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Two hieroglyphic signs and the egyptian words for «Alabaster» and «Linen», etc.

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TWO HIEROGLYPHIC SIGNS

AND

THE EGYPTIAN WORDS

FOR "ALABASTER" AND "LINEN", ETC.

BY

ALAN H. GARDINER.

Among the topics treated by the scholar whose contributions to Egyptology we celebrate in this number of the Bulletin, there is none where his perspicacity and erudition have been shown to better advantage than in the discussion of individual hieroglyphs. I need only mention his brilliant interpretation of the warrior chieftain's field-kit], and his determination of the readings of the sign of Seth () and of the fish-scale . It seems not unfitting, therefore, that my personal hommage should take the form of a study of certain hieroglyphs; and the hieroglyphs which I have chosen for the purpose are those representing respectively a loop of rope of and a bag . The conclusions which I shall seek to draw are, indeed, already set forth in brief in the sign-list to my Egyptian Grammar, but certain recent Egyptological publications (Erman, Ägyptische Grammatik, 4th ed., Schrifttafel, under V 6, V 33; A. Z., 64, 136, line 2; Polotsky, Zu den Inschriften der 11. Dynastie, p. 14, line 4) show that these conclusions have been either overlooked or rejected. For that reason it seems desirable to defend them in a less categorical and more argumentative form.

I

The specific functions of the two hieroglyphs in question had, previous to the appearance of my *Grammar*, been quite imperfectly understood by Egyptologists, in whose excuse it may be said, however, that therein they were *Bulletin*, t. XXX.

but following the example of the Egyptians themselves. A still more valid excuse lies in the fact that not only do the forms of the signs closely resemble one another, but also their phonetic values (šš, ššr) were such as to render fusion and confusion practically inevitable. The generally accepted view has been that the bag or pouch either is the determinative of : "to envelop", "bind up", or else has the value g, whereas the rope or cord δ , properly the word-sign for - [18 sis "rope" is the hieroglyph which enters into a whole series of words beginning with is originally, but in some cases subsequently betraying a metathesis of those two letters. Such seems to have been the opinion of Griffith (*Hieroglyphs*, p. 48), Davies (*Ptahhetep*, I, p. 33), Erman and Grapow (see their Handwörterbuch, p. 186), to mention only living It has been taken for granted that the words of "linen", of the linen ", of the linen", of the linen is a line of the linen is a line of the line of t Wertvolles (sic), ö "corn", and o ∫ — "alabaster" all embarked on their literary careers with the reading ss, see the Handwörterbuch, loc. cit., whereas I shall be at pains to show that this is true only of the last of these four words, the first three reading ssr, or at least having had that value in their early days. That the bag \mathbf{a} ever had the reading gb is an error avoided by Griffith (loc. cit.) and expressly corrected by Lacau (Rec. de trav., 35, 231); it lingers on quite unrepentantly in the Schrifttafel of the latest edition of Professor Erman's classical Egyptian Grammar. The earlier literature of the most important contributions to the subject comprises the fundamental article by Brugsch in A. Z., 18, 1 and Griffith's discussion of && (33) in Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch., 13, 74.

II

That two distinct hieroglyphs are represented by \otimes and \nearrow has always been known, and a perfectly correct statement of their pictorial signification will be found in Griffith, *Hieroglyphs*, p. 48. My own account merely repeats that just quoted in rather more elaborate form.

The loop of rope \aleph (V 6 in my sign-list) is shown in examples of Dyn. IV with transverse markings representing the twisted strands, as in the sign of the tethering-rope \Longrightarrow . See figure 1, a from Junker, Giza, I, Pl. 27; the sign is white with red markings, like \Longrightarrow on the same plate; quite similar contemporary specimens will be found in Lutz, Egyptian Tomb Steles, Pls. 1; 2, 1;

2, 2. A variant type which is possibly rather earlier shows a double cord arranged in the same way, but displaying a tiny loop at the end where the cord doubles back upon itself. See Fig. 1, b from Petrie, Medum, Pl. 13 (reading --); similarly op. cit., Pl. 16, bottom right; Murray, Saqqara Mastabas, Pt. 1,

Pls. 1, 2 (in these three last cases in the combination 8%); the loop of the double end would, in our printed hieroglyphs, be on the left. Commoner at all periods are forms showing no internal markings, neither the transverse ones indicating the twisted strand, nor the central and parallel marking indicating that the cord is a double one; figure 1, c from Petrie, Medum, pl. 16, bottom left, is typical; see too Davies, Ptahhetep, I, Pl. 14, no. 291. In this

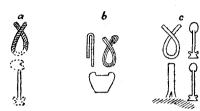


Fig. 1. — Old forms of the sign for the "rope" & šś.

- a. Junker, Giza, I, Pl. 27;
- b. Petrie, Medum, Pl. 13;
- c. Op. cit., Pl. 16, bottom left.

normal form \otimes is identical with the phonetic sign for $\check{sn} \otimes (op.cit., Pl. 14, no. 300)$, save that the latter sign (V7) always shows the ends downwards instead of upwards. Probably a rigid convention was adopted in the very earliest period to employ Ω for the verbal notion of "encircling", as with a cord, in Egyptian Ω \check{sn} (3ae. inf.), whence the phonetic value \check{sn} , while Ω was chosen for the substantival notion of "cord", "rope", in Egyptian Ω Ω Ω Ω Ω Ω Ω Ω is written for the usual Ω Ω Ω Ω is written for the usual Ω Ω Ω is written for the usual Ω Ω Ω is written for the usual Ω Ω Ω is practical purposes we may eliminate the sign Ω (V7) from our discussion.

