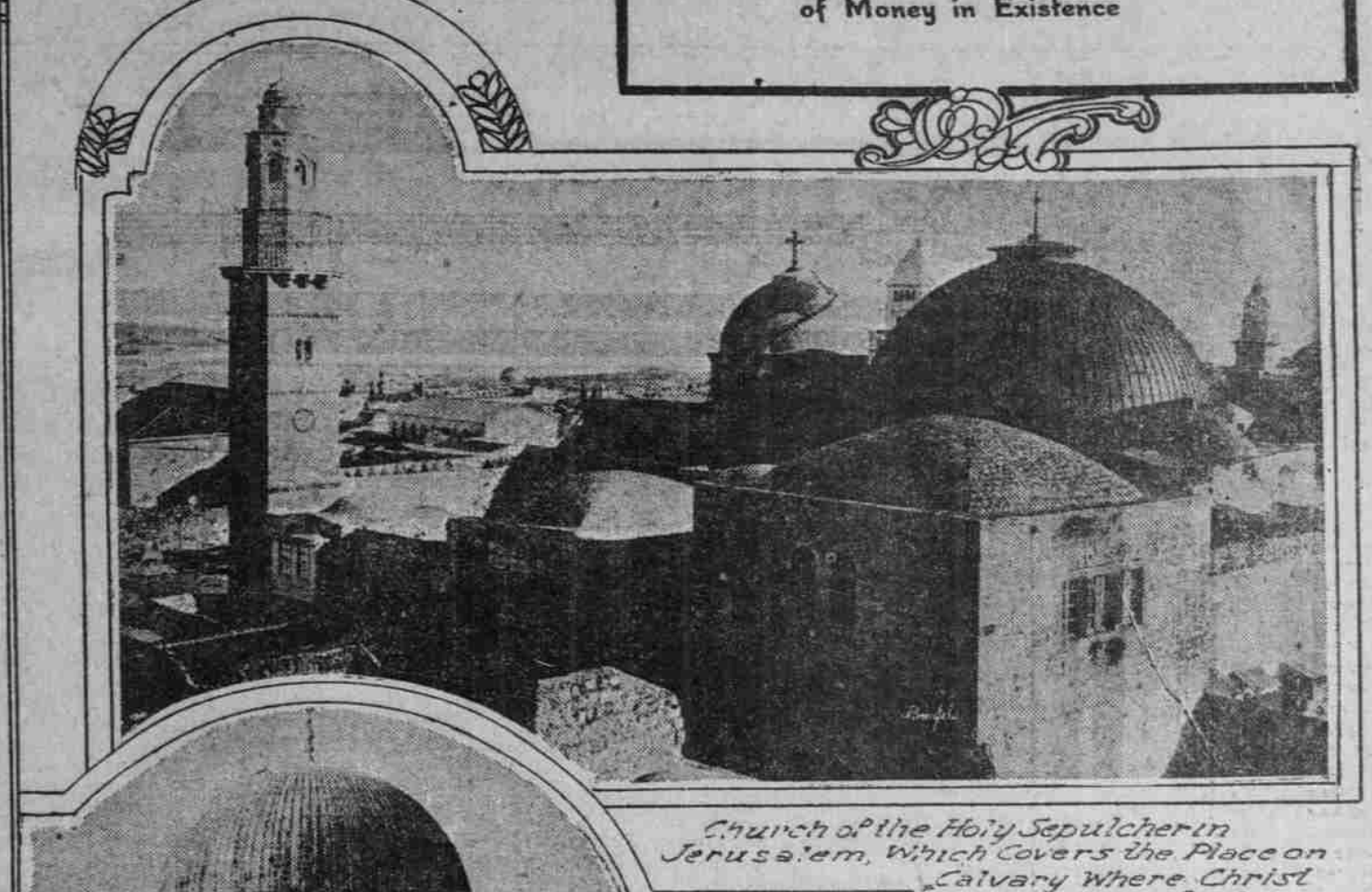
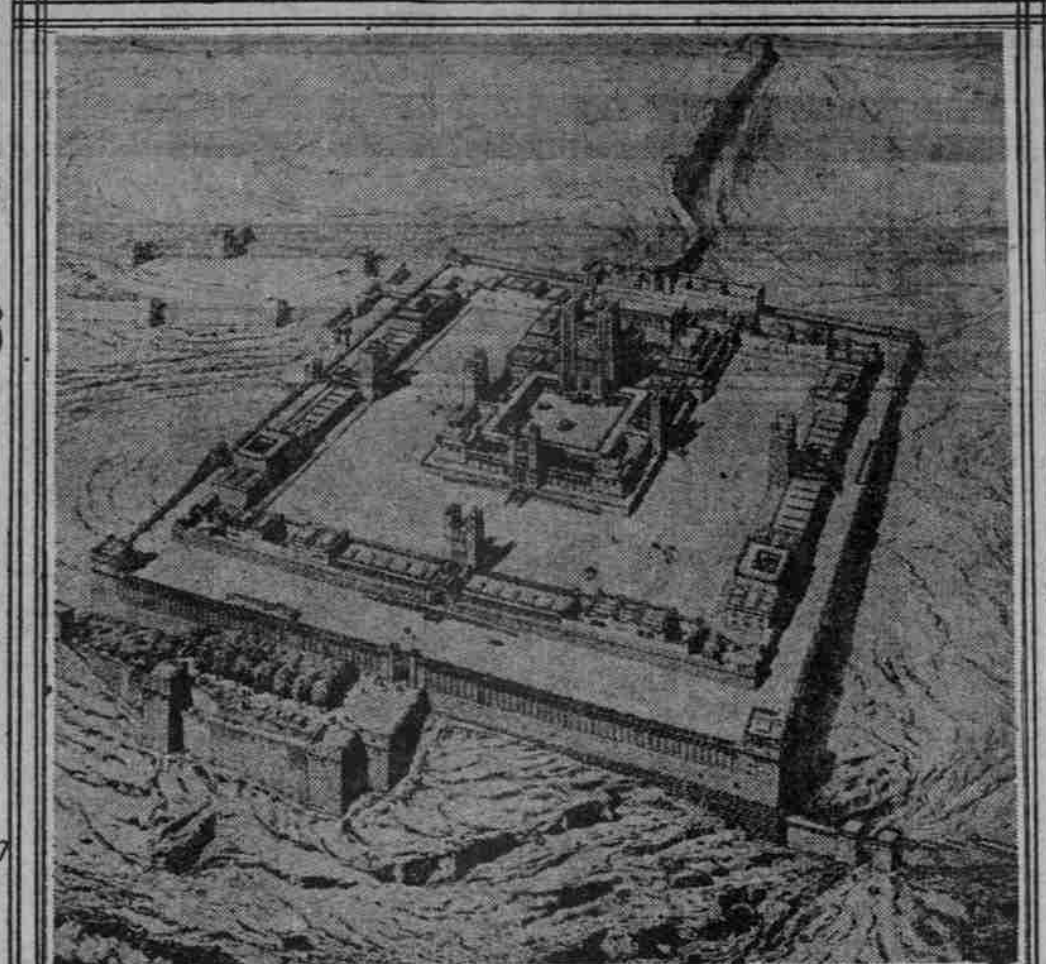


