

MEDINET HABOO.

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Remains of the Hypostyle Hall.

PASSING through the gateway in the northern corridor, we come to a more recently excavated hall, the bases of the columns of which alone remain. Whether the columns themselves were used to form the supports for the Christian church or not is open to doubt, though the convenience of having the material at hand may have induced their employment for the purpose. This area must have been subdivided at least into two or three portions, for so the foundations and lower course of the dividing walls seem to indicate. Judging from the dimensions of the bases, it appears probable that the hall must have been about twenty-six feet in height, and that it had the same architectural characteristics as the preceding court. There can be no doubt that it was roofed, and formed the main part of the temple, as on each side of it are doorways, leading to chambers, possibly used as dwelling-houses by the priests, or as store-rooms of the various paraphernalia requisite for the religious ceremonies which took place within it. Recently the ruins of an Arab village covered the site, and but a few years have elapsed since the remains of the pillars were unburied. The appearance of the bases is peculiar, as they seemingly have a thick coating of whitewash on them.