

III. *On the Egyptian Stele, or Tablet.* By the REV. EDWARD HINCKS, D. D.
 (*Communicated by the President.*)

Read June 28, 1841.

OF the Egyptian monuments that are collected in European museums, there are none which ought to attract more attention than the *steles*, or funeral tablets; and yet I suspect that there are none which are more generally overlooked. They are certainly not so well calculated to arrest the attention of the uninitiated observer as many other objects; but they are much more likely to afford information. They in general record facts; and it not unfrequently happens that the facts recorded throw light on the history of the country, or on the state of society in it. Sarcophagi, on the other hand, mummy cases, sepulchral figures and cones very seldom determine any thing but the name and parentage of the deceased person whom they commemorate. The copious inscriptions, with which the former are often covered, contain merely extracts from the Ritual, or other general formulas, in which the names and offices of the deceased and of his parents are alone peculiar. There are some scarabæi, on which historical facts are recorded, and which are somewhat of the nature of medals. There is one, for example, in the museum at Liverpool, of which there is a duplicate at the Louvre, which records the name and parentage of the Queen of Amenothph III., and the northern and southern limits of his kingdom. These were probably sculptured in considerable numbers on the occasion of the marriage of that prince, which must have taken place when he was a mere child;* and which was in all probability an important political event, as transferring the actual government

* At the death of his father, this Amenothph and a twin brother, who shared with him the nominal sovereignty, were infants in arms; yet the scarabæi recording his marriage, are dated in the eleventh year of his reign.

from his mother to his wife or her father. There are other scarabæi of a similar nature; but the great majority of them are funereal, containing the name of a deceased person (or sometimes a blank for a name, the scarabæus having never been appropriated), followed by a speech from the Ritual respecting the heart of the speaker. The tablets, on the contrary, though essentially funereal, and containing much that is of a general nature, have, for the most part, a great deal which is peculiar to the deceased person. In this, they resemble our tombstones; and it is curious that they are of the same shape as those which we set up at the head of graves, and that they were set up in similar positions. Some tablets mention the King of Egypt whom the deceased person served, and the capacity in which he served him; some record the more important events in his life; some are dated either in the body of the inscription or at the top of the tablet, with the year of the king's reign, and often with the month and day of the month; and in some rare instances (would that they were more frequent!) the dates of the birth and death of the deceased person and the length of his life are all stated. I am aware of but two such tablets; but among the many which are in existence, that have not yet been examined, it is likely that there are others; and the immense importance of such tablets, which are probably the only means*

* Another means of equal value would exist, if we had records of the years of kings' reigns, in which the cyclical panegyries were held. These panegyries occurred at intervals of three years; ten of them forming a series, the *τριακοστιαετηρις* of the Rosetta stone. A tablet has been found at Silsilis, stating that a certain person presided over the first or grand panegyry in the thirty-first year of Rameses the Great, the second in his thirty-fourth year, the third in his thirty-seventh year, and the fourth in his fortieth year. Another tablet records that another individual presided over the sixth panegyry, in the forty-sixth year of the same king. Any of these records would prove that the first year of Rameses the Great was the first year of a *τριακοστιαετηρις*; and, of course, if the principles which I have endeavoured to establish elsewhere be correct, in a year B. C. of the form 1767—30 k. If now a record should be found of any given panegyry of the series occurring in any given year of any other king, the exact interval between the commencement of the two reigns could be determined from an approximate interval. Suppose, for example, that a record should be found of a grand panegyry occurring in the twenty-sixth year of Amenothph III. Knowing that the commencement of his reign was above 100 years before that of Rameses the Great, we should infer, that the interval between his twenty-sixth year and the first of Rameses, was ninety years; and, of course, that the interval between the beginnings of the two reigns was 115 years. Unfortunately, with the exception of the two tablets at Silsilis, I believe no record of this kind has been discovered.

by which the chronology of the Egyptian kings can be settled with accuracy, renders it highly desirable that they should be sought after.

In order to show the utility of tablets of this description, I will enter into some details respecting the two that are known; and I am the more disposed to do this, because a false inference has been drawn from one of them, and I believe the other has not been noticed by any one conversant with hieroglyphics.

One of these tablets, which is in the museum at Florence, records, that a person named Psammitich, was born in the third year of Necho, the tenth month, and first day; that he died in the thirty-fifth year of Amasis, the second month and sixth day; and that he lived seventy-one years four months and six days. When this tablet was first noticed, it was carelessly stated, that it counted seventy-one years from the third of Necho, to the thirty-fifth of Amasis; and from this it was inferred that there were thirty-nine years between the first of Necho and the first of Amasis. If, however, we take into account the months and days, we shall see that the true interval was forty years. This interval comprehends the reigns of three kings, the joint length of whose reigns is stated by Herodotus to be forty-seven years; by Africanus, from Manetho, to be thirty-one; and by Eusebius, who professes also to follow Manetho, to be forty-eight. We may judge of the degree of credit due to the Greek authorities by the gross blunders which they have, all of them, been detected in making, in this instance, where the truth is known from a cotemporary monument. We may likewise test their accuracy by the length of reign which they assign to Cambyses in Egypt. Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Eusebius, are all agreed that he conquered that country in the fifth year of his reign; and of course that he reigned over it only three or four years. Africanus alone gives him a reign of six years;* but in this he is corroborated by the express testimony of a cotemporary monument,

* Καμβύσης ἔτη εἰ τῆς ἰαυτοῦ βασιλείας Περσῶν ἰβασίλευσεν, Αἰγύπτου ἔτη ς'. So the text of Africanus exists in all MSS. and editions; but for εἰ I would read θ'; correcting a mistake, into which a transcriber might easily fall, and rendering the statement perfectly consistent with truth. I would also correct the text of Africanus, by substituting ις' for ς', as the length of reign of Necho II. This makes him agree as to the length of that reign with Herodotus; and as to the sum of the three reigns with the Florence tablet; for, where reigns are reckoned by complete years, months and days being neglected, the sum of sixteen, six, and nineteen years may be very well reduced to forty.

published by Mr. Burton;* and also by an obvious inference from the narrative in 2 Kings, xxiii, taken in connexion with the tablet above mentioned. Necho was king of Egypt before the death of Josiah, in 610, B. C.; but this could not have been the case, if Cambyses had only conquered Egypt in 525, B. C., as Amasis only reigned forty-four years, and Necho and the intermediate kings only forty. The true date of the death of Amasis, and of the conquest of Egypt by Cambyses, must therefore be 527, B. C.

