

preserve, somewhat distorted, the name of Mahanaim. The substitution of *m* for *n* is not a very strong objection, since in Syrian speech these two letters are often interchanged. The plain is several miles across, about 2,000 feet above sea level, with hills from 1,000 to 1,500 feet higher round it. The soil is sandy and fertile, the hills are of limestone. There is an important ancient ruin called *Eṯ Basha*, about a mile to the south with a fine clear spring. The ruins consist of a tower and round arched vaults, such as occur in many other ancient sites in Gilead, but which are probably of the second to fifth century A.D. Here, I think, we may therefore place the long lost Mahanaim, in a fertile district, near Penuel, south of the Jabbok, and east of the woods whence Salt (*Saltus Hieraticus*) took its name. The runners could be seen at some distance on the level road west of the plain, and the "circle" of Mahanaim would be the circle of the curious basin in which it stands. The northern site should be abandoned as not suiting the geographical requisites of the case.

ALTAIC LETTER FROM TELL AMARNA.

By MAJOR CONDER, R.E.

AMONG the 300 letters from Tell Amarna (1500-1450 B.C.) the longest of all is written to Amenophis III, by Dusratta, King of Mitani, or the region immediately east of the Euphrates, opposite the Hittite city of Carchemish. The first seven lines are in Assyrian, but, after this introduction, follow 505 lines in his own language. Dusratta wrote other letters in Assyrian which have been translated, and one of which refers to the same persons, Giliās and Manis, who are mentioned in this letter, of which many paragraphs are fairly well preserved, though others are too much broken to be read. The writing is syllabic, in an old cuneiform character, with a few determinatives.

Although the letter has not been translated, the meanings of a few words have been determined by Dr. Sayce and other scholars, and judging from these words, and from the terminations of verbs and nouns, it appears to me to be clear that the whole is written in a Mongol dialect, akin to the Akkadian and Medic. I am unable to find any resemblance to the Aryan language of the Vannic tribes, nor has Dr. Sayce pointed out any, save a termination which also occurs in Akkadian. The known words are also not the same that stand for the same sense in Vannic. The vocabulary is very large, and great difficulties will no doubt arise in attempting to render the meaning, without the aid of bilinguals, but many of the words at once recall well-known Medic and Akkadian terms, and the same may be said of the commoner terminations.

The Assyrian introduction is much damaged, but the names of Amenophis and of Dusratta have already been recognised, with the

usual invocation of peace and prosperity for the receiver of the tablet
It appears roughly to have run as follows :—

“To Amenophis the third the [King] of Egypt, from Dusratta King
[of Mitani]. I am at peace . . . may there be peace to
to thy ladies, to thy nobles, to thy horses, to thy land, and to all
that is thine exceedingly.”

The words which frequently recur, and of which the meaning is supposed to be known, are as follows :—

- Atta*, “Father.” Akkadian, *Adda*; Medic, *Ate*; Turkish, آتا , *ata*.
Amat, “grandfather;” *Am-at*, “father’s father.” Compare the Tunguse *ama*, “father.”
Sen, “brother.” Compare the Turkic *yin*, a “younger brother,” the *s* being often softened to *y*. In Cantonese we have *hing*, “brother.”
Dubsar, “scribe.” Akkadian, *dub*, “tablet,” and *sar*, “master.”
Tsalam, “image” (used in Assyrian). Medic, *zal zalmu*, “image.”
Enippi, “God.” Medic and Susian, *annap*.
Ti, “word.” Turkic, *tia*, “say.”
Pireta, “I have sent.” Turkic, *pir*, “to go,” *pirat*, “to despatch.”
U, “I” (or *Hu*). Medic, *U*, *Hu*, “I.”
Nikhari, “written.” Turkic, *khar*, “to engrave.”
Talami, “interpreter.” Turkic, *talamis*, “interpreter.”
Atinin, “these.” Turkic, *Atin*, “that,” “this.”
 -*na*, plural ending. Mongol, -*na*; Akkadian, -*ene*.
 -*s*, termination of the nominative, as in Hittite and Cassite.
Tissan Tissan, an adverb. Probably the Turkic *tis*, “quick,” meaning “very quickly.” Dr. Sayce renders it *vehementer*.
Tip, “to send.” Medic, *tip*, “send.”

To these words, which all point in one direction, I think we may add others which are equally suggestive, and of which a careful study of the text, as given by Dr. Winckler, shows the occurrence to be in accordance with the proposed interpretation. As instances may be cited—

- Paza*, “moreover.” Turkic, *paza*, “again,” “anew.”
Khakhani, “Princes.” Turkic, *Khakhan*, “Prince.”
Khiaurukka, “contracted.” Turkic, *Khiaur*, “to bind,” “to wed.”
Umun, “Lord.” Akkadian, *Umun*.

