

J A B E Z.

"And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren : and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me ! And God granted him that which he requested."—1 Chronicles iv. 9-10.

THE age in which we live is pre-eminently one of historical discovery. No longer dependent upon the doubtful traditions of the Greek and Latin historians, we are brought face to face with the actual sources of their imperfect information in the long-sealed-up monuments of distant centuries. The inscriptions of actors in the great historic past or of their contemporaries, have yielded their treasures of knowledge to the learning, ingenuity and patient research of modern investigators. Egypt and Ethiopia, Himyaritic Arabia and Accadian Chaldea, Assyria, Media and Armenia, Persia and Elam, Cyprus and Moab have contributed in large or small measure to our acquaintance with the ancient world ; and the keys will doubtless soon be found to unlock the secrets of Hamathite Syrian, of Etruscan, and of the inscriptions of Central America. Already many deciphered monuments have corroborated the truth of the Bible narrative, and have amplified our knowledge of the times, persons and places of which the inspired writers treat. But, for as long a period as many of these records have lain hidden from mortal view, there has been concealed within the leaves of our well-thumbed Bibles another historical record, brief indeed, yet comprehensive and of infinite value, being the very key to the truthful but often chaotic facts of the monuments themselves. It is in this genealogical record that the brief notice of Jabez occurs.

To the eye of the superficial student, and to the mind of him who would limit God to one way of revealing Himself in his Word, Jabez is, as he was to the Jewish commentators, a wise doctor of the law belonging to the tribe of Judah, who lived at some unknown period in an unknown city called Jabez. Now if Jabez lived after the conquest of Palestine, it must have