EGYPT

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XI. Queen Hatasu and her Merchant Fleet

Hasheps, or Hatasu, was the daughter of the great warrior king, Thothmes the First, and, according to some, was, during his later years, associated with him in the government. An inscription is quoted in which he assigns to her her throne-name of Ra-ma-ka, and calls her "Queen of the South and of the North," But it was not till after the death of her father that she came prominently forward, and assumed a position not previously held by any female in Egypt, unless it were Net-akret (Nitocris). Women in Egypt had been, it is true, from very early times held in high estimation, were their husbands' companions, not their playthings or their slaves, appeared freely in public, and enjoyed much liberty of action. One of the ancient mythical monarchs, of the time before Sneferu, is said to have passed a law permitting them to exercise the sovereign authority. Nitocris of the sixth dynasty of Manetho ruled, apparently, as sole queen; and Sabak-nefru-ra of the twelfth, the wife of Amenemhat IV., reigned for some years conjointly with her husband. Hatasu's position was intermediate between these. Her father had left behind him two sons, as well as a daughter; and the elder of these, according to Egyptian law, succeeded him. He reigned as Thothmes-nefer-shau, and is known to moderns as Thothmes the Second. He was, however, a mere youth, of a weak and amiable temper; while Hatasu, his senior by some years, was a woman of great energy and of a masculine mind, clever, enterprizing, vindictive, and unscrupulous. The contrast of their portrait busts is remarkable, and gives a fair indication of the character of each of them. Thothmes has the appearance of a soft and yielding boy: he has a languishing eye, a short upper lip, a sensuous mouth and chin. Hatasu looks the Amazon: she holds her head erect, has a bold aquiline nose, a firmly-set mouth, and a chin that projects considerably, giving her an indescribable air of vigour and resolution. The effect is increased, no doubt, by her having attached to it the male appendage of an artificial beard; but even apart from this, her face would be a strong one, expressive of firmness, pride, and decision. It is thought that she contracted a marriage with her brother, such unions being admissible by the Egyptian marriage law, and not infrequent among the Pharaohs, whether of the earlier or the later dynasties. In any case, it is certain that she took the direction of affairs under his reign, reducing him to a cipher, and making her influence paramount in every department of the government.

At this period of her life the ambition of Queen Hatasu was to hand her name down to posterity as a constructor of buildings. She made many additions to the old temple of Ammon at Karnak; and she also built at Medinet Abou, in the vicinity of Thebes, a temple of a more elaborate character than any that had preceded it, the remains of which are still standing, and have attracted much attention from architects. Egyptian temple-architecture is here seen tentatively making almost its first advances from the simple cell of Usurtasen I. towards that richness of complication and multiplicity of parts which it ultimately reached. Pylons, courts, corridors supported by columns, pillared apartments, meet us here in their earliest germ; while there are also indications of constructive weakness, which show that the builders were aspiring to go beyond previous models. The temple is cruciform in shape, but the two arms of the cross are

unequal. In front, two pylons of moderate dimensions, not exceeding twenty-four feet in height, and built with the usual sloping sides and strongly projecting cornice, guarded a doorway which gave entrance into a court, sixty feet long by thirty broad. At the further end of the court stood a porch, thirty feet long and nine deep, supported by four square stone piers, emplaced at equal distances. The porch led into the cell, a long, narrow chamber of extreme plainness, about twenty-five feet long by nine wide, with a doorway at either end. At either side of the cell were corridors, supported, like the porch, by square piers, and roofed in by blocks of stone from nine to ten feet long. These blocks have in some instances shown signs of giving way; and, to counteract the tendency, octagonal pillars have been introduced at the weak points, without regard to exact regularity or correspondence. Behind the cell are chambers for the officiating priests, which are six in number, and on either side of the porch are also chambers, forming the arms of the cross, but of unequal dimensions. That on the left is nearly square, about fifteen feet by twelve; that on the right is oblong, twenty-seven feet by fifteen, and has needed the support of two pillars internally, which seem, however, to have been part of the original design. This chamber is open towards the north-east, terminating in a porch of three square piers.

The joint reign of Hatasu and Thothmes II. did not continue for more than a few years. It is suspected that she engaged in a conspiracy against him in order to rid herself of the small restraint which his participation in the sovereignty exercised upon her, and was privy to his murder. But there is no sufficient evidence to substantiate these charges, which have been somewhat recklessly made. All that distinctly appears is, that Thothmes II. died while he was still extremely young, and when he had reigned only a short time, and that after his death Hatasu showed her hostility to his memory by erasing his name wherever it occurred on the monuments, and substituting for it either her own name or that of her father. She appears also at the same time to have taken full possession of the throne, and to have been accepted as actual sovereign of the Egyptian people. She calls herself "The living Horus, abounding in divine gifts, the mistress of diadems, rich in years, the golden Horus, goddess of diadems, Queen of Upper and Lower Egypt, daughter of the Sun, consort of Ammon, living for ever, and daughter of Ammon, dwelling in his heart." Nor was she content with attributes which made acknowledgment of her sex. She wished to be regarded as a man, assumed male apparel and an artificial beard, and gave herself on many of her monuments the style and title of a king. Her name of Hatasu she changed into Hatasu-Khnum-Ammon, thus identifying herself with two of the chief Egyptian gods. She often represented herself as crowned with the tall plumes of Ammon. She took the titles of "_son_ of the sun," "the good _god_," "_lord_ of the two lands," "beloved of Ammon, the protector of _kings_." A curious anomaly appears in some of her inscriptions, where masculine and feminine forms are inextricably mixed up; though spoken of consistently as "the king," and not "the queen," yet the personal and possessive pronouns which refer to her are feminine for the most part, while sometimes such perplexing expressions occur as "le roi qui est bien _aimee_ par Ammon," or "His Majesty herself."

The legal position which Hatasu occupied during the sixteen years that followed the death of Thothmes II. was probably that of regent for Thothmes III., his (and her) younger brother; but practically she was full sovereign of Egypt. It was now that she formed her grand schemes of foreign commerce, and had them carried out by her officers. First of all, she caused to be built, in some harbour on the western coast of the Red Sea, a fleet of ships, certainly not fewer than five, each constructed so as to be propelled both by oars and sails, and each capable of accommodating some sixty or seventy

passengers. Of these thirty were the rowers, whose long sweeps were to plough the waves, and bring the vessels into port, whether the wind were favourable or no; some ten or twelve formed the crew; and the remainder consisted of men-at-arms, whose services, it was felt, might be required, if the native tribes were not sufficiently impressed with the advantages of commercial dealings. An expedition then started from Thebes under the conduct of a royal ambassador, who was well furnished with gifts for distribution among the barbarian chiefs, and instructed to proceed with his fleet down the Red Sea to its mouth, or perhaps even further, and open communications with the land of "Punt," which was in this quarter. "Punt" has been generally identified with Southern Arabia, and it is certainly in favour of this view that the chief object of the expedition was to procure incense and spices, which Arabia is known to have produced anciently in profusion. But among the other products of the land mentioned in the inscriptions of Hatasu, there are several which Arabia could not possibly have furnished; and the conjecture has therefore been made that Punt, or at any rate the Punt of this expedition, was not the Arabian peninsula, or any part of it, but the African tract outside the Gulf, known to moderns as "the Somauli country." However this may have been, it is certain that the fleet weighed anchor, and sailed down the Red Sea, borne by favourable winds, which were ascribed to the gracious majesty of Ammon, and reached their destination, the Ta-neter, or "Holy Land"--the "abode of Athor," and perhaps the original home of Ammon himself--without accident or serious difficulty. The natives gave them a good reception. They were simple folk, living in rounded huts or cabins, which were perched on floors supported by piles, probably on account of the marshiness of the ground, and which had to be entered by means of ladders. Cocoa-nut palms overshadowed the huts, interspersed with incense trees, while near them flowed a copious stream, in which were a great variety of fishes. The principal chief of the country was a certain Parihu, who was married to a wife of an extraordinary appearance. A dwarf, hunchbacked, with a drawn face and short, deformed legs, she can scarcely, one would think, have been a countrywoman of the Queen of Sheba. She belonged, more probably, to one of the dwarfish tribes of which Africa has so many, as Dokos, Bosjesmen, and others. The royal couple were delighted with their visitors, and with the presents which they received from them; they made a sort of acknowledgment of the suzerainty of the Pharaohs, but at the same time stipulated that the peace and liberty of the land of Punt should be respected by the Egyptians. Perfect freedom of trade was established. The Egyptians had permission to enter the incense forests, and either to cut down the trees for the sake of the resin which they exuded, or to dig them up and convey them to the ships. We see the trees, or rather bushes, dug up with as much earth as possible about their roots, then slung on poles and carried to the sea-shore, and finally placed upright upon the ships' decks, and screened from the heat of the sun's rays by an awning. Thirty-one trees were thus embarked, with the object of transplanting them to Egypt, where it was hoped that they might grow and flourish. A large quantity of the resin was also collected and packed in sacks, which were tied at the mouth and piled up upon the decks. Various other products and commodities were likewise brought to the beach by the natives, and exchanged for those which the Egyptians had taken care to bring with them in their ships' holds. The most prized were gold, silver, ivory, ebony and other woods, cassia, kohl or stibium, apes, baboons, dogs, slaves, and leopard skins. The utmost friendliness prevailed during the whole period of the Egyptians' stay in the country; and at their departure, a number of the natives, of their own free-will, accompanied them to Egypt. Among these

would seem to have been the deformed queen and several chiefs.

The return journey to Thebes was effected partly by way of the Nile. No doubt the sea-going ships sailed back to the harbour from which they had started; while the incense trees and other commodities were disembarked, and conveyed across the desert tract which borders the Nile valley towards the east; but instead of being brought to Thebes by land they were re-shipped on board a number of large Nile boats, and conveyed down the river to the capital. The day of their arrival was made a grand gala-day. All the city went out to meet the returning travellers. There was a grand parade of the household troops, and also of those which had accompanied the expedition; the incense trees, the strange animals, the many products of the distant country, were exhibited; a tame leopard, with his negro keeper, followed the soldiers; a band of natives, called Tamahu, engaged in a sort of sham-fight or war-dance. The misshapen queen and the chiefs of the land of Punt, together with a number of Nubian hunters from the region of Chent-hen-nefer, which lay far up the course of the Nile, were conducted to the presence of Hatasu, offered their homage to her as she sat upon her throne, and presented her with valuable gifts. "Homage to thy countenance," they said, "O Queen of Egypt, Sun beaming like the sun-disk, Aten, Arabia's mistress." An offering was then made by Hatasu to the god Ammon; a bull was sacrificed, and two vases of the precious frankincense presented to him by the queen herself. Sacrifice was likewise made and prayers offered to Athor, "Queen of Punt" and "Mistress of Heaven." The incense trees were finally planted in ground prepared for them, and the day concluded with general festivity and rejoicing.

