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Sir Henry Howorth asked how the stone sockets and dowels, which he compared with those of a Swedish circle, could have been made with stone tools.

Mr. Gowland, in reply, pointed out (1) that in Japan such sockets were made commonly by pounding and bruising; (2) that the absence of bronze implements made it improbable in any case that bronze tools had been employed; (3) that the reason for the absence of the smaller chips of "sarsen" was that pounding produced not chips but powder and granular pieces, except where large fragments were broken away at once.

REVIEWS.

Egypt.

Petrie.

Recent Excavations on Prehistoric and Dynastic Sites in Egypt.

Diospolis Parva, the Cemeteries of Abadiyeh and Hu, 1898-9. By W. M. Flinders Petrie. Special Extra Publication of the Egypt Exploration Fund. **7**

The Royal Tombs of the Earliest Dynasties, 1901. Part II. By W. M. Flinders Petrie. Twenty-first Memoir of the Egypt Exploration Fund.

Diospolis was held back by the author to enable him to issue without delay his account of the subsequent season's work at the royal tombs of Abydos. But the postponed volume is not inferior in real interest even to the first instalment of the *Royal Tombs*, nor indeed to any volume of the series in which it appears. The title of the memoir conveys no idea of the true significance of the book. The cemeteries of Abadiyeh and Hu, indeed, proved rich in prehistoric objects and not uninteresting for subsequent periods though strangely deficient in inscriptions. Besides these cemeteries, a Ptolemaic temple enclosure at Hu was investigated and found to have been converted in Roman times into a fortress. Here a soldier had left a record on a potsherd in some script and language of Asia Minor, which now presents a puzzle to the learned in such matters. But the great importance of the volume lies in the attempt which Professor Petrie makes to utilise his observations, and those of Quibell, Randall-MacIver, and others, on the prehistoric remains in Egypt, for establishing a system of dating them. This dating is not by years but by sequences, and the sequences are those of development or changes of style, which of course may not be in strict historical order, and would hardly have prevailed over all the country alike. There is seldom any stratification or even superposition of the remains to guide the archæologist. The prehistoric cemeteries, which abound in Upper Egypt, are spread over wide areas on the edge of the desert so that the graves interfere little with each other. Petrie has had to depend for his guidance on style and association alone. A sketch of the ingenious system by which he worked the results of his mass of observations into a practical form was first given in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XXIX., pp. 295, *et seq.* The main guide is the pottery, a specimen or two of which was seldom absent from a grave. Other classes of remains were far less common than the pottery and must therefore be dated by the latter; they may, however, usefully supplement that evidence confirming a view previously held, or deciding between views as to which the evidence of the pottery would be evenly balanced. No country has hitherto yielded such abundant and comparatively full record of its prehistoric age of stone and bronze in Egypt. The only pure stone age, however, known there is that which produced implements of palæolithic type, the civilisation of the prehistoric cemeteries does not seem to extend behind the period when copper was utilised. It may here be remarked that Petrie believes that palæolithic man continued in the Egyptian deserts down to the time when the Nile began to deposit alluvium. The rich soil then attracted a superior African race which already employed metal (hammered, not molten?) and made fine pottery by hand without the wheel and soon exterminated or absorbed the weaker aborigines. Petrie recognises survivals of the old race (as slaves?) amongst the new in the stately statuettes found in the earliest graves. Seven chapters in *Diospolis Parva* are occupied with a statement

of the method of classification and with discussion of the pottery, the stone vases, the slate "palettes," the ivories, the stone and metal tools, the amulets and beads, and finally with an outline reconstruction of the prehistoric periods. Taking a series of numbers from 1-100 to represent the division of prehistoric remains in Egypt, Petrie starts his classification at s.d. (sequence date) 30, so as to leave room for earlier phases when discovered, and ends at s.d. 80. Between the latter time and the First Dynasty (Menes) there seems to have been some interval by the style of the remains, and this gap Petrie would fill with Manetho's dynasties of Thinite kings preceding Menes, of which he recognises traces at Abydos and Hierakonpolis. He considers the best period of art to have been in the thirties when the pottery had the purest forms. But greater evidence of wealth and technical skill is found from s.d. 50-60, which Petrie considers to have been the acme of prehistoric civilisation in Egypt. "We see, then, the most "elaborate flint working, with perfect serial flaking, the best metal work . . . "the more valuable beads of gold turquoise and amethyst, the greatest profusion of "hard stone vases, and the greatest amount of decorated pottery (perhaps rather "from 45-55.)" Petrie detects a marked change about s.d. 40, which he is inclined to attribute to the influx of a new people, perhaps from Syria, amongst the earlier population of Libyan stock. The first remains of the copper-using race Petrie would place about 7,000 B.C., considering that the Nile deposit must have begun about that time. The date of 7,000 B.C. may never be verified, but Petrie's sequence-dates for the prehistoric remains ought to be verifiable by his own future researches and those of other explorers. Besides Mr. MacIver's and Mr. Garstang's work of last season, there has also been the expedition of the University of California working among the prehistoric remains on scientific lines. Mr. MacIver's "eastern" cemetery at El Amrah, excavated this year, (see MAN 1901. 40) yielded the whole of the prehistoric sequences and reached down to the period of the First Dynasty, thus bridging the archaeological gap after s.d. 80 left by Petrie in *Diospolis Parva*.^{*} Other cemeteries cover only small portions of the whole. Careful deductions from observations on such points should soon settle the succession to the satisfaction of all. Unhappily the cemeteries are being ruined wholesale by plunderers, so that there can be few now remaining intact. The observations hitherto have all been carried on amid the embarrassing wreck of recently plundered graves, otherwise the problem would have been far easier of solution and the results much fuller than they actually have been. A glance at the plates will convince the ethnologist as well as the student of prehistoric remains of the extraordinary importance of this oldest but most recently explored field of archaeology in Egypt, and they will be grateful to Petrie for his courageous and brilliant effort to co-ordinate the results.

The work amongst the *Royal Tombs* of Abydos seems to follow naturally on the prehistoric archaeology of *Diospolis Parva*. At Abydos, Professor Petrie has **8** been working through the remains of the earliest dynasties, I. and II. of Manetho. In some cases the royal names found in these tombs are recognizable in the New Kingdom lists, though always more or less deformed and misunderstood. The greater number, however, must be arranged according to circumstantial evidence, sequence of style, &c. At that time, as also at some later periods, changes in fashion were evidently very rapid within certain limits, so that in general the succession of kings, thanks to a few fixed points, can be made out with surprising ease and certainty. Here again a great stumblingblock is the mixture of remains through ancient and modern plundering, so that the attribution of graves to particular kings is often a matter of speculation.

* Mr. Mace informs me that the latest discoveries show s.d. 80 to have been contemporary with, or even later than, Menes, thus abolishing the gap from s.d. 80 to 100. In general, Professor Petrie's conclusions are confirmed from s.d. 30 to 80.