

WORK.

WORK for the night is coming,
Work through the morning hours;
Work while the dew is sparkling,
Work 'mid springing flowers;
Work when the day grows brighter,
Work in the glowing sun;
Work for the night is coming,
When man's work is done.

Work for the night is coming,
Work in the sunny noon;
Fill brightest hours with labour,
Rest comes pure and soon.
Give every flying minute
Something to keep in store;
Work for the night is coming,
When man works no more.

Work for the night is coming,
Under the sunset skies;
While their bright tints are glowing
Work for the daylight flies.
Work till the last beam fades—
Fadeth to shine no more;
Work for the night is coming,
When man's work is o'er.

ASSYRIAN HISTORY FROM THE TABLETS.

The following paper on the subject of the monumental records hitherto obtained in Mesopotamia, from the pen of Mr. George Smith—the decipherer of the now world-famous "cuneiform tablet," which contains the Chaldean story of the Flood—is published in the London *Daily Telegraph*.

The subject of Assyrian discovery is so wide, and the results are so numerous and important, that it would be impossible to dispose of the whole question even in a dozen articles. Instead of wandering over the large range of Assyrian literature, I will therefore take, to illustrate the theme, some of the main results as regards history. Considerations of space prevent my entering into details as to the discoverers themselves and the methods by which they arrived at these facts. It must suffice to say that all Assyrian scholars have had their share in the work. The earliest date yet verified is that of the conquest of Babylon by Kudur-nahundi, the Elamite, B.C. 2280, more than 4000 years ago. Kudur-nahundi carried off from Babylon an image of the goddess Nanna, much venerated by the Babylonians. This captive goddess was set up in the city of Susa, and remained there for 1680 years, when it was retaken by the Assyrians and restored to its place.

From the twenty-third to the sixteenth century B.C., or from about 4000 to 3400 years ago, the Babylonian inscriptions supply us with the names of many monarchs who ruled in the Euphrates valley. These monarchs built great cities, excavated canals, and reared magnificent temples, the ruins of which exist to this day. Want of the records of the period prevents us from knowing their exact chronology, or even the succession of their names; but, in some few cases, their inscriptions have come down to us, and prove of remarkable interest.

One of the most famous of these monarchs was Sargon I. Of him the inscriptions tell an extraordinary tale. He is said to have been of royal descent; his mother gave birth to him in obscurity, placed him in an ark of rushes daubed with bitumen, and exposed him on the river Euphrates, as Jochebed did the infant Moses on the Nile. Sargon was rescued by a man named Akki, who brought the child up as his son. He afterwards became a husbandman, and by good fortune rose to be king. During his reign Sargon engaged in extensive wars, and carried the Babylonian arms from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf. Another renowned warrior and builder was Hammurabi, who founded the greatness of the city of Babylon. Before Greece and Rome were thought of, and while most of the peoples of antiquity had not emerged into national life, the first Babylonian Empire had already become old, its power had decayed, and its dominion was fast passing into the hands of the younger and more vigorous kingdom of Assyria, then rapidly rising at the side of it. The history of the early Assyrian monarchs, so far as it is known from the inscriptions, shows them warring against their neighbours on every side, and gradually welding together a nation destined to overshadow the Eastern world.

One of the greatest of these early kings was Tiglath Pileser I., who reigned B.C. 1120, a few years after the Trojan war. Tiglath Pileser claims to have conquered sixty kings during the first five years of his reign, and in the intervals he found time to engage in hunting expeditions and to slaughter many lions, wild oxen, leopards, and other fierce animals. Wild oxen he hunted on the slopes of Lebanon, and he killed a porpoise in the Mediterranean. At home he reared the great tower of the city of Assur, which is marked by the ruins of Kalah Sherghit. One disaster, nevertheless, marks the reign of this prosperous monarch: he was defeated by the Babylonians who captured the Assyrian city of Ekali. Tiglath Pileser, however, next year avenged this defeat, and ravaged a large part of Babylon. In those days the two great Powers—one on the banks of the Nile, the other on the banks of the Tigris—established what are called in political language "friendly relations," and the King of Egypt sent to Tiglath Pileser the present of a crocodile. Passing over the history of many monarchs, including Assur-nazir-pal, called "the great conqueror,"—so many of whose memorials are in the British Museum—we arrive at the time of Shalmaneser II., who reigned 801 years before the Christian era. The exploits of this monarch are recorded on the famous black obelisk and the monolith from Kurkh, both of which are in the British Museum. This king in the sixth year of his reign invaded Syria; at the time when Ben Hadad, so well known to us from the Bible, was on the throne at Damascus. Shalmaneser entered Hama, and on the banks of the river Orontes fought a battle with Ben Hadad, who was assisted by several other monarchs: amongst these by Baasha, King of Ammon, and Ahab, King of Israel. The text of the Book of Kings relates the story of the illness of Ben Hadad, and his murder by his servant Hazael, who then usurped his throne. After the accession of Hazael, Shalmaneser again invaded Syria, and de-

