

before getting into that of our friends the Towaras. Abu Nabut tells me that he will explain all to me when he gets away from this place. He has been away making purchases for the return journey; but to-morrow we do not start. I cannot make my observations here in less time than the whole of to-morrow. Indeed I ought to remain another day, but I shall manage not to do so. We have three soldiers picketed by our tents! In the evening I watched the tide, and found it at its highest at 9.15 P.M., as it seemed to me. It was about the same hour that the moon rose. It was a lovely night, as still and calm as a lake, and the glass is rising, so that it promises to be fair.

February 6.—Before 4 A.M. I was up and out on the beach to observe the tide. I was quite alone, nobody being about, but I could see the soldiers squatting round their fire. Of course they saw me, but took no notice. I stayed by the sea till four o'clock, when it seemed to me that the tide began to turn. It was low water when I went out on the beach, and, as is always the case, there is an interval, more or less long, when the water neither rises nor falls. The distance between high and low water-marks is only six yards, and the rise and fall of the tide, as far as I could estimate it, does not exceed

three or four feet. In rough weather, or at spring tides, the beach is covered some sixteen yards more. It was a most exquisite morning, the sea more still, if possible, than it was when I left it last night, with a high moon overhead and Venus shining brightly close to her. I wish I had the command of language, wouldn't I say something fine!

I returned to bed without disturbing Milne, though he says that he heard me either when going out or coming in; but he does not trouble himself when not called on to do so. In this he is a perfect "soldado." This morning he is off at 8 A.M. to visit the long-talked-of *Maghara*! We have found it at last. I was dreadfully afraid it would turn out to be all talk, and that therefore I might appear to have made a wrong representation in my letters to Sir Walter Trevelyan and to Mr. Poulett Scrope, and others. But, thank God, *there the cave is, close to the head of the sea*, as is stated in Exodus.¹ It will take him all the day to go and return. I had wanted him to help me with my observations, and to take the time of noon from the sun; but I must now do the best I can by myself. The "sun" must be taken on the journey, as he carries the azimuth compass

¹ Exod. xiv. 1.

with him for use. After he was gone I tried to take an observation with the boiling-point thermometer, but could not do it with the Royal Geographical Society's new-fangled apparatus. It is just as it was with us in Abyssinia. So I put the tubes and things aside, and boiled my thermometer in the water itself, as I used to do on both occasions when I was in Abyssinia. I did it well enough then, and so I have done it now! I have got a day of comparative idleness before me, so I think I shall begin writing a letter to the "Times," to be sent from Suez as soon as I arrive there.

11 A.M.—In the midst of my work I have left off to go down and look at the sea again. It is really marvellous. The calm is absolute, and the tide goes gently running down with scarcely any movement. The beach shelves gently out, and may be seen for a considerable distance under the clear water—every stone of the shingle being distinctly visible. I imagine *the tide* can have had very little effect on the passage of the Israelites. I had entered *this* in my diary as the day of the 'encampment by the Red Sea,' and the 'Passage' as having taken place this very night. I think I have made a mistake in my calculation, and that to-morrow is *the day*. If I find myself in error

when I get back to England, I shall only have to add the difference of three-quarters of an hour. Everything is so completely without variation one day from another, that it is never worth while wasting twenty-four hours.

Poor Captain Sciassar had very different weather. It continued so rough after we left Akaba and started inland, that the boat could not reach the beach, and he had to *swim* off to his ship. After this he went only as far as the anchorage behind Pharaoh's Island. Whether he remained there a day, or continued his voyage on the following day, I cannot make out; but I fancy he went on in the course of January 31. Anyhow he will not have more than reached Suez by this time with my letters. I have omitted to say, that on the way down Wady Ithem yesterday, we passed on the left side a rock with several round holes in it, perhaps a foot in diameter, and as much or more deep, with still more numerous smaller holes, two or three inches across. The story is, that in one of the larger holes, a Beduin of Tor (Peninsula of Pharan) found a jar containing gold and silver, which he carried away with him; and that the smaller holes have been made by Beduins of the country, in the

hope of finding other treasures! Milne says that the holes are natural, being caused by the weathering and disintegration of the granite; and I myself saw with him one part of the rock in which the process was going on on a large scale.

2.30 P.M.—I am now occupied with the tide, as it will soon be low water. But there is a little wind, and the sea is no longer so calm, though still it must be called quite smooth. Abu Nabut has got some beautiful fish caught here: some are a bright scarlet and others a beautiful blue, and both kinds are a foot long and more. There are none like them at Suez they say, only in this—the sea that the Beni Israel passed through, as they are already learning to say! It will be a case of “Haran” in a very short time. This morning, when I went out to look at the tide, some large crows and a raven flew across my path on the left hand, and alighted on the shore at my right! Is this lucky?

While I was down on the beach in the afternoon, a fellow with a gun shot one of the ravens on the wing, and crippled him. I did not see the result, but I conclude that he ran after his prey, and killed the bird: more shame for him! The Haz Bashi came in, and was very anxious about Milne's keeping away so long. I do not know what

arrangement Abu Nabut made with him, but I fancy, nay, I am sure, the old vagabond wanted me to make him a present. He talked of having himself given him two pounds of candles, and as I happen to have brought a pound in my trunk in case of accidents, I got them out and gave them to the officer's little boy, a nice quiet little child, who comes always with his father, and who is dressed up in a Haz Bashi's uniform. What the Muhafiz wants of me is, that I should say a word in his favour with the Khédive, which I will willingly do. He and his officers have behaved extremely well. They have had long talks about Moses and Pharaoh, according to the Korân version of the story,¹ which I mean to make use of. When the Haz Bashi took leave of me, he requested that one of the soldiers might be sent to him immediately on Milne's return to inform him of it.

It was not till six o'clock that Milne came back, heartily tired with a journey twice as long as he had anticipated. His day, he said, had been thrown away: there was no *maghara*, nothing in fact to see. But when I came to inquire particulars, I found that there is a "maghara," though he does not care to call it one; but he has made a sketch

¹ Desert of the Exodus. Appendix C., p. 533.

of it, which will be one of the most effective in my book! He has also made a sketch of Pharaoh's Island, with "Mount Sinai" towering beyond it, and appearing as if it stood directly above it, whereas it is on the *opposite side* of the sea! But what is more important by far is, that he has seen a salt marsh at the head of the Gulf, over which the sea sometimes runs, with a *passage of dry land between the two*. Here it is that the Israelites passed!¹ I must go and see this to-morrow. This will make us a day longer perhaps; but this I must not care for. I may, in spite of myself as it were, be placed, on the twenty-first day of the moon, on the very spot from which the Passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea took place! I feel that I am not my own master in all this. I plan one thing, and circumstances happen to alter my plans. "Man proposes, and God disposes."

February 7.—Truly I may say this. The wind got up so much yesterday evening that it was quite useless to think of going out to observe the tide, as it depends so greatly on the wind that all results are quite arbitrary. In ordinary times the difference between high and low water on the beach is only about six yards, and the rise and

¹ Exod. xiv. 1, 21, 22.

fall four feet. I turned in last night before nine o'clock, and soon fell fast asleep; but about 11 P.M. I was awakened by the wind knocking the side of my tent against my bed, so I got up, struck a light, and moved my bed. I looked out, but could see nothing, it being very dark, and the wind blowing fearfully. I returned to bed, but in about half an hour, before I could get to sleep, Milne called out, "Look out, Doctor, my side of the tent has come down on me, and the whole will fall on you if you don't take care." On this I at once got up and dressed myself as well as I could in the dark, putting on everything in order to be ready for a rush. The tent still kept up, and as soon as I was dressed I went out, and called Abu Nabut. He roused all his people, and they soon came to the rescue. The storm was now worse than ever, and had they not brought immediate assistance, the tent would surely have gone over. As it was, they lashed the centre pole with a thick rope to a date tree close by, both at the top and in the middle, and strengthened the tent ropes by tying them all together. They did their work very cleverly, as we could see in the morning.

When the tent was righted, a lantern was

brought into it, and by this light we packed up all our things as quickly as we could. Abu Nabut talked of taking down the tent altogether, but by means of ropes and extra cords we managed to keep it up in its place, so that after a while we were able to return into it and lie down.

But in the meanwhile what a scene of confusion and horror—really horror it was. The wind blew most terrifically, and drove the sand with such violence that we were literally smothered with it: and it cut so too! A curious fact was noticed, namely, that the intensity diminished the higher it was above the ground. When we were stooping to our portmanteaus it more than half blinded us, besides actually bruising the skin; but when we stood up it was our legs that suffered instead of our faces.

The sea was perfectly wild, coming up far above the ordinary limits. When I first went out to call Abu Nabut I witnessed a singular sight. *The wind was blowing from the south, or south-west, which naturally heaped the waters up in our direction, so that they ran up the beach, and filling the hollow ground behind, left a tongue of dry land between the two.* This, as the storm increased, and the waters also rose, was soon covered; but when I first saw it *the water*

was on both sides of the land! How forcibly then and wonderfully did this portray and confirm the Bible narrative (Exod. xiv.).

I had been telling Abu Nabut last night about this being the anniversary of the passage of the Israelites, and the destruction of Pharaoh; and the first thing he did when he came to me was to remind me of what I had said; and he has since constantly spoken of this as "Pharaoh's night." I believe he thinks me something wonderful, and as knowing things that no one else does. The effect of the dry sand and wind was such that my mouth and throat were quite parched, and I had to ask for some water to drink. Milne quite independently of me did the same. While they were getting our tent in order, we went and sat down in the other tent in the dark. Through all the strain put on it, our good tent did not give way anywhere; but that of Abu Nabut was, however, much torn in more than one place.

Such a night I think I never experienced in my life. As the day approached the storm abated somewhat, but it was still raging when I rose at seven o'clock. I felt myself quite unwell and unnerved, and on Abu Nabut's coming to me for instructions as to what was to be done, saying, that if we remained

at Akaba, the tents must be moved into some sheltered place, I told him that he might pack up and be off at once, as I did not intend to remain a moment longer. * Nothing could be observed in such weather, and therefore I had no object in remaining; besides, I had to consider 'Milne, who wanted to be back in England by a certain time. Nabut was only too glad to be off, and set to work instantly to strike the tents.

Now came the leave-taking. The old man who has accompanied Milne on his excursions wanted to be paid, as was only right; but Abu Nabut had left me without money, so I emptied my purse, containing some five shillings, into the corner of the old fellow's cloak. He was not satisfied, but had to be, for I could give him no more. Then came Sheikh Mohammed, who begged me, when I saw the Khédive—Effendina—to say that he kissed his feet, and had only been too happy to obey his commands in attending to me. For His Highness's sake he had allowed the Towára with their camels to come into his country; only, in future, he would suggest in the most delicate way in the world that the Towára should bring strangers to Akaba only, and that from thence the Aluwín should have the supply of

these amiable creatures. This latter part was intended for the British Consul, to whom he sent his salâms. As for me, he said he was delighted to have known me, and to have been of use to me in discovering "Mount Sinai." And so, after shaking hands all round, and wishing me all kinds of good fortune, Sheikh Mohammed, with all his "tag-rag and bob-tail," rode away up the mountains. It was now the turn of the Muhafiz. He was profuse in his compliments, as I was in mine, of course; and the end of it was, that he asked me to give him a silver watch as a remembrance of me, and said that if I put it in the hands of the Consul, it would reach him in safety! I assured him that, "I wished he might get it;" and so we parted on the most friendly terms. There was then a long *kulâm* with Abu Nabut, to the effect that, as I imagine, I was handed over into the safe keeping of the Sheikh of the Towâra, who is to convey me to Suez and Cairo.

