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VIEWS IN EGYPT,

FROM THE

Original Drawings

IN THE POSSESSION OF

SIR ROBERT AINSLIE,

TAKEN DURING HIS

EMBASSY TO CONSTANTINOPLE

BY

LUIGI MAYER:

Engraved by and under the Direction of Thomas Milton:

WITH

HISTORICAL OBSERVATIONS,

AND

INCIDENTAL ILLUSTRATIONS

OF THE

Manners and Customs of the Natives of that Country.



LONDON:

Printed by THOMAS BENSLEY, Bolt Court, Fleet Street,

For R. BOWYER, Historic Gallery, Pall-mall.

1801.

VIEWS IN EGYPT

Original Drawings

SIR ROBERT ANSELL
SIR ROBERT LINDSAY

EMISS TO GOVERNMENT

EMISS TO GOVERNMENT

Designed by and under the direction of Thomas Nelson

HISTORICAL OBSERVATIONS

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Remarks and Observations of the Author

1812

Printed by R. Taylor, Stationer, Strand

TO

SIR ROBERT AINSLIE,

LATE AMBASSADOUR TO THE SUBLIME PORTE,

AS A GRATEFUL TESTIMONIAL OF THE LIBERALITY, WITH WHICH
HE HAS PERMITTED THE FOLLOWING DRAWINGS,

TAKEN UNDER HIS AUSPICES,

TO BE PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC,

THIS WORK IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS MOST HUMBLE

AND VERY OBLIGED SERVANTS,

ROBERT BOWYER,

THOMAS MILTON.

HISTORIC GALLERY,
FALL-MALL.

SIR ROBERT P. T. ASSIET

It is not necessary to say that the country has existed so much as it is now, for it has had peculiar claims to that name long before Rome existed, and when the inhabitants of Greece were more numerous than the Egyptians were a numerous and civilized people, to whom science was no stranger. From these the Greeks derived the first rudiments of letters, and to them all the knowledge of the ancient world is traced back as to its cradle. Of late indeed, what mystery has been discovered between the learning of the Hindus and the Egyptians; and hence it has been inferred, that the Egyptians were the scholars of the Hindus. Which were the masters however, and which the pupils is a problem, the solution of which we have neither data nor instruments to decipher, but which may be hoped from the researches of our able countrymen, in a field yet little explored: though there are certainly grounds, that which incline us in favour of Asia. Still, if the Egyptians were the scholars of an Asiatic people, or which appears more probable, brought the rudiments of knowledge with them from Asia when they migrated into the Thebaid, before they were able to occupy the fertile vale beneath; that they were the immediate

E G Y P T.

FROM the remotest times, with which we are acquainted, to the present period, no country has excited so much attention as Egypt; for it has had peculiar claims to men's notice. Long before Rome existed, and when the inhabitants of Greece were mere savages, the Egyptians were a numerous and civilized people, to whom science was no stranger. From them the Greeks derived the first rudiments of instruction, and to them all the knowledge of the ancients may be traced back as to its cradle. Of late, indeed, great analogy has been discovered between the learning of the Hindoos and the Egyptians; and hence it has been inferred, that the Egyptians were the scholars of the Hindoos. Which were the masters, however, and which the pupils, is a problem, the solution of which we have neither data nor inclination to attempt; but which may be hoped from the researches of our able countrymen, in a field yet little explored: though there are certainly probabilities, which incline us in favour of Asia. Still, if the Egyptians were the scholars of an Asiatic people; or, which appears more probable, brought the rudiments of knowledge with them from Asia, when they migrated into the Thebaid, before they were able to occupy the fertile vale beneath; that they were the immediate

cause of enlightening the greeks, and through them the whole western world, is not to be disputed. But our design is only to consider Egypt itself, and give a slight sketch of the country, before we proceed to examine the particular objects, which the drawings were intended to illustrate.

The space it occupies is of no great extent; for, though it's length from north to south may be about five hundred and fifty miles, the greater part of it is extremely narrow, being confined by two ridges of mountains, between which is the bed of the Nile; and the base of the Delta, or that part which borders on the Mediterranean, where it is broadest, does not exceed a hundred and thirty miles. The great fertility of the land, however, of that part of it at least which has been generally deemed the gift of the Nile both by the ancients and moderns, cherished an astonishing population. Indeed the accounts that are transmitted to us of the number of it's cities are incredible; for Herodotus says, that in the reign of Amasis it contained twenty thousand. It is probable, however, that Herodotus did not employ the proper term on the occasion; and the idea of extent we associate with our word city tends but to increase our misconception: while at the same time it is unquestionable, from the stupendous masses of architecture, and gigantic works of art, which at this day lie scattered on it's plains, or from their solidity still brave the efforts of Time, that there was a period, when it's population must have been immense. Assisted by the hand of Industry, the fertilizing stream of the Nile diffused plenty over every spot of ground, to which Art could convey it; while the same Art prevented it's inordinate flow from sweeping all

before it, and diverted the too impetuous torrent into channels, where it might spend it's fury without harm, and become a blessing instead of a curse.

