

## THE TOMB OF HIRAM.

BY BRO. BOB MORRIS.

I HAVE found but few objects in my Palestinian researches of so much interest to my mind, both in a Masonic and archæological point of view, as the great monument standing six miles east of Tyre, and designated by the natives *Kabr Hiram*, "the Sepulchre of Hiram." Travellers through Syria and Palestine have so rarely taken this route (from Tyre to Jibnin) that until 1833 there was no allusion to it in their books so far as I can discover. "Monro," vol. ii. p. 25, gives the earliest account of it, but his notice is brief. Thomson, in his "Land and Book," is more diffuse. Robinson, in "Biblical Researches," vol. iii. pp. 385, *et seq.*, goes out of his actual cold and dull manner, and really gets up a little animation, while referring to *Kabr Hiram*. Shall I quote him?—

"We came (June 23rd, 1840,) to one of the most remarkable monuments of antiquity yet remaining in the Holy Land. It is an immense sarcophagus of limestone, resting upon a lofty pedestal of large hewn stones, a conspicuous, ancient tomb, bearing among the common people the name of *Kabr Hairan*, "Sepulchre of Hiram." The sarcophagus measures twelve feet long by six in height and breadth; the lid is three feet thick and remains in its original position; but a hole has been broken through the sarcophagus (also the superincumbent stone or lid, R. M.) at one end. The pedestal consists of

three layers (four layers, R. M.) of the like species of stone, each three feet thick (but see my exacter measurement, R. M.), the upper layer projecting above the others; the stones are large, and one of them measures nine feet in length. This grey weather-beaten monument stands here alone and solitary bearing the marks of high antiquity."

During my itineracy among sacred scenes, I have visited this spot so memorable for the tradition that associates it with one of our ancient Grand Masters. On the first occasion, April 15th, I had no assistant, save some natives, who knew as little of my language as I knew of theirs. Nevertheless, I made all the measurement wanted and took occasion of the inspiration of the hour to draft a few lines with which I will not torture your readers at present. On the second visit, May 22, I had the valued aid of my associate, D. W. Thomson, Esq., with whom I verified and corrected my former measurements and noted down every important fact connected with this ancient relic.

The sepulchre of Hiram stands directly in the prolongation of the (original) island and (present) isthmus of Tyre upon a spur of the Lebanon at exactly the distance from that city that "lends enchantment" to the view. Originally, when Tyre was the metropolis of this coast, perhaps of the world, and the whole plain east of it was covered with the splendid edifices