

## GLIMPSES OF ISLAM IN EGYPT.\*

AS SEEN BY MME. EMILIE HYACINTHE LOYSON.

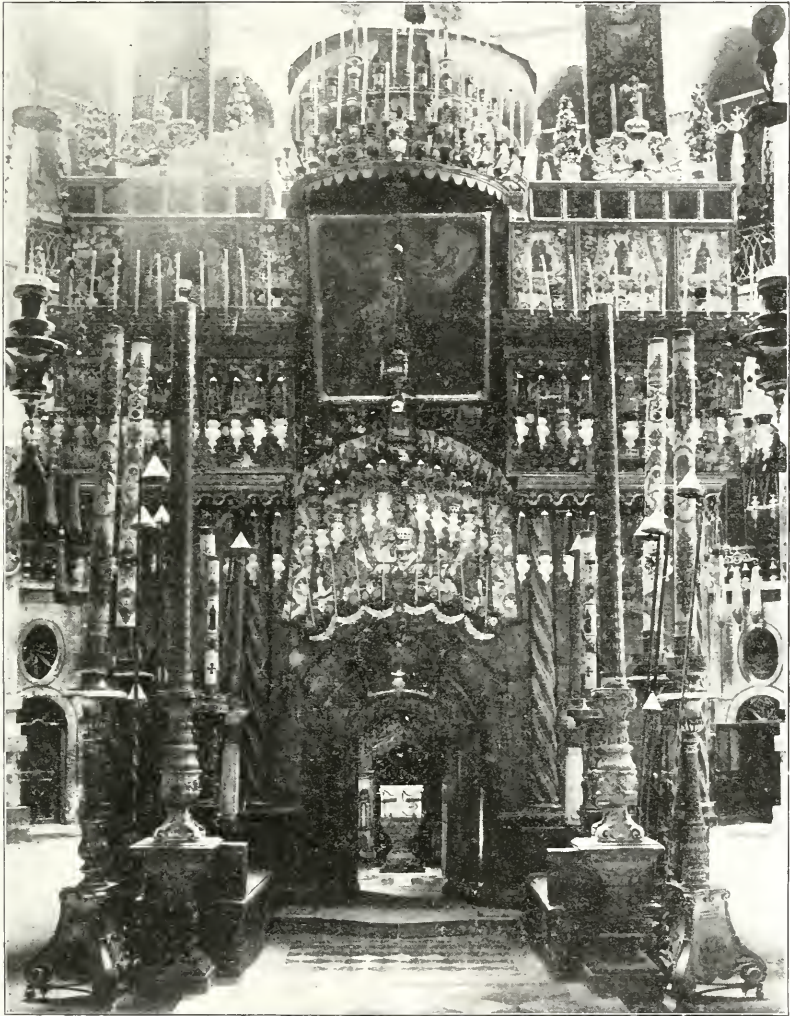
CAIRO.

A CORDIAL welcome awaited us in Cairo, from Christians and Moslems. For a fortnight we were the guests of Chefik Bey, Secretary to the Khedive, and were the recipients of a most charming hospitality. His residence is palatial, with all the comforts and conveniences of European life, yet is under the Moslem régime.

A suite of rooms were at our disposal, with French-speaking Arab servants. Our Egyptian host is a refined and educated gentleman, having studied in Paris and traveled extensively. He usually accompanied the Khedive on his European excursions. He is married to a beautiful and educated Turkish wife, and has a fine little son. To say more than this would be indiscreet, save that the harem, or wife's apartments, are luxurious, with heavy carved furniture in gilt, hangings of delicate pink and blue satin, and lace. The windows and galleries belonging to the harem are all closely latticed, as in all Moslem houses. It should be borne in mind that this seclusion of Mohammedan ladies is not imposed by their religion, or by their husbands, but by ancient custom; and they demand what to them is a sacred privilege—of living, and taking the air on their terraces or verandas, without the annoyance of being gazed at by curious neighbors or passing strangers;—and also, of walking or riding with their faces covered, without being obliged to suffer the vulgar stare or prying curiosity of the public. Their pride is in privacy and seclusion—the vanity of our women demands show and publicity. As to liberty, the Moslem wife in superior families, is not only free in her own domain, but she is a reigning queen, and by no means the abject slave we have been led to think. The husband

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religiously respects her privacy—and when lady visitors are announced he always withdraws, never presuming to intrude upon their presence, nor upon his wife's prerogative of receiving what ladies she likes.



INTERIOR OF THE COPTIC CATHEDRAL, CAIRO.

We enjoyed every possible attention in this intelligent and cultured Moslem family—receiving many visits, both Moslem and Christian. Every day His Excellency received, at his table, men

of learning, distinction, and piety: Arabs, Turks, and Europeans,—which afforded us the rare opportunity of studying Mussulmans in their own *milieu*. I was, unfortunately, the only lady present.



GRAND MOSQUE OF EL-AZHAR, CAIRO.

