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*THE JEWISH GARRISON AND TEMPLE IN
ELEPHANTINÉ.*

OPPOSITE Assuan lies the island of Elephantinê, the larger half of which, covered with palms and verdure, forms a pleasant contrast to the sandy deserts and yellow cliffs that mark the region of the First Cataract. The southern end of the island, however, is occupied by the mounds of the old city which commanded the entrance to Egypt from the days of the earlier dynasties down to the age of the Arab conquest. For many years past the mounds have been handed over to the diggers for *sebakh*, that is to say the phosphates that are contained in the nitrogenous earth of an ancient city-site. During the period that Assuan was a military province, before the reconquest of the Sudan, the *sebakh*-diggers were particularly active, and as I spent some portion of every winter moored in my dahabia close to the mounds I had plenty of opportunity for observing what was found in them. Usually it was Greek ostraka—potsherds on which the tax-gatherers' receipts in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods were inscribed—that were brought to me: now and then, however, an ostrakon was brought to me with Aramaic writing upon it. But Aramaic ostraka were scarce and the inscriptions upon them were generally much obliterated.

Fragments of papyrus were also frequently found, but were generally destroyed by the natives, who had not yet discovered that they possessed a value in the eyes of the tourists. Once I rescued from destruction a quantity of fragments which belonged to the age of the fifth dynasty

and which I happened to see extracted from under the foundations of the early city-wall. Unfortunately they were mere fragments which had not been improved by the process of excavation. I was more fortunate two or three years later, in January, 1901, when I chanced to be looking on at the moment that a small, but well-preserved, roll of papyrus was unearthed along with two large ostraka in the Aramaic script. The ostraka doubtless would have been kept and sold to some tourist to be finally lost in his "cabinet of curiosities," but the papyrus roll would never have been heard of again, had not my lucky star led me to the mounds on that particular day. On returning to Oxford I handed the papyrus and the ostraka to Dr. Cowley, who published them in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*. The publication at once made a stir in the world of Semitic scholars.

The papyrus, and consequently the ostraka also, belonged to the Persian age of Egyptian history and proved that a colony of Jews was established at the time at Assuan or in Elephantinê. They further made it clear that similar documents of the same period were likely to be discovered if proper search was made for them. No one, however, seemed inclined to undertake excavations in Elephantinê, and so things remained until another discovery was made which produced, not a stir, but a sensation. Assuan had become the winter resort of the fashionable world; monster hotels were springing up there, and "antika-dealers" came in their wake. The objects found by the natives in Elephantinê during the summer months were no longer destroyed or lost: they made their way into the hands of the dealers and were offered at big prices to the tourists the following winter. In the winter of 1904 it became known that a number of large and apparently important Aramaic papyri had been discovered the previous summer, and

were for sale. Part of them were bought by Lady William Cecil, part by Mr. Robert Mond, while one which had gone astray was subsequently secured for the Bodleian Library. A new road had been cut the preceding summer through the ruins of Roman Assuan, and the dealers averred that it was here that the papyri had been found in a wooden box.

With great generosity Mr. Mond and Lady William Cecil gave the papyri they had purchased to the Cairo Museum, and I was asked to edit them. In this task I had the good fortune to obtain the help of Dr. Cowley, and the expenses of the publication were borne by Mr. Mond. Meanwhile the Egyptian Service of Antiquities determined to start excavations in Elephantinê, and as Mr. Howard Carter, the Inspector of Antiquities, was too busy at the time to undertake them, the work was put into my hands. Unfortunately I was just finishing the excavations which Mr. Somers Clarke and myself had been carrying on for some years at El-Kab, the Nile was getting dangerously low for the safe passage of my dahabia to Cairo, and the high winds of the Egyptian spring were beginning to blow. I was, therefore, able to devote only a week to looking after the Government work in Elephantinê.

The natives had not only assured Mr. Carter and myself that the papyri had really been found in Elephantinê, they also pointed out the spot where the discovery had been made, on the western side of the mounds. Here, therefore, I set the men to work, and the first morning produced two baskets full of broken papyri, demotic and Greek. But there was nothing Aramaic among them, nor did any scrap of Aramaic come to light as long as I was able to superintend the digging.

