

Ganneau. It was decided by Captain Warren that it would be best at this point to leave the matter in the hands of Dr. Petermann. Observe that any interference on his part would have probably tended to complicate matters, and might have led to a still earlier destruction of the monument. In the spring of 1863, Captain Warren, with his party, went to the Libanus. Dr. Petermann, too, left Jerusalem for Berlin, *after personally assuring M. Ganneau that the whole affair had fallen through.* Captain Warren away, and the Prussians having desisted from their endeavours, the coast was clear for M. Clermont Ganneau.

M. Ganneau got a squeeze of the whole—in rags, it is true, but still a squeeze. Then came the catastrophe. The wild Arabs, terrified at the prospect of another raid, angry at the probable loss of a stone which possessed supernatural powers in their eyes, lit a fire under the priceless relic, threw cold water on it when it was red-hot, and so smashed it into pieces. Captain Warren obtained squeezes of the two larger fragments; and then the work of decipherment, history, controversy, and recrimination began. After all that has been said as to its history, one thing is clear; *the blame of its destruction rests neither with Captain Warren nor with M. Clermont Ganneau.* Had M. Klein gone openly in the first instance to the former, there is not the slightest doubt that this most invaluable monument would be now lying, intact and entire, in the British Museum, in the Louvre, or in Berlin. No matter where, provided only it had been saved.

For it is a monument which yields in importance to none yet found. It is a narrative by a Moabite king of his battles and conquests. It is like another page added to the Bible. It takes us back to the time of King Omri and King Ahab; and it takes nearer to the origin of our own alphabet than any other document yet discovered. In every way it was again. It has a value historical, a value geographical, a value linguistic, a value theological, a value paleographic. It has this