

Arabah el Madfunah
Dec 6th 1932.

Dear Mother.

We have been receiving calls from all our friends in the village & struggling hard to make suitable conversation. we tried to describe the traffic of London to the Coptic Priest, & I have a suspicion that he thought we were pulling his leg when we talked about the railway in a hole under the earth. The Schoolmaster made a state call with his two under masters & they all complimented me on my efforts at writing Arabic during the summer. He came yesterday evening to give me my first lesson. & I produced the pen, it was quite the right thing, he was delighted, he kept on murmuring expressions of gratitude all the time

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2

I was showing him how to fill it
 & I felt so embarrassed that I nearly
 spilt the ink, I felt I ought to
 know the correct replies to all those
 flowing phrases - I explained to him
 that the man in the shop had seen
 one of his letters so as to select the
 right nib. I asked him to try
 it, & he wrote "I am exceedingly
 grateful" & the pen suited his hand
 exactly. He was also pleased with
 the seeds. I read Arabic for
 nearly an hour until my voice gave
 out. I went over the book I had
 last year as I was afraid I might
 have forgotten most of the pronunciation
 but he seemed very satisfied, & this
 morning he sent me the second year's
 reading book by Sardic's son.
 We are settling down to work

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now, & it seem as if we had never
been away at all.

We have three very superior
Soudaneese guards. very smart fellows
from a cavalry regiment; with the most
delightful manners. The sergant
we had last year has been promoted,
he has got some one who can write
a little English to write to Amice
to thank of him for giving such a
good report of him to head quarters.
the letter was a masterpiece, we
spent quite a long time disentangling
it, I did'nt find it half as funny as
Amice did, as I have a sympathetic
feeling that my Arabic letters are
just as amusing to the learned Egyptian

I have bought the first
installment of amber for M^{rs} Thomas.
the old dealer man was delighted

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4
 To see us. he looks a bigger rascal
 than ever, we have great bargainings
 which always ends by his saying
 "it shall be as your honour wishes."

which completely disarms one &
 always produces the extra half piastre

The Little Un is busy putting
 up shelves in his room, he has
 been cadging some of my precious
 screws. he is full of bright ideas
 & very handy & neat with tools

Our carpenter has been busy
 making two more doors out of
 the packing cases. They are most
 excellent, & cause our visitors much
 amusement, one gets, "Keep away
 from the boilers", & "glass with care"
 & sundry odd bits of inscriptions all
 over them. some upside down -

Love to you both
 Your affectionate daughter
 Myrtle.

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