

HOMER'S POLYBOS

BY EDWARD ULBACK

I AM not aware, that any Egyptologist has attempted to identify "Polybos, Alkandra's husband," who, according to the Poet, was reigning over Egypt at, and after, the time Ilium was taken. It is evident that the name Polybos is not Greek, but, before we proceed to analyze and explain it, it will be necessary to state briefly certain facts.

The Twentieth Dynasty was composed of seven Diospolitan Kings, who reigned altogether one hundred and eighty-five years from, and after, the great sothiac era of Menophres, 1324 B.C. Each of these kings bore the celebrated name of Ramesse, but they were distinguished from one another by additional titles, such as Ramesse-Ameno, Ramesse-Sethos, Ramesse-Usermares, Ramesse-Uaphru, Ramesse-iorbasse. Ramesse-iorbasse was the sixth king of this Dynasty, and reigned thirty-nine years, from 1207 B.C. to 1168 B.C. After he had reigned three years, the sothiac month of Thoth came to a close, and the sothiac month of Paophi commenced. This was the month of the Nile, that is, Pa-hapi, Paophi, (Aquarius) "The Nile." Hapi, however, was a religious, or symbolical designation of the Nile, the popular name being simply, ar or iar, "river," or, with the definite article prefixed, Pa-iar, "The River," which the Greeks converted into Phuoro. In describing Eden, Moses uses the popular name "river." In fact, as Egypt has but one river, a distinctive proper name was not needed.

The Pharaoh who happened to be on the throne when a new sothiac month came in, assumed an appropriate epoch-title. Thus, Usertasen III, according to Eratosthenes, one of the grandest scholars that ever lived, assumed the title Phuoro, or Nile, at the beginning of the sothiac month of Paophi, 2664 B.C., ruling, first, as Hermes (Thoth) and, afterwards, as Herakles (the youthful adolescent Horus, whose dormant strength was symbolized by the reclining sphinx). One full cycle, or 1460 years later, Ramesse-iorbasse headed the same epoch, and was likewise popularly known as Phuoro, or King Nile. Now, strange as it may appear, Phuoro and Nile are identical, except that they differ in number, the one being singular, the other plural. Without the definite article, we

have ar or iar, "river," ar-u or iar-u, "rivers"; with the definite article, pa-iar, "the river," na-ar-u, "the rivers." The last named form was used in the Delta, where it was pronounced naal-u, which the Greeks converted into Neil-os, "Nile." King Nile, who derived his sothiac epoch in that way, was well known to the Greeks. Dikaearches mentions him by this title, and places him very accurately at 436 years before the first Olympiad, which is but five years before the true date of his accession as sole king. Pliny, in his enumeration of the obelisks, mentions him by his proper name Ramesses, and identifies him as "Rampses, who was reigning when Ilium was captured." Diodorus refers to him by his epoch-title, introducing him after "Remphis, the miser, who spent all his time in filling his coffers, and heaping up wealth," that is, Rhampsinitus, or Remesses VI, Hy-on-nuter. He tells us, that, after the death of this Rampses, for seven generations together, there reigned successively a company of kings, who gave themselves up to sloth and idleness, and did nothing but wallow in pleasures and luxury, except Nile, who cut many canals and dykes, and used his utmost endeavor to make the river more useful and serviceable.

Having identified King Nile and fixed his date, the question arises: What is Iorbasse? The answer is simple: It is the Greek form of iar-ba-sh-i, "Gushing River," another designation of the Nile. Prefixing the definite article, pa, to this title, we have P'ar-bash, which was pronounced P'ol-bosh in the Delta. Now what is Homer's Polybos but this same Polybosh?

A remark originally attached to this reign, but afterwards fraudulently transferred to the last reign of the Nineteenth Dynasty, shows that Manetho called attention to the identity of Iorbasse and Polybos, for he says, in so many words, that Homer called this king, "Polybos, Alkandra's husband, in whose times Troy was taken."

Homer uses Ph'ar, or Phuoro, in another form, when he sings of "Pharian Thebes," "the Pharian isle," and "the Pharian race." Aeschylus derives the name of Egypt itself, to wit: "Aeria," or Ar-ia, from ar, "river." The most important fact deducible from Polybos, however, is, that Homer, as well as Manetho, Dikaearches, Eratosthenes, Diodorus and others, knew this king by a title derived from the sothiac epoch of Paophi, 1204 B.C.

Another equally interesting epoch-king, who was known to the Greek writers of the classical period by his epoch-title, was Seti I.

This king, after reigning thirty-six years in the sothiac month of Paoni, or Payni, reigned twenty-three years in the sothiac month of Epiphi. The first of these two months was sacred to Osiris, the symbol and personation of Good, under his title of Uon-nofer, "Perfect Being," or "Perfect One," which was abbreviated into Pa-uon, "The One." The name of the month, Pa-uon-i, was derived from Pa-uon in the same way that Seti was derived from Set. The first vowel of "Uon" is preserved in Payni, the second vowel, in Paoni.

The month of Epiphi was dedicated to Set-an, or Typhonic-Set, the personation of Evil, under his title of Apap, the "Great Serpent." Epiphi is a modification of Apap-i, which was derived from Apap in the way just indicated.

Seti, therefore, represented successively Osiris and Typhon, that is, the antagonistic principles of Good and of Evil.

Although both were thus seemingly blended in his person, the ancient teachings required him to separate scrupulously and distinguish the one from the other; but in this vital particular he proved himself to be more subtle than any monarch who had preceded him. In the false list of Syncellus, the first thirty-six years of his reign are given to Spanios, that is, Sa-paoni, "Son of Paoni," which is correct enough, but the last twenty-three years of his reign are given to Osiropis, a most remarkable title, in which Ostris and Apis (Hus-ir and Hapi) are unlawfully blended. The Greeks, by interpretation, rendered this title Aegyptus.