When these great and useful labours were accomplished, when all Egypt was converted into a garden, which afforded the necessaries of life in abundance with little toil, the policy of the pharaohs led them to employ the industry of the people in erecting works of less utility, though calculated to excite admiration. Hence the vast palaces of the once famous Thebes; hence the sphinxes, the obelisks, the pyramids, that have existed the wonder of ages past, and will exist the wonder of ages to come. But mutability is the character impressed upon human nature by the hand of Omnipotence. These works were finished, and these days passed away. From a concatenation of moral and physical causes, which we shall not attempt to trace, the face of Egypt has been changed like the features of it's inhabitants. To the egyptian toiling in the excavation of canals to cover his fields with luxuriant harvests labour no doubt was pleasant; to the egyptian thus habituated to industry the erection of a palace for his king, or a temple for his god, was a mean to save him from the oppressive demon of Idleness: but when other generations arose, who had never reaped the fruits of their industry; impelled to labours, in which they could see no utility, at the will of an imperious taskmaster; working from day to day, from year to year, to raise a vast pile for the sole purpose of enclosing a single corpse; labour became disgusting to them, and they naturally sunk into lifeless indolence. Thus prepared for subjugation, conqueror after conqueror invaded their

land, one robber preying upon another, till the lethargy of turkish despotism overspread the whole.

It is worthy of remark, that the ancient inhabitants of Egypt, by whom such works were performed, and from whom Greece received instruction, bore the same crisped and curled hair, which now distinguishes the negro, whom they likewise resembled in feature and complexion. These were the men, whose learning, laws, and government, had so much to excite our admiration, before any records that have reached us existed, or at least any intelligible to us; for their writings have long ago perished, their hieroglyphics we do not understand, and the oldest historians of Greece were then unborn. How is it then, that the present race of negroes, dwelling on the same continent, are deemed by too many europeans as little superiour to the brutes, when we have such proofs of the ability and cultivation of their elder brethren? Unfortunately the present inhabitants, a mixed breed descended from the various ravagers of the country, in whom little or none of the original blood remains, have been vulgarly considered as the legitimate descendants of the egyptians of old; and thus, from a want of proper discrimination, the negro has been robbed of the fame so justly his due.

It is to moral causes, no doubt, we are to ascribe the difference perceived in the state both of the inhabitants and of the country. There is no adequate reason to presume a physical defect of capacity even in the present mixed people of Egypt, and the natural circumstances of the country itself have undergone no alteration, that can tend to diminish it's ancient advantages. The soil, an-

nually renovated by the same Nile, has evidently lost nothing of its former richness; as the crops it now produces with little care sufficiently prove: and the same means of fertility remain in full vigour, for enterprising Genius to employ, whenever it may be roused to exertion.

The climate, too, is still the same, is still as favourable to man, as when the land swarmed with inhabitants. During the greater part of the year it is extremely hot, for the soil, heated by a fervid sun, is not refreshed by the alternation of grateful showers, and cooling dews: though after the rains in Ethiopia have begun to swell the Nile, more aqueous vapour arises from it during the day, than the air can hold in solution during the absence of the sun, and this falls in dew by night. As natural causes act with more uniformity here, than in our variable climates, the first appearance of this dew is commonly observed on the night of the festival of St. Michael, which in the coptic calendar is the 17th of June, and at the same period the plague ceases to extend its ravages; so that these two circumstances have been associated together in the minds of the people, and ascribed to the miraculous interposition of the archangel.

It was formerly imagined, that the terrible scourge of the east, to which so many fall annually a sacrifice, arose spontaneously in Egypt: but many modern writers are of opinion, that this is by no means the case; and Sonnini asserts, that the country had been completely free from the plague for twelve years, when he was there, though a free communication had been kept up with other places where it prevailed. This circumstance, indeed, may

be deemed an argument rather against Sonnini's hypothesis, than in favour of it; while it has a greater tendency to prove, perhaps, that the climate is not unfavourable to health; and this the constant disappearance of the contagion at midsummer, after which, it is said, no one has ever been known to die of the disorder, strongly confirms.

The once ready admission of conjectures, if they had the appearance of being founded on fact, to account for natural phenomena, the causes of which were not investigated, may explain the reason of this serious charge brought against a country, that by no means deserved the imputation. With the true cause of the plague we are unacquainted: but it was found to occur in Egypt; it was a fact, that the land was covered with water, which became stagnant, evaporated, and left it's heterogeneous sediment on the moist surface, to be dried up by the heat of the Sun; it was supposed, that noisome miasmata, of sufficient virulence to engender the plague, must be exhaled by this putrefying sediment; and accordingly to this the disease was attributed, so that Egypt was supposed to be the place of it's birth. But in this there is far too much of gratuitous supposition. The evaporation is carried on too quickly, to leave much matter for putrefaction; while the pure dry air of the climate, and the salubrious northern gales, which blow with considerable steadiness and force for the greater part of the year, permit no noxious vapour, that has once arisen, to descend again, or hover over the land, and infect the atmosphere. From the numbers of fishes left by the retiring waters, and the multitudes of frogs, that are annually produced, the generation of a vast

load of putrid animal matter might be apprehended: but happily this is prevented by the numerous flocks of birds, which assemble round the contracting waters, and greedily devour the frogs and fishes, so that few are left behind. Who sees not here the wisdom of Providence, which, acting through the means of second causes, has averted an impending evil, and given multitudes of living creatures to find the support of their existence in what would otherwise probably have been fatal to man? From this view, which agrees with the fact of the salubrity of the climate, the sediment of the Nile seems capable of little injury to health; though, even were it such a putrid mass, as men at a distance in their closets have supposed, there is no reason to imagine, that it would be capable of generating the plague.

It is not to be expected, that in this country man should be exempt from diseases, to which he is more or less a prey in every part of the globe; but it would certainly be unjust, to brand it with the epithet of unhealthy; and Sonnini appeals confidently to experience, to attest the purity and salubrity of it's air, which is equally asserted by Mr. Antes, who resided in the country twelve years. Possibly the dryness of it's atmosphere, of which striking instances occur in the sandy parts, and the regularity of it's seasons, counteract the sickening effects of sloth, and of the stagnant waters of the Nile. The diseases, that prevail here to a degree unknown perhaps in any other country, are the elephantiasis, or leprosy of the arabs, as it has been called, and inflammations of the eyes. These affections of the eyes are particularly frequent and severe, often occasioning the loss of one or both of these or-

gans, and it is probable are to be ascribed chiefly, if not solely, to the acrimonious particles, wafted by the winds from the sandy deserts, and from a soil strongly impregnated with alkaline salts.

