

### *THE NEW POPYRI OF ELEPHANTINE.*

To all who are interested in the story of the Old Testament, the discoveries at Elephantine offer a wonderful prospect—that of seeing a history of Israel at some time based upon authentic and contemporary records. For between even the brilliant conjectures on which the work of Wellhausen is based and certain knowledge there is a wide gulf. The hope of obtaining such records from Palestine, though not quite extinct, is exceedingly faint: nothing but stone or brick would be preserved in that soil, and documents engraved on these materials have hitherto been yielded by it in scanty numbers. From Egypt, where papyrus is preserved by the soil, till recently little illustrative of Israelitish history earlier than Alexandrian Judaism was ever expected. But the unexpected has once more come about. The Jewish colony of Upper Egypt, of which the Bible knows little more than the name, has suddenly come into prominence. The deed-box of a family belonging to it in the Persian period was accidentally discovered, and threw a powerful light on some of the prophecies incorporated in the Book of Jeremiah. A second find, of which the firstfruits have now been published, takes us far nearer to the communities of Palestine of whom some records have come down to us in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. We can scarcely believe that this source will have run dry before it has furnished material which will set at rest a number of burning controversies. If the Jewish communities of Egypt in the year 400 B.C.

had any Sacred Books, and portions of them or the whole of them should come to light, what will their relation turn out to be to the sacred canon of later Jews and Christians? How far will their Torah—should it be discovered—coincide with any of the documents which criticism has endeavoured to reconstruct? Had they any portion of our Isaiah or of our Psalms? For some years, at any rate, the eyes of Biblical students will be directed towards Upper Egypt, as the probable source of enlightenment on these and similar problems.

The second find, published by Dr. E. Sachau in the *Abhandlungen der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* for the year 1907, consists of a complete papyrus, dated from the 17th year of Darius, and containing a letter addressed by the Jews of Elephantine to the governor of Jehûd (the Jews): a fragmentary copy of the same letter, in slightly different wording: and a fragmentary reply from two of the persons mentioned as addressees in the first papyrus. Dr. Sachau's translation and commentaries will of course be the basis for any future studies of these documents.

It is noticeable that the complete papyrus (the only one of the three to be dealt with in this article) contains numerous mistakes, some of which are corrected by the scribe himself between the lines, whereas others are left uncorrected, though the fragmentary copy affords the means of correcting some. Perhaps then the reason why the papyrus is preserved lies in the fact that it was never sent: either it was used by some official copyist or translator as a draft whence to make the copy to be sent to the governor in Palestine; and such a document would be likely to be free from clerical errors, and to be couched in Persian. Or it may be a duplicate of the copy actually sent, retained for purposes of reference, as is the custom in modern times, and as was usual afterwards at the bureaux of the Caliphs.

The language is, according to Dr. Sachau, the very purest Aramaic: this does not prevent it being in many places ungrammatical, and hard to translate with certainty. It contains what appear to be decided Hebraisms, and in general bears an extraordinary likeness to the language of Nehemiah. This appears both in the phraseology and the tone.

## TRANSLATION.

To our Master Bagoas,<sup>1</sup> governor of the Jews. Thy servants Jedoniah and associates, priests in the city of Elephantine.

May the God of Heaven<sup>2</sup> pray for the peace<sup>3</sup> of our Master much at all times, and appoint thee to mercy<sup>4</sup> before king Dariohos and them of his household<sup>5</sup> a thousand times more than now<sup>6</sup>: and may he give thee long life. And be thou joyous<sup>7</sup> and strong at all times.

Now thy servant Jedoniah and his associates say thus: In the month Tammuz, of the year 14 of Dariohos the king, when Arsames<sup>8</sup> had gone away and gone to the king,

<sup>1</sup> Bagoas: Aram. בַּגּוּאֵי. A name apparently derived from old Pers. Baga or Bâga, "God."

