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The Bible in the Nineteenth Century

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NEW WITNESSES FOR GOD

II.

THE BOOK OF MORMON

CHAPTER I.

THE BIBLE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

“The Bible in the Nineteenth Century” will yet form an interesting subject for a volume. The writer of it will recount the attacks made upon the sacred volume by unbelievers, and the defense of it by faithful Christian and Jewish scholars. He will also be under the necessity of writing the history of the betrayals of the Holy Scriptures by pretended friends; and he will say such betrayals were more mischievous than the attacks of avowed enemies. He will balance the harm done by the attacks and the betrayals, against the good accomplished by the defenses, and give the net result of gain or loss. Which will preponderate? The nineteenth century was prolific in both assaults and defenses; and much valuable material was collected from unexpected quarters for the latter, but for all that it is doubtful if, in what is recognized as the Christian world, the faith of the Christians in the Bible as the veritable word of God was as sound and absolute at the close of the nineteenth century as it was at the commencement of it. This is not saying that what is regarded as old fashioned faith in the

Bible has been entirely banished, or totally eclipsed. There are those, and many of them, thank God, who still revere the Bible as the word of God, and therefore hold it true, and take it as a lamp to their feet, as a guide to their path. But there has arisen within Christendom itself—and chiefly within the nineteenth century—a class of Bible scholars who have done much mischief to faith in the Bible; who make it part of their boast that in their study of the Bible they have dropped the theological attitude towards it, viz., the preconception that the Bible is the word of God, on which conception men were wont to reason: God is a God of absolute truth; the Bible is the word of God; therefore, the Bible is absolutely true. This position they abandon and take up what they are pleased to call the “literary attitude or method.” That is, they approach the Bible without any preconception whatsoever. They take up the collection of books forming the Bible as they would take up any other body of literature; as they would English, French, or German literature. “This method,” says one high in authority in the new school of critics, “assumes nothing. It leaves the conclusion of the questions whether the Bible came from God, in what sense it came from God, how far and to what extent it came from God, all to be determined by examination of the book itself. This I call the literary method.”^a “This method,” says another, “leads to the in-

^a“The Bible as Literature.” A course of lectures by Dr. Lyman Abbot, in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, 1896-7. What is here called the “Literary Method,” is identical with what is called “Higher Criticism,” the terms are used interchangeably. Higher Criticism may be said to stand in contradistinction to what is called Lower Criticism in this, that it concerns itself with writings as a whole, whereas Lower Criticism concerns itself with the integrity or character of particular passages or parts; and is sometimes called “Textual Criticism,” “The term ‘Literary’ or ‘Higher Criticism’ designates that type of Biblical Criticism which proposes to investigate the separate books of the Bible in their in-

vestigation of the origin, authorship, and meaning of the several books of the Bible, and the credibility of the history which it contains."^b Concurring in what those of the Literary school are agreed, and in what their method results, as to the Old Testament, I quote the following:

They are generally agreed in thinking that the book of Genesis is composed of three or four or more documents woven together by some ancient editor in one continuous narrative. They are generally agreed in thinking that the book of the Covenant,^c with the Ten Commandments at its forefront, is the oldest book in the Bible; that the history in which that book of the Covenant is embedded was written long subsequent to the time of Moses. They are generally agreed in thinking that the book of Deuteronomy, embodying a later prophet's conception of Mosaic principles, was not written or uttered by Moses himself in its present form, but some centuries after the death of Moses. They are generally agreed in thinking that the book of Leviticus was written long subsequent to the time of Moses, and so far from embodying the principles of the Mosaic code embodies much that is in spirit adverse if not antagonistic to the simple principles of Mosaism. They are generally agreed in considering that we have in the books of Kings and Chronicles history and belles lettres so woven together that it is not always possible to tell what is to be regarded as belles lettres and what is to be regarded as history. They are generally agreed in the opinion that Job, while it treats of history about the days of Moses, or even anterior thereto, was written later than the time of Solomon; that very little of the Hebrew Psalter was composed

ternal peculiarities, and to estimate them historically. It discusses the questions concerning their origin, the time and place, the occasion and object of their composition, and concerning their position and value in the entire body of revelation. . . .