The other tablet to which I have alluded is of the Ptolemaic age; and its dates are useful, not in determining the chronology of the reigns, which is already known from other sources,† but in ascertaining the power of a numeral character, which occurs for the first time in inscriptions of this age; and in determining to which of the Ptolemies a cartouche with certain titles belonged. This tablet belongs to Mr. Harris, of Alexandria, and it has been published by Mr. Sharpe, in the seventy-second and seventy-third Plates of his Egyptian inscriptions.

The person commemorated by this tablet was a priest at Memphis, named Psherin-phthah, son of a priest, who held a very high sacerdotal office, the name or precise nature of which I have not yet been able to ascertain. He is said to have been born in the $x + 5$ year of a Ptolemy, whose cartouche is



I have used the letter x to represent the unknown numeral, a bird's head, which is here accompanied by five vertical lines. He was born in the second month of this year, on the twenty-first day. When he was thirteen years old, his father died. He was promoted by Ptolemy "the new Osiris" (the Neo-Dionysus of the Greeks), in the tenth year of his reign, to the sacerdotal office which his father had held. After he had completed his forty-third year, he had his first

* An Egyptian functionary is said to have served under the Persians for *six* years of Cambyses, thirty-six of Darius, and twelve of Xerxes.—Burton Exc. Hier. 8.

† It appears from Ptolemy's canon, that the first year of Lathyrus was the 632nd of Nabonassar; the first of Neo-Dionysus, the 668th of Nabonassar; and the first of Cleopatra, the 697th of Nabonassar. Alexander's first year was 635, when his brother Lathyrus was driven to Cyprus; and the latter was restored to the throne of Egypt about 660.

son, who was named Imothph. He died, aged forty-nine years, in the eleventh year of Cleopatra and her son Cæsar, the eleventh month and twentieth day; and he was buried in the twelfth year on the thirtieth day of the first month. The usual interval between the death and burial was seventy days, and we see here that the Epagomenæ were not counted, being strictly *dies non*. His death took place, as appears from Ptolemy's canon, at the close of the 707th year of Nabonassar; and as he lived about forty-nine years, and was born at the beginning of a year, the year of his birth must have been the 659th of Nabonassar. This was the 25th year of Alexander, and certainly before the restoration of Lathyrus; as there is a papyrus at Berlin (Kosegarten, Plate XII.) dated in the twenty-sixth year of Alexander, the fourth month and nineteenth day; it is therefore certain that the cartouche above given, belongs to Ptolemy Alexander, though it does not contain his surname;* and that the bird's head, when used as a numeral, signified twenty.

It is a curious circumstance, that the tablet of the wife of this person, who was also his half-sister, is in the British Museum. It has been published by Mr. Sharpe in his 4th Plate; and by combining the information which the two tablets afford, we obtain much insight into the history of this family, which is perhaps not a bad illustration of Egyptian family history in general. It appears, that, after the death of the father of Psherin-phthah, his mother, Ho-onkh, married another priest named Hapi, by whom she had a daughter, Te-imothph, and a son, Imothph, who survived his half-brother and sister, and erected both their tablets. The first husband died when his son was thirteen years old, and therefore in the fifth year of Neo-Dionysus. Five years after, in his tenth year, and in the fourth month, Te-imothph was born; and in his twenty-third year, and in the eleventh month, she married her half-brother. The birth of their son, Imothph, is recorded as having taken place in the sixth year of Cleopatra, and in the eleventh month, just twelve years after her marriage; and she died in the tenth year of Cleopatra, the eighteenth day of the fifth month. Her age at her death is not stated on the tablet; but it must have been twenty-nine

* Unless indeed the sculptor committed the mistake of using the cartouche of the exiled, but afterwards restored king, *de jure*, instead of that of the intrusive king *de facto*. He might easily have done this after an interval of about fifty years.

years and a few weeks. By comparing the dates of the births of her son and of his father, the interval between them is found to be forty-three years and eight or nine months. This accords with the statement on the father's tablet: "I lived forty-three years before a son was born to me." Whether he had or had not daughters previously, is not stated. As they could not fill his sacerdotal office, the existence of such would be considered unimportant. That office was not strictly hereditary; for it appears from this tablet, that it was conferred by the sovereign. It is probable, however, that if it was not conferred, as a matter of course, on the heir of the former possessor, as soon as he attained a suitable age, it was limited to the members of a few particular families; and a desire to preserve the purity of the priestly stock, as well as to prevent it from becoming too numerous, may have led to such unnatural marriages as that of Psherin-phthah and his sister. Similar marriages were, however, common among all ranks of the Egyptians. It appears that the sacerdotal office, whatever it was, was conferred on this person, when he attained the age of eighteen. This may have been the age at which he was considered capable of filling it, and it may have been kept vacant for him; but it is also possible that it may have been held in the interim by some other person, on whose death it reverted to the son of the former incumbent.

