THE NIMRUD INSCRIPTION OF TIGLATH-PILESER III

TRANSLATED BY S. ARTHUR STRONG

THE following inscription contains the annals of the king, who-since the discovery 1 of a second Tiglathpileser among the predecessors of Assurnatsirpalis known as Tiglathpileser III. His real name appears to have been Pul, or Pulu; and that he was the rightful heir to the throne, or even of royal blood, is by no means certain. He never calls himself the son of Assurnirâri, the king his predecessor, or indeed makes any allusion to his father-a reticence unusual in an Assyrian king, and in later times his monuments were to a large extent defaced by Esarhaddon. But these facts do not necessarily imply more than that he was only a younger son of the royal house. On ascending the throne (745 B.C) he took the name of the great conqueror of the first Assyrian epoch, whose exploits he was destined to rival, and this circumstance has led the Biblical compiler into the mistake of supposing that there were two kings, Pul and Tiglath-

¹ Pinches, Guide to the Nimroud Central Saloon, p. 9.

pileser. Nevertheless the fact of their identity is now completely established.

The operations of his first campaign (in 745) were directed against the (partly nomadic) Aramæans and Chaldæans of the province of Babylon, who were constantly threatening the stability of the Assyrian power on the southern borders of the empire. lon itself he appears to have left undisturbed; but Sippara and Niffer, besides other towns of less importance, were taken. The power of the Aramæans was broken, and their territory placed under the control of an Assyrian governor, while the priests of Babylon, Borsippa and Kutha, sent presents to the conqueror in token of submission. following year he moved eastward across the river Zab, invaded the little-known territory of the "mighty Medes," and pushed his conquests as far as Bikni, "the mount of the rising sun."

His attention was now directed to the course of events in the west. At Arpad, in Syria, whither he had moved, he found himself confronted by a powerful coalition, at the head of which was Sarduris, king of Urardhi, or Ararat. Tiglathpileser lost no time in attacking the allies, upon whom he inflicted a signal defeat at Kummukhi (Komagene); but meanwhile, during his absence from Arpad, this town had become the centre of a hostile league, which included the king of Hamath and, as it appears, Azariah, king of Judah. Accordingly Tiglathpileser advanced upon Arpad, which after a siege of three years was taken

(in 740). Hamath soon shared the same fate. These successes produced an immediate effect throughout the whole district. Eighteen kings sent tribute to Tiglathpileser, among them Rezin of Damascus, Hiram of Tyre, and Menahem of Samaria.

During the next three years (737-735) the east and north-east again became the theatre of the conqueror's exploits. After an unsuccessful attempt to reduce the stronghold of Sarduris on lake Van, he directed his march along the southern shore of the Caspian sea, and penetrated into the recesses of Media. At this point, owing to the obscurity of the geographical names in the inscriptions, it becomes impossible to determine with accuracy the extent and direction of the king's further advance. But one thing appears to be certain, and that is that the Assyrian arms were carried eastward by Tiglathpileser far beyond the limits reached by any of his predecessors. Some scholars have even supposed that he made his way into the valley of the Indus, and that to Tiglathpileser belongs the glory of the conquests associated long afterwards in popular tradition with the great name of Semiramis.

Leaving these remote fields of conquest and adventure, the king again turned westward. Ahaz, king of Judah, menaced by Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Israel, had appealed to Assyria for help. Tiglathpileser advanced first against Rezin. A battle was fought, and the king of Damascus was

driven to take refuge in his capital, where Tiglath-pileser blockaded him, as he tells us, "like a bird in a cage." He then turned his arms against Israel; but here he seems to have left the capital unmolested, and to have contented himself with overrunning and devastating the surrounding country, parts of which were annexed to Assyria. Gaza and Ashkelon, strongholds of the Philistines, were next attacked and taken, and the power of the conqueror made itself felt even among the Arabian tribes on the borders of Egypt, some of whom voluntarily submitted, and retained their independence, while others were incorporated with the empire.

Meanwhile Pekah of Israel had been murdered; but the difficulty of the situation was peacefully solved by Tiglathpileser, who either promoted the murderer Hosea to the vacant throne, or, at any rate, confirmed him in the possession of it. Whether the expedition against Tabal and Tyre was undertaken at this time (732) or somewhat later is uncertain. Conducted, however, not by the king in person, but by his general, it was completely successful, and from Tyre in particular the enormous sum of 150 talents was taken as tribute.

