

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

THE Fifty-sixth Annual General Meeting of the Palestine Exploration Fund was held in the Rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, on Wednesday, June 29th, the Rt. Honourable Viscount Bryce, P.C., O.M., D.C.L., LL.D., etc., in the Chair.

THE HON. SECRETARY stated that letters regretting inability to attend the Meeting had been received from Sir George Adam Smith, Rev. Dr. Ewing, the Dean of Westminster, James Melrose, Esq., the Chief Rabbi, Miss Ida Layard, and Dr. Holdsworth Lunn.

THE HON. SECRETARY stated that the last General Meeting was quite an ordinary business Meeting, only notable on account of the presence of Sir Herbert Samuel, who made a most friendly and encouraging speech.

The Meeting agreed to accept the Minutes as read, and they were signed.

THE CHAIRMAN moved the first resolution, namely, "That the report and accounts for the year 1920, already printed and in the hands of subscribers, be received and adopted." He said :

"That motion will give me an opportunity of saying a few words to you upon the nature of the work and the prospects it holds out, as well as the special reasons why we should prosecute it with assiduity and energy. I cannot, however, hope to say anything new to those who are present, who are deeply interested in the work, and who know as much, in many cases more, than I do of what has been done and what is being attempted. But I may be permitted perhaps to dwell upon a few facts which, although obvious, are at any rate relevant to our purpose.

"In the first place, I may remind you that there is, I suppose, within the whole compass of this small world—as it was which

contained the ancient civilizations—no area which, considering how small it is itself, contains so much of immense historical and archaeological interest as the strip of land which lies east of the Mediterranean—between the Suez Desert on one side and Syria on the north, taking Syria to mean the place where the Ladder of Tyre divides that which we call Palestine from what we call the land of the Phoenicians. That region, and especially the coastal part, was the home of a number of successive civilizations. There is no place where the succession of civilizations, especially the character which each of them bears, can be more profitably studied, and what we have already discovered shows us how much may remain to be learnt, and how much light all discoveries there may throw upon the general relations of the ancient peoples and the ancient civilizations to one another. There is no place where we can study the international history of Asia so well as in Palestine. We have a civilization of incomparable richness and interest, with its own idiosyncrasy and its own character in Egypt; we have another scarcely less fertile in Assyria and Babylon; but the contact point of these ancient civilizations and the contact point with those mysterious Hittites whom we are all puzzling over, is to be found more in Palestine than anywhere else. It was the great highway of trade along the coast; it was certainly the great line of what one would call postal communications, that is to say, postal despatches in cuneiform characters going to and fro between Egypt and Assyria, and *vice versa*.

“It was also the highway of armies. Those of you who have been to the Dog River in Northern Syria, near Beirut, and seen the tablets of the kings who passed with their armies and recorded their advance, know how extraordinarily interesting this coast was from its strategical importance as the one great route from the North to the South, from the Assyrian and the Hittite regions to Egypt in those early ages. I will not digress to speak about the other or inland route. It is quite sufficient to observe that this one is of the highest possible interest.

“The question which arises before us now is whether we should not use to the utmost the advantages which recent events have given us for pressing forward the work of excavation and exploration, not only in this coastal region marked with the lines of communication and of war, but also over the whole of what we call Palestine in the widest sense, including Trans-Jordan regions as

well as the regions between Jordan and the sea. It is a land about which much has been written by previous workers, many of these British and many American; the names of Sir Charles Warren and Lord Kitchener will, of course, occur to your minds in that connection, as they were among the first who were engaged in the great Palestine survey. And I think before their time others, such as Dr. Robinson from America, did extremely good archaeological work, though, of course, not with anything like the resources and the knowledge which we possess now.

“The first great advantage is that we have got rid of the Turks, who devastated that country and who, from the little I was able to glean when I was there shortly before the War, were detested by the native population.