In the remainder of this paper, it is my intention to resolve the inscription, which usually occurs on these tablets, into its several parts. I will treat of all these parts in succession; pointing out, as I go along, the *criteria* derived from each, by which the age of undated tablets may be ascertained; and likewise directing the Egyptian student to the parts in which he is to look for information respecting the person commemorated.

The following is the skeleton of an inscription in the most usual form:



which I translate: "An act of homage to **A**; he has [*or, as the case may be*] given **B** unto **C**, who says **D**." The blank at **A** is filled up with the names and titles of deities; that at **B** with an enumeration of gifts; that at **C** with the name and description of the deceased person; and at **D** is the speech attributed

to him. Sometimes the tablet is without a speech, the inscription closing at the end of C; and sometimes it begins with C, containing only the name and description of the deceased person and his speech. In a few tablets, the prefatory matter before C is somewhat different from the above; but the form given above is much the most usual.

I now remark, in the first place, that no record of facts, and, in short, nothing which would not answer equally well for any tablet, is to be expected till we come to C. The part before this is only valuable, as it may aid us in the study of the language, and as it may lead us to know the age of the tablet, supposing it to be without a date. To assist in this, I propose the following criteria, the result of a careful examination of a great number of tablets of known age.

1. If the lowermost of the two central introductory characters be omitted, the semicircle being placed over the triangle, the tablet may be presumed to be of the *most remote* antiquity. This is the case in the tablets, which have been found in the neighbourhood of the pyramids, and which bear the names of their builders, Cheoph (𓆎𓅓) and Kephren (𓆎𓅓𓏏). But if the introductory characters, being all present, be grouped in a different manner from what I have represented above, the tablet is not of *very great* antiquity. I speak, of course, comparatively. I mean, that I have met with no tablets, in which the initial group was differently arranged, which there was any reason to suppose anterior to the so called eighteenth dynasty.

2. If the initial group be followed by the preposition *n to*, the tablet can have no pretensions to antiquity: it is probably Ptolemaic or Roman.

3. If the names of more than one deity are combined in the space A, the tablet is not of the *most remote* antiquity. The earliest dated tablet, in which I have met this combination of divine names, is of the thirteenth year of Amenemhe II., the king whose cartouche was the first on the second line of the tablet of Abydos, at the time when that tablet was first copied. It has since, I believe, been broken off. If more than one deity be mentioned in tablets more ancient than this, the initial group is repeated for each; being, however, sometimes mutilated at its commencement for all after the first.

4. The mention of Osiris-Apis, or Apis-Osiris, the Serapis of the Romans, among the deities enumerated in A, is a proof that the tablet is Ptolemaic or

Roman. I do not think that any other inference can be safely drawn from the names of deities introduced.

5. The mode of writing Pente-pamente, a common title of Osiris, which occurs very frequently in A, furnishes more than one criterion. The use of a nose (the old Egyptian name of which was Phente) for the former part of this title was not introduced till the latter part of the eighteenth dynasty; and it is, of course, a proof that the tablet on which it occurs is not of *very* great antiquity. In the most ancient tablets, but not in them exclusively, this is written



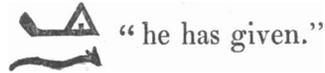
which is often reduced by abbreviation to the first character, a combination of water jars; either alone or with the small semicircle, which so commonly accompanies a single character when it stands for an entire word. The use of the square for P in this word is, comparatively speaking, modern.

6. The absence of a bird from the usual group representing Amente, whether in this title or elsewhere, is a proof that the tablet is not more ancient than the middle of the eighteenth dynasty. Anciently, the group without the bird, or the single character to which it was frequently reduced, signified "the west;" and the bird restricted the signification to "the divine west," or "the west of souls," that is, the Amente or Hades. About the middle of the eighteenth dynasty the bird was omitted. I have observed that, during a short interval of time previous to its omission, it had the usual sign of the plural number annexed to it. Should the word Amente occur on any tablet in that particular form, I should scarcely hesitate as to its being of the reign of Amenothph II., or one of his immediate predecessors or successors.

7. The omission of the connecting verb between A and B is, I think, a positive proof that the tablet is very ancient. We must not, however, conclude, that the insertion of the verb is a proof of the contrary; as it is found in tablets of the earliest age. The fact seems to be, that so long as the initial characters were grouped in the *primitive* manner (see 1), they might be translated in two ways; either "an act of homage for bounty to A," in which case the verb and pronoun were required before B; or "an act of homage; A has given," in which

case B should follow at once. It is well known, that the subject of an Egyptian verb, whether noun or pronoun, was always placed after it.

The connecting verb is followed by the pronoun of the third person, required by the contents of the space A. If a single male deity be there mentioned, the horned serpent, corresponding to the Hebrew γ , is invariably used; if a single female deity be mentioned, one of the usual characters for S is used; and if two or more deities be mentioned, the plural pronoun SN, with three small lines as a determinative sign, is employed. For convenience of grouping, a hand holding a small triangle is frequently substituted for the triangle itself. Thus, we have



The contents of the space B were supposed by Dr. Young to be offerings to the gods, instead of gifts of theirs to the deceased person; and I believe the nationality of some English antiquarians leads them still to persist in this mistake. That it is such must be evident to any one who admits the first principles of hieroglyphic interpretation, from the use of the preceding verb and pronoun, as just explained. It is also evident from an examination of the contents of B; for, though many things there enumerated may be supposed to be given *to* the gods, as well as *by* them, this is by no means the case with all. We frequently meet among the gifts “a good burial;”—“that he may go in and go out in Noutehir, without being turned back at the gate of the abode of glory;”—“that he may adore the Sun in Heaven; that he may give aid in battle to Sebh upon the earth; that he may speak the truth (i. e. be justified or pronounced righteous) before Osiris in Amente.” These are not the kind of gifts that a man would offer to a deity.

