

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## HUMAN DOCUMENTS FROM THE EARLY CENTURIES.

The discovery of the *Logia Iesou* at Oxyrhynchus in 1897 aroused world-wide interest in the archæological explorations being conducted in Egypt. But the Logia were by no means the only manuscripts found at that time and place. The Egypt Exploration Fund, under whose auspices this work was being done by Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt, has just published under their editorship a whole volume, containing more than a hundred and fifty ancient texts found at that time.

Among these is a single page of the Gospel of Matthew, which is older than any other MS. of the New Testament now known. Although only a few verses of the first chapter its text tends to prove the correctness of the conclusions of Westcott and Hort, and to show the incorrectness of the accepted text. Some other theological texts of no special value were also discovered, but the most interesting "find" was a lost poem by Sappho. Professor Blass has restored the somewhat mutilated text, which is translated thus :

" Sweet Nereids, grant to me  
That home unscathed my brother may return,  
And every end for which his soul shall yearn  
Accomplished see !

" And thou, immortal Queen,  
Blot out the past, that thus his friends may know  
Joy, shame his foes,—nay rather, let no foe  
By us be seen !

" And may he have the will  
To me, his sister, some regard to show,  
To assuage the pain he brought, whose cruel blow  
My soul did kill,

" Yea, mine, for that ill name  
Whose biting edge, to shun the festal throng  
Compelling, ceased awhile ; yet back ere long  
To goad us came."

Fragments of a treatise on metre by Aristoxenus of two lost comedies, of a chronological work, elegiacs, and epigrams, together with fragments of Thucydides, Homer, Plato, Demosthenes, and other extant authors have also been brought to light.

But none of these is so interesting as the large number of private and public documents which were found, filled as they are with so much of the "Eternally Human" that they cannot fail to appeal to us. An account of the trial of an em-



issary from Oxyrhynchus before the emperor in Rome is so dramatic in its effect as to prove itself the relation of an eye-witness. The scene is laid in the famous gardens of Lucullus, where the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and his council are seated in judgment.

"As he (the emperor) was saying this, Appianus turned around, and, seeing Heliodorus, said, 'Heliodorus, when I am being led off to execution, do you not speak?' Heliodorus: 'And to whom can I speak, when I have no one to listen to me? Onward, my son, to death; it is a glory for you to die for your beloved country. Be not distressed. . . .' The Emperor recalled Appianus and said, 'Now do you know whom you are addressing?' Appianus: 'I know very well: I, Appianus, am addressing a tyrant.' The Emperor: 'No, a king.' Appianus: 'Say not so! the deified Antoninus, your father, deserved imperial power. Listen; in the first place he was a lover of wisdom; secondly, he was no lover of gain; thirdly, he was a lover of virtue. You have the opposite qualities to these; you are a tyrant, a hater of virtue, and a boor.' Cæsar ordered him to be led away. Appianus, as he was being led off, said, 'Grant me this one favor, lord Cæsar.' The Emperor: 'What?' Appianus: 'Order that I may wear the insignia of my nobility on the way.' The Emperor: 'Take them.' Appianus took up his band, placed it on his head, and put his white shoes on his feet, and cried out in the midst of Rome, 'Run hither, Romans, and behold one led off to death who is a gymnasiarch and envoy of the Alexandrians.' The veteran (who was accompanying Appianus) ran and told his lord, saying, 'Lord, while you are sitting in judgment, the Romans are murmuring.' The Emperor: 'At what?' The consul: 'At the execution of the Alexandrian.' The Emperor: 'Let him be sent for.' When Appianus entered he said, 'Who has recalled me when I was now saluting my second death, and those who have died before me—Theon, Isidorus, and Lampon? Was it the senate or you, the arch-pirate?' The Emperor: 'We, too, are accustomed to bring to their senses those who are mad or beside themselves. You speak only so long as I allow you to speak.' Appianus: 'I swear by your prosperity I am neither mad nor beside myself, but I appeal on behalf of my nobility and of my rights.' The Emperor: 'How so?' Appianus: 'Because I am a noble and a gymnasiarch.' The Emperor: 'Do you, then, mean that we are ignoble?' Appianus: 'As to that, I do not know, but I appeal on behalf of my nobility and my rights.' The Emperor: 'Do you not now know that we are noble?' Appianus: 'On this point, if you really are ignorant, I will instruct you. In the first place, Cæsar saved Cleopatra's life when he conquered her kingdom, and, some say, . . .'"

