

## MEETING OF GENERAL COMMITTEE.

JUNE 19TH, 1884.

THE Chair was taken by Mr. JAMES GLAISHER.

The Secretary read the minutes of the last General Meeting, which were confirmed.

The Secretary then read the Annual Report of the Executive Committee, as follows :—

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

Your Committee, elected at the last General Meeting of June 19th, 1883, have, on resigning office, to render an account of their administration during the past year.

I. The Committee have held twenty-one meetings during the year.

II. It has been found impossible to carry on the survey of Eastern Palestine for want of the Sultan's Firman. The portion of the survey already accomplished has been engraved on the reduced scale, and issued to subscribers. Captain Conder has completed and handed in his Memoirs of the 500 miles surveyed. These are remarkably full and detailed, and are accompanied by hundreds of plans and drawings. The Committee have still under consideration the question, whether these should be published at once, or whether they should wait for the continuation of the work.

III. The issue of the Society's great work, "The Survey of Western Palestine," is at length completed. The last two volumes, that on "Jerusalem," by Sir Charles Warren and Captain Conder, and that on the "Flora and Fauna," by Canon Tristram, are now in course of distribution to subscribers. The Jerusalem volume is accompanied by a portfolio of plates, drawings, and sketches. These two volumes will not be limited in their issue. The Committee think that the Society may be justly gratified by the completion of this magnificent work, which, with the accurate and beautiful maps furnished by the survey of Captains Conder and Kitchener, is by far the most important and valuable contribution ever made to the elucidation of the Bible from the geographical, archæological, and topographical point of view. The maps have been executed in the best style, and therefore at a very considerable cost. The Committee think it due to Mr. Stanford, their engraver, to record their sense of the beauty and excellence of the work put into the engraving of their reduced maps.

IV. There have been many expressions of opinion that the maps, which now show only the western side of the Jordan, should be extended so as to

give the eastern side also, even though that part is yet imperfectly known. It has therefore been resolved that all the existing information on this part of the country shall be laid on sheets the same size as those of the reduced map for the engraver. Mr. Armstrong, who has been in the Society's service since the year 1871, is now engaged in doing this. As soon as he has completed the work it will be sent to the engraver.

In order to make these maps more generally useful, the Old and New Testament names, boundaries, &c., will be laid down on them in different colour. Sir Charles Wilson has kindly undertaken to superintend this part of the work; when it is completed, those subscribers who wish will be allowed to exchange the Bible maps they have already obtained at the office for the new ones, on payment of the small difference in the cost of the two maps.

V. In October of last year the Committee published, through Messrs. Bentley & Son, Captain Conder's new book on his Eastern travels, entitled "Heth and Moab." The result, though not yet so satisfactory as in the case of the preceding work by the same author, has left a balance on the right side in our hands.

VI. The exploration work of the year has been of a very satisfactory and valuable kind. The Committee announced at their last General Meeting that they hoped to organise, and send out in the autumn, an expedition which should be mainly devoted to geological research. This expedition has been despatched, and has accomplished the work entrusted to its leader, Professor Edward Hull, F.R.S., Director of the Geological Survey of Ireland. He was accompanied by Captain Kitchener and by Mr. George Armstrong. Professor Hull also took with him his son, Dr. Gordon Hull, and the party was also strengthened by the addition of two volunteers, Mr. Hart, who was assisted by a grant from the Royal Irish Academy for botanical purposes, and Mr. Reginald Lawrence. They left England on 10th of October last year, and returned on the 12th of February, after a journey which occupied four months.

VII. As regards the results of the expedition, they are twofold. First, *Geological*. An analysis of Professor Hull's discoveries has been placed in the hands of the Committee, and will be published in the next number of the *Quarterly Statement*. He has traced the ancient margin of the Gulfs of Suez and Akabah to the height of 200 feet above their present level, so that the whole country has been submerged to that extent, and has been gradually rising. As regards the Dead Sea, he has discovered that it formerly stood at an elevation of 1,400 feet above its present level; that is to say, 150 feet above the level of the Mediterranean. The history of this gradually lowering of the waters will form a special feature in Professor Hull's forthcoming report. He has also found evidences of a chain of ancient lakes in the Sinaitic district, and of another chain in the centre of the Wâdy Arabah, not far from the watershed. The great line of feature of the Wâdy Arabah and the Jordan Valley has been traced to a distance of more than a hundred miles. The materials for working out a complete theory of the origin of this remarkable depression are now

available. They are found to differ in many details from the one furnished by Lartet. The terraces of the Jordan have been examined, the most important one being 600 feet above the present surface of the Dead Sea. The relation of the terraces to the surrounding hills and valleys shows that these features had already been formed before the waters had reached their former level. Sections have been carried east and west across the Arabah and the Jordan Valley. Two traverses of Palestine have also been made from the Mediterranean to the Jordan.

