

have devoted themselves to copying, drawing (and, more recently, to photographing) the ruins of ancient Egypt and to copying its inscriptions, and many sumptuous volumes have been issued. Far less actual excavation has been done in Egypt than in Mesopotamia or Palestine. One reason is the great amount of knowledge that could be gained in Egypt simply by studying the remains that already stood above the ground.

The pyramids, which are the most imposing remains of ancient Egypt, were a natural development from an earlier form of tomb. About 2700 B.C. a king named Djoser built a tomb composed of five large quadrangular stone houses, one on top of the other, with the size of the upper ones becoming progressively smaller and the whole reaching a height of 190 feet. From this so-called "step pyramid" it was an easy step to a real pyramid. There are many pyramids in Egypt and the largest of them was the first to be built, by order of King Khufu (often called Cheops). Khufu's intention, like that of Djoser, was to build a burial place for himself, which would also be a memorial of his greatness. He lived much longer than he had expected and therefore from time to time revised the plan of his pyramid, enlarging it greatly, and altering the location of the burial chamber. The resulting monument covers thirteen acres, and is almost five hundred feet in height. It was made of 2,300,000 blocks of limestone, each weighing about two and one-half tons. The second pyramid was almost as tall as the first, but somewhat narrower at the bottom, and therefore steeper. All of the pyramids were broken into in ancient times, and the bodies of the pharaohs were removed, along with many precious objects that had been buried with them. A few of the pyramids contain texts written on the walls of their inner passages and chambers. These "Pyramid Texts" are a description of the