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64. Excavations at Abydos.

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no greater advantage to a people than the practice of totemism, and implies that our argument as to the antecedent improbability of totemism therefore falls to the ground. I answer that the cases are hardly comparable; in the one class of cases we are dealing with a direct and simple effect of some idea, some mental association or emotional state; in the other case with a complex social system that affects in a very definite and peculiar manner almost every detail of the lives of members of large groups of tribes. As to the argument from the absence of totemism among the Punans we think that much weight may rightly be attached to it, although in the case of the Supreme Being of the Punans we take the opposite view, for it is, from the nature of the case, much easier to feel sure that there is no totemism among Punans than that their Supreme Being is not a borrowed conception; totemism would express itself in the conduct of all individuals of these hunting tribes in a manner hardly to be overlooked by us, while we learn of their Supreme Being only through conversation with a few of the less wild individuals whose ideas are hazy and whose motives are obscure.

W. McDOUGALL.

### Egypt.

Petrie.

**Excavations at Abydos.** *By W. M. Flinders Petrie, D.C.L.*

64

The main result of my work for the Egypt Exploration Fund at Abydos, during the past winter, has been the thorough connection of the prehistoric and historic remains. In past years we had explored the prehistoric age, and the system of sequence dates had enabled me to bring the various stages of undated remains into their consecutive order; and in the last two years the royal tombs of the earliest dynasties had yielded material which placed the civilisation of some eighteen reigns before us. Now we have the connection of the two scales, and pass from years into sequence dates without a break.

The ground which furnished these results is a town just outside the temple of Osiris, and within the great *temenos* of Osiris of later age. This town proves to have been started at about the time of the earliest kings of Abydos, three centuries before Mena and the first dynasty; it continued to grow upward by successive strata of rubbish and weathered *débris* through all the history; but the upper parts have been removed by the natives for earth, and so we had only the strata of about 5000-4000 B.C. to deal with. The town was founded on the clean sand edge of the desert; and we have only worked those parts where we could still reach the basal sand, and so have a starting point for measurement. All the things of importance, all the flints, and the pottery, were levelled in inches over the sand and recorded. That the town was wide-spread and grew regularly is shown by the narrow limits of level at which some objects are found; eight examples of a type of flint scraper, which were found over some 200 ft. of ground, were yet all within 15 inches of extreme range of level. Also the pottery shows clear limits for several types.

The present result, from comparing the pottery and stone vases with those of the royal tombs and the prehistoric sequence dates, is that we can place as contemporary:—

Sequence Date.	Town Level.	Tomb of King.	Approximate Date.
76	0	—	? 5000 B.C.
77	10	—	—
78	20	Ka	? 4870
79	40	Mena	4715
80	55	Zet	4627
—	70	Den	4584
—	90	Qa	4514
—	110	Perabsen	4373

Turning now to the different classes of objects, the pottery is so varied and frequent that it is useless to say anything of it here.

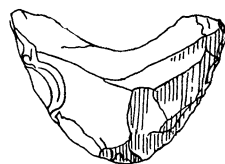
The flint tools are of many types, which I have divided into knives without handles; knives with handles; hoes; scrapers, tailed, round, long, and various; flakes, plain, tipped, worked on edges, rounded, and square; saws; crescent flints; animal figures; and combs. Altogether 327 are levelled and drawn. The working varies from the moderately good, irregular flaking of this age, down to rough chipping; none of it is of the precise and regular work of the prehistoric age. The following are some of the peculiar types:—



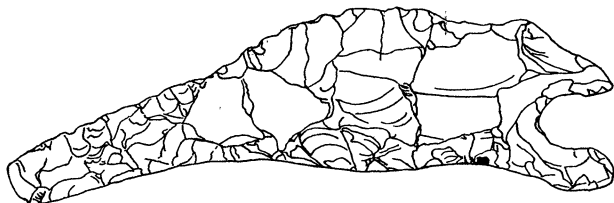
1.—TAILED SCRAPER.



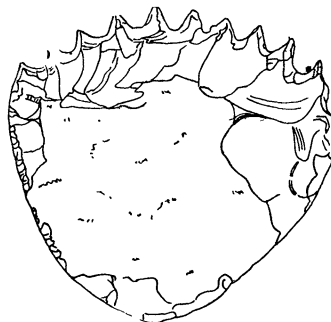
2.—BORER.



4.—CRESCENT.



ALL. 1 : 2.

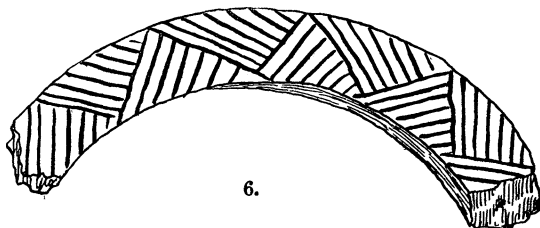


5.—COMB.

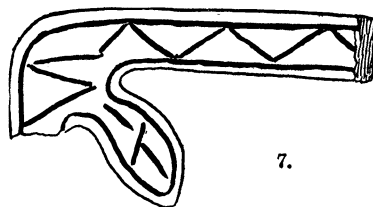
3.—CROCODILE.

