

The Persian Wars

by

Herodotus

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Translated by George Rawlinson

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Book 2 - EUTERPE

[2.1] On the death of Cyrus, Cambyses his son by Cassandane daughter of Pharnaspes took the kingdom. Cassandane had died in the lifetime of Cyrus, who had made a great mourning for her at her death, and had commanded all the subjects of his empire to observe the like. Cambyses, the son of this lady and of Cyrus, regarding the Ionian and Aeolian Greeks as vassals of his father, took them with him in his expedition against Egypt among the other nations which owned his sway.

[2.2] Now the Egyptians, before the reign of their king Psammetichus, believed themselves to be the most ancient of mankind. Since Psammetichus, however, made an attempt to discover who were actually the primitive race, they have been of opinion that while they surpass all other nations, the Phrygians surpass them in antiquity. This king, finding it impossible to make out by dint of inquiry what men were the most ancient, contrived the following method of discovery:- He took two children of the common sort, and gave them over to a herdsman to bring up at his folds, strictly charging him to let no one utter a word in their presence, but to keep them in a sequestered cottage, and from time to time introduce goats to their apartment, see that they got their fill of milk, and in all other respects look after them. His object herein was to know, after the indistinct babblings of infancy were over, what word they would first articulate. It happened as he had anticipated. The herdsman obeyed his orders for two years, and at the end of that time, on his one day opening the door of their room and going in, the children both ran up to him with outstretched arms, and distinctly said "Becos." When this first happened the herdsman took no notice; but afterwards when he observed, on coming often to see after them, that the word was constantly in their mouths, he informed his lord, and by his command brought the children into his presence. Psammetichus then himself heard them say the word, upon which he proceeded to make inquiry what people there was who called anything "becos," and hereupon he learnt that "becos" was the Phrygian name for bread. In consideration of this circumstance the Egyptians yielded their claims, and admitted the greater antiquity of the Phrygians.

[2.3] That these were the real facts I learnt at Memphis from the priests of Vulcan. The Greeks, among other foolish tales, relate that Psammetichus had the children brought up by women whose tongues he had previously cut out; but the priests said their bringing up was such as I have stated

above. I got much other information also from conversation with these priests while I was at Memphis, and I even went to Heliopolis and to Thebes, expressly to try whether the priests of those places would agree in their accounts with the priests at Memphis. The Heliopolitans have the reputation of being the best skilled in history of all the Egyptians. What they told me concerning their religion it is not my intention to repeat, except the names of their deities, which I believe all men know equally. If I relate anything else concerning these matters, it will only be when compelled to do so by the course of my narrative.

[2.4] Now with regard to mere human matters, the accounts which they gave, and in which all agreed, were the following. The Egyptians, they said, were the first to discover the solar year, and to portion out its course into twelve parts. They obtained this knowledge from the stars. (To my mind they contrive their year much more cleverly than the Greeks, for these last every other year intercalate a whole month, but the Egyptians, dividing the year into twelve months of thirty days each, add every year a space of five days besides, whereby the circuit of the seasons is made to return with uniformity.) The Egyptians, they went on to affirm, first brought into use the names of the twelve gods, which the Greeks adopted from them; and first erected altars, images, and temples to the gods; and also first engraved upon stone the figures of animals. In most of these cases they proved to me that what they said was true. And they told me that the first man who ruled over Egypt was Min, and that in his time all Egypt, except the Thebaic canton, was a marsh, none of the land below Lake Moeris then showing itself above the surface of the water. This is a distance of seven days' sail from the sea up the river.

[2.5] What they said of their country seemed to me very reasonable. For any one who sees Egypt, without having heard a word about it before, must perceive, if he has only common powers of observation, that the Egypt to which the Greeks go in their ships is an acquired country, the gift of the river. The same is true of the land above the lake, to the distance of three days' voyage, concerning which the Egyptians say nothing, but which exactly the same kind of country.

The following is the general character of the region. In the first place, on approaching it by sea, when you are still a day's sail from the land, if you let down a sounding-line you will bring up mud, and find yourself in eleven fathoms' water, which shows that the soil washed down by the stream extends to that distance.

[2.6] The length of the country along shore, according to the bounds that we assign to Egypt, namely from the Plinthetic gulf to Lake Serbonis, which extends along the base of Mount Casius, is sixty schoenes. The nations whose territories are scanty measure them by the fathom; those whose bounds are less confined, by the furlong; those who have an ample territory, by the parasang; but if men have a country which is very vast, they measure it by the schoene. Now the length of the parasang is thirty furlongs, but the schoene, which is an Egyptian measure, is sixty furlongs. Thus the coastline of Egypt would extend a length of three thousand six hundred furlongs.

[2.7] From the coast inland as far as Heliopolis the breadth of Egypt is considerable, the country is flat, without springs, and full of swamps. The length of the route from the sea up to Heliopolis is almost exactly the same as that of the road which runs from the altar of the twelve gods at Athens to the temple of Olympian Jove at Pisa. If a person made a calculation he would find but a very little difference between the two routes, not more than about fifteen furlongs; for the road from

Athens to Pisa falls short of fifteen hundred furlongs by exactly fifteen, whereas the distance of Heliopolis from the sea is just the round number.

[2.8] As one proceeds beyond Heliopolis up the country, Egypt becomes narrow, the Arabian range of hills, which has a direction from north to south, shutting it in upon the one side, and the Libyan range upon the other. The former ridge runs on without a break, and stretches away to the sea called the Erythraean; it contains the quarries whence the stone was cut for the pyramids of Memphis: and this is the point where it ceases its first direction, and bends away in the manner above indicated. In its greatest length from east to west it is, as I have been informed, a distance of two months' journey towards the extreme east its skirts produce frankincense. Such are the chief features of this range. On the Libyan side, the other ridge whereon the pyramids stand is rocky and covered with sand; its direction is the same as that of the Arabian ridge in the first part of its course. Above Heliopolis, then, there is no great breadth of territory for such a country as Egypt, but during four days' sail Egypt is narrow; the valley between the two ranges is a level plain, and seemed to me to be, at the narrowest point, not more than two hundred furlongs across from the Arabian to the Libyan hills. Above this point Egypt again widens.

[2.9] From Heliopolis to Thebes is nine days' sail up the river; the distance is eighty-one schoenes, or 4860 furlongs. If we now put together the several measurements of the country we shall find that the distance along shore is, as I stated above, 3600 furlongs, and the distance from the sea inland to Thebes 6120 furlongs. Further, it is a distance of eighteen hundred furlongs from Thebes to the place called Elephantine.

[2.10] The greater portion of the country above described seemed to me to be, as the priests declared, a tract gained by the inhabitants. For the whole region above Memphis, lying between the two ranges of hills that have been spoken of, appeared evidently to have formed at one time a gulf of the sea. It resembles (to compare small things with great) the parts about Ilium and Teuthrania, Ephesus, and the plain of the Maeander. In all these regions the land has been formed by rivers, whereof the greatest is not to compare for size with any one of the five mouths of the Nile. I could mention other rivers also, far inferior to the Nile in magnitude, that have effected very great changes. Among these not the least is the Achelous, which, after passing through Acarnania, empties itself into the sea opposite the islands called Echinades, and has already joined one-half of them to the continent.

[2.11] In Arabia, not far from Egypt, there is a long and narrow gulf running inland from the sea called the Erythraean, of which I will here set down the dimensions. Starting from its innermost recess, and using a row-boat, you take forty days to reach the open main, while you may cross the gulf at its widest part in the space of half a day. In this sea there is an ebb and flow of the tide every day. My opinion is that Egypt was formerly very much such a gulf as this - one gulf penetrated from the sea that washes Egypt on the north, and extended itself towards Ethiopia; another entered from the southern ocean, and stretched towards Syria; the two gulfs ran into the land so as almost to meet each other, and left between them only a very narrow tract of country. Now if the Nile should choose to divert his waters from their present bed into this Arabian gulf, what is there to hinder it from being filled up by the stream within, at the utmost, twenty thousand years? For my part, I think it would be filled in half the time. How then should not a gulf, even of much greater size,

have been filled up in the ages that passed before I was born, by a river that is at once so large and so given to working changes?

[2.12] Thus I give credit to those from whom I received this account of Egypt, and am myself, moreover, strongly of the same opinion, since I remarked that the country projects into the sea further than the neighbouring shores, and I observed that there were shells upon the hills, and that salt exuded from the soil to such an extent as even to injure the pyramids; and I noticed also that there is but a single hill in all Egypt where sand is found, namely, the hill above Memphis; and further, I found the country to bear no resemblance either to its borderland Arabia, or to Libya - nay, nor even to Syria, which forms the seaboard of Arabia; but whereas the soil of Libya is, we know, sandy and of a reddish hue, and that of Arabia and Syria inclines to stone and clay, Egypt has a soil that is black and crumbly, as being alluvial and formed of the deposits brought down by the river from Ethiopia.

[2.13] One fact which I learnt of the priests is to me a strong evidence of the origin of the country. They said that when Moeris was king, the Nile overflowed all Egypt below Memphis, as soon as it rose so little as eight cubits. Now Moeris had not been dead 900 years at the time when I heard this of the priests; yet at the present day, unless the river rise sixteen, or, at the very least, fifteen cubits, it does not overflow the lands. It seems to me, therefore, that if the land goes on rising and growing at this rate, the Egyptians who dwell below Lake Moeris, in the Delta (as it is called) and elsewhere, will one day, by the stoppage of the inundations, suffer permanently the fate which they told me they expected would some time or other befall the Greeks. On hearing that the whole land of Greece is watered by rain from heaven, and not, like their own, inundated by rivers, they observed - "Some day the Greeks will be disappointed of their grand hope, and then they will be wretchedly hungry"; which was as much as to say, "If God shall some day see fit not to grant the Greeks rain, but shall afflict them with a long drought, the Greeks will be swept away by a famine, since they have nothing to rely on but rain from Jove, and have no other resource for water."

[2.14] And in thus speaking of the Greeks the Egyptians say nothing but what is true. But now let me tell the Egyptians how the case stands with themselves. If, as I said before, the country below Memphis, which is the land that is always rising, continues to increase in height at the rate at which it has risen in times gone by, how will it be possible for the inhabitants of that region to avoid hunger, when they will certainly have no rain, and the river will not be able to overflow their cornlands? At present, it must be confessed, they obtain the fruits of the field with less trouble than any other people in the world, the rest of the Egyptians included, since they have no need to break up the ground with the plough, nor to use the hoe, nor to do any of the work which the rest of mankind find necessary if they are to get a crop; but the husbandman waits till the river has of its own accord spread itself over the fields and withdrawn again to its bed, and then sows his plot of ground, and after sowing turns his swine into it - the swine tread in the corn - after which he has only to await the harvest. The swine serve him also to thrash the grain, which is then carried to the garner.

[2.15] If then we choose to adopt the views of the Ionians concerning Egypt, we must come to the conclusion that the Egyptians had formerly no country at all. For the Ionians say that nothing is really Egypt but the Delta, which extends along shore from the Watch-tower of Perseus, as it is called, to the Pelusiatic Salt-Pans, a distance of forty schoenes, and stretches inland as far as the city

of Cercasorus, where the Nile divides into the two streams which reach the sea at Pelusium and Canobus respectively. The rest of what is accounted Egypt belongs, they say, either to Arabia or Libya. But the Delta, as the Egyptians affirm, and as I myself am persuaded, is formed of the deposits of the river, and has only recently, if I may use the expression, come to light. If, then, they had formerly no territory at all, how came they to be so extravagant as to fancy themselves the most ancient race in the world? Surely there was no need of their making the experiment with the children to see what language they would first speak. But in truth I do not believe that the Egyptians came into being at the same time with the Delta, as the Ionians call it; I think they have always existed ever since the human race began; as the land went on increasing, part of the population came down into the new country, part remained in their old settlements. In ancient times the Thebais bore the name of Egypt, a district of which the entire circumference is but 6120 furlongs.

[2.16] If, then, my judgment on these matters be right, the Ionians are mistaken in what they say of Egypt. If, on the contrary, it is they who are right, then I undertake to show that neither the Ionians nor any of the other Greeks know how to count. For they all say that the earth is divided into three parts, Europe, Asia, and Libya, whereas they ought to add a fourth part, the Delta of Egypt, since they do not include it either in Asia or Libya. For is it not their theory that the Nile separates Asia from Libya? As the Nile, therefore, splits in two at the apex of the Delta, the Delta itself must be a separate country, not contained in either Asia or Libya.

[2.17] Here I take my leave of the opinions of the Ionians, and proceed to deliver my own sentiments on these subjects. I consider Egypt to be the whole country inhabited by the Egyptians, just as Cilicia is the tract occupied by the Cilicians, and Assyria that possessed by the Assyrians. And I regard the only proper boundary-line between Libya and Asia to be that which is marked out by the Egyptian frontier. For if we take the boundary-line commonly received by the Greeks, we must regard Egypt as divided, along its whole length from Elephantine and the Cataracts to Cercasorus, into two parts, each belonging to a different portion of the world, one to Asia, the other to Libya; since the Nile divides Egypt in two from the Cataracts to the sea, running as far as the city of Cercasorus in a single stream, but at that point separating into three branches, whereof the one which bends eastward is called the Pelusiatic mouth, and that which slants to the west, the Canobic. Meanwhile the straight course of the stream, which comes down from the upper country and meets the apex of the Delta, continues on, dividing the Delta down the middle, and empties itself into the sea by a mouth, which is as celebrated, and carries as large a body of water, as most of the others, the mouth called the Sebennytic. Besides these there are two other mouths which run out of the Sebennytic called respectively the Saitic and the Mendesian. The Bolbitine mouth, and the Bucolic, are not natural branches, but channels made by excavation.

[2.18] My judgment as to the extent of Egypt is confirmed by an oracle delivered at the shrine of Ammon, of which I had no knowledge at all until after I had formed my opinion. It happened that the people of the cities Marea and Apis, who live in the part of Egypt that borders on Libya, took a dislike to the religious usages of the country concerning sacrificial animals, and wished no longer to be restricted from eating the flesh of cows. So, as they believed themselves to be Libyans and not Egyptians, they sent to the shrine to say that, having nothing in common with the Egyptians, neither inhabiting the Delta nor using the Egyptian tongue, they claimed to be allowed to eat whatever they pleased. Their request, however, was refused by the god, who declared in reply that Egypt was the

entire tract of country which the Nile overspreads and irrigates, and the Egyptians were the people who lived below Elephantine, and drank the waters of that river.

[2.19] So said the oracle. Now the Nile, when it overflows, floods not only the Delta, but also the tracts of country on both sides the stream which are thought to belong to Libya and Arabia, in some places reaching to the extent of two days' journey from its banks, in some even exceeding that distance, but in others falling short of it.

Concerning the nature of the river, I was not able to gain any information either from the priests or from others. I was particularly anxious to learn from them why the Nile, at the commencement of the summer solstice, begins to rise, and continues to increase for a hundred days - and why, as soon as that number is past, it forthwith retires and contracts its stream, continuing low during the whole of the winter until the summer solstice comes round again. On none of these points could I obtain any explanation from the inhabitants, though I made every inquiry, wishing to know what was commonly reported - they could neither tell me what special virtue the Nile has which makes it so opposite in its nature to all other streams, nor why, unlike every other river, it gives forth no breezes from its surface.

[2.20] Some of the Greeks, however, wishing to get a reputation for cleverness, have offered explanations of the phenomena of the river, for which they have accounted in three different ways. Two of these I do not think it worth while to speak of, further than simply to mention what they are. One pretends that the Etesian winds cause the rise of the river by preventing the Nile-water from running off into the sea. But in the first place it has often happened, when the Etesian winds did not blow, that the Nile has risen according to its usual wont; and further, if the Etesian winds produced the effect, the other rivers which flow in a direction opposite to those winds ought to present the same phenomena as the Nile, and the more so as they are all smaller streams, and have a weaker current. But these rivers, of which there are many both in Syria and Libya, are entirely unlike the Nile in this respect.

[2.21] The second opinion is even more unscientific than the one just mentioned, and also, if I may so say, more marvellous. It is that the Nile acts so strangely, because it flows from the ocean, and that the ocean flows all round the earth.

[2.22] The third explanation, which is very much more plausible than either of the others, is positively the furthest from the truth; for there is really nothing in what it says, any more than in the other theories. It is, that the inundation of the Nile is caused by the melting of snows. Now, as the Nile flows out of Libya, through Ethiopia, into Egypt, how is it possible that it can be formed of melted snow, running, as it does, from the hottest regions of the world into cooler countries? Many are the proofs whereby any one capable of reasoning on the subject may be convinced that it is most unlikely this should be the case. The first and strongest argument is furnished by the winds, which always blow hot from these regions. The second is that rain and frost are unknown there. Now whenever snow falls, it must of necessity rain within five days; so that, if there were snow, there must be rain also in those parts. Thirdly, it is certain that the natives of the country are black with the heat, that the kites and the swallows remain there the whole year, and that the cranes, when they fly from the rigours of a Scythian winter, flock thither to pass the cold season. If then, in the

country whence the Nile has its source, or in that through which it flows, there fell ever so little snow, it is absolutely impossible that any of these circumstances could take place.

[2.23] As for the writer who attributes the phenomenon to the ocean, his account is involved in such obscurity that it is impossible to disprove it by argument. For my part I know of no river called Ocean, and I think that Homer, or one of the earlier poets, invented the name, and introduced it into his poetry.

[2.24] Perhaps, after censuring all the opinions that have been put forward on this obscure subject, one ought to propose some theory of one's own. I will therefore proceed to explain what I think to be the reason of the Nile's swelling in the summer time. During the winter, the sun is driven out of his usual course by the storms, and removes to the upper parts of Libya. This is the whole secret in the fewest possible words; for it stands to reason that the country to which the Sun-god approaches the nearest, and which he passes most directly over, will be scantest of water, and that there the streams which feed the rivers will shrink the most.

[2.25] To explain, however, more at length, the case is this. The sun, in his passage across the upper parts of Libya, affects them in the following way. As the air in those regions is constantly clear, and the country warm through the absence of cold winds, the sun in his passage across them acts upon them exactly as he wont to act elsewhere in summer, when his path is in the middle of heaven - that is, he attracts the water. After attracting it, he again repels it into the upper regions, where the winds lay hold of it, scatter it, and reduce it to a vapour, whence it naturally enough comes to pass that the winds which blow from this quarter - the south and south-west - are of all winds the most rainy. And my own opinion is that the sun does not get rid of all the water which he draws year by year from the Nile, but retains some about him. When the winter begins to soften, the sun goes back again to his old place in the middle of the heaven, and proceeds to attract water equally from all countries. Till then the other rivers run big, from the quantity of rain-water which they bring down from countries where so much moisture falls that all the land is cut into gullies; but in summer, when the showers fail, and the sun attracts their water, they become low. The Nile, on the contrary, not deriving any of its bulk from rains, and being in winter subject to the attraction of the sun, naturally runs at that season, unlike all other streams, with a less burthen of water than in the summer time. For in summer it is exposed to attraction equally with all other rivers, but in winter it suffers alone. The sun, therefore, I regard as the sole cause of the phenomenon.

