

A NEW LIGHT UPON THE EGYPTIANS.

BY WALTER L. BEASLEY.

It has been supposed that embalming the dead and converting the bodies into mummies was the earliest and universal mode of disposing of the dead among the ancient Egyptians. This long accepted theory has been almost conclusively overturned by the recent startling discoveries of Prof. Flinders Petrie, who has thrown fresh light on the methods of burial of the ancient Egyptians. During the excavations conducted by him at Deshasheh, about fifty miles south of Cairo, a series of old Mastaba tombs, dating back 3,500 years, were opened. On uncovering the lid of a number of wooden coffins, instead of the usual type of embalmed mummy being revealed, the dissected body of a woman, carefully wrapped in mummy cloth and linen, was disclosed, but the flesh had been entirely removed from the bones, unmistakably before burial. The uncovering of the mutilated flesh-scraped remains at Deshasheh ranks among the most astonishing archaeological discoveries of the age, and goes far toward confirming the theory of cannibalism among the cultured Egyptians. The accompanying photograph shows the dissected portions of the body of a royal lady—a priestess—named

Mery, lying on top of the original coffin in which her body was discovered. In the coffin was found a pair of wooden mortuary sandals and a head rest, on the sides of which were painted the name and title of the deceased noblewoman. The head rest was used to avoid disarranging the elaborate head dress and placed in the tomb along with her sandals for the use of the deceased. It is made of one block of sycamore, covered with a coating of stucco, grained to represent costly wood. The coffin, notwithstanding its nearly 5,000 years of entombment beneath the sands of the Nile, is to-day almost in perfect preservation, though somewhat injured during excavation and subsequent handlings. The various pieces were admirably fitted together, so that one sees the original almost intact. Down the middle of the lid and sides and ends are inscribed petitions of magical efficacy, which secure the deceased the satisfaction of all temporal wants, especially clothing, food, and drink. At the head and left side are painted a pair of eyes, which look toward the rising sun, and through which the deceased looked out. The coffin exhibits the form used in the old and middle empires. The material is sycamore wood, small pieces of which are fastened together by means of wooden pins into suitable planks, no large trees being found in Egypt. The corners are mitered and were fastened together by thorns countersunk inside them. The coffin was covered with a coating of stucco and decorated with a series of hieroglyphic inscriptions. There was found hanging up near the coffin a decorated panel or tomb drawing, which is particularly noteworthy from the fact that it is one of the oldest specimens of freehand work in existence. The picture is done in water colors, the pigments retaining their original color in a remarkable manner, while the execution shows considerable skill and knowledge of draughtsmanship. The picture dates back from the fifth dynasty, so that we are looking at the handiwork of an artist who lived some 5,000 years ago. The picture represents the sacred bark and rowers of the dead priestess Mery. The cord from which it was partly suspended from the wall of the tomb is still attached. Sets of amethysts and beads of the fifth dynasty were also found in the coffin. In a statue chamber of an adjoining tomb was found a limestone statue of a ruler named Nankheltka and his wife.

It is the opinion of Profs. Petrie and Brugsch that the custom of cannibalism was brought into Egypt by the Libyan invaders who occupied Upper Egypt about 3300 B. C. (See "Eaten With Honor," by Prof. W. M. F. Petrie, Contemporary Review, June, 1897.) They habitually cut up and dismembered the bodies of the dead, eating the flesh as a part of the burial ceremony to increase the eaters' own intellectual powers as well as imbibing all the magical attributes of the vic-

fatigably to win adherents to his cause, writing articles, delivering addresses, traveling from place to place, consulting officials high in authority at the European courts. . . . By the provision of the Red Cross treaty, surgeons, nurses, ambulance trains, and all hospital supplies are considered neutral, provided they display a uniform badge and flag, accompanied by their national flag.

In compliment to Mr. Dunant and the Swiss government the protective sign and flag agreed upon was a red Greek cross on a white ground—the reverse of the Swiss flag. Turkey alone has objected to this. Her soldiers, in their intense hatred of the Christian symbol, refused to work under a banner with a cross, and they were allowed to use a red crescent in its place.

Mr. Dunant is now about seventy years of age. Having spent half his fortune in establishing the Red Cross, and having lost the other half in unfortunate business ventures, he lived for many years poor and forgotten, in a plain district infirmary in Switzerland, of which he himself was the founder. Now, however, through the pensions granted him by the Dowager Empress of Russia and the Federal Council of Switzerland, and the generous gifts of money sent him by the citizens of Stuttgart, Germany, he is spending a peaceful old age in comfort and plenty.

