STEPHEN HERBERT LANGDON

1876–1937

IT is still hardly a hundred years from the true beginning of the studies which centre upon the cuneiform writing. The two generations which have now spent themselves upon it have enjoyed little of that long life which ancient kings and notables wearied their gods by craving, in the prayers that these scholars have by their labours interpreted. The pace has been too hot for that; μέγας ὁ ἀγὼν ἐστι, θεῖον γὰρ ἔργον, not merely to enter a long-forgotten realm, but to view from every ridge attained new slopes rising ahead and fresh lines of advance on either hand, with but a handful of men to occupy them all. Nothing in this situation, perhaps, is peculiar to the development of any one science, but one which is so recent, having for its subject the greater part of man's earliest articulate civilization, must make extraordinary calls upon the devotion and strength of its pioneers. Few among them have responded with more single-hearted loyalty than the late Professor Langdon, whose life was indeed his work and little else. In this service he died suddenly on 19 May 1937, at the age of 61, if not untimely in his fullest vigour, at least while he had yet useful tasks to accomplish.

There is another circumstance which must be counted to him for honour in the company of his predecessors and contemporaries. New studies are adapted to be begun and improved by men of good natural parts little indebted to scholastic tradition, and thus it is found that the great rediscovery of the ancient world which took place in the last century was largely the work of amateurs, of divers professions and capacities, who have not since been spared the now injurious name of dilettanti. Among them were some who were born and passed their early years in humble conditions, with small influence of letters; of our countrymen,

and in the history of Langdon's own study, the name of George Smith is remarkable for this as for so many other reasons, and the late T. G. Pinches may worthily be remembered with him. Sir Ernest Budge used to relate a sneer of Jules Oppert that 'Smith was a good workman, and he wrote like one', but it needed another generation and the advance of knowledge to appreciate a genius which no alleged faults of manner concealed from the unprejudiced of his own day. Without attempting to carry the analogy farther it is permissible to observe that Langdon, too, although he seems to have had a very tolerable schooling, was not born into such a situation as promised a scholar, much less a notable contributor to an abstruse science.

Stephen Herbert Langdon became a British subject by naturalization in 1913, having been born a citizen of the United States of America on 8 May 1876. His father, George Knowles Langdon, and mother Abigail Elizabeth (*née* Hassinger), occupied at that time a farm in Ida township near Monroe in the state of Michigan not far from the western shore of Lake Erie. According to a letter[1] written by the Professor himself as recently as December 1936 to the Editor of the *Monroe Evening News* 'my associates [i.e. their ancestors] came from New Hampshire, and one of them was governor of that state, and the first name of the thirteen signatories of the Constitution. Another was president of Harvard. My great grandfather served in a New York regiment during seven years of the Revolution, and was financially ruined. My grandfather trekked westward over 100 years ago to Monroe county. His library consisted

[1] Published in the *Monroe Evening News* of 21 May 1937, appended to an obituary notice. Extracts from this letter had been inserted in the same journal on 8 January, and an article by Miss Gertrude Golden containing reminiscences of his early life in Monroe appeared in the number for 12 December 1935. I take this opportunity of acknowledging my debt to two appreciations of Langdon's life and work contributed by Mr. G. R. Driver to the *Oxford Magazine*, 27 May 1937, and by Dr. R. Campbell Thompson to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, October 1937, pp. 719–26.

of an English Bible, Shakespeare, Paley's Evidences, and Blackstone's Principles of English Law. These were almost the first books I ever read.' The young Langdon's native place may not, indeed, have been a very enlightened community in the eighties, but it is clear from his own account that education and opportunities were by no means lacking there. He is said to have attended a country school in his earliest years, but his taste for learning was first excited when he entered the high school of Monroe. Of this institution his letter speaks with high praise, which not only does credit to his local patriotism, but is justified by the writer's own career. According to this testimony 'the school board was particular about securing the best talent available from Ann Arbor, and consequently I learned Latin and Greek from Warriner and Denison, both of whom latterly became quite well-known scholars. The school in those days enabled a boy to secure five years Latin, three years Greek, French, and German, with considerable mathematics and science. There was in my day also a remarkable scholar as superintendent, named Honey, one of the best classical and German scholars, who also knew some Sanscrit.' A glimpse of the other side of the picture appears in the story that the boy's father was at first opposed to his being taught Latin, deeming that this would be of no use in carrying on the farm which he designed to leave subsequently in the hands of his two sons. But such opposition, and its motive, is traditionally the first obstacle to the promising lad.

