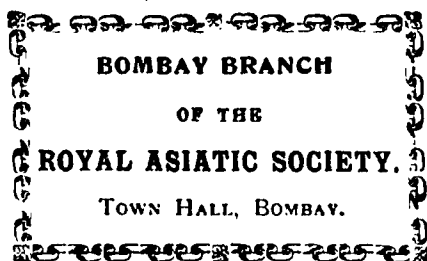




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EGYPT AND NUBIA



THE FINDING OF MOSES.—P. 36.

NOTES OF TRAVEL

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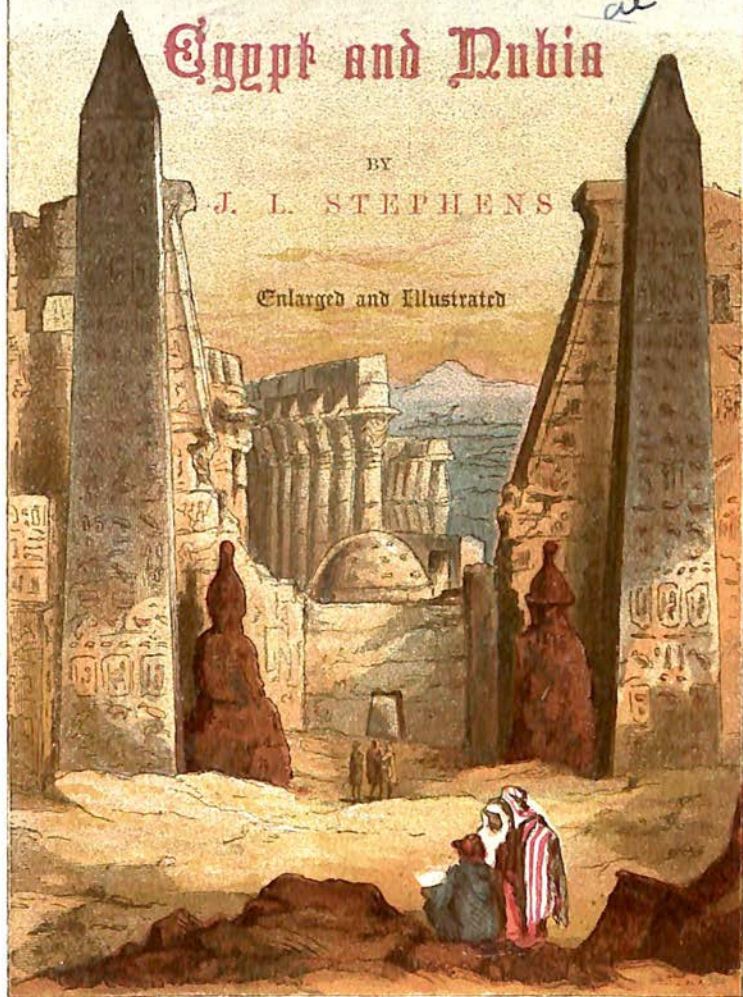
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Egypt and Nubia

BY

J. L. STEPHENS

Enlarged and Illustrated



NOTES OF TRAVEL
IN
EGYPT AND NUBIA

BY
J. L. STEPHENS

Revised and Enlarged

WITH
AN ACCOUNT OF THE SUEZ CANAL

Numerous Illustrations and a Map



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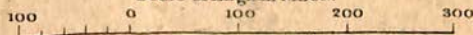
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EGYPT AND NUBIA.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at Alexandria—Pompey's Pillar—Cleopatra's Needles—The
Catacombs—The Pasha's Canal—Boats of the Nile.

ONE afternoon in December, 1835, after a passage of five days from Malta, I was perched up in the rigging of an English schooner, spyglass in hand, and earnestly looking for the "Land of Egypt." The captain had never been there before; but we had been running several hours along the coast of Barbary, and the chart and compass told us that we could not be far from the fallen city of Alexander. Night came on, however, without our seeing it. The ancient Pharos, the Lantern of Ptolemy, no longer throws its light far over the bosom of the sea to guide the weary mariner.

This magnificent lighthouse was erected in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus about 284 B.C., and was reputed to be one of the seven wonders of the world. It is said to have been built of white marble, 400 feet high, and its cost has been variously estimated at from £200,000 to £400,000.

The architect was Sostratus of Cnidus. It fell into decay in the 13th and 14th centuries, and no vestige of it now remains.

Morning came, and we found ourselves directly opposite the city, the shipping in the outward harbour, and the fleet of the Pasha riding at anchor under the walls of the seraglio, carrying me back in imagination to the days of Cleopatra, the Ptolemies, and the Macedonian conqueror. Slowly we worked our way up the difficult and dangerous channel, unaided by a pilot, for none appeared to take us in charge. It is a fact worthy of note, that the celebrated Pompey's Pillar is even now, after a lapse of so many years, one of the landmarks which guide the sailor to her fallen capital.

Just as we had passed the last reef pilots came out to meet us, their swarthy faces, their turbans, their large dresses streaming in the wind, and their little boat with its huge lateen sail, giving a strange wildness to their appearance, the effect of which was not a little heightened by their noise and confusion in attempting to come alongside. Failing in their first endeavour, our captain gave them no assistance, and when they came upon us again he refused to admit them on board. The last arrival at Malta had brought unfavourable accounts of the plague, and he was unwilling to run any risk until he should have an opportunity of advising with his consignee. My servant was the only person on board who could speak Arabic; and, telling the wild, flyaway-looking Arabs to fasten on astern, we towed our pilots in, and at about eight o'clock



PHAROS, ALEXANDRIA.

came to anchor in the harbour. In half-an-hour I was ashore, and the moment I had touched it, just as I had found at Constantinople, all the illusion of the distant view was gone.

Indeed it would be difficult for any man who lives at all among the things of this world to dream of the departed glory of Egypt when first entering the fallen city of Alexander; the present and the things of the present



LANDING IN EGYPT.

are uppermost; and between ambling donkeys, loaded camels, dirty, half-naked, sore-eyed Arabs, swarms of flies, yelping dogs, and apprehensions of the plague, one thinks more of his own movements than of the pyramids. I groped my way through a long range of bazaars to the Frank quarter, and here, totally forgetting what I had come for, and that there were such things as obelisks, pyramids, and ruined temples, the genius of my native land broke

out, and, with an eye that had had some experience in such matters at home, I contemplated the "improvements;" a whole street of shops, kept by Europeans and filled with European goods, ranges of fine buildings, fine country houses and gardens, growing upon barren sands, showed that strangers from a once barbarous land were repaying the debt which the world owes to the mother of arts, and were raising her from the ruin into which she had been plunged by years of misrule and anarchy.

These remarks apply to most Oriental cities. A few palaces, temples, gardens, and tanks excepted, there is, even in these days, little to admire in comparison with streets deep with dust and filth, and masses of wretched population.

My first visit was to the American Consul, whose reception of me was such that I felt already as one not alone in a strange land. While with him an English gentleman came in—a merchant in Alexandria—who was going that night to Cairo. The Consul introduced us; and, telling him that I too was bound for Cairo, Mr. T. immediately proposed that I should accompany him, saying he had a boat and everything ready, and that I might save myself the trouble of making any preparations, and would have nothing to do but come on board with my luggage at sunset. Though rather a short notice, I did not hesitate to accept his offer. Besides the relief from trouble in fitting out, the plague was in every one's mouth, and I was not sorry to have so early an opportunity of escaping from a city where, above all others, "pestilence

walketh in darkness, and destruction wasteth at noon-day."

Having but a short time before me, I immediately mounted a donkey—an Egyptian donkey—an animal somewhat different from the European variety, and, generally, of a finer appearance. Accompanied by my servant, with a sore-eyed Arab boy to drive us, I started off



EASTERN ASSES.

upon a full gallop to make a hasty survey of the ruins of Alexandria. The Frank quarter is the extreme part of the city, and a very short ride brought us into another world. It was not until now, riding in the suburbs upon burning sands and under a burning sun, that I felt

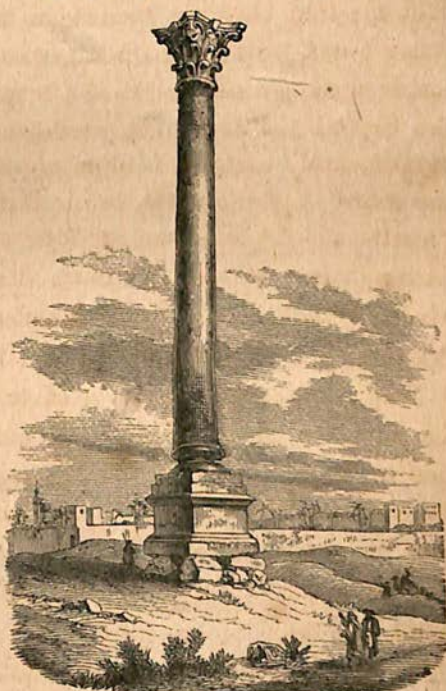
myself really in the land of Egypt. It was not, in fact, till standing at the base of Pompey's Pillar that I felt myself among the ruins of one of the greatest cities of the world. Reaching it through long rows of Arab huts, where poverty, and misery, and famine, and nakedness stared me in the face, one glance at its majestic height told me that this was indeed the work of other men and other times. Standing on a gentle elevation, it rises a single shaft of ninety-eight feet, surmounted by a Corinthian capital ten feet high, and, independent of its own monumental beauty, it is an interesting object as marking the centre of the ancient city. It stands far outside the present walls, and from its base you may look over a barren waste of sand, running from the shores of the Mediterranean to the Lake Mareotis, the boundaries of Alexandria as it was of old.

This remarkable column is of red granite, nearly 100 feet high, and about 29 feet in circumference. The inscription on its base implies that it was erected in honour of the Emperor Diocletian, about 296 A.D. ; this, however, may have been engraved on it long after its erection. When or why the name "Pompey's Pillar" came to be applied to it is not known.

All this intermediate space of sandy hills, alternating with hollows, was once covered with houses, palaces, and perhaps with monuments, equal in beauty to that at whose base I stood. Riding over that waste, the stranger sees broken columns, crumbling walls, and fragments of granite and marble thrusting themselves above their sandy graves,

as if struggling for resurrection : on one side he beholds a yawning chasm, in which forty or fifty naked Arabs are toiling to disentomb a column long buried in the sand ; on another an excavated house, with all its walls and apartments almost as entire as when the ancient Egyptian left it. He is riding over a mighty sepulchre, the sepulchre of a ruined city, and at every step some tell-tale monument is staring at him from the grave.

Riding leisurely among the ruins, I passed the celebrated wells built in the time of Alexander, at the very foundation of the city, at which generation after generation have continued to slake their thirst, and ended my ride at a beautiful obelisk 70 feet high, called Cleopatra's Needle,



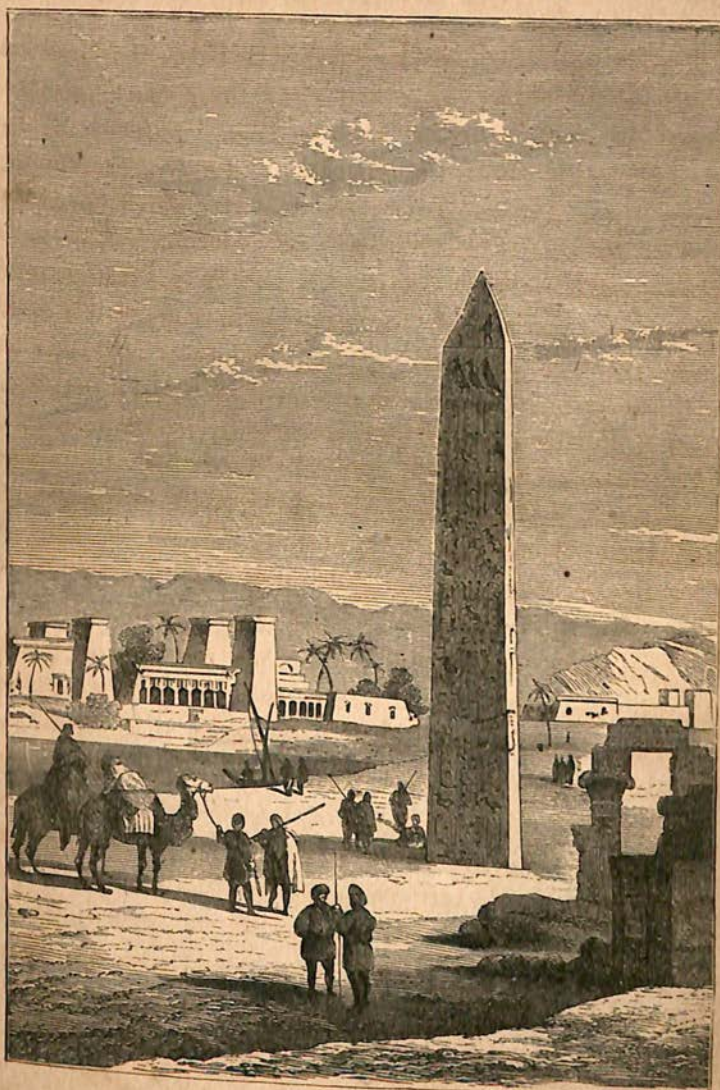
POMPEY'S PILLAR, ALEXANDRIA.

full of mysterious hieroglyphics that mock the learning of the wise of our day. It is as old as the days of Thothmes III., who lived in the 16th century before the Christian era, and is by some writers supposed to have been the Pharaoh

whose daughter rescued Moses from the Nile. But time has dealt lightly with it, and on one side the characters stand bold and clear as when it came from the hands of the sculptor, although, on the other, the dread sirocco, blowing upon it from the desert for more than two thousand years, has effaced the sculptor's marks, and worn away the almost impenetrable granite. By its side, half buried in the sand, lies a fallen brother, of the same size and about the same age. This was presented to the British nation by Mahomet Ali, for the purpose of being carried to England; but since that time it has lain in fallen majesty, stretching across a deep chasm formed by excavations around it. These obelisks were first erected at Heliopolis, and were removed to Alexandria by one of the Cæsars, who placed them at the front of his palace. A third obelisk was transferred to Paris, and now stands in the Place de la Concorde.

At six o'clock I was riding with my new friend, spurring my donkey to its utmost speed to get out of the city before the gate should be closed; and the reader will acquit me of all intention of writing a book, when I tell him that a little after dark of the same day on which I arrived at Alexandria I was on my way to Cairo. Accident, however, very unexpectedly brought me again to Alexandria; and on my second visit, while waiting for an opportunity to return to Europe, I several times went over the same ground, more at my leisure, and visited the other objects of interest which my haste had before prevented me from seeing.

Among these were the Catacombs, situated about one



CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

mile from the city, on the edge of the Libyan Desert, and near the shore of the sea. These great repositories of the dead are so little known, that we had some difficulty in finding them, although we enquired of everybody whom we met. Seeing an Arab brushing some horses near an opening in the side of the rock, we went to him to enquire, and found we were at the door of the Catacombs. The real entrance is now unknown, but was probably from above. The present is a rude forced breach, and the first chamber into which we entered—a chamber built with pious regard to the repose of the dead—we found occupied as a stable for the horses of one of the Pasha's regiments. My donkey-boy had taken the precaution to bring with him candles, and a line to tie at the entrance, after the manner of Fair Rosamond's clew, to save us from being lost in the labyrinth of passages; but this proved to be unnecessary, as the Arabs employed about the horses had explored them so thoroughly, for purposes of plunder, that they were sufficiently sure guides. Taking two of them into pay, we followed with our lighted torches through two chambers—which to me, who had previously seen the tombs in Thebes, Petra, and Jerusalem, contained nothing remarkable—and came to what has been called the state chamber, a circular room about thirty feet in diameter, with three recesses, one at each side of the door and one opposite, a vaulted roof, and altogether admirably fine in its proportions. In each of the recesses were niches for the bodies of the dead, and in one of them skulls and mouldering bones were still lying on the ground. Following my guides,

I passed through several chambers half filled with sand; but having by this time lost much of my ardour for wandering among tombs, and finding the pursuit unprofitable and unsatisfactory, I returned to the state chamber and left the Catacombs.

They are supposed to extend many miles under the surface, but how far will probably never be known. The excavations that have as yet been made are very trifling; and unless the enlightened Pasha should need the state chamber for his horses, the sands of the desert may again creep upon them and shut them for ever from our eyes. It is to be regretted that these have never been sufficiently explored in search of papyri, which might prove of historic or literary interest.

Near the door of the entrance, directly on the edge of the shore, are chambers cut in the rocks, which open to the sea, and are called by the imposing name of Cleopatra's Baths. It is rather an exposed situation, and, besides the view from the sea, there are several places where "peeping Tom" might have hidden himself quite conveniently. It is a rude place, too; and when I was there, the luxurious queen could hardly have got to her chambers without at least wetting her royal feet; in fact, not to be imposed upon by names, a lady of the present day can have a more desirable bath for an English shilling than ever the Queen of the East had in her life.

The city stands outside the Delta, in the Libyan Desert, and, as Volney remarks, it is only by the canal which conducts the waters of the Nile into the reservoirs in the

time of inundation that Alexandria can be considered as connected with Egypt. Founded by Alexander the Great, to secure his conquests in the East—being the only safe harbour along the coast of Syria or Africa—and possessing peculiar commercial advantages, it soon grew into a giant city, fifteen miles in circumference, and containing a population of 300,000 citizens and as many slaves. One magnificent street ran the whole length of the city, from the Gate of the Sea to the Canopic Gate, commanding a view, at each end, of the shipping, either in the Mediterranean or in the Mareotic Lake, and another of equal length intersected it at right angles. A spacious circus lay without the Canopic Gate, for chariot-races, and on the east a splendid gymnasium, more than six hundred feet in length, with theatres, baths, and all that could make it a desirable residence for a luxurious people. When it fell into the hands of the Saracens, according to the report of the Saracen general to the Caliph Omar, “it was impossible to enumerate the variety of its riches and beauty;” and it is said to “have contained four thousand palaces, four thousand baths, four hundred theatres or public edifices, twelve thousand shops, and forty thousand tributary Jews.” From that time, like everything else which falls into the hands of the Mussulman, it began to decay, and the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope very much lessened its commercial greatness.

At present it stands a phenomenon in the history of a Turkish dominion. It appears once more to be raising its head from the dust, and has again been increasing

in importance. It remains to be seen whether this rise is the legitimate and permanent effect of a wise and politic government, combined with natural advantages, or whether the Pasha is forcing it to an unnatural elevation, at the expense, if not upon the ruins, of the rest of Egypt. It is almost presumptuous, on the threshold of my entrance into Egypt, to speculate upon the future condition of this interesting country; but it is clear that the Pasha is determined to build up the city of Alexandria if he can. His



HOTEL D'ORIENT, ALEXANDRIA.

fleet is here; his army, his arsenal, and his forts are here; and he has forced and centered here a commerce that was before divided between several places. Rosetta has lost more than two-thirds of its population, Damietta has become a mere nothing, and even Cairo the Grand has become tributary to what is called the regenerated city.

Writers differ greatly in their estimates of the population of the present city of Alexandria, varying from 60,000 to 220,000. As the country has for a number of years

enjoyed peace, the latter number may now (1876) be accepted as the most accurate.

Alexandria has also been the scene of interesting events in modern days. Here the long-cherished animosity of France and England sought a new battle-field, as if conscious that the soil of Europe had too often been moistened with human blood. Twice I visited the spot where the gallant Abercrombie fell, about two miles outside the Rosetta Gate. The country was covered with a beautiful verdure, and the Arab was turning up the ground with his plough; herds of buffalo were quietly grazing near, and a caravan of camels was slowly winding its way along the borders of a nameless lake which empties itself into the Lake Mareotis. Farther on and near the sea is a large square enclosure, by some called the ruins of the palace of Cleopatra, by others the camp of Cæsar. This was the French position, and round it the battle was fought. All is quiet there now, though still the curious traveller may pick up from time to time balls, fragments of shells, or other instruments of death, which tell him that war, murderous and destructive war, has been there.

My last ride was to Pompey's Pillar. Chateaubriand requested a friend to write his name upon the great pyramid, not being able to go to it himself, and considering this one of the duties of a pious pilgrim; but I imagine that sentimental traveller did not mean it in the sense in which "Hero" and "Beatrice," and the less romantic name of "Susannah Wilson," are printed in great black letters, six inches long, about half-way up the shaft.

There can be no doubt that immense treasures are still buried under the ruins of Alexandria ; but whether they will ever be discovered will depend upon the Pasha's necessities, as he may need the ruins of ancient temples for building forts or bridges. New excavations are constantly being made, and between my first and second visit a beautiful vase had been discovered, pronounced to be the original of the celebrated Warwick vase found at Adrian's villa, near Tivoli. It was then in the hands of the French consul, who told me he would not take its weight in gold for it. I have since seen the vase at Warwick Castle ; and if the one found at Alexandria is not the original, it is certainly remarkable that two sculptors, one in Egypt and the other in Italy, conceived and fashioned two separate works of art so exactly resembling each other.

But to return to the moment of my first leaving Alexandria. At dark I was on board a boat at the mouth of the Mahmoudieh, the canal which connects Alexandria with the Nile ; my companion had made all necessary provision for the voyage, and I had nothing to do but select a place and spread my mattress and coverlet. In a few minutes we had commenced our journey on the canal, our boat towed by four Arab boatmen, each with a rope across his breast. A few years later a steamer conveyed passengers from Alexandria to Cairo ; and, a little later still, a railway was opened to Cairo and thence to Suez.*

I have heard this canal spoken of as one of the greatest works of modern days, and I have seen it referred to as

* See also an account of the Suez Canal, further on.

such in the books of modern travellers; and some even, as if determined to keep themselves under a delusion in regard to everything in Egypt, speak of it as they do of the pyramids, and obelisks, and mighty temples of the Upper Nile. The truth is, it is sixty miles in length, ninety feet in breadth, and eighteen in depth, through a perfectly level country, not requiring a single lock. In regard to the time in which it was made it certainly is an extraordinary work, and it could only have been done in that time in such a country as Egypt, where the government is an absolute despotism, and the will of one man is the supreme law. Every village was ordered to furnish a certain quota; 150,000 workmen were employed at once, and in a year from its commencement the whole excavation was made.

As a great step in the march of public improvement it certainly does honour to the Pasha; though, in passing along its banks, our admiration of a barbarian struggling into civilisation is checked by the remembrance of his wanton disregard of human life, and the melancholy fact that it proved the grave of more than thirty thousand of his subjects.

We started in company with Mr. Waghorn, formerly in the East India Company's service, now engaged in forwarding the mails from England to India by the Red Sea. He is a man of indefatigable activity and energy, was one of the first projectors of that route, and was the first courier sent from England with despatches overland. He travelled post to Trieste, took a Spanish vessel to Alexandria, and thence by dromedary to Cairo and Suez, where, not finding

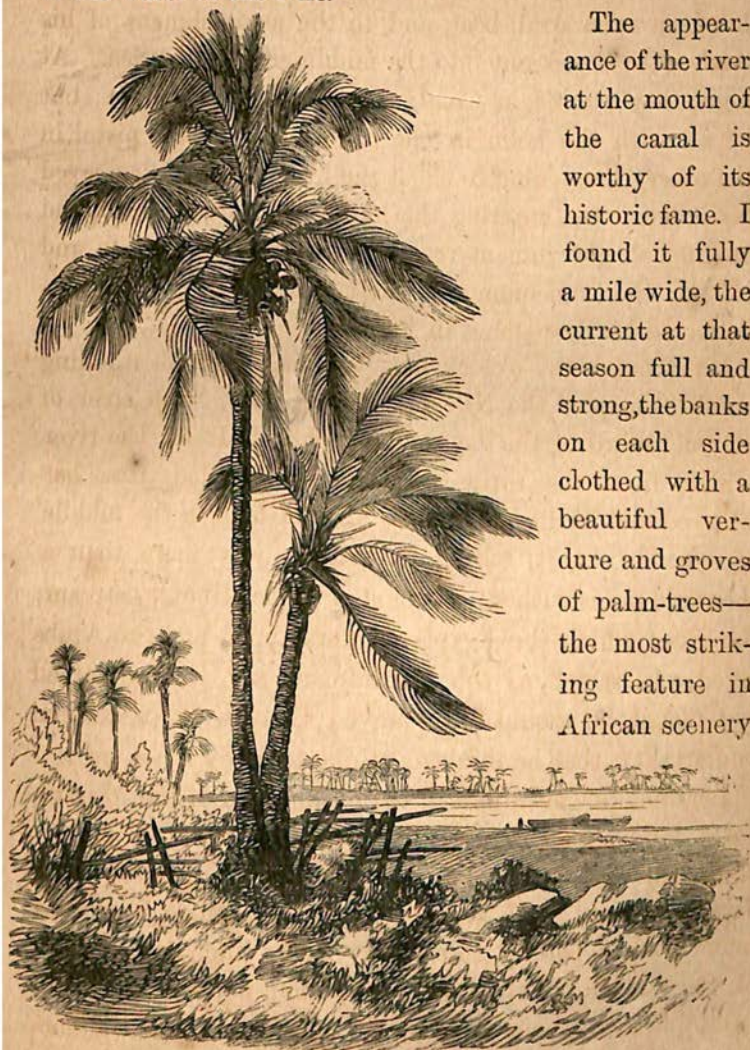
the vessel which had been ordered to meet him, and having with him a compass, his constant travelling companion, he hired an open Arab boat, and, to the astonishment of his Arab crew, struck out into the middle of the Red Sea. At night they wanted, as usual, to anchor near the shore; but he sat with the helm in one hand and a cocked pistol in the other, threatening to shoot the first man that disobeyed his orders. On entering the harbour of Mocha he found an English government vessel on its way to meet him, and in the then uncommonly short time of fifty-five days delivered his despatches in Bombay.

At about eight o'clock next morning we were standing on the banks of the Nile, the eternal river, "the river of Egypt," recalling the days of Pharaoh and Moses; the river which, from the earliest periods of recorded time, has watered and fertilised a narrow strip of land in the middle of a sandy desert, rolling its solitary way more than a thousand miles without receiving a single tributary stream; the river which the Egyptians worshipped and the Arabs loved, and which, as the Mussulmans say, if Mohammed had tasted, he would have prayed Heaven for terrestrial immortality, that he might continue to enjoy it for ever.

I cannot, however, join in the enthusiasm of the Mussulmans, for I have before me at this moment a vivid picture of myself and servant at Cairo, perched upon opposite divans covered with tawdry finery, in a huge barn of a room, with a ceiling thirty feet high, like two knights of the rueful countenance, comparing notes and bodily symptoms, and condoling with each other upon the cor-

poreal miseries brought upon us by partaking too freely of the water of the Nile.

The appearance of the river at the mouth of the canal is worthy of its historic fame. I found it fully a mile wide, the current at that season full and strong, the banks on each side clothed with a beautiful verdure and groves of palm-trees—the most striking feature in African scenery



—and the village of Fouah, the stopping-place for boats coming up from Rosetta and Damietta, with its mosques, minarets, whitened domes, and groves of palms, forming a picturesque object in the view.

Upon entering the Nile we changed our boat, the new one being one of the largest and best on the river, of the class called *canjiah*, about seventy feet long, with two enormous lateen sails. These are triangular in form, and attached to two very tall spars, more than a hundred feet long, heavy at the end, and tapering to a point; the spars or yards rest upon two short masts, playing upon them as on pivots. The spar rests at an angle of about thirty degrees, and, in carrying the sail to its tapering point, gives the boat, when under way, a peculiarly light and graceful appearance. In the stern a small place is housed over, which makes a very tolerable cabin, except that the ceiling is too low to admit of standing upright, being made to suit the cross-legged habits of the Eastern people. She was manned by ten Arabs, good stout fellows, and a rais or captain.





CHAPTER II.

From Alexandria to Cairo—Experience versus Travellers' Tales—An unintended Bath—Iron Rule of the Pasha—Entrance into Cairo—A Chat with a Pasha.

WE commenced our voyage with that north wind which, travellers tell us, for a considerable portion of the year continues to blow the same way, making it an easy matter to ascend from the Mediterranean to the Cataracts, even against the strong current of the river; and I soon busied myself with meditating upon this extraordinary operation of nature, thus presenting itself to my observation at the very moment of my entrance into this wonderful country. It was a beautiful ordinance of Providence in regard to the feebleness and wants of man, that while the noble river rolled on eternally in one unbroken current, another agent of Almighty power should almost as constantly fill the flowing canvas, and enable navigators to stem the downward flow. I was particularly pleased with this train of reflection, inasmuch as at the moment we had much the best of it. We were ascending against the current at the rate of six or seven miles an hour, with a noise and dash through the water that made

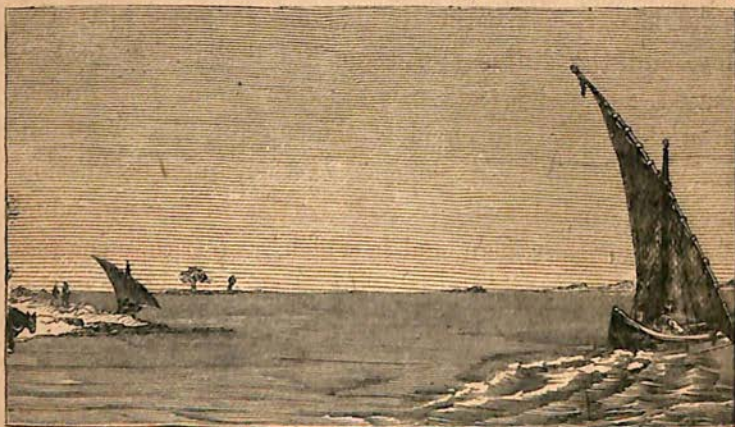
it seem like nine or ten; while the descending boats, with their spars taken out and sails tied close, were crawling down almost imperceptibly, stern first, broadside first, not as the current carried them, but as the wind would let them. Our men had nothing to do; all day they lay strewed about on the deck. Towards evening they gathered around a large pilau of rice, and as the sun was setting, one after the other, turning his face towards the tomb of the Prophet, knelt down upon the deck and prayed. And thus passed my first night upon the Nile.

In the morning I found things not quite so well ordered. The wind seemed to be giving "premonitory symptoms" of an intention to chop about, and towards noon it came in dead ahead. After my self-complacent observations of yesterday, I would hardly credit it; but when it became so strong that we were obliged to haul alongside the bank and lie to, in order to avoid being driven down the stream, I was perfectly satisfied and convinced. We saw no more of our friend Mr. Waghorn; he had a small boat rigged with oars, and while we were vainly struggling against the wind and tide, he kindly left us to our fate. My companion was a sportsman, and happened to have on board a couple of guns; we went on shore with them, and the principal incident of the day that I remember is, that instead of fowler's I had fisherman's luck. Rambling carelessly along, we found ourselves on the bank of a stream, which it was necessary to cross; on the other side we saw a strapping Arab, and called to him to come and carry us over. Like most of his tribe he was not troubled

with any superfluous clothing, and, slipping over his head the fragments of his frock, he was in a moment by our side, in all the majesty of nature. I started first, mounted upon his slippery shoulders, and we went along very well until we had got more than half-way over, when I began to observe an irregular tottering movement, and heard behind me the smothered laugh of my companion. I felt my Arab slowly and deliberately lowering his head; my feet touched the water; but with one hand I held my gun above my head, and with the other gripped him by the throat. I found myself going deeper and deeper, let down with the most studied deliberation, till all at once he gave his neck a sudden toss, jerked his head from under me, and left me standing up to my middle in the stream. I turned round upon him, hardly knowing whether to laugh or to strike him with the butt-end of my gun: but one glance at the poor fellow was enough; the sweat stood in large drops on his face and ran down his naked breast, his knees shook, and he was just ready to drop himself. He had supported me as long as he could; but, finding himself failing, and fearing we should both come down together with a splash at full length, he had lowered me as gently as possible.

The banks of the Nile from this place to Cairo furnish nothing interesting. On one side is the Delta, an extensive tract of low rich land, well cultivated and watered, and on the other a narrow strip of fertile land, and then the Libyan desert. The ruined cities which attract the traveller into Egypt, their temples and tombs, the endur-

ing monuments of its former greatness, do not yet present themselves. The modern villages are all built of mud or of unburnt bricks, and sometimes, at a distance, being



VIEW ON THE NILE.

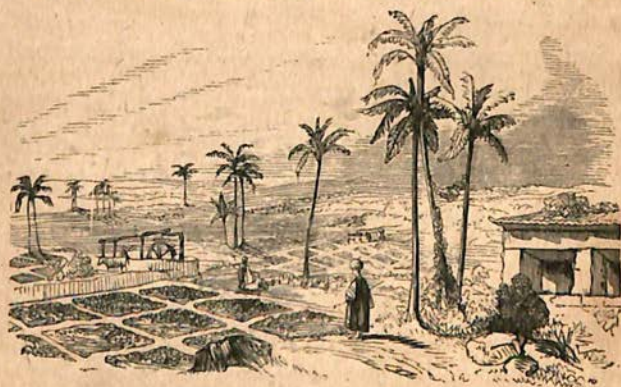
surrounded by palm-trees, make a pleasing appearance, but this vanishes the moment you approach them. The houses, or rather huts, are so low that a man can seldom stand up in them, with a hole in the front like the door of an oven, into which the miserable Arab crawls, more like a beast than a being made to walk in God's image. The same spectacle of misery and wretchedness, of poverty, famine, and nakedness, which I had seen in the suburbs of Alexandria, continued to afflict me at every village on the Nile, and soon suggested the interesting consideration whether all this came from country and climate, from the character of the people, or from the government of the great reformer. At one place I saw on the banks of the river forty or fifty men, chained together with iron

bands around their wrists, and iron collars around their necks. Yesterday they were peaceful Fellahs, cultivators of the soil, earning their scanty bread by hard and toilsome labour, but eating it at home in peace. Another day, and the stillness of their life is for ever broken; chased, run down, and caught, torn from their homes, from the sacred threshold of the mosque, the sword and musket succeed the implements of their quiet occupation; they are carried away to fight battles in a cause which does not concern them, and in which, even if they conquer, they can never gain. So great is their aversion to this, that mothers have been known to amputate a finger of their boys to unfit them for military service, but sometimes without getting them exempted. In more recent years it is believed there has been some amelioration in the condition of this people.

Returning to our boat on the brink of the river, a slight noise caught my ear. I turned, and saw a ragged mother kissing her naked child, while another of two years old, dirty and disgusting, was struggling to share its mother's embraces; their father I had just seen with an iron collar round his neck; and she loved those miserable children, and they loved their miserable mother, as if they were all clothed "in purple and fine raiment every day." But a few minutes after, a woman, knowing that we were "Franks," brought on board our boat a child, with a face and head so bloated with disease, that it was disgusting to look at. The rais took the child in his arms and brought it up to us, the whole crew following with a

friendly interest. My companion gave them a bottle of brandy, with which the rais carefully bathed the face and head of the child, all the crew leaning over to help; and when they had finished to their satisfaction, these kind-hearted but clumsy nurses kissed the miserable bawling infant, and passed it, with as much care as if it had been a basket of crockery, into the hands of the grateful mother.

This scene was finely contrasted with one that immediately followed. The boat was aground, and in an instant, stripping their long gowns over their heads, a dozen large swarthy figures were standing naked on the deck; in a moment more they were splashing in the river, and, with their brawny shoulders under the bottom of the vessel, heaved her off the sandbank. Near this we passed a



IRRIGATION.

long line of excavation, where several hundred men were then digging, being part of the gigantic work of irrigating the Delta lately undertaken by the Pasha.

Towards the evening of the fourth day we came in sight of the "world's great wonder," the eternal Pyramids,



PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH.

standing at the head of a long reach in the river directly in front of us, and almost darkening the horizon; solitary, grand, and majestic, the only objects to be seen in the great desert before us. The sun was about setting in that cloudless sky known only in Egypt; for a few moments their lofty summits were lighted by a gleam of lurid red, and, as the glorious orb settled behind the mountains of the Libyan desert, the atmosphere became dark and more indistinct, and their clear outline continued to be seen after the whole earth was shrouded in gloom.

