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he has that hand to guide him, and then should bow humbly before him who alone is from everlasting to everlasting.

We have yet to inquire, What is the true idea of nature's individuality.

[To be concluded.]

ARTICLE VII.

BRANDIS ON THE ASSYRIAN INSCRIPTIONS AND THE MODE OF INTERPRETING THEM.

By Professor George E. Day, Lane Theological Seminary.

[The following essay is taken, with some abridgment, from a recent treatise "on the historical gain from the Deciphering of the Assyrian Inscriptions," by Dr. Brandis of the University of Bonn, of whose labors in this department, honorable mention is made in the Annual Report of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1856. It has been translated for the Bibliotheca Sacra, not only as furnishing an interesting view of the serious difficulties to be encountered in ascertaining the meaning of these ancient records, and the means employed to overcome them, but also as exhibiting the ground of the distrust with which many of the translations of Rawlinson and Hincks have been received in Germany.]

Not far from the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite to Mosul, rise two mounds, between which winds a small stream called the Khosser. Upon the northern mound, which is about fifty feet in height, and much larger and higher than the one on the south, stands the village of Koyunjik; upon the southern one, called Nebbi Yunus, stands a mosque [said to be] erected over the tomb of the prophet Jonah, and surrounded by dwellings. Both of these mounds are remains of artificially constructed terraces, on which

palaces and temples of the Assyrian capital once stood. This extended, according to the testimony of antiquity, from the Great Zab, northward along the Tigris, in the form of a parallelogram, the circumference of which, as given by Ctesias, was 480 stadia or 60 [geographical] miles. These mounds opposite to Mosul, therefore, can have occupied but *a part* of the area inclosed by the city wall; and the two points at which the most important remains have been discovered, viz. those where the villages of Khorsabad and Nimrud stand, were inclosed within the ancient city. The former is five hours north-east from Mosul; the latter, six hours below, on the Tigris. Here at Nimrud, where the Zab empties into the Tigris, rises a pyramidal hill, which overlooks a terrace-formed summit, on which lies the village of Nimrud. It was this which arrested the attention of Xenophon, when he passed, with the Ten Thousand, by the ruins of the city, without dreaming what activity had existed here scarcely two hundred years before.

At this period Layard, it is well known, commenced in the year 1845 his successful excavations, and brought out of the rubbish the ruins of four great palaces and several other edifices. Here, too, the most ancient and the most recent of the Assyrian buildings had stood side by side. When Nineveh was destroyed, the oldest of these palaces, as it seems, which occupied the north-west corner of the terrace, was already in ruins, and the materials of which it was constructed had been freely drawn from, in the construction of the south-west palace. Hence, while all the others give evidence of destruction by fire, the former alone shows no trace of any such catastrophe. Botta, who as early as the year 1843 had discovered the first Assyrian palace at Khorsabad, was stimulated by the success of Layard to institute explorations in the mound of *Koyunjik*, but with no considerable results. It was reserved for Layard to exhume both these, and, at Nebbi Yunus several additional Assyrian buildings. In December, 1846, the first Assyrian sculptures were brought, in the Cormorant, to Europe. Since then, the Louvre and the British Museum, have received numerous additional treas-

ures from the excavations carried on in Mesopotamia by English and French funds; but, in consequence of the Turkish war, the activity of the Assyrian Fund Society has been recently suspended.[1]

Besides Nineveh, there are numerous other places within and without the ancient Assyrian empire, in which written and sculptured monuments of the kings have been found. The most remarkable of these is the figure, in relief, of a king almost entirely covered with an inscription, which was discovered in Larnaka, the ancient Citium, in the island of Cyprus, and is now preserved in the Berlin Museum. Such commemorative tablets of Assyrian conquests have frequently been found, both in ancient and in modern times. One was seen by the attendants of Alexander, near the Cilician city Anchiale, which, as the Assyrians told them, was placed there by Sardanapalus.[2] This description agrees exactly with the ancient figures with which we are now acquainted.

