

events of ancient Egyptian history took place in the delta, the most prosperous section of the land, and also the one nearest to Asia and consequently most involved in the frequent preparations for warlike expeditions into Asia and *most in danger* of attack from that region. The great majority of the relationships between the Bible and Egypt doubtless took place in the delta region, yet perhaps nine-tenths of our remains from Egypt come from Upper Egypt and comparatively little from the delta.

The reason for this is that the delta has continued as a center of active life all through history and the remains of ancient times are covered by the teeming population of today. In addition, the water level in the delta has been constantly rising, so that even if it were possible to remove houses, factories, and farms, so as to excavate in the delta, one would not go very deep before the material would be all covered with water, subject to much corruption and decay, and extremely difficult to excavate or to study. On the other hand, in Upper Egypt where a thin line of occupation runs beside the Nile, behind which one need go only a short distance to reach complete wilderness, there was a little-disturbed region for erection of great monuments and for making burials. Thus southern Egypt is to quite an extent a great outdoor museum, but a tremendous portion of what it contains is what its people desired to celebrate, rather than the incidental remains of their normal human life and activity.

#### 4. Interpretation.

Egyptian records are not as helpful in Biblical interpretation as those from Mesopotamia, but there are a number of places at which Biblical words or situations can be better understood in view of the light from ancient Egypt. One of these to which allusion has been made above is its striking illustration of the reality and extent of the oppression to which the Israelites were subjected in the period just before the Exodus. Another interesting instance is the use of the word hanikim