

of Genesis, in the fourth how those made in Palestine and Egypt confirm the Egyptian and Canaanitish element and in the sixth how these of the Delta and surrounding districts confirm the story of the Exodus. In this way the whole field is surveyed and its bearing on the entire Old Testament narrative made to appear.

In the present condition of Old Testament studies the most interesting part of the production is that which deals with the Pentateuch. One might infer that the author himself was of this opinion from the relatively large space which he devotes to that part of his task. The question, therefore, that the intelligent reader will put, with the greatest amount of eagerness is how far the book establishes the authenticity of the Pentateuch. The matter will stand with him thus: Supposing the discoveries to be what Dr. Sayce says they are, how far do they establish the authenticity of the record in the Pentateuch. The unskilled reader must take Dr. Sayce's estimate in regard to the worth of the Archaeological material to which he refers, but every thoughtful mind can pass judgment on the conclusions drawn from that material. For instance only the specialist can decipher a monument or fix its place in history but every trained thinker can draw his inferences once these labors of the specialist are accomplished. Not everyone for instance could decipher the tablets of Abed Tob or discover the age in which they were written, this done, however, any one would infer that Jerusalem was at that time a prominent city. The practical question then is not in regard to the facts but to the conclusions that they justify.

One thing will appear at once that if the facts are what they are said to be then the conditions of the period covered by the Pentateuch are approximately the same as are pre-supposed in the narrative of the Pentateuch. If one takes the conditions implied in the Bible narrative between the call of Abraham and the Exodus and compares these with the conditions revealed by the monuments of that period he will find that the two sets of conditions are essentially the same. From the narrative in the Pentateuch we learn that such cities as these flourished in Abraham's day: Ur of the Chaldees, Haran, Jerusalem, Hebron and Beersheba, that these were the following states: Ellam, Shinar, Ellasar, Canaan, Egypt, and that of the Hittites, that there was easy communication between Babylonia and Palestine, and between Palestine and Egypt, that caravans and armies made frequent passage between these different countries, that a comparatively high material civilization had been attained which also produced a literature of no mean extent, that idolatry and polytheism prevailed in Babylonia, and that human sacrifices were frequently offered in Palestine. In the monuments there is found abundant evidence of all these conditions. Jerusalem we learn was a capital of considerable prominence, Haran was a sort of distributing centre between the West and East, Hebron was the home of some confederate tribes, Beersheba was a religious centre of some repute. The Hittites were a mighty people extending their influence towards the confines of Egypt and able to wage equal war against that land; Ellam, Shinar, Ellasar are well known names in the Babylonian literature of that day. Babylonia had developed into a high material civilization, Egypt was advancing rapidly in the same direction, and Canaan was following some distance in the rear; the art of writing was as universal as in Europe during the middle ages and large libraries were found in many a centre. Idolatry and polytheism with an elaborate sacrificial system flourished in Babylonia and human sacrifices were offered throughout the East. In short the same conditions as are found in the Scripture narrative.

A similar harmony is found between the conditions pre-supposed the Bible account of the Exodus and those revealed by the monuments of that period. The monuments show that there was then a Semetic population in the Delta, that they were oppressed by the Egyptians, that bands of them frequently broke away into Asia, that famines were not unknown in those early days, that there was a district in the Delta, named Goshen specially adapted to pasturage, and cities named Pithom, Ramases, and Succoth, that there was a fortress on the way to the land of the Philistines, that there was a land tenure in Egypt similar to that introduced by Joseph, that there were strong tribes in the lands between Egypt and Palestine, that the Canaanites were then in the reduced condition that made their conquest comparatively easy, that there was then a peace between Egypt and the nation of the East and

North that made it possible for Israel to take root in the subdued land. All this was much more brought to light by the monuments is pre-supposed in the story of the Exodus. Thus the monuments show the closest harmony between the conditions implied in the Bible narrative between Abraham and the Exodus and the actual conditions of the time.

This we take it goes far to establish the authenticity of the record. The whole narrative fits so perfectly into the actual conditions that its story must have grown out of these conditions. The author is so true to life in portraying the back ground that we must think of him as true to life also in the incidents that he depicts. That part of the record is seen to be historic which is covered by the monuments, this makes it highly probable that the remaining part also is. It is true that if there were discovered a record parallel to the narrative of Scripture the evidence would be much stronger even than it is, if for instance there were discovered a Babylonian cylinder describing Abraham's sojourn in Palestine or Jacob's visit to Padan-aram. Without such detailed conformation, however, the evidence as has been stated is strong indeed.

Some have objected that without the actual discovery of such parallel records the monuments can do little to authenticate the Scripture record. Such an objection is unreasonable. It forgets that to establish the authenticity of the conditions as the monuments do is to establish largely the authenticity of the entire narrative that finds its setting in these conditions. We could hardly conceive an Oriental author in writing a fictitious story going to the vast trouble of securing the actual conditions even if he were able to do so. Western authors of fiction generally try to secure the actual conditions and sometimes meet with considerable success in their efforts, but the historic instinct was not sufficiently strong in the Oriental to impel him to such a task or to give him success if the effort was made. The fact, therefore that the conditions geographical, social, educational, political and religious implied in the narrative of the Pentateuch were the actual conditions of the time must be regarded as virtually establishing the essential authenticity of the narrative.

Nor is it to be forgotten that the Radical critics have regarded the history contained in the Pentateuch as fictitious largely because it has been thought that the pre-supposed conditions were not nor could be the actual. For instance they held at one time that the art of writing was not known in the days of Moses and consequently that the Pentateuch could not have been written in his time; they hold at the present that the Pentateuch pre-supposes a higher civilization than that which existed in those early times and that consequently it must have been the product of a later age that lived to read back the conditions of the present unto the remote past. When, therefore, the monuments showed that the implied conditions of the Scripture narrative were the actual objections of the Radical critics are met, and so, as far as they are concerned, at any rate the authenticity of the narrative is established. For instance the Radical critic would say: The story of Abraham must be fictitious because the conditions that are implied belonged to a much later period, to this the Archaeologist might answer, the monuments show that the implied conditions were, as a matter of fact, the actual, and that consequently as far as you are concerned the authenticity of the story is established. With perfect safety, therefore, one can say that the monuments establish the authenticity of the Pentateuch narrative, at least, to the extent of meeting objections that Radical critics have raised against it.

In regard to the story of the Creation and of the Fall and of the Flood all that the monuments show is that there existed a very early tradition in regard to these great events. This fact, however, has as much to do with the authorship of the Pentateuch as with its authenticity. The only evidence that it affords of its authenticity is that afforded by a very early and almost universal tradition, which however is in itself evidence not to be despised.

*Concluded next week.*

When Saladin looked at the sword of Richard Cœur de Lion, he wondered that a blade so ordinary should have wrought such mighty deeds. The English king bared his arm and said, "It was not the sword that did these things, it was the arm of Richard." We should be instruments that the Lord can use, and when He has used us, the glory should all be His.—*Christian Endeavor World*