

CHAPTER IV.

THE CEMETERY G.

29. On the south side of the great valley which leads up to the Royal Tombs, a spur of the desert runs forward between the temenos of Osiris and the great temples of the XIXth Dynasty. The whole surface of this hill, for about half a mile back, is honeycombed with tombs. Those near the desert edge are so close together, and have been so completely wrecked by Mariette's plunderers, that we have not attempted to do anything among them. But opposite the old fort (the Shunet-*ez-Zebib*), and further back, only a few of the tombs had been opened in modern times. (See *R. T.* i, pl. iii.) During our first winter here, several of them were explored, and in the past season, we have opened up a good deal of the ground. The burials here belong to many different periods. Small interments of the prehistoric times are frequently found near the surface; and the pottery, and other objects, also occur mixed with the earth thrown up in constructing later tombs. A part of a mastaba of the VIIth Dynasty has been already mentioned, see the altar at base of pl. lix. Several tomb-pits of the XIth Dynasty have been opened; they are usually placed in pairs, one leading to the chamber, the other, about half of the depth, probably for offerings; deeper tombs of the XIIth Dynasty have also furnished us with the alabaster vases and beads of that age. In the XVIIIth Dynasty older tombs were re-used, for a burial of a child with vases, and a rich burial with a silver pilgrim bottle, gold ring, &c. In the XIXth Dynasty a great tomb was made here for a priestess Khnumy, from which

we removed her granite sarcophagus lid, now in Cairo. But the principal use of this region was from the XXVIth Dynasty to the Ptolemaic age. One of the earliest of this group, containing five stone sarcophagi, was found beneath a large square pillared court of a few centuries later, G. 57 (see base of pl. lxxx). The next type of tomb was that with two arched chambers side by side, beneath a low mastaba of brickwork (see G. 50 pl. lxxx); these also contain stone sarcophagi, sometimes square, sometimes shaped like the body. Other less usual types of this age are seen in G. 68 and 58. Later than these forms are wide square courts of brickwork, which were filled up with two stone built chambers; these were evidently derived from the form of G. 50, but were later than that as the sarcophagi are debased. This form was modified to a court with pillars of brick, the whole faced with hewn stone, as the upper tomb G. 57; and, in another case, remains of a Greek pediment front of breccia, showed an ornamental doorway to have been an architectural feature. These great brick courts filled with stone work, have in all cases been quarried to pieces; and they are now usually full of broken mummies, dogs, and various organic rubbish thrown in when the cemetery was cleaned up in later times. In the Ptolemaic times the tombs were crowded with bitumenized bodies; and soon the system of deep and large tombs gave way to that of small chambers, only just below the surface, containing only one or two sarcophagi in each. These sarcophagi are very neatly and boldly cut in soft limestone,

with a plain wedge-shaped hole hollowed out in the shoulders. After the Roman or Arab age.

30. The prehistoric tombs contracted, the head south, face west; in shallow circular pits, the large tomb with over the doorway. All of the later part of the contents of the tombs of the Dynasties, not having yet been described when they are fragments of a coffin, with the XVIIIth or XIXth in the chamber of a limestone (see pl. lxxxi) after the time of Rameses the style of the writing is rather later date.

(A) Uah-ab-ra

(A, B) Me

The variants of these names should be observed, as they are written on the true reading in A and B, the name Merit-her; also the letters *ra* and the plural *meru*; the name Merit-*ta-se-nekht*; the name Merit-*her*, which latter is the similar form of the name reading *zed*, the name.

In pl. lxxiii the name of the tomb is given as *Wedgall* in a date