The Treasury of Ancient Egypt

Arthur E. P. Brome Weigall

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PART I
CHAPTER I.
CHAPTER II.
CHAPTER III.
PART II.
CHAPTER IV.
CHAPTER V.
CHAPTER VI.
PART III.
CHAPTER VII.
CHAPTER VIII.
CHAPTER IX.
PART IV.
CHAPTER X.
CHAPTER XI.
CHAPTER XII.
Copyright

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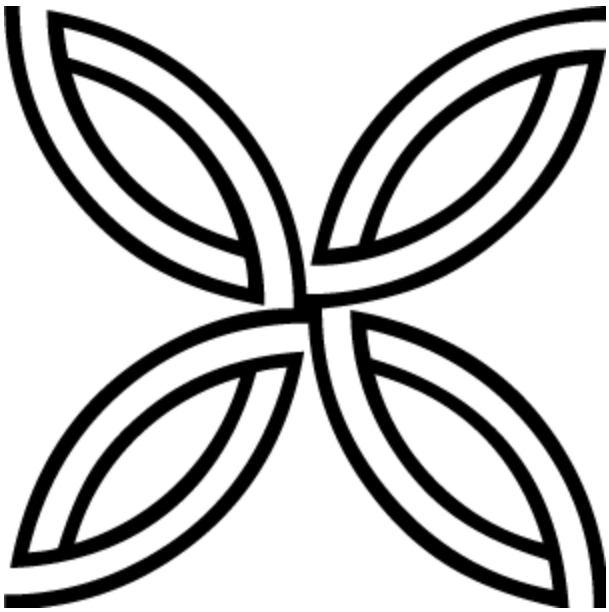


PART I

THE VALUE OF THE TREASURY.
"History no longer shall be a dull book. It shall walk incarnate in every just and wise man. You shall not tell me by languages and titles a catalogue of the volumes you have read. You shall make me feel what periods you have lived. A man shall be the Temple of Fame. He shall walk, as the poets have described that goddess, in a robe painted all over with wonderful events and experiences.... He shall be the priest of Pan, and bring with him into humble cottages the blessing of the morning stars, and all the recorded benefits of heaven and earth."

Emerson.

CHAPTER I.

THE VALUE OF ARCHÆOLOGY.

The archæologist whose business it is to bring to light by pick and spade the relics of bygone ages, is often accused of devoting his energies to work which is of no material profit to mankind at the present day. Archæology is an unapplied science, and, apart from its connection with what is called culture, the critic is inclined to judge it as a pleasant and worthless amusement. There is nothing, the critic tells us, of pertinent value to be learned from the Past which will be of use to the ordinary person of the present time; and, though the archæologist can offer acceptable information to the painter, to the theologian, to the philologist, and indeed to most of the followers of the arts and sciences, he has nothing to give to the ordinary layman.

In some directions the imputation is unanswerable; and when the interests of modern times clash with those of the past, as, for example, in Egypt where a beneficial reservoir has destroyed the remains of early days, there can be no question that the recording of the threatened information and the minimising of the destruction, is all that the value of the archæologist's work entitles him to ask for. The critic, however, usually overlooks some of the chief reasons that archæology can give for even this much consideration, reasons which constitute its modern usefulness; and I therefore propose to point out to him three or four of the many claims which it may make upon the attention of the layman.

In the first place it is necessary to define the meaning of the term "Archæology." Archæology is the study of the facts of ancient history and ancient lore. The word is applied to the study of all ancient documents and objects which may be classed as antiquities; and the archæologist is understood to be the man who deals with a period for which the evidence has to be excavated or otherwise discovered. The age at which an object becomes an antiquity, however, is quite undefined, though practically it may be reckoned at a hundred years; and ancient history is, after all, the tale of any period which is not modern. Thus an archæologist does not necessarily deal solely with the remote ages.

