

## INTRODUCTION.

THE work of this year has lain at places scarcely ever visited by any European, and at which no exploration had previously been attempted. Naukratis was wholly unknown, even as an ancient site, until I first visited it two years ago, and its exploration only dates from last year. Nebesheh, on the opposite side of the Delta, was never seen by any archæologist, until my flying visit when I was at Tanis; and Defenneh, though seen by one or two passing travellers, was untouched and unheeded until I settled there at the end of last March.

Of Naukratis I need say but little, having already described it. I stayed less than a month there, merely to induct Mr. Gardner; but in that time I saw the cemetery successfully opened by him in the mound which had been suspected the year before to be probably the site of it, and he also found the temenos of Hera. The temple of the Dioscuri came out, so far as it remained, as I cleared more in the area of the temenos which I found last year; and, most happily, within ten days I had the clue to the temenos of Aphrodite, and identified the temple. There the pottery of the finest Naukratite ware, with the dedications, came abundantly to light, and a rich field was opened, which was most successfully worked out by Mr. Gardner. Other points of interest also appeared; all of which will be duly recorded in his forthcoming volume. At Tell Nebesheh the ground was wholly different: there was no flourishing native village as at Naukratis, but only a few scattered huts of settled Bedawin, or Arabs as they should be called in their present state, in contradistinction to the fellahin, in whom old Egyptian blood is prominent. These people live here under their aged shekh Nebesheh, almost cut

off from the world; except in the driest months there is but one path through the marshes, and that impossible for any but a native to find, while on most sides are desert or marshy tracts down to Lake Menzaleh. The old shekh was delighted to have his solitude enlivened, and his affection was almost embarrassing. He had seen much in his life; about as old as the century, he had in his younger days been the shekh of the Bedawin, far and wide on the E. of the Nile, about Esneh: he had fought along with Ibrahim Pasha in his campaigns, and was never weary of telling long tales of his doings with Ibrahim and Abbas. Falling into some disgrace with the Government, he was pitchforked out of his high position, and sent down to near Naukratis, in the quagmires about Tell Afrin; then after a while removed again, and given the grant of two or three hundred acres of marshy ground where he still lives. He feels his change and his present state, and longs for some one to listen to the stories of his old wild days; he is truly solitary, with only a few rough attendants, and one son who is but a sorry result for all the six and forty wives which the old shekh is credited with having had in times past. He provided us with a guest-room, and a smaller roofless room adjoining; the walls of both were tunnelled by rats and white ants, who had to be kept in check respectively by heaps of broken shabti and insect powder. With some iron roofing from my house at San, this place was inhabitable, and Mr. Griffith or myself occupied it for full three months.

Of Defenneh no real account could be obtained; before I left England I was told that it was inaccessible until near the summer. At San I was told there was no water there to drink. At

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