

# Owe Alphabets to Sign Systems

## Phenicians Formed Characters From Symbols First Used in Egypt.

New York.—Those who have become surfeited with the cross-word puzzle but are still in the grip of the word juggling complex need not despair of new fields to conquer. There is still open to them the illimitable possibilities contained in transposing the letters of the alphabet.

According to Dr. Frank H. Vizetelly, managing editor of Funk & Wagnalls' New Standard Dictionary, it is humanly impossible to assemble all the combinations which the letters of the alphabet are capable of forming.

"Those 26 letters," he says, "can be transposed 620,448,401,733,239,439,300,000 times.

"If the entire population of the world were to be put to the task, it could not write all the possible transpositions of these 26 letters in 1,000,000,000 years, even though they wrote 40 pages a day, each page containing 40 different transpositions."

With the alphabetical nativity of some 250,000 words indexed in the catalogue of his mind, Doctor Vizetelly is an authority on alphabets past and present and as a lexicographer he digs most assiduously into languages in search of their roots.

"Ignorance concerning the alphabet we use is surprisingly common," he remarked recently. "Seldom a day goes by but what I receive a score of inquiries concerning some branch of alphabetical lore. One of the beliefs still generally accepted, for example, is that we owe our alphabet to the Phenicians.

**Phenician Legend Shattered.**

"Greek mythology credits the invention of the alphabet to Cadmus, the Phenician, but neither he nor any other Phenician invented the alphabet, for it is not a thing that would have occurred spontaneously in its entirety to the mind of any man, no matter how great a creative genius man may be.

"No one likes to be termed an iconoclast, but it is certain that Emmanuel de Rouge was one when, in 1859, he shattered the legend that our alphabet was invented by the Phenicians and proved that the Phenicians derived their characters from the Egyptian hieratic symbols as shown by the papyrus Prisse, which was in all probability written before 2000 B. C. The discovery in 1887-88 of the cuneiform tablets of Asiatic correspondence, written by Amenophis IV, in Syria about 1375, showed that thousands of years ago the Phenicians and other Semitic people used Babylonian as the language of international communication.

"The Egyptian hieratic characters are at least 2,000 years older than any of the Phenician inscriptions of which we have any knowledge. Professor Flinders Petrie put forward the theory that a sign system was the original means of international communication, which has 700 characters, partly alphabetic, partly syllabic, and written from left to right; (3) the New Sussian; (4) the old Persian, which had about sixty phonetic characters and which, when deciphered by Grotefend in 1802, provided a clue to other cuneiform systems, and (5) the Armenian. The shape of the characters was governed by the tool or stylus used to produce them.

"The Greeks adopted the Phenician alphabet before they embarked on their great colonizing movement a thousand years before Christ. At first they wrote from right to left after the Phenician plan; then alternately from right to left and left to right. In this fashion the laws of Solon were written, but the plan was abandoned in the Fifth century and the left to right method adopted by Occidental nations. The alphabet was brought to Italy by the Dorian Greeks of Cumae and Sicily and there it was subjected to further modification. The Latin alphabet retained the Phenician Kaph and Koph (k and q) and dropped theta, phi, and chi (kai) because the Romans did not require aspirate sounds and later they dropped zeta which was replaced by g, a modification of c which they used for both k and g sounds, and so continued with 21 letters until the Latin alphabet, spread through Roman conquests, necessitated an increase of five letters, bringing the total up to 26. These included the development of I into J, of u into v, w, and y, and the addition of z.

"The one European language that did not get its alphabet in this manner is the Russian, whose characters like that of its people are derived from the Byzantine Greek of the Ninth century. To this Cyril added others to cover Slavonic sounds and thus increased the number to 35 letters.

**Vary in Number of Letters.**

"The alphabets of different nations vary in the numbers of letters they contain. For instance, there are 28 letters in the Arabic alphabet, and 38 in the Armenian, 32 in the Coptic, 26 in the Dutch, 26 in the English, 25 in the French, 24 in the Georgian, 26 in the German, 24 in the Greek, 22 in the Hebrew, 21 in the Italian, 23 in the Latin, 45 in the Persian (Parsee or Zend), 35 in the Russian, 49 in the Sanskrit, 40 in Slavonic, 27 in the Spanish, including the digraphs ch, ll, rr; 22 in Syriac. The Japanese syllabic or list of characters representing syllables or syllabic sounds, consists of 72 of these sounds which are indicated by 48 characters. The Chinese are much more progressive and resorted to phraseograms of which they have about 20,000, but no alphabet.

