

with its rare collection of marbles and mummies; of hieroglyphics on wood and stone; of ancient coins, and weapons, and jewels, and idols; of papyrus, with its mysterious writings; and of granite tombs, one sarcophagus being an immense monolith more than eight feet long, with proportionate breadth and depth. The spoils of many tombs and palaces were here, and it was the next thing to seeing the old cities themselves to see so much of their splendor. While the ruins which we did visit in the course of the next few days are the oldest in Egypt, yet the wonderful sculptures of Thebes and Karnac we were not able to see, save as they were represented by specimens in the museum. The art of accurately representing the features of a man in the hardest granite or marble had reached a remarkable degree of perfection in that ancient day. Even more wonderful was a human face cut in wood as accurately as if in marble. But I must leave the reader to imagine the rich stores of an Egyptian museum. Under a better government what is now found in the British Museum and elsewhere would have been gathered and kept here in its proper home at the foot of the pyramids. Hitherto Egypt has shown great indifference about her monuments, which really constitute her glory.

While going through the museum we suddenly discovered, on looking out of the window, that we were on the very banks of the Nile. Immediately that mysterious river had a greater charm for us than any thing under lock and key. We stood upon its bank and watched its ceaseless flood of waters coming from distant sources, known only as yet to the Almighty, and with an unvarying volume almost the whole length of the river. Its bosom was covered with sail-boats filled with grain, brought from different parts of this fertile valley. We drove along near its bank, high enough here to

protect the city at the time of the overflow, and came to the island of Rhoda, at one end of which, tradition has it, lodged the ark of bulrushes in which the mother of Moses had placed her child. The island is now the site of one of the many palaces of the khedive's family. Crossing over to it by the now dry channel of one branch of the Nile, we passed through an orange-grove, the air laden with the rich perfume of the orange-blossoms, and came to the Nilometer. This is an instrument for measuring the rise of the Nile. It is simply a stone less than fifty feet high, but so graduated and placed with reference to the river—the waters from which enter the sort of well where it is erected—that it affords a certain measure of the extent of the overflow, and of the probable crops of the year. If the water rises only thirty-two feet, a time of scarcity is certain; if it rises forty-two feet, immense damage will result; if it stands at forty, all is well, and harvests will be abundant. The annual rise is from June to October, and is supposed to be due to the periodical rains of Abyssinia and other parts of the South. Aside from the overflow as a means of fertilizing, there are canals, made to distribute the water at other times. An extensive one is in Middle Egypt, running almost parallel with the river, and called, as might be expected, the Canal of Joseph.

Old Cairo, near which the Nilometer is located, afforded us a view of the dilapidated Mosque of Omar, once a fine structure, but now interesting only for its history. Here we found the "pillars of the faithful," or two stone columns, near the entrance, placed so close together that they were supposed to test the true believers. Whoever could squeeze through the ten inches between them would pass the test. They are worn quite smooth by the frequent trials made. I failed to prove a good Moslem, while Bishop Marvin was afraid to try.

The only other thing of interest here was a column with an indentation, and also slightly veined, the figure bearing distant resemblance to a whip. This is said to have come from Mecca, Mohammed striking it with hand and whip, and saying, Go to Omar. The old mollah dropped a stone through an opening in the floor of the mosque, and gravely informed us that the water whose splash we heard had come from Mecca.

A Coptic or Greek convent near by had equally absurd traditions, there being pointed out to us the font where Christ was baptized when an infant, as well as the place where Joseph and Mary lived while in Egypt. Here we found some quaint old tiles, as well as some rather good carving and inlaid work. But the building is very old, while the crucifix and candles abound as in a Romish church. The monk in charge was quite ready for backshish, although more modest about it than the mollahs.

Our return drive showed the people at their favorite employment, coffee-drinking, the coffee-house being as frequent as the tea-house in China or the drinking-saloon in America. While in the museum we saw the jars of baked meats which used to be placed in the tomb of the dead for his refreshment—very much as the Chinese set out food at the grave every year. In fact, with more numerous canals, Egypt would pass very well for China, the occasional sails often reminding us of the more frequent ones of the Celestial Empire. The Egyptian shop-keeper usually sits or stands in front of his wares, which are crowded into small niches in the wall. The bazaars are of all sorts—Turkish, Damascene, and European, the latter subdivided considerably. The women are fuel-gatherers, driers, and bearers, as in India.