feated Hazael at Samir, in the mountains of Lebanon, with heavy loss. Hazael fled from the battle pursued by his victorious foe, and was besieged in his capital, Damascus. The Assyrian monarch, unable to take the city, ravaged the district of Hama, and marched to the sea coast. Here Jeho, who now occupied the throne of Israel, and the Kings of Tyre and Sidon, gave him tribute. Towards the close of this monarch's reign, his son Assur-dan-pal, impatient to grasp the crown, raised a revolt against his father. Nineveh, the new capital, Assur, the old capital, and twenty-five other leading cities of Assyria, joined the rebellion, which was ultimately put down by Samaspul, another son of Shalmaneser.

Tiglath Pileser II., who reigned B.C. 746 is well known to us from the Biblical story. His memorials, although very imperfect are perhaps, the most important in the Assyrian series. Tiglath Pileser was not of royal descent, and he ascended the throne during a popular revolution. He defeated the Armenians and many other nations, and conquered the people of Hamath, who had revolted and allied themselves with Azariah, the warlike king of Judah. To Tiglath Pileser, Menahem, King of Israel, gave tribute. This Assyrian monarch pushed his conquests as far as Egypt, and engaged in war with the Queen of the Arabs, named Siamia. In the time of Tiglath Pileser large portions of Syria were incorporated into the Assyrian dominions, and many of the Israelites were carried captive to those regions. Towards the close of his reign, Tiglath Pileser mentions the murder of Pekah, King of Israel, and the accession of Hoshea. After the death of Shalmaneser, the successor of Tiglath Pileser, Sargon, who is mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah, ascended the throne B.C. 722. Sargon captured the city of Samaria, and carried the ten tribes of Israel into captivity. He also defeated the famous Ethiopian, Sabaco, mentioned by Herodotus, and took the city of Ashdod, as related in the twentieth chapter of Isaiah. Another exploit of Sargon was the conquest of Merodach Baladan, the Babylonian monarch who sent an embassy to Hezekiah. Sargon built the city of Dur-Laurin, from which many of the sculptures in the Louvre come.

Sennacherib, son of Sargon, is perhaps the best known by stone and tablet of all the Assyrian monarchs. He began to reign B.C. 705, and his annals, carved on the great winged bulls which adorned the entrance of his palace, record the various incidents of his campaign in Palestine; the submission and tribute of Hezekiah, King of Judah; the defeat of Pharaoh and the King of Ethiopia, and numerous other matters. One of the most splendid palaces in Nineveh was built during his reign. The sculptured halls of this edifice were adorned on either side with scenes from the wars and triumphs of the monarch, and representations of the architectural works of his reign. Sennacherib was the contemporary of Isaiah, the most sublime of the Hebrew prophets and writers, and some of the finest passages of Isaiah's writings were directed against this Assyrian monarch, when Sennacherib's host came up against Jerusalem. Of the overthrow of this great ruler, the inscriptions give no information, and we learn very little with respect to his tragical death. Sennacherib was murdered by two of his own sons while worshipping in the temple at Nineveh. The civil war which commenced on his death ended at length in the triumph of Esarhaddon, a younger son of that monarch, who entered Nineveh in the early part of the year B.C. 680, and was crowned King of Assyria. To Esarhaddon tribute was paid by Manasseh, King of Judah. Esarhaddon destroyed the city of Zidon, the great emporium of eastern trade, and he extended his power over the island of Cyprus, ten kings of which submitted to him. Later in his reign he attacked Tyre, the Ethiopian, and drove that monarch out of Egypt, which country he now added to the Assyrian dominions. Esarhaddon is also famous for his expedition into Arabia. The arid deserts of Arabia have formed a barrier through which few of the conquerors of antiquity ever ventured to pass, so that this campaign of Esarhaddon has few parallels in history.

