

## ARTICLE VIII.

## THE TOPOGRAPHY OF JERUSALEM.

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In a former Article (Vol. xxiv. pp. 116-140) we concluded, as we supposed, our examination of this topic, with a refutation of the singular theory which Mr. Fergusson had advanced respecting "the identity of the hills Zion and Moriah." In a preceding number of the present volume (pp. 191-196) we find still another theory, defended by Rev. John Forbes, L.L.D., Edinburgh, which is as novel as the former, affirming the identity of the hills Zion and Akra. This originated with Captain Warren, the British engineer who has made such important and interesting subterranean explorations in Jerusalem, and who appears to have enlivened his labors below ground with historical researches above, which are quite independent of his professional work. It is propounded by him, in "Quarterly Statement, No. III.," of the "Palestine Exploration Fund," under the title: "The Comparative Holiness of Mounts Zion and Moriah" (pp. 76-88). It is only of late that we have had access to the latter paper, and we now propose to examine the two together in relation to the point under discussion.

Both writers assume, and one expressly concedes (Warren, pp. 80, 81), the baselessness of the Fergusson theory. That has found no recent supporter, and will never, probably, be put forward again. The new theory, we apprehend, will be as transient as the other; and, in venturing to speak freely of the traditional and historical Mount Zion, as "the pseudo-Zion," Mr. Forbes will probably discover that he has been presumptuous.

A decisive test of the new theory, which does not appear to have occurred to either writer, is the ascertained course of the ancient walls. We read: "David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus. . . . David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the City of David. . . . David dwelt in the fort, and called it the City of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward" (2 Sam. v. 6-9; 1 Chron. xi. 4-9). "And Solomon took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the City of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about. . . . Solomon built Millo, and repaired the breaches of the City of David his father" (1 Kings iii. 1; xi. 27). If we can ascertain the courses of these ancient walls, we have ascertained the seat of the ancient royal residence, and the site of the true Zion.

In this particular, Josephus has fortunately given us the desired in-

formation. He says: "The city was fortified by three walls wherever it was not encircled by impassable valleys; for in that quarter there was but one wall" (Bell. Jud. v. 4, § 1). He then describes the configuration of the city—its hills and valleys—and in the next section traces the courses of these walls, respecting the first and oldest of which there is no dispute. Beginning at Hippicus, on the north, it ran southward, and then eastward, along the western and southern brow of the southwest hill, and thence across to Ophel and the eastern side of the Temple on Moriah. The latter part of its course is not definitely known; but all are agreed that from Hippicus it followed the brow of the southwest hill, forming, with the deep valleys below, ample protection in this quarter. The "Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem" reports some recent excavations on the southern slope of this hill, and the discovery of an escarpment which "must have formed part of the defences of the old city, the wall running along the crest. . . . The steps which lead down the Valley of Hinnom could be defended by a couple of men against any force, before the invention of fire-arms" (p. 61). The above was the course of the first wall of Josephus, from Hippicus southward.

From Hippicus eastward this wall ran along the northern brow of the southwest hill to the Xystus, an open place on the eastern crest of this hill opposite the Temple, and thence across the valley to the western side of the Temple-area. This is undisputed. And this part of the first and oldest wall, from Hippicus eastward, was the strongest wall in Jerusalem, and the last which was taken in every siege. Josephus describes it as difficult to be taken, and assigns two reasons. The first is its natural position, built on the brow of a hill; and recent excavations have strikingly confirmed his statement, and vindicated Robinson's theory of the course of the Tyropeon Valley, disclosing, below the present surface, depths at different points of from thirty to nearly eighty feet along the ancient cliff (Smith's Dict., Amer. ed., ii. 1221). His second reason is the extraordinary strength of the wall itself, through the zeal which David and Solomon and the kings who succeeded them took in the work (Bell. Jud. v. 4, § 2). All are agreed that this oldest and strongest of the walls of Jerusalem protected the southwest hill, and was constructed for this special purpose. This part of the city, having the highest area and the most precipitous sides, offered the strongest natural advantages for defence; and King David and his successors took advantage of its natural position, and threw around it a wall which made it well nigh impregnable.

