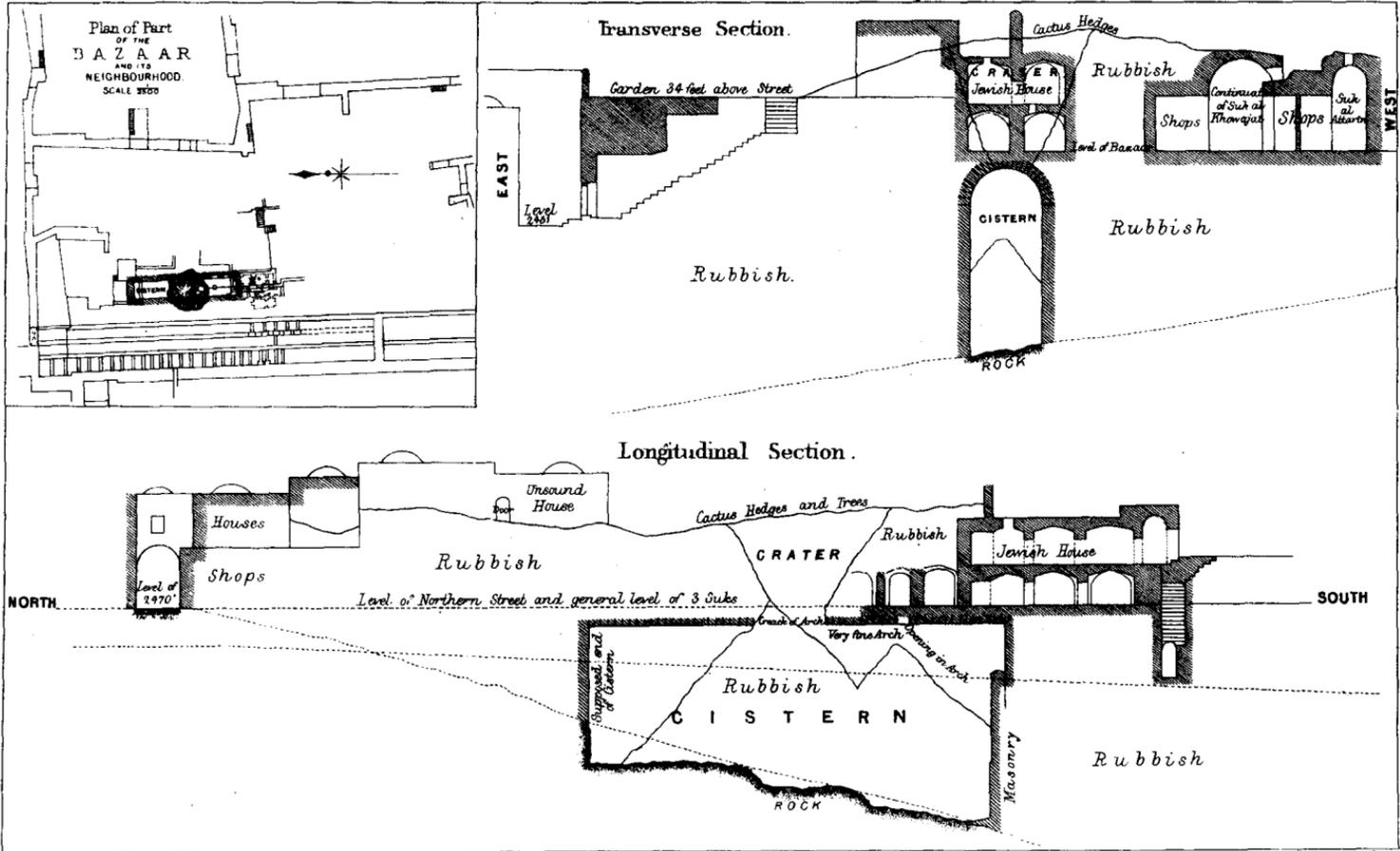


PLAN AND SECTIONS OF A LARGE VAULTED CHAMBER. Examined & drawn by HERR C. SCHICK, K. K. BAURATH. 1876.



RECENT EXCAVATIONS AT JERUSALEM, BY HERR C. SCHICK, K. K. BAURATH.

I HAVE, on more than one occasion, drawn attention to the good work which my friend Mr. Schick is doing in a quiet way at Jerusalem, by ascertaining the actual level of the original rock surface whenever it is exposed, and I have now much pleasure in communicating a short note on an excavation recently made by him which will be of interest to those who make a study of Jerusalem topography.

