

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Annual Meeting was held in the Lecturing Theatre of the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, on July 11th, 1899. Lord Amherst of Hackney occupied the chair.

There were present:—Admiral Sir Erasmus Ommanney, Lord Eustace Cecil, Mr. James Glaisher, Dr. Ginsburg, Colonel Watson, Dr. Chaplin, Mr. J. D. Crace, Rev. W. J. Stracey, Mr. William Simpson, Mr. James Melrose, Mr. H. C. Kay, Professor Hull, Dr. Löwy, Rev. W. H. Rogers, D.D., Rev. William Fleming, General Sir Charles Wilson, Mr. Walter Morrison, M.P., Professor Sayce, Canon Dalton, Mr. Basil Woodd Smith, and others.

LORD AMHERST.—Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure it is with the very greatest pleasure that we welcome here on this occasion the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Glaisher, but he has asked me to perform the actual duties of the chairmanship for him on this occasion. The first thing I have to announce is that letters of regret for not being able to attend have been received from His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, Viscount Sidmouth, the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and others. I will now ask Canon Dalton to read the Report.

CANON DALTON read a short summary and abstract of the Report, of which printed copies had previously been circulated among the audience, and which is here given in full.

GENTLEMEN,

In resigning the office to which they were appointed at the last Annual Meeting, your Executive Committee have the honour to present the following Report:—

They have held twenty-two meetings for the transaction of business.

The excavations determined upon last year on the historical site of Tell es-Sâfi, supposed, since 1857, by many Biblical students to be the ancient Gath (*cf.* Colonel Conder's valuable notes, *Quarterly Statement*, 1880, pp. 214–221, Professor G. A. Smith's "Historical Geography of the Holy Land," pp. 194 to 197 and p. 227, and Sir Charles Warren's article "Gath," in the second volume of Hastings's "Dict. of the Bible," 1899,

pp. 113, 114), have been successfully begun, and are now being carried out by the Fund under Dr. Bliss and Mr. Macalister.

After returning from his visit to America, and seeing his volume on the excavations at Jerusalem through the press, Dr. Bliss proceeded to Palestine, and arrived at Jerusalem on August 30th, 1898, where he was joined by Mr. Macalister.

The area of 10 kilometres within which excavations by the Fund have been sanctioned by the Sublime Porte for two years includes the three ancient sites Tell Zakariya (Survey, "Memoirs," vol. ii, p. 441), Tell es-Sâfi (*id.*, pp. 415, 416, 440), and Tell ej-Judeiyideh (Survey, "Memoirs," vol. iii, p. 291), each situated at one of the three angles of a hollow triangle with its apex towards the south at the last-mentioned Tell. After a careful reconnaissance of the ground it was decided to commence operation at Tell Zakariya. "The place has every appearance of being an ancient and important site, though as yet unidentified," 1874 ("Memoirs," vol. ii, p. 441). Work was here carried on from October 26th until Christmas (when the rains rendered it impossible for a time), and was resumed on March 20th, and continued for five weeks, till April 22nd, after which the exploring party moved on to Tell es-Sâfi, which lies about five miles due west of Tell Zakariya.

Dr. Bliss sends the following general account of the work of the year:—

"Tell Zakariya is a hill rising 350 feet above the Vale of Elah, which sweeps around its eastern and northern sides. It stands about half way in a direct line between Jerusalem and Ascalon, being in the heart of the Shephelah, or low hilly country, that lies between the Maritime Plain and the high Central Range. The summit is fairly flat, and has a generally triangular shape, measuring from base to apex about 1,000 feet, with a maximum breadth of about 400 feet. At the south-east corner is 'a raised area (as at Tell Jezer) on which apparently the citadel once stood' ('Memoirs,' vol. ii, p. 441).

"I would once more here emphasise the invaluable assistance given to excavators in Palestine by the researches in pottery made by Dr. Petrie at Tell el-Hesi in 1890. The results he arrived at there were amply confirmed in the more extended excavations afterwards conducted on the same site. With this key in our hands, from

a merely superficial survey of the pottery of Tell Zakariya and of the heaps of fragments there collected, I inferred that the place had been inhabited in Jewish times, and that the Roman occupation had been brief. How fully these inferences were confirmed will be seen from the summary of the excavations.

