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A new translation of the inscription of Herwerre at Serâbit el-Khâdim [with one plate].

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A NEW TRANSLATION

OF THE INSCRIPTION OF HERWERRE

AT SERÂBÎŢ EL-KHÂDIM

(with one plate)

BY

AYLWARD M. BLACKMAN.

The most recent reproductions of this interesting but difficult inscription are to be found in Weill, Recueil des inscriptions égyptiennes du Sinaï, Paris, 1904, p. 174; Petrie, Researches in Sinai, London, 1906, fig. 114, op. p. 110; Gardiner, and Peet, The Inscriptions of Sinai, i., 1917, Pl. XXVI, no. 90; Sethe, Aegyptische Lesestücke zum Gebrauch im akademischen Unterricht, Leipzig, 1924, p. 86.

The only translations of importance that have hitherto appeared are those of Weill, op. cit., pp. 173-175, and Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt, i., Chicago, 1906, pp. 322 ff. Sethe has published some useful philological notes, but not a translation, in his Erläuterungen zu den aegyptischen Lesestücken, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 142 ff.

Thinking that I have made some advance on Weill and Breasted's interpretation of this inscription, and on Sethe's also, judging from his notes, I venture to offer the following translation to readers of the Bulletin de l'Institut français d'Archéologie orientale as a token—I fear it is a small and wholly inadequate one—of my respect for Monsieur Loret's great contributions to Egyptological studies.

The translation is the result of many discussions with pupils at Oxford who have attended the lectures in which I have dealt with this among other Middle Egyptian texts. I have also had the advantage of talking over various difficulties with Professor Peet, who made the suggestion, which I have adopted,

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about 'Irty-m-hb, and who also pointed out to me the wrong reading in the Lesestücke text at the end of line 6.

I have thought it advisable to include in my article Gardiner and Peet's copy of the inscription, as it is the only really satisfactory one, and as, moreover, their massive publication is not easily accessible to all scholars.

It should be noted that the inscription is dated by two other monuments of Herwerre to the reign of Amenemmes III (1).

TRANSLATION.

The Majesty of this god dispatched the Treasurer of the God, Superintendent of the Inner Appartment, Director of Gangs (1) Herwerre^c, i unto this Sinai. This land was reached (2) in the third month of Prōyet, albeit (3) it was indeed not the season for coming i to this Sinai.

This Treasurer of the God saith unto the officers who shall come unto this Sinai at this season: 4 Be not downcast on account of it. Behold, Hathor always giveth it (4) $_{1}^{5}$ out of kindness (5). I have seen (that) with regard to myself, I have exper-I came from Egypt 6 downcast. Difficult, so ienced the like in mine own person. it seemed to me (6), was the acquiring of the (right) skin (7) for it, as the flat land was burning (8) hot, i the country being in summer, and the mountains branded (one), and skins were blistered (9). On the eve ${}_{\perp}^{8}$ of (10) my setting out from the right I was addressing (11) the workmen about it (i.e. Sinai, or the conditions prevailing there): How fortunate (12) is he who is in this Sinai! they said: There is " always turquoise in the mountain. It is the (right) skin that is wanted at this season. 11 We have been used to hear likewise (13) that ore is forth-coming at this season, ' but it is the (right) skin that is lacking for it in this grievous time of summer. 13 I was directing my course to (14) this Sinai, the will of the King prompting me. 14 Then I reached this land, 15 and I began the work at a favourable moment (15). My force came back completely intact, no loss ever occurred in it. I was not downcast 16 at the prospect of work. I succeeded in seizing (16) a favourable moment (17). I departed (18) in the first month $\frac{17}{7}$ of

⁽¹⁾ GARDINER-PEET, op. cit., i., p. 9.

summer, having brought away this precious mineral. I exceeded 18 any one who had come (before), all orders. There was no 'Oh for the (right) skin!' 19 'Irty-m-hb (19) was kind, she was kinder than at her proper season. Offer 10 oblation to the Lady of Heaven, appease ye (20) Ḥathor. If ye do this it will be well 11 for you; ye shall exceed because of her; ye shall have good fortune (21). 11 I conducted (22) my expedition very successfully. There is no boasting 13 with regard to my work. What I did(?) was successful. 14 The whole troop of recruits....

NOTES.