Another interesting minute of court proceedings shedding light upon the life of the year 49 in Egypt is this account of a law-suit for the possession of a child. "From the minutes of Tiberius Claudius Pasion, strategus (judge of the nome or district). The ninth year of Tiberius Claudius Cæsar Augustus Germanicus Imperator, Pharmouthi 3. In court, Pesouris *versus* Saræus. Aristocles, advocate for Pesouris, said: 'Pesouris, my client, in the seventh year of our sovereign Tiberius Claudius Cæsar, picked up from the gutter a boy foundling, named Heracles. He put it in the defendant's charge. This nurse was there for the son of Pesouris. She received her wages for the first year when they became due, she also received them for the second year. In proof of my assertions there are the documents in which she acknowledges receipt. The foundling was being starved, and Pesouris took it away. Thereupon Saræus, waiting her opportunity, made an incursion into my client's house and carried off the foundling. She now justifies its

removal on the ground that it was free-born. I have here firstly, the contract with the nurse; I have also, secondly, the receipt of the wages. I demand their recognition.' Saraeus: 'I weaned my own child, and the foundling belonging to these people was placed in my charge. I received from them my full wages of eight staters. Then the foundling died, and I was left with the money. They now wish to take away my own child.' Theon: 'We have the papers relating to the foundling.' The strategus: 'Since from its features the child appears to be that of Saraeus, if she and her husband will make a written declaration that the foundling entrusted to her by Pesouris died, I give judgment in accordance with the decision of our lord the praefect, that she have her own child on paying back the money she has received.'

The custom of manumitting slaves for a monetary consideration is reflected in this letter of the year 86. "Chaeremon to the agoranomus, greeting. Grant freedom to Euphrosyne, a slave, aged about thirty-five years, born in her owner's house of the slave Demetrous. She is being set at liberty under . . . by ransom by her mistress Aloine, daughter of Komon, son of Dionysius of Oxyrhynchus, under the wardship of Komon, the son of Aloine's deceased brother Dioscorus. The price paid is ten drachmae of coined silver and ten talents, three thousand drachmae of copper. Farewell."

A letter touching upon a shortage in the accounts of an official is a fresh reminder of the constancy in human traits. "Good men went wrong," or, rather, rogues were found out then as now. "Aurelius Apolinarius, strategus of the Oxyrhynchite nome, to his dear friend Apion, ex-strategus of the Antaeopolite nome, greeting. Dioscorus, strategus of the Antaeopolite nome, has sent me a despatch which has been delayed until Epeiph 13 of the past third year, explaining that Potamon, also called Sarapion, the collector of the nome, among the receipts of the revenue of the third year when you were in office, received towards the completion of the survey of the dykes and canals in the second year the sum of three thousand one hundred and eighty-seven drachmae, three obols, which he did not pay over to the revenue office within the appointed time. Dioscorus now wishes me to ask that this should be refunded, and to credit it to the nome. In order, therefore, that you may be acquainted with these facts and lose no time in repaying the money in accordance with this letter . . ."

A report of a robbery in which the victim seems to have his doubts as to the efforts made by the police to catch the thieves, is suggestive of the idea that Tammany methods are pretty ancient. ". . . they broke down a door that led into the public street and had been blocked up with bricks, probably using a log of wood as a battering-ram. They then entered the house and contented themselves with taking from what was stored there ten artabae of barley, which they carried off by the same way. We guessed that this was removed piecemeal by the said door from the marks of a rope dragged in that direction, and pointed out this fact to the chief of the police of the village and to the other officials. I am therefore obliged to put in this petition, and beg you to order that the chief of the police and the other officials be brought before you, and to make due inquiry about this robbery, so that I may be able to recover the barley."

A declaration by an egg-seller is rather quaint reading. "To Flavius Thenyras, logistes of the Oxyrhynchite nome, from Aurelius Nilus, son of Didymus, of the illustrious and most illustrious city of Oxyrhynchus, an egg-seller by trade. I hereby agree on the august, divine oath by our lords the Emperor and the Cæsars to offer my eggs in the market-place publicly, for sale and for the supply of the

said city, every day without intermission, and I acknowledge that it shall be unlawful for me in the future to sell secretly or in any house. If I am detected so doing (I shall be liable to the penalty for breaking the oath)."

Some of the Greek and Latin documents deal with the every-day life of the people in the most concrete fashion. Here, for instance, is the monthly meat bill of a cook, affording more than a glimpse at the bill of fare of the second century. "Cook's account. Thoth 4th, 24th year, 4 pounds of meat, 2 trotters, 1 tongue, 1 snout. 6th, half a head with the tongue. 11th, 2 pounds of meat, 1 tongue, 2 kidneys. 12th, 1 pound of meat, 1 breast. 14th, 2 pounds of meat, 1 breast. 16th, 3 pounds of meat. 17th, 2 pounds of meat, 1 tongue. 18th, 1 tongue. 21st, 1 paunch. 22nd, 1 paunch, 2 kidneys. 23rd, 2 pounds of meat, 1 paunch, 2 trotters. 26th, 1 tongue. 30th, 1 breast. And before this, on Mesore 18th, 2 pounds of meat, 1 paunch, 2 kidneys. 21st, 1 breast. 23rd, 1 half a head with the tongue 2 kidneys. 24th, 2 pounds, 2 trotters. 25th, for Tryphon 2 pounds, 1 ear, 1 trotter, 2 kidneys. 29th, 2 pounds, 2 trotters, 1 tongue. 2nd intercalary day, 1 tongue. 3rd, 1 breast."