The name of the land of Egypt in this letter is written either *Mazri* or *Mizri* in different passages, and the Egyptians are called *Misrippi* like the Medic, *Muzzariyap*, “Egyptians.” The country whence the letters are despatched appears to be called KUR U, *Minippi*, “Land of the race of the Minni.” This agrees with the position of *Mitani*, which is the name given to his country by Dusratta in the last part of the letter

The Minni or Minyans were well known to the Assyrians as an Asia Minor people, and to the Egyptians as the *Men* or *Menti*, who are described in Egyptian records as dwelling in Assyria, "East of Syria." They were indeed the same race who, in the Hyksos period, had seized on Egypt itself, but had been driven out some two centuries before the date of the letter under consideration. They seem to have been friendly with the Hittites, since in another of the Tell Amarna letters we read of a Hittite prince who fled to the land of Mitani, where he was captured. Dusratta was allied by marriage with Amenophis III, and his translated letters show that an alliance had also existed in the days of his grandfather or of his father, *Suttarna*, whose name suggests that he was a worshipper of *Sut* (or *Set*), the well-known Hittite god. The language of his letter also seems to indicate that he was of the same race with the Hittites and Akkadians. In modern Turkish this name *Menua* is applied to the Turks of Asia Minor.

The cases of the nouns, and the terminations of the verbs, also serve to show the Mongolic character of the language, as follows:—

Nominative, ¹	-s (as in Cassite, and in some instances in Akkadian).
Genitive, "of,"	-n, Akkadian, -n, Turkish, -n.
Dative, "to,"	-a, " " -eh.
Locative, "at,"	-da, " -da, " -deh.
Accusative	-i, " -a, -i.
Ablative, "from,"	-dan, " -den.
Instrumental, "by,"	-la, " -leh, -li.
Comitative, "with,"	-laan " -ailan.
Causative, "for,"	-ikku, Medic, -ikku, -ichun.

The verb would require much study to understand with certainty, but the following seem to be probable:—

Infinitive, a prefixed *ni* occurs for the active, as in Akkadian: the passive appears to be *-man*.

Past tense, 1st singular, *-ta* (Medic, *-ta*), 3rd singular, *-sa* (Medic, *-s*).

Subjunctive, 3rd singular, *-sena* (Medic, *-sne*).

Imperative, 3rd singular, *-s* (Medic, *-s*).

The greater part of the syllabary is also the same used later in Medic.

¹ NOTE.—The suffix *ippi*, added to the nouns, seems to form the definite case. It does not appear to be a plural. It is to be compared with what Lenormant calls the "absolute case" in Akkadian, which he compares with *-b*, the Lapp accusative, Samoyed *-p*, Mongol *-ben*. Castren derives it from the pronoun of third person, which is the Akkadian demonstrative *b*. In our letter, however, *-ippi* may also be the termination of the third person of verbs in a certain tense, as in Medic also, and apparently in Akkadian. This does not,

In some passages the number of proper names renders the explanation somewhat more easy, but the number of words used is very great, and many of them are probably new, and not to be found in the small stock of inscriptions in cognate languages already understood. It is clear that the general subject relates to the sending of messengers, and to the interpretation of the letter; and the presents sent are also mentioned, while the last part seems to refer to the marriage of a lady. There are also passages in which, as Dr. Sayce has pointed out, the gods are invoked, including *Ammon* of Egypt, and the Akkadian god *Ea*, with *Tessub*, who is already known to have been a god compared by the Assyrians with Rimmon.

If, as seems to me certain from the considerations above noted, the language is one like Akkadian and Hittite (and indeed several of the words are the same used by the Hittite prince Tarkondara in writing to Amenophis III), it is clear that the syntax of a Turanian language must be strictly followed, the verb always standing at the end of the phrase, and not, as in Aryan speech, often first. None of the known words are Aryan, which it is almost unnecessary to say that they are not Semitic. The language, when fully understood, is likely to be of great value in the study of Hittite; and it appears to me that some of the words, and nearly all the pronouns and terminations, are the same found on the Hittite monuments. This view as to the language being Hittite is, I understand, also held in Germany.

I venture on a tentative translation of some of the passages which are most perfect, though these may be subject to revision. The pious invocations are in the same tone found in passages in the Assyrian letters of Dusratta. Thus early in the letter (line 85-90) he prays to "Ammon and Simigin, to Ea, the King of Life," that they "may hasten very speedily . . . assisting also my speech to be spoken in wisdom."

The letter appears to open with good wishes for the countries of the two kings of Egypt and of Mitani in the native language, and then refers to what had happened in the time of Suttarna.

Dusratta introduces his messengers, Manis and Gilias, in separate paragraphs, and proceeds to say: Amenophis, my Egyptian friend, knows that I live far off. I dwell in the city of *Ikhabin* (or *Idhibin*), which is the city of the god Simigin, whom my father adored as a deity." The next passage (99) seems to mean, "let these whom I have sent (so far?) be received, soon to approach the hall of thy palace." "Gilias . . . I have despatched who will add what does not appear in writing." "The god Simigin I have besought to prosper these things, prospering these . . .

however, show, as some have argued, that there was no real distinction of verb and noun—which would be impossible in so fully developed a language. In English we do not consider that we have no distinction of these parts of speech, because we use *s* as a termination for both, and also for the possessive. This suffix seems to be the Hittite *-Pe*, represented by a long vase as distinguished from the round pot, *-a*.

from the Land of the Minyan race, with the god Ammon, and with Ea the King of Life."