Dr. Gordon Hull has taken more than a hundred photographs, chiefly of places never before figured.

Next, *the Geographical results*. Major Kitchener has made a survey, which is lying on the table, of the whole of the Wâdy Arabah, from Akabah to the Dead Sea; he found traces of an old city about a mile north-east of the town of Akabah; another ruined city on the east of the wâdy, six miles north of Feidan, with many indications of former buildings, terraces, and irrigation works. He visited Petra and heard many rumours and reports of ruins said to lie on the east of the hills in the country of Edom. He has given the Committee a report on his work, which will also be published in the *Quarterly Statement*.

As regards exploration, therefore, this year has been fruitful of valuable work. For future work the Committee must be mainly guided by circumstances. Until the Sultan grants the Firman it is useless to think of continuing the survey of Eastern Palestine. It is therefore proposed to continue the work from time to time as opportunities offer, by means of such special expeditions as those of Professor Hull, or by the informal work of private parties and travellers, the results of which will be published from time to time as they arrive.

VIII. The following is the Balance Sheet of the year 1883:—

1883.					£	s.	d.
Jan. 1.	Balance ..	..	..	..	363	14	3
Dec. 31.	Subscriptions ..	..	..	..	2,014	1	1
„	Maps and Memoirs ..	..	..	..	881	7	0
„	Books ..	..	..	..	100	11	0
„	Photographs ..	..	..	..	22	3	7
					<hr/>		
					£3,381	16	11
					<hr/>		

1883.					£	s.	d.
Dec. 31.	Exploration ..	..	..	..	732	2	3
„	Maps and Memoirs ..	..	..	..	1,521	5	2
„	Management :						
„	Salaries and wages ..	..	..	..	374	7	3
„	Rent ..	..	..	..	121	0	0
„	Stationery, Advertising, Lithography, Insurance, and Office ..	..	..	..	13	18	2
„	Printing ..	..	..	..	263	2	2
„	Postage ..	..	..	..	113	16	3
„	Balance ..	..	..	..	172	5	8
					<hr/>		
					£3,381	16	11
					<hr/>		

It will thus be seen that the Committee spent during the year the sum of £3,209 11s. 3d., of which £509 5s. 5d. was expended in management, or including postage £623 1s. 8d., which is not quite 20 per cent. of the whole. The expenditure of the year 1884, up to the present date, has been £3,121, of which £1,830, or 59 per cent., has been spent in exploration, £833, or 27 per cent., on Maps and Memoirs, £130, or 4 per cent., on printers, and £328, or 11 per cent., in management.

The maps and Memoirs up to the present have cost the Society about £6,000. They have realised rather more than that amount. There is about £2,000 still to be paid on this account; and when all the subscriptions to the "Survey of Western Palestine" have been paid, and the copies still on hand subscribed for, there will remain a considerable surplus, but it is not possible at the present moment to estimate the exact sum.

IX. Papers have appeared in the *Quarterly Statement* since last June on the Geology of Palestine, by Professor Huddleston; on various topographical and archaeological points, by Captain Conder, the Rev. W. F. Birch, the Rev. Pickering Clarke, the Rev. H. G. Tomkins, and others; on the Shapira Manuscripts, by the Rev. Dr. Ginsburg, M. Clermont-Ganneau, and Captain Conder; on the Relation of Land and Sea in the Isthmus of Suez, by Professor Hull; on Mr. Holland's Last Journey, by Sir Charles Wilson; on the Khurbets of Carmel, by Mr. Laurence Oliphant; and on Inscriptions in Palestine, by M. Clermont-Ganneau. To all these gentlemen the Committee render their best thanks.

