

## THE SILOAM INSCRIPTION.

I HAVE allowed two years to pass without writing again on the Siloam Inscription, partly because it was being well looked after by German scholars, partly also from want of leisure. Thanks to the labours of Dr. Guthe the text of it is now as fairly established as it ever will be, and the casts that are in Europe permit it to be examined with that minute care which the actual position of the inscription makes almost impossible. I must begin by formally retracting my objections to the readings **אמת** and **במאתים** in the second and fifth lines which I urged two years ago. The casts leave no doubt that I was wrong, and Dr. Guthe right. In most other points I agree with the readings and interpretation of the German scholars, as embodied in Dr. Guthe's article in the "Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft," xxxvi, 3, 4. I should now, therefore, give the following translation of the text:—

1. "(Behold) the excavation! Now this had been the history of the excavation. While the workmen were still lifting up
2. "the axe, each towards his neighbour, and while three cubits still remained to (cut through), (each heard) the voice of the other who called
3. "to his neighbour since there was an excess in the rock on the right hand and on (the left). And on the day of the
4. "excavation the workmen struck, each to meet his neighbour, axe against axe, and there flowed
5. "the waters from the spring to the pool for a thousand two hundred cubits; and . . .
6. "of a cubit was the height of the rock over the heads of the workmen."

The most curious thing about the inscription is the absence in it of any proper name. The name neither of the king who caused the tunnel to be made, nor of the engineer who executed the work, is mentioned. The omission is rendered all the more curious by the fact that the upper part of the tablet in which the inscription is engraved is left bare, the inscription beginning about half-way down—in fact, just where it would be concealed by the water. There seems only one possible explanation of so strange a circumstance. There must have been an official quarrel, and the engineer, naturally desirous of commemorating the feat he had performed, engraved the record of it in a place where it would not be discovered. At the same time I do not understand why he should not have recorded his own name.

The question as to the date of the inscription is no nearer settlement than it was two years ago. It is pretty well agreed now that no argument can be derived from the form of the letters—except in so far as they prove that the inscription is older than the middle of the sixth century, B.C.,—since we have no early Hebrew monuments with which to compare

them. The question must be decided on historical, and not on palæographical grounds.

Now we gather from the Books of Kings and Chronicles that there were only two building periods in the pre-exilic history of Jerusalem—those, namely, of Solomon and Hezekiah. The majority of those who have commented on the inscription ascribe it to the age of Hezekiah; I am still inclined, with hesitation, to assign it to the age of Solomon. Canon Birch, in the last number but one of the *Quarterly Statement*, seems to think that the matter can be easily disposed of by a simple reference to the fact that 2 Kings xx, 20, speaks of “the pool,” and “the conduit.” But there is all the difference in the world between referring to “the pool” and “the conduit” which Hezekiah made, and the statement of the inscription that the waters flowed “from the spring to the pool.” Here “the pool” is correlated to “the spring,” or “exit,” and no one, I suppose, will assert that there was more than one spring. Moreover, the word translated “conduit” is תעלה, which is not the same as the נקבה, or “tunnel,” of the inscription. On the other hand, the passage in Kings goes on to add that Hezekiah “brought the water to (not into) the city,” which the chronicler (2 Chron. xxxii, 30) supplements by saying that it was “directed downwards on the west side of the city of David,” after that the “exit,” or “spring of the waters of the upper Gihon,” had been sealed up. This would exactly suit the position of the Pool of Siloam.

It would also suit, though not so well, the tunnel discovered by Colonel Warren, which leads, like the Siloam Tunnel, into the Virgin's Spring. This second tunnel ends in a perpendicular shaft, which communicates with another subterranean passage, partly sloping, partly horizontal, the whole terminating in a flight of steps in a vaulted chamber cut out of the rock. The Roman lamps and other relics found in the chamber and passage show that the tunnel was used by the inhabitants for obtaining water up to a late period. Now this second tunnel best suits the verb “he directed,” employed by the chronicler, whereas the adverb “downwards” applies naturally to the Siloam conduit.

It must, however, be remembered that this second tunnel is in connection with the Siloam one, a perpendicular shaft descending to the latter below the vaulted chamber, and appears, therefore, to be of later origin. The overflow of the water in it, in fact, must have made its way through the Siloam aqueduct into the Siloam Pool. It is obviously to this tunnel that we should have to apply the passage in Kings if it stood alone.

