

ON EGYPTIAN SEPULCHRAL STATUETTES,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AN EXAMPLE IN THE POSSESSION
OF CAPT. E. HOARE.

By S. BIRCH, LL.D., F.S.A.

These figures are found in the tombs, along with the mummies (see Pierret, *Dict. d'Arch. Egypt.*, p. 225) sometimes cast pell-mell into the sarcophagi, at others set upright all round, or planted in the sand; occasionally they have been discovered scattered on the floor; in other instances they are deposited in small wooden boxes. Thousands have been discovered in the sepulchres of Memphis and Thebes, and lately some of remarkable colour and beauty, of intense bright blue porcelain, have been discovered with the mummies of the Deir-el-Bahari. None of these figures have been found in the tombs of the fourth, fifth, or sixth dynasties at Memphis or elsewhere, and the oldest which have been exhumed at Abydos are assigned to the thirteenth dynasty. The materials of which they are made are alabaster, calcareous stone, and wood, but not of porcelain or enamelled earth. They represent the deceased mummied, the hair in the costume of the period, especially with long side lappets, the hands come out of the garments, and are crossed, but only hold vases or bandlets, and never the hoe pickaxe and cord of the basket, or even the *tat* and buckle *ta*; of the nineteenth dynasty some, however, have the usual formula of the sixth chapter of the Ritual which was in use at that early period. The most flourishing period was that of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties, when the same materials, with the addition of basalt schists, and other stones in addition to the precited, came into use, and rarely metal also appears, and the most flourishing period continues to the twenty-first dynasty. The porcelain figures of this period are excessively bril-



Egyptian Statuette.

liant, and are distinguished by having inscriptions printed in a darker colour. The sixth chapter of the Ritual is usually found more or less abridged upon these figures, but the stone ones of Amenophis III have a totally different formula, and some others have either sepulchral inscriptions or unusual expressions. The words "*s'hrut*," "luminous," are constantly prefixed at this period to the name and titles of the deceased. At the time of the twenty-first and later dynasties the figures often have the dress and costume of the period, and are not mummied. Commencing with the twenty-sixth dynasty the figures assume another type, shown in Capt. Hoare's specimen.

The statuettes of this age are almost always of enamelled earth, or porcelain, of a pale green or blue colour, seldom made of wood, and never of stone. They are mummied, stand upright upon a square pedestal, and have a plinth up the back. They are of one colour throughout, and the details are no longer indicated by dark lines, but by hollow or sunk lines; all is engraved. The body of the statuette is certainly moulded, but while the paste was soft, and before baking, a scribe inserted the details with the hand. At the former period seldom more than one or two were found in a tomb; but after the twenty-first dynasty, especially at the time of the twenty-sixth, fifty and a hundred were of common occurrence. None of the age of the twenty-sixth dynasty were found at Abydos. (See Mariette, *Abydos*, pp. 78, 79). These figures evidently come down to the period of the Persian conquest, for the inscription of one, of the Monarch, Nekht-har-hebi, or Nectabes, of the thirtieth dynasty, B.C. 378, with the usual formula, has been found; and this is the last dated figure known, and as it came from Memphis, or rather from Sakkarah, it proves, with the fact of the coffin of this monarch being found at Cairo, and now in the British Museum, that Nekht-har-hebi, or Nectabes, was buried there. It is after this period that the sepulchral figures rapidly went out of use, although a few may have continued to be made under the Ptolemies, and the commencement of the Greek period; no dated ones of this time, however, have been found. Although great diversity exists in the shape and inscription of these figures, they ought as a rule to have had the fifth or sixth

chapter of the Ritual inscribed or engraved upon them. Although the entries, unfortunately wanting of these figures, may have only directed that the chapter should be said over them, many figures are plain and uninscribed, others have only the name and titles of the deceased, sometimes preceded, at a later period, by the expression "s'hut," "white," "bright," or "luminous." The inscription, containing the sixth chapter, one of the four formulas with which they are often covered, is generally written or engraved in horizontal lines round the body. The arrangement in vertical lines, as on the present example, is very much rarer.

According to Mariette (*Abydos*, p. 45) they ought on certain formulas pronounced by the deceased to answer his appeal. He reads, "Oh Shabti if we need he is called to work in Karneter," (he answers) "It is I, here I am." The end of the formula is only a development of the same idea. "If the deceased is judged and called," (The shabti answers) "I am him thou callest for these labours. So he has struck (I have struck) the enemy who is found there (Hades), I have struck him, as a person engaged in his duties:" "The shabti then by means of the implements he carries upon him, cultivates the earth with the deceased, and there casts the seeds, where under the concealed effort of nature, food and life spring forth." This formula is inscribed on statuettes said to be as old as the thirteenth dynasty found at Abydos, and is the resumé of the sixth chapter, already mentioned. However, giving this chapter in detail, which appears upon Captain Hoare's figure, it will be necessary to consider some of the others.