[2.26] It is the sun also, in my opinion, which, by heating the space through which it passes, makes the air in Egypt so dry. There is thus perpetual summer in the upper parts of Libya. Were the position of the heavenly regions reversed, so that the place where now the north wind and the winter have their dwelling became the station of the south wind and of the noon-day, while, on the other hand, the station of the south wind became that of the north, the consequence would be that the sun, driven from the mid-heaven by the winter and the northern gales, would betake himself to the upper parts of Europe, as he now does to those of Libya, and then I believe his passage across Europe would affect the Ister exactly as the Nile is affected at the present day.

[2.27] And with respect to the fact that no breeze blows from the Nile, I am of opinion that no wind is likely to arise in very hot countries, for breezes love to blow from some cold quarter.

[2.28] Let us leave these things, however, to their natural course, to continue as they are and have been from the beginning. With regard to the sources of the Nile, I have found no one among all those with whom I have conversed, whether Egyptians, Libyans, or Greeks, who professed to have any knowledge, except a single person. He was the scribe who kept the register of the sacred treasures of Minerva in the city of Sais, and he did not seem to me to be in earnest when he said that he knew them perfectly well. His story was as follows:- "Between Syene, a city of the Thebais, and Elephantine, there are" (he said) "two hills with sharp conical tops; the name of the one is Crophi, of the other, Mophi. Midway between them are the fountains of the Nile, fountains which it is impossible to fathom. Half the water runs northward into Egypt, half to the south towards Ethiopia." The fountains were known to be unfathomable, he declared, because Psammetichus, an Egyptian king, had made trial of them. He had caused a rope to be made, many thousand fathoms in length, and had sounded the fountain with it, but could find no bottom. By this the scribe gave me to understand, if there was any truth at all in what he said, that in this fountain there are certain strong eddies, and a regurgitation, owing to the force wherewith the water dashes against the mountains, and hence a Sounding-line cannot be got to reach the bottom of the spring.

[2.29] No other information on this head could I obtain from any quarter. All that I succeeded in learning further of the more distant portions of the Nile, by ascending myself as high as Elephantine and making inquiries concerning the parts beyond, was the following:- As one advances beyond Elephantine, the land rises. Hence it is necessary in this part of the river to attach a rope to the boat on each side, as men harness an ox, and so proceed on the journey. If the rope snaps, the vessel is borne away down stream by the force of the current. The navigation continues the same for four days, the river winding greatly, like the Maeander, and the distance traversed amounting to twelve schoenes. Here you come upon a smooth and level plain, where the Nile flows in two branches, round an island called Tachompso. The country above Elephantine is inhabited by the Ethiopians, who possess one-half of this island, the Egyptians occupying the other. Above the island there is a great lake, the shores of which are inhabited by Ethiopian nomads; after passing it, you come again to the stream of the Nile, which runs into the lake. Here you land, and travel for forty days along the banks of the river, since it is impossible to proceed further in a boat on account of the sharp peaks which jut out from the water, and the sunken rocks which abound in that part of the stream. When you have passed this portion of the river in the space of forty days, you go on board another boat and proceed by water for twelve days more, at the end of which time you reach a great city called Meroe, which is said to be the capital of the other Ethiopians. The only gods worshipped by the inhabitants are Jupiter and Bacchus, to whom great honours are paid. There is an oracle of Jupiter in the city, which directs the warlike expeditions of the Ethiopians; when it commands they go to war, and in whatever direction it bids them march, thither straightway they carry their arms.

[2.30] On leaving this city, and again mounting the stream, in the same space of time which it took you to reach the capital from Elephantine, you come to the Deserters, who bear the name of Asmach. This word, translated into our language, means "the men who stand on the left hand of the king." These Deserters are Egyptians of the warrior caste, who, to the number of two hundred and forty thousand, went over to the Ethiopians in the reign of king Psammetichus. The cause of their desertion was the following:- Three garrisons were maintained in Egypt at that time, one in the city of Elephantine against the Ethiopians, another in the Pelusiac Daphnae, against the Syrians and Arabians, and a third, against the Libyans, in Marea. (The very same posts are to this day occupied

by the Persians, whose forces are in garrison both in Daphnae and in Elephantine.) Now it happened, that on one occasion the garrisons were not relieved during the space of three years; the soldiers, therefore, at the end of that time, consulted together, and having determined by common consent to revolt, marched away towards Ethiopia. Psammetichus, informed of the movement, set out in pursuit, and coming up with them, besought them with many words not to desert the gods of their country, nor abandon their wives and children. "Nay, but," said one of the deserters with an unseemly gesture, "wherever we go, we are sure enough of finding wives and children." Arrived in Ethiopia, they placed themselves at the disposal of the king. In return, he made them a present of a tract of land which belonged to certain Ethiopians with whom he was at feud, bidding them expel the inhabitants and take possession of their territory. From the time that this settlement was formed, their acquaintance with Egyptian manners has tended to civilise the Ethiopians.

[2.31] Thus the course of the Nile is known, not only throughout Egypt, but to the extent of four months' journey either by land or water above the Egyptian boundary; for on calculation it will be found that it takes that length of time to travel from Elephantine to the country of the Deserters. There the direction of the river is from west to east. Beyond, no one has any certain knowledge of its course, since the country is uninhabited by reason of the excessive heat.

[2.32] I did hear, indeed, what I will now relate, from certain natives of Cyrene. Once upon a time, they said, they were on a visit to the oracular shrine of Ammon, when it chanced that in the course of conversation with Etearchus, the Ammonian king, the talk fell upon the Nile, how that its sources were unknown to all men. Etearchus upon this mentioned that some Nasamonians had once come to his court, and when asked if they could give any information concerning the uninhabited parts of Libya, had told the following tale. (The Nasamonians are a Libyan race who occupy the Syrtis, and a tract of no great size towards the east.) They said there had grown up among them some wild young men, the sons of certain chiefs, who, when they came to man's estate, indulged in all manner of extravagancies, and among other things drew lots for five of their number to go and explore the desert parts of Libya, and try if they could not penetrate further than any had done previously. The coast of Libya along the sea which washes it to the north, throughout its entire length from Egypt to Cape Soloeis, which is its furthest point, is inhabited by Libyans of many distinct tribes who possess the whole tract except certain portions which belong to the Phoenicians and the Greeks. Above the coast-line and the country inhabited by the maritime tribes, Libya is full of wild beasts; while beyond the wild beast region there is a tract which is wholly sand, very scant of water, and utterly and entirely a desert. The young men therefore, despatched on this errand by their comrades with a plentiful supply of water and provisions, travelled at first through the inhabited region, passing which they came to the wild beast tract, whence they finally entered upon the desert, which they proceeded to cross in a direction from east to west. After journeying for many days over a wide extent of sand, they came at last to a plain where they observed trees growing; approaching them, and seeing fruit on them, they proceeded to gather it. While they were thus engaged, there came upon them some dwarfish men, under the middle height, who seized them and carried them off. The Nasamonians could not understand a word of their language, nor had they any acquaintance with the language of the Nasamonians. They were led across extensive marshes, and finally came to a town, where all the men were of the height of their conductors, and black-complexioned. A great river flowed by the town, running from west to east, and containing crocodiles.

[2.33] Here let me dismiss Etearchus the Ammonian, and his story, only adding that (according to the Cyrenaeans) he declared that the Nasamonians got safe back to their country, and that the men whose city they had reached were a nation of sorcerers. With respect to the river which ran by their town, Etearchus conjectured it to be the Nile; and reason favours that view. For the Nile certainly flows out of Libya, dividing it down the middle, and as I conceive, judging the unknown from the known, rises at the same distance from its mouth as the Ister. This latter river has its source in the country of the Celts near the city Pyrene, and runs through the middle of Europe, dividing it into two portions. The Celts live beyond the pillars of Hercules, and border on the Cynesians, who dwell at the extreme west of Europe. Thus the Ister flows through the whole of Europe before it finally empties itself into the Euxine at Istria, one of the colonies of the Milesians.

[2.34] Now as this river flows through regions that are inhabited, its course is perfectly well known; but of the sources of the Nile no one can give any account, since Libya, the country through which it passes, is desert and without inhabitants. As far as it was possible to get information by inquiry, I have given a description of the stream. It enters Egypt from the parts beyond. Egypt lies almost exactly opposite the mountainous portion of Cilicia, whence a lightly-equipped traveller may reach Sinope on the Euxine in five days by the direct route. Sinope lies opposite the place where the Ister falls into the sea. My opinion therefore is that the Nile, as it traverses the whole of Libya, is of equal length with the Ister. And here I take my leave of this subject.

[2.35] Concerning Egypt itself I shall extend my remarks to a great length, because there is no country that possesses so many wonders, nor any that has such a number of works which defy description. Not only is the climate different from that of the rest of the world, and the rivers unlike any other rivers, but the people also, in most of their manners and customs, exactly reverse the common practice of mankind. The women attend the markets and trade, while the men sit at home at the loom; and here, while the rest of the world works the woof up the warp, the Egyptians work it down; the women likewise carry burthens upon their shoulders, while the men carry them upon their heads. They eat their food out of doors in the streets, but retire for private purposes to their houses, giving as a reason that what is unseemly, but necessary, ought to be done in secret, but what has nothing unseemly about it, should be done openly. A woman cannot serve the priestly office, either for god or goddess, but men are priests to both; sons need not support their parents unless they choose, but daughters must, whether they choose or no.

[2.36] In other countries the priests have long hair, in Egypt their heads are shaven; elsewhere it is customary, in mourning, for near relations to cut their hair close: the Egyptians, who wear no hair at any other time, when they lose a relative, let their beards and the hair of their heads grow long. All other men pass their lives separate from animals, the Egyptians have animals always living with them; others make barley and wheat their food; it is a disgrace to do so in Egypt, where the grain they live on is spelt, which some call zea. Dough they knead with their feet; but they mix mud, and even take up dirt, with their hands. They are the only people in the world- they at least, and such as have learnt the practice from them - who use circumcision. Their men wear two garments apiece, their women but one. They put on the rings and fasten the ropes to sails inside; others put them outside. When they write or calculate, instead of going, like the Greeks, from left to right, they move their hand from right to left; and they insist, notwithstanding, that it is they who go to the right, and the Greeks who go to the left. They have two quite different kinds of writing, one of which is called sacred, the other common.

[2.37] They are religious to excess, far beyond any other race of men, and use the following ceremonies:- They drink out of brazen cups, which they scour every day: there is no exception to this practice. They wear linen garments, which they are specially careful to have always fresh washed. They practise circumcision for the sake of cleanliness, considering it better to be cleanly than comely. The priests shave their whole body every other day, that no lice or other impure thing may adhere to them when they are engaged in the service of the gods. Their dress is entirely of linen, and their shoes of the papyrus plant: it is not lawful for them to wear either dress or shoes of any other material. They bathe twice every day in cold water, and twice each night; besides which they observe, so to speak, thousands of ceremonies. They enjoy, however, not a few advantages. They consume none of their own property, and are at no expense for anything; but every day bread is baked for them of the sacred corn, and a plentiful supply of beef and of goose's flesh is assigned to each, and also a portion of wine made from the grape. Fish they are not allowed to eat; and beans - which none of the Egyptians ever sow, or eat, if they come up of their own accord, either raw or boiled - the priests will not even endure to look on, since they consider it an unclean kind of pulse. Instead of a single priest, each god has the attendance of a college, at the head of which is a chief priest; when one of these dies, his son is appointed in his room.

[2.38] Male kine are reckoned to belong to Epaphus, and are therefore tested in the following manner:- One of the priests appointed for the purpose searches to see if there is a single black hair on the whole body, since in that case the beast is unclean. He examines him all over, standing on his legs, and again laid upon his back; after which he takes the tongue out of his mouth, to see if it be clean in respect of the prescribed marks (what they are I will mention elsewhere); he also inspects the hairs of the tail, to observe if they grow naturally. If the animal is pronounced clean in all these various points, the priest marks him by twisting a piece of papyrus round his horns, and attaching thereto some sealing-clay, which he then stamps with his own signet-ring. After this the beast is led away; and it is forbidden, under the penalty of death, to sacrifice an animal which has not been marked in this way.

[2.39] The following is their manner of sacrifice:- They lead the victim, marked with their signet, to the altar where they are about to offer it, and setting the wood alight, pour a libation of wine upon the altar in front of the victim, and at the same time invoke the god. Then they slay the animal, and cutting off his head, proceed to flay the body. Next they take the head, and heaping imprecations on it, if there is a market-place and a body of Greek traders in the city, they carry it there and sell it instantly; if, however, there are no Greeks among them, they throw the head into the river. The imprecation is to this effect:- They pray that if any evil is impending either over those who sacrifice, or over universal Egypt, it may be made to fall upon that head. These practices, the imprecations upon the heads, and the libations of wine, prevail all over Egypt, and extend to victims of all sorts; and hence the Egyptians will never eat the head of any animal.

[2.40] The disembowelling and burning are, however, different in different sacrifices. I will mention the mode in use with respect to the goddess whom they regard as the greatest, and honour with the chiefest festival. When they have flayed their steer they pray, and when their prayer is ended they take the paunch of the animal out entire, leaving the intestines and the fat inside the body; they then cut off the legs, the ends of the loins, the shoulders, and the neck; and having so done, they fill the body of the steer with clean bread, honey, raisins, figs, frankincense, myrrh, and other aromatics. Thus filled, they burn the body, pouring over it great quantities of oil. Before

offering the sacrifice they fast, and while the bodies of the victims are being consumed they beat themselves. Afterwards, when they have concluded this part of the ceremony, they have the other parts of the victim served up to them for a repast.

[2.41] The male kine, therefore, if clean, and the male calves, are used for sacrifice by the Egyptians universally; but the females they are not allowed to sacrifice, since they are sacred to Isis. The statue of this goddess has the form of a woman but with horns like a cow, resembling thus the Greek representations of Io; and the Egyptians, one and all, venerate cows much more highly than any other animal. This is the reason why no native of Egypt, whether man or woman, will give a Greek a kiss, or use the knife of a Greek, or his spit, or his cauldron, or taste the flesh of an ox, known to be pure, if it has been cut with a Greek knife. When kine die, the following is the manner of their sepulture:- The females are thrown into the river; the males are buried in the suburbs of the towns, with one or both of their horns appearing above the surface of the ground to mark the place. When the bodies are decayed, a boat comes, at an appointed time, from the island called Prosopitis, - which is a portion of the Delta, nine schoenes in circumference, - and calls at the several cities in turn to collect the bones of the oxen. Prosopitis is a district containing several cities; the name of that from which the boats come is Atarbechis. Venus has a temple there of much sanctity. Great numbers of men go forth from this city and proceed to the other towns, where they dig up the bones, which they take away with them and bury together in one place. The same practice prevails with respect to the interment of all other cattle - the law so determining; they do not slaughter any of them.

[2.42] Such Egyptians as possess a temple of the Theban Jove, or live in the Thebaic canton, offer no sheep in sacrifice, but only goats; for the Egyptians do not all worship the same gods, excepting Isis and Osiris, the latter of whom they say is the Grecian Bacchus. Those, on the contrary, who possess a temple dedicated to Mendes, or belong to the Mendesian canton, abstain from offering goats, and sacrifice sheep instead. The Thebans, and such as imitate them in their practice, give the following account of the origin of the custom:- "Hercules," they say, "wished of all things to see Jove, but Jove did not choose to be seen of him. At length, when Hercules persisted, Jove hit on a device - to flay a ram, and, cutting off his head, hold the head before him, and cover himself with the fleece. In this guise he showed himself to Hercules." Therefore the Egyptians give their statues of Jupiter the face of a ram: and from them the practice has passed to the Ammonians, who are a joint colony of Egyptians and Ethiopians, speaking a language between the two; hence also, in my opinion, the latter people took their name of Ammonians, since the Egyptian name for Jupiter is Amun. Such, then, is the reason why the Thebans do not sacrifice rams, but consider them sacred animals. Upon one day in the year, however, at the festival of Jupiter, they slay a single ram, and stripping off the fleece, cover with it the statue of that god, as he once covered himself, and then bring up to the statue of Jove an image of Hercules. When this has been done, the whole assembly beat their breasts in mourning for the ram, and afterwards bury him in a holy sepulchre.

[2.43] The account which I received of this Hercules makes him one of the twelve gods. Of the other Hercules, with whom the Greeks are familiar, I could hear nothing in any part of Egypt. That the Greeks, however (those I mean who gave the son of Amphitryon that name), took the name from the Egyptians, and not the Egyptians from the Greeks, is I think clearly proved, among other arguments, by the fact that both the parents of Hercules, Amphitryon as well as Alcmena, were of Egyptian origin. Again, the Egyptians disclaim all knowledge of the names of Neptune and the

Dioscuri, and do not include them in the number of their gods; but had they adopted the name of any god from the Greeks, these would have been the likeliest to obtain notice, since the Egyptians, as I am well convinced, practised navigation at that time, and the Greeks also were some of them mariners, so that they would have been more likely to know the names of these gods than that of Hercules. But the Egyptian Hercules is one of their ancient gods. Seventeen thousand years before the reign of Amasis, the twelve gods were, they affirm, produced from the eight: and of these twelve, Hercules is one.

[2.44] In the wish to get the best information that I could on these matters, I made a voyage to Tyre in Phoenicia, hearing there was a temple of Hercules at that place, very highly venerated. I visited the temple, and found it richly adorned with a number of offerings, among which were two pillars, one of pure gold, the other of emerald, shining with great brilliancy at night. In a conversation which I held with the priests, I inquired how long their temple had been built, and found by their answer that they, too, differed from the Greeks. They said that the temple was built at the same time that the city was founded, and that the foundation of the city took place two thousand three hundred years ago. In Tyre I remarked another temple where the same god was worshipped as the Thasian Hercules. So I went on to Thasos, where I found a temple of Hercules which had been built by the Phoenicians who colonised that island when they sailed in search of Europa. Even this was five generations earlier than the time when Hercules, son of Amphitryon, was born in Greece. These researches show plainly that there is an ancient god Hercules; and my own opinion is that those Greeks act most wisely who build and maintain two temples of Hercules, in the one of which the Hercules worshipped is known by the name of Olympian, and has sacrifice offered to him as an immortal, while in the other the honours paid are such as are due to a hero.