The formal invitations of the second and third century were so much like those issued to-day that, with the names and dates changed, they might be copied and used as models of elegance in any social circle. This invitation to dinner, for instance: "Chaeremon requests your company at dinner at the table of the lord Serapis in the Serapeum to-morrow, the 15th, at 9 o'clock."

A less formal letter of invitation to a festival was also found: "Greeting, my dear Serenia, from Petosiris. Be sure, dear, to come up on the 20th for the birthday festival of the god, and let me know whether you are coming by boat or by donkey, in order that we may send for you accordingly. Take care not to forget. I pray for your continued health."

A letter of consolation written in the second century is no less interesting; "Irene to Taonnophris and Philo, good cheer! I was as much grieved and shed as many tears over Eumœrus as I shed for Didymas, and I did everything that was fitting, and so did all my friends, Epaphroditus and Thermouthion and Phillion and Apollonius and Plantas. But still there is nothing one can do in the face of such trouble. So I leave you to comfort yourselves. Good-bye. Athyrl."

There were pawn-shops in those days to which some of the ladies had recourse when in need, and they were compelled to pay the usurious interest of four per cent. per month. Here is a letter from one of the victims: "Now please redeem my property from Serapion. It is pledged for two minae. I have paid interest up to Epeiph, at the rate of a stater per mina. There is a casket of incense-wood, and another of onyx, a tunic, a white veil with a real purple border, a handkerchief, a tunic with a Laconian stripe, a garment of purple linen, two armlets, a necklace, a coverlet, a figure of Aphrodite, a cup, a big tin flask, and a wine-jar. From Onetor get the two bracelets. They have been pledged since Tybi of last year for eight . . . at the rate of a stater per mina. If the cash is insufficient owing to the carelessness of Theagenis, if, I say, it is insufficient, sell the bracelets to make up the money. Many salutations to Aia and Eutychia and Alexandra. Xanthilla salutes Aia and all her friends. I pray for your health."

Most natural of all this epistolary literature is an ill-spelled and ungrammatical letter written by a spoiled boy to his father: "Theon to his father Theon, greeting. It was a fine thing of you not to take me with you to the city! If you won't take me to Alexandria with you I won't write you a letter or speak to you or say good-bye to you; and if you go to Alexandria I won't take your hand or ever

greet you again. That is what will happen if you won't take me. Mother said to Archelaus, 'It quite upsets him to be left behind.' It was good of you to send me presents . . . on the 12th, the day you sailed. Send me a lyre, I implore you. If you don't I won't eat, I won't drink; there now."

I wonder if he got the lyre.

CLIFTON HARBY LEVY.

### THE GOESCHEN SERIES OF POPULAR CLASSICS, AND LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC TEXT-BOOKS.

There was undoubtedly a strong admixture of ethics and philanthropy in the economical reflexions that stirred the heart of Herr G. J. Göschen, the well-known Leipsic publisher, when he conceived the project of publishing his cheap series of *Literary Classics* and *Literary and Scientific Manuals*. But whatever the motive, the World-Spirit moved to good purpose in him. The series is marvelously cheap, costing but 80 pfennigs apiece (20 cents) for volumes some of which run to 300 pages, and all of which are bound in flexible linen covers. It embraces the most varied subjects—histories of literatures, grammars of the most important languages, annotated editions of the German classics of all periods, dictionaries, histories of art, and manuals of all the sciences. The books are not reprints, but independent works by competent authorities—with illustrations, figures, etc.,—and all of pocket-size. The plenitude of material is such that we can mention in this review the mathematical text-books only. A few of the literary manuals will be noticed later. "*Wir können es nicht mit einem Trichter eingiessen,*" as the medieval professor of philosophy petulantly said to his students at the end of a four-years' course on Aristotle.

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The miniature mathematical library of the Göschen series consists of some ten volumes, which are shortly to be increased by several more. The mathematical editor under whose direction these works have been written is Prof. Hermann Schubert, of Hamburg, well known to the readers of *The Open Court* and *The Monist*. Professor Schubert is himself the author of three of the books of the series—all of them models of conciseness, yet exceedingly rich in contents for their size, and of very high didactic value. They are (1) his *Arithmetic and Algebra*, (2) his *Collection of Examples in Arithmetic and Algebra*; and (3) his *Tables of Four-Place Logarithms*. The value of his first book lies in its systematic and logical development of the principles; it embraces nearly all of what is called with us higher arithmetic (excluding the commercial parts), and elementary algebra; it would form an excellent skeleton-course in the hands of elementary instructors. The *Examples* are a companion-book to the *Arithmetic and Algebra*. The *Four-place Logarithms* are unique in several respects: they are printed in two colors red and black; both for the natural numbers and for trigonometric functions, anti-tables are given, dispensing with interpolation, and making it as easy to find the anti-logarithms as the logarithms; tables of physical and mathematical constants have also been added. This book could be used in great part by students quite ignorant of German.

The next volume in order is that of Dr. Benedikt Sporer, on *Niedere Analysis*, and is devoted to such subjects as continued fractions, indeterminate analysis, the theory of combinations and probabilities, series, interpolation, and the elementary theory of equations. The volume has 173 pages, and contains much material