EGYPT

Lesson	Chapters
EGYPT001	Chapters 1 to 4
EGYPT002	**Chapters 5 to 10**
EGYPT003	Chapters 11 to 15
EGYPT004	Chapter 16 to 20
EGYPT005	Chapter 21 to 27

V. The Rise of Thebes

Hitherto Egypt had been ruled from a site at the junction of the narrow Nile valley with the broad plain of the Delta--a site sufficiently represented by the modern Cairo. But now there was a shift of the seat of power. There is reason to believe that something like a disruption of Egypt into separate kingdoms took place, and that for a while several distinct dynasties bore sway in different parts of the country. Disruption was naturally accompanied by weakness and decline. The old order ceased, and opportunity was offered for some new order--some new power--to assert itself. The site on which it arose was one three hundred and fifty miles distant from the ancient capital, or four hundred and more by the river. Here, about lat. 26 deg., the usually narrow valley of the Nile opens into a sort of plain or basin. The mountains on either side of the river recede, as though by common consent, and leave between themselves and the river's bank a broad amphitheatre, which in each case is a rich green plain--an alluvium of the most productive character--dotted with _dom_ and date palms, sometimes growing single, sometimes collected into clumps or groves. On the western side the Libyan range gathers itself up into a single considerable peak, which has an elevation of twelve hundred feet. On the east the desert-wall maintains its usual level character, but is pierced by valleys conducting to the coast of the Red Sea. The situation was one favourable for commerce. On the one side was the nearest route through the sandy desert to the Lesser Oasis, which commanded the trade of the African interior; on the other the way led through the valley of Hammamat, rich with _breccia verde_ and other valuable and rare stones, to a district abounding in mines of gold, silver, and lead, and thence to the Red Sea coast, from which, even in very early times, there was communication with the opposite coast of Arabia, the region of gums and spices.

In this position there had existed, probably from the very beginnings of Egypt, a provincial city of some repute, called by its inhabitants Ape or Apiu, and, with the feminine article prefixed, Tape, or Tapiu, which some interpret "The city of thrones". To the Greeks the name "Tape" seemed to resemble their own well-known "Thebai", whence they transferred the familiar appellation from the Baeotian to the Mid-Egyptian town, which has thus come to be known to Englishmen and Anglo-Americans as "Thebes." Thebes had been from the first the capital of a "nome". It lay so far from the court that it acquired a character of its own--a special cast of religion, manners, speech, nomenclature, mode of writing, and the like--which helped to detach it from Lower or Northern Egypt more even than its isolation. Still, it was not until the northern kingdom sank into decay from internal weakness and exhaustion, and disintegration supervened in the Delta and elsewhere, that Thebes resolved to assert herself and claim independent sovereignty. Apparently, she achieved her purpose without having recourse to arms. The kingdoms of the north were content to let her go. They recognized their own weakness, and allowed the nascent power to develop itself unchecked and unhindered.

The first known Theban monarch is a certain Antef or Enantef, whose coffin was discovered in the year 1827 by some Arabs

near Qurnah, to the west of Thebes. The mummy bore the royal diadem, and the epigraph on the lid of the coffin declared the body which it contained to be that of "Antef, king of _the two Egypts._" The phrase implied a claim to dominion over the whole country, but a claim as purely nominal as that of the kings of England from Edward IV. to George III. to be monarchs of France and Navarre. Antef s rule may possibly have reached to Elephantine on the one hand, but is not likely to have extended much beyond Coptos on the other. He was a local chieftain posing as a great sovereign, but probably with no intention to deceive either his own contemporaries or posterity. His name appears in some of the later Egyptian dynastic lists; but no monument of his time has come down to us except the one that has been mentioned.

Antef I. is thought to have been succeeded by Mentu-hotep I., a monarch even more shadowy, known to us only from the "Table of Karnak." This prince, however, is followed by one who possesses a greater amount of substance--Antef-aa, or "Antef the Great," grandson, as it would seem, of the first Antef--a sort of Egyptian Nimrod, who delighted above all things in the chase. Antefaa's sepulchral monument shows him to us standing in the midst of his dogs, who wear collars, and have their names engraved over them. The dogs are four in number, and are of distinct types. The first, which is called _Mahut_ or "Antelope," has drooping ears, and long but somewhat heavy legs; it resembles a foxhound, and was no doubt both swift and strong, though it can scarcely have been so swift as its namesake. The second was called _Abakaru_, a name of unknown meaning; it has pricked up, pointed ears, a pointed nose, and a curly tail. Some have compared it with the German _spitz_ dog, but it seems rather to be the original dog of nature, a near congener of the jackal, and the type to which all dogs revert when allowed to run wild and breed indiscriminately. The third, named _Pahats_ or _Kamu, i.e._ "Blacky," is a heavy animal, not unlike a mastiff; it has a small, rounded, drooping ear, a square, blunt nose, a deep chest, and thick limbs. The late Dr. Birch supposed that it might have been employed by Antefaa in "the chase of the lion;" but we should rather regard it as a watch-dog, the terror of thieves, and we suspect that the artist gave it the sitting attitude to indicate that its business was not to hunt, but to keep watch and ward at its master's gate. The fourth dog, who bears the name of _Tekal_, and walks between his master's legs, has ears that seem to have been cropped. He has been said to resemble "the Dalmatian hound": but this is questionable. His peculiarities are not marked; but, on the whole, it seems most probable that he is "a pet house-dog" of the terrier class, the special favourite of his master. Antefaa's dogs had their appointed keeper, the master of his kennel, who is figured on the sepulchral tablet behind the monarch, and bears the name of Tekenru.

The hunter king was buried in a tomb marked only by a pyramid of unbaked brick, very humble in its character, but containing a mortuary chapel in which the monument above described was set up. An inscription on the tablet declared that it was erected to the memory of Antef the Great, Son of the Sun, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, in the fiftieth year of his reign.

Other Mentu-hoteps and other Antefs continued on the line of Theban kings, reigning quietly and ingloriously, and leaving no mark upon the scroll of time, yet probably advancing the material prosperity of their country, and preparing the way for that rise to greatness which gives Thebes, on the whole, the foremost place in Egyptian history. Useful projects occupied the attention of these monarchs. One of them sank wells in the valley of Hammamat, to provide water for the caravans which plied between Coptos and the Red Sea. Another established military posts in the valley to protect the traffic and the Egyptian quarrymen. Later on, a king called Sankh-ka-ra launched a fleet upon the

Red Sea waters, and opened direct communications with the sacred land of Punt, the region of odoriferous gums and of strange animals, as giraffes, panthers, hunting leopards, cynocephalous apes, and long-tailed monkeys. There is some doubt whether "Punt" was Arabia Felix, or the Somauli country. In any case, it lay far down the Gulf, and could only be reached after a voyage of many days.

The dynasty of the Antefs and Mentu-hoteps, which terminated with Sankh-ka-ra, was followed by one in which the prevailing names were Usurtasen and Amenemhat. This dynasty is Manetho's twelfth, and the time of its rule has been characterized as "the happiest age of Egyptian history?" The second phase of Egyptian civilization now set in--a phase which is regarded by many as outshining the glories of the first The first civilization had subordinated the people to the monarch, and had aimed especially at eternizing the memory and setting forth the power and greatness of king after king. The second had the benefit and advantage of the people for its primary object; it was utilitarian, beneficent, appealing less to the eye than to the mind, far-sighted in its aims, and most successful in the results which it effected. The wise rulers of the time devoted their energies and their resources, not, as the earlier kings, to piling up undying memorials of themselves in the shape of monuments that "reached to heaven," but to useful works, to the excavation of wells and reservoirs, the making of roads, the encouragement of commerce, and the development of the vast agricultural wealth of the country. They also diligently guarded the frontiers, chastised aggressive tribes, and checked invasion by the establishment of strong fortresses in positions of importance. They patronized art, employing themselves in building temples rather than tombs, and adorned their temples not only with reliefs and statues, but also with the novel architectural embellishment of the obelisk, a delicate form, and one especially suited to the country.

The founder of the "twelfth dynasty," Amenemhat I., deserves a few words of description. He found Thebes in a state of anarchy; civil war raged on every side; all the traditions of the past were forgotten; noble fought against noble; the poor were oppressed; life and property were alike insecure; "there was stability of fortune neither for the ignorant nor for the learned man." One night, after he had lain down to sleep, he found himself attacked in his bed-chamber; the clang of arms sounded near at hand. Starting from his couch, he seized his own weapons and struck out; when lo! his assailants fled; detected in their attempt to assassinate him, they dared not offer any resistance, thus showing themselves alike treacherous and cowardly. Amenemhat, having once taken arms, did not lay them down till he had defeated every rival, and so fought his way to the crown. Once acknowledged as king, he ruled with moderation and equity; he "gave to the humble, and made the weak to live;" he "caused the afflicted to cease from their afflictions, and their cries to be heard no more;" he brought it to pass that none hungered or thirsted in the land; he gave such orders to his servants as continually increased the love of his people towards him. At the same time, he was an energetic warrior. He "stood on the boundaries of the land, to keep watch on its borders," personally leading his soldiers to battle, armed with the _khopesh_ or falchion. He carried on wars with the Petti, or bowmen of the Libyan interior, with the Sakti or Asiatics, with the Maxyes or Mazyes of the north-west, and with the Ua-uat and other negro tribes of the south; not, however, as it would seem, with any desire of making conquests, but simply for the protection of his own frontier. With the same object he constructed on his north-eastern frontier a wall or fortress "to keep out the Sakti," who continually harassed the people of the Eastern Delta by their incursions.

The wars of Amenemhat I. make it evident that by his time Thebes had advanced from the position of a petty kingdom situated in a remote part of Egypt, and held in check by two or more rival kingdoms in the lower Nile valley and the Delta, to that of a power which bore sway over the whole land from Elephantine to the Mediterranean. "I sent my messengers up to Abu (Elephantine) and my couriers down to Athu" (the coast lakes), says the monarch in his "Instructions" to his son--the earliest literary production from a royal pen that has come down to our days; and there is no reason to doubt the truth of his statement. In the Delta alone could he come into contact with either the Mazyes or the Sakti, and a king of Thebes could not hold the Delta without being master also of the lower Nile valley from Coptos to Memphis. We must regard Egypt, then, under the "twelfth dynasty." as once more consolidated into a single state--a state ruled, however, not from Memphis, but from Thebes, a decidedly inferior position.

