

NEHEMIAH'S WALL.

In his paper in the April *Quarterly Statement*, Mr. St. Clair comes to the conclusion that the sepulchres of David were on the western side of Ophel (so-called), north of the Virgin's Fount. To me it seems clear that really they were on its eastern side, south of that Fount. Indeed, I cannot see the slightest ground for doubt on this point. Yet, as these contrary opinions perplex some readers of the *Quarterly Statement* who are interested in Jerusalem topography, it is desirable at once to test the accuracy of Mr. St. Clair's theory.

The basis he takes is unfortunately unsound. He accepts as correct Sir Charles Warren's site for Akra on the northern side of the Upper City, without attempting to meet even one of the ten or rather twelve points in Josephus, which both require Akra to be on Ophel, east of the Upper City, and render impossible any northern site (*Quarterly Statement*, 1886, 26; 1888, 108). Mr. St. Clair next contradicts himself in first stating that the causeway joined Akra to the eastern hill, and then on his plan making it join the Upper City to that hill. It cannot have joined both, since a valley separated (Jos. Wars, v, iv, 1) the Upper City from Akra. The plan is right, agreeing with Josephus, who makes the causeway part of the first wall. Lastly, Mr. St. Clair, in making his Lower City to be of a *crenate form*, agrees, not with Josephus, but only with his mistranslators, since whatever *ἀμφικυρτός* may mean; it certainly does not mean crescent-shaped (Wars, *id.*).

I have pointed out these errors by way of preface in order that the reader may be the more convinced that Mr. St. Clair's theory is not to be accepted without a sifting examination, and that he may not be carried away by the high-handed manner in which the theory in question is developed in spite of Josephus, existing remains, and Biblical evidence.

Mr. St. Clair seems willing to allow that Nehemiah's Wall may have included the towers at the south-west corner, discovered by Mr. Maudslay. It *must* have done so if we accept the statement of Josephus (Wars, v, iv, 2), that the first wall was built by the kings; and Mr. St. Clair would hardly, I imagine, dispute its doing so, if he had to admit that the city wall came near to the Pool of Siloam. As to this point we learn from Josephus (*id.*) that (1) "The wall bending above the Fountain of Siloam, *thence* again," &c. This *thence* must mean *from Siloam*, since it can only refer to the words immediately preceding it. Therefore the wall went near to the Pool of Siloam. (2) Simon (Wars, v, vi, 1) "held as much of the old wall as bent from Siloam . . . also that fountain" (Siloam). Thus, obviously, the fountain was, if not within, yet commanded by the wall. Be it noted that Whiston's *inaccurate* translation in Wars, v, ix, 4 ("Siloam, as well as all the *other* springs without the city"), by arbitrarily inserting *other* has given rise to the common error that the Romans had access to the fountain of Siloam, and that therefore it was without the city. Thrupp

points out that the words of Josephus do not imply any such thing. (3) "The Romans drove the Jews out of the Lower City and set all on fire as far as Siloam" (vi, vii, 2). If Mr. St. Clair desires to appeal to Josephus (as he does on page 91), these passages afford evidence enough to show that the wall went near to the Pool of Siloam. The Jewish historian, however, often errs. Therefore, I will not press his evidence in support of my two main objections (page 38), that the wall passed close to the Virgin's Fount, and sufficiently near to the Pool of Siloam to defend it.

Unconsciously Mr. St. Clair gives on his plan the strongest possible refutation of his own theory, inasmuch as it shows (1) the winding aqueduct cut through Ophel from the Virgin's Fount to the Pool of Siloam, and (2) the secret passage above that Fount discovered by Sir Charles Warren.

But some one will ask, how do these remains refute the theory in question? The simple answer is that by leaving the Fount 500 feet and the Pool 1,200 feet outside Jerusalem, Mr. St. Clair makes both the aqueduct and the passage to be but mere exhibitions of the folly not only of the original constructors, but also of those who used the passage as well as of those who executed the famous inscription found in the aqueduct. For who with immense labour would hew a tunnel 1,700 feet long, through a rocky hill, to convey water from one point to another, when it could more readily be conducted along the side of the hill, and already was so conducted, as Mr. Schick's discovery proves (*Quarterly Statement*, 1889, 35), at the very time the tunnel was made? Who, again, without a reason, would cut through rock an underground staircase, with a shaft forming a draw-well; and who, further, after the contrivance was finished, would care to use it, when it was easier and far more pleasant to go down the hill under the open sky and draw the water direct from the fountain itself? Who, lastly, would care to sit in a cramped position in order to engrave on the rock an account of a perfectly useless undertaking? Yet one and all of these incredible suppositions must be admitted if Mr. St. Clair's novel line for the wall is to be adopted.

It is far better to suppose that the ancients acted with a reason than without one, though it may need some thought to decide what that reason was.

Happily Dr. Robinson's penetration discerned the object of the aqueduct, long before the discovery of the staircase confirmed the correctness of his conjecture. He says it seems to have been "important to carry the water from one point to the other, in such a way that it could not be cut off by a besieging army. This purpose would have been futile had either of these points lain without the fortification," or been undefended.

This judicious remark was supported by Sir Charles Warren's discovery of a staircase (opening southwards on Ophel), by which those within the city would have access to the waters of the Virgin's Fount

without going outside the fortifications (see "Recovery of Jerusalem," 238).

