

THE
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND

NOTES AND NEWS.

HERR SCHUMACHER reports a discovery of great interest from the shores of the Lake of Tiberias. It has long been known that ancient remains and ruins are scattered about on the small plain south of the modern city. These have never attracted much attention. Robinson tried to prove that the modern town stands on the site of the Herodian city. Herr Schumacher has now, however, traced the whole wall of Herod's City of Tiberias. It is three miles in length, and is in shape an oblong, the long side presented to the Lake. At its south-west corner there rises a lofty hillock, five hundred feet in height. This hillock is crowned with ruins which were noted by Lieut.-Colonel Kitchener, but he could not examine them, because at the time of his survey they were covered with high thistles. The ancient wall of Tiberias ran up, and was connected with a strong wall round this hill; within the wall are ruins, probably of Herod's palace, certainly of a fort. This then was the acropolis of Tiberias, which in the time of our Lord is now proved to have been no mean Galilean village, but a great and stately city, its wall three miles long, and for a mile in length facing the sea from which He saw it, dominated and guarded by Herod's stronghold, built on a hill five hundred feet in height. In the restoration of the country at the time of the Gospel History, the great city of Tiberias will henceforth occupy a large and important place.

The great event of the Quarter, however, has been Captain Conder's announcement that he has found the long looked-for key to the decipherment of the Hamathite or so-called Hittite Inscriptions. On Saturday, February 26th, 1887, the following letter appeared in the *Times*:—

SIR,—It is with great pleasure that I announce, through the columns of *The Times*, a discovery, the news of which I have this day received from Captain Claude Conder, R.E., the discoverer. It is no less than the reading of the mysterious Hittite inscriptions (so-called) which have baffled every attempt to decipher them since their re-discovery in the year 1872. They were first found by Burckhardt in the year 1808. You will observe that Captain Conder at present gives the world only a portion of the results of his discovery. He has, however, read the whole of the inscriptions and all the gems and seals bearing

Hittite legends. He has placed in the hands of Sir Charles Wilson and Sir Charles Warren documents showing how he has arrived at this discovery, and he has in preparation a memoir which will be published, together with complete readings, by the Palestine Exploration Fund without any delay. In anticipation of his memoir, I have only to say that the questions raised and the points illustrated by this discovery promise to equal in interest those of the cuneiform inscriptions or the hieroglyphics. One point only I will here mention, that it throws great light on the early chapters of the Book of Genesis, and explains certain names in ancient history which have hitherto been impossible to explain.

From what Captain Conder has told me, I think we may hope to produce his memoir before the end of next month. Meantime, there are reasons why the language in which the inscriptions are written and the manner in which the discovery was arrived at should be kept back until the memoir is completed and the whole story can be told at length.

I must add a word of congratulation to Captain Conder, whose patient researches into this subject for the last four years have at length been so brilliantly rewarded.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES GLAISHER,

Chairman of the Executive Committee.

*Palestine Exploration Fund,
1, Adam-street, Adelphi, W.C.*

Chatham, Feb. 24.

TO THE CHAIRMAN PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

SIR,—The decipherment of the curious hieroglyphics found at Hamath, at Aleppo, at Carchemish, and throughout Asia Minor has for many years been considered one of the most interesting questions of Oriental archaeology. Many attempts have been made to read them, but none of these could be considered successful so long as the language of the texts remained unknown. It has been my good fortune within the present month to discover what that language is, and I shall, I think, have no difficulty in convincing Oriental scholars of the reality of this discovery, since not only the words but the grammar as well can be demonstrated to belong to a well-known tongue. In fact the discovery once made seems so simple and obvious that I can only wonder that it has not previously been observed.

The complete reading of the texts is still attended with difficulty—first, because of the mutilated and decayed condition of the inscriptions; and, secondly, because of the imperfections of the published copies; while in some cases symbols only once or twice repeated must remain obscure until further examples can be obtained. I have no doubt, however, that careful study of the original texts will clear up many of these minor difficulties when once the simple and obvious key to the language is recognised. I have no doubt, also, that it is already quite possible to understand the sense and character generally of all the ten principal texts at present known. I may observe that this character is known to have been used in 1400 B.C., and it is probably very much older.

