

CYCLOPÆDIA
OF
BIBLICAL LITERATURE

EDITED BY

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people who felt the necessity of denoting them by separate signs.

Nearly an equal number of ancient authorities might be cited as testimonies that the discovery of letters was ascribed to the Phœnicians and to the Egyptians (see Walton's *Prolegomena*, ii. 2). And, indeed, there is a view, suggested by Gesenius (*Palæographie*, l. c.), by which their rival claims might, to a certain extent, be reconciled:—that is, by the supposition that the hieroglyphical was, indeed, the earliest kind of all writing; but that the Phœnicians, whose commerce led them to Egypt, may have borrowed the first germ of alphabetical writing from the phonetic hieroglyphs. There is at least a remarkable coincidence between the Syro-Arabian alphabet and the phonetic hieroglyphs, in that in both the figure of a material object was made the sign of that sound with which the name of the object began. To follow this further would lead beyond the object of this article. But, if this

theory were true, it would still leave the Phœnicians the possibility of having actually developed the first alphabetical writing; and that, together with the fact that the earliest monuments of the Syro-Arabians have preserved *their* characters, and the unanimous consent with which ancient writers ascribe to them the transmission of the alphabet to the Greeks (Herod. v. 68; Diod. Sic. v. 74), may make the probabilities preponderate in their favour [WRITING; WRITING-MATERIALS].—J. N.

ALPHABETICAL SOUNDS. In connection with the subject of the Hebrew and Greek alphabets, we may be allowed to enter on some considerations which are seldom duly developed in the grammars of either language; and which will besides throw some light on the Greek spelling of Hebrew names.

Let us first request the reader to bestow a little study on the following table of consonants:—

	EXPLOSIVE.		CONTINUOUS.				
	Thin.	Full.	Thin.	Full.	Liquid.	Nasal.	
Labial . .	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>m</i>	(1)
Dental or Palatal	{ <i>n</i> <i>d</i>	<i>t</i> <i>d</i>	<i>θ</i>	<i>ð</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>n</i>	(2)
Guttural or Palatal	{ <i>k</i> <i>p</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>χ</i> <i>ç</i>	<i>γ</i> <i>ğ</i>	Softest German <i>ch</i> or <i>g</i>	<i>ng</i>	(3)
Aspirate .	<i>h</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>y</i>	French <i>n</i>	(4)
Sibilant or Vibratory			{ <i>s</i> <i>sh</i>	<i>s</i> French <i>j</i>		<i>r</i>	(5)

The names annexed to the left-hand of the rows are not perfectly satisfactory. To 'Labial' no objection can be made. Neither 'Dental' nor 'Palatal' fitly describes the second row, in which the sounds are produced by *contact* (more or less slight and momentary) of the tongue with the teeth, gums, or palate; while the third row, on the contrary, does not need contact. The term 'Guttural' is apt, improperly, to give the idea of a roughness which does not exist in *k* and *g*. The soft palatal sounds of *χ*, *γ*, *ch*, cannot be named absolutely 'Palatals,' without confounding them with those of the row above. The word 'Aspirate' (or breathing) has in English been generally appropriated to a 'rough' breathing; and it is against our usage to conceive of the liquid *y* as a *breathing* at all.

Those consonants are called *explosive* on which the voice cannot dwell when they terminate a word; as *ap*, *ak*, *ad*. At their end a rebound of the organs takes place, giving the sound of an

obscure vowel; as *appé* for *ap*: for if this final sound be withheld, but half of the consonant is enunciated. The Latins, following the Greeks, called these 'Mutes.' Or the contrary, we name those *continuous* the sound of which can be indefinitely prolonged, as *afff* . . . , *asss* . . .

For the names *thin* and *full*, others say sharp and flat; or hard and soft; or surd and sonant; or whispering and vocal. It would appear that in whispering the two are merged in one; for instance, *p* cannot be distinguished from *b*, nor *z* from *s*. Yet the 'Aspirates' (or fourth row) will not *strictly* bear this test.

