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1925

678TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W. 1, ON MONDAY, MAY 4TH, 1925,
AT 4.30 P.M.,

PROFESSOR THEOPHILUS G. PINCHES, LL.D., M.R.A.S.,
IN THE CHAIR.

A paper by Professor Edouard Naville, LL.D., D.C.L., a Vice-President of the Society, was read, on "The Land of Punt and the Hamites."

The CHAIRMAN explained that, much to the regret of the Council, Professor Naville was not able to be present to read his paper, which had unfortunately arrived too late to be printed and circulated to members.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced that the following gentlemen had been elected as Associates:—The Rev. Professor L. B. Henderson, A.M., B.D., and Herbert B. Cole, Esq.

The CHAIRMAN then, after a few general remarks on the subject, called on the Hon. Secretary to read the paper, in Professor Naville's absence.

In introducing Professor Naville's paper: "The Land of Punt and the Hamites," the Chairman spoke of the importance of the subject. We knew something of the Hamites, but Punt was not a district with which ordinary Bible-students were acquainted. It was well known, however, to Egyptologists, and seems to have been a land of romance even to the Egyptians themselves. We might therefore expect that Professor Naville had something of considerable interest to tell us.

THE LAND OF PUNT AND THE HAMITES.

By PROFESSOR EDOUARD NAVILLE, D.C.L., LL.D., F.S.A.

IN the Egyptian inscriptions we frequently find the mention of a land with which the Egyptians were connected by special links, and to which they several times sent expeditions. It is chiefly referred to in religious texts because it was the land of frankincense, which was much employed in the ceremonies. It was the land which we shall call the land of Punt, though it is possible that the vowel of the name was lengthened, as it is shown by the Greek name Πουάνου πόλις.

The proof that the Egyptians considered that there was a sort of parentage between them and the land of Punt is that its name is never written with the sign of a foreign country, although in the

inscriptions even districts which were borderlands still have that sign when they belong to the administrative divisions of Egypt.

The first time we meet with the name of Punt is under King Chufu of the IVth dynasty. One of his sons has a slave from Punt. But a regular expedition to Punt is first recorded under the Vth dynasty, under King Sahura, as we know from the inscription of the Palermo stone. We see there that the king, building his sanctuaries, sent to the land of Punt to get there, in the first place frankincense, also a metal to which I shall have to revert, and which I believe to be copper, and a yellow mineral which I cannot determine. This shows that in that remote time already there was a commercial intercourse between Egypt and Punt, and the trade probably was by sea. It must have been regular under the Vth dynasty and afterwards, since we find the name of the frankincense in the texts of the pyramids of Unas, the last king of the Vth dynasty, and Teti, the third king of the VIth. Occasionally, at that epoch we find mention of Punt, from which a dancing dwarf is brought by travellers who went South; but what proves that there was a trade by sea with Punt is what we read in an inscription of an officer called Pepinekht, who was sent by King Pepi II of the VIth dynasty somewhere on the coast of the Red Sea, to avenge the death of an officer who had been killed by the people of the desert while fitting up a transport ship for Punt.

The first account of a naval expedition to Punt is given by the last king of the XIth dynasty, Sankhkara Mentuhotep. An officer called Henu is ordered by the king to send a vessel to Punt, to bring fresh frankincense from the sheikhs of Punt. Henu starts from Coptos with a troop of 3,000 men. His journey to the harbour on the Red Sea seems to have been difficult. It is possible that he had to open a new road to the harbour. He seems to have encountered on his way some hostility from the natives, and he had to dig several wells in the desert. At last he reached the sea: "I made the ship and I dispatched it with everything." He did not go himself with the ship, but he stayed till its return. The voyage does not seem to have been very long. Probably the ship went to the nearest port of Punt, which, as we shall see, was on the Arabian coast. After the ship's return, Henu went back to Egypt, and he boasts of having brought for the king all the products he had found in the districts of "God's land."

Here Punt is named by its Egyptian name, God's land or the

divine land. It received this name because, though it was well known, it was considered as the land of wonders, of marvels. What was very highly valued among the products of Punt was frankincense. It was for frankincense that the Egyptians sent expeditions to Punt. Other valuable things would come from there, but the odoriferous gum was the most precious, and it was much more prized for temple worship and household consumption than it is now. Punt was renowned for its perfumes; it was a sweet-smelling country. The greatest compliment which may be made to a woman is that she breathes all the perfumes of Punt. Punt and frankincense are nearly always connected, and the choicest frankincense, called by the Egyptians *anti*, comes from Punt only.