"In the Book of Ezra, Chapter 7, verse 21, you have a Biblical verse in which there are all the letters of the alphabet except J, but the letter J is merely a modification of I and both were considered one and the same letter in medieval writing. In English the graphic separation of I and J dates back to only the Seventeenth century, but long after that the two letters were considered identical and treated accordingly in the alphabetization of words in the dictionary. Even as late as a century ago, words in I and J were alphabetized among one another by Todd in his edition of Johnson's Dictionary.

"A lover of words once made up his mind to test the recurrence of the various letters of the alphabet in a set number of citations taken from fugitive pieces, and containing in all 1,069 letters, with the following results: A occurred 85 times; B, 16; C, 30; D, 44; E, 120; F, 25; G, 17; H, 64; I, 80; J, 4; K, 8; L, 40; M, 30; N, 80; O, 80; P, 17; Q, 5; R, 62; S, 80; T, 30; U, 34; V, 12; W, 20; X, 4; Y, 20, and Z, 2. This showed that the letter e occurred most frequently and, therefore, is almost an indispensable letter, but it is not altogether indispensable as the following lines, which do not contain the letter e, will show:

A jovial swain should not complain  
Of any buxom fair,  
Who mocks his pain and thinks it gain  
To quiz his awkward air,  
Quixotic boys who look for joys  
Quixotic hazards run;  
A lass annoys with trivial toys,  
Opposing man for fun.

"That you can do without s this  
verse will serve to show:

Tonight, tonight, my gentle one,  
The flower-bearing Amra tree  
Doth long with fragrant moan to meet  
The love-lip of the honey-bee,  
But not the Amra tree can long  
To greet the bee at evening light,  
With half the deep fond love I long  
To meet my Norma here tonight.

tion on the Mediterranean littoral from early times, and that from this sign system our alphabet was selected and grouped by the Phenicians.

"Other scholars have sought the source of the alphabet in the Island of Crete and some of them hold that the Pictan inscriptions are identical with Egyptian hieroglyphs and that the Minoan pictographs contain prototypes of the Phenician letters.

"Our journey toward the letters was a painfully slow one, for we used a syllabary of hieroglyphs to express our ideas, and by degrees progressed to runes, and these runes we termed futhore, the name being derived from the first six letters—feoh ur (oor), thorn, os (es), rad (raid), the runic alphabet. The runes are said to have been taken from the Greek alphabet, like those of Thrace in the Sixth century B. C. The earliest extant specimens are of the Second and Third century. They passed out of use with the spread of the Roman alphabet from the Eleventh to the Fifteenth century. The original meaning of the word rune is 'secret,' and it was used to signify a mysterious song, doctrine, speech, or writing. There were several runic alphabets—the Gothic, the Anglian, and the Scandinavian.

"From the clearest and from the simplest of those early alphabets, we have derived all the modern systems of writing and after the Roman alphabet displaced the runes, it superseded the Greek, the square letter of the Hebrew, the decorative Sanskrit, the beautiful Neski of the Arabic-speaking world, and may be said to prevail everywhere. It is only within recent years, in fact, since the establishment of Angora as the Turkish capital, that Roman letters have by decree superseded the Neski alphabet in Turkey.

**Antiquity of Cuneiform System.**

"The stele of Mezha, king of Moab, which was found at Dibban in 1868, and is more popularly known as the Moabite Stone, belonged to the Ninth century B. C. This contains one of the earliest inscriptions in the Phenician alphabet, and its language, the New Standard Dictionary tells us, differs only dialectically from the Hebrew. By studying the fragments of this stone, Clermont Ganneau was able to publish the text, and the first translation; and the decipherment of the entire stone, which is now complete, was the result of researches by French, German and English scholars.

