

# Northern Messenger

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## 'A Land of Villages.'

(By Mrs. Chorley Hall, in Church Missionary Gleaner.)

Who that visits Egypt, even if he has merely just entered the land, can fail to be struck by the sight of village after village as the train passes on its journey from Alexandria to Cairo? I have often tried to count them, but had at last to give up in despair. If those seen on the journey were so many, how many were there hidden from view! It has been truly said that Egypt is a land of villages.

### A VISIT TO AN OUT-OF-THE-WAY VILLAGE.

Some years ago I had the privilege of going for a few days on the 'dahabiyeh, or house-boat, with Dr. and Mrs. Harpur, on their itinerating journey through some of these villages between Alexandria and Cairo.

We went to one a good way off from the canal, which we had to reach by donkey riding. The people were almost as wild as savages, indeed, I have never seen such a sight as those crowds of ignorant people who surrounded us, screaming and shouting. When we tried to tell them why we had come, and to give our gospel message, they only laughed and would not listen, and seemed afraid to ask us into their houses. They had never seen English ladies before, I should think, from the way in which they received us. We had at last to come sorrowfully away, feeling how little we had been able to accomplish that afternoon, and yet I doubt not, if we had been able to stay

## THE BOY 'BELONGING TO THE WATER-MELON.'

The villages are mostly reached, in the C.M.S. work, through the Medical Mission and hospital.

On our itinerating tour that I have just mentioned, Dr. Harpur went to a certain village and there saw a lad of about eighteen years of age who was very ill and needed a serious operation, of which the doctor must have told his parents. After some time had elapsed a group of 600 'fellaheen' was seen outside the hospital, one of whom was the boy who had been seen in the village.

He greeted us most eagerly, saying, 'I told them all I would come here or I would die at home. I wouldn't go to any other place than this.'

He was evidently a thoroughly spoilt child, though nearly a man in years. His parents and elder brothers and sisters had to give way to him in everything because he was ill. He came into the hospital and went through a most successful operation. We used to laugh and tell him that we could hardly believe he was ill at all.

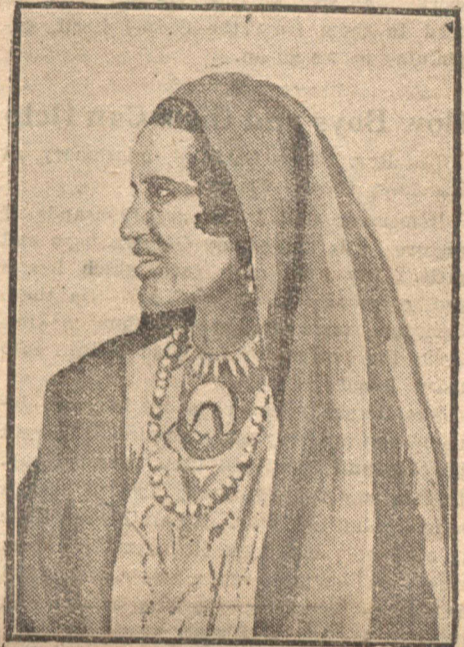
The second or third day after the operation he requested that he might have a large piece of water-melon, which was of course refused. He almost cried over the refusal, which had to be repeated over and over again. Milk he much objected to take, but gave in at last very meekly, much to the delight of his elder brother, who was sitting beside him, and who remarked, 'We could not have made him take it at home.' The boy left the hospital quite well.

Some years later another group of peo-

village had remembered us so affectionately, and that he sent others to be healed as he had been.

'YOU MAKE ALL THE PEOPLE CHRISTIANS.'

One of the catechists, Malam Athanasius, who has been a long time in Mission work



FELLAHEEN WOMAN.

in Old Cairo and the surrounding villages, was crossing a ferry and there met a man who knew a woman who had been in the hospital. She came from a village some way off.

After some conversation the man said, 'Your hospital is a very nice place and people get healed there, but we have one thing against it. You make all the people Christians.'

Malam Athanasius said that unfortunately this was not so.

'Oh, but it is,' persisted the man. 'A woman from our village went there. She was a very good Moslem when she went, and now that she has come back to her home she will not pray the Moslem prayers, and is always talking about Jesus, the Messiah.'

### NO REGULAR ITINERATING MISSIONARY.

How one longs and prays that more work can be done among these simple, ignorant villagers scattered all over Egypt. We know so many here and there who would welcome most gladly the Gospel messenger who could settle amongst them, but we are so few in comparison with the great need. Each one has his or her work in hospital, dispensary, or school, and so no regularly appointed itinerant missionary is working in connection with the C.M.S. in Egypt, this land of villages which can only properly be reached in this way. Will not some pray to be sent for this especial work?

### EMBARRASSING HOSPITALITY.

Their first idea is usually to offer hospitality. Many are the unpalatable things forced upon the guests, which out of fear



A NILE VILLAGE, BEDRASHAIN.

in the neighborhood and come and visit there often, we should soon have found friends in that village.

When people are as ignorant as we often find them in these villages, more than one flying visit is needed. It ought to be a continual 'line upon line, precept upon precept,' to do real good.

ple stood on the hospital steps, telling us that Mohammed sent us his best salaams.

'And who is Mohammed?' we asked.

'Don't you remember the boy "belonging to the water-melon?"' they replied, pleased with themselves for remembering the joke.

Indeed we did remember, and were so glad to know that the boy from that distant