Having completed his course in 1891 Langdon returned for a while to Ida as principal of the local school, during which time he was a member of the county board of school examiners. Out of his salary he managed to save enough to pay his fees at the University of Michigan and 'was graduated from the university in 1898 with an A.B. degree and election to Phi Beta Kappa'. This was followed by 'another year at Ann Arbor getting his M.A., and in the spring of 1899 [he] was elected Monroe county school commissioner. At the end of his term he was the unsuccessful

Democratic nominee for state superintendent of public instruction.' There seems to be no information about his studies at Ann Arbor beyond the one important fact that he there received his first introduction to Assyrian from Professor J. A. Craig, known as the editor of two groups of religious and astrological texts from Assyrian tablets in the British Museum.

The time had now come for Langdon to leave his birthplace, and henceforward his progress towards his life's work was rapid. Presumably in consequence of his failure to obtain political preferment in Michigan he entered the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, where he studied under Professors Brown and Briggs, and obtained the degree of B.D. in 1903. Simultaneously he was a member of Columbia University, reading Semitic languages and Greek under the tuition of Professors Prince and Gottheil, from the former of whom he may be supposed to have imbibed his first interest in Sumerian. The faculties of Semitics and Greek at Columbia University examined him for the degree of Ph.D. in 1904; in the preceding year he had already been elected a Fellow of the University in Semitics, but upon receiving his doctorate he was made an International Fellow to France, and went to Paris, where he studied under Père Scheil in the École des Hautes Études, under Professor Charles Fossey in the Section Religieuse of the same school, and under Professor Derembourg in the École des Langues Vivantes. At the same time he was reading Sumerian with M. Thureau-Dangin. Here he was doubtless faced with the dilemma of many others who have engaged themselves in a poorly endowed study of which it is fairly easy to become a novice, but only too often impossible to continue a devotee, and, again like many others, he evidently had thoughts of entering the ministry, for he attached himself to the American Episcopal Church of the Holy Trinity in Paris, where he was ordained a deacon. Subsequent events having made possible the purely scholastic career which he preferred, he never proceeded beyond this

order in the Church. Meanwhile he had the advantage of some material support from Mr. John D. Rockefeller, to which he gratefully alludes in the preface to an early work as having enabled him 'to continue in the arduous path he has set before himself'.

During these student days Langdon had already begun the long series of his publications, and, even so early, their frequency foreshadowed a large production. His name first appears on the title-page of a booklet in a Semitic Study Series edited by Gottheil and Jastrow, *The Annals of Ashurbanapal* (1903); this contains only the cuneiform text, copied by Robert J. Lau, and a glossary by Langdon. Only two years later appeared in print the first part of his thesis *The Building Inscriptions of the Neo-Babylonian Empire*. These texts had already received a good deal of attention from scholars, and consequently there is nothing very new in the work, though the introduction deals adequately with certain matters of literary form, and the translations are abreast of the knowledge of the period—not, indeed, that they would be very greatly altered now. The remainder of this material never appeared by itself, for the whole was adopted into the German series called the Vorderasiatische Bibliothek and came out in 1912 as *Die neubabylonischen Königsinschriften*, a book which has never been superseded, and is to-day perhaps the one indisputably 'standard' work which bears Langdon's name. The arrangement by which this part of the Bibliothek was entrusted to him may have been a consequence of the year which he spent in Leipzig at that time. Another outcome of this sojourn, which followed closely upon his studies in Paris, might (without too much indulging fancy) be traced in the curious uncertainty of his command over the English language, which his writings often discover. Early annotations in some of his books of reference seem to show that he then wrote indifferently in English, French, or German, and it is the employment of alien constructions and senses of words which sometimes gives an amusingly original effect to his sentences. His

earliest books have little trace of this infirmity, including the collection called *Lectures on Babylonia and Palestine* (1906), which are written in a plain, unpretentious style, with some pastoral emphasis, though they hardly had the matter to justify publication, which the author says was not originally intended for them. Rather inconsequentially the lectures are followed by some miscellaneous translations from recently published texts, and these, at least, would have been better suppressed, for they betray too often that insensibility to the unmeaning and even the grotesque, which youth could not excuse and maturity never quite overcame. This little book is dedicated in terms of pleasing affection to his mother, 'Abbey Hassinger Langdon', and its preface records the writer's gratitude to Mrs. Edith Berg of London who had presented him with some books from the library of Jules Oppert.

