INSCRIPTION OF ESARHADDON.

TRANSLATED BY
H. F. TALBOT, F.R.S., etc.

IT is recorded in 2 Kings xix. 37 and in Isaiah xxxvii. 38

"So Sennacherib King of Assyria departed and went, and returned and dwelt at Nineveh.

"And it came to pass as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia.

"And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead."

The Inscription of which I here offer a translation relates to this important event. It is always a pleasure to find an Assyrian inscription which describes, in its own way, events corresponding to those mentioned in Scripture. The clay tablets
which have been brought home from Assyria are for the most part miserably fractured, but in no instance is there greater reason to regret the loss of a part of an inscription than here. For, it is evident that the portion of it which is lost, described the murder of Sennacherib by his unnatural sons and the receipt of the sad intelligence by Esarhaddon, who was then commanding an army on the northern confines of his father's empire. Had it been preserved, we should possibly have found in it the names of Adrammelech and Sharezer and many particulars of the tragic event.

This Inscription found at Kouyunjik, is now in the British Museum. It was first published by Layard in plates 54—58 of his volume of *Inscriptions*, and since then, much more accurately, in the 3rd volume of *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, plates 15 and 16. 1st column translated in the *North British Review*, 1870, p. 379.
THE INSCRIPTION.

COLUMN I.

(All the upper part of this column is lost.)

1 (This line is broken.)

2 From my heart I made a vow. My liver was inflamed with rage.

3 Immediately I wrote letters (saying) that I assumed the sovereignty of my Father's House.

4 Then to Ashur, the Moon, the Sun, Bel, Nebo, Nergal,

5 Ishtar of Niniveh, and Ishtar of Arbela

6 I lifted up my hands. They accepted my prayer.

7 In their gracious favour, an encouraging oracle

8 they sent to me: “Go! fear not!

9 We march at thy side! We aid thy expedition!”

10 For one or two days I did not stir from my position;

11 I did not move the front of my army,

12 and I did not move my rear: the tethering ropes of my horses, trained to the double yoke,

13 I did not remove. I did not strike my camp.

14 But I made haste to provide the needful for the expedition.

14 A great snow storm in the month of January darkened the sky, but I did not recede.

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1 The liver was the seat of rage or anger according to the ancients—“quantī jecur ardeat inā.” (Juvenal.)

2 The army was in winter quarters, not expecting any service, when it was thus suddenly called upon to act. Hence the delay of some days in getting ready.

3 Their chariots were drawn by 2 horses.

4 He was then in the mountains, where the snow-drifts would soon make the ways impassable to an army.
Then, as a šērin bird spreads its wings
so I displayed my standards, as a signal to my allies;
and with much toil, and in haste, I took the road to
Niniveh.

But, getting before my troops, in the hill country of the
Khani-Rabbi, all their warriors
powerful attacked the front of my army and discharged
their arrows.
But the terror of the great gods my Lords overwhelmed
them.

When they saw the valour of my great army they
retreated backwards.
Ishtar queen of war and battle, who loves my piety,
stood by my side. She broke their bows.
Their line of battle in her rage she destroyed.
To their army she spoke thus: “An unsparing deity
am I.”
By her high command (or favour) I planted my
standards where I had intended.¹

COLUMN II.

(The commencement of this column is broken off. The
meaning is doubtful; but it seems that during the time of
trouble which followed the death of SENNAHERIB, a son of
MERODACH BALADAN named NEBO-ZIR-ZIZ or NEBO-ZIR-
GISIDI took the opportunity to rebel in lower Chaldea.
The following lines appear to refer to this event.)

• • • • • the insurgent King • • • • •
• • • • • assembled his camp, and marching against Nin-gal
• • • • •

¹ This probably means, “I planted them at Niniveh;” but the rest of
the column being broken off, the necessary explanation of the phrase is
wanting.
Prefect of Ur, who was my loyal subject,
killed him with the sword; and seized his . . . . . .
and even after the time that Ashur, the Sun, Bel, Nebo, Ishtar of Niniveh
and Ishtar of Arbel had me, Esarhaddon,
on the throne of my father happily seated,
and the sovereignty of the land had given to me, even
then he worshipped me not:
he gave me no more gifts, he would not do homage
to me,
and his envoy to my presence
he would not send. He would not even enquire after
the health of My Majesty.'
When I heard at Niniveh of his evil doings,
my heart swelled: my liver was inflamed with rage.
My Officers
and Magistrates who were nearest his land I sent
against him.
Then he, Nebo-zir-ziz who was a gluttonous vile
ignoble man
hearing of the march of my troops, fled away con-
temptibly to the land of Elam.
Nevertheless the anger of the great gods whose worship
he had abandoned, Ashur, the Moon, the Sun,
Bel and Nebo laid great affliction upon him
and in the land of Elam slew him with the sword.
Neith-Marduk his brother, the deeds in the land of
Elam
which I had done to his brother, seeing,
from the land of Elam fled, and to do homage to me
came into Assyria, and supplicated my Majesty.
The province of the sea coast, the whole of it, which
was the inheritance of his brother, I gave to him.
A universal custom. To neglect it showed hostile intentions.
Every year without fail, with great presents
he came and kissed my feet.

27 Abdil-Milkutti King of Sidon
28 a non-worshipper of My Majesty, and disobedient to
my royal words,
29 who trusted to his position on the Great Sea and had
shaken off my yoke,
30 the city of Sidon, his great city, which lay beside the
Great Sea

(The rest of the story of the King of Sidon is broken off:
but it is preserved on the other inscription marked B.)

COLUMN III.

(The third column is a good deal broken but is very well
preserved in the other inscription B. I therefore omit it
here.)

COLUMN IV.

(This column relates the conquest of Batzu an Arabian
country, nearly in the same terms as in the inscription B. I
therefore omit it, except the following passage which
amplifies in an important degree the brief statement of
inscription B, namely, “I put to death 8 of their sovereigns”
(col. iii. 37) by giving us their names, as follows,)
19 Kitzu King of Kaldili; Akbaru' King of Dupiati;
20 Mansaka King of Magalani; Yafa Queen of
Dihutani

¹ A name related to the Arabic Akbar (great). It is also probably the
same with Abgarus whose name is celebrated in early ecclesiastical history.
21 Habitzu King of Kadasiha: Nikharu King of Gahupani:
22 Bailu Queen of Ikhilu: Habanamru King of Budahu:
23 the eight sovereigns of that country, I put to death.
24 The bodies of their soldiers I flung away like so much clay:
25 their gods, their wealth, and their people I carried off to Assyria.

(It will be observed that two of the sovereigns were queens. This was a frequent custom in Arabia, according to the cuneiform inscriptions, but as far as I have observed it was confined to that country. This fact is a striking illustration of Scripture History, for it explains how the Queen of Sheba (or the Sabeans of Arabia) was able to display such royal magnificence when she visited Solomon. She was a reigning sovereign.)

COLUMN V.

(The beginning of this column agrees with the inscription B, and is therefore omitted. But at line 12 an important passage is added.)

12 I assembled the Kings of Syria, and of the nations beyond the sea:
13 Baal King of Tyre: Manasseh King of Judah:
14 Kadumukh King of Edom: Mitzuri King of Moab:
15 Reuben? King of Gaza: Mitinti King of Ascalon:
16 Ituzu King of Amgarrun: Milki-Asaph King of Gubal:
17 Kulu-Baal King of Arvad: Abi-Baal King of Ussimiruna:
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