Frankincense is a gum produced by a plant which botanists call *Boswellia Carteri*; it grows to the height of 4 or 5 metres. The gum is gathered at the present day by the Arabs by cutting the stem, and, after seven days, collecting the gum which has exuded. But there are other varieties of *Boswellia*, which are trees, and which emit the gum which dries up in small patches along the branches, as we see in the pictures of Deir el Bahari. These trees are called sycamores of incense, and they are brought in pots from the land of Punt to be transplanted in the garden of Amon at Thebes, where they grow to a great height.

Where was the land of Punt which was so renowned for its incense? We have a picture of a part of Punt, to which the queen, whom I shall call by her familiar name Hatasu, sent her vessels, in the sculptures of the temple of Deir el Bahari. They were partly brought to light by Mariette; all that remains of them may be seen after the excavations which I made there for the Egypt Exploration Fund. It is a pity that these walls have been so much destroyed, even not very long ago, by travellers. The queen relates that it is on the express order of Amon that she sent an expedition to Punt, to the land of incense, after the god had promised her that, while her predecessors had received the marvels of Punt in return for large payments, "the incense terraces will belong to her," the god will give success to the expedition.

The queen sends an expedition, which has not a military character; it is not intended to make the conquest of the country, but to establish regular commercial intercourse. The five ships which are sent to Punt carry a certain number of soldiers, but there is no fighting, only trade carried on by exchange

of wares, as it is still done at the present day with African populations.

The ships anchor in a harbour which is certainly African ; certain animals and plants which we see there are exclusively African, like the giraffe, certain monkeys, the elephant or rhinoceros, and the ebony wood. The population is mixed. The Puntites are the rulers, the land is theirs, but a negro population has established itself there, black and brown negroes. We see their huts, which seem to be made of wicker-work, probably palm-stalks ; they are built on poles and reached by a ladder. We have here the picture of a kind of commercial factory, where the wares of the country were sold and the goods of the African natives were brought for barter. There is no doubt that what is shown to us is a harbour on the African coast ; Punt was therefore a part of Africa. How far did this settlement extend on the coast of the continent ? This is a very much discussed question. Some authors, like Glaser, maintain that Punt went as far as Mashonaland, that the Puntites knew the gold mines of South Africa, and that they raised the extraordinary constructions of Zimbabe. Mariette, who first published these inscriptions about Punt, considered that the land of ointments and of all sorts of fragrant gums, whither the Egyptians repeatedly sent expeditions on purpose to get frankincense, must be the *Aromatifera regio* of the Greeks and Romans in Africa ; it meant the present land of the Somali as far as Cape Guardafui ; but the Latin name applies also to the Arabian coast, and, in fact, we find that in the inscription Punt is spoken of as being on both sides of the sea. And when the countries are enumerated which are the cardinal points of Egypt, Punt is sometimes East, the Arabian Punt, and sometimes South, the African.

The Puntite is a tall, well-shaped man, of a type which certainly belongs to the Caucasian race ; his hair is flaxen and is divided in well-made plaits ; his nose is aquiline, his beard long and pointed ; he wears a loin-cloth. The chief has a dagger in his belt. The type is very like that of the Egyptians ; except in the hair there is hardly any difference between Egyptians and Puntites, who are loading together the five ships sent by the queen, and especially carrying the incense trees in pots, which are to be planted in the garden of Amon. The appearance of the Puntites such as we see them portrayed at Deir el Bahari shows that they formed part of the Hamitic stock, and, as we shall see further, that their original home was Arabia.

It is something extraordinary that the name of Punt is exclusively Egyptian. No other people in antiquity, neither the Hebrews nor the Babylonians, the Assyrians, or the Persians, knew that name, nor is it quoted in the inscriptions of South Arabia. It seems that Punt does not designate a definite country, but an ethnic group, and that it means the old population of southern Arabia and the eastern coast of Africa, a vast region which is called by Greek and Latin authors *Æthiopia*.

That the coast of Arabia from the Persian Gulf belonged to Punt is certain. Let us remember that Punt is the land of frankincense, and the land of frankincense from which there was since a remote antiquity a trade in this much valued ware is Arabia, and chiefly the coast as far as the Erythrean sea, the Persian Gulf. Even now the trade in incense from the Arabic coast is still extant. The region where it grows is restricted to a small part of the southern coast, which has been visited and described by Bent. The trade is now carried on by Indian merchants.

