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to Dr. Schick for information. I have just received his answer, in which he says:—"It was not with a round or millstone-like stone, but with a regular door, with lock and hinges, that this tomb was closed, as can be clearly seen." The "trough or groove" that Mr. Price Hughes has mistaken for the receptacle of a circular stone door is, in fact, one of the grooves in which the slabs were fixed for the receptacle of other bodies. The absence of these slabs is Mr. Hughes's proof (following Mr. Haskett Smith) that the tomb was never finished. But the slabs were *in situ*, and the tomb was full of bones and mould when it was first inspected by Dr. Schick, showing not only that the tomb was finished, but that it was full of human remains. As the tomb stands, it is not Jewish at all, but indubitably Christian, and long subsequent to the time of Christ.

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#### ON THE SITE OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

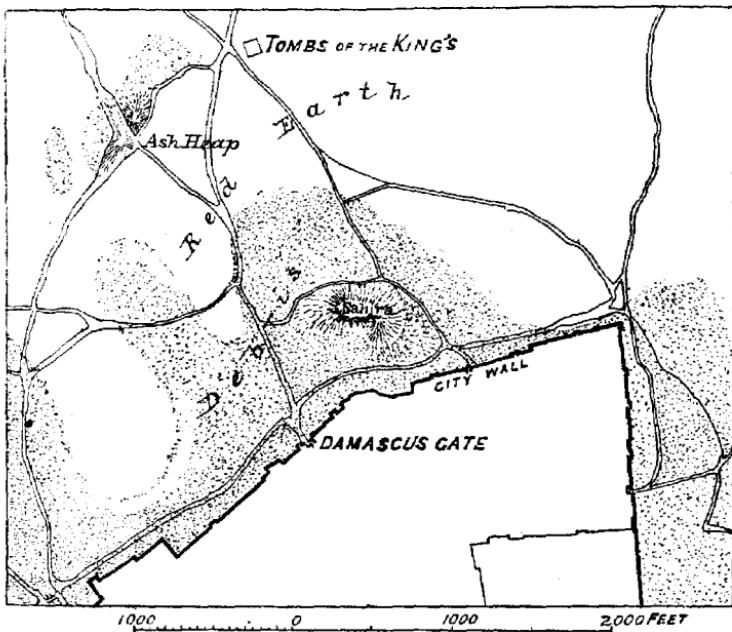
By Rev. FRANCIS GELL, M.A., Rector of Ripple, Hon. Canon of Worcester Cathedral, and Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Worcester.

WE are witnessing a recrudescence of the old controversy as to the real site of Golgotha, and we shall, perhaps, be told that it is a sign of the decay of faith. It has been remarked that, as true faith in the Divine person of the Lord Jesus ebbed and flowed, the ebb has always been marked by an almost feverish desire to find, what will probably never be found in our time, the exact spot where the greatest crime man ever committed was perpetrated, and the greatest deliverance man ever experienced was accomplished.

Of late years the saintly eminence of Gordon, backed by the topical knowledge of Conder, has given currency to a theory which has a certain sort of plausibility. On the other hand, the revived ecclesiasticism of the day has contended against it with some ingenuity, and polished up the old arguments for the traditional site, which has at least the advantage of ancient prescription in its favour, if it has nothing else.

Otto Thenius, in 1849, was, I believe, the first to suggest that the striking mound just outside the Damascus Gate was the true place of the Crucifixion; and Gordon, holiest of soldiers, who was, unfortunately, neither an Orientalist nor a topographer, adopted this theory. Like the sweet singer who composed those tripping verses, sung by every English child the world over, "There is a green hill far away, outside a city wall," he fell into the venerable blunder of supposing that Calvary was a hill; and the children who sang that simple ditty grew up to believe that it must be a hill just outside the existing city wall; and have thus been prepared to accept with acclamation from a Christian hero and a diligent and learned explorer, what I venture to call the Gordon myth.

We hear of large subscriptions paid down to keep the favoured spot from desecration, and of fervent believers who are prepared to pay three or four times its value to become its possessors. If those ladies and gentlemen have actually parted with their money, I can scarcely hope to convince them of the improbability of their theory; but having given nearly two months to the careful study of the site of Calvary on the spot, and some years of reading and reflection upon it since, I may beg the many reasonable persons who are interested in the topography of Jerusalem to entertain, at least with patience, a few considerations from one who is not swept away by prepossessions, and who does not feel sure even of the site which he believes has most to say for itself.



