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THE
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

PREFACE.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee, on March 14th, 1871, the following resolutions were passed, and ordered to be published in the next *Quarterly Statement* :—

“(1.) That the secretary be instructed to write to the chairman of the American Committee, and point out the importance of speedily arriving at some plan of united action, acquainting him at the same time that the English Committee have under consideration a plan for completing the survey of Palestine west of the Jordan, connecting the new work with those portions which have already been surveyed by their officers, Captain Wilson, Captain Warren, and Lieutenant Anderson.

“(2.) That Captain Wilson be directed to draw up a report showing the probable cost and best mode of conducting such a survey, with a view to recommending a plan of action to the General Committee, if possible, in combination with the labours of the American Association.”

These resolutions are here published, as a preparatory step to the new expedition contemplated by the Committee. It is proposed to get this ready to leave England early in the autumn, and commence work at once. It will be under the command of officers of the Royal Engineers, assisted by sappers. The American Association has accepted the share of work proposed, and will, as soon as possible, fit out an expedition to carry on simultaneously a similar work east of Jordan. The results will be published, it is hoped, simultaneously. The survey will include examination, measurement, and sketches of ruins and inscriptions.

Excavations will be undertaken wherever they may appear necessary. It is hoped that large additions will be made to the Society's photographs. Periodical publications will be issued, giving the reports of the work in progress and the discoveries made, with, if possible, illustrations; as has been done for the last two years in the *Quarterly Statements*.

Estimates of the cost of this undertaking will be prepared for publication in the next *Quarterly*. The summer will be occupied in organising the expedition, and in collecting the funds necessary to begin it. Meantime, the Committee will be glad to receive promises from those who intend to support the work, and for that purpose wish to add their names to the list of annual subscribers. A public appeal will be made, and the readers of this preface, who are the present supporters of the Fund, will be able, by their own personal influence, if they will kindly exert it, very largely to increase the list.

The present number of the *Quarterly* contains Captain Warren's paper on Philistia, which has been kept back for some months for want of space. Mr. Palmer's concluding paper will be issued in the next number. The map of Moab supplements the map published in January, and embodies some of Captain Warren's work.

An expedition of great interest is contemplated by Reshid Pasha, Governor of Damascus, for the early summer. It will cross the desert, hitherto unvisited by Europeans, between Damascus and Petra, to the east of Moab. Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake will, if possible, accompany it on behalf of the Fund. Mr. Drake is now in Syria, engaged in getting copies and photographs of the Hamáh inscriptions, mentioned by Mr. Palmer in his "Preliminary Report."

THE PLAIN OF PHILISTIA.

BY CAPTAIN WARREN, R.E.

It is no idle dream to suppose that Palestine might, in a few years, become a land flowing with milk and honey; even with the present inhabitants, under an upright Government, the land would in a short time change its appearance, and, as it is, the country has changed in parts to a small extent, due to the alteration in the Government, brought about by the influence of public opinion of the West