

III.

TRANSLATION OF AN ASSYRIAN INSCRIPTION ON THE SCULPTURED SLAB RECENTLY PRESENTED TO THE MUSEUM BY PROFESSOR J. Y. SIMPSON. By H. FOX TALBOT, Esq.

The Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland has been recently enriched with a noble specimen of Assyrian sculpture, being the munificent donation of Dr Simpson, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society.

This sculptured slab represents Ashurakhbal, a monarch of the tenth century B.C., holding in his hand a cup of wine, with which he is about to offer a libation to the gods. This sculpture is accompanied by an inscription of twenty-one lines in very good preservation, of which I annex a translation.

This inscription is a well-known one, more than 100 copies of it having been found by Mr Layard while he was engaged in the excavation of Ashurakhbal's palace; for which reason it has been called the "standard inscription." Nevertheless, no translation of it appears to have been published.

Ashurakhbal was a great warrior and conqueror, but appears to have been destitute of any taste for literature. This may be inferred from the fact that he gave orders to inscribe the same inscription upon so many of the slabs which lined the apartments and galleries of his palace; whereas, if he had given upon each slab the description of some different battle, or other remarkable event of his reign, our knowledge of his career would now have been much more complete.

There have been found, however, two pavement slabs, engraved on both sides, at the entrance of the temple of Hercules on the mound of Nimrud, which give a much more full and perfect account of his reign and his conquests. These have been lithographed by the British Museum, and occupy ten plates (17 to 26) of one of their volumes of inscriptions.

The Assyrians wrote their annals on small terra cotta cylinders, several of which are in the British Museum. They are covered with close and crowded characters impressed on them, while the clay was soft, by a kind of *stylus*. These were, no doubt, when newly made, easily and conveniently legible. Besides these, the Assyrians had, doubtless, volumes written on papyrus which have not reached our times.

The inscriptions on the large sculptured slabs, such as the one now in the Museum, were in all probability seldom read. Several reasons concur to show this. In the first place, the inscription is treated as quite subordinate to the sculpture. When a line of writing meets the king's figure, it is suspended, often in the middle of a word, and the reader has to search for the continuation of the word at the distance of a foot or two, according to the breadth of the king's figure, or other interruption.

This may not be of much importance in the case of the first or last lines, but it is embarrassing in the central lines: it would be so even to an English reader, reading his own language, if he found half of each line written on one side of his newspaper, and half on the other side. Moreover, the terra cotta cylinders (which were intended for actual reading and frequent consultation) were neatly and methodically written, each line often commencing with a new subject. There is nothing of this kind of care and attention on the large sculptured slabs. A new subject almost always begins, without warning, in the middle of a line. The workmen being commanded to repeat the same formal inscription so often, grew inattentive, and bestowed all their care upon the king's effigy and the scene represented. A striking proof of this is afforded by the present inscription, line 14, in which the sculptor has carelessly repeated no less than sixty cuneiform signs which he had just written (only in the previous line!). These contain only some phrases in praise of the king which were certainly not repeated intentionally, since other usual glorifications of the king have been omitted, and a copious choice of them was at the disposal of the scribe.

Translation of the Inscription.

This is the palace of Ashurakhbal, servant of Ashur, priest of Bel and Ninev, beloved by Anu and Dagon, worshipper of the great gods: the great king, the king of the nations, the king of Assyria. Son of Shimish-Bar the great king, the powerful king, the king of the nations, the king of Assyria: who was the son of Hubirga, also king of nations and king of Assyria.

The noble hero who went forth in the armed service of Ashur, his lord, against the kings of the four regions of the world, as none had ever done before; and smote the heretics who worship not the exalted things, in battles too numerous to be counted.

The king who humbled to the dust all those who did not obey him; and who subdued all the races of men. The great worshipper (*of the gods*): the trampler upon the necks of his enemies; the conqueror of hostile lands; the destroyer of powerful fortresses. The king who advanced in the arms of the great gods his lords, and seized with his hand

all hostile countries, fixed the tribute of all their territories, and took hostages from them as a pledge.

The favour of Ashur, who called me to the sovereign power, and is the supporter of my throne, gave his irresistible arms into the hands of my Majesty. The armies of the wide world I overthrew in battle.

By the help of the Sun, and Yem the god of the Sky, the gods to whom I trust, I conquered the armies of the Highland Nahiri, the land of Kirkhi, the land of Subari (*or Mesopotamia*), and the land of Nireb : and like the god Yem himself I rode thundering over them.

