THE PAPYRUS
OF
MORAL PRECEPTS.
XXXIIInd DYNASTY.

TRANSLATED BY
M. THEOD. DEVERIA.

These moral precepts are written in the demotic script on a palimpsest papyrus in the collection of the Musée du Louvre, X. 9, No. 2114. The other side of the papyrus has a Greek inscription contained in three columns, which has been published by MM. Egger et Brunet de Présle in Papyrus grecs du Musée du Louvre et de la Bibliothèque, No. 56, and the Egyptian text has been published and annotated by M. Pierret in the Recueil Egyptologique, 1re Livraison, and also again by M. Theod. Deveria in Catalogue des Manuscripts Egyptiens au Musée du Louvre, 8vo., Paris, 1875, p. 139, and from that latter source the following translation is taken. These wise
admonitions which are almost the latest that occur in Egyptian literature should be compared with those of the scribe Pthah-hept which were written in the time of the VIth Dynasty, and which have been translated both by M. Chabas in *Le plus Ancien livre du Monde*, 1857, and by the Rev. Dunbar Heath, under the title of *The Proverbs of Aphobis*.

¹ A translation of these ancient proverbs will shortly appear in the *Records of the Past*. 

LOUVRE PAPYRUS.
No. X., 9.

1. Make it not in a heart of a mother to enter into bitterness
2. Kill not, nor expose thyself to be killed
3. Make not a companion of a wicked man
4. Do not do after the advice of a fool
5. Do not build up thy tomb above those who command you
6. Do not . . . to your children till they are old they have increased in age and strength
7. May it not happen to thee to maltreat an inferior and may it happen to thee to respect the venerable
8. May it not happen to you to maltreat your wife whose strength is less than thine but may she find in you a protector
9. Do not curse thy master before God
10. Do not curse him who . . .
11. Do not speak against thy master . . .
12. Do not save thy life at the cost of that of another
13. Desire not that thy son . . . and his sons

1 See Ritual, cap cxxv., "I have not made to weep."
2 Cf. Pro. iv. 14 and xxviii. 7.
3 Lacunæ.
4 Cf. the fine old Sanskrit Proverb, "Strike not a wife even with a flower."
5 This admonition sounds almost Budhistic in its tendency. If the view could be safely entertained that the doctrine of Sakyamunya had reached Greece, then an Egyptian priest educated in the Greco-Egyptian School of Alexandria might have heard of such a precept.
14 May it not happen to thee to cause thy infant to suffer if he is weak, (on the contrary) assist him
15 Do not abandon one son to another of thy sons, who is stronger or more courageous
16 That is the cause of vexation which comes from...
17 Do not amuse thyself or play upon those who are dependent upon you
18 Do not allow thy son to be familiar with a married woman.
19 Do not build thy tomb in thine own estate.
20 Do not build your tomb at the approaches to the Temples
21 Do not go out with a foolish man.
22 Do not stop to listen to his words
23 Do not pervert the heart of thy acquaintance if he is pure
24 Do not take a haughty attitude
25 Do not mock the venerable man who is thy superior.

Cætera desunt.

1 Lacuna.
2 Cf. Ecclus. ix. 9 and Prov. vi. 29.
3 That such a caution should have become necessary demonstrates plainly how much in the Ptolemaic period the Egyptians had declined from the love of their old faith, since a tomb in the consecrated mountains of the West was at one time the last and highest comfort that religion could bestow.
4 Cf. Prov. xiv. 7 and xiii. 20.
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