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Contributions and Comments.

An Historical Place in Jerusalem.

IN the accounts of the surrender of Jerusalem to General Allenby in 1917, it has been recorded that the ceremonies at that time took place at 'the Citadel' under the 'Tower of David.' But the deeper interest to Christians concerning that place has not been noticed.

According to Sanday, Schürer, Mommsen, and others, the lower courses of the Tower of David (which are probably Herodian) are all that remains of 'Hippicus,' built by Herod the Great, as one of the towers adorning his palace in Jerusalem. In the general destruction of the city by Titus, part of the tower was left standing, and the name 'Tower of David' became attached to it. The name 'Citadel' probably commemorates the four centuries of Turkish occupation, and the tall erection most easily seen probably does not date earlier than the Saracenic period.

The Roman governor had no private palace in Jerusalem, but (as representing the supreme overlord) Pontius Pilate, with his wife and retinues of soldiers, would have been received with all honour at the palace of the subordinate local king in a building arranged for public purposes. Wherever the Procurator was in residence the building would doubtless, for the time being, have been called The Pretorium. The Pretorium at Cesarea, where Pilate mostly lived, was also a palace built by the same Herod. The Revisers of the New Testament have, therefore, translated the Pretorium of the Gospels, where Pilate and his wife were staying at the time of our Lord's trial at Jerusalem, as 'the palace.' They have been equally careful to state the place of St. Paul's detention as the 'castle.' For he was preaching in the Temple courts, and was taken by the soldiers up the staircase to the castle of Antonia which overlooked the Temple.

The sending of our Lord to Herod by Pilate would, therefore, not have necessitated any crossing of the city from the Temple precincts (for which there would have been no time), but merely a movement to another part of the same building.

The Hall of Judgment in Herod's palace opened into a courtyard still remaining. The priests and their company would not enter the Hall of Judgment on the first Good Friday 'because of the Preparation,' but remained in the courtyard; and to them Pilate went out four or five times and then

returned to the Hall to question our Lord afresh. Finally, Pilate, accompanied by the Lord wearing the purple robe and the crown of thorns, went to the *Bema* (the Judgment-seat) to pronounce the sentence of death. This spot is called in the Gospels, the Pavement (*i.e.* the Roman Mosaic Pavement), in Hebrew, *Gabbatha*. Our Lord stood beside him, and Pilate, greatly impressed, pointed to Him and called Him 'your King,' perhaps hoping at the last moment to sway the mind of the assembled crowd, whom he could address from this raised parapet or terrace, built beyond the courtyard on the outside of the wall.

The procession to Calvary would have passed out of the Gennath Gate—near the present Jaffa Gate—to the place where, in 326, Constantine the Great built the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The great gateway into the Hall of Judgment and the courtyard surrounding it still survive; so does the raised terrace on the outside of the wall of the courtyard to which Pilate mounted in order to address the crowd which had gathered together to support the priests. The present gatehouse on the wall of the courtyard appears to be of Saracenic structure, but the pillared building originally placed here was of Roman grandeur, and there are still traces of the Roman mosaic pavement on, and near, this site.

It was from this place that Titus addressed and thanked his soldiers and distributed rewards. It had, apparently, been originally built by Herod the Great as a convenient place for public utterances.

It was from this place that Lord Allenby made his proclamation of toleration for the three chief religions of the world. Afterwards, we read, he retired into the courtyard behind the gatehouse, and there received the notabilities of the city. Three months later, he himself was invested in the same place, by the Duke of Connaught, with the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

No attention has been publicly drawn to the astonishing interest of this spot, where the greatest event in the history of the world was enacted, and where the formal abrogation of Pilate's verdict was announced in the name of the Christian Allies, who, after more than a thousand years, took over the government of the Holy Land from the hand of unbelievers.

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Oxford.