. . . The 'Higher Criticism' has been so often employed for the overthrow of long-cherished beliefs that the epithet 'destructive' has frequently been applied to it; and hence it has become an offense to some orthodox ears." (The Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch, Charles Elliott, D. D., pp. 12, 13.)

^bBeginning of Christianity (Fisher) p. 392.

^cxxi, xxii, xxiii, Exodus—The Ten Commandments and amplifications.

by David: that most of it was composed in the time of the exile or subsequent thereto; that Solomon's song was not written by Solomon and is the drama of a pure woman's love, not a spiritual allegory; that the book of Isaiah was written by certainly two authors and perhaps more, the later book being written one hundred years at least after the earlier and by a prophet now unknown; that the book of Jonah belongs to the series of moral instruction through fiction, and that the book of Daniel conveys moral instruction by means of, to use Dean Farrar's phraseology, one of these "splendid specimens of the lofty moral fiction which was always common among the Jews after the exile."^d

Another recognized authority in the same field of learning in summing up the results of the so-called "Higher Criticism," says:

It has thus far done an inestimable service in the removal of the traditional theories from the sacred books, so that they may be studied in their real structure and character The higher criticism shows us the process by which the sacred books were produced, that the most of them were composed by unknown authors, that they have passed through the hands of a considerable number of unknown editors who have brought together the older material without removing discrepancies, inconsistencies and errors. In this process of editing, arranging, addition, subtraction, reconstruction and consolidation, extending through many centuries, what evidence have we that these unknown editors were kept from error in all their work?^e

Such dissecting as this can have but one general result—death of reverence for the Bible; death of faith in it, as the revealed word of God. The authenticity of the Bible by it is left doubtful; for while this method of criticism suc-

^dThe Bible as Literature, Dr. Lyman Abbot.

^e"Truthfulness of Scripture," a paper submitted to The World's Parliament of Religions by Professor Chas. A. Briggs, D. D. See World's Parliament of Religions (Barrows) Vol. I, p. 563.

ceeds, with those who affect it, in proving that Moses is not the author of the five books for so many centuries accredited to him, it fails to tell us who is the author of those books. This Higher Criticism tells us that there are two and perhaps more, authors of the book of Isaiah's prophecies; that the last twenty-seven chapters were not written by the great Hebrew prophet whose name the book bears; but it fails to tell us who is the author of them. Nor can it be determined even when the unknown author lived. The same is true as to the other books of the Old Testament upon whose authenticity this system casts its shadow. The system is wholly destructive in its tendencies; it unsettles everything, it determines nothing, except that everything with reference to the authenticity, time of composition, inspiration, and credibility of the Old Testament is indeterminate. "It leaves everything hanging in the air," says one able critic of Higher Criticism. "It begins in guesses and ends in fog. At all events the result leaves us in a hopeless muddle, and, when that is the only thing settled, the proposed solution is self-condemned."^f And yet the Doctor of Divinity who wrote that sentence, Rev. A. J. F. Behrends, when he comes in his treatise to remark upon the extent to which the destructive criticism obtains, has to confess that in eight of the most famous German Universities^g possessing theological faculties, and numbering seventy-three professors in all, thirty of those professors upheld and taught the destructive criticism; while forty-three were counted conservatives.^h

^fRev. A. J. F. Behrends, D. D., Bible Criticism and its Methods, course of lectures, 1897.

^gThese are the Universities of Berlin, Bonn, Breslau, Griefswald, Halle, Königsberg, Leipzig and Tübingen.

^hThis was the condition in 1897.

A more significant admission, as showing the rapid increase of the radicals, or liberals, as the upholders of the destructive criticism are called will be found in the following statement concerning the same theological faculties. "The so-called liberal wing has increased from ten to thirty during the last twenty-five years; and the conservatives have been reduced from fifty to forty-three."

