

Scarabs 2 and 3 are of the "New Empire," 2500 to 3000 B. C., and belong to the XVIII. Dynasty. Scarabs 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 belong to an earlier period. Scarabs 1 and 9, as well as the pendant, are of carnelian. As there are no inscriptions upon them, the exact date is impossible to determine. The gold settings and chain are of comparatively modern manufacture.

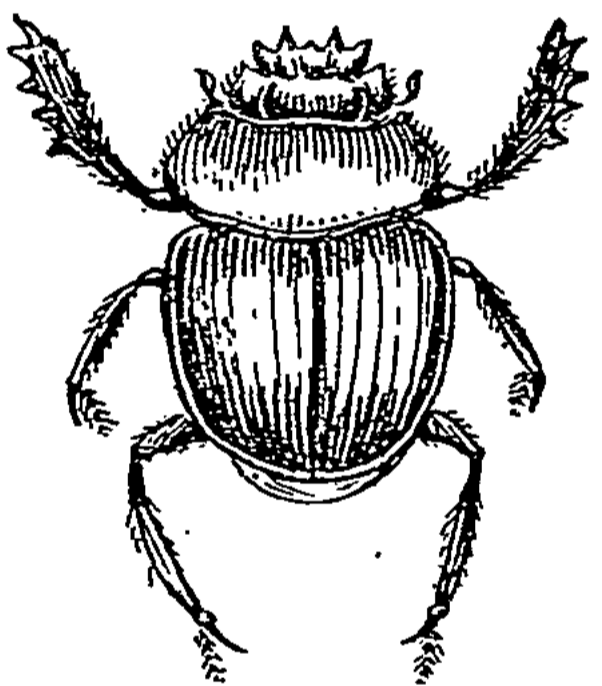
SCARAB VENERATION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

ORIGIN AND PECULIARITIES OF THE ANCIENT GEM.
Rare Egyptian Bracelet Owned in this City—Ignorance and Cupidity of Some Turbaned Dealers in Antiques.

IT IS not often that it falls to the lot of the tourist in Egypt to get even a single genuine scarab. But Mr. H. C. Corson of this city is the lucky possessor of a bracelet which is composed of nine genuine scarabs, some of them bearing the inscriptions of Pharaohs antedating the builders of the great pyramids of Gizeh, about 4000 B. C., and others, contemporary with Thothmes III. and Rameses II., (the Pharaoh who did not know Joseph.)

As few readers are likely to be familiar with the subject of scarabs, especially in connection with their being worshipped by the ancient Egyptians, I deem it desirable to give here, in as concise a manner as possible, a few particulars as to what a scarab is and why this insect was selected as an object for veneration. Few of the vast number of tourists who visit annually the Land of the Pharaohs and departing bring with them scarabs purchased from the ubiquitous vendor of "antichi" know what a scarab really is. They know this much—that it is an imitation of a beetle in stone, glass, paste, or porcelain. Those who have searched further and have consulted modern dictionaries are informed that it is "an ornament, a gem, usually made of green feldspar or obsidian, cut in the form of a beetle and engraved on the under face; common among the ancient Egyptians as an amulet." But as to its other uses and the deity it represented they are usually left in the dark.

The Egyptian Pantheon contained several great deities and a vast number of smaller gods and goddesses, the latter subdivided into several special classes. Every province, city, hamlet, yea, every household, as well as the elements, seasons, &c.,



The Scarab.
Sanskrit—CARABHA.
Ancient Egyptian—KHEPER.
Hebrew—K'ROUB, Plural K'ROUBIM.
Modern German—KAFER.
English—CHAFER.

had their gods. One of their principal deities was called Khepera. He is represented in human form, dressed in royal attire and holding the divine staff (kukupha) in his left hand and the ringed cross, (the ankh,) which is the sign of life, in his right. He is usually represented with a beetle (kheper) upon his head, and sometimes he is depicted with a beetle in place of his head. The word kheper has a double signification; it means to create and transform.

