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Campbell, C. C. (1851)

a lot got from Dean Butcher
who got them from the widow
of the translator.

J. F. Campbell

November 3. 1882

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J. P. Campbell
Middle Lodge
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From Dear Butcher
August 1801.

Egyptian Silk Lane

TRANSLATION
OF
A FRAGMENT OF A FABULOUS TALE.

From an Egyptian Papyrus in the British Museum.

BY C. W. GOODWIN, M.A.

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THE Harris Papyrus 500, from which I have already taken the historical fragments relating to Tothmes III, contains in the last five pages, on the reverse side, a fragment of a tale of the same class as that of the Two Brothers, which has long been familiar to Egyptologists. The style is that of a child's book, quite prosaic and unadorned, and remarkably easy to translate.

The period to which the tale relates is quite vague. A king of Egypt and a prince of Naharanna or Mesopotamia are mentioned, but without the least hint of their names or dates. The scene lies sometimes in Egypt, sometimes in Mesopotamia, but there seems no intention to fix anything definitely, any more than there is in the faërie tales of our own times. This story and that of the Two Brothers, are the prototypes of the prose romance, a mere string of marvellous adventures, destitute of all poetic colouring. Whether this kind of composition was first produced in the XIXth dynasty, that is about the time of the Hebrew Exodus, or whether earlier specimens existed, we have no materials at present for determining. But certainly their style is far less elevated than that of the story of Saneha, and the tale of the Injured Gardener, which belong to the XIIth dynasty, and they read like the productions of a less serious and poetical age.

The story I am about to translate is, as before said, a mere fragment, contained in five pages, and one is led to

speculate upon the original length. The story of the Two Brothers is in nineteen pages, but I doubt whether the present tale can have been equally long. The plot is simple. A young prince is born, of whom the Hathors or fairy god-mothers, who attend his birth, foretell that he will die by one of three deaths, either by means of a crocodile, a serpent, or a dog. The young prince is immured by his father's order, with a view of shielding him from danger, but he one day catches sight of a dog, and wishes to have one. This desire is granted, rather imprudently it would seem, but probably the dog provided for him was one considered of a species not dangerous, and this animal became his faithful companion. When arrived at manhood, he petitions to be allowed to go out and see the world. The king accedes to this, and the young man goes with his dog to Mesopotamia. The king or prince of this country has an only daughter, whom he has shut up in a lofty tower, of which the window was many cubits from the ground; the sons of all the neighbouring princes have been invited to scale this tower, with the promise that whichever succeeds in reaching the princess's window shall have her as his wife. The young Egyptian joins this band of suitors, and eventually proves successful. The process by which the window was reached is rather obscure; the word expressing it is $\text{— } \epsilon \text{ } \text{||} \text{ } \text{||}$ *pui*, a word which occurs elsewhere with the determinative of a bird's wing, and then means "to fly." Here it appears to be determined only by a vague sign, perhaps answering to the hieroglyphic — which means nothing. As it is difficult to believe that the young princes had flying apparatus, I have preferred to venture upon the word "climb." If the papyrus were not mutilated here, we might perhaps decide with certainty. The Egyptian prince talks about using enchantment, or invoking the aid of some god, perhaps Thoth, and it is not impossible, in a marvellous tale of this kind, that flying may be really meant. Whether by climbing or flying, he reaches the princess's window, and after some difficulties arising from his supposed obscure parentage, he marries her. After this he goes to Egypt to hunt, and meets with an adventure with a crocodile and a giant, the nature of which it is impossible

to determine, but the prince escapes without hurt; he next runs in danger of a serpent, who approaches to bite him while he lies asleep; this enemy is, however, despatched by his wife. After this the crocodile and giant are introduced again, but here unfortunately the manuscript breaks off; one cannot help guessing that after all the faithful dog will be the cause of his death. Considering the rapidity with which the story is developed in the five pages which we have, it may be presumed that not more than five others would be needed to bring about the catastrophe.

The seven Hathors who attend at the birth of children, and predict their future fate, are mentioned also in the tale of the Two Brothers, where they unanimously foretell a violent death to the woman who was formed by the creator Chnum to be the wife of Batau. These mysterious beings are the prototypes of the *Parcæ* or Fates of the ancients. In the CXLVIIIth chapter of the Book of the Dead, they are represented as cows, and their names are given at length.

HARRIS PAPYRUS 500, VERSO.—TRANSLATION.

[*The words in parentheses supply the lacunæ of the text from conjecture.*]

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1. It is told (that there was once) a king, who had no male offspring. (He prayed for an heir) and the gods listened to his request.
2. They decreed that one should be born to him. He lay with his wife in the night, and behold (she became) pregnant. She completed the month
3. of parturition, and then brought forth a male child. When the Hathors (*Parcæ*) came to greet him at his birth, they said
4. that he would die either by a crocodile, a serpent, or by a dog. When the people who were about the child heard it, they went (and told) these
5. things to His Majesty. His Majesty was exceedingly grieved at the evil tidings. His Majesty gave orders (to shut the child up in) a house

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6. in the country, provided with attendants and all kinds of good things from the king's palace, and that the child should not go out abroad. (Now it came to pass
7. after some time) when the child grew big, he ascended to the roof of the house, and he saw a dog, which was following a person who
8. was going along the road. He said to his attendant, who was beside him, "What is that which (follows the person going along) the road." He
9. said to him, "That is a dog." The child said to him, "Let one be brought to me like it." The attendant went and repeated these things
10. to His Majesty. His Majesty said, "Let there be got for him a boar-hunting dog, to run before him." Then they got for him
11. a dog. Now it came to pass some time after this, the child became like a prince, in all his limbs. He
12. sent to his father, saying, "Why is it that I still remain shut up. I am destined (to die by one of three deaths)
13. Let God do whatsoever pleases him." He went and