Whatever, however, may be thought of the statements in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, I do not see how it is possible to explain away the words of Isaiah, who writes of the topography of Jerusalem, not as it existed some centuries earlier, but as it was in his own day. What Mr. Birch means by a “newly-found aqueduct,” in addition to the Siloam Tunnel, I fail to comprehend any more than Captain Conder, “since,” as the latter remarks, “there is but one aqueduct from the Virgin's Fountain to Siloam—that, namely, in which the inscription is engraved.” Now in

a prophecy delivered during the reign of Ahaz, Isaiah (viii, 6) contrasts the waters of Shiloah, that go softly," with the Euphrates (or rather Tigris). Unless the Kidron is referred to, only the Siloam Tunnel can be meant, since there was no other "softly-flowing" watercourse in or near Jerusalem. And that the Kidron is not referred to is shown partly by the epithet given to the waters, partly by the name Shiloah, which signifies an artificial aqueduct. But this passage does not stand alone. In Isaiah vii, 3, the prophet states that he was directed to meet Ahaz "at the end of the conduit of the Upper Pool, in the highway of the fuller's field." Now the topography of Jerusalem makes it clear that the fuller's field could have been only at the southern entrance into the Tyropeon valley, where water for fulling could be obtained from the Kidron and En-rogel, the modern Bîr Eyyub, as well as a strip of level ground. This is fully confirmed by the name of En-rogel, "the fuller's fountain." Consequently, on the road from the city towards En-rogel, a conduit must have led from an upper pool into a lower one, which is called the Lower Pool in Isaiah xxii, 9. This conduit can only be the rock-cut channel which still leads from the Pool of Siloam into the old reservoir below. As Isaiah, in the passage just quoted, ascribes the construction of the Lower Pool to Hezekiah, I am inclined to think that this is really the reservoir referred to in 2 Kings xx, 20, and that the chronicler has confused "the exit of the waters of the upper Gihon," or "spring," from which the water originally came, with the Upper Pool of Siloam. It is, however, possible that he merely means to say that Hezekiah, after sealing up the Virgin's Spring, lengthened the channel through which its waters were conveyed into the city, and so "directed them downwards on the west side of the city of David." Perhaps, indeed, this is the most natural interpretation of his words. Dr. Guthe has discovered the remains of four other old reservoirs in the neighbourhood of the Pool of Siloam, all of which may have been supplied with water from the Siloam Tunnel. If these had existed, or, indeed, if only the Lower Pool had existed at the time the inscription was written, it is difficult to understand how the Siloam Pool could have been termed "*the pool*." In fact, if the reservoirs discovered by Dr. Guthe were supplied with the refuse-water of the Upper Pool, as the Lower Pool certainly was, the Upper Pool must have been the first of them that was made.

My conclusions are, then, the following. The passage in 2 Kings xx, 20, applies most naturally to Colonel Warren's tunnel. That in 2 Chronicles xxxii, 30, must be interpreted of the Lower Pool of Siloam. The contemporary references of Isaiah (vii, 3; viii, 6; xxii, 9) apply only to the Siloam Tunnel, the Siloam Pool, and the Lower Pool, which was repaired by Hezekiah, who changed it from a rain-water cistern into a reservoir supplied with water from the Siloam Tunnel.<sup>1</sup> The Siloam Tunnel must consequently have been in existence before the time of Ahaz, and since

<sup>1</sup> I do not see what other sense can be attached to the expression, "ye collected the waters." Besides, an Upper Pool already existed in the time of Ahaz (Isa. vii, 3).

the only great builder known to the Books of Kings before that epoch was Solomon, we are justified in ascribing the construction of it to him. After all, this conclusion is only in harmony with probabilities. When Solomon was executing great public works in Jerusalem, and completing its fortifications, it is hardly likely that he would have allowed his capital to depend only upon rain-water in time of siege. Dr. Guthe has pointed out that, according to the Septuagint, Solomon "cut through the city of David."

Why then, it will be asked, is no mention made of the excavation of the conduit among the other works of Solomon? I will reply by asking another question: Why is it that no king is mentioned in the Siloam Inscription? The answer in each case must be the same—there had been an official quarrel, and the fame of the engineer who "cut through the city of David" was not allowed to go down to posterity.

I can see only one valid objection to the conclusion at which I have arrived. Solomon's workmen were Phœnicians, and nevertheless the Siloam Inscription is in the purest Hebrew. But it must be remembered that it was only Hiram, the brassfounder, and the Sidonian hewers of timber that came from Phœnicia; the stonecutters were partly Tyrians and Gebalites, partly Hebrews (1 Kings v, 18).

