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THE
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

LETTERS ON THE SURVEY.

I.—FROM MR. GEORGE GROVE.

Reprinted from the "Times."

SIR,—It will be seen from your advertising columns that the Palestine Exploration Fund has just despatched its autumn expedition to the Holy Land, and I take the opportunity to explain what we are proposing to do, and to solicit the aid of the public in doing it. It is now proposed to make a complete and minute survey of the whole country west of the Jordan, from the extreme north to the extreme south of the Holy Land proper—"from Dan to Beersheba"—of the same nature with the Ordnance Survey of England and Wales. That is to say, not only will the natural features of the country be accurately mapped, but every town and village, every saint's tomb, every sacred tree or heap of stones, every spot, in short, to which a name is attached—and in Palestine a name is attached to nearly every irregularity of the soil—will be faithfully plotted in our map, and its name written down in Arabic by a competent Arabic scholar, wherever possible by the head man of the village or district, or some other native. Our survey will not only deal with the beaten tracks and frequented places, but will penetrate into those nooks and corners in the entangled hilly country which are never approached by ordinary travellers, but which form three-fourths of the Holy Land, and are as thickly sown with names as the parts along which every stranger passes. In this way alone can a map be obtained which shall answer the wants of modern Biblical topography and of the student anxious to understand the Bible in the thorough manner in which it is worthy to be understood. In some form or other, either of translation, or transference, or corruption, or allusion, there is reason to believe that most of the ancient names are embalmed in the modern ones, and the topography of the Old and New Testaments can never be satisfactorily adjusted, or its correspondence with that of the actual country be made manifest, till the modern names are discovered and recorded in the most ample and detailed manner. This, then, is the

immediate purpose of our present expedition. The archæological investigations recently so ably urged in the *Times* will by no means be neglected. On the contrary, they will receive careful attention. But at present they can only be subsidiary to the Survey, or, at any rate, the two must proceed *pari passu*. The basis of all investigation of a Country and a Book alike so curiously rich in topographical elements, is a thoroughly minute and exhaustive map; and, valuable as the archæology is, the Committee do not think themselves justified in preferring it to the Survey. But they have not left archæology out of their scheme, and they anticipate that, as in the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain and Ireland, a large amount of information on that head will be obtained through the observations of their surveyor.

The Government, always ready to assist the Fund by all means in its power, has been good enough to allow us to have the services of Captain Stewart, R.E., an officer of great experience in the English survey and that of Ceylon, and himself a skilful working photographer. He has already taken his departure with two sappers in whom we hope to see the admirable qualities of Sergeant Birtles and Sergeant Phillips reproduced. At Christmas Captain Stewart will be joined by Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake, already well versed in the language and habits of the East, and favourably known for his journey in the Wilderness of the Wanderings with Professor Edward H. Palmer, of Cambridge. An archæologist will follow as soon as the funds permit.

Captain Stewart will not remain in or near Jerusalem. The works there, necessarily relinquished by Captain Warren on his return to England, are under the charge of Dr. Chaplin, the able surgeon of the English Hospital. For the further prosecution of the investigations at Jerusalem, the Committee have other views, which I hope shortly to explain; but this part of our observations must be kept quite distinct from the survey. In the meantime, should anything special arise, Captain Stewart will be within easy reach of the Holy City, and can be quickly brought to the spot.

My readers will remark that I have spoken only of the west of the Jordan, and that for the very satisfactory reason that the survey of the eastern side has been undertaken by the American committee. At the instance of the Palestine Fund the subject has been taken up by the people of the United States with an earnestness and spirit which fully relieve us from all anxiety as to the successful accomplishment of their portion of the undertaking. This is only natural in the countrymen of Robinson and Lynch, but it is not the less gratifying, and it ought to stir us up to an honourable rivalry in a cause in which England has already done so much, and in which we must remain first in the field.

The time which the survey is estimated to take, from Captain Stewart's arrival to the delivery of the map, with lists, photographs, and drawings, to the Committee, is four years, and the estimated annual cost £3,000. The annual income on which the Committee of the Fund can depend is at present about £2,000, so that an additional annual sum of

£1,000 is required to carry on the survey, in addition to the works at Jerusalem and to the various collateral things which are constantly occurring.

I feel sure that our new undertaking will be well supported in Great Britain by those who have hitherto shown so lively and practical an interest in the exploration of Palestine. The present work is necessarily slow, but it is sure, and it has the advantage over archaeological researches that its results are not problematical, but certain. The objects with which it deals are not hidden hundreds of feet below the ground, to be searched for at hazard, but are open on the surface, where their appropriation is only a work of time. Nor are the ultimate results less certain. Those who give their money for the survey may rest assured that the map which will be handed to them at the close of the undertaking will contain the most definite solid aid obtainable for the elucidation of the most prominent of the material features of the Bible. Biblical research has now reached a point at which it cries out for a thoroughly accurate map as indispensable to its further existence. And this thing so much wanted can only be done by the combined efforts of private persons. No Government can undertake it. But the Committee of the Palestine Fund, comprising so many of the leading personages in Church and State, acting under the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen, and employing officers of the Royal Engineers of known skill and character, supplies a guarantee hardly inferior to the guarantee of Government that the work will be thoroughly done. I, therefore, confidently ask the aid which has never yet been refused to my appeals on behalf of this most important branch of investigation, which so peculiarly unites the claims and the interests of Science and Religion.

Your obedient servant,
GEORGE GROVE,
Hon. Sec. Palestine Exploration Fund.

November 7, 1871.

II.—FROM CAPTAIN R. F. BURTON.

The return of Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake to Damascus on November 5, after his dangerous *reconnaissance* of the 'Ulah or uplands lying between the El Hamah (the Hamath of the Old Testament) and Aleppo, enables me to say a word for the cause lately advocated in your columns by the "Hon. Sec. Palestine Exploration Fund." My friend and fellow-traveller, during a journey of thirty-five days, averaging six miles of riding per diem, sketched and fixed the positions of some fifty ruins which, in presence of the Circassian immigration, now a *fait accompli*, are fated soon to disappear from the face of earth; he is also sending home twenty to twenty-five Greek inscriptions, of which six or seven have dates, and before joining Captain Stewart, R.E., he will