The king who subdued all the regions from the great stream of the Tigris unto the land of Lebanon and the Great Sea; with the land of Laki throughout all its provinces, and the land of Tsukhi as far as the city Rapikhi, and compelled them to fall down at his feet. And who seized with his hand the region from the source of the river Supnat unto the land of Urardi (*Armenia*).

All the region from the entrance of the land of Kirruri unto the land of Kirzan; and from the great stream of the lower Zab as far as the fortress of Til-bahari which protects the city of Zakim; and from the fortress of Aptan unto the fortress of Zabdan, along with the cities of Khirimu and *Birrutu*(?) which is a fortified city of the land of Karduniash (*Babylonia*), I restored once more to my country's rule. All the region from the entrance of the land of Babiti, as far as the city of Khasmar, I distributed among the men of my own land.

Over the regions which I had conquered I placed my lieutenants, and they did homage to me.

Ashurakhbal the glorious Ruler, the friend (*or favourite*) of the great gods. The Sun of great splendour, the conqueror of cities and lands with all their people; the king of kings, the chastiser of heretics; the scourge of those who worship not the sacrifices; the great smiter of the disobedient; the destroyer of rulers who reject my royalty, and of heretics and rebellious men.

[*Here a line is repeated, probably by the mistake of the sculptor; namely, the whole of the preceding paragraph, from "the Sun" down to "rebellious men."*]

The king whose name caused lands and seas to tremble; and who enrolled in the federation of his empire glorious foreign kings, from the rising of the sun unto the setting of the sun, every one of them.

The former city of Calah, which Divanurish king of Assyria, one of the kings who reigned before me, had built, that city had fallen into ruins.

That city I built again. I peopled it with the captives I had taken in the various lands which I had conquered:—the land of Tsukhi; the land of Lakhi; through all its provinces; the city of Tsirku which is placed at the great passage of the river Euphrates: the land of Zamia throughout its whole extent: the land of Bit-Adini, and the land of Syria; together with the people of Lubarna king of the Patinœans whom I had carried off.

I pulled down its old citadel, and I built it new, as far as the surface of the waters (*in its moat?*). One hundred and twenty spans of the lower part I built in fine masonry.

Within the circuit of this fortress I constructed a palace (*or fine house*) of cedar; a house of cypress wood; a house of *taprani* wood; a house of *ku* wood; a house of *meshkani* wood; a house of terebinth wood, and of *tarpikhi* wood, for the residence of my Majesty, and for a remembrance of my reign for evermore.

I made sculptures of the animals of the lands and seas, carved in *pari* stone and in *paruti* stone (*white alabaster?*) and I set them up at the doors of my palace.

I made it grand; I made it splendid; and with images of bright copper I adorned it.

Columns of cedar wood, cypress wood, *taprani* wood, and *meshkanni* wood, I erected at its gates: and the stores of silver and gold; of lead, copper, and iron, captured by my hand in the lands which I had conquered, which I had seized in vast quantities, I treasured up within it.

MONDAY, 8th May 1865.

JOSEPH ROBERTSON, Esq., Vice-President, in the Chair.

The following gentlemen were balloted for and elected Corresponding Members of the Society:—

DAVID MILLER, Esq., Arbroath.

JAMES NICHOLSON, Esq., Kirkeudbright.

The Donations to the Museum and the Library were as follows, and thanks were voted to the Donors:—

(1.) By Colonel J. FORBES LESLIE, F.S.A. Scot.

Necklace of Jet, consisting of thirteen oblong Beads, measuring from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to 1 inch in length; eight flat, somewhat square-shaped pieces, measuring 1 inch to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length, and from $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch to $1\frac{5}{8}$ inch in breadth; three portions are triangular in form, and measure from $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. These flat portions are all pierced with three holes lengthwise, and are of the uniform thickness of $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch;

Two small Amber Beads; small portion of bronze; portions of charcoal;

Fragments of an urn of reddish clay, with an incised ornament of small lines arranged in rows; and portions of human bones, which appear to have been burnt. All found in a cist or coffin at Rothie, Aberdeenshire. (See Communication by Mr STUART, page 217.)

(2.) By Admiral Sir ALEXANDER MILNE, K.C.B.

