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ARTICLE VIII.

PSEUDO-KRANION.

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MY noted and beloved friend, Dr. Charles S. Robinson, is trying to realize an ideal. In the purity of his heart he yearns after the perfect, and if he could he would very quickly purge our fallen world, or rather humanity, of all its defects and unholiness, not stopping to reflect that then heaven itself would be most unreasonably antedated.

In the November issue of the *Century Magazine* he has related what happened more than eighteen years ago, when together we scanned from far and near the cliffs and the cave of the Grotto of Jeremiah, beyond Jerusalem on the north, and stood upon the summit of the hill adjoining. Had he published this article then, it would have been timely, but now it is too late. From the drift of his gentle words it is evident he imagines good men generally to be accepting this adjacent hill as "The True Site of Calvary," and "a sort of competition" to be prevailing "among explorers as to the credit of having first suggested the knoll by the Damascus gate as being probably the exact place where our Lord was crucified;" but, alas! just the contrary is the case—already the fantasy is obsolete.

Within the last five years much new evidence of topographical and archaeological character has been discovered, revealing the course of the northern wall of Jerusalem at the era of our Lord to have been south of the modern Church of the Holy Sepulchre; and the site of this church, being shown to have been outside the town in those days, thus becomes the unquestionable place of his crucifixion and tomb of his resurrection.

Inasmuch as my good friend seems to be incompletely advised as to the origin of the movement he joins, roaming away from the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre, let us, for a moment, retrace its history.

Half a century ago Dr. Edward Robinson recoiled from the traditional locality very much as Dr. Charles S. Robinson now does. To this he was impelled by such considerations as these:—

"It is not therefore without some feeling of wonder, that a stranger, unacquainted with the circumstances, on arriving in Jerusalem at the present day, is pointed to the place of crucifixion and the sepulchre in the midst of the modern city, and both beneath one roof. This latter fact, however unexpected, might occasion less surprise; for the sepulchre was nigh to Calvary. But beneath the same roof are further shown the stone on which the body of our Lord was anointed for burial, the fissure in the rock, the holes in

which the crosses stood, the spot where the true cross was found by Helena, and various other places said to have been connected with the history of the crucifixion; most of which it must have been difficult to identify even after the lapse of only three centuries; and particularly so at the present day, after the desolations and numerous changes which the whole place has undergone."¹

Having justified his dissent as best he can, he concludes:—

"If it be asked, Where then are the true sites of Golgotha and the sepulchre to be sought? I must reply, that probably all search can only be in vain. We know nothing more from the Scriptures, than that they were near each other, without the gate and nigh to the city, in a frequented spot. This would favor the conclusion, that the place was probably upon a great road leading from one of the gates; and such a spot would only be found upon the western or northern sides of the city, on the roads leading toward Joppa or Damascus."²

Dr. Edward Robinson was thus careful not to commit himself definitely to any new proposal or site; and yet he indicated, in a general way, so nearly where he thought the spot must have been, as to encourage another biblical student, less cautious and having no personal acquaintance with the ground, to attempt to point out exactly where it was! This follower after Dr. Robinson was the German commentator Otto Thenius, residing at Dresden in Saxony, who put forth his happy thought in a contribution to Illgen's *Zeitschrift fuer die historische Theologie*, entitled, "Otto Thenius has endeavored to prove Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre to survive even down to the present moment outside Jerusalem both modern and ancient, and has conceded the determination of this fact to the American Robinson." This appeared in 1842, one year after the publication of the first edition of Dr. Robinson's "Biblical Researches." He professed that the particular idea occurred to him upon an examination of Renner's "Map of Palestine," showing a hill existing outside the northern wall of Jerusalem, near the Damascus gate, above the Grotto of Jeremiah; and, certain modern travelers having reported it to be round in outline, he put this, and the notion of Reland (afterward also of Paulus) that the hill must have received its name from some real likeness to a human skull in shape (*a forma cranii humani dictum*), together, and so he identified the site with "the place called *Kranion*" as phrased by the evangelist Luke. For this spot, he affirmed, the Gospel narratives require the following conditions: (1) Without the city; (2) Near it; (3) On a well-known highway; (4) Which probably conducted to the north; (5) A sepulchre close to Golgotha; (6) To be rock-hewn, of moderate size, and one whose cell shall not be lower than the entrance, but cut directly in a vertical wall. And these conditions he was convinced were satisfied by the Grotto of Jeremiah and its contiguous hill.