The Service of Antiquities was unable to continue the work another year, and eventually concessions were granted

to the German and French Governments, allowing them to divide the ancient city-site between them, the Germans taking the western and the French the eastern half. The Germans, under the leadership of Dr. Rubensohn, were the first in the field (in 1906). They set to work at the spot where I had excavated and soon brought to light the remains of the houses in which the Jews to whom we owe the papyri had once lived. The Jewish quarter, it turns out, was built over an old burial-ground which goes back to the Twelfth, if not to the Sixth dynasty; in the Persian age, however, its very existence had been forgotten.

There were two rooms in two different houses in the Jewish quarter in which papyri were found. These papyri are now at Berlin, where they are being edited by Professor Sachau. The firstfruits of them were given to the world almost immediately by their editor. In 1907 Professor Sachau published "Drei aramäische Papyrusurkunden aus Elephantine" in the *Transactions* of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences, which made it clear that the "Assuan" papyri already published by Dr. Cowley and myself (in 1906) must have come from the same place. The *sebakh*-diggers must have found their way into the Jewish houses, which will account for the state of ruin in which Dr. Rubensohn discovered them. The papyri which he himself came across were lying scattered in the rubbish of the houses less than two feet below the surface of the ground. How many documents may have perished before the diggers for *sebakh* learned that they had a commercial value it is impossible to say.

The three published by Professor Sachau are of exceptional importance. Two of them are duplicate copies of a petition sent by Yedoniah and his brother Jews to Bagoas the Persian Governor of Judah and dated the 20th of Marchesvan (November) in the seventeenth year of Darius

II., that is B.C. 408. Three years previously (B.C. 411) the priests of Khnum, the Egyptian god of the Cataract, to whom the city of Elephantinê was dedicated, had taken advantage of the absence of the Persian Governor Arsames and bribed Waidrang, who had been left in command, to destroy "the temple of Yahu," which occupied a prominent position in the Jewish quarter. Waidrang accordingly sent to his son, who commanded the Persian garrison in Assuan, ordering him to cross the Nile and demolish the Jewish sanctuary. The soldiers (or rather the auxiliaries) and a promiscuous body of Egyptian natives thereupon came across the river and entering the temple "destroyed it to the foundations. They broke in pieces the columns of stone that were in it, and smashed the seven great gates of hewn stone that were in the sanctuary," together with the bronze doors, and they set fire to the cedar-wood roof and the rest of the building. "The bowls of gold and silver and whatever else was in the sanctuary they took and appropriated." All this happened in the month of Tammuz or June, and ever since the Jewish community had been fasting and praying, with sackcloth on their loins, "to Yahu the Lord of Heaven." Such an outrage, they declare, had never been committed against them before, since the days of "the kings of Egypt" when their "fathers had built this temple in the fortress of Elephantinê." "When Kambyzes entered Egypt," they go on to state, "he found this temple already built, and though the temples of the gods of Egypt were all overthrown by him, no injury was done to this temple."

The Egyptian Jews had first appealed to "Jehohanan the high-priest and his companions, the priests in Jerusalem, as well as to his brother Ostanès, whose (Jewish name is) 'Ananî, and the Jewish nobles," but all in vain. No notice was taken of their letter. Then they turned to "Delaiah and

Shelemiah, the sons of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria," and finally to Bagoas who, as we learn from Josephus, was a friend of Joshua the brother of the high-priest Johanan, here called Jehohanan. Johanan, it will be remembered, is mentioned in Nehemiah xii. 22, 23 ; he subsequently got into trouble by murdering his brother Joshua in the temple, a crime which Bagoas visited upon the Jewish people by making them pay 50 drachmae on every lamb offered in the daily sacrifices. At the time the Jews of Elephantinê wrote their petition, however, Joshua was still living.

