

ruined columns of a Christian church. They have a most paltry and diminutive look among the colossal pillars of the pagan temple.

The donkey-ride across the sandy plain at Thebes, to the tombs of the kings, was exceedingly hot; the very air seemed like a breath from the desert. It was so dry, however, that it was by no means so enervating as a humid atmosphere at a much lower temperature. Still hotter was the climb up the steep slopes of the stony Libyan Hills; but the magnificent view of the far-winding Nile, with the fertile plain beneath, and the many groups of ruined temples in this vast Necropolis, well repaid the fatigue of the ascent. We took refuge from the intense heat in a grotto, which formed the entrance to an ancient tomb which had drifted nearly full of sand. Here we had our lunch and were soon beset by a lot of chattering Arabs who wanted to sell "anteekas." I shut my eyes and pretended to be asleep, but soon perceived one of them attempting to steal my sun-shade. When detected in the act there was a great guffaw of laughter from his fellow-rascals.

In sombre rock chambers, the kings and priests of the land, lords of Egypt, from the Great Sea to the bounds of Cush, and from the Libyan to the Syrian Desert, are solemnly laid to rest. Palaces, houses, markets and courts are all gone—gone, the last trace of them. Only the temple and tombs remain, rising here and there in quiet majesty from the green plain or bordering sand of the western desert.

"In 1891 a new find of mummies was discovered in the valley of the kings—over 150 priests and priestesses of the old gods of Egypt. They were accompanied by many thousands of funeral images, and a provision of food in the shape of preserved mutton, honey, and even wine. For three thousand years no eye had gazed upon these painted and varnished coffins, as brilliant in their colours as when laid away. Men drew them up with cords as when men laid them down. But how different this world from that on which they last had looked! The scene grew even more weird and strange, when late in the evening they were borne across the sands of the desert to the river and to the steamboat which was waiting for them. It seemed a new and solemn funeral, the funeral of men dead for thirty centuries."

In this dreary vale of tombs a solitude and desolation, exceedingly impressive, reign on every side. Not a blade of grass, nor a living thing can be seen; nothing but barren and splintered rocks on the right hand and on the left, reflect the heat like a reverberating furnace. It seems to have been one of the chief