

me, he is too old for my hard work. However, I told Yaktûb I must first see Mr. Rogers, and then I would talk about engaging him.

About eleven o'clock I went again to the Consulate and had a long friendly talk with Mr. Rogers, who promised he would give me letters to the Mutsellim, which might be of use to me. He then said that he had been seriously reflecting on what I had told him about my intended voyage by sea to Akaba, and he strongly recommended me not to undertake it. He said it was very hazardous, and besides, might be very tedious ; as, if there were bad weather, I might remain an indefinite period at some out of the way place unable to proceed. Then, too, the expense might be increased immensely by the protracted voyage. He said much more to the same effect, and concluded with the strong recommendation that I should undertake the journey by land *on a good quiet horse or mule*, about which there could be no difficulty or uncertainty ; the time being defined, and in all human calculation *certain*, and the expense being also defined and considerably less ! All these considerations had suggested themselves to me ; indeed, so hesitating had I become on the subject, that, whereas I had intended to write to Mr. West at Suez, asking him to enter

into treaty for a boat, I changed my mind, and put off doing so till to-morrow. I am glad I did, as I now see that the boat voyage will not do at all. But then the land journey! If you were with me, I imagine you would strongly object to my undertaking it. Nevertheless, I feel that I could do it safely, if not altogether comfortably, on a good horse or mule.

As I came out from the Consulate I met Yakûb, to whom I communicated the alteration in my plans. He, too, was strongly in favour of the land route. If you were here with me what would you recommend me to do? I cannot throw up the affair; and Milne, though a very clever fellow, and most useful assistant, is quite incompetent to go alone: so that if I do not go myself, the enterprise must be abandoned, and this I feel I cannot do. I am, thank God, in the enjoyment of better health than I have had for many years. I feel quite strong, and capable of enduring any *reasonable* fatigue, and, with God's help, I trust to get through the journey in health and safety.

After writing the foregoing, I went out and called on Cook's head dragoman, Alexander Howard, to ask him how many days it is to Akaba from Suez direct. He does not know; so he sent

out to inquire, and got (as is usually the case) various answers—one man saying it was only four days. All at once he called out to a man passing by “Nabut !” when an old man came in, whom I have often seen hanging about without knowing who he was. This was Yakûb esh Shellaby’s “Abu Nabut.” He appears to be an intelligent, sound, hale old man. I should hardly think he is more than sixty. He said the road is eight or nine days’ *easy* travelling : and suggested that I might have a litter, or palanquin, hung between two camels, one before and one behind, which is not a bad idea, and I think would even be cheaper than buying a horse : it certainly would be easier for me. I must speak to Yakûb about it. So I wished them good evening.

There is one most remarkable thing Abu Nabut told us, namely, that *near Akaba* is a mountain called Djebel-en-Nûr (the mountain of light), on which, the Arabs say, God ’spoke to Moses ! and, therefore, they stop and say their prayers there. I could not manage to extract from him its precise position. There is always so much indefiniteness and confusion with their “rights” and “lefts,” behind and before, that one never can make anything out of what they say ; and Howard made it worse

by pretending to know what in fact he knew nothing about. I must try and get at the root of the matter through Yakûb. I should not be surprised at being told that my discovery of Mount Sinai, like that of Harran, is nothing new, for that the natives knew all about it long before me! It is very singular, nevertheless. Milne has just come in from the petrified forest, where he has been all day. I told him of my change of plans, when he simply asked, when we should start? That Djebel-en-Nūr sticks in my gizzard. Mind it is not "*Nor*," which means "*fire*," but "*Nūr*," "*light*.'

*January 7.*—I got up very hoarse, but a cup of warm coffee and going out in the sun improved it a good deal, and I have no doubt I shall soon be all right again. To-day has been a busy day. I first went to Mr. Beyerlé, who has been away on a shooting expedition with Sheriff Pasha. We talked of the progress I was making with Nubar Pasha, and he said he thought the firman would obtain for me every assistance in the power of the Mutsellim to give; but he did not think this would be much. We spoke about the Viceroy and the steamer. He said candidly that he had hoped to get it for me; and had not matters changed, and looked so bad lately, he might have counted



on succeeding. But it is not so, and that is enough.

I have omitted to say that when I got up this morning I found at my door a letter from Mr. West, saying that the "Timsah" would cost £120 per day, or perhaps £150, even supposing I could have it, which I could not, without authority from London. The Khédive's boats are all engaged with pilgrims, except one which has been ordered to Massowah, and which I think I might have had, had General Stanton pressed it. But it is of no use complaining. A native boat Mr. West does not consider "prudent" or "expeditious" at this time of year. On this point we are *d'accord*: so there is an end of Suez.

I now went to talk with Yakûb. On my way I was accosted by another dragoman, Mohammed Abu something, who asked me five pounds, and then came down to four pounds per diem; I paying extra for the *takhterawân*, or palanquin, that is to say, buying it myself, and also paying for an extra camel to carry it. I said I would think it over. He did not know the country, however, though he said he had been once to Akaba, but no further. With Yakûb and also with Mr. Rogers I had a long talk about Abu

Nabut; inquired about his character through the Chancellor of the Consulate, and after a great deal of talk I agreed to give him five pounds per day for twenty-five days *from Cairo*, or £125; with five pounds for each day extra. This to include *takhterawdn*, and everything; half the amount to be paid down, and the remainder on our return to Cairo. So I shall not go to Suez at all. Going *from Cairo* is an extra expense, but then we save railway to Suez, and the expense of the hotel there, &c., so that it is not all loss.

I think I see my way, especially as I now feel persuaded that Djebel-en-Nūr is one of the three mountains seen by Dean Stanley. Abu Nabut had told Yakûb that *three* mountains were to be seen from the plain of the Arabah near Akaba, of which the Djebel-en-Nūr is one, and that when we get there, he will show it me through the telescope! What a wonderful thing it will be! and Dean Stanley saw it without knowing it, just as Dr. Porter went to Harran without knowing it to be "the Harran."<sup>1</sup> When I came back from the Consulate I found letters from Messrs. Tod advising me of the despatch of my two cases by railway, the agent here saying I may expect them to-day or

<sup>1</sup> See Mrs. Beke's "Jacob's Flight." Introd. p. 5.

to-morrow. So this is all right, and everything seems to be going on as well as I could desire; were it not for the confounded question of *filâss*: but we will try and remedy this as you shall see.

The *takhterawân*, or palanquin, will be shown me on approval: it seems to be a sort of easy chair, in which I think I may manage to sit for a few hours each day. I told Milne I thought of starting shortly. All he asked was a few hours' notice to pack up his mineralogical specimens! He has found some very interesting ones. I shall get him to make drawings of all the stations of the children of Israel from Succoth to the Encampment by the Red Sea, and thence to Rephedim and Sinai. After luncheon I went to the Consulate, and finally agreed terms with Abu Nabut—thirty days at five pounds per day, or £150, and five pounds for every day extra.

I have another proof that I am right. I spoke to Abu Nabut about "Jethro's Cave," which I wish Milne to go and see. He thought I meant a cave which he says is in the mountain near *Akaba*, exactly where I place Pi-ha-hiroth—the mouth of the caverns! I start from Cairo direct, and shall not enter Suez, but I shall write to you from thence, and shall come back to Cairo direct. Your letters

you must therefore send to the care of Mr. Rogers here, and you must forward me whatever money you get. God help me! and yet I am sure He will not abandon me in this momentous undertaking. Mohammed, who asked four pounds per diem, had the conscience to say he should want £102 for *extras*. So after all Abu Nabut is the "sheepest." Mr. Rogers has interested himself most kindly in the matter, and thinks I could not have done better. I have a thoroughly experienced man, and a *Sherrif*, which is always of value amongst these people. The Hadj left for Mecca on the 18th of last month, so that the road is clear.

You have sent me some white clothes; but I don't feel inclined to wear them, for washing is such a frightful price here. They charge four pence each for collars and pocket handkerchiefs, and I do not know that they do not charge the same for each stocking! It is ruination living here: I shall indeed be thankful to be off. Colonel Morrieson has kindly called to say that he is going to the Pyramids to-morrow, and will take Milne with him, if he likes. Of course he accepts the kind offer, not so much on account of the Pyramids themselves, as because it will afford him an opportunity of measuring the dip of the Sphinx.

What a queer fellow he is! He has been out all day and brought home some *skulls*! The American artists have said they are coming out to see us off, and to take a sketch of my caravan! My expedition is talked of a good deal, I find.

*January 8.*—Milne is off to the Pyramids, and I have been to see Abu Nabut, Yakúb esh Shellaby, and Mr. Rogers, about the *takhterawán*, having doubts as to its jolting too much. They assure me it will not, and Mr. Rogers tells me he has ridden in one himself. I am now told that Nabut will not be ready to start till Monday morning, so that we shall have two days more at this hotel, Pazienza! I have corrected my "Notes from Egypt," and written a letter to Mr. M——, which please send off to him. I have also written a few lines to Mr. Bolton, at Stanford's, which you will send likewise. I have told him to keep the information "private," by which I mean that he should not publish it, though I do not object at all to his talking about it. I enclose a letter to Mr. Bates, the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society. I send *all* to you; both in order that you may see what I say, and also in order to save postage. I have written to our friend Mr. Thurburn, asking him to assist you as to the remittance of funds. It may be that

the best course will be, if you are pressed for time, to get him to telegraph through the Bank of Egypt in London, to their agent here at Cairo, to pay me at once whatever money you may have to send me. This would save my being delayed in Egypt on my return, and the consequent expense of my staying at the hotel to receive your remittance by letter.

I feel carried away by the inward conviction that I am right, and that all things will work together for my good. I feel that I am doing the work of the Almighty, and that He will not desert me whilst in His service. I cannot resist the impulse—I would call it inspiration—but I fear to be thought profane and presumptuous, which carries me on beyond the bounds of reason, and what is *called* common sense. I feel myself called on to do this work, and do it I must, let the consequences be what they may. Besides which I cannot turn back. Bear with and help me, as, indeed, I know you will, to the utmost in your power. All will yet come right, I feel assured, however black things may look just at present. Thank God, I keep my health pretty well, and I have taken no medicine, except Dr. Garrod's prescription: but I am getting tired of the hotel food, and wish I was

away. My cold has nearly left me. The weather appears to be setting in fine; though it has been very cold.

After luncheon I went to the Consulate to sign the contract with Abu Nabut, and paid him the balance of first half. Then, not having heard anything about the firman, I went to General Stanton. He had heard nothing, and recommended me to go to Nubar Pasha's divan, at the Foreign Office. There I told my business to his secretary—Somebody Bey—and was asked to take a seat. After a while His Excellency came out, and told me in the most gracious manner, that His Highness would have much pleasure in receiving me on Saturday morning at half-past ten or eleven o'clock at the Palace of Abdin. I thanked him, and said I would not fail to present myself to His Highness at the appointed time. I then asked about my firman, when His Excellency said it should be made out and sent to me at my hotel, so that I need not trouble myself to call. He shook hands with me most cordially, advancing towards the door of the anti-chambre, in which we were; and so thanking him, to which he replied, "*Il n'y a pas de quoi*," I left. I thought it only right to go and tell General Stanton. He had not heard of it; but said that he would probably

be at the Palace on Saturday himself. He informs me I have only to send up my card, and Nubar Pasha will present me. I don't expect any good to come of it. However, what I asked for in this respect at least, I have got. With regard to my funds for the continuation of our journey I find matters are not so bad as I had fancied they were. I had made a mistake either in my accounts, or in my cash; for I had taken it into my head that the hotel expenses, which will be some forty shillings per day, were forty shillings for each of us! All at once I have discovered my mistake. I have been sitting quietly in my room all the evening making notes about Beduins, &c., for the journey, and I am now going to bed to sleep, as I trust, in peace.

