

MONOLITH
INSCRIPTION OF SAMAS-RIMMON.

TRANSLATED BY
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THE inscription translated below is engraved upon an Obelisk found in the South-East Palace of Nimrud, the ancient Calah, and now in the British Museum. It is written in archaic characters, which differ greatly from those ordinarily met with on the Assyrian monuments. They are more picturesque than the latter, and were therefore sometimes preferred for the same reason that makes us occasionally adopt the old black-letter type. The inscription is given in the First Volume of the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, edited by Sir H. Rawlinson and Mr. Norris in 1861, pp. 29-34. It has already been translated by Dr. Oppert in his *Histoire des Empires de Chaldée et d'Assyrie d'après les monuments* (1865); but the present translation is the

first that has been made into English. Shalmaneser, the father of the king who had the inscription engraved, was one of the greatest monarchs of the Middle Assyrian Empire. He reigned 35 years, and was a cotemporary of the Israelite kings Ahab and Jehu, and of Hazael of Syria. Ahab is mentioned in an inscription which Shalmaneser caused to be set up at Kurkh, and the names of Jehu and Hazael occur on an Obelisk of Black Marble, adorned with sculptures of tribute-bearers, which occupies a conspicuous place in the British Museum. The reign of Samas-Rimmon lasted 13 years; and the inscription itself gives an account of his successful suppression of a revolt raised by his brother Assur-dayan, which, like that of Adonijah, threatened to deprive Samas-Rimmon of the crown that had been destined for him.



TRANSLATION OF THE INSCRIPTION.

COLUMN I.

- 1 To ADAR,¹ the courageous Lord
 2 of mighty *Chiefs*, the Lord,
 3 the hero of the gods, the roller of the globe of heaven
 4 and earth, the urger on of all,
 5 the supporter of the Deities of Heaven (and) of rain-
 storms,
 6 the *bright one*, whose powers
 7 are unequalled, Chief of the Annunaci,²
 8 the most powerful of the gods, the *oracle*,
 9 the high *ruler* of the Southern Sun,
 10 Lord over the force of the whirlwind,
 11 who, like the destroying Sun, the threshold of the gods
 12 crosses, and the regions of the *leaders*
 13 of the gods, who *diffuse* glory,
 14 fills with the abundance of all powers,
 15 (and) the strength (of them); First-born of BEL, the
 servant
 16 of the gods, his superiors, offspring of BETH-ESER,³
 the son,

¹ The name of this god is variously read as Nin-ip, Bar, and Ussur.

² The Annunaci, the offspring of Anu or the Sky, had their seat in the Lower world. They are called the Spirits of the Earth.

³ Beth-Eser, "The Temple of the Sanctuary," was the name given to the Temples of Adar.

17 the ruler, who among the fragments of broken diadems
18 launches the arrow, offspring of the Sanctuary, receiver
of the instructions of

19 ANU and the Great Goddess, who changes not
20 the utterance of his mouth,¹ the mighty Chief, the
supreme (one), the magnified

21 Lord of the divine powers, who the *sinews* of the
hands and feet

22 binds together (and) brings the design to completion,

23 high among the gods, the Lord who dwells in Calah,

24 the crown of perfect places,

25 the seat of the Southern Sun ;

26 SAMAS-RIMMON² the mighty King, King of multitudes

27 unequalled (in number), the shepherd of (sacred)
places, bearer of the sceptre

28 of the shrines, the descender into all lands, the urger on

29 of all whom from former days

30 the gods have called by name, the protector, the
restorer

31 of Beth-Eser he who transgresses not, the roller of
the front of the Sanctuary.

32 (As to) whom, for the embellishment of Bit-Kharsak-
Kurra (and) the Sanctuaries of his land

33 his heart is established and his years exist ;

34 the son of SHALMANESER, the King of the Four Races,

35 the opponent of kings of all (countries), the trampler
on the world,

36 the grandson of ASSUR-NATSIR-PAL

37 the receiver of the tribute

38 and the riches of all regions.

¹ Or "the utterance of whose mouth shall never be changed."

² Samas is the Sun-god, the Shemesh of Scripture. See 1 Sam. vi. 9. Rimmon is the god of the atmosphere, whose name has been variously read Iva, Ao, Vul, and Bin.

39 It came to pass that ASSUR-DAYIN, the son, in the time of SHALMANESER

40 his father, made war. The overthrow of fealty wickedly

41 he brought about and caused the country to rebel, and made ready

42 battle. The men of the country of Assyria above and below with him

43 he collected, and he fortified the habitable towns. The cities he caused to be counted over, and

44 to make conflict and battle he set his face.