Esarhaddon avoided any strife at his death by himself crowning his son Assurbanipal, celebrated as the Sardanapalus of the Greeks. The pride and pomp of Sardanapalus, and the luxury of his court, have been described by many writers. The inscriptions and sculptures of his epoch bear out those descriptions in all respects save one—for the king himself was not the effeminate monarch the Greeks describe him, but a warrior and hunter whose deeds rival those of his long line of predecessors. In the time of Sardanapalus reigned Gyges, King of Lydia. The romantic story of Gyges and the woe of Candantes forms almost the opening passage of the history of Herodotus; and some of his statements regarding Lydian history are well confirmed by the Assyrian inscriptions. Sardanapalus tells us that Gyges was warned by Assur, the national deity of the Assyrians, to submit to the King of Assyria, and thereupon he sent an embassy to Nineveh, and presented to Sardanapalus, along with his tribute, two Cammerian chiefs, captured in battle. Sardanapalus engaged in wars in Egypt, he defeated Irbakal who had again invaded that country, and he restored the twenty kings of Egypt who had been set up by his father. The annals of Sardanapalus also record the successful revolt of Psammetichus, who conquered the other petty kings of Egypt, and freed the country from the Assyrian yoke. The palace of Sardanapalus, at Nineveh, was adorned with a bas-relief which depicted the wars and hunting expeditions of the king. Some of these are executed with great spirit and finish, and are the finest Assyrian sculptures which have yet been discovered.

The inscriptions are too imperfect to give us any information as to the closing scenes of the Assyrian empire; but we know that the Babylonian power under the revival after its long period of depression, and Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar rose to almost universal domination. The history of Nebuchadnezzar, the destroyer of Jerusalem, the rebuilders of Babylon, has not been recovered; and the inscriptions of his reign which have been found, relate exclusively to his architectural works. The palace, which Nebuchadnezzar built at

Babylon has for centuries formed a quarry of building materials for the people of the district. Various other inscriptions have been discovered, relating to the histories of Nabonidus, Belshazzar, Cyrus, Darius, and many other monarchs; but, in spite of the great accessions to our knowledge derived from the cuneiform inscriptions, there are still long blanks in the history, and many important questions pressing for that solution which a search in the rich dust of the Mesopotamian mounds would no doubt furnish.

THE PASTOR'S ASSISTANT.

A young minister was once called to a young and plastic church. One of the first questions which he asked was, "Do your people take good religious papers?" The elder scarcely knew. He was unwilling to accept their call unless they would see that the congregation was well supplied with that sort of literature. They liked his proposal. The people began to read more upon Church and Christian affairs, and he began to arouse them to earnest working and generous giving. The contributions increased wonderfully, for the people were learning of the real wants of the Church. The preaching was blessed. Press and pulpit lent a force to each other. Pastor and editor were mutual helpers in the same good work. And here is the real design of an earnest, thoroughly Christian paper. It is not to draw dividends upon the large investments, not to wage controversy, not to deal out the mere news of the day, not to publish brilliant essays; its leading design is to do what the pastor should be doing, if they knew everything, and could be taking and teaching every week in every house. It is his assistant and vicar in the parish. It supplements his work. It goes on wings, while he must walk. It sees when and where he cannot go. It makes a Sunday call on his people, and fits them to hearing the next day's sermons. It follows up his preaching, whispering again to the conscience and the heart. It is the unique supply in vacant churches. It is never down with a cold, nor absent on a vacation. Fifty-two times a year it brings happiness into the homes of thousands, and in every house tells the same old story of Jesus and His love, of the Church and her conquests, of holiness, and of heaven. Let every church have a devoted pastor and a Christian paper, and the Gospel will move the world.—Interior.