To turn now to the bag or pouch (V 33). The fine coloured plate in Lepsius, Denkm., II, 96 gives several examples of the sign, the upper part being red and the lower part white. I frankly do not understand this colouring, since the sign there serves as an ideogram for "linen", which one would expect to be wholly white. Bags of the same kind, doubtless containing eyepaint (msdmt, cf. Naville, Deir el Bahari, Pl. 78) have similar colouring in Davies, Puyemre, Pl. 34, where they are part of the Syrian tribute; in Davies and Gardiner, Tomb of Huy, Pl. 16, there are such bags containing gold-dust which are shown alternately red and white. Even where no colour is left, as in the fine example Holwerda and Boeser, Die Denkmäler des alten Reiches,

Pl. 15, my figure 2, d, a line bisecting the bag horizontally often indicates that it was parti-coloured. Are we to imagine a bag of linen of which the upper half was covered with leather? Or was the upper half painted red? Or, as a third alternative, is this colouring purely ornamental and fanciful?

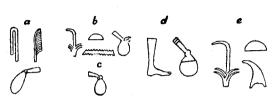


Fig. 2. — Old forms of the sign for the "bag" Trf, sšr, g.

- a. Petrie, Medum, Pl. 13;
- b. Borchardt, Grabdenkmal des Sahure, Pl. 61;
- c. Op. cit., Pl. 60;
- d. Holwerda and Borser, Denkmäler des alten Reiches, Pl. 15;
- e. Bissing, Gemnîkai, II, Pl. 38.

This last explanation must, at all events, hold good of the very variously represented bags for eyepaint on the Middle Kingdom coffins, see Jéquier, Les frises d'objets, p. 153, as well as in the example reproduced in colour Griffith, Beni Hasan, III, Pl. 3, no. 27, from the entry I a fr wid 2 "two bags of eye-paint" in a list of offerings. Griffith and Jéquier both conjecture that the bags in question

were made of leather, but the evidence which I shall produce renders it impossible not to conclude that they were of linen, at least in part. Since the hieroglyph constantly stands as the sign for "linen", that material must have been definitely characteristic of such bags. The various alternative forms of the sign will be illustrated as we proceed.

Ш

- (1) The sole phonetic value of δ in the Old Kingdom is šš, and it was there used as a biliteral only in words of two consonants or in such tri-consonantal words as merely had a weak radical in addition to šš (i. e. in iššt, šš(?))(1).
- (2) From the Middle Kingdom onwards the use of δ was extended to certain tri-consonantal words, like $\frac{\delta}{2} \leftarrow \delta sr$ "arrow", $\frac{\delta}{2}$... δsmt a green mineral (see on this JEA, 5, 222).
- (3) After the Old Kingdom $\stackrel{\diamond}{\longrightarrow}$ is usually written in preference to $\diamond \beta$, the former being a more sightly group.
- (4) From Dyn. XI onwards the reading of all words having s as part of their phonetic writing is suspect and only to be decided by alphabetic variants, since now s may be the result of confusion with .

IV

four times and δ once for the loaf or cake usually written δ or δ

schr..... Berlin, I, pp. 105-6. These quite exceptional variants are due simply to confusion between Q and Q.

However, it was not very clear what benefit thousands of cords were going to confer upon the dead, so that before long some scholars at least had discarded "cords" and were translating *si mnht—often written together as *\overline{\text{M}}\)—by "linen bandages" or the like. In this they were undoubtedly influenced by the supposed word *\overline{\text{M}}\) *si for "linen", which Brugsch discussed in the same article. Such has, I think, for many years past been the prevailing view, though some have substituted "clothing" for "linen bandages". Perhaps no Egyptologist has been very clear as to what was exactly intended by *si and by mnht respectively; something in the clothing line seemed to be meant, but nothing more precise could be said than that.

Such too was my own state of mind with regard to the problem when, in correspondence with Sethe, I submitted for his opinion my observations on the two signs & and . In his reply, Sethe startled me with the rendering "thousands of alabaster and thousands of cloth". The incongruity of this collocation seemed so great, that I asked for evidence, which for once my learned friend had not ready to hand. A little research on my part showed me, however, that Sethe's view, however unpromising at first sight, was not only plausible, but certain. At some time or other the Old Kingdom proofs must have attracted his attention, and particularly the passages from the Pyramid Texts which I shall quote below. Fortunately, Sethe's acute discernment of the true rendering reached me in time for inclusion in my Grammar (p. 172).

Additional evidence has come before me recently, and both for this reason and since scepticism has been expressed in certain quarters, it seems worth while to set forth the arguments in favour of the rendering "alabaster" at length. In the first place let it be realized that s šš in the offering formula could not possibly have anything to do with clothing, since, as we shall see below (under VI), the word for linen is ššr, not šš, and since there is absolutely no justification for supposing that the word for "rope" had also a subsidiary meaning "thread" or "cloth-fabric". The choice, therefore, is between Brugsch's "thousands of rope" and Sethe's "thousands of alabaster", the presumption being in favour of the latter for the reason that alabaster vessels containing ointment were regularly buried with the dead, while coils of rope were not.

That _\delta, later written \delta, really means "alabaster" was formally proved by Brugsch (A. Z., 18, 6) from the dedicatory inscription of the alabaster shrine in the temple of Ramesses II at Abydos. An unusually shaped monument made of alabaster, which was found by Legrain at Karnak (Annales, IV, fication (?) made of alabaster of Hatnub"; and an alabaster shrine of Amenophis I, recently found in the same temple (Annales, XXIII, 113; XXIV, 57) Alabaster of Hatnub is mentioned Urk., IV, 640 and also in the quarries of that place, where the reading - (Anthes, Die Felseninschriften von Hatnub, no. 10, 6; no. 25, 20) varies with 5 (op. cit., no. 43, 2). I do not know why the Hebrew dictionaries (Gesenius-Buhl, Brown-Driver-Briggs) have ignored Brugsch's comparison of the Hebrew word for "alabaster" שַׁיִש, שׁשֶׁ, and have preferred to connect שׁשֵּׁ with the assyrian šaššu. tells me that the meaning of šaššu is quite uncertain, one text seeming even to indicate that it was a rare designation of "gold". But the identification of the Hebrew word with "alabaster" also appears to be also somewhat doubtful.