"On the raised portion we have found a large fortress, of irregular shape, measuring 220 feet on the west side, and about 120 feet on the north. The walls are about 6 feet thick, built without mortar. At the angles are four towers, with two extra towers on the northern and western sides, all proved to have been of later construction than the main walls. This building stands upon the rock to a height varying from 16 feet to about 20 feet; the top of its ruined walls crops out in places from the present surface of the soil. About half the area included has been examined down to the rock. The *débris* thus exhumed has proved to consist of two strata: one a pre-Israelite stratum, in which the foundations of the fortress were sunk; and the other a Jewish stratum, slightly disturbed in Roman times. The fortress thus may possibly be the work of King Rehoboam, who built so many cities for defence."

[Their names are given in 2 Chron. xi, 6-10, and they formed a girdle of fenced cities round Jerusalem. Socoh, Gath, Lachish, Azekah, and Hebron are among them. This line of fortresses, which protected Jerusalem on the west and south, was forced by Sheshonk, the first king of the twenty-second or Bubastite dynasty, when, in Rehoboam's fifth year, he took Jerusalem (2 Chron. xii, 2-5), as Jeroboam's ally and former friend in Egypt. His well-known record of that invasion, with a long list of captured Jewish forts (most of which have been identified by Colonel Conder, *Quarterly Statement*, 1893, pp. 245-246), is inscribed on the walls of Karnak.]

"In the lowest stratum, near the rock, was found a buried jar, broken but *in situ*, containing, among other Egyptian amulets, scarabs of Thothmes III and his great-grandson Amenhotep III," [the fifth and eighth kings of the eighteenth dynasty, and both conquerors of Palestine. It was the son of the latter monarch, to whom the Tell el-Amarna tablets were addressed. These Pharaohs reigned about 300 years before a commonly received date of the Exodus, and about 600 years before Sheshonk and Jeroboam]. "Jar-handles inscribed in Hebrew 'Belonging to the

King of Hebron' and 'Belonging to the King of Shocoh' also occurred." [Rather translate, "For the King. Hebron"; "For the King. Shocoh"; *i.e.*, "For the King's service," "made at, or sent from, Hebron and Shocoh."] "Pre-Israelite and Jewish pottery was found in large quantities. Objects in stone, bronze, iron, and clay were numerous.

"The excavation of about half of the interior of the fortress proved that this was merely an enclosure for the protection of houses within. On a site where stone was always the main material of construction, exact plans of the various occupations cannot be given as in the case of a series of mud-brick towns, where one set of buildings rises from the ruins of another, but a study of the walls, floorings, pit-ovens, &c., of Tell Zakariya has proved that there were at least four mutually excluding occupations. The Roman pottery was very scarce, consisting of only 2 to 3 per cent. of the fragments found to a maximum depth of 7 feet.

"In a brief summary of our four months' digging on this site it is impossible to go into details and proofs, but my reports have shown that the place was founded in pre-Israelite times, twice fortified in the Jewish period, and inhabited for a brief time by the Romans. What, then, is this place? From topographical considerations it has been identified with the Azekah of Scripture by Van de Velde, Sir George Grove, and Sir Charles Wilson (Articles 'Azekah' and 'Vale of Elah,' Smith's 'Dict. of the Bible,' vol. i, pp. 304 and 890, ed. 1893); and with them I myself would agree.

"Before leaving Tell Zakariya, I must refer to the indefatigable zeal of Mr. Macalister in examining the numerous rock-cut chambers in the slopes of the Tell." [Some of these may perhaps have contained "the store of victual, of oil and wine," mentioned 2 Chron. xii, 11.] "One system has at least 49 rooms connected by shafts and creep-passages, of which he has made careful plans and sections. The exploration of these was complicated by the *débris* with which they are partly filled, and by the foul atmosphere lurking in their recesses.

"I am bound also to refer to the Tell Zakariya workmen, and to the villagers in general. Between us and them there exists a feeling of genuine friendship and cordiality. The invitations to dinner were almost embarrassing in their frequency, and we

were obliged to acknowledge our obligations in one grand farewell party, when some 80 people sat in groups in the moonlight, and partook of roast lamb, rice, and other simple fare.

