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The Victoria Institute,  
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1919.

THE 608TH ORDINARY MEETING,  
 HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
 WESTMINSTER, ON MONDAY, MARCH 17TH, 1919,  
 AT 4.30 P.M.

ALFRED T. SCHOFIELD, ESQ., M.D., IN THE CHAIR.

The CHAIRMAN called upon the Secretary to read the Minutes of last Meeting.

The SECRETARY read the Minutes of the previous Meeting, which were confirmed and signed.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I call upon Dr. Rendle to read the Paper he is so kind as to bring before us this afternoon, I must call your attention to the circumstances under which he reads it. We were to have had the lecturer whose name is on the card, who was unfortunately taken ill at the last moment, and Colonel Mackinlay succeeded in getting Dr. Rendle to take his place, and this Society is greatly indebted to him.

I now call upon Dr. Rendle to read his Paper.

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*PLANTS OF THE BIBLE.* By ALFRED B. RENDLE, ESQ.,  
 D.Sc., F.R.S., F.L.S., Department of Botany, British  
 Museum, S.W.

MR. CHAIRMAN, ladies and gentlemen, I am afraid my action is not quite so magnanimous as has been described to you. The real facts of the matter are these: As Dr. Wernham was unfortunately taken ill, I felt it was my duty to supply his place, and do the best I could, and so I told Col. Mackinlay that if a talk on the Natural History of the Bible, more especially the Plants, would be welcome to the members of the Institute, I should be pleased to say something about it this afternoon. It is a subject with which I have had something to do in connection with the Tercentenary of the Bible. We prepared an exhibition at the Natural History Museum, and I had the arrangement of the botanical part of that exhibition, so if I refer to a book in the course of the lecture I am merely referring to some of my own notes. The exhibition as a whole has been removed, but the botanical section still remains in the Central Hall of the Museum.

As regards the natural history of the Bible, there is one other

point to which I should like to refer before I begin. My lecture is announced as being illustrated by lantern slides, and so it is. Col. Mackinlay went all over the place trying to obtain some, to these I have added a few of my own, and will supplement them with drawings and specimens, so if you will regard this as rather a scratch lecture I think perhaps we shall spend an interesting and instructive hour together.

If we are really to understand the natural history of Palestine, we must understand the country itself. You have not a map here, so I have had to draw roughly a chart on the board, which represents Palestine. At the top we have the Lebanon Range. Here is the valley of the Jordan, down the centre. Then there are two parallel ranges of mountains, the Lebanon and on the other side the Anti-Lebanon. The Lebanon runs from the north, and melts away in the hilly country in the north of Galilee. My drawing is not quite good, but it illustrates my point. The Lebanon breaks away into the hilly country of North Galilee; then spreads into the hilly country of Southern Galilee, until near Nazareth we get the Plain of Esdraelon.

South of this it rises again into the hilly country of Samaria, which continues in hills with valleys intervening, through Ephraim, Benjamin and Judah to the south of Hebron. Thus we have a mountainous or hilly country extending from Lebanon in the north until we get to Hebron. Below Hebron the hill country sinks into a wide region of broad valleys suitable for pasture, which gradually pass into the wilderness of Paran, a vast limestone plateau separated by a sandy desert from the granite mass of Sinai. The western shore is fringed by a succession of plains, narrower in the north, but broadening down to Philistia and passing into the desert.

A parallel range, the Anti-Lebanon, culminates in Mount Hermon, and the mountains continue as the trans-Jordanic chain, passing into the Mounts of Gilead and Moab. The hills which rise to the east gradually lose themselves in the great Eastern Desert. The river Jordan, after passing through the waters of Lake Merom, rapidly descends to the Sea of Galilee, and then winds tortuously in a deepening valley between its lower terraces, which form the Plain of the Jordan, rarely more than two or three miles wide. It occupies about two hundred miles in passing through a distance of about sixty miles. The valley then gradually widens, and runs between narrow terraces.