The next morning, at seven o'clock, we were alongside the island of Rhoda, as the Arab boatmen called it, where

the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe and found the little Moses. (*See Frontispiece.*) We crossed over to Boulac, the harbour of Cairo; breakfasted with my friend's brother-in-law, an engineer in the Pasha's service, whose interesting wife is the only English lady there; and, mounting a donkey, in half-an-hour I was within the walls of Grand Cairo. The traveller who goes there with the reminiscences of Arabian tales hanging about him will nowhere see the Cairo of the Caliphs; but before arriving there he will have seen a curious and striking spectacle. He will have seen, streaming from the gate among loaded camels and dromedaries, the dashing Turk with his glittering sabre, the wily Greek, the grave Armenian, and the despised Jew, with their long silk robes, their turbans, their solemn beards, and various striking costumes; he will have seen the harem of more than one rich Turk, eight or ten women on horseback, completely enveloped in large black silk wrappers, perfectly hiding face and person, and preceded by that abomination of the East, a black eunuch; the miserable santon, the Arab saint, with a few scanty rags on his breast and shoulders, the rest of his body perfectly naked; the swarthy Bedouin of the desert, the haughty janizary, with a cocked gun in his hand, dashing furiously through the crowd, and perhaps bearing some bloody mandate of his royal master; and perhaps he will have seen and blushed for his own image in the person of some beggarly Italian refugee. Entering the gate, guarded by Arab soldiers in a bastard European uniform, he will cross a large square filled with

officers and soldiers, surrounded by what are called palaces, but seeing nothing that can interest him, save the house in which the gallant Kleber, the hero of many a bloody field, died ingloriously by the hands of an assassin. Crossing this square, he will plunge into the narrow streets of Cairo. Winding his doubtful and perilous way among tottering and ruined houses, jostled by camels, dromedaries, horses, and donkeys, perhaps he will draw up against a wall, and, thinking of plague, hold his breath and screw himself into nothing, while he allows a corpse to pass, followed by a long train of howling women, dressed in black with masks over their faces; and entering the large wooden gate which shuts in the Frank quarter, for protection against any sudden burst of popular fury, and seating himself in a miserable Italian locanda, he will ask himself, Where is the Cairo of the Caliphs, the superb town, the holy city, the delight of the imagination, greatest among the great, whose splendour and opulence made the Prophet smile?

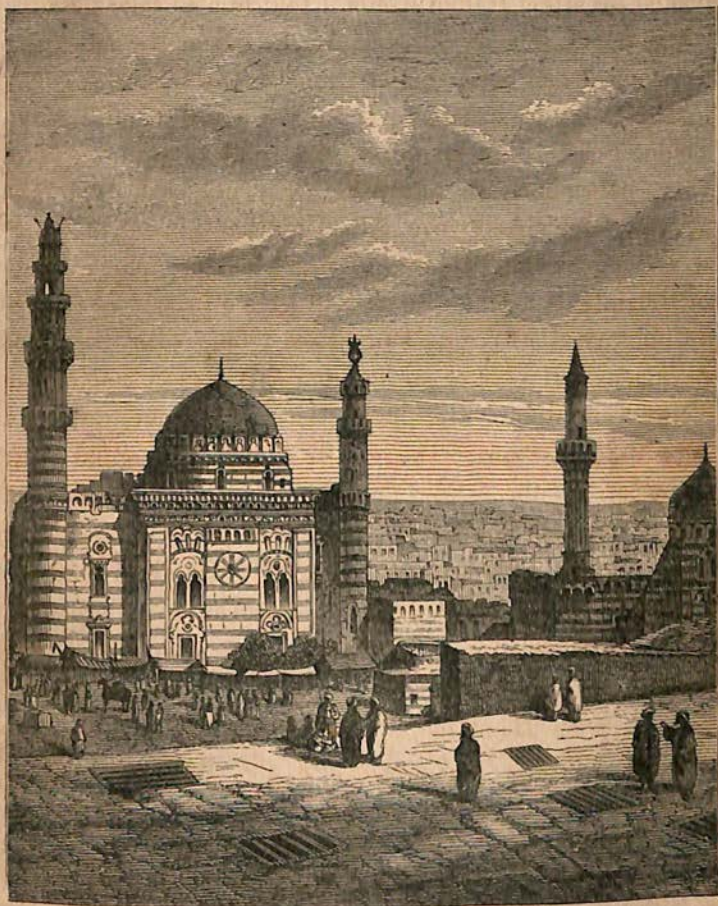
Almost immediately upon my arrival I called upon the American vice-consul, and upon Nubar Bey, an Armenian dragoman to the Pasha, to whom I had a letter from a gentleman in Alexandria. The purport of my visit to the latter was to procure a presentation to the Pasha. He told me that several English officers from India had been waiting several days for that purpose; that he thought the Pasha would receive them the next day, and, if so, he would ask permission to present me. Having arranged this, and not being particularly pleased with the interior,

and liking exceedingly the donkeys on which it is the custom there to mount on all occasions for long and for short distances, I selected one that was particularly gay and sprightly, and followed by an Arab boy who had picked up a few Italian words, I told him to take me anywhere outside the city. He took me out at the same gate by which I had entered, and I rode to Old Cairo.

Old Cairo is situated on the river, a few miles from Boulac. The road is pretty, and some of the points of view, particularly in returning, decidedly beautiful. The aqueduct which conveys water into the citadel at Cairo is a fine substantial piece of workmanship, and an item in the picture. The church and grotto in which, as tradition says, the Virgin Mary took refuge with the infant Saviour when obliged to fly from the persecution of the tetrarch of Judea, are among the few objects worthy of note in Old Cairo. The grotto, which is guarded with pious care by the Coptic priest, is a small excavation, the natural surface covered with smooth tiles; it is hardly large enough to allow one person to crawl in and sit upright. It is very doubtful whether this place was ever the refuge of the Virgin; but the craft or simplicity of the priests sustains the tradition, and a half-dozen Coptic women, with their faces covered and their long blue dresses, followed me down into the vault and knelt before the door of the grotto, with a devotion which showed that they at least believed the tale.

The city of Cairo is remarkable for its minarets and mosques. Some of the former are of great height, and

are built of alternate layers of red and white stones. The most ancient is that of the Mosque of Sultan Tayloón, which was built about the year 879 A.D. The Mosque of the Sultan Hassan (see engraving), situated near the



CAIRO AND THE HASSAN MOSQUE.

citadel, was completed about the year 1362 A.D., and, on account of its great strength, was frequently used as a fortress during the numerous rebellions at Cairo under the Mameluke kings.

The population of Cairo has been estimated at about 250,000, and consists chiefly of Mussulmans, with a mixture of Copts, Jews, Syrians, &c. The city is divided into different quarters, one being appropriated to the Turks, one to the Christians, and one to the Jews; each quarter being separated from the other by strong gates. It is the chief seat of learning for the East, and has attained considerable celebrity for its professors. It possesses a university or college, and several good schools.

At my locanda this morning I made acquaintance with two English parties, a gentleman, his lady, and nephew, who had been travelling in their own yacht on the Mediterranean, and the party of English officers to whom I before referred, as returning from India by way of the Red Sea. They told me that they were expecting permission from the Pasha to wait upon him that day, and asked me to accompany them. This suited me better than to go alone, as I was not ambitious of a *tête-à-tête* with his highness, and merely wished to see him as one of the lions of the country. Soon after I received a note from the consul, telling me that his highness would receive me at half-past three. This, too, was the hour appointed for the reception of the others, and I saw that his highness was disposed to make a lumping business of it, and get rid of us all at once. I accordingly suggested to the consul

that we should all go together; but this did not suit him; he was determined that I should have the benefit of a special audience. I submitted myself to his directions, and in this, as in other things while at Cairo, found the benefit of his attentions and advice.

It is the custom of the Pasha on such occasions to send horses from his own stable, and servants from his own household, to wait upon the strangers. At half-past three I left my hotel, mounted upon a noble horse, finely caparisoned, with a dashing red cloth saddle, a bridle ornamented with shells, and all the decorations and equipments of a well-mounted Turkish horseman; and, preceded by the janizary, and escorted by the consul, with no small degree of pomp and circumstance I arrived at the gate of the citadel. Passing through a large yard, in which are several buildings connected with the different offices of government, we stopped at the door of the palace, and, dismounting, ascended a broad flight of marble steps to a large central hall, from which doors opened into the different apartments. There were three recesses fitted up with divans, where officers were lounging, smoking, and taking coffee. The door of the divan, or hall of audience, was open, at which a guard was stationed; and in going up to demand permission to enter, we saw the Pasha at the farther end of the room, with four or five Turks standing before him.

Not being allowed to enter yet, we walked up and down the great hall, among lounging soldiers and officers of all ranks and grades, Turks, Arabs, and beggars, and went out upon the balcony. The view from this embraces the

most interesting objects in the vicinity of Cairo, and there are few prospects in the world which include so many; the land of Goshen, the Nile, the obelisk at Heliopolis, the tombs of the caliphs, the pyramids, and the deserts of eternal sands.

While standing upon the balcony, a janizary came to tell us that the Pasha would receive us, or, in other words, that we must come to the Pasha. The audience chamber was a very large room, with a high ceiling—perhaps eighty feet long and thirty high—with arabesque paintings on the wall, and a divan all round. The Pasha was sitting near one corner at the extreme end, and had a long and full view of every one who approached him. I too had the same advantage, and in walking up I remarked him as a man about sixty-five, with a long and very white beard, strong features, of a somewhat vulgar cast, a short nose, red face, and rough skin, with an uncommonly fine dark eye, expressing a world of determination and energy. He wore a large turban and a long silk robe, and was smoking a long pipe with an amber mouthpiece. Altogether he looked the Turk much better than his nominal master the Sultan.

His dragoman, Nubar Bey, was there, and presented me. The Pasha took his pipe from his mouth, motioned me to take a seat on his right hand on the divan, and with a courteous manner said I was welcome to Egypt. I told him he would soon have to welcome half the world there: he asked me why; and, without meaning to flatter the old Turk, I answered that everybody had a great curiosity

to visit that interesting country: that heretofore it had been very difficult to get there, and dangerous to travel in when there; but now the facilities of access were greatly increased, and travelling in Egypt had become so safe under his government, that strangers would soon come with as much confidence as they feel while travelling in Europe; and I had no doubt there would be many Americans among them. He took his pipe from his mouth and bowed. I sipped my coffee with great complacency, perfectly satisfied with the manner in which, for the first time, I had played the courtier to royalty. Knowing his passion for new things, I went on, and told him that he ought to continue his good works, and introduce on the Nile a steamboat from Alexandria to Cairo. He took the pipe from his mouth again, and in an off-hand manner said he had ordered a couple. I knew he was fibbing, and I afterwards heard, from those through whom he transacted all his business in Europe, that he had never given any such order. Considering that a steamboat was an appropriate weapon in the hands of an American, I followed up my blow by telling him that I had just seen mentioned in a European paper a project to run steamboats from New York to Liverpool in twelve or fourteen days. He asked me the distance; I told him, and he said nothing and smoked on. He knew America, and particularly from a circumstance which, I afterwards found, had done wonders in giving her a name and character in the East, the visit of Commodore Patterson in the ship Delaware.

So far I had taken decidedly the lead in the conversation; but the constant repetition of "Son Altesse" by the dragoman began to remind me that I was in the presence of royalty, and that it was my duty to speak only when I was spoken to. I waited to give him a chance, and the first question he asked was, as to the rate of speed of the steamboats on our rivers. Remembering an old, crazy, five-or-six-mile-an-hour boat that I had seen in Alexandria, I was afraid to tell him the whole truth, lest he should not believe me, and did not venture to go higher than fifteen miles an hour; and even then he looked as Ilderim may be supposed to have looked, when the Knight of the Leopard told him of having crossed over a lake like the Dead Sea without wetting his horse's hoofs. I have no doubt, if he ever thought of me afterwards, that it was as the lying American; and just at this moment, the party of English coming in, I rose and took my leave.

Gibbon says—"When Persia was governed by the descendants of Sefis—a race of princes whose wanton cruelty often stained their divan, their table, and their bed with the blood of their favourites—there is a saying recorded of a young nobleman, that he never departed from the Sultan's presence without satisfying himself whether his head was still on his shoulders." It was in somewhat of the same spirit that, in passing, one of the Englishmen whispered to me, "Are you sure of your legs?"

During my interview with the Pasha, although my conversation and attention were directed towards him, I could not help remarking particularly his dragoman, Nubar

Bey. He was an Armenian, perhaps a year or two over thirty, with an olive complexion, and a countenance like marble. He stood before us, about half-way between the Pasha and myself, his calm eye finely contrasting with the roving and unsettled glances of the Pasha, a perfect picture of indifference, standing like a mere machine to translate words, without seeming to comprehend or take the least interest in their import; and though I had been particularly recommended to him, he did not give me a single glance to intimate that he had ever seen me before, or cared ever to see me again. He was an ambitious man, and was evidently acting, and acted well, a part suited to an Eastern court—the part necessary in his responsible and dangerous position as the depository of important secrets of government. He was in high favour with the Pasha, and when I left was in a fair way of attaining any honour at which his ambitious spirit might aim. On my return to Alexandria, four months after, he was dead.

The life and character of Mohammed Ali are a study and a problem. He has risen from the rank of a common soldier, and now sits firmly and securely on a throne of his own making. He has risen by the usual road to greatness among the Turks—war, bloodshed, and treachery. In early life his bold and daring spirit attracted the attention of Beys, Pashas, and the Sultan himself; and having attained a prominent position in the bloody wars that distracted Egypt under the Mamelukes, boldness, cruelty, intrigue, and treachery placed him on the throne of the caliphs, and neither then nor

since have these usual engines of Turkish government, these usual accompaniments of Turkish greatness, for a moment deserted him. The extermination of the Mamelukes, the former lords of Egypt, as regards the number killed, is perhaps nothing in comparison with the thousands whose blood cries out from the earth against him; but the manner in which it was effected brands the Pasha as the prince of traitors and murderers. Invited to the citadel on a friendly visit, while they were smoking the pipe of peace he was preparing to murder them; and no sooner had they left his presence than they were pent up, fired upon, cut down and killed, bravely but hopelessly defending themselves to the last. This cruel deed must not be likened to the slaughter of the janizaries by the Sultan, to which it is often compared, for the janizaries were a powerful body, insulting and defying the throne. The Sultan staked his head upon the issue, and it was not till he had been driven to the desperate expedient of unfurling the sacred standard of the Prophet, and calling upon all good Mussulmans to rally round it—in a word, it was not till the dead bodies of thirty thousand janizaries were floating down the Bosphorus, that he became master in his own dominions. Not so with the Pasha; the Mamelukes were reduced to a feeble band of four or five hundred men, and could effect nothing of importance against him. His cruelty and treachery can neither be forgotten nor forgiven; and when, in passing out of the citadel, the stranger is shown the place where the unhappy Mamelukes were penned up and

slaughtered like beasts, one only leaping his gallant horse over the walls of the citadel, he feels that he has left the presence of a wholesale murderer. Since that time he has had Egypt quietly to himself; has attacked and destroyed the Wahabees on the Red Sea, and subdued the countries above the Cataracts of the Nile, to Sennaar and Dongola. He has been constantly aiming at introducing European improvements; has raised and disciplined an army according to European tactics; increased the revenues, particularly by introducing the culture of cotton; and has made Egypt, from the Mediterranean to the Cataracts, as safe for the traveller as the streets of New York. It remains to be seen whether, after all, he has not done more harm than good, and whether the miserable and oppressed condition of his subjects does not more than counterbalance all the good that he has done for Egypt.

One of the strongest evidences he ever gave of his civilising inclinations is the tendency he once manifested to fall under petticoat government. He was passionately fond of his first wife, the sharer of his poverty and meridian greatness, and the mother of his two favourite children, Youssouff and Ibrahim Pasha; and whenever a request was preferred in her name, the enamoured despot would swear his favourite oath, "By my two eyes, if she wishes it, it shall be done." Fond of war, and having an eye to the islands of Candia and Cyprus, he sent a large fleet and army, commanded by his son Ibrahim Pasha, to aid the Sultan in his war against Greece, and with his wild Egyptians turned the tide against that unhappy

country, receiving as his reward the islands which he coveted. More recently, availing himself of a trifling dispute with the governor of Acre, he turned his arms against the Sultan, invaded Syria, and, after a long siege, took and made himself master of Acre; his victorious armies, under his son Ibrahim, swept all Syria; Jerusalem, Damascus, and Aleppo fell into his hands; and, beating the Sultan's forces whenever he met them, in mid-winter he led his Egyptians over Mount Taurus, defeated the Grand Vizier with more than one hundred thousand men, almost under the walls of Constantinople, and would have driven the Sultan from the throne of his ancestors, if the Russians, the old enemies of the Porte, had not come in to his relief. According to the policy of the Porte, that which is wrested from her, and she cannot get back, she confirms in the possession of the rebel; and Palestine and Syria are now in the hands of Mohammed Ali, as the fruits of drawing his sword against his master. He still continues to pay tribute to the Sultan, constrained doubtless to make the last payment by the crippled state in which he was left by the terrible plague of 1834; and, without any enemy to fear, is at this moment draining the resources of his country to sustain a large army and navy. No one can fathom his intentions, and probably he does not know them himself, but will be governed, as the Turks always are, by caprice and circumstances.

On leaving the Pasha, the American consul proposed that we should call upon the governor of Cairo. We stopped at what would be called in France the "Palais

de Justice," and, mounting a dozen steps, entered a large hall, at one end of which stood the governor. He was a short stout man, of about fifty-five, with a long beard, handsomely dressed, and stood gently rubbing his hands, and constantly working his jaws like an ox chewing the cud. A crowd was gathered around him, and just as we were approaching the crowd fell back, and we saw an Arab lying on his face on the floor, with two men standing over him, one on each side, with whips like cowskins, carrying into effect the judgment of the munching governor. The blows fell quickly and heavily; the poor fellow screamed piteously, and when the full number had been given he could not move; he was picked up by his friends and carried out of doors. It was precisely such a scene as realised the reference in the Scriptures to the manners of the East in the time of our Saviour, when a complaint was made to the judge, and the judge handed the offender over to justice; or the graphic accounts in the Arabian Nights, of summary justice administered by the Cadi or other expounder of the law, without the intervention of lawyers or jury. The poor Arab was hardly removed before another complaint was entered; but, not feeling particularly amiable towards the governor, and having seen enough of the great Turks for that day, I left the citadel and rode to my hotel.



CHAPTER III.

The Slave-Market at Cairo—Tomb of the Pasha—The Pyramid of Cheops—
Oppressive Attentions of the Arabs—The Sphinx.



LADY OF CAIRO.

NEARLY all the time I was at Cairo, Paul and myself were ill, and for a few days we were in a rather pitiable condition. Fortunately a young English army surgeon was there, on his way to India, and, hearing there was a sick traveller in the house, he with great kindness called upon me and prescribed for our ailments. If this book should ever meet the eye of Dr. Forbes, he will excuse my putting his name in print, as it is

the only means I have of acknowledging his kindness in saving me from what would otherwise have been a severe

and most inconvenient illness. At that time there was no English physician in Cairo, and I believe none at all, except some vile, half-bred Italian or French apothecaries, who held themselves fully qualified to practise, and were certainly very successful in relieving the sick from all their sufferings. On my return I found Dr. Walne, and though, for his own sake, I could wish him a better lot, I hope, for the benefit of sick travellers, that he is there still.

One of my first rambles in Cairo was to the slave-market. It is situated nearly in the centre of the city, as it appeared to me, although, after turning half-a-dozen corners in the narrow streets of a Turkish city, I will defy a man to tell where he is exactly. It is a large old building, enclosing a hollow square, with chambers all round, both above and below. There were probably five or six hundred slaves sitting on mats in groups of ten, twenty, or thirty, each belonging to a different proprietor. Most of them were entirely naked, though some, whose shivering forms evinced that even there they felt the want of their native burning sun, were covered with blankets. They were mostly from Dongola and Sennaar; but some were Abyssinians, with yellow complexions, fine eyes and teeth, and decidedly handsome. The Nubians were very dark, but with oval, regularly-formed, and handsome faces, mild and amiable expressions, and no mark of the African except the colour of their skin. The worst spectacle in the bazaar was that of several lots of sick, who were separated from the rest and arranged on mats by themselves; their bodies thin and shrunken, their chins resting upon their knees, their

long lank arms hanging helplessly by their sides, their faces haggard, their eyes fixed with a painful vacancy, and altogether presenting the image of man in his most abject condition. Meeting them on their native sands, their crouching attitudes, shrunken jaws, and rolling eyes might have led one to mistake them for those hideous animals the orang-outang and ape. Prices vary from four to twenty pounds sterling; but the sick, as carrying within



BURCHARDT'S TOMB AT CAIRO.

them the seeds of probable death, are coolly offered for almost nothing, as so much damaged merchandise, which the seller is anxious to dispose of before it becomes utterly worthless on his hands.

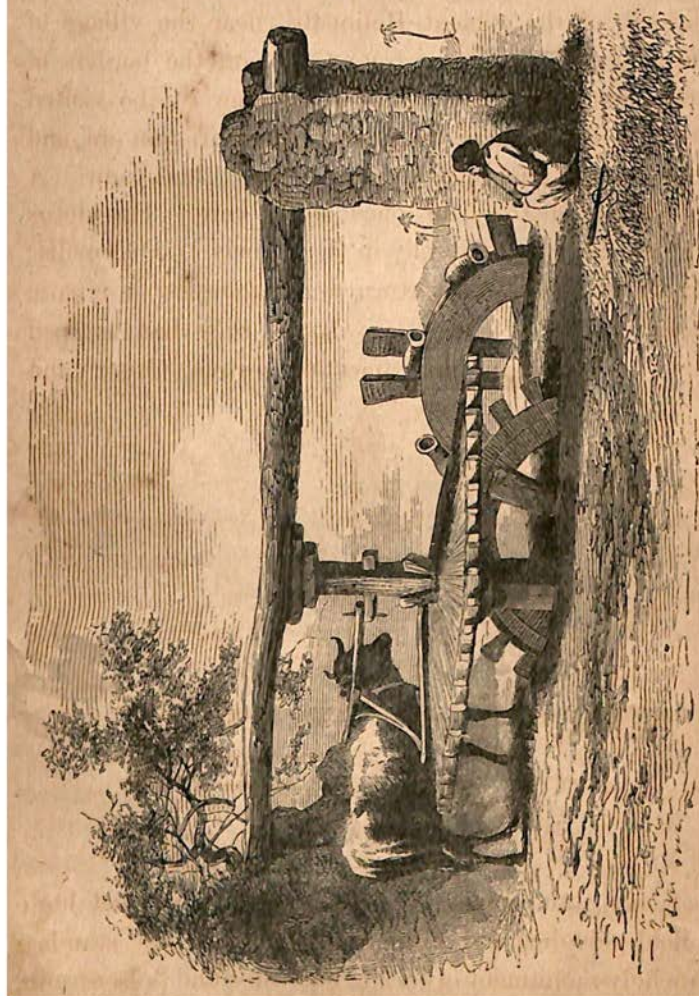
Cairo is surrounded by a wall; the sands of the desert approach it on every side, and every gate opens to a sandy waste, except that of Boulac, which is partly protected

by the Nile, between Cairo and the western sands. Passing out by the Victory Gate, the contrast between light and darkness is not greater than between the crowded streets and the stillness of the desert, separated from them only by a wall. Immediately without commences the great burial-place of the city. At a short distance from the gate are the tombs of the caliphs, large and beautiful buildings, monuments of the taste and skill of the Saracens.

In the Moslem burying-ground is the tomb of the lamented Burckhardt, who was here interred by the Turks with funeral honours. This remarkable man had, by long-continued study, acquired such proficiency in the Arabic language, that he could travel as an Oriental merchant without danger of detection. He visited Mecca, where he remained for some time studying Islamism. So completely had he mastered its language and ideas that, when thoroughly examined on the Koran, he was highly commended as a great Moslem scholar. After having so fully qualified himself for travel, he was attacked by dysentery at Cairo, while waiting for the Fezzan caravan, and died at the age of 33.

From hence, passing around outside the walls, I entered by the gate of the citadel, where I saw what goes by the name of Joseph's Well, perhaps better known as the Well of Saladin. It is forty-five feet wide at the mouth, and cut two hundred and seventy feet deep, through the solid rock, to a spring of saltish water on a level with the Nile, whence the water is raised in buckets on a wheel turned by a buffalo. This mode of raising water is called the

"sakieh," and is frequently to be seen in Egypt. In this way the water left by the inundation of the Nile, in pools and canals, is used to irrigate and fertilise the soil.



RAISING WATER FOR IRRIGATION (THE "SAKIEH").

On the 25th, with a voice that belied my feelings, I wished Paul a merry Christmas, and after breakfast, wishing to celebrate the day, mounted a donkey and rode to the site of the ancient Heliopolis, near the village of Matarea, about four miles from Cairo, on the borders of the rich land of Goshen. The geographer Strabo visited these ruins about thirty years before the Christian era, and describes them almost exactly as we see them now. A great temple of the sun once stood here. Herodotus and Plato studied philosophy in the schools of Heliopolis; "a barbarous Persian overturned her temples; a fanatic Arabian burnt her books" (as far as they had escaped former burnings, in the times of Julius Cæsar and



HELIOPOLIS.

Theodosius); and a single obelisk, standing 67 feet high, in a field ploughed and cultivated to its very base, stands a melancholy monument of former greatness and present ruin.

Outside another gate lies another vast cemetery, ranges of tombs extending miles out into the desert. In Turkey I had admired the beauty of the graveyards, and often thought how calmly slept the dead under the thick shade of the mourning cypress. In Egypt I admired still more the solemn stillness and grandeur of a last resting-place among the eternal sands of the desert. In this great city of the dead stand the tombs of the Mamelukes, originally slaves from the foot of the Caucasus, then the lords and tyrants of Egypt, and now an exterminated race. The tombs are large, handsome buildings, with domes and minarets, the interior of the domes beautifully wrought, with windows of stained glass, all going to ruin. Here, too, is the tomb of the Pasha. Fallen, changed, completely revolutionised as Egypt is, even to this day peculiar regard is paid to the structure of tombs and the burial-places of the dead. The tomb of the Pasha is called the greatest structure of Modern Egypt. It is a large stone building, with several domes, strongly but coarsely made. The interior, still solemn and imposing, is divided into two chambers. In the first, in a conspicuous situation, is the body of his favourite wife, and around are those of other members of his family. In the other chamber are several tombs, covered with large and valuable Cashmere shawls; several places yet unoccupied, and in one corner a large vacant place, reserved for the Pasha himself. Both apartments are carpeted and illuminated with lamps, with divans in the recesses, and little wicker chairs for the different members of the family who come to mourn and

pray. Two ladies were there, sitting near one of the tombs, with their faces completely covered; and, that I might not disturb their pious devotions, my guide led me in a different direction.



TOMBS OF THE MAMELUKES.

During the time that I had passed in lounging about Cairo, I had repeatedly been down to Boulac in search of a boat for my intended voyage up the Nile; and going

one Sunday to dine on the island of Rhoda with Mr. Trail, who had charge of the palace and garden of Ibrahim Pasha, I again rode along the bank of the river for the same purpose. In coming up from Alexandria, I had found the inconveniences of a large boat, and was looking for one of the smallest dimensions that could be at all comfortable. We were crossing over one more than half-sunk in the water, which I remarked to Paul was about the right size; and while we stopped a moment, without the least idea that it could be made fit for use, an Arab came up and whispered to Paul that he could pump out the water in two hours, and had only sunk the boat to save it from the officers of the Pasha, who would otherwise take it for the use of Government. Upon this information I struck a bargain for the boat, eight men, a rais, and a pilot. The officers of the Pasha were on the bank looking out for boats, and, notwithstanding my Arab's ingenious contrivance, just when I had closed my agreement, they came on board and claimed possession. I refused to give up my right, and sent to the agent of the consul for an American flag. He could not give me an American, but sent me an English flag, and I did not hesitate to put myself under its protection. I hoisted it with my own hands, but the rascally Turks paid no regard to its broad folds. The majesty of England did not suffer, however, in my hands, and Paul and I spent more than an hour in running from one officer to another, until at last we procured the necessary order for the release of the boat. Leaving this with the rais, and the flag still flying, I went

on to Rhoda, and spent the day there in decidedly the prettiest spot about Cairo. At the head of this island is the celebrated Nilometer, which, for no one knows how long, has marked the annual rise and fall of the Nile. It consists of a square well, in which stands a slender graduated pillar of marble. The building, which formerly had a dome, is said to have been erected about 847 A.D.

Another Nilometer at Elephantine, near Assuan, has been described by the ancient geographer Strabo, which shows that Nilometers were at least as old as the beginning of the Christian era; and they were probably used in the times of the Pharaohs. The rise of the Nile began about the summer solstice. The fall commenced about the middle of October, at which date the angle of elevation of the great pyramid was the same as that of the sun. The people were thus guided as to the season for preparing to plough and sow.

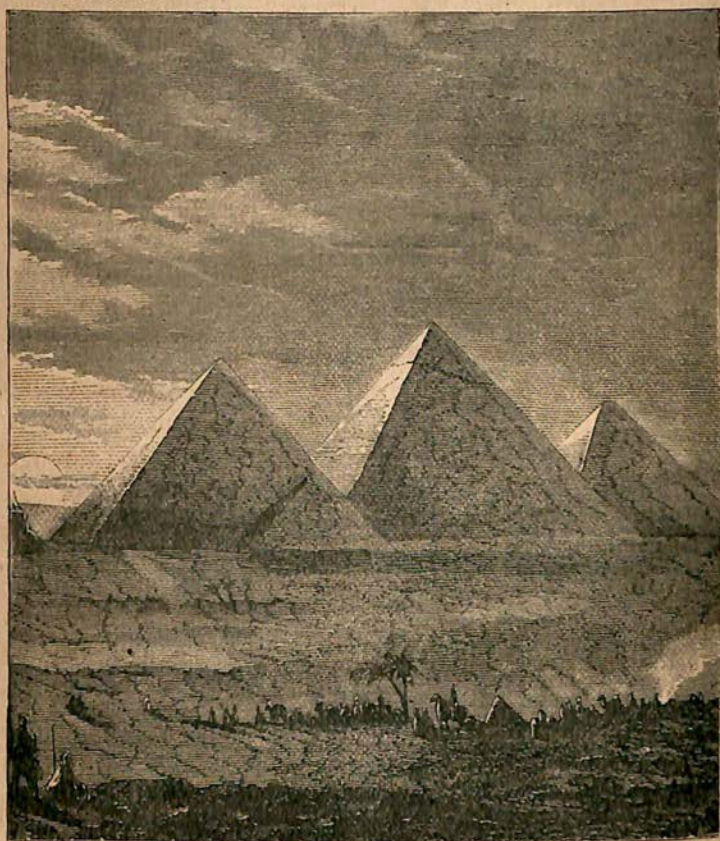
I had been ten days at Cairo without going to the pyramids. I had seen them almost every day, but my doctor, who was to accompany me, had delayed my visit. He was obliged to leave Cairo, however, before I was ready to do the same; and as soon as he was off, like a school-boy when the master is out of sight, I took advantage of his absence. My old friend from Alexandria had promised to go with me to the pyramids, and, joining me at Old Cairo, we crossed over to Ghizeh. Here the process of hatching eggs in ovens may still be seen, a practice which has been continued from the time of the Pharaohs to the present day. Ghizeh, although now a mere village, was

once a place of some importance, and adorned with beautiful palaces and mosques.

Almost from the gates of Cairo the pyramids are constantly in sight, and after crossing the ferry we at first rode directly towards them, but the waters were yet so high that we were obliged to diverge from the straight road. In about an hour we separated, my guide taking one route, and my friend's another. With my eyes constantly fixed on the pyramids, I was not aware of our separation until I had gone too far to return, and my guide proved to be right.

Standing alone on an elevated expanse of land on the edge of the desert, without any object with which to compare them, the immense size of the pyramids did not strike me with full force. Arrived at the banks of a stream, twenty Arabs, more than half-naked, and most of them blind of an eye, came running towards me, dashed through the stream, and pulling, hauling, and scuffling at each other, laid hold of me to carry me over. All seemed bent upon having something to do with me, even if they carried me over piecemeal; but I selected two of the strongest, with little more than one eye between them, and, keeping the rest off as well as I could, was borne over dryshod. On approaching the pyramids, the three great ones and one small one are in view, towering higher and higher above the plain. I thought I was just upon them, and that I could almost touch them, yet I was more than a mile distant; the nearer I approached, the more their gigantic dimensions grew upon me, until, when I actually

reached them, rode up to the first layer of stones, looked up their sloping sides to the lofty summits, and saw how very small I was, they seemed to have grown to the size of mountains.



THE THREE GREAT PYRAMIDS.

The base of the great pyramid is about 764 feet square, covering a surface of about eleven acres, according to

the best measurement, and was originally 480 feet high ; or, to give a clearer idea, starting from a base as extensive as the entire area of Lincoln's-inn-Fields in London. Even as I walked round it, and looked up at it from the base, I did not feel its immensity until I commenced ascending ; then, having climbed some distance up, when I stopped to breathe, and looked down upon my friend below, who was dwindled to insect size, and then up at the great distance between me and the summits—then I realised in all their force the huge dimensions of this giant work. It took me twenty minutes to mount to the summit ; about the same time that it had required to mount the cones of Etna and Vesuvius. The ascent is not particularly difficult, at least with the assistance of the Arabs. There are two hundred and six tiers of stone, from one to four feet in height, each two or three feet smaller than the one below, making what are called the steps. Very often the steps were so high that I could not reach them with my feet. Indeed, for the most part I was obliged to climb with my knees, deriving great assistance from the step which one Arab made for me with his knee, and the helping hand of another above.

It is not what it once was to go to the pyramids. They have become regular lions for the multitudes of travellers ; but still, common as the journey has become, no man can stand on the top of the great pyramid of Cheops, and look out upon the dark mountains of Mokattam bordering the Arabian desert—upon the ancient city of the Pharaohs, its domes, its mosques, and its minarets glittering in the light

of a vertical sun—upon the rich valley of the Nile, and the “river of Egypt” rolling at his feet—the long range of pyramids and tombs extending along the edge of the desert to the ruined city of Memphis, and the boundless and eternal sands of Africa, without considering that moment an epoch not to be forgotten. Thousands of years roll through his mind, and thought recalls the men who built them, their mysterious uses, and the poets, historians, philosophers, and warriors who have gazed upon them with wonder like his own.

For one who but yesterday was bustling in the streets of a busy city, it was a thing of strange and indescribable interest to be standing on the top of the great pyramid, surrounded by a dozen half-naked Arabs, forgetting, as completely as if they had never been, the stirring scenes of his distant home. But even here petty vexations followed me, and half the interest of the time and scene was destroyed by the clamour of my guides. The descent I found extremely easy; many persons complain of the dizziness caused by looking down from such a height, but I did not find myself so affected; and though the donkeys at the base looked like flies, I could almost have danced down the mighty sides.

The great pyramid is supposed to contain six millions of cubic feet of stone, and a hundred thousand men are said to have been employed twenty years in building it. The four sides stand exactly in the four points of the compass, inducing the belief that it was intended for other purposes than those of a sepulchre. The entrance is on the north

side. The sands of the desert have encroached upon it, and, with the fallen stones and rubbish, have buried it to the sixteenth step. Climbing over this rubbish the entrance is reached—a narrow passage three and a-half feet square, lined with broad blocks of polished granite, descending in the interior at an angle of twenty-seven degrees for about ninety-two feet; then the passage turns to the right, and winds up a steep ascent of eight or nine feet, and then falls into the natural passage, which is five feet high and one hundred feet long, forming a continued ascent to a sort of landing-place: in a small recess of this is the orifice or shaft called the well. Moving onward through a long passage, the explorer comes to what is called the Queen's chamber, seventeen feet long, fourteen wide, and twelve high. I entered a hole opening from this crypt, and, crawling on my hands and knees, came to a larger opening, not a regular chamber, and now cumbered with fallen stones. Immediately above this, ascending by an inclined plane lined with highly polished granite, and about one hundred and twenty feet in length, and mounting a short space by means of holes cut in the sides, I entered the King's chamber, about thirty-seven feet long, seventeen feet wide, and twenty feet high. The walls of the chamber are of red granite, highly polished, each stone reaching from the floor to the ceiling; and the ceiling is formed of nine large slabs of polished granite, extending from wall to wall. It is not the least interesting part of a visit to the interior of the pyramids, as you are groping your way after your Arab guide, to feel your hand

running along the sides of an enormous shaft, smooth and polished as the finest marble, and to see by the light of the flaring torch chambers of red granite from the Cataracts of the Nile, the immense blocks standing around and above you, smooth and beautifully polished in places where, if our notions of the pyramids be true, they were intended for but few mortal eyes. At one end of the chamber stands a sarcophagus—more correctly called the Porphyry Coffin—also of red granite; its length is seven feet six inches, depth three and a-half, breadth three feet three inches. Here, according to some, slept one of the great rulers of the earth, the king of the then greatest kingdom of the world, the proud mortal for whom this mighty structure was raised. Where is he now? Even his dry bones are gone, torn away by rude hands, and scattered by the winds of heaven.

This coffin, however, does not appear ever to have contained a mummy; and from the fact that its content is equal to a quarter of wheat, and for other reasons, Piazzzi Smyth, Astronomer-Royal for Scotland, thinks it was an ancient standard of measure.

There is something curious about this coffin too. It is exactly the size of the orifice which forms the entrance of the pyramid, and could not have been conveyed to its place by any of the now known passages; consequently it must have been deposited during the building, or before the passage was finished in its present state. The interior of the pyramid is excessively hot, particularly when a number of Arabs surround you with flaring torches.

