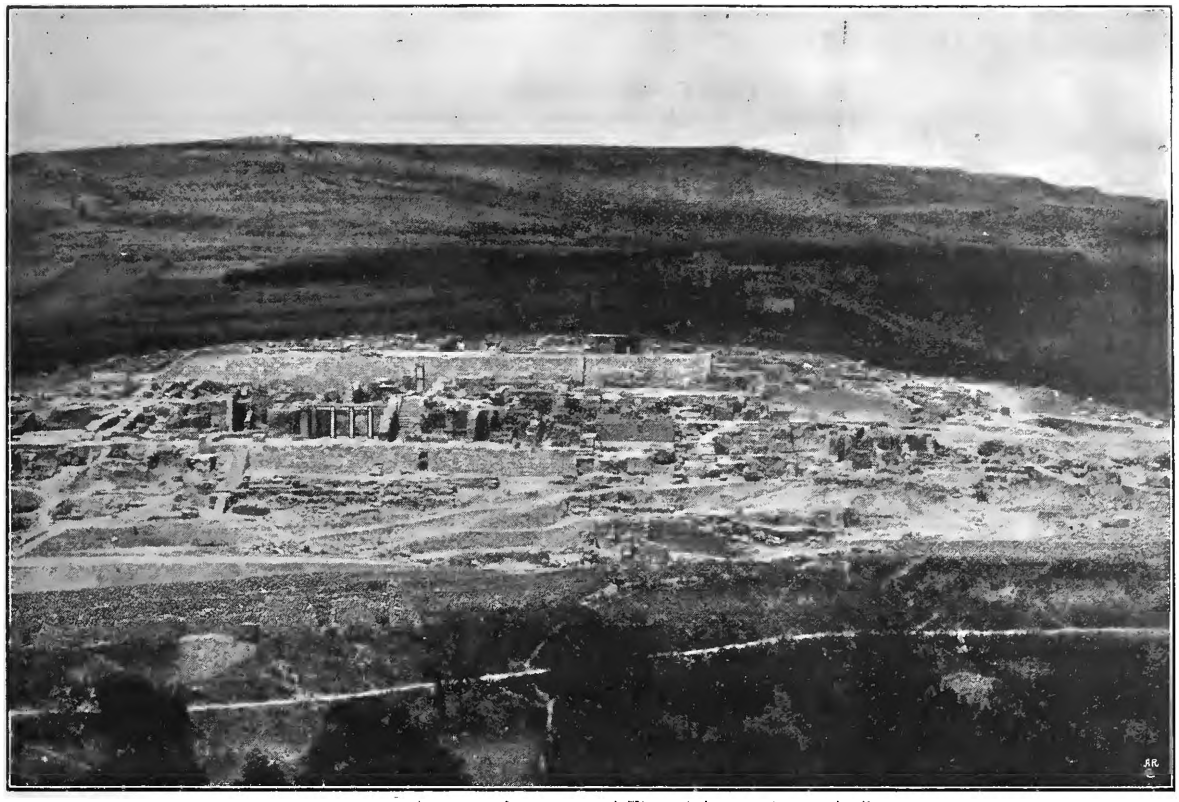


Ruins of the Palace of Knossos, Crete: General View of the Remains on the East Slope.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE MINOAN PALACE OF KNOSSOS, CRETE.

By Arthur J. Evans, LL.D., F.R.S., F.S.A.

Read before the Royal Institute of British Architects, Monday, 15th December 1902.

AFTER three campaigns of excavation, begun in 1900, it is now possible—though the work cannot be said as yet to have attained completion—to speak with some confidence of the main lines as to the great prehistoric Palace that it has been my lot to bring to light on the site of Knossos. The magnitude of the work can be judged from the fact that between four and five acres of the building have now been uncovered, and in some parts the area has been practically doubled so far as architectural results are concerned by the recovery of extensive remains of upper stories. I had previously acquired—though not without encountering years of opposition from the native owners—the site on which the remains are situate, but the work of excavation, and it must also be added of conservation, on so vast a scale has been beyond the limits of individual resources. Great assistance has been given to me through the Cretan Exploration Fund, and I gladly seize the occasion of heartily thanking the Institute for its liberal contribution; but the annual amount to be covered, over and above the assistance given, has still been necessarily large. In carrying out the work I have been specially fortunate in securing the services of Dr. Duncan Mackenzie, who had acquired most useful experience in the excavations under-

taken by the British School at Athens in Melos, and of Mr. Theodore Fyfe, formerly Architect to the School. as to the excellence of whose architectural plans and drawings the Institute has now an opportunity of judging.