We cannot consider the soil of Egypt, and it's extraordinary fruitfulness, without our attention being turned immediately to

THE NILE,

the inexhaustible source of it's fertility. This celebrated river rises in the village of Geesh, in the country of Gojam, in the south of Abyssinia, in the latitude of $10^{\circ} 59' 25''$ north, and longitude $36^{\circ} 55' 30''$ east of the meridian of Greenwich. At the fountain head it is upwards of two miles above the level of the sea; and hence it flows through Abyssinia, Sennaar, and Nubia, it's magnitude increased by various tributary streams, and it's descent accelerated at different places by cataracts, from one of which the water rushes down at once about two hundred and eighty feet, till it reaches the Thebaid, and it's course is confined to a narrow valley, between two mountainous ridges, the sides of which once afforded habitations to the troglodytes, that first peopled the country. In the neighbourhood of the ancient Syene, now Assouan, at the southern extremity of upper Egypt, is the last cataract; if that may be so called, which in North America would receive the appropriate name of rapids; from which to the Mediterranean the Nile is navigable by vessels of considerable size. The canjas, or boats employed in the commerce of the river, are well adapted to the peculiar circumstances of it, combining in them speed, safety, and convenience.

The celebrated Mourad bey has procured some ships to be built and equipped in the european fashion, and purchased a few others, in which he has incurred considerable expense to little purpose. The largest of them mounts twenty-four guns; and they are well manned, chiefly with greeks from the Archipelago. He has about six of these vessels, lying at anchor before Geeza the greater part of the year, as they can be navigated only while the river is at a considerable height. Should either of the european powers maintain a footing in this country, perhaps the usual shallowness of the Nile will prove no greater obstacle to the establishment of any marine force that may be of utility on it, than that of the American lakes did in the last war.

For the transport of commodities, or the purposes of war, however, the Nile is of little importance, compared with it's influence on the cultivation of the country. What but for it would be a barren desert, is rendered by it's waters one of the most productive spots on the Earth. This is effected by it's annual inundation, to which the people anxiously look, as the dispenser of plenty or of famine. At the heliacal rising of the dog-star, when the rainy season commences within the tropics, all the rivers are swelled by the torrents of water, that fall from the clouds, and seek their passage to the sea through the channel of the Nile, into which they flow. Hence it's stream, which from the continuance of drought had sunk low, begins to rise in consequence of this addition. It's increase, however, is not so considerable, as to be an object of public notice, till about the end of june, when it's degree is proclaimed through the streets of Cairo by a person appointed for the

purpose. As soon as it has risen to the height of sixteen cubits, this is announced by the cry of *wafaa ullah*, 'God has given us abundance;' if it rise to twenty, which is sufficient to render the whole of the land fit for cultivation, the cry is *men jibbel alla jibbel*, 'from mountain to mountain;' implying, that the water suffices to inundate the country up to the foot of the mountains on either side.

To some of our readers, perhaps, this may require explanation. The vale of lower Egypt is nearly flat, but the banks of the Nile are it's highest parts, from which it slopes gently toward the mountains. The whole of this land, parched with almost perpetual drought at other seasons, requires to be deluged by the annual inundation of the river, the turbid waters of which furnish it at the same time with manure, in the sediment it deposits, and the recrements of the preceding crop, which it renders subservient to the purpose of promoting vegetation by the putrefactive process it induces in them. The height of the banks of the Nile is such, as to prevent the water from having access to the land behind them, unless on extraordinary occasions; such indeed as would threaten a general famine. Accordingly canals were formed by the care of the ancient inhabitants, to convey the water over the whole face of the country, when it had risen to a proper height; and others to carry it off, when too abundant, into the lakes in the deserts of Libya. The mouths of these canals were closed by mounds, which were broken down, when the water had attained the requisite degree of increase. If the inundation were too copious, the superfluous water was diverted to the lakes, and thus

prevented from doing injury; if it were precisely sufficient, to cover the whole of the land, the banks of the river excepted, an abundant harvest was produced, with very little labour; and if the lower grounds alone were covered by the natural influx of the water, the aid of mechanics was called in, when the inundation was at it's height, to extend the influence of the stream by means of engines, and thus dispense fertility to fields, which indolence and ignorance would have left unproductive. Now, that it was extremely desirable, to know the proper times for opening the canals, and the extent to which the water would overflow the plains, that the business might be conducted most to the advantage of the community, was presently obvious. For this the Nilometer was invented. It required much less science, than the ancient egyptians possessed, to know, that a graduated column, fixed in the bed of the Nile, would indicate with certainty the limits of the inundation; and probably they employed one differing very little from that which is at present used by the government at Cairo, for an accurate delineation of which, with an internal and an external view of the building that contains it, we refer our readers to the plates annexed, and which we shall proceed to describe, in the words of Mr. Bruce, who appears to have examined it with care, and given an account of it with accuracy. Though this is not to be considered as the sole instrument throughout the course of the Nile for measuring it's rise, since we are informed by Mr. Langles, that there are no less than fifteen nilometers between the island of Elephantina and the mouth of the river.

THE NILOMETER.