Akaba might be made a large city—was one, in fact, in former times. Like Adulis, it is at the mouth of a large watercourse, so that it has water all the year round; and its numerous date-trees show how luxuriant vegetation of almost every kind might be made here. With water,

anything may be done in these countries. I shall suggest this to the Khédive. Why, too, should not the Port of Akaba be utilised, as in the time of Solomon ?¹

At length, at 9.20 A.M., we were off on our way home. But before starting Abu Nabút showed me that he deserved his nickname ('the Man with a Stick') by giving one of our Beduins a good thrashing, though they soon made it up. It was now a fine morning, though the sea was still remaining very high. There was no saying anything about the tide. I could see that the water had been more than ten yards above high water-mark, and yet it hardly seems to be quite high water even now.

On leaving Akaba we went along round the head of the Gulf, under some sand banks thrown up by the sea. Date palms and other vegetation covered the Arabah to some distance inland. By and by we came to the commencement of a salt marsh which extends some way up the Arabah. We first passed below a pool of salt water some thirty or forty yards from the sea; and then another larger, which Milne saw yesterday, and which therefore

¹ 1 Kings ix. 26. See Captain Burton's forthcoming work, "The Gold Mines of Midian."

was not caused by last night's storm; then we passed a third, larger still, and nearer. They all seem on a somewhat higher level than the sea, and to have formed by the water being washed over by wind and tide. But presently we came to a little stream running across our path *from the sea* where the ground was lower. It now threatened to rain; so I thought of wrapping myself up, and asked for my railway rug; but it was missing. It was evidently stolen last night by one of the Beduins during the confusion.

As we approached the western side of the head of the Gulf we had on our right hand a flat waste of salt marsh, pools of which were almost in our path, the sand being so rotten that a stick could easily be thrust a yard down. The rains from the mountains run into this marsh, and thence find their way into the sea. I doubt not that the whole of this marsh formerly formed part of the sea, which consequently must have extended further to the north, and the road on which we went may then have formed a shallow or reef. All this may possibly affect the passage of the Israelites. There was a salt efflorescence on the ground here and there a little way from us.

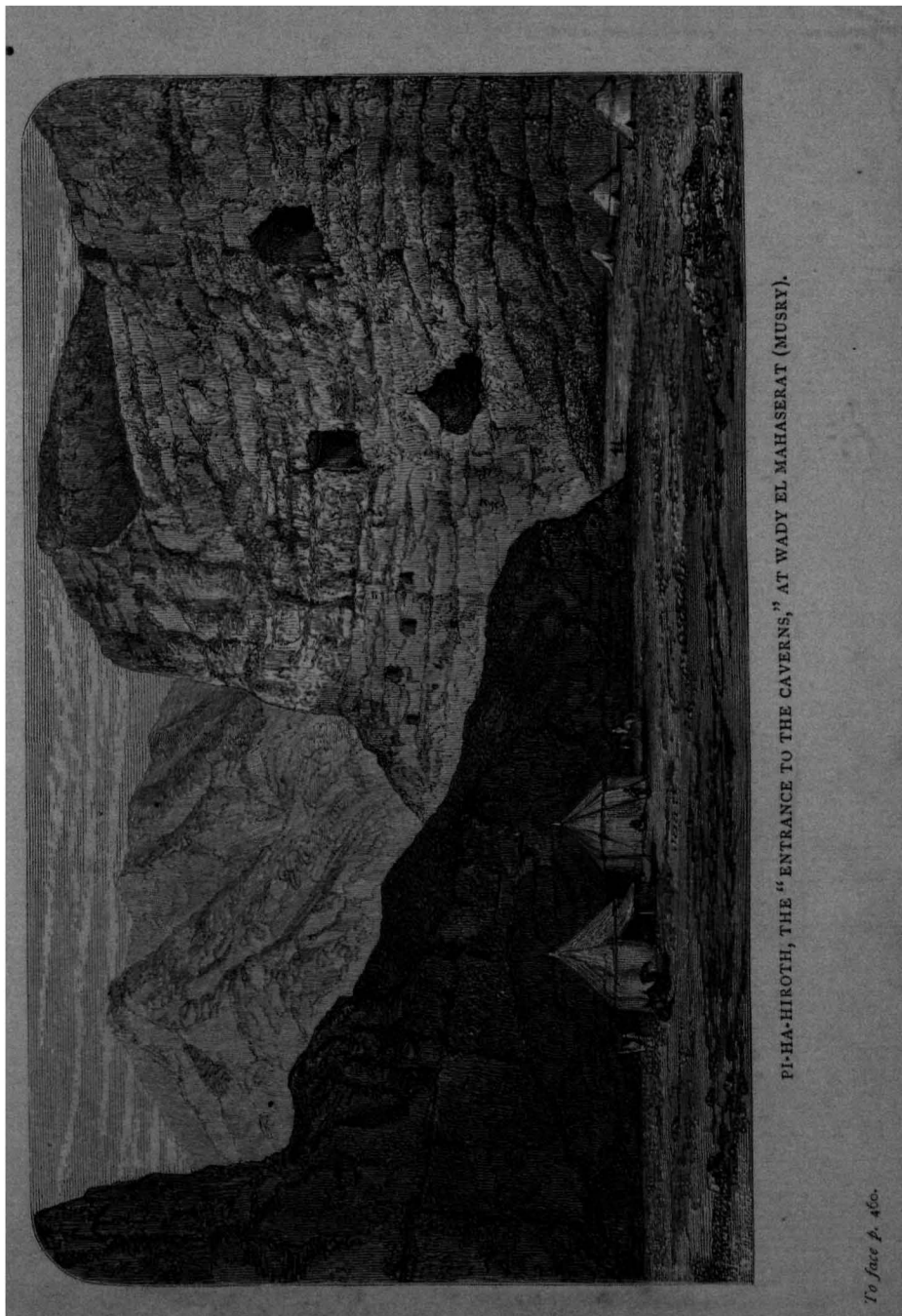
At 11 A.M. we reached the western side of the

sea, and began ascending the mountains. We appear not to have gone up any regular wady; but rather to have crossed the beds of several, running south, our course being somewhat about north-west.

At 11.45 we came to Wady el 'Mahaserat, marked in the map as Wady el Musry. The map appears to be *altogether wrong*. Up this wady we ascended west-north-west or so, till noon. It now began to rain; but we went on till 12.45, when we stopped to take luncheon.

From Mr. Milne's description of his visit on the 6th inst. to the Maghara, or Cave opposite Jesirat Fir'ôn, and from what he there saw, *en passant*, of the limestone formations at the mouth of this wady, coupled with the fact of our *now* finding here several large cavernous openings, he has, you will see, come to the conclusion that the existence of "Caves" (Magharas) opposite Jesirat Fir'ôn is most probable. Mr. Milne says:—

"*Feb. 6th.*—Close to Ras el Musry [Mahaserat], and opposite Jesirat Fir'ôn, we get headlands of hard stone projecting, and forming small caves. For the most part this is a bluish grey granitic rock, but there is also a reddish coarse-grained granite, the mica being in plates the size of a half-



PI-HA-HIROTH, THE "ENTRANCE TO THE CAVERNS," AT WADY EL MAHASERAT (MUSRY).

crown. Between those two places there is an exposure of a whitish limestone, about a quarter of a mile in length. In parts this is quite white, but the bulk of it is of a yellowish tinge. As it nears the granite rocks of Jesirat Fir'ôn it slopes upwards, as if forming a flank to them. These are very noticeable from their tilted position and their bright pink colour. The exposed limestone in one place may be at least 600 feet high, forming with its cliff and talus an imposing object. It varies considerably in texture, being in places compact and hard, and in others apparently earthy : these latter having intercalated with them several hard bands two or three feet thick. Part of it contains irregularly disseminated light yellowish flints.

“ There was no cave seen in this limestone on the very cursory examination I could give it, simply passing by at a distance probably of a quarter to half a mile ; but their existence is not improbable, from the fact that when on our journey from Akaba to Suez, we came to the continuation of the same rock, and saw in it, on the face of the cliff, several large cavernous openings. From their height above we could not reach them, and the whole was so shut in by other rocks that the portion visible was very limited.

“The chief motive for my not paying this limestone particular attention was, that I was on my way to a spot which the people at Akaba described as a *Maghara*, or cave, but which in fact (if my guides took me to the right place), is nothing more than a niche formed by two overhanging granitic rocks opposite Jesirat Fir'ôn, which, in our acceptance of the word ‘cave,’ can hardly be considered as such. About ten yards distant from it is a noticeable outlier, also granitic, in appearance resembling one of the outstanding ‘needles’ so common on the English coast.

“*February 7.*—After leaving the Gulf of Akaba the road slopes upwards, amongst mounds of *débris*, right and left, and under your feet you notice fragments of granitic rocks, and also of limestone, indicative of what is to be found above. After about two hours travelling between much decomposed granitic rocks, we came on the limestone at about 1000 feet elevation, and after continuing a short distance up the valley, with the limestone on our left, and granitic rocks on the right, the road turns suddenly to the left between high cliffs of limestone, where we encamped. . In the right hand cliff (north) were the caves, already mentioned on the 6th instant. This limestone has all the appear-

ances and physical qualities of the chalk of the South of England, from which it differs in the fact that it contains bands of *flint stone* and not of flints. The thickness of these bands and their distance apart vary, but they may be taken as averaging four inches in thickness, and four feet apart. The strike of this limestone would indicate that it is continued down towards the limestone or chalk seen by Ras el Musry, lithologically the two being almost identical."

Assuming this, and that Wady el Mahaserat (Musry ?) runs down from the one to the other, then this wady is Pi-ha-hiroth—the "Entrance to the Caverns"—and no doubt other caverns will be found along the course of the wady.¹ [February 14, 1874. Charles Beke.]

We were not yet at the summit of the mountain, but we had a magnificent view of the head of the

¹ Exodus xiv. 1. On Dr. Beke's writing to Mr. Milne (May 7, 1874), asking him whether *other* caves ought not to be inserted in his drawing, he replied :—"The rest of the holes in that chalk cliff were too small to be called caves, and therefore had better be omitted. But observe that along the line of junction of the chalk and granite, which will be up that Wady *Musry*, there is every likelihood of there being more caves. The chalk rock being contorted, as seen in the drawing, and water, &c., percolating through the contortions and breakages, is more likely to produce caves there than elsewhere in the *solid* mass. This can be dilated on. *N.B.*—That chalk is not equivalent to our chalk in age, but only so lithologically.

Gulf of Akaba, with "Mount Sinai" beyond—its summit being hidden by clouds. Here we may well suppose Pharaoh to have seen the Israelites encamped by the sea, as we read in Exodus xiv. 9, 10 :—"But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and all his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pi-ha-hiroth, before Baal-Zephon. And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them."