The petition concludes in a characteristically oriental way. "Ever since that day of Tammuz in the fourteenth year of Darius," its writers say, "even unto this day we have put on sackcloth and fasted, our wives have become as widows, we have not anointed ourselves with oil nor drunk wine. And from that time until this day in the seventeenth year of Darius no meal-offerings, frankincense or burnt-offerings have been offered in this temple. Now, therefore, thy servants, Yedoniah and his companions and all the Jews who are citizens of Elephantinê, say thus : If it seem good to our lord, think upon this temple to build it again, because we are not permitted to rebuild it. Look upon us who receive thy kindnesses and mercies who are here in Egypt. Let a letter be sent from thee to them concerning the temple of the God Yahu that it may be rebuilt in the fortress of Elephantinê as it was built before. And we will offer meal-offerings and frankincense and burnt-offerings upon the altar of the God Yahu in thy name. And we will pray for thee at all times, we and our wives and our children and all the Jews who are here, if thou doest this, until this temple be built again. And thou shalt have a share before Yahu, the God of Heaven, from everyone who offers unto Him a burnt-offering and sacrifices,

to the amount of 1,000 silver talents. As for the gold, we have already written about it and explained."

The petition was successful, and along with the copies of it was found a "memorandum" of the reply sent to Arsames after his return to Upper Egypt. "A memorandum of what Bagoas and Delaiah have said to me. The memorandum is as follows: Thou art to say in Egypt before Arsames concerning the altar-house of the God of Heaven, which was built in the fortress of Elephantiné before our time, before Cambyses, which Waidrang, that rebel, had destroyed in the fourteenth year of Darius, that it shall be built again in its place, as it was formerly. And meal-offerings and frankincense shall be offered upon this altar as was done formerly." The word used for "memorandum" is the same as that which is found in Ezra vi. 2, where we should translate: "And there was found at Hamadan, in the fortress that is in the province of Media, a roll, and therein was thus written: A memorandum: In the first year of Cyrus the king, Cyrus the king made a decree." The formula was plainly an official one.

The temple of Yahu or Yahveh is twice mentioned in the papyri of which I was editor, where we learn that it stood in the midst of the Jewish quarter. The Berlin papyri show that it was no mere chapel, much less a synagogue, but, like the one afterwards built by Onias in the Delta, a rival to that in Jerusalem. But they also show a good deal more than this. In the first place the temple had been erected in the days when Egypt was governed by the Pharaohs and was spared at the time of the Persian conquest: in the second place the same sacrifices and burnt-offerings were offered as were prescribed by the Levitical Law for the temple in Jerusalem, the frankincense being burnt on the altar along with part of the meal-offering

in accordance with the directions in Leviticus ii. 1, 2; while, thirdly, the temple itself was of large size and costly construction, rivalling, in fact, the native temple of Khnum.

A discovery, indeed, which I have made in the sandstone quarries east of Assuan proves that the temple was on as large a scale as the leading Egyptian ones and that it was built much in the same style. One of the quarries there has been "earmarked" in five different places for the exclusive use of the Jewish temple, the abbreviated word ב , which is employed in the papyri to denote "house" or "temple" (בית), being engraved on the rocks that marked its boundaries. The letters are ligatured as in the papyri, and they have precisely the same forms. In more than one place the base of a column, or rather of the drum of a column, has been left in the native rock, and we can therefore ascertain what the size of each column was. The three I have found all alike measure 85 centimetres in diameter or nearly 3 feet, and will therefore bear comparison with the columns of the great Egyptian sanctuaries. It would seem that granite as well as sandstone was employed; at all events the base of a smaller column of granite is lying at the foot of the quarry, where I also came across some fragments of Jewish pottery.

It is clear, therefore, that at the time the Temple was erected, the Jews were not only a large and wealthy community at Elephantinê but also that they must have possessed great political influence. It is not wonderful that the priests of Khnum looked with jealous eyes upon them and their rival shrine and seized the first opportunity of bringing about its destruction. Professor Clermont-Ganneau made exhaustive attempts to discover any fragments belonging to it; but his attempts met with no success: the very site of the building has been obliterated and the stones of which it was constructed must have been broken

up. The restored temple will have met the same fate as the earlier one: the recovery of Egyptian independence and the expulsion of the Persian garrisons must have meant the massacre or flight of colonists who were regarded as an outpost of the foreign occupation as well as the destruction of their sanctuary. That the Persian government accepted the Egyptian belief that the Jews were its protégés and outpost may be gathered from the reply of Bagoas as well as from the fact that under Kambyzes a distinction had been made between the Jewish and Egyptian temples.