Of the Palace itself and its place in the history of architecture and art it is impossible here to give more than a summary account. In outline, as will be seen from the plan, it very nearly approaches a square form with an oblong central court, and apparently four main entrances, roughly answering to the points of the compass. To the west are the remains of a paved court, with altar bases and raised causeways. Along the base of the Palace wall there is a raised plinth, which seems also to have been used as a seat, and there is every indication that this was the principal gathering place of the people—the Agora—where king and citizens would most naturally have met. Here certainly was the state entrance, a lofty porch, flanked by fresco paintings in which bulls formed a principal feature, giving access to two imposing entrances. One of these opened into a magnificent corridor, the other to a chamber at whose portal we may well believe the king sat in judgment before the assembled people in the Agora beyond.

The entrance corridor contained remains of a great processional fresco—men in long robes, priests or princes: youths carrying vases, apparently tribute-bearers: the lower borders of the robes of a brilliantly-apparelled lady, perhaps a queen. Evidence was forthcoming of the continuation of this "Corridor of the Procession" along the upper terrace of the southern face of the Palace, doubtless in this section opening on a kind of verandah. By this means a covered line of passage was secured between the state entrance on the west and the eastern quarter of the Palace, passing the southern entrance, and looking out on the south end of the central court. To the section of this corridor flanking the central court seem to have belonged a series of painted bas-reliefs, found in the basement below, which in some respects may be regarded as the continuation in an ascending scale of the processional frescoes nearer the western entrance. Two remarkable fragments found here show a part of a head with a fleur-de-lis crown, and a male torso, naturalistically moulded, wearing a fleur-de-lis collar.

The more immediate objective of the entrance corridor from the west is to be found, however, in the remains of a Propylæum overlooking the southern terrace. This Propylæum was originally entered by three doorways, giving access to a kind of fore-hall containing two column bases. Traces of the original decoration of the façade of this occurred in the shape of finely relieved and undercut rosettes, executed in a porphyry-like limestone, and forming part of a kind of frieze or cornice, which seems to have run round the portals. Of the internal decoration of the Propylæum very interesting relics occurred, not only in the shape of painted stucco rosettes in the flat which carry on the motives in relief of the exterior stone-work, but in the remains of a fresco exhibiting a male figure, painted life-size, which had fallen backwards into a neighbouring passage. This design, representing a cup-bearer, shows that the same system of processional figures that characterises the walls of the entrance corridor from the west was continued on those of the columnar hall. The elegant pose of the youth bending back to support the weight of the tall pointed silver vase that he bears with both hands, the brilliantly decorated belt and embroidered loin-clothing, but above all his finely-cut features, of a dark south European type not yet extinct in Crete, combine to stamp this as the finest example of figure painting that has survived from prehistoric Greece.

This southern Propylæum gives access to a small court with an altar-base, beyond which, in the present state of the remains, is visible a somewhat complicated block of small rooms. Many of them seem to have served as the offices of palace functionaries, and contained deposits of their clay archives, accounts, inventories, and other documents in a highly-

developed system of writing, about a thousand years earlier than the first written records of historic Greece. Other small chambers were used as stores for fine stone vases, or as cellars containing vats and tall jars, once filled with oil or wine. This block of ground floor or basement rooms flanked the west side of the central court, the floor level being four steps down from it. On its inner or western side the block was flanked by a fine paved corridor, upon which opened a succession of eighteen magazines, many of them with rows of huge oil jars—large enough to have accommodated the forty thieves!—still ranged in order against their walls. A remarkable feature of these magazines was that beneath the paved floor on which rested the jars were double tiers of stone chests, lined with lead, which may, in part at least, have been constructed with a view to securing treasure.

