

Bible Society Recorder.

TORONTO, 1ST OCTOBER, 1889.

THE BIBLE RECORD CORROBORATED.

BY BISHOP JOHN F. FURST, D.D.

So far, every tablet which Rawlinson and George Smith and others have found on the banks of the Euphrates have corroborated the Biblical record, in the later reading of them all we shall see, not that the Pentateuch is a group of empty myths, but that the myths are only the dim oral reflection from the first recorded light in that Pentateuch. Smith has found, for example, in the tiles of dead and buried Babylon, the Chaldean myth of Noah and the flood.

We read in the Word of God these words: "Marvellous things did he in Zoan." What was Zoan? Where was it? Within two years we have learned all about it. There is a vast section of the Delta of the Nile which covers five hundred thousand acres of land, and is called the Menzelah district. It is purely primitive. The land is flat, covered by water during the inundation of the Nile, and forming great lagoons, occupied mostly by fishermen. That is the Zoan of the Bible, the Tanis of to-day. Great temples have been discovered. Vast palaces of superb sculpture have been thrown open. The houses are of immense proportions. You can see the labyrinthine paths which led through the cemeteries of five thousand years ago. Beautiful homes have been kissed by the sunlight. Now, when was Zoan founded? Moses tells us, far, far back in the centuries, "seven years after Hebron." Now, it turns out, by hieroglyphics and unmistakable records, that in this same Zoan, the Tanis of to-day, the splendid court of the great Rameses II. lived in all its splendour. Rameses was the Sesostris of history, the mightiest king in all the East. Even in his day he found Tanis a ruin, and built it up into his great capital. Here lived, later, Menepthah, the very Pharaoh of the Exodus. Here, within the gates of Tanis, Moses performed his miracles of murrain and darkness. Here, amid the splendours of military pageantry, the immense Egyptian army set out for the capture of the fugitive Israelites, but never came back again. How little the builders of the cities knew of what they were doing in those distant times. How little the very destroyers knew, when they laid waste great cities, and left them for the desert sands to wrap them in their winding-sheets. Little they dreamed of the secret revelation which was yet to be made in all its fulness, and of the world's redemption through the incarnate God, and that down in the later ages they should themselves arise from their winding-sheet of desert sands and stand up as witnesses of that wonderful book. Within just a few months on'y, Maspero, the director-general of the antiquities of Egypt, has taken off the bandages of Sesostris, and his face has been photographed; and we now know the very features of the man who introduced the great oppression of the Israelites!

Another illustration of the enterprise with which the new countries are lifting the veil from the old and the buried, and making them tell their long-kept secrets, can be found in the results of the expedition in Assos, in Asia Minor, organized and paid for by the citizens of Boston, and conducted by Messrs. Clark and Bacon. Now, Assos has an important bearing upon the travels of Paul. It lies upon the Aegean coast, in the district of the ancient Mysia, and distant about twenty miles from Alexandria Troas, where Paul saw the Macedonian vision, and whence he set out for the evangelization of Europe. He subsequently passed through Assos on foot, in order to take ship at Mitylene for Cesarea in Palestine. These two American explorers