“Next, we have the great advantage of occupying neutral ground as an archaeological society. There is no place in the world where the nerves which lie close to the skin are so sensitive as they are in Palestine; it is dangerous to touch them even with the end of the finger. What with the Christians and those whom we call Arabs, but who would seem to be rather, at least in the regions west of the Jordan, the remains of the Canaanitish inhabitants speaking Arabic, and what with the native Jews and the Zionists, it is a question of great complexity and one which requires very careful handling. Fortunately, Sir Herbert Samuel, although himself a Zionist, is a man of good sense and moderation, and I think he will deal with all these great difficulties with tact and with judgment. But we have the advantage, as an archaeological body, of having no enmities to arouse in any religious body or in any influential section. The Mussulman peasant and native Effendi are willing for us to go on working there. The Effendi takes no interest in it, but he does not object to us.

“When I was in Egypt many years ago, I was very much interested in seeing the tombs of the ancient Caliphs and other later relics of Mussulman architecture in its brilliant period, and I had a conversation with the Minister of Education, the late Artin Pasha. He told me that he could not get the slightest interest aroused in the Muslims of Egypt to preserve there the ancient tombs or the decaying and disused mosques. So I suppose we shall have no hostility from the Mussulman in prosecuting our archaeological work, and if we discover relics of Moslem structures and find caves with which Moslem legends can be associated, and if

we follow the good example set by General Allenby in paying the greatest respect to Moslem religious feeling, we shall have nothing to fear. The Jews, and especially the Zionists, are very keen on anything which relates to ancient Hebrew history; and the native Christians will be keen on matters belonging to the New Testament (which are comparatively few for the purposes of excavation) and also for Old Testament references.

“These things being so, the present moment is favourable for pushing forward. And you will ask what are the places where the work can best be done, and in what direction can our efforts best be expended? I would not presume to offer an opinion on that subject in the presence of the distinguished scholars and archaeologists who are here and who know infinitely more about it than I do; but I gather it is thought that on the whole one of the best places to begin to work is the coastal plain and at the foot of the hills which join the coastal plain leading to the high mountains. There is this to be said: that while the neglect of the country and the incursions of the sands and all these things have buried some of the old sites—for instance, the site of Gath has never been identified—there is every reason to think that if the improvement of the country goes on, if we create reservoirs of water in the valleys of the Judæan range and begin to irrigate the country, there may be changes in the surface which will make future excavations more difficult, and in the course of which changes objects of great value may be lost.

“It seems very desirable to mark out without delay the sites where excavation should be prosecuted. Philistia with its cities would be a very good region in which to set to work.

“It is curious that this region seems to have attracted the attention of the ancient Greeks. I think I am right in saying that the story of Perseus and Andromeda is attached to the rocks opposite Jaffa, which shows it to be a place of romantic interest, and that the legend of St. George and his Dragon may be that of Perseus come to light in a new form. That region has been comparatively little excavated. We are now at work at Askalon, and I suppose some of the other cities will present equally good opportunities.

“When one comes to the inland portion, there are many sites mentioned in the Old Testament which deserve to be examined; but nowhere shall we find many monuments as different in style,

and seemingly furnishing such successive civilizations, as in the coastal plain. Beyond Jordan you have another region of the greatest possible interest. Eight years ago when I was in that country, I heard that the Circassians had been destroying some of the remains on the Greco-Roman sites. I suppose that has been stopped before now; but the work of destruction may be still going on, and it is very important we should mark out the sites. The present Administration in Palestine has the right to protect all the places in which excavations could be best conducted, in fact all the places where there is any prospect that discoveries may be made—and there must be many of them in the Trans-Jordanic regions. There is also Petra. The visitor to Petra gets the impression that much remains to be done. In the central part of the valley, which was the inhabited part of the town, the rubbish has been only partly excavated, and I take it discoveries of the greatest interest might be expected there. It would be a costly business, perhaps, but it might perhaps be done safely now, with a small guard. We may expect to learn much of immense interest, not so much with regard to Biblical times as in reference to later times, in the short time during which the Romans were in the place and in the still shorter time when the Crusaders built their castles there. There is a very ample field open all over Palestine, in one way or another, without going forward into Phoenicia. I ought to say, I suppose, that much might be done to find out something about the Hittites: how they came there, how they were dispersed among the other ancient tribes; what relation they bore to the Hittite kingdoms in the North. All these are large questions, which many of you have probably studied, but which most of us have only studied sufficiently to know how much still remains to be discovered. If we could find Hittite sites in Palestine, it would probably prove to be of high interest.