Of the American universities where the destructive criticism obtains, Dr. Behrends names eight;ⁱ and eighteen where 'conservative criticism holds its ground.'^j It should be remembered that these are admissions of one upholding the conservative criticism as against radical criticism. The claims of the radical school for the success of their methods are much more sweeping than the admissions allow. But taking the extent to which the destructive criticism obtains, even at the estimate of those who are opposed to it, and who for that reason reduce its triumphs to a minimum, yet it must be admitted that it has succeeded in making very marked progress. It permeates all Protestant Christian countries; and all Protestant Christian sects. It is more in evidence in the churches than in the schools; and tinctures all Protestant religious literature. There is scarcely any necessity for unbelievers in the Bible assailing it from without; the destruction of faith in it as an authentic, credible, authoritative revelation from God, whose truths when rightly understood are to be accepted and held as binding upon the consciences of men, is being carried on from within the churches who profess to hold the Bible in reverence more effectually than it could be by profane infidels. Doctors of

ⁱThese Universities are Boston, Yale, Harvard, Cornell, John Hopkins, Union, Chicago and Andover.

^jDr. Behrend's, Bible Criticism, Second Lecture, Feb. 28, 1897.

Divinity are more rapidly undermining the faith of the masses in the Bible than ever a Voltaire, a Paine, a Bradlaugh or an Ingersoll could do; and that may account for the singular circumstances of absolute silence at present on the part of popular infidel writers and lecturers.^k

It is not my purpose to enter into a discussion of the merits or demerits of Higher Criticism; to point out what is true in it, and what false. I am merely calling attention to a condition that has been created by that method of Bible treatment, viz., a condition of rapidly increasing unbelief among the masses in the Bible as the undoubted word of God. The learned who are leaders in that method of Bible criticism after destroying confidence in the authenticity of almost every book of the Old Testament; after questioning the credibility of the greater part of all those same books; after retiring some of the books from the dignified realm of reliable history to the questionable station of *belles-lettres*; after saying, "we are obliged to admit that there are scientific errors in the Bible, errors of astronomy, of geology, of zoology, of botany, and anthropology;" after saying, "There are historical mistakes in the Christian scriptures, mistakes of chronology and geography, errors of historical events and persons, discrepancies and inconsistencies in the historians, which cannot be removed by any proper method of interpretation;" after reducing the inspired writers to the level of just ordinary historical, poetical, and fiction-writing authors, by saying that the foregoing enumerated errors in the sacred books "are just where you would expect to

^kThis is written in 1903, and since the death of Bradlaugh in England in 1891, and the death of Ingersoll in America in 1899, there have appeared no infidel lectures against the Bible of any prominence. The mantle of those noted unbelievers and revilers of the Scriptures seems not to have fallen upon the shoulders of any of their followers.

find them in accurate, truthful writers of history in ancient times," and that the sacred writers merely "used with fidelity the best sources of information accessible to them—ancient poems, popular traditions, legends and ballads, regal and family archives, codes of law and ancient narratives," and "there is no evidence that they received any of this history by revelation from God, there is no evidence that the divine Spirit corrected their narratives either when they were being composed in their minds, or written in manuscript;" after saying, "we cannot defend the morals of the Old Testament at all points, . . . the Patriarchs were not truthful, their age seems to have had little apprehension of the principles of truth;" after saying that "God spake in much the greater part of the Old Testament through the voices and pens of the human authors of the scriptures," then ask—"Did the human voice and pen in all the numerous writers and editors of the Holy Scriptures prior to the completion of the Canon always deliver an inerrant word?" and, "Even if all the writers were possessed of the Holy Spirit as to be merely passive in His hands, the question arises, can the finite voice of the finite pen deliver and express the inerrant truth of God?" After all this, then these Higher Critics propound the question: Can we, in the face of all the results of our literary and historical¹ method of treating the scriptures, still maintain the truthfulness of the Bible? And while they are speculating how they can make it appear that "the substantial truthfulness of the Bible" need not be inconsistent with the existence of "circumstantial errors;" and are indulging in subtle refinements to show that "none of the mistakes, discrepancies and errors which have been discovered disturb the religious les-

¹Historical Criticism and its results were considered in Volume I of New Witnesses, See Ch. i.