By the Greek letters *θ*, *ð*, *χ*, *γ*, we understand the sounds given to them by the modern Greeks; in which *θ* = English *th* in *thin*; *ð* = English *th* in *that*; *χ* = German or Irish *ch*; *γ* = Dutch *g*. To conceive of the last sound, when we know that of *χ*, it is only requisite to consider that the following proportion strictly holds:—*g* (hard) : *k* :: *γ* : *χ*. At the same time, *γ* and *χ* have a double

pronunciation, rougher and smoother, as *ch* in German has. When their roughness is much exaggerated, they give the Arabic sounds ç (*kha*) and ġ (*ghain*), which last is the consonant *gh* heard in gargling. As for the softer sounds, when their softness is exaggerated, the χ passes through the softest German *ch* into a mere *y*; while the γ is gradually merged in the soft imperfect *r* of liipers, and finally in *w*.

But the fourth row, or the 'Aspirates,' yet more urgently need explanation to an Englishman. The *explosive* aspirates come under the general head of what is called the Soft Breathing in Greek grammar (although ψ in the Arab mouth is far enough from *soft*), while the *continuous* aspirates are Rough Breathings. Moreover, ψ is a fuller and stronger h , just as π is a fuller and stronger f ; and although the relation does not seem to be precisely that of *b* : *p*, or *d* : *t*, it is close enough to justify our tabular arrangement. As for ρ , it is rather softer than our English *h*; and π , or *hh*, is the *Irish h*, a wheezing sound. The consonant h is the hiatus heard between the vowels in the Greek word *hine*, and ψ is the same sound exaggerated by a compression of the throat. The last is, in short, a jerking hiatus, such as a stuttering man often prefixes to a vowel-sound, when with effort he at length utters it. That h , ψ , are explosive, and π , ρ , continuous, is evident on trial. It is also clear that the hiatus h readily softens itself into the liquid *y*. Just so, for the name Maxlatet (the Sept. reads $\text{Ma\lambda\epsilon\kappa\eta\lambda}$, where the ϵ before $\eta\lambda$ is in fact meant for an English *y*. On this ground we have put *y* into the fourth row.

It is important to observe how the consonants of different nations differ. For instance, the German *p* and *b* are *intermediate* to the English *p* and *b*, so as to be difficult to our ears to distinguish, and the Armenians have two different *p*'s. So the English *h* is intermediate in strictness to π and ρ , if at least we assume that these Hebrew

letters had the sound of the Arabic ψ and ç . Now this is a general phenomenon, in comparing the Indo-European with the Syro-Arabian sounds. Our *k* is between the two Hebrew or Arab *k*'s; our *t* is between their two *t*'s; and so on. To explain this, observe that we may execute a *t* in various ways; first, by slapping the tongue flat against the teeth, as an Irishman or man of Cumberland does when he says *water*; secondly (what is rather less broad), by slightly touching the root of the teeth, as a Frenchman or Italian does; thirdly, by touching only the gums, which is the English method; fourthly, by touching the palate, or by pressing on the gums with a muscular jerk. One or other of the last is the Hebrew t , the Arab t ; hence some call it a palatal, others a strong *t*. In touching the palate, the throat is involuntarily opened, and a guttural sound is imparted to the letter and to the following vowel; for which reason it has been also called a guttural *t*. The other method, of pressing the tongue firmly, but not on the palate, is an Armenian *t*, but perhaps not the true Syro-Arabian.

What we have here to insist on is, that differences which with us are provincialisms, with

them constitute differences of elementary sounds. To a Hebrew, t differs from t , or t from t , as decidedly as with us *p* from *b*. On the other hand, *t* and *t* (thin), as *d* and *t* (full), which with us have an elementary distinction, are but euphonic variations in Hebrew.

After this, we have to explain that t was originally sounded forwarder on the palate than English *k*, as p was far backwarder, at the root of the tongue. So t was probably forwarder, and t certainly backwarder than our *s*, each of them being nevertheless a kind of *s*. That t was not *ts* is seen by t , t , t , t , &c. &c., which are written t , t , t , t , &c. &c. in the Sept., as well as from the analogy of the

Arabic t . The *ts* pronunciation is a late invention, as is the *ng* sound, which has been arbitrarily assigned to t . Nevertheless, out of t the Greeks made t , which is contrary to the analogy of t for t : yet the adjective *Sarranus*, instead of *Tyrrius*, used by Virgil, may prove that *Sarr* or *Sour* was in ancient, as in modern days, the right pronunciation of *Tyrr*. In English we have the double sound *s* and *sh*, which is illustrative of t and t , t and t , &c., to which modification it is closely analogous. For *sh* is only a modified *s*, being formed with the broad or central part of the tongue, instead of the tip. In this action the forepart of the tongue forms itself into a sort of cup, the whole rim of which comes near to the palate while the breath rushes between. On the contrary, in sounding t , only a single transverse section of the tongue approaches the palate; but this section is far back, and the lips are protruded and smacked, so as to constitute a *sounding s*. Farther; the alliance of *r* to *s*, so strongly marked in the Greek and Latin languages, justifies our arranging them in one row. The *r* is formed by a vibration along the tongue, which bears some analogy to the rush of the breath along its surface, on which the *s* and *sh* depend. The Armenians have a twofold *r*, of which one, if we mistake not, is related to the other, as our *sh* to *s*.

