

SEPULCHRAL INSCRIPTION OF PANEHSI.

TRANSLATED BY

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THE following inscription was found in a tomb near Memphis, and formed part of the Passalacqua collection at Berlin. It was first published by Dr. Brugsch in his *Monumens de l'Égypte*, pl. 3, with an accompanying translation, and later by Dr. Reinisch, in his *Aegyptische Chrestomathie*, pl. 15. It contains a hymn to the Sun-god Ra, put into the mouth of the deceased Panehsi, designated as scribe or registrar of the table in Royal Apt, which Brugsch

in his *Dict. Geogr.*, p. 21, explains as the quarter of the royal harem at Memphis. Something is lost from the upper end of the tablet, which may have once had a figure of Panehsi presenting himself with suppliant gestures before Osiris the judge of the dead, attended by members of his family. The monument is dedicated by his son Apherumes,¹ himself a scribe attached to the Court, *making his father's name live*, as he expresses it, in a conventional formula of frequent occurrence in sepulchral monuments. A few characters only in two or three places have become illegible.

The hymn abounds in reiterated phrases, constantly found in similar compositions, descriptive of the Sun-god's triumphal progress through heaven, showering blessings on the earth, and visiting with his penetrating radiance the under-world. His boat of morning,

¹ This name formerly read as above, but the god's title, Apheru, is now usually accepted as Apmatenu, or Apmatu.

Sekti, and boat of evening, Aat, receive the god each at its appointed season. The Egyptian notion of a vessel conveying the sun on the other side of the earth from west to east during the hours of night, may have been familiarized to the Greeks, if not earlier, at least in the time of Psammetichus, and it was readily accepted as congenial to their versatile imagination. The first poem indeed in which it is said to occur, the epic *Titanomachia* of an unknown author, might point to a remoter date for its introduction ; but the earliest evidence preserved to us in the elegies of Mimnermus comes very near to this epoch. This poet sang how " Helios has toil allotted to him for all days, and no rest for his steeds or himself after rosy-fingered morn has climbed the sky ; for his much-loved hollow couch of costly gold, made by Hephæstus' hands, upheld by wings, bears him through the wave on the topmost flood, sleeping by snatches, from the region of Hesperides to the land

of Aethiopes, where his swift car and horses stand till early dawn may arrive, when he mounts another carriage." Later poets took up the fancy, and told how Helios lent his golden bowl, that was wont to bear himself, for Hercules to traverse in it the waste of ocean, on his daring raid upon Geryon's herds in Erytheia. Many of them may have had no suspicion of the source whence the original idea sprung, before it passed into distant regions; nor might modern readers have guessed its birthplace if the Egyptian language had not been recovered.



SEPULCHRAL INSCRIPTION OF PANEHSI.

(Adoration to RA). when he sets in the western horizon of heaven,
 by one skilled scribe of the sacrificial table
 in royal APT, PANEHSI. Saith,
 Hail RA, (maker of) mankind, TUM HARMACHIS,
 one god living by truth, maker of beings,
 author of existences, of beasts and men, proceeding from
 thy (his) eye,
 lord of heaven, lord of earth,
 maker of subjects and rulers,
 lord universal, bull of the cycle of gods,
 King of the upper sky, lord of gods,
 Sovran Prince over cycle of gods and goddesses,
 self-formed double essence that was in the beginning.
 Homage to thee, maker of gods, TUM,
 creator of intelligences, lord of delight,
 mighty one of loves, illumining all mankind living ;
 I give thee adoration in the evening ;
 propitiated, thou reposest in life,
 the *sekti* is in gladness of heart,
 the *aat* in exultation,
 they conduct thee through the abyss in peace,
 thy crew rejoicing ;¹ thy radiant eye divine has
 overthrown thy foe, repelling the advance of APAP,
 Thou reposest gracious with glad heart

¹ *Sejer-n xut-k xefti-k* ; for the sense here given to *xut*, the deified eye of Ra, cf. Naville, *Lit.*, p. 57.

in the horizon of MANU,
 where thou shinest on the gracious god,
 lord of eternity, ruler of the nether world,
 thou givest illumination to beings there departed :
 they see thy glories,
 the dwellers of the hollows in their recesses,
 their arms are uplifted in adoration to thy form.
 Spirits of the West rejoice when thou beamest on them,
 the lords of the deep are glad at heart
 when thou illuminest the West,
 their eyes open to see thee,
 their heart delights as they behold
 with acclamation thy form above them ;
 faultless their divine limbs are born,
 thou framest them in their completeness ;
 thou risest, thou destroyest their ills,
 thou settest to refresh their limbs,
 they adore as thou arrivest to them,
 they occupy the front of thy bark
 as thou settest in the horizon of MANU,
 renewed as RA each day.
 Grant thou that my soul may be among them,
 may thy radiance beam on my frame,
 may I see the sun's orb amid those enlightened spirits of
 Hades,
 who sit before UNNEFER, tending with careful regard
 the form of the Osirian scribe
 of the sacrificial table in royal APT, PANEHSI.

A kneeling figure, with hands raised in attitude of
 devotion, faces the last four lines of the inscription :
 in front of it are the words :—

By his son, giving life to his name,
Scribe of the divine book of the lord of the Two Lands,
the protector¹ residing at the royal palace,
APHERUMES, justified.

¹ "The protector," *sotep sa*, often applied to the King, a phrase of which the exact force is perhaps still undetermined.





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