But it was not certainly with a view either to the basement offices or the magazines, that the stately line of approach marked by the south Propylæum was designed by the Minoan architect. The existing remains of upper blocks show that the whole of the region in question was originally surmounted by a more important upper story. More than this, the distribution of these upper blocks as well as the inner lines of the lower walls and supporting pillars in the central part of this area show that an important hall ran down it, the general outline of which can, to a great extent, be recovered. It almost exactly corresponds in arrangement with the great Megaron of the contemporary Palace excavated by the Italian Mission at Phæstos on the southern side of Crete. The face of this hall rose opposite the Propylæum, and it was approached either by a ramp or, as at Phæstos, by a flight of steps, that has since disappeared—this particular portion of the site having been much denuded. Together with its antæ, enclosing the steps, it must have been 20 metres deep, and its interior width was about 11·50 metres, dimensions somewhat smaller than in the great Megaron of Phæstos. It seems to have been divided into a columnar porch, a fore hall leading to a double portal, and an inner room with three columns in a cross line. This Megaron led in turn to a long hall with its axis at right angles to it, which descended to the central court by a flight of seven steps with a central column. Some idea is given of the magnificent fresco decorations that once adorned this hall by a fragment of a bas-relief, in painted *gesso duro*, showing a man's hand attaching a blue robe and gold jewel, with pendants in the shape of negroes' heads, to another life-size figure, probably of a woman, the dark tresses of whom alone have been preserved.

Immediately north of the point where this "Hall of the Jewel Fresco" descends to the central court, appears a quadruple entrance, from which steps go down to a chamber flanked by benches, forming the ante-chamber of the most perfectly preserved, and, in many ways, the most interesting, room of the Palace.

This is the Room of the Throne, discovered, though at but a small depth from the surface of the ground, in a surprising state of preservation. The remains of the frescoes—wingless griffins with peacock plumes against a landscape background of somewhat Nilotic aspect—were still clinging to the walls. Gypsum benches were ranged on three sides round the well-paved floor, which still showed traces of its central square of red painted plaster. In the centre of the north wall, between two lower benches, rose the gypsum throne with its high leaf-shaped back—this, too, once covered with coloured designs—its shapely seat, its lower arches and crocketed moulding, so strangely anticipative of Gothic architecture. Opposite, giving light to the whole, was an impluvium, except for the inverted lines of its supporting columns, almost Pompeian in character, with steps descending to an oblong basin beneath the light well, which may have served as a shallow bath. The wooden columns were found in their sockets in a carbonised condition, but together with the upper part of the walls and the roof, they have now, in accordance with my directions, been restored by Mr. Fyfe after a wall-painting of a small shrine found in the Palace, so that this little gem of Knossian architecture has been

definitely rescued from destruction. Here, surely, was the actual council chamber of the Palace, and Minoan kings must have sat on what is certainly the oldest throne in Europe.

The rest of the north-western quarter of the Palace can only be passed in rapid review. At the north-west angle remains of frescoes showing zones of human figures, and a beautifully carved stone frieze with triglyphs, bore witness to the former existence of a stately upper room. Nearer the northern entrance the lower rooms of a quadrilateral area contained remarkable remains of frescoes, belonging to important upper chambers, in a curious miniature style, showing figures of male warriors and groups of ladies attired in very modern costumes and engaged in lively conversation. But what is of special interest from the point of view of the building itself is that these frescoes seem to have formed part of a great architectural piece showing walls, windows, and balconies, and the façade of a shrine. These frescoes throw a new light on the character of the upper stories of the Palace, with their combination of timber and painted stucco, their triglyph bands and other adornments.

Beneath the basement rooms of this area were deep pits, the sides of which had once been covered with smooth cement, and which, perhaps, served as the Palace dungeons. Beyond, northwards, is a portico, a paved piazza, and a large bath with descending stairs. Eastwards, this block of buildings overlooks the important northern entrance.

This northern entrance represents the main point of intercourse between the Palace and the City on the one hand, and the Port on the other. Two lines of ancient roadway in fact here converge—one leading west to a region which we know to have been covered with prehistoric houses, the other pointing north in the direction of the sea, where traces exist of an ancient haven some four miles distant. At this point of public concourse, of a character very different from anything that affected the state entrance on the west, it was natural that certain precautionary measures, if only of police, should be taken. And, accordingly, though as a whole there are very little traces of anything resembling real fortification about the outskirts of the Palace, we here see the lines of access guarded and dominated by towers and bastions in a significant way. The converging part of the two roadways is commanded by a flanking tower and bastion, opposite which are the piers of an important portico that may have served the purpose of some kind of emporium of goods under the inspection of royal officers. The inner passage to the central court is flanked by a deep recess, whence guards could sally forth on any marauding party, and between the great bastions which dominate the western side of the ascending passage are gaps as if for sentries. On the opposite or eastern side of this entrance passage are low ascending terraces backed by another high wall-line. These terraces may have partly served an ornamental purpose, and have been planted with flowering shrubs. The discovery in the entrance passage itself of parts of magnificent reliefs of bulls in painted *gesso duro* tends to show that a decorative element, probably in the shape of a fine open gallery above, was not wanting on this side also.

