THE ORKHON INSCRIPTIONS

Being a Translation of Professor Vilhelm Thomsen's final Danish rendering

By E. DENISON ROSS

THE two famous monuments known as the Orkhon Inscriptions, erected in honour of the two Turkish princes, Kül-Tegin and his brother Bilgä Kagan, though mentioned in Chinese histories, remained forgotten and ignored down to quite recent times. They stand near the Lake Kocho Tsaïdam, to the west of the River Orkhon, about 50 miles north of the monastery of Erdentso (the site of the ancient city of Kara Korum), and about 25 miles to the north-west of the ruins of the capital of the Uighurs, Kara-Balgassun. They are two great square monoliths, which originally reposed in two sockets. Both these sockets are still in their original position, but the monuments have been thrown down, with the result that Monument II is in four pieces. They contain long Turkish inscriptions in Runic characters on three sides, and on one side (the western) the inscription is in Chinese. The Chinese inscriptions are very beautifully cut; the Runic inscriptions, which are also probably the work of the Chinese stone-cutters, are less elegant. It may be mentioned that the Chinese inscriptions differ entirely in their contents from the Turkish.

In 1896 the late Vilhelm Thomsen, of Copenhagen, published his first decipherment and translation into French [1] of these Runic inscriptions, which are of the greatest historical importance for the early history of the Turks. In 1922, in the third volume of his collected essays,[2] he published an entirely new translation into Danish of these inscriptions, his researches in the interval having thrown a great deal of new light, both linguistic and historical, on the interpretation of these texts.

No rendering of these famous inscriptions has hitherto appeared in English, although a full translation was published by H. H. Schaeder in the *ZDMG.*, Neue Folge, Bd. iii, 1924. I thought it would be of interest to readers of our *Bulletin* to know what were the contents of these remarkable monuments, erected respectively in A.D. 732 and 735. Professor Thomsen also published at the same time a new translation of the Tonyukuk inscription found near the other two, and of this I hope to publish an English version in a future number.

[1] *Inscriptions de l'Orkhon*, Helsingfors, 1896.

[2] *Samlede Afhandlinger*, vol. iii, Copenhagen, 1922.

Translation of Monuments I and II (1)

South side of Monument I (I S) = North side of Monument II (II N)

I S 1 II S 1 I, the God-like, Heaven-bred Turkish Wise [Bilgä] Kagan, I have mounted my throne (?). Hear from the beginning to the end of my words, first and foremost Ye my younger brothers, my brother's and my sister's sons (?) and my young princes, and then all Ye my kindred and my people, Ye Shadapit-begs on the right, Ye Tarkans I S 2 and Buyruk-begs on the left, Otuz—[" Thirty "—] (Tartars ? . . .) begs and peoples of the Tokuz—[" Nine "—] Oguzes ! Harken well to these my words, give close heed to them ! Towards the East, towards the sun's rising, towards the South, towards the mid-day, II N 2 towards the West, towards the sun's setting, towards the North, towards the mid-night—let all peoples within this [circle] listen to I S 3 me ; so far around have I disposed all the peoples. So long as the Turkish kagan rules in the forest of Mount Ötükän without the wickedness of to-day the kingdom suffers no ill. To the East I have made campaigns as far as the Shantung plain, and almost reached the II N 3 sea ; to the South I have made campaigns as far as Tokuz-Ersin (?) and almost reached Tibet ; to the West I have made campaigns beyond Yenchü-ügüz [" The Pearl River "] as far as Tämir-kapig I S 4 [" The Iron Gate "] ; to the North I have made campaigns as far as the land of the Yer-Bayirku's. To all these lands have I led [the Turks]. The forest of Mount Ötükän has no [foreign] overlord ; the forest of Mount Ötükän is the place wherefrom the kingdom is held together. I S 5 While I have ruled here, I have become reconciled with the Chinese II N 4 people. The Chinese people, who give in abundance gold, silver, millet (?), and silk (?), have always used ingratiating words and have at their disposal enervating riches. While ensnaring them with their ingratiating talk and enervating riches, they have drawn the far-dwelling peoples nearer to themselves. But after settling down near I S 6 them these have come to see their cunning. The good and shrewd men, the good and stout men, however, they have not shaken ; and even if a man have fallen away from [us], they have not succeeded in leading astray the sober ones within his kindred or his people. II N 5 But by letting yourselves be snared by their ingratiating talk and enervating riches, many of you, Turkish folk, have gone to destruction. When some among you, Turkish folk, said : " I will settle in the South, but not in the forest of Mount Chugay, but in the plain," then the I S 7 wicked men encouraged this party among you, Turkish folk, in this

