

Arabah. D/<J>an 7th 1933.

Dear Mother.

The month of Elijah has descended on me in the form of the worst cold I have had for years, Amice & I have caught^{sic} sneezed & spluttered in company, I spent the day before yesterday in bed, & yesterday I sat out in the sun for a little, & am still feeling sore & headachy though decidedly better.

My last lesson was certainly not a success though earlier in the day my knowledge of written Arabic had been put to a good practical test. At lunch time in the temple Sandie brought me a letter from the schoolmaster that required a written reply - & I had^{nt}^{sic} any of my books with me. I worried over the letter, recognizing a word here & there, guessing at others & finally I could

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made all of it. It was to convey his salutations & beg my permission to change the day of my next lesson as he was going to Girga the next day as soon as the school was over but if I wished, he could come that day if I would send him word.

It wasn't by any means as simple as it sounds in English as it had to be well sprinkled with polite phrases. I wrote a hasty reply, returning salutations & saying I would be pleased if he would come that day etc. When I got back to the house for the lesson, I was beginning to feel this heavy cold coming on & my head felt like a blob of cotton wool. & the things I wrote for dictation were most surprising. The sheikh was most sympathetic & advised me to

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 wrap my head up well & put wool on my chest. I took the latter advice but not the former. He really was most tactful during the lesson, he could see I was'nt at all up to the mark, so instead of looking pained & surprised when I missinterperated (something wrong with the spelling here?) his best efforts he tried to help me over the difficult parts by whispering the letters under his breath after making the noise. & trying to look as if he was'nt doing it. - was'nt it nice of him.

I had your Xmas letter & then one following it both together yesterday, you seem to have heard from a lot of old friends this Xmas. Thank you for sending me the little hanky. I am afraid it will not do much to ^{help} stemming the flow during the present state of affairs.

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I will save it for more polite occasions
 There has been a distinct improvement
 in the manners of our police officer, I think
 someone, (possibly his superior officer in
 Baliana) has told him we are people of
 great importance & friends of high officials
 in Cairo & must not be treated with
 familiarity as if we were American
 tourists, for when ever he comes into the
 temple now he apologizes for his presence
 & hopes he isn't bothering us. He is rather
 like a tiresome puppy that one has had
 to smack, that lies on its back with all
 legs in the air & begs to be forgiven, one
 would like to pat it, but one knows
 it is quite ready to be tiresome again
 if one is in the least bit friendly -
 When you are in Watford will you go
 into a hairdressers & get me two sleeping
 caps. pink or yellow I like the plain

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I think & cost about 1/- or 1/6 each.
the ones I have show signs of wearing
& I do not think they will last the
season. There is no hurry. you
could put them in with letters one
at a time

Love from us both.
Your affectionate daughter
Myrtle.

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