<sup>2</sup> The God of heaven: Neh. i. 4, 5.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase in the text יִשְׁאַל שְׁלָמִים is common in Hebrew and Aramaic for "to greet." At first sight there would seem to be an extraordinary parallel to this phrase in the Arabic formula used after the names of Prophets: *sallâ 'llâhu 'alaihi wasallama*, "may God pray over him and salute him!" Yet it seems more probable that the word יִשְׁאַל, "ask, is a miswriting for some word meaning "increase."

<sup>4</sup> The phrase is common in the O.T. with the verb נָתַן for שִׂים of the text.

<sup>5</sup> According to Diodorus the famous Bagoas had a friend in the grandson of Ostanes, brother of Artaxerxes II.

<sup>6</sup> A thousand times, etc.: in the passages quoted below from Diodorus the great Bagoas is repeatedly described as the most trusted of the king's friends.

<sup>7</sup> The Greek formulae χαλεπὸν and ἐβήσω agree with this.

<sup>8</sup> Arsames is a common name in Persian history of this period. Ctesias (Photius ed. Bekker, 42, 33) gives Arxanes as the name of a governor of Egypt, B.C. 424.

the priests of the god Khnoub which is in Elephantine covenanted <sup>1</sup> with Vidrang, who was Usher <sup>2</sup> here, that <sup>3</sup> they might remove from there the Temple of the God Jahu which is in the city of Elephantine. Thereupon, the aforementioned Vidrang Lakhâyâ <sup>4</sup> sent a letter to his son Nafyan, who was general in the city of Syene, saying: Let them destroy the Temple which is in the city of Elephantine. Thereupon Nafyan took Egyptians with other troops: they came to the city of Elephantine with their mattocks (?), <sup>5</sup> entered the above temple, razed <sup>6</sup> it to the ground, broke

<sup>1</sup> The word in the text, הַמְוֹנִית, is unknown. The fragmentary copy has "gave money and goods to." Since *ham* in Persian is a prefix signifying "together," it might seem that a Persian compound verb is intended.

<sup>2</sup> Usher: the original is פֶּרְתָר, which seems to be identical with the Armenian Hratarak, "herald," "crier." So Armenian has Hraman for *Firman* (Sansk. Pramāna), and the Armenian form is curiously found in the Aramaic of the Talmud. An official of the Persian court called *εταγγελεύς* is mentioned by Herodotus (iii. 84) and Diodorus (xvi. 47). Perhaps, as applied to a governor, it meant "announcer of the king's will."

<sup>3</sup> That they might: the particle הַ is familiar in Syriac, where it invariably follows the first word or words of a quotation. If it is not a mistake of the scribe's, it should here have some sense like "in order that," or "that" only, as in the fragmentary copy.

<sup>4</sup> The word following Vidrang, לַחִי, is puzzling, and from the place in which it occurs in the third papyrus, it can only be an epithet of Vidrang. Probably it is a local name, signifying "of Lakh," a place difficult to identify. One is inclined to think of Râgha, the Avestic name for the famous Rai, but this transliteration seems improbable.

<sup>5</sup> The word conjecturally rendered "mattocks," תְּלִיחָה, is unknown. In default of a better suggestion, one is inclined to connect it with the Arabic *thalla*, "to pull down a house," usually found in connexion with the word 'urûsh, "houses." I have noted two cases of the occurrence of this word: a poet quoted in the commentary on Mutanabbi, ed. Dieterici, p. 466, says in *yaktulûka fakad thalalta 'urûshahum*, "if they kill you, you have pulled down their houses": and the Romance of Hamzah, Beirut, 1886, i. 262, *lâ budda li min an athulla hâdhâ'l-arsha waahdima dhâka 'l-îwâna*, "I must assuredly pull down this house and demolish that palace," which shows that the word is a synonym of *hadama*, the ordinary word for "to demolish." The substantive is not found in Arabic, except in the form *thalal*, meaning "destruction," "demolition."