Every chronicler of the events of the less recent times who goes to the original documents for his facts, as true historians must do during at least a part of their studies, is an archæologist; and, conversely, every archæologist who in the course of his work states a series of historical facts, becomes an historian. Archæology and history are inseparable; and nothing is more detrimental to a noble science than the attitude of certain so-called archæologists who devote their entire time to the study of a sequence of objects without proper consideration for the history which those objects reveal. Antiquities are the relics of human mental energy; and they can no more be classified without reference to the minds which produced them than geological specimens can be discussed without regard to the earth. There is only one thing worse than the attitude of the archæologist who does not study the story of the periods with which he is dealing, or construct, if only in his thoughts, living history out of the objects discovered by him; and that is the attitude of the historian who has not familiarised himself with the actual relics left by the people of whom he writes, or has not, when possible, visited their lands. There are many "archæologists" who do not care a snap of the fingers for history, surprising as this may

appear; and there are many historians who take no interest in manners and customs. The influence of either is pernicious.

It is to be understood, therefore, that in using the word Archæology I include History: I refer to history supplemented and aggrandised by the study of the arts, crafts, manners, and customs of the period under consideration.

As a first argument the value of archæology in providing a precedent for important occurrences may be considered. Archæology is the structure of ancient history, and it is the voice of history which tells us that a Cretan is always a Cretan, and a Jew always a Jew. History, then, may well take her place as a definite asset of statecraft, and the law of Precedent may be regarded as a fundamental factor in international politics. What has happened before may happen again; and it is the hand of the archæologist that directs our attention to the affairs and circumstances of olden times, and warns us of the possibilities of their recurrence. It may be said that the statesman who has ranged in the front of his mind the proven characteristics of the people with whom he is dealing has a perquisite of the utmost importance.

Any archæologist who, previous to the rise of Japan during the latter half of the nineteenth century, had made a close study of the history of that country and the character of its people, might well have predicted unerringly its future advance to the position of a first-class power. The amazing faculty of imitation displayed by the Japanese in old times was patent to him. He had seen them borrow part of their arts, their sciences, their crafts, their literature, their religion, and many of their customs from the Chinese; and he might have been aware that they would likewise borrow from the West, as soon as they had intercourse with it, those essentials of civilisation which would raise them to their present position in the world. To him their

fearlessness, their tenacity, and their patriotism, were known; and he was so well aware of their powers of organisation, that he might have foreseen the rapid development which was to take place.

What historian who has read the ancient books of the Irish —the Book of the Dun Cow, the Book of Ballymote, the Book of Lismore, and the like—can show either surprise or dismay at the events which have occurred in Ireland in modern times? Of the hundreds of kings of Ireland whose histories are epitomised in such works as that of the old archæologist Keating, it would be possible to count upon the fingers those who have died in peace; and the archæologist, thus, knows better than to expect the descendants of these kings to live in harmony one with the other. National characteristics do not change unless, as in the case of the Greeks, the stock also changes.

In the Jews we have another example of the persistence of those national characteristics which history has made known to us. The Jews first appear in the dimness of the remote past as a group of nomad tribes, wandering over southern Palestine, Egypt, and the intervening deserts; and at the present day we see them still homeless, scattered over the face of the globe, the "tribe of the wandering foot and weary breast."

In no country has the archæologist been more active than in Egypt during the last half century, and the contributions which his spade and pick have offered to history are of first-rate importance to that study as a whole. The eye may now travel down the history of the Nile Valley from prehistoric days to the present time almost without interruption; and now that the anthropologist has shown that the modern Egyptians, Mussulman and Copt, peasant and townsman, belong to one and the same race of ancient Egyptians, one may surely judge to-day's inhabitants of the country in the light of yesterday's records. In his report for the year 1906, Lord Cromer, questioning whether the

modern inhabitants of the country were capable of governing their own land, tells us that we must go back to the precedent of Pharaonic days to discover if the Egyptians ever ruled themselves successfully.