Widow's Mite Dug Up in Holy Land

Only Coin of Its Kind, Once Worth Fraction of Cent, Now Most Valuable Piece of Money in Existence



The Quadrant.
The Mite.
The As.
Three Coins in Common Circulation in Palestine in Jesus' Time.

Restoration of the Temple of Jerusalem

Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, Which Covers the Place on Calvary Where Christ Was Crucified.

BY RENE BACH.
PHILADELPHIA, June 19.—The famous "widow's mite" has recently come into the possession of the Philadelphia mint. It is the smallest coin ever circulated anywhere in the world, so far as can be ascertained, and was dug up close by the ancient site of the Temple of Jerusalem, in Palestine. A Baptist clergyman, the Rev. William Barclay, brought it to this country.

One readily recalls the Bible tale relating to the mite and the widow. Saint Mark narrates how Jesus who was walking along with some of his disciples, paused when he reached a point directly opposite the temple, and gazed with interest upon what was going on. There was quite a crowd assembled about a contribution box, placed in front of the building and guarded by priests in their official robes. Volunteer offerings were being made, and each person gave in proportion to his or her means, substantial citizens bestowing a considerable amount in gold and silver, intended to help in the maintenance of the ecclesiastical establishment.

"And Jesus" (according to Saint Mark) "beheld how the people cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much."

"And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing."

"And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, 'Verily I say unto you that this poor widow has cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury.'