It may be asked, why I have translated the verb between A and B in the past tense, rather than in the optative mood. The latter appears more natural; and, as the letter N, the usual sign of the past tense, is not affixed to the verb, I should certainly have preferred “may he give;” did I not feel myself constrained by the authority of the Rosetta stone to adopt the other translation. In the fifth line of the hieroglyphic text of that inscription, we have an expression precisely similar to that in the tablets, in which the N of the past tense is equally wanting; and in the thirty-fifth line of the Greek version the verb is translated in the past tense. This appears to me decisive on the subject. The objection,

which may occur to some, that the gifts enumerated were, in part at least, to be enjoyed hereafter, appears to me to have no force ; and in truth the same objection might be made against the passage on the Rosetta stone ; for among the gifts of the gods and goddesses there mentioned is “a kingdom established to him and to his children for ever.” The answer is easy. The gift was past, though the enjoyment of it was future.

8. Very little dependence can be placed on the contents of B as determining the age of a tablet. It may, however, be stated that the abbreviated group,



which I believe means “the appointed nourishment of meat and drink,” and which begins B in almost all tablets of the reign of Osortasen I., and of his successors to the very latest period, has not been met with, so far as I am aware, in any tablet of an earlier reign. Before his time the characters for meat and drink were placed after the words Hre taoue, “the appointed provision,” or their abbreviation as above given ; and accompanied either by a circle, representing a cake of bread, or by a long figure, resembling the prismatic spectrum, representing a number of such cakes. This character, however, is not to be translated in the present instance “bread” or “cakes,” but “of all sorts.” The Egyptian word having that meaning, being homophonous, or nearly so, with the word signifying bread, is often represented by the symbol for the latter ; and it is so, I conceive, in this connexion.

The group which occurs between B and C was naturally translated “for the sake of” by those who imagined that B were offerings to the gods. As the deceased person could not make these offerings himself, they conceived that the survivors made them *for his sake*. It appears to me unaccountable that any should have retained the old translation of this group, who perceived the mistake in which it originated. I take the literal meaning of the group to be “to the receiving of,” a compound proposition, more definite in its signification than the single N, which admitted a variety of meanings ; and probably also more solemn, as being confined to the forms of religion. The middle character is a pair of arms held up, as if to receive a gift,* which ideographically denoted the

* This may derive confirmation from the speech of the ancestors of Rameses II. to that king, at the conclusion of the tablet of Abydos,—“We hold up our arms to receive offerings.” It is true,

verb "to receive," and its derived noun; and which also denoted the same verb phonetically, according to the well-ascertained usage of the Egyptians, being the letter K, the first letter of the old Egyptian verb $\kappa\iota$ "to receive;" whence we have in Coptic $\chi\iota$ and $\sigma\iota$. After this character a small vertical line is frequently placed, signifying that it represents a word, and not a mere letter. Compound prepositions of this sort are of common occurrence in the Coptic language; and there are some well-known instances of them in Hebrew.

9. Now, I observe that, though this compound preposition en-ki-en, was substituted for the single preposition en, at a very remote period, it is not so remote a one as that instances to the contrary do not occur. The earliest dated tablet that I have seen, containing the compound preposition, is of the twenty-ninth year of Amenemhe II. In all tablets sculptured in the early part of the reign of this king, as well as in all those sculptured under his predecessor Osortasen I., or any of the preceding monarchs, the simple waved line, en, "to," is invariably used; if, indeed, the preposition be not omitted altogether.

The part of the inscription, which follows this simple or compound preposition, contains the name of the deceased person, preceded by an enumeration of the offices, sacerdotal, civil, or military, which he held, and followed in most instances by the names and offices of his father and mother (or at least one of them), and sometimes of his grandfather or other relatives. It is but seldom that the exact nature of all the offices held by the deceased person can be satisfactorily discovered. We can perceive, however, that the Egyptians in general, and especially the priests, were great pluralists. Occasionally, but very rarely, we meet in this part of the inscription with the name of a king, whom the deceased person served, and even with a fact respecting him of historical interest. Thus, in a tablet of the reign of Thothmos IV.,* belonging to Mr. Harris (Eg.

that the verb here used for "receive" is not $\kappa\iota$; but is the equivalent verb chop, $\eta\Gamma$, preserved in the Coptic $\psi\epsilon\pi$ or $\psi\omega\pi$, and corresponding to the Latin cap-ere.

* I mean the king, who is called Thothmos V. by Rosellini. The Italian antiquarian has imagined a king of this name, whom he calls Thothmos III., but who had no real existence. Having taken it into his head that Queen Amouneth ente heou, who erected the Karnac obelisks, was the *mother* of Thothmos Mephre, and finding that the name of the father of this king was Thothmos, he assumed the existence of a husband of the queen, whom he called Thothmos III.; and he styled Mephre, Thothmos IV. The fact is, however (as I conjectured in a note to my paper on the years and cycles of the ancient Egyptians, and as has since been completely established), that this queen

Ins. 93), the deceased person is called "the attendant upon the king in his journeys to the southern and northern countries, who went from Naharina (Mesopotamia) to Karai in the suite of his majesty." It is worthy of observation, that these are the identical limits of the Egyptian empire, which are recorded on the Liverpool and Paris scarabæi (as already noticed), in the eleventh year of Amenothph III., the son and successor of this king. This deceased person, whose name was Amenothph, was also "first prophet of Empe" and "superintendent of his Majesty's cattle stall;" and he held another office under the crown, the nature of which I do not understand.

