

number of the Benjamite refugees, and that they did hide in it is the only reasonable explanation as to how six hundred is the number now named.

7. Modern measurement confirms the tradition that six hundred men could find shelter in this cave if pushed to extremities.

The Israelites, however, had probably gained too bitter an experience of the desperate valour of the slinging tribe, to dare to attack the wolf of Benjamin, when driven to bay in his *dernier ressort*. And most assuredly they would have caught a Tartar (as will probably every one who ventures to assail their famous stronghold*) if they had attempted to harass the fugitives in Wâdy Suweinîf, and so they discreetly let alone that little Benjamin who was destined afterwards to be their ruler. But still, why not make some excavations in the cave ?

W. F. BIRCH.

THE VALLEY OF HINNOM AND ZION.

MORE than 200 books have been written on Palestine, about 50 treat specially of its geography ; thousands of intelligent travellers have visited the Holy City, and yet to this hour the Christian world is not agreed as to where Zion stood.

Four faults have led most writers astray :—

- (1.) They have made wrong assumptions, in a matter in which hardly anything can safely be assumed.
- (2.) They have grounded their arguments on statements of Josephus, who is most unreliable, and at times flatly contradicts the Bible.
- (3.) They have not always verified their references.
- (4.) They have interpreted their quotations in a way sometimes at variance with the context.

Hence there are *four* opinions as to what hill is described as *Mount Zion*, and *five different views* about the real position of Zion itself, viz. :—

- (1.) The *high* ; north of the Temple ; advocated by Messrs. Fergusson, Thrupp, and Lewin.
- (2.) The *low* ; south of the Temple, on Ophel so called, held by the writer.
- (3.) The *broad*, which places Zion simultaneously on two or more of the following 1, 2, 4, 5, originated by Josephus and adopted by Lewin and Lieutenant Conder.
- (4.) The *mediæval* ; the south-western hill or upper city of Josephus, approved of by almost all writers from Jerome to the present

* The same may also be said of the stronghold of Zion, or the City of David which was situated on Ophel, so called, south of the Temple.

date, and defended by the discrimination of Robinson, the erudition of Williams, as well as by Professor Porter and Lieutenant Conder.

- (5.) That of the *Woolwich Brethren*, the district within the second wall west of the Temple and north of the upper city, gallantly held by Colonel Warren and Lieutenant Conder.

To a mind that delights in "showing of hard sentences and dissolving of doubts," the Jerusalem problem is irresistibly fascinating, and as four years have failed to show me any flaw or fallacy in the view which alone (so far as I can see) is reconcilable with and demanded by the Bible, I cheerfully descend from Scopus to join in the *bellum topographicum*, against the modern Simons, Johns, and Eleazars who between them have rent Jerusalem in pieces.

The "Nikon" argument that must make the first breach in the great wall of error, shall be "the true position of the Valley of Hinnom," the accidental discovery of which put an end to my gropings in the dark, led me out of the Josephean fog into bright daylight, and showed me the great outlines of Jerusalem in wonderful distinctness.

Modern discoveries allow us (without falling into *fault* 1) to assert that ancient Jerusalem stood somewhere on the often printed plan (see *Quarterly Statement*, 1879). The great question then is which was the valley of Hinnom?

A. Jerome says that Tophet, in the valley of the son of Hinnom, was irrigated by the waters of Siloam (Ain Silwân).

B. Colonel Warren identifies the brook (*Nachal*) Kedron, on the eastern side of Jerusalem, with the valley (*Ge*) of Hinnom.

C. Popular opinion takes the valley on the south-west and south of Jerusalem to be the valley of Hinnom.

While I was vainly seeking to reconcile these divergent if not opposite views, the thought occurred to me, "might not the Tyropœon, the valley passing through Jerusalem, be the Valley of Hinnom?" The novelty of the idea was charming. Immediately I set about trying how this identification would suit the various passages of the Bible in which the valley of Hinnom is mentioned.