Now, had the novelty suggested by the German Thenius possessed any quality to commend it, our American biblical authority would have welcomed it, would he not? or, at least, he would note the fact of its having

¹Biblical Researches, Vol. i. p. 407.

²*Ibid.*, p. 48.

been made since the publication of his earlier "Researches"? But, this attempt to bring the matter down to a particular locality met with no encouragement on his part: evidently Dr. Edward Robinson did not consider so singular an hypothesis worthy a moment's attention. Indeed, this has been the treatment it has received at the hands of all critical scholars: W. Krafft does notice it in his "Die Topographie Jerusalems," but merely to dismiss it without consideration as wholly untenable ("gänzlich unhaltbar," p. 220). One would naturally expect to find it received among the Germans if by anybody, but it would seem to be unknown among them: Bædeker's handbook "Palestina," the work of Professor Albert Socin, does not even mention the theory in connection with its account of the "Jeremiasgrotte," p. 249.

Nevertheless, the vagary has wandered westward, and on our side of the Atlantic has met with a few who take a fancy to it. Of course it was taken up by the Dutch lieutenant, C. W. M. Van de Velde, in 1851 and 1852, who also was horror-struck at the profanations of the Holy Sepulchre.³ Then in 1857 it was adopted by the watery J. T. Barclay, M.D.⁴ In 1871 it was advocated by Mr. Fisher Howe, who, from the very fact that he could not "force words out of old Dr. Edward Robinson's tomes" in favor of his illusion, ought to have been suspicious of its nature. During the survey of Western Palestine, between the years 1872 and 1875, Captain C. R. Conder found Dr. Thomas Chaplin of Jerusalem entertaining this view; and, having obtained the doctor's consent, proceeded to make use of it on his own account.⁵ In 1883 General Charles G. Gordon indulged in certain "Reflections in Palestine," which, so far as they pertain to this subject, are so mystical and wild as to do him no credit and to injure his cause, if indeed it were capable of injury. Besides others cited by Dr. Charles S. Robinson, Professor Edward Hull has fallen in with this view and Canon Tristram is said to hold it.

But our deeper interest lies in the decision of the question, Ought we to cast away the site determined by the early Christians, for this new speculation?

Though, hitherto, it has never been thought necessary to controvert this conjecture, I venture to call attention to the following considerations forbidding its acceptance:—

1. The site was the city quarry; and the work of taking out stones and of preparing them for their places was in full blast at the time of our Lord's decease, for the completion of the Temple and the edification of the rapidly growing new city. Such a place would have been altogether incompatible with many of the circumstances associated by the Gospel narratives with our Lord's death, sepulture, and resurrection.

2. Especially, the site was not nigh unto the city. During the lifetime of our Master the nearest city wall was that of Antonia at the northwestern

³Cf. his narrative, Vol. i. pp. 462, 485-514; Vol. ii. p. 201.

⁴The City of the Great King, pp. 78-85.

⁵Tent Work in Palestine, Vol. i. pp. 371-376; and memoir on Jerusalem, p. 430 sq.

corner of the Temple area, from which this quarry hill stood nearly half a mile away, out beyond the suburbs.

3. The distance of the highway on the west from the top of this hill is too great to suit the requirement involved by the words of the Gospels, "And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ha! thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross." One of the main arguments of Mr. Fisher Howe, and other special pleaders for the hill above the Grotto of Jeremiah, is that the place of crucifixion was on some public road, and this hill is nigh unto the great northern thoroughfare of ancient as well as modern Jerusalem. Well: how nigh? Actually, according to the Ordnance Survey, the distance between the two was and is five hundred feet. This is altogether too much for the individual recognition, the wagging of heads, and the personal address on the part of people going along the highway, described by the two evangelists Matthew and Mark: these reporters of the scene answer as to the length of the interval, and they intimate that the measure of the road from the cross could not have been greater than one hundred, and probably was less than fifty, feet. The conversation of the passers-by took place under the same condition of immediate presence as that of the chief priests who mocked the Sufferer, and of the scribes who said, "He saved others; himself he cannot save," and of the thief crucified with him who cast the same in his teeth. All of these scoffers fell within the limits of close association. But a range of thirty rods is too long for the action or drama that occurred: at such remoteness those passing upon the road could not distinguish between the features of the crucified ones, nor could their revilings be heard.