The complete success of so important and difficult an enterprize might well please even a great queen. Hatasu, delighted with the result, did her best to prevent it fading away from human remembrance by building a new temple to Ammon, and representing the entire expedition upon its walls. At Tel-el-Bahiri, in the valley of El-Assasif, near Thebes, she found a convenient site for her new structure, which she imposed upon four steps, and covered internally with a series of bas-reliefs, highly coloured, depicting the chief scenes of the expedition. Here are to be seen, even at the present day, the ships--the most ancient representations of sea-going ships that the world contains--the crews, the incense-trees, the chiefs and queen of Punt, the native dwellings, the trees and fish of the land, the arrival of the expedition at Thebes in twelve large boats, the prostration of the native chiefs before Hatasu, the festival held on the occasion, and the offerings made to the gods. It is seldom that any single event of ancient history is so profusely illustrated as this expedition of Queen Hatasu, which is placed before our eyes in all its various phases from the gathering of the fleet on the Red Sea coast to the return of those engaged in it, in gladness and triumph, to Thebes.

After exercising all the functions of sovereignty for fifteen years, during which she kept her royal brother in a subjection that probably became very galling to him, Hatasu found herself under the necessity of admitting him to a share in the royal authority, and allowed his name to appear on her monuments in a secondary and subordinate position. About this time she was especially engaged in the ornamentation of the old temple of Ammon at Thebes, begun by Usurtasen I., and much augmented by her father, Thothmes I. The chief of all her works in this quarter were two obelisks of red granite, or syenite, drawn from the quarries of Elephantine, and set up before the entrance, which her father had made in front of Usurtasen's construction. These great works are unexcelled, in form, colour, and beauty of engraving, by any similar productions of Egyptian art, either earlier or later. They measure nearly a hundred feet in height, and are covered with the most

delicately finished hieroglyphics. On them Hatasu declares that she "has made two great obelisks for her father, Ammon, from a heart that is full of love for him." They are "of hard granite of the South, each of a single stone, without any joining or division." The summit of each, or cap of the pyramidion, is "of pure gold, taken from the chiefs of nations," so that they "are seen from a distance of many leagues--Upper and Lower Egypt are bathed in their splendour"(!).

Hatasu reigned conjointly with Thothmes III. for the space of seven years. Their common monuments have been found at Thebes, in the Wady Magharah, and elsewhere. It is not probable that the relations of the brother and sister during this period were very cordial. Hatasu still claimed the chief authority, and placed her name before that of her brother on all public documents. She was, as she has been called, "a bold, ambitious woman," and evidently admitted with reluctance any partner of her greatness. Thothmes III., a man of great ambition and no less ability, is not likely to have acquiesced very willingly in the secondary position assigned to him. Whether he openly rebelled against it, broke with Hatasu, and deprived her of the throne, or even put her to death, is wholly uncertain. The monuments hitherto discovered are absolutely silent as to what became of this great queen. She may have died a natural death, opportunely for her brother, who must have wished to find himself unshackled; or she may have been the victim of a conspiracy within the palace walls. All that we know is that she disappears from history in about her fortieth year, and that her brother and successor, the third Thothmes, actuated by a strong and settled animosity, caused her name to be erased, as far as possible, from all her monuments. There is scarcely one on which it remains intact. The greatest of Egyptian queens--one of the greatest of Egyptian sovereigns--is indebted for the continuance of her memory among mankind to the accident that the stonemasons employed by Thothmes to carry out his plan of vengeance were too careless or too idle to effect the actual obliteration of the name, which they everywhere marred with their chisels. Hatred, for once, though united with absolute power, missed its aim; and Hatasu's great constructions, together with her "Merchant Fleet," are among the indisputable facts of history which can never be forgotten.

XII. Thothmes III and Amenhotep II

No sooner had Thothmes III. burst the leading-strings in which his sister had held him for above twenty years, then he showed the metal of which he was made by at once placing himself at the head of his troops, and marching into Asia. Persuaded that the great god, Ammon, had promised him a long career of victory, he lost no time in setting to work to accomplish his glorious destiny. Starting from an Egyptian post on the Eastern frontier, called Garu or Zalu, in the month of February, he took his march along the ordinary coast route, and in a short time reached Gaza, the strong Philistine city, which was already a fortress of repute, and regarded as "the key of Syria." The day of his arrival was the anniversary of his coronation, and according to his reckoning the first day of his twenty-third year. Gaza made no resistance: its chief was friendly to the Egyptians, and gladly opened his gates to the invading army. Having rested at Gaza no more than a single night, Thothmes resumed his march, and continuing to skirt the coast, arrived on the eleventh day at a fortified town called Jaham, probably Jamnia. Here he was met by his scouts, who brought the intelligence that the enemy was collected at Megiddo, on the edge of the great plain of Esdraelon, the ordinary battle-field of the Palestinian nations. They consisted of "all the people dwelling between the river of Egypt on the one hand and the land of Naharain (Mesopotamia) on the other." At their head was the king of Kadesh, a great city on the upper Orontes, which afterwards became one of the chief seats of the Hittite power, but was at this time in the possession of the Rutennu (Syrians). They were strongly

posted at the mouth of a narrow pass, behind the ridge of hills which connects Carmel with the Samaritan upland, and Thothmes was advised by his captains to avoid a direct attack, and march against them by a circuitous route, which was undefended. But the intrepid warrior scorned this prudent counsel. "His generals," he said, "might take the roundabout road, if they liked; _he_ would follow the straight one." The event justified his determination. Megiddo was reached in a week without loss or difficulty, and a great battle was fought in the fertile plain to the north-west of the fortress, in which the Egyptian king was completely victorious, and his enemies were scattered like chaff before him. The Syrians must have fled precipitately at the first attack; for they lost in killed no more than eighty-three, and in prisoners no more than two hundred and forty, or according to another account three hundred and forty, while the chariots taken were nine hundred and twenty-four, and the captured horses 2,132. Megiddo was near at hand, and the bulk of the fugitives would reach easily the shelter of its walls. Others may have dispersed themselves among the mountains. The Syrian camp was, however, taken, together with vast treasures in silver and gold, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and alabaster; and the son of the king of Kadesh fell into Thothmes' hands. Megiddo itself, soon afterwards, surrendered, as did the towns of Inunam, Anaugas, and Hurankal or Herinokol. An immense booty in corn and cattle was also carried off. Thothmes returned to Egypt in triumph, and held a prolonged festival to Ammon-Ra in Thebes, accompanied by numerous sacrifices and offerings. Among the last we find included three of the cities taken from the Rutennu, which were assigned to the god in order that they might "supply a yearly contribution to his sacred food."

It is a familiar saying, that "increase of appetite doth grow by what it feeds on." Thothmes certainly found his appetite for conquest whetted, not satiated, by his Syrian campaign. If we may trust M. Lenormant, he took the field in the very year that followed his victory of Megiddo, and after traversing the whole of Syria, and ravaging the country about Aleppo, proceeded to Carchemish, the great Hittite town on the Upper Euphrates, and there crossed the river into Naharain, or Mesopotamia, whence he carried off a number of prisoners. Two other campaigns, which cannot be traced in detail, belong to the period between his twenty-fourth and his twenty-ninth year. Thenceforward to his fortieth year his military expeditions scarcely knew any cessation. At one time he would embark his troops on board a fleet, and make descents upon the coast of Syria, coming as unexpectedly and ravaging as ruthlessly as the Normans of the Middle Ages. He would cut down the fruit trees, carry off the crops, empty the magazines of grain, lay hands upon all valuables that were readily removable, and carry them on board his ships, returning to Egypt with a goodly store of gold and silver, of lapis lazuli and other precious stones, of vases in silver and in bronze, of corn, wine, incense, balsam, honey, iron, lead, emery, and male and female slaves. At another, he would march by land, besiege and take the inland towns, demand and obtain the sons of the chiefs as hostages, exact heavy war contributions, and bring back with him horses and chariots, flocks and herds, strange animals, trees, and plants.

Of all his expeditions, that undertaken in his thirty-third year was perhaps the most remarkable. Starting from the country of the Rutennu, he on this occasion directed the main force of his attack upon the Mesopotamian region, which he ravaged far and wide, conquering the towns, and "reducing to a level plain the strong places of the miserable land of Naharain," capturing thirty kings or chiefs, and erecting two tablets in the region, to indicate its subjection. It is possible that he even crossed the Tigris into Adiabene or the Zab country, since he relates that on his return he passed through the town of Ni or Nini, which many of the best historians of Egypt identify with Nineveh.

Nineveh was not now (about B.C. 1500) the capital of Assyria, which was lower down the Tigris, at Asshur or Kileh Sherghat, but was only a provincial town of some magnitude. Still it was within the dominions of the Assyrian monarch of the time, and any attack upon it would have been an insult and a challenge to the great power of Upper Mesopotamia, which ruled from the alluvium to the mountains. It is certain that the king of Assyria did not accept the challenge, but preferred to avoid an encounter with the Egyptian troops. Both at this time and subsequently he sent envoys with rich presents to court the favour of Thothmes, who accepted the gifts as "tribute," and counted "the chief of Assuru" among his tributaries. Submission was also made to him at the same time by the "prince of Senkara," a name which still exists in the lower Babylonian marsh region. Among the gifts which this prince sent was "lapis lazuli of Babylon." It is an exaggeration to represent the expedition as having resulted in the conquest of the great empires of Assyria and Babylon; but it is quite true to say that it startled and shook those empires, that it filled them with a great fear of what might be coming, and brought Egypt into the position of the principal military power of the time. Assyrian influence especially was checked and curtailed. There is reason to believe, from the Egyptian remains found at Arban on the Khabour, that Thothmes added to the Egyptian empire the entire region between the Euphrates and its great eastern affluent--a broad tract of valuable territory--and occupied it with permanent garrisons. The Assyrian monarch bought off the further hostility of his dangerous neighbour by an annual embassy which conveyed rich gifts to the court of the Pharaohs, gifts that were not reciprocated. Among these we find enumerated gold and silver ornaments, lapis lazuli, vases of Assyrian stone (alabaster?), slaves, chariots adorned with gold and silver, silver dishes and silver beaten out into sheets, incense, wine, honey, ivory, cedar and sycomore wood, mulberry trees, vines, and fig trees, buffaloes, bulls, and a gold habergeon with a border of lapis lazuli.

