

the early Celtic and Saxon religious manuscripts and stone crosses of England and Ireland and the neighboring countries. The intercourse between the monks of the West and the East being quite ample to account for this derivation.

The illustration is of the top of a wooden comb of early Egyptian date.

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### **Recent Discoveries in Crete.**

CANDIA, July.

Since the year 1890, when, owing to altered political conditions, the long-hidden treasures of Crete became accessible to systematic exploration, the island has become the scene of a series of discoveries which rank among the most brilliant achievements of archæological research. During the preceding period of anarchy sustained and accurate investigation was practically impossible; and, notwithstanding the discovery in 1884, of the Gortynian Laws, the greatest and most important archaic Greek inscription ever brought to light, the results obtained but faintly foreshadowed the amazing triumphs of recent years. Not only have the obstacles in the way of research been removed, but the methods adopted have become more minute, precise and scientific; the advance upon the methods of Schliemann, as illustrated by the later excavations of Dörpfeld at Troy, has been conspicuously manifested in recent Cretan exploration—the use of the sieve, for instance, has rescued hundreds of seal-impressions and other objects liable to be overlooked, and the skill of trained architects has come to the aid of scholarship and antiquarian learning. The picture of a long forgotten civilization has been unrolled before our eyes; the frescoes, the reliefs, the sculptures not only furnish a wholly new revelation of ancient art, but bring vividly before us the life

of a remote age in its domestic, civic, and religious aspects; the mythical figures of Daedalus and Minos stand out in the midst of the past and are clothed with an almost historic reality. The crowning achievement, however, consists in the complete vindication of Mr. Arthur Evan's theory that two distinct systems of writing, the linear and the pictographic, were employed by the prehistoric inhabitants of the Aegean area. It is evident that the two systems were used contemporaneously, and the discovery of many hundreds of inscribed tablets at Knossos has lately been supplemented by isolated examples found elsewhere. The Knossian tablets, indeed, appear to have been simply archives—lists of men, of horses, or of precious objects, and there seems little hope that they preserve any literary monuments, such as hymns or historical records. But their message, whenever it reaches us, will nevertheless be supremely interesting. Should the inscription prove to have been written in the early indigenous Cretan tongue we may still have long to wait; but we shall at least be justified in concluding that the aboriginal race, which in historical times was confined to the eastern end of the island, either itself evolved this great civilization or imposed its language on the immigrant "Mycenæans;" should the language prove to be Greek we shall at once have reached an entirely new stage in our knowledge of the Mycenæan civilization and its makers.

The systematic excavation of Knossos was begun by Mr. Evans in March, 1900. His efforts to investigate the site date from 1895, when he first acquired a portion of the ground by purchase; and his perseverance in the face of many obstacles has met with a rich reward. Some details remain to be worked out, and the search for tombs in the neighborhood will be continued next year; but the great work has been practically completed. The vast prehistoric palace, extending over five acres, with its courts and halls and staircases and labyrinthine passages, stands a living witness to the fabled grandeur of the Minoan realm. For those who have not watched the progress of the works it is not easy to realize the magnitude, the difficulty,

the cost, and, at times, the dangers of this remarkable undertaking. Owing to the steepness of the eastern declivity a great retaining wall has been constructed in order to prevent subsidence, and the excavation of the lower floors on this side has necessitated the employment of strong wooden props and a large amount of new masonry supporting the upper storeys. The throne room and the adjacent apartments have been protected from the weather by a strong roof, covered with Santorin cement, and supported on the side of the impluvium by three new columns tapering towards the base, the design being taken from one of the frescoes found in the palace. From a purely material point of view the palace, as it now stands, forms a valuable bequest to the Cretan community; the Candia Museum, enriched with a unique collection of frescoes, sculptures, vases, and other works of art, is now one of the most interesting in Europe, while the employment of native labor—some 200 to 250 workmen have been daily engaged in the excavations—has been a boon to the town and neighborhood, where thousands of Moslem refugees have been congregated since the last insurrection. Owing to the inadequacy of subscriptions, Mr. Evans has drawn largely on his private resources during the prosecution of the work; and in the circumstances it is somewhat disheartening to learn that his request for permission to remove a few duplicate vases and other objects to Oxford has not even met with a reply from the Cretan Government.

The principal discoveries of the past season up to the end of last April have been described by Mr. Evans in these columns. His anticipation that the remaining operations would be productive of interesting results has been amply fulfilled. On the northern side of the palace, near the northeast corner, a large portico has been revealed with double rows of six columns. The portico was evidently approached by a road leading up through the neighboring valley from the sea coast; on the inner side a stepway communicates with the central court, the passage being flanked with bastions of huge square stones marked with tridents. This was evidently the sea-gate through which the poetic

imagination may picture the Minoan sailors passing with bands of captive pirates or, it may be, a disconsolate train of Athenian youths and maidens on their way to the lair of the Minotaur.