Lepsius has been the first to compare the name of the inhabitants of Punt, of the Puni or Puntii, with that of the Phœnicians, and to show that the original home of the Phœnicians was in the Erythrean sea, the Persian Gulf. The name Phœnicians and the name of the bird Phœnix come from there. The Puni extended rapidly over the Arabian coast, and the Eastern coast of Africa. As I said, Dr. Glaser, who is now the chief authority on Arabia, does not hesitate to assert that they conquered Mashonaland, and that Zimbabwe was one of their colonies, since some of the monuments found there have the greatest likeness to some of the Phœnicians.

As to the Puni settling on the Syrian coast, we do not know when that took place; but they were Puntites. Herodotus, speaking of them, says: "This nation, according to their own account, dwelt anciently upon the Erythrean sea, but, crossing thence, fixed themselves on the sea-coast of Syria, where they still inhabit." This statement is confirmed by Strabo, who even goes beyond Herodotus, and attempts to determine the original habitat of the Phœnician race, and discovers that certain islands, those namely of the Bahrein group, were the first settlements of the nation, from which they started to found their great cities. Trogius Pompeius undertakes to give the causes of their migration. But we shall not follow these two later authors; we shall be content with the statement of Herodotus.

We find occasionally, for instance in the inscription of Henu, that the land of Punt is called the Red Land, and the sea which washes its shores is called Erythrean, the Red Sea. Various explanations have been given of that name. The question seems to me to have been solved by a Chinese scholar, M. Léopold de Saussure, who, studying Chinese cosmology, has shown that colours are attributed to every one of the cardinal points—black to the North, red to the South, green to East, and white to West, the central part of the earth, occupied by the throne of the sovereign, being yellow. This conception is not special to the Chinese; the cosmology of the Zend Avesta shows that the theory of the five colours existed in the Iran. A curious proof of it is what we read in Herodotus: "The Persians inhabit a country upon the Southern or Erythrean Sea." So that this name, the Red Sea, the Red Land, means only the Southern, for we read in the same author: "Arabia is the last of inhabited lands towards the South, and it is the only country which produces frankincense, myrrh, cassia, cinnamon and ladanum."

If the coasts of the Persian Gulf and of Arabia were the original home of the Phœnicians, when did they settle on the Syrian coast, and which way did they follow to reach that region? It seems excluded that they came by sea, unless their migration goes very far back, when, according to geologists, the Red Sea, of which we know that in historical times it went further north than at the present day, communicated with the Mediterranean. But it seems more probable that the Puni came by land and occupied more than the coast of Palestine, for we read in Exodus that the Israelites did eat the manna until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan. Here the LXX read, "until they came to a part of Phœnicia." The word Phœnicia does not occur in Hebrew, which has only Canaan or Canaanites, while in the LXX, Kanaani, Canaanite, is often translated by Phœnician or by merchant, "trafficker." This raises an important question: Does the word Canaanite mean only "of Phœnicia," or were there two different races in the country? This seems probable, since we see such great difference between these two nations. The Phœnicians are quiet and peaceable, a nation of traffickers, skilful in navigation and in the arts both useful and ornamental, unwarlike except at sea; whereas the Canaanites are fierce and intractable warriors. Were the Phœnicians the Puni, the first inhabitants

of the country, or did they meet in their migration with this warlike population? The ethnic table of Gen. x gives them a common origin. They are descendants of Ham, who was the father of Canaan, whose first-born was Sidon. Another son was Heth; he begat also the Jebusite, the Amorite, the Gergashite, the populations which are said to inhabit Canaan. Probably there must have been in later time a Semitic invasion, which introduced Semitic language. This question is still very obscure. Let us hope that the excavations in Syria, especially at Byblos, which have already given such surprising results, will bring some light on the early migrations of those peoples.

We have seen that the land of Punt was a vast territory comprising the Persian Gulf, the south coast of Arabia, and certainly also the coast of the present Red Sea on both sides, for on the Arabian side Ptolemy mentions Πουάνου πόλις, which is the Egyptian name, and which, according to the map of the geographer, would be opposite the present Italian colony of Erythrea. The name of Punt, as we said, does not occur anywhere except in the Egyptian inscriptions, and we must not consider it as referring to a definite state organized as such. It is a geographical name applying to the region which was occupied by the Puni, these Hamites of the same stock as the Egyptians, but in the first place to the region producing frankincense, the coast of Arabia and that of Africa. It is clear that those Hamites not only had a wide expansion, but they were also among the first civilized nations and that they imported their civilization into some of the lands which they occupied or where they made colonies.

