

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
FRONTISPIECE—MAP OF CARMEL. FROM THE SURVEY OF PALESTINE.	
PREFACE AND NOTES . . . . .	1, 3
REPORTS FROM LIEUT. CONDER, XXII.—XXIV. . . . .	5
THE LAST REPORT OF MR. TYRWHITT DRAKE . . . . .	27
LIEUT. CONDER ON—	
(1) THE SITE OF NOB . . . . .	34
(2) THE SCENERY OF DAVID'S OUTLAW LIFE . . . . .	41
(3) THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE ROYAL CANAANITE AND LEVITICAL CITY OF DEBIR . . . . .	48
A GREEK INSCRIPTION FOUND IN THE HARAM AREA. BY M. CLERMONT-GANNEAU . . . . .	56

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# PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

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Patron—THE QUEEN.

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## *Quarterly Statement*

FOR 1875.

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think of any spot on which our Lord stood. The question is often asked, "Can you show us, amid all these traditions, any place where our Lord stood?" Now, as you go out to Bethany there is a road on the hill-side, cut in the solid rock; an old Roman pavement remains there now, and a gentleman of eminence and knowledge of this question rode out with me upon this road, and when we came to the spot where our Lord must have passed, he said, "I cannot ride over that place: will you hold my horse?" and he walked over it. I hope, by the exertions of this Society, we shall arrive at a true solution of the dimensions of the Jewish cubit. With regard to the other discoveries which have been made there is specially that one of the Moabite stone, which I look upon as a page from Josephus himself. And, with regard to Josephus, I may say that I went to Palestine with a prejudice against that author, but I have tested him, so far as his topography is concerned, and have found it correct, and therefore my estimate of his accuracy has been increased a hundredfold. The more we investigate these things the more we shall be able to realise the facts of our religion, for it is a system of facts. Before I sit down I will venture to express what I think is the feeling of all Bible scholars, that we owe the greatest gratitude to Sir Henry James and his officers for the work they have done in Sinai. We have now established without doubt the site of the giving of the Law. What we wish done for Palestine is the same that was done for Mount Sinai; but we must not forget that this is expensive work, and that we want money. There is not only the cost in money, but the wear and tear of human life. Some of our explorers have given their lives to this work and are now sleeping their last sleep there till the roll-call of the Great Captain; and others may have to suffer in the work. It is a very difficult thing to make explorations amongst old ruins, but the men selected to do the work of this Society have been the right men in the right place. They have felt their responsibility, and they have done their duty. Everywhere throughout the world people are now waiting for the result of this Survey, and I have no doubt the speech of the noble Earl this day will find a response, for it is written, "Thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof." (Cheers.) I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Capt. R. BURTON: Your Grace, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Almost at the last moment your excellent Secretary, my good friend Mr. Walter Besant, sent me an "immediate" inviting me to speak about the trans-Jordanic region, and gave me the following resolution:

"That this meeting has heard with great satisfaction of the despatch of a second expedition by the American Association for the exploration of the Holy Land, and heartily wishes it every possible success."

As this meeting well knows, that part of Syria has been the happy hunting ground of your Anglo-American colleagues, who propose continuing their researches. They will doubtless prove formidable rivals

in the extent and value of their discoveries. The invitation so kindly conveyed orders me to renew a great sorrow. I had, as early as 1870, proposed to myself two trans-Jordanic trips. The first was to the great plateau of central Arabia, known as El Nejd, on a line a little north of that taken by Mr. Gifford Palgrave, whose charming book is in the hands of every one. But his geography is perhaps the loosest on record; he gives us no intelligible account of the mysterious region El Jauf, or the "hollow," an exceptional feature which, from the reports of the Bedawin, I am disposed to consider a great meridional depression corresponding in lay and length with the Jordan Valley, but wanting the river. To this feature especially I would draw the attention of our future travellers. The picturesque pages of Mr. Palgrave give no notice of the Roman, or rather the classical ruins which are said to extend from the Haurán to the highlands of El Nejd. I have often been assured of their existence by the Bedawin, who compared them with the Kasr el Hayr, the ruin near Karyatayn, on the way to Palmyra, and for a description of the latter I venture to refer you to Mrs. Burton's book, "Inner Life in Syria." The walls are reported to be "mukattab," that is, covered with inscriptions. The second excursion which I had kept for myself, and which I now recommend to others, is a visit to El Hijr, the district lying south-west of the Dead Sea, on the road to El Medinah. It is annually traversed by the great pilgrimage caravan which travels from Damascus to Meccah, and I had made all my arrangements to travel with the Arab chief who escorts the Tayyáreh or flying caravan sent to relieve the returning pilgrims with provisions and medical comforts. The strangest tales are told concerning El Hijr, and yet, though many have proposed visiting it, the tract remains unexplored. Thirty years ago the Ritter von Kremer, at the recommendation of that most distinguished Orientalist, Baron von Hugel, went to Damascus for the purpose, and was deterred by the large sums demanded from him. Lately at Bern, in Switzerland, I passed a couple of days with my kind friend Professor Aloys Sprenger, and we discussed at full length the wonders of El Hijr. I only hope that our Anglo-American collaborateurs will not neglect to borrow some of his local knowledge. Finally at Basel I strongly advised my young friend Prof. Socin, so well known by his travels from Damascus to the Euphrates, to attack El Hijr. He is one of the best men for explorations amongst Arabs, as he knows them thoroughly. The following two anecdotes may prove his tact and *savoir-faire*. On one occasion when a revolver was stolen from him he procured its restitution by threatening the Shaykh with a reference to Constantinople, and he punished him by the fine of a dollar by way of permit to his servant. They who know what the Bedawi thinks about a "stone dollar," as he calls it, will appreciate the just severity of the proceeding. On another occasion his escort attempted to desert him, when he cocked his rifle and declared he would shoot the first mare that moved. Had he said the first man, all would have laughed at his beard, but they thought much more seriously

