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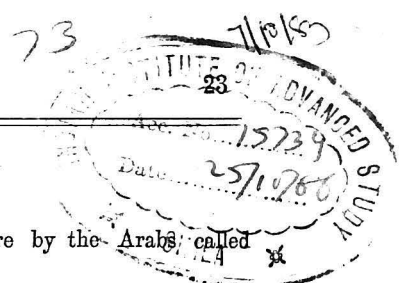
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SKETCH OF SABÆAN GRAMMAR.

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During the latter part of the first half of this century, when certain inscriptions were first brought to Europe from the southern part of Arabia, hazy notions were entertained about them. It was not even certain whether they ought to be read from right to left, as all the Semitic languages, or in the contrary direction, and conjectures were hazarded about their Abyssinian, Ethiopic, or even Phœnician origin. Fresnel, the French Consul for Jeddah, made a collection, which was published, and gradually scholars, like Osiander and others, ventured to read and to interpret them. The number of these inscriptions, small and large—the shortest consisting only of a few words, and the longest of many lines, engraved on stone, but some also on metal plates—amounts now to more than eight hundred; but as the language ceased to be spoken, probably about the beginning of the Christian era, and no other written monuments of it exist, considerable difficulty is experienced in eliciting the true sense of these records, though at present the mode of deciphering them has become so well fixed that their reading presents not much difficulty, except in cases where the letters are indistinct either in the originals or the copies. There is also a blacksmith in Mareb who, allured by the profit arising from the sale of copper tablets, manufactures spurious ones from old inscriptions, and has been exposed in the *Journal* of the German Oriental Society as a forger; some fabricated texts also were published there by Prætorius in 1872 (pp. 426-433).

The cognate languages, but especially the Arabic, Ethiopic, and Hebrew, afford the most valuable aid to the scholars who have signalized themselves in this field of Oriental research; as yet they do not all quite agree in their translations, but they may nevertheless be depended upon as safe guides in researches of this kind. The number of such men at present is small; the chief scholars are Prætorius, Lenormant, Socin, Levy, and Halévy,—the latter of whom was bold enough to go personally to Southern Arabia and copy nearly seven hundred of these

inscriptions, which are by the Arabs called Hemyaritic.

According to Muhammadan tradition the town of Hemyar was not originally the seat of empire; it was Saba, the present Mareb, which was annihilated by the breaking of a dam\* not only husbanding the waters flowing from the mountains for the irrigation of the land, but also enhancing the power of the monarch, who thus kept in his hands the key of fertilization, and was enabled to grant or to withhold it as he listed. The memory of this catastrophe, considered as a chastisement from God, in which many inhabitants perished, and in consequence whereof the seat of government was transferred to the town of Hemyar, survived till the *Qorân* was written, and is alluded to in *sura xxxiv.* 14 and 15, as the inundation of *Âla'rem*, i.e. of the dams that confined the water:—

لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكَنِهِمْ آيَةٌ جَنَّتَانِ  
 عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ كُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَ  
 أَشْكُرُوا لَهُ بَلْدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ ۝۵ فَاَعْرَضُوا  
 فَارْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعُورِمْ

“14. The people of Saba had indeed in their dwelling-places a sign:—Two gardens, on the right and on the left! [*It was said to them*] ‘Eat ye of the bounty of your Lord and be thankful unto him! [*Yours is*] a goodly country and a gracious Lord. 15. But they turned aside [*from this injunction*]: and we sent upon them the inundation of *Âla'rem*.”

The names Hemyar and Saba are also of frequent occurrence in the inscriptions themselves, but it appears that the expression Hemyaritic instead of Sabæan language, which has hitherto been current, will in course of time have to give way to the latter, as being perhaps more expressive and comprehensive.

*The Languages of Southern Arabia.*

There is great probability that the language

\* See M. Caussin de Perceval, *Hist. des Arabes*, Tome III. He and M. de Saey agree in fixing this flood of Irem in the second century A.D.—Ed.

whose written monuments, in spite of the iconoclastic fervour of the first Moslems, have been preserved to our times, must have been the principal idiom of Southern Arabia, though there is no doubt also that various other dialects, and even languages, were current; but in the entire absence of reliable information it would be useless to adduce the scanty and unreliable notices in Muhammadan authors, by whom such pagan researches were generally considered sinful unless they contribute in some way to elucidate their own religion, and to this circumstance we are indebted also for the meagreness of the vocabulary purporting to contain Hemyaritic and Yamani words given by Suyuti\* as follows:

قوله تعالى وانتم سامدون قال الغناء وهي يمانية  
..... عكرمة قال هي بالحيرية

قوله تعالى ولو التئى معاذيرة قال ستورة \* قال  
بلغة اهل يمين

لا وزر قال لا حبل \* وهي بلغة اهل اليمين  
النهى بلسان اليمينه المرأة

قوله تدعون بعلا قال ربا بلغة اليمين

الطير جهالة بلغة حمير

فنتبوا هربوا بلغة اليمين

بلغة حميرية يسون الكتاب اسطورا

It will be observed that some Qorânic words are here translated differently; thus in *sura* III. 61 *وَاَنْتُمْ سَامِدُونَ* is usually rendered by "And you are careless or triflers," or, as Sale has it, "spending your time in idle diversions;" but Suyuti renders the word *سامدون* by *الغناء*

Again, in *LXXV. 15* *وَلَوْ اَلْتَمَىٰ مَعَاذِيرُهُ* the meaning is "and though he offer his excuses" (or set forth his plea); but Suyuti puts for *معاذيره* its equivalent *ستورة*; and in the same chapter, *v. 11*, *لَا وَزَرَ*, we have in Suyuti for *لا وزر*, "no place," the word *لا حبل*. He further says that *لهو* [play] is in the Yamani language *المرأة* [woman]. In *sura xxxviii. 15*, "Do ye invoke *Ba'l*," he says *ربا* the acc. of *رب* [Lord]. The word *طير* [bird, &c.] means, according to him, in the Hemyaritic language, *جهالة* [ignor-

ance]. In *sura* I. 35 *فَنَتَبَرُوا* rendered by Sale "Pass therefore," is, in the language of Yemen "they fled." Lastly *كتاب* *book* is in the Hemyaritic language called *اسطور*.

