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A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jtvi-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php)

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1924.

## 658TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 10TH, 1923,  
AT 4.30 P.M.

LIEUT.-COLONEL G. MACKINLAY, IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed and signed, and the Hon. Secretary announced the following Elections:—As Associates: Mrs. S. M. Blackwood, E. J. Cooper, Esq., Miss Millicent Taylor, and Frederick C. Wood, Esq. As Library Associate, Cleveland Public Library, U.S.A.

The CHAIRMAN introduced the lecturer as a well-known archæologist, a Member of our Council, and one who had already helped the Victoria Institute by reading two or three valuable papers before the Members. One of them was of special interest, on the "Christian Roman Remains in England," and it attracted much attention.

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### EGYPT IN THE DAYS OF AKHENATEN AND TUT- ANKHAMEN. By WILLIAM DALE, Esq., F.G.S., F.S.A.

*(Illustrated by special lantern slides kindly lent by a well-known  
Egyptian explorer.)*

THE discovery by the late Earl of Carnarvon of the last resting place of Tutankhamen has created an interest which has been world-wide. This interest has, undoubtedly been largely increased by the fact that we have hitherto known but little of this shadowy king and further, that the XVIIIth dynasty of Egyptian rulers among whom he figures was a period of the greatest interest in the long life of that country, the golden age of Egypt. Moreover, though there is much difference of opinion concerning the chronology of Egypt before this epoch, yet up to the time of the XVIIIth dynasty we are on safe ground and are able to correlate it with some of the events recorded in the Bible, the stories familiar to us from childhood, charming in their simplicity, too faithful to human nature not to be true.

It has been my privilege during the past season to deal with this subject as occasional guide lecturer at the British Museum, and I have been both pleased and surprised to find among the very mixed crowds with which I have had to deal that the one

question that has been uppermost is, "What connection has this discovery with Bible history? What can we learn from it?" So it is in this spirit I approach the subject on the present occasion and feel I need make no apology for so doing as it is not a feature usually dwelt upon by those who have lectured on the subject. I am well aware my remarks may provoke criticism and controversy among the distinguished Orientalists we number amongst our ranks. But I ask for the forbearance of such. I am not an Egyptologist nor one versed in Oriental lore. I wish simply to impart to you the same pleasure the subject has given me and that you may gain instruction and help by looking at the whole story with the eyes of those who believe in the historicity of the Bible and appreciate its spiritual lessons. The chronology I adopt, and to which I adhere, is that of Professor Breasted. It is that which has been adopted by the appointed Guide Lecturers at the British Museum and commends itself to me as that most likely to be true.

First of all permit me to remind you briefly of the nature of the discovery which has awakened so much interest. In that part of the Nile Valley known as the Valley of the Kings is a wonderful series of tombs which are the last resting places of Egypt's great ones. A belief in a future life and a more perfect state of existence held a foremost place in their religion. To this end care was taken to preserve the natural body under the belief that in the underworld the various parts, split up by death, would be re-united, and the body revived. But the journey thence was long and its various stages marked by delay. The present life to them was but a sojourn. The tomb was the house of the soul. Food was placed in it, and magical figures in great number. Accompanying the mummy there was also a guide book of the underworld known as the "Book of the Dead," in which every incident was depicted that would take place in the spirit world, including the time when, before the judgment seat of Osiris, the heart of the departed was weighed in the sacred balance which determined the hereafter. Behind the throne of this dread God sat the hideous tripartite monster whose office it was to devour the soul of the condemned one who was weighed in the balance and found wanting. It is in this valley that a series of death chambers has been found, provided for, and inscribed with the name of Tutankhamen who died about the year 1360 B.C. The first chamber was filled with furniture and other objects, jewellery, clothing, offerings of food and flowers,