Roman Amphora or Jar, of coarse yellow-coloured clay, measuring 7 inches in height, and 3 inches across the mouth. The under portion is globe-shaped, and is 7 inches in diameter; the diameter across the bottom being $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; and there is a handle on each side of the neck. It was found at a depth of 7 feet from the surface.

Eight fragments of small Jars of coarse clay.

Three portions of Mortaria, of coarse red clay: one of them stamped with an ornament or potter's mark—a branch with leaves. Bones of animals, including deer, ox, &c. These remains were all found at Inveresk, near Musselburgh.

At Inveresk the remains of a Roman villa were found (as described in the "Archæologia Scotica," vol. ii. p. 159) in digging a trench for a new churchyard wall, in a field situated to the west of the present churchyard, which is on the highest part of elevated ground.

(3.) By Sir ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, Bart., F.S.A. Scot.

Bronzed Winged Celt, 4 inches in length, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ across the cutting edge, turned up by the plough many years ago, on the farm of Achinroer, on the estate of Barcaldine, Argyleshire.

Pair of Brass Snuffers; the top part is ornamented with a lion's head

in high relief, behind it a head winged, and an imitation Roman coin. A human figure forms the centre of each handle.

Plate of Brass, measuring 6 inches in length by $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth, being the sinister half of a shield bearing the arms of England (three lions passant gardant) within a bordure semie fleurs-de-lis. These were probably the arms of John of Eltham, second son of Edward II., created Earl of Cornwall 1328, died 1334; and this brass has probably ornamented some of his residences, or perhaps the canopy of the monument and effigy erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey. The shield there, on the arm of the knight, has the same blazon, with the slight difference, however, of the bordure bearing the fleur de lis and not semie; but this may be an error of the artist. (See Nichol's "Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain," vol. i. part ii. p. 95.)

Quaich, or Drinking Cup, measuring 3 inches in diameter, formed of ebony and white wood, bound with two silver hoops on the sides, and one round the bottom. The Cup has a handle projecting from each side. It is stated by the donor to have been made by Archibald Marquess of Argyle just before his execution, and it has been handed down as an heirloom in his family.

(4.) By Mr THOMAS BRYCE, Dykehead, West Calder.

Wooden Spindle, 10 inches long, with stone whorl 2 inches in diameter, being a distaff used by the mother of the donor.

Iron Caltrop, with four prongs, each measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length, found in the parish of West Calder.

Dutch Tobacco Box, oval-shaped, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches long by $2\frac{1}{2}$ broad. On the top and bottom are engraved figures and an inscription.

(5.) By Sir WILLIAM JARDINE, of Applegarth, Bart., F.S.A. Scot.

Section of a portion of a Scots Fir, found standing erect, as if growing, on the subsoil of Lochar Moss, at the depth of 14 feet under the peat.

(6.) By D. COTTIER, Esq., 24 George Street.

Portions of Painted Glass from Lincoln Cathedral. Two portions show parts of the human face, &c.; another portion an arm and hand. The colours are various shades of yellow and dark-brown.

(7.) By General PATRICK YULE, R.E., F.S.A. Scot.

Portrait of Flora Macdonald, oval-shaped, measuring $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, photographed from a drawing which belonged to the late Colonel Munro, 16th Regiment of Foot.

(8.) By JOHN NICHOLSON, publisher, Kirkcudbright.

Ball of Oak, 7 inches in diameter, and seven pins of oak, each measuring 13 inches in length, and 3 inches in diameter at the lower end, from which it tapers towards the ball-shaped top, which is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter. They were found in a moss in the parish of Balmaclellan, Galloway, 12 feet under the surface. Part of the pins were standing, and part thrown down, as if they had been suddenly left in the middle of an unfinished game.

(9.) By HUGH J. C. BEAVEN, Esq. (the Editor).

The Plurality of the Human Race, by George Pouchet, translated and edited by the donor. 8vo. London, 1864.

(10.) By Madame RAFN.

Notices of the Life and Writings of C. C. Rafn (pp. 20). 8vo. Copenhagen, 1864.

(11.) By A. OSWALD BRODIE, Esq., C.C.S.

