

PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

STATEMENT OF PROGRESS.

THE contents of the present number of this Quarterly do not call for any detailed preliminary observations. Their importance will be readily perceived. The work of the shafts will be found in the Letters of Captain Warren. They have yielded results of great interest. It will be remarked that the date of the Report is the 22nd of December. No account has been received since that time, Captain Warren's time having been chiefly occupied with the completion of the other papers here printed. We must therefore wait till the next quarter for the excavation work of this. It was stated in the introductory paper to *Quarterly Statement* No. IV. that a woodcut of the Haram, with the shafts noted, and a paper on the results, was proposed to be presented to subscribers this quarter. It is, however, found desirable to postpone this for the present, because Captain Warren is himself expected to be in England this summer, and under his superintendence the plan could be made with a far greater degree of exactness.

The principal work described in Letter XLVI. is that at the north-east angle. From it Captain Warren deduces certain inferences of some interest. The city wall, to north of St. Stephen's Gate, has but a few feet of rubbish, which seems to show that there has been but little destruction of old walls. Further, it rests upon 10ft. of concrete, and there is no appearance of an older wall. Perhaps, then, St. Stephen's Gate may not stand upon the site of the old wall. And of what period are the stones, now hidden by plaster and concrete, of the northern end of Birket Israil?

The Great Rock-cut Aqueduct in the Valley of Kedron, near the "Well of Joab," an account of which is given in p. 140 has, as we learn from a brief note in a more recent letter from Captain Warren,

been found to come to an end. This splendid piece of engineering stops unfinished and suddenly, and the problem of the design of it has not yet, apparently, been solved by Captain Warren.

It will be remarked that the so-called "Gennath Gate" has been found to rest, not on the rock, but in "made earth mixed with pottery, similar to that found at the lowest point at the south-east angle of the Haram Area."

The letters on the "Moabite Stone" give its history, so far as is at present known. The two accounts furnished by Captain Warren, dated respectively January 21st and March 11th, are given with the correspondence on the subject that has already appeared in the *Times*. It is to be hoped that information will very shortly be received which will enable a correct translation to be made. Photographs of Captain Warren's two full-sized tracings will be taken immediately, and issued to subscribers at the lowest possible cost.

It was thought highly desirable that so complete and detailed an account of the temples of Cœle-Syria, as that published in this number, should not appear without one or two illustrations, taken from the extremely careful tracings (fifteen in number) sent home by Captain Warren. These tracings are to be seen at the Society's office. Accordingly, two have been selected, by the advice of Mr. Fergusson, for illustration, and have been presented to subscribers. The temples themselves are of the late Roman period.

The paper of Dr. Sandreczki, whom the Committee has had to thank for an extremely careful and useful list of Arabic names, which it is hoped to publish shortly, will be read with great interest, as an attempt to solve a question which has met with various answers.

The first two letters received from Mr. Palmer are now published. They leave him, with his companion Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake, on the edge of the Desert of the Tih. Up to the date of his second letter, he had been occupied in completing the Geographical Survey of the Peninsula, and has sent home a map of the very small piece of country left incomplete by the Ordnance Survey.

The short Arabic Glossary is published at the instance of several subscribers. It is extracted from the "Handbook to Syria and Palestine," by kind permission of Mr. Murray.

As a great many requests have been made to have copies of the

marks and characters found at the north-east and south-east angles of the Haram Area, it has been thought desirable to have them photographed. This is now done, and subscribers can have copies of the four photographs of these interesting letters at the same price as the other photographs in the Society's series.

Reports will be found of upwards of eighty Lectures delivered for the Fund in the last three months. Through the agency of these, the work of the Fund is made known, and friends are especially invited to join in promoting these meetings.

Attention is invited to the Treasurer's statement appended to the balance-sheet of the year 1869 (see page 261). It will be found that there are two main streams of expenditure—the larger on the exploration itself, the smaller, on the subscribers who support the exploration. And while the Committee recognise the duty of making known to their subscribers the results of their work, they hope that subscribers themselves will aid them by disseminating copies of their publications, and by advocating their claims to support.

THE MOABITE STONE.

CAPTAIN WARREN'S FIRST ACCOUNT OF THE INSCRIPTION FROM MOAB.

January 21, 1870.

In the summer of 1868 a gentleman, riding past Diban, saw a stone with characters on it, and his observations appear to have excited the curiosity of the natives, as about six weeks after a man from Kerak came to tell me of a black stone with writing on it, and wanted me to go over and see it. On making inquiries, I heard that others were moving in the matter, and I did nothing whatever for twelve months, when the whole story became current in Jerusalem, and M. Ganneau and I were told the story by a third party, and we were both astonished to hear that an attempt had been made to get the stone before a squeeze had been taken. I heard nothing more of the matter until my return from the Lebanon in November, when an "Adwan" met me on my way from Jaffa, who said he had come to welcome me back. But thinking he had not come across the Jordan merely for that purpose, I went on in front with him, and, after several preliminaries, he told me that there had been an inscribed stone across the Jordan, which the natives had broken sooner than let some Franks take it, and that the French Consul had tried to get a squeeze of it, and had failed. On seeing that there really was a chance of the inscription getting lost to the world, I gave the man squeeze paper to apply to the broken portions of the stone, or to the whole, if by any chance it still remained intact.

He appeared in a few days with a squeeze of a Nabatean inscription, which at first he said was from Diban; but when he found that would