

special characteristics previously unknown make their appearance) a more special name seems desirable. Perhaps "Maccabean" or "Ptolemaic" are as good as any—they are certainly more applicable, to Gezer at least, than "Seleucidan." But if we were to call this the "Hellenizing" period, we should use a term that at once is descriptive, and avoids the names of people who, though no doubt they tried to influence the art-evolution of the time, had really little to do with the actual process of development.

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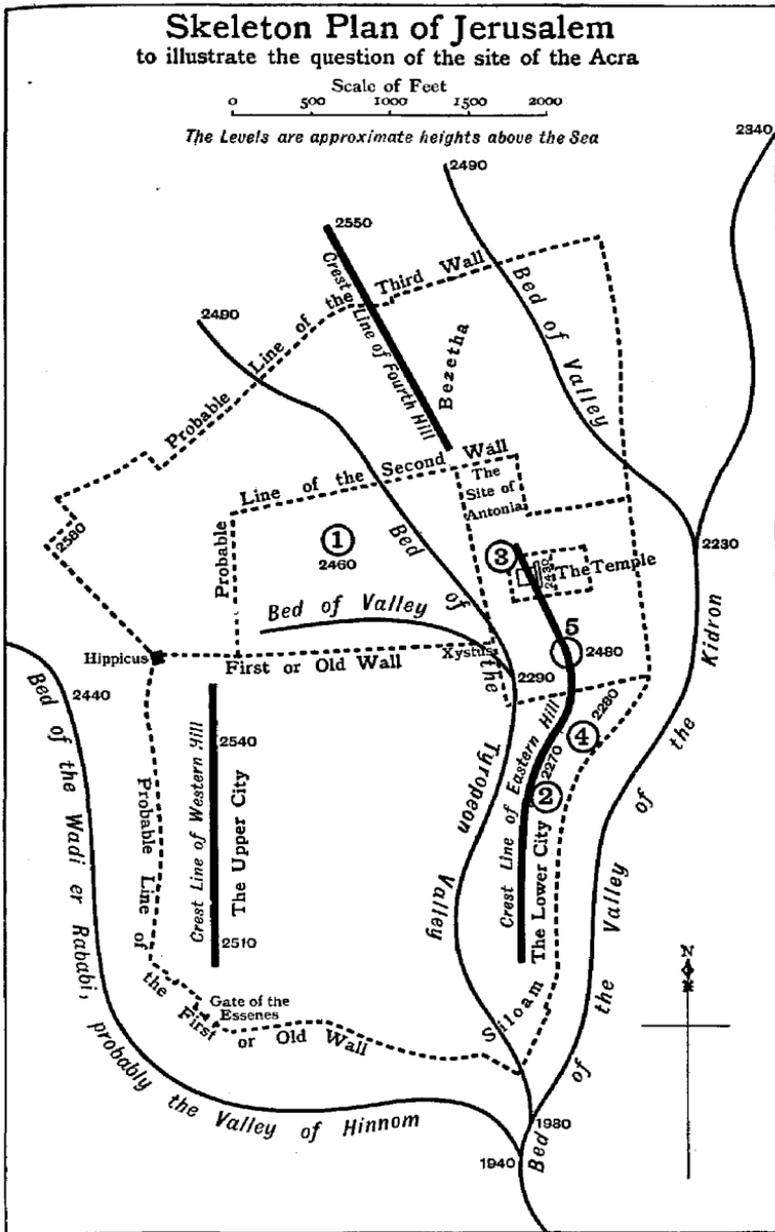
### THE SITE OF THE ACRA.

By SIR CHARLES WATSON, K.C.M.G., C.B., R.E., M.A.

SINCE the publication of my article on "The Site of the Acra at Jerusalem" in the *Quarterly Statement* for January, 1906, there have been several papers on the subject, *i.e.*, by the Rev. W. Birch in the number for April, 1906, by the Rev. J. M. Tenz in the same, and by the Rev. J. C. Nevin in the numbers for July and October, 1906. I have also received several letters with regard to the matter, and have been asked to give some further information respecting the question.

In order to elucidate the following remarks, an outline plan of Jerusalem is annexed, in which details not required for a consideration of the subject of the Acra have been omitted for the sake of clearness. On this plan there are marked with small circles the sites proposed by the various writers above mentioned for the Acra.