It is possible that the flame of Egyptian fanaticism had been fanned by another reason ingeniously suggested by Professor Clermont-Ganneau. The Egyptian god of the Cataract was symbolised by the ram, and the mummies of the sacred rams have been found by the French excavators in their cemetery a little to the east of the Jewish quarter. To the adorers of the sacred ram the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb would have appeared a wanton profanation deliberately intended to shock the prejudices of the natives on the part of those who enjoyed the confidence and protection of the conquerors of the country.¹ However this may be, the stately temple of Yahu, rising as it did in the midst of the sacred island of Khnum, was a sign and symbol of a detested foreign occupation and foreign religion. Before the Persian conquest it could be tolerated: after the Persian conquest and the destruction of the Egyptian sanctuaries that was impossible.

It will be noted that for nearly a century the temple of Yahu in Elephantiné was the only temple which was standing in the Jewish world, and that the rites and ceremonies

¹ In a letter on an ostrakon in my possession the writer, after referring to the "kneading" of the unleavened bread and stating that he was now "clean," asks that a maid should be sent to him "to prepare the passover" (אמת תעברן פסחא). The letter was written about 440 B.C. For the law about cleanness see Numbers ix. 10-13.

carried on in it were the same as those which had been carried on in the temple of Jerusalem. They were the rites and ceremonies prescribed by the Levitical Law—that “Priestly Code” which according to fashionable critical theories had been devised in post-exilic times long after its injunctions were being obeyed at the southern extremity of Egypt. It is, therefore, not wonderful that after the fall of Jerusalem the companions of Jeremiah should have insisted upon settling in Egypt in spite of the opposition of the prophet who belonged to the Babylonian or anti-Egyptian party and who foresaw that Egypt would be invaded before long by Nebuchadrezzar.¹ There were already colonies of Jews in Memphis and Pathros or Upper Egypt (Jer. xlv. 1), though the new comers do not seem to have mixed with them, “Pathros” in Jeremiah xlv. 15 being a patent interpolation. If we may judge from the proper names the Jews of Elephantinê would have been more orthodox than their contemporaries at Jerusalem before the fall of the Jewish monarchy: at any rate most of the names found in the papyri are identical with those of the orthodox Jewish community which returned from the Babylonish exile. That so orthodox a community should nevertheless have erected a rival temple to that of Jerusalem may appear strange to those who insist on the strict letter of the book of Deuteronomy. But Onias and his friends saw no contradiction between adherence to the Deuteronomic law and the erection of his temple at Tel el-Yahudiya, and the same may be said of the predecessors of Josiah or Hezekiah in Judah itself. Isaiah

¹ Jeremiah seems to have believed that Egypt would fall an easy prey to the Babylonian invader and would become a Babylonian province. The main part of the Egyptian army, however, now consisted of Greeks and not of natives, and Nebuchadrezzar was consequently unable to penetrate beyond the eastern edge of the Delta. Here was the Greek camp at Daphnae or Tel ed-Defena, to which Nebuchadrezzar himself appears to give the name of *Putu Yānan* or “Phut of the Ionians.”

(xx. 19) contemplates not only an obelisk of Yahveh " beside the (southern ?) border " of Egypt, but also an altar, like the " altar-house " at Elephantiné, which should stand in the midst of the country, in other words, at Memphis. In the age of Isaiah, indeed, there were already " five cities in the land of Egypt " speaking " the language of Canaan " ; Aramaic did not become first the official and then the common language of the Egyptian Jews until the Persian epoch, and the five cities which spoke the language of Canaan would therefore have been cities in which there were Jewish quarters.