Here we made the acquaintance of the Sheik Ali-Youssef, the distinguished editor of the leading Arabic newspaper in Egypt, *El-Moayad*, one of the most notable leaders of the National party, a progressive mind, and promoter of all salutary reforms.

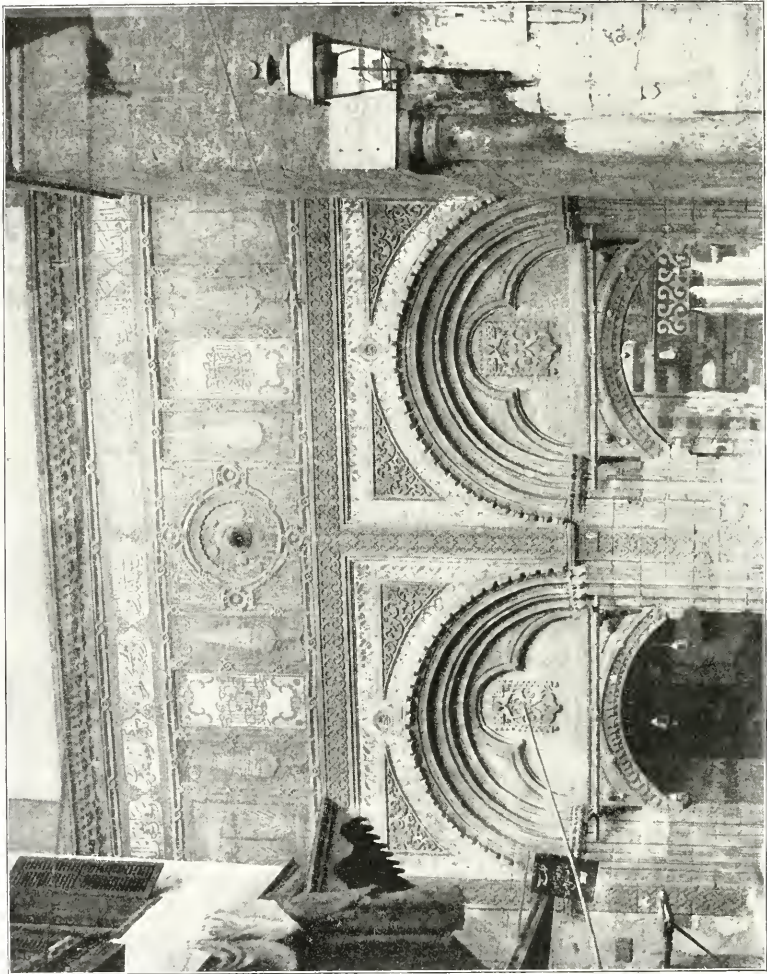
We had expected much from Cairo, but the first view and impression of this strange and unique city were overpowering. It was permanent phantasmagoria ;—very human but withal something super-human. The mind could not seize or comprehend it ; and it was only when we mounted the citadel, and rose high above its mixed and mottled humanity, and looked out over the marvelous metropolis, a forest of minarets and domes,—over the majestic Nile,—beyond the deserted city of the Tombs of the Khalifs, away to the distant Delta, with its deep, dark verdure,—out to the yellow desert belt—to the Arabian hills on the east, and the Lybian mountains on the west, which bind within this narrow strip of loam-land the richest granary in the world, and which compass the Pyramids and the horizon,—that we began to comprehend the majestic past and the marvelous present of Egypt.

Going about for the first two or three days among this heterogeneous mass of men—the mind is depressed and sometimes saddened. So many fellahs, barefooted and in tatters, so many women, all clad in black with long veils trailing in the dust, as if in mourning,—and they, too, barefooted ; carrying their children on hip or shoulder, and, besides, often carrying a great jar on the head, and with only an attempt at covering their faces from below the eyes with a shred of thick black veil, fastened with a gilt perpendicular cylinder on the forehead. At first I could bear this only for two or three hours at a time, when I was obliged to seek my quiet room and shut my eyes and rest my brain, while meditating on this mysterious conglomerate world. But as the days, and my observation, wore on, my impressions changed. I remarked with what alertness all these people moved about. There was evidently something to do, and they were doing it. The Egyptians were never a cheerful people, and how could they be to-day with the ponderous past, the solemn present, and the portentous future ! But in observing more closely, I perceived, especially among the fellahs, that there was a placid expression upon their faces which showed, if not content, something better :—faith. As I went deeper into their lives I found among them a relative happiness, certainly greater than with our European lower classes.

“Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.” But these unlettered people are not by any means untaught, and in what is most important in life :—humility, obedience to God and their rulers, (even if they do not like them—and therein lies a great virtue.)—resignation, and adoration. Here is certainly a grand basis for happiness. Life with them is certainly reduced to its preliminary prin-



ciples, moral, social, and religious:—to be born, to breathe warm, congenial air all the days of their lives, and to have just enough to eat to sustain them.—whether herbs, grain, or fruit,—with the free nutritious water of the Nile to drink and wherein to bathe—



ARABESQUE CARVING IN THE INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF EL-AZHAR.

and above all perfect liberty to worship God!—What else could they ask?