4. There seems to be no end for the necessity of saying that Calvary was not a mount. There is no mention of a hill, or even of a rise of ground, in any of the Gospel accounts; and both the conception and the expression are wholly unwarranted. On the contrary, the hill adjoining the Grotto of Jeremiah rises to a height of between fifty and sixty feet above the area at its southern base. Furthermore, the summit of a hill is not the *sine qua non* of a conspicuous position: the centre of a hollow is equally good, if not better. A natural cavity is imitated by the Colosseum at Rome, or any of the Roman theatres in the East.

5. The allegation that Golgotha took its name from a hill having the peculiar form of a skull, is a modern invention and equally unfounded. It arose with Reland in the early part of the eighteenth century, and was hailed by the sceptical De Wette: it has no basis beyond the fiction of "Mount Calvary." Whereas, in the words of Matthew, "Golgotha, which is called the place of a skull;" of Mark, "to the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull;" of Luke, to the place called *Kranion*; and of John, "to the place called of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha;" the allusion is to a Hebrew tradition which taught that Adam died and was buried there, and that his skull was either preserved or found there. We are not concerned about the matter of fact, but only as

to the existence of the legend among the Jews: so, too, the evangelists, and probably the reason why they did not say more about it by way of explanation was that they did not wish to countenance the popular superstition. Between the second and sixth centuries the following Church Fathers testify to the currency of this tradition: Origen, Athanasius, Basil of Cæsarea, Ambrose, Epiphanius, Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, Basil of Seleucia, Athanasius of Sinai, some of them referring the report to the Jews at large, others to the *magistri Hebræorum*, the chief men or rabbis of the Hebrews. Is it not rather late in the day to undertake to discard such an ancient belief and to inaugurate something entirely different?

6. Even the resemblance between hill and skull vanishes when soberly tested, and most of the features of the face have to be created by the imagination. Some of the advocates of this theory lay great stress on certain eyeless sockets near the brow of the hill—manifestly artificial hollows in the rock; but, at the very least, there are three or four of these void excavations existing along the same strata in the face. Were there, then, three or more eyes belonging to this single skull? At the base of the scarp there is no cavern under these several eye-openings, corresponding to a mouth. The cave which should represent the mouth of the skull is the Grotto of Jeremiah, which stands quite off to one side of the hill, in its eastern declivity. Thus, what answers to the mouth of the skull occurs where the ear ought to be, and is placed on end relatively to the face of the hill or cranium. Regarding the whole hill as the skull, these eye-sockets are misplaced at one corner of the face, and reduced to a space on a scale out of all proportion to the head. On close examination the figure breaks down completely.

7. But, what is far worse is, this mis-set face is certainly a comparatively recent creation: it cannot by any possibility date back to the time of Christ. Since the period of his dwelling among men all the material for the third wall, constructed about the year 42 A. D. by Herod Agrippa, all the stones of Hadrian's wall around *Ælia Capitolina* in 130 A. D., all the blocks required by the restorations of Eudocia between 450 and 460 A. D., all the material consumed in the repairs and strengthening of the city wall by the Egyptians just prior to the appearance of the Crusaders in 1099, by the Christians themselves in 1178, by the Saracens in 1192, again by the Franks in 1229, and much of the substance of the modern wall re-erected by Soleiman the Magnificent in 1542,—must have been derived from this proximate quarry; and, as down to modern times the extraction of building-stone from this vast mine has continued, there is not a ghost of a chance that any of the ledges on the south of the Jeremiah-Grotto hill has survived unchanged either in position or contour from the date of 30 A. D. to the present moment. Those eye-sockets are plainly burial-cells, of which the mount is full and which have been reached and laid bare by the recession of the quarry precipice. Indeed, the present configuration is so recent as to be totally unknown among early Christians and church historians, and even to the whole line of pilgrims to the holy places down to mediæval times. In their days the

Prison of Jeremiah used to be observed near the Prætorium of Pilate, and not far from the church of Saint Anne, quite within the present city.

