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Rameses II, and his successor Mineptah II, under whom the Exodus took place,¹ the waters of the "Red Sea" extended northwards up the valley at least as far as the Bitter Lakes, producing a channel from 20 to 30 feet in depth, and perhaps a mile in breadth; a terrible barrier to the Israelites, and sufficient to induce a cry of despair from the whole multitude. If this view be taken, the Bible narrative (which I assume to be perfectly exact) will be brought into harmony with physical conditions; and the difficulty which has surrounded the subject will have been, to a great degree, removed.

On the same principles we may suppose that the gradual elevation of the sea-bed and adjoining land has progressed, till at some period—one cannot say how distant—the present relations were established; but supposing the rise to have gone on till very recent times, or to be still going on, the rate of elevation would be less than one foot in a century.

EDWARD HULL.

M. MASPERO'S WORK IN EGYPT.

THE following letter, addressed to Mr. Scott-Moncrieff by M. Maspero was published in the *Times* of February 23rd.

(Translation.)

"BOULAK, Feb. 2nd, 1884.

"SIR,—During the four years I have had the honour to direct the Department of Antiquities, I have never ceased to protest against the numerical insufficiency of the staff and the inadequacy of the funds placed at my disposal. Permit me to repeat this complaint once more, though the present state of Egypt affords me but little hope that it will be heard.

"You know how many monuments are found above the surface of the soil between the mouths of the Nile and the Second Cataract; no country in Europe, not even Italy or Greece, possessing so great a number on so small an extent of territory. Nature, moreover, has divided these monuments into three groups—first, that of the Delta, with Alexandria, San, Sa (Saïs), Bubastis, and the regions mentioned in the Bible; secondly, that of Egypt proper, with Memphis, the Pyramids, the Faioum, Beni-Hassan, Tel-el-Amarnah, Siout, Abydos, Denderah, Thebes, Esneh, Edfou, Koum Ombou, and Philæ; thirdly, that of Nubia, with all the temples of the Ptolemaic epoch in the neighbourhood of Philæ and the wonderful Pharaonic ruins of Wâdy Essaboua, Ibsamboul, and Wâdy Halfa. Of these three groups only one is placed under the care of the Department of Antiquities, and protected as well as may be from the avidity of treasure-seekers and the mischievous folly of tourists—that in Egypt proper. Even this is imperfectly protected, and some localities such as Siout, Tel-el-Amarnah, Bersheh, Beni-Hassan, Illahoun, &c., remain without

¹ Brugsch-Bey, "Egypt under the Pharaohs," edit. 1881, vol. i.

guardians. The Delta and Nubia have no protection, and are left to the mercy of the first who may choose to destroy or rifle the temples. Thus, in Nubia the inhabitants of the village of Dandour have recently caused the wall of the temple to topple down through taking the *sebakh*; at Mansourah a proprietor demolished a superb naos of Nectanebo I in order that he might use the *débris* for the foundations of a bridge; at Zagazig and at Damanhour the treasure-hunters in 1883 discovered dépôts of *bijoux*, which, valued at the weight of the metal, without taking the artistic workmanship into account, were worth over 50,000f. The artistic and archaeological treasures of Egypt are open to pillage throughout two-thirds of the Egyptian territory.

"Observe that here I speak only of the service appointed for the guardianship of the monuments; another part of my functions obliges me to make excavations, to endeavour to increase the number of the monuments deposited in the Boulak Museum, and to discover new documents which may enable us to re-write the ancient history of the Egyptian and Semitic worlds. The funds allotted to the service for the prosecution of excavations are so small that in Europe I am almost ashamed to name the exact figures. They have been diminishing from year to year; they have never exceeded 35,000f. per annum, and have always approached much more nearly 25,000f. With 35,000f. I can still sustain the burden imposed on me, provided that I undertake a great deal personally. The discovery of the Royal mummies at Thebes; the opening of sixteen pyramids, of which some, like that of Mydoun, passed for impregnable; the clearing away of the rubbish begun at Luxor, show what we can do with the miserable means afforded us. But I learn that many, even among Europeans, consider that these few thousand francs are yet too heavy a charge for the Treasury, and decri our labours as entailing a useless expense. I confess I cannot see sense in the accusation. In ordinary times Egypt is visited every year by about 3,000 travellers, drawn there, not by factories, or cotton, or railways, or all that it is customary to call useful and productive, but by the monuments of Arab and Egyptian art. Estimating the expenditure of these travellers at 2,000f. each on an average, there is a sum of four to six millions of francs a year which is left by them in Egypt, and which the country gains entirely. In first deducting from these millions the thousands of francs which the Department of Antiquities requires, Egypt does not incur a useless expense; she has the wisdom to take from the riches which come without trouble to her funds barely sufficient to keep up the artistic and archaeological capital bequeathed to her by antiquity.

"Circumstances are so unfavourable at present that I shall not ask for an augmentation proportionate to the importance of the service: I shall only ask the Government not to diminish the little it gives me. On the other hand, I cannot resign myself to leave two such important provinces as the Delta and Nubia to be pillaged. Already I have endeavoured to engage private individuals to promote the objects we have in view in those parts of the country in which I cannot carry on excavations myself on the Government account. I have favoured the formation of the Egyptian

Exploration Fund, for which M. Naville last year discovered the town of Pithom, and for which Mr. Flinders Petrie is executing some works at Tanis this year. I have concluded arrangements with Messrs. Cook which will enable me to obtain some money from all the travellers that firm conducts through the country. The French Government has put some thousands of francs at our disposal, through the intervention of the École d'Archéologie which it has founded at Cairo. It seems to me that private persons might come to our aid as companies and Governments do, and that subscriptions opened in England and in the other countries of Europe might furnish us with some resources. With so little as it is our fortune to obtain our budget is so restricted that the smallest sums of money will be welcome.

"I leave it to you, Sir, to see if this suggestion can be made to lead to any practical result, and beg to assure you, &c.,

"G. MASPERO."

PILLAR OR GARRISON ?

SIR,—With all due respect to Captain Conder, I do not think my position with regard to 1 Samuel xiii, 23, can be so easily shaken. In Joshua xv, 3, 9, &c., the "boundary line" of the tribes is *the subject* of the narrative, but in the episode of 1 Samuel xiii and xiv there is no hint of a boundary being in question, unless it can be read into the word in dispute.

I cannot go into the Hebrew ; but the question is not whether the verb can be employed of some kinds of inanimate objects, but whether such an object as a menhir can be said to have *gone out* or *extended*.

That this distinction exists may be shown in the English words, by substituting for "garrison" the words proposed by C. R. C. as the correct rendering of מצב. We at once recognise that we could not properly say "the pillar of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash," or "the menhir of the Philistines extended to the passage of Michmash." You could indeed say the boundary of the Philistines went out (or extended), &c., because in the subject of a "boundary" there is involved the active principle of extension in length of circuit, or expansion of an area ; but I do not gather that Matzab can signify a boundary in this sense, but only a boundary *mark* set up to signify the precise position of the boundary at a particular place.

Following verses 5 and 6 of chapter xiii, the latter part of the chapter really described a more extended irruption of the Philistines than that prior to Jonathan's exploit, and verse 23 naturally follows on verse 16 as describing a military foray.

If it had signified a *lessening* of the extent of Philistine territory consequent on Jonathan's prowess, ought it not to have been mentioned before verse 5, and to have been worded "and the *Matzab* of the Philistines went *back* to the passage of Michmash ?"