

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

THE Annual Meeting of the General Committee was held at the Society's Offices, 1, Adam Street, Adelphi, on Wednesday, June 24th, 1885.

The Chair was taken by Mr. JAMES GLAISHER.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The Secretary then read the following Report of the Executive Committee :—

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"Your Committee, elected at the last meeting of June 19th, 1884, have, on resigning office, to render an account of their administration during the past year.

"I. The Committee have held nineteen meetings during the year.

"II. The 'firman' necessary for the prosecution of the Survey of Eastern Palestine is still withheld by the Turkish authorities.

"III. The work of exploration in the Holy Land has been carried on during the last twelve months by Mr. Laurence Oliphant, Herr Schumacher, and Mr. Guy le Strange. The best thanks of the Committee are due to these gentlemen for the valuable reports and papers given to the Society by them ; some of them, including *Notes on the Jaulan* and *Notes on Carmel* by Mr. Oliphant, have already been published in the *Quarterly Statement*. Other notes by the same gentleman will appear in July, together with an account of a journey east of Jordan by Mr. Guy le Strange. The Committee have also just received, and have great pleasure in laying on the table, a really magnificent contribution to the Survey of the East, in a packet of memoirs, plans, and map, from Herr Schumacher. This work, certainly the most important examination, so far as it goes, of the Jaulan district, as yet made by any traveller, is put forward by the Committee with great satisfaction as the principal work of the year. It is proposed to issue this in a separate form apart from the *Quarterly Statement*, and to present it to all subscribers who may desire to possess a copy. The map will be incorporated with the map of the Society, and laid down on the sheets now being prepared by Mr. Armstrong. It covers about 200 square miles ; the Memoirs contain a list of Arabic names, a general description of the country with its perennial streams, cascades, forests, villages, roads, and people, and an account with excellent plans and drawings of the villages and ruins in the district visited by Herr Schumacher.

"Among the principal ruins described may be mentioned that called Kh. Arkub er Rahwah, which Herr Schumacher would identify with the Argob of the Bible, commonly placed at the Lejjah. He is supported in this view by the authority of Burckhardt, who maintained that Argob would be found somewhere in southern Jaulan. Important ruins were found in the Ain Dakhar and Beit Akkar. North of the former place is a field of

dolmens, in number not short of 500, called by the natives Kubur Beni Israel—graves of the children of Israel. Ancient stone bridges were found crossing the streams at Nahr el Allan and Nahr Rukkad ; a remarkable altar was found at Kefr el Ma, conjectured by Herr Schumacher to be the Maccabæan Alima. Here a remarkable statue of basalt was also found. In a village called Sahem el Jolan, Herr Schumacher thinks he has discovered the Biblical Golan, which has hitherto escaped identification. The situation, the name, the extensive ruins, and the traditions of the people, all seem to confirm Herr Schumacher's conjecture. The ruins of the remarkable underground city of Ed Dera were examined and planned for the first time, together with the towns and monuments of El Mezeirib Tuffas and Nawar, identified by Mr. Oliphant with the land of Uz ; other subterranean buildings were found at Kh. Sumakh and at Sheik Saad. The rock tomb of Job was also photographed and planned. These Memoirs and Maps may be considered as following immediately on the notes furnished by Mr. Oliphant for the *Quarterly Statement* of April last. The recovery of two important Biblical places, the mass of light thrown upon ancient worships, the great number of ruins planned, and the care and intelligence bestowed upon the whole work, render it incumbent upon the Committee to ask the General Committee for a special vote of thanks to this young explorer, as well as to Mr. Oliphant and Mr. Guy le Strange. It must also be mentioned that Mr. Oliphant has discovered a dolmen in Judæa, where hitherto none had been found. It lies in a desert and hilly part of the country, on sheet 115 of the great map. Another interesting discovery is one made by Herr Hanauer, close to the site of the ancient Zorah, of a rock altar which suggests the passage in Judges xiii, 19 and 20.

"The publications of the year in the *Quarterly Statement* have also included Major Kitchener's important geographical report of the Arabah Valley. An archeological paper by Clermont-Ganneau on Palestine Antiquities in London, and communications from Canon Tristram, Rev. H. Clay Trumbull, Rev. H. G. Tomkins, Dr. Selah Merrill, Dr. Chaplin, Rev. W. F. Birch, Professor Hull, Mr. Baker Greene, and others, to whom the best thanks of the Committee are due. The books published by the Committee since the last meeting of the General Committee are 'Mount Seir' by Professor Hull, and cheap editions of Captain Conder's 'Tent Work' and 'Heth and Moab.' The remaining copies of the 'Survey of Western Palestine' have been placed in the hands of Mr. A. P. Watt, of Paternoster Row, for disposal, subject to the condition that no reduction be made on the original price of the work. -

"The Committee have now in their hands the whole of Professor Hull's Geological Memoirs. This important work has been sent to the printers and will be issued as soon as possible.

"An arrangement has been made with Mr. H. Chichester Hart, by means of which we shall be enabled to publish his Memoirs on the Natural History of the Arabah. Herr Schumacher will also, it is hoped, continue his researches as opportunity may offer.

"The Balance Sheet for the year 1884 was published in the April *Quarterly Statement*. The Society received during the year the sum of £5,654, including a loan of £850, and expended £1,851 in exploration, £2,592 on maps and memoirs, £504 in printing, and £618 in management. Since the beginning of the year the sum of £1,224 has been received; exploration has cost £116, maps and memoirs £408, printers £200, and management £346.

"As regards the maps showing both Eastern and Western Palestine with the Old and New Testament names on them, they are now ready for the engraver, but will not be handed to him until Herr Schumacher's work can be laid down on them. Mr. Armstrong has also completed a list of Old and New Testament names with their identifications.

"The Committee have to express their best thanks to the Local Hon. Secretaries, and to all who have helped to spread a knowledge of their work, which, as will be seen from the preceding report, is actively going on, and will continue to do so, as long as any part of our original prospectus remains to be filled up.

"The Committee have lastly to deplore the sudden death on Sunday last, the 21st, of Mr. W. S. W. Vaux, F.R.S., formerly Chief of the Numismatic Department in the British Museum, and lately Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society. Mr. Vaux has been a member of the Executive Committee since the formation of the Society on May 12th, 1865. There has hardly been a meeting from that date until the last meeting of June 2nd at which he was not present, and his interest in the Society and his watchfulness over the advance of its work have never ceased from the beginning."

The adoption of the Report was proposed by Dr. CHARLIN, of Jerusalem, who spoke of the way in which the work of the Society was steadily growing in recognition, and seconded by Mr. CYRIL GRAHAM, who bore testimony, from his own experience in the country, to the beauty and excellence of Herr Schumacher's work.

The DEAN OF CHESTER proposed the re-election of the Executive Committee. This was seconded by the Rev. DR. LÖWY. Both gentlemen took occasion to speak of the great loss the Society had sustained in the lamented death of Mr. Vaux.

Mr. HENRY MAUDSLAY proposed, and Mr. CRACE seconded, a vote of thanks to the Chairman.