After various compliments a paragraph referring to "tablets" occurs, and apparently Dusratta asks for an answer. Dr. Sayce renders the word *gipanu*, "papyrus" (Akkadian *gi*, "reed," *pa*, "leaf," *nu* "letter," would be the explanation in such case I should suppose, *i.e.*, "a letter on the pith of the reed"). Further on (col. 2, line 60), Dusratta appears to speak of the treasures sent with the messengers, "Invoking the gods to guard the presents with him," "an account being taken." "Gold" is here mentioned, "heaped up before you in abundance, bountifully given, let the gold be received as a gift." He proceeds: "By word of mouth, by writing, by interpretation, . . . replying soon . . . answering my request quickly."

The writer then again (line 75) invokes the gods, Rimmon and Ammon, "may they cause my words to be received, through their wisdom, if I speak not clearly." This subject occupies a good many lines which follow, after which the writer returns to the question of Manis and the letter, which he apparently is to explain.

Another important passage, well preserved, is at the beginning of the back of the tablet. This refers to the "interpretation" or "translation" of the strange tongue. Dusratta then proceeds to speak of something connected with the letter which was to be done by Manis "with Gilias," and again invokes the assistance of the gods: this section ends up with the names of additional envoys, "also besides Manis, the envoy, to my brother, also besides Gilias, Artesupas and Asalinas are messengers. Asalinas, the interpreter of Gilias, my secretary" (this last clause is due to Dr. Sayce) "since he speaks this language together with my brother's language . . . in my embassy to my brother I have sent."


The next paragraph refers to a present of a gold throne (this has been pointed out already by Dr. Sayce) which was sent with the envoy. Dusratta then begins to reach the subject of his letter, which regards the affiancement or marriage of a lady. The expression, *nin es ie*, clearly means "twenty-three months" (line 60), *ie* being the Akkadian *ai*, "month," "moon" (Turkish *ay* in some dialects, *ye*), and the gods are again invoked in this connection, after which the tablet is much injured. When it again becomes more perfect other deities are mentioned, including *Sin*, the Moon-god, and Ammon. Dusratta's own name occurs lower down (line 127) with the distinctive word *umun*, "Lord," preceding it, followed by the name of Amenophis III, of Egypt." In the next section a country called *Pal musri* is noticed. The passage seems to refer generally to difficulty in understanding, and to include the sentence, "my brother had ordered a clearly written reply." Then follows a clause possibly referring to the Hittites (line 16) "*ūwū Khati-ma-an danga Esippias dan maan nuukka tūlan āpi latakkhha Senippiūtallan uru Kharanu sūssena*," perhaps to be rendered, "the chieftain of my people of the land of the Hittites, all

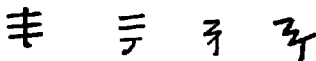
the people whom I conquered with my brother ; he rules in the city of Harran."¹ As regards this passage it is to be noted that Egyptian records prove that Amenophis III, at some time during his long reign, had entered the country beyond the Euphrates, where he is said to have hunted lions ; and that Harran is usually supposed to have been in the same country, being the abode of Abraham on his way from Babylonia to Syria.

The letter continues to speak of the Land of the Minyans and of Embassies, and apparently of a reply to be sent. It then refers (line 35) to the time of his father and to tablets then written ; also (line 53) to Artatas, the grandfather of Dusratta, "before my father," who again is called "my grandfather, my father's father" (as Dr. Sayce has pointed out). It continues (line 67) to refer to Gold in connection with his grandfather and father, and to a contract in the Land of the Minyans "contracted in the presence of the images" (of the gods). This contract seems to refer to a lady (line 90), "the woman my . . . affianced by my brother in the presence of the images," and soon after we read of "my god Sausbe in his presence in the city of Nineveh." The lady's name (line 103) was Tadukhepa, and the passage might perhaps be rendered "Tadukhepa to be taken in marriage, Dusratta of Mitani, ever a friend, desires of his friend Amenophis III, the Egyptian. In the final paragraph there are two references to the "Princes ruling (or living) in the Land of the Minyan race," with a reference to "renewal of friendship and understanding," which no doubt would result from the marriage. Such appears to me to be the general subject of the longest and perhaps most interesting letter in the Tell Amarna collection.

THE LACHISH INSCRIPTION.

By MAJOR CONDER, R.E.

DR. SAYCE'S proposal (*Quarterly Statement*, April 1891, p. 158) to read *Li Semak*, depends mainly on his understanding of what he supposes to be the Samech. This appears to me to be quite untenable, because Phœnician letters consist of joined strokes, and not of strokes independent of each other, as in the case of the signs  which he renders as Samech. I subjoin the various early forms of the letter Samech.



¹ The Semitic letters from Tell Amarna speak of the Hittites very often. One mentions a Hittite prince fleeing to the land of Mitani. In others they are noticed as rebels seizing the city of Tunep (Tennib) which belonged to them also in 1360 B.C.