

## Messenger and Visitor

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### New Light From Old Sources.

In an article recently published in the Sunday School Times, Professor Sayce, of Oxford, gives an interesting account of an archaeological discovery made last year, near the Egyptian town of Nagada which is situated on the west bank of the Nile and some twenty miles from Thebes. At that place M. de Morgan, the late Director of the Service of Egyptian Antiquities, discovered a tomb which Prof. Sayce thinks there is sufficient evidence for believing to be that of Menes, the first king of the first Egyptian dynasty. The main building, which was of considerable size, was divided into a large number of chambers. In the central and largest of these chambers the body of the dead had been laid, afterwards the body and the articles buried with it had been calcined by fire, as in a kiln. Why the tomb of Menes should have been built at Nagada instead of Abydos, some forty miles below on the Nile, which is known to have been the burial place of the kings of the first dynasty, is not easily explained. Prof. Sayce thinks it may have been because the king fell in battle while fighting against the Libyans. However this may be, the articles found in the Nagada tomb correspond to those found in the tombs of the kings of the first dynasty at Abydos, and demonstrates that the civilization of Egypt had at that time reached an advanced stage, indicating that it must have been an inheritance from a still older civilization. The system of hieroglyphic writing was fully developed, and many of the characters had become conventional in form. Art too was already far advanced. Tools and weapons of bronze moreover are met with in great abundance. "The copper," Professor Sayce says, "probably came from the mines of Sinai; the tin with which it is mixed must have been derived either from India and the Malayan Peninsula, or from Spain and Britain."

Dr. Sayce maintains that evidence from the modes of burial employed by the first dynasty of Egyptian kings goes to confirm the supposition based upon the character of the religious and intellectual life of the people as revealed by the monuments, that the Egyptian civilization was an inheritance from Babylonia. The use among the early Egyptian dynasties of the Babylonian seal cylinder, and of clay, as writing material, points in the same direction. Such a mode of writing, Dr. Sayce holds, was natural in a country where there was no stone, and clay was plentiful, but could never have been invented in the valley of the Nile, where "stone was plentiful, while the sandy loam of the cultivated land was but ill-adapted for receiving the impress of a seal." It is also noted that this theory of the Babylonian origin of the Pharaonic Egyptians confirms the Old Testament teaching that it was from the Plain of Shinar that civilized man was scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. "It is one more illustration of the fact that archaeology has of late been impressing upon us that civilization is an inheritance and not an independent development."

In the old world we have as yet found no evidence of the savage rising by his own spontaneous efforts to culture and civilized life." Professor Sayce does not fail to count the recent discovery on his score against the "criticism so called," which only two or three years ago was denying that Menes had ever lived. "And yet this 'semi-mythical' Menes now turns out to have been a very real person, living in the full blaze of recorded history, in an age when the art of writing was known and prac-

ticed, and there was intercourse between Egypt and distant lands. His tomb and his name have alike been found, and some of his actual bones are now in the museum of Giza. The truth of tradition has once more been vindicated by Oriental archaeology, and the skepticism of the critic has been put to shame by the spade of the excavator."

### Our Father's Care.

The first verse of the Bible lesson for the current week is quite as much a conclusion from what has gone before as a starting-point for what follows. The passage should be studied as a whole. Jesus had been speaking to his disciples of God and of their relations to him, as the supreme and most significant fact of their being. The great fact which he would have them make a corner-stone of their faith and a first principle in their philosophy of life is that God is their Father in Heaven. The great thing for them is to realize that holy and blessed relationship, to live in the light and the joy and the strength of it. If God is their Father, what they most need is not to have great wisdom in themselves, but to be guided by the divine hand and kept from evil. If God is their Father, they may confidently ask and expect, from Him their daily bread, and they do not need to vex their souls to make provision for the future, or to devote their best energies to gathering wealth. If God, their Father, is in Heaven, then their hearts and their treasure must be there also. And here comes in the caution against the deceitfulness of riches. Where a man's treasure is there his heart will be. See that what you have of worldly good is of the nature of daily bread to you, and not a stored-up treasure in which your heart is delighting and your soul is trusting. Men are easily deceived in this matter; they are prone to persuade themselves that they can love God and love money, that they can serve both God and mammon. Jesus says with great emphasis that this is impossible; and warns men against darkening the light that is in them by failing in their fidelity to the truth they know, and against making themselves practically enemies to God by giving him only half their hearts. It is God *or* mammon, not God and mammon.

The admonitions of this lesson are not opposed to industry and forethought on the part of men, but to a worrying anxiety for earthly needs, which tends to draw away the mind from things spiritual, and implies distrust in the ability or the willingness of the Heavenly Father to provide for the needs of his children. Nature has lessons for us at this point. The birds and the flowers should teach wisdom to men and women overwrought with care and labor for the things that minister to temporal needs. "Behold the birds . . . that they sow not, neither do they reap, . . . and your Heavenly Father feedeth them." Our Lord does not say—Be ye therefore like the birds, and neither sow nor reap, nor make any provision for your needs. He did not mean to discourage reasonable forethought and industry. The birds are industrious. They use such wisdom as God has given them to obtain a supply for their needs. So men should do. It is God's law for man that in the sweat of his face he shall eat bread. We may be sure that our Lord did not mean to discourage men from honest toil and a thoughtful care for their families.