After the name of the person commemorated by the tablet, there occurs very commonly, in inscriptions of all ages, an addition on which I will make a few remarks. It commences with the word Me (ꜣ) "truth," expressed either symbolically, by an ostrich feather or a measure; phonetically, by the sickle and arm, which represent the two component letters of the word; or in both ways combined, the measure or feather, the sickle and arm being all used. This is followed by a club, T, representing the word Taoue, "speaking," the subsequent or complementary letters of which are but seldom expressed. And after this we occasionally meet characters which I consider to belong to the sentence; namely, Chal, (ꜥ) a preposition, answering to the Hebrew ל or לו, "to," and either the name of Osiris, or the two N's, the hatchet and the pike, with which the words Nter, "god," and Naa, "great," are written, and which are commonly used as abbreviations of those words. I would then translate the entire addition, not as Champollion has done "the truth-speaking, *le veridique*,"* but "who has spoken the truth to Osiris," or "to the great god."† This expression I understand in a forensic sense, as meaning "who has been justified, or pronounced innocent, by Osiris." It has been expressly stated by Diodorus, that the president of every Egyptian court of justice wore a badge, which was called Truth,

was *sister* to Thothmos Mephre, and that they were children of King Thothmos II. It is therefore Mephre that we should call Thothmos III.; and his grandson, under whom this tablet was sculptured, must be Thothmos IV.

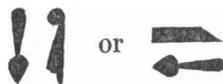
* I do not deny that the two former words would have this meaning, *if they stood alone*; as they do in the prænomen of the successor of Amenemhe III., whose phonetic name has not yet been ascertained, "The sun who speaks truth." But I conceive that in the addition of which I am speaking, the subsequent words, if not expressed, are always to be understood.

† Or as I have observed in one place, "To the lords of the abode of glory."

and which the monuments show us to have been an image of Thme, the goddess of Truth or Justice, who is represented sitting, with an ostrich feather on her head, and a bandage over her eyes. With this figure he touched the successful party in the suit; thus announcing to him that the decision of himself and his assessors was in his favour. This was as much as to say to him that "he had spoken the truth;" that his plea was true. In accordance with this, the unsuccessful accuser, the adversary of the deceased, is called in the ritual "the liar."

Here I cannot refrain from noticing the extraordinary mistake, into which Sir J. G. Wilkinson has fallen with respect to this badge, which he supposes to have been the same as that worn by the Jewish high priest; arguing from the similarity of the words Thme and Thummim. The resemblance between these words is merely apparent, and disappears when we reduce them to the radical forms. The initial Th of the Egyptian word is the feminine article, while the ת of the Hebrew word is radical; and, on the other hand, the Egyptian word has at the end of it a letter having the force of the Hebrew y, to which there is nothing equivalent in the Hebrew word that has been supposed to correspond with it. The resemblance, then, between the names (מע and תם) is not real; nor were the purposes for which the two badges were worn at all similar.

The addition, of which I have been speaking, which is commonly abbreviated to two characters, such as



appears to belong to deceased persons exclusively; so that it might be translated "deceased," or "the late." It is contrasted with the characters,



which, when they follow the name of a man, imply that he is alive. Thus, on a broken tablet, in the British Museum (Eg. Ins. 27) the person commemorated is called Imothph, deceased, son of Hapi, still alive; and of a deceased mother, daughter of a deceased person, and sister to a living person. It was, however, in most cases, considered sufficient to express that a person was alive, if the characters for deceased were omitted after his name. Now, as

these characters are wanting after the names of many persons commemorated on tablets, a question arises, whether these tablets were always funereal ; whether they may not, in many instances, have been erected by individuals out of gratitude to the gods, for gifts conferred on them during their lives. That this was the case, in *some* instances, is highly probable ; but I would by no means affirm that it was the case whenever the characters expressing death were wanting. It is, however, a question, which I do not feel myself called on to decide. One thing appears to me clear ; namely, that the presence or absence of this addition is no criterion of the antiquity of the tablet.

10. It is otherwise with certain prefixes, which are found on very early and on very recent tablets, immediately after the preposition en, or enkien. Tablets of the Ptolemaic and Roman ages, and, perhaps I should add, tablets sculptured under the latest dynasties, have after this preposition the title "Osiris," which is never found on the more ancient tablets. I do not, by any means, intend to deny that it was customary, in ancient as well as in modern times, for the Egyptians to identify deceased persons with Osiris. I am aware that on that most ancient record, the coffin found in the third pyramid, this identification is distinctly made. What I mean to assert is simply this—that the title is not given to deceased persons *on ancient tablets*.

11. On the other hand, a title, which I interpret "the blessed," or "favoured," sometimes followed by a preposition, and the name of a deity, is almost peculiar to very ancient tablets. Instances, may, perhaps, occur, in which this title may be found on recent ones, or in which it may be wanting on ancient ones ; but we may infer with tolerable certainty, that if this title be found on the stone, it is more ancient than the reign of Amenemhe III., and if it be not found on it, it is of that or some subsequent reign. I would be understood as speaking with the same qualification as I did with respect to the title Osiris. Deceased persons of all ages are spoken of as "blessed," or "possessed of blessing;" but it is only on ancient tablets that gifts are said to be given "to the blessed superintendent," &c., or the like.