The buffalo abounds, as in China and India, while this is the home of the camel, where he is found in

immense numbers. We rode over a young one in the street, and such noises as he made I never heard before. Of all ungainly things, the young of the buffalo and the camel deserve the palm, while for genuine awkwardness they can excel any thing in the world. A camel is used for every thing. He is yoked singly to turn a water-wheel, or with an ox or a buffalo to pull a plow. We saw a camel-camp, where hundreds were tethered near the tents. The camel's motion in walking is like a wave of the sea.

One other thing I will mention in Cairo, before we begin to go out and about the city. I secured a ticket of admission to the University Mosque. This is the great school of Mohammedanism, where they come from all parts of the world to prepare for the priesthood. Here, too, is the home of fanaticism. The number of pupils, as reported to me by the head mollah, is thirteen thousand. Far less than that number were there the day I was present, but many may not lodge or remain in the building. It is really a series of buildings, or rather of courts and mosques, where, lying on rugs in the open sun, or stretched on mats on the floor, or squatted in circles about the teacher, or swaying the body to and fro in memorizing the Koran, all ages were represented among the students, from the boy of seven to the man of sixty. Mohammedanism has more vitality than all the false religions of the world, and will prove the last and bitterest enemy of Christianity.

On the morning of the 27th of March we took our donkeys with us on the cars, and leaving the train at the first station we proceeded at full gallop toward the ruins of old Memphis, the probable home of the Pharaoh who set the Israelites to such heavy tasks. The place is now simply a series of mounds filled with ruins of brick, sculptures, and implements of various sorts, some of which that

have been excavated are exposed to sight. The bricks were made of mud and straw, and dried in the sun. The marks of the straw still remain, as well as small pieces of it. One of our party supposed that the Israelites made the bricks *wholly* out of straw. The mammoth statue of Rameses lies face downward in the mud, while once it towered in stately beauty in front of his palace. It is supposed to accurately represent his features, the profile showing a face of much character. The size of the statue may be inferred from the statement that from shoulder to elbow is over eight feet, while the beard is fully three feet long. The stony eye measured a foot in diameter. All back of Memphis for many miles, up to the site of the present Cairo, the range of hills was used for tombs, and is crowned at different points by pyramids, which were simply tombs on a larger scale. Of those now standing the distance between the most remote is fully fifteen miles.

Near the pyramids of Sakkara, a couple or more miles from Memphis, are the tombs of the sacred bulls. Both bulls and ibises were worshiped, and when they died their bodies were embalmed and put in tombs near the temple, where divine honors were paid them. The tombs of the ibises are now closed again and covered by the drifting sand. We saw in the temples of the Serapis twenty-four immense *sarcophagi*, all monoliths, and some twelve feet long and seven feet deep and seven wide, and where, in spacious arched vaults, the mummied remains of these sacred bulls were kept. These tombs have since been despoiled of their treasures, and I have seen at least one of these mummied bulls in the rooms of the New York Historical Society. The tombs are of granite, and in several cases of black granite, highly polished, and carved in hieroglyphics. Grander than the tombs of any

of the kings of Egypt did we find the sarcophagus of the sacred bull.

But we have ten miles before us to Gheezeh, where the great pyramids are. The ride is through the desert, and on a hot day the sand would be scorching and our progress slow. Our donkey-boys urge on the donkeys, and we gallop it in two hours. But how deceptive the distance! We have only gone half way when Cheops seems so near that one of our party of four thinks a mile more will bring us to it. Our dragoman, Zedan Ahmed, shakes his head, and says it will take an hour yet to reach the Sphinx, this side of the pyramid. So it proved, for when we looked up into its stony, mysterious eyes it was already past one o'clock.

The Sphinx looks best at a distance. Time and Arabs have dealt roughly with it, breaking nose, lip, and cheek. The sands have covered much of it from view. Its head is still erect, the circumference around the forehead being estimated at one hundred and two feet; but if its original height were one hundred and forty-three feet, then fully one hundred is covered up by the sand. All about it are remains of temples and tombs. One could almost wish that the whole could be "restored," but nothing could long withstand the drifting sand. This ridge is at the edge of the desert, the sands sweeping over and down the hill, the annual inundation of the Nile alone saving the beautiful carpet of green some distance below from utter desolation. Part of the stone causeway that led to the Nile, and over which were brought the stones out of which the pyramids were built, is still standing. The Sphinx is cut out of the solid rock, on natural layers of which the pyramids stand.