The fellah is not often hungry, though he is often in need of food; but when he feels the gnawing, and has nothing to eat, he goes to the Nile and drinks;—and if he is *very* hungry, he drinks a good deal, and takes a bath! and then goes on with his work—

refreshed, sustained, content, remembering the Arab proverb: "He who has tasted a crust of bread has tasted all the stars and all the heavens."

#### ON THE NILE.

Not even Cairo nor the Pyramids could satisfy us,—for our goal in this land was in Upper Egypt:—the tombs of the great kings whose gigantic genius and superhuman power builded these stupendous monuments. So, after a month, we started on this long longed-for voyage up the Nile.

During the first day of our voyage all were occupied with the Pyramids which stand along the western shore of the Nile;—sublime sentinels, keeping count of the passing generations, dynasties, and centuries.

Any description of mine of life on the Nile would be very feeble and futile,—for those who never travel know all about it; but this much I must say: I have traveled in many lands, and have breathed the balmy winters in the south of France, Algeria, Tunis, in Italy, Florida, and California,—but nothing approaches this marvelous climate of Egypt! The beatitude of breathing is only here.

Above all else, however, we are interested in the people:—this strange race who carry the history of the past in their lithe forms, graceful movements, and deep dark eyes,—but most of all in their resisting force and native intelligence. Brains keep to the front. There is ignorance, but no degeneracy.—At every landing they swarmed upon us, these poor fellahs—some timidly, others courageously, and many asking for backsheesh. They often encumbered the pier and the plank, hindering business affairs, yet they were never treated with harshness by the upper native class. Occasionally, however, an onslaught was made upon them by some one belonging to the boat, then they scattered in an instant, but returned again, unchanged in humor and demeanor.

There is an intermediate class who bring their wares and products to sell. Mixed with the Mussulmans, who are the large majority, there are almost always a number of Copts. In the larger towns there is a considerable and very respectable community of these native Christians, but as they are of the same race and customs, save in their religion, they are not outwardly distinguishable to strangers.

The principal commodities they bring for sale are long sugar canes of 12, 15, and 20 feet in length, and bread which resembles a thick, soft pancake, made of coarse ground wheat, slightly sifted

—which makes it very nutritive, healthy, and really excellent to the taste.

These gaunt, frugally-fed fellahs work all day long in the broiling sun, where a full-fed, muscular European workman would

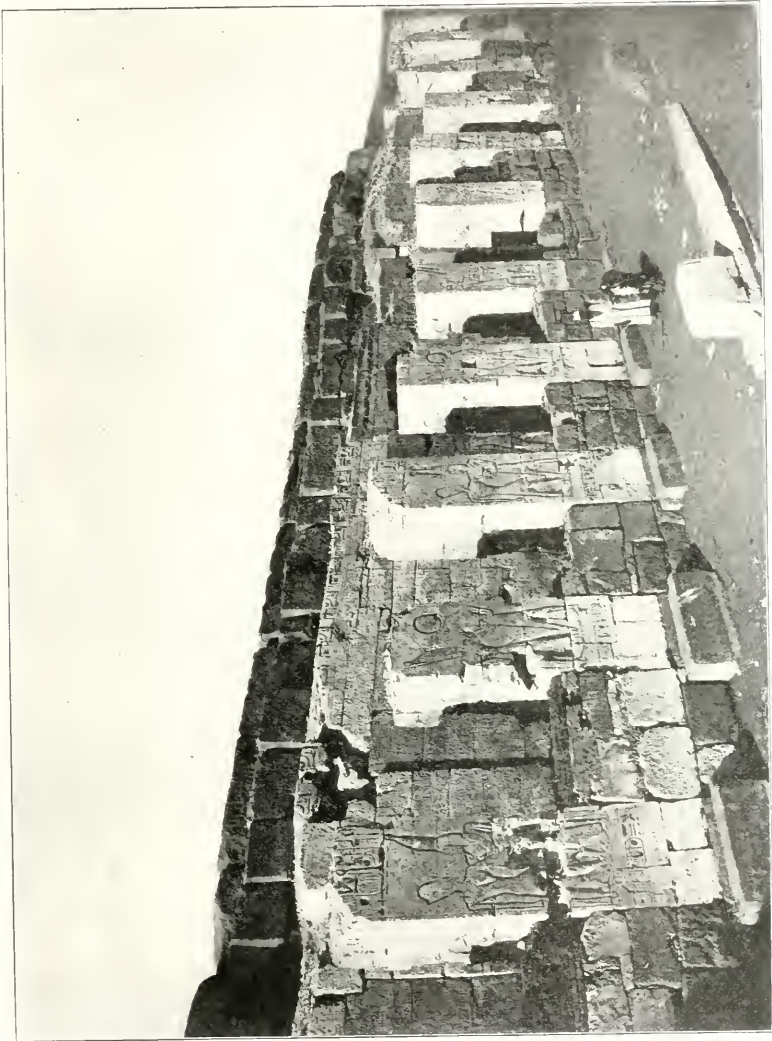


THE NILE AND THE PYRAMIDS.

