

A CRUEL BLOW FOR SKEPTICS.

DISCOVERY OF NOAH'S ARK UPON MOUNT ARARAT AND IN INSURANCE ARCHIVES.

The commission recently appointed by the Supreme Court of Turkey to investigate avalanches on Mount Ararat with a view to ascertaining if it were practicable to grow wheat on the mountain top and slide the field into the valley on an avalanche to be harvested, has made its report. While this report does not settle the real question at issue, it throws light upon a subject which has bothered Biblical students for about 3,000 years. It seems that the Commissioners, while pursuing their investigations, came upon what seemed to be the bow of a gigantic canal-boat protruding from a glacier, and (see questions 1,725 to 1,783 of the report) they made inquiries concerning it of the inhabitants. These barbarians had been aware of the existence of this structure for centuries past, but had never dared to investigate it because a spirit of remarkably fierce and savage aspect had glared from an upper window upon whoever approached and frightened them away.

The President of the commission, however, was not to be daunted by any mere spirit, and he proceeded at once to pay a visit to the mysterious structure, and, according to the report, captured the spirit and disposed of it to an American named Tunnell, or Vunnell, or Bunnell. (See folio 608 of the report.) Upon entering the structure they at once discovered it to be nothing less important than Noah's Ark, which foundered upon Mount Ararat about the year 2348 B. C., but had been popularly supposed to have crumbled to ruin. Indeed, its very existence has been doubted by irreligious scoffers, who have affected to believe that the late Moses did not thoroughly investigate all the tales he wrote for the Book of Genesis, and that some designing person had imposed the story of the ark upon the patriarch for reasons of his own. The discovery of the ark will be a sufficient refutation of these heresies. The report reads as follows: "We discovered that the vessel was made of the ancient gopher wood of Scripture, which, as every one knows, only grows on the plains of the Euphrates. Effecting an entrance into the structure, which was painted brown, we found that the Admiralty requirements for the conveyance of horses had been carried out, and the interior was divided into partitions 15 feet high. Into three of these only could we get, the others being full of ice, and how far the ark extended into the glacier we could not tell. If, however, on being uncovered it turns out to be 300 cubits long, it will go hard with disbelievers in the Book of Genesis." From papers discovered on the vessel it was inferred that the ark had been insured with the Atlantic Mutual Insurance Company, and a reporter of *THE TIMES* was ordered to take an omnibus, without regard to expense, and inquire of Vice-President Dennis, of the company, at the company's office, No. 51 Broadway. Mr. Dennis said that although the company was one of the oldest in the world, it had the records of very few vessels of 2,300 B. C. Upon searching through the "inspection minutes," however, he found the following record:

THE ARK.—Built by Noah; owned by Noah & Sons; tonnage, 42,413.95; length over all, 525 feet; breadth of beam, 87 feet 6 inches; depth of hold, 52 feet 6 inches; built of gopher wood; bow ports and trenailed throughout; used as passenger and cattle transport; rated A1.

"Can you inform me what the ark was insured for?" asked the reporter.

"I should not feel at liberty to make that matter public without consulting the proprietors," replied Mr. Dennis.

"Was the menagerie insured separately?" the reporter inquired.

"Our company does not insure live stock, and therefore I cannot answer that they were," said the Vice-President.

"Can you tell me whether Noah's life was insured?" pursued the questioner.

"I cannot give you information from my own knowledge," replied Mr. Dennis, "as the matter occurred so many years back that I can scarcely recollect it. I have heard, however, that it was. The story is that he was insured with the Lamech Mutual, and you will remember that he lived to be 950 years old. In his nine hundred and forty-eighth year he happened to figure up the amount of the premiums he had paid on his policies, and found that the sum amounted to about four times as much as the value of the policy itself. So he let it lapse."

"Is it a fact that Japhet made a kick about the matter after his father's death?" asked the reporter.

"I don't know," Mr. Dennis said.

"Was it Ham?" inquired the reporter.

"I don't know," replied the Vice-President.

"Wasn't it Shem?" queried again the reporter.

"I don't know," repeated Mr. Dennis.

"Well, who was it?" persisted the reporter.

"I don't know," again Mr. Dennis replied; and, as he at that moment reached for a revolver in the back part of a drawer, the reporter came away, sadly but not slowly.