

THREE DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE SONS OF NEBUCHADREZZAR

TRANSLATED BY THE EDITOR

THE three documents of which translations follow are included among the Babylonian "Contract-tablets," now in the British Museum, copies of which have been published by Dr. Strassmaier. They will be found in his *Babylonische Texte*, vi. ; *Inschriften von Nabuchodonosor*, Nos. 372, 382, and 393. Their interest lies in the references they make to two of the sons of Nebuchadrezzar, Merodach-suma-utsur ("O Merodach, defend the name") and Merodach-nadin-akhi ("Merodach has given a brother"). They show us, moreover, that the members of the royal family were not exempt from the obligation of paying the tithe or *esrû* to the Babylonian temples ; while the second (No. 382) throws light on Babylonian law so far as it related to slaves. The document, however, is very difficult to translate, as our knowledge of the legal terms used by the Babylonians is still defective. The "battle" to which allusion is made is quite unknown.

Bit-Uri, "the house of light," was the great temple of the Sun-god at Sippara. Its Sumerian name seems to have been Ê-Babbara.

THREE DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE SONS OF NEBUCHADREZZAR

- I. [One sheep], the title [of Merodach-]suma-utsur [the son] of the king, Zubuduru the secretary¹ of Merodach-suma-utsur the son of the king has paid to BIT-URI.² One sheep (has been received) in BIT-URI in the presence of Samas-nadin,³ the 7th [day] of the month Adar, the 40th year⁴ [of Nebuch]adrezzar [the king of BABY]LON.
- II. Kinâ the son of Nadinu has not withdrawn (from his agreement)⁵ in regard to the 62 *gur* of dates, which (he gave) in return for half a maneh of silver⁶ belonging to Sin-abil-sarri-utsur the son of Pâ'siya the slave of Merodach-nadin-akhi the son of the king whom in the battle he gave to Tabnêa the son of Merodach-sakin-sumi the son of Dabibi. Ardiya the son of Gimillu the son of Epis-ili and Nebo-khidhu-mê-su the slave of Tabnêa, the agents of Tabnêa, have transferred the duty of paying Kinâ the son of Nadinu with the money to Sin-abil-sarri-utsur the son of Pâ'siya on behalf of Tabnêa. Kinâ has preferred no claim against Ardiya and Nebo-khidhu-mê-su. Kinâ has paid the 62 *gur* of dates valued at half a maneh of silver. Sin-abil-sarri-utsur, who represents Tabnêa, assumes the engagement⁷ to pay the half maneh of silver as well as the

¹ Or "messenger," "agent."

² The temple of the Sun-god at Sippara.

³ Presumably the priest of the Sun-god.

⁴ B. C. 665-4.

⁵ *Ul ituruma*. ⁶ £4 : 10s. according to Dr. Oppert's calculation.

⁷ *Ullim*, connected with the Hebrew *alah*, "oath."

engagement entered into by Ardiya, and satisfies the claim of Ardiya (accordingly). Witnessed by Samas-damiq the son of Tabik-ziri the son of the superintendent of the court-yard, Niqudu the son of Merodach-suma-epis the son of Epis-ili (and) the priest Bel-yusallim; BABYLON, the 8th day of the second Elul, the 41st year of Nebuchadrezzar king of BABYLON.

III. Twenty-five shekels of silver,¹ the tithe of Merodach-nadin-akhi, the son of the king, by the hands of Samas-yukin-akhi and Aqabi-ili,² he has given to BIT-URI, the 14th day of Iyyar, the 42d year of Nebuchadrezzar king of BABYLON.

¹ £3 : 15s. according to Dr. Oppert's calculation.

² Perhaps corresponding to a Hebrew Jacob-el.

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