sons of Biblical history^m—the masses who come to hear of these doubts cast upon what they have hitherto been taught to regard as the infallible oracles of God, answer off-hand: If so much doubt exists as to the authenticity, credibility, inspiration, and authoritativeness of so great a part of the Bible, how are we to determine that the few remaining things you urge upon us are of divine appointment, or reach to any higher level than human conception and human authority? This their question; and, ever glad to meet with any excuse that will lend the lightest shadow of justification for casting aside the restraints which religion imposes upon the indulgence of human passion, and human inclination to worldiness in general, they rid themselves of their faith in the word of God, and in the religion it teaches, and walk abroad in the earth unchecked in their selfish pursuit if whatsoever may attract the fancy, please the taste or gratify the passions. For whatever may be the effect of what is left of the Bible, on minds of peculiar structure, after Higher Criticism is done with it, it must be conceded that a Bible of doubtful authenticity, of questionable credibility as to the greater part of it; with its divine inspiration and its divine authenticity remaining open questions—neither such a Bible nor any religion formulated from it in harmony with such conceptions, can have much influence over the masses of humanity.

Again I find it necessary to say that it is foreign to my purpose to enter into a consideration of the merits or demerits of Higher Criticism, or even to point out how much of that criticism merely attacks an apostate Christianity's

^mThe quoted passages in the foregoing are all from the paper of Dr. Chas. A. Briggs, one of the foremost scholars among the Higher Critics, read before the World's Parliament of Religions. See Barrows' History of the Parliament of Religions, Vol. I, pp. 650-661.

misconceptions and false interpretations of the Bible, and not the Bible itself. It is sufficient for my purpose if I have made clear the results that must inevitably follow this attack upon the Scriptures, under the guise of Higher Criticism.

I must notice briefly the other side of the question; that is, give some account of the materials which have been brought to light in the nineteenth century for the defense of the Bible; materials which tend to prove its authenticity, its credibility, its inspiration and its divine authority. And here I am but a compiler of a very few of the principal results of researches that have been made in Egypt, in the valley of the Euphrates and in Palestine. I make no pretensions to original investigations of these researches, but accept the statements of what I consider to be reliable authorities in relation to them.

In the year 1799 a French officer named Boussard discovered a large black basalt stone at Fort St. Julian near Rosetta, in the delta of the Nile. From the circumstances of the discovery being near Rosetta it has always been known as the "Rosetta Stone." It was inscribed in Greek, in Egyptian hieroglyphics, and a third class of writing which is called Demotic. The last is the common writing of the people of Egypt as opposed to the hieroglyphic which was written by the priests. The Greek upon the stone was readily made out, and it was found to consist of a decree drawn up by the priests of Memphis in honor of Ptolemy Epiphanes, who ruled about 198 B.C. It was at once evident that the Greek inscription on this stone was the translation of the hieroglyphics upon it, and hence afforded a key to the interpretation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. By the fortunes of war the Rosetta Stone was surrendered by the French to General Hutchinson and subsequently presented to the Brit-

ish Museum where it is now preserved. Accurate copies of the three-fold text were made forthwith and distributed among the scholars of Europe with the result that through the combined patient labors of Silvestre de Sacy, Akebald the Swede, Thomas Young, Champollion, Lepsius in Germany, Birch in England, and others, the hieroglyphics were deciphered and a system of translation constructed which enabled European scholars to read many of the inscriptions upon the monuments of Egypt, and bring to light much of the history of that country which hitherto had been a mystery. This gave an impetus to research. The political representatives of the great countries of Europe made collections of antiquities in Egypt, and travelers spent much time and money in opening tombs and digging out ruins. The tombs have given up not only their dead, but with them the books which the Egyptians read, the furniture which they used in their houses, the ornaments and articles of the toilet of the Egyptian lady, the weapons of the warrior, the tools of the handicraftsman and laborer, the dice of the gambler, the toys of the children, and the portraits, statues and figures of the men and women for whom they were made. The many-lined inscriptions upon the tombs give us their ideas about the future world, the judgment of the dead, the paradise of the happy souls, the transmigration of souls, and they enable us to place a juster estimate upon the statements of those Greek writers who profess to understand and to describe with accuracy the difficult religion of the educated Egyptians. And the result of all this as affecting the authenticity of the Bible? Simply this: the manners, customs, government, arts, sciences, occupations and state of civilization of the Egyptians in general, are demonstrated by these monuments to be substantially what they are described to be in the book of Genesis. Also there is supposed to be

the confirmation of special events in the scripture narrative. Professor A. H. Sayce, for instance, has the following upon the existence of such a line of kings ruling at Jerusalem as Melchizedek is described to be in Genesis :

