

MEMPHIS.

Ethiopia and

the origins of
civilization in this

the same ex-
tents at once for
the place of temple
in the Nile valley,
that the oldest
civilization centered
on superior fertility
and the large
available ground,
and of the coun-
try in the earliest civiliza-
tion in later times,
and to the destruc-
tion of the valley
exposed to
in the 7th cen-
tury from their time
in the lower valley.
The new settlers,

have been able to
make it interesting,
and that the earliest
date when Mem-

phis—the
empire, whose
beginning has been seen there
at the end of this period

have been already mentioned in connection with the ruins of Thebes.

Over sixty pyramids are still in fair preservation. Of these, the greater pyramids of Gizeh, three in number, are the most wonderful. The largest of the three covers thirteen acres of ground—twice the area of the largest building in the world, St. Peter's at Rome—and is 480 feet high.* It contains two tomb chambers for the stone coffins of the king and queen. The king who built this pyramid was named Chufu†—a name transformed by the Greek Herodotus, who visited Egypt in the 5th century B. C. and described the pyramids, into Cheops.‡ The pyramid of Chafra (Chephren, in Herodotus) is 447 feet high; of Menkera (Mykerinus), 218 feet high. The entrances to the galleries which lead to the tomb chambers were originally closed by enormous blocks of stone.

Religion.—The sentiment which prompted the construction of these tombs was analogous to that which created the custom of embalming the mummy. Both are expressions of an ideal of eternal duration, which also stamped itself on the massive and solemn forms of the Egyptian temples. The Egyptians were believers in the immortality of the soul and in rewards and punishments after death. Their moral law contained many distinctions of great refinement. Their worship of animals became, among the lower orders in the times of decay, a degrading idolatry; but it first originated in the pictorial symbolism by which the forms of animals were used to indicate the attributes of various divinities, and so were connected with them. It probably was the expression, also, of a reverence for animal life, which strove to limit the killing of various kinds of animals for food, by making them sacred. In the submissive nature of the brute creation, accomplishing its work without repining, obedient to the natural instinct of its species, the creature of habit and routine, the Egyptian found the symbol of the life which he himself pursued.

The Egyptian mythology was polytheistic in form, its deities being personifications of the forces of nature, the Sun-god, Ra, at the head.

The Sphinx.—Near the pyramid of Chafra is the colossal rock-hewn Sphinx, 65 feet in height and 142 feet in length, including the extended paws. It consists of a lion's body with a human head, the emblem of supreme power and supreme intellect in combination, the Egyptian symbol of divinity. Between the paws is a small temple 18 feet high. On its wall an inscription records that Chafra restored the Sphinx, leaving us to assume an unknown author and an earlier date for this wonder of the world.

* The Strasburg Cathedral tower, the highest in Europe, is 461 feet high; the dome of St. Peters is 429 feet high.

† Soft "ch" in Egyptian.

‡ Pronounced, as always in Greek, hard "ch."