

copies of fragments of inscriptions belonging to the reign of Tiglath-Pileser. Rollinson gave him this permission and Smith went eagerly to work. He came across a new inscription of Shalman-izir with the name of Jehu upon it, calling Jehu son of Omri, as was noted on the black obelisk.

This discovery led to the employment of Smith by the British Museum for work in the Assyrian Department. In his work in the Museum, Smith came upon texts referring to Pekah and Hoshea, kings of Israel. He possessed in an unusual degree the gift of decipherment and made several advances of considerable importance in the understanding of the texts that he found.

After a number of important discoveries, he came upon one which aroused still more interest. In 1872 he was reading a broken clay tablet and discovered upon it unmistakable parallels to the biblical account of the Flood. From other fragments which fitted together with the piece of tablet that he had, he ascertained that the part which he had first found was the eleventh in a series of twelve tablets, giving the story of a great hero, whom Smith called Izdubar, but whom we now call Gilgamesh. He presented his discovery in a paper before the Society of Biblical Archaeology on December 3, 1872. The meeting was large and enthusiastic. Sir Henry Rollinson presided. Gladstone was one of those present whose interest was greatly aroused by the new discoveries. People urged that the government resume excavations on the site of Nineveh to find more material which might illustrate or confirm the biblical narrative.

The proprietors of the Daily Telegraph offered 1,000 guineas to pay the expenses of an expedition to Nineveh on condition that Smith should lead it and should send letters to the paper describing his experience and discoveries.