*January 9.*—During the night I have been thinking of what Mr. West wrote to me about the steamer of the Viceroy, which is going from Suez to Massowah. This is the vessel about which Nubar Pasha spoke, saying that she could not be spared; though he did not tell me that she had not gone to Massowah, but was doing duty as a tug in the Suez Canal, while one of the Canal tugs was taking Mr. Vivian to Port Said. I have now thought that if she has not yet left Suez, *but is going immediately*, the Viceroy, might be induced to let her so far

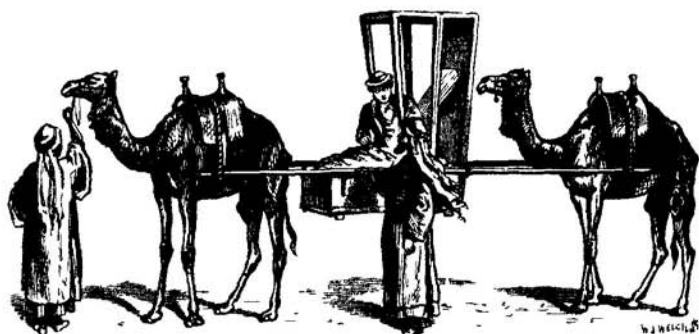


deviate from her direct course as to take me to Akaba, with my suite, the camels being ordered on to Akaba to meet me there. This would really be a *fluke*—almost too good to come true. But it is worth trying for. So I went off this morning the first thing to Mr. Beyerlé, and pressed him strongly to use his influence with Nubar Pasha, which he promised to do. His Excellency is not at business to-day, it being the Mohammedan Sabbath, and General Stanton is out shooting with Sheriff Pasha, so nothing can be done with him till to-morrow.

I then called on Mr. Rogers to ask him for his promised letters, which he says he will have written. We talked about my taking small money. He advises me to take half copper and half silver ; but I have decided to take one pound in copper to three in silver. I have bought a *kefiya* from Yakûb for my hat, and Milne has also bought one. They are very necessary, as you know, being so great a protection against the sun. On Mr. Rogers's recommendation, I shall also take with me about twenty-five pounds in gold to give to Abu Nabut on the journey, in case he should be in need of it.

The *takhterawân* is something like a London

cab, only not on wheels, and without fixed sides and top; but these are supplied by means of cur-



tains which may be drawn or not à discrétion, forming, in fact, sometimes an open, and at others a closed cab. It has a mattress and cushion to sit upon, and a sloping footboard on which to rest the feet, instead of being stretched out, as I expected they would be. Mr. Rogers told me it would be fixed on the two poles attached to the camels, which would have made it jolt dreadfully; but Yakûb esh Shellaby has remedied this by suspending the *takhterawân* to the poles by means of ropes, which will serve as springs or something like them—the poles themselves being slung beside the camels, one before and one behind. It is a rough sort of contrivance, but not altogether uncom-

fortable. It is certain I could not perform the land journey without a palanquin, and even so, I should be well glad if I were saved the land journey to Akaba. Besides the saving of fatigue, it would give me more time there, so that by the time the camels arrived, I might be ready to start for Suez, and thus be back within the month. This afternoon Colonel Morrieson came to ask me and Milne to go out with him for a ride, but I declined with thanks. Milne is gone. Abu Nabut has been to ask whether I would let him have some more money at Akaba in case he should want it: *this I expected*, and therefore consented. Your remittance had better be sent to me in circular notes. I do not want you to pay money into the Bank of Egypt except in case of absolute necessity. This bank is, I am told, dearer in their terms than any other house. Tod, Rathbone, & Co. give half per cent., that is, ten shillings in a hundred pounds more than the bank. I trust I shall receive your letters before I start, so that I may answer them; and also know how you are: I should not like to start without.

*January 10.*—A most eventful day. In the first place, I received in the morning your dear letter of December 31st and January 1st, and am glad to

hear you are so much better, though still not quite well. I am much pleased with your letter to the "Times," which was very cleverly done. I had already seen it in the newspaper of December 30th, which was in the reading-room before your letter arrived. I also saw the notice in the later paper, without knowing it was from you. I am glad I got your letter before I went to the Khédive, because it refreshed my memory. I am only sorry I did not get the extract from my "Idol in Horeb," which I found on my return from the Palace. It is precisely what I was in want of; and now to tell you what occurred.

At 10.30 A.M. I started for the Palace of Abdin dressed in black, with frock-coat, and black neck-tie, being, as I am, in mourning. On my arrival at the Palace I was asked my name, whereupon I gave my card. 'My visit being expected, I was requested to walk into the waiting-room, where there was sitting one of the persons in attendance—I don't know his rank—who addressed me as Mons. le Docteur, and requested me to be seated. Coffee was soon served to us both, in the ordinary *finjal* with filigree stand. Other persons came in on business, for whom also coffee was brought, and I was

asked to take a second cup, but I declined. Here they drink coffee all day, as you know. After a quarter of an hour or so, during which I employed myself reading your letter, an attendant came in, to say that His Highness was prepared to receive me. I rose, but was told to wait for a minute or two. Another official then came, and said His Highness was ready to receive me, and asked me to accompany him. We then went up a broad staircase, thickly carpeted, two flights apparently, when I was shown into a room, in which were several officers richly dressed, and others in attendance. From a side room, which was filled with smoke as if it were a sanctuary—mark this as a matter for after consideration—Nubar Pasha issued, and shook hands with me, and took me to an inner room, close to the door of which I *was met* by a gentleman of about forty years of age, or perhaps not so much, dressed in the usual European dress, with frock-coat and tarbush: he shook hands with me most cordially, and asked me to walk in. I followed him into a further inner room, not quite clear in my own mind whether he was really the Khédive, whom I had expected to find seated in his Divan—as I had found Mohammed Ali Pasha in 1840—but these doubts were removed as soon as I

saw there was no one else in the room, and by his desiring me to sit down on a sofa, he himself taking an arm-chair close to the window.

Ismail Pasha is a very short, thick-set man. He has a fine intelligent face, and seems very good-natured. No one could be more amiable and courteous in his behaviour, which was that of one gentleman conversing on equal terms with another. Nubar Pasha sat in a chair near the Viceroy's end of the room, facing him. The conversation was commenced in French by the Foreign Minister, who explained to His Highness the object of my journey, &c., to which the Viceroy listened attentively, and *seemed* as if interested; a pause ensuing, I said that the object of my soliciting the honour of being allowed to pay my respects to His Highness was, that in 1840 I had passed through Egypt, and had paid my respects to Mohammed Ali Pasha of blessed memory, and that I wished to do the same to His Highness.

He expressed surprise at my having been in Abyssinia; so I had to explain all about my representations made to the British Government so long in vain, and what the late Mr. E. Egerton, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had said to me, when it was too late to save the country £9,000,000, namely, "Dr Beke, if the Govern-

ment had followed your advice and policy, there would have been no Abyssinian captives, and no Abyssinian war!" This gave rise to the remark that persons in authority did not like to follow the advice of *savants*—or, as I added, persons out of their own circle—those not belonging to their own corps. I cannot repeat the precise words that were used on the subject, on which we all three had our say.

I then passed to the subject of my scheme for flooding the Libyan Desert, as a means of suppressing the slave trade.<sup>1</sup> The Khédive said he could not understand how it was known to be below the level of the ocean: he did not think it had ever been levelled. I spoke of the advantage it would be to commerce and civilisation to bring the sea near to Kordofan and Darfûr;<sup>2</sup> to which His Highness assented, but doubted the practicability, not to speak of the expense. As to the idea attributed to M. de Lesseps, of turning the waters of the Nile into the Desert, it was absurd. I mentioned that Dr. Schweinfurth had told me of the French project to inundate the Sahara behind Algiers.<sup>3</sup> The Khédive said he did not know that Dr. Schweinfurth was, or had been, in Egypt. He told

<sup>1</sup> See "Egypt As It Is," pp. 329-374.      <sup>2</sup> Ibid. 170.

<sup>3</sup> This project is now actually in course of operation.

me that Schweinfurth is a Russian subject, but had undertaken his journey for Germany.

I next spoke of my having interested myself in the growth of cotton in Egypt; and that I had presented a "Memoir" on the subject to Said Pasha; and had published several papers on the matter.<sup>1</sup> But that in Said Pasha's time Egypt was not what it is now, and therefore I had not succeeded in accomplishing what I wished. My project *then* was to connect Taka with Suakin by a Tram or Canal, and *later* by a Railway.<sup>2</sup> To this His Highness said, the one was nearly, if not quite, as expensive as the other, in the first cost; and as to the railway wood could be found to take the place of coal. This I doubt, but I did not care to say so.

I had now been with the Khédive more than a quarter, indeed the best part of half, an hour. I paused, and was looking towards Nubar Pasha, as if to receive a signal from him to leave, when an animated conversation took place between the Khédive and His Excellency *in Turkish*, of which I understood only one word, "pecki," meaning

<sup>1</sup> "The Idol in Horeb," p. 91. London: Tinsley Brothers, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> It would appear that this scheme has been adopted by the Viceroy at the instance of Mr. Fowler, to whom Dr. Beke also communicated his plan. See "The Khédive's Egypt," pp. 353-357; "Egypt As It Is," p. 239.



“yes,” “good,” “very well”—assent generally—which the Prince kept repeating in reply to what his minister said. Nubar Pasha then rose, and I did the same. The Khédive rose also, and on my thanking him for the honour he had done me, he asked how long I expected to be absent, “a month or so?” and whether I returned by the way of Cairo. On my replying in the affirmative, His Highness said, shaking hands with me most heartily, “*Alors à votre retour j’aurai le plaisir de vous serrer la main.*” I again thanked him and took leave; but His Highness accompanied me out of the inner room, and halfway (at least) across the second room; where I again bowed and left. What think you of this reception? But this is not all. As we descended the stairs, I said to Nubar Pasha, “*Excellence, I said nothing to His Highness about the steamer as I promised, but I have now to tell you that I have heard*”—and I was beginning to repeat what Mr. West had told me—when he stopped me by saying, to my surprise, “His Highness has ordered me to communicate with M<sup>r</sup>Killop Bey to know whether it is practicable to give you a passage to Akaba; and if it can be done it shall.” I could scarcely believe this, especially when he added, “I must telegraph to

M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey, who is at Alexandria, and will let you know when I get his reply." On my expressing my hope that it might be managed, he said it rested entirely with M<sup>c</sup>Killop, who had the entire charge of the Marine. His Excellency was then going to pay a few visits—I had accompanied him down to the entrance, where he got into his carriage—and would go and telegraph immediately to Alexandria, he said. I got into my carriage, and drove off likewise ; on my way calling at Messrs. Tod's to pay some money for postage and expenses, and then home.

