

SPECIAL ISSUE
Dedicated in memory of
Dr. David B. Perley

NINEVEH

*Voice of
The Assyrian Foundation of America*

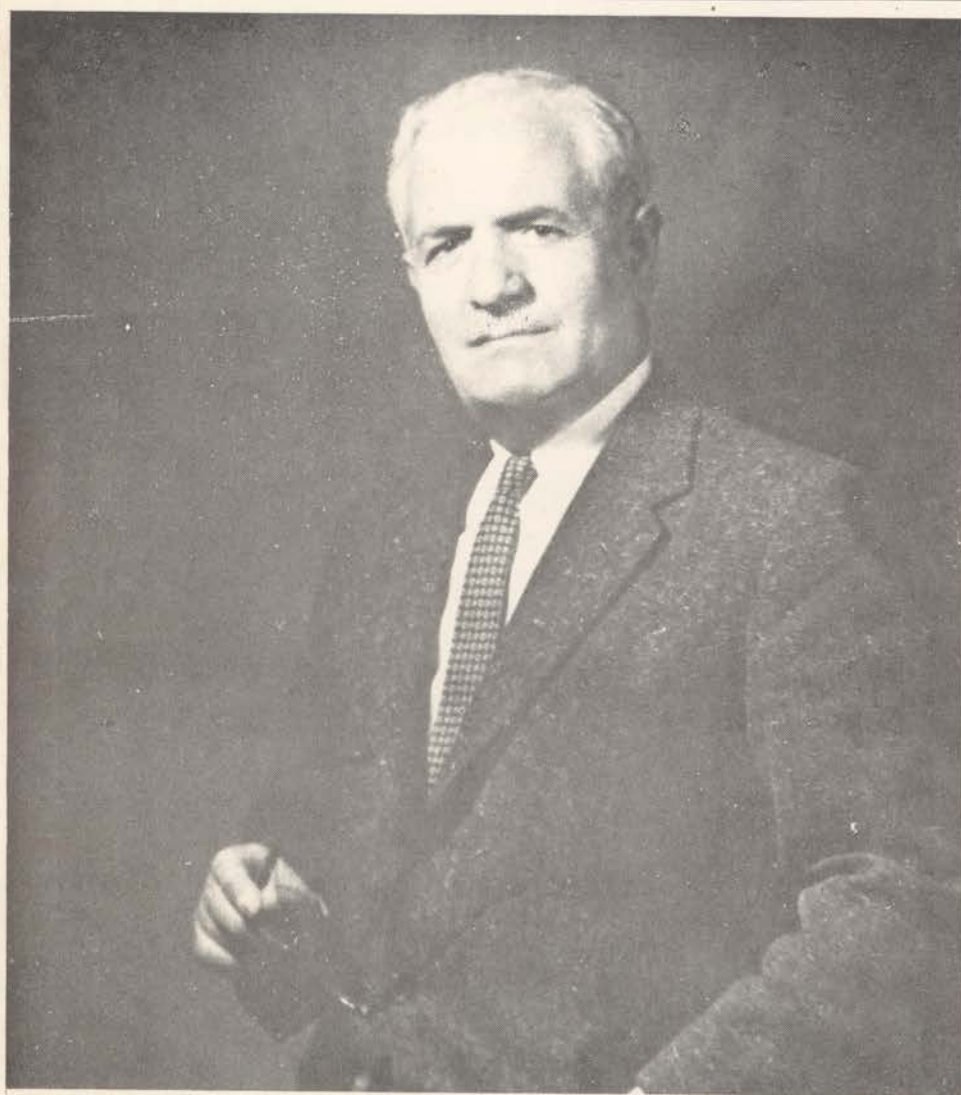


Established 1964

*Dedicated to the
Advancement of Education
of Assyrians*

JULY-AUGUST 1979

VOLUME 2 NO. 4



DR. DAVID BARSUM PERLEY, J.S.D.

*"I am an Assyrian, and
as an Assyrian I am
obligated to be actively
interested in the destiny
of the Assyrians, once
the greatest nation now
almost forgotten. I
would be an arch-
criminal if I failed to
assume this obligation."*

By

Dr. David B. Perley

CULTURAL—EDUCATIONAL—SOCIAL

NINEVEH

JULY-AUGUST 1979

VOLUME 2

NO. 4

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Assyrian Periodicals

We urge our readers to read and support the Assyrian publications. The active participation of all Assyrians is the only guarantee of the success of Assyrian periodicals.

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**NINEVEH
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“The Assyrians Should Learn How To Defend Themselves”

The subject quotation is from a letter received by the editor of Nineveh from the late Dr. David B. Perley only a few days before his sudden and shocking death, robbing the Assyrian nation of one of its finest minds. Dr. Perley had submitted for publication his latest review article on Brackman's book, *“THE LUCK OF NINEVEH.”* In the subject letter he indicated that he spent a great deal of time on the article and expressed a strong feeling about its extreme importance to the Assyrian nation in general. The article is printed on page 11 of this issue. We highly recommend our readers to read and study it. You will find the article illuminating, and likewise, feel great respect and admiration for the writer who has devoted his life to the service of his people.

In dedicating this commemorative issue to the memory of the late Dr. David B. Perley, we are not only paying our respect to him as a person, but also for his great achievements undertaken during his lifetime. He has been the most outstanding, outspoken exponent in defense and behalf of the Assyrians. He was noble by nature and birth. He was proud of his Assyrian birth. He was in logic a great critic, profoundly skilled in analytic. In his writings he has repeatedly pointed out to his people and consistently maintained to stand up and defend themselves against unjust critics. To quote one of his renowned statements: “I am an Assyrian, and as an Assyrian I am obligated to be actively interested in the destiny of the Assyrians, once the greatest nation now almost forgotten. I would be an archcriminal if I failed to assume this obligation.”

To wit, Dr. Perley has judiciously replied in defense of the Assyrians of ancient times to Historian J. Arnold Toynbee and other western historical writers. Also replied to Dr. Leo Oppenheim, Oriental Institute, University of Chicago for published comments about the present Assyrians.

Dostoevsky said: “The secret of man's life is not only to live, but to have something to live for.” Dr. Perley lived for his great ideals and so should we.