A similar tablet still exists, hewn in the rocks, at Nahr-el-Kelb, near Beirût, together with a row of Babylonian and Egyptian sculptures, which were intended to immortalize the march of Rameses and the expeditions of Assyrian and Babylonian forces upon the great highway through Syria and along the coast of the Mediterranean, which connected Mesopotamia with Egypt.[3] Further west than Nahr-el-Kelb, no trace of Assyrian sculpture has yet been found.

[1] In 1855, the works of the Assyrian excavation Society were placed under the direction of the British Museum. To the members of that Society, Mr. Loftus, who was employed by them, and subsequently by Col. Rawlinson, and whose "Researches in Chaldea and Susiana" have been recently published, affirms that the British nation is indebted for the discovery and exhumation of a series of bas-reliefs which, for their artistic conception, bold relief, and delicacy of finish, are to be regarded as the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Assyrian art. They were obtained from the northern half of the mound of Koyunjik, which forms the centre of the ruins of Nineveh, and proves to be the great treasure-house of Assyrian Antiquities. The excavations, at this point, were made in 1854; and the collection of marbles and antiquities, thus gained, was received by the British Museum in the early part of 1856.—*Tr.*

[2] Arrian. Exped. Alex. II., 5.

[3] These tables were examined by Dr. Robinson in his recent tour, and are described in his "Later Bib. Researches." pp. 419—23.—*Tr.*

On the east and north-east, the evidences of their power extend to Armenia, where the parts adjacent to Lake Van especially abound in them.

Notwithstanding, however, the evidence of the greatness of Nineveh, and the lively representations of Assyrian manners and customs, furnished by these dead figures, they could furnish nothing beyond general historical results, so long as the inscriptions, designed to explain them, were not deciphered. For this, we were not long to wait. Fortunately, before the Assyrian records were brought to light, the means for unravelling them had been obtained by the deciphering of the *old Persian* inscriptions. On the inscriptions of Persepolis, Hamadan, Naksh-i-Rustan, etc., the Arian or Indo-European text is accompanied with records in two other languages. These, it has been discovered, are *translated* in Tartar and Babylonian.[1] Just as, at the present day, the edicts of the governors of Bagdad are published in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian; so, twenty-three centuries since, the kings of Persia found it necessary to make what they published intelligible to their subjects, by dialects of the same three families of languages. The key to the deciphering of the Persian cuneiform inscription, obtained by Grotefend in the names of Darius and Xerxes,[2] was so diligently used by such men as Lassen, Burnouf, Westergaard, and Rawlinson, that now few words or phrases exist in respect to which any doubt is left. Thus, by means of the great number of names which the inscriptions of the Achæmenian princes contain, we are able to determine the value of the signs in the two

[1] Comp. the excellent treatises of *Edwin Norris.* Memoir on the Scythic Version of the Behistun Inscription: London. 1853, and *Martin Haug.* Ueber Schrift und Sprache der zweiten Keilgattung. Göttingen. 1855.

[2] Prof. Grotefend, with great acuteness, conjectured that the names of the three Persian monarchs, which are specially prominent in the Greek historians, viz.: Hystaspes, Xerxes, and Darius, would be contained on one of these Persian inscriptions. On selecting groups of characters, and comparing them with each other, it was found that the same character which stood *third* in the first of these names, stood *last* in the one of Darius, and *second* in that of Xerxes (KS = x). This gave the letter s; and as the other letters, in like manner, corresponded with each other, the conjecture was confirmed, and the alphabetic value of ten or twelve cuneiform characters was obtained.—*Tr.*

translations of the Arian text. All the three versions of these inscriptions are in the arrow-headed or wedge character. Fortunately, the identification of the proper names amid the confusion of the arrow-headed characters, which are of the greatest variety in the Tartar, and still more in the Babylonian inscriptions, was greatly facilitated by a peculiarity, which appears, with minor variations, in both. It consists in a *perpendicular wedge* placed before every proper name, while the names of nations and countries are distinguished by a different mark.[1] The decipherers of the Babylonian and Assyrian, are under additional obligations to the scribes of Mesopotamia for never having ended a line with the fragment of a word, as the Persians and Tartars did. Whenever it was necessary, they completed the line by extending the letter, as was customary with the Semitic alphabets with which we are acquainted.

