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ARTICLE VII.

EGYPTOLOGY, ORIENTAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND TRAVEL.

BY JOSEPH P. THOMPSON, D. D., NEW YORK.

In the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for October, 1862, some account was given of Dr. Henri Brugsch's *Recueil de Monuments Egyptiens*, with special mention of a new confirmation of Herodotus by the discovery of a Phœnician *Astoreth* worshipped at Memphis. The second volume of this work contains a still more remarkable confirmation of Galen, through the discovery at Memphis of a portion of the medical library, which the Greek father of therapeutics describes as contained in the temple of Ptah, in that city. It has long been known to savans that a papyrus discovered at Memphis some thirty years ago, by Mr. Passalacqua, and now among the treasures of the Royal Museum of Berlin, was a treatise on *Materia Medica*, and in 1853, Dr. Brugsch published, in the *Allgemeine Monatschrift für Wissenschaft und Literatur*, a memoir based upon this manuscript, and treating of the knowledge of medicine in ancient Egypt. Mons. F. Chabas of Chalon-sur-Saone, an eminent Egyptologist, published a dissertation upon the same manuscript, in his *Mélanges Egyptologiques* of 1862.¹ And now, at the instance of many European scholars, Dr. Brugsch publishes the entire manuscript in *fac simile*, with copious annotations.²

It covers twenty-three large quarto pages, and is in a remarkably perfect state. In the original, two of these pages are written upon the reverse. The manuscript is divided by M. Chabas into three parts, and these again, according to Brugsch, are subdivided into sections, each indicated by a brief title in red ink. Chabas estimates that it contains not less than a hundred and seventy distinct medical prescriptions, applicable to a great variety of diseases, and though these may not put us in possession of many forgotten remedies, they will serve to enrich the vocabulary of medicine with a variety of technical terms.

According to Diodorus Siculus, the Egyptian physician was bound to follow the code prescribed in these books, under severe penalties if a case should terminate fatally through some adventurous treatment of his own. "Medici enim annonam ex publico accipiunt, et medicinam ex lege scripta, per multos ab antiquo medicos illustres concinnatam, applicant. Si leges, quas sacri codicis lectio tradit, secuti aegroto sanitatem reddere nequeant, culpa vacant, et indemnes abeunt; sin contra præscriptum agant, capitis

¹ *Mélanges Egyptologiques*, onze Dissertations; Paris: M. Benj. Duprat, 1862.

² *Recueil de Monuments Egyptiens*, par Doctor Henri Brugsch. Deuxième Partie. Leipzig: 1862.

judicium subeunt. Nam medendi rationem longi temporis usu observatam et ab optimis artificibus ordinatam paucos ingenio et solertia superaturos legislator censuit." ¹

The remarkable papyrus now published by Dr. Brugsch is probably one of the books to which Diodorus refers. The date is assigned to the fourteenth century before our era; but in the course of the manuscript are citations from previous documents dating from the age of the pyramids, so that we have here the medical science of Egypt from the most remote antiquity. Dr. Brugsch has availed himself of the collaboration of Dr. Emmerich of Berlin, in determining the names and the properties of the remedies prescribed in this unique materia medica; but of course many of these are obscure, their equivalents not being found in the Coptic. A great variety of herbs are identified, nine different species of trees, such as the cedar and the sycamore-fig; nearly twenty-five salts and alkaline substances — common salt, nitre, etc; and of liquids — which are indicated by a vase or by undulating lines — wine, honey, oil, milk (human milk as well as that of the cow and of the goat), vinegar, and urine, besides some twenty others not clearly distinguished. Animal excrements are an important item in these prescriptions, and are classified as the excrement of the ass, the cat, the lion, the goose, the crocodile.

This will seem less offensive if we consider how extensively the same article is used for fuel in the East. There are traces of this in the Old Testament (2 Kings vi. 25, and Ezekiel iv. 15). The Egyptians also used for medicament various parts of the animal, the blood, the raw-flesh, the fat, the horn, and in some cases the whole creature, as the lizard and certain kinds of fish. These compoundings remind one of the witches' cauldron in Macbeth.

The tables of diseases and their remedies are of interest chiefly to physicians, and therefore belong appropriately to a journal of medicine. But a few examples may be given here, to illustrate the sanitary condition of ancient Egypt, and the manners of her people. Diseases of the chest, dropsy, inflammation, etc, appear to have been common; also a disease whose symptoms suggest neuralgia, for which the specific is an ointment compounded of beef-tallow and the excrement of the bird *Tef*. An unknown disease named *serj* figures largely in the papyrus, and commands several pages of prescriptions. It appears to have been a frequent and violent malady. Tumors and diseases of the skin seem to have been prevalent, and ointments, liniments, cataplasms, friction, laving, etc., were common specifics.