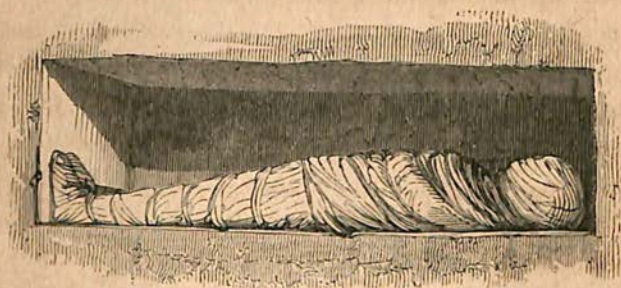
Leaving the King's chamber, I descended the inclined plane, and prepared to descend the well referred to by Pliny. The shaft is small, merely large enough to permit one to descend with the legs astride, the feet resting in little niches, and hands clinging to the same. Having no janizary with me to keep them off, I was very much annoyed by the Arabs following me. I had at first selected two as my guides, and told the others to go away; but it was of no use. They had nothing else to do; a few paras would satisfy them for their day's labour; and the chance of getting these, either from charity or by importunity, made them all follow. At the mouth of the well I again selected my two guides, and again told the others not to follow; and, sending the two before me, followed down the well—being myself quickly followed by two others. I shouted to them to go back, but they paid no regard to me; so, coming out again, I could not help giving the fellow next me a blow with a club, which sent him skipping among his companions. I then flourished my stick among them, and after a deal of expostulation and threatening gesticulation, I attempted the descent once more. A second time they followed me, and I came out perfectly furious. My friend was outside shooting, the pyramids being nothing new to him, and unfortunately I had been obliged to leave Paul at Cairo, and had no one with me but a little Nubian boy. Him I could not prevail upon to descend the well; he was frightened, and begged me not to go down; and when he saw them follow me the second time, and beheld me coming out and laying about me with

a club, he began to cry, and, before I could lay hold of him, ran away. I could do nothing without him, and was obliged to follow. There was no use in battling with the poor fellows, for they made no resistance; and I believe I might have brained the whole of them without one offering to strike a blow. Moreover, it was very hot and smothering; and as there was nothing particular to see, nor any discovery to make, I concluded to give it up; and, calling my guides to return, in a few moments I escaped from the hot and confined air of the pyramid.

At the base I found my friend sitting quietly with his gun in his hand, and brought upon him the hornet's nest which had so worried me within. The Arabs, considering their work done, gathered around me, clamorous for backsheesh, and none were more importunate than the fellows who had followed me so pertinaciously. I gave them liberally, but this only whetted their appetites. There was no getting rid of them; a sweep of my club would send them away for a moment, but instantly they would reorganise and come on again, putting the women and children in the front rank. The sheik came ostensibly to our relief; but I had doubts whether he did not rather urge them on. He, however, protected us to a certain extent, while we went into one of the many tombs to eat our luncheon.

For a great distance around there are large tombs which would of themselves attract the attention of the traveller, were they not lost in the overwhelming interest of the pyramids. That in which we lunched had a deep

shaft in the centre, leading to the pit where the mummies had been piled one upon another. The Arabs had



opened and rifled the graves, and bones and fragments were still lying scattered around. Our persecutors were sitting at the door of the tomb looking in upon us, and devouring with their eyes every morsel that we put into our mouths. We did not linger long over our meal, and, giving them the fragments, set off for a walk around the pyramid of Cephrenes, the second in magnitude.

This pyramid was opened at great labour and expense by the indefatigable Belzoni, and a chamber discovered containing a sarcophagus, as in that of Cheops. The passage, however, has now become choked up, and hardly accessible. Though not so high, it is much more difficult to mount than the other, the outside being covered with a coat of hard and polished cement, at the top almost perfectly smooth and unbroken. Two English officers had mounted it a few days before, who told me they had found the ascent both difficult and dangerous. One of the Arabs who accompanied them, after he had reached the top,

became frightened, and, not daring to descend, remained hanging on there more than an hour, till his old father climbed up and inspired him with confidence to come down.

The pyramids, like all the other works of the ancient Egyptians, are built with great regard to accuracy of proportion. The sepulchral chamber is not in the centre, but in an irregular and out-of-the-way position in the vast pile; and some idea may be formed of the great ignorance which must exist in regard to the whole structure and its uses, from the fact that, by computation, allowing an equal solid bulk for partition walls, there is sufficient space in the great pyramid for 3700 chambers as large as that containing the sarcophagus.

The fact that no hieroglyphics are to be seen in the pyramids has given rise to the supposition that they were erected before that mode of writing was invented.

Next to the pyramids, probably as old, and hardly inferior in interest, is the celebrated Sphinx. Notwithstanding the great labours of Caviglia, it is now so covered with sand that it is difficult to realise the bulk of this gigantic monument. Its head, neck, shoulders, and breast are still uncovered; its face, though worn and broken, is mild, amiable, and intelligent, seeming, among the tombs around it, like a divinity guarding the dead.

The Sphinx was hewn from the solid rock, with some brickwork to fill up cavities. It consisted of a human bust on the body of a lion; this combination being intended, it is supposed, as an emblem of the qualifications required

The Sphinx.

in a monarch—intelligence being represented by the human head, and power by the lion's body. Its length was about 170 feet, and its height about 56 feet; but different



THE SPHINX AND PYRAMIDS, AT GIZEH.

travellers, who have seen it at different periods, vary greatly in their measurements.

To quote Dr. Richardson's graphic description, "the head-dress has the appearance of an old-fashioned wig, projecting out about the ears, like the hair of the Berberi Arabs; the ears project considerably, the nose is broken, and the whole face is painted red, which is the colour assigned to the ancient inhabitants of Egypt, and to all the deities of the country except Osiris. The features are Nubian, or what, from ancient representations, may be called ancient Egyptian, which is quite different from the negro feature."



ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ARCH.



CHAPTER IV.

Journey up the Nile—An Arab Burial—Pilgrims to Mecca—Trials of Patience—A Hurricane on the Nile—A Turkish Bath.

ON the first of January I commenced my journey up the Nile. My boat was small, for greater convenience in rowing and towing. She was, however, about forty feet long, with two fine lateen sails, and manned by eight men, a rais or captain, and a governor or pilot. This was to be my home from Cairo to the Cataracts, or as long as I remained on the river. There was not a place where a traveller could sleep, and I could not expect to eat a meal or pass a night except on board; consequently, I was obliged to provide myself at Cairo with all things necessary for the whole voyage. My outfit was not very extravagant. It consisted, as near as I can recollect, of two tin cups, two pairs of knives and forks, four plates, coffee, tea, sugar, rice, macaroni, and a few dozen of claret. My bedroom furniture consisted of a mattress and coverlet, which in the day-time were tucked up so as to make a divan. Over the head of my bed were my gun and pistols, and at the foot was a little swinging shelf, containing my library—which consisted of the *Modern Traveller in Egypt*, Volney's



ON THE NILE.

Travels, and an Italian grammar and dictionary. My only companion was my servant; and as he is about to be somewhat intimate with me, I take the liberty of introducing him to the reader. Paolo Nuozzo—or, more familiarly, Paul—was a Maltese. I had met him at Constantinople travelling with two of my countrymen; and though they did not seem to like him much, I was very well pleased with him, and thought myself quite fortunate, on my arrival at Malta, to find him disengaged. He was a man about thirty-five years' old; stout, square built, intelligent; a passionate admirer of ruins, particularly the ruins of the Nile; honest and faithful as the sun, and one of the greatest cowards that luminary ever shone upon. He called himself my dragoman, and, I remember, wrote himself such in the convent at Mount Sinai and the temple at Petra, though he promised to make himself generally useful, and was my only servant during my whole tour. He spoke French, Italian, Maltese, Greek, Turkish, and Arabic, but could not read any one of these languages. He had lived several years in Cairo, and had travelled on the Nile before, and understood all the little arrangements necessary for the voyage.

At about twelve o'clock, then, the hour when at home my friends were commencing their New Year visits, accompanied to the boat by my friend from Alexandria, my first, last, and best friend in Egypt, I embarked; and with a fair wind, and "the star-spangled banner" (made by an Arab tailor) floating above me, I commenced my journey on the Nile. It is necessary here for every

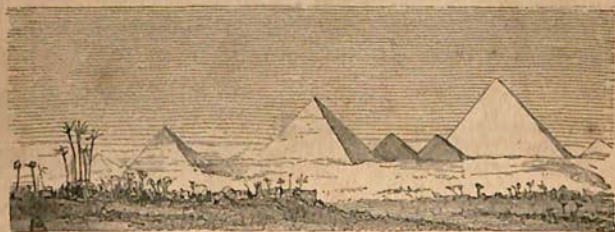
stranger to place himself under the flag of his country, else his boat and men are liable to be taken at any moment by the officers of the Pasha. It was the first time I had myself ever raised the banner of my country, and I felt a peculiar pride in the consciousness that it could protect me so far from home.



EGYPTIAN TOWN ON THE NILE.

We started, as when I first embarked upon the Nile, with a fair wind, at sunset, and again, to the gentle tap of the Arab drum, we passed the great pyramids of Ghizeh, and the smaller monuments of Sakkara and Dashoor. Long after sunset their dark outline was distinctly visible over the desert; I sat on the deck of my boat till their vast masses became lost in the darkness. My situation was novel and exciting, and my spirits were elate with curious expectation; but with the morrow came a very essential

change. A feeling of gloom came over me when I found the wind against my progress; but the current was still running obstinately the same way as before, and to be so soon deserted by the element that I needed gave a rather dreary aspect to the long journey before me. That day, however, we contrived to do something; my boat being small, my men were almost continually ashore, with ropes around their breasts, towing, and occasionally rowing across from side to side, would give us the advantage of



a bend in the river, when we could carry sail and make some progress. The scenery of the Nile, about fifty miles from Cairo, differed somewhat from the rich valley of the Delta; the dark mountains of Mokattam, in the neighbourhood of Cairo, bounding the valley on the Arabian side, while on the African the desert approached to the very banks of the river. Though travelling in a country in which, by poetic licence, and by way of winding off a period, every foot of ground is said to possess an exciting interest, during my first day's journey on the Nile I was thrown very much on my own resources.

My gun was the first thing that presented itself. I had bought it in Cairo, double-barrelled and new, for three

guineas. I did not expect to make much use of it, and it was so very cheap that I was rather doubtful of its safety, and intended to make trial of it with a double charge and a slow match. But Paul had anticipated me; he had already put in two enormous charges, and sent one of the boatmen ashore to try it. I remonstrated with him upon the risk to which he had exposed the man; but he answered in the tone in which he (like all European servants) always spoke of the degraded inhabitants of Egypt, "Pooh! he is only an Arab;" and I was soon relieved from apprehension by the Arab returning, full of praises of the gun, having killed with both shots. One thing disheartened me even more than the head wind. Ever since I left home I had been in earnest search of a warm climate, and thought I had secured it in Egypt; but wherever I went, I seemed to carry with me an influence that chilled the atmosphere. In the morning, before I rose, Paul brought in to me a piece of ice as thick as a pane of glass, made during the night—a most extraordinary, and to me unexpected circumstance. The poor Arabs, accustomed to their hot and burning sun, shrank in the cold almost to nothing, and early in the morning and in the evening were utterly unfit for labour. I suffered very much also myself, obliged to sit with the door of my cabin closed, my coat and great-coat on, and with a prospect of a long cold voyage. By the evening of the second day I had lost some portion of the enthusiasm with which, under a well-filled sail, I had started the day before from Cairo.

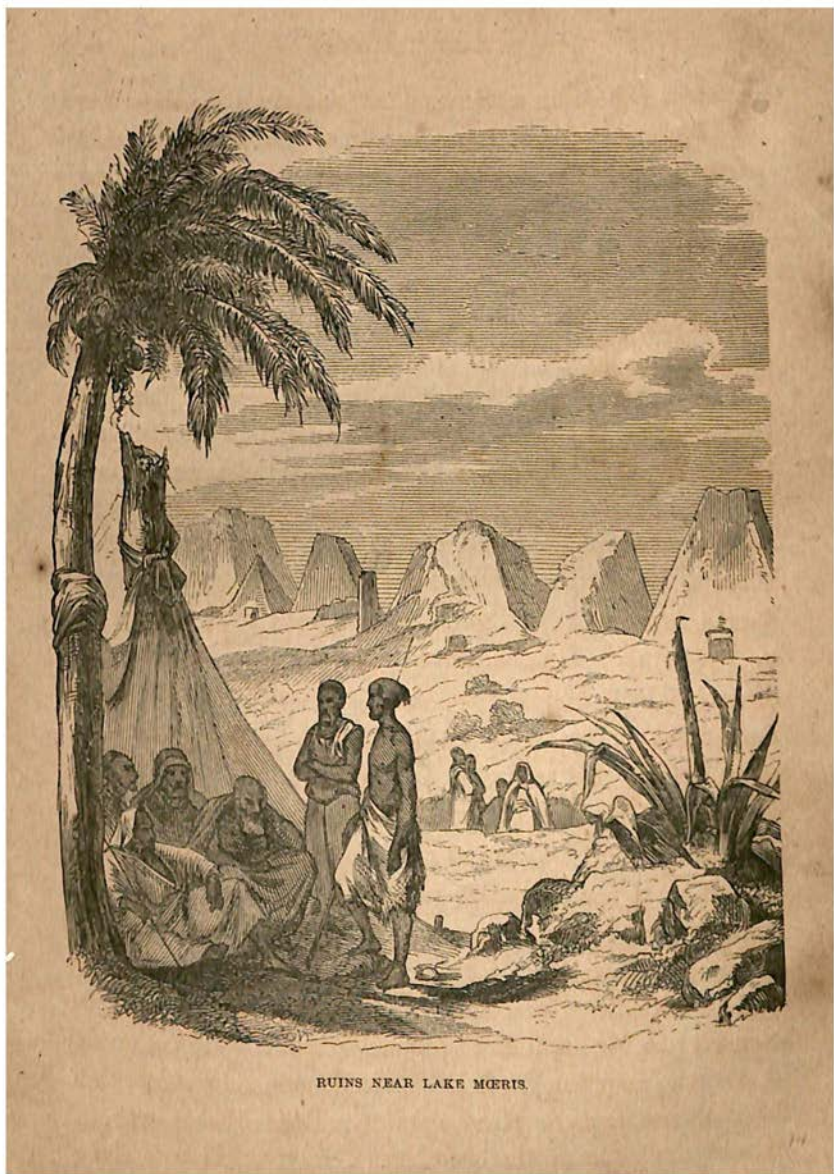
The third day (January 3) was also exceedingly cold,

the wind still ahead, and stronger than yesterday. I was still in bed, looking through the many openings of my cabin, and the men were on shore towing, when I was roused by a loud voice of lamentation, in which the weeping and wailing of women predominated. I stepped out, and saw on the bank of the river the dead body of an Arab, surrounded by men, women, and children, weeping and howling over it previous to burial. The body was covered with a wrapper of coarse linen cloth, drawn tight over the head and tied under the neck, and fastened between two parallel bars, intended as a barrow to carry it to its grave. It lay a little apart before the group of mourners, who sat on the bank above it, with their eyes turned towards it, weeping, and apparently talking to it. The women were the most conspicuous among the mourners. The dead man had been more happy in his connections than I imagine the Arabs generally are, if all the women sitting there were really mourning his death. Whether they were real mourners, or whether they were merely going through the formal part of an Egyptian funeral ceremony, I cannot say; but the big tears rolled down their cheeks, and their cries sounded like the overflowings of distressed hearts. A death and burial scene is at any time solemn, and I do not know that it loses any of its solemnity, even when the scene is on the banks of the Nile, and the subject a poor and oppressed Arab. Human affection probably glows as warmly here as under a gilded roof, and I am disposed to be charitable to the exhibition that I now beheld; but

I could not help noticing that the cries became louder as I approached, and I had hardly seated myself at a little distance from the corpse, before the women seemed to be completely carried away by their grief, and with loud cries, tearing their hair and beating their breasts, threw out their arms towards the corpse, and prayed, and wept, and then turned away with shrieks piteous enough to touch the heart of the dead.

The general territorial division of Egypt, from time immemorial, has been into Upper and Lower: the latter beginning at the shores of the Mediterranean, and extending very nearly to the ancient Memphis; and the former commencing at Memphis, and extending to the Cataracts. Passing by, for the present, the ruins of Memphis, on the fourth day, the wind dead ahead, and the men towing at a very slow rate, I went ashore with my gun, and at about eleven o'clock in the morning walked into the town of Beni Souef. This town stands on the Libyan side of the river, on the borders of a rich valley, the Nile running close under the foot of the Arabian mountains; and contains, as its most prominent objects, a mosque and minaret, and what is here called a palace, or seraglio; that is, a large coarse building covered with white cement, and having grated windows for the harem.

Here travellers sometimes leave their boats to make an excursion to Medinah el Fayoum, the ancient Crocodopolis or Arsinoë, near the great Lake Mœris, and now celebrated for the manufacture of rose-water. Lake Mœris was in ancient days one of the wonders of Egypt. It was sixty



RUINS NEAR LAKE MOERIS.

miles long (about the size of the Lake of Geneva), and Herodotus says that it was an artificial lake, and that in his time the towering summits of two pyramids were visible above its surface. The great Labyrinth, too, was supposed to be somewhere near this; but no pyramids, nor any ruins of the Labyrinth, are now to be seen. At a short distance from the lake, Belzoni discovered the ruins of a town about a mile in circumference, partly covered with sand. But the locality of the Labyrinth, described by Herodotus as one of Egypt's greatest wonders, has not been ascertained with certainty, although diligent search has been made by various explorers. The lake is now comparatively dry, and very little is left to reward the traveller.

At sundown we hauled up to the bank, alongside a boat loaded with pilgrims; and, building a fire on shore, the two crews, with their motley passengers, spent the night quietly around it. It was the first time since we left Cairo that we had come in contact with pilgrims, although we had been seeing them from my first entering Egypt. This was the season for the pilgrimage to Mecca. The great caravan was already gathering at Cairo, while numbers, not wishing to wait, were seen on all parts of the Nile on their way to Kenneh, from thence to cross the desert to Cosseir, and down the Red Sea to the Holy City. They were coming from all parts of the Mussulman dominions, poor and rich, old and young, women and children, almost piled upon each other by scores, for several months exposing themselves to all manner of hardships, in obedience to one of

the principal injunctions of the Koran, once in their lives to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca.

The wind still kept blowing dead ahead ; the men continued to tow, but without making much progress ; and the day dragged heavily. On the 6th I saw another burial. Early in the morning Paul called me to look out. We were lying in company with another boat, fast to a little island of sand nearly in the middle of the river. I got up exceedingly cold, and saw a dead man lying on the sand, his limbs drawn up and stiff. He was a boatman on board the other boat, and had died during the night. A group of Arabs were sitting near, making coffee, while two were preparing to wash the body previous to burial. They brought it down to the margin of the river and laid it carefully upon the sand, then washed it, pressed down the drawn-up legs, and wrapped it in the fragments of tattered garments, contributed by his fellow-boatmen, who could ill-spare even these scanty rags ; and laying it with great decency a little way from the river, joined the other group, and sat down with great gravity to pipes and coffee. In a few moments two of them rose, and going a little apart, with their bare hands scratched a shallow grave, and the poor Arab was left on a little sandbank in the Nile, to be covered in another season by the mighty river. He was an entire stranger, having come on board the evening before his boat set out from Cairo. In all probability he was one of an immense mass which swarms in the crowded streets of Cairo, without friends, occupation, or settled means of living.

On the 7th the wind was still ahead and blowing strong, and the air was very cold. Having no books, no society, and no occupation, except talking with Paul and my boatmen and the stragglers on shore, I became dispirited, and sat, hour after hour, wrapped up in my greatcoat, deliberating whether I should not turn back. One of the most vexatious things was the satisfaction apparently enjoyed by all around me. If we hauled up alongside another boat, we were sure to find the crew sprawling about in a most perfect state of contentment, and seemingly grateful to the adverse wind that prevented their moving. My own men were very obedient, but they could not control the wind. I had a written contract with my rais, drawn up by a Copt in Cairo, in pretty Arabic characters, and signed by both of us, although neither knew a word of its contents. The captain's manner of signing, I remember, was very primitive; he dipped the end of his finger in the ink, and pressed it on the paper, and in so doing seemed to consider that he had sold himself to me almost body and soul. "I know I am obliged to go if Howaga says so," was his invariable answer; but, though perfectly ready to go whenever there was a chance, it was easy enough to see that they were all quite as contented when there was none. Several times I was on the point of turning back, the wind blew down the river so invitingly; but if I returned it was too early to go into Syria, and Thebes, "Thebes with her hundred gates," beckoned me on. On the 7th I had not made much more than fifty miles, and the wind was still ahead, and blowing stronger

than ever; indeed, it seemed as if this morning, for the first time, it had really commenced in earnest. I became desperate, and went ashore, resolved to wear it out. We were lying on the bank on the Libyan side, in company with fifteen or twenty boats, wind-bound like ourselves. It was near a little mud village, of which I forget the name, and several Bedouin tents were on the bank, in one of which I was sitting smoking a pipe. The wind was blowing down with a fury I have never seen surpassed in a gale at sea, bringing with it the light sands of the desert, and at times covering the river with a thick cloud which prevented my seeing across it. A clearing up for a moment showed a boat of the largest class, heavily laden, and coming down with astonishing velocity; it was like the flight of an enormous bird. She was under bare poles, but small portions of the sail had got loose, and the Arabs were out on the very ends of the long spars getting them in. One of the boatmen, with a rope under his arm, had plunged into the river, and with strong swimming reached the bank, where a hundred men ran to his assistance. Their united strength turned her bows around, up stream, but nothing could stop her; stern foremost, she dragged the whole posse of Arabs to the bank, and broke away from them perfectly ungovernable; whirling round, her bows pitched into our fleet with a loud crash, tore away several of the boats, and, carrying one off, fast locked as in a death-grasp, she resumed her headlong course down the river. They had gone but a few rods when the stranger pitched her bows under and went down in a moment,

bearing her helpless companion also to the bottom. It was the most exciting incident I had seen upon the river. The violence of the wind, the swift movement of the boat, the crash, the wild figures of the Arabs on shore and on board, one in a red dress almost on the top of the long spar, his turban loose and streaming in the wind, all formed a novel and most animating scene. I need scarcely say that no lives were lost, for an Arab, on the bosom of his beloved river, is as safe as in his mud cabin.

On the 8th the wind was as contrary as ever; but, between rowing and towing, we had managed to crawl up as far as Minyeh. It was the season of the Ramadan, when for thirty days, from the rising to the setting of the sun, the followers of the Prophet are forbidden to eat, drink, or even smoke, or take the bath. My first inquiry was for a bath. It would not be heated or lighted up till eight o'clock; at eight o'clock I went, and was surprised to find it so large and comfortable. I was not long surprised, however, for I found that no sooner was the sacred prohibition removed, than the Turks and Arabs began to pour in in throngs: they came without any respect of persons—the haughty Turk with his pipe-bearing slave, and the poor Arab boatmen; in short, every one who could raise a few paras.

It was certainly not a very select company, nor over clean, and probably very few Europeans would have stood the thing as I did. My boatmen were all there. They were my servants, said the rais, and were bound to follow me everywhere. As I was a Frank, and as such expected

to pay ten times as much as any one else, I had the best place in the bath, at the head of the great reservoir of hot water. My white skin made me a marked object among the swarthy figures lying around me; and half-a-dozen of the operatives—lank, bony fellows, and perfectly naked—came up and claimed me. They settled it among themselves, however, and gave the preference to a dried-up old man, more than sixty, a perfect living skeleton, who had been for more than forty years a scrubber in the bath. He took me through the first process of rubbing with the glove and brush, and having thrown over me a copious ablution of warm water, left me to recover at leisure. I lay on the marble that formed the border of the reservoir, only two or three inches above the surface of the water, into which I put my hand and found it excessively hot; but the old man, satisfied with his exertion in rubbing me, sat on the edge of the reservoir, with his feet and legs hanging in the water, with every appearance of satisfaction. Presently he slid off into the water, and sinking up to his chin remained so a moment, drew a long breath, and seemed to look around him with a feeling of comfort. I had hardly raised myself on my elbow to look at this phenomenon, before a fine brawny fellow, who had been lying for some time torpid by my side, rose slowly, slid off like a turtle, and continued sinking until he too had immersed himself up to his chin. I expressed to him my astonishment at his ability to endure such heat, but he told me that he was a boatman, had been ten days coming up from Cairo, and was almost frozen, and his only regret

was that the water was not much hotter. He had hardly answered me before another and another followed, till all the dark naked figures around me had vanished. By the fitful glimmering of the little lamps, all that I could see was a parcel of shaved heads on the surface of the water, at rest, or turning slowly and quietly as on pivots. Most of them seemed to be enjoying it with an air of quiet, dreamy satisfaction, but the man with whom I had spoken first seemed to be carried beyond the bounds of Mussulman gravity. It operated upon him like a good dinner; it made him loquacious, and he urged me to come in, nay, he even became frolicsome, and, making a heavy surge, threw a large body of the water over the marble on which I was lying. I almost screamed, and started up as if melted lead had been poured upon me; even while standing up it seemed to blister the soles of my feet, and I was obliged to keep up a dancing movement, changing as fast as I could, to the astonishment of the dozing bathers, and to the utter consternation of my would-be friend. Roused too much to relapse into the quiet luxury of perspiration, I went into another apartment of a cooler temperature, where, after remaining in a bath of moderately warm water, I was wrapped up in hot cloths and towels, and conducted into the great chamber. Here I selected a couch, and, throwing myself upon it, gave myself up to the operators, who now took charge of me, and well did they sustain the high reputation of a Turkish bath: my arms were gently laid upon my breast, where the knee of a powerful man pressed upon them; my joints were cracked

and pulled—back, arms, the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, all visited in succession. I had been shampooed at Smyrna, Constantinople, and Cairo; but who would have thought of being carried to the seventh heaven at the little town of Minyeh? The men who had me in hand were perfect amateurs, enthusiasts, worthy of rubbing the hide of the Sultan himself; and the pipe and coffee that followed were worthy too of that same mighty seigneur. The large room was dimly lighted, and turn which way I would, there was a naked body, apparently without a soul, lying torpid, and turned and tumbled at will by a couple of workmen. I had had some fears of the plague; and Paul, though he felt his fears gradually dispelled by the soothing process which he underwent also, to the last continued to keep particularly clear of touching any of them; but I left the bath a different man—all my moral as well as physical strength was roused. I no longer drooped or looked back; and though the wind was still blowing a hurricane in my teeth, I was bent upon Thebes and the Cataracts.





CHAPTER V.

Sporting on the Nile—The Crocodile—A Recluse—An Egyptian Hebe—
Siout—A Wolf-race among the Tombs—Funeral Procession—Adventure with a Governor.

IN the morning of January 13th, the first thing I did was to shoot at a flock of ducks, the next to shoot at a crocodile. He was the first I had seen, and was lying on a sand-bank on an island in the middle of the river. I might as well have thrown a stone at him, for he was out of range twice over, and his hard skin would have laughed at my bird-shot, even if I had hit him; but I did what every traveller on the Nile must do, I shot at a crocodile. I have met several travellers, all abundantly provided with suitable materials, and believe we were about equally successful. I never killed any, nor did they.

The crocodile is not a handsome animal, and it is not easy to imagine why the ancient Egyptians should have made it an object of worship. Its characteristic *gape* seems to indicate its immense voracity, and the great strength of its long tail, which is flattened at the sides, enables it to propel itself in the water with great rapidity. Its colour is

a bronzed green, speckled with brown. Notwithstanding its formidable armour, offensive and defensive, it is a shy animal.

During the day the wind abated considerably, and towards evening it was almost calm. My boat rowed as easily as a barge, and we were approaching Manfalout. For some time before reaching it there is a change in the appearance of the river.



CROCODILE.

The general character of the scenery of the Nile is that of a rich valley, from six to eight or ten miles wide, divided by the river, and protected on either side from the Libyan and Arabian deserts by two continuous and parallel ranges of mountains. These are the strongly-marked and distinguishing features; and, from Cairo to

the Cataracts, almost the only variety is that occasioned by the greater or less distance of these two ranges. Before approaching Manfalout they changed their direction, and on the Arabian side the dark mountains of Mokattam advanced to the very border of the river.

Here we began to approach the eternal monuments of Egyptian industry. For a long distance the high range of rocky mountain was lined with tombs, their open doors inviting us to stop and examine them; but most provokingly, now for the first time since the day we started, the wind was fair. It had been my peculiar bad luck to have a continuance of head winds on a part of the river where there was nothing to see; and almost the very moment I came to an object of interest, the wind became favourable, and was sweeping us along beautifully. One of the few pieces of advice given me at Cairo, of which my own observation taught me the wisdom, was, with a fair wind never to stop going; and though every tomb seemed to reproach me for my neglect, we went resolutely on.

In one of the tombs lives an old man, who has been there more than fifty years, and an old wife, his companion for more than half-a-century, is there with him. His children live in Upper Egypt, and once a year they come to visit their parents. The old man is still hale and strong; at night a light is always burning in his tomb, a basket is constantly let down to receive the offerings of the charitable, and few travellers, even among the poor Arabs, ever pass without leaving their mites for the recluse of the sepulchres.

It was dark when we arrived at Manfalout; but, being the season of the Ramadan, the Mussulman day had just begun: the bazaars were open, and the cook and coffee shops thronged with Turks and Arabs, indemnifying themselves for their long abstinence. My boatmen wanted to stop for the night; but as I would not stop for my own pleasure at the tombs below, I of course would not stop here for theirs; and after an hour or two spent in lounging



through the bazaars, and making a few necessary purchases, we were again under way.

At about eight o'clock, with a beautiful wind, I sailed into the harbour of Siout. This is the largest town on the Nile, and the capital of Upper Egypt. It is built on the site of the ancient Lycopolis, and stands near the western bank of the river, 200 miles above Cairo. It has

several fine buildings, including mosques and bazaars, and was, until recently, the centre of the Egyptian slave trade.

Brighter prospects now opened upon me. The wind that had brought us into Siout, and was ready to carry us on farther, was not the cold and cheerless one that for more than two weeks had blown in my teeth, but mild, balmy, and refreshing, raising the drooping head of the invalid, and making the man in health feel like walking, running, climbing, or clearing fences on horseback. Among the *hourriquières* who surrounded me the moment I jumped on the bank, was a beautiful bright-eyed little Arab girl, about eight years old, leading a donkey, and flourishing a long stick with a grace that would have shamed the best pupil of a fashionable dancing-master. By some accident, moreover, her face and hands were clean, and she seemed to be a general favourite among her ragged companions, who fell back with a gallantry and politeness that would have done honour to the ball-room of the dancing-master aforesaid. Leaving her without a competitor, they deprived me of the pleasure of showing my preference: and putting myself under her guidance, I followed her nimble little feet on the road to Siout. I make special mention of this little girl, because it is a rare thing to see an Egyptian child in whom one can take any interest. It was the only time such a thing ever occurred to me; and really she exhibited so much beauty and grace, such a mild, open, and engaging expression, and such propriety of behaviour as she walked by my side, urging on the donkey, and looking up in my face when I asked

her a question, that I felt ashamed of myself for riding while she walked. But, tender and delicate as she looked, she would have walked by the side of her donkey, and tired down the strongest man. She was, of course, the child of poor parents, of whom the donkey was the chief support. The father had been in the habit of going out with it himself, and frequently taking the little girl with him as a companion. As she grew up she went out occasionally alone; and even among the Turks her interesting little figure made her a favourite; and when all the other donkeys were idle, hers was sure to be engaged. This and many other things I learned from her own pretty little lips, on my way to Siout.

Siout stands about a mile and a-half from the river, in one of the richest valleys of the Nile. At the season of inundation, when the river rolls down in all its majesty, the whole intermediate country is overflowed; and boats of the largest size, steering their course over the waste of waters by the projecting tops of the palm-trees, come to anchor under the walls of the city. A high causeway from the river to the city crosses the plain, a comparatively unknown and unnoticed, but stupendous work, which for more than three thousand years has resisted the headlong current of the Nile at its highest, and now stands like the pyramids, not so striking, but an equally enduring, and perhaps more really wonderful monument of Egyptian labour. A short distance before reaching the city, on the right, are the handsome palace and garden of Ibrahim Pasha. A stream winds through the valley, crossed by

a stone bridge, and over this is the entrance gate of the city. The governor's palace, the most imposing and best structure I had seen since the citadel at Cairo, standing first within the walls, seemed like a warder at the door.

The large court yard before the door of the palace contained a group of idlers, mostly officers of the household, all well armed, and carrying themselves with the usual air of Turkish conceit and insolence. Sitting on one side, with large turbans and long robes, unarmed, and with the large brass inkhorn by their sides, the badge of their peaceful and inferior, if not degrading profession, was a row of Copts, calling themselves, and believed to be, the descendants of the ancient Egyptians, having, as they say, preserved their blood intact during all the changes of their country. Boasting the blood of the ancient Egyptians, with the ruins of the mighty temples in which they worshipped, and the mighty tombs in which they were buried, staring them in the face, they were sitting on the bare earth at the door of a petty delegate of a foreign master, a race of degraded beggars, lifeless and soulless, content to receive as a grace from the hands of a tyrant, the wretched privilege of living as slaves in the land where their fathers reigned as masters.

I do not believe that the contents of all the bazaars in Siout, one of the largest towns in Egypt, were worth as much as the stock of a good mercer or draper in New York. But these are not the things for which the traveller stops at Siout. On the lofty mountains overlooking this richest valley of the Nile, and protecting it from the

Libyan Desert, is a long range of tombs, the burial-place of the ancient Egyptians; and the traveller, looking for a moment at the little Mohammedan burying-ground, turns with wonder from the little city he has left, and asks, Where is the great city which had its graves in the sides



of yonder mountains? Where are the people who despised the earth as a burial-place, and made for themselves tombs in the eternal granite?

The mountain is about as far from the city as the river, and the approach to it is by another strong causeway over the same beautiful plain. Leaving our donkeys at its foot, and following the nimble footsteps of my little Arab girl, we climbed by a steep ascent to the first range of tombs. They were the first I had seen, and are but little visited

by travellers; and though I afterward saw all that were in Egypt, I still consider these well worth a visit. Of the first we entered, the entrance-chamber was perhaps forty feet square, and adjoining it on the same range were five or six others, of which the entrance-chambers had about the same dimensions. The ceilings were covered with paintings, finished with exquisite taste and delicacy, and in some places fresh as if just executed; and on the walls were hieroglyphics enough to fill volumes. Behind the principal chamber were five or six others nearly as large, with smaller ones on each side, and running back perhaps 150 feet. The back chambers were so dark, and their atmosphere was so unwholesome, that it was unpleasant, and perhaps unsafe, to explore them; if we went in far, there was always a loud rushing noise, and as Paul suggested, their innermost recesses might now be the abode of wild beasts. Wishing to see what caused the noise, and at the same time, to keep out of harm's way, we stationed ourselves near the back-door of the entrance chamber, and I fired my gun within; a stream of fire lighted up the darkness of the sepulchral chamber, and the report went grumbling and roaring into the innermost recesses, rousing their occupants to frenzy. There was a noise like the rushing of a strong wind; the light was dashed from Paul's hand; a soft skinny substance struck against my face; and thousands of bats, wild with fright, came whizzing forth from every part of the tomb to the only avenue of escape. We threw ourselves down and allowed the ugly frightened creatures to pass over us, then hurried out ourselves. For

a moment I felt guilty; the beastly birds, driven to the light of day, were dazzled by the glorious sun, and, flying and whirling blindly about, were dashing themselves against the rocky side of the mountain and falling dead at its base.

Cured of all wish to explore very deeply, but at the same time relieved of all fears, we continued going from tomb to tomb, looking at the pictures on the walls, endeavouring to make out the details, admiring the beauty and freshness of the colours, and speculating upon the mysterious hieroglyphics which mocked our feeble knowledge. We were in one of the last when we were startled by a noise different from any we had yet heard, and from the door leading to the dark recesses within, foaming, roaring, and gnashing his teeth, out ran an enormous wolf; close upon his heels, in hot pursuit, came another, and almost at the door of the tomb they grappled, fought, growled fearfully, rolled over, and again the first broke loose and fled; another chase along the side of the mountain, another grapple, a fierce and desperate struggle, and then they rolled over the side, and we lost sight of them. The whole affair had been so sudden, the scene so stirring, and the interest so keen, that Paul and I had stood like statues, our whole souls thrown into our eyes, and following the movements of the furious beasts. Paul was the first to recover himself; and as soon as the wolves were fairly out of sight, with a characteristic movement, suddenly took the gun out of my hand, and started in pursuit. It is needless to say that he did not go far. But the

interest of the day was not yet over. While walking along the edge of the mountain, in spite of bats and beasts, still taking another and another look, my ears were suddenly struck with a loud voice of lamentation coming up from the valley below; and looking in the direction of the city, I saw approaching over the elevated causeway a long funeral procession, and the voice came from the mourners following the corpse. They were evidently coming to the Mohammedan burying-ground, at the foot of the mountain, and I immediately left the tombs of the ancient Egyptians to see the burial of one who but yesterday was a dweller in the land.