some of them of great beauty, much of which material still awaits examination. Statues to represent his Ka or spirit form were also there. The second chamber was almost filled with a marvellous tabernacle or shrine in which is either the mummy itself or the canopic jars containing such parts of the body as were removed in the process of embalmment. The third chamber, not yet opened, we trust may reveal more information concerning an interesting personality of whom we have at present but meagre knowledge. The chambers already opened had previously been entered and spoiled by robbers in dynastic times in search of gold and other portable wealth. What remained was, however, of surpassing interest. The furniture with which the first chamber was closely packed astonishes us by its beauty and is a revelation of the great pitch of excellence in art and of the wealth which marked the XVIIIth dynasty and was but just passing away in the days of Tutankhamen. No other discovery in Egypt has given us so complete a picture of the domestic life of its great and noble lords.

At this stage I will trouble you with a few particulars of the XVIIIth dynasty which began with Ahmes I, about the year 1580 B.C. It was he who drove from Egypt the Semitic rulers known as the Shepherd Kings under whom Jacob went down to Egypt and Joseph rose to eminence. This was the new dynasty which "knew not Joseph."

Some eighty years after Ahmes I, Thothmes I sat on the throne. He had two daughters, one known by the name of Hatshepset who at one time bore absolute rule and became one of the most famous women monarchs that ever sat upon a throne. Of her more anon. Another who added glory to the dynasty was Thothmes III, a great builder, a successful warrior, and one who amassed such wealth for the country as to make his dynasty the golden age of Egypt. Two of the great obelisks he erected now stand in English-speaking lands and look across the Atlantic at each other, the one in New York City, the other on the Thames Embankment. Two hundred years after the days of this king there passed away Amenhotep III with whom the power and prestige of the country declined. The heretic King Akhenaten began to rule and brought political disaster on Egypt. He was succeeded by Tutankhamen whose last resting place has just been found.

Who was Tutankhamen? We do not know. Perhaps he was not of Royal blood but only obtained the throne because he

married the third daughter of Akhenaten, the heretic king, and bore rule when the kingdom was falling to pieces. Of Akhenaten we do know more, and the story, wrapped as it is in mystery, clothed with details giving full play to the imagination, makes him one of the most fascinating personalities of the old world. His mother was the great Queen Thi, wife of Amenhotep III, a Mittanian princess, beautiful and intelligent. His wife was Nefertiti, who also appears to have been not of Egyptian origin. Her portrait bust, discovered at Akhenaten's own city and, unfortunately, now at Berlin, shows her to have been singularly beautiful. Concerning the bust itself, Professor Peet has said that no age or country has ever produced a finer work of art.

Akhenaten is known as the heretic king because he broke away from the old religion of Egypt with its 2,000 deities and its powerful hierarchy of priests. To escape them he left Thebes and founded a new city nearly 300 miles away, which he planned himself, fixed its boundaries, hewed out chambers in the rock, built a palace for himself and made a temple for the God that he worshipped, Aten, the Sun God. This city was never finished. Here I quote from an article which appeared in the "Times": "Physically a weakling, almost deformed, gentle hearted, devoted to his wife and family, a lover of all created things, a poet and a dreamer, he deserted the religion of his Fathers, dethroned the great God Amen and all the Pantheon, and in their stead set up the worship of the one God Aten, beneficial and omnipresent. For the purposes of worship, Aten was personified by the Sun, but the king himself struggled to make it plain that the true Deity was not the sun itself, but the vital force residing in the Sun's creative warmth, and it is difficult not to believe that he himself saw further than this. In elaborating the new religion he built up the fabric of a faith which in many things foreshadowed Christianity with extraordinary closeness. In its entirety Aten worship was infinitely more beautiful and spiritual than any religion held by man of which we have knowledge at so early a date. He lived in his new capital engrossed in religion, and under him grew up a new school of art to which we owe the incomparable beauty of the objects discovered in the tomb of Tutankhamen." The article from which I quote concludes with the following words: "The gentleness of Akhenaten spelt wreckage. He left no son. Eight years of chaos followed, in which the names of three usurpers appear, one of whom was he whose tomb has just been discovered, of whom all we know is

that he undid the work of Akhenaten, destroyed the pure worship he had set up and reverted to the old religion of Amen, dominated by a powerful and numerous priestly caste."