Whether or not, however, the Siloam inscription can be assigned to a precise chronological period, it has, I believe, thrown most important light on the topography of pre-exilic Jerusalem. Mr. Birch seems to me indubitably right in holding that the city of David stood on the so-called hill of Ophel. In fact no other view is now possible. But it further follows from this that the Tyropœon valley was the valley of the son of Hinnom. This will explain why the older name of the Tyropœon has never hitherto been discovered, and it will also explain why the tombs of the Jewish kings have not been found. They lie concealed under the rubbish that covers the southern slope of Ophel. If we are to discover the relics of royal Jerusalem we must excavate the Tyropœon valley, at the bottom of which probably lie the ruins that were thrown into it by the soldiers of Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>1</sup>

The hill on which the city of David stood was the original Mount Zion, a name which was afterwards extended to the Temple-hill, the proper designation of which seems to have been Moriah (or Moreh?); see 2 Chronicles iii, 1; Genesis xxii, 2, 14. Here I believe to have been the city of Jebus. At all events, the proverb quoted in 2 Samuel v, 8—"the blind and the lame shall not enter the temple"—implies that the

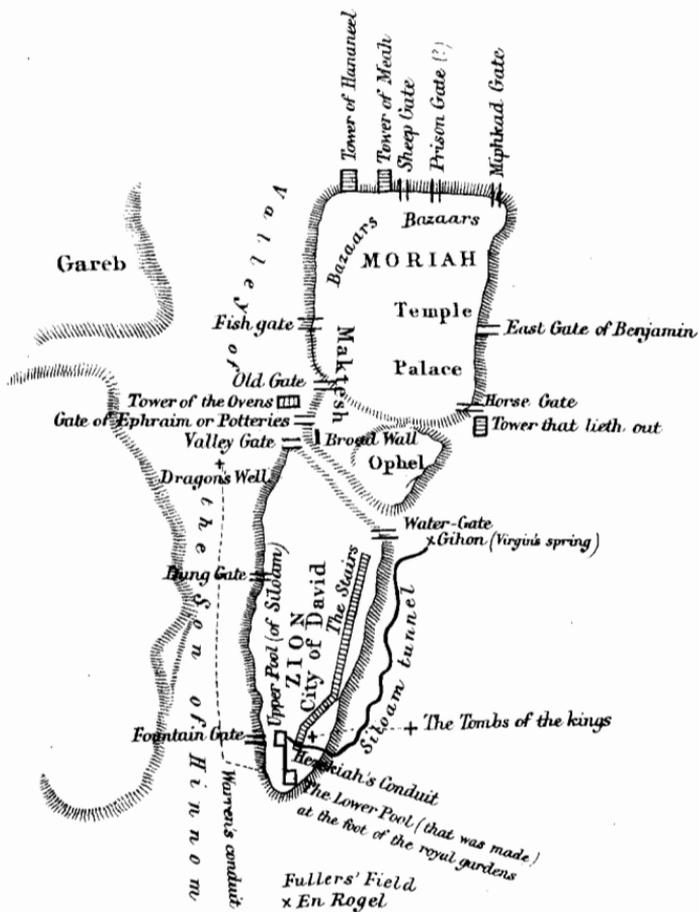
<sup>1</sup> The determination of the position of the valley of the son of Hinnom settles that of "the mountain that is over against the valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the valley of Rephaim northward" (Josh. xv, 8; xviii, 16). This mountain is either Bezetha, or that on which the Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands, or that to the south of it, which has been erroneously identified with Zion. It is more probably the last. Professor Robertson Smith has already pointed out in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" that the valley of the son of Hinnom must be represented by the Tyropœon.

Jebusites, whose city was stormed, inhabited the higher Temple-hill. David had already that day taken "the stronghold of Zion" on the lower hill.<sup>1</sup> This stronghold was merely an outpost, or isolated tower, and it was accordingly on the lower uninhabited hill that David built his new city, named in consequence "the city of David." The Jebusites still continued to live on the higher hill of Moriah, as we may infer from the fact that Araunah had his private threshing-floor there towards the close of David's reign. This will explain why we find so many cisterns on the area of the Harám. When Solomon swept away the houses of the old Jebusite city to make room for his palaces and the temple, he reduced their inhabitants to a state of serfdom (1 Kings ix, 20, 21), and transferred them, under the name of Nethinim, or "Temple-servants," to Ophel, the north-eastern portion of Mount Zion (see Nehemiah iii, 26, 31).<sup>2</sup> Between Moriah and Zion Dr. Guthe has found traces of an old valley which opened into the valley of the Kidron, not far from the Virgin's Spring. Here must have been the two walls between which Hezekiah made the "gathering-place," or tank, "for the water of the old pool" (Isa. xxii, 11), and here, too, was the gate through which Zedekiah fled along the valley of the son of Hinnom, "by the way of the king's garden," past En-rogel and Mar-Saba, to the plain of Jericho (Jer. xxxix, 4; lli, 7). This gate was probably the "Potteries' Gate" of Jeremiah xix, 2.