In Greek the words àlásaolos (àlásaolos is a less good form) and àlásaoloov are both used for receptacles made of alabaster, like our own English archæological term "alabaster", of which NED quotes an example from the year 1398. Nothing could be more natural than that materials should give their names to the principal objects made of them, cf. our "fire-irons", "biscuit-tins"; and if Egyptian used its word for "alabaster" in the same way as ourselves, this is a likely enough coincidence. Now some of the earliest tomb-stelae give lists of funeral furniture, and here in two cases at least the word šš "alabasters" is found; so specially (see here figure 1, b) in Medum, Pl. 13, beside vessels of red granite, lapis lazuli, etc.; and specially "whitebowls". It is all the more illuminating for Sethe's thesis that under each of the items in the last-named list stands the word for "thousand". If we now turn to the equally early stela of the legend specially, which we cannot do otherwise than render

"thousands of alabasters and thousands of cloth (mnht)". On the same plate another stela mentions thousands of various beasts and birds to the right of the table-post, and to the left merely x + mathematical x" "a thousand of alabasters". The

presence of only two "thousand"-signs for three hieroglyphs on the first stela, and only one "thousand"-sign for two hieroglyphs on the second, proves conclusively, in conjunction with the evidence already adduced, that s is a single word composed of the phonetic sign s šš and a determinative ; and since oil-vessels of the shape found in the tombs are frequently made of alabaster, the rendering "alabasters", i. e. alabaster jars for oil or unguents, is demonstrated about as well as is humanly possible. Other early examples of s in parallelism with it are fighther are significant. Pyr. 745 and s if it is Daressy, Mastaba de Mera, p. 559, sim. with s is 45.

Both early and late & alone is, of course, by far the commonest writing found on the funereal stelae, but that is merely testimony to its antiquity, not an argument against the rendering "alabasters". In the history of writing, like that of language, man awoke but slowly to the necessity of making himself intelligible. The oldest inscriptions owe no small part of their obscurity to the absence of determinatives and of phonetic complements which would have rendered their component signs less ambiguous. The writing $oldsymbol{\circ}$ is a characteristic example of this blindness to the needs of the reader. phonetic & ss was selected in place of the ideogram was perhaps due, partly to the desire to stress the material rather than the shape or content, and partly because vessels of the form \ were not the only ones intended. last point is proved by the not infrequent Old Kingdom examples with - as determinative; examples are & Aeg. Inschr.... Berlin, I, pp. 93, 104; Murray, op. cit., Pl. 23; Brit. Mus., 130; $\stackrel{\diamond}{\smile}$ (see above) Junker, op. cit., 1, Pl. 29, a; and above all $\S \longrightarrow \P$ $\longrightarrow Pyr. 1332$. That \longrightarrow represents a bowl or basin of alabaster is indicated by the markings shown in the more elaborate examples of the hieroglyph, and New Kingdom paintings show dead nobles standing up on bowls of the sort and receiving lustrations from lectorpriests (see Rec. de trav., 39, 54). Alabaster bowls of this shape measuring from 25 to 33 centimetres (10 to 13 inches) in diameter were found by Junker (op. cit., pp. 109-110) in the IVth Dynasty mastabas at Gîzah. In passing

let it be noted that to regard \smile in $\overset{\circ}{\smile}$ or $\overset{\circ}{\smile}$ as a phonetic sign hb and so to render festival-alabaster or the like is quite impossible; \smile does not obtain the value hb until the Middle Kingdom, the previous sign for that phonetic value being \bigcirc or \bigcirc ; see my sign-list under \bigcirc 22, W 3.

In the Middle Kingdom $\overset{\circ}{\sim}$ is still found, but not very commonly; so Beni Hasan, I, Pls. 7, 12; Cairo 20558; Brit. Mus. 557; Louvre C 2. A new variant substitutes for the two specific or exemplificatory determinatives already discussed the generic determinative \longrightarrow ; for $\overset{\circ}{\sim}$ see Cairo 20445, 20775; Berlin 8808. The writing $\overset{\circ}{\sim}$ with a stroke but without any further determinative is not infrequent, e.g. Louvre C 1; Leyden V 6. Most of the references in this last paragraph are derived from the materials of the Berlin dictionary.

When s was immediately followed by 🔟 the habit arose, probably only after the Old Kingdom, of writing & within the two uprights of L. ing-point will have been writings like \$ \$ \$ \$ Brit. Mus. 159 (Dyn. XI), where one "thousand"-sign does duty for each pair of separate items; so too Berlin 1118, 1119. Middle Kingdom examples of value are Brit. Mus. 861, 903; Berlin 7300; similarly, but with - below & so enclosed, Cairo 20093; Leyden, M. K. stela no. 34. In Dyn. XVIII the practice of writing 181 is exceedingly common, and it is probable that either mnht alone was read, or else mnht ss(r) with the meaning "cloth of linen"—as we shall see, ssr "linen" "cloth of byssus" actually occurs once, apparently among the revenue of a temple (Urk., IV, 821, 2; reign of Tuthmosis III). As I have already noted, vo (originating in →) becomes an ordinary substitute for ⊤ as determinative of clothing in Late Egyptian; in hieratic of the New Kingdom T is almost non-existent, see Möller, Hier. Pal., II, no. 430. At this period therefore, [8] became a highly appropriate determinative or abbreviation for mnht "linen". The Berlin Wörterbuch, s. v. ____ \ \ \ quotes __ as a Late Egyptian alternative, and this shows very clearly that the v in \(\subset\) was now interpreted as the determinative of "clothing" at least wherever 101 is used in connection with mnht. by the high-priest of Amûn Masaherti" on the Dyn. XXI rewrappings of the mummy of Queen Meryet-Amûn, see Bull. Metr. Mus. of Art; the Eg. Expedition, 1928-1929, p. 31.

