

The Cretan Exploration Fund.

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THE Cretan Exploration Fund was formed with the object of assisting British Explorers and the British School at Athens to investigate the early remains of the island, which it was thought, from indications already apparent, would be likely to supply the solution of many interesting questions regarding the beginnings of civilization in Greece.

Already in 1894 Mr. ARTHUR EVANS had secured a part ownership (completed last year) in the site of Kephala at Knossos, which evidently contained the remains of a prehistoric building. Excavations, to which the Fund has largely contributed, begun by him in 1900 on this site and continued during the present year, have brought to light an ancient Palace of vast extent, which there is every reason to identify with the traditional House of Minos and at the same time with the legendary "Labyrinth."

The result of last year's excavations was to unearth a considerable part of the western side of this great building, including two large courts, the porticoes and entrance corridors, a vast system of magazines, some of them replete with huge store jars, and a richly adorned room, where between lower benches rose a curiously carved gypsum throne, on which King Minos himself may have sat in council. The second season's work has uncovered a large additional tract of the western court and the continued lines of the south-west angle of the building, a further series of magazines stored with huge jars, the whole northern end of the Palace, including a bath-chamber, a great central court, and an extensive eastern quarter. It was only, however, towards the close of this year's excavations that what appear to have been the principal state rooms first came into view. A triple flight of stone stairs, one flight beneath another, here leads down from an upper corridor to a suite of halls, showing remains of colonnades and galleries. It was at this interesting point that, owing to the advanced season, Mr. EVANS was obliged to bring this year's excavations to a close.

Apart from the architectural results already gained, the finds within the walls of the Palace have been of such a nature as to throw an entirely new light on the art and culture of prehistoric Greece. Partly still clinging to the walls, partly on the floors of the chambers, were found the remains of a whole series of fresco paintings. Among these the full-length figure of the Cup-bearer supplies the first real portrayal of a man of the Mycenæan age, while the miniature groups representing court ladies show a liveliness and expression far beyond any work of the kind in contemporary Egypt. Another more recently unearthed fresco represents a bull-catching scene in which female "cowboys" take part. Allied to this branch of

art are the painted reliefs in *gesso duro*, showing a force and naturalism for which no parallel can be found till the great days of Greek sculpture some ten centuries later. To the remarkable bull's head discovered last year the more recent excavations have added parts of human figures, in which the muscles and even the veins are reproduced with a singular mastery of execution. With these was found a relief of the



Long Corridor of the Magazines in the Palace of Knossos.

upper part of a male head wearing a kind of fleur-de-lis crown, copied from an original in precious metals.

The marble mouth of a fountain in the shape of a lioness's head and a triton shell of alabaster, together with many other beautiful stone vessels and architectural ornaments, also evidence the high level

already attained in the sculptor's art. Among the minor arts represented is that of miniature painting on the back of crystal gem engraving and intarsia work. Of this latter art a splendid example has been found this season in the remains of what appears to be a kind of draught-board compacted of ivory thinly plated with gold and set with crystal plaques underlaid with silver and blue enamel. Other finds illustrate the connexions with ancient Egypt and the East. Part of a small diorite statue from last year's excavations bears a hieroglyphic inscription fixing its date about the beginning of the Second Millennium B.C., while a more recently discovered alabaster lid bears the cartouche of the Hyksos King Khyan. A fine cylinder of lapis lazuli, mounted with gold and engraved with mythological subjects, bears witness to the early connexions with Babylonia.

Beneath the level of the Palace itself have come to light the remains of a vast settlement of Neolithic date, the exploration of which has produced a variety of interesting evidence bearing on the remote origins of Aegean civilization. This is the first Stone Age settlement explored in the Greek lands.

Of all the discoveries made within the Palace of Knossos the most interesting is the accumulated evidence here for the first time afforded that there existed on the soil of prehistoric Hellas a highly developed system of writing some eight centuries earlier than the first written Greek monuments, and going back six or seven centuries even before the first dated record of the Phœnician script. A whole series of deposits of clay tablets has come to light, many of the most important of them during last season's excavations, engraved with a linear script, often accompanied by a decimal system of numeration.

That these documents largely relate to the royal stores and arsenals is seen by the pictorial illustrations with which the inscriptions are often accompanied. Others, in which signs representing men and women frequently recur, probably contain lists of slaves or officials. Others again of a different class may, perhaps, ultimately reveal to us fragments of contemporary correspondence or the actual formulas of Minoan laws.

