

out erect and alone in a level land, and having only one cavern within it, lest, had there been many, the miracle of Him who overcame Death should have been obscured. The Corpse was therefore laid there, the Vessel of the living WORD; and a great stone held (the entrance of) the cave. (Lee's translation, p. 199.)

N.B.—The Theophania is only extant in the Syriac version, and the meaning would be much clearer if the original Greek were in existence. The work was written after the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built, or whilst it was in building, and the passage apparently alludes to the excavations by which the tomb was isolated, and to its appearance after isolation. Whether the meaning is that there was only one chamber or only one loculus or grave is uncertain—the former is most probable.

NOTES FROM JERUSALEM.

By Dr. SELAH MERRILL, U.S. Consul.

1. *An Immense Charnel House.*—In the autumn of 1898, during the visit of the German Emperor to Jerusalem, a considerable piece of land adjoining the west side of Neby Daūd, on Mount Zion, passed into the hands of the German Catholics. The entire plot of ground, of which this is a part, forms an imperfect square, bounded by a field on the south, a lane on the west, a narrow street on the north, and Neby Daūd, with the short lane leading to it, on the east. In the north-west corner a rectangular bit became, 70 years ago, the property of the American Board of Foreign Missions; the south-east corner of the square is pushed in, so that the outline of the German Catholic ground is very irregular. Beyond the lane, on the west, is the Greek cemetery, and beyond the narrow street, on the north, is the cemetery of the Armenians, and the north-east portion of this ground is very near what is known as the House of Caiaphas. These details are mentioned in order to define precisely the location of the ground in question.

In digging graves in the ground of the American Mission, we came, in three or more instances, upon what appeared to be a large flat stone, so that the holes had to be refilled and the graves dug elsewhere. At one time men were employed to dig at this point to ascertain what the obstruction below the surface was. There was uncovered a finely-constructed basement of a pier. It was 6 feet square and 2 feet high. About it, so far as the digging

extended, a plastered floor was found, on which were many human bones. Beyond the fact that some large building once stood there nothing was determined.

All the graves at the south-east corner of this ground, if they were dug sufficiently deep, reached the same plastered floor, and many bones were thrown up by the gravedigger. In every such instance I went alone to the cemetery, picked up with my own hands the bones that had been thrown out, a handful, or two or three handfuls, in two cases a skull also, put them by themselves and carefully covered them with earth, in order that the feelings of the friends of the deceased person about to be buried might not be disturbed by them. When the coffin had been lowered into the grave the bones were laid back and the earth replaced.

The period covered by the events I have mentioned was about 20 years, and nothing further was known about these remains or these bones until the ground adjoining passed into the possession of the German Catholics in 1898, and they began to excavate it the following year.

Broad, deep trenches were first cut from north to south, and later a considerable section, perhaps 300 square yards, was removed. Extensive foundations, columns, squared stones with smooth faces, and other remains, were found. The basement of a pier, corresponding to that already described, and 50 feet east of it, was uncovered, and the plastered floor extended to the east and south for a considerable distance. The most surprising thing that was found was a mass of human bones. They formed a great bed or layer of pretty uniform depth 12 inches thick. The number of skulls was appalling. They were interspersed all through the layer of bones: in one hollow place 50 were counted, and in a cistern there were nearly 100. To the west this layer continued under the wall dividing this ground from that of the American Mission, at its south-east corner, as has been described. The area of this remarkable bone bed will never be known; but from the portions exposed it may be asserted that it extended 30 feet in one direction and 50 feet in another. This is an under-estimate, as the extreme limits were not reached.

It was perfectly evident that the bodies had not been laid in any order—simply thrown or dumped here indiscriminately two or three deep and covered with earth. These bones could easily represent 300 to 500 human beings. Could they have been thrown

here after some plague? This is exceedingly doubtful. Could they have been placed here after some battle? The great confusion in which they lay makes this supposition very improbable. May they not rather be the ghastly relics of some awful massacre?

In case of the burials referred to, the returning to the graves, after the coffins had been lowered, of the bones that had been thrown out would result, after the coffins had decayed, in a strange commingling of bones. This, of course, was unavoidable.

During the past year (1902) the entire place has been excavated and cleared; extensive remains of buildings have been found fallen upon each and scattered about in the greatest confusion. Canals for water, well built and commodious cisterns, capitals, columns, squared stones, carved work, sections of flooring and foundation walls; these were all noted and described by Mr. Sandel, the architect of the German Catholic Society, on a large map as the work went on. They will be published in due time.