die before noon. They receive for a day's work but a few farthings, and I think the average workman lives on about two sous a day, women on less, and the children, after they are weaned, live on air



and water and sunshine, with a few herbs and a little bread added thereto. The health of the natives is generally good, but all over Africa and the East, many are afflicted with ophthalmia, owing to the dust and want of care of the eyes. I have seen poor Mussul-



TEMPLE AT ABYDOS.

mans who make scrupulous ablutions and wash their mouths with vigor several times a day, but who, if they are inclined to this terrible malady, are afraid to wash their eyes thoroughly. They have the fatal prejudice that when the terrible disease shows itself, the



eyes must not be touched. But blindness is not considered such a disaster with them as with us; as they deem affliction rather a blessing and bear it with a cheerful resignation. Insanity denotes sanctity; and both blind and insane are treated with special care and affection. But it is surprising that there is no more efficacious means employed by the government to prevent and treat ophthalmic contagion. There is, however, a free English hospital at Luxor, recently built mainly by Cook & Sons, the celebrated tourists' agents.—a worthy thank-offering for their great wealth acquired on the Nile.

#### ASSOUAN.

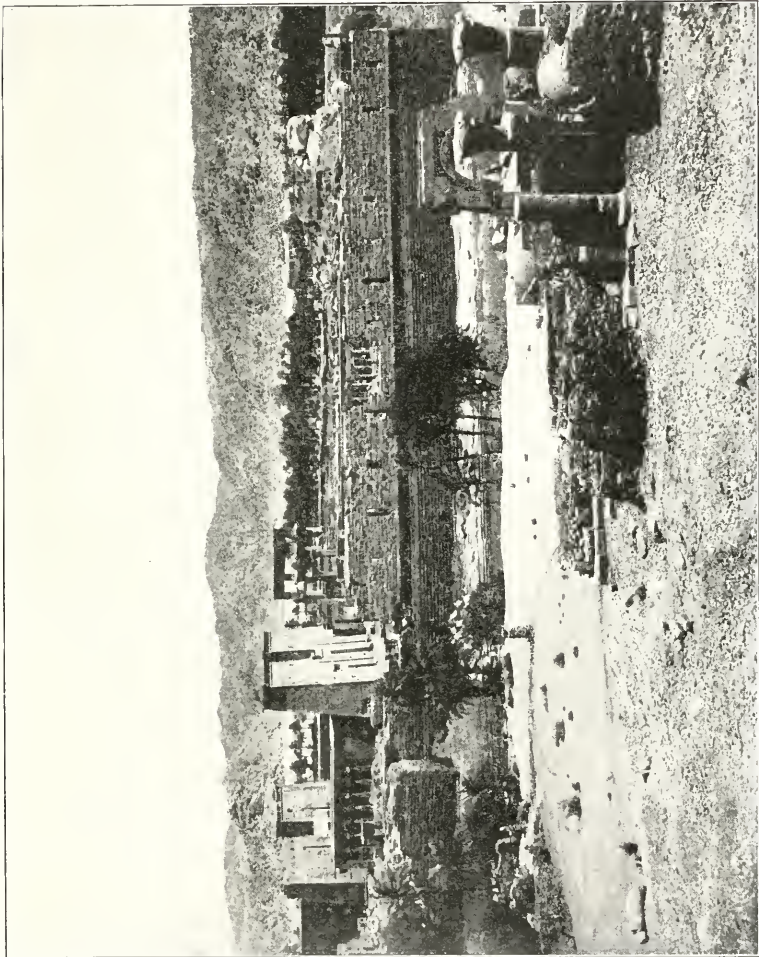
##### *A Sheik's Home.*

We arrived at Assouan, the capital of Upper Egypt, on the afternoon of the 28th of January, and it was as warm, if not as hot, as a July day in Paris. Lighter apparel was necessary as soon as we left the cool breeze of the river.

The city is on the high eastern bank of the Nile, and in its aspect reminds one very much of a young town on the banks of the upper Mississippi.

We were scarcely settled in the fine hotel, when we received the visit of the Governor of Upper Egypt, Colonel Aly Haïdar Bey, who proffered us his offices in every possible manner. His Excellency is a fine Egyptian gentleman,—intelligent and cultivated, having pursued his studies in Europe and particularly in Paris. The purity of his French, and his sympathetic manners almost led us to believe him a compatriot. Of course he is a Mussulman; but as with all educated and large-minded people, has nothing of fanaticism—though tenacious of his faith. Among other agreeable things, he brought us an invitation from the great Sheik, Bicher Bey, to visit him in his village out in the desert. This Sheik is the most important personage of the country,—as he is the chief or king of a great people,—or I should say of different tribes,—for he is the independent ruler of that immense nomadic people who occupy the vast desert region lying between the Nile and the Red Sea. Of recent years he has been induced to recognize the Egyptian government which has, in consequence, ennobled him with the title of Bey, and also bestowed upon him many privileges, in recognition of the peaceful and kindly relations which now exist between them. He is a power to be counted with, in religion and in war, and his people are devoted to him—knowing no other ruler. The well-known Bicheri are among his tribes.

