

DISCOVERY AT JERUSALEM.

JERUSALEM, Oct. 21, 1875.

IN the piece of ground west of the north road leading from Damascus Gate, about 150 yards from the gate, some interesting tombs have been recently discovered. The proprietor was digging a cistern, and about fifteen feet below the surface came upon rock which sounded hollow when struck. He broke through this and found beneath it some sepulchral chambers. In the structure of the tombs there is nothing very unusual, but in one of the chambers is a large stone chest which, when discovered, contained human bones. It is cut from a single stone, measures 7 ft. 7 in. in length, 2 ft. 8 in. in breadth, and 3 ft. 2 in. in height. It stands upon four feet, and has its rim cut to receive a lid. Some broken pieces of what is believed to have been the lid were found near. The rock roof of the chamber has been cut away in order to admit this chest, which is evidently of far later date than the tombs, which appear to be very ancient. Its use is not very clear. It is not an ordinary sarcophagus, and is much too large for a body. The most probable supposition that suggests itself is that it formed a cover for the protection of the wooden or leaden coffin of some distinguished person which has long since been rifled and removed. Near, perhaps over, this spot once stood the church dedicated to St. Stephen. Is it possible that in this chest we have the last resting-place of Eudocia? I send you an excellent plan and sections of the tombs made by M. Schick.

THOMAS CHAPLIN.

THE PARIS GEOGRAPHICAL EXHIBITION.

THE following correspondence has been received on the map work sent to the Paris Geographical Exhibition:—

1. Lieut.-Col. T. Montgomerie, R.E., to the Chairman of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

Sept. 30th, 1875.

To the Chairman of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that the Paris Geographical Congress intends to send you a Letter of Distinction in recognition of the services of the Palestine Exploration Fund. This letter will be forwarded to you in due course, as you will see by the enclosed.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. MONTGOMERIE, Lt.-Col. R.E.,

H.M.'s. Commissioner, Paris Geographical Congress.

2. THE Commissary-General, International Congress of Geographical Science, to the Commissioner for Great Britain.

Paris, le 16 Septembre, 1875.

Monsieur le Commissaire,

J'ai l'honneur de vous informer que le Jury International des récompenses du Congrès International des Sciences Géographiques a décerné une récompense de l'ordre le plus élevé au "Palestine Exploration Fund."

Aussitôt que les rapports du Jury me seront parvenus, je m'empres- serai de vous adresser cette Lettre de Distinction.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur le Commissaire, l'assurance de ma haute considération,

Le Commissaire Général,

BARON REILLE.

South Kensington Museum, 23rd Dec., 1875.

SIR,—I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education to acquaint you that their Lordships have received through Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with a request that it might be forwarded to its proper destination, the accompanying testimonial, or letter of distinction, awarded to the Palestine Exploration Fund by the International Geographical Congress which was held this year at Paris.

It is stated in the despatch received from Lord Lyons that letters of this description are the highest testimonials awarded by the Congress to exhibitors.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

NORMAN MACLEOD.

The President, Palestine Exploration Fund,
9, Pall Mall East, S.W.

Société de Géographie.

Congrès International des Sciences Géographiques.

Deuxième Session, tenue à Paris.

1875.

Lettre de Distinction.

Paris, le 11 Août, 1875.

7^e Groupe.

Monsieur le Président,—L'Exposition du PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND a paru au Jury International mériter une récompense exceptionnelle.

Les cartes, plans, reliefs, photographies, etc., de la Terre Sainte, envoyés par cette association scientifique au Congrès de Paris présentent une telle importance géographique que les distinctions prévues par le règlement ne pouvaient leur être appliquées.

J'ai l'honneur, au nom du Congrès de porter à votre connaissance cette haute appréciation du Jury et de vous délivrer pour le PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND la présente Lettre de Distinction comme la récompense de l'ordre le plus élevé décernée à l'occasion de l'Exposition.

Veillez agréer, M. le Président, l'assurance de ma haute considération.

Le Vice-Amiral,

Président du Congrès,

Et de la Société de Géographie, Paris,

DE LA RONCIÈRE-LE-NOURY.

À Monsieur le Président du PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

EARLY CHRISTIAN TOPOGRAPHY IN PALESTINE.

THE study of the topography of Palestine in periods subsequent to Biblical times is not merely a matter of antiquarian curiosity, it is intimately connected with the more important study of the topography of the Bible. We possess valuable works, like the *Onomasticon* of Eusebius and Jerome, the ancient Itineraries, and the mediæval travels, Christian and Jewish, containing hints and observations, the importance of which depends on the trustworthy character of the work in which any of them appear. To estimate fairly how far we may rely on these supplementary authorities we must consider the later topography as a whole, and thence deduce the amount of confidence to be placed in any particular statement bearing on Biblical questions.

I have in former reports touched upon mediæval and Crusading sites, such as the *Tower of Eder*, the two *Ascalons*, &c., but a few remarks on the earlier topography of Byzantine Palestine and of the *Onomasticon* may perhaps be of value.

Of the thirty-three episcopal towns of the *Palestina Prima* of the fifth-century division of the Holy Land (a district almost exactly answering to the Roman Judæa and Samaria taken together), six only remained unknown in the time of Reland, who has carefully arranged the whole number in alphabetical order. These six are—*Apathus*, between Jericho and Sebaste; *Diocletianopolis*, south of Jerusalem; *Minois*, near Gaza; and *Sozuza Toxus*. *Minois* alone is immediately recognisable as being the present ruin of El Minieh, on the north bank of Wady Refah, the supposed River of Egypt.

I.

Diocletianopolis was a town of some little importance as an episcopal see, and the bishops appear as early as the Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D. Reland, however, gives no indication of its position, and the identification depends on a passage in an Italian work called "*Siria Sacra*," of which I discovered a copy in the library of the Carmel Convent, dating 1695 A.D. Here we find that *Diocletianopolis* was on the