

## NOTES.

Nos. 8, 9 and 10 give results which are evidently too high.

Nos. 11, 12.—The aneroid fell at Rukhleh, after the observation there. It was compared with a mercurial barometer at Bludân, on July 15, and these two observations corrected accordingly. I also re-adjusted the instrument.

Nos. 13-17 are corrected in accordance with the comparison after the readjustment.

Nos. 18-41.—There was manifestly some great change in the adjustment which affected all these readings. Taking the heights of Deir 'Atiyah (No. 19), and the Cedars (41), determined by mercurial barometer, as correct, I have applied throughout a constant correction -0.55 inch, which brings all the observations into fair accordance with previous determinations.

N.B.—In making the reductions from the observations in this series, I have made a rough allowance for temperature by *assuming* a temperature for the upper station. It need scarcely be added that these results cannot be considered as at all exact.

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 ANCIENT JERUSALEM.

*Acra North, not South of the Temple.*

By Major-General Sir CHARLES W. WILSON, K.C.B., F.R.S. &c., R.E.

IN the last *Quarterly Statement* the Rev. W. F. Birch has criticised some views on the topography of ancient Jerusalem which I ventured to put forward last summer; and has charged me with mistranslating Josephus.

I may at once say that, in my opinion, the *data* at present at our disposal are not sufficient to enable us to determine accurately some of the most important points in dispute. By comparing the historical materials with the local indications we can make guesses, more or less accurate, but, until the excavations made by Sir C. Warren are resumed, we cannot be certain. My guesses, the result of many years' study, unfortunately differ from the firm convictions of my critic, and I am sorry to say that, after reading his many admirable papers on the topography of Jerusalem, including the last, I am unable to accept all his conclusions.

To bring forward all the arguments for and against Mr. Birch's identifications would be to write a book, for which I have no leisure; and I can only notice here, and that briefly, some of his criticisms. In the first place, however, I must say a word for Josephus, in whom I am said to confide too readily. Josephus, whatever his faults may be, cer-

tainly knew what he was writing about when he described Jerusalem as it existed before the final siege. He had lived in the city for years; and though his descriptions of walls and buildings erected prior to the Herodian period may be wrong, they undoubtedly represent the traditions of his day. He wrote in a language not his own, and this has led, in some cases, to want of clearness; but when he makes a distinct topographical statement we cannot throw him over to suit our views without the clearest evidence that he is wrong.

Another point, Mr. Birch considers that "one may elucidate Josephus by the Bible, but not the Bible by Josephus." I maintain, on the contrary, that the only way to understand the topography of the Bible is to work backwards. If we could once reconstruct Jerusalem as Josephus saw it, there would not be much difficulty in restoring the Præ-Exilic city.

The principal points referred to by Mr. Birch are:—

(1.) The position of the Macedonian "stronghold," or "fortress," which Josephus calls sometimes the Acra and sometimes the Acropolis. The Acra was situated in the "Lower City," *i.e.*, on the eastern hill, upon a rocky height that was afterwards cut down and levelled (1 Macc. i, 33; Joseph. *Ant.* xii, 6, § 4; xiii, 9, § 7). It was in close proximity to and overlooked the Temple (1 Macc. iv, 41; xiii, 52; Joseph. *Ant.* xii, 5, § 4; 9, § 3; 10, § 5); and was within the limits of the "City of David" (1 Macc. i, 33; vii, 32; xiv, 36; cp. *Ant.* xii, 10, § 4). It was built or restored by Antiochus Epiphanes, and, until its destruction, it was regarded as the Citadel or Acropolis of Jerusalem. Now it may safely be asserted that no Greek engineer would have built an Acropolis on lower ground than the building it was intended to command and overawe. In Greek cities the Acropolis was almost invariably built on the highest and most defensible ground, and there is no reason to suppose that the engineers of Antiochus departed from the usual practice when they built the Acra on the eastern hill at Jerusalem. The site north of the Temple is so clearly indicated by the form of the ground that in any other ancient city it would never be questioned. As a further argument, it may be remarked that Aristeas, who visited Jerusalem before the Acra was built, describes a fortress which stood on a commanding eminence north of the Temple, and was fortified with towers to the summit of the hill, and constructed with enormous stones. (Quoted by Williams, *Holy City*, i, 73, 74.) It may be inferred, with some certainty, that what Antiochus did was to restore and, in part, rebuild this fortress.

Mr. Birch (*Quarterly Statement*, p. 74) gives certain points in favour of a southern site for Acra. To these it may be replied, (a)<sup>1</sup> that Josephus (*Ant.* xii, 5, § 4) says the Acra was in the "Lower city." (c) That portion of the ridge, on which the Acra stood, which was within range of the Temple, for the missiles of those days, was cut down and the danger removed. (d) It is geologically impossible for the ground south of the

<sup>1</sup> The letters (a), &c., are those of Mr. Birch's paragraphs.

