

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

THE Fifty-first Annual General Meeting of the Palestine Exploration Fund was held in the Library of the Society, 2, Hinde Street, Manchester Square, on Thursday, June 22nd, 1916, at 4 p.m. The Meeting was held for business purposes only. Amongst those present were Dr. Leonard W. King, Chairman of the Executive Committee, Prof. A. C. Dickie, Col. Sir Henry Trotter, K.C.M.G., Prof. Edward Hull, and Mr. James Melrose.

On the motion of Sir Henry Trotter, seconded by Prof. Dickie, the chair was taken by Dr. King.

After the Minutes of the last General Meeting had been read and signed, the Chairman stated that the first item on the Agenda was the Resolution that the Report and Accounts for the year 1915 be received and adopted. This it would be his duty presently to move, but he would first like to express their great regret at the absence through illness of Mr. Crace, the Hon. Secretary. He was glad to say that in spite of his trying illness, he was able to continue giving his close attention to the affairs of the Society, and the speaker was sure that all would join in wishing Mr. Crace a speedy and complete recovery. (Hear, hear.) Letters of regret at their inability to attend had also been received from Mr. Morrison, Prof. Flinders Petrie, and Col. Fellowes. At the beginning of the Annual Meeting it was usual for the Secretary to make a report on the Membership, and to refer to any losses the Society might have sustained through death during the past year; and Mr. Crace had suggested that, in his absence, a few words might be said by the Chairman on that subject.

Of Members of the General Committee whose loss the Society had to deplore, there was one whose name he thought would at that moment be in the minds of all,—Lord Kitchener. It was well known that he had first made his mark as a geographer when working as a young lieutenant of Engineers upon the Staff of the Fund; and it was hardly necessary to say how much the great Survey of Western Palestine had owed to his energy and resource.

A few years later he had carried out the very difficult Survey of Sinai and the Wadi Arabah, when he accompanied Prof. Edward Hull, who, they were glad to see, was present at the Meeting. Since that time Lord Kitchener had always taken a keen interest in their researches. The Society had a right to be proud of the fact that his work as surveyor in Palestine should have laid the foundation of that marvellous knowledge of the East, on which he had built his career.

A more intimate loss which the Society had sustained was that of the Chairman of their Executive Committee, Colonel Sir Charles Watson. That was a loss which many of those present had felt and were feeling very deeply ; and they needed no words of his to recall how unsparingly he had devoted himself to furthering their work and interests. Perhaps they would allow him to make the announcement then that, in memory of Sir Charles, Lady Watson had presented to the Society a selection of books from his Library, dealing with the history and antiquities of Palestine ; she had also given an Egyptian amphora of the first century B.C. for the Museum, a map-cabinet, a number of antique chairs as additional furniture for the Museum, and a portrait of Sir Charles Watson, which was placed upon the table. He felt sure they would wish that the thanks of the Society be conveyed to Lady Watson for these valuable gifts. (Hear, hear.)

He regretted to have to report the death of one other Member of the General Committee, the Rev. W. F. Birch, who for many years past had acted as Local Secretary for Manchester.

The CHAIRMAN then moved formally that the Report and Accounts for the Year 1915, already printed and in the hands of subscribers, be received and adopted.

Prof. HULL, in seconding the Resolution, said that he could not express how deeply he sympathized in the losses sustained by the Society through the deaths of Lord Kitchener and Sir Charles Watson. He could add nothing to the Chairman's eulogy upon Lord Kitchener, and he would only refer briefly to Sir Charles Watson, whom he had first met years ago at the Trinity College Dinner in Dublin, when he learnt that they were both students of Trinity College. Sir Charles Watson's kindness and tact made him an admirable Chairman on that and every other occasion. The news of his death in the midst of his many activities had come upon all the Members as a terrible shock.

The CHAIRMAN then put the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Sir HENRY TROTTER proposed that Mr. P. J. C. McGregor, His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, be invited to join the General Committee. He had peculiar pleasure in moving this, as he had known Mr. McGregor well some five-and-twenty years ago, when he was his Vice-Consul in Syria, and a most efficient and capable colleague; and he had no doubt that his many talents and energies were fully as effective now as Consul at Jerusalem.

Prof. DICKIE, in seconding the Resolution, said that when he had been working in Palestine, he had come into contact with Mr. McGregor most pleasantly.

The CHAIRMAN then put the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Prof. EDWARD HULL proposed that the Executive Committee as now constituted be re-elected.

