

In Memoriam.

CHARLES F. TYRWHITT DRAKE.

LONDON, 26th June, 1874.

THE sad news which has just reached us from Palestine entails on me the painful duty of writing a few last words on one who for two years has been my constant and almost only companion. The death of Charles F. Tyrwhitt Drake adds one more name to the list of those who have fallen in harness in the exploration of Palestine. The fatal Jordan valley climate, to the effects of which I think our heavy loss is mainly attributable, took one member from Lynch's party. Dr. Tristram's expedition did not escape a similar calamity. The exploration of Jerusalem cost the life of one of Capt. Warren's men, and the health of another. In all of these expeditions, however (as in the parallel case of African travel), the actual head of the party invariably escaped. We had trusted that, in the serious illness which obliged Capt. Stewart to resign the command of the survey of Palestine, our debt to the country was paid, and we invariably looked forward with hope and in confidence that all other members of the original party would be able to see the satisfactory termination of their work.

It has pleased God that this should be otherwise, and the only consolation which can be found for the survivors is, that all that could be done was done to preserve the valuable life; that Mr. Drake was in the hands of kind friends and trustworthy followers; that the medical advice of Dr. Chaplin was, both from his peculiar experience and his unusual ability, all that could be desired, and that his treatment of the case was entirely confirmed by the opinion of his brother practitioners.

I believe that from his childhood Mr. Drake suffered from an asthma, which rendered life in his native country almost an impossibility. He often told me that he felt it beyond hope that he should live to see his prime, and it was to the enthusiastic desire to do something worth remembering in a short life that we must attribute that disregard of fatigue and imprudent expenditure of strength which hastened on the end.

It is but a poor comfort for those he has left behind to remember that his ambition was to a great extent realised, and that, though he was just on the point of undertaking new and important explorations, still he felt that already his name was

made, and that as long as any interest is felt in the question of Biblical investigation, it will be remembered with honour and esteem.

His acquaintance with Bible lands dates from the commencement of the Sinai Ordnance Survey. Of that expedition he was to have been a voluntary member, but circumstances detained him, and prevented his joining till the work was almost completed, and a severe attack of dysentery very nearly proved fatal at the outset of his career. His subsequent work in the Desert of the Wanderings in company with Professor Palmer, leading to important and interesting discoveries, is well known; as also his explorations in the Antilibanus, and the eastern deserts and Hauran, described in "Unexplored Syria." The value of these labours were fully appreciated by the Royal Geographical Society (of which he was a Fellow), and all other authorities capable of forming an opinion. Had he been able to complete these latter explorations, he would probably have known more of trans-Jordanic Palestine than any one now living.

On joining as a volunteer the Survey Expedition, he found himself suddenly called upon (in consequence of Captain Stewart's illness) to assume all the responsibilities and duties of a commander. Had he shrunk from the delicate and difficult position which a civilian has to occupy when in charge of trained soldiers, the Great Survey would have been a failure, and the success of this important work must always be attributable in great measure to his courage and tact. For six months, and those passed in the worst hill country in Palestine, at the very commencement of the work, when Europeans and natives were alike unused to the practical details, and unable to communicate together, Mr. Drake had to act as commander, guide, interpreter, and archæologist. The progress was extraordinary, and his firm and just management, tact, and acquaintance with the habits, prejudices, and character of the Syrians were advantages of which I have felt the benefit ever since the command devolved upon me.

Throughout the expedition he suffered much in health. A man less enthusiastic would have quitted Palestine, and perhaps escaped the sad fate which I cannot but attribute to want of due care for health and over-work and exposure at a time when rest and a good climate were indispensable. Bent as he was, however, on continuing the work he had begun, it was worse than useless to endeavour to persuade him to give it up. Soon after my arrival his liver was seriously affected by the trying work entailed

on us all in measuring the check base line. He was obliged to leave on a visit to Egypt, but it was not until he returned to England last spring that any marked improvement in his health took place. On his return in October, we all thought him looking stronger and better. Then came the most serious check our work ever sustained, of which little is known to others than members of the party. In November the terrible Jericho fever broke out in our camp at 'Ain el Sultán. In a few days no fewer than ten members of the party, including Mr. Drake, were struck down, and the anxiety of those who escaped was, as may be imagined, very great. A full day's journey (and it was by special Providence that we were not more) from a doctor, or from any source of supply, in a malarious climate, a desert, and surrounded by wild and hostile tribes, with most of the servants incapable, and the rest only kept from deserting us by the certainty of being shot down, the anxiety of the position was as trying as can well be imagined. The unexampled kindness of Dr. Chaplin and Mr. Neil, under the circumstances, is an honour to England. Though suffering himself, and quite unfit to be out of bed, the doctor mounted his horse, and accompanied by Mr. Neil, set out to come down to us at Jericho, and met us bringing up Mr. Drake in the litter. The hotel-keeper, Mr. Hornstein, at the risk of losing every one of his guests, took him in, and spared no pains to make him comfortable.

The English hospital was a refuge for our poor servants. The care and skill of Dr. Chaplin saved Mr. Drake's life, and probably that of others. His recovery was rapid, and his state of health seemed more satisfactory than it had been for a long time, but he was, I think, quite unaware of the extreme danger he had gone through. I found six months later that he had never known how Dr. Chaplin, suffering himself most cruelly, had watched with me a whole night of delirium, hardly expecting that he would live till morning. We both felt at the time that he ought on his recovery to leave the country, and I shall always regret that I did not represent this more strongly to the Committee, but that recovery was so rapid, and apparently so satisfactory, that it justified us in hoping he might be able to continue the work.

I have enlarged on these circumstances, thinking it might be some consolation to his friends to know that all care was taken of him in his first illness, whence they may judge that he was equally well cared for and attended during his last.

The survey of the Jordan valley was resumed. The exposure

and hardship were greater than anything we had before endured. For ten days we drank brackish water, and for nearly all the time we were subject to alternations of extreme heat and cold, snow, rain, and unusual atmospheric pressure. The whole party was much exhausted, although consisting of men beyond the average in strength and power of endurance. It was true that Mr. Drake was far more cautious and saving of his strength than formerly, but he was unable to escape the effects of rain and malaria.

On leaving the country I had felt some apprehensions of the return of the fever in summer, and written to his friends at Damascus, where I expected him to be, warning them not to allow him to journey alone in June—a time when he usually suffered from low fever. When the news arrived that he had been seized, I could not but feel thankful that he was still in Jerusalem, knowing that the medical care he would get there was far superior to any in other parts of Palestine. In the face of such complications, however, as followed rapidly, no medical skill could, however, be of use.

Of Mr. Drake's personal character, it will not become a younger man to speak. I always felt the comfort of his experience and his just and honourable dealing. His fitness for the work was in some respects peculiar, and he may be best judged by the fact, that whilst travelling in company with men of very various disposition and ability, he never complicated the difficulties of work by personal quarrels, and was well spoken of by all. His excellent colloquial knowledge of Arabic, no less than his fine figure and skill in all exercises, made him unusually respected by the Arabs and native authorities. His justice, integrity, and firmness were qualities invaluable in the East, and his good-nature and gentlemanly feeling enabled us for two long years of trying work, in a delicate relative position, to live together, almost unseparated, without so much as a single unkind word passing between us.

CLAUDE R. CONDER, Lieut. R.E.