

THE TOMB OF DAVID.

January 27th, 1875.

WE learn (Josephus, Bel. V., iii. 2) that Titus, when besieging Jerusalem, wished to pitch his camp nearer the city, and for this purpose made all the place level from Scopus to Herod's Monument.

Again we read (Bel. V., vii. 3) that Titus, on getting within the city, took up his position at the place called "The Camp of the Assyrians," and that Herod's Monument (Bel. V., xiii. 3) was near to the camp on north-east of Jerusalem.

We know (from Ant. XV., ix. 4; Bel. I., xxxiii. 2, and other passages) that Herod was buried in the fortress Herodium, which he had built for himself, eight miles south of Jerusalem, and we have no account of any of Herod's family having been buried at Jerusalem.

Whence then arises the term "Herod's Monument" (*μνημεῖον*), applied to the erection on north-east of Jerusalem?

The answer appears to be supplied by Ant. XVI. vii. 1, where it is related that Herod, having met with some strange obstacles in his attempt to plunder David's Tomb, built a propitiatory monument (*μνημα*) in white stone at the mouth of the Sepulchre.

From this it follows that the entrance to David's sepulchre was situate outside the north wall of Jerusalem to the east.

On turning to the account of the city wall (Bel. V., iv. 2), we read that the north wall, after passing by the royal caverns (translated by Whiston, "sepulchral cavern of the kings"), bent again at the tower of the corner.

The propitiatory monument would thus have stood near the royal caverns, which may have contained the sepulchres of the kings.

If we now examine the ground itself, regarding the present north wall as on the site of the old outer wall, we find the extensive caverns, or subterranean quarries, called the Cotton Grotto, to be situated on the spot where we would expect to find the royal caverns.

These quarries were apparently used in getting out the stone for the ancient buildings of Jerusalem, and it has been surmised (by Major Wilson, I think) that the blocks were brought down, on an incline to the Temple platform through an opening to the south now lost to view.

May we suppose that David, having hewn the stones from these quarries ready for the building of the Temple, took advantage of the subterranean recesses thus afforded for the formation of his sepulchre?

Portions of the roof of these quarries have fallen in, which may prevent effectual search, but it is possible that further examination may result in the discovery of the continuation of the cavern to the south, and advance us a further step in our knowledge of the Holy City.

Major Wilson (p. 50, Vol. II., "Palestine Exploration Fund," 1872) proposes to identify the aqueduct which runs over the Cotton Grotto to Convent of Sisters of Sion, with the conduit of the upper pool in the

highway of the fuller, by which Rabshakeh stood when he addressed the Jews on the walls of the city (2 Kings xvii. 17). In this he appears to be borne out by the account of Josephus, who places (Bel. V., iv. 2) the royal caverns (Cotton Grotto) near the Fuller's Monument. Major Wilson also suggests that this conduit was cut across near the grotto in the time of Herod, and this appears to strengthen my proposal as regards the Tomb of David, and accounts for its entrance being found on north side of the city.

I suppose that on first cutting into the quarries of the Royal Cavern the entrance was to the south, opposite the Temple, the entrance to the royal tombs also being in same place, that this continued until after time of Nehemiah (Neh. iii. 16). On the re-building of the Temple by Herod, the ditch was cut to north of present wall, exposing to view the northern end of the cavern; and this new entrance being well outside the city was used in preference to the old southern entrance, which may possibly have been filled in for defensive reasons. The conduit of the upper pool (2 Kings xvii. 17) is so often supposed by the best authorities to be identical with the upper water-course of Gihon (2 Chron. xx. 30) that I should mention that I consider them to be quite distinct; the former entering the city (as suggested by Major Wilson) over the Cotton Grotto, the latter entering at the Tower of Hippicus (Bel. V., vii. 3), near the present Jaffa Gate, and running straight down to the west side of the City of David (2 Chron. xxii. 30) into the pool of the Bath, otherwise called Hezekiah's Pool, which I suppose to be Gihon in the Valley (2 Chron. xxxiii. 14).

CHARLES WARREN.

GREEK INSCRIPTION.

In the *Quarterly Statement* received this morning I observe, at page 19, an imperfect inscription, of which Lieutenant Conder remarks it "seems to have been only a text or religious sentence." No doubt many others will find no difficulty in completing the text, but in case it should not have been so obvious as it seems to me, I beg to send you the solution.

E. B. FINLAY.

Folkestone, January 16, 1875.

Psalm cxviii. 20 (Septuagint, Psalm cxvii.).—*Ἄβτη ἡ πύλη τοῦ κυρίου δίκαιοι εἰσελεύσονται ἐν αὐτῇ.*

ΑΤΗΗΠ(Τ)
 (Λ)ΗΤΟΥΚΥ(Ρ)
 ΙΟΥΔΙΚΑΙΟ
 ΙΕΙC(Ε)ΔΕΥC(ΟΝΤ)
 ΑΙΕΝΑΤ(ΘΗΙ)