

RACHEL'S SEPULCHRE.

To avoid the difficulty about Ramah, one writer has placed Rachel's Sepulchre *north* of Jerusalem.

The site, however, at Kubbet Rahil marked out by common tradition agrees well with Genesis xxxv, 16. "They journeyed from Bethel, and thence was but a *little way* (Chabrah) to come to Ephrath," which is Bethlehem. This term has been rated as high as *four miles*, but as (2 Kings v, 19) Gehazi being pressed for time, could hardly afford to give Naaman £0 much start, a mile is more than sufficient, so that the accepted site may be regarded as practically correct.

The punishment of Gehazi, as well as Elisha's death and tomb, ought (it seems to me) to be put at Abel-Meholah. Then "the Ophel" (A. V. tower, 2 Kings v, 24) would be one of the adjacent Tells in the Jordan Valley.

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PALESTINE—AS IT IS, AND AS IT MIGHT BE.

EXTRACTED FROM A LETTER TO THE "TIMES."

"1. Nothing can well exceed the desolateness of much of it. Trees it is for 20 or 30 miles together, forests which did exist 30 years ago (*e.g.* on Mount Carmel and Mount Tabor) fast disappearing, rich plains of the finest garden soil asking to be cultivated, at best but scratched up a few inches deep in patches, with no hedges or boundaries, mountain terraces natural, or artificially formed, ready to be planted with vines, as the German colony are doing at the foot of Mount Carmel; the villages nothing but mud huts, dust, dirt, and squalor; the inhabitants with scarce clothing enough for decency, their houses—ovens; large tracts without a horse or cow, sheep or dog; no pretence at roads except from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and this like a cart road over a ploughed field, the rest at best like sheep-walks on the Downs of Sussex, but for far the most part like the dry bed of the most rocky river, where amid blocks of stone each makes his way at a footpace as best he can, or on smooth, sloping rocks or over loose stones thrown down from the old walls on either side, which no one offers a finger to remove; nothing upon wheels, not so much as a barrow, to be met with in a ride of over 300 miles.

"2. Everything is taxed: every fruit-tree, so none now are planted; every cow or horse, &c.; every vegetable sold out of a private garden. Every eighth egg is not taxed but taken by the Government. In some places the taxes of the district are sold to the highest bidder. The farmer is unable to sell a measure of his corn till all has been collected into a