

MONOLITH
INSCRIPTION OF SHALMANESER.
FOUND AT KURKH.

TRANSLATED

BY REV. A. H. SAYCE, M.A.

KURKH is the modern name of some important ruins on the right bank of the Tigris, about 20 miles distant from Diarbekr, which probably represent the Karkathiokerta of the classical geographers. The inscription set up here by Shalmaneser, though unfortunately much mutilated as will be seen from the translation, is of great interest on account both of its supplementing the annals of the king recorded on the Black Obelisk of Nimrud and of the mention in it of Ahab of Israel.¹ A copy of the original will be found in *W. A. I.* Vol. III. pl. 7, 8, and the larger part of it has already been translated by M. Ménant in his "*Annales des Rois d'Assyrie*" (1874) as well as

¹ The monument is now in the British Museum.

previously by M. Oppert. The present, however, is the first translation of the whole inscription.

Shalmaneser had a long reign of 35 years, during which he came into contact with Ahab, Jehu, Hazael and other Biblical personages. In accordance with the astronomical system used in Assyria, a sort of jubilee was kept in his 31st year, the king "inaugurating the cycle for the second time" as he tells us in the Black Obelisk inscription. It may be added that the dates given in the latter inscription do not always agree with those in the one before us; a fact which illustrates the necessity of critical caution even when we are dealing with cotemporary documents.



INSCRIPTION OF SHALMANESER.

COLUMN I.

- 1 ASSUR, the great Lord, King of all the assembly of the great gods; ANU King of the spirits of heaven and earth, Lord of the world; BEL, the father of the gods, the determiner of destinies,
- 2 the assembler of solemn assemblies; HEA, the Leader, King of the abyss of chaos,¹ the Overseer of the *treasures* of heaven (and) earth, the Prince of heaven, the Lord; the SUN-GOD
- 3 the Judge of mankind, the supreme; (and) ISTAR, Queen of war and battle, who (stirs up) the strength of contention;—the great gods, the promoters of my sovereignty,
- 4 who extend lordship over multitudes and union, the glory of my fame, empire, and all Princes mightily have they made for me,
- 5 SHALMANESER, King of the multitudes of men, the Prince, the Servant of ASSUR, the powerful King, King of Assyria, King of all the four races,² a Sun-god
- 6 ruling multitudes of men throughout the world, the purified of the gods, the servant of the eyes of BEL, the High-priest of ASSUR, the royal guardian, the glorious, the ruler
- 7 of roads and Lord of streets, the trampler on the heads of mountains (and) all forests, receiver of the tribute and riches

¹ The Assyrian word is *bahu* (the *bohu* of Gen. i. 2). *Bahu* is generally the wife of Hea; here, however, the term is used as an epithet of "the abyss" over which Hea ruled.

² Of Syria.

- 8 of all these lands, opener of the trackless places which (are) above and below¹ which against the onset of his mighty battle the countries caused to be extended,
- 9 the *hope* of the world (which) in the exercise of his bravery he founded, the powerful Minister who in the service of ASSUR and SAMAS the gods his helpers has often marched
- 10 and among the Kings of the four races his rival had not, Monarch of the world, the Sovereign who (through) trackless paths has often marched (and) opened out mountains and seas,
- 11 the son of ASSUR-NATSIR-PAL, the offspring of BEL, the servant of ASSUR, whose power over (him) the gods have made good and caused all the countries of the world to submit to (be) under him, the glorious scion of TIGLATH-ADAR
- 12 who laid his yoke on hostile lands and swept (them) like a whirlwind. At that time ASSUR the great Lord in his firm resolution brought me forth before his eyes and ears, and
- 13 (to) the sovereignty of Assyria proclaimed me. Powerful force(s) I slaughtered. The disobedient I coerced, and²
- 14 to work and labour have urged me. At that time, at the beginning of my reign, in my first campaign
- 15 on the throne of my sovereignty in Majesty I had seated myself. The chariots of my armies I assembled. Into the lowlands of the country of 'Sime'si I descended. To the city of Aridi,³ the fortress
- 16 of Ninni, I approached. The city I besieged, I took.

¹ That is, northward and southward of Assyria.

² Here follows a lacuna which it is hazardous to fill up by conjecture.

³ Aridu was a city of Nahri, " (the land) of rivers " (the Aram-Naharaim of Scripture) on the north-west of Assyria.

Its numerous fighting-men I slew. Its spoil I carried away. A pyramid of heads over against¹ that city I built up.