In this pregnant remark Lord Cromer was using information which the archæologist and historian had made accessible to him. Looking back over the history of the country, he was enabled, by the study of this information, to range before him the succession of foreign occupations of the Nile Valley and to assess their significance. It may be worth while to repeat the process, in order to give an example of the bearing of history upon modern polemics, though I propose to discuss this matter more fully in another chapter.

Previous to the British occupation the country was ruled, as it is now, by a noble dynasty of Albanian princes, whose founder was set upon the throne by the aid of Turkish and Albanian troops. From the beginning of the sixteenth century until that time Egypt had been ruled by the Ottoman Government, the Turk having replaced the Circassian and other foreign "Mamlukes" who had held the country by the aid of foreign troops since the middle of the thirteenth century. For a hundred years previous to the Mamluke rule Egypt had been in the hands of the Syrian and Arabian dynasty founded by Saladdin. The Fatimides, a North African dynasty, governed the country before the advent of Saladdin, this family having entered Egypt under their general, Jauhar, who was of Greek origin. In the ninth century Ahmed ibn Tulun, a Turk, governed the land with the aid of a foreign garrison, his rule being succeeded by the Ikhshidi dynasty of foreigners. Ahmed had captured Egypt from the Byzantines who had held it since the days of the Roman occupation. Previous to the Romans the Ptolemies, a Greek family, had governed the Nile Valley with the help of foreign troops. The Ptolemies had followed close upon the Greek occupation, the Greeks having

replaced the Persians as rulers of Egypt. The Persian occupation had been preceded by an Egyptian dynasty which had been kept on the throne by Greek and other foreign garrisons. Previous to this there had been a Persian occupation, which had followed a short period of native rule under foreign influence. We then come back to the Assyrian conquest which had followed the Ethiopian rule. Libyan kings had held the country before the Ethiopian conquest. The XXIst and XXth Dynasties preceded the Libyans, and here, in a disgraceful period of corrupt government, a series of so-called native kings are met with. Foreigners, however, swarmed in the country at the time, foreign troops were constantly used, and the Pharaohs themselves were of semi-foreign origin. One now comes back to the early XIXth and XVIIIth Dynasties which, although largely tinged with foreign blood, may be said to have been Egyptian families. Before the rise of the XVIIIth Dynasty the country was in foreign hands for the long period which had followed the fall of the XIIth Dynasty, the classical period of Egyptian history (about the twentieth century B.C.), when there were no rivals to be feared. Thus the Egyptians may be said to have been subject to foreign occupation for nearly four thousand years, with the exception of the strong native rule of the XVIIIth Dynasty, the semi-native rule of the three succeeding dynasties, and a few brief periods of chaotic government in later times; and this is the information which the archæologist has to give to the statesman and politician. It is a story of continual conquest, of foreign occupations following one upon another, of revolts and massacres, of rapid retributions and punishments. It is the story of a nation which, however ably it may govern itself in the future, has only once in four thousand years successfully done so in the past.

The mummy of Rameses II. of Dynasty XIX.—Cairo Museum.

Such information is of far-reaching value to the politician, and to those interested, as every Englishman should be, in Imperial politics. A nation cannot alter by one jot or tittle its fundamental characteristics; and only those who have studied those characteristics in the pages of history are competent to foresee the future. A certain Englishman once asked the Khedive Ismail whether there was any news that day about Egyptian affairs. "That is so like all you English," replied his Highness. "You are always expecting something new to happen in Egypt day by day. To-day is here the same as yesterday, and to-morrow will be the same as to-day; and so it has been, and so it will be, for thousands of years." [1]Neither Egypt nor any other nation will ever change; and to this it is the archæologist who will bear witness with his

stern law of Precedent.

[1] E. Dicey. 'The Story of the Khedivate,' p. 528.

