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**DFG-Projekt "Digitalisierung und Erschließung des Nachlasses des
Ägyptologen Adolf Erman (1854-1937)"**

Brief von Norman de Garis Davies an Adolf Erman

Davies, Norman de Garis

Ben Hasan, 16.12.1931

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The Tante of Bern Talsan
Dec. 16/31

My dear Erman,

A happy Xmas to you and to your household! It is true our standards of happiness have had to be altered somewhat of late years. This would not altogether matter did not the worst of the change lie not so much in the reduction of sources of pleasure as in the fear how much more sacrifice may be demanded of us yet. No one and nothing seems safe. We seem to depend for our very existence on shadows of shadows such as Currency. Whereas a nation working hard & producing food and manufactures ought to be acquiring wealth and sufficient happiness. But no man & no nation seems really prosperous now. It is comforting to be able to work through I do not imagine that any one who feels that the marmalade is not thick & enough on his bread & butter is going to be comforted by having more and better pictures of all the things the ancient Egyptian used to have for breakfast or hoped to have in the next world.

Amongst the bare necessities of life and work which we have brought with us to this jaded-infested region is the latest volume of the Wörterbuch. It is splendid to have that finished and I hope that Grabow has been able to take his ticket to Egypt. He ought not to need

Davies

Letter of Mrs. Thomas
Dec 18/31

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any other passport. How long and with how many misgivings
you have looked forward to this day! How fruitful
of great things in Egyptology these five volumes will be in
the years to come. Budzisz's gamas (what an inspired
word!) can now be used as ballast on English Steam-
boats. But we shall no longer have such "tit-bits" as
"le fougue impetueuse, &c"! A thousand thanks to
you & friends & the Commission which has endowed
my library with this fine compass by which I may
hope to escape the scornful laughter of generations to
come.

My wife and I are doing slave-work here trying to get some
of the admirable Colms-work which here & there adorns
these rocks on to paper and publishes into print. I live
on the rungs of tall ladders and my wife is perched
very high up on a scaffold painting that grand netting
scene. It has nearly 200 birds in it with all their
feathers complete, to say nothing of all the leaves on the
trees and all the ripples in the water! We have been
here four weeks and shall not get away till after the
New Year. Life is simple and we live to get the work done
and nothing else. All the other problems of life are put
aside for the moment and that in itself is a good way towards
happiness. I am going through all the Trunks and trying
to get all the detail that is of value and that heretofore
miniature copies fail to exhibit. I have long wanted

[Faint, mirrored handwritten text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is illegible due to fading and mirroring.]

to be better acquainted with Middle Kingdom work and if I had left it much longer I should not have had the courage to make a beginning. I do not know that I am impressed by its accuracy and reliability, but it is often highly decorative at any rate. Rawlinson's copies of textual matter seems very good, and the pictures reach a high standard on the whole, though a good deal more can be made out of them of course, and especially in colour notes.

I hope your eyes hold out pretty well, considering, under the more moderate strain you put upon them now. I am thankful to say that physically the years have not yet done me much damage and I can do a very hard day's work yet, without any sign of over-work damage. It is very nice to get away from the monotonous Tibetan tents with their smothered up & illegible walls and those awful Ramocide damps. Nelson is a hero to devote himself to them - a most admirable and tireless little man he is and improving on my own methods greatly. But so far I will not agree that any publications are not about as equal to the value of the subject as is needed. I don't believe the future world with all the new vistas opening to it will have leisure to take these things too seriously. If only what we preserve for it is a true report! With very sincere wishes for the happiness and good of you & yours
Yours very sincerely
H. G. Daniels.