The Plain of the Jordan is a narrow strip on either side of the banks of the river. Above that the higher terraces stretch away to the foot of the hills. Finally the river passes into the Dead Sea, nearly 1300 ft. below the level of the sea. Thus there is between these two parallel mountain chains, and the mountainous country into which they break, a very low and narrow depression forming the Valley of the Jordan. The variety in physical character of Palestine is therefore very marked.

On the sea coast, where frost is unknown and there is abundant rain, the rich plains yield crops of corn, millet and fruits in abundance. The hill country, the chief seat of the population in the times when Palestine was at its most prosperous period, largely precluded the corn farms of the plains, and induced the careful terracing of the hills, where the vine, olive and fig were the staple products. The hills in the days of the Patriarchs were covered with forest, which gave cover to many wild beasts. As these forests were cut down to make room for terrace cultivation, they were replaced by the olive and vine.

It is a serious matter to strip a country of its forest. The presence of forest helps the rainfall, and if you get rid of forest you may have a country which has been flourishing subjected to a very trying period of drought. During the period of anarchy and misrule which followed the fall of the Roman Empire the terraces were greatly neglected, the supporting walls crumbled, or were destroyed, and the soil was washed down into the valleys by the rain, so that where there were once flourishing vineyards, olive gardens and fig gardens there are now bare spaces of rock, and as the trees were destroyed there has been a diminution of the rain, and the country has been subjected to periodic droughts. We find references in the times of the Israelitish kings to these forests, the Forest of Hamath, the Wood of Ziph, and so on.

Arid conditions have replaced very largely the fertile conditions of Judah and Israel at the present day. In the highlands of Gilead across the Jordan we can get a picture of the kind of country which the Holy Land presented during the time of the Patriarchs. Beyond the Jordan was the portion of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh, and there was never the population there that there was on this side of the Jordan. There was plenty of room in the open glades and valleys among the mountains for

the cultivation of corn, and there was no need to terrace the steeper slopes. From this we can form a very fair idea of what the country round Shechem and Bethel was like in the time when Abraham first visited it, and during the succeeding few hundred years.

The highest mountains are covered with pine, evergreens and other shrubs, lower down are semi-tropical trees, yielding, as we descend into the Jordan Valley, to the jujube, oleander and palm. In open glades corn is grown and olives planted, and the streams are fringed with oleander. Further south we find an open region of fine turf, well-watered and covered with flocks, stretching to the east to the fertile corn lands of Syria; and that again gives a picture of the kind of country in the south of Hebron round about Beersheba, a very open grazing country. In the extreme south is a tropical desert, with a characteristic surface of broken stone and shingle, and a vegetation of scattered, stunted bushes one foot or two feet high.

On the north the conditions are totally different; and towards the east we get the great Assyrian Desert. The most remarkable feature is the Jordan Valley, which we may describe as a tropical oasis. The Nile is a fertilising stream, which overflows its valleys and spreads its fertilising influence far and wide on its banks. "Cast thy bread upon the waters," etc., applies to the Nile, but not to the Jordan. The Jordan winds through what is practically a barren desert, with here and there an oasis of very deep green and remarkably vigorous vegetation.

Owing to the great depression the Jordan Valley is extremely sheltered and the sun is very hot, so that where there is sufficient moisture you have a remarkably vigorous vegetation; in fact it is a tropical vegetation. For instance, in the marshes as far north as Lake Merom, growing by the side of the lake, are acres of papyrus, now extinct in Egypt, but which in Bible times was the bulrush of the Nile. It reaches sixteen feet high, and occurs also in the Plain of Gennesaret on the west of the Lake of Galilee.

The date palm was abundant here in the time of Josephus. Below the lake the palm still occurs on the east side, but there are comparatively few. The oleander fringes the river and its streamlets, and many other trees unknown in the rest of Palestine occur. In certain sheltered spots, such as the Plains of Shittim on the north-east of the Dead Sea and of Jericho on the north-west, the climate is truly tropical. The corn ripens in March, and melons ripen in winter. Birds of tropical affinity also

frequent these favoured spots, and the butterflies recall those of Nubia and Abyssinia.