Temple to have been higher than that upon which the Temple stood. (e) The argument that the Acra was lower than the Temple because in 1 Macc. vii, 32, 33, it is stated that Nicanor went "up to Mount Zion," is at first sight plausible. It must be remembered, however, that the writer is only using the usual *formula*; the expression "down to Mount Zion" is, as far as I am aware, never used in the Bible or Apocrypha. (f) The identification of the "third hill" of Josephus with the Temple hill requires the presence of a valley across Ophel which does not exist. (g) The quotation from Josephus is incorrect and incomplete, and has not the meaning attached to it. (h) It is not necessary to suppose that the threshing floor of Araunah was outside Jebus, or that the Acropolis was connected by walls with the lower city near Gihon. Possibly the Acropolis was first connected with the lower city of the Jebusites by David.

(2.) The questions connected with the sites of Gihon and Enrogel are most difficult ones, and I am not prepared to accept the speculations in Mr. Birch's paper in *Quarterly Statement*, 1889, p. 46, as facts. There is only one known spring at Jerusalem, and, if Enrogel were a spring, as it is generally supposed to have been, it is a fair inference that Gihon and Enrogel were the same. The *Bir Eyûb* is not, and never could have been, a true spring; it is a deep well, and its only claim to be considered a spring is that, after four or five days' continuous rain, it overflows and runs down the valley. I may add that I do not take *gai*, and *emek* to be interchangeable, but I maintain that a valley may be an *emek*, "dale," near its head, and a *gai*, "ravine," at a lower portion of its course.

(3.) The next point is the charge of mistranslation:—

(a) My interpretation of the passage in *B. J.* ii, 19, § 4, is supported by Traill's translation. Cestius "proceeding to the upper town, encamped opposite the royal residence;" and it is considered correct by a Greek scholar to whom I referred the point. As Cestius was outside the first wall, it follows that Josephus must refer to that portion of the western hill to the north of the Jaffa Gate.

(b) The same scholar also considers that the way in which I take *ἀμφικυρτος*, in the difficult passage in *B. J.* v, 4, §1, is in accordance with the Greek. My view is that *ἀμφικυρτος* refers to *plan*, and not, as Mr. Birch holds, to *section*; and that Josephus, in describing the principal topographical features of the ground on which Jerusalem stood, intended to draw a broad contrast between the western hill which was *high* and *straight*, and the eastern hill which was *low* and *curved*. I take *ἀμφικυρτος* more particularly to refer to the eastern face of the eastern hill which is *convex*. If we are to insist on the exact meaning of the word, "curved on each side like the moon in its third quarter," I am afraid we must give up the question in despair, for no known topographical feature at Jerusalem has that form. This is one of those instances in which, knowing that Josephus wrote in a language not his own, I do not think we can insist on the full force of the Greek word.

February 28, 1893.

## THE GARDEN TOMB.

I HAVE been requested by the lady to whom allusion was made in my letter to the "Times," of the 1st October last, to forward the accompanying note for publication in the *Quarterly Statement*.

I am glad to be able to take this opportunity of expressing my regret that I made a statement not strictly in accordance with the facts, though, at the time, I had every reason to believe that it was correct.

My object was to show how soon a suggestion, in favour of which there is no historic or traditional evidence, may become an accepted fact, when it refers to a "Holy Place" at Jerusalem.

C. W. W.

March 11, 1893.

## A CORRECTION.

Three several times in the *Quarterly Statements* I have seen it noticed that the person who had the Gordon Tomb Chamber cleaned out some months ago *had passed the night there*. I, myself, was the person to have it cleaned, several others assisting—but no one passed the night there.

It was in the Church of the Resurrection that I passed the night on the Greek Festival of the Incarnation. While to do so in one place was feasible, to do so in the other was not so, and our poor homage reaches Him whose acts command it equally from every spot on earth.

M. E.

## SINAI AND SYRIA BEFORE ABRAHAM.

By Major C. R. CONDER, D.C.L., R.E.

THE earliest notice of Palestine on monuments occurs in the inscriptions found, twelve years ago, by De Sarzek at Tell Loh, an important and very ancient city of Babylonia, standing on a mound 40 feet high, east of the great canal which joins the Tigris and the Euphrates (*Khat-el-Hai*). The site includes an oblong palace in which is one of the *Ziggurat*, or stepped pyramids, of which Herodotus (i, 181) describes that erected at Babylon. The *Tell Loh* example has its stairs and sacred chamber, the use of which is also mentioned by Herodotus; and round this shrine the palace, with walls of burnt brick set in bitumen—still standing to a height of 10 feet—was raised, with a large central court and surrounding halls and rooms. Eight statues, not much smaller than life size, finely carved of Sinaitic granite, stood in the court; near the northern gate another colossal seated figure was found, and near the pyramid a small torso of yet earlier date. The place continued to be inhabited down to Greek times, and was finally destroyed by fire. The name of the city which