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In the Temple of Bêl at Nippur

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H. V. HILPRECHT.

IN THE TEMPLE OF BÊL AT NIPPUR.

A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE GERMAN COURT AND UNIVERSITY CIRCLES
BY H. V. HILPRECHT.

THE land in which I shall request you to accompany me for a short time this evening is well known to all of you from childhood, through the Old Testament. It is that small alluvial plain south of Baghdad, bordered by the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris, the seat of very ancient state-organizations. In the native cuneiform inscriptions it is generally designated by the double name "Shumer and Akkad," but it is more familiar to us by the classical name of Babylonia. In modern geography it is called *Irâq el-'Arabî*; the present inhabitants, however, in their peculiar, graphic manner often call it merely *El-Jezîra*, i. e., "the island."

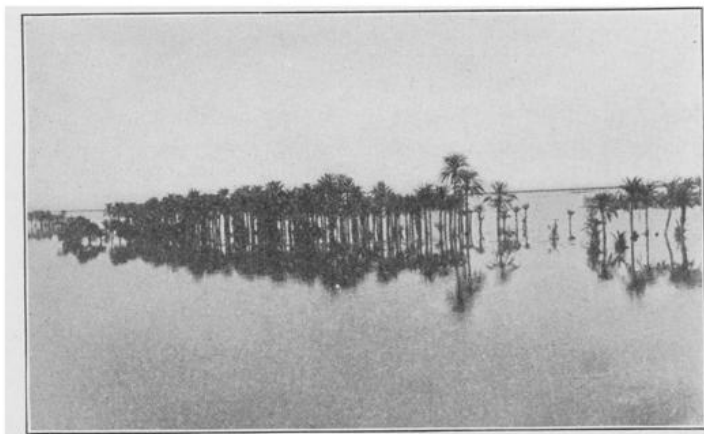


1. The Babylonian Dragon (*Sirrushshu*).
Terra-cotta Relief, c. 2300 B. C.

An island of the dead, a land of graves and of silence it is in reality. The outstretched arm of God has lain heavily upon this unhappy country for more than 2000 years. The words of Isaiah (chapter 14), "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" sound like a dirge through Babylon's crumbling walls; resound like the mocking echo of the prophetic curse from the fallen towers and temples of Nuffar and Warkâ.

Through the systematic excavations of the German Orient Society carried on by Dr. Koldewey and his associates, through the projected railroad to Baghdad, and above all through a series of popular lectures and pamphlets, Babylon has suddenly become the centre of public interest in Germany, where formerly only a few specialists occupied themselves with its history and exploration. "Babel and Bible" and "Bible and Babel" meet the eye in every bookstore; and it is considered almost unscientific if the professional Assyriologist does not furnish his contribution to what is stirring all minds. As occurred so often in history, two entirely separate domains, science and revealed religion, have been amalgamated to the disadvantage of both.

In spite of a constantly increasing literature on this subject, it is not my intention here to take a prominent part in the general discussion, although perhaps through my own recent excavations in the older layers of the ruins of the temple of Bêl at Nuffar I might throw some new ingredients into the



2. Date-Grove during the Inundations.

seething caldron. On account of the universal interest I cannot, however, refrain from submitting to you a few bare facts concerning the present Babel, by quoting the expressive words of the old Bible. Bear with me, if I can

find no better language wherewith to describe to you the present condition of the degenerated land of my love and of my studies, than the language of an Isaiah and a Jeremiah. It is doubly significant, if we consider that the quotations date from a time when Babylonia was one wide-stretching field of splendour and a blooming garden.

The destruction and utter desolation which characterize the Babylonia of to-day are so universal and impressive that although I have explored the land repeatedly within the last fourteen years, they do not fail still to make the same deep impression upon me. From 'Aqarqûf in the north to Qorna in the south, where the two rivers unite, it looks "as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" (Is. 13:19; Jer. 50:40). The countless large and small canals, which flowed in all directions through the fruitful plain like so many nourishing veins, bringing cheerful life and prosperity to every village and field, are long since choked with rubbish and earth. No longer kept in order

by diligent hands or fed by the Euphrates and Tigris, they have gradually become filled with sand. A drought is upon the waters of Babylon, so that they dried up (Jer. 50:38). Only their high embankments still defy the hand of time. In consequence of mirage, they often appear as imposing mountain chains or as a network of forsaken highroads, till they are gradually lost to the eye in the distance.

And yet the proverbial fertility and prosperity of Babylonia are not past, but only slumbering. Of the whole alluvial plain may be said (Lev. 26: 34, 35): "The land rests, and enjoyeth her sabbaths." "Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth" (Jer. 51:43). The ground is scorched, and covered with sherds and nitre and buried in many places under sand drifts three to four feet deep. Only here and there grow *'arid* and *şerim*, *qubbâr* (*capparis spinosa*, caper shrub) and *tarfâ* (the tamarisk), and other lowly shrubs of the desert.



3. 'Afej Marshes near Nuffar.

However gloomy the picture just outlined may seem to us, yet it takes into consideration only the one side, and not even the most impressive, of Babylonia's present cheerless condition. "How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof" (Jer. 51: 41, 42). In autumn and in winter Babylonia is like a sand desert, but in spring and summer it is largely an inhospitable swamp, a veritable "desert of the water" or "of the sea" (Is. 21:1). For weeks Baghdad itself is often almost completely surrounded by water extending in nearly every direction from ten to twenty miles. Its date-groves are under water (Figure 2), bridges and houses are carried away, and the Arabs of the neighbourhood with their herds perish miserably in the flood.

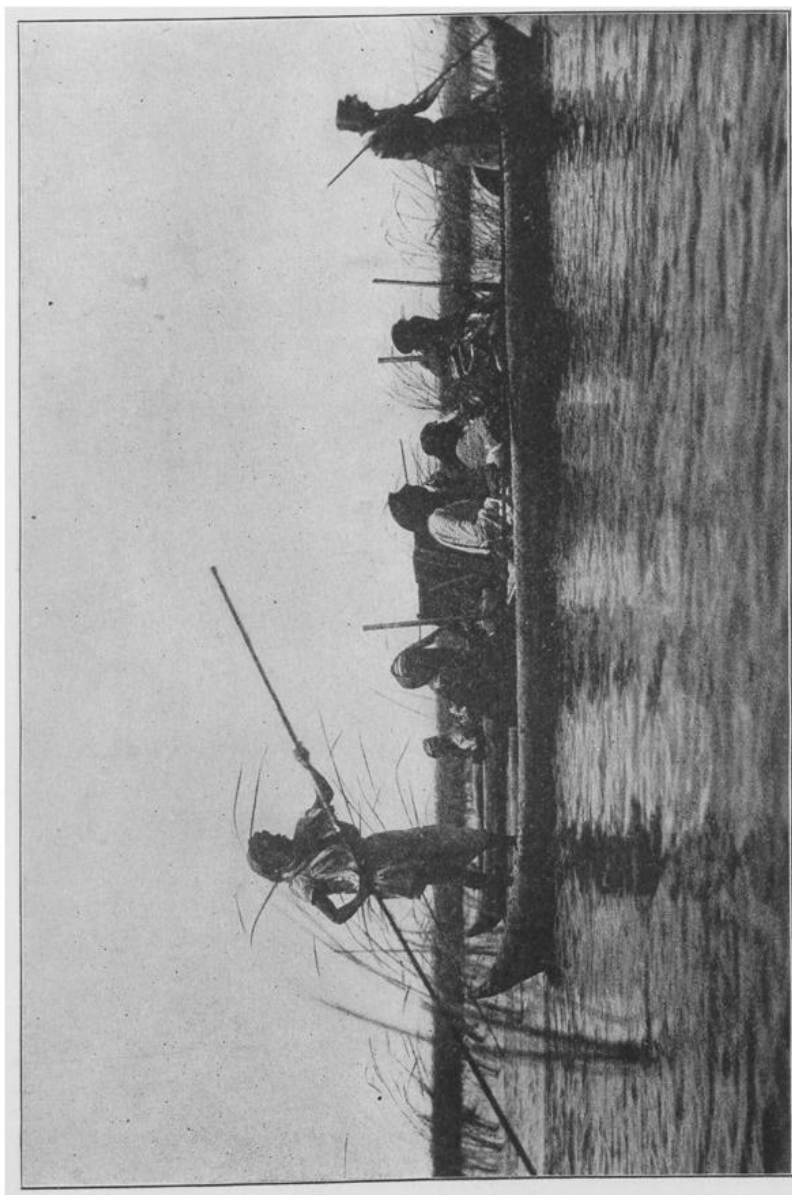
During the period of the annual inundation a luxuriant vegetation shoots up everywhere in the stagnating waters. Large flocks of birds with brilliant plumage inhabit the morasses, which, covered with white ranunculus as with a wonderful carpet, present a charming sight in the spring. Tortoises and snakes glide in the lagoons through the open waterways formed by old canals, and innumerable small green frogs squat on the rushes rustling in the morning wind. Unwieldy buffaloes wade and splash among the reeds and sharp-edged grasses (Figure 3). Wild animals, such as boars and wolves, hyenas and jackals, wild cats and an occasional lion, live in the jungles or ruins. Here and there a fairly large piece of land, protected by an earth castle or *meftûl*;



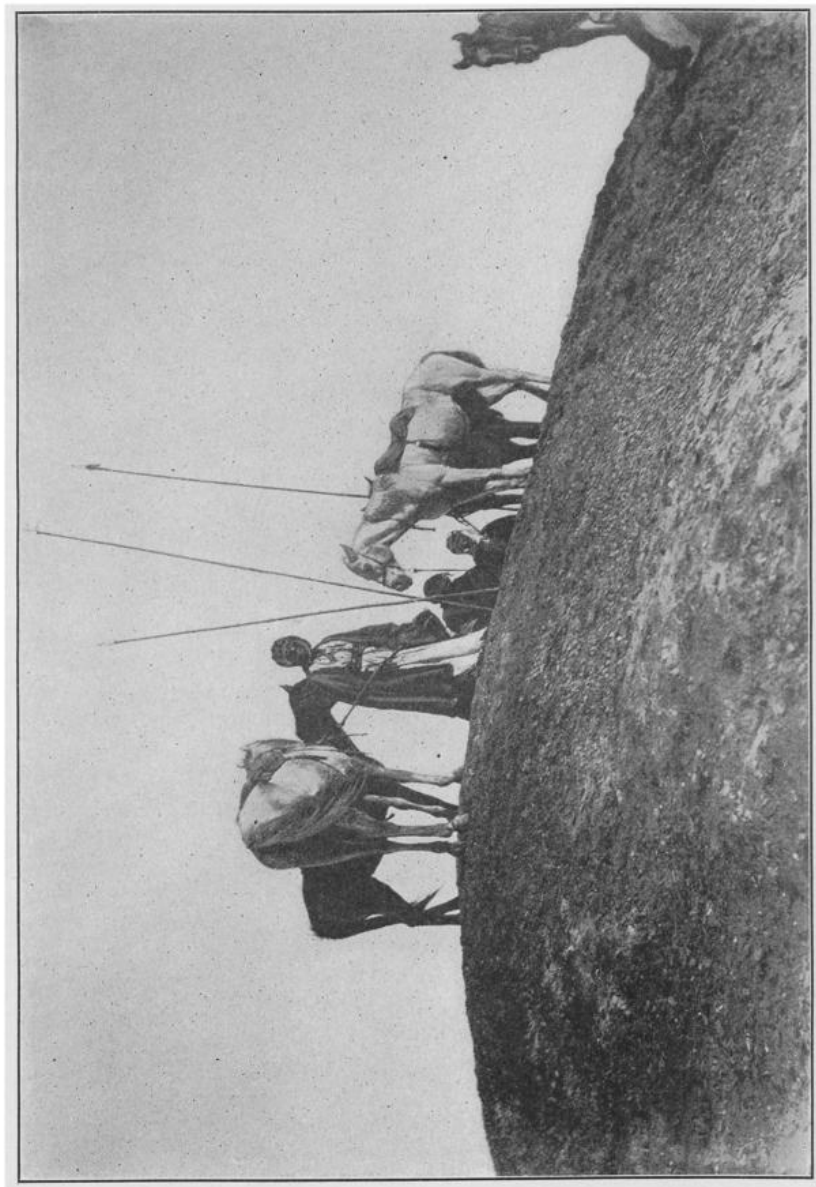
4. Babylonian Reed-Huts (*Serifas*).

a low-lying island, or a lonely heap of rubbish rise up from the pestilential swamps as dumb witnesses of a departed glory.

Ugly women, tattooed blue, wearing large nose rings; lean men, half nude, with hair hanging in two plats on either side of the head, and ill-fed, pot-bellied children, burnt almost black by the sun, inhabit these inhospitable regions. Reed-huts, dirty and teeming with vermin, so-called *serifas* (Figure 4), give them scanty shelter during the night. By day they cruise around in the waters (Figure 5) in long, narrow boats (*turrâdas*), with the help of long bamboo poles (*merdi*), catching fish with the five-pronged spear. Or



5. 'Afej Warriors crossing the Swamps in their Canoes (*turrâdas*).



6. The Shammar Bedouins appearing at the Mounds of Nuffar.

they pasture their scanty herds on the borders of the inundated territory and lie in ambush, armed with flintlocks and clubs, waiting for booty.

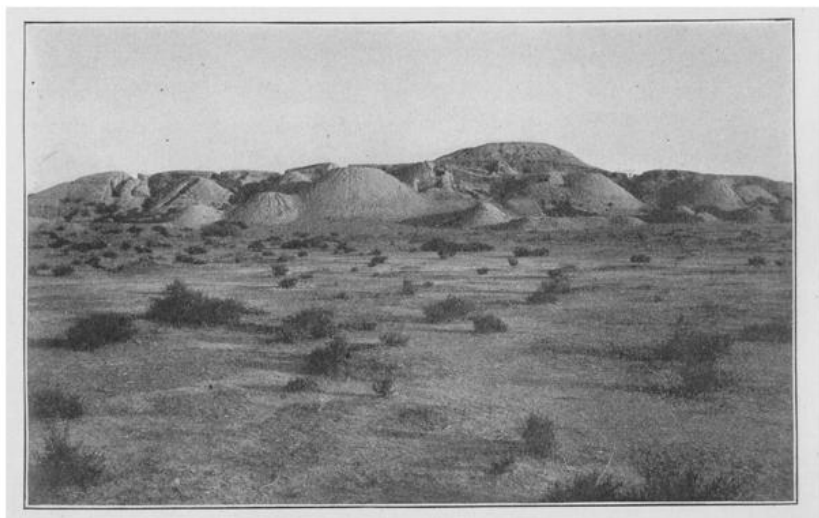
Although generally good-natured and living like untrained children without a care for the morrow, these Ma'dân tribes (*i. e.*, literally "ignoramuses") are yet not free from a certain amount of treachery. Besides, they are easily excited and ready to fight on the least provocation. Possessing no special bodily superiority and apparently poor in the proverbial Arabian virtues, they are feared by the city traders, but scorned and despised by the Shammar (Figure 6), Montefik(j), Dhafir, and other Bedouin tribes who often advance far into their territory.

In the north and south nomads wandering restlessly around, in the centre of the land dull-witted swamp dwellers, are the heirs of the shattered empire of Nebuchadrezzar. What a contrast between old civilization and present degeneration! Once, as far as the eye reached, luxuriant date-groves, swaying cornfields, watered by the irrigation plants so often mentioned in the inscriptions, flourishing cities and farms, the land which we are so fond of calling the cradle of humanity, where science and art were born, and now—an open land of Nod (Genesis 4:16), whither deserters and criminals flee, a place of devastation and ignorance, the Eldorado of robbers and murderers.

In the interior of this country, which is anything but a paradise, where the temperature in the shade rises in summer to 120°, and sometimes even 125° Fahrenheit, are situated the imposing ruins of Nuffar, about fifty English miles southeast of Hilla and stretched along the northeasterly borders of the 'Afej swamps—so named after the 'Afej tribes inhabiting them. With Babylon and Warkâ, the most extensive mounds of the whole alluvial plain, they have been, with longer or shorter interruptions, since 1889 the object of methodical excavations by the University of Pennsylvania.¹

¹ A short résumé of the first three expeditions (time of excavation and main results) is to be found in Hilprecht, "The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania," Series A, vol. i, part 2 (1896), pp. 8, 9. For the first short history of all the four expeditions compare "Explorations in Bible Lands during the 19th Century" (Philadelphia, Holman & Co. (7th edition, 1904), edited by H. V. Hilprecht in connection with Drs. Benzinger, Hommel, Jensen, and Steindorff. The first part (577 pages) of this richly illustrated volume was recently published under the title "The Excavations in Assyria and Babylonia" (Series D, vol. i, of "The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania"), and will appear in German in the course of next summer under the title "Die Ausgrabungen in Assyrien und Babylonien" (Leipsic, J. C. Hinrichs). A French translation of the same is being prepared under the auspices of the Guimet Museum of Paris. In spite of their epoch-making results, the entire activity of the four Philadelphia expeditions at the mounds of Nuffar lasted only five years out of the last fifteen years. The writer of these lines himself spent more than four years in the East on matters connected with the four expeditions, namely, two years in Asia (Babylonia, Assyria, Asia Minor, and Syria), and two years three months in the Imperial Ottoman Museum at Constantinople. He was, altogether, eight months in Babylonia (not "fifteen weeks," as has been reported in several newspapers).

