

The fact that some declare that these pages instead of dispelling uncertainty only throw them into a fog, leads me to drop a stone on this claim, and to answer the points *seriatim*.

(1) If Amos vii. 13 indicates that "the calf was close to the king's palace," then it was not close to Shechem, but to Samaria or Jezreel, since Jeroboam II., not I., is referred to.

(2) Abijah, on taking (the true) Bethel from Jeroboam, would hardly be driven by his conscience to destroy "the calf temple," since he permitted worse things in his own kingdom (2 Chron. xiv. 3, 5).

(3) The southern (or true) Bethel, though allotted to Benjamin, was from the first seized by Ephraim (Judges i. 25), and is reckoned to it in 1 Chron. vii. 28, and therefore it is not "strange that it was chosen as a religious centre" by Jeroboam, being not "beyond the bounds of his own kingdom."

(4) "The prophet that came out of *Samaria*" (2 Kings xxiii. 18) died long before the city of Samaria was built. The word is obviously used proleptically either of the kingdom of Israel or of the district described as *the cities of Samaria* (1 Kings xiii. 32; 2 Kings xvii. 26). Further, Samaria is mentioned (Amos iv. 1, 4; v. 5, 6) in connection not only with Bethel, but also with Gilgal and Beer-sheba. Are the two latter places, therefore, to be looked for close to Samaria (? Shechem)?

(5) "The Samaritans in *Shechem* having been plagued with lions," &c. *Shechem* is here introduced inadvertently, not being mentioned in 2 Kings xvii. The colonists were placed in *the cities of Samaria*—i.e., the cities of the captive tribes.

(6) Surely not more than *one Luz* was likely to have had the alternative name of Bethel.

(7) (The true) "Bethel was the seat of a school of prophets." But still the children of the city mocked Elisha, an act quite consistent with the worship of the calf.

(a) Dan was "consecrated by the memories of Jewish history" (Judges xviii. 30).

(b) Bethel, as shown in (3), was within "the bounds of Jeroboam's kingdom" when the calves were set up.

Scrutiny thus shows that *the seven notes* are invalid and unable to disturb the common opinion that one golden calf was set up at Jacob's Bethel (Beitin), possibly within sight of Solomon's Temple.

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THE NAMELESS CITY.

[See *Quarterly Statement*, 1879, p. 130, 171.]

I HAVE not yet learnt as a *fact* that the Mount of Olives is visible from some spot on the Bakoosh hill below the summit.* That it really is so I

* The Survey Triangulation diagram shows that the neighbourhood of Jerusalem is visible from the top of the Râs Sherifeh, but it is hidden lower down by the intervening ridges.—C. R. C. But see Finn, pp. 445, 449.—W. F. B.

feel certain; but as the point is essential to showing satisfactorily that the nameless city was on the Bakoosh hill, it seems desirable to secure all the voussoirs before beginning to build the arch. Accordingly the proof promised will be kept back for the next number.

Still, as Lieut. Conder has raised objections, they shall have immediate attention. He suggests Bethlehem as an alternative position. Establishing an *alibi* will best disestablish all rival sites, so that to this reply is deferred. His other objections, however, must be met at once, as they directly controvert point (3)—viz., that “*the hill (Gibeah) of God* (1 Sam. x. 5, 10) is the place of the Upper City of Jerusalem (Gabbatha, John xix. 13).” He urges—

(1) “The name Gibeah is nowhere connected with Jerusalem.” In reply it is enough to quote Isa. x. 32: “The mount (of) the daughter of Zion, *the hill (Gibeah) of Jerusalem.*” Here the earlier words represent the eastern hill, the italicised words the south-west hill, the site of the Upper City.

(2) “Jerusalem was at that time held by the Jebusites, whereas *the hill of God* was a garrison of the Philistines.” This is the common (and I think *erroneous*) opinion; for I consider it demonstrated (in *Quarterly Statement*, 1878, page 182) that the stronghold of Jebus, *i.e.*, the city of David, was on Ophel, so called.

Therefore it was *quite open to the Philistines*, who had a garrison in Geba, *to put one also on the south-west hill (Gibeah) of Jerusalem*, even even if it partly belonged to the city occupied in common by the Israelites and Jebusites.

