

EGYPT'S RETURN AND HEALING.—No. II.

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WE have already contemplated one phase of prophetic announcement concerning the ancient kingdom of the Pharaohs, and have seen how rapidly was fulfilled the prediction that it should become desolate, that the nation should be scattered and wasted. The princes of Zoan before long showed themselves fools, and the princes of Noph were deceived to their ruin, for the mouth of the Lord had already spoken their doom.

But now there is a second verse of equal force, and of a serener temper, far more hopeful for the depressed nation. He who smites here covenants to heal; there are certain conditions annexed to the promise He makes, but these are only the common conditions of pardon in case a penitent is forgiven. Egypt must "return," and the people must be eager in "entreaty" for the blessing engaged: "And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them."

We keep in mind what has been said concerning the loss of political integrity, the dominance of foreigners, the changes of the atmosphere, the pestilence, the vices, and the destructive rains of heaven. The worst of this, however, is found in the debasement of the nation's feeling. Egypt has lost heart, and so is altogether gone astray. Let us consider also that with these violent interjections of an outside and dangerous European spirit among the people, the old reverences are gone. A Mohammedan will stop in his prayers any time to ask a traveler for backshish; he is not in earnest, but is working under a mere mechanical pressure of tradition, so much to the square inch. No patriotism, no loyalty, no public spirit, no interest in anything can be found worth mentioning in all that land. Intrigue is the basis for each form of government, and assassination is the plan of revolutions. No homes are established; the family tie is almost nothing. There can grow up no sentiment, no poetry, no imagination, under such a regimen. It would be preposterous to think of such a thing as embalming Joseph or Jacob, or having any pomp of real feeling over any leader or friend whatsoever. We read the romances of "Uarda" and "The Sisters," written by the historian Ebers; such scenes of venerable and youthful life, with love and fidelity and truth in them, could not be discovered there in Egypt now. It was a crime, long generations ago, to pledge the sacred mummies of one's father and his ancestors; but one might redeem an abhorrent pawn like this in three months. If he did not he fell into infamy the most scorching that could fasten itself upon an Egyptian in that grand old age. One king,