wise: "When they are far away they give bad gifts; when they are
II N 6 near they give good gifts." Thus did they urge them on. The foolish persons were taken by these words, and went down to their neighbourhood, whereby many among you have come to destruction. "If thou
I S 8 then go forth to that land, O Turkish nation, thou wilt come to destruction; but if thou stay in the land of Ötükän, and send out caravans, thou wilt never suffer any need. If thou stay on in the mountain forest of Ötükän, thou shalt ever hold an everlasting kingdom, O Turkish nation, and thou shalt be full-fed. When thou art hungry, thou dost not remember what fullness is; but once thou
I S 9 art full-fed, thou hast no thought of what hunger is." Without giving
II N 7 heed to the words of your kagan, of him who, thanks to those of like mind among you, has set you on your feet—ye have wandered forth from place to place, and ye have all there languished and suffered need. Those among you that have stayed behind there have all had to go on from place to place, to life or death. Under the will of Heaven, and for that it was my high calling, I became kagan. After having
I S 10 become kagan I gathered together the whole luckless people; the poor people I have made rich, the people small in numbers I have
II N 8 made a numerous one. Or is there, perhaps, any untruth in these my words? Turkish begs and peoples, harken unto this! How thou, O Turkish people, hast preserved the kingdom (through being obedient?), I have here written down; how thou hast been divided up, when thou wast faithless, I have here set forth. All that I had to
I S 11 say to you I have written down on this memorial stone [literally, the everlasting stone]. Having obeyed this, ye Turkish peoples and begs now living, ye begs that up to now have been obedient to the throne, could you indeed wish to be found wanting? (2)

I (have had) the memorial stone (hewn?). From the Chinese Emperor I have had artists to come, and have set them to work.
I S 12 My request has not been refused (?). They have sent the Chinese Emperor's court painters. I have bidden them set up a separate [or excelling?] hall, and inside and out I have had them to make various (?) [remarkable?] paintings. I have had the stone hewn; that which lay in my heart to utter I have (had written . .). Understand to see [: to read?] this (. . . ?) all as far as the suns and subjects of the Ten Arrows.[1] I have had the memorial stone
I S 13 hewn. For those of you (?) who might have been withdrawing [into

[1] It is interesting to note that the combination *ung* which Thomsen following Radloff originally read as *unug* = beloved, he now reads as *on og* or the Ten Arrows.

winter camp ?], or from barren (?) places striving towards grazing-ground, I have had this memorial stone hewn in a barren (?) place, and have written this. When ye see it, then know so much : this stone I have (. . . .). He that has written this inscription is his sister's son (?) Yolig Tegin.

The East Side (I and II E)

(3) When the blue sky above and the dark earth below were made,
II E 3 then were made between them both the sons of men. Over the sons of men set themselves [as rulers] my forbears Bumin kagan and Istämi kagan, and having set themselves [as rulers] they governed and kept
I E 2 in order the Turkish peoples' kingdoms and polity. All [the peoples in] the four quarters of the world were foes to them ; but they waged wars against them and overcame all the peoples in the four quarters of the world, made them keep the peace and bow their head and bend their knee. Towards the East they made them settle as far as the mountain
II E 4 forest of Kadirkan, to the West as far as Tämir-kapig [: " The Iron
I E 3 Gate "). Over so great a distance did they rule between [these] two [extremes], bringing order to the " blue " Turks [kök Türk], who were without lord and without any tribal [organization]. They were wise kagans, they were stout-hearted ; also their buyruk's [: high officials] were wise, were stout-hearted. Both begs and peoples were united.
I E 4 Therefore were they able to govern so great a realm, to bring order into the political body. According as their fate was laid down so they died. To witness the funeral and take part in the mourning there
II E 5 came from the East, from the sun's rising, the far-off Bökli (?)—nation, the Chinese, the Tibetans, Apar (?), Apurum (?), the Kirghiz, the Üch—[: " Three "—] Kurikans, the Otuz—(" Thirty "—) Tatars, the Kitays, Tatabi—so many nations came to take part in the mourning and funeral. Such illustrious kagans they were. After them
I E 5 their younger brothers became kagans, and their sons became kagans ; but the younger brothers were now not like their elder brothers, the
II E 6 sons were not like their fathers. It was incapable kagans that mounted the throne, it was bad kagans ; their buyruks were likewise incapable
I E 6 and they were bad. Because of want of harmony between the begs and the people, and because of the Chinese people's cunning and craft and its intrigues, and because the younger and the elder brothers chose to take counsel against one another and bring discord between begs and
II E 7 people, they brought the old realm of the Turkish people to dissolution,
I E 7 and brought destruction on its lawful kagans. The sons of the nobles