45 The cities of Nisura, Adia, Sibaniba, Imgur-Bel,¹ Issabri,

46 Beth-Imdira, Simu, Sibkhinis, Parnusur, Kipsuna,

47 Kurban, Tidu, Napulu, Capa, Assur,² Huracca,

48 Sallad (?), Khuzirina, Dur-baladh,³ Dariga, Zab,

49 Lubdu, Arapkha,⁴ Arbela, as far as Amida, Tel-Abni,⁵ (and)

50 Khin-makhnu, in all 27 fortified towns with their citadels, which from

51 SHALMANESER, King of the Four Races, my father, had revolted (and)

52 on the side of ASSUR-DAYAN, the son, had ranged themselves, by the will of the great gods, my Lords,

53 my feet I made them kiss in my first campaign, when to the country of Nahri⁶ (Continued on Column II.)

¹ Imgur-Bel was the name of the outer-wall of Babylon.

² Assur, the original capital of Assyria, is the modern Kalah-Shergat.

³ This means "The Fortress of Life."

⁴ The name of the city has hitherto been read in this way, and the classical Arrapachitis compared with it. It ought, however, to be either *Sanakha* or *Arbanun*.

⁵ That is "The Mound of Stones."

⁶ Lit. "The Country of Rivers." It corresponds with Northern Mesopotamia, the Aram Naharaim of Scripture.

COLUMN II.

- 1 I went up. Tribute (in the shape of)
 2 horses harnessed to the yoke
 3 from all the Kings of
 4 Nahri I received at the same time.
 5 The land of Nahri to its frontiers
 6 like shavings I swept.
 7 The border of Assyria, which (extended) from the city
 of Paddira
 8 in Nahri as far as
 9 Kar-Shalmaneser, near
 10 Carchemish, from the country of Zaddi,
 11 the border of Accad, as far as
 12 Enzi, from the country of Aridi as far as
 13 the country of the Sukhi, by the will of ASSUR, SAMAS,
 14 RIMMON, (and) ISTAR, the gods, my protectors,
 15 *with shame of face*, my feet
 16 kissed. In my second campaign
 17 MULIS-ASSUR, Chief of the Commanders,
 18 a leader skilful in fighting, a man of authority,¹
 19 with my war-engines and my camp
 20 to Nahri I urged on, and
 21 sent him forth. Unto the sea of the setting sun he
 went.
 22 Three hundred cities
 23 of KHIRTSINA, the son
 24 of MIGDI-ARA (and) eleven fortresses
 25 as well as 200 cities
 26 of Uspina he cut off; their fighting men
 27 he slew; their spoil, their treasure, their goods,
 28 their gods, their sons, (and) their daughters
 29 he carried off; their cities he threw down,

¹ Lit. "man of command."

30 dug up (and) burned with fire. On his return
31 the fighting men of the country of the Sunbai he
slaughtered.

32 A multitude of horses, trained
33 (to) the yoke, belonging to the Kings of Nahri,
34 all of them I received. In my third campaign the
river Zab

35 I crossed. The country of Tsilar I passed through.
36 To the land of Nahri I went up. The tribute
37 of DADI of the country of the Khopuscai,¹
38 of KHIRTSINA, the son of MIGDI-ARA,
39 of the country of the Sunbai, (of) the country of the
Manai,²

40 (of) the country of the Parsuai (and of) the country
of the Taurlai,

41 (namely) horses trained (to) the yoke,
42 I received. (As to) the country of the Mi'sai, ex-
ceeding fear

43 of ASSUR my Lord overwhelmed them.

44 Before the sight of my mighty arrows

45 they had fear, and their cities they abandoned.

46 A mountain difficult (of access) they occupied.

47 Three mountain peaks, which like the mist

48 reached unto heaven, over which no bird

49 could find its passage,³ the place

50 as their stronghold they made.⁴ After them I rode.

51 At those mountain peaks I arrived.

52 In a single day like an eagle over them I rushed.

¹ Khopusca lay to the North-East of Assyria, among the mountains of Armenia.

² The Manai or Mannai, called Minni in the Old Testament, inhabited the neighbourhood of Lake Van in Armenia.

³ Lit. "which a bird his crossing came not (to)."

⁴ Lit. "the place of them (*i.e.*, the mountain-peaks) for their stronghold they made."

