

FROM KARNAK TO ASSOUAN

By MRS. JULIA A. SYMINGTON

From Karnak to Assouan the Nile valley contracts, and at places only a very narrow strip of soil is sown with beans and other grain. The igneous rocks in the bed of the Nile and on the left shore tell that Assouan is near the ancient boundary of Egypt. On the right limestone hills tower up, with deep chasms in them filled with sand, the fine grains sparkling in the bright sunlight. On rounding a sharp bend of the Nile the city came in view, with its minarets and palm trees. Egyptians, Turks and Nubians throng the shore. You are tempted to think surely this is a new world. The inhabitants are especially striking by their grand manners and stately attitudes, black faces and fine heads, reminding you of the best types of northern races. Their merchandise consists of gums, elephants' teeth and the skins of beasts. No longer are we tempted with antiquities, but with clubs of ebony, pikes, lances, and arrows, whose iron points are said to be poisoned.

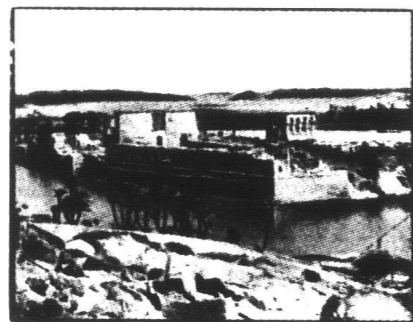
Assouan has about 9,000 inhabitants. It is nearly six hundred miles from Cairo. It is a well built town, and a walk through the bazaars is very interesting. Assouan's former name was Syene, but little can be learned of its early Egyptian history. From the granite quarries of this place the obelisks and other monoliths of the cities of Upper Egypt were procured. In one quarry there is a monolith eighty feet long, with one side still fast to its native rock. The importance of the locality to tourists is owing to the many beautiful historic remains. The chief of these is the Island of Philea, the pearl of Egypt, containing many ruins, the principal being the Temple of Isis

and the smaller temple known as Pharaoh's Bed. They have been elegant structures amidst the most beautiful scenery on the River Nile. The whole island is covered with ruins, but the most important are the ones named. Many of the ruins of this lovely island have been more fully disintegrated by the English officers stationed there, revealing to the visitor new beauties. Since the British occupation many important improvements have taken place; barracks have been built and antiquarian researches of great interest have been



First Cataract of the Nile.

made. I need not at this date describe the Assouan dam, now so familiar to English readers. It has added hundreds and hundreds of cultivated acres and productive fields to the poor fellahin that was once desert. If now it does



Philoe, Temple of Isis.

The Assouan Dam will soon destroy this beautiful ruin.

not blossom as the rose it does and will more and more produce the bread of life to many a hungry Nubian. What if in time the water will undermine these beautiful ruins? They are heathen temples used for nothing but the worship of idols which the Apostle Paul decided were nothing. So holy was Osiris and so terrible that the people were afraid to utter his name. None were allowed to visit this sacred island except the priests, who were always to keep their mysteries from the eyes of the people. Now, however, its shores are trodden by plundering and begging Egyptians and Nubians. The propylon of the temple stands out as an object of grandeur as we approach, and the colonnade is very fine, some of them have been left unfinished. Within the temple on the walls is a copy of the famous Rosetta stone with the Greek translation. The capitals of the columns are exquisitely carved with the lotus and palm leaves. Farther in the interior is the sanctuary and dark rooms connected with the mysteries of the worship of the god. The legends represented on the walls of this temple are of interest. In an inner room, about eight feet square, the death and resurrection of Osiris is represented. He is lying on a couch dead; two

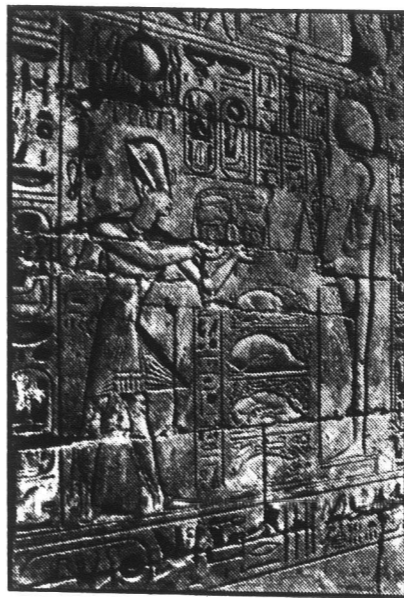
priests standing, one at each end of the couch, are praying. Their hands are uplifted as in supplication to some power, or to the dead Osiris himself. In another part of the scene Osiris has raised himself on his arms and is restored to life.