- 17 The sons and the daughters of their nobles² for holocausts I burned. While I was stopping in the city of Aridi the tribute of the countries of Murgāsā, of the Murma'sians,
- 18 the 'Sime'sians, the 'Simeyans, the 'Sirisians, (and) the Ulmanians, horses trained to the yoke, oxen, sheep, (and) goats, I received. From the city of Aridi
- 19 I departed. Trackless paths (and) difficult mountains, which like the point of an iron sword stood pointed to the sky, on wheels of iron (and) bronze I penetrated.³ (My) chariots.
- 20 (and) armies I transported over (them). To the city of Khupuscia⁴ I approached. The city of Khupuscia together with 100 cities which depended on it with fire I burned. CACIA
- 21 King of the country of Na'iri and the remains of his army from before the sight of my weapons fled-in-fear, and occupied the fastnesses of the mountains. After them the mountains I ascended.
- 22 A hard battle in the midst of the mountains I fought.⁵ A destruction of them I made.⁶ Chariots, numerous soldiers, (and) horses trained to the yoke from the midst of the mountain I brought back. Exceeding fear
- 23 of ASSUR my Lord overwhelmed them. They came

¹ Lit., "in the coming to."

² Lit., "the nobles, their young men and their young women."

³ Lit., "I dug up."

⁴ On the north-east of Assyria among the mountains of Armenia.

⁵ Lit., "I made."

⁶ Lit., "I overthrew."

- forth and took my feet.¹ Taxes and tribute upon them I fixed. From the city of Khupuscia I departed.
- 24 To the city of 'Sugunia, his stronghold, belonging to ARAME (King) of the Armenians, I approached. The city I besieged, I took. Their fighting men in numbers I slew.
- 25 Its spoil I carried away. A pyramid of heads over against that city I built up. Fourteen cities which depended upon it with fire I burned. From the city of 'Sugunia
- 26 I departed. To the sea of the land of Na'iri² I descended. My weapons by the sea-side I stayed. Sacrifices to my gods I performed. At that time an image of my person
- 27 I made. The decrees of ASSUR, the Lord of Princes, my Lord, and my collected laws upon it I wrote. By the sea-side I erected (it). On my return
- 28 from the sea, the tribute of A'su (King) of the country of Gozan, horses, oxen, sheep, goats, 2 camels which (have) two humps, I received.
- 29 To my city Assur³ I brought (them). In the month Iyyar,⁴ the 13th day, the city of Nineveh I quitted; the river Tigris I crossed. The countries of Kha'samu (and) Dikhunu I passed through.
- 30 To the city of Lahlahte which belonged to AKHUNI the son of ADINI I approached. Exceeding fear of ASSUR

¹ In token of submission.

² That is Lake Van. Shalmaneser elsewhere speaks of his rule over the upper and lower seas of Nahri, which Sir H. Rawlinson has identified with the lakes of Van and Urumiyeh.

³ The primitive capital of Assyria from which the whole country derived its name, now represented by Kalah-Shergat. It was the Ellasar of Genesis.

⁴ Iyyar answers roughly to our April. Shalmaneser is here speaking of his second campaign (856 B.C.).

- my Lord overwhelmed him (and he fled to his fortified city. The high ground)
- 31 I ascended. The city I threw down, dug up (and) burned with fire. From the city of Lahlahti I departed. (To the city of Ci . . . ka)
- 32 which belonged to AKHUNI the son of ADINI I approached. AKHUNI, the son of ADINI, to the power (of his army trusted), and battle (and) war (he made) with me. In the service of ASSUR
- 33 and the great gods my Lords with him I fought. A destruction of him I made. In his city I shut him up. From the city of Ci . . . ka I departed.
- 34 To the city of Burmarahna belonging to AKHUNI, the son of ADINI (I approached. The city) I besieged, I took. Three hundred of their fighting-men with arrows I slew. A pyramid of heads
- 35 (over against the city I built up.) The tribute of KHAPINI of the city of Tul-Abnā (of) GAHUNI of the city of 'Sa (and) of CIGIRI-RIMMON
- 36 (of the city of),—silver, gold, oxen, sheep, (and) goats,—I received. From the city of Burmarahna I departed. In great vessels of skins the river Euphrates
- 37 I crossed, and the tribute of KATAZILU (King) of Comagene,—silver, gold, oxen, sheep, (and) goats,—I received. The city of Paburrukhbuni
- 38 (and) the cities of AKHUNI the son of ADINI on the hither banks of the Euphrates I approached. A destruction of the country I made. Devastation (and) death
- 39 I scattered. With the destruction of his warriors the broad desert I filled. 1,300 soldiers, their fighting men, with arrows I slew.
- 40 From the city of Paburrukhbuni I departed. To the cities of MUTALLI of the city of the Gamgumians I approached. The tribute

