

purpose these stupendous edifices were erected, remains a mystery, which the most learned antiquarians have in vain attempted to solve. Were they for tombs or for temples of worship? Probably they united both purposes.

THEBES.

The antiquarian perfectly revels at Thebes. Here are ruins the most ancient, extensive, and magnificent in the world. I remember when a boy, how often I have walked many a long mile, repeatedly to visit an old mansion which they told me had been standing one hundred and fifty years, and in which Washington quatered in the war. I used to gaze upon that old building and wonder and wonder and examine each brick and each foundation stone, and think on the strange people that lived there, to me far distant in the mist of antiquity. I came to Thebes years after and when I had seen the *Cloaca-maxima* of Numa Pompilius I thought the climax was surely capped, and again exhausted my wonder and awe. But now we are at Thebes—and what shall we say? Numa Pompilius is an infant in age to him whose cartouche we deciphered to day, and the old Dutch manion like a drop in a bucket, compared with buildings which have seen the sun encircle four thousand eclipses and have witnessed one hundred generations of men rise and fall on the arena of life. A minute description of these ruins would be impossible, to say nothing of being unreadable, for a whole day's ride hardly suffices to carry you from one extremity to another. Karnak eclipses Luxor as Luxor eclipses every other ruin we have seen. The great temple of the former would alone easily justify a journey round the world to see, though that journey should have to be made in hulks which floated one thousand years ago. The two places are over a mile from each other, and were once connected by the grandest and most imposing avenue the world ever saw. Monster men and ram-plinthes bordered its sides, some of which remain with their long spiral horns, and others which Cambyzes bruised and levelled when he came this way. Such was the entrance to this vast edifice, whose ruins are a mile and a half in circuit, and whose vast wilderness of obelisks and columns and pylons perfectly bewilder the mind and cause the eye to ache in its gaze.

The propyla, the most enormous in Egypt are not more than half in ruins, and yet in these ruins seem to be stone enough for ten cathedrals. We clambered to its top and enjoyed a view which we would not have lost for the world. For in one glance we took in the whole Theban plain, bristling with vast forests of half ruined obelisks and colonades, and backed by the high Mokattam chain reflecting gold-like and purple, and there was Luxor in the distance, and across the river, the "Lybian suburb," as it was formerly called—the Plantagenet part of the ancient city, where its magnates used to live in their country palaces of sandstone and granite. We could see *Medinet Habou* and the *Ramesseum*, and the *Vaal Memnon*, all at one glance, and in the rear the *Tombs of the Kings*, where whole mountains are dismembered and turned into sepulchral palaces. When we had come down and entered the vast portal, we found ourselves in a vast area lined with a double corridor, and once graced in the centre by a double line of immense columns, one only of which remains, sentinel-like, rearing its dusky capital above its prostrate fellows. I knew it was somewhere here that we were to look for the name of *Shishak*, and the representation of his victories over Judah, and I enquired of my guide, but he seemed to know as little about it as myself, so I opened my hieroglyphical dictionary, and went to resolving cartouches. Near the south-east corner I found a giant figure before whom a file of war prisoners were presenting themselves whose physiognomies were as plainly and decidedly Jewish, as we could wish, and above the kingly figure we resolved the name and were as happy as if we had found a vein of gold. This was he that came up against Jerusalem, with the *Zubims*, and *Sukkims*, and *Ethiopian*, and horsemen and chariots without number—of whom Shemariah warned the rebellious Rehoboam, and who carried away the king's treasures, and the temple treasures, even all—and these treasures he now pours out before his god *Amonra*, and there are shields portrayed here, and in them are the names of Beth-horan and Megeddo—and above all is inscribed, "*Judah-melek-kah*," king of the country of Judah. What a fine corroboration is this of Scripture history, and how thankful we ought to be to

old Egypt for it, especially when the so-called "professed friends of light and reason," have laboured so hard to press her into the service of infidelity!

After you have passed this outer court, then you emerge into the wonder of the whole. The Grand Hall measures 329 feet in length, and more than one half that distance in breadth. Notre-Dame might stand within it, and not touch its wall. Along its centre are twelve massive columns, of whose magnitude you may judge when I tell you that six men with extended arms would hardly embrace their circumference. Then beautiful lotus-shaped capitals gave them an appearance at once tasteful and sublime. In the rear of them are one hundred and twenty-two smaller, whose capitals imitate the lotus bud closed. The wall is grand beyond conception, and when seen in the stillness of night under the light of a full moon, as we saw it repeatedly, painfully solemn and impressive. There are several courts and obelisks beyond the Grand Hall. I saw one of the latter as shining and beautiful as if just from the sculptor's chisel, and on it was the name of one who had reigned before the Exodus. From the beauty and sharpness and deepness of those hieroglyphical lines inscribed in the hardest basalt and granite, nothing is more fully confirmed in my mind than that those ancient men were well acquainted with the use of steel: this is corroborated almost to a certainty by the bluish tint given to the blades of their tools and swords in the paintings on their tombs. We rode home with our head full of strange thoughts—whichever way we turned we could see some stately half ruined pylon almost blending with the horizon, once heading a magnificent line of sphinxes which served as an avenue to this grand central isle. What giants there were in those days, and could we restore those ruined fabrics to their original splendor, what a scene of enchantment and wonder we should here possess! When that council hall was filled with a thousand tribute kings, and the Great Ramases used here to return in triumph, laden with glory, and with spoil, and followed by captives from nations north of Taurus—*Correspondence N. Y. Observer*

[ORIGINAL.]

MAMMON'S CROWN.

BY SYLVICOLA.

