

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

THE Forty-Ninth Annual General Meeting was held at the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, on Tuesday, June 16th, 1914, at 3.30 p.m., the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.S.A., in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN.—The Honorary Secretary will read certain letters from those unable to attend.

The HON. SECRETARY.—I have letters of regret from the Dean of Ely, the Chief Rabbi, the Marquis of Normanby, Professor George Adam Smith, Mr. James Melrose, the Rev. W. F. Birch, and also, received since I have been in the building, a telegram from Professor H. V. Hilprecht, who says "Invitation for annual meeting just received, too late to attend. May all the great gods from beyond the River Euphrates bless the work of the Society." I do not think the Dean of Canterbury has been able to attend. He hoped to be able to do so, but he had another engagement so soon after this hour that he has probably been unable to come.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, the first business of this annual meeting is the adoption of the Report. We then have to re-elect Committees, after reporting on the death of certain members of the General Committee. Subsequently to that formal business we shall have an address on the recent work of the Society from Dr. Masterman, followed by Captain Newcombe's address on the Survey of Southern Palestine. I now beg to move, and I do so formally, that the Report and Accounts for the year 1913, already printed and in the hands of subscribers, be received and adopted. I will invite the Rev. Arthur Carr to second the motion.

Rev. ARTHUR CARR.—I have much pleasure in seconding the adoption of the Report.—Carried.

The HON. SECRETARY.—It is always my sad duty, at these meetings, to report a number of losses by death from the General Committee. In the present case we have particularly to lament, not so much an unusual number, as of men of unusual eminence and of value to the Society. We have, among those who have passed away since the last meeting, Lord Sidmouth, who had belonged to the Society for twenty years, Sir Frederick Eaton, as to whom I have a word or two to say afterwards, Dr. Christian Ginsburg, Dr. Driver, and Dr. Aldis Wright, three men who have been among the first scholars of our time as Bible scholars. Dr. Ginsburg was, perhaps, the first Hebrew scholar in the country. They were all three members of that company which were appointed for the revision of the Old Testament thirty years ago, and amongst the most valued scholars. It shows how much this Society has attracted men of ability, that those three men should have been members of our General Committee. Besides them there have also been the Rev. W. J. Stracey-Clitherow; and to-day, since I have been in the building, I have heard of the death of Mr. Serapion Murad, who was of great local value to our work during the execution of the Gezer excavations. A resident on the spot, and a man of considerable ability, he rendered us constant service during the five years that Gezer was being excavated. I should like, for a moment, to refer, as a personal matter, to the loss of Sir Frederick Eaton, who was the Secretary of the Royal Academy of Arts, a near neighbour here. He, for many years, was a constant attendant at our Executive Committees, and it was only since the demands made upon his time as Secretary of the Royal Academy made it impossible for him to attend, that his attendances have diminished. I feel very interested in his membership of the Executive Committee, because he was born in the same year, and was elected on the same day as myself, and that day will be forty-two years hence to-morrow. (Applause.)

Sir CHARLES WATSON.—My lord, ladies and gentlemen, as your lordship has already announced, it is the sad duty on these occasions to refer to the losses we have suffered on the General Committee in the past year; and it now falls to my lot to propose the names of gentlemen to succeed them. We are very fortunate in the Palestine Exploration Fund that we always have a succession of distinguished men who are ready to come and help with the work. The first name is that of yourself, my lord, the Earl of Crawford and

Balcarres, whom we are so pleased to see presiding on this occasion. (Applause.) Then there is Sir Frederic Kenyon, the Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum, who took the chair here last year; Dr. Cowley, of the Bodleian Library at Oxford, Captain Newcombe, a brother officer of my own of the Royal Engineers, who has just been working so admirably on the Survey in Palestine, continuing that work which was done many years ago by Colonel Conder and Lord Kitchener; Mr. Robert Williams, Architect, of Alexandria, who has helped us with some valuable papers. I propose that these gentlemen be elected members of the General Committee.

Sir HENRY TROTTER.—I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution.—Carried.

Rev. A. BIGG-WITHER.—I have very great pleasure indeed in proposing that the Executive Committee, to which this Palestine Exploration Fund owes so much under its genial and able Chairman, Sir Charles Watson, be re-elected.

Colonel FELLOWS.—May I have the honour of seconding that resolution?—Carried.

The CHAIRMAN.—I have now the great satisfaction of asking Dr. Masterman to give us his address on the recent work of the Society.

