

ferent trades of the Egyptians—sculptors, brickmakers, carpenters, ropemakers, cabinetmakers and glassblowers. On another occasion the proprietor is represented sailing in a boat on a lake in his pleasure grounds, or hunting gazelles, or killing with a throwstick geese that are nesting among reeds. These tombs are now generally inhabited by Copts and Arabs, who take no care to preserve the interesting subjects which adorn the walls, and it will soon be impossible amid smoke and accumulated filth at all to decipher them. The western bank was the necropolis of Thebes, and no tombs are found in the opposite side of the river, but it is equally rich in its Temple monuments. The modern town of Thebes is on the eastern bank, and occupies the greater part of the site of the ancient temple of Luxor, and prevents any very accurate examination of this interesting ruin. The wretched hovels of the present inhabitants, as they are in such close proximity, are in striking contrast to this magnificent monument of ancient grandeur. Compelled to examine this temple in detail, we can only suppose the effect the whole must have had. This temple is close to the river, and its southern end was built on a terrace rising from the water's edge. The principal entrance was on the southern side, and in front of its pylon stood two magnificent obelisks erected by Rameses 2nd, one of which still occupies its original position, but the other has been removed to Paris and now adorns the Place de la Concorde. Behind these obelisks are two huge syenite statues of the same king, but they are now nearly buried in the sand and rubbish which many centuries have accumulated around them. This temple was begun during the 18th dynasty, but continued by Rameses 2nd, whose battles are again represented on the face of the pylon. The court within a second pylon has a colonnade, and the capitals of the columns can still be seen above the ground. The temple itself was destroyed by the Persians, and rebuilt by the Ptolemies and Cæsars, and the little now exposed does not possess much interest.

The temple of Karnac is about a mile from the river, and an equal distance from Luxor. The principal part of the ancient city probably occupied this interval, and a dromas of Sphinxes connected the two temples. Karnac is incomparably the grandest ruin in Egypt and was the royal temple dedicated to Amun Ka, the Jupiter of the Egyptians, and its history must be closely connected with the history of Egypt after Thebes became the seat of monarchy. It was founded about 2000 years B. C. by Osirtasen, and all succeeding dynasties vied in the enlargement and embellishment of this great national sanctuary. Approaching it from the river, we enter a long avenue of Sphinxes, which conducts to its western pylon, and passing through this is continued to a second py-

lon with a hall and chambers attached, and then opens into the area of the temple itself. The front propylon has been lofty and massive, but is now much in ruin. The court within has a corridor and chambers on either side, and a double row of columns in the centre, and to the western side a wing has been added at a later date. The pylon at the extremity of the court conducts to the grand hall of Karnac, which is so strikingly magnificent. The columns that have supported the roof are of colossal dimensions, the two centre rows, being the largest, are of 12 columns, the height of which is given as 66 feet, and they are 12 in diameter; 14 rows of 9 each on either side are of rather less dimensions. It is quite impossible to convey an adequate idea of this hall, it is so impressive in its grandeur. The massive columns, so lofty and so beautifully sculptured, with their bell-shaped capitals, are marvellously grand, and this grandeur seems almost augmented rather than diminished by their ruined state. Some lie broken on the ground, others recline, their fall being prevented by those still standing, and the strength and stability of which must therefore be very great. To this hall succeeds a number of chambers that are but imperfectly excavated, and the arrangement of which is most perplexing. Within the large enclosure, and on either side of the temple, are small artificial lakes, which have been lined with solid masonry, and were connected with the temple, supplying it with water for sacrificial purposes. The sculptures on the interior walls of the temple are not particularly interesting, but those on the outer walls are very important. The king Osirei I, having reviewed his troops, marches in the campaign, and, arrived in the enemies' country, besieges a fortified town, situated on a rocky eminence in a woody country and in the vicinity of mountains, to which the inhabitants are fleeing with their flocks and herds. In the next scene the enemy is defeated in an engagement in the field, and the Egyptian king returns in triumph, and makes an offering of the captives and spoils to AmunKa. The two next lines represent similar engagements with an enemy, evidently Asiatic, and the name of their town being read Kauana leaves little doubt that the defeated are the Canaanites. To these succeed other battle scenes of the same wars carried on against the Phœnicians or other inhabitants of Lebanon. In another place Rameses II is represented as continuing the wars which his father had begun, and in the last scene of a long series the Egyptian armies besiege a walled town, and, while one division of the army force the gates, others apply scaling-ladders to the walls, and the enemy is obliged to surrender. All these subjects are most graphically represented, the principal interest centres in the king,

who displays great prowess; sometimes alighting from his car, and at others driving furiously against the enemy, he encounters the kings and chiefs of the opposing army in hand-to-hand fight. These battle scenes are continued on the south wall of the temple, and on the western side are represented the victories of Shishak, at whose court Jeroboam took refuge,* and who invaded Judea in the 5th year of Rehoboam's reign, and who, having conquered Jerusalem, rifled the temple of some of its ornaments and utensils.† He is represented leading in triumphal procession a number of captive kings; the name of one is read by Champollion King of the Jews, and some of them have unmistakably Jewish countenances. This is the most direct testimony to the truth of the Old Testament records which we find in the monuments of Egypt, and is therefore very important. Shishak appears to have contributed much to the enlargement of this temple, and his cartouch, or royal stamp, is found in many places among its sculptures.

Ten days diligently spent in the examination of the ruins of Thebes has only served to quicken the desire for acquaintance with its wonders, and by no means to satisfy it. Its temples, massive yet elegant in their architecture, having their walls covered with bas-reliefs, which relate the conquests of the ancient rulers of Egypt and are executed with remarkable skill, and still retain their vivid colouring, though more than 30 centuries have passed since they received the touch of the painter, and its catacombs so extensive, with their sculptures and paintings descriptive of the manners and domestic habits of the Egyptians, now convey but a faint picture of the ancient Thebes. What a splendid scene must have met the view of the stranger, as he visited this royal city, in the days of her prosperity! And to what a degree of civilization must that nation have arrived that could plan such marvels! Great natural taste must have conjoined with a period of internal peace and prosperity in fostering learning and carrying the arts to such a state of perfection as is unfolded in the Theban monuments. But it was really religion which gave energy to and directed the powers of this people, and it could scarcely have been a mere barbarous superstition which tended so to elevate a nation.

* 1 Kings, xi.—30.

† 1 Kings, xiv.—25—28. 2 Chron. xii.

POETRY.

TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL.

* Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.—Daniel xii. 24.

Where roll the stormy billows
Along the troubled deep;