

The background of the cover is a detailed illustration of an ancient Egyptian temple interior. In the center, a large column is decorated with hieroglyphs and topped with a papyrus-bundle capital. Two faces, likely of a deity or pharaoh, are carved into the column's capital. To the left, a winged sphinx is visible. The walls are covered in hieroglyphs and other carvings. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

Global Grey Ebooks

**RECORDS OF THE PAST
VOLUME III**

A. H. SAYCE

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Contents

Preface

Equivalents Of The Hebrew Letters In The Transliteration Of Assyrian Names Mentioned In These Volumes

The Assyrian And Egyptian Calendars

The Precepts Of Ptah-Hotep

The Daughter Of The Prince Of Bakhtan And The Spirit That Possessed Her

Hymn To The Nile

Letters To Egypt From Babylonia, Assyria, And Syria, In The Fifteenth Century B.C.

Ancient Babylonian Agricultural Precepts

The India House Inscription Of Nebuchadrezzar The Great

Contract-Tablets Relating To Belshazzar

The Kings Of Ararat

The Kings Of Persia

Preface

In presenting a new volume of the *Records of the Past* to the public, I feel it my duty to remind the reader of certain words which I wrote in the Preface to the first volume. I there said that “the writer who wishes to make use of a translation from an Egyptian or Assyrian text for historical or controversial purposes ought to know where it is certain, and where it is only possible, or at most probable.” I therefore promised that “in the present series of volumes doubtful words and expressions should be followed by a note of interrogation, the preceding word being put into italics where necessary”; that is to say, that the reader should be forewarned whenever the translator was himself in doubt as to the correctness of his rendering.

So far as lies within the power of an editor, this promise has been fulfilled. But it must be remembered that in many cases a translator may consider that the version he proposes admits of no question, whereas another scholar may take a different view, and hold the version to be incorrect. Such cases occur even in translations from Latin and Greek authors, still more so in the translation of the Old Testament. It is impossible for all men to think alike even in matters of philology. Gradually, no doubt, with the progress of knowledge, approach is made to unanimity of opinion; but after all it is only approach. It is only young scholars who think themselves qualified to set all the world right.

In the decipherment and translation of what may be termed the monumental languages of the past—Egyptian, Assyrian, Phœnician, and the like—much depends upon the nature of the text. Historical texts are fortunately the simplest, and are naturally the first to attract the notice of the decipherer. Consequently the historical texts of Egypt or of Assyria can now be read with almost as much ease and certainty as the historical books of the Hebrew Scriptures. The case is different when we come to deal with texts of a more complicated character, and when we recollect how uncertain is the translation of much of the language in the non-historical books of the Old Testament, we need not wonder that the Egyptian or Assyrian translator should intersperse his renderings of religious and mythological texts with notes and queries, or should improve upon them from time to time as his materials increase. In one respect, however, he possesses an advantage over the Old Testament student; he generally has to deal with texts which are fairly free from the corruptions of copyists. The Assyrian translator, moreover, has at his disposal an enormous mass of literature, much exceeding that contained in the Old Testament, though it is true that but a comparatively small part of it has as yet been examined.

Like all other branches of inductive science, the science of decipherment is one of probabilities. Absolute certainty is unattainable, whether we are translating an inscription of Sennacherib or the book of Genesis. But for all practical purposes a high probability amounts to absolute certainty, and it is this high probability that the decipherment of the ancient monuments of Egypt and Assyria or Babylonia has now attained. Scholars may dispute about the exact meaning of certain words or phrases, as they do in the case of the Hebrew Bible, but it is seldom that anything of importance turns upon the dispute, at all events so far as regards the historical inscriptions. And in the present series of volumes due notice is given to the reader of the occurrence of such disputed words and phrases.

When once we have settled the philological signification of a historical text there begins the equally important work of critically examining it. We have first to ask whether it is

contemporaneous with the event or events which it professes to record, and if not, whether its authorities or its interpretation of its authorities are trustworthy.

This is more especially the case as regards chronology—the skeleton and framework of history. I do not think, therefore, that it will be out of place even in a preface, to examine some of the data we possess at present for determining the chronology of Babylonia and Assyria. Translations of the documents upon which it rests have been given in the two previous volumes of this series.

Nothing can be more satisfactory than the chronology of Assyria so far as it extends. The Assyrians were a people of business, and they carried their business habits into their mode of reckoning time. Each year was distinguished by the name of a particular officer, the *limmu* or “eponym,” after whom it was called, and as the names of the eponyms were recorded on the accession of each to office and registers of them were kept, there was no difficulty in determining the exact year in which an event occurred or anew king ascended the throne.¹

In Babylonia, however, the custom of counting the years by eponyms does not seem to have existed, at all events in early times. From the era of Nabonassar (B.C. 747) downwards Babylonian chronology was fixed by means of astronomy; before that period it appears to have been determined by the reigns of the kings and the duration of dynasties. In legal documents of the time of Khammuragas (or Khammurabi) deeds are not even dated by the regnal years of the sovereign, but by such occurrences as a war, the construction of a canal, or the capture of a city. Under such circumstances it is plain that the historian who endeavoured to restore the early chronology of Babylonia had an extremely difficult task before him.

Our materials for reconstructing the chronology of Babylonia are given at the beginning of the present series of *Records of the Past*. I have already noted the suspicious character of the ciphers attached to the first dynasty of Babylon, in what may be termed the dynastic tablet, and the discrepancy in two of our documents between the length of reign assigned to the kings of the dynasties of the Sea and of Bit-Bazi. Other facts go to show that the tablet of dynasties was drawn up by a compiler who lived at a comparatively late date and extracted a system of chronology from older materials. Contemporaneous documents lately discovered at Niffer prove that the true name of Ebisum, who is made the eighth king of the first dynasty, was really Abesukh. A seal in the possession of Mr. R. P. Greg, belonged to a librarian who calls himself “the servant of the king Abé-sukh” or “Abi-esukh,” and contract-tablets make it clear that the name is really compounded with the word *abi*, “father,” and has nothing to do with *ebisum*, “an actor.” It is questionable, moreover, whether Khammu-ragas or Khammu-rabi—the exact reading of the last syllable is still doubtful—was the son of Sin-muballidh, as is stated by the author of the Dynastic List. At all events the name he gives to his father in one of his inscriptions seems to have been different,² and the compiler of the document which contains Assyrian translations of the names of early Babylonian kings evidently regarded him as of foreign origin. In this document, accordingly, he is classed, like Ammi-sadugga,³ with Kur-galzu, Simmas-sipak, and other Kassite princes.

From a strictly philological point of view the classification is incorrect. The Kassite language was non-Semitic, whereas the names of Ammi-sadugga and Khammu-rabi are Semitic, though not Assyro-Babylonian. Along with those of Samsu-satana, and probably also Samsu-

¹ The etymology of the word *limmu* is doubtful. In the bilingual (Assyrian and Aramaic) tablets it is written 𐎶𐎵 and 𐎶𐎵 in the Aramaic text. In the Kappadokian cuneiform tablets the “limmu” is frequently named.

² Ummu-banit, though Hommel would read Sin-mubanit.

³ My reading Ammi-didugga (*Records of the Past*, New Ser., i. p. 32) must be thus corrected, as well as the translation of the Assyrian interpretation in which *kittu* means “justice” and not “established.”

iluna and Abi-esukh, they belong to the Semitic dialects spoken by tribes of Arabian descent on the western and eastern frontiers of Babylonia. It is only geographically, therefore, and not philologically, that the names of Khammurabi and Ammi-sadugga can be grouped with those of the Kassite kings.

The Babylonians had some difficulty in pronouncing and writing the second element in the name of Ammi-sadugga, and in contemporaneous inscriptions it appears under various forms, the most correct of which is *zaduga*.⁴ It represents, in fact, the Hebrew *tsadoq*, and belongs to a root which is not found in Assyrian. We now have evidence, however, that it was known at an early date to the Minæan language, which extended from the southern coast of Arabia to the borders of Palestine and Chaldæa. Among the inscriptions discovered by M. Halévy in the south of Arabia is one in which mention is made of ‘Ammi-tsadiqa, who was appointed by the Minæan king, Abi-yada’, governor of the fortress of Zar on the Egyptian frontier, as well as of the neighbouring district of Ashur (see Gen. xxv. 3). Prof. Hommel, to whom the discovery of these facts is due, points out that the inscription must belong to a very early epoch indeed, probably to that of the Hyksos in Egypt. However this may be, the name ‘Ammi-tsadiqa is identical with that of the Babylonian king Ammi-zadugga.⁵ The author of the explanatory list of Babylonian royal names renders both *ammi* and *khammu* by the Assyrian *kimtu*, “family.” It is more probable that in both instances it is really the name of a god. Ben-Ammi was the “father of the children of Ammon,” according to Gen. xix. 38, and the Old Testament presents us with names like Ammiel, Amminadab, Balaam, and Jeroboam, while Assur-bani-pal tells us of Ammu-ladin, king of the Kedarites. The more correct rendering of Numb. xxii. 5 would be “Pethor, which is by the river (Euphrates) of the land of the children of ‘Ammo,” and it is stated in a cuneiform text (*W. A. I.*, ii. 54. 65) that Emu—the exact equivalent of the Hebrew *’ammo*—was the name given to the god Nergal by the Shuhites on the western banks of the Euphrates. The fact that in Khammu-rabi the initial *ayin* of *’ammo* is represented by *kh*, pointing to a pronunciation with *ghain*, is indicative of dialectal differences, and implies that the dialects to which the names of Khammu-rabi and Ammi-zadugga belonged were not the same.

We may conclude, therefore, that “the first dynasty of Babylon” had been formed out of the reigns of kings who did not belong to the same nationality, much less to the same family, and that consequently the relationship assumed by the compiler of the dynastic tablet to have existed between them was imaginary. The first four or five kings of the dynasty were probably local rulers of Babylon; Khammu-rabi, as we know, conquered the other states of Babylonia and made it a united kingdom, with Babylon as its centre; it is with him, therefore, that the first dynasty of Babylon ought properly to commence. The earlier kings of the dynasty owe their inclusion in it to local vanity. It is possible, however, that they claimed precedence over the other Semitic princes of Babylonia, since we know that the power of one of them, Zabû, extended as far as Sippara, and he may accordingly have claimed to have been the representative of the ancient Semitic empire of Sargon which had its seat in the close neighbourhood of Sippara.

The relation of the Babylonian dynasties given by the native compiler to those which have been excerpted by George the Synkellos from the Chaldean history of Berossos cannot be determined at present. It is difficult to find any agreement between them before the time of Nabonassar. On the other hand, the statements of Berossos have been verified by the monuments in several important particulars. His account of the deluge was taken from native

⁴ In a contract-tablet from Niffer we even find Ammi-ziduga.

⁵ In other Minæan inscriptions occur the names of ‘Ammi-tsaduq and his son ‘Ammi-karib, as well as of the king Waqah-il-tsaduq.

documents, and his history and chronology of the period which begins with the era of Nabonassar show a close acquaintance with the actual facts. It is of course possible that the numbers, whether of reigns or of years, given by the Synkellos, are corrupt and erroneous. But even so, the scheme of dynasties proposed by Berossos does not agree with the scheme found on the cuneiform tablets. It is clear that more than one system of chronology and dynastic arrangement must have been current in Babylonia.

In one point, however, I think I can show that Berossos had good authority at his back. This is the statement that, almost at the beginning of assured Babylonian history, Babylon was captured by "Medes," who ruled the country for eight generations. Now the inscriptions of Nabonidos and Kyros have proved that the subjects of Istuvegu or Astyages, who were called Medes" by the Greeks, were called "Manda" by the Babylonians. The Greeks in fact confounded the two words Madâ, "Medes," and Manda, led thereto by the fact that both Madâ and Manda alike came from the mountains on the northeast of Babylonia. Manda, however, was not a proper name in the same sense as Madâ. It is usually preceded by *tsab*, "soldier," and though not Assyrian, I believe it to have had its origin among the Semitic tribes on the eastern side of Chaldæa, and to be related to the Hebrew *nûd*, "to wander." *Tsab manda* will therefore be the equivalent of the Biblical *erets nôd* or "nomad-land" (Gen. iv. 16). The title is applied by Esarhaddon to Teuspa the Kimmerian, the Gimirrâ or Kimmerians, the Gomer of the Old Testament, being further distinguished from the Madâ or "Medes."

The title, however, was much older than the age of Esarhaddon. It occurs several times in the astrological tablets. The most important example of its use is in W. A. L, iii. 61. 21, 22, where we read: "The *tsab manda* comes and governs the land. The altars of the great gods are taken away. Bel goes to the land of Elam. It is prophesied that after thirty years the smitten shall be restored (and that) the great gods shall return with them." The same catastrophe is referred to in another passage of the great work on astrology (*W. A. I.*, iii. 64. 7, 8). "The *tsab manda* invades the land and rules over the country." The prophecy is interesting on account of its analogy to the prophecy of the restoration of the Jews after seventy years of exile (Jer. xxv. 11). But what is equally interesting is that while Bel, the national god of Babylon, flies for refuge to Elam, his country is handed over to the rule of the Manda and its altars are broken down. I cannot but think that in these Manda we ought to see the "Medes" of Berossos who captured Babylon and founded there the first historical dynasty. They will represent Khammu-rabi, Ammi-sadugga, and the other kings whose names betray their origin among the nomad Semites on the frontiers of Chaldæa. Berossos was right rather than the compiler of the dynastic tablet in making Khammu-rabi the founder of the dynasty under which Babylon became for the first time the capital of a united Babylonia.

If the Synkellos can be trusted Berossos reckoned eight kings to his Median dynasty. The compiler gives Khammu-rabi only five successors. But it is questionable whether he has collected the names of all the kings who followed him. At all events I possess a contract-tablet from Niffer, which belongs to the age of Khammu-rabi and Ammi-sadugga, but is dated in the reign of a king whose name does not occur in the compiler's list. It reads Am(?) - mu-'SI-DI-DU-an, perhaps Ammu-e'sir-yukan. It is possible, moreover, that classical mythology has preserved the name of another prince of the same period. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, iv. 212, mention is made of the Babylonian monarch Orchamus, of whom it is said that he was seventh in descent from Belus. Orchamus is not an Assyro-Babylonian name. It actually occurs, however, under the form of Yar-khamu on contract-

tablets which are dated in the reign of Samsu-iluna.⁶ Whether it is to be compared with the Biblical name of Jerahmeel (1 Chr. ii. 25), or whether it is a mimmed form of the Minæan name of the Moon-god, I do not know; but its origin must be referred to the dialects of the Arabian tribes on the borders of Babylonia, and not to the Assyrian language itself. In any case the name is found on documents of the time of Khammu-rabi, and consequently it is by no means impossible that the myth repeated by Ovid may have incorporated the name of a real king.

We must not forget that the passage I have quoted from the astrological tablet associates the invasion of Babylonia by the Manda with the departure of the god Bel to Elam. Now about B.C. 2285, or just before the date assigned by the compiler of the dynastic tablet to the accession of Khammu-rabi, the goddess Nana of Erech was carried to Elam by the Elamite king Kudur-nankhundi (see *Records of the Past*, New Series, i. p. 10). A mutilated text (*W. A. I.*, iii. 38, No. 2) couples Kudur-nankhundi with the otherwise unknown Babylonian kings [Bel?]-sum-iddina and Bel-nadin-akhi, but it is probably a later Kudur-nankhundi to whom reference is here made. What is certain is that, as the contemporaneous contract-tablets inform us, Khammu-rabi made himself master of Babylonia by the overthrow of Rim-Sin of southern Chaldæa and his ally "the king of Elam." It was this event which made Babylonia a homogeneous kingdom, and so constituted an era of high importance in the annals of the country.

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September 1890.

⁶ See Strassmaier: *Die altbabylonischen Verträge aus Warka* in the *Verhandlungen des fünften internationalen Orientalisten-Congresses* (1882), ii. x, pp. 95, 98, 100. Among the interesting proper names met with in the tablets published by Dr. Strassmaier I may notice that of Sabâ, "the Sabæan," as well as some which exhibit traces of nunnation; e.g. Inun-Ea, "the eye of Ea," Ilun-ka-Rammanu, "thy god is Rimmon."

Equivalents Of The Hebrew Letters In The Transliteration Of Assyrian Names Mentioned In These Volumes

א <i>a, ' </i>	ל <i>l</i>
ב <i>b</i>	מ <i>m</i>
ג <i>g</i>	נ <i>n</i>
ד <i>d</i>	ס <i>'s, s</i>
ה <i>h</i>	ע <i>e</i>
ו <i>u, v</i>	פ <i>p</i>
ז <i>z</i>	צ <i>ts</i>
ח <i>kh</i>	ק <i>q</i>
ת <i>dh</i>	ר <i>r</i>
י <i>i, y</i>	ש <i>s, sh</i>
כ <i>k</i>	ט <i>t</i>

N.B.—Those Assyriologists who transcribe ש by *sh* use *s* for ס. The Assyrian *e* represents a diphthong as well as ע.

In the Introductions and Notes W. A. I. denotes *The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, in five volumes, published by the Trustees of the British Museum. Doubtful words and expressions are followed by a note of interrogation, the preceding words being put into italics where necessary. *Lacunæ* are denoted by asterisks or by the insertion of supplied words between square brackets. Words needed to complete the sense in English, but not expressed in the original, are placed between round brackets. The names of individuals are distinguished from those of deities or localities by being printed in Roman type, the names of deities and localities being in capitals.

The Assyrian And Egyptian Calendars

THE ASSYRIAN CALENDAR

	CORRESPONDING MONTHS
1. Ni'sannu (Nisan)	March—April.
2. Aaru (Iyyar)	April—May.
3. 'Sivanu (Sivan)	May—June.
4. Dûzu (Tammuz)	June—July.
5. Abu (Ab)	July—August.
6. Ululu (Elul)	August—September.
7. Tasritu (Tisri)	September—October.
8. Arakh-savna (Marchesvan) "the 8th month"	October—November.
9. Ki'silivu (Chisleu)	November—December.
10. Dhabitu (Tebet)	December—January.
11. Sabadhu (Sebat)	January—February.
12. Addaru (Adar)	February—March.
13. Arakh-maqrû (Ve-Adar), the intercalary month.	

EGYPTIAN CALENDAR

Months.	Sacred	Alexandrine ¹
	Year begins	Year begins
Thoth	July 20	August 29
Paophi	August 19	September 28

¹ The Alexandrine year began B.C. 25.

Athyr	September 18	October 28
Khoiak	October 18	November 27
Tybi	November 17	December 27
Mekhir	December 17	January 26
Phamenoth	January 16	February 25
Pharmuthi	February 15	March 27
Pakhons	March 17	April 26
Payni	April 16	May 26
Epeiphi	May 16	June 25
Mesorê	June 15	July 25
The Epagomenæ		August 24–28

The Precepts Of Ptah-Hotep

Introduction

Translated by Philippe Virey

The most ancient book in the world, the *Papyrus Prisse*, now preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, has furnished us with the text of a treatise, famous on account of its antiquity, of the glimpse that it gives us into the moral ideas of ancient Egyptian society, and of the difficulties it offers to the translator. I have studied it perseveringly since 1881, and have made it the subject of a philological essay, which I presented to the École des Hautes-Études in 1884–85 and published in 1887.¹ In this I gave the history of the manuscript, an account of the labours of my predecessors, a transcription of the hieratic text in hieroglyphic characters, and a translation accompanied by numerous critical observations and an index of the words employed in the *Papyrus*; but I did not intend to offer in it more than a purely philological study. In spite of its dry simplicity, however, the essay met with acceptance, and in the following year Mr. Howard Osgood did me the honour to publish an English translation of it in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Oct. 1888), along with a good commentary and an interesting comparison of the work with the Precepts of Ani. In my turn I now undertake to present my work under another form; not that the translation can be very new, since after so short a lapse of time I could not greatly improve a work on which I have bestowed all my thought and care²; but what can be remodelled is the commentary. The philological part of my previous publication can be reduced without inconvenience, as the reader who wishes to study this side of the subject can refer to my essay; on the other hand, the philosophical and historical portion of the commentary will be considerably increased. I shall utilise for this purpose some of the texts which I copied at Thebes in 1886 in the tomb of Rekhmara, who exercised at a later period the same functions as Ptah-hotep.

Both were feudal lords of the Egyptian empire, nomarchs or prefects, and were specially honoured with the royal favour. Rekhmara³ is called *hesi n nuter nofer*,⁴ "favourite of the good god" (Thothmes III); Ptah-hotep, who dates his treatise in the reign of Assa of the Fifth Dynasty, boasts at the end of it that he had enjoyed above all others the favour of the king, and in a text published by Lepsius (*Denkmäler*, ii. 115) we read: *Assa hesi Ptah-hotep*, "the favourite of Assa, Ptah-hotep."

In the preface of Ptah-hotep's treatise he even seems to declare that he was of royal descent, for he calls himself "the royal son, first-born, legitimate" (ch. v. ll. 6, 7); but I have elsewhere noticed that this title must not be interpreted too literally. We may ask why the elder and legitimate son of the king never reigned if he lived, and Ptah-hotep did not die young, since he was already 110 years old⁵ when he published his work. We must attribute an extraordinary longevity to Assa if we hold that Ptah-hotep was his son and died before him.

¹ *Études sur le Papyrus Prisse, le Livre de Kaqimna et les Leçons de Ptah-hotep*. Vieweg, Paris, 1887.

² Of course I do not mean that I consider my translation very nearly final.

³ The inscriptions of the tomb of Rekhmara, prefect of Thebes under the Eighteenth Dynasty, have been published by me in the *Mémoires publiés par les Membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire*; Leroux, Paris 1889.

⁴ *Tombeau de Rekhmara*, in the *Mémoires*, p. 114, note 3.

⁵ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xix. l. 7.

But Prof. Maspero has already shown that we must not give too literal an interpretation to the titles “royal mother,” “royal wife,” “royal daughter,” and that it was possible to be “royal wife” by right of birth before being married. Such titles served only to determine the rank occupied by a princess at court in questions of etiquette and precedence.

If the appellation “royal wife” were only an honorary title, we may infer that “royal son” also might be the same and signify nothing more than “prince.” In this case, “the eldest legitimate son of the king” would be equivalent to “prince of the blood royal.” That such a title can be given to a person not belonging to the royal family is not unexampled even in our own days in the West; all the more could it be given in the East, where the most pompous titles are so easily accumulated. At the court of Egypt, where everything was referred to the king, the source of all honour, it is possible that a claim to nobility consisted in attaching oneself, at all events nominally, to his family, or even in making oneself part of it. The relations of the king enjoyed the highest titles, but even the “royal nurses” gloried in “the suckling which had mingled their blood with Horus.”⁶

If Rekhmara does not, like Ptah-hotep, bear the title of royal prince, he was perhaps of even higher rank, since he is called “the double of the Pharaoh,” animated by his spirit, taking his place in his absence, governing all Egypt like him, addressed by the same titles,⁷ and saluted like him by the courtiers. We must not be astonished therefore at the royal title given to Ptah-hotep; the prefect of the capital was next to the king the first person in the kingdom.

Although an interval of many centuries separated the two prefects, it is probable that both governed according to the same rules, and that little change had taken place in the social state and ideas of the Egyptian people. Rekhmara, after exercising the viceroyalty in the absence of Thothmes III, insists before all else on the conservative character of his government.⁸ The temples, the laws, the principles on which society rested, all remained unshaken; the children of the nobility succeeded their fathers regularly; everything, in short, continued as if the king remained perpetually in his capital, and the same hand had governed Egypt since the mythical age of Horus. All its kings and their ministers were only the images and substitutes of the god who had been the first to reign over the country; the principles of government, like the principles of morality, were of divine origin; nothing could be changed. Ptah-hotep had asserted this of the past and predicted it of the future; innovators had no place in Egypt, and their ephemeral success had always been followed by reaction. “Let none make innovations,” he had said, “in the precepts of his father; let the same precepts form his instruction to his children.”⁹ Doubtless innovators sometimes made themselves heard by the uninstructed multitude and influenced the public for a moment, but their triumph was momentary. Nothing, then, must be taken away or added, nothing changed in established principles, and whoever found contrary ideas growing up in himself must be careful to root them out.¹⁰ Thus, in order to discover the earliest trace of the struggle between established custom and new ideas, between the conservative and the radical, it is necessary to go back to the oldest book in the world.

⁶ The title of “royal nurse” was independent of the function of nurse, and was merely a title of etiquette. Under Amenophis II there were at least two commanders of the royal armies, Amenemheb and Pehsukher, whose wives were royal nurses. As it is very improbable that there were two nurses, both of whom married, one after the other, the commanders of his army, we must suppose that the wife of the commander, in virtue of the dignity of her husband, could claim the same rank as one who had really been a nurse of the king.

