

§ 68. 'NORTH-WEST INSULA' NORTH OF CENTRAL COURT, WITH RAMP PASSAGE FROM N.W. PORTICO AND LUSTRAL AREA: BASEMENT CHAMBERS ABOVE EARLY KEEP.

'North-West Insula'—its artistic revelations; Functional importance—supplements that of Western borders of Central Court; Area West of Central Court chief Cult Centre—retrospective view; 'Stepped Porch', built over earlier Cists; Block North of Porch, of L. M. II date: Includes 'Room of the Throne'; N.E. Corner of old façade and of Early Western 'Insula'; North-Western 'Insula' formed by 'Early Keep'; Elements of fortification in Early Palace; Ramp passage round Keep from N.W. Entrance; 'Initiatory Area' and 'Votaries' entrance; 'North-West Lustral Basin' of M. M. III a date; Restored plan and elevation of 'Lustral Basin' and Superstructures; Isolation of 'Sunken Area' from other buildings; Minoan bronze 'key' found in doorway of later passage; 'North-West Entrance' partially blocked; Basement Chambers above 'Early Keep'; Plinth bordering Court, and steps down; M. M. II a paved floor over Walled Pits, belonging to large basement Chamber; Later dividing wall—M. M. II b; Gypsum steps re-used for pavement; Central Pillar of Western Basement in M. M. II b; Exceptional evidences of stratification in 'Room of Knobbed Pithos'; Large black steatite vessel with spiral reliefs; 'Saffron-Gatherer' Fresco; Later floors with stone lamps and tablets of Class B; L. M. III a floors above these; Basements bordering Central Court; Rearrangement of supporting pier; Further evidence supplied by 'Room of Knobbed Pithos'; M. M. III a pottery below later pavement (M. M. III b); Extension of M. M. III b floor, its continuous use in restored Palace; 'Miniature Frescoes' and Spiral Ceiling fallen on this level; Stone lamps, and basins for ritual sprinkling.

THE Palace region to which we are now led, to the North of the Central Court, may be fittingly described as the 'North-West Insula'. Its Eastern and Western boundaries are indeed well defined, on the one side by the 'North Entrance Passage', on the other by a ramp passage winding up from the North-West Portico round the massive outer walling of the 'Early Keep', which forms the nucleus of the 'insula' (see Plan, Fig. 1 B, facing p. 7). As regards its upper structures this region had suffered much dilapidation, but it proved to be of the first importance in the revelations that it has afforded of certain classes of artistic work.

Here was brought to light the 'Saffron-Gatherer' fresco, the earliest figured painting of which any record has been left at Knossos. Here, too,

III.

B

The
'N.W.
Insula'.