

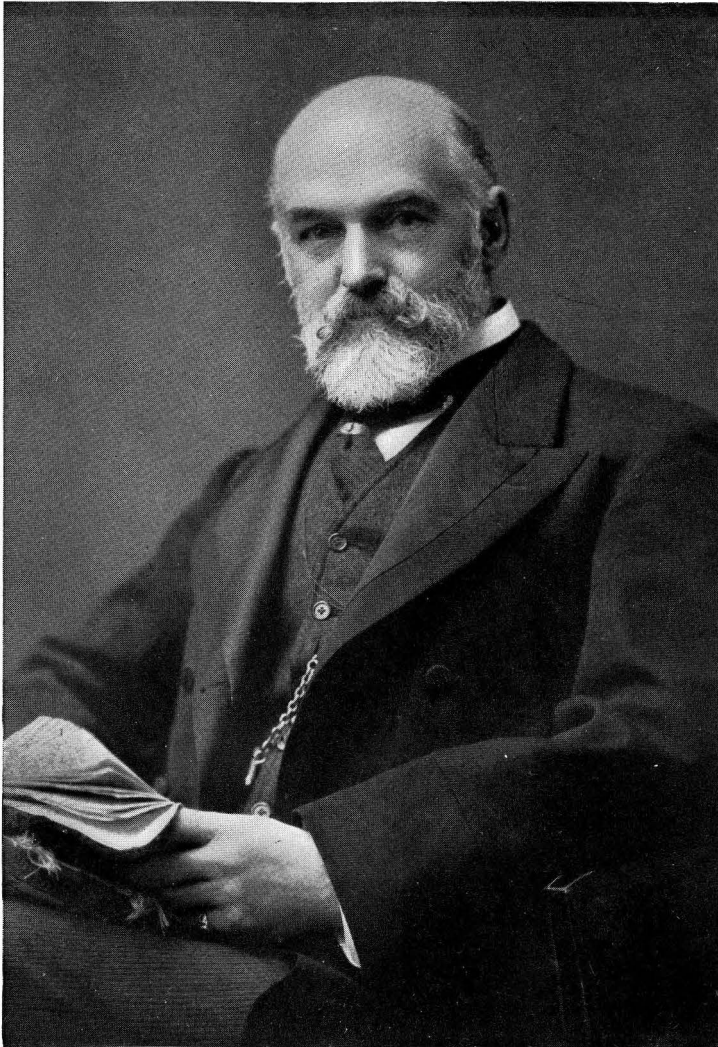
MEMOIR OF THE LATE MR. J. D. CRACE.

MR. JOHN DIBBLEE CRACE, to whose death reference has already been made (p. 2), had been closely connected with the Palestine Exploration Fund for forty-seven years, during the last eighteen of which he acted as Honorary Secretary in succession to Sir Walter Besant. Not only was he by far the most regular attendant at all the meetings, but he threw himself into the work and interests of the Fund, and bore the heaviest share of the labours. Although suffering from failure of health and diminishing eyesight during the last few years, he remained interested and active to the end, his undaunted courage and cheerfulness being a wonder and inspiration to all who had the privilege of knowing him.

As regards details, Mr. Crace (says the notice in *The Times* of November 22nd) "was the fifth in direct descent, from father to son, of those in his family who practised the art of decoration. He was Master of the Painter Stainers' Company in 1884; his father, Mr. John Gregory Crace (who decorated the Houses of Parliament and the International Exhibition of 1862 in London), having been Master in 1879, and his grandfather, Mr. Frederick Crace, in 1851. In 1908 he was the recipient at the hands of Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema of the Gold Medal of the Institute of British Decorators, of which he had been the founder and first President.

"At the early age of sixteen he joined his father in business, but his education was continued by various visits to France, Germany, and Italy. He was one of the earliest of the old Volunteer Force, and was promoted to Major before pneumonic trouble compelled his retirement in 1868. He spent the following winter and spring in Egypt, Turkey, Greece, and Palestine, filling sketch-books and note-books. He was a most industrious sketcher all through life, and a careful student of all forms of industrial art. Now and again he exhibited small pictures at the Royal Academy. . . .

