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BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

The *hemsah-h* in the Semitic

IN this JOURNAL for 1926, pp. 323-5, Mr. G. S. Driver has advanced the argument for the derivation of יהוה from original ה by the suggestion that ה was inserted as a vowel letter or letter of prolongation in the biliteral form; i. e. *ya(h)u* — *ya(h)u*, which then came to be 'improperly read and pronounced' *yahû(-ô)*, a final ה being subsequently added 'under the influence of a religious interpretation' and 'to support the final vowel.' For the inserted ה Mr. Driver might well have appealed to the 'graphic *h*' which appears so often and in as yet unexplained ways, in South Arabic. And the writer fully agrees with him that *h* in אברהם is just such a letter, which came later to induce a new syllable, 'Abraham.' Also note Moabite מודבא along with Biblical מִדְבָּא. Along with this phenomenon goes the earlier spelling of the name of the patriarch's wife, שרי (= שרה), which is the well-known Arabic spelling of certain feminine nouns. This combination of Arabian spellings opens up some interesting vistas into early Arabian scripts, and is a proof of the intimate relation of early Hebrew tradition with Arabia. Despite this assent the writer still remains unconvinced as to the monosyllabic origin of יהוה. He would observe *en passant* the early names Ya-wi^dDagan and Ya-wi^dAN listed by Theo Bauer in his *Ostkanaanäer* (1926), p. 31, in which the author finds the element יהוה (cf. pp. 56, 63). He disposes of the identification of Yaum, famous in the Babel-Bible controversy as though — הו, by interpreting it, e. g. in Ia-u-um-AN as meaning 'God is mine.' Ya-wi he interprets by 'he causes to exist.' But indeed so many names in the Akkadian implying absolute existence of the deity are found (probably so the

element *ya-kun*) that we may not categorically deny that יהה may mean 'the being one.'¹

But I think that Mr. Driver goes too far in claiming that root formations like Aram. רהט, בהת, Heb. קהל, כהן, were developed out of י' roots through the orthographic expression of the internal long vowel in the script by the vowel-letter ה, which ensued in the mispronunciation of the root רהט as רהט, etc. This argues for too vast an influence of script upon language in the early days of writing, when orthography was most phonetic. But the explanation, I believe, is as follows. Just as there is the well-known exchange of *y*, *i*, ' in weak roots, so also *h* appears at times as a corresponding element along with those variants. Thus we have בוש (בות), באש and בהת; so also the related roots בול, יכל, כהל; so also חפא = Aram. חפה, and Arabic חפא along with חפי. So the primary noun שח developed a denominative verb: in Arab. *sammî*, but in Aram. *sammeh*. That is, the slight aspirate *h* was used in radical developments even as *y*, *i*, and the *hemza*. For the phonetics cf. the equivalents in the causative stem, *haktala* and *'aktala*.

There is another field in which this inorganic aspirate appears, in the extension of nominal forms, and all in primitive nouns. The phenomenon exists in several plurals in the Aram., e. g. שמהת, from שח, etc.; in the unique Heb. אמרות, and in several Arabic plurals, e. g. 'abahât 'parents,' 'ummahât 'mothers' (similarly JAram. אמרות), šifâh, from šafat 'lip' (cf. JAram. שפת). In the first of these *h* is the survival of the generally assumed third radical *y*, i. e. 'abayât, which with the loss of *y* between the vowels might have become 'aba'ât, but actually it took the variant phonetic form 'abahât. 'Ummahât may be an analogy-formation; or is it analogous to Heb. and JAram. 'umahât? And there is the interesting exchange of *h* with *y* and *i* in the ancient Sem. word for 'water', along with ים, Akk.

¹ Withal s. & W. R. Arnold's article in the JOURNAL, 1905, 107-165, 'The Divine Name in Exodus iii, 14,' which well demonstrates that the theological explanation of the Name in that verse is a very late intrusion into the E Narrative. Dr. Arnold's thesis might help Mr. Driver's contention, but if the theological development is late, how can we explain יהה on the Moabite Stone?

mê, modern Arab. *mô* (doubtless very ancient as the early etymology of מֵאָה proves), Arab. *mâ^un* or *mâh^un*, with the pl. based on *h* as radical, *miyâh^un* or *'amwâh^un*. We have thus for variants of the basal monosyllable, *mau*, *mai*, *mâh*, *mâ'*. The first two would be the elder forms, with subsequent weakening into *h* and finally'. And so in the cases in the papyri which Mr. Driver cites in proof of his contention for a mere graphic *h*, רִיחֵשׁ, רִיחֵשׁ, בְּנֵהוּ, I have come to consider the *h* as an actual aspiration separating the two vowels, for which ' might also have been used. (Cf. the early Biblical Latin Israel for Israel.) Their occurrence is too late for the postulation of the very antique graphic *h*.²

Accordingly, because of this parity of *h* with ' (an inorganic phenomenon which is found in other languages) I am accustomed to call it the *hemza-h*.

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On the Use of the Word Jehovah in Translating the Old Testament

Conclusions based on forty years experience in the Hebrew
classroom

In the Authorized version of the Old Testament the English word Lord is used to represent two quite different words in the Hebrew. For the one word it is printed Lord, and for the other LORD or GOD. The explanation is given that the latter printing indicates that it stands for the Hebrew word designating the covenant God of Israel, and is a proper name. The proper assimilation of this fact rarely occurs. In all cases the words carry the idea, Master, Ruler. Neither of them after four centuries of use has acquired the connotations that are desired.

In order to secure the proper idea in the mind of the student the custom was adopted in the early years of teaching to require him to give the rendering Yahweh when the Hebrew IHWH occurred. Gradually it came to be felt that this method

² There may also be noticed in this connection the occasional expression in Akkadian of intervocalic ' by *h*; e. g. A-bi-*h*i-el = אֲבִי־הִי־עֵל; s. Bauer, *op. cit.* 63.