Everything fitted in beautifully, but when I came to Jer. xxxi, 39, 40, which describes the environs of Jerusalem, I was struck with the fact not only that the valley of (*Ge*) Hinnom was not specifically mentioned, but also that "the whole *valley* of the dead bodies and of the ashes," generally taken to be south-west and south of the valley above named, was not described by the Hebrew word *Ge* but by quite a different word, *Emek*. Soon I perceived that the distinct Hebrew words, *Nachal*, *Ge*, and *Emek* were *never* interchanged, and delighted with this success I followed up the clue until it led me right into Zion.

But before passing on, the three views A, B, C, need a word. A is not disturbed by the Tyropœon being the valley of Hinnom, perhaps it even requires this line.

B cannot stand for a moment against the rigid use of Hebrew words.

It only rests on Arabic accounts* ("Jerus. Rec.," p. 307) and the misleading "East gate" (Jer. xix, 2), and to speak from hearsay, possibly on the Talmud.

C. The Bible Dictionary (under "Tophet") observes, "Until comparatively modern times that southern valley is never so named. Hinnom, by old writers, Western and Eastern, is always placed *east* of the city, and corresponds to what we call 'the mouth of the Tyropœon,' along the southern bed and bank of the Kedron." I have not, however, verified the references given for this statement.

Lieutenant Conder ("Handbook," p. 330) adopts C, and puts forward two points as *conclusive arguments* in its favour. (1) "Not only does the line of the border of Judah, which followed this valley, and ran south of Jerusalem (Josh. xv, 8), presuppose such a position; but (2) the situation of Tophet in the valley of Hinnom points to the same conclusion. Tophet was the scene of the worship of Moloch, and the high place of that idol is mentioned (2 Kings, xxiii, 13) as on the south of the Har-ham-Mashekith, which is probably the same as Har-ham-Mesekhah, or Mount of Anointing, by which name the Rabbis denominate the Mount of Olives."

This is a good illustration of how a well-read writer may unconsciously go astray.*

Point (1) would be conclusive if it could be proved that "the Jebusite" or "stronghold of Zion" was situate on the hill of the Upper City. But here Lieutenant Conder falls into *fault 2*, as all the proof he has to allege (p. 336) is the *incorrect* statement of Josephus that "the upper hill was by David called the citadel." If this professes to be a paraphrase of the Bible it is a *misrepresentation*; if not, whence did Josephus get his knowledge of things that happened a thousand years before his time? (*Quarterly Statement*, 1880, p. 169.)

Point (2) is an instance of *fault 4*. The context (2 Kings, xxiii, 10, 13) shows that Tophet in the *valley of Hinnom* had nothing to do with "the high places that were before Jerusalem which were on the right hand of the Mount of Corruption, etc.," for verse 10 states that Josiah defiled Tophet, and verse 13 that he defiled those high places. The chapter gives an orderly account of Josiah's doings, and verse 13 is not an idle repetition of verse 10, but perfectly distinct from it.

The "Handbook," p. 33C, has a remark about "*the valley (emek) of Dead Bodies and of the ashes*," viz., "no indication of the position of this place is given, and it has no topographical importance." (*Vide note on Jerem. xxxi, 38-40.*)

There was formerly *not much difficulty* about its position, as it was taken to be the west and south valley, *until* it was pointed out that an *emek* could not be a *ge*, and its topographical importance instead of being *nil*, seems

* In *Quarterly Statement*, 1881, p. 102, Mr. Beswick discusses Colonel Warren's view, and rejects it. I cannot altogether agree with his arguments, and should have been glad if he had endeavoured to show that the Tyropœon so called (1878, p. 180) was not the valley of Hinnom. He seems, however, to pass over the point without notice.

to me *greater* than that of any other topographical passage in the Bible, because it proves that the west and south valley was not the valley of Hinnom. Yet Mr. Fergusson's most praiseworthy identification of the *eastern hill* at Jerusalem with *Mount Zion* was years ago, is briefly disposed of by the reply that it did "not deserve the trouble of a serious refutation." Not thus will difficult questions be solved, though books may be multiplied to any extent.

The position that the central valley was the valley of Hinnom now seems to me to be fully proved and impregnable (*Quarterly Statement*, 1878, p. 180); but if any one thinks he can upset "Nikon" let him try.

As I believe that Colonel Warren, in the "Memoirs," and Lieutenant Conder in the "Encyclopædia," will shortly fully put forward their latest views on the topography of Jerusalem, I propose to defer the assault on the pseudo-Zions until the next number.