A little below the north portico is a great sewer passing into the adjoining valley. In general the sanitary arrangements at Knossos seem to rival those of our own times. Shafts from the upper storeys communicate with conduits in the basement; the drain pipes are almost exactly similar to those recently found by Professor Dörpfeld at Lerkas, and present a wonderfully modern appearance. On the southeastern side of the palace another portico has been discovered with six columns and a corner pier. In the same quarter of the building—the residential portion of the palace—a number of ivory statuettes have been found in a kind of cupboard; here, too, on the last day of the excavations, I witnessed the clearance of a small chapel or shrine, where an altar-ledge with horns, a votive double axe of steatite and various sacrificial objects were found.

The remarkable excavations carried out by the Italian archaeological mission at Phaestos under the able direction of Professor Halbherr form a counterpart to Mr. Evans' great undertaking at Knossos. The works, which were begun in June, 1900, occupied three seasons, and, like those at Knossos, have now been practically concluded. The site of the ancient Homeric city, the rival of Knossos, was identified by Admiral Spratt half a century ago, though no trace of masonry was visible except a few calcined blocks on the summit of the acropolis. Phaestos lies almost due south of Mount Ida, at a distance of some three miles from the southern coast. The situation is one of extraordinary beauty; the acropolis, on which the fortress-palace of the Mycenæan *anaktes* stood, is the most easterly of a series of three eminences commanding a magnificent view over the wide plain of Messará, with its rich olive groves, cornfields, and ruined Moslem villages; on the north are the snowy summits of Ida and the strange twin peaks of Kamáres, to the southwest is a charming glimpse of blue sea with the islet of Paximadi on the horizon. The architectural lines of the palace are incomparably more striking than

those of Knossos. Here, also, there is a large western area, or agora; the pavement is traversed by some curious slightly raised diagonal lines, which perhaps had reference to ceremonies or games celebrated in the enclosure. The agora terminates at its northern end in a broad series of stone steps, apparently intended for an auditorium. To the west, protected by a ramp, another wide and imposing flight of steps leads up through a portico to the great hall which, measures 27·70 metres by 13·75, thus surpassing in dimensions any Mycenæan apartment yet discovered. The *megaron*, like the "Hall of the Double Axes" at Knossos, is divided into two portions—a vestibule, and an inner chamber consisting of two compartments separated from each other by three columns. To the right are the store-rooms or magazines, ranged on either side of a broad corridor; in the center a great stone pier, which apparently serves no structural purpose, may conceivably furnish another example of the Mycenæan pillar cult. From the magazines we pass through another large hall with columns, probably the hall of the men, as distinguished from the women's hall in the gynæconitis, into a vast rectangular space flanked with porticoes—the central court of the palace. In the whole range of Mycenæan discoveries there is nothing more imposing than this magnificent quadrangle; viewed from its southern end, with its snowy crest of Ida towering above, it possesses a strange and wonderful beauty in its present solitude and desolation. A broad doorway to the north, with niches on either side, apparently designed as sentry-boxes for two eunuchs, leads into the gynæconitis, the women's quarter, with thalami or bedrooms, a bath, a columned hall and propylæa opening to the north. The buildings on the eastern side of the great court communicate with the gynæconitis, and are conjectured to have been the residential quarter; on the western side, separated from the magazines by a broad corridor, are a great number of small apartments, which were probably inhabited by servants.

Any adequate comparison of the two great palaces of Knossos and Phaestos would be excluded by present limits.

The buildings present many points of similarity in general design, architectural features, mode of construction, and various details. Both sites were inhabited from the remotest times, as may be concluded from the neolithic deposits in the lowest strata. The abundance of "Kamáres" pottery at Phaestos shows that the place had attained considerable importance in pre-Mycenæan times. This type of ware occurs more sparingly at Knossos, where it appears in some of the lower levels. The palaces were both destroyed by fire in the Mycenæan age; but Phaestos, after a certain lapse of time, perhaps two centuries, was occupied by new settlers, of whom traces are found in courses of post-Mycenæan masonry and in pottery of the "Kurtes" type, which is transitional from the late Mycenæan to the geometric. Thus we have an explanation of the comparative scarcity of Mycenæan domestic objects found at Phaestos. These were to a large extent used up, destroyed, or removed by the subsequent inhabitants. Mycenæan Phaestos appears to have flourished somewhat earlier than Knossos and at a period anterior to the highest perfection of Mycenæan art; the paintings, for example, are more primitive and conventional than those at Knossos, which abound in subjects taken from nature and real life. On the other hand the structural magnificence of Phaestos—largely attributable, of course, to the greater capabilities of the site—the contemporaneous employment of the older Cyclopean style with the use of squared blocks, the judicious selection of local and foreign materials, and the combination of solidity with elegance bear witness to the fullest development of Mycenæan architectural science. The excavations have confirmed the classical tradition with regard to the greater wealth and power of the Minoan city; the magazines at Knossos are more numerous and extensive—the curious cists let into their flooring for the concealment of treasure find no parallel at Phaestos—while the greater size and more elaborate painting of the vases and the representations of jewelled ewers and goblets and magnificent gold ornaments speak for themselves. There is little or nothing at Phaestos to show the existence of those