The name of Punt does not appear in the list of nations of Gen. x. But it must be noticed that in that chapter the posterity of Ham is more fully described than that of his two brothers, even of Shem, the ancestor of the Hebrews. It seems that when the author wrote this list the Hamites were an important part of the nations of the world. How is it, then, that Punt does not appear in it? It was thought at first that Punt was Put, who is given as the third son of Ham; but Put is the only one whose descendants are not given, as if he had not had any. I believe with Dr. Glaser that Punt, this ethnic group, is called in the list *Cush*, which is a name of the same kind, and must not be considered as the African Ethiopia. Cush certainly meant a part of Asia. The Cushites are not black negroes, they are found in Arabia and Mesopotamia. We see that in the

Bible, when speaking of the rivers coming out of Eden, it is said that the second river is Gihon, "that compasseth the whole land of Cush," the third and the fourth river being the Tigris and the Euphrates; it is clear that here Cush cannot be a part of Africa, and must be Asiatic.

If we look for the starting-point of the Puni and the country where they reached the highest degree of civilization, it is certainly the south of Arabia, a country which in antiquity, even in the time of Diodorus, was very different from what it is now. The Greek historian speaks several times of the extreme beauty of that country, which was called "Arabia felix": "Coming from the waterless and desert country, Arabia differs so much from it because of the abundance of fruits which grow there, and all other wealth, that she is called the happy Arabia." The historian describes all the odoriferous plants which grow there, cinnamon, cassia, and others; but that is not enough, the earth itself emits vapours of sweet scent: "All kinds of cattle are found there, and the country is watered by many rivers; many villages and considerable cities have been founded there on high terraces or hills and in the plain. The metropolis of the country is called Sabæ. This nation differs not only from the neighbouring Arabs, but from all others, by its riches and its magnificence. Since, owing to their remoteness, they never were under a foreign domination and never were ravaged, the mass of accumulated gold and silver is overflowing, especially at Sabæ, where is the royal residence; all kinds of drinking-cups are adorned with reliefs in gold and silver, beds and tripods have feet of silver, and all the furniture is of incredible magnificence. The great columns of peristyles are partly covered with gold and have silver ornaments on their capitals; the panels and the doors are adorned with mouldings of gold and precious stones. In all the construction of houses they show a lavish expenditure of silver and gold, of ivory and the most precious stones, and of all things which other men consider as most valuable."

It is clear that this description of Diodorus is not that of an eye-witness. It has been related to him with the amount of exaggeration which is generally found in descriptions made by Orientals, as any one who has lived with them can easily perceive. We shall have to compare what the Greek historian says to what we see in the Egyptian inscriptions.

It is certain that from an early epoch, the Arabian coast of

Punt was divided into many states which became very powerful, owing to the fact that the Puni were a seafaring nation addicted to trade. Some of these states seem to be of late date—the Katabanians, the Minæans, the Himyarites—and it is clear that the country was subjected to Semitic invasions. It is shown by the fact that the South Arabian inscriptions, which are the only literary documents which we possess, are all in Semitic languages. The history of these South Arabian kingdoms is not much known; it is only quite lately that we have obtained more information about them, chiefly through the journeys, first of Halevy, and afterwards of the German Glaser, who went to the country and collected about 2,000 inscriptions. The states which are best known are the Minæans and the Sabæans, who occupied what is now Yemen. These two kingdoms had intercourse together. They were peaceful folk and their business enterprise was widespread. But there were other nations or states more East, in Hadramaut; for Bent, who explored only a small part of that coast which is still now a frankincense country, found there extensive ruins of great cities.

The Sabæans are known to us from Scripture, where they are called Sheba or Seba; we learn there that they were a population of mixed origin. Seba is said to be a son of Cush, a Hamite; at the same time there is a Sheba who is son of Joktan, a Semite. This seems to show that when the author of Genesis wrote, in the regions which have this name, invasions and migrations of populations had taken place, Semites had occupied Sheba, and the name had not changed, so that both Hamites and Semites could vindicate that country as their own. Ezekiel speaks of the traffickers of Sheba who trade with spices, precious stones and gold, Job of the caravans of Sheba; but what shows best the riches of the Sabæans is the narrative of the visit which the Queen of Sheba paid to King Solomon.