about the murder of a mare. Mohammed, as many of you know, when passing through El Hijr, hooded his head, veiled his face, and hurried at full speed to escape from the phantoms which appal the sight, and the terrible voices which shriek in the wayfarer's ear. He declared it to be an accursed land, and every caravan, I am told, still follows his example. I would suggest that the idea arises from the number of statues and figures carved in the rocks. The peculiar measure of converting Damascus, the metropolis and head-quarters of Syria, from a consulate to a vice-consulate, caused my recall in 1872, and lost for me the chance of visiting the Nejd and El Hijr. But the glory of a discoverer is not the small addition to general knowledge which his individual efforts may secure; his aim is to excite emulation, and induce others to labour in the field which he has opened up. A certain book called "Unexplored Syria," has, I am told, had this effect, and has sent to Palmyra many students who before never thought of going there. The same, I hope, will be the result of a translation of Dr. Wetzstein's "Reise" to Haurán and the (two) Trachones. He describes and figures a world of ruins which is now passing away; the next generation will probably see nothing of these weird and ghostly basalt walls, which, deserted a thousand years ago and more, look as if the tenants had passed from them yesterday. These wondrous buildings, in which the hardest stone was worked like wood, are being pulled to pieces by the Druzes, and other races, to make their miserable cots. I will not call them, with the Rev. Dr. Porter, "the giant cities of Bashan"—in fact I hold, with Mr. Freshfield, that they are not "giant cities" at all. But I strongly recommend them to Colonel Lane. Another book is about to appear, and you will hail its appearance. The irreparable loss which the Palestine Exploration Fund, not to mention individuals, has sustained in the death of my lamented friend, that noble worker, Charles F. Tyrwhitt Drake, need not be enlarged upon in your presence, especially as it has been alluded to by Mr. George Grove. His widowed mother has resolved, you will be glad to hear, to publish in a collected form all those letters whose arrival in England used to be anticipated with so much eager curiosity, and read with so much pleasure and profit. *Non omnis moriar* will thus apply to the memory of that good and gallant English gentleman.

It is reported that the United States expedition has been amply provided with funds, the sinews of travel and of war, and we may believe the report, for our Anglo-American cousins never "do things by halves," as the phrase is. Their liberality contrasts strongly with the feeble support which the general public of England has bestowed upon your great undertaking; and this lukewarmness has ever been a marvel and enigma to me. We should of course have expected that in a country in which the Bible is the book most read, Bible lands would have been the most interesting on earth, and that your especial object, which is to illustrate those lands, would be the most popular of objects. You are changing careless and incorrect for highly finished maps upon a large

scale; a κτήμα ἐς δει—you are labouring at the geology, the botany, the archæology, and the *omnis res scibilis* of Palestine. "Sylvia's Lovers," a clever novel by Mrs. Gaskell, told me long ago that amongst the lower, that is, the uneducated classes of England, there is an idea that Biblical sites and cities like Jerusalem and Nazareth once existed, but now exist no longer; and did this idea extend to cultivated levels it would explain the curious apathy with which the vast additions to our knowledge proposed by the Palestine Exploration Fund have been received. The same, strange to say, appears to be the case with the Israelites dwelling in Europe; theoretically they take an immense interest in the homes of their forefathers—practically, it is difficult, I am assured, to unloose their purse-strings for the benefit of Judea. I have trespassed long upon the patience and courtesy of this meeting; but when wishing long life and success to the Palestine Exploration Fund, I would also express a hope that it will not consider its mission perfect when its map is published. North, south, and east of Palestine proper, there are wide regions whose inhabitants were and are still connected with it by ties of blood, and by the sympathisers of society. The country immediately about Damascus, the Lejá, the 'Alah, the Haurán, and many others, still await serious study, and this will be the work of long and laborious years. I will conclude with proposing the resolution, and with requesting this influential meeting to join me in offering our best wishes for the safety and success of Colonel Lane, the chief of the American Expedition, and his adventurous companions.

