

unprecedentedly fruitful—during the past season.

The sites of seven temples have been cleared, of which four were quite unknown, and only two were rightly attributed. The earliest of these dates back to the year 1440 B. C., and was built by the Pharaoh known as Amenhotep II. It was subsequently rearranged by Amenhotep III. as a funeral temple for his daughter Sitamen. The inscriptions found on the walls, on the fragments of stone, and foundation deposits, which comprise various kinds of pottery, jars, vases, models of tools, etc., bear witness to the fact of this attribution. An avenue of jackal-headed sphinxes led to the temple, similar to the sphinxes of the temple at Karnak.

A large black granite tablet highly polished—perhaps the largest known—was found, upon which is displayed a scene of offering and an inscription of thirty-one lines of hieroglyphics. This Prof. Petrie discovered to be a restoration by Seti I, after the iconoclastic erasures made by the heretic king, Akhenaten.

But of far greater interest and importance is the disclosure revealed by the inscription which is cut on the back of the great tablet. At last, after years of study and conjectural attempts to identify the monuments of Egypt with the sojourn in the country of the children of Israel, Prof. Petrie has discovered the record of a connection between these two peoples.

Merenptah, son of Rameses II, was like his father, an arch-destroyer, appropriating to his own use and glorification the temples and monuments already at hand, hewn, sculptured, and recording the deeds of his kingly predecessors. It mattered not to him, as long as the stones could be removed, that *his* temples and monuments were built and designed for others. The royal names could be erased and his own inserted in their places; and it would be left for future generations to inveigh against him.

By means of such destruction of the

temple of Amenhotep III., Merenptah built a magnificent temple for himself. Nevertheless, he has left two valuable monuments of his *own*, the upper part of a fine colossus in black granite—photographs of which, taken from different points, were thrown upon the screen during the lecture—and the long inscription on the back of the great tablet mentioned above.

This inscription records mainly his deliverance of Egypt from the Libyans and the flight of their king by night alone and on foot leaving all his women behind, and without either food or drink. Toward the close are recited the various places taken in the Syrian war; and among these—in Northern Palestine apparently—he spoiled “the people of Israel.” This is the first time that any mention of the Israelites in any form has been found on Egyptian monuments. There it is, written out clear and distinct in the hieroglyphic characters.

The rendering of the name is most distinct; and, in conjunction with Prof. Petrie, it has been accepted by Prof. Maspero, Dr. Naville, and others of equal authority. Here we have the cardinal fact that Merenptah fought the people of Israel, apparently in Palestine, about 1200 B. C.; and, although different historical interpretations are possible, the whole inscription will be carefully studied and discussed before any full account of this wonderful discovery is given to the public.

This enormous tablet, for its size, the length of its inscriptions, its completeness, and the unique importance of it to Biblical history, is one of the most notable monuments ever found, and will shortly be placed in the museum at Cairo along with the statue of Merenptah.

With results of such historical value, Prof. Petrie's labours ought not to languish either for lack of funds or workers who can give him the mechanical assistance so much needed in his work of excavation and research among the ruined temples and monuments of Egypt.