Tutankhamen's motive in thus acting may have been to spare the country from political ruin and to restore it to somewhat of its former power and glory.

The task of equating the period in question with the events recorded in Exodus is not an easy one. It is universally acknowledged that the entry of Joseph and Jacob into Egypt took place during the reign of the Shepherd Kings and the date of 1580 B.C. for the accession of Ahmes I, who expelled these rulers, is not contraverted. More difficulty arises in fixing the date of the Exodus, and opinions on this point are divided fairly equally. By many the Pharaoh of the oppression is considered to be Rameses II and the Pharaoh of the Exodus Meneptah, in the second year of whose reign, 1233 B.C., the event is said to have taken place. If we accept this, we remove the occurrence into the next, or XIXth dynasty, and are far away from the days of Akhenaten and Tutankhamen.

The difficulty of fixing the date of the Exodus arises from the uncertainty which hangs round the duration of the period of the sojourning of the children of Israel in the land of Egypt. In Exodus xii, 40, we are told that the "sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was 430 years." The Septuagint and the Samaritan versions add "and in the land of Canaan." The two versions differ as to the position of this insertion and by many it is considered as a gloss. If, however, we accept this explanation and give a total of about 200 years for the lives of the patriarchs we can shorten the sojourn by half. Again, in Genesis xv, 13, 16, we read, and the passage is quoted by Stephen in his address to the Sanhedrim, "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them and they shall afflict them 400 years, and in the fourth generation they shall come hither again." This passage may surely be dismissed from the reckoning as affording a date for the Exodus. As the Rev. I. S. Griffiths points out,\* it is manifestly contradictory. A generation is not of a hundred years' duration. The figures have evidently been misread in transcribing and the passage may be fairly paraphrased, "They shall be slaves for a period of years and in the fourth generation they shall return." And now as to

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\* "The Exodus in the light of archæology."

an alternative date. In the 1st Kings vi, 1, we find the statement that the period from the Exodus to the building of the temple in the 4th year of Solomon was 480 years. Without much difficulty the 4th year of King Solomon can be fixed at 966 B.C. Counting back 480 years we come to the reign of Amenhotep II, the successor of the great warrior King Thothmes III, and the date 1446 B.C. It is argued by some that the number 480 is of an artificial character, 40 multiplied by 12 and, therefore is used, as in some other cases, not as an arithmetical expression but as a vague statement of number. Those who criticise the statement, however, point out that in Chron. v, 3, 8, twelve generations are recorded as having elapsed between the Exodus and foundation of the temple. The twelve generations may be accepted as historical, but in order to bring the Exodus into the days of Meneptah it is necessary to estimate a generation as twenty-two years, not forty. The earlier date is accepted for the purposes of this Essay and thus the departure of Israel is brought into the XVIIIth dynasty and before the days of Akhenaten and Tutankhamen. There is yet a third possible date for the Exodus, which is very fascinating, favoured by the well-known Egyptologist, Mr. Arthur Weigall, in an interesting article on Tutankhamen in the "Empire Review" for May last. In the passage from Chronicles just referred to, if we estimate the twelve generations at less than forty for each or at about three to a century, we are brought to a date between 1360 and 1330 B.C. and to the days of Tutankhamen. Admitting this interpretation, Mr. Weigall supposes Moses to have been born in the reign of Amanhotep III, that he fled to Midian in the reign of Akhenaten, that Akhenaten's death is referred to in Exodus ii, 23. "It came to pass in process of time, the King of Egypt died" and that Tutankhamen was the Pharaoh under whom Moses returned to Egypt and organised the exodus of his enslaved countrymen. The arguments by which Mr. Weigall supports his theory are reasonable but not convincing.