In the same year in which such rich treasures of Assyrian sculptures and inscriptions were received at Paris, the most important monument of the old Persian language was made known by Rawlinson's publication of the *inscription of Behistun.* Up to that time had been derived, from the Persian inscriptions, only the titles and genealogies of the kings and satraps, and utterances of rulers general in their nature, and historically worthless; but now was furnished a chronicle, rich in facts and names, of the first years of the reign of Darius. From these, which, with the exception of the Usurpation of the Pseudo Smerdis, were before entirely unknown, it appears that a brief notice, in Herodotus, of an insurrection of the Medes against Darius, which had been supposed to refer to a rebellion under Darius Nothus, or even to be interpolated, relates to an insurrection headed by a native Mede named Phraortes. With the aid of this long inscription, there was ground to hope for success in the attempt to decipher the two other far-more complicated species of writ-

[1] In the Tartar, the use of the mark for persons is extended to such words as father, son, family, men, people, nation, king, leader, satrap, magian, subject, rebel, elected; names of places, local designations generally, and many other terms, are indicated by a horizontal mark. Haug, p. 8.

ing, especially when the discovery of the countless inscriptions in Nineveh, which all exhibit the same characters with the *third* kind of Achaemenian records, was made. If the value of these signs could be ascertained by comparison with the Persian text, there was room for the hope that the *language* also might be mastered, and the history of the Assyrian people be recovered from their own monuments. After various unsuccessful efforts by English, French, and German scholars, the genius of the indefatigable Rawlinson, who had obtained an impression, on paper, of the whole of the Behistun inscription, by means of the incredible daring of the Kurds in climbing, had been so far successful as to render him certain of the *Semitic* character of the language; and, soon after, a comparison of the Assyrian inscriptions with the Babylonian of the age of the Achaemenian monarchs, made it evident that not only were both written with the same characters, but were also composed on the whole in the same language.

After the publication, in the year 1850, of specimens of his results in deciphering inscriptions at Nineveh, and especially a translation on the black obelisk, he laid before the public, in 1851, the Babylonian text of the Behistun inscription, with a translation and the first part of a commentary, followed by remarks upon the single characters.[1] Although this is but a fragment, it enables us to form a judgment of the numerous difficulties surmounted by Rawlinson's courageous investigations, and of the extent to which a cautious criticism may venture to follow him in his slippery path. The difficulty of deciphering the Babylonian-Assyrian, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate. Of all the Asiatic nations which employed the arrow-headed character, the Persians were the last to rise to power, also the last to adopt this mode of writing. This alphabet thus obtained, which was simple, and consisted of about forty different characters, they adapted to their national language, as the Greeks adapted the Semitic letters to their own Indo-Germanic tongue. The

[1] Memoirs on the Babylonian and Assyrian Inscriptions, in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XIV.

