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THE Presbyterian Quarterly.

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I. THE PRESBYTERIAN BULWARKS OF LIBERTY AND LAW.

It is a striking and memorable coincidence that while in the City of Philadelphia the Presbyterian Synod of New York and Philadelphia, in 1787, was discussing and amending the report of Witherspoon and his associates, and seeking the best possible embodiment of Presbyterianism as an organized, representative and constitutional government, the Constitutional Convention was also at the same time, in that same city, debating and determining the best form of government for the new Nation. Led by Witherspoon, whose blood still tingled with the thrill of the hour when he signed the Declaration of Independence, the Synod took the Confession of Faith in hand, and without any scrupulosities of reverence for it as a venerable symbol, and in absolute indifference to possibilities of patch-work, stripped it of every vestige of Erastianism, and ordered a thousand copies of the Plan as thus amended, printed for distribution among the Presbyteries, "for their consideration, and the consideration of the churches under their care." In the next Synod, 1788, after further amendment and full discussion, the whole Plan was finally adopted as "The Constitu-

III. THE DISCOVERY OF THE KINGS.

It is well known that the announcement was made two or three years ago that the names of Amraphel, Chedorlaomer, Arioch and Tidal had been found on Babylonian tablets. The importance of such a discovery, if real, it is difficult to exaggerate. It would be a very plain proof that those critics who had announced that the accounts of Abraham's times in Genesis were legendary and not historical, must be mistaken; for, in the discovery of their names on the tablets, these supposedly mythical figures of the time would be seen emerging from the cloudland of legend and taking their places on the now clearly-lighted stage of history.

It is not strange, then, that the reality of the discovery should have been hotly disputed, and that the claim that the names in Genesis 14:1 had been found on the tablets, should have elicited angry denial and sarcastic criticism. There seems to have been much of this sort of comment in England, and *The Expository Times*, reprinted in this country, takes up the strain.

The lecture of Mr. Theophilus Pinches, of the British Museum, before the Victoria Institute, January 20th, 1896, announcing the probable discovery of these four names on Babylonian tablets, was published in the *Journal of Transactions* of that society for 1897, and *The Expository Times*, endorsing a critique of *The Church Times*, speaks of the lecture as follows :

“Mr. Pinches practically surrenders the whole case, for he says, ‘I now come to what many will probably regard as the most interesting part of my lecture, namely, the tablets which seem to refer to Arioch, Tidal and Chedorlaomer. At the word ‘seem’ you find a reference to a note at the foot of the page. The note is this, ‘At this stage I

purposely say 'seem to refer,' and I wish it to be noticed that I have never spoken of these names without a note of interrogation, though this was probably an excess of caution.' But he continues and says: 'With such imperfect texts as these, dogmatising is impossible, and the author disclaims any such intention. It is quite indifferent to him whether it [KU-KU-KU-KU-MAL, E-RI-E-A-KU, and TU-UD-KHUL-A]* be Chedorlaomer, Arioch and Tidal respectively—they may be entirely different personages, but if they are not what they seem to be, it is a remarkable historical coincidence, and deserves recognition as such.' 'That,' says *The Church Times*, 'is not the way men talk when they have made 'an important discovery.' And it adds: 'After this its advocates can do no less than give their dead tablet a decent and honorable burial.'"—*Expository Times for June, 1898*.

The writer of this editorial stops quoting Mr. Pinches' foot-note just at the point to serve his evident, though, perhaps, unconscious, purpose to discredit the evidence adduced later on, and to make it appear that the lecturer "practically surrenders the whole case." This will be plain when the reader is told that the rest of the foot-note reads:

"My audience will be able to judge whether three names so similar to those in the 14th chapter of Genesis are or are not those of the personages mentioned in that chapter. I do not ask them, however, to express an opinion as to the magnitude or strangeness of the coincidence if they should decide that the names given by the tablets are *not* those of Arioch and his allies. The other Assyriologists are now adopting the views regarding these names held by Prof. Sayce, Prof. Hommel and myself."

This, while modest, as becomes true scientific investiga-

*Instead of this, the cuneiform characters occur here in the lecture. *The Exp. Times* thus transcribes the inscription with an evident design.

tion, making no dogmatic deliverance before the evidence is in, is surely not a "surrender of the whole case," either practical or theoretical.

One does not like to charge the editor of so very scholarly a periodical as *The Expository Times* with garbling and intentional *suppressio veri*, and prefers what seems the only alternative supposition—that such is his devotion to an adopted theory, that he is absolutely blind to all facts that militate against it. There is a great deal of our poor, common, human nature even in specialists of the most remarkable attainments.

Whatever may be the explanation, when one has before him the complete lecture, with the facsimiles of the tablets, the lecturer's transcription of the words on them in ordinary letters, his translation of them, and his notes upon them, his impression is precisely the opposite of that which he would gain from the extracts in *The Expository Times*.

