

AN ERECHITE'S LAMENT

TRANSLATED BY THEO. G. PINCHES

IN connection with the text referring to Ê-ana in Erech, the following, a kind of penitential psalm written in the Sumerian dialect, with a translation into Semitic-Babylonian, which I have entitled "The Erechite's lament over the desolation of his fatherland," may be here very appropriately appended. This interesting composition, if not actually written and sung after the carrying away of the statue of the goddess Nanā by the Elamities, might well have been chanted by the sorrowing Erechites on that occasion.

The fragment as published (*Cun. Ins. of W. Asia*, iv. 19, No. 3) begins with the reverse of the text, and breaks off when rather less than half-way through it. Of the obverse, which is as yet unpublished, the remains only of about sixteen lines at the bottom are left. What remains of the obverse refers to the devastation wrought by an enemy in the city of Erech, and the subject is continued on the reverse, which ends in a kind of litany. The following is a free rendering of the inscription on the reverse.

TRANSLATION OF THE LAMENT

How long, my Lady, shall the strong enemy hold thy sanctuary?

There is want in ERECH, thy principal city;

Blood is flowing like water in E-ulbar, the house of thy oracle;

He has kindled and poured out fire like hailstones on all thy lands.

My Lady, sorely am I fettered by misfortune;

My Lady, thou hast surrounded me, and brought me to grief.

The mighty enemy has smitten me down like a single reed.

Not wise myself, I cannot take counsel;¹

I mourn day and night like the fields.²

I, thy servant, pray to thee.

Let thy heart take rest, let thy disposition be softened.

. weeping, let thy heart take rest.

. let thy heart take rest.

. save (?) thou.

Translations of this text have been given by G. Smith, Lenormant, Halévy, Hommel, and Zimmern, and a drawing of the reverse of the fragment, accompanied with a transcription and translation, was given by me in the *Babylonian and Oriental Record* for December 1886.

¹ Literally, "I do not take counsel, myself I am not wise (Sumerian: *Dimmu nu-mundib, ni-mu nu-mushtugmen*; Assyrian: *Dhême ul tsabtaku, ramani il khasaku*).

² Better, perhaps, "Like the *marshland*, day and night I groan."

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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