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1. all kinds of weapons to serve him. The man conducted him to the East.
2. He said to him, "Go now whithersoever thou wilt." He went off) and the dog with him. He went up to the country according to his will, he lived upon the best of
3. all the beasts of the field. He arrived at the country of the prince of Mesopotamia (Naharanna). Now there was no child of the prince of
4. Mesopotamia, excepting one daughter. He had built a house for her, of which the window was distant
5. cubits from the ground. He had sent for all the sons of all the princes of the land of Syria (Chara), and said to them,
6. "Whoever shall scale the window of my daughter, she shall be his wife." It came to pass many days after this,

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7. while they were engaged in their daily occupations, the youth rode up to them. They
8. received the youth into their house, washed him, they gave fodder to his
9. horse, they did all sorts of things for the youth. They lodged (?) him, they shod (?) his feet, they
10. brought him to their they said to him in the way of conversation, "Whence comest thou,
11. thou good youth?" He said to them, "I am the son of one of the horsemen of the land of Egypt. My mother died, and my
12. father took another wife, a step-mother. Thereupon she hated me, and I fled from before her." He
13. was silent (?). They kissed him He said to the
14. youths, "What shall I do" (they tell him about the daughter of the king of Mesopotamia).

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1. to scale the window of the tower. Now it came to pass many days after this
2. he said to them, "Do ye go out; I will call (or conjure some deity?). I will go to climb
3. among you." They went to climb, according to their custom every day. The youth
4. stood afar off looking on. The maid-servant (?) of the daughter of the prince of Mesopotamia was upon it (the tower?). Now it came to pass some time after this,
5. the youth went to climb with the children of the princes; he climbed
6. and he reached the window of the daughter of the Prince of Mesopotamia. She kissed him, she embraced him in
7. all his limbs. Some one went to congratulate her father, and said to him, "A man has scaled the window
8. of thy daughter." The prince inquired about him, saying "The son of which of the princes is it?" They said to him,

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9. "It is the son of a horseman, who has run away from the land of Egypt, (from the face) of a step-mother."
The
10. prince of Mesopotamia was exceedingly angry. He said,
"How can I give my daughter to a runaway
11. from Egypt. Let him go back again." They went and said (to the youth, "Go back) to the place from whence thou camest."
12. But the girl clung to him. She swore by God, saying,
By the name of the Sun, Horus, (if I am prevented) from keeping him
13. with me, I will neither eat nor drink." She was on the point of dying. A messenger
14. went to announce all that she had said to her father. The prince sent men to slay him (the youth).
15. He was in his house. The girl said, "By the Sun, if he is slain I will die too,
16. I will not pass an hour of life (without) him." One went (and told all these things) to her father. (The prince of Mesopotamia causes the youth to be brought to him).

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1. (The result is favourable) The fear of him
2. came upon the prince. He embraced him, and kissed him in all his limbs. He said to him, "Behold thou art
3. unto me as a son." He replied to him, "I am the child of a horseman of the land of Egypt. My mother died, my father took
4. to himself another wife she hated me. I ran away from before her." He gave him his daughter to wife. He
5. (gave him a handsome establishment.) Now it came to pass some time after this, that the youth
6. said unto his wife, "I am predestined to one of three deaths; either by a crocodile, a serpent, or a dog." She said to him, "Let
7. (some precautions be taken)." He replied, "I will not cause my dog to be killed. How should he do it?"

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8. The woman (urged) her husband greatly. He would not allow him (the dog?) to go out alone.
9. (He goes a journey to some place) in the land of Egypt to catch birds. Behold a crocodile
10. (probably a sacred animal), he was at the door of his house in the village, in which the
11. (youth had formerly dwelt). Behold there was a giant by him. The giant did not suffer him to go out.
12. (he shut up) the crocodile. The giant went out to walk. Now when the dawn
13. appeared (the youth) went every day for the space of two months. Now it
14. came to pass some time after this, that the youth was sitting and making a feast in his house. Now it happened that
15. when night approached, the youth lay down upon his mat, and sleep overcame his limbs.

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1. His wife was engaged in (some occupation connected with the bath). (There came a serpent)
2. from a hole to bite the youth. Behold his wife was sitting beside him; she was not reposing. Then the (servants came and presented something, probably wine)
3. to the serpent. He drank of it to intoxication. He lay down overcome. (The woman kills him and throws him)
4. into her bath. Then they awoke her husband (and told him what had happened).
5. She said to him, Behold thy God hath given one of thy dooms into thy hand. He proceeded to make
6. offerings to God, to worship him, and exalt his presence, every day. Now it came to pass some time after this,
7. the youth went out to walk, at a distance from his dwelling. He did not
8. Behold his dog followed him. His dog seized the head of (some animal)

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9. He began to run (after) him, he approached (a place near) the sea. He proceeded to the
10. the dog was standing (near) the crocodile. He led him to where the giant was
11. the crocodile (said) to the youth, "I am thy doom, I am come after thee
12. with the giant. But, behold, I will remember (?) thee
13. thou mayest bewitch me (like) the giant. But if thou seest"
14. Now it came to pass after two months that (the youth) went

[*Here ends the fragment.*]