A curious episode of the expedition is related by Amenemheb, an officer who accompanied it, and was in personal attendance upon the Egyptian monarch. It appears that in the time of Thothmes III. the elephant haunted the woods and jungles of the Mesopotamian region, as he now does those of the peninsula of Hindustan. The huge unwieldy beasts were especially abundant in the neighbourhood of Ni or Nini, the country between the middle Tigris and the Zagros range. As Amenemhat I. had delighted in the chase of the lion and the crocodile, so Thothmes III. no sooner found a number of elephants within his reach than he proceeded to hunt and kill them, mainly no doubt for the sport, but partly in order to obtain their tusks. No fewer than a hundred and twenty are said to have been killed or taken. On one occasion, however, the monarch ran a great risk. He was engaged in the pursuit of a herd, when the "rogue," or leading elephant, turned and made a rush at the royal sportsman, who would probably have fallen a victim, gored by a tusk or trampled to death under the huge beast's feet, had not Amenemheb hastened to the rescue, and by wounding the creature's trunk drawn its rage upon himself. The brute was then, after a short struggle, overpowered and captured.

Further expeditions were led by Thothmes into Asia in his thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth, thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, fortieth, and forty-second years; but in none of them does he seem to have outdone the exploits of the great campaign of the year 33. The brunt of his attacks at this time fell upon the Zahi, or Tahai, of northern Phoenicia, and upon the Nairi of the Mesopotamian region, who continually rebelled, and had to be reconquered. The Rutennu seem for the most part to have paid their tribute without resistance and without much difficulty. This may have been partly owing to the judicious

system which Thothmes had established among them, whereby each chief was forced to give a son or brother as hostage for his good behaviour, and if the hostage died to send another in his place. It was certainly not because the tribute was light, since it consisted of a number of slaves, silver vases of the weight of 762 pounds, nineteen chariots, 276 head of cattle, 1,622 goats, several hundredweight of iron and lead, a number of suits of armour, and "all kinds of good plants." The Rutennu had also to supply the stations along the military road, whereby Thothmes kept up the communications between Egypt and Mesopopotamia, with bread, wine, dates, incense, honey, and figs.

While thus engaged in enlarging the limits of his empire towards the north and the north-east, the careful monarch did not allow the regions brought under Egyptian influence by former rulers to escape him. He took a tribute of gold, spices, male and female slaves, cattle, ivory, ebony, and panther skins from the land of Punt, of cattle and slaves from Cush, and of the same products from the Uauat. Altogether he is said to have carried off from the subject countries above 11,000 captives, 1,670 chariots, 3,639 horses, 4,491 of the larger cattle, more than 35,000 goats, silver to the amount of 3,940 pounds, and gold to the amount of 9,054 pounds. He also conveyed to Egypt from the conquered lands enormous quantities of corn and wine, together with incense, balsam, honey, ivory, ebony and other rare woods, lapis lazuli, furniture, statues, vases, dishes, basins, tent-poles, bows, habergeons, fruit trees, live birds, and monkeys! With a curiosity which was insatiable, he noted all that was strange or unusual in the lands which he visited, and sought to introduce the various novelties into his own proper country. Two unknown kinds of birds, and a variety of the goose, which he found in Mesopotamia, and transported from the valley of the Khabour to that of the Nile, are said to have been "dearer to the king than anything else." His artists had instructions to make careful studies of the different objects, and to represent them faithfully on his monuments. We see on these "water-lilies as high as trees, plants of a growth like cactuses, all sorts of trees and shrubs, leaves, flowers, and fruits, including melons and pomegranates; oxen and calves also figure, and among them a wonderful animal with three horns. There are likewise herons, sparrow-hawks, geese, and doves. All these objects appear gaily intermixed in the pictures, as suited the simple childlike conception of the artist." An inscription tells the intention of the monarch. "Here," it runs, "are all sorts of plants and all sorts of flowers of the Holy Land, which the king discovered when he went to the land of Ruten to conquer it. Thus says the king--I swear by the sun, and I call to witness my father Ammon, that all is plain truth; there is no trace of deception in that which I relate. What the splendid soil brings forth in the way of productions, I have had portrayed in these pictures, with the intention of offering them to my father Ammon, as a memorial for all times."

Besides his army, Thothmes also maintained a naval force, and used it largely in his expeditions. According to one writer, he placed a fleet on the Euphrates, and in an action which took place with the Assyrians, defeated and chased the enemy for a distance of between seven and eight miles. He certainly upon some occasions made his attacks on Syria and Phoenicia from the sea; nor is it improbable that his maritime forces reduced Cyprus (which was conquered and held in a much less flourishing period by Amasis) and plundered the coast of Cilicia; but a judicious criticism will scarcely extend the voyages of his fleet, as has been done by another writer, to Crete, and the islands of the AEgean, the sea-boards of Greece and Asia Minor, the southern coast of Italy, Algeria, and the waters of the Euxine! There is no evidence in the historical inscriptions of Thothmes of any such far-reaching expeditions. The supposed evidence for them is in a song of victory, put into the mouth of

the god, Ammon, and inscribed on one of the walls of the great temple of Karnak.

It is impossible to conclude this sketch of Thothmes III. without some notice of his buildings. He was the greatest of Egyptian conquerors, but he was also one of the greatest of Egyptian builders and patrons of art. The grand temple of Ammon at Thebes was the especial object of his fostering care; and he began his career of builder and restorer by repairs and restorations, which much improved and beautified that edifice. Before the southern propylaea he re-erected, in the first year of his independent reign, colossal statues of his father, Thothmes I., and his grandfather, Amenhotep, which had been thrown down in the troublous time succeeding Thothmes the First's death. He then proceeded to rebuild the central sanctuary, the work of Usurtasen I., which had probably begun to decay, and, recognizing its importance as the very _penetrale_ of the temple, he resolved to reconstruct it in granite, instead of common stone, that he might render it, practically, imperishable. With a reverence and a self-restraint that it might be wished restorers possessed more commonly, he preserved all the lines and dimensions of the ancient building, merely reproducing in a better material the work of his great predecessor. Having accomplished this pious task, he gave a vent to his constructive ambition by a grand addition to the temple on its eastern side. Behind the cell, at the distance of about a hundred and fifty feet, he erected a magnificent hall, or pillared chamber, of dimensions previously unknown in Egypt, or elsewhere in the world at the time--an oblong square, one hundred and forty-three feet long by fifty-three feet wide, or nearly half as large again as the nave of Canterbury Cathedral. The whole of the apartment was roofed in with slabs of solid stone; it was divided in its longest direction into five avenues or vistas by means of rows of pillars and piers, the former being towards the centre, and attaining a height of thirty feet, with bell capitals, and the latter towards the sides, with a height of twenty feet. This arrangement enabled the building to be lighted by means of a clerestory, in the manner shown by the accompanying woodcut. In connection with this noble hall, on three sides of it, northwards, eastwards, and southwards, Thothmes further erected chambers and corridors, partly open, partly supported by pillars, which might form convenient store-chambers for the vestments of the priests and the offerings of the people.

Thothmes also added propylaea to the temple on the south, and erected in front of the grand entrance which was (as usual) between the pylons of the propylaea, two or perhaps four great obelisks, one of which exists to the present day, and is the largest and most magnificent of all such monuments now extant. It stands in front of the Church of St. John Lateran at Rome, and has a height of a hundred and five feet, exclusive of the base, with a width diminishing from nine feet six inches to eight feet seven inches. It is estimated to weigh above four hundred and fifty tons, and is covered with well-cut hieroglyphics. No other obelisk approaches within twelve feet of its elevation, or within fifty tons of its weight. Yet, if we may believe an inscription of Thothmes, found on the spot, the pair of obelisks whereof this was one shrank into insignificance in comparison with another pair, also placed by him before his propylaea, the height of which was one hundred and eight cubits, or one hundred and sixty-two feet, and their weight consequently from seven hundred to eight hundred tons! As no trace has been found of these monsters, and as it seems almost impossible that they should have been removed, and highly improbable that they could have been broken up without leaving some indication of their existence, perhaps we may conclude that they were designed rather than executed, and that the inscription was set up in anticipation of an achievement contemplated but never effected.

Other erections of the Great Thothmes are the enclosure of the famous Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis, the temple of Phthah at Thebes, the small temple at Medinet-Abou, a temple to Kneph adorned with obelisks at Elephantine, and a series of temples and monuments erected at Ombos, Esneh, Abydos, Coptos, Denderah, Eileithyia, Hermonthis, and Memphis in Egypt, and at Amada, Corte, Talmis, Pselcis, Semneh, Koummeh, and Napata in Nubia. Extensive ruins of many of these buildings still remain, particularly at Koummeh, Semneh, Napata, Denderah, and Ombos. Altogether, Thothmes III. is pronounced to have left behind him more monuments than any other Pharaoh excepting Rameses II., and though occasionally showing himself, as a builder, somewhat capricious and whimsical, still, on the whole, to have worked in a pure style and proved that he was not deficient in good taste.

It has happened, moreover, by a curious train of circumstances, that Thothmes III. is, of all the Pharaohs, the one whose great works are most widely diffused, and display Egyptian skill and taste to the largest populations, and in the most important cities, of the modern world. Rome, as we have seen, possesses his grandest obelisk, which is at the same time the greatest of all extant monoliths. The millions who have flocked to Rome in all ages have learnt the lesson of Egyptian greatness from the monument erected before the Church of St. John Lateran. Constantinople holds an obelisk of Thothmes III., which is placed in the middle of the Atmeidan. London has put on its embankment, half-way between St. Paul's and the Palace and Abbey of Westminster, another obelisk of the same monarch, erected originally at Heliopolis, thence removed to Alexandria by Augustus, and now adorning the banks of the Thames, nearly in the centre of the most populous city that the world has ever seen. The companion monument, after having, similarly, stood at Heliopolis for fifteen centuries, and then at Alexandria for eighteen, has crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and now teaches the million residents, and the tens of thousands of visitors, of New York what great things could be done by the Egyptian engineers and artists of the time of the eighteenth dynasty.

Thothmes III. has been called "the Alexander of Egyptian history." The phrase is at once exaggerated and misleading. It is exaggerated as applied to his military ability; for, though beyond a doubt this monarch was by far the greatest of Egyptian conquerors, and possessed considerable military talent, much personal bravery, and an energy that has seldom been exceeded, yet, on the other hand, his task was trivial as compared with that of the Macedonian general, and his achievements insignificant. Instead of plunging with a small force into the midst of populous countries, and contending with armies ten or twenty times as numerous as his own, defeating them, and utterly subduing a vast empire, Thothmes marched at the head of a numerous disciplined army into thinly peopled regions, governed by petty chiefs jealous one of another, fought scarcely a single great battle, and succeeded in conquering two regions of a moderate size, Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, as far as the Khabour river. Alexander overran and subdued the entire tract between the AEgean and the Sutlej, the Persian Gulf and the Oxus. He conquered Egypt, and founded a dynasty there which endured for nearly three centuries. Thothmes subdued not a tenth part of the space, and the empire which he established did not endure for much more than a century. It is thus absurd to compare Thothmes III. to Alexander the Great as a conqueror.