became the bondsmen of the Chinese people, their unsullied daughters became its slaves. The Turkish begs gave up their Turkish names [or titles ?], and bearing the Chinese names [titles ?] of Chinese begs they
I E 8 obeyed the Chinese Emperor, and served him during fifty years.
II E 8 For him they waged war in the East towards the sun's rising, as far as Bökli kagan, in the West they made expeditions as far as Tämir-kapig (" The Iron Gate ") ; for the Chinese Emperor they conquered
I E 9 kingdoms and power. The whole of the common Turkish people said thus : " I have been a nation that had its own kingdom ; where is now my kingdom ? For whom do I win the kingdoms ? " said they. " I have been a people that had its own kagan ; where is my kagan ?
II E 9 Which kagan is it I serve ? " they said. Speaking in this wise they rose
I E 10 up against the Chinese Emperor ; but as they, having risen up, had not been able to put themselves in order and take proper thought, they once more submitted. All these were [not only] not minded to give [us] help, but [even] said : " Let us [rather] slay the Turkish people and root it out " ; but they went [themselves] to meet
II E 10 destruction. But the Turks' Heaven above, and the Turks holy
I E 11 Yer-sub did as follows : to the end that the Turkish people should not perish but that it should [again] become a people, they raised up my father Elterish kagan and my mother Elbilga katun, supporting them from the heights of Heaven. My father the kagan went forth
I E 12 with seventeen men. When they heard the tidings that he was going forth outside [China], they that were in the towns went out, and they that were on the mountains came down from them, and when they
II E 11 gathered together they were seventy men. As Heaven gave them strength, my father, the kagan's army was as wolves, and their foes as sheep. Making marches East and West, he gathered people and
I E 13 brought them together, and there came to be in all seven hundred men. When there had come to be seven hundred men he set the people in order in consonance with my forefathers' institutions, the people that had lost its realms and its kagan, the people that had become
II E 12 thralls and slave-women, the people whose Turkish institutions had
I E 14 been broken up, and he put heart into them. He now brought order into the Tölish peoples and the Tardush peoples, and gave them a yabgu and a shad. To the south the Chinese people was our foe, to the North Baz kagan and the people of the Tokuz [" Nine "] Oguz's were our foes ; Kirghiz, kurikans, Otuz [" Thirty "] Tatars, Kitays
I E 15 and Tatabis—they were all hostile to us ; (with) all these (had)
II E 13 my father the kagan (to fight ?). Forty-seven times he went

campaigning, and fought in twenty fights. By the will of Heaven we took from them that had a kingdom their kingdom, and them that had a kagan we robbed of their kagan ; he made the foes to keep the peace, and made them bow their head and bend their knee. After
I E 16 having won so great a kingdom and such great power he died. Instead of my father the kagan we raised up Baz kagan as first balbal. (4) [1] So my father's brother the kagan took over the government. Having mounted the throne, my father's brother the kagan organized anew
I E 17 the Turkish people, and set it on its feet ; the poor he made rich, those that were few he made many. When my father's brother the kagan had mounted the throne I myself became shad over the Tardush people (5). Together with my father's brother the kagan I took the field eastwards as far as the Green River [*yašil ügüz*] and the Shantung plain ; westwards we made campaigns as far as Tämir-kapig ; as far
I E 18 as the Kirghiz land beyond Kögmän we made campaigns. Altogether we made twenty-five campaigns and fought thirteen times. From them that had a kingdom we took away their kingdom ; them that had a kagan we robbed of their kagan ; we made them bend their
II E 16 knee and bow their head. The Türgish kagan was of my Turks, my
I E 19 people. Because of his foolishness, and because he was filled with deceit towards us he was slain and his buyruks and begs were slain. The people of the Ten Arrows suffered evil. So that the land governed by our forbears should not be without a lord, we set in order the people that was small in numbers [? or : the Az people ?] (. . . .)
I E 20 who was Bar's beg ; we gave him here the title of kagan, and gave
II E 17 him the princess my younger sister to wed. But they were faithless, the kagan was slain, and the people became thralls and slave-women. So that the land Kögmän should not be left without a lord, we came, after setting Az-og (?) the Kirghiz people in order, and fought, but
I E 21 we gave them (their independence ?) back again. So far as the other side of the mountain forest of Kadirkan in the East, we let the people dwell, and organized it ; so far as Kängü-tarman in the West we let
II E 18 the Turkish people dwell, and organized it. At that time the slaves themselves had slaves, the slave-women themselves had slave-women ; the younger brother knew nought of the elder brother, the sons knew nought of their father. So great was the kingdom and the dominion
II E 19 which we had won and organized. But, Turkish and Oguz begs and