“Well, when we have so large and promising a field, you will naturally ask what are our resources for prosecuting enquiries into it? The Report will tell you the present state of our funds. The sum at our disposal leaves much to be desired. I am only saying what pretty nearly every promoter of enterprise in connection with learning and science is compelled to say. All the money the country has at present seems to be spent in amusements; and those who desire to spend it on matters of more permanent

value have no funds available. But there must be minds which are not entirely occupied with cricket, golf, racing, boxing and moving pictures; and there must still be some treasure-houses which we could unlock if we could bring proper arguments to bear upon their owners. One economy, a comparatively small one by which much, at any rate, might be saved, it seems worth while to consider, namely, whether this Society could enter into some arrangement with the British School of Jerusalem by which economies could be effected. The two bodies are working harmoniously together now. There are many of our societies about which the same might be said. I have often wondered why the British School in Athens and the Hellenic Society might not pool their funds, and the same might be said of the Society of Roman Studies and the British School at Rome.

“I refer to these as illustrations of the means by which efficiency might be increased without extra expense, possibly even expense saved. These are questions which, of course, engage the attention of the Committee. Any facts we can give you will be given in the hope that you will endeavour to use them by making more widely known the aims, the achievements and the needs of the Society.

“With these few observations, which I ought to apologise for offering to you, for most of you know more about the subject than I do, I now move the adoption of the Report.” (Applause.)

The resolution was seconded by Prof. Buchanan Gray, and carried.

THE HON. SECRETARY.—It is an annual and melancholy duty of the Hon. Secretary to report our serious losses during the preceding year, losses which we hope may be made up to some extent this year. I have to-day to mention the death of Prof. Sanday, of Oxford, whose interest in Palestine is well known, and whose books on the New Testament probably most of you have seen.

We have also to lament the death of the Rev. Archdeacon Dowling, whom many of you knew personally for many years in Palestine. He was extremely interested in the work of the Fund, and he was Acting Hon. Secretary in Jerusalem for some years. Also Major-Gen. C. E. Cumberland, of the Royal Engineers, an Indian Mutiny veteran, who was a supporter for many years.

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE.—Lord Bryce, it is my duty to move the second resolution, namely, that T. E. Lawrence, Esq., and Sir Wyndham Deedes be elected to serve on the General Committee. I do not think we could have two more powerful additions to our Committee than those two gentlemen. Mr. Lawrence is described as T. E. Lawrence, Esq., by his own wish; he is, of course, more familiarly known to the general public as Colonel Lawrence. He once told me, three years ago, that he thought he was the only full colonel in the British Army who never told anybody to “form fours,” and now at his own request, he has relinquished all military titles and become an official of the Colonial Office, where he is Adviser on Arab affairs to the Secretary of the State, and particularly valuable, especially to archaeologists. He is almost as well known as an archaeologist as he is for the part he played in the War, and I might almost say in the attempts to make peace in the Middle East. But now he is an official of a department of the Government in this country.

Since the last annual report of this Fund the control of Mesopotamia and Palestine has been transferred from the Foreign Office and the India Office respectively, to a new Middle Eastern department of the Colonial Office. This is a new department which is in its infancy, but let us hope that that department, under Mr. Churchill, will take a kindly interest in the work of archaeology and in protecting and doing all it can in the interests of the antiquities on the spot, and in preserving and exploring suitable places.

