

THE  
LITERARY REMAINS

OF THE LATE

CHARLES F. TYRWHITT DRAKE, F.R.G.S.

EDITED WITH A MEMOIR

BY

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SECRETARY OF THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND

With a Portrait



LONDON

RICHARD BENTLEY & SON, NEW BURLINGTON STREET

Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen

1877

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intention, as soon as the survey of Palestine was finished, to return and examine minutely the ruins through which he had passed as a simple pioneer of exploration.

The whole results of this year were published in two volumes, called 'Unexplored Syria' (Tinsley Brothers), the combined work of Captain Burton, Mrs. Burton, and Drake. Here the Hamath inscriptions were reproduced in full, and drawings from Drake's original sketches made in the Alah appeared in the work.

There appears no better place than the present for a communication, forwarded me by Captain Burton, which speaks for itself:—

'On a red-hot morning in July 1870 I rode from Damascus to Blúdan, and said to my wife "I have fallen in with two such nice fellows, and they are coming here—Drake and Palmer, who have been doing Sinai and the Tih."'

'They made their appearance in our garden on the 19th, sunburnt, "hard as nails," briefly in the finest travelling condition. They were a first-rate working pair, Drake taking the surveying and mapping, and to Palmer fell the linguistic labours of the expedition, whilst a thorough good fellowship existed between them. As we were short of bedrooms they pitched their tents below Mr. Consul-General Wood's house, our summer quarters, and passed a few quiet days

with us. Both were somewhat fatigued with their unusually hard work, but still they were anxious to visit, in our company, the summits of the Libanus. We made hurried preparations for twenty-three days of gipsying; and, with our two friends, my wife and I started after as short a delay as possible, at the head of a small caravan of horses, servants, tents, and light baggage.'

'We spent a week amongst the ruins of Ba'albak, trying to save some of the grandest features from destruction. We then rode up the fertile and malarious Cœlesyrian plain as far as El Ká'a, a village about thirty miles distant from Homs, which could be distinctly seen in the clear pellucid air, and thus we galloped across the valley towards Ayn Urghush, camping in a Maronite stronghold at Ayn Atá. All greatly enjoyed the scramble up the Cedar Col, where we found banks and wreaths of snow in July, and the slide down to the old Trees. There we encamped for some days, and hence we visited the summits of the Libanus with the view of determining the disputed altitudes. Professor Palmer has since published a short sketch of our trip in the "Journal of the Palestine Exploration Fund." A cheerful and pleasant time it was to all, fitly to be described by the adjective "jolly," at which Philister and Philistine turn up the nose "polite."

‘From the Cedars we were obliged to part, and I cannot say which of the four felt parting the most. There is eternal fitness in the saying of Háfiz the Shirazi :—

That eve so gay, so bright, so glad ; this morn so dim and sad and grey—  
Ah ! that Life’s Registrar should write that day a day, thy day a day !

‘Drake then returned to England for a while, and we kept up an unintermitted correspondence, which ended in his returning to us in Syria during the following year (1871). He arrived rather suddenly on the cold damp evening of March 25, suffering somewhat from his old enemy, asthma ; and it was unanimously determined by three friends in council that, instead of turning into the comfortless solitude of a bachelor establishment, he should take up his quarters permanently with us. His kindly and domestic disposition made this prospect agreeable to him, and we were glad to find it so, as he was evidently far from strong, and when he became one of us we should be better able to look after him. His attacks, frequent at first, soon lost their violence, and his health under the climate and the life that suited him became manifestly a gainer.

‘He was my inseparable companion during the rest of our stay in Palestine, and never did I travel with any man whose disposition was so well adapted to make a first-rate explorer. We all three visited almost

every known part of Syria, either for the first time or over again, taking observations, making sketches and skeleton maps, and writing diaries and accounts of our journeys. We divided the work, each taking what was best suited. My wife had charge of the camp generally, and especially the horses and the sick or wounded, and visited the harems to note things hidden from mankind. Drake copied inscriptions, mapped the country, measured the remains of antiquity, collected geological specimens, fauna and flora, and made admirable sketches in pencil and water-colours—we keep many of these as some of our most precious relics. The time was passed most enjoyably. Our companion was one of the few who can make a pleasant third in a ménage—a plain, honest, straightforward disposition that was a true friend to both in an honest way, and that is high praise.

‘A day or two after he arrived from England I rode back from Hums and Hamáh with a native copy of the “Hamath stones.” My journey had been for upwards of a fortnight over the Northern desert and the Ansári Mountains, where the snow and frost had bitten my fingers and toes. After a short rest we resolved on spending the holy week at Jerusalem. My wife went under his charge viâ Beyrout by sea to Jaffa and Jerusalem, where, after riding down across country, I met them with our own horses. “Inner Life of Syria” has

given a good Catholic's account of the visit to Jerusalem and the holy places; more is to come. Drake's familiarity with the Holy City made him an invaluable companion; but he suffered from the abominable climate, and I well remember his telling me that it had never agreed with him. Had I been present at the very beginning of his last illness, I should have put him into a litter, and have carried him *volens volens* to the coast. When he had recovered we pursued our way, including Ayn Kárin, and Hebron, Bethlehem, Mar Sábá, the Dead Sea, the so-called tomb of Moses, the Jordan ford, Jericho, and Ayn-el-Sultán, where he, poor fellow, afterwards encamped in 1874, and caught the fever that terminated his short but useful and promising career. We then turned northwards or homewards viâ Bethel and Náblus, the consular boundary between Damascus and Jerusalem, halting to visit Mount Ebal and Gerizim, and Shechem and the Samaritans. From Scythopolis and Endor we finally made Nazareth, where we were both stoned by the so-called and miscalled Greeks; on this occasion Drake displayed the cool bravery and determination of his character, and he was a great help to me in saving my wife and servants from the fury of an excited mob, urged on by their priests and bishop.