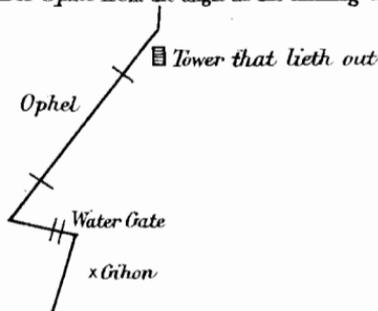
The enclosure of Moriah and Zion within a single wall created the city of Jerusalem. The name is written *Ur-salmu*, or "city of peace," in the Assyrian inscriptions, which goes to show that those scholars are right who have supposed the name to signify "the peaceful town," in spite of

<sup>1</sup> *Mětsudháh* and *mětsádá* are always used of isolated forts, situated in uninhabited spots. That Jebus, or the city of the Jebusites, occupied Moriah is further indicated in Joshua xv, 8 (and xviii, 16), where we read that "the border went up by the valley of the son of Hinnom to the shoulder of the Jebusite from the south; that is, Jerusalem." The "south" is explained by the previous verse to be En-rogel (the *Bir Eyyub*). "The shoulder of the Jebusite" will be the spur of Zion, on which the "stronghold stood." Its proper name may have been Eleph; see Joshua xviii, 28—"Eleph and the Jebusite, which is Jerusalem," and Zechariah ix, 7, where Halévy proposes to read, "he shall be as Eleph in Judah, and Ekron as Jebusi." According to Joshua xv, 63, the Jews lived along with the Jebusites at Jerusalem; according to Judges i, 21, the Benjamites did so, but in Judges xix, 10-12, Jebus is "the city of a stranger." However, we find both Jews and Benjamites in Jerusalem in Nehemiah xi, 4, and 1 Chronicles ix, 3.

<sup>2</sup> We learn from Ezra viii, 20, that some of the Nethinim had been "given" by David to the service of the Levites before the temple had been begun; in Nehemiah vii, 46-60, these are carefully distinguished from "Solomon's servants." The first seem to have been the Jebusites who were taken by David with arms upon them; the second to have been those who, like Araunah, were allowed to live in their old quarters until after David's death. Besides the colony of the Nethinim on Ophel there were others who inhabited the portion of the Temple-hill north of the Temple.



Sketch-map of the well of Ophel from the angle at the turning of the corner:-



the difficulty occasioned by the loss of the *'ain* in the first element of which it is composed. I am however more inclined to see in this first element a play upon *Yĕru*, "a cairn," which we may gather from Genesis xxii ("in the mount of the Lord is אֶרְרָה") was the name of a locality on Moriah. Isaiah (xxix, 1, 2) similarly plays on the name by turning it into Ari-el. The title "city of peace" may well have been given to David's capital when his foreign wars had been ended, and the name of Solomon, "the peaceful," had been given to his son Jedidiah. The dual form *Yĕrushalaim*, which apparently goes back to the time of the Macchabees, probably refers to the old division of Jerusalem into the lower city and the Temple-hill.

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### THE TOPOGRAPHY OF PRÆ-EXILIC JERUSALEM.

IN my paper on the Siloam Inscription, I have tried to show how closely the question of the date to which the inscription is to be assigned is connected with that of the topography of ancient Jerusalem. The key to the whole position is the fact that the south-eastern hill, the so-called Ophel, represents Zion, the City of David. This fact once granted—and it is now no longer possible to deny it—not only does the rest of the topography of præ-exilic Jerusalem become clear, but the Solomonic date of the Siloam Inscription, as it seems to me, follows unavoidably. It may assist the reader if I here summarise the arguments which I have urged in its behalf.

(1) Our knowledge of the water-supply of ancient Jerusalem is derived from three passages of Isaiah, a passage in the Books of Kings, and another in the Books of Chronicles. Only the first three passages are contemporaneous with the state of things to which they allude; their testimony is therefore superior to that of the other two passages, and should be considered first.

(2) According to Isaiah vii, 3, in the time of Ahaz, the prophet met the king "at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field" (see also Isaiah xxxvi, 2). The fuller's field adjoined the *Bir Eyyûb*; the upper pool, consequently, must be the Pool of Siloam, and the conduit the tunnel which conducts the water into it.

(3) In Isaiah viii, 6, also in the time of Ahaz, the prophet refers to "the waters of Shiloah that go softly," in contrast to the waters of the Tigris. The only softly-going waters at Jerusalem, conducted through the Shiloah, or "artificial aqueduct," were those of the Siloam Tunnel.

(4) In Isaiah xxii, 9, at the time of the invasion of Sargon (B.C. 711), and consequently in the reign of Hezekiah, the Jews are said to have "gathered together the waters of the lower pool." As "the lower pool" implies an "upper pool," the lower Pool of Siloam must be meant, and the