In 1908 Langdon came to Oxford, the place of his life's work, which he never afterwards quitted, except for a few more or less protracted visits to museums abroad, and subsequently for his two expeditions to Kish. He had obtained the interest of Miss Mary Wallace Shillito, who offered the University of Oxford the sum of £10,000 to endow a Readership in Assyrian and Comparative Semitic Philology on condition that Langdon should be the first Reader. This arrangement was made permanent in 1911, and thus provided the first modest living in the British Universities for a student of cuneiform, though the income, originally sufficient for this purpose, had to be supplemented after the War by an amount which still left the Reader obliged to seek occasional employment for his pen more remunerative than purely scientific authorship. Conscious of this unsatisfactory position, the University had decided to remedy it at the very time of Langdon's premature death, by which he was denied the satisfaction of seeing the object of his devotion more worthily recognized. It abides a reproach to our national education that a full Professor of Assyriology is still nowhere to be found.

Here it may be convenient to record some further particulars of Langdon's University and domestic life. He was made an honorary M.A. in 1910, M.A. by decree in 1918, and, upon the retirement of the late Professor A. H. Sayce, one of the pioneers of Assyrian studies, he became Honorary Professor in 1919. Though a member of the Senior Common Room at Jesus College he never received a Fellowship there or elsewhere, which was no doubt a disappointment to him. Extra-mural honours came to him from several institutions and societies at home and abroad; he was an Associate Fellow of the Society of Oriental Research, an Honorary Patron of the Field Museum, Chicago, and served on the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society. His principal honour, one that gave him much gratification, was to be elected in 1931 a Fellow of the British Academy, and this was followed in 1933 by a similar recognition from the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, making him a *correspondant* (which is not, however, a *membre*) of that distinguished body.[1] He was also appointed in 1934 by the Fondation Singer-Polignac to lecture at the Collège de France on his exploration of Kish.

Of his private life it is not possible to say much, for few men have been more absorbed in their work, and, beyond one or two outdoor games and some social pastimes, in which he was more inclined to indulge after his marriage, he had little outside interest. Recollections of his later years at Oxford will always associate him with the sympathetic figure of his wife, May, the younger daughter of Mr. Thomas Gregory of Cardiff. Their marriage took place in 1925, and, though there were no children, was obviously a very happy union. Nobody who had known him before this event could mistake its wholly favourable effect upon his personality; he became noticeably, as the phrase now is,

[1] An *éloge* delivered by the President at the meeting of the Académie on 4 June 1937 is printed in the *Comptes rendus* for 1937, pp. 163 ff. I owe to the kindness of Langdon's preceptor and friend, M. Thureau-Dangin, this reference to a tribute which I have not yet been able to see.

more 'human', and what had seemed the excessive austerity of his life and interests was happily mitigated.

The first book to bear Langdon's new academic title is *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms* (1909), and, since this began the series of what were to be his most extensive publications, a general view of these will not be out of place here. To enumerate only the principal, they include, besides the above-mentioned work, *Babylonian Liturgies* (1913), *Historical and Religious Texts* (1914), *Sumerian Epic of Paradise* (1915), *Sumerian Liturgical Texts* (1917), and *Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms* (1919). Nearly the whole contents of these are autograph copies and translations selected from the ancient Sumerian religious and mythological literature, most of it written down about the beginning of the second millennium B.C., and surviving in tablets of that date, though some was copied in later ages. These texts are very seldom furnished with a Semitic translation (a practice which did not become common until the late Assyrian period), and therefore present great difficulty of understanding owing to our very imperfect grasp of the Sumerian vocabulary and grammar. In choosing this class of literature for his special study Langdon was rightly guided by his perception of its remarkable interest, but he was also exceedingly bold in venturing upon its interpretation; predecessors had mostly contented themselves with publishing material and hoping that some day somebody would be able to make use of it. Nor has this unhelpful (but not incomprehensible) practice yet ceased, for it has to be owned that in no direction has progress been so little and so slow as towards even the rudimentary understanding of these texts that has now been achieved. To say this is, no doubt, an implied criticism of Langdon's own labours, the industry of which may be judged from the dates of his successive publications. Only those who have attempted it can imagine the tax upon eyesight and nerve levied by the mere production of so many pages of copies from tablets often fragmentary or ill-preserved, and inscribed with many rare characters in an