The essential part of the title, to which I allude, is the character,



representing an object unknown to me. How this character came to signify

“blessed,” I cannot say; but Mr. Sharpe assigned this meaning to it by deciphering; and though I do not often assent to that gentleman’s conclusions, I cannot avoid doing so in this instance. It may possibly represent the *idea* expressed by the word “blessed;” but it is possible also, and I think much more probable, that it represents some object, the name of which was pronounced in the same manner, or nearly so, as the Egyptian word for “blessed,” or as the first syllable in this word. Along with this unknown character, there occur in this title, when written in full, the leaf, answering to the Hebrew Aleph, and which may be read by any vowel; the sickle M, the sieve CH, and either the pair of leaves EI, or the quail OU. The two latter characters are equivalent to our termination ed; and have the same effect as the corresponding Hebrew vowels ם and ן, when placed before the last radical, in the participle Pahul or the verbal noun of the form Pahil. Rejecting then these servile letters, the Egyptian verb consists of three letters פמח, in addition to the unknown character; which I regard as merely *determinative*, unless it be used as a *substitute* for the whole word, or for its first syllable, or for the consonant M. To show the manner in which this peculiar character is introduced, I will set down a number of varieties which I have met with; putting for the common phonetic characters their Hebrew equivalents, and for the peculiar character an asterisk; and, for the sake of comparison, I will do the same thing with the word me, “truth,” already mentioned; the asterisk in *it* representing *its* peculiar character, the ostrich feather or the measure.

Amach, to bless, is written, *מחמ; חמ*ח; ח*ח; ח*; *

Me, truth, is written, *מע; מע*; ע*; *

The peculiar characters belonging to the word me, “truth,” are known to be ideographic; but that which distinguishes the word amach, is unknown; and, as I have already observed, it may be significative of sound. If I must hazard a conjecture, it would be that it represented a vessel holding mud, with the mud flowing out of it; omi, or ome, is the Coptic for “mud;” and the old Egyptian word for it probably only differed from this in its vowels.*

* On communicating my views respecting this word to Mr. Birch, he proposed an objection to them, which I think it right to notice, as I trust I shall be able satisfactorily to remove it. He observed that the preposition used between this participle and the name of a deity was “to,” not “by,” as according to my views it should be. The preposition is לל, answering to the Hebrew

I now come to the most important part, as I think I may safely call it, of the inscription on a tablet, namely, the speech put into the mouth of the deceased person. It may be known by the group of hieroglyphics which precedes it, as in the skeleton inscription given above. These characters are כַּתָּו, "he says," that is, "who says;" for the Egyptians had no relative pronouns. If the person commemorated be a female, the broken line ס, "she," is used for the horned serpent, ׀, "he." It must not be supposed that these speeches are always of importance, or even that they always convey information respecting the deceased person. Sometimes, the speech is a prayer addressed to Osiris, or some other deity; sometimes it is a statement of the happiness enjoyed by the deceased in Amente; sometimes it is an invitation to mankind in general, or to the priests, or to those who may approach the burial place, to pray for blessings to the deceased; but it is, in many instances, a brief narrative of the most important events in the life of the deceased person; and it is here, if any where in the body of the inscription, that we may expect to find the time when he lived, or his age, stated.

It would be impossible, in such a paper as this, to describe at any length the varied contents of this portion of the inscription. Nor is it necessary for my purpose, which is merely to direct attention to this class of Egyptian antiquities, and to guide the purchaser or student to those which are of most value, either from their age or from their contents. It is a rule, which admits few exceptions, that very little information is to be derived from any tablet which does not contain a speech; but the converse of this is by no means true; many speeches contain no information whatever.

I have mentioned, as I went along, several criteria of the antiquity of tablets. It remains for me to notice one, the most striking of all, which lies not in the

ל or ל; and, no doubt, it signifies most commonly "to." It, however, has other meanings, *just as the corresponding ל has.* It is used before the name of a king, when the year of his reign is to be expressed. So is the Hebrew ל. And why may it not be also used for "of" in such expressions as "the blessed of Osiris," "the favoured of his master?" In that very ancient Hebrew passage, Genesis, xiv. 19, a document, which is probably of the same age with the tablets which contain this formula, the proposition ל is used for "of" in the similar expression, "Blessed be Abram of the most High God," לֵאלֹהֵי עֲלִיוֹן. The Hebrew and the ancient Egyptian languages throw great light on each other; and it is not unreasonable to expect that the study of the Egyptian monuments will elucidate many passages of the sacred text that are now obscure.

inscription itself, but in the sculptures which accompany it. In the more ancient tablets, the figures which occur are exclusively those of the deceased person and his relatives; figures of deities are never introduced. On the contrary, a tablet of the eighteenth dynasty, or of any subsequent period, is seldom without the representation of some deity or deities. I must, however, remark, by way of caution, lest any one should infer from this that the Egyptians of the earlier ages did not represent their deities in a visible form, that in the inscriptions on these ancient tablets small images of the deities are used, either to represent their names, or as determinative signs after them. The difference between the two classes of tablets is not to be attributed to any change in the religious notions of the people; it seems to have been merely a difference of taste or fashion; the more ancient Egyptians representing the deceased person as entertaining his relatives at a feast, while those of after ages represented him as doing homage to the deities.

The dates of some tablets are conspicuously placed at the tops; the royal name and titles being inclosed in a cartouche, and the year of the king's reign, and sometimes the month and day, being prefixed. It is from a comparison of these dated tablets, the relative ages of which can admit of no question, that I have derived the criteria of antiquity which I have mentioned.

I say the *relative* ages, because there are gaps in Egyptian chronology, which render it impossible for us to assign as yet the years, or even the centuries, before our era, at which the earlier kings lived. We know that the eleven kings, who appear as the predecessors of Rameses II. in the tablet of Abydos, with the intervening kings and queens whose names are omitted, reigned together for about 300 years. These are included in the eighteenth dynasty of Manetho. We know also that from the commencement of the reign of Sheshonk I., who commenced the twenty-second dynasty of Manetho, to the Persian conquest, is within a trifle, in excess or in defect, of 450 years. But as to the interval between the accession of Rameses II. and that of Sheshonk I., we have as yet, so far as I am aware, no satisfactory evidence. We know both from Manetho, and from the royal tombs at Thebes and other monuments, that a great number of kings intervened; but we have no certainty, that they did not belong to two or more contemporaneous dynasties; or that in the same dynasty two or more brothers did not occupy the throne together. This interval, then, which is by some extended

to 550 years, is reduced by others to less than the half of that period;* and thus an uncertainty to the extent of about 300 years exists as to the reign of each monarch of the so called eighteenth dynasty, when the date of its commencement is compared with any given era; although the order of most of the reigns is perfectly well ascertained, and the length of many of them is known also.

