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JOURNAL OF  
THE TRANSACTIONS  
OF  
The Victoria Institute,  
OR,  
Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

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SECRETARY: E. WALTER MAUNDER, F.R.A.S.

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VOL. XLVI.



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1914.

## 548TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

HELD IN THE ROOMS OF THE INSTITUTE ON TUESDAY,  
DECEMBER 9TH, 1913, AT 4.30 P.M.

THE VERY REVEREND THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY OCCUPIED THE CHAIR UNTIL 5.30, WHEN LIEUT.-COLONEL G. MACKINLAY TOOK HIS PLACE.

The Minutes of the preceding Meeting were read and confirmed, and the elections were announced of the following Associates and Member :—Miss Edith Grindley, Mr. Ivan Panin, Miss Selina F. Fox, M.D., B.S., Rev. W. J. Heaton, B.D., Mr. J. E. Solade-Solomon, Rev. G. H. Lancaster, M.A., F.R.A.S., Rev. W. H. Murray Walton, B.A., Miss Florence Wolsey, Mrs. Annie Scott Dill Maunder (Life), Mr. Robert Kerr, Mr. Wilfred St. George Grantham-Hill, M.D., Mr. W. H. Stanley Monck, M.A., Mr. John T. Burton (Member).

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*THE FALL OF BABYLON AND DANIEL V, 30.* By Rev. ANDREW CRAIG ROBINSON, M.A., Donnellan Lecturer, Dublin University, 1912-13.

**B**EFORE the archaeological discoveries of recent times the Book of Daniel had been, for probably over 2,000 years, the only extant evidence for the existence of Belshazzar. The Bible was in regard to this matter a single witness, unsupported by any evidence outside itself, and it was open to any rationalist who chose to reject the evidence of the Bible to assert that such a person as Belshazzar never existed, but was merely a creation of the imaginative fancy of the writer of the Book of Daniel. All that, however, is now changed, and by the discovery of the contemporary inscriptions of the Age of Cyrus the reality of the existence of Belshazzar as a personage of history is placed beyond the power of scepticism to deny.

When Cyrus in his career of conquest in Western Asia marched against the Babylonian Kingdom the name of the Babylonian king was Nabonidus—called by the Greeks Labynetos—and he was in the seventeenth year of his reign. Belshazzar was his son, and was probably associated with his father in the kingly power. His name very frequently appears in the inscriptions as “the son of the king”; and he would seem to have been dearly loved by his father, who in one of his inscriptions offers up an earnest prayer to his god for the

welfare of Belshazzar and calls him "his eldest son the offspring of his heart." The Annalistic Tablet, one of the principal inscriptions of this period, for several successive years records that "the king's son and the nobles were with the army in Accad" (Northern Babylonia). To these nobles, with whom he was thus so intimately associated in the army for many years, Belshazzar perhaps gave that memorable banquet in Babylon recorded in the 5th Chapter of the Book of Daniel, "Belshazzar the King made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand"—a banquet to the chiefs of the army. Several contract tablets record business transactions of "Belshazzar the son of the king" (*Records of the Past*, New Series, vol. iii, pp. 125-127), and there are records also of his offerings to the temples of the gods. The Annalistic Tablet, as we have seen, informs us that for several years in succession Belshazzar was in command of the army in Northern Babylonia, whilst his father, Nabonidus, remained in Babylon. Subsequently he and his father would appear to have exchanged places—his father taking command of the forces in the field, and suffering a signal defeat from the army of Cyrus—whilst Belshazzar remained in Babylon, where, the Book of Daniel tells us, he was holding a brilliant banquet to his lords on the night that the city fell. "On that night," says the Book of Daniel, "was Belshazzar the King of the Chaldeans slain."

But it has now come to be treated as if it were a commonplace of history, and one of the "assured results" of modern criticism that these words in the Book of Daniel, and the general account of the fall of Babylon which has come down to us in the writings of the classical historians, are contradicted by the inscriptions.

How has this impression been created?

The general account of the Fall of Babylon which has come down to us from antiquity may be put in this way:—The classical authorities say, that the Babylonians after one encounter with the troops of Cyrus, in which they were worsted, retired within the walls of Babylon which seemed to be impregnable, and within which there had been stored up provisions for many years. Cyrus then invested Babylon. He commanded his soldiers to dig deep trenches surrounding the city, as if he were throwing up lines of circumvallation, but contrived that these trenches should be dug in such a way that at a moment's notice the waters of the River Euphrates could be turned into them, and the depth of the river so much reduced in that part where it flowed through the city, that his soldiers

should be able to advance through the water and enter the city by the river gates. The Babylonians, secure within the walls of Babylon, "took no heed," Herodotus says, "of the siege"—whilst Xenophon says, "They laughed at the Persians, and turned them into ridicule,"—so the work of digging the trenches went on without any attempt on the part of the besieged to interfere with it;—and the siege was consequently carried on "without fighting." This bloodless character of the siege—as described by the classical writers—is an important point to note.

And Herodotus says, that when Cyrus had set these things in order, he himself went away with the inefficient part of his army, and employed it in diverting the river at another point into a marshy lake. This absence of Cyrus from the principal scene of operations is another point to be particularly noted.

But when the trenches were dug, Xenophon relates, Cyrus selected a night on which he heard there was to be some great feast held in Babylon, and as soon as darkness fell, taking a number of his troops, he caused the trenches to be opened, the water from the Euphrates poured into them, and soon the river became shallower. Then Cyrus commanded two of his most trusted officers, Gôbryas and Gadatas, to lead the troops up the river, now rendered shallow at its banks, and to enter the city by the river gates.

It was a night of festival in Babylon, the streets were full of revellers. The soldiers of Gôbryas, assuming the guise of revellers themselves, mingled in the crowd—pressed on to the palace—burst in through the guards at the palace gates—and reached the hall where the King was. They found him, when they entered, standing up sword in hand—but he was soon overpowered by numbers, and fell slain by the soldiers of Gôbryas. Such would appear to have been Belshazzar's tragic end.