I will reserve the enlarging of this subject for the next chapter: for the present we may consider, as a second argument, the efficacy of the past as a tonic to the present, and its ability to restore the vitality of any age that is weakened.

In ancient Egypt at the beginning of the XXVIth Dynasty (B.C. 663) the country was at a very low ebb. Devastated by conquests, its people humiliated, its government impoverished, a general collapse of the nation was imminent. At this critical period the Egyptians turned their minds to the glorious days of old. They remodelled their arts and crafts upon those of the classical periods, introduced again the obsolete offices and titles of those early times, and organised the government upon the old lines. This movement saved the country, and averted its collapse for a few more centuries. It renewed the pride of workmanship in a decadent people; and on all sides we see a revival which was the direct result of an archæological experiment.

The importance of archæology as a reviver of artistic and industrial culture will be realised at once if the essential part it played in the great Italian Renaissance is called to mind. Previous to the age of Cimabue and Giotto in Florence, Italian refinement had passed steadily down the path of deterioration. Græco-Roman art, which still at a high level in the early centuries of the Christian era, entirely lost its originality during Byzantine times, and the dark ages settled down upon Italy in almost every walk of life. The Venetians, for example, were satisfied with comparatively the poorest works of art imported from Constantinople or Mount Athos: and in Florence so great was the poverty of genius that when Cimabue in the thirteenth century painted that famous Madonna which to our eyes appears to be of the crudest workmanship, the

little advance made by it in the direction of naturalness was received by the city with acclamations, the very street down which it was carried being called the "Happy Street" in honour of the event. Giotto carried on his master's teachings, and a few years later the Florentines had advanced to the standard of Fra Angelico, who was immediately followed by the two Lippis and Botticelli. Leonardo da Vinci, artist, architect, and engineer, was almost contemporaneous with Botticelli, being born not much more than a hundred years after the death of Giotto. With him art reached a level which it has never surpassed, old traditions and old canons were revived, and in every direction culture proceeded again to those heights from which it had fallen.

The reader will not need to be reminded that this great renaissance was the direct result of the study of the remains of the ancient arts of Greece and Rome. Botticelli and his contemporaries were, in a sense, archæologists, for their work was inspired by the relics of ancient days.

Now, though at first sight it seems incredible that such an age of barbarism as that of the later Byzantine period should return, it is indeed quite possible that a relatively uncultured age should come upon us in the future; and there is every likelihood of certain communities passing over to the ranks of the absolute Philistines. Socialism run mad would have no more time to give to the intellect than it had during the French Revolution. Any form of violent social upheaval means catalepsy of the arts and crafts, and a trampling under foot of old traditions. The invasions and revolts which are met with at the close of ancient Egyptian history brought the culture of that country to the lowest ebb of vitality. The fall of Greece put an absolute stop to the artistic life of that nation. The invasions of Italy by the inhabitants of less refined countries caused a set-back in civilisation for which almost the whole of Europe suffered. Certain of the French arts and crafts have never recovered

from the effects of the Revolution.

A national convulsion of one kind or another is to be expected by every country; and history tells us that such a convulsion is generally followed by an age of industrial and artistic coma, which is brought to an end not so much by the introduction of foreign ideas as by a renascence of the early traditions of the nation. It thus behoves every man to interest himself in the continuity of these traditions, and to see that they are so impressed upon the mind that they shall survive all upheavals, or with ease be re-established. There is no better tonic for a people who have weakened, and whose arts, crafts, and industries have deteriorated than a return to the conditions which obtained at a past age of national prosperity; and there are few more repaying tasks in the long-run than that of reviving an interest in the best periods of artistic or industrial activity. This can only be effected by the study of the past, that is to say by archæology.

