

That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 10); and he asked me what that might mean. After a pause, I said: "What would you say to this? None are allowed to enter without leave into the presence of our sovereign; but the nurses of the royal children have free access whenever they have anything to say about the children." "That's worth a talent of gold," he said. Of Mrs. Irving all I then saw was just enough to shew that she lived in the light of her husband's countenance; but to what extent she was able to enter intelligently into his ideas, I had no means of judging till long after.

DAVID BROWN.

DR. DELITZSCH'S ASSYRIAN DICTIONARY.

FOR ten long years has the little band of Assyrian students been waiting for Delitzsch's *Assyrische Wörterbuch*;¹ and now that the first part has actually appeared, it is a question whether it supplies any want known to Assyriologists. When we remember the many visits which Delitzsch has made to this country, ostensibly for the purpose of copying texts, verifying references, and collecting material generally, our expectation ran high upon the great benefits which we were to receive from his work. Judging by his reviews of books by other students, we all imagined that the advent of his work would mark the beginning of an Assyrian millennium, that crooked texts would be made straight, that all difficulties would be solved, and finally that our souls, hitherto vexed by comparative Semitic philology, might bask and rest themselves in the full light of the learning of the Leipzig professor. How sorely we are disappointed in our expectations we will now show.

The first part of this *Wörterbuch* consists of 168 autographed pages; the writing is plain, neat, and regular. Now the first use

¹ *Assyrisches Wörterbuch zur gesamten bisher veröffentlichten Keilschrift literatur unter Berücksichtigung zahlreicher unveröffentlichter Texte.* Von Friedrich Delitzsch. Erste Lieferung. Henrich's, Leipzig, 1887. 4to.

of a dictionary is for beginners who are trying to learn a new language, and dictionaries are usually accompanied by a "preface" or statement, in which the plan and method of work followed by the writer are explained, and instructions are given for the use of the work. In Delitzsch's book however no words of direction are added for the use of the student, no list of Assyrian or Babylonian signs is given, and the helpless beginner is left to flounder about and find his way as best he can. An Assyrian Dictionary coming forth with such pretensions as those assumed by that of Delitzsch should have begun with an historical account of Assyrian lexicography, and a plain statement of what has been done before in this branch of research by such men as Norris and Strassmaier. Following this, a sketch of the proposed contents of the book should have been given, and then a complete list of the Assyrian and Babylonian signs which occur in the work, with their phonetic values, etc. The list of books and texts mentioned by Delitzsch as having been laid under contribution by him for his *Wörterbuch* is, on the whole, good; it is however incomplete. He has omitted to use the copies of the Liverpool collection of contract tablets made by the Rev. Dr. Strassmaier, and published in the *Transactions* of the Oriental Congress held at Leyden in year 1883; and so far as we can see he either does not know of or cannot read the copies of the "case-tablets," published by Strassmaier in the *Transactions* of the Oriental Congress held at Berlin. These are serious omissions, for this last class of texts is most important for grammatical forms, and is peculiarly rich in Biblical proper names found in the seal inscriptions impressed on the tablets.

The more we go over Delitzsch's work, the less need do we see for its appearance, and the more certain we are that he is quite unqualified for the task he has undertaken. The student already had Norris' and Strassmaier's Dictionaries, besides the most valuable syllabary published by Sayce in his *Assyrian Grammar*. It is true that Norris' work is incomplete, but then Strassmaier's is not, and as he has gone over the same ground as Delitzsch we fail to see why he brought his book out. Now the writer or compiler of an Assyrian Dictionary needs two qualifications, which are rarely met with in one person; we mean: 1, an accurate knowledge of Assyrian epigraphy; 2, a good knowledge of the Semitic dialects allied to Assyrian. Prof. Nöldeke has shown in a masterly article on Delitzsch's *Prolegomena eines neuen hebräisch-aramäischen*

*Wörterbuchs zum Alten Testament*¹ that when he attempts to discuss comparative Semitic philology, his deductions and conclusions are generally forced, and often wrong; and, in short, proves plainly that he does not possess the second of the two needful qualifications for making an Assyrian Dictionary enumerated above. Throughout the first part of his work Delitzsch has given "part copies" of texts which he considers of great importance, and which contain uncommon words. These "part copies" are very unsatisfactory, for they are part transcript into ordinary letters, and part are attempted representation of the signs on the tablets. This system of making "part copies" is to be much condemned, for it necessarily leads to bad mistakes. No Arabist, Hebraist, or Syriac scholar attempts to copy a text by transcription into Roman letters; and if this practice is found to be faulty when a language having a limited number of letters in its alphabet is concerned, how much more is it so in the use of a language having many hundreds of complex signs? But to return. One of the texts which Delitzsch so publishes in his *Wörterbuch* (pp. 114, 115) is taken from a beautifully written report tablet, 3 ins. by $1\frac{3}{8}$ in., of the time of Assur-bani-pal, bearing the No. K. 525 in the British Museum collection. The greater part of the text has been published by Strassmaier, who quotes it in his *Verzeichniss* thirty-five (!) times.² In spite of this help afforded by the *Verzeichniss* Delitzsch has managed to make no fewer than twenty mistakes in a little text of forty-four lines of beautifully clear and distinct Assyrian script. The passages which we now quote will show the reader what reliance is to be placed on Delitzsch's copies.