- (1) A must be the same word as [] A skw in Newberry, Bersheh, i., Pl. XIV, 8, meaning "companies", "squadrons". See also Urkunden, iv., 653,9; 659,3; Gardiner, Admonitions, p. 20; Notes on the Story of Sinuhe, p. 92. Unless hrp skw is here a military title, "Squadron-Leader", the skw must be the "gangs" of miners.
- (2) Both m; at the beginning of line 1 and spr are infinitives; see Gardiner, Grammar, \$306,2, and also Sethe, Erläuterungen, p. 142.
- - (4) The produce of the mines; so too Sethe, Erläuterungen, p. 142.
- - (6) Lit. "in my face (i.e., sight)"; cf. Lebensmüde, 132, 134, etc.
- (7) Reading št; m hr·i gmt inm·s, the meaning being that a skin well seasoned by the right treatment was needed in a person who was to brave the intense heat of Sinai in summer time.
- (8) The reading according Gardiner and Peet's facsimile is clearly — 1 not 1.

- (9) Such I guess to be the meaning of hn in view of the sign m, which is the usual determinative of words meaning "swelling" or the like, e.g., Pap. Ebers, 51, 19.
- (10) I read here with Sethe: hd-t; m; im r;ht. For this use of hd-t; cf.

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The word rift occurs nowhere else and is, as Sethe points out, very problematical. Can it be a miswriting of whrt "wharf" "dock", i. e., the port in the Sinaitic peninsular to which Herwerre had just come? We might also possibly compare the word in Pyr. § 451a, "Behold Unis hath brought unto thee thy left eye from Rwhtt", for it is to be noted that mention is made of Horus of Sinai (Hr šsmty) and Horus of the East (Hr kbty) in the immediately preceding passage § 450b, c.

- (11) Gardiner, Grammar, § 474,2, regards the form $wn \cdot f sdm \cdot f$ as narrating a past continuous action, and cites both this instance and that in line 13 among his examples. But his rendering "I kept on" doing so and so seems to me unnecessary in the case of $wn \cdot i$ $w \cdot i d \cdot i$, and is impossible in that of $wn \cdot i$ $m \cdot i$, for Herwerre is describing one voyage only. I feel that my translation "I was addressing" represents better the force of the Egyptian idiom, action extended over a period of time, but not necessarily repeated; see also note 14.
 - (12) Reading sbk-wy. The precedes the on calligraphical grounds.
- (13) Either render with Sethe (1): "We have been wont to hear the like, (namely that) ore is forthcoming", or read m mitt "likewise" which I personally prefer. The m would easily be omitted, coming as it does between the final m of sdm and the initial m of mitt.
- (14) By the use of the form wnf sdmf the writer doubtless intended to lay stress on the duration of the voyage. A better rendering, perhaps, of the

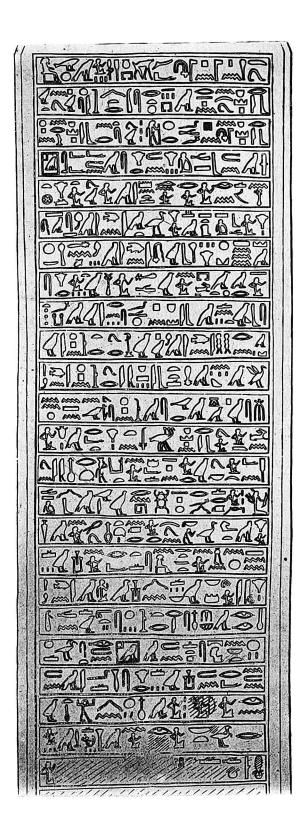
⁽¹⁾ See also Gardiner, op. cit., \$ 484.

words $wn \cdot i \dots m \cdot hr \cdot i$ would be: "The whole time that I was making for Sinai the will of the King was prompting (or counselling) me".

- - (16) Lit. "I arrived at seizing".
 - (17) See note 15.
- (19) Professor Peet has suggested with great probability that 'Irty-m-hb is the name of a district, or perhaps rather a mine, in Sinai, and not a designation of Hathor, who is mentioned by name immediately after.
- (20) I follow Sethe in regarding \mathbf{k} as a writing of the particle \mathbf{k} , following the optative $sdm \cdot tn^{(1)}$.

A. M. BLACKMAN.

⁽¹⁾ See GARDINER, op. cit., \$ 250.



The Inscription of Herwerre'.