Beside these linear tablets there was discovered a separate deposit of clay bars and labels containing inscriptions of a more hieroglyphic class. Although contemporary with the linear tablets, the script on these is apparently of quite distinct evolution, and in all probability in a different language. The characters answer in fact to the sign-groups already observed in certain seal-stones mostly found in the east of Crete. The hieroglyphs themselves present many parallels to the presumed pictorial prototypes of Phœnician letters.

In addition to the assistance given to Mr. Evans in his work at Knossos, the Cretan Exploration Fund has contributed towards various works of exploration in the island undertaken under the auspices of the British School at Athens. In 1899, the late Director of the School, Mr. D. G. Hogarth, excavated a series of prehistoric houses in the lower town of Knossos. He found in these many remarkable painted vases, showing that a highly developed ceramic art flourished here already before the days of the civilization known as Mycenæan. A large number of similar houses await exploration; in fact the whole plan of the early town could probably be recovered. Mr. Hogarth further successfully explored the great cave of Zeus on Mount Dicta, discovering remains of a prehistoric sanctuary and large deposits of votive bronze figures and other objects, among which the double axe, the symbol of the Cretan and Carian Zeus, was specially conspicuous.

During the present year Mr. R. C. Bosanquet, the new Director of the British School, has carried out an exploration of the site of Praesos, in the easternmost region of Crete, in historic times the chief civic centre of the original Eteocretan element of the island. The remains on the actual site of Praesos proved to belong to the geometrical and later periods. A remarkable inscription was found, however, the second of its class, written in Greek characters of the fifth century B.C., but composed in the old Eteocretan language. Two sanctuaries with votive deposits also came to light, and the remains of a large public building of Hellenistic date, which may have been an "Andreion" of the kind in which the Cretan citizens met for common meals.

This season Mr. Hogarth has also been enabled by a grant from the Fund to explore an ancient site

at Zakro in the extreme east of the island. This site lies on the bay which, of all in that part of Crete affords the best shelter and anchorage. It is still the point of rendezvous for the sailing craft of the Aegean which engage in the African fisheries and trade. Mr. Hogarth has there uncovered a small Mycenæan town with well preserved remains of many brick houses and magazines full of objects in earthenware and bronze, and a pit containing fine examples of early pottery. But the most important discovery was a deposit of clay impressions of Mycenæan gems and signets containing 150 types, some of them throwing a new light on the early cult of Crete and of great importance in the history of later Greek art. Among other subjects represented was the Minotaur, which also occurs on a seal impression recently discovered in the Palace at Knossos. Furthermore, some interesting cist-graves were found in caves about Zakro. These yielded incised and painted pottery of the pre-Mycenæan age, including types novel in Crete but familiar in Cyprus and Egypt. The general result, taken with the evidence from Praesos, has important bearing on the origin and history of Mycenæan civilization in Crete.

Other interesting sites, already previously secured for British excavation, remain to be explored. The Executive Committee, however, are of opinion that, before devoting any sums towards breaking new ground, a sufficient amount shall be raised to enable Mr. Evans to complete his excavation of the Palace of Knossos, a considerable part of the cost of which has already fallen on his shoulders. The large scale of the work, on which throughout the greater part of last season two hundred workmen were constantly employed, makes it necessarily costly, and in this case, in addition to many other incidental items of expenditure, a great deal has to be done towards the conservation, and in some cases even the roofing-in of the chambers discovered. It is estimated that, apart from the heavy arrears on last season's work, a sum of between one and two thousand pounds will be necessary for the adequate completion of this important work alone. The unique character of the results already obtained is, however, so widely recognized that the Committee confidently trusts that no financial obstacles will stand in the way of this consummation.

In order to carry out the satisfactory exploration of other sites allotted to the Fund, at least twice the above amount will be ultimately required. The Directors have recently acquired the right to explore a certain early site of exceptional interest. From the point of view of primitive civilization there is perhaps no site in the Aegean which promises such rich results. It is much to be hoped that at least £600 may be available over and above what is necessary for the completion of the work at Knossos in order to explore this early settlement during the coming season, there being always risk of a serious loss to science in postponing the exploration of such sites when once the attention of natives has been drawn to them.



Vase from Zakro.

Subscriptions will be received and acknowledged by MR. GEORGE MACMILLAN, St. Martin's Street, London, W.C., or may be paid to the account of "The Cretan Exploration Fund," at MESSRS. ROBERTS, LUBBOCK & CO., Lombard Street, E.C.