JEWISH BIGOTRY.

We extract a remarkable paragraph from a recent report given in the Bible Society by Dr. Thompson of Constantinople.

"At Zeptseh, I found a number of Spanish Jews, with whom I had a good deal of conversation, and whom I consider to be amongst the most deplorably ignorant and fanatically bigotted individuals I ever met. From my knowledge of Hebrew and Spanish they insisted for a time that I was a Jew; but on my professing my faith in Jesus, as the promised Divine Redeemer, they regarded me with something like horror. And when I rejected several of their answers to my arguments, as being founded, not on the Word of God, but on the traditions of men, they boasted that they held the written and oral laws as of equal authority; that such nonsense as I was uttering would not go down with the Bosnian Jews; and that if I ventured to talk in this way in Sereievo, the Jews there would kill me as they nearly did a Jewish missionary, (Mr. Palotta) some six years ago; and then loaded with insult the name of our blessed Lord Jesus. I confess this was hard to bear; but I felt it was best to follow the example of Jesus himself, and observe perfect silence, as these unhappy men seemed actually incapable of discerning whether an objection had been properly answered or not. It is now a long time since I have heard Jews boasting, as they did, that their fathers had slain that Holy and Just One, and I could not but feel that their words amounted particularly to a repetition of the imprecation, 'His blood be on us and on our children.'"

REDEEM THE TIME.

All our time here ought to be made the most of, because it is precious. But we ought jealously to save and use those special seasons and occasions which, rightly used, may help us in our spiritual work.

Christmas is such a season. In danger of being overlaid with festivities and made more than a mere children's holiday, its solemn memories rightly used may stimulate our faith, deepen our consecration to Him who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and so mightily enrich our spiritual life.

New Year's is such a season. Its essential solemnity is unapproached by its social holidays. But it is an act of moment to clear up the account of one twelvemonth and open that of another; and the more we are compelled to look back over fields strewn with the wrecks of good resolutions, and embowered with the deplorable demonstrations of forgetfulness and folly and backsliding and guilt.

The first week of the year is a solemn one to all, and especially now to all pastors and churches. It is a week of prayer to the world over. Let the time be redeemed. Let every Christian be much on his knees at home in his closet. And then prayer-meetings will be full and fervid. And then a blessing will descend. The path of the Lord will drop fatness. The New Year will indeed be a happy one.—The Congregationalist.

TURKISH PROVERBS.

"When we asked the Armenian brother of the Convent of St. Lazarus, in the heart of Venice, for a specimen of the printing done at the establishment, he put into our hands a little pamphlet entitled *Turkish Proverbs Translated into English*. The Armenians are subjects of the Sublime Porte, and these brethren of St. Lazarus, though living under the shadow of the

winged Lion of St. Mark still fly the Turkish flag. The Turks are a sentimental people, and it might therefore be expected that they would make use of those trifling sayings in which so much of the wit, wisdom, and imagination of mankind is condensed. We did not find this collection wanting in either of these essential elements of the proverb; and as our gondola floated lazily over the still lagoon toward Venice, we extracted much amusement from its pages. The proverbs are given in most incomprehensible characters, accompanied by the English translation, which is not always so clear as it might be.

On the very first page we find evidence of the low esteem in which women are held by the Turks: "Whoever does not beat his daughter will one day strike his knee in vain." What a glimpse does this give of the domestic discipline of the Turkish household! "The genius, wit, and spirit of a nation are discovered in its proverbs," says my Lord Bacon, and so are its prejudices, weaknesses, and vices. This is exemplified in the following which reveals the Oriental prejudice against red hair, as well as the buying and selling of human beings: "Do not buy a red-haired person; do not sell one either; if you have any in the house drive them away." And how much of Oriental duplicity is expressed in this: "Kiss ardently the hand which you cannot cut off."

