

fore this temple was completed, and it is not improbable that the revelation of the fall had been engrafted into the Egyptian mythology, and especially connected with the mythic tales of Osiris.

Near this temple of Isis stands a smaller ruin overhanging the eastern branch of the river, and which has also a very beautiful appearance. Indeed the ruins of I'hidae are so numerous and complicated as to present a labyrinth. There still remain large portions of a wall which surrounded the whole island, and rendered it an inaccessible sanctuary.

We would willingly have lingered longer on this interesting island, but the shades of evening warned us to our boat, and we enjoyed our return to Assouan in the cool of the day. The same evening we left Assouan on our return down the river. In descending the stream, on account of the prevalence of the north wind, the yards are lowered from the masts and the boat is propelled by oars, or left to the force of the current.

Between Assouan and Thebes the temples of Esne, Edfoo and Roumhos do not differ from the general style of Egyptian architecture, and present little of interest; they all belong to the age of the Ptolemies. That at Edfoo is only now being perfectly excavated by Mons Mariette, whom the French Government has commissioned to the work of research in Egypt; it is discovered to be in remarkable preservation, and the colouring of its sculptures is still vivid.

At Hagar Silsilis are the sandstone quarries which were extensively worked, and where the material was obtained for many of the temples of Egypt. Here are some interesting grottoes or temp'es excavated in the rock, and which were likely for the service of those engaged in the quarries. The principal one is interesting. It is in the eastern cliff, and has a corridor in front supported by natural columns, and is covered with sculptures. Horus, a king shortly subsequent to the Exodus, is represented engaging in battle with the Ethiopians, and, having defeated them, he is in the next scene borne in triumph, seated in a splendid shrine, which is carried on men's shoulders. He is preceded by his troops and the captives of the conquered nation, some of whom are chained two and two by the hands, others are supplicating the king. A little further on the king is represented making an offering to the presiding deity.

A short distance below Hagar Silsilis is El Kab, the ancient Elvhius. Walls of crude brick of great thickness, and which no doubt enclosed the ancient town and temples, still remain in remarkable preservation; but there are few traces of the temples, as the Arabs find it easier to remove the ancient ruins than to quarry from the rock, and in this wanton destruction of most interesting remains they are

encouraged by the present government, who build some of the public works with the stones of ancient temples. Near El Kab there are some tombs, the inscriptions on which illustrate the life of the ancient Egyptians. The drawings or frescoes are on stucco, with which the walls are covered, and their colour is wonderfully preserved. The outer chamber has probably been a private chapel. On the western wall are represented agricultural scenes,—ploughing with oxen, sowing, broadcast, and reaping with a small sickle three kinds of grain, wheat, barley and doors. The owner is present in the field with his two-horsed chariot. Then succeed the treading with oxen, winnowing, and stoning of the grain. In the next scene an inventory is being taken of the effects of the deceased and men are bringing asses, oxen, and sheep to a scribe who is recording their number, others are weighing and taking an account of the gold, which is in the shape of rings, and the weight in the opposite scale is in the form of an ox lying down. Then are represented a fishmonger's and poulterer's shops, and a little further some men are fishing with a net, and others trapping birds. In another compartment they gather and press grapes, and preserve the wine in jars; and below is apparently a funeral procession. Boats convey the people with their horses and chariots across the river. These boats are large and highly ornamented, and resemble the modern dahabeeh or passenger boat. On the opposite wall the owner of the tomb with his wife and child are entertaining a number of friends. The reception is very stiff and formal, but great attention is paid to the guests, whom the servants amount and present with a lotus-flower. Ample provision is made for the entertainment. A goose, shoulder of mutton and other meats besides baskets of fruits and jars of wine stand in readiness and to the couch on which the man and his wife are sitting is chained a favonite-monkey. In a recess at the end of the chamber are the sitting statues of Osiris, Isis and Horus, now much mutilated. To this chamber other chambers join, the entrance to which has been by a stone door, where the inscriptions had been evidently continued, and which apparently fitted so closely as to prevent detection. In the inner chambers the mummies were deposited. Another tomb preserves the names of several kings of the 18th dynasty.

After leaving El Kab we soon reached Thebes, and moored our boat on the western bank. At Thebes both the Lybian and Arabian chains of hills recede and leave the widest expansion of fertile land in Upper Egypt, and the fittest place for

\* Herodotus states that there were no vines in Egypt, but the monuments prove that the vine was cultivated in Egypt in accordance with the accounts of Scripture. Gen. xl. 10. Numb. xx. 8.

the site of a great capital. The plain resembles an amphitheatre in form, and is divided by the river, on either side of which are the monuments of the ancient city. These monuments testify to us of a time when it was the centre of the civilization of the human race, and we would desire to know much of its history—a complete narrative of its origin, rise and fall, but the information is so limited that we must be content to dwell in dim twilight, and can scarcely hope for a clearer day. The accounts of this city given by ancient writers, whose works remain to us, are meagre, but they corroborate the tale of its ruins and the allusions to it in the Bible. We know that it rose into great importance when after the expulsion of the Hyksos or shepherd kings a native dynasty again ruled Egypt and made Thebes the capital of the Empire. Under a long succession of victorious monarchs it was increased and embellished with its magnificent temple palaces, but it began to decline under the Ethiopians, who made themselves masters of Egypt, and at length yielded to the invading army of Cambyses, who wantonly destroyed many of its most beautiful buildings, and rifled it of its wealth. It was the hundred gated Thebes of the Classics,\* and the No-Ammon or No of the Prophets† Jeremiah‡ and Ezekiel§ prophesied its downfall, and its ruin was held up by Nahum as a warning to Nineveh¶.

\* This referred to the gates of its temples and palaces, for it is now generally understood to have had no walls.

† Ammon was the principal deity of Thebes, which was called No-Ammon—the portion of Ammon or dwelling-place of Ammon, sometimes called simply No.

‡ Jer. XLVI, 25. § Ezek. XXX, 14. ¶ Nah. III. 8.

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EDITED BY NORMAN McLEOD, D.D.

Edinburgh: Alexander Strachan & Co. Montreal: B. Dawson & Son.

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