‘ON the point of the island Rhoda, between Geeza and Cairo, near the middle of the river, but nearer to Geeza, is a round tower, and in that an apartment, in the middle of which is a very neat well, or cistern, lined with marble, to which the Nile has free access, through a large opening like an embrasure, the bottom of the well being on the same level with the bottom of the river. In the middle of this well rises a thin column, as far as I can remember, of eight faces of blue and white marble, to the foot of which if you are permitted to descend, you are then on the same plane with the foot of the column and bottom of the river. This pillar is divided into twenty peeks, called *draa el belledy*, of twenty-two inches each. The two lowermost peeks are not divided at all, but are left absolutely without mark, to stand for the quantity of sludge the water deposits there, and which occupies the place of water. Two peeks are then divided on the right hand into twenty-four digits each; then, on the left, four peeks are divided each into twenty-four digits; then, on the right, four; and, on the left, another four; again, four on the right, which complete the number of eighteen peeks from the first division marked on the pillar, each of twenty-two inches. The whole, marked and unmarked, amounts to thirty-six feet eight inches english.’

When this country was conquered by the turks, a tribute was imposed upon it. All it's wealth, however, consisting in it's pro-



VIEW OF THE NILOMETER.

L. Mayer del.

Published by R. Bevington, Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, 1803.

duce, it would be vain to require this tribute, when the deficiency of the inundation keeps the land in a state of barrenness. Accordingly the *Mikeas*, or Nilometer, is of the highest importance, not to the people only, but to the grand seignior, as it indicates the extent of the impost, which the circumstances of the country will allow him to exact. If the land rendered fit for cultivation by the overflowing of the Nile will be too little, or barely sufficient, to keep the people from starving, the sovereign must of necessity forego his tribute. When the inundation reaches to a certain extent, the produce will allow the grand seignior to receive a certain portion: and this, which is indicated by the rise of the water to the height of sixteen peeks at the Mikeas, is announced to the people by the cry of *wafaa ullah*; by which they are given to understand, that the *meery*, or tribute, will be demanded. In this case, however, it is necessary, to measure the land, in order to ascertain how much the water has overflowed, for which the tenant is to pay the whole of the tax; how much has been watered by means of machines, for which he pays only half, the other half being allowed as a compensation for the expense of the additional labour required; and how much has been incapable of receiving benefit, left uncultivated, and therefore remains exempt from taxation. If the water should rise to the height of twenty peeks, the cry of *men jibbel alla jibbel* proclaims, that the whole of the land will be fertilized, and become liable to the tribute.

In the midst of this expanse of water, covering the whole of the low lands, the banks of the Nile appear, beautifully studded with villages, to which the palm-trees around them are no incon-

siderable ornament. As soon as the river retires from the fields, they are sown with all sorts of grain; and as the heat and moisture speedily occasion the seed to germinate, the face of the country quickly assumes the appearance of a delightful green meadow, which in a short time is variegated with the hues of flowering plants and ripening corn.

CANALS.

THE canals for conveying the water of the Nile have already been mentioned: that at Cairo is said by arabian writers to be paved with marble, though at present nothing is discoverable at the bottom but mud. During part of the year indeed it is a mere dunghill, a receptacle of filth in general: but against the rise of the Nile it is cleaned, and converted into a street, which is as much crowded as any in the city, and where the jugglers, tumblers, and dancing girls, exhibit their feats in public. When the Nile flows into it, boats and barges richly decorated float on it, and it still wears the face of festivity, though on a different element.

As soon as the water has risen to the proper height, the mound of this grand canal, or calisch, is opened with great ceremony; as might be expected in the metropolis on an occasion of such real importance to the country. The bashaw and the beys, for whom a tent is pitched by the side of the canal, repair to the place with a grand retinue on horseback. Riding up to the mound, which is thrown up at the mouth of the canal when the water of the



FIRST AND SECOND PYRAMID OF GIZAH, ANCIENT MEMPHIS.

L. Meyer del.

T. Milnes sculp.

Published by R. Bowyer, Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, Oct. 1. 1801.

river begins to rise, the bashaw strikes it with his lance, and then retires to the tent. The people immediately fall to work on the mound, and break it down; the bashaw throws a few small pieces of coin into the water; nuts, melons, and other fruits, are thrown in by people in a boat ready for the occasion; rockets are let off; and the day is concluded amid the most licentious expressions of revelry.

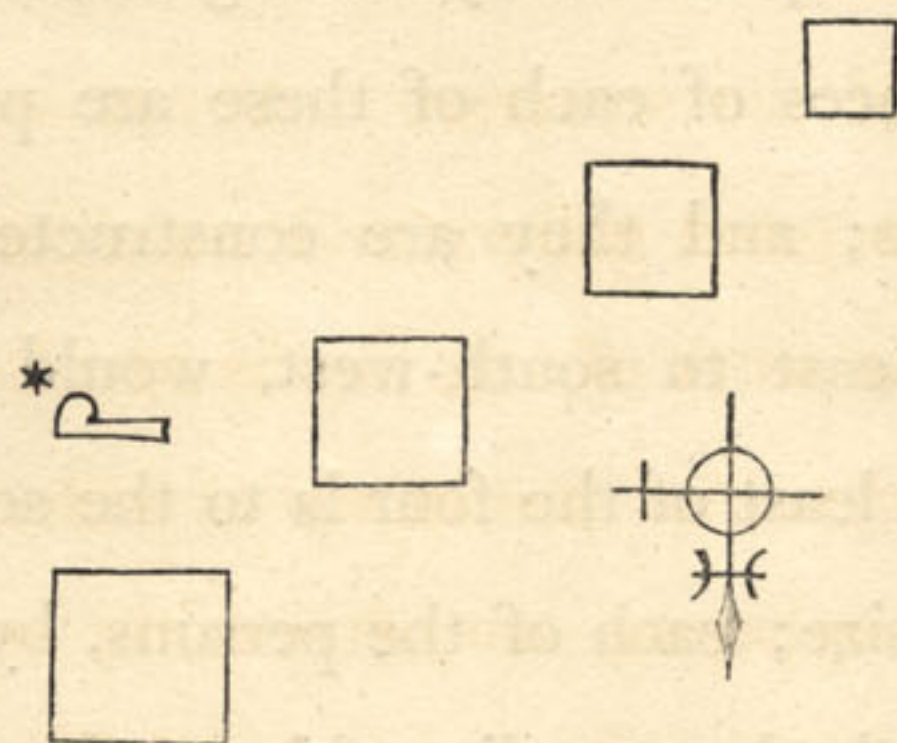
Having thus entered on the antiquities of Egypt, for of these the canals must be considered as the first in time, as well as in utility, we are naturally attracted to those, that most eminently obtrude themselves on our imagination.