This is an excellent carriage road all the way. At 1.15 P.M. we started again, and in less than half an hour crossed into Wady-el-Satkh, up which we went northwards crossing into another wady, which they still said was Wady el-Satkh. As we were now near the top of the pass, and they say there is no place to stop for some *four* hours more, we encamped here at 2.30 P.M.—a very short day—in the Wady el-Satkh, about half an hour they say below the Ras-el-Satkh, or Nagb. The road was a good deal improved by Abbas Pasha when his mother went to Mecca, and the present Pasha has also been at work upon it.

Dr. Robinson gives the following description of

this part of his route from Akaba to Jerusalem :¹—
“*April 5th, 1838.*—Having at last made all our arrangements, we left the castle of 'Akabah at a quarter-past one o'clock P.M. . . . Our course lay along the head of the gulf on the Haj road by which we had come yesterday. At 2.40 we reached the foot of the western ascent, where the hills of conglomerate, which we had passed yesterday further south, sink down into a steep slope of gravel, extending far to the north. This we ascended about W.N.W., and at 3.25 crossed the shallow Wady Khurmet el-Jurf, which runs down towards the right ; and then came among low hills of crumbled granite. Beyond these there is again an open gravel slope in some parts, before reaching the higher granite cliffs. At four o'clock we encamped on the side of the mountain, in a narrow branch of the same water-course, called Wady edh-Dhaiyikah. From this elevated spot we had a commanding view out over the gulf, the plain of el-'Arabah, and the mountains beyond.

“The castle bore from this point S.E. by E. Behind it rose the high mountain el-Ashhab ; and back of this, out of sight, is el-Hismeh, a sandy

¹ “Biblical Researches in Palestine,” &c., vol. i. pp. 173-175. London. 1867.

tract, surrounded by mountains. But no one of our guides knew this latter name as a general appellation for these mountains. At the south end of the Ashhab, the small Wady Elteit comes down to the sea, having in it the ruin Kūsir el-Bedawy, bearing from here S. 40° E. More to the south the hills along the eastern coast are lower, having the appearance of table land; while further back are high mountains, and among them the long ridge en-Nukeirah. These extend far to the south, and there take the place of the lower hills along the coast. North of the castle the large Wady el-Ithm comes down steeply from the north-east through the mountains, forming the main passage from 'Akabah to the eastern desert. By this way doubtless the Israelites ascended from the Red Sea in order to 'compass Edom,' and pass on to Moab and the Jordan. Wady el-Ithm now bore E. 1° S., while a mountain further north, called Jebel el-Ithm bore E. 1° N. Then a smaller wady comes down named es-Sidr. To the northward of this was Jebel esh-Sha'feh, N. 70° E.; and still further north our guides professed to point out Jebel esh-Sherâh by Wady Ghüründel. On this point, however, we had doubts.

"*Friday*, April 6.—The bright morning pre-

sented a beautiful view of the sea, shut in among mountains like a lake in Switzerland. The eastern mountains too glittered in the sun; fine, lofty, jagged peaks, much higher than those we were to climb. We set off at six o'clock, ascending W.N.W. We soon reached the granite hills, and entering among them over a low ridge, descended a little to the small Wady er-Rizkah at 6.25. It flows to the left into the Musry, within sight a little below. Passing another slight ridge, we reached Wady el-Musry at a quarter to seven o'clock. This is a large wady coming down from the north obliquely along the slope of the mountain, and running down by itself to the sea, which it was said to enter just north of Râs el-Musry. Our route now lay up along this valley, winding considerably, but on a general course about north-west. The ridge upon the left was of yellow sandstone, resting on granite, while on the right was granite and porphyry. The scenery around was wild, desolate and gloomy; though less grand than we had seen already. At seven o'clock limestone appeared on the left; and we turned short from the Musry towards the left, into a narrow chasm between walls of chalk with layers of flint. Ten minutes now brought us to the foot of the steep and difficult ascent; so that

this last ravine might well be termed the gate of the pass. The ascent is called simply en-Nûkb, or el'-Arkûb, both signifying 'the pass' up a mountain; and our guides knew no other name. The road rises by zigzags along the projecting point of a steep ridge, between two deep ravines. It is in part artificial; and in some places the thin layer of sandstone has been cut away twenty or thirty feet in width down to the limestone rock. Portions of this work have probably been done at the expense of pious Mussulmans to facilitate the passage of the Haj. Two Arabic inscriptions on the rock, one of them at the top of the ascent, apparently record the author of the work. Near the top is something like a modern improvement, a new road having been cut lower down on the side of the ridge, rising by a more gradual ascent. The whole road is said by Makrizi to have been first made by Ibn Ahmed Ibn Tulûn, Sultan of Egypt in A.D. 868-84.

"We reached the top of the steep ascent at eight o'clock; but continued to rise gradually for half an hour longer, when we came to Râs en-Nûkb, the proper 'Head of the Pass.' Here however we had immediately to descend again by a short but steep declivity, and cross the head of

Wady el-Kureikireh running off south to Wady Tâba', of which it would seem to be a main branch. Ascending again along a ridge at the head of this valley, still on a course W.N.W., we had on our right a deep ravine called Wady er-Riddâdeh, running eastward, a tributary of the Musry. At nine o'clock we finally reached the top of the whole ascent, and found ourselves on the high level of the desert above. During the whole way we had many commanding views of the gulf and of el-'Arabah; which latter, as seen from this distance, seemed covered in parts with a luxuriant vegetation. But we had viewed it too closely to be thus deceived. The point where we now were afforded the last and one of the finest of these views. The castle of 'Akabah still bore S.E. by E., and the mouth of Wady el-Ithm E. by S. At 9.25 we came to the fork of the roads, called Mufârik et-Turk, where the Haj route keeps straight forward, while the road to Gaza turns more to the right."

The Marquis Arconati describes fully Ras Qûreieh, and Jeziret el Qûreieh.¹ But he says little of Akaba, except about the castle and its illegible inscriptions.² Of the Wady Arabah, in which he spent

¹ See *Diario in Arabia Pétrea* (1865) di Visconte Giammartino Arconati, Rome, 1872, p. 271.

² *Ibid.* pp. 278-84.

some days, *en route* to Petra, he gives some interesting particulars.¹

February 8.—Last night Abu Nabut gave us some Yemen dates for dessert. He said he could not produce them before, or the Beduins would have devoured them all. He complained most bitterly of their voracity. They have eaten him up two whole loaves of sugar, and the poor man is in a most indignant frame of mind about it. It rained hard during the night, and I daresay there was a continuance of bad weather down below, so that we did well to return. I do not think we have had one single fine day since we left the 'Erin' and commenced our inland journey.

We started at 8 A.M., turning off from the main valley up a siding, and in about two hundred yards came to a bridge over a deep ravine, above which the road ascended the side of the mountain, just like the roads up the passes over the Alps. The road has been worked on like them, and is a very pretty piece of engineering. I imagined it to have been constructed by the present Pasha; but I understand that the whole is the work of Abbas Pasha. Here I was told by Abu Nabut that it would be

¹ See *Diario in Arabia Petrea* (1865) di Visconte Giammartino Arconati, Rome, 1872, pp. 294, 296, 297, 300, 302, 303.

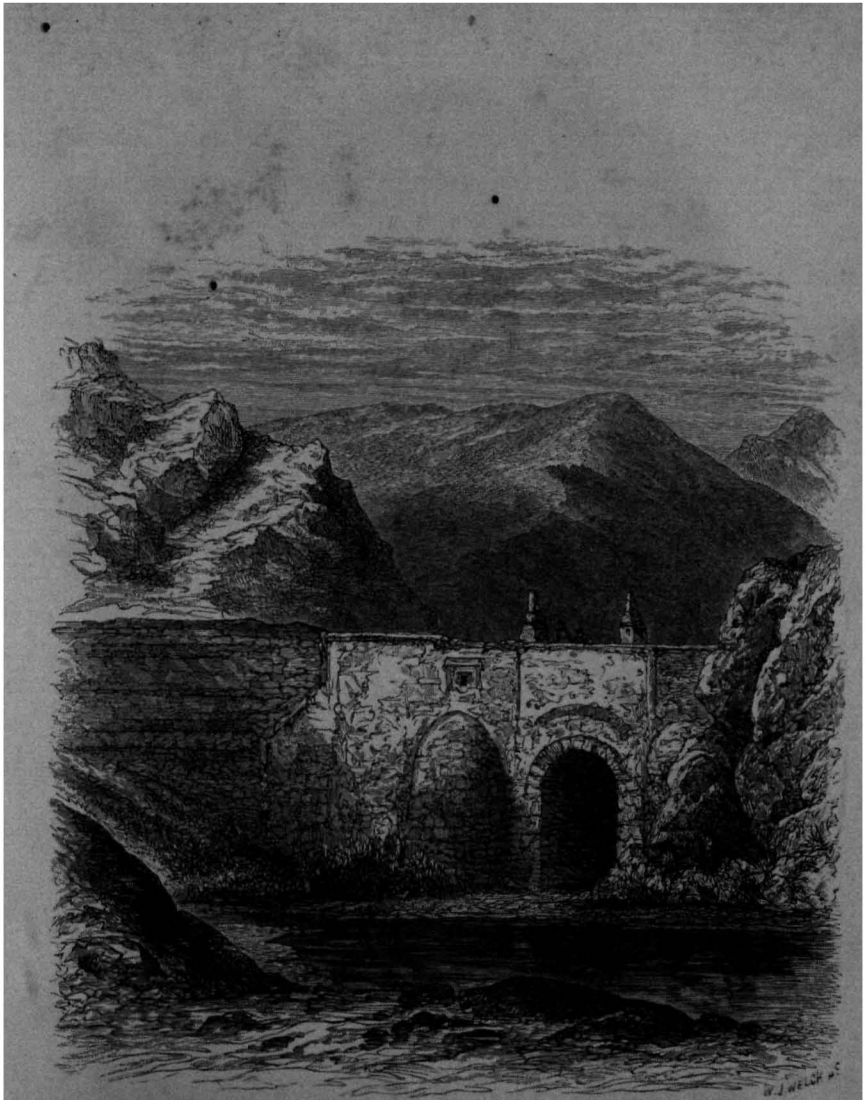
impossible for me to make the ascent in the *takhterawân*, so while our people were loading I walked on for some twenty minutes, when I sat down to rest. When the camels came up I mounted the one Milne usually rides, he preferring to walk a little, and on I rode, at first slowly for nearly an hour, when I came to a magnificent view of "Mount Sinai" (Jebel Bâghlir), and the head of the Gulf. On the road were stones inscribed with the *fâttha*, which I suppose served as milestones.

The road now became more level, and I rode on briskly till 9.50, when I came to the summit of the pass called Ras el Satkh. At this point the pilgrims from Cairo say the *fâttha* (prayer) towards my Mount Sinai, which is plainly visible, and they set up stones one upon another as memorials. The mountain is here nearly east— $94^{\circ} 5'$ by azimuth compass. The elevation is about 2000 feet. I rested here awhile for the others to come up, and at half-past ten I got into my *takhterawân*, and proceeded over an immense gravelly, which soon became sandy plain, in a direction a little to the north of west. It was almost perfectly barren. At twelve o'clock we stopped to lunch, when I set my watch by the sun, and I found it nearly quite right.