X. The Committee have, lastly, to express their best thanks to the Local Secretaries, who are active in spreading abroad a knowledge of their work; and to all their subscribers and donors.

The Rev. Dr. WILLIAM WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, My Lords and Gentlemen, I have much pleasure in proposing that the Report just submitted be adopted, printed, and circulated. The different items referred to show that the past year has been one of considerable activity. You have done all you were able to do, though not all you desired to do. In your publications, and in your explorations, you have largely added to our knowledge of the Holy Land during the year; and though in some of your efforts you may not have attained to certainty, you have certainly made advances towards certainty, and you have stimulated curiosity, and mental activity, and a great desire to know more, and to explore further, and deeper, on lines which you have indicated. You are still, I regret to see, hampered by the groundless fears of the Sultan. If any man can remove obstructions out of the way, Lord Dufferin can. I know personally that Lord Dufferin succeeded last year in securing results in Syria which seemed impossible. The Sultan could do no more popular act than permit those who wish him no ill to explore thoroughly and make a good map of those sacred and historic lands of which he is now the guardian. And it is certainly not in his interest that his acts should only drive earnest scholars to long for the time when the country, now closed and barred by ignorant, blind, weak fanaticism, shall be opened to all under a more enlightened ruler. I trust

that Lord Dufferin will continue to urge on the Sultan, in his own interest, as well as in the interest of geographical science, to remove all restrictions out of the way of a thorough survey of Syria and Palestine. Sir, I have seen your work in progress, and I know something of the results attained. I have had the pleasure of seeing your men hard at work on the survey, in the face of difficulties, and I have also seen them hard at work in filling in details during what was supposed to be their holidays at Bludan and elsewhere. I have just recently been associated with some of your best men, in the preparation of maps for the British and Foreign Bible Society; and it is only by going through the work done that one can form any idea of the vast amount of material for the future student which your explorers have placed at the disposal of Bible students. You will be pleased to hear that the corrected proofs of the set of the Bible Society's maps containing your own work, so far as is possible on our small scale, are now in the hands of Mr. Stanford, and as the Society's home circulation last year amounted to over one million and a half copies of the Scriptures, you may form an idea of the wide circulation of the knowledge of the Holy Land made accessible by your Society. But the maps will also appear in the Italian, French, German, Telugu, Chinese, and other foreign versions of the Society. And as the Society's versions now reach a total of somewhat over 250, the information gathered by your agents will be more extensively circulated than could ever have been dreamed of by the founders of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Let me urge you not to slacken energy in this work, which is for all the world, and for all time. I long for the day when your work shall go on east of the Jordan. Rich treasures await you in the Hauran, and among what have been called the "giant cities of Bashan." You have done good work in giving us a true map for the west of the Jordan, but a less explored and a more fertile field awaits you east of the Jordan, not to speak of the south country, Edom and Moab. I have much pleasure in commending your work, and in moving the adoption of the resolution which I have submitted.

Mr. CYRIL GRAHAM: I beg, Sir, to second the resolution of Dr. William Wright. I have long desired that this important survey may be extended to cover the Land of Bashan, and even further east. In this map, which I drew up from the notes of my own journeys in the year 1858, I was able to lay down a great many places and names not previously known. At the same time the journey of a single traveller can never do such map work for a country as a party of surveyors accomplish. The country is not too far east for Biblical limits; for instance, in Umm el Jamul we recognise Beth-gamul. And there are certain periods in the year when it may be safely and easily traversed. I have only to express my hope that the hoped-for Firman may speedily be granted, and the party again in the field. Meantime, the exploration work of the year shows what may be done in seizing opportunities and getting the right men to work.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Rev. W. F. BIRCH : I beg to propose the re-election, for the ensuing twelve months, of the Chairman and the Executive Committee. I am quite sure, as a member of the General Committee, an Honorary Local Secretary, and one who takes the greatest interest in the welfare and success of the Society, that we are in very good hands. The Report of the year proves that the work is being followed up with as much vigour and activity as is possible.

The Rev. Dr. LÖWY, in seconding the resolution, called attention to a recent decree by the Porte that no visitors to Palestine should remain there for more than thirty days without special permission.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The Rev. Dr. GINSBURG : Mr. Chairman, I have a list of gentlemen in my hands whom I beg to propose for election in the list of General Committee. They have all shown that active interest in all belonging to the Holy Land which is the one qualification required to make a man eligible for our General Committee. These names are—

Lord Rollo.

