

not to be compared with the number of those with Mesopotamia. The contacts with Mesopotamia will prove to be of intense interest, while those with Egypt are far less numerous and many of them of less importance.

Since the Egyptian contacts occur earlier chronologically than those with Mesopotamia, we shall take a rapid view of the developments in this connection before turning our attention to the development of our knowledge of Mesopotamia.

One hundred and thirty years ago, comparatively little was known of ancient Egypt. Travelers had observed a great many remains of ancient temples in Egypt with hieroglyphic signs on them. No one could read these hieroglyphic signs and the tendency was to regard them as representing some type of magic. Back of the history of the Greeks, nothing was known of Egyptian history. Certain Greek writers had marvellous stories to tell of Egyptian history, but these stories contained a comparatively small kernel of truth, mixed with a great deal of phantasy. Up to 1798 no systematic examination of the antiquities of Egypt had ever been made. Then occurred the invasion of Egypt by Napoleon I. He took with him almost a hundred eminent scholars and artists and set them to work describing and picturing the antiquities of Egypt. Between 1809 and 1822 a seven volume work was published describing the outstanding remains of ancient Egypt. The military expedition of Napoleon to Egypt laid the foundation for scientific study of the ruins of the ancient Egypt, but as it happened, Napoleon's expedition resulted in something of far greater importance to our knowledge of ancient Egypt than this systematic investigation of the temples and palaces that were standing. At Rosetta, a town near the mouth of the farthest west of the one of the large branches of the Nile, one of Napoleon's engineers discovered a stone containing writing in three types of characters. Part of the stone was broken away so that about