⁷ For example, *smen hapu* (*Tombeau de Rekhmara*, pl. xviii.)

⁸ *Tombeau de Rekhmara*, p. 42.

⁹ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xvii. ll. 11–13, ch. xlii.

¹⁰ *Id.*, pl. xviii. ll. 2–8, chap. xlii.

Thanks to this horror of change in the government and society of ancient Egypt, the documents which relate to the occupations of the prefect Rekhmara doubtless give us sufficient information in regard to the occupations of the prefect Ptah-hotep. Interesting resemblances, moreover, between certain chapters of the *Papyrus Prisse* and the texts of the Tomb of Rekhmara authorise us in making this comparison. These texts depict to us the divan of the Pasha or Prefect of Thebes: “He sits in the divan, in order to hear the petitions ... to *give peace* to the whole country, dispensing justice without paying attention to bribes, applications, (or) offerings, and he who has petitioned him has not wept.”¹¹ ... From early dawn he has been up to listen all day to the petitions of the provinces of the South and the provinces of the North. He has not repelled small or great; the evil done to the poor, the aged, or the afflicted is requited by Horus to its author.¹² ... There is no inattention in him to the matters about which he has been petitioned; he estimates the poor equally with the rich, appearing as peace-maker.”¹³

Ptah-hotep also tells us how the prefect ought to apply himself to fill the office of “leader of peace,” with what care he ought to hear the explanations offered by the parties to a suit, with what patience he should try to unravel the truth from obscure statements and . useless details: “When thou art a leader of peace, listen well to the words of the petitioner. Be not abrupt with him; that would trouble him. Do not say to him: Thou hast [already] said this. Indulgence will encourage him to do that for the sake of which he is come. As for being abrupt with the plaintiff because he describes what happened when the injury was done instead of complaining of the injury itself, let it not be! The way to obtain a clear explanation is to listen with kindness.”¹⁴

With the object of maintaining peace among their subordinates by means of justice, one of the chief cares of the prefects was to provide subsistence for the people and to preserve them from want. Every centre of population accordingly possessed a *larit* or assemblage of magazines, where corn, wine, and all sorts of provisions were stored and thoroughly well guarded. No place, in fact, could have been more secure, and we shall see how strictly all access to it was forbidden to the stranger.

The word *larit* appears to mean a well-guarded enclosure¹⁵; among the duties which Ptah-hotep insists upon in his Precepts, one of those to which he attaches most importance is that of vigilantly guarding the *larit*: “If,” he says, “thou art employed at the *larit*, stand or sit rather than walk about. Determine from the first not to absent thyself even when weariness overtakes thee. Keep an eye on him who enters, declaring that the object of his request is secret; what is consigned to thee is above appreciation, and all contrary argument is to be rejected. He is a god who penetrates into a place where no relaxation (of the rules) is made for the privileged.”¹⁶

Am-n-teh, overseer and director of the *larit*, tells us that there was no repose for him, and that he never closed his eyes during the night.¹⁷

¹¹ *Tombeau de Rekhmara*, pp. 26, 27, pl. iii.

¹² *Id.*, p. 165.

¹³ *Id.*, pp. 270, 171.

¹⁴ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xi. ll. 3–7, chap. xvii.

¹⁵ See my study on the Tomb of Am-n-teh and the office of *mer larit*, “overseer of the *larit*,” in the *Recueil de travaux relatifs à l'archéologie et à la philologie égyptiennes et assyriennes*, vol. vii. Comp. Gen. xli. 48.

Joseph “gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.”

¹⁶ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. viii. ll. 2–6, chap. xiii.

¹⁷ See note 2 above.

The presentation of the seal of the prefect alone could open the door.¹⁸ Thus Rekhmara caused the storehouses to be constantly inspected by officials to whom he deputed his powers.¹⁹ Well guarded as they were, he was constantly on the watch to assure himself that nothing was wanting to their safety. But only himself or his deputy could enter them; for all others the doors were carefully closed, and it was he who consigned the care of them to the guards.²⁰ The officials were empowered to strike even a delegate of the government who had not presented the seal and produced his authorisation to enter.²¹

But the prefect did not confine himself to the superintendence of the storehouses; he also saw that they were filled, since on his supervision depended for his subordinates abundance or death. When Egypt had become a conquering, maritime, and commercial power, foreign countries further contributed to the support of the *larit*; the tombs of Rekhmara and Am-n-teh show us the wines of Syria, the essences and woods of Comal imported from afar and passing through the bazaars of Coptos. But it was still the taxes which furnished corn, the most necessary of provisions, and it is probable that under Ptah-hotep Egypt was engaged solely in filling with it its magazines. The tomb of Rekhmara depicts for us the labourers presenting the agents of the prefect with their crop of wheat, in order that the government might receive its share. They empty their baskets and form a heap, from which the delegate of the treasury measures out the amount due to the State.²² The tax must have been somewhat heavy. The Bible tells us that Joseph took from the agricultural population the fifth part of their grain to store the *larits* in view of a famine (Gen. xlvii. 24). In any case the taxpayers who came so humbly before Rekhmara, with their faces to the ground, must in reality have been less submissive than they appeared to be through fear of the stick. Even Ptah-hotep mistrusted the tendency to revolt which might lie hid under such forced humility, and it was not enough for him that the taxpayer should put on a submissive air when paying his tax, it was necessary that his manner should be gay. "Let thy countenance be cheerful," he says, "during the time of thy existence. When we see one leaving the storehouse who has entered in order to bring his moiety of provisions, with the countenance contracted, it shows that his stomach is empty and that authority is offensive to him. Let not this be thy case."²³ He is continually recalling the services rendered by the Government and declaring that it is not sufficient to serve it; it is necessary to love it and cause it to be loved.²⁴ If there are superiors and inferiors, it is because God has so willed it;²⁵ all authority, all governors, are entitled to respect; when things are prosperous, the absence of submission to authority may endanger them.²⁶ The inferior ought to obey blindly and execute all commands without discussing them;²⁷ however he may act in obeying a superior, his conscience is clear before God;²⁸ the superior alone is responsible.

In return for the submission which it exacts, the Government takes care of the wants of the people; it supports and enables them to live. In the tomb of Rekhmara we see the workmen of

¹⁸ *Tombeau de Rekhmara*, pp. 20, 24.

¹⁹ *Id.*, pp. 23, 24.

²⁰ *Id.*, p. 15, pl. ii. 1. 16.

²¹ *Id.*, p. 15, pl. ii. 1. 31.

²² *Tombeau de Rekhmara*, p. 46, pl. ix. xi. xii.

²³ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xiv. l. 12; pl. xv. l. 2, ch. xxxiv. It is possible, however, that as the verb "to bring" sometimes signifies "to carry away," Ptah-hotep had here in view not taxpayers who found that the State took too much away from them but salaried officials who thought that it did not pay them enough.

²⁴ *Id.*, pl. xii. ll. 9–13, ch. xxvii.

²⁵ *Id.*, vii. ll. 2, 3, ch. vii.

²⁶ *Id.*, pl. xv. ll. 5, 6, ch. xxxvi.

²⁷ *Id.*, pl. xiii. ll. 1–4, ch. xxviii.

²⁸ *Id.*, pl. vii. l. 7, ch. x.

foreign race presenting themselves before the storehouses with sacks to be filled with grain;²⁹ jars of oil, wine, etc., are also distributed among them. In a similar fashion the sons of Jacob came to fill their sacks in the storehouses organised by Joseph. But Ptah-hotep reminds the great of the earth that their duty is not only to protect in this way those whom God has confided to their authority. He who is placed in front, at the head of a large number of men, must be without reproach, and in spite of his power never forget that there are laws. The forgetfulness of this principle is the cause of revolutions; when the great neglect their duty, why should not the small take their place?³⁰ It is not of the counsels of the flatterers of to-day that it is needful to take heed; it is of the judgment of posterity, which renders justice to righteous actions.³¹ To appear before it with honour, it is necessary to reverence knowledge and wisdom; to observe in everything a just moderation;³² not to abuse one's powers; and to seek to inspire love rather than fear. For God forbids us to terrify the feeble;³³ on the contrary, we are as gods to the inferiors, whose confidence we have known how to gain.³⁴ The great man should remember that he is only the dispenser of the gifts of God, and if, being of low origin, He has attained to high honour, he must not, as is too often the case, be puffed up by his good fortune, but should consider the new duties which his rank imposes on him.³⁵ His position makes of him a steward of God, but a responsible steward. For if the inferior has no responsibility in obeying, the superior has in commanding and cannot avoid it. God has imposed different duties according to different stations in life. Thus the inferior who carries the message of a superior to a superior must transmit it faithfully and exactly, even if he thinks that the communication will not be well received.³⁶ On his side, the superior who sits in the council must declare candidly what he believes best, even in presence of the president, however exalted he may be, and not twist his words so as not to compromise himself.³⁷ He must only see that he does not deceive himself, since to deliberate in the council is not a pastime,³⁸ and he must for that end work hard and devote himself to his task.³⁹ Responsibility and continuous labour is the lot of him who watches over the public weal. In return it is right that he should obtain some compensations. His life is not subject to the discretion of any one; within the limits of his conscience he is the master of his own actions; but it is the reward of his labours; moreover, if the conditions of life differ in this world, it is because God has so willed it.⁴⁰

There are of course duties common to all men, at least to all who can read Ptah-hotep, for his book is addressed to the educated classes.⁴¹ Thus the great must abstain from plundering as the small from thieving;⁴² each must love his household and his wife,⁴³ making her happy;⁴⁴ must treat his people well, being recompensed in return by their good will;⁴⁵ must

²⁹ *Tombeau de Rekhmara*, pl. ix. pp. 9, 10, 50.

³⁰ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. vi. ll. 3–7, ch. v.

³¹ *Id.*, pl. viii. l. 14; pl. ix. ll. 1–3, ch. xvi.

³² *Id.*, pl. xi. ll. 12, 33; pl. xii. ll. 1–4, ch. xxv.

³³ *Id.*, pl. vi. ll. 8–11, ch. vi.

³⁴ *Id.*, pl. vii. ll. 6, 7, ch. ix.

³⁵ *Id.*, pl. xiii. ll. 6–8, ch. xxx.

³⁶ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. vii. ll. 3–5, ch. viii.

³⁷ *Id.*, pl. viii. ll. 11–14, ch. xv.

³⁸ *Id.*, pl. xi. l. 8–14, ch. xxvi.

³⁹ *Id.*, pl. xii. l. 7, ch. xxvi.

⁴⁰ *Id.*, pl. vii. l. 2, 3, ch. vii.

⁴¹ *Id.*, pl. v. l. 4, ch. i.

⁴² *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. vii. ll. 5–7, ch. ix.

⁴³ *Id.*, pl. x. ll. 8–9, ch. xxi.

⁴⁴ *Id.*, pl. xv. ll. 6–8, ch. xxxvii.

⁴⁵ *Id.*, pl. xi. ll. 1–4, ch. xxii.

avoid licentiousness;⁴⁶ must listen without anger to a just observation and feel no resentment towards him who has made it;⁴⁷ must shun bad temper and walk in loyalty and frankness;⁴⁸ must exercise his power of criticism in judging himself rather than others;⁴⁹ must speak pleasantly, and refer to that which is bad by showing that it is bad, but without passion;⁵⁰ must argue with courtesy, answering with kindness him who deceives himself, and not be rude to him should he display ignorance.⁵¹

But among all other duties there is one on which the book insists specially; every one should labour to make his son a true gentleman, and not allow the authority given him by God to be weakened.⁵² The father ought to command, the son to obey, in order that he may be worthy of governing one day in his turn the children which may be born to him.⁵³ "Good when he obeys and good when he commands, whoever has obeyed has profited, and it is profitable to obey him who has obeyed. The son who accepts the word of his father will attain old age on that account. God wishes us to obey; disobedience is abhorrent to Him."⁵⁴ Accordingly the father must display no weakness; a son without principles will bring grief to his parents;⁵⁵ on the other hand, when the son is obedient to his father, it is a double joy for both.⁵⁶

It is not astonishing that Ptah-hotep paid so much attention to paternal authority; the family is the foundation of society, and the school of obedience is the family. Docile children will not be turbulent subjects to the prefect.

The whole system of morality is practical. "Moreover," says Professor Maspero, "we must not expect to find in this work deep profundity of conception.... Ptah-hotep does not trouble himself to invent or to draw conclusions."⁵⁷ This pleases God; that displeases Him; such is the ordinary argument, at least when the author does not offer, as the sanction of his morality, the hope of a good place for the laborious and docile student,⁵⁸ the hope of a long life for the obedient son,⁵⁹ and the hope of being faithfully served by his domestics for the good master.⁶⁰

The artlessness which we find in these counsels should not make us inattentive to the spirit of refinement which also appears in the writings of Ptah-hotep. He is not the author of the precepts which he gives; his practical philosophy has been bequeathed to him by his ancestors,⁶¹ but he has put the precepts in verse in order to establish them in the memory of mankind; the poetical form in which he clothes them is intended to preserve them from alteration in the future.⁶² The most ancient book in the world is therefore a rhythmic, if not a poetical, work, and we can gather from this to what a height civilisation had already attained. Although the author himself recognises that humanity has still much progress to make, and

⁴⁶ *Id.*, pl. ix. ll. 7–13, ch. xviii.

⁴⁷ *Id.*, pl. xiii. ll. 4, 5, ch. xxix.

⁴⁸ *Id.*, pl. ix. l. 13; pl. x. ll. 1–5, ch. xix.

⁴⁹ *Id.*, pl. x. ll. 5, 6, ch. xx.

⁵⁰ *Id.*, pl. xi. ll. 5–8, ch. xxiii.

⁵¹ *Id.*, pl. xiv. ll. 6–12, ch. xxxiii.

⁵² *Id.*, pl. vii. ll. 10–12; pl. viii. ll. 1, 2, ch. xii.

⁵³ *Id.*, pl. xvii. ll. 10–13, ch. xlii.

⁵⁴ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xvi. ll. 4–7, ch. xxxix.

⁵⁵ *Id.*, pl. vii. ll. 5, 6, ch. ix.

⁵⁶ *Id.*, pl. xvi. ll. 9, 10, ch. xxxix.

⁵⁷ *Histoire ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient*, ch. ii.

⁵⁸ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xv. ll. 10–12, ch. xxxviii.

⁵⁹ *Id.*, pl. xvi. l. 6, ch. xxxix.

⁶⁰ *Id.*, pl. xi. l. 4, ch. xxii.

⁶¹ *Id.*, pl. v. ll. 4, 5, ch. i.

⁶² *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xv. ll. 9, 10, ch. xxxviii.

that the learned are in reality only students,⁶³ this fact alone would suffice to prove that Egyptian society had long since left barbarism behind it⁶⁴ in the reign of Assa when Ptah-hotep compiled his treatise, as he tells us at its commencement.

Text

THE PRECEPTS OF PTAH-HOTEP

Precepts of the prefect the feudal lord⁶⁵ Ptah-hotep, under the majesty of the king of the South and North, Assa, living eternally for ever.

I

The prefect, the feudal lord Ptah-hotep says: O God with the two crocodiles,⁶⁶ my lord, the progress of age changes into senility. Decay falls [upon man] and decline takes the place of youth.⁶⁷ A vexation weighs upon him every day; sight fails, the ear becomes deaf; his strength dissolves without ceasing.⁶⁸ The mouth is silent, speech fails him; the mind⁶⁹ decays, remembering not the day before. The whole body⁷⁰ suffers. That which is good becomes⁷¹ evil; taste completely disappears. Old age makes a man altogether miserable; the nose is stopped up, breathing no more from exhaustion.⁷² Standing or sitting there is here a condition (?) of ...⁷³ Who will cause me to have authority to speak?⁷⁴ that I may declare to him the words of those who have heard the counsels of former days? And the counsels heard of the gods, who (will give me authority to declare them?) Cause that it be so and that evil be removed from those that are enlightened; send the double ...⁷⁵

The majesty of this god says: Instruct him in the sayings of former days. It is this which constitutes the merit of the children of the great. All that which makes the soul equal penetrates him who hears it, and that which it says produces no satiety.

II

⁶³ *Id.*, pl. v. l. 9, ch. ii.

⁶⁴ The rules of politeness were very refined (pll. v. vii. chs. iii. iv.; pl. x. ch. xx.; pl. xi. ch. xxiii.; pl. xiv. ch. xxxiii.); knowledge was respected (pl. xi. ch. xxv.); schools existed where the students passed their examinations in order to secure posts in the administration (pl. xv. ch. xxxviii.); I have no need to add that some of the most celebrated monuments of Egypt, like the great pyramids of Gizeh, were already ancient.

⁶⁵ See Maspero: *Un Manuel de Hiérarchie égyptienne*. Maisonneuve, Paris 1889.

⁶⁶ Honhen or Osiris, as is shown by the 43d invocation of the 142d chapter of the Book of the Dead: "O Osiris, god with the two crocodiles!" But it is Osiris reborn and regaining, after decline and death, rejuvenescence and vigour. Chabas (*Zeitschrift*, 1868, p. 10s), studying the stelæ of Horus standing on the crocodiles, and noticing that this god is named "the aged who becomes young in his hour, the old man who becomes a child," very justly recalls the passage of the *Papyrus Prisse* where Ptah-hotep invokes the aid of the god with the two crocodiles against the evils of old age.

⁶⁷ Literally "comes upon newness." Doubtful translation; but I believe with Chabas that *mau* expresses here the idea of "flourishing" or "brilliant youth" (as in the Book of the Dead, ch. 87, line 2). *Ahu* seems to be the contrary of *mau*, so I render it "decline."

⁶⁸ We must read *an urd* and take no account of the *het* which follows and has been erroneously added by the scribe, accustomed to write the name of the god Urd-het. Similarly the termination *n Ra* is frequently added erroneously to *sotep* through the influence of the consecrated formula *sotep n Ra* "chosen of Ra."

⁶⁹ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. v.

⁷⁰ The carcase.

⁷¹ "Is transformed."

⁷² This translation of the word *tennu*, which I borrow from Chabas, is conjectural.

⁷³ I cannot read this passage with certainty.

⁷⁴ I am not sure that I have understood this difficult passage.

⁷⁵ I can neither read nor translate the word.

Beginning of the arrangement of the good saying(s),⁷⁶ spoken by the noble lord, the divine father, beloved of God, the son of the king, the first-born of his race,⁷⁷ the prefect (and) feudal lord Ptah-hotep, so as to instruct the ignorant in the knowledge of the arguments of the good saying(s). It is profitable for him who hears them, it is a loss to him who shall transgress them.

He says to his son: Be not arrogant because of that which thou knowest; deal with the ignorant as with the learned; for the barriers of art are not closed, no artist being in possession of the perfection to which he should aspire.⁷⁸ [But] good word(s) are more difficult to find than the emerald,⁷⁹ for it is by slaves that that is discovered among the rocks of pegmatite.⁸⁰

III

If thou findest a disputant while he is hot,⁸¹ and if he is superior to thee in ability, lower the hands, bend the back, do not get into a passion with him. As he will not let thee destroy his words, it is utterly wrong to interrupt him; that proclaims that thou art incapable of keeping thyself calm, when thou art contradicted.⁸²

If then thou hast to do with a disputant while he is hot, imitate one who does not stir.⁸³ Thou hast the advantage over him if thou keepest silence when he is uttering evil words. "The better (of the two) is he who is impassive," say the bystanders, and thou art right in the opinion of the great.

IV

If⁸⁴ thou findest a disputant while he is hot, do not despise him, because thou art not of the same opinion.⁸⁵ Be not angry against him when he is wrong; away with such a thing. He fights against himself; require him not [further] to flatter thy feelings.⁸⁶ Do not amuse thyself with the spectacle which thou hast before thee; it is odious, [it is] mean, [it is the part] of a despicable soul [so to do]. As soon as thou lettest thyself be moved by thy feelings, combat this [desire] as a thing that is reproved by the great.

V

If thou hast, as leader, to decide on the conduct of a great number of men, seek the most perfect manner (of doing so) that thy [own] conduct may be without reproach. Justice is great, invariable and assured; it has not been disturbed since the age of Osiris. To throw obstacles in the way of the laws, is to [open] the way before violence. Shall that which is

⁷⁶ Ptah-hotep arranges the good sayings of the past in verses in order to render them unalterable.

⁷⁷ "Of his loins," that is "legitimate." The meaning of the title has been explained in the introduction.

⁷⁸ Literally "endowed with his perfections."

⁷⁹ Literally "the good word hides itself more than the emerald." *Teha*, "to hide," is found, with a slight variation of spelling, in the story of Sinuhit (ll. 4–5 of the ostrakon discovered by Prof. Maspero).

⁸⁰ Literally "being found by female slaves." The emerald is usually found in pegmatite, a compound of feldspath and quartz, out of which it was picked. The *Papyrus Ebers* (lxxxix. 3) informs us that the powder of pegmatite was used in the composition of a dentifrice.

⁸¹ Literally "in his hour." A god is said to be "in his hour" when he is warlike. I suppose the author ridicules the warlike disposition of disputants.

⁸² Literally "that proclaim: it is not to know inaction as regards that which crosses thee, to maintain it." This inversion is perhaps due to the exigencies of the rhythm.

⁸³ Literally "who is in thy inaction of thy arms."

⁸⁴ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. vi.

⁸⁵ "If thou art not like [him]."

⁸⁶ Literally "Call him not to flatter thy feelings."

below gain the upper hand, if the unjust does not attain to the place of justice? ⁸⁷ even he who says: I take for myself, of my own free-will; ⁸⁸ but says not: I take by [virtue of] my authority. ⁸⁹ The limitations of justice are invariable; such is the instruction which every man receives from his father.

VI

[Inspire not men with fear, [else] God will fight against thee] in the same manner. If any one asserts that he lives by such means, [God] will take away the bread from his mouth; if any one asserts that he enriches himself [thereby], [God] says: I may take [these riches] to myself. If any one asserts that he beats others, [God] will end by reducing him to impotence. Let no one inspire men with fear, this is the will of God. Let one provide sustenance for [them] in the lap of peace; it will [then] be that they will freely give [what has been torn from them by terror].

VII

If thou art among the persons seated [at meat] in the house of a greater man than thyself, ⁹⁰ take that which he gives [thee], bowing to the ground. ⁹¹ Regard that which is [placed] before thee, [but] point not at it; regard it not ⁹² frequently; he is a blameworthy person who departs from this rule. Speak not to [the great man] more than he requires, for one knows not what may be displeasing [to him]. ⁹³ Speak when he invites thee and thy word will be pleasing. ⁹⁴

As for the great man who has plenty of means of existence his conduct is as he himself wishes. He does that which pleases him; if he desires to repose, he realises his [intention]. The great man stretching forth his hand does that to which [other] men do not attain. [But] as the means of existence are under the will of God, one cannot rebel against it.

VIII

If thou art one of those who bring the messages of one great man to another, conform thyself exactly to that wherewith he has charged thee; perform for him the commission as he hath enjoined thee. Beware of altering in speaking the offensive words which one great person addresses to another; he who perverts the truthfulness of his way, in order to repeat only what produces pleasure in the words of every man, great or small, is a detestable person.

IX

If thou art an agriculturist, gather the crops (?) in the field which the great God has given thee, fill not thy mouth in the house of thy neighbours; ⁹⁵ it is better to make oneself dreaded by the possessor. ⁹⁶ As for him who, master of his own way of acting, being all-

⁸⁷ Literally "the part of it" where the feminine pronoun must refer to justice. The phrase seems to mean that revolutions are occasioned by forgetfulness of the principles of justice on which society is based.

⁸⁸ Literally "I catch for myself, myself, spontaneously."

⁸⁹ Translation very uncertain.

⁹⁰ Comp. Proverbs xxiii. 1. "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee."

⁹¹ Literally "put thyself on thy nose."

⁹² *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. vii.

⁹³ "That which is bad to the heart."

⁹⁴ "Is thy word for being good to the heart?"

⁹⁵ That is, do not steal to live.

⁹⁶ See ch. vi., where those are condemned who "fleece" men by terrifying them. It seems that theft is here considered more blameworthy even than these extortions.

powerful,⁹⁷ seizes [the goods of others] like a crocodile in the midst [even] of watchmen, his children are an object of malediction, of scorn and of hatred on account of it, while [his] father is grievously distressed, and [as for] the mother who has borne [him], happy is another rather than herself.⁹⁸ [But] a man becomes a god when he is chief of a tribe which has confidence in following him.

X

If thou abasest thyself⁹⁹ in obeying a superior, thy conduct is entirely good before God. Knowing who ought to obey and who ought to command, do not lift up thy heart against him. As thou knowest that in him is authority, be respectful towards him as belonging to him. Fortune comes only at her own good-will, and her caprice only is her law; as for him who ...¹⁰⁰ God, who has created his superiority, turns himself from him and he is overthrown.