[2.45] The Greeks tell many tales without due investigation, and among them the following silly fable respecting Hercules:- "Hercules," they say, "went once to Egypt, and there the inhabitants took him, and putting a chaplet on his head, led him out in solemn procession, intending to offer him a sacrifice to Jupiter. For a while he submitted quietly; but when they led him up to the altar and began the ceremonies, he put forth his strength and slew them all." Now to me it seems that such a story proves the Greeks to be utterly ignorant of the character and customs of the people. The Egyptians do not think it allowable even to sacrifice cattle, excepting sheep, and the male kine and calves, provided they be pure, and also geese. How, then, can it be believed that they would sacrifice men? And again, how would it have been possible for Hercules alone, and, as they confess, a mere mortal, to destroy so many thousands? In saying thus much concerning these matters, may I incur no displeasure either of god or hero!

[2.46] I mentioned above that some of the Egyptians abstain from sacrificing goats, either male or female. The reason is the following:- These Egyptians, who are the Mendesians, consider Pan to be one of the eight gods who existed before the twelve, and Pan is represented in Egypt by the painters and the sculptors, just as he is in Greece, with the face and legs of a goat. They do not, however, believe this to be his shape, or consider him in any respect unlike the other gods; but they represent him thus for a reason which I prefer not to relate. The Mendesians hold all goats in veneration, but the male more than the female, giving the goatherds of the males especial honour. One is venerated more highly than all the rest, and when he dies there is a great mourning throughout all the Mendesian canton. In Egyptian, the goat and Pan are both called Mendes.

[2.47] The pig is regarded among them as an unclean animal, so much so that if a man in passing accidentally touch a pig, he instantly hurries to the river, and plunges in with all his clothes on. Hence, too, the swineherds, notwithstanding that they are of pure Egyptian blood, are forbidden to enter into any of the temples, which are open to all other Egyptians; and further, no one will give his daughter in marriage to a swineherd, or take a wife from among them, so that the swineherds are forced to intermarry among themselves. They do not offer swine in sacrifice to any of their gods, excepting Bacchus and the Moon, whom they honour in this way at the same time, sacrificing pigs to both of them at the same full moon, and afterwards eating of the flesh. There is a reason alleged by them for their detestation of swine at all other seasons, and their use of them at this festival, with which I am well acquainted, but which I do not think it proper to mention. The following is the mode in which they sacrifice the swine to the Moon:- As soon as the victim is slain, the tip of the tail, the spleen, and the caul are put together, and having been covered with all the fat that has been found in the animal's belly, are straightway burnt. The remainder of the flesh is eaten on the same day that the sacrifice is offered, which is the day of the full moon: at any other time they would not so much as taste it. The poorer sort, who cannot afford live pigs, form pigs of dough, which they bake and offer in sacrifice.

[2.48] To Bacchus, on the eve of his feast, every Egyptian sacrifices a hog before the door of his house, which is then given back to the swineherd by whom it was furnished, and by him carried away. In other respects the festival is celebrated almost exactly as Bacchic festivals are in Greece, excepting that the Egyptians have no choral dances. They also use instead of phalli another invention, consisting of images a cubit high, pulled by strings, which the women carry round to the villages. A piper goes in front, and the women follow, singing hymns in honour of Bacchus. They give a religious reason for the peculiarities of the image.

[2.49] Melampus, the son of Amytheon, cannot (I think) have been ignorant of this ceremony - nay, he must, I should conceive, have been well acquainted with it. He it was who introduced into Greece the name of Bacchus, the ceremonial of his worship, and the procession of the phallus. He did not, however, so completely apprehend the whole doctrine as to be able to communicate it entirely, but various sages since his time have carried out his teaching to greater perfection. Still it is certain that Melampus introduced the phallus, and that the Greeks learnt from him the ceremonies which they now practise. I therefore maintain that Melampus, who was a wise man, and had acquired the art of divination, having become acquainted with the worship of Bacchus through knowledge derived from Egypt, introduced it into Greece, with a few slight changes, at the same time that he brought in various other practices. For I can by no means allow that it is by mere coincidence that the Bacchic ceremonies in Greece are so nearly the same as the Egyptian - they would then have been more Greek in their character, and less recent in their origin. Much less can I admit that the Egyptians borrowed these customs, or any other, from the Greeks. My belief is that Melampus got his knowledge of them from Cadmus the Tyrian, and the followers whom he brought from Phoenicia into the country which is now called Boeotia.

[2.50] Almost all the names of the gods came into Greece from Egypt. My inquiries prove that they were all derived from a foreign source, and my opinion is that Egypt furnished the greater number. For with the exception of Neptune and the Dioscuri, whom I mentioned above, and Juno, Vesta, Themis, the Graces, and the Nereids, the other gods have been known from time immemorial in Egypt. This I assert on the authority of the Egyptians themselves. The gods, with whose names they

profess themselves unacquainted, the Greeks received, I believe, from the Pelasgi, except Neptune. Of him they got their knowledge from the Libyans, by whom he has been always honoured, and who were anciently the only people that had a god of the name. The Egyptians differ from the Greeks also in paying no divine honours to heroes.

[2.51] Besides these which have been here mentioned, there are many other practices whereof I shall speak hereafter, which the Greeks have borrowed from Egypt. The peculiarity, however, which they observe in their statues of Mercury they did not derive from the Egyptians, but from the Pelasgi; from them the Athenians first adopted it, and afterwards it passed from the Athenians to the other Greeks. For just at the time when the Athenians were entering into the Hellenic body, the Pelasgi came to live with them in their country, whence it was that the latter came first to be regarded as Greeks. Whoever has been initiated into the mysteries of the Cabiri will understand what I mean. The Samothracians received these mysteries from the Pelasgi, who, before they went to live in Attica, were dwellers in Samothrace, and imparted their religious ceremonies to the inhabitants. The Athenians, then, who were the first of all the Greeks to make their statues of Mercury in this way, learnt the practice from the Pelasgians; and by this people a religious account of the matter is given, which is explained in the Samothracian mysteries.

[2.52] In early times the Pelasgi, as I know by information which I got at Dodona, offered sacrifices of all kinds, and prayed to the gods, but had no distinct names or appellations for them, since they had never heard of any. They called them gods (*Theoi*, disposers), because they disposed and arranged all things in such a beautiful order. After a long lapse of time the names of the gods came to Greece from Egypt, and the Pelasgi learnt them, only as yet they knew nothing of Bacchus, of whom they first heard at a much later date. Not long after the arrival of the names they sent to consult the oracle at Dodona about them. This is the most ancient oracle in Greece, and at that time there was no other. To their question, "Whether they should adopt the names that had been imported from the foreigners?" the oracle replied by recommending their use. Thenceforth in their sacrifices the Pelasgi made use of the names of the gods, and from them the names passed afterwards to the Greeks.

[2.53] Whence the gods severally sprang, whether or no they had all existed from eternity, what forms they bore - these are questions of which the Greeks knew nothing until the other day, so to speak. For Homer and Hesiod were the first to compose *Theogonies*, and give the gods their epithets, to allot them their several offices and occupations, and describe their forms; and they lived but four hundred years before my time, as I believe. As for the poets who are thought by some to be earlier than these, they are, in my judgment, decidedly later writers. In these matters I have the authority of the priestesses of Dodona for the former portion of my statements; what I have said of Homer and Hesiod is my own opinion.

[2.54] The following tale is commonly told in Egypt concerning the oracle of Dodona in Greece, and that of Ammon in Libya. My informants on the point were the priests of Jupiter at Thebes. They said "that two of the sacred women were once carried off from Thebes by the Phoenicians, and that the story went that one of them was sold into Libya, and the other into Greece, and these women were the first founders of the oracles in the two countries." On my inquiring how they came to know so exactly what became of the women, they answered, "that diligent search had been made

after them at the time, but that it had not been found possible to discover where they were; afterwards, however, they received the information which they had given me."

[2.55] This was what I heard from the priests at Thebes; at Dodona, however, the women who deliver the oracles relate the matter as follows:- "Two black doves flew away from Egyptian Thebes, and while one directed its flight to Libya, the other came to them. She alighted on an oak, and sitting there began to speak with a human voice, and told them that on the spot where she was, there should henceforth be an oracle of Jove. They understood the announcement to be from heaven, so they set to work at once and erected the shrine. The dove which flew to Libya bade the Libyans to establish there the oracle of Ammon." This likewise is an oracle of Jupiter. The persons from whom I received these particulars were three priestesses of the Dodonaeans, the eldest Promeneia, the next Timarete, and the youngest Nicandra - what they said was confirmed by the other Dodonaeans who dwell around the temple.

[2.56] My own opinion of these matters is as follows:- I think that, if it be true that the Phoenicians carried off the holy women, and sold them for slaves, the one into Libya and the other into Greece, or Pelasgia (as it was then called), this last must have been sold to the Thesprotians. Afterwards, while undergoing servitude in those parts, she built under a real oak a temple to Jupiter, her thoughts in her new abode reverting - as it was likely they would do, if she had been an attendant in a temple of Jupiter at Thebes - to that particular god. Then, having acquired a knowledge of the Greek tongue, she set up an oracle. She also mentioned that her sister had been sold for a slave into Libya by the same persons as herself.

[2.57] The Dodonaeans called the women doves because they were foreigners, and seemed to them to make a noise like birds. After a while the dove spoke with a human voice, because the woman, whose foreign talk had previously sounded to them like the chattering of a bird, acquired the power of speaking what they could understand. For how can it be conceived possible that a dove should really speak with the voice of a man? Lastly, by calling the dove black the Dodonaeans indicated that the woman was an Egyptian. And certainly the character of the oracles at Thebes and Dodona is very similar. Besides this form of divination, the Greeks learnt also divination by means of victims from the Egyptians.

[2.58] The Egyptians were also the first to introduce solemn assemblies, processions, and litanies to the gods; of all which the Greeks were taught the use by them. It seems to me a sufficient proof of this that in Egypt these practices have been established from remote antiquity, while in Greece they are only recently known.

[2.59] The Egyptians do not hold a single solemn assembly, but several in the course of the year. Of these the chief, which is better attended than any other, is held at the city of Bubastis in honour of Diana. The next in importance is that which takes place at Busiris, a city situated in the very middle of the Delta; it is in honour of Isis, who is called in the Greek tongue Demeter (Ceres). There is a third great festival in Sais to Minerva, a fourth in Heliopolis to the Sun, a fifth in Buto to Latona, and a sixth in Papremis to Mars.

[2.60] The following are the proceedings on occasion of the assembly at Bubastis:- Men and women come sailing all together, vast numbers in each boat, many of the women with castanets,

which they strike, while some of the men pipe during the whole time of the voyage; the remainder of the voyagers, male and female, sing the while, and make a clapping with their hands. When they arrive opposite any of the towns upon the banks of the stream, they approach the shore, and, while some of the women continue to play and sing, others call aloud to the females of the place and load them with abuse, while a certain number dance, and some standing up uncover themselves. After proceeding in this way all along the river-course, they reach Bubastis, where they celebrate the feast with abundant sacrifices. More grape-wine is consumed at this festival than in all the rest of the year besides. The number of those who attend, counting only the men and women and omitting the children, amounts, according to the native reports, to seven hundred thousand.

[2.61] The ceremonies at the feast of Isis in the city of Busiris have been already spoken of. It is there that the whole multitude, both of men and women, many thousands in number, beat themselves at the close of the sacrifice, in honour of a god, whose name a religious scruple forbids me to mention. The Carian dwellers in Egypt proceed on this occasion to still greater lengths, even cutting their faces with their knives, whereby they let it been seen that they are not Egyptians but foreigners.

[2.62] At Sais, when the assembly takes place for the sacrifices, there is one night on which the inhabitants all burn a multitude of lights in the open air round their houses. They use lamps in the shape of flat saucers filled with a mixture of oil and salt, on the top of which the wick floats. These burn the whole night, and give to the festival the name of the Feast of Lamps. The Egyptians who are absent from the festival observe the night of the sacrifice, no less than the rest, by a general lighting of lamps; so that the illumination is not confined to the city of Sais, but extends over the whole of Egypt. And there is a religious reason assigned for the special honour paid to this night, as well as for the illumination which accompanies it.

[2.63] At Heliopolis and Buto the assemblies are merely for the purpose of sacrifice; but at Papremis, besides the sacrifices and other rites which are performed there as elsewhere, the following custom is observed:- When the sun is getting low, a few only of the priests continue occupied about the image of the god, while the greater number, armed with wooden clubs, take their station at the portal of the temple. Opposite to them is drawn up a body of men, in number above a thousand, armed, like the others, with clubs, consisting of persons engaged in the performance of their vows. The image of the god, which is kept in a small wooden shrine covered with plates of gold, is conveyed from the temple into a second sacred building the day before the festival begins. The few priests still in attendance upon the image place it, together with the shrine containing it, on a four-wheeled car, and begin to drag it along; the others stationed at the gateway of the temple, oppose its admission. Then the votaries come forward to espouse the quarrel of the god, and set upon the opponents, who are sure to offer resistance. A sharp fight with clubs ensues, in which heads are commonly broken on both sides. Many, I am convinced, die of the wounds that they receive, though the Egyptians insist that no one is ever killed.

[2.64] The natives give the subjoined account of this festival. They say that the mother of the god Mars once dwelt in the temple. Brought up at a distance from his parent, when he grew to man's estate he conceived a wish to visit her. Accordingly he came, but the attendants, who had never seen him before, refused him entrance, and succeeded in keeping him out. So he went to another city and collected a body of men, with whose aid he handled the attendants very roughly, and

forced his way in to his mother. Hence they say arose the custom of a fight with sticks in honour of Mars at this festival.

The Egyptians first made it a point of religion to have no converse with women in the sacred places, and not to enter them without washing, after such converse. Almost all other nations, except the Greeks and the Egyptians, act differently, regarding man as in this matter under no other law than the brutes. Many animals, they say, and various kinds of birds, may be seen to couple in the temples and the sacred precincts, which would certainly not happen if the gods were displeased at it. Such are the arguments by which they defend their practice, but I nevertheless can by no means approve of it. In these points the Egyptians are specially careful, as they are indeed in everything which concerns their sacred edifices.

[2.65] Egypt, though it borders upon Libya, is not a region abounding in wild animals. The animals that do exist in the country, whether domesticated or otherwise, are all regarded as sacred. If I were to explain why they are consecrated to the several gods, I should be led to speak of religious matters, which I particularly shrink from mentioning; the points whereon I have touched slightly hitherto have all been introduced from sheer necessity. Their custom with respect to animals is as follows:- For every kind there are appointed certain guardians, some male, some female, whose business it is to look after them; and this honour is made to descend from father to son. The inhabitants of the various cities, when they have made a vow to any god, pay it to his animals in the way which I will now explain. At the time of making the vow they shave the head of the child, cutting off all the hair, or else half, or sometimes a third part, which they then weigh in a balance against a sum of silver; and whatever sum the hair weighs is presented to the guardian of the animals, who thereupon cuts up some fish, and gives it to them for food - such being the stuff whereon they are fed. When a man has killed one of the sacred animals, if he did it with malice prepense, he is punished with death; if unwittingly, he has to pay such a fine as the priests choose to impose. When an ibis, however, or a hawk is killed, whether it was done by accident or on purpose, the man must needs die.

[2.66] The number of domestic animals in Egypt is very great, and would be still greater were it not for what befalls the cats. As the females, when they have kitted, no longer seek the company of the males, these last, to obtain once more their companionship, practise a curious artifice. They seize the kittens, carry them off, and kill them, but do not eat them afterwards. Upon this the females, being deprived of their young, and longing to supply their place, seek the males once more, since they are particularly fond of their offspring. On every occasion of a fire in Egypt the strangest prodigy occurs with the cats. The inhabitants allow the fire to rage as it pleases, while they stand about at intervals and watch these animals, which, slipping by the men or else leaping over them, rush headlong into the flames. When this happens, the Egyptians are in deep affliction. If a cat dies in a private house by a natural death, all the inmates of the house shave their eyebrows; on the death of a dog they shave the head and the whole of the body.

[2.67] The cats on their decease are taken to the city of Bubastis, where they are embalmed, after which they are buried in certain sacred repositories. The dogs are interred in the cities to which they belong, also in sacred burial-places. The same practice obtains with respect to the ichneumons; the hawks and shrew-mice, on the contrary, are conveyed to the city of Buto for burial, and the ibises

to Hermopolis. The bears, which are scarce in Egypt, and the wolves, which are not much bigger than foxes, they bury wherever they happen to find them lying.

[2.68] The following are the peculiarities of the crocodile:- During the four winter months they eat nothing; they are four-footed, and live indifferently on land or in the water. The female lays and hatches her eggs ashore, passing the greater portion of the day on dry land, but at night retiring to the river, the water of which is warmer than the night-air and the dew. Of all known animals this is the one which from the smallest size grows to be the greatest: for the egg of the crocodile is but little bigger than that of the goose, and the young crocodile is in proportion to the egg; yet when it is full grown, the animal measures frequently seventeen cubits and even more. It has the eyes of a pig, teeth large and tusk-like, of a size proportioned to its frame; unlike any other animal, it is without a tongue; it cannot move its under-jaw, and in this respect too it is singular, being the only animal in the world which moves the upper-jaw but not the under. It has strong claws and a scaly skin, impenetrable upon the back. In the water it is blind, but on land it is very keen of sight. As it lives chiefly in the river, it has the inside of its mouth constantly covered with leeches; hence it happens that, while all the other birds and beasts avoid it, with the trochilus it lives at peace, since it owes much to that bird: for the crocodile, when he leaves the water and comes out upon the land, is in the habit of lying with his mouth wide open, facing the western breeze: at such times the trochilus goes into his mouth and devours the leeches. This benefits the crocodile, who is pleased, and takes care not to hurt the trochilus.

[2.69] The crocodile is esteemed sacred by some of the Egyptians, by others he is treated as an enemy. Those who live near Thebes, and those who dwell around Lake Moeris, regard them with especial veneration. In each of these places they keep one crocodile in particular, who is taught to be tame and tractable. They adorn his ears with ear-rings of molten stone or gold, and put bracelets on his fore-paws, giving him daily a set portion of bread, with a certain number of victims; and, after having thus treated him with the greatest possible attention while alive, they embalm him when he dies and bury him in a sacred repository. The people of Elephantine on the other hand, are so far from considering these animals as sacred that they even eat their flesh. In the Egyptian language they are not called crocodiles, but Champsae. The name of crocodiles was given them by the Ionians, who remarked their resemblance to the lizards, which in Ionia live in the walls and are called crocodiles.