The great central court was originally paved with fine limestone slabs, best preserved in its north-west corner. Its length was about 54 metres, and its breadth varies from about 22 to 24 metres. The dimensions of the central court at Phæstos are somewhat smaller, namely, 46·60 by 22 metres.

We now turn to the Palace area east of this great court and of the northern entrance, where, owing to the slope of the hill, the ground floors are all on a lower level. The north-eastern quarter, now much denuded, seems to have been occupied by slaves and artisans; and there were here found a group of magazines filled with rustic pottery apparently for their use, besides large rubbish heaps of the same. Further south are paved halls and corridors containing, both on their surface and in the cellarage beneath, traces of a very different class of inmates. Here came to light a truly royal draught-board of ivory, magnificently inlaid

with silver and blue enamel, set with crystal plaques and overlaid with gold plate. Here were found the ivory draughtsmen, and remains of a porcelain mosaic of extraordinary interest. The glazed plaques that composed it, probably belonging to a wooden chest, exhibited, besides scenes of peace and war, actual elevations of the houses of the Minoan town, with three or four stories, and windows with four or even six panes, apparently filled with some substitute for glass, such as oiled parchment. Here too were signs of industry on a princely scale, an olive press with its conduits and connected system of magazines with huge oil-jars, and the workshop of a palace sculptor, containing, beside an unfinished vase of the same kind, a finished masterpiece in the shape of a huge marble amphora with fine decorative reliefs, and so ponderous that it took eleven men with poles and ropes to remove it from the site.

The lower rooms about the olive press area with their exceptionally massive walls, and especially the great buttresses that here run out from the terrace wall of the central court, unquestionably give the outline of a great upper hall or Megaron. This Megaron, the entrance to which must have been from the level of the Central Court, seems to have corresponded in its general arrangement with that of which the indications have been noted in the western wing of the Palace. It must, however, have been larger, its interior dimensions measuring about 15·50 metres in depth, by 14·50 in width, the corresponding internal measures of the great hall at Phæstos being about 14 by 13·75 metres. Of the importance of this great Megaron, and its magnificent decoration, the contents of the basement spaces to the east and of a part of the room of the olive press below bear ample witness. Here were found not only pieces of bull reliefs analogous to those from the northern entrance, but remains of painted human figures, both male and female, moulded in high relief in *gesso duro*, and showing, in their reproduction not only of the general contour but of the individual muscles, sinews, and veins, an extraordinary fidelity to nature. Fragmentary as they are, they represent the highest achievement in stucco relief by the Minoan artists, and found their fitting place in the largest Palace hall.

It was at this point, on the southern borders of the olive press-room and the substructures of the great Megaron, that the course of the excavation took a most unexpected development. Beyond this line the floor level was found to descend suddenly 4·20 metres —the depth of another story—or some 8 metres, in other words, two stories—below the level of the Central Court. More than this, a paved corridor that ran past the bays formed by the supporting piers of the great Megaron was found to abut on the middle landing of a fine stone staircase. One flight of this, flanked by a balustrade resting on steps with sockets for its columns, ascended to another landing, above which again two great blocks in the middle wall of the staircase showed the traces of the steps of a still higher flight running to the level of the Central Court. The middle landing, already referred to, gave access to two other flights, answering to these, below, and it was possible, by taking all the precautions of mining operations, actually to excavate the lowest flight of stone stairs below the ascending flight above. Such a result is probably unparalleled in the history of excavation—flights of stairs one above another being unknown even in Pompeii.

The lowermost flight of this quadruple staircase descended into a portico forming a wing of a fine columnar hall, between which and the staircase wall was a light area. The interior of the hall was paved and lined with gypsum slabs, the small court on which it looks being simply cemented. This hall, to which I have given the name of the "Hall of the Colonnades," is one of the finest features of the building. The small court on which it opens was flanked on one side by the double line of the ascending staircase with window openings below it, the balustrade of its upper flight rising step-wise, and showing at intervals the sockets of its colonnade. The same upper balustrade with its pillar sockets is continued along its northern

side, while its south wall, consisting of twelve courses of good limestone masonry, with an intermediate interstice for woodwork, showed the remains of a double window that lit another, apparently wooden, staircase beyond. The whole effect of the tiers of colonnades and their harmonious gradations, following the staircase lines, recalls the entrance court of an Italian Renaissance palace.