"Yet another, the code of ethics of Hammurabi, king of Babylonia from 2240 B. C. to 2185, which was discovered in 1902, is in cuneiform characters. The cuneiforms are said to have been invented by the primitive Accadians of Mesopotamia about 6,000 years ago, and were impressed or engraved by the ancient Babylonians, Assyrians, and others on bronze, glass, iron, stone, clay and other substances. The most important of these signaries or alphabets are (1) the Accadian, which is the oldest, its characters being ideographic; (2) the Assyro-Babylonian, the largest and most compli-

ated, which has 700 characters, partly alphabetic, partly syllabic, and written from left to right; (3) the New Sussian; (4) the old Persian, which had about sixty phonetic characters and which, when deciphered by Grotefend in 1802, provided a clue to other cuneiform systems, and (5) the Armenian. The shape of the characters was governed by the tool or stylus used to produce them.

"The Greeks adopted the Phenician alphabet before they embarked on their great colonizing movement a thousand years before Christ. At first they wrote from right to left after the Phenician plan; then alternately from right to left and left to right. In this fashion the laws of Solon were written, but the plan was abandoned in the Fifth century and the left to right method adopted by Occidental nations. The alphabet was brought to Italy by the Dorian Greeks of Cumae and Sicily and there it was subjected to further modification. The Latin alphabet retained the Phenician Kaph and Koph (k and q) and dropped theta, phi, and chi (kai) because the Romans did not require aspirate sounds and later they dropped zeta which was replaced by g, a modification of c which they used for both k and g sounds, and so continued with 21 letters until the Latin alphabet, spread through Roman conquests, necessitated an increase of five letters, bringing the total up to 26. These included the development of I into J, of u into v, w, and y, and the addition of z.

"The one European language that did not get its alphabet in this manner is the Russian, whose characters like that of its people are derived from the Byzantine Greek of the Ninth century. To this Cyril added others to cover Slavonic sounds and thus increased the number to 35 letters.

**Vary in Number of Letters.**

"The alphabets of different nations vary in the numbers of letters they contain. For instance, there are 28 letters in the Arabic alphabet, and 38 in the Armenian, 32 in the Coptic, 26 in the Dutch, 26 in the English, 25 in the French, 24 in the Georgian, 26 in the German, 24 in the Greek, 22 in the Hebrew, 21 in the Italian, 23 in the Latin, 45 in the Persian (Parsee or Zend), 35 in the Russian, 49 in the Sanskrit, 40 in Slavonic, 27 in the Spanish, including the digraphs ch, ll, rr; 22 in Syriac. The Japanese syllabic or list of characters representing syllables or syllabic sounds, consists of 72 of these sounds which are indicated by 48 characters. The Chinese are much more progressive and resorted to phraseograms of which they have about 20,000, but no alphabet.

"In the Book of Ezra, Chapter 7, verse 21, you have a Biblical verse in which there are all the letters of the alphabet except J, but the letter J is merely a modification of I and both were considered one and the same letter in medieval writing. In English the graphic separation of I and J dates back to only the Seventeenth century, but long after that the two letters were considered identical and treated accordingly in the alphabetization of words in the dictionary. Even as late as a century ago, words in I and J were alphabetized among one another by Todd in his edition of Johnson's Dictionary.

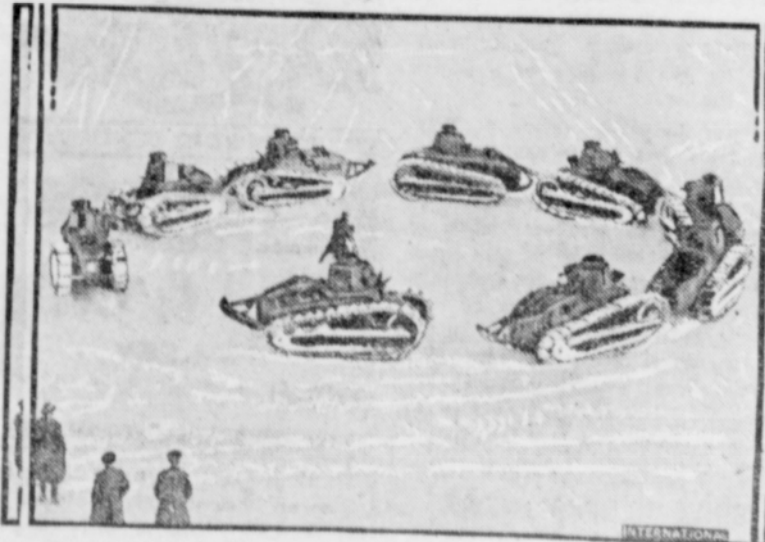
"A lover of words once made up his mind to test the recurrence of the various letters of the alphabet in a set number of citations taken from fugitive pieces, and containing in all 1,069 letters, with the following results: A occurred 85 times; B, 16; C, 30; D, 44; E, 120; F, 25; G, 17; H, 64; I, 80; J, 4; K, 8; L, 40; M, 30; N, 80; O, 80; P, 17; Q, 5; R, 62; S, 80; T, 30; U, 34; V, 12; W, 20; X, 4; Y, 20, and Z, 2. This showed that the letter e occurred most frequently and, therefore, is almost an indispensable letter, but it is not altogether indispensable as the following lines, which do not contain the letter e, will show:

A jovial swain should not complain  
Of any buxom fair,  
Who mocks his pain and thinks it gain  
To quiz his awkward air,  
Quixotic boys who look for joys  
Quixotic hazards run;  
A lass annoys with trivial toys,  
Opposing man for fun.

"That you can do without s this  
verse will serve to show:

Tonight, tonight, my gentle one,  
The flower-bearing Amra tree  
Doth long with fragrant moan to meet  
The love-lip of the honey-bee,  
But not the Amra tree can long  
To greet the bee at evening light,  
With half the deep fond love I long  
To meet my Norma here tonight.

## Armored Tanks Maneuver in Snow



Here are shown the tanks at Miller field, going around in circles during their great exhibition drill in the snow-covered fields. No snow bank was too high or deep enough to halt the progress of the tanks.

## Production Record for U. S. Set in 1925

Washington.—Manufacturing production in the United States during 1925 was the largest ever recorded, the Commerce department announced, the level being represented by the index number 125 on the basis of 100 as the 1919 output volume. It also represented an 11 per cent increase in production over 1924.

None of the industries considered showed a production decline under 1924 except the foodstuffs group. Great gains were recorded in iron and steel, lumber, stone, ceramics, oils and automobiles.

Raw material output in 1925, however, declined from the 1924 level. The index number 115 was fixed for the output of 1925 raw materials, while in 1924 it was 118. Here also the 1919 level was represented by 100. Farm crops were the only items in the category to show greater volume in 1925 than in 1924.

Common salt is used in the recovery of silver from its ores.

## MUSEUM IS ESTABLISHED WHERE CZAR WAS SLAIN

Bloodstained Room Where Royal Family Was Murdered Preserved by Soviet Government.

Sverdlovsk, Siberia.—The Bolshevik government has converted the house in which the emperor and empress of Russia and their family were murdered into an historical museum. Part of the building now is a small Communist "university." The former dining room of the imperial family has become a reading room, where scores of proletarian students pore over newspapers and scientific books.

In the basement is the blood-stained bullet-pierced room in which the royal family were killed. It has been preserved as an "historical reminder of the just fate that befell the autocrat of all the Russias."

A section of the floor is torn up, the Kolchak troops having, it is said, attempted to remove traces of the crime. Visitors are told that after the Kolchak officers discovered the murder, white soldiers washed the floor and distributed the sands to the clergy, "priests having waited for hours in long lines for their share of the water containing their former imperial master's blood."

Visitors must have special permission. Some Americans recently were refused entrance on the ground that foreign visitors had written matter hostile to the Bolshevik regime.

Outside the house, which overlooks the "Square of National Vengeance," is a marble pedestal on which stands a headless statue of Karl Marx. The statue was "beheaded" by Kolchak's troops in 1918.

To prevent forest fires a device has been invented to catch the sparks flying from logging engines and extinguish them in water.

# The TALE of KIDDIE KATYDD

By Arthur Scott Bailey

## SPREADING THE NEWS

WHEN Freddie Firefly reached the swamp he found that the Frog family's singing party had already broken up. But luckily, Mr. Frog the tailor was the last one to leave. He was still poised on the bank of the sluggish stream, ready to plunge into the water and swim away, when Freddie Firefly dropped down upon a cattail and called him by name, flashing



Start by Laying the Buttons in a Row on the Ground.

his light frantically so that Mr. Frog would be sure to notice him.