Sir Richard Temple.

Sir William Muir.

General Charles Gordon, R.E.

Professor Hudleston.

Professor Hull.

Mr. George Burns.

Mr. John Robinson, of Westwood Hall, Leeds.

Mr. W. C. Jones, of Daresbury, Warrington.

Mr. A. H. Heywood.

Rev. Professor Milligan.

Mr. Henry Lee, M.P.

Mr. H. S. Perry, of Monksbourne, Cork.

Mr. F. W. Grafton, M.P.

Rev. F. W. Creeny.

Rev. H. G. Tomkins.

Mr. W. H. Houldsworth, M.P.

Mr. J. H. Shorthouse.

Rev. Prof. H. A. Hort, D.D.

Rev. F. E. Wigram.

Mr. VAUX seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The Rev. W. F. BIRCH : Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, We have now reached an epoch in the history of this Society. The two newly issued volumes and the plans lying on the table conclude the great work of the "Survey of Western Palestine," begun in 1872. The portion of Captain Conder's map before us, containing 550 square miles, is the firstfruits of the eastern survey ; now unhappily stopped by the withholding of a Firman.

Even under this discouragement, previous speakers are radiant with hope that the survey will yet be extended southwards into the desert of Et Tih and eastwards into the far Hauran. But what of the centre of interest in the Holy Land? My thoughts turn always to Jerusalem. Is there not work there? Colonel Warren's beautiful plans show us much that was once unknown; but at many important points his work was cut short, so that what is known only makes me the more desirous to know more. I ask, is it not time, after an interval of fifteen years, once more to resume excavations at Jerusalem? Shall we be content with presenting to the Bible-loving people of England a correct map of Palestine, and then own that we cannot give them a true plan of Biblical Jerusalem? One says Zion was here, another there; is this always so to be? The Bible arguments seem to me to demonstrate that the City of David was on the eastern hill south of the Temple, but almost all authorities are in favour of some other position, and nothing but excavation will ever settle this debated point. I understand that Colonel Warren thinks that there would be no difficulty in excavating on Ophel, away from the walls of the present city. Why should the Turk object to Englishmen paying for the privilege of digging in the gardens down towards Siloam? The money spent would be so much gain to the poor fellahin. I am convinced that between the Virgin's Fount and Siloam there are remains of the deepest interest connected with the City of David. I would hope, then, that the day is not far distant when the long-lost catacombs of David and other kings of Zion will once more be trodden by those who take pleasure in her stones. As to the question of expense, I believe the necessary funds would soon be forthcoming, since I am satisfied that many supporters of the Palestine Exploration Fund would rejoice to hear that excavation work at Jerusalem was once more to be taken in hand. I have much pleasure in proposing the following resolution:—"That the Executive Committee be requested to consider the question of resuming excavation outside Jerusalem on the earliest opportunity."

Sir CHARLES WARREN: I have great pleasure in seconding Mr. Birch's resolution—the more, perhaps, because we do not always take the same view on the sacred sites of the City. There are many places about and around, perhaps within the city, where excavations might be conducted at small cost, and without danger of interference.

The resolution was carried.

The CHAIRMAN: My Lords and Gentlemen, We have now, as Mr. Birch remarked, reached an epoch in our work. On the table before us lie the volumes, the maps, and the drawings, summed up generally under the title of the "Survey of Western Palestine," which represent the great bulk of our labours since the work of the Society began. We have surveyed all that part of the Holy Land, from Dan to Beersheba, which lies on the west of the Jordan—there are our maps. We have planned, drawn, measured, and photographed nearly every ruin in the country; we have

