THE TWELVE EGYPTIAN OBELISKS IN ROME: THEIR HISTORY EXPLAINED BY TRANSLATIONS OF THE INSCRIPTIONS UPON THEM

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The Twelve Egyptian Obelisks in Rome: Their History Explained by Translations of the Inscriptions Upon Them by John Henry Parker

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JOHN HENRY PARKER

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Trieste

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EDITED BY

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THE
ARCHÆOLOGY OF ROME.

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KEEPER OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGY, OXFORD;
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PART IV.
THE EGYPTIAN OBELISKS.

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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In this Second Edition English translations in full of the Egyptian Hieroglyphics on the more important of the Obelisks are added; the substance of these only was given in the first instance, as that was all that seemed necessary at the time. Now that so much more attention has been called to the subject, it seems expedient to add more details.

The translations of those previously published have now been corrected by Dr. Birch, and a new translation of the hieroglyphic inscription on the one made in Egypt for the Emperor Hadrian has been also made by Dr. Birch expressly for this work. He has also at the last moment sent me an impression from an Egyptian Scarabæus, with a representation of an Obelisk upon it. This is very small, but Professor Donaldson has kindly made an enlarged drawing of it, on the same plan as his excellent *Architectura Numismatica*, from which our lithograph is taken. English translations of the chapters from Pliny in the first century, and from Ammianus Marcellinus in the fourth, are also added, so that all the authentic information on the subject that is extant is now given in this work.

The collection of Obelisks in Rome is the finest now remaining anywhere, even in Egypt itself there is no place where twelve Obelisks are collected, and some of them are remarkably perfect, so that the hieroglyphics can be read by those who understand the language.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION.

This concise account of the Egyptian Obelisks in Rome is drawn up entirely from the inscriptions on them. Those of the Popes, record when each was placed in its present situation. Those of the Emperors, state on what occasion each was brought to Rome. The hieroglyphics give the original history of each in Egypt. Two of them only were made for the Romans, or are of their time; the others are much older, and belong to the history of Egypt, as will be seen in reading the account of them. These were brought to Rome as trophies of conquest only, and were erected in the most public places to commemorate the triumph of the Roman arms.

The hieroglyphic inscriptions have been kindly translated for me by an eminent Egyptian scholar residing in Rome during the winter, who declines to have his name published; but I am permitted to state that the translation has been compared by Dr. Birch, of the British Museum, and Mr. Bonomi, of the Soane Museum, and they agree that it is done in an accurate and careful manner. Their names are a guarantee to the public that this portion of the work can be fully depended on.

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