Site No. 1 is that which was, I believe, first suggested by Doctor Robinson, and which has been supported by General Sir C. Warren, Colonel Conder, and others. The position shown is that indicated in the plate opposite page 37 in Sir C. Warren's work *The Temple or the Tomb*, and marked thereon as "Zion or Acra." It agrees with the position marked as "Acra or Millo" in the plate of Ancient Jerusalem, given at page 334 in Colonel Conder's *Handbook of the Bible*.



Site No. 2 is the northern point of the area, shown by Mr. Birch in the plan at page 34 of the *Quarterly Statement* for January, 1886, and marked as the "Castle of Zion, *i. e.*, the City of David."

Mr. Tenz, in his note at page 158 of the *Quarterly* for April, 1906, adopts both of the above sites, of which he considers No. 1 was the Acra of the Greeks, which was demolished by the Maccabees; and that No. 2 was the fort or Acra of the Jebusites, which David took and called the City of David. He thus agrees partly with Mr. Birch and partly with Sir C. Warren.

In Mr. Nevin's article, he states that he did not agree with the position I had proposed; but as, after a careful perusal of his remarks, I could not clearly understand what site he preferred, I asked him to furnish a sketch plan to illustrate his paper. This he has kindly sent, and from it I have taken sites No. 3 and 4. Of these he considers that No. 3 was the position of "the tower," "the fortress," "the castle," "the Baris," "the citadel," "the Acra," and "the Antonia"; and that No. 4, which corresponds with the tower in the Wall of Ophel discovered by Sir C. Warren, was "the stronghold of the Jebusites and the City of David."

Site No. 5 is that which I have suggested in the article quoted above.

Before considering the arguments for and against these different sites, it is advisable to examine briefly some of the records on the subject, and of these one of the most important is the description of Jerusalem, given by Josephus in the *Wars of the Jews*, Book V, ch. 4. As much depends on the exact meaning of the words, it is best to quote the passage in the original Greek, which is as follows:—

#### Ἱεροσολύμων ἔκφρασις.

Τρισὶ δὲ ὠχυρωμένην τεῖχεσιν ἡ πόλις καθὰ μὴ ταῖς ἀβάτοις φάραγμα ἐκυκλοῦτο· τάντη γὰρ εἰς ἦν περίβολος· αὐτὴ μὲν ὑπὲρ δύο λόφων ἀντιπρόσωπος ἔκτιστο μέσῃ φάραγμα διηρημένων εἰς ἦν ἐπάλληλοι κατέληγον αἱ οἰκίαι· τῶν δὲ λόφων ὁ μὲν τὴν ἄνω πόλιν ἔχων ὑψηλότερος πολλῶ καὶ τὸ μήκος ὑψύτερος ἦν. διάγουσιν τὴν ὀχυρότητα φρούριον μὲν ὑπὸ Δαβίδου τοῦ βασιλέως ἐκαλεῖτο· πατὴρ Σολομῶνος ἦν οὗτος τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νεῶν κτίσαντος· ἡ δὲ ἄνω ἀγορὰ πρὸς ἡμῶν· ἄτερος δὲ ὁ καλοῦμενος Ἀκρα καὶ τὴν κάτω πόλιν ὑψητῶς ἀμφίκυρτος· τούτου δὲ ἀντικρὺ τρίτος ἦν λόφος ταπεινότερός τε φύσει τῆς Ἀκρας καὶ πλατεῖα φάραγμα διειρηγόμενος ἄλλη πρότερον· αὐθὶς γε μὴν καθ' οὓς οἱ