ADDRESS (with Lantern Slides).

By Dr. E. W. G. MASTERMAN.

My lord, ladies and gentlemen. In accepting the suggestion of the Committee that I should have the great honour of addressing you this afternoon, I may say at once that I have no claim to speak to you on the ground of being any judge of the subject of the relation of the work that we are doing to our knowledge of general archaeology, nor can I claim, with the many speakers who have been here before, any special understanding of the bearing of these great discoveries that we have been making on Bible knowledge. My one and only claim must be that for now a period of twenty years it has been my very great privilege to be in touch with the explorers in this Society who have been working in Palestine during that time.

On account of their greatly valued friendships and the pleasant times we have had together, I have been enabled probably more than most, if not all of you in this room, to watch intimately the progress of this work, and my feeling is that whereas it has been a great privilege, I have a pity for those of you who, like myself, are not professed archaeologists, in that you have not yourselves seen what has been done; for, except for the professional expert, it is very difficult to picture how great are the results that have been obtained during all this work. I think, perhaps, the results have been most astonishing in the line of the early occupations of Palestine—I speak in the presence of specialists with great diffidence, but I speak here also to those who are not specialists—and it seems to me that we have obtained an extraordinary insight into that marvellous civilization which existed in Palestine before the coming of the Hebrews. If you have followed the work you have seen how wonderful were those great fortifications which were erected round ancient cities, notably Gezer; how astonishing were those great excavations made, as we understand, many of them with the most primitive instruments, and as far as we can find out, chiefly to reach the water supply of the cities in which they were. For example, that great water tunnel of Gezer is wonderful to read of: it is far more wonderful to go down it. A somewhat similar work, quite as great, though on different lines, existed in Jerusalem, and we find now that in places like ancient Gibeon and at Ibleam there were exactly similar works. And it is not only, I think, the greatness of the architectural work which astonishes us, but it witnesses to what a very high condition of organization the State must have reached, that could produce such works. We realise, indeed, that the people who preceded the Hebrews in Palestine were people who had attained, for their time, to a high state of civilization. Even upon so difficult a subject as their religious beliefs we have had a flood of light thrown by the great discoveries connected with the burial rites and with the great high places, especially that of Gezer. This is not the occasion to go into that fully, but if you consider how much in the dark we were with regard to these facts a few years ago you will see how wonderful is the light that we have now on the subject. But I think there is one special period on which we all feel that light is very much needed: it is the period of the first coming of those nomadic tribes of Hebrews into the land

of Palestine. We see in the archaeological results that their coming distinctly set back the civilization of the period. We can see from such things as the pottery and buildings, and so on, that these desert tribes had not got the high civilization of those whom they replaced; and we see that while those tribes came from the East, from the land side—the land-loving Hebrews—another set of people were coming from the West—from the sea—almost simultaneously, a people we know as the Philistines, a name which we have associated—quite wrongly—with all that is against culture. Indeed, as far as we can dimly see, the great upholders of culture at that period were those very Philistines. For although the Philistines were enemies of Jehovah they were far from being enemies of culture, and we should very much like to know, and perhaps we may find out, how much the Hebrews owed in those ancient times to their contact with the Philistines. In the Bible there are dim and obscure lights on the subject. Some of you, no doubt, have read those extremely interesting lectures by Professor Macalister on the Philistines, where he puts on record almost everything we know about them. If you have, you will realise how great is our need for more information. It happens, we may say by chance, the Palestine Exploration Fund has, from the very beginning of its work outside the city of Jerusalem, had its energies directed to the corner of Palestine on the borders of the Philistine country. And certainly in the last excavations at Beth Shemesh it was the deliberate desire we should get light on that subject. My hope to-day is that we may proceed without delay, having conquered the outskirts of the territory, to go straight in and attack the citadel itself. There is one site which stands out very prominently, pre-eminently calling for our efforts, and it is probably the finest site for excavation, viz., Ascalon. Dr. Mackenzie and Mr. Newton visited the site, and perhaps when you see their photographs you will realise how great is the opportunity which lies before us. But I should not be doing my duty this afternoon if I did not mention that if there is anything which keeps the Society back it is not want of success; it is not that they do not realise how great is the opening: it is simply that to embark upon such an undertaking needs a very great backing from the general public. I have seen in Palestine excavations which have made me very sad; they are excavations which have been begun and never finished, on account of lack of funds. I am glad to say that the tradition of

the Palestine Exploration Fund is not that ; for when we undertake our excavations, as a rule we carry them through ; and I think it would be a great misfortune if we began an excavation like Ascalon without abundant support, and support means not for a year only, but for several years. Otherwise it is like going into a battle unprepared to fight to the end. If we begin excavating a site and then leave off, it is a dismal ruin, we leave a witness of defeat from a scientific point of view, and we make ourselves look ridiculous. And so I hope there will be a great rally on the subject of this new excavation, which I trust will be undertaken very shortly.