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In the inscriptions of Dyn. XI * is substituted for * of the offering formula with great consistency, see Brit. Mus. 614, vert. 1; Naville, XIth Dyn. Temple, Pl. 21; Cairo 20512,7; 20543,2; Moscow, 4071,1; these examples are from Polotsky, op. cit., p. 13, where more will be found. Since * is clearly a form of , we see that at this period the signs for šš and ššr were already confused. The cause of this is evidently similarity of form combined with similarity of phonetic value, though it does not seem that the metathesis šsr for ššr is anterior to Dyn. XVIII. Nor am I quite sure that the interpretation "alabasters" is shown by this writing to have been abandoned for "linen" at so early a date, for, as we have seen, so not uncommon in Dyn. XII. Possibly throughout the Middle Kingdom there were two schools of thought in this matter, the one interpreting as "alabaster", the other as "linen".

V

The uses of the sign for the "bag" or "pouch" next claim attention. Its ideographic functions seem to result from the three different aspects in which the object in question can be regarded, namely (1) its purpose, (2) its contents, and (3) its material. I will deal with these in turn.

(1) The Egyptian word for a "bag" is size "rf, a word which often occurs in the long list of offerings as the receptacle for black (msdmt) or green (wsdw) evepaint; cf. Murray, op. cit., I, Pls. 21, 23; Firth and Gunn, Teti Pyramid Cemeteries, Pl. 3; Blackman, Meir, IV, Pl. 12; Newberry, Beni Hasan, I, Pl. 17 (the entire entry was quoted above as source of the coloured example Griffith, Beni Hasan, III, Pl. 3, no. 27). Where the spacing makes it desirable, the alphabetic signs are omitted, so that we have such abbreviated writings as A T 🔁 🕽 w;dw 'rf "bag of green eyepaint", Sтымболгг, Grab des Ti, Pl. 126; so too Murray, op. cit., Pl. 19, and Pyr. 54. In these cases there is a certain variation in the shapes of the sign 3, but not the extreme variety which we shall find below in the writing of śśr "linen" and the similarly sounded words The normal form in 'rf is as in the printed hieroglyph to which it gives rise. or as in Fig. 2, c. d. No examples of the triangular shape have been found, and indeed in Bissing, Gemnikai, II, Pl. 41, the word 'rf is written with while, on the same Plate, ssr niswt is written with \(\begin{aligned}
\hat{\text{\text{1}}} & \text{In the scene in question,} \end{aligned}\)

assistant ka-priests are shown bringing in bags of the shape of the hieroglyphs, but displaying an unintelligible hollow in the middle.

The cognate verb fr "envelop", "bind up" has not been noted before the Middle Kingdom, but good examples can be quoted to show that its specific determinative was certainly the bag and not the cord. See Naville, Deir el Bahari, Pl. 84, 2; Sethe, Urkunden, IV, 364, 5. Earlier hand-copies of inscriptions containing this verb, like Newberry, El Bersheh, II, pl. 21, 6 (Sayce); Piehl, Inser. hiér., III 73, 6, usually substitute & wrongly for .

(2) From the use of to indicate a bag or the act of enclosing in a bag to its use as a determinative of what is so enclosed is but a short step, and that step was early taken. In Petrie, Medum, Pl. 13 an entry i process in the midst of the oils and unguents, see figure 2, a; if is a linen bag, is can hardly be an oil as the Berlin Wörterbuch (I, 130) supposes, but only some dry sweet-smelling substance. The same holds good of process, but only some dry sweet-smelling substance. The same holds good of process in the tomb of Methen, op. cit., Pl. 2, variant process is in the tomb of Methen, Aeg. Inschr. aus. . . Berlin, I, 87, which Wb. I, 63 does not quote, but implicitly and rightly connects with the ointment presented at an angle different from that of the more normal form seen in our hieroglyphic type, and this seems to have been its original aspect.

From these specific terms will next have passed to the generic word for "perfume" often so written in the Old Kingdom (e.g. Pyr. 18, 696, 113; Lepsius, Denkm., II, 22b) and in the archaizing monumental inscriptions of Dyn. XVIII, e.g. Naville, Deir el Bahari, Pls. 82, 94; Annales, XXIV, Pl. IV of the article by M. Pillet. The same sign enters into 7, R 9 in my sign-list, but this I will not discuss further here.

(3) The evidence set forth above does but amplify what is known and accepted, but in dealing with the use of to indicate linen material I am seeking to controvert the view held hitherto, according to which the word for "linen" was šš and consequently employed the sign of the rope s and not that of the bag. I shall create a more favourable atmosphere for my innovation, perhaps, if I start with some related facts which are not of the very earliest date.

In Davies, Deir el Gebrawi, I, Pl. 8 are found the writings \(\) (see Fig. 3, a for the exact form) "bed", "bedding" and \(\) (the first sign is damaged) "good fine linen". Exceptional as is this use of \(\) it links up (a) with the common use of \(\) from Dyn. XIX onwards (\(\) and \(\) are by this time often



Fig. 3. — Exceptional O. K. determinatives for "clothing".

a. Davies, Deir el Gebrâwi, I, Pl. 8;

b. Steindorff, Grab des Ti, Pl. 111.

interchanged) as a determinative of cloth and clothes of any kind, and (b) with the by no means infrequent variant $\{ \}$ as substitute for $\{ \}$, of which the earliest example I have found is in the word $\{ \}$ "bind thou(?)", sense unintelligible, Steindorff, Grab des Ti, Pl. 111, reproduced Fig. 3, b; Wb., II, 105 quotes an O. K.

place-name from Dyn. IX and throughout the Middle Kingdom is common, cf. Petrie, Gizeh and Rifeh, Pl. 13 c ()); Griffith, Siut, Tomb I, l. 247 (id.). Just as represents a strip of cloth with a fringe, combined with the folded cloth , so too, doubtless, represents a common article of linen combined with the folded cloth .