"Wait a moment!" cried Freddie. "I've something to say to you!"

"Out with it, then," said Mr. Frog. "My time is valuable, you know. I ought to be back in my shop this moment; for I promised Paddy Muskrat I'd make him a policeman's uniform by tomorrow morning. And I haven't begun it yet."

"Why not?" asked Freddie, forgetting—for the moment—his own errand.

"He wants brass buttons," explained the tailor. "And I couldn't get any until tonight."

"But couldn't you go ahead with-

out them?" Freddie Firefly inquired.

"Certainly not!" replied Mr. Frog. "I see you don't know much about making a policeman's suit. You start by laying the buttons in a row on the ground; and then you sew the cloth onto them. . . . That's my own invention—that method," he added with an air of pride. "And now, what was it you wanted to say to me?"

"I don't believe there's any use of my telling you, after all," Freddie Firefly replied. "You're going to be so busy that you won't have time to do an errand for me. I wanted you to give Mr. Crow a message."

"Yes—I'll be altogether too rushed to bother with it," said Mr. Frog. "I expect to be on the jump all night—and most of tomorrow, too."

"This message," Freddie Firefly went on, "was something about Kiddie Katydid. I found out his secret tonight. And I thought Mr. Crow ought to know about it."

Now, Mr. Frog was all ready to leap into the water. But when Freddie said that, the tailor promptly changed his mind.

"Kiddie Katydid's secret!" he repeated in a tone of amazement. "You don't mean to say you've discovered what it was that Katy did?"

"Never mind!" said Freddie. "I don't want to trouble you, Mr. Frog. I know you're too busy to bother your head with such things."

"Tut, tut, young man!" Mr. Frog cried. "I see you have something important to tell me. And since that is the case, I'll manage somehow to deliver your message to Mr. Crow, even if I have to disappoint a customer. Always oblige a friend! That's my motto!" said Mr. Frog.

"Very well, then!" Freddie Firefly replied. "I'll say what I was going to; but it doesn't concern that Katy person you just mentioned."

"Oh, it doesn't," the tailor echoed. "Then I don't know that I care to listen to you, after all. I thought you were going to explain about that mysterious lady that Kiddie's always singing about." He was sadly disappointed. And once more he turned toward the creek.

(© by Grosset & Dunlap)

## Janet Gaynor



This prominent motion picture actress was born in Philadelphia nineteen years ago. After graduating from school, she was an extra until she was selected to play leads in comedies. Her screen test won her the leading role in a prominent production and a long-term contract. She is a lovely brunette with a sweet personality and much charm.

## WHO SAID

"Servility is to devotion what hypocrisy is to virtue."

THE author of this condemnation of the fawning servility of the times, was a woman—Delphine Gay Girardin, famous novelist of France, the daughter of a novelist, and the wife of a journalist and politician of France, Emile de Girardin.

The mother of Madame Girardin was Madame Sophie Gay, a French authoress who was born in Paris the same year as the signing of the American Declaration of Independence, 1776. She was at first married to a financier, but six years later divorced him, to marry Monsieur Gay, who was the receiver general under the French empire. The salon of this noted woman of letters was the resort of the leading literary people of the period. Madame Gay died in Paris in 1852.

The husband of Madame Girardin was born in Switzerland in the year 1802. He was connected politically and as a promoter with many different papers and periodicals in France. The most successful of these was a newspaper, La Presse, which voiced the conservative opinions of the day. So violent were the controversies fought out in the columns of this sheet that a duel was precipitated between Girardin and Armand Carrel which proved fatal to the latter.

In politics, Madame Girardin's husband played many parts and once he was fined 5,000 francs for an attack made on the imperial government in the newspaper, La Liberté.

Madame Girardin was born in 1804 and died in 1855. Her best known works are: "Le Lorgnon," "Le Marquis de Pantanges," "La Canne de M. Balzac," "Il ne Faut Pas Jouer avec Douleur," and "Marguerite." In addition she contributed to her husband's newspaper, La Presse.—Wayne D. McMurray.