XI

Be active,¹⁰¹ during the time of thy existence, doing more than is commanded. Do not spoil the time of thy activity; he is a blameworthy person who makes a bad use of his moments. Do not lose the daily opportunity of increasing that which thy house possesses. Activity produces riches and riches do not endure when it slackens.

XII

If thou art a wise man, bring up a son who shall be pleasing¹⁰² to God. If he conforms his conduct to thy way and occupies himself with thy affairs as is right, do to him all the good thou canst; he is thy son, a [person] attached [to thee] whom thine own self hath begotten. Separate not thy heart from him. ... [But] if he conducts himself ill and transgresses thy wish,¹⁰³ if he rejects all counsel, if his mouth goes according to the evil word, strike him on the mouth in return.¹⁰⁴ Give orders without hesitation to those who do wrong,¹⁰⁵ to him whose temper is turbulent; and he will not deviate from the straight path, and there will be no obstacle to interrupt the way.

XIII

If thou art [employed] in the *larit*, stand or sit rather than walk about. Lay down rules for thyself from the first: not to absent thyself even when weariness overtakes thee. Keep an eye on him who enters announcing that what he asks is secret;¹⁰⁶ what is entrusted to thee¹⁰⁷ is

⁹⁷ Literally "for the master of the manner of acting as master of the things." The author means the powerful man who abuses his power in order to plunder openly and to place himself above the laws.

⁹⁸ This inversion of the words may be attributed to the exigencies of the rhythm.

⁹⁹ Or perhaps "if thou doest evil."

¹⁰⁰ I have not ventured to translate this passage, because a study of the rhythm leads me to suppose that some words are omitted. I believe that half a verse is lost.

¹⁰¹ I translate *shes ab* "activity" because the sense seems to require it. The translation is necessarily conjectural.

¹⁰² Translation doubtful.

¹⁰³ Or "thy counsels."

¹⁰⁴ Literally "Strike him on the mouth according to that which it is, such as it behaves itself, in consequence." It is probable that there is here a sort of play upon the words, and that the sense is "strike directly against a bad direction." The sequel seems to state that with disobedient subordinates it is necessary to give precise and positive orders without consideration.

¹⁰⁵ Literally "throw, on account of the 'they act ill,' the order:" *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. viii.

¹⁰⁶ Literally "the *usekh* is the place of that which he demands." The *usekh* was the hall in the centre of a building, and consequently protected from intruders. A "communication *usekh*" would accordingly be a secret communication.

¹⁰⁷ Literally "the *larit*, the guardianship of the *larit*."

above appreciation and all contrary argument is a matter to be rejected. He is a god who penetrates into a place where no relaxation [of the rules] is made for the privileged.

XIV

If thou art with people who display for thee an extreme affection, [saying]: “Aspiration of my heart, aspiration of my heart, where there is no remedy! That which is said in thy¹⁰⁸ heart, let it be realised by springing up spontaneously. Sovereign master, I give myself to thy opinion. Thy name is approved without speaking. Thy body is full of vigour,¹⁰⁹ thy face is above thy neighbours.”¹¹⁰ [If then thou art accustomed to this excess of flattery], and there be an obstacle to thee in thy desires, then thine impulse is to obey thy passion.¹¹¹ [But] he who ... according to his caprice, his soul is ..., his body is ...¹¹² While [the man who is] master of [his] soul is superior to those whom God has loaded with his gifts;¹¹³ the man who obeys his passion is under the power of his wife (?).

XV

Declare thy line of conduct without reticence; give thy opinion in the council of thy lord; while there are people who turn back upon their own [words] when they speak, so as not to offend him who has put forward a statement, and answer not in this fashion:¹¹⁴ “He is the great man who will recognise the error of another; and when he shall raise his voice to oppose the other.¹¹⁵ about it he will keep silence after what I have said.”¹¹⁶

XVI

If thou art a leader, setting forward thy plans¹¹⁷ according to that which thou decidest, perform perfect actions which posterity may remember, without letting the words prevail [with thee] which multiply flattery, [which] excite pride and produce vanity.

XVII

If thou art a leader of peace, listen to the discourse of the petitioner. Be not abrupt with him; that would trouble him. Say not to him: “Thou hast [already] recounted this.” Indulgence will encourage him to accomplish the object of his coming. As for being abrupt with the complainant because he described what passed when the injury was done, instead of complaining of the injury itself,¹¹⁸ let it not be! The way to obtain a clear explanation is to listen with kindness.¹¹⁹

XVIII

If thou desirest to excite respect within [the house] thou enterest, for example [the house] of a superior, a friend¹²⁰ or any person of consideration, [in short] everywhere where thou enterest, keep thyself from making advances to a woman, for there is nothing good in so

¹⁰⁸ “In his heart.”

¹⁰⁹ “Thy flesh is *well nourished* (?)”

¹¹⁰ That is, thou art superior to thy neighbours.

¹¹¹ “A contradiction being to thee in that which pleases thee, thy desire is to obey its passion.

¹¹² There are three words here which I cannot translate.

¹¹³ Literally “has provided for.”

¹¹⁴ Literally “knowing this.”

¹¹⁵ When the great man shall oppose him, who has put forward an error.

¹¹⁶ He will not be able to oppose me, because there is no motion in my speech.

¹¹⁷ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. ix.

¹¹⁸ “And does not complain of the whole matter on the subject of that,”

¹¹⁹ “Causing him to represent the heart is the listening with kindness,”

¹²⁰ “Of a lord, of a brother, and by extension companion, friend.”

doing. There is no prudence in taking part in it, and thousands of men destroy themselves in order to enjoy a moment, brief as a dream, while they gain death, so as to know it. It is a villainous *intention* (?), that of a man who [thus] excites himself (?); if he goes on to carry it out, his mind abandons him. For as for him who is without repugnance for such an [act], there is no good sense at all in him.

XIX

If thou desirest¹²¹ that thy conduct should be good and preserved from all evil, keep thyself from [every] attack of bad humour.¹²² It is a fatal malady which leads to discord, and there is no longer any existence for him who gives way to it.¹²³ For it [introduces] *discord* (?) between fathers and mothers, as well as between brothers and sisters;¹²⁴ it causes the wife [and] the husband to hate each other; it contains all kinds of wickedness, it embodies all kinds of wrong.¹²⁵ When a man has established his just equilibrium and walks in this path, there where he makes his dwelling, there is no room¹²⁶ for bad humour.

XX

Be not of an irritable temper as regards that which happens beside thee;¹²⁷ grumble (?) not over thy [own] affairs. Be not of an irritable temper in regard to thy neighbours; better is a compliment to that which displeases than rudeness. It is wrong to get into a passion with one's neighbours, to be no longer master of one's words.¹²⁸ When there is only a little irritation, one creates for oneself an affliction for the [time when one will again be] cool.¹²⁹

XXI

If thou art wise, look after thy house; love thy wife without alloy. Fill her stomach, clothe her back, these are the cares [to be bestowed] on her person. Caress her,¹³⁰ fulfil her desires during the time of her existence; it is a kindness which does honour to its possessor. Be not *brutal* (?); *tact* (?) will influence her better than violence; her ... behold to what she aspires, at what she aims, what she regards. It is that which fixes her in thy house; if thou repellst her, it is an *abyss* (?). Open thy *arms* (?) for her, [respondent] to her arms; call her, display to her¹³¹ [thy] love.

XXII

Treat¹³² thy dependants well, in so far as it belongs to thee [to do so]; [and] it belongs to those whom God has favoured. If any one fails in treating his dependants well it is said: "He is a person ..." As we do not know the events which may happen to-morrow, he is a wise person by whom one is well treated.¹³³ When there comes the necessity of showing zeal, it will [then] be the dependants [themselves] who say: "Come on, come on," it good treatment has not quitted (?) the place; if it has quitted it, the dependants are defaulters.

¹²¹ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. x.

¹²² Literally "time of bad humour."

¹²³ "There being no existence to him who enters into it."

¹²⁴ Literally "the fathers, men [and] women, as well as the brothers, men [and] women."

¹²⁵ Compare "It is a net of iniquity."

¹²⁶ Not a house of bad humour."

¹²⁷ "On the subject [of things which are] in two halves, on two sides, right and left, at the side of thee."

¹²⁸ Literally "deprived of the conduct of one's words."

¹²⁹ Literally "is a little difficulty in that, affliction is created in coolness." But the translation is doubtful.

¹³⁰ Literally "anoint her."

¹³¹ "Make to her." The translation of the two last lines is uncertain.

¹³² *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xi.

¹³³ Literally "the person is a person well balanced, good treatments [are] in him."

XXIII

Do not repeat any extravagance of language; do not listen to it; it is a thing which has escaped from a hasty mouth. If it is repeated, look, without hearing it, towards the earth; say nothing in regard to it. Cause him who speaks to thee to know what is just, even him who provokes to injustice;¹³⁴ cause that [which is just] to be done, cause it to triumph. As for that which is hateful according to the law, condemn it by unveiling it.¹³⁵

XXIV

If thou art a wise man, sitting in the council of thy lord, direct thy thought towards that which is wise. Be silent rather than scatter thy words. When thou speakest, know that which can be brought against thee. To speak in the council is an art, and speech is criticised more than any [other] labour; it is contradiction which puts it to the proof.¹³⁶

XXV

If thou art powerful, respect knowledge and calmness of language. Command only to direct; to be absolute is to run into evil. Let¹³⁷ not thy heart be haughty, neither let it be mean. Do not let thy orders remain unsaid and cause thy answers to penetrate; but speak without heat, assume a serious countenance. As for the vivacity of an ardent heart, temper it; the gentle man penetrates [all] obstacles. He who agitates himself all the day long has not a good moment; and he who amuses himself all the day long keeps not his fortune. Aim at fulness like pilots;¹³⁸ once one is seated another works, and seeks to obey [one's] orders.

XXVI

Disturb not a great man;¹³⁹ weaken not the attention of him who is occupied.¹⁴⁰ His care is to embrace [his task], and he strips his person through the love which he puts into it. That transports men to God, [even] the love for the work which they accomplish. Compose [then thy] *face* (?) [even] in trouble, that peace may be with thee, when agitation is with ... These are the people who succeed in what they desire.¹⁴¹

XXVII

Teach [others] to render homage to a great man.¹⁴² If thou gatherest the crop for him among men,¹⁴³ cause it to return fully to its owner, at whose hands is thy subsistence. [But] the gift of affection is worth more than the provisions.¹⁴⁴ with which thy back is covered. For that which [the great man] receives from thee will enable thy house to live, without speaking of the maintenance thou enjoyest, which thou desirest to preserve;¹⁴⁵ it is thereby [that] he extends a beneficent hand, and that in thy home good things are added to good things.¹⁴⁶ Let

¹³⁴ Literally "the unjust being commanded."

¹³⁵ Literally "it is raising the veil from its face."

¹³⁶ "Which puts it according to the measure."

¹³⁷ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xii.

¹³⁸ I do not know whether this is the precise rendering, but the object of the chapter is clear. It is necessary to be moderate in everything; excess of work is to be avoided like excess of pleasure.

¹³⁹ "Let not a great man be diverted from his hour."

¹⁴⁰ "Of him who is charged."

¹⁴¹ "Who cause that which is loved to prosper." I am not sure of the sense of these last two phrases.

¹⁴² Literally "teach the great man that one may honour him, that one may do him honour."

¹⁴³ This probably means: if thou collectest the taxes in the provinces for the governor.

¹⁴⁴ The word also signifies "offerings."

¹⁴⁵ "With the consideration, thou lovest that it lives." The taxes levied by the government pay for the maintenance of its officers, who thereby maintain their position.

¹⁴⁶ Literally "the possession."

thy love pass into the heart of those who love thee; cause those about thee to be loving and obedient.

XXVIII

If¹⁴⁷ thou art a son of the guardians deputed to watch over the public tranquillity, execute [thy commission] without knowing [its meaning], and speak with firmness.¹⁴⁸ Substitute not for that which the instructor has said [what thou believest to be] his intention; the great use words as it suits [them].¹⁴⁹ Thy part is to transmit rather than to comment upon.

XXIX

If thou art annoyed at a thing,¹⁵⁰ if thou art tormented by some one who is acting within his right, get out of his sight, and remember him no more.¹⁵¹ when he has ceased to address thee.

XXX

If thou hast become great after having been little, [if] thou hast become rich after having been poor, [when thou art at the] head of the city, know¹⁵² how not to take advantage of the fact that thou hast reached the first rank, *harden* (?) not thy heart because of thy elevation; thou art become [only] the steward of the good things of God.¹⁵³ Put not behind thee the neighbour.¹⁵⁴ who is like unto thee; be unto him as a companion.

XXXI

Bend thy back before thy superior. Thou art attached to the palace of the king; thy house is established in its fortune, and thy *profits* (?) are as is fitting. Yet a man is annoyed at having an authority above himself,¹⁵⁵ and passes the period of life in being vexed thereat. Although that hurts not thy¹⁵⁶ ... “Do not plunder¹⁵⁷ the house of thy neighbours, seize not by force the goods which are beside [thee].” Exclaim not then against that which thou hearest, and do not feel humiliated. It is necessary to reflect¹⁵⁸ when one is *hindered* (?) by it that the pressure of authority is felt [also] by one’s neighbour.

XXXII

Do not make ... thou knowest that there are obstacles to the water [which comes] to its hinder part, and that there is no trickling of that which is in its bosom. Let it not ... after having corrupted his heart.

XXXIII

If thou aimest at polished manners, call not him whom thou accostest. Converse with him especially in such a way as not to annoy him. Enter on a discussion with him only after having left him time to saturate his mind with the subject of the conversation. If he lets his ignorance display itself, and if he gives thee an opportunity to disgrace him, treat him with

¹⁴⁷ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xiii.

¹⁴⁸ “Express what thou dost not comprehend, affirm thy speech.”

¹⁴⁹ “As for these great men, he puts the word in its proper place.”

¹⁵⁰ “At a time arrived.”

¹⁵¹ That is, hear no rancour after being deservedly blamed.

¹⁵² Translation very doubtful.

¹⁵³ “Thou art become the administrator, the prefect, of the provisions [which belong] to God.”

¹⁵⁴ “Let there be no other behind.”

¹⁵⁵ “In vexations a governor in quality of superior, one lives a time of distaste for him.”

¹⁵⁶ The text here seems faulty, some words being wanting as regards both rhythm and sense.

¹⁵⁷ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xiv.

¹⁵⁸ Literally “being one who knows that ...”

courtesy rather; proceed not to drive him [into a corner]; do not ... the word to him; answer not in a crushing manner; crush him not; worry him not; in order that in his turn he may not return [to the subject], but depart to the profit of thy conversation.¹⁵⁹

XXXIV

Let thy countenance be cheerful during the time of thy existence. When we see one departing from the storehouse who has entered in order to bring his share of provision,¹⁶⁰ with his face¹⁶¹ contracted, it shows¹⁶² that his stomach is empty and that authority is offensive [to him]. Let not that happen to thee; it is ...

XXXV

Know those who are faithful to thee when thou art in low estate. Thy merit [then] is worth more than those who did thee honour. His ..., behold that which a man possesses completely. That is of more importance than his high rank; [for] this is a matter [which passes] from one to another. The merit of one's son is advantageous to [the father], and that which he really is is worth more than the remembrance [of his father's rank (?)].

XXXVI

Distinguish the superintendent who directs from the workman, for manual labour is little elevated; the inaction [of the hands] is honourable. If a man is not in the evil way, that which places him [there] is the want of subordination to authority.

XXXVII

If thou takest a wife, do not ... Let her be more contented than any of her fellow-citizens. She will be attached [to thee] doubly, if her chain is pleasant.¹⁶³ Do not repel her; grant that which pleases her; it is to her contentment that she appreciates [thy] direction.¹⁶⁴

XXXVIII

If thou hearest those things which I have said to thee,¹⁶⁵ thy wisdom will be fully advanced. Although they are the means which are suitable for arriving at the *Ma*,¹⁶⁶ and it is that which makes them precious, their memory would recede from the mouth of men. [But] thanks to the beauty of their arrangement [in rhythm] all their words will [now] be carried without alteration over this earth eternally.¹⁶⁷ That will create a *canvass* (?) to be embellished,

¹⁵⁹ Literally "in order that it may not be his turn not to come, [and] that one does not steal away to the profit of that same."

¹⁶⁰ Literally "the loaves of communion," probably the part which each had to contribute from the crops. It is possible, however, that the reference is to distributions of food by the authorities; the malcontents would then be those who find that too little is given to them instead of contributors who think that too much is required from them. But I prefer the first explanation, since the verb *an* means "to bring" rather than "to carry away."

¹⁶¹ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xv.

¹⁶² "It is the making known the emptiness of his stomach."

¹⁶³ "She being in the attachment doubly, sweet to her the bond."

¹⁶⁴ "Being her contentment, she appreciates the work."

¹⁶⁵ The author has concluded his exposition of the wisdom of the ancients. He now speaks in his own name, and while eulogising the doctrines he has repeated, notices with satisfaction the perfect form he has given to them to prevent them from being effaced from the memory of men and to preserve them from alteration. Their rhythmic form allows neither omissions nor variations.

¹⁶⁶ That is to cause truth and justice to reign.

¹⁶⁷ I do not think that a clearer statement can be found of the existence of a poetical language, rhythmically arranged, among the ancient Egyptians.

whereof the great will speak, in order to instruct men in its sayings.¹⁶⁸ After having listened to them [the pupil] will become a master,¹⁶⁹ even he who shall have properly listened to the sayings because he shall have heard them. Let him win success by placing himself in the first rank¹⁷⁰; that is for him a position perfect and durable,¹⁷¹ and he has nothing [further] to desire for ever.¹⁷² By knowledge his *path* (?) is assured, and he is made happy by it on the earth. The wise man is satiated by knowledge; he is a great man through his own merits.¹⁷³ His tongue is in accord with his mind¹⁷⁴; just are¹⁷⁵ his lips when he speaks, his eyes when he gazes, his ears when he hears. The advantage of his son is to do that which is just without deceiving himself.

XXXIX

To attend [therefore] profits the son of him who has attended. To attend¹⁷⁶ is the result of the fact that one has attended. A [teachable] auditor is formed, because I have attended. Good when he has attended, good when he speaks,¹⁷⁷ he who has attended has profited, and it is profitable to attend to him who has attended. To attend is worth more than anything [else], for it produces love, the good thing that is twice good. The son who accepts the instruction of his father will grow old on that account.¹⁷⁸

What God loves is that one should attend; if one attends not, it is abhorrent to God. The heart makes itself its own master when it attends and when it does not attend; [but] if it attends, then his heart is a beneficent [master] to a man.¹⁷⁹ In attending to instruction, a man loves what he attends to, and to do that which is prescribed is pleasant. When a son attends to his father, it is a twofold joy [for both]; when [wise] things are prescribed to him, the son is gentle towards [his] master. Attending to him who has attended when such [things] have been prescribed to him, he engraves upon [his] heart that which is approved by his father; and the recollection of it is preserved in the mouth of the living who exist upon this earth.

XL

When a son receives the instruction of his father, there is no error in all his plans. Train thy son to be a teachable man whose wisdom¹⁸⁰ is agreeable to the great. Let him direct his mouth¹⁸¹ according to that which has been said to him; in the docility of a son is discovered his wisdom. His conduct is perfect, while error carries away the unteachable.¹⁸² To-morrow knowledge will support him, while the ignorant will be destroyed.

XLI

¹⁶⁸ "The great will speak above; it is by explaining to a man the word." It therefore appears that the Precepts of Ptah-hotep were intended to be commented on by professors, and that there were schools of philosophy.

¹⁶⁹ *Abuu*, "artist," or "master-workman." Perhaps something analogous to the degree of *magister artium*.

¹⁷⁰ "Being produced a good time by being at the head." The reference is possibly to a competitive examination among the students in order to obtain a public post.

¹⁷¹ "Is to him perfection which endures."

¹⁷² "His complete satisfaction being for ever."

¹⁷³ "Through his good" or "fortunate time."

¹⁷⁴ With his mind is his tongue.

¹⁷⁵ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xvi.

¹⁷⁶ Literally "To listen penetrates by one who has listened."

¹⁷⁷ "Good, listening; good, speaking." To "listen" includes the idea of "obeying."

¹⁷⁸ Compare Exod. xx. 12. "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

¹⁷⁹ Literally "life-health-strength of some one is his heart when listening."

¹⁸⁰ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xvii.

¹⁸¹ Compare chap. xii.

¹⁸² "His ways are perfect, the bad way takes away the unteachable."

As for the man without experience who listens not, he effects nothing whatsoever. He sees knowledge in ignorance, profit in loss; he commits all kinds of error, always accordingly choosing the contrary of what is praiseworthy. He lives on that which is mortal, in this fashion. His food are evil words whereat he is filled with astonishment. That which the great know to be mortal he lives upon every day, flying from that which would be profitable to him,¹⁸³ because of the multitude of errors which present themselves before him every day.

XLII

A son who attends is like a follower of Horus; he is happy after having attended. He becomes great, he arrives at dignity, he gives the same lesson to his children. Let none innovate upon the precepts of his father; let the same precepts form his lessons to his children. "Verily," will his children say to him, "to accomplish¹⁸⁴ what thou sayest works marvels."

Cause [therefore] that to flourish which is just, in order to nourish thy children [with it]. If the teachers allow themselves to be led towards evil principles verily the people who understand them not will speak accordingly,¹⁸⁵ and that being said to those who are docile, they will act accordingly. Then all the world considers them [as masters] and they inspire confidence in the public; but their glory endures not so long as would please them. Take not away [then] a word [from the ancient teaching], and add one not; put not one thing in place of another; beware of uncovering [the rebellious ideas] which arise¹⁸⁶ in thee; but teach according to the words of the wise. Attend [if] thou wishest to dwell in the mouth of those who shall attend to thy words, when thou hast entered upon the office of master, that thy words may be upon our lips ... and that there may be a chair from which to deliver thy arguments.¹⁸⁷

XLIII

Let thy thoughts be abundant [but] let thy mouth be under restraint, and thou shalt argue with the great. Put thyself in unison with the ways of thy master; cause him to say: "He is my son," so that¹⁸⁸ those who shall hear it shall say: "Praise be to [her who] has borne him to him!" Apply thyself while thou speakest; speak [only] of perfect things; and let the great who shall hear thee say: "Twice good [is] that which issues from his mouth! "

XLIV

Do that which thy master bids thee. Twice good is the precept of our¹⁸⁹ father, from whom we have issued, from his flesh. What he tells us, let it be [fixed in our] heart; to satisfy him greatly let us do for him more than he has prescribed. Verily a good son is one of the gifts of God, [a son] who does [even] better than he has been told [to do].¹⁹⁰ For his master he does what is satisfactory, putting himself with all his heart on the part [of right].¹⁹¹

So¹⁹² I shall bring it about that thy body shall be healthful, that the king shall be satisfied [with thee] in all circumstances, and that thou shalt obtain years of life without default.

¹⁸³ "Departing from his times because of the multitude of errors."

¹⁸⁴ *Papyrus Prisse*, xviii.

¹⁸⁵ "Just as that is [said]."

¹⁸⁶ "That which flows in thee."

¹⁸⁷ Literally "Thy arguments being on their chair."

¹⁸⁸ *Papyrus Prisse*, pl. xix.

¹⁸⁹ Literally "The precept of his father, from whom he has issued."

¹⁹⁰ "Making increase on that which is said to him."

¹⁹¹ "He does the *Ma*, putting himself with all his heart on its ways."

¹⁹² That is, by means of these precepts.

It has caused me on earth to obtain 110 years of life, along with the gift of the favour of the king among the first of those whom their works (?) have ennobled,¹⁹³ satisfying the king in a place of dignity.

Colophon. It is finished, from its beginning to its end, according to that which is found in writing.

¹⁹³ “The two hands have made them noble.” The whole expression signifies “the first” or “ancients.”

The Daughter Of The Prince Of Bakhtan And The Spirit That Possessed Her

Introduction

Translated by Prof. Maspero

The monument which has preserved for us this curious narrative is a stele discovered by Champollion in the temple of Khonsu at Thebes, and removed from thence in 1886 by Prisse d'Avennes, by whom it was given to the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. The text has been published by Prisse d'Avennes: *Choix de Monuments égyptiens* (Paris, 1847); and Champollion: *Monuments de l'Égypte et de la Nubie* (Paris, 1846–76, vol. ii. pp. 280–90); and translated by Birch: *Notes upon an Egyptian Inscription in the Bibliothèque Impériale of Paris* (in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, iv. new series); and E. de Rougé: *Étude sur une Stèle égyptienne appartenant à la Bibliothèque Impériale* (in the *Journal Asiatique*, Aug. 1856, Aug. 1857, June and Aug. 1858).

