

# THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

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## NOTES AND NEWS.

THE Annual Meeting of the General Committee was held at the Office of the Fund, 38 Conduit Street, on Tuesday, July 17th. For report, see p. 395.

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The Committee desire to draw special attention to the last sentence of the Treasurer's report, that the present year has been the worst the Fund has ever experienced during its more than 30 years' existence. Spite of all the Fund has accomplished in the past, and of all the useful labour that still awaits it in the future for the elucidation of the facts and truths recorded in Holy Writ, there is danger that the century will close with a deficit. An earnest appeal is made to subscribers and all friends of Biblical study for help to avert so great a misfortune. As we go to press the adverse balance against the Fund amounts to over £300.

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The excavations at Tell Sandahannah were brought to a close on August 31st, when the party returned to Jerusalem. It is impossible to include the whole of the reports of Dr. Bliss and Mr. Macalister in the present issue of the *Quarterly Statement*, and the publication of the full reports, together with numerous plans and drawings which accompany them, has therefore to be deferred.

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Dr. C. Schick sends the following:—

*A New Convent at Urtâs.*—A few years ago a Roman Catholic Order in South America bought some of the gardens of Urtâs and

a plot of ground on the southern slope of the valley. They have since been employing the villagers in blasting stones and building a convent for nuns of the Order "Sisters of the Closed Garden." There is to be a church and a court surrounded with cloisters, the floor of which is about 50 feet above the level of the gardens in the valley. To get room for these buildings on the steep mountain side a strong wall was built up to that height, and the empty space created by it filled up with stones and earth, forming a terrace, in which are cisterns, cellars, &c. By blasting away the rock a scarp 48 feet high was formed on the side of the hill, which has been protected on the upper edge and also on the east and west sides with a wall. The convent itself is to be two or more stories high. On one side a broad flight of steps leads down to the gardens, and at the middle of the building a stone bridge with many arches leads at a great height over the gardens and across the valley to the slope of the northern side, and from there a carriage road will be made leading up to the pools of Solomon, and there joining the Jerusalem-Hebron road, so that one may drive from Jerusalem to the gate of this convent, or even into its courtyard. The number of nuns to be lodged there I cannot say. They will come over from South America. As the stones quarried on the spot are not good for the outsides of the building, a zigzag road up the mountain has been made, and good stones are brought from a spot on the south-east. The appearance of Urtâs has been entirely changed, and it has now quite a picturesque aspect.

*Hindrance to the Navigation on the Dead Sea.*—It was formerly reported by me that the Greek Convent or their Patriarch of Jerusalem had, with great expense and, as it seemed at the time, with the consent of the local authorities, brought two ships, one from Hamburg, the other from Greece, for use on the Dead Sea. But a Commissioner of the Sultan has protested against this, as it seems by direct order of the Sultan, who considers the whole Valley of the Jordan, with its waters and lakes, as his own private property, and for several years has had there his officers as managers—one at Jericho, who often resides at Jerusalem, others higher up the valley, especially at Bethshan, where buildings have been erected, and many trees planted. I was told that the plea that though the land was His Majesty's property the water should be free, was answered by the remark that navigation on the surface of the sea would demand stations

and warehouses on the shore, and that this will not be granted. So the matter stands, and the boats are in danger of becoming rotten. However, the Greek Convent, being subjects of the Sultan, hope that in course of time a way will be found to obtain the issue of an Imperial firman, and that then navigation will begin.

*A Rock Altar at Petra.*—Professor Robinson, of Chicago, was here in the earlier part of this year, and made many excursions beyond the Jordan to Madeba, Kerak, Petra, and elsewhere. On his return he told me that in the neighbourhood of Petra he had visited an ancient “high place” with a rock altar, but as he was not able to make a close examination, he left this to another American Professor, Professor Curtiss, who is staying longer in the country. The latter also came to see me, and described the altar<sup>1</sup> as well as the scheme of a work which he intends to write. This altar at Petra seems in several respects to resemble the rock altar at Artuf, described by the Rev. J. E. Hanauer in the *Quarterly Statement*, 1885, p. 183, and 1887, p. 57; and by me in the “*Zeitschrift des deutschen Palestina-Verein*,” 1887, pp. 135–159.

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The concluding volume of Professor Ganneau’s “Archæological Researches in Jerusalem and its Neighbourhood” has been published and issued to subscribers. This completes the set of four vols. as advertised under the title “Survey of Palestine.” There are only eight sets left of the first 250 copies of this valuable work. Those who wish to secure a set at £7 7s. before the price is raised should fill up the form and send it to the Secretary of the Fund.

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*In order to make up complete sets of the “Quarterly Statement,” the Committee will be very glad to receive any of the back numbers.*

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Dr. Bliss’s detailed account of his three years’ work at Jerusalem, published as a separate volume, with the title “Excavations at Jerusalem, 1894–1897,” and copiously illustrated with maps and plans, may be procured at the office of the Fund. Price to subscribers to the work of the Fund, 8s. 6d., post free.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 350.

The "Flora of Syria, Palestine, and Sinai," by the Rev. George E. Post, M.D., Beirût, Syria, containing descriptions of all the Phaenogams and Acrogens of the region, and illustrated by 441 woodcuts, may be had at the office of the Fund, price 21s.

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The income of the Society from June 25th, 1900, to September 22nd, 1900, was—from Annual Subscriptions and Donations, including Local Societies, £162 11s. 10d.; from Lectures, £1 2s. 0d.; from sales of publications, &c., £124 14s. 8d.; total, £283 8s. 6d. The expenditure during the same period was £589 6s. 8d. On September 22nd the balance against the Fund was £20 3s. 10d.