The lecturer's view of the matter may be seen quite clearly, whatever disclaimers he may make of an intention to dogmatize, from such words as these :

"It is in the highest degree unlikely that tablets containing the names of Tidal and others, closely resembling Arioch and Chedorlaomer, the last designated "King of Elam" and "the Elamite," should not, after all, refer to these personages."

The credit of discovering the name of Amraphel, King of Ellasar, under the form of Hammurabi, who seems to be King of Babylonia (Shinar)*, is given to Prof. Schraeder and the celebrated "Father Scheil," who deciphered it in Babylonian tablets in the Museum of Constantinople. In one of the letters of Hammurabi (or Amraphel), the name of Chedorlaomer also occurs. (There are three of these

* "I may add that the texts discovered by Mr. Pinches seem to be oracles addressed to the Babylonian King Khammurabi."—*Prof. A. H. Sayce*.

letters.) A note from Prof. Sayce, written from Assuan, Egypt, suggests the propriety of the title "King of Nations," given to Tidal in Genesis. The word in the tablet (Umman-manda) which he translates "nomad hordes," he says, corresponds exactly with the Hebrew, *goyyim*, "nations." Prof. Hummel, in his *Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, makes the same suggestion.

We should never forget, in a discussion like this, the power of the imagination to mislead. We see men, beasts, ships, etc., in the shifting clouds of the sky or among the embers on the hearth; and Mr. Pinches is right in refraining from an unqualified assertion that he has certainly made the discovery of the names of the kings who, almost forty centuries ago, invaded Palestine. It would have been better if some other Assyriologists had shown an equal degree of caution, and it is well for us to suspend our judgment till the evidence is quite clear. There are some things, however, which concur to aid us in coming to a conclusion, if not of absolute certainty, yet of a very high degree of probability, in this matter. Let us notice some of these.

(a) The improbability of such an invasion, at this time, has been asserted by Wellhausen to amount to a certainty that it *did* not, because it *could* not, occur, and he has spoken in the most scornful terms of the historical character of the account in Genesis 14, asserting that "all these incidents are sheer impossibilities." The monuments, however, show us that Sargon, long before the days of Abraham, invaded the land of the Amorites and extended his conquests to the Mediterranean Sea. Besides, the Tel-el-Amarna tablets, discovered ten years ago, written in the cuneiform character, show that Babylonish influence in this region had by no means ceased in the age of Abraham. The account of such an invasion, then, instead of bearing the stamp of improbability, is seen to be *antecedently quite*

probable."*

(b) Another thing which has impressed me is one which does not seem to have been dwelt on, by those who have discussed the matter, as much as it deserves: This is the similarity of these names on the tablets to those in our Hebrew Bible, leaving out of view the vowel points. We should remember that we are not to try to see whether they correspond to the names as they appear in our English Bible. Every beginner in the study of the Hebrew Bible must be struck with the somewhat shadowy resemblance between many of the names in the Hebrew and in our English Bible. In some cases they have undergone a transformation altogether unaccountable.

The names which we are to compare with those on the tablets are not Chedorlaomer, Tidal, Arioch and Amraphel, but the names which were in the Hebrew text of Genesis 14:1, as it was originally written. We know that it was written without the vowel points of the present Hebrew text as generally printed for ease and convenience in reading. The vowel points were put in by the Masorites when the knowledge of the Hebrew language was declining. These scholars supplied the vowel points that the Scriptures might be more easily read.† The pronunciation of their day was doubtless as far from that of Moses as is our pronunciation of English from that of Chaucer, so far as vowel sounds are concerned, and it is entirely improbable

* Kudur-Mabug, the father of Arioch, is found from the tablets to have borne the title, *Prince of Palestine*.

† A second inscription discovered at Ur (W. A. I. i. 2. No. 3) runs as follows:

To the God Uru-Ki (Moon-god of Ur) his king, has Kudur-Mabug, the prince of Martu (i. e. the countries of the West, Palestine) built the temple for the preservation of his life and the life of Iri-Aku, his son, the king of Larsa." *The Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, (Hommel) p. 167.

"The title, 'Prince of Martu,' therefore, necessarily implies that Kudur-Mabug had extended his military operations as far as Palestine." *Ibid.* p. 170.

