

## CHAPTER VIII

### HITTITE TRADE AND INDUSTRY

THE Hittites shone as much in the arts of peace as in the arts of war. The very fact that they invented a system of writing speaks highly for their intellectual capacities. It has been granted to but few among the races of mankind to devise means of communicating their thoughts otherwise than by words; most of the nations of the world have been content to borrow from others not only the written characters they use but even the conception of writing itself.

We know from the ruins of Boghaz Keui and Eyuk that the Hittites were no mean architects. They understood thoroughly the art of fortification; the great moat outside the walls of Boghaz Keui, with its sides of slippery stone, is a masterpiece in this respect, like the fortified citadels within the city, to which the besieged could retire when the outer wall was captured. The well-cut blocks and sculptured slabs of which their palaces were built prove how well they knew the art of quarrying and fashioning stone. The mines of the Bulgar Dagh are an equally clear indication of their skill in mining and metallurgic work.

The metallurgic fame of the Khalybes, who bordered on the Hittite territory, and may have belonged to

the same race, was spread through the Greek world. They had the reputation of first discovering how to harden iron into steel. It was from them, at all events, that the Greeks acquired the art.

Silver and copper appear, from the evidence of the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments, to have been the metals most in request, though gold and iron also figure among the objects which the Hittites offered in tribute. The gold and copper were moulded into cups and images of animals, and the copper was changed into bronze by being mixed with tin. From whence the tin was procured we have yet to learn.

Silver and iron were alike used as a medium of exchange. The Assyrian king received from Carchemish 250 talents of iron; and the excavations of Dr. Schliemann among the ruins of Troy have afforded evidence that silver also was employed by the Hittites in place of money, and that its use for this purpose was communicated by them to the most distant nations of Western Asia Minor.

In the so-called 'treasure of Priam,' disinterred among the calcined ruins of Hissarlik or Troy, are six blade-like ingots of silver, about seven or eight inches in length and two in breadth. Mr. Barclay Head has pointed out that each of these ingots weighs the third part of a Babylonian maneh or mina, and further that this particular maneh of 8,656 grains Troy, was once employed throughout Asia Minor for weighing bullion silver. It differed from the standard of weight and value used in Phœnicia, Assyria, and Asia Minor itself in the later Greek

age. But it corresponded with 'the maneh of Carchemish' mentioned in the Assyrian contract tablets, which continued to hold its own even after the conquest of Carchemish by Sargon. The maneh of Carchemish had, it is true, been originally derived from Babylonia, like most of the elements of Hittite culture, but it had made itself so thoroughly at home in the Hittite capital as to be called after its name. Nothing can show more clearly than this the leading position held by the Hittites in general, and the city of Carchemish in particular, in regard to commerce and industry.

Carchemish was, in fact, the centre of the overland trade in Western Asia. It commanded the high-road which brought the products of Phœnicia and the West to the civilized populations of Assyria and Babylon. It was this which made its possession so greatly coveted by the Assyrian kings. Its capture assured to Sargon the command of the Mediterranean coast, and the transference to Assyrian hands of the commerce and wealth which had flowed in to the merchant-princes of the Hittite city.

The sumptuous furniture in which they indulged is mentioned by Assur-natsir-pal. Like the luxurious monarchs of Israel, they reclined on couches inlaid with ivory, of which it is possible that they were the inventors. At all events, elephants were still hunted by Tiglath-pileser I, in the neighbourhood of Carchemish, as they had been by Thothmes III four centuries earlier, and elephants' tusks were among the tribute paid by the Hittites to the Assyrian kings. It may

be that the extinction of the elephant in this part of Asia was due to Hittite huntsmen.

The ivory couches of Carchemish, however, were not employed at meals, as they would have been in Assyria or among the Greeks and Romans of a later day. Like the Egyptians, the Hittites sat when eating, and their chairs were provided with backs as well as with curiously-formed footstools. The food was placed on low cross-legged tables, which resembled a camp-stool in shape.

At times, as we may gather from a bas-relief at Merash, they entertained themselves at a banquet with the sounds of music. Several different kinds of musical instruments are represented on the monuments, among which we may recognize a lyre, a trumpet, and a sort of guitar. It is evident that they were fond of music, and had cultivated the art, as befitted a people to whom wealth had given leisure. A curious indication of the same leisured ease is to be found in a sculpture at Eyuk, where an attendant is depicted carrying a monkey on his shoulders. Those only who enjoyed the quiet of a peaceful and wealthy life would have gratified the taste for animals which the monuments reveal, by importing an animal like the monkey from the distant south. The Hittites were doubtless a warlike people when they first swooped down upon the plains of Syria, but they soon began to cultivate the arts of peace and to become one of the great mercantile peoples of the ancient world.

We learn from the Books of Kings that horses and

chariots were exported from Egypt for the Hittite princes, the Israelites serving as intermediaries in the trade. But they must also have obtained horses from the north, and perhaps have bred them for themselves. The prophet Ezekiel tells us (xxvii. 14) that 'they of Togarmah traded' in the fairs of Tyre 'with horses and horsemen and mules,' and Togarmah has been identified with the Tul-Garimmi of the Assyrian inscriptions, which was situated in Kappadokia. In the wars between Egypt and Kadesh a portion of the Hittite army fought in chariots, each drawn by two horses, and holding sometimes two, sometimes three men. The chariots were of light make, and rested on two wheels, usually furnished with six spokes.