Amenemhat I. is the only Egyptian king who makes a boast of his hunting prowess. "I hunted the lion," he says, "and brought back the crocodile a prisoner." Lions do not at the present time frequent Egypt, and, indeed, are not found lower down the Nile valley than the point where the Great Stream receives its last tributary, the Atbara. But anciently they seem to have haunted the entire desert tracts on either side of the river. The Roman Emperor Hadrian is said to have hunted one near Alexandria, and the monuments represent lions as tamed and used in the chase by the ancient inhabitants. Sometimes they even accompanied their masters to the battlefield. We know nothing of Amenemhat's mode of hunting the king of beasts, but may assume that it was not very different from that which prevailed at a later date in Assyria. There, dogs and beaters were employed to rouse the animals from their lairs, while the king and his fellow-sportsmen either plied them with flights of arrows, or withstood their onset with swords and spears. The crocodile was certainly sometimes attacked while he was in the water, the hunters using a boat, and endeavouring to spear him at the point where the head joins the spine; but this could not have been the mode adopted by Amenemhat, since it would have resulted in instant death, whereas he tells us that he "brought the crocodile home a prisoner." Possibly, therefore, he employed the method which Herodotus says was in common use in his day. This was to bait a hook with a joint of pork and throw it into the water at a point where the current would carry it out into mid-stream; then to take a live pig to the river-side, and belabour him well with a stick till he set up the squeal familiar to most ears. Any crocodile within hearing was sure to come to the sound, and falling in with the pork on the way, would instantly swallow it down. Upon this the hunters hauled at the rope to which the hook was attached, and, notwithstanding his struggles, drew "leviathan" to shore. Amenemhat, having thus "made the crocodile a prisoner," may have carried his captive in triumph to his capital, and exhibited him before the eyes of the people.

Amenemhat, having reigned as sole king for twenty years, was induced to raise his eldest son, Usurtasen, to the royal dignity, and associate him with himself in the government of the empire. Usurtasen was a prince of much promise, He "brought prosperity to the affairs of his father. He was, as a god, without fears; before him was never one like to him. Most skilful in affairs, beneficent in his mandates, both in his going out and in his coming in he made Egypt flourish." His courage and his warlike capacity were great. Already, in the lifetime of his father, he had distinguished himself in combats with the Petti and the Sakti. When he was settled upon the throne, he made war upon the Cushite tribes who bordered Egypt upon the south, employing the services of a general named Ameni, but also taking a part personally in the campaign. The Cushites or Ethiopians, who in later times became such dangerous

neighbours to Egypt, were at this early period weak and insignificant. After the king had made his expedition, Ameni was able with a mere handful of four hundred troops to penetrate into their country, to "conduct the golden treasures" which it contained to the presence of his master, and to capture and carry off a herd of three thousand cattle.

It was through his sculptures and his architectural works that the first Usurtasen made himself chiefly conspicuous. Thebes, Abydos, Heliopolis or On, the Fayoum and the Delta, were equally the scenes of his constructive activity, and still show traces of his presence. At Thebes, he carried to its completion the cell, or _naos_, of the great temple of Ammon, in later times the innermost sanctuary of the building, and reckoned so sacred, that when Thothmes III. rebuilt and enlarged the entire edifice he reproduced the structure of Usurtasen, unchanged in form, and merely turned from limestone into granite. At Abydos and other cities of Middle Egypt, he constructed temples adorned with sculptures, inscriptions, and colossal statues. At Tanis, he set up his own statue, exhibiting himself as seated upon his throne. In the Fayoum he erected an obelisk forty-one feet high to the honour of Ammon, Phthah, and Mentu, which now lies prone upon the ground near the Arab village of Begig. Indications of his ubiquitous activity are found also at the Wady Magharah, in the Sinaitic peninsula, and at Wady Haifa in Nubia, a little above the Second Cataract; but his grandest and most elaborate work was his construction of the great temple of the Sun at Heliopolis, and his best memorial is that tall finger pointing to the sky which greets the traveller approaching Egypt from the east as the first sample of its strange and mystic wonders. This temple the king began in his third year. After a consultation with his lords and counsellors, he issued the solemn decree: "It is determined to execute the work; his majesty chooses to have it made. Let the superintendent carry it on in the way that is desired; let all those employed upon it be vigilant; let them see that it is made without weariness; let every due ceremony be performed; let the beloved place arise." Then the king rose up, wearing a diadem, and holding the double pen; and all present followed him. The scribe read the holy book, and extended the measuring cord, and laid the foundations on the spot which the temple was to occupy. A grand building arose; but it has been wholly demolished by the ruthless hand of time and the barbarity of conquerors. Of all its glories nothing now remains but the one taper obelisk of pink granite, which rises into the soft sleepy air above the green cornfields of Matariyeh, no longer tipped with gold, but still catching on its summit the earliest and latest sun-rays, while wild-bees nestle in the crannies of the weird characters cut into the stone.

Usurtasen, after reigning ten years in conjunction with his father and thirty-two years alone, associated his son, Amenemhat II., who became sole king about three years later. His reign, though long, was undistinguished, and need not occupy our attention. He followed the example of his predecessors in associating a son in the government; and this son succeeded him, and is known as Usurtasen II. One event of interest alone belongs to this time. It is the reception by one of his great officials of a large family or tribe of Semitic immigrants from Asia, who beg permission to settle permanently in the fertile Egypt under the protection of its powerful king. Thirty-seven Amu, men, women, and children, present themselves at the court which the great noble holds near the eastern border, and offer him their homage, while they solicit a favourable hearing. The men are represented draped in long garments of various colours, and wearing sandals unlike the Egyptian--more resembling, in fact, open shoes with many straps. Their arms are bows, arrows, spears, and clubs. One plays on a seven-stringed lyre by means of a plectrum. Four women, wearing fillets round their heads, with garments reaching below the knee, and

wearing anklets but no sandals, accompany them. A boy, armed with a spear, walks at the side of the women; and two children, seated in a kind of pannier placed on the back of an ass, ride on in front. Another ass, carrying a spear, a shield, and a pannier, precedes the man who plays on the lyre. The great official, who is named Khnum-hotep, receives the foreigners, accompanied by an attendant who carries his sandals and a staff, and who is followed by three dogs. A scribe, named Nefer-hotep, unrolls before his master a strip of papyrus, on which are inscribed the words, "The sixth year of the reign of King Usurtasen Sha-khepr-ra: account rendered of the Amu who in the lifetime of the chief, Khnum-hotep, brought to him the mineral, _mastemut_, from the country of Pit-shu--they are in all thirty-seven persons." The mineral _mastemut_ is thought to be a species of stibium or antimony, used for dying the skin around the eyes, and so increasing their beauty. Besides this offering, the head of the tribe, who is entitled _khak_, or "prince," and named Abusha, presents to Khnum-hotep a magnificent wild-goat, of the kind which at the present day frequents the rocky mountain tract of Sinai. He wears a richer dress than his companions, one which is ornamented with a fringe, and has a wavy border round the neck. The scene has been generally recognized as strikingly illustrating the coming of Jacob's family into Egypt (Gen. xlvi. 28-34), and was at one time thought by some to represent that occurrence; but the date of Abusha's coming is long anterior to the arrival in Egypt of Jacob's family, the number is little more than half that of the Hebrew immigrants, the names do not accord; and it is now agreed on all hands, that the interest of the representation is confined to its illustrative force.

Usurtasen II. reigned for nineteen years. He does not seem to have associated a son, but was succeeded by another Usurtasen, most probably a nephew. The third Usurtasen was a conquering monarch, and advanced the power and glory of Egypt far more than any other ruler belonging to the Old Empire. He began his military operations in his eighth year, and starting from Elephantine in the month Epiphi, or May, moved southward, like another Lord Wolseley, with a fixed intention, which he expressed in writing upon the rocks of the Elephantine island, of permanently reducing to subjection "the miserable land of Cush." His expedition was so far successful that in the same year he established two forts, one on either side of the Nile, and set up two pillars with inscriptions warning the black races that they were not to proceed further northward, except with the object of importing into Egypt cattle, oxen, goats, or asses. The forts are still visible on either bank of the river a little above the Second Cataract, and bear the names of Koommeh and Semneh. They are massive constructions, built of numerous squared blocks of granite and sandstone, and perched upon two steep rocks which rise up perpendicularly from the river. Usurtasen, having made this beginning, proceeded, from his eighth to his sixteenth year, to carry on the war with perseverance and ferocity in the district between the Nile and the Red Sea--to kill the men, fire the crops, and carry off the women and children, much as recently did the Arab traders whom Baker and Gordon strove to crush. The memory of his razzias was perpetuated upon stone columns set up to record his successes. Later on, in his nineteenth year he made a last expedition, to complete the conquest of "the miserable Kashi," and recorded his victory at Abydos.

The effect of these inroads was to advance the Egyptian frontier one hundred and fifty miles to the south, to carry it, in fact, from the First to above the Second Cataract. Usurtasen drew the line between Egypt and Ethiopia at this period, very much where the British Government drew it between Egypt and the Soudan in 1885. The boundary is a somewhat artificial one, as any boundary must be on the course of a great river; but it is probably as convenient a point as can be found between Assouan (Syene) and Khartoum. The

conquest was regarded as redounding greatly to Usurtasen's glory, and made him the hero of the Old Empire. Myths gathered about his name, which, softened into Sesostris, became a favourite One in the mouths of Egyptian minstrels and minnesingers. Usurtasen grew to be a giant more than seven feet high, who conquered, not only all Ethiopia, but also Europe and Asia; his columns were said to be found in Palestine, Asia Minor, Scythia, and Thrace; he left a colony at Colchis, the city of the golden fleece; he dug all the canals by which Egypt was intersected; he invented geometry; he set up colossi above fifty feet high; he was the greatest monarch that had ruled Egypt since the days of Osiris!

No doubt these tales were, in the main, imaginary; but they marked the fact that in Usurtasen III. the military glories of the Old Empire culminated.

