

Hardly half a dozen years ago the 'critic' assured us that Menes, the founder of the united kingdom of Egypt, and his immediate successors of the First Dynasty were the creations of etymological invention, 'semi-fabulous' personages, belonging to a 'prehistoric' period, of which no record could ever have existed. The spade of the excavator has rudely dissipated all such dreams. So far from being 'semi-fabulous' and 'mythical' the kings of the First Dynasty of Egypt turn out to have lived in the full blaze of culture and history, at a time when the civilization of Egypt was already old, when its art was highly advanced and its political organization complete. The hieroglyphic system of writing was already perfected; an alphabet had been formed out of it, and even a cursive hand developed. A careful chronological register was kept, and, as in Babylonia, the events of each year were officially recorded. Even the tombs of the 'semi-fabulous' beings of the critic's imagination have been discovered, and the bones of Menes himself are now in the Museum of Cairo.

If we turn to Babylonia, the same story awaits us there. There, too, we were told that