

RECENT HITTITE LITERATURE.

THE question of the Hittites continues to interest scholars, and several new contributions to the literature have appeared, though they can hardly be said to have advanced the question. Most of them are rather general dissertations than serious attempts at decipherment, and most of them make use, without due acknowledgment, of previous materials. Nor do the principles of hieroglyphic writing, or of the syntax which distinguishes Aryan from Mongolic speech, appear to be known to the writers.

M. Halévy sticks to his opinion that no races which used either the cuneiform or the so-called Hittite could have been anything but Semitic; but Akkadian and Medic scholars do not accept his opinion. In North Syria, at Merâsh, has been found a statue of Panammu, with a long Semitic inscription. M. Halévy urges that this shows that the Hittites were a Semitic people, because they lived in this region. The Tell Amarna tablets show us, however, that in 1500 B.C. there were Amorites in this region who were Semitic, as well as Hittites (at Rezepth) who spoke a non-Semitic tongue. Panammu is a known historic character. He is mentioned in the reign of Tiglath Pilezer II, on an Assyrian tablet¹ (about 745-727 B.C.) as Chief of the Samalli. There is, therefore, no reason to assume that he was a Hittite. The Samalli were no doubt a Semitic people, whose name may be derived from שְׂמַל (Arabic

شمال), "the left hand" or "north" (Gen. xiv, 15; Job xxiii, 9).

A volume of 130 pages was published at Brussels in 1891, by M. Leon de Lantscheere, who kindly sent me a copy. It includes a summary of former literature, but several important indications are unnoticed, which have come to light since. The author passes judgment on his predecessors, but his own proposals are confined to the following ("De la race et de la langue des Hittites," p. 95):—

"Certain indications make one think that the language of the proto-Armenians was part of the same group."

It is very generally agreed that the tribes of ancient Armenia and of North Syria, who used the same peculiar script, spoke the same language; but M. de Lantscheere does not tell us what that language was. The language of Media—adjoining Armenia—continued till 500 B.C. and later to be a Mongolic language like Turkish, as is universally allowed since the translation of the third language of Behistun by Sir H. Rawlinson and Dr. Oppert. The language of Mitanni (or Matiene) in 1500 B.C.—spoken in Armenia proper—I think I have been able to show was very close to the Medic, and very similar to Akkadian and to ancient

¹ Schrader, "Cuneif. Inscriptns and O.T.," Vol. I, p. 242.

Turkish speech.¹ The language of the Prince of Rezep, in the same correspondence (from Tell Amarna) appears to be the same, and he calls himself a Hittite. Hence it seems safe to conclude that Hittite was a Mongolic language like Akkadian and Turkish.

Herodotus says (vii, 73) that the Armenians of his time were colonists from Phrygia, and the Phrygians were, he says, Europeans, and apparently Aryans (Briges). The modern language of Armenia is an Aryan tongue, which stands midway between Slavonic and Persian speech. The Phrygians appear to have entered Asia Minor about 800 B.C., but were not the only population. The Carians and Lydians were (judging from the remains of their languages) partly Mongolic—as Dr. Beddoe supposes also on anthropological grounds—and the Lycians appear to have been akin to the Persians. The language spoken at Lake Van was—as I think I have been able to show pretty clearly from grammar and vocabulary—an Aryan language, akin also to Persian, and spoken in the 9th century B.C.² When, therefore, M. de Lantscheere speaks of “proto-Armenians” we gain no definite knowledge till he has defined his terms. Aryan and Mongolic languages belong to distinct classes of Asiatic speech, and both classes are represented in ancient, as they are in modern, Armenia.