Plutarch informs us that "the men of the sword had a beetle carved upon their signets because there is no such thing as a female beetle, for they are all males." The habit of the beetle of depositing its eggs in a rissole of dung or mud, "being herein providers of the place in which they are to be engendered, as well as of the matter of their nutrition," says Plutarch, rolling it into a small ball and propelling it up the bank of the Nile, then burying it in the sand, out of which, after a short time, emerge the new creatures, has caused it to be named the Creator Kheper, as related by Plutarch. In time the beetle became the emblem and type of the god Khepera, the creator and transformer of all.





Khepera, according to the Egyptians, was not only a god of the living, but also of the dead. The instruction given in Chapter XXX. of the Egyptian ritual called "The Book of the Dead," is that a scarab of green stone, set in gold, should be placed in the heart of the mummy as a charm to protect the heart and keep it intact during its peregrinations in the nether world. The scarabs were considered religious emblems for more than 4000 B. C. There is in the British Museum a scarab bearing the name of King Semen-Ptah of the First Dynasty, (about 4400 B. C.) The hieroglyphic inscriptions upon three scarabs in this bracelet

bear the names of Egyptian Kings, and are thus called royal scarabs. The names of Kings are generally inclosed in an oblong ring called cartouche.

One of the principal uses of the scarab was as an amulet; it was placed, as above stated, in the breast where the heart of the mummy was situated. The heart itself was removed by the embalmers and placed in one of the four jars called canopi, which were the receptacles of the viscera. Those scarabs were termed "the stony hearts," and were of a larger size than the ordinary scarabs.

The scarabs were used as ornaments in connection with rings, necklaces, pendants, charms, &c. These were manufactured of steatite, jasper, carnelian, amethyst, &c., but the most common are of steatite. The inscriptions of non-royal scarabs are various. Some bear names of priests and priestesses of the temples of Amon at Us, (Thebes,) On, (Heliopolis,) or Men-Nefer, (Memphis); others bear the names of Princes and Princesses, royal spouses, and mothers.

They were worn together with other amulets, forming necklaces, such as Sign of Life, the Ankh; Emblem of Stability, Tat; the Emblem of Watchfulness and

-  NUB
The meanings of the various signs of the bracelet illustrated in Scarab 6 are thus explained:
Nub—Symbol of gold.
-  NEFER
Nefer—Mandolin, implying goodness, pleasant happiness.
-  TAT
Ankh—Sign of life. This scarab is a private one, worn for good luck, and may be ascribed to the period of the fifth dynasty, about 400 B. C.
-  ANKH

Protection, Ut'a, &c. The scarabs, one writer plausibly observes, "held the position among the ancient Egyptians which the Latin cross holds over us." Taking into consideration the etymology of the word, I venture to suggest that the great lawgiver, Moses, the iconoclast of the Egyptian Pantheon, substituted the cherubim for the scarabs. The Israelites were accustomed to see the scarab with outstretched wings and the solar disk everywhere. Hence the cherubim upon the mercy seat, called kaporeth, the place where the khepers or k'roubim were placed. The Sanskrit word for scarab (carabha) is the same as the Hebrew word, k'roub, "cherub," plural k'roubim, (cherubim.) Can it be possible that Moses' command was to place scarabs upon the mercy seat, also to weave them into the curtains of the Tabernacle? (Exodus, xxxvi., 8;)

"And every wise-hearted man among them that wrought the work of the Tabernacle, made ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue, and purple and scarlet; with cherubims of cunning work made he them." (Exodus, xxxvii., 6, 9;)

"And he made the mercy seat of pure gold, kaporeth, . . . and he made two cherubims of gold, . . . one cherub on the end on this side and another cherub on the other end on that side out of the mercy seat made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims spread out their wings on high and covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another; even to the mercy seatward were the faces of the cherubims."