- 41 of MUTALLI of the city of the Gamgumians, silver, gold, oxen, sheep, goats, (and) his daughter with a large gift, I received. From the city of Gangume
- 42 I departed. To the city of Lutibu, his strong city, belonging to KHANU of the country of the 'Samahlans I approached. KHANU of the country of the 'Samahlans, 'SAPALULME
- 43 of the country of the Patinians,¹ AKHUNI the son of ADINI, (and) 'SANGARA of the country of the Carchemishians² to the help of one another trusted and marshalled themselves
- 44 for battle. (When) to make plunder after me they had come, by the supreme powers of NERGAL who marches before me and with mighty weapons
- 45 which ASSUR the Lord furnished, with them I fought. A destruction of them I made. Their fighting-men
- 46 with arrows I slew. Like the Air-god over them a deluge I rained. In ditches I heaped them. With the spoil
- 47 of their warriors the broad desert I filled. Their corpses like chaff through the country I scattered. Multitudes of (their) chariots, (and) their horses
- 48 trained to the yoke I seized. A pyramid of heads over against the city (of KHANU) I built up. His cities I pulled down, dug up, (and) burned with fire.
- 49 At that time I hung up the ordinances of the great

¹ The Patinai have been compared with the Biblical Padan-Aram or "plain of Syria."

² Carchemish, the Circesium of classical geography, stood at the junction of the Khaboras and Euphrates and was the key of the high-road to the West. Its possession, therefore, was a matter of great military importance. After the destruction of Tyre by the Assyrians Carchemish became the centre of trade in the East and the "maneh of Carchemish" was one of the chief standards of commerce. 'Sangara probably gave his name to the Singara of the classical geographers which was situated upon the Khaboras and after which the neighbouring range of hills was called.

gods, wherein¹ to ASSUR and SAMAS their victories I
 ascribed. For future days an image of my Majesty
 50 of a great size I made. The records of my victories
 (and) my triumphant deeds upon it I wrote. At the head
 of the sources of the river 'Saluara
 51 which (lies) at the foot of the mountains of Amanus I
 erected (it). From the country of Amanus I departed.
 The river Arantu² I crossed. To the city of Alizir
 52 his stronghold, belonging to 'SAPALULME (King) of the
 country of the Patinians I approached. 'SAPALULME
 (King) of the city of the Patinians, to save
 53 his life, (made alliance with) AKHUNI son of ADINI,
 'SANGARA of the city of the Carchemishians, KHAINU of
 the country of the 'Samahlians, CATE of the
 country of the Kuans, PIKHIRIM of the country of the
 Khilucians,³ BURANATE of the country of the Yazbukians,
 (and) ADU

COLUMN II.

The first few lines, describing the defeat of the con-
 federacy and the spoil which Shalmaneser carried away, are
 destroyed, and the inscription does not become legible
 again until line 4.

4 (Their fighting men with) arrows I slew. In the midst
 of this battle BURANATE (of the country of Yazbukians)
 5 took my hand. The great fortified cities of the
 Patinians I threw down, (dug up, and burned with fire.)
 6 The upper (cities) of Palestine and the sea of the
 setting sun

¹ Or, "I satisfied the ordinances of the great gods, in that."

² The Orontes of classical geography.

³ Khiluk may be the same as Khilak or Cilicia.

- 7 The tribute of the Kings of the sea-coast I received.
On the shores of the broad sea
- 8 I descended. An image of my Lordship, the main-
tainer of my name for ages, I made. By the sea-side (I
set it up).
- 9 To the mountains of Amanus I ascended. Logs of
cedar and fir I cut. To mountains (I went up. Against)
- 10 the land of Atalur, an uninhabited place of deserts
(and) *low-lying*, I went. Its tribute I appointed. From
the sea (I departed.)
- 11 The cities of Tayā . . . Khazazu, Nulia, (and) Butāmu,
belonging to the Patinians, I took. Two thousand eight
hundred fighting-men
- 12 I slew. Fourteen thousand six hundred of their slaves
I carried away. The tribute of ARAME, the son of
GU'SI, silver, gold, oxen
- 13 sheep, goats, ornaments of gold, (and) silver specie,
I received. In the same year during my own eponymy,¹
in the month Iyyar, the 13th day, from the city (of
Nineveh)
- 14 I departed. The river Tigris I crossed. Through the
countries of Kha'samu (and) Dikhunu I passed. To
the city of Tul-Barsip, the stronghold of AKHUNI
- 15 the son of ADINI, I approached. AKHUNI the son of
ADINI to the power of his armies trusted and to meet me
came. A destruction of him I made. In (his city)
- 16 I shut him up. From the city of Tul-Barsip I de-
parted. In large vessels of skin the Euphrates in its upper
part I crossed. The cities of ga, Tagi
- 17 'Surunu, Paripa, Mabasere, (and) Dabigu, 6 of his
strongholds belonging to AKHUNI I took. His fighting-
men