At 12.40 we went on again over the same dreary

plain. Thus far we were told it was all called el Satkh, meaning "the roof," but now it is the Tih—always the same dreary waste, with patches here and there of a little verdure. They call these patches, wadies, with names which I did not care to record; but I could see little difference in the level. On the road we rose somewhat at first, but afterwards the elevation fell again. All the way the sandy surface of the rock was marked with parallel camel tracks, being those of the Hadj! At 2.45 we went more to the north-west, still over the plain, but its extent being limited by low hills. This, we were informed, was Wady Imshash, forming part of the Tih, and so we went on, till four P.M., when we stopped for the night.

I was very thankful to do so, for I was so cold I hardly knew what to do. I actually lost the use of my hands, in spite of my having had silk gloves on, and having kept them covered up as well as I could in the *takhterawân*. Immediately the tent was ready I lay down and went to sleep, which did me good, but did not make me warm. I then went into the other tent, where there was a good fire, over which I toasted myself till the dinner was ready. This, and a fire I have had brought into my tent, have warmed me sufficiently



THE BRIDGE AT EL SATKH.

To face p. 471.

to enable me to write up my notes and this letter, which I trust you may be able to read, as luckily you can often read my writing when I cannot do so myself. I shall now have a cup of tea and go to bed. It will be cold all the way to Suez!

February 9.—It was indeed cold during the night. This morning the ground and our tent are covered with hoar frost, and the thermometer stood at 6.30 A.M., just before sunrise, at freezing point, 32°. They say that we are in danger of thieves as far as Nakhl, and so our trunks and my writing-desk are taken every night into the other tent. With the Hadj *every year*, goes a man of Cairo, named Abu Haláweh, who knows all the places where the *fátha* is to be said, on reaching which he calls out with a loud voice, “Fátha, Jebel Bághir” —“Fátha, Wady e’ Nūr,” and so on. And then all the pilgrims repeat together the first chapter of the Korân, which to them is like our “Lord’s Prayer.” It was a lovely morning, but as it was still very cold, I thought it better to go on walking than to stand still. So I went on slowly with Milne for an hour and a quarter dawdling and occasionally standing still, but always moving on. I wore my *Kefiya* over my cap, and continued to do so the whole day, though not on account of the

cold, but to keep off the sun! It turned out a regular hot day, which we enjoyed after the continued wet and cold we have experienced hitherto. It is cold again, to-night, and we are glad to have a fire in our tent.

About half-past eleven a Beduin of the tribe of Héiwi (plural Héiwát) came up to us, and wanted to know what we were doing on his ground. He was a little chap, armed with an old gun, though I doubt if he had any ammunition for it, but he had lots of pluck. There seemed symptoms of a row, and our people took to their swords. Whereupon Abu Nabut took the matter upon himself. It appeared that the Héiwi wanted to supply us with camels. Abu Nabut did not deny his right to do this; but said we came from Akaba on business of the Effendina (Khédive), and as there were no Héiwát there, we took Towáras. That was all very well, he said, but he wanted to supply us now. "All right," replied Abu Nabut; "have you got the camels here?" "No; but I will bring them." "Bring them then," answered Abu Nabut. "I will to-morrow or next day." "But we cannot wait," we said. "But you *must* wait," answered the Héiwi. Then with an air of injured innocence, Abu Nabut came to me and requested me to note

down the name of Sulciman Salim, who wanted to stop the Hakim Bashi travelling for the Effendina, &c., &c. This so frightened the fellow that he decamped. We saw a large number of goats grazing on the mountain-side close by, and therefore there must be several persons there; but there are no camels, and if the Héiwi is gone to fetch them, we, in the meanwhile, continue our way, and by to-morrow shall be off his ground! The tracks on the road of which I wrote yesterday are in part caused by Abbas Pasha having had the stones cleared off there when his mother went to Mecca. What an affectionate son! I fancy he had a little game of his own to play, and made his mamma an excuse so as not to give the Sultan cause of offence.

In a chalk hill which we crossed to-day, he had had a cutting made to lower the ascent. On one side is a stone with an Arabic inscription in commemoration of it, on the other side of the cutting are a lot of inscriptions, or rather rude marks, some of them very much in the style of the "Sinaitic," or of my "Jebel-e'-Nūr." This chalk hill is called Jebel Máujar. On the way Milne found some hematite or *iron ore*. He has given me specimens to show to the Khédive. I shall also have his drawings for the same purpose.

February 10.—A very fine morning, and nothing like so cold as yesterday. At 6.45 A.M. the thermometer stood at 48°. The dress of the Sheikhs is very picturesque, with its three colours, red, white and black. On my asking at what time we should arrive at Nakhel to-morrow, the Sheikh said, we could not be there till the day after. On this I blew up, complained of their delay and constant wish to stop, and I finished by saying, I would not pay for more than five days—and even this is one day more than I bargained for at Cairo. We started at 7.50, and had a monotonous sort of morning, the day being fine but not at all warm. In fact there was a cold wind blowing, which made me very chilly in the *takhterawân*, and at last just at noon, I felt myself quite ill. The wind had caught my right arm and hand, though I had *three* coats on, and I had an attack of what seemed like venous congestion. My hand was blood red, with very little feeling in it. I could not hold my style to write.¹

I got down and walked for upwards of an hour, at times pretty sharply, rubbing my hand and

¹ After the serious illness from which Dr. Beke had so recently recovered, this journey was altogether too arduous an undertaking, and had he had to perform the journey entirely by land, it is feared he would never have reached the "Mountain of Light."

beating it across my chest. At length it recovered its feeling and natural colour, and being now tired, I got again into my carriage, and wrapped myself, especially my right side, in Milne's railway rug, over which Abu Nabut put his thick cloak, so that I felt quite warm. After I had ridden about an hour, we came to Wady Kureis, where is an immensely deep well, and by it a tank which Abbas Pasha had had constructed for the pilgrims. It is nearly one hundred feet in length, and some sixty feet in width, and perhaps half as deep: along one side are troughs for camels. Before reaching this we saw a herd of camels of the Héiwat going down the valley with only one man. At this wady the territory of the Héiwat ends, and that of the Teiyáha begins: this continues to Nakhl, where commences that of the Towára, to whom our people belong. The Sheikh wanted to stop soon after 4 P.M., but I insisted on his going on, as I positively declared I would be at Kala'at e' Nakhl to-morrow, even if we travelled to midnight. So we went on till 5.45 P.M., the sun having set some time, when I was induced to stop on the promise that we should start very, very early to-morrow morning and get to Nakhl by night. I preferred this to going on now; as, if the worst comes to the worst and

we have to go on by night, there will be the castle for us to put our beds up in, without waiting for the tents to be set up. This evening I am all right again, and writing as usual. Milne is dead beat, having *walked* the whole day. He does not much like the camel-riding. I had almost vowed I would never mount a camel again after my experience of 1843 at Tor. But I did not feel any inconvenience from my short ride the day before yesterday. I almost liked it.

February 11.—This morning I was getting out of bed at 6.15, when Hashim came in with water for me to wash : the first time on the journey that I have not been up first—a great disgrace, as I tell them, I the master, and the eldest ! This morning we breakfasted in the open air, in order that the tent might be taken down ; but they were not ready when I was, so I and Milne walked on at seven o'clock. After walking for about half an hour, we saw a few camels grazing belonging to the Terabín, of whom the Teiyáha appear to be a sub-tribe ; they went on before us, and we some time afterwards saw they had one man with them. By and by we came to a large number of camels, probably as many as one hundred, grazing on our left. We did not see any people with them.

Our road was a very monotonous one, like that of yesterday; but it was interesting to me, as it gave me an opportunity—or, rather, I should say, it caused me to make careful observations of our route, as that on the map which Mr. B. sent me is altogether wrong. I never saw anything so bad. I did not want to be bothered with this, but I must. The sun was intensely hot to-day, and we both got our faces burnt frightfully.

We arrived at the Kala'at e' Nakhl at 5.45. My companion, Milne, *walked* the whole way! I was very tired, and went immediately into my tent and lay down, so that I know nothing yet about the place or its inhabitants. It is a kalla'a or castle, like that of Akaba, only smaller, and has a garrison of Egyptian soldiers. That is all I can say at present about it.

February 12.—Very cold again this morning. The thermometer is at 6.45 A.M. 30°. We are now in the great Wady el 'Arish—the Wady el Kebir “Quadelquiver,” of this part of the world: a great sandy plain between two ranges of chalk cliffs. There is plenty of water, but it runs off, otherwise I do not see why it might not be made as fertile as the chalk hills of Kent. Milne says that the soil is principally composed of lime and

silica, forming a sort of loam, but there is very little alumina or clay. I hear that it is very cold here at all times; and that of the Hadj pilgrims who passed here, last month—or rather, two months ago—thirty died from the cold, and seventeen had to be sent back to Egypt. As we did not start so early as yesterday, having to supply ourselves with water, Milne and I went into the castle. It is much smaller than that of Akaba, and as the Hadj is past, there is nothing for the garrison of forty soldiers to do; so their firelocks are hung up in linen cases in the entrance hall, and they themselves are “at ease” in their apartments! There was one fellow sitting on a seat in the entrance wrapped up in his cloak, but he took no notice of us, nor we of him. A man of the place was sent with us by Abu Nabut, and he took us to the top of the castle. The stairs reminded me of those leading up to the Samaritan synagogue at Shechem; so I was on my guard on this occasion, and went up and down very carefully. Our guide was also very attentive to me. On the way up we saw a *sakiyeh* worked by two mules, which draws water from an immense depth, and delivers it into three large tanks. There is another well outside the castle, which can be worked in case of need.

On the terrace above we had a fine view, and Milne took some angles. There is a small village adjoining the castle, where we saw lots of children more cleanly dressed than those at Akaba. It must be rather slow work here.

When we came down we were accosted by the Haz Bashi, who would seem to have been *wakened* up by our appearance, and he accompanied us to our tents, where we found everything ready for our departure, and after going with us a short distance on foot, he took his leave, with many good wishes for our journey. This is a very interesting and important spot to me, as being the station which I identify with the "Succoth" of Exodus.¹

We crossed the broad plain of the Wady el 'Arīsh²—in which are several water channels, though they have not a drop of water in them—and continued all day a most monotonous journey, in a north-westerly direction. On the way I heard our people speaking about Mount Bāghir—"Mount Sinai, mūsh Bāghir," as Abu Nabut said. This will be the cry now, and it will soon be taken up by all! About one o'clock we met a woman with

¹ Exodus xii. 37.

² Isaiah xxvii. 12. Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus," pp. 286, 287.
2 H

two children on two camels. She was the wife of a soldier at Nakhl. I certainly was surprised at meeting her, with only one Arab driving the camels; a second one followed at some distance. The *Derb el Hadj* is a well-trodden path, and perfectly safe.

We arrived in Wady Nethilah 'at 5.50 P.M., where we are encamped for the night. It is much less cold here. On the journey I wore my dark spectacles, and I felt the benefit of them. Yesterday I was quite blinded by the sun, and actually could not see for some time after I had entered the tent. I have arranged with Abu Nabut to send my letters on from to-morrow's station, so that they may get to Suez in time for the mail of Sunday. I shall see and get my letter to "The Times" ready to send you. You will of course forward it at once. I shall not telegraph to you till I get to Suez, but I shall do so to Mr. Gibbs if I am able. This letter will be all I shall send to you now.