- 53 Multitudes of their soldiers I slew : their spoil,
54 their treasure, their goods, their oxen, their asses,
55 their sheep, horses trained (to) the yoke,
56 bulls which (have) two humps¹
57 (and) horns to a countless number from the midst of
the mountains I caused to be brought down.
58 Five hundred cities which (were) dependent upon
them I threw down, dug up,
59 (and) burned with fire. To the country of Girubbunda²
(Continued on Column III.)

¹ *I.e.*, Camels.

² Girubbunda lay to the east of the Par'suai, who are probably the Parthians, and to the west of the Medes, at that time considerably eastward of the country afterwards called after their name.



COLUMN III.

1 I went. The city of Cinaci I cut off,
 2 threw down, dug up (and) burned with fire.
 3 The country that belonged to NIRISBIZIDA
 4 I passed through. The tribute of TITAMASCA
 5 of the city of the Samasai, (and of) CI-ARA of the
 city of the Kar-'sibutai,
 6 (namely) horses trained (to) the yoke, I received.
 7 (As to) the country of Girubbunda, all its inhabitants
 the fear of my Lordship
 8 and the onset of my mighty battle overwhelmed, and
 9 their cities they abandoned. To
 10 the city Huras, their fortified stronghold, I went
 down; and
 11 this city I besieged, I captured. The corpses
 12 of their warriors, like rubbish I scattered. Their city
 13 I laid in heaps; 600 of their warriors I slew.
 14 PIRISATI their King, with 1,200 of his fighting men
 15 into bondage I took. Their spoil, their treasure,
 their goods,
 16 their oxen, their sheep, their horses, property
 17 (in) silver, (and) gold mingled with bronze, to
 18 a countless amount, I carried off. I pulled down, dug up
 19 (and) burned with fire. The tribute of ENGUR
 20 of the city of the Tsibarai I received. An image
 21 of my magnified Royalty I made.¹ The laws
 22 of ASSUR my Lord, the decrees of my ascendancy
 23 and the full history of the deeds of my hand, which in
 24 the country of Nahri I wrought, upon it
 25 I wrote. Into the city of Tsibara,
 26 their fortified stronghold in the country of the
 Girubbundai,

¹ That is, he had a statue of himself erected.

27 I caused (it) to be brought. To the country of the Matai¹ I went.

28 Before the mighty arrows of ASSUR, and the trial

29 of my terrible battle, which had not rest,

30 they had fear; and their cities they abandoned.

31 To the country of Epite after them

32 I rode: 2,300 soldiers of KHANATSIRUCA

33 of the country of the Matai I slew; 140 of his war-carriages

34 I seized. His treasure his goods to a countless amount

35 I brought back to the city Sagbita, the capital. As many as

36 1,200 of his cities I threw down, dug up, (and) burned with fire.

37 On my return the passes of the mountains I made my way through.

38 MUNIR'SUARTA of the country of the Araziasai,² together with

39 1,070 of his fighting-men with arrows I slaughtered.

40 (With) their corpses the successive valleys of the high country

41 I filled: their sons, their daughters, their treasure,

42 their goods, their oxen, (and) their sheep the armies

43 of my country as tribute carried away. Their cities I threw down,

44 dug up (and) burned with fire. At that time the tribute

45 of SIRASMI of the country of the Babarurai, of AMAKHAR

46 of the city of the Kharmis-andai, of ZARISU of the country of the Par'saniyai,

47 of ZARISU of the city of the Khundurai, of SANISU

48 of the country of the Cipabarutacai, of ARDARA

49 of the country of the Ustassi, of SUMA of the country of the Cinucaï,

¹ These are the Medes.

² The Araziasians are placed by Lenormant in Sagartia.

50 of TATAI of the country of the Ginginai,
 51 of BI'SIRAIN of the country of the Arimai, of PARUSTA
 52 of the country of the Cimarusai, of ASPASTATAUK
 53 of the Huilai, of AMAMAS of the country of the
 Cingistilinzakharai¹

54 of KHA'S'SIKHU of the country of the Matsirausai, of
 MAMANIS

55 of the country of the Luk'sai, of ZABEL of the country
 of the Dimamai,

56 of SIRASU of the country of the 'Singuriai, of GISTA

57 of the country of the Abdanai, of ADADANU of the
 country of the A'satai,

58 of UR'SI of the country of the Ginkhukhtai, of BARA

59 of the country of the Ginzinai, of ARUA of the country
 of the Cindutansai,

60 of DIRNACUS of the country of the Mairuai, of ZABANU

61 of the country of the Zuzarurai, of IRTIZATI of the
 country of the Ginkhidai

62 of BAZZUTA of the country of the Taurlai, of SUA

63 of the country of the Nanikirians, of 'SATIRIAI, (and)
 of ARTA'SIRARI

64 Kings of the country of Nahri all of them, by the will
 of ASSUR, SAMAS,

65 (and) RIMMON, the gods my defenders, a fixed tribute

66 of horses trained (to) the yoke for the future

67 over them I appointed. At that time from the country
 of Tsilar

68 (and) the land of Edanni as far as the sea of the
 setting sun, like RIMMON,

69 my storm over them I poured. Exceeding fear

70 into them I infused. In my fourth campaign, (in the
 month) Sivan² *(Continued on Column IV.)*

