

CAPTAIN CONDER'S REPLY TO PROFESSOR SOCIN.

(From the "Expositor" of May, 1886.)

THERE are three questions in Professor Socin's paper which have perhaps hardly been sufficiently distinguished. First, that of the permanent Map and Memoirs by which the Society must be judged. Second, their more ephemeral or speculative publications, the *Quarterly Statement*, and the Old Testament and New Testament Maps, with their popular books. Third, works not published by the Society at all, such as my Handbook and Primer, and Mr. Henderson's Handbook, for which the Society are in nowise responsible.

It is only fair to the Committee of the Society to remember that library scholars and the conductors of exploration parties are not made always of the same stuff. The Committee choose the commander; they ask him for a professional report, whereby he must be judged; and if he choose to add the results of his own literary studies, and if they publish these always with the caution that for such suggestions the author is responsible, it is, I think, clear that they have fulfilled at once their duty to the public and to the explorer. This is what the Society have always done. It is a question then: 1st, as to the professional report; 2nd, as to the explorer's opinions; but in both cases a question between the explorer and the critic, not between the Committee and the critic. I think that within the limits at his disposal, Professor Socin might have said more than he has about the professional reports—as to the physical description of the country, the minute accounts with plans and photographic drawings of the ruins, the legends and notes as to population, the inscriptions, and other details tending to establish date or historical sequence, the accounts of masonry dressing and other distinguishing peculiarities. Professor Socin has, however, preferred to confine his notice to picking holes in the results which have been published outside this professional report on Palestine, which forms the main material of the Memoirs, and the most solid basis of the reputation which the Palestine Exploration Fund enjoys, at all events in England.

I am not aware that the permanent publications of the Palestine Exploration Fund can justly be said to have, what he calls, an "apologetic tendency." Survey and the description of ruins have no tendency at all; they represent the collection of facts on which the reader may put any construction he pleases. The strength of the Society lies in the fact that officially it recognises no *views*, but only deals with ascertained facts. It is clear, from Professor Socin's misconstruction of my views on Biblical criticism, that there can have been nothing in the Survey Memoirs to allow of his knowing what those views are.

As regards the identification of the Akkadians with Mongols, I am not sure what Professor Socin's objection can be. Perhaps I should have written Finns or Uralo-Altaic races, but this is a very slight alteration.

I can hardly believe that Professor Socin is ignorant of the results of philology in this case. The labours of Lenormant have proved beyond doubt that the old non-Semitic speech of Mesopotamia of the Akkadians, Sumerians, early Elamites and Cosseans, was closely akin to the Finnic language, and (according to the ordinary use of the word) was therefore Turanian.¹ Again, as regards the Amorites, Professor Socin says, "It is the name in a particular document for the Canaanites in general." I presume he is referring to one of the hypothetical documents into which some German scholars divide the Pentateuch; but considering how various are the views as to these components, no ordinary student is as yet bound to accept any one among them in particular as belonging to the category of ascertained fact. Professor Socin is presumably aware that the Amaur are mentioned in Egyptian inscriptions, and I may remark in the known instances that they always appear as inhabiting the "high lands."

Professor Socin again seems to fail in making a point as regards the worship of the Makams, "a worship," he says, "as different from the old idolatry as is the Catholic image worship." Has he, I would ask, reflected on the mass of evidence which shows that Catholic image worship is directly founded on paganism, and that throughout Europe pagan deities of the Kelts or Gaul or Germans are still adored as Christian saints? The parallel is at least an unfortunate one for the critic.

As to the acceptability of Talmudic tradition in topography, there may be differences of opinion. My own belief is, that the earlier works of the second and third centuries, included under this general title with others of later date, are of very high value, as representing indigenous tradition. Like all other evidence, it cannot of course be accepted unquestioned. The question of identification is again one of opinion, but the rules of the interchange of certain letters which I have always attempted to follow are recognised by every student. Why Professor Socin should prefer Talluza (طَلُوْزَا) to Teiasir (تِيَاصِيْر) as representing Tirezah (תִּרְצָה) I cannot see; the former word has not a single letter in common with the Hebrew.²

¹ If this "makes a very painful impression on a serious German student," I can only suppose that the student in question knows very little of Assyriology. As to the Phœnicians coming from Mesopotamia, the evidence is not only that of Strabo or Herodotus, but includes philological considerations which seem to me of great weight, such as the name Akharu, the worship of Nergal and Tammus, and other indications of a like kind. I am aware that this migration is doubted by some, but it is accepted by good authorities.

² As regards the cases (four out of more than 150) to which Professor Socin takes exception—

Hosah = Ezzilyah is suggested for topographical reasons.

Hannathon = Kefr 'Anân is also chiefly on account of geographical position. The Talmudic Caphar Hananiah seems, however, to give an intermediate stage.

Neiel has the article in the Hebrew, which Professor Socin seems to neglect.

