

## Old Testament History 113

excavation. The work since the war has hardly gotten reestablished again but it is now getting established. I mentioned yesterday the new excavation of Nippur. Dr. [redacted] of the University of Chicago spent a good deal of last summer searching in Mesopotamia to decide what would be the most profitable place for new large scale excavation and he decided on Nippur. This fall they made a preliminary investigation of it and tried to get things more or less laid out and plan to carry it on for a number of years starting next fall unless conditions interfere and make it impossible. I mentioned yesterday, I believe, how Professor [redacted] flew over there on December 1 and got back on December 9 and spent a day and a half there on the mound [redacted] investigating just how the plans were working out and one of the things he was interested in doing there was trying to secure a little railroad that the Germans when they excavated the mound before the war had built and they had, when they finished their excavation, [redacted] they sold this railroad to one of the other governments. Now the railroad is supposed to be not of much use to the [redacted] today. They thought they would make a lot of use of it and they haven't so he is trying to buy this railroad that the Germans put in there to have it there to carry away their earth from the excavation and so on. It would be tremendously helpful if they could get this railroad but I don't know just how far negotiations have proceeded for buying the railroad. They probably would offer it to him for about \$50,000 and in the end they might sell it for \$300.00 if he bargained long enough. Well the early excavations found much that was of value but of course they destroyed much but they did find, especially in Northern Mesopotamia; that is the southern part of Northern Mesopotamia, not in the extreme north, but fairly well north in Mesopotamia, they carried on a number of very important excavations especially around Nineveh. Now there an interesting thing occurred. The excavations were largely in Nineveh which was the center of the Assyrian empire and consequently the early books on the subject always speak of it as Assyrian discoveries and then they came to speak of the language as the Assyrian language, though the Assyrians were only