The time has come for us to surrender a champion, a defender. We will do so with a grieving heart, but we will rejoice in the knowledge that our bloodline, our culture, our great Assyrian heritage could never vanish from this earth. A race of people that can produce a man like Dr. Perley, who possessed so much love and devotion to his people

will be here for time eternal.

What could be the epitaph of such a giant? HE LIVED AND DIED IN DEFENSE OF THE ASSYRIAN CAUSE. It is a sad and irreplaceable loss.



NINEVEH EXTENDS ITS THANKS TO . . .

- *Mrs. Rose B. Dartley*, A devoted Assyrian and close friend of the late Dr. David B. Perley for providing Nineveh with information in the preparation of this commemorative issue.
- *Mr. Julius N. Shabbas*, a former president of the Foundation for assisting the editor and staff of Nineveh in the preparation and coordination of this special issue.



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Letters to the Editor

Dear Sargon:

With a great sorrow and grief I wish to inform you that the late Dr. David B. Perley had felt ill on the evening of July 10th. He was immediately rushed to the hospital and began improving in a day or two. But on Saturday, the 14th at 8:00 a.m., our great historian who dedicated the many years of his youth and life to the Assyrian nation, passed away. His wish for a simple funeral was fulfilled and he was buried in Patchogue, N.Y.

The family requested the friends and relatives to abide by his wish, and therefore, his daughter, Penna Redvanly, and Eden Naby, Associate Professor at Harvard suggested that instead of flowers, donations be made to:

The David B. Perley Memorial Fund,
c/o Eden Naby Frye
Center for Middle Eastern Studies
1737 Cambridge St.
Mass. 02138

The memorial services were conducted in his memory at the Assyrian Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary in Paramus, New Jersey, Sunday August 19, 1979.

Sincerely yours,
Rose B. Dartley
North Bergen, New Jersey

Dear Editor:

Friends of David B. Perley, who passed away on July 14, 1979, have decided to create a memorial to him in the form explained below. We should appreciate your carrying this announcement in your next issue.

Announcing
**THE DAVID B. PERLEY
MEMORIAL ASSYRIAN FUND**

A memorial to the late David B. Perley, an active and devoted member of the Assyrian community, has been created. It is to be called the David B. Perley Memorial Assyrian Fund. The monies from this Fund will be used to subsidize the publication of scholarly books or monographs in the English language about the Assyrians since the seventeenth century.

Tax deductible contributions may be sent to the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1737 Cambridge St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138. Checks should be made out to CMES, Harvard University for the David B. Perley Memorial Assyrian Fund.

Sincerely yours,
Eden Naby
Cambridge, Mass.



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SCHOLAR OF EMINENCE

Dr. David Barsum Perley, J.S.D.

Passes Away

David Barsum Perley was born in a small town situated along the banks of the Euphrates River within sight of the City of Harpoot, Turkey, the son of the late Vartar and Barsum, and one of their six children.

The family took an active part within the Assyrian Community of Harpoot where David attended the Assyrian Jacobite Church, its Parochial School, and later became a student in the Euphrates College in that city.

During the first World War massacres of Christians in Turkey, David was forced to flee from his home accompanied by other male Assyrians fearing for their lives as David's father and other prominent Assyrians had been seized, marched away, never to have been heard from or seen.

The flight of David and his companions led them through the mountains into Russia, thence eastward and within two years they reached the United States where his sisters, brother and other relatives resided in Massachusetts.

Dr. Perley enrolled in the International College Springfield, Massachusetts, and upon completion he applied and was admitted to the Boston University College of Law. He graduated and received his degree in Jurisprudence and subsequently passed his Bar Examinations for the practice of Law. While he lived in New Jersey, he attained his Doctorate in Jurisprudence.

He later married Miss Rose Kazanchy of Paterson, N.J., and established his office in Paterson. Their only child, Penna is presently married to Richard Redvanly, M.D. and are residing in Patchogue, New York where Dr. Perley also resided at the time of his death.

Dr. Perley's interest and involvement in his nation's cause stems from his early youth in Harpoot and he has never, since then wavered in this allegiance.

After the tragic massacre of Assyrians in Simel, Iraq, Dr. Perley was one of the founding fathers of the Assyrian National Federation, an organized body to become a force in 1933 to protest the inhumane, unjust massacre of Assyrians, the demands for their rightful existence in peace, freedom and safety within the countries of their residence.

He has been the most outstanding, outspoken exponent in defense and behalf of the Assyrians. His timely articles, journalistic masterpieces, book reviews, subjects concerning the Assyrians whether in the Assyrian or American press on various national subjects have been his innumerable contributions.

Dr. Perley has served as Vice-President, President, Secretary of the Assyrian National Association (*now known as the Assyrian National Federation*).

Among his classic literary achievements and contributions have been:

- "Whither Christian Missions" First edition 1943, revised printing 1944, reprint 1972 in English and Persian.
- "Lest We Perish", Saicca-1947
- "Petition-In-Behalf of the Assyrians of Iran" in behalf of His Holiness Mar Eshai Shimun, to the United Nations.
- "Kurdistan-Reflections on the Assyro-Kurdish Relations."
- Editor-in-chief of the NewBethnahreen-1940's.
- Collaboration-formulation and completion of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Assyrian National Federation-1934.
- Collaboration and completion of the first Assyrian National Directory-1960.
- Collaboration-Translation into English of Yusuf Malek's manuscripts, and the publication of "The Assyrian Tragedy"-1935.

Throughout the hemispheres, Dr. Perley was renowned for his devotion to the Assyrian cause. He was the greatest Assyrian of this century, a learned scholar, endowed with wisdom, a sage, imbued with the intense national spirit of "Freedom for Assyria" has been a constant beacon, a flame to follow the national cause.

He had sacrificed timeless hours away from his office for the national business, giving the use of his office, the services of his secretary, the myriads of letters, petitions, documentations, book reviews, magazine articles are just a fraction of his personal sacrifices in behalf and defense of his nation.

His superb articulation concerning the Assyrian cause, or his meditations about his people, or whatever the bearing on the subject of Assyrianism, Dr. Perley expressed his opinions in a manner of perspective and perfection.