The Rev. HORROCKS COCKS, of Kensington, on rising to second the resolution, expressed the great pleasure it afforded him to be present at this annual meeting. He said he presumed that one of the reasons why he had been requested to speak to the resolution so ably moved by Captain Burton was, that he had several times visited the United States and Canada, though he thought that on this question England could justly claim the co-operation of the friends of Palestine in the Dominion, and he had, therefore, endeavoured to awaken an interest in the minds of some of the leading men of Canada in the important investigations which the Committee were carrying on in the Holy Land. The United States had no hoary past to glory in, no great international questions to discuss, no York Minster, no Westminster Abbey, no grand old buildings nor ruins to boast of; but most of the problems the Americans had to solve were territorial and material, and this to some extent explained the characteristics of the Transatlantic press. Still a section of the American people were devoting their attention to Palestine, and as this Society was rather emulous of co-operation than jealous of competition, the resolution would commend itself to them for cordial adoption. Having in a very humorous manner replied to the objections of certain would-be philanthropists who maintained that the dens of London needed exploration more than the sites of Palestine, the speaker pointed to the untiring labours of the Earl of Shaftesbury in grappling with the evils of our overcrowded cities, and said that the noble Earl was quite as much

interested in foreign as in home enterprises, as indeed his speech that day indicated. The speaker said that his mind was first awakened to the claims of Palestine by the labours of Dr. Traill and Isaac Taylor, whose joint translation of Josephus he eulogised, and said that some of the plates for this important work were prepared in his own residence, though he regretted that Dr. Traill was cut off so sadly and so suddenly by disease. He felt assured that in ten years to come where ten travellers now visited the Holy Land fifty would explore the regions east and west of the Jordan, and the important work projected and accomplished by this Society would materially assist future travellers and explorers in the Eastern lands. The speaker then said that he did not think it necessary, after the admirable addresses which had been delivered, for him to detain the meeting by any speech, though if there was one theme which fired his enthusiasm, and on which he delighted to dwell, it was Palestine, and he had come prepared to speak for an hour, if necessary, upon the work which this Society had accomplished. He did not intend to dogmatise on questions of theology or prophecy, but if he might be allowed to add another article to his creed it would be—Judea for the Jews. Dwelling on this topic for a few moments, the speaker concluded by stating that the Palestine Exploration Society was carrying on a most important enterprise which challenged the sympathy and support of all Christian people. The survey which they had already accomplished was of great importance, and he predicted for the land which they were now exploring a brilliant industrial, commercial, agricultural, and spiritual future.

Mr. GROVE proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

Rev. G. WILLIAMS: I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution, and am glad to avail myself of the occasion of doing so to say that lately when I was staying at Oxford I had an opportunity of talking over this map of Palestine with Dr. Pusey, and I promised him that if I had the opportunity I would communicate to this meeting the very great value he attaches to the work which is being done in Palestine by this Association. No person can better appreciate the work than Dr. Pusey, and I am glad to say that it has his most entire approval and support; and I may perhaps be allowed to mention, as a hint to the Executive Committee, that many of us would, I am sure, be very glad indeed if this map could be at once taken in hand and published in parts as rapidly as those parts can be completed, and then put into a complete form perhaps two or three years hence. In the meantime many of us who are interested in the geography of Palestine are exceedingly impatient to have the results of that great work which this Society has undertaken. It is a great satisfaction to me, my Lord Archbishop, to second the vote of thanks to your Grace, who has watched with such interest the proceedings of this Society, and whose services in advocating it have been so valuable. (Cheers.)

## THE SURVEY OF PALESTINE.

LIEUT. CLAUDE R. CONDER'S REPORTS.

XXXII.

BEIT JIBRIN, 20th March, 1875.

THE SURVEY OF THE DEAD SEA DESERT, AND A VISIT TO MASADA.

THE wearisome period of indoor work which we are yearly compelled to undergo during the violent cold and wet winter weather—a time when we all suffered much in health, and which is never looked forward to with pleasure—is at length over, and I hope that only one more winter in Palestine remains to be gone through.

On the 25th February, as soon as a storm of rain and wind had subsided, we once more took the field. The expedition was cut down to the utmost, only such clothes as could be carried in the beds were allowed. Books, meteorological instruments, photographic apparatus, and one tent were left behind. Lieut. Kitchener having only just recovered from a sharp attack of fever, as well as our head servant, who has for some time past suffered very much from the effects of our hard campaign in the Jordan valley, remained in Jerusalem in order to complete the selling off of Fund property authorised by the Committee, and thus the party being reduced considerably, we managed to place our whole equipment, including barley for three days, upon twelve pack animals. The reason of this change was that we proposed, by forced marches and rapid work, to fill in the Judæan Desert from the line of Wady el Taamireh to the boundary of the trigonometrical survey at Wady Seiyal, 330 square miles in all, and as supplies were not to be obtained, nor camels to be hired in this wild district, we had to carry all we wanted with us, and it was a great object to move as rapidly as possible.

Our success was greater than we could have expected; we were not stopped by weather until quite the end of the time. In twelve days we surveyed the whole 330 square miles, settled over 200 names, and only paid about £7 in backsheesh, whereas other travellers had been obliged in fourteen days to pay as much as £30. We made a correct plan of the fortress of Masada and visited 'Ain Jidy. Thus, in spite of two days during which we were detained in Hebron by a violent storm, we succeeded in reaching our present camp in the western plain on the 11th