THE PYRAMIDS.

THESE structures appear in considerable number, varying in size, in materials, and in architecture, between Cairo and Meduun: but those nearest Cairo, called the pyramids of Geeza, are the most worthy of notice; four of which, though different in magnitude from each other, are particularly distinguished from the rest by their bulk. The faces of each of these are placed fronting the four cardinal points; and they are constructed so that a line, drawn from north-east to south-west, would pass through the base of each. The least of the four is to the south-west, and the others increase in size; each of the persons, by whom they were built, resolving no doubt to eclipse his predecessor, till the bulk and expense of the last precluded any attempt to outvie it; if the circumstances of the times did not become less favourable to the

waste of so much toil, for a purpose of so little advantage even to the single mortal, for whom it was intended.

It has been conjectured, indeed, that the pyramids were temples, or altars, dedicated to the Sun. But that an edifice nearly solid, and to the narrow chamber of which all access was carefully excluded, should have been intended for a temple, is palpably absurd: and what sacrifices could be offered on a structure of such height, terminating in a point, and the sides of which were rendered smooth, as if to frustrate all attempts to ascend it? The writer of the article on this subject in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, however, considers this supposition as well founded, and as supported by the accounts we have from the Asiatic Society, that the hindoos erected large statues of their gods Seeva and Mehedeo, all of a conical or pyramidal figure. But were the pyramids the statues of an egyptian god, it is scarcely probable, that they should be confined to the extent of country between Meduun and Cairo, be found there in such numbers, and be repeated in such a manner as the four we have mentioned, the disposition of which will appear from Mr. Reveley's sketch annexed.



* *Colossal Sphinx.*

The etymology of the appellation pyramid, which Mr. Silvester de Sacy has lately given in the *Magazin encyclopédique*,

may perhaps be adduced as countenancing the above conjecture: for he derives it with much plausibility from an egyptian root, signifying something sacred, or set apart from men's use. But, not to mention the little stress that can be laid on etymologies, often fanciful, and at best dubious, this derivation is as suitable to a tomb as to a temple, for nothing was more sacred to the ancient egyptians than the repositories of the dead.

An ingenious gentleman of Germany, Mr. Witte, who never saw them by the by, has endeavoured to maintain the hypothesis of their being the work of nature, not of art: and he goes so far as to ascribe the same origin to the ruins of Persepolis, Balbec, and Palmyra, the palaces of the incas in Peru, the temple of Jupiter at Girgenti, in Sicily, and even to Stonehenge on Salisbury plain. Mr. Bryant, too, imagines, that the three largest at least are not artificial structures of stone and mortar, but solid rocks, cut into a pyramidal shape, and afterward cased with stone. The opinion of Mr. Bruce approaches this; and it appears highly probable, that as much of the stratum of rock, on which they are raised, as could be made subservient to the purpose, was employed in the lower part of the structure. Yet it seems unquestionable, that all above the great gallery and sepulchral chamber at least must have been the work of art; for, as Mr. Reveley observes, and this is conformable to the testimony of others, the great gallery, chamber, and sarcophagus, are of granite; which could not have been brought in through the passage leading to them from the side of the pyramid; and cannot be in it's natural situation, in the centre of such a mass of soft freestone.

On approaching the pyramids from Geeza, the first that offers itself is the largest, standing on a hill of rock, about a hundred feet higher than the plain below. Its base is buried in the sand, that now rises in a slope on the north side within two courses of the entrance, which was formerly midway between the base and the summit. This, as well as the others, is built of a stone very little harder than chalk, whitish when scraped, but become by exposure to the air of a yellowish brown hue, being the same with the rock on which they stand. It was originally cased with a different stone, as appears from the concurrent testimony of ancient authors, and from this circumstance, that the courses of stone, which give the appearance of steps externally, are neither uniform in size, as they vary from the height of near five feet to little more than two, nor diminishing with regularity, one or other of which no doubt would have been the case, had it not been intended, that they should be concealed. A considerable portion of the casing of the second pyramid still remains at the top, and by the holes that are visible in many places where it is removed, it has evidently been destroyed by the hand of man. Many authors say, this casing is of granite: but it is of a whitish tint very unlike granite either red or gray; and the summit, which is decayed by time, for no man can climb up the ashlar facing, is not rounding off, as granite would decay, but stands up in points. All the other pyramids are stripped of their facing entirely.

The great pyramid wants about eight feet of its height at the top, many stones having been taken away, or thrown down by people out of wantonness. Dr. Pococke says, that the upper



TOP OF THE FIRST PYRAMID OF GIZAH.

