CHAPTER X

THE TYPICAL TEMPLE OF THE EMPIRE—KARNAK

The Egyptian temple was a gradual growth originating in the primitive ancestral worship when a shrine was an adjunct to a tomb, the tomb itself being a more permanent or dignified form of a secular dwelling. The temple may thus be regarded as the final evolution of a mastaba horizontally as a pyramid was in vertical height. The larger temples share in common with subterranean tombs a tendency to indefinite longitudinal extension, with little regard to external architectural effect except in front. On the other hand, there is an excess of internal elaboration, an accumulation of columns, a complexity of plan, and an abundance
of surface decoration characteristic of frequent ritual observances by a numerous and aristocratic priesthood permanently attached to the temple, in which the people, the *profanum vulgus*, had only an occasional and passive share.

The main features of the typical temple, from the time when it ceased to be merely an adjunct to a tomb, are a forecourt open to the sky, at the further side of which was a colonnaded hall, beyond which lay chambers more or less numerous devoted to the service of the god or gods, and its varied furniture and appurtenances. The central chamber was the sanctuary containing a shrine, or more than one, in which was placed an image, generally carved in wood, of the deity to which it was dedicated. Sometimes there was also a sacred ship, the means of celestial migration, in which the image was on occasions borne in procession.

Subject to these main conditions the plans of the temple vary indefinitely in size, length, and complexity, save only that additions made from time to time were almost always along the major axis of the building.

The great temple of Amen-Ra at Karnak, on the east side of the Nile opposite Dēr-el-Bahri, on account both of its magnitude and its political importance, must be regarded as the metropolitan fane of ancient Egypt. Its construction, extending at the lowest computation over more than 1,000 years, during which Egypt attained its highest degree of power and civilization, illustrates more completely than any other building all that is peculiarly Egyptian in architectural art. Its original foundation and dedication to Amen as a purely local deity, may date from a very early dynasty, but under

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1 Breasted, p. 61.
the Theban kings Amen came to be the principal god of Egypt, and was identified with Ra, the Sun-god of the Old Kingdom. His temple then assumed a more important form, being rebuilt by Amenemhat I and his son Senusert I of the XIth dynasty. It preserved its importance during the obscure and troubled centuries; which included the Hyksos domination, when Thebes remained a focus of the national spirit; and after the establishment of the XVIIIth dynasty it was gradually reconstructed by Thothmes I, Queen Hatshepsut, and Thothmes III.

The XIth dynasty temple must have occupied only a small portion of the eastern half of the present ruins. From a few broken polygonal columns and other fragments which lie in the space beyond the sanctuary (see Plan, p. 104, I), it seems probable that it agreed in style with the temple of Mentuhetep at Dür-el-Bahri. When the empire was firmly established it became a special object of interest to the kings of the XVIIIth dynasty, and Thothmes I enlarged the building by surrounding it with lateral colonnades and a narrow pillared fore-hall ($\mathit{f}$), of which the present 5th pylon formed the façade. The hall and pylon are all that distinctly remain of this alteration, for the surrounding colonnade was superseded by the operations of Thothmes' successors, and the fore-hall itself was to some extent altered. From the fact that the remaining columns are polygonal with sixteen sides, it seems that he still adhered to the style of the older building. The work of Thothmes I, however, did not end here, for some years later he built another enveloping wall with a larger fore-hall (G) and pylon (now the 4th) to the west of his previous frontage. He completed his work by erecting two obelisks before the entrance; another pair ($\mathit{dd}$) was afterwards erected
in front of these by Thothmes III, but only one of the four, that on the south-east, still remains \textit{in situ}. It is

A A. Pylon I (Ptolomaic).
B. Taharka's colonnade.
C. Pylon II (Rameses I).
D D. Hypostyle Hall of Seti and Rameses II.
E E. Pylon III
\quad (Amenhetep III).
F F. Circuit Wall
\quad (Rameses II).
G G. Osiride Hall
\quad (Thothmes I).
H. Sanctuary and Hatshepsut's chambers.
I. Space with remains of XIIth dynasty.
K. Building of Thothmes III.
L. Temple of Rameses III.
M. Temple of Seti II.