The second member is Sir Wyndham Deedes, whose recent honour deserves our most sincere congratulations. Those of us who were in Palestine during the War knew him just as Colonel Deedes, of the Intelligence Section in Palestine, and that country is indeed fortunate in having as its chief civil official, under Sir Herbert Samuel, a man of the intellectual and moral calibre of Sir Wyndham Deedes, whose unflinching tact, extraordinary capacity for work and breadth of mind on all the thorny political questions which he has to deal with, as well as his amazing patience and administrative skill, always excited the admiration of anybody who came into contact with him. And even if he cannot attend our Committee, we should be doing right in putting him on the Committee, not merely because he is an official of the Government, but particularly because he merits it on personal grounds.

Lord Bryce in his opening address said he hoped we had heard the last of the "unspeakable Turk." I wish we had. The trouble I see about our work in Palestine, and about any work of this kind throughout the Middle East, is due to the fact that we have not made peace with Turkey, we have not made peace of any kind with that country. This difficulty is reacting on the whole political situation in the Middle East. And in Palestine in particular, we are still carrying on an interim Government; that is to say, the much-talked-of Mandate is still in a draft stage, and the goods are not yet delivered. We have not got a Treaty of Peace with Turkey, nor have we got the final terms of the Mandate for Palestine.

It was on the Agenda of the Council of the League of Nations at Geneva last week, but it has again been put off, and it looks as if it may be put off for some considerable time to come. I think that unfortunate from many points of view. There can be little doubt that all the recent news from Palestine points to the continuation of considerable unsettlement in that country, and that unsettlement is shared by all the neighbouring countries as well. The situation in the Middle East, whether we look to Egypt, to Palestine, to Syria, to Arabia, or to Armenia which I know is near Lord Bryce's heart, or to Asia Minor, or even to the Balkans—the situation is anything but what we should like it to be now three years after the Armistice. That is the result of a large number of circumstances, some of which, I am sure, ought to have been foreseen and which were not foreseen, and some it was not possible to foresee. But we all hope the time is coming shortly when something like a permanent settlement and a permanent policy to be pursued in those countries by those who are responsible for our Government will be made clear. Until it is clear one cannot help feeling that work is to a certain extent hampered, and I cannot help expressing the wish that the whole question of the Middle East will receive in the future rather more grip on the part of the responsible Statesmen among the Allies than they have shown in recent years. I beg to move the resolution which I read.

The resolution was seconded by the Rev. Father Waggett, who hoped that the Fund would go on multiplying its efforts and not wait for the peace with Turkey. He continued: "The state of things across the Jordan is perilous in the extreme, archaeologically. I was there soon after the Armistice, and several times later was

able to see the destruction of the Graeco-Roman remains, and it goes on apace, by innocent people who think this is proper material for making roads with. These prepared blocks look as if they were specially made for making roads, and when I was there no power on earth seemed able to check it. I used the name of General Allenby, without authority, and there was a check for a time, but it has still gone on. Sir Wyndham Deedes is now chief officer of the Administration, and Mr. Lawrence has lately become, as you have heard, closely connected with Mandatory power in both countries. If we have Mandatory power with local administration on the alert, something may be done even in countries which are outside the scope of the Mandate. Arabia, unfortunately, is not archaeologically guarded in the terms of the Mandate so securely as Palestine is, but we hope these new Members of the Committee will by propinquity to that unhappy country, archaeologically, be able to do something to preserve its remains."

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Captain TEICHMAN, D.S.O., proposed and C. E. MOTT, Esq., seconded the re-election of the Executive Committee, with the addition of Lieut.-Colonel E. M. Jack, C.M.G., D.S.O., of the General Staff of the War Office. This was seconded and carried unanimously.

Dr. Hogarth gave a lantern lecture on Askalon, in the course of which he said that the excavation of Askalon had occupied two seasons since the last General Meeting. The Fund had gone there because it was the most suitable (indeed almost the only one possible) of the sites of the five great Philistine cities to explore; but though easier than the rest, it still presented considerable difficulties owing to the gardens and fields upon it. Having dug all round the fringe of the Philistine country, at Lachish, Gezer and Bethshemesh, the Fund wished to investigate the Philistine civilization itself and to learn who this people was which occupied such a narrow fringe of the coast, and why its civilization appeared so formidable to the Jews.