The middle and the lowermost landing of the stairs lead respectively to an upper and lower corridor, forming a central axis on this side. The upper of these descended by a flight of stone stairs towards the lower terraces of the east slope, and perhaps to a small water-gate on the former course of the stream, that has now withdrawn to the other side of the valley.

The lower of these "east-west" corridors, of which the north arcade of the Hall of the Colonnades is here regarded as a section, gives access to the largest existing hall of the Palace, to which, from the signs repeated on its limestone blocks, the name of the Hall of the Double Axes has been given. It consists of a light area, a columnar hall, an inner space surrounded by pillars, and at its further or eastern end two lines of portico facing east and south. Together with these porticoes the Hall of the Double Axes occupies an area of about 250 square metres.

An interesting feature here are the remains, now supported *in situ*, of an upper hall, with pillars answering to those below, and with parts of its wall-painting—a palm tree and horn-like objects are visible—still clinging to its northern wall. A door opened into this upper hall from the upper "east-west" corridor and from a small private staircase on the other side communicating with the "Queen's Megaron."

Beyond this block, containing the grand staircase and the two columnar halls that seem marked out for state and semi-public use, is a section lying due south of it, and belonging to the same deep cutting, which has a special interest, from its obviously private and domestic character. This is not necessarily a "haremlik" in the strict Oriental sense, but there can be little doubt that it was the principal scene of the family life of the Palace, and, as such, a part of woman's domain.

The centre of interest in this domestic quarter is a very original chamber approached through double doorways by a crooked passage from the Hall of the Double Axes, to which I have given the name of the "Queen's Megaron." It is divided into two parts by a stylobate, with pillars at intervals on a central ledge, leaving ample openings for light, and which shows on each side of it remains of a shapely bench of wood and plaster. The outer of these two benches faced a portico and small light area entirely shut in from the more public quarter beyond. The inner division of the Megaron has another stylobate on its south side, flanked by a similar bench, and looking on another light area of elongated form, the back wall of which steps back to facilitate the incidence of the light. On the west side again of this inner part of the hall is a balustrade and opening leading to a small bath room, with its fine gypsum lining slabs intact, and above them part of a brilliant stucco frieze of spirals and rosettes in position.

A painting representing the upper part of a lady in energetic action seemed to have been derived from the north wall of the Queen's Megaron. More interesting still was the system of decoration adopted in the light areas on either side. Along the remains of the back wall of that on the eastern side were found heaps of fallen plaster, showing a variety of fish, including part of two dolphins, rocks with their coralline attachments, and blue wreaths and coils of spray to indicate the sea-water. In the southern light area, on the other hand, was found another heap of fallen stucco, containing parts of a brilliantly plumaged bird in a curious technique between intaglio and relief. It looks as if in both cases a system of

pictorial illusion had been resorted to, like that so familiar in the small courts and areas of Italian villas, where the blind wall spaces are filled with views suggesting a free prospect over land or sea.

A small private staircase leads up by two flights of stone steps from the Queen's Megaron to the chambers, still partly traceable above this room and the adjoining Hall of the Double Axes. There are, moreover, indications that this staircase was continued to a still higher story. On the west an upper and lower passage leads to a complicated series of rooms originally provided on one side with a wooden staircase, which seem to have been used for various domestic purposes. There is here a small court suggestively marked with the distaff sign; an inner room where valuables seem to have been stored, of which various traces, including a gold heart and parts of a crystal bowl, were found, and other rooms which may have served as bedrooms, including one off which opens the nearest approach to a modern w.c. yet found in any ancient site. Besides the passage to the main drain, it is provided with an actual flush pipe and shows traces of a wooden seat.

Nothing indeed is more extraordinary than the remains of an elaborate drainage system existing throughout all this section and common to the upper as well as the lower story. The limestone slabs of parts of the pavement, the pillar bases and door jambs, the walls with painted stucco still adhering to them; in one case, even a stone bench in position, are here preserved on the upper story level. From these floors a succession of stone shafts—one apparently connected with another latrine—descend to a network of stone ducts, large enough for a man to make his way along them, beneath the floor level below. It may be added that near the olive press area were found fine terra-cotta drain-pipes fitted into each other, with stop-ridges and internal collars to grip the cement, which must be considered to equal the most modern forms, though following out a different principle.

