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in which I have myself followed Delitzsch, that, for the sake of susceptible minds, especially in the first ages of the Gospel, a providential guidance may have been given to the utterances of "inspired" persons, and so the literal fulfilment of ancient prophecies may in some sense be admitted even by a historical critic.

T. K. CHEYNE.

The Woman's Language of Chaldæa.—The critic of Dr. Delitzsch's *Assyrian Dictionary* in the last number of THE EXPOSITOR has fallen into error upon one point. He is alluding to Dr. Delitzsch's reading of *naqbu* for the Accadian *eme-sal*, and his rendering of the supposed Assyrian word by "Female Language"; and he adds: "Upon this statement a whole theory about the Sumerian and Accadian language was built up by Delitzsch, Haupt, Sayce, and Hommel. But quite recently Dr. Bezold has proved that the reading *naqbu* is a mistake for *eme-sal*, and thus this elaborate and wonderful theory falls to the ground with a crash."

With Dr. Delitzsch's theory and its fate I have nothing to do, but an Assyriologist ought to know that the theory put forward by myself, and adopted by Hommel, has no connexion with it or with the reading *naqbu*; indeed it presupposes that this reading is incorrect. The facts are very simple. Certain of the pre-Semitic texts of Chaldæa are written in a form of Accadian, which shows extensive signs of phonetic decay, and seems to have been the dialect spoken in Sumer or Southern Babylonia. The same decayed forms are qualified in the "syllabaries" with the two ideographs *eme-sal*, which signify "the language of a woman," reminding the linguistic student of the numerous cases in which a peculiar "woman's language" is spoken, distinct from that of the men. That such a woman's language existed in Accad is the theory which I have propounded, and I have always protested against the idea that the ideographs *eme-sal* were shown by the word *naqbu* (which by the way, ought to have been *naqbitu*) to represent a mere grammatical error.

A. H. SAYCE.