"On his retirement from active practice Mr. Crace was able to give increased attention to the many other interests for which even in his busier days he had always found time. He was keenly interested in education on the technical side of his own art, and



JOHN DIBBLEE CRACE, F.S.A.
HONORARY SECRETARY OF THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

took an active part in the foundation of travelling studentships to enable young men of a new generation to get from a study in Italy the same inspiration which he had himself enjoyed. . . .

“Mr. Crace published a book on the ‘Art of Colour Decoration,’ but he exhibited very little, and had a reserve and shyness about his own work which left much of his talent unknown except to the few who were familiar with the delicate colouring and exquisite pencil-work of the many sketches and drawings made during a long life. Alike in his profession and outside it, his life was rich in work done not for himself.”

At an Extraordinary Meeting of the Executive Committee, when a vote of condolence to the family was passed, a letter was read from Sir Charles Warren, from which the following extract may be made:—

“It was with deep regret that I saw in *The Times* to-day that my dear old friend, Mr. J. D. Crace, had passed away, and I wish to join with your Committee in expressing our sense of the loss we have sustained in his mature judgment, discernment, and counsel. It is now fifty years since Mr. J. D. Crace and I first met in the Haram and streets of Jerusalem, and I have learned to look upon him as a most loyal friend, and to rely upon his good judgment and advice. . . .”

Prof. Dickie writes:—

“During the last years of his life he bore the greater part of the burden of the Fund’s affairs, thinking and acting with that high quality of wisdom and decision which was his. . . . By wise policy, tactfully exercised, he steered the P.E.F., for more than half its lifetime of over fifty years, through successive stages of its long record of valuable research. Those who have been associated with him in this work can realize the loss it has sustained, and can mourn, even more intimately, the passing of one whose high principles so directly governed his conduct in all things. Human sympathy was, in him, a strongly marked trait, but for ‘the man who did not know his job’ he had little patience.

“Overtaken by failing eyesight, but still possessed of his remarkably clear intellect, the pleasure of contact with men and matters was, as he said, ‘sadly marred by my inability to see the man to whom I am speaking.’ To the second party the charming personality of Mr. Crace was, if possible, enhanced by age and infirmity.

“During the last decade death has claimed a heavy toll of those pioneers whose work we so much appreciate; and it is with grief that we contemplate the end of their valued counsel at this dawn of a new era.”

It was especially during the last few years that, owing to the war-work upon which many of the Fund's officers were employed, a greater burden fell upon Mr. Crace. Even when he was quite infirm he made almost daily visits to the offices and devoted much time to the ordinary routine work. He was gratified to find that the Fund was able to place at the service of the country the valuable maps and the unpublished details which it had at hand; but at a time when he was feeling the weight of age and impaired eye-sight, his work was naturally not lightened by the disabilities due to the war.

To the pages of the *Quarterly Statement* Mr. Crace contributed a number of important memoirs and obituary notices (Major-General Sir Charles Wilson, Mr. John Dickson, Prof. T. F. Wright, Mr. Armstrong, Col. Sir Charles Watson, and Lord Kitchener). He also sent a few special articles and notes on architectural and archaeological subjects. In addition to this he wrote numerous reviews and notices of books and foreign publications.

This does not by any means cover his literary work, and to *The Painted Tombs at Marissa* and other publications of the Fund he devoted a great deal of time and trouble, and was most invaluable in the editorial work.

To the Editor of the *Quarterly Statement* himself Mr. Crace was for eighteen years a constant friend and adviser, helping him in difficult matters of policy and attitude, facilitating his work in innumerable ways, and placing at his service his wide technical experience, and his archaeological and topographical knowledge of Palestine, and his thorough acquaintance with the history of the Fund's activities. Mr. Crace devoted his whole energy to the success of the Fund in every respect, and his invariable old-time charm and courtesy, his conscientiousness, and his lofty standard of duty and accuracy were a constant stimulus to all who had the privilege of personal intercourse with him. Of the many who will mourn the death of the Honorary Secretary of the Palestine Exploration Fund, the Editor of the *Quarterly Statement* is especially conscious of the loss of a noble and trusty guide.

S. A. C.