Pending the preparation of a memoir on the subject, in which I propose to give a complete analysis, I attach the readings of the more important and certainly decipherable of the inscriptions. It appears that they are invocations

to the gods of Heaven, Ocean, and Earth—exactly the deities (including Set) whom we know from Egyptian and cuneiform tablets to have been adored by the Hittites and by other tribes of Asia Minor. This we ought to have already suspected, since the inscriptions in some cases occur on the bas-reliefs of deities. It is, no doubt, a disappointment to find that they are not historical, but I shall be able to show that they furnish, nevertheless, very important historical deductions, and throw a new and most astonishing light on the early history of Western Asia and of Egypt.

The discovery will, no doubt, be regarded with some incredulity until it can be demonstrated by a full account of the grammatical reading of the inscriptions, the construction of the sentences being apparently one of the main reasons why these inscriptions have not previously been understood. I have therefore placed in the hands of two well-known Orientalists (Sir C. W. Wilson and Sir C. Warren) a statement of the basis on which the discovery rests, which will serve to show that the method is not arbitrary, and that the deductions are of primary interest to all students of Oriental history.

The following (subject to improvements) is the reading of the more important texts. The first is a prayer to the sun:—

“May the Holy one mighty and powerful hear the uprising prayers. I call upon the Most High. . . . I adore my Lord. . . . Shine Lord. Great Spirit so be it. He gives me the rain of Heaven.”

A second prayer is addressed to the god of water and of the sky and ocean:—

“I pray . . . to my God of the Water, the stately Lord of Water, the God of Heaven. I make an inscription in his honour. I extol him. I cause a great libation to be made as an offering. I make an offering to the Most Holy the King of the Water. I call on the (strong?) Lord the mighty one. The (strong?) King (strong?) light: Chief God of Heaven. . . . I offer to. I cry . . . I extol (him) praying for water.”

In a third text we read as follows:—

“To Thee the mighty one . . . the powerful, the Chieftain, the acknowledged Lord be prayers made. . . . I cry with prayer to the Holy one the great Lord . . . to God and Goddess both I cry to the great spiritual. . . . Amen. I . . . to my Water God. He Set my Water God . . . chief . . . I cry to. To the beneficent god of dawn . . . I cry. To my Holy one. (May he make . . . my supplication?) Offering a libation to the God of Heaven. . . . I cause an excellent libation to be offered to him. . . . Accept my most excellent libation. The crescent moon I greatly . . .”

This text is much injured and contains several very unusual emblems, but of its general sense there can be no question.

Another long text of the same character I have also translated, but the mutilated condition leaves it full of gaps. Altogether I have applied the language to ten of the principal texts. The seals and gems with similar characters are not difficult to read. Finally, the bowl found at Babylon appears to be a magic bowl like several already known inscribed in Hebrew characters. I have no doubt that further study will suggest improved and extended readings, but I do not expect that the substantial facts will be called in question. I ought, in conclusion, to say that I owe my discovery in great measure to the kind

encouragement which in 1883 I received from Professor Sayce in studying the texts for the first time. His own reading of a short bilingual is confirmed in a remarkable manner, though not exactly as he expected.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

C. R. CONDER, Capt. R.E.

Captain Conder further writes as follows :—

“ I should like clearly to explain in the *Quarterly Statement* what it is that I have discovered concerning these hieroglyphs. The attempts of the Rev. Dunbar Heath and the Rev. C. Ball are based on the supposition that the language is Semitic, and the emblems either letters or letters and determinatives. These views are directly contrary to the conclusions of such scholars as Professor Sayce and M. Chabas ; and Mr. Hyde Clarke, in 1880, pointed out that the emblems must be syllabic, and the language probably Turanian. In fact, as the texts are older than 1400 B.C., it is highly improbable that the emblems would be alphabetic.

“ Professor Sayce, while pointing out that the Hittite language could not have been Semitic, has only gone as far as to suggest an approximation to Georgian. All that I claim to have done is to restore the known sounds of the symbols to the language to which they belong, to show that this was the Hittite language, and to put in the hands of specialists the key which will enable them to make final and complete translations of the texts. My knowledge of the language does not enable me to do more than this, and I ask those who are real authorities on this ancient tongue to show some indulgence for my probable mistakes, if they are satisfied (as I think they will be) of the soundness of my principles of decipherment.

“ The Memoir which I am preparing consists of the following sections :—

1. History of the Discovery.
2. Rules for Translation.
3. The Commoner Emblems.
4. The Gods and Religious Ideas.
5. The Grammar (General Remarks).
6. The Cypriote Connection.
7. The Cuneiform Connection.
8. The Egyptian Connection.
9. The Canaanite Connection.
10. Other Connections.
11. Summary.
 - Analysis of 28 Inscriptions.
 - Final Note.
 - Vocabulary.