I do not know whether it is necessary to say it, but often in the performance of my duty as collector of subscriptions for the Fund, I come across those who imagine that when we have no excavations going on, there is no work being done at all by the Society. And I should like to add that those of us who know more about the work of the Society know that this is not the case. There is very great expense after an excavation is finished : the expense of publishing the results. And, moreover, the Fund is always doing something for the furtherment of the objects for which it exists. For instance, we are very shortly bringing out a new and most valuable map of Western Palestine, on a scale of  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch to the mile, a map which has been much in demand. But far more important is this new survey which has been undertaken by Captain Newcombe in the great region south of our Palestine survey and north of the Egyptian frontier, a region which has never been surveyed before : practically an unknown country. We have with us this afternoon Captain Newcombe, and I am sure I express the wishes of all those who are connected with the Fund when I say we hope this will not be his last connection with the Palestine Exploration Fund. We owe an immense debt to the officers of the Royal Engineers : it is hardly necessary for me to quote to you the names of Wilson and Conder, Warren and Kitchener, and Sir Charles Watson, whom we have with us, and I am sure Sir Charles Watson will not mind if I associate with him the name of Mr. Armstrong, who did very good work for us too. To these men we owe an enormous debt, which we hope will only be accumulating, and become greater in the years to come, by fresh members of the Royal Engineers assisting us. Associated with him in his survey he had two distinguished archaeologists, Mr. Woolley and Mr. Lawrence, and the result of that survey will

shortly come out in the Annual, and I am sure we are all impatient to see it. Here it would be impossible to speak of the results in any exhaustive way, but I would touch on two points which are worth mentioning, for they appeal to us all. The first is that the survey has conclusively shown that that region known as the Negeb, and translated in our Old Testament as "the South," was a region of purely nomadic peoples, and that before the Byzantine era there were no settled habitations there. That is the old-fashioned view. You know that a distinguished Oxford professor not long ago put forward a theory that in great part the early history of Israel was centred in that region; and you will find place after place located by him down there in a way which falsified the main results of the Palestine Exploration Fund. I do not suppose many of us advocate such a theory now, for there is no longer any room for holding it, because it has been conclusively shown that the "desert of the wanderings" was actually a hopeless desert for all except wanderers. And the second point is that during the period from, I suppose, the third to the fifth Christian century there was a considerable civilization in that region. There were several cities of no inconsiderable size; and the problem presented to us is this evidence, as maintained by Professor Huntington—the writer of the interesting book called "Palestine and its Transformation,"—that the climate has changed during these centuries. I think that is a point on which we want the opinion of those who have been on the spot. It is possible that the people, or many of them, starting monastic establishments there, were prepared to put up with climatic conditions as bad as now, and brave the difficulties of their surroundings; and it is also possible the land was inhabited because it was more habitable, the climate better, the rainfall more plentiful. That is a question to which I hope we shall have an answer shortly.

I should like very briefly to mention other excavations which have been, or we hope will shortly be, taking place in Palestine. There is the great excavation of Sebastieh, which was commenced by Professor Reisner. Some months ago I heard that Professor Reisner was coming back to continue the work, but I am sorry to say that so far the work has not been resumed; I take it that the general feeling will be that when an American Society or a great American University, undertakes such a work they ought to go on with it and finish it, for there is an immense amount to be done yet. So

