

THE FOUNDATION OF THE TEMPLE OF  
THE SUN OF HELIOPOLIS.

POETICAL TEXT WRITTEN ON A LEATHER ROLL.

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TRANSLATED BY  
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THE leather roll which contains the following record of the XIIth dynasty was secured by Dr. Brugsch in 1858, at Thebes, and sold, after his return in 1859, to the Royal Egyptian Museum at Berlin. It remained unknown till 1874, when I published the texts, in facsimile, with a transcription, in the *Zeitschrift für Aegyptische Sprache* of Berlin. Though I recognized its contents as referring to the foundation of the Temple of Heliopolis, yet it was not without an appeal to the indulgence of the candid reader, that I ventured a translation of a text so full of difficult phrases and obsolete words. Dr. Reinisch republished the hieratic text in his *Chresto-*

*mathy*; Dr. Birch, the transcript in his reading-book of *Egyptian Texts*; and Dr. Brugsch gave a short analysis of its contents in the recent edition of his *History of Egypt*. The following translation is a revision of my first attempt.

The document refers to the foundation of a Temple of the Sun, in the 3rd year of the reign of Usertsen I. This king having ruled for several years, together with his father Amenemhā I., the date of the present account ought to fall into this co-regency; and in my first attempt I even thought the father himself alluded to in the text. But, after due consideration, I abandoned this supposition, since, if this were the case, we should expect him to be introduced with his full titles. There can be no doubt that the temple, the foundation of which is described here, is the temple of Horus and Tum, the rising and the setting sun, at On or Heliopolis. It is the famous "House of the Sun," mentioned in the prophecy of Jeremiah (xliii. 13): "He shall break also the images of Beth-Shemesh, that is in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire."

RECORD OF FOUNDATION.

- 1 The year 3, month Athor, of the reign of the King of  
Upper and Lower Egypt, KHEPER-KA-RA, the Son of the  
Sun, USERTSEN I., may he triumph and live for ever !
- 2 The King<sup>1</sup> was crowned with the double crown,  
there was a sitting in the hall,  
a council of his attendants.  
the counsellors of PHARAOH, may he live !
- 3 and the great ones for the place of the foundations.<sup>2</sup>
- 4 "Come, let my Majesty order the works,  
'let me think duly of the glories.
- 5 Henceforth I will make monuments  
and erect carved columns to the Double Harmachis.<sup>3</sup>
- 6 He created me to do what becomes him,  
to fulfil what he ordered to do.  
He made me overcome<sup>4</sup> this country,  
he took note and inclined, (?)
- 7 he bestowed on me his protection,  
illustrating what is in the eyes (?).  
Let me do the same in his love,  
. . . . .
- 8 I am a king of his making ;  
a monarch long-living, not by the father (?).  
I occupied as a mere child, not yet worshipped,

<sup>1</sup> Read *sutn*, instead of *ât*.

<sup>2</sup> For *ââtu*, as given in the edition, might be read *senentu*'. The meaning of some expressions is suggested by a similar inscription in Mariette's Karnak, pl. xii.

<sup>3</sup> Read *en Hor*, instead of *Hor*.

<sup>4</sup> Read *ken-â* (beating man), instead of *uau-â*.

- 9 in the egg already I was a superior of the road of  
 ANUBIS. He exalted me as lord of both parts,<sup>1</sup>  
 10 as an infant not yet gone forth.  
 He anointed my forehead as lord of men,  
 11 creating me as chief of mortals.  
 He placed me into the palace,  
 as youth not yet come forth from my mother's womb.<sup>2</sup>  
 12 He gave me his length and his width,  
 and I have a name in his being victorious.  
 He gave me the land, I am its lord,  
 and I penetrated unto the souls in the heights of heaven.  
 13 Let me do good deeds<sup>3</sup> to him who made me,  
 let me conciliate the god by offerings to him.  
 . . . . . his son . . . . .  
 14 He ordered me to occupy what he had occupied.  
 I come, O HORUS, examiner of the body.<sup>4</sup>  
 I established the offerings of the gods,  
 15 and I shall make works in the house of father TUM.  
 May he give increase as he made me begin (?).  
 16 I shall fill his altar upon earth,  
 and I shall build, while I abide.  
 There will be a remembrance of my benefits in his house.  
 17 Let my name be the temple, my monument the lake.  
 Immortality is a glorious deed.  
 18 There is no calculating a king of age out of his works,  
 they will not know (how) to name him, (?)

<sup>1</sup> Read *pesesti*. "both parts of Horus and Set," as it is found elsewhere. Lepsius, *Denkm.* III. 5, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Compare: "when thou comest from the *akhti* of thy mother." Lepsius, *Denkm.* VI. 115, 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Mäars* perhaps to be explained: "success, good deed, happiness." Comp. Goodwin in the *Zeitschrift*, 1876, p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> An epithet of Horus, *ap-zet*, which I have met with in another instance. Mariette, *Karnak*, xvi. 39.

- unless his name be engraved.
- 19 There is no desolation by the effect of time, the works  
will last,  
it is a striving for glories ;
- 20 it is an enterprise of a perfect name ;  
it is the watching over an eternal work."



## PART II.

- 1 They spoke thus, the King and the counsellors,  
and these replied to their god :  
“ HU is (in) thy mouth, and SA is within thee.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 O long-living ruler ! thou plannest<sup>2</sup> and it is so.  
King crowned as uniter of both countries.  
to extend (the cord) in thy temple.<sup>3</sup>
- 3 Magnificent, when the morning is looking  
upon the glories of the age !
- 4 They all will not finish it without the lord,  
thy Majesty is now the eyes of everybody.  
Let large statues be made for thy monuments in the house  
of the gods
- 5 to thy father, the Lord of the Great house,  
TUM, the bull of the circle of the gods,
- 6 who makes thy house, its construction of hard stone ;  
let it be made with a sculptured idol,  
let thy statues be placed in the interior  
on pedestals<sup>4</sup> everlasting.”
- 7 The King himself said :  
“ Chancellor and intimate counsellor,  
chief of the treasure house,
- 8 chief of the mysteries of THOTH,  
it is proposed to execute the work ;  
the Majesty likes to have it made.
- 9 Let the superintendent in this matter

<sup>1</sup> The gods of eloquence and wisdom.

<sup>2</sup> Read *sexeru'* instead of *sexer'*,

<sup>3</sup> To extend the cord is to lay the foundation.

<sup>4</sup> Read, *em anut*, but the meaning is doubtful

carry it on as is desired.

Let everybody be vigilant,  
10 let them make it void of fatigue.

Let every ceremony required be done,  
11 and let the foreman perform it.

Thy hour is a time for doing it,  
12 since it becomes thee to order the things (?);  
let the beloved place arise.

13 Order the workmen  
to perform as thou art charged."

The King (rose) with the diadem and double pen, all men following him. The lecturer read the holy book, while extending the cord and laying the foundation on the spot to be occupied by this temple.<sup>1</sup>

Then his Majesty departed . . . . .<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Almost the same expressions are found in a text of the time of Thutmes III., in Mariette's *Karnak*, 15, 25. Here the King extends the cord with his own hands.

<sup>2</sup> It is impossible to give a sure translation of the lost lines of the text, explained only conjecturally in the *Zeitschrift*. In line 18 I discern the groups "the South and the North;" *anen su*, will be rather "he returned."







# END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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