Now, will the advocates of the new theory please favor us with some consistent explanation of the royal zeal, shown through successive reigns, in fortifying this broad and goodly summit? They take pains to explain that Zion was not an isolated fortress, but included a considerable part of the city—the palace of the king and the dwellings of the people; and the upper city was, confessedly, larger than the lower. The most com-

manding spot in the capital, by nature and art combined made the most secure, and of ample extent, withal,—the royal palaces (according to their theory) were not here; the royal treasures were not here; the royal sepulchres were not here; the citadel was not here; the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant, before the building of the Temple, were not here. The wise monarchs of Israel fortified this elevated quarter of their capital, until it could bid defiance to almost any assault, and then (we are asked to believe) built their own residence outside of it, looking up with admiration to its strong bulwarks, congratulating the inhabitants who dwelt within its fastnesses, but depriving themselves, their families, and their possessions, secular and sacred, of the benefit of their own defences. To any reader not theory-smitten — we had almost said, not moon-struck — is this credible?

There succeeded a period of prolonged peace, in which the monarch could have his summer residence in the country, and build a palace for his queen in the unwallled suburbs. But from the first conquest it was necessary to have a point of as absolute security as possible; and what conceivable point would naturally be guarded with more jealous care than the principal seat of the royal family — the seat of empire? For a considerable period (we know not how long) the wall around the southwest hill was the *only* wall of the city. Josephus repeatedly refers to it as, by way of distinction, “the old wall.” And the interval in which it served as the sole protection of the capital was not a season of peace, but a period of incessant war with the tribes and nations on every side of Israel. And when new walls were afterwards erected, new defences were added to this.

Captain Warren says: “If we place three round-shot close together we have a rough model of Jerusalem in the time of Solomon — the shot to the north being Mount Zion; that to the southeast, Moriah; and that to the southwest, the remainder of Jerusalem” (p. 81). Accepting this “model,” we call the north shot Akra; the southeast, Moriah; and the southwest (which to Warren is nameless), Zion. The north hill was subsequently protected on its exposed side by a strong wall — the second wall of Josephus; and at a still later day, in the reign of King Herod Agrippa, a fourth hill, on the northeast (Bezetha), was protected on its exposed side by the third wall of Josephus. Jerusalem was never attacked from the south. The point of menace and peril, in every siege, was in the highlands on the north. These three walls on the north were successive breastworks against a foreign foe. When the hill represented by Warren’s north shot was protected by one wall, the southwest hill was protected by two walls; when the former was protected by two, the latter was protected by three. And the security enjoyed by the upper city, on the southwest hill, above that of the lower city, consisted, besides its natural defences on the south, in the strength of the old wall on the north, in the construction of which

successive kings had taken an enthusiastic interest. Consequently, as we have said, this part of Jerusalem held out the longest in every siege. "No attack or approach is ever described as made against the *upper* city of Zion until after the besiegers had broken through the second wall, and had thus got possession of the *lower* city" (Robinson's *Bib. Res.*, 1852, p. 214). When the city was invested by Titus, after he had stormed and carried every part but the southwest hill, the course of the siege is thus stated by Mr. Grove: "The upper city, higher than Moriah, inclosed by the original wall of David and Solomon, and on all sides precipitous, except on the north, where it was defended by the wall and towers of Herod, was still to be taken. Titus first tried a parley. . . . It took eighteen days to erect the necessary works for the siege. The four legions were once more stationed on the west or northwest corner, where Herod's palace abutted on the wall, and where the three magnificent and impregnable towers of Hippicus, Phasaelus, and Mariamne rose conspicuous. This was the main attack" (Smith's *Bible Dict.*, Amer. ed., ii. 1807). The wall thus strengthened by Herod for the protection of that part of the city which embraced his own palace, was the old wall, which ran from Hippicus eastward to the Xystus. "The interior and most ancient of the three walls on the north was, no doubt, the same wall which ran along the northern brow of Zion," or the southwest hill. (Robinson's *Bib. Res.* i. 413.) We again ask the champions of the new theory: For whose protection, as more important than their own, was this wall built and strengthened by David and Solomon and their immediate successors?