<sup>6</sup> The spelling נָשׁ for נָשׁ is, perhaps, merely an error, arising from the similarity of the sounds *dh* and *th*. In the portion of Dionysius of Tell-Mahré edited by Chabot there are examples of the opposite error, חָל for חָל and חָק for חָק.

the stone columns that were there. Moreover<sup>1</sup> five stone portals, built<sup>2</sup> of sculptured stone, which were in that temple, they destroyed: and they set them [on]<sup>3</sup> their heads: and they burned with fire the copper hinges in those marbles<sup>4</sup> and their cedar-wood roofing all together with the rest<sup>5</sup> of the building, and whatever else was there. And they took and appropriated the gold and silver chalices and whatever else was in that temple. Now from the days of the king of Egypt our fathers had built that temple in the city of Elephantine, and when Cambyses came to Egypt he found the temple built. And they destroyed all the temples of the Egyptian gods,<sup>6</sup> but no one did any injury to that temple. And when they did thus, we, with our wives and children, put on sackcloth, and were fasting and praying to Jahu Lord of heaven, who showed us<sup>7</sup> [our desire] upon Vidrang Kalbâyâ. The ring<sup>8</sup> was removed from his feet, all the property which he possessed

<sup>1</sup> There is here an otiose הוה, as sometimes in Syriac.

<sup>2</sup> The original is בנין פסילה זי אבן. In Arabic the grammarians have a special rule whereby the nomen verbi of one verb can serve as cognate accusative to a synonymous verb. This would be the grammatical construction here.

<sup>3</sup> Since "they set up their heads" would give no satisfactory sense, it is probable that the particle על has fallen out, as has also happened in a line below. The Greek ἐπι κεφαλῆν is similarly used for topsy-turvy.

<sup>4</sup> This appears to mean "in the marble door-ways": for the doors themselves can scarcely have been of that material. Perhaps by "hinges" the writer means the doors themselves.

<sup>5</sup> Sachau reads שידיית; perhaps it can be read שיריית and interpreted as above.

<sup>6</sup> Diodorus, i. 46, § 4, "Cambyses burned the temples in Egypt."

<sup>7</sup> "To show us upon" should, on the analogy of "to see upon," involve some such supplement as that suggested. There seems, however, a possibility that the word Kalbâyâ may mean, as usually, "dogs," and should be taken as the subject of the following sentence, implying that he was fettered in the open air, and eaten by dogs: see 1 Kings xxi. 23; Dionysius, ed. Chabot, 41. 7. In Jahiz, Ḥayawân 1. 109, several verses are quoted, describing the devouring of the dead by dogs; in one a man is stitched up in a sack, to prevent the dogs getting at him.

<sup>8</sup> The Syriac כבלא means "anklet" as well as "fetter." Apparently (as Sachau suggests) the removal of the anklets from the feet must signify some form of degradation; or else the whole is a euphemism for execution.

was destroyed, and all those men who had devised mischief against the temple were slain. And we saw [our desire] upon them. Even before this at the time when this mischief was done unto us we sent a letter [to]<sup>1</sup> our Master, and to Jochanan the high-priest and his associates the priests which are in Jerusalem, and to Ostanēs brother of Anani,<sup>2</sup> but the nobles<sup>3</sup> of the Jews sent no letter at all to us. Moreover from the day of Tammuz of the year 14 of king Daríohos until the present day we are clad in sackcloth and fasting: our wives are treated as widows: we have not anointed ourselves with oil, nor have we drunk wine. Moreover from then until the day<sup>4</sup> of the 17th year of king Daríohos meal-offering, incense and burnt-offering have not been offered in that Temple. Now thy servants Jedoniah and his associates and all the Jews of Elephantine say thus: If our Master thinketh well to build this temple, seeing that they permit us not to build it, lo, unto thy clients and friends which are here in Egypt let a letter be sent from thee concerning the temple of the God Jahu in the city of Elephantine to build it, even as it was built before: and meal-offering, incense and burnt-offering shall be offered on the altar of the God Jahu in thy name, and we shall pray for thee at all times, we and our wives and children, and all the Jews that are here, if they do so that this temple be built. And there shall be to thee a right before Jahu, God of heaven, from one that sacrifices to Him burnt-offering

<sup>1</sup> The omission of "to" is apparently due to the scribe.

