

P R E F A C E.

MY DEAR LADS,

Thanks to the care with which the Egyptians depicted upon the walls of their sepulchres the minutest doings of their daily life, to the dryness of the climate which has preserved these records uninjured for so many thousand years, and to the indefatigable labour of modern investigators, we know far more of the manners and customs of the Egyptians, of their methods of work, their sports and amusements, their public festivals, and domestic life, than we do of those of peoples comparatively modern. My object in the present story has been to give you as lively a picture as possible of that life, drawn from the bulky pages of Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson and other writers on the same subject. I have laid the scene in the time of Thotmes III., one of the greatest of the Egyptian monarchs, being surpassed only in glory and the extent of his conquests by Rameses the Great. It is certain that Thotmes carried the arms of Egypt to the shores of the Caspian, and a people named the Rebu, with fair hair and blue eyes, were among those depicted in the Egyptian sculptures as being conquered and made tributary. It is open to discussion whether the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt took place in the reign of Thotmes or many years subsequently, some authors assigning it to the time of Rameses. Without attempting to enter into this much discussed question, I have assumed that the Israelites were