For the appreciable esteem and regard, for his superb talents and many years of dedication for the Assyrian cause, the Assyrian Universal Alliance Congress of 1973 awarded Dr. David Barsum Perley, J.S.D., the highest honor, conferring upon him the "Star of Ashur".



IN LASTING MEMORY OF DR. DAVID BARSUM PERLEY J.S.D. SON OF ASHUR

By William Daniel

Assyrians are mourning the loss of a Giant Defender. Who will replace this valiant Son of Ashur? Who will champion the cause of this orphan nation? Where shall we look for another Goliath to step to the front battle line when our rights are challenged; when our honor is attacked? Who will take his place as the advisor of the novice heads of our Socio-Political organizations?

When French Kings of pre-Napoleonic era were on the verge of their last trip to eternity, the formal announcer of the sad news, standing on an elevated spot facing the anxiously expectant multitude, would snap and break a tiny twig in his hands pronouncing solemnly: "The King is dead; The King is dead; The King is dead. LONG LIVE THE KING." Are we in the situation that after saying "Our valiant defender is dead" to add—"Long live our defender?" Do we have someone to fill the empty chair?

O you who are wasting precious time quarreling about petty differences, will you ever realize the enormity of the loss you are causing. The atmosphere you create nourishes splits among good members of our society and harmfully interferes with their cooperation. Let us beware of our grand festivities that are swelling out of size, for they, like a thin rubber balloon, might burst for lack of solidity.

Your campaigns and parties do not add a single brick onto the foundation laid by our master architects like: David Barsum Perley, Yusuf Malick, Senharib Balley, Yoel Warda, Benyamin Arsanis, Joseph Durna, Charles Dartley, Mar Tooma Odo, Freidoun Aturaya, Shlemon of Salamas, Paul Beidjan, Naoum Faiq and many others. But you are destroying their work, which action is dictated by absence of sound judgement magnified out of proportion by selfish motives. Shall we be so bold as to ask what portion of your efforts and finances, spent during your annual get together, go to the furtherance of the foundations laid by those architects?

The period of truce of the Assyrians today is—when swords and guns pointing earthward, with bowed heads and solemn faces they gather around the remains of a departed brother or sister and lament the irreparable loss; but as soon as the sorrowful ceremony is over they resume the interruptible hostilities. Pardon them O Heavenly

Father, for they do not know what they are doing, but awaken them to realize that they are desecrating the work of the departed and obliterating the memory of their dedication.

O you that cover your personal ambition by a veil of political coloring, your veil, unfortunately is too thin, it makes a poor job of hiding your selfish motives. It is true that your nose collects some gullible individuals around you for a shortwhile, for they judge you by their own honest standards but when they are awoken to discover the real incentive behind your campaign, they withdraw into their own shell with a dejected spirit and with the determination never again to participate in national endeavors. Now, do you realize the enormity of your crime? It amounts to murder, murder of an idea within a devoted heart.

Let us take an example from our dear David, who supported any effort bearing the national banner; although mourning the conflicting attitude but loved them all and always hoped for a betterment of the temporary condition, as he called it.

How often during our private conversation with Dr. Perley the subject of the so-called warring leaders was brought up; and their voracious appetite for prominence, prior to useful activity, was discussed. His concluding statement used to be—"What can we do, this is the element we have to work with. How sad!"

Knowing all about our weaknesses, about our immaturity; realizing the frailty of the human element he was defending; yet never daunted, he marched alone in foremost line of battle, like the great general Napoleon, who, while a lieutenant, snatched the flag from the bearer and rushed towards the enemy line saying "brave French soldiers follow me". Thus also our dearest David recognizing all the infirmities of our people with the Assyrian flag flying above his head never knew the word "retreat".

Shall we, laying aside the garment of selfishness and cowardice, follow this unforgettable leader who recognized no barriers to PROGRESS?



ON BEING AN ASSYRIAN. . .

As Related by Dr. David B. Perley in his writings:

- One's being an Assyrian is a synthesis of heritage, religion and culture, and emotional consciousness that transcends all diversities, theological demographic, and otherwise. To be an Assyrian is to feel: The past is my heritage I shall forget it not; the present, my responsibility; the future, my challenge.
- When a person is of Assyrian blood, he retains his birthright, self-esteem, and the heritage of his fathers. The term Assyrian is one single unity. The approach of this oneness of all Assyrians regardless of their religious adherence, is through the avenue of blood, and through the majesty of common memories. Religion is a faith acquired and is changeable. Nationality is one's flesh and blood; it is his total nature. Even death cannot undo it.
- Nationality or nationhood is an unconquerable universal spirit. Nationality means a rich inheritance of memories and a desire to preserve these memories. That is—common experiences of triumphs and defeats, of comforts and sorrow, of temporal, spiritual and moral achievements—and failures. If such elements make a nation, then no people is richer in these wholesome memories than the Children of Ashur; yes, heroic achievements, agonies heroically suffered. Haven't the Assyrians known exaltant achievements and bitter failures and disappointments? These are the sublime food by which the spirit of manhood is nourished. In the words of the famed historian, Sir Ramsey Muir, from "these are born the sacred and imperishable traditions that make the soul of nations", and, "in contrast with them, mere wealth, numbers, or territory seem but vulgar things."
- I am an Assyrian. Therefore, I am interested in the Assyrian national destiny as well as in their national dilemma. What binds me to the Assyrians is a sentiment of duty and reverence. I am tied to them in the same way as I am bound to my father and mother and my family and my Vatan in spirit.
- The Assyrian nation has an aspiration that cries out for fulfillment—to find complete recognition for them as human beings and in human dignity.
- What then is an Assyrian; what is his Quest?

I must admit that I belong to an unfortunate, martyred, deprived, and dispersed people. But proudly must I admit also that I belong to a people whom the world has not succeeded in destroying. The soul of Assyria will not be destroyed!

If I were a Cicero or a Demosthenis, I would lay an oratorical emphasis upon one point, that is, we are not a religious group, but a separate nation. The Assyrian question is neither social nor a religious one, it is a national question. Any Assyrian in exile (a general condition of the Assyrians), who denies his nationality, can never have the respect of the nations among whom he dwells.