Champollion had already studied the text and has cited many phrases from it in his works. It was sumptuously reproduced on a single sheet at the Imperial Printing-Press for the Paris Exhibition of 1855 under the superintendence of E. de Rougé.

Little has been added by later works to de Rougé's results. Translations of it have been given by Brugsch in his *History of Egypt* (English translation, 2d edit., ii. pp. 191–4), and by Maspero in his *Contes égyptiens*, ii. pp. 209–224.

The narrative presents the appearance of an official document. The Ramses recorded in it was believed to be the twelfth of the name who belonged to the twentieth dynasty, and efforts were made to discover the country of Bakhtan in the map. The account begins with a royal protocol in the name of a sovereign who has the same names and *prænomina* as Ramses II or Sesostris. Next come dates which follow a definite order throughout the text; the details of the cult of the deity and of the Pharaonic ceremonial are described with scrupulous exactitude. The whole possesses such a character of probability that the inscription was considered historical until quite recently. Prof. Erman, however, has shown with much sagacity that we must recognise in it a pure fiction invented by the priests of Khonsu in order to heighten the glory of the god and the importance of his temple; see A. Erman: *Die Bentreschstele* in the *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache*, 1883, pp. 53–60.

Prof. Erman has made it clear that the forgers intended to assign the narrative to the reign of Ramses II, and has thus relieved us from an imaginary Pharaoh. He has brought the redaction of the story down to the Ptolemaic period, but I believe that I can attribute it to the earlier days of the Ethiopian invasions, when the high-priest of Amon was about to fall, and the great priesthoods which still existed at Thebes were to endeavour by all the means in their power to inherit the influence which the fallen priesthood had exercised.

The narrative refers to a belief which is common in popular literature; a spirit has entered the body of a princess and struggles against the exorcists who have been commissioned to expel it, consenting to depart only on certain conditions. The story furnishes us with the simplest and most ancient form of the belief. A modern Egyptologist has adopted it as the subject of a novelette (H. Brugsch: *Des Priesters Rache, eine historisch beglaubigte Erzählung aus der ägyptischen Geschichte des zwölften Jahrhunderts vor Christus*, in the *Deutsche Revue*, v. pp. 15–41).

Prof. Erman has noted in the narrative an affectation of archaism and somewhat serious errors of language. We can understand that the priests of Khonsu have endeavoured to imitate the language of the period to which they attributed the monument. We can also understand that they could not be equally successful everywhere in maintaining an archaistic tone, and have thus at times committed errors. The sentences are badly constructed, the expression of ideas is poor, the phrase curt and flat. Moreover, they have assigned to a king of the nineteenth dynasty methods of government which belonged only to sovereigns of the twentieth. Ramses II, devout as he was, would never have considered it necessary to submit to the approval of the gods all the affairs of state; it was the last successors of Ramses III who introduced the custom of consulting the statue of Amon upon every occasion. With these reservations it may be admitted that the text offers no further difficulties to the interpreter, and with a little attention can be easily translated; like the *Story of the Two Brothers* it can be advantageously placed in the hands of beginners in Egyptian.

The stele is surmounted by a tableau in which one of the scenes in the story is enacted before our eyes. On the left, the bark of Khonsu, the good counsellor, is carried on the shoulders of eight porters and is followed by two priests reading prayers; the king, standing before it, offers incense to it. On the right, the bark of Khonsu, which regulates the destinies of Thebes, is figured, carried by four men only, for it is smaller than the other; the priest who offers incense to it is the prophet of Khonsu who regulates the destinies of Thebes, Khonsu-hâ-nutir-nibit. It is probably the return of the second god to Thebes which is thus illustrated: the first Khonsu comes to receive the second, and the priest and king each render equal homage to his divinity.

Text

THE DAUGHTER OF THE PRINCE OF BAKHTAN

The Horus, powerful bull, laden with diadems and established as solidly in his kingdoms as the god Atumu;¹ the Horus, the conqueror mighty with the sword and destroyer of the Barbarians, the king of the two Egypts, Usir-ma-rî Sotpuri-rî, son of the Sun, Ramses Mî-amun, beloved of Amon-Ra, master of Karnak² and of the circle of the gods, the lords of Thebes, the good god, the son of Amon, offspring of Mut, begotten by Har-ma-khuiti, glorious child of the universal Lord, engendered by the divine husband of his own mother, king of Egypt, prince of the tribes of the desert, the sovereign who governs the Barbarians, scarcely issued from his mother's womb he directed wars and commanded valiantly while still in the egg, like a bull which presses forward, for he is a bull, is this king, a god who issues forth on the day of battles like Montu,—who is very valiant like the son of Nuit.³

Now his Majesty was in Naharina⁴ as was his custom each year, and the princes of every country came bending under the weight of the offerings which they brought to the souls of his

¹ [Otherwise transcribed Tum.]

² North of Thebes on the eastern bank of the Nile.

³ The son of Nouit is Sit-Typhon, in this kind of phraseology.

⁴ Written differently from the orthography Naharanna in the Tale of the Doomed Prince. Naharanna was the country between the Orontes and the Balikh, which falls into the Euphrates (on the eastern bank) a little north of the Khabour. It is included in the Aram-Naharaim of Scripture.

Majesty;⁵ the fortresses brought their tributes, gold, silver, lapis-lazuli, *mafkait*,⁶ (and) all the fragrant woods of Arabia, on their backs and walking in order one behind the other. The prince of Bakhtan sent his tributes and set his eldest daughter at the head of the procession, to salute his Majesty and to ask life from him. She was a very beautiful woman, who pleased his Majesty more than anything else; taking her as his chief royal wife he inscribed her with the name of Nofiru-rî, and when he had returned to Egypt he assured to her the treatment of a royal wife..⁷

And it came to pass in the fifteenth year, the 22d day of the month Payni, when his Majesty was at Thebes in the temple *Nakhthonit-ropeu*,⁸ chaunting the praises of his father Amon-Râ the master of Karnak, during his excellent festival in southern Thebes,⁹ the favourite residence of the god since the creation, behold a message is brought to his Majesty: "There is there a messenger of the prince of Bakhtan who is come with numerous presents for the royal wife." Conducted before his Majesty with his presents, he says, invoking his Majesty: "Glory to thee, O Sun of foreign peoples, to thee by whom we live," and when he had uttered his adoration before his Majesty, he proceeds to speak to his Majesty: "I come to thee, sire, my master, concerning Bint-Rashit,¹⁰ the younger sister of thyself and the royal wife Nofiru-rî, for a malady penetrates her limbs. Let thy Majesty order a sage to set forth to see her." Then the king said: "Bring me the scribes of the double house of life who are attached to the palace."

When they were come, his Majesty said: "Behold I have summoned you in order that you may hear these words: 'Bring me one of yourselves who is expert in his heart, a scribe skilful with his fingers.'" When the royal scribe Thothimhabi had entered the presence of his Majesty, his Majesty commanded him to betake himself to Bakhtan with this messenger. As soon as the sage had arrived in Bakhtan he found Bint-Rashit possessed of a demon, and he found the demon who possessed her difficult to combat. The prince of Bakhtan thereupon sent a second message to his Majesty, saying: "Sire, my master, let thy Majesty order a god to be sent to combat the demon."

When the messenger reached his Majesty in the 23d year, the 1st day of the month Pakhons, the day of the festival of Amon, while his Majesty was at Thebes, behold his Majesty spoke again in the presence of Khonsu in Thebes, the god of good counsel, saying: "Excellent lord, behold me again before thee, concerning the daughter of the prince of Bakhtan."¹¹ Then Khonsu In Thebes, the god of good counsel, was transported

⁵ We know that the Sun had seven souls and fourteen doubles (Bergmann: *Hier. Inschriften*, pl. 62, 2). The Pharaoh, as son of the Sun and himself the Sun, had also several *biu* or "souls," and the conquered endeavoured to win them by presents.

⁶ The word *mafkait* expresses emerald, green jasper, green feldspar, various oxides of copper, malachite; in short, every kind of precious stone which is naturally coloured green.

⁷ The daughter of the prince of the Hittites, Khiti-saru, similarly received from Ramses II on her arrival in Egypt the title of "chief royal wife" and the Egyptian name of Ma-ur-nofiru-rî, of which the name of the princess in the text is probably only an abridged form.

⁸ These words, which literally signify "the strong one, the lady of the temples," probably denote one of the chapels in the temple of Karnak.

⁹ Southern Thebes was the modern Luxor; the festival, consequently, must have been the festival of the patron deity in the temple of Luxor.

¹⁰ The name of this princess appears to be formed from the Semitic *bint*, "daughter," and the Egyptian *rashit*, "joy," the signification being "Daughter of joy."

¹¹ In order to understand this passage, we must remember that according to Egyptian belief every statue of a god in a temple had in it a *ka* or "double," detached from the actual person of the god and so an incarnation of the god different from his other incarnations. The god Khonsu had in his temple at Karnak two statues at least, each of which was animated by an independent "double," whom the rites of consecration had detached from the god. One of them represented Khonsu, immutable in his perfection, tranquil in his greatness, and not directly

towards Khonsu who governs destiny, the great god who drives away strangers, and his Majesty said before the face of Khonsu in Thebes, the god of good counsel: "Excellent lord, if it pleases thee to turn thy face to Khonsu who governs destiny, the great god who drives away strangers, he will be sent to Bakhtan." And the god twice decidedly nodded assent with the head.¹² Then his Majesty said: "Grant unto him thy virtue so that I may send the Majesty of this god to Bakhtan in order to deliver the daughter of the prince of Bakhtan."

And Khonsu in Thebes, the god of good counsel, violently nodded assent twice and transmitted his magical virtue to Khonsu who governs destiny in Thebes, four times.¹³ His Majesty ordered Khonsu who governs destiny in Thebes to be despatched on a great bark, escorted by five boats, by chariots and by numerous horses which walked on the right and on the left. When the god had arrived in Bakhtan, after an interval of a year and five months, behold the prince of Bakhtan came with his soldiers and his generals before Khonsu who governs destiny, and flung himself on his face, saying:

"Thou comest to us, thou rejoinest us according to the orders of the king of the two Egypts, Usir-ma-rî Sotpu-ni-rî." Behold as soon as the god was gone to the place where Bint-Rashit was and had made magical passes over the daughter of the prince of Bakhtan, she found herself well at once, and the demon which was with her said in the presence of Khonsu who governs destiny in Thebes: "Come in peace, great god who drivest away the foreigner; Bakhtan is thy city, its people are thy slaves, and I myself am thy slave. I shall depart therefore to the place from whence I am come, in order to satisfy thy heart concerning the matter which brings thee, but let thy Majesty order a day of festival to be celebrated for me and for the prince of Bakhtan." The god made his prophet a sign of approval with the head, meaning to say: "Let the prince of Bakhtan present a great offering to this demon." Now while this was taking place between Khonsu who governs destiny in Thebes and the demon, the prince of Bakhtan was there with his army stricken with terror. And when a great offering had been presented to Khonsu who governs destiny in Thebes and to the demon of the prince of Bakhtan, and a day of festival had been celebrated in their honour, the demon

interfering with the affairs of men; this was Khonsu Nofir-hotpu, whose name I have paraphrastically translated "the god of good counsel." The other statue represented a more active Khonsu who governed the affairs of mankind and drove away foreigners (that is to say enemies) from Egypt (*Khonsu p. iri sokhru m uisit, nutir âa, sahru shemau*). The first Khonsu, being considered the more powerful, we know not why, does not condescend to go himself to Syria, but sends the second Khonsu after having transferred to the latter his own powers (E. de Rouge: *Etude sur une stèle*, pp. 15–19).

¹² The statues, being animated by a "double," declared their will either by the voice or by rhythmical movements. We know that queen Hatshopsitu "heard" the god Amon commanding her to send an expedition to the "Coasts of Incense," in order to fetch the perfumes necessary for religious worship. The kings of the twentieth and twenty-first dynasties, less fortunate than she, were gratified only with gestures, which were always the same; when they put a question to a god the statue remained motionless if the answer were negative, but twice shook the head violently if it were favourable. The inquiries were made in accordance with a fixed ritual, the chief points in which have been preserved in contemporaneous texts.

¹³ The innate virtue of the gods (*sa*) seems to have been regarded by the Egyptians as a sort of fluid analogous to that called by us "the electric fluid" or the like. It was transmitted by the imposition of hands and mesmeric "passes" over the neck or spine of the patient; this was called *sotpu sa*, which we may render "to make passes." The ceremony whereby the first Khonsu transferred his virtue to the second is frequently represented on the monuments in the scenes where a statue of a god is making passes over a king. The statue, which was usually of wood, had movable limbs; it embraced the king and passed its hand four times over the nape of his neck while he knelt before it with his back turned towards it. Every statue received at its consecration not only a "double" but also a portion of the magical virtue of the deity whom it represented; the "*sa* of life" was "behind it," which animated and penetrated within it so far as the statue did not lessen the amount of the magical virtue by transmission. The god himself, whom this perpetual flow of the *sa* would have ended by exhausting, replenished himself with a supply of it from a mysterious source in the other world: we are not told how it happened that the source could not be exhausted (Maspero: *Bulletin critique de la religion égyptienne. Le Rituel du Sacrifice funéraire*, pp. 17–18, 28–29).

departed in peace to the place which pleased him, according to the order of Khonsu who governs destiny in Thebes.

The prince of Bakhtan rejoiced greatly as well as the people of Bakhtan, and he discoursed with his heart saying: "Since this god has been given to Bakhtan I shall not send him back to Egypt." Now after the god had remained three years and nine months in Bakhtan, as the prince of Bakhtan was lying on his bed, he saw in a dream the god leaving his shrine in the form of a golden hawk which flew on high towards Egypt; when he awoke he was in a shiver. Then he said to the prophet of Khonsu who governs destiny in Thebes: "This god who dwelt with us, he returns to Egypt; let his chariot go to Egypt!" The prince of Bakhtan allowed the god to start for Egypt, and he gave him numerous presents of all good things as well as a strong escort of soldiers and horses. When they reached Thebes, Khonsu who governs destiny in Thebes entered the temple of Khonsu in Thebes the good counsellor; he set the presents which the prince of Bakhtan had given him before Khonsu in Thebes, the good counsellor, he kept nothing for his own temple. Now Khonsu, the good counsellor in Thebes, re-entered his temple in peace the 19th day of the month Mekhir, the 33d year of the king Usir-ma-rî Sotpuni-rî, living for ever like the Sun.

Hymn To The Nile

Introduction

Translated by Paul Guieysse

The Hymn to the Nile is, properly speaking, not a religious document like those, for example, of the Funerary Ritual, whose history can be followed from century to century, but a religious poem in the same sense as that in which the Poem of Pentaur is a historical poem. It is the work of the scribe Ennana, the author of the Story of the Two Brothers and of several other fragments contained in the papyri of the British Museum. We possess two copies of it in the papyri Sallier II and Anastasi VII; both texts, however, are extremely poor. Prof. Maspero was the first to translate them in 1868,¹ and to show from an examination of the variant readings that they must have been transcribed from dictation by pupils in the schools of the scribes, though not from the same original text. The translation of Prof. Maspero has often been reproduced in works on Egypt, and Canon Cook has given a translation which differs from it but little.² In the present translation notice has been taken, as far as possible, of the recent progress of Egyptological knowledge; it will appear with a complete transcription of the two texts in the *Recueil des Travaux relatifs à l'Égyptologie*.³

The text of the Hymn is divided into fourteen verses, introduced by red letters, and each, with two exceptions, containing the same number of complete phrases, separated from one another by red points. Unfortunately we are still ignorant of the rules of Egyptian poetry; but as the variant readings show that the number of syllables in one and the same sentence is not the same in the different texts, it is probable that the tonic accent played a chief part in it. We find, however that the order of the words is clearly not the same as in ordinary prose.⁴

The author has developed the idea, well-known even to classical antiquity, that the Nile is the source of all life in Egypt, that it is the supreme god, mysterious, uncreated, the father of the gods and all things else, into whose secrets none can penetrate. He describes in a lofty style the benefits conferred by the Nile when it spreads its waters over the country at its annual return, and the miseries of the land when the inundation has not exercised its fertilising influence, as well as the joy of the inhabitants of Egypt and their gratitude when the Nile has answered their prayers.

Text

HYMN TO THE NILE

I

Adoration to the Nile!

Hail to thee, O Nile!

who manifesteth thyself over this land,

and comest to give life to Egypt!

¹ *Hymne au Nil*. Franck, Paris 1868.

² *Records of the Past*, IV. Bagster & Sons, London 1875.

³ Vol. xiii. Bouillon, Paris 1890.

⁴ Notably in verse 2, phrases 7 and 8, and in verse 14, phrase 1.

Mysterious is thy issuing forth from the darkness,
 on this day whereon it is celebrated!
 Watering the orchards created by Ra.⁵
 to cause all the cattle to live,
 thou givest the earth to drink, inexhaustible one!
 Path that descendest from the sky,⁶
 loving the bread of Seb and the firstfruits of Nepera,
 thou causest the workshops of Ptah⁷ to prosper!

II

Lord of the fish, during the inundation,
 no bird alights on the crops.
 Thou createst the corn, thou bringest forth the barley,
 assuring perpetuity to the temples.⁸
 If thou ceaseest thy toil and thy work,
 then all that exists is in anguish.
 If the gods suffer in heaven⁹
 then the faces of men waste away.

III

Then he torments the flocks of Egypt, and great and small are in agony.
 But all is changed for mankind when he comes;
 he is endowed with the qualities of Num.¹⁰
 If he shines, the earth is joyous,
 every stomach is full of rejoicing,
 every spine is happy,
 every jaw-bone crushes (its food).

IV

He brings the offerings,¹¹ as chief of provisioning;

⁵ The orchards of Ra are mentioned in the Book of the Dead, ch. 81.

⁶ This belief in the celestial origin of the Nile survived in Egypt, at all events as late as the time of Joinville (*Histoire de Saint-Louis*, ch. xl.).

⁷ Ptah is associated with the Nile in a list of divinities represented on a wall of the age of Ramses II at Karnak (Champollion: *Not. Manuscrites* II. p. 255, where Ptah is called *Ptah, pa Hapi aā*).

⁸ In the Anastasis text: "Causing the temples to keep holiday."

⁹ The Nile is not only the dispenser of life to mankind, but also to the gods (see verses 4, 10, 53). In the Hymn it absorbs as it were all the gods, and even takes the place of Ra in verse 14.

¹⁰ Num, the divine creator, like Ptah, is similar to Ptah in his relation to the Nile. The two verses point out that all life is dependent on the Nile, an idea which is developed to excess in the verses following.

¹¹ Funerary offerings made to the *ka* or "double."

he is the creator of all good things,
 as master of energy, full of sweetness in his choice.
 If offerings are made it is thanks to him.
 He brings forth the herbage for the flocks,¹²
 and sees that each god receives his sacrifices.
 All that depends on him is a precious incense.
 He spreads himself over Egypt,
 filling the granaries, renewing the marts,
 watching over the goods of the unhappy.

V

He is prosperous to the height of all desires,
 without fatiguing himself therefor.
 He brings again his lordly bark;
 he is not sculptured in stone, in the statues crowned with the uræus serpent, he cannot be
 contemplated.
 No servitors has he, no bearers of offerings!
 He is not enticed by incantations!
 None knows the place where he dwells,
 None discovers his retreat by the power of a written spell.¹³

VI

No dwelling (is there) which may contain thee!
 None penetrates within thy heart!
 Thy young men, thy children applaud thee
 and render unto thee royal homage.
 Stable are thy decrees for Egypt.¹⁴
 before thy servants of the North!¹⁵
 He stanches the water from all eyes
 and watches over the increase of his good things.

VII

¹² See verse 14.

¹³ The gods had to submit to the power of incantations and magic formulæ (compare the legend of Ra bitten by a serpent, the romance of Setnau, and numerous passages in the Book of the Dead). The Nile alone was excepted from this law; it remained enshrouded in mystery in its retreat near the two whirlpools often mentioned in the texts and even alluded to by Herodotus.

¹⁴ So in the Anastasi text. The fixity of the periodic return of the Nile is probably referred to.

¹⁵ Verse 5 has, however, stated that the Nile had no servants; perhaps the secondary gods are meant here who directed the spread of the waters over Egypt, that is to the north of the whirlpools from whence the Nile rose.

Where misery existed, joy manifests itself;
 all beasts rejoice.
 The children of Sebek, the sons of Neit,¹⁶
 the cycle of the gods which dwells in him, are prosperous.
 No more reservoirs for watering the fields!
 He makes mankind valiant,
 enriching some, bestowing his love on others.
 None commands at the same time as himself.
 He creates the offerings without the aid of Neit,¹⁷
 making mankind for himself with multiform care.

VIII

He shines when he issues forth from the darkness,
 to cause his flocks to prosper.
 It is his force that gives existence to all things;
 nothing remains hidden for him.
 Let men clothe themselves to fill his gardens.
 He watches over his works,
 producing the inundation during the night.¹⁸
 It is a god Ptah ...¹⁹
 He causes all his servants to exist,
 all writings and divine words,²⁰
 and that which he needs in the North.

IX

It is with the words that he penetrates into his dwelling;
 he issues forth at his pleasure through the magic spells.²¹
 Thy unkindness brings destruction to the fish;

¹⁶ Neit is often represented with two crocodiles on the breast; her relation to Sebek, the crocodile-god, is difficult to define.

¹⁷ Neit appears here as the goddess of production; the Nile has no need of Neit (or perhaps the rain) in order to generate the crops; it makes its way throughout the country by means of canals and trenches.

¹⁸ This seems to be an allusion to the festival of the "Night of the Drop" (*Lélet en-Nuqta*), still observed in Egypt on the 5th of June, when the rise of the Nile is supposed to commence. The name is due to the old tradition recorded by Plutarch, according to which the rise of the Nile was caused by a tear which dropped into it from the eye of Isis. In M. Amélineau's *Contes et Romans de l'Égypte Chrétienne*, i. p. 17, the rise of the Nile is attributed to the intercession of St. Michael, whose festival is celebrated on the 6th of June; three days before, the archangel prays that the water may rise, since it is "the life of men and animals."

¹⁹ Unknown word, conjectured by Cook to represent the name of a new god *Kabes*.

²⁰ The Nile inspires Thoth the scribe of the divine utterances.

²¹ The Nile is unaffected by incantations, but serves himself with them at his pleasure in order to manifest himself.

it is then that prayer is made for the (annual) water of the season;
 Southern Egypt is seen in the same state as the North.
 Each one is with his instruments of labour, none remains behind his companions.
 None clothes himself with garments,
 the children of the noble put aside their ornaments.
 The night remains silent,
 but all is changed by the inundation;
 it is a healing-balm for all mankind.

X

Establisher of justice! mankind desires thee,
 supplicating thee to answer their prayers;
 thou answerest them by the inundation!
 Men offer the first-fruits of corn;
 all the gods adore thee!
 The birds descend not on the soil.
 It is believed that with thy hand of gold
 thou makest bricks of silver!
 But we are not nourished on lapis-lazuli;
 corn alone gives vigour.²²

XI

A festal song is raised for thee on the harp,
 with the accompaniment of the hand.²³
 Thy young men and thy children acclaim thee
 and prepare their (long) exercises.
 Thou art the august ornament of the earth,
 letting thy bark advance before men,
 lifting up the heart of women in labour,
 and loving the multitude of the flocks.

XII

When thou shinest in the royal city,²⁴

²² The Nile is indeed the dispenser of all wealth, but true wealth does not consist in gold or silver, but of the products of agriculture which enable men to live.

²³ Women are represented on the monuments accompanying the singers by clapping the hands; this custom still survives throughout the East. It is possible that we still possess the festal songs of the Nile, of which Lane has preserved for us some fragments in his work on *The Modern Egyptians*.

²⁴ Probably Thebes, the residence of the Pharaohs at the time when the Hymn was composed. No other city can be meant, as otherwise the mythological texts would have mentioned it. Thebes, moreover, is near Silsilis,

the rich man is sated with good things,
 the poor man even disdains the lotus;
 all that is produced is of the choicest;
 all the plants exist for thy children.
 If thou hast refused (to grant) nourishment,
 the dwelling is silent, devoid of all that is good
 the country falls exhausted.

XIII

O inundation of the Nile,
 offerings are made unto thee,
 oxen are immolated to thee,
 great festivals are instituted for thee.
 Birds are sacrificed to thee,
 gazelles are taken for thee in the mountain,
 pure flames are prepared for thee.²⁵
 Sacrifice is made to every god as it is made to the Nile.²⁶
 The Nile has made its retreats in Southern Egypt,
 its name is not known beyond the Tuau.²⁷
 The god manifests not his forms,
 he baffles all conception.