¹ Lit., "in the eponymy of the year of my name aforesaid."

- 18 in numbers I slew. Their spoil I carried away. Two hundred cities which depended on him I threw down, dug up (and) burned with fire. From the city of Dabigu (I departed).
- 19 To the city of 'Sazabe, his stronghold belonging to 'SANGARA of the city of Carchemish, I approached. The city I besieged, I took. Their fighting-men in numbers I slew.
- 20 Their spoil I carried away. The cities which depended on him I threw down, dug up, (and) burned with fire. The Kings of the country, throughout the whole extent of it,
- 21 from before the sight of my mighty weapons and my watchful battle fled-in-fear and took my feet. (From) their country, even the country of the Patinians,
- 22 3 talents of gold, 100 talents of silver, 300 talents of bronze, 300 talents of iron, 1000 plates of bronze, 1000 robes of variegated thread and wool, their daughters
- 23 with numerous presents, 20 talents of white (and) purple raiment, 500 oxen, 5000 sheep I received. Two talents of white (and) purple raiment for one talent of precious metal, (and) 100 beams of cedar,
- 24 as tribute, over them I imposed. The fixed sum in my city Assur I duly received. (From) KHAYANU, the son of GABBARI, who (dwelt) at the foot of Amanus, talents
- 25 of copper, talent(s) of iron, 300 robes of variegated thread and wool, 300 oxen, 3000 sheep, 200 beams of cedar, 2 *images* of cedar, (and)
- 26 his daughter with her gifts I received. Ten manehs of silver, 200 beams of cedar, *images* of cedar, as tribute upon them I imposed. The fixed sum
- 27 I duly received. (From) ARAMU, the son of AGU'SI, 10 manehs of gold, 6 talents of silver, 500 oxen, (and)

- 5000 sheep I received. (From) 'SANGARA of the city of the Carchemishians one-third talent
- 28 of gold, one and a sixth talent of silver, 30 talents of bronze, 100 talents of iron, 20 talents of white (and) purple cloth, 5 thrones, his daughter with gifts and 100 of his nobles' daughters,
- 29 500 oxen, (and) 5000 sheep I received. One maneh of gold (and) 2 talents of white and purple cloth to one talent of silver, a *high* tribute, I imposed. The fixed sum I duly received. (From) KATAZILU,
- 30 of Comagene, 20 manehs of silver, (and) 300 beams of cedar, the fixed sum I duly received. In the eponymy of ASSUR-BILA-CAYIN, the month Tammuz, the 13th day, from the city of Nineveh I departed.
- 31 The river Tigris I crossed. The countries of Kha'samu (and) Dikhnnunu I traversed. To the city of Tul-Barsip, his stronghold belonging to AKHUNI the son of ADINI I betook myself. AKHUNI
- 32 the son of ADINI from before the sight of my mighty weapons and my watchful battle to save his life (fled-in-fear). The Tigris I crossed (to go)
- 33 against the hostile countries (which had) revolted. By the command of Assur, my great Lord, the cities of Tul-Barsip, Aligu, . . . sagukāna, (and) Manyā
- 34 I seized. Men, even the men of Assyria, in the midst (of the country) I settled. The palaces for the seat of my Majesty within it I took. The city of Tul-Barsip the city of "The Fort of Shalmaneser"
- 35 by name, the city of Nappigi the city of "The Law of Assur" by name, the city of Alligi the city "I took; not for you" by name, the city of Ruguliti the city of "The Command (of ASSUR)" by name, I called them. At that time
- 36 to the city of Assur I returned. I took what the kings

