

BRITISH MUSEUM.

A GUIDE

TO THE

EGYPTIAN COLLECTIONS

IN THE

BRITISH MUSEUM.

WITH 53 PLATES AND 180 ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT.

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P R E F A C E .

THE Collection of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum comprises nearly fifty thousand objects, and many of its sections are unrivalled in completeness. It illustrates, in a more or less comprehensive manner, the history and civilization of the Egyptians from the time when their country was passing out of the Predynastic Period under a settled form of government, about B.C. 4500, to the time of the downfall of the power of the Queens Candace at Meroë, in the Egyptian Sûdân, in the second or third century after Christ. The monuments of Christian Egypt also form a very important series, and illustrate Coptic funerary sculpture and art between the sixth and eleventh centuries A.D.

The present Guide has been prepared with the view of providing the visitor to the British Museum with information of a more general character than can be conveniently given in the Guides to the several Galleries and Rooms of the Department. An attempt has here been made to present a sketch of the origin, the manners and customs, the language, the writing, the literature, the religion, and the burial rites of the peoples of Egypt, and of their history under the successive dynasties; embodying references to the several objects of the Collection which illustrate the different branches of the subject. The text is supplemented by an abundant selection of cuts and plates of the most important of the antiquities.

E. A. WALLIS BUDGE.

DEPARTMENT OF EGYPTIAN AND ASSYRIAN
ANTIQUITIES, BRITISH MUSEUM,
September 29, 1908.