The main part of these ruins covers an area of about 160 acres of land. A large canal, now dry and filled with earth and sand, but formerly in many places 6 m. deep and 50 to 60 m. broad, divides the ruins into approximately equal halves. The Arabs call it "Shatt en-Nîl" (River Nile). The ancient Sumerians who dug it—if indeed it does not represent the old course of the Euphrates, a theory for which much can be said—designated it in their writing as the "Euphrates of Nippur," while the Semitic inhabitants of Babylonia called it *Kabaru* or "the great canal," upon the water supply of which depended the unparalleled fertility of the whole interior land. As I showed a short time ago, this canal is identical with the Biblical Chebar in the land of the Chaldeans (Ez. 1:1 and 3; 3:15), on the eastern banks of which the exiled Jews were colonized after the destruction of Jerusalem. It

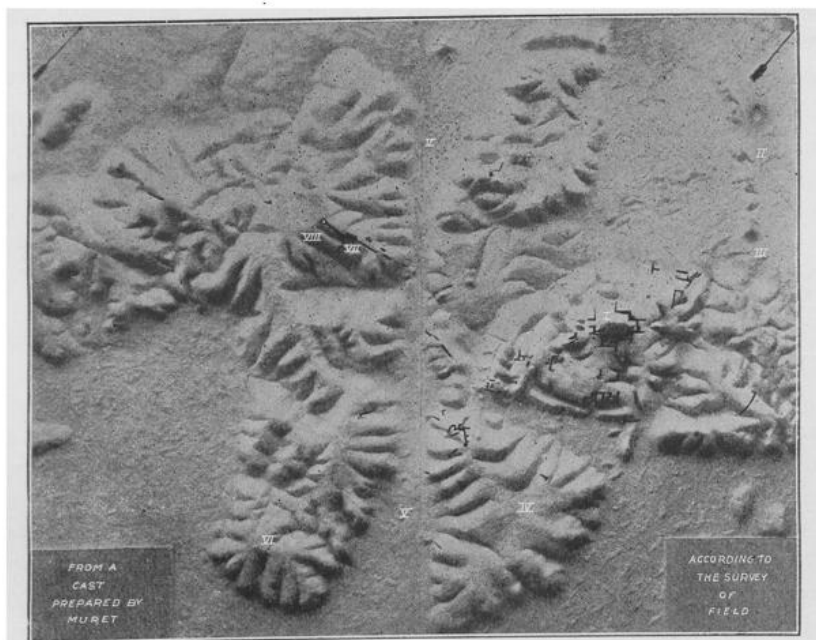


7. The Ruins of the Temple of Bêl at Nuffar.

was accordingly here in the shadow of the temple of Bêl at Nippur, the central place of worship of the earliest Babylonia, that Ezekiel saw his sublime vision of the Cherubim, and that one of the most important acts in the great historical drama of Israel was enacted. Therefore, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5).

The ruins of Nuffar represent the ancient Nippur, as was first recognized by Professor Oppert, of Paris. According to an apparently well-founded Talmudic tradition this place is identical with the Biblical "Calneh in the land of Shinar" (Genesis 10:10), one of the four principal cities in the kingdom of Nimrod. The present mounds are on an average 10 to 18 m. high, but in several places reach the considerable height of 25 and even 30 m. above the level of the plain. In consequence of the heat of the sun and winter rains,

the elevations, originally more uniform, were gradually cleft into numerous hills and valleys, so that from the distance the pile of ruins rising directly from the flat table-land (Figure 7) bears a striking resemblance to the rugged range of mountains of Hamrîn on the upper Tigris. The deplorable destruction of so many houses of the Parthian and post-Christian settlements of Nippur thus caused cannot astonish us, as sun-dried bricks were used almost exclusively as building material in ancient Babylonia, excepting for temples, palaces, wells, drains, and numerous graves.



8. Plan of the Ruins of Nuffar.

I. Ziggurrat and Temple of Bêl, buried under a huge Parthian fortress. II. Northeast city wall. III. Great northeast (pre-Sargonic) city gate. IV. Temple Library, covered by extensive ruins of a later period. V. Dry bed of an ancient canal (Shatt en-Nil). VI. Pre-Sargonic wall, buried under sixty feet of rubbish with archives of later periods. VII. Small Parthian palace, resting on Cassite archives. VIII. Business house of Murashû Sons, with more ancient ruins below.

After my first ride over the extensive ruins in February, 1889, even before we began the excavations, I reached several logical conclusions in regard to the probable contents of these mounds. The few early cuneiform texts then known in which Nippur is mentioned, a comparison of the different heights of the ruins, and sundry antiquities picked up on the surface, served as a scientific basis and support of my theory. But above all, the fact, so often overlooked, that the absence of broken glass and fragments of green

and blue enameled vases, both characteristic of ruins of the Hellenistic and later periods, forms a sure sign of pure Babylonian settlement. My first conclusions may be briefly stated as follows:

The highest point rising cone-shaped in about the centre of the eastern half and called by the Arabs *Bint el-Amîr* or "princess," represents *Imkharsag*, the stage-tower of ancient Nippur, known from the cuneiform inscriptions (Figure 8). The narrow range of mounds running to the northwest, northeast, and southeast of it is identical with the remains of the outer wall of the city, *Nîmit-Marduk*, likewise mentioned in the cuneiform writings. Wherever there is a stage-tower there must have been in the immediate vicinity necessarily a temple belonging to it. *Ekur*, the famous ancient sanctuary of Bêl, of which the tower formed the most conspicuous part, could therefore only lie buried under the large plateau stretching to the southeast of *Bint el-Amîr*.

From this it followed further that the wide open place north of the temple must be regarded as situated not in front but in the rear of the latter; and that, therefore, the main entrance to the sanctuary must have been at its southeastern side, while the wide open place with the mounds adjoining on the northwestern side seems to have been used for secondary purposes, such as stables for herds, lodgings for pilgrims, rooms for general purposes, dwellings for the lowest officials, etc.

Only two of the larger mounds on the east and south sides of the temple-grounds had to be determined. What were their probable contents? Even according to the scanty sources then at our disposal, the abiding influence which Nippur, as the principal place of worship of the "father" and "king of the gods," must have exercised upon the religious and political development of entire Babylonia made it seem likely that, analogous to the "patesis" or "priest-princes" of Lagash, made better known to us through the French excavations at Tellô, a similar institution had existed in the far more important Nippur. The palace of these priest-princes of Nippur, apparently the most imposing building next to the temple, could only lie buried under the high mass of ruins standing alone to the east of the sanctuary, where it probably, after the manner of the Sargon palace of Khorsabâd, once formed an important bulwark in the line of the fortifications of the temple.

If my theories so far were only approximately correct, then the determination of the contents of the remaining triangular mound to the south, which is separated from the complex of the temple by a sand-filled branch-canal of the Chebar or a broad moat, offered no special difficulties. This mound must necessarily cover the temple library, known to us from King Ashurbânâpal's collection of clay tablets, and the priest-school belonging to it.

The direct sequence of this whole hypothesis was threefold: (1) The temple complex of Nippur, with the dwellings of the numerous officials, embraced the whole eastern half of the city, an area of almost eighty acres. (2)

The so-called inner and outer walls of Nippur cannot refer to the whole city, as one would at first have supposed from the inscriptions, but in accordance with the topographical evidence must be limited to the temple of Bêl (even to the exclusion of the temple library). (3) The mounds situated on the west side of the canal contain either only an immense cemetery (as I assumed in the first weeks) or the business houses, bazaar, and private dwellings of the people, with the cemetery. It appeared afterward that this western half had been essentially a burial ground in the oldest (Sumerian) period and in the post-Christian era, but in the Semitic Babylonian time it represented the real business part of the city.

A similar theory can be maintained for most of the larger ruins of 'Irâq el-'Arabî. Above all, the remains of the foundation walls of the tower of Babel torn down by Alexander the Great can be traced with absolute certainty among the ruins of the capital of Nebuchadrezzâr, even without the use of the spade. For my present purpose it suffices to emphasize that my hypothesis concerning the topography of ancient Nippur, set forth in the year 1889 for the first time and since then often repeated in my university lectures, bold as it may have seemed at that time, has been confirmed in all its essential points by my latest excavations in the year 1900.¹ Above all, we have actually found in the southern triangular mound the famous temple library of Nippur,—an older library, destroyed by the Elamites in the third millennium, and a later one gradually ceasing to exist in the new Babylonian period. About 23,000 cuneiform tablets and fragments, mostly belonging to the older library, have thus far been saved, though only eighty rooms, or about the twelfth part of the library complex, which covers an area of about fourteen acres, could be excavated. From various facts and indications in the soil I concluded with great probability that an even earlier third library of the pre-Sargonic age lies buried in the lowest still untouched layers of the same mound.

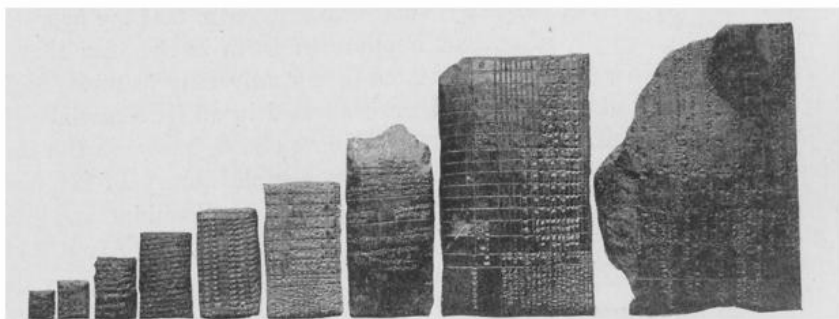
Before I begin to speak about the excavations proper may I be permitted to call attention to the following essential points, selected from a vast mass of material, for the general information concerning the history and results of the expedition.² The fieldwork of the great scientific undertaking (including traveling expenses) has cost, up to date, about \$112,000, subscribed by a small number of distinguished citizens of Philadelphia. Among these the following five gentlemen deserve special credit on account of their great liberality and their personal interest in the expedition: The late Dr. William

¹ On account of the extensive Parthian buildings lying on the great eastern mound, which I had selected for the palace of the patesis, sufficient excavations could not yet be made at this part of the ruins. However, a very ancient gateway and water conduit, in the outer walls, besides a number of large cuneiform tablets, have been brought to light by means of trial trenches, so that all signs point to a large building buried there.

² As already mentioned above (p. 11, footnote), all the necessary details are set forth in my "Excavations in Assyria and Babylonia."

Pepper (died 1898), equally prominent as Professor of Medicine, and Provost of the University; the present distinguished Provost, Dr. C. C. Harrison; the two brothers, Edward W. and Clarence H. Clark, bankers, the one chairman of the Expedition Committee (who died April 9, 1904, after the most remarkable and unselfish labors for the cause of Assyriology), the other chairman of the Publication Committee, and W. W. Frazier, in no small degree connected with the extraordinary development of the whole University.

In the first two short expeditions the Rev. Dr. J. P. Peters, at present minister of an Episcopal Church in New York, but formerly Professor of Hebrew at the University of Pennsylvania, was Director. After two successful campaigns, at his instigation, in 1893 Mr. J. H. Haynes, photographer and business manager during the first two campaigns, was sent alone to Babylonia and entrusted with the excavations. He braved many difficulties and worked faithfully to the best of his ability. When, however, the total inadequacy of

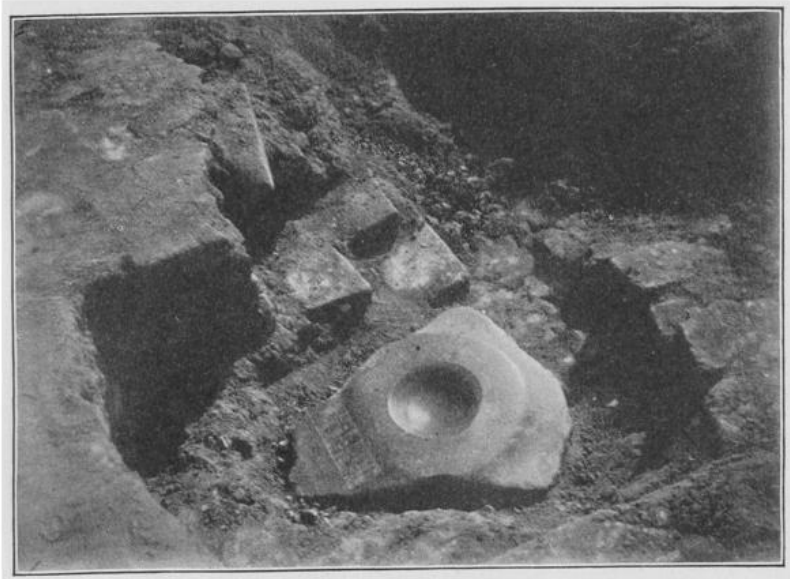


9. Cuneiform Tablets from Nippur.

this plan became apparent, the writer undertook the scientific management of the expedition in the winter of 1894, at the request of the chairman, Mr. E. W. Clark, and formed with the latter the executive subcommittee of the undertaking. Our endeavours since then were directed especially to the establishing of purely scientific researches at the ruins and to the sending out of well-trained specialists. For the scientific directorship and the scientific results of the fourth expedition the author is responsible. The fieldwork stood again under the control of Mr. Haynes, with the exception of the last three months, during which the scientific director, supported by two architects, Messrs. Fisher and Geere, undertook also the management in the field. Almost all the scientific members of the four expeditions gave their services without remuneration. Only thus was it possible to keep the expenses of the expedition down in spite of the extraordinary amount of work performed.

For a fifth expedition, which has been postponed in consequence of the writer's pressing duties in the Imperial Ottoman Museum at Constantinople, a handsome sum has already been placed at the disposal of the University by

private citizens. At the same time the two above-mentioned great patrons of science, Messrs. E. W. and C. H. Clark, endowed, with a further donation of \$100,000, a chair of Assyriology, exclusively for the purpose of scientific research. For the expensive publications of the expedition \$20,000 were promised most generously by another well-known supporter of Babylonian research, Mr. Eckley Brinton Coxe, Jr., half of the sum being already deposited. A truly magnificent work has been accomplished by a few liberal men of Philadelphia during the last fifteen years. But we must not forget that, in order to explore the entire ruins of Nuffar in a methodical manner, employing an average working force of four hundred Arabs, at least fifty, probably one hundred more years will be necessary.



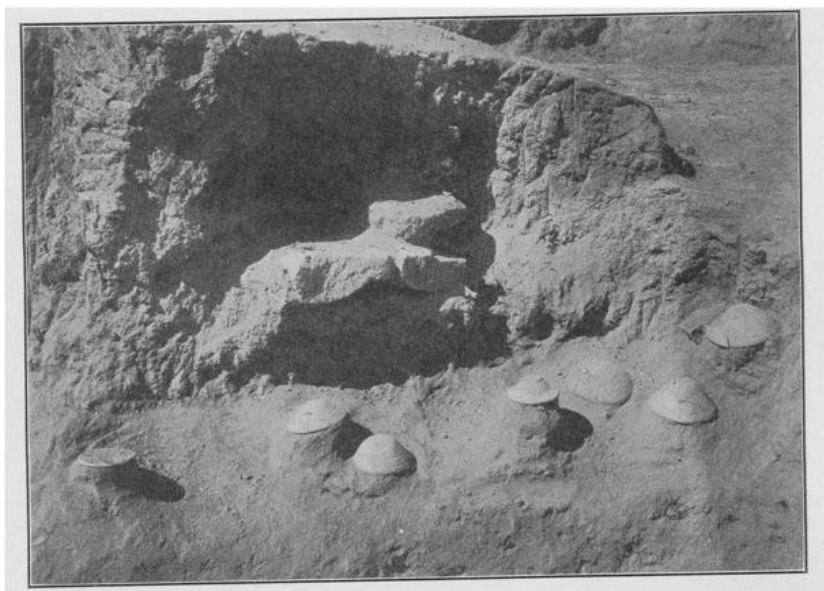
10. Door-Socket of King Ur-Gur (c. 2700 B. C.) in its Original Position.
From the main gate of the temple.

These brief statements of mere facts and figures, relating to a single scientific enterprise carried on by a single American city and university, may bring before you more effectively and eloquently than many words spoken by me the awakening desire of a young and energetic nation to take part in the solution of great scientific problems, in spite of its own short history.

In the first years of our excavations our task consisted principally in gaining a general knowledge of the contents of the vast field of ruins by means of long experimental trenches, and in reaching, by careful examination and removal of the upper strata, the pure Babylonian remains which were naturally of greater value to us. In the course of time, however, our work was concentrated on the most important points of the ancient city determined by theory

and the use of the spade. The cuneiform and archaeological material which was gradually brought to light cannot, of course, be enumerated here in detail. The following summary, given in a very general and therefore imperfect manner, will at least justify the statement that our labours were crowned with extraordinary success.

Besides the above-mentioned 23,000 literary cuneiform texts from the library and priest-school, the expedition gathered nearly 28,000 business documents—for the greater part well preserved—from the third, second, and first millenniums, principally in the western part of the city, and about 2000 pre-Sargonic cuneiform tablets from the fifth and fourth pre-Christian millen-



11. Hebrew Incantation Bowls in their Original Position.
Seven placed upside down, one with the inscribed face upward.

nium, mostly in the lower layers of the temple of Bêl. To this total of 53,000 cuneiform tablets (unfortunately often very fragmentary), differing in size from 2 cm. to nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ m. (Figure 9), the collecting of which took about two and one-half years all in all, there may be added about 800 fragments of vases in stalagmite limestone, which proved to be especially valuable sources for the reconstruction of the oldest history of Babylonia.

Furthermore, we may mention several boundary stones, not yet published, from the time of the kings of the dynasty of *PA-SHE* (probably to be read *Isin*), about 1100 B. C.; about twenty inscribed door-sockets, from the days of the ancient kings Lugal-kigub-nidudu and Sargon I. down to the Cassite ruler Kurigalzu (Figure 10); a great number of royal votive inscriptions on turquoise, agate, lapis lazuli, magnesite, feldspar, etc., from the second millen-

nium; sixty to eighty finely executed brick-stamps of Sargon I. and Narâm-Sin, rightly designated as the first historical hand-presses of two kings who prior to the Nuffar excavations were generally considered as half mythical persons.

In addition to these important antiquities I may mention sundry Sumerian stone tablets, the building records of several kings of Ur (third millennium), the clay cylinders of Samsu-iluna, Sargon II. (the conqueror of Samaria), and of Ashurbânabal, the last great ruler of Assyria. Finally there are 300 to 400 seal cylinders collected from the business houses and the Parthian graves, and quite as many Hebrew, Mandaic, Syriac, and Arabic terra-cotta bowls. The latter were found mostly inverted in the ground (Figure 11). Here and there lay under it a small inscribed skull (apparently that of an animal) or an inscribed eggshell as a sacrifice for appeasing the evil spirits. Sometimes two bowls were fastened together with pitch, the inner sides facing each other, in order to prevent the escape of the demons apparently supposed to be confined within.