First, the inscriptions found on the sepulchral figures of Amenophis III. Second, those probably introduced at the time of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty, and continued till the nineteenth; and third, the fifth chapter of the Ritual rarely placed upon them. The first of the series is a modification of the sixth chapter, and contains part of that belonging probably to an older Ritual than that extant at the time of the twenty-sixth dynasty. This inscription on the figures of Amenophis III is as follows:—"Make the responding figures of the devoted to Osiris, the King Amenophis III act in Hades. Oh

Gods! who are with the complete lord (Osiris), seated at his word it has been commanded that ye should proclaim his name ye have given to him the things on the altar of the shrine, hear ye all his vows in the boundary of the gap (of the Horizon by which the deceased went to the Sun) he makes the festival, and the *uga*, when he was over the Osiniar King, irrigating the furrows, transporting the sand of the East to the West. The Oriris King has been ordered in the course of every day before Amenophis to receive the cakes." (See *Zeitschrift. fur Aegyptische Sprache*, 1864, pp. 91, 92). There is another formula also found at the time of the eighteenth dynasty, not exactly the sixth chapter, but perhaps introduced instead at the time of that dynasty. It reads, "Shew thy face, regard the disc of the Sun, adore thou in life, thou hast been hailed in Rusta (or place of Fates leading to Hades) thou goest round the abode of Jemie, Thou perambulatest the valley of Rusta above, Thou goest against the secret gate, thou sittest placed in the region of Tasar (a part of Hades) like the great ministers of the Sun." (See *Zeitschrift. fur Aegyptische Sprache*, 1864, p. 104). This formula may have been introduced at the time of the disc worshippers, but it is rare and exceptional. There are two chapters relating to the *Shabti*, the first of which, the fifth, has only once to my knowledge been found inscribed on a figure. It is entitled the chapter of "Avoiding to cause that a person does work in Hades." The chapter itself reads, "I require a quiet and coming forth at the hour, fed or living off the nose-cra of agnocephali," or "living off nose-cra again" (or turning back). The object therefore of these figures is to spare the defunct the toil and trouble of Hades. The sixth chapter, the one so often found on the figures, bears the title of "The chapter of causing to do work the shabti," or "sepulchral figures in Hades."

I now proceed to consider the formula of the sixth of the Ritual, which is found on Captain Hoare's figure. So many hundreds of this occur that it offers many differences, the principal of which I have already given. (*Zeitschrift. fur Aegyptische Sprache*, 1865, p. 8, and following). "Oh these responding figures, let this Osiris be ready (or judged), for all the labour to be done in

Hades," is one beginning, or, "Oh these responding figures, should there be a call day or night at any time to do the work (it is for the Osirian, deceased) they should strike away the evil as a person who does his duties, Should I call ye, get ready at all times to do what is to be done, there to labour in the fields, to water the furrows, to transport the sand of the West to the East, and vice versà, let me say in Hades, I am yours." Other formulas give, "Oh these responding figures should the Osirian deceased be required by day or night to do the work to be done in Hades when the enemies are struck down as by a person who does his duty, Should I call upon ye at any moment get ready at once to do what is to be done, there to labour in the fields, to water the furrows, to transport the sand of the West to the East, and vice versà, I am thou (says the figure) or I the Osiris make my appeal before the company of the Gods of the West. Should I be called by Osiris, or should my name be called, I answer the call the same to-day or for ever." Several allusions to Shabti are thought to have been found in different monuments.

A tablet of wood remarkably fresh, with a hieratic inscription, containing a text relative to these *ushabti*, has been translated by Mons. Maspero,¹ and it evidently came from the Deir-el-Behari, and is dated on the eighth day of the fourth month of the summer of the fifth year of the monarch, Herhor, of the twenty-first dynasty, and refers to the sepulchral figures made for the mummy of Naskhonsu, daughter of Tenthantahue, one of the queens of the twenty-first line. The *Thari ushabti* are enjoined to make all the prostrations and lamentations for the protection of Naskhonsu yearly, monthly, every decade day, and on epagomena, or intercallery days. It is Amenka who allows to dwell in the seats of the abode of Berber, mentioned also on the leather canopy of the Queen, Hesiemkleb. They are exhorted to make good lamentations for the Queen Naskhonsu. The shabti appear to have been paid for in bronze, linen, bread, cakes, and fish. The shabti were mystically supposed to guide and control the deceased in all his actions, and to protect his mummy.

¹ Maspero, "Rec. de Travaux," iv, 17.

The word ushabti, respondent, is the same as applied to the figure, and is also given to the cows as ushabti. It evidently means the cows.¹

The present sepulchral figure is evidently for a person named "Pet," or "Petru," son of a female, or born of a woman, named "Hant," or "Htar," and is of the period of the twenty-sixth dynasty, about B.C. 600.

In taking the opportunity of expressing my thanks to Dr. Birch for the trouble he has so kindly taken in elucidating the Egyptian Statuette engraved above, I should also say that it was discovered, with ten or eleven others, in the summer of 1879, in a tomb near Thebes. All these figures were obtained by my relative Captain G. Rochfort, who gave me this example to add to my small collection of Egyptian antiquities. It was exhibited at the monthly meeting of the Institute, December 2nd, 1880.

EDWARD HOARE.

¹ Mariette, "Les Papyrus Egyptiens du Musée de Bouilac," Plate 13.