

Book Notices.

Pharaohs, Fellahs and Explorers.

By AMELIA B. EDWARDS. Illustrated, 8vo. Harper Bros., New York; and Methodist Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.

Many of our readers have read with delight Miss Edwards' charming volume, "A Thousand Miles up the Nile," and her book of travel in the Tyrol, "Among the Dolomites." Some of them may have heard her lectures on Egypt and its monuments during her recent visit to Canada. The way in which Miss Edwards became one of the first living authorities on Egyptology is somewhat remarkable. Being on a sketching tour in Southern France, the bad weather drove her to Italy, and from thence to Egypt, where she made her famous two thousand mile journey on the Nile. She became fascinated with the study of the memorials of the long dead and buried past, mastered the literature of the subject, and herself made important discoveries. She is a lady of indomitable enterprise and pluck, as indicated by the fact that while lecturing in America she broke her arm, but, nothing daunted, she appeared on the platform the same evening with her arm in splints, and went on with her lectures.

In this volume she gathers up the substance of those lectures, with large additions, notes and references. The somewhat colloquial form of the lectures is still maintained in the book, which makes it more vivacious reading and more easily kept in memory. Miss Edwards begins her study with the remark, "It may be said of some very old places as of some very old books, that they are destined to be forever new." Egypt is pre-eminently one of these. In these charming chapters she draws aside the veil of ages, unrolls the ancient papyri, and interprets the hieroglyphics, throwing a thousand interesting side-lights on the daily life and occupations, the laws, insti-

tutions and religion, the literature and philosophy, the art and architecture of that most ancient land. She makes the statement that the estimated number of embalmed mummies during the period when the custom of embalment was practised reaches the enormous total of 731,000,000 human mummies, or about three-fourths of the entire population of the earth at the present time.

One of the chief topics of interest in the study of ancient Egypt is the light which it throws on the sacred narrative of Scripture, and the confirmation which it gives to its historic credibility. A very interesting section is given to the buried cities of ancient Egypt, the "treasure-cities of Goshen," and "Pithom of Succoth," described in the Book of Exodus, where have recently been found specimens of the bricks made first with straw, then without. Important explorations are now going on at Tanis (Zoan). It is claimed that Pharaoh's house at Taphanhes has been discovered, even the brick-work or pavement described by Jeremiah being identified beyond doubt.

There are exceedingly interesting chapters on the development of Egyptian art and sculpture and its relationship to Greek decorative art. The numerous illustrations on this most ancient art in the world will be a surprise to those who derive their only conceptions of Egyptian art from the hieroglyphs and stiff inscribed figures of ancient tombs and temples.

The explanations of the hieroglyphic writing, and glimpses of the ancient literature, philosophy, religious writing folk-lore and folk-song, tales, love-songs and threshing-songs of the ancient Egyptian are of fascinating interest. A threshing-song is thus paraphrased :

"Hie along, oxen, tread the corn faster;
The straw for yourselves, the grain
for your master. . ."

We know that Herodotus, Plato