Being far beyond the regular path for descending, and wishing to intercept the procession before its arrival at the burying-ground, I had something like the wolf-race I had just beheld to get down in time; unluckily, I had sent Paul back to the place where we had left our cloaks and donkeys, and the little girl, with directions to ride round the foot of the hill and meet me at the burying-ground. How I got down I do not know; but I was quietly sitting under a large palm-tree, near the cemetery, when the procession came up. It approached with funeral banners and devices, which I could not make out, but probably containing some precept of the Koran, having reference to death, and the grave, a paradise of houris; and the loud wailing which had reached me on the top of the mountain, here was almost deafening. First in the strange procession came the beggars, or santons, men who are supposed to lead peculiarly pure and holy lives, denying themselves

all luxuries and pleasures, labouring not, and taking no heed for themselves what they shall eat or what they shall drink, and living upon the willing though necessarily stinted charity of their miserable countrymen. I could read all this at the first glance; I could see that poverty had been their portion through life; that they had drank the bitter cup to its very dregs. Their beards were long, white, and grizzled; over their shoulders and breasts they wore a scanty covering of rags, fastened together with strings, and all with some regard to propriety. This ragged patchwork covered their breasts and shoulders only, the rest of their bodies being entirely naked, and they led the funeral procession among a throng of spectators, with heads erect and proud step, under what, anywhere else, would be called an indecent and shameless exposure of person, unbecoming their character as saints or holy beggars. Over their shoulders were slung by ropes large jars of water, which, for charity's sweet sake, and for the love of the soul of the deceased, they carried to distribute gratis at his grave. After them came a parcel of boys, then the sheiks and two officers of the town, then the corpse, tightly wrapped from head to foot in a red sash, on a bier carried by four men; then a procession of men, and more than a hundred women in long cotton dresses, covering their heads, and drawn over their faces, so as to hide all except their eyes.

They were the last, but by no means the least important part of the procession, as by general consent the whole business of mourning devolved upon them; and the poor

Arab who was then being trundled to his grave had no reason to complain of their neglect. Smiles and tears are a woman's weapons; and she is the most to be admired, and has profited most by the advantage of education, who knows how to make the best use of them. Education and refinement can, no doubt, do wonders; but the most skilful lady in civilized life might have taken lesson from these untutored Egyptians. A group of them were standing near me, chattering and laughing until the procession came up, when all at once big tears started from their eyes, and their cries and lamentations rent the air, as if their hearts were breaking. I was curious to see the forms of a modern burial in Egypt, but I hesitated in following. Some of the Arabs had looked rudely at me in passing, and I did not know whether the bigoted Mussulmans would tolerate the intrusion of a stranger and a Christian. I followed on, however, looking out for Paul, and fortunately met him at the gate of the burying-ground. The shiek was standing outside, ordering and arranging; and I went up to him with Paul, and asked if there was any objection to my entering. He not only permitted it, but, telling me to follow him, with a good deal of noise and an uncere- monious use of the scabbard of his sword, he cleared a way through the crowd, and even roughly breaking through the ranks of the women, so as materially to disturb their business of mourning, and putting back friends and relations, gave me a place at the head of the tomb. It was square, with a round top, built of Nile mud, and white-washed; two men were engaged in opening it, which was

done simply by pulling away a few stones, and scooping out the sand with their hands. In front, but a few feet from the door, sat the old mother, so old as to be hardly conscious of what was passing around her, and probably long before this buried in the same grave; near her was the widow of the deceased, dressed in silk, and sitting on the bare earth with an air of total abandonment; her hands, her breast, the top of her head, and her face, plastered with thick coats of mud, and her eyes fixed upon the door of the tomb. A few stones remained to be rolled away, and the door, or rather the hole, was opened; the two men crawled in, remained a minute or two, came out and went for the corpse.

The poor widow followed them with her eyes, and when they returned with the body, carefully and slowly dragging it within the tomb, and the feet and body had disappeared, and the beloved head was about to be shut up for ever from her eyes, she sprang up, and, wildly and passionately throwing her arms towards the tomb broke forth in a perfect frenzy of grief. "Twenty years we have lived together; we have always lived happily; you loved me, you were kind to me, you gave me bread; what shall I do now? I will never marry again. Every day I will come and weep at your tomb, my love, my life, my soul, my heart, my eyes. Remember me to my father, remember me to my brother," &c., &c. I do not remember half she said; but as Paul translated it to me, it seemed the very soul of pathos; and all this time she was walking distractedly before the door of the tomb, wringing her hands,

and again and again plastering her face and breast with mud. The mourning women occasionally joined in chorus, the santons ostentatiously crying out, "Water, for the love of God and the Prophet, and the soul of the deceased;" and a little girl, about seven or eight years old, was standing on the top of the tomb, naked as she was born, eating a piece of sugar-cane. Paul looked rather suspiciously upon the whole affair, particularly upon that part where she avowed her determination never to marry again. "The old Beelzebub!" said he; "she will marry to-morrow if any one asks her."

Leaving the burying-ground, we returned to Siout. On my way I made acquaintance with the governor, not only at that place, but also of all Upper Egypt, a Pasha with two or three tails; a great man by virtue of his office, and much greater in his own conceit. I saw coming towards me a large, fine-looking man, splendidly dressed, mounted on a fine horse, with two runners before him, and several officers and slaves at his side. I was rather struck with his appearance, and looked at him attentively as I passed, without, however, saluting him, which I would have done had I known his rank. I thought he returned my gaze with interest; and in passing each continued to keep his eyes fixed upon the other, to such a degree, that we must either have twisted our necks off or turned our bodies. The latter was the easier for both; and we kept turning, he on horseback and I on foot, until we found ourselves directly facing each other, and then both stopped. His guards and attendants turned with him, and, silent as

statues, stood looking at me. I had nothing to say, and so I stood and said nothing. His mightiness opened his lips, and his myrmidons, with their hands on their sword-hilts, looked as if they expected an order to deal with me for my unparalleled assurance. His mightiness spoke, and I have no doubt the Turks around him thought it was the *ne plus ultra* of dignity, and wondered that such words had not confounded me. But it was not very easy to confound me with words I could not understand, although I could perceive that there was nothing very gracious in his manner. Paul answered, and after the governor had turned his back, told me that his first address was, "Do I owe you anything?" which he followed up by slapping his horse on the neck, and saying in the same tone, "Is this your horse?" Paul says that he answered in a tone of equal dignity, "A cat may look at a king;" though, from his pale cheeks and quivering lips, I am inclined to doubt whether he gave so doughty a reply.

I was exceedingly amused at the particulars of the interview, and immediately resolved to cultivate the acquaintance. During the long days and nights of my voyage up the Nile, in poring over my books and maps, I had frequently found my attention fixed upon the great Oasis in the Libyan desert. A caravan-road runs through it from Siout, and I resolved, since I had had the pleasure of one interview with his excellency, to learn from him the particulars of time, danger, &c. I therefore hurried down to the boat for my firman, and strong in this as if I had the Pasha at my right hand, I proceeded forthwith

to the palace; but my friend observed as much state in giving audience as the Pasha himself. Being the season of the Ramadan, he received nobody on business until after the evening meal, and so my purpose was defeated. Several were already assembled at the gate, waiting the appointed hour; but it did not suit my humour to sit down with them and exercise my patience, and perhaps feel the littleness of Turkish tyranny in being kept to the last, so I marched back to my boat.

It was still an hour before sunset; my men had laid in their stock of bread, the wind was fair, a boat of the largest size, belonging to a Turkish officer, with a long red satin flag, was just opening her large sails to go up the river, and, bidding good-bye to my little Arab girl, we cast off our fastening to the bank at Siout. It was the first day I had spent on shore in the legitimate business of a tourist, and by far the most pleasant since I left Cairo.





CHAPTER VI.

Small Favours thankfully received—Slavery in Egypt—How to catch a Crocodile—An elaborate Joke—Imaginary Perils—Arabs not so bad as they might be.

THE next day, at about four o'clock, we arrived at Girgeh, formerly the capital of Upper Egypt, and one of the largest towns on the Nile. My humour for going to the Oasis had been growing upon me, and finding that there was a track from this place also, I landed, and, working my way through the streets and bazaars, went to the governor's palace. As I have before remarked, the place where the governor lives is always by a stretch of courtesy called a palace.

The governor was not at home; he had gone to Siout, on a visit to my handsome friend the governor there, but he had left his deputy, who gave us such an account of the journey and its perils as almost put an end to it for ever, at least so far as Paul was concerned. He said that the road was dangerous, and could not be travelled except under the protection of a caravan or guard of soldiers; that the Arabs among the mountains were a fierce and desperate people, and would certainly cut the throats of any unpro-

tected travellers. He added, however, that a caravan was about forming, which would probably be ready in four or five days, and that perhaps before that time the governor would return and give me a guard of soldiers. It did not suit my views to wait the uncertain movements of a caravan, nor did it suit my pocket to incur the expense of a guard. So, thanking the gentleman for his civility (he had given us pipes and coffee, as usual), I bade him good-bye, and started for my boat; but I had not gone far before I found him trotting at my heels. In the palace he had sat with his legs crossed, with as much dignity as the governor himself could have displayed; but as soon as he slid down from the divan he seemed to have left dignity for his betters, and pounced upon Paul for "backsheesh." I gave him five piasters (about equal to a quarter of a dollar), for which the deputy of the Governor of Girgeh, formerly the capital of Upper Egypt, laid his hand upon his heart and invoked upon my head the blessing of Allah and the Prophet.

At Girgeh, for the first time, I saw carried on one of the great branches of trade on the Nile, a trade which once stained the annals of our own country, and the fatal effects of which we still continue to experience. There were two large boat-loads—perhaps five or six hundred slaves—collected at Dongola and Sennar, probably bought from their parents for a shawl, a string of beads, or some trifling article of necessity. Born under the burning sun of the tropics, several of them had died with cold, even before reaching the latitude of Upper Egypt; many were sick, and others dying. They were arranged on board the boats and

on the banks, in separate groups, according to their state of health. Among them was every variety of face and complexion, and it was at once startling and painful to note the gradations of man descending to the brute. I could almost see the very line of separation. Though made in God's image, there seemed no ray of the divinity



SLAVE MARKET.

within them. They did not move upon all fours, it is true, but they sat, as I had seen them in the slave-market at Cairo, perfectly naked, with their long arms wound round their legs, and their chins resting upon their knees, precisely as we see monkeys, baboons, and apes; and as,

while looking at these miserable caricatures of our race, I have sometimes been almost electrified by a transient gleam of resemblance to humanity, so here I was struck with the closeness of man's approach to the inferior grade of animal existence. Nor was there much difference between the sick and well; the sick were more pitiable, for they seemed doomed to die, and death to any thing that lives is terrible; but the strong and lusty men and women were bathing in the river; and when they came out they smeared themselves with oil, and laid their shining bodies in the sun, and slept like brutes.

In the East slavery exists now precisely as it did in the days of the Patriarchs. The slave is received into the family of a Turk in a relation more confidential and respectable than that of an ordinary domestic; and when liberated, which very often happens, stands upon the same footing with a freeman. The curse does not rest upon him for ever: he may sit at the same board, dip his hand in the same dish, and, if there are no other impediments, may marry his master's daughter.

In the evening we left Girgeh, and about ten o'clock hauled up to the bank, and rested quietly till morning. Next day the wind was fair, but light, and I passed it on shore with my gun. This same gun, by the way, proved a better companion to me on my journey than I had expected. There were always plenty of pigeons; indeed, advancing in Upper Egypt, one of the most striking features in the villages on the Nile is the number of pigeon-cotes, built of mud in the form of a sugar-loaf, and

whitewashed. They are much more lofty than any of the houses, and their winged tenants constitute a great portion of the wealth of the villagers. It is not, however, allowable to shoot at these, the laws regulating the right of property in animals, *feræ naturæ*, being as well established on the banks of the Nile as in any county in England; but there are hundreds of pigeons in the neighbourhood of



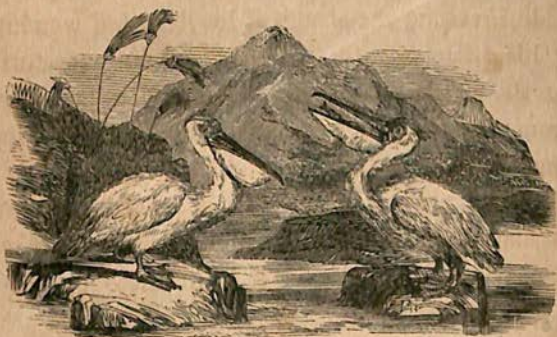
every village which no one claims. In some places, too, there is fine sport in hunting hares; and if a man can bring himself to it he may hunt the gazelle; and almost the whole line of the river, at least above Siout, abounds with ducks and geese. These, however, are very wild, and, moreover, very tough, and except for the sport, are not worth shooting. No keeping and no cooking could

make them tender, and good masticators were throw away upon them.

But the standing shots on the Nile are crocodiles and pelicans. The former still abound, as in the days when the Egyptians worshipped them; and as you see one basking in the sun, on some little bank of sand, even in the act of firing at him, you cannot help going back to the time when the passing Egyptian would have bowed to him as to a god; and you may imagine the descendant of the ancient river-god, as he feels a ball rattling against his scaly side, invoking the shades of his departed worshippers, telling his little ones of the glory of his ancestors, and cursing the march of improvement, which has degraded him from the deity of a mighty people into a target for strolling tourists. I always liked to see a crocodile upon the Nile, and always took a shot at him, for the sake of the associations. In one place I counted in sight at one time twenty-one; a degree of fruitfulness in the river probably equal to that of the time when each of them would have been deemed worthy of a temple while living, and embalmment and a mighty tomb when dead.

While walking by the river-side I met an Arab with a gun in his hand, who pointed to the dozing crocodiles on the bank before us, and marking out a space on the ground, turned to the village a little back, and made me understand that he had a large crocodile there. As I was some distance in advance of my boat, I accompanied him, and found one fourteen feet long, stuffed with straw, and hanging under a palm-tree. He had been killed two days

before, after a desperate resistance, having been disabled with bullets, and pierced with spears in a dozen places. I looked at him with interest and compassion, reflecting on the difference between his treatment and that experienced by his ancestors, but, nevertheless, opened a negociation for a purchase; and though our languages were as far apart as our countries, bargaining sharpens the intellect to such a degree that the Arab and I soon came to an understanding, and I bought him as he hung,



PELICANS

for forty piasters and a charge of gunpowder. I had conceived a joke for my own amusement. A friend had requested me to buy for him some mosaics, cameos, &c., in Italy, which circumstances had prevented me from doing, and I had written to him, regretting my inability, and telling him that I was going to Egypt, and would send him a mummy or a pyramid; and when I saw the scaly monster hanging by the tail, with his large jaws distended by a stick, it struck me that he would make a

still better substitute for cameos and mosaics, and that I would box him up, and, without any advice, send him to my friend.

The reader may judge how desperately I was pushed for amusement, when I tell him that I chuckled greatly over this happy conceit; and having sent my Nubian to hail the boat as she was coming by, I followed with my little memorial. The whole village turned out to escort us, more than a hundred Arabs, men, women, and children, and we dragged him down with a pomp and circumstance worthy of his better days. Paul looked a little astonished when he saw me with a rope over my shoulder, leading the van of this ragged escort, and rather turned up his nose when I told him my joke. I had great difficulty in getting my prize on board, and when I had got him there, he deranged everything else; but the first day I was so tickled, that I could have thrown all my other cargo overboard rather than him. The second day the joke was not so good, and the third I grew tired of it, and tumbled my crocodile into the river. I followed him with my eye, as his body floated down the stream; it was moonlight, and the creaking of the water-wheel (sakieh), on the banks, sounded like the moaning spirit of an ancient Egyptian, indignant at the murder and profanation of his god. It was perhaps hardly worth while to mention this little circumstance, but it amused me for a day or two, brought me into mental contact with friends at home, and gave me the credit of having myself shot a crocodile, any one of which was worth all the trouble it cost me. If the

reader will excuse a bad pun, in consideration of its being my first and last, it was not a *dry* joke; for in getting the crocodile on board I tumbled over, and, very unintentionally on my part, had a January bath in the Nile.

During nearly the whole of that day I was walking on the bank of the river; there was more tillable land than usual on the Arabian side, and I continually saw the



Arabs naked, or with a wreath of grass around their loins, drawing water to irrigate the ground in a basket fastened to a pole, like one of our old-fashioned well-poles. This mode of raising water for irrigation is called the *shadoof*, and is used frequently in the East to draw water from wells, as seen in the engraving. Two forms of the *sakieh* are also shown here, and another on page 54.

On the 17th we approached Dendera. I usually dined at one o'clock, because it was then too hot to go on shore, and also, to tell the truth, because it served to break the very long and tedious day. I was now about four hours from Dendera by land, of which two-and-a-half were desert, the Libyan sands here coming down to the river. It was a fine afternoon, there was no wind, and I hoped by walking to have a view of the great temple before night. It was warm enough then; but as it regularly became very cold towards evening, I told my Nubian to follow with my cloak. To my surprise he objected. It was the first time he had done so. He was always glad to go ashore with me, as indeed were they all, and it was considered that I was showing partiality in always selecting him. I asked one of the others, and found that he, and in fact all of them, made objections, on the ground that it was a dangerous road:

This is one of the things which vex a traveller in Egypt, and in the East generally. He will often find the road which he wishes to travel a dangerous one, and though no misadventure may have happened on it for years, he will find it impossible to get his Arabs to accompany him. My rais took the matter in hand, began kicking them ashore, and swore they should all go. This I would not allow. I knew that the whole course of the Nile was safe as the streets of London; that no accident had happened to a traveller since the Pasha had been on the throne; and that women and children might travel with perfect safety from Alexandria to the Cataracts; so, vexed with their

idle fears, and seeing that Paul was as much infected as any of them, I went ashore alone. Paul seemed quietly making his mind up for some desperate movement; without a word, he was arranging the things about the boat, shutting up the doors of the cabin, buttoning his coat, and with my cloak under his arm, and a sword in his hand, he jumped ashore and followed me. He had not gone far, however, before his courage began to fail. The Arabs, whom we found at their daily labour, drawing water, seemed particularly black, naked, and hairy. They gave dubious and suspicious answers, and when we came to the edge of the desert he began to grumble outright; he did not want to be shot down like a dog; if we were strong enough to make a stout resistance it would be another thing, &c., &c. In truth, the scene before us was dreary enough, the desert commencing on the very margin of the river, and running back to the eternal sands of Africa. Paul's courage seemed to be going with the green soil we were leaving behind us; and as we advanced where the grass seemed struggling to resist the encroachments of the desert, he was on the point of yielding to the terror of his own imagination, until I suggested to him that we could see before us the whole extent of desert we were to cross; that there was not a shrub or bush to interrupt the view, and not a living thing moved that could do us harm. He then began to revive; it was not for himself, but for me he feared. We walked on for about an hour, when, feeling that it was safe to trust me alone, and being tired, he sat down on the bank, and I proceeded. Fear is infectious. In about half-

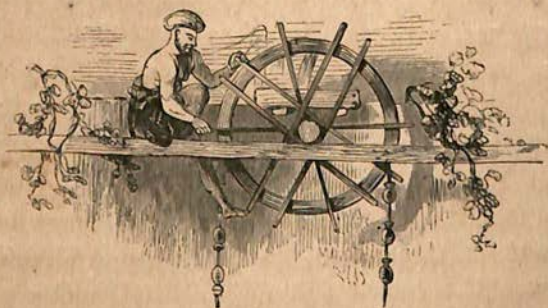
an-hour more I met three men, who had to me a peculiar cut-throat appearance; they spoke, but I, of course, could not understand them. At length, finding night approaching, I turned back to meet the boat, and saw that the three Arabs had turned too, and were again advancing to meet me, which I thought a very suspicious movement. Paul's ridiculous fears had completely infected



me, and I would have dodged them if I could, but there was no bush to hide behind. I almost blushed at myself for thinking of dodging three Arabs, when I had a double-barrelled gun in my hand, and a pair of pistols in my sash; but I must say I was not at all sorry, before I met them again, to hear Paul shouting to me,

and a moment after to see my boat coming up under full sail.

One who has never met an Arab in the desert can have no conception of his terrible appearance. The worst pictures of the Italian bandits or Greek mountain robbers I ever saw, are tame in comparison. I have seen the celebrated Gasperini, who, ten years ago, kept in terror the whole country between Rome and Naples, and who was so strong as to negotiate and make a treaty with the Pope. I saw him surrounded by nearly twenty of his comrades; and when he told me he could not remember how many murders he had committed, he looked civil and harmless compared with a Bedouin of the desert. The swarthy complexion of the latter, his long beard, his piercing coal-black eyes, half-naked figure, an enormous sword slung over his back, and a rusty matchlock in his hand, make the best figure for a painter I ever saw—but happily he is not so bad as he looks to be.



RAISING WATER BY WHEEL AND FOOT.



CHAPTER VII.

The Temple of Dendera—Practice against Theory—Regulating the Sun—
The French at Thebes—The curse of Pharaoh—An Egyptian Tournament—Preparations for Dinner—An English travelling Lady.

AT eight o'clock in the morning of January 18 we arrived at Kenneh, a considerable town, but without any objects of interest to the traveller. Leaving my boat and crew here to make a few additions to our stock, Paul and I crossed over in a sort of ferry-boat to Dendera.

The temple of Dendera is one of the finest specimens of the arts in Egypt, and the best preserved of any on the Nile. It stands about a mile from the river, on the edge of the desert, and, coming up, may be seen at a great distance. The temples of the Egyptians, like chapels in Catholic countries, in many instances stand in such positions as to arrest the attention of the passer-by; and the Egyptian boatman, long before he reached it, might see the open doors of the temple of Dendera, reminding him of his duty to the gods of his country. I shall not attempt any description of this beautiful temple; its great dimensions, its magnificent propylon or gateway, portico, and columns; the sculptured figures on the walls; the spirit of the devices

and their admirable execution; the winged globe (an emblem of the Deity) and the sacred vulture, the hawk and the ibis, Isis, Osiris, and Horus, god, goddesses, priests, and women; harps, altars, and people clapping their hands, and the whole interior covered with hieroglyphics and paintings, in some places, after a lapse of more than two thousand years, in colours fresh as if but the work of yesterday.

It was the first temple I had seen in Egypt; and although I ought not perhaps to say so, I was disappointed. I found it beautiful, far more beautiful than I expected; but, look at it as I would, wander around it as I would, the ruins of the Acropolis at Athens rose before me; the severe and stately form of the Parthenon, the beautiful fragment of the temple of Minerva, and the rich Corinthian columns



WINGED GLOBE—ETHIOPIAN EMBLEM OF THE DEITY.

of the temple of Jupiter, came upon me with a clearness and vividness I could not have conceived. The temple is more than half-buried in the sand. For many years it has formed the nucleus of a village. The Arabs have built their huts within and around it, range upon range, until they reached and almost covered the tops of the temple. Last year, for what cause I know not, they left their huts in a body, and the village, which for many years had existed there, is now entirely deserted. The ruined huts still remain around the columns and against the

broken walls. On the very top is a chamber, beautifully sculptured, and formed for other uses, now blackened with smoke, and the polished floors strewn with fragments of pottery and culinary vessels.

Nor is this the worst affliction of the traveller at Dendera. He sees there other ruins, more lamentable than the encroachments of the desert and the burial in the sand, worse than the building and ruin of successive Arab villages; he sees wanton destruction by the barbarous hand of man. The beautiful columns, upon which the skilful and industrious Egyptian artist had laboured with his chisel for months, and perhaps for years—which were then looked upon with religious reverence, and ever since with admiration—have been dashed into a thousand pieces, to build bridges and forts for the great modern reformer.

It is strange how the organ of mischief developes itself when it has something to work upon. I sat down upon the sculptured fragments of a column, which perhaps at this moment forms the abutment of some bridge, and, looking at the wreck around me, even while admiring and almost reverencing the noble ruin, began breaking off the beautifully chiselled figure of a hawk, and perhaps in ten minutes had demolished the whole of a year. I felt that I was doing wrong, but excused myself by the plea that I was destroying to preserve, and saving that precious fragment from the ruin to which it was doomed, to show at home as a specimen of the skill of the Old World. So far I did well enough; but I went farther. I was looking intently, though almost unconsciously, at a pigeon on the

head of Isis, the capital of one of the front columns of the temple. It was a beautiful shot—could not have been finer if the temple had been built expressly to shoot pigeons from. I fired: the shot went smack into the beautifully sculptured face of the goddess, and put out one of her eyes; the pigeon fell at the foot of the column; and while the goddess seemed to weep over her fallen state, and to reproach me for this renewed insult to herself and to the arts, I picked up the bird and returned to my boat, and did not leave it again that day.

On board I had constantly a fund of amusement in the movements of my Arab crew. During the Ramadan, a period of thirty days, no good Mussulman eats, drinks, or smokes from the rising to the setting of the sun. My men religiously observed this severe requisition of the Koran, although sometimes they were at work at the oar under a burning sun nearly all day. They could form a pretty shrewd conjecture as to the time of the setting of the sun; but, nevertheless, they fell into the habit of regulating themselves by my watch, and I did not think the Prophet would be particularly hard upon them if I sometimes brought the day to a close half-an-hour or so before its time. Sometimes I was rather too liberal, but out of respect for me they considered the sun set when I told them it was; and it was interesting to see them regularly every evening, one after another, mount the upper deck, and, spreading out their cloaks, with their faces toward the tomb of the Prophet, kneel down and pray.

On the 20th the wind was light, but favourable, and part of the time the men were on shore towing with the cords. We were now approaching the most interesting spot on the Nile—perhaps in the world. Thebes, immortal Thebes, was before us, and a few hours more would place us among her ruins. Towards noon the wind died away, and left us again to the slow movement of the tow-line. This was too slow for my then excited humour. I could not bear that the sun should again set before I stood among the ruins of the mighty city; and, landing on the right side of the river, I set out to walk. About an hour before dark the lofty columns of the great temple at Luxor, and the still greater of Karnac, were visible. The glowing descriptions of travellers had, to a certain extent, inflamed my imagination. Denon, in his account of the expedition to Egypt, says, that when the French soldiers first came in sight of Thebes, the whole army involuntarily threw down their arms and stood in silent admiration: a sublime idea, whether true or not; but I am inclined to think that the French soldiers would have thrown down their arms and clapped their hands with much greater satisfaction if they had seen a living city and prospect of good quarters. For my own part, without at this moment referring to particulars, I was disappointed in the first view of the ruins of Thebes. We walked on the right side of the river, the valley as usual running back to the desert.

It was nearly dark when we arrived at the ruined village, which now occupies part of the site of the once magnificent city. The plough has been driven over the

ruins of the temples, and grass was growing where palaces had stood. A single boat was lying along the bank; a single flag, the Union Jack of England, was drooping lazily against the mast; and though it be death to my reputation as a sentimental traveller, at that moment I hailed the sight of that flag with more interest than the ruined city. Since I left Cairo I had seen nothing but Arabs; for three weeks I had not opened my lips, except to Paul; and let me tell the reader, that though a man may take a certain degree of pleasure in groping among ruins, in travelling in strange and out-of-the-way places, he cannot forget the world he has left behind him. In a land of comparative savages, he hails the citizen of any civilised country as his brother; and when on the bank of the river I was accosted in my native tongue, by a strapping fellow in a Turkish dress, though in the broken accents of a Sicilian servant, I thought it the purest English I had ever heard. I went on board the boat, and found two gentlemen, of whom I had heard at Cairo, who had been to Mount Sinai, from thence to Hor, by the Red Sea to Cosseir, and thence across the desert to Thebes, where they had only arrived that day. I sat with them till a late hour. I cannot flatter myself that the evening passed as agreeably to them as to me, for they had been a party of six, and I alone; but I saw them afterward, and our acquaintance ripened into intimacy; and though our lots are cast in different places, and we shall probably never meet again, if I do not deceive myself, neither will ever forget the acquaintance formed that night on the banks of the Nile.

Our conversation during the evening was desultory and various. We mounted the pyramids, sat down among the ruins of temples, groped among tombs, and, mixed up with these higher matters, touched incidentally upon rats, fleas, and all kinds of vermin. I say we touched incidentally upon these things; but, to tell the truth, we talked so much about them, that when I went to my boat I fairly crawled. I have omitted to mention that the curse provoked by Pharaoh still rests upon the land, and the rats, fleas, and those detestable animals into which Aaron converted the sands, are still the portion of the traveller and sojourner in Egypt. I had suffered considerably during the last four days, but, not willing to lose a favourable wind, had put off resorting to the usual means of relief. To-night, however, there was no enduring it any longer: the rats ran, shrieked, and shouted, as if celebrating a jubilee on account of some great mortality among the cats, and the lesser animals came upon me as if the rod of Aaron had been lifted for my special affliction. I got up during the night, and told Paul that we would remain here a day, and early in the morning they must sink the boat. Before I awoke we were half across the river, being obliged to cross in order to find a convenient place for sinking. I was vexed at having left so abruptly my new companions; but it was too late to return. We pitched our tent on the bank, and immediately commenced unlading the boat.

On a point a little above, in front of a large house built by the French, at the south end of the temple of Luxor,

and one of the most beautiful positions on the Nile, were two tents. I knew that they belonged to the companions of the two gentlemen on the opposite side, and that there was a lady with them. I rather put myself out of the way for it, and the first time I met the three gentlemen on the bank, I was not particularly pleased with them. I may have deceived myself, but I thought they did not greet me as cordially as I was disposed to greet every traveller I met in that remote country. True, I was not a very inviting looking object; but, as I said to myself, "Take the beam out of your own eye, and then—" true, too, their beards were longer, and one of them was redder than mine, but I did not think that gave them any right to put on airs. In short, I left them with a sort of as-you-please feeling, and did not expect to have any more to do with them. I therefore strolled away, and spent the day rambling among the ruins of the temples of Luxor and Karnac. I shall not now attempt any description of these temples, nor of the ruins of Thebes generally (no easy task), but reserve the whole until my return from the Cataracts.

At about three o'clock I returned to my tent. It was the first day of the feast of Bairam, the thirty days of fasting (Ramadan) being just ended. It was a great day at Luxor; the bazaars were supplied with country products, the little cafterias were filled with smokers indemnifying themselves for their long abstinence, and the fellahs were coming in from the country. On my return from Karnac I, for the first time, saw dromedaries, richly caparisoned,

mounted by well-armed Arabs, and dashing over the ground at full gallop. I had never seen dromedaries before except in caravans, accommodating themselves to the slow pace of the camel, and I did not think the



clumsy, lumbering animal could carry himself so proudly and move so rapidly. Their movement, however, was very far from realising the extravagant expression of "swift as the wind," applied to it in the East. I was somewhat fatigued on my return, and Paul met me on the bank with a smiling face, and information that the English party had sent their janizary to ask me to dine with them at six o'clock. Few things tend to give you a better opinion of a man, of his intelligence, his piety, and morals, than receiving from him an invitation to dinner. I am what is called a sure man in such cases, and the reader may suppose that I was not wanting upon this occasion.

It was an excessively hot day. You who were hovering over your cold fires, or moving about wrapped in cloaks and greatcoats, can hardly believe that on the 20th day of

January the Arabs were refreshing their heated bodies by a bath in the Nile, and that I was lying under my tent actually panting for breath. I had plenty to occupy me, but the heat was too intense; the sun seemed to scorch the brain, while the sands blistered the feet. I think it was the hottest day I experienced on the Nile.

While leaning on my elbow, looking out of the door of my tent towards the temple of Luxor, I saw a large



body of Arabs, on foot, on dromedaries, and on horseback, coming down towards the river. They came about half-way across the sandy plain between the temple and the

river, and stopped nearly opposite my tent, so as to give me a full view of all their movements. The slaves and pipe-bearers immediately spread mats on the sand, on which the principal persons seated themselves; and while they were taking coffee and pipes, others were making preparations for equestrian exercises. The forms and ceremonies presented to my mind a lively picture of preparing the lists for a tournament; and the intense heat and scorching sands reminded me of the great passage of arms in Scott's *Crusaders*, near the Diamond of the Desert, on the shores of the Dead Sea.

The parties were on horseback, holding in their right hands long wooden spears, the lower ends resting on the sands, close together, and forming a pivot, around which their movements were made. They rode round in a circle, with their spears in the sand and their eyes keenly fixed on each other, watching an opportunity to strike; chased, turned, and doubled, but never leaving the pivot; occasionally the spears were raised, crossed, and struck together, and a murmuring ran through the crowd like the cry in the fencing-scene in *Hamlet*, "a hit, a fair hit," and the parties separated, or again dropped their poles in the centre for another round. The play for some time seemed confined to slaves and dependants, and among them, and decidedly the most skilful, was a young Nubian. His master, a Turk, who was sitting on the mat, seemed particularly pleased with his success.

The whole of this seemed merely a preliminary, designed to stir up the dormant spirit of the masters. For a long

time they sat quietly puffing their pipes, and probably longing for the stimulus of a battle-cry to rouse them from their torpor. At length one of them, the master of the Nubian, slowly rose from the mat and challenged an antagonist. Slowly he laid down his pipe, and took and raised the pole in his hand; but still he was not more than half-roused. A fresh horse was brought him, and, without taking off his heavy cloth mantle, he drowsily placed his left foot in the broad shovel stirrup, his right on the rump of the horse behind the saddle, and swung himself into the seat. The first touch of the saddle seemed to rouse him; he took the pole from the hand of his attendant, gave his horse a severe check, and, driving the heavy corners of the stirrups into his sides, dashed through the sand on a full run. At the other end of the course he stopped, rested a moment or two, then again driving his irons into his horse, dashed back at full speed; and when it seemed as if his next step would carry him headlong among the Turks on the mat, with one jerk he threw his horse back on his haunches, and brought him up from a full run to a dead stop. This seemed to warm him a little; his attendant came up and took off his cloak, under which he had a red silk jacket and white trousers, and again he dashed through the sand and back as before. This time he brought up his horse with furious vehemence; his turban became unrolled, he flew into a violent passion, tore it off and threw it on the sand, and, leaving his play, fiercely struck the spear of his adversary, and the battle at once commenced. The Turk, who had seemed too

indolent to move, now showed a fire and energy, and an endurance of fatigue, that would have been terrible in battle. Both horse and rider scorned the blazing sun and burning sands, and round and round they ran, chasing, turning, and doubling within an incredibly small circle, till an approving murmur was heard among the crowd. The trial was now over, and the excited Turk again seated himself upon the mat, and relapsed into a state of calm indifference.

The exercise finished just in time to enable me to make my toilet for dinner. As there was a lady in the case, I had some doubt whether I ought not to shave, not having performed that operation since I left Cairo; but as I had already seen the gentlemen of the party, and had fallen, moreover, into the fashion of the country, of shaving the head and wearing the tarbouch (one of the greatest luxuries in Egypt, by-the-way), and could not, in any event, sit with my head uncovered, I determined to stick by the beard; and disguising myself in a clean shirt, and giving directions to my boatmen to be ready to start at ten o'clock, I walked along the bank to the tent of my new friends. I do not know whether my notion in the morning was right, or whether I had misapprehended things, but at any rate I had no reason to complain of my reception now; I think myself that there was a difference, which I accounted for in my own way, by ascribing it to their discovery that I was an American. I have observed that English meeting abroad, though they would probably stand by each other to the death in a quarrel, are ridicu-

lously shy of each other as acquaintances, on account of the great difference of caste at home. As regards Americans, the case is different, and to them the English display none of that feeling. After I had started on my ramble, Paul had planted my flag at the door of the tent, and among the other advantages which that flag brought me, I included my invitation to dinner, agreeable acquaintances, and one of the most pleasant evenings I spent on the Nile. Indeed I hope I may be pardoned a burst of national feeling, and be allowed to say, without meaning any disrespect to any other country, that I would rather travel under the name of an American than under any other known in Europe. Every American abroad meets a general prepossession in favour of his country, and it is an agreeable truth that the impression made by our countrymen abroad generally sustains the prepossession. I have met with some, however, who destroyed this good effect, and made themselves disagreeable and gave offence, by a habit of intruding their country and its institutions, and of drawing invidious comparisons, with a pertinacity and self-complacency I never saw in any other people.