I slept, and 'mid a landscape bright I wander'd far along,
And lo! a form of wondrous height appear'd amid the throng.
The diadem of ages crown'd his brows of lofty mould,
And princely vestments hung around his form of burnish'd gold.
And in his hand he held a crown, so temptingly display'd,
That high and low fell prostrate down to worship 'neath its shade.
I mark'd a youth of graceful form, with cheek of manly health,
Long had a brav'd life's darkest storm in hope of earning
He look'd not nor linger'd he behind, but every danger brav'd,
And onward press'd with eager mind—the crown was all he crav'd.
And then methought a form approach'd with slow and cautious tread,
And ever and anon he crouch'd and meanly bent his head;
He bow'd to power, he stoop'd to pride, and when his way was clear,
He rush'd along with plant stride, and knelt to worship there.
And then came one with stealthy pace, a borrow'd mask he wore;
For guilt was gray on his face, his hand was dark with gore,
He grasp'd the vile assassin's blade to clear his own dark path,
And 'neath that golden crown he laid the price of blood and death.
And then methought the child of fame whose lofty brow enthron'd
The soul of nations, thither came, with glory's chaplet crown'd,
His name had nations peal'd aloud, the book of fame enroll'd,
Yet like the grovelling slave he bow'd and knelt to worship gold.
The hero of the battle field at length came by that way,
He saw, and he had to yield and slavish homage pay.
The long sought coronet of fame was round his time-scar'd brow,
But ah! he said his glorious name and bent the captive now.
And then a hoary pilgrim pass'd whose hope was in the skies,
He look'd at the chain was round him cast—he knelt to crave the prize.
The soldier of the cross came by, the bait was held to view,
He look'd at—he long'd, and with a sigh he knelt to worship too.
I wonder'd why such fearful power was in that golden crown,
That ever in temptations' hour it made the world bow down,
And why that monarch thus could draw both greatness, guilt
and worth.
Till given on his brow I saw—*The Mammon of the earth.*
Inisfil, C. S., August 1851.

SUPPOSED RUINS OF THE TOWER OF BABEL.

I rode to it over a perfect flat, bordering on a swamp, but an elevated, and reached its base in a little more

than two hours, having stopped to shoot at game more than once by the way, so that I estimated the distance at eight miles. The view on the Hildah side is intercepted by the very large mound of Ibrahim-ul-Kharezmi. Having cleared that by ascending or going round its base, the Birrs is seen as a lofty, irregular pillar, built upon an earthen hill and rising from a vast level of sand for though there are numerous mounds of various sizes, far and near around it, and the ground is covered with bricks and pot-herds, the general surface is as flat as water. The height of mound and sand taken together, seemed to me from about one hundred and eighty to two hundred feet, but I understand that this is short of the truth, the former alone rising one hundred feet above the level of the plain, while the latter attains a height of thirty-five feet more, a two hundred and thirty-five feet. On nearer approach you discover that this supposed earthen mound is really, a mass of sun-dried bricks, mingled with fragments of kiln-dried bricks, of various colors, yellow, red, out of which protrudes a lofty mass of the most exquisite brick masonry possible, which is the same as the aforesaid. To trace the design or original form of the structure seems to me impossible, because the top and side are covered with the debris that has been caused to moulder down, leaving only the corners of solid brickwork here and there peeping out. The complete subdivision must have been very ancient, as appears from this, that the fragments of brick which form a sort of macadamized pavement over the top and upper parts of the side are now covered with lichenous coat, like those of an ancient cairn—a slow process in so dry a climate, and the separation of the bricks used in the upper part of the structure those below, is equally obvious from the fact that the former do not crumble into dust, while the under ones which are of a larger size, do. I saw no sun-dried bricks used in the centre part of the building, which may be more properly termed the tower.

On the southeast side, or that next to Hildah, is a very large mass, formed of sun-dried bricks, joined to the lower part of the centre; but it appears as if this had originally been distinct, and that it had been united by the washing down of debris, both having filled up the space between them. There is no corresponding projection on the other side. But it is on mounting this mass of brick that one begins to comprehend the vastness of the original structure and the utterness and extraneous nature of the ruin that has overtaken it. On ascending to the summit, you find yourself at the basis of a fabric built, as I have said, of the most singularly beautiful masonry, the bricks being joined with layers of cement so thin that you are at a loss to understand why it cannot easily separate them from one another, but trying, you find it next to impossible to do so. The mass, which I estimated at 50 (but which I have since learned is only thirty-five) feet in height, has been rent in two by a crack through which you can see, and its breadth bears so small a proportion to its height, that its foundation not connected with the original fabric below, it must have long since given way; upon it, the elements and seasons seem to have little effect, and it defies the yet more destructive hand of man. The most striking objects, I think, of the ruin are the remarkable blackened and partly vitrified masses which lie at the foot of the fragments just described, and which, from the disorder they are found in, appear to have fallen from some greater height than any now remains. On examination, you find that they consist of brickwork, but so much influenced by the action of fire as to have lost their original character. Even the texture and division between brick and mortar has been so much obliterated, as to be often indistinguishable, and the whole has been converted into a mass of the hardest, and, with the exception of a few air bubbles here and there, the closest texture conceivable—I know of no rock so tough and hard. Had no hammer, with a fragment of itself I tried to break off a bit obviously a single brick, which projected little from the rest, but with all my force I was unable to break it, and was obliged to take specimens from what was left.

The question instantly suggested itself, what has these fire-seathed masses been? and by what means came they to be exposed to such an overpowering degree of heat they must have undergone? I can conceive nothing less than the continued heat of some great furnace sufficient to produce the effect apparent here, and how could they have been applied at the base