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Minute Book

THE
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

THE NEW SURVEY.

THE Committee have great pleasure in announcing that the members of the new Survey Expedition are now on their way to Palestine, and in a few days' time will have commenced this important undertaking.

Sergeant Black and Corporal Armstrong sailed from Southampton in charge of the stores, on Saturday, October 21st, in the Peninsular and Oriental steamer, "Ceylon," the Company having kindly granted, as on previous occasions, passages for them at a reduced rate. Captain R. W. Stewart, R.E., who takes command of the expedition, has followed by the Brindisi route, and will arrive at Alexandria about the same time as the "Ceylon," probably on November 3rd. They will then proceed at once to Jaffa, and commence their work as soon as possible. It is, of course, impossible to speak with certainty with regard to the manner of conducting the Survey. Unforeseen circumstances may arise to alter Captain Stewart's intended plans; but it will interest our subscribers to learn what course has been suggested.

On arrival at Jaffa, the men will be set to work to unpack the stores and instruments, and get them ready for use. This will necessarily take several days, and meanwhile Captain Stewart will proceed to Jerusalem, and will call upon the authorities there, and other gentlemen who have taken an active interest in our work. The Committee have also given him special instructions to make himself acquainted, by a careful examination on the spot, with the topography of Jerusalem, and the results of Captain Warren's

excavations, in case he should be called upon at any time to make further explorations in the holy city. On his return to Jaffa, the survey will be at once commenced. The following notes, which embody the instructions given to Captain Stewart, having been prepared by Captain Wilson at the request of the Committee, will best explain the intended operations of the expedition.

The objects of the present expedition to Palestine are—

1. To obtain an accurate map of the country, on which, in addition to the topographical features, shall be laid down the sites of all towns, villages, ruins, roads, &c.
2. To collect, as far as possible, the native names and traditions connected with the various places.
3. To make tentative excavations where necessary.
4. To carry on a series of meteorological observations.
5. To make such notes as may be possible on the geology of the country, its botany, zoology, &c.
6. To take any opportunity which may offer of making excavations at Jerusalem, which will lead to decisive results.
7. To examine and make plans and drawings of interesting archaeological remains in the country.
8. To carry out generally the scheme which has been proposed in the several prospectuses issued by the Committee.

The survey of that portion of Palestine lying on the west of the River Jordan is to be regarded as the principal object of the expedition. The American Palestine Exploration Fund, working side by side with us, will undertake the survey of the country lying on the east of the Jordan.

Scale.—The Committee consider that the scale of the finished map should not be less than one inch to a mile. Special localities and plans of important buildings to be on a larger scale, as circumstances may require.

Base.—The locality best suited for the measurement of a base is on the plain east of Jaffa, in the neighbourhood of Lydda and Ramleh. The two points, Lydda Mosque and Ramleh Tower, should be taken into the triangulation, and connected as soon as possible with a common point of the Admiralty survey at Jaffa, and also with the triangulation of the Jerusalem survey.

A second base should be measured on the Plain of Esdraelon, and connected with the first by triangulation, when the survey of the northern portion of the country is commenced.

Triangulation.—A regular triangulation will be carried over the country from the base line. The computation of this will be made in England, for which purpose copies of the observations will be sent home as soon as they can conveniently be made. The adoption of this plan will probably save considerable expense, since it will enable Captain Stewart to devote much more time to field work, and thus hasten the completion of the survey.

Some maps have been very carefully prepared under the direction of Captain Wilson, embodying the results of the Admiralty, and other surveys; and it will be sufficient for the field surveys if the points are laid down on the projections on these maps, either by plotting the angles, or by latitudes, and true bearings. There are also many points laid down on the projections with sufficient accuracy to enable them to be made use of in sketching. The field sketches will be made on any scale larger than the one inch, which may be found advisable. Copies of these, either photographs or tracings, will be sent home from time to time.