Collection of 100 specimens of Paper Money issued by the British Colonies and United States in America from 1758 to 1786, as follows:—

Albany, City and County—Five Shillings,	1775
Connecticut Colony—Forty Shillings,	1775
Maryland State—Six Dollars,	1774
Four Dollars, equal to 27 shillings sterling, 1767-1776	
One Dollar,	1770
Half-Dollar,	1767
Newcastle, Counties of Kent and Sussex-on-Delaware—	
Twenty Shillings,	1759
Twenty Shillings, 1760, printed by B. Franklin and B. Hall.	
New Jersey Colony—Six Pounds, or 17 oz. 10 dwt. of plate, 1762-1764	
Three Pounds,	1758
Six Shillings,	1786

New Jersey Colony—Three Shillings,	1786
One Shilling and Sixpence,	1776
One Shilling,	1776
New York Colony—Ten Pounds, or 200 Shillings,	1771
One Pound,	1771
(Water Works) Eight Shillings,	1775
Six Shillings,	1786
Five Shillings,	1788
(Water Works) Four Shillings,	1775
Two Shillings and Eightpence,	1776
One Shilling,	1776
Ten Dollars (Spanish milled),	1776
Five Dollars,	1776
Three Dollars,	1775-1776
Two Dollars,	1776
One Dollar,	1776
Two-thirds of Dollar, or Five Shillings and Fourpence currency,	1776
Half Dollar, or Four Shillings,	1776
One-third of Dollar, or Two Shillings and Eightpence,	1776
Quarter Dollar, or Two Shillings,	1776
Sixth of Dollar, or One Shilling and Four- pence,	1776
Eighth of Dollar, or One Shilling,	1776
Pennsylvania Province—Fifty Shillings,	1773
Twenty Shillings,	1759-1764-1773
Ten Shillings,	1760-1771
Six Shillings,	1773
Two Shillings and Sixpence,	1772
Eighteenpence,	1774
Ninepence,	1781
Rhode Island Colony—Ninepence,	1776
Philadelphia, United Colonies—Sixty Dollars (Spanish milled),	1778
Fifty Dollars,	1778
Forty Dollars,	1778

Philadelphia, United Colonies—Thirty Dollars,	1778
Twenty Dollars,	1778
Eight Dollars,	1776
Seven Dollars,	1776
Six Dollars,	1775
Five Dollars,	1776
Four Dollars,	1776
Three Dollars,	1776
Two Dollars,	1776
One Dollar,	1775
Third of Dollar,	1776
Sixth of Dollar,	1776
United States—Twenty Dollars,	1780
Two Dollars,	1780
One Dollar,	1780

As specimens of early Amèrican paper money are not common, descriptions of a bill of the British colonies, and another of the United States, are annexed :—The “Bills” are printed on thin, coarse card-board, and measure $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length by 3 inches in breadth.

One for twenty shillings has the words *TWENTY SHILLINGS* on the four sides of the border, which is formed by a base supporting two pillars and an architrave, and is printed as follows :—

“This Bill shall pass current for Twenty Shillings within the Province of Pennsylvania, according to an Act of Assembly made in the fourth year of the reign of King George III. Dated the 18th day of June 1764. Twenty Shillings;” and in addition, the Royal Arms of Great Britain, and three signatures.

On the back is a border formed by ornamental types. At the top, between two crowns, “To counterfeit is death.” The centre is filled up by a woodcut, representing two leaves, and below this, “Printed by B. Franklin and D. Hall, 1764.”

The other of the United States :—

“This Bill entitles the bearer to receive Forty Spanish milled Dollars, or the value thereof in gold or silver, according to a resolution passed by Congress at Philadelphia, Sept. 26, 1778.” It is ornamented by a

woodcut border, having on each side the words, "Continental Currency Forty Dollars," and at the top and bottom "The United States." These Bills are generally ornamented with emblematical devices, rudely cut on wood, but in varied forms and patterns; on the back is an ornamental type border, with a woodcut in the centre displaying a stalk with leaves, at the top "Forty Dollars," and at the bottom the printer's name and the date, "Printed by Hall and Sellers 1778."

(12.) By Sir CHARLES LYELL, Bart., through JOHN EVANS, Esq., London.

Specimens of worked Flints, collected in the neighbourhood of Jubbulpore in Central India, by the late Lieutenant Swiney.

(13.) By JOHN EVANS, Esq. (the Author).

On the Forger of Antiquities (pp. 12). 8vo. Lond. 1865.

(14.) Purchased from Mrs WATT, Townhead, Kintore, Aberdeenshire.