VI. The Good Amenemhat and His Works

The great river to which Egypt owes her being, is at once the source of all her blessings and her chiefest danger. Swelling with a uniformity, well calculated to call forth man's gratitude and admiration, almost from a fixed day in each year, and continuing to rise steadily for months, it gradually spreads over the lands, covering the entire soil with a fresh coating of the richest possible alluvium, and thus securing to the country a perpetual and inexhaustible fertility. Nature's mechanism is so perfect, that the rise year after year scarcely varies a foot, and is almost exactly the same now as it was when the first Pharaoh poured his libation to the river-god from the embankment which he had made at Memphis; but though this uniformity is great, and remarkable, and astonishing, it is not absolute. There are occasions, once in two or three centuries, when the rainfall in Abyssinia is excessive. The Blue Nile and the Atbara pour into the deep and steady stream of the White Nile torrents of turbid water for months together. The windows of heaven seem to have been opened, and the rain pours down as if it would never cease. Then the river of the Egyptians assumes a threatening character; faster and faster it rises, and higher and higher; and further and further it spreads, until it begins to creep up the sides of the two ranges of hills. Calamitous results ensue. The mounds erected to protect the cities, the villages, and the pasture lands, are surmounted, or undermined, or washed away; the houses, built often of mud, and seldom of any better material than crude brick, collapse; cattle are drowned by hundreds; human life is itself imperilled; the population has to betake itself to boats, and to fly to the desert regions which enclose the Nile valley to the east and west, regions of frightful sterility, which with difficulty support the few wandering tribes that are their normal inhabitants. If the excessive rise continues long, thousands or millions starve; if it passes off rapidly, then the inhabitants return to find their homes desolated, their cattle drowned, their household goods washed away, and themselves dependent on the few rich men who may have stored their corn in stone granaries which the waters have not been able to penetrate. Disasters of this kind are, however, exceedingly rare, though, when they occur, their results are terrible to contemplate.

The more usual form of calamity is of the opposite kind. Once or twice in a century the Abyssinian rainfall is deficient. The rise of the Nile is deferred beyond the proper date. Anxious eyes gaze daily on the sluggish stream, or consult the "Nilometers" which kings and princes have constructed along its course to measure the increase of the waters. Hopes and fears alternate as good or bad news reaches the inhabitants of the lower valley from those who dwell higher up the stream. Each little rise is expected to herald a greater one, and the agony of suspense is prolonged until the "hundred days," traditionally assigned to the increase, have gone by, and there is no longer a doubt that the river has begun to fall. Then hope is swallowed up in despair. Only the lands lying nearest to the river have been inundated;

those at a greater distance from it lie parched and arid during the entire summer-time, and fail to produce a single blade of grass or spike of corn. Famine stares the poorer classes in the face, and unless large supplies of grain have been laid up in store previously, or can be readily imported from abroad, the actual starvation of large numbers is the inevitable consequence. We have heartrending accounts of such famines. In the year 457 of the Hegira (A.D. 1064) a famine began, which lasted seven years, and was so severe that dogs and cats, and even human flesh, were eaten; all the horses of the Caliph but three perished, and his family had to fly into Syria. Another famine in A.D. 1199 is recorded by Abd-el-Latif, an eye-witness, in very similar terms.

There is reason to believe that, under the twelfth dynasty, some derangement of meteoric or atmospheric conditions passed over Abyssinia and Upper Egypt, either in both the directions above noticed, or, at any rate, in the latter and more ordinary one. An official belonging to the later part of this period, in enumerating his merits upon his tomb, tells us, "There was no poverty in my days, no starvation in my time, even when there were years of famine. I ploughed all the fields of Mah to its southern and northern boundaries; I gave life to its inhabitants, making its food; no one was starved in it. I gave to the widow as to the married woman." As the late Dr. Birch observes, "Egypt was occasionally subject to famines; and these, at the time of the twelfth dynasty, were so important, that they attracted great attention, and were considered worthy of record by the princes or hereditary lords who were buried at Beni-Hassan. Under the twelfth dynasty, also, the tombs of Abydos show the creation of superintendents, or storekeepers of the public granaries, a class of functionaries apparently created to meet the contingency."

The distress of his subjects under these circumstances seems to have drawn the thoughts of "the good Amenemhat" to the devising of some system which should effectually remedy these evils, by preventing their occurrence. In all countries where the supply of water is liable to be deficient, it is of the utmost importance to utilize to the full that amount of the life-giving fluid, be it more or be it less, which the bounty of nature furnishes. Rarely, indeed, is nature absolutely a niggard. Mostly she gives far more than is needed, but the improvidence or the apathy of man allows her gifts to run to waste. Careful and provident husbanding of her store will generally make it suffice for all man's needs and requirements. Sometimes this has been effected in a thirsty land by conducting all the rills and brooks that flow from the highlands or hills into subterranean conduits, where they are shielded from the sun's rays, and prolonging these ducts for miles upon miles, till every drop of the precious fluid has been utilized for irrigation. Such is the _kareez_ or _kanat_ system of Persia. In other places vast efforts have been made to detain the abundant supply of rain which nature commonly provides in the spring of the year, to store it, and prevent it from flowing off down the river-courses to the sea, where it is absolutely lost. For this purpose, either huge reservoirs must be constructed by the hand of man, or else advantage must be taken of some facility which nature offers for storing the water in convenient situations. Valleys may be blocked by massive dams, and millions of gallons thus imprisoned for future use, as is done in many parts of the North of England, but for manufacturing and not for irrigation purposes. Or naturally land-locked basins may be found, and the overflow of streams at their flood-time turned into them and arrested, to be made use of later in the year.

In Egypt the one and only valley was that of the Nile, and the one and only stream that which had formed it, and flowed along it, at a lower or higher level, ceaselessly. It might perhaps have been possible for Egyptian engineering skill to have blocked the valley at Silsilis, or at the Gebelein, and to have thus turned Upper Egypt into a huge reservoir

always full, and always capable of supplying Lower Egypt with enough water to eke out a deficient inundation. But this could only have been done by an enormous work, very difficult to construct, and at the sacrifice of several hundred square miles of fertile territory, thickly inhabited, which would have been covered permanently by the artificial lake. Moreover, the Egyptians would have known that such an embankment can under no circumstances be absolutely secure, and may have foreseen that its rupture would spread destruction over the whole of the lower country. Amenemhat, at any rate, did not venture to adopt so bold a design. He sought for a natural depression, and found one in the Libyan range of hills to the west of the Nile valley, about a degree south of the latitude of Memphis--a depression of great depth and of ample expanse, fifty miles or more in length by thirty in breadth, and containing an area of six or seven hundred square miles. It was separated from the Nile valley by a narrow ridge of hills about two hundred feet high, through which ran from south-east to north-west a narrow rocky gorge, giving access to the depression. It is possible that in very high floods some of the water of the inundation passed naturally into the basin through this gorge; but whether this were so or no, it was plain that by the employment of no very large amount of labour a canal or cutting might be carried along the gorge, and the Nile water given free access into the depression, not only in very high floods, but annually when the inundation reached a certain moderate height. This is, accordingly, what Amenemhat did. He dug a canal from the western branch of the Nile--the modern Bahr Yousuf--leaving it at El-Lahoun, carried his canal through the gorge, in places cutting deep into its rocky bottom, and by a system of sluices and flood-gates retained such an absolute control over the water that he could either admit or exclude the inundation at his will, as it rose; and when it fell, could either allow the water that had flowed in to return, or imprison it and keep it back. Within the gorge he had thus at all times a copious store of the invaluable fluid, banked up to the height of high Nile, and capable of being applied to purposes of cultivation both within and without the depression by the opening and shutting of the sluices.

So much appears to be certain. The exact size and position of Amenemhat's reservoir within the depression, which a French _savant_ was supposed to have discovered, are now called in question, and must be admitted to be still _sub judice_. M. Linant de Bellefonds regarded the reservoir as occupying the south-eastern or upper portion of the depression only, as extending from north to south a distance of fourteen miles only, and from east to west a distance varying from six to eleven miles. He regarded it as artificially confined towards the west and north by two long lines of embankment, which he considered that he had traced, and gave the area of the lake as four hundred and five millions of square metres, or about four hundred and eighty millions of square yards. Mr. Cope Whitehouse believes that the water was freely admitted into the whole of the depression, which it filled, with the exception of certain parts, which stood up out of the water as islands, from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet high. He believes that it was in places three hundred feet deep, and that the circuit of its shores was from three hundred to five hundred miles. It is to be hoped that a scientific expedition will ere long set this dispute at rest, and enable the modern student distinctly to grasp and understand the great work of Amenemhat. Whatever may be the truth regarding "Lake Moeris," as this great reservoir was called, it is certain that it furnished the ancients one of the least explicable of all the many problems that the remarkable land of the Nile presented to them. Herodotus added to the other marvels of the place a story about two sitting statues based upon pyramids, which stood three hundred feet above the level of

the lake, and a famous labyrinth, of which we shall soon speak.

Whether the reservoir of Amenemhat had the larger or the smaller dimensions ascribed to it, there can be no doubt that it was a grand construction, undertaken mainly for the benefit of his people, and greatly conducing to their advantage. Even if the reservoir had only the dimensions assigned to it by M. de Bellefonds, it would, according to his calculations, have contained water sufficient, not only for irrigating the northern and western portions of the Fayoum throughout the year, but also for the supply of the whole western bank of the Nile from Beni-Souef to the embouchure at Canopus for six months. This alone would in dry seasons have been a sensible relief to a large portion of the population. If the dimensions exceeded those of De Bellefonds, the relief would have been proportionately greater.

