

THE
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

Died

ON THE 25TH DECEMBER, 1890,

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK,

President of the Society.

THE YEAR 1890.

1. The chief event of the year has been the work of Mr. Flinders Petrie at Tell el Hesi. A firman having been granted for excavation within an area of ten kilometres at Khîrbet 'Ajlân, Mr. Petrie went up from Egypt in February, and commenced the operations which have been so surprisingly successful. Tell el Hesi was the spot chosen for the excavations, and here the wall of the ancient Amorite city of Lachish was discovered, as well as later constructions believed to belong to the times of Rehoboam Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, and Manasseh. The discoveries of pottery are of great importance. Mr. Petrie states that "we now know for certain the characteristics of Amorite pottery, of earlier Jewish, and of later Jewish, influenced by Greek trade."

2. Herr Schick's untiring and intelligent work at Jerusalem has produced many interesting and valuable results. He has reported further discoveries north of Damascus Gate, including a Greek inscription; several more rock-hewn chapels and rooms at Silwân; a very remarkable passage, with shafts, leading to the spring of Gibeon; further excavations on the eastern brow of Zion which revealed the existence of an extensive series of rock-cut chambers apparently designed for dwellings; a remarkable and elaborate tomb near Bethany; and excavations on Olivet, and at Siloah in connection with the (so-called) "second" aqueduct.

3. To Herr Schumacher the Fund has been indebted for notes on subjects of interests from Galilee, and for a description and photographs of the curious human figures cut in the rocks near Kâna.

4. Dr. Post of Beirût has contributed the first part of an essay on the sects and nationalities of Palestine, and Mr. Frederick J. Bliss, also o

Beirût, has furnished an elaborate report on Ma'lula and its dialect, derived from personal investigations on the spot.

5. Many minor observations and discoveries have been reported. Professor Hayter Lewis has sent a photograph of a squeeze of an Assyrian tablet found at Jerusalem; the Rev. J. E. Hanauer has described another visit to the curious cave at Saris; Mr. Gray Hill and Mr. W. Simpson have reported observations on a remarkable system of irrigation by underground canals, and the Rev. James Neil has communicated a paper on the same subject in connection with the pits at Nimrin; Dr. Selah Merrill has supplied an account of "birds and animals new to Palestine"; and Dr. Chaplin has reported the discovery of an inscribed Hebrew weight, believed to belong to the period of 800 B.C., and of a stone mask from Er Râm.

6. Apart from actual discoveries, valuable literary contributions to the *Quarterly Statement* have been made by Major Conder, R.E., the Lord Bishop of Salisbury, the Rev. W. F. Birch, the Rev. H. Brass, the Rev. J. H. Cardew, Mr. George St. Clair, Mrs. Finn, and others.

7. A manuscript of a journey to Tadmor in 1691 having been placed in the hands of the Executive Committee, they thought it well to print it. It contains copies of many inscriptions in Greek and in the Palmyrene character.

8. The publication of the meteorological observations taken under the auspices of the Fund at Sarona and Jerusalem, has been continued by Mr. James Glaisher, the indefatigable Chairman of the Fund.

9. The new publications of the year^s (besides the *Quarterly Statements*), have been—

"Palestine Under the Moslems," by Guy le Strange.

"Ajlûn Within the Decapolis," by G. Schumacher.

The New Map of Palestine.

NOTES AND NEWS.

Everyone interested in the Archæology of Palestine will regret to learn that the famous "Siloam inscription" has been cut out of its place in the rock tunnel and carried away. It was broken in removal, and the fragments are reported to have been sold to a Greek of Jerusalem. On receiving this intelligence the Executive Committee forwarded to Hamdi Bey a resolution expressing their regret, and the hope that immediate steps will be taken to secure the fragments.

Fortunately an accurate copy of this inscription has been made and published by the Fund. The occurrence shows how valuable the work done by the Fund has been in preserving records of monuments which are in daily danger of being destroyed. The Rev. W. Ewing, of Tiberias, reports that the gateway of the small synagogue at Kefr Birim has disappeared, but that the stone bearing an inscription has been preserved.