Alexander was, besides, much more than a conqueror; he was a first-rate administrator. Had he lived twenty years longer he would probably have built up a universal monarchy, which might have lasted for a millenium. As it was, he so organized the East that it continued for nearly three centuries mainly under Greek rule, in the hands of the

monarchs who are known as his "successors." Thothmes III., on the contrary, organized nothing. He left his conquests in such a condition that they, all of them, revolted at his death. His successor had to reconquer all the countries that had submitted to his father, and to re-establish over them the Egyptian sovereignty.

In person the great Egyptian monarch was not remarkable. He had a long, well-shaped, and somewhat delicate nose, which was almost in line with his forehead, an eye prominent and larger than that of most Egyptians, a shortish upper lip, a resolute mouth with rather over-full lips, and a rounded, slightly retreating chin. The expression of his portrait statues is grave and serious, but lacks strength and determination. Indeed, there is something about the whole countenance that is a little womanish, though his character certainly presents no appearance of effeminacy. He died after a reign of fifty-four years, according to his own reckoning, having practically exercised the sovereign power for about thirty-two of the fifty-four. His age at his death must have been about sixty.

During these stirring times, what were the children of Israel doing? We have supposed that Joseph was minister of the last of the Shepherd Kings, under whose reign his people had entered upon the peaceful occupation of the land of Goshen, where they were received with hospitality by a population of the same simple pastoral habits with themselves; and it seems probable that, under Thothmes III., they were increasing abundantly and waxing mighty, and that the land between the Sebennytic and Pelusiac branches of the Nile was gradually being filled by them. Their period of severe oppression had not yet begun; there had as yet arisen no sufficient reason for any measures of repression, such as were pursued by the new king who "knew not Joseph." The name and renown of the great minister seems still to have protected his kinsmen in the peaceful enjoyment of their privileges in the land that must by this time have lost for them most of its strangeness.

Thothmes III. was succeeded by his son, Amenhotep, whom historians commonly term Amenophis the Second. This king was a warrior like his father, and succeeded in reducing, without much difficulty, the various nations that had thrown off the authority of Egypt on receiving the news of his father's death. He even carried his arms, according to some, as far as Nineveh, which he claims to have besieged and taken; he does not, however, mention the Assyrians as his opponents. His contests were with the Nairi, the Rutennu, and the Shasu (Arabs) in Asia, with the Tahennu (Libyans) and Nubians in Africa. On all sides victory crowned his arms; but he stained the fair fame that his victories would have otherwise secured him by barbarous practices, and cruel and unnecessary bloodshed. He tells us that at Takhisa in northern Syria he killed seven kings with his own hand, and he represents himself in the act of destroying them with his war-club, not in the heat of battle, but after they have been taken prisoners. He further adds that, after killing them, he suspended their bodies from the prow of the vessel In which he returned to Egypt, and brought them, as trophies of victory, to Thebes, where he hung six of the seven outside the walls of the city, as the Philistines hung the bodies of Saul and Jonathan on the wall of Beth-shan (i Sam. xxxi. 10, 12); while he had the seventh conveyed to Napata in Nubia, and there similarly exposed, to terrify his enemies in that quarter. It has been said of the Russians--not perhaps without some justice--"Grattez le Russe et vous trouverez le Tartare;" with far greater reason may we say of the ancient Egyptians, that, notwithstanding the veneer of civilization which they for the most part present to our observation, there was In their nature, even at the best of times, an underlying ingrained barbarism which could not be concealed, but was continually showing itself.

Amenophis II. appears to have had a short reign; his seventh year is the last noted upon his monuments. As a builder he was unenterprizing. One temple at Amada, one hall at Thebes, and his tomb at Abd-el-Qurnah, form almost the whole of his known constructions. None of them is remarkable. Egypt under his sway had a brief rest before she braced herself to fresh efforts, military and architectural.

XIII. Amenhotep III

The fame of Amen-hotep the Third, the grandson of the great Thothmes, rests especially upon his Twin Colossi, the grandest, if not actually the largest, that the world has ever beheld. Imagine sitting figures, formed of a single solid block of sandstone, which have sat on for above three thousand years, mouldering gradually away under the influence of time and weather changes, yet which are still more than sixty feet high, and must originally, when they wore the tall crown of an Egyptian king, have reached very nearly the height of seventy feet! We think a statue vast, colossal, of magnificent dimensions, if it be as much as ten or twenty feet high--as Chantrey's statue of Pitt, or Phidias's chryselephantine statue of Jupiter. What, then, must these be, which are of a size so vastly greater? Let us hear how they impress an eye-witness of world-wide experience. "There they sit," says Harriet Martineau, "together, yet apart, in the midst of the plain, serene and vigilant, still keeping their untired watch over the lapse of ages and the eclipse of Europe. I can never believe that anything else so majestic as this pair has been conceived of by the imagination of art. Nothing certainly, even in nature, ever affected me so unspeakably; no thunderstorms in my childhood, nor any aspect of Niagara, or the great lakes of America, or the Alps, or the Desert, in my later years.... The pair, sitting alone amid the expanse of verdure, with islands of ruins behind them, grew more striking to us every day. To-day, for the first time, we looked up to them from their base. The impression of sublime tranquillity which they convey when seen from distant points, is confirmed by a nearer approach. There they sit, keeping watch--hands on knees, gazing straight forward; seeming, though so much of the face is gone, to be looking over to the monumental piles on the other side of the river, which became gorgeous temples, after these throne-seats were placed here--the most immovable thrones that have ever been established on this earth!"

The design of erecting two such colossi must be attributed to the monarch himself, and we must estimate, from the magnificence of the design, the grandeur of his thoughts and the wonderful depth of his artistic imagination; but the skill to execute, the genius to express in stone such dignity, majesty, and repose as the statues possess, belongs to the first-rate sculptor, who turned the rough blocks of stone, hewn by the masons in a distant quarry, into the glorious statues that have looked down upon the plain for so many ages. The sculptors of Egyptian works are, in general, unknown; but, by good fortune, in this particular case, the name of the artist has remained on record, and he has himself given us an account of the feelings with which he saw them set up in the places where they still remain. The sculptor, who bore the same name as his royal master, _i.e._ Amenhotep or Amen-hept, declares in the exultation of his heart: "I immortalized the name of the king, and no one has done the like of me in my works. I executed two portrait-statues of the king, astonishing for their breadth and height; their completed form dwarfed the temple tower--forty cubits was their measure; they were cut in the splendid sandstone mountain on either side, the eastern and the western. I caused to be built eight ships, whereon the statues were carried up the river; they were emplaced in their sublime temple; they will last as long as heaven. A joyful event was it when they were landed at Thebes and raised up in their place."

A peculiar and curious interest attaches to one--the more eastern--of the two statues. It was known to the Romans of the early empire as "The Vocal Memnon," and formed one of the chief attractions which drew travellers to Egypt, from the fact, which is quite indisputable, that at that time, for two centuries or perhaps more, it emitted in the early morning a musical sound, which was regarded as a sort of standing miracle. The fact is mentioned by Strabo, Pliny the elder, Pausanias, Tacitus, Juvenal, Lucian, Philostratus, and others, and is recorded by a number of ear-witnesses on the lower part of the colossus itself in inscriptions which may be seen at the present day. Amenhotep, identified by the idle fancy of some Greek or Roman scholar with the Memnon of Homer, son of Tithonus and _The Dawn_, who led an army of Ethiopians to the assistance of Priam of Troy against the Greeks, was regarded as a god, and to hear the sound was not only to witness a miracle, but to receive an assurance of the god's favourable regard. For the statue did not emit a sound--the god did not speak--every day. Sometimes travellers had to depart disappointed altogether, sometimes they had to make a second, a third, or a fourth visit before hearing the desired voice. But still it was a frequent phenomenon; and a common soldier has recorded the fact on the base of the statue, that he heard it no fewer than thirteen times. The origin of the sound, the time when it began to be heard, and the circumstances under which it ceased, are all more or less doubtful. Some of those exceedingly clever persons who find priest-craft everywhere, think that the musical sound was the effect of human contrivance, and explain the whole matter to their entire satisfaction by "the jugglery of the priests." The priests either found a naturally vocal piece of rock, and intentionally made the statue out of it; or they cunningly introduced a pipe into the interior of the figure, by which they could make musical notes issue from the mouth at their pleasure. It is against this view that in the palmy days of the Egyptian hierarchy, the vocal character of the statue was entirely unknown; we have no evidence of the sound having been heard earlier than the time of Strabo (B.C. 25-10), when Egypt was in the possession of the Romans, and the priests had little influence. Moreover, the theory is disproved by the fact that, during the two centuries of the continuance of the marvel, there were occasions when Memnon was obstinately silent, though the priests must have been most anxious that he should speak, while there were others when he spoke freely, though they must have been perfectly indifferent. The wife of a prefect of Egypt made two visits to the spot to no purpose; and the Empress Sabina, wife of the Emperor Hadrian, was, on her first visit, also disappointed, so that "her venerable features were inflamed with anger." On the other hand, as already mentioned, a common Roman soldier heard the sound thirteen times.

With respect to the time when, and the circumstances under which, the phenomenon first showed itself, all that can be said is, that the earliest literary witness to the fact is Strabo (about B.C. 25); that the earliest of the inscriptions on the base that can be dated belongs to the reign of Nero, and that it is at least questionable whether the sound ever issued from the stone before B.C. 27. In that year there was an earthquake which wrought great havoc at Thebes; and it is an acute suggestion, that it was this earthquake which at once shattered the upper part of the colossus, and so affected the remainder of the block of stone that it became vocal then for the first time. For centuries the figure remained a _torso_, and it was while a _torso_ that it emitted the musical tone--

"_Dimidio_ magicae resonabant Memnone chordae."

After a long interval of years, probably about A.D. 174, that restoration of the monument took place which is to be seen to the present day. Five blocks of stone, rudely shaped into a form like that of the unharmed colossus, were

emplaced upon the _torso_, which was thus reconstructed. The intention was to do Memnon honour; but the effect was to strike him dumb. The peculiar condition of the stone, which the earthquake had superinduced, and which made it vocal, being changed by the new arrangement, the sound ceased, and has been heard no more.