Sheba is in the region which the Egyptians called Punt, and certainly there must have been a commercial intercourse between the Arabian coast and Egypt. Let us revert to the picture at Deir el Bahari, and see what the expedition of the queen brings back from Punt. The most important product, which alone would have induced the Egyptians to make a naval expedition, is frankincense; this was the special property of the Puntites. In loading the ships, frankincense and the pots where the frankincense trees are planted, are carried only by the Egyptians and Puntites, not by the negroes, who carry

ebony and bring various animals. After the landing of the ships on their return, the first thing they unload is frankincense, of which an enormous heap is made; the trees are planted in the garden of Amon. The incense is weighed; the quantity brought is said to be 3,333,300 *deben*. A *deben* is 90·95 grammes, 10 *deben* is nearly 1 kilog., so that the total weight would be above 300 metric tons.

This weight seems fabulous, but what is still more so is what we see next to it. The second thing which is weighed is a metal which was brought in boxes and which is in rings; it is called *uasem* or *usem*. This word has been translated in various ways. The English egyptologist Le Page Renouf has found the true meaning; it is copper. It is clear that the enormous weight, which is the same as that of the incense, cannot be that of gold. The use which was made of that metal shows what it is; the tops of the obelisks are covered with that metal, the rays of which illuminated the country like the sun when it appears on the horizon. The doors of the temples are said to be made of copper, they were covered with that metal, and it is often said that they project rays like the solar disk; columns are covered with copper, the figures which must shine are made of copper, the walls of shrines have mouldings of that metal, which adorned chariots, thrones, tables and coffers. It is spoken of a big ewer of that metal which was seven cubits in height. This reminds us of what Diodorus says of the furniture of the inhabitants of the "Arabia felix," which, he says, was of gold and silver.

The Egyptians distinguished three precious metals—gold, copper and silver—while the people of Arabia had only gold and silver. This induces us to question whether the gold of the Arabians does not mean two different metals, the real gold and the *usem*—the copper of the Egyptians, which was found in such great quantities. Those ancients were not experts in mineralogy, nor were they versed in the properties of the different minerals and their nature. They distinguished them by their degree of brilliancy, and they called *gold* two metals of nearly equal resplendency. Copper is very much valued for it, even at the present day, in some parts of Africa. The German traveller, Schweinfurth, who travelled in Central Africa about fifty years ago among natives who were then cannibals, relates his visit to Mounsa, the king of the Monbuttu. For them copper was the precious metal; they had neither gold nor silver. Copper and

slaves were their only money. Mounsa received the traveller in a big hall made of palm wood. He was covered with heavy copper ornaments, which illuminated his body ; his sword was of copper ; his throne had rings and nails of copper. Behind his throne was a rack on which were arranged several hundreds of lances and picks of hammered copper. The rays of the midday sun, says Schweinfurth, gave to this mass of red metal a dazzling brilliancy, and each of these lances sent forth a fire as of blazing torches. This reminds us of what the Egyptian writers say of the effect of copper doors or obelisks. If we turn to the Old Testament, we find that once Ezra speaks of vessels of fine bright copper as precious, or, as the Hebrew text says, as desirable as gold. Much earlier, we find that in his campaign against Hadadezer, " David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and from Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took exceeding much copper " (II Sam. viii, 8).

The Jews had different names for gold and copper, but evidently they often called *gold* what, like the vessels of Ezra, was as bright as gold, and would be mistaken for the more precious metal. This is clearly the case where the metal comes from the land of Punt. It is related that the Queen of Sheba (the Sabæans) came to visit King Solomon. She came with a great train with camels that bare spices and very much gold and precious stones. The first thing mentioned in the gifts which she brings to the king are spices ; the frankincense of her country, the most valuable product, coming from Punt. Next to it is very much gold. Are we not to recognize there the *usem*, the copper, which came in such great quantity from Punt ? When she went away she made a present to the king of 120 talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones. The writer in Chronicles adds : " Neither was there any such spices as the Queen of Sheba gave King Solomon." She gave him the best frankincense of Punt, which was highly valued. As for the weight of metal, 120 talents of gold, reckoning the much-discussed value of the talent to its lowest, 42 kilog., the gift of the queen would be of more than 5 metric tons of gold, which seems an incredible quantity of that metal. Have we not to understand here the word *gold* as being that bright *copper* which was found abundantly in Punt, and which, according to Ezra, was as valuable as gold ?