Showing views of the sea-front and of the crown of the site before excavation, Dr. Hogarth proceeded to summarize the results of Prof. Garstang's explorations, inaugurated by H.M. High Commissioner. Photographs of the latter's party and of the excavation camp at the west end of the site appeared on the screen. He described first the work done on the scarp at the

north where untouched deposits going down to the period of the XIXth Egyptian Dynasty were examined level by level. These, covering the whole Philistine Age from about 1200 B.C. onwards, afford a most valuable "calendar" marked by different types of painted potsherds, by which other strata all over the site and on all Philistine sites will be dated hereafter.

On so large and deep a site the early seasons must be expected to be spent in tentative exploration, designed to find the whereabouts of things generally. Prof. Garstang was led by a right instinct to test the region east of the main longitudinal street, since this lies low, and there it is likely that the Sacred Lake and Shrine of Derketo, the great goddess of the place, half fish, half human, were situated. He hit on a great building of later times, but probably not on the Shrine and Lake sought, though maybe on the "Peace Pool" seen by Antoninus Martyr. Views were shown of this great complex, which seems to have been remodelled at various dates, and to have fulfilled the purposes of both a basilica and a theatre as well as a sanctuary of Fortune, and to have been one of the public edifices abutting on the Forum to west. Various statues, architectural members, and inscriptions were shown, the most interesting being an honorific decree in favour of one of Titus' centurions, whose very odd name suggests a North European origin. Two years earlier he had been in Egypt but in another Legion, and had scrawled his name with those of two other centurions on the foot of one of the Colossi at Thebes, commemorating the fact that at such an hour on such a day in April of the year 65 A.D. all those had "heard Memnon" salute the dawn.

After referring to the fresh discovery of "Herod's Stoa" west of the main longitudinal street (of which only a telegraphic announcement had yet been received), the speaker concluded by illustrating the fine Crusading ruins on the site which date from King Richard's restoration, following the wholesale destruction effected by Saladin. The whole series of views showed how long and interesting a history Askalon had. It is first heard of under the XVIIIth Egyptian Dynasty, and there are indications on the site of a long pre-Philistine period, during which it was held perhaps by Capthorim. Peculiar types of weapons, etc., discovered there and not represented at Gezer, argue that Philistine civilization was markedly distinct from that of the Canaanite and Jewish

settlements of the inner country; and most probably it was altogether foreign and sea-borne. He appealed for further funds to develop this interesting excavation, saying that the penalty of selecting a great site was its expense. But, when a great site had been selected, duty and policy both dictated the devotion of several seasons' work to the place. It had taken eight seasons to get at the heart of Carchemish.

The HON. TREASURER.—Ladies and Gentlemen, with your permission I beg to propose a hearty vote of thanks to Lord Bryce for so kindly coming here to preside in the midst of so many pressing engagements and for his admirable address. Lord Bryce has told us that we have an excellent opportunity for excavation, and we ought to take full advantage of it. We have something like £3,000 available, but we shall certainly want a good deal more if we are to do justice to the site. Therefore, as Hon. Treasurer for this Fund, I can only add my suggestion that it is our duty, if the Fund is to go on in a proper way, to do what we can to increase its membership and to get it up to the number which we had formerly. We are not receiving the money which we ought to have and which we had before the War. As Dr. Hogarth has just said, we have now an admirable site for exploration, and Lord Bryce has told us we have a fine opportunity in the freedom we now enjoy for excavating. Let us take advantage of this happy conjunction.

A vote of thanks to Lord Bryce was carried by acclamation.

LORD BRYCE in replying said that it was a labour of love to come to bear testimony to the admirable work which the Fund has done to invoke support for it; it was an additional pleasure to have light, even the first glimpse of light, on the civilization of one of these ancient Philistine cities so lucidly explained by Dr. Hogarth.

On the proposition of the Hon. Secretary, the Society of Antiquaries was thanked for the loan of the room.

The proceedings then terminated.
