

Sailing about 200 miles above Assouan, through ranges of desert hills, sloping down to green banks, studded with palm and mimosa, or standing cliff-like over the stream, we see before us the bold mass of rock upon which, as we approach it, colossal figures become visible. They are so vast that they look like some freak of nature rather than the work of puny man. It is Abu-Simbel—one of the temples of the great Rameses, and worthy of rank with the edifices of Thebes or Gizeh. Elsewhere, the great Egyptian builders had erected their edifices upon the surface of the earth. Here a mountain had been hollowed into shrines for the gods, and hewed into imperishable monuments, the glory of the Pharaohs.

The smaller of the two temples is cut into the rock to the depth of ninety feet. It was dedicated to Hathor. The facade, ninety feet in length, represents Rameses standing among the gods as though their equal in dignity and power. In the interior, the mild, gentle face of the goddess appears on the walls amongst her kindred deities, whilst the hero-king records his conquests of the world as far as it was then known.



NUBIAN MUD HUTS.

Elsewhere this temple would rivet our attention upon itself; here it is dwarfed almost into insignificance by its companion. Four granite warders hewn out of the living rock keep watch at its portals, seated in solemn majesty, as they have sat for nearly four thousand years. Figures fail to convey any adequate sense of their magnitude. Murray says: "Their total height is about sixty-six feet without the pedestal; the ear measures three feet five inches; from the inner side of elbow joint to the end of middle finger, fifteen feet. The total height of the facade of the temple is about one hundred feet." The lower part of the figures is buried in the sand, but they tower so high above the drifted mass, that it is a task of some labour to climb up into the lap of one of them. (See page 327.)

The beauty of the faces is even more remarkable than their enormous magnitude. Usually we associate a coarseness and rudeness of finish with great size in works of art; but every visitor is struck by the delicacy and