Babylonian and Egyptian influences which are so marked at Knossos. Lastly, while evidence of the existence of Mycenaean writing is furnished by the inscribed stones and vases at Phaestos, no counterpart to the Knossian archives has been discovered here, with the exception of a single inscribed tablet with mixed linear and pictographic signs.

Professor Halbherr's brilliant discovery of another Mycenaean palace at Hagia Triáda (more correctly Hagia Trias), a few miles to the west of Phaestos, may be described as the sensational event of the past season. The palace stood on a picturesque hill top overlooking the alluvial plain, through which the Lethaeus wanders on its way to the sea; at the nearer end of the plain is the tall, smooth rock still confronting the waves of the Libyan sea; but it seems probable that in Mycenaean times a portion of the plain was submerged, the shore being in closer proximity to the palace, which Professor Halbherr conjectures to have been the maritime residence of the Kings of Phaestos. The excavations, which were not begun till the closing days of the season, have yielded results which give promise of a rich series of discoveries during next year's campaign. In addition to the objects briefly described by telegraph three more tablets have been brought to light with pre-Hellenic inscriptions, two frescoes, and a magnificent vase of black steatite. One of the frescoes displays a wood with plants and rocks, on which a bird, a cat, a hare and other animals disport themselves; the other gives an almost life-size representation of a Mycenaean lady arrayed in a sumptuous robe. The vase, a *chef d'œuvre* of Mycenaean art, presents 26 figures in relief. A band of warriors, armed with tridents, marches along, preceded by shouting heralds and headed by a chief with long Homeric hair and heavy cuirass. The face and figures supply well-marked and definite types, which will aid in the study of the pre-Hellenic Cretan race.

To the researches carried out by Miss Boyd at Gourniá and by Mr. R. C. Bosanquet at Palæócastro only a few words can be allotted, though both are deserving of a fuller description. At Gourniá, near the northern shore of the isthmus which

connects the peninsula of Sitia with the rest of the island, a small but well-preserved Mycenæan settlement has been brought to light. Many interesting objects have been discovered; sacrificial vases, bronze saws, and other implements, together with ante-Mycenæan fetishes and idols; what is more important, however, a sensible addition has been made to our knowledge of Mycenæan domestic architecture owing to the excellent preservation of some of the buildings. At Palæócastro, at the extreme east of the island, Mr. Bosanquet has obtained some notable results. Though the site has not been identified as that of any known Cretan city, the place appears to have been an important centre in Mycenæan and pre-Mycenæan times. Hitherto graves of the "Kamàres" epoch were practically unknown, but two cemeteries of this period have now been found here. They consist of small enclosures of masonry, divided by parallel walls into long, narrow compartments tightly packed with skulls and with heaps or bundles of bones. The bodies were apparently first buried elsewhere, and the bones cleansed by interment, subsequently transported to their final resting-place. Thus a method of sepulture now commonly prevailing in the Levant would seem to have been in vogue before the Mycenæan age. In one of the cemeteries were found 140 vases, one apparently to each skull. Some Mycenæan tombs were also opened, in which the bones, as elsewhere, were found in *larnakes* or earthenware chests. Close by the sea, at a spot called Russolakkos, is a group of Mycenæan mansions, of which two have been cleared out. The larger of these presents a type intermediate between the ordinary Mycenæan dwelling and the great palaces of Knossos and Phaesos. It reproduces many features of the palaces, such as a columned hall with adjoining bathroom, an upper storey approached by two staircases—one of them seven feet wide—and magazines with vases of all sizes. Of all the objects brought to light here the most interesting is a tablet bearing seven lines of a linear script akin to that of the Knossian archives.

The excavations at Palæócastro will be continued next year



should the requisite funds be forthcoming. For the works carried out by Mr. Bosanquet this season the modest sum of £150 was all that was available. It must be remembered that while foreign governments liberally support their several scientific missions in Crete and elsewhere, British archæological enterprise is entirely dependent on voluntary contributions. For many years to come Crete will offer a field of extraordinary interest for exploration.