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INTRODUCTION

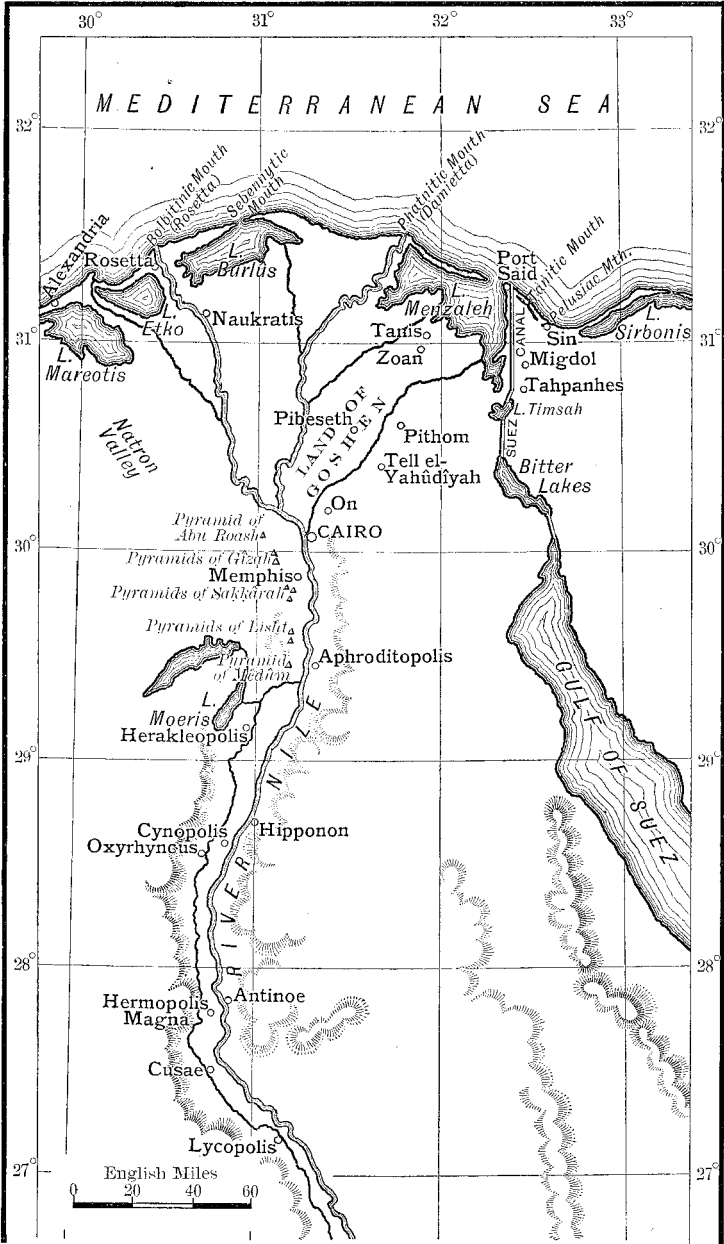
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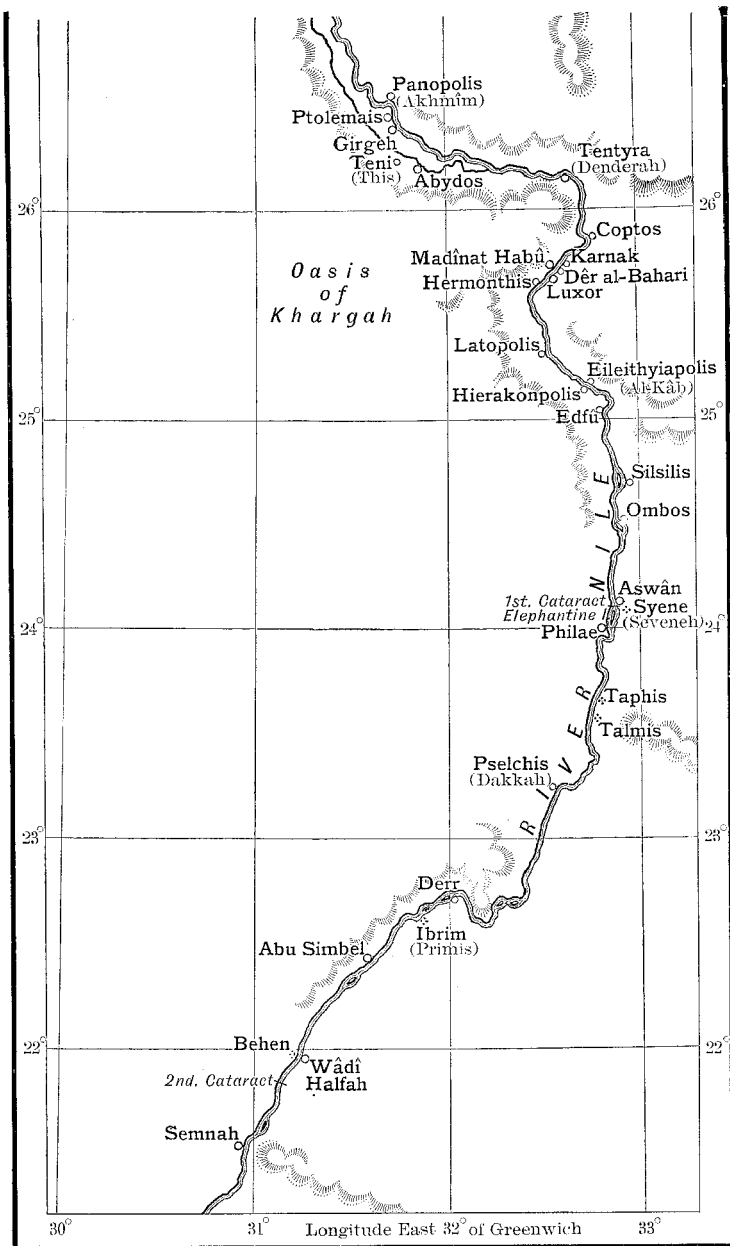
EGYPTIAN COLLECTIONS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

CHAPTER I.

THE COUNTRY OF EGYPT AND ITS LIMITS. THE DELTA.
OASES. LAKES. THE NILE. INUNDATION. NILE
FESTIVALS. FAMINES. ANCIENT AND MODERN
DIVISIONS OF EGYPT AND THE SÛDÂN.

The **Land of Egypt** is situated in the north-east shoulder of the continent of Africa, and in the earliest times it consisted of that portion of the Nile Valley which lay between the Mediterranean Sea and the northern end of the First Cataract; the Island of Äbu, or Elephantine, and the town of Sunnu, or Sunt, the Syene of classical writers and the Sewênêh of the Bible (Ezekiel xxix, 10), forming the southern boundary of the country. The northern limit of Egypt has, in historic times, always been the Mediterranean Sea, but its southern limit varied considerably at different periods. Under the Vth dynasty, about B.C. 3600, it was marked by Elephantine and Syene. Under the XIIth dynasty, about B.C. 2500, it was extended to Semnah and Kummah, about 250 miles to the south of Syene. Under the XVIIIth dynasty, about B.C. 1600, the southern frontier town was probably Napata, the modern Merawi, about 600 miles, by river, from Syene. A century later the Egyptians took possession of the Island of Meroë, and they appear to have built a town at a place about 930 miles from Syene, by river, to mark their southern frontier. Between B.C. 1200 and 600 the frontier was withdrawn to Syene, where it remained practically for several centuries. Under the Arabs, the





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