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Subscribers in U.S.A. to the work of the Fund will please note that they can procure copies of any of the publications from the Rev. Professor Theo. F. Wright, Honorary General Secretary to the Fund, 42, Quincy Street, Cambridge, Mass.

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The following gentlemen have kindly consented to act as Honorary Local Secretaries :—

The Rev. Francis Knowles, Gimingham Rectory, North Walsham, for  
Norwich, in place of the Rev. John Holden, resigned.

Robert T. Kingsley, Esq., for Nelson, New Zealand.

William Dorph, Esq., the A. J. S. Bank, for Sydney, Australia.

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The price of a complete set of the translations published by the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, in 13 volumes, with general index, bound in cloth, is £10 10s. A catalogue describing the contents of each volume can be had on application to the Secretary, 38 Conduit Street.

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The Museum at the office of the Fund, 38 Conduit Street (a few doors from Bond Street), is open to visitors every week-day from 10 o'clock till 5, except Saturdays, when it is closed at 2 p.m.

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It may be well to mention that plans and photographs alluded to in the reports from Jerusalem and elsewhere cannot all be published, but all are preserved in the office of the Fund, where they may be seen by subscribers.

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While desiring to give 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.

TOURISTS are cordially invited to visit the Loan Collection of "Antiques" in the JERUSALEM ASSOCIATION ROOM of the Palestine Exploration Fund, opposite the Tower of David, Jerusalem. Hours: 8 to 12, and 2 to 6. Maps of Palestine and Palestine Exploration Fund publications are kept for sale.

Photographs of Dr. Schick's models (1) of the Temple of Solomon, (2) of the Herodian Temple, (3) of the Haram Area during the Christian occupation of Jerusalem, and (4) of the Haram Area as it is at present, have been received at the office of the Fund. Sets of these photographs, with an explanation by Dr. Schick, can be purchased by applying to the Secretary, 38 Conduit Street, W.

Branch Associations of the Bible Society, all Sunday Schools within the Sunday School Institute, the Sunday School Union, and the Wesleyan Sunday School Institute, will please observe that by a special Resolution of the Committee they will henceforth be treated as subscribers and be allowed to purchase the books and maps (by application only to the Secretary) at reduced price.

The Committee will be glad to receive donations of Books to the Library of the Fund, which already contains many works of great value relating to Palestine and other Bible Lands. A catalogue of Books in the Library will be found in the July *Quarterly Statement*, 1893.

The Committee acknowledge with thanks the following:—

- "Sinai, Kadesh, and Mount Hior" (Henry Crossley); "Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History" (Crusè); "Eusebius's Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine"; "Voyage and Travel of Sir John Maundevile"; "The Hebrews in Egypt and their Exodus" (Thayer); "A Vocabulary of the Chief Topographical and Geographical Words used in Scripture" (Stanley and Grove); Volume of Pamphlets; "Numismatic Illustrations of the Gospels" (Akerman); "Practical Tables for the Reduction of Mahometan Dates to the Christian Kalendar" (Gumpach); "The Proper Names in the Old and New Testaments rendered into Urdu and Hindé"; "Index to the Topography of Jerusalem"; "The Hebrews in Egypt and their Exodus"; "Das Todte Meer" (Fallmerayer); "The Assize of Jerusalem"; and other volumes and pamphlets. From Lady Grove.
- "Cairo of To-Day." By E. A. Reynolds-Ball, B.A. From the Author.
- "Days in Galilee." By the Rev. Alexander A. Boddy. From the Author.
- "The Amherst Papyri." By Percy E. Newberry and W. E. Crum, M.A. From Lord Amherst of Hackney.
- "The Royal Tombs of the First Dynasty." By Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie, D.C.L., &c. From the Author.

- "Recueil d'Archéologie Orientale." Publié par Professor Ch. Clermont-Ganneau. Tome IV, Livraisons 3 and 4, February and March. *Sommaire* :—§ 4. Empédocle, Zénon, les Manichéens et les Cathares. § 5. Une nouvelle dédicace à Zeus Héliopolite. § 6. Jean le Hiéropolite, évêque d'Abila de Lysanias. § 7. Le "ralt" arabe et "l'éponge américaine." § 8. La ville lévitique de Méphaat. Livraisons 6, 7, and 8, May and June. *Sommaire* :—§ 14. La "Tabella devotionis" punique. § 15. Le nom de Philoumenè punique. § 16. Manboug-Hiérapolis dans les inscriptions nabatéennes. § 17. Resapha et la Strata Diocletiana. § 18. Inscriptions grecques du Haurân. § 19. Les inscriptions du tombeau de Diogène à El-Hâs.
- "A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, at Easter, A.D. 1697." By Hen. Maundrell, M.A. "Travels in Mesopotamia." By J. S. Buckingham, 1827. From Miss Frances C. Wright.
- "Il Trattato di Terra Santa e Dell 'Oriente." From the Author, P. Girolamo Golubovich, O.F.M., Missionario Apostolico di Terra Santa.
- "Histoire et Religion des Nosairis." From the Author, René Dussaud.

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For list of authorised lecturers and their subjects, see *January Quarterly Statement*, p. 5.

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

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It having come to the knowledge of the Committee that local secretaries and subscribers to the Fund have received from certain persons resident in Jerusalem books of dried flowers and articles in olive wood, accompanied by the intimation that pecuniary assistance would be gratefully received by the senders, this Committee desire to state that the said persons have no connection whatever with the Fund.

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