

**THE DEMOTIC
MAGICAL PAPYRUS OF
LONDON AND LEIDEN**

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The Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden by F. Ll. Griffith & Herbert Thompson

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DEMOTIC MAGICAL PAPYRUS
OF
LONDON AND LEIDEN

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PREFACE

THE MS., dating from the third century A. D., which is here edited for the first time in a single whole, has long been known to scholars. Its subject-matter—magic and medicine—is not destitute of interest. It is closely connected with the Greek magical papyri from Egypt of the same period, but, being written in demotic, naturally does not reproduce the Greek hymns which are so important a feature of those papyri. The influence of purely Greek mythology also is here by comparison very slight—hardly greater than that of the Alexandrian Judaism which has supplied a number of names of Hellenistic form to the demotic magician. Mithraism has apparently contributed nothing at all: Christianity probably only a deformed reference to the Father in Heaven. On the other hand, as might have been expected, Egyptian mythology has an overwhelmingly strong position, and whereas the Greek papyri scarcely go beyond Hermes, Anubis, and the Osiris legend, the demotic magician introduces Khons, Amon, and many other Egyptian gods. Also, whereas the former assume a knowledge of the *modus operandi* in divination by the lamp and bowl, the latter describes it in great detail.

But the papyrus is especially interesting for the language in which it is written. It is probably the

latest Egyptian MS. which we possess written in the demotic script, and it presents us with the form of the language as written—almost as spoken—by the pagans at the time when the Greek alphabet was being adopted by the Christians. It must not be forgotten, too, that this is the document which contributed perhaps more than any other to the decipherment of demotic, partly through its numerous Greek glosses.

We have therefore thought that a complete edition, with special reference to its philological importance, would be useful. The vocabulary is extensive, comprising about a thousand words. The present volume, containing the introduction, the transliteration, translation, and notes, will be followed by a complete glossary, with separate indices of Greek words, invocation names, names of animals, plants, and minerals, and a list of the glosses, &c., besides a chapter dealing with the principal grammatical forms met with in the MS., and a hand-copy of the text; the photographic reproduction by Hess of the pages in the British Museum and Leemans' facsimile of those at Leiden will of course preserve their independent value for reference, as, for instance, in judging the condition of the MS. and the precise forms of the signs in particular passages.

There is considerable inconsistency in the spelling of words in the papyrus itself. So much having to be rendered more or less conventionally, while fresh light is thrown daily on the intricacies of demotic, it is probable that there are a good many inconsistencies in our transliterations, translations, and notes, in spite of the watchfulness of the excellent reader at the Clarendon

Press. Those, however, who have dealt with the subject at all will probably not judge these too hardly.

In conclusion, we have to record our gratitude, first, to our predecessors in publication and decipherment of the papyrus—to Reuvens, Leemans, and Hess, to Brugsch, Maspero, Revillout, and W. Max Müller—but for whose varied contributions our task would have been infinitely more laborious even in the present advanced state of the study: and secondly, to the authorities of the Egyptian department in the British Museum, and of the Rijksmuseum in Leiden, for their courtesy in affording every facility for studying the original MS., and more especially to Dr. Boeser of the Leiden Museum for much kindness and assistance.

F. LL. G.

H. T.

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INTRODUCTION

I. HISTORY OF THE MS.

THE demotic magical papyrus of London and Leiden was discovered at Thebes with other papyri, principally Greek but dealing with subjects of a like nature, in the early part of the last century, and was bought by Anastasi, who was at that time Swedish consul at Alexandria, and made a large collection of Egyptian MSS. When Anastasi obtained the MS. it must already have been torn into two parts, and it is even probable that he obtained the two parts at different times, since he sold his Egyptian collections, including the Leiden MS., to the Dutch government in 1828, while the London portion was bought at the sale of his later collections at Paris in 1857 for the British Museum (No. 1072 in Lenormant's Catalogue).

The Leiden fragment was made known to the world much earlier than that in the British Museum. Its importance for the deciphering of the demotic script by the help of the numerous glosses in Graeco-Coptic characters was at once perceived by the distinguished scholar Reuvens, at that time Director of the Leiden Museum of Antiquities, who proceeded to study it carefully, and in 1830 published an admirable essay¹ in which he sketched the principal contents of the MS. and indicated its value for the progress of demotic

¹ *Lettres à M. Letronne sur les papyrus bilingues et grecs*, par C. J. C. REUVENS. Leide, 1830. (Première lettre, Papyrus bilingues.)