

THE
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE organisation of the Geological Expedition, which was announced in July, has occupied the attention of the Committee during the summer. They have been so fortunate as to secure the services of Professor Hull, F.R.S., the Director of the Geological Survey of Ireland; he will be accompanied by his son, Dr. E. Gordon Hull, as Assistant Geologist, and Medical Officer to the party. Captain Kitchener, R.E., who is now in Egypt, has received permission to employ his leave in accompanying the party. Two volunteers, Mr. Henry Hart (who has received a grant from the Irish Academy for botanical research) and Mr. Reginald Lawrence, will also accompany Professor Hull.

As regards the route, the first part will be across the Sinai Desert from Suez to Akabah, whence they will travel north by the Wâdy Arabah, to the south end of the Dead Sea. The key to the geological problems of the whole country lies in this little-known region. The party will afterwards visit Moab, along the border of which country the Nubian sandstone comes to the surface. Opportunity will be, of course, taken by the officers to make notes as to the topographical features of the Wâdy Arabah, and to examine as much as possible into the various Biblical questions which belong to the district. A summary of these has been prepared for the party by Colonel Sir Charles Wilson.

It is calculated that the cost of the whole expedition, including that of publishing the results, will be under £2,000. Any who wish their subscriptions specially devoted to this work should state their desire to the Secretary. A form of subscription is enclosed.

The late Mrs. Anne Jay, of the Villa Bertolini, Lausanne, Switzerland, who died on June 10th last, has left a legacy of £2,000 to this Society. The bequest will not, however, be available in time for the new expedition.

The investigation into the Shapira manuscripts has created a great deal of interest during the last three months. A narrative of the affair, together with the letters and reports of M. Clermont Ganneau, Captain Conder, Dr. Neubauer, and Professor Sayce, with the report of Dr. Ginsburg to Dr. Bond, will be found in this number.

A paper has been contributed by M. Clermont-Ganneau, to the "Revue Critique," on the names of the personages associated in early mediæval art with the Crucifixion. "St. Longinus," the soldier with the spear, got his name, M. Ganneau shows, from the spear itself, *λόγχη*. The penitent thief, St. Dysmas, may be, he thinks, a corruption of *εἰς τὰς δυσμάς*—i.e., the west—derived from the representations of the sun and moon found in primitive pictures of the Crucifixion. The name of the impenitent thief—Gestas—is possibly the remaining *εἰς τὰς*. The soldier who bore the sponge is sometimes called Stephaton, which, M. Ganneau thinks, is derived from a misreading of the word *σπίγγον*.

The September number of the "Contemporary Review" contains a remarkable paper by Professor Sayce on the Gods of Canaan.

Canon Tristram's volume on the "Flora and Fauna of Western Palestine" is rapidly advancing. The author thinks there is no reason why the book should not be ready before the end of the year. The illustrations are ready: they comprise six plates of mammals, seven of birds, twelve of fishes and reptiles, and one of gastropods.

As regards the Jerusalem volume, that, it is hoped, will also be ready about the same time. The drawings are nearly all completed with the exception of those to illustrate M. Clermont Ganneau's work.

Captain Conder's "Heth and Moab," being a popular account of his recent campaign and discoveries, will be ready this month (October). As in the case of "Tent-Work in Palestine," a considerable reduction in the price will be made or subscribers *only by application to the office in Adam Street*.

The only authorised lecturers for the Society are—

- (1) The Rev. Henry Geary, Vicar of St. Thomas's, Portman Square. His lectures are on the following subjects :—
 - The Survey of Western Palestine, as illustrating Bible History.
 - Palestine East of the Jordan.
 - The Jerusalem Excavations.
 - A Restoration of Ancient Jerusalem.
- (2) The Rev. James King, Vicar of St. Mary's, Berwick. His subjects are as follows :—
 - The Survey of Western Palestine.
 - Jerusalem.
 - The Hittites.
 - The Moabite Stone and other monuments.

The income of the Society, from June 25th to September 30th inclusive, amounted in all, including subscriptions, lectures, and payment for maps, memoirs, and publications, to £576 6s. 11d.

It is suggested to subscribers that the safest and most convenient manner of paying subscriptions is through a Bank. Many subscribers have adopted this method, which removes the danger of loss or miscarriage, and renders unnecessary the acknowledgment by official receipt and letter.

Subscribers who do not receive the *Quarterly Statement* regularly, are asked to send a note to the Secretary. Great care is taken to forward each number to all who are entitled to receive it, but changes of address and other causes give rise occasionally to omissions.

While desiring to give every publicity to proposed identifications and other theories advanced by officers of the Fund and contributors to the pages of the *Quarterly Statement*, the Committee wish it to be distinctly understood that by publishing them in the *Quarterly Statement* they neither sanction nor adopt them.