At Berlin, during 1892, was published another work, by Priv. Doc. F. E. Peiser, of the University of Breslau. Concerning this, a writer in the Royal Asiatic Society's Journal for April, 1893, says, “We fail to discern a shadow of probability in his elaborate essay at decipherment.” Dr. Peiser, however, appears to have taken some pains to study the question grammatically. He accepts the view which I put forward in 1887, in “Altaic Hieroglyphs,” which had not been then previously proposed by any one: namely, that the language was Mongolic, and akin to Turkish; a view which will, I believe, in the end prevail over others. He proposes a paradigm of the Hittite, as compared with modern Turkish verbs, which appears to me improbable; because the ancient languages of this class—Medic and Akkadian—have a very imperfectly developed verb, and these contemporary languages are more likely than modern tongues to have resembled Hittite grammatically. Dr. Peiser also attributes the inscriptions to the time of Sennacherib, because certain Hittite seals were found in his palace. He seems to overlook the fact that the Cartouche of Rameses II is engraved on the field of the Hittite statue at Mount Sipylos in a manner which shows it to be later than the Hittite text. In this instance it is clear that the Hittite is older than 1360 B.C.; and considering that the Hittite Prince of Rezep wrote in cuneiform in 1500 B.C., and that Sennacherib destroyed the last remnants of the Hittites at Carchemish, it seems clear that Dr. Peiser's date is far too late, and that the time of their prosperity (from the 14th century B.C. backwards) is a more probable period for the execution of their inscriptions, which are more archaic in character than any others known—not

¹ “Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,” October, 1892.

² *Ibid.*, 1891.

even excluding Egyptian. If, however, the true method of discovering the sounds of the Hittite, by use of the Cypriote syllabary, were adopted, instead of giving merely arbitrary values to the emblems not founded on comparative study, it is possible that advance might be made in Germany in this study, if the right class of language be compared.

The Rev. C. J. Ball has added a note to my article on the Hittites in the new "Smith's Bible Dictionary," which contains two statements from which I entirely dissent. First, that all the names of Hittites in the Bible are "of a decidedly Semitic complexion," which is asserted in spite of the fact that names like Ephron, Beeri, and Toi, have entirely puzzled great Semitic scholars. And, secondly, that "we do not certainly know the sound of a single Hittite symbol," which ignores the Cypriote comparison which in certain cases is perfectly clear, especially as regards *mo*, *ne*, *ti*, &c. Mr. Ball has long been interested in the subject, and since 1887 has compared the Hittite with Hebrew (*Semitic*), with Armenian (*Aryan*), and with Chinese (*Mongolic*), so that it is evident that his mind is still open. It is, however, in each case obvious that a considerable historic lapse of time separates the archaic speech in question from these proposed parallels.

Mr. D. G. Hogarth has published in 1893 a long Hittite text of seventy lines; but it is unfortunately so mutilated as to throw little new light on the subject. It is, however, now clear that we already possess the system in its complete state, and that only about 130 signs were used, which renders it improbable that the system was purely ideographic, and makes the search of the syllabic values more hopeful. My views have been supported by Dr. I. Taylor, by Mr. T. G. Pinches, and by Dr. Peiser, while others have contented themselves with leaving the various suggestions put forward without reply.

Two articles on the subject have also appeared in the "Sunday School Times" in America, from Dr. Peter Jensen, of the University of Marburg, who heads his papers (March 25th, 1893, and April 1st, 1893) "A Solution of the Hittite Question," which appears to me to be a somewhat sanguine title. These demand attention, because it has been announced that his discovery is a new one, whereas, on investigation, it appears that he adds no new proposal to the controversy, which may now be said to be confined to a decision between the Mongolic and the Armenian theories.

Dr. Jensen informs us that he has "shared in the attempts to decipher the inscriptions of Mitanni." There is only one inscription written by a King of Mitanni in the native language, and if his "results" have been "but scanty," the reason is, I think, to be found in the fact that he is led to attempt an Aryan comparison. He says that "it matters not who the people were to whom we owe the (Hittite) inscriptions," basing this statement apparently on the fashionable belief that "language is not a test of race." As a fact, the great races of Asia, in our own time, are still distinguished by the same classes of language which distinguish them on the earliest known monuments; and at all intermediate periods of history

they have been so distinguished. The fact that the Hittite type is Mongolic is, therefore, a fair argument in favour of their having spoken a Mongolic language.