Of course the Temple of Philea is modern, belonging to the age of the Ptolemies, and the readiness with which the Egyptians could blend Christianity with their mythology is interesting as showing the progress of Christianity in the south. Perhaps St. Mark himself would send teachers, or even go himself, which would be better, to these remote cities, as there had always been communication between Syene and the north of Egypt. Whatever it means, it is evident it is an

Egyptian declaration of the death of Christ and his resurrection. And the scene being laid in an upper room indicates some knowledge of the Bible truth of the meeting in the upper room of Christ and his disciples.

We rode through a poor village amid a storm of demand for bush-beesh to the old quarries, about a mile from Assouan. Blocks of granite are lying there perhaps from the time of the building of the pyramids. The marks of the workmen's tools are clearly seen on the rock and the blocks of stone. The method of quarrying these massive blocks is indicated at Assouan.

Along the face of a block I have described that is ninety-five feet long, I observed a narrow groove had been



Karnak Relief.

cut by a narrow pointed tool. At regular intervals of about three feet cavities had been cut down about four inches broad and wedges driven into them and swollen with water. Whether or their tool was stone or iron the Egyptians worked the beautiful granite and had been at it for days and days with the same method. The relief shows the figure of a man, possibly a deity or a ruler, seated on a throne, surrounded by hieroglyphs. The carving is highly detailed and shows signs of ancient craftsmanship.

near the Nile that they could float their blocks of granite and transport them to any part of Egypt. Sometimes they were moved on sledges and dragged by human force. Time and human life were of small value in the eyes of an Egyptian king. The Oriental yet has no idea of the value of time. As fatalists they are fearless of death, for it is the will of Allah and they die without a murmur. It would often take three years to place these huge blocks in place. This gives an idea of the time spent in bringing down these granite blocks that we all had admired for their beauty and size in and around Cairo, and in fact all the trip up the Nile in the many temples we had seen but had not time to visit in Alexandria, Cairo, with a trip up the temple-lined River Nile.

We can scarcely leave Assouan without some attention to the population which is predominately Egyptian. The travellers find themselves surrounded by Nubians, who are tall and slender in person, far less massive in build than the Theban Arabs. There is something like elegance in their general appearance, and the cast of their features is rather intellectual. They are of a soft dusky black or bronze tint, with a fine glossy skin; they seem to use oil instead of water for cleansing purposes, and load their sable ringlets with something of hair-dressing that is anything but pleasant (castor oil). The women have often been remarked for their beauty by travellers in whose eyes they look like so many sable Venuses. They are shy and in that serene and glowing climate need little clothing. The most common attire seemed thongs of leather trimmed with small shells. They appeared industrious, what little chance we had for observing their habit, as in their hands were braids of beads and other fancy and useful articles—none were idle. On our return we spent our remaining days in visiting temples and tombs of kings and gods that were of less interest. We were glad to think that the days of slavery have passed forever for the Egyptian, and the right or power to crush the joy and life out of men to rear tombs for kings or temples for gods.

Canada's Progress.

Wall Street Journal: The Canadian Northwest is still the brightest agricultural section of the continent. There is not a single note of pessimism, and hardly a single note of caution in the advices received from either the railroads, the people or the special correspondents in the Canadian Northwest. Optimism arising out of the harvesting and marketing of one of the best crops ever grown in the Canadian Northwest has led to optimistic estimates of the future possibilities in that country. The business life of the country is thriving and is advancing at a pace somewhat reminiscent of the boom that created the Dakotas, which is now creating the south-western states.

The Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk are both recording earnings in excess of their previous years' records. Canadian Pacific in particular breaks its records in gross week by week. It is a notable fact that this road records almost every week an increase in gross ranging from \$50,000 to \$150,000. This is the product of new business rather than a development of old resources. The company has an immense increased equipment in service, and its equipment appears to be still pretty well used.

When the electrification of the railways that run underground in London is completed the traveller will be able to traverse sixty miles underground by electric traction without running twice over the same piece of track.

The G. T. P. like terminals are now assured. Their Avignon and real estate there is bound to be in brisk demand. The annual report of Howman & Co., 188 Market St. E. Winnipeg, appearing elsewhere in this issue, is sure to be read with interest by all investors. They are asking \$100,000 only, on very easy terms for the present.

 **PUMPS**
All wood, turned, well-finished, painted, wood heads fitted for 1½ and 1¾ inch iron pipe, Made to Stand Frost
\$5.50
WRITE US!
We drill wells and have our own patent force pump, deep well steam pump, well drilling machinery, etc., etc.
T. H. MAXWELL, 178 RUPERT ST. WINNIPEG.

 **Cater's PUMPS**
only **\$6.00**
A Star Windmill guaranteed to do the work
Write for New Catalogue . . .
Address,
Brandon Pump & Windmill Works
H. CATER, PROP. BRANDON, MAN.

WHEN WRITING ADVERTISERS PLEASE MENTION THE WESTERN HOME MONTHLY