

THE ROCK TOMBS OF EL MEDYEH.

A PAPER written by Dr. Sandreczki, which appeared in our *Quarterly Statement* (No. V.) of March 31, 1870, called attention to the Tombs at El Medyeh, as being those raised by Simon Maccabæus for himself and his brethren. Besides arguing with great force on behalf of this site, Dr. Sandreczki described carefully the ruins themselves. Since this was written, excavations have been made by M. Victor Guerin, which have been attended with remarkable results. The honour remains to Dr. Sandreczki of having, at least, pointed the way.

The following account is extracted from the *Globe* of July 20, 1870:—

“M. Victor Guerin, a French *savant*, who has for some years been engaged in antiquarian researches in the East, announces the discovery, at El Medyeh, the supposed site of the ancient Modin, of an edifice which must be identified with the tomb described in the Book of Maccabees, and by Josephus, as having been raised by Simon Maccabæus for himself, his parents, and his four brethren. The ruins stand on an eminence about a mile from El Medyeh, and present the appearance of a building of hewn stone now almost completely overthrown. M. Guerin commenced excavations at either extremity, and on the 27th of last month arrived at a chamber in the eastern end of which the walls were still to a great extent intact. After clearing away the *débris*, he discovered beneath the chamber a sepulchral vault two metres in length and one in width, and 70 centimetres deep. It was paved with mosaic work of red, black, and white stone, and was surrounded by a ledge which formerly supported the slabs which served at once for the flooring of the chamber and for the roof of the vault. Ten metres to the west of this a second chamber was discovered in a less perfect condition, and the remains of five others, with their respective vaults, could be distinctly traced. Each chamber we know was surmounted by a pyramid, and the place where these pyramids had been fitted into the rest of the building was still visible. The whole edifice measures 28 metres in length and $6\frac{1}{2}$ metres in width. It was surrounded by a portico resembling the peristyle of a Greek temple. The shaft of ten of the columns, which had formed the portico, each shaft 47 centimetres in diameter, were found among the ruins. This discovery removes all doubt as to the identity of the Medyeh with the ancient home of the family of the Maccabees.”