I have briefly stated the reasons for placing the Exodus in the reign of Amenhotep II and for accepting the date of 1446 B.C. We are attracted to this view because it enables us to place the birth and education of Moses in that period which we know now, more than ever we knew before, represents the highest period of Egypt's culture and refinement and the highest pitch she attained in the development of art. Moreover, we can best realise, as we contemplate the enormous wealth of the country, how when



Israel departed, they went not empty-handed but took from those with whom they sojourned, jewels of gold and silver and spoiled the Egyptians. As we look into the open tomb of Tutankhamen and behold its treasures, despoiled and robbed though they were in dynastic times, the words of Holy Writ come home to us with peculiar force: "By faith Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of Sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

Who was Pharaoh's daughter who saw, among the paper reeds of the Nile's brink, the cot which contained Israel's future lawgiver? It is satisfactory to know that if we accept the chronology we have adopted it was Queen Hatshepsut, daughter of Thothmes I, married to her half-brother; reigning apparently at one time by herself and in part with Thothmes III she figured as one of the most remarkable queens of history. The record of her life and talents, her learning and prowess, makes it possible for us to say that no better woman could in the order of God's providence have been chosen to make Moses "Learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and mighty in word and in deed." The temple at Der-al-Bahri remains as a monument of her genius, and still standing at Karnak is one of the magnificent obelisks she erected, a monolith 97 feet high and weighing 350 tons. Equally interesting it is to speculate as to where Akhenaten, the heretic king, acquired the wonderful religion he practised. We cannot admit the possibility that it was evolved out of his own consciousness. He has been called a man a thousand years before his time. The worship he set up and strove to maintain was really monotheistic. Nearly half a century had elapsed since the departure of Israel and any attempt to connect his belief with their sojourn cannot be very successful. Yet surely in some way we are tempted to associate the two and to picture to ourselves the poet king, the dreamer and the visionary living in his own capital, far away from the old worship he had set at nought, inheriting in part the great religious truths made known to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and practised by the race when they sojourned in Egypt. Among the literary remains of Akhenaten is a Nature poem, which Professor Breasted prints with parallel passages from the 104th Psalm. The mother of Akhenaten, as we have said, was Queen Thi, wife of Amenhotep III,

a Mittanian princess, beautiful and learned. His wife was Nefertiti who, if we may judge from her portrait bust, was also not an Egyptian. In the paintings that adorn the walls of Akhenaten's own palace, these two women figure largely and may have shared his religious views and perhaps in some way was responsible for them.

Passing to Tutankhamen, the one act by which he is known is the restoration by him of the Old Amen worship and the reinstatement of the powerful priestly machinery which ruled and engineered it. At this religion we may afford to give a glance. To describe it would require a more capable pen than mine. It is fairly well summarised by the apostle Paul when he speaks in the Epistle to the Romans of those who "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man and to birds and four-footed creatures and creeping things." Dominated by magic the priestly caste held the keys of death and of the hereafter. In the tomb of Princess Set Hathor, Petrie found an alabaster vase on which was an inscription that the priests had endowed it with magical powers and anything the Princess required in the tomb or the underworld if she put her hand in the vase she would find it there. Let me on this subject quote Professor Breasted\*: "This magic which the priests were supposed to work ruled everything in the after life which in most respects was a reflection of the present. Lentils and wheat grew in the fields of Yaru but the Lords of the empire escaped all personal labour in the happy fields. Ushebti figures, inscribed with a potent charm, performed these duties for them. These figures were placed in the tombs by scores and hundreds. This means of obtaining material good was transferred to the moral world to secure exemption from the consequences of an evil life. A sacred beetle, cut from stone and inscribed with a charm beginning with the words, 'Oh, my heart, rise not up against me as a witness,' was laid on the breast of the mummy and was so powerful that when the guilty soul stands in the judgment hall in the awful presence of Osiris, the accusing voice of the heart is silenced and the great God does not perceive the evil. Likewise in the book of the dead, besides all the other charms, the welcome verdict of acquittal was sold by priestly scribes to any one with the means to buy. The purchaser's name was inserted in the blanks left for the purpose, securing to

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\* "History of Egypt," chap. xiii.

himself the certainty of such a verdict. However vicious a man's life may have been, exemption in the hereafter could be purchased at any time from the priest."