It is the more strange that the reading ssr for the word meaning "linen" should have been overlooked, since the evidence for it is both abundant and The hitherto accepted reading šš is due to Brugsch (A. Z., 18, 5, and earlier Geogr. Wörterb., 873), who having proved the value šs (šś) for the word for rope - [] &, & (see above), promptly transferred that value to \\[\begin{align*} \pi \equiv \pi \\ \pi \equiv \ overlooking the vital fact that in all early examples of this word the sign used is and not v. As corroborative evidence Brugsch adduced the Hebrew loanword ww and the Coptic anc: agenc, both of them equivalents of the Greek βύσσος "linen" (this a borrowing from Hebrew בוצ). The Coptic word he regarded simply as šs "mit eingeschobenem n-laut", quoting parallels which would not be acceptable nowadays. In taking this course he abandoned his previous recognition that the demotic group (which corresponds to βυσσίνων δ[θονί]ων in l. 17 of the Rosetta stone represents a hieroglyphic transcription | s and contains the word for "king" (Brugsch, Wörterbuch [1862], 1346). For that reason he had identified the demotic group with the word 1 and among the variants of which he quoted \$\rightarrow\delta\delt

"das koptische Wort dafür Wenc, Wnc scheint entstanden zu sein aus der Lesung šen-suten oder šen-su (cf. šen infra = $\aleph I$)". The last-named reference I am unable to find and can only imagine that Brugsch was confusing & šś The slip-shod argumentation, which leaves it quite obscure what the real relation is between the supposed readings suten and sen-suten, is thoroughly characteristic of Brugsch's brilliance of insight coupled with indifference to logic. The combination of the earlier and later views propounded by him seems due to Griffith, who gave šs-(n)-stn as his reading of the demotic group (Stories of the High Priests of Memphis, p. 89), comparing Hn(?)-n-stn for 2NHC Ehnâs. But the medial n still occasioned difficulty, which was removed only when Sethe proved the word for "king" to read niswt, for which nzw was early substituted (A.Z., 49, 17). To Sethe's article I myself made a small contribution (loc. cit., n. 1) by showing that the word thitherto read as 🛊 🚅 • « » in Late Egyptian papyri did not contain • « at all (1); but I was at fault in transcribing 1 2 5 is instead of 1 2 5 is. Of this anon; at the present moment I am merely showing that the semi-final stage in the history of the prototype of wnc assumed its reading to be šś-niśwt (šś-nzw). As such it appears in Erman-Grapow's Handwörterbuch; so too Sethe in Bor-CHARDT, Grabdénkmal des Sahurē, p. 126, top.

In reality, however, the reading of the hieroglyphic word for Greek \$\(\textit{\sigma}\sigma\sigma\cop\). Coptic QNC, and Hebrew \$\(\textit{w}\), is \$\(\textit{s}\)r(w)\$ niswt (\$\(\textit{s}\)r\ nzw\). A title of which I have three examples from the Old Kingdom is "overseer of the king's linen" which is written in the following ways: \$\(\textit{k}\) \(\textit{k}\) \(\textit{T}\) Mariette, Mastaba, p. 307; \$\(\textit{k}\) \(\textit{k}\) \(\textit{k}\) \(\textit{k}\), p. 252; \$\(\textit{k}\) \(\textit{k}\) \(\textit{Lepsius}, Denkm., II, 100 c.\)
In the funerary temple of Sahurē (Borchardt, op. cit., II, Pl. 61) a fragment shows the writing \$\(\textit{k}\) \(\textit{k}\) \(\

⁽¹⁾ The stroke is clear in the great majority of the many instances in the Harris papyrus.

shoulder. In Davies, Deir el Gebrâwi, I, 16 a stands in front of a (linen)-chest; the stroke shows that is to be understood pictorially, so that the official is an "overseer of linen" A scene in the tomb of Ti reproduced in my figure 4 is important in various respects. Behind a

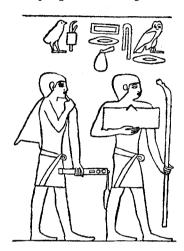


Fig. 4. — Scene from the tomb of Ti (Steindorff, op. cit., Pl. 115).

servant, the latter carrying over his shoulder an object shaped (Steindorff, Grab des Ti, Pl. 115). Here we find the full alphabetic writing of or for the first time. As we have seen, writings showing the first two radicals together with the ideogram are not infrequent; but for similar writings showing the third radical as well I can quote no other example beside that in the tomb of Ti. The discussion of the phonetic use of and below (VI) will, however, establish that value beyond a peradventure. For this reason, we need have no hesitation in identifying the word for "linen" written thus ideographically with the synonymous word written [III] or [III]. In Pyr.

As if the varieties of spelling already quoted were not enough, another one of less certain authenticity has yet to be mentioned. On the funerary stelae of the early IVth Dynasty there are often lists of various kinds of cloth, where the word śśr would be expected to occur. A common heading there used is — which, since the Old Egyptian word for "arrow" was śśr, one would expect to read in the same way. Examples are Lutz, op. cit., Pls. 1; 2, 2; 2, 3; Medum, Pls. 13, 16, 20; Murray, op. cit., Pls. 1, 2; Aeg. Inschr....