We find evidences here of the resemblances observed in the proverbs of all nations. We say in English, "The pot calls the kettle black;" the Italians, "The pan says to the pot, 'Keep off, or you'll smother me!'" The Spaniards, "The raven cried to the crow, 'Aunt, Blackamoor!'" The Germans, "One ass nicknames another 'Long Ears!'" the Catalans, "Don't talk to the men with his throat cut, 'How ugly you look!'" and here we find the Turks saying, "The kettle calls the saucepan smutty." Dr. Franklin says, "Keep the shop, and thy shop will keep thee;" and the Turks have it, "It is well for a shopkeeper to be lame of one foot." We say, "The drowning man catches at a straw;" the Turk, "He that falls into the sea takes hold of the serpent to be saved." "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," said Sterne; the Turks have it, "The nest of a blind bird is made by God." "Never look a gift-horse in the mouth," is a familiar saying; the Turks put it in this form: "The teeth of a horse of which a present has been made are not observed." "Out of the frying-pan into the fire," is rendered by the reverse figure, "Avoiding the nose to spit the face," finds a different rendering in "Wanting to make right the eyebrow, put out the eyes." "He who dances must pay the fiddler," has an equivalent in "Wine and roast, yes, yes: count the bills; woe! woe!"

There is much condensed wit and wisdom in some of these proverbial sayings. The unbecomeliness of truth is thus wittily suggested: "He that speaks truth must have one leg in the stirrup." And how true is this. "Every fish that escapes appears greater than it really is." Many will agree with the Turk that poverty is a shirt of fire. Here is a slight hint at the generosity of some people: "Generosity from the purse of another." And the hypocrite is told, "The prayers that are forced do not penetrate into heaven." The caution inculcated in "Look before you leap" is more forcibly expressed in "Measure a thousand times, and cut once." And how subtle a truth is conveyed in this: "The dying man regards not death, but asks if his coffin is made of walnut."

Poetic imagery and striking comparisons are not wanting, as for instance: "The appetite is concealed under the tooth; dig a well with a needle; though they are brothers, nevertheless their pockets are not sisters. Parents will appreciate this: 'If you have wicked children, of what use is money; and if good, again of what use is it?'" This reveals a national characteristic. "Who has no beard has no authority." Here is the grumble of ill-luck: "We were hardly gone out to sell pine wood (for torches) than the moon rose." The dissatisfied are told "The camel went in search of horns, and lost his ears." The upshot of dishonesty and cunning is foretold by "The fox goes at last to the shop of the furrier." We conclude with a shrewd hint to young men about to marry, which is as applicable to Yankee land as in Turkeydom: "Observe the edge, and take the linen; observe the mother and take the daughter."—Portland Transcript.

GEORGE MACDONALD AS A PREACHER.

This celebrated Scottish novelist and poet preached in Association Hall, Newark, N. J., on Sabbath afternoon, December 29th, to an immense throng of people who filled every available spot of sitting and standing room in the spacious building. The only other sermon which he has delivered since his arrival in America was in Boston when also a great multitude crowded the Music Hall to hear him. In Newark all the exercises of the occasion were conducted by the preacher. His reading of the Scriptures and hymns and his prayer were remarkable for that peculiar earnestness which he throws into every utterance. The sermon, which was delivered without notes, and occupied about fifty minutes, was from the words of Christ to the young man (Matthew 19:21), "If thou wilt be perfect." It embraced an interesting and minute exegesis of the whole narrative to which these words gave the clue.

We do not propose to analyze or sketch the discourse. In many respects, it was a fine specimen of the oratory method, giving most interesting turns to its words and phrases, evolving suggestive trains of thought, and oftentimes making some sudden practical appeal which went right home to many hearts. There was no attempt at oratorical manner or "swoon-wrought" expression. But the deepest earnestness and reverence, mingled with great simplicity, and beautiful expressions, alternated with homely ones in a way that showed him to be a master of public speech, to the mixed multitude. His voice is clear, musical, capable of much variety of expression, and adapted to all the changing moods of

thought and feeling that marked the whole discourse. Looking his hearers full in the face, gesticulating with easy propriety, drawing his whole soul and body into his thought, as if often adopting a familiar conversational manner, how could the people help listening to a man who thus brought tribute to their hearts?

That there was a general feeling of deep pointment as to the preacher's style and delivery is unquestionable. Yet throughout it was a unique and characteristic effort, free of all attempts at greatness, and yet great in its very simplicity and originality, combined with exquisite touches of tenderness and keen searchings of human hearts.

