

EARLY BABYLONIA.

Is not this great Babylon which I have built? So spake Nebuchadnezzar at the height of the prosperity and grandeur of the second Babylonian, or, more properly speaking, the Chaldean Empire. Before it, however, there had risen, flourished and decayed the Assyrian power itself, the successor of the first or Babylonian Empire proper. It is to the history of this people that I wish to turn the reader's attention for a moment.

This race comes first under our notice in the person of their earliest king, Sargon I., whose long reign commenced approximately about 4000 B.C. Many stories are told about him on the monuments, from which we learn that he was a great military genius, probably of low birth, and having seized upon the chief power spread his authority over the greater part of the West land. After his rise many accounts were given of his birth, early years and education similar in character to those told about Romulus, and without doubt for the purpose of drawing attention away from his parvenu origin. With his son and successor, Naramsin, we come to the first fixed date in this early history, that of the beginning of his reign in 3750 B.C. He followed in the footsteps of his warlike father and extended his power as far as the islands of the Mediterranean, where, as in Cypress, we find inscriptions relative to Babylonian occupation bearing his name.

Passing on for a period of about twelve hundred years, during which various South Babylonian cities rose to prominence and power (among which we might mention Ur, Larsa, Nisin and others), we come to the time of the Elamitic oppression. This foreign sway lasted some four hundred years, commencing 2300 B.C., and proved a season of great distress and hardship to Babylonia. It was during this period that Abraham had the battle with Chedorlaomar, king of Elam, and his hard-named confederates in which he rescued Lot. The cruelties and oppression which followed this Elamitic subjugation of Babylonia was the cause of the first immigration of any extent to Nineveh and Assyria.

This harsh military rule lasted until 1900 B.C., when a deliverer rose in the person of Hammurabi, who freed his people from the foreign yoke and established native authority. This continued, roughly speaking, till the middle of the twelfth century B.C., when the last epoch in Babylonian history, that of decline, began, culminating in the subjugation of the country and its reduction to a province of Assyria by Sargon II. in 710 B.C.

During this long extended period of power from 4000 to 700 B.C., Babylonian influence was predominant in Western Asia. Nor must we think that this influence was that of a barbarian race, uncivilized, without arts, and almost, were we to believe some ideas concerning the early Semites, with a mere gypsy jargon for a language. It was quite the contrary. There language displayed all, or nearly all, the distinctive marks and principles of phonetic decay and change seen in later Assyrian, while they themselves possessed all the more ordinary appliances of civilization, implements, weapons and such like. Their advances in trade and commerce are readily seen in the working of the mines in Cypress and elsewhere, and their utilizing of the cedars of Lebanon and importation of the products of conquered countries. During this period were first brought to light the use of weights and measures and the sciences of mathematics, astronomy and other inventions which, through the medium of Phoenecia, have been used by the western world up to the present day; while sculpture and architecture were taking rapid strides onwards. In fine, before the rise of Tyre and Sidon, they were the civilizers of the Mediterranean islands and coastlands. When the Hittite and other Canaanitic races were unknown they held rule over Syria, Palestine and almost the whole of Western Asia. Inscriptions have also been lately found in Egypt showing evidence of an early predominance there, while further excavations will,

without doubt, prove conclusively that much of Egyptian civilization and culture had its rise and origin among this long forgotten people of the lower Euphrates.

D. MCGEE.

NATURAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

The regular meeting of the Natural Science Association was held on Friday afternoon in the Biological Building, the president, Dr. G. Chambers, B.A., in the chair.

A communication was read from Mr. W. B. McMurrich, M.A., Q.C., the donor of the "McMurrich Medal," expressing his hearty approval of the recommendation of the Association for the awarding of the said medal.

Mr. F. R. Lillie then read a very interesting paper on the "Formation and Significance of Polar Bodies," describing in a most lucid manner Weissmann's theory regarding them and their connection with heredity. Mr. E. C. Jeffrey, B.A., and Mr. Thomas McCrae took part in the discussion on the paper.

The president announced that the Association hoped to have the pleasure before long of a paper from Professor Pike, at which he intends to exhibit the new electrical apparatus kindly loaned to the University by the Edison Electric Co., as also an immense storage battery given to the Chemical Department at cost price by the Roberts' Storage Battery Co. Those who have had the pleasure of listening to Dr. Pike's papers in previous years anticipate a rare treat. The above named firms are to be congratulated for their business tact, as well as for their generosity to the University of Toronto. Professor Pike's grateful acknowledgement of these firms before his large class of nearly two hundred students, lately, will no doubt prove a most valuable advertisement for them.

MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SOCIETY.

The Mathematical and Physical Society held its regular meeting on Friday last, the President, J. McGowan, B.A., in the chair. After the minutes of last meeting were disposed of, F. White and G. B. McLean were proposed for membership.

Mr. Anderson, '93, enlightened the Society by a very interesting and carefully prepared paper on the "Development of the Decimal System," tracing its growth from the earliest stages. Mr. Henderson, '91, gave a neat solution of a problem under consideration.

It was unanimously decided to hold an open meeting of the Society in the course of two weeks, to which a cordial invitation is extended to the whole student body. Watch next week's VARSITY for particulars.

SPORTING INTELLIGENCE.

The annual meeting of the Baseball Club was held on Friday evening in Room 16, Residence. There was a large attendance of enthusiastic ball tossers, and the prospects for the ensuing season are most encouraging. The reports of the retiring manager and secretary were read and adopted, and show that the club is in a very satisfactory condition. The election of officers was proceeded with and resulted as follows: Hon. Pres., Alfred Baker, M.A.; Pres., S. W. Schultz, B.A.; 1st Vice Pres., J. W. McIntosh, '92; 2nd Vice Pres., W. R. Parker, '93; Sec.-Treas., H. A. Moore, '92; Manager, J. B. Peat; Curator, J. A. Clarke, '94; Committee, J. M. Bennett, '91; C. McKeown, '91; J. W. Odell, '92; W. L. McQuarrie, '92; J. W. Knox, '93; J. Driscoll, '93; S. Cameron, '94, and I. J. Levy, '94.

A Hockey practice was held on the lawn on Saturday, and was largely attended.

The Residence Butes played a game with Upper Canada College yesterday on the U. C. C. rink, to which we will refer further in our next issue.