[1] It was a custom of the Turks to set up stones round the tomb of a fallen prince, each stone representing an enemy he had slain during his lifetime. Such stones were called *balbal*.

people, hearken to this! Did not Heaven above fall down, or the earth below open, who could then have destroyed thy kingdom and
I E 23 thy might? Turkish peoples! Tremble and go into thyself! It is thou thyself that has been deceitful and acted cravenly towards thy wise kagan, who through thy obedience had raised thee up, and brought thee to thy goodly realm, which had been free and independent. Whence came, indeed, armoured men and split thee up? Whence, indeed, came lance-bearing men and dragged thee away? Thou people from the holy Ötükän mountain-forest, it was thou thyself that went
I E 24 forth! Some of you went eastwards, others of you went westwards;
II E 20 but in those lands whither ye went ye attained only to this, that your blood flowed in streams and your bones lay like mountains. Your nobles' sons became thralls, your unsullied daughters became slave-women. Through your foolishness and cowardice my father's brother
I E 25 the kagan found his death. As the first one I had the Kirghiz kagan raised to be balbal. Heaven, which, so that the name and fame of
II E 21 the Turkish people should not perish, had raised up my father the kagan and my mother the katun, Heaven, which had given them the kingdom—this same Heaven, so that the name and fame of the
I E 26 Turkish people should not perish, has now appointed me as kagan. I did not become a ruler over a flourishing (?) people; I became the ruler of a people which within was without food and outside was without clothing, a wretched and weak people. Together with my
II E 22 younger brother Kül tegin did I deal with this. So that the people's name and fame won by my father and my father's brother might not
I E 27 perish, for the sake of the Turkish people, I have not slept by night, and by day not found rest. Together with my younger brother Kül tegin, and with the two shads I have toiled unto death. By so toiling I have brought the peoples to not being as fire and water [: disunited]
I E 28 (After I had mounted the throne as kagan ?) those peoples that had
II E 23 gone forth far around came back, dying, without horses, and without clothing. That I might set the people up I (undertook) twelve (expeditions) with great armies, northwards against the Oguz people, to the East against the Kitay and Tatabi peoples, to the South against
I E 29 the Chinese, and I fought (. times). By the will of Heaven, and because I was greatly deserving and it so brought it about, I brought the dying people back to life; for the naked people I found clothing,
II E 24 the poor people I made rich, the scanty people I made numerous. I have made the other, which has a kingdom and a kagan, to stand
I E 30 higher. All the peoples in the four quarters of the world I have brought

to keeping the peace and making an end of hostilities ; they all have obeyed me (6), and serve me. After having done so much for the power of the kingdom, my brother Kül tegin died by the decree of fate. At my father the kagan's death my brother Kül tegin was (left behind at the age of) seven years. (At ten years of age ?) my brother
I E 31 Kül tegin was given a man's name [: was received among the grown up], to the happiness of my mother the katun, who is like Umay.[1] At the age of sixteen he accomplished as follows for my father's brother, the kagan's kingdom and power : we made a campaign against Alti [" Six "] Chub (?) and the Sogds and defeated them. The Chinese
I E 32 Ong tutuk (came with an army of) fif(-ty thousand and we fought). Kül tegin attacked at the run with the footmen, and took by force of arms the tutuk with spearmen prisoners, and brought them armed to the kagan. That army we destroyed there. When he was twenty-
I E 33 one years old we fought with Chacha sängün. First (he attacked riding on) Tadik (?) chur's grey (horse ; this horse) was killed there. The second time he attacked, riding on Ishbara Yamtar's grey horse ; this horse was killed there. The third time he attacked riding on Yäginsilig beg's brown horse Kädimlig ; this horse was killed there. His armour and his moon-diamond (ornament) they hit with more
I E 34 than 100 arrows, but not one hurt the [armour-?) plates or his head (. . . . .) their [? his ?] attack ye all remember, Turkish begs. That army we there destroyed. Thereafter the Yer-Bayirkus under Ulug- [" great "] erkin became our foes. We hewed them up and
I E 35 defeated them by Lake Türgi-yargun. Ulug-erkin fled with but a few men. When Kül tegin was (26) years old we made a campaign against the Kirghiz. Making ourselves a way through the snow that lay a lance's depth, we marched up over Kögmän mountain-forest and fell
I E 36 on the Kirghiz people as they slept. Kül tegin attacked at a run, riding on Bayir-ku's white stallion. One man he shot with an arrow, two men he pierced through, one after the other. In this attack he broke the leg of Bayir-ku's white stallion. The Kirghiz kagan we slew, and took their realm. In the same year we marched against the Türgishes up over the Altun mountain-forest, and crossing over the
I E 37 River Irtish. The Türgish folk we fell upon as they slept. The Türgish kagan's army came up by Bolchu like fire and storm, and we fought. Kül tegin attacked riding on the grey horse Bashgu. The grey horse Bashgu (. . . . . .). On the way back from there the Türgish
I E 38 kagan's buyruks took the Az [people's] tutuk a prisoner. Then we

