

but Robin intended to stay at Port Said for forty-eight hours, as he wished to make an expedition to one of the islands of Lake Menzaleh on the following day. He therefore now bade good-bye to the three of them, and promised to come out on his first free afternoon to see them at Heliopolis, which is just outside Cairo.

"Good-bye," said Mrs. Jones, squeezing his hand more intimately, perhaps, than the proprieties would sanction; "I am sure we are going to be friends."

"Good-bye, old chap," said Blake. "You know, I feel somehow that we three are linked together in some mysterious way."

"Delighted, I'm sure," remarked Robin, busy with their baggage; and it was not till later that he realized what indifference on his part the words must have seemed to indicate.

He watched them as they were rowed ashore, seated amidst a pile of baggage. Colonel Winterbottom, white-haired and red-faced, was wearing a very new sun-helmet, which seemed somewhat out of place in mid-winter, when the Egyptian sea-coast is enjoying weather not unlike the best days of an English April. Mrs. Jones wore a large picture-hat, from which flowed yards of pale-blue veiling. She was dressed in a summery sort of costume and carried a parasol, which she waved merrily to Robin, until, having inadvertently smitten the burly, red-jerseyed oarsman across his brown face, she was persuaded to make her salutations with her white-gloved hand instead. Beside her sat Augustus Blake, a stiff, upright figure in grey flannels, with a green Homburg hat, several sizes too small for him, placed gaily upon the dome of his bald head. Behind them stood Cook's agent in his smart blue uniform, one hand on the tiller and the other wildly gesticulating to the surrounding craft; while on top of the pile of baggage sat another