



REFUGEES EMBARKING ON THE BRITISH VESSELS IN ALEXANDRIA HARBOUR.

A SOLDIER'S WIFE.

On my second expedition to Kordofan, one of the soldiers of my escort, rejoicing in the name of Abou-la-nane, came to me on the eve of our departure from Cairo and stated that he had married a wife from a village far up the Nile. Would I permit him to take his wife on the boat and leave her at her village with her relatives! otherwise she would starve from misery in Cairo. This was probably a subterfuge, but I consented. Arriving at the village after several days, Abou-la-nane came and said that all his wife's relations were dead, and if she was left there she would starve more certainly than in Cairo. "Would his Excellency the Bey," (that was myself) "permit him to take her along!" I told him that if he did she would certainly die in the desert from the hard-

ships we would have to encounter, and which none but strong men could hope to resist. But he was a good casuist, this son of Islam, and he argued that she would certainly die of want in her village, but she might survive in the desert. Finally he gained his point. The fact is, she was a useful servant to him, as are all wives of the lower class. She cooked for him, brought fuel and water, kept his clothes in order, as well as the little shelter tent, which he had blarneyed the Arab quartermaster to let him have for their separate establishment. From my observation they got along as well as most couples in their rank of life. When she displeased him he used to administer a gentle correction, but it was done in a paternal way, and not at all in that brutal style of wife-punishing that is too often seen in Christian lands. One night at Dongola, on the Upper

Nile, after retreat, the whole camp were startled by the wails and moanings of Hafizah, the soldier's wife. He had become jealous of the attentions of the sergeant of artillery, and in a fit of rage he pronounced the dread sentence: "*Entee talteekah beetalateh* — thou divorced thrice." She published her woe to the world, and invoked all the curses of Allah and his prophet on her husband's father, and his father's father, and all his forefathers to the remotest generation, according to the retrospective-Arab manner of cursing in the oblique cases, never like the Saxon who blanks your eyes and blanks your soul with the most refreshing directness. "Might the dogs defile his father's grave for bringing her so far from home to divorce her in a strange land and leave her to perish!" By the time morning had come it repented Abou-la-nane the having divorced his

Hafizah. But what was to be done? The sentence was irrevocable. Fortunately, there were no witnesses, and he stoutly denied having used the triple formula, only the simple one. So they went before the Cadi and got married again, and everything was altogether lovely. I may as well state here that my kind treatment of Abou-la-nane and his wife was "bread cast on the waters." When in the heart of Kordofan, soldiers and servants were dying or prostrated by fevers, and I was at the point of death, this little weak, puny woman was never sick a day, and did all the cooking and washing at head-quarters when no one else could be found to do it. When I was transported back to Cairo, Abou-la-nane was detailed as one of my escort, and he returned safely to Cairo with his wife. — *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society.*