From the later Palestinian point of view, however, the orthodoxy of the Jews at Elephantiné would not have been unimpeachable. The very fact that a temple rivalling that of Jerusalem in size and costliness should have existed there, and that the same services and ceremonies should have been carried on in it, would of itself have seemed an indication of schism, if not of heresy. And it cannot be denied that some at least of the Elephantiné Jews were inclined to draw too little distinction between the worship of Yahu and that of the Egyptian gods. In the " Assuan Papyri " the Jewess Mibtahyah marries an Egyptian and swears by the Egyptian goddess Sati in " the court of the Hebrews," and on the rocks of El-Hoshân, north of Silsilis, I have copied the record of Azariah son of Shagbí, who calls himself the " blessed of Horus." Even in the temple of Yahu the worship of other Deities was permitted. In the Ptolemaic age, when northern Egypt was filled with Jews freshly imported from Palestine, the laxity of the Jews in southern Egypt stands out in contrast to the strict orthodoxy of their co-religionists in the Delta ; I have published Greek ostraka from Karnak, for instance, which show not only that they were willing to farm the revenues of the heathen temple of Amon, but also that they adopted Greek

names and Greek customs. We may ascribe to this period of Greek history in Egypt what I have called the "patent interpolation" in Jeremiah xlv. 15. It would have been inapplicable a century or two earlier.

Still it must be remembered that before the return from the exile even the Palestinian Jews were not particularly literal in their interpretation of the Law. Isaiah sees nothing wrong in the erection of an obelisk to Yahveh like the obelisks dedicated to the Egyptian Sun-god or the pillars of stone which characterised the worship of the Canaanite Baal: still less does he think it strange that the Jews in Egypt should have an "altar" (or "altar-house") of their own. It is possible that the obelisk and altar already existed; the temple at Elephantinê had been built in the time of the Pharaohs, and Isaiah, however liberal-minded he may have been, is hardly likely to have been the first to suggest the erection of them. Indeed there is a further possibility that in the name of the Egyptian city which is singled out for mention by the prophet there is an allusion to Elephantinê. The better-authenticated reading *ha-heres* would represent an Egyptian *Ha-t-risi* "temple of the south," as Pathros—or rather Pathris as it ought to be written—represents *Pa-to-risi* "the land of the south." In any case the very accurate acquaintance with the region of the sudd displayed in the eighteenth chapter of Isaiah makes it clear that the southern course of the Nile was well known in Palestine at the time.

We can well imagine the horror, however, with which Johanan and his brother priests received the appeal of the Egyptian Jews for help. They must have sympathised with Waidrang and his gang and have rejoiced over the destruction of the schismatic temple. That the Elephantinê community should have believed there would be sympathy for them in Jerusalem proves how utterly cut

off they had been from post-exilic Judaism and how little they knew about it. Naturally no answer was returned to their appeal from the Palestinian priesthood: in the eyes of the latter the destruction of their temple was a righteous judgment inflicted upon them by Yahveh. The community in Elephantinê represented the ideas and practices of pre-exilic Judaism; with post-exilic Judaism it is plain they had never come into touch.

Can we fix the date at which their temple was built? This will largely depend upon the date to which we can assign the settlement of the Jewish community in Elephantinê, and upon this point the unpublished papyri at Berlin are likely to throw light.

They prove that the Jewish colony at Elephantinê was not a commercial, but a military, colony. The colony is called in them חילא יהודיא, "the Jewish garrison," and it is represented as occupying the citadel and defending the southern approach to Egypt not only against the Ethiopians of the Sudan but also against the Egyptians themselves. The Jewish force was, in fact, employed in seeing that the Egyptians did not rise against their Persian masters and in suppressing any signs of rebellion upon their part. It was no wonder that they were hated by their Egyptian neighbours and that any weakening of Persian authority meant trouble to the Jews.