But our carriage, which took us to the depot in the morning, is waiting with our lunch, which we eat in the shadow of Cheops, before we attempt its

lofty ascent of four hundred and fifty feet. Its base covers eleven acres of ground. Once its exterior was covered with a smooth casing of granite, which would have made its ascent impossible by our present mode. The Arabs, it is held, loosened and took away the material for the building of Cairo, and the exposed surface is now of blocks of limestone, somewhat irregularly arranged in steps. For the privilege of going to the top and into the interior we each pay five francs, or a dollar, to the sheik, or head man of the Arabs who have charge of it. This is supposed to include all charges, save what each visitor may choose to give to his escort who helps him up to the top. This consists of two men to pull you by each hand and two to "boost" you from behind, while a fifth goes along with a water-jar, that you may refresh yourself withal. A man needs none of these, but, taking it leisurely, could very well climb up alone. But it is important to impress you with the difficulties of the ascent, so that you will give plenty of backshish. The men will grunt and groan and try to lift you, and want you to stop every few seconds to rest and rub your limbs, and they will get you to sit down and take a drink of water and give them a little backshish, or promise them much, or buy old coins or relics which they may have for sale; in short, do any thing for a few piasters or five-cent pieces. Here is a sample of their talk: "Master, you an American. Yankee Doodle, good fellow. Master a gentleman—you do what is right. We make it all satisfactory to you. You do all the same to us"—all the while rubbing my leg so as to touch my pocket-book occasionally. They continued their fondling and flattery, while I imitated the example of the Sphinx at my feet, and said not a word. They were puzzled. Following the advice of the guide-book, I did not try to help myself, especially after the fatiguing journey of the

morning, and let them literally pull and "boost" me up, stopping only now and then to breathe. Concluding that I was a man of silence, and getting a little out of breath themselves, I made the ascent finally in quiet, they changing their tactics, and saying, "Master make it all right. Nobody say a word more." In the meantime the others were being tormented all the way to the top. What a motley crowd on the summit! It took twenty Arabs to see us all safe, and twenty hearts beat in hope of backshish.

The view was almost worth a journey to Egypt—the city, the Nile, the valley, the desert, and the distant pyramids. On that little platform, thirty-two feet square, where we now were, how many thousands of all nationalities and ranks had stood and looked out upon the same scenes! But our Arabs will not let us think. One agrees to run down the pyramid and climb the other, almost as tall, all in the space of nine minutes, for four francs. Away he goes out of sight, making long leaps, which every moment threaten to rid the pyramids of one pest forever. But no! See him, small as an ant on the ground, running between the pyramids. Look close, or else you will fail to see him climbing toward the top of the other, the veriest insect clinging to the rocks, but reaching the summit at last, just as his time is up. Others offer to do it in seven minutes—any thing for backshish. But we will neither tempt nor be tempted.

Descending, one takes off his turban and ties it around my waist, making a sort of a pullback, while others going before hold out their hands for me to lean on, my water-carrier being always ready with the water-jar. None of the steps were over forty-two inches, and most of them were only thirty, while the whole number of steps was two hundred. The entrance to Cheops is on the north side, about

fifty feet from the ground. Quite a descent is first made, then an ascent to the queen's chamber, and returning, another to the king's chamber, directly above. Both are empty, the latter, however, containing the sarcophagus broken and empty. I was disappointed in the size of the stones of the pyramids. I brought a small tape-line from America with me specially to measure them. The only respectable one measures ten by ten feet, and that is on the inside of the wall of the king's chamber. The stones of the casing now removed may have been larger. But the ceaseless clamor of our body-guard forbade our indulging in any special thoughts in these rifled tombs, and I will let the reader moralize for himself on the facts as here given.