But to return to the dinner (a man may make a long digression before a dinner on paper, who would scorn such a thing before a dinner *de facto*), the party consisted of four—a gentleman and his lady, he an honourable, and heir to an old and respectable title; a brother of the lady, an ex-captain in the guards, who changed his name and resigned his commission on receiving a fortune from an uncle; and another gentleman, I do not know whether of

that family, but bearing one of the proudest names in England. They were all young, the oldest not more than thirty-five, and, not excepting the lady, full of thirst for adventure and travel. I say, not excepting the lady; I should rather say that the lady was the life and soul of the party. She was young and beautiful, in the most attractive style of English beauty; she was married, and therefore dead in law; and as we may say what we will of the dead, I venture to say that she had shone as a beauty and a belle in the proudest circles of England, and was now enjoying more pleasure than Almack's or drawing-rooms could give, rambling among ruins and sleeping under a tent on the banks of the Nile. They had travelled in Spain, had just come from Mount Sinai and the Red Sea, and they talked of Bagdad. I had often met on the Continent with Englishmen who "were out," as they called it, for a certain time, one year or two years, but this party had no fixed time; they "were out" for as long as suited their humour. To them I am indebted for the most interesting part of my journey in the East, for they first suggested to me the route by Petra and Arabia Petræa. We made a calculation by which we hoped, in reference to what each had to do, to meet at Cairo and make the attempt together. It was a great exertion of resolution that I did not abandon my own plans, and keep in company with them, but they had too much time for me; a month or two was no object to them, but to me a very great one.

All this and much more, including the expression of a

determination, when they had finished their travels in the Old World, to visit us in the New, took place while we were dining under the tent of the captain and his friend. The table stood in the middle on canteens, about eight inches from the ground, with a mattress on each side for seats. It was rather awkward sitting, particularly for me who was next the lady, and in that position felt some of the trammels of conventional life; there was no room to put my legs under the table, and, not anticipating the precise state of things, I had not arranged straps and suspenders, and my feet seemed to be bigger than ever. I doubled them under me; they got asleep, not the quiet and tranquil sleep which makes you forget existence, but the slumber of a troubled conscience, pricking and burning, till human nature could endure it no longer, and I kicked out the offending members with very little regard to elegance of attitude. The ice once broken, I felt at my ease, and the evening wore away too soon. An embargo had been laid upon my tongue so long, that my ears fairly tingled with pleasure at hearing myself talk. It was, in fact, a glorious evening; a bright spot that I love to look back upon, more than indemnifying me for weeks of loneliness. I sat with them till a late hour; and when I parted, I did not feel as if it was the first time I had seen them, or think it would be the last, expecting to meet them a few days afterward at the Cataracts. But I never saw them again; we passed each other on the river during the night. I received several messages from them; and at Beyrout, after I had finished my tour in Arabia Petræa

and the Holy Land, I received a letter from them, still on the Nile. I should be extremely sorry to think that we are never to meet again, and hope that when wearied with rambling among the ruins of the Old World they will execute their purpose of visiting America, and that here we may talk over our meeting on the banks of the Nile. I went back to my boat to greater loneliness than before, but there was a fine wind, and in a few minutes we were again under way. I sat on deck till a late hour, smoked two or three pipes, and retired to my little cabin.





CHAPTER VIII.

The Rock of the Chain—Assouan—Deserted Quarries—A youthful Navigator—Island of Philæ—Improvising a Dinner.



THE next day and the next still brought us favourable winds, and strong, and we were obliged to take down one of our tall lateens, but made great progress with the other, even against the rapid current of the river. The Nile here was very wide, the water turbulent, and the waves rolling with such violence that Paul became sea-sick; and if it had not been for the distant banks, we could hardly have believed ourselves on the bosom of a river one thousand miles from the ocean.

In the evening we were approaching Hadjur Silsilis, the Rock of the Chain, the narrowest part of the river, where the mountains of Africa and Arabia seem marching to meet each other, and stopping merely to leave a narrow passage for the river. Tradition says that in ancient days an iron chain was drawn across the narrow strait, which checked the current; and the Arab boatman believes he can still see, in the sides of the mountains, the marks of

the rings and bolts to which the miraculous chain was fastened.

Silsilis is chiefly remarkable for its immense quarries, which probably furnished the wonderful columns, statues,



NUBIAN ISIS.

and obelisks, the ruins of which now form the chief features of Thebes, Dendera, &c. Various monuments of Egyptian architecture are still found here, near the rocks from which they have been cut.

Above Silsilis, at Koum Ombo, are the remains of a magnificent temple, with a façade of fifteen columns, thirteen of which are still standing; also a small temple of Isis, the sister and wife of Osiris, who is called the Goddess-Mother, the Mistress of Heaven, &c., &c. Her worship was universal in Egypt, and more particularly at Philæ and Bubastes,

where special festivals were observed in her honour. Her tears were supposed to cause the inundations of the Nile. On the capitals of this temple the countenance of the goddess is beautifully sculptured.

We hauled up alongside of the bank for part of the night, and the next morning, with a strong and favourable wind, were approaching Assouan, the last town in Egypt,

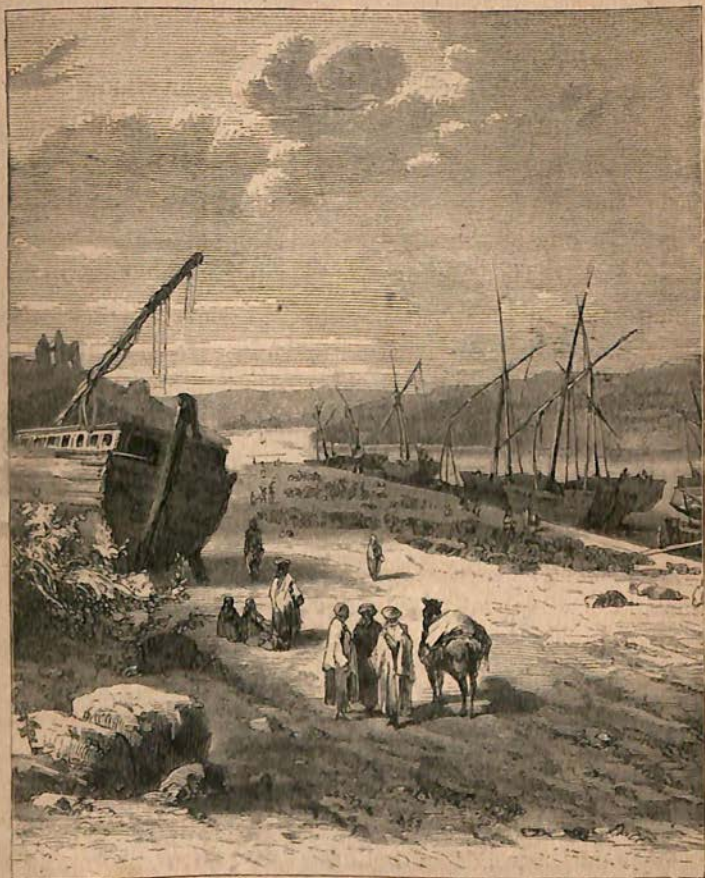


GROVE OF PALMS.

standing on the borders of Ethiopia, and at the foot of the Cataracts of the Nile. For some time before reaching Assouan the river becomes broader and the mountains again retire, leaving space for the islands and a broad surface for the body of the river. About three miles this side, on the Arabian bank, is the new palace of Ibrahim Pasha, where he retired and shut himself up during the terrible plague of the previous year. On the right, the top of the Libyan mountain is crowned with the tomb of a Marabout sheik, and about half-way down are the ruins of a convent, picturesque and interesting, as telling that before the crescent came and trampled it under foot, the cross, the symbol of the Christian faith, once reared its sacred form even in the interior of Africa. In front is the beautiful island of Elephantine, with a green bank sloping down to the river. On the left are rugged mountains, and projecting in rude and giant masses into the river are the rocks of dark grey granite from which came the mighty obelisks and monuments that adorned the ancient temples of Egypt.

The little town of Assouan stands on the bank of the river, almost hid among palm-trees; and back at a distance on the height are the ruins of the old city, the Syene of Scripture—where it is spoken of as one of the boundaries of Egypt (*Ezek.* xxix. 10). From the deck of my boat, the approach to the Cataracts presented by far the finest scene on the Nile, possessing a variety and a wildness equally striking and beautiful, after the monotonous scenery along the whole ascent of the river. With streamers gallantly

flying I entered the little harbour, and with a feeling of satisfaction that amply repaid me for all its vexations I looked upon the end of my journey. I would have gone to the second Cataract if time had been no object to me,



HARBOUR OF ASSOUAN.

or if I had had at that time any idea of writing a book, as the second Cataract is the usual terminus for travellers on the Nile. Having been pent up on board for two days, I now jumped upon the bank, put myself in rapid action, and, in one of the cant phrases of continental tourists, began to "knock down the lions."

My first move was to the little town of Assouan, but here I found little to detain me. It was better built than most of the towns on the Nile, and had its street of bazaars, the slave-bazaars being by far the best supplied of any. In one of the little cafeterias opposite the slave-market, a Turk meanly dressed, though with arms, and a mouthpiece to his pipe that marked him as a man of rank, attracted my particular attention. He was almost the last of the Mamelukes, but yesterday the lords of Egypt; one of the few who escaped the general massacre of his race, and one of the very few permitted to drag out the remnant of their days in the Pasha's dominions. The ruins of the old town are in a singularly high, bold, and commanding situation, overlooking the river, the Cataracts, the island of Elephantine, and the Arabian desert. More than a thousand years ago this city contained a large and flourishing population, and some idea may be formed of its former greatness from the fact that more than twenty thousand of its inhabitants died in one year of the plague. In consequence of the terrible ravages of this scourge, the inhabitants abandoned it, but, still clinging to their ancient homes, commenced building a new town, beginning at the northern wall of the old. The valley here is very

narrow; and the desert of Arabia, with its front of dark granite mountains, advances to its bank.

Elephantine is rich in architectural remains; although both Romans and Saracens have done all in their power to deface or conceal them. In the midst of an extensive field of bricks a very ancient temple is still standing, supposed by some to be the temple of Cneph, the Egyptian good genius, and that one of their gods which approaches the nearest to our ideas of the Supreme Being.

The southern gate of the modern town opens to the sands of the desert, and immediately outside the walls is a large Mahommedan burying-ground, by its extent and the number of its tombstones exciting the wonder of the stranger how so small a town could pay such a tribute to the king of terrors. In many places the bodies were not more than half-buried, the loose sand which had been sprinkled over them having been blown away. Skulls, legs, and arms were scattered about in every direction; and in one place we saw a pile of skulls and bones which seemed to have been collected by some pious hand to save them from the foot of the passing traveller. In another, the rest of the body being still buried, the feet were sticking out, and the naked skull, staring at us from its sightless sockets, seemed struggling to free itself from the bondage of the grave, and claiming the promise of a resurrection from the dead. We buried again these relics of mortality, and, hoping it might not be our lot to lay our bones where the grave was so little revered, continued our way to the ancient granite quarries of Syene.

These quarries stand about half-an-hour's walk from the river, in the bosom of a long range of granite mountains, stretching off into the desert of Arabia. Time and exposure have not touched the freshness of the stone, and the whole of the immense quarry looks as if it was but yesterday that the Egyptian left it. You could imagine that the workman had just gone to his noonday meal; and, as you look at the mighty obelisk lying rude and unfinished at your feet, you feel disposed to linger till the Egyptian shall come to resume his work, to carve his mysterious characters upon it, and make it a fit portal for some mighty temple. But the Egyptian workmen have passed away, and these immense quarries are now, and probably for ever, silent and deserted.

Apart from the great interest of these ancient quarries, it is curious to notice how, long before the force of gunpowder and the art of blasting rocks were known, immense stones were separated from the sides of the mountains, and divided as the artist wished, by the slow process of boring small holes, and splitting them apart with wedges. A row of holes being cut in the face of the rock in the line where the stone was to be split, wedges of dry wood were driven in; these were kept moistened with water until, by expanding, they split the stone.

The vestiges of these quarries are sufficiently extensive to render it probable that they furnished materials for many of the colossal monuments of Egypt. The marks of the chisels and drills used in shaping and cutting the immense blocks of stone are still visible.

I returned by the old city, crossing its burying-ground, which, like that of the new town, told, in language that could not be misunderstood, that before the city was destroyed, it too had paid a large tribute to the grave. This burying-ground has an interest not possessed by any other in Egypt, as it contains, scattered over its extended surface, many tombstones with Coptic inscriptions, the only existing remains of the language of a people who style themselves, and are styled, the descendants of the ancient Egyptians.

It was late in the afternoon as I stood on the height crowned by the ruins of the ancient city, with a momentary feeling of returning loneliness, and gazed upon the sun retiring with glorious splendour towards my far distant home. I turned my eyes to my boat, and beyond it, at a distance down the river, I saw a boat coming up under full sail, bearing what my now practised eye told me was the English flag. I hurried down, and arrived on the bank in time to welcome to the Cataracts of the Nile the two gentlemen I had first met at Thebes.

We spent the evening together, and I abandoned my original intention of taking my own boat up the Cataracts, and agreed to go up with them.

In the morning, after an early breakfast, we started for the Island of Philæ, about eight miles from Assouan, and above all the Cataracts; an island singularly beautiful in situation, and containing the ruins of a magnificent temple. The road lay nearly all the way along the river, commanding a full view of the Cataracts, or rather, if a citizen

of a New World may lay his innovating hand upon things consecrated by the universal consent of ages, what we who have heard the roar of the Niagara would simply call "the rapids." We set off on shaggy donkeys, without saddle, bridle, or halter. A short distance from Assouan, unmarked by any monument, amid arid sands, we crossed the line which, since the days of Pharaoh, has existed as the boundary between Egypt and Ethiopia. We passed through several villages, standing alone at the foot of the granite mountains, without green or verdure around them, even to the extent of a blade of grass, and irresistibly suggesting the question, "How do the miserable inhabitants live?" It was not the first time I had occasion to remark the effect of blood on physical character, and the strong and marked difference of races among people living under the same sun, and almost on a common soil. In the first village in Nubia, though not half-an-hour from Assouan, there is a difference obvious to the most superficial observer; and here, on the very confines of Egypt, it would be impossible to mistake a border Nubian for an Arab of Assouan.

Before arriving at Philæ the river is filled with rocks and islands, and the view becomes singularly bold and striking. At the foot of one of the islands is a sort of ferry, with a very big boat and a very little boy to manage it. We got on board, and were astonished to see with what courage and address the little fellow conducted us among the islands washed by the Cataracts. And it was not a straight-ahead navigation either; he was obliged to take



advantage of an eddy to get to one point, jump ashore, tow the boat to another, again drop to another, tow her again, and so on; and all this time the little fellow was at the helm, at the oar, at the rope, leading the chorus of a Nubian song, and ordering his crew, which consisted of three boys and one little girl. In this way we worked to an island inhabited by a few miserable Nubians, and, crossing it, came to the point of the principal cataract (I continue to call it cataract by courtesy), being a fall of about two feet.

And these were the great Cataracts of the Nile, whose roar in ancient days affrighted the Egyptian boatmen, and which history and poetry have invested with extraordinary and ideal terrors! The traveller who has come from a country

as far distant as mine, bringing all that freshness of feeling with which a citizen of the New World turns to the storied wonders of the Old, and has roamed over the mountains and drunk of the rivers of Greece, will have found himself so often cheated by the exaggerated accounts of the ancients, the vivid descriptions of poets, and his own imagination, that he will hardly feel disappointed when he stands by this apology for a cataract.

Here the Nubian boys had a great feat to show, viz., jumping into the cataract and floating down to the point of the island. The inhabitants of the countries bordering on the Nile are great swimmers, and the Nubians are perhaps the best of all ; but this was no great feat.

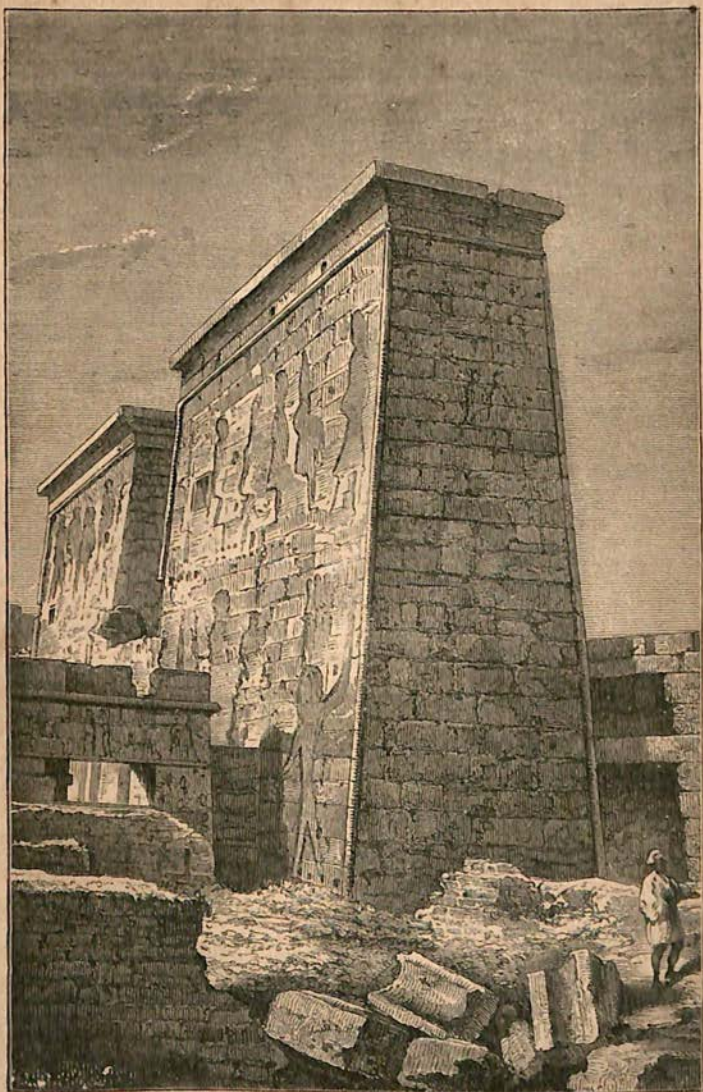
We returned by the same way we had come, and under the same guidance, augmented, however, by a motley collection of men and boys, who had joined us as our escort. In paying for the boat we showed a preference for our little boy, which brought down upon him all the rest, and he had to run to us for protection. We saved him for the present, but left him exposed to one of the evils attendant upon the acquisition of money all the world over—the difficulty of keeping it ; which difficulty in his case was so great physically, that I have no doubt he was stripped of more than half before we were out of sight.

Getting rid of them, or as many of them as we could, we again mounted our shaggy donkeys, and rode to the island of Philæ. This island makes one of the most beautiful pictures I ever saw. Perhaps the general monotony of the scenery on the Nile gives it a peculiar beauty ; but I

think it would be called beautiful anywhere, even among the finest scenes in Italy. It brought forcibly to my mind, but seemed to me far more lovely than, the lake Maggiore, with the beautiful Isola Bella and Isola Madre. It is entirely unique, a beautiful *lusus naturæ*, a little island about a thousand feet long and four hundred broad, rising in the centre of a circular bay, which appears to be cut off from the river, and forms a lake surrounded by dark sandstone rocks; carpeted with green to the water's edge, and covered with columns, propylons, and towers, the ruins of a majestic temple. A sunken wall encircles it on all sides, on which, in a few moments, we landed.

I have invariably avoided description of ruins when I could. The fact is, I know nothing of architecture, and never measured anything in my life; before I came to Egypt I could not tell the difference between a dromos and a propylon, and my whole knowledge of Egyptian antiquities was little more than enough to enable me to distinguish between a mummy and a pyramid. I picked up about enough to answer my purpose on the spot; but I have too much charity for my reader to impose my smattering on him. In fact, I have already forgotten more than half of the little that I then learned, and should show but a poor return for his kindness if I were to puzzle him with the use or misuse of technical phrases. Still I must do something; the temples of Egypt must have a place here; for I might as well leave out Jerusalem in the story of a tour through the Holy Land.

The temple of Philæ is a magnificent ruin, four hundred



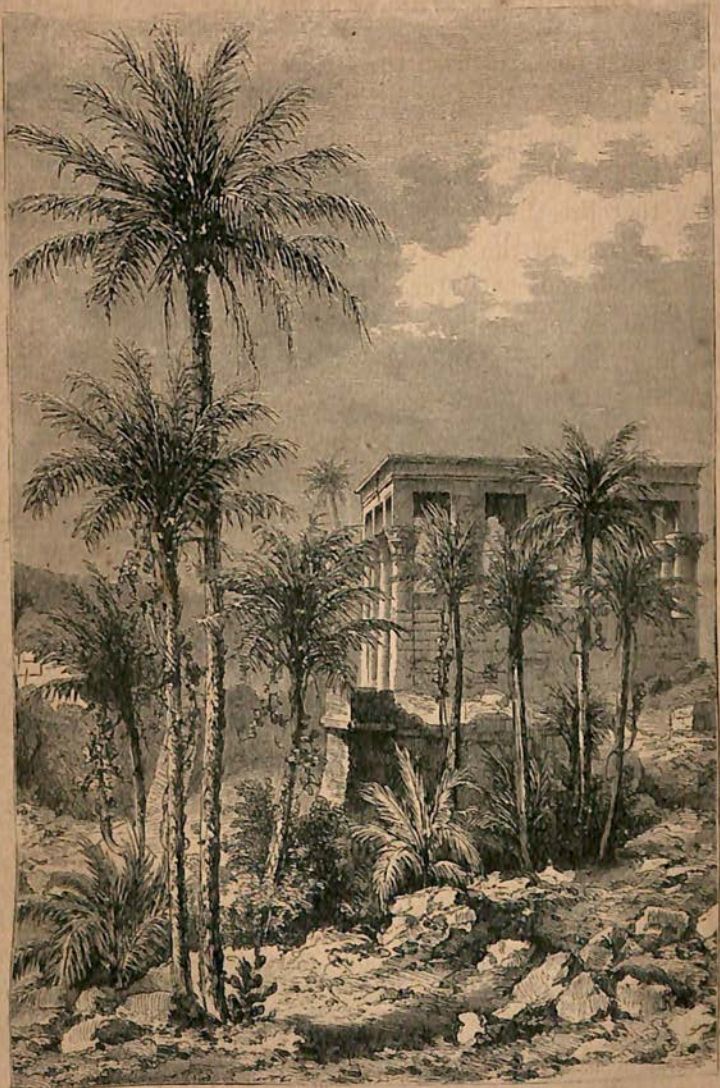
GREAT PORTICO, TEMPLE OF ISIS, PHILAE.

and thirty-five feet in length and one hundred and five in width. It stands at the south-west corner of the island, close upon the bank of the river, and the approach to it is by a grand colonnade, extending two hundred and forty feet along the edge of the river to the grand propylon. The propylon is nearly a hundred feet long, and rises on each side of the gateway in two lofty towers, in the form of a truncated pyramid. The front is decorated with sculpture and hieroglyphics; on each side is a figure of Isis, twenty feet high, with the moon over her head; and near the front formerly stood two obelisks and two sphinxes, the pedestals and ruins of which still remain. The body of the temple contains eleven chambers, covered with sculpture and hieroglyphics, the figures tinted in the most lively colours, and the ceiling painted azure and studded with stars.

But there are other things which touch the beholder more nearly than the majestic ruins of the temple—things which carry him from the works of man to a grander and higher subject, that of man himself. On the lofty towers in front of the temple, among the mysterious and unknown writings of the Egyptians, were inscriptions in Greek and Latin, telling that they whose names were there written had come to worship the great goddess Isis; that men had lived and looked upon the sun, moon, and stars, the mountains and the rolling river, and worshipped a mute idol. And again, on the front wall was the sacred cross, the emblem of the Christian faith, and the figures of the Egyptian deities were defaced and plastered over, showing

that another race had been there to worship, who scorned and trampled on the gods of the heathen. And again there was an inscription of later days, that in the ruins of the temple carried with it a wild and fearful interest; telling that the thunder of modern war had been heard above the roar of the cataract, and that the arm of the soldier which had struck terror in the frozen regions of the North had swept the burning sands of Africa. In the grand propylon, among the names of tourists and travellers, in a small plain hand is written—“*L'an 6 de la République, le 13 Messidor, une armée française, commandée par Buonaparte, est descendue à Alexandrie; l'armée ayant mis, vingt jours après, les Mamelukes en fuite aux pyramides, Desaix, commandant la première division, les a poursuivis au-delà les cataractes, où il est arrivé le 13 Ventose de l'an 7.*” Near this was an inscription that to me was far more interesting than all the rest—the name of an early friend, written with his own hand. I did not know that he had been here, although I knew that he had been many years from home, and I had read in a newspaper that he had died in Palestine. A thousand recollections crowded upon me, of joys departed never to return, and made me sad. I wrote my name under his, and left the temple.

The island of Philæ was deemed sacred, from an opinion, according to Diodorus, that Osiris was buried here, and a hall, commonly called Pharoah's Bed (see engraving), is probably a modern erection over the supposed grave of Osiris. There are also temples here sacred to Horus



SMALL TEMPLE IN THE ISLAND OF PHILÆ.

and Isis, and the history of Osiris is sculptured in one of the chambers of a small chapel here.

I was glad to get back to my rascally donkey. If a man were oppressed and borne down with mental anxiety, if he were mourning and melancholy, either from the loss of a friend, or an undigested dinner, I would engage to cure him. I would put him on a donkey without saddle or halter, and if he did not find himself by degrees drawn from the sense of his misery and worked up into a towering passion, getting off and belabouring his brute with his stick, and forgetting everything in this world but the obstinacy of the ass, and his own folly in attempting to ride one, man is a more quiet animal than I take him to be.

As I intended going the next day up the Cataracts with my companions, and expected to spend the day on board their boat, I had asked them to dine with me in the evening. After giving the invitation, I held a council with Paul, who told me that the thing was impossible, and, with a prudence worthy of Caleb Balderstone, expressed his wonder that I had not worked an invitation out of them. I told him, however, that the thing was settled, and dine with me they must. My housekeeping had never been very extravagant, and macaroni, rice, and fowl had been my standing dishes. Paul was pertinacious in raising objections, but I told him peremptorily there was no escape; that he must buy a cow or a camel, if necessary; and left him scratching his head and pondering over the task before him.

In the hurried business of the day I had entirely for-

gotten Paul and his perplexities. Once only, I remember, with a commendable prudence, I tried to get my companions to expend some of their force upon dried dates and Nubian bread, which they as maliciously declined, that they might do justice to me. I had perfect confidence in Paul's zeal and ability, but I began to have some misgivings. I felt a hungry devil within me, that roared as if he would never be satisfied. I looked at my companions, and heard them talk, and as I followed their humour with a hysteric laugh, I thought the genius of famine was at my heels in the shape of two hungry Englishmen. I trembled for Paul, but the first glimpse I caught of him reassured me. He sat with his arms folded, on the deck of the boat, coolly, though with an air of conscious importance, looking out for us. Slowly and with dignity he came to assist us from our asses; neither a smile nor frown was on his face, but there reigned an expression that you could not mistake. Reader, you have seen the countenance of a good man lighted up with the consciousness of having done a good action; even so was Paul's.

A load was removed from my heart. I knew that my credit was saved, and I led the way with a proud step to my little cabin. Still I asked no questions and made no apologies. I simply told my companions we were in Paul's hands, and he would do with us as seemed to him good. Nor did we wait long; soon we saw Paul coming toward us, staggering under the weight of his burden, the savoury odour of which preceded him. He entered and laid before us an Irish stew. Reader, did you

ever eat an Irish stew? Gracious Heaven! I shall never forget that paragon of dishes; how often in the desert, among the mountains of Sinai, in the Holy Land, rambling along the valley of Jehoshaphat, or on the shores of the Dead Sea—how often has that Irish stew risen before me to tease and tantalise me, and haunt me with the memory of departed joys! The potato is a vegetable that does not grow in Egypt. I had not tasted one for more than a month, and was almost startled out of my propriety at seeing them; but I held my peace, and was as solemn and dignified as Paul himself. Without much ceremony we threw ourselves with one accord upon the stew. My companions were knowing ones, and seemed to be of the same way of thinking; and without any consultation, all appeared to be approaching the same end, to wit, the end of the stew. With the empty dish before him, demonstrative to Paul that so far we were perfectly satisfied with what he had done, that worthy purveyor came forward with an increase of dignity to change our plates. I now saw that something more was coming. I had suspected from the beginning that Paul was in the mutton line, and involuntarily murmured, “this day a sheep has died;” and presently on came another cut of the murdered innocent, in cutlets, accompanied by fried potatoes. Then came boiled mutton and boiled potatoes, and then roast mutton and roast potatoes, after that came a macaronia pâté, and Paul wound us up and packed us down with pancakes. I never knew a man that did not like pancakes, or who could not eat them, even at the tail of a mighty dinner.

And now, feeling that happy sensation of fulness which puts a man above kings, princes, or pashas, we lighted out long pipes and smoked.

And now, all dignity put aside and all restraint removed, and thinking my friends might have recognised acquaintances among the things at the table, which were strangers to me, and thinking, too, that I stood on a pinnacle, and come what might I could not fall, I led the way in speculating upon the manner in which Paul had served us. The ice once broken, my friends solved many of the mysteries, by claiming this, that, and the other as part of their furniture and stores. In fact, they were going on most unscrupulously, making it somewhat doubtful whether I had furnished anything for my own dinner, and I called in Paul. But that functionary had no desire to be questioned; he hemmed and hawed, and dodged about; but I told him to make a clean heart of it, and then it came out—but it was like drawing teeth—that he had been on a regular foraging expedition among their stores. The potatoes with which he had made such a flourish were part of a very small stock furnished them by a friend, as a luxury not to be had on the Nile; and instead of the acknowledgments which I expected to receive on account of my dinner, my friends congratulated me rather ironically upon possessing such a treasure of a steward. We sat together till a late hour; were grave, gay, laughing, and lachrymose by turns; and when we began to doze over our pipes, betook ourselves to slumber.



CHAPTER IX.

Ascent of the Cataracts—A Nautical Patriarch—Political Improvement—
A Test of Friendship—East and West compared—Edfou—Moonlight
on the Nile—Uses of a Temple.

IN the morning we were up betimes, expecting another stirring day in mounting the Cataracts. Carrying boats up and down these rapids is the great business of the Nubians who live on the borders of Egypt. It is a business that requires great knowledge and address; and the rais who commands the large squad of men necessary to mount a boat is an important person among them. He was already there with part of his men, the others being stationed among the islands of the Cataracts, at the places where their services would be needed. This rais was one of the most noble-looking men I ever saw. He was more than eighty, a native of Barbary, who had in early life wandered with a caravan across the Libyan desert, and had been left, he knew not why, on a little island among the Cataracts of the Nile. As the Nubian does now, firmly seated on a log and paddling with his hands, he had floated in every eddy, and marked every stone that the falling river lays bare to the eye; and now, with the experience of

years, he stood among the Nubians confessedly one of their most skilful pilots, through a difficult and sometimes dangerous navigation. He was tall and thin, with a beard of uncommon length and whiteness, a face dried, scarred, and wrinkled, and dark as it could be without having the blackness of a negro. His costume was a clean white turban, red jacket, and red sash, with white trousers, red slippers, and a heavy club fastened by a string around his wrist. I am particular in describing the appearance of the hardy old man, for we were exceedingly struck with it. Nothing could be finer than his look, his walk, his every movement; and the picturesque effect was admirably heightened by contrast with his swarthy assistants, most of whom were desperately ragged, and many of them as naked as when they were born. The old man came on board with a dignity that savoured more of a youth passed amid the polish of a European court, than on the sands of Barbary, or the rude islands of the Nile. We received him as if he had been the great Pasha himself, gave him coffee and pipes, and left him to the greatest luxury of the East, perfect rest, until his services should be required.

In the meantime, with a strong and favourable wind, we started from the little harbour of Assouan, while a throng of idlers, gathered together on the beach, watched our departure with as much interest as though it were not an event of almost daily occurrence. Almost immediately above Assouan the view extends over a broad surface, and the rocks and islands begin to multiply. The strong wind enabled us to ascend some distance with the

NUBIANS



sails; but our progress gradually diminished, and at length, while our sails were yet filled almost to bursting, we came to a dead stand, struggled vainly for a while against the increasing current, and then fell astern. The old rais, who sat quietly watching the movements of the boat, now roused himself; and, at his command, a naked Nubian, with a rope over his shoulders, plunged into the river, and swam for the shore. At first he swam boldly and vigorously; but soon his strength began to fail, and the weight of the slackened rope effectually stopped his progress; when, resting for a little space, he dived like a duck, kicking his heels in the air, came up clear of the rope, and soon gained the bank. A dozen Nubians now threw themselves into the water, caught the sinking rope, carried it ashore, and wound it round a rock. Again the rais spoke, and fifty swarthy bodies were splashing in the water, and in a moment more they were on the rocky bank, hauling upon the rope; others joined them, but where they came from nobody could see; and by the strength of a hundred men, all pulling and shouting together, and both sails full, we passed the first Cataract.

Above this the passage became more difficult, and the old rais seemed to rise in spirit and energy with the emergency. As we approached the second Cataract, half-a-dozen ropes were thrown out, and the men seemed to multiply as if by magic, springing up among the rocks like a parcel of black river-gods. More than two hundred of them were hauling on the ropes at once, climbing over the rocks, descending into the river, and again mounting,

with their naked bodies shining in the sun, all talking, tugging, ordering, and shouting together; and among them, high above the rest, was heard the clear voice of the rais; his noble figure, too, was seen, now scrambling along the base of a rock, now standing on its summit, his long arms thrown above his head, his white beard and ample dress streaming in the wind, until the inert mass had triumphed over the rushing river; when he again took his seat upon the deck, and in the luxury of his pipe forgot the animating scene that for a moment had cheated him back to youth.

At this season there was in no place a fall of more than two feet, though the river, breaking among the almost innumerable rocks and islands, hurried along with great violence and rapidity. In the midst of the most furious rushing of the waters, adding much to the striking wildness of the scene, were two figures, with their clothes tied above their heads, sitting on the surface of the water apparently, and floating as if by a miracle. They were a man and his wife, crossing from one of the islands; their bark a log, with a bundle of cornstalks on each side; too frail to support their weight, yet strong enough to keep them from sinking.

And now all was over; we had passed the Cataracts, catching our dinner at intervals as we came up. We had wound round the beautiful island of Philæ, and the boat had hauled up alongside the bank to let me go ashore. The moment of parting and returning to my former loneliness had come, and I felt my courage failing. I verily believe



ISLAND OF PHILÆ.

that if my own boat had been above the Cataracts, I should have given up my own project and accompanied my English friends. Paul was even more reluctant to part than his master. He had never travelled except with a party, where the other servants and dragoman were company for him, and after one of these chance-encounters he was for a while completely prostrated. The moment of parting came, adieus were said, and, with Paul and my own rais for company, I set out on foot for Assouan.

Directly opposite the island of Philæ is a stopping-place for boats, where dates, the great produce of Upper Egypt, are brought in large quantities and deposited, preparatory to being sent down to Cairo. All along the upper part of the Nile the palm-tree had become more plentiful, and here it was the principal and almost only product of the country. Its value is inestimable to the Nubians, as well as to the Arabs of Upper Egypt; and so well is this value known, and so general is the progress of the country in European improvements, that every tree pays an annual tax to the great reformer. The date-palm requires a humid soil, and is found on the banks of rivers and beside old wells, which makes it a welcome sight in the desert. Much care is necessary to prevent its blossoms being torn off by the wind. The doum-palm divides into several stems or branches as it ascends, while the date-palm has only a single stem.

The Nubian is interesting in his appearance and character; his figure is tall, thin, sinewy, and graceful, possessing what would be called in civilised life an uncommon degree

of gentility; his face is rather dark, though far removed from African blackness; his features are long and aquiline, decidedly resembling the Roman; the expression of his face mild, amiable, and approaching to melancholy. I remember to have thought, when reading Sir Walter Scott's *Crusaders*, that the metamorphosis of Kenneth into a Nubian was strained and improbable, as I did not then understand the shades of difference in the features and complexion of the inhabitants of Africa; but observation has shown me that it was my own ignorance that deceived



DATE AND DOUM-PALM TREES.

me; and in this, as in other descriptions of Eastern scenes, I have been forced to admire the great and intimate knowledge of details possessed by the unequalled novelist, and his truth and liveliness of description.

The inhabitants of Nubia, like all who come under the rod of the Pasha, suffer the accumulated ills of poverty. Happily they live in a country where their wants are few; the sun warms them, and the palm-tree feeds and clothes them. The use of firearms is almost unknown, and their principal weapons are still the spear and shield, as in ages long past. In the upper part of Nubia the men and women go entirely naked, except a piece of leather about six inches wide, cut in strings, and tied about their loins; and even here, on the confines of Egypt, at least one-half of the Nubians appear in the same costume.

