

ANCIENT PALESTINE.

By STANLEY A. COOK, M.A.

II.—*First Babylonian Dynasty.*

WE turn next to the great Babylonian dynasty which brought Babylon to a position which it held for nearly two thousand years. Its rise is contemporary with the invasion of the Elamites, the people of Susa, whose early history is being unfolded by the French excavations at that city. A definite allusion to their inroad is furnished by Ashur-bani-pal (about 645 B.C.), who states that when he conquered Susa he recovered the image of the goddess Nanâ, which Kudur-Nahunte had carried off from Erech 1,635 years previously. The notice, of whatever authority, points to the date 2280 or thereabouts, and affords some idea of the extent of the inroad. Other references to invasion about this period combine with the preceding to illustrate the Elamite devastations, and it is possible that we may see in these catastrophes the explanation of the scantiness of Babylonian historical tradition in the preceding ages.

A certain Kudur-Mabug, the son of Simti-silbak, is found in occupation of Babylonia, and erected a temple to the moon-god in Ur. He claims the title "Prince of Martu"; it is disputed whether the reference is to the land lying on the west border of Elam or whether it comprises Syria and Palestine. The possibility that there was a region in North Babylonia called Martu (Amurru) is not without independent support.

Names compounded with Kudur (meaning perhaps "servant") are specifically Elamite, and particular interest is attached to this feature in view of the Biblical account of Chedorlaomer. This name is purely Elamite in form (Kudur-lagamar), and is actually said to occur on late Babylonian texts. Moreover, Kudur-Mabug's son Eri-aku, or Rim-aku, king of Larsa, was a contemporary of Hammurabi and ruled over a small South Babylonian state. This name, in its turn, has at once suggested the Biblical Arioch and

it is extremely interesting to find that Eri-aku reappears in the same texts with Tudhulu. A short account of their contents may be given from Prof. Sayce's recent description.¹

The first (Spartali collection A) describes the capture of Babylon and Borsippa by the Elamite conqueror Ku-dur-lahha-mar (so it is read) with his hordes (the Umman-manda). "It is ascribed to the unrighteousness of the people which causes Merodach [Marduk] to bring evil upon his city of Babylon, and Nebo to forsake his city of Borsippa. The lesson of the poem is thus similar to that inculcated by the Jewish prophets, and the moral intended by it was probably that as the fall of Babylon in old days was due to the sins of its inhabitants, so its present conquest by Cyrus ought to be ascribed to the same cause."

The second tablet (B) is particularly remarkable, since here the story of Ku-dur-lahha-mar and his followers is in some curious manner connected with mystical rites in the months of July and December. Prof. Sayce points out, these are the months in which the gods Tammuz and Nergal were believed to have died, and consequently some funereal ceremonies connected with the summer and winter solstices appear to be alluded to. The description of the desecrated temple frequented by herds and dogs; of the raven which builds its nest and croaks in the ruins; of the promised king "who from days everlasting had been fore-destined," will at once suggest parallels partly from the Jewish prophets and partly from the inscriptions of Cyrus himself.

The third (C) narrates the punishment which Marduk inflicted upon the enemies of his land: Sar-ilani the son of Eri-aku; Tu-ud-hul-a son of Gazza . . . (the name is incomplete), and the great Chedorlaomer himself meet their end, and the "sinner" is no more.

These three interesting texts belong to the same period. "The echoes of the Cyrus texts which occur in them suggest that they were composed in the age which saw the extinction of Babylonian independence. In all three cases the same fragment of earlier Babylonian history was worked into them by way of parallel, illustration, warning, and encouragement." Various forms of spelling, &c., also point to a later period, and the spelling "Lah-hamar" instead of Lagamar, is reproduced in the Biblical Chedorlaomer. Consequently, as Prof. Sayce remarks, "This would go

¹ *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 1906, pp. 193-200, 241-51; 1907, pp. 7-17.

