Egypt Exploration Fund.

THIS Society undertakes to conduct excavations in Egypt, especially on sites of Biblical and classical interest, without infringing the Egyptian law whereby objects found are claimed for the Boolák Museum.

H.H. the Khedive, with that enlightened regard for the history and antiquities of Egypt, and for the advancement of learning, by which he is so distinguished, has, at the instance of Professor Maspero (Director-General of the Museums and Excavations of Egypt), graciously accorded every facility to the agents and officers of this Society. Professor Maspero also, while cordially supporting the objects of the Fund, agrees that the publication of the results of its own work (within reasonable limit of time) shall belong exclusively to the Society.

The superintendence of the excavations is confided to M. Naville, the eminent Swiss Egyptologist, under whose direction the Society's first campaign has recently resulted in a discovery of the first importance. Assisted by an experienced engineer and a numerous gang of labourers, M. Naville began work in the Wadi Tumilat (the scene of the late war) on the 19th of January, 1883, having selected for examination the celebrated mounds of Tel-el-Maskhutah, long supposed to represent the site of Raamses or Rameses, one of the two cities specified in the 1st chapter of Exodus as built by the forced labour of the Hebrews.

The first week's excavations yielded hieroglyphic inscriptions which enable M. Naville to identify the site, not with "Raamses," but with "Pithom," the other store-city, stated to have been built "for Pharaoh" under the Oppression. These inscriptions show that Pithom (or Pa-Tum) was the religious or temple-name, and Succoth (or Thukut) the civil name, of the city; so identifying the first camping-place of the Israelites as they went up out of the land of Egypt. Further excavations produced, week by week, results of the highest interest, showing (1) that the founder of Pithom was Ramses II.; consequently that this Pharaoh was, as already conjectured, the great oppressor of the Hebrews; (2) that the Greek and Roman names of Pithom were Hero, Ero, or Heroöpolis, derived from the Egyptian appellation Ar, or "store-house;" so marking the place emphatically as a "store-city," and that it was consequently the capital of the Heroöpolite Nome or province, which bore the Egyptian

name of An; (3) that the temple founded by Ramses II. was rebuilt by the Bubastite kings of Shishak's line; was still extant under the Ptolemies; and later, in the Roman age, was converted into a fortified camp. Several statues and fragments of statues were found in the ruins; also a Roman mile-stone giving the distance from Pithom to Clysma; and a large and highly-important historical tablet of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the STELE OF PITHOM, a document of the same class as the Rosetta Stone, but with only a hieroglyphic text, recording the foundation of the city of Arsinoë, and giving details of work performed on the canal leading from the Nile to the Red Sea. Among other geographical indications, this tablet gives us for the first time the original Egyptian name of a locality called Pi-keheret, probably Pihahiroth, near which the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. Hence the site of this place is to be looked for eastward or south-eastward of Pithom, and, even if this be not certain, Dr. Brugsch's theory of the route of the Exodus must now be finally abandoned. Perhaps the most interesting remains laid bare by the excavations at Pithom are the vast store-chambers—unlike any other constructions yet discovered in Egypt—which gave to this place the special designation of a store-city. These chambers are very strongly built, and divided by brick partitions from 8 to 10 feet thick. The bricks are very large, sun-dried, and made some with, and some without, straw. Apart from the comparatively small space occupied by the foundations of the temple, these store-chambers fill the whole area enclosed by the boundary-walls of the city. These walls are about 650 feet square, above 22 feet thick, and of unusually solid construction. In uncovering the chambers, which were undoubtedly built by the Hebrews with bricks of their own making, as related in the Mosaic narrative, above 580,000 cubic feet of sand and soil have been cleared away by M. Naville's labourers. Thus, in a short campaign of only six or seven weeks, and at a comparatively small cost, the Fund has for the first time secured the exhaustive excavation of an Egyptian mound by a scholar thoroughly qualified for the task. In discovering the city of Pithom, one of the most interesting sites of Bible history has been brought to light. In discovering that Pithom and Succoth are one and the same, a fixed point is determined in the route of the Exodus, the direction of which begins to be a question of fact, and not merely of conjecture. In discovering that Pithom was built by Ramses II., the great Pharaoh of the Oppression is finally identified, and the earliest synchronism between Biblical and Egyptian history is firmly established. The monuments unearthed are not numerous, but they are of the highest geographical, chronological, and historical importance. Two of these monuments—namely, an inscribed statue bearing the name of the store-city, and the granite-hawk which identified the name of the founder—have been graciously presented to the Society by H.H. the Khedive; and have, by the unanimous vote of the Subscribers, been presented by this Society to the British Museum.

