

## OLD EGYPTIAN RECORDS CORROBORATING SCRIPTURE.

(From the *Pilot*)

THE contributions to our knowledge of mankind in its earliest historical stages furnished by discoveries in Egypt are as surprising as they are satisfactory. At the present moment, a series of inscriptions is on exhibition in the British Museum, which are, so far as men yet know, the earliest specimens of State reports. They consist of small clay tablets covered with fine arrow-headed or cuneiform lettering, referring in their context to the politics of Egypt thirty-four centuries ago, and the questions which then divided statesmen. "By these inscriptions," says one writer, "rescued from under the sands of the Nile Valley, we are enabled to enter into the Foreign Office of the Pharaohs of the sixteenth century before the Christian era. Egypt has been fitly called the land of surprises, and no more striking vindication of this title has she afforded than in the discovery of these valuable records." They were found about 200 miles from Cairo, on the edge of the desert, in the year 1887, by an Arab woman wandering through the ruins searching for nitrate earth for manure. On the ground she saw these curiously scratched tablets; and in the ruined tomb in which these first ones were discovered, about 300 were brought to light.

A less curious but still more important discovery was made two years ago by an American named Wilbour. In the island of Sebel, Mr Wilbour came across a great and lengthy inscription, carved upon a rock, which in its text referred to the seven years of famine that occurred in Egypt, as related in the Book of Genesis! Such was the subject which the learned Professor Orazio Marucchi, one of the first, if not the first, of Egyptologists in Italy, discussed on Thursday, June 2, in the large hall of the Cancelleria at Rome. Cardinal Serafini presided, and among those present were Mgr Tripepi, Abbot Cosmi-Lizi, Commendatore De Bossi, and other noted Roman scholars. The inscription was translated from the original hieroglyphs by its discoverer, Mr Wilbour, and his translation has been accepted in its general features by the great Egyptian scholar, Emil Brugsch. The inscription is a copy, made in the Ptolemaic period, about two centuries B.C., from a very much older inscription dating from the third dynasty. It relates the words spoken by the King to the great God, the Self-created Being, the Chief of all the gods. The King makes a fervent appeal in favour of the people over whom he rules, that they may be saved from the horrors of another such famine. The God promises that such a famine, so long in its duration, arising from the failure of the fertilising Nile to overflow its banks, shall not occur any more. Marucchi mentioned that the memory of this famine is referred to as existing for centuries after its occurrence, and that testimony to this fact is furnished by two other inscriptions found at widely different places. The learned lecturer stated that he would soon publish the paper he read recently, and it will then be possible to have a more accurate account of this wonderful testimony to the verity of the Bible than can be furnished from a simple hearing of it read.

It may be within the recollection of many that, about 20 years ago, a discovery of Assyrian records, consisting of tiny bricks of baked clay written all over with cuneiform characters, related the history of the deluge as it was known to the ancient Babylonians. The bricks, which were books, were found amid the ruins of what had been the library of Assurbanipal, King of Assyria. Few scientific discoveries made more noise in the world than that of the Babylonian story of the deluge. Apart from its relating the story which is so important in the annals of the human race, the new and unexpected light it cast upon the religious ideas of the Babylonians, and of their traditions relative to the primitive ages of humanity, gave it, in the eyes of scholars, a special importance. Now from the mysterious land of Egypt comes the corroboration of the Scripture account, which rationalists first questioned and then denied, of the seven years' famine predicted by the Patriarch Joseph to the then reigning Pharaoh. One of the strangest circumstances is that that old inscription should be brought to light by a native of the New World!

One hundred buildings in the Mexican city of Guadalajara were destroyed by earthquakes during the week. No lives were lost.

The crypt of the new Church of St Joachim, in the Prati di Castello, Rome, was solemnly presented last month to Cardinal Parocchi, Vicar-General of His Holiness. The crypt is itself a handsome church with a noble nave, and the ceremony was to be followed immediately by that of laying the first stone of the first pillar of the church above. A large and representative congregation attended, and heard the sermon of the Abbe Brugidou, to whose two years' work of collecting the building is due. The preacher gave an enthusiastic account of his difficulties and of the invariable good fortune that attended them. Not a workman had ever waited a day for his wages. Cardinal Parocchi replied. Over the entrance to the crypt is an eloquent inscription in Italian, declaring this to be the first fruits of the Pope's Episcopal Jubilee—a place that calls aloud for its crown, the church above.