On my way I met Mr. Beyerlé, to whom I told the good news. He was surprised, as only this morning he had spoken to Nubar Pasha, who told him it could *not* be done. I have not much expectation myself ; but I thought I might do what I could to help it ; so I sat down instantly and wrote a letter to my friend Mr. Fleming, asking him to intercede with his friend M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey, and also with Fedrigo Pasha. I had only time to write a few hurried lines, and as I was already too late for the town post, I had to send a donkey-boy off with my letter to the railway station. I must not omit to say that before leaving the Khédive's presence, I heard Nubar Pasha speak about a "firman," to

which was replied "pecki," with a reverence on the part of His Excellency, to show that the order would be obeyed. Whilst I was finishing my letter to Fleming, Mr. O., a visitor, on his way from India to England—a Madras civil servant—came and wished to speak to me. Milne had already told me he was much interested in my expedition, and introduced him to me—I mean before I left for Abdin; and he had evinced so much interest in my journey and its object, that I had given him a copy of my pamphlet. He now came to propose that he should join me. Milne had told me he seemed much inclined to do so. To cut a long matter short, he consented to give me £2, 10s. per diem if he went with me.

While I think of it, I wish you to say nothing about "Djebel-en-Nūr." From what Abu Nabut tells me, I imagine it must be on the wrong side of the Wady Arabah, and therefore not my Mount Sinai. But if so, I suspect I have heard before of *this* "Mount Sinai" somewhere. The subject must be left till I know something definite. I enclose you the agreement entered into between Mr. Milne and myself. It is dated to-day; but was, in fact, signed last night. I know he is afraid we shall not be back in *England* by the end of February. As far as the matter rests with me, we shall, for I am as

anxious and nervous on the subject as he can possibly be. Master Abu Nabut has been and done me out of another ten pounds on account. He is a *Nubian*, a people noted for their fidelity, and he seems an honest fellow, so I hope all will go well.

Now to answer your dear letter this evening as I must post mine to-morrow morning before church. You managed the "Times" letter very-nicely. You are at liberty to make up as many letters as you please from what I write to you : having more time for consideration, you will often express yourself better than I do in my hurry, and you can leave out anything you do not approve of. By-the-by General Stanton was not at the Palace ; at all events I did not see him. He has been most civil and obliging as far as *forms* go, and I have no substantial ground, or wish for believing him not to be willing to serve me, if he could do so, without putting himself much out of the way. I have now written likewise to Mr. Kay, and to Fedrigo Pasha, asking for their interest with M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey. I do not wish to leave a single stone unturned.

On my return I shall want one hundred and fifty pounds, or, perhaps, I ought to say two hundred ; of course, Milne will go on to England direct through Egypt : but I must stop a few days here

myself, in order to see the Viceroy, as His Highness has invited me to do so. I have written to the publishers about my book, and, if I have time for this post, I will send you both this letter and one to Mr. Heugh to forward. You will see what I say. If you think fit you can enclose in the publisher's letter a copy of my agreement with Mr. Milne; and, should I die, *you* must write my book for me, from my materials. I will endeavour to make them as complete as possible during the journey; but I trust in God, who has so far protected me, to bring me home safely.

I see in the "Times" of the alteration in our old firm in King William Street, which is now Blyth, Greene, Jourdain & Co. What lucky fellows Burn-Blyth and Jourdain are! It is now just twelve o'clock, and I am so sleepy I must really go to bed. My cough is still a little troublesome; but only wants change of air to remove it altogether. If I am successful I will date you a telegram from "the Crater of Mount Sinai," which please therefore, enter in your list of telegram cyphers against the word "Palace." The beauty of the *word-telegrams* is, that if even they should happen to be misspelt, it does not signify.

*January 11.*—This morning I must finish, and

post my letters before going to church, so that I cannot give you any positive news about the steamer and the firman, or about our starting. I am to see the *takhterawân* to-day. The tent was seen by Milne and others yesterday; it is set up behind the New Hotel, and is said to be a very good one. It is like ours in Syria, namely, the ordinary kind, and not like the swell tents we took with us from Edgington's to Abyssinia. I have bought some whisky and brandy to take with us on the journey, an umbrella, and sundry little articles. If I get the steamer to Akaba I shall try to keep her long enough to allow me to ascertain the substantial correctness of my views; in which case I shall write to Munzinger Bey, to telegraph the news to General Stanton, whom I shall ask to publish it.

It would be very curious if the news reached Europe *via Massowah!* There is now a Government telegraph line to that place. I shall be glad to get away from here on Milne's account as well as on my own. He wants to be actively employed. Having used up all the *geological* facts that this bare region presents to him, he is now hard at work, studying Arabic, Italian, and French. I wish you would send me out a copy of my "Idol in Horeb," containing the paper (Appendix B) on

the Nile, for me to make use of on my return ; or the leaves would be enough, as they contain all that I require to communicate to the Viceroy. Tinsley will give them to you if you ask him.

*January 11*, continued.—On my way to church, after posting my letter, I met our friend Mr. W. E. Cooke, the artist, who had just arrived in company with Professor Owen, and Mr. Fowler, the Khédive's engineer. I spoke to Cooke about my expedition, and gave him a copy of my pamphlet, which he said he would look at. Professor Owen, perhaps, I may see when I return. He is staying at Mr. Fowler's. Mr. Cooke is at the New Hotel. Now that the time of departure draws nigh, I am getting nervous and "funky." I feel as if I should like to go back, if I could. You know it is all fidgetiness ; for if I were offered the option of giving it up, I should of course refuse. Still, I cannot help feeling nervous. I am off my feed, and shall be so till I am off. I ought not to tell you all this ; but you know me so well that I may just as well say it, lest you should imagine me to be so *exalté* as not to possess any longer my ordinary feelings. No ; I look at the matter in all its bearings, and I see and feel that I have no easy task before me, but one which will

require all my strength, and resolution, and presence of mind, to enable me to carry it through.

As I came out of church I saw Mrs. Stanton, and asked her whether it would be convenient for General Stanton to see me *to-day*. She said, "Yes, at two o'clock." After lunch, I was just going out, when a polite note came from Mrs. Stanton, saying that the General has an engagement at two o'clock, but asking me to go and dine there, when I should be able to say good-bye to them. Of course I accept, though I meant to be packing up; so I must do it now. But this going out to dine is a bother. This morning I was caught in a tolerably heavy shower of rain—in this place where it never used to rain—and had to take shelter in the tent.

I want to sit down and write some letters, but my hand shakes with pulling the boxes about and packing, and my mind shakes with thinking about all things. I wish it was all over, and I on my way home. How happy I should then be! In talking with a dragoman about Djebel-en-Nūr, he tells me it is seen from "Mount Sinai," *sixty-miles* off. It cannot, therefore, be one of the Sinaitic group by any possibility. I think it must certainly be a mountain of the range marked on the



map as Djebel-et-Tih, extending across from Suez to Akaba to the south of the Hadj road. If so I must see it on my right hand, as I approach Akaba. I daresay you think I am troubling myself with what ought not to concern me; but it does concern me, on account of the "tradition," which I expect to find to be of older date than that of the "Sinai of Tourists," and is most important to be used as an argument.

11.15 P.M.—I am just back from General Stanton's. There was only a small party, Colonel [now Sir J.] Stokes, R.E., one of the Suez Canal Commissioners, who has just arrived from Constantinople, and is staying with the Stantons; a Mr. Greenfield, the contractor for the Alexandria Breakwater; Mr. Clarke, the chaplain; and myself. Nothing particular took place. General Stanton was with the Khédive this morning (not yesterday), but I was not alluded to; in fact, the General forgot all about me. I told him of my reception, and he cannot make out *where* it took place. He never was at any place answering my description, and thought my reception was very *marked*! He could not understand how I should have imagined that Nubar Pasha would hand me over to a master of the ceremonies, or allow any one, in fact, to introduce

me but himself; to which I replied that I was not very familiar with Court etiquette. I only recollect that the Khédive's grandfather, Mohammed Ali Pasha, received me sitting on his Divan, and I naturally concluded that there would have been rather more ceremony. The fact seems to be that I was received in the Viceroy's private apartments. I told the General I intended starting to-morrow. He said, he thought I might stay two or three days longer, and let the camels go on to Suez without me, although he admitted that the firman, and the notice about the steamer, could be sent on to me at Suez, and also that I should be quite right in going to Nubar Pasha to-morrow morning, as I intend doing. So I took leave of him and Mrs. Stanton till my return from Mount Sinai. Of course, I had their best wishes, &c., &c.

*January 12.*—You will not be prepared for the blessed news I have to tell you. This morning, after breakfast, I called on Nubar Pasha to ask about the firman, and to say I was off to-day. I went to his private residence, which is much like that of any European gentleman. A female servant was taking up the breakfast-things as I went in. After waiting nearly half an hour His Excellency came to me, and presented me with the firman,

and he then put into my hand, to read, a despatch from M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey, saying I *could* have the steamer to take me to Akaba. I could hardly hold the paper for joy ! If I had *only known this at first* I should have naturally altered my arrangements. As it is, I am bound by my contract with Abu Nabut, the only difference being that he will go straight on to Suez, where I shall meet him by train, and then take him and the cook on board with me, so we shall get to Akaba much quicker by ship than by caravan. This will involve an extra expense for hotel bill here and at Suez. But on the other hand it will very much shorten the length of the entire journey, for which I am most thankful. I shall not now leave Cairo till Wednesday morning. Nubar Pasha has telegraphed to M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey to ask when the steamer will be ready. M<sup>c</sup>Killop says it will take four days for the voyage, and then three days back to Tor, to coal. Of course I thanked His Excellency most warmly.

With reference to Mr. O.'s accompanying us, I had almost arranged with Abu Nabut for a third traveller, when Mr. O. told me he is on his way home to be married, and expects to be called to England before the end of February, and on reflecting well over the matter, he did not see

how he could be absolutely *sure* of being back in time ; and in such a delicate matter as marriage, he could not break his engagement. If he could make sure of being back *here* by the middle of February, nothing would delight him more than to go with me.

I have explained to Mr. Milne that, as he is pressed for time it might suit his convenience to go straight on from Suez by steamer through the Canal when we return, to which he seems to have no objection. I am in such a whirl in consequence of this unexpected good luck, that I scarcely know how to set about what I have still to do. My first task is to communicate this good news to you. I have seen Mr. Rogers who is having the letters written to the Sheikh of Akaba, and the *Mûdir*—that is his Egyptian title—*Mutsellim*, is Turkish. My firman is addressed to the Sheikh. He is to render me every assistance, &c., but nothing is said about expenses. 'I must be glad to take what I can get. Please God all will go well. Do your best, dear, to help me, as I know you will. I am now going to see Mr. Fowler before I leave, and have a talk with him about a *Canal* from Taka to Suakin. This was Sir William Fairbairn's suggestion to me, instead of a Tramway.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'The Idcl in Horeb.' Appendix B, p. 104.