It is to be remembered, of course, that the sentimental interest in antique objects which, in recent years, has given a huge value to all ancient things, regardless of their intrinsic worth, is a dangerous attitude, unless it is backed by the most expert knowledge; for instead of directing the attention only to the best work of the best periods, it results in the diminishing of the output of modern original work and the setting of little of worth in its place. A person of a certain fashionable set will now boast that there is no object in his room less than two hundred years old: his only boast, however, should be that the room contains nothing which is not of intrinsic beauty, interest, or good workmanship. The old chairs from the kitchen are dragged into the drawing-room—because they are old; miniatures unmeritoriously painted by unknown artists for obscure clients are nailed in conspicuous places—because they are old; hideous plates and dishes, originally made by ignorant workmen for impoverished peasants, are enclosed in glass

cases—because they are old; iron-bound chests, which had been cheaply made to suit the purses of farmers, are rescued from the cottages of their descendants and sold for fabulous sums—because they are old.

A person who fills a drawing-room with chairs, tables, and ornaments, dating from the reign of Queen Anne, cannot say that he does so because he wishes it to look like a room of that date; for if this were his desire, he would have to furnish it with objects which appeared to be newly made, since in the days of Queen Anne the first quality noticeable in them would have been their newness. In fact, to produce the desired effect everything in the room, with very few exceptions, would have to be a replica. To sit in this room full of antiques in a frock-coat would be as bad a breach of good taste as the placing of a Victorian chandelier in an Elizabethan banqueting-hall. To furnish the room with genuine antiquities because they are old and therefore interesting would be to carry the museum spirit into daily life with its attending responsibilities, and would involve all manner of incongruities and inconsistencies; while to furnish in this manner because antiques were valuable would be merely vulgar. There are, thus, only three justifications that I can see for the action of the man who surrounds himself with antiquities: he must do so because they are examples of workmanship, because they are beautiful, or because they are endeared to him by family usage. These, of course, are full and complete justifications; and the value of his attitude should be felt in the impetus which it gives to conscientious modern work. There are periods in history at which certain arts, crafts, or industries reached an extremely high level of excellence; and nothing can be more valuable to modern workmen than familiarity with these periods. Well-made replicas have a value that is overlooked only by the inartistic. Nor must it be forgotten that modern objects of modern design will one day become antiquities; and it should be our desire to

assist in the making of the period of our lifetime an age to which future generations will look back for guidance and teaching. Every man can, in this manner, be of use to a nation, if only by learning to reject poor work wherever he comes upon it—work which he feels would not stand against the criticism of Time; and thus it may be said that archæology, which directs him to the best works of the ancients, and sets him a standard and criterion, should be an essential part of his education.

Wood and enamel jewel-case discovered in the tomb of Yuaa and Tuau. An example of the furniture of one of the best periods of ancient Egyptian art.—Cairo Museum.

The third argument which I wish to employ here to demonstrate the value of the study of archæology and history to the layman is based upon the assumption that patriotism is a desirable ingredient in a man's character. This is a premise which assuredly will be admitted. True patriotism is essential to the maintenance of a nation. It has taken the place, among certain people, of loyalty to the sovereign; for the armies which used to go to war out of a blind loyalty to their king, now do so from a sense of patriotism which is shared by the monarch (if they happen to have the good fortune to possess one).

Patriotism is often believed to consist of a love of one's country, in an affection for the familiar villages or cities, fields or streets, of one's own dwelling-place. This is a grievous error. Patriotism should be an unqualified desire for the welfare of the race as a whole. It is not really patriotic for the Englishman to say, "I love England": it is only natural. It is not patriotic for him to say, "I don't think much of foreigners": it is only a form of narrowness of mind which, in the case of England and certain other countries, happens sometimes to be rather a useful attitude, but in the case of several nations, of which a good example is Egypt, would be detrimental to their own interests. It was not unqualified patriotism that induced the Greeks to throw off the Ottoman yoke: it was largely dislike of the Turks. It is not patriotism, that is to say undiluted concern for the nation as a whole, which leads some of the modern Egyptians to prefer an entirely native government to the Anglo-Egyptian administration now obtaining in that country: it is restlessness; and I am fortunately able to define it thus without the necessity of entering the arena of polemics by an opinion as to whether that restlessness is justified or not justified.