It is a fact well known to scientific persons at the present day, that musical sounds are often given forth both by natural rocks and by quarried masses of stone, in consequence of a sudden change of temperature. Baron Humboldt, writing on the banks of the Oronooko, says: "The granite rock on which we lay is one of those where travellers have heard from time to time, towards sunrise, subterraneous sounds, resembling those of the organ. The missionaries call these stones _loxas de musica_. 'It is witchcraft,' said our young Indian pilot.... But the existence of a phenomenon that seems to depend on a certain state of the atmosphere cannot be denied. The shelves of rock are full of very narrow and deep crevices. They are heated during the day to about 50 deg.. I often found their temperature during the night at 39 deg.. It may easily be conceived that the difference of temperature between the subterraneous and the external air would attain its _maximum_ about sunrise." Analogous phenomena occur among the sandstone rocks of El Nakous, in Arabia Petraea, near Mount Maladetta in the Pyrenees, and (perhaps) in the desert between Palestine and Egypt. "On the fifth day of my journey," says the accomplished author of 'Eothen.' "the sun growing fiercer and fiercer, ... as I drooped my head under his fire, and closed my eyes against the glare that surrounded me, I slowly fell asleep--for how many minutes or moments I cannot tell--but after a while I was gently awakened by a peal of church bells--my native bells--the innocent bells of Marlen that never before sent forth their music beyond the Blagdon hills! My first idea naturally was that I still remained fast under the power of a dream. I roused myself, and drew aside the silk that covered my eyes, and plunged my bare face into the light. Then at least I was well enough awakened, _but still those old Marlen bells rang on_, not ringing for joy, but properly, prosily, steadily, merrily ringing 'for church.' _After a while the sound died away slowly_; it happened that neither I nor any of my party had a watch to measure the exact time of its lasting; but it seemed to me that about ten minutes had passed before the bells ceased." The gifted writer proceeds to give a metaphysical explanation of the phenomena; but it may be questioned whether he did not hear actual musical sounds, emitted by the rocks that lay beneath the sands over which he was moving.

And similar sounds have been heard when the stones that sent them forth were quarried blocks, no longer in a state of nature, but shaped by human tools, and employed in architecture. Three members of the French Expedition, MM. Jomard, Jollois, and Devilliers, were together in the granite cell which forms the centre of the palace-temple of Karnak, when, according to their own account, they "heard a sound, resembling that of a chord breaking, issue from the blocks at sunrise." Exactly the same comparison is employed by Pausanias to describe the sound that issued from "the vocal Memnon."

On the whole, we may conclude that the musical qualities of his remarkable colossus were unknown alike to the artist who sculptured the monument and to the king whom it represented. To them, in its purpose and object, it belonged, not to Music, but wholly to the sister art of Architecture. "The Pair" sat at one extremity of an avenue leading to one of the great palace-temples reared by Amenhotep III.--a palace-temple which is now a mere heap of sandstone, "a little roughness in the plain." The design of the king was, that this grand edifice should be approached by a _dromos_ or paved way, eleven hundred feet long, which should be flanked on either side by nine similar statues, placed at regular intervals along the road, and

all representing himself. The egotism of the monarch may perhaps be excused on account of the grandeur of his idea, which we nowhere else find repeated, avenues of sphinxes being common in Egypt, and avenues of sitting human _life-size_ figures not unknown to Greece, but the history of art containing no other instance of an avenue of colossi.

Another of Amenhotep's palace-temples has been less unkindly treated by fortune than the one just mentioned. The temple of Luxor, or El-Uksur, on the eastern bank of the river, about a mile and a half to the south of the great temple of Karnak, is a magnificent edifice to this day; and though some portions of it, and some of its most remarkable features, must be assigned to Rameses II., yet still it is, in the main, a construction of Amenhotep's, and must be regarded as being, even if it stood alone, sufficient proof of his eminence as a builder. The length of the entire building is about eight hundred feet, the breadth varying from about one hundred feet to two hundred. Its general arrangement comprised, first, a great court, at a different angle from the rest, being turned so as to face Karnak. In front of this stood two colossal statues of the founder, together with two obelisks, one of which has been removed to France, and now adorns the centre of the Place de la Concorde at Paris. Behind this was a great pillared hall, of which only the two central ranges of columns are now standing. Still further back were smaller halls and numerous apartments, evidently meant for the king's residence, rather than for a temple or place exclusively devoted to worship. The building is remarkable for its marked affectation of irregularity. "Not only is there a considerable angle in the direction of the axis of the building, but the angles of the courtyards are hardly ever right angles; the pillars are variously spaced, and pains seem to have been gratuitously taken to make it as irregular as possible in nearly every respect."

Besides this grand edifice, Amenhotep built two temples at Karnak to Ammon and Maut, embellished the old temple of Ammon there with a new propylon, raised temples to Kneph, or Khnum, at Elephantine and built a shrine to contain his own image at Soleb in Nubia, another shrine at Napata, and a third at Sedinga. He left traces of himself at Semneh, in the island of Konosso, on the rocks between Philae and Assouan, at El-Kaab, at Toora near Memphis, at Silsilis, and at Sarabit-el-Khadim in the Sinaitic peninsula. He was, as M. Lenormant remarks, "un prince essentiellement batisseur." The scale and number of his works are such as to indicate unremitting attention to sculpture and building during the entire duration of his long reign of thirty-six years.

On the other hand, as a general he gained little distinction. He maintained, indeed, the dominion over Syria and Western Mesopotamia, which had been established by Thothmes III., and his cartouche has been found at Arban on the Khabour; but there is no appearance of his having made any additional conquests in this quarter. The subjected peoples brought their tribute regularly, and the neighbouring nations, whether Hittites, Assyrians, or Babylonians, gave him no trouble. The dominion of Egypt over Western Asia had become "an accomplished fact," and was generally recognized by the old native kingdoms. It did not extend, however, beyond Taurus and Niphates towards the north, or beyond the Khabour eastward or southward, but remained fixed within the limits which it had attained under the Third Thothmes.

The only quarter in which Amenhotep warred was towards Ethiopia. He conducted in person several expeditions up the valley of the Nile, against the negro tribes of the Soudan. But these attacks were not so much wars as raids, or razzias. They were not made with the object of advancing the Egyptian frontier, or even of extending Egyptian influence, but partly for the glorification of

the monarch, who thus obtained at a cheap rate the credit of military successes, and partly--probably mainly--for the material gain which resulted from them through the capture of highly valuable slaves. The black races have always been especially sought for this purpose, and were in great demand in the Egyptian slave-market: ladies of rank were pleased to have for their attendants negro boys, whom they dressed in a fanciful manner; and the court probably indulged in a similar taste. Amenhotep's aim was certainly rather to capture than to kill. In one of his most successful raids the slain were only three hundred and twelve, while the captives consisted of two hundred and five men, two hundred and fifty women, and two hundred and eighty-five children, or a total of seven hundred and forty; and the proportion in the others was similar. The trade of slave hunting was so lucrative that even a Great King could not resist the temptation of having a share in its profits. When Amenhotep was not engaged in hunting men his favourite recreation was to indulge in the chase of the lion. On one of his scarabaei he states that between his first and his tenth year he slew with his own hand one hundred and ten of these ferocious beasts. Later on in his reign he presented to the priests who had the charge of the ancient temple of Karnak a number of live lions, which he had probably caught in traps. The lion was an emblem both of Horus and of Turn, and may, when tamed, have been assigned a part in religious processions. It is uncertain what was Amenhotep's hunting-ground; but the large number of his victims makes it probable that the scene of his exploits was Mesopotamia rather than any tract bordering on Egypt: since lions have always been scarce animals in North-Eastern Africa, but abounded in Mesopotamia even much later than the time of Amenhotep, and are "not uncommon" there even at the present day. We may suppose that he had a hunting pavilion at Arban, where one of his scarabs has been found, and from that centre beat the reed-beds and jungles of the Khabour.

In person, Amenhotep III. was not remarkable. His features were good, except that his nose was somewhat too much rounded at the end; his expression was pensive, but resolute; his forehead high, his upper lip short, his chin a little too prominent. He left behind him a character for affectionateness, kindliness, and generosity. Some historians have reproached him with being too much under female influence; and certainly in the earlier portion of his reign he deferred greatly to his mother, Mutemua, and in the latter portion to his wife, Tii or Taia; but there is no evidence that any evil result followed, or that these princesses did not influence him for good. It is too much taken for granted by many writers that female influence is corrupting. No doubt it is so in some cases; but it should not be forgotten that there are women whom to have known is "a liberal education." Mutemua and Tii may have been of the number.

XIV. Khuenaten and the Disk Worshippers

On the death of Amenhotep III., his son, Amenhotep IV., mounted the throne. Left by Amenhotep III to the guardianship of his mother, Tii, who was of some entirely foreign race, he embraced a new form of religion, which she appears to have introduced, and shocked the Egyptians by substituting, so far as he found to be possible, this new creed for the old polytheism of the country. The heresy of Amenhotep IV has been called "Disk-worship;" and he, and the next two or three kings, are known in Egyptian history as "the Disk-worshippers." It is difficult to discover what exactly was the belief professed. Externally, it consisted, primarily, in a marked preference of a single one of the Egyptian gods over all the others, and a certain hatred or contempt for the great bulk of the deities composing the old Pantheon. Thus far it resembled the religion which Apepi, the last "Shepherd King," had endeavoured to introduce; but the new

differed from the old reformation in the matter of the god selected for special honour. Apepi had sought to turn the Egyptians away from all other worships except the worship of Set; Amenhotep desired their universal adhesion to the worship of Aten. Aten, in Egyptian theology, had hitherto represented a particular aspect or character of Ra, "the sun"--that aspect which is expressed by the phrase, "the solar disk." How it was possible to keep Aten distinct from the other sun-gods, Ra, Khepra, Turn, Shu, Mentu, Osiris, and Horus or Harmachis, is a puzzle to moderns; but it seems to have been a difficulty practically overcome by the Egyptians, to whom it did not perhaps even present itself as a difficulty at all. Disk-worship consisted then, primarily, in an undue exaltation of this god, who was made to take the place of Ammon-Ra in the Pantheon, and was ordinarily represented by a circle with rays proceeding from it, the rays mostly terminating in hands, which frequently presented the symbols of life and health and strength to the worshipper.

