

earlier period. It seems to me that in the story contained in the third chapter of Daniel, of the three children, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who were cast into the fiery furnace and miraculously saved, we have the legendary account of Nebuchadrezzar's treatment of Ahab and Zedekiah, or some of their compeers. It has come down to us through the medium of the popular, patriotic party, the party opposed by Jeremiah, but the party which was both the most numerous and the most influential in his time.

While it has no direct bearing on this subject of the burning of the prophets, nevertheless, since it is interesting as showing the cruel methods of punishment in Babylonia, and the disregard of human life there prevalent from time immemorial, I may add that Mr. Haynes in excavating the Ziggurat of the Temple of Bel at Nippur discovered a quantity of skulls built in with the bricks. They may have been 'striking' workmen who were thus summarily dealt with, or they may have been offenders of some other sort. The find was interesting merely as showing the barbarous disregard of life, and the cruelty of the punishments inflicted in Babylonia in those days.

3. The Nebuchadrezzars of Daniel. — History is strangely turned about and confused in the book of Daniel. A curious example of this confusion we find in the relation of the conquest of Belshazzar by Darius. According to the book of Daniel, Nebuchadrezzar was succeeded by his son Belshazzar, and Belshazzar was conquered and slain by "Darius the Mede." Now no Belshazzar son of Nebuchadrezzar ever reigned in Babylon, and the only Darius who can possibly be intended by the designation "Darius the Mede" is Darius Hystaspes, who was not an almost immediate successor of Nebuchadrezzar, but was separated from him by several reigns; neither was it he who overthrew the Babylonian empire and established the rule of the "Medes and Persians." Nebuchadrezzar was succeeded by Evil-Merodach, he by Neriglissar, he by Labashi-Marduk, and he by Nabonidus, who was overthrown by Cyrus. Cyrus was succeeded by Cambyses, he by Pseudo-Smerdis, and he by Darius. It is difficult, at first sight certainly, to understand how in the stories contained in the book of Daniel history can have become so confused as to bring Darius into such close proximity to Nebuchadrezzar, and to make him the conqueror of Babylon in the time of Nebuchadrezzar's son. It seems to me that some light is thrown upon this difficulty by the Behistun inscription. In this inscription (l. 31 ff.) we read this account of a revolt against Darius in Babylon:

Further there was a Babylonian, Nidintubel his name, son of Aniri, who rebelled in Babylon, lying to the people, and saying, "I am Nebuchadrezzar son of Nabonidus." Then all the Babylonians went over to that Nidintubel, Babylon rebelled, he made himself king over Babylon. . . . Thus saith Darius the king: Then I marched to Babylon and against that Nidintubel who called himself Nebuchadrezzar. The army of Nidintubel was placed upon ships; the shores of the Tigris they occupied.

The next two lines are not altogether intelligible in detail, but state in general that Darius forced the passage of the Tigris and defeated the army of Nidintubel.

On the 26th day of the month Kisleu we delivered battle. Thus saith Darius the king: Then I marched toward Babylon. I had not yet reached Babylon when Nidintubel, who had said, "I am Nebuchadrezzar," marched against me with an army to deliver battle, to a city named Zazanu on the shore of the Euphrates. There we joined battle. Ormuzd was my strong helper; by the grace of Ormuzd I smote the army of Nidintubel. One part was driven into the water, and the water swept them away. We joined battle on the second day of the month Anamaka. Thus saith Darius the king: Then this Nidintubel with a few mounted soldiers came to Babylon. Then I came to Babylon. By the help of Ormuzd I took Babylon and captured Nidintubel; and I slew Nidintubel in Babylon.

Further on in the same inscription (l. 84 ff.) Darius describes another revolt against himself of the Babylonians, in which again the pretender to the throne claimed to be Nebuchadrezzar son of Nabonidus.

Thus saith Darius the king: While I was in Persia and Media the Babylonians revolted against me for a second time. A man named Arakhu, an Armenian, son of Haldita, arose against me. There is in Babylonia a district named Dubala. From this place he arose against me. He deceived the people of Babylon, saying, "I am Nebuchadrezzar son of Nabonidus." Thereupon the people of Babylon rebelled against me and went over to this Arakhu. He took Babylon; he became king in Babylon. Thus saith Darius the king: Then I sent an army to Babylon. Vindafra, a Mede, my servant, I made commander; I sent him out, saying, "Go thither and smite the army of the rebels." Ormuzd brought me help; by the grace of Ormuzd Vindafra took Babylon and smote the army of Babylon, the rebels, and took them captive.

