

mob. Donkeys being secured, we make a break through the crowd, mount our donkeys, and ride away as rapidly as possible.

We follow an embankment or dyke bordered on either side by wheat fields of brightest green, and traverse the vast plain, shaded by palms and strewn with blocks of granite, broken crockery, and crumbled fragments of sun-dried brick made from Nile mud. This is Memphis, the oldest and one of the greatest cities in the world, a city old in the time of Abraham and Joseph. "No other capital," says Miss Edwards, "dates back so far as this, or kept its place in history so long. Founded four thousand years before our era,* it beheld the rise and fall of thirty-one dynasties; it survived the rule of the Persian, Greek, and Roman. It became the quarry from which the



WATER-SELLER, CAIRO.

old and new Cairo were built. Now it is an utter desolation—a few large rubbish heaps, a dozen or so of broken statues, and a name."

Even in the middle ages its ruins extended "half a day's journey" in every direction. A fallen colossus marks the site of the main entrance to the temple of Ptah, a temple once as large and as magnificent as that at Karnak. Of this, not a vestige remains. Herodotus states that Sesostris—that is, Rameses the Great—built a colossal statue of himself in front of the great gateway. And there it lies to the present day, the memorial of that wonderful king, a gigantic trunk forty-two feet long. For age after age it lay as it fell, face downward, in the mud, every year drowned in the annual inundation of the Nile—a not unfitting type of the fallen grandeur of Memphis. It has now been raised out of the mud, and supported by a brick pedestal. We climb a ladder, and pace up and down on its gigantic breast—there is ample room for six persons to walk about. The stony features



SHERBET-SELLER,
CAIRO.

*Miss Edwards follows the medium chronology, that of Lepsius. The chronology of Mariette is about 1,100 years longer, that of Wilkinson about 1,200 years shorter.