to show that the narrative in Gen. xiv. was copied from cuneiform tablets at a time when the names of Chedorlaomer and his allies in their popular forms had already made their way into literature."¹ This will also account for the popularity of the name Arioch, not only in the book of Daniel but also in the book of Judith, where "Arioch the king of the Elymaeans," king Arphaxad and king Nebuchadnezzar assemble for war.²

What elements of genuine old Babylonian history have been preserved in these late semi-poetical texts is uncertain. Chedorlaomer had apparently conquered Babylonia and had sacked Babylon. Like Sennacherib, another great enemy of Babylon, he had been assassinated by his son. "His son with the iron dirk of his girdle pierced his heart." What is known from the contemporary history of the twenty-third century shows clearly that the elements have been carefully preserved, but it would be precarious to attempt any reconstruction on the basis of these popular Babylonian texts which have used the ancient chronicles for purposes which are not wholly historical. But they show that the account of the Babylonian wars of freedom against Elam and the final union and establishment of the Babylonian empire under Hammurabi long continued to be a source of reflection and study.

To return to the Babylonian dynasty. It consisted of nine kings, whose names are Sumu-abi, Sumu-la-ilu, Zabû, Hammurabi, Samsu-ilûna, Ebisu (Abeshu'a), Ammi-satana, Ammi-zadugga, and Samsu-satana. The most noteworthy feature here is the sudden appearance of a new class of names which are not of the usual Babylonian style, but are characteristic generally of the Arabian and Palestinian (Hebrew, &c.) formation. The imperfect of the verb, which otherwise takes the form *imlik*, appears as *iamlik* in Iamlik-ilu, Iarbi-ilu, &c. The termination *-na* in Samsu-ilûna "Shamash, our god" is quite distinct from the ordinary Babylonian *-ni*; *s* is found notably in this name, where *sh* is otherwise used. Many other points of detail have been noticed which combine to indicate a new infusion.

Now, the history, in particular the internal conditions of this period, have been illuminated in the most welcome manner by the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 17.

² Judith i, 6. Although it might seem tempting to compare the unknown "sons of Chelod" with Chedorlaomer, textual corruption being assumed, there is no evidence in the versions to support the proposal.

repeated discovery of contract-tablets, historical records, and, as is very well known, a remarkable series of laws codified by Hammurabi. Many of the personal names which are met with at this period are of extreme interest. In Abi-ramu one may recognize the Hebrew Abiram or Abram; Ya'kub-ilu at once points to the name Jacob; Yashub-ilu, conceivably (but not necessarily) to Joseph. Abdi-ili, "servant of God," is the same as Abdeel; Ya'zar-ilu, "God helps," reminds one of Azriel; and further examples could be cited. Thus it appears that the population of Babylonia about 2000 B.C. contained a considerable admixture of Semites whose names would show them to be very closely akin to the people of Palestine itself.

Hammurabi's predecessors had been gradually freeing Babylonia from the Elamite yoke, and he himself undertook the task of reorganizing the scattered forces in order to make a single organic kingdom with Babylon as its capital. It was a kingdom the like of which had already been formed by the great Sargon and by Lugal-zaggisi (p. 61 *sq.* above), but whilst these had no lasting coherence, Babylon henceforth became the most important city of the southern district. The Elamite power was finally broken, and among the fragmentary annals of the king is the record, in his thirty-first year, of the capture of Rim-Sin and his land.

Our knowledge of the internal history of this period is derived partly from the letters which Hammurabi wrote to his officials, partly from the numerous contemporary contract-tablets, and from his code of laws.¹ From the whole we gain a picture of Babylonian life which for extent of culture and thought stands unequalled in the ancient world. The care which the king took to promote the internal development of his territory; his works of irrigation; his granaries and storehouses; his interest in the temples of the gods; in fine, his devotion to the national cause; all combine to form a striking picture of old-time life and politics.

