

and the very judgments of Heaven to work together for good ; could we but see what the Seraphim saw, the whole earth filling with the glory of a holiness before whose pure splendours even they must veil their faces with their wings, —who would talk of failure, whose heart would be clouded and torn with fear?

In fine, if we would be strong in hope, whether for ourselves or for the world at large, we must rise, with Isaiah, into the holiest of all, into the secret place of the tabernacle of the Most High ; we must listen, with St. John, to those holy voices which sing day and night without ceasing : “ Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and He Himself shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying ; neither shall there be any more pain.”

S. Cox.

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*ASSYRIAN AND BABYLONIAN INSCRIPTIONS IN  
THEIR BEARING ON THE OLD TESTAMENT  
SCRIPTURES.*

XIII. MENAHEM AND PUL.

THE name of the next Assyrian king, the “ Pul ” of 2 Kings xv. 19 ; 1 Chronicles v. 26, who appears in Biblical history, presents a problem on which there is as yet no approach to agreement among Assyrian scholars. It does not appear in the inscriptions, and the one point in which all are of one mind is, that there being no name in them of this monosyllabic, uncompounded character, we must regard it as being, like the Shalman of Hosea x. 14, an abbreviated form. On the question what name it represents we have very conflicting hypotheses.

(1) Lenormant (*Anc. Hist.*, vol. i. p. 388), assuming, with Oppert and Dr. Hincks, a capture and destruction of Nineveh in 789 B.C., under a luxurious and effeminate king, Asshur-likhish (B.C. 800-789), whom he identifies with the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, by the united force of the Chaldeans under Belesu (Phul Balazu = the terrible one), and the Medes under Arbaces, sees in the former the Babylonian head of a later Assyrian Empire, identifies him with the Pul of the Jewish records, rests in the fact that no inscriptions of his reign have been found, and looks on the facts mentioned in 2 Kings xv. 19 (1 Chron. v. 26), that he invaded Israel and made the usurper Menahem pay a tribute of 1000 talents of silver, and carried away part of the population of the Transjordanic tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, to "Halah and Habor and Hara, and the river Gozan," as all that is known of his reign.

(2) Rawlinson (*Smith's Dict. of Bible*, art. *Pul*), on the other hand, rejects the theory of an earlier Medo-Chaldean capture of Nineveh before its final overthrow under Assur-Banipal, in B.C. 606, and finds the equivalent of Pul in an Assyrian whose name is read somewhat doubtfully as Iva-Lush, or Vul-Lush, or Vul-Nirari, and who reigned from B.C. 800 to B.C. 750, after the Shalmaneser whom we have seen as contemporary with Jehu, and before the succession of Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esar-haddon. In the Hebrew Pul, and yet more in the LXX. form of Phalos, or Phaloch, he finds a natural corruption of one or other of the three forms given above. The inscriptions of this king, whose wife bore the name of Semiramis, and was probably a Babylonian princess, record his capture of Damascus, and his receiving tribute from Medes, Armenians, Phœnicians, *Samaritans*, Damascenes, Philistines and Edomites. This it will be seen agrees with what is recorded of the Biblical Pul; and

Professor Rawlinson sees in Menahem's attack on Tiphсах (Thapsacus, on the ford of the Euphrates, 1 Kings iv. 24; 2 Kings xv. 16) an act of rebellion, the object of the attack being to recover the boundary of Solomon's kingdom, which led to the Assyrian king's invasion. Menahem, we find, submitted, paid a tribute of 1000 talents of silver, and was then "confirmed" by Pul in his kingdom.

(3) Niebuhr (*Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 132, 142) conjectures that Pul is an abbreviated form of Tiglath-Pileser, a predecessor of the Biblical king, and connects this with an inscription of the second, or fourth, king of that name, recording the fact that he received tribute from "Minikhimmi (Menahem) of Samirina (Shimron or Samaria), and Azrijahu (Azariah) of Judah." It seems however, unlikely that the shorter and fuller forms of the same name should be used by the same writers in the same chapter, as they are in 2 Kings xv. 19, 29; 1 Chronicles v. 26. It may be added that the Chronicle of Alexander Polyhistor, which professes to be based upon Berosus, the Chaldean historian, gives Phul as the name of a Chaldean king who was succeeded by Sennacherib; but the date of the two writers makes it probable that they were reproducing what they found in the Jewish records, and deprives their testimony of any independent value. On the whole, and with all the reserve which in such a case is necessary, it seems that, until further evidence presents itself, the theory adopted by Rawlinson has in its favour a balance of probabilities. Schrader, it may be added (*Keilinschriften Assyriens*, pp. 422-460), accepts the identification of Pul with Tiglath-Pileser, whom inscriptions name as both "king of Babylon" and "king of Assyria," as the most tenable hypothesis.