In l. 90 ff. he mentions in succession the various pretenders who rebelled against him at one time or another. Gomates, a Magian, who claimed to be Bardes son of Cyrus; Ashina, who raised a revolt in Elam; Nidintubel, a Babylonian, who claimed to be Nebuchadrezzar son of Nabonidus, and who made himself king of Babylon;

Martes, a Persian, who led a rebellion in Elam; Phraortes, a Median, who claimed to be Xathrites, of the race of Cyaxares, and who raised Media against Darius; Sitrantachmes, a Sagartian, who also claimed to be a descendant of Cyaxares and raised part of the same country on much the same grounds as the preceding; Parada, a Margian, who led a rebellion in Margu; Veisdates, a Persian, who claimed to be Bardes son of Cyrus and raised a rebellion in Persia; and Arakhu, an Armenian, who claimed to be Nebuchadrezzar son of Nabonidus and raised a revolt in Babylon. It is worthy of note that both pretenders to the throne in Babylon make use of the name Nebuchadrezzar, although according to Darius each claimed also to be the son of Nabonidus. It is clear that Nebuchadrezzar was the name to conjure by in Babylonia, so that when a man sought to raise a revolt he laid claim to this name as a sure means of arousing popular sentiment in his favor. This may serve to show us that that confusion of Babylonian history in the book of Daniel which sets chronology at naught and gathers everything about the name of Nebuchadrezzar was not altogether an invention of later Jewish legends, but that it had its origin in the popular ideas of the Babylonians themselves.

In addition to the record of the two pretenders named Nebuchadrezzar contained in the Behistun inscription, we have also some contract tablets from the reign of one or the other of these two pretenders, presumably, according to Boscawen (*TSBA.* vi.), the first. In the fourth volume of Schrader's *Sammlung von assyrischen und babylonischen Texten* are given three of these documents from the reign of "Nebuchadrezzar III," of which two are dated in "the accession year of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon," and one in "the first year of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon." The names of the members of the Egibi family mentioned in these tablets are the evidence that they do not belong to the reign of Nebuchadrezzar II, but to that of Nebuchadrezzar III.

It may be worth noting in connection with the dates of these tablets, which give us for the duration of the reign of this Nebuchadrezzar III portions at least of two years, that at the close of the third book of his history Herodotus describes the revolt of Babylon and its siege by Darius for a period of a little more than twenty months. After he had taken the city he treated it, according to Herodotus, with great severity, in striking contrast with the treatment it had received from Cyrus, dismantling its fortifications, and endeavoring to destroy forever its capacity to do mischief. This siege naturally impressed itself upon the popular imagination more strongly than the

almostly friendly capture of the city by Cyrus, and hence in folk-history Darius and not Cyrus became the conqueror of Babylon. It is this folk-history which is perpetuated in the book of Daniel.

Precisely why Belshazzar should play such an important part in the story I cannot conjecture. All the information which we possess regarding him up to the present is very little. We know that Nabonidus had a son of this name. He seems, however, to have played a role of importance, otherwise his name would not have been substituted in the tradition represented in the book of Daniel for that of Nabonidus, as it evidently has been, adding one more element of confusion to those already existing. In the folk-history of the book of Daniel, then, Belshazzar has taken the place of Nabonidus, for reasons which we do not know. He is made the son of Nebuchadrezzar, because Nebuchadrezzar was the great king of Babylon whose name every one knew, and about whom every one was grouped in the thought of the people. Darius Hystaspes takes the place of Cyrus as conqueror of Babylon, because of his capture of the city in the war against Nebuchadrezzar III, a siege and capture which impressed the popular mind much more forcibly than that by Cyrus. Why he is called the Mede I do not know.

4. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin (Dan. v. 25).—In the explanation of these words, given in vs. 26–28, we find simply *Mene, Tekel, Peres*. Turning to the Greek text we find that in the 25th verse we have not *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, but merely *Mene, Tekel, Peres*. It seems to me almost self-evident that the Greek text is correct and the Hebrew wrong. The *Mene* in the Hebrew text seems to have been repeated by accident, and the *Peres* has either been inflected, or else we have the conjunction with the plural form of the word פֶּרְסִי, 'Persian.' If the Greek text be adopted and the pointing of the words be omitted entirely, which is what the story itself requires, the whole passage becomes plain. We have the three roots meaning simply, *number, weigh, divide* (or *Persian*). The last word may equally well be 'divide' or 'Persian,' so far as the root is concerned, and this ambiguity gives opportunity for the play which is found in the explanation. The problem given to Daniel is to explain what is meant by the three words on the wall, *number, weigh, divide* or *Persian*. His skill or his inspiration is shown in the finding of a meaning which so precisely fitted these three enigmatic roots to the circumstances. Remembering that the writing must have been without vowels, the conditions are very much the same as if we