

cessors in the same Dynasty had already founded the town of Crocodilopolis, in the centre of the Faium, which is proved by some ruins that still exist belonging to that period; and they probably conducted the Nile Canal, Bahr-Jusef, which branches off from Derut-Scherif, into the basin of the desert. That part of the basin which is most advanced and situated highest, terminated in a lake formed by means of gigantic dams, many of which still exist; and the connection of the canal was regulated by sluices in such a manner, that in the dry season the reserved water could flow back again into the valley of the Nile, and irrigate the country around the capital long after the Nile had retreated within its banks. Amenemhe built his Pyramid upon the shore of the lake, and a splendid temple in front of it. It afterwards formed the centre of the Labyrinth whose many hundred chambers, forming three regular masses of buildings, surrounded the oldest portion, and according to Herodotus, were destined by the Dodecarchs for the general diets. The ruins of the Labyrinth had never yet been correctly represented, not even in their general arrangement. An Arabian canal, which was carried through it at a later period, had drawn away the attention of passing travellers from that portion of the chambers which was in best preservation. We have made the most exact ground plan, accompanied by sections and views. A journey round the province, as far as Birget-el-Qorn, and beyond it, to the ruins of Diméh and Qasr Queun, induced us to remain several months in this neighbourhood.

On the 23rd August we embarked at Beni-suef, visited a small rock temple of King Sethos 1st, at Surarich, on the eastern shore, and farther on the remains of later monuments in the neighbourhood of Tehneh. At Kum-ahmar, a little to the south of Zauiet-el-meitin we examined a series of nineteen rock-tombs belonging to the 6th Manethonic Dynasty. The group of tombs which are scattered about a few days' journey to the south, at Schech-Said, El-Harib, Wadi-Selin, and still farther on, at Qasr-e-Saiat, also belonging to this period, which, in point of age, was immediately connected with the flourishing time of the great builder of the Pyramids. If we judge by the remains now extant, it appears that there were, at that early period especially, in this portion of Central Egypt a number of flourishing cities. Royal kindred are frequently met with among the ancient possessors of the tombs, but no sons or daughters of the king, because there was no royal residence in that neighbourhood. But we found the last flourishing period of the old Monarchy, the 12th Manethonic Dynasty, represented in this part of Egypt by the most beautiful and most considerable remains. The rock-tombs of Beni Hassan, so remarkable for their architecture, as well as for the various paintings on their walls, peculiarly belong to this period. The town to which they appertained, the residence of a governor of the eastern province, has entirely disappeared all except the name, which is preserved in the inscriptions. It appears that it only flourished a short time during this Dynasty and again declined at the invasion of the Hyksos. In the neighbouring Berscheh also, and farther on, among the Lybian rocks, behind the town of Siut, which was as important 4000 years ago as it is at present, we again found the same plans of tombs on as magnificent a scale, whose period of erection might be recognised even at a distance.

It is a singular fact, that in point of age the greater proportion of the remains of the Egyptian monuments become more modern the higher we ascend the Nile valley, the reverse of what might have been expected from a large view of the subject; according to which the Egyptian civilization of the Nile valley extended from south to north. While the Pyramids of Lower Egypt, with the monuments around them, had displayed the oldest civilization

of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Dynasties in such wonderful abundance, we found the 6th Dynasty, and the most flourishing period of the 12th, the last of the old Monarchy, especially represented in Central Egypt. Thebes was the brilliant capital of the new Monarchy, especially of their first Dynasties, surpassing all other places in the number of its wonderful monuments, and even now it offers us a reflection of the splendour of Egypt in her greatest times. Art, which still created magnificent things even in its decline, under the Ptolemies and the Roman Emperors, has left considerable monuments behind it, consisting of a series of stately temples in Dendera, Erment, Esneh, Edfu, Kum-Ombo, Debdod, Kalabscheh, Dendur, Dakkeh, which are all, with the exception of Dendera, in the southern part of the Thebaid, or in Lower Nubia. Lastly, those monuments of the Nile valley which are situated most to the south, especially those of the "Island" of Meroe, are the latest of all, and most of them belong to the centuries after the Christian era.

We hastened immediately from the monuments of the old Monarchy in central Egypt to Thebes, and deferred till our return the examination of the well-preserved, but modern temple of Dendera, the ruins of Abydos, and several other places. But of Thebes also, we took but a preliminary survey, for we only remained there twelve days, from the 6th to the 18th of October.

We were impatient to commence immediately our second fresh task, which consisted in the investigation of the Ethiopian countries, situated higher up the river. The French-Tuscan expedition did not go beyond Wadi Halfa; Wilkinson's careful description of the Nile land and its monuments, which contains so much information, only extends a little higher up, as far as Semneh. The most various conjectures were still entertained concerning the monuments of Gebel, Barkal, and Meroe, with reference to their age and their signification. It was necessary to obtain a general view of the true relation between the History and civilization of Egypt and Ethiopia, founded upon a complete examination of the remains which are still extant. Therefore, after a cursory visit to the temple ruins, as far up as Wadi Halfa, we returned to Korusko, from which place we started on the 8th of January, 1844, through the great desert to Abu-Hammed, and the upper Nile countries, on the 16th of January we arrived at Abu-Hammed, on the other side of the desert; on the 28th, at Begerauiéh, near to which the Pyramids of Meroe are situated. From Schendi, which lies more to the south, we visited the temple ruins of Naga and Wadi e Sofra, far on in the interior of the eastern desert. On the 5th of February we reached Chartum at the confluence of the White and the Blue Nile. From this place, accompanied by Abeken, I descended the Blue River, passed the ruins of Soba and Sennar, as far as the 13° N. Lat.; whilst the other members of the expedition returned from Chartum to the Pyramids of Meroe. The tropical countries of the Nile, when contrasted with those northern ones devoid of rain, extending south as far as the 17°, and the plants and animals now almost exclusively confined to South Ethiopia, when compared with individual representations of the ancient Egyptian monuments, were rendered still more interesting by the discovery of some monuments, with inscriptions upon them, near Soba, by which we obtained traces of the ancient vernacular language of those districts in a written character resembling the Coptic.

I also made use of our residence in these districts to be instructed by the natives of the adjacent countries in the grammar and vocabulary of their languages.

On the 5th of April, I returned with Abeken to the other members of the expedition at Begerauiéh. After drawings had been made of all that still existed which peculiarly represented