

**A COMPENDIOUS GRAMMAR OF THE  
EGYPTIAN LANGUAGE AS CONTAINED IN THE  
COPTIC, SAHIDIC, AND BASHMURIC DIALECTS;  
TOGETHER WITH ALPHABETS AND NUMERALS  
IN THE HIEROGLYPHIC  
AND ENCHORIAL CHARACTERS. SECOND  
EDITION, REVISED AND IMPROVED**

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**HENRY TATTAM**

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BY THE  
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TO  
**J O H N L E E E S Q R.**

LL. D., F. R. S., P. A. S., & &

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF  
THE MANY FACILITIES AFFORDED  
IN THE PROSECUTION OF  
**HIS EGYPTIAN STUDIES**

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

PHYSICS 311

LECTURE 1



## P R E F A C E.

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Egyptian Literature has of late years attracted particular attention. All that has come down to us of the Language and Literature of ancient Egypt is contained in the Coptic, Sahidic, and Bashmuric Dialects; and in the Enchorial, Hieratic, and Hieroglyphic Inscriptions, and Manuscripts.

Without attempting to trace the origin of the Egyptian Language, we may just remark that the learned Rossius in his "Etymologiæ Ægyptiacæ," has shown the affinity of a number of Coptic and Sahidic words to the Oriental Languages; which affinity to a certain extent, it must be admitted, does exist.\*)

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\*) In Rawlinson's Herodotus are the following observations. "The Egyptian Language might, from its grammar, appear to claim a Semitic origin, but it is not really one of that family, like the Arabic, Hebrew,

Nor need we be surprised at this, when we consider the intercourse of the Jews, Syrians, Persians, Chaldeans, and Arabians with the Egyptians: but whether these words were originally Egyptian, or whether they were adopted from other languages, it is impossible for *us* to determine. M. Klaproth, a Gentleman well acquainted with Asiatic Languages, has also pointed out the resemblance of a considerable number of Egyptian

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and others; nor is it one of the Sanscrit family, though it shows a primitive affinity to the Sanscrit in certain points; and this has been accounted for by the Egyptians being an offset from the early "undivided Asiatic stock;" — a conclusion consistent with the fact of their language being "much less developed than the Semitic and Sanscrit, and yet admitting the principle of those inflections and radical formations which we find developed, sometimes in one, sometimes in the other, of those great families." Besides certain affinities with the Sanscrit, it has others with the Celtic, and the languages of Africa; and Dr. Ch. Meyer thinks that Celtic "in all its non-Semitic features most strikingly corresponds with the old Egyptian." It is also the opinion of M. Müller that the Egyptian bears an affinity both to the Arian and Semitic dialects, from its having been an offset of the original Asiatic tongue, which was their common parent before this was broken up into the Turanian, Arian and Semitic.

In its grammatical construction, Egyptian has the greatest resemblance to the Semitic; and if it has less of this character than the Hebrew, and other purely Semitic dialects, this is explained by the latter having been developed after the separation of the original tongue into the Arian and Semitic, and by the Egyptian having retained a portion of both elements. There is, however, a possibility that the Egyptian may have been a compound language, formed from two or more *after* the first migration of the race, and foreign elements may have been then added to it, as in the case of some other languages.

Rawlinson's Herodotus vol. II. p. 279.

words to some of the dialects of the north of Asia, and the north of Europe: this discovery appears to have raised a doubt in his mind of the African origin of the Egyptians. The fact is, the remains we possess of the Egyptian Language, when separated from the Greek, with which it is in some measure mixed up, have no near resemblance to any one of the ancient or modern languages.\*

The importance of the Ancient Egyptian Language to the Antiquary, will at once appear, when we consider that the knowledge of it is necessary before the inscriptions on the Monuments of Egypt can be properly understood, and the Enochial and Hieratic Manuscripts can be fully deciphered.

Nor is it of less importance to the Biblical Student. The Egyptian Versions are supposed to have been made about the second century; \*\* and if they were not

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\* Dr. Murray says, "The Coptic is an original tongue, for it derives all its indeclinable words and particles from radicals pertaining to itself. Its verbs are derived from its own resources. There is no mixture of any foreign language in its composition, except Greek." *Bruce's Travels*, vol. II. p. 473.

\*\* Zosimus, as quoted by Fabricius, says, that the old Testament was translated into Egyptian, when the Septuagint Translation was made. "Biblia tunc non in Graecam tantum, sed etiam Aegyptiis in vernaculam linguam fuisse translata." p. 196.

The Talmudists say, "It is lawful for the Copts to read the Law in Coptic." *Tycheensisius*. See also *Buxtorf's Talmudic Lex.* p. 1571. Also. "It is permitted to write the Law in Egyptian." *Babyl. Talmud*,