If patriotism were but the love of one's tribe and one's dwelling-place, then such undeveloped or fallen races as,

for example, the American Indians, could lay their downfall at the door of that sentiment; since the exclusive love of the tribe prevented the small bodies from amalgamating into one great nation for the opposing of the invader. If patriotism were but the desire for government without interference, then the breaking up of the world's empires would be urged, and such federations as the United States of America would be intolerable.

Patriotism is, and must be, the desire for the progress and welfare of the whole nation, without any regard whatsoever to the conditions under which that progress takes place, and without any prejudice in favour either of self-government or of outside control. I have no hesitation in saying that the patriotic Pole is he who is in favour of Russian or German control of his country's affairs; for history has told him quite plainly that he cannot manage them himself. The Nationalist in any country runs the risk of being the poorest patriot in the land, for his continuous cry is for self-government, without any regard to the question as to whether such government will be beneficial to his nation in the long-run.

The value of history to patriotism, then, is to be assessed under two headings. In the first place, history defines the attitude which the patriot should assume. It tells him, in the clear light of experience, what is, and what is not, good for his nation, and indicates to him how much he may claim for his country. And in the second place, it gives to the patriots of those nations which have shown capacity and ability in the past a confidence in the present; it permits in them the indulgence of that enthusiasm which will carry them, sure-footed, along the path of glory.

Archæology, as the discovery and classification of the facts of history, is the means by which we may obtain a true knowledge of what has happened in the past. It is the instrument with which we may dissect legend, and extract from myth its ingredients of fact. Cold history tells the

Greek patriot, eager to enter the fray, that he must set little store by the precedent of the deeds of the Trojan war. It tells the English patriot that the "one jolly Englishman" of the old rhyme is not the easy vanquisher of the "two froggy Frenchmen and one Portugee" which tradition would have him believe. He is thus enabled to steer a middle course between arrant conceit and childish fright. History tells him the actual facts: history is to the patriot what "form" is to the racing man.

In the case of the English (Heaven be praised!) history opens up a boundless vista for the patriotic. The Englishman seldom realises how much he has to be proud of in his history, or how loudly the past cries upon him to be of good cheer. One hears much nowadays of England's peril, and it is good that the red signals of danger should sometimes be displayed. But let every Englishman remember that history can tell him of greater perils faced successfully; of mighty armies commanded by the greatest generals the world has ever known, held in check year after year, and finally crushed by England; of vast fleets scattered or destroyed by English sailors; of almost impregnable cities captured by British troops. "There is something very characteristic," writes Professor Seeley, [1]"in the indifference which we show towards the mighty phenomenon of the diffusion of our race and the expansion of our state. We seem, as it were, to have conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind."

[1] 'The Expansion of England,' p. 10.

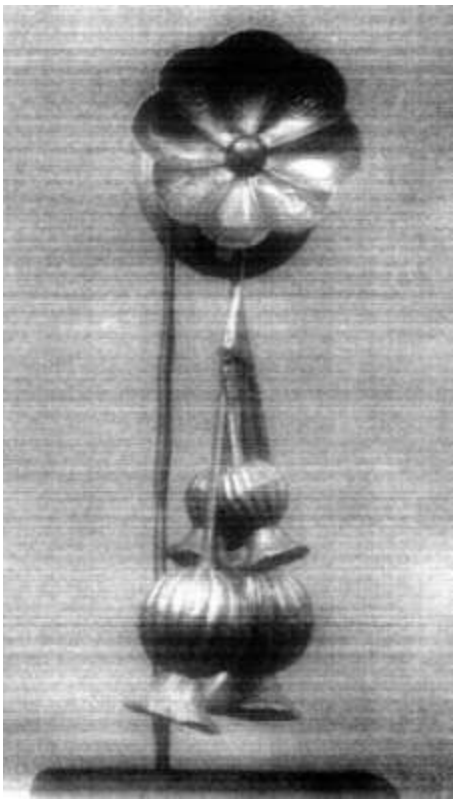
The history of England, and later of the British Empire, constitutes a tale so amazing that he who has the welfare of the nation as a whole at heart—that is to say, the true patriot—is justified in entertaining the most optimistic

