

ARTICLE VIII.  
NOTES ON EGYPTOLOGY.

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THE war between Germany and France has left an ineffaceable mark even upon the literature of archaeology. In September 1870 the *Revue Archéologique* came to a sudden pause, and the Number for that month was not distributed to subscribers until the close of 1871. When finally delivered it brought with it the announcement that the two years, 1870-1871, would be merged into one, and the Numbers for October, November, and December 1871 would fill out the subscription lists for the year preceding. Happily the leading contributors to the *Revue* have survived the calamities of the siege of Paris, and Mons. F. Lenormant continues his Memoir upon the Ethiopian Epoch in Egyptian History, and Mons. Jacques de Rougé completes his analysis of the Geographical Inscriptions of the Temple of Edfou. Lenormant's essay has relations to Biblical history and chronology, the definitive results of which will in due time be laid before the readers of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*.

Among the tablets brought by Mariette from Djebel Barkal in Ethiopia, and now deposited in the Museum at Boulak, is one containing a decree of excommunication from the king against certain evil and heretical priests who had profaned the temple and corrupted the sacrifices, the language of which reminds one of the imprecations of David and the denunciations of Jeremiah against the false prophets. Not content with forbidding these prophets and priests of evil deeds to enter the temple, and denouncing against them the severest penalties, his majesty prays that God may utterly destroy them; that he may not suffer their feet to walk the earth, nor permit them to have a posterity still to pollute the temple with their errors and their crimes.<sup>1</sup> How like all this is to David's outbursts of holy indignation in Psalm lxxix: "Let their table become a snare before them, and their welfare a trap. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living. Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents." The Ethiopian decree belongs probably to the sixth or seventh century before our era, and well illustrates the style in which religion was vindicated by eastern monarchs. It is reproduced in the decree of Germany against the Jesuits.

The development of the arts in ancient Egypt and the influence of Egyptian art upon later nations are discussed by Dr. Lepsius in two essays read before the Berlin Academy of Science, and now published as inde-

<sup>1</sup> G. Maspero in *Revue Arch.*, Dec. 1871.

pendent monographs: "*Ueber einige aegyptische Kunstformen und ihre Entwicklung*"; and "*Die Metalle in den aegyptischen Inschriften*." In the last edition of his "*History of Architecture*" Mr. Fergusson gives it as the result of his studies in comparative architecture, that "the Greeks borrowed nearly every peculiarity of their arts from the banks of the Nile. We possess tangible evidence of peristylar temples and proto-Doric pillars, erected in Egypt centuries before the oldest known specimen in Greece. We need therefore hardly hesitate to award the palm of invention of these things to the Egyptians, as we should probably be forced to do of most of the arts and sciences of the Greeks if we had only knowledge sufficient to connect them. Taken altogether, we may perhaps safely assert that the Egyptians were the most essentially a building people of all those we are acquainted with, and the most generally successful in all they attempted in this way. The Greeks, it is true, surpassed them in refinement and beauty of detail, and in the class of sculpture with which they ornamented their buildings, while the Gothic architects far excelled them in constructive cleverness; but with these exceptions no other styles can be put in competition with them. At the same time, neither Grecian nor Gothic architects understood more perfectly all the gradations of art, and the exact character that should be given to every form and every detail. Whether it was the plain flat-sided pyramid, the crowded and massive hypostyle hall, the playful pavilion, or the luxurious dwelling — in all these the Egyptian understood perfectly both how to make the general design express exactly what he wanted, and to make every detail, and all the various materials, contribute to the general effect. They understood, also, better than any other nation, how to use sculpture in combination with architecture, and to make their colossi and avenues of sphinxes group themselves into parts of one great design, and at the same time to use historical paintings, fading by insensible degrees into hieroglyphics on the one hand, and into sculpture on the other; linking the whole together with the highest class of phonetic utterance. With the most brilliant coloring they thus harmonized all these arts into one great whole, unsurpassed by anything the world has seen during the thirty centuries of struggle and aspiration that have elapsed since the brilliant days of the great kingdom of the Pharaohs."<sup>1</sup>

These generalizations of Fergusson — in which he was partly anticipated by Julius Braun in his *Geschichte der Kunst*<sup>2</sup> — are borne out by the details which Dr. Lepsius has given of the development of Art-forms in Egypt, and the influence of these upon the growth of art in Greece. The artistic feeling in ancient Egyptian works shows itself, in the first instance, in the adaptation of material to conditions and ends. The country and its surroundings furnished varieties of stone, clay, wood, metals, precious stones, available for the purposes of art; and in their buildings, their

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. pp. 114, 125, 126.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. i. pp. 137-139 (ed. 1856).