recovered the old Jewish tombs, and are now enabled to classify and to date them; we have written down the names of the modern villages and ruins; we have found the remains of the synagogues and enabled the world to restore the synagogue of Capernaum—there are the Memoirs; and with them we have published the hundreds of drawings executed for us by Captain Conder and Captain Kitchener; we have, thanks to my friend Canon Tristram, who is never weary of doing something more for the Holy Land, given to the world this truly magnificent book, with its beautiful illustrations, on the Flora and Fauna of the country. We cannot too much congratulate ourselves, that is, our Society, nor can we sufficiently thank Canon Tristram, for the production of a book so admirable and so worthy of the subject. There is so much special interest in the Holy Land attached to its Natural History that it was absolutely necessary to supplement the survey by such a work as this, which could only be thoroughly taken in hand by such a specialist as Canon Tristram. It contains facts, otherwise unattainable, bearing on the questions of the distribution and modification of species. No other country affords so many opportunities for illustrating these questions. We have also in this volume, the last of a splendid series, produced a complete record of all that has been done in Jerusalem since the Ordnance Survey of the city was executed for the world by our friend Sir Charles Wilson in 1865. This book contains the complete and exact account of all Warren's work in the years 1867 to 1870. It also includes a paper on the Architecture of Jerusalem, and an account of the various work done in the city by Captain Conder, M. Clermont-Ganneau, Herr Schick, Herr Guthe, and others. We have to thank Captain Conder, whose name we are all glad to see on the title-page, for his hearty co-operation with Sir Charles Warren. I am sure we are rejoiced to see Captain Conder, who has done so much for the Society, increasing our obligations to him. Lastly, in this great portfolio, with its fifty plates, are figured the discoveries made by Warren. If it be asked why the plates have not been published before, we should have to give the history of Sir Charles Warren's busy and active life since he left Jerusalem. But at this point in our own work, and with these volumes in our hands, I think we should take the opportunity to pass a vote of our warmest thanks to Sir Charles Warren. I am happy to announce that, to the many honours he has won, the Royal Society has recently added one more. I am sure that he is as proud of being a Fellow of that noble Society as he is of wearing the Collar and Star of a Knight Commander of the most distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL: I am happy, Mr. Chairman, in the opportunity of seconding this vote of thanks. I can only add to your remarks that, though we shall never forget the work done at Jerusalem, we must also remember the work done by Sir Charles during the Zulu War, as Governor of Griqualand, in the region of mathematical science, and in the hunting down of Professor Palmer's murderers. I think, Sir, the Society singularly fortunate in its officers, but especially so in the case of Sir Charles Warren.

Sir CHARLES WARREN, in replying to the vote of thanks accorded to him, said : It has long been a dream with me that these plans should be published, and I am heartily rejoiced to find that sufficient funds have at last been found to enable this to be accomplished, for I have felt certain that as soon as they are in the hands of the public fresh interest will be excited in the topography of Jerusalem, and there will be a renewed desire to excavate there. Of course these plans can only be taken as an earnest of what is to be discovered in the future ; we were obliged to break off in the middle of our work, but we had already accomplished one great section of our enterprise. We had obtained a fairly correct contoured plan of the ancient Jerusalem, and an accurate delineation of the ancient Temple wall. We had commenced quite in the dark as to the relative value of the conflicting theories, and have emerged with so much fresh knowledge that all the old theories have to be modified or abandoned. When the Sultan's Firman expired in 1870, and we were compelled to desist from excavating, I had already elaborated a project for a trigonometrical survey of Palestine, and pointed out that the original design for a mere reconnaissance was not applicable for the work in hand ; I pointed out also that while the objects underground would keep a few years longer, the march of civilisation was rapidly erasing all records of the past above ground. The ancient ruins were being burnt into lime, the old names were giving way to modern appellations, and the records of the past were disappearing : it was necessary at once to proceed with the trigonometrical survey of Palestine and to leave Jerusalem. This work has been completed most successfully through the industry and perseverance of Captain Conder and his comrades, and the time appears to have arrived when we may again consider the question of excavating about Jerusalem. It would be expensive work digging near the inhabited portion, but happily there is the Hill of Ophel, on which, as has been stated, excavation may be made at a comparatively small expense. My friend the Rev. W. F. Birch, who now sits beside me, insists that here is Mount Zion, and is about to attack with a violent hand the position I have assigned to that ancient stronghold. Why not spend a small sum in excavating on Ophel and ascertaining whether he be right or not ? There is much to be said on all sides of the question. I am sure that great interest would be attached to this work. There is a large section of the public interested in Palestine generally, but I think the feeling is more intensely centred in the Holy City.

After a vote of thanks to the Chairman, the Committee adjourned.

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