There is hardly need to say more against the proposed line of wall; yet the clearest proof has still to be adduced, namely the *direct* Biblical evidence of the aqueduct being made, and the indirect evidence of the staircase being used, though for a purpose very different from what its authors ever intended.

Patient research has proved Gihon to be the Virgin's Fount. We learn from 2 Chron. xxxiii., 14, that Manasseh built an outer wall to the city of David on the west side of Gihon. Surely here we have a wall built on Ophel close to the Virgin's Fount. Previously (xxxii., 30) Hezekiah had "stopped the upper spring of the waters of Gihon and brought them straight down (or by an underground way—Variorum Bible) on the west side (or to the west side) of the city of David." Why! Here the very construction of the aqueduct is recorded, while the reason of Hezekiah's great water-works is given in verse 4. "They stopped all the fountains, saying—why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?"

I have pointed out (1878, 129, 184) that the staircase or secret passage proved invaluable to the Jebusites, until Joab climbing the shaft with the help or connivance of *Ara^unah*, got up through the *Tzinnor* or gutter (as the passage in whole or part is called in 2 Saml. v, 8) and so captured the castle of Zion. That the *gutter* was this shaft, seemed (1884, 175) as absurd to Prof. Sayce, as that it was a *waterfall* still seems to me. No addition indeed to Jerusalem could possibly be more picturesque than a cataract feathered with maidenhair fern, but criticism must interpose, Where is the waterfall now, and whence flowed the water then?

On the other hand, in defence of my *shaft* (or *passage*) I can urge that Kennicott thus explained the Hebrew word a hundred years ago, and that Sir Charles Warren discovered the passage ten years before it was proved that the castle of the Jebusites was on Ophel so called. That this was its site is a fact; that a passage was made to the spring gives the reason for the fact. A strong prejudice exists against Kennicott's solution, but without the least reason. A similar passage is mentioned by Polybius as existing at Rabbath Ammon (1878, 190) in B.C. 218, and is probably alluded to by Josephus (Ant. vii, vii, 8) as existing in David's time. In *Quarterly Statement*, 1881, 256, mention is made of a like contrivance at Gibéon. If further refutation of Mr. St. Clair's theory is desired, let me briefly show how it falls to pieces under the weight of its own inconsistencies.

1. It is maintained that the four turnings and one corner named in Neh. iii, 19-25, coincide with those along his line of wall. To attain this harmony, the one and same turning in verses 19-20 has to count as two (p. 93). Again the first salient angle (a very prominent corner on his plan) south of the causeway has nothing to correspond to it in Neh. iii. As a plea for its absence it is urged that the Ephraim Gate is not named in Neh. iii, 6-8, but I have pointed out (1879, 177) that "the throne of

the governor" (justice being administered at the gate) marks the required spot. Lastly, while Binnui (v. 24) repaired *unto* the turning of the wall and *unto* the corner," Mr. St. Clair's wall on his plan passes *over against* (in sight of, in front of, *see* 16), and does not come *to* (*i.e.*, unto) either the turning or the corner.

2. The frequent expression *after him* in Neh. iii seems to me to mean that where the previous builder left off, the next began his work, as in verses 20, 21. But Nehemiah (v. 16) who repaired *after* Shallun instead of beginning where Shallun left off, actually begins where Shallun, himself had begun. This predicament arises from Mr. St. Clair's predetermination to have a loop line of wall.

3. The Pool of Siloam (p. 92) is made to lend its name to the transverse wall 1,500 feet away from it. Why was not the wall rather billeted on the King's Pool, *alias* the Pool that was made (but can the two be identical ?) on Mr. St. Clair's plan only 300 feet distant, instead of having to beg its name from Siloam.

4. Finally the loop line of wall, the chief characteristic of the theory, is utterly inadmissible. Surely, among the thousands of Jews at Jerusalem who had no superfluous taste for heavy burdens (Neh. iv, 10), some one at least must have been intelligent and sharp enough to perceive that it was only frittering away their strength to fortify an inner loop wall, four times as long as the transverse wall, and requiring all the workers from v. 16 to the prison in v. 25, instead of concentrating their combined energies on making the latter as strong as possible. Mr. St. Clair says (p. 95) : "That the transverse wall was no protection by itself, there being an easy approach up the valley." But if a wall across the bed of a valley must necessarily be weak, much more weak must the loop wall have been, since Mr. St. Clair is by his theory (p. 91) forced to draw it in one part actually *along the valley-bed*. Could any other line possibly be weaker? On the position of a wall a workman's wit is a safer guide than literary talent. An unnecessary wall along the bottom of a valley exposes the unsoundness of Mr. St. Clair's theory (who rightly takes the south-west hill (*gibeah*) to be part of Jerusalem), just as much as the notion of a wall at the foot of a hill (1883, 215, plan) being a defence against besiegers on that hill, exposes the weakness of Prof. Sayce's theory that the south-west hill was no part of Jerusalem, and that consequently the hill (*gibeah*) of Jerusalem was the same as the Mount (*har*) of Zion. What fun the Chaldeans would have had in rolling big stones downhill against a wall so remarkably illplaced.

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