One of the earliest and soundest archaeologists in Jerusalem, when I resided there, was Dr. Rosen, the Prussian Consul. He entered with kindly zest into my investigations, and suggested a line of argument which was quite new to me, but which my Indian experience at once accepted as sound. He had noticed that wherever ground has been thickly covered by buildings the soil itself testifies unmistakably to the fact. Applying this test to the suburbs of Jerusalem, he constructed a chart, a copy of which accompanies this paper, showing that the northern suburb of the city extended considerably beyond and all round the knoll, el-Heidhemiyeh—now generally christened “Gordon’s Calvary.” As far as it goes this argument proves that the place was at the time of the

Crucifixion in the middle of a large and populous suburb. We know that every vestige of building there was afterwards razed to the ground ; but the tell-tale soil still testifies to the fact that a considerable portion of the ground within the third wall built by Agrippa 11 or 12 years afterwards to protect it, was then covered by buildings to accommodate the vast crowds who assembled at the Passover.

There is some conflict of testimony as to the numbers usually present at that time in and near Jerusalem. Josephus has been, perhaps, too much discredited by reason of his patriotic exaggeration ; but careful calculations have estimated the normal population of Jerusalem in the time of Christ at 70,000, which would certainly be doubled or trebled during the Feast days ; so that however largely we may discount the two or three millions of the Jewish historian, there remains a population far beyond the capacities of the old city, unless the people stood upon each other's heads. 97,000 are said to have been made captive by Titus, and 40,000 more were set at liberty, and yet that was at a time when every soul who could escape out of the doomed city had fled. Such multitudes could never have been crammed into that part of the city behind the second wall, wherever it was, especially when the great northern plateau presented unlimited means for expansion. I think any unprejudiced person reading the history of the siege would gather that a large space intervened between the third and second walls, and as Dr. Rosen's Terrainkarte shows, a good deal of the eastern part of it was not built upon. Tobler, no mean authority, believed the third wall reached northward nearly to the tomb of Helena of Ædiabene, to give room for the 90 towers, 200 cubits apart, which stood upon it; almost all traces of which appear to have been swept away. Is it in the least degree probable that the place of execution selected by Pilate, or his centurions, for the three crosses, would have been in the very middle of a thickly populated suburb of fanatical Jews ? Even supposing that the knoll had not been utilised for some shrine (and we know that subsequently a Byzantine church stood upon it), would it have been in the least likely that such a place would have been desecrated by the disgraceful punishment of criminals condemned by Roman law ? We forget how terribly disgraceful, and even obscene, that punishment was, because to us, "the shameful cross" now symbolises the highest point of Divine self-sacrifice. Moreover, we have it from Dr. Chaplin that the knoll was a place of Jewish execution by stoning, and in the Talmud is called Beth-ha-sekela. But our Lord suffered at the hands of Roman executioners ; and the place of Jewish executions, even if it could be proved that it was so then, would have been the last place where the Roman law would have been carried out. This consideration should give the advocates of this locality pause. But the final and, to my mind, conclusive argument against it, is the universal and scriptural conviction that the Crucifixion fulfilled the type to which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers (xiii, 11, 12), and that the direction, "without the camp," in Leviticus iv, 11, 12, 21, meant without the city which represented it. Thus independently of all arguments

drawn from the direction of the walls (which lead, as we know, to an interminable wrangle), but merely on the showing of Dr. Rosen's map there can be no doubt that the inhabited city did extend, in our Lord's time, to the northward of the present wall, and we are driven to the conclusion that we must look for the place of Crucifixion, and of the sepulchre outside the city somewhere on that northern plateau.

In 1865 I pointed out to Dr. Gobat, the then Bishop of Jerusalem, and to Dr. Barclay, that the Levitical ritual required<sup>1</sup> that the carcase of the burnt offering, represented in antitype by the Crucifixion, should be consumed north of the altar. The Bishop at once adopted the inference, and told me that when he first knew the city, there were considerable remains of tombs on the north side, near the slope into the Kedron Valley, which, when he returned as bishop, had been broken open or lost sight of. I am glad to see that such an authority as Sir Charles Wilson, in the new edition of the "Dictionary of the Bible," adopts the opinion that the northern plateau is the most probable site for the sepulchre.

