

aiding those, who are to join the future population of the country, to obtain true facts about its capabilities ; and has thus served to promote, by peaceful and conscientious labours, the future prosperity, and lifting up from its misery, of that which we call the Holy Land."

A reference to Canon Tristram's valuable contribution on the Natural History of Palestine, will be found on another page. It is very important to realise that the beasts and flowers of the Bible are just as real as any of the characters portrayed in its pages.

A most interesting lecture is that by Walter Besant, on the work of the society, with which he has been connected for upwards of 25 years. Those who care to have a precise knowledge of the general aims and work of the society in a small space, cannot do better than study Mr. Besant's lecture. We cannot forbear quoting at length from one paragraph.

"I have often been asked, whether these researches actually prove the historical part of the old Testament. It is a difficult question to answer. Suppose, however, we were to discover a papyrus two thousand or three thousand years old, containing a history, fragmentary in part, and in part full and connected, covering many hundreds of years. Suppose we were without any prejudice against the authenticity of this history, or any presumption in its favour, to discover on examination that we could assign any single event, recorded in the narrative, exactly to the ground on which it was said to have taken place. Suppose further, we could prove that the event must, from the conformation of the ground, have to take place on that spot and on no other. Suppose we could prove that the writer of the history had an exact knowledge of the place he was describing ; and if there were twenty writers, every one of them had also an exact knowledge of the country, would not these facts go very far indeed to make us believe in the truth of this history ? Well, such is exactly what we have proved for the historical books of the Bible. Such and no more."

Incidentally, however, they have proved more, as the Rev. William Wright points out in a sketch of the Hittites, and that is the folly of those who assert that the Old Testament writers did not know of what they wrote.

"The Israelites under Jehoram, son of Ahab, were being hard pressed by Benhadad of Damascus, but the Syrians heard a noise and said, "The King of Israel hath hired against us the Kings of the Hittites," and they "fled for their lives" (2 Kings, vii : 6, 7.) "This passage has been ridiculed by an eminent English authority "as not exhibiting the writer's acquaintance with the times in a very favourable light." We have now very full details of the times deciphered from the Assyrian inscriptions, and we find that the "Kings of the Hittites" were the terror of the times. It was the critic therefore and not the sacred writer whose acquaintance with the times does not appear in very favourable light."