With reference to the statement of Prof. Sayce on this subject, I would call attention to the following extracts. In the Academy of May 11th, 1878, Prof. Sayce wrote: “Another interesting fact disclosed by the syllabaries is the existence of a woman’s language among the Accadians.” In consequence of this statement Dr. Haupt wrote (Die Akkadische Sprache, p. xxix), “Der Erste, der in emé sal die Bezeichnung für eine besondere Weibersprache bei den Akkadiern zu erkennen glaubte, war meines Wissens A. H. Sayce.” The explanation of the ideograph emé sal by “Woman’s Language” was first given by Delitzsch, and Dr. Haupt thought that “it was the technical term by which the old Babylonian grammarians designated the lower Babylonian dialect.”

It is true that Dr. Delitzsch was the first to read emé sal as naqbu, and to explain it by the word “female,” but it is equally true that the theory of a “woman’s language” was previously held by Prof. Sayce (as I have shown above), and by Lenormant (La Magie, p. 399, German edition). The statement by Dr. Bezold on this subject is as follows: “His view (i.e. that of Dr. Delitzsch) was also held previously by Sayce and Lenormant. I have however recently examined the tablet, and found that these two signs (naq-bu) do not exist upon it at all; but instead of them there are parts of the ideograph emé sal, of the true reading and meaning of which we are just as ignorant as we were twenty years ago” (Bezold, Remarks on some Unpublished Cuneiform Syllabaries, p. 2). It seems to me a logical consequent that Prof. Sayce’s theory is either proved by the explanation of emé sal given by Dr. Delitzsch, especially as he himself says that the existence of a woman’s language is disclosed by the syllabaries, that is to say, by the term emé sal, or that it falls to the ground when it is proved that emé sal does not mean “Woman’s Language,” and that it cannot be at present explained. I therefore stand by the sentence in my review to which Prof. Sayce takes exception.

The suggestion that we should expect to find naqbitu instead of naqbu, (which Dr. Delitzsch actually read!) i.e. a feminine instead of a masculine form, was made so far back as 1883 by Dr. Haupt, who, by the way, would read naqbatu (Die Akkodische Sprache, p. xxviii). Which form is to be read cannot at present be decided.

E.

1 The capitals are mine.