obscure language. Even if Langdon's powers in this respect were exceptional, as manifestly they were, the inference is unavoidable that so great an output in so few years must have been attained at the expense of care and accuracy. As regards the copies there is reason to fear that this imputation could be established. A true verdict upon this might, of course, be delivered only by one who had collated a sufficient number of his texts, and this may not be done for another century, so great at present is the distraction of ever new material. But a few that have undergone a test do not emerge very well from it, and others seem to contain so many improbabilities that a like suspicion is engendered.

A passage in a text is naturally suspect if it makes no sense or an unsatisfactory sense, but this principle is not easy to apply in so little understood a language as Sumerian, where readings both true and false may pass together as equally unintelligible. It may fairly be said, however, that Langdon often made less use than was possible of this criterion, for his translations bear too many marks not only of haste but of inadequate reflection. He seems sometimes to have been content to wrest a meaning for words with the aid of much comparative material, which he had amassed by a reading no less assiduous than his writing, and to have cared too little for the sense of the whole line or the passage or the document which he was translating. There are pages in his books where, if one reads the English version by itself, it is impossible to gather any connected sense at all, quite apart from the question whether it is the sense of the original. This inconsequence, coupled as it sometimes was with oddities of expression, has given occasion for much criticism. But, though the charge of writing inconsiderately cannot be denied, it can partly be explained, if not excused, by haste in over-production, and it is necessary to bear in mind that much of the phraseology which strikes us as grotesque is in fact, so far as can be seen, that of the texts themselves, which use a vast deal of repetition and abound in quaint images. Very little is known, in fact, about the occasions

or purposes for which these compositions were employed; we may assume without rashness that they were mostly the concomitants of rituals, which would tend to explain some of their *longueurs* and apparent frigidity. But the so-called epics at least have some action to relate, however circumstantially, and translations of these ought, therefore, to be more amenable to the test of conformity with ordinary sense. As an example, then, Langdon's interpretation of his most celebrated subject, called by him the *Sumerian Epic of Paradise* (1915), may be taken as an illustration. A lively, even an acrimonious, criticism greeted this work, and it must be owned that, despite much correct observation of subsidiary matters, Langdon's main ideas about the meaning of this text have had to be rejected—there is nothing here about the Fall of Man, and only something incidental about a kind of Paradise. What is most clearly described is a sacred marriage between a god and a goddess, and the birth of their offspring after a miraculous shortening of nine months into nine days, which are expressly alluded to. This was not observed by Langdon in his original edition, and he strangely declined to admit it in the improved French version which he produced several years afterwards.

To conclude this summary of his work in Sumerian a word should be added about his grammatical studies, which naturally extended throughout his life. It has already been recalled that during his student days in Paris he studied Sumerian grammar under the guidance of M. Thureau-Dangin, who has kindly informed me (in a letter which he allows me to quote) that Langdon used to come to him in the company of MM. Henri de Genouillac and Étienne Combe—'nous expliquions des inscriptions de Gudea, surtout du point de vue grammatical. . . . En sumérien Langdon n'a pas tardé à voler de ses propres ailes.' As early as 1907 he had published in the periodical *Babyloniaca* (of which he became associate editor) his *Syntaxe du verbe sumérien*, a study preliminary to his full-

length *Sumerian Grammar and Chrestomathy* (1911). This book is undoubtedly difficult to use, attempts in certain subjects an exactitude beyond the evidence, and did not, of course, solve problems such as the use of the verbal prefixes, which are still far from being completely explained, but it could claim to be the first of its kind, and has probably been more often consulted than quoted. His subsequent grammatical work is found chiefly in footnotes, which generally belong rather to the domain of lexicography, the collection of materials for a Sumerian dictionary being the work which he regarded as his most important care during the latter years of his life.

