

country, here made attack more easy. Thus the military and governmental forces were of necessity massed together—placed at the sole disposal of a single man that he might use them with instantaneous and crushing power against the foreign foe. The kings of Egypt were not hated as despots; they were worshiped as the safety of the nation. And since the form of government could not be changed without endangering the people, Egypt was generally free from seditions and would-be reformers. A despotic government, devised and accepted by the people, reacted upon them and held them to their traditional institutions from century to century.

Thus we understand the **system of caste** by which each Egyptian followed the occupation of his father, and the division of hereditary occupations, by which priests, who were the men of learning, formed one caste, the warriors another, agriculturists another. The various trades and occupations were all hereditary. There are found cases in the tomb inscriptions, where for twenty generations the son is recorded as having followed the occupation of his father. The lives of individuals were so bound down by tradition, that in the case of the king his hours of eating and drinking and of sleeping were defined by unvarying law.

EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION.

The antiquity of Egyptian civilization, the wealth of the country, the continuity of life, and the hereditary transmission of traditional occupations, help to explain the **perfection of Egyptian science** and of the technical and mechanic arts. On the threshold of history we are astounded by the existence of a nation which surpassed in many arts of civilized life the boasted advancement of the nineteenth century. The various applications of electricity, the use of steam, photography, printing, and the modern explosive agents, are almost the sole exceptions to the general law of Egyptian superiority to, or equality with, ourselves, in material things.

The jealousy with which the priests guarded their knowledge makes the extent of their **astronomic science** uncertain, but it was certainly great. The Greek astronomers who flourished in Egypt in the 3d century B. C., were the first who announced to the world the true diameter of our earth, the approximate distances of the fixed stars, and the revolution of our planetary system round the sun. How much of this knowledge they owed to Egyptian studies is uncertain, but these were at least the basis of their own results. It was an Egyptian astronomer who computed, at a later time, for Julius Caesar, the Julian Calendar (first corrected under Pope Gregory XVI. in the 16th century A. D.).

The
constru
3d cent
of the
taught
exhibit
delicacy

Block
length
lisks.
still er
standing
at Thet
solid blo
val 10 fe
of the
been me
mids, bl
mon. E
stone h
small t
from the
First Ca
Nile. 1
by 31½
says tha
moving
tined to
ple, heav
had reach
the king
men to le
block wa
Arabian
the 13th
The
but the
were mov
power or