Remounting our donkeys, after quieting with francs and piasters our noisy guard of honor, we rode around both pyramids, and also got a distant view of the smaller ones. The second one still has some of the smooth casing left near the top, but there are enough breaks in it to enable one to ascend it. One pyramid a day is enough for anybody but an Arab. It is supposed that a perfect pyramid, with a sarcophagus for his remains, was first built by each king at the beginning of his reign, so as to make certain of a tomb, but that it increased in size by succeeding layers of stones until his death, when the smooth casing was put on. Cheops must have had a long reign, as is apparent from the size of this pyramid. The causeway for bringing the stone from the Nile took one hundred thousand men ten years to build it, while the pyramid itself took three hundred thousand men twenty years. So says the guide-book, but on what authority I cannot say. It certainly required hardly less time and labor to build this artificial mountain of stone. But we have our carriage waiting at the foot of the hill, and galloping down to it we dismiss our don-

keys and stretch our wearied limbs and rest our aching backs as we drive several miles to our hotel.

We pass a number of the royal palaces on the way, and with a permit, kindly secured by the consul, we return next day to visit Gezireh, the finest of them. It is located on the bank of the Nile, just opposite to and in full view of the city. The grounds are well arranged with flowers, fountains, grottoes, avenues of trees, and contains a fine zoölogical garden. There are really two palaces in the inclosure, and it is hard to say which is the most elegant. They are larger than the old Mogul palaces at Delhi and Agra, and while, being furnished, at present a much more fitting home of royalty, they lack their marble and inlaid walls of dazzling splendor. It was interesting in going through these costly and elegant apartments—the marble floors covered with the finest and softest Axminster carpets, all in one piece; the furniture, and even the walls and ceiling in some rooms, upholstered in silk and satin; the tables of the best Florentine mosaic, or coming even from the Vatican workshops; the splendid chairs of state bearing the regal crest—to find at the head of the marble stairway at the principal entrance of one of the palaces, a piece of statuary ten feet high, bearing the well-known features of Benjamin Franklin in bass-relief, and representing him discovering the electric fluid. The only inscription is, "*Eripuit celo fulmen, 1750.*"

Our final excursion was to see the obelisk of Heliopolis, where it still stands as placed originally, four thousand years ago. Here was the home of Joseph, who married the daughter of the high priest, perhaps, of the very temple before which this obelisk stood. "What!" said a fellow-traveler when I made this remark, "was *Mary Magdalene* the daughter of a priest?" All has disappeared except this granite shaft, once seventy feet high

and covered with hieroglyphics, figures of birds and utensils still quite visible at some distance. The inundations of the Nile have left only about forty-five feet of it above ground. This is, perhaps, the only very ancient obelisk standing on its original site. The pyramids were quite visible fully fifteen miles away, the two appearing one, with a bifurcated point.

Near by is an old sycamore-tree, covered with the names of ambitious people and inclosed by a fence. Here, tradition has it, Joseph and Mary rested when they fled into Egypt with the young Child. The tree is old, but while Jesus, perhaps, saw the obelisk which we had just left, and the pyramids which rose in the distance, this tree probably sprang up within the century.

Our road back to the city ran between fields of bearded wheat ripening for the sickle. This is the only wheat we saw in Egypt. The head is short but heavy, and the yield is probably quite large to the acre. This was doubtless the corn which Joseph stored and his brethren came to buy. The treasure-cities, which his descendants built under the lash, have long since disappeared. We may have driven home over their ruins!

Alexandria, Egypt, March 30, 1877.

## LETTER XXVIII.

## FROM ALEXANDRIA TO JERUSALEM.

LIKE the children of Israel, we went out of Egypt into the Promised Land; unlike them, we went by water rather than by sand or through the desert. We had glimpses enough of the barren wilderness while on the Red Sea to understand why the Israelites longed for the delta of the Nile, with its luxuriant vegetation, even though the tales were doubled in the brick-yards. Following on camels their course through the Peninsula of Sinai and the desert is a trip often undertaken by travelers, and is perfectly practicable for those who have several months to devote wholly to Palestine, but not for such as make the tour of the world in less than a year, and who must apportion their time accordingly. Our course lay from Cairo to Alexandria by rail, and thence by steamer to Port Said and Joppa.

The run by rail was through the delta of the Nile, crossing both of the principal branches into which it divides before mingling its waters with the blue Mediterranean. The country was not unlike that part of the delta through which we passed from Suez to Cairo. Our friends were right who said, "There is not much to be seen in Alexandria." To one who had never been to Europe it would pass for an average Continental city, or perhaps I should say French city. Hotels and stores are mostly French, and so are the European ladies one sees on the