

A HISTORY OF EGYPT

VOL. I.

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO
THE XVITH DYNASTY

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HISTORY OF EGYPT

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO
THE XVITH DYNASTY

BY

W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE, D.C.L., LL.D.

EDWARDS PROFESSOR OF EGYPTOLOGY IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON
MEMB. ARCHÆOL. INST., BERLIN

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examination of every accessible book that is here quoted.

This history, however, does not aim at being a bibliography of the subject; nor has it seemed desirable to bring in theories or views which appear to have passed away, and not to need present attention. While endeavouring to notice everything that a student should bear in mind on each period, yet more space has been given in proportion to new facts or new theories, *pro* and *con*, than to those which will be already familiar to persons who have read works on the subject. Similarly, in the illustrations, it has been sought to give such as are not commonly known, wherever it was suitable to do so. In this way this work is not only complete in itself, but may serve as a supplement, brought down to date, to the other histories that have appeared. It will be found to provide illustrations, later information, and more chronological discussion than exists in the present histories of Brugsch, Wiedemann, or Meyer.

In the matter of chronology—the backbone of history—it is sought here to glean everything that can be noticed as to the internal history of each period. And on the still more difficult question of general chronology, an attempt has been made to give some main outline of it to assist the memory. Where dates are confessedly so uncertain, it may seem presumptuous to keep a running head-date to the pages; but yet it is better to thus assist the reader's ideas of the relative periods of different rulers, than to refuse any such help on the ground that it can only be approximate. In the last chapter the actual bases of our present chronology are fully stated; and it must always be remembered by the reader that the range of uncertainty may be about

a century in the earlier parts of this volume, diminishing perhaps to about a generation by the close of the volume. No greater accuracy than this is in the least professed in the numbers here assigned. But as their relation to one another over short periods is probably correct within a few years, it is needful to state them to the nearest year.

In the very vexed question of transliteration, a course has been followed which will probably not satisfy either of the extreme parties. The names are neither reduced to unpronounceable skeletons, nor are they dressed out in ornate vocalisation. The skeleton and comma system may be very well for purely philological purposes, but is a gratuitous obstacle to the reader who has not taken a preliminary course of such work; while the following of Greek and Coptic vocalisation renders it difficult to trace the word in hieroglyphics. Hence a system has been adopted very near to that which is most familiar to the English reader in other books.

Throughout this work I have received continual help from my constant friend, Mr. F. Ll. Griffith, whose special knowledge of the language has provided many new translations of texts here quoted, and whose familiarity with the literature has often been of great service to me.

This volume is but the first of a series which is intended to embrace the whole history of Egypt down to modern times. It is expected that three volumes will treat of the period of the Pharaohs, one volume of the Ptolemies, one volume of the Roman age, and one volume of Arabic Egypt. So far as practicable, the same system will be maintained throughout, though by different writers; and the aim of all will be to provide