What was the inward essence of the religion? Was it simple sun-worship--the adoration of the visible material sun--considered as the ruling and vivifying power in the universe, whence heat and light, and so life, proceeded? Of all the forms of nature worship this was the most natural, and in the old world it was widely spread. Men adored the orb of day as the grandest object which nature presented to them, as the great quickener of all things upon the earth, the cause of germination and growth, of fruitage and harvest, the dispenser to man of ten thousand blessings, the sustainer of his life and health and happiness. With some the worship was purely and wholly material--the sun was viewed as a huge mass of fiery matter, uninformed by any animate life, unintelligent, impersonal; but with others, sun-worship was something higher than this: the orb of day was regarded as informed by a good, wise, bright, beneficent Spirit, which lived in it, and worked through it, and was the true benefactor of mankind and sustainer of life and of the universe. Sun-worship of this latter kind was no mean form of natural religion. If not purged from the debasing element of materialism, if not incompatible with a certain kind of polytheism, it is yet consistent with the firmest belief in the absolute supremacy of one God over all others, with the conception of that God as all-wise, all-powerful, pure, holy, kind, loving, and with the entire devotion of the worshipper to Him exclusively. And this latter form of sun-worship was, quite conceivably, the religion of the "Disk worshippers." "Aten" is probably the same as "Adon," the root of Adonis and Adonai, and has the signification of "Lord"--a term implying personality, and when used specially of one Being, implying absolute mastery and lordship, an exclusive right to worship, homage, and devotion. It is not unlikely that the "Disk-worshippers" were drawn on towards their monotheistic creed by the presence in Egypt at the time of a large monotheistic population, the descendants of Joseph and his brethren, who by this time had multiplied greatly, and must have attracted attention, from their numbers and from the peculiarity of their tenets. A historian of Egypt remarks that "curious parallels might be drawn between the external forms of the worship of the Israelites in the desert and those set up by the Disk-worshippers at Tel-el-Amarna; portions of the sacred furniture, as the 'table of shewbread,' described in the Book of Exodus as placed within the Tabernacle, are repeated among the objects belonging to the worship of Aten, and do not occur among the representations of any other epoch." He further notes that the commencement of the persecution of the Israelites in Egypt coincides nearly with the downfall of the "Disk-worshippers" and the return of the Egyptians to their old creed, as if the captive race had been involved in the discredit and the odium which attached to Amenhotep and his immediate successors on account of their religious reformation.

The aversion of the "Disk-worshippers" to the old Egyptian religion was shown (1) in the change of his own name which the new monarch made soon after his accession, from Amenhotep to Khu-en-Aten, whereby he cleared himself from any connection with the old discarded head of the Pantheon, and associated himself with the new supreme god, Aten; (2) in the obliteration of the name of Ammon from monuments; and (3) in the removal of the seat of government from the site polluted by Ammon-worship and polytheism to a new site at Tel-el-Amarna, where Aten alone was worshipped and alone represented in the temples. The enmity, however, was not indiscriminate. Amenhotep took for one of his titles the epithet, "Mi-Harmakhu," or "beloved by Harmachis," probably because he could look on Harmachis, a purely sun-god, as a form of Aten; and to this god he erected an obelisk at Silsilis. His monumental war upon the old religion seems also not to have been general, but narrowly circumscribed, being, in fact, confined to the erasure of Ammon's name, especially at Thebes, and the mutilation of his form in a few instances; but there does not appear to have been any such general iconoclasm practised by the "Disk-worshippers" as by the "Shepherd Kings," or any such absolute requirement that "one god alone should be worshipped in all the land" as was put forth by Apepi. The "Disk-worshippers" did not so much attempt to change the religion of Egypt as to establish for themselves a peculiar court-religion of a pure and elevated character.

It has been remarked above that the motive power which brought about the religious revolution is probably to be found in the powerful influence and the peculiar views of the queen mother, Tii or Taia. This princess was of foreign origin; her complexion was fair, her eyes blue, her hair flaxen, her cheeks rosy; she probably brought her "disk-worship" with her from her own country, whether it were Syria, or Arabia, or any other. Already in the lifetime of her husband, Amenhotep III., she had prevailed on him, as his wives prevailed on Solomon (i Kings xi. 4-8), to allow her the free exercise of her own religion, and to provide her with the means of carrying it on with all proper pomp and ceremony. At her instance, Amenhotep III. constructed a great lake or basin, more than a mile long and a thousand feet broad, to be made use of for religious purposes on the queen's special festival day. It was proper on that festival day that "the barge of the most beautiful Disk" should perform a voyage on a sheet of water in the presence of his worshippers--a voyage probably representing the course of the sun through the heavens during the year. There is evidence that this festival was kept on the sixteenth day of the month Athor, in the eleventh year of Amenhotep III., and that the king himself took part in it.

So far, Queen Taia succeeded in introducing her religion into Egypt while her husband was alive. At his death she found herself regent for her son, or, at any rate, associated with him upon the throne, and saw that a fresh opportunity for pushing her religious views offered itself. Amenhotep IV. was of a most extraordinary _physique_ and physiognomy. His appearance was rather that of a woman than of a man; he had a slanting forehead, a long aquiline nose, a flexible projecting mouth, and a strongly developed chin. His neck, which is represented as most unusually long, seems scarcely equal to the support of his head; and his spindle shanks seem ill adapted to sustain the weight of his over-corpulent frame. He readily yielded himself to his mother's influence, and completed her work in the manner which has been already described. As Thebes opposed itself to his reforms, he deserted it, withdrew his court to Tel-el-Amarna, and there raised the temples, palaces, and other monuments, in a "very advanced" style of art, which may be seen at the present day.

Amenhotep also introduced certain changes into the court ceremonial. He surrounded

himself with officials of foreign race, probably kinsmen of his mother, and required from them an open display of submission and servility which Egyptian courts had not witnessed previously. An abject prostration was enforced on all, while the king posed before his courtiers as a benevolent god, who showered down his gifts upon them from a superior sphere, since his greatness did not permit a closer contact. He was himself the "Light of the Solar Disk," an _apaugasma_, or "Light proceeding from Light;" it behoved him to imitate the Sun-god, and perpetually bestow his gifts on men, but it behoved them to veil their faces from his radiance and receive his bounty prostrate in the dust beneath him.

The peculiar views of Khuen-Aten, or Amenhotep IV., were maintained by the two or three succeeding kings, who had short and disturbed reigns. After them there arose a king called Horus, or Har-em-hebi, who utterly swept away the "Disk-worshippers," ruined their new city, obliterated their names, mutilated their monuments, and restored the ancient religion of the Egyptians to its former place as the religion, not only of the people, but of the court. Henceforth, what was called "heresy" ceased to show itself in the land.

XV. Beginning of the Decline of Egypt

The internal troubles connected with the "Disk-worship" had for about forty years distracted the attention of the Egyptians from their Asiatic possessions; and this circumstance had favoured the development of a highly important power in Western Asia. The Hittites, whose motto was "reculer pour mieux sauter," having withdrawn themselves from Syria during the time of the Egyptian attacks, retaining, perhaps, their hold on Carchemish (Jerabus), but not seeking to extend themselves further southward, took heart of grace when the Egyptian expeditions ceased, and descending from their mountain fastnesses to the Syrian plains and vales, rapidly established their dominion over the regions recently conquered by Thothmes I. and Thothmes III. Without absorbing the old native races, they reduced them under their sway, and reigned as lords paramount over the entire region between the Middle Euphrates and the Mediterranean, the Taurus range and the borders of Egypt. The chief of the subject races were the Kharu, in the tract bordering upon Egypt; the Rutennu, in Central and Northern Palestine; and in Southern Coelesyria, the Amairu or Amorites. The Hittites themselves occupied the lower Coelesyrian valley, and the tract reaching thence to the Euphrates. They were at this period so far centralized into a nation as to have placed themselves under a single monarch; and about the time when Egypt had recovered from the troubles caused by the "Disk-worshippers," and was again at liberty to look abroad, Saplal, Grand-Duke of Khita, a great and puissant sovereign, sat upon the Hittite throne.

Saplal's power, and his threatening attitude on the north-eastern border of Egypt, drew upon him the jealousy of Ramesses I., father of the great Seti, and (according to the prevalent tradition) founder of the "nineteenth dynasty." To defend oneself it is often best to attack, and Ramesses, taking this view, in his first or second year plunged into the enemy's dominions. He had the plea that Palestine and Syria, and even Western Mesopotamia, belonged of right to Egypt, which had conquered them by a long series of victories, and had never lost them by any defeat or disaster. His invasion was a challenge to Saplal either to fight for his ill-gotten gains, or to give them up. The Hittite king accepted the challenge, and a short struggle followed with an indecisive result. At its close peace was made, and a formal treaty of alliance drawn out. Its terms are unknown; but it was probably engraved on a silver plate in the languages of the two powers--the Egyptian hieroglyphics, and the now well-known Hittite picture-writing--and set up in duplicate at Carchemish and Thebes.

A brief pause followed the conclusion of the first act of the drama. On the opening of the second act we find the _dramatis personae_ changed. Saplal and Ramesses have alike descended into the grave, and their thrones are occupied respectively by the son of the one and the grandson of the other. In Egypt, Seti-Menephthah I., the Sethos of Manetho, has succeeded his father, Ramesses I.; in the Hittite kingdom, Saplal has left his sceptre to his grandson Mautenar, the son of Marasar, who had probably died before his father. Two young and inexperienced princes confront one the other in the two neighbour lands, each distrustful of his rival, each covetous of glory, each hopeful of success if war should break out. True, by treaty the two kings were friends and allies--by treaty the two nations were bound to abstain from all aggression by the one upon the other: but such bonds are like the "green withes" that bound Samson, when the desire to burst them seizes those upon whom they have been placed. Seti and Mautenar were at war before the latter had been on the throne a year, and their swords were at one another's throats. Seti was, apparently, the aggressor. We find him at the head of a large army in the heart of Syria before we could have supposed that he had had time to settle himself comfortably in his father's seat.

Mautenar was taken unawares. He had not expected so prompt an attack. He had perhaps been weak enough to count on his adversary's good faith, or, at any rate on his regard for appearances. But Seti, as a god upon earth, could of course do no wrong, and did not allow himself to be trammelled by the moral laws that were binding upon ordinary mortals. He boldly rushed into war at the first possible moment, crossed the frontier, and having chastised the Shasu, who had recently made an invasion of his territory, fell upon the Kharu, or Southern Syrians, and gave them a severe defeat near Jamnia in the Philistine country. He then pressed forward into the country of the Rutennu, overcame them in several pitched battles, and, assisted by a son who fought constantly at his side, slaughtered them almost to extermination. His victorious progress brought him, after a time, to the vicinity of Kadesh, the important city on the Orontes which, a century earlier, had been besieged and taken by the Great Thothmes. Kadesh was at this time in possession of the Amorites, who were tributary to the Khita (Hittites) and held the great city as their subject allies. Seti, having carefully concealed his advance, came upon the stronghold suddenly, and took its defenders by surprise. Outside the city peaceful herdsmen were pasturing their cattle under the shade of the trees, when they were startled by the appearance of the Egyptian monarch, mounted on his war-chariot drawn by two prancing steeds. At once all was confusion: every one sought to save himself; the herds with their keepers fled in wild panic, while the Egyptians plied them with their arrows. But the garrison of the town resisted bravely: a portion sallied from the gates and met Seti in the open field, but were defeated with great slaughter; the others defended themselves behind the walls. But all was in vain. The disciplined troops of Egypt stormed the key of Northern Syria, and the whole Orontes valley lay open to the conqueror.