The king, having now finally established his supremacy over the vast regions of the west and north-west, felt himself free to consolidate and extend the conquests of his first campaign. So in the year 73 I he marched against the sacred city of Babylon itself. Here he seems to have met with no resistance,

and, in the same way, Sippara, Niffer, Borsippa, and other towns of importance submitted. Lastly, having subdued the Puqudu and other Aramæan and Chaldæan tribes within the limits or on the borders of Babylonia, he could justly style himself king of Sumir and Akkad.

The closing years of his reign appear to have been peaceful—occupied, not improbably, by the building operations of which we have a fragmentary account in our inscription. He was succeeded in 727 by Shalmaneser IV.

The inscription here translated is on a tablet of clay brought from Nimrud, and now (K3751) in the British Museum. Much of it has been defaced, and the conquests of the king are enumerated on a geographical plan, not in chronological order. It is published in W. A. I., ii. 67, and has been several times translated—into English by George Smith (Discoveries, 256 ff.), into French by Ménant (Annales, 140 suivv.) and Eneberg (Journal Asiatique, vi. 441 suivv.), and into German by Schrader (Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek, ii. 8 ff.).

THE NIMRUD INSCRIPTION OF TIGLATH-PILESER III.

- 1. The palace of Tiglathpileser, the great king, the mighty king, king of the whole (world), king of Assyria, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Accad, king of the four regions,
- 2. the mighty one, the warrior, who with the help of like a flood overspread (them), and as smoke reckoned (them),—
- 3. the king who at the command of Assur, Samas, and Merodach the great gods from the sea ¹ of Bit-Yakin to Bikni of the rising of the sun,
- 4. and the sea of the setting of the sun to Mutsri, 2 from the west to the east the countries ruled, and exercised kingship over them.
- From the beginning of my kingship to seventeen years of my reign. The peoples of Itu'a, Rubu'a, Khamarani, Lukhûatu, Kharibu, Rubbû, Rapiqu, Khirânu, Rabîlu,³
- Natsiru, Gulusu, Nabatu, Rakhiqu, Ka . . ., Rummulutu,⁴ Adili\(\hat{e}\), Kipri\(\hat{e}\), Ubudu, Gurumu, Bagdadu, Khindiru,
- DAMUNU, DUNANU, NILQU, RADIÊ, DA . . ., UBULU, KARMA', AMBATU, RU'A, QABI'A, LI'TÂU, MARUSU,
- 8. Amatu, Khagarânu, the cities of Dûr-Kurigalzi,

2 Egypt

³ It is possible that this name should be read Rabian,

¹ Lit. "the bitter river," at the head of the Persian Gulf.

⁴ The last syllable of this word is -tu, not -su, as printed in W. A. I., ii. 67, 6.

Adi . . ., Birtu 1 of Sarragiti, Birtu of Lab-BANAT, BIRTU OF KAR-BÊL-MÂTÂTI,

9. the Arumu,² all of them, who (are) on the banks of the rivers Tigris, Euphrates, and 'Surappi, to the midst of the river UKNIE, which (is) over against the lower sea, I subdued, with slaughter 3 of them I slaughtered, their spoil I spoiled.

10. The Arumu, as many as there were, to the territory of Assyria I added them, and my generals as governors over them I set. Upon Tul-Kamri, which

they call the city Khumut.

II. a city I built; KAR-ASSUR its name I called; people of the countries, the spoil of my hands, in the midst I placed. In Sippara, Niffer, Babylon, Borsippa, KUTHA, KIS, DILBAT and ERECH, cities without equals.

12. splendid sacrifices to Bel, Zirbanit, Nebo, Tasmit, NERGAL, LAZ, the great gods, my lords, I offered, and they loved my priesthood. Broad KAR-DUNIAS4

to its whole extent I ruled, and

13. exercised kingship over it. The Puoudu⁵ as it were (with) a net I struck down, with slaughter of them I slaughtered, much spoil of them I spoiled. These PUOUDU (and) the city of LAKHIRU, which ⁶(looks) towards the midst of the city of Khilimmu,

14. (and) the city of PILLUTU, which is on the side of ELAM, to the territory of Assyria I added, and in the hands of my general, the governor of ARRAPKHA I allotted. The KALDUDU, as many as there were, I carried away, and

¹ Or "the fortress."

² The Aramæans.

³ Dikta is here taken closely with the verb aduk as a sort of cognate accusative. Schrader and others, on the contrary, translate it as the direct object, "fighting men," "warriors,"

⁴ Babylonia.

⁵ The Pekod of Jer. l. 21.