The revelations of the Berlin papyri explain the allusions in a fragmentary Aramaic papyrus from Elephantinê, now at Strasburg, which has been published by Professor Euting, as well as a passage in a mutilated inscription on a block of sandstone in the Cairo Museum which came from the same island, possibly from the site of the temple of Yahu. On this latter we read: . . . רב חילא זי סון עבר, "the commander of the garrison of Assuan Ebed . . .," who thus bore a Jewish name, probably Obadiah. As the troops

he commanded were stationed at Assuan it would appear that part of the Jewish garrison, as was natural, was on duty there as well as in Elephantinê.¹ The Strasburg papyrus, which gives an account of the Egyptian outbreak in the fourteenth year of Darius II., just after the departure of the governor Arsames, now becomes intelligible. The Egyptians, we are told in it, had "revolted," and the priests of Khnum had bribed some of "the auxiliaries of the king" to destroy the citadel of Elephantinê, to build a wall over the ruins and to fill up the well which supplied the garrison with water. This well, which is of large size and is sunk through the rock like the famous Well of Joseph in the Citadel at Cairo, has been cleaned out by Mr. Howard Carter and is once more in use. "The auxiliaries of the king" may have been Greeks; at all events after the mutiny of the native army and its flight to the Sudan in the time of Psammetichus its place was mainly supplied by Greek mercenaries. The names of some of these mercenaries, mixed with those of Karians and Canaanites, are found, as is well known, on the legs of the colossi at Abu-Simbel, and a little to the north, at Tonqála, Mr. Weigall has lately discovered *graffiti* in the Aramaic letters of the sixth century B.C. but in the Hebrew language.² That there were Greeks in Elephantinê or Assuan living by the side of the Jewish colony is clear from a document published by Professor Sachau, which is dated in the fifteenth year of King Amyrtæus. The name of Amyrtæus—Amon-

¹ Similar testimony is borne by the "Assuan Papyri" (K²) where Mahseiah and Yedoniah are described as "Aramæans of Assuan, belonging to the Flag-division of Warêzath." In H² Menahem and Ananiah are described as "Jews of Elephantinê the Fortress, belonging to the Flag-division of Iddin-Nabu." The difference in the description may imply that the cohort stationed at Assuan contained other Syrians as well as Jews, whereas the cohort in Elephantinê was exclusively Jewish.

² One of them begins אַנְכִי בְּיָוֶן. The writer describes himself as אַזְפִּי, "strong of mouth."

erdu-f, probably, in Egyptian—is written A-m-u-r-t-i-s, which presupposes a Greek original.

We further learn from the still unpublished papyri at Berlin that the Jewish troops were divided into companies called "Flags." Six of these are known: four of them bear Persian names derived from the names of their commanders; the two others have Babylonian names. Professor Sachau¹ quotes a passage in which mention is made of an "Aramæan (Jew) of Yeb (Elephantinê) the Fortress, belonging to the Flag-division of Nebo-kudurri," and he points out that the system of military organisation is precisely the same as that described in Numbers ii. and x., where the Israelites are similarly said to have been divided into companies each distinguished by its "standard." He further notes that the use of the preposition *lê* before the word "flag" or "standard" in the papyri corresponds with its use in Numbers xxvii. 1 and xxxvi. 1.

The two Babylonian names take us back to a period before the Persian conquest of Egypt. With this agrees the statement in the petition sent to Bagoas that the temple of Yahu at Elephantinê had been built before the conquest of Egypt by Kambyzes and that while the native Egyptian temples were destroyed by the conqueror that of Yahu was spared. The Egyptian temple, it must be remembered, was a fortress as well as a temple, and alone among public and private buildings was constructed of stone. That the temple of Yahu, which was also of stone, should have been left uninjured can only mean that the Jews of Elephantinê were already regarded as a garrison in a hostile country. They were soldiers who occupied the citadel that commanded the southern entrance into Egypt, and, as in the Persian age, so too before the time of Kambyzes they

¹ *Florilegium* (Paris, 1909), p. 533.

must have already been planted there to keep the natives in check.

