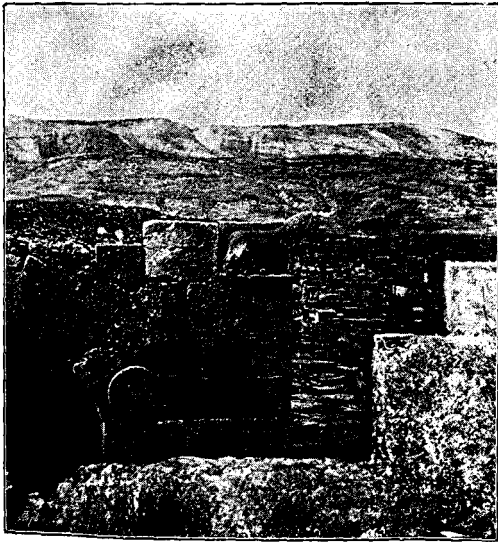




THE BILINGUAL BOSS OF TARKONDEMOS.



THE LION OF MERASH.

# THE HITTITES

THE STORY OF A  
FORGOTTEN EMPIRE

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etc., etc.

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## PREFACE

### TO THE THIRD EDITION

SINCE the first edition of this book was published fourteen years ago, 'Hittitology,' as our German friends call it, has become a recognized science. Hittite sites have been explored, fresh inscriptions been discovered, and a 'Hittite' literature has grown up. M. Ménant, indeed, the learned translator of this volume into French, and one of the most devoted of Oriental students, has passed away, but his place has been supplied by young recruits of many nationalities. Various attempts have been made to decipher the inscriptions, among others by myself, but until the last few months the solution of the problem seemed as far off as ever.

I have at last succeeded, however, in partially lifting the veil which has hitherto concealed their meaning, and in the chapter relating to them will be found a brief outline of the process and its results. Before any system of decipherment can be accepted, there are three conditions which it has to fulfil. The right geographical names must be read without forcing in the inscriptions in which they would be expected to occur; the grammar of the language must resemble that of the cuneiform tablets of Boghaz Keui and the Arzawan letters; and the values assigned to the characters must support and corroborate one another. If the value is correct it will give us the name or

## 4 Preface to the Third Edition

grammatical form we want in each fresh text that we examine.

It is because all three conditions are fulfilled in the system of decipherment of which I here give a summary that its main conclusions may be accepted with confidence. Doubtless it is only a beginning, but in some cases 'the beginning is half the whole.' Our materials are still miserably imperfect: they often fail us where we most need them; and inscriptions scattered over a wide area and of different dates are necessarily of less assistance to the decipherer than a group that comes from a single locality. What we want are more and better-preserved texts, above all, the systematic excavation of old Hittite sites like Boghaz Keui or Tyana, where we know that the archaeological and epigraphic wealth is large. There is still much to be discovered even above ground. Two years ago Mr. Anderson found a new text at Karaburna, in the valley of the Halys, and this year Dr. Belck has returned from his exploration of Kappadokia with a goodly spoil. Let us hope that before a new edition of this volume is called for, Dr. Leopold Messerschmidt's *Corpus inscriptionum Hettiticarum* may be doubled in size and the inscriptions within it fully explained.

A. H. SAYCE.

DAHABIA ISTAR, ASSIOUT.

December, 1902.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE HITTITES OF THE BIBLE . . . . .	7
II. THE HITTITES ON THE MONUMENTS OF EGYPT AND ASSYRIA . . . . .	15
III. THE HITTITE MONUMENTS. . . . .	58
IV. THE HITTITE EMPIRE. . . . .	72
V. THE HITTITE CITIES AND RACE . . . . .	94
VI. HITTITE RELIGION AND ART . . . . .	105
VII. THE INSCRIPTIONS . . . . .	130
VIII. HITTITE TRADE AND INDUSTRY . . . . .	153
APPENDIX: EXTRACTS RELATING TO THE HITTITES FROM THE TEL EL-AMARNA LETTERS . . . . .	162
INDEX . . . . .	165

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