The subject of generation is treated with a freeness and vulgarity quite shocking to occidental tastes; and the most absurd and disgusting devices of charlatanism are gravely recorded as medical tests. Indeed both Dr. Brugsch and Mons. Chabas declare that decency forbids the translation of some of the instructions given for such cases. "Le Latin ne braverait pas

¹ Dio, B. I. sec. 82.

assez l'honnêteté pour rendre ce que je comprends dans la première phrase."¹

Pliny² informs us that the Egyptians in their medical practice imitated the ibis in the use of its hooked beak as a syringe; and this ancient papyrus makes frequent mention of the clyster in its prescriptions. A common beverage in sickness was a sweet, light beer, brewed from two kinds of grain, which was used also as an offering to the gods.

Even more curious than this medical papyrus is the *Warrant for the Arrest of Fugitive Slaves*, of which Mons. Chabas furnishes a *fac simile*, with a translation and a commentary.³ Six slaves belonging to prince Atefamen, a son of Rameses II, had run away, and had taken refuge in in Sutennen. A functionary named Afner, was sent to capture them and this papyrus contains the report of his proceedings.

"My master having ordered me to go in quest of six slaves of prince Atefamen which were at Sutennen, I first interrogated their companions, and charged Neferho, the charioteer, to bring them. Then I reported myself at Sutennen, and there found Piai, a slave of the military chief, — also one Kenhikhopeschef slave of prince Atefamen [probably men sent in advance to aid in the capture of the runaways], these brought with them six men taken in the workshop of the son of the intendant of the royal treasure [probably runaways from another master]; they have returned to fetch the others, and I write to inform my master, requesting him to send before the judge those who ought to be arraigned, together with the witnesses. The slaves have been registered at Memphis, and there also those belonging to Mer-en-Ptah, son of the military chief, will be taken for trial, unless my master shall order him to send them back to their work."

From this document and from collateral sources, Mons. Chabas infers that the proprietors of slaves were obliged to register them in a list kept by the government, and disputes with regard to such ownership must be brought before the judges. The right of masters was not absolute. It was not by virtue of orders from the owner of the slaves that search was made for them; but by the authority of a high functionary, to whom the result is reported, and from whom instructions are sought for further proceedings.

The silence of Egyptian monuments and records with regard to the Hebrews and their exodus has been a perplexity to Biblical scholars, and a ground of caviling to unbelievers. No attempt to identify the Hyksos or shepherds of Manetho with the Israelites has yet satisfied all the conditions of both the Hebrew and the Egyptian historians. But M. Chabas is of opinion that this silence is at length broken; and that he has discovered a distinct mention of the Hebrews in official Egyptian records. He first argues, with reason, that in the monumental inscriptions, which are but official bulletins of the triumphs and splendors of the Pharaohs, it is vain to look for any mention of checks sustained by the arms or the pol-

¹ Chabas, p. 70.

² Pliny, B. VIII. c. 41.

³ *Mélanges Egyptologiques.*

icy of Egypt; but that the records on papyrus, now so abundantly in our possession, may furnish some clue to the Hebrews, since these consist of both official and private correspondence, military reports, surveys of public works, accounts, inspections, legends, in short, of details the most various and familiar with regard to the organization and the manners of Egypt under the Pharaohs. It is to be presumed that a productive colony held by force upon the soil of Egypt, and employed upon various public works, would find some mention in these records. Assuming that Rameses II. was the Pharaoh who elevated Moses, the most of the hieratic papyri now known were written at about the epoch of the Exodus; and M. Chabas arrives at the conclusion that a sound criticism of Manetho, as illustrated from the monuments, requires us to place the wonderful increase of the Hebrews, the systematic oppression and violence pursued toward them, and finally their illustrious deliverance, in the reign of the earlier Rameses.

Under what form, then, should we look for a designation of the Israelites in the papyri of this period? The term "children of Israel" was not an ethnic but a religious designation, like "the seed of Abraham," the "sons of Jacob." The name *Israelite* does not occur in either Genesis or Exodus,¹ while the name *Jew* belongs of course to a much later period.² But the name *Hebrew* appears quite early, and must have been regarded by the Egyptians as the proper ethnic designation of the oriental race held as captives in the Delta. And since the Egyptian scribes represented Semitic words with great fidelity, we may look with a good degree of confidence for some trace of the Israelites under this name.

Of course it is not to be supposed that Egyptian traditions concerning this people would at all correspond with the miraculous events recounted in Exodus. But in the scriptural account are purely historical facts which accord perfectly with what we know of Egyptian usages. They were employed in building the cities of Pithom and Rameses, in making brick and cement, and in the most exacting labors of the field. That this was the use to which the Egyptians put their prisoners of war, is evident from the many texts in which their kings make it a merit before the gods, that they had secured so many captives to labor upon the temples. Now, there are three documents which mention a foreign race under the hieroglyphic title *APERIU-U*, who were employed upon such works; and two of these belong precisely to the reign of Rameses II.

