

your soul, and do you seek for their realization? Or have mere curiosity and the spirit of unrest driven you forth to wander? Come away to the Nile. Here are sunshines that are never clouded, and fragrant airs as gentle as a maiden's whisper; instead of northern gales that howl around you as if you were an old battlement. Here are nights all a-glow with stars, and a crescent moon, that seems bowing to you by courtesy, not bent double by rheumatism. You never hear the sound of your native tongue; and somehow men don't talk, and therefore don't think, so lightly when they have to translate their thoughts into a strange language. Here is the highest species of monastic retirement: you stand apart from the world; you see its inhabitants so widely differing from yourself in their appearance, their habits, their hopes, and their fears, that you are enabled to look upon man in the abstract and to study his phenomena without prejudice. As you recede from Europe further and further on, towards the silent regions of the Past, you live more and more in that Past; the river over which you glide—the desert, the forest, the very air you breathe—are calm; the temples, in their awful solitudes, the colossal statues, the tombs, with their guardian sphinxes, all are profoundly calm; and, at length even your island restlessness softens down, and merges into the universal peace around.

* * * * *

Cairo! for the present farewell. It was late when I issued from the gates, but it was impossible to be in a hurry on such an evening, and on such a spot. The distance between the modern metropolis and the river was once occupied by Babylon, and is now broken by many a mound and chasm—the distorted features of a city that died a violent death.

The metropolism of Egypt had an uneasy life of it. To say nothing of its youth at Thebes, it has wandered about Lower Egypt, as if it were a mere encampment. Under the name of Memphis, it remained for some time on the western bank of the river. It fled from Nebuchadnezzar to the opposite side under the "alias" of Babylon; paid a visit to Alexandria under the Ptolemies; and returned to Babylon, where it was besieged by Amrou. A dove built its nest in the tent of the Saracen general;