Of course, if these arguments are sound they dispose of what is called the "traditional" site. In full view of all that has been so ably said in defence of that site, the fatal objections of Dr. Robinson are unanswered. The facility with which the transference of holy sites was made, in very early times, is known to all students of history (see a valuable article by Mr. Simpson in the *Quarterly Statement* for January, 1879), the total lack of the "topographical instinct," as proved by many instances, in days when few could read or write—and the absolute subjection of reason to faith in those who could— incline all who have no prepossession to think St. Willibald was not far wrong when he said that Helena had "arranged" that the place which was formerly outside should be inside the city : (see "Hodæporicon," XVIII, Pilgrims' Text Society, p. 19), and in that age who could possibly object to it ? Similar "arrangements," for the sake of convenience, are met with everywhere. What but convenience ruled the "invention" of the cross, together with the tablet which Pilate wrote to affix upon it, and "arranged" the stone of unction and the pillar of the flagellation, and all the rest of it ? And when the pious custodians had, without any idea of fraud, "arranged" objects and places of interest to their liking, a wealth of legendary association clustered round them, and it became worth no one's while to dispute them. Why should any one do so ? The facts were the really important things. The exact places where they were enacted was a very small matter. So we get venerable churches, built in impossible places, yet purporting to be on the very spots ; and venerable "fathers" by the score proving that they had seen the localities two or three hundred years afterwards, and had no doubt whatever about it ; till now it becomes difficult to plead for strict adherence to the only reliable documentary evidence we have, and to insist on squaring our topography with fair inferences from history and the Holy Scriptures.

Let me enumerate some of the essentials for the identification of the

<sup>1</sup> Lev. i, 10-11; iv, 21.

true sepulchre ; and I do not think those who have closely studied the matter will demur to any one of them :—

1. It must be in a garden. St. John xix, 41.
2. It must be hewn out of the rock. St. Matthew xxvii, 60.
3. It must be the tomb of a rich Jew of the Herodian period St. Matthew xxvii, 57, &c.
4. It must be close to the place of the Crucifixion. St. John xix, 41.
5. It must be near a high road. St. Matthew xxvii, 39, 41 ; St. Mark xv, 29 ; St. Luke xxiii, 26.
6. It must have been quite new, and therefore would have had then no loculi or kokim. St. John xix, 41 ; St. Luke xxiii, 53.
7. The place of the Crucifixion, which was close to it, must be where it could be seen “afar off.” St. Matthew xxvii, 55.
8. It must be clearly outside all the inhabited parts of the city. Hebrews xiii, 11.
9. The tomb must be a chamber in which at least five people at one time could move about and converse. St. Luke xxiv, 4, 10.
10. It must be closed by a great rolling stone. St. Matthew xxviii, 2, 4 ; St. Mark xvi, 4, &c.
11. It must be “nigh unto the city” (St. John xix, 20), but far enough for persons coming to it and going from it, to miss each other on the way (compare the various visits to the tomb).
12. The tomb must be so constructed that a person close to it must stoop down in order to look into it. *See* St. John xx, 11 ; St. Luke xxiv, 12.
13. And yet so that persons sitting “over against it,” *i.e.*, at some distance, could see into it, and observe “how the body of Jesus was laid” in it. St. Matthew xxvii, 61 ; St. Luke xxiii, 55 ; St. Mark xv, 47.

These are a few of the indications given us in Scripture to guide us as to the kind of sepulchre which received the dead body of our Lord, and from which he was raised on the third day. There may be more ; but these are enough to give a high probability to any tomb which combines them all. Over 500 rock tombs have been carefully examined by the agents of the Fund in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. They need not be compared, because Sir Charles Wilson says in his paper (*Quarterly Statement* for 1869, p. 67), with which I concur, that the most complete of all yet discovered is the Kubur es-Saladeen. This tomb has gone through many vicissitudes and been called by different names. In “Josephus” it is called the Monument of Helena, Queen of Adiabene, a Jewish proselyte who adopted it, and whose sarcophagus was “appropriated” by De Saulcy in 1863, and is now in the Louvre. The tomb is now called the Tombs of the Kings, probably because there is no evidence that any king was ever buried in it. As a typical Jewish tomb of the time of Herod, however, it has a special value for us, containing, in a condition of more or less preservation, all the four members of a rich man’s tomb of that

period, *i.e.*, first, a garden ; secondly, a vestibule or ante-chamber ; thirdly, an embalming chamber ; and fourthly, loculi, arcosolia, or kokim, excavated as they were required by deaths in the family or friends of the owner—the whole called the sepulchre. As that in which our Lord was buried was just dug, “wherein never before man was laid,” it would, at that time, have had no additional chamber or loculi.