<sup>2</sup> This appears to be the natural rendering: When a man is described as the brother of some one else, it implies that the latter is better known than the former. An Ostanēs is mentioned by Diodorus as brother of Artaxerxes II: but it is difficult to regard Ananias as other than a Jewish name. Or could the words mean "his brother Ostanēs of the village or town Ananiah" (Neh. xi. 32)? Certainly we should have expected a preposition before it.

<sup>3</sup> The Hôrím of the Jews play a great part in the book of Nehemiah.

<sup>4</sup> The day of the year: this rather implies that we have before us a rough draft in which details were afterwards to be filled up.

and sacrifice a sum equal to a [th]ousand silver talents.<sup>1</sup> And *concerning gold* <sup>2</sup> concerning this we have sent and given information; moreover all the words that are in this letter we have sent in our name unto Delayah and Shelam-yah, sons of Sanballat, governor of Samaria. Moreover, Arsames knoweth not concerning all this which was done to us. On the — of Marheshwan, year 17 of Dariohos the king.

A commentary to this valuable monument is to be found in Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 7, which may be given in its entirety.

At the death of the high-priest Elyashib, his son Judas (=Jehoiada) received the high-priesthood: and at his death his son John received the office, on whose account Bagoes, general of the other [?] Artaxerxes, defiled the Temple, and imposed a tribute upon the Jews, making them pay out of the public funds *fifty drachms for each lamb, before offering the daily sacrifice.*<sup>3</sup> This was for the following reason. John had a brother Jesus, who, being the friend of Bagoes, received from him a promise of the high priesthood. Relying on this promise, Jesus, having a dispute with John in the Temple, irritated his brother so that in a fit of anger he slew him. For a man holding a holy office, like John, to commit such a crime against his brother, was a terrible thing—indeed, so hideous an outrage had never

<sup>1</sup> The form kankar is Armenian. What a thousand silver talents would come to is not clear: one is tempted to think of the Sicilian talent, worth 3 or 6 denars, about which there is so much in Bentley's *Phalaris*. Even so the sum seems enormously high: but the figure given by Josephus as demanded by Bagoas for the daily sacrifices at Jerusalem is also very exorbitant.

<sup>2</sup> Apparently then Arsames is still nominally governor of Upper Egypt, and the writers are anxious to inform Bagoas that the outrage was effected without his consent.

<sup>3</sup> The words in italics are apparently due to an error of the scribe.

occurred among Greeks or barbarians. The Divine power did not overlook it, for owing to this act the people were enslaved, and the Temple defiled by the Persians. For Bagoses, Artaxerxes's general, knowing that the high-priest of the Jews, John, had killed his own brother Jesus in the Temple, whereas he himself had, on a former occasion, been prevented by the Jews from entering the Temple, now assailed them, and began wrathfully to say, "Ye have dared to do murder in your Temple! Surely I am more holy than he who has committed a murder therein," and uttering this he entered within. And on this pretext Bagoses ill-treated the Jews for seven years after the death of Jesus.

After the death of John his son Jaddua received the high-priesthood. He had a brother named Manasseh, to whom Sanballat, who had been sent by the *last king Darius* as Satrap to Samaria, willingly gave his daughter Nikaso, knowing that Jerusalem was a fine city, whose kings had given much trouble to the Assyrians and Syrians. This Sanballat was by origin a Cuthaeon, of the same race as the Samaritans. He hoped by this alliance to secure the goodwill of the whole Jewish nation.

About this time Philip, king of Macedon, was treacherously killed by Pausanias, son of Cerastes, of the family of the Orestae, at Aegaeae. His son Alexander receiving the kingdom, crossed the Hellespont, and at the battle of Granicus defeated the generals of Darius. [The rest of this chapter may be given in summary.] The Jews, disapproving of the marriage of the high-priest's brother, demanded that he should either divorce his wife, or keep away from the altar, and with them the high-priest agreed. Manasseh approached Sanballat, saying that he preferred to retain his wife, but did not wish to lose the priesthood: so Sanballat said he would build Manasseh a Temple on



Mount Gerizim, and get a firman for it from king Darius.

