

ANNOTATIONS (B) TO TABLE XXVI

FACTS IGNORED IN THE ASSYRIAN EPONYM LISTS.

THE CONTEMPORARIES OF TIGLATH-PILESER III.

The beginning of the 9th century B.C. is identified with the rise of the Assyrian kingdom under Assur-nazir-pal. With him begins a succession of 5 kings, the records of whose reigns show a steady increase in the power of Assyria. Following this succession is "a period of strange, almost inexplicable, decline. Of the next three reigns we have no single royal inscription, and are confined to the brief notes of the Eponym Lists. From these we learn too little to enable us to follow the decline of Assyrian fortunes, but we gain here and there a glimpse of it, and see also not less vividly the growth of a strong northern power which should vex Assyrian kings for centuries." (Rogers, "Hist. Bab. and Assy." II, p. 100.)

To appreciate the significance of the statement quoted, it is necessary to remember that the Assyrian Eponym Lists, as we know them, were compiled as a statement of a continuous succession of years, at a date considerably later than the three reigns identified with the decline of Assyrian power. Some mystery obviously attaches to these three reigns. They belong to what appears to have been a period of decline. There are no contemporary records. The only data relating to the three reigns are data compiled at a much later date and ostensibly from the annual records of the Eponyms. It is important to bear the latter fact in mind in considering what follows:—

Now whereas the genealogy of the preceding five kings is known with certainty, no data exist to show what relationship, if any, held between the three succeeding kings, Shalmaneser III, Assur-dan III, and Assur-nirari II, and their predecessors. The important fact is that the actual records of Tiglath-pileser III, who succeeded Assur-nirari II, claim conquests in Syria, dates of which belong to the reigns of Assur-dan III and Assur-nirari II. Now in the Assyrian Chronicle (the notes of the Eponym Lists mentioned by Rogers) there are only two campaigns to Syria in the reigns noted. These are dated in the years 765 and 755 B.C., i.e., 3234.25 to 3235.25 and 3244.25 to 3245.25 A.K. respectively. The former date falls in the 2nd year Menahem of Israel = 41st year Azariah of Judah. Now II Kings, xv, 19, 20 refers to Menahem giving tribute to Pul. Pulu was the original name of the Assyrian king prior to his adoption of the name Tiglath-pileser, after the death of Assur-nirari II. Therefore since Tiglath-pileser III states that he received tribute from Menahem and Azariah it is obvious that he is referring to his acting for Assur-dan III in 765 B.C. I Chron., 26, therefore refers to Pul and Tiglath-pileser as two successive names of one and the same person. II Kings, xv, 19 refers to him as Pul during the reign of Menahem of Israel, in the year 765 B.C., and verse 29 of the same chapter refers to him as Tiglath-pileser, during the reign of Pekah, which ended at 3265.5 A.K., or, more precisely, in the course of the year 735 B.C., which was the 9th year of Tiglath-pileser, according to his second method of dating (Table XX). The sequence of names in 11 Kings, xv, therefore agrees with the facts relating to Tiglath-pileser III.

Now, in the fragmentary inscription of Tiglath-pileser III, mentioning Menahem and Resin of Syria, the statement is followed by the words "In my 9th year." We now see that Tiglath-pileser III is historically relating previous events in Syria—in which he was concerned—with the events of his 9th year, when he deposed Pekah and set up Hoshea as governor. Tiglath-pileser's exact statement is, "Pekah their king Asui (Hoshea) I appointed over them." Therefore II Kings, xv, 29, 30, in narrating "concerning Tiglath-pileser taking Israel into captivity in the days of Pekah, states that Hoshea slew Pekah, and reigned in his stead. The two statements are in agreement, both concerning the sequence of events and concerning the date.

The matter as elucidated above explains why the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III mention Azariah and Ahaz, of Judah, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea of Israel and Resin of Damascus as his contemporaries.