[1] A children's deity.

slew the kagan, and took over his kingdom. The whole of the common
I E 39 Türgish people submitted. This people (. . . . .). To organize the Sogd people we went over Yenchü-ügüz as far as Tämir-kapig. Afterwards the Türgish common people revolted, and went off towards Kängäräs. Our army had neither horses nor supplies at the resting-
I E 40 places; they were evil peoples (. . . . .). They were brave men that had attacked us. In despair under such conditions we sent out Kül tegin with a few men to come up with them. They gave a great fight. He attacked, riding on his white horse Alpshalchi. There he slew and conquered the Türgish common people. As he withdrew (. . . . .).

North Side (N)

I N 1 (. .) he fought with (.) and with Koshu tutuk, and slew all his men. Their tents and goods he took all home without leaving anything. When Kül tegin was 27 years old, the Karluk people, which at that time was free and independent, came to a war with us. We fought by the holy spring [or mountain-top; literally "head"] Tamag.
I N 2 Kül tegin was, when this battle took place, 30 years old. He attacked at a run, riding on his white horse Alpshalchi. Two men he pierced through one after the other. The Karluks we slew and overcame. The Az people came to war with us. We fought by Lake Kara (?)-köl.
I N 3 Kül tegin was then 31 years old. Riding on his white horse Alpshalchi he attacked at a run. He took prisoner the eltäbir of the Az people and annihilated there the Az people. As the kingdom of my father's brother the kagan had become rebellious and the people had taken a hatred (?) to him, we fought with the Izgil people. Riding on his white
I N 4 horse Alpshalchi, Kül tegin made his attack at the run. This horse fell dead there. The Izgil people was destroyed. The Tokuz-Oguz people was my own people. As Heaven and Earth were in a turmoil they rose against us. Within one year we fought five times. First
I N 5 we fought at [the town of] Togu-balik. Kül tegin attacked at a run, riding on his white Azman. Six men he transfixed with his lance, a seventh man he cut down in the hand-to-hand fight of the armies. The second time we fought with the Ädiz at Kushlagak. While Kül
I N 6 tegin attacked at a gallop, riding on his brown Az, he transfixed one man, nine men he hewed down in the turmoil of the fight (?). The Ädiz people was destroyed there. The third time we fought with the Oguz people at Bo(. . . . .). Kül tegin attacked, riding on the white Azman, and transfixed [foes with the lance]. We overcame their army

and brought their people to submission. The fourth time we fought
I N 7 at Chushbashi. The Turkish people was rebellious and nigh to being craven. After Kül tegin had scattered (?) their army which had come first, we surrounded and slew, at Tonga tegin's funeral, the alpagus of the Tongra of one kindred and (?) ten men. The fifth time we fought
I N 8 with the Oguz at Äzgänti-kadaz (?) Kül tegin attacked riding on his black-brown Az. Two men he transfixed (. . .). This army was there slain. After wintering in [the stronghold of] Maga- [or Amga-] kurgan we set forth in the spring with an army against the Oguz; Kül tegin we sent off to bear the orders home (?). The hostile Oguz fell on the
I N 9 camp. Kül tegin transfixed nine men among them, riding on his white Ögsiz [= "the motherless"], and did not yield the camp. My mother the katun, along with my stepmothers, my aunts, and elder sisters, my daughters-in-law, my princesses—all of those that were left alive, would have become slave-women, and those of you that were
I N 10 slain would have been left lying in the camp or on the road. If Kül tegin had not been there, it would have been all over with you all. Now my brother Kül tegin is dead. I have myself mourned. My eyes, though seeing, have become as blinded; my thoughts, though conscious, have become as without consciousness. I have myself mourned.
I N 11 But the sons of men are all born to die, so soon as Heaven ordains the time. Thus did I mourn, with the tears coming from the eye, and wailing from the heart, I have mourned ever and again; deeply have I mourned. I thought that the two shads, my younger brothers and brothers' sons, my sons, my begs and my people would weep till their eyes grew sick. To take part at the funeral and mourning Udar Sängün
I N 12 came from the Kitay and Tatabi peoples. From the Chinese Emperor came Ishiyi and (?) Likäng. They brought in immeasurable quantity precious things, gold and silver [to the value of] a tümän [= 10,000]. From the Tibetan kagan came a *bölön*.[1] From the peoples of the Sogds, Persians(?), and Bukhara tribes, dwelling in the West, towards the
I N 13 sun's setting came Näng [? or Näk ?] sängün and Ogul tarkan. From the Ten Arrows and my son [? son-in-law or: from my sons, the Ten Arrows, and] the Türgish kagan came Makarach, the keeper of the seal, and Oguz Bilgä, the keeper of the seal. From the Kirghiz kagan came Tardush Inanchu chur. To build the hall, carry out the