The same seems to me to be said of another part of Punt, also

mentioned by Scripture ; I mean Ophir. It is said that King Solomon made a navy of ships in Eziongeber, "that Hiram sent in the navy shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, that they came to Ophir and fetched from thence gold, 420 talents, and brought it to King Solomon." I cannot go into the arguments brought forward by a German scholar, Moritz, who seems to have established that Ophir is part of the Arabian west coast of the Red Sea. It is certain that in antiquity the Arabic coast of the Red Sea was considered as a country where a great quantity of gold was found, and that was the reason why naval expeditions like that of Solomon and Hiram were sent there. But was such an enormous amount of the precious metal found there ? When we read that Solomon's fleet brought back more than 16 metric tons of gold, are we not justified in thinking that the term gold was applied to another metal which had the same brilliancy, but was of a different nature, and was found, and is still now found, in various parts of the world in much greater quantity than gold—I mean copper ? In the account of Queen Hatasu's expedition to the land of Punt, an enormous amount of copper is mentioned, and there is also gold, but it is not one of the chief wares coming from the country ; after frankincense, ebony and ivory, green or fresh gold from the land of Amu is mentioned, as if it did not come from Punt.

What is fresh or green gold ? We do not know, but this shows what we hear from the inscriptions that the Egyptians distinguished several kinds of gold ; and it explains to us a passage in Genesis which has not been understood. The second chapter of Genesis, speaking of one of the rivers coming out of the Garden of Eden, the Pishon, says : "That is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold, and the gold of that land is good." That is an extraordinary remark, which seems rather senseless, since it does not mean pure, which is expressed in Hebrew by another word. What is meant by "good gold" ?—good for what ? We cannot fancy a kind of gold which should not be good. But this is an Egyptian touch, and reveals the hand of a writer who, like Moses, was well versed in the Egyptian language and its colloquial expressions. In the lists, where are enumerated various kinds of gold coming from different places, also gold from the mountain, or from water, we find distinguished from them "good gold." When they sum up the quantities of these different golds, the "good gold" is one of the units ; it is not mixed up with the others. Therefore

there is no doubt that there was a special kind called the "good gold." And, curiously, we have a coin of that metal, a gold coin on which there is no image of a king, no inscription, other than these words: "good gold." When the first coin was found it was held to be a forgery, but for Egyptologists there was no doubt that it was genuine. The word "good" is written in two different ways; one of them is a variant of later time which is rare and could not be invented by forgers. Several samples, of that coin have been found since. It is stamped and not cast and probably it is the beginning of coined money in Egypt.

The passage of Genesis should be translated something like "the gold of Havilah is *the* good gold. Havilah appears twice in Gen. x. Once with Seba, it is a son of Cush, a Hamite; in another place, with Sheba and Ophir, it is a descendant of Joktan, a son of Eber, a Semite. That, I suppose, means that those countries were occupied by a mixed population of Hamites and Semites, so that both considered it as their own. Havilah joined to Sheba and Ophir is certainly an Arabic country. "It produces the bdellium," a kind of resinous gum, of myrrh or balsam; it belongs therefore to the region which is called aromatical, to the Arabian coast, and the inscription of the coin, "good gold," means gold from Arabia. It is not impossible that this good gold from Arabia is that which Diodorus calls *ἄπυρος*, and of which he says that it is not found in small chips to be joined by fire, but it is dug out perfectly pure in pieces like a chestnut, and of such brilliant colour that when the jewellers set in it the most precious stones it makes the most beautiful ornaments.

Summing up the chief results at which we have arrived, we found that Punt was a name meaning an ethnic group, not a country with definite limits, that consisted chiefly of coastland in Africa and in Arabia; that the population belonged to the Hamitic stock; that one of its tribes, leaving the Persian Gulf, had settled on the coast of Syria, where it became the Phœnicians.

I can only relate in a few words the history of the Puntites and their influence on Egyptian civilization.

The original home of the Puntites seems to have been South Arabia. There they found metal, especially copper, which they were the first to use, and of which they made weapons. From South Arabia they crossed over to the African coast and went down the Nile. In its lower valley they found the Anu, Hamite tribes in the neolithic age, not knowing metal, and which they

easily conquered. One of the first festivals in the calendar, that of "striking the Anu," recorded the conquest. They gave to the native population the impulse to civilization, they seem to have introduced agriculture, and to them must be attributed the invention of scripture, a figure-writing which arose in one of the conquered tribes and spread over the whole country. The conquerors became the Pharaonic Egyptians. All the traditions of the country show that they came from the South. The South always has precedence over the North, and their coming from Punt seems proved by the fact that Punt is never quoted as a foreign country.

The Egyptian civilization is Hamitic, and it is due to ancient inhabitants of South Arabia, who before historical time settled in the valley of the Nile. This seems in accordance with the traditions of the country and with the scanty information which we have on those remote ages.

DISCUSSION.

In opening the discussion, the CHAIRMAN touched upon several points in this noteworthy communication.