"For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did

cast in all that she had, even all of her living."

Now, Mr. Dooley says in his witty way that when the Laird of Skibo gives away a dollar it "sounds like a water falling downstairs with a tray of dishes." And yet it must be owned that no gift ever bestowed, by Mr. Carnegie or anybody else, has made such a noise in the world as the two mites dropped into the contribution box by the poor widow of Jerusalem.

Realizing which, it is interesting to consider how much the widow's gift, in a merely pecuniary sense, amounted to. The English translation of the gospel of Saint Mark states that it was "half a farthing," but this is very far from being correct. It was not, as a matter of fact, anything like so much as that.

A numismatic expert has gone to the trouble of figuring the matter out with accuracy. He states that the unit of the ancient Roman coinage—Palestine in the time of Jesus, of course, was a Roman province—was the As, or pound. It weighed, originally, 12 ounces, and on it was stamped a sheep. Whence the word "pecuniary," relating to money, from the Lat in "pecus," meaning a flock.

But the As in the course of time underwent various changes. Being gradually reduced in size, and proportionately in value, it fell at length to a weight of half an ounce. This was what it weighed in the time of Jesus, when it was worth only a trifle over a farthing, or about half of one of our bronze cents.

It is necessary to make this explanation in order to show clearly and exactly what was the value of the widow's mite. For, if, ignoring the English translation of Saint Mark, we go back to the earlier Latin version, we find that it says: "There came then a certain poor widow, who cast in two minuta (mites), which make a quadrans." But the quadrans was the fourth of an As; so that the mite being the half of a quadrans, it must have had a value of only the eighth part of a farthing, or the 16th of a cent.

Thus it appears that the widow dropped into the contribution box two small coins, each of which was worth a 16th of a cent—which means that her offering amounted to one-eighth of a cent.

A fact worth considering in this connection is that metal money had a much greater purchasing power in those days than at present. The world's stock of gold and silver was comparatively small, and much of it was arbitrarily held by emperors, kings and nobles, in the form of treasure, decorations, etc., and by the priests in the temples devoted to the worship of the gods. Consequently what coin there was in circulation would then buy a great deal more in proportion to its face value than it would today. Probably it would not be too much to assume that the coins given by the widow to the Temple at Jerusalem were worth in purchasing power eight times as much as pieces corresponding to them in modern currency. If this be assumed the poor woman's offering was equivalent to about 1 cent.

Nobody knows exactly what the widow's mite was made of. The specimen in the Philadelphia mint is bronze of some sort, apparently, but not ordinary bronze. Probably it is composed

of copper and tin; but there is no possible way of determining the matter without destroying it, and it is too precious to be subjected to even the mildest test.

The weight of the mite in question is 10 grains. Its stamped design consists of nothing more than a capital Greek L, which looks exactly like an A without the cross-mark. The L stood for Lepton, which is what the coin was called in the days when it was in circulation. It was (as already stated) the smallest piece of metal money ever minted and possessed the least value—a fact which alone would give it more than a passing interest.

Now, when one speaks of the "minting" of the mite, one uses a term which hardly corresponds to our modern notion of coin making. For dyes, such as are now employed for the stamping of designs upon pieces of money, were unknown in the time of Jesus. In those days punches were used instead. The mite was cast in a mold of sand, after which the design was imprinted

on it by a hammer and punch. Of course, it was a slow method of making money, but the coinage in circulation was of comparatively small value, barter being largely employed then as a means of doing business without the help of a negotiable medium.

When an ancient Roman died a small piece of money was customarily placed in his mouth before consigning him to the tomb, in order that he might have the wherewithal to pay the fare to Charon, who was supposed to paddle departed souls across the River Styx, in the after world. In all likelihood the mite was frequently utilized for this purpose.

The mint of Philadelphia possesses what is believed to be the oldest piece of metal money ever made. It was minted at Aegina in 700 B. C., or thereabouts, and its design is in high relief, with a tortoise crawling across the face. There is no date on it, of course, the idea of putting dates on coins being unknown up to 400 years ago.

Naturally, when such crude processes

were employed, it could not be expected that the coins produced would be very symmetrical. Considered as a mechanical product, the pieces of money of the time of Christ were poor things compared with ours, but some of them were very artistic. And it may fairly be said that, later, the coinage of the Middle Ages, which was made by stamping disks out with shears out of metal sheets hammered to the desired thickness, was, much of it, superior in this latter respect to that of today.