Seti, as the name indicates, was devoted to Sutech, the "lord god" of the serpent-worshiping Hyksos, and openly emulated his cruel and sanguinary virtues. He did not, like Apophis II, attempt to force the worship of Set upon the Egyptians to the exclusion of Amen and the other so-called deities, but he set about to accomplish his purpose by subtlety. He bridged the impassable gulf between good and evil by blending the symbols Osiris and Apap, for the later is, in reality, simply a duplication of Ap. For example, in pictorial representation of the coronation of his son, Rameses II, we behold Horus and Set pouring ointment over the young king. Aeschylus represents the "daughters" of Danaus as fleeing from the "sons" of Aegyptus, taking it for granted that his hearers and readers would understand why the marriage which they sought to escape was unlawful.

It seems that Manetho, who was conversant with Greek literature, explained that the brothers, Danaus and Aegyptus, represented

Harmais and Osiropis, the respective epoch-titles for Paoni and Epiphi. The daughters of Danaus represent the true religion of ancient Egypt, and, as Osiris was the only lawful consort of Isis, a marriage between them and the sons of Egyptus would have been equivalent to making Sutech, Set-an, or Typhonic-Set, the lawful husband of Isis. While the symbols of Osiris and Typhon were kept separate, substantial mistakes could not occur, but after Osiris and Apis had been deceptively blended, innumerable errors grew up, many of a most serious nature. Those which injuriously affected religion, and brought on the "test and trial of the gods of ancient Egypt." I will not mention; but everyone is familiar with the fallacious notion, that Osiris was the Nile (Apis) and Isis the alluvial plains annually watered by the inundation. We need but look at the six planetary zones, through which the sun was supposed to ascend and descend during his annual course, to realize how utterly untenable such notions are. The zone through which the sun descended in the month of Paoni, was governed by Venus, the star of Osiris, and was sacred to Isis, or Hathor, and Osiris, and all the symbols and titles connected with it were good and beneficent; but the zone through which the sun descended during the month of Epiphi was ruled by the star of Set (now called Mercury) and its symbols were uniformly evil and malevolent, for example, we find the scorpion, the "great serpent," the dragon, hippopotamus, crocodile, ass, hog, in fact, the entire menagerie of malignant, hurtful, ferocious, and stupid creatures. The *Suppliants* shows that Aeschylus knew Sethos by his epoch-title and that he realized how unnatural was and ever will be the union of Osiris and Apis.

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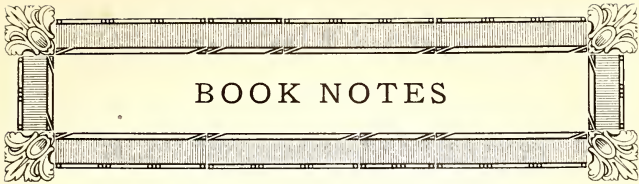
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BOOK NOTES

This Troubled World. By John Drinkwater. New York. Columbia University Press. 1933. Pp. 105. Price \$1.50.

In *This Troubled World*, the poet, John Drinkwater, taking stock of the past and the future in the light of the present, finds in humanity, in spite of grave dangers, hope for our civilization. In the promise of visible trends of the times, in the desire of men to work together for the good of the many we could build up a modern Utopia on conditions as they are. The results, for instance, of the few decades of democratic education have been tremendous. But there are dangers—the danger that, in our passion for mastery, we let the machine master us; that, in the case of mastery, we neglect to learn to work; and, that in the economic confusion, we let war destroy our only chance to save our civilization. We need peace above all else to work out our problems. There is much food for thought contained in this small volume, and at a time when the talk of war is on many tongues, the answers to these perplexing problems, worked out with great sincerity and earnestness by Mr. Drinkwater, might help to avert catastrophe.

Faith: An Historical Study. By Stewart Means. New York. The MacMillan Company. 1933. Pp. xvi 334. Price \$2.50.

In Dr. Means' words this book "is not a church history in the ordinary sense of the word, or a history of doctrine. It is an attempt to discover what forces were at work to shape the different forms in which the interpretation of the word Faith found expression. "The Chapter headings read thus: The Origin and Development of the Jewish Conception—The New Testament—Christianity and Paganism in the Second Century—The Crisis in the Third Century—St. Augustine and the End of the Classic World—The Middle Ages and Thomas Aquinas—Martin Luther and the Revolution of the Sixteenth Century—The Counter Reformation and After. In this account, vivid and alive, of the many complex forces as they have come together in the development of Christian Faith, Dr. Means has given us a book with the rare combination of scholarship and great beauty of expression.

Modern Tendencies in World Religions. By Charles S. Braden. New York. The MacMillan Company. 1934. Pp. xiv 343. Price \$2.50.

"How fares religion amid the changes evident throughout the world?" The desire to answer this question and to learn what was happening to religion in India, China, Japan, and Russia, in Judaism, in Islam, since the beginning of this century led the author to compile the material for this book. Dr. Braden finds five main factors which affect religion, economic change, scientific discovery, political evolution, intellectual change, and cultural interchange. In the apparent developments of the various religions considered it is interesting to note the similarity of trends—toward irreligion, toward fundamentalism, toward syncretism, toward modernization, toward religion through social service. Christianity is discussed only in connection with the movement in Russia. Dr. Braden has made available in concise form a survey of the tendencies in World Religions during the last thirty years which should be of great value for the student of religion as well as for the general reader.

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