⁶ I read sa idi biri ina Khilimmu, taking biri as a preposition. Cf. Nebuchadnezzar, EIH, viii, 52, ina birisunu, "between them." Schrader (Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek, ii. 13) takes birina as some (unexplained) part of a town, and renders "which is on the side of the biring of the town Khilimmu."

15. in the midst of Assyria I settled. Kaldu¹ to its (whole) extent like dust I trod it down. Nabûusabsi, son of Silâni, his warriors² close to 'Sarrapanu his city I slew,

16. and himself in front of the great gate of his city on a stake I lifted up, and I reduced his country to subjection. 'Sarrapanu by means of a wall and battering engines I captured. 55,000 people to-

gether with their goods,

17. his spoil, his stuff, his possessions, his wife, his sons, his daughters, and his gods I carried off. That city together with the cities which (are in) its neighbourhood I destroyed, I laid waste, with fire I burned, and to mounds and ruins I reduced.

18. The city of TARBATSU (and) the city of YAPALLU I captured. 30,000 people together with their goods, their stuff, their possessions and their gods [I carried off. Those cities] together with the cities which (are in) their neighbourhood

19. like a ruin of the deluge I destroyed. Zaqiru son of Sa'alli against the ordinances of the great gods sinned, and with his mouth. Him together with his great men with (my) hands I seized;

20. bonds of iron I put upon them, and to Assyria I took (them). The people of Bît-Sa'alli were afraid, and the city of Dûr for their stronghold they took.

21. That city by siege and storm I took, and as earth³ I reckoned. 50,400 people together with their goods, their spoil, their stuff, their possessions, his wife, his sons, his daughters, and his gods I carried off.

22. The city of Amlilatu I captured. The people together with their goods, its spoil, its stuff, its pos-

¹ The Chaldæans of classical antiquity.

² Here it seems as if dikta must refer to an object other than Nabû-usabsi. See also lines 23, 33.

³ Or, literally "on the earth," that is "I threw to the ground," "levelled with the ground."

sessions I carried off. Bît-Sa'allı to its (whole) extent like a deluge I overspread, and I laid waste its homesteads.

23. Those countries to the territory of Assyria I added.

Ukîn-zir¹ son of Amukkan in 'Sapiê the city of his kingship I besieged him; his fighting men in numbers in front of his great gate I slew.

24. The groves of palms, which (were) outside his wall, I cut down, and I did not leave one. His date-palms, which (are) the growth of the country I destroyed, and his enclosures I broke down, and filled up the interiors. All his cities

25. I destroyed, I laid waste, with fire I burned. Bît-Silâni, Bît-Amukkâni, and Bît-Sa'alli to their (whole) extent like a ruin of the deluge I destroyed;

to mounds and ruins I reduced.

26. The tribute of Balas'u² son of Dakkuri, (and of)
Nadin of Larak,³ silver, gold, precious stones, I
received. Merodachbaladan son of Yakin, king of
the sea,⁴ who (in the time of) the kings my fathers
into the presence of none (of them) had come, and

27. kissed their feet, fear of the majesty of Assur my lord cast him down, and to Sapia, into my presence, he came, and kissed my feet. Gold, the dust of his

country, in abundance,

28. implements of gold, necklaces of gold, precious stones, the produce of the sea, beams of wood particoloured garments, perfumes in abundance of all kinds, oxen, sheep, as his tribute I received.

29. The countries of Namri, Bît-'Sangibuti, Bît-Khamban, 'Sumurzu,⁵ Barrua, Bît-Zualzas, Bît-Matti, the city of Niqu, which (is in) the country of Umlivas, the countries of Bît-Taranzai, Pars'ua, Bît-Zatti,

² This name corresponds to the classical Belesys.

¹ The Khinziros of the Greek writers.

³ For this value of the characters, see e.g. Strassmaier, AV. p. 586. Schrader (l. c. p. 15) is undecided between the renderings Ut-ut and Tam-tam. Larak seems to be the Larankha of Bêrôssos, now Schkerch.

⁴ The country at the head of the Persian Gulf.

⁵ It is possible that the right reading is Sukharzu.