The Hebrews were commonly stated to have given two sounds to each of the letters t , t , t , t , t , t , t , t , t , t , t , t so as to produce the twelve sounds, *p, f, b, v, t, \theta, d, k, \chi, g, \gamma*; but it is now generally admitted that it was not so originally. The Greeks (at least provincially), even in early days, pronounced *Bhga, Veta*, as they now also say *Ghamma, Dhelta*; and the Italians for Latin *b* sometimes have *v*, sometimes *d*. The Hebrew corruption was however so early as constantly to show itself in the Sept.; indeed, as a general rule, we must regard the thin consonants t , t , t , as having assumed the *continuous*, instead of the *explosive*, pronunciation; i. e. they were become *f, \theta, \chi*. Thus t , t , t , t , t , t were written t , t , t , t , t , t , in spite of the *dagesh lena* by which the later Masoretes directed the initial letters to be sounded *P, T, K*. Yet there is no immovable rule. Thus the t is in the same book variously rendered *Xerretelmu* and *Kritelmu* (1 Macc. i. 1, and viii. 3). It will be observed that a decidedly dental *t* is very near to *t*, and a *k*, very mincing and forward in the mouth, easily melts into *ky*, as in the Turkish language, and thence into soft χ . In this way, θ and χ having been adopted for t and t , t and t were left as the general representatives of t and t . It

is well known that the Ephraimites at an early period said *a*, at least in some words, for *sh*, as in the celebrated tale of Shibboleth; but this corruption went on increasing after the orthography had been fixed, so that it became requisite to denote by a dot many a *ʿ* *sh*, the sound of which had degenerated into *ʿ*. It is rather perplexing to find *D* occupy the same place in the Hebrew alphabet as *Z* in the Greek, a fact which perhaps still needs elucidation.

But we must turn to an important subject—the tendency of aspirates to degenerate into vowels. The muscular language of barbarians seems to love aspirates; in fact, a vowel energetically sounded is itself an aspirate, as an aspirate softened is a vowel. Let it be noticed in passing that an over-vocalised language is by no means soft. Such a word as *Ignis* has of necessity strong hiatuses between the vowels, which hiatuses, although not written in Western languages, are virtually consonantal aspirates; in which respect an English representation of some barbarous languages is very misleading. The Hebrew spelling of Greek names often illustrates this; for example, *Antiochus* is אַנְתִּיּוֹכֹּס, where the central *K* indicates the hiatus between *i* and *o*. That the letters *ן* (final), *י*, *ו*, from the earliest times were used for the long vowels *A*, *I*, *U*, seems to be beyond doubt. At a later period perhaps, *K* was used for another *A*: the Greeks adopted *υ* for *O*, and finally *η* for a long *E*. It is probable that a corruption in the Hebrew pronunciation of *ן* and *η* had already come in when the Sept. adopted the spelling of proper names which we find. As for *ן*, it is the more remarkable that the Greek aspirate should not have been used for it; for both in Greece and in Italy the *h* sound must have been very soft, and ultimately has been lost. So we find in the Sept. אֶבֶל לְכַל הַבְּהֵמָה *Hebel*, 'Doyt for אֶבֶל הַחַיָּה *Hoahē a*; and even the rougher and stronger aspirate *ן* often vanishes. Thus אֶבֶן לְחֶמֶק *Hhemak*; פֶּסַח לְרַחֵם *Rah-hobot*, &c. Sometimes however the *ן* becomes *ח*, as in אֶבֶן חַמֶּט, אֶבֶן חַמֶּט; which may possibly indicate that *ן*, at least in proper names, occasionally retained the two sounds of Arabic

and אֶבֶן חַמֶּט and אֶבֶן חַמֶּט. The *υ* was of necessity omitted in Greek, since, at least when it was between two vowels, no nearer representation could be made than by leaving a hiatus. Where it has been denoted by Greek *γ*, as in Γόμορρα, Γαδδδ, Σηγώρ, there is no doubt that it had the force of the Arabic ع (ghain), whether or not this sound ever occurred in Hebrew except in proper names.