*January 12, continued.*—I sent you very good news about the steamer this morning *via Marseilles*. I shall telegraph shortly to you to-morrow, in order to anticipate my last gloomy letter *via Brindisi*. The cases and Milne's London package have gone off with the camels. My camels with the *takhterawân* stop behind, because Abu Nabut and Yakûb esh Shellaby have managed to "misunderstand my instructions." The chair of which it in reality consists is without any covering. As I told you, I consented to its not being closed in like a cab with windows, &c., but not that it should be without covering against the rain and the sun. But they pretend that when I waived the one I waived the other. This caused a bit of a row, and they hurried off to do as I intended they should. In the course of half an hour I am to see *how* they have complied with my wishes. If I am not satisfied, I tell them I will not go with Abu Nabut. The contract is for a *takhterawân*, not a mere open chair, so I am clearly in the right. Meanwhile I have been to tell General Stanton of my good news. He congratulated me, but said he did not expect it.

In the morning I was going to call on Professor Owen, and through him to make the acquaintance of Mr. Fowler; but on the way I met him

coming to my hotel, though not to call on me, of whom indeed he knew nothing. We walked together to the hotel, and had an interesting talk about my views, in which he substantially agrees; or, I should rather say, he goes much beyond me; believing, like Colenso, not in the untruth of the history as interpreted, but in the history itself! I spoke about Mr. Fowler, and he told me that the best time was to call on him towards sunset. As I had to go again to look at the *takhterawân*, I went towards his house rather earlier than Owen said, and luckily met Mr. Fowler just as he was coming out, on his way to Nubar Pasha's Divan. I walked with him, and explained to him my plan for a Canal between Taka and Suakin, which, he said, would be much more expensive than a railway, and, therefore, was not to be thought of.<sup>1</sup> I gave him, however, my paper<sup>2</sup> which you sent me, when he said he would look it over carefully. I then gave him a copy of my "Mount Sinai a Volcano," a subject in which, to my surprise, he seemed more interested than in my *Canal*. He condemned Owen's open assertion of his opinions, even if permissible among men of science. My moderate views he

<sup>1</sup> See "The Khédive's Egypt," p. 353.

<sup>2</sup> See "The Idol in Horeb," Appendix B.

thought highly of, and on taking leave of me, expressed the hope that he should see me on my return.

On coming into the hotel I received a letter from Messrs. Tod, Rathbone, & Co., with the following message from Mr. Kay, "Inform Dr. Beke favourable answer sent to Government." Mr. Wolff adds, "We have no doubt you will understand the meaning of this message," which, "no doubt," I do. It was extremely kind of Mr. Kay to telegraph this. Now about the *takhterawdn*. When I got to the spot I found the skeleton of the covering up, which, with a little alteration, is to my satisfaction. The covering will be of oiled cloth, so as to keep off the rain. The sides will be removable, to allow me to look about me when I like. Cushions for my arms are also added. Altogether, I think it will do very well. Yakûb is so delighted with it, that he means to ride in it past my hotel to show it off. My caravan consists of thirteen camels, and the Sheikh rides one. I wish we had a party of half a dozen, or more. But I was tied up by the expectation of the steamer, and only acted at the last moment in haste. Yet I feel confident all is for the best as it is: companions chosen at the last moment might have been anything but agreeable ones.

I have been on my legs all day, and am so tired I do not know what to do scarcely. If *exercise* is to keep off the gout, you may rely upon it I shall not have an attack till after I get home, and you spoil me by doing everything for me. I say it with thankfulness that I am really wonderfully well. Professor Owen, who is four years younger than me, is ten years older in appearance; and as a physiologist, he congratulated me on my *frume*: he would not hesitate, he said, to pass an assurance on my life. It has rained again to-day; and yet Nubar Pasha says he does not see any material change in the climate since he first came here! I do not think he will find many back him in this opinion. I had a cup of *café noir* with Nubar Pashá this morning, in a regular coffee cup, *à la Française*, or rather *à l'Anglaise*, handed on a tray by a servant in European clothes. It is the *ton* here to be quite European, or rather English. By the last mail an English nurse, or nursery governess, came out for one of the Viceroy's children.

At dinner, Mr. Gibbs, who sits at the table nearly facing me, asked me whether I knew Mr. Tuck, the telegraph agent at Suez, who is under him, as he should be happy to give me an introduc-



tion to him, when I said that I knew Mrs. Tuck, Mr. West's step-daughter. This was not the beginning of the conversation. He at first congratulated me on my having got the steamer, and asked me when I started. I told him that my camels started to-day, and that I hoped to follow them in a couple of days; when he said that he should like to have some further conversation with me respecting my journey, if I would allow him, to which I, of course, assented. I must tell you that yesterday he had called my attention to your letter in the "Times," which he fancied I might not have seen! After dinner he asked me into his room, which is on the ground floor near the dining-room. I had some time ago given him a copy of my pamphlet, he having spoken to me about my expedition. He is a busy, and to some extent an influential, person in this country, as being the head of the European Telegraph Company in Egypt, and as far as Aden. ' Well, what he wanted to know was the route I purposed taking when I started, &c. I knew perfectly well his object; but saw no reason why I should not tell him what I make no secret of with any one. I told him of the steamer being under orders to go to Massowah, to be under the orders of Munzinger Bey, which led

to a conversation about this latter, when Mr. Gibbs said that he is no longer at Massowah, "somebody" Bey, having been appointed in his place; to which I answered that I supposed then that he was at Taka. I heard that Munzinger<sup>1</sup> had been conniving at the slave trade, and had been *reported*. In the course of conversation, Mr. Gibbs said that he should be happy to receive, either himself, or through the agent at Suez, any communication I might like to make to him whilst on my journey, which should be telegraphed to London free of expense to me, for which I thanked him. I think it is a chance I ought to avail myself of. It will be better than writing letters. I told him I wanted to send a telegram to you, and wished to know whether I could send one of *ten* words. He at first thought I could not, but afterwards said I could. He however suggested that I should not send it till I knew for a certainty when I should start, and said that M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey would be here on Wednesday, and that he thought I ought to wait to see him. I shall send my telegram off to you nevertheless, and I told him so. The waiting here for M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey will not suit

<sup>1</sup> This official lost his life in the ill-fated Egyptian Expedition against Abyssinia in 1876.

my book, as I should be paying hotel expenses, whilst at the same time the camel hire is running on. I must endeavour to get on board the steamer as soon as possible, as I want to have all the time I can at Akaba before the camels arrive. It was nearly ten o'clock before I left Mr. Gibbs to come and write to you.

Mr. Milne is gone to the theatre. At dinner to-night he nearly drove me into leaving the table—I was almost going into hysterics from a remark he made. After Mr. Gibbs had congratulated me upon my having obtained a steamer, I said to Milne, Mr. Gibbs wants to telegraph home the progress of my discoveries; to which he replied, "What startling reports he will give! Discovered the Tables of the Law—Milne half way up the cone." The idea was so perfectly absurd that I burst out laughing. At the same time, though I could not check the laughter, I was so strongly impressed with the serious and momentous nature of information such as I hope to send home, that the two together almost overpowered me. Milne, of course, only looked at the amusing side of the question, and continued laughing and joking; whilst I, though I could not refrain from laughing, yet the serious view still predominated, till at last

I had to hold my head between my two hands, and cover my face—begging, nay, entreating him, to leave off, or I should really have to leave the room. At length he was quiet, and I recovered my equanimity. But it was a very close run. My laughing was with difficulty prevented from turning into a good fit of crying! When one reflects on the subject, it becomes a very serious one indeed. I wish it were all over!

Mr. Milne has come in, not having been to the theatre as he intended, but remained below watching the preparations for a grand supper, given by a Russian princess, who is staying in the house, on this their New Year's day, or rather, I believe, it is to-morrow, their 1st of January, and the supper is for the purpose of *beginning* the New Year. It is in a private dining-room, on the opposite side of the house, so that I saw nothing of it, as I came from Mr. Gibbs. I fancy she is a Madame de 'Bekestow (toff)—no "princess," unless incognito.

*January 13.*—This morning I went to call on Nubar Pasha. I was kept waiting upwards of two hours. It was apparently his reception day, and some twenty persons were there with me, among them, Mr. Beyerlé, and a Greek priest of rank, a

bishop, I believe. Mr. Beyerlé and several others went into an inner room where I fancied His Excellency was; but it appeared that I was wrong, as after a time he came into the room as if from upstairs, walked quickly across it, we all rising and salaaming—I bowing, of course—and went straight up to the priest, whose hand he kissed, and then took him into a side room. After a few minutes the priest and a gentleman with him came out and went away. Shortly after Nubar Pasha came out of the room and crossed over to me. He seemed not to be best pleased, for he cut me very short by saying that he had telegraphed to McKillop Bey, and as soon as he heard from him he would let me know. I explained to him that I was starting for Suez, and so I left, he wishing me *bon voyage*. While I was waiting, coffee was brought in on a tray; the coffee was in *finjals* and the filigree stands were placed behind them. I, in reaching across for mine to put my cup in it, knocked over the other cups and upset the coffee, some of which—a very little—fell on the cushion of the divan I was sitting on. The servant brought a cloth to wipe it up, and on my expressing regret he said, “*Ça ne fait rien : ça porte le bonheur !*” Inshallah ! I said.

From Nubar Pasha's I went to Mr. Rogers, who gave me letters to the Sheikh, and to the Governor of Akaba. I got his dragoman (chief clerk) to translate the firman, which ran as follows:—

*“ To the Sheikh of the Arab Tribes at Akaba.*

“ Dr. Beke, an illustrious Englishman, being about to proceed to Tor for some historical discoveries, you are, on his arrival in your district, to receive him with due reverence and respect, and to give orders to whom it may concern to receive him well, and assist him in all his requirements for facilitating his journey, as long as he may be in need of the same. Cairo 23, Zilkade 1290 (Jan. 11, 1874). The seal of Ahmed Kheiry Pasha, Moohr-dâr (seal bearer) of His Highness the Khédive.”

This is strong enough, I trust. Abu Nabut when it was read to him seemed very much pleased; but he wanted to see a letter to the Governor of Akaba likewise, and was not a little gratified when he saw that of Mr. Rogers. You will see the firman speaks of “Tor,” which is in fact the traditional Mount Sinai; but Mr. Rogers says this does not at all signify. It is sufficient for the Sheikh to know he has the Khédive's orders to assist me in my “discoveries.” I went upstairs to take leave of Mrs. Rogers, and then gave orders to Abu Nabut to be

ready to start to-morrow for Suez. The cook and servant went off with the camels.