Cyrus instantly sent cavalry through the city, and caused it to be proclaimed that, on pain of death, none of the Babylonians should leave their houses. Next morning all arms and the towers of the city were surrendered; Cyrus held a great reception, at which the Babylonians, Xenophon says, attended in unmanageable numbers—and thus, almost without fighting or bloodshed, Babylon was his. The Cyrus Cylinder, one of the principal inscriptions of that time, in remarkable agreement with this says, "The men of Babylon, all of them, and the whole of Sumer and Accad, the nobles and the high priest, bowed themselves beneath him, they kissed his feet, they

rejoiced at his sovereignty, their countenances shone—and when the same inscription says, that “without fighting and battle (Merodach) caused him to enter into Babylon,” this is in reality not a contradiction of the classical account, but a confirmation of it, because that account represents Babylon as having been taken practically without fighting, since the siege was conducted without any attempt on the part of the Babylonians to oppose it—and on the night in which the city was captured only Belshazzar and those immediately around him were slain.

This would seem to be clearly the case—yet Professor Sayce, strange to say, took up the idea—which he put forward, first in his edition of Herodotus, published in 1883, and afterwards in his celebrated book, *The Higher Criticism and the Monuments* (1894), that the classical account of the Fall of Babylon, and the 5th chapter of Daniel, verse 30—which seemed to agree with it—were contradicted by the account of that event implied by the inscriptions—the special point being, that the classical account related how there was a siege of Babylon lasting for some months—whereas the cuneiform inscriptions declare that the city fell “without fighting.”

Professor Sayce wrote—

“There was no siege and capture of Babylon; the capital of the Babylonian Empire opened its gates to his general, as Sippara had done before. Gôbryas and his soldiers entered the city ‘without fighting.’ . . . Three months later Cyrus himself arrived, and made his peaceful entry into the new capital of his empire. We gather from the contract tablets that even the ordinary business of the place had not been affected by the war.”—*Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 522.

And in a note on the same page he adds—

“Even after the entry of Gôbryas into Babylon on the 16th of Tammuz, the contracts made there and at Sippara continued to be dated in the reign of Nabonidos.”

And then he gives the dates of certain tablets, published by Dr. Strassmaier, which shall be referred to presently. He adds—

“It is clear that the transference of power from Nabonidos to Cyrus must have been a peaceful one, so far as the commercial community was concerned.”

And he writes, p. 527—

“It is clear that the editor of the fifth chapter of the Book of Daniel could have been as little a contemporary of the events which he professes to record, as Herodotus.”

It may well be imagined with what avidity the Critics pounced upon these pronouncements of Professor Sayce: all the more that they supplied a crumb of comfort in a book which otherwise was in great measure a drastic attack on their theories. Thus the late Dean Farrar in a work of his, *The Book of Daniel*, published in 1895, which may be described as an impassioned attack on the conservative view, quotes, on p. 56, the above passage from Sayce—with many emphatic italics. Dr. Driver in his *Daniel* (p. xxxi) takes the same view, and all the rest of the Critics have followed in a similar strain.

The following are the most important passages in the "Annalistic Tablet"—the principal inscription bearing on the Fall of Babylon—according to the translation adopted by Dr. Driver—

"In the month of Tammuz (July) when Cyrus in the city of Upê (Opis), on the banks of the river Zalzallat, had delivered battle against the troops of Akkad, he subdued the inhabitants of Akkad. . . . On the 14th day of the month, Sippar was taken without fighting. Nabu-na'id (Nabonidos) fled. On the 16th Gubaru (Gôbryas), governor of the country of Guti, and the soldiers of Cyrus, without fighting entered Babylon. In consequence of delaying Nabu-na'id was taken prisoner in Babylon. . . . On the 3rd day of Marchesvan (November) Cyrus entered Babylon. . . . Peace for the city he established, peace to all Babylon did Cyrus proclaim. Gubaru (Gôbryas) his governor appointed governors in Babylon. From the month of Kislev (December) to the month Adar (March—*viz.*, in the following year, 537—*Driver*) the gods of the country of Akkad, whom Nabu-na'id had brought down to Babylon, returned to their own cities. On the 11th day of Marchesvan during the night, Gubaru (Gôbryas) made an assault (?) and slew the King's son (?)."

Dr. Driver adds in a note—

"The tablet is injured at this point, but 'the king's son' is the reading which those who have most carefully examined the tablet consider the most probable."

In respect, then, to the Fall of Babylon, three points are maintained by the Critics at the present day:—

- First, that on the 16th Tammuz (July) Gôbryas obtained complete possession of Babylon for his master Cyrus.
- Secondly, that notwithstanding this the merchants of Babylon continued to date their contract tablets "in the 17th year of Nabonidus, King of Babylon."

Thirdly, that although his general Gôbryas had obtained full possession of Babylon on the 16th of Tammuz (June-July), it was not until three months after—on the 3rd Marchesvan (Oct.-Nov.)—that Cyrus “entered Babylon.”

To the present lecturer it seems that it would be passing strange, that when the capital of the Babylonian empire, and by far the most famous city in Western Asia, had come into his power, Cyrus should treat the matter with such cool disdain, as not to condescend to visit it until three months had passed away. It was not *his way* to treat the conquered peoples with discourtesy. The sentiment also in ancient times in a case like this, as between a king and his lieutenant, may be well illustrated by the message that Joab, captain of his host, sent to King David, when he found that the city of Rabbah was practically in his hands, and by David’s action on receiving the message: “I have fought against Rabbah,” Joab announces, “and have taken the city of waters. Now therefore gather the rest of the people together and encamp against the city and take it, lest I take the city and it be called by my name. And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.”—II Sam. xii, 27–29.

