

NOTES ON JERUSALEM.

IN the *Quarterly Statement* for October, 1879, Mr. Birch advocates the prosecution of further excavations in Jerusalem as soon as funds will allow. Whether the present administration of the country offers greater advantages than of former years is only known to residents, though the reports which reach us are far from encouraging. I beg, however, to offer a few suggestions, which may be possibly of service.

Tombs of the Kings.—While agreeing with many of the general results of Mr. Birch's papers—papers which have, I think, done service to the cause of Jerusalem topography—I would point out that there were *two Tombs of the Kings* in Jerusalem. The sepulchres in which the nine most famous monarchs were entombed were in the "City of David," and according to the Talmud, within the walls of the town. But there was also a Royal Garden, or "field of burial of the kings," in which Uzziah, Manasseh, and Amon were buried, which seems to have been a distinct place. This second cemetery is mentioned in connection with the Royal Palace, which stood south of the Temple, and it seems probably to be the tomb of the House of David on Ophel, which is placed by Nehemiah near Siloam, as mentioned by Mr. Birch. Near to Siloam, also, the King's Garden (the Garden of Uzzah) and the King's Winepresses were to be found, the recess between Ophel and the upper city being apparently a royal domain.

The tombs of the nine famous kings were in the City of David, but their position is not clearly indicated. I do not think that the view that Ophel was the City of David—which, though often put forward, has never been accepted by the great authorities Reland, Robinson, &c.—will be found capable of proof, for Josephus (Wars v. 4. 1) distinctly identifies the "citadel," or *Metzad Zion*, which was called the "City of David," with the Upper Market of his own time, the *Suk ha 'Aliun* of the Talmud. Millo or Akra was also in the City of David, but the Ophel wall west of Gihon (*'Ain Umm ed Deraj*) is distinctly stated to have been without the City of David.

It remains, then, to look for these tombs on *Millo*, a site not among the nine enumerated by Mr. Birch, as proposed by various authorities.

The ground in which the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands is now known to be the summit of a kind of knoll, which slopes steeply down on every side, and is divided from the modern Zion by the deep, broad valley which, from the twelfth century down, has been generally recognised as the Tyropœon. This northern knoll or hill is the site, according to Robinson and the majority of authorities, of the Akra of Josephus, and Akra, according to the Septuagint, was Millo, and Millo was in the City of David.

Now, immediately east of the so-called Holy Sepulchre is an ancient Jewish tomb with *kokim*—the only undisputed specimen of a Jewish tomb within the walls of modern Jerusalem, and a tomb which,

as placed on Akra or Millo, would have been within the circuit of the ancient city also.

This tomb, minutely described by Colonel Wilson in a former number of the *Quarterly Statement*, and now called the Tomb of Nicodemus, I would propose to identify with the long-lost tombs of the nine famous kings of Judah. Any one who studies Colonel Wilson's plan will see that the tomb had originally nine *kokim*, or graves for nine bodies, and it is yet more remarkable that some of these are sunk below the level of the chamber floor, reminding us of the expression of Josephus, that the sepulchres were underground, and could not be seen even by those who stood within the monument.

The reasons, briefly recapitulated, for this identification, are—

1st. The tomb is undoubtedly ancient and Jewish.

2nd. It is in the City of David.

3rd. It is within the probable circuit of the old walls.

4th. It contains graves for nine bodies, according to the number of kings enumerated in the Bible.

5th. Some of these graves are concealed beneath the floor.

6th. It is the only undoubted Jewish tomb in Jerusalem.

If the Holy Sepulchre were really an ancient tomb, we might identify it with the tomb of Huldah, the only other sepulchre within the walls, according to the Talmud.

Those who are interested in this question will find it fully worked out, with all the references, which time does not allow of my now giving, in "Conder's Handbook to the Bible," just published by Messrs. Longmans, page 341.

The Stone hat T'aim.—I would suggest a few notes on the interesting paper by Prof. Sepp.

It is evident that the stone in question was in a high part of the city, or itself elevated to some height, from the following passage:—

"The showers came down abundantly until all Israel went up from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives because of the rains. They came and said to him (Honi), 'As thou hast prayed that the rains may fall, so pray that they may cease.' He said to them, 'Go and see if the Stone of Proclamation (Eben hat T'aim) be covered.'"—*Taanith* iii. 8.

It is curious to see the same differences of opinion arising in the nineteenth century which can be traced in the fourth and twelfth in the conflicting accounts of various writers, and which are due to the brevity of the Gospel narrative. It must, however, be pointed out that Herr von Alten, though condemned by Prof. Sepp, is correct in stating that the Temple guards occupied Antonia, as the fact is expressly stated by Josephus (Wars v. 5. 8).

Prof. Sepp seems also to have fallen into a misconception in supposing that the footprint of Christ, mentioned by Antony of Piacenza, was in the Dome of the Rock. Such a footprint was indeed shown in the same building in the twelfth century, probably the present *Kadam en Neby*, or "Footprint of the Prophet." But Canon Williams

has shown that Antony of Piacenza refers to a place in the present Mosque el Aksa, which is still called *Kadam Aisa*, or the "Footprint of Jesus." The point may have no practical value except as an instance of "transference of tradition" by the Crusaders—one of many.

Prof. Sepp appears also to confound the place where the Jewish Sanhedrin sat with the Prætorium of the Roman Governor. With regard to the site of the former, it is distinctly stated in the Mishna that the Beth Din, or Smaller Sanhedrin, sat in the chamber Gazith ("cut stone"), also called Balutin ("pavement"), which was at the south-east corner of the Court of the Priests. To this, of course, the Roman Governor can never have had access. As to whether the place Lithostroton, or Gabbatha, was in Antonia or on Zion, the writers of fourteen centuries have been constantly of different opinion, there being nothing in the Gospel narrative to fix the site.

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THE GOLDEN CALF AT BETHEL.

ANY theory stalking through these pages is for the time a Goliath deliberately inviting an attack. Josephus is like Saul's armour, too clumsy to be used with effect. I wish (*Idem non vitrei culminis immemor*) to sling a few smooth stones.

The Samaritans indulge in most extravagant pretensions; they assert that Gerizim is the scene of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. "The Land and the Book" disposes of the claim at once by a reminder that no ordinary Syrian ass would be cajoled into performing nearly a four days' journey in two days and a part. The distance from Beer-sheba to Gerizim is too great, while that to Jerusalem suits the narrative very well. The minor objections against Mount Moriah, named in "Sinai and Palestine," (251)—viz., that "there is no elevation, nothing corresponding to the place *afar off* to which Abraham *lifted up* his eyes," vanish when it is pointed out that—

(1) There was a *far off* place (lit. *house*? Araunah's) on the west side of the brook Kidron, not half a mile from Jerusalem (2 Sam. xv. 17). Miriam also watched the ark *afar off* (Exod. ii. 4). A few hundred yards would suffice."

(2) The expression "*lifted up* his eyes" hardly requires the existence of an *elevation* in Gen. xxii. 13, which is not admissible in *both* cases in Gen. xxiv. 63, 64, and contrary to fact in Numb. xxiv. 2.

The soul of Simon Magus must have migrated into the dark-eyed and fascinating Jacob, now high priest of the Samaritans, and "custos rotulorum," for Lieut. Conder, after seeing him, was actually inveigled into seriously advocating the claim that the Bethel where Jeroboam set up a golden calf was immediately west of Gerizim, at the ruins called Lôzeh (Luz).

Seven points in favour of the claim are given in *Quarterly Statement*, 1878, p. 28, and condensed in "Tent Work," vol. ii. 107; but not one of the seven appears to me able to stand scrutiny.