

the Persian Kings, Xerxes (B.C. 485-465): Artaxerxes I. (465-425); and Darius Nothas (424-405). They consisted of the business papers of a Jewish family. They were written in Aramaic; and to the surprise of historians shewed that at that date there was a community of Jews settled at the extreme southern border of Egypt. They lived at Jeb with native Egyptians, Nubians, Aramaens, Babylonians, and Persians, then the rulers of the country. Aramaic was at that time the principal business and official language of all that part of the world. But the Jews of Jeb would know the language of their fathers, as a matter of course for the performance of their religious duties, though it is very probable that it is because the Jews of Egypt had become weak in Hebrew that we owe the Greek version of the Bible that we call the Septuagint, prepared, however, at a somewhat later date, when Greek had taken the place of Aramaic as a world language. The Jews of Jeb seem from these papers to have occasionally intermarried with other races, and to have at times become influenced by their religion, and also to have made proselytes, very much as the Jews of Jerusalem did in Nehemiah XIII, 23-25, at about the same time. Egypt was then, as often since, and as now, a sort of whirlpool of races and religions, which made it very difficult for the Jews to maintain their exclusiveness at Jeb. Indeed it would appear certain from Isaiah and Jeremiah that the Jews always had a weakness for Egypt and things Egyptian.

The Jewish family to whom the Sayce-Cowley papers refer, and apparently all their countrymen at Jeb, were commission agents, bankers, and merchants, but not engaged in agriculture or any other industry.

The community possessed some jurisdiction among themselves, and could, for example, pronounce di-

voice among their own people. They had also a temple dedicated to their God Yahu the form of the name always used in these records, corresponding to our Jehovah, and to the Yaveh of the Moabite stone.

These family papers shew a wonderfully perfect official style, and a highly developed business life; and throw much light on the early history of the administration of justice, all of which was the outcome of the previous ancient Babylonian culture and civilization.

All this highly interesting information, and much more, has been supplied by the Sayce-Cowley records. They are, however, thrown in to the shade by a record found by Rubensohn at Jeb, and now in the Berlin Museum. Several copies more or less perfect have been discovered of this document, of which the following is a translation from the German of Hermann Gunkel, in the *Deutsche Rundschau* of February last.

"To Our Lord Bagohi, Governor of Judah, thy servants Jedoniah and his colleagues, priests in the garrison of Jeb, may our Lord, the God of Heaven, grant grace abundantly for all time. May he bestow on thee favour with King Darius and the princes of the royal house, a thousand times greater than even now, and grant to thee long life. May you be happy and well always.

Now thy servants Jedoniah and his colleagues speak as follows:—

In the month of Tammuz, in the fourteenth year of King Darius (July 411-410 B.C.) when Arsham had left and had gone to the King, the priests of the God of Chnub in the garrison of Jeb, with Waldrang, who was Governor here, formed a conspiracy, that the temple of the God Yahu, in the garrison of Jeb, should be destroyed.

Thereupon this Waldrang, who was a Lechlter, sent letters to his son Nephajan, who was in command