Ernout-Meillet derive *ebur* from Egyptian $3bw$ (used for both "elephant" and "ivory"). A slightly different explanation, which would account for the $r$, has occurred to me.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that $3bw$ itself is an African loanword. Suppose the Romans obtained their word from a Nubian rather than an Egyptian intermediary. A feature of Old Nubian is the suffix $l$ (after a consonant) which serves as a definite article — e. g. KOCMOC-, "the world". But Zyhlarz (Grundzüge der Nubischen Grammatik im Christlichen Grühmittelalter, Leipzig, 1928, p. 14) points out that this $l$ occasionally appears as $r$ — e. g. $[z\lambda]$ or $[z\varphi]$, definite for $[z]$, "son". Since loan-words are often taken over in the articular form — European borrowings from an Arabic are an obvious example — the Latin language could have acquired *ebur* ready — made from Nubian traders.

Our knowledge of Old Nubian comes, of course, from texts of much later date, but the Sudanese languages seem to exhibit a considerable stability.

*Bedford (England).*

_G. M. Lee._

J. W. Goethe:

**ÜBER ALLEN GIPFELN...**

Incubat monti requies, nec aurae
commovent ramos, tacet altum vox
cuncta per dumeta; mane: Frueris
tu quoque somnis.

*Bedford (England).*

_Latine vertit G. M. Lee._

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1 I adopt Sir Alan Gardiner's transliteration. I do not know whether $3bw$ is related to $3by$, "panther". Eric Partridge (A Charm of Words, 1960, p. 58f.) shows that in several languages the name of "elephant" is given to other large animals.

2 Edited by F. Llewellyn Griffith for the Berlin Academy in 1913. They are written in a modified form of the Coptic alphabet.

3 The general character of these languages is described in Meillet and Cohen, *Les Langues du Monde*, II, nous. éd. 1952, p. 237f. — I abstain for the moment from speculation about the origin of $\ell\lambda\varphi\chi\varsigma$ and its oriental equivalents.