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The Directors have regretfully to record the loss by death of three original members of the Committee, the late DUKE OF WESTMINSTER, K.G., THE LORD WANTAGE, V.C., K.C.B., and Her late Majesty's former Consul in Crete, Mr. T. B. SANDWITH.

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Peckover, Alexander, LL.D.	5	0	0	Westminster, His Grace the Duke of	100	0	0
Pelham, Hon. Mrs. Arthur	1	0	0	Whately, Arthur P.	5	5	0
Pelham, Prof. H. F. (President of Trinity College, Oxford)	10	0	0	Whetham, Mrs. C. D.	1	1	0
Percival, F. W.	4	4	0	White, J. N.	2	0	0
Phillips, Mrs. E. J.	5	0	0	Willing, Mrs.	5	2	2
Pollock, Sir Frederick, Bart.	5	5	0	Willink, H. G.	5	0	0
Powell, J. U.	1	1	0	Wilson, R. D.	5	0	0
Powell, Legh S.	1	0	0	Wood, Rev. W. S.	1	1	0
Powell, W. W. Richmond	2	2	0	Wrightson, Sir Thomas	5	5	0
Prothero, G. W.	2	2	0	Wyndham, The Rt. Hon. George, M.P.	10	0	0
Pullan, Rev. L.	1	1	0	Wyse, W.	5	0	0
				Yates, Rev. S. A. Thompson	1	0	0
				Young, W. H.	2	0	0

The Directors of the Fund, in the appeal recently circulated, stated that the sum of £3,000 would be required to complete the work satisfactorily. Further donations would be gladly received by MR. GEORGE MACMILLAN (Hon. Treasurer), St. Martin's Street, London, W.C.; or may be sent direct to the account of the "Cretan Exploration Fund," at MESSRS. ROBERTS, LUBBOCK & Co., 15 Lombard Street, E.C.

THE CRETAN EXPLORATION FUND, STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE,
JUNE 14, 1899, TO OCTOBER 30, 1901.

Dr.

Cr.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Subscriptions per Hon. Treasurer...	...	...	...	Excavations at Knossos, Mr. A. J. EVANS	...	...	...
" Miss Minet ...	...	...	3.427 16 1	" General Expenses...	122	9	3
" Interest on Deposit Account ...	...	...	50 0 0	" Kephale ...	100	0	0
" Balance carried forward ...	...	...	4 9 5	Knossos, General Expenses...	84	3	0
			65 0 2	" ...	500	0	0
				" and furnishing house...	500	0	0
				" ...	300	0	0
				" ...	200	0	0
				" ...	250	0	0
				" ...	50	0	0
				" ...	100	0	0
				" ...	2,206	12	3
				1900 Apr. 3. " Mr. D. G. HOGARTH...	100	0	0
				May 10. " Dictaeon Cave ...	100	0	0
				July 24. " balance ...	2	5	3
				1901 Mar. 4. " Kato Zakro ...	200	0	0
				May 24. " ...	200	0	0
				Mar. 3. Personal and Travelling Expenses ...	250	0	0
					852	5	3
				Working Materials, Stores, &c.			
				1900 Feb. 27. By Pontifex (Wheelbarrows, &c.) ...	52	17	6
				Oct. 20. " Stereoscopic Company ...	16	0	0
				1901 Feb. 6. " Army and Navy Stores ...	45	1	11
				Feb. 8. " Pontifex (Wheelbarrows, &c.) ...	40	0	0
				Mar. 4. " Sundry Accounts per Mr. D. G. HOGARTH ...	51	11	3
				Mar. 5. " Pontifex, Freight, Insurance, &c. ...	8	12	6
				" Silver and Co., Tents, &c. ...	8	18	6
				" Carriage of do. ...	0	17	0
					223	18	8
				1900 Dec. 19. " Printing, Clarendon Press ...	5	9	0
				1901 Jan. 23. " Advertising in Times ...	8	16	0
				Jan. 23. " Stationery and Postage to Dec. 31, 1900 ...	1	4	5
				Feb. 8. " Printing, Clay and Sons ...	32	0	0
				July 17. " 360 Stamped Envelopes ...	1	10	0
				" Postages, Receipts and Receipt Books ...	1	1	0
					50	0	5
				Mar. 5. " Books, Heisenmann ...	10	16	0
				" Carriage and Insurance of do. ...	1	12	10
				July 12. " D. Nutt ...	0	11	3
					13	0	1
				" Cheque Book, Commission and Postage, per Bankers ...	1	9	0
				April 12. " Excavations at Praesos ...	200	0	0
					£3.547	5	8
				Balance brought forward ...	£65	0	2

£3.547 5 8