L. Mayer delin.

T. Milton dicit.



PASSAGE FROM THE SECOND TO THE THIRD GALLERY IN THE GREAT PYRAMID

L. Meyer del.

Published by R. Hoeper, Historic Gallery, Fall 1861, 1862.

course consisted of nine stones when he saw it, and that two more were wanting, to complete the course. Mr. Mayer found only seven; so that two had been thrown down since Dr. Pococke's time. For a view of the top, as it appeared when Mr. Mayer was there, see the plate, in which every stone is faithfully represented.

By whom, or at what period, this pyramid was opened, is not certainly known. An arabian author, Ibn Abd Alhokm, discoursing of the wonders of Egypt, relates, that Al Mamoun, the khalif of Bagdad, caused it to be opened about ten centuries ago: and that there was found in it, toward the top, a chamber, with a hollow stone, in which was a statue like a man, and within it a man, upon whom was a breastplate of gold, set with jewels; on his breastplate lay a sword of inestimable price, at his head was a carbuncle of the bigness of an egg, shining like the light of the day, and upon him were characters written with a pen, which no man understood. But by whomever it was opened, or whatever was then found in it, nothing now remains, except an empty sepulchre. To arrive at this you first descend a sloping passage, or gallery, seventy-nine feet long, four feet high, and three feet four inches and a half wide. At the end of this is an irregular space, eight feet and a half wide, and about ten feet and a half high, formed by breaking a way through to the second passage, which runs sloping upward a hundred and two feet. This is three feet two inches wide, and four feet three inches high. From it is an opening to a well, fifteen inches wide, and three feet four inches in height. The third or great gallery, which terminates in a kind of very sharp arch, formed by each course of stone projecting a little

beyond that which is beneath it, continues the ascent a hundred and twenty-eight feet farther. This is six feet nine inches wide, and thirty-eight feet six inches high, measured at right angles. On each side is a bench, near thirteen inches high, and the same in width. From the end of this gallery a horizontal passage leads to the principal chamber, the door-way of which is three feet nine inches high, and three feet two inches wide. The chamber itself is thirty-five feet long, twenty-two feet five inches wide, and twenty-five feet and a half high. It contains the sarcophagus, which is seven feet six inches in length externally, three feet six inches wide, three feet nine inches high, and six inches thick. From the landing-place at the end of the second passage a horizontal gallery leads to another chamber below the former. This chamber, the roof of which is not flat, but angular, is eighteen feet two inches long, twelve feet nine inches wide, and the same in height. The passage to it is a hundred and twenty-one feet seven inches long, three feet four inches and a half wide, and three feet nine inches high. These measures were taken by Mr. Jean Baptiste Record, of Cairo, in september, 1784, in french feet, which are here reduced to english.

The dimensions of the pyramid itself have been variously recorded by different authors. The late captain Riou gave to Mr. Reveley the following measures, taken by his father, Stephen Riou, an engineer of undoubted abilities, in the year 1754 or 1755. Length of the base seven hundred and fifty-nine feet, perpendicular height four hundred and forty-one. Mr. Dalton assigns twelve feet more to the base, and two feet more to the perpendi-



CHAMBER AND SARCOPHAGUS IN THE GREAT PYRAMID OF GIZAH.

L. Mayer del.

J. Milnes sculp.

cular. If, however, there be two hundred and seven or eight steps, which is pretty clearly ascertained, and these steps vary, as Dr. Pococke asserts, from two feet and a half to four feet in height, it seems scarcely possible, that the pyramid should have no greater altitude than these gentlemen assign it. Mr. Record makes the measure of the base on the north side six hundred and seventy-eight feet six inches: the hill beneath the entrance fifty-five feet six inches, and from the top of the hill to the summit of the pyramid five hundred and ninety-three feet six inches, so that the total height is six hundred and forty-nine feet. If Mr. Record intended this for the perpendicular height, the angle at the summit of the pyramid must be very acute, which is by no means the case: it may be presumed, therefore, that his measurement was that of the slant height, taken mechanically, in which case it would probably come near the truth.

On this subject we should have been less full, had we not deemed it of some importance to settle a point, in which travellers of very great reputation have differed considerably, and on which an accurate idea of the figure of the pyramid depends. We cannot avoid placing much confidence in the measurements of Mr. Riou, and Mr. Dalton; which are corroborated by Mr. Giobert, a french engineer, who makes the height of the pyramid four hundred and forty-eight feet: and these come pretty near to Mr. Mayer's, on whose precision we can rely. From the minutes of this gentleman it appears, that the face of the pyramid is an isosceles triangle, the base of which measures seven hundred and twenty-eight feet, and each of the sides six hundred and eighty-

three; that the angle at the summit is of sixty-six degrees, and the perpendicular altitude of the pyramid four hundred and forty-five feet; and that it consists of two hundred and seven courses of hewn stone, the largest of which is near five feet in height, and the smallest upward of two.

Though the pyramids most forcibly strike the eye, and command the attention, yet they are not the sole objects here, that deserve the notice of the inquisitive and enlightened traveller. In their neighbourhood were spacious temples, the ruins of one of which are still easy to be traced before the eastern front of the second pyramid, and of another before that of the third. Various sepulchral chambers, too, have been cut in different parts of the rock, and highly ornamented in basso relievo, an idea of which may be formed from the views we have given. Beside these, about six hundred paces to the east of the second pyramid, is a monument remarkable for its singularity,

THE COLOSSAL SPHINX.

