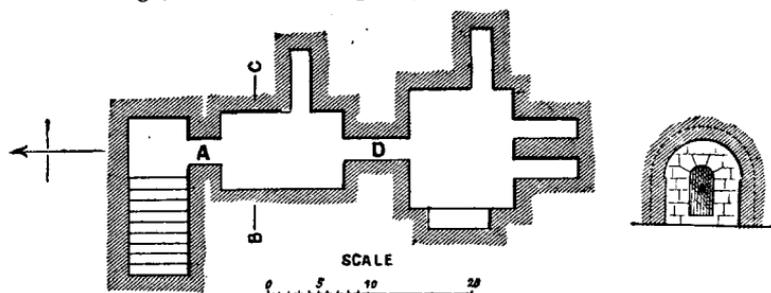


NOTES ON A TOMB OPENED AT JEBATA, AND ON MONUMENTS FOUND AT NABLOUS.

BY LAURENCE OLIPHANT.

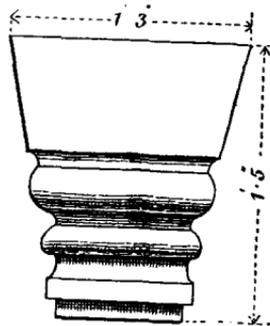
HAIFA, 21st January, 1885.

HAVING received intelligence from a native that the villagers of Jebata (Sheet 5, M. *i*) while excavating for stone for their building operations, had unearthed what he termed a subterranean abode, but which I conjectured to be a tomb, I proceeded to that place in order to examine it. The sheikh and most of the villagers accompanied me to the spot; here they had laid bare a flight of nine stone steps leading down to an open court about 6 feet square—the niches formed of cemented masonry, the stones averaging 2 feet by 18 inches, but in some instances exceeding those dimensions. The height from the *débris* which had accumulated on the floor to the top of the masonry was about 11 feet, above which were 2 feet of soil. From this open court a passage 3 feet long, 2 feet 6 inches wide, and 5 feet high, marked A in the plan (Section BC), led to a chamber 14 feet



long, 8 feet broad, and 8 feet 6 inches high, the walls consisting of plain chiselled stones set with mortar in courses of from 2 feet to 2 feet 6 inches in height. This chamber differs from the very few hitherto discovered in Palestine, and which seem confined to Galilee, in that the stones are set in mortar. On the left of the chamber was a single koka, which had been a good deal destroyed by the recent excavations of the villagers, but the chamber itself was in perfect order, and in fact in such good condition that it was difficult to realise that it was an ancient construction. The roof was vaulted, and of solid masonry. In the centre of the east wall was an entrance, D, exactly corresponding to the one marked A, excepting that the passage was 7 feet 6 inches in length. It led into a chamber hewn out of the solid rock, 12 feet by 10 feet 6 inches and 6 feet 6 inches in height; this contained three kokim and a loculus under an arcosolium, but the side of the loculus, as well as those of the kokim, had been much injured. The villagers told us that they had found bones in the loculus, and some fragments of pottery in this chamber. Not far from these tombs was another similar excavation, the entrance to which presented the appearance of that to an ordinary cave; but on entering it we found ourselves in

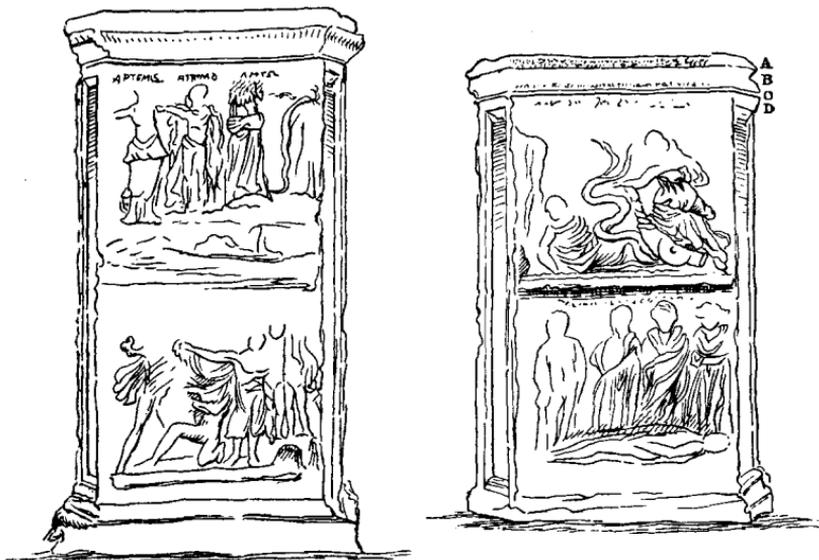
a small circular rock-hewn chamber, the floor so covered with rubble that it was not possible to stand upright. In the centre of the roof was an aperture 18 inches square, carefully hewn, and from it led a passage of masonry, the stones, also set in mortar, 2 feet 6 inches broad, and about 5 feet to the point where it was completely choked with earth; had we been able to spare the time to excavate we should have found probably that it led into a tomb. The entrance to this passage was almost completely blocked by the handsome capital of an Ionic column, the column itself 18 inches in diameter. On further examining the stones strewn in the vicinity, and some of which we were told by the natives they had unearthed, we found one on which was carved a seven-branched candlestick, one which may have served as a keystone, a sarcophagus, several fragments of columns, and a monolith standing 10 feet from the *débris* at its base, with grooves and lots similar to others which I have seen at Dubil on Carmel, but taller. I can only imagine it to have formed part of some olive-pressing machinery. In the neighbouring rocks were vats and winepresses. It is not unlikely