Beneath what seems to have been a wooden staircase, lit by a window from the Hall of the Colonnades, was a small store closet, in which apparently part of the treasure kept in the neighbouring inner room had been hurriedly deposited. Here were found ivory statuettes of leaping youths, obviously belonging to a group taken from the bull-ring, which in their spirited and at the same time minutely naturalistic execution, exceed any work of sculpture of this period as yet brought to light. Very animated paintings representing analogous scenes from the bull-ring, in some of which female toreadors take part, formed a favourite subject of the Palace wall-paintings. The room above the Queen's Megaron appears to have been adorned with miniature designs of this class.

South of the domestic quarter above described is a region constructed on a higher ground level, containing a court with an altar base, flanked by a small bath and a connected sanctuary. This included a little shrine with the vases of offering still in position before an elongated base, upon which rested images of votaries and female divinities, sacred horns of stucco, and a small double axe, the emblem of the Cretan Zeus, and here used as a fetish idol. This discovery in the Palace of a shrine of the Double Axe, and its associated divinities, derives a special interest from the connection already established on philological grounds between *labrys*, the Carian term for the sacred Double Axe, and the name of the Labyrinth. The remains of the great building itself, with its mazy corridors and subterranean ducts, seem to have been the local habitation and the home of many of the elements of the later myth.

The south-east corner of the building shows a staircase in two flights apparently in communication with a postern gate, and well-built rooms as yet incompletely explored, with fragments of fine wall-painting exhibiting myrtle sprays and lilies. In a neighbouring corridor was found a fresco actually containing an early representation of the Labyrinth in art.

Finally, along the lower terrace on the eastern slope are remains of a quadruple line of

walls built at narrow intervals from one another, and a bastion with two descending flights of steps, one of them flanked by a remarkable water-runnel. This runnel is made to follow the steps in a succession of descending curves, and is led by a crooked channel to a settling basin, on its way to a tank below. It is obvious that various delicate problems regarding the moderating of the flow of water and the deposit of sediment had been here carefully worked out.

It is possible that the four-fold repetition of the line of wall on this side was due to the undermining action of the stream which then, no doubt, flowed in greater volume and at a higher level probably on this side of the valley. This quadruple line represents the eastern border of the Palace.

Both the construction of the Palace and its general design and distribution, as briefly reviewed in the above sketch, present some remarkable contrasts to the Mycenæan palaces, such as those of Tiryns and Mycenæ itself, hitherto known on the mainland of Greece. The great surrounding fortifications, the massive Cyclopean walls and galleries are here wanting. Save for the defensive works, to be regarded as primarily due to considerations of police, about the northern entrance, and what are really supporting walls on the east, there is nothing here that can be strictly regarded as fortification. The outlines of the palace citadels of Tiryns and Mycenæ eagerly seize and follow the defensible contours of the site. Their interior is divided into irregular courts without real cohesion. At Knossos, on the other hand, the whole outline of the Palace is laid down in definite lines without regard to the site—or rather a site has been chosen which allowed free scope of action to the architect and engineer. The island civilisation was here at home, and its true bulwarks were the "wooden walls" of the Minoan navy.

Here and in the Palace of Phæstos, which among known buildings supplies the only real parallel, everything is arranged according to the most elaborate planning. The lines are at right angles to one another; the whole design divides itself into zones and rectangles. The Palace of Phæstos—though in its present state not occupying so large an area, and for the most part consisting of walls stripped bare of paintings and reliefs, and rooms devoid of the various masterpieces of the art of Dædalos and of the clay archives that attach such inexhaustible interest to the Knossian pile—has this advantage, that its great halls rest on solid terraces of rock instead of on the less secure foundation of lower stories. The plan there, as it stands, is more simple and grandiose, and it is only when with its help we reconstruct the great upper halls above the smaller basement rooms of Knossos that the extraordinary similarity of plan and construction is brought home to us. The west court, the very recesses of the western wall, the porch, the door jambs and pillar-bases, the corridors, the store-rooms, the baths, the great Central Court, the prevailing plan of the Megaron, the light-wells, the absence of fixed hearths, are all repeated, and even the individual measurements show a great tendency to approach one another. The Palace of Phæstos when complete was a somewhat smaller building. It was pre-eminently a state dwelling, not cumbered with the same needs of vast magazines and offices, or of the stories piled one above the other for the accommodation of the crowded inmates, that we find in Knossos, the capital of the island Empire, and the true centre alike of business and government. At Knossos the remains of these upper stories, which add so greatly to the plan, are a most distinctive feature, which cannot be matched by any other sites of the classical or prehistoric age of Greece.

