



Pl. 3. Leather scroll in the British Museum (BM 10250), containing simple relations between fractions. The scroll is said to have been found together with the Rhind papyrus near the Ramessesum at Thebes. The date is about 1700 B.C. The unrolling of the hardened scroll was a clever piece of work of modern chemistry. At first, the contents were disappointing: every line gave a simple relation between fractions, such as  $\frac{1}{9} + \frac{1}{18} = \frac{1}{6}$ ,  $\frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{20} = \frac{1}{4}$ , etc. Nevertheless, the leather scroll has proved valuable inasmuch as it supplies a key for the understanding of the first stages in calculation with fractions. See S. R. K. Glanville, *The mathematical leather roll in the British Museum*, *Journ. Egypt. Archeol.* 13 (1927) p. 232, and B. L. v. d. Waerden, *Die Entstehungsgeschichte der ägyptischen Bruchrechnung*, *Quellen u. Studien Gesch. Math.* B 4, p. 359.