

## ETHNOLOGY

# Dream Interpreter of Old Egypt Advertised Ability

**A** CLEVERLY WRITTEN advertising sign, the idea of an enterprising business man in Egypt in the third century B. C., has been discovered by Dr. Nathaniel Julius Reich of Dropsie College. The advertisement, written on a small stone, has been deciphered by Dr. Reich, as follows:

"Dreams I explain, holding the commands of the Gods. Good Fortune! A Crete will interpret them."

Analysis of this ancient Egyptian "ad" shows that advertising principles were understood long ago. The sign is brief and comes to the point in the first sentence. It is subtly suggested—though not actually promised—that the customers who bring their dreams to this man for explanation will hear good and happy interpretations. The customers are reassured that the interpreter knows his business, for he is "under command of the Gods." As a last alluring and romantic touch, the man reveals himself as a foreigner in Egypt, who has come from the Island of Crete.

This old advertisement was found by Dr. Reich as he examined a number of inscriptions from the Temple of Serapis, near Memphis. The dream-interpreter's sign had been strategically set up before the Avenue of Sphynxes which led to the temple. Along this avenue passed Egyptians who came from near and far to spend a few days on the temple grounds. They came in order to sleep there and to have their dreams interpreted by the priests, who were the official and paid dream-interpreters. The dreamers listened carefully to the interpretations, and planned their future days accordingly.

## "Muscling In"

The stranger from Crete was therefore daringly edging himself into the dream business against formidable competition of the priests.

People who came to the Temple of Serapis often wrote down their dreams, and Dr. Reich has discovered some of these writings on papyrus. The dreams deal with attacks by lions and bandits.

Dr. Reich is making a detailed study of writings found at the Temple of Serapis, and is finding in them a great deal about manners, customs, and every-

day life of the ancient Egyptians.

Only four scholars living today, Dr. Reich being one of them, are skilled in reading demotics, the "people's handwriting" which was used in Egypt for a thousand years, from 700 B. C. to 300 A. D. Understanding of demotics requires a knowledge of hieroglyphics, hieratics, and Coptics, the latter being Egyptian written with Greek letters.

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## MEDICINE

## Enzyme Stops Formation Of Surgical Adhesions

**A** LARGER number of successful surgical operations was visioned by scientists who heard Dr. Robert P. Walton of Tulane University, New Orleans, describe a substance with which

## MEDICINE

## Gastric Ulcer Treated With Extract From Hog's Stomach

**R**ELIEF from pain and other distressing symptoms of stomach ulcer in 85 patients who were given a washed and dried extract of the mucous lining of hogs' stomachs is reported to the American Medical Association by Dr. Arthur J. Atkinson of Northwestern University Medical School. At the same time a warning against impure preparations of the extract, which is called mucin, was issued in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* by Drs. Andrew B. Rivers, Frances R. Vanzant and Hiram E. Essex of the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

The patients receiving the mucin were free from pain in from three to five days, Dr. Atkinson reported.

The theory of the treatment is that the mucin coats the ulcer and protects it from the protein-digestive action of the stomach secretion. Mucin also neutralizes the corrosive action of the stomach juice by combining with the free acid contained therein.

he has succeeded in preventing adhesions following operations in the body cavity. Dr. Walton worked in collaboration with Dr. Alton Ochsner and Dr. Earl Garside.

The adhesions are digested in a very weak solution of the protein-dissolving enzyme, papain. Unusually low concentrations of papain were found to work best. They contained only two thousandths of one per cent. of the dry powder. This substance is now being distributed for trial in hospitals and laboratories, it was said.

"Using experimental animals," Dr. Walton explained, "dense adhesions were produced which bound the abdominal organs in a firm mass. When these adhesions were broken by surgical operation, they reformed in most cases. However, if the weak papain solution were introduced at the time of the operation the adhesions reformed in a much smaller proportion of the cases.

"It was suggested that the exuded fibrin, a glue-like substance principally responsible for the development of adhesions, was dissolved just enough to prevent its development into permanent adhesions."

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Dr. Atkinson emphasized the fact that mucin is not a "fool-proof" substance which can be prescribed and then the patient forgotten. His patients were given it with milk and cream feedings and in water.

The warning of the Rochester investigators came as a result of noticing that their patients responded differently to different batches of mucin. With some they seemed to be helped and with others they seemed to be definitely harmed. Investigation showed that some of the batches of the commercial preparation contained a substance that stimulated secretion of the gastric juice, thus defeating the purpose of the mucin treatment, which is to neutralize the corrosive action of the gastric juice, not to increase the amount of it. Until a consistently standardized, pure preparation of mucin is supplied, it will not be possible to determine the value of mucin in treatment of ulcers, they declared.

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