The good king was not, however, content merely to benefit his people by increasing the productiveness of Egypt and warding off the calamities that occasionally befell the land; he further gave employment to large numbers, which was not of a severe or oppressive kind, but promoted their comfort and welfare. In connection with his hydraulic works in the Fayoum he constructed a novel species of building, which after ages admired even above the constructions of the pyramid-builders, and regarded as the most wonderful edifice in all the world. "I visited the place," says Herodotus, "and found it to surpass description; for if all the walls and other great works of the Greeks could be put together in one, they would not equal, either for labour or expense, this Labyrinth; and yet the temple of Ephesus is a building worthy of note, and so is the temple of Samos. The pyramids likewise surpass description, and are severally equal to a number of the greatest works of the Greeks; but the Labyrinth surpasses the pyramids. It has twelve courts, all of them roofed, with gates exactly opposite one another, six looking to the north, and six to the south. A single wall surrounds the whole building. It contains two different sorts of chambers, half of them underground, and half above-ground, the latter built upon the former; the whole number is three thousand, of each kind fifteen hundred. The upper chambers I myself passed through and saw, and what I say of them is from my own observation; of the underground chambers I can only speak from report, for the keepers of the building could not be induced to show them, since they contained (they said) the sepulchres of the kings who built the Labyrinth, and also those of the sacred crocodiles. Thus it is from hearsay only that I can speak of them; but the upper chambers I saw with my own eyes, and found them to excel all other human productions; for the passages through the houses, and the varied windings of the paths across the courts, excited in me infinite admiration, as I passed from the courts into chambers, and from the chambers into colonnades, and from the colonnades into fresh houses, and again from these into courts unseen before. The roof was, throughout, of stone, like the walls; and the walls were carved all over with figures; every court was surrounded with a colonnade, which was built of white stones, exquisitely fitted together. At the corner of the Labyrinth stands a pyramid, forty fathoms high, with large figures engraved upon it, which is entered by a subterranean passage."

The pyramid intended is probably that examined by Perring and Lepsius, which had a base of three hundred feet, and an elevation, probably, of about one hundred and eighty-five feet. It was built of crude brick mixed with a good deal of straw, and cased with a white silicious limestone. The same material was employed for the greater part of the so-called "Labyrinth," but many of the columns were of red granite, and some perhaps of porphyry. Most likely the edifice was intended as a mausoleum for the sacred crocodiles, and was gradually enlarged for their accommodation--Amenemhat, whose praenomen was found on the pyramid, being

merely the first founder. The number of the pillared courts, and their similarity, made the edifice confusing to foreigners, and got it the name of "The Labyrinth"; but it is not likely the designers of the building had any intention to mislead or to confuse.

Amenemhat's praenomen, or throne-name, assumed (according to ordinary custom) on his accession, was Ra-n-mat, "Sun of Justice" or "Sun of Righteousness." The assumption of the title indicates his desire to leave behind him a character for justice and equity. It is perhaps noticeable that the name by which the Greeks knew him was Moeris, which may mean "the beloved." With him closes the first period of Theban greatness. A cloud was impending, and darker days about to follow; but as yet Egypt enjoyed a time of progressive, and in the main peaceful, development. Commerce, art, religion, agriculture, occupied her. She did not covet other men's lands, nor did other men covet hers. The world beyond her borders knew little of her, except that she was a fertile and well-ordered land, whereto, in time of dearth, the needy of other countries might resort with confidence.

VII. Abraham in Egypt

"Now there was a famine in the land of Canaan; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there" (Gen. xii. 10). Few events in the history of mankind are more interesting than the visit which the author of the Pentateuch thus places before us in less than a dozen words. The "father of the faithful," the great apostle of Monotheism, the wanderer from the distant "Ur of the Chaldees," familiar with Babylonian greatness, and Babylonian dissoluteness, and Babylonian despotism, having quitted his city home and adopted the simple habits of a Syrian nomadic sheikh, finds himself forced to make acquaintance with a second form of civilization, a second great organized monarchy, and to become for a time a sojourner among the people who had held for centuries the valley of the Nile. He had obeyed the call which took him from Ur to Haran, from Haran to Damascus, from Damascus to the hills of Canaan; he had divorced himself from city life and city usages; he had embraced the delights of that free, wandering existence which has at all times so singular a charm for many, and had dwelt for we know not how many years in different parts of Palestine, the chief of a tribe rich in flocks and herds, moving with them from place to place as the fancy took him. It was assuredly with much reluctance that he quitted the open downs and fresh breezes and oak groves of Canaan the land promised to him and to his seed after him, and took his way through the "desert of the south" to the great kingdom with which he and his race could never hope to be on terms of solid friendship. But the necessity which constrained him was imperative. When, from the want of the ordinary spring rains, drought and famine set in on the Palestinian uplands, there was in ancient times but one resource. Egypt was known as a land of plenty. Whether it were Hebrew nomads, or Hittite warriors, or Phoenician traders that suffered, Egypt was the sole refuge, the sole hope. There the river gave the plenteous sustenance which would be elsewhere sought in vain. There were granaries and storehouses, and an old established system whereby corn was laid up as a reserve in case of need, both by private individuals of the wealthier classes and by the kings. There among the highest officers of state was the "steward of the public granary." whose business it was, when famine pressed, to provide, so far as was possible, both for natives and foreigners, alleviating the distress of all, while safeguarding, of course, the king's interests (Gen. xlvii. 13-26).

Abraham, therefore, when he found that "the famine was grievous in the land" of Canaan, did the only thing that it was possible for him to do--left Palestine, and wended his way through the desert to the Egyptian frontier. What company he took with him is uncertain. A few years later we find him at the head of a body of three hundred and eighteen men

capable of bearing arms--"trained servants born in his house"--which implies the headship over a tribe of at least twelve hundred persons. He can scarcely have entered Egypt with a much smaller number. It was before his separation from his nephew, Lot, whose followers were not much fewer than his own. And to leave any of his dependents behind would have been to leave them to starvation. We must suppose a numerous caravan organized, with asses and camels to carry provisions and household stuff, and with the women and the little ones conveyed as we see them in the sculpture representing the arrival of Abusha from the same quarter, albeit with a smaller _entourage._ The desert journey would be trying, and probably entail much loss, especially of the cattle and beasts; but at length, on the seventh or eighth day, as the water was getting low in the skins and the camels were beginning to faint and groan with the scant fare and the long travel, a dark low line would appear upon the edge of the horizon in front, and soon the line would deepen into a delicate fringe, sparkling here and there as though it were sown with diamonds. Then it would be recognized that there lay before the travellers the fields and gardens and palaces and obelisks of Egypt, the broad flood and rich plain of the Nile, and their hearts would leap with joy, and lift themselves up in thanksgiving to the Most High, who had brought them through the great and terrible wilderness to a land of plenty.

But now a fresh anxiety fell upon the spirit of the chief. Tradition tells us that already in Babylonia he had had experience of the violence and tyranny of earthly potentates, and had with difficulty escaped from an attempt which the king of Babylon made upon his life. Either memory recalled this and similar dangers, or reason suggested what the unbridled licence of irresponsible power might conceive and execute under the circumstances. The Pharaohs had, it is plain, already departed from the simple manners of the earlier times, when each prince was contented with a single wife, and had substituted for the primitive law of monogamy that corrupt system of hareem life which has kept its ground in the East from an ancient date to the present day. Abraham was aware of this, and "as he was come near to enter into Egypt," but was not yet entered, he was seized with a great fear. "Behold," he said to Sarai his wife, "Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon; therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive," Under these circumstances Abraham, with a craft not unnatural in an Oriental, but certainly far from commendable, resolved to dissemble his relationship towards Sarah, and to represent her as not his wife, but his sister. She was, in point of fact, his half-sister, as he afterwards pleaded to Abimelech (Gen. xx. 12), being the daughter of Terah by a secondary wife, and married to her half-brother "Say, I pray thee," he said, "thou art my sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee." Sarah acquiesced; and no doubt the whole tribe was made acquainted with the resolution come to, so that they might all be in one story.

The frontier was then approached. We learn from the history of Abusha, as well as from other scattered notices in the papyri, how carefully the eastern border was always guarded, and what precautions were taken to apprise the Court when any considerable body of immigrants arrived. The chief official upon the frontier, either Khnumhotep or some one occupying a similar position, would receive the in-comers, subject them to interrogation, and cause his secretary to draw up a report, which would be forwarded by courier to the capital. The royal orders would be awaited, and meantime perhaps fresh reports would be sent by other officials of the neighbourhood. In the present instance, we are told that several "princes of Pharaoh," having been struck with the beauty of Sarah,

commended her to their royal master, who sent for her and had her brought into his own house. Abraham himself was well received and treated with much distinction "for her sake." According to Eupolemus, he and his were settled in the sacred city of On or Heliopolis; and there, in that seat of learning and religion, the Patriarch, as the same authority declares, lived peacefully for many years and taught the Egyptians the sciences of astronomy and arithmetic. The author of Genesis says nothing of the place of his abode, but simply informs us of his well-being. "Pharaoh entreated Abram well for Sarai's sake; and he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels." The collocation of the clauses implies that all these were presents from the king. The pleased monarch lavished on his brother-in-law such gifts of honour as were usual at the time and suitable to his circumstances. Abraham became "very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold" (Gen. xiii. 2). He flourished greatly, whether for months or for years the scripture does not say. He was separated from his wife, and she was an inmate of Pharaoh's hareem; but he kept his secret, and no one betrayed him. Apparently, he was content.

Ere long, however, a discovery was made. Calamity came upon the royal house in some marked way, probably either in the form of sickness or of death. The king became convinced that he was the object of a Divine chastisement, and cast about for a cause to which his sufferings might reasonably be attributed. How had he provoked God's anger? Either, as Josephus thinks, the priests had by this time found out the truth, and made the suggestion to him, that he was being punished for having taken another man's wife into his seraglio; or possibly, as others have surmised, Sarah herself divined the source of the calamities, and made confession of the truth. At any rate, by some means or other, the facts of the case became known; and the Pharaoh thereupon hastened to set matters right. Sarah, though an inmate of the hareem, was probably still in the probationary condition, undergoing the purification necessary before the final completion of her nuptials (Esth. ii. 12), and could thus be restored intact. The Pharaoh sent for Abraham, reproached him with his deceit, pointed out the ill consequences which had followed, and, doubtless in some displeasure, required him to take his wife and depart. The famine was at an end, and there was no reason why he should linger. Beyond reproach, however, Pharaoh inflicted no punishment. He "commanded his men concerning Abraham; and they sent him away, and his wife, and _all that he had_."