“ Five plates and some cuts of the symbols will be given ; but Dr. Wright’s ‘ Empire of the Hittites ’ will be required still by the reader for good copies of the inscriptions.”

The Memoir will take the form of a book in form and appearance similar to Captain Conder’s other works. It is now in the press, and will be ready very soon after Easter. Messrs. Bentley & Son are the publishers, and the price will be probably five shillings. As stated by Captain Conder, plates illustrating the

symbols are preparing for it. The work referred to by Captain Conder, Dr. Wright's "Empire of the Hittites," is published by Nisbet & Co. It contains all the inscriptions hitherto found in the Hamathite character carefully figured.

Herr Conrad Schick's researches on the Hill of Ophel promise to be of great value. He is going to follow up the research, of which an account is given on page 112.

Another large packet has been received from Herr Schumacher, with an important memoir and additions to the map. An analysis of this paper will appear in the July number.

The following letter appeared in the *Times* of March 30th. It is not yet certain whether permission can be obtained to photograph, plan, and figure the remarkable monument described. Steps have been taken to get the necessary authority, and we hope that before next July we may be in possession of a more accurate and complete description.

SIR,—I have just received through Dr. Henry Jessup, of Beyrout, the following letter regarding the discovery of a most interesting tomb temple at Sidon. Mr. Eddy's observations were made under great difficulties, and do not claim to be complete, but his hasty description will awaken widespread interest. Dr. Jessup adds that no inscriptions have yet been discovered, but Phœnician letters might easily escape notice during a hurried examination in bad light. Professors Porter and Fisher, of the Protestant Syrian College, Beyrout, have left for Sidon, with photographic apparatus and magnesium wire, in the hope of obtaining pictures of the sculptures. A Turkish guard is standing over the shaft to prevent the removal of the statues.

Dr. Jessup, writing later, adds:—"The west chamber is found to contain a marble sarcophagus, with painted figures (sculptures) in lavish profusion of the most exquisite designs—a very gem of Greek art."

The discovery at Sidon may turn out to be of very great importance artistically and archæologically. The treasure will probably be consigned to the archæological limbo at Constantinople. If they cannot be brought to London for the use of the world, could they not be preserved *in situ*?

I have the honour to be yours obediently,

W. WRIGHT, D.D.

British and Foreign Bible Society,

146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C., March 28th.

LETTER OF THE REV. W. K. EDDY, AMERICAN MISSIONARY, DATED SIDON, SYRIA, MARCH 12TH, 1887.

About a mile north-east of the city, in an open field above the line of the gardens, was found a shaft, open at the top, about 30 feet square and 35 feet or 40 feet deep. When this was excavated, doors were found on the four sides of the perpendicular walls leading to as many chambers. Entering the south one first, we found it about 15 feet square, cut out of the solid rock, roof and sides all of rock, but a built wall between it and court of shaft. Entering, two

sarcophagi met the eye, the one on the right of black marble highly polished, with lid of peaked shape, very little ornament; the one on the left of purest white marble of dazzling brilliancy and enormous size. Remembering that we saw these only by the flickering light of a candle, and in an atmosphere so dense with carbonic acid gas, that a candle held near the bottom went out, and that one soon became faint, it will be easy to see that guesses at measurements may be very faulty.

This sarcophagus was 11 feet long, 5 feet wide, and 12 feet high. The body was of one piece, and also the top of another solid block. The top was a grand arch of shining marble, the front of which was divided by a line into two panels, and so the back. At the four sides were four projections with noble lions' heads. On each panel was a symbolical figure, body of animal, head of eagle, with uplifted wings facing each other. Below, on the front of the tomb, beneath a very elaborate cornice, were two Centaurs facing each other and trampling on a warrior who strove to defend himself by a shield. On the sides, which were alike, were first two human figures with four spirited horses ahead of them; some of the horses have their heads turned back; and beneath the horses' feet a lion on the one side, and a boar or hyena on the other; then two more figures with four more horses.

