

AROUND THE WORLD

A Camel Trip to Petrified Forest—Vicissitudes of Sahara Traveling—The Sphinx as the Father of Terror—More Ancient than Chronology.

CAIRO, EGYPT, Feb. 20, 1903.

Thebes, where are your hundred gates, horsemen and cars mentioned by the poet? What caused you to lose your grasp upon a thousand states, which Homer suggests were once yours? Let the poet of the Greeks speak:

"Not all proud Thebes' unrivaled walls contain
The world's great empress on the Egyptian plain
That spreads her conquests o'er a thousand states,
And pours her heroes through a hundred gates,
Two hundred horsemen, and two hundred cars,
From each wide portal issuing to the wars."

The grandeur and splendor once evinced by proud, unrivaled Thebes, so entrancing to Homer that it indelibly freseed itself upon his mind, has flown and in its departure has left wreck, ruin, decay and almost total annihilation as vestiges of its former greatness.

"The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, saith: 'Behold, I will punish the multitude of No (Thebes) and their kings.'"
Jeremiah, 46: 25.

No (Thebes) shall be rent asunder."
Ezekiel 30: 16.

History follows as the narrator of prophecy fulfilled.

I shall leave Egypt, laden with an argosy of memories that shall afford food for thought until life's highest goal is reached, and I shall not consider the trouble and labor experienced if I am assured that I have taken a single step toward unlocking Egypt to any searcher for truth unacquainted with this historic land.

CAIRO, EGYPT, Feb. 21, 1903.

After scaling the great pyramid and finishing the trip through its interior, my Ohio friend and I secured camels at a charge of six shillings each for a long trip out in the Sahara desert to the petrified forest so called, but I would call it a petrified tree instead. Why dignify one tree or at most a half dozen trees with the name "forest?" I did not care so much for the petrification so apparent away out in the desert as for the trip itself. I had often wondered how it would be to ride a long legged, crooked necked camel over the scorching Sahara sands as a Bedouin, and if I ever had enough of any one thing in my life it was that riding. If I had consulted my own feelings I would have preferred to walk and carry the camel and probably would if I had been strong enough, but since I was out for experience I decided to ride the entire journey or die in the attempt, even if every bone in my anatomy ached under the influence of ten thousand movements in seventeen directions at one and the same time. The dargoman, who went along to show us the whereabouts of this so-called primeval forest, rode a donkey. My friend and I, who were surprised to meet each other out on a desert wild, were permitted to ride the donkey occasionally over a short stretch of the journey alternately while our bones were in the formal act of seeking their former rendezvous and resetting themselves. My camel was named Rameses and if he was not in the ark, I rest assured that his ancestors were, his age being very much in evidence though he could rise from the turtle posture almost as quickly as the up-spring of a rabbit, thereby requiring a person to be very active or the lantern-jawed desert traveler would be off without his passenger. Of course we were wise enough to take our lunch along as those desert wastes produce nothing, in short it would be difficult out there to develop sufficient energy to raise a respectable disturbance.

A visit to old Cairo is not without interest, but old Cairo is a reproduction of the old cities of India. He who would see only the native quarters of old Indian cities might stop off here and save a few thousand miles of his journey.

Cairo's mosques are built on a small scale compared with those of India. Those of India are more beautiful, more costly and much larger, the finest one here being at the Citadel, built by Mohammedi Ali in 1829 and patterned after those at Constantinople, so I am told. The mosques of Cairo are the leading sights of the city. The Coptic church in old Cairo is interesting because it is the traditional site where the Virgin took refuge, for a while at least, when the innocent children were being massacred at Bethlehem. The crypt of the church, containing the identical spot, is 2,900 years old, the spot occupied by the sacred ones being marked with a cross. The citadel is much sought by visitors

because of its high commanding position affording a splendid view of the city and also because 450 Memlooks were slain here; only one, Emin Bey, escaped by leaping his horse from the towering battlement, crushing his horse but saving himself.

Among the objects of interest in and about Cairo which I shall not take the space to describe are: The Ezbekieh gardens in the center of Cairo. The bazaars on Mousky street. The university. Hundreds of mosques. The tombs of the Khalifs and Memlooks. The great aqueduct in old Cairo. Rhoda island, reached by train, where the Nilometer is located, and Moses' tree, where Moses is supposed to have been found in the rushes along the Nile. The museum, where are exhibited the mummies, sarcophagus, gods, and relics of ancient Egyptians. It is opened daily except Mondays, an admission fee of 5 piasters being charged at present. It contains probably the finest collection of Egyptian antiquities extant, the building itself having cost \$1,000,000 according to one authority, and \$5,000,000 according to another. The ostrich farm near Heliopolis contains about 800 birds, and is a favorite mecca for the ladies.

Next to the pyramids the Sphinx attracts the attention of every traveler. It is the most lonesome bachelor-like object you ever saw. All alone, it sits about 500 yards from the great pyramid. It is called by the Arabs "the father of terror or immensity." It is supposed to be older than the oldest pyramid, and is carved from the adamantine rock. Its paws are 50 feet in length, its total length is given as 140 feet, but those feet seem short when the Sphinx is compared with the pyramids. Some idea of the size of this fellow may be gathered when you imagine him to be 30 feet from brow to chin and 14 feet across the brow. A stone discovered by Mariette Bey, now in the museum at Cairo, contains the proof that the Sphinx antedates the pyramids. Speaking of the Sphinx, Kinglake said: "Laugh and mock if you will at the worship of stone idols, but mark ye this, ye breakers of images, that in one regard the stone idol bears awful semblance of deity—unchangeableness in the midst of change—the same will and intent, for ever and ever inexorable. Upon ancient dynasties of Ethiopian and Egyptian kings, upon Greek and Roman, upon Arab and Ottoman conquerors; upon Napoleon, dreaming of an eastern empire; upon battle and pestilence; upon the ceaseless misery of the Egyptian race; upon keen-eyed travelers, upon Herodotus yesterday and Warburton today, upon all and more this unworldly Sphinx has watched like a providence, with the same earnest eyes and the same tranquil mien; and we shall die and Islam (Mohammedanism) shall wither away, and still that sleepless rock will be watching and watching the works of a new busy race with those same sad earnest eyes, and the same tranquil mien everlasting. You dare not mock at the Sphinx."

I was not impressed so much with the Sphinx. To me it is not so inspiring as Mr. Kinglake suggests nor is it commanding for it sits in a depression. While the earth's crust was forming a colossal boulder or rather a stupendous stratified rock was upheaved. The ancients chose it as an object out of which to sculpture for themselves an unusually large god. So to my mind the Sphinx is easily accounted for, but the great pyramid staggers the mind in every attempt to account for it. The other pyramids which stretch out across the desert like huge haystacks are smaller than the one considered, so I will not devote space to them.

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