

I.—*The 'Tomb of the Double Axes' and Associated Group, and the Pillar Rooms and Ritual Vessels of the 'Little Palace' at Knossos.* By Sir ARTHUR EVANS, D.Litt., F.R.S., F.S.A.

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PART I

THE TOMB OF THE DOUBLE AXES AND ASSOCIATED GROUP

§ I. *Discovery of a New Cemetery at Isopata.*

THE discovery of the 'Royal Tomb' on the upland plateau of Isopata, described by me in *Archaeologia* in 1906,¹ has had an important sequel. About a quarter of a mile farther north of the same headland, on the edge of the plateau that here overlooks the site of the ancient harbour-town of Knossos, a series of Minoan tombs has since been unearthed, some of which throw a wholly new light on the sepulchral cult in vogue during the earlier part of the Late Minoan Age. One tomb indeed, that of 'the Double Axes', to be described below,² combines points of structural and religious interest to a degree altogether unexampled among the early sepultures of the Aegean lands.

Hardly less interesting is the evidence supplied in some of these tombs— notably no. 5—of the survival in a new form of the earlier polychrome tradition of the Middle Minoan Age but applied to a special class of ritual vases, and here devoted to the use of the departed.

The first tomb discovered consisted of a built chamber originally with a keeled roof, and supplying a smaller version of the Royal Tomb. As in the former case, the objects that actually lay within it were of L. M. II date, but a deposit found at the point where its entrance passage would have reached the surface presented forms which go back to the close of the Middle Minoan Age.³ The 'Tomb of the Polychrome Vases' (no. 5) afforded for the first time an undoubted example of an interment going back to the First Late Minoan Period. The 'Tomb of the Double Axes' belongs as clearly to the succeeding, Second Late Minoan Period, and contained magnificent vases in the style characteristic

¹ *The Tombs of Knossos* (*Archaeologia*, lix, 1906).

³ See below, p. 3.

VOL. LXV.

² See p. 33 seqq.