

of the Missions. The native Christians also are still a small minority of the 300,000,000 of people in Hindustan, yet about one-fourth of the successful men at these impartial examinations were Christians. Besides two of the young Christians carried off two of the medals—one for the best work in clinical surgery and one for the best all around graduating student of the Medical College. An interesting fact related to education in India is an earnestly advocated proposition to establish an International High School and College for Christian students, in which all the Christian missions shall unite in supplying support in money and in furnishing professors and teachers, and to which they shall send lads of promise desiring a higher education. This scheme seems worthy of adoption. There is a great deal of power everywhere in mere numbers, and a union of the Missions in such institutions would be likely to result in an impressive and attractive exhibition of strength, besides furnishing the widest possible range of instruction at an outlay considerably less than that demanded by the present separate mission schools.

RECENT BABYLONIAN DISCOVERIES.

Much has been published concerning the excavations which have been carried on by the expedition of the University of Pennsylvania among the ruins of Nippur, in Northern Babylonia. Innumerable remains of a civilization that flourished at least 8,000 years ago have been discovered, and texts that furnish us with a continuous history of Babylonia since that period. These discoveries are among the most important of modern times, and have been reinforced by the finding at ancient Telloh, in the extreme south of Chaldea, by a French expedition, of a "library," containing 33,000 clay tablets, formed 5,000 years ago. Telloh, however, was but a provincial town of Babylonia, while Nippur, or Niffer, or Nuffar, was the center of ancient Babylonia civilization. We find in *The Contemporary Review* an article on the subject by Prof. A. H. Sayce, from which we quote the following extract:

"Nippur was, in fact, one of the oldest seats of Babylonian religion and civilization. Its great temple, dedicated to the god called by the Sumerians Mul-lil or El-lil, 'the lord of the ghost-world,' was coeval with the beginnings of Chaldean history. Here the old Shamanistic beliefs of Sumerian Babylonia, which peopled the universe with innumerable spirits, were first organized into an official cult. In later days, when Semitic rulers took the place of the Sumerian princes, and Semitic priests succeeded to the sorcerers and magicians of an earlier age, the Sumerian Mul-lil became the Semitic Bel or Baal, to whom this earth and the under-world were assigned as a domain. The Bel of Nippur, however, eventually faded into the background before the younger Bel-Merodach of Babylon. When Babylon was made the capital of a united Babylonia, its god assumed supremacy over the other deities of the Babylonian cities, and the older Bel was relegated to a subordinate place.

"It is among the ruins of the temple of this older Bel that the American excavators have been working. For the first time in Babylonia they have systematically carried their shafts through the various strata of historical remains which occupy the site, carefully noting the objects found in each, and wherever possible clearing each stage away when once it had been thoroughly examined. The work began in 1888, about two hundred Arabs being employed as laborers. For two seasons, until May 1890, the excavations were continued under the direction of Dr. Peters. The site was surveyed, trial trenches were dug, and systematic exploration made in certain places. Among the objects discovered were about ten thousand tablets and inscribed fragments, some of which go back to the earliest epoch of Chaldean history. Then for three years the work of the expedition was discontinued, but in the spring of 1893 it was resumed more vigorously than ever by Mr. J. H. Haynes. For three full years it was carried on, with an interruption of only two months. What this meant can best be understood by the fact that Mr. Haynes's one European companion, Dr. Meyer, succumbed after a few months to the pestilential atmosphere of the Babylonian marshes, and during the rest of the time Mr. Haynes was left to

fight single-handed against fevers, and Bedawin, and all the usual difficulties which attend excavations in the Ottoman dominions.

"As Professor Hilprecht says: 'It was indeed no easy task for any European or American to dwell thirty-four months near these insect-breeding and pestiferous Affej swamps, where the temperature in perfect shade rises to the enormous height of 120° F., where the stifling sand-storms from the desert rob the tent of its shadow and parch the human skin with the heat of a furnace, where the ever-present insects bite and sting and buzz through day and night, while cholera is lurking at the threshold of the camp, and treacherous Arabs are planning robbery and murder; and yet during all these wearisome hours to fulfil the duties of three ordinary men.'

"But the task was at last accomplished, and the excavations at Nippur were carried deeply and widely enough not only to reveal the history of the city itself but also to open up a new vista in the forgotten history of civilized man.

"The history of civilization has been taken back into ages which a short while since were still undreamed of. Professor Hilprecht, the historian of the expedition, upon whom has fallen the work of copying, publishing, and translating the multitudinous texts discovered in the course of it, declares that we can no longer 'hesitate to date the founding of the temple of Bel and the first settlements in Nippur somewhere between 6000 and 7000 B.C., possibly even earlier.' At any rate the oldest monuments which have been disinterred there belong to the fifth or sixth millennium before the Christian era. Hitherto we have been accustomed to regard Egypt as the land which has preserved for us the earliest written monuments of mankind, but Babylonia now bids fair to outrival Egypt."

Professor Sayce retaliates upon some of the German critics who have made merry over the credulity of Assyriologists for accepting as authentic the inscriptions of Nabonidos, fixing the date of the reign of Sargon, hitherto "the earliest fixed date in Babylonian history." The discoveries at Nippur, says the Professor, vindicate the Assyriologists and discredit German criticism. But the tablets unearthed at Nippur carry the history back far beyond Sargon; and yet do not reach the beginnings of Babylonian civilization. Says Professor Sayce again:

"It would seem that the temple of Mul-lil must have been founded at least as early as 6000 B.C. And yet, as far back as we can penetrate, we still find inscribed monuments and other evidences of civilization. It is true that the characters are rude and hardly yet lifted above their pictorial forms. They have, however, ceased to be pictures, and have already become that cursive script which we call cuneiform. For the beginnings of Babylonian writing we have still to search among the relics of centuries that lie far behind the foundation of the temple of Nippur."

"MY LOT IN LIFE"

I find myself where I am and as I am. My duty is submission. My privilege is enjoyment. Because I am sick or disabled, I need not be useless nor unhappy. I accept my situation as of divine appointment, and I will try to be contented in it.

Lamenting over the past will do no good. I cannot recall or change it.

Complaining of the present will not mend it. It may make myself and others wretched. Anxiety about the future will not of itself make it any better.

My heavenly Father has permitted things to be with me just as they are, but I know He loves me. I will therefore leave all to Him. No rebellion shall be cherished in my heart, and no murmur shall escape my lips. My Saviour has promised that His grace shall be sufficient for me. He will never leave me, but be a present help in my time of need.

Trusting in Him, and committing all to my Father's loving care, I will do what I can. I will make the place where my lot is cast as bright and cheerful as possible, and work and wait with patience till I am permitted to go to my Heavenly Home.