

*Oriental Institute Communica-
tions Number 2*

EXPLORATIONS IN HITTITE ASIA MINOR

(A Preliminary Report)

By H. H. VON DER OSTEN

Rock fortresses pierced by subterranean tunnels and steps leading to the very center of the rock, subterranean temples of three stories supported by huge pillars and decorated in hand-carved frescoes, rock tombs containing blue and red-stained pottery—these are some of the interesting discoveries made by H. H. Von der Osten in his expedition into Hittite Asia Minor.

The region in which the Hittites lived has scarcely been touched by archeologists, so that it presents a very fertile field. This report contains material valuable to archeologists and laymen alike. The facts are interestingly presented, and the book is well illustrated.

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The Deluded Consumer

Sociology

F. J. SCHLINK, in an address before the National Retail Goods Association (printed by *Printers' Ink*):

The ultimate consumer, when he sallies forth to make a purchase, whether a new car or a pair of shoes, is facing problems of appalling difficulty, of which, fortunately for his peace of mind and yours, he is in the main only vaguely conscious. How can he tell which of the 400 brands of popular tooth-pastes, liquids and powders he should buy, or shoe polish, or floor wax? Will the right cake of soap give him a school-boy complexion? Does part wool mean the same to him as it does to the blanket trade?

His Government buys some \$300,000,000 worth of supplies and equipment, from thumb tacks to battle-ships, but instead of buying on the basis of advertisements in four colors, and word pictures alluringly drawn by high-pressure salesmen, Government agents test the goods in a cool and dispassionate manner, with intricate instruments and the contents of many reagent bottles to give definiteness and objectivity to their judg-

ments. For an estimated cost of \$2,000,000 a year these experts on the staff of a single bureau in Washington save taxpayers something like \$100,000,000 on Federal purchases.

The Government and the large private buyer, such as the railroads and other public utility corporations, are able through the technique of tests and standards to go into the market and get true competition on the actual properties and performance of all sorts of goods, divorced from the endless, colorful and entertaining assertions of advertising and salesmanship (which are, like as not, put forward by people who know little more about the actual and usable properties of a given product than does the way-faring man who buys it). The taxpayer-consumer is justified in wondering whether this scientific approach to the problem of useful goods, and of the utility aspects of aesthetic goods, might not bring comparable savings if applied directly to the needs of himself and his family and the 90 per cent. of the population below the minimum health and decency income level computed by the Department of Labor.

On the other side of the industrial scene, he learns something of the technique of the advertiser; that "repetition is reputation," that the purpose of good advertising is "to take goods out of competition"; to make us buy the numerous things we don't want or have little use for, through the appeal of soaring words, alluring pictures, shiny packages, specious demonstrations, and intriguing arguments. These appeals often involve glaring irrelevancies, and the latest sensations of the pseudo-sciences; in a surprising proportion of cases, downright misrepresentation, detectable only by scientific specialists, is the definite technique employed.

The industrial machine is too complex for the consumer ever again to manufacture his own requirements on any significant scale, or ever personally to test the goods which he buys, except as to hefting a grapefruit or poking a thumb into the end of a cantaloupe. In time, he will and must depend upon the resources of technical experts of the Federal departments, the national standardizing bodies, and the progressive leaders of private industry, to put his purchases upon an economical and efficient basis, where facts have a chance to prevail and magic flies out the window.

Science News-Letter, March 24, 1928



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