¹ The latter part of this word seems to be the Assyrian *Zakharu* "small."

² Sivan, the 3rd month of the Assyrian year, answered roughly to our May.

COLUMN IV.

1 (on) the 15th day to Car-duniyas¹ (my troops) go, and
2 the river Zab I crossed. Between the cities of Zaddi
and Zaba

3 fragments of rock I passed. Three fierce lions I slew.

4 The country of Ebikh I passed through. The city of
the waters of the Dhurnat² I approached.

5 Exceeding fear of ASSUR and MERODACH, the great gods,
6 my lords, overwhelmed them. My feet they took.³

These men

7 I caused to go out, and with their goods (and) their
gods to the midst

8 of my own country I brought them. As men of my
own country I counted (them).

9 The Dhurnat I crossed in its upper part.⁴ The city
Karne,

10 the capital of the country,⁵ as well as 200 towns de-
pendent upon it I threw down, (dug up)

11 (and) burned with fire. The country of Yalman I
passed through. The city Diahbina

12 I approached. The fear of ASSUR overwhelmed the
inhabitants. My feet they took.

13 Three thousand cities with their men, their treasure
their goods, from the midst

14 of that city I took. The cities of Datebir (and)
Iz . . . ya

15 which (are) beside the city Ganasuticanu, together with
200 cities

¹ Car-duniyas was the name usually given to Lower Chaldea.

² This river is the Tornadotus of classical geographers.

³ As a token of homage and submission.

⁴ Or "in its flood."

⁵ Lit., "its royal city."

16 that (are) dependent on them I conquered: 330 of their soldiers I slew:

17 their spoil, their treasure, their goods, (and) their gods I carried off: their plantation

18 I cut down: their towns I threw down, dug up, (and) burned with fire. The men who from the face

19 of my mighty arrows fled, into a city in the midst of (their other) cities, their fortified (stronghold,)

20 entered. That city I besieged, I captured. Five hundred of their soldiers I slew. Their spoil,

21 their treasure, their goods, their gods, their oxen (and) their sheep I carried off. The city

22 I threw down, dug up, (and) burned with fire. As to all the land of Accad, which before the sight

23 of my terrible arrows, (and) the trial of my mighty battle, which cessation had not,

24 had fear, and into the city of Dur-Papsukul (?) the capital, which like a crag in the river

25 in a flood of waters was situated (so that) for the attack of my army

26 it (was) not good, (and into) 447 cities round about (it) had entered,

27 that city in my passage I captured. Thirteen thousand

28 of its fighting-men with arrows I slew. Their dead bodies

29 like water I scattered. Their city I demolished. The ranks

30 of their warriors into heaps I heaped.

31 Three thousand lives with a measuring-line I took: its royal divan, the treasures of its palace,

32 the guards of its high altar, the amazons of its high altars, its stores,

33 its goods, its gods, the of its high altar, to a countless number,

34 from the midst of that town I carried off. The ranks
of its warriors,

35 like flocks of birds,¹ to the armies of my country
36 yielded. That city I pulled down, dug up (and)
burned with fire.

37 MERODACH-BALADHSU-IKBI to the strength of his
troops

38 trusted, and the country of Chaldea, the country of
Elam, the country of Zimri,

39 (and) the country of Arumu, with their numerous
troops to a countless amount,

40 summoned together. To make conflict and battle
against me he came.

41 Over against Ahdaban, in the neighbourhood of the
city of Dur-Papsukul a fortified town,

42 where he marshalled his troops, with him I fought.
A destruction of him I made.

43 Five thousand of the ranks of (his) men I destroyed.
Two thousand lives in the hands I took.

44 One hundred of his chariots, 200 of his war-carriages,
his royal pavilion, (his) divan, (and)

45 his camp I seized.

¹ I think a character has fallen out of the text here. Otherwise we
must translate (with Norris) "as if by destiny."



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