He thought that all would agree that they had listened to an exceedingly interesting paper—a paper which had fulfilled the prediction which he had made, that we should find in the land of Punt, as the Egyptians did, a land of romance. It is a pity that we had not any pictures to show, for if we had had that good fortune, the audience would have seen how like an Egyptian the Prince of Punt was, though the Princess of Punt and her daughter, far from having the slim Egyptian type, are ridiculously fat, short and ungainly (W. Max Müller, *Asien und Europa nach Altägyptischen Denkmälern*, Leipzig, 1893)—in fact, they look like caricatures. As he had said, these pictures are well known to Egyptologists, and it is to be noted that they are not only given by Max Müller but also in the great monumental works wherein the tombs of Egypt are figured.

There is no doubt that the radical letters of the name of Punt (or, otherwise vocalized, *Pwanet*) suggest a connection with the name Phœnicia, and, notwithstanding that they spoke Semitic languages or dialects, the Hebrews regarded Canaan, Seba, and Sheba as being,

like the nation to which Nimrod belonged, as being Hamitic. The Philistines, Amorites and Sidonians are also described as Cushites, for they were children of Canaan. These—possibly in alliance—must practically have occupied the whole Peninsula of Sinai. About the time when this paper was to be read, the Chairman was studying certain of the temple-accounts of Lagaš—the province ruled over by the renowned viceroy Gudea—and was then reminded of the two Semitic-speaking Hamitic races, the Amorites and the Sabæans. The former occurs in the Amherst Tablets published under the number 80, and is written 𒌦- 𒌦𒌦 𒌦 , *Mar-tu-sal*, the Sumerian equivalent of the Akkadian *Amurritu*, “Amorite woman.” The reference to the Sabæans, however, is apparently still more satisfactory, as the name is spelled out in full, and appears in the plural 𒌦 𒌦𒌦𒌦 𒌦- 𒌦𒌦 𒌦𒌦 𒌦 , *sal Sa-bu-u^m (ki)-me*, read simply, apparently, as *sal Sabume*, “Sabæan women.” Did these foreigners—and probably others—come from the west or from the south—from the land of the Amorites, or from the district of Punt? The food for the Amorites seems to have been taken by ship, and therefore may have come from the south—the Persian Gulf. In any case, it is probably not too venturesome to suppose that travellers and merchants went to and from the western land of the Amorites and the Arabian region, and possibly to Punt, through Babylonia, finding settlements of their countrymen and countrywomen on the way. It is to be noted that the renowned hero and traveller, Gilgameš of Erech, visited a *Sabitu^m*—in all probability a Sabæan woman—when on the way to find the Babylonian Noah, *Ut-napišti^m*, and received from her instructions as to the road he was to take. The name of this Sabæan woman or goddess is given as *Siduri*, and she dwelt on the throne of the sea—that is, of the Persian Gulf and the islands of Bahrein—the very place where Professor Naville locates a portion of Punt and the land occupied by their Hamite kindred.

Another point is that of the gold, and the probability that copper was comparable in appearance and value with it. The lavish use of “gold” by the Babylonian kings in their temple-decorations, as related in their inscriptions, seems improbable, and Professor Naville’s suggestion offers a possible solution of the difficulty. One of the most interesting inscriptions bearing upon this question is that

printed in the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of W. Asia*, vol. ii, pl. 51, No. 1. We there learn that *Şarpat* was the land of silver, *Arali* and *Gab-ua* lands of gold, and *Harhâ* and *Mas-gungunnu* lands of lead. But to this is added, lower down, that *Meluhha* (Sinai and Meroë) was the land of the *sîmtu*-stone—probably some form of red copper ore—and *Magan*, the land of copper, is mentioned on the same line with it. The general opinion with regard to this last is that it was some part of the district of the Persian Gulf and the Peninsula of Sinai.

Everything therefore tends to confirm Professor Naville's reasoned conclusions :—

“ I am sure that when the time comes, you will all agree that this is an important and valuable paper, and will accord it a really hearty vote of thanks.”

MR. THEODORE ROBERTS inquired of the Chairman if there was any connection between the Latin name “ Punic ” and “ Punt.” It was interesting, as the lecturer had pointed out, that the descendants of Ham occupy a larger space in Gen. x than the descendants of the other two sons of Noah, which showed they were the most prolific, as indeed was the negro or black race of to-day as compared with the white. It seemed now clear from recent archæological investigations that it was the race of Ham that in both Egypt and Mesopotamia was the first to exercise sovereign power, as the Genesis record indicated, which disproved the Higher Critics' theory that Genesis was put together during the Babylonian exile. All the time of this sovereignty of Ham's posterity, Noah's prophecy that it should be servant of servants remained unfulfilled, but had since been proved to be a true prediction.