The following expressions, occurring in the same work, p. 312, stated to be Hemyaritic, with their Arabic equivalents, I insert without comment:—

بلغة حمير تفشلا تجنبا عثرا طلع سفاهة جنون زيلنا

ميينا مرجرا حقيرا السقاية الاناء مسنون مدن

امام كتاب ينعضون بجركون حسبانا بردا من الكبر

مدينا نحولا مآرب حاجات خرجا جعل غراما بلا

الصرح اليبث انكر الاموات اقبحها يتركم ينقصكم

مدينين محاسبين رابية شديدة ويك شديدة بجزار

بهسلط مرض زنا القطر النحاس محشورة مجموعة

معدونا محبوسا \*

Hemyaritic is believed to have ceased to be a spoken language long before the Hijrah era; but perhaps it may have been used later also, in the same manner as Latin inscriptions are still employed on buildings, monuments, and coins among ourselves, long after the language itself has become a dead one.

The Hemyaritic or rather Sabæan language, as at present known from the inscriptions, although essentially one, may be divided into four varieties or dialects, the first of which is the general Sabæan, comprising by far the greatest number of all the inscriptions hitherto known; the second was current in Ma'in, and is the Minaean dialect belonging to the people called *Minaei* by the Greek and Roman geographers; the third is nearly the same as the last, and was spoken in the interior of *Hadramaut*; whilst the fourth, to judge from terminations of words such as *محرمت* "his sanctuary" and *مكرمت* "their rank and order," appears to have been affected by Persian influences, as it is well known that Persian colonies existed there.

The inscriptions hitherto discovered may, according to their contents, be divided into six classes:—

I. Votive inscriptions, usually engraved on bronze tablets or stone slabs, occurring in the interior or in the immediate vicinity of temples. A multitude of national and local deities are mentioned in them, and these prove the Sabæan pantheon to have been prodigiously rich.

II. Votive tablets, called by Halévy *Prosynèmes*, belonging to strangers who completed some act of devotion in the sanctuary and there inscribed their names and descent. These inscriptions are engraved on slabs suitable for the purpose, and the formulæ vary but slightly. The chief interest of these inscriptions centres in the large number of territories, towns, and tribes mentioned in them, affording materials for a restoration of the ancient geography and ethnography of Southern Arabia.

III. Architectural inscriptions, traced on the walls of temples and other public edifices, in order to commemorate the name of the building, or of the persons who had contributed to it. In this latter case, care is taken to indicate the exact dimensions of the portion constructed by each man, and if a stranger was among them his country and tribe are mentioned. Inscriptions of this kind constitute the majority in Halévy's collection.

IV. Historical inscriptions, intended to announce a victory gained over a foe, or to commemorate an event wherein the author plays a part. Under this head fall the texts of Mareb and of Širwâh, the inscription on Hišn G'urâ'b, and especially the inscription on the monolith of Širwâh, the copy of which was stolen from Halévy by the Arabs.

V. Police orders, engraved on pillars at the entrance of temples or other public localities, in order to warn the people against the commission of damages under pain of fines. These texts are very interesting, because they show great perfection in the civil organization, as well as the existence of a penal code among the Sabæans.

VI. Funerary inscriptions, not many of which have as yet been discovered, but which prove that the Sabæans were in the habit of carrying away their dead from inhabited places into isolated valleys, and up mountains, where they erected small houses for them.

*The Sabæan Alphabet.*

In the following sketch of Sabæan grammar I shall give only what has been fixed by valuable authorities, not the least of whom is Halévy, whom I intend to follow closely. I shall only mark by signs of interrogation words not yet fully authorized, and shall designate the inscriptions of Fresnel, Osiander, and Halévy respectively by *Fr. Os. Hal.* or *H.* Although the alphabet is at present well fixed, I append *A harmonic Sabæan, Hebrew, and Arabic Alphabet*, and shall adduce some peculiarities of certain letters; mention a few, the occurrence of which is rare, and whose value was not at first very well fixed; enumerate those letters which are apt to give rise to confusion; and, lastly, I shall mention such letters as may, by their too great proximity to each other in certain inscriptions, sometimes be mistaken for one letter.

The  $\eta$  generally remains after the preformative letters of the Imperfect, thus:— $\eta\eta\eta$ . There are, however, a few exceptions:  $\eta\eta$  (*H.* 152, 14\*),  $\eta\eta$  (*Os.* VIII. 11†). In the Minæan dialect the  $\eta$  is sometimes considered as a vowel: thus we very often find  $\eta\eta$  (*H.* 188, 5),  $\eta\eta$  (*H.* 199, 1),  $\eta\eta$  (*H.* 111, 5) for  $\eta\eta$ ,  $\eta\eta$ ,  $\eta\eta$  (*H.* 222, 1; 229, 2), which is certainly derived from the radical  $\eta$  ( $\eta = \eta$ ). The other gutturals,  $\eta$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\eta$ , and  $\eta$ , present no peculiarity.

The letters  $\eta$  and  $\eta$ , like the first radical of verbs, are often elided by the servile letters:— $\eta\eta$  for  $\eta\eta$ ; when the  $\eta$  forms the third radical it generally remains unchanged, thus:— $\eta\eta$  ( $\eta$ );  $\eta\eta$ ; but also  $\eta\eta$  occur (*Os.* XII. 9; 1, 9).