THIS huge statue was sculptured out of the solid rock: its body, about a hundred feet in length, is now buried in the sand, above which the head rises at present twenty-seven feet. Though the nose and upper lip have been destroyed by the arabs, the head is strongly marked with the characteristics of the negro form. The ears are remarkably large, the upper edge of them being on a line with the middle of the forehead. The head is covered with a hood, bound on above the eyebrows, spreading out very wide on



HEAD OF THE COLOSSAL SPHINX.

L. Meyer del.

T. Milton sculp.

each side of the face, and ribbed all over. There are several horizontal veins of softer strata in the rock, which have mouldered away, and give it a singular appearance behind. The neck is so decayed, that it's original form is entirely lost.

That this chimerical figure, having the head of a woman, the paws of a lion, and the body of a dog, should have been designed as a type of some important occurrence, is highly probable: and that it was emblematical of the rising of the Nile, which took place in the months of July and August, when the Sun passes through the signs of Leo and Virgo, is by no means a far-fetched conjecture. If this be the true import of a representation common in Egypt, though of much smaller dimensions than that we are now considering; and it be also a fact, that the sphinx is met with as a sacred or mystical figure in Hindostan, which has been reported; this would be a strong argument to prove, that in ancient times a migration from Egypt to Hindostan took place, instead of the Hindoos having peopled Egypt.

But whatever the sphinx may have been intended to typify, the situation of this colossal statue with respect to the second pyramid and it's temple pretty clearly indicates it's connexion with them. Pliny informs us, that in his time there was a subterraneous communication between the body of the sphinx and one of the pyramids. At present there is a hole on the summit of the head about five feet deep; and how much farther it may extend is unknown, as from that depth it is choked up with sand. We have little reason to question therefore, that this sphinx was once connected with the temple, before which it stood, by a secret pas-

sage, through which the priest ascended to its head, whence he issued oracular responses to the multitude below.

The date of these astonishing monuments appears to baffle all conjecture. They are mentioned as works of antiquity by the most ancient of the heathen historians: from the figure of the vaulted roof of the gallery in the great pyramid, we may presume they were built before the art of constructing a circular arch was known; and as they are totally destitute of hieroglyphics, which abound on other remains of this country, it is most probable they were erected before these sacred characters were invented, the use of which was forgotten at a very remote period.

THE CATACOMBS.

WE have already mentioned the subterraneous repositories of the dead, which are numerous in the neighbourhood of the two larger pyramids, and of great antiquity no doubt, though from the sculptures they exhibit we must naturally infer the work of times much less rude. Some of them are executed in a style of excellence superiour to the performances of a similar kind in the sepulchral grottoes of Upper Egypt. It is not improbable, therefore, that these were made at the time when Memphis, which stood but a few miles south of the pyramids, was the capital of this kingdom.

No part of Egypt appears to have been explored with any degree of diligence, in which catacombs have not been found, though differing much in their form and workmanship. Some



ENTRANCE TO A SEPULCHRAL CHAMBER NEAR THE SPHINX.

L. Mayer del.

Published by R. Dreyer, Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, June 1802.



SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER, NEAR THE PYRAMIDS AT GEEZA.

Published by R. Dreyfus, Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, Lond. 1829.

of them are simply square cavities hewn out of the rock; others are chambers, with one or more rows of niches in their sides to receive the bodies of the dead; and frequently there are several of these chambers, communicating with each other. The roofs of some are flat, of others vaulted, and some rise in domes over circular areas. The walls of some are perfectly plain; those of others are covered with insculptured hieroglyphics, adorned with bass reliefs, or embellished with a profusion of painting and gilding. Occasionally we meet with statues in them, as large as life, in sitting postures, with hieroglyphics upon scrolls resting in their laps, or upon the adjacent walls; probably the epitaphs of the persons represented by the statues, and containing a brief chronicle of their lives.

Neither were these places of sepulture confined to the reception of human bodies. The ibis was embalmed with religious care, enclosed in an earthen urn, and then deposited in a subterranean vault. There are galleries of this kind forty or fifty feet beneath the surface of the ground, in the sides of which are several chambers filled with earthen vessels, each containing an embalmed ibis enveloped with linen. Other animals held in veneration by the egyptians were embalmed and inhumed in a similar manner.

In some of these subterranean grottoes, as well as in the pyramids, sarcophagi are found; and there is a very curious one at Cairo made of basalt, a delineation of which is here given, from the hieroglyphics on it evidently of ancient egyptian workmanship, yet ornamented with volutes, which have been considered

as of greek invention. This now serves as the basin of a fountain, called the Lover's, it being a popular persuasion firmly credited, that it's water possesses the virtue of extinguishing love. Neither must we omit to mention the stone coffins, in which mummies have been enclosed; sometimes with a human figure sculptured on the lid, inclining to one side, in the posture in which a person usually sleeps.

The catacombs of Alexandria, of which we have given a representation, are on the south of the old port, their present entrance being a small irregular hole, a few paces from the edge of a basin, that communicates with it. This hole is so narrow, that you are obliged to creep in feet foremost. Having passed it, you find yourself in a chamber of a moderate size, but so filled with earth, that a man can barely stand upright in it. Three sides of this chamber have each another cut out of it only eight feet square, and in three of the sides of each of these are square recesses, the fronts of which are ornamented with a kind of tuscan pilasters, supporting a segment of an arch. From the first chamber you pass into various others. One is a parallelogram, about fifteen feet wide, the cieling of which is a very flat segment of an arch; and at the farther end of it are two tuscan pilasters, supporting an architrave, cornice, and pediment, forming a large door, on each side of which is a small door ornamented in the same manner, only without the pediment. These three doors lead into a circular chamber of the same width, it's roof a very flat dome resting on an architrave; and from this chamber you enter three smaller square chambers, with three recesses in each, exactly as



AN ANCIENT SARCOPHAGUS OF BASALTES, CALLED THE LOVERS FOUNTAIN

J. Meyer del.

Published by R. Bence Jones, Gallery Pall Mall, 1852.