Line 6. The last sign in this line, he says, is erased (*radirt* ?); it is not so, but most clear.

Line 9. The sixth sign he has failed to copy at all. It is *lib*, and the following *bi*, had he understood the text, would have shown him how to read the word. The last three signs of this line he has represented as being partly erased; they read *šu-u-tu*, which is another form of *šuatu*, and means "this"; Delitzsch has made the same mistake in line 35. These signs are clear, and we cannot at all understand how he could read *šu-num* out of his own copy *su-mu-tu*.

Line 12. The sixth sign of this line is *ša*, and is not erased.

¹ See *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgen Gesell.*, vol xl., pt. iv., pp. 718-743.

² For a list of the pages where the tablet is quoted see Bezold, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 264.

The eighth sign is *ma*, and not *gis*; here again, if he had understood the text, the words *ina ma-ḥar-ti* would have given him the correct reading.

Line 16. He gives the last sign as *ut*, and adds an erasure. On the margin he gives *ka* ? and adds "*braucht nichts weiter zu fehlen.*" The sign which he reads *ut* does not occur in the line at all, which finishes with the word '*matu*,' 'country.' The reason of Delitzsch's blunder is this: On the reverse of the tablet, at the end of the line which touches the end of line 16 on the obverse, the scribe wrote *bi-ši*, but afterwards erased both these characters. The sign *ši*, upside down, Delitzsch first read *ut*, and afterwards *ka*, clearly not recognising the state of the case, nor noticing that his reading made nonsense.

Line 17. The third sign of this line is represented by Delitzsch as broken. It is quite clear, however, on the tablet, and is to be read *dag*, and forms part of the word *mad-dag-giš*, which occurs on other tablets. In a remark on the margin he describes *dag* as a "*sign like bitu*"!! The last sign but one in the line is *še*, but Delitzsch has copied it wrongly, and then queries *man* ? in the margin.

Line 18. The sixth and seventh signs of this line Delitzsch reads *ina* 15 *šal*. The two signs are however *ištu pan*, and are perfectly clear on the tablet. These words occur at the beginning of the line, and it is only too evident that Delitzsch blundered through not understanding the text.

Line 25. Delitzsch gives the last sign but one in the line as erased; it is not so.

Line 26. The last sign cannot be *tu*, as he suggests.

Line 38. Delitzsch thinks that at the end of this line there is an erased *ša*; the sign is however *a* for *ia*, and is often met with in this class of tablet.

Line 40. The fourth sign Delitzsch reads *ina* 15, instead of *šur*, which is the ideograph for the land of Assyria. This is a part of the proper name, *Sur-bi-su-nu*.

Now if Delitzsch makes all these mistakes in copying a text which had been before almost completely published, how many would he make in one which he attempted to copy for the first time? It must be remembered too that the tablet is written in Assyrian, and not Babylonian; had it been written in the latter script, much might have been forgiven him, for his incapacity in copying Babylonian is well known. The above facts as to his

skill and accuracy in copying Assyrian speak for themselves, and we think that we have proved conclusively that he does not possess the more important of the two great needs for successfully making an Assyrian Dictionary; namely, the power of copying texts correctly.

In lines 15, 23, and 32 of the text which we have just discussed the word *tê-gir-tê* occurs. Delitzsch's article on the word on p. 113 of his *Wörterbuch* tells us that it does occur in these lines of the text; it even describes the tablet, K 525, its style of writing, etc.: but we look in vain for any explanation of the word, neither is there any suggestion as to its probable meaning. Of what use is a dictionary which helps the beginner no more than this? Since all the references were given by Strassmaier's *Verzeichniss*, why print them all over again?

Dr. Delitzsch has taken upon himself to inform Bible students and Semitic scholars of the importance of the study of Assyrian for the right understanding of their own special subjects; yet as we turn over page after page of his lucubrations we are infinitely surprised at the few comparisons drawn between Assyrian and the other Semitic dialects. Many of the other texts published by Delitzsch in his *Transcriptionsmethode* are as faulty as that discussed above (particularly S. 1064, p. 163), but want of space forbids reference to them here. We close the first part of the *Assyrisches Wörterbuch* with much disappointment, and are sorry to think how much the difficulty of learning Assyrian will be increased by the inaccuracies of copying and the misrepresentations which Delitzsch prints in his work.

E.

RECENT ENGLISH LITERATURE ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE most important addition which has been made to expository literature during the past months is without doubt Dr. Ellicott's long-expected commentary on 1 Corinthians.¹ We give it the highest praise possible when we say that it is worthy of previous volumes from the same hand. It is in the truest sense a continua-

¹ *St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. With a Critical and Grammatical Commentary.* By Charles J. Ellicott, D.D., Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. (Longmans, 1887.)