[2.70] The modes of catching the crocodile are many and various. I shall only describe the one which seems to me most worthy of mention. They bait a hook with a chine of pork and let the meat be carried out into the middle of the stream, while the hunter upon the bank holds a living pig, which he belabours. The crocodile hears its cries, and making for the sound, encounters the pork, which he instantly swallows down. The men on the shore haul, and when they have got him to land, the first thing the hunter does is to plaster his eyes with mud. This once accomplished, the animal is despatched with ease, otherwise he gives great trouble.

[2.71] The hippopotamus, in the canton of Papremis, is a sacred animal, but not in any other part of Egypt. It may be thus described:- It is a quadruped, cloven-footed, with hoofs like an ox, and a flat nose. It has the mane and tail of a horse, huge tusks which are very conspicuous, and a voice like a horse's neigh. In size it equals the biggest oxen, and its skin is so tough that when dried it is made into javelins.

[2.72] Otters also are found in the Nile, and are considered sacred. Only two sorts of fish are venerated, that called the lepidotus and the eel. These are regarded as sacred to the Nile, as likewise among birds is the vulpanser, or fox-goose.

[2.73] They have also another sacred bird called the phoenix which I myself have never seen, except in pictures. Indeed it is a great rarity, even in Egypt, only coming there (according to the accounts of the people of Heliopolis) once in five hundred years, when the old phoenix dies. Its size and appearance, if it is like the pictures, are as follow:- The plumage is partly red, partly golden, while the general make and size are almost exactly that of the eagle. They tell a story of what this bird does, which does not seem to me to be credible: that he comes all the way from Arabia, and brings the parent bird, all plastered over with myrrh, to the temple of the Sun, and there buries the body. In order to bring him, they say, he first forms a ball of myrrh as big as he finds that he can carry; then he hollows out the ball, and puts his parent inside, after which he covers over the opening with fresh myrrh, and the ball is then of exactly the same weight as at first; so he brings it to Egypt, plastered over as I have said, and deposits it in the temple of the Sun. Such is the story they tell of the doings of this bird.

[2.74] In the neighbourhood of Thebes there are some sacred serpents which are perfectly harmless. They are of small size, and have two horns growing out of the top of the head. These snakes, when they die, are buried in the temple of Jupiter, the god to whom they are sacred.

[2.75] I went once to a certain place in Arabia, almost exactly opposite the city of Buto, to make inquiries concerning the winged serpents. On my arrival I saw the back-bones and ribs of serpents in such numbers as it is impossible to describe: of the ribs there were a multitude of heaps, some great, some small, some middle-sized. The place where the bones lie is at the entrance of a narrow gorge between steep mountains, which there open upon a spacious plain communicating with the great plain of Egypt. The story goes that with the spring the winged snakes come flying from Arabia towards Egypt, but are met in this gorge by the birds called ibises, who forbid their entrance and destroy them all. The Arabians assert, and the Egyptians also admit, that it is on account of the service thus rendered that the Egyptians hold the ibis in so much reverence.

[2.76] The ibis is a bird of a deep-black colour, with legs like a crane; its beak is strongly hooked, and its size is about that of the land-rail. This is a description of the black ibis which contends with the serpents. The commoner sort, for there are two quite distinct species, has the head and the whole throat bare of feathers; its general plumage is white, but the head and neck are jet black, as also are the tips of the wings and the extremity of the tail; in its beak and legs it resembles the other species. The winged serpent is shaped like the water-snake. Its wings are not feathered, but resemble very closely those of the bat. And thus I conclude the subject of the sacred animals.

[2.77] With respect to the Egyptians themselves, it is to be remarked that those who live in the corn country, devoting themselves, as they do, far more than any other people in the world, to the preservation of the memory of past actions, are the best skilled in history of any men that I have ever met. The following is the mode of life habitual to them:- For three successive days in each month they purge the body by means of emetics and clysters, which is done out of a regard for their health, since they have a persuasion that every disease to which men are liable is occasioned by the substances whereon they feed. Apart from any such precautions, they are, I believe, next to the

Libyans, the healthiest people in the world - an effect of their climate, in my opinion, which has no sudden changes. Diseases almost always attack men when they are exposed to a change, and never more than during changes of the weather. They live on bread made of spelt, which they form into loaves called in their own tongue *cyllestis*. Their drink is a wine which they obtain from barley, as they have no vines in their country. Many kinds of fish they eat raw, either salted or dried in the sun. Quails also, and ducks and small birds, they eat uncooked, merely first salting them. All other birds and fishes, excepting those which are set apart as sacred, are eaten either roasted or boiled.

[2.78] In social meetings among the rich, when the banquet is ended, a servant carries round to the several guests a coffin, in which there is a wooden image of a corpse, carved and painted to resemble nature as nearly as possible, about a cubit or two cubits in length. As he shows it to each guest in turn, the servant says, "Gaze here, and drink and be merry; for when you die, such will you be."

[2.79] The Egyptians adhere to their own national customs, and adopt no foreign usages. Many of these customs are worthy of note: among others their song, the *Linus*, which is sung under various names not only in Egypt but in Phoenicia, in Cyprus, and in other places; and which seems to be exactly the same as that in use among the Greeks, and by them called *Linus*. There were very many things in Egypt which filled me with astonishment, and this was one of them. Whence could the Egyptians have got the *Linus*? It appears to have been sung by them from the very earliest times. For the *Linus* in Egyptian is called *Maneros*; and they told me that *Maneros* was the only son of their first king, and that on his untimely death he was honoured by the Egyptians with these dirgelike strains, and in this way they got their first and only melody.

[2.80] There is another custom in which the Egyptians resemble a particular Greek people, namely the Lacedaemonians. Their young men, when they meet their elders in the streets, give way to them and step aside; and if an elder come in where young men are present, these latter rise from their seats. In a third point they differ entirely from all the nations of Greece. Instead of speaking to each other when they meet in the streets, they make an obeisance, sinking the hand to the knee.

[2.81] They wear a linen tunic fringed about the legs, and called *calasiris*; over this they have a white woollen garment thrown on afterwards. Nothing of woollen, however, is taken into their temples or buried with them, as their religion forbids it. Here their practice resembles the rites called Orphic and Bacchic, but which are in reality Egyptian and Pythagorean; for no one initiated in these mysteries can be buried in a woollen shroud, a religious reason being assigned for the observance.

[2.82] The Egyptians likewise discovered to which of the gods each month and day is sacred; and found out from the day of a man's birth what he will meet with in the course of his life, and how he will end his days, and what sort of man he will be - discoveries whereof the Greeks engaged in poetry have made a use. The Egyptians have also discovered more prognostics than all the rest of mankind besides. Whenever a prodigy takes place, they watch and record the result; then, if anything similar ever happens again, they expect the same consequences.

[2.83] With respect to divination, they hold that it is a gift which no mortal possesses, but only certain of the gods: thus they have an oracle of Hercules, one of Apollo, of Minerva, of Diana, of

Mars, and of Jupiter. Besides these, there is the oracle of Latona at Buto, which is held in much higher repute than any of the rest. The mode of delivering the oracles is not uniform, but varies at the different shrines.

[2.84] Medicine is practised among them on a plan of separation; each physician treats a single disorder, and no more: thus the country swarms with medical practitioners, some undertaking to cure diseases of the eye, others of the head, others again of the teeth, others of the intestines, and some those which are not local.

[2.85] The following is the way in which they conduct their mournings and their funerals:- On the death in any house of a man of consequence, forthwith the women of the family beplaster their heads, and sometimes even their faces, with mud; and then, leaving the body indoors, sally forth and wander through the city, with their dress fastened by a band, and their bosoms bare, beating themselves as they walk. All the female relations join them and do the same. The men too, similarly begirt, beat their breasts separately. When these ceremonies are over, the body is carried away to be embalmed.

[2.86] There are a set of men in Egypt who practice the art of embalming, and make it their proper business. These persons, when a body is brought to them, show the bearers various models of corpses, made in wood, and painted so as to resemble nature. The most perfect is said to be after the manner of him whom I do not think it religious to name in connection with such a matter; the second sort is inferior to the first, and less costly; the third is the cheapest of all. All this the embalmers explain, and then ask in which way it is wished that the corpse should be prepared. The bearers tell them, and having concluded their bargain, take their departure, while the embalmers, left to themselves, proceed to their task. The mode of embalming, according to the most perfect process, is the following:- They take first a crooked piece of iron, and with it draw out the brain through the nostrils, thus getting rid of a portion, while the skull is cleared of the rest by rinsing with drugs; next they make a cut along the flank with a sharp Ethiopian stone, and take out the whole contents of the abdomen, which they then cleanse, washing it thoroughly with palm wine, and again frequently with an infusion of pounded aromatics. After this they fill the cavity with the purest bruised myrrh, with cassia, and every other sort of spicery except frankincense, and sew up the opening. Then the body is placed in natrum for seventy days, and covered entirely over. After the expiration of that space of time, which must not be exceeded, the body is washed, and wrapped round, from head to foot, with bandages of fine linen cloth, smeared over with gum, which is used generally by the Egyptians in the place of glue, and in this state it is given back to the relations, who enclose it in a wooden case which they have had made for the purpose, shaped into the figure of a man. Then fastening the case, they place it in a sepulchral chamber, upright against the wall. Such is the most costly way of embalming the dead.

[2.87] If persons wish to avoid expense, and choose the second process, the following is the method pursued:- Syringes are filled with oil made from the cedar-tree, which is then, without any incision or disembowelling, injected into the abdomen. The passage by which it might be likely to return is stopped, and the body laid in natrum the prescribed number of days. At the end of the time the cedar-oil is allowed to make its escape; and such is its power that it brings with it the whole stomach and intestines in a liquid state. The natrum meanwhile has dissolved the flesh, and so

nothing is left of the dead body but the skin and the bones. It is returned in this condition to the relatives, without any further trouble being bestowed upon it.

[2.88] The third method of embalming, which is practised in the case of the poorer classes, is to clear out the intestines with a clyster, and let the body lie in natrum the seventy days, after which it is at once given to those who come to fetch it away.

[2.89] The wives of men of rank are not given to be embalmed immediately after death, nor indeed are any of the more beautiful and valued women. It is not till they have been dead three or four days that they are carried to the embalmers. This is done to prevent indignities from being offered them. It is said that once a case of this kind occurred: the man was detected by the information of his fellow-workman.

[2.90] Whosoever any one, Egyptian or foreigner, has lost his life by falling a prey to a crocodile, or by drowning in the river, the law compels the inhabitants of the city near which the body is cast up to have it embalmed, and to bury it in one of the sacred repositories with all possible magnificence. No one may touch the corpse, not even any of the friends or relatives, but only the priests of the Nile, who prepare it for burial with their own hands - regarding it as something more than the mere body of a man - and themselves lay it in the tomb.

[2.91] The Egyptians are averse to adopt Greek customs, or, in a word, those of any other nation. This feeling is almost universal among them. At Chemmis, however, which is a large city in the Thebaic canton, near Neapolis, there is a square enclosure sacred to Perseus, son of Danae. Palm trees grow all round the place, which has a stone gateway of an unusual size, surmounted by two colossal statues, also in stone. Inside this precinct is a temple, and in the temple an image of Perseus. The people of Chemmis say that Perseus often appears to them, sometimes within the sacred enclosure, sometimes in the open country: one of the sandals which he has worn is frequently found - two cubits in length, as they affirm - and then all Egypt flourishes greatly. In the worship of Perseus Greek ceremonies are used; gymnastic games are celebrated in his honour, comprising every kind of contest, with prizes of cattle, cloaks, and skins. I made inquiries of the Chemmites why it was that Perseus appeared to them and not elsewhere in Egypt, and how they came to celebrate gymnastic contests unlike the rest of the Egyptians: to which they answered, "that Perseus belonged to their city by descent. Danans and Lynceus were Chemmites before they set sail for Greece, and from them Perseus was descended," they said, tracing the genealogy; "and he, when he came to Egypt for the purpose" (which the Greeks also assign) "of bringing away from Libya the Gorgon's head, paid them a visit, and acknowledged them for his kinsmen - he had heard the name of their city from his mother before he left Greece - he bade them institute a gymnastic contest in his honour, and that was the reason why they observed the practice."

[2.92] The customs hitherto described are those of the Egyptians who live above the marsh-country. The inhabitants of the marshes have the same customs as the rest, as well in those matters which have been mentioned above as in respect of marriage, each Egyptian taking to himself, like the Greeks, a single wife; but for greater cheapness of living the marsh-men practise certain peculiar customs, such as these following. They gather the blossoms of a certain water-lily, which grows in great abundance all over the flat country at the time when the Nile rises and floods the regions along its banks - the Egyptians call it lotus - they gather, I say, the blossoms of this plant and dry

them in the sun, after which they extract from the centre of each blossom a substance like the head of a poppy, which they crush and make into bread. The root of the lotus is likewise eatable, and has a pleasant sweet taste: it is round, and about the size of an apple. There is also another species of the lily in Egypt, which grows, like the lotus, in the river, and resembles the rose. The fruit springs up side by side with the blossom, on a separate stalk, and has almost exactly the look of the comb made by wasps. It contains a number of seeds, about the size of an olive-stone, which are good to eat: and these are eaten both green and dried. The byblus (papyrus), which grows year after year in the marshes, they pull up, and, cutting the plant in two, reserve the upper portion for other purposes, but take the lower, which is about a cubit long, and either eat it or else sell it. Such as wish to enjoy the byblus in full perfection bake it first in a closed vessel, heated to a glow. Some of these folk, however, live entirely on fish, which are gutted as soon as caught, and then hung up in the sun: when dry, they are used as food.

[2.93] Gregarious fish are not found in any numbers in the rivers; they frequent the lagunes, whence, at the season of breeding, they proceed in shoals towards the sea. The males lead the way, and drop their milt as they go, while the females, following close behind, eagerly swallow it down. From this they conceive, and when, after passing some time in the sea, they begin to be in spawn, the whole shoal sets off on its return to its ancient haunts. Now, however, it is no longer the males, but the females, who take the lead: they swim in front in a body, and do exactly as the males did before, dropping, little by little, their grains of spawn as they go, while the males in the rear devour the grains, each one of which is a fish. A portion of the spawn escapes and is not swallowed by the males, and hence come the fishes which grow afterwards to maturity. When any of this sort of fish are taken on their passage to the sea, they are found to have the left side of the head scarred and bruised; while if taken on their return, the marks appear on the right. The reason is that as they swim down the Nile seaward, they keep close to the bank of the river upon their left, and returning again up stream they still cling to the same side, hugging it and brushing against it constantly, to be sure that they miss not their road through the great force of the current. When the Nile begins to rise, the hollows in the land and the marshy spots near the river are flooded before any other places by the percolation of the water through the riverbanks; and these, almost as soon as they become pools, are found to be full of numbers of little fishes. I think that I understand how it is this comes to pass. On the subsidence of the Nile the year before, though the fish retired with the retreating waters, they had first deposited their spawn in the mud upon the banks; and so, when at the usual season the water returns, small fry are rapidly engendered out of the spawn of the preceding year. So much concerning the fish.

[2.94] The Egyptians who live in the marshes use for the anointing of their bodies an oil made from the fruit of the sillicyprium, which is known among them by the name of "kiki." To obtain this they plant the sillicyprium (which grows wild in Greece) along the banks of the rivers and by the sides of the lakes, where it produces fruit in great abundance, but with a very disagreeable smell. This fruit is gathered, and then bruised and pressed, or else boiled down after roasting: the liquid which comes from it is collected and is found to be unctuous, and as well suited as olive-oil for lamps, only that it gives out an unpleasant odour.

[2.95] The contrivances which they use against gnats, wherewith the country swarms, are the following. In the parts of Egypt above the marshes the inhabitants pass the night upon lofty towers, which are of great service, as the gnats are unable to fly to any height on account of the winds. In

the marsh-country, where there are no towers, each man possesses a net instead. By day it serves him to catch fish, while at night he spreads it over the bed in which he is to rest, and creeping in, goes to sleep underneath. The gnats, which, if he rolls himself up in his dress or in a piece of muslin, are sure to bite through the covering, do not so much as attempt to pass the net.

[2.96] The vessels used in Egypt for the transport of merchandise are made of the Acantha (Thorn), a tree which in its growth is very like the Cyrenaic lotus, and from which there exudes a gum. They cut a quantity of planks about two cubits in length from this tree, and then proceed to their ship-building, arranging the planks like bricks, and attaching them by ties to a number of long stakes or poles till the hull is complete, when they lay the cross-planks on the top from side to side. They give the boats no ribs, but caulk the seams with papyrus on the inside. Each has a single rudder, which is driven straight through the keel. The mast is a piece of acantha-wood, and the sails are made of papyrus. These boats cannot make way against the current unless there is a brisk breeze; they are, therefore, towed up-stream from the shore: down-stream they are managed as follows. There is a raft belonging to each, made of the wood of the tamarisk, fastened together with a wattling of reeds; and also a stone bored through the middle about two talents in weight. The raft is fastened to the vessel by a rope, and allowed to float down the stream in front, while the stone is attached by another rope astern. The result is that the raft, hurried forward by the current, goes rapidly down the river, and drags the "baris" (for so they call this sort of boat) after it; while the stone, which is pulled along in the wake of the vessel, and lies deep in the water, keeps the boat straight. There are a vast number of these vessels in Egypt, and some of them are of many thousand talents' burthen.

[2.97] When the Nile overflows, the country is converted into a sea, and nothing appears but the cities, which look like the islands in the Egean. At this season boats no longer keep the course of the river, but sail right across the plain. On the voyage from Naucratis to Memphis at this season, you pass close to the pyramids, whereas the usual course is by the apex of the Delta, and the city of Cercasorus. You can sail also from the maritime town of Canobus across the flat to Naucratis, passing by the cities of Anthylla and Archandropolis.

[2.98] The former of these cities, which is a place of note, is assigned expressly to the wife of the ruler of Egypt for the time being, to keep her in shoes. Such has been the custom ever since Egypt fell under the Persian yoke. The other city seems to me to have got its name of Archandropolis from Archander the Phthian, son of Achaeus, and son-in-law of Danaus. There might certainly have been another Archander; but, at any rate, the name is not Egyptian.

[2.99] Thus far I have spoken of Egypt from my own observation, relating what I myself saw, the ideas that I formed, and the results of my own researches. What follows rests on the accounts given me by the Egyptians, which shall now repeat, adding thereto some particulars which fell under my own notice.

