

era. The publication is a most important one, and the translations and descriptive notices of the various papyri reflect great credit on the English school of Egyptology.

Commencing with the illuminated papyri, we have a small but beautiful example of the best period of the Theban school. The papyrus roll was 18 feet long, and was decorated with beautifully painted scenes rather larger in size than usual. The hieroglyphic text is in two handwritings, but is extremely carefully written, and not a single character is missing. We are fortunately able to fix the date with accuracy. Hunefer styles himself "Overseer of the Palace of the King, lord of two lands, Men, Maat-Ra, the pre-nomen of Seti, superintendent of the royal cattle of the lord of two lands, royal scribe, and governor of Western Thebes." In addition to these titles, which open the papyrus, we know that he was also "royal scribe of all the divine offerings of the King," which implies that he was a priest and member of the confraternity of Hmen-Ra. His wife, Nasha, was a *gemat*, or singer, in the temple of Amen, and is here represented holding a sistrum crowned with lotus flowers, and wearing the cone head-dress, a mark of the order. It is evident that Hunefer was an official of the highest rank in the service of Seti I., the father of Rameses II., and nearly contemporary with Moses—about 1370 B.C. The ritual of Hunefer, and those of Queen Netchemet and the Singer Anhai, here published, all belong to members of the Order of Amen, the greatest monastic order of ancient times. Rising from a small community of priests who served the chapel of Amen in Thebes, these priests, about 1800 B.C., raised themselves to the head of the Egyptian hierarchy, deposed the Theban local god Mentu, god of war, and proclaimed their patron under the title of Amen-Ra, king of the gods. The power of the order, with the "first prophet of Amen" at its head, was immense. The kings, the queens, and all the nobility and officials of Thebes were members of the order. The immense wealth which poured into Thebes from the wars in Asia and Nuhia found its way into the treasury of the god and was administered by the priests. The compilation of the Theban version of the Book of the Dead fell into the hands of the order, and they soon began to introduce their own god and his worship into a ritual in which he was formerly unknown. One great feature of these Theban priestly rituals is the beautiful introductory hymns to Ra and Osiris, and sometimes to the scribe-god Thoth. The ritual of Hunefer opens with a very beautiful hymn to Ra, and also one to Osiris. The almost monotheistic character of this hymn is very remarkable :

"Homage to thee, O Amen-Ra. Thou dost rest on Maat (Truth), and who passeth over Heaven; every face seeth thee. Thou art unknown, and no tongue is worthy to declare what thou art; only thou thyself art able.

"Men praise thee by thy name Ra, and swear by thee, for thou art lord over them.

"Thou hearest with thine ears, thou seest with thine eyes.

"Millions of years have gone over the world; I cannot tell the number of those through which thou hast passed.

"Thou steerest thy way across the watery abyss to a place which thou lovest; this thou doest in one little moment of time, and then thou dost sink down and make an end of the hours."

Here we see, then, that Amen had found his way into the Theban ritual, and that