February 13.—We left this morning at 8.15, and arrived at our station in the Wady Hawawiet at 4.40 P.M. It rained a little in the morning, and my people wanted to stay; but I would not let them, as it is absolutely necessary my letters should go on to-night to Suez. I have prepared a tele-

gram on the road for Mr. Gibbs to make use of: therefore you will see the news in Reuter's telegrams no doubt. I only trust I shall find good news from you when I arrive. God Almighty bless you. Addio.

Ras el Gibab (two days from Suez), February 14.—I begin here the last letter I shall have to write to you on what is properly to be called my "journey," with the most gratifying intelligence that I have satisfactorily determined the position and identification of *Pi-ha-hiroth*—the entrance to the caverns. It is the *Wady Mahaserat*, which, in my last letter, I told you we went up from the west side of the head of the Gulf of Akaba. It was only this evening that Mr. Milné gave me the full particulars of his trip to the "Maghara," near Pharaoh's Island, on the 6th inst., the particulars of which are duly recorded in my route-book.

After I had done up my letter last night for Mr. Levick I gave it to the messenger, one of the Beduins of our party, who was to carry it to Suez; after which every one joined in giving him instructions as to where he was to go, and what he was to do when he got to the Canal, where he would be sure to be stopped, as the bridge is only opened for passengers once a day. He was to say that it was

from the Hakim Bashi, the Emir to whom the Khédive gave the steamer, and that it was for the Bostat-el-Inglese, for the Khawāja Lebbek, and of great importance, and then he would be sure to be allowed to pass at once. Then the man, though not afraid of thieves, had a wholesome dread of hyenas on the road, so he was supplied with a pistol, powder and shot. To these Abu Nabut added a cloak, and some one else a coat, to protect the poor man from the cold, and at nine o'clock he started on a swift camel or dromedary. He will reach the bridge early this morning.

We started at 8 A.M. The Sheikh wanted to wait, as it threatened rain, but I was inexorable; and after all it was fine. Near us yesterday were encamped a soldier, his wife and child, with three camels. This is a regular beaten road, as I explained when we were at Kala'at el Nakhl. Where we stopped to lunch we fell in with a party of Beduins going to Suez with wood and charcoal, some ten camel loads. For the charcoal they may get as much as one pound the camel load; for the wood, four shillings only. One could hardly imagine that this would pay them. We are now on our way *down* to Suez, having crossed the water-parting between the Mediterranean (Wady el 'Arīsh)

and the Gulf of Suez. Near the summit the road has been cleared of stones, and improved by Abbas Pasha. Here Milne found a vein of yellow ochre (an ore of iron), which he gave me for the Khédive. Neither this nor the other would *pay* to work, but I shall do right to give them to His Highness.

February 15.—The last morning I shall have to write to you before reaching Suez, which is now, thank God, within sight! Before we got to our place of encampment last night, we came upon a *considerable tract of green grass*: its colour was remarkable, and took us quite by surprise! I am convinced that formerly this country was *fertile*, and that it might be *made so again*. But when once we had crossed the water-parting, we came into a sandy region extending to the Gulf of Suez, where vegetation is difficult, and almost impossible. Our Beduins collected a lot of wood on the way to serve for their fires to-night, as they will find none further on. In the sand we found stunted plants, with immensely long roots to them: one measured as much as nine yards in a straight line! These are the things to keep the sand together.

Thinking over Milne's report about those caves at Mahaserat, I asked Abu Nabut the meaning of "Mahaserat," when the fellow began telling me a

long cock and a bull story about Moses and Pharaoh taken from the Korân, and so explaining the name. This shows you how soon legends arise. About noon to-day we came in sight of the sea, and I cried out, like the ten thousand Greeks, "*θαλασσα*" (the sea)! After that we kept coming down, down, so that on the whole we have descended some 900 feet. The difference of temperature was very soon felt, and it was warm in spite of a strong wind blowing. On the other side of the mountains the same wind would have frozen us to death. Milne has made a sketch of me to-day in my *takhtera-wân*; it will give you an idea of the conveyance, and others too, who may feel inclined to follow my example when they perform a pilgrimage to my Mount Sinai. I fear I could not have performed the journey without it.

Suez, February 15.—I have only time to inform you of my safe arrival here. For your dear letters, and all you have done for me, *as I knew you would*, you have my hearty thanks. The steamer from Bombay is behind-hand, so Milne will go on by her perhaps to-night. The 'Erin' has not returned! She is at Tor, so my letters by her will come on after me. I have completed a rough sketch of the letter for "The Times." I conclude

that journal will be the best to send it to, but I leave you absolute discretion to do what you like with it.

Now, perhaps, that these important matters have been thus brought by me to public notice in "The Times," it may be worth the while of others to follow up the great discoveries I have been permitted to make, and complete them more *in detail* than it has been in my power to do.

February 16.—So our poor friend Livingstone is dead! This is sad news indeed. I have made up my mind to start for Cairo to-morrow. I cannot wait to see Milne off; but Mr. Andrews, the chief clerk of the P. and O. Company, is very kind and will attend to him. He takes on the instruments for the Royal Geographical Society, and the geological specimens.¹ I see that you have inserted my "Notes on Egypt" in the "Athenæum," and that the editor, as usual, has cut out all that concerns me and my expedition. I have no time to answer your letters to-day, being fully occupied with all our friends here, and I have still some observations to make. I find that, after all, Mahaserat really means what Abu Nabut said, so that I have a very strong case. I shall have to *fight* lots of people

¹ Presented, by Dr. Beke's desire, to the British Museum.

when I get to England; but I shall have the majority on my side. I have done what I wished, and am truly thankful for it.

Midnight.—I am truly grieved to learn such bad news of your health. The trouble and anxiety I have unfortunately caused you have, I feel, been greatly instrumental in increasing your illness. I only hope, when I return home, we may be able to get you well again.

CHAPTER IX.

RETURN TO CAIRO—FAREWELL AUDIENCE OF THE KHÉDIVE—
 HOMEWARD BOUND

CAIRO, *February* 17.—To go back to our last day's journey to Suez, which commenced at 7.30 in the morning. We proceeded eastward towards the bridge over the Suez Canal, which has caused the Hadj route to be diverted from its former course, to the one on which we travelled, being to the south of the old road. At 10.30 we came to the bridge, which is a miserable concern, quite unworthy of so great an undertaking. It is made of roughly hewn timbers laid across four iron boats, two on each side; between which a movable platform laid on three other boats is dragged by ropes, and then rafters run out to support a sort of portcullis, which is lowered down, and then planks laid to make a connected roadway — altogether a most barbarous affair. We were half an hour before we got across. Abu Nabut had sent most of our Arabs on in front to help to pull the boats into their places and so expedite matters.

After crossing we proceeded over the fresh water canal and along its side, between it and the salt marshes at the head of the Gulf, which they are *attempting* to render fertile; but it will be a long time indeed before they succeed in this. We then crossed the marsh itself, and so soon as we got on solid ground we stopped to lunch, and then continued our journey, reaching Suez at 2 P.M.

As we entered the town we were told by some Beduins that our messenger arrived safely on Sunday morning; but this we found not to be exactly the fact, it having been Sunday afternoon. Nevertheless, it would appear that Mr. Levick did not forward my telegram to Mr. Tuck till Monday morning, out of consideration, perhaps, for poor Tuck, who has been at death's door since I left. Instead of going to the hotel, I decided on encamping on an open space at the back of the town called "the camp." During the afternoon lots of *hadjis* from Mecca arrived, and pitched their tents around us.

I have already told you that I left Suez at 8 o'clock this morning, after having thanked all my good friends for their kind assistance, and wished them "good bye." Abu Nabut came on with me by train to act as courier. You suggest that I

should give a lecture here. If I were a ready speaker I would ; but I should have to write it out, and I have not the time for this. On my arrival here I met Mr. Rogers, who was kindly coming down to the station in his carriage to meet me. Mr. Gibbs also came up and welcomed me most cordially. This resulted in my going in to dine at the Consulate and to tell them all the news.¹

February 18.—My first visit this morning was, of course, to Nubar Pasha. He was delighted to see me, I might almost say in raptures, so glad was he to be relieved from the anxiety and responsibility he had incurred on my account, believing, not unnaturally from the non-appearance of the 'Erin,' that some accident had happened to me. "Never again," said he, "would he do a good natured thing for any foreigner!" Had I been lost, he would have been deemed my "*assassin*," and so on. I had to appease him as well as I could, and to tell him that I knew his "*bonté*" would not allow him to keep his pledge. He tells me he only heard of the safety of the 'Erin' two days ago. It appears that the Captain ran short of coal, and this, to-

¹ Mr. Rogers has confirmed the meaning of "*Mahaserat*," as being the "hemming in," the "driving up into a corner;" so that Abu Nabut's story is correct.

gether with very foul weather, had delayed them so much that they with difficulty reached Tor at all.

During the last week there have been marriages in the Khédive's family, and *fantasia ketir*—festivities without end, so that public business has been a little, or rather, a great deal neglected. His Excellency asked me no end of questions about my journey. My description of the fertility of Madiān (Midian) and Akaba interested him very much indeed; also my opinion of the possibility of fertilizing the Tih, which I contend is not very much worse than Kent—"the garden of England"—as regards soil, the great drawback being, of course, the comparative want of water. But water is *there*, if they only knew how to utilize it, and if once they planted trees, the rain would increase, as it has already done in other parts of Egypt.¹ The latter part of our conversation, which lasted upwards of an hour, turned upon "miracles," respecting which his belief is much the same as mine, namely, that "all things are miracles." I spoke of my *compagnon de voyage* as a perfect man of science, who would not believe in things contrary to what is called the laws of nature, and who was, therefore, dissatisfied at our not having found a

¹ See "The Khédive's Egypt," p. 61, and "Egypt as it is," pp. 352-354.

volcano—to which he replied, “Il est un savant mécréant, tandis que vous, M. Beke, vous êtes un savant croyant,” to which I answered, “Plutôt croyant que savant.” This brought me a hearty squeeze of the hand, and so we parted.

All the people here seem full of my discoveries; and Abu Nabut, who is now the prince of dragomans, is in great request, my discoveries losing nothing by the manner in which he relates them. The welcome and congratulations I receive on all sides are most cordial and gratifying. I hear that the British Consulate here is abolished, and my friend Rogers has been offered the Consulate at Buenos Ayres, where his profound knowledge of Eastern affairs would be lost, and he would have to begin another line of study, so he has refused.¹ But this is a matter with which the Foreign Office does not concern itself; its practice being always to put the square peg into the round hole, and *vice versa*.

I have now been to call on General Stanton, who received me in a very friendly manner, asking me a good deal about my journey; but I did not altogether like his *manner*. He twitted me with not having brought back some of the sacrificial

¹ Mr. E. J. Rogers was soon after appointed Director of Public Instruction in Cairo by the Khédive of Egypt.

bones. The afternoon was taken up in receiving visits from many of my very good friends here ; but, hearing Colonel Gordon (Chinese Gordon) was in Cairo, I managed to go and call on him. He is so like our friend Major Wilson, that for the moment I thought it was the Major ; and he himself admitted the likeness. Colonel Gordon is a man of middle height, sparely but strongly built, and giving little indication of the strength, both of sinews and constitution, which has borne him so far unscathed through so many hardships. In complexion he is still comparatively fair and fresh. He is quite youthful in appearance, with regular features, brown hair, and bright keen eyes. We had half an hour's friendly conversation, during which we spoke of Sir Samuel Baker's expedition having cost a total of £475,000 ; but he said he thought the real cost was not more than half that sum. However, even this is a good big sum for having done what Gordon has now to *undo* ! He expressed a wish to know my views about the Upper Nile, the lakes, &c., and proposed that we should adjourn till to-morrow morning, when we could meet at his room, where he has a large map. Gordon knows all about us from our friend Dr. Stevenson of Patricxbourne, and says he has seen our old house at "Bekesbourne."