The servile  $\eta$  usually becomes  $\eta$  in the Minæan and in the Ḥadramaut dialect; thus  $\eta\eta$ ,  $\eta$ , the suffix of the third person, appears in these dialects in the form  $\eta\eta$ ,  $\eta$ , for instance  $\eta\eta$  instead of  $\eta\eta$  ( $\eta\eta$ ). In the same manner the fourth form of the verb, which is in ordinary Sabæan  $\eta\eta$ , becomes  $\eta\eta$  in these dialects: thus the Sabæan  $\eta\eta$  in the Minæan and Ḥadramaut dialect will be  $\eta\eta$ . This is another approach to the Assyrian, and in general to the languages of East Africa. This form answers to the Aramæan  $\eta\eta$  and to the Ethiopic  $\eta\eta$ .

The change of the servile  $\eta$  into  $\eta$  is much

\* Halévy's inscriptions here referred to will be found in the *Journal Asiatique* (1872 Fev.—Mars).  
 † Osiander's are given in No. 7, Oct. 1873, &c.

THE SABÆAN ALPHABET.

Harmonic Sabæan, Hebrew, and Arabic Alphabet.

Sabæan.	Hebrew.	Arabic.
𐩨	א	ا
𐩧, 𐩦, 𐩥	ב	ב
𐩤	ג	ג
𐩣	ד	ד
𐩢	ה	ה
𐩡	ו	ו
𐩠	ז	ז
𐩟	ח	ח
𐩞	ט	ט
𐩝	י	י
𐩜	כ	כ
𐩛	ל	ل
𐩚	מ	م
𐩙	נ	ن
𐩘	ס	س
𐩗	ע	ع
𐩖	פ	ف
𐩕	צ	ق
𐩔	ק	ك
𐩓	ר	ر
𐩒	ש	ش
𐩑	ת	ت
𐩐	י	ي
𐩏	י	ي
𐩎	י	ي
𐩍	י	ي
𐩌	י	ي
𐩋	י	ي
𐩊	י	ي
𐩉	י	ي
𐩈	י	ي
𐩇	י	ي
𐩆	י	ي
𐩅	י	ي
𐩄	י	ي
𐩃	י	ي
𐩂	י	ي
𐩁	י	ي
𐩀	י	ي

A.—Doubtful letters.

𐩠 = 𐩡  
 𐩠 = 𐩡  
 𐩠 = 𐩡 }  
 𐩠 = 𐩡 } rare } = 𐩡 = 𐩡  
 𐩠 very rare }  
 𐩠, 𐩡 Sound between 𐩡 and 𐩡

C.—Combinations apt to be mistaken.

𐩠 for 𐩡  
 𐩠 for 𐩡  
 𐩠 for 𐩡  
 𐩠 for 𐩡

D.—Letters sometimes marking the commencement or the end of an inscription:—

𐩠 (𐩡) 𐩡

B.—Letters easily confounded.

- I. 𐩠 𐩡 𐩢 𐩣
- II. 𐩤 𐩥 𐩦 𐩧
- III. 𐩨 𐩩
- IV. 𐩪 𐩫 𐩬 𐩭
- V. 𐩮 𐩯
- VI. 𐩰 𐩱
- VII. 𐩲 𐩳
- VIII. 𐩴 𐩵
- IX. 𐩷 𐩸

The Sabæan Numerals.

- 1 𐩠
- 2 𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 154, 8.)
- 3 𐩠𐩠𐩠 (H. J. 151, 9.)
- 4 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠
- 5 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠
- 6 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠
- 7 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 or 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠
- 8c.
- 9c.
- 10 𐩠𐩠
- 11 𐩠𐩠𐩠
- 12 𐩠𐩠𐩠 8c.
- 15 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 192, 3.)
- 17 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 199, 1; 478, 12-13.)
- 18 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 208, 4.)
- 20 𐩠𐩠𐩠
- 22 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 478, 10.)
- 25 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 196, 10-11.)
- 30 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 188, 3; 459, 2.)
- 40 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 400.)
- 47 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 199, 1.)
- 50 𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 150.)
- 60 𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 352, 3.)
- 63 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 151, 10.)
- 100 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 412, 2, 3.)
- 1000 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠
- 3000 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠 (Hal. 150, 8.)
- 4000 𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠𐩠

The figure 8 also occurs for 𐩠𐩠 or 20.

E. Khatsek.

more strictly observed in the Ḥaḍramaut than in the Minæan dialect, where sometimes the usual form occurs. The first of these dialects, however, displays another peculiarity, namely, if an *ס* is to be added to a word terminating with *ה* it is not affixed, but the *ה* is changed to *ה̄*, thus *גַּחְמָה*, *גַּחְמָה̄*, *גַּחְמָה̄* (N. H. 1), for *גַּחְמָהּ*, *גַּחְמָהּ*, *גַּחְמָהּ*. But this *ה̄*, instead of representing an absorption of *ס*, may perhaps only represent an aspirated pronunciation of the feminine *ה*, as is usual in Barbary and in some districts of Yemen.

Permutation between *ה* and *ה* occurs seldom, as in *הַחֲמִידוּ* (*Fl.* LV. 4), *חַמְדָּה* (N. H. 1), and *חַמְדָּנָה* (H. G. 1, 8) for *חַמְדָּה*, *חַמְדָּה*, *חַמְדָּה*, but this may perhaps be an error of the copy.

A much more important permutation is that according to which the sound *ג̄* (*g'*) is rendered by a simple *ג* (*g*) like *גַּחְ* (*Os.* xvii. 8-9) instead of *גַּחְ* (*ibid.* xviii. 10). In the same way the root *גַּחְ* (H. 169, 2) must assimilate with the Arab *غمت*, and the root hidden in the form *גַּחְ* (*Hal.* 639, 3) does not differ from that occurring in *גַּחְ* (*Os.* iv. 10-11). This permutation proves that the Sabæans always pronounced *ג* *ג̄* hard, as some tribes still do, and not like *j*, as is most usual with modern Arabs.