When I went home I found a letter from McKillop Bey, telling me of Fedrigo Pasha having called and shown him my letter ; but he had already written to Nubar Pasha about the steamer. He says she has a *small* cabin, with the means of cooking on board, &c. He has written to-day to ask about a pilot, and to suggest the *painting of her bottom* before starting. (Afterwards found to have been very necessary, only the paint-brush slipped through and made a *hole* in her bottom.) I fear this would cause delay, so I have written off to him sharp, begging him to expedite the business, and telling him I am off to Suez to-morrow. He finished his letter by saying, "I must tell you that the 'Erin' is *very* small." And Mr. Fleming, from whom I have since heard, says she is not very comfortable, so that I must make up my mind to rough it. But I hear from a Mr. Thompson that she is a good sea-boat, and her commander, a Maltese, a good sailor, having brought her from Malta to Port Said in very bad weather. Inshallah ! it will be all right. In addition to Mr. Fleming's letter I have one from Mr. Kay, saying he had seen Captain Morice, McKillop's deputy, the latter being ill, and that he

had telegraphed to me. He will be here to-morrow, and hopes to see me, or rather *not* to see me, as this will show I am getting forward. He is very kind, in fact, everybody is kind; and God is kindest of all, in having favoured me thus far.

This morning before going in to luncheon I saw Mr. Gibbs, with whom I arranged to send any information I might have of importance to Mr. Tuck, at Suez, for him to telegraph it to Mr. Gibbs, who would then forward it to London, New York, or elsewhere, free of expense to me. I hear that Munzinger was here a few weeks ago and has got reinstated. I suppose his "explanations" were deemed sufficient, and all the blame thrown on his secretary. It is always the poor *secretaries* who are wrong! but if I recollect rightly, he himself said in one of the public journals that the slave trade was being carried on, and *he was obliged to shut his eyes to it*. Perhaps it was this *unusually candid* confession that offended the Egyptian Government. However, he is now in favour again, and the 'Erin' is going to Massowah to be under his orders. I have just heard from Colonel Stokes that the Khédive has issued orders that the officers in his service are to appear in uniform; this is in imitation of Germany.



Now to business. I have been thinking about my "Notes from Egypt," sent you by last post, for the "Athenæum." If the editor inserts them it will bring me in only a guinea or so; and he may cut out all that most concerns me, just as he has done in my review of New's Book. Now, although I shall not be paid for it, I think it will be better to send it to the "Times": *that* paper is read everywhere, and by everybody that you know in England and that I know in Egypt, where numerous persons have spoken to me or to Milne about your letter. If the "Times" does not insert it, you can still send it to the "Athenæum." So I telegraph to you to stop it. And now I want you to take the trouble to copy it carefully out, making such improvements as you may think desirable. Just now is a good time for the appearance of such a letter: everybody being in town; and I am sure this will be of more value to the public and to me than one guinea from the "Athenæum," payable April 1st—Tom Fool's day.

I know now what was the matter with Nubar Pasha this morning. It is the New Year's day of the Armenians as of all the Eastern Churches, and when all the world came to congratulate him, I came to bother him with business. It was a blun-

der on my part, which is worse sometimes than a crime. I cannot work any more, but must go to bed. It is half-past eleven, and I am quite tired out.

NOTES ON EGYPT.<sup>1</sup>

“*Cairo, January 11, 1874*”:<sup>2</sup>—Since my arrival in Cairo on the 23d ultimo my time and attention have been mainly concentrated on the arrangements for my contemplated visit to the volcanic region lying to the east of the head of the Gulf of Akaba, where, in the ‘three low peaks’ seen by Dean Stanley, and described by him in page 84 of his ‘Sinai and Palestine,’ as being ‘visible beyond the gap in the hills on the east,’ when he was ‘going northwards along the wide and desert valley of the Arabah,’ I calculate on finding the true Mount Sinai—the said ‘gap’ being the entrance to the Wady *Ithem*, described by Burckhardt as ‘leading eastward towards Nedjed,’ and identified by myself with the ‘*Etham* in the edge of the wilderness’ of Exodus’ xiii. 20, its scriptural name being, as will be perceived, retained to this day.

“Notwithstanding my occupations, I have nevertheless found time to jot down a few notes on EGYPT. A few days ago I paid a visit to the

<sup>1</sup> Much of the information contained in the following “Notes” is recorded in Dr. Beke’s journal; but I have thought it well to repeat it here, in a more connected form.

<sup>2</sup> See “*Athenæum*,” January 24, 1874, and “*Hastings Observer*,” February 7, 1874, &c.

Museum of Egyptian Antiquities at Boulak, under the able direction of Mariette Bey, of whose labours and researches during more than twenty years it is the fruit, and with whom I had the gratification of holding a long and most interesting conversation, the main subject of our discourse being the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth dynasties of Manetho, of whom he has brought to light so many important relics, now preserved in the Museum. Respecting these people—whose descendants of a totally distinct type from that of the ancient Egyptians still exist in the vicinity of Lake Menzaleh—Mariette Bey says in his valuable '*Aperçu de l'Histoire d'Egypt*,' page 41, 'Strong presumptions tend to make us believe that the patriarch Joseph came into Egypt under the Shepherds, and that the scene of the touching history related in Genesis was the court of one of these foreign kings. Joseph therefore was not the minister of a Pharaoh of natural extraction. It was a Shepherd King, that is to say, a Shemite like himself, that Joseph served, and the elevation of the Hebrew minister is the more easily explained on the assumption that he was patronised by a sovereign of the same race as himself.'

"The conclusion thus arrived at by the accomplished Egyptologist from the consideration of the sculptured remains of the Hyksos is so confirmatory

of my hypothesis that the Mitzrites, under whom the Israelites were in bondage, were not Egyptians, that I could not refrain from dwelling on it in my conversation with Mariette Bey, and I pointed out to him that the fish which the statues of his Hyksos or Shepherds—my Mitzrites—are seen bearing, and perhaps offering to their deity, have apparently some connection with Dagon, the fish-god of the Philistines,<sup>1</sup> especially as the Philistines are stated<sup>2</sup> to be a branch of the Mitzrites. This idea would seem not to have occurred to him before, and he said he would at once make *une petite étude la dessus*. In connection with this subject I may remark further that the latest 'Egyptian' authorities place the Rameses of Exodus and the land of Goshen, at or near Ismailia on the Suez Canal, altogether to the east of the 32d meridian; so that, on an impartial consideration of the entire subject, it will be seen that the difference is now very small between the results of recent investigations and my views of forty years' standing. I trust that ere long the difference will become still smaller. From Monsieur Mariette I learned that the French Government are seriously contemplating the flooding of the Sahara behind Algiers, by letting in the waters of the Mediterranean from the Lesser Syrtis. I do not know whether their acquisition of the Island of Tunis, of which I have also heard, has any-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. v. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. x. 13, 14.

thing to do with this project. Several years ago there was a talk of a scheme of M. de Lesseps to lay the Libyan Desert under water from the Red Sea; but as I showed in the '*Athenæum*' of August 14, 1869, this would be impracticable; whereas, on the assumption that the Desert is below the level of the Mediterranean, I pointed out that its inundation from the Greater Syrtis or Gulf of Sidra might be a work of comparatively little difficulty.<sup>1</sup> How immense its importance would be I hope to show on a future occasion.

"On my return from Boulak, I received a very pleasing visit from Dr. Schweinfurth on his way through Cairo to the Oasis Khargeh, or Great Oasis, which he purposes exploring thoroughly. From him I learned several matters of interest which I will now communicate. The well-known Italian traveller, Signor Miani, died recently at Khartum. He had penetrated as far to the south-west as Schweinfurth himself, but not being so young or so robust as the latter, he sank under the fatigues of a journey which, from Dr. Schweinfurth's description of it, now probably before the public, could be borne by few. On the other hand the German traveller, Dr. Nachtigall, has succeeded in traversing the hitherto-untrodden country of Wadai, where unhappily my young friend Vogel lost his life, and in reaching Khartum in safety, by

<sup>1</sup> "*The Idol in Horeb*," p. 91.

the way of Darfûr and Kordofan. As regards himself the Doctor assured me that the report of his having received material aid from the Khédive is without foundation, for that he obtained only the moral support of the Egyptian Government. So, too, the assistance rendered by the Viceroy to Dr. Rohlfs' expedition into the Libyan Desert has been greatly exaggerated, his subsidy to it being limited to the sum of £4000 sterling.

"When Mr. Milne and I came to Cairo from Alexandria on the 23d ultimo, nothing was more striking to me, who have visited Egypt several times since 1840 (when I went on my first journey into Abyssinia, but have not been here since 1866, when I passed through in company with my wife on our way to and from the latter country), than the many great changes for the better that have taken place throughout Egypt. When once Lake Mareotis<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> In the "Times" of February 1, 1878, a correspondent says:—"The second public work which is proposed is the draining and bringing under cultivation Lake Mareotis. . . . At present it is a vast marsh, 90 miles in circumference, and its basin is 8ft. below the level of the sea, which is so close that at Aboukir a strong sea wall is necessary to prevent inundation. At the beginning of the century it was almost dried up. Portions of it were even cultivated, and many villages had risen up in its bed. But the English, under General Hutchinson, in their siege of Alexandria in 1801, deemed it a step justified by war to let in the sea at Aboukir in order to shut off the besieged French Army from all communication with Cairo. The strategical move was successful, but a vast tract of country, 200,000 acres in extent, and 40 villages were submerged. The reclamation of this marsh has often been proposed. Foreign enterprise has offered to do it, provided that the exclusive enjoyment

the dreary waste on the western side of the Rosetta branch of the Nile are passed, the country, far and wide, exhibits unequivocal signs of improved and extended cultivation. I am told that whereas in 1850 there were only two millions and a half of acres under culture, there are now at least five millions.<sup>1</sup> The cotton harvest is just at an end,

of the reclaimed land is granted for a certain term of years. Such a proposal has recently been renewed by a Dutch company, whose nationality guarantees a knowledge of the science of irrigation. Hitherto their proposal has not been accepted, and it is said that the point of difference lies in a natural insistence on the part of the Khedive that the reclaimed land should be subject to the ordinary fiscal regulations. The taxation of land in Egypt newly brought into cultivation begins three years after reclamation, and gradually rises to the level of other freehold lands in their payments. Perhaps this difficulty may be surmounted, or another company may be formed more ready to accept what seems a necessary condition of land tenure in any country. The mere reclamation would only be a matter of time and steam pumping. Then would come the more difficult task of preparing the soil for cultivation. It is at present so impregnated with salt as to be unfit for most crops. But the Mahmoudieh Canal, one of the largest offshoots from the Nile, is close by. From it an abundant supply of water could be obtained, and three years' washing by periodical inundation would clear the land from all the salt, and leave a fresh virgin soil behind fit for every kind of crop. Another beneficial result should not be forgotten. Alexandria is at present the favourite haunt of fever, and all the doctors concur in saying our neighbour the marsh is the cause. Its removal would obviously be an immense gain for the city in the matter of health as well as prosperity." See also Mr. E. De Leon's "*Khédive's Egypt*," p. 269; and Mr. J. C. McCoan's "*Egypt As It Is*," pp. 248-250.