Such is the account which has come down to us of Abraham's sojourn in Egypt. If it be asked, Why is it inserted into the "story of Egypt" at this point? the reply must be, because, on a dispassionate consideration of all the circumstances, chronological and other, which attach to the narrative, it has been generally agreed that the event belongs to _about_ this time. There is no special reign to which it can be definitely assigned; but the best critics acquiesce in the judgment of Canon Cook upon the point, who says: "For my own part, I regard it as all but certain that Abraham visited Egypt in some reign between the middle of the eleventh and the thirteenth dynasty, and most probably under one of the earliest Pharaohs of the twelfth."

This is not the only entrance of Hebrews or people of Semitic race into Egypt. Emigrants from less favoured countries had frequently looked with interest to the fertile Delta of the Nile, hoping that there they might find homes free from the vicissitudes of their own. Previous to this, one Amu had entered Egypt, perhaps from Midian, with his family, counting thirty-seven, the little ones riding upon asses, and had sought the protection of the reigning sovereign. It was again the experience of Egypt to receive emigrants from the north-east, from Syria or Northern Arabia, at a little later period, when the nomads in those regions looked over to the

south and, by contrast with their over-peopled country, thought they saw a sort of "fairy-land of wealth, culture, and wisdom," which they hoped to enjoy by force: and they were not the last to seek asylum there. We shall soon have to remark on the familiar case of the immigration of the sons of Jacob with their households. In process of time the Semitic wanderers increased so materially that the population in the eastern half of the Delta became half Asiatic, prepared to submit readily to Asiatic rule and to worship Semitic deities; they had already imposed a number of their words upon the language of Egypt.

VIII. The Great Invasion; the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings; Joseph and Apepi

The prowess of the Egyptians had not yet been put to any severe proof. They had themselves shown little of an aggressive spirit. Attracted by the mineral wealth of the Sinaitic peninsula, they had indeed made settlements in that region, which had involved them in occasional wars with the natives, whom they spoke of as "Mena" or "Menti"; and they had had a contest of more importance with the tribes of the south, negro and Ethiopic, in which they had shown a decided superiority over those rude barbarians; but, as yet, they had attempted no important conquest, and had been subjected to no serious attack. The countries upon their borders were but sparsely peopled, and from neither the Berber tribes of the northern African coast, nor from the Sinaitic nomads, nor even from the negroes of the south, with their allies--the "miserable Cushites"--was any dangerous invasion to be apprehended. Egypt had been able to devote herself almost wholly to the cultivation of the arts of peace, and had not been subjected to the severe ordeal, which most nations pass through in their infancy, of a struggle for existence with warlike and powerful enemies.

The time was now come for a great change. Movements had begun among the populations of Asia which threatened a general disturbance of the peace of the world. Asshur had had to "go forth" out of the land of Shinar, and to make himself a habitation further to the northward, which must have pressed painfully upon other races. In Elam an aggressive spirit had sprung up, and military expeditions had been conducted by Elamitic kings, which started from the shores of the Persian Gulf and terminated in Southern Syria and Palestine. The migration of the tribes which moved with Terah and Abraham from Ur to Haran, and from Haran to Hebron, is but one of many indications of the restlessness of the period. The Hittites were growing in power, and required an enlarged territory for their free expansion. It was now probably that they descended from the hills of Cappadocia upon the region below Taurus and Amanus, where we find them dominant in later ages. Such a movement on their part would displace a large population in Upper Syria, and force it to migrate southwards. There are signs of a pressure upon the north-eastern frontier of Egypt on the part of Asiatics needing a home as early as the commencement of the twelfth dynasty; and it is probable that, while the dynasty lasted, the pressure was continually becoming greater. Asiatics were from time to time received within the barrier of Amenemhat I., some to sojourn and some to dwell. The eastern Delta was more or less Asiaticized; and a large portion of its inhabitants was inclined to welcome a further influx from Asia.

We have one account only of the circumstances of the great invasion by which Egypt fell under a foreign yoke. It purports to come from the native historian, Manetho; but it is delivered to us directly by Josephus, who, in his reports of what other writers had narrated, is not always to be implicitly trusted. Manetho, according to him, declared as follows: "There was once a king of Egypt named Timaeus, in whose reign the gods being offended, for I know not what cause, with our nation, certain men of ignoble race, coming from the eastern regions, had the courage to invade the country, and falling

upon it unawares, conquered it easily without a battle. After the submission of the princes, they conducted themselves in a most barbarous fashion towards the whole of the inhabitants, slaying some, and reducing to slavery the wives and the children of the others. Moreover they savagely set the cities on fire, and demolished the temples of the gods. At last, they took one of their number called Salatis, and made him king over them. Salatis resided at Memphis, where he received tribute both from Upper and Lower Egypt, while at the same time he placed garrisons in all the most suitable situations. He strongly fortified the frontier, especially on the side of the east, since he foresaw that the Assyrians, who were then exceedingly powerful, might desire to make themselves masters of his kingdom. Having found, moreover, in the Sethroite nome, to the east of the Bubastite branch of the Nile, a city very favourably situated, and called, on account of an ancient theological tradition, Avaris, he rebuilt it and strengthened it with walls of great thickness, which he guarded with a body of two hundred and forty thousand men. Each summer he visited the place, to see their supplies of corn measured out for his soldiers and their pay delivered to them, as well as to superintend their military exercises, in order that foreigners might hold them in respect."

The king, Timaeus, does not appear either in the lists of Manetho or upon the monuments, nor is it possible to determine the time of the invasion more precisely than this--that it fell into the interval between Manetho's twelfth and his eighteenth dynasties. The invaders are characterized by the Egyptians as Menti or Sati; but these terms are used so vaguely that nothing definite can be concluded from them. On the whole, it is perhaps most probable that the invading army, like that of Attila, consisted of a vast variety of races--"a collection of all the nomadic hordes of Syria and Arabia"--who made common cause against a foe known to be wealthy, and who all equally desired settlements in a land reputed the most productive in the East. An overwhelming flood of men--a quarter of a million, if we may believe Manetho--poured into the land, impetuous, irresistible. All at once, a danger had come beyond all possible previous calculation--a danger from which there was no escape. It was as when the northern barbarians swooped down in their countless thousands on the outlying provinces of the Roman Empire, or as when the hordes of Jingis Khan overran Kashgar and Kharesm--the contest was too unequal for anything that can be called a struggle to be made. Egypt collapsed before the invader. Manetho says that there was no battle; and we can readily understand that in the divided condition of the country, with two or three subordinate dynasties ruling in different parts of the Delta, and another dynasty at Thebes, no army could be levied which could dare to meet the enemy in the field. The inhabitants fled to their cities, and endeavoured to defend themselves behind walls; but it was in vain. The walls of the Egyptian cities were rather banks to keep out the inundation than ramparts to repel an enemy. In a short time the strongholds that resisted were taken, the male population put to the sword, the women and children enslaved, the houses burnt, the temples ruthlessly demolished. An iconoclastic spirit possessed the conquerors. The gods and worship of Egypt were hateful to them. Where-ever the flood passed, it swept away the existing civilization, deeply impregnated as it was with religion; it covered the ground with the _debris_ of temples and shrines, with the fragments of statues and sphinxes; it crushed existing religious usages, and for a time, as it would seem, substituted nothing in their place. "A study of the monuments," says M. Francois Lenormant, "attests the reality of the frightful devastations which took place at the first moment of the invasion. With a solitary exception, all the temples anterior to the event have disappeared, and no traces can be found of them except scattered ruins which bear the marks of a destructive violence. To say what during these centuries

Egypt had to endure in the way of upsetting of her past is impossible. The only fact which can be stated as certain is, that not a single monument of this desolate epoch has come down to our days to show us what became of the ancient splendour of Egypt under the Hyksos. We witness under the fifteenth and sixteenth dynasties a fresh shipwreck of Egyptian civilization. Vigorous as it had been, the impulse given to it by the Usurtasens suddenly stops; the series of monuments is interrupted, and Egypt informs us by her very silence of the calamities with which she was smitten."

It was, fortunately, not the entire country that was overrun. So far as appears, the actual occupation of Egypt by the Hyksos was confined to the Delta, to the Lower Nile valley, and to the district of the Fayoum. Elephantine, Thebes, Abydos, escaped the destroyers, and though forced to certain formal acts of submission, to an acknowledgment of the Hyksos suzerainty, and to the payment of an annual tribute, retained a qualified independence. The Theban monuments of the eleventh and twelfth dynasties were undisturbed. Even in Lower Egypt there were structures that suffered little or nothing at the conqueror's hands, being too humble to attract his attention or too massive to yield to the means of destruction known to him. Thus the pyramids scarcely suffered, though it is possible that at this time their sanctity was first violated and their contents rifled. The great obelisk of Usurtasen I., which still stands at Heliopolis, was not overthrown. The humbler tombs at Ghizeh, so precious to the antiquary, were for the most part untouched. Amenemhat's buildings in the Fayoum may have been damaged, but they were not demolished. Though Egyptian civilization received a rude shock from the invasion, it was not altogether swallowed up or destroyed; and when the deluge had passed it emerged once more, and soon reached, and even surpassed, its ancient glories.

The Hyksos king who led the invasion, or who, at any rate, was brought to the front in its course, bore, we are told, either the name of Salatis, or that of Saites. Of these two forms the second is undoubtedly to be preferred, since the first has in its favour only the single authority of Josephus, while the second is supported by Africanus, Eusebius, George the Syncellus, and to a certain extent by the monuments. The "tablet of four hundred years" contains the name of Sut-Aapehti as that of a king of Egypt who must have belonged to the Middle Empire, and this name may fairly be regarded as represented in an abbreviated form by the Greek "Saites." Saites, having made himself absolute master of the Lower Country, and forced the king of the Upper Country to become his tributary, fixed his residence at Memphis, at the same time strongly fortifying and garrisoning various other towns in important positions. Of these the most considerable was the city, called Auaris, or Avaris, in the Sethroite nome, which lay east of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, and was probably not far from Pelusium itself, if indeed it was not identical with that city. Another strong fort, by means of which the Delta was held and overawed, seems to have been Zan or Tanis, now San, situated on what was called the Tanitic branch of the Nile, the next most easterly branch to the Pelusiac. A third was in the Fayoum, on the site now called Mit-Fares. A large body of troops must also have been maintained at Memphis, if the king, as we are told, ordinarily held his court there.