we hope Professor Reisner may be able to return and carry on the magnificent work of exploration which he began. Secondly, a year ago Professor Sellin, who had excavated Jericho, amongst other places, undertook a small excavation on the very interesting Tel Belata between Ebal and Gerizim, as you turn in to reach the modern city of Nablous. When I was there with Professor Macalister he began to wonder that this was the site of the ancient Sychar, but now Professor Sellin has sunk shafts and made trenches and thus showed that this mound hides walls of extraordinary strength and thickness, and it is more than probable that this is the site of ancient Shechem itself. Professor Sellin went back to Europe to collect funds to start an excavation there, and we shall follow with very great interest the excavation of a site which is so historical, and which will throw so much light on Bible knowledge. Lastly, in Jerusalem, Captain Weil was recently sent out by Baron Rothschild from Paris to excavate the southern part of the hill Ophel. We have not yet the results published, but I think they are of extreme interest. The special object for which he was looking, viz., the tomb of David, I am happy to say he has not yet found. I would mention a word about one important publication which has been coming out but is not yet completed, viz., Père Vincent's great book on Jerusalem, a magnificent monograph illustrated by diagrams and photographs on a scale, such as, I think, has never been previously attempted. It is really a monumental work. And I have in my hand a monograph which, perhaps, will not appeal to all of us, but it illustrates a point; it is on the language of the Nowah or nomad smiths of Palestine. I show you this because it is what we should call, in chemical language, a by-product of the Palestine Exploration Fund work. Our friend, Professor Macalister, was such an embodiment of energy that, though, I believe, no man worked harder for his society than he did, he managed to do a number of other things at the same time. He has collected and recorded here 101 tales. They have never been written before, but were carried on by mouth from generation to generation among the gypsies of Palestine. He has also constructed from these a grammar and vocabulary. This has but little bearing on the object of our work, but it illustrates how, if men have an eye to look out for them, there are many side lights on Palestine which they can find opportunity to take up. I have here a pamphlet which illustrates another point. About a year or so ago, a Scotch naturalist,

Professor Annandale, came from India and spent five weeks in Palestine with the object of examining fresh-water sponges of the Lake of Galilee. During the time he was there, he made a more or less superficial collection of other curiosities, and in those five weeks he found eight entirely new species of invertebrate animals, hitherto unknown; and that shows how much remains to be done along the lines of Natural History in Palestine. I should like very much—and I hope some day it will be done—for the “Fauna and Flora of Palestine” to be brought up to date, and for an accomplished zoologist to be sent out to pick up a great amount of what has been left undone along those lines. I take it, however, that most of you here are especially interested in the bearing of this work on our Bible knowledge, and on those lines, I think, there is also very much that we need to have done. I do not know whether many of you have had occasion to examine what I may call the material from which our Bible maps are made, the material on which we identify the various Old Testament and New Testament sites. I think if you have, you will find that a great many of those sites rest upon extremely slender evidence; some of them have nothing more than a superficial likeness in the modern name to that of the ancient. When Dr. Bliss, for example, many years ago, undertook the exploration of the city of Sandahannah, it must have been months before he came to the conclusion that this city was the great Jewish city of Maréshah, a very important one which was fortified by Rehoboam; and the reason was that in the neighbourhood there was a Khurbet Marash which seemed to echo the old name. All over the country we have sites which have been identified for such reasons. If you take your Memoirs of the Fund and look you will see all that is said about many of them is “cisterns, caves and ruins,” or something of that sort. I think we ought to do a great deal to verify these places, these sites of ancient cities. A roving expedition with an accomplished archaeologist who knows the pottery of the various periods could, in 50 per cent. of the cases, give a positive answer whether these are or are not the sites which they are claimed to be. Let me give you two small illustrations of this. You all know how much dispute there has been as to the site of Capernaum. Recently three places have each been claimed to be the true site of the city of Capernaum. I went some years ago—and you will excuse the personal note, because to me what I have witnessed is of more interest than

what I have read—I went some years ago with Professor Macalister to this spot, and we had before us the three claimants. History and literature could not determine which was the true site. But when we wandered over the site, Professor Macalister was able to show that Khan Minyeh was a site which showed no evidence of occupation before the Arab period, and the remains were Arab remains ; the Roman remains being only those of a few scattered houses. But on the hill above, Tel Oreimeh, except for a few modern pottery fragments immediately under the surface, the latest remains were of pre-Israelite times ; there was nothing which could belong to the Roman or even to Hebrew times. When we went to Tel Hâm we found all the remains belonged to the Roman period except a few modern ruins on the surface. Therefore the witness of archaeology was of far more value than the discussions which had taken place on purely literary and historical grounds. If you have been reading the *Quarterly Statements* you will have seen recently an instance of the same thing. A distinguished contributor to our Society who has done very much in the past in illuminating the geography of Palestine, conceived the idea that Gibeah of Saul was situated on a hill not far north of Jerusalem, known as Khurbet Adaseh. And this idea which he evolved in his study and felt extremely convinced about from the text of the Bible, was not at first put to any test. But, at last, Mr. Crace, I think it was, asked me if I would go with the foreman of the Palestine Exploration Fund and examine the site. When we went to Khurbet Adaseh there was no evidence of occupation of the site before Roman times, but to make assurance doubly assured we sank a pit down to the rock, and found nothing there except Roman pottery. Another site had been identified as Gibeah of Saul for many years, viz., Tel el Fûl ; and there we found, upon the surface, a great quantity of pottery which belonged to the Hebrew period. As Professor Macalister did not think Tel el Fûl was the site of Gibeah, I gathered a big packet of pottery and sent it to him. And his answer was that it was clear evidence that the city had been a Hebrew city, and there was strong presumptive evidence that it was of ancient Hebrew times. I mention this because I think there is much to be done on these lines, and I think Bible students would be extremely grateful if the Palestine Exploration Fund would verify these sites or show that they are possible or impossible sites, and so make the way clear for other proposals.