What should the Assyrians do?

How can the Assyrians regain their self-respect in the eyes of the non-Assyrians?

The Knight-errant of Cervantis had but one dream—to follow his Quest no matter how impossible his Dream—to follow that star, no matter how hopeless—no matter how unreachable. To fight for the Right, he was willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause.

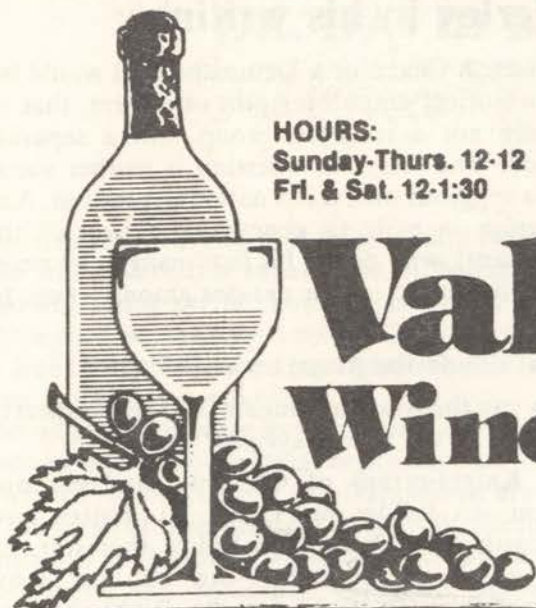
What is more "heavenly" than the cause of the Assyrians?

- How did the Assyrians achieve, over many dark centuries, the miracle of survival in other lands in the face of total destruction of the decimated self-same Assyrians in their peoplehood? It was due to their unbeatable optimism, respect for their ancestral past, and faith. Because of such heroism, I wish to remain an Assyrian.

It was that heroism that has been pivotal in the survival of the Assyrian people through the ages. It is that which has united each Assyrian with his ancestors from time immemorial. And it is that which, wherever he may have been originally, relates him with all whom we regard as Assyrians.

In making this assertion, I think back 2573 years and muse on why and how my ancestors have maintained their Assyrian selfhood throughout all these innumerable generations, despite the long, long night and the present black pages. History gives the answer. It is ancestral tradition from the past, a distinctive historic consciousness today, a consecrated purpose for the future which gives an Assyrian strength to persist, and which unite and preserve the children of Ashur. It is essentially that past which compellingly gives us the dedicated purpose to remain a distinctive people for the present and the future.

Why am I an Assyrian? Because my parents were. Additionally, I am an Assyrian because I feel it a sacred destiny to be one. One is an Assyrian not only because of the accident of birth. The will to be an Assyrian involves more than being the child of Assyrian parents.



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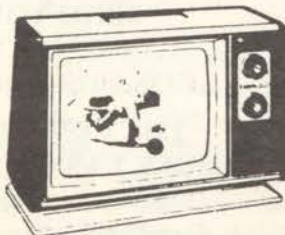
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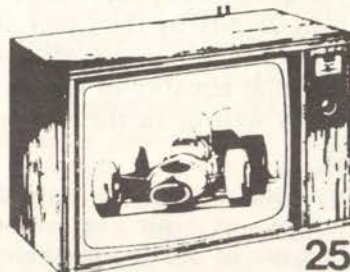
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MEDITATIONS OF DR. DAVID B. PERLEY

- Duty transcends all personal privileges and immunities; that happiness can be attained only by the pursuit of stoic virtue, not by physical pleasure. My meditative muse leads me to believe that virtue has no seat on the motor of a Cadillac.
- The melting-pot-concept had to fall by the weight of its own inadequacy, simply because the human soul cannot be potted—it has a spark of divinity in it. Hence, a new concept came into existence in this land. America is now seen as a vast symphony in which peoples of every diverse origin play very distinctive parts. Just as in a symphony, no two instrumentalists use the same score, yet in concert they give us melodic harmony, so does each American segment contribute best to the American life when it cherishes and cultivates its cultural heritage. In this glorious process of self-orchestration rests the genius and destiny of America. When that process goes on, life is music; when it is stopped (under the steam-roller of uniformity), life is noise and pluralistic society has lost its meaning.
- Assyrians are not a narrow tribe of men and women. We do not expect any country to give us happiness, but we can count upon it not to prevent us in matters having reference to the pursuit of happiness. We cannot long any country to promise the Assyrians wealth; we can aspire, however, to equality of opportunity to live in economic, human dignity by the sweat of the brow. We do not ask for wisdom as a gift, but we can expect freedom and equality of speech and education in local as well as in the (Aramaic) Assyrian language.
- The Assyrian problem cannot be solved by assimilation because of our far-and-wide dispersion, and because of our indomitable will to survive. Homelessness is our mortal sickness; and in our aspiration for a National Home, we bear no malice to anyone or to any country. What we are seeking was echoed centuries ago (8th century B.C.) by Amos:

*Let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like a mighty stream.*



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LAYARD'S STORY IN THE HEROIC AGE OF ASSYRIAN ARCHAEOLOGY,
THE FINDS BEING AIDED BY MERITED LUCK

THE LUCK OF NINEVEH: ARCHAEOLOGY'S
GREAT ADVENTURE

By Arnold C. Brackman N.Y.: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1978, 349pp., \$14.95

A Review Article by David B. Perley

"As a young boy", writes the author (P. 337), "I saw my first winged bull and lion at the Metropolitan. . . These monsters had guarded Ashurbanipal's palace, 883-859 B.C., at Layard's Nimrod, and were acquired by the museum in 1932." He quotes two meaningful paragraphs from Layard's journal to give emphasis to his personal admiration for these objects of Archaeology (241):

"In Nineveh and Babylon, Layard expressed his feelings about the lions solemnly, eloquently, and romantically: 'We rode one calm cloudless night to the mound, to look on them for the last time before they were taken from their old resting-places. The moon was at her full, and as we drew nigh to the edge of the deep wall of earth rising around them, her soft light was creeping over the stern features of the human heads, and driving before it the dark shadows which still clothed the lion forms. One by one the limbs of the gigantic sphinxes emerged from the gloom, until the monsters were unveiled before us.'