“On May 4th, after a slight interruption, due to ill-health and other reasons, we broke ground at Tell es-Sâfi (which is about 600 feet lower than Tell Zakariya, but still 700 feet above the level of the Mediterranean), and have worked there continuously till June 12th, the date of writing. Owing to the stagnant water which usually is found in the stream-bed all through the summer and autumn, Tell-es-Sâfi has an evil reputation for malaria, well justified by the debilitated appearance of the inhabitants. Fortunately this is a singularly healthful year, and thus far we have not suffered. Moreover, the weather has been exceptionally cool, and our camp is open to every breeze of heaven. The importance of this site has struck everyone traveling through the district. Its white cliffs on the north are visible from a long distance. Its strategic qualities were recognised by the Crusaders who erected here in 1144 A.D. the fortress of Blanche - Garde (*Alba specula*), which doubtless took its name from these same white cliffs. It was dismantled by Saladin in 1191 A.D., and had apparently four towers of equal height. The cliffs rise from the river-bed some 150 feet, and from their top the ground slopes rapidly upwards for another 150 feet to the Wely, dedicated to el Khudr, which crowns the southern end. The summit has not the flat surface of Tell Zakariya, but slopes down from the Wely to the north-east plateau. On plan the summit has the shape of the moon in its first quarter. The boundary of the ancient city on the south, east, and west has been determined by the discovery of a massive rampart which, by its construction, must antedate Crusading times. The town was irregular in shape, measuring about 400 yards in maximum length and about 200 yards in maximum breadth, and thus contained a space about six times the size of the fort on Tell Zakariya. The city walls are 12 feet thick, built without mortar, like those at Tell Zakariya, but they are twice as thick, and twice as high; they are preserved in places to a height of 33 feet, and show a system of buttresses regularly spaced. They rest not on the rock, but on some 6 feet to 10 feet of *débris*, which is characterised by very early pre-Israelite pottery. As their massive foundations must have been sunk in a considerable

quantity of soil we gather that they were not erected much before Jewish times. The gate has still to be found. Unfortunately the area within the ancient city is so encumbered by cemeteries and by the modern village that the space available for excavation is limited. However, shafts sunk in the accessible portions soon revealed the nature and depth of the accumulation. A large clearance to the rock on the north-east plateau has proved the existence of four strata of *débris*; a pre-Israelite stratum on the rock earlier than the lowest stratum at Tell Zakariya; a later pre-Israelite stratum; a stratum coinciding with Jewish times; and a Crusading stratum. These results were obtained mainly by the study of thousands of potsherds and confirmed by associated objects. According to the testimony of the pottery the place appears to have had a continuous history from the eighteenth to the fourth century B.C., to have been founded long before the conquest of the land by Joshua, and to have been inhabited continuously till a late Jewish period, when it was deserted till the time of the Crusaders.

“Chance is a favouring element in excavation. Often the excavator while searching for one thing finds another. In tracing the ancient wall we found one portion buried by an old rubbish heap, on which, curiously enough, the modern rubbish heap is superimposed. The older heap revealed an extraordinary mixture of objects: potsherds ranging from early pre-Israelite to late Greek; busts and other fragments of statuettes, probably Greek, pottery masks, figurines in large variety, great quantities of beads, Egyptian amulets with one fragment of a *Ushabti* figure inscribed, an inscribed jar-handle with two lines of Hebrew writing, &c. So precious a mine called for exhaustive working, but the long wished-for tablets and steles are yet to seek. Without these it will be impossible definitely to establish the identity of Tell es-Sâfi with Gath. This identification has usually been based on the ground of the position and importance of the site. Our excavations have proved the existence of a city quite as ancient as Gath, on a site where Gath may reasonably be looked for, fortified at about the period when Gath was made a city of defence. That the Tell contains inscriptions that will positively prove it to be Gath is quite within the range of possibilities. That these may be found by us is a desire felt, I am sure, by every subscriber to the Fund.