These bowls belong in general to the Jewish inhabitants of the country who had degenerated under the influence of Babylonian demonology, and to other allied sects of the fifth to the eighth centuries of our era. They teach us in their own way what kind of religious influence it may have been which was exercised by Babylon on Judah, exiled from her native soil and far removed from the warning voice of her prophets (comp. Figure 28).

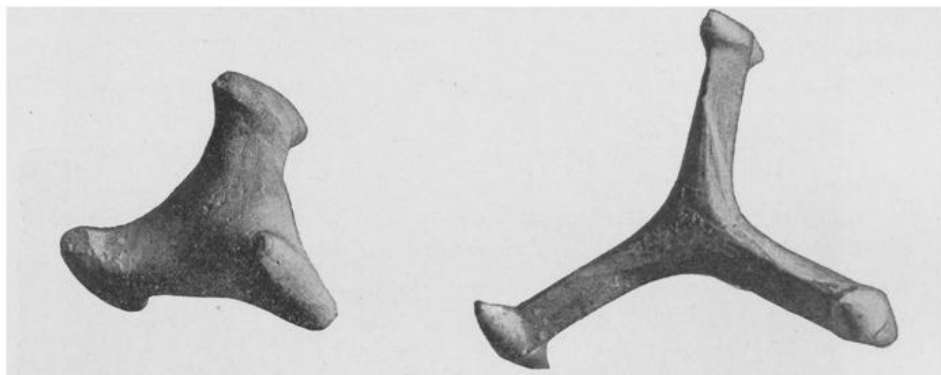


12. Silver Bracelet.

The precious objects (Figure 12) in various stones, copper, bronze, silver, and gold, taken chiefly from graves and funeral urns, weigh more than fifty pounds, not to mention the numerous silver coins of the earlier Greek and Parthian periods and of even later date. Several hundred silver coins from the time of the 'Omayyade and 'Abbâside caliphs, of whom Hârûn ar-Rashîd is the best known, were found in the slopes of the mounds in two large deposits. We examined about 2500 of the post-Babylonian terra-cotta coffins, occurring in large numbers everywhere in the upper strata of the ruins and generally lying above and alongside of each other without any order. Of still greater importance were the funeral urns from the oldest prehistoric time, which in connection with thousands of terra-cotta vases from all centuries of Babylonian history will considerably advance our knowledge of the gradual development of ceramics in lower Mesopotamia (Figures 21 to 25).

In the course of the excavations it became evident that the art of the modern and the old Babylonian potter have many points in common. As especially striking, I may refer to the fact that in the neighbourhood of a Babylonian pottery-kiln of the third millennium terra-cotta stilts were found (Figure 13) similar to those which are used in modern china factories for

separating the plates and saucers piled up one on the other during the process of burning (Figure 14). Traces of the three points of the stilts were discovered without difficulty, especially on many enameled bowls of the Parthian period. The pottery-kiln just mentioned, which leaned against the northeast wall inclosing the temple complex, was immediately recognized as such by our Arabs, since primitive ovens of that kind, used both for burning pottery and for cooking, still exist in Baghdad, Hilla, and Basra. Although in a very ruinous state, the original nine arches and air shafts of the oven could still be traced (Figure 15), so that Mr. Fisher, one of the architects of the fourth expedition, was able to restore the original plant and show the method of heating and ventilating the kiln.



13. Babylonian Stilt. About 2300 B. C.

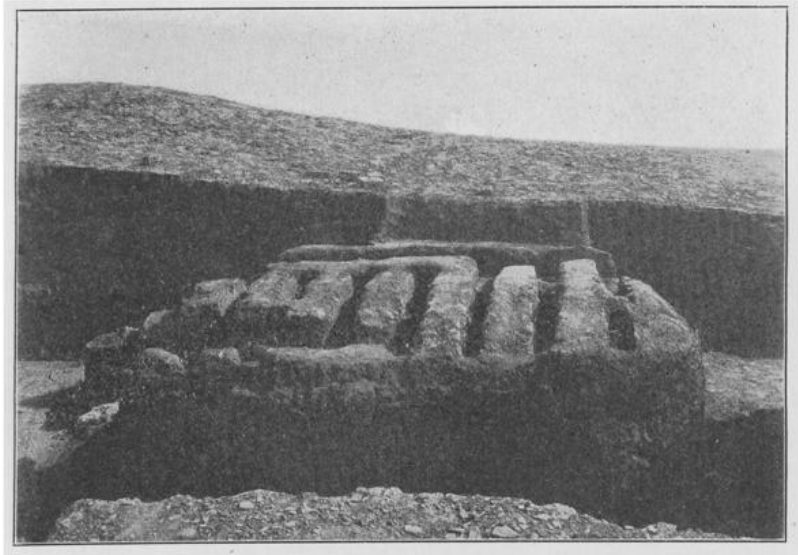
14. Stilt used in Modern China Manufactories.
From Trenton, N. J.

However, I must not dwell on details which, taken singly and apart from their connection, can give only a very defective idea of the actual contents of the remains of Nippur. Our main interest centres in the great complex of the temple of Bêl, the principal sanctuary of ancient Babylonia, which could look back on a history of more than 2000 years before Babylon became the political and religious metropolis of the united kingdom under Hammurabi (toward the end of the third millennium).

To free the great stage-tower from the mass of the later buildings encumbering it on all sides was naturally the first task of our expedition. Then starting from it as a given base, the next work to be done was to investigate the adjoining plateau, in order to obtain gradually a connected picture of the whole plan of the temple and of its long history, and at the same time to determine the exact relation of a Babylonian stage-tower to the adjoining sanctuary proper. Our project met with extraordinary difficulties.

By difficulties I do not mean the unhealthy climatic conditions, increased by the hot sand storms and the poisonous miasma of the swamps surrounding us at times on all sides, from which at first we all had to suffer more or less; nor the awful plague of mosquitoes, sand flies, and other small insects, which

set in regularly about the middle of April. Nor have I in mind those two daring Koordish robbers, who successfully attacked, plundered, and murdered pilgrims, traders, travelers, and even military escorts, and, to the dismay of Mr. Haynes, made their headquarters for eighteen months not far from Nuffar in the 'Afej swamps. Nor would I lay too great a stress on the fact that our Arabs had no idea of regular work, that innumerable times they would suddenly throw down their primitive baskets and utensils, seize their arms, perform a *hausä* (Figure 16), and hasten away, shouting and gesticulating to their fellow tribesmen who were carrying on a feud in the neighbourhood. Suffice it to say that in the year 1894, within eight months, thirteen



15. Old Babylonian Baking Furnace. About 2300 B. C.

battles between the Arabs took place not far from the ruins, in one of which no less than seventy dead were left on the field. At the beginning of our excavations at Nuffar we generally dug, deciphered, and slept gun in hand; and finally, through the shooting of a Said-Bedouin, we fell under the ban of Arabian blood-revenge, were surrounded and besieged by the whole tribe, and, in spite of military relief, forced to retire over the swamps with our antiquities, our whole camp having been destroyed, a considerable sum of money stolen, and most of the horses killed.

All these and other difficulties of the first year I pass over, as they have for the most part disappeared, or at least been lessened by our friendly relations with the most influential tribes, above all with Ḥajji Tarfâ, the supreme



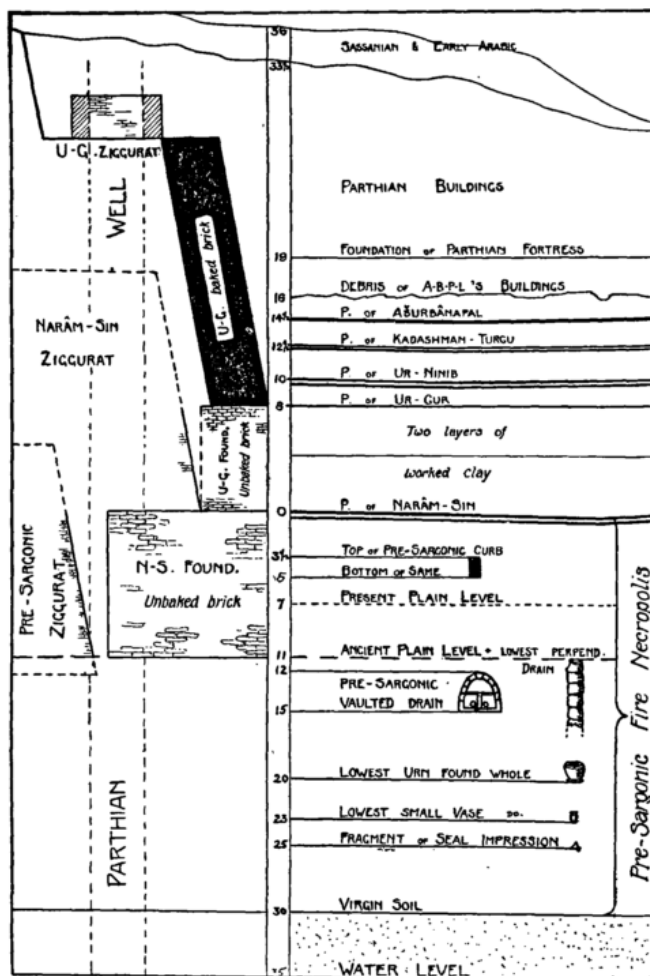
16. Arab Workmen at Nuffar Dancing, Chanting, and Brandishing their Guns.
(Executing a so-called *hausa*.)

shaikh of the 'Afej, and with 'Abud el-Ḥamîd, the leader of the six Hamza tribes. Thanks also to the energetic endeavours of the Ottoman Government, which, by removing the seat of their subgovernor (*mutessarif*) from Hilla to Diwânîye and considerably strengthening the military forces there, even adding artillery, brought about a great improvement on the former terrible conditions of the 'Afej district.

The difficulties which I have in mind refer to the mounds themselves and to the manifold obstacles which presented themselves at first to an exact determination of the age of uninscribed or undated antiquities, and to ascertaining the purpose of ruined walls, which ran in all directions, seemingly without any definite plan. After years of study I have finally succeeded in bringing a certain order into the confused mass of ruins.

Twenty-one different strata can be traced with certainty in the mounds of Nuffar. It must, however, be remembered that these different phases in the history of this ancient city, the founding of which is placed by the Babylonian legend of the creation immediately at the commencement of the history of the human race, can by no means be determined in every part of the ruins. In many places the ruins of the second millennium rest directly on those of the pre-Sargonic period; in others they are separated by ten to fifteen feet of rubbish; in still others the remains of the oldest civilization, as in Fâra, appear almost directly on the surface. It seems, therefore, clear that many quarters of Nippur sometimes must have remained unsettled for centuries and longer, while others again were constantly occupied by houses. This theory is, however, to be understood only in a general way. The problem still remains to be solved, how far in each particular case later generations have had a hand in the destruction, be it only in order to procure cheaper and better building material; for it is still considered in Babylonia an indisputable fact that clay, previously used, furnishes a better, because tougher, material for the manufacture of sun-dried bricks than freshly dug clay. The Parthian architects, in fact, used almost exclusively early Babylonian débris for their fortresses and palaces. Only in the temple mound itself, where in earlier times a certain respect for the property of the gods, and in post-Babylonian times military considerations, were responsible for a better preservation of the main buildings, can these twenty-one layers be more definitely determined, by means of valuable platforms dividing the mounds, as it were, into degrees, by some remains of walls, inscribed antiquities, characteristic fragments of pottery, peculiarly shaped bricks, and other auxiliaries of archaeological research.

These twenty-one strata, of which only the chief ones are given in the accompanying diagram (Figure 17), can be divided into three main periods, succeeding each other. They are as follows, beginning at the top of the mound:



17. Section of the Stage-Tower and the Adjoining Southeast Court.

Restored and designed by Hilprecht, drawn by Fisher.

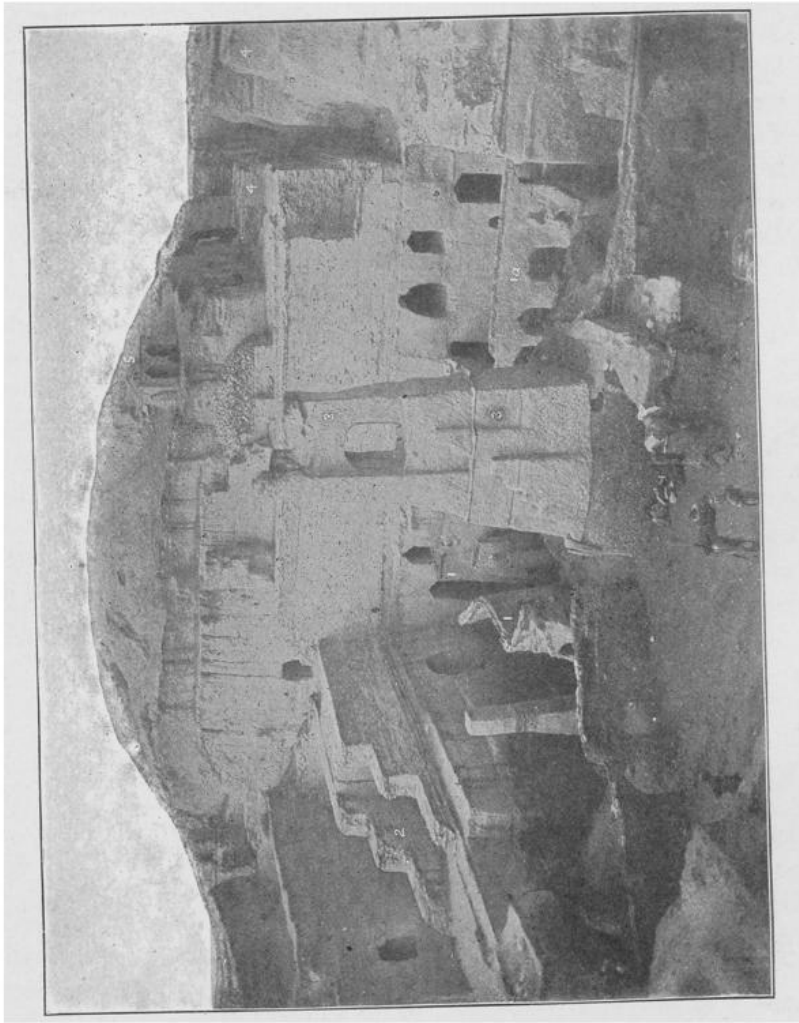
A-B-P-L. Ashurbânâpal. N-S. Narâm-Sin. U-G. Ur-Gur. P. Pavement. — Baked Brick. — Pavement of two layers of bricks. Measurements given in feet.

- (1) *The post-Babylonian period, from about 300 B. C. to about 1000 A. D.*, characterized by six different layers of débris, 6 to 24 m. high. The difference in the number of metres is due to the difference of height between the remains of the stage-tower, in the first part of this period used for military purposes, and the adjoining plateau.
- (2) *The Semitic-Babylonian period, from about 4000 to 300 B. C.*, represented by ruins and platforms in the temple court, $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 m. high; nine different strata.
- (3) *The earliest or prehistoric Sumerian period, from unknown beginning to about 4000 B. C.*, represented by ruins 6 to 9 m. deep; six different strata.

Accordingly, the deepest trench which we have dug into the temple mound of Nuffar measures 128 feet, or about 39 m., from the surface to the water level. The following picture (Figure 18), showing plainly at the right and left and by means of the test-column in the centre (considerably crumbled at the top) the height of the original débris, will illustrate to a certain extent what an enormous amount of rubbish had to be examined and removed by the expedition before the gigantic remains of the temple were cleared of their covering. Even in their utter desolation these crumbling walls still testify to the lofty aspirations of a bygone race, upon whose very shoulders our own civilization largely rests, and they still seem to re-echo with the strains of that old Sumerian hymn which resounded in honor of Enlil or Bêl thousands of years ago in the shadow of his sanctuary:

"O great mountain of Bêl, Imkharsag,
Whose summit rivals the heavens,
Whose foundations are laid in the bright abysmal sea,
Resting in the land as a mighty steer,
Whose horns are gleaming like the radiant sun,
As the stars of heaven are filled with lustre."

If we first examine the six post-Babylonian strata, with their strange mixture of 1200 to 1300 years of history, the chief conclusion reached is the striking fact that soon after the return of Alexander the Great from India and his premature death in the palace of Nebuchadrezzar on the Euphrates (about 300 B. C.) the temple of Bêl ceased to exist as a sanctuary. Hellenistic influence is to be traced everywhere, in the patterns of friezes, in the head of Medusa on a beautiful brown enameled lamp (Figure 19), in the pleasing forms of thin terra-cotta vases, in peculiar long-stemmed glass vases, flasks, bowls, etc., in Rhodian jar-handles stamped with Greek letters, in the increasing number of hollow terra-cotta figurines covered with a coating of white paste, in the folds of the women's garments, the erotic representations, even in the playthings of the children, and the rattles (hens, drums, dolls) of the infants.



18. The Ruins of the Stage-Tower of Nippur. Southeast View.

Three stages visible. 1. Pre-Sargonic drains. 1a. Pre-Sargonic curb. 2. Ascent to the stage-tower of Ur-Gur and successors. 3. Pillar of earth left standing to show different strata and original height of mound. 4. Remains of Parthian fortress, formerly covering the entire temple ruins. 5. Temporary building erected by Mr. Haynes.