The priests said that Min was the first king of Egypt, and that it was he who raised the dyke which protects Memphis from the inundations of the Nile. Before his time the river flowed entirely along the sandy range of hills which skirts Egypt on the side of Libya. He, however, by banking up the river at the bend which it forms about a hundred furlongs south of Memphis, laid the ancient channel dry, while he dug a new course for the stream halfway between the two lines of hills. To

this day, the elbow which the Nile forms at the point where it is forced aside into the new channel is guarded with the greatest care by the Persians, and strengthened every year; for if the river were to burst out at this place, and pour over the mound, there would be danger of Memphis being completely overwhelmed by the flood. Min, the first king, having thus, by turning the river, made the tract where it used to run, dry land, proceeded in the first place to build the city now called Memphis, which lies in the narrow part of Egypt; after which he further excavated a lake outside the town, to the north and west, communicating with the river, which was itself the eastern boundary. Besides these works, he also, the priests said, built the temple of Vulcan which stands within the city, a vast edifice, very worthy of mention.

[2.100] Next, they read me from a papyrus the names of three hundred and thirty monarchs, who (they said) were his successors upon the throne. In this number of generations there were eighteen Ethiopian kings, and one queen who was a native; all the rest were kings and Egyptians. The queen bore the same name as the Babylonian princess, namely, Nitocris. They said that she succeeded her brother; he had been king of Egypt, and was put to death by his subjects, who then placed her upon the throne. Bent on avenging his death, she devised a cunning scheme by which she destroyed a vast number of Egyptians. She constructed a spacious underground chamber, and, on pretence of inaugurating it, contrived the following:- Inviting to a banquet those of the Egyptians whom she knew to have had the chief share in the murder of her brother, she suddenly, as they were feasting, let the river in upon them by means of a secret duct of large size. This and this only did they tell me of her, except that, when she had done as I have said, she threw herself into an apartment full of ashes, that she might escape the vengeance whereto she would otherwise have been exposed.

[2.101] The other kings, they said, were personages of no note or distinction, and left no monuments of any account, with the exception of the last, who was named Moeris. He left several memorials of his reign - the northern gateway of the temple of Vulcan, the lake excavated by his orders, whose dimensions I shall give presently, and the pyramids built by him in the lake, the size of which will be stated when I describe the lake itself wherein they stand. Such were his works: the other kings left absolutely nothing.

[2.102] Passing over these monarchs, therefore, I shall speak of the king who reigned next, whose name was Sesostris. He, the priests said, first of all proceeded in a fleet of ships of war from the Arabian gulf along the shores of the Erythraean sea, subduing the nations as he went, until he finally reached a sea which could not be navigated by reason of the shoals. Hence he returned to Egypt, where, they told me, he collected a vast armament, and made a progress by land across the continent, conquering every people which fell in his way. In the countries where the natives withstood his attack, and fought gallantly for their liberties, he erected pillars, on which he inscribed his own name and country, and how that he had here reduced the inhabitants to subjection by the might of his arms: where, on the contrary, they submitted readily and without a struggle, he inscribed on the pillars, in addition to these particulars, an emblem to mark that they were a nation of women, that is, unwarlike and effeminate.

[2.103] In this way he traversed the whole continent of Asia, whence he passed on into Europe, and made himself master of Scythia and of Thrace, beyond which countries I do not think that his army extended its march. For thus far the pillars which he erected are still visible, but in the remoter regions they are no longer found. Returning to Egypt from Thrace, he came, on his way, to the

banks of the river Phasis. Here I cannot say with any certainty what took place. Either he of his own accord detached a body of troops from his main army and left them to colonise the country, or else a certain number of his soldiers, wearied with their long wanderings, deserted, and established themselves on the banks of this stream.

[2.104] There can be no doubt that the Colchians are an Egyptian race. Before I heard any mention of the fact from others, I had remarked it myself. After the thought had struck me, I made inquiries on the subject both in Colchis and in Egypt, and I found that the Colchians had a more distinct recollection of the Egyptians, than the Egyptians had of them. Still the Egyptians said that they believed the Colchians to be descended from the army of Sesostris. My own conjectures were founded, first, on the fact that they are black-skinned and have woolly hair, which certainly amounts to but little, since several other nations are so too; but further and more especially, on the circumstance that the Colchians, the Egyptians, and the Ethiopians, are the only nations who have practised circumcision from the earliest times. The Phoenicians and the Syrians of Palestine themselves confess that they learnt the custom of the Egyptians; and the Syrians who dwell about the rivers Thermodon and Parthenius, as well as their neighbours the Macronians, say that they have recently adopted it from the Colchians. Now these are the only nations who use circumcision, and it is plain that they all imitate herein the Egyptians. With respect to the Ethiopians, indeed, I cannot decide whether they learnt the practice of the Egyptians, or the Egyptians of them - it is undoubtedly of very ancient date in Ethiopia - but that the others derived their knowledge of it from Egypt is clear to me from the fact that the Phoenicians, when they come to have commerce with the Greeks, cease to follow the Egyptians in this custom, and allow their children to remain uncircumcised.

[2.105] I will add a further proof to the identity of the Egyptians and the Colchians. These two nations weave their linen in exactly the same way, and this is a way entirely unknown to the rest of the world; they also in their whole mode of life and in their language resemble one another. The Colchian linen is called by the Greeks Sardinian, while that which comes from Egypt is known as Egyptian.

[2.106] The pillars which Sesostris erected in the conquered countries have for the most part disappeared; but in the part of Syria called Palestine, I myself saw them still standing, with the writing above-mentioned, and the emblem distinctly visible. In Ionia also, there are two representations of this prince engraved upon rocks, one on the road from Ephesus to Phocaea, the other between Sardis and Smyrna. In each case the figure is that of a man, four cubits and a span high, with a spear in his right hand and a bow in his left, the rest of his costume being likewise half Egyptian, half Ethiopian. There is an inscription across the breast from shoulder to shoulder, in the sacred character of Egypt, which says, "With my own shoulders I conquered this land." The conqueror does not tell who he is, or whence he comes, though elsewhere Sesostris records these facts. Hence it has been imagined by some of those who have seen these forms, that they are figures of Memnon; but such as think so err very widely from the truth.

[2.107] This Sesostris, the priests went on to say, upon his return home, accompanied by vast multitudes of the people whose countries he had subdued, was received by his brother, whom he had made viceroy of Egypt on his departure, at Daphnae near Pelusium, and invited by him to a banquet, which he attended, together with his sons. Then his brother piled a quantity of wood all

round the building, and having so done set it alight. Sesostris, discovering what had happened, took counsel instantly with his wife, who had accompanied him to the feast, and was advised by her to lay two of their six sons upon the fire, and so make a bridge across the flames, whereby the rest might effect their escape. Sesostris did as she recommended, and thus while two of his sons were burnt to death, he himself and his other children were saved.

[2.108] The king then returned to his own land and took vengeance upon his brother, after which he proceeded to make use of the multitudes whom he had brought with him from the conquered countries, partly to drag the huge masses of stone which were moved in the course of his reign to the temple of Vulcan - partly to dig the numerous canals with which the whole of Egypt is intersected. By these forced labours the entire face of the country was changed; for whereas Egypt had formerly been a region suited both for horses and carriages, henceforth it became entirely unfit for either. Though a flat country throughout its whole extent, it is now unfit for either horse or carriage, being cut up by the canals, which are extremely numerous and run in all directions. The king's object was to supply Nile water to the inhabitants of the towns situated in the mid-country, and not lying upon the river; for previously they had been obliged, after the subsidence of the floods, to drink a brackish water which they obtained from wells.

[2.109] Sesostris also, they declared, made a division of the soil of Egypt among the inhabitants, assigning square plots of ground of equal size to all, and obtaining his chief revenue from the rent which the holders were required to pay him year by year. If the river carried away any portion of a man's lot, he appeared before the king, and related what had happened; upon which the king sent persons to examine, and determine by measurement the exact extent of the loss; and thenceforth only such a rent was demanded of him as was proportionate to the reduced size of his land. From this practice, I think, geometry first came to be known in Egypt, whence it passed into Greece. The sun-dial, however, and the gnomon with the division of the day into twelve parts, were received by the Greeks from the Babylonians.

[2.110] Sesostris was king not only of Egypt, but also of Ethiopia. He was the only Egyptian monarch who ever ruled over the latter country. He left, as memorials of his reign, the stone statues which stand in front of the temple of Vulcan, two of which, representing himself and his wife, are thirty cubits in height, while the remaining four, which represent his sons, are twenty cubits. These are the statues, in front of which the priest of Vulcan, very many years afterwards, would not allow Darius the Persian to place a statue of himself; "because," he said, "Darius had not equalled the achievements of Sesostris the Egyptian: for while Sesostris had subdued to the full as many nations as ever Darius had brought under, he had likewise conquered the Scythians, whom Darius had failed to master. It was not fair, therefore, that he should erect his statue in front of the offerings of a king, whose deeds he had been unable to surpass." Darius, they say, pardoned the freedom of this speech.

[2.111] On the death of Sesostris, his son Pheron, the priests said, mounted the throne. He undertook no warlike expeditions; being struck with blindness, owing to the following circumstance. The river had swollen to the unusual height of eighteen cubits, and had overflowed all the fields, when, a sudden wind arising, the water rose in great waves. Then the king, in a spirit of impious violence, seized his spear, and hurled it into the strong eddies of the stream. Instantly he was smitten with disease of the eyes, from which after a little while he became blind, continuing

without the power of vision for ten years. At last, in the eleventh year, an oracular announcement reached him from the city of Buto, to the effect, that "the time of his punishment had run out, and he should recover his sight by washing his eyes with urine. He must find a woman who had been faithful to her husband, and had never preferred to him another man." The king, therefore, first of all made trial of his wife, but to no purpose he continued as blind as before. So he made the experiment with other women, until at length he succeeded, and in this way recovered his sight. Hereupon he assembled all the women, except the last, and bringing them to the city which now bears the name of Erythrabolus (Red-soil), he there burnt them all, together with the place itself. The woman to whom he owed his cure, he married, and after his recovery was complete, he presented offerings to all the temples of any note, among which the best worthy of mention are the two stone obelisks which he gave to the temple of the Sun. These are magnificent works; each is made of a single stone, eight cubits broad, and a hundred cubits in height.

[2.112] Pheros, they said, was succeeded by a man of Memphis, whose name, in the language of the Greeks, was Proteus. There is a sacred precinct of this king in Memphis, which is very beautiful, and richly adorned, situated south of the great temple of Vulcan. Phoenicians from the city of Tyre dwell all round this precinct, and the whole place is known by the name of "the camp of the Tyrians." Within the enclosure stands a temple, which is called that of Venus the Stranger. I conjecture the building to have been erected to Helen, the daughter of Tyndarus; first, because she, as I have heard say, passed some time at the court of Proteus; and secondly, because the temple is dedicated to Venus the Stranger; for among all the many temples of Venus there is no other where the goddess bears this title.

[2.113] The priests, in answer to my inquiries on the subject of Helen, informed me of the following particulars. When Alexander had carried off Helen from Sparta, he took ship and sailed homewards. On his way across the Egean a gale arose, which drove him from his course and took him down to the sea of Egypt; hence, as the wind did not abate, he was carried on to the coast, when he went ashore, landing at the Salt-Pans, in that mouth of the Nile which is now called the Canobic. At this place there stood upon the shore a temple, which still exists, dedicated to Hercules. If a slave runs away from his master, and taking sanctuary at this shrine gives himself up to the god, and receives certain sacred marks upon his person, whosoever his master may be, he cannot lay hand on him. This law still remained unchanged to my time. Hearing, therefore, of the custom of the place, the attendants of Alexander deserted him, and fled to the temple, where they sat as suppliants. While there, wishing to damage their master, they accused him to the Egyptians, narrating all the circumstances of the rape of Helen and the wrong done to Menelaus. These charges they brought, not only before the priests, but also before the warden of that mouth of the river, whose name was Thonis.

[2.114] As soon as he received the intelligence, Thonis sent a message to Proteus, who was at Memphis, to this effect: "A stranger is arrived from Greece; he is by race a Teucrian, and has done a wicked deed in the country from which he is come. Having beguiled the wife of the man whose guest he was, he carried her away with him, and much treasure also. Compelled by stress of weather, he has now put in here. Are we to let him depart as he came, or shall we seize what he has brought?" Proteus replied, "Seize the man, be he who he may, that has dealt thus wickedly with his friend, and bring him before me, that I may hear what he will say for himself."

[2.115] Thonis, on receiving these orders, arrested Alexander, and stopped the departure of his ships; then, taking with him Alexander, Helen, the treasures, and also the fugitive slaves, he went up to Memphis. When all were arrived, Proteus asked Alexander, "who he was, and whence he had come?" Alexander replied by giving his descent, the name of his country, and a true account of his late voyage. Then Proteus questioned him as to how he got possession of Helen. In his reply Alexander became confused, and diverged from the truth, whereon the slaves interposed, confuted his statements, and told the whole history of the crime. Finally, Proteus delivered judgment as follows: "Did I not regard it as a matter of the utmost consequence that no stranger driven to my country by adverse winds should ever be put to death, I would certainly have avenged the Greek by slaying thee. Thou basest of men, - after accepting hospitality, to do so wicked a deed! First, thou didst seduce the wife of thy own host - then, not content therewith, thou must violently excite her mind, and steal her away from her husband. Nay, even so thou wert not satisfied, but on leaving, thou must plunder the house in which thou hadst been a guest. Now then, as I think it of the greatest importance to put no stranger to death, I suffer thee to depart; but the woman and the treasures I shall not permit to be carried away. Here they must stay, till the Greek stranger comes in person and takes them back with him. For thyself and thy companions, I command thee to begone from my land within the space of three days - and I warn you, that otherwise at the end of that time you will be treated as enemies."

[2.116] Such was the tale told me by the priests concerning the arrival of Helen at the court of Proteus. It seems to me that Homer was acquainted with this story, and while discarding it, because he thought it less adapted for epic poetry than the version which he followed, showed that it was not unknown to him. This is evident from the travels which he assigns to Alexander in the Iliad - and let it be borne in mind that he has nowhere else contradicted himself - making him be carried out of his course on his return with Helen, and after divers wanderings come at last to Sidon in Phoenicia. The passage is in the Bravery of Diomed, and the words are as follows:-

There were the robes, many-coloured, the work of Sidonian women:
They from Sidon had come, what time god-shaped Alexander
Over the broad sea brought, that way, the high-born Helen.

In the Odyssey also the same fact is alluded to, in these words:-

Such, so wisely prepared, were the drugs that her stores afforded,
Excellent; gift which once Polydamna, partner of Thonis,
Gave her in Egypt, where many the simples that grow in the meadows,
Potent to cure in part, in part as potent to injure.

Menelaus too, in the same poem, thus addresses Telemachus:-

Much did I long to return, but the Gods still kept me in Egypt -
Angry because I had failed to pay them their hecatombs duly.

In these places Homer shows himself acquainted with the voyage of Alexander to Egypt, for Syria borders on Egypt, and the Phoenicians, to whom Sidon belongs, dwell in Syria.

[2.117] From these various passages, and from that about Sidon especially, it is clear that Homer did not write the *Cypria*. For there it is said that Alexander arrived at Ilium with Helen on the third day after he left Sparta, the wind having been favourable, and the sea smooth; whereas in the *Iliad*, the poet makes him wander before he brings her home. Enough, however, for the present of Homer and the *Cypria*.

[2.118] I made inquiry of the priests whether the story which the Greeks tell about Ilium is a fable, or no. In reply they related the following particulars, of which they declared that Menelaus had himself informed them. After the rape of Helen, a vast army of Greeks, wishing to render help to Menelaus, set sail for the Teucric territory; on their arrival they disembarked, and formed their camp, after which they sent ambassadors to Ilium, of whom Menelaus was one. The embassy was received within the walls, and demanded the restoration of Helen with the treasures which Alexander had carried off, and likewise required satisfaction for the wrong done. The Teucricians gave at once the answer in which they persisted ever afterwards, backing their assertions sometimes even with oaths, to wit, that neither Helen, nor the treasures claimed, were in their possession, - both the one and the other had remained, they said, in Egypt; and it was not just to come upon them for what Proteus, king of Egypt, was detaining. The Greeks, imagining that the Teucricians were merely laughing at them, laid siege to the town, and never rested until they finally took it. As, however, no Helen was found, and they were still told the same story, they at length believed in its truth, and despatched Menelaus to the court of Proteus.

[2.119] So Menelaus travelled to Egypt, and on his arrival sailed up the river as far as Memphis, and related all that had happened. He met with the utmost hospitality, received Helen back unharmed, and recovered all his treasures. After this friendly treatment Menelaus, they said, behaved most unjustly towards the Egyptians; for as it happened that at the time when he wanted to take his departure, he was detained by the wind being contrary, and as he found this obstruction continue, he had recourse to a most wicked expedient. He seized, they said, two children of the people of the country, and offered them up in sacrifice. When this became known, the indignation of the people was stirred, and they went in pursuit of Menelaus, who, however, escaped with his ships to Libya, after which the Egyptians could not say whither he went. The rest they knew full well, partly by the inquiries which they had made, and partly from the circumstances having taken place in their own land, and therefore not admitting of doubt.

[2.120] Such is the account given by the Egyptian priests, and I am myself inclined to regard as true all that they say of Helen from the following considerations:- If Helen had been at Troy, the inhabitants would, I think, have given her up to the Greeks, whether Alexander consented to it or no. For surely neither Priam, nor his family, could have been so infatuated as to endanger their own persons, their children, and their city, merely that Alexander might possess Helen. At any rate, if they determined to refuse at first, yet afterwards when so many of the Trojans fell on every encounter with the Greeks, and Priam too in each battle lost a son, or sometimes two, or three, or even more, if we may credit the epic poets, I do not believe that even if Priam himself had been married to her he would have declined to deliver her up, with the view of bringing the series of calamities to a close. Nor was it as if Alexander had been heir to the crown, in which case he might have had the chief management of affairs, since Priam was already old. Hector, who was his elder brother, and a far braver man, stood before him, and was the heir to the kingdom on the death of their father Priam. And it could not be Hector's interest to uphold his brother in his wrong, when it

brought such dire calamities upon himself and the other Trojans. But the fact was that they had no Helen to deliver, and so they told the Greeks, but the Greeks would not believe what they said - Divine Providence, as I think, so willing, that by their utter destruction it might be made evident to all men that when great wrongs are done, the gods will surely visit them with great punishments. Such, at least, is my view of the matter.