W. F. B.

NOTE ON JEREMIAH xxxi, 38-40.

This passage is the *key* to Jerusalem. It will hardly be disputed that the words "from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner," describe generally the breadth of the city from east to west, on its northern or weakest side.

Verses 39 and 40 seem to describe a circuit about the city going round from north to west, then to south and ending at the east. I think it safe to identify the hill (*gibeah*) of Gareb, outside the Jerusalem of the Kings, with the hill east of the Damascus gate; *Goath* seems to me to have been a place more to the west, and identical with the site of *the Assyrian camp* of Josephus; the name probably has reference to the destruction of the 185,000 men.

In verse 40 we come to the west and south valley (that wrongly called in our day the valley of Hinnom), and this is described as "the whole valley (*emek*) of the dead bodies and of the ashes." This brings us to "all the fields," *i.e.*, the level ground in the eastern valley (described as "all the fields"), which reach to near the Virgin's Spring, where the valley becomes narrow, or in other words "unto the brook (*nachal*) of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate towards the east," *i.e.*, to near some part of the Haram area.

The fact that we have the *fields*, the *brook*, the *horse gate* in proper order, seems to make it certain that the description is an orderly one throughout; while the west and south valley is the only one which can fill up the space (between "Goath" and "the fields") described as "the valley (*emek*)," etc. All the places thus named seemed to have been *defiled*: *Gareb* has been connected with *leprosy*; *Goath* with death; while the *dead bodies* would defile the *emek*. Even the fields and brook Kidron were defiled (2 Kings xxiii, 4, 6). The high places on the Mount of Olives had also been defiled (2 Kings xxiii, 13), but as no mention is here made of this part becoming holy, though in close proximity to Jerusalem, it is

inadmissible to apply the expression "the valley (*emek*) of the dead bodies," etc., to any part of the country beyond the west and south valley, and not adjoining Jerusalem.

Thus this valley being the only valley available must be that intended by the prophet, and as it is called (*emek*) it could not possibly be the valley (*ge*) of Hinnom.

The use therefore made above of this passage is fully justified.

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VARIETIES.

It may be well to correct a few errors and misapprehensions.

Emmaus.—The anonymous paper on this place is incorrectly credited to me by Lieutenant Conder.

The Siloam Inscription.—In *Quarterly Statement*, 1881, page 141, the Pool of the Virgin (*Birket Sitti Maryam*) near St. Stephen's Gate is confused with the Virgin's Well, half a mile to the south. It is from the latter that the canal is cut to the Pool of Siloam.

The Table land Rock.—On page 327, this is given by the Rev. James Niel as one of the titles of Jerusalem. The allusion is obviously to Jer. xxi, 13, 14, "Behold I am against thee, O inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain, saith the Lord; which say, Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations?"

There could hardly be a more beautiful illustration of the use of topographical research than this passage affords. Here the Hebrew word for valley is *emek*, and that for plain *mishor*; but the inhabitants of Jerusalem did not dwell in an *emek*; and *the mishor* is an expression only used of the upland downs east of the Jordan, so that this verse cannot be applied to Jerusalem, unless the utmost violence be done to Biblical usage.

The *topographical key*, however, turns this dead-lock with perfect ease. The inhabitants of Rabbath-Ammon boasted (Jer. xlix, 4) of their well watered valley (*emek*), while their citadel overlooked the surrounding country or *mishor*. Our *key* fits exactly, and makes it certain that the prophet refers to Rabbah. Besides, "Who shall come down to us?" is the very question asked in Jer. xlix, 4, "Who shall come unto me?" and the king of Babylon was advancing against both Rabbah and Jerusalem (Ezek. xxi, 20, 21), though he took the latter first. See *Quarterly Statement*, 1878, page 189.

Gibeah.—It seems to me that Kh. 'Adaseh, nearly two miles east of Gibeon, represents the long-lost site of *Gibeah* (Judg. xx), of *Gibeah of Saul*, and of the hill of *Ammah*, *lit.* the *Gibeah* or hill of the chief city. The arguments for this identification seem to me conclusive, but it will be