Armed with these tests, my very first object on reaching Jerusalem was to apply them to Tombs of the Kings, which I need not describe, as they have been carefully described by our agents. Leaving the Bab el-Amud by the great north road, I easily found the excavated garden near the road side, approached by 25 steps down to a doorway through a wall of rock. There was the vestibule with the tank for water required for the ablution—there the 3-foot square entrance below the level of the floor of the vestibule—there the greater part of the rolling stone by which the entrance was closed ; and there, on the architrave, not only the triglyphs and pateræ of the Debased Doric of the Herodian period, but the grapes in the central metope, indicating that the tomb originally belonged to a rich Jew. Entering the chamber, I found it 19 feet square, surrounded by a stone ledge or seat, except where the rock wall has been since pierced by doorways to other chambers.

These observations disposed of Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 14. There remained 12 and 13. As to 12, it was clear after trial that a person near the entrance or in the vestibule, must stoop to see into the tomb chamber. But the women “sat over against the sepulchre,” and from that point “beheld how the body was laid.” Leaving the excavated garden I ascended on to the plateau, and seating myself on the north-western side of the excavation I found I could see through the 3-foot square opening into the embalming chamber, in the middle of which I desired my servant to lie down ; but it was too dark to see much of him till I called to him to take off his dark blue embroidered jacket, and as soon as he did so, and lay in his white shirt, I could distinctly see “how his body was laid.” The tomb being new, the paving slab, which was ultimately to conceal the entire entrance, had not been laid over the opening in the floor of the vestibule. It was therefore possible for the Jews to see the Governor’s seal affixed to the rolling stone. This disposed of tests Nos. 12 and 13, and the facts were so striking in their undesigned coincidence with the New Testament narrative, that at that time I had no doubt I was looking on the spot where the body of Jesus had lain. I do not feel sure of it now, but ever since I have felt assured that if that tomb is not the tomb, it must have been one in that neighbourhood, and similar to it. It is not above seven minutes’ walk from the place where, according to Rosen, Josephus, Tobler, &c., the city suburb extended in our Lord’s time. It is near a high road, and, though I altogether repudiate the cocksureness of some of our friends, it has a stronger claim than any other existing sepulchre to the honour of having been the mortuary chamber in which our Lord’s body was temporarily laid. But certainty is forbidden us ; good reasons for

which are not far to seek. Meantime we may well utilise the help it affords us in realising the most important event that ever took place in the world.

God forbid that in this faithless age I should speak scornfully even of erroneous beliefs. I can never forget how, on one occasion, I climbed to the top of that canopy (is it a baldachino ?) covering the traditional tomb, and lay there for an hour or more unobserved ; gazing down through the open work I saw group after group of frowsy pilgrims from the farthest corners of Russia, pressing as near as they could get to the tomb slab to pour out their sorrows, while streaming tears poured down brown cheeks—not of women only, but of hardy men, whose passionate devotion shamed my own cold heart, because they believed, what I knew was a fable, that their dear Lord and mine had been buried in that tiny marble cabinet, which monks persuaded Constantine and Helena had been the sepulchre of Christ.

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### THE RUIN AT KHURBET BEIT SAWIR.

By Rev. J. E. HANAUER and Dr. E. W. GURNEY MASTERMAN.

WE are sending some photographs taken by us when on a visit to a ruin north of the new carriage road to Hebron, just before the said road turns south to El Arrûb, and situated some 350 paces from the road itself, near the 20th kilometre stone from Jerusalem.

The photographs are not a great success, as the day was a bad one, and a fine rain was actually falling when they were being taken, but they show in a general view the megalithic nature of the remains to which we wish to call attention.

In the "Memoirs," vol. iii, p. 351, under the heading "Khûrbet Beit Sawir," the ruin is thus referred to :—"About half a mile to the south" (*i.e.*, of Khûrbet Beit Sawir) "is an ancient tower, visible from the Hebron Road ; it is 22 paces square, and consists of large, roughly-squared stones 8 or 9 feet long, 5 feet wide, and 1 foot 4 inches thick. The stone is much worn, and there is no trace of mortar. The tower has fallen over to the south, and on that side is a large cistern, the mouth partly closed by a slab like those in the tower. This tower has an appearance of great antiquity. Some three or four courses" (there are still, as the photographs show, six in the western wall) "remain in the walls," which, according to our measurements of January 9th, 1901, form two sides of a square of 14 metres outside and 12·50 inside.