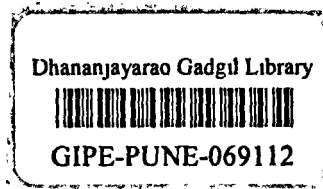


Date section





Statue of Assur-nasir-pal
in the British Museum

Rare section

THE
PASSING OF THE EMPIRES

850 B.C. TO 330 B.C.

BY
G. MASPERO

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MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE EGYPT EXPLORATION FUND

WITH MAPS, THREE COLOURED PLATES, AND NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS



LONDON
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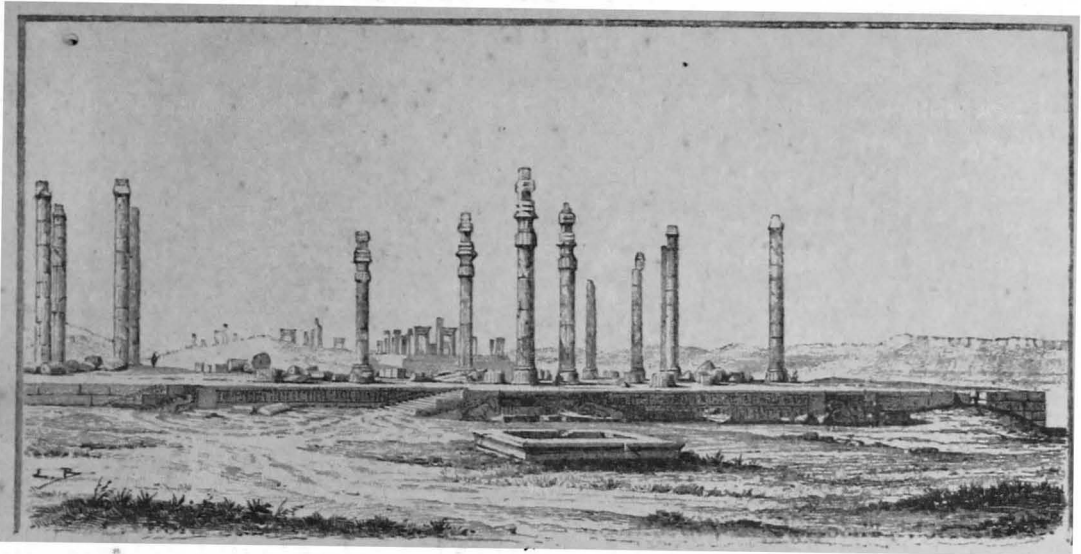
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THE RUINS OF THE APADANA OF XERXES AT PERSEPOLIS.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

WITH this third volume Professor Maspero concludes his monumental work on the history of the ancient East. The overthrow of the Persian empire by the Greek soldiers of Alexander marks the beginning of a new era. Europe at last enters upon the stage of history, and becomes the heir of the culture and civilisation of the Orient. The culture which had grown up and developed on the banks of the Euphrates and Nile passes to the West, and there assumes new features and is inspired with a new spirit. The East perishes of age and decrepitude; its strength is outworn, its power to initiate is past. The long ages through which it had toiled to build up the fabric of civilisation are at an end; fresh races are needed to carry on the work which it had achieved. Greece appears upon the scene, and behind Greece looms the colossal figure of the Roman empire.

Since the first volume of Professor Maspero's work was published, excavation has gone on apace in Egypt and Babylonia, and discoveries of a startling and unexpected nature have followed in the wake of excavation. Many pages of the volume will have to be rewritten in the light of them; such is always the fate of the historian of the past in this age of rapid and persistent research. Ages that seemed prehistoric step suddenly forth into the day-dawn of history; personages whom a sceptical criticism had consigned to the land of myth or fable are clothed once more with flesh and blood, and events which had been long forgotten demand to be recorded and described. In Babylonia, for example, the excavations at Niffer and Tello have shown that Sargon of Akkad, so far from being a creature of romance, was as much an historical monarch as Nebuchadrezzar himself; monuments of his reign have been discovered, and

we learn from them that the empire he is said to have founded had a very real existence. Contracts have been found dated in the years when he was occupied in conquering Syria and Palestine, and a cadastral survey that was made for the purposes of taxation mentions a Canaanite who had been appointed "governor of the land of the Amorites." Even a postal service had already been established along the high-roads which knit the several parts of the empire together, and some of the clay seals which franked the letters are now in the Museum of the Louvre.