#### XIV. ISRAEL, JUDAH, SYRIA AND TIGLATH-PILESER.

It lay in the nature of the case that the intervention of a great power like Assyria in the affairs of the smaller

kingdoms of Syria and Palestine, should bring about relations which became gradually more and more complicated. There are traces of that intervention, as we have seen, in the reign of Jehu. With less certainty, we may say that the Assyrian inscriptions shew that they had begun in the reign even of Ahab. In the monolith inscription of Shalmaneser II., the king who records his receiving tribute from Jehu, we find the name of the king of Israel. "1200 chariots, 1200 magazines, and 20,000 men of Rimmon-Hidri" (probably the kingly title of the Biblical *Benhadad* or *Benhadar*) "of Damascus, 700 chariots, 700 magazines, and 10,000 men of Irkhuleni of Hamath, and 2000 chariots and 10,000 men of Akhahbu (*Ahab*) of the country of the Israelites," are named as allied against Assyria, and as defeated by Shalmaneser (*R. P.*, iii. 99). Between the death of Ahab and the accession of Jehu there was an interval but of twelve years; and as the reign of Shalmaneser II. is reckoned by Assyriologists as lasting for thirty-five, it is quite possible that in his earlier years he may have received tribute from Ahab, and in his later, as we have seen, from Jehu. The fact of an earlier intercourse with an actual son of Omri would make it natural to address the latter by the same title, just as another king, Bin Nirari, a successor of this Shalmaneser, describes the country over which Jehu ruled as the land of Omri (Schrader, *Keilinschr.*, p. 7). Sargon at a later date uses the same language, and another inscription connects Samirina (= Samaria) with the "whole land of Omri" (*Ibid.*, p. 8.) As we thus trace a connexion between the kingdom of the Ten Tribes and Assyria at a date earlier than that which the history of the Old Testament brings before us, so we also find that there had been a like connexion between Assyria and Judah. Ahaz was not the first king of the house of David who acknowledged the suzerainty of the great ruler of the city on the Tigris.

In an inscription of Tiglath-Pileser IV., (II. ?), part of which has been already quoted in the 12th of these studies, we find a record which implies a war with Azariah (= Uzziah). Fragmentary as it is, assuming the name to be read rightly, it warrants the inference that it records a conquest. I quote from Smith's *Assyrian Discoveries*, (pp. 275-277).

“ . . . course of my expedition the tribute of the kings  
 . . . Azariah of Judah, like a . . .  
 . . . Azariah of Judah, in . . .  
 . . . without number to high heaven were raised . . .  
 . . . in their eyes which as from heaven . . .  
 . . . was, and subdue the feet . . .  
 . . . of the great army of Assyria they heard and their heart  
 feared . . .  
 . . . their cities I pulled down, destroyed . . .  
 . . . to Azariah turned and strengthened him, and . . .  
 . . . like an arch . . .  
 . . . fighting . . .  
 . . . he cleared his camp . . .  
 . . . were placed, and his exit . . .  
 . . . he brought down and . . .  
 . . . his soldiers he drew together . . .  
 . . .  
 . . . Judah . . .  
 . . . of Azariah, my hand greatly captured . . .  
 \* \* \* \* \*

The cities of Ellitarb and Litanu . . . . .  
 . . . . . Nineteen districts  
 of Hamath, and the cities which were round them, which are beside  
 the sea of the setting sun, in sin and defiance to Azariah had  
 turned, . . . .  
 to the boundaries of Assyria I added, and my generals governors  
 over them I appointed.”

It is obvious that though the Biblical narrative records none of these events, there is nothing in it inconsistent with them. Uzziah's long reign of fifty-two years, for the most part a victorious and prosperous reign, may have been