thoughts for the future. He should not be indifferent to the past: he should bear it in mind all the time. Patriotism may not often be otherwise than misguided if no study of history has been made. The patriot of one nation will wish to procure for his country a freedom which history would show him to have been its very curse; and the patriot of another nation will encourage a nervousness and restraint in his people which history would tell him was unnecessary. The English patriot has a history to read which, at the present time, it is especially needful for him to consider; and, since Egyptology is my particular province, I cannot better close this argument than by reminding the modern Egyptians that their own history of four thousand years and its teaching must be considered by them when they speak of patriotism. A nation so talented as the descendants of the Pharaohs, so industrious, so smart and clever, should give a far larger part of its attention to the arts, crafts, and industries, of which Egyptian archæology has to tell so splendid a story.

As a final argument for the value of the study of history and archæology an aspect of the question may be placed before the reader which will perhaps be regarded as fanciful, but which, in all sincerity, I believe to be sober sense.

In this life of ours which, under modern conditions, is lived at so great a speed, there is a growing need for a periodical pause wherein the mind may adjust the relationship of the things that have been to those that are. So rapidly are our impressions received and assimilated, so individually are they shaped or classified, that, in whatever direction our brains lead us, we are speedily carried beyond that province of thought which is common to us all. A man who lives alone finds himself, in a few months, out of touch with the thought of his contemporaries; and, similarly, a man who lives in what is called an up-to-date manner soon finds himself grown unsympathetic to the sober movement of the world's slow round-about.

Now, the man who lives alone presently developes some of the recognised eccentricities of the recluse, which, on his return to society, cause him to be regarded as a maniac; and the man who lives entirely in the present cannot argue that the characteristics which he has developed are less maniacal because they are shared by his associates. Rapidly he, too, has become eccentric; and just as the solitary man must needs come into the company of his fellows if he would retain a healthy mind, so the man who lives in the present must allow himself occasional intercourse with the past if he would keep his balance.



Heavy gold earrings of Queen Tausert of Dynasty XX. An example of the work of ancient Egyptian goldsmiths.—Cairo Museum.

Heraclitus, in a quotation preserved by Sextus Empiricus, [1]writes: "It behoves us to follow the common reason of the world; yet, though there is a common reason in the world, the majority live as though they possessed a wisdom peculiar each unto himself alone." Every one of us who considers his mentality an important part of his constitution should endeavour to give himself ample

opportunities of adjusting his mind to this "common reason" which is the silver thread that runs unbroken throughout history. We should remember the yesterdays, that we may know what the pother of to-day is about; and we should foretell to-morrow not by to-day but by every day that has been.

[1] Bywater: 'Heracliti Ephesii Reliquiæ,' p. 38.

Forgetfulness is so common a human failing. In our rapid transit through life we are so inclined to forget the past stages of the journey. All things pass by and are swallowed up in a moment of time. Experiences crowd upon us; the events of our life occur, are recorded by our busy brains, are digested, and are forgotten before the substance of which they were made has resolved into its elements. We race through the years, and our progress is headlong through the days.

Everything, as it is done with, is swept up into the basket of the past, and the busy handmaids, unless we check them, toss the contents, good and bad, on to the great rubbish heap of the world's waste. Loves, hates, gains, losses, all things upon which we do not lay fierce and strong hands, are gathered into nothingness, and, with a few exceptions, are utterly forgotten.