The preceding test appears to us so decisive that we do not care to apply any other; although the theory might be refuted without it. The reasons offered by these writers for their violent hypothesis are not based on recent discoveries, nor are they new. These speculations have not the remotest connection with Captain Warren's explorations in Jerusalem. The argument rests mainly on two or three passages in Josephus and the first Book of Maccabees, relating to the *Akra* or castle which Antiochus Epiphanes built on the hill sustaining the lower city, and which are familiar to all who have studied the topography of the city. These parallel narratives involve a perplexity which Professor Robinson fully examined, and, we think, satisfactorily explained, almost a quarter of a century ago (*Bib. Sac.* iii. pp. 629-634). His suggestion is, that in process of time "the City of David," at first restricted to the Hill of Zion, came to be used by synecdoche for the whole city, so as to be synonymous with Jerusalem; and he cites evident traces of such usage from Isaiah, the Maccabees, and Josephus. This is a much simpler solution of the difficulty than the bold transfer of site by these writers.

We need not dwell on incidental points. "The stairs which go down from the City of David," on which Dr. Forbes lays stress (p. 196), have, apparently, been discovered where we should naturally look for them—in

connection with the southwest hill (Smith's Bible Dict., Amer. ed., ii. 1331). The conjecture of Captain Warren, which Dr. Forbes passes over in silence, that the boundary between Judah and Benjamin (Josh. xv. 8; xviii. 16) ran through the middle of the city (pp. 79, 81); the conjecture of Dr. Forbes, "that within the lower district of the city rose a towering eminence, somewhat similar to the Castle Rock in Edinburgh" (p. 193); and the further conjecture, less fanciful, but more surprising, that the sepulchre of King David is to be sought in the lower part of the obscure suburb of Ophel (p. 196) — "the place called the Ophla" (Bell. Jud. vi. 6, § 3), and a quarter which does not appear to have been enclosed until the reign of Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 14), — these conjectures, purely such, we dismiss without further comment.

The immemorial conviction, which has not merely survived centuries of observation, but been confirmed by the investigations of keen-eyed witnesses, — enabling Dr. Robinson to affirm, so late as 1852: "Among many diversities of opinion, it is gratifying to find a few points yet unassailed — especially, 1. That Zion was the southwestern hill of the city" (Bib. Res. p. 2061) — will, we are confident, abide. The southwest hill, fortified beyond the rest, and its dwellings more carefully protected; the most important strategic point in the city, and the last rallying-point in memorable sieges; the hill for which the propounders of the new theory have no name — Dr. Forbes contenting himself with applying the epithet "pseudo" to the current appellation, and Capt. Warren designating it as "the remainder of Jerusalem," — this historic hill has borne, and will continue to bear the sacred and classic name of ZION.

Every Christian reader has felt — what every Christian visitor to the holy city who has stood on its southwest hill has felt more — the force and beauty of such passages as these, in the Psalms of David: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Ps. xlviii. 2); "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever" (Ps. cxxv. 1). From strains like these the transition is abrupt and startling to such sentences as the following: "The site where Zion once was, and is not" (Warren, p. 85); "Mount Zion, once so holy, was at length razed to the ground and obliterated" (Forbes, p. 195). We take comfort in the undoubting conviction that the grand similes of the sacred writer have not been thus emptied of their significance. The Zion of the psalmist and the prophet still stands, with its rocky, precipitous sides, and the deep valleys sweep around its base, as of old. Its "palaces" have disappeared; and in its desolation, literal and moral, it is no longer "the joy" which it once was; a portion of its summit has even been "ploughed," as predicted. But "beautiful for situation" it still is; and, to the eye of the traveller who approaches it from the south, it still lifts itself in strength though not in the ancient grandeur, "on the sides of the north."