clouded towards its close, not only by the leprosy which followed on his attempt to usurp the office of the priesthood, but by disasters from without. And it was in the thirty-ninth year of his reign that Menahem, who paid his tribute to Pul, the king of Assyria (2 Kings xv. 19), began to reign, in the last year that Pekah, who witnessed the captivity of the eastern and northern tribes, ascended the throne of Israel (2 Kings xv. 27, 28). Whether, according to the varying theories of Assyriologists, we assume the identity of Pul with Tiglath-Pileser II., or look upon him as the predecessor of that king, it was in either case probable that the latter should have been led to extend his operations to Judah as well as Israel. The warlike character of Uzziah's policy, his fortifications and military engines, his strength and arrogance, quite fall in with the picture drawn in the Assyrian king's inscription, of one who wished to make himself the centre of a confederacy of the nations west of the Euphrates, which should have for its object to stay the onward march of the Assyrian armies. The attempt was, as we have seen, frustrated; and though the comparatively short reign of Jotham was marked by some conquests over the Ammonites, and by defensive measures, such as the erection of fortresses on the mountains of Judah (2 Chron. xxvii. 1-6), there was probably no attempt to assert his independence, and the power of Assyria must even then have been a prominent object in the thoughts of prophets who, like Micah and Isaiah, were watching the signs of the times, and the gathering of the heavens.

On the accession of Ahaz, therefore, the position of affairs was that Judah, Israel, and Syria had all been brought to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Assyrian king, and were in the relation of vassal princes paying tribute. It seemed to two of those princes that an opportunity presented itself, in the weak and wavering character of Ahaz, for an alliance against the third. Israel and Syria would renew their old

confederacy against Judah. It began with a great and crushing victory. If we accept the narrative of 2 Chron. xxviii. 1-15, with whatever allowance for the tendency of Eastern annalists or transcribers to large numerical estimates, 120,000 men of Judah were slain in battle, 200,000, including women and children, were carried captives to Samaria, and were only delivered from the slavery which was the usual fate of prisoners by the intervention of the prophet Oded. The old hereditary enemies of Judah, the Edomites and Philistines, took advantage of the opportunity and renewed their attacks (2 Chron. xxviii. 17, 18). Pekah, and his ally Rezin of Damascus, were emboldened by their success to march against Jerusalem, aiming at nothing less than the deposition of Ahaz, and with him of the whole house of David, and the substitution of "the son of Tabeal," as a king who should be their vassal or ally (Isa. vii. 6). Who this Tabeal was, the Jewish records do not tell us. Some light is however thrown upon the matter by an inscription of Sennacherib's, known as the "prism" inscription, in the British Museum (*R. P.*, i. 35), in which he enumerates among the kings who paid him tribute—

"Menahem, king of Ussimiruna (= Samaria)  
Tubaal, king of Sidon."

and the rulers of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Arvad, Gaza, Ashdod. There is, of course, a chronological difficulty in the fact that Menahem had paid tribute to Pul some fifty years before Sennacherib's invasion of Judah. Possibly a solution of that difficulty may be found in the conjecture that some scion of the house of Menahem, bearing the same name, had been left as a satrap in charge of Samaria after its capture by Shalmaneser or Sargon; but the occurrence of the name of Tubaal points to the fact either that Zidon had joined the alliance of Syria and Israel against Judah, or that

he, as a soldier of fortune, had thrown himself into the conflict in the hope of gaining some share of the spoil. It would seem that he was sufficiently strong to make it worth while for the Assyrian king to come to terms with him, as he appears in the inscription above quoted to have been appointed over Zidon by Sennacherib.

It was natural that a weak prince like Ahaz should think in this emergency that his only chance of safety lay in appealing to the king, who claimed what we have learnt to call suzerainty alike over him and over his foes. It was in vain that Isaiah protested against the unwisdom of this policy, and pointed out the evils which would inevitably follow; in vain also that he held out to the king and his panic-stricken people the assurance that the powers which threatened them, formidable as they seemed, would, if left to themselves, collapse, before a child yet unborn could pass from infancy to manhood (Isa. vii. 8, 16). The king sent his messengers to Tiglath-Pileser, "who came unto him and distressed him, and strengthened him not" (2 Chron. xxviii. 21). The Assyrian monarch sold his help dear, and the treasury of the temple and of the palace had to be half emptied to satisfy his demands. If Ahaz had the satisfaction of seeing the chief cities of the Transjordanic and northern tribes captured and their people carried into exile, and his enemy Pekah dethroned and murdered (2 Kings xv. 29, 30), he was yet compelled to see also the Assyrian armies parading through Judah as well as Israel (Isa. viii. 8). The straits to which he was brought shewed themselves in his efforts to propitiate the gods of Syria, whom he looked upon as mightier than the Lord of hosts, by worshipping after their ritual (2 Chron. xxviii. 23), and by his "seeking to familiar spirits and wizards that peep (=whisper) and that mutter" (Isa. viii. 19), instead of listening to the prophet who had spoken such unwelcome truths.