As regards the Tomb of Rachel, I can only say that I have no confidence in Mr. Schick's supposed discovery. I investigated the matter carefully on the spot and found no basis for his assertion, nor has any one since confirmed the supposed existence of the name at Mr. Schick's site. Nor do the passages mentioned by Professor Socin (1 Sam. x, 2; Jer. xxxi, 15) prove that Rachel's Tomb was ever north of Jerusalem, while Gen. xxxv, 19, not mentioned by Professor Socin, distinctly states that this tomb was near Bethlehem (see 16).

Professor Socin does not believe that the Cities of the Plain were north of the Dead Sea. Josephus said they were under it, and the Biblical account may mean the same, but I can hardly think that any one who has visited the southern shores of the Dead Sea could believe it had ever been a district capable of supporting a settled population, whereas the plains of Jericho still are so capable. This, however, is not a matter in any way affecting the credit of the survey of Palestine.¹

As regards my identifications of Neby Namán with Micah, and of Neby Mashúk with Melkarth, Professor Socin has omitted all reference to the historical evidence on which alone they rest. Perhaps he has not been able to find it in the Memoir, but I assure him that it is there awaiting his perusal. I am perhaps to blame for not giving cross references, but must beg for indulgence, as I was again exploring in Palestine while the memoirs of my first survey were being published in England.

I now come to the question of the Arabic name lists, where I am more in accord with the critic. I cannot, however, think that Professor Socin can have read my account in the first volume of the Memoirs of the Method of Execution of the Survey. It is hardly possible that he can mean flatly to contradict—without any personal knowledge of the survey operations—my direct statement to the effect that the names were *never* repeated by the surveyors to the scribe. Each surveyor had with him invariably a local guide. Every name was taken down from the mouth of that guide in my presence, and in that of the surveyor, by the scribe. The error, if any, must have been that of the native guide. I do not, however, note any instances of such error mentioned by Professor Socin, and I have no doubt that my assurance will induce him not again to repeat his hasty assertion, which is contrary to fact.²

Tell en Nahl is quite out of the question, but I am not responsible for this rather wild shot of Mr. T. Saunders.

Chephar Haamonai is also supported by topographical requirements as to situation.

¹ The suggestion that Kasim was Cadmus was made by Professor Palmer. It certainly seems unfounded. As to Jisr Mujámia' there is a legend attached to the bridge, of a great gathering which once occurred there.

² There is one instance in the north where the name Tireh is spelt تيره, yet translated "fortress," by Professor Palmer. I was, I believe, the first to show how this Aramaic word طيره (טירה) survives in Palestine, though its

The grammatical points raised by Professor Socin do not show, as he supposes, our ignorance of Arab grammar. They evince clearly to any one who has for six years¹ been living among the Fellahîn, writing down their words, inquiring into the peculiarities of their dialect, and with the aid of experienced natives and residents examining the question of nomenclature, that Professor Socin has himself very little knowledge of these dialectic peculiarities. Had he possessed such knowledge he would not have prepared a vocabulary of "townsman's Arabic" only, for his travellers, and he might even be puzzled to understand a fellah of the outlying districts when he spoke. Thus, for instance, Burâk is no doubt not the proper plural of Birkeh, but it is certainly a form used by the peasantry, as is Buwâb instead of Abwâb for gates. The correct form was constantly suggested to me by our scribe, but I always insisted on the fellah form being that written down. The various sounds of the feminine ending faithfully reproduce the fellah intonation. Surely Professor Socin does not suppose that Professor Palmer was capable of ignorance on such an elementary point as that of the *status constructus*, and I may tell the critic, that the list of abbreviations and explanations for those who could not read Arabic, was prepared, not by me, but by Professor Palmer. The question of transliteration is one of very secondary importance. Robinson's earlier method was adopted by the Committee because it was familiar in England. It is not in itself a good system; but no student would rely on the English lettering when he could find the original Arabic in the name lists.

The critic again objects to the translation of Shem (שֵׁם) as meaning "brown." It is not, however, my ignorance which is thus shown. The careful note on this question by Professor Sayce in the "Proceedings of the Biblical Archæological Society" seems to me to leave no doubt on this subject. This is one of several instances in which I think Professor Socin hastily condemns statements as to the foundation for which he knows nothing.

As regards other writers, it is not my business either to defend or to condemn. The contributors to the *Quarterly Statements* of the Society are of various calibre. It is not I think undesirable that, in an ephemeral production of this kind, all who wish should find room to write, but the value of their contributions is matter of opinion. Personally, I should prefer not to see its columns filled with endless discussions on unimportant points which can probably never be settled. I should prefer not again to read therein bad jokes, or personal details of ordinary travellers' mishaps; but these are rare and unimportant details, and no doubt much very

meaning is lost to the natives. They translate it "bird" (طير), and in the same way Râmeḥ ("the hill") they translate "the tank."

