

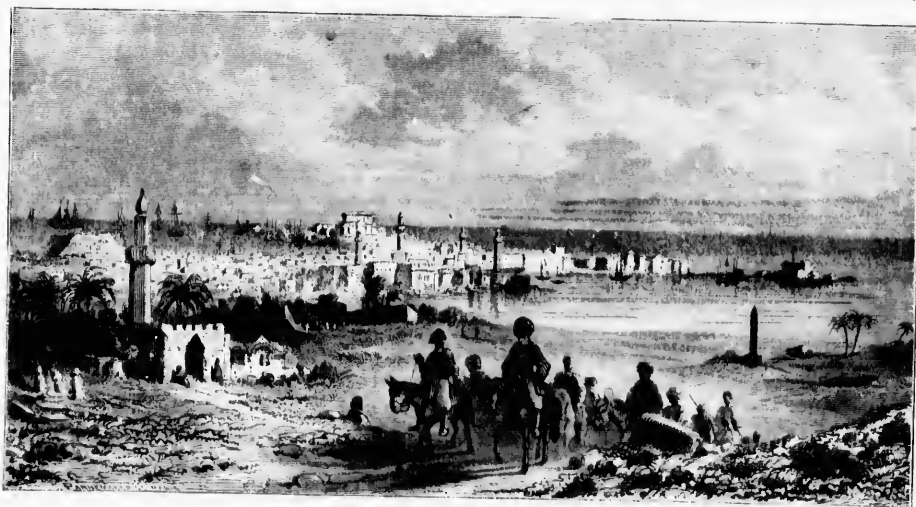
three months, the whole country is covered with water. This moistens the land, and leaves rich earth behind. The farmers do not need to plough the land or manure it; but when the water has drained off they sow their grain in the mud. There are many canals through the country, from which water is taken and applied to the growing crops.

Egypt has always been noted for its grain. It also produces cotton, sugar-cane, and indigo. There are many beautiful groves of the date-palm on the borders of the desert.

769. The houses of the farmers are not scattered here and there over the country, but are collected in villages on the higher grounds, so as to be out of the way of the water.

770. The ancient Egyptians were very learned in some things. They built large cities and idol temples, which were adorned with immense stone columns and statues, many ruins of which are still to be seen in the country. Among the wonderful remains of ancient Egyptian art are the Pyramids. These are immense stone buildings, large at the bottom, and drawn in on all sides, as one stone rises above another, till they come to a point at the top. The largest pyramid is four hundred and sixty feet high.

771. The ancient Egyptians did not bury their dead as we do. They first embalmed the body, by applying spices and drugs, so that it would not decay, and they then laid it in a sepulchre, hewn in the rocks on the borders of the country. Many of these embalmed bodies,



773. ALEXANDRIA

called *mummies*, have been brought to Europe and America, and are kept in museums as curiosities.

772. On the sepulchres and sculptured rocks are found ancient inscriptions in picture-writing and curious characters. Learned men in our times have discovered how to read these inscriptions, and have thus gained much knowledge of the early history and customs of the country.

773. **Cairo**, near the Nile, is the capital of Egypt. Its numerous mosques form the most attractive feature of the

city. The great pyramids are a few miles distant. **Alexandria** is an important port.

774. **Port Said** on the Mediterranean, and **Suez** on the Red Sea, are small places at opposite ends of the Suez Canal.

775. The **Suez Canal**, which connects the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, affords a short route for commerce between Western Europe and India, China, and Japan. **Railways** connect Suez with Cairo and Alexandria.