- of the Patinians had called the city of Pethor, which (is) upon the river 'Sagura on the hither side of the Euphrates,
- 37 and the city of Mutūnu which (is) on the further side of the Euphrates, which TIGLATH-PILESER, the royal forefather who went before me had (united) to my country, (but) ASSUR-RAB-BURI
- 38 King of Assyria (and) the King of Syria (ARUMU) by a treaty had taken away, these cities to their places I restored. The children of the Assyrians in the midst (of them) I settled.
- 39 While in the city of the Fort of Shalmaneser I was staying, the tribute of the kings of the sea-coast and of the kings of the banks of the Euphrates, silver, gold, lead, bronze,
- 40 plates of bronze, oxen, sheep, robes of variegated thread and wool, I received. From the Fort of Shalmaneser I departed. The country of 'Sugab I traversed.
- 41 Into the country of Bit-zamāni I descended. From the city of Bit-zamāni I departed. The countries of Namdānu (and) Mirkhi'su I traversed. Trackless paths (and) mountains
- 42 difficult, which like the end of a sword stood pointed to the sky, on wheels of iron I penetrated.¹ (My) chariots (and) armies I transported. To the country of Enzite (belonging) to the land of Isua²
- 43 I went down. The country of Enzite to its whole extent (my) hand(s) conquered. Their cities I threw down, dug up, (and) burned with fire. Their spoil, their booty, their riches, to a countless number,
- 44 I carried off. An image of my Majesty of a large size I made. The decrees of ASSUR, the great Lord, my

¹ Lit., "I dug up."

² Enzite was near the river Arzania, and Mr. Norris notes that "Maps of Armenia have the name Arzen at the sources of the Tigris."

- Lord, and my collected laws upon it I wrote. (In) the city of 'Saluri, the citadel I erected (it).
- 45 From the city of Enzite I departed. The river Arzania I crossed. To the country of 'Sukhme I approached. The city of Vastal, its capital, I took. The country of 'Sukhme to its whole extent
- 46 I overthrew, dug up (and) burned with fire. 'SUA, the Chief of their city, with the hand I seized. From the country of 'Sukhme I departed. To the country of Dayāni I went down. The city of Dayāni
- 47 to its whole extent I occupied. Their cities I threw down, dug up (and) burned with fire. Their spoil (and) their plunder in great quantities I took. From the country of Dayāni I departed.
- 48 To the city of Arzascu, the city of His Majesty, belonging to ARRAME (King) of the Armenians, I approached. ARRAME of the Armenians from before the sight of my mighty weapons
- 49 (and) my watchful battle fled-in-fear and his city abandoned. To the mountains of the country of Adduri he ascended. After him to the mountains I ascended. A hard battle in the midst of the mountains I fought. Three thousand four hundred
- 50 of his fighting-men with weapons I slew. Like the Air-god a deluge over them I rained. Their corpses like chaff I scattered. His camp I despoiled him of.
- 51 His chariots, his magazines, his horses, his asses (and) calves, his riches, his spoil (and) his booty in large quantities from the midst of the mountains I brought back. ARRAME to save
- 52 his life to inaccessible mountains ascended. With the main-body of my servants his country like a threshing-ox I threshed. To his cities devastation I brought. The city of Arzascu together with the cities

53 which depended upon it I threw down, dug up (and) burned with fire. Pyramids of the heads of the people over against his great gate I built up.

[Here occurs a lacuna of nearly a whole line.]

54 heaps on stakes I impaled. From the city of Arzascu I departed. To the mountains

55 (I ascended). An image of my Majesty of a large size I made. The decrees of ASSUR my Lord, and my collected laws, which in the country of Armenia I had made, upon it

56 (I wrote. In the country of Eritia) I erected (it). From the country of Eritia I departed. To the city of Aramale I approached. Its cities I threw down, dug up (and) burned with fire.

57 From the city of Aramale I departed. To the city of Zanzi'una (I approached. The King of Zanzi'una feared my battle.) My feet he took.

58 Horses trained to the yoke, oxen (and) sheep I received. Grace I granted. (From the city of Zanzi'una I departed. On my return) to the sea

59 of the country of Na'iri I descended. The mighty weapons of ASSUR in the midst of the sea I stayed. Sacrifices I offered. An image of my Majesty I made. The decrees

60 of ASSUR the great Lord, my Lord, the records of my victories and my triumphant deeds upon it I wrote. (From the sea) I departed. To the land of Gilzāni

61 I approached. A'SAHU¹ King of Gilzāni to his

¹ A'sahu is called 'Suha in the first epigraph of the Black Obelisk inscription. He seems to be identical with the A'su of Gozan of Col. I 28. In this case Gilzanu will be another form of Guzanu, the Gozan of the Bible, which lay between the upper courses of the Tigris and Euphrates. Nisibis was one of its chief cities.

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