

covered of 120 towns captured, of which there are three copies. The names of the towns are given in the order of their position in the country. They are names of the time between Abraham and Joshua. Three-fourths of the existing names have been traced to their origin. Two of the most important results of the work have been the fixing of the site of the Cave of Adullam and the site of our Lord's baptism. The Cave of Adullam is one of a series of caves which would accommodate 300 men. There are two kinds of caves, those of water-worn origin, damp, the abode of bats, and unhealthy, and small dry caves, still inhabited and showing traces of inhabitation at different periods. Among the Adullam caves is one larger than the others, used, probably, by David himself. The site of our Lord's baptism is recorded as being at a ford near Bethabara. They determined to trace all the fords of the Jordan, and on an average they found three fords to a mile. Nothing was found at all answering to their search, when near the end of the survey of the Jordan they found a ford called Abara—without the "Beth," which means a house. The position with regard to the villages where our Lord is recorded to have been just previously suits admirably. The concluding part of Lieutenant Conder's paper was given to a consideration of the present physical condition of Palestine as compared with the past. There are traces of terraces and indications of using the land to the utmost for corn and vine. Now cultivation is neglected; oaks that used to flourish have disappeared; still the changes are rather of degree than of kind. The reason for stopping work for the present was stated to be an attack from fanatics, from whose wounds Syrian fever set in. Cholera, too, existed in that part of the country which remained to be surveyed. The party was, in consequence, ordered home to recruit, to superintend the publication of the work already done, and it is hoped that by the end of the year work in Palestine may be resumed.

LETTER TO THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

The following letter has been sent to the President of the Royal Geographical Society:—

Royal Geographical Society, 1, Savile Row.

To the President of the Royal Geographical Society, &c., &c.

SIR,—We, the undersigned Fellows of the Royal Geographical Society, desire to bring before your notice the following facts connected with the early history of the Society.

In the year 1804, or thereabouts, there was formed in London a Society which took the name of the Palestine Association. Its objects were to promote the Exploration of the Holy Land, and to publish from time to time such information as the Committee could procure as to the state of the country, its geography, its people, its climate, and its history. The only volume which, so far as we have yet learned, the Society published, was a "Brief Account of the Countries adjoining the

Lake of Tiberias, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea," by M. Seetzen, *Conceiller d'Ambassade de S. M. L'Empereur de Russie* (1810, Hatchard, Piccadilly). This was a translation, accompanied by a map, of certain papers sent to Sir Joseph Banks by some unnamed members of the National Institute at Paris. The papers seem to have been rough notes compiled by the traveller from day to day. The English volume is also provided with a brief appendix. We believe that the Society also sent out two travellers to conduct an expedition of exploration, who got no further than Malta, being stopped by the dangerous condition of the country.

It appears further that no meeting of the Council of that Society took place between the years 1805 and 1834, and that no steps were taken to continue the researches in Palestine after the year 1809. In 1834 it was found that there was lying to the credit of the Society at the bank of Messrs. Coutts and Co. the sum of £135 9s. 8d. It was resolved at a meeting, held January 28, 1834, under the presidency of Mr. Bartle Frere:—

1. That the above sum is not sufficient to enable the Association to prosecute the objects of their institution without a further call on the members.
2. That in consequence of the formation of the Royal Geographical Society, which embraces in its views purposes of a similar nature to those for which the Palestine Association was instituted, it is not desirable that such a call be now made.
3. That under the circumstances of the case the treasurer and secretary be directed to take such steps as may be necessary for making over the said sum of £135 9s. 8d. to the Royal Geographical Society, to form part of their general fund, and to be employed as the Council of that Society may think fit for the promotion of geographical discovery.
4. That all papers, books, &c., be at the same time handed over to the Royal Geographical Society.

And at an adjourned meeting of March 4, 1834, it was resolved that the above decisions of the Council be confirmed. And in consequence the Palestine Association ceased to exist.

The Society thus dissolved in 1834 was instituted again in 1865. The new Society, called the Palestine Exploration Fund, has been in existence for nearly eleven years. During that time it has acquired considerable funds, which have been administered in the promotion of knowledge of the Holy Land by various expeditions. These have been as follows:—

1. That conducted by Major Wilson, R.E., F.R.G.S., and Captain Anderson, R.E., F.R.G.S., in 1865-66.
2. That of 1867-1870, commanded by Captain Warren, R.E., F.R.G.S., in which the excavations at Jerusalem were executed.
3. That of Professor Palmer, M.A., F.R.G.S. (1870-71), in which the Desert of the Exodus was partially explored.

4. That of M. Clermont Ganneau (1873-74), which was mainly devoted to archæological research.
5. That of the Survey of the whole of Western Palestine. This great work has been executed by Captain Stewart, R.E., Lieutenant Conder, R.E., Lieutenant Kitchener, R.E., F.R.G.S., and the late Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake, F.R.G.S. Four-fifths of the work have been accomplished, and the map, so far, will be placed immediately in the hands of the engraver. It will be accompanied by plans of all the principal ruins, and by memoirs which are now being written. They will embody the whole of the information obtained by the Committee, and will render unnecessary, it is hoped, except for archæological purposes, any further scientific examination of the country.

The cost of this Survey is about £3,000 a year. The Society publishes and issues for all its subscribers a quarterly record of its proceedings and results. Its whole expenses thus amount to about £4,000 a year. It is gratifying to find that so large an income has been received principally in guinea subscriptions for a work which at first would appear to address itself especially to geographers, scholars, and archæologists.

We venture, therefore, to ask the Council of the Royal Geographical Society, through its President, to consider whether the sum placed in its hands on the failure of the old Palestine Association might not be justly and profitably transferred to the new and successful society, which is carrying out the work previously proposed, which through various circumstances had to be temporarily abandoned.

The letter has been signed by the following Fellows of the Royal Geographical Society, who are also interested in the work of the Fund, in the order as below :—

Mr. W. Hepworth Dixon,
 Rev. F. W. Holland,
 Captain Warren, R.E.,
 Mr. James Bateman,
 Mr. F. A. Eaton,
 Major Wilson,

Lord Lawrence,
 Lord Henry J. Scott,
 Mr. John Murray,
 Lord Alfred Churchill,
 Mr. George Green,

members of the General Committee of the Fund; and by

Lord Ebury,
 Mr. H. N. Courtney,
 Col. Gawler,
 Lieut. H. H. Kitchener,
 Mr. Edward Stanford,
 Mr. D. P. Cama,
 Mr. F. E. Blackstone,

Lord Clermont,
 Rt. Hon. Stephen Cave, M.P.,
 Mr. George Bentley,
 Mr. P. P. Bouverie,
 Admiral Sir J. Drummond Hay,
 Mr. Henry Wagner.