Among the cuneiform tablets found at Tel el-Amarna in Upper Egypt, are letters to the Pharaoh from Ebed-tob, king of Jerusalem, written a century before the time of Moses. In them he describes himself as appointed to the throne, not by inheritance from his father or mother (compare Heb. 7, 3), but by the arm of "the Mighty King," i. e. of the god of whose temple stood on Mount Moriah. He must therefore have been a priest-king like Melchizedek. The name of Jerusalem is written Ura-Salim, "the city of the god of peace," and it was the capital of a territory which extended southward to Kellah. In the inscriptions of Rameses II. and Rameses III., Salem is mentioned among the conquests of the Egyptian kings."

The same writer sees confirmation of the history of Joseph, son of Jacob, in the following circumstance:

The "Story of the Two Brothers," an Egyptian romance written for the son of the Pharaoh of the oppression, contains an episode very similar to the Biblical account of Joseph's treatment by Potiphar's wife. Potiphar and Potipherah are the Egyptian Pa-tu-pa-Ra, "the gift of the Sun-god." The name given to Joseph, Zaphnath-paaneah, (Gen. xli:45), is probably the Egyptian Zaf-nti-pa-ankh, "nourisher of the living one," i. e. of the Pharaoh. There are many instances in the inscriptions of foreigners in Egypt receiving Egyptian names, and rising to the highest offices of state.

The story of the Exodus as related in the Bible is supposed to find confirmation in the following:

The cuneiform tablets found at Tel el-Amarna, in Upper Egypt, have shown that in the latter days of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty, when the Pharaoh had become a convert to an Asiatic form of faith, the highest offices of state were ab-

sorbed by foreigners, most of whom were Canaanites. In the national reaction which followed, the foreigners were expelled exterminated, or reduced to serfdom; while a new dynasty, the nineteenth, was founded by Rameses I. He, therefore, must be the new king, the builder of Pa-Tum or Pithom (now Tel el-Maskhuteh, near Ismailia), as has been proved by Dr. Neville's researches, and consequently, as Egyptian students had long maintained he must have been the Pharaoh of the oppression."

The occupancy of the land of Goshen by the Israelites who, it will be remembered, were shepherds, is supposed to receive confirmation in the following:

Further excavations of Dr. Neville have shown that Goshen, the Egyptian Goshen (now Saft el-Henneh), is the modern Wadi Tumilat, between Zagazig and Ismailia. A despatch dated in the eighth year of the reign of Menephtah, the son and successor of Rameses II., states that Bedouin from Edom has been allowed to pass the Khetam or "fortress" in the district of Succoth (Thukot), in order to feed themselves and their herds on the possessions of Pharaoh. Khetam is the Etham of Exodus 13, 20. The geography of the Exodus agrees remarkably with that of the Egyptian papyri of the time of Rameses II. and his son."

The search for evidences of the truth of the Bible has not been confined to Egypt. Equal interest has been awakened in those ancient empires that occupied the valley of the Euphrates; in Palestine, and the Sinaitic Peninsula. European scholars with keen interest followed the study of the cuneiform characters found on Babylonian tablets and monuments. Progress made in deciphering this ancient method of writing led M. Botta, in 1842, to begin excavations upon the ancient site of Nineveh, but he met with little success. Later, however,—1845—Mr. Henry Layard

"Professor Sayce's Article from which foregoing quotations are made, is to be found in the "Bible Treasury," published in Nelson & Son's addition of the Authorized version, p. 43.