Tartar nations, on the other hand, who used the *second* mode of writing on the Achaemenian monuments, had an alphabet of about a hundred characters. The cuneiform writing of the Babylonians was the earliest, as that of the Persian was the latest. In the remains of the Babylonian text of the Behistun inscription, which has unfortunately suffered from time and the weather, we have about 160 different characters. Rawlinson gives a list of 246 arrow-headed forms, which he has found, partly in Assyrian and partly in Babylonian records. It is certain, however, that this number might be easily increased by a comparison of all the Ninevite inscriptions. This variety becomes still greater in consequence of the multitude of variations, in which these characters appear in the different inscriptions. If after ages might commiserate the Babylonians and Assyrians for being obliged to use this multitude (as it would seem) of arbitrary forms, this pity must give place to speechless astonishment at the declaration of such men as Rawlinson and Hincks,[1] that the scholars of Mesopotamia may have used, — perhaps a fourth part of those figures — for *several* sounds entirely *different* from each other. Since, in the known written languages, the effort clearly appears to become intelligible and to avoid misunderstanding, as may be everywhere seen even in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, it is difficult for us to conceive of a system so entirely different; and we almost dread to think of the consequences involved in the liberty of reading a sign, for instance, which frequently occurs in the inscriptions, either *ta* or *kur* or *mat* or *shat* or *lat* or *nat* or *kimu* or *ekshu*. If such variations can be demonstrated, our efforts to decipher them must certainly be in vain ; and we shall be obliged, not merely to wonder at the boldness of the Assyrians in daring to tolerate them, but much more at their ability to read their own writing.

Rawlinson was first led to these views by observing that, in

[1] His essays, on the Khorsabad inscriptions ; on the Assyro-Babylonian Phonetic Characters; and on the Personal Pronouns of the Assyrian and other languages, are contained in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, Vols. XXII. and XXIII.

the inscription of Behistun, the names of Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonedus are written *An. pa. sa. du. ach.* and *An. pa. ia.*, while in others, the name Nabopolassar is sometimes written *An. pa. ha. ach.* Next, so long as the ordinary phonetic value of the signs was adhered to, a series of words resisted all attempts to bring them into connection with any known language. And finally, the great variety of variations in the names of the Assyrian kings, and in several other proper names, appeared to confirm his hypothesis. Once in possession of such a principle, it was natural that the work of deciphering should rapidly go forward; no difficulty was so great as not to be, in this manner, happily solved. A striking instance is furnished us in the treatment of the name of a king who styles himself Ruler of Assyria and Son of Sennacherib, and consequently can be no other than Assarhaddon. The first sign agrees with this, being the sign at Behistun to express the land of Assyria, and in the Ninevite inscriptions, both this and the god Assar. But the last of the three characters which compose the name, is the same with the first. From this difficulty Hincks easily escapes: the initial character is to be read Assar, but in the end of the name perhaps *don!* credat Judæus Apella. Happily we are able to show that no such violence was necessary; for the full name of the Assyrian monarch was *Assar don Assar*, i. e. Assar, lord of Assyria,[1] and the abbreviated form was in use only among the people.[2] Be this as it may, the thing is so utterly incredible, as to render any other mode of solving such difficulties preferable to this. Neither hieroglyphics nor alphabetic writing furnishes the least analogy to such lawlessness. Nor is the manner in which Rawlinson seeks to explain the origin of the alleged polythong at all satisfactory. We may admit, without scruple, that the arrow-headed writ-

[1] *Ezer* or *ezar*, at the end of Babylonian and Assyrian names, as Tiglath-Pilesar, Shalmanezer, Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, Nabonassar, is simply the land of Assar, as the Assyrian orthography of this name shows.

[2] By a similar abbreviation is the circumstance to be explained, that one of the murderers of Sennacherib is called, in 2 Kings 19: 37, Sharezer, and in Abydenus (Arm. Eus. ed. Ancher I. p. 53), Nergilus, although the full name was probably Nergal-Sarezar. Cf. Hitzig. Begr. d. Kritik, p. 195 ff.

ing was originally derived from the hieroglyphic, although the phonetic part of the letter must have been, at the time, considerably developed, because in no other way can the use of generic signs, before the names of persons, countries, rivers, and the like, be accounted for: but that in Mesopotamia, the figure of an object was employed for all its various names, is opposed to all probability. Even among the Egyptians, each figure always retained its distinct phonetic value; and where, as a generic sign, it appears to have lost this property, it was not pronounced. Accordingly, we believe, and think we have proved in the second part of this essay, that, in a large number of arrow-groups, a definite conventional law of formation may be traced. If this discovery is verified, it runs directly counter, it is plain, to that theory.

