

LADIES' ASSOCIATIONS.

WE have pleasure in stating that the Ladies' Associations in aid of the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund are increasing in number. Mrs. Finn has held meetings at the houses of friends in various places, and one result has been that several hundred persons have heard—some of them for the first time—of the discoveries made by Major Wilson and Captain Warren in Jerusalem, as well as of those made by Lieut. Conder and M. Clermont Ganneau in other parts of the Holy Land. Although many thousand copies of our Quarterly Reports have been circulated, and numerous articles on the subject have appeared in the newspapers and in magazines, it is the fact that there are still numbers of people who do not know that any very definite results have been obtained, or any discoveries of importance made in Palestine. Mrs. Finn has been able, by means of drawings, photographs, and a model of the Temple Sanctuary, to bring home to the minds of many the extraordinary nature of the ancient Temple walls discovered by Capt. Warren. The following is a list, in their order, of the meetings thus held, and the best thanks of the Committee are tendered to the ladies and gentlemen who, by opening their houses, have thus given us opportunities of making our work known in a pleasant and effectual manner.

A meeting was held Jan. 6, at Mrs. De Bergue's, 17, Kensington Palace Gardens, and a large company was present. Colonel Gawler took the chair, and spoke in support of the object.

Jan. 11. The Rev. T. Cornthwaite had a meeting at his house at Walthamstow, and he addressed the assemblage on the subject brought under their notice.

Jan. 17. About sixty persons assembled, being invited to a private room kindly lent for the purpose, at the Crystal Palace, to Mrs. Standing, the secretary of the Sydenham Ladies' Association. The Rev. Canon Gover, Rev. Mr. Franklyn, and Mr. Standing addressed the meeting.

Jan. 21. Lady Smith and Colonel Pinney assembled their friends at their house in Somersetshire, Somerton Erleigh, to hear about the Exploration work. This meeting led to a series of other meetings being held in neighbouring places, viz., on Jan. 25, at Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Dickinson's, Kingweston; on Feb. 1, at Weston-super-Mare, where the Rev. Mr. Hunt presided, and Mrs. Tomkins undertook the office of Secretary to the Ladies' Association formed after the meeting.

On Feb. 2 a meeting was held at Lympsham, which was attended by many ladies and gentlemen, as also by the inhabitants of the parish, invited by the Rector, Rev. J. H. Stephenson (Rural Dean), and Mrs. Stephenson. The Rector spoke, as did also the Ven. Archdeacon Denison, of East Brent, expressing their deep interest in the information which had been given to the meeting.

Two meetings were held in Clifton, one by kind permission of Miss

Heptinstall, at 2, Rodney Place. The Right Rev. Bishop Anderson presided, and addressed the meeting, as did also the Rev. W. Wallace and the Rev. J. B. Goldberg, local secretaries. Another meeting was held at the house of Miss Harris. The Rev. Robert Taylor presided at this meeting. The next was held by invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Wingfield Digby, at Sherborne Castle, where a large party met. Mr. Digby presided, and addressed the company on the subject. The Rev. F. W. Portman, Rev. M. and Mrs. Hawtrey, and about seventy other guests were present at this gathering.

On Feb. 11, the Rev. Canon and Miss Meade assembled their friends at the Vicarage at Castle Cary, and Canon Meade opened the meeting by a short address recommending the subject to his friends, among whom were Mr. H. E. and Mrs. Bennett, of Sparkford Hall, who a few days afterwards (Feb. 18) collected another company at their own house for the same purpose. Meetings were also given at Hornblotton Rectory by the Rev. Godfrey and Mrs. Thring, and at Rimpton Rectory, by the Rev. M. and Mrs. Hawtrey, who spared no pains in collecting their various friends to hear the accounts of our work in Palestine.

The Rev. Canon and Mrs. Pratt had a meeting at the Rectory, Shepton Mallet, on Feb. 21, presided over by Canon Pratt. Some of those who had attended the meetings above mentioned wrote to Torquay and enlisted the aid of friends there, who in their turn obtained the co-operation of others in extending our efforts among our lady friends. The first meeting in Torquay was held at the house of Dr. and Mrs. Macintosh, and this led to others—*i.e.*, one at the house of Mrs. Tinner, where the Rev. Flavel Cook made an eloquent address, urging the importance of the work now being done in the Holy Land. Another meeting was held at Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Hunt's. Meanwhile, friends living at Earley, near Reading, arranged a meeting at the house of Mr. and Mrs. C. Stephens, and a Ladies' Association was formed at Earley, Mrs. Stephens undertaking the office of secretary. A similar meeting was held at Miss Buckland's, Blenheim House. Other friends had taken the matter up at Oxford. The Rev. H. and Mrs. De Brisay opened their house during a whole week for a series of meetings. A special meeting was also held for a large number of young ladies. A very considerable interest appears to have been created, and we trust that our work may commend itself to many in that ancient seat of learning as one of real practical value. Measures have been taken for the formation of a Ladies' Association in Oxford.

Mrs. Charles, of Combe Edge, Branch Hill, Hampstead, invited a large party to her house on the 21st March, and, in spite of the inclement weather, about eighty assembled. On the following day, the 22nd, there was a full meeting at the house of Col. and Miss Fyers, 25, Kensington Square; and another very large meeting on the evening of the 23rd, at Woneford Green, at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Johnston.