The march of Darius to meet Alexander would, Sanballat thought, furnish an opportunity to get what he wanted, since Darius would certainly defeat Alexander, and be ready to grant favours on his return. Unfortunately Darius was defeated, and Sanballat deserted to the side of Alexander, and got the firman from him instead.

With this passage of Josephus the following of Diodorus Siculus, xvii. 5, § 3, should be compared: While Philip was still reigning the Persians were ruled by Ochus, who treated his subjects with great violence. He being hated owing to his cruelty, the chiliarch Bagoas, who was physically a eunuch, and of bad character, fond of war, poisoned Ochus by the aid of a physician, and placed his youngest son Arses on the throne. In the third year of his reign he was also slain by Bagoas, who placed on the throne one of his friends, named Darius, son of Arsanes, son of Ostanes, brother of the former king Artaxerxes.

About this Bagoas we hear something more in Diodorus, xvi. 47: A certain man was the most trusted of the king's (Artaxerxes Ochus's) friends next to Bagoas. Ibid. 51, § 2: When Artaxerxes had reduced all Egypt, and razed the walls of the most important towns, by plundering the temples, he got together a great quantity of gold and silver, and carried off the chronicles out of the ancient sanctuaries: these Bagoas afterwards for a great sum sold back to the Egyptian priests.

It seems evident<sup>1</sup> that the Bagoas who is general of "the other" Artaxerxes in the record of Josephus is the same as the Bagoas of Diodorus. "The other," it should

<sup>1</sup> So Grätz, *Geschichte*, ii. 2, 211 n. Jüdeich, v. infra.

be observed, is a conjecture, and not necessarily a good one.

He might be thought, indeed, too distinguished a person to be confused with any other of the same name, having taken a part of great prominence, though not altogether successful, in the Egyptian campaign, and having made a compact with Mentor whereby the latter was to be supreme in the maritime parts of Asia, whereas Bagoas was to be supreme in the inland satrapies. In the story told by Diodorus he regards other men's religious scruples as a means of making money—restoring the records to the Egyptian priests for a good sum : and in the record of Josephus he acts in the same way, since he makes the Jews pay him a high fee for their daily sacrifices. Now it is difficult to dissociate the Bagoas of {the Elephantine papyrus from the Bagoas of Josephus, since the personage of the papyrus demands a fee for sacrifices to be offered—i.e. the offer made by the Jews implies that they were acquainted with his practice, and demand leave to sacrifice on terms as good as those granted to the priests at Jerusalem. Then the opening words of the papyrus imply that he stood high in the king's favour, as the suppliants pray that he may have a thousand times as much of it as he now enjoys. And Diodorus insists repeatedly on the favour which his Bagoas enjoyed at the court of Artaxerxes III. One passage has been cited above : in the following § (xvi. 47, § 4) he says, "Bagoas, whom the king trusted especially" : a little later on (xvi. 60, § 5) he declares that Bagoas was master of the empire and the king did nothing without his consent. Hence it is difficult to dissociate the Bagoas of Diodorus from the person mentioned in the papyrus. For though the name Bagoas may have been common, that there should have been two persons of that name both high in the favour of their kings and both making money of men's scruples is *a priori* unlikely.

Moreover, the date of Josephus for his Bagoas is exactly confirmed by Diodorus, with whom Strabo agrees.