How long the Egyptians groaned under the tyranny of the "Shepherds," it is difficult to say. The epitomists of Manetho are hopelessly at variance on the subject, and the monuments are silent, or nearly so. Moderns vary in the time, which they assign to the period between two centuries and five. On the whole, criticism seems to incline towards the shorter term, though why Manetho, or his epitomists, should have enlarged it, remains an insoluble problem. There is but one dynasty of "Shepherd Kings" that has any

distinct historical substance, or to which we can assign any names. This is a dynasty of six kings only, whose united reigns are not likely to have exceeded two centuries. Nor does it seem possible that, if the duration of the foreign oppression had been much longer, Egypt could have returned, so nearly as she did, to the same manners and customs, the same religious usages, the same rules of art, the same system of government, even the very same proper names, at the end of the period, as had been in use at its beginning. One cannot but think that the _bouleversement_ which Egypt underwent has been somewhat exaggerated by the native historian for the sake of rhetorical effect, to enhance by contrast the splendour of the New Empire.

In another respect, too, if he has not misrepresented the rule of the "Shepherd Kings," he has failed to do it justice. He has painted in lurid colours the advent of the foreign race, the war of extermination in which they engaged, the cruel usage to which they subjected the conquered people; he has represented the invaders as rude, savage, barbarous, bent on destruction, careless of art, the enemies of progress and civilization. He has neglected to point out, that, as time went on, there was a sensible change. The period of constant bitter hostilities came to an end. Peace succeeded to war. In Lower Egypt the "Shepherds" reigned over quiet and unresisting subjects; in Upper Egypt they bore rule over submissive tributaries. Under these circumstances a perceptible softening of their manners and general character took place. As the Mongols and the Mandchus in China suffered themselves by degrees to be conquered by the superior civilization of the people whom they had overrun and subdued, so the Hyksos yielded little by little to the influences which surrounded them, and insensibly assimilated themselves to their Egyptian subjects. They adopted the Egyptian dress, titles, official language, art, mode of writing, architecture. In Tanis, especially, temples were built and sculptures set up under the later "Shepherd Kings," differing little in their general character from those of purely Egyptian periods. The foreign monarchs erected their effigies at this site, which were sculptured by native artists according to the customary rules of Egyptian glyptic art, and only differ from those of the earlier native Pharaohs in the head-dress, the expression of the countenance, and a peculiar arrangement of the beard. A friendly intercourse took place during this period between the kings of the North, established at Tanis and Memphis, and those of the South, resident at Thebes; frequent embassies were interchanged; and blocks of granite and syenite were continually floated down the Nile, past Thebes, to be employed by the "Shepherds" in their erections at the southern capitals.

The "Shepherds" brought with them into Egypt the worship of a deity, whom they called Sut or Sutekh, and apparently identified with the sun. He was described as "the great ruler of heaven," and identified with Baal in later times. The kings regarded themselves as especially under his protection. At the time of the invasion, they do not seem to have considered this deity as having any special connection with any of the Egyptian gods, and they consequently made war indiscriminately against the entire Egyptian Pantheon, plundering and demolishing all the temples alike. But when the first burst of savage hostility was gone by, when more settled times followed, and the manners and temper of the conquerors grew softened by pacific intercourse with their subjects, a likeness came to be seen between Sutekh, their own ancestral god, and the "Set" of the Egyptians. Set in the old Egyptian mythology was recognized as "the patron of foreigners, the power which swept the children of the desert like a sand-storm over the fertile land." He was a representative of physical, but not of moral, evil; a strong and powerful deity, worthy of reverence and worship, but less an object of love than of fear. The "Shepherds" acknowledged in this god their Sutekh; and as

they acquired settled habits, and assimilated themselves to their subjects, they began to build temples to him, after the Egyptian model, in their principal towns. After the dynasty had borne rule for five reigns, covering the space perhaps of one hundred and fifty years, a king came to the throne named Apepi, who has left several monuments, and is the only one of the "Shepherds" that stands out for us in definite historical consistency as a living and breathing person. Apepi built a great temple to Sutekh at Zoan, or Tanis, his principal capital, composed of blocks of red granite, and adorned it with obelisks and sphinxes. The obelisks are said to have been fourteen in number, and must have been dispersed about the courts, and not, as usual, placed only at the entrance. The sphinxes, which differed from the ordinary Egyptian sphinx in having a mane like a lion and also wings, seem to have formed an avenue or vista leading up to the temple from the town. They are in diorite, and have the name of Apepi engraved upon them.

The pacific rule of Apepi and his predecessors allowed Thebes to increase in power, and her monuments now recommence. Three kings who bore the family name of Taa, and the throne name of Ra-Sekenen, bore rule in succession at the southern capital. The third of these, Taa-ken, or "Taa the Victorious," was contemporary with Apepi, and paid his tribute punctually, year by year, to his lawful suzerain. He does not seem to have had any desire to provoke war; but Apepi probably thought that he was becoming too powerful, and would, if unmolested, shortly make an effort to throw off the Hyksos yoke. He therefore determined to pick a quarrel with him, and proceeded to send to Thebes a succession of embassies with continually increasing demands. First of all he required Taa-ken to relinquish the worship of all the Egyptian gods except Amen-Ra, the chief god of Thebes, whom he probably identified with his own Sutekh. It is not quite clear whether Taa-ken consented to this demand, or politely evaded it. At any rate, a second embassy soon followed the first, with a fresh requirement; and a third followed the second. The policy was successful, and at last Taa-ken took up arms. It would seem that he was successful, or was at any rate able to hold his own; for he maintained the war till his death, and left it to his successor, Aahmes.

There was an ancient tradition, that the king who made Joseph his prime minister, and committed into his hands the entire administration of Egypt, was Apepi. George the Syncellus says that the synchronism was accepted by all. It is clear that Joseph's arrival did not fall, like Abraham's, into the period of the Old Empire, since under Joseph horses and chariots are in use, as well as wagons or carts, all of which were unknown till after the Hyksos invasion. It is also more natural that Joseph, a foreigner, should have been advanced by a foreign king than by a native one, and the favour shown to his brethren, who were shepherds (Gen. xlvi. 32), is consonant at any rate with the tradition that it was a "Shepherd King" who held the throne at the time of their arrival. A priest of Heliopolis, moreover, would scarcely have given Joseph his daughter in marriage unless at a time when the priesthood was in a state of depression. Add to this that the Pharaoh of Joseph is evidently resident in Lower Egypt, not at Thebes, which was the seat of government for many hundred years both before and after the Hyksos rule.

If, however, we are to place Joseph under one of the "Shepherd Kings," there can be no reason why we should not accept the tradition which connects him with Apepi. Apepi was dominant over the whole of Egypt, as Joseph's Pharaoh seems to have been. He acknowledged a single god, as did that monarch (Gen. xli. 38, 39). He was a thoroughly Egyptianized king. He had a council of learned scribes, a magnificent court, and a peaceful reign until towards its close. His residence was in the Delta, either at Tanis or Auaris. He was a prince of a strong

will, firm and determined; one who did not shrink from initiating great changes, and who carried out his resolves in a somewhat arbitrary way. The arguments in favour of his identity with Joseph's master are, perhaps, not wholly conclusive; but they raise a presumption, which may well incline us, with most modern historians of Egypt, to assign the touching story of Joseph to the reign of the last of the Shepherds.

IX. How the Hyksos were Expelled from Egypt

At first sight it seems strange that the terrible warriors who, under Set or Saites, so easily reduced Egypt to subjection, and then still further weakened the population by massacre and oppression, should have been got rid of, after two centuries or two centuries and a half, with such comparative ease. But the rapid deterioration of conquering races under certain circumstances is a fact familiar to the historian. Elamites, Babylonians, Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Greeks, rapidly succeeded each other as the dominant power in Western Asia, each race growing weaker and becoming exhausted, after a longer or a shorter interval, through nearly the same causes. Nor are the reasons for the deterioration far to seek. Each race when it sets out upon its career of conquest is active, energetic, inured to warlike habits, simple in its manners, or at any rate simpler than those which it conquers, and, comparatively speaking, poor. It is urged on by the desire of bettering its condition. If it meets with a considerable resistance, if the conquest occupies a long space, and the conquered are with difficulty held under, rebelling from time to time, and making frantic efforts to throw off the yoke which galls and frets them, then the warlike habits of the conquerors are kept up, and their dominion may continue for several centuries. Or, if the nation is very energetic and unresting, not content with its earlier conquests, or willing to rest upon its oars, but continually seeking out fresh enemies upon its borders, and regarding war as the normal state of its existence, then the centuries may be prolonged into millennia, and it may be long indeed before any tendency to decline shows itself; but, ordinarily, there is no very prolonged resistance on the one side, and no very constant and unresting energy on the other. A poor and hardy people, having swooped down upon one that is softer and more civilized, easily carries all before it, acquires the wealth and luxury which it desires, and being content with them, seeks for nothing further, but assimilates itself by degrees to the character and condition of the people whom it has conquered. A standing army, disposed in camps and garrisons, may be kept up; but if there is a cessation of actual war even for a generation, the severity of military discipline will become relaxed, the use of arms will grow unfamiliar, the physical type will decline, the belligerent spirit will die away, and the conquerors of a century ago will have lost all the qualities which secured them success when they made their attack, and have sunk to the level of their subjects. When this point is reached, thoughts of rebellion are apt to arise in the hearts of these latter; the old terror which made the conqueror appear irresistible is gone, and is perhaps succeeded by contempt--the subjects feel that they have at least the advantage of numbers on their side; they have also probably been leading harder and more bracing lives; they see that, man for man, they are physically stronger than their conquerors; and at last they rebel, and are successful.