The resulting chronology of the Assyrian Kings, following the Supremacy of the Aramaean Confederation and prior to the Kings of Table XX, is as follows:

Tiglath-pileser II	circ. 990 B.C.	Samsi-Hadad II	861-850 B.C.
Assur-dan II	circ. 970 B.C.	Hadad-nirari III	850-821 B.C.
Hadad-nirari II	949-928 B.C.	Gap ignored by later Eponym Lists	39 years.
Assur-nazir-pal	928-922 B.C.	Shalmaneser III	782-773 B.C.
Tukulti-Enurta II	922-898 B.C.	Assur-dan III	773-755 B.C.
Shalmaneser II	898-863 B.C.	Assur-nirari	755-745 B.C.
Assur-danin-pal	863-861 B.C.		

THE CONTEMPORARIES OF SHALMANESER II.

As relating to the preceding column, the following identities show that a gap of 39 or 40 years occurred between the Assyrian succession of 5 predominant kings and the succession of 3 "declining" reigns. This explains that "the inexplicable decline" occurred within the gap of 39 or 40 years, which was ignored in "the later compilation of Eponym Lists, precisely as the longer gap in Assyrian history was ignored by Sargon, Sennacherib, and Assurbanipal (Annotations (C) to Tables XVII-XIX).

Table XXV and Annotations show that Ahab died early in his 22nd year. The 3 years of truce between Benhadad of Syria and Ahab of Israel were, therefore, the 22th, 20th, and 21st years of Ahab, since Ahab was slain when he broke the truce by attacking Benhadad as I Kings, xxii, narrates. Now Shalmaneser II, the son and successor of Assur-nazir-pal in Assyria, has recorded on the Kurkh monolith that Ahab of Israel was one of kings, allies of Ben Hadad of Syria in Shalmaneser's 6th year. Shalneser states that he defeated them and gives a list of his captures. The alliance of Ahab with Syria can only belong to one or other of the 3 years of truce. The truce was not made because of fear of Assyria (I Kings, xx, 1-34), but because of Israel defeating Syria. The truce was most likely broken because of disagreement between the allies after the Assyrian invasion of Shalmaneser's 6th year. This would identify the 6th year of Shalmaneser with the 3rd year of the truce and therefore with the 21st year of Ahab = 3106.5 - 3107.5 A.K.

The invasion would be timed to coincide with the Syrian harvest, i.e., "at the return of the year, at the time when kings go forth to battle," (II Sam., xi, 1 ; I Chron., xx, 1) obviously to collect tribute from the approaching harvest. This is confirmed by the Kouyunjik obelisk of Shalmaneser II. This records that in each year the king set forth on his campaigns by crossing the Euphrates in flood, i.e., in the spring. The statement occurs in this inscription concerning the campaign of the 6th year, mentioned above The defeat of Benhadad and his allies, including Ahab, therefore occurred not later than the summer at 3106.75 A.K. = 893 B.C., in the 6th year of Shalmaneser II. The reign of Shalmaneser II therefore began at 3101.5 A.K. = 898 B.C., whereas the date alleged by the Assyrian Eponym Lists is 858 B.C. — 40 years later. Modern authorities give his reign as beginning in 860 or 859 B.C. The synchronism of Shalmaneser II with the kings of Israel and Damascus he mentions can be confirmed by other data than as given above. In the record of his 18th year — beginning at 3118.5 A.K. by datum above — Shalmaneser defeated Hazael of Syria. (Bull Inscription of Shalmaneser.) In describing the siege of Damascus that followed, Shalmaneser continues 'with the statement that "In those days I collected tribute from Jehu of Israel."

Now II Kings, viii, 7-15 relates concerning the death of Benhadad of Syria and the succession of his son Hazael. Verse 28 then relates that Joram of Israel was wounded in battle against Hazael of Syria. This explains why Israel did not support Hazael. Whilst Joram was recovering from his wounds he was slain by Jehu at 3119.5 A. K. (Table XXV and Annotations.) This accounts for Shalmaneser, towards the end of his 18th year, ending at 3119.5 A.K. , collecting tribute from Jehu, during the siege of Damascus. If he had collected it earlier in the same year, he would have collected it from Joram.