



THE FLOODED NILE, WITH THE COLOSSI OF MEMNON IN THE MIDDLE DISTANCE.

one was wafted back to Old Testament days, for, without a doubt, there was a man at work spreading on the bank a number of oblong cakes of mud—nothing more nor less than the famous Nile bricks, that would soon be baked hard in that intense, scorching sun.

Clusters of date palms raised their fruit-laden heads in all directions—near the towns, away in a great inland sea, or sheltering some isolated mosque. Blindfolded oxen paced slowly round and round under their shade, working the sakiyehs, or water-wheels, that pump the water from wells, and distribute it over the land. Away on the horizon the slanting masts and white sails of the ships located far as the position of the great river whose water was abroad over the land.

The Egyptian children are mostly very bright and pretty, but the poor little babies are almost eaten alive with flies, which their superstitious mothers will not drive away. I have seen a child's eyes so covered by sticking flies that it could not raise its poor little lids, and yet it seemed to feel no irritation. These flies, however, carry much disease with them, and what with the desert sandstorms and the perpetual plague of flies, many hundreds of Egyptians lose the sight of at least one eye. I never saw so many one-eyed folk in all the rest of my life as during the few weeks we spent in Egypt.

The little boys, where they come much in contact with Europeans, are as full of



A LOOK ON THE IRRIGATION CANAL.



THE APPROACH TO THE MAIN GATEWAY OF THE GREAT TEMPLE OF KARNAH.

cheeky confidence as it is possible to imagine them.

There was a young page boy at the Luxor Hotel, whose behaviour would have set the smartest of London "but-tons" thinking.

I was writing letters in the writing-room one night when Miss Pearce of Egyptian impudence came in and fussed around, making so much rattling of papers that I looked up to remonstrate with him. The moment I glanced at him he came over to me saying:

"Would the English lady like a lamp, it is very dark where she is writing."

I agreed that I would like a lamp, so off he flew, and was back with one in a moment. He placed it on the writing desk, but showed no signs of moving away.

"Did the English lady sleep well last night," he asked.

I answered that I had slept excellently, and so turned to my writing.

"Is that your husband, lady, you are with?" he next inquired.

"No," I answered, "it is my brother."

I was not a little surprised at the question, and looked at the boy, who was aged about eighteen, and was sitting half on the table, and swinging his shoulders about rather nervously.

"Have you a husband, lady?" he next asked.

"No," I replied.

"Oh!" said the boy, "hope lady will have beautiful husband some day."

"What is your name?" I asked him.

"Ahmed Abdulla. I am page boy here and I work for my mother and sister, who live in the village," he answered. "Has your gentleman brother a wife?" he continued at once.

"No, Abdulla," I answered.

"Oh! Hope your gentleman brother will have beautiful wife some day. Where do you live lady?" he went on again, gazing at me out of a half-squinting eye, with intense curiosity.

"Far away, Abdulla; you wouldn't know where it was if I told you, and I must write my letters now," I replied, hoping so to freeze him off.

But Abdulla was of a much more persevering nature than that. "You write many letters, lady. When you go away will you write a letter to me?"

"But can you read English?" I asked. "I cannot write Arabic, and if you cannot read English, what would be the good of writing you a letter?"

"My uncle reads English—he would read it to me," said the undaunted Abdulla.

"And who is your uncle?" I asked.

"The big hall porter," said Abdulla, with unmistakable pride.

I well remembered the big hall porter, and I did not like him, and I began to have visions of Abdulla and the hall porter surrounded by a crowd of gaping Arabs while the much read about the letter Abdulla had received from "the English lady," and I could see Abdulla's