All I need to add is that the earth in this plot of ground was from 5 to 16 feet deep. The rock seems to rise slightly towards the south-west. The plastered floor was generally about 6 feet below the surface. It appeared to have been laid on the native earth, and in some places the ground was filled and levelled to receive it. The soil or débris was deepest at the north-east quarter, which, I have said, was near the Armenian grounds.

All the remains appear to me to be Christian, and it is not improbable that more than one church existed here at different periods. It is thought, I believe, that one of the earliest churches in Jerusalem stood upon Mount Zion.

The beautiful church now being erected here has behind it a venerable ancestry.

2. *An Excavation North of the City Wall.*—Extending from the north-west corner of Jerusalem to the Damascus Gate there is a narrow piece of land between the carriage road and the wall of the city, which is destined before long to be covered with houses. A long section running east from the New Gate is owned by the Latins; the next section is the property of the Syrian Catholics; the third, extending to the Damascus Gate, is owned by a private gentleman, who also is a Catholic.

The Syrian Catholics required a place for the pilgrims belonging to their order who visit Jerusalem, and on this ground they have, during the past summer, erected a hospice. The house is not a

large one, and indeed few Syrian Catholics come here; but this hospice when completed will be a very comfortable home for them.

Between the Damascus Gate and the New Gate the distance is not far from 1,500 feet, and the east end of this hospice is 460 feet west of the Damascus Gate. Referring to Warren's levels, the hospice stands between levels 2,479 and 2,489, its western end being very near level 2,489. Between 100 and 200 feet east of this hospice is the lowest part, 20 feet lower, level 2,469, of what Josephus calls a "broad valley," coming down from the north-west, and running on in a southerly direction through the city.

From the city wall to the hospice is 90 feet; from the city wall to the road is 130 feet. Under nearly the entire building there is an immense cistern, 66 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 40 feet deep. Excavating for the cistern afforded a good opportunity to ascertain the depth of the rock below the surface of the ground, and the character of the material which had accumulated here to such a great depth. While the work was going on I visited the place a great many times.

At the depth of 32 feet the rock was found. This refers to the depth below the general surface of the ground, not below the level of the road, which is 10 or more feet higher. The rock slopes, as we should expect, from north-west to south-east, and the difference in its level between the front and rear walls of the house was about 7 feet.

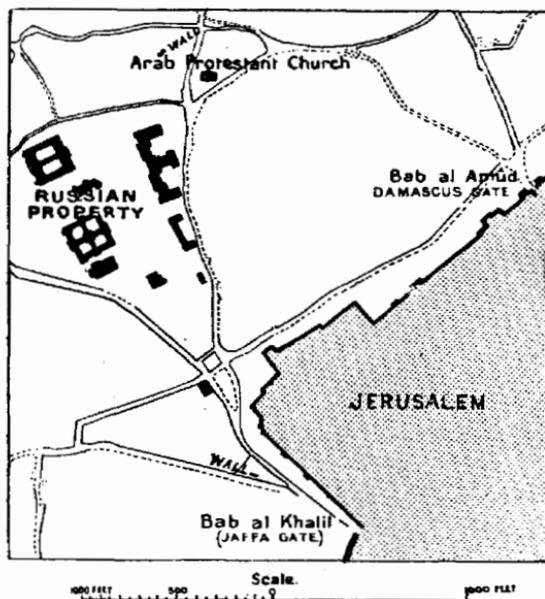
The *débris* accumulated here showed great variety, and indicated many different periods. Nothing was found in position. At the bottom of the excavation a number of large stones of Jewish workmanship had fallen on each other, and it was found easier to build over these than it was to break them up and remove them. The longest of these blocks was 10 feet, bevelled with rough face.

Higher up in this mass of *débris*, scattered here and there, were smaller stones, squared with smooth faces, bits of columns, carved stones for door jambs, others that were sections of arched windows, and a variety of materials belonging to the Christian, Crusading, and Arabic periods. Very little pottery was found, and very few objects of any kind. About 24 feet below the surface there was a thick layer of black material, composed mostly of ash and charcoal. This appeared to extend entirely across the excavation, at an angle, of course, for all the layers of *débris* followed the slope of the bed rock as mentioned above.

At 40 feet north of the city wall the line of an ancient wall appears, large stones running continuously both east and west. These appear to be in position. All large stones north of this line (notice what I have said about those at the bottom of the excavation) appear as if they had fallen.