<sup>1</sup> "The land already under cultivation in the Delta is not brought to the point of high production, and there are literally hundreds of thousands of acres not yet tilled or planted which would amply return the first cost of reclamation. All that is wanted is more hands. Proposals have been made to the Government for the importation of

and the peasants are busily employed in cleaning

Chinese and Coolie labour ; but the Khédive has never taken to the idea very warmly. He is tired of the irrepressible foreigner who has oppressed him at every turn, and is reported to have said that he certainly ' would not add to the list of his Consular dictators the name of a Chinese Consul-General.' To those who know how some of our diplomatic agents here have used their power this speech is not without reason." (See the "Times," March 15, 1878.) "Three schemes are now more or less discussed, and all are of vital interest to the prosperity of the country. . . . The first is the completion of the Barrage. . . . Cotton requires water more than any other crop, and at a time when the Nile is lowest. It is now our most important product, and our exports have risen from four millions to thirteen. It is fortunate, therefore, that the idea of the Barrage has revived with new life. The science of irrigation on a large scale has enormously advanced, and what seemed difficult in 1847 is now a work of comparative ease. The vast dams, or annicuts, in India on the Canvery, or the Godavary, or the Kistnah rivers, are works of a similar kind and scale, and their complete success is abundantly proved by the large return they make on the capital expended. All experts are agreed that the Barrage would bring under cultivation some hundreds of thousands of acres of land now barren, and would greatly increase the productiveness of much of the cultivated area by the supply of water at all seasons. It must also be borne in mind that in Egypt every canal by its banks is a roadway as well as a water way, and thus doubly increases the communications of the country. As regards the cost, a small water cess such as is levied in Lombardy would speedily redeem the capital expended. The estimate, as made by Mr. Fowler the Viceroy's consulting engineer, of the cost of the Barrage and the necessary canalisation, is under two millions sterling. But the difficult question remains how to obtain this capital at a time when Egyptian credit is exhausted, and her revenues are mortgaged up to the hilt. Two plans are proposed. The first is to induce foreign capital to take up the schemes by the offer to mortgage the water cess for a certain number of years and to insure its fair and punctual collection. There is little doubt that there is private enterprise and unemployed money in abundance in Europe ready for such a scheme, and its adoption would only be a question of terms. But, say philo-Egyptians, this is a public work which ought not to be



and ploughing the land.<sup>1</sup> In one instance I saw what I do not remember to have remarked before, a *camel* drawing the plough. Green crops of various kinds are growing luxuriantly, and it is pleasing to see the animals, black cattle, asses, sheep, and goats, grazing in the rich pasture without stint. Trees not only line the road on both sides, but have been planted so extensively that many parts of the country have the appearance of being well-wooded. Altogether the run across the Delta on a lovely, cool, but sunny day, was most delightful, and I am not in the least exaggerating when I say that I was

made a source of profit such as any joint-stock company would demand. Moreover, the total absence of local capacity for association destroys one of the main arguments in favour of such works being done by private enterprise. The settlement of a gigantic foreign company in the heart of the country would not in any way teach the native Egyptians self-help and self-dependence. Why, then, should not the profit the strangers would demand be kept at home? The means are at hand for the State to do the work. At present half a million of revenue is annually set aside for the *amortissement* of the public debt. If this sinking fund were suspended only for four years, the Barrage and the canals could be constructed; the expenditure would be recouped in a very few years by a water cess, which would be a payment for value received, not a tax; Egypt would be the gainer by a vast public work of great permanent value, and the creditors would be more secure in the increased productiveness of the country. It seems a golden but not impossible picture." See the "Times," February 1; "Egypt As It Is," pp. 182 and 200-206; and "The Khédive's Egypt," pp. 202-204 and 236.

<sup>1</sup> The cotton crop of 1875-76 was 3,000,000 cantars, the largest ever known. That of 1876-77 was 2,500,000. See "The Idol in Horeb," p. 100, and also M'Coan's "Egypt As It Is," p. 192.

often inclined to doubt whether I could really be in Egypt. The sight, here and there, of tall factory chimneys rising out of the midst of the villages, or from among the trees, tended to increase the illusion.

“The fact is, that Egypt, though geographically forming a part of Africa, is rapidly assimilating herself to Europe, of which she desires to be regarded as a member.

“The condition of the lower classes generally, both in town and country, has likewise much improved. Ophthalmia, perhaps the greatest curse of Egypt, is far less frequent and less virulent. If the people are not better fed, they have at all events constant food. Those in the town seem to be better clad. In Cairo shoes are worn much more than formerly, not merely the native slippers, but European boots. I have just noticed a man in the usual native blue cotton frock, apparently the driver of a hack-carriage, actually having *his boots blacked* by a lad scarcely less meanly clad than himself. As regards the Fellāhín, or peasants, they are better protected from the weather in their mud-huts, which are generally much better roofed than formerly, and oftentimes better built. In some places one sees dwellings for the labourers approaching to a European type. On the other hand, several of the native villages of the last generation are deserted, and their mud-huts are rapidly falling into decay. Such must have been the fate of the “treasure

cities" built by the Israelites for Pharaoh with bricks, which there is no reason to suppose to have been *burnt* bricks and straw; and hence it is intelligible that no traces of them should now remain.

"No doubt there is a dark side to the picture of Egyptian prosperity. The people, like the Israelites of old, work not for themselves, but for taskmasters, who 'make their lives bitter with hard bondage; all their service, wherein they render them service, is with rigour.' Still, on the whole, the balance is decidedly on the side of good. The greatest and most important change, as being likely to be the most lasting, is, however, in the climate, consequent on the bringing of the land under culture, and on the planting of trees.<sup>1</sup> Egypt is fast losing its proverbial rainless character. At Alexandria, as is well known, rain is now so frequent as to have become a source of annoyance; but, until quite recently, Cairo has prided itself on its almost total exemption from rain. 'At Cairo,' says the new edition of Murray's "Handbook," 'five or six showers would be the (yearly) average, and these not at all heavy.' But I am assured, on good authority, that during last year there were no less than twenty-one or twenty-two days of rain; and only a week ago, since my arrival here, we had four-and-twenty hours of rain, as heavy and continu-

<sup>1</sup> See "The Khédive's Egypt," p. 61; and  
"Egypt As It Is," pp. 352-54.

ous as any in London,—in fact, a regular English wet day. The consequence was, that the unpaved streets were ankle deep in mud, and all ‘circulation’ was suspended, except in carriages: there was even ‘*riposo*’ at the Opera for want of an audience. It may easily be imagined that the ignorant Arabs attribute this extraordinary change in the seasons to some supernatural cause, and, as it has taken place since the accession of Mohammed Ali, they conclude that he and his dynasty have possessed the means of bringing it about. And so they have in fact, though not in the way imagined by their superstitious subjects. Another curious instance may be given of how these people attribute results to wrong causes. It is matter of history that four-and-twenty centuries ago the Persian invader, Cambyzes, injured and destroyed many of the monuments of ancient Egypt, and among them (as is generally considered) the Vocal Statue of Memnon, at Thebes. It is also matter of history that, during the present century, Professor Lepsius defaced several of the existing monuments by depriving them of their sculptured figures and inscriptions. The natives of the country, who know nothing of dates, and entertain the most vague notions respecting everything that occurred before their own time, having heard from their fathers of Lepsius’s vandalism, but nothing of that of Cambyzes, not unnaturally confound the one with the other, and so

Dr. Lepsius is asserted by them to have been the destroyer of the Vocal Memnon, as if he had not already sinned enough of his own to answer for.

"If the changes in the agricultural districts and in the climate of Egypt have been great, those in Alexandria<sup>1</sup> and about the capital of the country are not less so. The Khédive seems determined to make

<sup>1</sup> "The great improvement which calls for accomplishment [as instanced by Dr. Beke at page 149] is the removal of the reef that bars the entrance to the port of Alexandria. Its existence ought no longer to be tolerated. Shipping to the amount of 1,300,000 tons enters the port every year. The exports amount in value to 13 millions sterling. The imports come to 5 millions. The harbour works, which are near completion, when finished will have cost two millions and a half, and the conveniences then offered will put Alexandria next to Marseilles, Trieste, and Genoa in the rank of Mediterranean ports. Yet no ship can enter the port after nightfall, and all vessels of considerable draught cannot enter at all either by day or night in stormy weather. Alexandria Bay is 5 miles across, but as you near the harbour you find shoal water almost everywhere, across which for more than a mile stretches the new breakwater. The real deep-water channel, the only passage for large ships, is not 100 ft. across, and has the additional drawback of being very circuitous. Its depth is only 27 ft., so that in rough weather vessels of deep draught dare not venture in for fear of touching the rock in the trough of the sea. Barely a month ago, during a forty-eight hours' gale, the Austrian Lloyd and English mail steamers and several merchantmen dare not venture out of harbour, while four large vessels tossed about outside in the offing for thirty-six hours, and the English turret-ship 'Rupert' actually put back to Port Said rather than venture in. A careful survey has been recently made by a skilful English engineer of the amount of rock it would be necessary to remove in order to widen and deepen the channel sufficiently to permit entry and exit at all times and in all weathers. The work required proves by no means insurmountable. It is said that a tithe of what has been spent on the harbour would make its entrance safe, and it seems penny wise and pound foolish not to take the matter in hand at once." See the "Times," Feb. 1, 1878.

Cairo the Paris of the Levant. The western portion of the city is being almost entirely rebuilt, and extensively enlarged in the direction of the Nile, whilst new streets are being opened through the other quarters. But on this subject I need not dilate. [Is it not all written in Murray's 'Hand-book;' 'The Khédive's Egypt,' p. 47; and 'Egypt As It Is,' p. 51 ?] It is only to be hoped that, in his zeal to modernize and Europeanize Cairo, the Viceroy will not deprive it of its Oriental character, which constitutes its great charm and attraction.

