

till the end of the ninth century B.C., and that the earlier population of the district, which was then known as Kumusšu, spoke a dialect akin to those of Asia Minor. A tablet covered with hieroglyphs of the Hittite type has been found near Van.

As for the old Sumerian or Akkadian of Babylonia, much light has been thrown upon it since the first edition of this book was printed. Hundreds of Sumerian inscriptions have been discovered, some of which may go back to so remote a date as the seventh millennium B.C. But its place among the known families of speech is still doubtful. Professor Hommel has argued ably on behalf of its relationship to the Turkish-Tatar idioms of to-day; I should no longer be inclined, however, to class it with the Uralic group, whatever may be its relation to the Altaic branch of the family. As early as about 4000 B.C. it began to borrow elements from the language of the Semitic immigrants into Babylonia, though the latter, in its turn, was still more influenced by the older and more cultured language of the country. The result was a mixed language, not unlike the English of to-day, which Professor Hommel believes to have been the mother of Old Egyptian. I should now separate Sumerian from Susianian and Protomedic, which last had better be termed Amardian or Neo-Susian. The Susianian or Elamite dialects are, it is true, agglutinative like Sumerian, but the more we know of them the less genealogical similarity do they show to the Sumerian of primitive Chaldæa. It is, moreover, questionable whether Koosæan should not be classed by itself. Its vocabulary, so far as we are