The army was well disciplined and well arranged. Its nucleus was formed of native-born Hittites, who occupied the centre and the posts of danger. Around them were ranged their allies and mercenaries, under the command of special generals. The native infantry and cavalry also obeyed separate captains, but the whole host was led by a single commander-in-chief.

We have yet to be made acquainted with the details of their domestic architecture. The ground-plan of their palaces has been given us at Boghaz Keui and Eyuk, at Carchemish and Zinjerli, and we know that they were built round a central court of quadrangular form. We know too that the entrance to the palace was, like that to an Egyptian temple, flanked by massive blocks of stone on either side, and approached by an avenue of sculptured slabs. We have learned, moreover, that the palace was

erected on raised terraces or mounds; but beyond this we know little except that use was made of a pillar without a base, which had been originally derived from Babylonia, the primitive home of columnar architecture.

About the Hittite dress we have fuller information. Apart from the snow-shoes or mocassins which have helped to identify their monumental remains, we have found the Hittites wearing on their heads two kinds of covering, one a close-fitting skull-cap, the other a lofty tiara, generally pointed, but sometimes rounded at the top or ornamented, as at Ibreez, with horn-like ribbons. The pointed tiara was adorned with perpendicular lines of embroidery. At Boghaz Keui the goddesses have what has been termed the mural crown, resembling as it does the fortified wall of a town.

The robes of the women descended to the feet. This was also the case with the long sleeved garment of the priests, but other men wore a tunic which left the knees bare, and was fastened round the waist by a girdle. Over this was thrown a cloak, which in walking left one leg exposed. In the girdle was stuck a short dirk; the other arms carried being a spear and a bow, which was slung behind the back. The double-headed battle-axe was also a distinctively Hittite weapon, and was carried by them to the coast of the Ægean, where in the Greek age it became the symbol of the Karian Zeus, and of the island of Tenedos. All these weapons were of bronze, or perhaps of iron; but there are indications that the

Hittite tribes had once contented themselves with tools and weapons of stone. Near the site of Arpad Mr. Boscawen purchased a large and beautiful axe-head of highly polished green-stone, which could, however, never have been intended for actual use. It was, in fact, a sacrificial weapon, surviving in the service of the gods from the days when the working of metal was not yet known. Like other survivals in religious worship, it bore witness to a social condition that had long since passed away. A small axe-head, also of polished green-stone, was obtained by myself from the neighbourhood of Ephesos, and bears a remarkable resemblance in form to the axe-head of Arpad. The importance of this fact becomes manifest when we compare the numerous other weapons or implements of polished stone found in Western Asia Minor, which exhibit quite a different shape. It permits the conclusion that both Arpad and Ephesos had once submitted to the same influence, and that in both the same form of stone implement—a survival from an earlier age of stone—was dedicated to the service of the gods.

The dresses of cloth and linen with which the Hittites clothed themselves were dyed with various colours, and were ornamented with fringes and rich designs. That of the priest at Ibreez is especially worthy of study. Among the patterns with which it is adorned are the same square ornament as is met with on the tomb of the Phrygian king Midas, and the curious symbol usually known as the 'swastika,' which has become so famous since the excavations of General

di Cesnola in Cyprus, and of Dr. Schliemann at Troy. The symbol recurs times without number on the prehistoric pottery of Cyprus and the Trojan plain; but no trace of it has ever yet been found in Egypt, in Assyria, or in Babylonia. Alone among the remains of the civilized nations of the ancient East the rock-sculpture of Ibreez displays it on the robe of a Lykaonian priest. Was it an invention of the Hittite people, communicated by them to the rude tribes of Asia Minor, along with the other elements of a cultured life, or was it of barbarous origin, adopted by the Hittites from the earlier population of the West?

Before we can answer this question we must know far more than we do at present about that long-forgotten but wonderful race, whose restoration to history has been one of the most curious discoveries of the present age. When the sites of the old Hittite cities have been thoroughly explored, when the monuments they left behind them have been disinterred, and their inscriptions have been deciphered and read, we shall doubtless learn the answers to this and many other questions that are now pressing for solution. Meanwhile we must be content with what has already been gained. Light has been cast upon a dark page in the history of Western Asia, and therewith upon the sacred record of the Old Testament, and a people has advanced into the forefront of modern knowledge who exercised a deep influence upon the fortunes of Israel, though hitherto they had been to us little more than a name. At the very moment when every word of Scripture is being minutely scrutinized, now by



friends, now by foes, we have learnt that the statement once supposed to impugn the authority of the sacred narrative is the best witness to its truth. The friends of Abraham, the allies of David, the mother of Solomon, all belonged to a race which left an indelible mark on the history of the world, though it has been reserved in God's wisdom for our own generation to discover and trace it out.