'I shall never forget that night, or the emotions which those venerable figures caused within me. A few hours more and they were to stand no longer where they had stood unscathed amidst the wreck of man and his works for ages. It seemed almost a sacrilege to tear them from their old haunts to make them a mere wonder-stock to the busy crowd of a new world. They were better suited to the desolation around them; for they had guarded the palace in its glory, and it was for them to watch over it in its ruin.'"

Mr. Brackman, very correctly, calls the **Winged Bull** (the picture of which is only produced on the jacket of his book) "the logo of the Assyrian Empire" (171), which had endured longer than any empire before or since, ever existed (VII). In these circumstances, his omission of an imperative, and indeed, a companion-quotation from Layard's journal is a matter of regret; for the inclusion of the following quotation would add immensely to the richness of his book for obvious reasons.

*"I used to contemplate for hours these mysterious emblems and muse over their intent and history. What more noble forms could have ushered the people into the temple of their gods? What more sublime images could have been borrowed from nature, by men who sought, unaided by the light of revealed religion, to embody their conception of the wisdom, power and ubiquity of a **Supreme Being**? They could*

*find no better type of **Intellect and knowledge** than the **head** of the man; of **strength**, than the **body** of the **lion**; of **rapidity of motion**, than the **wings** of the **bird**. These winged humanheaded lions were not idle creations, the offspring of mere fancy; their meaning was written upon them. They had awed and instructed races which flourished 3,000 years ago. Through the portals which they guarded, kings, priests, warriors had borne sacrifices to their altars, long before the wisdom of the East had penetrated to Greece, and had furnished its mythology with symbols long recognized by the Assyrian votaries. They had been buried, and their existence may have been unknown, before the foundation of the eternal city. For twenty-five centuries they had been hidden from the eye of man, and they now stood forth once more in their ancient majesty. But how changed was the scene around them! The luxury and civilization of the mighty nation had given place to the wretchedness and ignorance of the few half-barbarous tribes. The wealth of temples, and the riches of great cities, had been succeeded by ruins and shapeless heaps of earth . . ."*

AUSTIN HENRY LAYARD (1817-1894) was the pioneering hero of Assyrian archaeology. Throughout his activities, the virtue that characterized him was **indefatigability**. In addition, he was exceedingly lucky. He had to be, for nobody, not even the British Museum or the Royal Geographic Society, was willing to give him an adequate amount of money! **Luck** helped him so much that, in one instance, 20 minutes after he stuck his shovel into the first mound, he hit a wall and, behold! within 24 hours, he had discovered two palaces—his dominating dream—palaces that had been hidden for 2,500 years! The news of his dazzling discovery electrified Victorian England and all of Europe and Layard became famous overnight—before he was 30! Inspired or just lucky, he went on to discover riches and art treasures, including Ashurbanipal's Library, the world's first library, a collection of 40,000 invaluable cuneiform tablets which were to serve Assyriological scholars for centuries to come.

Another evidence of Layard's luck was Henry Rawlinson's decipherment of cuneiform almost simultaneous with the discovery of Ashurbanipal's Library.

It becomes necessary to state that, had the author been less of a Biblical fundamentalist, his book would probably have been less responsible for the

creation of historical delusion. The chief delusive factor is found on page 4, in Chapter I. This chapter is written under the inspiration of Lord Byron's prejudicial poem, "The Destruction of Sennacherib", which Byron correctly calls "A Hebrew Melody"; and which he admits is not based on historical accuracy, but on the Old Testament account. The Hebrews of Old Testament days wrote profusely against the Assyrians because they were humiliated by the Assyrians under the specific direction of Jehovah, whose intent it was to punish His people for deviating from the divine rules of their daily lives. What, then, does Chapter I do to the Assyrians of antiquity? It convicts them of as a state policy. Mr. Brackman does this without documentation! I challenge him to produce his documents. I further challenge him to show one instance of Assyrian geocide like the murder of Carthage by the Roman empire.

In another instance, the author emphasizes, on page 330, that the Assyrians "reveled in bloodshed and did not understand why they should not state what they did". Had he studied more carefully A. T. Olmstead's **History of Assyria** to which he refers, he would agree, I think, that Assyrians were not "wolves" but "shepherd dogs of civilization"; and that he would properly understand the Assyrian "policy of calculated frightfulness" as propaganda to intimidate their enemies.

From these observations, there emerges ineluctably a principle of unprecedented importance: you cannot make unfounded and misleading remarks to give your readers false information of ancient Assyria and expect to have a book of permanent value.

How I wish Mr. Brackman had followed the example of modern enlightened Assyriologists and historians who prefer the critical, and not the literal, traditional interpretation of history! I can think of several such modern writers and thinkers, as follows:

1. A. T. OLMSTEAD in his **History of Assyria**, 1923, briefly discussed before.

2. ANDRE PARROT in his **Discovering Buried Worlds**, 1955. Dr. Parrot, in describing the dialogue between heaven and earth (Gen. 28:12), makes the following truthful statement on p 116: "This dialogue between heaven and earth was never-ending. Yet it had its troubles, and the record, in which everything might have been light, is interleaved with shadows and with blood. Some readers of the Old Testament have found, and still find, certain of its pages scandalous. Why scandalous? Archaeology intervenes once more, revealing the Biblical world in its entirety—by which is meant no longer Palestine only, but also Mesopotamia, Syria, Phoenicia and Egypt. By bringing us dated documents from all these peoples and races, among whom Israel is only a tiny island,

it enables us to make comparisons and contrasts which explain and clarify everything. If we set Israel against the background of the period, there is no longer any risk of our being shocked or put out by anything the Bible has to say. . ."

To read this distinguished French Biblical archaeologist's pronouncement is to find satisfaction to one's historical hunger. Meanwhile, the reader can realize the truth of the validity of Professor Parrot's condemnation of the traditional, literal interpretation of history as slavish.