Ασαμωναίοι χρόνους ἐβασίλευον τὴν τε φάραγμα ἔχωσαν συνάγαγι  
 βουλόμενοι τῷ ἱερῷ τὴν πόλιν καὶ τῆς Ακρας κατεργασάμενοι τὸ ὕψος  
 ἐποίησαντο χθαμαλώτερον ὡς ὑπὲρ φαίνοιτο καὶ ταύτης τὸ ἱερόν· ἡ δὲ  
 τῶν Τυροποιδῶν προσαγορευομένη φάραγιξ ἦν ἔφαιμεν τὸν τε τῆς ἄνω  
 πόλεως καὶ τὸν κάτω λόφον διατέλλει καθήκει μέχρι Σιλωάμ· οὕτω γὰρ  
 τὴν πηγὴν γλυκεῖάν τε καὶ πολλήν οὔσαν ἐκαλοῦμεν· ἐξῶθεν δὲ οἱ τῆς  
 πόλεως δύο λόφοι βαθείαις φάραγιξι περιείχοντο καὶ διὰ τοῖς ἐκατέρωθεν  
 κρημνοῦς προσιτὸν οὐδαμῶθεν ἦν· τῶν δὲ τριῶν τειχῶν τὸ μὲν ἀρχαῖον διὰ  
 τε τὰς φάραγας καὶ τὸν ὑπὲρ τούτων λόφον ἐρῶν κατεσκεύαστο ἐυσάλωτον  
 ἦν· πρὸς δὲ τῷ πλεονεκτῆματι τοῦ τόπου καὶ καρτερίως ἐδεδόμητο·  
 Δαβίδου τε καὶ Σολομῶνος ἔτι δὲ τῶν μεταξὺ τούτων βασιλέων φιλοτιμη-  
 θέντων περὶ τὸ ἔργον· ἀρχόμενον δὲ κατὰ βορρᾶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰππικοῦ καλου-  
 μένου πύργου καὶ διατεῖνον ἐπὶ τὸν Ξυστὸν λεγόμενον ἔπειτα τῇ Βουλῇ  
 συνάπτου ἐπὶ τὴν ἐσπέριον τοῦ ἱεροῦ στοᾶν ἀπηρτίζετο· κατὰ θάτε-  
 ρον δὲ πρὸς δύσειν ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ μὲν ἀρχόμενον χωρίου διὰ δὲ τοῦ  
 βηθσῶ καλουμένου κατατεῖνον ἐπὶ τὴν Εσσημῶν πύλην καὶ ἔπειτα πρὸς  
 νότον ὑπὲρ τὴν Σιλωάμ ἐπιστρέφον πηγὴν· ἔνθεν τε πάλιν ἐκκλίνου  
 πρὸς ἀνατολὴν ἐπὶ τὴν Σολομῶνος κολυμβήθραν καὶ εἰς ἄκρον μέχρι χώρου  
 τινὸς ὃν καλοῦσιν Οφλὰν τῇ πρὸς ἀνατολὴν στοᾷ τοῦ ἱεροῦ συνῆπται· τὸ δὲ  
 δευτερον τὴν μὲν ἀρχὴν ἀπὸ πύλης εἶχεν ἦν Γεννάθ ἐκάλουν τοῦ πρώτου  
 τείχους οὔσαν κυκλοῦμενον δὲ τὸ προσάρκτιον κλίμα μόνον ἀνῆει μέχρι  
 τῆς Αντωνίας.

Josephus then goes on to describe the line of the third wall and the position of the fourth hill, called Bezetha, north of Antonia, but these do not concern the question of the site of the Acra.

The meaning of the above-quoted description of the situation of Jerusalem appears to be as follows:—

“The city fortified with three walls (except where it was “encircled by impassable valleys, where there was only one wall) “stood upon two hills, opposite to each other, separated by a middle “valley upon which the corresponding houses abutted.

“The one of these hills, upon which was the upper city, was “much higher, and the length more straight. On account of its “strength it was called the fortress (*φρούριον*) by David the king, “the father of Solomon who first built the temple. With us it was “the upper market place.

“But the second hill, called Acra, and supporting the lower “city, was double-curved (*ἀμφίκυρτος*).

“Over against this was a third hill, originally lower than the “Acra and formerly separated from the latter by a flat (*i.e.* shallow)

“valley. Afterwards, in the times when the Asamoneans ruled, they did away with this valley, wishing to connect the city with the temple; and cutting down the summit of the Acra, they made it lower, so that the temple might be visible over it.

“But the valley, called that of the Tyropeans, which, as we have said, separated the hill of the upper city from the lower, extended to Siloam, for so we call the fountain which is both sweet and abundant.

“The two hills of the city were surrounded on the outside with deep valleys, and, on account of the precipices on each side, there was no approach anywhere.