There are two characteristic features about the natural history of Palestine. First its isolation, shut in by the sea, the desert, and the snow mountains; and then the extraordinary variety of its physical geography.

It is estimated that about 120 plants are mentioned in the Bible, and, as in the case of the animals, it is often difficult or impossible to associate the Hebrew name with a specific plant. I must confine my remarks to-day to plants, and I think that will take all the time we have at our disposal.

We must remember two things. The men who were put in charge of the translation of the Bible were not scientists, and in the second place, even if they had been scientists, science had not advanced far at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and practically nothing was known about the natural history of Palestine—in fact, it was not until Canon Tristram spent a year, from fourteen to fifteen years ago, in very careful collection and observation, and until his observations were published, that we had anything at all like an adequate idea of the natural history of Palestine. Hence the names in the Authorised Version were simply an effort, well meaning enough, to express in English the plant referred to, and in some cases the translators have not attempted to find an English equivalent.

The name Gopher wood is simply a transliteration. The word occurs only once, and may be the same as Copher, the Cypress, which is very common in Chaldea and Armenia, and from its toughness is very well suited for shipbuilding. In many cases words have been used which are not correct, as in the case of the Rose, Chestnut, Oak, Terebinth. Some have very general application, as Bramble or Thorn, and it is hopeless to pin down any particular plant to any special term. There is another term, "bitter herbs," which is one of very wide meaning; as Canon Tristram points out, the inhabitants of Palestine used a great variety of herbs in their salads.

I referred just now to one of the woods. I might refer to a second wood mentioned in the Bible, the Almug or Algom tree, which was imported by Hiram, King of Tyre, from Ophir. The wood was used in the King's house and for musical instruments, and it was evidently a very precious wood, and has been identified with the red Sandal-wood of India, which is of a very red colour, and is still used in the East. Or it may have been the true

Sandal-wood, which is very commonly used in India in carving and cabinet-making. Another wood is the timber which was used in the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the Shittim wood, or wood of the Shittar tree, which is repeatedly referred to. There is very little difficulty in identifying this, because practically the only tree available in the Arabian Desert is the Acacia, which flourishes in the driest situations. The timber of a tree growing very slowly would be hard and close-grained. The tree is also of good commercial value, as it yields gum-arabic. We find names of places derived from the wood, such as the Plain of Shittim, from the trees occurring there. As you will remember, it was the last camping-place of the children of Israel before they crossed the Jordan.

Then it may perhaps be interesting to run through a few of the trees and shrubs mentioned in the Bible, such as the Almond tree, frequently mentioned, where the flowers appear before the leaves; you read of Aaron's rod that budded. There is the Apple which occurs in the Song of Solomon. "Feed me with apples for I am sick of love." There is also a reference to the fragrance of an apple, and also to the pleasant shade of the apple tree. There is also an apple mentioned in Proverbs: "Apples of gold in pictures of silver." There have been a great many suggestions about this. It has been suggested that it was a Quince which was meant; but I do not think anybody would have eaten a Quince. Then some say it was a Citron; but a Citron would not be eaten raw.

Canon Tristram makes a suggestion which I think fulfils all the necessary conditions—namely, the Apricot. This is a fruit which is very beautiful to look at, is very fragrant and has a very pleasant taste, and if we accept that I think we have an explanation of "apples of gold in pictures of silver," for the foliage is bright in contrast with the golden fruit. The Apricot was not indigenous to Palestine, but was introduced from Armenia, and is now one of the commonest trees in the country. Then we find one or two references to the Chestnut tree, but again the Chestnut is not indigenous to Palestine. The Revised Version has altered this, and correctly rendered it the Plane tree, which is a very familiar tree to us in London.

Then there is the Cypress tree, which I have referred to as the tree associated with the Gopher wood from which Noah built the Ark. This is a native of Armenia, and very probably also

includes the Fir tree, which is mentioned now and again in the Bible, as well as the Cypress.