It was nearly dark, when, from the ruined height of the old city of Assouan, I saw my little boat with the flag of my country, and near it, hardly less welcome to my eyes, the Union Jack of Old England. The sight of these objects, assisted by my various bargainings with the natives, relieved me from the loneliness I had felt in parting from my friends; and I went on board the English boat, hoping to find a party with which I had partially arranged to set out from Cairo, and which I was every day expecting. I was disappointed, however; but found a gentleman to whom I was then a stranger, the English consul at Alexandria. He had been eighteen years in the country, closely devoted to his public and private duties, without ever having been in Upper Egypt. On the point of returning home, to enjoy in his own country and among his own people the fruits of his honourable labours, he had now for the first time ascended the Nile. He was accompanied by his daughter—who had reigned as a belle

and beauty in the ancient city of Cleopatra—and her newly-married husband. Coming from home, their boat was furnished and fitted up with all kinds of luxuries. Their tea-table, in particular, made such a strong impression on me, that when I met them again at Thebes, I happened to find myself on board their boat regularly about the time for the evening meal. I was exceedingly pleased with Mr. T——; so much so, that at Thebes I gave him the strongest mark of it a man could give—I borrowed money of him; and I have reason to remember his kindness in relieving me from a situation which might have embarrassed me.

Early the next morning the sails were already loosed and the stake pulled up, when Paul, from the bank, cried out, “A sail!” and, looking down the river, I saw a boat coming up, and again the English flag. I furled my sails, fastened the stake, waited till she came up, and found the party I had expected. I went on board and breakfasted with them. They had started from Cairo on the same day with me, but with their large boats could not keep up with me against the wind. They had heard of me along the river; and, among other things, had heard of my having shot a crocodile. Waiting to see them off for the island of Philæ, and bidding them good-bye until we should meet at Thebes, I returned to my boat, and letting fall the sails, before they were out of sight was descending the Nile.

My face was now turned towards home. Thousands of miles, it is true, were between us; but I was on the

bosom of a mighty river, which was carrying me to the mightier ocean, and the waves that were rolling by my side were rapidly hurrying on, and might one day wash the shores of my native land. It was a beautiful prospect I had before me now. I could lie on the deck of my boat, and float hundreds of miles, shooting at crocodiles; or I could go ashore and ramble among modern villages and the ruins of ancient cities, and all the time, I thought, I would be advancing on my journey. Before night, however, the wind was blowing dead ahead, and we were obliged to furl our sails and take to our oars. But it was all of no use; our boat was blown about like a feather; carried around, backward and forward, across the river, zigzag, and at last fairly driven up the stream. With great difficulty we worked down to Ombo; and here, under the ruins of an ancient temple, part of which had already fallen into the river, we hauled up to the bank, and, in company with half-a-dozen Arab boats, lay by till morning.

Man is a gregarious animal. My boatmen always liked to stop where they saw other boats. I remember it was the same on the Ohio and Mississippi. Several years since, when the water was low, I started from Pittsburg in a flat-bottomed boat, to float down to New Orleans. There, too, we were in the habit of stopping along the bank at night, or in windy or foggy weather, and the scene and circumstances were so different that the contrast was most interesting and impressive. Here we moored under the ruins of an ancient temple, there we made fast to the

wild trees of an untrodden forest: here we joined half-a-dozen boats with eight or ten men in each, and they all gathered round a fire, sipped coffee, smoked, and lay down quietly to sleep; there we met the dashing, roaring boys of the West, ripe for fun, frolic, or fight. The race of men, "half horse, half alligator, and t'other half steamboat," had not yet passed away, and whenever two boats met, these restless rovers must "do something"—play cards, pitch pennies, fight cocks, set fire to a house, or have a row of some description. Indeed it always involved a long train of interesting reflections, to compare the stillness and quiet of a journey on this oldest of rivers, with the moving castles and the splashing of paddle-wheels on the great rivers of the New World.

At daylight I had mounted the bank, and was groping among the ruins of the temple. The portico fronting the river is a noble ruin, nearly a hundred feet in length, with three rows of columns, five in each row, thirty feet high, and ten feet in diameter at the base. The principal figure on the wall is Osiris, with a crocodile head, and the sacred tau in his hand. The Ombites were distinguished for their worship of the crocodile, and this noble temple was dedicated to that bestial god. Among the ruins are still to be seen the wall on which the sacred animal was led in religious procession, and the tank in which he was bathed.

Towards noon we were again approaching Hadjur Silsilis. On the eastern side are ancient quarries of great extent, with the same appearance of freshness as at Assouan.

Nothing is known of the history of these quarries; but they seem to have furnished material enough for all the cities on the Nile, as well as the temples and monuments that adorned them. Whole mountains have been cut away, and while the solitary traveller walks among these deserted workshops, and looks at the smooth sides of the mountains, and the fragments of unfinished work around him, he feels a respect for the people who have passed away, greater



OSIRIS AND ISIS.

than when standing among the ruins of their mighty temples; for here he has only the evidences of their gigantic industry, without being reminded of the gross and disgusting purposes to which that industry was prostituted. The roads worn in the stone by the ancient carriage-wheels are still to be seen, and somewhere among these extensive quarries travellers have found an unfinished sphinx. I remember one place where there was an irregular range of unfinished doors, which might well have

been taken for the work of beginners, practising under the eyes of their masters. Paul took a philosophic and familiar view of them, and said that it seemed as if, while the men were at work, the boys playing around had taken up the tools, and amused themselves by cutting these doors.

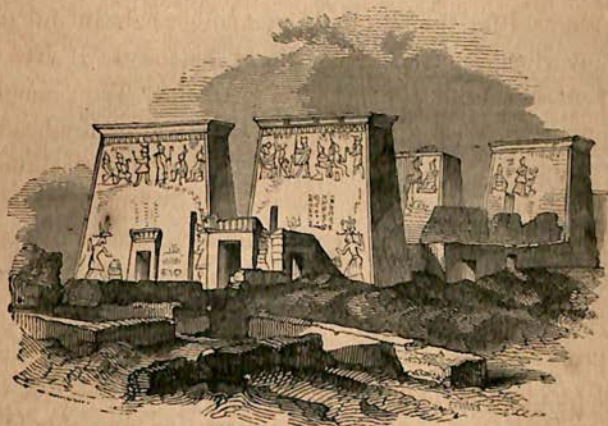
On the opposite side, too, are quarries, and several ranges of tombs looking out on the river, excavated in the solid rock, with pillars in front, and images of deities in the recesses for the altars. I remember a beautiful chamber overhanging the river like a balcony. It had been part of a temple, or perhaps a tomb. We thought of stopping there to dine, but our boat had gone ahead, and our want of provisions was somewhat of an impediment.

At about four o'clock we saw at a distance the minaret of Edfou. There was no wind, the men were gently pulling at the oars, and I took one myself, much to the uneasiness of the rais, who thought I was dissatisfied. Sloth forms so prominent a feature in the composition of the Orientals, and quiet is so material an item in their ideas of enjoyment, that they cannot conceive why a man should walk when he can stand, why he should stand when he can sit, or, in short, why he should do anything when he can sit still and do nothing.

It was dark before we arrived at Edfou—I mean it was that period of time when, by Nature's laws, it should be dark; that is, the day had ended, the sun had set with that rich and burning lustre which attends his departing glories nowhere but in Egypt, and the moon was shedding

her pale light over the valley of the Nile. But it was a moon that lighted up all nature with a paler, purer, and more lovely light; a moon that would have told secrets—a moon—a moon—in short, a moon whose light enabled one to walk over fields without stumbling, and this was, at the moment, the principal consideration with me.

Edfou lies about a mile from the bank of the river, and taking Paul and one of the Arabs with me, I set off to



GATE OF TEMPLE AT EDFOU.

view the temple by moonlight. The town, as usual, contained mud houses, many of them in ruins, a mosque, a bath, bazaars, the usual apology for a palace, and more than the usual quantity of ferocious dogs; and at one corner of this miserable place stands one of the magnificent temples of the Nile. The propylon, its lofty proportions enlarged by the light of the moon, was the most grand and imposing portal I saw in Egypt. From a base of nearly

one hundred feet in length, and thirty in breadth, it rises on each side the gate, in the form of a truncated pyramid, to the height of a hundred feet, gradually narrowing, till at the top it measures seventy-five feet in length, and eighteen in breadth. Judge, then, what was the temple to which this formed merely the entrance; and this was far from being one of the large temples of Egypt. It measured, however, 440 feet in length and 220 in breadth, about equal to the whole space occupied by St. Paul's churchyard. Its dromos, pronaos, columns, and capitals all correspond, and enclosing it is a high wall, still in a state of perfect preservation. I walked round it twice, and by means of the wall erected to exclude the unhallowed gaze of the stranger I looked down upon the interior of the temple. Built by the Egyptians for the highest uses to which a building could be dedicated—for the worship of their gods—it is now used by the Pasha as a granary and storehouse. The portico and courtyard, and probably the interior chambers, were filled with grain. A guard was stationed to secure it against the pilfering Arabs; and, to secure the fidelity of the guard himself, he was locked in at sunset, and the key left with the governor. The lofty entrance was closed by a wooden door; the vigilant guard was already asleep, and we were obliged to knock some time before we could wake him.

It was a novel and extraordinary scene, our parley with the guard at the door of the temple. We were standing under the great propylon, mere insects at the base of the lofty towers; behind us, at a little distance, sat a group of

the miserable villagers; and leaning against a column in the porch of the temple was the indistinct figure of the guard, motionless, and answering in a low deep tone, like an ancient priest delivering the answers of the oracles. By the mellow light of the moon everything seemed magnified; the majestic proportions of the temple appeared more majestic, and the miserable huts around it still more miserable; and the past glory and the present ruin of this once most favoured land rushed upon me with a force I had not felt even at the foot of the pyramids. If the temple of that little, unknown city now stood in Hyde Park, or the garden of the Tuileries, France, England, all Europe would gaze upon it with wonder and admiration; and when thousands of years shall have rolled away, and they too shall have fallen, there will be no monument in those proudest of modern cities, like this in the little town of Edfou, to raise its majestic head and tell the passing traveller the story of their former greatness.

Some of the Arabs proposed to conduct me to the interior, through a passage opening from the ruined huts on the top; but after searching a while, the miserable village could not produce a candle, torch, or taper, to light the way. But I did not care much about it. I did not care to disturb the strong impressions and general effect of that moonlight scene; and though in this, as in other things, I subject myself to the imputation of having been but a superficial observer, I would not exchange the lively recollection of that night for the most accurate knowledge of every particular stone in the whole temple.

I returned to my boat, and, to the surprise of my rais, ordered him to pull up stake and drop down the river. I intended to drop down about two hours to Elythias, or, in Arabic, Elkob. No one on board knew where it was, and, tempted by the mildness and beauty of the night, I stayed on deck till a late hour. Several times we saw fires on the banks, where Arab boatmen were passing the night, and hailed them, but no one knew the place; and though seeking and inquiring of those who had spent all their lives on the banks of the river, we passed, without knowing it, a city which once carried on an extensive commerce with the Red Sea, where the traces of a road to the emerald mines and the fallen city of Berenice are still to be seen, and the ruins of whose temples, with the beautiful paintings in its tombs, excite the admiration of every traveller.

We continued descending with the current all night, and in the morning I betook myself to my old sport of shooting at crocodiles and pelicans. At about eleven o'clock we arrived at Esneh, the ancient Latopolis—so called from the worship of a fish—now containing fifteen hundred or two thousand inhabitants. Here, too, the miserable subjects of the Pasha may turn from the contemplation of their degraded state to the greatness of those who have gone before them. In the centre of the village, almost buried by the accumulation of sand from the desert and the ruins of Arab huts, is another magnificent temple. The street is upon a level with the roof, and a hole has been dug between two columns, so as to give entrance to

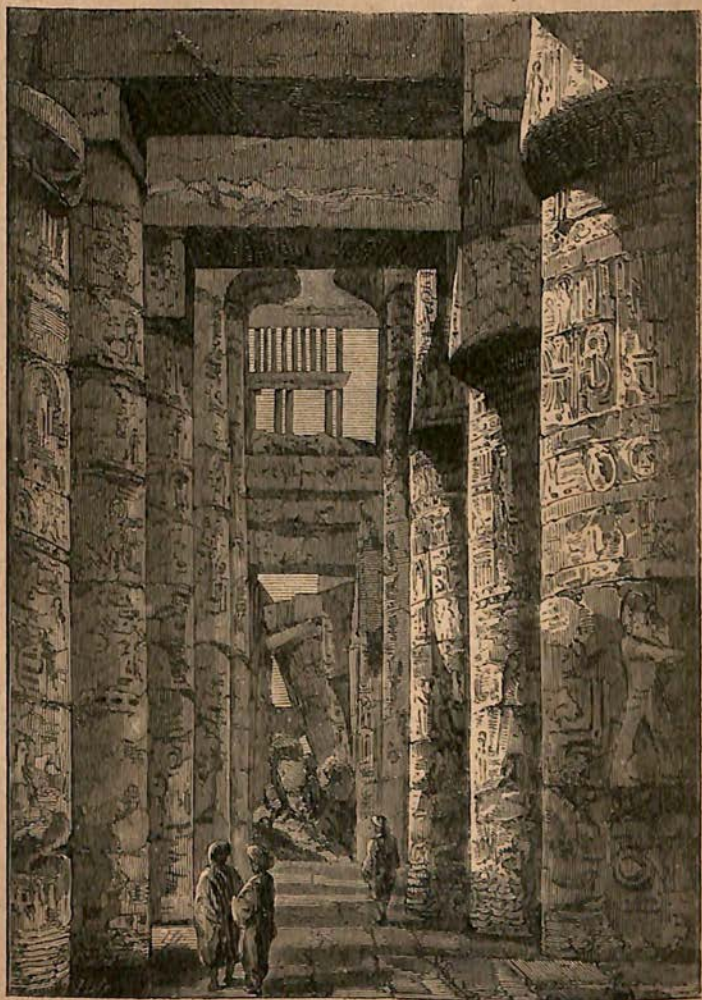
the interior. The traveller has by this time lost the feeling of wonder and indignation at the barbarity of converting the wonderful remains of Egyptian skill and labour to the meanest uses; and descending between the excavated columns, finds himself, without surprise or sorrow, in a large cleared space, filled with grain, earthen jars, and Arabs. The gigantic columns, with their lotus-leaved capitals, are familiar things; but among the devices on the ceiling, his wandering eye is fixed by certain mysterious characters which have been called the signs of the zodiac, and from which speculators in science have calculated that the temple was built more than six thousand years ago, before the time assigned by the Mosaic account as the beginning of the world.

But this little town contains objects of more interest than the ruins of a heathen temple; for here, among the bigoted followers of Mohammed, dwell fifty or sixty Christian families, being the last in Egypt, and standing on the very outposts of the Christian world. They exhibited, however, a melancholy picture of the religion they profess. The priest was a swarthy, scowling Arab, and, as Paul said, looked more like a robber than a pastor. He followed us for backsheesh, and, attended by a crowd of boys, we went to the house of the bishop. This bishop, as he is styled by courtesy, is a miserable-looking old man; he told us he had charge of the two churches at Esneh, and of all the Christians in the world beyond it to the *south*. His flock consists of about two hundred, poor wanderers from the true principles of Christianity,

and knowing it only as teaching them to make the sign of the cross, and to call upon the Son and Virgin, and a long calendar of saints. Outside the door of the church was a school; a parcel of dirty boys sitting on the ground, under the shade of a palm-tree, with a more dirty blind man for their master, who seemed to be at the work of teaching because he was not fit for anything else. I turned away with a feeling of melancholy, and almost blushed, in the presence of the haughty Mussulmans, to recognise the ignorant and degraded objects around me as my Christian brethren.



PILLARS IN THE FORM OF PALM TREE.



GREAT HALL, TEMPLE OF JUPITER AMMON, KARNAC



CHAPTER ·X.

Thebes: its Temples and great Ruins—Obelisks of Luxor—An Avenue of Sphinxes—Karnac—The Mummy-pits—The Tombs of the Kings—The Memnonium.

IT was nearly noon when, with a gentle breeze, we dropped into the harbour of Thebes. The sun was beating upon it with meridian splendour; the inhabitants were seeking shelter in their miserable huts from its scorching rays; and when we made fast near the remains of the ancient port, to which, more than thirty centuries ago, the Egyptian boatman tied his boat, a small group of Arabs smoking under the shade of some palm-trees on a point above, and two or three stragglers who came down to the bank to gaze at us, were the only living beings we beheld in a city which had numbered its millions. When Greece was just emerging from the shades of barbarism, and before the name of Rome was known, Egypt was far advanced in science and the arts, and Thebes the most magnificent city in the world. Homer calls it the City of a Hundred Gates, in allusion, probably, to its numerous propylæ, or temple gateways, as it never was a walled city. When at its greatest prosperity it could send out an army

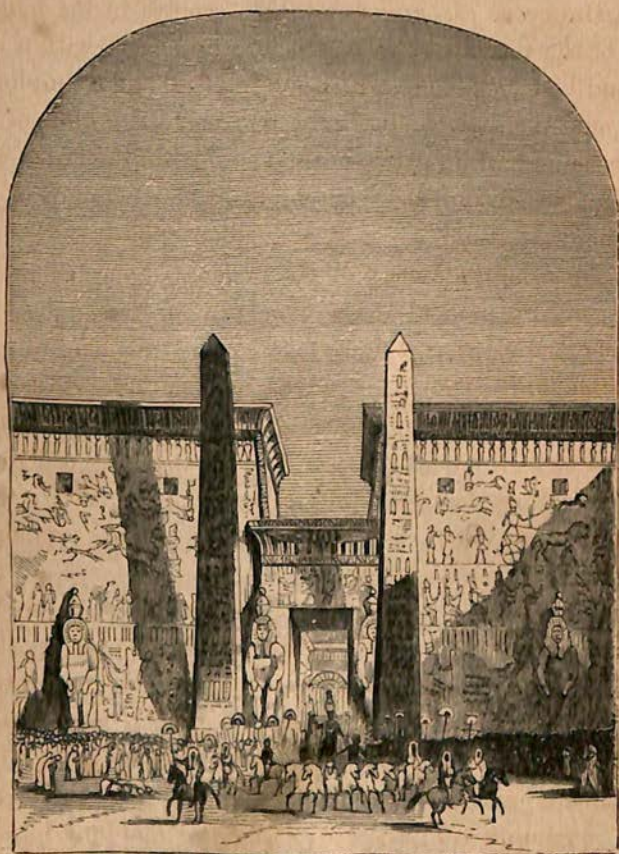
of 20,000 war chariots. But the Assyrian came and overthrew for ever the throne of the Pharaohs. The Persian war-cry rang through the crowded streets of Thebes; Cambyses, who here obtained a spoil of nearly £2,000,000, laid his destroying hands upon the temples of its gods, and a greater than Babylon the Great fell to rise no more.

The ancient city was twenty-three miles in circumference. The valley of the Nile was not large enough to contain it, and its extremities rested upon the bases of the mountains of Arabia and Africa. The whole of this great extent is more or less strewed with ruins, broken columns, avenues of sphinxes, colossal figures, obelisks, pyramidal gateways, porticoes, blocks of polished granite, and stones of extraordinary magnitude; while above them, 'in all the nakedness of desolation,' the colossal skeletons of giant temples are standing "in the unwatered sands, in solitude and silence. They are neither grey nor blackened; there is no lichen, no moss, no rank grass or mantling ivy, to robe them and conceal their deformities. Like the bones of man, they seem to whiten under the sun of the desert." The sand of Africa has been their most fearful enemy; blown upon them for more than three thousand years, it has buried the largest monuments, and, in some instances, almost entire temples. Its ruins are the most extensive in Egypt, and comprise nine townships—the chief of these being Medinet Abou, Gornou, Karnac, and Luxor. These are separated by the Nile; Karnac and Luxor lying on the east side, and Gornou and Medinet Abou on the west side of the river.

At this day the temples of Thebes are known almost everywhere, by the glowing reports of travellers. Artists have taken drawings of all their minute details, and I shall refer to them very briefly. On the Arabian side of the Nile are the great temples of Luxor and Karnac. The temple of Luxor stands near the bank of the river, built there, as is supposed, for the convenience of the Egyptian boatmen. Before the magnificent gateway of this temple, until within a few years, stood two lofty obelisks, each a single block of red granite more than eighty feet high, covered with sculpture and hieroglyphics, fresh as if but yesterday from the hands of the sculptor. One of them has been lately taken down by the French, and set up in the Place de la Concorde, Paris; the other is yet standing on the spot where it was first erected.

Between these and the grand propylon are two colossal statues with mitred head-dresses, also single blocks of granite, buried to the chest by sand, but still rising more than twenty feet above the ground. The grand propylon is a magnificent gateway, more than 200 feet in length at its present base, and more than sixty feet above the sand. The whole front is covered with sculpture—the battle-scenes of an Egyptian warrior, designed and executed with extraordinary force and spirit. In one compartment the hero is represented advancing at the head of his forces, and breaking through the ranks of the enemy; then standing, a colossal figure, in a car drawn by two fiery horses, with feathers waving over their heads, the reins tied round his body, his bow bent, the arrow drawn to its head, and

the dead and wounded lying under the wheels of his car and the hoofs of his horses. In another place several cars are seen in full speed for the walls of a town; fugitives



ENTRANCE TO TEMPLE OF LUXOR—RESTORED.

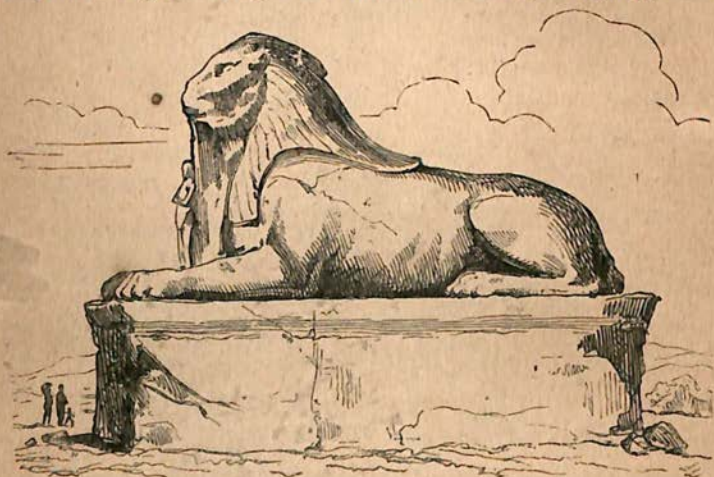
passing a river, horses, chariots, and men struggling to reach the opposite bank; while the hero, hurried im-

petuously beyond the rank of his own followers, is standing alone among the slain and wounded who have fallen under his formidable arm. At the farthest extremity he is sitting on a throne as a conqueror, with a sceptre in his hand, a row of the principal captives before him, each with a rope around his neck—one with outstretched hands imploring pity, and another on his knees to receive the blow of the executioner; while above is the vanquished monarch, with his hands tied to a car, about to grace the triumph of the conqueror.

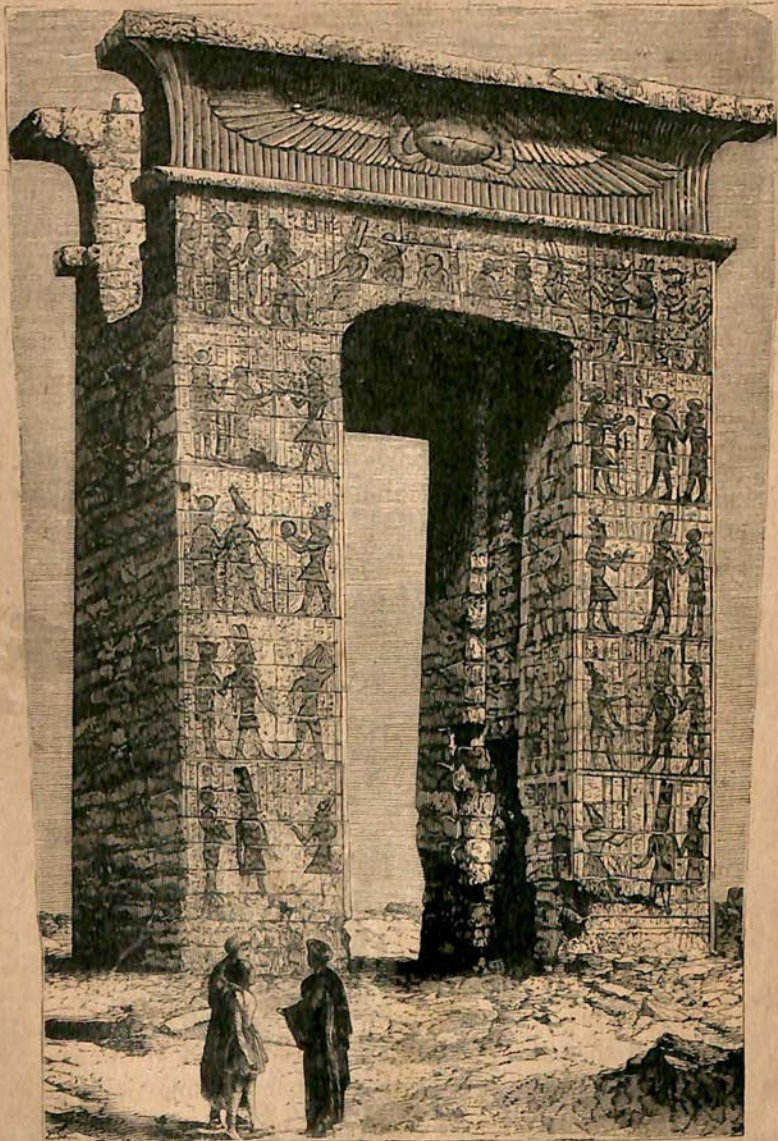
Besides the peculiarity of the incidents recorded in this sculpture, an evident distinction may be traced between the short dresses of the Egyptians and the long robes of their enemies—Indians, Persians, or Bactrians. Also, the different forms of the car or chariot—the Egyptian containing two warriors, the others three; and, above all, the difference in their arms—the Egyptian soldiers having a bow and arrows, while their antagonists carry spears or short javelins.

Passing this magnificent entrance, the visitor enters the dromos, or large open court, surrounded by a ruined portico formed by a double row of columns covered with sculpture and hieroglyphics; and, working his way over heaps of rubbish and Arab huts, among stately columns twelve feet in diameter and between thirty and forty feet in height, with spreading capitals resembling the budding lotus—some broken, some prostrate, some half-buried, and some lofty and towering as when they were erected—at the distance of 600 feet reaches the sanctuary of the temple.

But great and magnificent as was the temple of Luxor, it served but as a portal to the greater Karnac. Standing nearly two miles from Luxor, the whole road to it was lined with rows of sphinxes, each of a solid block of granite. At this end they are broken, and, for the most part, buried under the sands and heaps of rubbish. But, approaching Karnac, they stand entire, still and solemn as when the ancient Egyptian passed between them to worship in the great temple of Ammon. Four grand propylons



terminate this avenue of sphinxes, and passing through the last, the scene which presents itself defies description. Belzoni remarks of the ruins of Thebes generally, that he felt as if he was in a city of giants; and no man can look upon the splendid ruins of Karnac without feeling humbled by the greatness of a people who have passed away for ever. The western entrance, facing the temple of Northern



GRAND PROPYLON, KARNAC.

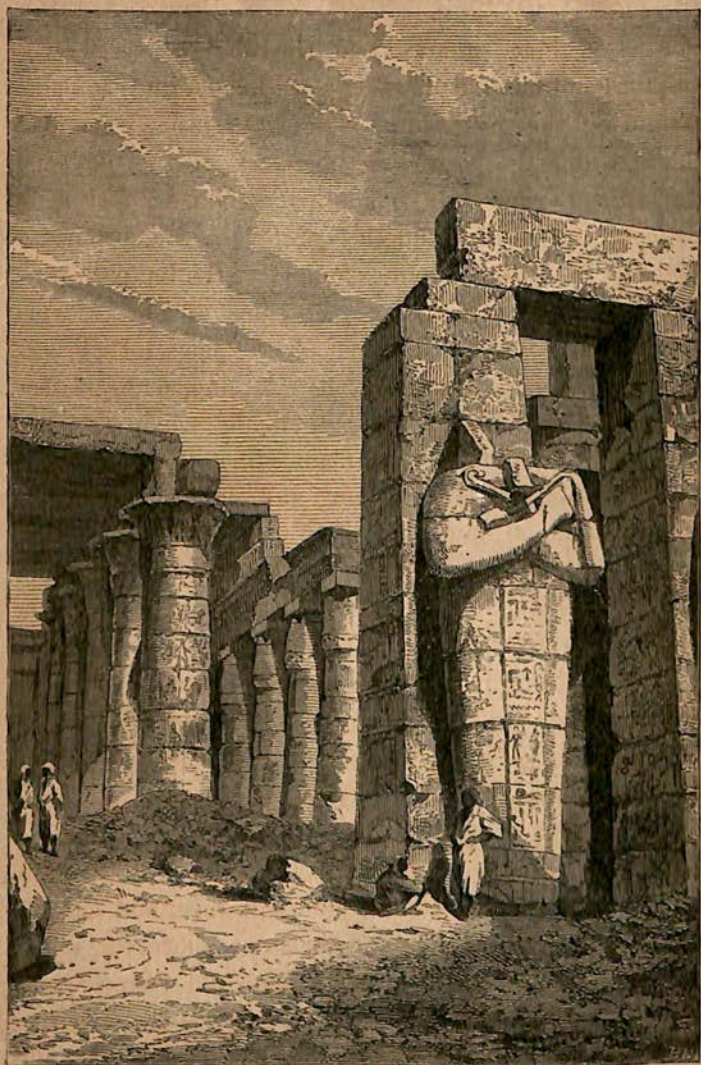
Dair on the opposite side of the river, also approached between two rows of sphinxes, is a magnificent propylon 400 feet long and forty feet in thickness. In the language of Dr. Richardson, "looking forward from the centre of this gateway, the vast scene of havoc and destruction presents itself in all the extent of this immense temple, with its columns, and walls, and immense propylons, all prostrate in one heap of ruins, looking as if the thunders of heaven had smitten it at the command of an insulted God."

The field of ruins is about a mile in diameter; the temple itself 1200 feet long and 420 broad. It has twelve principal entrances, each of which is approached through rows of sphinxes, as across the plain from Luxor; and each is composed of propylons, gateways, and other buildings, in themselves larger than most other temples; the sides of some of them are equal to the bases of most of the pyramids, and on each side of many are colossal statues, some sitting, others erect, from twenty to thirty feet in height. In front of the body of the temple is a large court, with an immense colonnade on each side, of thirty columns in length, and through the middle two rows of columns fifty feet in height; then an immense portico, the roof supported by 134 columns, from twenty-six to thirty-four feet in circumference. Next were four beautiful obelisks more than seventy feet high, three of which are still standing; and then the sanctuary, consisting of an apartment about twenty feet square, the walls and ceiling of large blocks of highly-polished granite, the ceiling studded with

stars on a blue ground, and the walls covered with sculpture and hieroglyphics, representing offerings to Osiris, illustrating the mysterious uses of this sacred chamber, and showing the degrading character of the Egyptian worship. Beyond this is another colonnade, and again porticoes and walls to another propylon, at a distance of 2000 feet from the western extremity of the temple.

But these are not half of the ruins of Thebes. The Memnonium or Rameseum, erected by Rameses II., is still more remarkable, and perhaps the most ancient in Thebes. It is fronted by a stupendous propylon, of which 234 feet in length still remain. The main edifice has been about 200 feet wide and 600 feet long, and above all towered a colossal statue of Rameses himself, now lying in the sand. This is pronounced to be by far the finest relic of art which the place contains. It measures about 26 feet between the shoulders, 54 feet round the chest, and 13 feet from the shoulder to the elbow, and is formed out of a block of granite, estimated to weigh, when entire, about 900 tons.

On the western side of the river, besides others prostrate and nearly buried under the sands, but the traces of which are still visible, the temples of Gornou, Northern Dair, Dair-el-Medinet, and Medinet Abou (see illustration, p. 207), with their columns, and sculpture, and colossal figures, still raise their giant skeletons above the sands. Volumes have been written upon them, and volumes may yet be written, and he that reads all will still have but an imperfect idea of the ruins of Thebes. I will only add, that all these temples were connected by long avenues of



MEMNONIUM OR RAMEBEUM, KARNAC.

sphinxes, statues, propylons, and colossal figures, and the reader's imagination will work out the imposing scene that was presented in the crowded streets of the now desolate city, when, with all the gorgeous ceremonies of pagan idolatry, the priests, bearing the sacred image of their god, and followed by thousands of the citizens, made their annual procession from temple to temple, and, "with harps, and cymbals, and songs of rejoicing," brought back their idol and replaced him in his shrine in the grand temple at Karnac.

The rambler among the ruins of Thebes will often ask himself, "Where are the palaces of the kings, and princes, and people who worshipped in these mighty temples?" With the devout though degraded spirit of religion that possessed the Egyptians, they seem to have paid but little regard to their earthly habitations; their temples and their tombs were the principal objects that engrossed the thoughts of this extraordinary people. It has been well said of them that they regarded the habitations of the living merely as temporary resting-places, while the tombs were regarded as permanent and eternal mansions; and while not a vestige of a habitation is to be seen, the tombs remain, monuments of splendour and magnificence, perhaps even more wonderful than the ruins of their temples. Clinging to the cherished doctrine of the metempsychosis, the immortal part, on quitting its earthly tenement, was supposed to become a wandering, migratory spirit, giving life and vitality to some bird of the air, some beast of the field, or some fish of the sea, waiting for a regeneration

in the natural body. And it was of the very essence of this faith to inculcate a pious regard for the security and preservation of the dead. The whole mountain-side on the western bank of the river is one vast necropolis. The open doors of tombs are seen in long ranges and at different elevations, and on the plain large pits have been opened, in which have been found a thousand mummies at a time. For many years, and until a late order of the Pasha preventing it, the Arabs have been in the habit



EGYPTIAN SARCOPHAGUS.

of rifling the tombs to sell the mummies to travellers. Thousands have been torn from the places where pious hands had laid them, and the bones meet the traveller at every step. The Arabs use the mummy-cases for fire-wood, the bituminous matters used in embalming being well adapted to ignition; and the epicurean traveller may cook his breakfast with the coffin of a king. Notwithstanding the depredations that have been committed, the mummies that have been taken away and scattered all over the world, those that have been burnt, and others that now remain in fragments around the tombs, the numbers yet undisturbed are no doubt infinitely greater; for the practice of embalming is known to have existed from the earliest periods recorded in the history of Egypt;

and by a rough computation, founded upon the age, the population of the city, and the average duration of human life, it is supposed that there are from eight to ten millions of mummied bodies in the vast Necropolis of Thebes.

Very recently (1876) a valuable relic of Egyptian sculpture was discovered near the ruins of the temple of Karnac. A sandstone chest was dug up containing a green basalt figure of a hippopotamus, about three feet high, and beautifully carved and polished. Hieroglyphic writings on the chest show that this sculpture is as old as the period of Psammeticus I., more than 600 years B.C. It is thought to be the most delicate and perfect specimen of Egyptian carving yet discovered.

Leaving these resting-places of the dead, I turn for one moment to those of more than royal magnificence, called the tombs of the kings. The world can show nothing like them; and he who has not seen them can hardly believe in their existence. They lie in the valley of Biban-el-Melook, a dark and gloomy opening in the sandstone mountains, about three-quarters of an hour from Gornou. The road to them is over a dreary waste of sand, and their doors open from the most desolate spot that the imagination can conceive. Diodorus Siculus says that forty-seven of these tombs were entered on the sacred registers of the Egyptian priests, only seventeen of which remained at the time of his visit to Egypt, about sixty years B.C. In our own days, the industry and enterprise of a single individual, the indefatigable Belzoni, have brought to light one that was probably entirely unknown

in the time of the Grecian traveller. The entrance is by a narrow door, a simple excavation in the side of the mountain, without device or ornament. That discovered by Belzoni is 309 feet long, and contains fourteen chambers of different sizes. The entrance-hall, which is extremely beautiful, is twenty-seven feet long and twenty-five broad, having at the end a large door opening into another chamber, twenty-eight feet by twenty-five, the walls covered with figures drawn in outline, but perfect as if recently done. Descending a large staircase, and passing through a beautiful corridor, Belzoni came to another staircase, at the foot of which he entered another apartment, twenty-four feet by thirteen, and so ornamented with sculpture and paintings that he called it the Hall of Beauty. The sides of all the chambers and corridors are covered with sculpture and paintings, the colours appearing fresher as the visitor advances towards the interior of the tomb; and the walls of this chamber are covered with the figures of Egyptian gods and goddesses, seeming to hover round and guard the remains of the honoured dead.

Farther on is a large hall, twenty-eight feet long and twenty-seven broad, supported by two rows of square pillars, which Belzoni called the Hall of Pillars; and beyond this is the entry to a large saloon with a vaulted roof, thirty-two feet in length and twenty-seven in breadth. Opening from this were several other chambers of different dimensions, one of them unfinished, and one forty-three feet long by seventeen feet six inches wide, in which he found the mummy of a bull; but in the centre of the

grand saloon was a sarcophagus of the finest oriental alabaster, only two inches thick, minutely sculptured within and without with several hundred figures, and perfectly transparent when a light was placed within it.