The lecturer's view that Cush was not Ethiopia was interesting in connection with the prophecy of Isa. xviii of the restoration of Israel, of which Mr. Roberts could not help thinking that the Balfour note was the beginning of fulfilment, for he knew of no other country which must of necessity send its ambassadors by the sea than this island of Great Britain.

He pointed out that, even in the New Testament, Peter twice mentioned silver before gold (Acts iii, 6 ; 1 Pet. i, 18), no doubt from his being a Jew influenced by the Old Testament. We had explained this priority of silver to gold by its typical meaning

of the redemption price, while gold indicated the divine nature. He was sure that we should gain much from studying the paper with our Bibles.

Mr. WILLIAM C. EDWARDS said : It is much to be regretted that this interesting and instructive paper did not arrive in time to be printed as usual for this Meeting, because one might have had time to look up the authorities quoted, especially Herodotus and Strabo.

Herodotus seems a very reliable man when he writes regarding what he saw with his own eyes, but when he quotes—almost verbatim—what he was told, then one must beware, for they are “tales of the marines.” Many of these tales were told for the express purpose of frightening him from going to these places and keeping the secret of the gold and spices rare and precious. He tried hard, and in vain, to find a man who had been to the seas west of Spain, and that shows his earnest quest for knowledge.

Herodotus believed in the close connection between Greece and Egypt. He writes that all the gods of Greece, except a few, came from Egypt.

Now, with regard to the immigrations of the Hamites, what I cannot understand is the curious way some theorists seem to have of saying “this way or nothing.” I am prepared to believe that the Hamites came as described in the paper, but in other ways as well.

As regards Egypt, I believe that the first great and main stream came as Abraham did, *via* Damascus down through Palestine and settled on the Nile. Other streams of people came coastwise down the Persian Gulf and through the Gulf of Aden. I suggest that a close study of the various caravan routes may show almost the original lines of these land immigrations.

When later streams came to Egypt they found a lot of low-type people in possession, and, conquering them, became their rulers.

The same thing happened in Greece and India, but in Egypt it was specially true that the Sons of Ham became the servants of servants—the slaves of slaves.

Now, it is a mistake to regard Arabia as entirely barren. Even in the Sinaitic peninsula there are signs, and not a few, that once the country had a plentiful supply of rain.

I remember some years ago, when on a P. & O. steamer, being introduced to the Sultan of Lahej, and discussing this very point. He assured me through his secretary that all they wanted was assistance to store up the plentiful rains that they received during the rainy seasons. His Highness wanted me to visit his country and settle there for that very purpose—of helping make pools like those called Solomon's at Aden.

I remember having read in Marco Polo that in the part of Arabia producing the best spices the Soldan had the monopoly of white incense that he compelled people to sell to him at £10 (livres) per hundredweight, and resold to the merchant exporters at £60.

In many of these matters we are often dealing only with conjectures and traditions.

There is one certain document that tells us about the races, their origin and distribution, and that is the Bible. A few verses in Gen. x give us more absolutely reliable information about these ancient things than all the other writers of antiquity put together.

Again, Ezek. xxvii is full of information about the trade and traders of those distant ages. In Ezek. xxvii two different Hebraic words are translated by the same English word "merchant."* In I Kings x, 15, one of these words is translated "spice merchant," and refers to a country of Arabia, but the translation of the country is in dispute. The two words are *rakal* and *cachar*, and my Jewish friends do not seem able to help me to understand the exact difference. The dictionaries tell us that *rakal* is a prime root for travelling for trade, whilst *cachar* may be something of a pedlar. I suggest that perchance the first is a merchant doing business by ships, and the other refers to caravan dealers.

Let us hope that one day Arabia will become better known, and then many puzzles may be solved, and when they are, I am sure that light will be thrown upon Holy Scripture, and its absolute accuracy again become more and more demonstrated.

* To me it is an interesting and suggestive fact, that whilst the Hebrew word translated (Ezek. xvii, 4) "merchant" is *Rakal*, and in Isa. xxiii, 8, *Sachar*, the word in Isa. xxiii, 11, is *Kercan* (thus also in Hos. xii, 7, and Zeph. i, 11), and *Kenaani* in Job xli, 6, and Prov. xxxi, 24. Was Canaan the "father" of merchants?