Finally, our distrust of this lawlessness is still more increased by the fact that so many important parts of the Ninevite inscriptions can be deciphered without assigning to the individual cuneiform characters more than *one* sound, which each has been proved to represent. It will never be possible, however, to escape from the confusion of contradictory statements, except by a rigid *separation of the orthography of Assyrian and Babylonian proper names from the orthography of all other names and words.* For, in the former, it is not only the wider use of ideographic and determinative signs, which makes the determination of the arrow-groups specially difficult, but still more a singular mode of abbreviation, which, on account of being able to express the longest names by a few strokes, is of very frequent occurrence. This is governed by entirely different laws from those which are observed in writing other words, and reminds one of a rebus or riddle, more than of anything else. In the name of nearly every king of Assyria or Babylon, an example is furnished of the various ways, longer or shorter, in which it was written. The name of Nebuchadnezzar is written Nebikudurruzur, Anakkudiruzur, Anakkudirach, Anpasaduach; that of his father, Nabipaluzur, Anakhaach; that of Sargon, Sargana, Sardu, Mindu. In all these examples, the steps can be traced from the longer to the abbreviated form,

though not, of course, with entire clearness except by inspection of the signs themselves. These abbreviations must have been occasioned by the rule already mentioned, according to which the end of a line must coincide with the end of a word. Hence we find the most extensive employment of these contractions on the brick temples. It must certainly be admitted that sometimes one arrow group is substituted for another which expresses the same idea, but does not represent the same sound; and this it is which has induced Rawlinson to advance his theory and to suppose it to be everywhere verified. But such substitutions would never of course occur either in the orthography of foreign names, or of any other word when the scribe was anxious to make his work intelligible to himself and others.

Accordingly, in the Semitic records, the alphabetical apparatus, in particular that which has been obtained from the Behistun inscription, can be applied to the single characters of Assyrian and Babylonian proper names, only when these names are expressed *in full*, and even then not to all, since into nearly every name generic and ideographic signs are interwoven. This is especially the case with the names of nearly all the Assyrian and Babylonian kings. These are consequently the most difficult to decipher, not only for this reason, but also because into the orthography of the name of a deity, the signs of his attributes and surnames often enter, although they have no connection with the pronunciation of the kings' names.[1]

From not observing this distinction, and improperly applying the laws which belong only to the contracted forms of these proper names to all words and names, the theory of various sounds for the same sign arose. That this is in fact restriction to the limits just described — if we may speak in query of a polythong of arrow-head groups — is proved by the simple solution of many difficulties, which it has been

[1] Thus, the sign for the god Nebo, in the names of Nebuchadnezzar and Nebopolassar, is followed by one which does not represent the pronunciation of the name of the god or the king. So to the god *San*, in the name of Sanherib (Senacherib), is affixed his surname *don* or *adon*.

believed could only be solved by the erroneous hypothesis already referred to.

It is not surprising, after all this, that the labors of the English scholars in this department have not been favorably regarded in Germany, and the greatest distrust of their translations of the Ninevite inscriptions has been expressed.[1] A more careful examination, however, of the processes and results of Rawlinson and Hincks shows, that if England has believed too much, we in Germany have believed too little; and that, while firmly convinced of the impossibility of the wide ambiguity of signs which they maintain, we have reason to rejoice that their researches have already yielded much fruit.

From the more than eighty proper names found in the Achaemenian inscriptions, and which, as we have seen, could be easily distinguished, the means of fixing and certainly determining the phonetic value of nearly one hundred arrow-head signs was furnished. With this material it was, of course, possible to determine the sounds of those groups of arrow-heads which were composed of these signs. In this manner the Semitic character of the Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions was discovered, and, though only a part of the words could be connected with known roots, yet a comparison of the same word in various inflections, gave about ten additional determinable signs, which the proper names did not contain.

