

Nov 16th 1929.
Arabah-el Madfunah.

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Dear Mother.

I have been wrestling hard with Arabic to-day. To start with Mr Beazley wanted me to tell Sandic to buy him 2 boxes of cigarettes, 20 stamps & put correct stamps on two letters for England & take the necessary money out of 20 PT. I did my best & thanks to Sandic's intelligence it came out all correctly. Then as I was collecting my things together to return home Sheikh Abdu Wahid came to pay me a call, I managed to get through the polite greetings & reply to enquiries after my health & then I was stumped. I find I almost have to start learning all over again as the language is quite different to Cairo Arabic all q's are g's & lots of the words are very different or have different shades of meaning.

Mr Beazley has had several lessons in Arabic, but he will not attempt to speak it, Capt Calverley knows about as much as I do, he gets on very well, when Arabic fails he shouts directions in English & waves his arms about & makes an awful commotion, but they seem to understand

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what he wants somehow.

Today on our return to the Temple after lunch the Capt & I had a wild donkey race, with all our escort running yelling at our heels, it was fun. These little donks gallop full tilt down the sand hills & we have to balance on their backs somehow. of course they take their time climbing up the next rise, then away they go again when they are over the top

After a while one accepts this wonderful climate as a matter of course. every day the skys are deep blue, sometimes flecked with little fleecy clouds, always the sun is shining, & now the fresh north wind blowing over the hot sand makes the atmosphere wonderfully invigorating.

Every day is perfect yet every day is different. sometimes the outlines are clear cut & sparkling, another time the distance is veiled in an opal haze, the pink limestone cliffs change their colours every hour, & the desert sand varies in hue from the palest suggestion of mauve to deep orange.

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On our way home midday, we passed a gentleman taking a hot sand bath. all one could see was a mound of sand with a brown head sticking out at one end & two brown feet the other end. it seems to be the native cure for all aches & pains, our old nannie believes in it firmly, when she gets a twinge of rheumatics off she goes with a sunshade to protect her head & wearing an ancient dussing gown & gets the old water carrier to dig her in. We are all thinking of donning bathing dresses one hot day & all having sand baths there is something very wonderful about the feel of hot sand on ones flesh, If we do it I shall try to get a snapshot.

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it was addressed to Calverley, I enquired where the Capt was, the man said he was at the house, so I instructed the messenger to deliver it to him I hoped that would be the end of it. but oh dear no, in about an hours^{sic} time the answer was brought to me by the small house boy. I told Sardic to have the messenger take it to the telegraph office (11 miles away). Sardic said it was not possible because the writing was not on the proper paper. I asked where the proper forms were, & he told me they were in the cupboard of the store room that I had the key of. Can you imagine the difficulty I had to make this all out, with Sardic, the house boy & the messenger all talking at me at once. when I did understand I had the donkey brought round at once, galloped to the house, got the forms, wrote the answer & sent the man off with it. This telegram was from friends of Miss Calverley's she had asked them to visit us on their way from Luxor. the wire was to ask if Tuesday would be convenient. she will be

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here Monday morning so we sent the answer
 To say we would be delighted to see them
 Nov 18th Miss Calverley has returned I am very glad
 To hand the directorship back to her, its no joke
 keeping a crowd of natives busy with such a limited
 vocabulary. our two men were not a bit of help
 they took an unholy joy in my difficulties.
 The new batch of photos have come from Kodak,
 I am enclosing them with this, some of them are
 really beautiful. I may use them sometime for
 sketches so keep them carefully as the negatives
 may deteriorate (cant spell it) in this climate.
 I may not have much time for writing the next
 few days as there will be two guests to ^{help} entertain in
 my spare time, so I will seal this up now & put it
 in our post box, the mail comes in tomorrow
 & Sandie goes to meet the postman with our out
 going post & collects the incoming one
 Love to you both & to Pat
 & kind messages to M^r & M^{rs} Childs
 Your affectionate daughter
 Myrtle.

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