INTERIOR VIEW OF THE CATACOMBS AT ALEXANDRIA.

J. Meyer, del.

Published by R. Beves Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, June 1802.

in the first chamber. All these chambers are cut out of the solid rock, very neatly worked, and stuccoed over. Some of them had square openings in the roof, to admit light, but these are now stopped up. They are all extremely dry, and similar in style; but how far they extend it is impossible to say, they are now so filled, and the original entrance to them is equally unknown.

If we may judge of the antiquity of these from their architectural ornaments, at least such of them as we have been able to explore may be referred to the period when the arts had passed their meridian. Over the great door entering into the circular chamber above mentioned for instance, the horizontal cornice is adorned with dentils only, without modillions, while the inclined cornice of the pediment has modillions without dentils. Now of this no instance occurs in the works of the ancients, while the arts were in perfection; but we cannot be surprised at finding it as they began to decline, when all sorts of absurdities took place, and the neglect of the ancient simplicity brought on that confusion, which terminated in their ruin.

Thus we find the grave of the grecian art in the same country, in which we find it's cradle. For, notwithstanding the ingenious fancies, to which some have had recourse for ascribing the invention of the different orders to the greeks, it is scarce to be doubted, that Greece borrowed it's architecture from the country whence it was in a great measure peopled. In purity of taste, it is true, the greek went far beyond his african predecessor; but the models of his temples, the principal parts of his edifices, the rudiments of all his orders, and the ornaments with which he deco-

rated them, are to be found in Egypt: he only carried them to a degree of perfection, which they could never have reached in their native clime.

O B E L I S K S.

AMONG the antiquities of Egypt coeval with the use of hieroglyphics the obelisk is remarkable. These fingers of the Sun, as they were called by the Egyptian priests, were designed both for ornament and utility. They were gnomons of colossal sundials, cut on the pavement on which they stood, whence they derived their appellation. Placed before their temples as ornamental, their faces were covered with hieroglyphics, recording probably astronomical observations and historical events, and inculcating moral doctrines. Mr. Bruce indeed sees in these, as well as in other hieroglyphics, nothing but almanacs; differing from the wooden calendars, or clogs, which our rustics copied from their northern ancestors, only in being more copious; as they contained much of true astronomical science, with much of those astrological absurdities, from which some of our own almanacs, even in the present day, are not free. That such may have been the subject of many hieroglyphical inscriptions, among a people by whom astronomy was much studied, and to whom it was of importance to ascertain particular periods of the year, is probably true: but we can scarcely suppose them to have been confined to this, when we consider their multiplicity on the walls of temples, on obelisks, on the pedestals and supports of statues, and in the repositories



THE OBELISKS AT ALEXANDRIA, CALLED CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLES

J. Meyer del.

Engraved by R. Brown, Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, 1791



AN ANCIENT OBELISK AT MATAREA, FORMERLY HELIOPOLIS.

L. Mayer del.

Published by R. Bevyer, Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, 1802.

of the dead. Surely it could never be intended, that the silence of these should be disturbed, to know when the moon would be at full, or even when the Dog-star would emerge from the rays of the Sun. One supposition made by Mr. Bruce himself is sufficient, to controvert this hypothesis. Moses, he observes, was directed to write the law in alphabetical characters, and not in hieroglyphics: but if these were appropriate to astronomical observations alone, and used for no other purpose, it was absurd to prohibit his employing them to record the law.

However general or particular their purport, it is obvious, that many of them were intended to endure to remotest posterity. They were deeply cut on the hardest stone, as if to brave the hand of Time. But though they still remain conspicuous, and many perhaps will not be effaced as long as the world shall last, their meaning has already been forgotten ages ago; while the classical writings of Greece and Rome, consigned to the frailest materials, bid fair for an immortality, to which they in vain aspired.

The obelisk near Alexandria, called Cleopatra's needle, is a block of granite, not quite six feet in diameter at it's base, and near seventy feet high originally, but it's pedestal, and part of it's base, are buried in the sand. See the plate. The sides facing the north-west and south-west are best preserved, the hieroglyphics on the other two sides being greatly defaced, especially toward the lower part, large scales falling from the stone, notwithstanding it's hardness.

There is another beautiful obelisk standing amid the ruins of what was once the city of Heliopolis. This, of which like-

wise a delineation is here given, is formed of a single piece of red granite, and covered with hieroglyphics, not injured as those of the obelisk before mentioned, from which it differs very little in size.

POMPEY'S PILLAR,

As it is commonly called, is another monument of antiquity, which has much engaged the attention of travellers, though far less ancient than the obelisks. It has lately been measured with great care, while the French were in possession of Egypt, and the following are its dimensions, as given by Mr. Norry in his report to the institute.

	metres. cent.	feet. inches. lines.
Height of the pedestal	3, 24	equal to 10, 6, 9·132, english measure.
base	1, 78	5, 9, 7·241
shaft	20, 48	67, 2, 2·176
capital	3, 21	10, 5, 7·383
making in the whole	28, 71	94, 0, 5·932

Mr. Norry likewise reports, that the diameter of the column is

	metres. cent.	feet. inches. lines.
in the lower part	2, 70	equal to 8, 9, 7·613
near the astragal	2, 49	8, 1, 5·363

The shaft and upper member of the base of this pillar are formed of one block of red granite. The capital, which is of a different stone, is of the corinthian order, with palm leaves, not indented. These Mr. Bruce supposes were designed merely to