Comparing the general plan of the Palace of Knossos with that of Phæstos as completed from the parts preserved, we are struck with a systematic arrangement which has a profound comparative interest. In both cases we see a large, square-shaped building containing a central rectangular court that seems to have been approached at right angles by four main avenues. At Knossos we have traces of a southern stepway and entrance, and of a fine north

passage debouching on the middle of the central court on that side. Again, from the middle of the east side of the court the "east-west" corridor descends at right angles towards the outer eastern wall, where there seems to have lain originally the water-gate of the Palace. Immediately opposite the opening of this eastern line on the other side of the court is a central break in the western division of the building, consisting of the room of the column-bases, which has the nature of an ante-chamber and passage-room, and the two pillar-rooms behind with their short flanking corridor. It is true that in this case this cross-avenue does not go through to the line of the west wall, though if prolonged it would come out not far from the west portico. But it is all the same a significant survival of an old and simple ground plan scheme, which seems to have been modified by the architect in order to bring round the state approach to the southern Propylæum.

At Phæstos the principal public entrance seems originally to have been on the south side of the Central Court.* Opposite it is a dividing corridor at the north end of the court, the major axis of which runs, as at Knossos, from north to south. On the west side, again—in this case in relation to the portico of the state entrance—a fine corridor runs towards the middle of the court. The eastern wing has been much denuded.

But it is impossible, in view of the fundamental arrangement thus revealed to us, pointing in both cases to a more or less square building with central court, crossed at right angles by two main lines of approach, not to recall the familiar features of the Roman camp, and its still more remote prototype as traced by Chierici and Pigorini in the prehistoric pile-settlements, the "Terremare" of the Po Valley. We have here, in fact, lines analogous to the *Cardo*, the "north-south" passage which was, as apparently at Knossos, the main axis in the Roman camps, and the *Decumanus* that crossed it at right angles from east to west.

We note, indeed, further parallel lines answering to the *Cardines* and *Decumani Minores* of the Roman plan. There is, however, this distinction, that the principal halls rise on the sides, and do not—like the Prætorium—occupy the centre of the court which forms the converging point of the main passage lines. Neither have we as yet found anything like the *templum*, such as seems to have existed in more than one Italian terramara † near this point of intersection. But the quadrilateral form, the orientation, the existence of *Cardo* and *Decumanus* with their minor parallels, and the inner court itself, are points of comparison of a very suggestive kind, and seem to go back to an ancient European system of arrangement, sister forms of which were preserved by prehistoric Crete as well as Italy.

The palaces of Knossos and of Phæstos belong in their existing shape approximately to the same period. That period, as shown by the earliest remains of vases and other relics found above the floor levels in each case, is somewhat more remote than that to which Mycenæ has given a name, though in both cases modifications of the building were carried out during the Mycenæan period proper. The best positive chronological data are supplied by the lid of an Egyptian alabastron found, with remains of indigenous stone vases belonging to the early Palace period, on a floor-level near the northern bath. The lid has a beautifully cut cartouche of King Khyan, of the Fifteenth Dynasty, who was the principal ruler of the foreign or Hyksos conquerors in the Nile Valley. He seems to have reigned about the eighteenth century B.C., and, considering the rarity of his monuments in Egypt itself, it is difficult to suppose that objects with the name of this Pharaoh could have reached Crete at a later date.