Berlin, I, pp. 81, 99; Junker, op. cit., I, Pl. 27 and p. 175. Junker has evi-

(1) In Urk., I, 146, 13 = Davies, Deir el Gebrawi, II, 13 the word for "linen" is written

with a stroke and a rather different form from any of those above quoted.

dently overlooked my proof, in the sign-list, of the reading ssr for the word meaning "linen", since he reads \leftarrow as ss(r) (op. cit., p. 31) or ss(op. cit., p. 31)p. 178) without note of interrogation. The same identification of - with the word for linen a found thus alone or in 1 had also suggested itself to me, but I had rejected it on the grounds (1) that in the Old Kingdom, so far as my evidence went, the phonetic value of the arrow \leftarrow was ssr, not ssr, and (2) that - in the lists in question did not appear to be a general name for "linen" or "cloth", but a special variety; the four kinds mentioned in the lists are A idmi, -, a i - šm't nfrt and - ':t. A piece of evidence recently found leads me now to believe that - may be the generic word for "linen" after all; though in that case, of course, in view of the testimony adduced above, it could not read ss, but only ssr as the prototype of ssr, or alternatively itself ssr. My new evidence is a variant in the mastaba of 'Ankhmahor (Firth-Gunn, op. cit., Pl. 6, D, with the text, p. 97); on a wall in the burialchamber four linen-chests are depicted, and above them the legends [] -🕌 🧫 "royal linen", 🚨 🕻 📡 "first-quality i:-fabric (?)"; [] --- 🛰 "ššrw-linen" and at "good Upper Egyptian cloth". Thus the only available witness to the phonetic value of the linen or cloth called - presents it as ssrw. Perhaps the easiest hypothesis is to suppose that originally both the word for "arrow" and that for "linen" read śśrw, but that the word for "arrow" very early became ssrw, whence the arrow-sign - was before Dyn. V abandoned, but for rare exceptions, in the writing of "linen". I shall now produce evidence to show that at a much later date the word for "linen" underwent the same metathesis of s and s. In the tomb of Rekhmare (Dyn. XVIII; Urk., IV, 1143, 13) the captains of vessels announce to the vizier that the treasuries "packed cloths containing goodly things". In another part of the same tomb is a scene showing the allotment of new clothes and unquents to the prisoners of war who were serfs in the temple of Amun; part of the legend (Urk., IV, oil, and clothes". These two passages show that at this period šsrw was For the altogether exceptional writing of $\check{ss}(r)$ -niswt as $\overset{\triangleright}{\longrightarrow}$ \downarrow . Urk., IV, 821, 2, see above p. 169, l. 21. In Coptic whic displays as š all that remains of the status constructus.

The first of the two passages quoted from the tomb of Rekhmare is interesting in other respects. Not only does it display the two signs and in close proximity and in their characteristic uses, but also the phrase *srw 'rfw "packed cloths" seems to be the exact verbal description of the object indicated by the sign .

Before we leave the words for "linen" and "bag", it remains to point out that it is not always easy to know whether is to be read sir or 'rf when employed ideographically alone. The triangular form is not ambiguous, as 'rf is not written with that sign. But how are we to read in The Borchard, op. cit., Pl. 60 (see my Fig. 2, c), or in Lepsius, Denkm., II, 96, cf. Naville, Deir el Bahari, 130? I do not understand this phrase sir tpy or (less probably) 'rf tpy.

VI

I would gladly have dwelt upon certain lexicographical aspects of the word for "linen" $s\check{s}r(w)$ and of that for its finer sort $s\check{s}r(w)$ niswt, as well as upon the officials concerned with its keeping—a • has to be added (Lepsius, Denkm., II, 22)—but the formidable length this article has assumed admonishes me to hasten on to consider the phonetic uses of and its variant We have first to illustrate the value ssr derived from these signs as the exemplification of linen material (ssrw). In the Old Kingdom only one word is in question, namely the word written [] or \ and meaning "thing", "matter". It is even a little doubtful whether there is here any real phonetic transference at all, or whether the meanings "thing", "matter" be not merely extensions of the original meaning "linen". The English "stuff" and the German "Zeug" offer themselves as analogies, though in the latter case at all events the more special significance "cloth" seems secondary. The writings with the stroke \(\) and later \(\nu\) suggest that the word is really identical with that for "linen". I will now illustrate one or two of its uses, whence it will be seen to be almost as colourless as or first, or as the Latin res.

A. Of material "things", especially to sum up such material items as it is not desired to specify individually.

- (1) "....100 asses being with me bearing oil, honey, clothes, thnt-oil, and x everything", Urk., I, 136, 5. O. K.
- (2) "A thousand of bread, a thousand of beer, \[\] \[
- (3) ".... valuables being in my charge and under my seal of the choicest of all good things brought to the Majesty of my lord from Upper and Lower Egypt, " consisting of all delectable things", Brit. Mus., 614, Dyn. XI. So too state of the choicest of all delectable things, Brit. Mus., 614, Dyn. XI. So too state of the choicest of the choicest of all good things brought to the Majesty of my lord from Upper and Lower Egypt, the consisting of all delectable things, Brit. Mus., 614, Dyn. XI. So too state of the choicest of all good things brought to the Majesty of my lord from Upper and Lower Egypt, the consisting of all delectable things." Brit. Mus., 614, Dyn. XI. So too state of the choicest of all good things brought to the Majesty of my lord from Upper and Lower Egypt, the consisting of all delectable things.
- B. Of actions, to be rendered "thing", "action", "matter", "service", "respect", according as the context demands. Often summarizing a number of actions not severally specified.
- (4) The state of the second of this work adequately (?) in every respect", Monter, Hammamat, no. 206 = Urk., I, 149, 9. After O. K.
- (5) A A A My Majesty made the said exemptions of the said two pyramid-towns from the said things in order that the priestly duties, the monthly services, and the divine rites might be performed in the said two pyramid-cities", A. Z., 42, 11, Dahshûr decree of Phiops I.