I have now to show you some pictures to illustrate some of the points concerning the excavations.

We have here the pillars of the high place at Ain Shems which Dr. Mackenzie uncovered in the later times of his exploration. You see the workmen carrying baskets of earth. I have two photographs of this high place. It was not like the high place of Gezer, where most of the monoliths were standing, and were very much larger. But you see three, and the third is broken across. The others are less distinct. The fact of these coming together in one area was strongly suggestive that this was the site of a high place, and underneath there was a sacred cave. Here is another view. It is somewhat disappointing, but it is the way most high places in Palestine will be found, with the monoliths thrown down; it was marvellous to find at Gezer monoliths standing, as the feeling among the later Jews was so strong against these pillars.

Here you see the southern gateway at Beth Shemesh. Inside these buildings were chambers, which may have been prisons, and they were reached from the upper part. There is an entrance 12 feet wide and the gateway is 30 feet in depth. It dated back to about 2000 B.C. and existed during the first and second city. It seems that during the Jewish period the site of the gateway was built over, and as far as excavations were made, it seems likely that Beth Shemesh was not a fortified city during the Jewish time, though the fortifications in the earlier periods were very extensive.

Here you see the entrance of the great well. It was very fascinating to see this well, and we were anxious to clear it out. But after going down 65 feet and apparently being no nearer to the bottom, Dr. Mackenzie desisted, the special reason being that the stones at the mouth were very insecure and there was a likelihood that we might have an accident. Ain Shems means the "Spring of the Sun." There is no spring in the neighbourhood, and no evidence of a surface spring anywhere near the city. But I think this well reached an underground source of water, and that may be a reason for the name.

Here is a photograph of an area which Dr. Mackenzie uncovered which had been devoted to the manufacture of olive oil. These curious jars, which were turned up in many of the excavations were found in such numbers over this area as to suggest that this special shaped jar was used for the manufacture and storage

of oil. And there were little jars out of which the oil could be taken and measured off, no doubt for selling.

In this view you see a series of steps going down into this hollowed-out part, and there opened to five sets of tombs. You can see the stones which were used for closing the mouth of the tombs. From the evidence of the pottery which was found, these tombs were proved to belong to the time of the Hebrew monarchy. One saucer had a Hebrew inscription on it.

Here I show you a general view of Ascalon. Ascalon is on the sea shore, and the remains are all enclosed within the ruined walls of Crusading times. The area within the walls is covered with palm trees and an immense quantity of sand, and it looked very hopeless to attempt excavation there. Dr. Mackenzie's and Mr. Newton's visit has been of value, because they have demonstrated that the site of the ancient city of Ascalon only occupies a small part of the enclosed area. The projections which you see sticking out are not cannon, but are old columns which have been used to strengthen the walls along the sea front.

Here is the appearance of the Philistine Ascalon standing on a rock, and all these upper portions represent layer after layer of ancient civilization. Here the sea has been quite friendly and has taken away sufficient to reveal the various layers. At Tel el Hesy the river made a similar excavation and led to the explorers undertaking that exploration. Here I show you a diagram of this natural section made by Mr. Newton. We have some traces of late Arabic deposits, and Crusading deposits, and then of Arabic conquest, and then we have a Byzantine layer. Then we get into the layers which most interest us, the Roman and the Philistine and the Canaanite and the Pre-Semitic. Some of this diagram is a little theoretical. You may ask how can you make such a scheme? It was made by taking out pieces of pottery at these different layers and reading as to dates from the evidence of the pottery.