Having chosen for his especial attention the more obscure of the two principal tongues written in cuneiform, Langdon made fewer contributions to the knowledge of Akkadian, the Semitic speech of Babylonia. Nevertheless in this also he has to his credit several books which will, no doubt, continue in use for as many years as are usually granted to the performances of Assyriologists. *Babylonian Wisdom* (1923) offered revised translations of many moral and proverbial texts, the obscurities of which have exercised the ingenuity of successive scholars, and *The Babylonian Epic of Creation* (1923) was a most painstaking and useful work which joined a reconstituted text with a careful, if sometimes curiously worded, translation, and added much illustrative matter and elucidation of particular questions. For a number of years this was in general use as the standard edition, and is probably not yet superseded. In his *Epic of Gilgamesh* (1917) he produced an important part of the old Babylonian version of that poem from a tablet in Philadelphia, and his *Babylonian Penitential Psalms* (1927) united a large number of liturgical texts both new and old, with translations and comments; but this book, it must be confessed, was found to be much impaired by textual inaccuracies.

During the years which witnessed this great activity of publication it was inevitable that Langdon should not often

have emerged from his study at Oxford. Yet he visited Constantinople in 1912, spent some time in the (then) Musée Impérial Ottoman, and brought away a sheaf of copies taken from the mass of tablets discovered by the American excavators at Nippur. The bulk of this material was fragmentary, but Langdon selected some important texts of the class to which he was then devoted, and in 1914 the pick of his harvest appeared as vol. xxxi of the *Babylonian Expedition*, published under the editorship of Hilprecht. In the autumn of 1913 he went to the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia,[1] with the purpose of working upon more of the Nippur tablets. He paid a second and longer visit in 1916, arriving at Philadelphia in August, when he began collating the texts copied during his earlier stay. The fruit of his labours fills the whole four parts of vol. x of the *Publications of the Babylonian Section* of the Museum, and one part of vol. xii; some of these have been noticed above under their separate titles, and a by-product of the same work was a number of descriptive articles in the *Museum Journal*. This visit, however, developed into something more when it was suggested that he should take the position of Curator of the Babylonian Section, then vacant. The appointment was made in October 1916, and thereafter he remained in America for rather less than a year, returning to Oxford in September 1917, and expecting, as it seems, to resume his work at Philadelphia early in the following year. But he never went back, and instead his resignation as Curator was received in April 1918. The War was then at its crisis, and it may be supposed that Langdon felt unable to leave his adopted country at such a moment, for he sought military service, joined the Oxford Volunteers, and is said to have been introduced to 'the disciplines of the wars' by digging

[1] Dr. Léon Legrain, Curator of the Babylonian Section of the Museum, has very kindly furnished me with a summary of Langdon's activities and publications on behalf of that institution. They are mostly recorded in the Philadelphia *Museum Journal*, vols. vii–ix.

trenches, and handling at Didcot some weapons not to be found among the armies of Eannatum or of Sennacherib.

With the end of the War, and the great changes thereby effected in the Near East, came the most surprising passage in this hitherto secluded life. Langdon had long been of the opinion that the ruins of the ancient Sumerian city of Kish must hide under their almost undisturbed mounds relics of the greatest historical and religious interest, and he saw in the opening-up of Iraq a splendid opportunity not only of putting his conviction to the test, but of enriching the Ashmolean Museum with a class of antiquities hardly represented there before. But instead of trying to move others to execute the project which he had theoretically conceived, he himself set about what every one would have supposed the wholly uncongenial task of raising a large fund and fitting out an archaeological expedition, with all the negotiation, correspondence, and multifarious activities inseparable from such an undertaking. His most generous supporter was Mr. H. Weld-Blundell, and he also formed an alliance with the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, which was to assume a share of the work, the expenses, and the results obtained. Not content with this, he proposed to direct and even to lead the expedition himself. Although the field work was mainly in charge of Mr. Ernest Mackay and of the late M. Charles Watelin successively, Langdon himself went out with the expedition in 1923 and 1925, and the exploration of the important early site called Jamdat Naṣr was his principal achievement. This is not, of course, the place to attempt any description of the work at Kish, the results of which have in many respects fulfilled and even surpassed Langdon's anticipations. But his scientific enthusiasm, his energy in pursuit of knowledge, and his readiness to discard old habits and face a quite unknown life in an unhealthy and then still somewhat dangerous country are surely qualities deserving of very high praise. They nearly proved fatal to him, however, for his second visit was cut short by a severe attack

of jaundice, and, recovering from this, he was dissuaded from going out again. Afterwards, until the expedition came to an end in 1934, Langdon continued to act as director at home, besides attending to publication of the results, a good deal of which, especially the work upon the pre-historic tablets of Jamdat Naṣr, is from his own hand. The epigraphical parts of the publication were included in a new series of editions of cuneiform texts which Langdon began in 1923—as though his energies at that time had still not sufficient outlet in the expedition to Kish and his professorial duties.