It is said that during the siege of the First Crusade, in 1099 A. D., Robert, Duke of Normandy, occupied the height above the Grotto of Jeremiah; but this is incorrect, for the Duke of Normandy encamped by the Church of Saint Stephen, and therefore on the west side of the thoroughfare leading from the Damascus gate northward.

It is also said that toward the end of the Latin kingdom, in 1163 A. D., the reservoir of the grotto belonged to the Hospital of Saint John; but thus far I have not succeeded in verifying the statement.

Perhaps the first incontestable notice of the grotto occurs in "The Ways of Jerusalem," by the Rabbi Yitshaq Hillò, in 1334 A. D., who writes:—

"At the present hour the Holy City possesses four gates: the Gate of Mercy on the east; the Gate of David on the west; the Gate of Abraham on the north; the Gate of Tsion on the south.

"When one departs by the Gate of Mercy one ascends the Mount of Olives, that is to say the mount of oil, where formerly they used to burn the red heifer: there the Valley of Jehosaphat, the brook Kedron, Bethphage, and the burial place of the Israelites, are found.

"When one departs by the Gate of David one passes by the Tower of David so-called: by this one descends into the Vale of Rephaim.

"When one departs by the Gate of Abraham, one enters into the Tombs of the Kings (upon whom be salvation!): there appears the Cavern of Ben Syra, the step-son of Jeremiah the prophet. . . .

"The Tombs of the Kings constitute the fourth remarkable thing pertaining to the Holy City: they are, as we have already said, near the Cavern of Ben Syra."⁶

According to the Kabbalists, Ben Syra was both step-son and son of Jeremiah, both names—Syra and Jeremiah—being numerically equivalent to 271. However, the name Syra manifestly has something to do with the Arabic name *Sahera* or *Zahiri*, which still survives from the Hill of the Grotto downward over its eastern declivity to the Gate of Herod. To which, the Hebrew or the Arabic, are we to ascribe the origin of the term? In 1495 A. D., Mejr ed-Dîn attributed the making this Grotto of *es-Sahera* to the Emir Menjek, prefect of Syria.

It is said that the pilgrim Stephan von Gumpenberg, in 1449 A. D., referred to both the reservoir and the Hill of this Grotto; but his allusion is unmistakably to the *Birket Israil* and to the castle Antonia.

Cotovicus⁷ appears to be the first who regarded this quarry grotto as the cavern wherein Jeremiah composed his "Lamentations" in view of the city's overthrow and the captivity; and Quaresmius seems to be the first who moved the Prison of Jeremiah also thither—since when no further change of venue has occurred.

⁶Carmoly's Itinéraires, pp. 235-239.

⁷Itinerarium, 1596 A. D. p. 305.

⁸Elucidatio, 1616 A. D., Vol. ii. p. 731.

These are positive obstacles in the way of this new fallacy: others of a negative character are equally prohibitive.

8. The site is destitute of both historical record and archæological proof indicating it to be the scene of our Lord's crucifixion. No identification is well founded that does not possess some link binding it to the past; but, for this spot no witness in secular or ecclesiastical history breaks the silence of the ages, no ancient relic appropriate to, or significant of, its alleged ancient service as a place of crucifixion survives. Those who select this spot decide the matter in advance, and then wait or hope for some evidence to turn up in its favor. Direct connections are conspicuously absent from the reasons assigned by Mr. Fisher Howe, and repeated by Dr. Charles S. Robinson; but if one still wishes to see how vague and weak are the most definite considerations that can be brought to the support of this locality, Captain Conder's doubtless will suffice:—

(1) The hill stands outside the city.

(2) A group of rock-cut tombs exists somewhere off to the west, about two hundred yards from the hill.

(3) A Christian tradition, as early as the fifth century of our era, teaches that the protomartyr Stephen was stoned near here, on the north of the city.

(4) This vicinity has apparently been always considered unlucky, accursed, and haunted.*

One would surely refuse to believe that such a beggarly array of makeshifts could be seriously proposed by any sensible man to offset the numerous and strong warrants of the Holy Sepulchre, were it not set forth in black and white and signed by its author. The truth is, we have, here, to deal with an effort to get away from tradition, which cannot be done without proceeding independently of testimony; for the early Christians had all the testimony there was in the case, very much more than we have, and they used it both intelligently and carefully for recognizing the identical spot. Historical and archæological evidence cannot favor two sites: inasmuch as all there is points to the Holy Sepulchre, there can be none for the hill beside the Jeremiah grotto.