I am told there was a large American party here a few days ago, a Dr. Bartlett and company, who were very sorry they had missed me. Apropos of Dean Stanley's "three low peaks," I have just seen Abdullah Joseph, who was the Dean's dragoman eighteen years ago, and went with him to Petra, passing *Jebel-e'-Nūr*, and he tells me that it is a common Arab tradition that this is the true Sinai; and yet he never told Dean Stanley, nor, according to his account, has he mentioned it to any other traveller. I cannot make this out. The man says, and not without some show of reason, that the Arab tradition is more to be trusted to than the Christian one; because they have had it from father to son.

February 19.—I am even more tired to-day than I was yesterday, though I have done nothing to make me so. The fatigue of my journey, which I withstood so manfully, is now telling on me. Mr. Milne, I hear, left Alexandria yesterday morning for Southampton. He will probably be in England as soon as this letter. This morning I resumed my conversation with Colonel Gordon, and have been talking "Upper Nile" with him. He leaves for Suez to-morrow morning, and thence proceeds by sea to Suakin, and on by land to Khartum, his object being to reach Gondokoro as

quickly as possible, and to proceed up the river Nile to where it is *said* to be navigable as far as the Albert Nyanza.

In the evening, just as I was going to bed, Colonel Gordon called again on me. He said he could not leave without saying good-bye to me. We had some very interesting conversation about his expedition. I recommended him not to be in a hurry, my experience of African character having taught me that such work as his, to be sure, must be slow. He replied that he was prepared to devote himself to his task, and to leave his bones in Africa, if it were so to be. Taking up your little Bible from the table, he said *that* was his companion and guide. He promised to write to me, and we parted good friends I trust.

[Colonel Gordon is now Gordon Pasha, and from the reports that have since reached us from time to time it has been seen that he has fully redeemed his vow; for not only has he ably and thoroughly accomplished the task he then set himself, but has even made his expedition, so far from being an expense to the Khédive, actually pay its own expenses, and a source of revenue to Egypt. His work in Eastern Intertropical Africa, thus far, has been preparatory to that on which he is now so

earnestly engaged, namely, the total abolition of the slave trade. With such absolute authority as the Khédive has recently intrusted to him—by appointing him Governor-General of the Soudan for life, and having raised him to the rank of a Pasha—there can be very little doubt that he will do much to assist this glorious object. If not entirely successful in this work, which is one hardly within the power of any single human being to accomplish in a lifetime, he will at all events have done a great work in developing commerce and civilisation within the regions of Eastern Inter-tropical Africa.

Gordon Pasha's journals are said to be in course of preparation for publication, and will doubtless be looked forward to with deep interest by all who feel any concern in African matters.]

February 20.—I am back just in time to meet the Nile travellers, who are returning from Upper Egypt, and will now be proceeding to Palestine via my Mount Sinai and Petra. In the course of conversation with Cook's manager, Mr. Howard and Abu Nabut, I learned that not only is thunder *said* to be heard by the pilgrims on their way back from Mecca, but that *some* of them declare that they have seen angels ascending and descending Jebel-

e'-Nūr; and that there is a tradition that when Moses was crossing Wady el-Tih, he saw the pillar of fire on the summit of this mountain, which is the reason for its name. You will recollect that when at Akaba I asked the origin of the name, but could not get any satisfactory explanation. Such is almost invariably the case. You must leave these people to tell their story their own way. If you put leading questions or ask for explanations, you are almost certain to be misled. The *truth* of all these traditions is not at all the question. It is the *fact* of their existence that concerns me. If I were to speculate on the subject, it might be objected that all this was pure imagination; whereas I have now simply to relate *facts*, and leave others to draw their own conclusions.

I am also happy to be able to meet one of General Stanton's objections or cavils respecting the sacrifices. The Arabs continue to perform sacrifices at the present day; it would therefore have been preposterous for me to have brought away with me the *horns* of an animal that might, for aught I know, have been killed and eaten a few months ago! But I learned that there is no stated period for making these sacrifices on Jebel-e'-Nūr, as there is on Mount Arafat by Mecca. Those performed

on Jebel-e'-Nūr are *ex voto*, or by way of thanksgiving after recovery from illness, or in consequence of any good fortune.¹ This explains the visit of

¹ "The last number of the *Comptes Rendus* of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres in Paris contained an interesting attempt made by M. Joseph Halévy to decipher in their entirety the *graffiti* to be found on rocks in the desert of Safa, situated south-east of Damascus. Mr. Cyril Graham had signalled them for the first time in 1857, and twenty-one of them were published in an imperfect state in the *Transactions* of the German Oriental Society. Ten years later Dr. Wetzstein, at that time Prussian Consul in Damascus, made copies of 260 of them, twelve of which are to be found in his *Diary* in the Hauran, Berlin, 1860. In the following year, and in 1862, Count de Vogué, French Ambassador at Vienna, and M. Waddington, late Minister of Public Instruction in Paris, both members of the French Institute, took copies of some hundreds of these inscriptions, 402 of which have lately been published by the former in the second series of his work, 'La Syrie Centrale.' The letters having some resemblance to those of the Himyaritic inscriptions, two German Orientalists tried to attribute the *graffiti* to the tribes of Saba, who, as it is supposed, came to Safa from Yemen towards the beginning of the first century of the Christian era, and accordingly they based the decipherment of them on the language of the Himyaritic inscriptions. Their attempt, however, did not lead to any satisfactory results. M. Halévy thinks that those *graffiti* were traced by the Arabic tribe *Thamood* who served as mercenaries in the Roman army. They contain, according to him, mostly proper names with devotional formulæ, similar to those of the Sinaitic inscriptions. We shall quote the translation of a few of them: 'By An'am Ahlam, son of the son of Am, son of 'Abdeel, son of Wahib, son of 'Abdeel.' 'By Ofah, son of Carib, in memory of his mother.' Some of them finish with the words, 'In memory of all the relations (!), friends (!). May there be peace with the others.' Others have the words: 'He has accomplished his vow;' and 'He has done (that), may he be pardoned.' As to the language of these *graffiti*, M. Halévy believes it to be intermediate between the Arabic and the Northern Semitic dialects. We find here the conjunction **𐤁** as in Arabic and the Sabeian idiom, as well as a great number of proper names which are in use in those languages. On the other hand, the article **𐤀**, the preposition **𐤁**,

Sidi Ali ibn 'Elim, who, I am told, was a Moslem commander in the first ages of Islam, like Abu Obeida—whose tomb you and I saw in the valley of the Jordan, and which you photographed.¹ I dare say the Cufic inscription we found at the foot of the mountain may tell us something about this. I must try and get a *squeeze* taken of it.

Colonel Gordon has not yet gone. He has seen my article in the *Athenæum*,² and does not think

and the ׀ as suffix of the third person masculine, occur in these inscriptions as in Hebrew. There are, however, words which are peculiar to the language of the *graffiti*, e.g. פֶּעַם, which occurs often, and which M. Halévy translates with 'to consecrate something in memory of somebody.' No name of any God is mentioned directly (we find only in the formation of proper names עֲבַדְאֵל, 'servant of El,' and לִעֲמֹן 'confiding in Loo'), and no cross or any other religious symbol, as is the case in the Christian inscriptions of Syria, is to be found. M. Halévy concludes from this fact that the inscriptions must have been written at a time when heathenism was already given up by the tribes that inscribed them without their having been as yet converted to Christianity. That would be towards the end of the third century A.D. 'At that time,' he says, 'Christianity became the official religion of the Empire; doubt and scepticism penetrated amongst those Arabic tribes which were the allies of Rome, and amongst whom for a certain time a kind of vague Deism was prevalent, until the day when they disappeared, having been absorbed by the great migrations which had taken place in those countries.' This last supposition will have to be proved by some more valid arguments, which the author will probably produce in his promised extended essay on the Safa *graffiti*. M. J. Derenbourg, member of the Institute, gave in a previous communication to the *Comptes Rendus* the decipherment of some letters of these *graffiti*, the chief point of which was the recognition of the word בֶּן 'son,' read בַּר by German scholars."—*Athenæum*, 16th March 1878.

¹ Mrs. Beke's, "Jacob's Flight," p. 285.

² *Athenæum*, 24th January 1874.

there is anything in it the Viceroy would be offended with, as his *policy* with respect to the annexation of all this part of Africa is well known and understood. In fact, Lieutenant Baker, openly declared it in his paper read before the Royal Geographical Society, a notice of which appeared in the *Times*.

Last night I saw the carriage of some big-wig or other pass by the hotel, preceded by four *Kawasses*, the two middle ones carrying their sticks, as usual, and the other two, torches. It was a pretty sight, and caused the natives as it passed to exclaim, "Mashallah!" I met Captain Kirk, a nephew of Mr. Merceron's, in the Esbekiah Gardens to-day, who is staying at my hotel. He tells me he saw my nieces a few days ago at his aunt's, &c. We talked conversation talk. He is going to Bagdad and Persia, though what for I know not. I have been showing Mr. Frank Dillon my companion's sketches, which he looks on as very creditable and effective. Fedrigo Pasha and I have exchanged visits, but as yet without meeting.

I mean to write to my friend Professor Fleischer of Leipzig telling him of my discovery, and the traditions connected with it, and asking him what he knows about the subject. I fancy that Cufic inscription would have told me something; not

going back to the time of Moses, but perhaps recording the visit of Ali Ibn 'Elim, some thousand years ago. I spoke to Rogers about *Gharrel-e'-Nakhil* [at Succoth], and he says that it means "the Torrent of the Palm Grove." This shows that not only a palm tree (Nakhal), but, a palm grove (*Nakhil*) must have existed in former times, where now no palm trees are found, and that therefore the vegetation was greater *then* than it is now. The Khédive is not at Abdin just now, so that I do not know when I shall be able to see His Highness.

February 22.—When I was thanking Mr. Gibbs for sending on my news from Mr. Tuck, he showed me the list of the new Ministry. Sir Stafford Northcote is Chancellor of the Exchequer, I see; but I doubt whether he will do anything for me. My "friends" seem inclined to do nothing for me, much as I have done for them in times past.

I met Nubar Pasha to-day, and congratulated him upon the safety of the 'Erin.' Availing myself of this opportunity I begged him not to delay speaking to the Khédive about me, and my desire to pay my respects to His Highness, as I said I was anxious to leave by the next mail for England. His Excellency replied that he had not yet had an opportunity, but would do as I wished. I have

heard something more about that *second* mountain (Eratówa), seen by Milne from the summit of Jebel Bághir, which you will recollect Abu Nabut spoke of as Horeb, with Rephidim. I suspect that Cufic inscription must be fully a thousand years old, if not more.