XIV

Men exalt him like the cycle of the gods,
 they dread him who creates the heat,
 even him who has made his son²⁸ the universal master
 in order to give prosperity to Egypt.
 Come (and) prosper! come (and) prosper!
 O Nile, come (and) prosper!
 [O thou who makest men to live through his flocks²⁹
 and his flocks through his orchards!
 Come (and) prosper, come,

where the height of the Nile was measured, as is indicated by the Book of the Dead, chap. 149, and the royal decrees of Silsilis, which institute festivals in honour of the Nile.

²⁵ These offerings are mentioned in the decrees of Silsilis.

²⁶ See verse 7.

²⁷ The other world.

²⁸ The Pharaoh.

²⁹ From the *Anastasi* papyrus.

O Nile, come (and) prosper!]

This work has been successfully finished and dedicated to the scribe of the treasury Qaqabu
[by the scribe Ennana].³⁰

³⁰ See the *Papyrus Anastasi* 7, pl. 7, ll. 5 and 6.

Letters To Egypt From Babylonia, Assyria, And Syria, In The Fifteenth Century B.C.

Introduction

Translated by the Editor

An account has already been given in these volumes of the recent discovery of cuneiform tablets at Tel-el-Amarna in Upper Egypt, which prove to contain official correspondence addressed to the Egyptian monarchs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, Amenôphis III and his son, Amenôphis IV, Khu-n-Aten, "The Heretic King" (*Records of the Past*, new ser., vol. ii. pp. 57 sq.) One statement, however, in that account requires correction, in view of the letters from the king of Mitanni, which have now been published. Queen Teie, the mother of Amenôphis IV, was not the daughter of Duisratta or Dusratta, the Mitannian king; the daughter of the latter prince was Tadukhepa, the wife of Amenôphis IV. We are still in the dark as to the parentage of Teie, and Prof. Maspero may be right in considering her to be of Egyptian origin, possibly even a sister of Amenôphis III.

In the following pages I have given translations of the most important letters, from a historical point of view, which have yet been published. They are mostly to be found in the magnificent publication of Messrs. Winckler and Abel, entitled *Mittheilungen aus den orientalischen Sammlungen* (Berlin, Spemann, 1889, 1890), of which two parts have appeared containing the texts of a considerable number of the Tel el-Amarna tablets at Berlin and Cairo. The promptitude and carefulness with which they have been edited contrasts favourably with the tardiness of the authorities of the British Museum in putting the collection of Tel el-Amarna tablets that exists there at the service of scholars. Of the eighty-one tablets now in the British Museum four only have been published (by Mr. Budge in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, June 1888). A few passages in the letters have been translated by Dr. Winckler in his *Bericht ueber die Thontafeln von Tel-el-Amarna* in the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Berlin Academy, 1888 (No. xxiii), and Dr. Zimmern has translated four of the texts in the *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, v. (1890). Three of these are the same as Nos. 2, 3, and 10 translated by myself in the following pages.

An unexpected light is cast by these letters on the literary education and intercourse which prevailed throughout the ancient civilised world from the Euphrates to the Nile in the century before the Exodus. The government of Egypt extended as far as Northern Syria, its political influence as far as the frontiers of Assyria. But the culture of Western Asia had its primitive home in Babylonia; it was the language and complicated script of Chaldæa which were taught and studied in the distant countries of the west, and which the educated gentleman was required to learn. Egypt exported gold from the mines which had been opened in the desert, and were worked by convicts and the captives taken in the Asiatic campaigns of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

These Asiatic campaigns, however, had tended to Semitise the governing class in Egypt. The king married into the families of Asiatic princes and filled his court with Asiatic officials. Amenôphis IV even became a convert to a Semitic faith, and endeavoured to substitute a belief in the supreme Semitic Baal, who revealed himself in the fiery orb of the sun, for the old religion of his people. His dominions in Palestine and Syria were placed under governors who bore Semitic names, mostly of a purely Canaanitish stamp. Even the vizier himself has a name which is otherwise not found outside the Bible, although the name of the Carthaginian

goddess Dido indicates that it was not unknown to the Phœnicians. This is Dûdu, the Dodo of the Old Testament, etymologically related to David. Dûdu's two sons, Aziru and Khâi, bear names which are equally Biblical in their character.

The two letters of Aziru to his father show pretty plainly the position occupied by Dûdu in the kingdom of the Pharaoh. He alone is addressed like the Pharaoh himself as "my lord," and even his son calls himself his "servant." Perhaps, however, the most significant phrase is that which speaks of "Dûdu and the king my lord and the nobles." We are reminded of what the Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Only in the throne will I be greater than thou" (Gen. xli. 40).

The letters of Aziru possess a further interest. They bring the Hittites before us in the act of descending from their old homes in the north upon the fertile plains and cities of the Semites in the south. Kadesh, on the Orontes, has not yet become their southern capital; but they are already threatening Tunip, the Tennib of modern days, to the northwest of Aleppo. A century later, when the civil wars were ended, which the death of Amenôphis IV and his attempt to introduce a Semitic religion and a Semitic government into Egypt had occasioned, when the stranger and his faith were driven from the land, and the Nineteenth Dynasty was founded by that "new king which knew not Joseph," the Hittites were encamped on the northern threshold of Palestine. The Egyptian armies again marched into Asia, but even the power of Ramses II was unable to dislodge them from the post they had gained, and the utmost he could do was to check their southward advance. The chief result of his war was to weaken both Egyptians and Hittites, and to exhaust the cities of Canaan, so that they became an easy prey a few years later to the invading tribes of Israel.

Assur-yuballidh, king of Assyria, whose letter to Amenôphis IV I have placed first in my series of translations, is mentioned towards the commencement of the so-called "Synchronous History of Babylon and Assyria" (line 8) as a contemporary of the Babylonian king Kara-Urus. We learn from the letter the name of his father, Assur-nadin-akhi, who must therefore be inserted between Assur-yuballidh and Buzur-Assur (see "List of the Kings of Assyria," *Records of the Past*, new ser., vol. ii. p. 206). Buzur-Assur, as we learn from the "Synchronous History," was a contemporary of Burna-buryas, another correspondent of Amenôphis IV.

A third royal correspondent of the Egyptian monarchs was Dusratta or Tusratta or Duisratta—for the name is written in these various ways—the king of Mitanni. According to the Assyrian inscriptions Mitanni was the district on the eastern bank of the Euphrates which lay opposite to Carchemish. It is called Maten in the Egyptian inscriptions, and was included in the kingdom of Nahrina, the Aram-Naharaim, or "Aram of the two rivers," of Scripture, of which Chushan-rish-athaim was king (Judges iii. 8). It is possible that an obscure passage in one of the letters signifies that the Mitannian prince claimed sovereignty also over Khani-rabbat or eastern Kappadokia. Among the tablets now at Berlin is a long letter from Dusratta, written in cuneiform characters, but in the language of Mitanni, which seems unlike any other hitherto known. We gather from it that the father and predecessor of Dusratta was Sutarna, who is stated in an inscription on an Egyptian scarab to have sent his daughter Kirkipa as a wife to Amenôphis III in the tenth year of the latter's reign, along with 317 attendants. Artatâmas, the grandfather of Dusratta, had also married his daughter to Thothmes IV, so that for three generations the rulers of Egypt and Mitanni had been connected by marriage with one another.

The people of Mitanni, however, did not speak a Semitic language, and it is probable that they did not belong to the Semitic race. But they had adopted the Semitic adoration of the winged solar disk, and along with it, in all probability, some portion of the Semitic worship of Baal. It was this worship and adoration which Amenôphis IV attempted to force upon his

subjects. The Semitic tendencies of the court and the dominance of Semitic strangers from Canaan and Syria were due not so much to the intermarriages with the royal family of Mitanni as to the Egyptian conquest of Palestine.

1. Letter Of Assur-Yuballidh, King Of Assyria, To Amenophis IV, King Of Egypt

1. To Napkhurîya (Neferu-kheper-Ra) [the great king]
2. the king of Egypt,¹ my brother, [I write]
3. thus, (even I) Assur-yuballidh king of the country of Assyria,
4. the great king, thy brother.
5. To thyself, to thy house and thy country may there be peace!
6. That I have seen thy ambassadors
7. has pleased (me) greatly; thy ambassadors
8. I have sent for to appear in my presence.
9. A chariot [the choicest?] in the kingdom with (its) harness
10. and two white horses, [together with]
11. one chariot without harness and a seal of white alabaster
12. I have despatched as a present for thee.
13. For the great king is produced perpetually
14. the gold (which) in thy country (is like) the dust
15. (that) they collect: why in thy presence
16. is it brought and kept back, is it withheld and not sent?
17. All the gold that is my property,
18. as well as what is lacking to it, send.
19. When Asur-nadin-akhi my father
20. sent (an embassy) to the country of Egypt (*Mitsri*),
21. 20 talents of gold did they despatch to him.
22. When the king of the country of Khani-rabbatû.²
23. to thy father and the land of Egypt
24. sent (an embassy), 20 talents of gold
25. did they despatch to him.
26. [As] to the king of Khani-[rab]bati
27. [so] also to myself
28. despatch the gold.

¹ Written Mitsari as in the letters of the king of Mitanni. The Babylonian form of the name is Mitsri, corresponding to the Hebrew Matsor and Mitsraim. In the later Assyrian inscriptions the name appears as Mutsur or Mutsri, probably through confusion with the name of Mutsri, a district to the north of Assyria.

² "Khani the great," or Eastern Kappadokia, the capital of which was Malatiyeh.

29. [The road both in] going and returning
30. for the hands of my ambassadors
31. I have made secure.³
32. If thou inclinest thy face.⁴ favourably
33. despatch much gold, and thy letter in return
34. write (to me) and what thou desirest let them take.
35. Behold, distant.⁵ lands
36. have the ambassadors visited.⁶ and they have journeyed to (many) cities.
37. As for thy ambassadors
38. they have delayed on the way because the 'Suti.⁷
39. threatened.⁸ them with death, until I sent and
40. the 'Suti took *fright* (?).⁹
41. My ambassadors ... them
42. [and] they did not delay.
43. When the ambassadors (reached) the frontier (of Assyria)
44. why do they not wait?¹⁰ And
45. at the frontier they *are in a hurry* (?).¹¹
46. *It is fitting* (?) at the frontier they should wait
47. for the king; everything is there
48. and he has established (it) and at the frontier
- 49 he has arranged (it). Against the king who fulfils everything
50. there is no *charge* (?): why
51. at the frontier are they *in a hurry* (?),
52. even the ambassadors who ...

The last three lines are too obliterated for translation.

2. Letter Of Burna-Buryas, King Of Babylonia, To Amenophis IV Of Egypt

OBVERSE

1. To Nipkhurri-riya king of the country of [Egypt]

³ *Ultammatstsi*.

⁴ Literally, "If thou art good as to thy face."

⁵ *Ruqatum*.

⁶ *Ilka*.

⁷ Nomads, who ranged through the desert on either side of the Tigris, in Mesopotamia and the south-east of Assyria.

⁸ *Ura'u*, the Heb. *yârê*.

⁹ Probably to be read *khardê*, "fear."

¹⁰ *Ultannazazu*.

¹¹ *Imattu*; the verb *imati* occurs in K 1282, Rev. 18.

2. by letter
3. I speak (even I) Burra-buriyas king of the country of Kara-duniyas.¹²
4. thy brother: unto myself (is) peace;
5. to thyself, thy house, thy wives, thy children, thy country,
6. thy officers, thy horses (and) thy chariots, may there ever be peace!
7. Ever since my father and thy father with one another
8. conferred in amity,
9. they sent beautiful present[s] to one another,
10. but they did not address one another in fair (and) beautiful letter[s].
11. Again, O my brother, 2 manehs of gold I have sent as my present.
12. In return send (me) abundance of gold as much as thy father (sent),
13. or if that is displeasing send half of what thy father (sent).
14. Wherefore shouldst thou send two manehs of gold (only)?
15. For the sake of¹³ the folding doors in the temple¹⁴ of Mât and the palace
16. (which) I have undertaken¹⁵ to build send much gold,
17. and whatsoever thou desirest in my country
18. write for and let them take it to thee.
19. In the time of Kuri-galzu my father the Kuna(?)khians, all of them,
20. sent unto him saying: Against the *government of the country* (?).¹⁶
21. let us sin and rebel.
22. [With] thee will we make (a league). My father
23. sent this (answer) to them
24. saying:

REVERSE

1. Cease (to ask) to ally thyself with me:
2. if thou art estranged from the king of Egypt my brother, and
3. alliest thyself with another,
4. I will not go and assist¹⁷ you.
5. Thus my father was like-minded with me,

¹² Babylonia.

¹³ Literally, "in favour of."

¹⁴ Literally, "house of God," *bit-ili*, the Heb. *beth-el*. The following word *mât* seems to be a proper name, though whether it denotes the name of a deity or of a place I cannot say. We may, however, read *mâd*, "many a temple."

¹⁵ Read *tsabtakû*.

¹⁶ Perhaps the country of "Qannisat." The Kunakhians are probably to be identified with the Kinakhkhians of the next letter. Winckler compares the name of the Canaanites.

¹⁷ *Akhamat* like *khamat*, *W. A. I.*, v. i. 75.

6. because of thy father he did not listen to them:
7. Again, by an Assyrian who regards [my face¹⁸]
8. have I not sent to thee after the news (I have) of them, asking
9. why they have gone to thy country.
10. If thou lovest me, no success
11. will they obtain; dismiss them to their distant land.
12. For a present to thee 3 manehs of alabaster,
13. (and) 14 spans of horses with 5 chariots of wood
14. I have despatched to thee.

3. Letter Of Burna-Buryas To Amenophis IV

OBVERSE

1. [To] Napkhuhru-ri[ya]
2. the king of Egypt¹⁹ my brother [it is spoken]
3. thus: Burra-buryas the king of Kara-[Duniyas]
4. thy brother-unto myself (is) peace;
5. unto thee, thy country, thy house, thy wives, thy children,
6. thy officers, thy horses (and) thy chariots
7. may there ever be peace!
8. I and my brother with one another
9. have conferred amicably,
10. and this is what we have said
11. as follows: as our fathers with one another,
12. we also have friendly dealings.
13. Again my ministers
14. who came with Akhi-dhâbu²⁰
15. into the country of Kinakhkhi²¹ trusted to destiny,
16. from Akhi-dhâbu to visit my brother they passed;
17. in the city of Kikhinnatuni of the country of Kinakhkhi
18. Sum-Adda the son of Balumme²²
19. (and) Sutatna the son of Saratum²³ of the city of Akku,²⁴

¹⁸ That is, "is tributary to me."

¹⁹ *Mitsri*.

²⁰ Dr. Zimmern compares the Biblical name of Ahitub.

²¹ Perhaps to be identified with the Kunakhians of the preceding letter.

²² Perhaps the Biblical Salaam. His son's name would represent Shem-Hadad.

²³ The Biblical Sarah. Sutatna may be Seth-yathan; cf. Numb. xxiv. 27.

²⁴ The Accho of Judg. i. 31, now Acre.

20. when they had sent their men, slew
21. my ministers and carried off their treasures
22. which they [were taking] for [a present to the king of Egypt].
23. I have sent to you [therefore] a complainant.²⁵
24. [who] may speak to thee [thus]:

REVERSE

1. Kinakhkhi (is) thy country and the king [is thy servant?].
2. In thy country I have been injured; do thou punish [the offender].
3. The silver which they carried off [was] a present [for thee],
4. and the men who (are) my servants they have slain.⁵ Slay them and requite the blood (of my messengers);
6. but if thou dost not put these men to death,
7. (the inhabitants) of the high-road that belongs to me will turn
8. and verily will slay thy ambassadors, and
9. a breach will be made in the agreement (to respect the persons) of ambassadors,
10. and this man²⁶ will be estranged from thee.
11. One of my men Sum-Adda,
12. having cut off his feet,
13. detained him with him;
14. and as for another man, Sutatna of Akku,
15. having made him stand on (his) head,
16. he stood upon his face. As for these men
17. ... one has spoken thus: I have seen indeed
18. ... [what] thou askest that indeed thou knowest.
19. [By way of a pre]sent, I maneh of alabaster I have despatched to thee.
20. [By] my ambassadors a costly gift I have [sent to thee].
21. [On account of the re]port²⁷ which my brother has heard
22. my ambassadors do not detain;
23. the costly present let them offer [to thee].

4. Letter From Aziru To His Brother Khâi

1. To Khâi.²⁸ my brother

²⁵ *Sita*['s'sa].

²⁶ That is Burna-buryas.

²⁷ [*Dhe*]ma.

²⁸ The Hebrew *khay*, "living"; compare the name of Hiel, 1 Kings xvi. 34.

2. thus (I speak, even I) Aziri²⁹ thy brother:
3. Unto thee may there be peace,
4. and from the soldiers of the palace
5. of the king my lord may there be much peace!
6. What immediately
7. I speak before the king my lord,
8. publicly I speak,
9. (even) I and my sons
10. and my brothers, all (being) servants
11. of the king my lord before (him).
12. Now I and Khatib
13. have gone again
14. with a present to Khazai³⁰
15. [who is] among you; ³¹ verily the frontier,
16. behold! I have reached.
17. From the orders of my lord
18. I do not free myself,
19. or from your orders,
20. (even) I the servant of my lord.
21. The king of the land of the Hittites³² in the country of Nukhasse³³
22. is staying and I am afraid
23. of him (and) have defended myself.
24. To Phœnicia he ascends;
25. and if the city of Dunip³⁴
26. falls, he stays in a place (only) 2 *parasangs from here* (?),
27. and I am afraid of him;
28. yet according to this order

²⁹ Aziru or Aziri (Ezir in the Old Testament was the son of Dûdu (the Biblical Dodo or David), a high official at the court of the Pharaoh. See Letter v.

³⁰ This seems to be the name of the Hittite king.

³¹ Plural.

³² *Khatte*.

³³ Nukhasse was in northern Syria; Dunip appears to have been one of its cities. M. Halévy suggests that Nukhasse is the land of “bronze” (Heb. *nekhosheth*), and compares 2 Sam. viii. 8.

³⁴ The Tunip of the Egyptian monuments, now Tennib, between Azaz and Arpad (Erfad), north-west of Aleppo. In the Assyrian period, from the ninth century B.C. downwards, Tunip disappears from history, its place being taken by Khazazu (Azaz) and Arpad.

29. he remains until he quits it..³⁵

30. And now one has gone

31. with a costly present to him

32. (even) I and Khatib.

5. Letter From Aziru To His Father Dûdu

1. To Dûdu my lord, my father,

2. thus (speak I) Aziru thy servant;

3. at the feet of my lord I prostrate myself.

4. Khatib has gone

5. and has *answered* (?) the words

6. of the king my lord publicly and well,

7. and I have rejoiced exceedingly;

8. and my country and my brothers,

9. the servants of the king my lord

10. and the servants of Dûdu my lord,

11. have rejoiced exceedingly.

12. Behold, there has gone

13. the prince.³⁶ of the king my lord

14. unto me. From the commands

15. of my lord, my god, my Sun-god,

16. and from the commands of Dûdu

17. my lord, I do not free myself.

18. Now, O my lord, Khatib

19. remains with me.

20. I and he.³⁷ will go (together).

21. O my lord, the king of the land of the Hittites

22. has marched into the country of Nukhasse

23. but has not prevailed over the cities.

³⁵ *Adi patari-se*. Compare another letter of Aziru (No. 32): "The king of the Hittites is staying in the land of Nukhasse and I am afraid of him. He is staying in a place [only two] *parasangs distant* (?), [in] the city of Tunip and I am afraid. The place he has quitted (*iptur*) also I p. 69 have reached. [So] again . we have gone into the land of Phœnicia, the country of my lord, and I am afraid for the country of my lord." So also in another despatch (No. 33): "And again [the king of the Hittites] is staying in the land of Nukhasse; [he is staying] two *parasangs distant* (?) in the city of Tunip, and I am afraid it may fall ... may [the king of the Hittites] quit (*iptur*) the city of Tunip."

³⁶ *Sarru*, which must not be interpreted "servant" here, but "prince," like the Heb. *sar*. In correct Assyrian *sarru* is "king," *malku* (*melech*) "prince," but the writer of the letter follows the Canaanitish usage.

³⁷ *Sûtu*, a curious derivative from *sû* "he," like *yati* "myself."

24. May the king of the land of the Hittites quit (them)!
25. Therefore now have (we) marched,
26. (even) I and Khatib.
27. May the king my lord listen to
28. my words. O my lord, I am afraid
29. of the king my lord
30. and of Dûdu.
31. And now my gods
32. and my messengers also are the men
33. of Dûdu and the nobles
34. of the king my lord, and I march.
35. And thus (speak) Dûdu
36. and the king my lord and the nobles:
37. If ever we publish anything
38. about Aziru which is not right
39. (let it be) before my gods and before my god,³⁸
40. and now I
41. and Khatib (are) servant(s) of the king before (him)
42. O Dûdu, verily thou *knowest* (?),
43. behold, I go to thee.

6. Letter From Rib-Addu To The King Of Egypt

1. [To] the king my lord,
2. my Sun-god I speak, (even I) Rib-Addu³⁹
3. thy servant: at the feet of my lord
4. my Sun-god seven times seven
5. do I prostrate myself. The king my lord
6. has heard the words of the servant
7. of his justice..⁴⁰ (I am) very sick..⁴¹
8. Unto me has hostility approached.

³⁸ In place of the anacoluthon we may translate, “(it is) against my gods and against my god.” In another letter of Aziru (No. 39), we read, “A second time (I say) to Dûdu my lord; hear the words of the kings of Nukhasse (which) they have spoken against me.”

³⁹ Or Rip-Hadad. Addu or Hadad is given as the Syrian equivalent of the Assyrian god Rimmon.

⁴⁰ That is to say, “his righteous servant.”

⁴¹ Or “distressed.”

9. The sons of Ebed-Asirta⁴² descended
10. into Phœnicia⁴³ they⁴⁴
11. (and) all of the country of the city of Tsumura⁴⁵
12. and the city of Irqata,⁴⁶ armed themselves
13. against the governor; and now in
14. the city of Tsumura (is their) station.
15. Behold, the governor is sick.
16. On account of the attack he has left⁴⁷
17. the city of Gubla,⁴⁸ and there are not⁴⁹
18. Zimrida [and]
19. Yapa-Addu along with me.
20. Now [accordingly] has the governor
21. sent to them, and
22. [they have sent] 30 manehs to him.
23. [Now] has the king my lord heard
24. the report of the servant of his justice,
25. and has despatched reinforcements
26. in haste to
27. the city of Tsumura to defend (it)
28. [and] capture the soldiers
29. of the palace of the king, the Sun-god;
30. and the king, the Sun-god, has supplied⁵⁰ me
31. with the soldiers of the kingdom⁵¹ from
32. the midst of his own country. A second time
33. has the king, my lord, heard the report of his servant

⁴² Also written Ebed-Asrâti, “the servant of Asherah.” The name of Asrâti is more than once preceded by the determinative of divinity, showing that Ashêrah, mistranslated “grove” in the authorised version of the Old Testament, was a goddess. She was, in fact, the goddess of fertility, who was symbolised by a cone or branchless trunk, and must be carefully distinguished from Ashtoreth or Astartê.

⁴³ *Mat Akharrâ*.

⁴⁴ It is possible also to translate, “into Phœnicia, even they: all the country.”

⁴⁵ The Zemar of the Old Testament (Gen. x. 18), called Simyra in classical geography, now Sumra, north of Tripoli.

⁴⁶ The “Arkites” of Gen. x. 17, now Tel ‘Arqa.

⁴⁷ *Itizi[b]*.

⁴⁸ The Gebal of the Old Testament, the Byblos of Greek writers, now Jebel north of Beyrût. Rib-Addu, the Egyptian governor of Phœnicia, had his residence at Gebal.

⁴⁹ *Ya[nu]*.

⁵⁰ *Usamri-ni*.

⁵¹ Native Egyptian soldiers.

34. and has despatched⁵² the garrison⁵³
35. to the city of Tsumura and
36. to the city of Irqata. Since
37. there have fled all
38. the garrison from
39. the city of Tsumura, and
40. there has applied (his) ear the king,
41. the lord, the Sun-god of the world, and
42. has given me 20 convoys
43. of horses for myself,
44. and has despatched reinforcements
45. in haste
46. to the city of Tsumura to
47. defend it, even all
48. the garrison
49. who had armed themselves with difficulty,
50. and the men had ...
51. in the midst of the city, since
52. the soldiers of the palace had not
53. ..., and
54. the said city had not armed itself,
55. on the capture and *slaughter* (?) of the soldiers of the palace
56. it is intent. All the world
57. have gone⁵⁴ to the king.