Hitherto the Hittites had not been engaged in the struggle. Attacked at a disadvantage, unprepared, they had left their subject allies to make such resistance as they might find possible, and had reserved themselves for the defence of their own country. Mautenar had, no doubt, made the best preparations of which circumstances admitted--he had organized his forces in three bodies, "on foot, on horseback, and in chariots." At the head of them, he gave battle to the invaders so soon as they attacked him in his own proper country, and a desperate fight followed, in which the Egyptians, however, prevailed at last. The Hittites received a "great overthrow." The song of triumph composed for Seti on the occasion declared: "Pharaoh is a jackal which rushes leaping through the

Hittite land; he is a grim lion exploring the hidden ways of all regions; he is a powerful bull with a pair of sharpened horns. He has struck down the Asiatics; he has thrown to the ground the Khita; he has slain their princes; he has overwhelmed them in their own blood; he has passed among them as a flame of fire; he has brought them to nought."

The victory thus gained was followed by a treaty of peace. Mautenar and Seti agreed to be henceforth friends and allies, Southern Syria being restored to Egypt, and Northern Syria remaining under the dominion of the Hittites, probably as far as the sources of the Orontes river. A line of communication must, however, have been left open between Egypt and Mesopotamia, for Seti still exercised authority over the Nairi, and received tribute from their chiefs. He was also, by the terms of the treaty, at liberty to make war on the nations of the Upper Syrian coast, for we find him reducing the Tahai, who bordered on Cilicia, without any disturbance of his relations with Mautenar. The second act in the war between the Egyptians and the Hittites thus terminated with an advantage to the Egyptians, who recovered most of their Asiatic possessions, and had, besides, the prestige of a great victory.

The third act was deferred for a space of some thirty-five years, and fell into the reign of Ramesses II., Seti's son and successor. Before giving an account of it, we must briefly touch the other wars of Seti, to show how great a warrior he was, and mention one further fact in his warlike policy indicative of the commencement of Egypt's decline as a military power. Seti, then, had no sooner concluded his peace with the great power of the North, than he turned his arms against the West and South, invading, first of all, "the blue-eyed, fair-skinned nation of the Tahennu," who inhabited the North African coast from the borders of Egypt to about Cyrene, and engaging in a sharp contest with them. The Tahennu were a wild, uncivilized people, dwelling in caves, and having no other arms besides bows and arrows. For dress they wore a long cloak or tunic, open in front; and they are distinguished on the Egyptian monuments by wearing two ostrich feathers and having all their hair shaved excepting one large lock, which is plaited and hangs down on the right side of the head. This unfortunate people could make only a poor resistance to the Egyptian trained infantry and powerful chariot force. They were completely defeated in a pitched battle; numbers of the chiefs were made prisoners, while the people generally fled to their caves, where they remained hidden, "like jackals, through fear of the king's majesty." Seti, having struck terror into their hearts, passed on towards the south, and fiercely chastised the Cushites on the Upper Nile, who during the war with the Hittites had given trouble, and showed themselves inclined to shake off the Egyptian yoke. Here again he was successful; the negroes and Cushites submitted after a short struggle; and the Great King returned to his capital victorious on all sides--"on the south to the arms of the Winds, and on the north to the Great Sea."

Seti was not dazzled with his military successes. Notwithstanding his triumphs in Syria, he recognized the fact that Egypt had much to fear from her Asiatic neighbours, and could not hope to maintain for long her aggressive attitude in that quarter. Without withdrawing from any of the conquered countries, while still claiming their obedience and enforcing the payment of their tributes, he began to made preparation for the changed circumstances which he anticipated by commencing the construction of a long wall on his north-eastern frontier, as a security against invasion from Asia. This wall began at Pelusium, and was carried across the isthmus in a south-westerly direction by Migdol to Pithom, or Heroopolis, where the long line of lagoons began, which were connected with the upper end of the Red Sea. It recalls to the mind of the historical student the many ramparts raised by nations, in their decline, against aggressive foes--as the Great

Wall of China, built to keep off the Tartars; the Roman wall between the Rhine and Danube, intended to restrain the advance of the German tribes; and the three Roman ramparts in Great Britain, built to protect the Roman province from its savage northern neighbours. Walls of this kind are always signs of weakness; and when Seti began, and Ramesses II. completed, the rampart of Egypt, it was a confession that the palmy days of the empire were past, and that henceforth she must look forward to having to stand, in the main, on the defensive.

Before acquiescing wholly in this conclusion, Ramesses II., who, after reigning conjointly with his father for several years, was now sole king, resolved on a desperate and prolonged effort to re-assert for Egypt that dominant position in Western Asia which she had held and obtained under the third Thothmes. Mautenar, the adversary of Seti, appears to have died, and his place to have been taken by his brother, Khita-sir, a brave and enterprizing monarch. Khita-sir, despite the terms of alliance on which the Hittites stood with Egypt, had commenced a series of intrigues with the nations bordering on Upper Syria, and formed a confederacy which had for its object to resist the further progress of the Egyptians, and, if possible, to drive them from Asia. This confederacy embraced the Nairi, or people of Western Mesopotamia, reckoned by the Egyptians among their subjects; the Airatu or people of Aradus; the Masu or inhabitants of the Mous Masius; the Leka, perhaps Lycians; the inhabitants of Carchemish, of Kadesh on the Orontes, of Aleppo, Anaukasa, Akarita, &c.--all warlike races, and accustomed to the use of chariots. Khitasir's proceedings, having become known to Ramesses, afforded ample grounds for a rupture, and quite justified him in pouring his troops into Syria, and doing his best to meet and overcome the danger which threatened him. Unaware at what point his enemy would elect to meet him, he marched forward cautiously, having arranged his troops in four divisions, which might mutually support each other. Entering the Coelesyrian valley from the south, he had proceeded as far as the lake of Hems, and neighbourhood of Kadesh, before he received any tidings of the position taken up by the confederate army. There his troops captured two of the enemy's scouts, and on questioning them were told that the Hittite army had been at Kadesh, but had retired on learning the Egyptian's advance and taken up a position near Aleppo, distant nearly a hundred miles to the north-east. Had Ramesses believed the scouts, and marched forward carelessly, he would have fallen into a trap, and probably suffered defeat; for the whole confederate army was massed just beyond the lake, and there lay concealed by the embankment which blocks the lake at its lower end. But the Egyptian king was too wary for his adversary. He ordered the scouts to be examined by scourging, to see if they would persist in their tale, whereupon they broke down and revealed the true position of the army. The battle had thus the character of a regular pitched engagement, without surprise or other accident on either side. Khitasir, finding himself foiled, quitted his ambush, and marched openly against the Egyptians, with his troops marshalled in exact and orderly array, the Hittite chariots in front with their lines carefully dressed, and the auxiliaries and irregulars on the flanks and rear. Of the four divisions of the Egyptian army, one seems to have been absent, probably acting as a rear-guard; Ramesses, with one, marched down the left bank of the stream, while the two remaining divisions proceeded along the right bank, a slight interval separating them. Khitasir commenced the fight by a flank movement to the left, which brought him into collision with the extreme Egyptian right, "the brigade of Ra," as it was called, and enabled him to engage that division separately. His assault was irresistible. "Foot and horse of King Ramesses," we are told, "gave way before him," the "brigade of Ra" was utterly routed, and either cut to pieces or driven from the field. Ramesses, informed of this

disaster, endeavoured to cross the river to the assistance of his beaten troops; but, before he could effect his purpose, the enemy had anticipated him, had charged through the Orontes in two lines, and was upon him. The adverse hosts met. The chariot of Ramesses, skilfully guided by his squire, Menna, seems to have broken through the front line of the Hittite chariot force; but his brethren in arms were less fortunate, and Ramesses found himself separated from his army, behind the front line and confronted by the second line of the hostile chariots, in a position of the greatest possible danger. Then began that Homeric combat, which the Egyptians were never tired of celebrating, between a single warrior on the one hand, and the host of the Hittites, reckoned at two thousand five hundred chariots, on the other, in which Ramesses, like Diomed or Achilles, carried death and destruction whithersoever he turned himself. "I became like the god Mentu," he is made to say; "I hurled the dart with my right hand, I fought with my left hand; I was like Baal in his fury against them. I had come upon two thousand five hundred pairs of horses; I was in the midst of them; but they were dashed in pieces before my steeds. Not one of them raised his hand to fight; their heart shrank within them; their limbs gave way, they could not hurl the dart, nor had they strength to thrust with the spear. As crocodiles fall into the water, so I made them fall; they tumbled headlong one over another. I killed them at my pleasure, so that not one of them looked back behind him, nor did any turn round. Each fell, and none raised himself up again."

The temporary isolation of the monarch, which is the main point of the heroic poem of Pentaour, and which Ramesses himself recorded over and over again upon the walls of his magnificent constructions, must no doubt be regarded as a fact; but it is not likely to have continued for more than a few minutes. The minutes may have seemed as hours to the king; and there may have been time for him to perform several exploits. But we may be sure that, when his companions found that he was lost to their sight, they at once made frantic efforts to recover him, dead or alive; they forced openings in the first Hittite chariot line, and sped to the rescue of their sovereign. He had, perhaps, already emptied many chariots of the second line, which was paralysed by his audacity; and his companions found it easy to complete the work which he had begun. The broken second line turned and fled; the confusion became general; a headlong flight carried the entire host to the banks of the Orontes, into which some precipitated themselves, while others were forced into the water by their pursuers. The king of Khirabu (Aleppo) was among these, and was with great difficulty drawn out by his friends, exhausted and half dead, when he reached the eastern shore. But the great bulk of the Hittite army perished, either in the battle or in the river. Among the killed and wounded were Grabatasa, the charioteer of Khitasir; Tarakennas, the commander of the cavalry; Rabsuna, another general; Khirapusar, a royal secretary; and Matsurama, a brother of the Hittite king.

On the next day the battle was renewed; but, after a short time, Khitasir retired, and sent a humble embassy to the camp of his adversary to implore for peace. Ramesses held a council of war with his generals, and by their advice agreed to accept the submission made to him, and, without entering into any formal engagement, to withdraw his army and return to Egypt. It seems probable that his victory had cost him dear, and that he was not in a condition to venture further from his resources, or to affront new dangers in a difficult, and to him unknown, region.