The famous discovery at Susa of the stone monument with forty-four columns of closely engraved writing is too well known to need further remark. It had apparently been removed by some Elamite conqueror, and five columns of the stele were erased with the evident intention of inscribing upon it an account of its capture. Although the world has lost the laws which formerly stood in this place, the columns remain uninscribed. The code has attracted

¹ See especially, L. W. King, *Letters and Inscriptions of Hammurabi*, Vols. I-III (London, 1898-1900).

the widest attention, since not only does it give us the oldest specimen of ancient law, far older than the collections of India, Greece, or Rome, but the characteristic Semitic stamp of the contents and the many parallels with Semitic law preserved in the Old Testament and elsewhere has made it one of the most welcome additions for the study of comparative custom. It appears that king Hammurabi, in his desire to set principles of law and justice upon a sounder level, found it necessary to draw up a code of the existing practices. Much was old, but some novelties were introduced. In a prologue and epilogue he describes his conquests and achievements; he pronounces a blessing upon those who observe the laws, and utters a series of denunciations upon the disobedient. The gods, he says, had entrusted him with the sovereignty, and he had made it his duty to establish "right and justice" in the land. It was from the gods that Hammurabi received the laws, Shamash the sun-god was the god of law, and "justice" and "right" were his children. The upper part of the inscription actually bears a representation of the sun-god, and before him stands the reverent recipient.¹

Thus we find ourselves in a period which is thronged with unusual, yet not unfamiliar features. The linguistic evidence points to a strain which suggests a non-Babylonian influence; the names find their analogies in Palestine or Canaan, as also in Arabia; some of the Babylonian kings claim supremacy over the land Martu, whilst in Babylonia itself there is evidence which suggests that the people called themselves "Amorites." The general conclusion, based upon a number of points of evidence, is that there was the same civilisation and culture extending over the oriental world; that the influence of a Semitic stock was making itself felt everywhere, and that great movements had been in progress which left their mark upon the whole land. The Phoenicians preserved the tradition that they themselves had come from the Persian Gulf (Herodotus, vii, 89); it is not impossible that at this period a separate movement extended along the Euphrates to the northern end of the Syrian desert (*Quarterly Statement*, p. 59). At least, it

¹ The code has been translated into English by O. H. W. Johns, *The Oldest Code of Laws* (2nd ed.), and T. G. Pinches, *The Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (2nd ed.). A comparison of its contents with Semitic law and custom elsewhere was made by the present writer (*Laws of Moses and Code of Hammurabi*).

is certain that far-reaching changes took place at the time of the first Babylonian dynasty, and by them Egypt may well have been affected. In fact, the possibility of associating the so-called "Amoritic" movement or migration with the Hyksos invasion of Egypt has approved itself to several scholars independently.

Somewhere about the eighteenth century a new wave swept from the north, perhaps from the steppes of Central Asia. The Kassites, already known as mercenaries—a Kassite soldier is mentioned in the time of Ammi-zadugga—entered under the leadership of Gan-diš, overran the country, seized its cities, and established themselves upon the throne for nearly six centuries. Marduk, the chief god of Babylonia, they removed to Hani (apparently in West Media), an indication of the fall of the empire. It was probably at this time that a new race entered Mesopotamia and laid the foundations of the kingdom of Mitanni which we shall meet with later. We can scarcely speculate as to the result of this foreign pressure coming from the north, and a recent suggestion that the tribes in front were driven into Egypt and became known as the Hyksos must naturally depend upon the chronological evidence for the period of this mysterious folk. Hommel (*Grundriss*, p. 30) has suggested that the Kassites, an Iranian race, introduced the horse into South-western Asia. Certainly it does not appear to have been used in Egypt before the time of the Hyksos, but the problem lies outside our scope. The Kassites, so far as can be seen, were absorbed by the people among whom they settled, but the presence of Iranian names in the Amarna tablets and elsewhere seems to show that Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and Syria were not uninfluenced by the new stock.¹

¹ Ball, *Proc. Soc. of Bibl. Arch.*, 1882, pp. 424 sqq.; Hommel, *op. cit.*

(To be continued.)