3. GORDON WATERFIELD in his **Layard of Nineveh**, 1963. This is the life of Layard in his archaeological operations in Assyria. The author writes with verve, eloquence, and power, in a way that one can hardly hope to produce a history so lucid, so humane, so inspiring, which has put us permanently in his debt. He cites (pp. 41-42) Layard as saying: "It is indeed one of the most remarkable facts of history that the records of an empire, so renowned for its power and civilization, should have been entirely lost; and that the site of a city as eminent for its extent as its splendour, should for ages have been a matter of doubt."

Incidentally, it may be added that we recall reading **Layard of Nineveh** in 1963, which had all the materials of **The Luck of Nineveh**, but without the misleading Chapter I of the book under review.

4. JORGEN LAESSOE in his **People of Ancient Assyria**, 1963. This famous Danish Assyriologist, in an attempt to "rehabilitate" the Assyrians and "to provide a truer picture on which to base their reputation", correctly asks:

"How far may we rely on the Biblical descriptions of the cruelty of the Assyrian armies and the depravity of Assyrian cities? Do the countless Assyrian reliefs that fill our museums give a complete picture of the phenomenon that was Assyria? Was the contribution of this people to world culture merely an incredibly effective military organization? (Introduction, p. XI)."

To ask these questions is to expect answers in the negative.

5. SIR MAX MALLOWAN, one of the most distinguished British Assyriologists, in his **Memoirs**, 1977, exonerates the Assyrians of antiquity in this rousing language on p. 77:

"The Assyrians who have acquired an evil reputation on account of their propaganda extolling the cruel treatment of their enemies, were, however, very intelligent and understood the quality of mercy which they often judiciously exercised. They have thus acquired a reputation which does them discredit but is unfair inasmuch as they were no more cruel than the peoples of their time, and doubtless no more cruel than many great nations of our own day."

Under these circumstances, what should be our implicit concluding remarks?

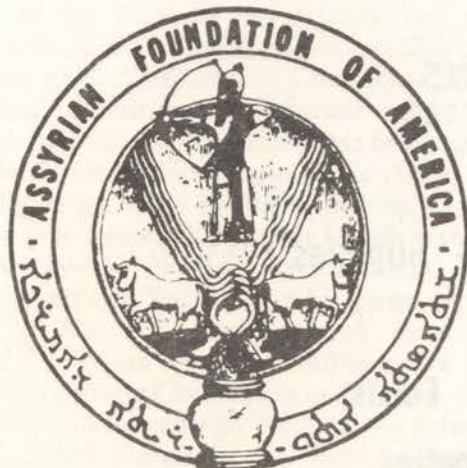
I. In the selection and ordering of his materials,

the author is obviously influenced by his biases, prejudices, beliefs and misconceptions. No blemish can be more unredeemable. He asserts the "genocide policy" of the Assyrians of Old, but does not disclose who told him so. Therefore, if he is not a traditional but a metahistorian, let him enter a plea of not guilty and put his defensive answer in writing. Otherwise his voice, in this respect, is not the voice of true history.

II. The author dismally fails to meet Olmstead's challenge on major issues raised in his **History of Assyria**, having reference to Assyrian greatness. Let us not deceive ourselves. It is the Bible that has popularized the cruelty of Assyrian militarism. He mentions the **History of Assyria** but bypasses it. he neither accepts nor rejects Olmstead's thesis as to the greatness and mercifulness of Assyria. Why emphasize this **HISTORY OF ASSYRIA**? Because it is an authoritative work, astonishing in the assurance of facts, which a few years prior to 1923 would have been considered mere conjecture—but not since its publication! Again, why emphasize Olmstead? Because he is a historian of "grasp and power"—not a mere chronicler—who decanted into his **magnum opus**, his life-time enthusiasm, entailing intense scholarship and unflagging industry. So that, Mr. Brackman gives a misleading impression of the Realm of Ashur, of whose solemn majesty St. Augustine spoke in awe-inspiring reverence in **The City of God**, bearing witness to the greatness of that Realm in every aspect of imperialism. This fault is most unfortunate because it smatters much that is excellent and elegant in **The Luck of Nineveh**.

III. Similarly, I am compelled to mention another serious fault in **The Luck of Nineveh**. The author heads his opening chapter with the too familiar excerpt from Lord Byron's poem (innocently prejudicial), having reference to the wolf-like character in which the "Assyrian came down". This is given priority (some may say) to arouse ancient prejudices against the Assyrians at the inception of the book. This poem, if misunderstood, cannot fail to hallucinate many uncreative readers, who are unfamiliar with the true history of Assyria, into believing the Old Testament tales, which were all seemingly Lord Byron (1788-1824) knew. He called that poem a Hebrew melody. He did not claim it to have any historical accuracy. It is even more important to notice that Lord Byron died 19 years before Layard visited Mosul for the first time in 1845. He was soon to reveal the wonders of ancient Assyrian civilization: aqueducts, botanical gardens, schools, libraries—the first in the world—and many other glories which are not within the ambit of this paper to name.

And finally, here I stand! As a humble Assyrian reader of the book, I have mentioned only a few perplexities. There are others, which I leave with my other Assyrian readers of **The Luck of Nineveh**.



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THE ASSYRIAN NATIONHOOD

(The Mystic Echoing of Ten Thousand Years)

By DAVID B. PERLEY

THE AMERICAN ASSYRIAN reading public was startled by the publication of a book, *TREASURE OF QUAMRAN* (1965), which attempted to introduce divers impurities into the body of modern Assyrian Society. That Society does, and must as a categorical imperative, reject it in its totality. The book is shoddy and lacks in authenticity. One scholar has aptly found it to be "one long purple passage". A work, I believe, not based upon exhaustive knowledge, as in this case, should be ignored for the reason that it is not only uninformative, but highly misleading. I therefore comment upon it in the nature of a review, with three introductory observations.

I. On September 5, 1956, I attended a symposium held at the Malburry Street Methodist Church, in Macon, Ga., where Dr. Bernard Cherrick of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem spoke on "The Dead Sea Scrolls—the Story They Tell". The speaker referred to the Syrian Metropolitan of St. Marks in Jerusalem. I suggested to the speaker that Archbishop Samuel (under whose name the book appears) is not a *Syrian* but an *Assyrian*. The answer was: "We know it; his very physiognomy betrays it. But he uses *Syrian* alternatively for an unknown reason."