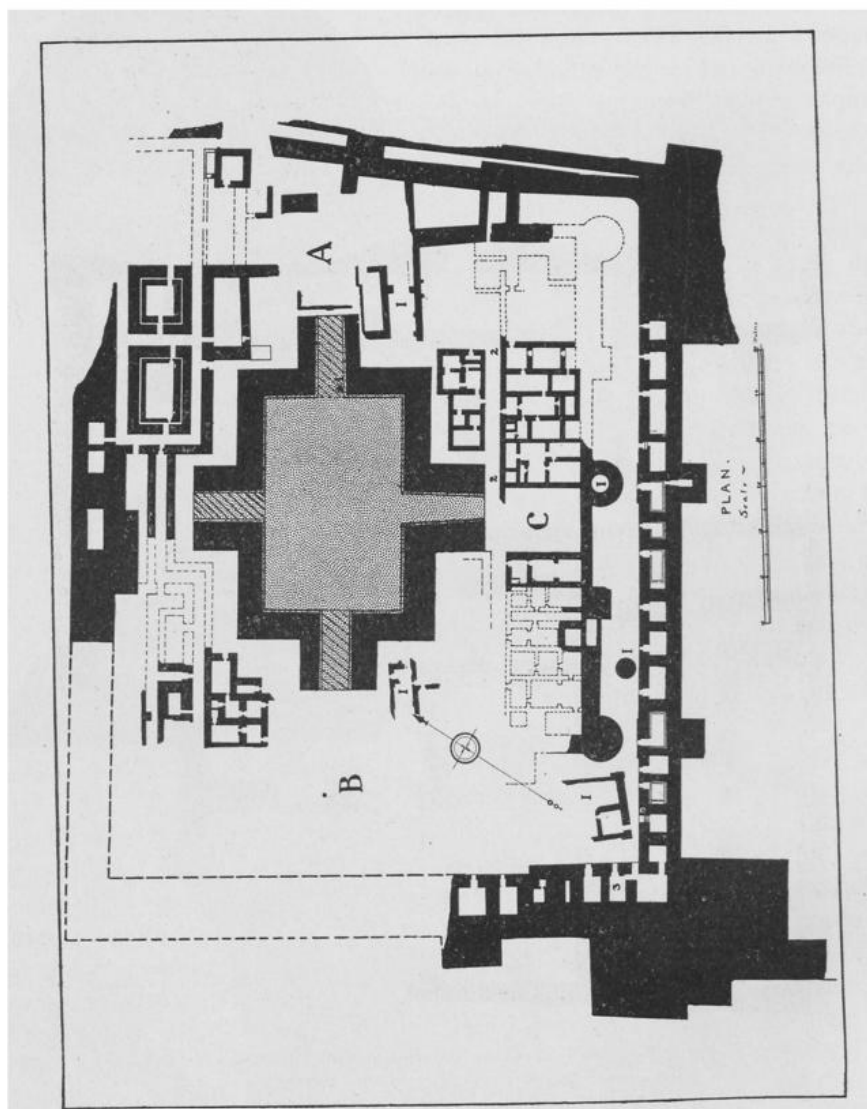
New gods with their foreign rites crowd out the old customs and habits. Seleucia on the Tigris takes the place of Babylon, and on the ruins of ancient temples rise up frowning fortresses and palaces. The dominion of the Seleucides soon comes to an end. Parthian horsemen swarm over the plains of Shumer and Akkad. For more than 400 years the Arsacide princes become the heirs of the great Macedonian. Once more a certain prosperity is felt throughout the land. The ancient ruins are searched for treasures. Extensive settlements and imposing buildings cover all the mounds of Nippur. A short-lived art and civilization flourish, combining Greco-Roman and Oriental elements—the last flickering of a dying flame before its final extinction.

The stage-tower of Bêl is extended by four mighty wings and changed into an almost impregnable citadel. A well 21 m. deep, dug down through the compact mass of adobes, provides the garrison with water. It is walled in with old bricks of the kings Ur-Gur (ca. 2700 B. C.), Kadashman-Turgu (ca. 1300 B. C.), and Ashurbânâpal (668-626 B. C.). Around this bulwark, with its extensive outlook, there is grouped a relatively well-preserved palace. Its outer walls still stand 18 m. high and 9 to 12 m. thick, the thickness varying with the height. Over the old entrance of the temple rises a massive tower for the defence of the inhabitants. The western corner, sloping steeply down toward the plain, is for the most part washed away and destroyed by the winter's rain.

Like the Babylonian sanctuary lying below, this enormous Parthian building (Figure 20) consisted of two adjoining courts. The southern one is only faintly indicated on the accompanying plan. The outer fortification wall of the northern court, about 168 m. long, was occupied on three sides by barracks for the soldiers, prisons, and granaries. Separated by a corridor from this outer wall rose an inner wall of uneven dimensions. Immediately behind it were the rooms of the household and the servants' quarters (indicated by C). They were separated from the large reception rooms of the commander in the northeast (B) and the harem or family apartments in the northwest (A) by a well-drained street (2) running parallel with the front of the



19. Lamp in Brown Enamelled Terra-cotta
With the head of Medusa.

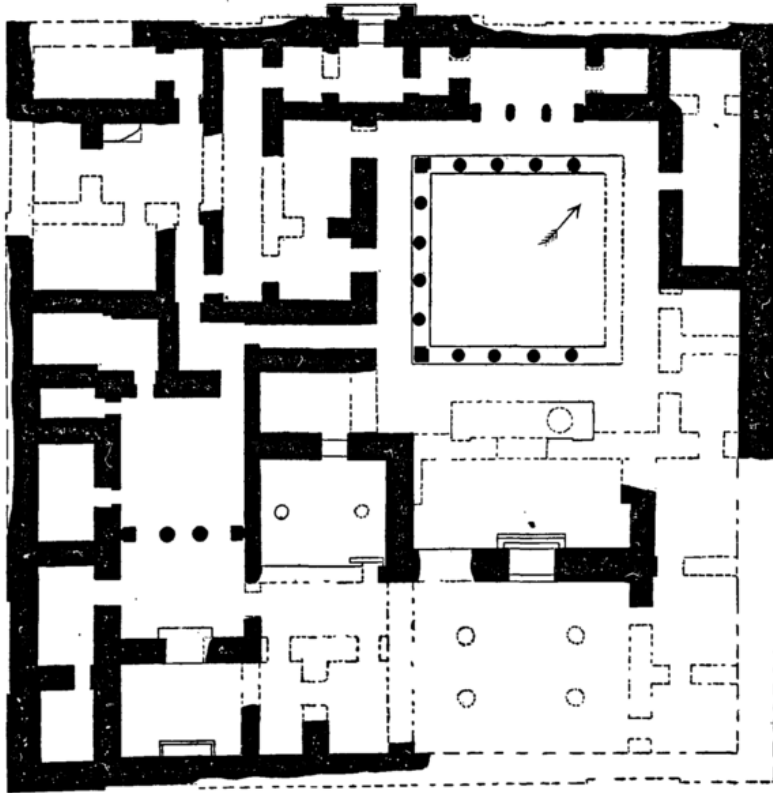


20. Large fortified Parthian Palace built over the Ruins of the Temple of Bêl.

Restored by Hilprecht, surveyed and drawn by Fisher and Geere.

I. Remains of an earlier, probably Seleucidan, building, about 300 B. C. The rest represents the remains of a Parthian palace, grouped around the ziggurrat as a citadel (about 250 B. C. to 200 A. D.). A. Public reception rooms and private apartments for the prince and his officers (partly unexcavated). B. Harem (largely unexcavated). C. Domestic quarters, storerooms, barracks, etc. 1 (on the ziggurrat). The only well of the palace. 2. Street separating the palace proper from the domestic quarters. 3. Room with a tomb beneath.

ancient *ziggurat*. About two-thirds of the whole complex have been uncovered. The main entrance was undoubtedly near the north corner, not yet sufficiently investigated. Remains of an earlier (Seleucidan?) fortress, standing at a different angle to the stage-tower (marked I on the plan), lie $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 m. below the Parthian palace. Three times the doors and walls of the rooms and corridors of the later building were raised on account of the constantly increasing deposits of dirt, as can still be seen tolerably well from the upper



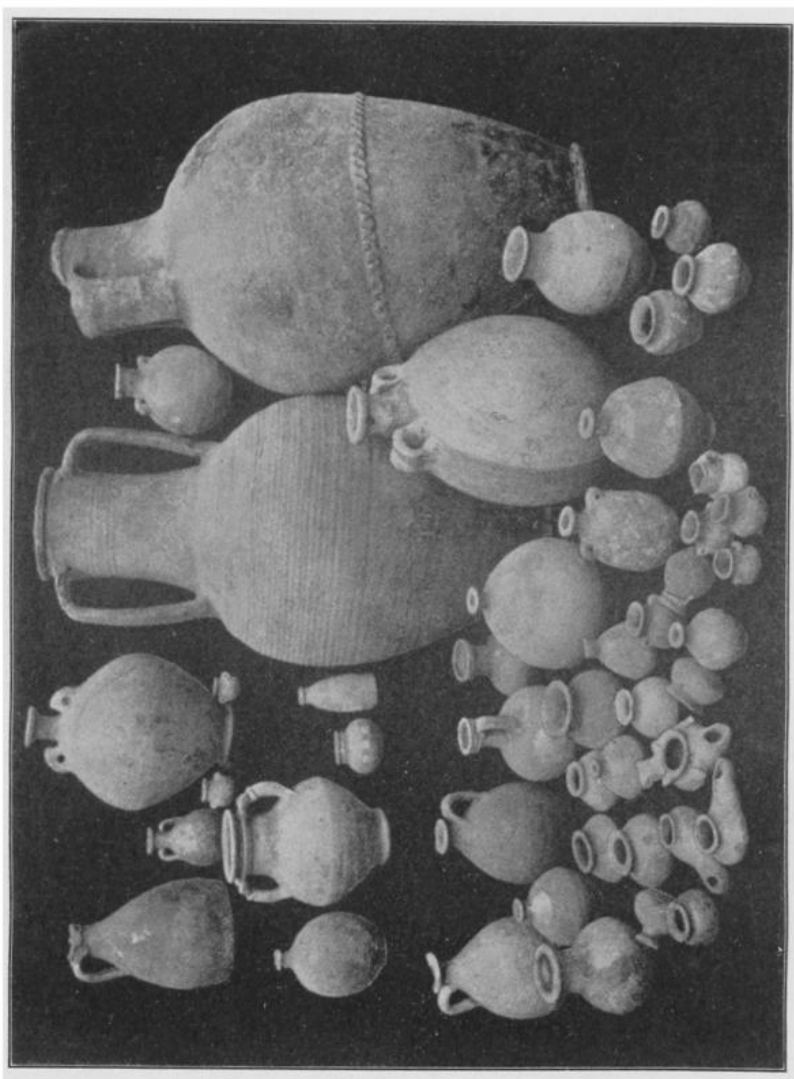
21. Plan of a Small Parthian Palace at Nippur, about 250 B. C.

Surveyed by Fisher and Geere, drawn by the former.

Discovered in 1889, and excavated completely in 1900. About thirty-six rooms and halls grouped around open courts. Entrance on the northwest side.

remains of the test-column (Figure 18), so that four periods can be traced with certainty in the above-mentioned fortress. The forms of terra-cotta vases characteristic of this whole period of 400 to 500 years are well shown by the following illustration (Figure 22, on the next page).

A smaller palace, built of similar unburnt material and containing about forty rooms and halls, dates from the same time. It covers an area of



22. Terra-cotta Vases from I'arthian Tombs. About 250 B. C. to A. D. 200.

51 metres square, and lies on the western side of the canal. The absolutely un-Babylonian character of this building, which stood on the ruins of much earlier Cassite houses, can be recognized by a mere glance at the plan (Figure 21). The clear and regular division of the whole complex into two parts: to the right the courtyard, altar, and the large reception hall for the men; to the left the division for women and servants, laid out on the same principle,—the methodical grouping of the single rooms around two open courts; the frequent use of tapering brick columns, as an important decorative element; a pronounced taste and sense of beauty in regard to proportions; the apparent attempt at unity with due regard to convenience,—all these traits are far more characteristic of the Greek houses of Delos, for example, than of the clay buildings of old Babylonia, which must generally be judged from quite a different standpoint. The foundation of this Hellenistic palace lay somewhat more than 12.5 m. above the level of the present plain.

A small temple only half as far above the plain level and belonging likewise to the Parthian period was situated halfway between the Shatt en-Nîl and the *ziggurat*. It was originally a domed building, after the fashion of the well-known *turbes* and holy tombs of the Islamic countries. Its four stuccoed walls had doorways in the middle, while its corners, according to old Babylonian fashion, pointed toward the four points of the compass. The altar rose, like a small stage-tower in four steps, out of a low heap of ashes on the south-eastern side, apparently, for ritualistic purposes, so placed that the rays of the sun might strike it full at a certain time of the day and season.

But we must leave the Parthian period, however instructive, interesting, and mysterious it may be. The resting places of the dead occur already alongside of the dwelling places of the living, now in the slopes of the hills, then again underneath the houses of the inhabitants. They are generally vaults made of old bricks, which often hide a large number of corpses. One of these graves underneath the floor of room No. 3 (on the above plan of the Parthian fortress, p. 28) had luckily escaped being pillaged in ancient times. It contained rich gold ornaments, viz: two thin gold plates, which originally covered the faces of the dead, each about 15 cm. square, two bands for the forehead, each



23. Gold Sandal Buckle with Latchet.

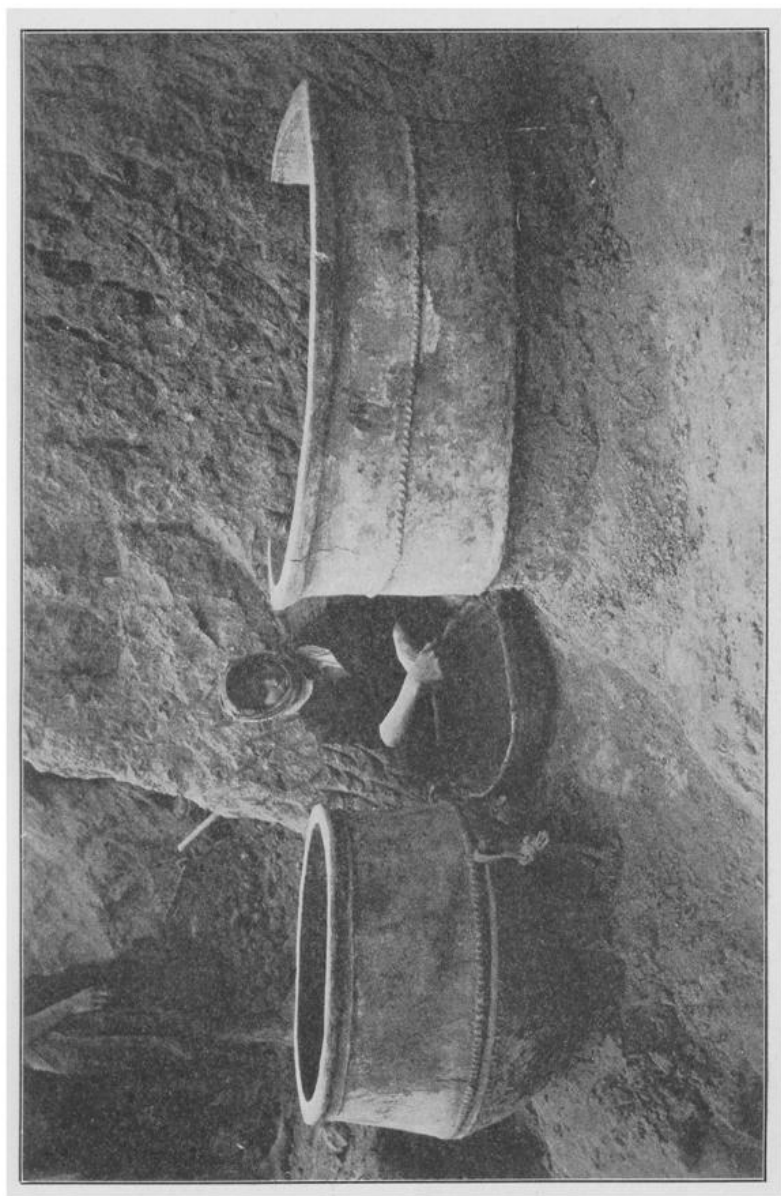
about 30 cm. long, twelve rosettes, four bell-shaped ornaments, forty-eight small gold buttons, a golden earring, two sandal buckles studded with rubies and turquoises (Figure 23), representing lions' heads in relief, and a gold coin of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, by which the age of the grave could be determined with greater certainty than usual.

Thus Bêl's city gradually returns to what it had been at the beginning of its history of many thousand years—a vast cemetery. With the rise of the Sassanian dynasty (A. D. 226-643) the importance of the city ceases. The Parthian palaces decay and become dwellings for the dead. No new buildings of any importance rise on the ruins of the old. Only miserable clay huts continue to cover the most conspicuous points. Wherever the spade strikes, the upper five to thirty feet of ruins are filled with Sassanian graves, sometimes accompanied by badly engraved seals, showing human heads of poor workmanship, animals hard to classify, and various kinds of fantastic plants.