Of the preacher's theology we cannot speak so favourably. It certainly lacked the savor of the old-fashioned Scriptural doctrine of men like Chalmers, Candlish, and Guthrie. Here and there certain phrases indicated the views which are more distinctly stated in the author's *Robert Falconer* and *Wilfrid C. Albermarle*, respecting the final restoration of the wicked to eternal life. They were only glintings toward those sentiments, not open declarations, and possibly may not have been noticed by the mass of his hearers. But not a few recognized them distinctly, and expressed their dissatisfaction in strong terms. To us it was evident that Mr. Macdonald seemed to feel under the restraints of his position; and that the discourse, which was in many respects so admirable, was marred by failure to bring out distinctly the essential gospel principles which underlie and permeate the narrative. He did not clinch the nail.

The only direct reference to the Saviour's sufferings and death, as the foundation of our salvation unto "eternal life," was in a single paragraph toward the close of the sermon. It is critically true, indeed, that Jesus himself made no allusion to them in his interview with the young man, and Mr. Macdonald might say in self defence that he went only as far as the Master himself did in this interview. Yet when preaching to such a multitude respecting perfection and eternal life, it surely seems hardly necessary, upon merely exegetical grounds, to shut almost out of view the great truths without which there can be no salvation. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

We add but one more reflection. Personally, we were quite prepared for just such a sermon as we have described. Any one who has read Mr. Macdonald's two volumes of poems *Within and Without*, and *A Hidden Life*, and especially the poem called *The Disciple*, will heartily appreciate our criticism. Only one who has struggled long with torturing doubts, and to whom Christ is a living presence, could have preached that sermon, notwithstanding its defects.

In person, and somewhat in manner, Mr. Macdonald reminded us very much of John B. Gough. He is apparently about fifty years old, wears a full-crown, dark, shaggy beard, and has a pleasant face, speaking features, and a tough, very firm. He speaks with a decided Scotch accent, and possesses a wonderful magnetism of voice, countenance and manner, which is better felt than described. His ecclesiastical relation is with one of the Scotch Presbyterian churches, in which he was very popular as a preacher until ill-health induced him to retire from the pulpit. Since then he has devoted himself to popular literature. His prose and poetry have a strong religious cast, while in genius, originality, pure-mindedness, and genuine power, they entitle him to a high place in the first rank of living writers of his class.—N. Y. *Christian Intelligencer*.

"CHEER HIM."

In one of our large cities, a fire broke out in a lofty dwelling. It was near midnight, and the flames had made headway before they were discovered. The fire companies rallied; the inmates escaped in affright; and the fireman worked with a will to subdue the flames. The smoke had become so thick that the outlines of the house were scarcely visible, and the fiery element was raging with fearful power, when a piercing cry thrilled all hearts, as they learned that there was one person unsaved within the building.

In a moment a ladder was swung through the flames, and planted against the heated walls, and a brave fireman rushed up its rounds to the rescue.

Overcome by the smoke, and perhaps daunted by the hissing flames before him, he halted and seemed to hesitate. It was an awful scene. A life hung in the balance, and each moment was an age.

"Cheer him!" shouted a voice, from the crowd; and a wild "Hurrah!" burst like a tempest from the beholding multitude. That cheer did the work; and the brave fireman went upward, amid smoke and flame, and in a moment he descended with the rescued one in his arms.

Friend, brother, when you see a brave soul battling with temptation, struggling under the cross, rushing forward to rescue dying men, and yet faltering in an hour of weakness, or a moment of peril, then "cheer him!"—*Seiler's Magazine*.

Remember what we have before shown, that regular exercise of our spiritual powers is as necessary to our spiritual health as our bodily exercise is necessary for the right and sound use of our physical functions; that revealed truth, received into the soul by faith, and nurtured by Christian companionship, must also be used in positive Christian activity toward others, if Christ is to be completely developed in us; and this, if we are Christ's, should be our aim.

"Obtained promises." This cannot mean obtained their fulfillment; but they are here spoken of by their faith in God's promise to make promises to them. He was pleased with their spirit and behaviour, and in consequence promised them surprising blessings. Witness Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, Hannah, and others.