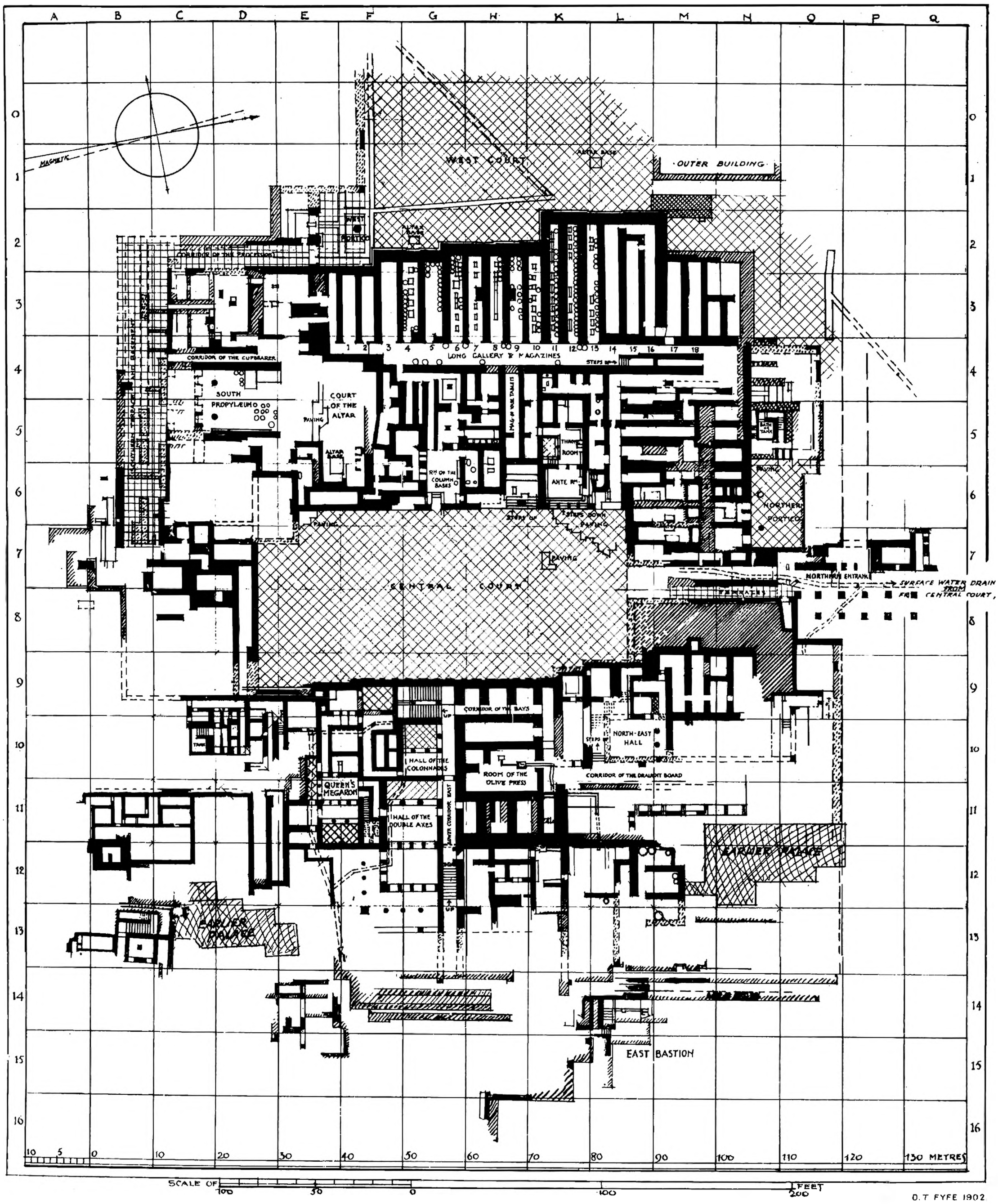
The high level of civilisation reached in Minoan Knossos by the date of the foundation of the existing Palace, so conspicuous alike in its architecture and decoration, points itself to

* Luigi Pernier, "Scavi della Missione Italiane a Phæstos." Rapporto Preliminare (*Mon. Ant.*, T. xii. 1902, p. 59).

† See especially Pigorini "Terramara di Castellazzo di Fontanellato" (*Notizie degli Scavi, &c.*, 1895, p. 14, *sqq.*).

long centuries of earlier development. It is not surprising, therefore, to find beneath the later foundations the remains of a still earlier Palace, the lines of which seem partly to have been followed in the later work. The Thirteenth Dynasty monument - not later than 2100 B.C.—found beneath the pavement of the Central Court, seems to belong to this earlier building, and a series of exquisite painted vases of eggshell fabric, in design and colouring never certainly surpassed, point, together with other relics, to an intimate acquaintance with Twelfth Dynasty designs, going back therefore to about 2800 B.C. But beyond this, again, we have evidence of still earlier princely occupation, and fragments of imported Egyptian vases of diorite and obsidian that take us well back into the Fourth Millennium before our era. And still beyond this, underlying the whole hill-top on which the Palace stands, is a vast Neolithic settlement replete with stone weapons and implements of primitive pottery and idols, which carries back the antiquity of the site beyond the limits of such records as were later supplied by this ancient intercourse with Egypt.

THE PALACE OF KNOSSOS.



SKETCH PLAN OF THE PALACE OF KNOSSOS.

C.F KELL & SON, PHOTO-LITHO. 8, FURNIVAL ST HOLBORN, E.C