All over the corridors and chambers the walls are adorned with sculptures and paintings in intaglio and relief, representing gods, goddesses, and the hero of the tomb in the most prominent events of his life; priests, religious processions and sacrifices, boats and agricultural scenes, and the most familiar pictures of everyday life, in colours as fresh as if they were painted not more than a month ago; and the large saloon, lighted up with the blaze of our torches, seemed more fitted for a banqueting-hall for song and dance, than a burial-place of the dead. All travellers concur in pronouncing the sudden transition from the dreary desert without to these magnificent tombs as operating like a scene of enchantment; and we may imagine what must have been the sensations of Belzoni, when, wandering with the excitement of a first discoverer through these beautiful corridors and chambers, he found himself in the great saloon, leaning over the alabaster sarcophagus. An old Arab who accompanied us remembered Belzoni, and pointed out a chamber where the fortunate explorer entertained a party of European travellers, who happened to arrive there at that time; making the tomb of Pharaoh* ring with shouts and songs of merriment.

At different times I wandered among all these tombs.

* Supposed to be the tomb of Pharaoh Necho.

All were of the same general character; all possessed the same beauty and magnificence of design and finish; and in all, at the extreme end, was a large saloon, adorned with sculpture and paintings of extraordinary beauty, and containing a single sarcophagus. "The kings of the nations did lie in glory, every one in his own house; but thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch." Every sarcophagus is broken, and the bones of the kings of Egypt are scattered. In one I picked up a skull. I mused over it a moment, and handed it to Paul, who moralised at large. "That man," said he, "once talked, and laughed, and sang, and danced, and ate macaroni." Among the paintings on the walls was represented a heap of hands severed from the arms, showing that the hero of the tomb had played the tyrant in his brief hour on earth. I dashed the skull against a stone, broke it in fragments, and pocketed a piece as a memorial of a king. Paul cut off one of the ears, and we left the tomb.

Travellers and commentators concur in supposing that these magnificent excavations must have been intended for something more than the burial of a single king in each. Perhaps, it is said, like the chambers of imagery seen by the Jewish prophet, they were the scene of idolatrous rites performed "in the dark;" and, as the Israelites are known to have been mere copyists of the Egyptians, these tombs are supposed to illustrate the words of Ezekiel: "Then said he to me, Son of man, dig now in the wall; and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in, and see the abominable things that they

do there. So I went in, and saw, and behold, every form of creeping thing and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about."—*Ezek.* viii. 8-10.

Amid the wrecks of former greatness which tower above the plain of Thebes, the inhabitants who now hover around the site of the ancient city are perhaps the most miserable in Egypt. On one side of the river they build their mud huts around the ruins of the temples, and on the other their best habitations are in the tombs; wherever a small space has been cleared out, the inhabitants crawl in, with their dogs, goats, sheep, women, and children; and the Arab is passing rich who has for his sleeping-place the sarcophagus of an ancient Egyptian.

I have several times spoken of my intended journey to the Great Oasis. Something was yet wanting in my voyage on the Nile. It was calm, tame, and wanting in that high excitement which I had expected from travelling in a barbarous country. A woman and child might go safely from Cairo to the Cataracts; and my blood began to run sluggishly in my veins. Besides, I had a great curiosity to see an oasis, a small spot of green fertile land in the great desert, rising in solitary beauty before the eyes of the traveller, after days of journeying through arid wastes, and divided by vast sandy ramparts from the rest of the world. The very name of the Great Oasis in the Libyan desert carried with it a wild and almost fearful interest, too powerful for me to resist. It was beyond the beaten track; and the sheik with whom I made my

arrangements insisted on my taking a guard, telling me that he understood the character of his race, and an Arab in the desert could not resist the temptation to rob an unprotected traveller. For my own part, I had more fear of being followed by a party of the very unprepossessing fellows who were stealthily digging among the tombs, and all of whom knew of the preparations for our journey, than from any we might encounter in the desert. I must confess, however, that I was rather amused when I reviewed my body-guard, and, with the gravest air in the world, knocked out the primings from their guns, and primed them anew with the best of English powder. When I got through I was on the point of discharging them altogether, but it would have broken the poor fellows' hearts to disappoint them of their three piasters (about fifteen cents) per diem, dearly earned by a walk all day in the desert, and a chance of being shot at.

In the afternoon before the day fixed for my departure, I rode by the celebrated Memnons, the Damy and Shamy of the Arabs. Perhaps it was because it was the last time, but I had never before looked upon them with so much interest. Among the mightier monuments of Thebes, her temples and her tombs, I had passed these ancient statues with a comparatively careless eye, scarcely bestowing a thought even upon the vocal Memnon. Now I was in a different mood, and looked upon its still towering form with a feeling of melancholy interest. I stood before it and gazed up at its worn face, with its scars and bruises, and my heart warmed to it. It told of exposure, for unknown

ages, to the rude assaults of the elements, and the ruder assaults of man. I climbed upon the pedestal—upon the still hardy legs of the Memnon. I pored over a thousand inscriptions in Greek and Latin—a thousand names of strangers from distant lands, who had come, like me, to do homage to the mighty monuments of Thebes; Greeks and Romans who had been in their graves more than 2000 years, and who had written with their own hands that they had heard the voice of the vocal Memnon. But, alas! the voice has departed from Memnon; the soul has fled, and it stands a gigantic skeleton in a grave of ruins. I returned to my boat, and in ten minutes thereafter, if the vocal Memnon had bellowed in my ears, he could not have waked me.



YOUNG MEMNON.



CHAPTER XI.

The Arabs and the Pasha—March into the Desert—Arab Christians—A cold Reception—Arab Punctuality—A Night in a Convent—An Arab Christian Priest—Speculative Theology—A Journey ended before commenced.

EARLY in the morning I was on the bank, waiting for my caravan and guides. I had everything ready, rice, macaroni, bread, biscuit, a hare, and a few shirts. I had given instructions to my rais to take my boat down to Siout, and wait for me there, as my intention was to go from the Great Oasis to the Oasis of Siwah, containing the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Ammon, to destroy which Cambyses had sent from this very spot an army of 50,000 men, who, by the way, left their bones on the sands of Africa; and I need not remind the reader that Alexander the Great had visited it in person, and been acknowledged by the priests as the son of Jupiter. I waited a little longer, and then, becoming impatient, mounted a donkey to ride to the Sheik's. My rais and crew accompanied me a little way; they were the only persons to bid us farewell; and, as Paul remarked, if we never got back, they were the only persons to make any report of us to our friends.

The Sheik's house was situated near the mountains, in the midst of the tombs forming the great Necropolis of Thebes, and we found him surrounded by fifty or sixty men, and women and children without number, all helping to fit out the expedition. There did not seem to be much choice among them; but I picked out my body-guard, and when I looked at their swarthy visages by broad daylight, I could not help asking the sheik what security I had against them. The sheik seemed a little touched, but, pointing to the open doors of the tombs, and the miserable beings around us, he said that he had their wives and children in his hands as pledges for my safety. Of the sheik himself I knew nothing, except that he was a sheik. I knew, too, that though by virtue of the Pasha's firman he was bound to do everything he could for me, he was no friend to the Pasha or his government; for one evening, in speaking of the general poverty of the Arabs, he said that if one-fourth of them owned a musket, one charge of powder, and one ball, before morning there would not be a Turk in Egypt. However, I knew all this before.

At 12 o'clock the last sack of biscuit was packed upon the camels, and I mounted a fine dromedary, while my companions bade farewell to their wives, children, and friends; a farewell so calm and quiet, particularly for a people whose blood was warmed by the burning sun of Africa, that it seemed cold and heartless.

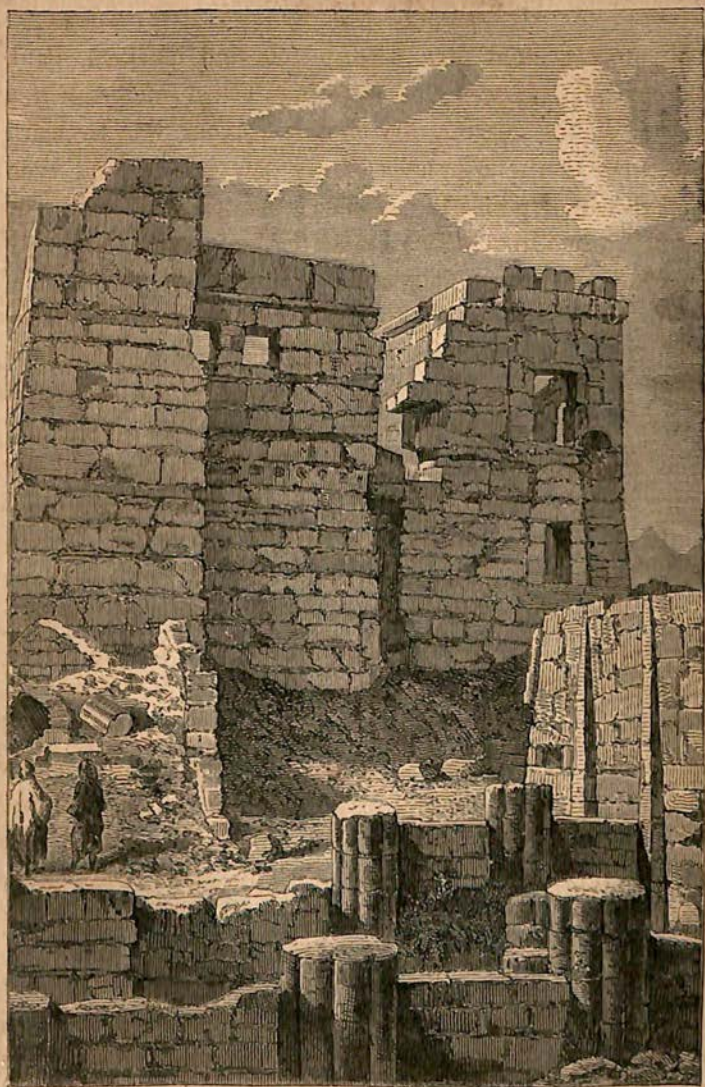
My caravan consisted of six camels, or rather four camels and two dromedaries, four camel-drivers armed

with swords, eight men with pistols and muskets, Paul, and myself. It was the first time I had undertaken a journey in the desert. My first endeavour was to learn something of the character of my companions, and even Paul became perfectly satisfied and pleased with the journey, when upon acquaintance he found that their ugly outsides gave no true indication of the inward man.

Our guide, he who was to conduct us through the pathless desert, was not yet with us; he lived at a village about four miles distant, and a messenger had been sent forward to advise him of our coming. Riding for the last time among the ruined temples of Thebes, beyond the limits of the ancient city, our road lay behind the valley bordering the river, and along the edge of the desert. On one side was one of the richest and most extensive valleys of the Nile, well cultivated, and at this season of the year covered with the richest greens; on the other were barren mountains and a sandy desert.

Here are to be seen the only remains yet discovered of an ancient Egyptian dwelling-house, the palace of Rameses IV. In one of the sculptures the king is seen surrounded by the ladies of his court, who fan him and present him with flowers. In another he is playing a game of draughts, the draught-board and men being very similar to those used now.

In about four hours we saw, crossing the valley, and stopping on the edge of the desert, a single Arab. It was our messenger, come to tell us that our guide would meet us at a Christian church about four hours' march in the



PALACE OF RAMESES IV., MEDINET ABOU.

desert. We now left the borders of the valley, and struck directly into the desert. Before us, at some distance over a sandy plain, was a high range of sandstone mountains, and beyond these was the mighty waste of sand and barrenness. Towards evening, we saw from afar the church at which we were to meet our guide. It was the only object that rose above the level of the sands; and as the setting sun was fast reminding us that the day was closing, it looked like a resting-place for a weary traveller.

Congratulating myself upon my unexpected good-fortune in meeting with those who bore the name of Christians, I was still more happy in the prospect, for this night at least, of sleeping under a roof. As we approached we saw the figure of a man stealing along the wall, and were near enough to hear the hasty closing of the door, and the heavy drawing of bolts inside. It was nine o'clock when we dismounted and knocked at the door of the convent, but received no answer; we knocked again and again without success. We then commenced a regular battery. I rattled against the door with my Nubian club, in a small way like Richard at the gate of the castle of Front-de-Bœuf; but my blows did not tell like the battle-axe of the Lionhearted, and the churlish inmates, secure behind their strong walls, paid no regard to us. Tired of knocking, and irritated at this inhospitable treatment from men calling themselves Christians, I walked round the building to see if by accident there was not some back-door left open. The convent was enclosed by a square wall of unburnt brick, twelve or fourteen feet high, and not a door, window,

or loophole was to be seen. It was built for defence against the roving Arabs, and if we had intended to storm it, we could not have found an assailable point. I returned, vexed and disappointed; and calling away the men, and almost cursing the unchristian spirit of its inmates, I pitched my tents under its walls, and prepared to pass the night in the desert.

I had hardly stretched myself upon my mat before I heard the smart trot of a dromedary, and presently my guide, whom I had almost forgotten, dismounted at the door of the tent. He was a tall, hard-faced, weather-beaten man of about fifty, the white hairs just beginning to make their appearance in his black beard. I wanted to have a good view of him, and, calling him inside, gave him a seat on the mat, a pipe, and coffee. He told me that for many years he had been in the habit of going once a-year to the Oasis, on a trading voyage, and that he knew the road perfectly. Almost the first thing he said was, that he supposed I intended to remain there the next day. The Arabs, like most other Orientals, have no respect for the value of time; and among the petty vexations of travelling among them, few annoyed me more than the eternal "bokhara," "bokhara,"—"to-morrow," "to-morrow." When they first sent to this guide to know whether he could engage with me, he said he was ready at any moment, by which he probably meant a week's notice; and when they sent word that I had named a particular day, he probably thought that I would be along in the course of two or three thereafter, and was no doubt taken by surprise when

the messenger came to tell him that I was already on the march. I of course had no idea of remaining there. He told me that I had better stay—that one day could not make any difference, and finally said he had no bread baked, and must have a day or two to prepare himself. I answered that he had told the sheik at Thebes that he would be ready at any moment—that it was absurd to think I would wait there in the desert—that I would not be trifled with, and if he was not ready the next morning I would ride over to his village and make complaint to the sheik. After a long parley, which those only can imagine who have had to deal with Arabs, he promised to be there at sunrise the next morning, and took his leave.

After supper, when, if ever, a man should feel good-natured, I again began to feel indignant at the churlish inmates of the convent, and resolved upon another effort to see what stuff these Christians were made of. I knew that the monks in these isolated places, among fanatic Mussulmans, were sometimes obliged to have recourse to carnal weapons; and telling Paul to keep a look-out, and give me notice if he saw the barrel of a musket presenting itself over the wall, I again commenced thundering at the door. Almost at the first blow it was thrown wide open, with a suddenness that startled me, and a dark, surly, and half-naked Arab stood facing me in the doorway. He had been reconnoitring, and though not sufficiently assured to come out and welcome us, he was ready to open when again summoned. With no small degree of asperity, and certainly without the meekness of the character upon

which I was then presuming, I asked him if that was his Christian spirit, to let a stranger and a Christian sleep outside his walls when he had a roof to shelter him; and, before he could interpose a word, I had read him a homily upon the Christian virtues that would have done credit to some pulpits. He might have retorted upon me, that with the Christian duties coming so glibly from my tongue, I was amazingly deficient in the cardinal virtue of forbearance; but I had the satisfaction of learning that I had not been excluded by the hands of Christians. The priests and monks had gone to a neighbouring village, and he was left alone. I followed him through a sort of courtyard into a vestibule, where was a noble fire, with a large cauldron boiling over it. He neither asked me to stay nor told me to go, and seated himself by the fire, perfectly indifferent to my movements. As soon as I had satisfied myself that he was alone, and saw that my Arabs had followed me, I thought I ran no risk in considering the building as a castle which I had stormed, and him as the captive of my bow and spear. I therefore required him to show me the interior of the convent, and he immediately took up a blazing stick from the fire, and conducted me within; and when I told him that I meant to sleep there, he said it would be for him a night "white as milk."

From the vestibule the door opened into the chapel, which consisted of a long apartment running transversely, the door in the centre; the floor was covered with mats, ostrich eggs were suspended from the ceiling, and three or four recesses contained altars to favourite saints. Directly

opposite the door was a larger recess, in which stood the great altar, separated by a railing ornamented with bone and mother-of-pearl, and over the top were four pictures of St. George slaying the dragon. I walked up and down the chapel two or three times, followed in silence by my swarthy friends; not altogether with the reverential spirit of a pious Christian, but with the prudence of a man of the world, looking out for the best place to sleep; and finally deposited my mat at the foot of the great altar.

I might better have slept on the sand, after all, for the walls of the church were damp, and a strong current of air from the large window above had been pouring in upon me the whole night. When I first woke I felt as if pinned to the floor, and I was startled and alarmed at the recurrence of a malady, because of which I was then an exile from home. I went outside, and found, although it was late, that the guide had not come. If he had been there I should no doubt have gone on, but, most fortunately for me, I had time to reflect. I was a changed man since the day before; my buoyancy of spirit was gone, and I was depressed and dejected. I sent a messenger, however, for the guide; and while I was sitting under the walls, hesitating whether I should expose myself to the long and dreary journey before me, I saw four men coming across the desert towards the convent. They were the priest and three of his Christian flock; and their greeting was such as to make me reproach myself for the injustice I had done the Arab Christians, and feel that there was something in that religion, even in the corrupt state in which it

existed there, that had power to open and warm the heart. The priest was a tall thin man, his dark face almost covered with a black beard and mustachios, and wore the common blue gown of the better class of Arabs, with a square black cap on his head, and his feet bare. I could not understand him, but I could read in his face that he saluted me as a brother Christian, and welcomed me to all that a brother Christian could give.

Living as we do in a land where the only religious difference is that of sect, and all sects have the bond of a common faith, it is difficult to realise the feeling which draws together believers in the same God and the same Redeemer, in lands where power is wielded by the worshippers of a false religion. One must visit a country in which religion is the dividing line—where haughty and deluded fanatics are the masters—and hear his faith reviled and its professors persecuted and despised, to know and feel how strong a tie it is.

After exchanging our greetings outside, the priest led the way to the church. I do not know whether it was a customary thing, or done specially in honour of me (Paul said the latter), but at any rate he immediately lighted up the edifice, and slipping over his frock a dirty white gown, with a large red cross down the back, commenced the service of the mass. His appearance and manner were extremely interesting, and very different from those of the priest I had seen at Esneh. His fine head, his noble expression, his earnestness, his simplicity, his apparent piety, his long black beard and mustachios,

his mean apparel, and naked feet, all gave him the primitive aspect of an apostle. He was assisted by a dirty, ragged, barefooted boy, who followed him round with a censer of incense, vigorously perfuming the church from time to time, and then climbing up a stand, holding on by his naked feet, and reading a lesson from the thumbed, torn, and tattered leaves of an Arabic Bible. There were but three persons present besides myself; poor, ignorant people, far astray, no doubt, from the path of true Christianity, but worshipping in all honesty and sincerity, according to the best light they had, the God of their fathers. The priest went through many long and unmeaning forms which I did not understand, but I had seen things quite as incomprehensible to me in the splendid cathedrals of Europe, and I joined, so far as I could, in the humble worship of these Egyptian Christians. There were no vessels of silver and gold, no imposing array of costly implements, to captivate the senses. A broken tumbler, a bottle of wine, and three small rolls of bread, formed the simple materials for the holy rite of the Lord's Supper. The three Arabs partook of it, and twice it was offered to me, but the feelings with which I had been accustomed to look upon this solemn ordinance forbade me to partake of the consecrated elements; and never did I regret my unworthiness so bitterly, as when it prevented me from joining in the holy feast with these simple-hearted Christians.

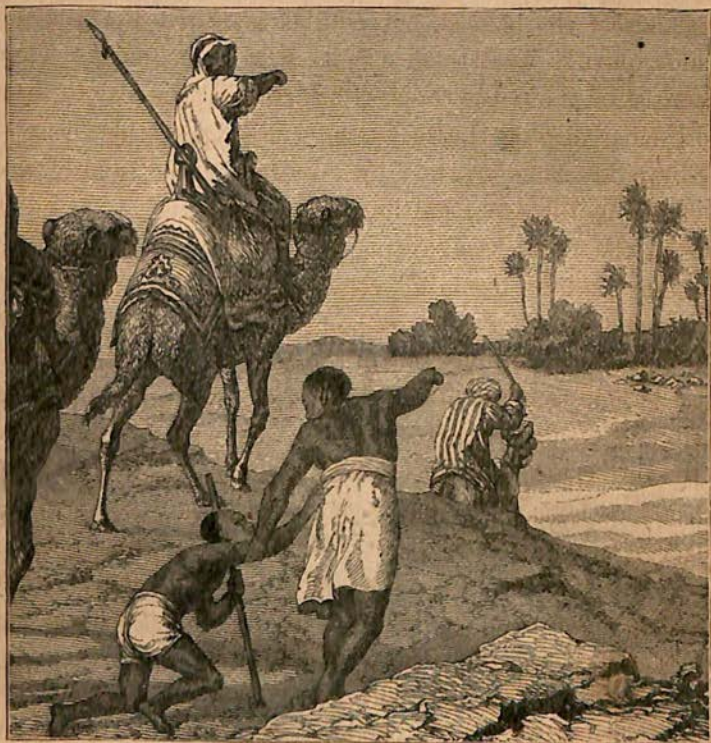
In the meantime Paul came in, and, the service being ended, I fell into conversation with the priest. He was a

good man, but exceedingly ignorant, weak, and of great simplicity of character. I inquired of him touching the number and condition of the Christians under his charge, and their state of security under the government of the Pasha, and, among other things, asked him if they increased. He told me that they remained about the same, or perhaps rather decreased. I asked him if a Mussulman ever became a Christian. He answered never, but sometimes a Christian would embrace the religion of Mohammed, and assigned a cause for this unhappy difference which I am sorry to mention, being no less than the influence of the tender passion. He told me that in the free intercourse now existing under the government of the Pasha between Christians and Mussulmans, it often happened that a Christian youth became enamoured of a Moslem girl; and as they could not by any possibility marry and retain their separate religions, it was necessary that one of them should change. The Moslem dare not, for death by the hands of her own friends would be the certain consequence; while the Christian, instead of running any temporal risk, gains with his bride the protection and favour of the Mussulmans. Paul seemed rather scandalised at this information, and began to catechise the priest on his own account. I could not understand the conversation, but could judge from the movement that Paul was examining him on that cardinal point, the sign of the cross. All appeared to go smoothly enough for a little while, but I soon noticed the flashing of Paul's eyes, and sundry other symptoms of indignation and contempt.

I asked him several times what it was all about; but, without answering, he walked backward and forward, slapping his hands under the priest's nose, and talking louder and faster than ever, and I had to take hold of him and ask him sharply what the plague was the matter, before I could get a word out of him. "A pretty Christian," said Paul; "fast fifty-six days for Lent, when we fast only forty-six: forty that our Saviour was in the mount, and six Sundays." I told him there was not so much difference between them as I thought, as it was only ten days; he looked at me for a moment, and then, as if fearful of trusting himself, shrugged his shoulders, and marched out of the chapel. During all this time the condition of the poor priest was pitiable and amusing: he had never been so sharply questioned before, and he listened with as much deference to Paul's questions and rebukes as if he had been listening to the Pope of Rome, and when it was over looked perfectly crestfallen.

It was twelve o'clock when the man we had sent after the guide returned, but before this time my malady had increased to such a degree as to leave me no option, and I had resolved to abandon the Oasis, and go back to Thebes. I had great reason to congratulate myself upon my accidental detention, and still greater that the symptoms of my malady had developed themselves before I had advanced another day's journey in the desert. Still it was with a heavy heart that I mounted my dromedary to return. I had not only the regret of being compelled abruptly to abandon a long-cherished plan, but I had great uneasiness

as to what was to become of me on my arrival at Thebes. My boat was probably already gone. I knew that no other could be obtained there, and, if obliged to wait for a casual opportunity, I must live in my tent on the banks of



OASIS IN THE DESERT.

the river, or in one of the tombs. My anxieties, however, were quickly dispelled on my arrival at Thebes, where I found the English gentleman and lady whom I had met at Cairo, and afterward at the Cataracts. They kindly took

me on board their boat. And so ended my expedition to the Great Oasis.

The Oases of the Libyan desert have been described in very different colours. Some Greek writers call them the islands of the blessed, but both Greeks and Romans not unfrequently used them as places of banishment. They consist of the Great Oasis, of which the principal town is El Khargeh; the Little Oasis, or El Kasr; the Oasis of Siwah or Ammon; and the Western Oasis, which was visited by Sir Archibald Edmonstone in 1819.

In the Great Oasis, ruins of several temples and of a necropolis have been discovered, and from the combination of relics of Egyptian paganism with symbols of the Christian religion on some of these, it has been conjectured that they were repaired and used by the early Christians after being deserted by their first occupants. Under the Byzantine Emperors the chiefs of the Catholic party were banished here, and Athanasius is supposed to have taken refuge in one of the Oases. In the Little Oasis, Belzoni was shown a remarkable well, sixty feet deep, the water of which varied regularly in temperature. He says—"If we were to suppose the water to have been 60° in the evening, it might be 100° at midnight, and in the morning about 80°; but when I returned at noon it appeared quite cold, and might be calculated in proportion to the others at 40°." The town of Siwah contains a population of from 2000 to 2500, and the Oasis about 8000. At some distance from the town are the ruins of an edifice built in the Egyptian style, which is supposed to have been the temple of

Jupiter Ammon. In the Western Oasis, which lies about 78 miles south-west of Siout, there are twelve villages, and the manufacture of indigo is carried on by the natives.

These Oases are now inhabited by Muggrebi Arabs, a numerous and powerful race, who supply camels and guides to travellers.



RUINS OF TEMPLE OF JUPITER AMMON,
OASIS OF SIWAH.



CHAPTER XII.

A Travelling Artist and Antiquary—An Egyptian Sugar-house—Grecian Architecture—A Melancholy Greeting—Tyranny of the Pasha—Amateurs of Physic—Memphis—Adventure with a Wild Boar—Perils of a Pyramid—The Catacombs of Birds—Voyaging on the Nile.

I SHALL never forget the kindness of these excellent friends; and, indeed, it was a happy thing for me that my own boat had gone, and that I was thrown upon their hospitality: for, in addition to the greater comforts I found with them, I had the benefit of cheerful society under circumstances when to be alone would have been horrible. Even when we arrived at Siout, after a voyage of seven days, they would not let me leave them, but assumed the right of physicians, and prescribed that I should be their guest until perfectly restored. I remained, accordingly, three days longer with them, my little boat following like a tender to a man-of-war, and passed my time luxuriously. I had books, conversation, and a medicine chest. But one thing troubled me. We had a cook who looked upon his profession as a liberal and enlightened science, and had attained its very highest honours. He had served various noblemen of eminent

taste, had accumulated 50,000 dollars, and was now cooking at the rate of fifty dollars a month upon the Nile. Michel was an extraordinary man. He came from the mountains of Dalmatia, near the shores of the Adriatic; one of a small nation who had preserved the name and form and spirit of a republic against Italians, Hungarians, and Turks, and fell only before the irresistible arm of Napoleon. He had been a great traveller in his youth, and besides his attainments in the culinary art, was better acquainted with history, ancient and modern, than almost any man I ever met. He had two great passions, the love of liberty and the love of the fine arts (cookery included), and it was really extraordinary to hear him, with a ladle in his hand, and tasting from time to time some piquant sauce, discourse of the republics of Rome and America, of the ruins of Italy, Palmyra, and Egypt. Michel's dinners, making proper allowances for the want of a daily market, would have done honour to the best lord he ever served, and I was obliged to sit down, day after day, to my tea, rice-water, biscuit, &c., and listen to the praises of his dainties while they passed untasted from me.

It was not until within two days of Cairo that we parted, with an agreement to meet at Jerusalem and travel together to Palmyra. We did meet for a few moments at Cairo, but the plague was beginning to rage, the Pasha had been putting himself into quarantine, and we had barely time to renew our engagement, which a particularly unfortunate circumstance (the illness of Mrs. S.) prevented us from keeping, and we never met again. Few things

connected with my compelled departure from the Holy Land gave me more regret than this; and if these pages should ever meet their eyes, they will believe me when I say that I shall remember, to the last day of my life, their kindness on the Nile.

The story of my journeying on this river is almost ended. Kenneh was our first stopping-place on our way down; a place of considerable note, there being a route from it across the desert to Cosseir, by which many of the pilgrims and a great portion of the trade of the Red Sea are conveyed.

At Ramaïoum, not far below Siout, we went ashore to visit a sugar-factory belonging to the Pasha. This manufactory is pointed out as one of the great improvements introduced into Egypt, and so far as it shows the capabilities of the Arabs, of which, however, no one can doubt, it may be considered useful. Formerly eighty Europeans were employed in the factory, but now the work is carried on entirely by Arabs. The principal was educated in France, at the expense of the Pasha, and is one of the few who have returned to render any service to their country and master. The enlightened Pasha understands thoroughly that liberal principle of political economy which consists in encouraging domestic manufactures, no matter at what expense. The sugar costs more than that imported, and is bought by none but governors and dependants of the Pasha. It is made from cane, contains a great deal of saccharine matter, and has a good taste, but a bad colour. This factory, however, can hardly be considered as in-

fluent upon the general interests of the country, for its principal business is the making of rock-candy for the ladies of the harem.

In the Turkish houses, while the apartments for the men are only remarkable for a plain style of neatness, those



IN THE HAREM.

of the women—the harem—are furnished with the finest and most expensive articles. Dr. Hume, who was admitted into the harem of Hassan Bey, says the inmates were seated in a small room, on the sides of which was a divan or sofa

covered with crimson satin, a Turkey carpet being spread on the middle of the floor. The crimson satin was fancifully embroidered with silver flowers. The ladies wore white turbans of muslin.

The same evening we came to at Beni Hassan, and the next morning landed to visit the tombs, excavated in the sides of the mountain, and, like all the tombs in Egypt, except those of the kings at Thebes, occupying the finest positions on the Nile. In construction they are different from all others in Egypt. The doors have regular Doric columns, and they are the only specimens of architecture in Egypt which at all approximate to the Grecian style. This would not be at all extraordinary, if they were constructed after the invasion of Alexander and the settlement of the Greeks in the country, but it is ascertained that they were built long before that time; and indeed it is alleged by antiquaries that these tombs and the obelisks at Heliopolis are the oldest monuments in Egypt. The interiors are large and handsomely proportioned (one of them being sixty feet square and forty feet high), and adorned with paintings, representing principally scenes of domestic life. Among them Mr. S. and myself made out one, which is constantly to be seen at the present day, namely, a half-naked Egyptian with a skin of water across his back, precisely like the modern Arab in the streets of Cairo.

We returned to our boat, and being now within two days of Cairo, and having different places to stop at below, after dinner I said farewell to my kind friends, and

returned to my own boat. My crew received me with three cheers, I was going to say, but they do not understand or practise that noisy mode of civilised welcome, and gave me the grave and quiet salutation of their country, all rising as soon as I touched the deck, and one after the other taking my hand in his, and touching it to his forehead and lips. My poor rais gave me a melancholy greeting. He had been unwell during the whole voyage,



WATER-CARRIERS OF THE EAST.

but since we parted he had been growing worse. He told me that our stars were the same, and that misfortune had happened to us both as soon as we separated. I could but hope that our stars were not inseparably connected, for I looked upon him as a doomed man. I had saved him at Cairo from being pressed into the Pasha's service; and again in descending, when he stopped at Kenneh, he and his whole crew had been seized in the bazaars, and in spite

of their protestations that they were in the service of an American, the iron bands were put around their wrists, and the iron collars round their necks. The governor afterwards rode down to the river, and the American flag streaming from the mast-head of my little boat procured their speedy release, and saved them from the miserable fate of Arab soldiers. Under all the oppressions of the Pasha's government, there is nothing more grinding than this. The governor of a town, or the sheik of a village, is ordered to furnish so many men as soldiers. He frequently has a leaning towards his own subjects or followers, and is disposed to save them if he can, and if any unlucky stranger happens to pass before the complement is made up, he is inevitably pounced upon as one of the required number. It is useless for the poor captive to complain that he is a stranger, and that the rights of hospitality are violated; he appeals to those who are interested in tightening his bonds: and when he is transferred to the higher authorities, they neither know nor care who he is or whence he comes. He has the thews and sinews of a man, and though his heartstrings be cracking, he can bear a musket, and that is enough. For centuries Egypt has been overrun by strangers, and the foot of a tyrant has been upon the necks of her inhabitants; but I do not believe that since the days of the Pharaohs there has been on the throne of Egypt so thorough a despot as the present Pasha.

But to return to my rais. His first request was for medicine, which, unfortunately, I could not give him. The

Arabs have a perfect passion for medicine. Early in our voyage my crew had discovered that I had some on board, and one or another of them was constantly sick until they had got it all; and then they all got well except the raïs, and for him I feared there was no cure.

On the 11th, early in the morning, Paul burst into the cabin, cursing all manner of Arabs, snatched the gun from over my head, and was out again in a moment. I knew there was no danger when Paul was so valorous; and opening my broken shutter, I saw one of my men struggling with an Arab on shore, the latter holding him by the throat with a pistol at his head. The rascal had gone on shore just at daylight to steal wood, and, while in the act of tearing down a little fence, the watchful owner had sprung upon him, and seemed on the point of correcting for ever all his bad habits. His fellows ran to the rescue, with Paul at their head, and the culprit, relieved from the giant grasp of his adversary, quietly sneaked on board, and we resumed our progress.

In the course of my last day on the Nile I visited one of the greatest of its ruined cities, and for moral effect, for powerful impression on the imagination and feelings, perhaps the most interesting of them all. So absolute, complete, and total is the ruin of this once powerful city, that antiquaries have disputed whether there is really a single monument to show where the great Memphis stood; but the weight of authority seems to be, that its stately temples and palaces, and its thousands of inhabitants, once covered the ground now occupied by the little Arab village

of Metrahenny. This village stands about four miles from the river; and the traveller might pass through it and around it without ever dreaming that it had once been the site of a mighty city. He might, indeed, as he wandered around the miserable village, find, half-buried in the earth, the broken fragments of a colossal statue; and, looking from the shattered relic to the half-savage Arabs around him, he might say to himself, "This is the work of other men and other times—and how comes it here?" But it would never occur to him that this was the last remaining monument of one of the greatest cities in the world. He might stop and gaze upon the huge mounds of ruins piled among the groves of palm, and ask himself, "Whence, too, came these?" But he would receive no answer that could satisfy him. In a curious and unsatisfied mood he would stroll on through the village, and from the other extremity would see, on the mountains towering before him, on the



edge of the desert, a long range of pyramids and tombs, some crumbling in ruin, others upright and unbroken as when they were reared, and all stretching away for miles, one vast necropolis; his reason and reflection would tell him that, where are the chambers of the dead, there must also have been the abodes of the living; and with wonder he would ask himself, "Where is the mighty city, whose inhabitants now sleep in yonder tombs? Here are the proud graves in which they were buried—where are the palaces in which they revelled, and the temples in which they worshipped?" And he returns to the broken statue and the mounds of ruins, with the assurance that they are the sad remnants of a city, once among the proudest in the world.

My movements in Egypt were too hurried, my means of observation and my stock of knowledge too limited, to enable me to speculate advisedly upon the mystery which overhangs the history of her ruined cities; but I always endeavoured to come to some decision of my own, from the labours, the speculations, and the conflicting opinions of others. An expression which I had seen referred to in one of the books, as being the only one in the Bible in which Memphis was mentioned by name, was uppermost in my mind while I was wandering over its site. "And Memphis shall bury them." There must be, I thought, some special meaning in this expression—some allusion to the manner in which the dead were buried at Memphis, or to a cemetery or tombs different from those which existed in other cities of its day. It seems almost im-

possible to believe that a city, having for its burying-place the immense tombs and pyramids which even yet for many miles skirt the borders of the desert, can ever have stood upon the site of this miserable village; but the evidence is irresistible.

The plain on which this ancient city stood is one of the richest on the Nile, and herds of cattle are still seen grazing upon it, as in the days of the Pharaohs. The pyramids of Sacchara stand on the edge of the desert, a little south of the site of Memphis. If it was not for their mightier neighbours, these pyramids, which are comparatively seldom honoured with a visit, would alone be deemed worthy of a pilgrimage to Egypt. The first to which we came is about 350 feet high, and 700 feet square at its base. The door is on the north side, 180 feet from the base. The entrance is by a beautifully polished shaft, 200 feet long, and inclining at an angle of about ten degrees. We descended till we found the passage choked up with huge stones. I was very anxious to see the interior, as there is a chamber within, said to resemble the tomb of Agamemnon at Mycene; and having once made an interesting visit to the tomb of that king of kings, I wished to compare them; but it was excessively close, the sweat was pouring from us in streams, and we were suffocating with heat and dust. We came out and attempted to clamber up the side from the door to the top, but found it so difficult that we abandoned the effort, although Paul afterwards mounted, with great ease, by one of the corners. While I was walking round the base, I

heard a loud scream from that courageous dragoman, and saw him standing about half-way up, the picture of terror, staring at a wild boar that was running away, if possible more frightened than himself. It was a mystery to me what the animal could be doing there, unless he went up on purpose to frighten Paul. After he got over his fright, however, the boar was a great acquisition to him, for I always had great difficulty in getting him into any tomb or other place of the kind without a guide; and, whenever I urged him to enter a pyramid or excavation of any kind, he always threw the wild boar in my teeth, whose den, he was sure to say, was somewhere within.

