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III.—FROM THE REV. F. W. HOLLAND.

Reprinted from the "Guardian."

SIR,—Three years ago you kindly inserted in your columns a letter from me asking for the help of the clergy and your other readers in carrying out the Ordnance Survey of the Peninsula of Sinai.

Owing in great measure to your assistance the necessary funds were collected, and the survey was brought to a successful issue.

May I again be allowed a little space to advocate the claims of a similar work, the survey of the Holy Land? The Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund has already despatched an expedition for this purpose, consisting of Captain R. W. Stewart, R.E., and two non-commissioned officers selected from the staff of the Ordnance Survey. Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake, who is an experienced Eastern traveller, and a good Arabic scholar, is to join them, as soon as he has completed some explorations which he is now making in the country north-east of Damascus.

By this time Captain Stewart must have commenced his survey. Full details of his instructions are given in the last *Quarterly Statement* of the Palestine Fund. I will not, therefore, occupy your space by repeating them. Suffice it to say that the Government has approved of the survey, and has given every assistance in its power; and that no expense or trouble has been spared to render the organisation of the expedition as complete as possible.

Our main objects are to obtain an accurate map of the country west of the Jordan, on which, in addition to the topographical features, shall be laid down the positions of all towns, villages, ruins, roads, &c.; (the American Palestine Exploration Society, working side by side with us, will undertake the survey of the country lying on the east of the Jordan); to explore the mountains and hill-tops which formed generally the homes of the ancient inhabitants; to collect all existing traditions and names; and to search for and examine all remains of archæological interest.

Let it not be thought, however, that we have given up the intention of carrying on Captain Warren's work at Jerusalem. The Holy City must always remain the central point of interest; and no occasion will be lost of proceeding with the excavations there whenever any opportunity may occur which seems to promise decisive results. We shall always have an agent at Jerusalem, who will be in constant communication with Captain Stewart.

But for these explorations additional funds are required. The present income of the Society is not adequate for the work. We must have at least £1,000 a year more to carry on the work on its present scale; and it could be far more effectually and more cheaply done by the employment of a larger staff.

We appeal, then, for help to enable us to carry out this important undertaking to a successful completion. Surely we shall not appeal in

vain; for our object is not to establish this or that theory, but by throwing more light upon the Land of the Bible, to illustrate and explain the pages of the Bible itself.

F. W. HOLLAND, *Hon. Sec.*

November 27, 1871.

LETTERS FROM MR. C. F. TYRWHITT DRAKE.

I

DAMASCUS, June 11, 1871.

I enclose a few of the inscriptions that I copied (in all about 120) in Jebel Druze Hauran. I have had no time to write out more of them. I was only there a few days, so did not collect so many as I hope to do on a second visit. Some of them have, I know, been already copied, but others were so covered with lichen that it was impossible to make anything out till I had cleaned them; others were concealed by plaster in the houses. From Jebel ed Druze, after much opposition from the Druzes at Shukka, who were afraid to accompany us and were ashamed of letting us go alone, we went to Umm Nirán (*Mother of Fires*), a curious cavern, partly natural and partly artificial, in the great volcanic outburst called El Wár. There are no ruins near it, and it is very curious, as water drips from the roof and the whole of the country above is an arid fiery waste of black lava. Thence we went to El Akir and other volcanic tells in the neighbourhood, thence to Bir Kasam, and afterwards to Jebel Dakweh. From these volcanoes, many of which are of considerable size, I was able to lay down the whole series of tells north of the Safa. From Jebel Dakweh we went to Dumeir, and just missed, by a few hours, a foray of one hundred horsemen and two hundred men on camels, who seem to have been dodging us for two days, but who missed us owing to our erratic course. They plundered Harrañ El Awamid, and two neighbouring villages within half an hour's ride of a camp of six hundred Turkish soldiers.

In the Hauran we found the true source of the Leja (Tell Shihañ), which seems to have been quite overlooked by previous travellers. Wetzstein's "great lava stream," from Jebel Kuleib (which we ascended) only exists on his map. Jebel Kuleib, *the turning-point*, not as Mr. Porter translates it, *the little heart*.

II.

DAMASCUS, June 29, 1871.

Since I last wrote I have been to Hums and Hamah, and will now lay before you the results of my journey.

Hums (the ancient Emesa) is a town of great importance; the country