In the repetition of two consonants the full uncontracted form is preferred in Sabæan. This peculiarity appears to be confined to the liquids *ל*, *מ*, *נ*, *ר*; for instance:—*הַחֲמִידוּ* (*Os.* x. 7), *הַחֲמִידוּ* (D. M. G. XIX. 1), *עַנְנָן* (*Os.* xv. 2), *סַרְסַר* (H. 191, 1), instead of *חַמְדָּה*, *עַנְנָן*, *סַרְסַר*. The proper noun *הַחֲמִידוּ* must certainly be pronounced *Waddādēl* (וַחְמִידוּ) "friend," as the form of the participle (*חַמְדָּה*) (H. 187, 2) proves.

The roots of the Sabæan language are mostly trilateral, and present all the forms occurring in the other Semitic languages:—

- I. Perfect roots:—*בַּבְּרָ*, *שַׁבַּע*, *כַּסַּר*, *דָּהַג*, *דָּבַה*, *דָּהַג*, *דָּהַג*;
- II. *יַגַּר*, *יַרְעַע*, *יַבֵּשׁ*, *יַחַר*; *וַרַד*, *וַרַד*, *וַרַד*, *וַרַד*, *וַרַד*, *וַרַד*; *וַקַּח*, *וַקַּח*, *וַקַּח*, *וַקַּח*, *וַקַּח*;
- III. *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*; *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*; *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*; *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*;
- IV. *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*; *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*; *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*; *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*, *קַחַח*;
- V. Mixed roots:—*וַרַד*, *וַרַד*, *וַרַד*, *וַרַד*.

As already observed, quadrilateral roots are scarce, and seem to occur only in some proper nouns, such as *הַחֲמִידוּ* or *הַחֲמִידוּ* and in the name of the divinity *עַחְרָה*, which latter is abridged to *עַחְרָה* when it designates a man's name. *הַחֲמִידוּ* and *הַחֲמִידוּ* are contracted from *הַחֲמִידוּ* and *הַחֲמִידוּ*.

The noun *רַחֵם* is contracted from *רַחֵם* (*רַחֵם*). The word *רַחֵם* "ram" (H. 187, 6, &c) appears to be formed from *רַחֵם*, "he who enters into the house:" which epithet may refer to the unconcernedness of this animal.

The degradation of the sibilants may be represented by the following scale:—

$\begin{matrix} \text{י} - \text{י}^* - \text{י} \\ \text{ש} - \text{ש}^* - \text{ס} - \text{ס}^* - \text{ה}^* - \text{ה} \\ \text{ז} - \text{ז}^* - \text{צ}^* - \text{צ} - \text{ע} \end{matrix}$

These transitions do not occur with regularity and in a logical manner in the Semitic languages; they are possible without being necessary. The forms accompanied by an asterisk are common both to the Arabic and to the Sabæan; the latter, however, may degrade the original *ש* a degree further by transforming it into *ה̄*. The Aramæan descends to this last stage of degradation.

In the other consonants the Sabæan generally agrees with the phonetics of the Arabic language; sometimes, however, it deviates, and follows a manner peculiar to itself. Among cases of this kind the fact is to be pointed out that the Arabic words *من* from and *من* who are both rendered by *מ*, so that it becomes difficult to distinguish them from the substantive *מ* son, but in some cases this change does not take place, and the word occurs exactly as in Arabic.

The exact determination of the letters equivalent to *غ* and *س* is due to Osiander, but he was not so successful in determining the equivalent of *ظ*. There is also another character the value of which was debated, but is now believed by Halévy to represent an intermediate sound between the Arabic letters *ث* and *س*. (See p. 26. B.)

The Sabæans rivalled the Egyptians and the Assyrians in the extreme care with which they produced their graphic texts: hence the inscriptions of Yemen are numbered among the most beautiful of antiquity. They are traced on stone or metal, and present a monumental character which seems to have been immutably fixed in very remote times, else it could not have subsisted with such uniformity from the banks of the Euphrates to *Âden*. Some details observed in certain letters are not confined to a fixed region, but arise only from the sculptor's manner. But, in spite of the general neatness of the characters, it is impossible for copyists not to confound with each other certain letters, especially when they have to deal with a text obliterated, or seen

from a distance. The chief sources of confusion are the Sabæan forms for the letters—

I. א, ב, ג, ד, ה. II. ו, ז, ח, ט, י. III. י and ל. IV. י, ז, ק, ח. V. ו and ע. VI. ו and פ. VII. ו and פ. VIII. ז and ח. IX. ק and פ.

An attentive collation of texts only can elicit the true lection. (See p. 26.)

There is reason to believe that, besides the monumental, another more manageable cursive form of writing also developed itself: the inscriptions of Beled Arhab, of Beled Nehm, of Sil Yam, but principally the *graffiti* of Jebel Sheyhan, which contain so many strange signs, bear witness to this. It is even possible that a portion of these signs are due to the combination of two or three letters for their unusual forms. That the Sabæan characters allowed of ligatures is proved by the existence of numerous monograms where one common trait serves to unite three and even four letters. Like many other nations, the Sabæans also used ornamental letters, of which several specimens exist. In the Museum of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society there is among the Sabæan inscriptions one with a large ornamental initial enclosed in a quadrangular frame cut round it, leaving the letter  $\gamma$  in relief, with three ornamental cavities in its body; and in another much smaller slab one trait unites several letters.