The crocodile is one of three animal figures found here; other examples known were illustrated in MAN, 1902. 14 (Pl. B., 17-19). The crescent flints seem from their associations to have been used as drills, at the end of a stick, for boring soft stones. The combs are hitherto unknown; the teeth are too slender to bear the strain of scraping, and the curvature is too varied for use in combing out materials, or for sawing; possibly they were used in preparing food, for shredding meat, &c. All of these belong to the earlier half of the first dynasty.

Fireplaces were found made in pottery, shaped as a ring, about two feet across and four or five inches high. This ring is decorated with basket patterns (6 and 8), and sometimes shaped as a snake (7), coiled round, with the head turned in toward the fire.

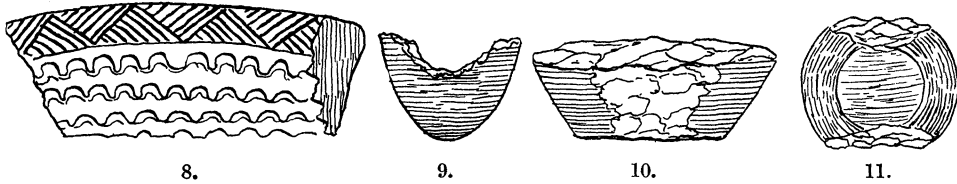


6.



7.

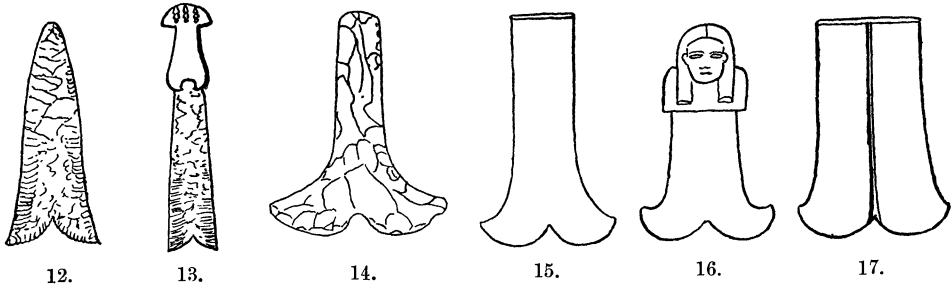
6, 7.—POTTERY FIRE-PLACES.



8.—POTTERY FIRE-PLACE.

9, 10, 11.—STONE VASE GRINDERS.

Stone grinders (9–11) used for making the stone bowls were often found, sometimes in the bed of sand and stone-dust left by the workmen. The history of glazed pottery was confirmed by finding pieces of glazed tile with a ribbed pattern, evidently for surface decoration: the dated pieces found in recent years were still looked on with some doubt as regards age, but these found in unshifted strata of the first dynasty are conclusive. An interesting series of the history of an amulet was completed by a small worked flint. In the prehistoric times forked flint lances are common (see 12). One of these was found mounted in a gold handle (13), not for its original use as a lance but as a cutting implement. Next we have found the small flint figured here (14), of the first dynasty. Then in the sixth dynasty a model appears in sets of funerary furniture (15). In the twelfth dynasty this has dwindled to a small amulet, of carnelian, with gold handle (16). And in the twenty-sixth dynasty this amulet, named *pesh-ken* or “the cutting tool,” is described as used for the ceremony of opening the mouth of the dead that he may speak, and is placed commonly on the mummies (17), modified in form by its similarity to two other amulets of the double feather.



12. 1 : 6. 6000 B.C. ? 1 : 10. 5500 B.C. ? 1 : 2. 4700 B.C. 1 : 2. 3500 B.C. 1 : 1. 2500 B.C. 1 : 1. 500 B.C.

An important group of eleven unplundered tombs of the first dynasty was found in the town. They contain the bodies contracted and buried like those of the prehistoric people, and around the body a number of stone and pottery vases, varying up to 22 of stone and 50 of pottery. Each grave was planned, and will be set up in original order in a museum.

Of later times there was found in this town, and in the temple of Osiris, much inscribed and sculptured stone, from the fifth to the thirtieth dynasty, of historical interest; and in a part of the great cemetery many large burials in inscribed stone sarcophagi were opened, serving to show the arrangement of funeral furniture and amulets in the late times.

Beside this work a larger part of the excavation was on an enormous royal tomb, the largest yet known, and its surrounding tombs. It had been plundered in Roman times; but we hope to recover some monuments in the hundreds of tons of *débris* that have yet to be searched.

The work of the Egyptian Research Account was entirely on the temple of King Sety at Abydos. Mr. Caulfeild's excavations showed a large enclosure wall, and exit to the royal tombs on the desert behind; and also an enormous inscribed tomb some hundreds of feet in length which still awaits clearing and copying. Mr. Christie was engaged in drawing the archæological detail of the temple sculptures.

The whole of the results will be issued in July in the annual volumes of the Egypt Exploration Fund and the Egyptian Research Account.