

# ABYDOS I.

## INTRODUCTION.

1. The present volume completes the account of the objects found in the Royal Tombs of the earliest dynasties, the discoveries in which during the previous two years have appeared in the last two volumes. The account of the results of the present year's excavations covers nearly all that has been yet found in the Temenos of Osiris and the well-known cemetery; but another large part of our work is kept back for publication when completed next year. It is always difficult to decide between partial publication in sections, issued rapidly for the immediate benefit of scholars, and systematic publication delayed until every detail has been finally sifted and settled. But the worst of the bulletin system is that the student is afterwards dependent on indexes to find connected subjects; while the worst of the great book long delayed is that often the material loses value while waiting, and the delays may run on so that much is forgotten in the interval.

The Temenos of Osiris I had wished to excavate since I first saw it in 1887. It was undoubtedly one of the oldest centres of worship, and had a long history to be unravelled. If it has proved so far rather different to what was expected, it the more corrects our ideas. But the real temple site has not yet been touched below the level of the XVIIIth Dynasty; and a vast deal still remains to be done there.

The cemetery G was only worked as proved desirable in intervals of other work, and to give employment to workmen between other enterprises. Lying close behind our huts, and with scarcely any small objects of value casually found in it, such a place was an ideal resort whenever men could not be kept on elsewhere. I should hardly have worked it for its own sake alone; but as a stop-gap it proved very convenient, and fairly desirable.

The other large work, which is not described at all in this volume, occupied half of our men, or more, all the season. About a mile south of Abydos, at the foot of the desert cliffs, I had noticed some great tombs when first visiting the ground. The temple which Mr. MacIver excavated two years ago (see the volume on *El Amrah* just issued) proved to belong to a king Kha-kau-ra, presumably Usertesen III., but possibly of a king of the XIIIth Dynasty. The temple lies on the edge of the desert, and a long causeway leads up to one of the great tombs which we have found. As probably most of next season's work will be occupied with these tombs, before they are finally cleared, it is best to leave aside the plans which have been prepared, and give a connected account of the whole site next year.

2. Our excavators were the same gang of men and boys from Koptos who have worked for me during many years. Indeed that gang

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