“ With reference to Sir Samuel Baker's Expedition, it is reported here, to have cost half-a-million sterling,—I have since been informed, on good authority, that the sum the Viceroy is out of pocket somewhat exceeds £400,000—and according to all accounts the results are anything but commensurate with the immense outlay. However, after his first disappointment, the Khédive is said to be not dissatisfied—‘*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.*’ Colonel Gordon, who has entered His Highness's service to, undertake the exploration, and, it must be added, the conquest and annexation of those southern regions, will know how to take up and unite the broken threads; and there can be little doubt that under his skilful management the policy of the Egyptian Government will eventually be successful. That policy is broadly and unequivocally stated by Mariette Bey, in the

Introduction to his 'Aperçu,' already referred to: 'History,' says he, 'teaches us that Egypt is bounded on the north by the Mediterranean, and on the south by the Cataract of Assuan. But history, in fixing these limits, does not take into account the indications furnished both by geography and by ethnography. At the north-east of the African Continent, from the sea to the equator, there extends an immense tract of country formed by the river, and fertilised by it alone. On the other hand, of the various races that people the banks of this river some are uncivilised, savage, and incapable of governing themselves; whilst on this side of the tropic we meet with a nation, which, on the contrary, merits the admiration of mankind on account of its glory, its industry, and all the elements of civilisation contained in it. *History, then, ought rather to say that Egypt extends wherever the Nile flows, and that consequently Egypt has the right to claim as her domain all the countries watered by this celebrated river as far as they extend towards the south.*'<sup>1</sup> It would not be difficult to expose the fallacy of this reasoning. But all that needs now to be said is, that such being the avowed object of the Khédive, it is manifest that the task of the accomplished British

<sup>1</sup> It will be seen that Mr. J. C. M'Coan in his recent work, "Egypt As It Is," p. 3, note, has adopted word for word Dr. Beke's translation of this important passage.

engineer officer who has just entered His Highness's service in the place of Sir Samuel Baker, is not only to explore the basin of the Upper Nile, but to enforce Egypt's claim to all the countries watered by that river ; and that if any man is capable of carrying out the ambitious views of Ismail Pasha with moderation and success, it is ' Chinese Gordon.' "

Since the foregoing "Notes" were written by Dr. Beke in 1874 very few changes have occurred except in the financial condition<sup>1</sup> of this naturally highly-favoured country ; but in spite of all these difficulties with which Egypt has of late had, and has still, to contend, I venture to predict that there is still a glorious future in store for her. The natural resources of the country are so great, that with economy and a moderately good government, and the contemplated improvements referred to at pages 273-275, 280, one may confidently look for a satisfactory result. The enormous advance which education has made in Egypt ;<sup>2</sup> the realisation of the plans for increasing the lands, and facilities for agricultural purposes ; Dr. Beke's and Mr. Fowler's Soudan railway<sup>3</sup> being extended to Suakin in the

<sup>1</sup> See the "Times," 19th May 1877.

<sup>2</sup> "The Khédive's Egypt," p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 353.



Red Sea, (by which the overland route to India would be shortened by three days, and commerce with the interior largely developed); together with the noble efforts of Gordon Pasha in the *East* for the suppression of the slave trade<sup>1</sup> and the advancement of commerce; and those of Captain Burton in the *West*, in developing the mineral resources of the country—must surely conduce to restore Egypt to the highest state of financial prosperity. If anything were wanting to suggest perfect confidence in the future of Egypt, it would be that Egypt should place itself under the *sole* protectorate of England, and abstain from further aggressions on Abyssinia.

Had the British Government only followed Dr. Beke's policy and advice, and retained possession of Abyssinia, or at least of Zulla, in 1868, the £9,000,000 which was spent on the Abyssinian Expedition would now have been found not to have been spent in vain.

<sup>1</sup> "Egypt As It Is," pp. 329-374. See "Geological Notes on Cairo," by Mr. John Milne, F.G.S. Published by Trübner & Co. 1874.

## CHAPTER VII.

DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT—VOYAGE ROUND THE PENINSULA OF PHARAN, OR PSEUDO MOUNT SINAI—DISCOVERY OF MIDIAN—VOYAGE UP THE GULF OF AKABA—RED SEA, OR SEA OF EDM.

*Suez, January 14, 1874.*—We left Cairo at nine o'clock this morning for Suez, and travelled with Colonel Morrieson. We had a carriage to ourselves all the way, which made it very pleasant for conversation ; and having lunched and changed carriages at Zagazig, we arrived at Suez at seven o'clock in the evening. The Colonel is come on to look about him a little, and intended to go along the Suez Canal, and stay a day or two at Ismailia ; but he saw enough *en passant* to satisfy him. It is a wretched place, and although the Land of Goshen is placed there by M. de Lesseps, Mr. Holland, and others, it seems pretty clear from *geological* evidence that the Israelites could never have lived there. There is no fertile soil down to the rock !

On our arrival we came direct to the hotel ; but

found it quite full. Having asked for three rooms, and being at first told there were none, we talked of going somewhere else, but heard there were nothing but second-class hotels (which I believe to be the fact), and that these were also full, with second-class people of course. They say that the people are *staying* here! What they can possibly find in Suez to "stay for," I cannot tell; but so it appears to be. After a good deal of talk the hotel people said they could give us one double-bedded room, (out of which they had to clear off lots of ladies' things!) and they could make up a third bed in it, or make one up on the sofa in the saloon. Colonel Morrieson and I took the bedroom; and Mr. Milne the sofa. We then had a wash (Milne in our room, for he had nowhere else), and then went down to dinner.

The 'Erin' is here, and is gone into the harbour. I hope it is not to have the bottom painted, as that will take some time to do. I am half inclined, if she is likely to be long, to go on with the camels which will be here to-morrow afternoon. Time is killing me! 11.30.—I have sat up in my room writing to Sir W. C. Trevelyan, Mr. Scrope, and others. I enclose these letters for you to forward. My bed-fellow is gone to bed, and is asleep!

*January 15.*—I was up this morning soon after

seven ; had a cup of coffee, and went to call on Mr. Levick at eight. He was very glad to see me, and we had a bit of a chat. I told him I wanted to see the proper authorities ; so he sent me to Seid Bey—the something or other here. I did not see him, but I saw his deputy, who said it was all right, a telegram having been received last night. But I must go and see Mohammed Pasha, whose position here I don't exactly know, except that he is an admiral. He was not up, but I learned that he would, in the course of the morning, be going in his boat to the harbour from the quay in front of the hotel, and I could see him there. Abu Nabut, who accompanied me, suggested that I should not make myself too cheap by running about after people *not so big as myself* ; and I could hear the fellow talking about me as one of the Omra (*Emirs*, or “Lords”) of England. I have no objection to air my dignity ; but if I am to lose time by doing so, I had better put my dignity in my pocket. However, I came to the hotel and had breakfast at nine o'clock, and afterwards, when Mohammed Pasha came down to his boat, I went out to him. He was very civil and polite, and said the steamer should be got ready *at once*, &c. All this looks very much like delay. I said that my camels with

the goods would arrive this afternoon, and I wanted to put them on board. He replied that the steamer should be brought alongside the quay, and if not to-day, my goods could be left till to-morrow, when she will come for them. Among his attendants was an Englishman, (Captain) Forster Bey, the harbour master here, who showed me a very nice letter from M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey, and said that if it depended upon him, I should have the boat in a few hours. But the everlasting Oriental procrastination prevented him from saying how long it might be. However, I might depend on his doing all in his power to expedite matters. The 'Erin' is a nice little boat, with good engines, and about eighty, or perhaps, a hundred tons burden. She is quite sea-worthy, and will have a good captain;—if not, he said, he would try and go with me himself. This is all gammon, as she is not coming back to Suez!

My business being thus far completed, I went to Mr. Levick again, and saw Mrs. Levick, who inquired very kindly after you, &c.; after which I called on the Wests, but found that Mr. West had been called suddenly away to Ismailia on Consular business—an English ship, laden with coals, having been *wrecked* in Lake Timsah! Only fancy this!

Then I went to see Mr. and Mrs. Tuck, and arranged with the former about sending messages to Mr. Gibbs. I shall try to send home news from Akaba, *via* Tor.

On my way back to the hotel I saw Captain Kellock, the Peninsular and Oriental Company's agent here, who was most polite and attentive, placing himself quite at my service, and offering to assist me in every way in his power. Certainly the Peninsular and Oriental Company's people are the most polite and obliging I ever came across : it is quite worth while to make a voyage by one of their steamers, just to see how comfortable and pleasant a voyage may be made under all circumstances, as you and I know from experience. If the weather is bad for landing, or anything of the kind, like it was when we arrived at Alexandria in the 'Simba,' the captain is equal to the occasion, and makes everything as comfortable as possible under the circumstances ; if it is fine weather and very hot, they are equally ready to render everything agreeable and cool. Besides, they are not only the most liberal company concerning their passengers, but are ever ready to afford independent travellers every courtesy, and the benefit of the various means at their disposal : so that, in fact,

they ought to be called the "Philanthropic and Obliging."

After luncheon I was thinking of going off on a donkey to the dock, but while I was thinking about it, I was told that Seid Bey had returned, so Milne and I went to him. He was busy writing a letter—or having it written for him—giving instructions about my boat. He told me that it would come up to the quay this afternoon, or, at the latest, to-morrow morning. During the conversation coffee was served. Seid Bey is the most gentlemanly man amongst them; but unfortunately he speaks only Arabic, and I had a very bad interpreter, Abu Nabut having gone to look after the camels, which are to arrive here from Cairo this afternoon. By and by, Mohammed Pasha returned in his boat. He has given all necessary orders; the steamer is being coaled, and will be here to-morrow morning early without fail. So I suppose all is right. If I can I shall start to-morrow; but I fear I shall be disappointed. The weather is perfectly lovely. Suez is frightfully dull, having gone down considerably since the canal was opened. Last night, our bedroom being filled with the luggage of us all three, I stumbled over Colonel Morrieson's bag, and struck my knee against his portmanteau. It hurt me a

good deal at first, but I don't think any great harm is done. My cough is gradually leaving me, as I expected it would with change of air.

The camels are come and I must go down to see them. On going down I found the captain and engineer of the steamer, who had come to receive my orders. The steamer is coaled, and will be here the first thing in the morning. She will not be able to start, however, till Saturday morning, as the crew have to provide themselves with food, and the tide will not serve till the next morning, Saturday; when, please God, we are to start, and in four days we are to be at Akaba. The Captain is a Maltese, as are also most of the crew; the engineer is an Englishman. We shall fly the *British* flag. The pilot is an Arab, who knows the sea well, and we shall steam only during the day, anchoring at night: the Captain has good charts, so there is nothing to fear. The 'Erin' is sixty-five tons, and a screw. Altogether everything promises most favourably.

The camels have unloaded in the yard of the hotel, and will go on to-morrow. We shall, I trust, be at Akaba three or four days before them, in which time I hope to have done good business, so as to be able to report favourably before the departure of



the Captain for Tor, to which place I shall send a letter for you, and also one for Mr. Gibbs. I have spoken with Captain Kellock, and also with Mr. Edwards, the P. and O. Company's chief clerk, who are both most kind and obliging. Instead of dining in the hotel, I went and had a "Manchester tea" with our friends the Levicks, who are exceedingly kind, and will do everything to help me as regards letters. Mrs. Levick was particular in her inquiries, and spoke much of you.

*January 16,—7 A.M.*—A lovely morning. No signs of the 'Erin' yet. It will not be high water till 9.30. I have been thinking over our journey, and about its commencing at Akaba; but, in point of fact, it begins here at Suez. What a pity it is I did not know I should have the steamer before I made my arrangements, and signed the contract with Abu Nabut, as it would have saved me a good deal of useless expenses, and the funds of the expedition being crippled. You must, however, apply to the public for further assistance, and I must leave the matter in your hands. I shall want money when I return to Egypt.

Colonel Morrieson has now got a separate bedroom, so Milne came into my room last night. It is very cold during the night: the seasons here have

changed a good deal since the canal was opened, it being generally much cooler than formerly.\* Abu Nabut has just been to me for a written request to the *chef du pont* over the canal, to let my camels pass. So they are off, thank God.

9 A.M.—The 'Erin' has arrived and is moored nearly opposite the hotel. She is a nice little boat, but small. The Captain's name is Emmanuele Chiassarò, or Sciassar (pronounced in English Shassàr), which is the Genoese form of the name, he being of Genoese parentage. He tells me that he cannot start before Saturday night, or Sunday morning, on account of the crew being without their pay. He has been to the Governor about it; but it is Friday, the Mohammedan Sabbath, and no work is done. To-morrow he will telegraph to Cairo, and all will be right. I doubt it much!