¹ I spent the years 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1881, 1882, among Fellahîn and Arabs. I do not know how many years Professor Socin includes under the term "a considerable time," nor do I know if he actually lived among the peasantry and conversed with them daily in their own language.

valuable information has been obtained from outsiders through the columns of the *Quarterly Statement*.

I would make an exception in the case of the Rev. A. Henderson to the criticisms of Professor Socin. This writer has always been remarkable for moderation, modesty, and freedom from prejudices. We may not always agree with his views, and I hear, in corresponding with him, that there are a few slips and printer's errors in his Handbook, which he expects to amend in a future edition. I think, however, that this work—which has, by the bye, nothing to do with the Palestine Exploration Fund—is generally so sound and useful that it cannot fail to be acceptable in the class for which it is intended.

We have come thus to the end of the Professor's criticisms. We must thank him for his expressions of approval, and also for a good many really valuable suggestions and objections, but at the same time we may fairly expect him to withdraw many others which are hasty and ill-formed. We may also be allowed to suggest to his consideration, that no work—not even his own—undertaken by mortal man is perfect, and that it is necessary to look at the general character in pronouncing a verdict. The task of exploring 6,000 square miles, and then preparing and publishing the results, is not a small task. It has fallen mainly on the shoulders of Mr. Walter Besant and of myself, though there have been many distinguished contributors. I have no doubt Mr. Besant feels as I do, that we have learned as we went on. The task of final assimilation of the huge mass of material is not yet complete. It will probably not be complete for many years. I hope soon to offer a contribution to such assimilation in a work on which I am still engaged; but I fully expect to see, even in Professor Socin's future editions of his Handbook, the influence of the work that has been already done. Professor Socin's time is, no doubt, mainly occupied by original research rather than by criticism, and we may hope to obtain some results which may be more valuable even than his critical comments on the Palestine Exploration Fund, from the labours of the German Palestine Society. As yet we have had nothing very striking from them either in the way of exploration or of literature. The papers by Herr Schick and his plans are welcomed as the work of an old and zealous workman, but they are open to criticism far more severe than that levelled against the English Society. After all, we have given the public a solid mass of information, vouched for by professional men, and accepted by students of a very high class in England.

The critical school is fast being superseded by the historical in England. The study of monuments and inscriptions, coins, statues, and buildings, gives us more certain results regarding the vexed questions of Oriental antiquity than any amount of exegetical criticism can be expected to give. If Professor Socin doubts the existence of non-Semitic races in Syria, his doubt is not shared by those who have studied the records of Egyptian and Akkadian monuments, and I for one believe that more is to be learned from such comparative study than from any amount of theorising on "documents," "editors," "first and second Elohist," and

the rest ; at the same time it does not follow that because our line of research leads away from these bitter controversies to the safer path of contemporary monumental evidence, we are therefore ignorant of what has been written in these matters. I have studied the works of Kuenen, Ewald, Colenso, Robertson Smith, and other critics, and have become generally acquainted with the views of Hitzig, Wellhausen, and other German critical writers, and I have read Renan's great work, as well as numerous books of Lenormant ; but there are many other branches of study which must yield their contributions to the study of Syrian antiquity, and to which Professor Socin does not refer. Such are the publications of the Biblical Archæological Society, the "Records of the Past," the Sacred Books of the East, the works of Smith, Layard, Rawlinson, Boscawen, Taylor, Sayce, Chabas, Brugsch, Birch, Mariette, De Rougè, and many more. There is so much to do in collating all that these great scholars have written respecting Syria, that the study might well fill a lifetime without leaving time for exegetical works. I think Professor Socin will agree, that time is better spent in trying to learn than in trying to pick holes in other men's work. As regards the word already spoken—that is past. If there has been error or shortcoming, all that can be done is to amend in the future, and to strive through the aid of one's critics to avoid the perpetuation of error. In the end, the true lives, the false dies away. All we have a right to require of every writer is, that he should be honest, well-informed, and open to conviction, conscientious in doing his best, and conscious of his own fallibility.

STONE DOORS.

I.

WE have been long familiar with the Stone Doors of Bashan, but Mr. Oliphant's discovery of a couple of these old portals, built into the house of a Jew at Tiberias, gives a new interest to the subject. In Palestine stone doors belong to the past, but I write to state that while lately accompanying the Afghan Boundary Commission through Persia I saw doors of that kind still in use at the present day. The necessity for them in that country may, perhaps, throw light on the conditions which required such protection in Palestine in times gone by. For centuries back, and up till only about two or three years ago, Persia has been liable on its north-eastern frontier to incessant inroads from Turkoman raiders ; these raiders came at times in small bodies, at times in large numbers ; their plan of action was necessarily hurried, they swooped down on villages and carried off whatever they could pounce upon. Men, women, and children, as well as houses, cattle, and sheep, were all prey to the Turkomans. The human spoil in such cases were carried off and sold as slaves in the