

a place in Egypt called El-Amarana in 1887, and provide a source of information regarding early Palestine which is still far from exhausted. As in the case of all letters, much is taken for granted in them, and consequently any new information relating to the period from which they come may clear up difficult points in their interpretation, and may, in its turn, be explained by statements contained in them.

Thus not only is the material found in Mesopotamia itself ~~entirely~~ often of great value in connection with Bible study, but much material found elsewhere is intelligible because of the knowledge of cuneiform gained from Mesopotamia. In the study of the contacts of Mesopotamia with the Bible there is much that is obvious, but still more that involves a great deal of careful study before it can be fully understood. For the Bible student there is no field of archaeological study which is more fruitful than that derived from Mesopotamia. *Syria! Palestine!*

Evidence from Palestine and Syria

The third great area is Palestine and Syria. It is in Palestine that the majority of the events recorded in the Bible actually occurred. As yet, however, there is less archaeological material from Palestine which has vital meaning in relation to the Bible than from Mesopotamia. The principal reason for this is that comparatively little written material has been found in Palestine. Being so near Egypt its people were able to secure ample supplies of papyrus, and only rarely used clay tablets; in the damper climate of Palestine the papyrus did not last, nearly as well as in the drier atmosphere of Upper Egypt. ⁽⁶⁾ Archaeology in Palestine would be in a very unsatisfactory condition if it had to stand entirely alone. Fortunately that is not the case. It was on the high road of commerce between Mesopotamia and Egypt, and its ruins contain many signs of contacts with both lands. It was good that excavation was slower to get started in Palestine than in either of these regions. Without the great help which inscriptional material would afford it needed to profit by advanced methods of digging, and also by knowledge of the meaning of objects imported from countries whose cultural history was already worked out.

A great step forward was made in 1890 when Sir William Flinders Petrie, already a veteran of Egyptian excavation, spent six weeks excavating in southern Palestine, and in that brief time discovered two principles which have been of incalculable