(subsequently Sir Henry Layard) undertook excavations at the same place for the Trustees of the British Museum, and succeeded in uncovering the palaces of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and Assur-banipal, and in bringing to light the terra cotta tablets which formed the great library founded by these kings at Nineveh, and of which some twenty-two thousand are now preserved in the British Museum. An examination of these tablets soon showed that they consisted of historical inscriptions, astronomical reports and calculations, grammatical lists, etc., and scholars began to apply Sir Henry Rawlinson's system of decipherment of the Babylonian version of the Behistun inscription to the texts inscribed upon these tablets. A large portion of the history of Babylonia and Assyria through the translation of these tablets is now revealed to us, and the knowledge of the language of these countries has thrown much light upon the language, literature, history, and learning of the Jews. The excavations which have been carried on in Mesopotamia for the last fifty years have yielded the most valuable results; and the inscribed slabs, monolithic stelæ, boundary stones, gate-sockets, bricks, seal-cylinders and tablets, now preserved in the British Museum, afford an abundant supply of material from which Bible customs and language may be freely explained and illustrated. The cuneiform writing is, at least, as old as B. C. 3,800, and there is evidence to show that it was in use as late as B. C. 80.^o

In 1865 the Palestine Exploration fund was opened, and excavations were begun in Jerusalem, and have continued, with some interruptions, until now. Since then researches have followed in the south, east and north of Palestine. Geological investigations have been made, natural history

^oThe Witness of Modern Discoveries to the Old Testament Narrative, Oxford Bible Helps.

collections have been formed, enquiries into nationalities and customs carried on, towns, villages, hills, valleys, water courses, wells, cisterns notable trees and other land marks have been located. In 1868 a party of engineering experts left England to make a scientific survey of the Sinaitic Peninsula. This they effected, making plans and models, taking three thousand copies of inscriptions with collections of specimens bearing on the zoology, botany and geology of the country.^p

The results of these explorations and discoveries in the valley of the Euphrates, in Palestine and the Sinaitic Peninsula have been even more fruitful in the production of materials which tend to confirm the truth of the Bible narrative and general credibility than the discoveries so far made in Egypt. The confirmation of the Bible narrative of ancient events is remarkable. So, too, the confirmation of its location of cities, mountains, rivers, plains and, indeed, the whole geography of the scriptures. The confirmation given of the Bible's incidental allusions to the manners and customs of neighboring and contemporary nations is no less remarkable; together with what is said of reigning kings and dynasties, and the incidental allusions that the Bible makes to their invasions of each other's territories, their alliances, their victories, and their defeats. The following are a few of the special Bible incidents which receive confirmation from the results of these researches condensed from the article of Professor Sayce:

CREATION: One of the accounts of creation in cuneiform characters found on the tablets very nearly resembles the first chapter of Genesis. It commences with the statement that "in the beginning" all was a chaos of waters, called the deep (Tiamat, the Hebrew *tehom*). Then the Upper and Lower Firma-

^pIbid.

ments were created, and the Gods came into existence. After that comes a long account of the struggle between Bel-Merodach and the "Dragon" of chaos, "Timaat," "the serpent of evil," with her allies, the forces of anarchy and darkness. It ended in the victory of the god of light, who thereupon created the present world by the power of his "word." The fifth tablet or book of the poem describes the appointment of the heavenly bodies for signs and seasons, and the sixth (or perhaps the seventh) the creation of animals and reptiles. The latter part of the poem, in which the creation of man was doubtless described, has not yet been recovered. But we learn from other texts that man was regarded as having been formed out of the "dust" of the ground.

THE SABBATH: From the tablets it is also learned that the Babylonians observed a day of rest, which is called Sabbattu and described as "a day of rest for the heart." On it, it was forbidden to eat cooked meat, to put on fresh clothes, to offer sacrifices, to ride in a chariot, etc. The Sabbattu fell on the 7th, 14th, 19th, 21st, and 28th days of the month.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN: The "plain" of Babylonia was called Edin in the ancient Sumerian language of the country, and the word was adopted by the Semitic Babylonians, in the form of Edinu. Eridu, the early seaport of Babylonia, was the chief center of primitive Babylonian religion and culture, and in its neighborhood was a garden, wherein, "in a holy place," according to an ancient poem, was a mysterious tree whose roots were planted in the "deep," while its branches reached to heaven. The tree of life is often represented in Assyria sculptures between two winged cherubim who have sometimes the heads of eagles, sometimes of men, and sometimes stand, sometimes kneel. Eri-Aku or Arioch (Gen. xiv: 1) calls himself "the executor of the oracle of the holy tree of Eridu." In Sumerian wine was called ges-din, "the draught of life." A second tree is mentioned in Babylonian hymns on whose heart the name of the god of wisdom is said to be inscribed.

