INSCRIPTION OF CHNUMHETEP.

TRANSLATED BY
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The following inscription, taken from the celebrated tomb at Beni-hassan, belonging to a most remarkable family which flourished at the XIIth dynasty, has long been known. The text was first published by Burton, Excerpta Hieroglyphica, fo., Cairo, 1830, pl. 33–34, and afterwards, in a more complete and exact form, by Professor Lepsius, Denkmäler, Abth. II., Bl. 124 and 125. It is taken from the walls of a well-known sepulchre. The most important and historical portion has been translated by Brugsch-Bey, Histoire d'Égypte, 4to, 1856, p. 55; his Geschichte Aegyptens, 8vo, Leipzig, 1877, pp. 139, 143, 146, and the translation, A History of Egypt under the Pharaohs, 8vo, London, 1879, pp. 148, 149,
157; 158, comprising the first half; but the other portion, although not so interesting, is far more difficult. Later, a translation of the whole has been given by M. Maspero in the *Recueil des Travaux relatifs à la Philologie et à l'Archeologie Égyptiennes et Assyriennes*, 1879, p. 160 and foll. The contents show the old feudal constitution of Egypt, the power of the monarch over the principalities, the amount they paid, and the hereditary succession of the great nobles, as also the rights of women to the hereditary estates under the Crown.
INSCRIPTION OF CHNUMHETEP.

1 The hereditary chief, the royal relative, loving the god,\(^1\) governor
2 of the lands of the East, XNUMPETEP, son of NEHERA,
   justified,
3 son of the daughter of a chief, BEQAT, justified,
4 has made a monument for the first time\(^2\) to embellish\(^3\)
5 his district, he has sculptured his name for ever\(^4\)
6 he has embellished it for ever by his chamber
7 of KARNETER,\(^5\) he has sculptured the name of his
8 household, he has assigned their place.
9 The workmen, those attached to his
10 house, he has reckoned amongst his
11 dependents of all ranks,\(^6\) he gave to
12 all the ministers,\(^7\) it was as they were.
13 his mouth said, granted me
14 the sanctity of the HORUS adoring with truth, the Lord
   of Diadems adoring with
15 Truth, the Golden Hawk the justified, the King of the
   South and North, RANUBRA, son of the Sun.
16 AMENEMHA (II.), Giver of Life, established and strong
   like the Sun, immortal, to be

\(^1\) Beloved of his god. Maspero.
\(^2\) The first time he made any monument.
\(^3\) Smenx, to fabricate or make; translated, throughout, "embellish," or
   "adorned," or "complete."
\(^4\) Srut, some read, "made to flourish."
\(^5\) His tomb.
\(^6\) xef, at this period xef, replaces the face, and usually read "her."
\(^7\) Net'en xet, a kind of officers, a word like the net'net of the Tablet of
   Canopus.

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the hereditary chief governor of the lands of the East,
Horus, PA\textsuperscript{1} to the succession\textsuperscript{2} of
the father of my mother in Mena-
\chi\textsuperscript{2}ufu, he set up to me
the landmark of the South; he made
the Northern like the heaven;
he stretched the great river at
its back,\textsuperscript{8} as was done to my father
and mother,\textsuperscript{4} by the decree
proceeding from the mouth of the sanctity of
the Horus, the second born, the Lord of Diadems, the
second born,
the Golden Hawk, the second born, the King of the
South and North, R\textsuperscript{1}as\textsuperscript{2}etp\textsuperscript{3}ab, son of the Sun.
Amenemh\textsuperscript{4}a(I.), Giver of Life, established and strong like
the Sun for ever,
he appointed him to be hereditary chief of the lands of
the East, in Mena-Xufu;\textsuperscript{6}
his landmark\textsuperscript{6} of the South; he sculptured
the Northern like the heaven; he stretched the great
river
on its back,\textsuperscript{7} its place in the East
was Apollinopolis,\textsuperscript{8} to remain in the East.
Came his sanctity doing away with

\textsuperscript{1} The patron god. Brugsch reads, "these god as parents or makes the
chief their priest." Perhaps of the East of Har-Pakhet.

\textsuperscript{2} Pau, race.

\textsuperscript{3} In its middle. Maspero.

\textsuperscript{4} Father of my mother. Brugsch.

\textsuperscript{5} Minieh.

\textsuperscript{6} H\textsuperscript{2}atu, tablets.

\textsuperscript{7} Or spine, aat; either the Nile flowed through or behind the district.