[1] It is interesting to note the Turkish transcription of the Tibetan word *blon*—pointing to the pronunciation of the initial "b" which has only an orthographical value to-day (= *lon-po*, an official).

works of art [the paintings ?] and the inscribed stone there came the Chinese Emperor's Chikans and Chang Sängün.

On the Face between the North and the East Side (I N E)

Kül tegin died in the year "sheep" [731] the seventh [day]. In the ninth month, the 27th we held the funeral. His hall, the works of art [the paintings ?] and the inscribed stone—all we dedicated in the year "ape", the 7th month, the 27th [= 21 August 732]. Kül tegin died in his 47th year. (. . . . .) All these artists were sent for by the toyguns (*sic*) and the eltäbirs.

On the Face between the South and the East Side (I S E)

He that has written [: composed] this inscription is I, Kül tegin's sister's son (?), Yolig tegin, who have written it. Tarrying here for twenty days, I have written all on this stone and these walls. Ye showed always a greater care than the others (?) for your princes and your tayguns. Now are ye dead. [Be in ?] Heaven just as [ye were then] amongst the living.

On the Face between the South and the West Side (I S W)

The toyguns (?) that saw to (?) Kül tegin's gold, silver, precious things, belongings, and 400 stud-horses (. . .) My lord the tegin (.) up to Heaven (. . . . . .). The stone I, Yollig [*sic*] tegin, have inscribed.

On the West Side to the Right of the Chinese Inscription (I W)

(1) Inantchu apa yargan tarkan is my name. The (Tur-) kish begs and the Turkish (people) (2) witnessed from the enclosure the funeral. Because of my brother Kül tegin's (merits) and because he has served my kingdom, I, the Turkish Bilgä kagan have taken my place in the middle that was kept for me to keep watch over my brother Kül tegin.

NOTES

(1) The gaps in the inscription are shown by ( ), with a greater or a smaller number of dots or strokes, or attempts to fill in the missing matter conjecturally. In between [ ] are put words which are inserted in the translation for the sake of making it clearer by explanations and the like. In general in giving Turkish words and names I do not usually distinguish the sounds *q, j*, at the back of the tongue from *k, g*, or from *i*; *ch* I use as in English = *c* (tsh); *sh* = *s*.

(2) (From here II goes on thus): As far around as (my father) the kagan and my father's brother the kagan after having mounted
II N 9 the throne had ordered (and organized) the peoples in the four quarters of the world, (just as far around) have I myself by the favour of Heaven, after having mounted the throne, ordered and organized the peoples (. . . .). To the Türgish kagan with very great
II N 10 magnificence I sent (the princess) my daughter in marriage. The daughter of the Tür (gish kagan) I gave with very great magnificence to my son in marriage. (The princess) my younger sister I sent (with very) great magnificence (to the Kirgiz (?) kagan) in marriage. (. . . . the peoples in the) four (quarters of the world I have brought into peace), to bow (their head) and bend their knee.
II N 11 By the blessing of Heaven above, and the earth below (I have led) my people, whom none [before] had seen with their eyes or heard of with their ears, to the (lands lying ?) forwards, towards the up (rising) of the sun, to the right, towards the middle of the day, backwards, (towards) the sun's (setting, to the left towards the middle of the night ?). I have won for my Turks, my people, their (yellow gold and) white silver, silk-stuff, and millet (?), riding-horses and stallions,
II N 12 black sables, and blue squirrels; I have brought it about that (my
II N 13 people) can live without cares. (. . . . So that thou dost not part thyself) from this thy kagan, from these thy begs, from (this) thy
II N 14 (land), O Turkish nation, then will it be well with thee, thou shalt come home again and not have any cares. (. . .) From the Chinese Emperor I had artists (to come. My) request has not been refused (?) Court artists have been sent. I have made them build a separate (? or excelling ?) hall and inside and outside I have (bidden them make) various (? excelling ?) paintings (. . .). Understand to see [: read]
II N 15 this [all] as far as the Ten Arrows' sons and subjects. The memorial stone (. . . .).