The Sabæan orthography is very sparing in the designation of vowels. The letter *a* never graphically denotes a vowel; with rare exceptions *i* and *u* are rendered by  $\gamma$  and  $\nu$  at the end of words only. There exists, on the contrary, a great tendency to elide these in the body of words, even when they are radicals, or when they represent an element of grammatical flexion. Thus we meet with  $\text{הַבֵּן}$  (*H.* 624, 2),  $\text{אֵן}$  (*H.* 155, 1),  $\text{בְּנֵי}$  (*Os.* iv. 1),  $\text{הָרֵם}$  (*H.* 589), instead of the usual orthography,  $\text{הַבֵּן}$ ,  $\text{אֵן}$ ,  $\text{בְּנֵי}$ ,  $\text{הָרֵם}$ . Sometimes the *scriptio defectiva* is adopted where the existence of a diphthong is certain; thus, for instance, the word  $\text{H a d r a m a u t}$  is nearly always spelt  $\text{הַדְרַמַּוּת}$ ; likewise  $\text{אֵפֶה}$  (*Os.* xviii. 5) for  $\text{אֵפֶה}$ .

The words are generally separated by a perpendicular line; this, however, is often omitted in inscriptions written with cursive characters, which aggravates the difficulty of interpretation. Often this mark of separation is too close to the

adjoining characters, and is apt to give rise to mistakes. For instance, the representative of  $\epsilon \gamma$  standing too near after the perpendicular of separation, may with it be read as  $\delta \gamma$ ; if it be after  $\zeta \gamma$  it will make with it the letter  $\beta \gamma$ , and if it be immediately after  $\omega$  the supposed coalescence will represent  $\kappa \gamma$ ; and lastly if it precedes  $\zeta \gamma$  both together will make  $\xi \gamma$ . The end of the inscription is sometimes indicated by certain ornaments; there are also two or three signs to indicate the beginning, especially in long texts sculptured on large edifices. Inscriptions of small extent destined to attract the attention of the public are enclosed by one or two letters. (D.)\*

#### The Verb.

The voices which have hitherto been authenticated are the following seven:—

1. Original form  $\text{קַל Qal}$ :— $\text{דַּבַּר, דָּבַר, דִּבְרֵי}$ ,  $\text{עָלָה, עָלִי, עָלוּ}$ ,  $\text{עָלִי, עָלוּ}$ .
2. Energetic form  $\text{פָּעַל Pa'el}$ :— $\text{פָּרַע, פָּרַע}$ .
3. Reflective form  $\text{תַּפְּעַל Tafa'el (tafa'el)}$ :— $\text{הִתְבַּחַר, תִּבְחַר}$ .
4. Internal reflective form  $\text{פִּתְעַל Pat'al}$ :— $\text{הִתְבַּחַר, תִּבְחַר}$ .
- 5a. Causative form  $\text{הַפְּעַל Hafel}$ :— $\text{הִתְבַּחַר, הִתְבַּחַר}$ ,  $\text{הִתְבַּחַר, הִתְבַּחַר}$ .
- 5b.  $\text{סָפַעַל Saf'el}$ :— $\text{סָפַעַל, סָפַעַל}$  (*Minæan and Ḥadramaut dial.*).
6. Reflective causative form:  $\text{סַתְּפַעַל Sat'fal}$ ;— $\text{סַתְּפַעַל, סַתְּפַעַל}$ .
7. Causative and reciprocal form  $\text{הִתְפַּעַל Hinfa'al}$ :— $\text{הִתְפַּעַל, הִתְפַּעַל}$ .

The *Qal* is the principal voice, from which the other voices are derived, either by internal modifications of the radical, or by the aid of certain letters added externally. As the Sabæan writing shows only the skeletons of words, we are not able to point out the various details of the root with reference to the vowels. Accordingly we do not know whether the second radical was pronounced with the vowels *a, i, u*, as in the majority of the Semitic languages, or whether it was affected by the *sheva*, as in Ethiopic.

Thanks to the usage of separately pronouncing the duplicated liquids, it is possible to discover the existence of the *Pa'el* among the voices derived by the internal modification of the root:  $\text{פָּרַע, פָּרַע}$ ,  $\text{פָּרַע, פָּרַע}$  (*H.* 188, 2); the proper

\* All this I have shown on p. 26.

נוח (H. 193, 1) leads also to שָׁחַר (שׁחַר); to the voice Pa'el belongs also כָּאֵל (כָּאֵל, Os. VIII. 3) and כָּרַח (כָּרַח, Os. VI. 4, VII. 4-5, &c.). As the Pa'el (third Arabic form) is discerned only by the vowel, it is of course not visible in the text; but as this voice exists also in Ethiopic, it could not be wanting in Sabæan.

The Pat'al, which answers to the Arabic *ifta'al* (8th conj. اِنْفَعَلَ) but is wanting in Ethiopic, is a much more interesting voice. Numerous examples of it occur: כָּרַח (H. G.), כָּרַח (H. 187, 3), קָרַח (Naqab el Hajar, 1), כָּרַח (Os. XII. 5), נָרַח (H. 484, 4), שָׁרַח (H. 478, 16), from כָּרַח, עָרַח, נָרַח, קָרַח.

The voices formed by an external augmentation are the same as in Arabic and Ethiopic, only the physiognomy of the preformatives is more original than in those languages. For the Tafa'al (5th conj. تَفَاعَلَ) we possess as examples חָנַח (Fr. No. LV. XIV. 3; Os. v.), חָנַח (Fr. No. LV.), חָנַח (H. 147, 1), חָנַח and חָנַח, whence the divine names—חָנַח (H. 144, 6; 145, 3; 146, 3, &c.) and חָנַח (H. 189, 1; 222, 1) are derived.