\textsuperscript{8} Tu-Har.
36 negligence, crowned as Atum
37 he was Atum
38 himself, he set right what he found
39 wasted; he made the district
40 in its two parts, knowing,
41 its frontiers, for a district:
42 setting up their land marks,
43 like the heaven, determining their waters;
44 by what was in the list, making
45 the dues by the valuation of the greatness
46 of his love of justice. He appointed him
47 hereditary chief, great protector of the land of Mah;
48 he made the land marks of
49 the South of his frontiers at
50 Unnut, his northern at Cynopolis; he stretch-
51 ed the great river at its back
52 his waters, his fields, his tamarisks,
53 his soil to remain to the lands of the West,
54 He gave his eldest son Nekht,
55 justified, a worthy person, (to be) ruler
56 of his heritage in Mena-Xufu
57 by the great favour
58 of the King, by an eternal decree

1 Suppressing the insurrection. Brugsch.
2 Rising. Maspero.
3 Taking one town after another. Brugsch.
4 Rex, or calculating.
5 Determining the two parts.
6 Benihassan.
7 Hermopolis.
8 The nome Anupu.
9 He distributed to him the great river over his territory. Brugsch.
10 Aser, here for trees in general.
11 St, sand arena.
12 Minleh.
coming from the mouth of the Sanctity of the Horus,
life of the born,
Lord of Diadems, life of the born,¹ the Golden Hawk,
life of the born,
Rāḫeperra, son of the son Usertesen (I.) Giver of
Life,
strong (and) firm, like the Sun immortal,
succeeded from my birth²
My mother proceeded as an hereditary
chief, the daughter of a ruler³
of Mah, to the palace of Rāsātepāb⁴
the giver of life, strong and firm, like the Sun immortal,
to be the wife
of the hereditary chief, the ruler of nōmes,
satisfying⁵ the heart of the King of the South, favourite
of the King of the North, to his succession of governor
of the country.
Nēhēra justified, a worthy person, brought
me the King of the South and North, Ra-nub-kau, Giver
of Life, strong and sound,
like the Sun immortal, as the son of a chief, to succeed
to the rule of my father and mother out of
the greatness of his love to me, truly he was Atum
himself, Ra-nub-kau,⁶ Giver of Life,
established and strong, like the Sun immortal, he ap-
pointed
me for chief in the 19th year,⁷ in

¹ Or living born.
² The first of my race, or those born as heir.
³ Heka, or ḫyk, small prince.
⁴ Amenemhe I.
⁵ Met-met.
⁶ Amenemhe II.
⁷ Uncertain if of his reign, but probably so.
INSCRIPTION OF CHNUMHETEP.

79 Menāẖufu.¹ I was adorning
80 it. I was making it to be (provided)
81 with all things. I caused to prosper²
82 the name of my father. I completed
83 the existing temples of the Ka.³ I served⁴ my statues
84 at the great temples. I sacrificed to them
85 their food, bread, beer, water, vegetables,
86 pure herbs. My priest has verified. I procured⁵
87 them from the irrigation
88 of my workpeople.⁶ I ordered
89 the sepulchral offerings of bread, beer, cattle, fowl, in all
  the festivals
90 of Karneter,⁷ at the festivals of the beginning of the
  year, the opening of the year, increase
91 of the year, diminution of the year,⁸ close of the year,⁹
92 at the great festival, at the festival of the great burning,
93 at the festival of the lesser burning, the five inter-
94 calary days, at the festival of bread-making,¹⁰
95 at the twelve monthly and twelve half-monthly festivals,
96 all the festivals on the earth (plain) terminating on the
  hill.¹¹ But
97 should my sepulchral priest or men

¹ Minich.
² Or flourish.
³ Or Genius.
⁴ I dragged my statue to the temples. Brugsch.
⁵ I chose a priest of the Ka or Genius. Maspero.
⁶ Mer, vassals, peasants, serfs.
⁷ Hades or Purgatory, sepulchral.
⁸ Little year. Brugsch.
⁹ These festivals varied according to the fixed or vague years, were in the
  year but did not mark separate years.
¹⁰ S et ta s a, civil and funereal, or s et ta s a, flour and food. Entry of
  grain, Maspero.
¹¹ On the hill, or, “over the hill” is a hill of Anubis.
98 conduct them wrong may he not exist,
99 nor his son in his place. I was more
100 favoured in the palace than
101 any other courtier,¹
102 who reckoned me his following ;²
103 before those who were
104 before me, in opposition to
105 chamberlains³ of the palace,
106 I paid my court by
107 touching the forehead in
108 the homage. It was
109 in the presence of the word of mouth of the king
110 himself, never was like done
111 by servants to their lord in their homage ;
112 he knew the place of my tongue,
113 the humility of my thought ;
114 I was one worthy
115 of the sanctity of the king, the honoured
116 of those around him,
117 favoured in the presence
118 of his courtiers, the hereditary chief,
119 Ḫnumḥetep's son Neḥerā, a devoted person.
120 Also praised ⁴ be what has done for me.
121 Appointed has been my eldest son Nekht
122 of the lady of the house, Ḫraṭī, to be ruler of
Cynopolis,
123 for the hereditaments of the father of
124 his mother. He is a courtier²

