

wedge-shaped type of writing. We have, in fact, early inscriptions which show it in the process of the earliest development of the writing, where they originally scratched pictures and then these pictures which they scratched on these clay tablets they came to make in a rectangular form made with pressing in with the stylus and making these letters and so it developed in the hands of the Sumerians and every type of writing known anywhere in the world almost certainly is derived from the impetus of this original Sumerian writing. It was taken over--the Egyptians took over the idea from them and developed their hieroglyphic writing; it was carried across the deserts, clear across Asia, and the origin of the Chinese writing, it is generally thought, came from the idea of writing this way which was derived from the Sumerians and the earliest Chinese writing has certain points of agreement with the earliest Sumerian writing. The earliest Chinese writing is, I think, about a thousand years later than the origin of the Sumerian which is recognized pretty well now to be the earliest writing anywhere in the world. Now this Sumerian writing, then, was taken over by the Babylonians, and the Babylonian language is about as different from the Sumerian language as, shall we say as Hungarian is from English? Or as Japanese is from English--much more different than Chinese, from English. It is an extremely different type of language, the Babylonian. And so, to take Sumerian signs and use them for writing Babylonian presented a tremendous amount of and confusion. It was just about as complicated as it is the way we do to use the Latin letters to represent English writing which they don't fit at all and so our English system is very complicated and cumbersome because we are using letters not invented for English at all and they don't fit our English. We have twisted them around to make them applicable to our English writing. When you see an English word, if you want to know how to pronounce it you can always ask somebody, but there's no other way to know. The Babylonian isn't quite that bad. The Babylonian is much more regular than the English and much more definite, even though it has its great disadvantage of being taken over from the Sumerian. Now the study, then, of this cuneiform