Early the next morning after our arrival we saw a number of tall magnificent cream-colored camels approaching with saddles, caparisons, and attendants which indicated rank. At the same time the Governor sent to say that the Sheik, Bechir Bey, had asked him to accompany us, and had sent his camels to convey us to his resi-



PHILAE.

dence. These tribes are semi-nomadic and during the summer move about in the vast desert, and only come to their city for the winter. I said nothing, but I must confess that it was with no little trepidation that I mounted the ladder which took me to the top of the kneeling mountain. Ready and accomplished hands landed me in

what was more a high-backed chair than a saddle, but before I had time to reflect, much less to consent, there was a great lunge forward, and then another lunge backward, and we were in the upper air and *en route*. The Governor rode a superb Arab horse at my side. We passed through the sinuous streets out through the Moslem cemetery, and on into the desert, where I could descry no sign of a dwelling amidst the undulating sand. After about an hour's ride we came upon it unawares, so like the sand in color was the town-residence of the great chief. It was well built, in rectangular streets, with large houses of sunburnt brick, one story high. From my lofty seat I could see that the houses were mostly without roof, or half-roofed,—having large open courts within. At the entrance of the main street, we were met by an advance-guard of tall retainers who surrounded us with repeated salaams of welcome, and then we were soon amidst a score of still taller and more soldier-like men, and before I had quite time to take in the novel scene, a tall dark Arab—head and shoulders taller than them all—with a scepter in his hand,—appeared before my camel, which immediately at sight of him, fell upon its knees. It was the Sheik himself, and he forthwith assisted me to alight, and with such grace, strength, and dexterity as no lady could find outside the Arab world. The Governor had already alighted and stood by his side, and the formal presentation of Père Hyacinthe and myself took place. Salutations were reiterated, and then we were led within. We traversed court after court, with nothing but walls around, sand floors beneath, and blue sky overhead. At last we reached a vaster room which was partly roofed, and what an unexpected scene met us! Several steps led up to a high, carpeted floor around which were divans of rich upholstery and fauteuils, all gilded; and in the midst thereof a large round table covered with silken damask and laid with silver-ware and Sèvres China. At the back of this was a withdrawing room, furnished with massive Florentine carved and gold-gilt furniture, and mirrors from ceiling to floor—(mirrors are not usual in Moslem houses—which fact has perhaps a moral). Tea was awaiting our arrival and was served by the Sheik himself, with all the grace of a West-end Londoner to the manner of "tiffin" born. The large fauteuil opposite the Sheik was for the lady guest, my husband at his right, the Governor at mine. Though servants of all rank abound, they would be quite out of place and embarrassing with the Orientals, who deem it the highest honor to serve their guests themselves, becoming thereby according to Oriental Gospel, the servants indeed of those



who do them honor in accepting their hospitality. This is as sincere as it is dignified, and as gracefully done as by those whose prerogative they usurp; for according to our ideas, it is the rightful privilege of the lady of the house, to be the server of teas and the dispenser of indoor hospitalities.

In height, perfect build, and demeanor,—with fine straight Caucasian features and deep bronze complexion—amalgamated gold and steel—a keen black, intelligent eye, and benevolent, though austere, expression of the face;—this proud son of the desert, this great Moslem Sheik,—carried off the palm in high and noble dignity. He, like his body-guard, wore a long graceful black robe, like the Coptic cassock, open down the front, with long open sleeves, beneath which was worn fine black raiment, with a broad winding belt. His large turban was of black silk. In his hand he carried his *bâton* of authority, which represents alike the crook or crozier of the pastoral kings and the ruler's scepter. He spoke many dialects and, of course, the classic Arabic, but alas! no tongue which we could understand.