There are several pyramids in this vicinity; among others, one which is called the brick pyramid, and which has crumbled so gradually and uniformly, that it now appears only a huge, misshapen mass of brick, somewhat resembling a bee-hive.

Retracing my steps, I continued along the edge of the mountain, which everywhere showed the marks of having been once lined with pyramids and tombs. I was seeking for one of the most curious and interesting objects that exist in Egypt—not so interesting in itself, as illustrating the character of the ancient inhabitants and their superstitions—I mean the burial-place of the sacred birds. Before we reached it, my Arab guide pointed to a pyramid on our left, saying that it contained a remarkable chamber, so high, that a stone, hurled with man's utmost strength, could not reach the top. As this pyramid was not mentioned in my guide-book, and I had no hope, in a country

so trodden as Egypt now is, to become a discoverer of new wonders, I at first paid no attention to him; but he continued urging me to visit the lofty chamber; and at last, telling him that if I did not find it as he said I would not give him a para of backsheesh, I consented. There was no door to the pyramid; but about a hundred feet from its base, on the north side, was a square excavation or shaft about forty feet deep, at the end of which was a little hole, not more than large enough to admit a man's arm. The Arab scooped out the sand, and with his hands and feet worked his meagre body through, and I followed on my back, feet foremost. Though not particularly bulky, I wanted more room than the Arab, and my shoulders stuck fast. I was trying to work out again, when he grasped me by the heels, and began pulling me in with all his might; but luckily I had play for my legs, and, drawing them up, I gave him a kick with my heavy boots that kept him from taking hold again, until I had time to scramble out.

While Paul and the Arabs were enlarging the hole below, the top of the pit was darkened, and looking up I saw two young Englishmen with whom I had dined a few days before, while coming down the river with Mr. S. and his lady. They had seen my boat, and come to join me; and I was very glad to see them; for though I had no actual apprehension of the thing, it occurred to me that it would be very easy for my Arab friends to roll a stone against the hole, and shut me in for ever. It would have been something to be buried in a pyramid, to be sure; but even the belief that it was the tomb of a king would

hardly compensate for the inconvenience of being buried alive. We left their servant, a strapping Greek, at the door, and the Arab having enlarged the hole, we went to work systematically, laid ourselves upon our backs, and being prepared beforehand, were dragged in by the heels. The narrow part of the hole was not more than half the length of the body, and once past this, there was more room to move about than in any other of the pyramids: we could walk without stooping. Descending some hundred feet through an inclined passage excavated in the rock, with doors opening from it at regular intervals, we came to the large chamber of which the Arab had spoken. As in all the pyramids and tombs, the interior was in perfect darkness, and the feeble light of our torches gave us but an imperfect view of the apartment. The Arab immediately commenced his experiment with the stone; we could hear the whizzing as it cut through the empty space, and, after what seemed a very long time, the sound of its fall upon the rocky floor. At some distance up we could distinguish a door, and sending one of the Arabs up to it, by the flaring light of his torch, held as high as he could reach, we thought, but we were not certain, that we could make out the ceiling.

From hence it was but a short distance to the catacombs of birds; a small opening in the side of a rock leads to an excavated chamber, in the centre of which is a square pit or well. Descending the pit by bracing our arms, and putting our toes in little holes in the side, we reached the bottom, where, crawling on our hands and knees, we were

among the mummies of the sacred ibis, the embalmed deities of the Egyptians. The extent of these catacombs is unknown, but they are supposed to occupy an area of many miles. The birds are preserved in stone jars, piled



THE IBIS RELIGIOSA.

one upon another, as closely as they can be stowed. By the light of our torches, sometimes almost flat upon our faces, we groped and crawled along the passages, lined on each side with rows of jars, until we found ourselves again and again stopped by an impenetrable phalanx of the little mummies, or rather of the jars containing them. Once we reached a small open space, where we had room to turn ourselves, and, knocking together two of the vessels, the offended deities within sent forth volumes of dust which almost suffocated us. The bird was still entire, in form and lineament perfect as the mummied man, and like

him, too, wanting merely the breath of life. The Arabs brought out with them several jars, which we broke and examined above-ground, more at our ease. With the pyramids towering around us, it was almost impossible to believe that the men who had raised such mighty structures had fallen down and worshipped the puny birds whose skeletons we were now dashing at our feet. Although its embalmed remains exist in such amazing numbers, the bird itself has now disappeared.

My last work was now done, and I had seen my last sight on the Nile. Leaving behind me for ever the pyramids of Egypt, and the mountains and sands of the Libyan desert, I rode along the valley, among villages and groves of palm-trees, and a little before dark arrived at Ghizeh. My boat was there; I went on board for the last time; my men took to their oars, and in half-an-hour we were at Boulac. It was dark when we arrived, and I jumped on shore searching for a donkey, but none was to be had. I was almost tired out with the labours of the day, but Paul and I set off, nevertheless, on foot for Cairo. We were obliged to walk smartly, too, as the gate closed at nine o'clock; but when about half-way there we met an Arab with a donkey, cheering the stillness of evening with a song. An extravagant price (I believe it was something like eighteen and three-quarter cents) bribed him to dismount, and I galloped on to Cairo, while Paul retraced his steps to the boat. The reader may judge how completely "turned up" must have been the feelings of a quiet citizen of New York, when told that, in winding at night through



ARAB DONKEY-BOY.

the narrow streets of Grand Cairo, the citizen aforesaid felt himself at home ; and that the greeting of Francisco, the



STREET IN EASTERN CITY.

garçon at the Locanda d'Italia, seemed the welcome of an old friend.

I have heard all manners of opinion expressed in regard to a voyage on the Nile ; and may be allowed, perhaps, to give my own. Being alone, and not in very good health, I had some heavy moments ; but I have no hesitation in saying, that with a friend, a good boat, well fitted up, books, guns, plenty of time, and a cook like Michel, a voyage on the Nile would exceed any travelling within my experience. The perfect freedom from all restraint, and

from the conventional trammels of civilised society, forms an episode in a man's life that is vastly agreeable and exciting. Think of not shaving for two months, of washing your shirts in the Nile, and wearing them without being ironed. True, these things are not absolutely necessary; but who would go to Egypt to travel as he does in Europe? "Away with all fantasies and fetters," is the motto of the tourist. We throw aside pretty much everything except our pantaloons; and a generous rivalry in long beards and soiled linen is kept up with exceeding spirit. You may go ashore whenever you like, and stroll through the little villages, and be stared at by the Arabs, or walk along the banks of the river till darkness covers the earth, shooting pigeons, and sometimes pheasants and hares, besides the odd shots from the deck of your boat at geese, crocodiles, and pelicans. And then it is so ridiculously cheap an amusement. You get your boat with ten men for thirty or forty dollars a month, fowls for three piasters (about a shilling) a pair, a sheep for a half or three-quarters of a dollar, and eggs almost for the asking. You sail under your own country's banner, and when you walk along the river, if the Arabs look particularly black and truculent, you proudly feel that there is safety in its folds. From time to time you hear that a French or English flag has passed so many days before you, and you meet your fellow-voyagers with a freedom and cordiality which exist nowhere but on the Nile.

These are the little everyday items in the voyage, without referring to the great and interesting objects which

are the traveller's principal inducements and rewards—the ruined cities on its banks, the mighty temples and tombs, and all the wonderful monuments of Egypt's departed greatness. Of them I will barely say, that their great antiquity, the mystery that overhangs them, and their extraordinary preservation amid the surrounding desolation, make Egypt perhaps the most interesting country in the world. In the words of an old traveller, "Time sadly overcometh all things, and is now dominant, and sitteth upon a sphinx, and looketh into Memphis and old Thebes, while his sister Oblivion reclineth semi-sominous on a pyramid, gloriously triumphing and turning old glories into dreams. History sinketh beneath her cloud. The traveller, as he passeth amazedly through those deserts, asketh of her who builded them, and she mumbleth something, but what it is he heareth not."

It is now more than three thousand years since the curse went forth against the land of Egypt. The Assyrian, the Persian, the Greek, the Roman, the Arabian, the Georgian, the Circassian, and the Ottoman Turk, have successively trodden it down and trampled upon it; for thirty centuries the foot of a stranger has been upon the necks of her inhabitants; and in bidding farewell to this once favoured land, now groaning under the iron rod of a tyrant and a stranger, I cannot help recurring to the inspired words, the doom of prophecy: "It shall be the basest of the kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more among the nations; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt."



CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUEZ CANAL.

THE Suez Canal is one of the most important undertakings executed in modern times. A route that diminishes by one-half the distance lying between the two great divisions of mankind; who are commercially dependent on one another, must have a marked and important influence on the future of both, the nature and extent of which it is difficult to estimate. What country is likely to reap the greatest advantage from it, and into what new channels it may direct the stream of commerce, are points which time alone can determine.

It seems clear, from the geological formation of the district, that at some remote period the Mediterranean and

the Red Sea were connected, if not by a deep sea tidal wave, by a series of salt water lagoons and marshes, and that the Isthmus as it now exists is a comparatively recent formation. There are clear traces of volcanic upheavings in the heights of Serapeum, El Guisr, and Chaloof, through which the canal is carried; the more level portions of the Isthmus were probably formed by the action of natural causes during many ages, such as we see still producing similar results at the present day. "Egypt is the gift of the Nile," and the deposits carried down by the river through those ages during which it was forming its channel, and draining the lakes and marshes of what is now the Valley of Egypt, contributed largely to the formation of the Delta and the Isthmus.

There is abundant evidence to show that the Red Sea has receded a distance of at least thirteen miles in a south-eastern direction, and also that it was at one time united to the Bitter Lakes, the shells in both these lakes being similar to those now existing in the sea. In cutting the canal, a bank of salt incrustation, seven miles in extent by five, was met with, which must have been formed chiefly by the process of evaporation—a process which is proved to be still at work, by the somewhat curious fact that the several species of fish carried into these lakes by the Red Sea current through the canal are found dead by thousands on the banks, the rapid evaporation leaving the proportion of salt in the water so great that they are unable to exist in it. The water of these lakes is almost as salt as those of the Dead Sea, a gallon of the latter yielding 18 oz. of salt,

while the same quantity of the former yields at present as much as 13 oz. The fauna of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea are different, and have not as yet been found together, which, it is supposed, would have been the case had the seas been at one period connected; but this may be accounted for by the fact that there was a large flow of fresh water from the Nile, which may have formed a sort of natural barrier. But, however difficult it may be to account for this on the supposition that the seas were connected, it is not of sufficient weight to counterbalance the evidence on the other side, which clearly points to a time when Africa was a separate continent.

Egypt is the country of canals. The fertility of the soil, and indeed the very existence of its people, depending on the periodic rising and overflow of the Nile, it became a matter of the utmost importance to husband its waters, and to lead them in different directions for the purpose of irrigation. The earliest historic records mention the existence of canals for this purpose, and reservoirs in which the waters were kept in store to fertilise the land and water the crops in the time of drought.

Rameses the Great, B.C. *cir.* 1400, added much in this way to the labours of his predecessors, and is said to have employed the captives taken in war in making canals, till the whole country was intersected with them in every direction, thus vastly increasing its fertility and resources. These canals—"brooks of defence," as they are called in the Bible—acted as barriers to check the incursions of their enemies. It is generally supposed that the "treasure cities

Pithom and Rameses," built for Pharaoh, were fortified stations to guard the frontier; the fresh water canals became necessary to supply the inhabitants and garrisons with provisions and water, and "this being conducted from the Nile, and running through the eastern wilderness in many channels, added a new province to Egypt, and turned what would otherwise have been arid waste into a fertile garden." Dr. Manning says, "The great Bahr Yoosef, as it is now called, which runs through the whole length of Egypt from Cairo to Farshool, offered a barrier to the inroads of Bedouin horsemen; or, if they made their way across it, they were in danger of being cut to pieces before they could effect a retreat." The canals of the ancient Egyptians were for these three purposes—the fertilisation of the country, the maintenance of fortified places on the extreme frontier, and as a protection against Bedouin forays. "The opening of a water-way for sea-going vessels was a subordinate purpose, which only took effect at a comparatively recent period of their history."

The French writer Champollion ascribes the idea, and in part the formation of the first canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, to Rameses II., the object being to open an easy communication by water from Egypt to Arabia. The plan was not to cut a canal from sea to sea direct, but to take advantage of the river when it was possible to do so, and to cut a channel with fresh water from the river, carrying it on to the Red Sea near to Suez. This canal, we are told, left the Nile at Bubastis, and was made in four sections, and extended somewhat over ninety miles. The first section

extended from Bubastis to El Wady, 12 miles in length; the next from El Wady to the Bitter Lakes, a distance of 40 miles; then 27 miles through the lakes, and 13 from the lakes to the Red Sea.

Pharaoh Necho, who succeeded to the throne of Egypt B.C. *cir.* 617, undertook the completion of this canal, which had only been partially made by his predecessors. He carried the canal a considerable distance farther, but with such a reckless disregard of human life, that 120,000 persons are said to have perished at the work. Having some reason for ceasing to prosecute it farther, he found an excuse for giving it up in the warning of an oracle, which declared it would be against the interest of his kingdom to complete it, and would serve to help the barbarian invaders in their attacks on the country. About a hundred years after, during the Persian occupation of Egypt, the canal, which had become choked with sand, was cleared and rendered navigable by Darius. At this period "ships sailed up the Pelusiac branch of the Nile to Bubastis, and thence along the canal to Hieropolis, where the cargo was transhipped to Red Sea vessels."

Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 255 B.C., cut an additional fresh water canal, adding locks to prevent the influx of water from the sea, and so completed an unbroken water-way from Arsinoe, the modern Suez, to the Nile at Pelusium, and thence to the Mediterranean. This canal varied from 100 to 150 feet in width, so that "two triremes could sail abreast;" and it had an average depth of 40 feet. The journey from sea to sea was made in four days. This

canal existed as a means of transport for ships to the period of the Roman Empire. After the defeat at Actium, Cleopatra endeavoured to save the remnant of her fleet in this direction, but the waters of the Nile happened at that season to be so low that the ships were unable to make their way through it.

In the year A.D. 649 the Caliph Omar gained the title of "Prince of the Faithful" because he had the canal restored, and used it to carry provisions to the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina, and the surrounding districts, during the prevalence of a famine. It remained for about a century in a navigable condition, till by an order of Caliph Massour Abool Khadur the waters were turned aside and the canal closed, to prevent supplies of corn being sent to some provinces that were in revolt.

The idea of a water communication between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea was revived by Napoleon in 1798. He appointed a commission to make a survey and report on the matter. The survey was made under great difficulties, but was far from accurate, as it reported the Red Sea level 30 feet higher than the Mediterranean, which seemed to preclude the possibility of a direct maritime canal from the one to the other. It was not till 1846 that the true levels were ascertained, which showed the difference to be so slight as not to cause any difficulty should a direct canal be attempted.

It has been said that a fresh water canal could have been made at much less cost, and that the waters of the Nile might have been utilised so as to fertilise large

districts now unproductive; but M. Lesseps had no doubt good reasons for the course he decided to adopt.

The writer of a recent work on Egypt says, in reference to this, "The only absolutely new point is that it is a salt water, and not a fresh water canal; and, with respect to this, I think we may feel certain that if old Rameses or Necho had engineered it, instead of M. Lesseps, it would not have been as it is. They would have decided in favour of fresh water, because they could then have constructed it at half the cost; and would, furthermore, by so doing, have had a supply of water in the desert sufficient for reclaiming a vast extent of land, which would have more than repaid the whole cost of construction. Instead of cutting a canal deep in the desert at an enormous cost, they would, as it were, have laid a canal on the desert. . . . The sweet water canal now reaches Suez. A sweet water ship canal might have done the same."—*Egypt of the Pharaohs and of the Khedive.*

The fresh water canal here spoken of leaves the Nile near Cairo, and runs to Ismailia, the central station of the ship canal, and thence to Suez in one direction, and to Port Said in the other. Two powerful pumping engines force the water in a continuous stream through a double row of iron pipes to Port Said, a distance of about fifty miles, and reservoirs are constructed at the different stations, and open drinking troughs are placed at intervals of a few miles along the line of the canal.

After much time spent in surveys and negotiations, M. Lesseps received in 1855 a firman from the Viceroy of

Egypt, authorising him to form a company and proceed with the work of cutting a canal from sea to sea across the Isthmus, in accordance with certain specified general plans. The company, which was to continue for 99 years from the opening of the canal, was registered as "*La Compagnie Universelle du Canal de Suez*." Certain privileges, regarding lands, &c., being conceded, all the works were to be executed at the company's expense; the Government were to receive 15 per cent. of the annual earnings, 75 per cent. to be divided among the shareholders, and 10 per cent. to the original founders of the company. The lands reclaimed by irrigation or otherwise at the expense of the company were to be held free for ten years from the opening of the canal, to pay one-tenth of the annual land tax of the country for 89 years, at the expiration of which time they are to revert to the Government. There was an important clause regarding labour, out of which much difficulty subsequently arose. All the lands belonging to the Viceroy are farmed on the forced labour system. Some 100,000 labourers—*fellaks* or *fellaheen*, as they are called—are drafted monthly from the villages and engaged in doing any work on which the Viceroy may please to employ them. The clause provided that in "all cases four-fifths at least of the workmen shall be Egyptians," which meant that the Egyptian Government was bound to find this proportion of labourers, amounting, at the time the clause was agreed upon in 1856, to about 20,000 men, the rate of wages being two-thirds less than was given for similar work in Europe, but somewhat more than they received for

labour in their own country; they were also to be provided with food and lodging, and hospital attendance when sick.

The Sultan, to whom the Viceroy was obliged to submit the terms of agreement, and, as it was supposed, in deference to the wishes of the English Government, who were, for political reasons, averse to the enterprise, refused his sanction to this clause regarding forced labour, and also to some other proposed arrangements regarding the leasing of the reclaimed lands and the right of property in the fresh water canal. Much delay was thereby occasioned, and for some years very little progress was made. On his accession to power in 1863, the present Khedive, perceiving the immense loss to the industrial resources of his country by the absence of 40,000 labourers monthly—for though only 20,000 were actually employed on the works, double that number were withdrawn from the country, as one-half were always on the way going or returning to their homes—refused, in the early part of 1864, to send the monthly contingent, and the works in consequence came almost to a stand-still. By the consent of all parties the matters in dispute were submitted to the arbitration of the French Emperor Napoleon, who gave his decision in July, 1864, in substance as follows:—That the concessions made in November, 1854, and January, 1856, were contracts, and therefore binding on both parties; that the Viceroy should pay an indemnity of £1,520,000 as a set-off for the withdrawal of the fellaheen labour, by which the works were delayed and the cost increased; that the fresh water canals should be given up to the Viceroy—who was bound to keep

them in efficient repair, the company only reserving the right of passage through them—on the payment of £400,000 for the cost of construction, and £240,000 as compensation for the tolls relinquished by the company; all the lands capable of cultivation by means of irrigation from the fresh water canals to be given up to the Viceroy on the payment of £1,200,000, the company retaining only such lands along the line of the canal as were necessary for its proper maintenance. The total amount paid to the company under the award being £3,360,000, which was, according to a subsequent agreement, to be paid by 1869.

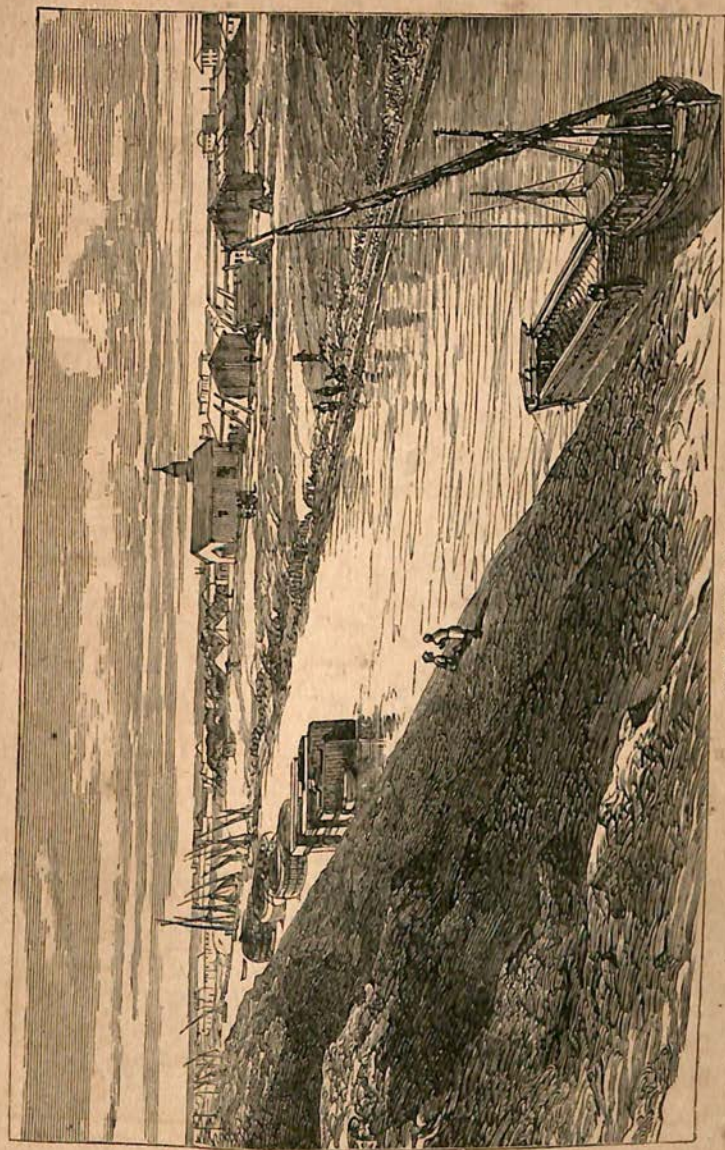
The original capital of the company was represented by 400,000 shares of £20 each. More than one-half was subscribed for by the public; the remainder, amounting to £3,500,000, was taken up by Said Pasha in 1860. As the works advanced, it became evident that a much larger sum would be needed than had been originally estimated for. In 1867 a fresh subscription was opened for raising an additional sum of £4,000,000; £20 bonds were issued at £12, bearing £1 per bond interest, and repayable at par in fifty years. The French Government, "in consideration of the exceptional character of the enterprise, and the interest France takes in the execution of the Suez Canal," allowed the company to issue "bonds, reimbursable by lottery drawings," on such favourable terms that the whole amount was soon taken up. A further sum of £1,200,000 was raised, and large sums were paid by the Egyptian Government for the cession of certain lands held by the company. Up to the year 1869, when the canal was

opened, the company had received in all about seventeen millions sterling.

The withdrawal of so much labour, by the refusal of the Viceroy to comply with the terms of the original agreement, though in one respect a loss, was gain in another, as it forced the company to seek for machinery to supply its place, and this led to the invention of some very useful excavating and embanking machines. The greater part of these were supplied from the firms of Gouin & Co., Paris, and Forges & Chantier, Marseilles and Toulon. The cost of making and settling the enormous plant used in the works amounted to a million and a-half sterling, and the monthly consumption of fuel reached nearly £50,000.

The place chosen for the port of entrance to the Mediterranean was the narrow bank of sand which divides the sea from the lagoons and shallows of the Menzaleh Lake. This bank, varying from 200 to 300 yards in width, is washed by the





VIEW ON THE SUEZ CANAL.

waters from both sides, so that it was difficult to fix on the line where the sea ended and the lakes began. The seaboard of the entire district is remarkably flat, and the shifting nature of the sand rendered it uncertain whether it was possible to obtain a foundation for a permanent harbour in such a situation. No site could be more unpromising than that selected, and in no portion of the undertaking have the engineering resources of those engaged in the work shown to greater advantage. In the short space of ten years this shifting bank of sand has been reclaimed to the extent of about fifteen thousand acres, and a permanent harbour constructed, and a town built which numbers over 10,000 inhabitants. Here, as elsewhere along the line of the canal, they have made "the wilderness to rejoice and blossom as the rose," and brought "springs of water" and fertility to what was hitherto a barren and "thirsty land."

The shortest line across the Isthmus would have entered the sea at Pelusium, and it was at one time intended to have had the port of entrance there; but it was found that water of the required depth was not to be had nearer than five miles from the shore, while at the point selected a depth of 30 feet was found at a distance of 2870 yards. On the 29th April, 1859, a day ever memorable in the annals of the canal, the first sod was turned in the presence of M. Lesseps, M. Laroche, and some friends and workmen, and the work begun by digging a trench to mark the line in which the canal was to run. At that time there was barely room to erect a few sheds and some wooden



PORT SAID.

houses raised on piles for the accommodation of those engaged in the works. The dredgings from the harbour were afterwards used to reclaim the bank and raise the ground for the future town, named Port Said, in honour of Said Pasha, Vice-roy of Egypt, who had taken such an active interest in promoting the enterprise. Great inconvenience arose from the want of water, which, with the necessary

provisions and fuel, had to be brought in Arab boats across the Lake Menzaleh from Damietta, a distance of thirty miles. Fresh water, as has been already mentioned, is now supplied from Ismailia to Port Said, where a large reservoir called "Chateau d'Eau" has been made, capable of containing a sufficient quantity to last the inhabitants several days, in case anything should interrupt the regular daily supply. The port is formed by two immense breakwaters, 12 yards in height, 26 yards wide at the base, and 6 yards on the summit. These breakwaters are carried out into the sea, one in a right line to the distance of 2726 yards, the other in a gradually converging line to the distance of 1962 yards, leaving an entrance 450 yards wide, and enclosing a triangular area of 550 acres. The depth of water at the entrance is 30 feet, and the channel to the inner harbour 300 feet wide and 26 feet deep.

These breakwaters are formed of immense blocks of concrete, the moulding and placing of which are thus described by Mr. Clerk:—"The blocks, each weighing 22 tons, with a dimension of about 12 cubic yards, are composed of two-thirds sand, principally obtained from the harbour dredgings, and one-third hydraulic lime, imported from Theil in France. These materials are mixed by machinery, a little salt water being added from time to time; and, this process completed, the liquid mass is made to fall into trucks running on tram rails. These are taken over the moulds, into which the concrete is dropped; in these it is allowed to remain for two months to consolidate, when the block becomes ready for immersion. These blocks become

gradually harder after they have been submerged for some time. A hydraulic lift places the block on another truck, and an engine runs it down to the wharf. Here again a lift places it in a barge, where it rests on a platform with an incline of about 20 degrees. Each barge, carrying three of these blocks, is towed by a steam tug to the mole. If it is required to place them where the foundation already appears above water, they are lodged in position by cranes; if the foundations are still below the water line, . . . when the barges are over the spot where the blocks are to be deposited, the catches are knocked away, and the three huge masses of concrete, representing 66 tons in weight and £50 in value, plunge simultaneously into the sea."

There is a lighthouse also built of one solid mass of concrete, 160 feet in height, with a lantern on the top 20 feet high, in which there is an electric light visible at a distance of twenty miles.

The greater part of the cuttings and excavations were made by dredging; machines of immense power being used for this purpose, capable of lifting a monthly average of 106,000 cubic yards of earth. Two ingenious contrivances were introduced for facilitating the disposal of the excavated soil. One was the "Long Couloir," an enormous spout, 75 yards in length, 5 feet wide, and 2 feet deep, supported by an iron framework, which rested partly on the dredge and partly on a floating lighter. The dredgings were dropped into one end of this tube, and forced downwards by a stream of water supplied by a pump worked by steam. A chain passed along the centre of the couloir, on

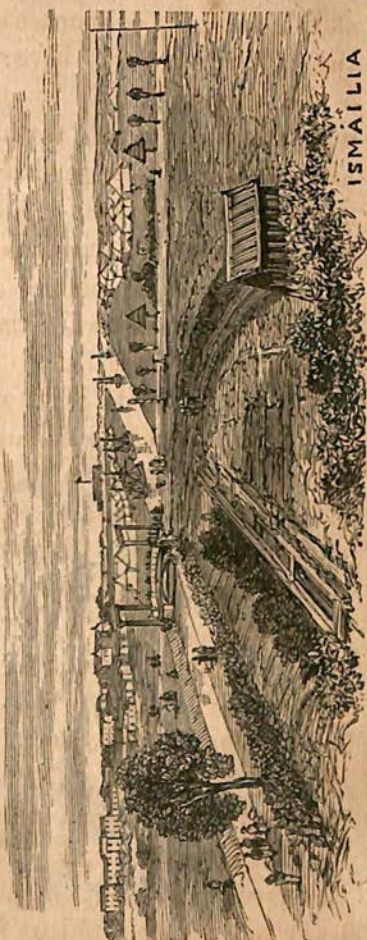
which scrapers were fixed to assist in pushing stones and other hard substances through the tube. When the banks were too high for the couloir, another machine called an "Elevateur" was brought into use. It is thus described by Mr. Clerk:—"This duct consists of an inclined plane, about 52 yards long, and carrying two lines of tram rail. The inclination is 1 in 4, and it is supported in the middle by an iron frame, which rests on a carriage, running on rails laid for the purpose along the bank of the canal, at an elevation of six feet above the water-line. The lower end of the elevateur reaches over the water, where it is again supported on a steam float. When this machine is at work, the lower extremity of the duct is 3 yards above the water, whereas the upper end is about 52 yards distant, with an elevation of 12 yards, thus reaching over the embankments. A lighter containing the boxes of dredgings is floated under the elevateur; these boxes are raised by an endless steel-wire rope, and so travel to the upper end of the incline, where they are tilted over and empty their contents on the bank."

In comparing the work done by these machines with other dredging operations, M. Lesseps stated that in "dredging the Clyde it took twenty-one years to accomplish three and a-half times the amount which was done by them in one month."

The canal runs through the Lake Menzaleh for 29 miles; leaving the lake at Kantara, it runs for two miles through sand-hills, till it enters Lake Ballah, which it traverses for a distance of eight miles. Between this and Lake Temsah is the plateau of El Guisr, where the deepest cutting on

the line, in some places to a depth of 70 feet, was required. On the north bank of this lake stands the town of Ismailia (named in honour of Ismail Pasha), a "flourishing French town, full of life and activity—a real oasis in the desert, where the eye, wearied by the glare of the surrounding sand, finds rest in the welcome green of the trees and gardens." Leaving Ismailia the canal passes the eastern shore of Lake Timsah, and is carried through the plateau of Tussum and Serapeum to the Bitter Lakes, through which it takes a central course for the distance of 27 miles, and thence through the heights of Shaloo, and over a slightly elevated district to the Red Sea at the port of Suez.

There is reason to suppose that the line of march of the children of Israel was somewhere between the Bitter Lakes and the Gulf of Suez, which at the period of the exodus may have been still partially connected. The



reasons given in support of this theory are thus stated. We read in the Bible that "the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind, and the waters were divided, and the children of Israel went into the sea upon dry ground." If, at that time, the subsidence of the Red Sea had arrived at the stage which would have formed the Bitter Lakes into a gulf, connected only by a channel of moderate depth with the sea, a strong north-east wind, combined with a low tide, would have partially dried them, and the passage might thus have been easily effected; whereas a high tide, acted on by a strong south wind, would again have rendered them impassable; so that Pharaoh and his host were overwhelmed "when the sea returned to his strength as the morning appeared."

The first sod of the canal was turned on the barren sand-bank which separates Menzaleh Lake from the Mediterranean, where the town of Port Said now stands, on the 29th April, 1859; and in the short space of ten years and six months, in spite of many unforeseen difficulties and delays, the great work was completed, and the canal opened for traffic on the 17th November, 1869. Ships from different nations were present at the opening, forty-eight vessels passing through the canal from Port Said to Lake Temsah, and thence on the following day to Suez. The tariff, which, by the terms of the company's charter, is the same for ships of all nations, is fixed at ten francs per ton and ten francs per passenger. The maximum rate of steaming was fixed at six miles an hour, the passage from sea to sea being made at this rate in sixteen hours. Vessels under

50 tons register are not subject to any restrictions as to speed. The first ship that paid dues for passing through the canal was an English one. M. Lesseps, speaking before the French Academy of Sciences, April, 1876, states that one ship of 5000 tons, and another drawing 25 feet of water, had passed through the canal without difficulty.

The Report presented to the shareholders, June, 1876, states that, during the year 1875, 1494 ships passed through the canal, the total receipts amounting to 30,827,194f. The total expenditure, including all the charges of the undertaking, and the payment of the interest on the capital stock, has been 29,727,047f., leaving an available sum of 1,117,988f. to be distributed as dividend.

The following table gives the relative distances, by the Cape route and by the canal, in nautical miles :—

		Cape Route.	Canal.	Saving.
From England to Bombay,	...	10,860	6,020	4,840
„ New York to Bombay,	...	11,520	7,920	3,600
„ St. Petersburg to Bombay,	...	11,610	6,770	4,840
„ Marseilles to Bombay,	...	10,569	4,620	5,940

The saving for English vessels passing through the canal is nearly one-half; the gain to vessels from the different Mediterranean ports will be somewhat greater, varying from 50 to 53 per cent.

Whether the opening of this route for Eastern traffic will ultimately tend to the benefit of England is a point on which much difference of opinion exists. Formerly, Eastern traffic was carried on across the Isthmus to the Mediterranean ports, whence the merchandise was redistributed

over all Europe; and hence the wealth and prosperity of these old maritime communities. One consequence of the discovery of the new route by the Cape of Good Hope was to bring the whole Oriental trade direct to England, which thus became the entrepot of Eastern merchandise for redistribution over Europe; but now, by another topographical change, the stream of Eastern traffic is in process of retrocession to its former haunts, and the Suez Canal may be the tap through which the golden current now flowing into British coffers may be drawn off. An able writer states his ideas on this important matter:—

“As the topographical relation of the various seaports throughout the world now stands, it may, without fear of contradiction, be asserted that, just in proportion to the increased rise and success of the Suez Canal, *whether owned by England or not*, the result in either case being the same, will the trade of the East become, as of old, centered on the Mediterranean, and the commercial loss to English and other northern ports will take place in a corresponding ratio, until, finally, the whole distribution of the Oriental trade over all Continental Europe will take place, as formerly, from the Mediterranean, and not, as it now does, from ports of England and marts on the North Sea and Baltic. This being the case, the commerce of the ports on these northern seas must undergo a similar decadence to that which befell those of the Mediterranean when trade deserted the Isthmus of Suez and took its course round the Cape of Good Hope.

Rose, in his *Diaries and Conversations*, records the

opinion of Mr. Pitt on this subject:—1803. Speaking of the spirit of enterprise manifested by the French, he says, “They would be very likely to make a large navigable cut from the Red Sea to the Nile, either from Suez to Cairo, or from Cosseir to the neighbourhood of Kenneh; in which attempt, if they succeed, they would effectually bring the trade of India to Marseilles, and other ports of the Mediterranean, by carrying the commodities of that country through Egypt for probably about one-half the expense of the freight by the Cape of Good Hope.”

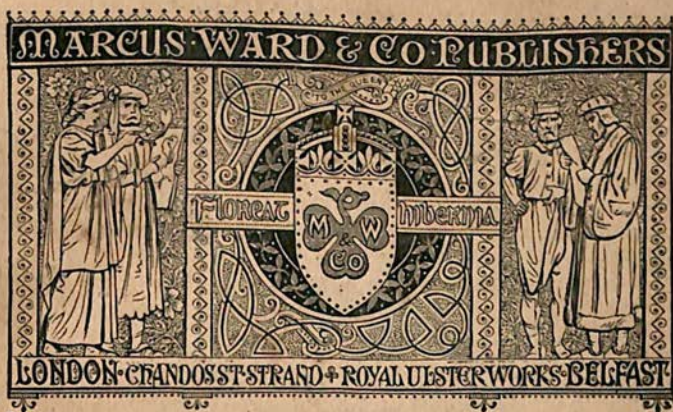
It is well known that Lord Palmerston entertained similar views, and believed that the canal, if completed, would tend to injure the commerce of England.

As England has now (1876) become the chief owner of the canal, by the purchase of the shares held by the Khedive, it is not likely that these gloomy forebodings will be realised. It is better to take a hopeful view of the future, and to look upon this great achievement of human skill and energy as a forward step in the progress of civilised humanity, and one more link in the chain that is binding the nations of the earth together in a common brotherhood of prosperity and peace.

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