

161
Arabah el Madfunah
Twelfth Night (Day)

Dear Mother.

We are expecting the Oultons from Sohag to spend to-day with us, & we have been preparing a Badminton court in the hopes of having a game if there is not too much wind, we had some difficulty in making the white lines on the mud floor. but managed by pouring white wash in little dribbles (along the measuring string) out of a milk jug. Nannie of course waxed furious as you can imagine

Yesterday we had the police officer & his wife to tea with us in the temple, we showed them the paintings etc, they were very pleased with them, we inquired how his mother in law was & if the dose had done her good. he replied that it had done her "too good." we hardly know how to take that, but we gather the old lady is better

While we were having our last lesson the Coptic priest called, & I had to read some

Arabah el Madfunah
Twelfth^{sic} Night. (Day) [5 January 1932]

Dear Mother.

We are expecting the Oultons from Sohag to spend to-day with us, & we have been preparing a Badminton^{sic} court in the hopes of having a game if there is not too much wind, we had some difficulty in making the white lines on the mud floor. but managed by pouring whitewash in little dribbles (along the measuring string) out of a milk jug. Nannie of course waxed furious as you can imagine

Yesterday we had the police officer & his wife to tea with us in the temple, we showed them the paintings etc, they were very pleased with them, we inquired how his mother in law was & if the dose had done her good. he replied that it had done her "too good." we hardly know how to take that, but we gather the old lady is better

While we were having our last lesson the Coptic priest called. & I had to read some

161²

Arabic to him, he was inclined to be very critical & the schoolmaster was simply furious, he said it was very wonderful that we could read at all after so few lessons. Of course the Coptic priest is very jealous that we have the schoolmaster & not him to teach us & there is great rivalry between them. The schoolmaster completely squashed the Coptic priest by flourishing my very best Arabic writing under his nose. We rather wished our friend the Copt had chosen some other time to call, he is a very nice intelligent & well educated man & we do not wish to hurt his feelings - but he is so lousy. we always have to flit the chair he sits on. The Copts are so much dirtier than the Mohammedans.

We have only had two boats of tourists this year. The dragomans are very sad about it


One of our old guards caught ^{another} a horned viper the day before yesterday & brought it to us alive in his handkerchief. It was only a small

Arabic to him, he was inclined to be very critical & the schoolmaster was simply furious, he said it was very wonderful that we could read at all after so few lessons. Of course the Coptic priest is very jealous that we have the schoolmaster & not him to teach us & there is great rivalry^{sic} {rivalry} between them. The schoolmaster completely squashed the Coptic priest by flourishing my very best Arabic writing under his nose. We rather wished our friend the Copt had chosen some other time to call, he is a very nice intelligent & well educated man & we do not wish to hurt his feelings - but he is so lousy. we always have to flit the chair he sits on. the Copts are so much dirtier than the Mohammedans.

We have only had two boats of tourists this year. the dragomans are very sad about it


One of our old guards caught a <another> horned viper the day before yesterday & brought it to us alive in his handkerchief. it was only a small

3
161
161

one about 20 inches long, its fangs were as large as cats teeth & set right in front of its mouth & it could open its jaws at an angle like this []

It was very brave of the old man to catch it alive as it is the most venomous of all snakes. Of course in the winter they are very torpid & cannot move quickly. We told him to kill it quickly with a heavy stone. We were very relieved when it was dispatched though it was wonderful to see the thing alive & how it moved & how it tried to attack when he put it on the sand & ~~po~~ before crushing its head with a large block of limestone. He said it could not move quickly because it was cold. But all the same we were glad we were wearing high boots.

Amice joins me in love to you both.
Your affectionate daughter
Myrtle.

one about 20 inches long, its fangs were as large as cats^{sic} teeth & set right in front of its mouth, & it could open its jaws at an angle like this []

It was very brave of the old man to catch it alive as it is the most venomous of all snakes. Of course in the winter they are very torpid & cannot move quickly. We told him to kill it quickly with a heavy stone. We were very relieved when it was dispatched though it was wonderful to see the thing alive & how it moved & how it tried to attack when he put it on the sand & ~~po~~ before crushing its head with a large block of limestone. He said it could not move quickly because it was cold. But all the same we were glad we were wearing high boots

Amice joins me in love to you both.
Your affectionate daughter
Myrtle.