In conclusion one might add that the coin of greatest interest mentioned in the New Testament, with the sole exception of the widow's mite, is that in which Judas bargained for the liberty and life of the Savior. Nobody knows, unfortunately, just what the piece of money was, though the common supposition is that it was a shekel—a coin about the size of our silver dollar. "Thirty pieces of silver" was the price received by the Betrayer—a sum which, if they were shekels, would be about equal in purchasing power to \$140 of our money.

When it is understood that the coun-

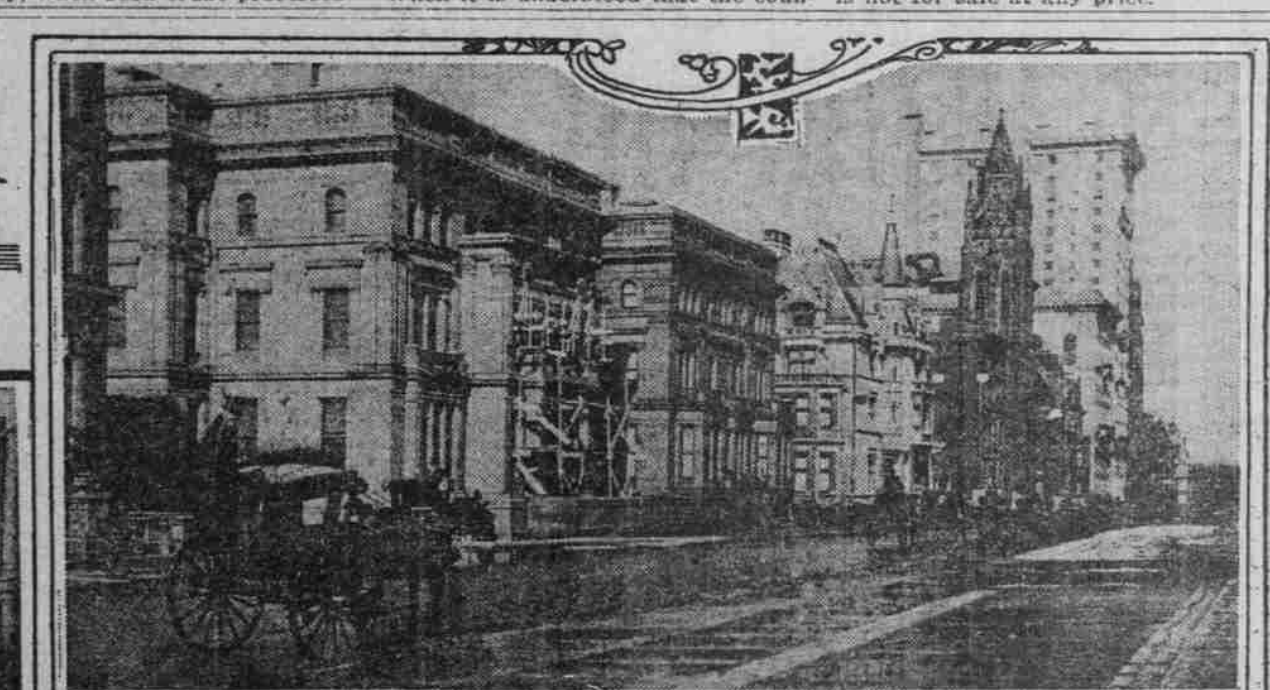
Children Who Find \$1,000 a Month Barely Enough to Live on



Alice and Ethel Vanderbilt, the Children of the Rich Have Every Encouragement to be Beautiful.



The Slums are the Largest Contributors to the Next Generation.



The So-called "Vanderbilt District" of Fifth Avenue. Children are Rarely Seen There.

NEW YORK.—The personal expense of a child in wealthy circumstances, from 5 to 15 years of age, may be properly reckoned at about \$1000 a month.

This inference is made from a number of recent court orders governing the expenditure of trust moneys in behalf of orphan boys and girls.

Indeed, \$1000 a month is to be regarded as a very moderate allowance in such cases. For the children of the rich nowadays usually start in life on a plane of substantial independence, occupying their own exclusive suites of apartments, and waited upon by their personal servants, who have nothing to do but to look after their comfort and obey their commands.