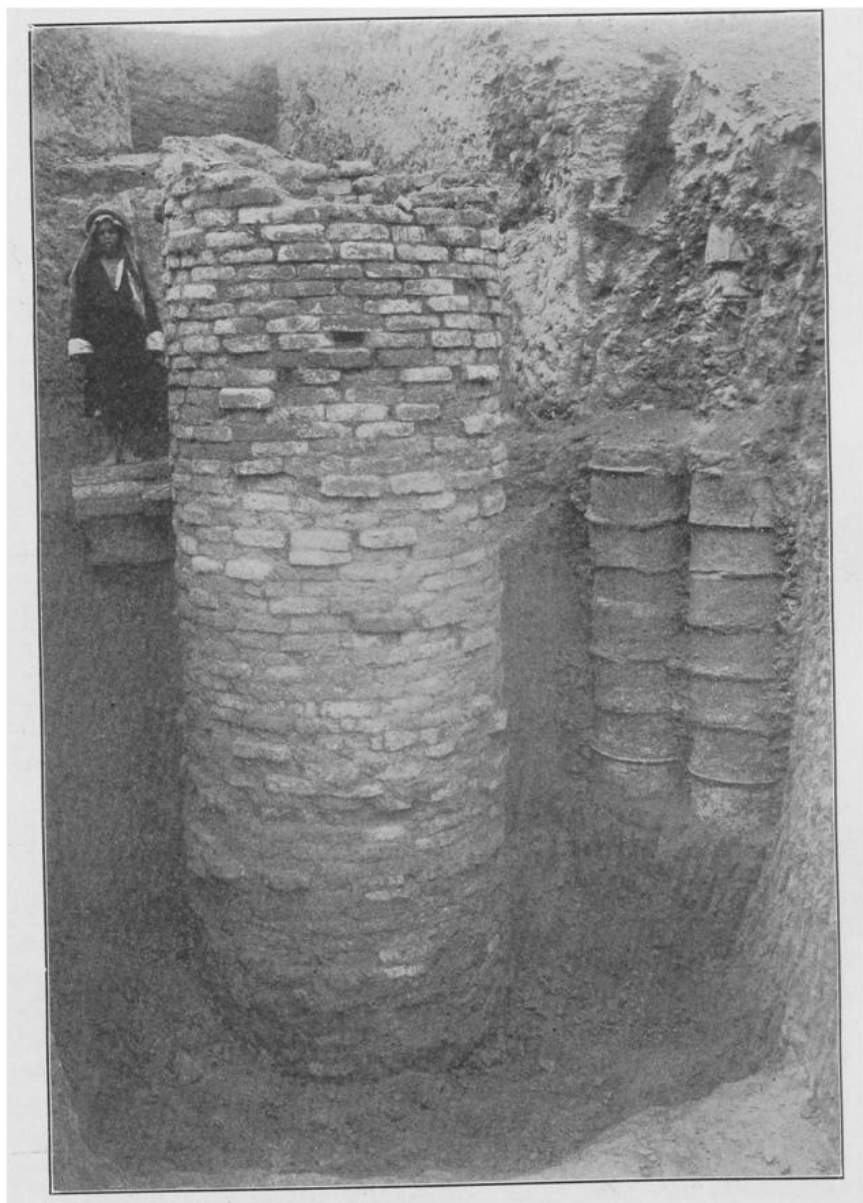


24. Blue Enameled Slipper-shaped Coffin with Female Figures.

The usual form of clay coffins is that of the slipper, enameled, for the richer class; for the poor, simply burnt. The tops of the latter are mostly plain; of the former, divided into sections. In the case of women's coffins, as it seems, the top is frequently adorned with a female figure (Figure 24), while men's coffins are generally decorated with figures of warriors, winged bulls, heads emitting rays of light, and other representations. At the lower end of the coffin, which as a rule has no special lid, there is a hole, not for the escape of gases generated during decomposition, as was formerly assumed, but in order to pull the corpse into position by means of a rope wound about the feet. Along with these there are also trough-shaped coffins with arched lids, or two urns with the openings placed together, enlarged for taller persons by the insertion of a terra-cotta ring, likewise urns standing upright, and so-called bathtub-shaped coffins (Figure 25), in which the skeleton lies with knees drawn up. Fish, fowl, dates, rice, and various kinds of grain in small vases



25. Bathtub-shaped Coffin and Large Burial Urn in their Original Position.



26. Well built of Ancient Bricks and Two Terra-cotta Drains
Descending from the floor of a Parthian tomb.

or bowls are put in as food, while a large pitcher of water, or a well reaching to the water level (Figure 26), provides for the thirst of the departed. In order to drain the graves, long pipes were formed by means of terra-cotta rings or water jars with the bottoms broken away. They were frequently sunk close to the well (as seen in Figure 26) to the depth of 24 m. into the old-Babylonian strata, and even into the virgin soil below. At times these pipes are perforated and occasionally provided with a bell-shaped top.

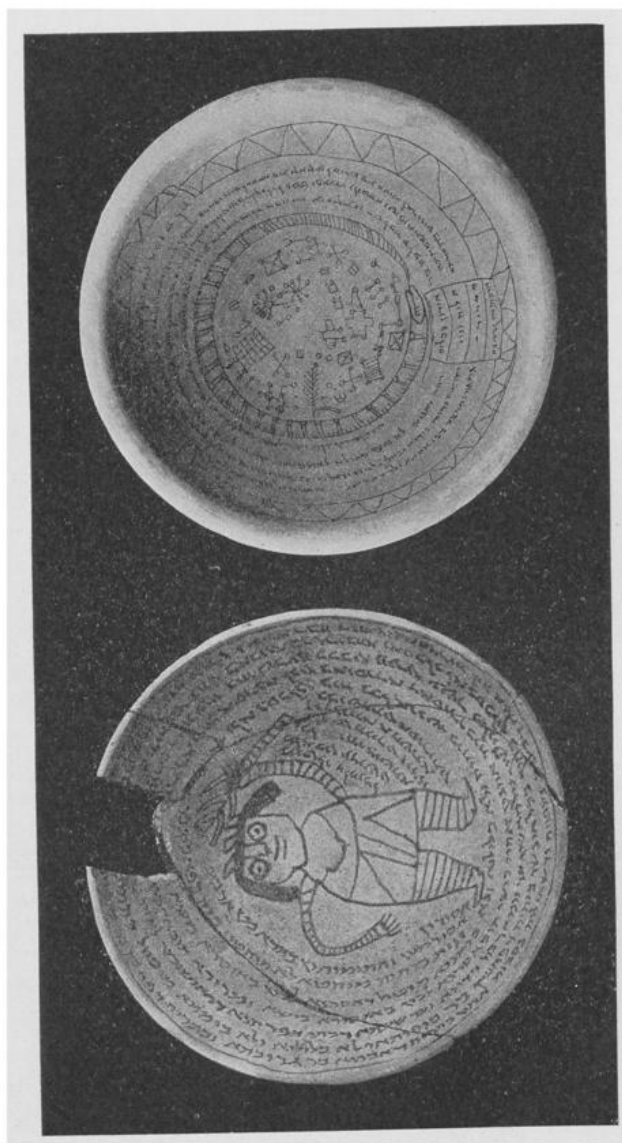
As I have already briefly indicated, the early Arabic period, with its Kûfic copper and silver coins and the numerous Hebrew and Mandæan magic bowls, is very well represented in Nippur (or, as the place was gradually



27. Pavements laid by Ashurbânâpal, Kadashman-Turgu, and Ur-Ninib.

pronounced, *Niffer*, and finally, on account of the following labial, *Nuffar*). A medium-sized jar, with a short Arabic inscription, likewise belongs to this general period. The inside of the incantation bowls is either left blank or adorned with cabalistic signs surrounded by a snake or a simple circle, but more frequently with a rather secessionistic-looking demon, reminding us vividly of the pictures in "Max and Moritz" (Figure 28, next page). Lilith and other evil spirits who plague mankind with sickness and misfortune and even disturb the dead in their graves are exorcised "in the name of Jehovah" by a spiral inscription covering the rest of the inside of the bowl.

From what has been said it will have become clear that the earlier Babylonian strata are buried under extensive and on the whole very important



28. Incantation Bowls inscribed in Hebrew Characters. About 750-950 A. D.

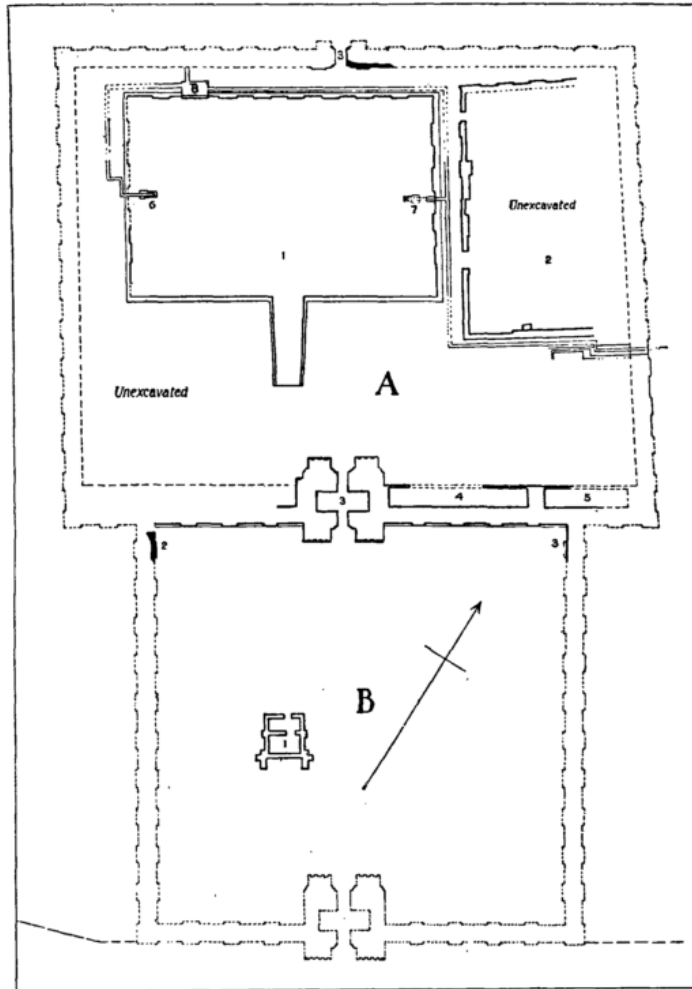
later remains, and that therefore it required an extraordinary amount of time and trouble to reach them, unless the upper strata were treated like useless rubbish and removed in a barbarous manner.

It would lie beyond the narrow limits of a lecture to discuss separately all the nine Semitic-Babylonian periods resting on top of each other in ruins $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 m. high. It may at first seem remarkable that, considering the long period of about 3500 years here represented by space, such relatively small deposits of rubbish occur between the single pavements extending through the temple area. If we examine, for instance, the three upper brick pavements (Figure 27), we recognize, by the figure of the 'Afej warrior standing alongside, that the distance from the first to the third platform is only 1.30 to 1.60 m., although the uppermost was laid by Ashurbânâpal (about 650 B. C.), the middle by Kadashman-Turgu (about 1300 B. C.), and the lowest by Ur-Ninib (about 2500 B. C.). In round numbers, therefore, 1850 years of stirring Babylonian history are, so to speak, here embodied. Similar is the case with regard to the pavements of Ur-Gur (about 2700 B. C.), and of Sargon I. and Narâm-Sin, his son (about 3750 B. C.).

In view of our present archaeological and historical knowledge of that period, which was so obscure only a short time ago, this fact is no longer of great importance. Its very natural and simple explanation, however, is to be found in the circumstance that before a pavement was laid all the damaged buildings and the accumulated débris were removed as far as was necessary to secure a level foundation and the stability of the new platform.

From the inscriptions of Nebuchadrezzar and Nabonidos we know that according to Babylonian view a restored sanctuary cannot be a place of worship worthy of the deity nor enjoy the benefit of its special protection and good will unless the new walls follow accurately the outlines of the old ones. In the light of this principle, so much accentuated by the neo-Babylonian kings, it does not seem strange that, according to our investigations at Nippur, the temple place proper had almost the same size during those 3500 years above referred to. As, however, it is the first temple of Babylonia methodically excavated, and represents, moreover, the most important sanctuary of the whole country from the earliest times, it may not be out of place to add a few explanatory remarks of a more general character.

The temple of Bêl (Figure 29), called in the cuneiform inscriptions *Ekur*, "mountain house," consisted of two large courts, an inner (A) and an outer (B), connected by a monumental gate (3). The walls marked in black in the plan (see next page) have been determined by the excavations; those indicated by dots have been restored as being highly probable. The inner court contained two main buildings: to the left the *ziggurrat*, or stage-tower, whose ruins still rise to a height of about 30 m., with originally a shrine of Bêl on its highest point, and to the right the "House of Bêl" proper, so far determined only in its outlines. In the latter "the father of the gods" resided



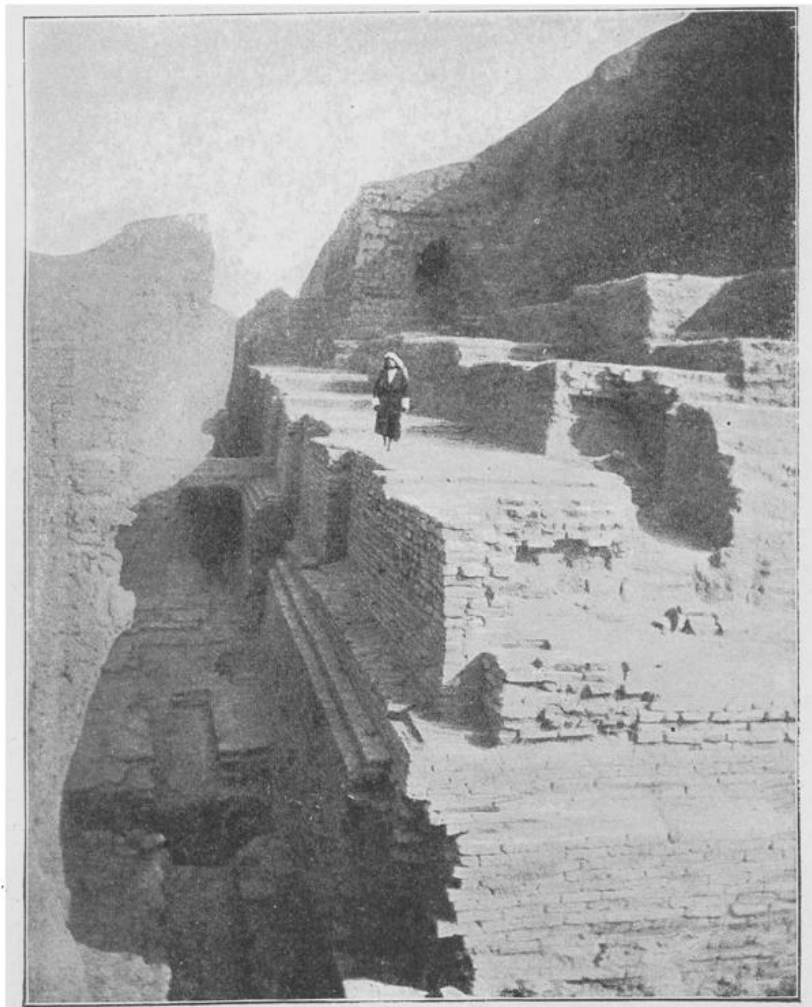
29. Ground Plan of Ekur, Temple of Bēl at Nippur.

Restored and designed by Hilprecht, drawn by Fisher.

A. Inner Court: 1. Ziggurat. 2. House of Bēl. 3. Front and rear gates. 4 and 5. Storage vaults. 6 and 7. Water conduits draining the ziggurat. 8. Shallow basin forming the junction of the water courses at the rear.

B. Outer Court: 1. Small Temple of Bēl. 2 and 3. Excavated portions of the enclosing walls. — excavated, - - - restored walls.

with his consort; here also the votive offerings of the nobles of the empire were deposited and the chief sacrifices offered to their deities. A small gate led out to the adjoining open space in the rear of the *ziggurat*. To the right of the main gate (3) is the treasury and the archives of the temple (4, 5), which were plundered by the Elamites. Between the temple of Bêl proper and the archives there were several water basins and a dolerite vase

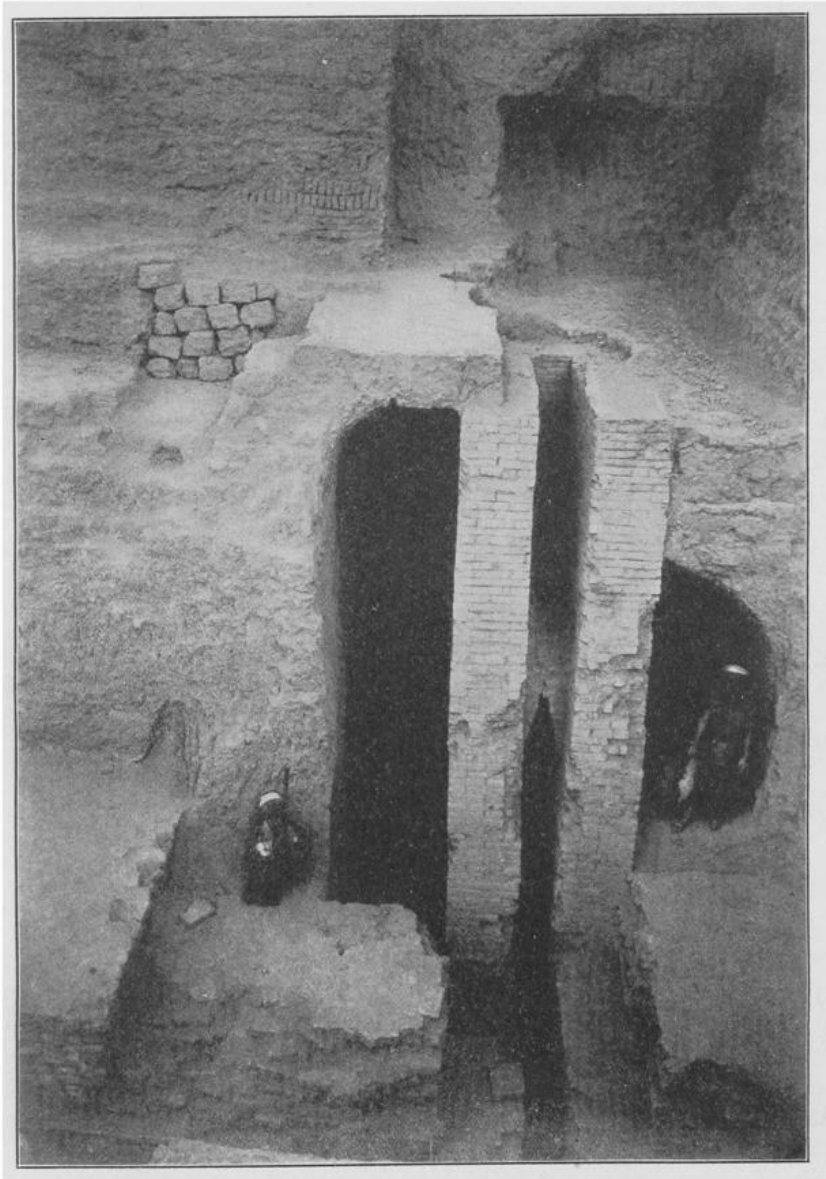


30. Northwestern Façade of the First Stage of the Tower of Nippur.
As restored by Ashurbānāpal about 650 B. C.

nearly a metre high, dedicated by Gudea, priest-prince of Lagash. They served for ritual purposes, like the "House of honey, milk, and wine"—three liquids playing an important part in the sacrifices—which was founded by Bur-Sin of Ur (about 2600 B. C.), and must have been situated originally to the right on the wall.