7. Letters From Dusratta, King Of Mitanni, To Amenophis III

No. 1

1. To Nimmuriya the great king,
2. the king of Egypt, my brother,
3. my son-in-law, whom I love
4. and who loves me, speak
5. thus: Dusratta, the great king,

⁵² The scribe has omitted the final syllable of *ussira*: "he has despatched."

⁵³ Literally "men of the guard."

⁵⁴ Literally "we have gone."

6. the king of the country of Mitanni, thy brother, thy father-in-law, 7. and who loves thee;
8. unto me is peace, unto my brother and unto my son-in-law
9. may there be peace; to thy houses, to thy wives,
10. to thy sons,⁵⁵ to thy men, to thy chariots,
11. to thy horses, to thy country
12. and to thy property, may there be abundant peace!
13. Of my brother, whom I love,
14. the wife, my daughter, I deliver to him:
15. may the Sun-god and Istar march before [my] brother:
16. according to the heart of my brother may they [act]:
17. and may my brother on this [same] day
18. rejoice: may the Sun-god and [Istar]
19. [hear] the prayer of my brother:
20. abundant joy [to my brother]
21. may they give, may [they ...]:
22. and may my brother [live?]
23. for ever in pea[ce]!
24. Manê, the messenger of [my brother],
25. and Khanê, the dragoman⁵⁶
26. of my brother, like a god⁵⁷ thou didst [send],
27. many presents didst thou give [them],
28. thou didst [honour] them greatly
29. on account of their letter, counting on their service (?).⁵⁸;
30. the men who really live
31. if at any time I see not, may my gods
32. and the gods of my brother protect them.
33. Now Nakhramassi,
34. whom thou hast seen, to transact (business) with my brother
35. I send, and also one necklace
36. of crystal and alabaster
37. and some gold for a present

⁵⁵ "Sons" may mean "children" here.

⁵⁶ *Targuman[nu]*. The word occurs for the first time in this letter.

⁵⁷ Or "according to the god."

⁵⁸ I am quite uncertain as to the correct translation of this passage.

38. to my brother I have despatched,
39. and for 100 thousand years
40. for the *service* (?) of my brother
41. may it be used.⁵⁹

8

No. II

OBVERSE

1. [To Nim]muariya king of the land of [Egypt] my brother, my son-in-law,
2. [whom I] love (and) who loves [me], speak
3. [thus:] Dusratta the king of Mi[tanni], thy father-in-law,
4. loves thee as thy brother; [unto] me is peace; unto thee
5. [may there be] peace; to thy house, to [thy] wives, to thy sons, to thy nobles,
6. [to] thy chariots, to thy horses, to thy officers,
7. to thy country and thy property may there be exceeding abundant peace!
8. Manê the ambassador of my brother went to demand a wife for
9. my brother that he might take her to be queen of Egypt, and the letter.⁶⁰
10. which he took I read, and to his message listened
11. my good heart attentively, and the words of my brother as the person of my brother
12. I saw and rejoiced on that day very exceedingly.
13. Day and night it produced pleasure.⁶¹
14. And all the words of my brother which Manê took [to me]
15. I performed in the same.⁶² year; again the wife of my brother,
16. the queen of Egypt, I ... and have despatched to my brother;
17. ... on that day the countries of Khani-rabbat.⁶³ and Egypt.
18. And as regards this, Manê will [speak?] before my brother: Giliya.⁶⁴
19. and Manê I [presented with?] a costly present, but I did not address them.
20. Again, O my brother, for ... and for [their] dismissal ...
21. But I did not cause them to go up (to Egypt) to [convey my daughter] that she might be the wife of [my] brother;

⁵⁹ I follow Dr. Zimmern, though with hesitation, in reading *nati* as *nadi*.

⁶⁰ *Duppa*, "a clay tablet."

⁶¹ *[An]nâ etepu[us]*.

⁶² *An[ni]ti*.

⁶³ "Khani the greater," or eastern Kappadokia, of which Malatiyeh was the capital. It is unfortunate that the commencement of the line is lost: if Khani-rabbat formed part of the dominions of Dusratta, it may have referred to the alliance between it and Egypt which was secured by the marriage.

⁶⁴ Giliya was the ambassador sent by Dusratta to Egypt.

22. even now I did not cause them to go up.
23. After six months Giliya my ambassador and Manê the [ambassador]
24. [of] my brother I dismissed; the wife of my brother, [to be queen of Egypt],
25. [my daughter], to my brother they brought. May Beltis the lady [of battle]
26. my [goddess], and Amânu⁶⁵ the god of my brother according to [his heart]
27. advise⁶⁶ [him].
28. [His wife] to my brother they brought, and when my brother [had children by her]
29. his son grew up stoutly and also ...
30. ... according to the heart of my brother he became tall,⁶⁷ and ...
31. ... which to give my brother ...
32. ... above the face ...
33. [Now Na]khâramassi has spoken, O my brother, a word to [my brother],
34. ... and a letter⁶⁸ into his hand I have given ...
35. ... and his words may [my brother] hear, [saying]
36. [thus: Nakharâ]massi to my brother I have sent ...
37. the soldiers [of] my brother have not made ...

Lacuna.

REVERSE

The commencement is lost.

1. ... of my brother they have brought ...
2. ... my [ambassador] has collected everything, O [my] brother.
3. ... before all of them, and we ...
4. ... among them, and these seals and the gold ...
5. ... and they regarded (them) very intently;
6. they [considered] these treasures.⁶⁹ as water, all of them, treasures of gold without [number];
7. [and] they said: “in the land of Egypt (are) treasures of gold, more than the dust in abundance.”
8. [My heart], O my brother, now loves thee in rivalry; the men ...
9. ... whom they love, and yet nothing is given to their backs.
10. [There are] quantities of what is needed, quantities more than the dust in Egypt in plenty.

⁶⁵ The Egyptian Amun, the supreme god of Thebes.

⁶⁶ [Li]messi[lisu], the Hebrew *mâshal*, “to speak in proverbs.”

⁶⁷ *Ipsidh*, like the corresponding Aramaic verb.

⁶⁸ *Duppa*.

⁶⁹ *Mâmê*, possibly the Aramaic *mamon*, “wealth,” the Mammon of the New Testament.

11. As myself (are) these men; to whom is the gift made? ...
12. ... and it has no gate; and truly when I [heard of] the treasures
13. [which lie] before you, I did not question if he loves me very greatly
14. [and] my country, even the king of Egypt.
15. And my brother lifts me up in his heart when my heart was vexed at aught;
16. and he does not *fail* (?) at any time, and the great god my lord does not forsake me;
17. Along with my brother am I not *remembered* (?) by thee? and to country and city ...
18. like my brother ...
19. Manê the ambassador of my brother [and the dragoman] of my brother who with him
20. journeyed, I honoured: [I spoke to] them and honoured them
21. exceedingly; now Manê has departed, and my brother
22. has exalted him even as I honoured him very greatly.
23. To my brother also I spoke, and my brother heard from them how
24. I had done unto them: when Manê lacked (aught which) is not supplied
25. to him, he indeed is not vexed.
26. And, O my brother, I have sent much worked⁷⁰ gold which cannot be counted, and the *aqqât*
27. of my father may my brother return to me, as my brother regards friendship.
28. As my brother before my country, as before my *numerous* (?) brethren,
29. my brother has caused me greatly to flourish, so may the god Amanu.⁷¹ *sustain* (?) (him), and
30. act for ever according to the heart of my brother, and may my brother,
31. my beloved one, act according to my heart, like the Sun-god
32. who loves mankind, and like the god Na-nînu may the gods
33. direct us, and for ever
34. let us love [one another].35. [And now I send] by way of a present one spear of *ubbi* wood
36. ... and an *isizzu* of Aleppo.⁷² stone set in gold
37. ... [which] he folds together on his throne
38. ... *khulal* stone set in gold for a throne
39. ... to my brother I have sent.

9. Letter Of Dusratta To Amenophis IV

OBVERSE

⁷⁰ *Musse*.

⁷¹ *Amon*.

⁷² *Khiliba*. See *W. A. I.*, v. 30, 66. The word seems to have no connection with the non-Semitic *khilib*, "a god."

1. [To Napkhûri]ya my son-in-law whom I love and who loves [me],
2. [Dusratta], the great king, [the king of Mita]nni, thy brother, thy father-in-law, who loves thee: unto me (is) peace;
3. [to thee and] Teie [thy mother, and to] Tadukhêpa my daughter, thy wife, may there be [peace]!
4. [To ...] may there be peace! To thy sons, to thy nobles, to thy chariots, to [thy] horses,
5. [to] thy [country], and to thy property may there be exceeding peace!
6. [I sent an embassy?] to Nimmuriya, and thy father sent to me ...
7. [and as regards] the message which he sent, there was no word whatsoever which [was concealed from?]
8. [the ambassadors] of thy father whom he sent [to] me; and Teie the chief wife of thy father,
9. thy mother, [knew?] them all; he *showed* (?) them to Teie and *favoured* (?) all of them, and *after* (?) them
10. thy father [repeated?] the words which he had spoken with me.
11. ... exceedingly, and [the words which I spoke] with Nimmuriya thy father whom we love,
12. [and the words which] Nimmuriya thy father spoke with me, he (and) I, my heart in nothing
13. did they vex, and all the words which I spoke those also on that day
14. did not vex the heart of [thy father, my] beloved one, in anything, and all that
15. [I said] these also did he perform on that day.
16. [Now Manakhbia⁷³] the father of [N]immuriya sent to Artatâma the father of my father, and the daughter [of]
17. [Artatâma, the father] of my father he asked for; 5 times, 6 times he sends, but (Artatâma) did not give her; at last
18. [his daughter] he sends and with a train (of handmaids) he gave her. An embassy from Nimmûriya thy father to Sut[tarna⁷⁴]
19. [my father came], and the daughter of my father, my darling sister, though he asked for her and seven times [requested her],
20. [my father did not give.] At last five times and six times he sends and (my father) gave [her] with a train (of handmaids).
21. [When] Nimmûriya [thy father] sent to me and when he asked for my daughter, I did not [refuse],
22. [but] I spoke favourably; to his messenger I speak as follows: "I am ready to give her; thy messenger among [my] children

⁷³ Manakhbia is mentioned as the father of Amenôphis III in a tablet now at Berlin (Winckler and Abel, ii. No. 30). It represents the Egyptian Menkhepru-(Ra) or Thothmes IV.

⁷⁴ The name is restored from the letter of Dusratta in the Mitannian language (Winckler and Abel, i. p. 29, line 55). A scarab of Amenôphis III states that in the tenth year of the Egyptian monarch, Satarna king of Nahrina sent his daughter Kirgipa to Egypt with an escort of 317 maidens.

23. has come, and [my] eyes [have seen] the *aqqâti* which he has given, and her dowry is worthy of yourself,⁷⁵ and I will bestow [on her]
24. the dowry due to Nimmûriya thy [father] which [contains] *jewels* (?) [such as] no god possesses; and because I am honoured.⁷⁶ I do not. [refuse]
25. to give her;” and Amasis.⁷⁷ [the ambassador] of my brother, [who had come] for the bride, I sent (back) to Nimmûriya
26. after three months, with a very costly present, and ..., and four ... of gold [such as] none [had given before]
27. [and] a goblet ... of gold was given, which I [despatched].
28. At last my daughter I gave [to him], and when [I had] despatched her and when Nimmûriya thy father had seen.⁷⁸ her,
29. ... he rejoiced with exceeding fulness, and my brother speaks as follows: “In the joy of my heart
30. I will give her [all her desire]”; and he caused her to be united publicly with his country.⁷⁹; and moreover my ambassador
31. [he honoured?] like men ... when he had seen [him], and he honoured him, and ever did Nimmûriya
32. [place him] in the front rank; and since he honoured the embassy, so among the houses which [he gave] to TaduKhêpa
33. [my daughter, he placed] my [servants] all of them, and he made (them) dwell round about.⁸⁰ and in the midst of my ambassadors, who entered
34. [his country]. There was nothing which Giliya [my ambassador did not obtain?]: gold which he gave a thousandfold in weight
35. ... Nimmûriya gave to [Tadu]khêpa and TaduKhêpa
36. [gave to Giliya?] whatsoever he desired, and [Giliya] my ambassador did Nimmûriya in friendship
37. [exalt and] honour: then [Nimm]ûriya sent Nisag his ambassador
38. [on account of TaduKhêpa] my darling sister, and along with [Nisag] he sent slaves to my presence [and] objects of gold
39. of gold ... of Giliya; and ever
40. [Nimmûriya] returned my friendship, [and] my ambassadors
41. I (?) did not send to the slaves
42. among the slaves when he sent
43. he did not despatch to me, and ... I despatched; an *object* (?) it had not; and so

⁷⁵ Literally “like yourself.”

⁷⁶ Literally “made illustrious.”

⁷⁷ *Khâmasi*.

⁷⁸ We must read *itamar*.

⁷⁹ Literally “he performed the affiliation of that (lady) in public with his country.”

⁸⁰ *Zikkhirti* for *'sikhirti*. *Sasba*, “he made dwell,” is the permansive Shaphel.

44. [Nimmû]riya, thy father, in all the words [he had], one subject for vexation did not leave.
45. [The words] which I speak, all of them, ... and a wish I do not utter. Teie
46. [knows the truth of] what I speak, and ask Teie thy [mother] if among the words which I speak
47. (there is) one word of falsehood ... him did Nimmûriya thy father [honour?], and
48. Nimmûriya thy father made brotherhood [and league?] with me, and Nimmûriya thy father
49. did [not] say: At last the gold which [thou desirest] I have forwarded⁸¹ to the land of Khani-rabbat; and when I went down and
50. he did not send the [gold which] I asked for, [to] future [days] it was left in the keeping of Nimmûriya
51. thy [father]; and Nimmûriya said to [my] envoy: Furniture (and) objects of gold, a profusion of everything
52. [which] my brother has asked for, which was left [here], which [I have agreed to give] and which my father agreed to give, I [now] send to you.
- 53 [And] so Nimmûriya thy father never changed his word to a non-word;
54. [through what] he said in words never did he cause vexation.
55. [Now] they say that Nimmûriya has died,⁸² and what they have said
56. has distracted my heart,⁸³ and I wept on that day,
57. [on my throne] I did [not] sit.⁸⁴ Bread and water on that day I did not [take], and I was sad,
58. [and] I [said]: If he is dead, in the land of my beloved (sister) and among my [servants] are the objects (of gold), and
59. [his son will succeed him?], and he loves me; or if he is alive with the god⁸⁵ and ..., we love
60. [one another, and on] that account in our hearts we are [not] distant (from each other).
61. [And now to] me the eldest son of Nimmûriya by Teie his wife
62. has made [offers of alliance and brotherhood] and has spoken thus: Nimmûriya is not dead
63. [since Napkhururi]ya [his] eldest son by Teie his chief wife (sits) in his place and
64. will never at all alter [his] words from their place (but they shall remain) as before.
65. [Now to] my [brother] I say as follows: [Artat?]ama my brother whom we love in our hearts

⁸¹ We must read *u-se-its-tsi*.

⁸² Literally “has gone to his destiny.”

⁸³ Such seems to be the signification of the text. The verb *ultebsil* is literally “caused to seethe.”

⁸⁴ [*At*]tasab.

⁸⁵ It is unfortunate that the mutilation of the text makes it impossible to state with certainty what is the context of this interesting phrase.

66. [I have sent to? Napkhûriya] the son of Nimmûriya his father [whom I] honour on account of Teie his mother, who [was chief] wife
67. [of Nimmûriya] (and) loved (him) during the reign of (his) father, in order that she may *repeat* (?) the words before Napkhûriya,
68. [even the words of Nimmû]riya her husband, very earnestly, whom we love.
69. Since [Nimmûriya] formerly sent an embassy to [me] when he dismissed Giliya, and
70. [further] sent Manê [as ambassador], and my brother despatched objects of wood, and also gold
71. [saying] that it (is) not gold and that I have not brought (it)
72. immediately from before the king
73. Nimmû[riya] my brother forthwith [despatched the object]s which my brother gave to me,
74. [saying, Take it?] since I dig [the mines] very laboriously,
- 75 and I [answer] thus: Nimmûriya my brother the presents
76. despatched [to me], which Napkhûriya my brother, whom [I love], has not increased above him
77. and what he despatched; and since
78. and before Manê I was vexed
79.
80. [the presents] which my brother forwarded and
81. [I convened] my nobles, saying: With my brother in [friendship]
82. [I am united, as his fathers with] my fathers in sooth and with his fathers
83. [my fathers; I have received] the gifts which my brother has sent and
84. we have rejoiced exceedingly and kept a day of festival.
85. he fixed ourselves, and in the [time] of night thou thyself
-

10. Letter Of Dusratta To Amenophis III

OBVERSE

1. [To] Nimmuriya the great king, the king of Egypt, [my] brother,
2. my son-in-law, who loves me, and whom I love
3. it is said as follows: Tusratta, the great king, thy father in law
4. who loves thee, the king of Mittanni, thy brother.
5. Unto myself (is) peace; unto thee may there be peace, to thy house,
6. to my sister,⁸⁶ and to the rest of thy wives, to thy sons,
7. to thy chariots, to thy horses, to thy noble(s),

⁸⁶ That is to say, his daughter Tadukhepa, who being the wife of his “brother” had thus become his sister.

8. to thy country and to thy property may there be abundant peace!
9. Until the time of thy fathers, they with my fathers were in closest
10. alliance;⁸⁷ since then thou hast perfected⁸⁸ (it), and with my father
11. wert in exceedingly close alliance.
12. Now thou, since (thou) and I love one another,
13. hast established (it) ten times more than in my father's time.
14. May the gods direct them,⁸⁹ and this our alliance
15. may Rimmon⁹⁰ my lord and Amanum⁹¹ for ever as now
- 16, *confirm* (?).
17. And when my brother sent Manê his ambassador,
18. saying: O my brother, let thy daughter be my wife
19. and mistress of the land of Egypt, I did not vex the heart⁹²
20. of my brother and spoke publicly according to (his) wish,⁹³
21. and her whom my brother asked for I showed to Manê,
22. and he saw her. When he had seen her he much approved⁹⁴ of her;
23. and in peace in the country of my brother may I know her:
24. may Istar and Amanum according to the heart of my brother advise her!
25. Giliya my messenger reported unto me the words of my brother.
26. When I heard (them) it was very good, I rejoiced very
27. exceedingly saying: Verily unto me has this favour happened,⁹⁵ and
28. whereas in consequence of the alliance that (was) between us we loved (each other),
29. now in consequence of these words we shall love (each other) for ever.
30. When I had sent to my brother and had said thus: As for me,
31. very exceedingly do we love (each other) and in alliance
32. we have been friendly; then to my brother I said thus: My brother
33. has honoured me ten times above my father!
34. And I asked much gold of my brother saying: Above my father

⁸⁷ Literally "loved."

⁸⁸ Literally "fulfilled" (it).

⁸⁹ If the copy is correct, Dusratta must have written "them" in mistake for "us."

⁹⁰ Called Tessubbe or Tessupa, in the language of Mitanni, as we learn from a letter of Dusratta which is written in that dialect. The name is written Tessupa in an Assyrian letter of Dusratta (W. 24. 79.)

⁹¹ The Egyptian Amon.

⁹² So Zimmern.

⁹³ *Animâ*, "favourably." Dr. Zimmern renders *ina panatimma* ("publicly") "in joy," considering it to stand for *ina banatimma*.

⁹⁴ *Yuttehizzi*, in correct Assyrian *yuttehi's'si* from *nanâdu*, "to honour."

⁹⁵ Literally, "been made to enter."

35. may my brother set me and may my brother send (it) to me.
36. And to my father didst thou send much gold;
37. an oblation-dish of solid gold and a cup⁹⁶ of solid gold didst thou send to him;
38. a brick of gold like molten bronze didst thou send to me.
39. I sent Giliya on an embassy to my brother and [much] gold
40. I asked for saying: As for me may my brother
41. above my father honour me, and much gold
42. which cannot be counted may he send me,

REVERSE

1. may my brother send me more than to my father.
2. And then I said thus to my brother: Thy standard,
3. which my grandfather made saying: As for me, that
4. it may last I have *painted* the work *red* (?), I have constructed (it) again for thee;
5. and thereupon I further said: The gold which my brother will send
6. let him send for the dowry.
7. Again my brother sends gold (and) I say thus:
8. The amount is much,⁹⁷ for the supply of the amount is much; and unto the (fitting) quantity
9. it reaches, for thus it reaches exactly unto the (fitting) quantity;
10. and on this account I have rejoiced greatly, and for all
11. that my brother has sent for this I have rejoiced exceedingly.
12. Now again I send to my brother, and may my brother
13. grant me friendship above what (he granted) to my father. Now
14. have I asked gold of my brother, and the gold which of my brother
15. I have asked, has twice been asked for,⁹⁸ once
16. because of thy standard and a second time for the dowry.
17. And, O my brother, gold in good earnest which cannot be counted
18. may my brother send unto me, and may my brother send more gold than (he sent) my father,
19. since in the midst of the country of my brother gold is as plentiful as dust.
20. May the gods reveal⁹⁹ it, and as at present in the country
21. of my brother gold is plentiful, so ten times more than at present

⁹⁶ *Sakharratu*.

⁹⁷ *Mâtus*.

⁹⁸ Literally, "goes twice to be asked for."

⁹⁹ Literally, "dismiss."

22. may he extract gold; and may the gold, which I have asked for, in the heart of my brother
 23. not cause vexation, and O my loved one, my heart let not my brother
 24. vex, but let my brother the gold which cannot be counted
 25. in good earnest send unto me!
 26. And whatsoever my brother desires let him send for to the house where it is, and
 27. let (the messenger) go and I will give the present which my brother has asked for.
 28. This country (is) my brother's country, and this house (is) my brother's house.
 29. Now I send my ambassador Giliya to my brother, and let my brother
 30. not detain him. Let him dismiss him with a costly present, and let him go.
 31. May I rejoice very exceedingly when I hear of my brother's present;
 32. may I hear for ever of my brother's present.
 33. And as for this letter¹⁰⁰ which we have sent may Rimmon¹⁰¹ my lord
 34. and Amanum¹⁰² direct them,¹⁰³ and unto their destination
 35. may they attain, and as (things are) at present so may they continue with them.
 36. As at present we love (one another), so, as at present,
 37. for ever may we love (one another)!
 38. Now for a present to my brother, one goblet of gold set with crystals
 39. (around) its cup; one heavy necklace of 20 crystal beads, and 19 (beads) of gold,
 40. in its centre a crystal (amulet) encased in gold; one heavy necklace of 42 *khulalu* stones
 41. (and) 40 gold beads, the metal of which (is) ... of Istar, (in) its centre an (amulet)
 of *khulalu* stone cased in gold;
 42. 10 pairs of horses; 10 chariots of wood, together with their furniture;
 43. and 30 eunuchs I have sent for a present to my brother.

11. Letter Of Dusratta To Amenophis IV

OBVERSE

1. To Napkhurruriya the king of Egypt,
2. my brother, my son-in-law, who loves [me],
3. and (whom) I love, it is said
4. as follows: Dusratta, king of the country of Mittani,
5. thy father-in-law, who loves thee, speaks thus:

¹⁰⁰ Literally, "words."

¹⁰¹ Tessubbe in the language of Mitanni.

¹⁰² Amon.

¹⁰³ The scribe forgets that he has written the feminine *amâtum* in the preceding line, and uses the masculine *sunuti*, as if "messengers" had been spoken of.

6. Unto myself (is) peace; unto thee may there be peace,
7. unto thy houses, Teie thy mother, and the land of Egypt,
8. to Tâdukhêpa my daughter, thy wife,
9. to the rest of thy wives, to thy sons, to thy soldiers
10. and thy chariots, to thy horses, to thy men,
11. to thy country and to all that thou hast, may there be very abundant peace!
12. Pirizzi and Pupri my ambassadors
13. I have sent to my brother to explain, and
14. have addressed them with great trouble and earnestness,
15. and I have sent them *in a body* (?)¹⁰⁴;
16. and this speech beforehand
17. I make to my brother: Manê, thy ambassador
18. I detain, and Umeatu my messenger. ...
19. I will dismiss, and the prophet¹⁰⁵ shall go [to thee].
20. And now my brother to [their own land?]
21. has not permitted them to go, but has detained them
22. overmuch. Wherefore has he not
23. protected the ambassadors? They have fled, and (there is) guilt
24. on my brother in respect of the ambassadors. Why is his heart
25. [angered]? Why has he *spoken* (?) before the face of ...
- 26 [Pup]ru has not returned and he has *spoken* (?).
27. ... his offers of alliance he does not listen to.
28. [Yet I,] O son-in-law, (am) verily thy father-in-law.

Lacuna.