I have spoken of kings and queens belonging to this dynasty, whose names are omitted in the tablet of Abydos. That this should be the case should excite no surprise, because that tablet was only intended to include the royal ancestors of Rameses II. The non-appearance of a king's name in it is no evidence that he did not live during the interval of time which it comprehends. In point of fact, the monuments in existence exhibit to us no less than four royal personages, who lived between Thothmos IV. and Rameses I., the twelfth and fifteenth kings on the tablet, in addition to the two who appear as the thirteenth and fourteenth, viz., Amenothph III., and Horus (Har-em-hebee). The names of three of these kings are Amuntuonkh, Amunmes, and Amenothph IV.; that of the fourth, whose tomb is in the western valley at Thebes, is yet undetermined. There can be little doubt that Amuntuonkh was the brother of Amenothph III., who shared the sovereignty with him for a time. This was pointed out by Sir J. G. Wilkinson, who has, however, confounded this king, who probably died in his childhood, with Amenothph IV. This last king has deservedly excited much interest; and strange mistakes have been made respecting the age when he lived. M. Letronne, and other French writers, have supposed him to belong to a dynasty anterior to the shepherds, the immediate successors of the gods! Colonel Vyse, on the other hand, imagines him to be one of the Persian kings of the twenty-seventh or thirty-first dynasty! The monumental evidence is, however, conclusive as to his belonging to the Thothmos family. It appears, that having become a proselyte to sun worship, he changed his original name of Amenothph, which implies devotion to Amoun, for Vach-en-aten (בַּחֲנַתֵּן),

* The most probable supposition appears to me to be that, which makes the date of the ceiling of the Memnonium about 1322 years B. C.; and which, to accord with this, assumes that the twentieth and twenty-first of Manetho's dynasties reigned contemporaneously after the nineteenth. If this be so, according to the principles laid down in a former note, Rameses the Great must have ascended the throne in 1347 B. C., about 400 years before Sheshonk.

“the adorer of the sun’s disk.”* The latter name is found at Karnac, cut over the former, the prænomen attached to it remaining unchanged. Not content with this, in the fervour of his religious zeal, he made war against the name of Amenothph, wherever he found it. It has been defaced in innumerable instances in the second cartouche of his grandfather (or perhaps his great grandfather), Amenothph III. In general, the name has been merely chiselled away; but in several places, a repetition of the prænomen has been cut over it; a plain proof that his hostility was not directed against his ancestor, but against the name which he bore. There is also a tablet of Mr. Harris’s of the age of Thothmos IV. (already referred to in this paper), relating to a deceased Amenothph, the former part of whose name has been rudely defaced in every one of the four places where it occurs. A like hostility appears to have been directed against the goddess Mouth, the wife of Amoun. In a curious statue of the reign of queen Amuneth, in the collection of Sign. Athanasi, representing (as I conceive) this queen, when an infant, in the arms of her nurse, and commemorating the father of the nurse, whose name was Sen-Mouth; the latter part of this name, which occurs very frequently in the inscriptions, has been, in the majority of instances, more or less defaced. This statue is curious, not only on account of its subject, but on account of its exhibiting traces of two defacers; a political one, who obliterated the name of the queen on the accession of her brother; and a religious one, at a later period, who made war on the name of the goddess. I mention these facts, because they are not unconnected with the subject of the present paper; they furnish a criterion of the age of a tablet which may sometimes be applicable. If the name of Amoun, or Mouth, appears on a tablet with marks of a hostile tool, it may be considered as certain that it was anterior to the reign of Rameses I., perhaps to that of Horus; and as highly probable that it was *not very long anterior to it*. Very ancient tablets, which are now in existence, were in all probability buried in the days of the sun-worshipper.

* In an article in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, which has appeared while these sheets were passing through the press, this king is called Oubasheniten, which is interpreted “the splendour of the disk.” The Coptic word oubash, splendour, is in Egypt *עבש*, and can have no connexion with *בז*; the Coptic corruption of the latter might be bash or ouash, but it certainly could not be oubash. It has been demonstrated by Salvolini that this root signifies “to adore.” Ouasht has this signification in Coptic, in which language a T is often paragogic.

Before the commencement of the eighteenth dynasty, the tablet of Abydos furnishes us with five royal names, to which we may add a sixth, ascertained from other monuments, who appear to have constituted the twelfth dynasty of Manetho, and to have reigned for about 160 years. These sovereigns have been commonly classed under the sixteenth and seventeenth dynasties of Manetho; but that writer's catalogue of the twelfth appears to me to be intended for them, though we must suppose it to be grossly corrupted. The five dynasties intervening between the twelfth and eighteenth, I conceive to have been either contemporaneous with the twelfth, or altogether imaginary.

The first two monarchs of this twelfth dynasty were Osortasen I.* and Amenemhe II.; the former of whom appears to have reigned forty-two years, and the latter thirty-two, before they took their respective successors into partnership with them. A great number of dated tablets are in existence, belonging to these two reigns. The first year of Amenemhe II. corresponded with the forty-third year of Osortasen I.; and the first of Osortasen II. with the thirty-third of Amenemhe II.; after whose death he appears to have reigned a very short time. We cannot, then, expect to have many monuments of his. After him comes Osortasen III., and then Amenemhe III. The first Amenemhe preceded Osortasen I., and belonged, according to Manetho, to the eleventh dynasty.