The statement of Josephus (Ant. vii. 3. 1) that “David took the lower city *by force*” now seems to me one of his frequent misapprehensions of the Bible.

(3) “Gabbatha . . . applies to the Court of Antonia.” I did not mean to connect Gabbatha philologically, but *topographically* with the *Gibeah* of Jerusalem. Hebrew scholars must decide the former question; as to the latter, Lewin seems to me to prove conclusively that Pilate’s palace was not Antonia, but Herod’s palace, in the Upper City, where Florus (Jos. Wars ii. 14. 9), before his tribunal, crucified Jews of the highest rank, on the very spot (I believe) where some of them had years before raised to Pilate the cry against Jesus, “Crucify Him!”

I gladly accept the correction that the cairn is named Rujm el Kabtân (Captain’s Cairn), the Arabic equivalent for “Conder’s Cairn,” which originally stood in the proof and was at the last moment altered to “Salami’s Cairn.”

Though Lieut. Conder reports that he did not find any traces of antiquity among the ruins on Râs Sherifeh (identical, I assume, with Dahar es Salâhh), I am not persuaded that Mr. Finn was mistaken about what he did see.

Seventeen years in Palestine must have taught him something about ruins, and his words (“Byeways in Palestine,” 442) are these: “On the mountain top is a *large oval space*, which has been walled round; frag-

ments of the enclosure are easily traceable, as also some *broken columns*, grey and weather-beaten. This has every appearance of having been one of the many sun-temples devoted to Baal by early Syrians.*

By temple I mean a succession of open-air courts, with a central altar for sacrifice; a mound actually exists on the highest spot of elevation, which may well have been the site of the altar."

The italicised words seem to me to indicate an antiquity greater than that of a *modern hamlet*. Indeed I shall be greatly surprised if a *great cistern* is not to be found hereabouts, described in 1 Sam. xix. 22 as "a great well in Sechu." A comparison of the different versions, Arabic, Syriac, &c., leads me to think that *Sechu* has been substituted for *Shefi*, = *a bare place on a hill*, and in "Tent Work," vol. i. 279, the position is said to be "a bare and rocky hill." W. F. BIRCH.

THE ROCK OF RIMMON OR THE POMEGRANATE.

MR. RAWNSLEY'S recovery of the name *Rimmon* in Wady er *Rumman*, and of the tradition that the vast cavern Mugharet el Jai holds *six hundred men*, makes the Benjamites' actual place of refuge to coincide with the obvious position in a way seldom attained in disputed questions of topography.

A further test of the correctness of the identification is afforded in the points proposed for consideration by Lieut. Conder in *Quarterly Statement*, 1879, page 170. In reply to—

1 and 6, Migron is allowed to mean a *precipice*. The difficulty about *two Migrons*, one north, the other south of Wady Suweinit, seems to me to vanish if we take the word to mean the wall of rock forming the north and south boundary of the passage of Michmash (see *Quarterly Statement*, 1877, page 55). That Saul was on the south side of the gorge, opposite to the Philistines, seems clear from 1 Sam. xiv. 6, "Let us *go over*, &c.," and *id.* 17, "See who is gone from us." Therefore the pomegranate-tree, which is *in* (so A. V. rightly, not *by*; see below, 2) Migron, cannot be "a tree in Ramah," if Lieut. Conder means us by Ramah to understand er Ram, distant nearly three miles to the west. Further the latter is literally "*the tamarisk*" (1 Sam. xxii. 6), and so could not be a pomegranate-tree.

2. It is true the Biblical narrative says nothing about a cave, but a little reflection shows that such a shelter would be desirable (not to say necessary) during a four months' stay in the hold, and *large caves* were frequently used as places of refuge (1 Sam. xxii. 1; xxiv. 3).

Lieut. Conder objects on principle to great caverns, such as that at Khureitwan (called also Mugharet M'asa = cave of refuge), and

* The circular depression mentioned by Mr. Finn I have seen, but do not consider it very ancient. It looks like an old lime-kiln. The place is fully described in the Memoir to Sheet XVII. of the Survey. The columns intended seem to be the Roman milestones close by.—C. R. C.