From a tablet taken from the library of the temple we learn that besides Bêl and Bêltis at least twenty-four other gods had their shrines and chapels in the temple at Nippur. The "City of Bêl," as the seat of the "kingdom of the four quarters of the world," which the great god granted to his earthly representative in his sanctuary on the Chebar, reflecting more than any other place in the entire kingdom the political rise and fall of Babylonia, it is at once a matter of course that the number of these lesser buildings and chapels was subject to continual change. But where must we look for all these twenty-four small temples? In the second year of our expedition a small shrine dedicated to Bêl, called *Kishaggûlla-Bur-Sin* ("Place of the delight of Bur-Sin"), had been exposed by Dr. Peters by means of a trial trench directly opposite to the *ziggurra*t (B, 1), in that part of the ruins which during our latest campaign I identified with the outer temple court. As the inner court did not offer sufficient space for so many chapels, and, moreover, no traces of any considerable number of buildings were disclosed there during our excavations, we may conclude, with a fair degree of certainty, that they all lay in the outer court. Apparently the large mass of pilgrims, having no access to the holy of holies of the temple, was permitted in this court, where at certain times of the year they assembled from all parts of the country, after the fashion of the Mecca pilgrims, in order to lay down their offerings and to perform their prayers at the most renowned sanctuary of Babylonia.

On account of the changes made during the Parthian period, it cannot be stated with certainty how many stages the high-towering *ziggurra*t had originally. The lowest stage, extended by Kadashman-Turgu $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. to the northeast, and restored for the last time by Ashurbânâpal, was somewhat over 6 m. high (Figure 30). Traces of probably two more stages were discovered inside of the mass encumbering it, while at the same time, on the shorter sides of the rectangular tower, the great water conduits were uncovered by Dr. Haynes. These conduits protected the *ziggurra*t, largely constructed with unburnt bricks, against the destructive action of the winter's rain (Figure 31). The votive offerings from about the time 4000-2500 B. C. found in the two temple courts are, unfortunately, often very fragmentary, because the Elamite hordes, which invaded and plundered Babylonia about the middle of the third millennium, according to Genesis 14 extending their raids even to the coast of the Mediterranean, played terrible havoc in the sanctuaries of Shumer and Akkad. Gold and silver and especially valuable works of art were carried off into the mountains to Susa, where the French expedition under De Morgan and Scheil has recently begun with great success to bring them to light again from the lowest strata. Vases and offerings of lesser value, bearing the name of the hated national god of the Babylonians, were broken or mutilated, the temple archives and libraries were ransacked, and their contents shattered on the walls. In perpetrating these sacrileges



31. Water Conduit in the Southwestern Façade of the Stage-tower.

the ancient hereditary enemies of Babylonian culture carried their reign of terror even to the present generation, for the best part of my time is spent in laboriously collecting and deciphering what Elamitic vandalism destroyed more than 4000 years ago.

Much better preserved are the numerous votive stones, account lists, and letters from the time of the Cassite kings (second millennium), who introduced the horse into Babylonia from the eastern mountains, lapis lazuli and chemically extremely pure magnesite in large quantities, likewise an imitation of lapis lazuli from colored glass—the oldest glass hitherto known in Mesopotamia. The general character of the 18,000 inscriptions of that time may be illustrated by three examples. First of all, we may mention as representative of

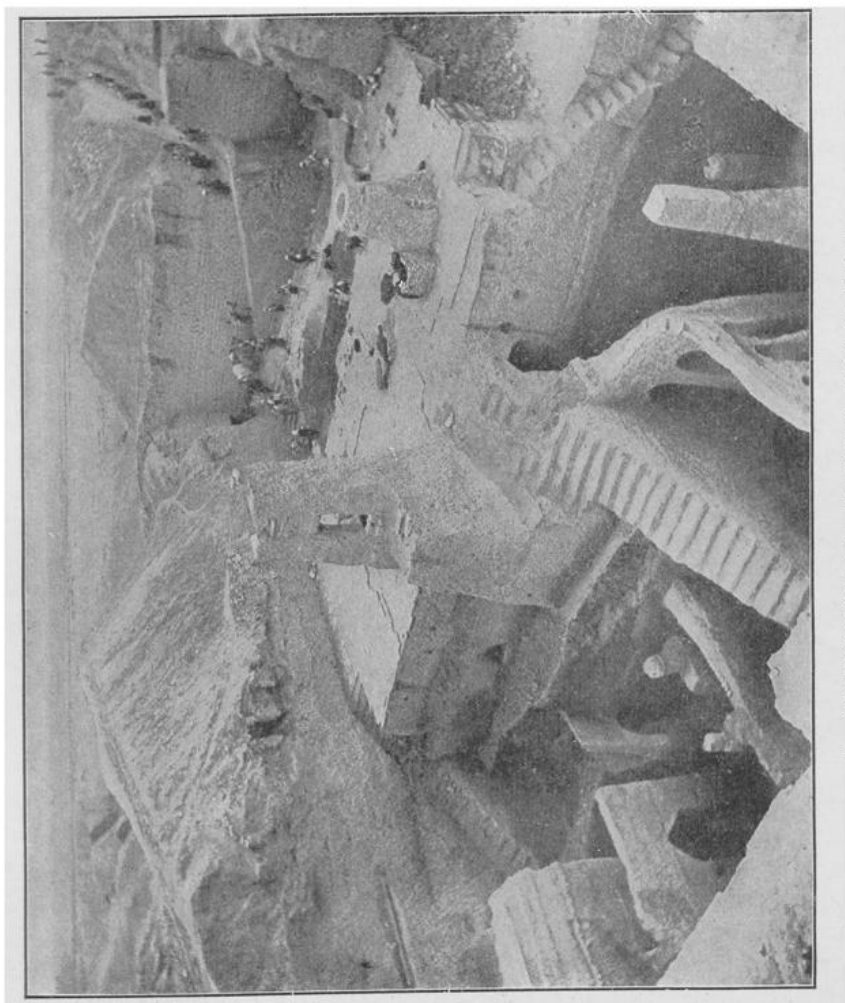


32. Votive Disk in Lapis Lazuli.

a whole number of similar antiquities a small, thin lapis lazuli disk. It bears the short votive inscription (Figure 32): "For the god Ninib, his lord, Kadashman-Turgu, the son of Nazi-Maruttash, made a disk of polished lapis lazuli and presented it for the preservation of his life." Or we refer to a fragmentary votive axe of Nazi-Maruttash himself in colored glass, with a highly poetical legend in which apparently a rhyme is intended. The inscription reads, as far as preserved, in Babylonian language and translation as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. | 1. To the god |
| 2. <i>Nazi-Maruttash</i> | 2. <i>Nazi-Maruttash</i> , |
| 3. <i>mâr Kurigalzu</i> | 3. son of Kurigalzu, |
| 4. <i>ikribishu ana sheme</i> | 4. that he may hear his prayer. |
| 5. <i>teslissu magâri</i> | 5. grant his supplication, |
| 6. <i>unnenishu leqé</i> | 6. accept his sigh |
| 7. <i>napishatshu naşâri</i> | 7. protect his life |
| 8. <i>ummishu urruke</i> | 8. and prolong his days |
| 9. | 9. [gave a votive axe in polished (imitation) lapis lazuli]. |

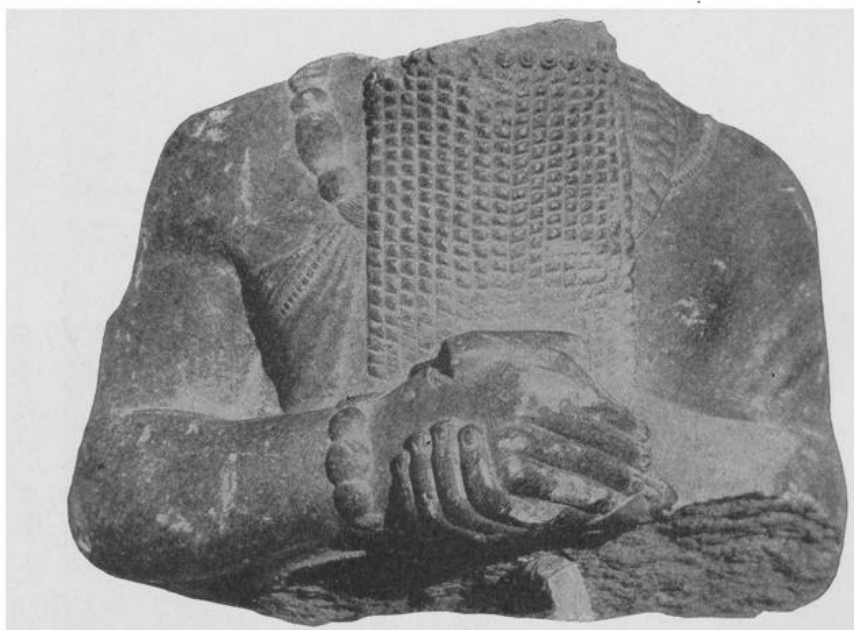
Of the many well-preserved account lists of that period when this foreign dynasty occupied the throne of Babylonia for 500 years, and the ancient sanctuary of Bêl at Nippur once more came to the front of religious and political life, at the expense of the younger Merodach of Babylon—at least one large tablet of temple revenues may be considered in this connection. Like thousands of similar documents, it is divided horizontally for the names of the persons paying and vertically for the months. The first six columns give the income for the first six months, consisting in dates; the somewhat broader seventh column the total amounts of the first half year; the eighth to thirteenth columns contain the single entries from July to December, according to our calendar, or from Tashrîtu to Addar (middle of September to middle of March), according to Babylonian reckoning; the fourteenth column contains the sum total for the



33. The Excavations in the Temple Court at Nippur.

second half of the year, and the fifteenth column the sum total of the revenues for the whole year; the sixteenth column some kind of an entry, and the last and broadest column the names of the persons paying (in other texts, of those receiving). Along with the so-called Amarna tablets these 18,000 Nippur texts, which are interesting in more than one way, are our main source for one of the darkest periods of Babylonian history. We may rightly expect important information from this almost entirely unpublished material, especially with regard to the internal condition of the country.

The number of the earlier monuments from the third and fourth millenniums has been considerably increased by the excavations of the third and



34. Torso of an Inscribed Statue in Dolerite, about 2700 B. C.
Original two-thirds of life-size.

fourth expeditions. They were found, as a rule, in a comparatively shallow layer, viz, in the débris covering the temple court between the third and fourth platforms (Figure 33). One of the largest and best preserved works of art is the torso of a statue in dolerite (Figure 34) two-thirds life-size, about 2700 B. C. In contrast to the well-known statues of Tellô the prince-priest is represented as bearded and wearing necklace and bracelets. He is evidently a Semite. The beard already shows the conventional style of braiding familiar to us in late-Assyrian monuments from the ninth to the seventh centuries. Besides we admire the first timid attempt of the Babylonian artist to reproduce the folds of the shawl covering the right breast, the swelling of the muscles on the right upper arm, and the delicately carved nails of the

slender fingers. The marble head of a Sumerian patesi from the south (Figure 35), adorned with a woolen cap, is about one hundred years older.

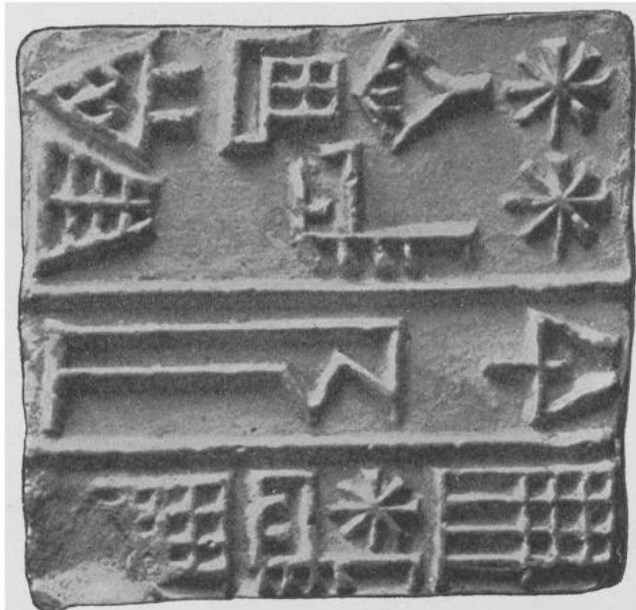


35. Marble Head
of a Sumerian *patesi*
(c. 2800 B. C.).

When we penetrate still deeper into the Semitic strata and have broken through the platform of Ur-Gur $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. thick, we may well exclaim, with Belshazzar's father, Nabonidos, the royal archaeologist of Babylonia, "What for millenniums no king amongst kings beheld—the old records of King Sargon of Akkad, I saw!" We stand in the presence of the golden age of Babylonian art, on the threshold of the fifth and fourth pre-Christian millennium. The elegance and regularity of the writing characteristic of the brick-stamps of Sargon and Narâm-Sin (Figure 36) and of all the other cuneiform tablets of their period, we find again

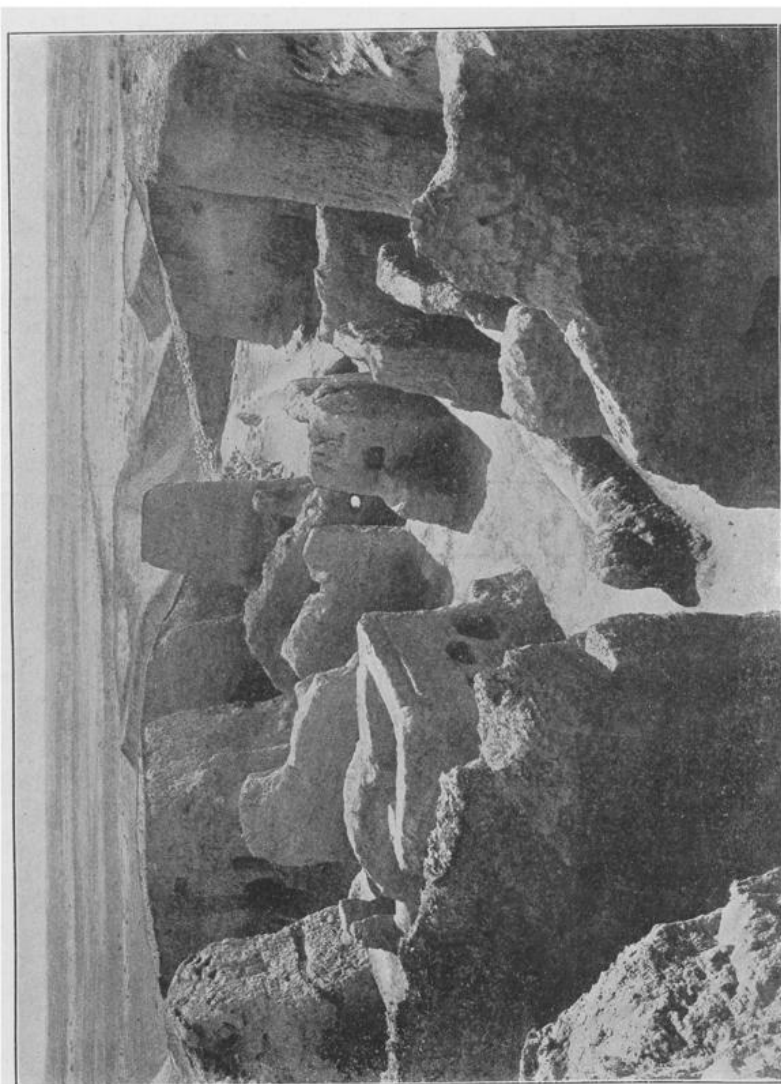
to the same extent only at the time of Ashurbânâpal, about 3000 years later. The Semitic usurper Sargon I. collected what the old Sumerian masters had accomplished in stone, brass, and clay before it was irreparably lost in the disturbances of a restless time and in the fierce struggles with invading tribes.

I cannot leave the Semitic period without sketching at least in a few words the contents of the famous temple library. As was indicated at the beginning of this lecture, I succeeded in proving the existence of two libraries lying one on top of the other in the triangular mound on the south side of the temple, which has an average elevation of almost 8 m. The chief value of



36. Brick-Stamp of Narâm-Sin.

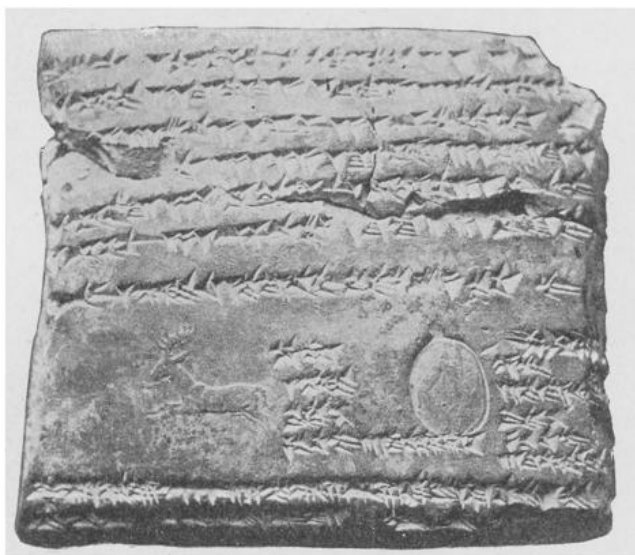
the later and far smaller collection of "clay books" consists in the fact that it contains tablets from more than three millenniums, which in part already were fragmentary at the neo-Babylonian period, when the priests of Nippur



37. Northeast Wing of the Temple Library and Priest-School of Nippur.

carried on excavations in the ruined parts of their city. Yet this later library has been completely eclipsed in importance and variety of contents by the 23,000 texts of the older library, which was in ruins 200 years before Hammurabi ascended the throne and restored peace and order in Shumer and Akkad.