Last paragraph:—

1. And as regards the frequent intercourse which with thy father
2. I had Teie thy mother knows the facts;
3. no one else knows the facts;
4. but after Teie thy mother thou knowest them, and
5. what he said to thee. As thy father with me
6. was friendly, so now, O my brother again
7. with me thou art friendly, and what (is) contrary thereto no one,
8. O my brother, listens to.

¹⁰⁴ *Mi'sûsamma*; but the reading is not certain.

¹⁰⁵ *Asip*.

Ancient Babylonian Agricultural Precepts

Introduction

Translated by G. Bertin

The tablet which contains the agricultural precepts is one of the series called by the Babylonians, from the first line of the first tablet, *uludinebisu* = *ana itti-su*,¹ formerly read *ki-kankala-bi-su* = *ana itti-su*. This collection, which must have contained at least ten or twelve tablets, was a compendium of precepts and prescriptions written at an early date in Akkadian for the guidance of the people in their various professions.² The work, as we know it from the fragments in the British Museum, is accompanied with a Babylonian translation, probably of the time of Sargon of Agade; and the fragments recovered are those of a Ninevite transcription made in the time of Assurbanipal for his library.

The tablets are divided into two columns, the left-hand one giving the Akkadian and the right-hand one the translation. The first six tablets and part of the seventh contained what may be called the commentary, that is, the list of the most difficult words and expressions, with explanations or translations. The notion, strange at first sight, of beginning with the commentary, appears natural when we bear in mind that these works were the text-books of the Babylonians, which they had to copy in order to master their complicated system of writing and the literary Akkadian language³; the text-book therefore began, as in our reading-books for children, with simple expressions or isolated words; the learner having acquired these, next undertook and understood without difficulty the connected text.

These tablets contained no laws, as has been sometimes stated, but precepts drawn, perhaps by a philosopher like Confucius or Mencius, from the customs and usages of the time. The seventh tablet contained "Precepts for a man in his private life."⁴ The agricultural precepts covered no doubt more than one tablet; the only one we possess is partly mutilated, and, the colophon being lost, we do not know what place exactly it occupied in the collection. What we possess, however, strange to say, has never been entirely published; the fragments found at first were published by the trustees of the British Museum,⁵ and a fragment found afterwards was published by Dr. Haupt.⁶ No complete translation of the fragments has been attempted,⁷ no doubt because the tablet was considered to be a list of unconnected words and sentences; some of the paragraphs have, however, been incidentally explained in order to support the interpretation of other texts.⁸

¹ E. G. Pinches.

² *S. B. A.*, vol. viii. part 2; *Akkadian Precepts*, pp. 4 and 5.

³ An exercise book (on clay) has been found in which some parts of these tablets have been copied three times over for practice; this fragment of a copy-book is now in the British Museum.

⁴ *W. A. I.*, ii. pl. 10, and v. pls. 24 and 25. It is the tablet which revealed to me the real character of this collection. See my paper which contains a translation of it; it must be remembered that our knowledge of Akkadian has made great progress since its publication. A mutilated tablet of "Commercial Precepts," which belong probably to the same collection, is published, *W. A. I.*, ii. pl. 13.

⁵ *W. A. I.*, ii. pls. 14 and 15.

⁶ *Keilschrifttexte*, p. 74. In the same publication Dr. Haupt has also republished the two first columns, pp. 71–73; it is difficult to see why he has not also republished the other parts, so as to make the publication complete.

⁷ Prof. Sayce has given in the *Records of the Past*, vol. xi. p. 153, the translation of the fourth column nearly complete.

⁸ The difficult passages have been generally omitted, and in the vocabularies already made public many words found in these texts are left out.

In the following translation the Akkadian has been taken as the standard text, but it has often been necessary to follow the Babylonian translation. Some parts of the translation are doubtful, partly on account of the mutilated state of the text and partly because, as many words are not found anywhere else, we have no means of testing their signification,⁹ and some paragraphs are still obscure.

Text

ANCIENT BABYLONIAN AGRICULTURAL PRECEPTS

COLUMN I

(First paragraph lost.)

II. In the sixth month¹⁰ of the year, he (the agriculturist) marks his establishment.

III. He agrees about the covenant.

IV. He completes the wording of the covenant.

V. He collects his tax-gift and surrounds the field with hedges.

VI. He brings together the gazelles (his flock) and gathers the birds.

VII. [He is to work] from dawn to dusk.

VIII. When the time of the working of the field comes, he ploughs, rakes, and divides it.

IX. For every sixty measures of grain the farmer takes eight measures, wheat produce, straw in stokes, grain thrashed and winnowed.

X. Field of half. In this case a field of culture is merely for culture.

XI. He (the agriculturist) goes as associate to his associate.

XII. He ploughs the field, he keeps his seeds, he takes the birds together, and gathers manure.

XIII. He waters the field and multiplies the seeds.

XIV. When the time of working the field comes he ploughs and rakes it, and the overseer reports to the lord of the field.

XV. Field of partnership. He (the agriculturist) takes a field of partnership with the lord of the field.

XVI. Everything is made equal and on the same footing; man as man, house as house, seed as seed.

XVII. When the time of working (reaping) comes, the master sends from his place as help a long cart, an ox for thrashing the corn; and the corn of the field ...

(One paragraph lost.)

COLUMN II

(Three paragraphs lost.)

⁹ I may also state that the translation is free, as my object is to give the meaning of the text and not that of the isolated words; I reserve the discussion of the words for a critical paper, where the text can be reproduced.

¹⁰ Only the Akkadian text of this paragraph remains; it is interesting to note that the month is designated by a number, as in some of the omen and astronomical tablets.

- IV. He draws water.¹¹ for the field ...
- V. He takes possession of the field.
- VI. He fences with sticks the ground to be ploughed.
- VII. He has the field ploughed and rakes it.
- VIII. He waters it once and twice.
- IX. He fixes hooks for the pails for drawing water.
- X. When the time of working comes, in a field of fifths the farmer takes one part.
- XI. As for the other divisions, he takes the percentage according to the division.
- XII. In a field of a third, he takes a third.
- XIII. In a field of a fourth, he takes a fourth.
- XIV. In a field of a fifth, he takes a fifth.
- XV. In a field of a tenth, he takes a tenth.
- XVI. As for the tithe, he gives one part as tithe to the palace.

(One paragraph lost.)

(REVERSE.)—COLUMN III

- I. Of property.
- II. Various kinds of divisions (*or* land tenures):
 - division of half,
 - division of a third,
 - division of a fourth,
 - division of a fifth,
 - division of a tenth,
 - division with a tithe.
- III. Furnitures and fixtures:
 - furniture of the palace,
 - fences,
 - sticks for fences,
 - poles,
 - threshold,
 - ploughing instruments,
 - ploughing instruments of the field,
 - poles of the plantation.
- IV. Enclosure (*or* garden):

¹¹ The paragraph is mutilated, it may refer to the establishment of some irrigating instrument.

enclosure of the palace,
 enclosure of the lord,
 enclosure of the associate.

V. He (the agriculturist) marks the limit of his garden.

VI. He indicates the limit of the garden by means of boundary stones.¹²

VII. He plants date-trees in it.

VIII. He waters the young plants.

IX. He strengthens the walls.

X. He completes the paling of the garden.

XI. The lord of the garden may give to the farmer his dismissal.

XII. He pulls up the paling of the garden.

XIII. He extends one enclosure to the other.

XIV. He strengthens the walls.

XV. On the thirtieth of the eighth month,¹³ in fine weather.

XVI. At the time of drying dates.

XVII. At the time of pulling off the paling.

XVIII. In order to quit himself he delivers to the lord of the plantation two-thirds of the dates.

XIX. He takes a fixed amount and he sends in money the amount of the produce of the date-trees.

(A paragraph lost.)

COLUMN IV

I. He makes secure the door and the gate.

II. The servants' (*or* working) house and the dwelling house [also].

III. He establishes for a dwelling his dwelling house as such.

IV. Until the house is built, he prepares the beams and makes the foundations.

V. He gathers together the beams which have been cut.

VI. He arranges in rows the chief beams.

VII. He strengthens the old house with bricks and sets up the uprights.

VIII. When he does not work in the fields, he works in the house.

IX. He makes a small house in the middle of the garden.

X. He lays down the intermediary wall of his foundation.

XI. He puts a roof over the wall he has devised.

XII. He makes first the house of the man.

¹² Or palings.

¹³ In Akkadian the month *Apin*.

XIII. Let him hold himself cautioned once and twice, even if he is not told so.

XIV. He works and toils for himself.

XV. He pays the wages at the time of the cessation of work.

XVI. If his wall is not constructed strongly, he must not set up props.

XVII. The house of comfort must be a house for his comfort.

XVIII. He makes a house as a (proper) house for a man, as (becoming to) a man.

XIX. If the house is not arranged as a proper house, he shall pay a fine of ten shekels.

(Two or more paragraphs and the colophon are lost.)

The tablet from which the above is a translation is of great importance as giving us information and particulars as to the system of land tenure and cultivation of the land in the early Akkadian period. The tablet speaks first of the simple tenure, and it shows (Paragraph II) that the tenure was to begin legally from the sixth month, that is the Babylonian *Ululu*. The end of that month is no doubt meant, and it would tend to confirm the opinion that at an earlier date *Tisritu* was the first and *Ululu* the last month of the year, though the Babylonians might have had an agricultural year, as we have a financial year, a scholastic or university year, etc. After having chosen the farm and agreed to the conditions of the contract, the first step of the farmer was to determine his position towards the treasury, for, among the Babylonians as among us, the payment of the taxes is a proof of the legality of the holding. After that the farmer had to gather his live stock. The tablet says "gazelles," and so carries us back to the earliest period, for the ox and sheep did not come originally from Babylonia, and the first animal domesticated there must have been a kind of gazelle which was found wild in the country. In the tablet, however, the word "gazelle" is no doubt taken to mean any kind of quadruped; in the same way the word "birds" designates here domesticated birds,—doves, ostriches, and at a later period hens, which were introduced a long time before the Persian conquest.¹⁴ Being once established in his farm, he is to give all his time to it.

After these preliminaries about tenure in general come the specifications about the various kinds of tenure. The first spoken of is the tenure by half, as it is called; it appears to signify the properties which used to belong half to the lord and half to the peasant who was attached to the soil as serf. In that case the farmer worked for his master, he kept the live stock and the seeds, but everything was controlled by the agent of the landlord. In the field of partnership, on the contrary, the landlord was placed on the same footing as his tenant; if the latter gave his labour, the former had to provide him with the material, implements, utensils, stock, grain, seeds, etc.

After a lacuna of a few paragraphs the tablet speaks of the various works to be performed by the agriculturist or farmer. The tenure of a fifth, or the tenure in which the farmer took a fifth of the produce for himself, was probably the most common in early times, and for this reason is mentioned here; but we also get an account of the percentage to be taken in the other sorts of tenure. To understand this we must suppose that the character of the tenure depended on the quality of the land; in very bad land the farmer was obliged to take a third of the produce to be able to subsist and be prepared for the next season.

The first paragraphs of Column are devoted to what might be termed "legal specification." They enumerate the various sorts of tenure, what are furnitures and fixtures, and the four sorts of garden, probably private gardens independent of the farm land. Then we are told

¹⁴ I have found on a Babylonian contract tablet, two centuries older than Cyrus, the representation of a cock.

about the general field work to be performed independently of the growing of seeds. The farmer may dissolve partnership or resign his contract at the end of the eighth month or Marcheswan, in fine weather, or at the time of drying the dates, or when the palings are to be pulled out, but only on certain conditions.

Column IV speaks of the works to be performed independently of the field works, and contains very interesting statements; for instance, the farmer was obliged to construct first the house of his workmen; we are even told that if the house is not constructed properly he will have to pay a fine. It is also stated that the farmer must pay his men when the work is finished.

Part of Paragraph XIX and the colophon are lost at the end of the fourth column, but it is probable that these precepts covered at least another tablet.

Before closing it is needful to remark again that the tablet of agricultural precepts did not contain laws but only precepts; in the time of the Babylonian Empire these were no doubt consulted by the lawyers, but the progress of civilisation had rendered some of the prescriptions impracticable, and, as is shown by the contract tablets recovered from Babylon, the laws of land tenure had become much more complicated.

The India House Inscription Of Nebuchadrezzar The Great

Introduction

Translated by The Rev. C. J. Ball

Whether we suppose that this famous relic of the past embodies the *ipsissima verba* of the great king, in whose name and by whose orders, at all events, it was written and graven in imperishable stone; or that it is the set panegyric composition of some one of the literary men of his brilliant court; will make little difference to the deep interest which such a monument must always inspire in the minds of thoughtful readers of the prophecies of Jeremiah and the picturesque traditions of the book of Daniel. Here we have an unquestionable relic of the age of the fall of the Jewish monarchy and the brilliant sunset of Hebrew prophecy: an authentic record, preserved almost intact in its original shape, of the very sovereign whom Jeremiah declared to be Jehovah's chosen servant, and whom, consequently, it was Judah's duty as well as highest political wisdom to obey. And not only this. The inscription paints for us in unfading colours a portrait of the man Nebuchadrezzar; it exhibits in the vivid light of actuality his pride of place and power and greatness, his strong conviction of his own divine call to universal empire, his passionate devotion to his gods, his untiring labours for their glory and the aggrandisement of that peerless capital which was their chosen dwelling-place.

The style of the inscription is elevated almost to the level of poetry; and the phraseology often recalls familiar expressions of the Old Testament. If I have not noted all such coincidences as they occurred, it was because I felt that they were too obvious and striking for even a cursory reader to miss.

In correcting my former version (*Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, Dec. 1887) I have, of course, made use of the other inscriptions of the king. The beautifully written cylinder, numbered 85-4-30. I, Brit. Mus., has supplied several important corrections of the text. (See *Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, March 1889.)

Some of the Accadian ideograms and words I have succeeded in explaining and illustrating by means of their Chinese representatives, as will be seen from the notes (cp. my papers in *Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, entitled *The New Accadian*).

Text

THE INDIA HOUSE INSCRIPTION OF NEBUCHADREZZAR

COLUMN I

1. Nebuchadrezzar
2. king of Babylon,
3. the prince exalted,
4. the favourite of Merodach,
5. the pontiff supreme,
6. the beloved of Nebo,

7. the serene, the possessor of wisdom,
8. who the way of their godhead
9. regardeth,
10. who feareth their lordship;
11. the servant¹ unwearied,
12. who for the maintenance²
13. of Esagilla and Ezida³
14. daily bethought him, and
15. the weal of Babylon
16. and Borsippa
17. regardeth ever;
18. the wise, the prayerful,
19. the maintainer⁴ of Esagilla and Ezida,
20. the chiefest son
21. of Nabopalassar,
22. king of Babylon, am I.
23. After that the lord my god had created me,
24. that Merodach had framed
25. the creature in the mother;
26. when I was born,
27. when I was created, even I,
28. the holy places of the god I regarded,
29. the way of the god I walked in.
30. Of Merodach, the great lord, the god my creator,
31. his cunning works
32. highly do I extol.
33. Of Nebo, his true son,
34. the beloved of my majesty,

¹ Or minister, *i.e.* of the gods. The Accadian ideogram is *foot + man*; somewhat like the Chinese *foot + firm*, pronounced *kân* (= *kín*), “a servant.” But Chinese actually possesses an identical ideogram in the term *fu* (= *bu* or *ba*), “to sit in state,” “to make a low obeisance,” “to sit cross-legged in worship”; a character compounded of *foot + man*. David “sat before the Lord” in prayer (2 Sam. vii. 18). This, at least, favours the opinion that *sagganakku* or *sakkanakku* meant a priestly rather than a secular personage; and that when Sargon called himself *sagganak Bâbili*, he meant not “Machthaber,” but “high-priest of Babylon.”

² Literally “fillings,” “filler” (*zanânu* is a synonym of *malû*, *Rich Cyl.* i. 17, 18).

³ The chief temples of Babylon and Borsippa. E-sagilla, the temple of Bel-Merodach, also contained a shrine dedicated to Nebo, called “E-zida of E-sagilla” (*Cyl. A.H.*, 82-7-54. 1042, col. i. 31).

⁴ Literally “fillings,” “filler” (*zanânu* is a synonym of *malû*, *Rich Cyl.* i. 17, 18).

35. the way of his supreme godhead
 36. steadfastly do I exalt;
 37. with all my true heart
 38. I love the fear of their godhead,
 39. I worship their lordship.
 40. When Merodach, the great lord,
 41. lifted up the head of my majesty and
 42. with lordship over the multitude of peoples invested me; and
 43. Nebo, the overseer of the multitude of heaven and earth,
 44. for the governing of the peoples
 45. a righteous sceptre
 46. placed in my hands:
 47. for me, of them I am heedful,
 48. I have regard unto their godhead;
 49. for the mention of their glorious name,
 50. I worship the god and Ishtar.⁵
 51. To Merodach my lord I made supplication,
 52. prayers to him I undertook, and
 53. the word which my heart looked for,
 54. to him I spate:
 55. "Of old, O prince, lord of all that is!
 56. for the king whom thou lovest, and
 57. whose name thou callest,
 58. that to thee is pleasing;
 59. thou leadest him aright,⁶
 60. a straight path thou appointest him.
 61. I am a prince obedient unto thee,
 62. a creature of thy hands;
 63. thou it was that madest me, and
 64. with sovereignty over the multitude of the peoples
 65. didst invest me;
 66. according to thy goodness, O Lord,
 67. wherewith thou crownest

⁵ The cylinder 85-4-30. 1, establishes this reading of the ideogram.

⁶ Literally "thou directest his name."

68. all of them.
69. Thy lordship supreme do thou make loving,⁷ and
70. the fear of thy godhead
71. cause thou to be in my heart!
72. Yea, grant that to thee is pleasing,

COLUMN II

1. for my life truly thou makest.”
2. Himself; the leader glorious,
3. the open-eyed of the gods, the prince Merodach,
4. my supplications heard and
5. received my prayers.
6. Yea, he made gracious his supreme lordship,
7. the fear of his godhead
8. he implanted in my heart;
9. to draw his car (?).⁸
10. he made me submit the heart;
11. I worshipped his lordship.
12. In his high trust,⁹
13. to far-off lands,
14. distant hills,
15. from the Upper Sea
16. to the Lower Sea,¹⁰
17. immense journeys,
18. blocked ways,
19. a place where the path is broken,
20. feet are not;
21. a road of hardships,
22. a journey of straits,
23. I pursued, and

⁷ Cp. ii. 6. The meaning is, “Show thyself kind or gracious.”

⁸ Cp. the words of Assurbanipal: “The yoke, the wood (= implement) of drawing, I made them (the conquered kings) put on; to the temple they drew beneath me” (i.e. drew me in my chariot): 5 R. 10.29.30a. See also *Phillipp's Cyl.*, i, 11, 12. “Unto Merodach . I reverently submitted; to draw his car I bowed the neck:” and I, 61, below.

⁹ Or, lofty confidence. The word *tukultu* coincides in form and meaning with the Ethiopic *tukelt*, “trust,” “confidence,” “hope”; and “his trust” is equivalent to “trust in him” (obj. genit.)

¹⁰ [Lake Van and the Persian Gulf.—Ed.]

24. the unyielding I reduced,
25. I fettered the rebels.
26. The land I ordered aright, and
27. the people I made to thrive;
28. bad and good
29. among the people I removed.¹¹
30. Silver, gold, glitter of precious stones,
31. copper, *mismakanna*-wood, cedar
32. what thing soever is precious,
33. a large abundance;
34. the produce of mountains,
35. the fulness of seas,
36. a rich present,
37. a splendid gift,
38. to my city of Babylon
39. into his presence I brought.
40. In Esagilla,
41. the palace of his lordship,
42. I wrought repairs.¹²
43. Ekua, the cell
44. of the lord of the gods, Merodach,
45. I made to glisten like suns
46. the walls thereof;
47. with large gold,
48. like rubble (?) stone,¹³
49. with *uknû*.¹⁴ and alabaster,
50. the habitation of the house I overlaid.
51. The gate Khilisu, even the Beautiful Gate,
52. and the gate of Ezida (and) Esagilla,

¹¹ Or, deported, carried away, cp. 2 Kings xvii. 6.

¹² Literally “fillings,” as at i. 12.

¹³ I only guess the meaning of *imtû* from the context. Solomon “made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones,” 1 Kings x. 27. Is *imtû* a noun of the form *ikribu*, from the root *matû*, “to strike,” “break” (= LAL)?? Some common material must be meant; but unfortunately the reading “stone” is not certain. (See Amiaud and Méchineau, *Tabl. Comp.*, No. 145 note.)

¹⁴ The Accadian ZAGIN is a compound term, denoting simply “bright,” “pure,” “white,” and as such might be applied to various valuable stones, such as jade, jasper, onyx, and other veined and coloured quartzose stones, of which *uknû* may have been a specific kind.

53. I had them made brilliant as the sun.
54. The bright seat, the place of them that determine destinies, .
55. which is the Quarter of Assembly, the chapel of the Fates,
56. wherein, at Zagmuku,¹⁵ the opening of the year,
57. on the 8th day (and) the 11th day,
58. the divine king, the god of heaven (and) earth, the lord of heaven,
59. taketh up his abode;
60. the gods of heaven (and) earth
61. with awe submit unto him;
62. they bow, they take their stand before him;
63. a destiny of enduring days,
64. as the destiny of my life,
65. they predestine in the midst (thereof):—

COLUMN III

1. that chapel, a chapel of majesty,
2. the chapel of the lordship
3. of the open-eyed of the gods, the prince Merodach,
4. whose fabric a former king
5. in silver had fabricated,
6. with shining gold, a splendid decoration,
7. I overlaid it.
8. The vessels of the house Esagilla
9. with large gold,—
10. the Bark of Merodach with *Zarirû*-stones,—
11. I made bright,
12. as the stars of the heavens.
13. The temples of Babylon
14. I made, I filled.
15. Of Etimmen-ana-ki¹⁶
16. in burnt brick (and) fine *uknû* stone,
17. I reared its summits.
18. To make Esagilla

¹⁵ From the Accadian ZAG, “head,” i.e. beginning, and MU, “year.”

¹⁶ [Meaning, in Accadian, “The house of the foundation-stone of heaven and earth.”—Ed.]

19. my heart lifted me up.¹⁷;
20. in chief have I regarded it.
21. The choicest of my cedars,
22. which from Lebanon,
23. the noble forest, I brought,
24. for the roofing of Ekua,
25. the cell of his lordship,
26. I looked out, and my heart vowed..¹⁸
27. The huge cedar-beams
28. for the roofing of Ekua
29. with shining gold I overlaid.
30. The panels under the cedar of the roofing
31. with gold and precious stones
32. I made bright.
33. For the making of Esagilla
34. daily I besought
35. the King of the gods, the Lord of lords.
36. Borsippa the city of his abode
37. I beautified, and
38. Ezida, the Eternal House,
39. in the midst thereof I made.
40. With silver, gold, precious stones,
45. copper, *mismakanna*-wood,¹⁹ cedar-wood,
42. I finished the work of it.
43. The cedar of the roofing
44. of the cells of Nebo
45. with gold I overlaid.
46. The cedar of the roofing of the gate of Nanâ,
47. I overlaid with shining silver.
48. The bulls, the leaves of the gate of the cell,

¹⁷ This phrase is found in Hebrew, Exod. xxxv. 21–26.

¹⁸ Literally “spake,” “sware”; i.e. resolved to devote them to this use.

¹⁹ Mismakanna or Mishmakanna, which looks like “Makan-wood,” (Makan being the Sinaitic Peninsula, or perhaps the east side of the Delta see Sayce, *Hilbert Lectures*, p. 31, note 2), is perhaps the origin of the Biblical *shikmîm*, Amos vii. 54 (St. Luke xvii. 6).

49. the lintels, the bars, the bolt,²⁰
50. the door-sill,²¹ *Zarirû*-stone.
51. The cedar of the roofing
52. of its chambers (?)²²
53. with silver I made bright.
54. The path to the cell,
55. and the way to the house,
56. (was of) glazed (?) brickwork.
57. The seat of the chapel therein
58. (was) a work of silver.
59. The bulls, the leaves of the gates,
60. with plates of bronze (?),
61. brightly I made to glisten.
62. The house I made gloriously bright, and,
63. for gazings (of wonder),
64. with carved work²³ I had (it) filled.
65. The temples of Borsippa
66. I made, I filled.
67. Of the House of the Seven Spheres of Heaven and Earth,
68. in burnt bricks, (and) gleaming *uknû* stone,
69. I reared the heads thereof.
70. The Bark of the river of Gan-ulu,²⁴
71. the car of his princeliness

COLUMN IV

1. the Bark of the Way of Zagmuku,
2. the festival of Babylon,
3. its sides
4. (and) the pavilion within it,
5. I overlaid

²⁰ The ideogram is (GIS) ES-GAN-RU, *shoot + bar + long*. The last character, RU, is explained “to be long, of a pole.” It is composed of the signs U, *earth* + GU, *ox*; like the Chinese *mau*, *mu*, “bolt,” “sliding part of a lock,” a character compounded of *ox* + *earth* (ngu + du).

