

CHAPTER V

SENNACHERIB; THE HISTORICAL TEXTS

231. The very abundant historical and building records (these are usually combined in the documents) which have come to us from the reign of Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) are here arranged as in the writer's work mentioned in the next paragraph. The historical sections are given in chronological order with the exception of the final edition of the annals, which is put first. The sections of the records which describe the king's building operations have also been separated from their historical introductions.

I. THE FINAL EDITION OF THE ANNALS

232. The final edition of Sennacherib's annals forms the text of the famous Taylor Prism of the British Museum, published in IR, Plates 37 f., and in the different editions of Delitzsch's *Assyrische Lesestücke*. In 1920 the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago acquired an even more perfect copy of this text, which was published by Luckenbill in *The Annals of Sennacherib*, "Oriental Institute Publications," Vol. II. The Taylor Prism is dated in the eponymy of Bêlemuranni, 691 B.C.; the Oriental Institute prism, in the eponymy of Gahilu, 689 B.C. The numbering of the lines in the following translation is that of the latter prism.

Introduction (Col. I, ll. 1-19)

233. Sennacherib, the great king, the mighty king, king of the universe, king of Assyria, king of the four quarters (of the earth); the wise ruler (*lit.*, shepherd, "pastor"), favorite of the great gods, guardian of the right, lover of justice; who lends support, who comes to the aid of the needy, who turns (his thoughts) to pious deeds; perfect hero, mighty man; first among all princes, the flame that consumes the insubmissive, who strikes the wicked with the thunderbolt; the god Assur, the great mountain, has intrusted to me an unrivaled king-

ship, and, above all those who dwell in palaces, has made powerful my weapons; from the upper sea of the setting sun to the lower sea of the rising sun, all humankind (*lit.*, the black-headed race) he has brought in submission at my feet and mighty kings feared my warfare—leaving their abodes and flying alone, like the *sudinnu*, the bird of the cave (? cliffs) to (some) inaccessible place.

First campaign. Against Merodach-baladan of Babylon; tribute from the Aramean tribes on the lower Euphrates (Col. I, ll. 20-64)

234. In my first campaign I accomplished the defeat of Merodach-baladan, king of Babylonia, together with the army of ~~Elam~~ ally, in the plain of Kish. In the midst of that battle he forsook his camp and made his escape alone; (so) he saved his life. The chariots, horses, wagons, mules, which he left behind at the onset of battle, my hands seized. Into his palace, which is in Babylon, joyfully I entered. I opened his treasure-house:—gold, silver, vessels of gold and silver, precious stones of every kind (name), goods and property without limit (number), heavy tribute, his harem, (his) courtiers and officials, singers, male and female, all of his artisans, as many as there were, the servants of his palace, I brought out, I counted as spoil. In the might of Assur, my lord, 75 of his strong, walled cities, of Chaldea, and 420 small cities of their environs, I surrounded, I conquered, their spoil I carried off. The Arabs, Arameans, and Chaldeans, who were in Erech, Nippur, Kish, Harsagkalamma, Kutha and Sippar, together with the citizens, the rebels (*lit.*, sinners), I brought out, as booty I counted them. On my return (march), the Tu'muna, Rihihu, Iadakku, Ubudu, Kibrê, Malahu, Gurumu, Ubulu, Damunu, Gambulu, Hindaru, Ru'ûa, Pukudu, Hamrânu, Hagarânu, Nabatu, Li'tâu, Arameans (who were) not submissive, all of them I conquered. 208,000 people, great and small, male and female, horses,

mules, asses, camels, cattle and sheep, without number, a heavy booty, I carried off to Assyria.

235. In the course of my campaign, I received from Nabû-bêl-shumâte, governor of the city of Hararate, gold, silver, great mulberry (? *musukkani*) trees, asses, camels, cattle and sheep, as his onerous contribution. The people (*lit.*, subjects) of the city of Hirimme, wicked enemies, I cut down with the sword. Not one escaped. Their corpses I hung on stakes, surrounding the city (with them). That district (province) I reorganized. One ox, 10 lambs, 10 *homers* of wine, 20 *homers* of dates, its choicest, (as gifts) for the gods of Assyria, my lords, I established for all time.