Respecting the vowels, we may add that it is now historically established, alike in the Syro-Arabian and in the Indo-European languages, that the sounds *ε* and *σ* (pronounced as in *maid* and *boat*) are later in time than those of *ε*, *ι*, *α*, and are in fact corruptions of the diphthongs *αι*, *αυ*. Hence, originally, three long vowels, *α*, *ι*, *αυ*, with three vowel-points for the same when short, appeared to suffice. On the four very short vowels of Hebrew a needless obscurity is left in our grammars by its not being observed that we have the same number in the English language, really distinct; as in *sudden* (or *castell*), *contrary*, *nobody*, *beneath*; although it is probable

that with *η* the vowel was clearer and sharper than in any short English *α*. We have even the *furtive vowel* of which the Hebrew grammars speak; namely, when a word ends in *τ*, preceded by a long accented vowel or diphthong. In this case, a very short *α* is heard in true English speech, but not in Irish, before the *τ*, as in *beer*, *shore*, *flower* (whence the orthography *flower*, *bowser*, &c.), which corresponds to the Hebrew אֶבֶן, אֶבֶן. The Arabs have it also when the final letter is *پ*.—F. W. N.

1. ALPHÆUS (Ἀλφαῖος), father of James the Less (Matt. x. 3; Luke vi. 15), and husband of Mary, the sister of our Lord's mother (John xix. 25); for which reason James is called 'the Lord's brother' [ΒΡΑΔΕΡΟΣ]. By comparing John xix. 25, with Luke xxiv. 10, and Matt. x. 3, it appears that Alphæus is the same person as Cleophas; Alphæus being his Greek, and Cleophas his Hebrew or Syriac name, according to the custom of the provinces or of the time, when men had often two names, by one of which they were known to their friends and countrymen, and by the other to the Romans or strangers. Possibly, however, the double name in Greek arises, in this instance, from a diversity in pronouncing the *η* in his Aramaean name, אֶבֶן, a diversity which is common also in the Septuagint (see Kuinoel in *Joan.* xix. 25) [NAMES].

2. ALPHÆUS, the father of the evangelist Levi or Matthew (Mark ii. 14).

ALTAR (אֲלֹתָר from אֲלֹתָר, to slay (a victim), but used also for the altar of incense; Sept. generally θυσιαστήριον, sometimes βωμός). The first altar we read of in the Bible was that erected by Noah on leaving the ark. According to a Rabbinical legend, it was partly formed from the remains of one built by Adam on his expulsion from Paradise, and afterwards used by Cain and Abel, on the identical spot where Abraham prepared to offer up Isaac (Zohar, *In Gen.* fol. 51, 3, 4; Targum, Jonathan, Gen. viii. 20). Mention is made of altars erected by Abraham (Gen. xii. 7; xiii. 4; xxii. 9); by Isaac (xxvi. 25); by Jacob (xxxiii. 20; xxxv. 1, 3); by Moses (Exod. xvii. 15). After the giving of the law, the Israelites were commanded to make an altar of earth (אֲלֹתָר אֲרָצִיתָם); they were also permitted to employ stones, but no iron tool was to be applied to them. This has been generally understood as an interdiction of sculpture, in order to guard against a violation of the second commandment. Altars were frequently built on high places (אֲלֹתָר בְּרָמֹת, בְּמוֹט, בְּמוֹט); the word being used not only for the elevated spots, but for the sacrificial structures upon them. Thus Solomon's *basilic* an high place for Chemosh (1 Kings xi. 7), and Josiah brake down and burnt the high place, and stamped it small to powder (2 Kings xxiii. 15); in which passage אֲלֹתָר is distinguished from אֲלֹתָר. This practice, however, was forbidden by the Mosaic law (Deut. xii. 13; xvi. 5), except in particular instances, such as those of Gideon (Judg. vi. 26) and David (2 Sam. xxiv. 18). It is said of Solomon 'that he loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David, his father, only he sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places' (1 Kings iii. 3). Altars were sometimes built on the roofs of houses: in 2 Kings xxiii. 12, we read of the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz. In the tabernacle