“Of the three walls, the old one (*i.e.* the first wall) was difficult to capture, both on account of the valleys and of the hill above them upon which the wall was built. And, in addition to the advantage of the situation, the wall was strongly built by David and Solomon, and the kings succeeding them, who were very energetic about the work. This wall, on the north side, beginning at the tower named Hippius, and extending to the so-called Xystus, was there joined to the council house and reached the west cloister of the temple. In the other direction, on the west, beginning at the same point (*i.e.* the tower Hippius), it was traced through the place called Bethso to the gate of the Essenes, and then extended, facing south, towards the fountain Siloam. Thence it inclined eastwards by the pool of Solomon, and, passing a certain place called Ophlas, joined the east cloister of the temple.

“The second wall had its beginning at a gate in the first wall which they call Gennath, and, enclosing the northern quarter only, reached to the Antonia.”

From the description by Josephus it is quite clear that *both* the first and the second hills were included within the old or first wall, that they were separated by a deep valley, and that *both* hills were surrounded, except on the north, by precipitous valleys. The first or higher hill was straight in plan, while the lower hill was double curved. The annexed plan, which shows the hills and valleys as we know they formerly existed, indicates plainly that there are only two hills in Jerusalem which agree with the description by Josephus, and these agree in every particular. These are the western hill, now called Sion, and the eastern hill, which extends from the Haram enclosure to Siloam.

A reference to the plan will show that the western hill is higher and straight, while the eastern hill is lower and double curved, *i.e.*, curved in both directions. Whiston, in his translation of Josephus, renders ἀμφίκυρτος by "the shape of the moon when she is horned," but there is no hill in Jerusalem answering to this description. The deep valleys which surround the two hills on the outside are the Wadi er-Rababi on the west and south, and the valley of the Kidron on the east, while the existence of the middle valley, separating the two hills, was proved conclusively by the explorations of Sir Charles Warren.

The position for the first or old wall, indicated on the plan, is now, I believe, generally accepted. There can be no doubt as to the approximate site of the tower of Hippicus, and the west wall of the temple enclosure still exists. Dr. Bliss, in his explorations in 1894-97, recovered the south portion of the wall to Siloam, while Sir C. Warren found the part of the wall, which, as Josephus explained, joined the east cloister of the temple. The gate of the Essenes was probably on the site of the ancient gate discovered by Dr. Bliss in the south wall, near the south-west corner of Jerusalem.

The third hill, mentioned by Josephus, was evidently the hill upon which the temple was built, otherwise the context would have no meaning; and, in the next chapter, in which he gives a description of the temple, he remarks, "but the temple which, as I have already said, was built upon a strong hill." This disposes of the proposition made by Mr. James Fergusson that the temple was at the south-west corner of the Haram enclosure, as, if it had been there, so far from being built on a strong hill, it would have stood over a deep valley, as is proved by Warren's explorations.

There can be little doubt that the third hill, as described by Josephus, is that now occupied by the Dome of the Rock, and this would quite coincide with the account in Josephus, provided the Acra was at site No. 5 on the plan, thus confirming this position. It is easy to see how the Acra, *before* the hill was cut down, would have obscured the view of the temple from the lower city, and how the two became connected, *after* the removal of the Acra. This is shown still more clearly in the plan which accompanied my article in the *Quarterly Statement* for January, 1906.

Having thus shown that the Acra, according to Josephus, was the highest point of the eastern hill, it follows that the city of

David was also on the eastern hill; as it is definitely stated in 1 Maccabees i, 33, that the Acra of the Greeks was in the city of David, and this agrees with the description in Nehemiah, who locates the city of David and the sepulchres of David on the eastern hill.

The relative positions of the Acra and the temple, as indicated above, are also confirmed by the description of Jerusalem by Aristeas, who is supposed to have visited the place in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus. A translation of his account is given in Vol. XI of the Palestine Pilgrim Text Society's publications. Aristeas says that the temple was built on the crest of the hill, and that from the citadel, which adjoined the temple, it was possible to see the whole of the city. Had the citadel been north of the temple, this would not have been possible, as the latter would have obscured the view.