“As I have stated before, my theory of excavation in Palestine is to choose a site which is undoubtedly ancient and then to turn over as much *débris* as possible on that site. That is what we have been doing both at Tell Zakariya and at Tell es-Sâfi, and our ability to do so in the future depends largely upon the subscribers to the Fund.”

A week later than this report Dr. Bliss writes again to the Committee, under date of June 19th, that “in the large clearance which he has made on the north-east plateau at Tell es-Sâfi, at a depth of 17 feet beneath the soil he has uncovered what appears to be an old Canaanite temple or high-place with three standing stones, or menhirs, surrounded by a rude enclosure made of mud and rubble. The three stones are set in a line directly east and west. They are very rude and vary in height from 6 feet to 8 feet. They stand embedded in the layer of pre-Israelite pottery.” On such sacred standing-stones (in A.V. translated “pillars”) libations of blood, milk, honey, or water were poured. Dolmens, “stone-tables” or altars, and cromlechs “stone circles” (or Gilgals) still exist in great number east of the Jordan, but west of that river, with the exception of a few examples in Galilee, none have hitherto been found. They seem to have been destroyed by the Judean kings, Hezekiah and Josiah, in obedience to the injunctions of the Book of Deuteronomy to demolish the religious emblems of the Canaanites. Hence, if this is really a high place of the Canaanites, it had probably become buried in this *débris* before the time of Hezekiah, or otherwise it would not have escaped destruction. For a complete description of such sacrificial stones and altars, see Robertson Smith, “Religion of the Semites,” pp. 200 to 212, ed. 1894.

The inscribed jar-handles, weights, and other objects which were found in the course of the excavations have proved to be of great interest, and notes with reference to them by Professor Clermont-Ganneau, Professor Hilprecht, and Professor Sayco have appeared in the *Quarterly Statement*.

Mr. Macalister, besides the admirable plans and drawings to illustrate the excavations and the objects therein found, has contributed scholarly and careful reports on the rock cuttings of Tell Zakariya, on a Byzantine Church at Umm er Rûs, and on

a font with Greek inscription at Malkathah. His assistance to Dr. Bliss has thus been simply invaluable.

By this series of excavations, together with those conducted from 1890 to 1893 at Tell el-Hesi, the Fund has demonstrated the existence to this day, on the ancient sites of Old Testament history, of remains dating back to those periods, and even beyond them into pre-historic times. It is scarcely necessary to dwell on the important results that are likely to ensue, not only to the scholar and the antiquary, but also to every intelligent student of Holy Writ, if such excavations can be adequately supported and continuously and more extensively carried out.

This consideration brings us at once to the last point in our Report—the pecuniary position of the Fund. Our annual income last year from all sources was about £3,000, and of this, we are grateful to note, about one-seventh part was contributed by our American friends in the United States. The present excavations cost about £120 a month, and at the present moment we have a balance in the bank of about £100: scarcely sufficient for one more month's work.

May we not with confidence appeal for further and enlarged support?

Dr. Conrad Schick, in spite of his advancing age and frequent ill health, has contributed to the periodical of the Fund many important reports and articles.

In the spring of this year, when Sir Charles Wilson was about to undertake a tour in Palestine and adjoining districts, he was requested by the Executive Committee to make an official inspection of the excavations. This he kindly did, and since his return has furnished several full and most valuable reports, which should be of much service both regarding the present and future operations of the Society.

Your Executive Committee have also to record their thanks to many scholars and investigators who have sent to the *Quarterly Statement* articles of much interest.

Professor Clermont-Ganneau has contributed various notes on many topics, and especially an article on a newly-discovered Hebrew and Greek inscription relating to the boundary of Gezer.

Mr. Archibald C. Dickie has furnished an article, with plans, of the Lower Church of St. John, Jerusalem; Colonel Conder, several on the antiquities of the Pentateuch and the Books of Joshua and Judges, another in illustration of the Book of Job, &c.; the Rev. J. E. Hanauer, articles on "Tell er Reesh" and "The Ruins of the Herodian Jericho"; Mr. Mark Sykes, a "Narrative of a Journey East of Jebel ed-Druse"; and Mr. E. T. Newton, a report on certain bones brought thence by Mr. Sykes; Sir Charles Warren an elaborate and important paper on "The Ancient Standards of Weight and Measure in the East." Also Mr. Gray Hill, Professor Theodore Wright, the Rev. W. F. Birch, and others, have kindly sent various interesting communications.