(© by George Matthew Adams)

## THE WHY of SUPERSTITIONS

By H. IRVING KING

### BABY ON THE TABLE

SOME old-fashioned nurses strongly object to having anyone pick up the baby and lay him on the table in their sportive moods. The old-fashioned nurse regards it as an omen of death. This superstition is merely one arising from the sympathetic magic of association coupled with the fact—the folk-lore fact—that a young child has its soul as yet very loosely embodied in its body and is, therefore, extremely liable to the operation of all sorts of magical influences; which idea appears in hundreds of superstitions. The baby laid out on the table suggests the baby laid out in death and, as we know, in a sympathetic magic an association of ideas is liable to bring about an association fact.

It is a very simple thing to pick up the baby and playfully lay him on the table and such an act ought not to be considered ominous; but to the really superstitious the most ordinary action may become a portent of evil and this superstition well illustrates the saying of Addison: "We suffer as much from trifling accidents as from real evils. A screech-owl at midnight has alarmed a family more than a band of robbers; may the voice of a cricket has struck more terrors than a roaring lion. There is nothing so inconceivable which may not appear dreadful to a mind that is filled with omens and prognostics. A rusty nail or a crooked pin shoot up into prodigies."

(© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

**"What's in a Name?"**  
By MILDRED MARSHALL  
Facts about your name; its history; meaning; whence it was derived; significance; your lucky day, lucky jewel

## AUDREY

AUDREY is closely allied with Ethel. Both signify "noble threatener," since they have their origin with the Anglo-Saxon feminine name Aetheldred or Aethelthryth, which in turn comes from the German Ediltrud, noble maiden.

The first Audrey of note was the Anglo-Saxon Saint Audrey. She was in reality Queen Aethelthryth; who was rather an unsuccessful wife and retired to a monastery, later being canonized as St. Audrey. She was revered as St. Audrey and many fairs are given in her honor by the peasantry. It is said that the garish little articles sold at these fairs have given rise to the term "tawdry."

Because of her saintly reputation, the name of Audrey reached a high estate of popularity in England and has never ceased to be in common usage. Particularly of late has it been revived and set to rival its counterpart, Ethel. Addy, which is commonly believed to be the contraction of Adelaide, is really the Devonian diminutive for Audrey.

The agate is Audrey's talismanic gem. It is believed to have the power to draw success and good fortune to its wearer, and to guard her from all harm. Monday is her lucky day and her lucky number.

(© by Wheeler Syndicate.)

**WHEN I WAS TWENTY-ONE**  
BY JOSEPH KAYE

At 21—Professor Seligman did not have to worry how to pay his tuition fees.

"AT TWENTY-ONE I was a university student in Europe. My studies were not ruffled by the pecuniary stringencies which are the favorite shadows of many earnest students. My father had died two years before and I was in a position known politely as of 'independent means.'"

"Of my aims at that time—I is now forty-three years ago—I remember I had decided to prepare myself for a life of scholarship, research and public service in economics and political science—Edwin R. A. Seligman."

TODAY—Professor Seligman is one of the most famous economists in the world. He is a professor at Columbia university, and a leader in his chosen field whose word is eagerly sought on problems of political economy.

The professor was a brilliant scholar in his young days. At nineteen he was an A. M., and a Ph. D. at twenty-four, becoming also at the same age a lecturer on his chosen subjects.

He has sat on many government and state committees, and has helped to fashion the laws of the country, though few laymen know this.

(© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

**A Growing Market**  
Sixty thousand live ducks were sold in New York city as a result of the recent Jewish event, "Feast of Laws."  
—The Progressive Grocer.

**A LINE O' CHEER**  
By John Kendrick Bangs

PREMONITIONS

I HAVE within a premonition deep  
That permeates my waking hours and sleep  
That very soon, not many days away,  
Will dawn the glory of the smiling May.

I have a feeling nestling in my soul  
That Father Time is speeding to the goal  
Where loveliness abounds, and  
The blessings and the beauties of the Spring.

And sure am I that in some coming hour  
Nearth the enchanting spell of some rare flower  
The voice of Love the glad truth will repeat  
That by the grace of God the world is sweet.

(© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

**IT'S A STRANGE WORLD WE LIVE IN**  
MY SPARKING  
MAY BE THE ONLY ONE  
THAT WILL STOP  
A LOGGING ENGINE

(© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)