I have indicated on the plan the approximate line of the second wall, according to Josephus. The exact line of this wall is not known, but a full account of the various theories regarding it is given in Sir Charles Wilson's work, *Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre*, p. 127. The date of the erection of the second wall is obscure, and the first reference to it in Josephus is in *Antiquities*, Book XIV, ch. xiii, 4. I have been unable to find any passage to prove that the second wall existed in the times of the Maccabees, and, at that period, there does not seem to have been a line of defence in front of the northern branch of the first wall, as described by Josephus, that is to say, from the tower Hippicus to the west cloister of the temple. But there was a wall surrounding the temple hill on the west, north, and east sides which must have been constructed at an early period, possibly by Solomon when he built the temple, but certainly in the time of the kings. In this wall were the tower of Hananeel, mentioned by Jeremiah, Zechariah, and Nehemiah;<sup>1</sup> the tower of Meah;<sup>2</sup> and the sheep gate,<sup>3</sup> where the repair of the walls by Nehemiah commenced. The exact line of this wall of defence is difficult to trace, but the fact of its former existence is undoubted. I have not attempted to show this wall on the plan, as it would be confused with the wall of the Haram enclosure. In the time of the Maccabeans a wall was added on the south side

<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah xxxi, 38; Zechariah xiv, 10; Nehemiah iii, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Nehemiah iii, 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

of the temple, between the latter and the Acra, so that the hill of the temple thus became a self-contained fortress. This was the fortress occupied by Simon Maccabeus, after he had captured the Acra from the Greek garrison, and there can, I think, be no question but that this fortified hill upon which the temple stood, was, in the times of the Maccabees, called Zion.

There has been much discussion as to the part of Jerusalem the name Zion was applied to. But it does not appear very difficult. In the times of the Jebusites, Zion was the eastern hill, and the fort on the highest point of this hill (Site No. 5 on the plan) was called the Castle of Zion, which was taken by David. After the temple was built on the hill adjacent to that on which the castle of Zion stood, the name Zion was more specially applied to the temple hill, and, when the latter hill became a fortress, it was called the fortress of Zion. The transfer of the name of Zion to the western hill does not appear to have taken place until after the destruction of the temple by Titus.

The question of the cutting down of the hill of the Acra by the Asamoneans, as related by Josephus, is a very interesting one. I have already quoted his remarks on the subject in his description of Jerusalem, and he also alludes to it in the *Antiquities*, Book XIII, 6, 7, where he says, speaking of Simon Maccabeus: "and, having captured the Acra in Jerusalem, he levelled it to the ground, so that it might not be a place of refuge to their enemies, if they took it, to do harm, as it had been until then. And having done this, he thought that it would be best to cut down the hill, upon which the Acra stood, so that the temple might be higher. . . . And they all, labouring zealously, demolished the hill, and, ceasing not from the work night and day for three whole years, brought it to a level and even slope, so that the temple became the highest of all, after the Acra, and the hill upon which it was built, had been removed."

A question naturally arises as to what became of the débris which was excavated from the hill of the Acra, and the answer seems to be given by the information obtained from Sir C. Warren's explorations. He sunk a number of shafts along the south wall of the Haram enclosure, and the details of his discoveries therein are to be found in the Jerusalem volume of the *Memoirs*, p. 169; in the plates that accompany the *Memoirs*; and in Warren's letters, especially Nos. VIII and X, which are included in the *Quarterly*

*Statement* for 1869. The shafts are shown on Plate XXVII of the *Memoirs*.

In shaft C. 19, which was 90 feet east from the south-west angle, he succeeded in getting right down to the bed of the Tyropeon valley, 87 feet below the present ground surface, and found a water conduit at the bottom, which must have been built before the valley was filled up. Above this conduit was a depth of 50 feet of rubbish, which was apparently placed there *before* the great wall of the Haram enclosure was built, as the stones of the masonry below this level were rough faced, and Warren remarks: "the rough-faced stones are in an excellent state of preservation, "having never been exposed to the weather since the wall was built." It will be seen from Plate X that the width of the filling at this level, measured across the valley, was about 400 feet. This is a large quantity of filling, and one naturally asks where did it come from.

Judging from Warren's investigation, the stages at this point appear to have been—

First. The Tyropeon valley was quite open.

Second. The water conduit, running north and south, was constructed in the bed of the valley. This conduit was probably under a road or street coming from the north.

Third. The valley was filled up to a depth of 50 feet over the conduit.

Fourth. The south wall was built from east to west across the valley, and the masonry of the lower part was left rough where it went down through the filling.

There are later stages of filling, but as these occurred after this wall was built, they need not be considered here.