And then, too, in regard to the second point asserted—namely: that after Gôbryas had gained complete possession of Babylon for his master Cyrus, the merchants of Babylon continued to date their contract tablets in “the 17th year of Nabonidus, King of Babylon,” as if nothing had happened, and as if the conqueror Cyrus was not then the reigning king—one may well ask, “Is this likely? Is it likely that the merchants of Babylon would be so foolish as to flout their new master by thus ignoring his sovereignty? and if they *were* so silly would Gôbryas have stood such nonsense?”

And then there is a further point which, on the supposition that Gôbryas in the month of Tammuz (July) obtained full possession of Babylon, would have to be explained, and that is: What does that mysterious passage in the Annalistic Tablet mean, where it is said, “On the 11th day of Marchesvan”—that is to say, 8 days after Cyrus had entered Babylon—“during the night Gubaru (Gôbryas) made an assault (?) and slew the king’s son (?)”. Does not this look very like what the Book of Daniel says in the 5th chapter, “In that night was Belshazzar the King of the Chaldeans slain.” For do not the inscriptions say that Belshazzar was the king’s son?

and does not the Book of Daniel say that Belshazzar was slain at night?

Dr. Pinches writes—

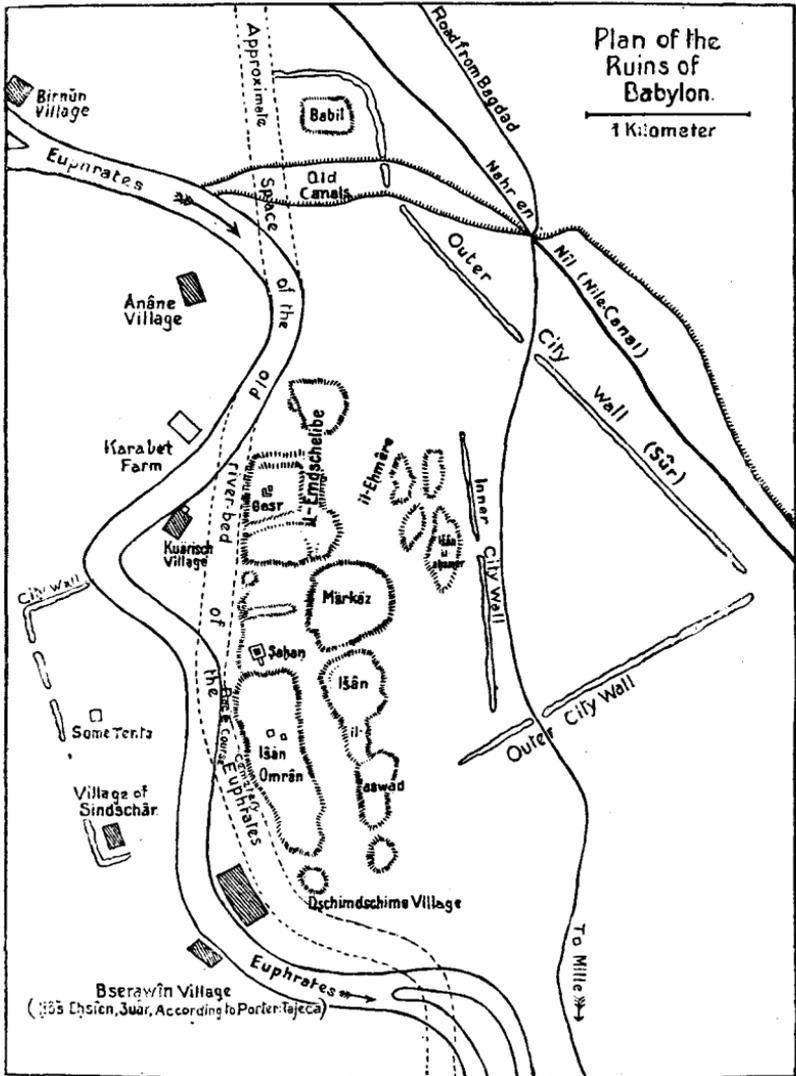
“The probability is therefore that ‘the son of the king’ Belshazzar, held out against the Persians in some part of the capital, and kept during that time a festival on the 11th of Marchesvan, when Gôbryas pounced upon the place, and he the rightful Chaldaean king was slain as recorded in Daniel.”—*The Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, pp. 418, 419.

The solution of the whole matter seems to be afforded by the plans of the ruins of Babylon showing the course of the walls, illustrating Weissbach's *Stadtbild von Babylon*, published by Hinrichs, Leipzig, by whose kind permission they have been reproduced by the present lecturer. The plans show that there was a not inconsiderable portion of the city enclosed with walls, situated on the western bank of the Euphrates; but the main portion of Babylon, containing the royal palace and the great temples, was on the eastern shore of the river. What therefore occurred at the taking of Babylon by Cyrus would seem to have been this: On the 14th of the month Tammuz (June-July) Sippar was taken, and King Nabonidus, who would appear to have been in it, fled. He probably crossed the river in escaping from the Persians, and took refuge in that part of the city of Babylon which was on the western side of the Euphrates. Gôbryas and the Persians pursued him, and two days after—on the 16th of the month—the citizens opening the gates to the enemy, the king was captured. Thus in the words of the inscription:—“On the 16th day Gôbryas . . . and the soldiers of Cyrus without fighting entered Babylon. In consequence of delaying Nabunaid was taken prisoner in Babylon.”