[2.121] When Proteus died, Rhampsinitus, the priests informed me, succeeded to the throne. His monuments were the western gateway of the temple of Vulcan, and the two statues which stand in front of this gateway, called by the Egyptians, the one Summer, the other Winter, each twenty-five cubits in height. The statue of Summer, which is the northernmost of the two, is worshipped by the natives, and has offerings made to it; that of Winter, which stands towards the south, is treated in exactly the contrary way. King Rhampsinitus was possessed, they said, of great riches in silver - indeed to such an amount, that none of the princes, his successors, surpassed or even equalled his wealth. For the better custody of this money, he proposed to build a vast chamber of hewn stone, one side of which was to form a part of the outer wall of his palace. The builder, therefore, having designs upon the treasures, contrived, as he was making the building, to insert in this wall a stone, which could easily be removed from its place by two men, or even by one. So the chamber was finished, and the king's money stored away in it. Time passed, and the builder fell sick, when finding his end approaching, he called for his two sons, and related to them the contrivance he had made in the king's treasure-chamber, telling them it was for their sakes he had done it, that so they might always live in affluence. Then he gave them clear directions concerning the mode of removing the stone, and communicated the measurements, bidding them carefully keep the secret, whereby they would be Comptrollers of the Royal Exchequer so long as they lived. Then the father died, and the sons were not slow in setting to work: they went by night to the palace, found the stone in the wall of the building, and having removed it with ease, plundered the treasury of a round sum.

When the king next paid a visit to the apartment, he was astonished to see that the money was sunk in some of the vessels wherein it was stored away. Whom to accuse, however, he knew not, as the seals were all perfect, and the fastenings of the room secure. Still each time that he repeated his visits, he found that more money was gone. The thieves in truth never stopped, but plundered the treasury ever more and more. At last the king determined to have some traps made, and set near the vessels which contained his wealth. This was done, and when the thieves came, as usual, to the treasure-chamber, and one of them entering through the aperture, made straight for the jars, suddenly he found himself caught in one of the traps. Perceiving that he was lost, he instantly called his brother and telling him what had happened, entreated him to enter as quickly as possible and cut off his head, that when his body should be discovered it might not be recognised, which would have the effect of bringing ruin upon both. The other thief thought the advice good, and was persuaded to follow it then, fitting the stone into its place, he went home, taking with him his brother's head.

When day dawned, the king came into the room, and marvelled greatly to see the body of the thief in the trap without a head, while the building was still whole, and neither entrance nor exit was to be seen anywhere. In this perplexity he commanded the body of the dead man to be hung up outside the palace wall, and set a guard to watch it, with orders that if any persons were seen weeping or lamenting near the place, they should be seized and brought before him. When the

mother heard of this exposure of the corpse of her son, she took it sorely to heart, and spoke to her surviving child, bidding him devise some plan or other to get back the body, and threatening, that if he did not exert himself, she would go herself to the king, and denounce him as the robber.

The son said all he could to persuade her to let the matter rest, but in vain; she still continued to trouble him, until at last he yielded to her importunity, and contrived as follows:- Filling some skins with wine, he loaded them on donkeys, which he drove before him till he came to the place where the guards were watching the dead body, when pulling two or three of the skins towards him, he untied some of the necks which dangled by the asses' sides. The wine poured freely out, whereupon he began to beat his head, and shout with all his might, seeming not to know which of the donkeys he should turn to first. When the guards saw the wine running, delighted to profit by the occasion, they rushed one and all into the road, each with some vessel or other, and caught the liquor as it was spilling. The driver pretended anger, and loaded them with abuse; whereon they did their best to pacify him, until at last he appeared to soften, and recover his good humour, drove his asses aside out of the road, and set to work to rearrange their burthens; meanwhile, as he talked and chatted with the guards, one of them began to rally him, and make him laugh, whereupon he gave them one of the skins as a gift. They now made up their minds to sit down and have a drinking-bout where they were, so they begged him to remain and drink with them. Then the man let himself be persuaded, and stayed. As the drinking went on, they grew very friendly together, so presently he gave them another skin, upon which they drank so copiously that they were all overcome with the liquor, and growing drowsy lay down, and fell asleep on the spot. The thief waited till it was the dead of the night, and then took down the body of his brother; after which, in mockery, he shaved off the right side of all the soldiers' beards, and so left them. Laying his brother's body upon the asses, he carried it home to his mother, having thus accomplished the thing that she had required of him.

When it came to the king's ears that the thief's body was stolen away, he was sorely vexed. Wishing, therefore, whatever it might cost, to catch the man who had contrived the trick, he had recourse (the priests said) to an expedient, which I can scarcely credit. He sent his own daughter to the common stews, with orders to admit all comers, but to require every man to tell her what was the cleverest and wickedest thing he had done in the whole course of his life. If any one in reply told her the story of the thief, she was to lay hold of him and not allow him to get away. The daughter did as her father willed, whereon the thief, who was well aware of the king's motive, felt a desire to outdo him in craft and cunning. Accordingly he contrived the following plan:- He procured the corpse of a man lately dead, and cutting off one of the arms at the shoulder, put it under his dress, and so went to the king's daughter. When she put the question to him as she had done to all the rest, he replied that the wickedest thing he had ever done was cutting off the head of his brother when he was caught in a trap in the king's treasury, and the cleverest was making the guards drunk and carrying off the body. As he spoke, the princess caught at him, but the thief took advantage of the darkness to hold out to her the hand of the corpse. Imagining it to be his own hand, she seized and held it fast; while the thief, leaving it in her grasp, made his escape by the door.

The king, when word was brought him of this fresh success, amazed at the sagacity and boldness of the man, sent messengers to all the towns in his dominions to proclaim a free pardon for the thief, and to promise him a rich reward, if he came and made himself known. The thief took the king at

his word, and came boldly into his presence; whereupon Rhampsinitus, greatly admiring him, and looking on him as the most knowing of men, gave him his daughter in marriage. "The Egyptians," he said, "excelled all the rest of the world in wisdom, and this man excelled all other Egyptians."

[2.122] The same king, I was also informed by the priests, afterwards descended alive into the region which the Greeks call Hades, and there played at dice with Ceres, sometimes winning and sometimes suffering defeat. After a while he returned to earth, and brought with him a golden napkin, a gift which he had received from the goddess. From this descent of Rhampsinitus into Hades, and return to earth again, the Egyptians, I was told, instituted a festival, which they certainly celebrated in my day. On what occasion it was that they instituted it, whether upon this or upon any other, I cannot determine. The following are the ceremonies:- On a certain day in the year the priests weave a mande, and binding the eyes of one of their number with a fillet, they put the mantle upon him, and take him with them into the roadway conducting to the temple of Ceres, when they depart and leave him to himself. Then the priest, thus blindfolded, is led (they say) by two wolves to the temple of Ceres, distant twenty furlongs from the city, where he stays awhile, after which he is brought back from the temple by the wolves, and left upon the spot where they first joined him.

[2.123] Such as think the tales told by the Egyptians credible are free to accept them for history. For my own part, I propose to myself throughout my whole work faithfully to record the traditions of the several nations. The Egyptians maintain that Ceres and Bacchus preside in the realms below. They were also the first to broach the opinion that the soul of man is immortal and that, when the body dies, it enters into the form of an animal which is born at the moment, thence passing on from one animal into another, until it has circled through the forms of all the creatures which tenant the earth, the water, and the air, after which it enters again into a human frame, and is born anew. The whole period of the transmigration is (they say) three thousand years. There are Greek writers, some of an earlier, some of a later date, who have borrowed this doctrine from the Egyptians, and put it forward as their own. I could mention their names, but I abstain from doing so.

[2.124] Till the death of Rhampsinitus, the priests said, Egypt was excellently governed, and flourished greatly; but after him Cheops succeeded to the throne, and plunged into all manner of wickedness. He closed the temples, and forbade the Egyptians to offer sacrifice, compelling them instead to labour, one and all, in his service. Some were required to drag blocks of stone down to the Nile from the quarries in the Arabian range of hills; others received the blocks after they had been conveyed in boats across the river, and drew them to the range of hills called the Libyan. A hundred thousand men laboured constantly, and were relieved every three months by a fresh lot. It took ten years' oppression of the people to make the causeway for the conveyance of the stones, a work not much inferior, in my judgment, to the pyramid itself. This causeway is five furlongs in length, ten fathoms wide, and in height, at the highest part, eight fathoms. It is built of polished stone, and is covered with carvings of animals. To make it took ten years, as I said - or rather to make the causeway, the works on the mound where the pyramid stands, and the underground chambers, which Cheops intended as vaults for his own use: these last were built on a sort of island, surrounded by water introduced from the Nile by a canal. The pyramid itself was twenty years in building. It is a square, eight hundred feet each way, and the height the same, built entirely of polished stone, fitted together with the utmost care. The stones of which it is composed are none of them less than thirty feet in length.

[2.125] The pyramid was built in steps, battlement-wise, as it is called, or, according to others, altar-wise. After laying the stones for the base, they raised the remaining stones to their places by means of machines formed of short wooden planks. The first machine raised them from the ground to the top of the first step. On this there was another machine, which received the stone upon its arrival, and conveyed it to the second step, whence a third machine advanced it still higher. Either they had as many machines as there were steps in the pyramid, or possibly they had but a single machine, which, being easily moved, was transferred from tier to tier as the stone rose - both accounts are given, and therefore I mention both. The upper portion of the pyramid was finished first, then the middle, and finally the part which was lowest and nearest the ground. There is an inscription in Egyptian characters on the pyramid which records the quantity of radishes, onions, and garlic consumed by the labourers who constructed it; and I perfectly well remember that the interpreter who read the writing to me said that the money expended in this way was 1600 talents of silver. If this then is a true record, what a vast sum must have been spent on the iron tools used in the work, and on the feeding and clothing of the labourers, considering the length of time the work lasted, which has already been stated, and the additional time - no small space, I imagine - which must have been occupied by the quarrying of the stones, their conveyance, and the formation of the underground apartments.

[2.126] The wickedness of Cheops reached to such a pitch that, when he had spent all his treasures and wanted more, he sent his daughter to the stewards, with orders to procure him a certain sum - how much I cannot say, for I was not told; she procured it, however, and at the same time, bent on leaving a monument which should perpetuate her own memory, she required each man to make her a present of a stone towards the works which she contemplated. With these stones she built the pyramid which stands midmost of the three that are in front of the great pyramid, measuring along each side a hundred and fifty feet.

[2.127] Cheops reigned, the Egyptians said, fifty years, and was succeeded at his demise by Chephren, his brother.

Chephren imitated the conduct of his predecessor, and, like him, built a pyramid, which did not, however, equal the dimensions of his brother's. Of this I am certain, for I measured them both myself. It has no subterraneous apartments, nor any canal from the Nile to supply it with water, as the other pyramid has. In that, the Nile water, introduced through an artificial duct, surrounds an island, where the body of Cheops is said to lie. Chephren built his pyramid close to the great pyramid of Cheops, and of the same dimensions, except that he lowered the height forty feet. For the basement he employed the many-coloured stone of Ethiopia. These two pyramids stand both on the same hill, an elevation not far short of a hundred feet in height. The reign of Chephren lasted fifty-six years.

[2.128] Thus the affliction of Egypt endured for the space of one hundred and six years, during the whole of which time the temples were shut up and never opened. The Egyptians so detest the memory of these kings that they do not much like even to mention their names. Hence they commonly call the pyramids after Philiton, a shepherd who at that time fed his flocks about the place.

[2.129] After Chephren, Mycerinus (they said), son of Cheops, ascended the throne. This prince disapproved the conduct of his father, re-opened the temples, and allowed the people, who were ground down to the lowest point of misery, to return to their occupations, and to resume the practice of sacrifice. His justice in the decision of causes was beyond that of all the former kings. The Egyptians praise him in this respect more highly than any of their other monarchs, declaring that he not only gave his judgments with fairness, but also, when any one was dissatisfied with his sentence, made compensation to him out of his own purse, and thus pacified his anger. Mycerinus had established his character for mildness, and was acting as I have described, when the stroke of calamity fell on him. First of all his daughter died, the only child that he possessed. Experiencing a bitter grief at this visitation, in his sorrow he conceived the wish to entomb his child in some unusual way. He therefore caused a cow to be made of wood, and after the interior had been hollowed out, he had the whole surface coated with gold; and in this novel tomb laid the dead body of his daughter.

[2.130] The cow was not placed under ground, but continued visible to my times: it was at Sais, in the royal palace, where it occupied a chamber richly adorned. Every day there are burnt before it aromatics of every kind; and all night long a lamp is kept burning in the apartment. In an adjoining chamber are statues which the priests at Sais, declared to represent the various concubines of Mycerinus. They are colossal figures in wood, of the number of about twenty, and are represented naked. Whose images they really are, I cannot say - I can only repeat the account which was given to me.

[2.131] Concerning these colossal figures and the sacred cow, there is also another tale narrated, which runs thus: "Mycerinus was enamoured of his daughter, and offered her violence - the damsel for grief hanged herself, and Mycerinus entombed her in the cow. Then her mother cut off the hands of all her tiring - maids, because they had sided with the father, and betrayed the child; and so the statues of the maids have no hands." All this is mere fable in my judgment, especially what is said about the hands of the colossal statues. I could plainly see that the figures had only lost their hands through the effect of time. They had dropped off, and were still lying on the ground about the feet of the statues.

[2.132] As for the cow, the greater portion of it is hidden by a scarlet coverture; the head and neck, however, which are visible, are coated very thickly with gold, and between the horns there is a representation in gold of the orb of the sun. The figure is not erect, but lying down, with the limbs under the body; the dimensions being fully those of a large animal of the kind. Every year it is taken from the apartment where it is kept, and exposed to the light of day - this is done at the season when the Egyptians beat themselves in honour of one of their gods, whose name I am unwilling to mention in connection with such a matter. They say that the daughter of Mycerinus requested her father in her dying moments to allow her once a year to see the sun.

[2.133] After the death of his daughter, Mycerinus was visited with a second calamity, of which I shall now proceed to give an account. An oracle reached him from the town of Buto, which said, "Six years only shalt thou live upon the earth, and in the seventh thou shalt end thy days." Mycerinus, indignant, sent an angry message to the oracle, reproaching the god with his injustice - "My father and uncle," he said, "though they shut up the temples, took no thought of the gods, and destroyed multitudes of men, nevertheless enjoyed a long life; I, who am pious, am to die so soon!"

There came in reply a second message from the oracle - "For this very reason is thy life brought so quickly to a close - thou hast not done as it behoved thee. Egypt was fated to suffer affliction one hundred and fifty years - the two kings who preceded thee upon the throne understood this - thou hast not understood it." Mycerinus, when this answer reached him, perceiving that his doom was fixed, had prepared, which he lighted every day at eventime, and feasted and enjoyed himself unceasingly both day and night, moving about in the marsh-country and the woods, and visiting all the places that he heard were agreeable sojourns. His wish was to prove the oracle false, by turning the nights into days, and so living twelve years in the space of six.

[2.134] He too left a pyramid, but much inferior in size to his father's. It is a square, each side of which falls short of three plethra by twenty feet, and is built for half its height of the stone of Ethiopia. Some of the Greeks call it the work of Rhodopis the courtesan, but they report falsely. It seems to me that these persons cannot have any real knowledge who Rhodopis was; otherwise they would scarcely have ascribed to her a work on which uncounted treasures, so to speak, must have been expended. Rhodopis also lived during the reign of Amasis, not of Mycerinus, and was thus very many years later than the time of the kings who built the pyramids. She was a Thracian by birth, and was the slave of Iadmon, son of Hephaestopolis, a Samian. Aesop, the fable-writer, was one of her fellow-slaves. That Aesop belonged to Iadmon is proved by many facts - among others, by this. When the Delphians, in obedience to the command of the oracle, made proclamation that if any one claimed compensation for the murder of Aesop he should receive it, the person who at last came forward was Iadmon, grandson of the former Iadmon, and he received the compensation. Aesop therefore must certainly have been the former Iadmon's slave.

[2.135] Rhodopis really arrived in Egypt under the conduct of Xantheus the Samian; she was brought there to exercise her trade, but was redeemed for a vast sum by Charaxus, a Mytilenaeon, the son of Scamandronymus, and brother of Sappho the poetess. After thus obtaining her freedom, she remained in Egypt, and, as she was very beautiful, amassed great wealth, for a person in her condition; not, however, enough to enable her to erect such a work as this pyramid. Any one who likes may go and see to what the tenth part of her wealth amounted, and he will thereby learn that her riches must not be imagined to have been very wonderfully great. Wishing to leave a memorial of herself in Greece, she determined to have something made the like of which was not to be found in any temple, and to offer it at the shrine at Delphi. So she set apart a tenth of her possessions, and purchased with the money a quantity of iron spits, such as are fit for roasting oxen whole, whereof she made a present to the oracle. They are still to be seen there, lying of a heap, behind the altar which the Chians dedicated, opposite the sanctuary. Naucratis seems somehow to be the place where such women are most attractive. First there was this Rhodopis of whom we have been speaking, so celebrated a person that her name came to be familiar to all the Greeks; and, afterwards, there was another, called Archidice, notorious throughout Greece, though not so much talked of as her predecessor. Charaxus, after ransoming Rhodopis, returned to Mytilene, and was often lashed by Sappho in her poetry. But enough has been said on the subject of this courtesan.

[2.136] After Mycerinus, the priests said, Asychis ascended the throne. He built the eastern gateway of the temple of Vulcan, which in size and beauty far surpasses the other three. All the four gateways have figures graven on them, and a vast amount of architectural ornament, but the gateway of Asychis is by far the most richly adorned. In the reign of this king, money being scarce and commercial dealings straitened, a law was passed that the borrower might pledge his father's

body to raise the sum whereof he had need. A proviso was appended to this law, giving the lender authority over the entire sepulchre of the borrower, so that a man who took up money under this pledge, if he died without paying the debt, could not obtain burial either in his own ancestral tomb, or in any other, nor could he during his lifetime bury in his own tomb any member of his family. The same king, desirous of eclipsing all his predecessors upon the throne, left as a monument of his reign a pyramid of brick. It bears an inscription, cut in stone, which runs thus:- "Despise me not in comparison with the stone pyramids; for I surpass them all, as much as Jove surpasses the other gods. A pole was plunged into a lake, and the mud which clave thereto was gathered; and bricks were made of the mud, and so I was formed." Such were the chief actions of this prince.

[2.137] He was succeeded on the throne, they said, by a blind man, a native of Anysis, whose own name also was Anysis. Under him Egypt was invaded by a vast army of Ethiopians, led by Sabacos, their king. The blind Anysis fled away to the marsh-country, and the Ethiopian was lord of the land for fifty years, during which his mode of rule was the following:- When an Egyptian was guilty of an offence, his plan was not to punish him with death: instead of so doing, he sentenced him, according to the nature of his crime, to raise the ground to a greater or a less extent in the neighbourhood of the city to which he belonged. Thus the cities came to be even more elevated than they were before. As early as the time of Sesostris, they had been raised by those who dug the canals in his reign; this second elevation of the soil under the Ethiopian king gave them a very lofty position. Among the many cities which thus attained to a great elevation, none (I think) was raised so much as the town called Bubastis, where there is a temple of the goddess Bubastis, which well deserves to be described. Other temples may be grander, and may have cost more in the building, but there is none so pleasant to the eye as this of Bubastis. The Bubastis of the Egyptians is the same as the Artemis (Diana) of the Greeks.