In Egypt there was, further, this peculiarity--the conquered people occupied two entirely distinct positions. In the Delta, the Fayoum, and the northern Nile valley, they were completely reduced, and lived intermixed with their conquerors, a despised class, suffering more or less of oppression. In Upper Egypt the case was different. There the people had submitted in a certain sense, acknowledged the Hyksos monarchs as their suzerains, and indicated their subjection by the payment of an annual tribute; but they

retained their own native princes, their own administration and government, their own religion, their own laws; they did not live intermixed with the new comers; they were not subject to daily insult or ill-treatment; the fact that they paid a tribute did not hinder their preserving their self-respect, and consequently they suffered neither moral nor physical deterioration. Further, it would seem to have been possible for them to engage in wars on their own account with the races living further up the Nile, or with the wild tribes of the desert, and thus to maintain warlike habits among themselves, while the Hyksos were becoming unaccustomed to them. The Ra-Sekenens of Thebes, who called themselves "great" and "very great," had probably built up a considerable power in Upper Egypt during the reigns of the later "Shepherd Kings;" had improved their military system by the adoption of the horse and the chariot, which the Hyksos had introduced; had practised their people in arms, and acquired a reputation as warriors.

More particularly must this have been the case with Ra-Sekenen III., the contemporary of Apepi. Ra-Sekenen the Third called himself "the great victorious Taa." He surrounded himself with a council of "mighty chiefs, captains, and expert leaders." He acquired so much repute, that he provoked Apepi's jealousy before he had in any way transgressed the duties which he owed him as a feudatory. In the long negotiation between the two, of which the "First Sallier Papyrus" gives an account, it is evident that, while Ra-Sekenen has committed no act whereof Apepi has any right to complain, he has awoke in him feelings of such hostility, that Apepi will be content with nothing less than either unqualified submission to every demand that he chooses to make, or war _a outrance_. Never was a subject monarch more goaded and driven into rebellion against his inclination by over-bearing conduct on the part of his suzerain than was Ra-Sekenen by the last "Shepherd King." The disinclination of himself and his court to fight is almost ludicrous: they "are silent and in great dismay; they know not how to answer the messenger sent to them, good of ill." Ra-Sekenen, powerful as he had become, "victorious" as he may have been against Libyans and negroes, and even Cushites, dreaded exceedingly to engage in a struggle with the redoubted people which, two centuries previously, had shown itself so irresistible.

It would seem, however, that he was forced to take up arms at last. We have, unfortunately, no description of the war which followed, so far as it was conducted by this monarch. But it is evident that Apepi was completely disappointed in his hope of crushing the rising native power before it had grown too strong. He had in fact delayed too late. Ra-Sekenen, compelled to defend himself against his aggressive suzerain, raised the standard of national independence, invited aid from all parts of Egypt, and succeeded in bringing a large army into the field. At the first he simply held his own against Apepi, but by degrees he was able to do more. The Hyksos, who marched against Thebes, found enemies rise up against them in their rear, as first one and then another native chief declared against them in this or that city; their difficulties continually increased; they had to re-descend the Nile valley and to concentrate their forces nearer home. But each year they lost ground. First the Fayoum was yielded, then Memphis, then Tanis. At last nothing remained to the invaders but their great fortified camp, Uar or Auaris, which they had established at the time of their arrival upon the eastern frontier, and had ever since kept up. In this district, which was strongly fortified by walls and moats, and watered by canals derived from the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, they had concentrated themselves, we are told, to the number of 240,000 men, determined to make there a final stand against the Egyptians.

It was when affairs were in this position that Ra-Sekenen died, and was succeeded by a king of a different family, the first monarch of

the "Eighteenth Dynasty," Aahmes. Aahmes was a prince of great force of character, brave, active, energetic, liberal, beloved by his subjects. He addressed himself at once to the task of completing the liberation of his country by dislodging the Hyksos from Auaris, and driving them beyond his borders. With this object he collected a force, which is said to have amounted to nearly half a million of men, and at the same time placed a flotilla of ships upon the Nile, which was of the greatest service in his later operations. Auaris was not only defended by broad moats connected with the waters of the Nile, but also bordered upon a lake, or perhaps rather a lagoon, of considerable dimensions. Hence it was necessary that it should be attacked not only by land, but also by water. Aahmes seems to have commanded the land forces in person, riding in a war-chariot, the first of which we have distinct mention. A favourite officer, who bore the same name as his master, accompanied him, sometimes marching at his side as he rode in his chariot, sometimes taking his place in one of the war-vessels, and directing the movements of the fleet. After a time formal siege was laid to Auaris; the fleet was ordered to attack the walls on the side of the lagoon, while the land force was engaged in battering the defences elsewhere. Assaults were made day after day with only partial success; but at last the defenders were wearied out--a panic seized them, and, hastily evacuating the place, they retired towards Syria, the quarter from which they had originally come. Aahmes may have been willing that they should escape: since, if they had been completely blocked in and driven to bay, they might have made a desperate resistance, and caused the Egyptians an enormous loss. He followed, however, upon their footsteps, to make sure that they did not settle anywhere in his neighbourhood, and was not content till they had crossed the desert and entered the hill country of Palestine. Even then he still hung upon their rear, harassing them and cutting off their stragglers; finally, when they made a stand at Sharuhen in Southern Palestine, he laid siege to the town, took it, and made a great slaughter of the hapless defenders.

The war did not terminate until the fifth year of Aahmes' reign. Its result was the complete defeat of the invading hordes which had held Lower and Middle Egypt for so long, and their expulsion from Egypt with such ignominy and loss that they made no effort to retaliate or to recover themselves. Vast numbers must have been slain in the battles, or have perished amid the hardships of the retreat; and many thousands were, no doubt, made prisoners and carried back into Egypt as slaves. It is thought that these captives were so numerous as to become an important element in the population of the eastern Delta, and even to modify the character of the Egyptian race in that quarter. The lively imagination of M. Francois Lenormant sees their descendants in the "strange people, with robust limbs, an elongated face, and a severe expression, which to this day inhabits the tract bordering on Lake Menzaleh."

It is probable that Aahmes had for allies in his war with the "Shepherds" the great nation which adjoined Egypt on the south, and which was continually growing in power--the Kashi, Cushites, or Ethiopians. His wife appears by her features and complexion to have been a Cushite princess, and the marriage is likely to have been less one of inclination than of policy. The Egyptians admired fair women rather than dark ones, as is plain from the unduly light complexions which the artists, in their desire to flatter, ordinarily assign to women, as well as from the attractiveness of Sarah, even in advanced age. When a Theban king contracted marriage with an Ethiopian of ebon blackness, we are entitled to assume a political motive; and the most probable political motive under the circumstances of the time was the desire for military assistance. Though in the early wars between the Kashi and the Egyptians the prowess of the former is not represented as great, and the designation of "miserable Cushites" is

evidently used in depreciation of their warlike qualities, yet the very use of the epithet implies a feeling of hostility which could scarcely have been provoked by a weak people. And the Cushites certainly advanced in prowess and in military vigour as time went on. They formed the most important portion of the Egyptian troops for some centuries; at a later period they conquered Egypt, and were the dominant power for a hundred years; still further on, they defied the might of Persia when Egypt succumbed to it. Aahmes, in contracting his marriage with the Ethiopian princess, to whom he gave the name of Nefertari-Aahmes--or "the good companion of Aahmes"--was, we may be tolerably sure, bent on obtaining a contingent of those stalwart troops whose modern representatives are either the Blacks of the Soudan or the Gallas of the highlands of Abyssinia. The "Shepherds" thus yielded to a combination of the North with the South, of the Egyptians with the Ethiopians, such as in later times, on more than one occasion, drove the Assyrians out of the country.

X. Thothmes I, the First Great Egyptian Conqueror

Thothmes I. was the grandson of the Aahmes who drove out the Hyksos. He had thus hereditary claims to valour and military distinction. The Ethiopian blood which flowed in his veins through his grandmother, Nefertari-Aahmes, may have given him an additional touch of audacity, and certainly showed itself in his countenance, where the short depressed nose and the unduly thick lips are of the Cushite rather than of the Egyptian type. His father, Amen-hotep I., was a somewhat undistinguished prince; so that here, as so often, where superior talent runs in a family, it seems to have skipped a generation, and to have leapt from the grand-sire to the grandson. Thothmes began his military career by an invasion of the countries upon the Upper Nile, which were still in an unsettled state, notwithstanding the campaigns which had been carried on, and the victories which had been gained in them, during the two preceding reigns, by King Aahmes, and by the generals of Amen-hotep. He placed a flotilla of ships upon the Nile above the Second Cataract, and supporting it with his land forces on either side of the river, advanced from Semneh, the boundary established by Usurtasen III., which is in lat. 21 deg. 50' to Tombos, in lat. 19 deg., conquering the tribes, Nubian and Cushite, as he proceeded, and from time to time distinguishing himself in personal combats with his enemies. On one occasion, we are told, "his majesty became more furious than a panther," and placing an arrow on his bowstring, directed it against the Nubian chief so surely that it struck him, and remained fixed in his knee, whereupon the chief "fell fainting down before the royal diadem." He was at once seized and made a prisoner; his followers were defeated and dispersed; and he himself, together with others, was carried off on board the royal ship, hanging with his head downwards, to the royal palace at the capital This victory was the precursor of others; everywhere "the Petti of Nubia were hewed in pieces, and scattered all over their lands," till "their stench filled the valleys." At last a general submission was made, and a large-tract of territory was ceded. The Egyptian terminus was pushed on from the twenty-second parallel to the nineteenth, and at Tombos, beyond Dongola, an inscription was set up, at once to mark the new frontier, and to hand down to posterity the glory of the conquering monarch. The inscription still remains, and is couched in inflated terms, which show a departure from the old official style. Thothmes declares that "he has taken tribute from the nations of the North, and from the nations of the South, as well as from _those of the whole earth_; he has laid hold of the barbarians; he has not let a single one of them escape his gripe upon their hair; the Petti of Nubia have fallen beneath his blows; he has made their waters to flow backwards; he has overflowed their valleys like a deluge, like

waters which mount and mount. He has resembled Horus, when he took possession of his eternal kingdom; all the countries included within the circumference of the entire earth are prostrate under his feet." Having effected his conquest, Thothmes sought to secure it by the appointment of a new officer, who was to govern the newly-annexed country under the title of "Prince of Cush," and was to have his ordinary residence at Semneh.

