


SIÛT.

In two visits, December 31, 1886—January 1, 1887, without ladders, and May 21—29, 1887, with clumsy native ladders, I copied and revised the inscriptions from Dêr Rîfeh to Siût, with the exception of Tombs I and II at the latter place. It is clear that the Siût hill was once rich in memorials of the Middle Kingdom, but I could discover inscriptions in only five tombs, the same that have long been known to Egyptian travellers. Two of these, I and II, may be attributed to the XIIth dynasty, the other three to the IXth or Xth. In England I added to these copies all the texts published by Lepsius, Brugsch (Recueil), Mariette, De Rougé, Maspero, and Erman, together with all their variations or suggestions, besides taking numerous notes from the "Description de l'Égypte"; moreover, Mr. Renouf lent me some good copies that he had made. I also obtained permission from the Committee of the Egypt Exploration Fund to be absent for a fortnight from the excavations of the following season.

In 1888, from the 16th January to the 5th February, I was engaged at Siût, and having already much exceeded the time agreed upon, was quite unable to proceed to Rîfeh. The Committee of the Exploration Fund was however well satisfied with what had been done, and furthermore, contrary to my expectation, paid all the expenses of travelling and stay at Siût.

When preparing my note-books in England, in the case of important inscriptions I assigned four vertical or horizontal lines to each line of the original, and so had plenty of space for annotation. But the abundance of false readings and other circumstances made it necessary, after the first collation with the original, to make a fair copy, into which were introduced many improvements resulting from subsequent collations. I was anxious to obtain the original reading of obscure and mutilated passages, which unfortunately abound, and this was only to be done by long-continued and repeated examination of the parallel texts in the tombs. Some long and handy

ladders borrowed from Mr. Petrie enabled me to closely examine the lofty walls, and catch the merest shadows of signs by holding a candle at every possible angle. For the sake of clearness, all the effaced signs were inserted in red ink amongst the black ink of my fair copy. One more such revision after a thorough study of the texts should complete the recovery of the inscriptions. Unfortunately my hieroglyphic vocabulary was then exceedingly limited, and even such a common word as  was a total stranger to me: I had therefore to depend almost entirely on eyesight for the restorations, which however are in general fully confirmed.

Since my return from Egypt I have collected some new material. In Paris indeed (where I unhappily lost a note-book containing two inscriptions) the MSS. of Nestor de l'Hôte furnished scarcely any material for this memoir. From Berlin, however, Professor Erman, most kindly forwarded for my use his collation of the MS. copies of Brugsch and Dümichen, supplying several signs and groups that have become illegible on the original. Above all, in London, last October, after the Plates had been drawn, I had the good fortune to find some copies by Arundale (1834?) in the Hay MSS. of the British Museum. Made evidently with the help of a good ladder, they might long ago have solved many difficulties. Lastly, since commencing to work seriously on the philology of the inscriptions, I have found many passages quoted in Brugsch's dictionary: but very few of these are accurate, though Herr Brugsch's copy is, I think, the most careful of any that I have yet seen, except perhaps Arundale's, which still abounds in little faults. The truth is that high ladders, with an infinite expenditure of time, trouble, and patience, and candles in corresponding quantity, are necessary for making good transcripts in such places.

The Plates of Siût are drawn from the fair copy. For the revision of I—XIX I was exceedingly fortunate in obtaining help from MM. Maspero and