monuments, their decorations, the Egyptians exhibit a nice sense of the relative uses and values of these crude materials — limestone, sandstone, syenite, granite, alabaster, serpentine, porphyry, each being employed in its turn according to the demands of strength, durability, or luxury. For purposes of luxury also the precious metals and precious stones were used, as appears not only from the mention of these in inscriptions, but from specimens to be seen in the collections of the Louvre, the Berlin, and the British Museums. Gold (*Nub*), Silver (*Hat*), Electrum (*Asem*), Lapis-lazuli (*Xesbet*), Emerald (*Mafek*), Ruby (*Xenem*), Turquoise (*Nesem*), Topaz (*Tehen*), often occur in the inscriptions, and the processes of working in them are delineated in pictures. Iron, copper, and lead are named, but no hieroglyphic equivalents have been ascertained for tin, though mirrors and other articles of bronze are found to contain as high as fourteen per cent of this metal. Neither is there any mention of zinc in the hieroglyphics. Gold and silver appear in the form of coins, rings, dishes, plates, vessels of divers shapes, and are pictured also in the lump and in large masses, ready for the artificer. Electrum, a compound of gold and silver, was used for coins and rings. The lapis-lazuli was imitated in glass, in various shades of blue; as were also the emerald, malachite, and other greens. Brilliancy of effect, which their climate favored, was studied by the Egyptians in their decorative arts, through variety and combination of colors.

In the next place, even the rigid conventionalism which presides over all the monuments of ancient Egypt, had its origin in a feeling kindred to that of the modern pre-Raphaelite school in painting — the desire to copy nature servilely in the minutest details without idealizing or harmonizing for general effect; — each particular member of the human body, for instance, being drawn independently of its relations to other members, the head in profile, the hand with its five fingers always visible, the two shoulders made to appear even when the legs were drawn in profile. But these peculiarities were transmitted to the earlier forms of Greek art, and may still be seen in coins, vases, and bas-reliefs prior to the free and graceful handling of the human figure as a whole in sculpture. And moreover somewhat of the same conventionalism holds its place in modern art, and justifies itself upon artistic grounds, as in bas-reliefs, heraldic symbols, and also upon the stage of the theatre.

But with all their conventionalism of style, the Egyptians observed a *canon of proportion*, which is a third mark of their devotion to art as a study. This canon of proportion was based upon a network of squares, which answered to the measurements of a modern sculptor when modelling in clay a bust from life. A fine example of the Egyptian method is to be seen in one of the three sepulchral chambers which Dr. Lepsius caused to be transported from Gizeh and set up in the New Museum at Berlin. Upon one wall of this tomb are the completed figures of animals, cut with

remarkable truth and spirit; upon another are tracings of unfinished figures, the outline visible in red or black colors, with the latest corrections from the hand of the artist; and in a third portion may be seen the network of squares which was his scale of measurement.

Nor are there wanting instances, in the fourth place, of the treatment of individual subjects by Egyptian artists in a creative, ideal style worthy of later Grecian art. Such is the sitting statue of Amenophis IV., of Egyptian alabaster, now in the Louvre, and the statue, also sitting, of king Safra, in the Museum at Cairo, pictured by Count Rougé in his *Recherches sur les Monuments historiques*. These occasional works show a capacity for a higher range of art than the average of conventional monuments would indicate. And as many a prophecy of Raphael's Madonnas beams from the faces of the figures draped in the old Byzantine forms, so may one detect in stiff, old Egyptian sculptures hints of the unfettered life and beauty which Greece was yet to bring to perfection in the kingdom of the ideal.

Not only in the proto-Doric pillars of *Benihassan*, and the round brick arches of temples and tombs, was Egypt the pioneer of Greece and Rome in architectural forms, but in the sense of adaptation, in the use of color and material, in the canon of proportion, and in hints and essays toward the ideal in painting and sculpture, was Egypt the pioneer in art as in science for nations whose later splendors eclipsed her dawn.

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## ARTICLE IX.

### NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

#### A. GERMAN WORKS.

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.<sup>1</sup> — The title of this work, translated into English, is: "The Idea of Immortality in the Faith and the Philosophy of the Nations." Its author is a learned Roman Catholic. Its compass is nine hundred and eighty-nine pages, and though it possesses a pretty complete table of contents, it lacks, as is only too usual in German publications, a good index.

The discussion is divided into three main parts. In the first part the author expounds his own views regarding the origin and nature of man; body and spirit; the essence of the soul; human personality; consciousness and self-consciousness; mental disorders; sleep and dreams; images of death and immortality; death and its phenomena; death from an ethical point of view; rise of the idea of immortality; the idea of God and that

<sup>1</sup> Die Unsterblichkeitsidee im Glauben und in der Philosophie der Völker. Von Dr. Leonhard Schneider. Regensburg. 1870. Price, 2 Th. 24 sgr.