Mr. JAMES MELROSE seconded the Resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN then stated that the formal business of the Meeting having been concluded, it was usual at this point in their proceedings for a report to be made on the work of the Society during the past year; but in view of the exceptional circumstances under which they were meeting, when the work of the Society in the field was entirely suspended, they would not expect any report of that character. There were, however, one or two things which he thought should be said with regard to the working of the Society during the War. Their Assistant Secretary, Mr. Ovenden, had been for some time serving with the Colours, and his absence had necessitated certain changes, in arranging which Prof. Dickie had given them very great assistance. For the period of Mr. Ovenden's absence they had been fortunate in securing the services of Miss Estelle Blyth. Her association with the work of her father, the late Bishop Blyth of Jerusalem, and her experience of Eastern life and conditions, rendered her exceptionally fitted to help enquirers and correspondents. With regard to the Society's publications it should be stated that the revised Map of Palestine, which had been prepared, as well as the Map illustrating the recent Survey of Southern Palestine, had still to be held back for military reasons; this was, of course, a proper obligation, but it cost the Society a considerable loss in sales. In addition to the double

Annual Volume for 1914-15, which was issued in 1915, the Society had published Sir Charles Watson's most valuable summary of the Fund's researches since its foundation, under the title "Fifty Years' Work in the Holy Land." Their only other literary activity during the past year had been the publication of the *Quarterly Statement* as usual. It had indeed been suggested that this should be discontinued during the War, but he felt sure they would agree that the Executive Committee had been wise to continue its publication. He thought that Mr. Stanley Cook, the Editor, was to be congratulated on the very able way in which, in spite of great difficulties, he had succeeded in maintaining its high level of interest and scientific value. It was to be hoped that, after the War, circumstances would permit of the resumption of active work in Palestine.

Prof. HULL, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman for presiding, said that he had forborne to add anything to his tribute to Lord Kitchener, though as a fellow-worker with him in Palestine over thirty years ago, he had many memories of him. He had sent a short account of this to the *Morning Post*, which Mr. Cook had permission from that paper to insert in the forthcoming *Quarterly Statement*, where he hoped Members of the Society would see it. He had very great pleasure in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman for the very kind and efficient way in which he had fulfilled his duties that afternoon.

Mr. MELROSE, who seconded the vote of thanks, said that the cloud of War just now overshadowed everything, and that it was impossible to carry on one's life in the same even way as before; but he trusted that the cloud would pass with the War, and that the work would reopen and expand in happier times.

Mr. HERBERT BIRCH, who also spoke to the motion, said that he was a brother of the late Hon. Secretary for Manchester, and that their acquaintance with the Palestine Exploration Fund dated from very early times, when, as travellers, he and his brother came across Lieut. Conder and Lieut. Kitchener, who were at work upon the survey and were then camping near Askelon. They had joined camp with the two officers for some little time, and had followed their work with the keenest interest. His remembrance of Lord Kitchener was of someone very tall, very agreeable, very silent, and very absorbed in his work. He and his brother had kept in touch with Lord Kitchener by correspondence since that date, often writing to ask his opinion upon subjects of Palestinian interest, and

the result was a number of most delightful and interesting letters from him, which they had always greatly treasured. He considered that the Palestine Exploration Fund might take credit for having "discovered" Lord Kitchener,—if he might use that word,—for it had given him scope to employ his wonderful talents and powers. The Palestine Exploration Fund deserved well of the Empire, and he hoped that, after the War, it would abound and flourish even more than in the past. He had always done his best to help the work, and he was more than ready now to assist it in any way he could. He warmly supported the vote of thanks to the Chairman.

The vote of thanks having been put to the Meeting by Prof. Hull and carried unanimously, the Chairman expressed his pleasure at seeing among them that afternoon such old friends and workers for the Society as Prof. Hull, Mr. Melrose, and Mr. Birch.

The proceedings then terminated.

LORD KITCHENER, K.G., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.M.G., R.E.

OF all the officers of the Royal Engineers who have rendered valuable service to the Palestine Exploration Fund, several attained high distinction in their own profession, and some a wide recognition of other talents; but no name has stood before the world with the same exceptional prominence as that of the late Lord Kitchener, whose whole remarkable career seems to have been influenced by the fact of his early connection with the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund. In that service, as a junior officer, he found his first opportunity of acquiring the Arabic language, and of studying the character of the Arab himself: and it was in turning the opportunity to good account that he laid the foundation of his subsequent connection with Egypt and the East.

In 1874, Lieut. Kitchener volunteered for the service of the Society's great Survey of Palestine, and went out as junior to Lieut. Conder, R.E. This expedition terminated abruptly in the summer of 1875, owing to the murderous attack upon the camp by the Moslem population of Safed. Both officers were injured, and it was decided to withdraw the party to England, where, for