9. The method pursued by the advocates of the Grotto-Hill for the site of Calvary is radically wrong in that they attempt to determine the place of crucifixion before, and apart from, that of the tomb. "In the place where Jesus was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre:" in relation, therefore, to the place of crucifixion the sepulchre was near at hand. Accordingly, the sepulchre, being something tangible and peculiar in structure, is the key to the scene of the crucifixion: the featureless area of crucifixion cannot be a key to the sepulchre. To pitch upon the site of the crucifixion first is quite out of order, the wrong way of going to work; and it is extremely hazardous, because, on a very low estimate, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine chances out of a thousand that the neighboring sepulchre will never be found, being absent. This is just what occurs in the

**Jerusalem*, Pal. Explor. Fund Memoir, p. 431.

present instance: no sepulchre of the proper sort for the tomb of our Lord can be found in the vicinity. There are graves enough, to be sure, all over and around this mount, for it has long been a Mohammedan cemetery. To the northwest of the hill-top, somewhat less than three hundred feet, a complex, subterranean, Jewish tomb occurs, consisting of a large central vault, surrounded by sepulchral chambers: originally a lateral descent of steps led down into the chambers on the north, through which access might be gained to the central vault; and subsequently, when the Jews had crumbled to dust and their descendants had disappeared, the Christians appropriated the burial-place and cut a similar stairway on the south in such way as to afford more direct access to the central vault. The whole is fully described by Herr Conrad Schick in the *Zeitschrift des. d. Palästina Vereins*, IX. 74-78. This was a catacomb rather than a tomb, and wholly deficient in the criteria of the sepulchre of our Lord. The same is true of all other rock-hewn places of interment near the Hill, or to the east of the thoroughfare.

Westward, across the great highway to Shechem and Samaria, two tombs have been discovered by Herr Conrad Schick. The first is described by Dr. Chaplin in the *Pal. Explor. Fund, Quarterly Statement for 1876* (p. 9), as an ancient sepulchre sunk vertically in the rock into which was let down through the roof a less ancient large sarcophagus conjectured to be that of the Empress Eudocia: it lies about seven hundred and thirty feet distant from the top of the Grotto-Hill, and its ground affording "various remains of early Byzantine sculpture, cornices, pavements," etc., possibly relics of that "very large sanctuary, conspicuous for elevation and beauty, in honor of Stephen, the first of deacons and martyrs, distant less than a stadium from Jerusalem," which Eudocia the consort of Theodosius erected and where "her own remains were deposited, when she had departed to the unfading life." No one claims this tomb for the sepulchre of our Lord. The second is described by Herr Schick in the *Quarterly Statement for October, 1879*, p. 198 sq., and by Captain Conder in the *Quarterly Statement for July, 1881*, p. 202 sq., April, 1883, p. 75 sq., and in the *Jerusalem Memoir*. It lies about seven hundred and seventy feet distant from the Grotto-hilltop, and is excavated in the scarp of a low platform of rock artificially levelled to be the site of some sort of a building. Here, also, the thin soil is composed of "rubbish containing many pieces of hewn and even richly carved stone, a circular wall of cubical blocks, rosettes, water-drops, triglyphs, palm-leaves," etc., etc. Perhaps the cloister of the church erected by Eudocia stood here. At any rate the tomb yielded a mortuary slab marked by a Christian cross and engraved in Greek letters of the fifth or the sixth century, reading, "Tomb belonging to —." On one or the other of these two spots the Basilica of Stephen certainly rose; and with equal certainty it marked the supposed scene of his stoning and falling asleep—which, therefore, was not the summit of the Grotto-Hill. Only Captain Conder proposes this tomb for the sepulchre of our Lord: beyond a doubt it is the Tomb of St. Stephen seen by the Russian pilgrim Daniel in 1113 A. D. Both of these tombs, however, are removed too far from the Grotto-Hill to be "in the place where Jesus

was crucified," from which they were separated by a great thoroughfare: besides, neither one of them has the right character or date.