that next summer the natives will undertake further quarrying operations, when new discoveries may be brought to light, the more especially as all the existing indications go to show that Jebata, the ancient Gabatha, must formerly have been a place of some importance.

I have been fortunate in obtaining a glimpse of some monuments recently discovered during some municipal improvements now in progress at Nablous, which are destined for the Museum at Constantinople, and of which I send you such hurried and imperfect sketches as I was able to take, with copies of inscriptions. They were in such positions that it was extremely difficult to take squeezes, nor were the conditions propitious for my doing so. The one which I forward was of an inscription much defaced, on which I can only make out the words **ΤΟΝ ΤΡΙΠΟΔ**, but perhaps others may be more successful. Many of the letters in the other inscriptions were so much effaced as to be rendered doubtful, and I have left them imperfect; but it will not be difficult, with more time than I have been able to give to them, to make the necessary corrections. The monuments which I have seen consist of two statues, one of a draped male

figure, life size ; the head, right arm, and feet were missing. The other was a smaller draped male figure, the head and feet of which were also missing. The most interesting object was a triangular pedestal, 40 inches high, with slightly curved sides 22 inches long, and squared angles 8 inches across. The three sides contained six tableaux *in basso relievo*, one of them a good deal mutilated, representing, amongst others, incidents in the life and labours of Hercules, in whose honour possibly the statue which once stood upon the pedestal was erected. The first tableau represents a figure in a



chariot struggling apparently with a hydra. Above this, on the upper moulding of the cornice, was the inscription (marked A)—

ΝΙΟΣΘΗΚΕΝΑΤΘΙΔΟΣΕΚ ΣΑΣ
 ΝΕΚΕΝΕΝΤΘΥΠΟΛΕΣΣΙΝΑΡΙΣ ΣΚΕΝΑΠΑΣΙΝ

Below this (marked B) was the following :—

ΚΑΛΛΕΙΚΛΙΜΕΙΦΘΙ- -ΚΑΙΧΑΡΙΣΙΝΠΛΟΦΕΡΟΝ

and below this (C)—

ΤΟΥΙΩΓ·ΚΑΙ·ΑΓΟΝΙΦΟ·Ι- -ΛΙΑΜΕΤΑΙ·ΚΑΙ·ΙΗΘΕΝ

The lower section represented three draped figures standing : on their right a nude male figure standing ; at their feet a prostrate nude male figure ; above them was the inscription (D)—

ΤΟΝΑΧΕΛΩΝ

The upper section of the next side represented Leto Apollo and Artemis, with their names above them in the following order:—

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ	ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ	ΛΗΤΩ
Nude to the waist.	Nude right arm over Artemis's shoulder, with a cloak hanging down his back and over his arm.	Completely draped, with a snake apparently on the left.

The lower section of this side represented five figures, behind a group of four figures, of whom two were naked men wrestling, the other two were naked, one standing with outstretched arm, and one on a sort of stool; above them the inscription, partly illegible,—

ΤΑ  ΠΙΤΟΝΜΕ

and over some of the figures were the letters, ΝΩΤ ΙΥΡΟ

On the third side, which I had no opportunity of sketching, on the upper section, under the words ΤΡΟΦΟΙ ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ, was a nude infant struggling with a serpent between two draped female figures—evidently Hercules strangling the serpents sent against him by Hera. On the lower section of this side, and under the words ΘΗΣΕΥΣ ΓΝΩΡΙΣΜΑΤΑ, was a much defaced nude figure on the left, supporting what seemed to be a full sack, and on the right three draped figures.

I understand that they are continuing to find objects of interest at Nablous, which I trust shortly to have an opportunity of going to examine.

THE PASSAGE OF THE ISRAELITES ACROSS THE RED SEA.

BY SIR JOHN COODE.

THE *Quarterly Statement* for April of last year contained an interesting article by Professor Hull, of Dublin, on "The Relations of Land and Sea in the Isthmus of Suez at the time of the Exodus," wherein he deals with the question of the actual position of the passage of the Red Sea by the Children of Israel.

Professor Hull justly remarks that, according to the present position of land and water, there is a direct landway across into the "wilderness of Etham," and he asks whether, if at the time of the Exodus the physical conditions of the district north of Suez had been the same as they are now (of course he disregards for the moment the existence of the Suez Canal), there would have been cause for the cry of despair from the Israelites, or