3. *A Bit of the Ancient Upper Gihon Aqueduct.*—The point where these remains were found is about 575 feet west of the Jaffa Gate, and can be located more definitely as follows:—

About 390 feet west of the Jaffa Gate the road divides, and the upper or northern section we call the main Jaffa road; the lower



Plan of Excavations at Jerusalem.

the road to the Turkish cemetery, or the road to the Convent of the Cross. The land between these two roads terminates towards the east in a point (390 feet west of the Jaffa Gate), and widens towards the west. The land abutting on each road is now covered with houses. The building covering the ruins in question is at present (January, 1903) in process of erection. While excavating for its foundations these remains were uncovered.

This tongue of land is at this point about 50, possibly 60, feet wide. From the remains north to the city wall is about 150 feet. From the point where the conduit running eastward ends, as marked on the English map, to the remains is 160 feet. The distance thence to the Jaffa Gate is, as I have said, 575 feet.

The section of wall uncovered was about 20 feet long, 8 feet high, and consisted of three layers of stones with rough faces. Some of the stones were 4, others 6, feet long. The stones were entirely unlike anything existing in the present aqueduct. Inside this wall—that is, to the north of it—a shoulder of native rock, 6 feet high, seems to have projected southward across the line of the aqueduct. This was an obstacle, and had to be overcome. We may suppose that the aqueduct followed in general a sort of rock terrace, and when it reached this point the workmen found it cheaper to carry it around the point by means of solid masonry than to excavate a channel through the rock itself. This is offered as a suggestion.

It is a matter of considerable interest that such an important piece of genuine Jewish work should be brought to light; “brought to light,” like so many other interesting finds in Jerusalem, only to be immediately hidden again for generations, and perhaps forever.

Perhaps I ought to say that this solid wall was not the canal itself, but simply for supporting or carrying the canal. Also the matter of level should be thought of. By the English map the present conduit touches level 2,519, while these remains are between levels 2,529 and 2,539.

4. *A Section of Agrippa's Wall.*—Two hundred feet north of the Arabic (St. Paul's) Church two roads—one running east and west, and the other north and south—intersect. In the south-west angle thus formed these remains were found. The point is 150 feet south of the road running east and west, the same distance from the one running north and south, and not far from 200 or 250 feet from the Arabic Church, at a point a little north of west.

The wall is about 20 feet long, and composed of two layers, the bottom layer longer than the upper layer. The stones are $3\frac{1}{2}$, $4\frac{1}{2}$, and 5 feet long, and have a bevel of 3 inches. The wall is 6 feet high. In levelling a piece of ground and making a cistern this wall was uncovered; but some of the stones were broken up, and others were covered—at all events, the wall was ruined.

These remains correspond to the line of Agrippa's Wall, as laid down by Dr. Robinson from extensive sections of it then in existence. When I first visited Jerusalem one of the first things to do was to visit Agrippa's Wall, of which 40 or 50 yards were visible. This was in 1869. Much of the wall had previously been broken up to supply stones for the new Austrian hospice. Many people now living in Jerusalem remember this wall perfectly well. It is not more than 20 years since the last massive blocks of it that remained above ground, to the north-west of the city, were broken up. In this connection I will mention a fact with which I have become acquainted during the past few years—namely, that certain persons ignore this wall, and declare that it never existed. This is dishonest, and in those who have the means in their hands of knowing better, is extremely reprehensible.

NOTES TAKEN ON A TOUR IN PALESTINE, IN THE SPRING OF 1901.

By HERBERT RIX, B.A.

1. *Bethlehem of Galilee*.—Among the places I visited was Beit Lahm, seven miles north-west of Nazareth, the Bethlehem of Josh. xix, 15. Some attention has been directed to it of late years by the suggestion, hazarded by certain writers, that this was in reality the Bethlehem at which our Lord was born;¹ but it is so seldom visited by travellers that my dragoman, although he was an old hand at his work, declared that he had never heard of it. The description of it, often quoted—"a miserable village among oak-woods"—is quite inadequate. It is approached through a beautiful countryside consisting of rich arable land, and we passed on our way some of the largest herds of cattle and flocks of sheep which I saw in Palestine. Crossing a stream, we found ourselves surrounded by wide stretches of luxuriant oak-woods, and soon afterwards came to the spring which supplies the villagers with water, and which is nearly half a mile from the village. Some of the women were

¹ By Professor Stapfer in *La Palestine au temps de Jésus Christ* (4^e Édit.), p. 44, footnote; and by Canon Cheyne in the *Encycl. Biblica*, art. "Nazareth."