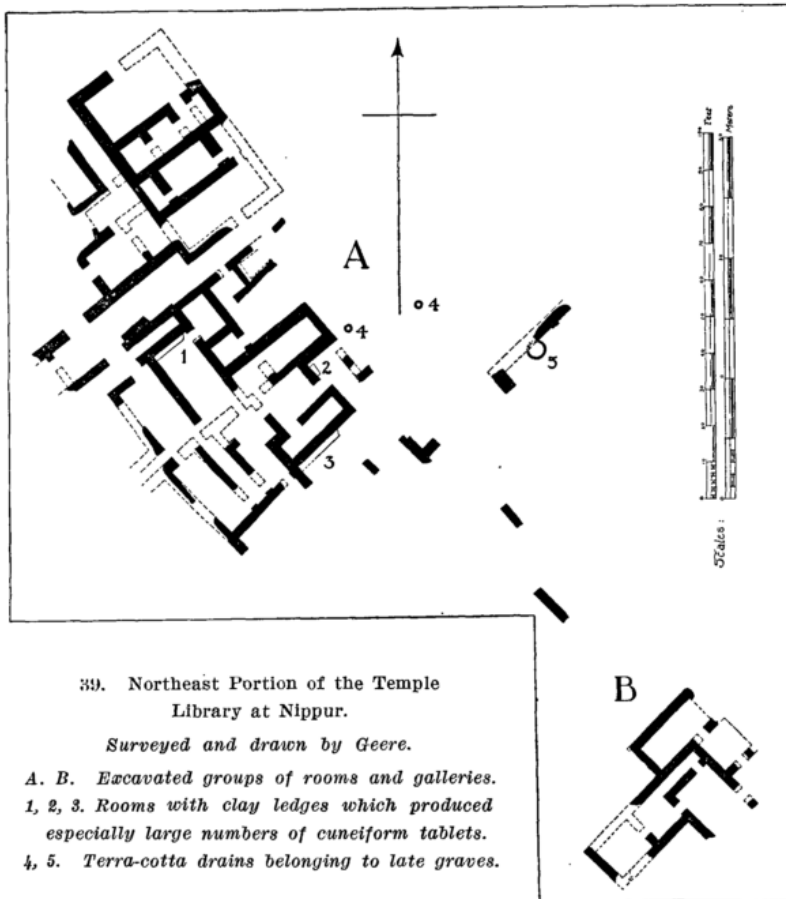
With what lively interest the neo-Babylonian scholars themselves not only excavated, as mentioned above, but followed up other excavations like those of King Nabonidos in Sippara and Akkad, is proved by a unique antiquity in the possession of the University of Pennsylvania. It is a tablet made of finely washed but unevenly burnt clay, slightly curved on its two longer edges. On the one side stands in inverted raised letters an inscription (well known to us, from Nippur) of King Sargon I. (about 3800 B. C.): "Sargon, the powerful king of the subjects of Bêl." On the other side there is written in the characteristic cuneiform writing of the sixth century an explanatory note to the effect that the whole is a clay impression (*zîpu*) of a monument preserved in the palace of King Narâm-Sin at Akkad, which the writer, Nabû-zêr-lîshir, has seen with his own eyes. What a well-developed archaeological interest in ancient Babylonia!



38. Clay Tablet with Seal Impressions from the Archives of Murashû Sons. Time of Artaxerxes I. (465-424 B. C.).

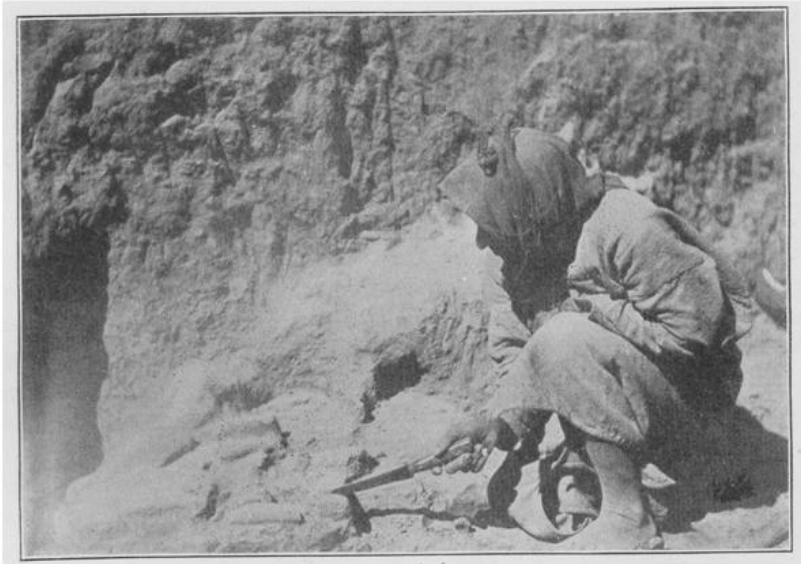
The unique value of the older library (Figure 37) lies in the fact that it will enable us to determine to what height the intellectual attainments of the Babylonians had reached about 2500 B. C. The library with the priest-school of the third millennium was divided into two separate sections, the one purely practical, for business purposes situated on the canal, and the other for religious and scientific purposes near the entrance to the temple. For very apparent reasons the business documents are, as a rule, of burnt clay, the literary of unburnt. The former treat mainly of the extensive administration of the temple, incomes and expenditures, tithes and various other kinds of offerings, building and repairing of houses, planting and irrigating of landed property,

buying and selling of animals, hiring and renting of slaves, weaving of garments and manufacturing of jewelry for the statues of the gods, the daily occupations of the priests, the cost of their maintenance, etc. We get the impression from those documents that the great temple of Bêl in many ways was not essentially different from large Babylonian mercantile firms and banking houses. I need only mention the house of Egibi & Sons, in the capital of Nebuchadrezzar, and the firm Murashû Sons, at Nippur, in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (Figure 38).



Of far greater importance to us is the religious and scientific section of the temple library, with the schoolrooms, of which up to date only forty apartments, *i. e.*, about the sixth part of this whole division, have been excavated. The rooms marked on the plan as Nos. 1, 2, and 3 (Figure 39) contained cuneiform tablets by the thousands. A few still lay on the low clay ledges of these rooms indicated in the drawing. Others had fallen down

from wooden shelves, rotted away, or were purposely destroyed. Most of them were lying in wild confusion on the floors of the rooms and adjoining corridors, exactly as they were scattered and broken by the barbarous mountain-tribes more than 4000 years ago. Not only had the unburnt tablets suffered heavily from human devastation, but they had also been injured from the dampness and salts of the surrounding soil. They were often so little to be distinguished from the débris that they had to be most carefully cut out with the knife (Figure 40). At other times large clods of earth filled with tablets were removed from the mounds and deposited in our *mestûl*, where they were allowed to dry slowly. After a few weeks they began to crack open, so that the tablets could be recognized and uncovered.



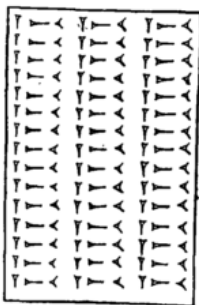
40. Arab Workman cutting unbaked Cuneiform Tablets out with a Knife.

Among the rooms excavated, the instruction rooms, in which the students learned the art of tablet-writing and were initiated into the different branches of Babylonian learning, occupy a most important place. A wonderful picture of zealous teaching and learning is unrolled before our eyes. The scholar was first instructed in the art of making clay tablets. A large number of unwritten tablets, of which many are very clumsily made, bear testimony to this. Then they commenced practicing the three wedges of which cuneiform writing consists. First, each one was written singly (Figure 41), then all three together (Figure 42)—exactly as we teach Assyrian to-day—till the Babylonian “professor” was satisfied with the work of his pupils. When the preliminary difficulties were overcome, they were drilled in writing the simple

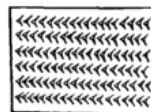
syllabic signs, without regard to contents. The scholar had to combine them according to a certain system by which the same sign was retained at the beginning of each line followed at first by the easier, and later by the more complicated cuneiform characters. Thus I read on one of the exercise-tablets:

1. *ba-a*. 2. *ba-mu*. 3. *ba-ba-mu*. 4. *ba-ni*. 5. *ba-ni-ni*. 6. *ba-ni-ia*. 7. *ba-ni-nu*. On another, and somewhat more difficult, was written: 1. *za-an-tur*. 2. *za-an-tur-tur*. 3. *za-an-ka*. 4. *za-an-ka-ka*. 5. *za-an-ka-a*. 6. *za-an-ka-mu*, etc. On still another tablet the student had made no less than four mistakes in five lines. Whether he was "kept in," flogged, or reprimanded I cannot yet tell.

We cannot, of course, attempt here to give even a general survey of the entire course of instruction in the "philosophical faculty of the University of Nippur" in the third pre-Christian millennium. It is possible that even then, as in the time of Daniel (1:4, 5), the course covered three years. As soon as the pupil was fairly familiar with the cuneiform signs, he had to make grammatical exercises, to write proper names ideographically and phonetically, in their full and abbreviated form, or, as on a number of exercise-tablets excavated, to write two nouns together, of which the second stands in the genitive relation to the first. He analyzed Sumerian verbal-forms, constructed small sentences, translated into the Semitic dialect of Babylonia, writing out a list of the words he did not know. If the pupil was particularly ignorant, a circumstance peculiarly favorable for our purpose, he wrote down nearly all the words which occurred in his exercise, so that, without knowing the original, we can guess the general trend of it.



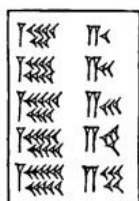
42. Exercise Tablet.
The three elements of
cuneiform writing.



41. Exercise
Tablet.
The angular hook.

Instruction in drawing was likewise given. We have a whole series of tablets on which there are straight and oblique lines, zigzags, latticework, and similar forms. Then they advanced to free-hand drawing from patterns or from nature, with sometimes rather amusing results on the part of untalented pupils. Some of these drawings may represent caricatures. Later on they proceeded to modeling, carving reliefs and figures, engraving, cutting seals, etc. This much can already be clearly seen, the instruction was given methodically. Even humorous representations, which we would scarcely have expected of the ancient Babylonians, occur sometimes among the objects excavated. I refer to a clay-relief (Figure 43) from the priest-school, in which a shepherd playing the lute is accompanied by the long-drawn howl of his dog standing in front of him with open mouth. The instruction in surveying fields, gardens, walls, canals, etc., could be illustrated by means of quite a number of tablets.

Especial attention was given to arithmetic, mathematics, and astronomy. First the pupil was drilled in the use of the sexagesimal system. In Figure 44, *e. g.*, we read $60 + 7 \times 10 = 2 \times 60 + 10$; $60 + 8 \times 10 = 2 \times 60 + 20$, etc. The multiplication table was studied in a really phenomenal manner. A great many of these multiplication tables, arranged according to series, have been preserved, among them several duplicates. The one published here (Figure 45) contains the 1×6



44. Calculation Tablet.

(to 60). I have had in my hands such tablets up to 1×1350 . Probably many of them were used like our tables of logarithms, as reference books, giving the results of the multiplication of large numbers, especially needed in astronomical calculations; for the last-mentioned class of tablets is well represented (Figure 46). I mention only a very detailed statement concerning certain observations of Virgo and Scorpion, which, like many others of the same kind, closes with the words: *kiâm nepeshu*, "thus is the calculation."

No less valuable are the numerous old-Babylonian syllabaries and lists, with their phonetical value added in smaller writing. As they are often in a fine state of preservation, we have reason to believe that our knowledge of the Sumerian language will be extended considerably by them. Highly important also are the lists of different measures, the synonyms of whole classes of words, the lists of countries, mountains, plants, etc. It may be mentioned that texts of special importance were inscribed on four-, five-, six-, and eight-sided clay prisms (Figure 47). For the history of the third millennium a series of chronologically arranged lists of dates are of special interest. The mass of the religious, mythological, and astrological texts still lie buried in the triangular mound, though we have already collected about 500 tablets of this important branch of literature. They are generally of a very large size, but for this very reason, unfortunately, much damaged. So far, principally the schoolrooms and the linguistic-grammatical and mathematical-astronomical rooms have been excavated. From this circumstance alone



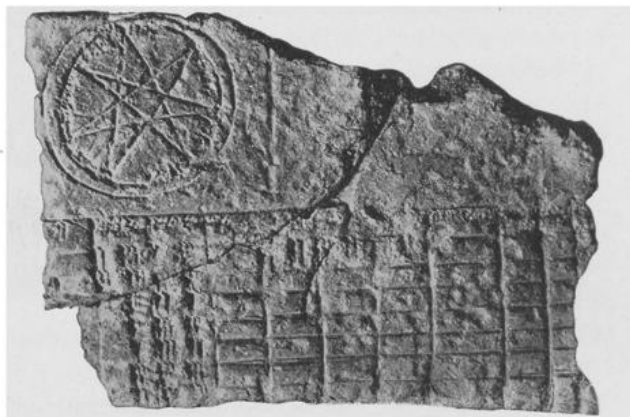
43. Shepherd playing the Lute.
Surrounded by his animals.



45. Multiplication Table.
 $1 \times 6 = 6$.

it can be concluded that the library was arranged on scientific principles, and according to subjects.

Of the numerous letters from the time of the first Babylonian and Cassite dynasties, taken partly from the library, partly from the business houses on the west bank of the Chebar, one dating from about 2300 B. C. may be briefly referred to (Figure 49). It is at present still inside of its original clay envelope, which is sealed on each of the six sides twice with the same seal, con-



46. Astronomical Tablet.

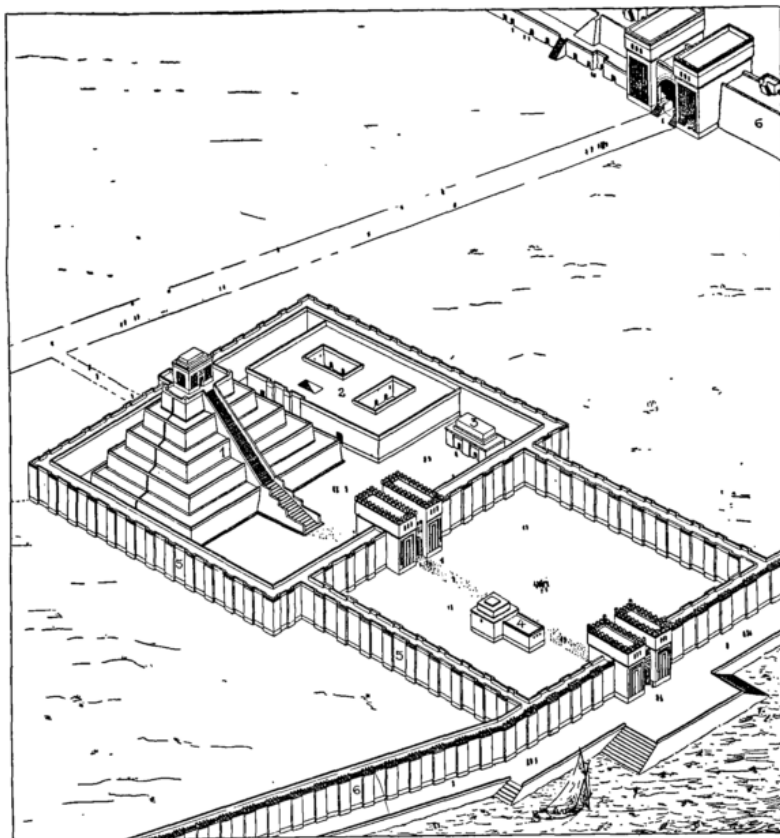


47. Hexagonal Clay Prism.

taining name and profession of the sender, and is addressed on the front side "to Lushtamar." A new catastrophe befell Nippur before the letter could be sent off. Fully occupied at present by my laborious work on the temple library, I have, in spite of a very pardonable curiosity, not yet found time to open the envelope and acquaint myself with the private correspondence of Mr. Lushtamar.

Thus the temple of Bêl (Figure 48), in the history of its last 4000 years, stands before us as the central place of worship of the older Babylonia, as the seat of an influential priest-school and finely equipped library, and even as a politically important centre, where the king of Shumer and Akkad, as Bêl's representative on earth, received from the hands of the priest-prince the "kingdom of the four quarters of the world" as a gift of grace from his god, during all this stirring period of history.

Before I close, a word must be said about the oldest, *i. e.*, the prehistoric or Sumerian, period of the sanctuary. At what time the transition from the Sumerian to the Semitic occupation took place cannot yet be determined accurately. About 4000 B. C. the Semitic conquerors were in possession of the country. As soon as we break through the platform of Narâm-Sin we meet with many peculiarities. During the period just treated the bricks were generally square, reaching their largest size (about 40 to 50 cm.) under the dynasty of Sargon I. (about 3800 B. C.), while soon afterward they were



48. Ekur, the Temple of Bêl at Nippur.

First attempt at a restoration by Hilprecht and Fisher.

1 Stage-tower with shrine on the top. 2. The temple proper. 3. "House for honey, cream, and wine." 4. "Place of the delight of Bur-Sin." 5. Inner wall (Imgur-Marduk). 6. Outer wall (Nmit-Marduk).

made only 30 to 33 cm. square, retaining this uniform size through more than 3000 years, down to the days of Ashurbânâpal and Nebuchadrezzar. Instead of these large, square bricks we find the so-called plano-convex bricks



49. Letter in Clay Envelope.
"To *Lushtamar*."

in the four pre-Sargonic layers easily to be recognized. These are small, rectangular bricks (in the earlier period rounded at the corners) with flat bottom and a more or less convex upper surface (Figure 50). On the convex surface they often show one or two impressions made with the finger, or one or more grooves running lengthwise and drawn with the finger or a reed. Some have both grooves and finger imprints. In their oldest form only 17 to 20 cm. long, they resemble roughly hewn stones, of which they are apparently an imitation (comp. Genesis 11). In accordance with the statement in the chapter of the Bible just quoted, bitumen is almost exclusively the mortar used in the buildings of the lower strata at Nippur; and it is not merely a coincidence that the oldest burnt

bricks in Babylonia occur in connection with wells and cisterns, which were of such paramount importance for life and prosperity in the interior of the country. The symbol for brick is evidently connected with the peculiar fashion in which the bricks of these oldest wells were laid—known in architecture as "herring-bone."

