

THE
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

LAST YEAR AND THIS.

THE year 1888 has not been fruitful of discoveries. On the other hand, it has been a year of very good work, and one that has enriched the bibliography of Palestine Research with much that is valuable and enduring.

- (1) Herr Conrad Schick has followed up and completed his account of the very interesting discoveries made in the Russian property to the east of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We have been in communication with the Russian Exploration Society, and have received from them the most gratifying assurances of assistance. It is possible that some of the opinions first advanced by Herr Schick upon this discovery may have to be modified. For example, he thinks that the granite columns found in the street Khan er-Zeit formed part of Constantine's Propylæum. Sir Charles Wilson, however, is of opinion that these columns probably belonged to the main street of Ælia Capitolina, which was decorated with columns as in the case of Samaria and other cities.
- (2) The line of the Second Wall has received no further investigation. But Herr Schick was absent on leave during the summer, and it is hoped that he may be able to resume his search during the present year.
- (3) As regards the Sidon Sarcophagi, we are still awaiting the promised work of Hamdi Bey upon them.
- (4) The great discovery of the year has been that of the Pool of Bethesda, and fully described in the *Quarterly Statement* for July, 1888. There seems to be very little doubt that we have here the ancient Pool itself.
- (5) A cave has been found in Jerusalem, at a depth of 49 feet 6 inches below the surface. It lies south-east of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The cave is to be cleared out and thoroughly examined.
- (6) Russian excavations at Jericho have proved the existence of former extensive buildings, on the site capitals, pillars, lintels, weapons, lamps, and jars, rings, &c., have been found.
- (7) Herr Schumacher has surveyed and planned the ruins of Abil, the Abila of the Decapolis, situated on the south bank of the Yarmûk. We shall give this Report to our Subscribers with the April or July number of the *Quarterly Statement*.
- (8) The narrative of the Botanical Expedition of Dr. Post to the Trans-Jordanic regions in the year 1886 was published in the October number of the *Quarterly Statement* for last year. The list of plants collected is a most valuable contribution to the Botany of the country.
- (9) Herr Schick has discovered a somewhat remarkable ruin on one of the sand dunes on the coast south of Jaffa. It is called Tell Yûnis, and is described in this number.

The Committee are pleased to announce that a sufficient number of names has been received for the three works—Conder's "Eastern Survey," Ganneau's "Archæological Drawings," and Hart's "Flora and Fauna of the Wady Arabah," to justify the commencement of the work. Major Conder's drawings are already executed and a portion of the work has been set up. The volume will probably be ready in March or April. Names should be sent in as soon as possible. No more than 500 will be printed, and the price, after 250 names have been received, will be raised from seven to twelve guineas.

The Committee have added to their list of publications during the year Schumacher's "Survey of Jaulân." Upwards of 150 plans and sketches of the country were made for the work; the map which accompanies it contains 600 names as compared with 150 in the previous maps. The book is full of new and valuable information on the people and the country.

The Committee have also to announce that by arrangement with Messrs. Bentley and Son, the new edition of the "History of Jerusalem," by Walter Besant and E. H. Palmer, can be obtained by subscribers, carriage paid, for 5s. 6d., by application to the Head Office only. The whole set (*see* below) of the Society's works, including this book, can be obtained by application to Mr. George Armstrong, for 37s. 6d., carriage paid. The "History of Jerusalem," which was originally published in 1871, and has long been completely out of print, covers a period and is compiled from materials not included in any other work, though some of the contents have been plundered by later works on the same subject. It begins with the siege by Titus and continues to the fourteenth century, including the Early Christian period, the Moslem invasion, the Mediæval pilgrims, the Mohammedan pilgrims, the Crusades, the Latin Kingdom, the victorious career of Saladin, the Crusade of Children, and many other little-known episodes in the history of the city and the country.

