

Arabah
March 9th 1932

Dear Mother.

I've been having a very exciting time, last Sunday I went on a pilgrimage to Sheikh Ali again, I rode the camel, & Sardic rode his ass [☞] (my darling) & the Soudani guard had a donkey & the three other men had another donkey, taking turns in riding, quite an impressive escort.

I took Sheikh Ali his photograph & a very fine bunch of flowers from Nannie's garden as an offering for the saints^{sic} shrine, It really was like living in the times of Christ, these people have the most absolute faith in the Sheikhs^{sic} healing power & for this reason they are often cured.

People come from all over Egypt. & those who can afford it bring some sort of offering, usually in kind, chickens, turkeys, bread, fruit etc these offerings are used by the Sheikks<h> for the needs of the very poor who come to him, he provides them with a meal in the evening, a place to sleep & gives them food for their return journey next day, I gave him PP PT 20 for my charm, which

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I have given to Sardic's gamoose to protect it from snakes scorpions vipers etc. Sheikh Ali very politely invited me to stay to lunch, I should have loved to lunch with him, but I was afraid that politeness might ^{tummy} compell me to eat something that might cause trouble, so excused myself, & after an exchange of polite remarks took my departure.

I had my lunch in the orange garden as before. after lunch Sardic told me the Omdah of the village wished to pay his respects, so the Omdah came. & he was some Omdah. quite one of the most handsome men I have ever seen, he was also of high birth & well educated, he could even speak a very few words of English. we had such a long conversation, he was so pleased to hear I was learning to write arabic, I had to show him my writing & he was astonished, we discussed the merits of modern doctors compared with the doctors of Tut-Ankh Amen's time,

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he thought mummification was a lost art until I told him about the potted Kings of Portugal, then we compared the fruits & trees of Egypt with those of England, & altogether had a delightful conversation, I was quite sorry when the time came for me to leave, I had a lesson in the evening so had to be back by 4.30.

I have been having a lesson each evening since Amice left. I have now taken to writing stories in Arabic & getting Sheikh Sarbit to correct them, the English Arabic grammar book I have contains some very witty short stories & with the help of a dictionary I was able to transcribe them into Arabic writing, I was awfully bucked when Sheikh Sarbit took them & read them straight off without a moments^{sic} hesitation & chuckled with appreciation at the joke. Of course there were a number of mistakes, but he thought it a splendid effort.

Last night he gave me Arabic proverbs for dictation. here are some in English

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He who is patient is victorious.
 He who remains calm achieves his desires
 Patience is the key of prosperity.
 Good manners are better than education.
 A good woman is better than golden treasure
 Patience is the best remedy.

It is difficult to get the exact shade of meaning
 in our language. Nannie helped me to translate
 them & her explanations are very roundabout
 & muddly, but I think I have got the idea.
 Of course all this is really far too advanced
 for me, but Sheikh Sarbit is so thrilled
 at having a pupil who doesn't have to be bullied
 into working that he goes ahead like an
 express train.

I will tell you my other adventures
 in my next letter, I am now going to try
 to write the Story of the Ill treated Robber.
 for this evening's lesson.

Thank Father for his letter
 I have written the Income tax
 man as advised

Lots of love to you both.
 Your affectionate daughter
 Myrtle

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