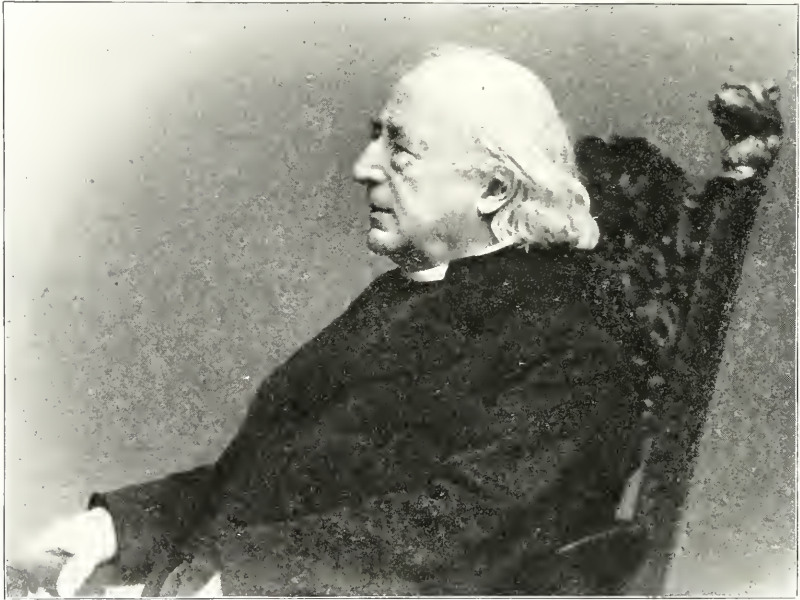
The Governor was our interpreter. For an hour we asked and replied to a multitude of questions,—the asking being certainly most on our side; and how admirably straight-forward, but respectful, without circumlocution or restraint, were the answers;—and what strange and valuable information he gave us. One of the most interesting subjects was that of ethnology, and when my husband asked whence his straight and fine features, deep bronze skin, and straight hair, he told us that their history—which is, of course, tradition, as these people have no literature save the Koran, which is common to all Islam—shows that their race was of European origin, probably Aryan:—"Our color comes from the sun," he explained, "Some of my people have straight hair and other tribes have crisp hair, but none are negroes."

In coming I had said to the Governor, "Very naturally the Sheik is married," to which he replied, "Certainly, as all Moslems marry;" and when I carried my curiosity a little further, I found that His Excellency knew absolutely nothing more, as inquiry is never made concerning harem life, even by the most intimate friends; and the kings of the desert have court protocol as rigorous as our sovereigns. So of course concerning this great Sheik who lives outside the more advanced and progressive Moslem life, there was little hope of hearing, and much less seeing anything of his mysterious shut-in-kingdom.

I had given a quiet signal to the Governor that we must not

abuse hospitality by remaining too long,—which signal, though given in a covered way, was seized at once by the quick eye of the Sheik, and he asked with perfect self-possession, if “Madame would not like to visit his Madame, who was waiting very anxiously to make my acquaintance.” Rarely have I been more surprised and never more gratified; and I was most happy to hear the waiting party spoken of in the singular.

Then, using the Governor for interpreter, I was obliged to tell him, and he to translate to the Sheik, all that I wished to say to his wife. For this I was forced to ask some questions—and the first



PÈRE HYACINTHE LOYSON.

of all as to her health and children:—and was assured touching the former with graceful salaams, and informed in the most easy manner concerning the latter:—that he had a son of four years old, his wife being now sixteen. The Sheik appeared to be about thirty-two.

Leaving the Governor and the Père to their conversation, the Sheik led me through a labyrinth of courts and corridors,—for the harem and the salemlik are always well separated (two distinct principalities in the great kingdom)—the same bare, sand-brick walls, and hard sand floors, with the same cerulean roof overhead. Not an object, nor a person was to be seen, save in one (was it

an augury?) a beautiful little lamb. Then through another door—and there she stood, on the covered dais:—a dream of beauty! white as milk with the faintest seashell blush of pink upon her cheeks and so transparent in complexion that the blue veins were easily traced upon her hands and broad finely developed forehead. She was evidently of pure Circassian, or Georgian blood; her type of beauty was pre-eminently intellectual. She stood in the middle of her throne-room to receive me like a reigning queen—with great dignity, yet with suave and graceful manner. With that mysterious and indescribable recognition which two sympathetic women possess in meeting for the first time, she and I simultaneously held out our hands and embraced each other, she kissing me on either shoulder, the mark of reverence for superior age, which, with the Oriental, is a first consideration. After repeated assurance of welcome, which I could easily understand, her husband began to explain my message. But to present the scene to the life, I must first say how she was dressed: She wore a long flowing soft blue muslin gown, the princess style, which is semi-adjusted and flowing full with a train—and, to my surprise she wore few ornaments; which proves that in the Orient, as in the Occident, real beauty and real distinction, as well as good taste, require few accessories. There was no henna upon her nails nor antimony about her eyes, whose lashes and eyebrows were jet black, as well as her wealth of hair, which was plaited in two massive braids, the classical Egyptian style which we see on its monuments, falling just in front of the ear—and almost to her knees; the back of the head and hair, enveloped in a pretty silken scarf, falling down the back. There was one very curious detail: just at the beginning of the straight parting of the hair, above the alabaster forehead, were woven in with infinite skill, small blue and golden beads, strung on each hair,—a little ornament, forming a sort of coronet.