To the great Assyrian king, with dominions stretching,



in his own language, "from the rising to the setting sun," the events in Jewish history which seem to us so full of interest, were but the transactions of a remote province, hardly as important as those of Cabul and Candahar, of Merv and Herat, are to us. We must not look, accordingly, to them for any full corroboration of the Biblical narrative. We can well understand, however, the satisfaction of the first interpreter (Mr. George Smith) when, in the Annals of Tiglath-Pileser, written in cuneiform characters on a tablet found in the temple of Nebo at Nimroud, he found that the events in question had not been passed over altogether without notice. In a list of tributary kings (Smith's *Assyrian Discoveries*, p. 263), we find, together with the kings of Carchemish, Hamath, Arvad, Moab, Askelon, Edom and others, the name of "Yauhazi of Jahudai," and Assyrian experts, such as Schrader (*Keilinschr.*, p. 8) and Mr. Rodwell (*R. P.*, v. 43) are agreed in seeing in this a transliterated form of "Jehoahaz of Judah." The question of course presents itself, how the Biblical name of the king came to appear in this fuller form in the Assyrian annals, and I venture to suggest an answer. (1) The name Ahaz (= the holder, or the grasper) was not, so to speak, a natural name to occur in a line of kings in which, with hardly an exception, the Divine Name forms either the first or the last syllable of all the other names. There would be an antecedent probability, on this ground, in favour of the fuller form Jehoahaz (= Jehovah holds, *i.e.* supports) borne both by a king of Israel (2 Kings xiii. 1-9), and a later king of Judah (2 Kings xxiii. 31). (2) Looking, however, to the evil fame which rested upon the name of this king, we can well understand that the prophets and scribes who recorded his transgressions might emphasize their condemnation by omitting the sacred syllables with which his memory was unworthy to be associated. Earlier achievements of Tiglath-Pileser II., his imposing tribute upon "Minihimmi of the

city Samarinaï" (= Menahem of Samaria) (*R. P.*, v. 48), and his wars with Azariah (*R. P.*, v. 45), have been in part already referred to. One other passage in his Annals (Smith's *Assyrian Discoveries*, p. 285 ; *R. P.*, v. 52), completes the points of contact with Jewish history.

"The land of Beth-Omri . . . .

. . . the population . . . the goods of its people (and the furniture to) the land of Assyria I sent. Pakaha (= Pekah) their king they had slain . . . Husih (= Hoshea) to the kingdom over them I appointed. Ten talents of gold, one thousand of silver . . . I received from them as their tribute, and to the land of Assyria I sent."

We have thus brought before us the captivity of part at least of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, the revolution which placed Hosea on the throne after the murder of Pekah (2 Kings xv. 30), and the position of that king as a tributary to Assyria, paying, as far as the silver is concerned, the same sum as Menahem ; and so the way is prepared for the right understanding of the events which led to the siege and capture of Samaria. Another fragment may however be noticed, though referring to events not recorded in the Old Testament annals, as bringing before us the fate of the king, Rezin of Damascus, who had joined Pekah in his attack on Judah, and so throwing light on the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophetic utterance to Ahaz, "The land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings" (Isa. vii. 16). I quote from Smith's *Assyrian Discoveries*, p. 282. The opening lines are mutilated, but the names that occur towards the close of the fragment leave no shadow of doubt as to their application to the king of Syria.

" . . . his warriors I captured . . . with the sword  
I destroyed  
.  
.  
the lords of chariots and . . . their arms I broke  
before him,

- . . . their horses I captured . . . his warriors carrying bows,  
 . . . bearing shields and spears, in hand I captured them and their fighting.  
 . . . line of battle. He to save his life fled away alone, and  
 . . . like a deer, and into the great gate of his city he entered.

His generals alive

In hand I captured, and on crosses I raised them.

His country I subdued, forty-five men of his camp

- . . . Damascus his city I besieged, and like a caged bird I enclosed him. His forests  
 . . . the trees of which were without number, I cut down and did not leave one.  
 . . . Hadara, [probably Rimmon-Hadara = Benhadar = or Benhadad] the house of the father of Rezon of Syria  
 \* \* \* \* \*

Sixteen districts of Syria, like a flood I swept."

The last line of the inscription furnishes a striking parallel to Isaiah's words (viii. 7, 8). "Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks and he shall pass through Judah: he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck." The boast of the last line but two, "His forests I cut down," illustrates in like manner that which Isaiah (xxxvii. 24) puts into the mouth of Sennacherib: "With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the heights of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar-trees thereof, and the choice fir-trees thereof."