I have made the preceding statements advisedly, and on what I consider perfectly sure grounds, though they are at variance with the received opinions. Major Felix produced a supposed succession from Benihassan, from which he inferred that Amenemhe the First intervened between Osortasen I. and Amenemhe II. This error, for such it demonstrably is, has been adopted by Sir J. G. Wilkinson, and by Rosellini; and Mr. Cullimore has grounded upon it a restoration of the obliterated portion of the tablet of Abydos, which has been published, under the title of "*Chronologia Hieroglyphica*," by the Royal Society of Literature. I have the highest respect for the learning and ingenuity of Mr. Cullimore, but truth obliges me to pronounce this restoration to have been made on erroneous grounds, and to be of no authority whatever. The sole ground for supposing that the royal names at Karnac formed a connected series,

* Or Gesortasen, if the initial letter corresponding to Ψ be sounded in Greek as a G, as it is in Gaza, Gomorrah, &c. Hence, probably, the grossly corrupted reading of Manetho, Gesongosis.

like that of Abydos, was that the names of the three kings in question occurred among the names at Karnac ; and that they might be read with a little management in the order, in which the Benihassan inscription was *supposed* to indicate that the kings reigned. It is quite impossible, however, that the names at Karnac can be read with any management in the true order of succession, as indicated above ;* and therefore I conclude that the names at Karnac must have been set down without order, the inscription there having never been designed to be historical. Nor do I think that it at all follows, that these were names of Egyptian sovereigns *exclusively*. If Thothmos reigned over the country about Meroe, as I believe he did, his predecessors in that region might very well be represented as receiving homage from him, as well as his predecessors in Egypt.

I will now state the grounds on which I pronounce the received order of succession of these three kings to be erroneous. In one of Mr. Harris's tablets figured by Mr. Sharpe (Eg. Insc. 73), which is dated in the third year of Amenemhe II., the deceased person is made to say, that he was born in the reign of Amenemhe I., and was appointed to certain offices by Osortasen I. When first I saw this, I was lost in astonishment, having never doubted, after the confident statements of Mr. Cullimore, Sir J. G. Wilkinson, and Rosellini, that there was a clear indication at Benihassan of an order of succession inconsistent with this. To settle the question, however, I referred to the Benihassan inscription itself, which I found copied by Mr. Burton (Exc. Hier. 33). I certainly found the three royal names occurring there in an order, which might not unnatu-

* This remark has led to a friendly correspondence with Mr. Cullimore, the result of which I have been requested to communicate in a note. Mr. Cullimore and I are agreed, that there is a way of reconciling the facts above stated, which he does not dispute, with the authority of the Karnac tablet, namely, by supposing that Amenemhe I. usurped the government in the life-time of Osortasen I., but that he died before him, and the latter then resumed his authority ; so that he was, in fact, the predecessor both of Amenemhe II., as is testified by contemporary monuments, and of Amenemhe I., in accordance with the Karnac tablet. But Mr. Cullimore and I differ as to the claims of this tablet to be received as an historic document. He considers it to carry with it its own evidence that it is such, and to be sufficiently corroborated by other monuments. I, on the contrary, conceive it to be totally destitute of internal claims to be received as an authentic catalogue of kings ; I consider the evidence on which Mr. Cullimore relies, as corroborating it, to be inconclusive ; and I think that other parts of it, as well as the Osortasen succession, are inconsistent with contemporary monuments. Mr. Cullimore's services to the cause of literature have been great ; and while I am compelled to differ from him on this point, I readily acknowledge them.

rally be supposed to be the reverse order of their reigns. Amenemhe II. occurred first; it was followed by Amenemhe I., and that by Osortasen I. I observed, however, that there was a great deal of matter intervening between these royal names; and I found, on examination, that this intervening matter was of such a nature as completely to *disprove* the order of succession, which it had been supposed to *prove*. The inscription stated that Nebhothph had been appointed by Amenemhe II., in the nineteenth year of his reign, a "Repha-He," with the military government of a certain district; the same rank and government having been conferred on his father by Amenemhe I., and on his *elder brother* by Osortasen I. Of course, Osortasen I. intervened between the two Amenemhes. After this I became acquainted with a tablet in the Leyden Museum, the date of which made "assurance doubly sure;" being "the forty-fourth year of Osortasen I., which is the second year of Amenemhe II."

The importance of this inference, as setting aside the supposed series of kings at Karnac, will, I hope, be accepted as an excuse for this digression. I will only add, that of the kings preceding Amenemhe I., we know very little as to the order, and nothing as to the length of their reigns.

I have now completed the task which I had marked out for myself; and it is my earnest wish that what I have said on this branch of Egyptian antiquities may induce others of my countrymen to engage in the study of this interesting and important branch of literature. I trust that no preconceived opinion of the impossibility that hieroglyphic characters in ancient inscriptions should express phonetically the words of a language will cause them to shut their eyes against the fact that they do so. And I trust also that no unworthy national prejudice will lead them to undervalue this field of discovery, because, though it may be said to have been opened in England, its most successful cultivators have been *hitherto* foreigners. I well remember the time, when the current of national prejudice ran strong against what were contemptuously called "French Mathematics;" but the good sense of our countrymen at length prevailed, and those branches which were once regarded as exclusively French, have been pursued with as much success in England, and, I will add, in Ireland, as ever they were in France. Let us adopt the same course in respect to hieroglyphical literature; and, in place of decrying the labours of Champollion, and undervaluing his won-

along, his errors where we find that he has committed them ; but candidly acknowledging that he himself corrected most of his early errors in his grammar, and that those which remain are few and unimportant, when we take into account the number, the magnitude, and the importance of his discoveries.