Such arrangements are made more easy by the small size of the multimillionaire's family. It is not likely that he has more than two children, because that is the number recognized as a well-bred and suitable limit. The social duties which impose themselves upon a fashionable woman do not permit Mrs. Midas to occupy herself beyond a certain point with affairs relat-

ing to the nursery. Besides, she must consider the preservation of her health and beauty, both of which are to her, all important.

It is mainly on this account that on Fifth avenue, in New York, one never beholds the spectacle of a wide-flung front door and a troop of merry-voiced youngsters issuing forth to play. There is no such joyous company consoled inside the walls of the palatial mansions of brick and stone, but only here and there a small boy or girl who is seen at intervals out walking with a maid, or, perchance, seeking amusement discreetly with two or three carefully-selected companions of his or her own social set.

The little Midas boy, who is 10 or 11 years of age, say, enjoys exclusive use of a sort of bachelor apartment in his own home, consisting of three rooms—bedroom, sitting-room and bath. To wait on him he has a maid and a governess, with the use of a man. This means that the man has other duties in the household, but at a summons from his young master's electric bell he is expected to drop everything and re-

spond. Every morning he gives the younger his "tub," the taking of which is not only a means of cleanliness but a part of early education in those habits which are becoming to a gentleman.

The suite assigned to little Miss Midas is similarly arranged, but furnished in a less substantial and more dainty way, as is appropriate to an apartment occupied by a young lady. Her personal establishment is in all respects as luxurious and complete as if she were grown up and out in society. The furniture in, all of it, of European manufacture, of light satin-wood, made and imported by special order. Her bed is an exquisite piece of art workmanship, and the chairs and sofas match it, as well as the dressing table, beneath the canopy top of which bunches of electric lights hang pendant.

The walls of the bedroom are covered with sky blue silk, put on in vertical pleats running from floor to ceiling, and with a flounce along the bottom edged with lace. The ceiling is adorned with the same material, drawn in pleats to the center, from which

requiring strength and endurance are a part of the education of girls as well as boys. If one would realize how far this idea is carried, let him go to Newport and see how the children of the so-called smart set, even to five or six years of age, of both sexes, take regular lessons in swimming and learn to paddle about and dive like ducks. Likewise they must learn to ride fearlessly, and nowadays youths of ten and twelve are instructed in the scientific management of automobiles.

Training of this kind possesses a practical value that is not to be overestimated. It hardens the body and the nervous system, and gives the child the sort of physical equipment that it needs to meet the wear and tear of the strenuous and incessantly active life which grown folks of great wealth and high fashion are accustomed to lead.

The children of our multimillionaires are simply and plainly clad, but their garments are very expensive, being made by the most fashionable tailors and dressmakers. Two thousand dollars a year is not considered too much to pay for the clothing of a little girl, whose gowns will cost from \$60 to \$75 apiece. She will need at least two dozen frocks, and perhaps 12 hats. Her shoe bill is a heavy item, inasmuch as all of her footwear is made to order at a high-priced boot-maker's. For the clothes of an infant as yet unborn from \$1500 to \$2000 is frequently spent.

Little Miss Midas has a regular allowance of pocket money, just like a grown-up young lady. When she is 10 years old she gets \$50 or \$40 a month.

At 16 she will receive \$1000 a year, and when she reaches the age of 18 her father will give her \$5000 or \$6000 per annum to supply her personal wants, including clothes. Thus the remarkable independence which she has enjoyed since babyhood will be continued up to the time when she marries. That she will not fail to marry may be taken for granted, because her dear papa is sure to present her a furnished house and a moderate fortune on her wedding day, and young women who are so situated do not look in vain for husbands.

Unquestionably the children of the rich do not have as good a time as boys and girls who are born to less fortunate circumstances. They are not allowed to play at will with other children, but the few companions with whom they are permitted to associate are carefully picked by their parents, usually with a view to subsequent advantage derivable from social importance.

Their toys, of course, are the most expensive purchasable, but it is doubtful if they enjoy them so much as everyday boys and girls do theirs. Little Miss Midas has a dollhouse which is a reproduction in miniature of a Fifth-avenue mansion, but it is almost too fine to play with. Somehow when a plaything becomes too gorgeous and costly it affords less amusement. Besides, when a youngster can have anything he wants simply for the asking and knows that such is the case, the fun is gone out of it.

Master Midas and his little sister are scarcely acquainted with their mother. How could it be otherwise, indeed?

(Continued on Page 7.)