

after many years he finally reached the coasts of the Mediterranean. That he looked with satisfaction upon his own achievements is evident from his inscription (now preserved in the British Museum), in which he calls himself "the king of kings, the lord of lords, the ever victorious hero." The merciless character of Assyrian warfare is seen in the career of another noted king, Assur-nazir-pal (885



ASSYRIAN WAR CHARIOT

B. C.), whom, in spite of his fame, we may regard as one of the most cruel of conquerors. The lands which he conquered, he desolated, ravaging the fields and killing the people. In his own words, which have come down to us, we may read his boasting of the pyramids he has built of human heads, of the captives flayed alive, and of the children burned to death. The conquests of these early kings were continued by Shalmaneser II (860 B. C.), whose deeds are recorded on the famous "black obelisk," which he built. On one side of this obelisk we may see a procession of subjects bringing their gifts and tribute to the king. The many wars of the period were intended to bring into subjection the neighbouring countries—especially Babylonia on the south, and Syria on the west. But these conquests were not permanent, and the first empire fell into a state of decline.



ASSUR-NAZIR-PAL
Relief in British Museum

The Second Assyrian Empire (745-606 B. C.).—The failure of the first empire was due to the lack of an efficient mode