

stood in all its classical proportions and beauty,—the object of admiration for a series of ages,—were very extraordinary. This massive and very costly building—that must have required the constant and indefatigable labor of thousands of the first artists of the time, for forty or fifty years—contained two holies of holies. It was raised wholly at the expense of the infantry that was quartered, during its erection, at Ombus, which was one of the eminent military stations, and the centre of an extensive military district, during the joint reigns of the brother and sister. Under the ceiling of the magnificent portico of this imposing creation of men, some of the designs in coloring were never completed; but the outlines, in red chalk, are still fresh and distinct, as though but just made. I was so full of astonishment at the sight of these ancient ruins, that have outlived everything else, that it quite destroyed all the veneration that had previously been acquired for the antiquities of Rome. Pompeii and Herculaneum, with all their wonders and buried treasures, which I had wandered over with feverish eagerness, melted into utter insignificance in comparison with Kom Ombus.

We spent some time in reflection over two beautifully-sculptured stones, twenty feet long, eight in width, and nearly eight thick. How they had been transported from the quarry is a matter of speculation; for, even in our modern improvements in derricks, and boats for burden, it would be very difficult to handle these enormous blocks. But the next query was this: How were they raised up the steep bank of the river, and then elevated to their position in the structure? In regard to the great blocks of which the roof was composed, the same perplexity arises. Many of them would weigh—so thought all of us—from twenty to fifty tons, if not more. This is, indeed a marvellous story to relate.

The propylon, the imposing gateway,—lofty enough for the entrance of the gods,—is fast going into the river. The current has undermined the advance sub-structure, and some massive and unequalled specimens of ancient sculpture, and primitive outline drawing in colors, have already been swallowed up by the insatiable Nile. Thirty years will wholly obliterate the last remains of this magnificent, wonderful, and unique edifice, unless the government speedily lends a helping hand,