† The vowel points did not exist in Jerome's day, and even then he could not read with certainty many Hebrew words.

that they attached to this consonantal writing the very vowels which their forefathers of twenty-five centuries before their time had used. When we make the comparison, then, it is not the likeness or unlikeness between the names on the tablets and those in our English Bible, or even those in our Hebrew Bible with the Masoretic pointing, but those in the unvocalized Hebrew text, that we are to decide upon. The four gutturals, though sometimes represented in the English forms of Hebrew names by vowels, come into the comparison, of course, as they belong to the text as originally written. With this made clear, we may begin the comparison, and may as well begin it with that name at which *The Expository Times* has poked most fun—Chedorlaomer. In the tablet which Mr. Pinches designates as "SP. III., 2. Reverse," * occurs the name Ku-dur-lag-mal. From the first Hammurabbi tablet of Father Scheil, what appears to be the same name has the final syllable "mar" instead of "mal."† Taking this last form, stripping it of its vowels to compare it with the unvocalized Hebrew name, we have on the tablet, K d r l g m r, and in the Hebrew, K d r l g m r. Most persons would agree that they are much alike. They are, in fact, as thus presented, *identical*. The English reader will naturally ask where the G comes from, as it does not appear in Chedorlaomer. The answer is that the last o in Chedorlaomer is the Hebrew *ayin*, a guttural which is sometimes represented by a vowel in English, and sometimes by the consonant G, as it is, for instance, in Gomorrah just below, where the G at the beginning is this same *ayin* which has been transcribed as o in Chedorlaomer.‡

* A facsimile of this tablet is shown in *The Journal of Transactions of the Victoria Institute for 1897*. (Vol. xxix.), p. 83.

† Liquids are liable to be interchanged, as we see from the fact that a very familiar Bible name is written sometimes Nebuchadnezzar and sometimes Nebuchadrezzar.

‡ Arabic scholars tell us that the *ayin* of that language, by the use of a diacritic mark, is made to do double duty, too—as a vowel and a consonant—as is the case, indeed, without the use of a diacritic mark, with our y.

It is true that the transcription of the Father Scheil tablet has a prolonged vowel and guttural sound along with the G, but I think any one who will ask an educated Jew to pronounce for him several words containing gutturals will be convinced that the sound of them, as coming from Semitic organs, is so peculiar that it would be quite natural to expect such differences in the transcription of a tablet which Hebrew writers transcribed into their own characters, using their peculiar gutturals to represent them. I think we may fairly say that here there is an exceedingly close resemblance, if not identity.

The most dissimilar name in our English text to that discovered in a tablet is Amraphel, King of Shinar. Yet, when we remember that Hammurabi begins with the letter H, which, in almost all languages, is a very uncertain quantity, witness the different pronunciation of the cultivated and uncultivated English people of words beginning with a vowel and those beginning with the letter H—and then remember that the Ph. in the final syllable in one case, and the B in the other are both labials and liable to be interchanged, the similarity is much closer than would at first appear. The consonants are the same with the exception of a final L* in the Bible name, and the double M in the tablet.

A-r-i-o-k—the Hebrew of Arioch† written without Masoretic points—is surely not unlike the A-r-i-a-k of the tablet treated in a similar way—Tidal, in the Hebrew (without points T-d-g-l), may be said to be identical with the Tudgula of the tablets so far as the consonants are con-

* This final L, however, instead of presenting difficulty, helps to make the identification more perfect, for Hommel draws attention to the fact that Ammi-rapal(tu) occurs as another form of the name Ammu-rabi or Ammi-rabi.

† Hommel (*Ancient Hebrew Tradition*, p. 167), informs us that "an *ex voto* now preserved in the Louvre runs as follows :

' To the goddess Ishtar, the lady of the mountain . . . have Kudur-Mabug . . . and Riaku, his son, the exalted shepherd of Nippur, the guardian of Ur,' *King of Larsa*, etc."

sonants are concerned, and with these alone have we to deal. The G, in this name, too, is *ayin*, the guttural, which is sometimes a vowel and sometimes G, while less frequently, it has other values.

(c) To these considerations must be added the remarkable fact that these names are found, not only on separate tablets, but three of the four on the *same* tablet, while, in a different part of the world, *on another set of tablets*, the name of the fourth king occurs along with that of one of these three. On the tablet in the British Museum just named, Mr. Pinches feels quite sure that he finds the names of Tidal, Arioch and Chedorlaomer, while Father Scheil and Prof. Schraeder announce the discovery of a tablet in the Museum at Constantinople in which the names of Amraphel and Chedorlaomer occur. The kings are *together* in Genesis, and we find the names *together* on the tablets.

(d) Then, no small importance should be attached to the character of the witnesses, and the number of them, some in one place and some in another. Men like Hommel, Sayce, Schraeder, Scheil and Pinches, are not likely to be mistaken in such a case, and, of course, collusion and wilful deception (and that, without any conceivable motive,) are not to be thought of for a moment. They are witnesses of the highest character and competency; and they are independent witnesses.