I have, to finish with, some pictures which show something with which I am personally identified in connection with the Palestine Exploration Fund. Here are two pictures showing the rock at Ain Feshkah on which is cut the datum line from which to measure the level of the Dead Sea. We had to go along the shore, an extremely hot rugged walk, for half an hour after we left our horses, before we could find a suitable place. Here you see

a vast mass of conglomerate rock which has fallen from the cliff above, and presented a convenient surface for measurement. We tested our measurements by taking them also on these other rocks. Here are the results, which you can see in the *Quarterly Statement*, so I will not explain them now. The difference between the lowest measurement we had on October 26th, 1904, and the highest on April 15th, 1911, is about 6 feet. The change of level depends largely on the rainfall. But I will direct your attention for further information to the *Quarterly Statement* of October, 1913.

I will now ask Captain Newcombe to show his own views.

Captain NEWCOMBE.—My lord, ladies and gentlemen, these views belong to Mr. Woolley and Mr. Lawrence, whom we were very fortunate in having with us as archaeologists. Mr. Woolley will not arrive in England for another fortnight, otherwise he would have taken my place here, to tell you about the archaeological results. I am afraid I cannot give you his information for him, but I will show you these photographs. Here is Ain Guderat, which is the most interesting historical place he visited, because there has been much discussion as to the site of Kadesh Barnea, where the Israelites spent 38 years. Hitherto it has been supposed to be Ain Kadeis. Mr. Woolley agrees with that view, but Ain Kadeis is a tiny spring, which might support about twenty camels, not the whole wandering tribes of Israel. Ain Guderat could supply a large body of people, and the locality would support them by cultivation. Here you see stone banks to hold up the water and catch the deposit of soil which comes down from the hills. Otherwise there would be no cultivation possible.

Here you see Reheibeh, which is twenty miles south of Beersheba and now in the desert. It is one of the Byzantine towns. It probably had a population of some 10,000 people. It is rather interesting in a way, because although the town itself is not more ancient than 200 A.D., there is a deep well, which is reputed to be the well which Isaac dug. There is also a fort close by which was built at the time of Solomon.

Here is a typical photograph showing the desert road, and the tracks across, worn by the camels and transport. Next you see the Church of St. Sebeita, forty miles south of Beersheba; in this neighbourhood there are no more than two or three wandering

Arabs, though there must have been a town of perhaps 5,000 people. Yet there are no visible means of support anywhere round. I do not know how they lived, unless they took every possible means to catch the water. Notice the arches; we found that each arch is different. Mr. Woolley thinks that these ruins were originally monasteries, and that the place grew because people came to the monasteries for protection. Remember, no desert Arab will take the trouble to put one stone in front of another. These remains are Byzantine.

Dr. Trumbull considers the Mountain, Jebel Madûrah, to be the site where Aaron was buried, because he thought it to be a very conspicuous mountain, and would answer the description. From the photograph it is obviously only a small hill, and an impossible theory.

The next photograph shows you a remnant of a Roman fort. It is about 20 feet by 20 feet, and such forts are seen on the desert roads from Petra to Beersheba. They are interesting as showing which roads the Romans took.

Here you see a pass called Naqb El Safa, the foot of which is below the level of the Mediterranean, and it rises about 1,800 feet in the course of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. That is the southern border of Palestine, because south of that it is absolutely uncultivable, there being nothing but broken limestone rock.

Here is one of the cisterns which the Byzantines dug all over the country south of Beersheba, so as to collect their water during the rains. The supply in these cisterns lasts three or four months. The Arabs do not trouble to clean all these cisterns out. During the other months of the year they wander off to wells twenty or thirty miles away.

I have a few other remarks, which Mr. Woolley would have made had he been present. In Sir Charles Watson's paper last January, in the *Quarterly Statement*, he referred to eight headings connected with the journey of the Israelites, and he pointed out the march from Sinai to Kadesh, and the halt at Kadesh. They came, he said, and stayed there thirty-eight years. Mr. Woolley will have some remarks to make on their stopping at Kadesh, and the value of excavating at Ain Guderat, where he found some pottery, which he could not date. He expects this to be of very great interest. Sir Charles Watson also referred to the journey from Kadesh to

Mount Hor. Since the Survey, we find that the easiest way was to go straight from Kadesh viâ Wady Lusan and Wady Jerafi to Mount Hor, which was not thought possible, owing to the high range of Azazma Mountains. These from the west look impassable, but actually the road is easy and wagons could pass along it. And I do not see why the Israelites should not have taken it. I cannot discuss it very fully, but it opens up a fresh possibility. Of course, there are no traces of any sort likely to be discovered along that road.