Mr. P. J. Baldensperger's noteworthy series of papers on "Woman in the East," in which he describes the daily life, customs, religion, and folk-lore of the different classes of the female population of Palestine, is in course of publication in the *Quarterly Statement*.

Our chairman, Mr. Glaisher, has continued to prepare for the press the Meteorological Observations taken for the Fund at Jerusalem and Tiberias.

The publications of the Fund during the year, besides the *Quarterly Statements*, have been "Excavations at Jerusalem, 1894-1897," new editions of "Mound of Many Cities," "Judas Maccabæus," the 12 and 20 sheet maps of the Old and New Testament, and the Colotype print of the Raised Map.

Since the last Annual Meeting 109 names have been added to the list of subscribers, and 169 have been lost through death and otherwise.

Our cordial thanks are due to the honorary local secretaries for their help in collecting and forwarding subscriptions to the office of the Fund.

The amount received in subscriptions and from sale of books in 1898 from the Rev. Professor Theodore F. Wright, Honorary General Secretary for the United States of America, was £363 6s. 5d.

The Committee have to deplore the loss by death since the last Annual Meeting of the following members of the General Committee:—His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, Professor T. Hayter Lewis, Mr. John Mason Cook, Mr. William Tipping.

The following is the Treasurer's Statement of Receipts and Expenditure during the year 1898:—

The income of the Fund for 1898 amounted to £2,600 5s. 10d., made up as follows:—

From Legacy left by the late Mr. Henry Smiles, £100; from Donations and Subscriptions, £1,871 2s. 6d.; from sale of publications, £582 9s. 3d.; from Lectures, mainly delivered by Dr. Bliss in America while waiting for the Firman, £46 14s. 1d.

At the end of 1897 there was a balance in the bank of £645 5s. 2d., making the total amount available for the year, £3,245 11s. 0d.

The expenditure was:—

On exploration, £695 5s. 4d. Owing to the delay in getting the Firman the excavation work was not begun until late in the year.

On printing and binding the *Quarterly Statement*, the new work "Excavations at Jerusalem," the new editions of "Mound of Many Cities" and of "Judas Maccabeus," &c., £652 9s. 11d. On maps, lithographs, illustrations, photographs, &c., £145 11s. 11d. Against these two sums the Fund received from the sale of all publications, £582 9s. 3d., as stated above.

On advertising, insurance, stationery, &c., £83 2s. 7½d.

On postage of books, maps, &c., including the *Quarterly Statement*, £121 1s. 10½d.

The management, including rent of office, cost of removing from 24, Hanover Square, dilapidations, new furniture, repairs, &c., £873 10s. 3d.

At the end of the year the balance in the Bank was £674 9s. 1d.

Special expenses were incurred during the year in consequence of the office being removed to 38, Conduit Street, W. During the quarter in which this took place rent had to be paid for both the old and present offices.

ASSETS.	£	s.	d.	LIABILITIES.	£	s.	d.
Balance in Bank, December 31st, 1898.. ..	674	9	1	Printer's Bill	105	15	1
Stock of Publications in hand, Surveying Instruments, Show Cases, Furniture, &c.				Current Expenses.			
In addition there is the valuable library and the unique collection of antiques, models, &c.							

WALTER MORRISON, *Treasurer.*

The Museum has recently been rearranged at the office of the Fund, 38, Conduit Street (a few doors from Bond Street), and is open to visitors every week-day from 10 o'clock till 5, except Saturdays, when it is closed at 2 p.m. Mr. George Armstrong, Acting Secretary, is in attendance there during the above-mentioned hours, and will always be happy to answer any inquiries regarding the operations or publications of the Fund.