At the back, in the upper part were also figures, bodies of birds, heads of men (if I remember aright), with beautifully extended wings. Below, two Centaurs carrying a captured stag between them. The cloaks falling from the shoulders of these Centaurs had lions' heads in the corners. One Centaur carries the branch of a tree like a gigantic arrow upon his shoulders. Below these figures all around was a band of figures quite small and exquisitely cut, representing hunting scenes, &c. This was partly covered with stones, so that we could not see it. The workmanship of this was good, but not remarkable. A hole had been broken in the front through which the contents had been rifled, but in general it was in a fine state of preservation. Three skeletons and five dogs' heads. From the long noses of the latter it is easy to infer they were hunting dogs.

The east chamber had also two sarcophagi, one small and plain, but on the left; while the larger one was on the right. This was the finest thing I remember to have seen in stone. A Greek temple, formed of finest marble, translucent as alabaster. The roof is slanting and carved to represent flat tiles, with strips of metal covering the joints, and pretty carved knobs where these strips cross the ridge. At the ends of the ridges are carved ornaments. The sides of the sarcophagus rise up above the eaves.

On the upper projections was a representation of the funeral procession, mourning women, two horses without saddles or trappings, but with men walking by them. A chariot with four horses—man in the chariot—then four more horses drawing the funeral car, more figures. In front three figures above and three on a strip below, all symbolizing grief. This top is all of one piece, and has the right upper corner broken open in order to rifle the tomb. The great beauty was the body of the temple, with a porch of columns all about it; and in the porch between these stood 18 statues, about 3 feet in height, not discoloured nor touched by dirt, as beautiful as if finished yesterday; of the finest art, muscles and form showed through the drapery. Each one of these eighteen would be a gem of itself—not a scratch nor a flaw anywhere. All the carving on this temple,

cornices, friezes, columns, &c., in perfect lines, as perfect and sharp as could be wished. Below is a band covered with representations of hunting scenes, &c. The imperfect view we could get of this was enough to fill us with enthusiasm. I cannot describe all the details—dragons, dogs' heads, mourners, &c.; thirty human figures above this band, &c.

North room, plain sarcophagus. West room has four sarcophagi which I have not yet seen.

I forgot to say that this temple has painted figures—cloaks, flowers, eyes with black pupils; paint mostly now gone. West room is said to be the finest of all.

The following additional particulars have been received by Dr. Wright:—

“The western door led into a small room from which we passed by a south-west door to another chamber, where there were four sarcophagi, three of white marble, and more or less ornamented with vines, &c. The large tomb is about 12 feet long, 5 wide, and 4 high to the eaves, and 2 feet to the side. This far exceeds all the other sarcophagi seen before. Professor Porter, of the American College, in Beyrout, says that he saw nothing to equal it in the collection at Athens, and very little in sculpture finer anywhere. The excellence consists in richness of ornament, force of the passions expressed, the variety of costumes depicted, the freshness of the painting of the costumes, the fineness of the polish, and great variety of subjects represented. The main features are battles. Two classes of warriors are represented: soldiers with casque helmets, tunics, short swords, some wore flowing cloaks painted red, but their tunics were blue, eyes also painted blue, these were mostly mounted on horses. The other class of soldiers had a peculiar head-dress, a peaked cap with tassels, and a cloth wrapped about the sides of the head, and also across the face below the nose; the rest of the costume was scanty.

“The upper part of the sarcophagus was loaded with ornaments. There were four beautiful lions on the corners. The tiles were not flat, but carved and also hollowed somewhat like caves. Had the tiles been flat the round edges would have suggested scales of fish. The line of the base of the slope had on it at intervals human heads with a surrounding of leaves, out of which they seemed to peer. Below, on the edge of the eaves was a row of stags' heads with horns. On the main body of the sarcophagus there was first a row filled with geometrical figures, below a receding cornice of cup and almond, or fruit of some kind; then a strip of exquisite vine tracery, with the background painted. Below, a fierce battle, with the dead and dying, horses rearing and plunging—a very spirited representation. On the other side a hunting scene: a hunter barbarian stands up with outstretched arms, having just discharged an arrow. A man on horseback as if thrusting with spear; then in front another horseman, and a lion has fastened upon the neck of his horse; the nostrils of the horse are dilated, and the skin is wrinkled above the nose. It is impossible to describe the many scenes depicted in this marvellous work of Greek sculpture.

“P.S.—A later note just received from Mr. Eddy states that the labourers are still excavating, and ‘now as they go deeper they uncover others, so that the total number is now sixteen. The last seven I have not been able to see, but all descriptions indicate that they are of Phœnician or Egyptian type.’”