At Susa, M. de Morgan, the late director of the Service of Antiquities in Egypt, has been excavating below the remains of the Achæmænian period, among the ruins of the ancient Elamite capital. Here he has found numberless historical inscriptions, besides a text in hieroglyphics which may cast light on the origin of the cuneiform characters. But the most interesting of his discoveries are two Babylonian monuments that were carried off by Elamite conquerors from the cities of Babylonia. One of them is a long inscription of about 1200 lines belonging to Manistusu, one of the early Babylonian kings, whose name has been met with at Niffer; the other is a monument of Naram-Sin, the son of Sargon of Akkad, which it seems was brought as booty to Susa by Simti-silkhak, the grandfather, perhaps, of Eriaku or Arioch.

In Armenia also equally important inscriptions have been found by Belck and Lehmann. More than two hundred new ones have been added to the list of Vannic texts. It has been discovered from them that the kingdom of Biainas or Van was founded by Ispuinis and Menuas, who rebuilt Van itself and the other cities which they had previously sacked and destroyed. The older name of the country was Kumussu, and it may be that the language spoken in it was allied to that of the Hittites, since a tablet in hieroglyphics of the Hittite type has been unearthed at Toprak Kaleh. One of the newly-found inscriptions of Sarduris III. shows that the name of the Assyrian god, hitherto read Ramman or Rimmon, was really pronounced Hadad. It describes a war of the Vannic king against Assur-nirari, son of Hadad-nirari (*A-da-di-ni-ra-ri*) of Assyria, thus revealing not only the true form of the Assyrian name, but also the parentage of the last king of the older Assyrian dynasty. From another inscription, belonging to Rusas II., the son of Argistis, we learn that campaigns were carried on against the Hittites and the Moschi in the latter years of Sennacherib's reign, and therefore only just before the irruption of the Kimmerians into the northern regions of Western Asia.

The two German explorers have also discovered the site and even the ruins of Muzazir, called Ardinis by the people of Van. They lie on the hill of Shkennâ, near Topsanâ, on the road between Kelishin and Sidek. In the immediate neighbourhood the travellers succeeded in deciphering a monument of Rusas I., partly in Vannic, partly in Assyrian, from which it appears that the Vannic king did not, after all, commit suicide when the news of the fall of Muzazir was brought to him, as is stated by Sargon, but that, on the contrary, he "marched against the mountains of Assyria" and restored the

fallen city itself. Urzana, the King of Muzazir, had fled to him for shelter, and after the departure of the Assyrian army he was sent back by Rusas to his ancestral domains. The whole of the district in which Muzazir was situated was termed Lulu, and was regarded as the southern province of Ararat. In it was Mount Nizir, on whose summit the ark of the Chaldæan Noah rested, and which is therefore rightly described in the Book of Genesis as one of "the mountains of Ararat." It was probably the Rowandiz of to-day.

The discoveries made by Drs. Belck and Lehmann, however, have not been confined to Vannic texts. At the sources of the Tigris Dr. Lehmann has found two Assyrian inscriptions of the Assyrian king, Shalmaneser II., one dated in his fifteenth and the other in his thirty-first year, and relating to his campaigns against Aram of Ararat. He has further found that the two inscriptions previously known to exist at the same spot, and believed to belong to Tiglath-Ninip and Assur-nazir-pal, are really those of Shalmaneser II., and refer to the war of his seventh year.

But it is from Egypt that the most revolutionary revelations have come. At Abydos and Kom el-Ahmar, opposite El-Kab, monuments have been disinterred of the kings of the first and second dynasties, if not of even earlier princes; while at Negada, north of Thebes, M. de Morgan has found a tomb which seems to have been that of Menes himself. A new world of art has been opened out before us; even the hieroglyphic system of writing is as yet immature and strange. But the art is already advanced in many respects; hard stone was cut into vases and bowls, and even into statuary of considerable artistic excellence; glazed porcelain was already made, and bronze, or rather copper, was fashioned into weapons and tools. The writing material, as in Babylonia, was often clay, over which seal-cylinders of a Babylonian pattern were rolled. Equally Babylonian are the strange and composite animals engraved on some of the objects of this early age, as well as the structure of the tombs, which were built, not of stone, but of crude brick, with their external walls panelled and pilastered. Professor Hommel's theory, which brings Egyptian civilisation from Babylonia along with the ancestors of the historical Egyptians, has thus been largely verified.