(3) (II has in front of this): I, the godlike Turkish Wise [Bilgä]
II E 1 kagan appointed by Heaven, these are my words: When my father the Wise [Bilgä] (kagan had come into the rule, . . . were rejoiced and glad) the illustrious begs and peoples of the Tokuz—[" nine "] Oguz's . . . . . (?) Now that my father the kagan is dead (I myself in accordance with) the Turkish Heaven's (and the Turkish, holy Yer-sub's will ?) come into the government of (this kingdom)
II E 2 as kagan. After I had come into the government the Turkish begs and peoples were glad and rejoiced, who had been in sorrow as though they must die, and looked upwards with quieted (?) eyes. After

myself mounting the throne I have given out so many important laws (for the peoples) in the four quarters of the world (. . . . . .).

II E 14 (4) (In the parallel place in II is here inserted :) When my father the kagan died, I myself was left behind at an age of eight years.

(5) (Instead of the last clause II has :) (I served) myself (my father's brother the kagan, so long as I ?) was tegin ; (by the will of

II E 15 Heaven) I was at fourteen years old appointed shad over the Tardush people.

(6) (From here II goes on as follows :) At the age of seventeen

II E 24 I made a campaign against Tangut. The Tangut people I destroyed ; their young men and households, their horses and belongings I took

II E 25 away from there. At 18 years old I made a campaign against Alti—[" six "] Chub (?) and the Sogds and defeated them. The Chinese Ong tutuk came with an army of 50,000 ; I fought at Iduk-Bash [" The holy spring " or " mountain-top "] and I destroyed there this army. At 20 years old I made a campaign against the Bashmil people and its Iduk-kut, since they did not send caravans [with tribute], (. . . . .) I made them submit again, and all together come to us.

II E 26 At 22 I made a campaign against the Chinese ; I fought against Chacha sängün and (his army of) 80,000 men ; I destroyed his army there. At 26 the Chik people together with the Kirghiz became our enemies ; I made a campaign over the river Kem against Chik, I fought at Örpän and beat their army. The Az people (. . . .), I brought them into submission to me again. At 27 years I made a campaign against the Kirghiz. As we made ourselves a way over the

II E 27 snow, which lay to a lance's depth, I marched up over the Kögmän mountain-forest, and fell upon the Kirghiz people as they slept. I fought with their kagan in the Songa (?) mountain-forest, and I slew their kagan and occupied their kingdom. In the same year I marched against the Türgish people up over the Altun mountain-forest and beyond the Irtish river, and I fell upon (the Türgish people as they slept). The Türgish kagan's army came like fire and storm ; we fought

II E 28 at Bolchu ; I slew there the kagan and his yabgn and shad, and brought their kingdom under my sway. When thirty years old I made an expedition against Beshbalik ; I fought six times (and conquered ?), the whole of their army I did destroy. What peoples are there within ? (. . . . .) came to call (. .) ; thereby Beshbalik was saved. When

II E 29 I was 31 years old the Karluk people became hostile to us, at the time when it was living in freedom and without any cares. I fought by the holy spring [or : mountain-top] Tamag, and I destroyed the Karluk