This outlying portion of the city on the western side of the river would seem to have been regarded by Nebuchadnezzar as an outwork of Babylon. In the India House Inscription he says—

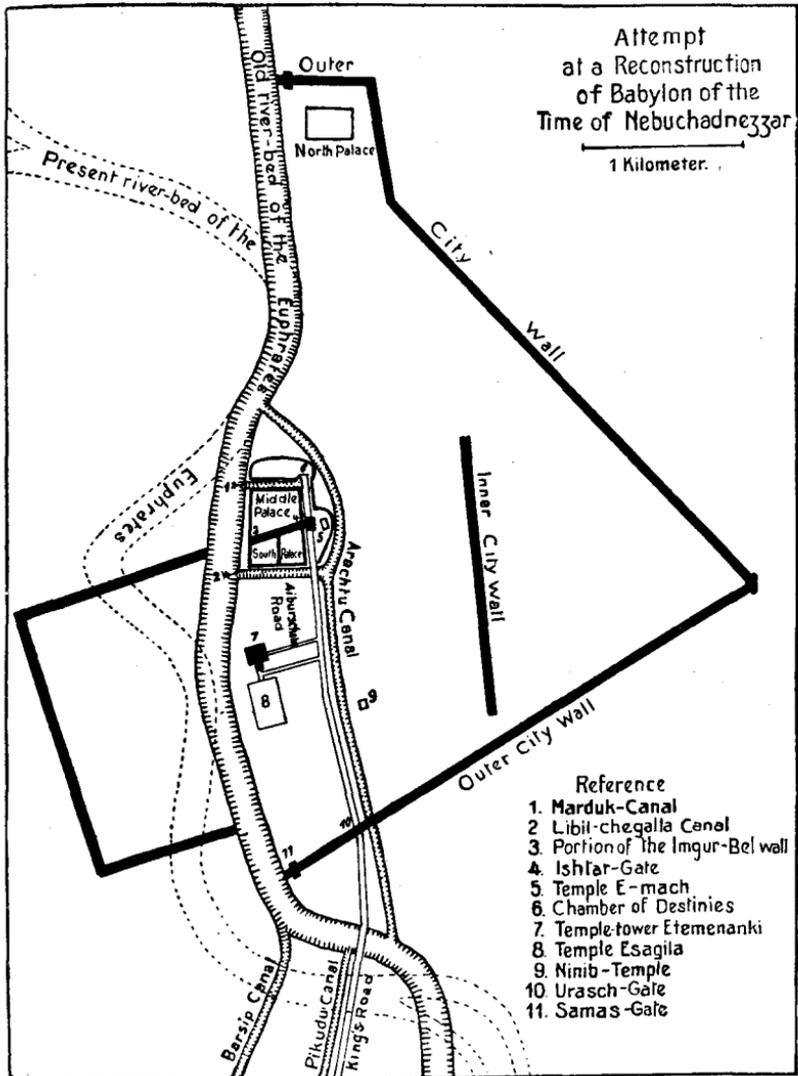
“and to the city for protection I brought near an embankment of enclosure beyond the river westward.”—*Records of the Past*, 1st Series, p. 125.

On this view Gôbryas had, it is true, “entered Babylon,” but he was very far indeed from having really gained possession of



PLAN OF THE RUINS OF BABYLON.

Reproduced by kind permission of J. C. Hinrichs, Leipzig, from Weiszbach's *Stadtbild von Babylon*.



ATTEMPT AT A RECONSTRUCTION OF BABYLON.

Reproduced by kind permission of J. C. Hinrichs, Leipzig, from Weiszbach's *Stadtbild von Babylon*.

the mighty city. He would find himself confronted by the River Euphrates—in breadth not much short of 200 yards—that is to say, about the width of the Thames at Chelsea—its further shore lined with immense embankments—behind which was the real Babylon.

King Nebuchadnezzar, some 70 years before in one of his inscriptions would seem to have described the position by anticipation. Boasting of the fortifications which he had thrown up to defend Babylon, he says—

“Great waters like the might of the sea I brought near in abundance, and their flowing by was like the sweeping past of the billows of the Western ocean—passages through them there were none, but mounds of earth I heaped, and embankments of brickwork I caused to be constructed.”—*Records of the Past*, 1st Series, p. 128.

There, in that eastern part of the city, secure for the moment from the enemy, Belshazzar, son of the king, reigned—and there the merchants of Babylon carried on their business transactions, and dated their tablets on which those transactions were recorded—safe from any interference of Gôbryas—on such a day of the month “in the 17th year of Nabonidos, King of Babylon.” Three months then elapsed before Cyrus “entered Babylon”—and those three months afforded time for the siege recorded by the classical writers, during which the soldiers of Cyrus round Babylon were digging the trenches—no very great task for a large army in the alluvial soil of Babylonia—whilst Cyrus himself—as recognized in the Annalistic Tablet—was absent—employing (so Herodotus says) the inefficient part of his army in further reducing the waters of the Euphrates by turning them into a marshy lake.

Then on the third of the month Marchesvan (Oct.-Nov.)—the tablet says—“Cyrus entered Babylon”—and soon the decisive blow was struck; for after this occur the words in the Annalistic Tablet—“on the 11th Marchesvan during the night Gubaru (Gôbryas) made an assault (?) and slew the king’s son (?)”

That was the night when the trenches were opened, the Persian troops, under the shadow of the mighty mounds defending the eastern bank of the river, stealthily advanced through the shallower waters—entered the city by the river gates—and Babylon was taken, and Belshazzar slain.

That this was the night on which Babylon really came into the power of Cyrus is shown to demonstration by the fact that all the contract tablets dated previous to the 11th Marchesvan

are dated in "the 17th year of Nabonidus, King of Babylon"—whilst all those dated later than the 11th of that month are dated in "the Accession year of Cyrus." Gôbryas is said to have "entered Babylon" on the 16th day of Tammuz (June-July) and yet there is a tablet dated the 22nd of that month "in the 17th year of Nabonidus, King of Babylon." Others are dated in the same way on the 5th, 21st, and 29th of Ab (July-Aug.) and on the 3rd, 5th, 11th, 18th, 21st, and 28th of Elul (Aug.-Sept.).