And now began, in our respective and unintelligible tongues, yet perfectly understood, conversation. I was, however, struck by the changed, though manly attitude of the great Sheik,—which plainly showed that he was in the presence of his sovereign! And she was quite conscious of her sovereignty. Yet there was certainly a happy reign of mutual respect and love. After she had charged him with much to say to me, with her graceful gesture and pretty speech—we again embraced, and the Sheik and I returned to the salemlik, where, with great precision he carefully and most attentively,—as a prime minister would convey the orders of his ruler, recapitulated, through the Governor, all that his wife would have



me know. And what touched her most was my anxieties concerning the moral education of our sons in the fear of God. She was evidently as pleased as surprised that religion was our great preoccupation. And another thing which surprised her was,—and this the Sheik recounted with equal gravity as a matter of state or religion,—that I had not asked to see her jewelry and fine clothes, as it is currently believed by Moslem women that Christian women only wish to visit Oriental women to see their treasures and furbelows. I was certainly complimented by hearing that this little Moslem wife and sixteen-year-old mother, of a nomadic tribe of the African desert, had found me, an Anglo-Saxon, belonging to the highest civilization,—a serious, polite, and religious woman! Indeed I was never more flattered in my life! Such appreciation was well worth going for “down into Egypt,” “up the Nile,” and “out into the desert.” Whether she was born Mussulman, or Christian as most Circassians and Georgians are, I do not know; but I felt that I loved this fair little Moslem lady at first and only sight.

On taking our departure, I said to His Excellency, Bicher Bey, that my visit to him and the acquaintance of his wife, were among the most instructing and happy events of our long voyage. After his warmly expressed desire that we might come again to Upper Egypt, and visit him and his wife, I said: “Well, if God wills it, we will come again,—but if we are prevented by circumstance, and our advanced age, from seeing you again in this world,—we hope our son, whom God has given us, will meet your son some day,—but never on the battlefield! And though we may never meet on earth again, we feel certain that we are friends for life, and for eternity, and our sons will be friends, and also our peoples: yours wandering in the great deserts of Africa, and ours dwelling in the great cities and fertile gardens of Europe. They will gradually be drawn together by mutual needs, understanding and respect, and above all by the love of the brotherhood of the children of God!”

The Sheik, who was sitting on the opposite side of the table, hereupon rose and came to me, taking both my hands in his, pressing them warmly and in silence,—and with deep emotion, in which all present participated, presented me with his sceptre, saying, solemnly: “*We and our sons are friends for life—forever!*”

Then we made our adieux, and took our departure,—and as we crossed the court the Governor said to us: “Well, this is the first time I have ever seen tears in the eyes of an Arab!”

As we returned across the desert and through the ancient Moslem cemetery, which seemed like a city in ruins—almost buried in

the drifting sands, hundreds of people, particularly women and children, came flocking to salute the Governor and his Christian friends.—Thus ended one of the most interesting episodes of our travels—of our lives.

*People of the Desert.*

As in Christian lands there are beggars in Egypt; and even among these desert wastes there are those who ask for a “present,” (backsheesh) particularly little children; but it really seems here more of a fashion and a compliment paid to the traveler than a necessity. Many travelers willingly give to those beautiful little creatures, scarcely clothed,—yet most modest and respectful. We might send our children to dancing schools a score of years without arriving at even an imitation of the native grace and winsome ways of these little children of the desert! I must confess that I gave them no money—but something infinitely better,—quiet little conversations and such friendly counsel that the second day no little hands were held out in my vicinity, save to clasp mine—and afterwards kiss their own in token of respect—begging me to visit their mothers. Indeed the invitations were constant and pressing to go to the homes of the people, and frequently the women came out in the streets plucking and kissing my garments with entreaties to go in and visit them, which I often did. The embarrassment was the difficulty of conversation; but with these people, everything is simple. Though the sexes, except those of near kinship, are separated, there is no distrust of men on the part of women, or disrespect of women on the part of men. When I entered their houses, our dragoman, quick and intelligent, either found a near relative who spoke some language I could understand, or they spoke through the door—the dragoman standing with his face outward—translating for us. Simple and straight methods are always found for right proceedings, even under difficulties.

I shall never forget one dark, lone figure who stood afar off from the street within her door, beckoning me to come to her. She could not venture out, for she was a lone widow, and childless—and such must not go abroad. “But,” as she said, having heard of me, “she had been praying Allah every day to direct my steps to her desolate dwelling.” As I entered her humble home, she fell upon my neck and wept,—telling me of her loneliness—a rare circumstance in the Mohammedan world—for she was without relatives. But happily she was not without support, as are so many friendless Christian women. Her daily allowance, though small,

was sure. The anguish of her widowhood was all the keener because she was childless—and for this she was inconsolable. In going away, Hamid, my dragoman (who had stood at the door with his face outward) said to me in a comforting way: “Ah yes, she is very sad now, but when the wailing is over, the ‘wise women’ will find her a good husband and, perhaps God will give her children at last, for her great consolation,—certainly nothing could be better!”

