

THE SITE OF GOLGOTHA AND THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

By GRAY HILL, Esq.

I AM not competent to discuss this question on historical grounds. But I may say that looking down upon Jerusalem from my house on Mount Scopus, as I have done daily for about two months in every year for many years past, I find it quite incredible that the Church of the Sepulchre, which is reputed to contain the true tomb and also Calvary, can have been outside the second wall at the period of the Crucifixion. Where could the population which the city must then have held, even at ordinary seasons of the year, have lived, and how is it possible that the vast numbers resorting to it at the time of the great feasts could have been accommodated if this was the case? There are probably about 70,000 people living within and without the walls to-day, but I should think not more than half of this number are now dwelling within; and yet there is but little vacant land within not included in the area of the Haram, which must at that time have been, as it is now, clear of dwelling places.

I may mention that Canon MacColl is entirely mistaken in saying that the plot of ground containing "Gordon's Tomb" is not intrinsically worth £20.¹ The piece of land adjoining it to the south, and lying between it and the main road running past the Damascus Gate, which comprises twice the area of the place in question, has lately been sold for a large sum. I am told, in answer to inquiries, that no less than 2,500 napoleons (£2,000) was paid for it.

The value of the land in and close to Jerusalem has risen very greatly within the last few years, and extraordinarily high prices have been paid for portions of the strip lying between the north wall and the road above mentioned, and extending from the New to the Damascus Gate. The chief part of that strip is now enclosed and planted or built on, and I am informed that the lowest portion—that hitherto occupied by a small gipsy encampment—has just been bought for a large sum.

I think that when the purchase of "Gordon's Tomb" was first proposed Canon MacColl wrote to the "Times" urging that a title could not be obtained which would be safe from the interference of the Turkish Government. This also is quite erroneous. Much of the land in and about Jerusalem belongs to Christians without any such interference. I myself have held land on Scopus for the last 12 years, and have from time to time purchased more, without any difficulty of the kind.

The question of the site of the sepulchre is full of interest, and is worthy of fair and temperate argument upon both sides. There is surely

¹ Canon MacColl probably referred to the date of purchase when land was much less valuable than it is now.—ED.

no reason for heat in the discussion. And whether "Gordon's Tomb" be the true sepulchre or not, the fact that it is a rock-cut tomb in a garden close to an ancient place of execution a little outside the present walls of Jerusalem, which has remained undisturbed for many centuries makes it worthy of acquisition and maintenance.

MERE HALL, BIRKENHEAD,
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NOTES ON "DU BIMETALLISME CHEZ LES HÉBREUX.

By Lieut.-General Sir CHARLES WARREN, K.C.B., F.R.S.

VICOMTE FRANÇOIS DE SALIGNAC FÉNELON has published a corrected edition of his pamphlet "Du Bimetallisme chez les Hébreux," in which he gives the values of the Hebrew and Roman weights and measures of capacity, and the weights of the gold and silver minæ, and of the shekel and daric. His estimates are founded on the supposition that the Maccabean shekel weighed exactly 14 grammes, and was the 3,000th part of a talent of 42,000 grammes.

In his results his measures throughout differ about 1 per cent. from the measures I have given in Tables V, VIII, and X, "The Ancient Standards of Measure in the East," *Quarterly Statement*, July and October, 1899.

Fourteen grammes are equal to about 216·048 Imperial grains; but the Maccabean shekels weigh about 218 Imperial grains. Had M. Fénelon taken the full weight of the shekel in grammes and parts of grammes instead of the round number, 14 grammes, his results would have accorded exactly with those I have given in Tables V, VIII, and X above alluded to, and his gold and silver minæ would also have been the same. The only discrepancy is in regard to the golden daric; he arrives at a golden daric of 121·2 Imperial grains, while I have arrived at one of 131 Imperial grains.

We have started from two opposite extremes, and have arrived (except in the case mentioned) at exactly the same conclusions. He has started from the Maccabean shekel and a stone talent found at Jerusalem weighing about 42,000 grammes, while I have started from the ancient cubit of 20·6109 inches, and derive everything from it without reference to existing weights.