Surely Babylon cannot have been held for Cyrus yet.

On the third Marchesvan (Oct.-Nov.) the Annalistic Tablet records "Cyrus entered Babylon"—yet even after this there is a tablet dated 10th Marchesvan "in the 17th year of Nabonidus, King of Babylon." On the very next night—the night of the 11th Marchesvan—that occurrence took place recorded on the Annalistic Tablet—

"On the 11th of Marchesvan in the night Gubaru (Gôbryas) made an assault and slew the King's son."

And after this occurs the first tablet dated in "the Accession year of Cyrus." It is a tablet—to be seen in the case at the British Museum—referring to workmen's rations—and it is dated the 24th Marchesvan "in the Accession year of Cyrus." Another occurs in the next month Chisleu (Nov.-Dec.) dated "Babylon 7th Chisleu in the Accession year of Cyrus."

In the note already referred to Professor Sayce writes—

"It should be added that the contracts dated in the reign of Nabonidus which were witnessed on the 21st of Ab and the 5th of Elul were drawn up in 'the city of the king's palace Babylon'—whilst one dated the 7th Chisleu of the Accession year of Cyrus is simply inscribed 'Babylon.'"

Does it not seem as if the words "the city of the king's palace Babylon" were intended to define the city of Babylon on the eastern side of the river, where the king's palace was—as distinguished from Babylon on the western side of the river—then in the hands of Cyrus.

In conclusion the present lecturer would claim to have laid before you an array of solid facts which clearly show—that so far from the account of the Fall of Babylon, which has come down from the classical writers, being contradicted by the cuneiform inscriptions of the Age of Cyrus—they are, on the contrary, *confirmed* by them. And accordingly the 5th chapter

of the Book of Daniel and 30th verse, which seems to imply the same account, *is also*—not contradicted—but confirmed by the inscriptions; and the words of the Book of Daniel, with all that they imply, stand unrefuted, “In that night was Belshazzar the King of the Chaldeans slain.”

#### DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the Meeting, previous to the reading of the paper, said that since their last Ordinary Meeting the Victoria Institute had suffered a severe loss in the death of its Secretary, Mr. F. S. Bishop, M.A., J.P. During the three years that he had held that office, Mr. Bishop had worked most devotedly for the welfare of the Institute, and the result of his labours had been seen in the enhanced interest of the Meetings, and in the increase in the roll of Members and Associates. But the Institute was fortunate in securing as his successor Mr. Maunder, who had just retired after forty years' service from his important post as Superintendent of the Solar Department of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. The Institute had been founded for the discussion of questions in philosophy and science, and it was therefore to be congratulated in having secured as its Secretary a man of scientific eminence, one who had already served on the Council of the Institute for four years, and had contributed two papers to their Proceedings.

After the paper had been read, the CHAIRMAN said that he desired, on behalf of the Institute, to offer his hearty thanks to the Rev. Andrew Craig Robinson for the admirable paper to which they had just listened. He was glad to see that Dr. Pinches was present, who was so high an authority on Babylonian inscriptions, and that there was also present another veteran in the controversy on the Book of Daniel—Sir Robert Anderson. That controversy presented features similar to those respecting the Book of Genesis. It was only seventy years since they first began to gain from the excavations light upon the ancient history of Babylonia; but, long before that, every child in a Christian household was acquainted, from what he had read in the Book of Genesis, with the most important facts concerning the origin of the Assyrian and Babylonian kingdoms. In the same way, the facts which were now being established respecting the Conquest of Babylon proved to have been those implied in the Book of Daniel.

Sir Robert ANDERSON said that the paper had cleared up difficulties which he had felt in the course of that study of Daniel, which had led to his publishing his book on the subject, more than thirty years ago. With reference to Daniel v, 30, seeing that it was held by some that the true reading of the Annalistic Tablet was "the wife" (not the son) "of the king died," he had referred to the British Museum, and learned that the gap in the tablet at this point left enough space for the word "son," but not for the word "wife." The fact that the decree of Cyrus for the building of the Temple was found in Ecbatana (Ezra vi, 2), afforded seemingly conclusive evidence of the identity of Góbryas with Darius the Mede. He was a prince of the royal house of Media, and it is to be presumed that, after his three years' reign as vassal King of Babylon, he was sent back to his own country, and carried with him the archives of his reign.

"The historical errors" of Daniel, paraded by our English critics, were all taken from Bertholdt's book of more than a century ago; and though every one of these "errors" had been disposed of by the researches or by the erudition of our own times, the critics had as yet offered no apology or retraction.

Dr. PINCHES said: Mr. Craig Robinson has made my views clearer as to the events leading up to the taking of Babylon, and I feel that my thanks are due to him for this. It is a long time since I first made acquaintance with the Annalistic Tablet. I remember sitting, more years ago than I care to count, in Dr. Birch's room at the British Museum, with a large tray of tablets before me, when Sir Henry Rawlinson, who was present, speaking of the one that I was examining, said, "You ought to find the name of Astyages there." And there, in fact, it was—one or two strokes of the brush revealed it—in the document in question—the Annalistic Tablet. I do not propose to discuss here the chronology of the Book of Daniel, which offers several difficulties, but the accuracy of the narrative therein is remarkable. The classical writers state that great excavations were made in order to drain the river (the Euphrates), but the tablets give no indications of this. With regard to the discrepancy in the names of the kings, it is to be noted that Belshazzar, according to Josephus, was called Nabonidus by the Babylonians (*Antiq.*, X, xxi, 2), "Baltasar, who by the Babylonians was called Naboandelus," but the inscriptions show that the former

was son of the latter. According to Xenophon, the Babylonians came and welcomed Cyrus, and this is supported by the Annalistic Tablet, which states that the crowds before him were great (or the deputations were numerous), and that they proposed peace for the city, saying: "Cyrus, grant peace to Babylon, all of it."