If we now ask, what do these prehistoric strata of the temple complex contain, in the lowest three or four metres of which burnt bricks are not yet



50. Pre-Sargonic Plano-Convex Bricks in their Historical Development.

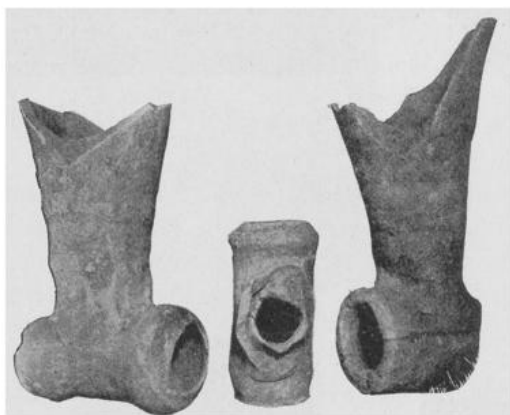
found, though the burning of pottery has long been practiced, we must distinguish between the temple proper and its environments. By a number of galleries dug into the interior of the stage-tower it was ascertained that 4.20 m. inside the face of the lower stage of the *ziggurrat* built by Ur-Gur (about 2700 B. C.) there lies buried an earlier Sumerian tower, extending still further down, so that the Sumerians, and not the Semites, must be regarded as



51. The Earliest Babylonian Arch known.
From the inside of a vaulted tunnel.

the inventors of these peculiar stage-towers. I had reached this conclusion even before by considering that all these towers bear distinctly Sumerian names, and that the older Tellô inscriptions seem already to refer to such towers. The low separating wall of the oldest sanctuary of Nippur, which is still preserved, incloses a considerably smaller space than the later strong fortification wall.

The sanctuary was drained in a most remarkable manner. Four and a half metres below Narâm-Sin's platform the expedition made an epoch-making discovery, the far-reaching importance of which I discovered only during our latest campaign. Directly beneath the ancient inclosing wall opened a vault about 1 m. high, built in the form of an arch (Figure 51). It belongs without doubt to the fifth millennium, and the mere fact of its existence at that early time reflects unfavorably upon the drainage system



52. Knee- and T-Joints in Terra-cotta.

of most of our great European and American cities in the twentieth century of our own era. In the "kingdom of Nimrod" it was not necessary to tear up the pavement whenever an underground pipe burst; for this structure is not a mere subterranean canal for drainage, but an arched passage, in the bottom of which are imbedded in cement, as can be plainly seen in the picture, two clay pipes of about 15 cm. diameter alongside each other.

If one of them burst, a workman crept into the vault and repaired the damage without further difficulty. Why two pipes? Apparently in order to drain the water, which ran into the vault at the southeast corner of the *ziggurra*t, from two different directions. About 500 knee- and T-joints (Figure 52) found in the vicinity show us that even at that early time they understood how to unite drainage pipes meeting at right angles.

Allow me to illustrate the art of that ancient period by means of at least two examples. The marble head given in the next illustration (Figure 53) belongs to a nation which shaved head and beard. Such fine pieces of art, unfortunately often mutilated, have been found in Nippur, Tellô, and other ancient ruins. In a head from Nippur the artist has formed the white of the eyes with shell, the pupils with brown stone, and the eyelids and eyebrows with inlaid silver. The other work of art is the wonderful bronze head of a goat, with twisted horns, from Fâra. There exist two specimens, one almost

life-size and the other somewhat smaller (Figure 54). As tin was apparently either little or not at all known, the necessary hardness and capacity for treatment of the copper was obtained by an addition of antimony. The eyes and ornaments on the head of the animal are also made of inlaid shell and stones, evidently without difficulty.

How long a historical development must have preceded before such works of art could be produced in the fifth millennium is at present beyond our power to judge. The high achievements of that period in the domain of technique and science; the highly developed system of writing (the single signs of which in most cases no longer resemble the picture they originally represented); the evident decay of the language in which, to a striking degree, roots of originally different endings have become identical after having lost their final consonants,—all these facts will bear out my statement (and



53. Marble Head of a Sumerian
(c. 4000 B. C.).



54. Markhur Goat in Copper. From Fâra (c. 4000 B. C.).

anthropologists may well smile at this low estimate) that at least 1000 to 2500 years are required for such a development from the first beginnings of human civilization, especially in view of the 4 to 5 m. of ruins lying below the arch.

On penetrating down to the water level outside the inclosure walls of the sanctuary I found everywhere fragments of vases (Figure 55), horizontal and vertical drainage canals, ashes, and other remains of burning. Together with these were excavated a number of urns, in a fine state of preservation, in spite of the heavy mass lying for millenniums above them. This was the fire necropolis of the ancient Sumerians sleeping their long sleep around the sanctuary of their god (Figure 56).

What then, we may well ask, was the original significance of the *ziggurat* of Nippur?

The first of its four names, *Imkharsag*, designates it as "Mountain of the wind," upon which the lord (*En*) of the wind (*Lil*), of storm and lightning, viz, *En-lil*, the god of all the atmospheric phenomena (with whom the Semitic god Bêl, *i. e.*, "Lord," later became identical), sits enthroned; whence he hurls down upon the earth his thunderbolts, with which he is often represented. As a place of oracle for men, the tower is called *Esagash*, "House of decision." Descending deep into the ground, where, according to Sumerian

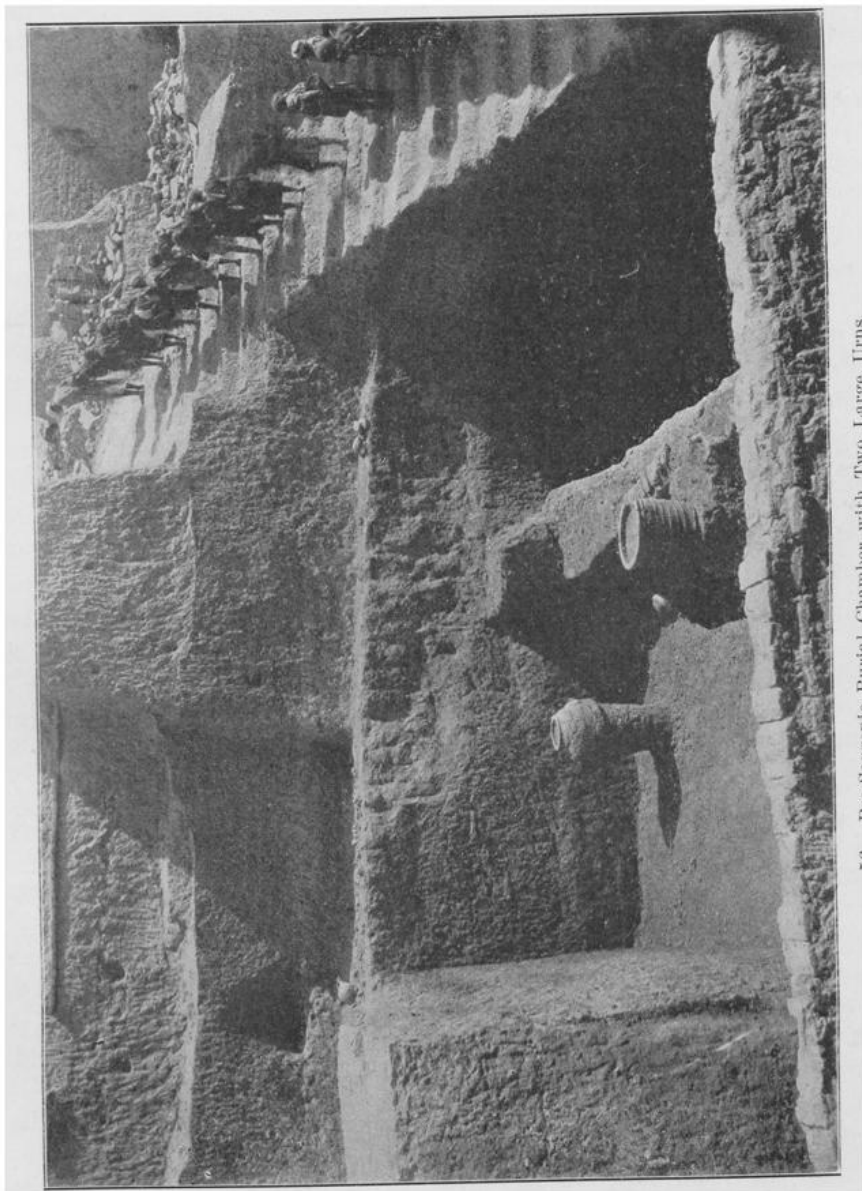


55. Pre-Sargonic Cup
in Terra-cotta.

conception, the departed spirits live in Hades, it is designated in one inscription as *Egigunû*, "House of the grave," *i. e.*, *pars pro toto*, "House of the lower world." In its vicinity accordingly the dead were buried. The fourth comprehensive name, *Duranki*, calls it "Link of heaven and earth." The stage-tower therefore is nothing else than the representation of a cosmic-religious idea, the local representation of the great mythological mountain of the gods, which the old Babylonians imagined as situated in the far north, rising from the lower world to the earth's surface and reaching unto heaven (comp. Genesis, chap. 11). It was a kind of Olympus, upon which the gods were

born as "children of Bêl," which in a later text, however, in reference to its other character, is designated as *shad Aralû*, "Mountain of the lower world."

In the earliest Sumerian period therefore the tower of Enlil represented in its upper part the dwelling place of the "father of the gods," enthroned in heaven, in the middle a place of worship for man on earth, and in the lower part, reaching down into Hades, a place around which the dead rest—a truly grand conception of a sanctuary in earliest Babylonian history, which to a certain extent has been retained even to modern times in the Christian churches surrounded by their graveyards. According to our present knowledge, it was not until the Semitic invasion that not only arts and science, but also religion, began to degenerate. After the time of Sargon I. the burials in the vicinity of the temple cease quite suddenly in Nippur until the Parthian



56. Pre-Sargonic Burial Chamber with Two Large Urns.
In the foreground the sacred enclosure of the earliest temple at Nippur.

period. In spite of all that has been written about it, and in spite of several cuneiform references to royal tombs, we have not yet learned from the methodical excavations where and how the Semitic inhabitants of Babylonia buried their dead. In Lagash (Tellô), where apparently the old Sumerian traditions survived longest, Gudea carried out the same reformation, about 2800 B. C., which the Sargon dynasty had effected in Nippur. In connection with the reconstruction of the temple the old graves were spared, but henceforth no new ones allowed. "A burial urn was not broken, portions (or remains) of bodies not injured" (Statue B, col. V, 10); "on the burial place of the city . . . a corpse was not buried" (col. V, 2); "mourning women uttered no [longer] lamentations" (col. V, 4); "he made the temple of Ningirsu a clean place like Eridu" (col. IV, 7-9).

But the new race, with its new customs and habits, its new gods and its new religion, soon forgot or at least essentially weakened and changed the significance of these stage-towers, however much it adapted itself to the conditions of civilization and worship formerly prevailing in Babylonia. In connection with the invaders' worship of dead kings and heroes these towers were gradually regarded as the burial places of the light-gods and sun-gods. Gudea constructed the mausoleum of his god Ningirsu in the temple of Lagash; Hammurabi, according to his code of laws, recently discovered at Susa, adorned with green, the color of resurrection, the tomb of the sun-goddess, Ai, at Sippar; and Nabonidos, Babylonia's last independent king, in a passage hitherto entirely misunderstood by Assyriologists, clearly designates the stage-tower at Larsa (the Biblical Ellasar, Genesis 14:1) as "the grave of the sun-god." The reports of the classical writers, so often disputed, concerning the "tower of Babel" as the "tomb of Bêl," are based accordingly on authentic cuneiform sources.

We have seen a development of thousands of years pass hurriedly before our eyes. In the course of time an extraordinary change has taken place in Nippur, as well as in entire Babylonia. Ancient Sumerian art and science have gradually degenerated under the Semitic invaders. It is true in certain epochs of national importance a laudable renaissance took place, and much that is worthy of recognition was accomplished in many departments in the days of the kings of Ur, of a Hammurabi, of the PA-SHE dynasty, of an Ashurbânâpal, and a Nebuchadrezzar; but compared with that highly developed civilization on the threshold of the fifth and fourth millenniums, the new shoots are only miserable aftergrowths of a great period of independent creation long past.

And the same must be said with regard to religion. The Sumerian Pantheon, in which the great trio of gods, Anum, Enlil, and Enki, and especially Enlil of Nippur, as "father" and "king of the gods," occupies the most prominent place, received a very considerable addition under the Semites.

Since Sargon I. even great Babylonian rulers had a decided predilection for declaring themselves gods of their subjects. Suffice it to mention Sargon himself, Narâm-Sin, Gudea, Dungi among many others, who after a certain time of their reign put the title of god before their name, or received it from their subjects. In their honor even temples were built and new cults introduced. The stage-pyramids of Nippur, Larsa, Sippar, Babylon, and other cities, formerly designated by their builders, with their lofty aspirations, as "the link between heaven and earth" (*Duranki*), or as "the foundation of heaven and earth" (*Etemenanki*), or by similar appellations, have become the tombs of Bêl, Shamash, Marduk, etc. A whole great nation, with its brilliant inheritance of an ancient civilization, with its admirable gifts, its intellectual maturity, has perished with the confession on its lips: "our gods are dead"—an impressive, a terrible picture! It is true these gods return with the approach of spring for a time to the upper world, but the dirge for their annual dying forms an important part of their cult, and the mighty stage-towers, as graves of the gods, give to the temples their characteristic feature.

Shall we in the face of such historical facts and actual discoveries expect a new heaven from Babel—helps for the setting aside of the unique nature of the god of Israel and the character of the Old Testament writings as documents of a revealed religion? How does Israel's confession of faith run: "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Ps. 121:4), much less die! "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4). "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God" (Isaiah 44:6). The gods of the Babylonians were created like other beings and things, if we may believe their own words in the cuneiform legend of creation: "When above the heavens were not yet named, below the earth not yet called, then were the gods formed." Therefore they acted quite logically in Babylonia in finally making the gods die also. According to the Biblical account, however, it was God who in the beginning created heaven and earth, and it was the spirit of God that moved on the waters, as the one that had been and therefore always will be.

But this unity of all gods, *Elôhîm*, this eternal being, *Jehovah* (*Jahve*) of the Old Testament, is he not a very exclusive, intolerant, and narrow-minded god of Israel, "the god belonging only and exclusively to Israel?" I would refer to the spirit of Jonah's mission and to other passages in order to grasp his full essence. But let us, rather, hear what Israel's greatest prophet, Isaiah, says, who in his holy wrath against the enemies of his people and of his god certainly did not treat them forbearingly: "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, for that the Lord of hosts hast blest them, saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance'" (Isaiah 19:24, 25). The isolated position of Israel in his own days appears

to the prophet himself only as a temporary one, conditioned by the natural course of history.

The question, perfectly justified in itself, "Is Jahve really a peculiarly Israelitish god?" has often been discussed in former times. Naturally one has also looked to Babylonia for its solution, and lately the bold theory has been advanced: "Even here [in the question of monotheism] Babel has very recently opened to us a new and unexpected prospect": for it is claimed that Jahve, probably the original pronunciation of Jehovah, has been found in proper names as early as the time of Hammurabi (*i. e.*, about 2300 B. C.) among the Semitic nomadic tribes which invaded Babylonia toward the middle of the third millennium. If only this interpretation could be relied upon! In fact many interpretations are possible, and the majority of Assyriologists, the speaker included, rightly consider that explanation as a rather improbable and bold one. And names like "Jahu is god" do not play such an important part in the question as one would like to assign to them. On the contrary, we expect their early existence even from the Biblical point of view. Likewise names such as "God has given" (*i. e.*, the god of the tribe referred to, not "God" in our sense of the word, as God of the whole universe) are entirely irrelevant to the burning question.

Even the theory maintained by several Assyriologists "that free, enlightened minds openly taught that Nergal and Nebo, the moon-god and the sun-god, the thunder-god Ramman, and all other gods were united in Marduk, the god of light," must be taken *cum grano salis*. The principal text advanced for this allows of another explanation, if not of several. I myself take Marduk in that passage as appellative for "god," just as Enlil (Bêl) for lord (*bêlu*), used by Nebuchadrezzar, and Ishtar for "goddess" in many well-known cuneiform inscriptions.

A pure monotheism and a unique prophetism, the voice of the national conscience never entirely slumbering in Israel, are the insurmountable barrier which still divides Israel from the ancient heathenish nations, although the people of the Old Testament show in their outer appearance all the characteristics of their race and time, and deeply marked traces of foreign influence from Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, and elsewhere. With all the means of exact science at our command we rightly seek to penetrate the great mystery, which, as it were, lifts the people of the Old Covenant out of all historical connection, stamping it as a miracle among the nations. But I believe the way to this knowledge and truth does not lead through Babel, although we shall always remain deeply indebted, above all, to the Babylonian inscriptions which to an extraordinary degree have thrown light upon the Old Testament in the past, and doubtless will do so in future.

I have outlined to you my own conception of the course of Babylonian history and civilization during the 3000 to 4000 years preceding our era, as the

result of my archaeological and historical investigations carried on during the last fourteen years in connection with the actual finds of our expedition. It is a history of degeneration, reflected in the words of Isaiah, which I placed at the beginning of my lecture: "How are thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning," from the height of intellectual acquirements and knowledge at the beginning of thy history down to thy final sad destruction!

But the curse will not always lie on the unhappy land. Isaiah himself has promised a change; and unless all signs are deceptive, it is even now at the dawn of a general resurrection. The last time when I gazed over the wide fields of Babylonia from the top of the temple of Bêl, a sacred calm lay over the ruin-covered plain of Shumer and Akkad; grazing herds and cheerful life as far as my eye could scan the horizon. The dry bones of this vast graveyard began to rise and be clad again with sinews and flesh under Jehovah's life-breathing spirit that blew softly through the land of Bêl. Unmistakable signs of a new and more peaceful development of the country's inexhaustible resources were visible everywhere. A great movement and expectation had taken possession of the tribes of the interior—how often did they reveal to me their hopes and asked about what was stirring their souls! This change was brought about partly by the energetic measures of the Ottoman authorities in connection with the purchase and rational farming of large tracts of land as crown-estates for the Sultan, partly as the result of the scientific missions from Europe and America. The foreign excavators introduced new ideas into the country, made the inhabitants acquainted with important inventions, and, above all, taught them the value of time and the blessing of work, thus preparing the way for the projected Turkish-German railroad, which undoubtedly is destined to play the principal rôle in the reawakening life of Shumer and Akkad.

