



HATSHEPSU AND THE TEMPLE OF DEIR EL BAHARI.¹


AFTER having completed the description of the temple, let us take a general view of it and dwell on a few historical facts concerning its construction, as well as some religious ideas which inspired the queen and her architect.

The name of Hatshepsu will always be associated with the temple situated in that part of the mountains of Thebes called the Assassif, at the end of the horse-shoe formed by the wall of sheer rocks whose majestic and wild aspect excites the admiration of all travellers. But Hatshepsu was not the first to choose this locality, and to build there her funeral temple. The kings of the XIth Dynasty were particularly fond of this place; it was originally called *Djesert*; after they made it their cemetery it was called *Khnast*. It was specially dedicated to Amon and Hathor. Many great persons belonging to that dynasty had been buried there in tombs more or less deeply cut in the rock.

One of the first kings of the dynasty (see ) Mentuhotep, had his tomb in that neighbourhood, in the shape of a pyramid placed on a basement. But the most important building was a funerary temple built in the south part of the amphitheatre, and standing against the rocks. This chapel was made on a natural rock platform, of which three sides had been cut back so as to give it a rectangular shape, and had been then faced with masonry, on which were sculptured the principal events of the king's life. At the top a triple row of columns surrounded a compact mass of masonry, on which perhaps stood an altar, or probably a pyramid.

King Mentuhotep had evidently been a great prince, with whom his successors liked to connect themselves. He reigned at least forty-six years; he made campaigns both in Nubia and in the peninsula of Sinai. He had as *ka* name , "he who joins the two lands," which seems to indicate that he perhaps reunited the two parts of Egypt which had been separated by disturbances or by anarchy, as Menes had done in the beginning. The XIIth Dynasty seems

also to have specially venerated this king. Useratesen III. placed in the king's temple a gallery of his own statues, six of which are still preserved; and the real head of the XVIIIth Dynasty, Amenophis I., also raised many statues of himself, in the pose and costume of the king celebrating the Sed festival, in the same place.

Hatshepsu could therefore not find a better spot on which to erect her temple, intended to eclipse in beauty and splendour all that had preceded it. Beside her building, Mentuhotep's chapel was to look small. She did not shrink from placing her erection over some tombs of the XIth Dynasty. We do not know to whom many of them belonged, their names not having been preserved; the inscriptions and part of the paintings of one only are still extant, showing it to be that of queen  *Neferu*. All the north side of the amphitheatre was free; Mentuhotep had not occupied even half of the space; so the building could spread itself against the rocks on the north side, as she placed it. In the rock was a cavern, no doubt the home of Hathor, the goddess of the mountain, the sacred cow of the West. A sanctuary would be made of it, where her emblems would be kept; and being the abode of the goddess, it was certainly there also that she nursed the young princess, the daughter of Amon. The divine cow herself suckled her with her milk, as Isis had fed Horus in the marshes of the north.

We note in the first place that Hatshepsu separates her "Memnonium" from her tomb. The temple stands in the desert, not far from the cultivated ground. The tomb, on the contrary, is in the desolate and wild valley called Biban el Molouk, where it has lately been found. This idea of not joining temple and tomb, and I mean by tomb the place where the dead body lies, seems to date as far back as the first dynasties, as is shown by the monuments found at Abydos, which I judge to be chapels only. That does not mean that the chapels were not burial places. On the contrary, all the great men in the kingdom, all the persons of high rank, wished to be buried in those temples where the king was not himself laid, but where he was worshipped. This we see clearly at Deir el Bahari, which

¹ This chapter is taken from the biography of the queen, which I have written for Mr. Davis's book on the queen's tomb.