

THE MOABITE STONE.

(From "Our Work in Palestine.")

THE discovery of this memorable stone and the circumstances which led to its destruction are so well known that we may be content to pass over the history in a few words only. It was found at Dhibân (Aug. 19, 1868) by the Rev. F. A. Klein, a French clergyman employed by the English mission. By a most extraordinary and most unfortunate error of judgment, M. Klein communicated his discovery neither to his learned and zealous countryman, M. Clermont Ganneau, nor to his English employers of the mission, nor to Captain Warren, the English explorer; but he went secretly to Dr. Petermann, the Prussian Consul. Here was the grand mistake of the whole business. Either Captain Warren or M. Clermont Ganneau could have got up the stone, whole and uninjured, for a few Napoleons, because the Arabs *were wholly unacquainted with its value*. One or two attempts were secretly made by Dr. Petermann to get the stone by means of native agents. They failed, and doubly failed, because they taught the Arabs the value of the stone.* Then an appeal was made to the Turkish Government—the most fatal mistake of all; for the stone was in the possession of the Beni Humaydah (not the Beni Hamidah, as stated by error in the article on the Moabite Stone in the "Recovery of Jerusalem"), the wildest of the wild tribes to the east of Jordan. They were smarting, too, at the time from the effects of the "Belka Expedition," led by Rashid Pasha in person; and says Captain Burton, "knowing what a *dragonnade* meant, they were in paroxysms of terror at the idea of another raid."

The secret oozed out, and was perfectly well known to Captain Warren, the Rev. Dr. Barclay, and M. Clermont

* The list of blunders perpetrated during the first attempts to get up the stone may be read in Burton and Drake's "Unexplored Syria," vol. i., p. 335, *et seq.*