

have demonstrated from what accounts of its size I could gather, for the Sakhra is doubtless the most marvellously interesting relic almost in the globe, and we cannot wonder at the veneration paid to it, though blindly, therefore, by the Mohammedans—in preserving it, enclosing with rails, and making it the centre of their great Dome. As far as I am aware, it has scarcely been minutely enough described—which is the case with many monuments which most of us cannot go and measure for ourselves.

VI. Can anyone say whether a window into a tomb is very rare, or are there other cases like "Gordon's Tomb" and 'Conder's in this feature?

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## MUD SHOWERS AND THEIR EFFECT ON BUILDINGS IN PALESTINE.

By the Rev. J. E. HANAUER.

LAST May I happened to spend a Sunday at Nazareth. About fourteen years had elapsed since I had last visited the place, and on this occasion I was very much surprised at the change that had during that time taken place in the colour of buildings there. The Protestant Church, for instance, which in 1878 was fresh, white, and conspicuous, had weathered into a light brown or yellowish tint, and was difficult to distinguish from other buildings near it; whilst, from the same causes, it was scarcely possible to recognise the Orphanage of the Society for Female Education in the East, situated on the hill-side high above the town, and which, when new, could easily be seen at a great distance.

So struck was I with this circumstance that I resolved that on my return to Jerusalem I would pay particular attention to the colour of buildings there.

The first discovery I made was that whether or not familiarity breeds contempt, it was certain that in my case it had produced blindness, for it was only now (when my special attention was drawn to the subject) that I noticed, what I had seen thousands of times before and yet never observed, namely—that whilst the city walls and towers were, generally speaking, both externally and internally, grey on their northern and western faces, which are most exposed to rain, yet that their southern and eastern faces, whether external or internal, were of different shades of tawny yellow, ochre, or brown. Closer examination showed that this remarkable difference of colour in the eastern and southern faces from that of the western or northern was due, not merely to greater exposure to sunshine and protection from rain on the east and south, *but to the presence of a curious coating or pigment* varying, according to the hardness of the stone it adhered to (or to the angle of protection and cover afforded by projections or buildings near), in the shades of yellow, ochre, and brown; and further, that these tawny patches of colour are found not only on

old buildings such as the city walls, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and minarets, &c., but also, and with equal richness of colour, on some modern ones known to have been built before 1860 for instance, on the south wall of Christ Church, and on the oldest part of Bishop Gobat's School.

These observations led me to make special enquiries on the subject and I was told by several old European residents that the yellow colour was caused by a remarkable shower of yellow mud which fell about thirty-five years ago.

I was also told that Professor Roth of Munich, who happened to be here at the time, examined this yellow mud and found it to consist of sand similar to that found in some parts of the Sinaitic peninsula and to contain many minute shells also found in that region.

Mr. Schick has, in answer to my written enquiry, kindly favoured me with the following note :—

“The rain of clay happened in the year 1857. I think it was in February. There were showers of rain before, then scirocco came for a few days. That evening the sun disappeared and then, in the night, there followed a shower of rain which brought down all the very fine dust in the air. All channels were stopped up with a sort of fine clay of yellow colour, and everything exposed was painted yellow, but the following rains washed off a good deal. ‘Gakooli’ stones, however, remained yellow, as they usually become by the process of exposure to sun and rain, whereas harder stones keep the natural colour. Such a rain mingled with clay has since then fallen on several occasions, but only slightly, and never in any quantity worthy of comparison with that above mentioned. Sometimes small shells fall with it or may be detected in the sediment.”

I have ventured to call attention to this fact because I do not remember having noticed any mention of it in works on Palestine, and I therefore hope it may not be uninteresting to readers of your valuable *Quarterly Statement*.

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## ANCIENT JERUSALEM.

*Zion or Acra, South, not North, of the Temple.*

By the Rev. W. F. BIRCH.

SIR CHARLES WILSON, in his lecture on Ancient Jerusalem, places Acra, and consequently the stronghold of Zion, north of the Temple. This position seemed to have been so riddled by the arguments given in the *Quarterly Statement*, 1888, p. 44, and 1886, p. 26, that I thought it was clearly untenable. It was with much surprise, then, that I found so cautious and able an authority on Jerusalem supporting the northern site. In self-defence I feel called upon to examine his theory, as