RECORDS OF THE PAST:

BEING

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

OF THE

ASSYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN MONUMENTS.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION

OF

THE SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

ASSYRIAN TEXTS.

LONDON:
SAMUEL BAGSTER AND SONS,
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NOTE.

Every Text here given is either now translated for the first time, or has been specially revised by the Translator to the date of this publication.
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PREFACE.

THE fifth volume of the "RECORDS OF THE PAST" contains translations from the Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian cuneiform inscriptions. Most of these are from historical monuments as being of the greatest value to ancient history. In the present volume are several of the most important Babylonian inscriptions, amongst them that of Nebuchadnezzar of whose history unfortunately but few contemporary documents are at present known, while of the earlier kings of Babylon mere fragmentary notices remain. The student as well as the general public will find this volume equal in interest to the preceding and the amount of new information considerable. Issued simultaneously with the fourth of the series in order to meet public demand and expectation, the rapidity with which it has been brought out is due to the cordial co-operation of the Assyrian scholars who have worked indefatigably for its production, and have in so short a time prepared or revised their different translations. Although historical texts have first engaged the attention of scholars, an unexhausted supply of literary or scientific import, as well as mythology and official records, still remain for selection, many of which have been as yet untouched. Amongst them are the so-called Izdubar legends comprising the account of the Babylonian and Assyrian Cosmogony, the creation of the world, and
of man, his fall, the war of the gods in heaven, the
deluge, and other traditions some of which have been
translated, but others have not as yet been published.
Some of these will form the material of subsequent
volumes and afford a general idea of the mythology
of the two great Semitic empires and will prove of
great value for the comparative study of mythology
at present so little understood on account of the
investigations having been restricted to the myths of
the Aryan nations. If freedom, eloquence and philo-
sophy have had their home in the West, religion has
always from the most remote ages had its cradle in
the East. From the East originated germs of
thought which grew up into blossoms amongst other
races long after the parent stem had lain a sapless
trunk in the distant regions of the Euphrates and the
Nile. It must be again repeated that it is impossible
to know the sources of Hellenic and Italian civiliza-
tion by enquiries directed into purely Aryan sources.
The orbit of vision has been enlarged, the decipher-
ment and interpretations of these dead and extinct
languages, like the discovery of the telescope in
astronomy, carry the eye to the farthest realms
of space, to enlarged human vision. So this newly
acquired instrument of interpretation has pierced the
hitherto unseen period which transcends the secondary
history of the West. The classical and biblical scholar,
alike require the valuable information now placed at
their disposal as elements of primary instruction for
their studies.

S. BIRCH.

London, 1st July, 1875.
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