

The Grand Hall.

WE turn next to the Grand Hall, which is rightly considered the most wonderful and splendid building in Thebes. The interior contains in all 134 columns: the central ones are twelve in number, 64 feet in height and 11 feet 6 inches in diameter at their base. The remaining columns are 42 feet 6 inches in height, with a diameter of nearly 9 feet. The plan shows their general arrangement. Sir Gardiner Wilkinson states that the lintel of the doorway was formed of one solid block of stone, and measured 40 feet 10 inches in length,—a huge mass to be raised over 60 feet in height, and then placed in position. All the columns are richly carved and were decorated with colour, patches of which are still visible. The Grand Hall is rich in historical scenes sculptured on the enclosure walls; they principally relate to the victorious campaigns of Sethi I., and his son, Rameses the Great. Among them is an account of the latter king's war with the Khitas, and also the treaty of peace made with Khetasar, their king. They are confirmatory of the history related on the walls of the Memnonium.

There is a certain majesty about this building which can scarcely be described. The feeling that everything around, though beautiful, is yet colossal, creates a bewildering sense of the engineering skill that these artists in masonry possessed. The small size of the photograph conveys no adequate idea of the dimensions. To be appreciated, the Grand Hall of Karnak should be seen.