Beyond this point, two difficulties prevented any rapid progress. In the first place, these one hundred and twenty signs were by no means sufficiently numerous to afford the means of deciphering the entire text of the Achaemenian inscriptions and still less of the Ninevite ones. On the other hand, however, variants of the same text, e. g. standard inscriptions, which, like the figures in our carpets, are again and again repeated, in all the halls of a Ninevite palace, have given us the value of many signs before unknown. But great caution is here necessary, and also in availing our-

[1] Comp. Ewald, in the Gött. gel. Anzeigen. 1851. S. 50 ff.

selves of the aid offered by the characters in the Tartar translation of the Persian original. That these are borrowed from the Assyro-Babylonian alphabet is not to be doubted; and here and there, their phonetic value is determined more certainly from the Tartar than from the Babylonian text; but, on the other hand, the pronunciation appears often to have been different.

The second difficulty, which cannot in all cases be at once overcome, is that of discovering the *Semitic roots* in the arrow-head form, the phonetic value of which has been decided. First of all we naturally resort to the vocabulary of the Aramæan dialects, although many words are, and will be, found which the dialects have lost, but which are preserved in other Semitic languages. Of the greatest importance, however, are the Semitic portions of two languages, viz. the Armenian and the Pehlevi, the latter of which was probably spoken in Southern Mesopotamia in the time of the Sassanides: for the Semitic parts of both languages could have been derived only from the Assyrian and Babylonian dialect. The brief but excellent treatise of Haug,[1] therefore, on the leading features of the Pehlevi, is a valuable contribution to the helps for the deciphering of the Babylonian-Assyrian. For, if we succeed in finding a root with a fitting signification in the Achaemenian inscriptions, we possess the surest pledge of the correctness of the discovery, if the same root can be discovered in the Pehlevi with the same or a cognate signification. Similar is the relation of the Armenian; but unfortunately its vocabulary has not yet been sifted, with this in view. To these difficulties must be added that which arises from the partial mutilation which the important inscriptions of Behistun and Naksh-i-Rustan has suffered. But happily, again, the same expressions, especially in the Behistun record, are very frequently repeated, so that many groups can be filled out by a careful comparison of different passages. In this manner, a whole series of words and ex-

[1] Ueber die Pehlevi-Sprache und den Bundehesh. Aus den Gött. gel. Anzeigen. Göttingen, 1851. [Also, *Spiegel*, Grammatik der Huzvâresch-Sprache. Wien, 1856. 8vo. p. 194.—*Tr.*]

pressions, in the third kind of the Achæmenian inscriptions has been perfectly deciphered, and this meaning, though in nearly every instance upon the basis of the Persian original, has been correctly determined.

Now the Assyro-Babylonian court-style, which had extended its influence even to the style of composition on the Persian records, was so settled that the Achæmenian inscriptions have not only much, as it respects form and complexion, in common with those at Nineveh of similar import; but even the same phrases frequently occur in both. Especially illustrative of this is the comparison of the black obelisk, already mentioned, with the inscription of Behistun; for, in the former, the builder of the central palace in Nimrud, recounts his exploits in the same words, frequently, with those of Daniel in the latter, several centuries later. A more careful comparison, therefore, of both records, may lead to a more certain translation, in many places, of the older writing.

ARTICLE VIII.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

We have received the following Notes from a valued literary correspondent: —

Hebrew Parallelism. The poetic parallelism of members, as a leading characteristic of Hebrew versification, is well known. This form of composition has been thought peculiar to the Shemites. But it has been pointed out in the poetry of the ancient Finns, before their conversion to Christianity.

In a poem to Tapio, the god of the woods, we have the following invocation:

"O, thou Bee, smallest of birds,
Bring me honey from the house of the woods,
Sweet juice from the hall of Tapio."