So especially in the phrase ____ "to perform these actions", "act in this way":

- (6) ["My Majesty does not allow the said priests to perform the said actions which (1) are commanded to be done in this land of Upper Egypt', Weill, Décrets royaux, Pl. II (decree B, Phiops II). The actions in question had previously been enumerated in a long list ending with [] .
- (1) The feminine gender of the participle is strictly a breach of concord, ssrw being masculine. Perhaps the feminine is due to these same

words having been thus written at the end of the list of special corvées previously enumerated.

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- (7) "As for any great chieftain who shall not inflict punishment in his nome who shall perform the said actions", op. cit., Pl. IV, decree of Wazkerē'. The actions in question are curtailments of offerings and services to the statues of the vizier Idi; these possible curtailments have been previously specified in detail. Similarly Petrhe, Abydos, II, Pl. 17.
- C. A course or manner of action, sometimes parallel to shr, to be rendered "action", "method", "way" or the like.
- (8) A A TO THE MARKET THE CONTROL OF SETHER, Lesestücke, p. 68. PIEHL, Inscr. hiér., III, 6 gives & here with a thickening of the two ends protruding above, accordingly not quite like & šś.
- (9) [All his actions are as the gait of the Ibis, his ways are (of) the form of the lord of Hesret (Thoth)", Turin statue of Ḥaremḥab, 1. 8.

So specially with the adjective "true":

- (10) Тран (10) "A successful method on a million occasions", Griffith, Kahun papyri, Pl. 6, l. 26. So Ebers, 1, 11 (with s instead of), and very often in the medical papyri as concluding comment in a prescription.
- D. From Dyn. XVIII on in the phrase property well, "in order" (lit. "like a (good) way"), after Dyn. XVIII written to Doubtless the phrase originally contained some adjective, and subsequently mi sšr m; or mi sšr nfr was shortened down to mi sšr.
- (12) * Thy house is well, and thy servants are well", Pap. Bologna 1094, 8, 4-5.

The evidence above quoted leaves no room for doubt that it is one and the same word which appears in all the examples, however varied the spel-

It is now clear that the reading is ssr and not ss, the lings may be and are. full phonetic value being shown by 15 in (4), where the roughly incised determinative shows a passable resemblance to the bag-sign 3 in one of its early shapes (cf. Fig. 2, a). Unhappily in most of the other passages which I quote no quite exact facsimiles of the decisive sign in question are available, but it is at all events clear that the variants correspond closely to those in the word for linen. In 0×10^{-6} of the XIIth Dynasty example (8) the first and third radicals are shown, a writing like $[\sum]$; the middle sign is either assimilated entirely to the rope-sign or is at least well on the road thither; v in (2) seems to show that the confusion sometimes was made at the very beginning of the Middle Kingdom. In the Old Kingdom the triangular form of the bag-sign λ or λ seems to be preferred; so in (1), (5), (6). The reading of the sign in _____ of the decrees has been much debated. Moret (Chartes d'immunité, troisième partie, p. 140 = Journ. asiat., 1917, p. 377) discusses the question at length, unfortunately deciding in favour of db: Borchardt, commenting on (5), had already discerned the true reading, but produced no proof of his view. In (7) appears in much the same form as in the example from Deir el-Gebrâwi, above fig. 3, a, and on the stela of Thethi (3) there is an analogous shape * which, however, is also used for šš in the formula of offering (vertical l. 1), while a "treasurer" named \mathbf{k} writes $\mathbf{\tilde{a}}$ for g (see below) in quite the normal form. allude to the hieratic variants at the end of this article. The only writing yet to be discussed is $\stackrel{*}{=}$ — (9) of which other examples of later date may be mentioned (Golénischeff glossary, 1, 2; Chassinat, Edfou, II, 13; A. Z., 18, 10). Here apparently we have a metathesis of s and s, yielding ssr as in the case of the word for "linen". Another word where similar variations of writing occur is 3: " "corn" hitherto wrongly read is. This word, quite common from the New Kingdom onwards, is written sim with the rope-sign salready in the Annals of Tuthmosis III (Urk., IV, 743, 1), but the variants $\underset{\times}{\times}$ - (Urk., IV, 372, 14) and $\int S_{111} (Rouge, Inscr. hier., 178, 3)$ definitely prove the reading ssr and show that the sign concerned is the bag-sign.

Finally, a rare verb 0.5 apparently meaning "to utter", "express" something (Gardiner, Admonitions, p. 101) must also be read ssr. The Dyn. XVIII writing $\frac{3}{2}$ (Newberry, Rekhmara, Pl. 2, l. 15), with others of similar

VII

No so wegg "be miserable", Ptahhotpe, 9; Sinuhe, B 168; var. And Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch., 18, 202, 9.

Tylor, Paheri (E. E. F.), Pl. 8, cf. Gauthier, Dict. géogr., s. v.; var. $\stackrel{\pi}{=}$ Blackman, Dendûr, p. 27.

Mggi, masc. proper name, Brit. Mus. 614, Dyn. XI.

 $rac{n}{60} \times ngg$ "break" Ebers, 40, 12, 14; geminating form of $rac{n}{60} \times ngi$, see Berlin Wb., 2, 348.

J-gbt "to slit (?)" a fish, see Montet, Scènes de la vie privée, p. 37. Two O. K. examples; for one of them see fig. 2, d.

3 3 47-149.

Jingbb "earth" Urk., IV, 146, 14; Millingen, 2, 8; var. Ji Piankhi, 55.

(1) I am indebted to R. O. Faulkner for a reference to (1) Take to thyself the fluid (??) which came forth from Osiris' Pyr. 117, where \(1) Take to the

usual $\frac{8}{4}$ (*ibid.*, 39, 105). The writing with $\frac{1}{4}$ is to me inexplicable, and in its isolation can hardly be taken to prove an equation $\frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{4}$.