But the lesson which he means to teach is one of cheerfulness, and trust in God. That is the lessons which the birds teach, they do not worry, they never borrow trouble. They seem to say, The hand that made us will surely provide us food. And so they sing as they work, and work as they sing. And God does care for them. This does not mean that no trouble or misfortune ever overtakes the birds. They have their enemies which persecute and sometimes kill them, and when the great cold storms come, they may die by hundreds. But still it is true God cares for the birds, the sparrow does not fall without his notice. He keeps the bird families through the summers and the winters, and through long migratory journeyings. From year to year, from century to century the bird life of the world is preserved, and today, as in the days when Jesus was in the world, the birds live and sing, gathering their food from God, and teaching men lessons of cheerfulness and trust. And so too of men. God keeps his human children. They may have enemies and suffer persecution. They may have trouble and be cut off by disaster and disease. Jesus does not

mean to teach his disciples that they will always have a nice comfortable time, if only they trust in God. It was to be very different from that. Still it is true that mankind are the objects of God's special care. He has preserved them through all the centuries, and from generation to generation the number increases of those who hallow the Father's name and declare his love. And God will keep his great family until his divine and gracious purposes connected with human life upon the earth shall be accomplished.

And what do men gain by being anxious and worrying over anticipated evil? The bird sings today, though the storm come tomorrow, and, if it did not sing, that would not prevent the coming of the storm. If trouble is coming, men cannot prevent it by being anxious; but we can, and often do, make ourselves miserable by anticipating evils that never come. The best preparation for trouble is to cultivate a cheerful trust in God. The supreme object of our endeavor, Jesus teaches, should be to have fellowship with the Heavenly Father. Those who seek his kingdom and his righteousness need not worry their souls about their temporal conditions. The Father understands their needs and will not forget His children.

### Editorial Notes.

—The results, which are just out, of the 1896-7 competition in New Testament Greek, conducted by the American Institute of Sacred Literature, shows that the first prize was won by Fred T. Tapscott, McMaster, '97. For this competition, which is open to undergraduates in Arts of Universities in the United States and Canada, contestants were enrolled by Cornell, Harvard, Columbia, Yale and thirty-three other Universities and Colleges, and Mr. Tapscott's success in taking first place is creditable to him and to his teachers in Greek, Professors Campbell and Farmer, and to McMaster. The amount of the prize is one hundred dollars.

—A few weeks ago the resignation was announced of Dr. John Hall, for thirty years pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church, New York. It was supposed that Dr. Hall's action would be final in the matter, but in compliance with an unanimous and very enthusiastic vote at a great meeting of the congregation, Dr. Hall has consented to withdraw his resignation and to continue in the pastorate as long as strength shall be given him for its duties. It is understood that an assistant minister will soon be chosen so as to lighten the pastor's labors as much as possible. Dr. Hall has long been one of the most prominent figures of the American pulpit. He adheres closely to conservative lines in theology. He is a man of great physical and intellectual force and of tremendous industry.

—The Watchman points out that the spiritual temptations to which an Evangelist is exposed are very great and that, as a rule, it is not a service for which young men are specially fitted. It is perilous to a man's own spiritual life to be habitually dealing with the emotions of others for the sake of accomplishing a purpose. "It is fatally easy for an Evangelist to fall a victim to spiritual pride and self-conceit, to disregard the rights of others, to entertain disproportionate views of truth and insensibility to acquire a purely professional attitude toward his work." These statements are, however, of a cautionary character and not to be understood as arguments against men properly qualified engaging in Evangelistic work, or against such men being employed at certain times in connection with the regular ministry, and as supplementing the pastor's labors.

—"The distinctive service that an Evangelist can render a congregation," says the Watchman, "is in leading its members who are perfectly familiar with Christian truth, but have never acted upon it, to a decision for Christ. The power of leading men to decide is a peculiar gift. You see it in an expert salesman. He knows how to bring his customer to a decision. He does not do it altogether by what he says; sometimes his silences are as effective as his words. A man who has this power sustains a peculiar psychological relation towards the one whom he wishes to impress, and by virtue of it he gives the will of the one with whom he is dealing a little push that carries the man to a definite decision. Successful Evangelists have this power.

Moody pursued with an audience did when he qualities that made him a this power, education of them. It for mathematics this gift into tered to by a qualification will cross over

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At 3 p. m. v very able and Brookline, Tr joy and profit t McMaster is and Redden. H. Davis, '93, R. McNally, '9 C. W. Allen an