

all the territory of the early Chaldean kingdom. It was not until Chaldea and Babylonia were united into one kingdom, gathering in and amalgamating many scattered tribes, that we have our first chapter in the authentic history of the Tigro-Euphrates basin. The Hebrew records say that the founder of this kingdom was NIMROD, the son of Cush.

If you will turn to the tenth chapter of Genesis, Master Tom, and read the eighth, ninth and tenth verses, you will see how there was later a confederation of four cities which ruled over this empire established by 'the mighty hunter' Nimrod. This Tetrapolis, or confederated group, was composed of the cities of Babylon, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, and all of these places have been identified within the last half-century. The spade and shovel have given back to us buried cities, whose temples and tombs are rich with stories of the mighty kings of mighty nations.

"When the *Assyrian* kingdom was at the height of her power she swallowed up all of Babylonia, a large part of Palestine, Arabia, and Egypt. This we know from the records which we find engraved on slabs and cylinders.

But the reason why I gave Chaldea the first place, Teddie, is because it possesses the earliest *secular* historic records. When Alexander the Great conquered Babylon (331 B. C.) he found there an unbroken series of astronomical observations taken by the Chaldeans,

and these records covered a period of nineteen thousand and three years. Now add that sum to the year of Alexander's conquest and you see that puts us back into the year 2234 B. C.

"But you must remember boys, that we have taken the oldest monumental building of which there is any record, and we have done our best to see where men went and what they did after God's hand had scattered them abroad. We say that this dispersion of the people followed hard on the Confusion of Tongues, an event which we suppose to have been about the twenty-third or twenty-second century. We cannot be sure of any of these dates.

We know that when Abraham visited Egypt, about the twentieth century, he found a civilization of a high order, he was within the borders of a vast monarchy ruled by the strong hand of a Pharaoh. And Abraham must have stood in the shadow of the Pyramids, for modern scholars are agreed in saying that Egypt was a civilized country 3,000 years before the Christian era.

So you see our dates are only approximate. Egyptian civilization is shrouded in the mists of antiquity. Nobody knows when the Pyramids were built, and nobody is quite sure *why* they were built; but, from the top of the tallest of them we shall, on our next half-holiday, take a bird's eye view of the world and see what progress it made during the thousand years that followed the call of Abraham.

THE BABES IN THE FLOOD.

A SKETCH FROM NATURE.

BY MRS. CLARK MURRAY.

After six months of almost uninterrupted possession of the River St. Lawrence by Jack Frost, something more is needed to shake the power of the retiring winter than a few batteries of heat from the advancing spring. Sometimes the battle is long and protracted. Repeated scouts and skirmishes of rain and warm winds are necessary before the sun and the current, bringing up the rear of the attack, compel the winter in sullen silence to yield up the keys of the fort. Again it is forced, under a constant and heavy artillery, to come to terms of immediate surrender amid dying groans and agonies. It is then that Jack Frost, like other vanquished despots, loves revenge. In sulky defeat he scorns the sun; he laughs at the rain; makes jams and bridges of his straggling ice blocks; and, in imperious imbecility, wreaks his retreating rage upon the advancing waters, sending them helter-skelter, panicstricken, over the land, in very terror seeking refuge on the wharves, along the streets, in the very dwellings of the people.

It is Nature pitched in battle against herself.

Thus it was in the spring of last year. The morning broke bright and warm over the City of Montreal. The river was still a frozen mass, though here and there patches of blue water sparkled in the sunshine, and only the fool-hardy were seen to trust themselves on the treacherous ice.

Mrs. Mearns left her two fatherless children in the morning, with a little bread for their dinner, and proceeded to one of the up-town houses to work for the day,

promising all sorts of good things to them on her return in the evening. Shortly afterwards Cottie, whose age was about eight, and her little four-year old brother Frankie put their simple repast into their pockets and sallied out to the sunny air. Already hoops, tops, balls, and other harbingers of spring were in vogue, and a roaring trade of exchange was going on about the doors. Suddenly a band of children came rushing round the corner, shouting and screaming.

"Hillo! hillo! hillo! for the flood? Who's coming to the flood? It's all coming up the street; up, and up, and up."

Cottie and her brother joined the party, took to their heels and flew like the wind. A strange sight met their young eyes. The streets they knew so well were nowhere to be seen; neither doorstep nor sidewalk was visible; and the houses were standing mute in their own dismay. Already many young arabs were afloat on the gleaming water, pushing themselves about on planks, or heartlessly worrying the thousands of rats who had been ruthlessly disturbed in their slumbers and were struggling for their very life.

A loud noise startled the young adventurers as they revelled in their unwonted sport. Raising their eyes they saw a huge tide of water come rushing towards them, roaring like thunder and bearing everything before it. Men and women shouted, children screamed in terror, hastening by hook or by crook to get out of the way.