Experience tells us that it is one thing to gain a battle, quite another to be successful in the result of a long war. Whatever glory Ramesses obtained by the battle of Kadesh, and the other victories which he claims to have won in the Syrian campaigns of several succeeding years, it is certain that he completely failed to break the power of the

Hittites, and that he was led in course of time to confess his failure, and to adopt a policy of conciliation towards the people which he found himself unable to subdue. Sixteen years after the battle of Kadesh he concluded a solemn treaty with Khitasir, which was engraved on silver and placed under the most sacred sanctions, whereby an exact equality was established between the high contracting powers. Each nation bound itself under no circumstances to attack the other; each promised to give aid to the other, if requested, in case of its ally being attacked; each pledged itself to the extradition both of criminals flying from justice and of any other subjects wishing to change their allegiance; each stipulated for an amnesty of offences in the case of all persons thus surrendered. Thirteen years after the conclusion of the treaty the close alliance between the two powers was further cemented by a marriage, which, by giving the two dynasties common interests, greatly strengthened the previously existing bond. Ramesses requested and received in marriage a daughter of Khitasir in the thirty-fourth year of his sole reign, when he had borne the royal title for forty-six years. He thus became the son-in-law of his former adversary, whose daughter was thenceforth recognized as his sole legitimate queen.

A considerable change in the relations of Egypt to her still remaining Asiatic dependencies accompanied this alteration in the footing upon which she stood with the Hittites. "The bonds of their subjection became much less strict than they had been under Thothmes III.; prudential motives constrained the Egyptians to be content with very much less--with such acknowledgments, in fact, as satisfied their vanity, rather than with the exercise of any real power." From and after the conclusion of peace and alliance between Ramesses and Khitasir, Egyptian influence in Asia grew vague, shadowy, and discontinuous. At long intervals monarchs of more enterprize than the ordinary run asserted it, and a brief success generally crowned their efforts; but, speaking broadly, we may say that her Asiatic dominion was lost, and that Egypt became once more an African power, confined within nearly her ancient limits.

If, from a military point of view, the decline of Egypt is to be dated from the reigns, partly joint reigns, of Seti I. and Ramesses II., from the stand-point of art the period must be pronounced the very apogee of Egyptian greatness. The architectural works of these two monarchs transcend most decidedly all those of all other Pharaohs, either earlier or later. No single work, indeed, of either king equals _in mass_ either the First or the Second Pyramid; but in number, in variety, in beauty, in all that constitutes artistic excellence, the constructions of Seti and Ramesses are unequalled, not only among Egyptian monuments, but among those of all other nations. Greece is, of course, unapproachable in the matter of sculpture, whether in the way of statuary, or of high or low relief; but, apart from this, Egypt in her architectural works will challenge comparison with any country that ever existed, or any people that ever gave itself to the embodiment of artistic conceptions in stone or marble. And Egyptian architecture culminated under Seti and his son Ramesses. The greatest of all Seti's works was his pillared hall at Karnak, the most splendid single chamber that has ever been built by any architect, and, even in its ruins, one of the grandest sights that the world contains. Seti's hall is three hundred and thirty feet long, by one hundred and seventy feet broad, having thus an internal area of fifty-six thousand square feet, and covers, together with its walls and pylons, an area of eighty-eight thousand such feet, or a larger space than that covered by the Dom of Cologne, the largest of all the cathedrals north of the Alps. It was supported by one hundred and sixty-four massive stone columns, which were divided into three groups--twelve central ones, each sixty-six feet high and thirty-three feet in circumference, formed the main avenue down its midst; while on either side, two groups of sixty-one columns, each

forty-two feet high and twenty-seven round, supported the huge wings of the chamber, arranged in seven rows of seven each, and two rows of six. The whole was roofed over with solid blocks of stone, the lighting being, as in the far smaller hall of Thothmes III., by means of a clerestory. The roof and pillars and walls were everywhere covered with painted bas-reliefs and hieroglyphics, giving great richness of effect, and constituting the whole building the most magnificent on which the eye of man has ever rested. Fergusson, the best modern authority on architecture, says of it: "No language can convey an idea of its beauty, and no artist has yet been able to reproduce its form so as to convey to those who have not seen it an idea of its grandeur. The mass of its central piers, illumined by a flood of light from the clerestory, and the smaller pillars of the wings gradually fading into obscurity, are so arranged and lighted as to convey an idea of infinite space; at the same time the beauty and massiveness of the forms, and the brilliancy of their coloured decorations, all combine to stamp this as _the greatest of man's architectural works_, but such a one as it would be impossible to reproduce, except in such a climate, and in that individual style, in which and for which it was created."

As Seti constructed the most wonderful of all the palatial buildings which Egypt produced, so he also constructed what is, on the whole, the most wonderful of the tombs. The pyramids impose upon us by their enormity, and astonish by the engineering skill shown in their execution; but they embody a single simple idea; they have no complication of parts, no elaboration of ornament; they are taken in at a glance; they do not gradually unfold themselves, or furnish a succession of surprises. But it is otherwise with the rock-tombs, whereof Seti's is the most magnificent The rock-tombs are "gorgeous palaces, hewn out of the rock, and painted with all the decorations that could have been seen in palaces." They contain a succession of passages, chambers, corridors, staircases, and pillared halls, each further removed from the entrance than the last, and all covered with an infinite variety of the most finished and brilliant paintings. The tomb of Seti contains three pillared halls, respectively twenty-seven feet by twenty-five, twenty-eight feet by twenty-seven, and forty-three feet by seventeen and a half; a large saloon with an arched roof, thirty feet by twenty-seven; six smaller chambers of different sizes; three staircases, and two long corridors. The whole series of apartments, from end to end of the tomb, is continuously ornamented with painted bas-reliefs. "The idea is that of conducting the king to the world of death. The further you advance into the tomb, the deeper you become involved in endless processions of jackal-headed gods, and monstrous forms of genii, good and evil; and the goddess of Justice, with her single ostrich feather; and barges carrying mummies, raised aloft over the sacred lake; and mummies themselves; and, more than all, everlasting convolutions of serpents in every possible form and attitude--human-legged, human-headed, crowned, entwining mummies, enwreathing or embraced by processions, extending down whole galleries, so that meeting the head of a serpent at the top of a staircase, you have to descend to its very end before you reach his tail. At last you arrive at the close of all--the vaulted hall, in the centre of which lies the immense alabaster sarcophagus, which ought to contain the body of the king. Here the processions, above, below, and around, reach their highest pitch--meandering round and round--white, and black, and red, and blue--legs and arms and wings spreading in enormous forms over the ceilings; and below lies the sarcophagus itself."

The greatest of the works of Ramesses are of a different description, and are indicative of that inordinate vanity which is the leading feature of his character. They are colossal images of himself. Four of these, each seventy feet in height, form the facade of the marvellous rock-temple of Ipsambul--"the finest of its class known to exist anywhere"--

and constitute one of the most impressive sights which the world has to offer. There stands the Great King, four times repeated, silent, majestic, superhuman--with features marked by profound repose and tranquillity, touched perhaps with a little scorn, looking out eternally on the grey-white Nubian waste, which stretches far away to a dim and distant horizon. Here, as you sit on the deep pure sand, you seem to see the monarch, who did so much, who reigned so long, who covered, not only Egypt, but Nubia and Ethiopia with his memorials. "You can look at his features inch by inch, see them not only magnified to tenfold their original size, so that ear and mouth and nose, and every link of his collar, and every line of his skin, sinks into you with the weight of a mountain; but those features are repeated exactly the same three times over--four times they once were, but the upper part of the fourth statue is gone. Look at them as they emerge--the two northern figures--from the sand which reaches up to their throats; the southernmost, as he sits unbroken, and revealed from the top of his royal helmet to the toe of his enormous foot" Look at them, and remember that you have here portrait-statues of one of the greatest of the kings of the Old World, of the world that was "old" when Greece and Rome were either unborn or in their swaddling clothes; portrait-statues, moreover, of the king who, if either tradition or chronology can be depended on, was the actual great oppressor of Israel--the king who sought the life of Moses--the king from whom Moses fled, and until whose death he did not dare to return out of the land of Midian.

According to the almost unanimous voice of those most conversant with Egyptian antiquities, the "great oppressor" of the Hebrews was this Ramesses. Seti may have been the originator of the scheme for crushing them by hard usage, but, as the oppression lasted close upon eighty years (Ex. ii, I; vii. 7), it must have covered at least two reigns, so that, if it began under Seti, it must have continued under his son and successor. The bricks found at Tel-el-Maskoutah show Ramesses as the main builder of Pithom (Pa-Tum), and the very name indicates that he was the main builder of Raamses (Pa-Ramessu). We must thus ascribe to him, at any rate, the great bulk of that severe and cruel affliction, which provoked Moses (Ex. ii, 12), which made Israel "sigh" and "groan" (ib. 23, 24), and on which God looked down with compassion (ib. iii. 7). It was he especially who "made their lives bitter in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field"--service which was "with rigour." Ramesses was a builder on the most extensive scale. Without producing any single edifice so perfect as the "Pillared Hall of Seti," he was indefatigable in his constructive efforts, and no Egyptian king came up to him in this respect. The monuments show that he erected his buildings chiefly by forced labour, and that those employed on them were chiefly foreigners. Some have thought that the Hebrews are distinctly mentioned as employed by him on his constructions under the term "Aperu," or "Aperiu"; but this view is not generally accepted. Still, "the name is so often used for foreign bondsmen engaged in the very work of the Hebrews, and especially during the oppression, that it is hard not to believe it to be a general term in which they are included, though it does not actually describe them."

The physiognomies of Seti I. and Ramesses II., as represented on the sculptures, offer a curious contrast Seti's face is thoroughly African, strong, fierce, prognathous, with depressed nose, thick lips, and a heavy chin. The face of Ramesses is Asiatic. He has a good forehead, a large, well-formed, slightly aquiline nose, a well-shaped mouth, with lips that are not too full, a small delicate chin, and an eye that is thoughtful and pensive. We may conclude that Seti was of the true Egyptian race, with perhaps an admixture of more southern blood; while Ramesses, born of a Semitic mother, inherited through her Asiatic characteristics, and, though possessing less

energy and strength of character than his father, had a more sensitive temperament, a wider range of taste, and a greater inclination towards peace and tranquillity. His important wars were all concluded within the limit of his twenty-first year, while his entire reign was one of sixty-seven years, during fifty of which he held the sole sovereignty. Though he left the fame of a great warrior behind him, his chief and truest triumphs seem to have been those of peace--the Great Wall for the protection of Egypt towards the east, with its strong fortresses and "store-cities," the canal which united the Nile with the Red Sea, and the countless buildings, excavations, obelisks, colossal statues, and other great works, with which he adorned Egypt from one end to the other.