

the road passing by Jerusalem and Bethlehem, his native place, which was quite as short and convenient, if Gath were, as there are some reasons for believing, at Tell es Safieh.

The fanciful derivation of the Neby of Neby Samwil from Nob will not bear a moment's scrutiny; there is no reason why this particular Neby should be derived from Nob more than any one of the hundred other Nebys in Palestine, and the Arabic Neby is hardly an exact reproduction of the Hebrew Nob. It may also be remarked that the tradition respecting Neby Samwil is antecedent to the Moslem conquest; in the time of Procopius there was a convent of St. Samuel on the summit, and it is only a natural transition from the Christian tomb and convent of St. Samuel to the Moslem tomb of the prophet (*Neby*) Samwil.

In his attempt to identify Nob with Neby Samwil, Lieut. Conder identifies it also with the "high place" of Gibeon, the site of the tabernacle during the early part of Solomon's reign; this, however, is unsupported by any passage in the Bible, and the quotations from the Talmud given in Lieut. Conder's paper seem to me to prove conclusively that Nob and the high place of Gibeon were distinct places. It is also reasonable to suppose that after the massacre of the priests at Nob the tabernacle would be removed from the scene of so much bloodshed; we do not know when it was erected at Gibeon, but there are some grounds for supposing that it was with Saul on Mount Gilboa. Dean Stanley has proposed to identify the high place of Gibeon with Neby Samwil, but he is careful to state that there are no grounds for the supposition except the apparent suitability of the place for the magnificent ceremonial on the occasion of Solomon's visit; on the other hand, it should be remembered that Neby Samwil is one and a quarter miles from El Jib (Gibeon), a distance so great that it would lead us to expect the place to have its own distinctive name rather than one derived from Gibeon. We may also observe that Gilgal and Shiloh, where the tabernacle rested for many years, were not prominent places; the Temple at Jerusalem was on the lower hill of the two; and even the temples of Jeroboam, at Dan and Bethel, were not on prominent sites such as Neby Samwil and many other peaks in Palestine. It would almost seem as if these positions were selected as a sort of protest against the general custom of worship on the high places, and there is certainly no indication that prominence was an object in selecting a resting-place for the tabernacle.

C. W. WILSON.

NOTE ON THE SOUTERRAINS IN THE NOBLE SANCTUARY, JERUSALEM.

A CONSTANT feature of the rock-cut tanks of Palestine is the rock-cut staircase running round the walls from top to bottom; the small bottle-shaped tanks of twelve to fifteen feet diameter being an exception to the general rule.

These staircases may be seen in the tanks at Beit Jebrin, Deir Dubban, Maresa, and at Nos. V., VIII., XI., and XXII. in the Noble Sanctuary.

We may therefore look for traces of these staircases in Souterrains Nos. I., III., and XXIX.; and not finding them, may we not fairly draw the inference—

1. That these souterrains are not tanks, but are ancient passages, which must have entrances and exits not now apparent?

2. That if they are tanks, either (a) the steps have been cut away; or (b) they still remain in the tanks blocked up with masonry?

As it is very improbable that rock-cut staircases would be cut away without any apparent object for so doing, we may, from the absence of these staircases, have much reason for supposing (whether they be tanks or no) that these souterrains are of greater extent than the plastered walls would at present indicate. It is very desirable that all information on the subject should be collected together, as the matter has an important bearing on the question of the site of the Temple. Lieut. Conder's recent researches cause renewed interest in the matter.

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CHARLES WARREN.

THE TEMPLE OF HEROD.

[This article and the following note on the tomb of David are reprinted from the *Athenæum* of Feb. 20th and Feb. 6th respectively, by kind permission of the proprietors.]

THE measurements of the Temple given in the *Mischna* are rendered with great precision, and are so perfectly intelligible that they have the appearance of having been taken on the spot or from a correct plan of the buildings. In the works of Josephus, on the other hand, however correct may be his descriptions, some of his measurements are given with a certain vagueness and want of method, rendering it very difficult to realise the form of the buildings he describes, and rather inducing the supposition that he spoke to some extent from recollection, and was often in want of memoranda or notes for the purpose of refreshing his memory.

For example, he tells us that the old cloisters of King Solomon (*Ant.* XX. ix. 7) were 400 cubits in length; that Herod, in rebuilding the Temple, encompassed a piece of ground twice as large (*Bel.* I. xxi. 1) as that before enclosed, and yet that the courts of Herod measured only a stadium or 600 feet a side (*Ant.* XV. xi. 3). It is not in these passages alone that Josephus appears to contradict himself, for, on the several occasions when he mentions the size of the Temple courts, there is an ambiguity presenting great difficulties.

I offer a solution to the problem by assuming that the 600 with regard to Herod's outer courts should be applied to cubits instead of feet; that Josephus's memory recalled the 600 feet, which is the measure (by my construction from the *Talmud*) of the length of the Inner Court, and ap-