The fact seems at first sight surprising, for the Twenty-sixth Egyptian dynasty, with its archaizing zeal and efforts to restore the old sanctuaries of the country like the Ptolemies in later times, has generally been considered to represent a national movement. But the restoration of the old sanctuaries had the same motives behind it as their restoration by the Greek Ptolemies. They were a sop thrown to the powerful priesthood and an endeavour to make the people forget that their rulers did not belong to the ancient royal race. Psammetichus belonged to the north; he bore a non-Egyptian name which is probably Libyan, and he secured and held the throne by means of foreign mercenaries. One of the first events which occurred after the establishment of his power was the revolt of the native army in consequence of the favour shown to the foreign troops and its flight into the Sudan. It was pursued by Psammetichus as far as the Second Cataract, where I have found Karian inscriptions, and though the Greek and Karian inscriptions at Abu Simbel have been supposed for the last half-century to belong to the reign of Psammetichus II., instead of that of Psammetichus I., the earlier date is now beginning to be once more preferred. The place of the mutineers in Elephantinê and Assuan was taken by a garrison of foreign troops, just as in the north their place was taken by the two great garrisons of Greek mercenaries at Daphnæ and Marea; but whereas the foreign garrisons in the Delta consisted of Greeks and Karians, those in Elephantinê and Assuan would have been mainly Jews. Herodotus (ii. 30) calls all three garrisons alike "Persians," by which he means non-Egyptians in the Persian service. While the Greek mercenaries kept the Delta in order, Upper Egypt was kept in order by the Jews.

We can, therefore, now understand why the successors of Psammetichus attempted to restore the old empire of the Eighteenth Dynasty in Asia. Just as the Greek Ptolemies possessed themselves of Palestine and Syria, or as the Albanian Mohammed Ali endeavoured to do the same in our own day, so the non-Egyptian Saitic dynasty found it needful to have a recruiting ground in Syria if they would render their power in Egypt secure. With Syria as a subject province the fleets and commerce of the Phœnician coast were under the control of the Pharaoh who was further able to suppress disaffection at home or counterbalance the influence of the Ionian mercenaries by the help of levies from the Lebanon. That there was good reason for this was proved by the fate of Apries after the fall of Jerusalem ; the struggle between him and Amasis was really a struggle between one body of Greek troops and another, and the fall of Apries was due to the fact that he was no longer able to obtain recruits from Syria.

The Jewish garrison at Elephantinê and Assuan was thus exactly on the same footing as the Greek garrison at Daphnæ. It differed only in being further removed both from the head-quarters of the sovereign power and from its own fellow-countrymen. But it was a garrison in the midst of a hostile population, who naturally hated it on both political and religious grounds, and were therefore ready to take advantage of the first opportunity that presented itself of driving it away.

The fact is a striking confirmation of a well-known passage in the long-discredited Letter of Aristæas to Philocrates which has hitherto received but scant acceptance. Here the writer states that : " Already also before (the reign of Ptolemy I.) a good many (Jews) entered (Egypt) with the Persians, and before this too others had been sent as allies to assist Psammetichus in fighting against

the king of the Ethiopians ; but they were not so numerous as those who were introduced by Ptolemy Lagos." ¹ The discovery of the accuracy of the statement will demand a reconsideration of the historical value of the document in which it occurs. At any rate it is clear that we may now accept its chronology and date the establishment of the Jewish garrison in Elephantinê at the time when Psammetichus was engaged in war with the Ethiopian king at whose court the revolted native troops of Egypt had taken refuge. This would have been about B.C. 655, in the latter years of Manasseh's reign. It would have been after this that Psammetichus repaid the assistance he had received from Judah by checking the advance of the Scythian hordes and keeping them at bay in Ashdod for nearly thirty years.² It is worth notice that both Necho, the father of Psammetichus, and Manasseh were carried in chains to Assyria and afterwards restored to their kingdoms, and it is conceivable that they may have made the acquaintance of one another while in captivity.