Fried. Delitzsch, in his description of Babylon, says that the area within the walls was no greater than that covered by Munich or Dresden. The plate accompanying the paper shows the plan of the old wall, but there was a greater Babylon outside this wall, just as there is a greater London outside the old City of London. Gôbryas of Gutiu<sup>m</sup>, that is to say of Media, took all Babylon outside the walls at his first approach, but the contract tablets, which cannot lead us astray, as they are contemporary documents, bear dates, as has been stated by the lecturer, right up to the eve of the taking of Babylon (that is, the old city) on the night of the 11th of Marchesvan, in the seventeenth year of Nabonidus. One tablet, found in Sippar, is dated in Chisleu in this year, and I think points to an error in the Annalistic Tablet; for if the Persians had taken possession of Sippar (*see* p. 12) before they took Babylon, this contract tablet would not exist. Moreover, Berosus says that Nabonidus was captured in Borsippa.

The passage in the Annalistic Tablet that refers to the events of the 11th day of Marchesvan cannot, I think, have stated that the king's wife was killed, for where the tablet is damaged there is not room enough for the character for "wife," and the verb, to all appearance, is not in the feminine. The Rev. C. J. Ball and Dr. Hagen, examining the text in my room in the British Museum, many years ago, agreed with me that the traces pointed to *u mâr*, "and the son of" (King Nabonidus).\*

I do not think that there is any doubt that the narrative in Daniel is as correct as it can be. With regard to Daniel being appointed third ruler, it was pointed out long ago that Nabonidus was, of course, the first, his son Belshazzar the second, and the third place was open for Daniel. Belshazzar was not officially king, unless perhaps he bore some subordinate title, and the title "King of the Chaldeans" may have been such.†

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\* This reading was adopted by Dr. Pinches in his address delivered at Rhyl Church Congress, October 1891.

† Nebuchadrezzar (Nebuchadnezzar) seems always to be called "King

The Venerable Archdeacon POTTER said that he had listened with great pleasure to Mr. Craig Robinson ; the more so as he came from his own old university.

Notwithstanding the undoubted contribution make by the author towards the reconciliation of the conflicting accounts of the taking of Babylon, several difficulties in the narrative still, in his view, remained unexplained. (1) The Book of Daniel called Belshazzar the son of Nebuchadnezzar, whereas there were three kings with short reigns between Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus. This could be explained away by assuming that the latter married a daughter of the former, and that the word "father" stood for the word "grandfather," or possibly for "predecessor," but it seemed somewhat strange to omit the name of the real father, Nabonidus, who was apparently a man of some literary distinction. (2) Then the Book of Daniel called Belshazzar the king, whereas he was the son of the king. (3) Moreover the account in this book of Belshazzar's feast gave no hint that at that time the city of Babylon was partly in the hands of the conqueror. Nor was it easy to reconcile with this fact the promise, made to the interpreter of the writing, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom ; or the words of the interpretation, "Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." (4) It looked, too, as though the writer of the book had confused Darius the Mede (Dan. v, 31) with Darius Hystaspes, as the latter did divide the empire into satrapies (*see* Dan. vi, 1). (5) Moreover the late origin of the book seemed to be demanded by the use of Persian and of Greek words, and by the fact that Jesus, the son of Sirach (B.C. 200), while he mentions all the other prophets, omits Daniel.

Rev. John TUCKWELL, M.R.A.S., felt deeply indebted to the Rev. Craig Robinson for his paper. He thought that, among modern Biblical critics, there was a danger of placing too much reliance upon the Greek historians and upon the tablets. Might they not give equal credit to Scripture? Why, if a statement in Scripture seemed opposed to some Greek writer, or to a Babylonian tablet,

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of Babylon" (*melek Babel*) in the Old Testament when his title is given. Belshazzar, however, is called "King of the Chaldeans" (*malkā Kasdāyā* or *Kasdāāh*. Dan. v, 30). Whether this is owing to the text being in Chaldee, and not in Hebrew, is uncertain.

should they at once conclude that the Scripture must be wrong? In the British Museum we had 150,000 tablets and tens of thousands in other collections all over the world; yet up to the present time he did not know of a single case in which a cuneiform tablet had disproved any historical incident recorded in Scripture. With regard to Belshazzar being called the son of Nebuchadnezzar, among neither the Babylonians nor the Greeks did the expression "son" always mean the direct offspring. Nabonidus himself called Naram-Sin the "son" of Sargon, yet we had learnt from a tablet recently discovered that two kings reigned between them, so that he may well have been a grandson or some other relation. In the first chapter of Matthew, Joram is said to have begotten Ozias; yet he was his great-great-grandfather. We needed to guard against the error of forcing our own narrow meanings upon the expressions of ancient writers, and should seek to find the meaning which the writers themselves intended. It was quite a mistake to suppose that the tablets were infallible; moreover, the records upon the historical tablets, such for instance as those of Sargon and Esarhaddon, were not always arranged in chronological order.

Concerning the suggestion that, because Darius the Mede is stated to have appointed governors (Dan. vi, 1), he has thereby been confused with Darius Hystaspes, it would be found on page 13 of the present paper that Gubaru is distinctly stated to have appointed "governors *in* Babylon,"—an expression which does not preclude the possibility that their jurisdiction may have been much wider than the city, and have extended over the whole country.

Col. Van SOMEREN said that, as regarded the deciphering of inscriptions, he felt hardly qualified to take part in the discussion; but he believed in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. Might not the title "King of the Chaldeans," given to Belshazzar, be like the title "Prince of Wales" given to the eldest son of the King of England? He would like to ask whether "Tidal, King of Nations," mentioned in Gen. xiv, should not be literally, "Tidal, King of Gutium." If so, was he a King of Media?