[2.138] The following is a description of this edifice:- Excepting the entrance, the whole forms an island. Two artificial channels from the Nile, one on either side of the temple, encompass the building, leaving only a narrow passage by which it is approached. These channels are each a hundred feet wide, and are thickly shaded with trees. The gateway is sixty feet in height, and is ornamented with figures cut upon the stone, six cubits high and well worthy of notice. The temple stands in the middle of the city, and is visible on all sides as one walks round it; for as the city has been raised up by embankment, while the temple has been left untouched in its original condition, you look down upon it wheresoever you are. A low wall runs round the enclosure, having figures engraved upon it, and inside there is a grove of beautiful tall trees growing round the shrine, which contains the image of the goddess. The enclosure is a furlong in length, and the same in breadth. The entrance to it is by a road paved with stone for a distance of about three furlongs, which passes straight through the market-place with an easterly direction, and is about four hundred feet in width. Trees of an extraordinary height grow on each side the road, which conducts from the temple of Bubastis to that of Mercury.

[2.139] The Ethiopian finally quitted Egypt, the priests said, by a hasty flight under the following circumstances. He saw in his sleep a vision:- a man stood by his side, and counselled him to gather together all the priests of Egypt and cut every one of them asunder. On this, according to the account which he himself gave, it came into his mind that the gods intended hereby to lead him to commit an act of sacrilege, which would be sure to draw down upon him some punishment either at the hands of gods or men. So he resolved not to do the deed suggested to him, but rather to retire

from Egypt, as the time during which it was fated that he should hold the country had now (he thought) expired. For before he left Ethiopia he had been told by the oracles which are venerated there, that he was to reign fifty years over Egypt. The years were now fled, and the dream had come to trouble him; he therefore of his own accord withdrew from the land.

[2.140] As soon as Sabacos was gone, the blind king left the marshes, and resumed the government. He had lived in the marsh-region the whole time, having formed for himself an island there by a mixture of earth and ashes. While he remained, the natives had orders to bring him food unbeknown to the Ethiopian, and latterly, at his request, each man had brought him, with the food, a certain quantity of ashes. Before Amyrtaeus, no one was able to discover the site of this island, which continued unknown to the kings of Egypt who preceded him on the throne for the space of seven hundred years and more. The name which it bears is Elbo. It is about ten furlongs across in each direction.

[2.141] The next king, I was told, was a priest of Vulcan, called Sethos. This monarch despised and neglected the warrior class of the Egyptians, as though he did not need their services. Among other indignities which he offered them, he took from them the lands which they had possessed under all the previous kings, consisting of twelve acres of choice land for each warrior. Afterwards, therefore, when Sanacharib, king of the Arabians and Assyrians, marched his vast army into Egypt, the warriors one and all refused to come to his aid. On this the monarch, greatly distressed, entered into the inner sanctuary, and, before the image of the god, bewailed the fate which impended over him. As he wept he fell asleep, and dreamed that the god came and stood at his side, bidding him be of good cheer, and go boldly forth to meet the Arabian host, which would do him no hurt, as he himself would send those who should help him. Sethos, then, relying on the dream, collected such of the Egyptians as were willing to follow him, who were none of them warriors, but traders, artisans, and market people; and with these marched to Pelusium, which commands the entrance into Egypt, and there pitched his camp. As the two armies lay here opposite one another, there came in the night, a multitude of field-mice, which devoured all the quivers and bowstrings of the enemy, and ate the thongs by which they managed their shields. Next morning they commenced their fight, and great multitudes fell, as they had no arms with which to defend themselves. There stands to this day in the temple of Vulcan, a stone statue of Sethos, with a mouse in his hand, and an inscription to this effect - "Look on me, and learn to reverence the gods."

[2.142] Thus far I have spoken on the authority of the Egyptians and their priests. They declare that from their first king to this last-mentioned monarch, the priest of Vulcan, was a period of three hundred and forty-one generations; such, at least, they say, was the number both of their kings, and of their high-priests, during this interval. Now three hundred generations of men make ten thousand years, three generations filling up the century; and the remaining forty-one generations make thirteen hundred and forty years. Thus the whole number of years is eleven thousand, three hundred and forty; in which entire space, they said, no god had ever appeared in a human form; nothing of this kind had happened either under the former or under the later Egyptian kings. The sun, however, had within this period of time, on four several occasions, moved from his wonted course, twice rising where he now sets, and twice setting where he now rises. Egypt was in no degree affected by these changes; the productions of the land, and of the river, remained the same; nor was there anything unusual either in the diseases or the deaths.

[2.143] When Hecataeus the historian was at Thebes, and, discoursing of his genealogy, traced his descent to a god in the person of his sixteenth ancestor, the priests of Jupiter did to him exactly as they afterwards did to me, though I made no boast of my family. They led me into the inner sanctuary, which is a spacious chamber, and showed me a multitude of colossal statues, in wood, which they counted up, and found to amount to the exact number they had said; the custom being for every high priest during his lifetime to set up his statue in the temple. As they showed me the figures and reckoned them up, they assured me that each was the son of the one preceding him; and this they repeated throughout the whole line, beginning with the representation of the priest last deceased, and continuing till they had completed the series. When Hecataeus, in giving his genealogy, mentioned a god as his sixteenth ancestor, the priests opposed their genealogy to his, going through this list, and refusing to allow that any man was ever born of a god. Their colossal figures were each, they said, a Piromis, born of a Piromis, and the number of them was three hundred and forty-five; through the whole series Piromis followed Piromis, and the line did not run up either to a god or a hero. The word Piromis may be rendered "gentleman."

[2.144] Of such a nature were, they said, the beings represented by these images - they were very far indeed from being gods. However, in the times anterior to them it was otherwise; then Egypt had gods for its rulers, who dwelt upon the earth with men, one being always supreme above the rest. The last of these was Horus, the son of Osiris, called by the Greeks Apollo. He deposed Typhon, and ruled over Egypt as its last god-king. Osiris is named Dionysus (Bacchus) by the Greeks.

[2.145] The Greeks regard Hercules, Bacchus, and Pan as the youngest of the gods. With the Egyptians, contrariwise, Pan is exceedingly ancient, and belongs to those whom they call "the eight gods," who existed before the rest. Hercules is one of the gods of the second order, who are known as "the twelve"; and Bacchus belongs to the gods of the third order, whom the twelve produced. I have already mentioned how many years intervened according to the Egyptians between the birth of Hercules and the reign of Amasis. From Pan to this period they count a still longer time; and even from Bacchus, who is the youngest of the three, they reckon fifteen thousand years to the reign of that king. In these matters they say they cannot be mistaken, as they have always kept count of the years, and noted them in their registers. But from the present day to the time of Bacchus, the reputed son of Semele, daughter of Cadmus, is a period of not more than sixteen hundred years; to that of Hercules, son of Alcmena, is about nine hundred; while to the time of Pan, son of Penelope (Pan, according to the Greeks, was her child by Mercury), is a shorter space than to the Trojan war, eight hundred years or thereabouts.

[2.146] It is open to all to receive whichever he may prefer of these two traditions; my own opinion about them has been already declared. If indeed these gods had been publicly known, and had grown old in Greece, as was the case with Hercules, son of Amphitryon, Bacchus, son of Semele, and Pan, son of Penelope, it might have been said that the last-mentioned personages were men who bore the names of certain previously existing deities. But Bacchus, according to the Greek tradition, was no sooner born than he was sewn up in Jupiter's thigh, and carried off to Nysa, above Egypt, in Ethiopia; and as to Pan, they do not even profess to know what happened to him after his birth. To me, therefore, it is quite manifest that the names of these gods became known to the Greeks after those of their other deities, and that they count their birth from the time when they first acquired a knowledge of them. Thus far my narrative rests on the accounts given by the Egyptians.

[2.147] In what follows I have the authority, not of the Egyptians only, but of others also who agree with them. I shall speak likewise in part from my own observation. When the Egyptians regained their liberty after the reign of the priest of Vulcan, unable to continue any while without a king, they divided Egypt into twelve districts, and set twelve kings over them. These twelve kings, united together by intermarriages, ruled Egypt in peace, having entered into engagements with one another not to depose any of their number, nor to aim at any aggrandisement of one above the rest, but to dwell together in perfect amity. Now the reason why they made these stipulations, and guarded with care against their infraction, was because at the very first establishment of the twelve kingdoms an oracle had declared - "That he among them who should pour in Vulcan's temple a libation from a cup of bronze would become monarch of the whole land of Egypt." Now the twelve held their meetings at all the temples.

[2.148] To bind themselves yet more closely together, it seemed good to them to leave a common monument. In pursuance of this resolution they made the Labyrinth which lies a little above Lake Moeris, in the neighbourhood of the place called the city of Crocodiles. I visited this place, and found it to surpass description; for if all the walls and other great works of the Greeks could be put together in one, they would not equal, either for labour or expense, this Labyrinth; and yet the temple of Ephesus is a building worthy of note, and so is the temple of Samos. The pyramids likewise surpass description, and are severally equal to a number of the greatest works of the Greeks, but the Labyrinth surpasses the pyramids. It has twelve courts, all of them roofed, with gates exactly opposite one another, six looking to the north, and six to the south. A single wall surrounds the entire building. There are two different sorts of chambers throughout - half underground, half above ground, the latter built upon the former; the whole number of these chambers is three thousand, fifteen hundred of each kind. The upper chambers I myself passed through and saw, and what I say concerning them is from my own observation; of the underground chambers I can only speak from report: for the keepers of the building could not be got to show them, since they contained (as they said) the sepulchres of the kings who built the Labyrinth, and also those of the sacred crocodiles. Thus it is from hearsay only that I can speak of the lower chambers. The upper chambers, however, I saw with my own eyes, and found them to excel all other human productions; for the passages through the houses, and the varied windings of the paths across the courts excited in me infinite admiration as I passed from the courts into chambers, and from the chambers into colonnades, and from the colonnades into fresh houses, and again from these into courts unseen before. The roof was throughout of stone, like the walls; and the walls were carved all over with figures; every court was surrounded with a colonnade which was built of white stones exquisitely fitted together. At the corner of the Labyrinth stands a pyramid, forty fathoms high, with large figures engraved on it, which is entered by a subterranean passage.

[2.149] Wonderful as is the Labyrinth, the work called the Lake of Moeris, which is close by the Labyrinth, is yet more astonishing. The measure of its circumference is sixty schoenes, or three thousand six hundred furlongs, which is equal to the entire length of Egypt along the sea-coast. The lake stretches in its longest direction from north to south, and in its deepest parts is of the depth of fifty fathoms. It is manifestly an artificial excavation, for nearly in the centre there stand two pyramids, rising to the height of fifty fathoms above the surface of the water, and extending as far beneath, crowned each of them with a colossal statue sitting upon a throne. Thus these pyramids are one hundred fathoms high, which is exactly a furlong (stadium) of six hundred feet: the fathom being six feet in length, or four cubits, which is the same thing, since a cubit measures six, and a

foot four, palms. The water of the lake does not come out of the ground, which is here excessively dry, but is introduced by a canal from the Nile. The current sets for six months into the lake from the river, and for the next six months into the river from the lake. it runs outward it returns a talent of silver daily to the royal treasury from the fish that are taken, but when the current is the other way the return sinks to one-third of that sum.

[2.150] The natives told me that there was a subterranean passage from this lake to the Libyan Syrtis, running westward into the interior by the hills above Memphis. As I could not anywhere see the earth which had been taken out when the excavation was made, and I was curious to know what had become of it, I asked the Egyptians who live closest to the lake where the earth had been put. The answer that they gave me I readily accepted as true, since I had heard of the same thing being done at Nineveh of the Assyrians. There, once upon a time, certain thieves, having formed a plan to get into their possession the vast treasures of Sardanapalus, the Ninevite king, which were laid up in subterranean treasuries, proceeded to tunnel a passage from the house where they lived into the royal palace, calculating the distance and the direction. At nightfall they took the earth from the excavation and carried it to the river Tigris, which ran by Nineveh, continuing to get rid of it in this manner until they had accomplished their purpose. It was exactly in the same way that the Egyptians disposed of the mould from their excavation, except that they did it by day and not by night; for as fast as the earth was dug, they carried it to the Nile, which they knew would disperse it far and wide. Such was the account which I received of the formation of this lake.

[2.151] The twelve kings for some time dealt honourably by one another, but at length it happened that on a certain occasion, when they had met to worship in the temple of Vulcan, the high-priest on the last day of the festival, in bringing forth the golden goblets from which they were wont to pour the libations, mistook the number and brought eleven goblets only for the twelve princes. Psammetichus was standing last, and, being left without a cup, he took his helmet, which was of bronze, from off his head, stretched it out to receive the liquor, and so made his libation. All the kings were accustomed to wear helmets, and all indeed wore them at this very time. Nor was there any crafty design in the action of Psammetichus. The eleven, however, when they came to consider what had been done, and bethought them of the oracle which had declared "that he who, of the twelve, should pour a libation from a cup of bronze, the same would be king of the whole land of Egypt," doubted at first if they should not put Psammetichus to death. Finding, however, upon examination, that he had acted in the matter without any guilty intent, they did not think it would be just to kill him; but determined, instead, to strip him of the chief part of his power and to banish him to the marshes, forbidding him to leave them or to hold any communication with the rest of Egypt.

[2.152] This was the second time that Psammetichus had been driven into banishment. On a former occasion he had fled from Sabacos the Ethiopian, who had put his father Necos to death; and had taken refuge in Syria from whence, after the retirement of the Ethiop in consequence of his dream, he was brought back by the Egyptians of the Saitic canton. Now it was his ill-fortune to be banished a second time by the eleven kings, on account of the libation which he had poured from his helmet; on this occasion he fled to the marshes. Feeling that he was an injured man, and designing to avenge himself upon his persecutors, Psammetichus sent to the city of Buto, where there is an oracle of Latona, the most veracious of all the oracles of the Egyptians, and having inquired concerning means of vengeance, received for answer that "Vengeance would come from

the sea, when brazen men should appear." Great was his incredulity when this answer arrived, for never, he thought, would brazen men arrive to be his helpers. However, not long afterwards certain Carians and Ionians who had left their country on a voyage of plunder, were carried by stress of weather to Egypt where they disembarked, all equipped in their brazen armour, and were seen by the natives, one of whom carried the tidings to Psammetichus, and, as he had never before seen men clad in brass, he reported that brazen men had come from the sea and were plundering the plain. Psammetichus, perceiving at once that the oracle was accomplished, made friendly advances to the strangers, and engaged them, by splendid promises, to enter into his service. He then, with their aid and that of the Egyptians who espoused his cause, attacked the eleven and vanquished them.

[2.153] When Psammetichus had thus become sole monarch of Egypt, he built the southern gateway of the temple of Vulcan in Memphis, and also a court for Apis, in which Apis is kept whenever he makes his appearance in Egypt. This court is opposite the gateway of Psammetichus, and is surrounded with a colonnade and adorned with a multitude of figures. Instead of pillars, the colonnade rests upon colossal statues, twelve cubits in height. The Greek name for Apis is Epaphus.

[2.154] To the Ionians and Carians who had lent him their assistance Psammetichus assigned as abodes two places opposite to each other, one on either side of the Nile, which received the name of "the Camps." He also made good all the splendid promises by which he had gained their support; and further, he intrusted to their care certain Egyptian children whom they were to teach the language of the Greeks. These children, thus instructed, became the parents of the entire class of interpreters in Egypt. The Ionians and Carians occupied for many years the places assigned them by Psammetichus, which lay near the sea, a little below the city of Bubastis, on the Pelusiac mouth of the Nile. King Amasis long afterwards removed the Greeks hence, and settled them at Memphis to guard him against the native Egyptians. From the date of the original settlement of these persons in Egypt, we Greeks, through our intercourse with them, have acquired an accurate knowledge of the several events in Egyptian history, from the reign of Psammetichus downwards; but before his time no foreigners had ever taken up their residence in that land. The docks where their vessels were laid up and the ruins of their habitations were still to be seen in my day at the place where they dwelt originally, before they were removed by Amasis. Such was the mode by which Psammetichus became master of Egypt.

[2.155] I have already made mention more than once of the Egyptian oracle, and, as it well deserves notice, I shall now proceed to give an account of it more at length. It is a temple of Latona, situated in the midst of a great city on the Sebennytic mouth of the Nile, at some distance up the river from the sea. The name of the city, as I have before observed, is Buto; and in it are two other temples also, one of Apollo and one of Diana. Latona's temple, which contains the oracle, is a spacious building with a gateway ten fathoms in height. The most wonderful thing that was actually to be seen about this temple was a chapel in the enclosure made of a single stone, the length and height of which were the same, each wall being forty cubits square, and the whole a single block! Another block of stone formed the roof and projected at the eaves to the extent of four cubits.

[2.156] This, as I have said, was what astonished me the most, of all the things that were actually to be seen about the temple. The next greatest marvel was the island called Chemmis. This island lies

in the middle of a broad and deep lake close by the temple, and the natives declare that it floats. For my own part I did not see it float, or even move; and I wondered greatly, when they told me concerning it, whether there be really such a thing as a floating island. It has a grand temple of Apollo built upon it, in which are three distinct altars. Palm trees grow on it in great abundance, and many other trees, some of which bear fruit, while others are barren. The Egyptians tell the following story in connection with this island, to explain the way in which it first came to float:- "In former times, when the isle was still fixed and motionless, Latona, one of the eight gods of the first order, who dwelt in the city of Buto, where now she has her oracle, received Apollo as a sacred charge from Isis, and saved him by hiding him in what is now called the floating island. Typhon meanwhile was searching everywhere in hopes of finding the child of Osiris." (According to the Egyptians, Apollo and Diana are the children of Bacchus and Isis, while Latona is their nurse and their preserver. They call Apollo, in their language, Horus; Ceres they call Isis; Diana, Bubastis. From this Egyptian tradition, and from no other, it must have been that Aeschylus, the son of Euphorion, took the idea, which is found in none of the earlier poets, of making Diana the daughter of Ceres.) The island, therefore, in consequence of this event, was first made to float. Such at least is the account which the Egyptians give.

[2.157] Psammetichus ruled Egypt for fifty-four years, during twenty-nine of which he pressed the siege of Azotus without intermission, till finally he took the place. Azotus is a great town in Syria. Of all the cities that we know, none ever stood so long a siege.