THE FLOOD: In 1872 George Smith discovered the Babylonian account of the deluge, which strikingly resembles that of Genesis. It is contained in a long poem which was composed in the age of Abraham, but the Chaldean tradition of the deluge,

of which the account in the poem is but one out of many, must go back to a very much earlier date. Xisuthros, the Chaldean Noah was rescued along with his family, servants, and goods, on account of his righteousness. The god Era warned him in a dream of the coming flood, and ordered him to build a ship, into which he should take every kind of animal so that "the seed of life" might be preserved.

UR OF THE CHALDEES: "Ur" is now identified as *Mightier*. This was the early home of Abraham and his forefathers spoken of in Genesis (xii:27-32). It was situated on the west side of the Euphrates. The name means "the city" in *Babylonia*. It is proven now that there was such a city, and that it is identical with *Mugheir*, the ruins of which have been thoroughly explored. It was the seat of a dynasty of kings who reigned before the age of Abraham, and was famous for its temple of the moon-god, whose other famous temple was at Haran in *Mesopotamia*.

ABRAHAM: Contract-tablets show that in the age of Abraham *Canannites*—or "Amorites," as the *Babylonians* called them—were settled in *Babylonia*, and that a district outside the walls of *Sippara* had been assigned to them. Several of the names are distinctly Hebrew, and, in a tablet dated in the reign of the grandfather of *Amraphel* (Gen. 14, 1), one of the witnesses is called "the Amorite, the son of *Abi-ramu*," or *Abram*.

CAMPAIGN OF CHEDORLAOMER: The records on the tablets that this event (described in Genesis xiv) is in accordance with the national movements of that age.

SHISHAK'S INVASION OF JUDAH: On the southern wall of the temple of *Karnak*, *Shishak* (*Shashang* in *Egypt*) the founder of the twenty-second *Egyptian* dynasty, has given a list of the places he captured in *Palestine*. Most of them were in *Judea*, but there are few (e. g. *Megiddo* and *Taanach*) which belonged to the northern kingdom.

THE MOABITE STONE: The *Moabite stone* was discovered by *Rev. F. Klein*, at *Dhiban* in the land of *Moab*, on

August 19, 1868. It measures three feet ten inches, by two feet by one foot two inches; and is inscribed with thirty-four lines of text. The language of the inscription hardly differs from Hebrew in vocabulary, grammar, or expression. The stone gives the Moabite account of the war of Mesha, king of Moab, about 860 B. C., against Omri, Ahab, and other kings of Israel, and confirms to quite an extent the history of the same war as given in II. Kings, chapter iii.^q

Very naturally those believers in the Bible who regard it as the very word of God, those believers who regard the Bible's historical statements as substantially true, allowing only for such errors as many have crept in through the carelessness of copyists, or perchance here and there an error through additions or omissions on the part of copyists or designing custodians—such believers rejoice at the confirmation the scriptures receive from the inscriptions upon monuments and tablets brought to light by the researches and scholarship of the nineteenth century. It is a pious sentiment, this rejoicing over the confirmation of the word of God; and one can only regret that the evidences supplied by these modern discoveries are not sufficiently voluminous or explicit to silence altogether the unbelief of modern times in the Bible. But they are not sufficient; for in spite of them unbelievers not only exist in Christian lands, but increase daily.

^qThe foregoing statements of monumental testimony to the truth of the Old Testament are condensed from an article of Professor A. H. Sayce's, LL. D. The whole article—too long to be inserted here—will be found in the Nelsen Illustrated Bible Treasury, p. 39-44. Those desiring more specific knowledge of the interesting subject will find it in the magnificent work of Herman V. Hilprecht, "Explorations in Bible Lands, During the 19th Century (1903). Mr. Hilprecht holds the Professorship of the "Clark Research Professorship of the Assyriology" in the University of Pennsylvania; and in his great work of 800 pages is assisted by other specialists.