I went with Captain Sciassar to the Peninsular and Oriental Company's Office, and got a British flag. The crew consists of captain (Maltese), mate (Maltese), pilot (Arab), chief engineer (Maltese), second engineer (Maltese), four men (Maltese), and two stokers (Egyptian). The 'Erin' goes eight to eight and a half knots per hour. She has orders to go with me wherever I please, so instead of stopping at Sherm, near Ras Mohammed, to look at

some volcanoes there, which are only interesting in a geological point of view, I have told the Captain I will stop at Ayoun el Kassab,<sup>1</sup> on the other side of the entrance to the Gulf of Akaba, which place I have hitherto identified with the "Encampment of the Israelites by the Red Sea."

About eleven o'clock this morning, Captain Foster came to me to say there is a "hitch." The Captain and crew are in arrears of pay, and cannot (or will not) go to sea unless paid! Foster has been to Mohammed Pasha, and got snubbed! It is a question between his department and that of M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey and the Egyptian Government. Unless strong measures are taken, I may be delayed an indefinite period! This is pleasant. I went off with him to the Egyptian Telegraph Office, and telegraphed to Nubar Pasha; and Foster is gone to the English Telegraph Office, to telegraph direct to M<sup>c</sup>Killop at Alexandria. As things now are there is no knowing when I may start; and the camels are gone on, so I am in a hole! Where the expenses are to end I know not.

Captain Sciassar has been with me to say that Mohammed Pasha has given him orders to leave with me directly, to cross over to the arsenal, and

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Beke's "Mount Sinai a Volcano," p. 36.

take on board five tons more of coal, then to proceed with me to Akaba, and after I have dismissed him, to go on to Massowah *direct* without coming round to Tor for coal. The Pasha is leaving this evening for Cairo. But now comes the hitch. The crew are willing to go without being paid up their wages, but they must have food for a month, during which they may be on their voyage to Massowah : they cannot go without. I have been thinking over the matter, and have agreed with Colonel Morrieson that it would be *cheaper* for me to advance them the money, even on the chance of getting it back than be delayed here. So I told the Captain I would give him the money if Captain Foster said it was all right. Whereupon he went to Captain Foster, and brought him to me. I told him I would advance the money on the skipper's receipt, and this I would send to Nubar Pasha, requesting the amount to be paid to Messrs. Oppenheim for me, explaining that I did it for the credit of the Khédive as well as myself, and also to avoid difficulties ; for the crew being British subjects, the Egyptian Government have no direct control over them, and besides, could not in any court force them to fulfil their engagement, so long as the Egyptian Government does not fulfil its part.

The Gordian knot was cut by the following telegram from M<sup>c</sup>Killop Bey, in reply to Captain Foster's: "Pay the 'Erin's' crew one month's wages." But how to get the money from the harbour-master's treasurer or cashier, to-day being Friday? Foster is gone off for this: he is a capital fellow. Before leaving he told me of another hitch. The English engineer, hearing that the steamer is not coming back to Suez, refuses to go! so the Captain and Foster Bey have gone to find another. But, perhaps when the Englishman sees the order for the pay, he may think better of it. A nice country this in which to be dependent on the Government!

*January 17.*—Yesterday I went and took a Manchester tea with Mr. Andrews; afterwards Colonel Morrieson and Milne came in. We passed a very pleasant evening talking about Sinai, &c. He has all the books on the *traditional Mountain*, and on the Holy Land. He sees a good deal in what I say; but, like many others, cannot be quite convinced. Whilst there, I had a visit from two of the officials, M<sup>c</sup>Killop's cashier and another. They told me the money will be paid, and I am to be off *to-day*. The engineer is displaced; the second supersedes him, and a new second engineer is to be shipped:

so far so good. I write this in the morning, having just gone out to look about me.

The *schooner* is getting up steam with all her might, and is to come alongside of the quay to ship my things; but the Captain is not on board, and I believe nothing till I see it. I find I was wrong in describing the rig of the 'Erin.' She is a schooner, with the addition of what appears to be a large lateen sail on the foremast. The screw is *auxiliary*. Under steam she goes eight knots, but under sail she can make twelve knots: in fact, she is said to be a clipper. At sea we shall keep *within* the reefs; that is, close along the shore; so that we shall not be exposed to a heavy sea, and besides can always run in when the weather looks at all nasty. Trust to an *Arab* pilot for taking care of *himself*, to say nothing of his ship.

8.30.—The British flag is flying at the masthead of the 'Erin.' She will not come up to the quay, as there is not water enough; so she remains where she was, and the things are being taken on board. I have seen Captain Sciassar, who has received *some* money, but not all. The English engineer, Clifton, did not properly belong to the vessel. The second, now first, is a Maltese, who has been four years with Sciassar. The 'Erin' is now going over to the arsenal to

take her coals on board, and then will come for me. I am going to breakfast, and then over to Mr. Tuck to telegraph to you. All this looks like business.

On going out to call on Consul West, who, I hear has returned, I saw the Captain again, who reported himself ready to depart, only he was waiting for a telegram from Cairo to say whether he was to go to Massowah *or return here*. Just fancy these people ! It is clear we shall anyhow be too late for to-day ; so to-morrow morning, Inshallah ! at seven o'clock we are to be off. This delay is killing me with anxiety, but what am I to do ? I may mention here at once, as I am going to write on a different subject, that when I returned to the hotel at twelve o'clock, the steamer, which went off to the arsenal for the five tons of coal, had not returned. She looked very pretty as she steamed down the creek. Captain Foster called here in my absence to say that the ' Erin ' is waiting the orders of Mohammed Pasha, and will not leave till she receives them. They are expected by telegraph, and will be directed to him at the harbour, whither he has now gone. What is to be the end of it all, I cannot form an idea. If I do not know soon, I shall telegraph to Nubar Pasha again, and shall continue doing so till I am really off. I have put the pos-

tage stamp on my letter to you, and shall leave it with Mr. Levick to state the precise moment of my departure on the outside of the envelope; so that when you get my letter you will know I am *really off*—unless! But I have no heart to write about it.

The post from Cairo this evening will most probably bring me your letter by the Brindisi mail, which arrived at Alexandria on Thursday evening. I much desired to have it, and yet did not venture to incur the delay and expense of stopping merely for this, as I have not reason to expect any intelligence from you affecting my journey, and my stopping here for more news would simply be delaying my return home to you in person just as long. As it is, duty and inclination go together, for I *must* wait. Mr. Levick is very good, and will get your letter from the *Egyptian* post-office as soon as it arrives. I called on Mr. and Mrs. West, who were glad to see me, and invited me to dinner to-day if *I do not go!*

3 P.M.—The 'Erin' is back with her coal, and there she sticks. The Captain is away, and I am —; whilst I am writing in he comes with his bill of health in order. He only awaits the telegram, which ought to arrive *now*. I am still afraid, but I take it for granted, and have ordered him to



light the fires at six o'clock to-morrow morning, so that we may be off at eight o'clock. I might have made it an hour earlier, but Mr. Levick tells me there is just the chance of your letter arriving too late from Cairo to be delivered before the morning, and I am certainly not going to throw away the chance for a mere hour. Captain Sciassar seems a straightforward fellow enough—at all events, for a Maltese!—and has navigated the Red Sea for four years as pilot, master, and commander.

I waited till six o'clock for Captain Sciassar, but he never came; so after "blowing up" a little to Abu Nabut, I said I should go to the Consul. I was to dine with him at half-past six, but thought I would go a little beforehand to consult with Mr. West as to what had best be done. I had in the course of the afternoon looked in on Mr. Levick, who gave me little hope; he would not take leave of me, saying I was sure to remain.

When I arrived Mr. West was busy for a while, and then began entering into my case: but hardly had he done so, when a man he knew, connected with the Government, came with the telegram from Cairo, ordering Sciassar to land me at Akaba, *and then return to Suez*, instead of going to Massowah. However, I am to start at once; there is nothing

now to prevent me. I dined with the Wests; Mr. and Mrs. Tuck being of the party. At about nine o'clock your letter of the fifth, *via* Marseilles, was brought me. There is nothing particular in it that requires special notice. I am about to start on an arduous undertaking, but yet I do so in perfect confidence and reliance on His blessing and protection.

*January 18.*—It is just seven o'clock, and I really do believe we are going at last. I got up soon after six, and after packing up my things, I have been down to the schooner. I had seen the smoke from my window as soon as I was out of bed. No one was on deck, so I called out lustily, 'Erin, ahoy!' which brought some one up. The Captain is on shore at the *locanda*, where he is staying. The steam will be up in a quarter of an hour. I take for granted that all is right, and so I came home to breakfast, to close my letter to you, to pay my bill, and be off.

*Post Office, 7.45.*—I have just seen the Captain. All is ready. We are to start in a quarter of an hour, *or as soon as the tide will permit*, which may make it a little later, he says. But we are really off; so I have sent for our things to be taken on board, and I now leave my letter with Mr.

Levick for you. God Almighty bless us both, and prosper my undertaking.

*At Sea, January 18.*—As the 'Erin' returns to Suez, I shall send you not only the latest news, but also my diary as heretofore. My notes will require a great deal of extension before they are ready for publication, and you might help me considerably in this. At eight o'clock I went on board the 'Erin' for the *first time*. Colonel Morrieson, who had got up to see us off, came on board with us, shook me heartily by the hand, and wished me all success. But he had little time given him. The Captain came up to me immediately and asked if we should start, to which I assented, and he took me so sharply at my word, that Colonel Morrieson had to scramble out of the ship as best he could. By five minutes past eight we were clear. It is a lovely morning, bright and clear, with very little wind; what there is, is from the north-east. We begin our voyage with the new moon, and by the time this moon is out, I hope to have completed all the observations I require to make, and to be *nearly* back at Suez; so that I shall literally be able to fulfil my contract with Mr. Milne, that he is to be back in England by the end of February. I shall unavoidably be a little

later, but not much, I trust. Our journey to Harran, if I recollect rightly, occupied three months and a week. In that time, from December the 8th, the day of my departure, I ought to be back with you.

The 'Erin' is a very nice little vessel, and was originally a pleasure yacht. I was mistaken about her sails. She is regularly schooner-rigged, with the addition of an immense square sail on her foremast; this is what I thought to be a lateen sail, from the way in which it was braced to the mast when in harbour. She is nominally of eighteen horse power, but works twenty, so says the Captain, and she consumes as much as one ton of coal a day: with twenty tons on board, therefore, she has fuel for just a three weeks' cruise.

Our voyage so far has been nothing remarkable. We passed the entrance to the Suez Canal; but of course could not see anything of it, except that there, and at the entrance to the harbour, there are most extensive works. There were several vessels of the P. and O. Company and others, lying there, and also three vessels of the Khédive. He might have given me one of these; but our Captain says they are none of them fit for the voyage, their Captains being incompetent. After a while I had