The illustration serving for frontispiece is presented by Mr. William Simpson to the Committee. It is a reduced sketch taken from a large water-colour drawing, and will be exhibited at the Royal Institute of Water-Colour Painters in May next.

The "Memoirs of Twenty-One Years' Work" is now in its third thousand. Subscribers are earnestly requested to use this book as a means of showing what the work has been, and what remains to be done. Copies are given to every subscriber who wishes to have one, and additional copies can be procured at a great reduction in the price, *by subscribers only*, by writing to the central office.

The Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society propose to issue in the course of this year—

1. The Bordeaux Pilgrim (ready).
2. Arculfus de Locis Sanctis (in the press).
3. La Citez de Jherusalem (in the press).
4. The Travels of the Russian Abbot Daniel (under correction).

The works already issued are—

1. Antoninus Martyr.
2. Sancta Paula.
3. Procopius.
4. El Mukaddasi.

The subscription is one guinea. New members can have copies of works published in previous years at a reduced rate. Members are requested to forward their subscriptions to the Hon. Secretary without being reminded.

Will all the subscribers to the Palestine Fund remember—(1) that it helps the Committee very much if subscriptions are paid early in the year? (2) Next, that it saves a great deal of trouble if they are paid to Coutts & Co. direct by a Banker's order? and (3) That whenever they are due it saves a great deal of labour if they are paid without waiting for a reminder? The clerical staff of the Society is small, and it is greatly desired not to increase the management expenses, and not to overburden the work of the office.

The following books are now published uniform in size and appearance:—Conder's "Tent Work"; Conder's "Heth and Moab"; Schumacher's "Across the Jordan"; "The Memoirs of Twenty-One Years' Work." Conder's "Syrian Stone Lore" will also be added to the list. Subscribers can have the whole set, together with Hull's "Mount Seir," for 25s. carriage free.

The long-promised List of Old Testament Names is in the printer's hands. Mr. Armstrong has also prepared a new list of photographs arranged alphabetically according to those Bible names which are illustrated by photographs. This list is also in the printer's hands, and will be ready before the end of May. Those who wish for a copy of either may send in their names.

Mr. G. E. Stewardson, Assistant-Secretary of the British Association, has completed the great Index for the "Survey of Western Palestine." It is hoped

to get this ready very shortly. A circular on the subject will be sent to every one who possesses the great work of the Society.

The income of the Society, from December 12th, 1886, to March 30th, 1887, inclusive, was—from subscriptions and donations, £984 13s. 11d.; from all sources, £1,144 4s. 2d. The expenditure during the same period was £954 6s. 7d., viz.: on Exploration, £261 0s. 1d.; on Publications, £379 3s. 4d.; on Office, £114 3s. 2d.; and on Reduction of Debt, £200. The Balance Sheet for the year 1886 will be presented in the July *Quarterly Statement*. On March 30th the balance in the Banks was £385 15s.

Subscribers who do not receive the *Quarterly Statement* regularly, are asked to send a note to the Secretary. Great care is taken to forward each number to all who are entitled to receive it, but changes of address and other causes give rise occasionally to omissions.

While desiring to give every publicity to proposed identifications and other theories advanced by officers of the Fund and contributors to the pages of the *Quarterly Statement*, the Committee wish it to be distinctly understood that by publishing them in the *Quarterly Statement* they neither sanction nor adopt them.

The only authorised lecturers for the Society are—

- (1) The Rev. Henry Geary, Vicar of St. Thomas's, Portman Square. His lectures are on the following subjects :—
 The Survey of Western Palestine, as illustrating Bible History.
 Palestine East of the Jordan.
 The Jerusalem Excavations.
 A Restoration of Ancient Jerusalem. Illustrated by original photographs shown as "dissolving views."
 - (2) The Rev. James King, Vicar of St. Mary's, Berwick. His subjects are as follows :—
 The Survey of Western Palestine.
 Jerusalem.
 The Hittites.
 The Moabite Stone and other monuments.
 - (3) The Rev. James Neil, formerly Incumbent of Christ Church, Jerusalem.
 - (4) The Rev. George St. Clair, Bristol Road, Birmingham, has resumed his Lectures for the Society. He is at present in the Holy Land, but is expected to return about the middle of April, when he will be ready to make engagements either for the summer or the autumn.
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ERRATUM.

In January *Quarterly Statement*, page 47, the plan of the Mosque el Aksa should have been described as "according to Mukaddasi," while that on page 49 should have been described as the "Mosque el Aksa as it is."