- 30. Bît-Abdadani, Bît-Kap'si, Bît-Sangi, Bît-Urzakki, Bît-Istar, the city of Zakruti, the countries of Gizinikissi, Nissâ, the cities of Tsibur, Urimzan, the countries of Ra'usan,
- [NI-]PARIA, BUZTUZ, ARIARMI, BURRUMU-SARR-ÂNI-ITSTSURU, 'SAK'SUKNI, ARAQUTTU, KARZIPRA, GUKINNANA, BÎT-'SAKBAT, SILKHAZI,
- 32. which men call the stronghold of the Babylonian, Rûadi, Bît-Dûr, Usqaqqâna, Sikra the land of gold, districts of remote (?) Media, to their whole extent like dust I overwhelmed, and
- 33. their fighting men in numbers I slew. 60,500 people, together with (their) goods, their horses, their mules, their humped oxen, their oxen, their sheep, without number I carried off.
- 34. Their cities I destroyed, I laid waste, and with fire I burned; to mounds and ruins I reduced. The countries of Namri, Bît-'Sangibuti, Bît-Khamban, 'Sumurzu, Bît-Barrua, Bît-Zualzas,
- 35. Bît-Matti, Niqqu, which (is in) Umliyas, Bît-Taranzai, Par'sua, Bît-Zatti, Bît-Abdadani, Bît-Kap'si, Bît-'Sangi, Bît-Urzakki, the cities of Bît-Istar,
- 36. (and) ZAKRUTI of remote (?) MEDIA, to the territory of Assyria I added. The cities which (were) in them anew I built; the worship of Assur my lord in the midst I established; people from the countries the conquests of my hands therein I settled;
- 37. my generals as governors over them I appointed; an image of my kingship in Tikrakki, the cities of Bît-Istar (and) Tsibur, the countries of Ariarmi, Burrumu-sarrâni-itstsuru,
- 38. 'SILKHAZI, which men call the stronghold of the BABY-LONIAN, I set up. The tribute of Media (and) Ellipai, and the chiefs of the cities of the mountains, all of them, as far as BIKNI,

¹ The Asagartiya of the Persian cuneiform texts (Behistun ii, 79, iv. 20), the Sagartians of classical geography in the Zagros mountains.

² The Nisæa of classical geography.

³ Ellip was the district of which Ekbatana was subsequently the capital-

- 39. horses, mules, humped oxen, oxen, and sheep the might (and) the majesty of Assur my lord, which in the mountains, all of them
- 40. . . . (of) Assur my lord cast him down, and to Dûr-Tiglathpileser, the city which . . . into my presence he came, (and) kissed [my feet]
- 41. . . . mules, oxen, and sheep, weapons
- 42. . . . my [general] Assurdaninani to the land of the mighty Medes, (the land) of the rising sun
- 43. . . . the land of Kirkhu in its totality I captured; to the territory of Assyria I added
- 44. . . . of my kingship therein I placed; the worship of Assur my lord therein I established
- 45. . . . the people of [Ar]arat 2 'Sulumal of the country of the Meliddians, 3 Tarkhu-[lara of the Gangumians]
- 46. . . . Kustaspi of the country of the Komagenians to capture (and) plunder . . .
- 47. . . . the countries of KISTAN and KHALPI districts of . . .
- 48. . . . assunu (?) the river SINZI, the canal like nabasi . . .
- 49. . . . I seized them in the midst of . . .
- 50. . . royal beds . . .
- 51. . . .
- 52. . . . which into my presence . . .
- 53. . . . the cities of the Temanians, the Sabæans, the Khaiappians, the Badanians . . .
- 54. . . . whom no one knows, and whose seat is distant, the majesty of my Lordship . . .
- 55. . . . camels, she-camels, perfumes in abundance of all kinds, (as) their tribute like one to . . .
- 56. Idibi'ili as a watch over (against) EGYPT I appointed.
 In the countries all of them, which . . .

 $^{^1}$ Omitted in W. A. I., ii. 67, followed by Schrader ; but plainly to be traced in the original. $2 [Ur]ardhai.

³ Melid, the modern Malatiyeh in eastern Kappadokia.

⁴ The Teman of the Old Testament.

⁵ 'Sab'ai, the Sheba of the Old Testament.

57. The tribute of Kustaspi of the Komagenians, Urik (of) the Quans, Sibittibi'il (of) Gebal . . .

58. Enîlu (of) Hamath, Panammû (of) the 'Sam'lians,' Tarkhulara (of) the Gamgumians, 'Sulumal (of) the Meliddians . . .

59. Uas-surmê (of) Tubal, Uskhitti (of) the Tunians, Urpallâ (of) the Tukhanians, Tukhammê (of) the Istundians . . .

60. [Ma]tanbi'il (of) Arvad, 'Sanipu (of) Bît-Ammon, 'Salamanu (Solomon) (of) the Moabites . . .