Dr. Jensen sees an "Egyptian influence" in the Hittite civilisation, but does not inform us of any details. There were symbols common to Chaldea and Egypt, which were also known to Hittites; but the Hittite art is as distinct from Egyptian as it well could be; and the assertion, therefore, requires proof. The author then proceeds to state that the opinions of Dr. Sayce, Rev. C. J. Ball (he does not specify which of the three views of the latter he intends), Major Conder, and Dr. Peiser are "in fact all without foundation," for which reason it becomes difficult to understand why he reproduces so much of the work of his predecessors, though, as a rule, he omits to notice that this is the case.

Dr. Jensen says that the inquiry includes (1) the analysis of the contents of the texts, and (2) the determination of the phonetic values. This appears to reverse the true problem, and he regards the second part of the inquiry as the more difficult. It will be evident to all that if we did not know the sound of the letters C, A, T, and assumed that the group meant "dog," we should be hindered in discovering that the sound was "cat," especially if we regarded it as being Hebrew or Chinese instead of English. The only basis on which any serious study can rest is on the recovery of the sounds of the emblems, by aid of the Cypriote syllabary, which Dr. Jensen ignores in favour of purely arbitrary proposed sounds, which cannot convince because they are conjectural, and based on the assumption that Hamath, Carchemish, and other cities are probably noticed in the texts.

Dr. Jensen attributes to Dr. Peiser the discovery of the "divider" between words. This I noticed in 1887, and, as I have stated in "Altaic Hieroglyphs," I found while correcting the proofs that I had been forestalled in the proposal by Dr. Sayce. There is nothing new, therefore, in the observation. He continues to state that the "words most probably never underwent modification at their beginning, but only at their end, so that the language of the inscriptions is suffixed." The conclusion is correct, and is one which I argued in 1887: but it is fatal to Dr. Jensen's comparisons with modern Armenian. Armenian is an inflected Aryan language, as every scholar knows, and has no suffixes such as are distinctive of Mongolic languages. In Mongolic speech we do not find "for—a—man," but "man—for"; that is to say, a suffix instead of a preposition. In Armenian the preposition is used as in all Aryan speech. Dr. Jensen thus convicts himself of want of acquaintance with the distinctive grammar of Aryan, as contrasted with Mongolic speech.

The first emblem on the Hamath stones is either a verb or a noun. Dr. Jensen says it means "I am," though in Egyptian (as I have shown in former papers) a very similar emblem means "speech." In suffixing languages, the verb never stands first, though it does in Aryan and Semitic inflected languages. Dr. Jensen, however, says it means "I," with "am" understood, though the emblem *mu* for "I" may be very

easily distinguished in Hittite, and is quite different. He regards the next sign as the "nominative exponent," though in suffixed languages there are two nominatives—definite and indefinite. To me it seems that these four signs mark the plural, being very like the plural emblem in other systems. This is perhaps confirmed by the sound *me*, which may be derived for them from the boss of Tarkondemos, which sound Dr. Jensen wrongly ascribes as a discovery to Dr. Peiser.

The most notable statement in his paper is as follows:—

"It is evident that in the Hittite writing we cannot find a consonant and vowel writing combined with ideographs, and as in the whole series of instances signs are interchangeably used, so that, for instance, for one definite sound there are found three signs, we can hardly speak of it as syllabic writing. For in order to render a syllable such as *ru* they hardly could have used these signs." "This rather indicates that it is a species of consonantal writing, or at least one which lays no great stress on the indication of the vowels."

After such a statement it becomes unnecessary to study Dr. Jensen's proposals in detail. Any scholar, acquainted with Egyptian, or Cuneiform, or Chinese, will see at once that Dr. Jensen has not mastered the rudiments of his subject, and cannot be acquainted with the well-known peculiarities of other hieroglyphic systems. The alphabet was the latest development in a series which began with picture writing, and developed syllabaries before consonants. The number of emblems used by the Hittites is by itself proof that their system was mainly syllabic; but all hieroglyphic systems have used some ideograms to aid the explanation of syllables.

The conjectural signs for "king," "country," "people," &c., which Dr. Jensen proposes, have no value, because they are not based on any knowledge of the syllabic sounds, or on any comparative study, but are purely conjectural. It was not by such means that Champollion obtained the clue to Egyptian, but by painful comparative study, and by recovery of syllabic values.

