

Bekrī, *Mu'jam*, 369, 18, we read of how ad-Ḍaḥḥāk entered a Christian monastery while the monk was reading *سفر من اسفارهم*, and Ibn Duraid, 103, says that *Sifr* means "the volume of the Torah or the Injil or what resembles them".¹

It is clearly a borrowing from Aramaic.² The common Heb. סֵפֶר appears in Aram. as סֵפֶרָא ; Syr. ܣܦܪܐ. From Aram. it passed on the one hand into Eth. as ሰፈረ and on the other into Arm. as սոփեր. As the Arm. word seems to have come from Syr.,³ we may suppose that it was from the same source that the Arabs got the word.

سَفَرَة (Safara).

lxxx, 15.

Scribes ; plu. of سَافِرَة (used of the heavenly scribes).

as-Suyūṭī, *Itq*, 321 (*Mutaw*, 60), tells us that some early authorities said it was a Nabataean word meaning قُرَاء. Aram. סֵפֶר was a scribe or secretary who accompanied the Governor of a Province (Ezra iv, 8, etc.), and then came to mean γραμματεὺς in general (cf. Ezra vii, 12, 21, and Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, Index, 301). So Syr. ܣܦܪܐ is both γραμματεὺς and νομικός, and as Arabic terms connected with literary craft are commonly of Syriac origin we may suppose with Mingana⁴ that this word is from Christian rather than from Jewish Aramaic, though the occurrence of Palm. ספרא⁵ may point to an early borrowing in N. Arabia.

سفينة (Safīna).

xviii, 70, 78 ; xxix, 14.

A ship.

¹ See Goldziher in *ZDMG*, xxxii, 347 n.

² Fraenkel, *Fremdw*, 247 ; Schwally, *Idioticon*, 64. In Safaite ספר means an inscription ; cf. Littmann, *Semitic Inscriptions*, 113, 124, 127.

³ Hübschmann, *Arm. Gramm*, i, 317, and see Müller, in *WZKM*, viii, 284.

⁴ *Syriac Influence*, 85 ; Horovitz, *KU*, 63, n., is in doubt whether it is of Jewish or Syrian origin. As a matter of fact the heavenly scribes occur just as frequently in Jewish as in Christian books, so that a decision from the use of the word is impossible.

⁵ *RES*, iii, No. 1739.