It appears that some time last year, the ground, at a point a little east of the bazaars, suddenly gave way, carrying with it a fig-tree and several bushes of cactus, and leaving a large crater or depression in the surface. For some months occasional earth-slips took place, and it became evident that the *débris* was finding its way into one or more subterranean chambers; the ground was at the time considered too dangerous for examination, but last summer Mr. Schick was requested by the Pacha to investigate the whole matter. It soon appeared that the earth had been running away into a great chamber over 100ft. long and 17ft. 6in. wide, and that the cause of the slip had been the sudden fall of a portion of the covering arch. The interesting point is, that in the floor of the chamber, which is entirely of rock, we have presented to view a larger area of the original surface of the ground on which Jerusalem stands than has hitherto been exposed within the city walls. We have, too, not only the depth of rubbish at a point near which there were few previous rock levels, but the actual fall of the rock over a distance of 100ft. in a north and south direction, or combined with the known level of the rock in the street to the north, a section over more than 200ft.

I was hardly prepared for the great accumulation of rubbish, 80ft., at this particular place, or for the rapid fall in the rock, 1 in 4, towards the south, which seems to indicate that the valley running eastward from near the Jaffa Gate is deeper than has generally been supposed, and that it may perhaps partake of the ravine nature of the valley examined by Captain Warren under Robinson's Arch. The section from east to west, though only 17ft. 6in. long, is of value as showing a steady fall of the rock towards the east, and thus indicating that the axis of the spur between the valleys from the Jaffa and Damascus Gates has been passed.

Mr. Schick's investigation has also proved that the bazaar called on the Ordnance Map of Jerusalem, $\frac{1}{3300}$ scale, Suk-al-Khowajat, formerly extended as far north as the other two bazaars, and has brought more prominently to notice the great depth of rubbish on which all the bazaars stand.

The long cistern or chamber is parallel to the bazaars, and as it was evidently not originally intended to be used as a cistern, we may perhaps have in it the line of one of the streets of ancient Jerusalem. The

chamber, at any rate, offers a favourable base of operations for an exploration of this part of the city, as galleries could be driven in several directions to examine the ground.

I take this opportunity of pointing out the great importance of collecting and registering in a methodical manner the levels of the rock exposed from time to time at Jerusalem, as it is only by obtaining a correct idea of the topographical features of the ancient city that we can hope to understand Josephus. Mr. Schick has published amongst Zimmermann's maps of ancient Jerusalem a map showing the original features of the ground, and coming from such an authority it is of considerable interest; but we have, unfortunately, none of the data used in its construction. There are still places at Jerusalem where it is impossible to say what the rubbish conceals, and any map showing, by contours, the natural features of the ground, must for the present be considered premature, or at most suggestive. How much is still left to the imagination of the draughtsman may be inferred from the fact that on a line joining the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with the Dome of the Rock, a most important part of the city, there is not a single rock level. It is to be hoped that some day Mr. Schick may find time to prepare a table of rock levels for publication, for since Capt. Warren left the city our knowledge of underground Jerusalem is almost entirely due to him, the excavations of M. Ganneau and Mr. Maudslay being, I think, the only exceptions.

December 5th, 1876.

C. W. W.

THE SITES OF TARICHEÆ AND BETHSAIDA.

A CONVERSATION with M. Ganneau some time ago relative to the positions of Taricheæ and Bethsaida, two important places on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, led me again to examine the question of their respective sites, and to modify considerably the opinion expressed in the "Recovery of Jerusalem" with regard to that of the former place. Lieut. Conder's approaching return to Palestine offers a favourable opportunity for examining these questions on the ground, and the following notes may draw his attention to certain points which might otherwise escape notice.

Taricheæ.—In 1866 I too hastily assumed that Dr. Robinson and other distinguished travellers were right in identifying Taricheæ with Kerak, the mound covered with shapeless ruins which occupies such an important strategical position at the point where the Jordan leaves the lake, but a careful perusal of Josephus leaves no doubt in my mind that Taricheæ was north and not south of Tiberias. Taricheæ appears to have been a place of considerable importance, and to have played a conspicuous part in the Roman campaign against the Jews in Galilee, as well as in the troubled times which preceded it; the description of its capture by the Romans, and of the great naval engagement on the Lake