Two Arrow-heads of light-coloured flint, with barbs and stem; measuring $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length. One leaf-shaped Arrow-head of reddish-coloured flint, 1 inch in length. All found on the moor between Kintore and the old castle of Hall-forest.

One leaf-shaped Arrow-head of yellowish-coloured flint, measuring $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length; and one with barbs and stem, of greyish-coloured flint, $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch in length. Found many years ago on the farm of Wardes, Kintore, Aberdeenshire.

Two Arrow-heads, the one of grey, the other of yellow-coloured flint, measuring from 1 inch to 2 inches in length, with barbs and stem. Found near Kintore.

Semicircular Disc of dark-grey-coloured flint, measuring 3 inches in diameter, the circumference ground to a fine cutting edge; it was probably used as a knife.

Three Whorls or Buttons of stone, with a perforation in the centre, measuring $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch to 2 inches in diameter. One is ornamented by incised diagonal lines, and was found in a garden at Townhead, Kintore.

Circular Disc of quartz, measuring 3 inches in diameter by 1 inch in thickness; the edges are blunt, and appear worn as if by use.

Three Celts of greyish-coloured stone, measuring from $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches to

5½ inches in length, and from 2 inches to 3 inches across the cutting face. Found near Kintore.

Water-worn Nodule of Sandstone, measuring 5 inches in length, and 2 inches in diameter, tapering from the centre to the round-shaped extremities. In the centre is cut a groove $\frac{7}{8}$ inch in width and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in depth. Probably a sinker for a net or line.

Mould for casting Bronze Celts, formed of a piece of sandstone, 9 inches in length, 5 inches in breadth, and 2 in thickness. One of the cavities cut for the Celts measures 6½ inches in length, and 4 inches across the cutting edge; the other measures 3¼ inches in length, 1½ inch across the cutting face, and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch across the upper extremity. It was found on the Borough-Moor, Kintore.

Bronze Celt, measuring 5 inches in length, and 3 inches across the face; found near Kintore.

Sculptured Slab of dark-coloured granite of irregular shape, measuring 3 feet 6 inches in height, 3 feet in greatest width, and 9 inches in thickness; on its face is incised the so-called symbol of the Two Crescents, turned back to back, they measure 16 inches between the points, the spaces between the outlines being ornamented with semi-circles and an implement like a fork with four prongs; a portion of the stone at the upper part appears to have been broken off.

Sculptured Slab of reddish-coloured granite, measuring 5 feet 2 inches in height, by 3 feet in width, and 5 inches thick; on one side, at the upper part, is cut the symbol of the "Elephant," under which is the "Spectacle" and "zigzag or Z" ornaments, with foliated ends; on the other side is the "Elephant" and "Mirror" inverted.

These two stones were found embedded in the "Castle-hill," a mound near the church of Kintore, recently removed by railway operations, which was about 30 feet in height by 150 feet in diameter; they are described and figured in Mr Stuart's book of "The Sculptured Stones of Scotland," page 33, and plates cx. and cxi.

Iron Padlock or Fetterlock, consisting of a tube 3½ inches long by 2 inches in diameter; at one end is a staple to which is attached a semi-circular hasp, the other end of the hasp passes into the tube and is locked by a spring inside; its key measures 5½ inches in length and has a Gothic bow, at its lower end is a pipe with wings, which being in-

serted into the large tube releases the spring. From the Old Kirk of Kintore.

Iron Padlock measuring $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches square; the key-hole is covered with a lid and hinge; and the hasp is of a semi-circular form, and passes through the box, being held by the wards inside. It is opened by a key 4 inches in length, with a plain bore; and an iron point which requires to be pressed on a spring at the side. From the old castle of Hall Forest, Kintore, Aberdeenshire.

There were exhibited—

(1.) By the Right Honourable Lord GRAY and Sir P. M. THREIPLAND, Bart., through Andrew Jervise, Esq., Corr. Mem. S.A. Scot.

A broken portion of Earthenware Pottery, Bone Pins, Bronze Rings, portion of Human Skull, &c. &c.; found at Hurley Hawkin, near Dundee, as detailed in a Communication by Mr Jervise (see below).

(2.) By JOHN M. BALFOUR, Esq., W.S., F.S.A. Scot.

Bronze Sword, and bronze point of a Scabbard, Gold Ring, and Bronze Brooch; found in digging in the parish of Corstorphine, Mid-Lothian.'

The following Communications were read :—