II. In the March (1965, p. 2) Bulletin of his church he wrote that our church suffered a severe blow by the Nestorians within the Persian Empire in 480. Imagine! This statement is made by a presumptively spiritual leader in the Age of Ecumenicity, when the brotherhood of all men, of every faith, is the guiding star!

Which do you think is the more important now—the future of the Faith of our fathers, and our continued collective existence, or the memories of the dastardly days of Ephesus or Chalcedon, when word-splitting definitions of obscure points of doctrine led me to do battle against their brothers as the "enemies of God"? In my opinion the Assyrians are too enlightened to be led back to those days!

III. Professor Arnold J. Toynbee has discovered (besides twenty-one existing Civilizations), five "Fossils" or "petrified Societies" in his monumental *A Study of History**. One honored fossilized member of the Syriac Society is shown to be the Jacobite Monophysite Christianity in diaspora. The Assyrians have an exceedingly meritorious defense to the unfounded charge. In the West, religion is confused with pragmatism having reference to social diplomacy. In the East, religion is an intrinsic value; its aim, sainthood. (Dr. George Lamsa has proven this fact in sixteen of his books). How can universal values, reflecting facets of truth, beauty,

love, holiness and religion, become perishable? Can the Professor justify his philosophy of history in applying biological categories to things of value—survival, despite his vehement opposition to Spengler's system of morphology? Does he now think of religion in organic terms?

Let me challenge, therefore, the distinguished Archbishop to come to the rescue of my Church. Every man is today in search of his own dignity, and has a right to expect his clerical leaders to lead him in finding it. If he does not do so, it is because he is either unknowledgeable, or that the entire issue is irrelevant, in his views, because the matter does not present a quarrel in a very real domestic sense.

Here we have a problem, in my opinion, more essential that the invention of Syrian for Assyrian, upon which topic I desire to challenge him to a public debate.

Let me propound this question. How was this confusion of the Assyrian racial appellatives initially brought about—as a periodically adhered to by lapsed Assyrians?

The matter goes back in part to the Greek distortions, perversions, and fictionizations. First, it was the change of "Syriac" for "Aramaic" which created confusion between every Syriac-speaking person with "Syrian"; and second, as reported by Mar Addai Scheer, the Chaldean Archbishop of Seert (in his salutary two-volume *History of the Chaldeans and Assyrians*; pp. 4-5, Vol. I) the Greek insinuation that the Assyrians were the "Syrian tribes" of the Assyrian Jacobite Patriarch Dionysius al-Talahari (who ruled in the beginning of the 9th century); that they had neither honor, nor had they ever been an important nation in ancient days." Historical data seems to be, however, that while the tiny Hellenic city-states were engaged in barbaric, fratricidal warfare among themselves, the Assyrians were enjoying the benefits of a mighty, well-organized Empire. St. Augustine acknowledged with pious consistency, the truth of this allegation in the *City of God* (paragraph 4, Book 18, Chap. 2), when he stated that not only the Greeks, but also the Romans, were outstanding more by reputation than in reality, and this in virtue of the fact that

*I cite only a few citations from Toynbee's *A Study of History*.

Vol. I, pp. 35, 51, 82n, 91, 155, 182n.

Vol. II, pp. 56, 235, 258, 364, ff., 384, 385, 452.

Vol. VII, pp. 393, 693.

Vol. VIII, pp. 108, 109, 275, 337n, 367-8, 447, 503.

Vol. XII, pp. 292-3, 298, 300, 460, 664.

brilliant accounts of them were given by Athenian historians; that "it happens that Greek history is more familiar to our people than Assyrian history," that when it comes to power, there was "nothing in antiquity to compare with that of Assyria in scope and duration," that up to the building of Rome, "it all makes extremely small talk by comparison with Assyrian achievements:" that, especially in the case of Athens, "additional glory came to it from the literature and philosophy which flourished in that city much after" the days in issue; and that Assyria surpassed them all, and in comparison with which, "I would call all other kingdoms with their kings mere appendages."

Similar literature in the field of religion, reflecting glory upon the Children of Ashur, is legion.

In another review (*The Assyrian Star*, 9/10/67, p. 10) I wrote that one's being an Assyrian is a synthesis of heritage, religion and culture, and emotional consciousness that transcends all diversities, theological, demographic, and otherwise. Those who honor truth for its own sake will have no difficulty in the comprehension of my meaning, and they will surely remember the lapsed Assyrians in a sunny Assyrian day. The Assyrians have but one nationhood, and the distinction is very clear.

When a person is of Assyrian blood, he retains his birthright, self-esteem, and the heritage of his fathers. It is for this very reason that he may be called a Jacobite-Assyrian, Nestorian-Assyrian, Assyrian-Presbyterian, or Chaldean-Christian. Calling someone a Jacobite-Assyrian should be no more amazing than calling someone else an Irish Catholic. It is a mere matter of hyphenated description, not a hyphenation or division. A hyphen does not divide; it unites. The use of the term Nestorian-Assyrian is the simplest way of designating a Nestorian, who comes from, or who has, an Assyrian background. The term *Assyrian* is one single unity. The approach of this oneness of all Assyrians regardless of their religious adherence, is through the avenue of blood, and through the majesty of common memories. Religion is a faith acquired and is changeable. Nationality is one's flesh and blood; it is his total nature. Even death cannot undo it.

Notwithstanding, in disregard of the essential requirements of his high office, and contrary to the assertion of a noted Church Historian, L.E. Cutts in (*Christians Under the Crescent in Asia*; London: S.P.C.F., 1877, p. 106) that the Jacobite Monophysites are Assyrians, and the late Charles Mannoog, commonly known as *Millet* because of his zeal for the welfare of the Assyrian Church and Nation (husband of Mary Perch of Worcester, Mass., my cousin)—*Millet* is made to be a "Syrian", who never met the Bishop!