Mr. Martin ROUSE believed that the "queen" who came in to advise Belshazzar at the banquet whereat his wives were already present, was the true queen, the wife of Nabonidus. This introduction of her as "the queen" without qualification, like the

unexplained promise of Belshazzar that Daniel should rule as "one of three" in the kingdom, was a touch that indicated the contemporary historian.

It was absurd to cavil at the use of the word "father" for "grandfather," as the Hebrews had no word for the last relation, but freely used "father" instead. For instance, in II Samuel ix, 7, both Jonathan and Saul are called the "father" of Mephibosheth.

Xenophon, alone among the Greek writers, mentioned the fact recorded in the Annals that Góbryas, or Gubaru, was the chief leader of the final attack upon Babylon in which the "king's son" perished. Since he alone gave this name correctly, why should we suppose him to be romancing when he says that after the capture of Babylon, Cyrus visited Ecbatana and there told Cyaxeres, King of Media, that a house "had been chosen for him in Babylon and a ruler's palace, so that when he went thither he might come to this, as to his own household" (Cyrop. viii, 5, 17). Josephus tells us that, before Cyrus himself, his kinsman, Darius, King of Media, son of Astyages, reigned for a while, and that he was "known to the Greeks by another name"; no doubt the name that Xenophon supplies—Cyaxeres. He, therefore, and not Góbryas, a mere deputy of Cyrus, was probably that "Darius the Mede" who "took the kingdom." Darius the Mede is called "king" a score of times in Dan. vi, and his final decree is quoted as made for "every dominion of his kingdom," and intended to be read in "all languages." It was noteworthy that in Dan. v and vi we read of "Medes and Persians"; but at a later period in Esther i, we find Persia set before Media [Moreover a Greek scholiast tells us that the Persian gold coin, the "daric," was so called after an earlier king than Darius Hystaspes, and Lenormant points out that in Babylonian and Chaldean contracts, Cyrus is designated only "king of the nations" in the first and second years after the capture of the city, but thereafter is called "King of Babylon" as well.]\*

In answer to Archdeacon Potter's objection that certain Greek words occur in Daniel, these are confined to three, or at most four, musical instruments bearing Greek names, and may well have been imported from the great Greek cities on the coasts of Asia Minor.

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\* Added subsequently.

The Greek poet Terpander invented the seven-stringed *cythara* about the year 650 B.C., and the Assyrian bas-reliefs show it in use as early as the reign of Assurbanipal (668-625 B.C.).

Professor LANGHORNE ORCHARD complimented the lecturer very heartily on the lucidity of his paper, in which he had solved a difficulty. The paper contained a warning against forming conclusions on insufficient evidence; that so highly competent a scholar as Professor Sayce should have fallen into the error of supposing the statement "without fighting" necessarily implied that there was no siege of Babylon, and no capture of it, was a warning to others to be on their guard lest their conclusions should be unstable, ready to be overturned by a fresh fact.

The CHAIRMAN proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the Rev. A. Craig Robinson, and called upon him to reply.

The LECTURER was very grateful for the kind reception which had been given him; he was glad that he had been able to clear up a difficulty. Above all he felt grateful to God, and in every work of this kind he sought His help and looked to Him for direction and light. He had felt sorry to have to contest any conclusion reached by Professor Sayce, for he had the highest appreciation of the splendid services which, by his many researches, he had rendered to our understanding of Holy Scripture. He fully concurred with the points which Mr. Rouse had brought before them. "Son" often simply means "successor"; thus on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser, Jehu is called the "son of Omri," although so far from being the son or descendant of Omri, he was the usurper who brought his dynasty to an end. No doubt Mr. Rouse was correct in his suggestion that the queen who came into the banquet house at Belshazzar's feast was none other than the wife of Nabonidus; also in thinking that Darius the Mede was Cyaxeres; the old traditions mentioned by Josephus very specially connected Daniel with Media.

#### SUBSEQUENT COMMUNICATIONS.

The Rev. Chancellor LIAS writes:—

The Members of the Institute are indebted to Mr. Robinson for showing that the Annalistic Tablet, fairly interpreted, confirms, instead of contradicting, the history of the fall of Babylon given in the Book of Daniel and in the Greek historians. There is no

improbability in the idea that Gôbryas may have captured the portion of the city on the west bank of the Euphrates, and may have received instructions from Cyrus to delay further operations till he arrived. There seems some doubt about the translations "assault," and "king's son." But surely, as matters stand at present, the translations which harmonize with the statements of the Hebrew and Greek authorities are more likely to be correct than those which place these statements in direct opposition to one another.

Mr. JOHN SCHWARTZ, Jun., writes:—

Our lecturer's new point of view that the Persians only entered without opposition into the western side of Babylon, while the eastern main portion resisted for some months, is very ingenious. The classical account of the lowering of the level of the Euphrates by diverting trenches, receives some support from the fact that this river, like the Nile, rises considerably during the summer months, when the snows around its source are melting, but in the month of November, when the entry was effected, it would be at its lowest. There are, however, difficulties; the Euphrates was a very rapid stream, so rapid that in those days navigation against stream was impossible, and it seems very doubtful whether such a stream could be rendered fordable even by a stupendous diversion of water. It is also difficult to imagine that such work could be carried on without the knowledge of the besieged. Passing over the fact that it is rather straining language to state that a force is "not fighting" when besieging a city, the statement quoted from the Annalistic Tablet, "on the 14th day of the month, Sippar was taken without fighting . . . on the 16th . . . the soldiers of Cyrus, without fighting entered Babylon," surely points to the abdication of Nabonidus, who had usurped the throne and incurred the hatred of the local priesthood by forcing the cult of Merodach as supreme. Professor Sayce's statement that the editor of Dan. v could not have been a contemporary was based on much more vital points than those referred to by our lecturer. The monuments show that the editor was incorrect in stating that Belshazzar was the son of Nebuchadnezzar, that he was a king of Babylon, and that he was succeeded by Darius the Mede. Professor Sayce seems to me to demonstrate that the editor was mixing up the siege of Babylon by Darius Hystaspes later on, with this earlier war.