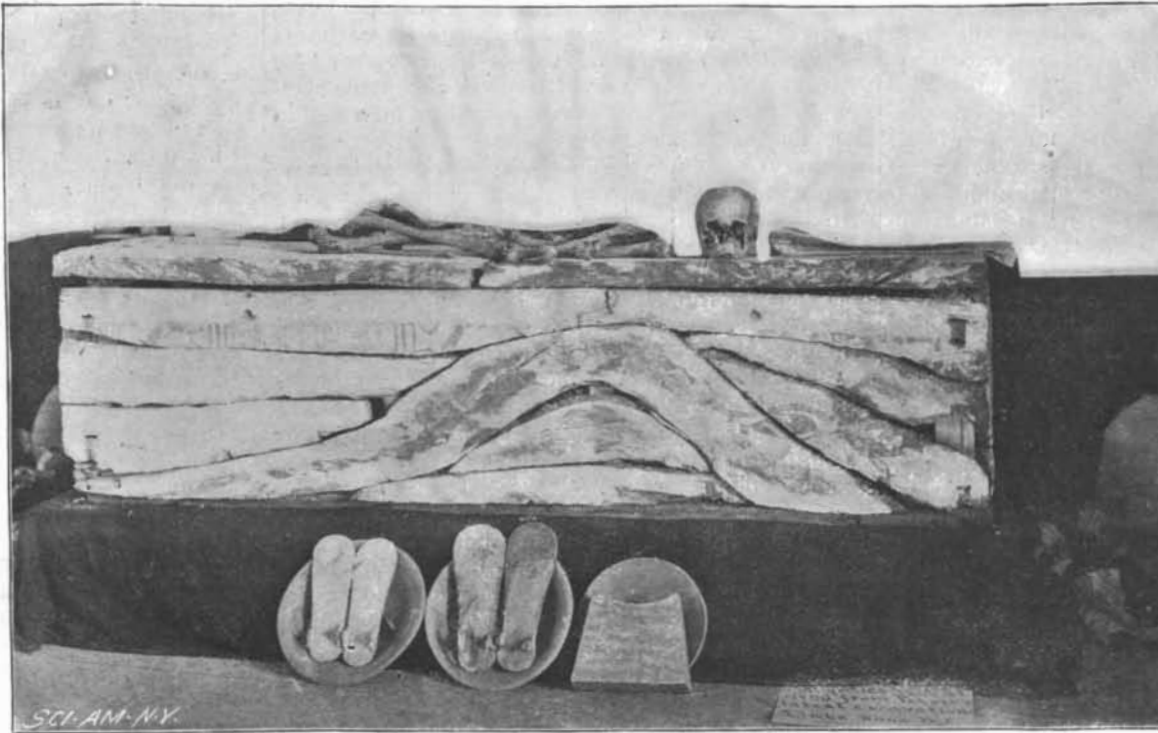
The Chinese Calendar.

The Chinese do not compute their time by centuries, but by periods of sixty years (luck shiapsix wood): each year in this space of time has its own name, partly relating to the five elements adopted by the Chinese sages, viz., wood, fire, earth, mineral, and water, partly connected with denominations of live creatures, such as rat, cattle, tiger, hare, etc. From the combination of these two factors into a double word results, at the same time, whether the year is a lucky or an unlucky one. If, for instance, wood and cattle meet in the name of a year, this signifies a good crop; fire and tiger prophesy a year of war. The year 1897 bore the name of dingh-dan—fire and fowl—and signifies a year of peace. The Chinese attach great value to these names, and are frequently governed in their enterprises by the fact whether the name of the year implies luck or bad luck. The division of the year is a twofold one,

it being divided into 12 months and 24 semi-months. The latter bear the signs of the old Chinese zodiac, and are called rain-water, vernal equinox, pure light, rain for the fruit, morning flush of summer, little rainy season, seed of the herbs, summer solstice, commencement of the heat, great heat, sign of autumn, end of the heat, white dew, etc. Like us, the Chinese have four seasons (mua). The months have alternately 29 (weak months) and 30 days (strong months); frequently leap months are introduced for the sake of equalization. According to the Chinese calendar, there are also two kinds of weeks, some of 10 days and others of 15 days, so that a month is divided either into two or three weeks. The first days of the months are designated by numbers, but the first day is also called that of the weasel and the last one that of return, every day of

the full moon being styled the day of hope. The night is taken at 7 hours, the day at 5. The counting of the 12 hours, each equal to two of ours, commences at 11 o'clock at night.

Frequently, however, the hours are also designated by animal names; thus the midnight hour is called the hour of the rat, while the midday hour is that of the horse. Each hour is divided into double minutes, minutes, and seconds.—Staats Zeitung.



A NEWLY DISCOVERED METHOD OF DISPOSING OF THE DEAD IN ANCIENT EGYPT.

tim consumed. It will be, however, for future excavations to throw additional light and furnish positive proof whether the removing of the flesh from the body prior to burial was done as a ceremonial rite or a cannibalistic habit, pure and simple. The accompanying photographs were taken at the Haskell Oriental Museum, of Chicago, by the writer, where they and other antiquities have recently arrived, through purchase by the Chicago Society of Egyptian Research from the Egyptian Exploration Fund. Prof. James Henry Breasted, Egyptologist of the University, considers the collection by all odds the finest and most valuable which has yet reached American shores.

Founder of the Red Cross.

To Mr. Henri Dunant, a Swiss gentleman, belongs the honor of inaugurating this movement, says Woman's Home Companion. Being in Italy at the time of the battle of Solferino, June 24, 1859, he visited the battlefield. Appalled by the needless and terrible suffering, he remained many days, doing all in his



EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES, HASKELL ORIENTAL MUSEUM, CHICAGO.

power to relieve it. During these terrible days Mr. Dunant conceived the idea of a system of organized relief whereby aid could be given under such circumstances. Returning home, he published a little book, called "Recollections of Solferino," that aroused great interest. His appeal touched a responsive chord in all hearts. Being invited to address the Geneva Society of Public Utility on the subject, he unfolded to them his plans. From that time forward he labored inde-