61. Mitinti (of) Ashkelon, Jehoahaz (of) Judah, Qausmelech (of) Edom, Muz . . .

62. Hanon (of) GAZA, gold, silver, lead, iron, abar, particular coloured clothing, garments, the dress of their country, purple . . .

63. . . . the produce of sea (and) land, the spoil of their country, the treasure of royalty, horses, mules, the team of a yoke . . .

64. Uas-surmê (of) TABAL, the things of Assyria sought to rival, and into my presence did not come; my general the Rab-[sak] . . .

65. [Kh]ullî, the son of an unknown person, on the throne of his royalty I seated. 10 talents of gold, 1000 talents of silver, 2000 horses . . .

66. my general, the Rab-shakeh, to Tyre I sent. Of Mietenna of Tyre 150 talents of gold . . .

67. with the sense, the cunning, the penetrating thought, which the chief of the gods, the prince Nudimmut ⁶ gave (me), a palace of cedar . . .

68. and an entrance-hall after the fashion of a palace of the Hittites for my majesty in Calah I built . . .

69. An amount of earth higher than the former palaces of my fathers from the bed of the Tigris I caused to raise . . .

¹ On the northern shore of the Gulf of Antioch.

² 'Samahla lay to the north-east of the Gulf of Antioch, its capital being now represented by the mounds of Sinjirli.

³ Yaukhazi of the Yaudai. ⁴ Qaus-malaka of the Udumai,

⁵ Lit. "the son of no one."

⁶ The god Ea. Schrader reads Nukimmut.

- 70. All the men of (my) army, (such as were) cunning, skilfully I employed, and . . .
- 71. 20 great cubits below the rushing ¹ water stout squared stone like the mass of a mountain I piled, and . . . the left . . .
- 72. their terraces I laid out, and their foundations I fixed, and I raised their spires. Half a gar, two-thirds of a cubit the house . . . I devised, and . . .
- 73. On the north side in front I placed their gates, with ivory, usû-wood, box-wood, palm-wood, box-wood (?)
 . . . juniper.
- 74. The tribute of the kings of the HITTITES, the princes of ARAM ² and KALDI, whom by the pre-eminence of my strength I had subdued to my feet . . . I stored (therein).
- 75. $5\frac{1}{2}$ gar, four cubits sheer from the depth of the water their fabric I enclosed, and more than the palaces of (all) lands I enlarged . . . their work.
- 76. (With) beams of cedar, well grown, which like the fragrance of the wood of Khasurri³ for (their) perfume (are) good, the produce of Khamana,⁴ Lebanon and Ammanana,
- 77. I roofed them, and made them fast. To show forth ornament . . . stones, the work of *burkulluti*, I made, and (therewith) I furnished the gate.
- 78. Doors of cedar (and) cypress, in pairs, the entering in of which is blissful, whose fragrance breathes upon the heart,
- 79. with a rim of bronze and shining metal I bound, and in the gates I fixed. Lions, bulls, (winged) bulls, formed with exceeding cunning, skilfully fashioned,
- 80. the entrances I caused to hold, and for wonderment I set up; thresholds (looking) towards the sun, of *paruti-*stone, at their base I laid down, and I made glorious the entrance.

¹ Literally "strong," i.e. "strong-flowing." ² Arimê.

³ Khasur was the name of one of the spurs of Mount Amanus; see W. A. I., ii. 51. 4.

⁴ Amanus at the head of the Gulf of Antioch.

81. An image too I made to keep guard 1 over the great gods; with creatures of sea and land I surrounded him; with terror I invested (him).

82. With a railing (?) of gold, silver, and copper for their completion I surrounded them, and I made their

forms to shine.

83. For the dwelling of my royalty its 2 buildings I raised; precious stones, the work . . . I placed within it.

84. The palaces—"Pleasure," "holding abundance," "king's graciousness," "making their builder grow old," for their names I called.

85. The gates—"Righteousness," "ordering the judgment of the princes of the four regions," "preserving the

tribute of mountains and seas,"

86. "Causing the fulness of the lands to enter into the presence of the king their lord," I named the names of their gates.

[In the above translation a comma before a vowel or consonant other than s, as in Samahla, line 58, represents h.—ED.]

¹ Reading u tsalam abni matsar sût ilî rabûti. Schrader (l. c. p. 24) gives u tsalam abnima zarsût (?) ilî rabûti; but the difficulty here is to explain zarsût, upon which, so far as I can see, Strassmaier (A. V. No. 2912), cited by Schrader, throws no light whatever.

² I.e. the buildings of the palace.

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