For our Saviour's sepulchre was no mere grave, nor even a Jewish *koka* running perpendicularly into the rock: it was a sepulchral chamber, equivalent to the Roman *cubiculum*, in one of whose sides had been cut a table-tomb, a rectangular recess, or a *arcosolium*, an arched recess, over a *loculus* parallel with the wall; and this *loculus* was covered by a slab on which our Lord's body lay for the unfinished process of embalming with sweet spices and ointment, for he never was buried in the *loculus* beneath corresponding to a grave. Now, such a rock-hewn sepulchral chamber, not unlike a vault in our cemeteries, and provided with such a lateral table-tomb, is wholly absent from the sides or vicinity of the Grotto-Hill. Those unsatisfied people who still wish to ascertain the true site of Calvary must find the authentic sepulchre first, and show us the adjacent Golgotha last: they ought not to offer the last for our acceptance first.

10. Such a course serves to betray the nature of this roaming movement. Generally it is a reaction from what is repellent, yet adventitious, in the rotunda and chapels of the Holy Sepulchre, and a withdrawal of faith from what is really valid there. In his first visit Dr. Edward Robinson did not even examine, much less study, the Holy Sepulchre. To quote his own words: "This was the Christian Sabbath, and it was also Easter Sunday.... I looked in for a few moments upon the Latin ceremonial.... The high altar was placed directly before the door of the sepulchre; so that we could not enter.... All this excited in my mind a feeling too painful to be borne; and I never visited the place again."¹⁰ In his second visit he went there to look at the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea and of Nicodemus; but he speaks of having inspected nothing else. With such, this rejection is a matter of feeling, a sentiment, a grief; and when the search for a new site is undertaken it is not one of scientific induction from facts. But, occasionally, as with General Gordon, it is an infatuation after allegory; and rarely, as in Captain Conder's case, the motive is not conscience at all but an overweening insatiable *ego*, all for fame. Yet each and every one who embarks in this speculation allows himself to be controlled by one impulse, and then by a second impulse exercises a most amazing amount of credulity in relying upon an incomparably more untrustworthy substitute.

11. There is nothing to be gained by forsaking the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as it stands to-day. Had the Jeremiah-Grotto Hill been the original scene of Calvary, we would now behold there all the shams we meet with in the traditional locality: could it now be proved that the Jeremiah-Grotto Hill is the real spot, all the falsehoods within the present building of the Holy Sepulchre would instantly emigrate over to that site. The witches would go too. The modern representatives of the oriental churches within the Holy Sepulchre are not a whit less inclined to perpetrate frauds of station and follies of ceremonial than their predecessors—in fact they are surpassingly more so inclined than were the Christians of Constantine's time. Or,

¹⁰Biblical Researches, Vol. i. pp. 223, 224.

if a third locality for the ancient Calvary and sepulchre were found, the same things would soon happen there; and so on. We might as well forgive with patience, stay where we are, and wait for improvement.

12. On account of the evil there may be in anything, it is neither logical nor necessary to throw overboard the whole of that thing, including the good there is in it. Those who, shocked by the sacrileges of the Holy Sepulchre, in order to get rid of them wander away to the spot above Jeremiah's Grotto, are in all probability leaving behind the genuine with the spurious. When our Saviour found the Temple desecrated by impious intruders, did he therefore stigmatize it as a "filthy old church" and argue that the whole thing was a fraud? Or, did he schismatically turn his back on the sacred precincts, stray away to some other spot, and try to set up a new temple, affirming it to be the true one? By no means; that was not his way. He drove the sinners out, and adhered to the legitimate sanctuary. In like manner, we are bound to hold fast to whatever may be veritable and credible in the present Church of his passion; and, as for the remedy, we are to do as much as lies in our power for the regeneration and recovery of the place, earnestly looking for the Lord himself to purify this shrine of his worship which during so many long centuries has at least commemorated his death and resurrection. So Lord Ellesmere felt when he sang:—

Oh! for that garden in its simpler guise,
Where she the earliest of His mourners came—
Came ere the stars of Syria's cloudless skies
Grew pale before their morning burst of flame

Oh! if the lichen now were free to twine
O'er the dark entrance of that rock-hewn cell,
Say, should we miss the gold-encrusted shrine
Or incense fumes' intoxicating spell?
Would not the whispering breeze, as evening fell,
Make deeper music in the palm-tree's shade
Than choral prayer or chanted ritual's swell?