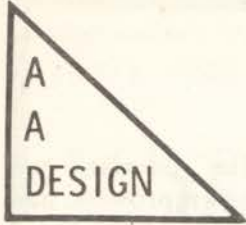
There are numerous falsities and impurities in the book, but this is neither the time nor the place to frame a complete catalogue thereof. And yet, this much be said:

If the writer of the book is Drs. John C. Trever, or Edmund Wilson, or William H. Brownlee, or anyone else, let him come forth and announce himself, so that we may know with whom to deal when we draw up a full inventory of the falsifications and impurities of the book in defense of the nationhood of the Assyrians.

I use the term nationality or nationhood advisedly. It is an unconquerable universal spirit. "Nationality", declared Ramsey Muir in his *Nationalism and Internationalism* is the "possession of common tradition, a memory of sufferings endured and victories won in common, expressed in songs and legends, in the dear names of great personalities that seem to embody in themselves the character and ideals of the nation; in the names also of sacred places where the national memory is enshrined". Nationality means a rich inheritance of memories and a desire to preserve these memories. That is—common in experiences of triumphs and defeats, of comforts and sorrow, of temporal, spiritual and moral achievements—and failures. If such elements make a nation, implicit in Sir Ramsey's pronouncements, then no people is richer in these wholesome memories than the Children of Ashur; yes, heroic achievements, agonies heroically suffered. Haven't the Assyrians known exalted achievements and bitter failures and disappointments? These are the sublime food by which the spirit of manhood is nourished. In the words of the famed historian, from "these are born the sacred and imperishable traditions that make the soul of nations," and, "in contrast with them, mere wealth, numbers, or territory seem but vulgar things."

Lest a domestic crackpot should suffer an unintended discomfiture by these statements, I add parenthetically that America does not require the potting of the dignity of man—the inner forces and vitality of a people and culture. The constant infusion of particular cultures must enrich the soul of America. The Melting Pot theory cannot ignore the essential need of a people's longing for self-identification.





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Extract From
THE ASSYRIAN QUEST
By Dr. David B. Perley, J.S.D.

“Some historical writers select the ancient Assyrian Empire as the only prototype of unusual ferocity in battle, palpably failing to refer to the ignominious conduct of other nations of antiquity; such as the Hebrews, Greeks, Romans and Egyptians, whose annals are full of even more heinous deeds than those attributed to the Assyrians. The answer is to be sought primarily in the enemy account of the writers of the Old Testament, who suffered as much from the Assyrian militarism as they did from the Power of any other of the contemporary empires. The Hebrew writers had reason to relate, not only in minute details the atrocious deeds of their tormentors, but also exceedingly exaggerate, distort and pervert every conceivable segment of the military deeds of the Assyrians, which account was to be misconstrued, twisted, distorted and magnified even more and much more by the later readers of the Old Testament and the commentators thereupon, such as Prof. A. J. Toynbee and many others.

“What, then, is the verdict of the Old Testament writers on the question of genocide and ferocity with regard to the Assyrians of by-gone days? Nahum, Jonah and Isaiah are the only Hebrew writers who deal directly — and in detail — with the deeds, misdeeds and the destiny of the Assyrians.

“Nahum, the raving prophet of vengeance, is exclusively and solely interested with the fall of Nineveh — his book is entitled *The Burden of Nineveh* — all of his vituperation is directed against its wickedness. Wrote he, “Nineveh is doomed for her despoiling of other nations, her lust for power and domination.” But what imperial power, ancient or modern can escape such an indictment?

“Jonah, the rebellious, self-willed and irascible prophet, is another Hebrew writer. He was sent to Nineveh on the divine mission of mercy to warn its inhabitants of the City’s doom, impending destruction within forty days. But God, being more compassionate than Jonah, forgave the penitent Ninevites, despite Jonah’s protests. The obvious deduction seems to be that God of the Hebrews considered the Assyrians as a nation more valuable to history than any other nation of that day. Neither God nor Jonah charged the Ninevites with specific sins or crimes.

“The third Hebrew writer in this connection is Isaiah, the greatest of the Hebrew prophets and a contemporary of Tiglath-Pileser III and Sennacherib. In his famous oracle against Assyria, he states, ‘though God has used Assyria as His agent in the destruction of Israel, he was displeased with her, for Assyria had failed to understand her

mission and its limitations.’ The Assyrians had ascribed their victories to their own prowess, had looked upon their military achievements as proof that their gods were superior to Jehovah, whose people they had humiliated—and despoiled. Therefore, to vindicate His power, God intended to destroy Assyria. As a Hebrew statesman and patriot, Isaiah was an opponent of an earthly power that endangered the peace, security, and integrity of his nation. Yet, he, the greatest of the Hebrew prophets, brings no specific moral charges against the scourging foe of his nation. Assyria’s only sin was here refusal to recognize the God of the Hebrews as being above her own deity. Even as did Pericles in the Golden Age of Athens of the Caesars in the Golden Age of Rome.

“Thus the Old Testament brings no charge of unusual ferocity against the Assyrians; nor does it charge them with any specific moral delinquency especially with regard to the policy of frightfulness and cruelty. The strange discovery of the Assyrians as ‘master of genocide’ had to be left for the ingenious mind of the modern men to fabricate!

“The Assyrians did not resort to killing innocent people. Those who were removed from the cities and territories they conquered were not sold into slavery as the Greeks and the Romans did. Nor were they thrown into the arena to fight with wild beasts—a practice invented by the Romans. Isaiah predicted a worse fate for his own people, as a consequence of their wanton disregard of the universal moral order established by Jehovah—the personal Divine Providence in whose hands are the destinies of all nations.

“Isaiah does not leave Assyria doomed and hopeless. He has a beautiful vision for her future redemption. It shall come to pass, declares he, when Egypt, Assyria and Israel shall be restored, the three nations shall be united in a triple alliance which shall bring great blessings to mankind.

“Yes Assyria and Egypt shall unite with Israel under God to bring peace, moral order, security and blessings to a distracted mankind! Who predicts this, in the confidence of his vision? Not an Assyrian seer, not a rapid nationalist, but a foreign seer, whose nation had been wronged and even destroyed, nationally!”



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یا آنکه کذب به کسی که دروغ بگوید و دروغ بگوید که دروغ است؟
کذب به چه دردی می‌آید؟

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