

THE PAPYRUS
OF
MORAL PRECEPTS.

XXXIInd 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 Prèsle 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 Manuscrits 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

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
bitterness¹
- 2 Kill not, nor expose thyself to be killed
- 3 Make not a companion of a wicked man²
- 4 Do not do after the advice of a fool
- 5 Do not build up thy tomb above those who command
you
- 6 Do not³ 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
protector⁴
- 9 Do not curse thy master before God
- 10 Do not curse him who³
- 11 Do not speak against thy master³
- 12 Do not save thy life at the cost of that of another⁵
- 13 Desire not that thy son³ 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 from¹
- 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
woman²
- 19 Do not build thy tomb in thine own estate³
- 20 Do not build your tomb at the approaches to the
Temples
- 21 Do not go out with a foolish man⁴
- 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.



END OF SAMPLE TEXT



The Complete Text can be found on our CD:
Primary Literary Sources For Ancient Literature
which can be purchased on our Website :
www.Brainfly.net

or

by sending **\$64.95** in check or money order to :
Brainfly Inc.
5100 Garfield Ave. #46
Sacramento CA 95841-3839

TEACHER'S DISCOUNT:

If you are a **TEACHER** you can take advantage of our teacher's discount. Click on **Teachers Discount** on our website (www.Brainfly.net) or **Send us \$55.95** and we will send you a full copy of *Primary Literary Sources For Ancient Literature* **AND** our *5000 Classics CD (a collection of over 5000 classic works of literature in electronic format (.txt))* plus our *Wholesale price list*.

If you have any suggestions such as books you would like to see added to the collection or if you would like our wholesale prices list please send us an email to:

webcomments@brainfly.net