Mr. MORRISON.—I have much pleasure in moving the adoption of the Report, an abstract of which has been read by Canon Dalton. You will see that it is mainly an account of the operations of Dr. Bliss and his colleague, Mr. Macalister. Dr. Bliss has had some training as an explorer under Dr. Petrie, and has now had a considerable amount of experience, and is getting to know where to look for things, what to look for, and what to deduce from them when he has found them. The work he is engaged upon is very interesting indeed, and I see Mr. Armstrong has put some of the results on the table. There is plenty of work yet to do. It is fortunate that we took up the work of exploring Palestine thirty years ago, and that we devoted at first our principal efforts to Jerusalem, because it would be a much more difficult thing to excavate in Jerusalem now than it was then, seeing that the population is now about three times what it was some years ago. We have provided the world with a map of Palestine which is as good as the Ordnance Map of England. But there still remain all over the country a large number of mounds which mark the sites of ancient towns which have been destroyed, and we hope that the public will supply us with a sufficient amount of money to go on with our excavations, and to thoroughly exhaust the work which lies before us. It is the same in Palestine as in many other cases: the trained explorer sees all sorts of things which the ordinary person does not see. I recollect very well when the late Mr. James Fergusson, one of the members of our Committee, was very strong upon the desirability of looking out for rude stone monuments, such as Stonehenge and the like. No one had ever seen them in Palestine, and we asked our explorer especially to look out for them. Colonel Conder afterwards found 400 on Mount Pisgah alone. But the financial question is one which particularly concerns me as the Treasurer of the Fund. As you have heard from Canon Dalton, our funds have got into a low

condition, as the balance we had at the bank in January no longer exists. It is not a time of the year in which money is likely to flow in, and it will be rather difficult to keep our works going unless we get some substantial aid from the public. I have great pleasure in proposing the adoption of the Report.

Dr. Löwy, in seconding the adoption of the Report, said :—We are under the greatest obligation to the promoters of the exploration in Palestine for the increasing light they help to throw on Biblical and secular history. When we look upon the geographical position of Palestine, we are at once reminded that it was a regular thoroughfare for the early war expeditions undertaken by the Babylonians against the Egyptians, and *vice versâ*. The independence of the Palestinian districts was jeopardised, now by the rulers on the Nile, and now by the more aggressive rulers near the Euphrates. The instructive *Quarterly Statements* have recently informed us that in the Holy Land a hieroglyphic inscription had been unearthed in a *Tell* which dates back to the days of Thothmes III, thus showing that about 1500 years B.C. the heavy hand of Egypt had taken hold of that country. This hieroglyphic relic apparently commemorates a conquest which wrested the possession of Palestine from the power of Babylon. On the other hand we have the inestimable testimony given by the Tell el-Amarna tile inscriptions that the Babylonians had in remote times well-distributed sub-kings in Palestine and Syria. Information thus afforded to us renders us truly grateful to the zealous promoters of Biblical researches.

Adverting to the *Tells* which are mentioned five times in the Hebrew scriptures, independently of three proper names, "*Tell-Melach*" (*i.e.*, salt mound), "*Tell-Charsha*" (*i.e.*, forest mound), and "*Tell-Abib*" (*i.e.*, spring mound), Dr. Löwy pointed out that the Hebrews employed the word *Tell* mainly in the sense of a ruined fort or fortress, and they more than once alluded to the fact that such mounds might be overtopped by new erections which again were liable to become ruins in the process of time. One of the Talmudical sections speaks of a Jewish owner of a *Tell*. In the folk-lore of post-biblical ages Jewish writers refer to ruins as haunts and homes of *shedim* (evil spirits); but such localities do not appear under the name of *Tell* but of *churbah*.

The Report was unanimously adopted.

The CHAIRMAN.—We are now coming to what is one of the great objects of our meeting, and I have great pleasure in calling on Sir Charles Wilson to give us an address on his recent travels in Moab and Edom.