To-day I spent an hour in the Esbekiah Gardens. You would be surprised to see how prettily they are laid out with water, grottos, waterfalls and parterres, and in the centre a kiosque, where a military band plays three times a week, as is the custom at Nice, so that it is quite a pleasant lounge. I took a chair and sat down, for which I paid one piastre (two and a half pence), and listened to the music. They played "*La Donna e Mobile*" very well; but after that, we had some Turkish music, which was barbarous enough. There were crowds of people, and among them a good sprinkling of native women! It is the last day of the Greek Carnival, so there were some masks, but very trumpery affairs.

February 23.—I am going to make a rush to see the Khédive, who is at Abdin, I hear. 11 P.M.—I have been to Abdin and seen Murad Pasha, the Master of the Ceremonies, to whom I expressed my wish for an audience of His Highness. He asked

me to wait a few minutes, when he returned and said that His Highness was engaged just then, but would see me on Wednesday morning at nine o'clock. So until then I must be content to wait.

February 25.—On my presenting myself at the palace this morning, I found Mr. Frank Dillon and a number of other persons awaiting audiences; but His Highness could not receive them, and although I was requested to wait, the audience was ultimately postponed till to-morrow, on account of the Khédive being so very occupied with the Foreign Consuls. I hear there is a disturbance at the palace to-day about the modification of the "capitulations."¹ The other Powers generally have agreed to the proposed changes, but France holds out [but finally in 1875, under the pressure of a threat of the Egyptian Government to close the old mixed Tidjaret Courts, and so leave French citizens without means of redress against natives or foreigners, the measure was agreed to]; and Nubar Pasha, who is very fiery, used some very strong expressions with respect to France. Altogether it is not a very auspicious time for seeking a farewell audience of the Khédive.

I have come to the conclusion that باغر *Bāghir*

¹ McCoan's "Egypt as it is," p. 290.

is the proper spelling of the name, though what the meaning is I cannot make out. Hashim wanted to make it باقر *Bakir*, pronounced here *Bagir*; but he is certainly wrong. I should never have written it with an "r," Barghir, in the first instance, had there not been a غ *ghain*, as in *Ghabaghrib*, when, if I mistake not, we put an "r" before the second *gh*, which is wrong. But the *gh* sounds exactly as if there were an "r" in it. I am told that Mount Sinai is called in the Korân "*Tor* Sinai," and that Mount Tabor is called to this day "*Tor* Tabor." *Tor*, therefore, must mean "mountain." I note this simply as a memorandum. "Eratówa," the name of the second mountain near Mount Bāghir, on the other side of Wady Ithem, is said to derive its name from *retuba* (?), which means "cold or cool." In Robinson's account of his visit to Akaba, he makes out the Gulf to have extended very much further to the north in former times. Rüppell went the Hadj road in 1822. I must see what he says.

February 26. — I went to Abdin again this morning. On my entrance I was received by one of the officers (probably Zecchy Pasha), seemingly one of equal rank with Tonnino Bey. Whilst I was waiting we talked about slavery and the slave

trade, Sir Samuel Baker, &c. Tonnino Bey presently came in and conversed with us, coffee being served in the usual way. At half-past ten o'clock I was invited to go with Tonnino, who took me to the foot of the stairs, and saluting me, left me in charge of the "gentleman in waiting," who received me at the head of the stairs, and marshalled me into the audience chamber—or rather into the aute-chamber, in which were numerous officers standing about; and in which the Khédive welcomed me, coming towards me from the opposite side of the room. I made a profound bow and advanced to take His Highness's hand, which he held out to me, as he expressed his satisfaction at seeing me back, congratulating me on the success of my expedition, and mentioning the *inquietude* he had had on my account. He desired me to enter, and I followed him into what I take to be the audience chamber, requesting me to be seated—pointing to a chair—whilst he took a place upon the sofa. At this moment Nubar Pasha came in, and seated himself *en face*. I proceeded to explain to His Highness all that I had done; Nubar interfering much more on this occasion than on the former in the conversation, translating into Turkish what I said. The Viceroy remarked, "Then it is not a volcano."

I said, "No; in *this* respect I found myself mistaken, and that the appearance to Moses must therefore be regarded as miraculous." He appeared much interested, and when I spoke of the Cufic inscription, he said it ought to be communicated to Brugsch.

I then showed His Highness the specimen of iron ore, with respect to which he said, "It was unfortunate there was no coal near there." His Highness had evidently been primed by his Minister. I next showed and explained my companion's several drawings, Nubar making a running comment on all that I said. When I had finished, His Highness volunteered the remark, "You propose to publish them in an album." I replied, that such was my desire, and that if I might presume to request His Highness to do me the honour to allow me to dedicate the work to him—"With pleasure," responded he, bowing; whereupon His Excellency interfered, by saying, "Nous parlerons de cela après." This shut me up. So I thanked His Highness for his great kindness, and the assistance he had rendered the expedition, and took my leave. He shook hands with me in the most cordial and friendly manner, expressing the hope that he might have the pleasure of seeing me again. He came one step towards the door, and bowed as I turned round

to make my reverence. This visit was one of more ceremony than the last. To-day, too, is a council day, and all the Ministers are in attendance. I am told it is not usual to give audience on that day. When I came down-stairs Tonnino Bey asked me particularly at what hotel I was staying, with what object I do not know, unless to send me a 'ticket for soup.' So altogether my farewell visit to the Khédive has not been very satisfactory. I had no opportunity even to dilate upon my plans for flooding the Lybian Desert.

February 27.—Mr. Young, Livingstone's friend, has arrived, so I went at once to call upon him. His two daughters are with him. He received me very kindly, and we spent a couple of hours together in most interesting conversation, I showing them my sketches, &c. I gave the young ladies some of the shells we brought from Madiān (Midian.) We were talking about Livingstone and his first book, about which he consulted me when he was with us in Mauritius, and for which he got £10,000 from Murray. They agreed first for £2000, for 12,000 copies, and half profits for all over that number; then Murray agreed to give him half profits on the whole; and in the end he gave him two-thirds, the account showing

a profit of £15,000! Murray's whole dealing in the matter was most liberal.

Nubar Pasha is annoyed at my having gone to the Khédive direct, and is determined that the Khédive's consent to my dedicating my book to His Highness shall not hold good. Pazienza! All my friends here agree with me that, as I had already the *entrée*, there was no necessity for troubling Nubar Pasha on so trivial a matter, and that I was justified in taking the course I did.

March 1.—Mr. Thomas Cook has just arrived here for the purpose of starting for Suez, the pseudo-Sinai, Petra and the Holy Land, the great detachment from the American "Oriental Topographical Corps," under Professor Strong. Their camels, forty-three in number, went off yesterday to Suez. They take a photographer with them, and all sorts of apparatus. They are going to "do" the Holy Land entirely. It is most important I should see them. If I can I shall try to get them to go over my ground and *work it well*. I still feel very tired and unwell, quite different to what I did whilst on the journey. I suppose it is the reaction after the great strain of the past months. Mr. Young has now come to disbelieve the report of Livingstone's death,

to make my reverence. This visit was one of more ceremony than the last. To-day, too, is a council day, and all the Ministers are in attendance. I am told it is not usual to give audience on that day. When I came down-stairs Tonnino Bey asked me particularly at what hotel I was staying, with what object I do not know, unless to send me a 'ticket for soup.' So altogether my farewell visit to the Khédive has not been very satisfactory. I had no opportunity even to dilate upon my plans for flooding the Lybian Desert.

February 27.—Mr. Young, Livingstone's friend, has arrived, so I went at once to call upon him. His two daughters are with him. He received me very kindly, and we spent a couple of hours together in most interesting conversation, I showing them my sketches, &c. I gave the young ladies some of the shells we brought from Madiān (Midian.) We were talking about Livingstone and his first book, about which he consulted me when he was with us in Mauritius, and for which he got £10,000 from Murray. They agreed first for £2000, for 12,000 copies, and half profits for all over that number; then Murray agreed to give him half profits on the whole; and in the end he gave him two-thirds, the account showing

a profit of £15,000! Murray's whole dealing in the matter was most liberal.

Nubar Pasha is annoyed at my having gone to the Khédive direct, and is determined that the Khédive's consent to my dedicating my book to His Highness shall not hold good. *Pazienza!* All my friends here agree with me that, as I had already the *entrée*, there was no necessity for troubling Nubar Pasha on so trivial a matter, and that I was justified in taking the course I did.

March 1.—Mr. Thomas Cook has just arrived here for the purpose of starting for Suez, the pseudo-Sinai, Petra and the Holy Land, the great detachment from the American "Oriental Topographical Corps," under Professor Strong. Their camels, forty-three in number, went off yesterday to Suez. They take a photographer with them, and all sorts of apparatus. They are going to "do" the Holy Land entirely. It is most important I should see them. If I can I shall try to get them to go over my ground and *work it well*. I still feel very tired and unwell, quite different to what I did whilst on the journey. I suppose it is the reaction after the great strain of the past months. Mr. Young has now come to disbelieve the report of Livingstone's death,

as do his father-in-law, Dr. Moffatt, and Dr. Kirk. I wonder if it will turn out to be another false alarm.

So that fellow Qrton has been found guilty, and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. It would have been a misfortune and disgrace to the country had he by any means got off. Sir Alexander Cockburn will now, of course, retire and be made a peer. I wish I could retire, like him, on a good pension. Amongst the new arrivals is a brother¹ of Sir Stafford Northcote, a clergyman, with his wife and adopted daughter. Lord and Lady Clarence Paget are also here.

March 2.—My letter to you *via* Marseilles, I made a mistake and posted in the wrong box. I ought to have sent it to the French post-office, which is still continued *here*, though the English one is abolished. I went to the post-office and inquired if I could not rectify my mistake by paying something extra. I was told by the Director, to my surprise, that the administration taking into consideration the want of knowledge of the local postal arrangements on the part of "*gli stranieri poverelli*"—poor foreigners—took upon itself to put all such little mistakes straight, without mak-

¹ Since deceased.

ing any charge for it ! What think you of that for Egyptian politeness !¹

I called on Professor Brugsch this morning, who took me rather aback by informing me that he had found out all about the route of the Israelites, and their passage, of the *Yam-Suph*, which *he* makes to be neither the Gulf of Suez nor the Gulf of Akaba, but the *Lacus Sirbonis* lying on the extreme north-east of Egypt, close to the Mediterranean Sea, somewhere about 33° east long. What think you of that for a change ? He speaks quite dogmatically. It is no "opinion" of his ; he says he has no opinions. He deals simply with "facts." *The inscriptions on the ancient monuments say so.* All I say is, so much the worse for the interpretation of the inscriptions. From those inscriptions he says he can trace the route of the Israelites step by step as far as the *Yam-Suph* (translated "Red

¹ By the terms of a new Postal Convention with Egypt, which will come into operation on the 1st of April next, the British post-offices at Alexandria and Suez will be abolished on that date, and the exchange of money orders, as well as all other postal transactions between Egypt and the United Kingdom, will be carried on entirely through the medium of the Egyptian post-office. No money orders payable at the British post-office either in Alexandria or Suez will be issued in this country after the 23rd inst. Thenceforward all orders intended to be paid at those places will be drawn on the Egyptian post-office, and the regulations will be in all respects conformable to those adopted in the case of orders drawn on towns in the interior of Egypt.— *March 21st, 1878.*

Sea”), and thence to “Marah,” which he makes (if I understand him rightly) to be the *Bitter Lake*: further he cannot trace them. Where Mount Sinai is the inscriptions do not say, though he finds mention of a *country* named “Sina,” the position of which is not indicated. Now my opinion is that this interpretation of Egyptian inscriptions is on a *par* with the late Charles Forster’s interpretation of the so-called “Sinaitic inscriptions,” which he most elaborately and learnedly demonstrated step by step, word for word, letter for letter—every single word and letter of which was imaginary! Brugsch is a very clever man, but I am afraid he is working out Champollion’s system *à l’outrance*. Mind, I am not alone in entertaining this opinion. What he told me certainly surprised me not a little at first.