The Egypt Exploration Fund proposes next to undertake the excavation of Sán, the Zoan of the Bible, the Tanis of the Greeks. The mounds of this famous city, as yet scarcely touched by the spade of the explorer, are among the most extensive in Egypt, and promise a rich harvest in objects of Biblical and other historical interest. Here, in the nearest great city to the land of Goshen, we may expect to find documents bearing on the history of the Hebrews during the 430 years of the sojourn, respecting which the Bible is almost silent. It is even possible that monuments and interments of the Hebrews during the time of their prosperity may be brought to light. Here also lies buried the lost history of the mysterious Hyksos, or Shepherd-kings, who are supposed to have ruled Egypt for upwards of 500 years. It was at Sán that Mariette found those remarkable monuments now in the Boolák Museum, which have revealed to us the artistic style of those foreign rulers, portrayed their peculiar type of race, and given us a glimpse of their historic reality. The one Shepherd king whose name occurs upon those monuments as that of the great builder of Zoan, is the traditional Pharaoh of Joseph. The recovery of more documents relating to his reign becomes, therefore, a matter of peculiar importance. Zoan owed much of its splendour to Ramses II., who restored and built here upon a scale of extraordinary magnificence. It was also a favourite residence of his successor Menephtah, the Pharoah of the Exodus. Here, therefore, if anywhere, may be expected records of the later, as well as of the earlier period of the Hebrew sojourn. Here also we may hope to discover whether the priest-kings, in whose family vault was found the great *trouvaille* of royal mummies at Deyr-el-Bahri, were or were not a Tanite dynasty; and this question is Biblically as well as historically interesting; for it concerns the alliance and marriage of Solomon, and the rise of his opponent Shishak, the founder of a new family which continued the embellishment of the shrines of Zoan.

The city of Zoan was not only the chief city of the Delta, during the most interesting two or three thousand years of Egyptian history, but it was also the key of the north-eastern frontier, the great centre of border-history, and the seat of government nearest the land of Goshen. No site in Egypt, or in the whole East, is known to be so rich in buried monuments, numbers of which just show themselves on the surface of the mounds. None is richer in historical promise.

For this great enterprise it will be necessary to raise a sum of from £4000 to £5000; but the expenses may possibly exceed this sum, which must also cover the costs of publication.

It is felt that a work which intimately concerns the historical character of the Mosaic narrative is urgently demanded by the state of critical opinion, and that a work which cannot fail to throw a clear light on the obscurest and most

interesting periods of Egyptian history is a part of that great task of research which is the special duty of the present age. The Society, therefore, looks for the liberal co-operation of archæologists, Egyptologists, and Hebraists, as well as of all students of the Bible and of primitive history.

~~Should inadequate funds, or the unhealthy condition of the Menzaleh district in which Sán is situate, or any other serious difficulty prevent the immediate commencement of these excavations, some more healthy, accessible, and less costly site, on the Sweet Water Canal, or in its neighbourhood, which may correspond to Pihahiroth, Migdol, Baal-zephon, or Raamses (the other "treasure-city" of Exodus) will be selected for the coming campaign; the discovery of most of these places being practically certain. In such case, however, the mounds of Sán will be surveyed and reported upon, and all preliminary arrangements for beginning active operations early in the following season will be made.~~

Subscriptions and donations will be received by the Hon. Treasurer, or by the Hon. Secretaries. Cheques may be crossed London and Westminster Bank, Bloomsbury Branch. All Subscribers and Donors of £1 will be entitled to a copy of M. Naville's "Memoir on the Discovery of Pithom," which the Society will publish in the course of the autumn.

A CHALLENGE.

☞ W. Fowler, Esq., M.P., offers to give £50 towards raising £1000 for excavating the mounds of Zoan, *provided that nineteen other donors will give the same sum.* ~~£250~~ has £450. been promised or paid towards this special Fund.

The Report of the General Meeting, with Mr. Naville's account of his discoveries, will be shortly sent to all Subscribers, with a balance sheet.

Sept., 1883. *

* N. B.

Since the above was issued, a year has elapsed and the Excavation of Sán (Zoan-Tanis) by the Society's agent, Mr W. M. Flinders Petrie, has made considerable progress. Reports of the work have appeared in The Times under dates March 7th 1884, April 22d, May 2d, May 30th & July 25th; also in The Academy under dates March 15th 1884, April 5th, May 3d, May 31st June 14th, June 21st July 12th & July 26th. An Exhibition of valuable objects discovered in the ruins has been on view in London during Sept. & part of the present month, at the rooms of the Archæological Institute; for notices of which see The Academy Sept. 20th, The Athenæum Sep. 20th, & The Standard Oct. 19th 1884.

Mr Petrie will return to Egypt about the last week in November to continue the work thus successfully begun, in aid of which further donations & subscriptions are earnestly solicited.

October 20th 1884.

Egypt Exploration