

cry of their misery was going up to God. Nor is this a mere rhetorical picture the author of Exodus has sketched for the entertainment of his readers. Recent research has demonstrated that the Scripture narrative of Israel's bondage is a page taken from veritable history. The monuments¹ tell us that scarcely was Seti I. seated on the throne than he was summoned to undertake a campaign against the neighbouring tribes, who were pressing in upon the Delta from the East, and that at its close he engaged in the construction or reparation of a great wall for the defence of the eastern frontier. Rawlinson thinks that Pithom and Raamses, the "store cities," were arsenals and magazines erected in connection with this wall; Brugsch regards them as having been "temple cities" dedicated to patron divinities. In any case, these cities have been found. Raamses was in all probability the Zoan-Tanis of Scripture,² which, begun by Seti I., was completed by Rameses II., and made a royal residence under the name of Pi-Ramessu, or "City of Rameses." A letter, dating from the 19th dynasty, and written by a clerk named Panbesa to his superior Amenemapt, supplies a lively description of this ancient capital:—

"I proceeded," says the writer, "to Pa-Ramessu Meiamen.
 I found it flourishing in good things, without a rival,
 Like the foundations of Thebes . . .
 The abode of felicity.
 Its meadows are filled with all good things;
 It is well provisioned daily.
 Its pools are filled with fish, its ponds with fowl;
 Its fields are verdant with grass,
 Its threshing-floors are full of wheat and barley.
 Gladness dwells within it,
 None speaks scorn of it.
 The little ones in it are like the great ones.
 (They say) Come, let us celebrate its heavenly festivals
 And the season feasts."

¹ Brugsch, *Egypt under the Pharaohs*, vol. ii. p. 10; Rawlinson, *Egypt and Babylon*, p. 226.

² Brugsch, *Egypt under the Pharaohs*, vol. ii. p. 100; Ebers, in Riehm, art. "Ramses;" *Records of the Past*, vol. vi. p. 11.