Dear Michael,

Sorry to have been so long with this, but I have had a deal to do as you will see, and in addition have lost a day through a minor illness. I had a very pleasant time in Crete staying at the Taverne — very pleasant. Should like to spend a month or two there — and working in the Museum. Access to the tablets was not so easy as here; I could not have them all out at once, and had to examine these one at a time in their glass cases; but I think I have done a fair job and overlooked none of the tablets for the book (i.e., silence on them in the notes various confirmation of the reading). I copied as well a large number of tablets joined by Bennett, especially where he had added unpublished fragments. I didn't try to check every single tablet, that would have taken too long. You will see a good many new readings, but most of them are already in the Index. I'm sorry about 56606 as it is going to upset our theorizing about 56605 though the tablet still remains related. On the whole, I am again impressed by the excellent work Bennett has done.

I had several long talks with Plato, and think I have made some impression on him; in particular the affair of 5895 shook him. He told me that there were some trays full of political and crumbling tablets which had become exposed to the weather as a result of broken windows during the war; and Bennett unexpectedly never saw these. They were thick in clay, and many have crumbled completely to a coarse red sand; some fell to pieces at the slightest touch (and were illegible anyway); but a great number are reasonably sound and well preserved. They are of course like the 56606 only tiny fragments, many of them a mere sign or two or a merely blank end. But I picked out any that seemed large enough to contain a whole word, and in some cases was able to make joins — at least 3 tablets. I completely resuscitated from these texts. The important thing is that these fragments will doubtless help to complete the published ones — but I couldn't start to tackle the job of looking for joins; it would take a month or so, at the very least, to do end and sort up everything and get all the other tablets resorted by categories so as to give you...
a reasonable chance of success. My one great discovery was simply the result of ready imp, followed by what looked like the beginning of a horse's head. This was too good to overlook, and in getting it clean I thought of 600 and took the fragments downstairs to see if it could possibly be a join. I laid it on the glass and it looked good, so I summoned Platon and we opened the case and do, it was good. I left him to get it glued, and when I came back on Monday (after spending the week-end at Thasos), the blocks had stuck it on the wrong end, with half the tablet upside down! I told Platon and it's being rectified!

Got back to Athens on Monday afternoon and have now spent some time with Blegen and have helped him join a few more of the new fragments to the Pylean material. All results here. I have not yet much out of Blegen's yet (except a promise to give us a copy of his AJA article with the room numbers marked on the plan).

Went to Eleusis to-day and saw the Mycenaean stirrup jar with the inscription. I feel sure it must be a Cretan import: 02-22-20 is quite the place of origin and 02-22-20 [etc.] may be the maker's name. I wonder what the archaologists will say about that?

I am still uncertain how best to follow my last week's work, but hope to get away soon. There is no more real work I can do on the tablets, though much on the book.

I think I had better get this off soon, so that you can digest it and query anything. On the subject of Bvex, I feel obliged to differ, for there isn't a general name for the bovine species other than ox, and its meaning as 'castorium bad' is only secondary. I quite appreciate your difficulty and think the point should be mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, but cattle will hardly do as it is too wide and bears no singular! After all they were quite right to use Ρ for the 'working ox'; natural they considered it more important than any human interference with it.

Weather was very hot in Crete but had been cold since.

I got back to Athens. How all is well with you.

Yours,

John