Sir CHARLES WILSON then delivered an address, illustrated by the limelight, on his recent visit to Palestine, more especially the land east of the Jordan. (*See p. 304.*)

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, before we proceed to the rest of the routine business of our annual meeting, I am sure you will think that I ought to take this opportunity of asking you all to return a vote of thanks to Sir Charles Wilson for the very interesting lecture he has given us this afternoon. (Applause.) I can assure him that this great gathering is mainly owing to the anticipation of the lecture which we have just heard. It is always interesting to hear travels described by the travellers themselves, but more especially when they are accompanied by such excellent photographs as have been shown on the screen, because many of us are not perhaps likely to have the fortune of being able to visit the sights themselves, and although drawings made by skilful artists give one a very good and true idea of the scenes they depict, yet the photographs themselves must give the most accurate representation that at present can be made. There is no part of the world I suppose where civilisation and desolation come so close together throughout the country. We have heard, and it has been very properly urged by our treasurer, Mr. Morrison, that we ought to continue our excavations whilst we have opportunity, and we hope to obtain funds to do so. Owing to the advance of civilisation many relics of history are unfortunately being destroyed throughout the country, and there has been an immense advance in the condition of Palestine since the work of the Fund began. I had the pleasure of visiting the country before the Palestine Exploration Fund came into existence. I also saw again the same places in 1894, and owing to the difference which the social progress of the country had occasioned I could hardly recognise many of the places. But there is one thing I should like to say for whatever my testimony is worth, and that is, that although with civilisation there come roads and railroads, I do not think that a railroad ever yet spoilt a country. I was horrified

by the idea of a railway up to the Holy City of Jerusalem; but I must say that when I travelled by it and saw how it approached the city I was quite surprised that such a modern innovation could have produced so little alteration in the aspect of the country. It is to the interest of us all that civilisation should advance, and we hope that our friends will support us by giving us the means of carrying on our excavations at the same rate. We have done a great deal during the last thirty-four years, but there is still a great deal more to do. We know that wherever these mounds exist they hide something of interest, perhaps of far greater interest than we could possibly imagine, and that nothing can tell us what lies there except excavations, which can only be carried on at considerable cost. There have been liberal contributions in the past, and I am sure there will be in the future; and if anything will bring them in more abundantly it is such instructive lectures as we have heard from Sir Charles Wilson. I am sure you will all wish me to accord a most hearty vote of thanks to him. (Carried by acclamation.)

The CHAIRMAN.—I have now to move that the following gentlemen be asked to become members of the General Committee:—His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, K.G.; Professor W. Ramsay, University of Aberdeen; Dr. Conrad Schick, Jerusalem; George Harvie Johnston, Esq., Edinburgh.

The Rev. W. F. STRACEY.—Ladies and gentlemen, I beg to propose the re-election of the Executive Committee, and in doing so I venture to submit to their judgment whether it would not be a good plan to charge something for the *Quarterly Statement*, instead of distributing it gratuitously. I think it would add very much to our funds if a certain sum, say two shillings and sixpence, was charged for each *Quarterly Statement*. It must take a very large amount out of the small funds at the disposal of the Association to print and publish the book. I beg to move the re-election of the Executive Committee.

Mr. MORRISON.—With regard to the charge for the *Quarterly Statement*, we send that *Quarterly Statement* free to subscribers of half a guinea, which is really charging them two shillings and sixpence for each number. I have myself sometimes thought that half a guinea was too low a subscription for the *Quarterly Statement* to be supplied free.

The Rev. W. F. STRACEY.—What does the charge come to?

Mr. MORRISON.—It is in the printed report. Printing comes to £652, though that includes all the other books, as well as the *Quarterly Statement*, but not its postage.

The CHAIRMAN.—No doubt the Executive Committee will take into consideration what has been mentioned by Mr. Stracey. Of course any way in which we can reasonably increase the funds we shall be anxious to adopt. That I have no doubt will be a matter for the consideration of the Committee when they next meet.

Professor E. HULL.—I have great pleasure in seconding the appointment of the Executive Committee. Might I add what an extreme gratification it has been to me to be able to listen to Sir Charles Wilson's lecture? Some of the places which he described, and which were represented by his photographs, are those with which my own memory is closely connected, and also, I am sure, that of our Secretary, Mr. Armstrong. Sir Charles Wilson has added very largely to our knowledge of the country which the expedition of 1883-4 visited, and districts which we should very much like to have visited if it had been possible.

The CHAIRMAN.—In asking you to sanction the re-election of our Executive Committee I would also ask you to accord a cordial vote of thanks to Dr. Bliss, Mr. Macalister, and Dr. Schick for their valuable services.