## THE CURLEW MOUNTAINS.

(Translated for the *Pilot* from the Irish by An Odraoibhin Aoibhinn.)

The Curlew Mountains are fine in winter,  
They are not embedded in ice or snow;  
The cuckoo calls from the greenwood's centre,  
The thrush and the cornerake sing below.

The hounds are hunting, the rocks resounding,  
They follow the fawn that flies before;  
The torrent comes down from the mountain bounding,  
Sa'mon are leaping beside the shore.

I think of my mountain late and early,  
Where blossoms are golden and glad and gay;  
Where the wheat springs high and the yellow barley,  
And birds are piping on every spray.

The tips of the rushes are heavy with honey,  
There's butter and cream from the silken kine;  
No Northern snow on its slopes so sunny,  
Will trouble its coasts or its harbours fine.

Where the bee has a home and is wisely working,  
And women eat honey from day to day;  
But deep in my bosom a care is lurking,  
The love of my heart is far away.

Your fair, thin forehead, the wide world's wonder,  
Your tresses that hang in a golden sheaf,  
Have torn the strings of my heart asunder,  
And covered my head with a cloud of grief.

I am as a man that is even dying  
For lack of the jewel his eye would see.  
Oh! will you not visit me where I am lying,  
And take God's blessing and comfort me?

NOTE.—This is a typically Irish song, it changes its tone and shifts its thoughts and illusions so often and abruptly. I am publishing this and other poems in my "Songs of the Connacht Bards," where I hope to print about forty love songs peculiar to Connacht. Winter and summer, the loch and the mountain, love and the chase are here mixed up in a manner quite characteristic, and peculiar to Gaelic peasant songs.

Mr Charles Byers' 14 Manchester street and Morton's buildings, Christchurch, is ready at all times to execute in the most satisfactory manner possible orders given him for every description of bread and fancy goods. Mr Byers' carts are sent daily to all parts of the town and suburbs.

Mr Gladstone will shortly publish a small and highly interesting little volume on "Special Aspects of the Irish Question: a Series of Reflections In and Since 1886." The brochure will enlighten many on the Irish question.

A Parliamentary return shows that at the end of last year the deposits in the Post-office Savings Bank in the United Kingdom reached the prodigious amount of £7,608,002. During the twelve months the sums received were £13,302,007, and those paid out £13,146,108.

The Propaganda has just finished the new missal for the use of the Church in Montenegro. This concession, which was requested by Monsignor Strosemayer in 1896, is important, as tending to draw into the Western Catholic orbit the Slav peoples of the Balkans and to act as a counterpoise to Russian panslavism.

The latest invention of the day, introduced into the Colony by the D.I.C., is one that makes especial provision for the convenience of ladies engaged in cooking operations. It consists of a round plate or girdle, technically known as "angite," and which has the peculiar and valuable property of preserving from burning or boiling-over the contents, no matter how delicate they may be, of any pot or saucepan placed upon it, above even the hottest fire. It may be utilised also for toasting bread. We have personally seen the invention tried with complete success. Our acquaintance with chemistry or mineralogy is not sufficiently profound to warrant us on entering into an inquiry as to the nature of the material made use of. Persons, however, desirous of investigating for themselves can do so by procuring from the D.I.C. one of the articles in question. Indeed, the firm deserve the thanks of the sisterhood of cooks in New Zealand for providing a household utensil so capable of making their work easier and sparing their tempers.

MYERS AND CO., Dentists, Octagon, corner of George street. The guarantee highest class work at moderate fees. Their artificial teeth give general satisfaction, and the fact of them supplying a temporary denture while the gums are healing does away with the inconvenience of being months without teeth. They manufacture a single artificial tooth for Ten Shillings, and sets equally moderate. The administration of nitrous oxide gas is also a great boon to those needing the extraction of a tooth. Read—[ADVT.]

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