One of the most interesting trees of the Bible is the Cedar, the Cedar of Lebanon. There is a little confusion about this. The term is applied to trees generally belonging to the forests and mountains of Lebanon. Although the Cedar seems to be dying out on the mountains of Lebanon, there are very fine trees on the Taurus mountains, from fifty feet to eighty feet in height, with enormous horizontal branches. The wood was largely used by Solomon in the construction of the Temple and his own palace.

Some of the Cedars of Lebanon are very large. It is a very interesting story, the story of the Cedars of Lebanon. We have not time to go through it in detail, but I have one or two notes which I can give you. The age of these Cedars has been a matter of some controversy. In 1550, a French traveller, Belon, found in Lebanon 28 old trees, and it was said that these were the trees which Solomon planted with his own hands. In the years which have elapsed the number has gradually become less and less, and the slowness of their disappearance confirms the fact that they were already of great age in 1550. In 1574 there were 26 of great size. In 1696 Mandrell says: "These noble trees grow in the highest part of Lebanon. Of the older ones I could reckon only 16." In 1774 Dr. Pococke found 15 large trees standing. Sir Joseph Hooker in 1860 examined the grove, and found 398 trees in nine clumps, of which there were 15 trees much larger than the others, and apparently these were the trees described in 1550. The 15 large Cedars were measured by Hooker, who attempted to make an estimate as to their age by counting the rings of wood on the section of a branch, and he concluded that the largest tree, which was thirteen feet in diameter, might be 2500 years old! An estimate has also been made, based on a specimen brought home, which is at Kew. By a similar calculation 2230 years were obtained as an estimate for a tree of thirteen feet in diameter; so it is evident that these large old trees go back to a very considerable period of antiquity.

I am afraid I have not got a slide showing the Fig tree, which is interesting, because it is the first mentioned in the Bible, and there are very frequent references in both the Old and New Testaments to this. It is a native of Palestine, and is also generally cultivated there; the land was described as a land

of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees and pomegranates. It reaches a considerable size, and affords grateful shade. The figs when dried furnish an article of food. The green or unripe figs were called in the Aramaic "paggá," a word found in Bethphage, which means literally the house of unripe figs.

There is another kind of Fig tree in Scripture which bears a different name, the Sycomore tree. A very old tree at Jericho is known as the Sycomore of Zaccheus; it is questionable whether it is the tree into which Zaccheus climbed. The leaf resembles that of a Mulberry. There are many species of figs. The common Fig is one, and the Sycomore is another. The Sycomore has a short trunk and long-spreading branches, and it would be a very suitable tree for a little man to climb into if he wanted to see what was passing. Before we leave the Sycomore I might tell you that the fruit is not nearly so useful as the fruit of the ordinary Fig tree. It is bitter, but if cut as it is ripening, to some extent this is remedied; the Prophet Amos described himself as "a gatherer of figs"—that is, he cut the unripe fruit, which, as the result of that operation, was not so bitter as if it were allowed to ripen naturally. The wood of the Sycomore tree is light and very durable, and was used by the Egyptians to make their mummy cases.

There is another tree, which is sometimes confused with the Sycomore, and that is the Sycamine tree, which is spoken of in the passage where Christ says, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed," etc. The tree referred to there is the Black Mulberry, which is grown somewhat extensively in Palestine. In connection with Mulberry there is another confusion. The children of Israel were given a sign, and were told to fall upon the enemy when they heard the sound of a going in the tops of the Mulberries, but the word does not mean Mulberries, but refers to a species of Poplar, which is quite common along the sides of streams, something like our Aspen, the characteristic of which, as you know, is the very light way in which the leaves are attached, so that they shake and rustle; and the sound of the going was the rustling of these Poplars. So you have a rational explanation when you get the right term.