And we, too, will soon have passed, and our little brains which have forgotten so much will be forgotten. We shall be throttled out of the world and pressed by the clumsy hands of Death into the mould of that same rubbish-hill of oblivion, unless there be a stronger hand to save us. We shall be cast aside, and left behind by the hurrying crowd, unless there be those who will see to it that our soul, like that of John Brown, goes marching along. There is only one human force stronger than death, and that force is History, By it the dead are made to live again: history is the salvation of the mortal man as religion is the salvation of his immortal life.

Sometimes, then, in our race from day to day it is

necessary to stop the headlong progress of experience, and, for an hour, to look back upon the past. Often, before we remember to direct our mind to it, that past is already blurred, and dim. The picture is out of focus, and turning from it in sorrow instantly the flight of our time begins again. This should not be. "There is," says Emerson, "a relationship between the hours of our life and the centuries of time." Let us give history and archæology its due attention; for thus not only shall we be rendering a service to all the dead, not only shall we be giving a reason and a usefulness to their lives, but we shall also lend to our own thought a balance which in no otherwise can be obtained, we shall adjust ourselves to the true movement of the world, and, above all, we shall learn how best to serve that nation to which it is our inestimable privilege to belong.

CHAPTER II.

THE EGYPTIAN EMPIRE.

"History," says Sir J. Seeley, "lies before science as a mass of materials out of which a political doctrine can be deduced.... Politics are vulgar when they are not liberalised by history, and history fades into mere literature when it loses sight of its relation to practical politics.... Politics and history are only different aspects of the same study." [1]

[1] 'The Expansion of England.'

These words, spoken by a great historian, form the keynote of a book which has run into nearly twenty editions; and they may therefore be regarded as having some weight. Yet what historian of old Egyptian affairs concerns himself with the present welfare and future prospects of the country, or how many statesmen in Egypt give close attention to a study of the past? To the former the Egypt of modern times offers no scope for his erudition, and gives him no opportunity of making "discoveries," which is all he cares about. To the latter, Egyptology appears to be but a pleasant amusement, the main value of which is the finding of pretty scarabs suitable for the necklaces of one's lady friends. Neither the one nor the other would for a moment admit that Egyptology and Egyptian politics "are only different aspects of the same study." And yet there can be no doubt that they are.

It will be argued that the historian of ancient Egypt deals with a period so extremely remote that it can have no bearing upon the conditions of modern times, when the inhabitants of Egypt have altered their language, religion,

and customs, and the Mediterranean has ceased to be the active centre of the civilised world. But it is to be remembered that the study of Egyptology carries one down to the Muhammedan invasion without much straining of the term, and merges then into the study of the Arabic period at so many points that no real termination can be given to the science; while the fact of the remoteness of its beginnings but serves to give it a greater value, since the vista before the eyes is wider.

It is my object in this chapter to show that the ancient history of Egypt has a real bearing on certain aspects of the polemics of the country. I need not again touch upon the matters which were referred to on page 8 in order to demonstrate this fact. I will take but one subject—namely, that of Egypt's foreign relations and her wars in other lands. It will be best, for this purpose, to show first of all that the ancient and modern Egyptians are one and the same people; and, secondly, that the political conditions, broadly speaking, are much the same now as they have been throughout history.

Professor Elliot Smith, F.R.S., has shown clearly enough, from the study of bones of all ages, that the ancient and modern inhabitants of the Nile Valley are precisely the same people anthropologically; and this fact at once sets the matter upon an unique footing: for, with the possible exception of China, there is no nation in the world which can be proved thus to have retained its type for so long a period. This one fact makes any parallel with Greece or Rome impossible. The modern Greeks have not much in common, anthropologically, with the ancient Greeks, for the blood has become very mixed; the Italians are not the same as the old Romans; the English are the result of a comparatively recent conglomeration of types. But in Egypt the subjects of archaic Pharaohs, it seems certain, were exactly similar to those of the modern Khedives, and new blood has never been introduced into the nation to an