The addition of a prefix ה serves to form the causative; this voice, identical with the Hebrew הַפִּיעַל, corresponds to the הַפִּיעַל of the other Semitic languages (Arabic 4th conj. اِنْفَعَلَ). As a proof that the ה is original, it may be adduced that instead of הַפִּיעַל the Minæan and Hadramaut dialects regularly present the form פִּיעַל; but, as the change of the servile ה into פ is repeated in the pronoun, it becomes clear that the פִּיעַל of these dialects implies the existence of a הַפִּיעַל; accordingly the פ is a degradation of ה, and not the ה a strengthening of פ. This point will aid us in recognizing the nature of the Semitic verbal prefixes in general. The הַפִּיעַל occurs very frequently in the inscriptions, as for example:—חָפַח (חָפַח, Fr. No. LIV.), חָפַח (Os. VIII. 3), חָפַח (Os. X. 5), חָפַח (H. 681, 5-6; 682, 9); in the Minæan and Hadramaut dialect חָפַח (H. 257, 1), חָפַח (H. 353, 2; 63, 2), חָפַח (H. 257, 3).

The voice Salf'al (חָפַח) answers to the Arabic 10th conj. اِسْتَفْعَلَ which occurs also in Ethiopic and Assyrian. The examples of this voice are numerous:—חָפַח (Os. XVI. 7), חָפַח (Cruttenden *Sanâ* 1), חָפַח (H. 681, 4), חָפַח (H. 51, 2), חָפַח (H. 535, 2).

The last voice is the *Hinf'al* (חָפַח), the Arabic

7th conj. اِنْفَعَلَ. The original ה occurs also in Hebrew, especially in the Imperative; only one example of this voice can be produced: הַרְחֵשׁ (H. 237, 7); from this example, belonging to a Minæan text, it may be seen that all the Sabæan dialects agree on this point. This voice is probably the origin of the divine name נָרַח (H. 189, 191, 2, &c.), the root whereof appears to be נָרַח.

It may be presumed that the emphatic forms Pa'el (فَاعَلَ) and tafá'el (تَفَاعَلَ), which are very common in Arabic and Ethiopic, existed likewise in Sabæan, as also the voices אֶפְעַל (א) and אֶפְעַל (א) which the Ethiopic has fully developed; but as these delicate shades concern merely the vowels, they are not perceptible in the texts.

As to the prefixed consonants which maintain themselves in Sabæan in an original state, it is important to observe that the reflective is formed by the ה alone, without the support of a guttural, whilst the reciprocal form is preceded by an ה. This induces to the belief that this form (Arabic 5th conj.), instead of being identical with the Hebrew *Hitpa'el*, as is generally conceived, constitutes a simple and anterior element whence the Hebrew form composed of the causative ה and of the reflective ה is derived. A similar remark also suggests itself with reference to the 7th Arabic form, which is usually identified with the Hebrew פִּיעַל, without considering that it has for its organic form not the פ alone, but פִּיעַל, contracted from פִּיעַל, &c.), exactly as in Sabæan, that is—a compound formed from the causative ה and from a reciprocal פ; accordingly we may ask whether the פ of the Arabic *infa'al* represents the enfeeblement of the organic ה, or is perhaps merely paragogic (euphonic); and in that case it would represent the simple form, whence the Sabæan and Hebrew forms were derived. The nature of the vowel attached to the personal letters of the Imperfect of this form appears to be in favour of the latter alternative. It is that in the imperfect the personal letters generally have the sound *a*;—يَقْبَلُ يَقْبَلُ يَقْبَلُ &c. opposite to the Hebrew *i* (e), excepting the 2nd (3rd) and 4th forms, in which these letters are pronounced with *u*:—يَقْبَلُ (يَقْبَلُ) يَقْبَلُ whilst the Hebrew has *sheva*: יִקְבֹּל; יִקְבֹּל = יִקְבֹּל. It



is evident, accordingly, that if the 5th form were identical with the Hebrew  $\text{הפעיל}$  the vocalization of the Imperfect would have been  $\text{يُنْقَبِلُ}$  with  $u$ , and not  $\text{يُنْقَبِلُ}$  with  $a$ ; consequently we must consider the Arabic *infu'al* as having only one single preformative, the  $\text{ن}$ , herein resembling the 5th form, which, combining with the particle of the causative, has produced the Hebrew *Hitpa'el*.

In the 10th form likewise, apart from the prosthetic *alef*, which is wanting in Sabæan, it may be observed that the preformative  $\text{ה}$  is composed of the causative  $\text{ט}$ , which supplants the  $\text{ה}$  in the dialects, and of the reflective  $\text{נ}$ , so that this form answers to the Hebrew *Hitpa'el*.

The following table presents a view of the most-used forms in the Semitic languages, and the arrangement of the voices from the simple to the compound :—

	Simple.	Emphatic.	Energetic.
Original theme or Pal $\text{فعل}$	$\text{פעל}$	$\text{פעל}^{\text{ע}}$ (Ar. Eth. Sab. ?)	$\text{פעל}^{\text{ע}}$
Reflective theme.	$\text{הפעל}$ (Aram. ? Ass.)	$\text{הפעל}^{\text{ע}}$ (Ar. Eth. Sab. ?)	$\text{הפעל}$ (Aram.)
Internal reflective theme.	$\text{הפעל}$ (Arab. Sab. Ass.)		$\text{הפעל}$ (Ass.)
Reciprocal theme .....	$\text{נפעל}$ (Ar. Ass.)		$\text{נפעל}$ (Ass. ?)
Causative theme .....	$\text{הפעל}$ (Heb. Sab. Arab. Aram. Eth.) $\text{הפעל}$ (Aram. Ass. Eth. Min. & Haqr. dial.)	$\text{הפעל}^{\text{ע}}$	$\text{הפעל}^{\text{ע}}$
		$\text{הפעל}^{\text{ע}}$ (Eth. Sab. dial. ?)	$\text{הפעל}^{\text{ע}}$ (Eth. Sab. dial. ?)
Causat. and Refl. theme:	$\text{הפעל}$ $\text{הפעל}$ (Aram. Ass. Eth. Minæan and Haqr. dial.)	$\text{הפעל}^{\text{ע}}$	$\text{הפעל}$ (Heb.) $\text{הפעל}$ (Eth. Sab. dial.)
		$\text{הפעל}^{\text{ע}}$ (Eth. Sab. dial. ?)	
Causat. and Recipr. theme.	$\text{הפעל}$ (Heb. Sab.)		
Recipr. and Refl. theme ...	$\text{הפעל}$ (Rabbinic Heb. Ass. Aram.)		