Flushed with his victories in this quarter, and intoxicated with the delight of conquest, Thothmes, on his return to Thebes, raised his thoughts to a still grander and more adventurous enterprize. Egypt had a great wrong to avenge, a huge disgrace to wipe out. She had been Invaded, conquered, plundered, by an enemy whom she had not provoked by any aggression; she had seen her cities laid in ashes, her temples torn down and demolished, the images of her gods broken to pieces, her soil dyed with her children's blood; she had been trampled under the iron heel of the conqueror for centuries; she had been exhausted by the payment of taxes and tribute; she had had to bow the knee, and lick the dust under the conqueror's feet--was not retribution needed for all this? True, she had at last risen up and expelled her enemy, she had driven him beyond her borders, and he seemed content to acquiesce in his defeat, and to trouble her no more; but was this enough? Did not the law of eternal justice require something more:

"Nec lex justior ulla est, Quam necis artifices arte perire sua."

Was it not proper, fitting, requisite for the honour of Egypt, that there should be retaliation, that the aggressor should suffer what he had inflicted, should be attacked in his own country, should be made to feel the grief, the despair, the rage, the shame, that he had forced Egypt to feel for so many years; should expiate his guilt by a penalty, not only proportioned to the offence, but Its exact counterpart? Such thoughts, we may be sure, burned in the mind of the young warrior, when, having secured Egypt on the south, he turned his attention to the north, and asked himself the question how he should next employ the power that he had inherited, and the talents with which nature had endowed him.

It is uncertain what amount of knowledge the Egyptians of the time possessed concerning the internal condition, population, and resources, of the continent which adjoined them on the north-east. We cannot say whether Thothmes and his counsellors could, or could not, bring before their mind's eye a fairly correct view of the general position of Asiatic affairs, and form a reasonable estimate of the probabilities of success or discomfiture, if a great expedition were led into the heart of Asia. Whatever may have been their knowledge or ignorance, it will be necessary for the historical student of the present day to have some general ideas on the subject, if he is to form an adequate conception either of the dangers which Thothmes affronted, or of the amount of credit due to him for his victories. We propose, therefore, in the present place, to glance our eye over the previous history of Western Asia, and to describe, so far as is possible, its condition at the time when Thothmes began to contemplate the invasion which it is his great glory to have accomplished.

Western Asia is generally allowed to have been the cradle of the human race. Its more fertile portions were thickly peopled at a very early date. Monarchy, it is probable, first grew up in Babylonia, towards the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates. But it was not long ere a sister kingdom established itself in Susiana, or Elam, the fertile tract between the Lower Tigris and the Zagros mountains. The ambition of conquest first showed itself in this latter country, whence Kudur-Nakhunta, about B.C. 2300, made an attack on Erech, and Chedor-laomer (about B.C. 2000) established an empire which extended from the Zagros

mountains on the one hand to the shores of the Mediterranean on the other (Gen. xiv. 1-4) Shortly after this, a third power, that of the Hittites, grew up towards the north, chiefly perhaps in Asia Minor, but with a tendency to project itself southward into the Mesopotamian region. Upper Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine, were at this time inhabited by weak tribes, each under its own chief, with no coherence, and no great military spirit. The chief of these tribes, at the time when Thothmes I. ascended the Egyptian throne, were the Rutennu in Syria, and the Nahari or Nairi in Upper Mesopotamia. The two monarchies of the south, Elam and Babylon were not in a flourishing condition, and exercised no suzerainty beyond their own natural limits. They were, in fact, a check upon each other, constantly engaged in feuds and quarrels, which prevented either from maintaining an extended sway for more than a few years, Assyria had not yet acquired any great distinction, though it was probably independent, and ruled by monarchs who dwelt at Asshur (Kileh-Sherghat). The Hittites, about B.C. 1900, had received a severe check from the Babylonian monarch, Sargon, and had withdrawn themselves into their northern fortresses. Thus the circumstances of the time were, on the whole, favourable to the enterprize of Thothmes. No great organized monarchy was likely to take the field against him, or to regard itself as concerned to interfere with the execution of his projects, unless they assumed extraordinary dimensions. So long as he did not proceed further north than Taurus, or further east than the western Khabour, the great affluent of the Euphrates, he would come into contact with none of the "great powers" of the time; he would have, at the worst, to contend with loose confederacies of tribes, distrustful of each other, unaccustomed to act together, and, though brave, possessing no discipline or settled military organization. At the same time, his adversaries must not be regarded as altogether contemptible. The Philistines and Canaanites in Palestine, the Arabs of the Sinaitic and Syrian deserts, the Rutennu of the Lebanon and of Upper Syria, the Nairi of the western Mesopotamian region, were individually brave men, were inured to warfare, had a strong love of independence, and were likely to resist with energy any attempt to bring them under subjection. They were also, most of them, well acquainted with the value of the horse for military service, and could bring into the field a number of war-chariots, with riders well accustomed to their management Egypt had only recently added the horse to the list of its domesticated animals, and followed the example of the Asiatics by organizing a chariot force. It was open to doubt whether this new and almost untried corps would be able to cope with the experienced chariot-troops of Asia.

The country also in which military operations were to be carried on was a difficult one. It consisted mainly of alternate mountain and desert. First, the sandy waste called El Tij--the "Wilderness of the Wanderings"--had to be passed, a tract almost wholly without water, where an army must carry Its own supply. Next, the high upland of the Negeb would present itself, a region wherein water may be procured from wells, and which in some periods of the world's history has been highly cultivated, but which in the time of Thothmes was probably almost as unproductive as the desert itself. Then would come the green rounded hills, the lofty ridges, and the deep gorges of Palestine, untraversed by any road, in places thickly wooded, and offering continually greater obstacles to the advance of an army, as it stretched further and further towards the north. From Palestine the Lebanon region would have to be entered on, where, though the Coele-Syrian valley presents a comparatively easy line of march to the latitude of Antioch, the country on either side of the valley is almost untraversable, while the valley itself contains many points where it can be easily blocked by a small force. The Orontes, moreover, and the

Litany, are difficult to cross, and in the time of Thothmes I. would be unbridged, and form no contemptible obstacles. From the lower valley of the Orontes, first mountains and then a chalky desert had to be crossed in order to reach the Euphrates, which could only be passed in boats, or else by swimming. Beyond the Euphrates was another dreary and infertile region, the tract about Haran, where Crassus lost his army and his life.

How far Thothmes and his counsellors were aware of these topographical difficulties, or of the general condition of Western Asia, it is, as already observed, impossible to determine. But, on the whole, there are reasons for believing that intercourse between nation and nation was, even in very early times, kept up, and that each important country had its "intelligence department," which was not badly served. Merchants, refugees, spies, adventurers desirous of bettering their condition, were continually moving, singly or in bodies, from one land to another, and through them a considerable acquaintance with mundane affairs generally was spread abroad. The knowledge was, of course, very inexact. No surveys were made, no plans of cities or fortresses, no maps; the military force that could be brought into the field by the several nations was very roughly estimated; but still, ancient conquerors did not start off on their expeditions wholly in the dark as to the forces which they might have to encounter, or the difficulties which were likely to beset their march.

Thothmes probably set out on his expedition into Asia in about his sixth or seventh year. He was accompanied by two officers, who had served his father and his grandfather, known respectively as "Aahmes, son of Abana," and "Aahmes Pennishem." Both of them had been engaged in the war which he had conducted against the Petti of Nubia and their Ethiopian allies, and both had greatly distinguished themselves. Aahmes, the son of Abana, boasts that he seven times received the prize of valour--a collar of gold--for his conduct in the field; and Aahmes Pennishem gives a list of twenty-nine presents given to him as military rewards by three kings. It does not appear that any resistance was offered to the invading force as it passed through Palestine; but in Syria Thothmes engaged the Rutennu, and "exacted satisfaction" from them, probably on account of the part which they had taken in the Hyksos struggle; after which he crossed the Euphrates and fell upon the far more powerful nation of the Nairi. The Nairi, when first attacked by the Assyrians, had twenty-three cities, and as many kings; they were rich in horses and mules, and had so large a chariot force that we hear of a hundred and twenty chariots being taken from them in a single battle. At this time the number of the chariots was probably much smaller, for each of the two officers named Ahmes takes great credit to himself on account of the capture of one such vehicle. It is uncertain whether more than a single battle was fought. All that we are told is, that "His Majesty, having arrived in Naharina" (_i.e._ the Nairi country), "encountered the enemy, and organized an attack. His Majesty made a great slaughter of them; an immense number of live captives was carried off by His Majesty." These words would apply equally to a single battle and to a series of battles. All that can be said is, that Thothmes returned victorious from his Asiatic expedition, having defeated the Rutennu and the Nairi, and brought with him into Egypt a goodly booty, and a vast number of Asiatic prisoners.

The warlike ambition of Thothmes I. was satisfied by his Nubian and Asiatic victories. On his return to Egypt at the close of his Mesopotamian campaign, he engaged in the peaceful work of adorning and beautifying his capital cities. At Thebes he greatly enlarged the temple of Ammon, begun by Amenemhat I., and continued under his son, the first Usurtasen, by adding to it the cloistered court in front of the central cell--a court two hundred and forty feet long by sixty-two broad, surrounded by a colonnade, of which the supports were Osirid pillars, or square

piers with a statue of Osiris in front. This is the first known example of the cloistered court, which became afterwards so common; though it is possible that constructions of a similar character may have been made by the "Shepherd Kings" at Tanis, Thothmes also adorned this temple with obelisks. In front of the main entrance to his court he erected two vast monoliths of granite, each of them seventy-five feet in height, and bearing dedicatory inscriptions, which indicated his piety and his devotion to all the chief deities of Egypt.

Further, at Memphis he built a new royal palace, which he called "The Abode of Aa-khepr-ka-ra," a grand building, afterwards converted into a magazine for the storage of grain.

The greatness of Thothmes I. has scarcely been sufficiently recognized by historians. It may be true that he did not effect much; but he broke ground in a new direction; he set an example which led on to grand results. To him it was due that Egypt ceased to be the isolated, unaggressive power that she had remained for perhaps ten centuries, that she came boldly to the front and aspired to bring Asia into subjection. Henceforth she exercised a potent influence beyond her borders--an influence which affected, more or less, all the western Asiatic powers. She had forced her way into the comity of the great nations. Henceforth whether it was for good or for evil, she had to take her place among them, to reckon with them, as they reckoned with her, to be a factor in the problem which the ages had to work out--What should be the general march of events, and what states and nations should most affect the destiny of the world.