The special instructions to the survey party were to make a map of half-inch scale over the whole area between Gaza, Beersheba and the Dead Sea down to Akaba and east of the Egyptian frontier. This district has an area of about 4,500 square miles. We had five survey parties, and four months to do it in. We had the advantage of the Egyptian Survey trigonometrical points, and we were able to carry the triangulation eastwards from them. There was the further advantage that the Mohammedans had preserved Aaron's Tomb on the mountain with great care, and had painted it white, we were thus able to see it from fifty miles off, and so we got a base fifty miles long, and fixed Mount Hor to within about thirty feet. That saved us a good deal of expense, as well as a good deal of trouble. We have been able to join up with Colonel Conder's survey, and fix his trigonometrical points. The final results are not yet finished, but I think that Colonel Conder's points are only half-a-mile out in longitude, and that will probably be the adjustment right through the map. We now have a survey joined across from Egypt to Syria, which we had not got before. With regard to Aaron's Tomb, there is much controversy about it. Whether Mount Hor is or is not the site of Aaron's Tomb, I am not competent to discuss, but can say that certain other sites which various authorities have put forward as the only possible ones, are undoubtedly wrong. In fact, both archaeologically and from the surveys, our results have been so far more negative than positive, in that we can prove several theories of various commentators to be wrong without being able to prove correct sites ourselves. Dr. Masterman mentioned the theory of the country drying up. I have read Professor Huntingdon's book, and Professor Gregory's article in the *Geographical Journal* two or three months ago, and it is difficult to add any fresh evidence to what they state. They both bring evidence to support their own views, and it is rather difficult

to give an opinion. But in the southern part, whether there has been water or not, there is nothing particular to cultivate. It is possible that formerly there was rather more rain in the northern country than now, and it would not have required very much more to make it more habitable than it is now. There is a huge wall of 1,800 feet drop here, and north of that is a country which is not altogether detestable—one cannot say more than that; south of that, one would stick to the description “detestable”; it is absolute limestone, with the exception of a few scrubby bushes in the valleys. It is difficult for any man to live there, and impossible for anybody but an Arab. With regard to the survey, it was more interesting work than one usually has when surveying a desert, because there was much else to do than actual surveying; one was not working one’s own country for one’s own government, and, had not the Turkish officials given us every assistance, we should have been very much hampered. One reads in journals about the Azazma country being very dangerous on account of the wildness of the local Arabs; but, as a matter of fact, these stories are probably due to non-Arabic-speaking travellers, who depend on the wily-tongued dragoman for information. It is to the dragoman’s interest to make out that there is danger, so that they may get higher rates of pay. I will conclude by saying that the best place in the whole of this country was Dr. Stirling’s C.M.S. Hospital at Gaza. His reputation amongst the Arabs and townspeople is remarkable and one to make anyone feel proud of his nationality. I may add that full value is obtained at Gaza for every contribution to the Hospital.

The CHAIRMAN.—Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure you will allow me to express, on your behalf, to Dr. Gurney Masterman and Captain Newcombe, our sense of obligation for the admirable addresses they have given us. Nothing, I think, can better bring home to the friends and supporters of this movement the immense variety and the different problems for research presented by the enterprise of the Palestine Exploration Fund than the series of photographs, notably the later ones, which I think Captain Newcombe said were prepared by Mr. Woolley. It would be difficult to picture a more variegated scene, or a group representing more differing aspects of civilization than that astonishing heap of rubbish which was once a prosperous and progressive community