As we have just seen, the Semitic languages use the three letters  $\text{ה}$ ,  $\text{נ}$ , and  $\text{פ}$  ( $\text{ט}$ ,  $\text{ש}$ ) sometimes simply and sometimes combined, in order to form derived voices, for the purpose of indicating an action which strikes by its external effect. These letters, which are visibly pronominal themes, serving also for the inflection of nouns, and constituting a real link between these two categories of words, show that the verb and noun were originally confused in the linguistic conception of the Semites. The most powerful instrument used in these languages to discriminate between the verbal and the nominal idea was the tonic accent, so well conserved in Hebrew, thus: verb—*habál*,  $\text{הביל}$  "to wound," noun— $\text{הביל}$ , *hébél* "a wound;" verb—*gaddl*,  $\text{גדל}$  "to become great," noun— $\text{גדל}$  *godel* (*godl*) "greatness;" verb—*qamaš*,  $\text{קמץ}$  "to grasp," noun— $\text{קמץ}$  "fist."

The Semitic nations, which manifest so delicate a perception in picturing the movements of the

mind that produce action, have come short as to the manner of indicating the succession of actions. They have not conceived of time as a determined and fixed period, but appear rather to have considered it as a point always receding, which cannot be seized, and which may be spoken of in a relative sense only. Accordingly Semitic verbs possess originally no special designation to distinguish time in the modern sense of the word. From a Semitic point of view the names *Past* and *Future*, applied by indigenous grammarians to the chief verbal inflections, are inaccurate; these forms indicate neither an absolute Past nor an absolute Future; they merely designate a relative succession floating between a distant past and a distant future; the names of *Perfect* and *Imperfect*, denuded of every idea of time, are more convenient. The *Perfect* points out the act as completed in an absolute state, whilst the *Imperfect* designates the same in a

subordinate uncompleted state. It may even be said that a relation analogous to that between a noun and an adjective exists between the Perfect and the Imperfect. Hence it follows that in the conjugation, the Perfect, being considered as a kind of verbal noun, precedes the terminations of the subject; whilst on the contrary the Imperfect, marking an act yet in need of a subject, is placed after it, so that the personal pronouns are placed at the head of the complex.

The modifications to which the vowels attached to the radical letters of the verb were subjected in order to indicate the Subjunctive Mood cannot of course be ascertained, but they could not be different from the method adopted in the Ethiopic language, with which the Sabæan conjugation has several features in common. Among the terminations of the moods, the termination with *ו* is of great interest. The first interpreters of Sabæan texts observed that the Imperfect often shows *ו* at the end of the word, like the Emphatic Arabic Imperfect. This *n* is considered identical with the Hebrew particle *נא* "now, behold," which would serve to emphasize the idea of an act yet waiting for completion; but this explanation does not well agree with the fact that this *n* stands also before the personal suffixes in the poetical forms: *הַתְּקַדְּוּהוּ, הַתְּקַדְּוּהוּ, הַתְּקַדְּוּהוּ, הַתְּקַדְּוּהוּ*; it is moreover often used in the particles *הַתְּקַדְּוּהוּ, הַתְּקַדְּוּהוּ*, and even sometimes before the possessive suffixes attached to the Perfect. Osiander meant to surmount this difficulty by supposing that the *n* had in Hebrew an origin different from the Arabic *n*, whilst on the other hand he declared that the *n* of the Perfect is due only to a false analogy with the Imperfect; but such a system of explanation, increases the difficulties instead of solving them, and it receives the most formal denial by the fact that in Sabæan the *n* is added even to the Perfect. These two moods may be called Consecutive Perfect and Consecutive Imperfect, because they are almost always subordinate to the absolute verb and preceded by the consecutive *ו*. Examples of the Consecutive Imperfect Singular *וְהוֹדוּ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם* (*Fr. No. LV. 4, 5*); the Plural shows *n* twice, *וְהוֹדוּ, וְהוֹדוּ* (*Os. XXV. 5, 6*); *סְחַמְלוּ וְיַחְזִיקֵיכֶם* (*ib. XVI. 7*): this prolonged form occurs also after other particles: *—תִּקְדֵּן* (*Os. X. 10*), *תִּקְדֵּן* (*ib. X.*), *תִּקְדֵּן* (*ib. IV. 15*), *יִבְרֵן* (*ib. XVIII. 5*), *יִבְרֵן* (*ib. XVII. 11*). For the Per-

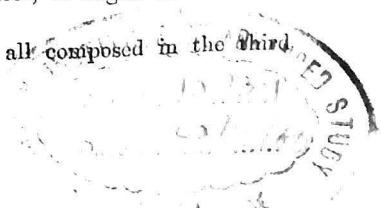
fect a single *n* occurs in the Plural: *וְהוֹדוּ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם* (*H. 3, 2-3; 10, 1-2; 10, 2-3*); in the Dual, *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 43, 2*), *וְהוֹדוּ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם* (*Os. 35. 1*); for the Singular Halévy gives three examples; one in masculine, *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 169, 2*), and two in the feminine, *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 681, 2; 682, 2*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 681, 6*); whence it may be seen that the feminine *n* disappears before this termination.