Mr. GLAISHER.—Ladies and gentlemen, I should much like to ask you to return your thanks to Mr. Morrison, our Treasurer. He was one of our original members, and he has taken a most lively interest in everything connected with the Palestine Fund from then till now. I should like also to thank Sir Walter Besant, our Honorary Secretary, who has taken an herculean task upon himself elsewhere that allows him but little time to be with us, but that little time is given and we must thank him for it. There is yet another, and that is our Acting Secretary, who seems never to tire. He keeps me *au fait* in everything that is proceeding in the Society, whether I can attend a committee meeting or not. I think those three gentlemen most richly deserve our thanks, and, sir, I beg to move that the best thanks of this meeting be given to them. (Applause.)

The CHAIRMAN.—I am sure the Chairman of the Committee will convey your thanks to these gentlemen.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL.—Before we part I should like to propose a vote of thanks to our Chairman, and in doing so I beg to say that I think it is a very great improvement our having met in this Institution to-day. I recollect last year we went to a room which was hardly big enough to hold the gentlemen who attended, and I think we had hardly any ladies present. I hope this arrangement will be continued next year, and that by so doing we shall attract even a larger audience than we have had to-day. I should like to have made some remarks upon Sir Charles Wilson's lecture, but I feel—the thermometer being at 80, and there being a great many more gentlemen better qualified to speak upon the matter than I am—it will probably detain people too long. I am an old traveller; I was in Palestine thirty years ago, and I had a most interesting time, but the part that Sir Charles Wilson described to us to-day was quite a sealed book then, because the country was so insecure. I was anxious to ask Sir Charles Wilson how he was able to get about in the way he did. I know two or three gentlemen tried it at the time of which I am speaking, and recollect perfectly well on one occasion a gentleman getting with his wife as far as Jericho, where, as the story was, he was stripped of his clothes and returned clothed in sheets of "The Times" newspaper. Whether that is true or not I do not know; but I know they were plundered, and there was a great deal of difficulty in getting about the country that Sir Charles Wilson has described. Another point I should like to have asked is whether anybody is following the really very laudable practice of Baron Rothschild in encouraging his co-religionists to go to the land of Moab and Edom. We have heard from Sir Charles Wilson that parts of it are most fruitful, and that a good deal of it certainly might be brought back into a state of cultivation. I think that is just the sort of thing that, if it goes out to the public, will make people think whether it is not possible from every point of view to encourage Jewish immigration to that side of the water, and to restore the country to what it was in its early days. These are some of the ideas that occur to me. I should have liked to have gone into the subject at much greater length, but I will not trouble the meeting with any further remarks, and will only record my sincere thanks to Sir Charles Wilson for having popularised by his lecture a most interesting country and a most interesting people. May I, then, propose that we offer our best

thanks to Lord Amberst for presiding, and I only hope that in years to come we may have a large attendance at our Annual Meeting, and that that will add very considerably to our subscribers in the future.

Mr. GLAISHER having seconded the vote, it was carried by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN.—I am sure, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you very much for the kind thanks you have given me for presiding to-day. It has been a very great pleasure to me to do so. I did accept the office two or three years ago, and my name was put down; but I was prevented from attending because I was then lying on a bed of sickness. I thank you very much for having allowed me to occupy the chair, which would have been so much more ably filled by Mr. Glaisher. But I will not yield to anybody in the interest I have taken from the commencement of the Palestine Fund in everything connected with it. I had the pleasure of attending the first meeting in June, 1865, and I have attended a great number of the meetings since. I am glad to see that a few of the members of the Executive who were with us when the Fund first started are still amongst us, and are as zealous in the work as they always have been.

Dr. GINSBURG.—Before we separate I am sure you will agree with me that we owe our best thanks to our veteran Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Glaisher. (Cheers.)

Mr. SIMPSON.—I shall have very great pleasure in seconding that.

The CHAIRMAN.—I am sure that is unanimously carried on all sides. (Applause.)

Mr. GLAISHER.—Accept my best thanks for your kindness in thanking me.

Lord AMHERST.—Before the meeting closes I am sure we all wish to record our thanks to the managers of the Royal Institution for so kindly granting us the use of their theatre for this our annual gathering.

The proceedings then terminated.