But the historical Egyptians were not the first inhabitants of the valley of the Nile. Not only have palæolithic implements been found on the plateau of the desert; the relics of neolithic man have turned up in extraordinary abundance. When the historical Egyptians arrived with their copper weapons and their system of writing, the land was already occupied by a pastoral people, who had attained a high level of neolithic culture. Their implements of flint are the most beautiful and delicately finished that have ever been discovered; they were able to carve vases of great artistic excellence out of the hardest of stone, and their pottery was of no mean quality. Long after the country had come into the possession of the historical dynasties, and had even been united into a single monarchy, their settlements continued to exist on the outskirts of the desert, and the neolithic culture that distinguished them passed only gradually away. By degrees, however, they intermingled with

their conquerors from Asia, and thus formed the Egyptian race of a later day. But they had already made Egypt what it has been throughout the historical period. Under the direction of the Asiatic immigrants and of the engineering science whose first home had been in the alluvial plain of Babylonia, they accomplished those great works of irrigation which confined the Nile to its present channel, which cleared away the jungle and the swamp that had formerly bordered the desert, and turned them into fertile fields. Theirs were the hands which carried out the plans of their more intelligent masters, and cultivated the valley when once it had been reclaimed. The Egypt of history was the creation of a twofold race: the Egyptians of the monuments supplied the controlling and directing power; the Egyptians of the neolithic graves bestowed upon it their labour and their skill.

The period treated of by Professor Maspero in his present volume is one for which there is an abundance of materials such as do not exist for the earlier portions of his history. The evidence of the monuments is supplemented by that of the Hebrew and classical writers. But on this very account it is in some respects more difficult to deal with, and the conclusions arrived at by the historian are more open to question and dispute. In some cases conflicting accounts are given of an event which seem to rest on equally good authority; in other cases, there is a sudden failure of materials just where the thread of the story becomes most complicated. Of this the decline and fall of the Assyrian empire is a prominent example; for our knowledge of it, we have still to depend chiefly on the untrustworthy legends of the Greeks. Our views must be coloured more or less by our estimate of Herodotos; those who, like myself, place little or no confidence in what he tells us about Oriental affairs will naturally form a very different idea of the death-struggle of Assyria from that formed by writers who still see in him the Father of Oriental History.

Even where the native monuments have come to our aid, they have not unfrequently introduced difficulties and doubts where none seemed to exist before, and have made the task of the critical historian harder than ever. Cyrus and his forefathers, for instance, turn out to have been kings of Anzan, and not of Persia, thus explaining why it is that the Neo-Susian language appears by the side of the Persian and the Babylonian as one of the three official languages of the Persian empire; but we still have to learn what was the relation of Anzan to Persia on the one hand, and to Susa on the other, and when it was that Cyrus of Anzan became also King of Persia. In the Annalistic Tablet, he is called "King of Persia" for the first time in the ninth year of Nabonidos.

Similar questions arise as to the position and nationality of Astyages. He is called in the inscriptions, not a Mede, but a Manda—a name which, as I showed many years ago, meant for the Babylonian a "barbarian" of Kurdistan. I have myself little doubt that the Manda over whom Astyages ruled were the Scythians of classical tradition, who, as may be gathered from a text published by Mr. Strong, had occupied the ancient kingdom of Ellipi. It is even possible that in the Madyes of Herodotos, we have a reminiscence of the

Manda of the cuneiform inscriptions. That the Greek writers should have confounded the Madâ or Medes with the Manda or Barbarians is not surprising; we find even Berossos describing one of the early dynasties of Babylonia as "Median" where Manda, and not Madâ, must plainly be meant.

These and similar problems, however, will doubtless be cleared up by the progress of excavation and research. Perhaps M. de Morgan's excavations at Susa may throw some light on them, but it is to the work of the German expedition, which has just begun the systematic exploration of the site of Babylon, that we must chiefly look for help. The Babylon of Nabopolassar and Nebuchadrezzar rose on the ruins of Nineveh, and the story of the downfall of the Assyrian empire must still be lying buried under its mounds.

A. H. SAYCE.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN giving to the public the translation of the third and last volume of Professor Maspero's work, it is necessary to say a word on the want of uniformity, which will doubtless be remarked by the reader, in the orthography of the geographical and personal names which occur in these pages. Professor Maspero, to whom I have referred more than once on the subject, is apparently at greater pains to give to the student the various forms under which a town or province was known at different periods, than to preserve a uniform orthography of the name throughout his present work. He himself writes: "Souvent après avoir donné au début la forme authentique, j'ai employé dans la suite la forme usuelle." This lack of uniformity will be evident chiefly in the place-names in Palestine and Asia Minor, which of necessity varied, in the case of the former with the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Persian occupation, in that of the latter under its Assyrian, Lydian, Cimmerian, Phrygian, and Greek rulers. One of these many variants, and that often with an incorrect orthography, may be familiar to the English reader, and therefore must be mentioned in the translation, though the forms used in the French may be subsequently employed throughout the book without again identifying them with the popular one. I have, however, endeavoured to collect the various readings and place them in the index under one heading.

