

A PORTRAIT HEAD OF SENUSERT III, FROM KARNAK.

SOME unexpected results were recently seen on taking a new photograph of the head of the red granite colossus of Senusert III, which now stands against a pilaster in a rather dark part of the entrance hall of the Cairo Museum. This head was originally published by Legrain in his *Statues de Rois et de Particuliers*, No. 42011; his photograph, shown in Fig. 1, which appears to have been taken in full daylight with ordinary plates, shows no trace of paint. The face, in fact, is perhaps less full of life than those of the other portraits known of this king.

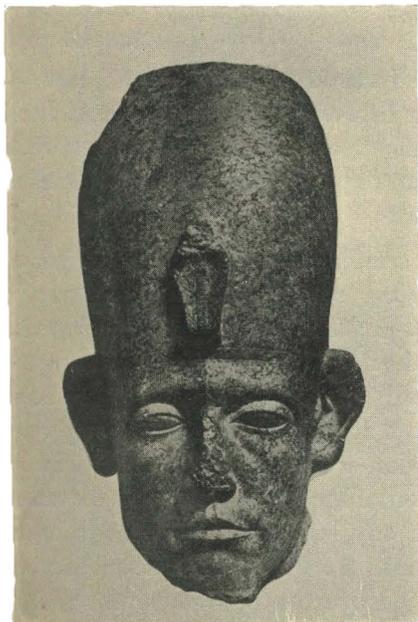


FIG. 1.

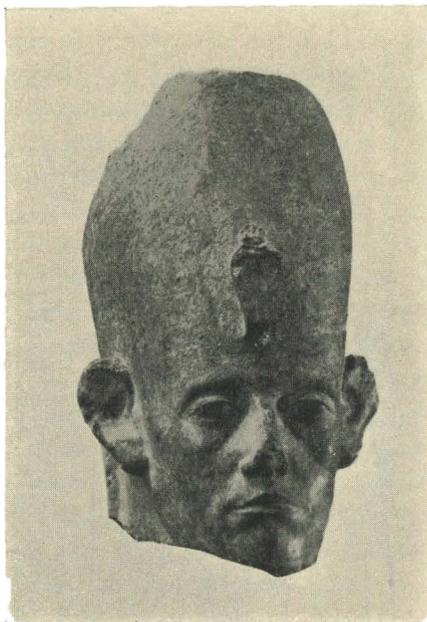


FIG. 2.

Having had occasion to obtain a small photograph of the head of this colossus, to compare it with a collection of the portrait-heads of the XIIth dynasty in the Cairo Museum and elsewhere, an exposure of a quarter of an hour had to be given, since the Cairo Museum was not then supplied with means for efficiently lighting objects for photography. The plates used were panchromatic.

The varied sources of reflected light, in the second picture (Fig. 2), have given effect to the detail of the face, and render this a far more vital portrait. So much expression would not have been suspected on looking at the effect of the single top light in the first figure. Moreover the panchromatic plate has brought out the painting of the eyes, and this might be the portrait of a living man which one would recognize anywhere.

A close examination of the colossus clearly shows that the body, though of good work, is not comparable in technique with the head, and it seems likely that a special artist was employed to portray the royal features. It must be admitted that, in the present case, the artist was a master of his craft.

R. ENGELBACH.

ISMAIL SHEHAB.