

A Challenge to American Scholarship

BY MARRION WILCOX

WHEN asked to mention the chief authority on the earlier portions of the most important book in the world, one may hesitate. Is it a person at all, or rather, in a special sense, a region, a "field"—Mesopotamia, namely, with ancient Babylonia? I shall sketch the progress of American explorers in this field only so far as may be necessary to introduce the suggestion that the time is at hand for founding an American school of archæology at Constantinople.

The Wolfe expedition was prompted by an incident of a meeting of the American Oriental Society in 1884. The feeling was expressed that it would be proper to follow the lead of England and France in Assyria and Babylonia; and if this struck some of the members as a rather indefinite proposal, it proved to be nevertheless all that was required, thanks to the energy of Dr. John P. Peters, Dr. W. H. Ward, and others, to mark the beginning of a new endeavor. Funds were supplied by Miss Catherine Lorillard Wolfe, and the expedition, which was in the nature of a reconnoissance under Dr. Ward's direction, accomplished the purpose for which it had been sent out in a fashion to encourage further efforts. Next followed the University of Pennsylvania expedition in 1888-1890, equipped and maintained by the liberality of a number of citizens of Philadelphia. Dr. Peters was appointed director of this enterprise, and the United States minister at Constantinople gained the Sultan's consent to the proposed work of excavation under conditions which were regarded as unusually favorable. The usual conditions, as one cannot fail to notice, seem almost prohibitive, and yet the Turkish law is neither better nor worse than the Greek law on the same subject, from which it was copied. Article 8 provides that "the exportation of antiquities found within the Ottoman

territory is absolutely forbidden." All objects of this class belong to the Ottoman Imperial Museum. The application for permission to excavate must designate precisely the spot at which the work is to be carried on. A Turkish commissioner accompanies the excavator, at the latter's expense, and is expected to take charge at once of all objects found, ultimately delivering them to the authorities of the museum at Constantinople. Practically, however, the obstacles thus placed in the way of foreign students are not found to be insurmountable; and as for the spirit of this legislation, it seems unwise to overlook, as some of our writers have done, the possibility that this may be part of a design to secure ample material for the use of Turkish scholars, the accomplished Hamdy Bey and his colleagues.

Dr. Peters had one unsuccessful year, followed by a year of memorable achievement, in this land of buried literary treasure. His "first campaign," as he calls it, was brought to an end by the Arabs, who treacherously burned his camp; in five minutes the work of a diligent season was undone. The explorer was obliged to offer explanations and to secure new assurances of approval and support. His excavations at Nippur went forward from this time without serious interruption, and when he returned to America finally, Dr. J. H. Haynes carried on the work until relieved of the chief responsibility by Professor Hilprecht, the well-known Assyriologist, who had accompanied Dr. Peters in 1888, and had enjoyed exceptional opportunities for study at Constantinople, the University of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere. The promise has been made to readers of this Magazine that Professor Hilprecht will soon share with them his most interesting experiences, and our anxiety to hear this new message is naturally proportioned to the surprising character of

those messages which have preceded. Dr. Peters, for example, says that recent discoveries in Babylonia by the University of Pennsylvania expedition, and also by the French explorations at Tello, "have opened to us new vistas of ancient history. They have shown us that men in a high state of civilization, building cities, organizing states, conducting distant expeditions for conquest, ruling wide-extended countries, trafficking with remote lands, existed in Babylonia 2000 years before the period assigned by Archbishop Ussher's chronology for the creation of the world." He looks to archæology, and particularly to excavations in the Babylonian ruin mounds covering the sites of Jewish settlements during the period of exile, to furnish us ultimately with a large amount of contemporary and dated material which will throw as much light on Bible study as Greek and Roman excavations have thrown on the study of Greek and Roman history, religion, and literature.

While the German expedition is at work at Babylon, and the French, as I have said, at Tello, a new American expedition is being organized, which has Mugheir, repeatedly mentioned in the Book of Genesis under the designation of Ur of the Chaldees, as its objective. The plan is to secure a firman authorizing excavations at that most ancient city, the birthplace of Abraham and Sarah, from which the founders of the race which was to be called Hebrew emigrated to Palestine—though not before they had received at least their first lessons in religion. In Genesis, xiv. 13, Abraham, or Abram, is already "the Hebrew"; to what extent he represented a sect with distinct characteristics before the departure from Ur we have still to learn; but there is no longer any doubt that this was an adventurous separation from a polite centre of civilization so very ancient that in its perspective even Nineveh and Babylon are brought nearer to our point of view; that the pyramids of Egypt no longer stand out against the mystery of prehistoric times, but have a background of stirring human activity; that the beginnings of Phœnicia and Greece and Rome seem comparatively modern events. "As long before Abra-