He is going to call on me to-morrow or next day, and bring me a list of some books he wished me to read in order to know how the “Sinai” question stands. There are a few recent ones which I know I ought to see; but when he told me that Lepsius is the *first* authority on the subject, and that his opinion is that Serbal is the true Mount Sinai instead of the traditional one, he merely told me what I knew more than twenty years ago! He

says he has not himself published anything material on the subject.¹ Jebel-e'-Nūr he has heard of from Arabs, but knew nothing of its position, nor, in fact, anything of it except as the name of a mountain.

Just before luncheon was over I caught sight of Professor Owen, who came into the dining-room of the hotel for a second; so, taking off Mrs. Norris's *souvenir*, which I always wear at meals, I immediately jumped up, and followed him into the verandah, where he welcomed me, and I told him all about Mount Sinai, mentioning among other things the "angel's visits," when he said that the last *angelic* visit was that of an Englishman—the old pun of Pope Gregory—*Non angli sed angeli*. After leaving him, I told Mr. Young that Owen was there, as he wanted to see him. I then went back to take my cup of coffee, and returned again to the verandah, where Mr. Young and Mr. Northcote were talking together.

Seeing Professor Owen sitting in a carriage in front of the hotel speaking to a gentleman, I drew attention to the resemblance of Owen's profile to that of "Punch," to which both Northcote and Young assented. I added, that he had also the

¹ See the "Athenæum," 16th May 1864. See also the report in the "Times" of 15th and 18th September 1874 of the meeting of the International Congress of Orientalists.

same sarcastic look, and Northcote said that he could speak sarcastically too, whereupon I instanced what he had just said to me, though that was more complimentary than sarcastic, but perhaps with a spice of irony; and so the conversation became general. Mr. Young laughingly asked me across Mr. Northcote, why it was the angels in Jacob's vision went up and down a ladder? and on our both giving it up, he said, the reply of a Scotch boy was "he supposed it was because they were moulting"—had lost their wing feathers and therefore could not fly.

I must not omit to tell you a very good story which General Stanton told me about the Egyptologists. The Duke of Sutherland took a mummy to England with him, which he had unrolled by a learned Doctor, of the British Museum, and others interested in the subject. They had first had the inscriptions on the outside of the case given them to interpret, and they came to the assembly with the translation, describing in detail that the person whose body was enclosed was a certain priest named *A. B.*, the son of *C. D.*, &c. The mummy was then unrolled, and lo! and behold, the body was found to be that of a *woman*! But one cannot contradict these Egyptologists, because they profess to have the *key*, and if you say that what they declare the meaning to be is not true, they ask you what then

it does mean? and if you are not prepared to say, that does not make them right. To-morrow I hope the American party will arrive, and then I should like to get away as quickly as possible. I hope money will arrive from you soon, as I want to settle with Abu Nabut, and be off home.

March 3.—I forgot to mention that when Professor Owen was talking with me yesterday, he said he supposed they would now give me a Canonry, such being the way persons of my sort were rewarded—alluding to Canon Tristram. I said that I was not in orders; but he replied that the Archbishop of Canterbury could easily remedy that. This is of course mere talk; but you will recollect Bishop Ryan and others have often expressed something of the same opinion. Archdeacon Hale, you know, strongly urged me when a young man to take holy orders: it is almost a pity I did not. However, I think that Mr. Disraeli [now Lord Beaconsfield] and Sir Stafford Northcote ought at least to increase my pension to £500 per annum.

Mr. Thomas Cook has been to see my pictures, and we have had an interesting talk about them, and other matters connected with the Holy Land, and travellers. He promises to let his American tourists know about me, directly they arrive. As I was going down-stairs, I met Professor Owen again. He said he was coming to tell me that Lord Clarence

Paget was much interested in my journey, and desired to have the pleasure of making my acquaintance, if I would go with him. I found his Lordship a very pleasing, not young, man, and with him I had an hour's conversation, going into the whole subject thoroughly. Lady Clarence is an invalid, he said, but hopes to be well enough to make my acquaintance in a day or two. His Lordship remarked, as I was leaving, that he took for granted I was travelling for the British Museum, and was quite surprised and shocked to learn that I was entirely on my own account, supported only by a few private friends, and was, in fact, now waiting for money to arrive to take me home.

March 4.—My friend Colonel Morrieson has just arrived, having come down the Nile by the same steamer as the American party. There being no rooms to be had in this hotel, and the Colonel and I having been "chums" at Suez, it was arranged for a bed to be made up in my room for him for the night. The American party were taken by Cook to the Hotel d'Orient. Colonel Morrieson was delighted to hear of my success; and when I said that I was waiting for funds from you, my journey and the delay in Egypt having cost more than I calculated, this kind good man, in the most unostentatious manner, made me a present of twenty pounds towards the expenses of my expe-

dition. I thanked him sincerely, as you may suppose. After breakfast a young man, a Mr. Percy Bankart, whom I have seen during the last few days with the Miss Youngs, came to ask my advice about joining the American party. At first I was inclined to advise him not to join them; but upon his explaining the special opportunity it offered, and the low terms upon which he would be taken, I said, "Go, by all means." He then promised to endeavour to take a "squeeze" for me of those Cufic inscriptions. [On his return to England Mr. Bankart wrote to Dr. Beke to say he had not been successful in obtaining the "squeeze," on account of the edges not being sufficiently sharp.]

I hear a very poor account of the American party from one who travelled with them up and down the Nile. He says he does not like them at all; that they are ignorant, bigoted, narrow-minded people; that there is not a single man of scientific acquirements or general knowledge—they are, in fact, mere "parsons,"—a conceited, self-sufficient set. After hearing this I decided not to go to Dr. Strong. If he wants me he will come to me; I shall not trouble myself about him.

In the "*Pall Mall Budget*" of February 20, I see there is an article on my discovery of Mount Sinai. I should not be surprised at finding my "Sinai" is Wellstead's mountain, only he did not identify it

with Sinai. The sand avalanche would well account for the thunder which Sheikh Mohammed assured me he, and others, had heard; only I do not quite see how there could be such "avalanches" on my mountain.¹

There are two young Englishmen here named Creyke and Naylor, who are going to Petra; they have engaged the dragoman Yonis, and having plenty of money, are going to "do" the tour, so as to be back in London for "the season." It is a miserable day, cold and overcast in the morning; in the afternoon showery, and now set in for rain. Such is Cairo, where it never rains!

With respect to the American party, poor Cook and Howard have had an awful time with them on the subject of Mohammed ibn Ijât and his bakhshish and camels. My impression is, that Dr. Strong in his self-sufficiency will decide on going along the Wady Arabah, and not up Wady el Ithem! He intends to follow in the *very footsteps* of the Israelites—as if a single inch of the ground were known

¹ "It will be interesting to hear whether Dr. Beke's Sinai is the same mountain as that visited by Wellstead, and described in his 'Travels in Arabia' (1838). Wellstead's Sinai was not a mountain to be visited by travellers who look for silence in solitude. It was a very noisy mountain, for Wellstead, having seated himself on a rock, saw an avalanche of sand falling, the sound of which 'attained the loudness of thunder,' caused the seat to vibrate, and so alarmed his camels that they were with difficulty prevented by their drivers from bolting. A more frightful occupation can hardly be imagined than that of riding a runaway camel on Mount Sinai."—*Pall Mall Budget*, February 20, 1874, p. 16, col. 2.

for a certainty. In the map which Mr. Bolton sent me, Kadesh Barnea is marked in *three* different places, fifty miles apart; and in Mr. Samuel Sharpe's map it is placed in a fourth position; and yet this Yankee Doctor intends going in the very foot-steps! This is almost as amusing as Mark Twain's *Pilgrims* in his "New Pilgrim's Progress," who went to the Lake of Gennesareth, where they were in all the ecstasies of religious fervour. They *would* sail on the waters where the apostles had fished, where our Lord worked His miracles, and so on. A boat came near. How much would the people take? Two napoleons. An imposition: *one* napoleon was enough; they could not give a farthing more. The boat sailed away, and they never had a sail on the Lake. And all this enthusiasm was wasted for the sake of a paltry napoleon.

After luncheon I called on the Consul-General and Mrs. Stanton to take leave; they were very amiable, and after a long chat on Egyptian matters we parted. When I came home I received a visit from Lieutenant-Colonel Arendrup, on the staff of General Stone, a very amiable young Dane who came to **Egypt** for his health, and being poor (as he himself confessed), had accepted service under the Egyptian Government. He was most interested in my journey, and ~~took~~ the liberty of asking me to tell him about it. He was quite modest and un-

assuming, so fearful of giving offence, and so thankful for even the brief information that I at first gave him, that I warmed to him, and showed him my pictures, and had a long agreeable chat. [It is sad to have to relate that this promising young officer fell a victim in the ill-fated Egyptian expedition into Abyssinia in 1875.]

I have borrowed from Mr Young, Murray's "Handbook" of the Holy Land; in it I find a notice of Aly ibn "Alecín," who, instead of being a Moslem commander, was a Dervish. So I was right in calling him a "saint." You will see his tomb and mosque at "El Haram" in Route 23 from Jerusalem to Nazareth by the sea-coast, the first station from Yāfa on the way to Cæsarea. Messrs. Creyke and Naylor, who sat beside me at dinner, told me that they were going to Akaba, and should visit Jebel-e'-Nūr.

March 6.—The mail is in, and I have your letters. I shall start for Alexandria and England to-morrow, as I am longing to be home. I must confess that I am disappointed in not having had a little more attention paid me here; but I am known to be now no longer a rich man, and no one cares much for poor men. I have settled with Abu Nabut, paying him for thirty-nine days £195, and giving him and Hashim very good certificates.

Alexandria, March 8, 1874.—At length, my

dearest Milly, I come to my last letter from Egypt. I left Cairo yesterday, travelling with Colonel Stokes, who is returning home. We go together to Brindisi, whence he proceeds to Rome. He is a very agreeable companion, and we had a pleasant journey. Before leaving Cairo I met Lord Clarence Paget in the reading-room, who took leave of me in a very friendly way, asking me to call on him in town. He seemed much delighted with my pamphlet, even though I had not found a "volcano"—all the better, perhaps, he said.

Professor Brugsch has been calling on his Lordship at the *hôtel* within the last few days, yet he has not called on me according to his promise. Colonel Morrieson, with a friend of his, and I went to the Museum to take a last look at the monuments again. I there saw young Brugsch, who is curator, and he showed me his brother's hieroglyphical grammar. He says his brother is writing a history, which will soon be out.

When I came back from Boulak I found General Stone had called upon me. He has come *too late*. I sent him in return my P.P.C. Hashim accompanied me to the station, where I found old Abu Nabut waiting to see me off. I gave the old fellow a napoleon bakhshish, for which he was all thanks. Since I arrived I have been calling upon all my good friends here to say good-bye, and