(e) Another thing which makes it look probable that these persons named in the tablets are the four kings of Gen. 14:1 is that in the case of some of them at least they seem to be referred to in the tablets as occupying the same positions with those named in Genesis. Kudurlagmar, as already stated, is referred to as "the King of Elam" and "the Elamite." As to Eriaku, Mr. Pinches tells us that "Father Scheil seems to have found the true key to the situation," and concludes that he was King of Larsa.* The propriety of the designation "king of nations" applied to

Tidal, or Tudgula, in Genesis, is seen, if he is the same as the Tudgula of the tablets, since in them is mentioned the assembling by Kudur-Lagmar of the "Umman-manda" or "nomad hordes," and Professor Sayce remarks: "In Tidal, therefore, I see a king of the nomad hordes who adjoined Elam on the North."

Here are coincidences of a very remarkable kind, and it is hard to believe that they are accidental. A very plain illustration may help us to see this more clearly. Suppose one is looking for three or four friends in a great crowd. At a distance in the throng he thinks he sees the face of one of them, but it is so far away that he cannot be certain that it is the face of his friend that he sees, though the likeness is very striking. At this moment another face is seen just by the first, and it looks like that of another member of the party for which he is looking. By this, the probability that he was right in his first supposition is not doubled only, but made almost a certainty. Then he sees another face and it seems to be that of a third member of the company he was searching for. It would be exceedingly improbable that three faces should happen to appear like the three he was expecting to see, unless they were those of his friends. When a fourth face is seen like that of the last member of the group, he was looking for, moral certainty is arrived at. He knows that these are his four friends. If each of these persons wore some insignia of rank which he could see in the distance, the recognition would be still more prompt and certain, if that were possible.

Now, let us make an advance in our supposition. Suppose that the friends he is looking for are not a Mr. Jones, a Mr. Smith, a Mr. Brown and a Mr. Green, but Emperor William of Germany, Francis Joseph of Austria, The Czar of the Russias and King Humbert of Italy, and that not

*Hommel puts this beyond doubt. See foot note on page 48.

only he, but other intelligent observers from different points of view, feel pretty certain that yonder in the great crowd is not only the face of William, with his waxed mustaches, but his German retinue and his German standard with its black cross and black eagle, and near him are the three other potentates with their standards and retinues. The crowd might consist of many thousands yet when several competent observers of the highest character concur in saying that these four persons are William, Humbert, F. Joseph and Nicholas, we could not doubt (especially if we had learned that these four princes were traveling together) that these were they. No one in his senses could doubt it.

So we see through the medium of the tablets—wonderful retrospective glasses—old Amraphel, King of Shinar; Arioch, King of Ellasar; Chedorlaomer, King of Elam, and Tidal, King of Nations, marching at the head of their hosts, with banners flying, out of the East into Palestine, as in the Bible, and out of the dreamland of the cities* into reality. The myths of the critics have materialized and become the kings—bad ones—cruel and ambitious ones—of the Bible. In the view of some of the learned, this conduct is highly improper and entirely unpardonable on the part of Amraphel and his allies. Many were doubtless much displeased and not a little discouraged to see these old kings come marching down the centuries to spoil so many fine theories and do such violence to the cherished results of “scholarship.” This invasion of the four kings

* “They have all agreed (and when they are agreed it seems that their science has spoken its final word and registered an irreversible decree) that we have no information regarding the patriarchal history. Some years ago Canon Cheyne stated in the *Contemporary Review* that this was one thing on which criticism positively insisted..... Henceforth, he said, no teacher of youth was to speak as if he knew, nor was he to suffer his pupils to imagine that he knew anything whatever of Abraham or Isaac or Jacob.”—(*Modern Discoveries and the Bible.*—Urquhart.

has been almost as disagreeable to many at the end of the nineteenth century as was that one of some thirty-nine centuries ago to the fine kings in Palestine and poor Lot. They have spoiled a fine region, carried off many much-prized goods—fine-spun, showy and much-wanted. But if the critics are taken, too, and carried into captivity, how hopeless is their case! for alas! alas! (unless they are mistaken) there is no Abraham to lead Amorite princes to rescue them, but only a poor bloodless myth.

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PARKE P. FLOURNOY.

[Since this excellent article was prepared for publication, Mr. L. W. King, also of the British Museum, has issued a volume on "The Letters and Inscriptions of Hammurabi," in which he claims that Father Scheil misread the name Chedorlaomer and that Mr. Pinches is probably mistaken in his transliteration of Tidal. The testimony for Arioch and Amraphel apparently remains the same. This fact is mentioned as bringing the latest word of archæology on this question, and also to make the point that the scholars, even the best of them, disagree about the more difficult inscriptions. Hence, when some discovery is announced contradicting Scripture history, the ordinary reader should possess his soul in patience until the final word of the scientists has been spoken. That word has been in multiplied instances a corroboration of the Bible account.—ED.]