[2.158] Psammetichus left a son called Necos, who succeeded him upon the throne. This prince was the first to attempt the construction of the canal to the Red Sea - a work completed afterwards by Darius the Persian - the length of which is four days' journey, and the width such as to admit of two triremes being rowed along it abreast. The water is derived from the Nile, which the canal leaves a little above the city of Bubastis, near Patumus, the Arabian town, being continued thence until it joins the Red Sea. At first it is carried along the Arabian side of the Egyptian plain, as far as the chain of hills opposite Memphis, whereby the plain is bounded, and in which lie the great stone quarries; here it skirts the base of the hills running in a direction from west to east, after which it turns and enters a narrow pass, trending southwards from this point until it enters the Arabian Gulf. From the northern sea to that which is called the southern or Erythraean, the shortest and quickest passage, which is from Mount Casius, the boundary between Egypt and Syria, to the Gulf of Arabia, is a distance of exactly one thousand furlongs. But the way by the canal is very much longer on account of the crookedness of its course. A hundred and twenty thousand of the Egyptians, employed upon the work in the reign of Necos, lost their lives in making the excavation. He at length desisted from his undertaking, in consequence of an oracle which warned him "that he was labouring for the barbarian." The Egyptians call by the name of barbarians all such as speak a language different from their own.

[2.159] Necos, when he gave up the construction of the canal, turned all his thoughts to war, and set to work to build a fleet of triremes, some intended for service in the northern sea, and some for the navigation of the Erythraean. These last were built in the Arabian Gulf where the dry docks in which they lay are still visible. These fleets he employed wherever he had occasion, while he also made war by land upon the Syrians and defeated them in a pitched battle at Magdolus, after which he made himself master of Cadytis, a large city of Syria. The dress which he wore on these

occasions he sent to Branchidae in Milesia, as an offering to Apollo. After having reigned in all sixteen years, Necos died, and at his death bequeathed the throne to his son Psammis.

[2.160] In the reign of Psammis, ambassadors from Elis arrived in Egypt, boasting that their arrangements for the conduct of the Olympic Games were the best and fairest that could be devised, and fancying that not even the Egyptians, who surpassed all other nations in wisdom, could add anything to their perfection. When these persons reached Egypt, and explained the reason of their visit, the king summoned an assembly of all the wisest of the Egyptians. They met, and the Eleans having given them a full account of all their rules and regulations with respect to the contests said that they had come to Egypt for the express purpose of learning whether the Egyptians could improve the fairness of their regulations in any particular. The Egyptians considered awhile and then made inquiry, "If they allowed their own citizens to enter the lists?" The Eleans answered, "That the lists were open to all Greeks, whether they belonged to Elis or to any other state." Hereupon the Egyptians observed, "That if this were so, they departed from justice very widely, since it was impossible but that they would favour their own countrymen and deal unfairly by foreigners. If therefore they really wished to manage the games with fairness, and if this was the object of their coming to Egypt, they advised them to confine the contests to strangers, and allow no native of Elis to be a candidate." Such was the advice which the Egyptians gave to the Eleans.

[2.161] Psammis reigned only six years. He attacked Ethiopia, and died almost directly afterwards. Apries, his son, succeeded him upon the throne, who, excepting Psammetichus, his great-grandfather, was the most prosperous of all the kings that ever ruled over Egypt. The length of his reign was twenty-five years, and in the course of it he marched an army to attack Sidon, and fought a battle with the king of Tyre by sea. When at length the time came that was fated to bring him woe, an occasion arose which I shall describe more fully in my Libyan history, only touching it very briefly here. An army despatched by Apries to attack Cyrene, having met with a terrible reverse, the Egyptians laid the blame on him, imagining that he had, of malice prepense, sent the troops into the jaws of destruction. They believed he had wished a vast number of them to be slain in order that he himself might reign with more security over the rest of the Egyptians. Indignant therefore at this usage, the soldiers who returned and the friends of the slain broke instantly into revolt.

[2.162] Apries, on learning these circumstances, sent Amasis to the rebels to appease the tumult by persuasion. Upon his arrival, as he was seeking to restrain the malcontents by his exhortations, one of them, coming behind him, put a helmet on his head, saying, as he put it on, that he thereby crowned him king. Amasis was not altogether displeased at the action, as his conduct soon made manifest; for no sooner had the insurgents agreed to make him actually their king than he prepared to march with them against Apries. That monarch, on tidings of these events reaching him, sent Patarbemis, one of his courtiers, a man of high rank, to Amasis with orders to bring him alive into his presence. Patarbemis, on arriving at the place where Amasis was, called on him to come back with him to the king, whereupon Amasis broke a coarse jest, and said, "Prythee take that back to thy master." When the envoy, notwithstanding this reply, persisted in his request, exhorting Amasis to obey the summons of the king, he made answer "that this was exactly what he had long been intending to do; Apries would have no reason to complain of him on the score of delay; he would shortly come himself to the king, and bring others with him." Patarbemis, upon this, comprehending the intention of Amasis, partly from his replies and partly from the preparations

which he saw in progress, departed hastily, wishing to inform the king with all speed of what was going on. Apries, however, when he saw him approaching without Amasis, fell into a paroxysm of rage, and not giving himself time for reflection, commanded the nose and ears of Patarbemis to be cut off. Then the rest of the Egyptians, who had hitherto espoused the cause of Apries, when they saw a man of such note among them so shamefully outraged, without a moment's hesitation went over to the rebels, and put themselves at the disposal of Amasis.

[2.163] Apries, informed of this new calamity, armed his mercenaries, and led them against the Egyptians: this was a body of Carians and Ionians, numbering thirty thousand men, which was now with him at Sais, where his palace stood - a vast building, well worthy of notice. The army of Apries marched out to attack the host of the Egyptians, while that of Amasis went forth to fight the strangers; and now both armies drew near the city of Momemphis and prepared for the coming fight.

[2.164] The Egyptians are divided into seven distinct classes - these are, the priests, the warriors, the cowherds, the swineherds, the tradesmen, the interpreters, and the boatmen. Their titles indicate their occupations. The warriors consist of Hermotybians and Calascirians, who come from different cantons, the whole of Egypt being parcelled out into districts bearing this name.

[2.165] The following cantons furnish the Hermotybians:- The cantons of Busiris, Sais, Chemmis, Papremis, that of the island called Prosopitis, and half of Natho. They number, when most numerous, a hundred and sixty thousand. None of them ever practices a trade, but all are given wholly to war.

[2.166] The cantons of the Calascirians are different - they include the following:- The cantons of Thebes, Bubastis, Aphthis, Tanis, Mendes, Sebennytus, Athribis, Pharbaethus, Thmuis, Onuphis, Anysis, and Myecphoris - this last canton consists of an island which lies over against the town of Bubastis. The Calascirians, when at their greatest number, have amounted to two hundred and fifty thousand. Like the Hermotybians, they are forbidden to pursue any trade, and devote themselves entirely to warlike exercises, the son following the father's calling.

[2.167] Whether the Greeks borrowed from the Egyptians their notions about trade, like so many others, I cannot say for certain. I have remarked that the Thracians, the Scyths, the Persians, the Lydians, and almost all other barbarians, hold the citizens who practice trades, and their children, in less repute than the rest, while they esteem as noble those who keep aloof from handicrafts, and especially honour such as are given wholly to war. These ideas prevail throughout the whole of Greece, particularly among the Lacedaemonians. Corinth is the place where mechanics are least despised.

[2.168] The warrior class in Egypt had certain special privileges in which none of the rest of the Egyptians participated, except the priests. In the first place each man had twelve arurae of land assigned him free from tax. (The arura is a square of a hundred Egyptian cubits, the Egyptian cubit being of the same length as the Samian.) All the warriors enjoyed this privilege together, but there were other advantages which came to each in rotation, the same man never obtaining them twice. A thousand Calascirians, and the same number of Hermotybians, formed in alternate years the body-guard of the king; and during their year of service these persons, besides their arurae, received a

daily portion of meat and drink, consisting of five pounds of baked bread, two pounds of beef, and four cups of wine.

[2.169] When Apries, at the head of his mercenaries, and Amasis, in command of the whole native force of the Egyptians, encountered one another near the city of Momemphis, an engagement presently took place. The foreign troops fought bravely, but were overpowered by numbers, in which they fell very far short of their adversaries. It is said that Apries believed that there was not a god who could cast him down from his eminence, so firmly did he think that he had established himself in his kingdom. But at this time the battle went against him, and his army being worsted, he fell into the enemy's hands and was brought back a prisoner to Sais, where he was lodged in what had been his own house, but was now the palace of Amasis. Amasis treated him with kindness, and kept him in the palace for a while; but finding his conduct blamed by the Egyptians, who charged him with acting unjustly in preserving a man who had shown himself so bitter an enemy both to them and him, he gave Apries over into the hands of his former subjects, to deal with as they chose. Then the Egyptians took him and strangled him, but having so done they buried him in the sepulchre of his fathers. This tomb is in the temple of Minerva, very near the sanctuary, on the left hand as one enters. The Saites buried all the kings who belonged to their canton inside this temple; and thus it even contains the tomb of Amasis, as well as that of Apries and his family. The latter is not so close to the sanctuary as the former, but still it is within the temple. It stands in the court, and is a spacious cloister built of stone and adorned with pillars carved so as to resemble palm trees, and with other sumptuous ornaments. Within the cloister is a chamber with folding doors, behind which lies the sepulchre of the king.

[2.170] Here too, in this same precinct of Minerva at Sais, is the burial-place of one whom I think it not right to mention in such a connection. It stands behind the temple, against the backwall, which it entirely covers. There are also some large stone obelisks in the enclosure, and there is a lake near them, adorned with an edging of stone. In form it is circular, and in size, as it seemed to me, about equal to the lake in Delos called "the Hoop."

[2.171] On this lake it is that the Egyptians represent by night his sufferings whose name I refrain from mentioning, and this representation they call their Mysteries. I know well the whole course of the proceedings in these ceremonies, but they shall not pass my lips. So too, with regard to the mysteries of Ceres, which the Greeks term "the Thesmophoria," I know them, but I shall not mention them, except so far as may be done without impiety. The daughters of Danaus brought these rites from Egypt, and taught them to the Pelasgic women of the Peloponnese. Afterwards, when the inhabitants of the peninsula were driven from their homes by the Dorians, the rites perished. Only in Arcadia, where the natives remained and were not compelled to migrate, their observance continued.

[2.172] After Apries had been put to death in the way that I have described above, Amasis reigned over Egypt. He belonged to the canton of Sais, being a native of the town called Siouph. At first his subjects looked down on him and held him in small esteem, because he had been a mere private person, and of a house of no great distinction; but after a time Amasis succeeded in reconciling them to his rule, not by severity, but by cleverness. Among his other splendour he had a golden foot-pan, in which his guests and himself were wont upon occasion to wash their feet. This vessel he caused to be broken in pieces, and made of the gold an image of one of the gods, which he set up

in the most public place in the whole city; upon which the Egyptians flocked to the image, and worshipped it with the utmost reverence. Amasis, finding this was so, called an assembly, and opened the matter to them, explaining how the image had been made of the foot-pan, wherein they had been wont formerly to wash their feet and to put all manner of filth, yet now it was greatly revered. "And truly," he went on to say, "it had gone with him as with the foot-pan. If he was a private person formerly, yet now he had come to be their king. And so he bade them honour and reverence him." Such was the mode in which he won over the Egyptians, and brought them to be content to do him service.

[2.173] The following was the general habit of his life:- from early dawn to the time when the forum is wont to fill, he sedulously transacted all the business that was brought before him; during the remainder of the day he drank and joked with his guests, passing the time in witty and, sometimes, scarce seemly conversation. It grieved his friends that he should thus demean himself, and accordingly some of them chid him on the subject, saying to him - "Oh! king, thou dost but ill guard thy royal dignity whilst thou allowest thyself in such levities. Thou shouldst sit in state upon a stately throne, and busy thyself with affairs the whole day long. So would the Egyptians feel that a great man rules them, and thou wouldst be better spoken of. But now thou conductest thyself in no kingly fashion." Amasis answered them thus:- "Bowmen bend their bows when they wish to shoot; unbrace them when the shooting is over. Were they kept always strung they would break, and fail the archer in time of need. So it is with men. If they give themselves constantly to serious work, and never indulge awhile in pastime or sport, they lose their senses, and become mad or moody. Knowing this, I divide my life between pastime and business." Thus he answered his friends.

[2.174] It is said that Amasis, even while he was a private man, had the same tastes for drinking and jesting, and was averse to engaging in any serious employment. He lived in constant feasts and revelries, and whenever his means failed him, he roamed about and robbed people. On such occasions the persons from whom he had stolen would bring him, if he denied the charge, before the nearest oracle; sometimes the oracle would pronounce him guilty of the theft, at other times it would acquit him. When afterwards he came to be king, he neglected the temples of such gods as had declared that he was not a thief, and neither contributed to their adornment nor frequented them for sacrifice, since he regarded them as utterly worthless and their oracles as wholly false: but the gods who had detected his guilt he considered to be true gods whose oracles did not deceive, and these he honoured exceedingly.

[2.175] First of all, therefore, he built the gateway of the temple of Minerva at Sais, which is an astonishing work, far surpassing all other buildings of the same kind both in extent and height, and built with stones of rare size and excellency. In the next place, he presented to the temple a number of large colossal statues and several prodigious andro-sphinxes, besides certain stones for the repairs, of a most extraordinary size. Some of these he got from the quarries over against Memphis, but the largest were brought from Elephantine, which is twenty days' voyage from Sais. Of all these wonderful masses that which I most admire is a chamber made of a single stone, which was quarried at Elephantine. It took three years to convey this block from the quarry to Sais; and in the conveyance were employed no fewer than two thousand labourers, who were all from the class of boatmen. The length of this chamber on the outside is twenty-one cubits, its breadth fourteen cubits, and its height, eight. The measurements inside are the following:- the length, eighteen cubits

and five-sixths; the breadth, twelve cubits; and the height, five. It lies near the entrance of the temple, where it was left in consequence of the following circumstance:- it happened that the architect, just as the stone had reached the spot where it now stands, heaved a sigh, considering the length of time that the removal had taken, and feeling wearied with the heavy toil. The sigh was heard by Amasis who, regarding it as an omen, would not allow the chamber to be moved forward any farther. Some, however, say that one of the workmen engaged at the levers was crushed and killed by the mass, and that this was the reason of its being left where it now stands.

[2.176] To the other temples of much note Amasis also made magnificent offerings - at Memphis, for instance, he gave the recumbent colossus in front of the temple of Vulcan, which is seventy-five feet long. Two other colossal statues stand on the same base, each twenty feet high, carved in the stone of Ethiopia, one on either side of the temple. There is also a stone colossus of the same size at Sais, recumbent like that at Memphis. Amasis finally built the temple of Isis at Memphis, a vast structure, well worth seeing.

[2.177] It is said that the reign of Amasis was the most prosperous time that Egypt ever saw, - the river was more liberal to the land, and the land brought forth more abundantly for the service of man than had ever been known before; while the number of inhabited cities was not less than twenty thousand. It was this king Amasis who established the law that every Egyptian should appear once a year before the governor of his canton, and show his means of living; or, failing to do so, and to prove that he got an honest livelihood, should be put to death. Solon the Athenian borrowed this law from the Egyptians, and imposed it on his countrymen, who have observed it ever since. It is indeed an excellent custom.

[2.178] Amasis was partial to the Greeks, and among other favours which he granted them, gave to such as liked to settle in Egypt the city of Naucratis for their residence. To those who only wished to trade upon the coast, and did not want to fix their abode in the country, he granted certain lands where they might set up altars and erect temples to the gods. Of these temples the grandest and most famous, which is also the most frequented, is that called "the Hellenium." It was built conjointly by the Ionians, Dorians, and Aeolians, the following cities taking part in the work:- the Ionian states of Chios, Teos, Phocaea, and Clazomenae; Rhodes, Cnidus, Halicarnassus, and Phaselis of the Dorians; and Mytilene of the Aeolians. These are the states to whom the temple belongs, and they have the right of appointing the governors of the factory; the other cities which claim a share in the building, claim what in no sense belongs to them. Three nations, however, consecrated for themselves separate temples - the Eginetans one to Jupiter, the Samians to Juno, and the Milesians to Apollo.

[2.179] In ancient times there was no factory but Naucratis in the whole of Egypt; and if a person entered one of the other mouths of the Nile, he was obliged to swear that he had not come there of his own free will. Having so done, he was bound to sail in his ship to the Canobic mouth, or were that impossible owing to contrary winds, he must take his wares by boat all round the Delta, and so bring them to Naucratis, which had an exclusive privilege.

[2.180] It happened in the reign of Amasis that the temple of Delphi had been accidentally burnt, and the Amphictyons had contracted to have it rebuilt for three hundred talents, of which sum one-fourth was to be furnished by the Delphians. Under these circumstances the Delphians went from

city to city begging contributions, and among their other wanderings came to Egypt and asked for help. From few other places did they obtain so much - Amasis gave them a thousand talents of alum, and the Greek settlers twenty minae.

[2.181] A league was concluded by Amasis with the Cyrenaeans, by which Cyrene and Egypt became close friends and allies. He likewise took a wife from that city, either as a sign of his friendly feeling, or because he had a fancy to marry a Greek woman. However this may be, certain it is that he espoused a lady of Cyrene, by name Ladice, daughter, some say, of Battus or Arcesilaus, the king - others, of Critobulus, one of the chief citizens. When the time came to complete the contract, Amasis was struck with weakness. Astonished hereat - for he was not wont to be so afflicted - the king thus addressed his bride: "Woman, thou hast certainly bewitched me - now therefore be sure thou shalt perish more miserably than ever woman perished yet." Ladice protested her innocence, but in vain; Amasis was not softened. Hereupon she made a vow internally, that if he recovered within the day (for no longer time was allowed her), she would present a statue to the temple of Venus at Cyrene. Immediately she obtained her wish, and the king's weakness disappeared. Amasis loved her greatly ever after, and Ladice performed her vow. The statue which she caused to be made, and sent to Cyrene continued there to my day, standing with its face looking outwards from the city. Ladice herself, when Cambyses conquered Egypt, suffered no wrong; for Cambyses, on learning of her who she was, sent her back unharmed to her country.

[2.182] Besides the marks of favour already mentioned, Amasis also enriched with offerings many of the Greek temples. He sent to Cyrene a statue of Minerva covered with plates of gold, and a painted likeness of himself. To the Minerva of Lindus he gave two statues in stone, and a linen corslet well worth inspection. To the Samian Juno he presented two statues of himself, made in wood, which stood in the great temple to my day, behind the doors. Samos was honoured with these gifts on account of the bond of friendship subsisting between Amasis and Polycrates, the son of Aeaces: Lindus, for no such reason, but because of the tradition that the daughters of Danaus touched there in their flight from the sons of Aegyptus, and built the temple of Minerva. Such were the offerings of Amasis. He likewise took Cyprus, which no man had ever done before, and compelled it to pay him a tribute.