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Recent Oriental Archaeology.

BY PROFESSOR A. H. SAYCE, LL.D., LITT.D., OXFORD.

A Boundary Stone.

THE vast stores of material bearing upon the archæology and history of early Babylonia which have been brought to light by the expedition of the University of Pennsylvania to the site of Nippur are being rapidly made available for study. One of the latest volumes to be published is that on *A New Boundary Stone of Nebuchadrezzar I.*, by Wm. J. Hincke (Philadelphia, 1907, volume iv. of Series D). The book is an admirable example, not only of printing, but still more of Assyriological research. It is, in fact, a model of what a work of the kind ought to be, and approaches perfection as nearly as is possible for human endeavour. It is full of new light, as well as of photographs and other illustrations of the symbols found on the Babylonian boundary stones.

A complete review is given of these boundary stones, or *Kudurri*, as the Assyriologists sometimes call them, of their origin, nature and use, their contents and the emblems engraved upon them. This is followed by a translation of the new and important specimen of the class which has been discovered at Nippur, together with a commentary, philological, historical, and geographical, and the volume concludes with indices and a glossary. Nothing has been omitted.

The emblems engraved upon the stones have been supposed to represent the signs of the Zodiac and other astronomical figures. Thanks to discoveries at Susa, however, it is now known that they are really the shrines, weapons, and symbols of the Babylonian deities. As the Babylonian deities were officially identified with certain of the heavenly bodies at an early date, Professor Hincke is inclined further to see in them emblems not

only of the gods, but of the heavenly bodies as well. But this is a concession to the 'astral theory,' which does not seem to me to be necessary, and I much question whether the Babylonian on whose field the stones were erected regarded them as anything more than divine symbols. At all events the cylinder-seal recently found at Gezer, to which Professor Hincke refers in the addenda, cannot be invoked in favour of the theory, since, as I have shown in the *Quarterly Statement* of the Palestine Exploration Fund, it has nothing to do with the Zodiacal signs. That the figures of Sagittarius, Aquarius, and Capricorn in the late Græco-Egyptian Zodiacs should be taken from the Centaur and Goatfish of the Babylonian monuments proves nothing for the astronomical origin or connexion of the latter. The Greek centaur was certainly not an astronomical symbol. On the other hand, the association of each sign of the Zodiac with an animal name in the late Egyptian and East Asiatic systems of astronomy was undoubtedly derived from Babylonia. But the derivation cannot be traced back to an early date.

The weapons of the gods, some of which are represented on the boundary stones, all bore special names, like the flaming sword of the cherubim which, according to Gn 3²⁴, kept 'the way of the tree of life.' Most of the weapons, like the other symbols on the stones, have now been identified with the divinities to whom they belonged, and Professor Hincke himself has added to the list the column with two lion-heads, which he has shown must be the emblem of Nin-*ip*.

Professor Hincke has a very interesting section on the exact place of Nebuchadrezzar I. in the

dynasty of Isin, and I think he has made it clear that this king was the immediate predecessor of Bel-nadin-abla and Merodach-nadin-akhê. But I cannot agree with him in believing that the two predecessors of Nebuchadrezzar were contemporaries of the last kings of the Kassite dynasty. Not only is there no indication of this in the dynastic tables, but it seems to me inconsistent with the Assyrian chronology as well as with the synchronisms that have been established with Egypt.

So far as is known at present, the boundary stone made its first appearance in Babylonia with the advent of the Kassite dynasty, and Professor Hincke's suggestion is a good one, that its erection was 'a foreign custom, which originated in a mountainous country where there were plenty of stones to supply the demand.' To the list of *Kudurru* inscriptions which he gives at the beginning of his book, two others (unfortunately, however, broken) should be added, one in the Warwick Museum, dated in the thirteenth year of Merodach-nadin-akhê, which I have published in the *Proceedings* of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, February 1897; and the other, still unpublished, which is in my own possession, and is dated in the reign of a king of Babylon whose name is written . . . na-MU-O, perhaps to be read [Nabu? -iddi]na-sumu. The forms of the characters indicate as its date the end of the Isin dynasty, but the names of the scribes, witnesses, and other parties to the document are not found on other boundary stones.

Legal and Commercial.

Another volume of cuneiform texts from Nippur¹ has just appeared from the skilful and indefatigable pen of Professor Clay. The enormous amount of labour involved in the preparation of the work, and demanded alike from eye, brain, and hand, makes the rapidity with which his volumes have followed one another all the more astonishing. There is no scamped or inaccurate work in them; his copies of the texts are exact reproductions of the originals, and the elaborate indices alone imply a large expenditure of time. The new volume contains the legal documents of the late Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian periods, and Professor Clay has included in it tablets not actually found by the expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, but bought from dealers, who would seem