‘After staying at Nazareth to see the rioters punished, we thence proceeded to Cana (?) in Galilee, and

at the Lake of Tiberias we camped, and visited by boat the seven famous sites as far as is possible to ascertain them ; we also circumnavigated the little sea, and took observations of temperature which yield curious results. Next came Safed, famed for its mediæval Jewish school of ferocious theology, the plain of Húleh and waters of Merom, with the Birket-el-Rám (Lake Phiala), where we took soundings on our camp-table, buoyed up with water, or rather air-skins. Finally, after visiting our Druse neighbours, we galloped across our own desert plain home.

‘ Our next joint excursion was to the Haurán, whither three hundred Bedawin were sent to waylay us. We explored the Tulúl-el-Safá, a somewhat risky feat, which the Europeans of Damascus had often wished to do, but were deterred by the overwhelming chances of being stripped by the robber tribes ; the latter were part of the state machinery under those who have turned a garden of roses into a desert and den of thieves.

‘ Drake then made a little trip on his own account, or rather on that of the Palestine Exploration Fund, to get better squeezes of, and collect more information concerning, the now world-famous “ Hamath stones.” The Rev. William Wright first suggested, *magno cum risu*, that they were Hittite—a theory now confirmed

by Birch, Sayce, and the late George Smith. I had been obliged to satisfy myself with a native copy, having unfortunately been without squeeze-paper.

‘We then all went once more into summer quarters at Blúdán, where we again spent a pleasant and quiet time, until August 16; on which day I was politely invited to return home with the utmost possible despatch. Drake, ever staunch and true, saw me to my saddle, and undertook to help my wife to settle the mass of business and hard work which the sudden giving up of an establishment could not but entail. As the reason given by Ráshid Pasha was my being so unpopular with the Moslems that they wanted my life, I made my wife remain at Damascus to prove its untruth; this measure certainly could not have been taken had not both of us been sure of our native friends. She slept with open door and windows in the Saláhiyyeh; this is the quarter which once had so lawless a reputation that at night none would venture into it, and even by day the timid avoided it.

‘Drake’s kind heart was greatly grieved by the loss of our happy home, and he advised me to await at Damascus the result of my explanatory report to headquarters. But I knew better; the greater the right in such cases the greater the wrong. He accompanied me to the diligence, and then returned to Blúdán; there he served all my interests like a true man, and assisted my



wife in all her troubles, until he placed her on board the steamer for England at Beyrút.

‘ Our house furniture, horses, and pets were all left with Drake in the forlorn hope that personal explanations might secure a modicum of justice ; but that day was never to dawn. Unfortunate Damascus presently became the scene of murders and disorders of all kinds, and she has gradually declined till all the little English colony has broken up. My excellent successor, Mr. Kirby Green, had anything but a happy sojourn there, and he was not sorry to exchange it even for Scutari in Albania, another fine specimen of a consular den.

‘ Time passed, and as I was transferred to Trieste, Drake halted a month with us en route to England, and we visited Pola, Aquileja, the caves of Adelsberg, the Karst (Carso), and San Cauzian, the famous *haras* or breeding-stables at Lippiza ; and the environs of Trieste. The climate, which residents find so cruel, agreed with him perfectly, and the holiday had a most favourable effect upon his spirits. I should note that we always kept up a lively correspondence ; we have bundles of his letters, which, however, are of too private and personal a nature for publication.

‘ We went to Venice and saw him off to England ; he promised us to return in seven weeks, but fate willed that we should not meet again. The cholera broke out

at Trieste (1873); he dreaded a long quarantine in July, and he was tempted by his friend Sir John Drummond Hay of Tangier with the prospect of another journey into inner Morocco, an almost virgin country in which his first trip had caused him to take a great and permanent interest. The project was frustrated by the emperor's death, and he went back to his work in Syria.

‘During the spring of 1874 he caught as before mentioned the Jericho fever whilst he was camped in the rainy swamps that bound the lower Jordan. When a little better he was removed to Jerusalem where he relapsed, and where his horror of the climate was justified, as if it had been a presentiment, by the fatal result of his illness.

‘The letter announcing his death reached me only two days after hearing he was not very well; to this we had attached but little importance, knowing that he had been weakened by overwork, and suspecting that he wanted rest. The sad news, I need hardly say, was a severe blow.

‘Drake's appearance and character are thus noticed in “Inner Life in Syria,” and I will copy it as our united testimony to the value of a friend whose loss can never be replaced.<sup>1</sup> Pray use these lines in any way you please.’

<sup>1</sup> Included in the letter was an extract from Mrs. Burton's work; see p. 46.