At present, however, Halévy considers it more probable that in the two last examples the second verb is in the Imperfect, analogous to the formula —*וְהוֹדוּ, וְהוֹדוּ*, which is so frequent in the inscriptions of Amrân. From this it may be concluded that the *n* constitutes so important an element for the verb that it is doubled in the Imperfect Plural.

The preposition *ל* is often added to the Imperfect in order to impart to it a Subjunctive sense; it is sometimes added to the simple, and sometimes to the prolonged form, e.g. *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 259, 1*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 259, 3*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*Os. IV. 11-12*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*Os. IV. 10-11*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*Os. XXVII. 9*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 152, 4*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 147, 6*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*Os. XXXV. 4*), and even to the Perfect in these two forms: *וְהוֹדוּ* (*Os. VI. 6, 7, VII. 8*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*ib. XX. 6*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 149, 11*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*ib. 149, 9*); the forms are perhaps Infinitives. Halévy also discovered the preposition *ב* prefixed to the Imperfect *בְּהוֹדוּ* (*H. 259, 7*), a form very common in vulgar Arabic, and in the Ethiopic dialects.

The Sabæan verb has two genders, the masculine and the feminine; and three numbers, the singular, the dual, and the plural. There is no doubt about the existence of the dual, which was first suspected by Fresnel, and afterwards denied by Osiander. Whenever two subjects are treated of, the verb takes the termination *ו* instead of *ן*, which is the mark of the plural—*וְהוֹדוּ* (*אֱלֹהֵיכֶם*): *וְהוֹדוּ* (*Os. XXXV. 1*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*Fr. No. LIV. 2*), *וְהוֹדוּ* (*H. 169, 2*); the feminine dual is formed by *ו*, as shown by the example *וְהוֹדוּ* (*Os. XXXIV. 4*). The terminations *ו*, *ו* are the organic forms of the Arabic dual *اثنان, اثنتان* and seem to have been pronounced *-é, -lé*. The dual of verbs has disappeared in other Semitic languages, and among them also in Ethiopic. Halévy has found no example for the dual of the Imperfect, but, to judge from the analogy of the Perfect, it ought also to have existed.

As the texts are all composed in the third



person, they leave us in uncertainty about the personal suffixes of the first and the second person of the Perfect. There is, however, reason to believe that they were ך and ך, as in Ethiopic.

To the conjugation of the verbs פ״י, it is to be observed that the ן is suppressed in the Subjunctive; thus ידןן (Fr. No. xi. 3), ל״ב (H. 259, 3), יקןן (Os. iv. 13), from ידן, יקן. The פ״י verbs never elide the *yod*: בניו (Ab. 1, 5), תנ״ו (H. 147, 1), תנ״ה (H. 681, 2; 682, 2). It is interesting to find that in the פ״י verbs the medial ן is retained: ח״ב, ח״ו, ח״ו. It was probably pronounced *ô*, as in Ethiopic, and did not become *û*, as in Arabic. The same analogy with the Ethiopic system is observable also in the פ״י roots; the

*yod* remains in ש״ם (H. 76, 1; Os. iv. 5), ק״ן (H. 8, 1), sometimes also ק״ן (H. 44, 2, 3), but the *yod* is elided before the suffixes beginning with a consonant: ש״מ״י (Os. xxxiv. 4).

In the Perfect and Imperfect, personal suffixes may be added, as in Arabic. The rule is that in the Perfect the suffix is appended immediately after the third radical; e.g. כ״א״ו (Os. viii. 3), ס״ע״ר״ו (H. 681, 4), ע״ו (probably for ע״ק “heard her prayer,” H. 681, 7), וק״ד״מ״ו (Os. i. 5), וק״ד״מ״י (Os. xxxiv. 6). Examples for the simple Imperfect:—ינ״ט״ס (Mincean dial. = וינ״ט״ו), ינ״צ״א ( = וינ״צ״ו, H. 257, 2-3), ינ״מ״ס ( = ינ״מ״ו, H. 465, 4), ינ״פ״ס ( = ינ״פ״ו, H. 465, 4); for the prolonged Imperfect:—ינ״ט״ו״ו (H. 680, 2), f. ינ״ט״ו״ו״ו (H. 681, 7-8).

Paradigm.

	1st Perfect.				2nd Perfect.	1st Imperfect.	2nd Imperfect.
3rd pers.	כ״ר	ב״י	כ״ן	ש״ם	ג״מ״ן	ק״נ״י	ק״ינ״ן
3rd p. f.	כ״ר״ח	.....	כ״נ״ח	.....	.....	.....	.....
2nd p.	כ״ר״ך ?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
2nd p. f.	כ״ר״י ?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	or כ״ר״ך ?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Dual m.	כ״ר״ו	ב״י	.....	.....	א״ח״ן	.....	.....
Dual f.	כ״ר״ו״י ?	.....	.....	.....	ש״מ״ו	.....	.....
	כ״ר״ו	ב״י	.....	.....	.....	ק״נ״ו	ק״ינ״ו
	כ״ר״כ״ו ?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	כ״ר״ו	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
II. 2.	כ״ל	.....	.....	.....	.....	כ״מ״ו	.....
II. Causative .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
III. Internal Reflective .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
IV. External Reflective .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
V. Causative and Reflective...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
VI. Causative and Reciprocal...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

With Suffixes.

.....	וק״ד״ו
.....	כ״ו
.....	וק״ד״מ״י
.....	וק״ד״מ״ו
IV.	תנב״ו
V.	סתע״ר״ו
VI.	דראש״מ״י
1st Precative...	ל״ח״א
.....	ל״ב״ו
2nd Precative...	ב״ק״ס
Passive .....	ינ״מ״י