It seems to be near the truth but contrary to the accepted and time-honored interpretation of cherubim, by which a cherub is represented as a beautiful winged child.

The Babylonians placed at the entrances to the royal palaces and temples winged, human-headed bulls and lions, as well as eagle-headed lions, which were called in Assyrian Karubi, "cherubim," the powerful. The placing of those figures at the entrance is supposed to have been with the object of preventing enemies from entering the royal domains. This throws much light upon the narrative, (Genesis, iii., 24,) "So He [God] drove out the man [Adam]; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubims [the additional plural is superfluous, since cherubim is the plural form of cherub,] and a flaming sword which

turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life."

Whether the cherubim were imported from Assyria into Egypt, or vice versa, is difficult to decide. I am, however, inclined to join the ranks of those who give Egypt's civilization priority. At all events, as far as Kheper, the emblem of the deity Kheperu, is concerned, it must be admitted that it is purely Egyptian.

There was a time, we are told, when the Egyptians were spoiled, but that was in remote antiquity. Nowadays it is different; it is the Egyptian who spoils the tourists. There ought to be signs in every public place in Cairo where tourists frequent warning the visitors: "Beware of the antich vendors." But there are no such things, and the tourists are taken in.

When I first visited Egypt, about thirty years ago, the inhabitants near the necropolis on the west side of the Nile gained their livelihood from the sale of Egyptian antiquities, mostly scarabs. The Fellahin then were not as much restricted from excavating among the tombs and ruins as they are now. Genuine relics were plentiful; statuettes, scarabs, and even mummies were obtainable for reasonable prices. It was about thirty years before that time that the late Dr. Abbott was enabled to make his wonderful collection, which is now the envy of the museums in the old country. The Abbott collection is now the property of the New York Historical Society. Every article of that collection is known to be genuine. But things have changed now. The Fellahin are still at work, but their finds belong to the Government, and woe betide those who are detected in purloining them. The finds are scarce, but the number of tourists, especially since the English occupation, have considerably increased. The majority of American tourists are not enthusiastic collectors of antiquities. You cannot hammer into their heads that there are pleasures in collecting other things than dollars. But even they are tempted to buy a few of the relics and trinkets offered for sale at the places they visit, and thus exchange good money for worthless pebbles.

But as the supply always corresponds with the demand, the Fellahin counterfeiter, as well as numerous "Frank" (i. e., European,) sharpers have multiplied and their name is legion. It is therefore safe to state that fully 99 per cent. of the so-called Egyptian antiquities offered for sale at Sakihara, Luxor, and other villages along the Nile are base forgeries. The modern forger does his work scientifically. It is therefore hard to discern between a counterfeit and a genuine scarab. There is not now such a thing as an expert in discerning scarabs. There was a time when most of the counterfeit scarabs had only the hieroglyphic inscription Ra-Men-Kheper, the Pron. of Thothmes III., or that of Ra-Mesu, the Pron. of Rameses II. of the Nineteenth Dynasty. But the subtle counterfeiter has been graduated in his profession, and he imitates the more difficult signs with equal facility.

The vendors of antiquities get their wares not only from accomplished counterfeiters at home, but from European emporiums. There are only two methods of protecting the tourist from imposition, and those are: First, to possess himself with the names of reliable antiquaries in Cairo. These he could easily procure from the Consul. Second, to show the relics to the Custodian of Antiquities in the Boulac Museum before concluding the bargain.

Mr. Corson, the owner of the bracelet, had recourse to both above mentioned means. The antiquary from whom he purchased the gems was more than willing to let him have the bracelet for approval before receiving the money. The Curator of Egyptian Antiquities in the Boulac Museum pronounced it genuine.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of those spurious articles were sold at the International Exhibition in Chicago and the Midwinter Fair in San Francisco. Prof. Adams of the Johns Hopkins University and myself visited "Cairo" in the "Midway Plaisance." The camels and their drivers were the only genuine Egyptians, but not so the Antechi. We approached a venerable-looking, turbaned merchant, who was sitting in front of his bazaar. I addressed him in the Arabic language.