prior to its destruction by some hordes of invaders, who overran the South. A different epoch of civilization was that singular little Roman blockhouse which Captain Newcombe, as a soldier, estimates would scarcely accommodate more than half-a-dozen troops, now a ruin, but a ruin dominated by an Arab labourer. Apart from the curious pictures illustrating the state of cultivation, I was impressed by the water cave, one of a great series, upon which this Southern desert at one time depended for its cultivation, and therefore for its life, which now, I gather, is at the mercy of persons who do not think it advisable or necessary to keep these wells clear. Those pictures certainly brought home to my mind the various aspects of the work of this Fund. But I have been impressed myself, I confess, by the multifarious responsibilities which this Society has undertaken, and has successfully achieved during what I think must now be close on fifty years of activity. No private society in the world can boast of the record of map-making comparable with that carried out by this Fund. To have achieved the great Survey of Palestine, assisted throughout, as the Fund has been, by officers of the Royal Engineers, was a work which lasted for many years and is even now not quite accomplished, and of itself justified the Fund in becoming the pioneer of this great effort, and more than justifies the existence of the Fund during the past half-century. Again, the Fund seems to me to be a great publishing house. The wall-shelf accommodation required for a complete set of the Proceedings, the Quarterly Notes, and so on, published by the Fund is very considerable. Again, I imagine that few societies of this character can have contributed so much to the literary demonstration of their work than has this Fund. Finally, of course, there is the research. I think Dr. Masterman—if he will permit me to say so—showed with great clearness, not only how exciting archaeological excavation can become, but how fruitful it can be made in the determination of exact knowledge. That diagram showing the respective strata of civilization, though, as he admitted, empiric in its form, was none the less based upon exact observation, and probably, if excavated to its logical conclusion, which is the bed-rock upon which the whole of these subsequent civilizations are founded, would more than justify the induction which he has himself drawn. I feel, therefore, ladies and gentlemen, that the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund is so far-reaching in its character and so wide-spread is the net it casts, that the Fund deserves greater support in the future than it has thought

necessary to claim from the public in the past. In one of the recent papers it is noted that the expense of exploration and excavation is growing. That, I have no doubt, is true, but it increases the difficulty, for in carrying out any great work it correlatively increases the obligation on the subscribers to supply the necessary finances. Moreover, Dr. Masterman pointed out something which should not be forgotten, namely, that the period following the active excavation is one during which serious financial burdens are placed on the Fund; the publication following excavation means an outlay of money; and although there may be a certain return, yet, none the less, support is very greatly needed.

We have now passed the time which it is customary for these meetings to last; but, in conclusion, I should like to offer a tribute of congratulation to the Fund for the admirable manner in which it seems to organize its work, for the consistency and patience which it has shown during the past half-century, often under conditions of great difficulty, in pursuing these arduous and responsible tasks; and, above all, on the tact and on the judgment which fifty years of Executive Committees have displayed in dealing, not with problems purely on their archaeological or indeed their Biblical side, but in dealing with the personal problems which must arise when conducting explorations in a country which in many ways—racially, religiously, socially—differs as the poles from our own.

I take this opportunity, ladies and gentlemen, of thanking you for the honour which you have done me in electing me to the General Committee. For many years past it has been my misfortune to ask for votes from a different kind of constituency from this, and it had been my intention to ask the Fund to elect me as an ordinary member, and they have honoured me by electing me as an Alderman forthwith. I thank you for that honour, and I wish all prosperity to the work of this distinguished Association. (Applause.)

Mr. MORRISON.—I have a pleasant task, but an easy one, ladies and gentlemen, and that is, to ask you to pass a cordial vote of thanks to Lord Crawford and Balcarres for the speech which he has given us and for taking the chair this afternoon. Lord Crawford is well known in the annals of Science, Art, and Archaeology, and his presence here will be of considerable service to our Fund, and we may well be proud, for we were the originators of scientific exploration in Palestine and everywhere else; and we have carried out our

business during the last 48 years in a thoroughly scientific way. There is not a bit of pottery or a bone that has been found in our explorations which has not been recorded, so that we can tell exactly where it was found, and sometimes the position is very important. And we have been the parent of a great number of Societies, Italian, French, American, German, who have followed in our footsteps, not always in the same scientific way, and we have produced a map which is practically as good as the Ordnance Map of England. I am sure you will join me in expressing your real gratitude to Lord Crawford and Balcarres for taking the chair and joining us this afternoon.

Mr. HOGARTH.—I have great pleasure in seconding the vote which has been moved by Mr. Morrison to Lord Crawford and Balcarres. He inherits many scientific interests, and he has developed artistic ones. Though we cannot find him art out of the mines of Palestine, I hope we shall find much which will interest him during the time he remains a member of our Council.

The vote was carried.

The CHAIRMAN.—Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Colonel Sir CHARLES WATSON.—My lord, ladies and gentlemen, the last resolution to propose is one which I feel sure you will pass with acclamation, namely, that the thanks of this meeting be given to the Council of the Society of Antiquaries, for allowing us the use of their lecture room. We are indeed indebted to the Council for being so good as to let us have the use of this admirable room for our meeting.

Dr. MASTERMAN.—I second it.

This was carried, and the meeting terminated.

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