Another most interesting visit was to a numerous family presided over by a blind grandmother whose occupation was the grinding of wheat between two millstones, the scriptural custom of 4000 years ago. She was surrounded by a cluster of little grandchildren and great-grandchildren, all of whom vied with each other in helping their venerable grandmother who seemed perfectly happy. In entering any house, though chairs are not used, it is marvelous with what alacrity a high seat was improvised for me, as it is everywhere known that Christian ladies do not sit on the floor. In some cases where I was expected a chair had been purchased or borrowed.

#### *In Ancient Quarries.*

The principal attraction at Assouan in the way of ruins or monuments, is the great quarry of granite from whence were cut those gigantic obelisks which, by spoliation of Egypt, adorn the cities of Europe and America,—and in whose climate they will soon crumble into ruin. Paris, London, New York, and Rome, have a great debt of restitution to make to Egypt, to history, and to the world. I hope the restitution will be willingly and loyally made when the time comes—and before it is too late.

One afternoon, through the sand, on our faithful donkey, we rode to visit the great quarry, accompanied by our good Hamid, and an escort of about a hundred—for we were obliged to let them follow us,—reluctantly at first, not understanding the honor paid us, (what stupid people we white folks are!) by that troupe of all colors and ages, even little tots, who had to be carried on the shoulders of their fathers, elder brothers, or neighbors. These pretty little *bambins* so carried, continually sent me kisses with their little dimpled hands. A few dark young girls of unmarried age joined in the procession, and both youths and old men vied with one another in walking next to me to hold my donkey's bridle and even to push and almost carry him forward. A cluster of the little fellahs clung to his tail. No one asked for backsheesh. They were acting as became body-guards of the national troops, with full appreciation of the responsibility of hospitality, and respect for the



lady left entirely to their care. For once in my life I was rid of our effete civilization, and simply reveled in the simplicity of natural manners!

I rode out far over the rolling waste of sand, among the rocks of granite, which come to the surface here,—stopping often to rest and hold conversation with my troops—I told them that they could



DONKEY-BOY'S SIESTA.

each ask me a question upon any subject they liked, and I would answer it. How they pressed in upon us!—the dragoman, donkey, and myself—but without the least importunity—all eager to question me. And what do you think was the burden of their inquiries? It was big rivers, mountains, the products of the soil, harvests, steam-engines, canals, the animals of different countries, snow,

soldiers, steamboats, etc., and almost every one expressed the desire to go home and live with us, forever and without wages! Not one asked me where they could best earn money,—and not a foolish question among them all. But what astonished and pleased them most was when I told them how we believed and prayed to the same God—to their Allah—and how, therefore, we were of the same family. Among these people of the desert, the nearest to nature, as well as among all Mussulmans of higher classes, it was very remarkable that above all other subjects, religion interested them most,—though they seldom, if ever, broached the subject first, and are, therefore, never intrusive nor given to discussion and less to any attempt of proselyting. I also remarked how little to them is this life—all their hope and confidence is in the life beyond. Everywhere I found a quick and intelligent conscience concerning all duties toward God.—We found no indifferent believers nor infidels among this people.

At last we reached the quarry and stood upon the great recumbent obelisk, three-quarters cut and polished, and fellow to the one which stands upon the *Place de la Concorde* in Paris. It lies obliquely horizontal, in a most difficult position for cutting, yet those ancient mathematicians—compared to whom we are but pigmy pupils—knew measurements of geometry and trigonometry as well as algebra and astronomy, and made no mistake in cutting or transporting these gigantic stones, or laying them one upon the other with the precision of the stars. The lifting of heavy stones without machinery is a lost art. Some vandal Christian conquerors (I was glad it was not Napoleon, for he destroyed enough in other lands, in all conscience!) have tried to cut this recumbent monarch in twain, but failed in time and tools.

In spite of the oblique position of the monster monolith, one can sit or walk from one end to the other. Being more than half out of the sand, it offered me a solid high platform for speaking to my followers, who had not ceased to beg me, through the dragoman, to “preach more” to them. Standing upon the great half-cut obelisk, with my dragoman beside me, translating sentence by sentence, I opened fire against theirs—the little fire which almost every one carried in his mouth. They were visibly disconcerted—for these simple people evidently feel that by smoking they give proof of their participation in our modes of life—the adoption of a higher culture, modern progress, etc., etc. I told them I had come from a distant country to breathe their delicious air, that I might be strengthened and cured, and then I asked them if it was right to attempt

to change the designs of Allah, to which all protested. Then I explained how this air, which all made so pure, sweet, and healthful, became offensive and harmful, not only to me, but to many others, by the nauseating fumes of tobacco. I had not half finished my opening remarks before every cigarette before me had vanished. Then I cautioned them not to imitate our bad habits and vices, particularly of drinking strong drinks, but to reprove them, and keep unswervingly to their simplicity of life and the rectitude of true believers. They were enthusiastic in their approbation, and when I had finished, the great majority pressed around me and declared they would smoke no more.

I hope you have kept your promise, my good fellahs! Perhaps I shall go and see, some day. . . . I know you will remember me—and I shall always remember you.