"Me no understand Arab; me speak French: Me Turk," he said.

One of the glass cases in his store contained ancient coins, scarabs, idols, &c. Several silver coins of the size of our dollar

specially attracted my attention. The Greek inscription upon them bore the name of Ptolomais Basileos, "King Ptolemy." As I had never seen such large silver coins of the Ptolemaic period, I was anxious to examine them. The Turk was obliging, and he handed me one of them, adding that the coin was of the premier roi de l'Egypte. Now, the first King of Egypt, I said to myself, was Mena, about 5000 B. C., and there was no money in Egypt throughout the thirty-one succeeding dynasties. Surely, I argued, he means the Ptolemy Soter, the first Klug after Alexander the Great.

"Monsieur," I said, "do you mean Ptolemy Soter or Ptolemy Philadelphus?"

"Pilapelpus," he replied.

He thus betrayed his ignorance, and I justly formed an adverse opinion about his Antich.

I told him that I was not ready to buy it, but should feel obliged if he would tell me its value. Thereupon he requested his employe behind the counter (in Turkish) to refer to the catalogue. That individual fetched a yellow-covered octavo volume from the shelf and began to turn rapidly the leaves, and scanned the pages from top to bottom.

"Dix-huit écus. Eighteen dollars," was the answer.

The unusual size of the coin catalogue and the yellow covers of the same caused me to suspect that all was not right. I therefore craned my neck across the counter and endeavored to learn the name of the publisher, &c. But I was not a little surprised when I discovered that the "catalogue" was nothing else but one of Emile Zola's novels.

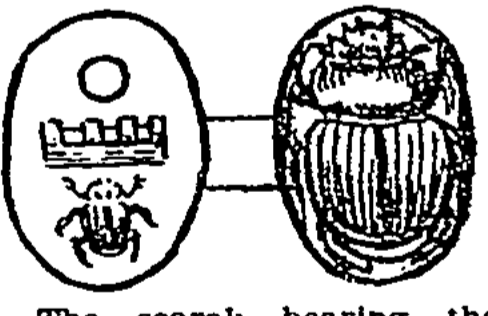
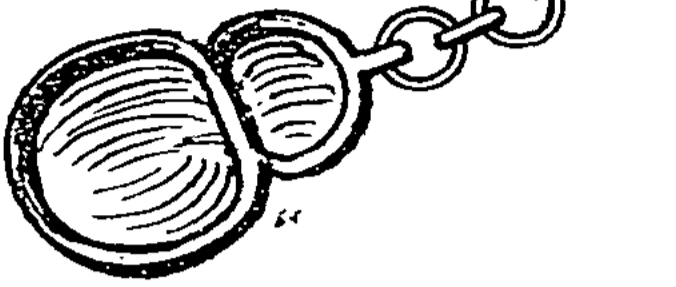
When we left a lady customer was bargaining for a scarab. We entered the court of the temples. Prof. A. wished to know the meaning of the hieroglyphics upon the walls. While I was explaining to him somebody touched my shoulder.

"Excuse me, Sir, in my interrupting you. I listened to your conversation with the Egyptian. I presume that you can read the hieroglyphics. Will you kindly tell me whether the scarab I have just purchased is really of Harmachis?"

"Harmachis? No. There is no such thing as a scarab with that inscription. You probably mean Har-em-kho-Horus."

My second surprise surpassed even the first. The inscription upon the counterfeit was the usual "Ra-men-kheper," the Pron. of Thothmes III. I gave to her my candid opinion, as she requested, and told her that the scarab was a counterfeit.

"Well," she said, complacently, "I have only paid \$4 for it, and I want to have a souvenir from Chicago."



The scarab bearing the pronomen of THOTHMES III. is the most numerous and has often been counterfeited.

S. A. BINION.