

## Interest of the Bible Student in Archaeology

The interest of the Bible student in Biblical archaeology can be placed quite definitely under three heads. The original interest in the archaeology of the ~~near-East~~ near-East came from people who were anxious to illuminate the background of the Bible and to corroborate its statements. Our first heading for Biblical Archaeology may be entitled Corroboration. The Bible gives us a picture of certain events in ancient times. Through Biblical archaeology we learn much of the general culture and history of those lands in those periods. We learn sometimes about the same events from two entirely different angles. We learn of many different phases of the same civilization from these different angles. We take the two pictures and fit them together to see whether or not they fit. Thus, we have a valuable external means of checking upon statements in the Bible. It is strengthening to faith if we can find important points in the ~~Biblical~~ Biblical history at which materials dug up from the ground corroborates the accuracy of the Biblical account. On the other ~~hand~~ hand, where we find points at which material excavated does not seem to fit in with the statements in the Bible, questions and problems are raised, the study of which comes under this general head of Corroboration.

Here, a word of caution should be mentioned. Occasionally, one will come across ~~wild~~ wild statements that the whole Old Testament has been corroborated by archaeology. On the face of it, such statements are absurd. At least half of the statements of the Old Testament are such as are not susceptible of corroboration by archaeology. The revelation of spiritual truths which it contains, the accounts of many incidents in the daily lives of the people from whom no record has been preserved aside from that in the Bible are not susceptible of corroboration by archaeology. Archaeology does not prove them true or false, although it may cast valuable light upon their background and thus indirectly tend toward corroborating them.