people, and conquered it. (When I was 32 years old . . . .) the Karluk people gathered together (and came ? ; their army conquered)
II E 30 I, and destroyed it. The Tokuz-Oguz's were my own people. Since Heaven and earth were in a tumult, and since envy have taken hold of their mind (?), they rose in rebellion. Within one year I fought four times. First I fought by [the town of] Togu-balik ; having made my men swim over the River Togla I (overcame and destroyed) their army. The second time I fought at Andargu [? or Urgu ?] and overcame (and destroyed their army . . . . The third time) I fought (at Chush Bashi). The Turkish people was mutinous and near
II E 31 to being craven, but I drove away (?) their [foes'] army, which had got the advantage, and was coming to break us ; and many that were near to dying came back to life again at this. There I surrounded and hewed down, at the funeral of Tonga tegin, the Tongra [tribes] yilpagu's of one kindred. The fourth time I fought at Äzgändi-kadaz ; their army I overcame and destroyed there. (Their horses) and their belongings (I took away there. When I was 24 (?) years old) there was a failure of the crops after we had wintered in [the stronghold of] Maga-[or Amga-]kurgan. In the spring I marched against the
II E 32 Oguzes ; the first army had gone forth, the second army was at home. Three Oguz armies came to attack us ; in the belief that we were left without horses and hard pressed, they came to attack us. One of their armies set forth to plunder our settlements, the second of their armies came to fight. We were few and we were hard beset, the Oguzes (. . . . . ; as Heaven) gave us strength, I overcame and broke
II E 33 them there. By the favour of Heaven, and because I myself accomplished somewhat, (.) the Turkish people (. . . .). If I had not first done so much, the Turkish people would have perished and come to destruction. (Turkish) begs (and people), think of this, know this !
II E 34 The Oguz people (. . . . . .) I took the field ; I laid waste their abodes. The Oguz people came united with the Tokuz Tatars ; at Agn I fought two great fights ; their army I destroyed, their tribes I overcame. After having accomplished so much (my father's brother the kanga (?) died). By the favour (of Heaven) (I became) myself
II E 35 when 33 years old (kagan . . . . . .) kagan,[1] who had set (them) on their feet again, was faithless. Heaven above and the holy Yer-sub and (. .) kagan's good fortune were not favourably minded towards him. The Tokuz-Oguz people left their land, and went to China. (. . . . from) China they came (back) to this land. I will set them

[1] Which kagan is here spoken of is not clear ; perhaps Bögü kagan (p. 188 f.) (?)

II E 36 on their feet, thought I (. . . . . .) the people (.) was faithless, (therefore) its name and fame came to ruin in the South in China ; in this land it became a shame (?) unto me. When I myself had become kagan, I (set) the Turkish people (on its feet . . . . . .). (There)
II E 37 I fought and overcame their army. Some of them submitted again, and became a people ; others found death. I marched down along Selenga . (?) and there laid waste their settlements. (. . . . .) the Uygurs' eltäbir fled eastwards with about 100 men (. . . . .).
II E 38 (. . .) The Turkish people suffered hunger ; I set them up through taking these horses. When I was 34 years old the Oguzes fled and gave themselves up under China ; in wrath I took the field (. . . . .).

[The rest of the East side and its continuation on the South side contain such great gaps, that these parts are here left out as far as II S 8 :]

II S 8 Küg Sängün came at the head of an army of 40,000 men ; I met him at the mountain Tüngkär, and defeated him and hewed down
II S 9 3,000 men (. . . . .). After my eldest son had died of sickness, I had Küg Sängün set up as balbal. For 19 years I governed as shad,
II S 10 for 19 years I was kagan and ruled the realm. 31 (years I was tegin ?). For my Turks, for my people I have brought so much good. Having [1] accomplished so much my father the kagan died in the year " dog "
II S 11 [734], the 10th moon, the 26 ; in the year " pig " [735], the 5th month the 27th, we held the funeral (. . . . . .) Lisün tay-sängün came at the head of 500 men ; they brought sweet-scented things (. .) gold and silver in quantity beyond reckoning ; they brought corpse candles (?) and set them up ; they brought sandal-wood
II S 12 (. . . .). All these people cut their hair and slashed their ears and cheeks. They brought their good riding-horses, their black sables, their blue squirrels in quantity beyond reckoning, and all this they offered up.

[The end of this part from 1.13 has only an enumeration of those who there took part in the funeral, and in the homage to the new kagan.]

[1] While up to now it has been always the dead kagan who is represented as speaking [except in II E 1–2], here it is suddenly the new kagan that starts speaking without any transition.

On the Face between the South and the West Side (II S W)

(The description concerning the Turkish Bilgä) kagan I, Yolig tegin, have written. (He that had all this painted and set up, the hall, the paintings, and the statues, is I, the kagan's sister's son (?), Yolig tegin. For a month and four days I have tarried here, and written and had painted (and had set up).

Over the Chinese Inscription on the West Side (II W; p. 483)
(= the beginning of this translation)

(Since my father) Bilgä kagan, (who has ruled) over (the Turks, is dead), I will, when it is spring, when (Heaven's) drums (sound ?) as—(?), when the deer flees on the mountain, again mown. My father (the kagan's) stone I have myself as kagan (. . .).

(7) The month is not given ; perhaps the first month of the year.