Altitudes.—The altitudes of trigonometrical stations will be obtained by reciprocal angles of elevation and depression, and by barometer; other altitudes by barometer only.

Excavations.—It is not thought advisable that any extensive excavations should be made until the survey shall have been completed. But slight excavations of a tentative character may, perhaps, be made with advantage at some spots which seem to promise valuable results.

Excavations at Jerusalem.—A false impression seems to have got abroad amongst some of our subscribers, that we are going to give up our researches at Jerusalem. Such is not the case, for the holy city must always remain the central point of interest; and to it we must always gravitate, however we may spread ourselves in other directions for a time. Two reasons have led the Committee to take up at this time the survey of Palestine for their special work; *first*—that, having tried every means to obtain permission to excavate *within* the Haram Area, and having failed to obtain it,

and few other spots remaining where excavations could be made which would promise decisive results, without proceeding on a scale to which the present funds are quite inadequate, it appeared advisable to postpone further excavations there until a better opportunity presents itself; *secondly*—the extreme importance of a speedy completion of an accurate and systematic survey of Palestine. The tide of Western civilisation also setting in more strongly every year tends to obliterate the relics of past ages, which, if once lost, can never be recalled. It is well known that many old names, and traditions, and traces of the ancient inhabitants of the country, still remain, and no time should be lost in securing them. Very little, too, is known of those very portions of the country which were chiefly inhabited by the Jews, viz., the mountains and hill tops. The roads through Palestine are confined almost entirely to the valleys and plains, and few travellers have explored the country lying away from those roads. But, while the survey of the country is to be regarded as the main object of the present expedition, Captain Stewart has been instructed to place himself in communication with some trustworthy person at Jerusalem, so that he may be constantly informed of the state of things there; and if any opportunity should occur of making excavations within the city at certain important points which have been pointed out to him, he is to hasten thither and set to work at once.

It is hoped that he may be able to obtain the assistance of M. Clermont-Ganneau, whose name is so well known in connection with the discovery of the Moabite Stone and other discoveries at Jerusalem. M. Ganneau has already expressed his willingness to assist us in our work, and is a contributor to our *Quarterly Statements*. His assistance will be of the greatest value, since he has become intimately acquainted with the topography of Jerusalem by a long residence there, and has considerable knowledge of the mode of dealing with the people.

We must congratulate ourselves on having secured the services of so experienced and competent an officer as Captain Stewart to take the command of this expedition. He has been attached to the staff of the Ordnance survey of England for the last three years, having been in charge of the station at Chester; and, having

been formerly quartered in Ceylon, he has also had some experience of Eastern life. The two non-commissioned officers who accompany him are picked men from the Ordnance survey staff, and have been engaged on the survey of Scotland for several years. They have also received at Chatham, under the direction of Lieutenant Anderson, special instruction for their work in Palestine.

No trouble or expense has been spared in rendering the organisation of the expedition as complete as possible; and the instruments, the greater part of which have been supplied by Government, have been selected with the greatest care, and most accurately tested. Captain Stewart is himself an experienced photographer, and is well supplied with the necessary apparatus.

Lastly, we have secured the services of Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake. His assistance cannot fail to be of the greatest value. Mr. Drake accompanied Mr. Palmer in his interesting journey through the Desert of the Tih and Moab; and for the last twelve months he has been residing in Palestine, travelling about, and making explorations. He is well acquainted with the Arabic language, and has had great experience in collecting names and traditions. He has also for many years devoted his attention to the collection of objects of natural history. At present he is engaged upon an expedition in Northern Syria, but he hopes to be able to join Captain Stewart before Christmas. In every respect, therefore, this new work of the Palestine Exploration Fund promises a successful issue. One thing only is needed, viz., sufficient funds to enable us to carry on the work until its completion; and, when it is remembered that our work is nothing less than the collection and diffusion of information for the purpose of throwing light upon the pages of the Bible, it is impossible to believe that our appeal will be made in vain.