The books now contained in the Society's publications comprise an amount of information on Palestine, and on the researches conducted in the country, which can be found in no other publications. It must never be forgotten that no single traveller, however well equipped by previous knowledge, can compete with a scientific body of explorers, instructed in the periods required, and provided with all the instruments necessary for carrying out their work. The books are the following:—

By Major Conder, R.E.—

- (1) "Tent Work in Palestine."—A popular account of the survey of Western Palestine, freely illustrated by drawings made by the author himself. This is not a dry record of the sepulchres, or a descriptive catalogue of ruins, springs, and valleys, but a continuous narrative full of observations upon the manners and customs of the people, the Biblical associations of the sites, the Holy City and its memories, and is based upon a six years' experience in the country itself. No other modern traveller has enjoyed the same advantages as Major Conder, or has used his opportunities to better purpose.

- (2) "Heth and Moab."—Under this title Major Conder provides a narrative, as bright and as full of interest as "Tent Work," of the expedition for the *Survey of Eastern Palestine*. How the party began by a flying visit to North Syria, in order to discover the Holy City—Kadesh—of the children of Heth; how they fared across the Jordan, and what discoveries they made there, will be found in this volume.
- (3) Major Conder's "Syrian Stone Lore."—This volume, the least known of Major Conder's works, is, perhaps, the most valuable. It attempts a task never before approached—the reconstruction of Palestine from its monuments. It shows what we should know of Syria if there were no Bible, and it illustrates the Bible from the monuments.
- (4) Major Conder's "Altaic Inscriptions."—This book is an attempt to read the Hittite Inscriptions. The author has seen no reason to change his views since the publication of the work.
- (5) Professor Hull's "Mount Seir."—This is a popular account of the Geological Expedition conducted by Professor Hull for the Committee of the Palestine Fund. The part which deals with the Valley of Arabah will be found entirely new and interesting.
- (6) Herr Schumacher's "Across the Jordan."
- (7) Herr Schumacher's "Jaulân."—These two books must be taken in continuation of Major Conder's works issued as instalments of the unpublished "Survey of Eastern Palestine." They are full of drawings, sketches, and plans, and contain many valuable remarks upon manners and customs.
- (8) The Memoirs of Twenty-one Years' Work.—A copy of this book is presented to every subscriber to the Fund who applies for it. The work is a popular account of the researches conducted by the Society during the past twenty-one years of its existence. It will be found not only valuable in itself as an interesting work, but also as a book of reference, and especially useful in order to show what has been doing, and is still doing, by this Society.
- (9) Herr Schumacher's Kh. Fahil. The ancient Pella (?), the first retreat of the Christians; with map and illustrations.
- (10) Names and Places in the Old and New Testament and Apocrypha, with their modern identifications, with reference to Josephus, the Memoirs, and *Quarterly Statements*.
- (11) Besant and Palmer's "History of Jerusalem," already described on p. 2.

The Questions for making an inquiry into the manners and customs of the various peoples and tribes in Syria and the Desert, which were carefully prepared three years ago, and sent out to Palestine, have now begun to furnish the expected replies. They were interrupted by the absence of Dr. Post from Beyrout; he has now returned and has begun to send the answers.

The translation, classification, and publication of these will form a great part of the work for the next year.

The publications for the year 1889, besides those already mentioned, will include Schumacher's "Abila" and his "Southern Ajlûn." These will be presented to subscribers.

We also hope to publish in the autumn Mr. Guy le Strange's new book on Palestine according to the Arabic Geographers.

Work at Jerusalem and elsewhere will be continued as opportunity may offer. Should the long-hoped for Firman be granted, the survey of Eastern Palestine will be renewed.

It will be evident from the above that the Society is vigorous and full of work. At no time has the reputation of the Palestine Exploration Fund stood higher: its publications are in demand over the whole world; its achievements in the illustration of the Bible rise beyond comparison with those of any other institution or private traveller; and it has still an immense quantity of work before it. In those lands whose chief treasures are below the surface it is impossible to say what may be discovered, and at any moment. The Committee can only, however, make general plans, subject to alteration, from motives of expediency and necessity. The management of the Society is conducted on the most economical lines possible, and where there is extravagance of expenditure it is in the presentation to subscribers of the results obtained by their money.