In rendering the passages from Holy Scripture cited by Professor Maspero in the course of his work, I have followed the Revised Version, but in the two or three instances where Professor Maspero's reading of the Hebrew original do not agree with that of the Revised Version, I have given a literal translation of his French, and have placed the Revised Version of the passage in

a Translator's footnote. The forms of proper names occurring in Professor Maspero's quotations from the Bible, it may be well to note, are not in many cases those adopted by the Editors of our revised Text. No change, however slight, has been made without the Author's written permission, and such alterations as have been introduced are almost entirely confined to the correction of the errors of the French printers, and not one of them has any bearing on Biblical criticism.

The English title chosen by the Editor has met with Professor Maspero's entire approbation.

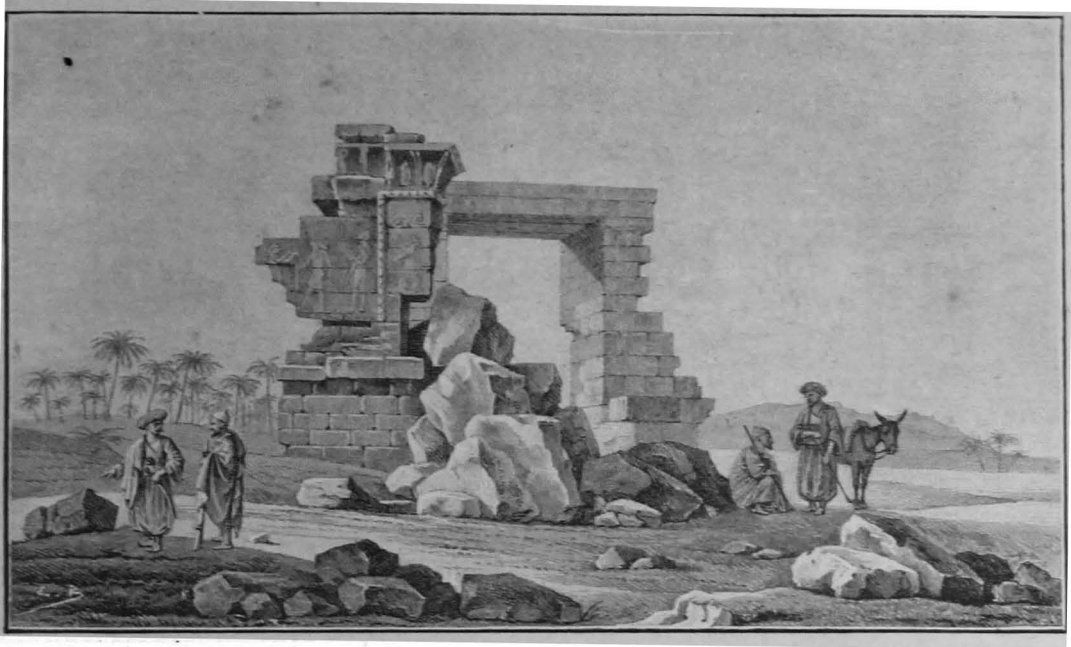
M. L. McCLURE.

November 20, 1899.

NOTE OF THE GENERAL LITERATURE COMMITTEE OF THE S.P.C.K.

IN bringing to a completion their undertaking to produce in English Professor Maspero's "History of the Ancient Peoples of the Classic East," the Committee wish it to be understood that they do not take upon themselves to pronounce on conclusions in the field of Biblical criticism deduced by the author from the events and documents discussed. While the great value of the materials embodied and their vivid presentment in Professor Maspero's books have seemed to the Committee to justify the publication of these volumes by the S.P.C.K., the author must be held responsible for the opinions which his study of these materials has led him to form.





ONE OF THE GATES OF THE TEMPLE OF ZEUS IN THE OASIS OF AMMON.

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जरोतका २

४८३ कंडेलेअणु - ३६ (मक्ष - २५ पारे सिंडे - ६४) (इराब्रक
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