The Olive is one of the most characteristic trees of Palestine. As I mentioned when we were discussing the general physical geography of the country, the Olive largely replaced the forests in the original country between the maritime coast plains and the River Jordan; but the Olive needs attention, and since the fall

of the Roman Empire and the unfavourable conditions which followed in the Holy Land many trees have been cut down, and young ones have not been replanted, and although the Olive occurs at the present time, it is only a poor representation of the Olive cultivation which existed in the time of the kings of Israel and of our Lord. The trees are small, with leaves of a pretty dull green colour. They grew in the Valley of the Kedron, as you see in this slide. I have a picture here of a branch of an Olive tree, showing the ripe olives, which are like small purple plums. In the Garden of Gethsemane there are still a few very old Olives, which tradition takes back to the time of our Lord. We find references in the Bible to the gathering of the Olives by beating the trees with sticks. You may see this in practice in the South of France at the present day. The Olive must be grafted if it is to yield good fruit, and thus we find a contrast between the wild Olive and the good Olive.

The Oak tree is often confused with the Terebinth. There are several kinds of Oak which are natives of Palestine, but the Hebrew word sometimes means Oak and sometimes means undoubtedly Terebinth. It was a Terebinth tree which was associated with Abraham's occupation of Mamre, but there is a very fine Oak there still known as "Abraham's Oak," which marked the site of Mamre. It is 23 feet in girth, and is 93 feet in height.

My next slide shows the Date Palm, intimately associated with Syria and Palestine. The Greek for the Date Palm is *phoinix* (whence Phœnicia). It also grows in the hotter parts of Northern Africa, and, where warm enough, on the shores of the Mediterranean. It is the tree of the desert, but to be successfully cultivated must have a certain amount of water; the beacon of the oasis is the Date Palm. In the journey across the Red Sea, after passing Marah, the children of Israel were, as we should say, "fed up" and tired, and they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and three score Palm trees, that is Date palms. It has a tall straight stem and is extremely graceful, and hence the association of its Hebrew name "Tamar," which is also used as a woman's name in the Bible, and is applied to the beautiful river which divides Devonshire from Cornwall.

There is no direct reference to dates in the Bible, but they must have been a very common article of food.

The branches of the Palm, which are referred to in the Bible as being strewn in front of our Lord, were the large leaves of

the Date palm. Jericho was the city of Palm trees. The Palm was also plentiful on the Mount of Olives, and Bethany on its eastern side means "house of dates"; but now the Palm exists neither there nor on the Mount.

My next slide shows the Pomegranate referred to in the description of the Promised Land. It is a small, evergreen tree or shrub. The Hebrew name Rimmon is a place-name in Palestine. The fruit and flower supplied models for carving, as on the capitals of the pillars in the Temple.

This next slide you will recognise as a Weeping Willow. It has been associated with the tree connected with the lamentations of the children of Israel in captivity, by the waters of Babylon, when they hung their harps on the willows. The Weeping Willow is a native of China; the tree of the captivity was a species of Poplar. Willows are referred to as growing by the water-courses; and Canon Tristram suggests that this Willow along the water-courses probably refers to the Oleander, a tree with a Willow-like leaf and a crimson flower, which is very common along the banks of the Jordan and the water-courses.

There is one other tree to which I should like to refer, and that is the Locust tree. The husks which the swine did eat in the parable of the Prodigal Son are no doubt these Locust beans. They are largely used for feeding horses. It has also been suggested that this was the Locust on which John the Baptist lived in the wilderness. The seeds, which are very hard and stony, are the origin of the carat weight used for weighing gold. They are very hard, and do not change.

We have not time to talk about the Vine. Since Bible times its cultivation has diminished, but the Moslems still plant the Vine for the sake of its fruit.

This represents the Wild Gourd, referred to as being shred into the pot. You will remember when the man exclaimed, "There is death in the pot," and the Prophet touched it, and the unhappy consequences were averted. The Wild Gourd is the Colycinth, which grows something like a cucumber. It is a fruit which is very tempting in appearance, but has an extremely noxious and bitter pulp; it is used in medicine as a purgative. When quite ripe it has little seeds inside. It is suggested that the Vine of Sodom, or Dead Sea Fruit, is also Colycinth.

