

the Lord." There is implication in this that Egypt has had a history of obedience heretofore, that the seed of the gospel has once flourished there. Can any facts be found to substantiate such a claim? Has this African continent an honorable record of religious life worth "returning" to now? Not before Isaiah's time, perhaps, but in later years of ecclesiastical annals there was great service credited by the churches to Egypt.

When Herodotus, the Father of History, began his best book of Oriental annals, he said as his opening sentence: "I shall now speak at greater length of Egypt, as it contains more wonders than any other of the lands and is pre-eminent above all the countries for works that a writer can hardly describe." But Herodotus, poor heathen that he was, could not know that the greatest glory of that spot was to be found in its singular relations to the gospel of God. There the church was begun; there the dispensation of the law was fashioned; there Jesus, the Lord of Glory, was housed from the violence of Herod; there the prophecy was fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." Thus this almost forgotten strip of territory naturally grew to be the earliest of the great centers of Christianity in wealth, intelligence, and doctrinal orthodoxy. For some scores of years one stronghold of the patristic faith was conspicuous along the northern shore of Africa. There a fresh hold was gained by the use of the Greek language; there the Pentateuch was translated by the noblest scholars of the age; there council after council was held, in which the greatest errors were silenced which ever harassed the churches, and the grandest doctrines were proclaimed which ever builded them up. The Scripture says those good old days are to come back again, and that strip of land redeemed from the sands is yet to grow fruitful and beautiful with graces for God's glory. It may not be far away from even our time when there may be another good Augustine at a new Hippo, another Aurelius at some Christian Carthage, and another Athanasius to stand for the truth at a more glorious Alexandria than those ages ever knew before, in the purer Egypt yet to be!

Add to this a fresh proof: the declarations of prophecy concerning Egypt are more profuse than those concerning any other nation, unless perhaps we except Assyria. God will see what is best in the past faith, and will restore it. He will see what is best in coming histories, and will secure it. He will accept kindly and gently what Egypt herself is doing to grow wiser, holier and better, and when He finds a feebleness which is open to pity, He will not break the bruised reed.

Influences are at work already. War has been like "the breaker" promised of old, and has opened strange sluices of information, and of course has awakened new interest. Prayer and effort are going steadily through the land hand-in-hand, and tokens of unmistakable prosperity are beginning to appear. Civilization is opening the path for gospel