Upon principles of comparative philology which he discusses at length, M. Chabas makes this hieroglyphic group, *Aperiu-u*, a transcription of עִבְרִיִּים *HIBERI-M*, excepting only the final plural, which the Egyptians never imitated. In the first of these documents the scribe Kauisar makes a return to his superior, the scribe Bek-en-Ptah, in these words: "I have obeyed the command which my master gave me, to provide subsistence for the soldiers, and also for the *Aperiu* who carry stone for the great Bekhen of king Rameses. I have given them rations every month, according to the excellent instructions of my master."

¹ It first occurs in Lev. xxiv. 10.

² After

The second is addressed by a scribe named Keniamen, to his master Kadjena Hui of the court of Rameses II., and is as follows: "I have obeyed the command of my master, and have furnished rations to the soldiers and also to the Aperiu who carry stone for the sun of the sun, Rameses Meriamen, to the south of Memphis."

The term "Bekhen" denotes every kind of building, temple, palace, or common house. But the use of the term in another papyrus may point to its meaning here; "His majesty has built a Bekhen, whose name is illustrious, which in its sumptuous arrangements resembles Heliopolis, and in the delights of life is like unto Memphis" This answers with the Biblical representation that "they built for Pharaoh treasure cities." The phrase "sun of the sun," Chabas regards as a metaphorical expression, or as a slip of the pen, for "the temple of the sun." Thus we find the Aperi-u, Hebrews, employed under Egyptian officers, in severe labors, building cities and temples south of Memphis. If this reading of M. Chabas shall be accepted by Egyptologists, it must be placed among the most remarkable confirmations of the Bible from contemporary sources.

Had Belzoni never written, Mr. A. H. Rhind F. S. A. would be the hero of Egyptian archaeology. His account of the discovery of the unrifled tomb of a Theban dignitary is as exciting to the antiquarian as was Belzoni's narrative to the popular mind; while the accessories of his story, incidents, sketches, descriptions, plates, and the beautiful mechanical execution of the volume, impart to it a real charm in spite of the author's involved and cumbrous style.¹ But the field of exploration among the monuments of Egypt has been so thoroughly canvassed, that the novelty of a discovery gives place at once to its value as an addition to our knowledge. After many fruitless attempts in the rock cemetery of el-Goornah at Thebes, Mr. Rhind's patience and ingenuity were rewarded by the discovery of a tomb dating probably from the fourteenth century before Christ. Its entrance is a chamber about eight feet high and as many broad, which penetrates the hill to a distance of fifty-five feet; at various points small lateral chambers diverge from this; but at its further extremity is "a tunnel, six feet high, which winds and slopes downward through the rock for about seventy feet, terminating at the edge of a shaft ten feet by six." Over this shaft are the beams and the ropes of palm fibres by which, ages ago, the dead were here lowered to their rest; and at the depth of twenty feet are four sepulchral chambers. All the other chambers in the tomb, though carefully closed and sealed, had been rifled, apparently by the Romans, since in one of them was found a common Roman lamp of terra cotta, with half-exhausted wick, as if left by the spoiler. It was evident also that the original occupants of these lower crypts had been dis-

¹ Thebes, its Tombs and their Tenants. By A. Henry Rhind, F. S. A. London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts.

placed for later comers, and that the perfect granite sarcophagus found in one of them did not contain the body for which it was originally made. The hieroglyphic groups show that this sepulchre belonged to the period of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties. But the mummy found in the sarcophagus dates back only to the first century before Christ. The scroll accompanying the body describes the person as one Sebau, a dignitary of the royal household, who was born in the thirteenth year of the reign of Ptolemy Philopater III., and died in the twenty-first year of Augustus Caesar. The mummy is in a perfect state of preservation, and affords one of the best illustrations of the funeral rites of that age. The head was crowned with a chaplet of copper, thickly gilt, with bay leaves of thin gold attached to it by pliant stalks. In the upper chamber was a canopy of wood, brightly painted and in perfect preservation. This was probably used to cover the body on the way to the tomb. These curious relics have been deposited by Mr. Rhind in the Royal Museum at Edinburgh; and we have the promise of a memoir upon the mummy from Mr. Birch of the British Museum.

Mr. Rhind also promises, at a future day, to favor us with his own conclusions upon the sepulchral rites of Egypt in their connection with general archaeology. His estimate of the labor of others in this field is given in the following ambiguous sentence: "Worker after worker has built a pharos on the great quicksands of oblivion which lies between it and us, but the solvent influence of advancing inquiry has deprived each in turn of cohesive power, causing it to sink down and leave no trace, unless its residuum containing substantial elements could make some addition to the accumulating foundations." But notwithstanding this vicious style, Mr. Rhind has succeeded in giving a distinct summary of the theories explanatory of Egyptian sepulture, and in convincing the reader that as yet too little is known to warrant very specific inferences in regard to the theology of the Egyptians from their sepulchral rites. He has also furnished some valuable data for the discussion of the subject, and by far the best description of the necropolis of Thebes with which we are acquainted.