Mr. MAUNDER writes :—

Mr. Schwartz's objections have force only against Herodotus and Xenophon and the Annalistic Tablet; though I think that their narratives are not those that he really wishes to call in question.

The Annalistic Tablet tells us that on the night of the 11th of Marchesvan "Gôbryas made an assault and slew the king's son"; and the business contracts make it clear that it was immediately after this date that the city of Babylon recognized its change of masters; for up to that date the contracts are dated in the 17th year of Nabonidus; after it, in the accession year of Cyrus. The entry of Gôbryas into Babylon "without fighting," on the 16th day of Tammuz had not effected any such change; nor the entry of Cyrus himself on the 3rd day of Marchesvan. Clearly, then, the 11th of Marchesvan was the date of an event of much higher importance than either, and marks the real "Fall of Babylon."

Turning to the accounts of Herodotus and Xenophon, both agree in ascribing the capture of Babylon to the lowering of the water in the Euphrates by the diversion of much of it into trenches, so that a river, usually more than 12 feet deep, was rendered easily fordable. The account in Xenophon is well worth considering, for he was one of the ablest soldiers of his time, and an earnest student of military operations. He describes Cyrus as having first attempted an investment of the city, but finding that his forces were unduly weakened by the length of the line over which they were extended, he gradually and most skilfully concentrated them. Herodotus supplies the information that the concentration took place at the two points where the Euphrates entered and left the city. It is manifest that this manœuvre would have been suicidal unless the city on one side or the other of the Euphrates had been already in the hands of the Persian troops. Incidentally therefore, the Greek accounts confirm the suggestion of the Lecturer that the "Babylon" entered by Gôbryas on the 16th of Tammuz, and by Cyrus on the 3rd of Marchesvan, was only the relatively small suburb on the west bank, not the main city. In any case a traveller, like Herodotus, so well acquainted with the Babylon and Euphrates of his day, and a soldier so experienced as Xenophon, have a far higher claim to acceptance than the mere *a priori* objections of those who live 2,300 years later and know nothing personally of the river and country.

The great merit of the paper presented to us is that, by one simple and natural suggestion, all the evidence relating to the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, supplied by the classical historians, by the Scriptures, and by the various cuneiform inscriptions, are brought together into a coherent, intelligible and accordant narrative.

#### LECTURER'S REPLY.

In reply to Archdeacon Potter—

(1) Nebuchadnezzar was called Belshazzar's father, probably as being his predecessor in the Babylonian kingdom, just as Shalmaneser on the Black Obelisk calls Jehu the son of Omri. Nabonidus was, of course, not mentioned by the Babylonian queen, because it was at the court of Nebuchadnezzar that Daniel was distinguished. (2) Belshazzar was probably associated with his father Nabonidus in the kingdom. (3) The mysterious writing on the wall surely shows that Daniel knew the desperate state in which the Babylonian kingdom stood that night, but to Belshazzar's thoughtless court, all things seemed to be the same as they had been for three months past. (4) Was Darius Hystaspes the first king who ever divided his kingdom into subordinate governments? (5) With regard to the Greek words in the Book of Daniel, I must refer to a book of mine, "What about the Old Testament?" If Jesus, the son of Sirach, omits any mention of the Book of Daniel, the prophet Ezekiel mentions Daniel himself.

In reply to Mr. Schwartz—

Mr. Schwartz is perfectly correct in saying that the Euphrates is at its lowest in November, the month in which the strategy of Cyrus was carried out. He doubts whether a very rapid stream, like the Euphrates, could be rendered fordable even by a stupendous diversion of water. But it must be remembered that in this case there was no question of crossing the river by fording: the Persians were already on the eastern side of the river, besieging the city; all they required, in order to reach the river gates of Babylon, was that the river should be rendered shallower close to the eastern bank. The Euphrates appears to have had at all times a facility for wandering from its bed; and Cyrus had already, at a point higher up, turned a great quantity of the water into a marshy lake. Now he

suddenly caused a further great volume of the water to flow into the "very wide and deep trenches" which his army had dug. We know how, by the receding of the tide, the southern shore of a great river like the Thames is left quite bare; and we can therefore understand how the water at the eastern shore of the Euphrates—though by a different agency—could have been so reduced in depth that the soldiers of Cyrus could advance along it; the water, according to Herodotus, reaching to their thighs.

Xenophon has explained very particularly how Cyrus concealed from the besieged the stratagem which he planned. Where the trenches approached the river he left a space on which he erected towers, resting on immense palm trees laid across the space, under which, later on, communication could be opened with the river. Thus the Babylonians could not suspect that the trenches had any reference to the river whatsoever. Even to his own officers, Cyrus pretended that he was going to reduce the city by famine.

Mr. Schwartz refers to the policy adopted by Nabonidus, by which he seems to have become unpopular, of bringing the images of the gods from other cities into Babylon. Now the Annalistic Tablet shows that this policy of Nabonidus continued down to the month Elul (Aug.-Sep.); that is to say, for more than two months after Góbryas had entered Babylon, and Nabonidus had been captured. But from the month Chisleu (Nov.) the reverse policy of Cyrus was carried out, and the images restored to their cities. So that previous to the 11th Marchesvan, the policy of Nabonidus continued; after the 11th Marchesvan, the policy of Cyrus began; pointing again to that night as the date upon which Babylon fell.

Mr. Schwartz's statement with regard to Professor Sayce is too indefinite to call for an answer. The points with regard to Belshazzar have been already dealt with. The question of Darius the Mede is not so simple as suggested, but I have fully discussed it in my book, "What about the Old Testament?" to which I must refer Mr. Schwartz for my answer.