The latter years of his life, being still years of not much more than middle age, were distinguished by such notable books as *The Venus Tablets of Ammizaduga* (1928), written in conjunction with the late Dr. J. K. Fotheringham, a careful and learned contribution to the study of old Babylonian dating, and *Semitic Mythology* (1931), his only considerable work of a general kind. Its title committed him, indeed, to a task hardly within the compass of a single volume, and it contained perhaps more of Sumerian than of Semitic, if the two can be properly distinguished in this realm. No doubt, too, he must have sadly regretted his ill luck in missing by so short a time the tablets from Ras Shamra which have since restored to us so much of ancient Semitic legend. His last book was the printed version of the Schweich Lectures of the British Academy delivered by him in 1933, entitled *Babylonian Menologies* (1935), a comprehensive and useful account of the various Sumerian and Semitic calendars. Throughout his writings he had always displayed a lively interest in Babylonian astronomy, though, of course, rather in the philological than the natural scientific aspect of a subject which most scholars of his kind are content to observe, with becoming awe, as it is expounded by a few specialists. For the preparation of these lectures he had copied and worked through a good deal of unpublished material from the Nineveh library, which he intended later to issue, but did not live to do so. Here also it is proper to

say something of a work which for some years past he had regarded as his main occupation, and often spoke about —his Sumerian Dictionary, destined to remain at his death a collection of paper slips, and a mass of entries in his copies of the standard collections of ideograms. Very much needs to be done upon this material before it could possibly appear, but it is beyond doubt that so much labour has amassed a wealth of information, concerning especially his favourite study of the Sumerian religious texts, and it would be as profitable to scholarship as it would surely have pleased Langdon himself, if a duly pious and competent hand could be found to finish his task.

With this ends the general survey of his writings, to which more space has been devoted in this notice than would have been appropriate in the case of a less devoted and single-minded student. And still nothing has been said of his unceasing activity in the contribution of articles to learned journals, and, in a much less degree, to popular literature. For the latter he had no great talent, and wisely refrained from indulging much in it. But there was another part of his work which cannot be passed over without recognition, for not only was it his true calling as a university teacher, but in it he appeared at his best. A Professor of Assyriology ought perhaps to be grateful for anything beyond the ἕπτὰ μαθηταί of satire, but Langdon had generally a steady supply of some two or three pupils at a time, of whom an encouraging proportion seems to have kept faithful to studies at least kindred to those in which he had guided them, and (according to Mr. Driver) 'he was proud to count amongst them, in a subject which offers few positions of emolument, nine Professors, three Readers, and two Lecturers' spread over several countries of the world. In nothing did he so much excel, by general testimony, as in his zeal for the instruction and progress of those who resorted to him. He would take infinite trouble over their theses, to which he added richly from the stores of his own learning; it was his habit to speak enthusiastically of the

ability and prospects of any pupil who could reasonably fulfil his only modest demands, that he should be interested and willing to work. This generosity, gratefully remembered by all who ever had dealings with him, was extended in equal measure to his colleagues, none of whom ever appealed to him without being made free of all his stores of scientific material.

It is not easy to sum up the effect of Langdon's life in the only history where he would have wished to make his mark, the progress of Assyriology. It is just because that study is at present so engrossed in progress, or at any rate progression, that some common standards do not apply. The foregoing notice of his books has been obliged to convey some criticism, and it has been said elsewhere that much of his work will have to be done again. This is undeniable, but the charge loses some of its force when one considers how brief a life is at present granted to nearly all books of this kind. It is hardly too much to expect another century (if studies endure) before some truly standard works, *nec scombros metuentia nec tus*, can be written on the literature preserved in cuneiform and its allied subjects. Meanwhile precept must be upon precept, line upon line. Langdon wrote very many; they were not all good lines, but he began with them some fresh pages which his successors can fill, even if, reading the opening words, they 'compare them with the bettering of the time' and have to blot them. His learning and his opinions will share the common fate of disappearance in the edifice of others who will lay their stones upon his, but those who knew him will remember the single-hearted scholar, the kindly man, and those to come will not contemn his devotion and labours in his own day.

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