My time is gone, but I should like to refer to a few of the herbaceous plants. As a child, I could not understand why it

was considered so difficult in the parable to distinguish between the Wheat and the Tares, but the Tares of the Bible were a kind of grass, the Darnel, which would be very difficult to distinguish from wheat until both were fully grown, and then they were easily distinguishable.

This is a picture of the Papyrus which grows on the northern course of the Jordan ; and this is the Marjoram, which may be the plant referred to under the name Hyssop, which was used for sprinkling the blood of the Paschal Lamb. This is a Mandrake. It is a plant with a golden-yellow fruit much prized by the women of Palestine, in the same way as in the old story in Genesis.

There are very few flowers mentioned in the Bible. We remember Christ's reference to the Lilies, but the Lily as we understand it is not a native of Palestine. If any one flower was meant, I suggest the Anemone, as it grows in very large quantities in Palestine, and forms a brilliant carpet of colour.

Another misnomer is the Rose, the Rose of Sharon. The Rose is not a native of Palestine, and it certainly was not the plant referred to. The Hebrew word denotes a plant growing from a bulb and was, perhaps, a species of Narcissus like a Jonquil, which grows from a bulb and is a very common plant.

I hope I have not detained you too long, but I might spend a very long time on this subject.

#### DISCUSSION.

Dr. SCHOFIELD (Chairman) said he would not make any remarks upon the very interesting paper to which they had just listened, but rose to propose a hearty vote of thanks to the learned lecturer for his interesting address, which he felt sure would be carried with acclamation.

He should much like, before he sat down, to ask the lecturer three questions:—First, was the prickly pear, which is now all over Palestine, there in the time of Christ? Secondly, the Palm tree is now nearly extinct in Palestine. Is it probable it will again multiply? Thirdly, may not the Rock Cistus be the Rose of Sharon? He begged to propose a hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Rendle for his admirable paper.

Mr. ARTHUR W. SUTTON said that he would like to be allowed to second the vote of thanks to Dr. Rendle for the extremely interesting paper he had read. It was a very special pleasure to join in welcoming Dr. Rendle to the Victoria Institute. He had long known Dr. Rendle in the Linnean Society, and in other circles where the pursuit of science linked together those whose aim it was to discover more and more of the hidden wonders of Nature, and this increased the pleasure of meeting Dr. Rendle on an occasion like the present at the Victoria Institute, where so many men of science have joined with the Institute in bringing to bear upon Bible records the result of their researches.

Mr. SUTTON mentioned that he had had the privilege of visiting Palestine and Syria many times, and the subject of Dr. Rendle's paper, therefore, was of peculiar interest to him. Knowing Palestine so well himself by personal observation, it struck him as a very remarkable fact that Dr. Rendle had obtained so intimate and accurate a knowledge of the country, with its principal features and characteristics, and more especially its flora, without having travelled there himself.

It was a noticeable feature of Dr. Rendle's paper that, although in a few cases, and some of these very interesting cases, it was suggested that a more accurate translation would have given a different meaning to that with which we are familiar, yet the paper generally afforded very substantial and confirmatory evidence of the accuracy of Holy Scripture.

Referring to the olive groves of Palestine, and the Scriptural reference to "wild olives," and "good olives," and the fact that the productiveness of these olive groves depended upon the wild olive being grafted with the good olive, Mr. Sutton asked Dr. Rendle if he could offer any suggestion as to where the Hebrews, or their predecessors in the country, could in the first place have obtained the good olives for the purpose of grafting. Dr. Rendle, in reply, said he was decidedly of the opinion that the good olive must have been cultivated in Palestine before the advent of the Israelites, but as to the source from which it originally came there was at present no certain information, nor was it possible to say whether the good olive had been evolved or developed by any method of cultivation from the wild olive indigenous to the country.