²¹ With the Accadian KANA, cp. Chinese *kan*, and *k'an*, “threshold,” “door-sill,” sometimes fixed, sometimes movable.

²² Perhaps related to the Heb. *debîr*, or inmost recess of the temple.

²³ With *lulû*, which is probably of Accadian origin, cp. the Chinese *lau*, old *lu*, “to carve,” and *luh*, *luk*, ditto.

²⁴ Apparently this means “perennial abundance,” or “flow.”

6. with *Tîrisassû*-stone.
7. The House of the Drink-offering, the exalted resting-place
8. of the lord of the gods, Merodach,
9. the master of the revels and rejoicings
10. of the Igigi and the Anunnaki,²⁵
11. on the ramparts of Babylon,
12. with bitumen and burnt brick
13. mountain-high I erected.
14. the great house, E-dimmer-nin-khar-shagga,
15. in the heart of Babylon,
16. for the Great Goddess, the Mother that made me,
17. in Babylon I built.
18. For Nebo, the exalted Messenger,
19. who bestowed a righteous sceptre
20. for governing all habitable places,
21. E-shapa-kalama-simma, his house,
22. in Babylon,
23. with bitumen and burnt brick
24. I constructed the structure thereof.
25. For Sin,²⁶ that brighteneth
26. my boundary walls,
27. E-gishshir-gal, his house,
28. in Babylon I made.
29. For Shamash, the Judge Supreme,
30. who putteth the righteous purpose²⁷ in my mind,
31. E-sakud-kalama, his house,
32. in Babylon,
33. with bitumen and brick
34. loftily I made.
35. For Rimmon,²⁸ who causeth abundance
36. in my land, E-nam-ghe, his house,

²⁵ [The spirits of heaven and earth.—Ed.]

²⁶ The Moon-god. *Sin* means “bright.”

²⁷ The Accadian terms ALAM SHIG mean “bright or pure image,” and so “pure, right thought, desire, or design.” Cp. the old Chinese *lam*, “to see, perceive,” *lam*, “desirous,” and *shing* “bright,” “pure,” “holy.”

²⁸ [The Air-god.—Ed.]

37. in Babylon, I built.
38. For Gula that spareth,
39. that fostereth my life,
40. E-sa-bad, E-kharsagella,
41. her houses in Babylon,
42. with bitumen and burnt brick
43. in fair wise I built.
44. For the Dame of the House of Heaven,
45. the lady that loveth me,
46. Ekikukus, her house,
47. in the purlieus of the wall of Babylon
48. loftily I made.
49. For the Son of the House, that shattereth
50. the sword of my foes,
51. his house in Borsippa I made.
52. For Gula, the Lady
53. that maketh whole my flesh,
54. Egula, Etila, Ezibatilla,
55. her three temples,
56. in Borsippa I made.
57. For Rimmon, that raineth
58. the rain of plenty in my land,
59. his house in Borsippa
60. in fair wise I built.
61. For Sin, that lifteth²⁹ the snare
62. of my welfare,
63. E-dim-anna, his house,
64. at the side of the precinct of Ezida
65. splendidly I made.
66. Imgur-bel
67. and Nimitti-bel,
68. the great ramparts of Babylon³⁰

²⁹ Or, "beareth away," "removeth": cp. *Sarg. Cyl.* 57, where the same god is called "exposer of snares," and Ps. xci. 3.

³⁰ The river of Babylon.

- 69. which Nabopolassar,
- 70. king of Babylon, the father that begot me,
- 71. had made and not finished
- 72. the work of them;

COLUMN V

- 1. whose moat he had dug, and
- 2. the two strong walls
- 3. with bitumen and burnt brick
- 4. had constructed along its bank;
- 5. the dykes of the Arakhtu³¹
- 6. had made, and
- 7. a fence of burnt brick
- 8. (on) the other side of Euphrates
- 9. had constructed, and
- 10. had not finished
- 11. the rest;
- 12. from the Bright Seat,
- 13. the place of them that determine destinies,
- 14. the shrine of the Fates,
- 15. unto A-ibur-shabu,
- 16. the causeway of Babylon,
- 17. before the Gate of Beltis,
- 18. with brick (and) *tur-mina-banda*³² stone,
- 19. along the way of the great lord Merodach
- 20. he beautified the road.
- 21. As for me, his eldest son,
- 22. the beloved of his heart,
- 23. Imgur-bel
- 24. and Nimitti-bel,
- 25. the great ramparts of Babylon,
- 26. I finished;

³¹ See Herod. i. 180.

³² This Accadian term recurs, with a different initial sign, in line 43. Those who know the difficulty of identifying the precious stones and trees mentioned in the Old Testament will not be surprised to find that similar difficulties exist in cuneiform documents. It may be that the material here mentioned (lines 18, 43) is only some kind of glazed or coloured brick, with a double determinative prefix (*brick+ stone*).

27. beside the scarp of its moat,
28. the two strong walls,
29. with bitumen and burnt brick I built, and
30. with the wall (which) my father had constructed,
31. I joined (them), and
32. the city, for cover,
33. I carried (them) round.
34. A wall of burnt brick,
35. at the ford of the setting sun,
36. the rampart of Babylon
37. I threw around.
38. Â-bur-shabu,
39. the causeway of Babylon,
40. for the way of the great lord Merodach,
41. to a high elevation
42. I raised,³³ and
43. with brick (and) *dur-mina-banda* stone,
44. and stone, the work³⁴ of mountains,
45. Â-ibur-shabû,
46. from the Shining Gate
47. to Ishtar that hurleth down them that assail her,
48. for the way of his godhead
49. I made fair, and
50. with what my father had done
51. I connected (it), and
52. I beautified
53. the road
54. of Ishtar, that hurleth down
55. them that assail her.
56. Of Imgur-bel
57. and Nimitti-bel
58. the portals, on both sides,
59. through the raising

³³ Literally “with a high filling I filled up.” Cp. the Latin expression *agger viae*.

³⁴ *i.e.* yield, or produce.

60. of the causeway of Babylon

61. had become low

62. in their entries:

63. those portals

64. I pulled down, and

COLUMN VI

1. over against the water their foundation

2. with bitumen and burnt brick

3. I firmly laid, and

4. with burnt brick (and) gleaming *uknû* stone,

5. whereof bulls and dreadful serpents

6. were made, the interior of them.³⁵

7. cunningly I constructed.

8. Strong cedar beams

9. for the roofing of them

10. I laid on.

11. Doors of cedar

12. (with) plating of bronze,

13. lintels and hinges,

14. copper-work, in its gates

15. I set up.

16. Strong bulls of copper,

17. and dreadful serpents, standing upright,

18. on their thresholds I erected:

19. those portals,

20. for the gazings of the multitude of the people,

21. with carven work I caused to be filled.

22. As an outwork³⁶ for Imgur-bel,

23. the wall of Babylon, unapproachable,

24. (what no king before me had done;)

25. at four thousand cubits off,

³⁵ Or perhaps, "the interior of them, which was made with (or into) bulls and dreadful serpents, cunningly I constructed." The relative clause sometimes precedes its antecedent.

³⁶ Cp. viii. 42; ix. 40. The Accadian GIN ME denotes that which *turns back battle* (GIN = *târu*, ME = *takhâzu*), in this case an outer wall.

26. on the flanks of Babylon
27. from afar unapproachable,
28. a mighty rampart, at the ford of the sunrising,
29. Babylon I threw around.
30. Its moat I dug, and the bank of it
31. with bitumen and brick
32. I bound together, and
33. the mighty rampart on the marge of it
34. mountain-high I built.
35. Its portals broad
36. I constructed, and
37. the doors in cedar, with plating of bronze,
38. I set them up.
39. That foes might not present³⁷ the face,
40. the bounds of Babylon might not approach;
41. great waters,
42. like the volume of the sea,
43. the land I carried round, and
44. the crossing of them
45. (was) like the crossing of the great sea,
46. of the briny flood.
47. An outburst of that within them
48. not to suffer to befall,
49. with a bank of earth
50. I embanked them, and
51. walls of kiln-brick
52. I threw around them.
53. The ward skilfully
54. did I strengthen, and
55. the city of Babylon
56. I made a fortress.
57. Dhâbi-suburshu,
58. the wall of Borsippa,

³⁷ Reading *la babil*; see *Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, March 1889. Col. iii. 30 (*la ba-bi-il*).

59. anew I made.
60. Its moat I dug, and
61. with bitumen and burnt brick
62. I fenced its bank.
63. Nebuchadrezzar,

COLUMN VII

1. king of Babylon,
2. whom Merodach, the great Lord,
3. for the weal of his city
4. Babylon did call, am I.
5. Esagilla and Ezida
6. like the brilliance of the sun I made shine.
7. The temples of the great gods
8. like day I made bright.
9. Formerly, from the days of yore
10. to the reign
11. of Nabopalassar, king of Babylon,
12. the father that begot me,
13. the many kings my predecessors,
14. whose name the god
15. named for the sovereignty;
16. in their favourite cities,
17. in a place they determined on,
18. palaces they built themselves,
19. they set up their abode.
20. Their wealth within
21. they heaped up;
22. they piled their substance.
23. On the feast of Zagmuku,
24. the merrymaking of the lord of the gods, Merodach,
25. they entered Babylon.
26. From the time that Merodach created me,
27. for sovereignty;
28. (from the time that) Nebo his true son
29. committed his subjects (to me);

30. like dear life
31. love I the building of their lodging-place:
32. Besides Babylon and Borsippa,
33. I did not beautify a city.
34. In Babylon,
35. my favourite city, which I love,
36. the palace, the house of the gazings of the people,
37. the bond of the country,
38. the splendid mansion,
39. the abode of royalty,
40. in the land of Babylon,
41. that is in the midst of Babylonia,
42. from Imgur-bel
43. to Libil-khegalla,
44. the canal of the sunrising,
45. from the bank of the Euphrates
46. to A-ibur-shabû;
47. which Nabopalassar
48. king of Babylon, the father who begot me,
49. with sun-dried brick had erected, and
50. dwelt therein;
51. by the waters of a flood
52. its foundation was weakened, and
53. through the raising
54. of the causeway of Babylon,
55. of that palace
56. low had become the gates of it:
57. its walls of³⁸ sun-dried brick
58. I pulled down, and
59. its record I uncovered, and
60. the bottom of the water I reached;
61. over against the water its foundation
62. I firmly laid, and

³⁸ Literally "a substance of."

63. with bitumen and burnt brick

COLUMN VIII

1. I reared it high

2. as the wooded hills.

3. Stout cedars for the roofing of it

4. I laid on.

5. Doors of cedar

6. (with) a plating of bronze,

7. sills and hinges

8. of copper-work, in its gates

9. I set up.

10. Silver, gold, precious stones,

11. everything that is prized,

12. is magnificent;

13. substance, wealth,

14. the ornaments of majesty,

15. I heaped up within it;

16. strength, splendour,

17. royal treasure,

18. I hoarded within it.

19. Because the establishment of my royalty

20. in another city

21. my heart loveth not;

22. in no dwelling-places

23. built I an abode of lordship:

24. riches (and) the ornaments of royalty,

25. I place not

26. among the lands.

27. In Babylon,

28. a stead for my abode,

29. for the insignia of my royalty,

30. was not to be found.

31. For that the fear of Merodach my lord

32. was in my heart,

33. in Babylon,

34. his fenced city,
 35. to make large
 36. the seat of my royalty,
 37. his street I altered not,
 38. his chapel I demolished not,
 39. his canals I filled not up;
 40. a stead far and wide
 41. I looked for.
 42. For an outwork³⁹
 43. to Imgur-bel,
 44. the wall of Babylon, unapproachable,
 45. at 490 cubits off,
 46. on the flanks of Nimitti-bel,
 47. The outer wall of Babylon,
 48. for cover
 49. of the two strong walls,
 50. with bitumen and burnt brick
 51. a rampart mountain-like I made. And
 52. betwixt them
 53. a structure of burnt brick I constructed, and
 54. on the top of it a great stead,
 55. for the seat of my royalty,
 56. with bitumen and burnt brick
 57. loftily I made, and
 58. with my father's palace I joined (it), and
 59. in a salutary month, on a lucky day,
 60. the foundation of it in the bosom of broad Earth
 61. I firmly laid, and
 62. the top of it I reared
 63. high as the wooded hills.⁴⁰
 64. On the 15th day, the work of it
 COLUMN IX

³⁹ *ganû, kanû*, Accadian GIN "bar," "barrier," "bulwark," "wall," answers to the old Chinese *gan, gin*, "outer wall," "bank," "barrier," and the like.

⁴⁰ For this distinction, see 2 R. 46, No. 2, 29, 30, where it is applied to palms.

1. I finished, and
2. made splendid the seat of lordship.
3. Strong male cedars,
4. the growth of high mountains,
5. huge female cedars,
6. and cypresses,
7. costly stones glittering,
8. for the roofing of it I laid on.
9. Doors of *mismakanna*,
10. cedar, cypress,
11. *ushû*⁴¹ and ivory,⁴²
12. the frame of silver (and) gold,
13. and the plating bronze;
14. the thresholds and hinges
15. copper-work
16. in the gates of it I set up, and
17. with a cornice of *uknû* its tops
18. I surrounded.
19. A strong wall
20. in bitumen and burnt brick
21. mountain-like I threw around it.
22. On the flanks of the wall of brick,
23. a great wall
24. with huge stones,
25. the yield of great mountains,
26. I made, and
27. like mountains
28. I raised its heads.
29. That house for gazings
30. I caused to be made, and,
31. for the beholding of the multitude of the people,

⁴¹ The Accadian DAN, “hard,” “strong,” is like the old Chinese *dan* (modern *t’an*), which denotes several kinds of hard-wood trees, including sandal-wood.

⁴² The Accadian KA-AMA-SI(G) = *mouth* + *wild-ox* + *horn*, which is the ideogram for “ivory,” recalls the Chinese *k’au*, “mouth,” *ma*, an obsolete name of the yak or wild-ox, and *siang*, “elephant,” “ivory,” as well as *si*, “rhinoceros” (written *ox* + *tail*).

32. with sculptures I had (it) filled.
33. The awe⁴³ of power, the dread
34. of the splendour of sovereignty,
35. its sides begird, and
36. the bad unrighteous man
37. cometh not within it.
38. That no foe might appear,⁴⁴
39. on the sides of the wall of Babylon
40. a bulwark against him⁴⁵
41. I built afar, and
42. the city of Babylon
43. I made strong
44. as the wooded hills.
45. To Merodach, my lord,
46. I made supplication, and lifted up my hands:
47. “Merodach, lord, open-eyed of the gods,
48. glorious prince!
49. Thou it was that createdst me, and
50. with the sovereignty of a multitude of peoples
51. didst invest me.
52. Like dear life
53. I love the exaltation of thy lodging-place:
54. besides thy city of Babylon
55. In no place
56. have I adorned a city..⁴⁶
57. Like as I love
58. the fear of thy godhead,
59. (and) seek unto thy lordship;
60. favourably regard the lifting up of my hands,
61. hear my prayers!
62. I verily am the maintaining king,

⁴³ *baltu* (from the same root as *balak*, i. 47. “I heed or care for,” “regard,” cp. Arab. *bala*). The phrase might be rendered “heed of wrath.”

⁴⁴ Literally “present face,” as at vi. 40 *supra*.

⁴⁵ Literally “the bulwark of his battle I carried to a distance” (from the inner wall); cp. vi. 40; viii. 42.

⁴⁶ Borsippa was no exception, being part of Babylon.

- 63. that maketh glad thine heart;
- 64. the careful servant,
- 65. that maintaineth⁴⁷ all thy town.

COLUMN X

- 1. At thy behest,
- 2. O merciful Merodach,
- 3. may the house I have made
- 4. therewith⁴⁸ endure! and
- 5. with the fulness of it may I be satisfied, and
- 6. within it
- 7. hoar age may I reach!
- 8. May I be satisfied with offspring!
- 9. Of the kings of the world,
- 10. of all men,
- 11. their heavy tribute
- 12. may I receive within it!
- 13. From nadir to zenith,
- 14. (and) where the sun riseth,
- 15. may I have no enemies,
- 16. foemen may I possess not!
- 17. My posterity within it!
- 18. for evermore
- 19. over the Blackheads⁴⁹ may they rule!”

⁴⁷ See note on i. 12, 19 *supra*.

⁴⁸ i.e. with Merodach's town, Babylon itself, ix. 65. Cp. ix. 54 *sqq.*

⁴⁹ The Blackheads were the aboriginal population of Babylonia, *i.e.* the Accadians. The Chinese anciently bore the same title, a fact which is one of the innumerable proofs of their Accadian origin. The meaning appears to be black-haired; though the expression is said to refer to the colour of their caps or kerchiefs. The Chinese still call themselves by several synonymous titles meaning the black-haired folk.

Contract-Tablets Relating To Belshazzar

Introduction

Translated by the Editor

The three contracts which follow are among the numerous cuneiform documents of the same class the publication of which we owe to the indefatigable labours of Dr Strassmaier. They are published in his *Babylonische Texte: Inschriften von Nabonidus*, i., iii., Nos. 184, 581, and 688, and are interesting on account of their references to Belshazzar, the eldest son of Nabonidos, whose name is written in Babylonian Bilu-sarra-utsur, "O Bel, defend the king." It is especially curious to learn from one of them that the heir-apparent to the throne had to conform to the same legal obligations as the meanest of his subjects. Security was exacted by him for the payment of a debt, a portion of the security being a house inhabited by a Persian. As Persian slaves are mentioned in other deeds of the period it is possible that the Persian in question was a slave. At all events the notice of him proves that there were Persians living in Babylon before the conquest of the country by Cyrus. The third document, it will be observed, is dated six years before the overthrow of Nabonidos and the entrance of Cyrus into Babylon.

Text

CONTRACT-TABLETS RELATING TO BELSHAZZAR

No. I

A house belonging to Nebo-akhi-iddin, the son of Sulâ, the son of Egibi, which adjoins the house of Bel-nadin, the son of Rimut, the son of the *soldier* (?).¹ has been handed over (by Nebo-akhi-iddin) for 3 years to Nebo-yukin-akhi the secretary² of Belshazzar, the son of the king, for 1½ manehs of silver, sub-letting of the house being forbidden, as well as interest on the money. (Nebo-yukin-akhi) undertakes to plant trees and repair the house.³ At the expiration of the 3 years Nebo-akhi-iddin shall repay the money, namely 1½ manehs, to Nebo-yukin-akhi, and Nebo-yukin-akhi shall quit the house in the presence of Nebo-akhi-iddin. The witnesses (are) Kabtiya, the son of Tabnêa, the son of Egibi; Tabik-zira, the son of Nergal-yusallim, the son of Sin-karabi-isime; Nebo-zira-ibni, the son of Ardîa; and the priest Bel-akhi-basa, the son of Nebo-baladhsu-iqbi. (Dated) Babylon, the 21st day of Nisan, the 5th year of Nabonidos king of Babylon.⁴

No. II

The sum of 20 manehs of silver for wool, the property of Belshazzar, the son of the king, which has been handed over to Iddin-Merodach, the son of Basâ, the son of Nur-Sin, through the agency of Nebo-tsabit the steward of the house⁵ of Belshazzar, the son of the king, and the secretaries of the son of the king. In the month Adar, of the 11th year (of Nabonidos), he

¹ *Kîkî*; in the account of the Deluge (l. 169) Bel is called *qurad kîkî*, "the warrior of the *kîkî*."

² *Amel'sipiri*. In the reign of Darius we hear of a certain Ablâ, who was "royal prince and secretary to the princes of the new palace."

³ That is to say, to keep the garden and house in order.

⁴ B.C. 551.

⁵ *Rab-biti*.

gives the money, namely 20 manehs. The house of ... the Persian⁶ and all his property in town and country shall be the security of Belshazzar, the son of the king, until he shall pay in full the money aforesaid. The money which he shall (meanwhile) make upon [the property] (?),⁷ he shall pay as interest. Witnessed by Bel-iddin, the son of Rimut, the son of the soldier (?); Etilpi, the son of ... the son of the father of the house; Nadin, the son of Merodach-[sum-utsur], the son of the superintendent of the works; Nergal-yusallim, the son of Merodach-[edir], the son of Gasura; Merodach-natsir, the son of Samas- ..., the son of Dabibi; and the priest Bel-akhi-iddin, the son of Nebo-baladhsu-iqbi. (Dated) Babylon, the 20th day of the month ..., the 11th year of Nabonidos king [of Babylon].⁸

No. III

One maneh 16 shekels of silver capital and interest, the property⁹ of Nebo-tsabit-idâ, the steward of the house of Belshazzar, the son of the king, which (he owes) to Bel-iddina, the son of Bel-sum-iskun, the son of Sin-tabni, and the seed grown in sight of the chief gates (of Babylon) which has been taken as security (for it). The money, namely 1 maneh 16 shekels, Nebo-tsabit-idâ, by the agency of Itti-Merodach-baladhu, the son of Nebo-akhi-iddin, the son of Egibi, has presented to Bel-iddina. The witnesses (are) Nebo-iddina, the son of Rimutu, the son of Kîkî;¹⁰ Bel-iddina, the son of Bel-sum-iskun, the son of Sin-tabni; Nebo-zira-esir, the son of Ina-essu-edir, the son of the *Umuk*;¹¹ Nadinu, the son of Merodach-iddin-akhi; Nergal-yusallim, the priest, the son of Merodach-edir, the son of Gasura. (Dated) at Babylon, the 27th day of the second Adar,¹² the 12th year of Nabonidos king of Babylon.¹³

⁶ *Par'su*.

⁷ Literally "the money as much as upon [the property] he shall *fill up* (?)." Perhaps we should read *isabsû*, "he shall acquire," instead of *imir-sû*.

⁸ B.C. 545.

⁹ Read *rasutu*.

¹⁰ Written here as a proper name.

¹¹ An officer who seems to have had something to do with the beginning of the year.

¹² The intercalary month Ve-Adar.

¹³ B.C. 544.

The Kings Of Ararat

(Biainas or Van):—

B.C.

The earlier dynasty ends with Arame cir. 857–840

1. Sarduris I, the son of Lutipris, founds the city of Dhuspas (Van) and the later dynasty 840
 2. Ispuinis, “the settler,” his son Ispuinis and his son Menuas together. ?
 3. Menuas alone ?
 4. Argistis I, his son 780
 5. Sarduris II, his son ?
 6. Ru’sas I, called Ur’sa by the Assyrians 730
 7. Argistis II 715
 8. Erimenas, his son ?
 9. Ru’sas II, his son 660
 10. Sarduris III. 645
- Ararat conquered by Media 610 (?)

The Kings Of Persia

B.C.

1. Akhæmenês (Hakhâmanish) —
2. Teispes (Chaispaish), his son. He conquers Susiania and rules in Anzan cir. 600
3. Ariaramnês (Ariyârâmna), son of Teispes, in Persia —
3. Kyros I (Kuras), son of Teispes, in Anzan —
4. Arsamês (Arshâma), son of Ariaramnês, in Persia —
4. Kambysês. I (Kamujyiya), son of Kyros, in Anzan —
5. Kyros II, or Agradatês, son of Kambysês, in Anzan. He conquers Media, and founds the Persian empire 550
6. Kambysês II, his son 529
7. Gomatês (Gaumata) the Magian, the pseudo-Bardes or Smerdis, usurps the throne for seven months 521
8. Dareios (Dârayavaush), son of Hystaspês (Vishtâspa) and grandson of Arsamês 521
9. Xerxes I (Khshayârshâ), his son 485
10. Artaxerxês I (Artakshatra) Longimanus, his son 465
11. Xerxes II, his son, for 2 months 425
12. Sogdianos, his half-brother, for 7 months 425
13. Dareios II Nothos (Okhos), his brother.¹ 424
14. Artaxerxes II Mnêmôn, his son.² 405
- Revolt of Kyros the younger 401
15. Okhos (Uvasu), son of Artaxerxes 362
16. Arsês his son 339
17. Dareios III Kodomannos 336
- Conquered by Alexander 330

THE END

I'm Julie, the woman who runs [Global Grey](#) - the website where this ebook was published. These are my own formatted editions, and I hope you enjoyed reading this particular one.

¹ A cuneiform tablet, however, gives the length of the reigns of Dareios II, and Artaxerxes II, as respectively 29 and 36 years.

² A cuneiform tablet, however, gives the length of the reigns of Dareios II, and Artaxerxes II, as respectively 29 and 36 years.

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