ham's time as Abraham was before our time Ur was a great city, the political and religious centre of the greatest empire of the Orient, and the remains of that civilization are still preserved beneath the soil, waiting for the excavator." The confines of that liberal period which we have known as "historic" hitherto appeared to be washed by an ocean of unknown antiquity on which no voyager had skill to set sail; now, a whole continent of solid fact has been added, which it is our business to explore. To the historian this seems comparable with nothing less than the discovery of a new world across the *Mare Oceano* in the fifteenth century. It is simple folly, it is unscholarly, to guess what this old-new region may yield to the scientific explorer: one must go, or send, and so learn in the course of time and by scientific methods.

The excavations at Ur, confided to Dr. Edgar James Banks, are undertaken for the benefit of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington; meanwhile, as the discovery of rich gold-fields always stimulates prospectors to fresh activity in other promising regions, we have to note the establishment of a School of Oriental Research in Palestine, sustaining the usual filial relationship to the American Institute of Archæology, and Mr. Howard Crosby Butler's recent exploration of the country west of the Euphrates. But why should we not come more directly to the point by planning to deal effectively with the region which, above all others, inspires hopes of great results? The argument in favor of making Constantinople our headquarters for future efforts need not be elaborated in a paper designed, like the present, merely to convey a suggestion; but I think it is plain from the facts I have touched upon that a strong argument might be constructed on the following lines: 1, The great importance of the work to be done in Turkish territory; 2, The waste of time and money involved in organizing each expedition separately; 3, The positive advantage of placing the museum, library, etc., at Constantinople, thus avoiding conflict with the Turkish authorities in regard to sending antiquities out of the country, and securing Hamdy Bey's co-operation and the use of his collection.

Sir John and the American Girl

BY LILIAN BELL

"NOW that we're engaged," she said, looking up at him with a smile in her eyes that he had never seen before, "let's begin at the beginning and go clear back to the time when we first saw each other."

"What's the good?" he said, contentedly. "We're engaged, and that's the end of it."

"No, that's the beginning of it."

They had driven to the Citadel to see the sun set, and as they leaned on the parapet the whole of Cairo, with the Pyramids beyond, was spread before them like a panorama.

"What did you see when you first saw me?" she asked.

"I don't know. What did you see when you first saw me?"

"Well, I'll begin, just to encourage you. The *Augusta Victoria* had touched at Genoa. Mrs. Richards and I were on the upper deck, when we saw"—she hesitated and closed her eyes dreamily—"when we saw a tall, fair Englishman, very big, very broad, very much sunburnt, in tweed shooting-jacket and knickerbockers and rough wool stockings and golf shoes, and he came clumping towards us—"

"Clumping?" he said.

"Yes; the nails in your shoes made you clump. As you came clumping towards us I saw that that white thing on your head was a Stanley helmet, and I saw that your eyes were near-sighted and light blue, except when you are excited, when they get black, and there was a little dent on your nose, which only showed when one looked straight at you, and didn't interfere with your profile, and that your mouth goes up first on the right side when you laugh, and that your laugh when it did ring out was hearty and generous, and I knew that I liked you from the very first instant."

As she felt his hand close over hers, she opened her eyes and laughed.

"Did you notice all that of me at first?"

"All that and more," she said, "for I saw your servant following you with your gun-case and your polo things and your golf-sticks and your tennis-racket and the bath-tub; so I knew that you were English. Now tell me what you noticed first about me."

"Well, I am, as you say, near-sighted, and I didn't notice you until I had sent my servant down to put my things away, and then I think I must have lighted a cigar. I generally do."

"Yes, you did," she said, "because I saw you."

"Well, and then I saw you, and I thought you were the prettiest girl I had ever seen, and I wanted to know you, and that's all."

"Oh! But that isn't half enough," she cried. "Didn't you see anything at all about me? Anything specific, I mean?"

He stared at her as if trying to recollect. "Yes, I saw that you had a figure as straight and slim as a young tree, and that you stood very well, and that your hair was red."

"Reddish!" she entreated.

"No, red!" he insisted. "I like red hair;—and that your eyes were every color."

"Hazel!" she cried, pleadingly.

"Every color!" he reiterated. "This is my story! And you had on a white sailor hat with a veil tied around it."

"A black veil," she said, complacently.

"And I saw that your mouth was impertinent, and that your nose was saucy, and your eyes laughed, and I wanted to shake you or kiss you—I didn't know which—until I got close to you; and then I saw that your hair was blowing around your face, so that I had to put my hands in my pockets to keep from smoothing it back."

"Tell me about your family. Will