There can be little doubt that this part of the south wall was built by Herod, as described by Josephus in *Wars*, Book V, v, 1, where he alludes to the fact that the lower part of the wall was buried in the ground.

It is difficult to see where the filling came from, unless it was derived from the cutting down of the hill of the Acra; for this it is in the natural place, and a rough estimate of the probable relative amounts of cutting and filling shows that these would about balance. Warren's explorations would, therefore, seem to confirm the position (Site No. 5) which I have proposed for the Acra.

Mr. Birch, I am aware, regards the account by Josephus of the

cutting down of the Acra as an idle tale, but the descriptions of the matter in his writings are so clear and so consistent with facts that it is quite impossible to reject them, and it is difficult to see what object he could have had in inventing such a story.

Having thus given reasons for considering that Site No. 5 was the most probable position for the Acra, I will briefly give some of the objections to the other sites proposed.

First let us take Site No. 1. This site is on the sloping spur upon which the Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands, and is about 1,000 feet from the temple, too far to have commanded it. It was outside the first wall, and worshippers going to the sanctuary from the city would not have been exposed to attack from the foreign garrison. The Acra was certainly in the city of David, and between this city and the temple, so that if the Acra was at this place, it would imply that the city of David was further to the north-west, and therefore about the same height as the upper city, which is not an admissible assumption. We have also the statement in Josephus, *Wars*, Book V, vi, 1: "But Simon held the upper city and the great wall (*i.e.* the third wall) to the Kidron, and that part of the old wall (*i.e.* the first wall) as turned from Siloam to the east, going down to the palace of Monobazus, the king of the Adiabeni, beyond Euphrates. And Simon held the fountain, and the Acra, which is the lower city." This is entirely in accord with his other statements, which are consistent in placing the Acra on the eastern hill, south of the temple. To place the Acra at Site No. 1, west of the temple, appears therefore to be in contradiction of what we learn from Josephus and the Books of the Maccabees.

Site No. 2, which is that proposed by Mr. Birch, has the advantage over No. 1 that it is on the eastern hill, and is so far in accord with the historical descriptions. But it fails to answer to these in being too far down the hill, as it is at the level 2,270, or about 170 feet below the top of the hill upon which the temple formerly stood, and is at a distance of 1,600 feet from the latter. How a fort in such a position could have commanded the temple I am quite unable to understand, as the distance is far too great, and the difference in level is too considerable. To adopt this site for the Acra makes it not only necessary to reject many statements in Josephus, but also in the Maccabees. For example, in 1 Maccabees vi, 18, we read: "About this time they that were

“in the tower shut up the Israelites round about the sanctuary, and sought always their hurt.” But this they could not have done if the Acra was in the position proposed by Mr. Birch. Again, in 1 Maccabees xiii, 22, after relating the manner in which the garrison of the Acra capitulated to Simon, and he had taken possession of this fortress, it is written: “Moreover, the hill of the temple that was *by* the Acra he made stronger than it was, and there he dwelt himself with his company.” The phrase in the Septuagint version is *παρὰ τὴν ἄκραν*, which certainly implies that the temple and the Acra were close to one another, and not separated by a distance of more than 500 yards.

As regards the sites suggested by Mr. Nevin, he places the city of David at No. 4, which is close to the probable site on the eastern hill, but he locates the Acra of the Greeks at No. 3, which is difficult to understand. In the first place it is not, according to him, in the city of David, which the Acra undoubtedly was, and it is much too close to the temple. To meet this, Mr. Nevin places the temple further to the south-west, in the Tyropeon valley, a position that contradicts the statements of Josephus and Aristæus, who both say it was on the hill.

Reviewing the whole matter, I can see no reason to alter my opinion that the only site for the Acra which is in accord with *all* the records in the Bible, Josephus, and the Maccabees, is that shown at Site No. 5. The adoption of any other site involves the rejection or the explaining away of some of these records, and this I do not think we should be justified in doing.

The question is one which it is difficult to understand from plans; I have therefore prepared a model of ancient Jerusalem, which makes the matter much clearer, and I have also made models, on a larger scale, to illustrate the ground in the vicinity of the Acra, before and after the hill was cut down by the Maccabees. It is not possible to circulate these models with the *Quarterly Statement*, but if any reader, who takes an interest in the question, cares to see them, I shall be pleased to show them to him at the Office of the Fund.

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