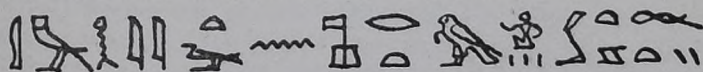


and existed during the 2nd and 3rd centuries of our era only. As the information in respect of their composition, etc., is much less satisfactory than that about the civilian societies, the consideration of their objects may be postponed until after the investigation into the civilian societies; the great value that they have for the student is due to the light they throw on what may have been the private practice of the civilian societies—the word private being used to show that, as such practices would have been illegal in the civilian societies, it would have been necessary for them to be kept in the background—the ostensible object of the society being the performance of its religious duties and the supervision of the burial of its members. It must be remembered that the evidence we have as to the objects and practices of the civilian societies refers to the legally authorized objects only, and can, consequently, serve to show the minimum work done by them, and that, had they carried on any other form of insurance, etc., they would have avoided any exposure thereof as far as was in their power.

NOTE.—In this connection mention should be made of what appears to have been a society providing funeral benefits, established in Egypt nearly 4,500 years ago.

In a well-preserved list of the household of a soldier Senefru, son of Hera, discovered some years ago by Professor Petrie at Kahun, is found a noteworthy mention of a gild of necropolis stone-masons. Senefru was a soldier in the army of Sekhem-kara,¹ the second king of the 13th Dynasty according to the Turin Papyrus, and seems to have been without rank or wealth. His grandmother and three aunts are spoken of as



*nem hyt*² *en neterkhert nehu uat mehti*,³ "members of the Gild

¹ = about 2500 B.C., according to Petrie.

² seems to have the meaning of a person who seems to be joined or connected with something—an associate or member of a society.

(Cf. in Pierret: *Vocabulaire Hiéroglyphique*, 267.) Griffith renders the following word Gild (see his article on "Wills in Ancient Egypt" in the *Law Quarterly Review*, January, 1898).

³ The Northern Division, i.e. of Lower Egypt, is often mentioned in the Kahun Papyri.