The Committee have resolved that Branch Associations of the Bible Society, all Sunday Schools in union with the Sunday School Institute, the Sunday School Union, and the Wesleyan Sunday School Institute, shall be treated as subscribers and be allowed to purchase the books and maps (by application only to the Secretary) at reduced price.

The friends of the Society are earnestly requested to use the "Memoirs of Twenty-one Years' Work" as a means of showing what the work has been, and what remains to be done.

Subscribers are very earnestly asked:—(1) To pay their subscriptions early in the year—say in January. (2) To pay them direct to Coutts and Co. by a banker's order. (3) If they would rather choose their own time, to send up their subscriptions without being reminded. The Clerical Staff of the Society is small; it is most desirable not to increase it; and if these simple requests are attended to a great saving of clerical labour, postage, and stationery is effected. For instance, there are, say, 3,000 subscribers. If every one of these waits to be reminded, and has to have a receipt sent to him, the Society has to spend £25 a year additional in postage, and to write 6,000 letters, merely to ask for and to acknowledge the receipt of the subscriptions.

It has come to the knowledge of the Committee that certain book hawkers are representing themselves as agents of the Society. The Committee have to caution subscribers that they have no book hawkers in their employ, and that none of their works are sold by any itinerant agents.

Mr. Armstrong has prepared a list of the photographs belonging to the Society, arranged alphabetically according to those Bible names which are illustrated by views. This list is now ready. Those who wish for a copy may send in their names.

The income of the Society, from September 19th to December 20th, inclusive, was—from subscriptions and donations, £318 19s. 0d.; from all sources, £1,011 13s. 8d. This amount includes a legacy of £500 from the late Mr. Robert Mackay Smith, of 4, Bellvue Crescent, Edinburgh. The expenditure during the same period was £769 6s. 6d. On December 20th, the balance in the Bank was £460 17s. 7d.

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.

It does not seem generally known that cases for binding the *Quarterly Statement* can be had by subscribers, on application to the office.

The Committee have resolved upon issuing single sheets of the Great Map (Scale, one inch = one mile) at 2s. 6d. each to Subscribers.

Subscribers are begged to note the following :—

1. Index to the *Quarterly Statement*, 1869–1880.
2. Cases for Herr Schumacher's "Jaulån."
3. Cases for the *Quarterly Statement*.

Each of these can be had by application to the office at 1s. each.

Early numbers of the *Quarterly Statement* are very rare. In order to make up complete sets the Committee will be very glad to receive any of the numbers in the following years :—

1869, 1870. These are numbered I to VII.

1871–1876, 1881, 1883, 1885.

Odd numbers are worth little or nothing. Complete sets of the *Quarterly Statement* are priced in second-hand catalogues from £7 to £10 each.

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.

The only authorised lecturers for the Society are—

- (1) Mr. George St. Clair, F.G.S., Member of the Anthropological Institute and of the Society of Biblical Archæology.

His subjects are :—

- (1) *The General Exploration of Palestine.*
- (2) *Jerusalem Buried and Recovered.*
- (3) *Buried Cities, Egypt and Palestine.*
- (4) *Buried Cities of Mesopotamia, with some account of the Hittites.*
- (5) *The Moabite Stone and the Pedigree of the English Alphabet.*

Address : Geo. St. Clair, Bristol Road, Birmingham, or at the Office of the Fund.

- (2) The Rev. Henry Geary, Vicar of St. Thomas's, Portman Square. His lectures are on the following subjects, and all illustrated by original photographs shown as "dissolving views :"—

The Survey of Western Palestine, as illustrating Bible History.
Palestine East of the Jordan.
The Jerusalem Excavations.
A Restoration of Ancient Jerusalem.

- (3) 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.

- (4) The Rev. Thomas Harrison, F.R.G.S., Member of the Society of Biblical Archæology, 38, Melrose Gardens, West Kensington Park, W. His subjects are as follows :—

- (1) *Research and Discovery in the Holy Land.*
 - (2) *In the Track of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan.*
 - (3) *Bible Scenes in the Light of Modern Science.*
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