

Brief Communications.

The Names of the Months on S. P. ii 263.

AFTER my article on the Cuneiform Name of the Second Adar (above, pp. 139—145) was in type, Dr. Pinches was kind enough to re-examine the Babylonian variants to ASKT 64, 13. The result is that neither Pinches' original reading II-*bi* nor Strassmaier's II-*u* is correct: the two characters are *a-tar(kut)*. Strassmaier, however, was right in regarding the side of the tablet on which this reading is found as the reverse. On the obverse we find *ar(up) + tar(kut) ša* || (i. e. *Adari*). Pinches thinks that the scribe left out the characters *xu* and *a* between *ar(up)* and *tar(kut)*. He says, the text seems to be a student's practice-tablet. He therefore proposes to read *ar[-xu a-]tar ša Adari*.

I hardly think that the two signs have been omitted: the variant on the reverse is undoubtedly *arxu atar ša Adari*, but on the obverse we must read *arkût ša* ||, i. e. *arkût ša Adari* which means *After-Adar*, as I explained above, p. 144; cf. French *arrière-saison*, &c. Strassmaier's reading *ar-kat* is not correct. Dr. Schick informs me that this character (*kut, tar*) is exactly like the last sign of the Sumerian name of the Adar, *iti-še-kin-kut*. The duplicates referred to in Bezold's *Catalogue* sub K 8521 shed no light on the problem.

The variant on the reverse, *arxu atar ša Adari*, proves the correctness of my explanation of the Sumerian *dir*, which I suggested more than 25 years ago (BA 1, 14, l. 14; cf. above, p. 141, and PSBA 35, 23): *atar* is, of course, the construct of *atru* (= *uātru*) excess, just as we have *atar-xasisu*, extremely clever (BA 2, 401; KB 6, 106, 39, and 415). For the construct before *ša* in *atar ša Adari* and *arkût ša Adari* cf. the conclusion of AG² § 98^a (*tēm ša Arabi*, news of the Arabs).

Consequently we have, in addition to the five cuneiform names for the Second Adar, enumerated above, p. 144, a sixth name: *arxu atar ša Adari*. In the first name, Sumer. *iti-dir-še-kin-kut* (cf. p. 140, below) *dir* has been omitted on p. 144. The second name given above, on p. 144, is correct although it is not found on the tablet with the names of the months.

Pinches' paper on the Sumerians of Lagaš in the first part of PSBA 35 was published after I had sent the manuscript of my article on the Second Adar to the Editor of this JOURNAL (Jan. 4, 1913). According to Pinches (PSBA 35, 20. 23. 127) the Sumerian name of the Adar does not mean *grain-harvest month*, but *grain-mowing month*, i. e. the month in which the blades of the wheat-plants were mown. He connects this designation with the statement in Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* 8, 7 (cf. G. Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, 1, 47) that it was the custom to mow the growing blades twice, and then to allow the beasts of the field to feed off them.

For the unlucky character of the number 13 cf. Ernst Böklen, *Die "Unglückszahl" Dreizehn und ihre mythische Bedeutung* (Leipzig, 1913). According to F. Ll. Griffith (EB¹¹ 9, 77^b, below) the five epagomenal days were considered unlucky in Egypt; therefore no known monument or legal document is dated in them; see, however, Ed. Meyer, *Gesch. d. Altertums*, vol. i, part 2 (1913) pp. 31. 107. 110.

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