to have procured some of them from other sites than Nippur. For the chronology of the periods represented by them the tablets are naturally of great value, and the historical part of the Introduction which Professor Clay has prefixed to his copies will be read with special interest. He agrees with the view which I advocated many years ago that Kandalanu, the predecessor of Nabopolassar, is not to be identified with Assur-bani-pal, as the majority of Assyriologists have maintained, and brings forward fresh reasons for this opinion. Indeed, it now seems probable that Assur-bani-pal died shortly after his reconquest of Babylon, and consequently some time before the death of Kandalanu. Among the tablets the Professor has found is one dated in the twenty-sixth year of Assur-bani-pal, and he remarks, with justice, that if it were true that the latter 'had assumed the name Kandalanu in Babylon . . . it seems unreasonable to suppose that at Nippur, not more than fifty miles distant, he should be known by his real name six years after the death of Shamash-shum-ukin and his own enthronement in that city.' A noteworthy fact, which, I think, has been observed for the first time by Professor Clay, is that neither Shamash-shum-ukin nor the two viceroys who followed him, 'ruled over any city south of Babylon.' In Southern Babylonia the direct rule of Assyria was acknowledged almost up to the last. Perhaps Professor Clay is right in his suggestion that Kandalanu was a son of one of Esar-haddon's foreign wives; at all events, the name does not appear to be Semitic.

Coming down to a later epoch we find that the dated tablets of Artaxerxes I. show him to have reigned, not forty years, as stated by Diodorus, but about forty-two years. It also becomes difficult to discover a place for Xerxes II. and Sogdianus, who are variously said to have reigned altogether nine months and a year and seven months. There are tablets which prove that Darius II. (the successor of Sogdianus) ascended the throne before the fourth day of Sebat in the forty-first year of Artaxerxes I.; that is to say, before the reign of Artaxerxes himself was officially regarded as at an end. Artaxerxes is still called king in tablets of later date.

Another interesting part of Professor Clay's

¹ *The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania*, Series A, vol. viii. pt. 1. 'Legal and Commercial Transactions.' By Albert T. Clay. Philadelphia, 1908.

Introduction is the section on the Aramaic endorsements. Many of the tablets are provided with endorsements in Aramaic which was at the time the *lingua franca* of trade. They are valuable not only as showing what was the current pronunciation of Assyrian names, but also how such names were represented in the letters of the Semitic alphabet. *M* is almost invariably a *waw*.

The tablets offer a few peculiarities, one of which is that generally only the father's name is given. This throws light on the converse fact which has been observed in the fragments of Ktesias, who gives the names of the sons of the fellow-conspirators of Darius, in their attack on the life of the Pseudo-Smerdis, instead of the conspirators themselves.

A Clavis Cuneorum.

Some four years ago I drew attention in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES to a useful publication by Dr. G. Howardy entitled *Clavis Cuneorum*, in which the cuneiform characters were classified and explained for the use of beginners in Assyriology. The first instalment, or the second part of the work, has now appeared (*Ideogrammata rariora*; Harrassowitz, Leipzig), and its contents fully justify the long period of time the author has taken in preparing it. It is no longer the beginner but the Assyriological scholar for whom it is intended, and it will occupy the same place to-day in Assyriological research that Dr. Strassmaier's Concordance to the second volume of the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia* did two decades ago. The Assyrian ideographs, both single and compound, are given in it with all their values, whether Sumerian or Semitic, so far as they are at present

known, and the whole has been packed into the smallest possible space without any sacrifice of clearness or of facility of reference. The meaning of each ideograph is given in English, Latin, and German wherever it is known, and authorities and references are added in all cases. No recent contribution to our knowledge of Assyrian lexicography seems to have escaped Dr. Howardy's notice, and the work is thoroughly up to date. I can find only one omission, that of AS-AS as a sign of the plural, which Dr. Ungnad has shown is to be met with in the date-formulæ of the age of Khammurabi.

Dr. Ungnad himself has brought out a useful little volume of *Selected Babylonian Business and Legal Documents of the Khammurabi Period* (Brill, Leiden, 1907), which forms the ninth volume in the 'Semitic Study' Series. The autographed copies of the texts are followed by a list of signs and an excellent glossary, to which an index of proper names has been further added. In a short introduction Dr. Ungnad points out that the language of the legal documents, being that of the people, is from a philological point of view more interesting than that of the famous Code of Khammurabi, which seems to have been composed by the best scholars of the time, and consequently to have been further removed from the spoken language. He also states his conviction, based upon the phonetic variants which occur, that the legal clauses written in Sumerian were also read as Sumerian and not as Semitic,—a conviction with which I entirely concur. The usage was parallel to that of Norman-French in our own legal formulæ. The 'selected' texts will be a useful introduction to the study of the early Babylonian contract tablets.

The Imitation of Christ.

BY THE REV. EDGAR T. SELBY, BATTICALOA, CEYLON.

FOR the practice of the Christian life, as for Christian theology, Jesus Christ is the central figure. As the Incarnate Son of God, He is the revelation of the Father and the ultimate source of our knowledge of God. So in Jesus the possibilities of human nature are fully displayed, and to that matchless figure we turn to learn what man's life should be. Jesus Christ is the great

example. Yet when that fact has been grasped, the difficulties in the way of those who would try to 'follow His steps' are only beginning. On every side the gulf which separates us from Him seems so broad as to make our chances of bridging it remote.

As soon as the believer sets his eyes upon Christ with a view to the imitation of His life, he