- Gbtyw Koptos, see Gauthier, op. cit., s. v.; var. [Montet, Hammandt, no. 47, 1. 3.
- To Gzi(?), masc. personal name, Borchardt, Sahurē, Pls. 57-58. Sethe (op. cit., p. 124, and index) does not transcribe the name. Can it be the adj. from Gs; Ķūs in spite of —?
- The Gé; Kûs, Pyr. 308; var. The Pyr. 312 and later The see Gauthier, op. cit., V, 178 for references.

The above list does not contain 80 we var. $\frac{8}{12}$ formerly identified with Goshen, $\Gamma \dot{\epsilon} \sigma \epsilon \mu$, for the reasons I have given in JEA, 5, 218-223. Gauthier (op. cit., 145) also accepts my reading $\dot{s}\dot{s}m$, though with some little hesitation (1). A further argument in my favour, and one which I have not hitherto employed, is that in Griffith, $Kahun\ Papyri$, 2, 148 for \dot{s} is written with the hieratic sign for \dot{s} $\dot{s}\dot{s}$, not that for \dot{s} \dot{g} , see below. But as the examples of wgg and ugg quoted above show, this argument is not decisive. In the Ramesseum Glossary both Kûs and Koptos are written with hieratic \dot{s} . In hieroglyphic, let it be noted, the triangular form \dot{s} is never employed for the value g.

The use of \bullet for g is, as the examples cited above show, very strangely distributed. It is predominantly as an initial consonant that \bullet is so used, a position which would most easily be explained if \bullet 1 or \bullet 7 in some contexts were readable as g; or g:t. But of this we have no evidence. Perhaps at the start $\bullet = g$ was confined to the two town-names Gbtyw and Gs:. The name of Koptos will have supplied the reason for using \bullet in a number of other words beginning with gb. I cannot help thinking that the doubled \bullet in \bullet 1 is due to the dual appearance of \bullet 2 following, this recalling the suffix \circ 3rd fem. sing. after dual nouns. The existence of \bullet 3 in this latter variant of the name of Kûş will have motivated the use of \bullet 3 in wgg and wgg, besides the two personal names wgg and wgg. All these being words where two wg's follow one another. Finally, wg will have been written with \bullet 3 simply because it is a place-name.

(1) It is not clear to me why Gauthier (op. cit., 5, 179) reads the town $\overset{\aleph}{\longrightarrow}$ $\overset{\aleph}{\longrightarrow}$ as qsmoui (i. e. gsmwy).

VIII

With the usual summary of results appended to philological discussions I can here dispense, since that summary may be found in the sign-list of my *Grammar*. But a few words must be added upon the hieratic rendering of the signs here studied. The influence of hieratic upon hieroglyphic was far

Drope a & b &

D bag . To a to . Tr

Fig. 5. — Hieratic forms of the "rope" & and the "bag" ...

greater than is usually believed, and I am convinced that this has been the main source of confusion between s and . I must trespass no further upon the hospitality of the Bulletin, and a complete revision of Möller's treatment of these two signs must be left to others. In Fig. 5 1 have drawn up a schematic summary of the distinction between s and

as seen in hieratic of the Middle and New Kingdoms. The rope s is made either in two (a) or in three (b) strokes; the characteristic feature is that the projecting ends form an angle with one another. Careless scribes, like those of Sinuhe B, Prisse, and Ebers write in the same way, and our transcriptions ought then to show v. More learned or conscientious scribes employ a sign for a not unlike hieratic anw, the distinguishing mark being a horizontal, or nearly horizontal, line at the top (c). I have noted above that Koptos and Kûş are thus written in the Ramesseum Glossary; so too śśr m; in the Kahûn medical papyrus (Griffith, op. cit., 6, 26; however, not quite certain). Egyptian is much more careful about this distinction, which is usual in 🖜 🗻 "(in) order", "(in) good condition", and invariable, as it would appear, in 🗼 🔔 🖜 🕏 . It is an extremely curious fact that Late Egyptian regularly uses s as the determinative of clothing, though this certainly originated in a; perhaps that determinative was now consciously believed to be the rope. Möller's evidence shows that a form of a with discritical point (d) was sometimes employed in , and further that a new differentiation (e) was used in Gbtyw, but nowhere else. In transcribing types c, d, and $e \ge$ ought undoubtedly al-Whether in d and e indications of the new diacritical ways to be adopted. marks should be added is a matter where difference of opinion is comprehensible.

ALAN H. GARDINER.

POSTSCRIPT.

I am indebted for some very valuable remarks to M. Kuentz, who has devoted to the printing of my article a care and an interest far exceeding what could have been expected of an editor. These remarks I append below in somewhat abbreviated form, together with a few comments of my own.

P. 170, line 4. M. Kuentz inquires whether * is a closed (solid) or an open (hollow) sign; in the latter case it might be a with some exaggeration of the tie binding the two ends of the cord. So far as I can see, * is always solid, and is therefore likely to be an equivalent of . See, moreover, * * (approximately so) for śśrw "actions" on p. 178, l. 2.

P. 175, lines 5-6. "Sans doute les Pyramides réservent à la flèche — la valeur phonétique *sér (406, 1545, 1866), tandis que *sér (* traire *; *lin *) n'a jamais — (265; 4437). Mais dans les tombeaux, au contraire, — a bien la valeur phonétique *sér". M. Kuentz then cites examples of (1) | — "boucher hermétiquement (?)", var. | — (Montet, Scènes de la vie privée, pp. 240, 252) and of (2) | — "to milk", with many variants all pointing to *sér (op. cit., pp. 107-8); and ends with the query: "Y a-t-il contradiction? ou faudrait-il lire aussi *sér les groupes — | — Pyr. 406, b; — | — * 1545, a; — | — 1866, b; — | — 1545 a? Y aurait-il là quelque métathèse graphique?"

P. 180, note 1. "Nk > ng serait-il un exemple de cette sonorisation de sourde au contact de n, à laquelle Sethe avait songé pour expliquer $\frac{1}{n} = \frac{1}{n}$?"