

THE
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

PREFACE.

WE have, before all things, to call the attention of our subscribers and readers to the speeches made at the Annual Meeting, and especially the statement made by the treasurer of our position and prospects. The funds are in an unsatisfactory condition. We have the summer, an unproductive season, before us; we are pledged to carry on the Survey, which is the most important and the greatest work ever yet undertaken in Palestine; and we want to send out M. Clermont-Ganneau, for one year only, to clear up, if possible, some of the points of dispute and mystery with which the topography of Jerusalem is beset. We therefore most earnestly beg our readers to assist us, first, in forwarding their own subscriptions, and secondly, in bringing the Society before the notice of others.

As regards the expense of the Survey. It ought, with printing, publishing, lithographing, &c., and including all expenses in Palestine, except those of excavation, to be covered by about £3,000 a year. The first six months of the present year have not brought in quite half that sum. We must add to this the expenses of "management," *i.e.*, advertising, rent, postage, salaries, &c., which are kept as low as possible, but which, with every economy, cannot be brought under £500.

Nothing could be more satisfactory than the progress of the work, and nothing more beautiful than the portions of the map already sent home. In the reports of Lieutenant Conder and Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake will be observed especially the accounts of Carmel; Athlit, remarkable especially as the site of the *Castellum Peregrinorum*, the landing-place for pilgrims; Cæsarea; the tombs of El Midyeh, supposed by some to be the tombs of the Maccabees; and

Mr. Conder's account of recent work done in Jerusalem. Among other things, Lieutenant Conder has obtained from Mr. Schick a hundred and fifty new rock levels. These, with the information already acquired by Major Wilson and Captain Warren, will enable us to produce a ground-plan of the city, which will form the most important set of data possible for all topographical questions. Mr. Shapira continues to accumulate fresh collections of inscribed pottery, of which Lieutenant Conder sends us copies. The first collection was bought by the German Government, but the opinions of the English *savants* are still unfavourable to the genuineness of the inscriptions.

The tracings of Lieutenant Conder will be exhibited at the Dudley Gallery during the months of July and August. We have here to call the attention of our readers to this exhibition, which contains, besides Mr. H. A. Harper's most beautiful collection of water-colour sketches, illustrations of the whole work of the Society.

All the particulars of the newly-found Samaritan stone will be found in this number.

Mr. Drake, who is returning to England for a short time on sick leave, was prevented from being present at the Annual Meeting through the accident of a telegram being wrongly delivered. The Survey party has been strengthened by the addition of Corporal Brophy, R.E.

The American party are now on the east of Jordan engaged in their preliminary expedition. Their party, too, has been strengthened by the addition of two assistant engineers.