A Sanballat occurs in the record of Josephus as a governor sent to Samaria by the last Darius, i.e. the last king before Alexander's seizure of the empire. The papyrus shows that Sanballat must have been sent before: but the Sanballat who is brought by Josephus into connexion with Alexander cannot have been sent there by the Darius who reigned from 424-404. The account of Sanballat given in the book of Nehemiah can be brought into agreement with that of Josephus. The latter, as has been seen, charges the brother of the high-priest Jaddua with marrying Sanballat's daughter: and Nehemiah (xiii. 28) declares that he banished one of the sons of the high-priest Jehoiada for marrying a daughter of Sanballat. According to the same book (xii. 11) Jaddua was the son of Jonathan, son of Jehoiada; but this Jonathan does not appear to have been himself high-priest, and may perhaps have died early. In no case is there anything unusual about the use of the word "son" for "grandson." It is on the whole probable that Nehemiah himself left Jerusalem while Jehoiada was still high-priest, and that the continuation of the series in chapter xii. is due to a later hand.

The remaining synchronism in the papyrus is that of the high-priest Jochanan or John. Josephus makes this person high-priest immediately before Jaddua, and the book of Nehemiah (xii. 22) agrees with him, while making him the son of Elyashib (*ibid.* 23), and so brother of Jehoiada. If Nehemiah's Artaxerxes is Artaxerxes II. (404-361), and Josephus is right in [making Jaddua die about 320 (soon after Alexander's death), the date of this Jochanan will be likely to include the year 340: it cannot possibly be brought up as early as the time of Darius II. (e.g. 407). The other lists of high-priests collected by Herzfeld omit Jochanan's

name, or rather substitute for it that of Jannaeus or Joatham : they do not put it higher up.

The papyrus confirms Josephus in making Sanballat governor of Samaria : but, if its date 17 of the king Darius be interpreted, as is natural, of Darius Nothus, Josephus's account of the founding of the Samaritan Temple, his bringing Sanballat into connexion with Alexander the Great, and Jochanan into connexion with the great Bagoas of Artaxerxes III.'s time must be quite unhistorical. He may then have committed two wrong identifications—that of the Darius under whom Sanballat was governor of Samaria with the *last* Darius, when he should have been identified with Darius Nothus ; and that of the great Bagoas of the reign of Artaxerxes III. with the governor of Judaea, a far less important person of the reign of Darius Nothus. He will thereby have led into error some of the best historians : thus Jüdeich, *Kleinasiatische Studien*, p. 176, places the residence of Bagoas in the nearer East between the years 348–341 B.C. on the authority of the passage quoted from Josephus. The mention of Vidrang brings the newly-discovered papyri into connexion with the Sayce-Cowley collection, where he is associated with the third generation of a family which has left records dating from Xerxes, Artaxerxes, and Darius. In order to justify Josephus, we should have not only to interpret Darius in the papyri as Artaxerxes Ochus, but Xerxes as Darius Nothus. These operations conjointly would seem too violent to be permissible, without evidence that these names were also in use. On the other hand, the reduction of several detailed chapters of Josephus to fiction is an operation which is to be regretted.

The record of Nehemiah, on the other hand, appears to agree in the main with the data of the papyrus, since, if his Artaxerxes be interpreted as Longimanus, the papyrus quite naturally deals with personages of the next period,

Jochanan for Jehoiada, and the sons of Sanballat for Sanballat. The marriage of a daughter of Sanballat to a son of Jehoiada is also in order. It is curious that Nehemiah does not apply the name Pahath (satrap) to Sanballat, but (iii. 33) rather implies that he held that position, which Josephus, in agreement with the papyrus, actually assigns him. Whether the historical character of the book of Ezra—which has been more seriously questioned than that of Nehemiah—will gain by the discovery seems doubtful. The anachronism of Ezra x. 6 (in which Ezra goes to the chamber of Jochanan, son of Elyashib), which, according to Stade, *Geschichte*, ii. 153, belongs at the earliest to the commencement of the fourth century B.C., is at any rate put back a few years.