\begin{itemize}
\item a. Wall reliefs of Seti I.
\item b. Porch and reliefs of XXIInd dynasty.
\item c. Reliefs of Rameses II.
\item d. Obelisks of Thothmes III.
\item d d. Obelisks of Hatshepsut.
\item f. Hall of Records, constructed in the earlier fore-hall.
\item g. Hall with polygonal columns.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{PLAN OF THE GREAT TEMPLE OF AMEN}

noticeable that the columns in this later hall are no longer of the polygonal type, but circular in section,
with the campaniform capitals, but they may have been substituted later. Round the walls were niches with colossal statues of Osiris.

When Thothmes' daughter Hatshepsut came to the throne as wife of Thothmes II, and after his death as sole ruler and guardian of her nephew Thothmes III, she took the temple in hand and made considerable alterations in its innermost portions. She built a sanctuary in the smaller hall and two series of chambers with black granite portals to the north and south of the central chapel (H). Their walls were decorated with fine reliefs, but they
are now in a ruinous condition. She also erected two immense obelisks of red granite in the larger hall (GG), which necessitated the reconstruction of part of the colonnade and the alteration of the roof, which must at one time have covered the whole of this court. One of the obelisks, which is 97 feet high, is still standing.

Further alterations were made by Hatshepsut's successor, Thothmes III. On the north and south sides he demolished the colonnades which had been built by Thothmes I and substituted a number of small chapels. He also built a small pylon (No. 6) and an inner pillared court across the front of Hatshepsut's chambers which flanked the sanctuary; but twenty years later he altered this court by constructing in its central part a hall inscribed with records (),$ and two ante-chambers on the outer side of the pylon. In the Hall of Records stand two quadrangular pillars of red granite which once supported the roof, and are finely carved in high relief, one with the lotus and the other with the papyrus, the symbols of Upper and Lower Egypt.

The most important addition to the temple-building
INVERTED COLUMNS IN THE HALL OF THOTHMES III

After a drawing by Miss E. L. Lister.
by Thothmes III was what is called the Great Festal Temple at the eastern end of the rectangular space enclosed by the wall of Thothmes I. It had no pylon or imposing front, but was entered by a portal at the south end of the west wall from which a turning to the left through a small vestibule led to a colonnaded hall (K), the outer wall of which is now broken down. It

had an internal peristyle of 32 rectangular piers and down the centre were two rows of ten round columns which do not range with the piers. They are of singular shape, for the diameter of their shafts increases upwards, whilst the bell-shaped capital has its larger
diameter below. They are, in fact, columns of the campaniform pattern in which both shaft and capital have been inverted—apparently a capricious attempt at originality which is not imitated elsewhere. The rectangular piers were of the same height as the walls and supported flat roofs of pentagonal stone slabs. But as the circular columns were higher the piers were prolonged by stone struts which supported a higher central roof, and probably admitted light through the intervening spaces. Round the north-east and south sides of the hall was a complexity of corridors and smaller chambers, some of which had columns, with a long and narrow sanctuary on the central axis. A small hall adjoining the sanctuary on the north side had a single row of four columns of the clustered "bud" pattern, richly ornamented with horizontal bands which are still in good preservation; whilst on the south side was a larger hall (g) with eight columns (seven of which are still erect) of the simple sixteen-sided type in singular contrast to the more ornate style of the others. It seems possible that these are some of the earlier work from the destroyed peristyle of Thothmes I, used again by his grandson.

The last addition to the plan and fabric of the temple during the XVIIIth dynasty was a large pylon (Ne built by Amenhetep III, so close to the front of T' mes I that it encroached on the bases of two of the obelisks which stood before the entrance. Th for this addition by the most powerful of the P not obvious unless it were to aggrandize hir expense of the greatest of his predecessor appears to have been covered with inscript recording his deeds and gifts to Amen,
UMNS OF THE HYPOSTYLE HALL, KARNAK