In his second paper he endeavours to restore the language by aid of Armenian, which, as above mentioned, is not a suffixing language. It may be noted that he reads *Markasi* for Merash, which is impossible, and that he ignores the fact that *Tarku* is a well-known Turkish and Mongol word. He asserts that the Assyrians had "no exact equivalent in their writing" for the first letter in the name of Hamath, which only shows his want of acquaintance with Assyrian. Finally, he says that an anthropologist has shown the Jews to be a mixture of "Semites, Indo-Europeans, Amorites, and Alarodian Hittites." The Jews are a purely Semitic people. The Amorites were not Indo-Europeans—their speech was purely Semitic, as is their type on the monuments. The term Alarodian has no racial signification. The (remote) resemblance between Jews and Armenians is due to the ancient infusion of Semitic blood in the veins of the latter, which is indicated also by the use of loan words from Semitic languages in Armenian.

Such considerations lead me to the conclusion that Dr. Jensen is still a tyro in the study of the subject of ancient Asiatic scripts and languages; and that he evolves a system instead of studying such indications as we possess.

The arguments on which I have based my own views have been the following:—1st, the reading of the short bilingual; 2nd, the character of the names of Hittite towns and persons; 3rd, the fact that the verb-forms in the letter of the Hittite Prince of Rezepth are Akkadian; 4th, the character of the Mitanni language spoken in Armenia in 1500 B.C., especially the cases of the noun; and 5th, the sounds of Hittite emblems as obtained from Cypriote. Until these arguments are shown to be fallacious, it appears certain that the Mongolic theory must prevail: especially as Dr. Sayce, Dr. Peiser, and Dr. Jensen, now all agree that we have to deal with suffixing speech: for no Aryan language can properly be so described, and the only suffixing languages of Western Asia are Mongolic. I append a table of those Hittite emblems of which the sound may, I think, be regarded as well established.

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NOTE.

With regard to this table, *Bu* is similar to the Akkadian sign; *Bi* is the Akkadian sign for "two"; *Du* is similar to the Akkadian sign *du*, meaning "to go," represented by the foot. *Es* is the Akkadian value of the sign "three": *Bar* is an "altar" as in Akkadian, and in the text may represent the verb "to be" (Turkish *bar*): *Dim* is taken from the bilingual, and is very similar to the Akkadian *dīm*: *Tar* (or *Tark*) is from the bilingual, as is also *Me* which represents the plural sign: *Un* is the sign for "ten" (as in Egyptian and Akkadian) and the Akkadian sound *Un* means "ten" (Turkish *On*): the remaining values are those found in the Cypriote syllabary derived from the Hittite, and from which I believe sprang the Phœnician alphabet. Several other conjectural signs might be added, as *Khat* for "Hittite"—two allies meeting, the word *Khat* meaning "companion": *Dib* or *Dub* "tablet," represented as in Akkadian by a tablet: *Gu* "speech"—a head and neck: *Khu* "bird"—an eagle: *Sak* "head"—a head: *Ab* "camel"—a camel's head; *Is* for the asses' head; *Diḫ* for the sheep's head; and several others which can only be ascertained when new texts are discovered. These latter are not, however, more than conjectural, but those tabulated depend, not on conjectures, but on comparisons.

Hittite Emblems of Known Sound.

	HITTITE.	CYPRIOTE.		HITTITE.	CYPRIOTE.
1. YA			21. KO		
2. U			22. KHE		
3. YE			23. LU		
4. BA			24. ME		
5. BI			25. MI		
6. BO			26. MO		
7. PA			27. NE		
8. PE			28. NI		
9. PI			29. RA		
10. PU			30. RE		
11. DU			31. RI		
12. TA			32. RU		
13. TE			33. SA		
14. TI			34. SE		
15. TO			35. SI		
6. TU			36. SHI		
17. EN			37. ZO		
18. ES			38. BAR		
19. KA			39. DIM		
20. KE			40. TAR		
			41. ME		
			42. UN		