

THE PAPYRUS, I. 371, OF LEYDEN.

TRANSLATED BY
G. MASPERO.

THIS papyrus was found in one of the Theban tombs. It was tied to a wooden statuette of "The singer-woman of Ammon, *Kena* . . ." The name on the statue, *Kena* . . ., being, not the name on the papyrus, *Onkhari*, it is evident that the statue had not been made in the first instance for the woman whom it was supposed to afterwards represent. It came probably from an older tomb which had been rifled of its contents by robbers, and was sold second-hand to the husband of Onkhari.

The style of the writing brings us to the last years of the XXth dynasty, and perhaps to the time of Sheshonq. A facsimile has been published by M. Leemans in *Monuments Égyptiens du Musée de Leyde*, Tom. II. pl. 183-184. A short analysis was given by M. Chabas in his *Notices Sommaires*; a transcription, translation and complete commentary will be found in the *Journal Asiatique*, Mai-Juin, 1880, and in the 2nd fasc. of my *Études Égyptiennes*.

In it we have a husband complaining of the evil condition he is in, three years at least after he became a widower, telling how considerably he had acted towards his wife, and contrasting his conduct with hers. The nature of the evil he suffered he does not state very explicitly; perhaps he was afflicted with some illness which he attributed to the malignity of his departed consort, perhaps he thought she came back from the other world expressly to torment him. The whole case reminds me of the curious actions the Norsemen of the Middle Ages brought against ghosts: they accused, judged, and found guilty dead persons who, as they said, rose from the tomb to haunt the house they had lived in. Though the Leyden Papyrus is not an official document, it seems to me to have a judicial character, and to relate to some matter of the same kind. The husband sues "the wise spirit" of his wife, and forbids it to inflict on him persecutions which no anterior ill-usage ever justified. To transmit the writ unto Ament, he probably read it aloud in the tomb, and then tied it to the statue which was supposed to represent his wife; she received the summons in the same way she was accustomed to receive the prayers and food which were given to her statue at certain times of the year.

TO THE WISE SPIRIT OF ONKHARI.¹

What offence have I committed against thee that I must come to this the evil condition which I am in? What offence have I committed against thee that thou must help² against me? For, since I became a husband to thee, until to-day, what I have done to thee that I kept secret? What am I to do, when I shall have to give my evidence [as to] what I have done to thee, when I shall stand with [thee] before [the judge,] in words of my mouth [directed] to the cycle of the gods of Ament, and thou shalt be judged through this writing—viz., [through] the words of my complaint against what thou hast done, what wilt thou do? When [thou] becamest my wife, I was a young man, I was with [thee]. I was promoted to offices of every kind, [and] I was with [thee], I never deserted [thee], I never caused any grief to thy heart. I acted thus when I was a young man; when I was promoted to every great dignity of PHARAOH, l. h. s., I did not desert thee, saying: "Let this be thine in common with me!" And whereas everybody who came to me saw me in thy presence, I never received anybody before knowing whether thou wouldst have anything to say to it, saying: "I will act according to thy heart." And now, behold, thou hast not gladdened my heart, and I must plead against thee, and people shall see the false from the true. For behold, I commanded the captains of the bowmen of PHARAOH, l. h. s., also of his

¹ Spirits were called *agrou*—viz., *instructed* in every prayer or science; and *âprou*—viz., *furnished* with every weapon or thing which was necessary to them in the other world.

² Here, as in some other passages, I have given only a paraphrase: for a literal translation see the notes in *Journal Asiatique* or *Etudes Egyptiennes*.

charioteers, and I, when they came to lie on their belly before thee, if there was, in what they brought, something good, I put it before [thee], I never hid anything for myself. I never shewed myself offensive to thy feelings in whatever I did to thee in the way of a master ; I never was found being rude to thee in the way of a clown who enters another's house ; I never took any account of what thou didst [to] me. When I was put into the place which I am in, when I came to know no more [what it was] to go out as was my wont [before], and to do what I had to do as one who is a recluse, when my oil, also my bread, also my clothes were brought me, I never put [thee] in another place, saying : "What would become of the woman ;" and I never was rude to thee, and behold, thou didst not recognize the good I did thee, and I of the things which thou didst. And when thou didst sicken of the sickness which thou hadst, I went to the chief physician, and he prescribed, and he did what thou toldest him to do. And when I went to follow PHARAOH l. h. s. to the South, whereas my wont was to be reunited with thee, while I made my stay of eight months, I never ate, never drank in the way of a man. And when I reached Memphis, I asked leave from PHARAOH, l. h. s., and I did what they were doing to thee, I wept extremely with my people in front of my dwelling, I gave clothes and linen for thy embalming, and I caused many clothes to be made, and there was nothing good I did not cause to be done for thee. And behold, I passed three years and I never entered the house, and I used not to cause that to be done which was ordinary, and behold, I acted thus because of thee ! And behold, I do not know any more good from evil, and thou shalt be judged with me ! And behold, as long as the lamentations lasted in the house, I never went in to PHARAOH l. h. s.

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