Still the great interest of Dr. Sachau's discovery is doubtless the evidence which it affords that the Israelites in these distant colonies had altars and sacrifices. Wellhausen's great work begins with the observation that in the first century A.D. both Samaritans and Jews were as convinced that there was only place where worship could be offered as they were that God was one. He then proves (or endeavours to prove) that Deuteronomy represents the stage at which this doctrine was still gaining ground, the Priestly Code the stage at which it was assumed or taken for granted. And now comes this document of 407 B.C., showing us that the Jews not only sacrificed elsewhere than at Jerusalem, but hoped for the approval of the community at Jerusalem when they endeavoured to get help to rebuild their altar and temple at Elephantine! And we are allowed to infer that the temple of Elephantine was possessed of vessels as costly as those of which we so often read as the property of the Temple at Jerusalem.

That this document and others which, it is to be hoped,

may follow quickly will long occupy the attention of Biblical critics may be safely predicted. They may be heartily congratulated on being enabled to build or rebuild some of their fabric on the solid basis of contemporary evidence, which, besides the information which it actually supplies, will be of the utmost value as a criterion of the credibility of previously known materials.

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NOTE ON THE ABOVE.

THE papyrus is of no small importance for the history of Egypt. The reference to Cambyses' severity is very interesting, though perhaps not quite convincing. Further, until the recent discoveries of Aramaic documents the whole of the periods of Persian rule from the end of Darius I. to the liberation of Egypt in the reign of Darius II.; and again, from the reconquest by Ochus to the arrival of Alexander, were practically unrepresented by contemporary monuments.

According to the ordinary view, this petition of the Jews, presented in the seventeenth year of Darius II. would have preceded the liberation of Egypt by only about a year. But the interesting parallels which Professor Margoliouth points out between the statements and references in the petition and those in Josephus and Diodorus, who are dealing ostensibly with persons and events belonging to the age of the latest Persian rulers, raise the question whether it would be possible to date the Elephantine papyrus to this later period. If this were so, we should find a confirmation of the idea in the fact that the only other group of papyri found in near connexion with the Aramaic series, was a number of Greek documents, dating

from the reign of Ptolemy Soter, and therefore following on the former with but a narrow gap between. These Greek papyri were discovered a little to the south of the Aramaic group (Sachau, p. 46). It may be remarked that the greater number of the Aramaic papyri still await publication.

The names of the early Persian rulers of Egypt, Cambyses, Darius I., Xerxes I. and Artaxerxes I., are all known on Egyptian monuments or papyri; those of the later kings are still unknown or unrecognized, unless Darius II. may occur in the Oasis of El Khargeh, and the last Darius on a legal document, in the Louvre, closely allied in formulæ and style to those of Ptolemaic age. We cannot, therefore, be certain by what names these beings would be designated in documents from Egypt. But it would be very difficult to admit the seventeenth year of a Persian king of this time in Egypt. For, though the chronology of the period is somewhat uncertain, it is clear that none of them ruled so long over Egypt; it would be against the analogy of Cambyses' and Alexander's reigns if the years of a conqueror from before the conquest were counted to his rule in the province, and only to be explained as an abnormal usage in the separate Jewish community.

Egyptian words, and especially Egyptian names, are found in most of the Aramaic papyri from Egypt. In this papyrus, concerning solely Jewish affairs and addressed to Jerusalem, there is less probability of meeting with them. The doubtful word לְחִיָּא, in which Canon Driver is inclined to see a title of Widrang, is suggestive of one of the many Egyptian compounds, commencing with *lo-*, *le-*, "superintendent," "governor." With regard to כִּנְכָר, in which [Professor Margoliouth has recognized the name of the talent, it is well known in Coptic as *kingôr*; while in demotic of the Ptolemaic age it is written *krkr*, and is

equivalent to 1,500 staters (tetradrachms). It has not yet been observed in earlier documents: indeed, so large an amount is not reached in those at present known. The sum of 1,000 silver talents is truly enormous, comparable to the whole tribute of the richest satrapies under Darius (Hdt. iii. 91). It seems necessary to suppose that the Jewish community at Elephantine was very wealthy and was here promising its utmost to an extortionate authority; even so 1,000 talents would not be expected from each member offering sacrifice in the restored temple; the meaning must surely be that, each of them would contribute his share to this bribe until the total was reached.

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