Second campaign. Against the tribes east of the Tigris (Col. I, 1-6 Col. II, l. 36)

236. In my second campaign Assur, my lord, encouraged me, and against the land of the Kassites and the land of the Iasubigallai, who from of old had not been submissive to the kings, my fathers, I marched. In the midst of the high mountains I rode on horseback, where the terrain was difficult, and had my chariot¹ drawn up with ropes; where it became too steep, I clambered up on foot like the wild-ox. The cities of Bît-Kilamzah, Hardishpi and Bît-Kubatti, their strong, walled cities, I besieged, I captured. People, horses, mules, asses, cattle and sheep, I brought out from their midst and counted as booty. And their small cities, which were numberless, I destroyed, I devastated, I turned into ruins. The houses of the steppe, (namely) the tents, wherein they dwelt, I set on fire and turned them into (a mass) of flames. I turned round, and made that Bît-Kilamzah into a fortress,—I made its walls stronger than they had ever been before,—and settled therein people of the lands my hands had conquered. The people of the land of the Kassites and the land of the Iasubigallai, who fled before my arms, I brought down

¹ *Lil.*, chariot of my feet.

out of the mountains and settled them in Hardishpi and Bît-Kubatti. Into the hand(s) of my official, the governor of Arrapha, I placed (*lit.*, counted) them. I had a stele made, and the might of my conquering hand which I established upon them, I caused to be inscribed thereon. In the midst of the city I set it up.

237. The front of my yoke I turned (*i.e.*, I turned about) and took the road to the land of the Ellipi. Before me (my approach) Ispabâra, their king, forsook his strong cities, his treasure cities (*lit.*, houses), and fled to distant (parts). Over the whole of his wide land I swept like a hurricane. The cities of Marubishti and Akkuddu, his royal residence cities, together with 34 small cities of their environs, I besieged, I captured, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. The people, great and small, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, cattle and sheep, without number, I carried off. I brought him to naught, I diminished his land. Sisirtu and Kummahlum, strong cities, together with the small cities of their environs, the district (province) of Bît-Barrû in its totality, I cut off from his land and added it to the territory (*lit.*, border) of Assyria. Elenzash I turned into the royal city and stronghold of that district. I changed its former name, calling its (new) name Kâr-Sin-ahe-eriba (Sennacherib-burg). Peoples of the lands my hands had conquered I settled therein. To my official, the governor of Harhar, I handed it (counted it). Thus I extended my land.

238. On my return march I received the heavy tribute of the distant Medes, whose name no one among the kings, my fathers, had (ever) heard. To the yoke of my rule I made them submit.

Third campaign. Against Syria-Palestine; siege of Jerusalem
(Col. II, l. 37—Col. III, l. 49)

239. In my third campaign I went against the Hittite-land (Syria). Lulê (Elulæus), king of Sidon,—the terrifying

ha (Ethiopia), a countless host, and these came to their aid. In the neighborhood of the city of Altakû (Eltekeh), their ranks being drawn up before me, they offered battle. (Trusting) in the aid of Assur, my lord, I fought with them and brought about their defeat. The Egyptian charioteers and princes, together with the charioteers of the Ethiopian king, my hands took alive in the midst of the battle. Altakû (and) Tamnâ I besieged, I captured and took away their spoil. I drew near to Ekron and slew the governors and nobles who had committed sin (*i.e.*, rebelled), and hung their bodies on stakes (*or*, pillars) around the city. The citizens who had sinned and treated (Assyria) lightly, I counted as spoil. The rest of them, who were not guilty of sin and contempt, who were without sin (blame),—I spoke their pardon. Padî, their king, I brought out of Jerusalem, I set him on the royal throne over them and imposed upon him my kingly tribute. As for Hezekiah, the Jew, who did not submit to my yoke, 46 of his strong, walled cities, as well as the small cities in their neighborhood, which were without number,—by escalade¹ and by bringing up siege engines(?), by attacking and storming on foot, by mines, tunnels and breaches(?), I besieged and took (those cities). 200,150 people, great and small, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, cattle and sheep, without number, I brought away from them and counted as spoil. Himself, like a caged bird, I shut up in Jerusalem, his royal city. Earthworks I threw up against him,—the one coming out of his city gate I turned back to his misery. The cities of his, which I had despoiled, I cut off from his land and to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padî, king of Ekron, and Silli-bêl, king of Gaza, I gave them. And (thus) I diminished his land. I added to the former tribute, and laid upon him (*v.*, them) as their yearly payment, a tax (in the form of) gifts for my majesty. As for Hezekiah, the terrifying

¹ *Lit.*, by causing (them) to tread the ramp, or, incline.