One of the most important results of the revelations which we owe to the Elephantinê papyri at Berlin is that as far back as the middle of the seventh century B.C. the ritual and prescriptions of the Levitical Law were observed in the temple of Yahu at the southern extremity of Egypt just as they were in the post-exilic temple of Jerusalem. It is clear from the petition to Bagoas that the temple in Elephantinê had been built in the early days of the settlement of the Jewish garrison, and archæological confirmation of this is to be found in the Saitic potsherds which

¹ Aristæus ad Philocratem : " De Legis divine translatione," 12, 13 : ἤδη μὲν καὶ πρότερον ἰκανῶν εἰσεληλυθόντων σὺν τῷ Πέρσῃ, καὶ πρὸ τούτου ἐτέρων συμμαχιῶν ἐξαπεσταλμένων πρὸς τὸν τῶν Αἰθίοπων βασιλέα μάχεσθαι σὺν Ψαμμητίχῳ· ἀλλὰ οὐ τοσοῦτοι πλήθει παρεγγυήθησαν ὅσους Πτολεμαῖος ὁ τοῦ Δάγου μετήγαγε.

² See Flinders Petrie : *A History of Egypt*, iii. pp. 331-2.

I have picked up in the Jewish quarry at Assuan. I have already noticed that the ritual law contained in Leviticus ii. 1-2 was strictly carried out in the Elephantiné temple ; in other words, " the Priestly Code " of literary hypothesis of which the law in question forms part was already known to the Jews of Elephantiné in the age of Manasseh. It is difficult to see how this fact can be reconciled with the post-exilic date assigned to the " Priestly Code." A revision of the date ascribed to the " Priestly Legislation," however, brings with it far-reaching consequences, not the least being a revision of the date currently ascribed to the book of Deuteronomy.

But it is not only the theories of Pentateuchal criticism a revision of which will be necessitated by the discovery of the Berlin papyri, a similar revision will be needed also in the case of another old document which has been dissected into composite fragments and brought down to a comparatively late date. This is the romance of the wise man Ahikar who is referred to in the book of Tobit (xiv. 10) under the name of Achiacharus. The romance, it now turns out, was already in existence in the fifth century before our era, and one of the arguments for the late dating of the book of Tobit thus falls away. Along with the fragments of the romance were found the fragments of a Chronicle which it has taken much time and ingenuity to fit together. But the importance of it from a historical point of view can hardly be over-estimated. Other papyri recovered by Dr. Rubensohn from the ruins of the Jewish houses contain letters, business and legal documents and long lists of proper names. The latter supplement the names found in the papyri of which I was the editor.

The names are in themselves of interest, since they are for the most part those which in the Old Testament are associated with the exilic and post-exilic periods. We

now know that they go back to the pre-exilic epoch and that consequently there was no such break in the religious conceptions of Judah before and after the exile as it has been of late the fashion to imagine. Yahveh already occupied the same place in Jewish religious thought as He did in the time of Ezra.

The publication of the Berlin papyri is eagerly expected, and it may be hoped that it will not be much longer delayed. Besides the papyri there are some hundreds of ostraka, most of which have been found by the French excavators. They lay, for the greater part, in a ditch or street which bounded the Jewish quarter to the east; no fragments of papyri, however, were discovered here. Among the ostraka were one or two inscribed labels of wood. Unfortunately nothing more is likely to be found in Elephantinê itself; the ground available for excavation having been thoroughly searched by the French excavators Messrs. Clermont-Ganneau, Gauthier and Clédat. Just before the commencement of their work a Rest-House was erected by the Ministry of Public Works on the site of the Citadel, with a garden attached to it, the irrigation of which will have destroyed whatever papyri or ostraka may have lain beneath it. On the Assuan side, however, the prospect is more hopeful. Here a considerable portion of the old Citadel still remains, though partly covered by the houses of the town, as well as by the Anglican Church and Parsonage. But there are no gardens to be irrigated.

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Note.—We may gather from Zephaniah that there were already Jews as far south as the region of the Sudd “beyond the rivers of Ethiopia—i.e. The Atbara, Blue Nile and Sobat—in the age of Josiah, where they would have been serving as soldiers either against or (less probably) with the Ethiopian king (Zeph. iii. 10). Zephaniah himself was the son of “a Kushite,” which would explain his references to Ethiopia (i. 1, ii. 12, iii. 10).