CHAPTER XII

LUXOR

The later history of Karnak has interrupted the account of the work of the XVIIIth dynasty, to which it is necessary to revert. Amenhetep III was not content with appendages to the work of others. He determined to emulate the work of Hatshepsut, and to build a temple to Amen which should at the same time glorify himself. It lies about a mile and a quarter south of that at Karnak, close to and parallel with the Nile. Its position on the bank of the river may account for its orientation, for it faces north-east.\(^1\) The plan of this temple illustrates,

\(^1\) The various temples on the east side of the Nile show no method in their orientation. The great temple at Karnak faces
like that at Karnak, the tendency to longitudinal accretion. The original building followed the usual type, and consisted of the sanctuary (C in plan) with its dependent chambers, a hypostyle hall or vestibule, and an open colonnaded court (B) with an entrance pylon, the remains of which are in the centre of the present ground plan. The total length was then 208 yards, and the courtyard is 56 yards broad by 49 in depth. The colonnade which lines its north, east, and west sides has a double row of clustered columns with bud-shaped capitals, much of which is well preserved, and is architecturally a fine feature. The vestibule has thirty-two similar columns in four rows of eight, and in the centre of the back wall is a door leading to a smaller hall which had eight columns. Behind it lay the sanctuary, north-west. The small ones of Seti II and Rameses III, though dedicated to the same Theban triad, face respectively south-west and north-east. That of Khonsu faces south-west and that of Mut north-north-east.
AMENHETEP'S COLONNADES AT LUXOR, FROM THE SOUTH
which was rebuilt under Alexander the Great. On the east side of the small hall is a chamber (D) called the Birthroom, from the mural reliefs which depict the divine origin of Amenhetep—obviously inspired by the similar reliefs executed for Hatshepsut at Dër-el-Bahri.

It appears to have been the intention or an afterthought of Amenhetep to add a large hypostyle hall in front of the pylon, on a plan which was only realized afterwards by Seti I at Karnak. But at Luxor only the central avenue (E) of fourteen columns was built. They are over fifty feet in height, with cylindrical shafts and the expanded calyx-capitals, above which square blocks support the plain architrave. They are well preserved, and still form an imposing architectural feature. It is doubtful whether he finally enclosed them by lateral walls. The mural reliefs on the portions which still remain were made for Tut-ankh-Amen, who succeeded Amenhetep’s son, the religious reformer Akhenaten, and reverted to the old religion. The forecourt (F) at the north end of the gallery was finally added by Rameses II, who seldom failed to leave his mark upon any important work of his predecessors. It
had a colonnade consisting of a double row of the
papyrus-bud type of columns along each of the four
sides of the court, which measures 187 feet by 167, but
the ground plan of the court is slightly skewed, i.e., its
angles are not right angles. Moreover, the large pylons
at the north and south sides are not exactly parallel
with the older front. This deviation of the axis was
apparently necessitated by a bend in the river, which
must formerly have almost washed the walls, and the
arrangement was obviously a compromise adopted to
preserve the equality of the opposite sides of the court.
The exterior walls of the court and the pylons are
covered with reliefs illustrating the foreign wars of
Rameses II, and in front of the entrance were six
colossal statues of the king, four standing and two
sitting. The latter two, 45 feet high, with one standing
figure, still remain, and in front of them were two
obelisks of red granite, one of which, 84 feet high, is
still in situ. The other adorns the Place de la Concorde
at Paris. A large number of recumbent rams on their
pedestals, which formerly lined the whole of the paved
road leading northward to the temple of Khonsu, may
be seen near the latter temple.

Amenhetep also built a very similar temple at Soleb
in Nubia, and it is possible that the two fine red granite
lions now in the British Museum, which show Egyptian
conventional art at its best, were taken from there by
Tut-ankh-Amen to Napata, whence they were brought
to England.
SMALL PERIPTERAL TEMPLE AT ELEPHANTINE, NOW DESTROYED
From "Description de l'Egypte."

THE SMALLER TEMPLE AT MEDINET HABU (XVIIIth dynasty)
From a drawing by Miss E. L. Lister.