

Vs. 24, 25. *He*; that is, God. *Increased . . . greatly*; made His people exceeding fruitful" (see Ex. 1:7). *Stronger*, etc.; so that the king of Egypt became afraid of them, Ex. 1:8-10. *He* (God) *turned their heart*, etc. The psalmist traces the hatred of the Egyptians to God's agency, because it was due to the blessings which God had given to Israel and led, at last, to Israel's liberation, hence becoming a link in the chain of God's action, though the Egyptians were none the less blameworthy. *Deal subtilly*; a reference to the crafty and cruel plans for destroying Israel (see Ex. 1:10-22.)

## II. The Plagues, 26-36.

Vs. 26, 27. *Moses his servant*; a usual title for the great leader and lawgiver, and one of the highest honor. *Aaron . . . chosen*; the divinely appointed spokesman for the slower-tongued Moses' (see Ex. 4:14-16). *They shewed*. Probably "they" should be "He," that is, God. *His signs*; the proofs of His power. *Wonders*; miracles.

Vs. 28, 29. *Darkness*; like a dense, black fog,—the ninth plague, Ex. 10:21-29. It was miraculous, though likely it resulted from a sand storm caused by the hot electrical wind called the Hamsin, which in Egypt blows in most years at intervals, usually for two or three days at a time. This plague, from which Goshen, the home of the Hebrews, was free (Ex. 10:23) showed God's power over the sun, which the Egyptians worshiped as one of its chief gods. *They rebelled not*; that is, the Egyptians, whose feelings towards the Hebrews were changed and softened by the plague, though they were not yet ready to free their slaves. *Waters into blood*; the first plague. The "waters" were those of the Nile, which, like the sun, was regarded as a god, but was now seen to be under God's control. The plague was a supernatural intensification of the blood-like appearance of the river at the time of overflow.

Vs. 30-33. *Frogs*; the second plague, Ex. 8:1-14. Frogs are common in most years in the Nile and its connecting ponds and canals, but they do not usually wander far from the water. Now, however, they swarmed over the land, invading houses, even the bedchambers and kneading troughs.

*Flies*; a specially irritating kind of insect, perhaps the "dog fly" of ancient Egypt, described as attacking its victim with the force of a dart and not giving up till it has had its fill of blood and flesh. This was the fourth plague, Ex. 8:20-32 (see also Light from the East). *Lice*; the third plague (see Light from the East), Ex. 8:16-19. *Hail for rain . . . flaming fire* (lightning); the seventh plague (Ex. 9:13-35), the fifth, murrain, and sixth, boils (Ex. 9:1-12) being omitted. For a description of the hail see Light from the East. Again Goshen was exempt, Ex. 9:26.

V. 34-36. *Locusts*; the eighth plague, Ex. 10:12-20. These insects, of the grasshopper variety, came in such numbers as to hide the ground from view and destroyed all vegetation left by the hail. *Caterpillars*; young locusts. "It often happens that immense swarms of locusts come (into Egypt) from Nubia. Wherever they appear, they cover the ground for miles, and sometimes to the depth of two or three feet." *Smote . . . the firstborn*. See next Lesson.

## Light from the East

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London, Ont.

**FLIES**—Are very plentiful in Egypt and have to be kept off the person and out of the houses by all manner of devices. They defile food and carry the contagion of various diseases, especially ophthalmia and diphtheria. They settle in a cloud on the weak eyes of infants, deposit their eggs in neglected sores and sometimes in the noses and ears of dirty people, and their larvæ hatch out and fill these cavities so as to make them a most distressing sight. But the plague far exceeded any ordinary experience.

**LICE**—Peculiar to men, cannot live on beasts, but probably some species of gnat, sand fly or mosquito is intended. Some of these pests are still so thick as to madden animals and make human life a burden. A minute tick no bigger than a grain of sand is known in the East; it burrows under the skin and when full of blood, swells to the size of a small nut.

**HAIL**—Is not entirely unknown in Egypt, but it is extremely rare. In Canada hail often completely destroys the crop along its