In all this we note that the poor and the common folk had no share. The most elaborate process of embalment cost about £250—of our money. For the poor there was no house of the dead, with its paintings, with its food, its magic charms and ushebti figures. The middle classes could only rent from the priests a great common tomb where the mummies were piled up like cordwood. The toiling millions could only bury their dead in the gravel and sand of the desert margin for the sun to mummify, looking longingly at the luxury enjoyed by the rich, sometimes with a touching pathos burying, at the door of some great man's tomb, a rude statuette of their lost one in the hope that he might gain a few crumbs from the rich man's mortuary table.

It would hardly be right for me to conclude this paper without stating that I am aware that a school of criticism exists which dismisses in a summary manner the Biblical events I have tried to correlate with the days of the XVIIIth dynasty. According to such the stories of the Pentateuch are not contemporary history and contain only a bare substratum of facts. The plagues of Egypt were only such visitations as that land is ordinarily subject to, magnified into miraculous proportions, together with all the other incidents of the sojourn in Egypt, to bring glory and prominence to the Hebrew race. Even the Exodus was only of minor importance but was swollen to the proportions in which it is recorded for the same purpose.

It is even stated that writing was not known in the time of Moses, ignoring altogether the evidence of the Tel el Amarna tablets and the Code of Hammurabi. So we are carried on many centuries until the return from the captivity for the compilation of the earlier books of the Bible and are asked to believe that as history they have but little more value than the traditional lore of other nations.

Professor Eric Peet, in his recently published book "Egypt and the Old Testament," says: "In other words our present Pentateuch was compiled not earlier than the fifth century B.C. and contains no material written down earlier than the ninth century except possibly certain laws and a few fragments such as the song of Deborah. It follows at once from this that practically the whole contents of these books as we have them

were written down only long after the times at which they were enacted."

It is satisfactory to know that Sir Flinders Petrie, reviewing this book in the October part of "Ancient Egypt," writes: "It is to be regretted that the valuable constructive work which the author wrote on Italy fourteen years ago has been succeeded by a devotion to the barren field of destructive criticism. This obsession of the Biblical critics depends on verbal questions rather than matters of fact and is too often accompanied by facile mis-statement. On page 98 the marriage of Joseph into the family of a priest of Ra, is 'a later colouring' because 'all we know of the Hyksos occupation of Egypt makes such an admission very difficult.' What we do know is that Apepa II favoured the Egyptian worship by making columns and gates of copper to adorn the temple of Bubastis. Priests were then by no means out of fashion. It is said that the Biblical narrative states that Pharaoh was drowned. No such statement appears in the narrative."

We cherish the hope that some day the records of this wonderful country will yield confirmation in an overwhelming manner to the Bible narratives. Meanwhile we hold fast to their historicity and value them for this as well as for the spiritual truths they convey.

#### DISCUSSION.

On the conclusion of the reading of the paper, the CHAIRMAN proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Dale, which was heartily responded to, with applause.

The lights were then turned down, and Mr. DALE explained a large number of very interesting views of Egyptian excavations and objects of art; these attracted very much interest.

The CHAIRMAN again thanked Mr. Dale, and referring to the large numbers present, he mentioned how Mr. Dale had helped the Victoria Institute by taking a subject of present-day interest which had attracted such a large audience, who were evidently much interested. He also said what a very good beginning had been made in the programme of lectures for this session; he welcomed the many visitors who were present, and invited them to apply to become Members or Associates.