¹ Sāmner, or, as some read, s'mer, a courtier or minister.
² Ḫenḫu, his condition or position, degree, nobility.
³ qanbut, pillars of the palace, “or household.”
⁴ Ḫesut, thought, or homage be rendered.
⁵ Sāmner, one of the king's friends. Brugsch.
appointed ruler of the district
of the South, given to him, have been each
hereditaments by the sanctity of
the Horus, conducting the two countries, the Lord of
Diadems, crowned (by) truth,
the Golden Hawk of the gods,\(^1\) King of the South and
North, Ra-sha-\(\dot{x}\)eper, son of the Sun,
Usertesen (II.), Giver of Life, established and strong
like the Sun, for he made
his memorial in Cynopolis, making good
what he found defective. He made
the district into two parts,\(^2\) causing to be determined
its frontiers, adjusting
the dues by valuation,
he placed a landmark\(^3\) at his frontiers
on the South, he completed the North
like the heavens, placed in the fields
of the fallen,\(^4\) making a total
of fifteen landmarks set up on
his fields, the Northern frontiers
to Uas-b-ua,\(^5\) he stretched
the great river at its back.\(^6\)
Its western place of Cynopolis to remain
(as far as) in the land of the West as requested.\(^7\)
The hereditary chief Nekt, son of Khnumhete, justifies a worthy person, says; Not has known my wish

\(^1\) Or third divine golden hawk.
\(^2\) Brugsch translates, taking possession of one town after the other.
\(^3\) Hattu, tablets.
\(^4\) Uncultivated. Brugsch.
\(^5\) Oxyrynchite, nome.
\(^6\) See before.
\(^7\) Self sfer, when, or, as asked by me.
favoured greatly
by the King, any other grown old in
the service as a courtier, ¹
any among the
numerous courtiers, ²
led to the palace as a courtier. ³
There is not in his district who has heard
(such) great hearings, a mouth
stopping mouths, bearing ⁴ the honour ⁵
of the great lord, door and gate of lands,
XNUMHETEP, son of NEHERA, son
of the lady of the house, KHRATI,
keeping alive the name of my father.
(which) I found injured
on the doors known by
the hand, ⁶ judged by the condition, ⁷ not
was given another instead
of the other, lo, I a son completed,
making to flourish the name,
of the ancestors of NEHERA,
son of XNUMHETEP, justified, a worthy person,
the chief ancestor, first I completed
the upper part ⁸ of the door to let pass
a person to do what a father had done;
my father made for it a statue
and a sepulchral temple for it, of his great love of the
district,

¹ Sabmer, or smer.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ar, making.
⁵ xut, the lustre or glory.
⁶ Or form.
⁷ S'et.
⁸ Her, the lintel.
of good and beautiful\(^1\) stone,
causing his name to flourish for ever.
He completed it for ever, his name lives
in the mouth of men, established
in the mouth of the living,
through his chamber of Karneter,\(^2\) his place
completed for ever, placed
is his house of eternity, through the favour
of the sanctity of the King, who loved him,
in his palace. He ruled his district when
he was a babe, clothed in male attire;
he accompanied the King, his feathers
danced as a boy
on his forehead, in the South,
the place of his tongue and humility of his thought

\textit{Sebak-}

\textit{ankh's son Nehera}, justified, a pure person.
He knew\(^4\) the hereditaments of his ancestors
to rule his district. It was \textit{Iunumheter},
making his noble memorial within the district.
I built a colonnade, which I found
on the place, I set it up
with new columns
inscribed in my own name.
I kept alive the name of my father in order
to perpetuate what I had done,
in all the memorial; a door of six cubits,
of brass\(^5\) and cedar, inlaid\(^6\) for the first

\(^1\) Or, of good stone to see, or in appearance.  \(^2\) Hades, sepulchral.
\(^3\) \textit{chet}, dressed; the feathers were \textit{su}, ostrich.
\(^4\) Or had assigned \textit{re}.  
\(^5\) Apparently determinative of this metal, and the word \textit{ar}, cedar.
\(^6\) \textit{Neka}.  
gate of the chamber; two gates of seven cubits
at the turn of the noble
house which is within that chamber; a table of
offerings, sepulchral meals of bread, beer, oxen, geese,
food in all;
the monuments I caused to be made hollow. The area
of its circuit, giving air to
the great colonnade placed
within this district for fathers,
as) a child of this district completing
the memorials of its district to the ancestral places
those before,
adding to the turn made before me.
I am noble by the monuments,
I ordered all the years of
disgust within that district
enveloped; sculpturing my name
on all the monuments. I
held on them without defect in them; I embarked
on the boat, as my father ordered.
the hereditary chief,
KNUMHETEP, son of NAHRI,
son of the lady BEGAT, justified
a devout person.
The chancellor BEGAT made the tomb.

1 Or area, kər, corner.
2 nšhn.
3 Sḥ, or xent.
4 lfd.
6 ḫr ḫt ʿt, or else the boat named ḫr ḫt ʿt.
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