Mr. W. DALE, F.L.S. : I only want to ask Dr. Rendle whether, as regards the Cedar of Lebanon, it is good building wood, because I have read that it is not, and that the Cedar employed in building in Joppa was the Red Cedar. Then I want to know about the Fig tree, which is very interesting, because it grows in our climate. In a garden in Southampton where Dr. Watts once was, there is a magnificent fig-tree, and also in the ancient Abbey of Beaulieu. I can recollect in the middle of March a fig-tree putting forth her green figs which always fall off, and it suggested the stars which fall from heaven, when it speaks of the fig trees casting their untimely figs.

Mr. A. W. OKE : This paper will, I am sure, be much valued, and I hope it will cause us to study our Bibles more deeply in our homes and in the libraries. I hope the paper will be scattered broadcast, as well as in the *Transactions* of the Society. I am sure it will be of great value.

Mr. W. HOSTE : I want to follow the excellent example of our Chairman by asking a question instead of making remarks. I have read that there is a Lily, which is very prevalent along the shores of the Lake of Galilee, and I think there was a Tiger Lily in Palestine which is really what is referred to. I should very much like an explanation.

Lt.-Col. G. MACKINLAY said he wished to join his warm thanks to the others for the excellent lecture which he had enjoyed very much. He was grateful to Dr. Rendle for pointing out how considerable are the references to plants in the Bible, and for correcting the English translation when it is at fault in the rendering of the names of some trees and flowers.

He spoke of the lilies of the field mentioned in the Sermon on the Mount. Sir Isaac Newton had remarked in the same passage that, as our Lord very frequently referred to things actually present there is good reason to conclude that it was then early summer time. This agrees with and confirms the context.

Dr. Rendle also referred to a tree plucked up by the root and planted in the sea (Luke xvii, 6). As transplanting takes place in the winter, we judge that it was most probably at that season of the year when these words were spoken. This also agrees with and confirms the context.

The various seasons of the year are also indicated in many different points of the Gospels by similar indirect references.

These will be found very useful in the construction of a reliable harmony of the Gospels.

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT : The Lecturer said that the general appearance of the land west of Jordan had greatly changed during the last few years, but the land east of it had remained unchanged. Perhaps in his answers he would tell us why this is.

Dr. RENDLE : I am very grateful, Mr. Chairman, to you and to my audience for the very kind way in which you have received the remarks which I have been able to make this afternoon on the Plants of the Bible. As I have said, I am afraid one could have spoken at very much greater length, and perhaps in being brief I may not have been quite clear. I think I will answer the last question first. My point with reference to fertility on one side of the Jordan as compared with the other was that on the west there was originally forest, but when it gave place in cultivation to Vineyards and Olive yards, that meant a destruction of the trees, which were replaced by terrace cultivation. If you do not keep up those terraces the walls fall, and then, as the heavy rain comes you get the bare rock. On the other side of the Jordan the population has not been so dense and the trees have not disappeared, whereas in the first case you have driven nature out and supplied artificial cultivation. Then, if these terraces are not kept up, there is no soil left for the trees to grow again. In course of time the trees may grow again, but that will be many years hence.

As regards the Lilies, I remember in my early days we had a picture, the unveiling of the Lilies; and Christ was pointing to Madonna Lilies, but personally I do not think that is what was meant by "Consider the lilies." You get a wonderful mass of colour with the Anemones, and I should have thought that it was the general mass of flowers which was referred to in that case. The Lily is mentioned in the Old Testament, and the word there is quite an indefinite term.

Then the Chairman mentioned the Prickly Pear. This is a new world product, and was not known in our Lord's time.

Then as regards the Palm. No doubt under favourable conditions

the Date Palms may be planted, and will grow again in the Jordan valley in great abundance.

As regards the Rose. The Rock Rose does not grow from a bulb ; the little Narcissus Tazetta grows from a bulb, and is a very favourite flower in the north of Palestine.

Mr. Sutton asked—Where did the children of Israel get the good Olive ? Of course the cultivated one must have been produced from the Wild Olive, but I think I am right in saying that the children of Israel found it when they got into the Holy Land.

The Meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.