

On January 8th, we arrived at Alexandria after anchoring outside the harbour all night so the Egyptians wouldn't mistake us for Israelia and give us too warm a welcome. We were only there for three hours and couldn't go ashore but the whole city came out to the ship so I don't think we missed too much. They were sure a weird looking bunch - dressed in nightshirts and turbans or baggy pants with green sashes around their middle and red fezs holding their ears in place. They were a suspicious bunch and soldiers with rifles patrolled the decks all the time we were there. Dozens of them set up shop on deck but as I had spent all my money in New York, all I could do was drool. They unloaded the cargo onto barges and this simple operation seemed to require the ultimate in arguing and waving of fists. When the stevedores stopped for breath, the travelling salesman took up the chorus so there were varying degrees of bedlam all the time we were there. An argument started between the Egyptians and the Indian crew and every minute I expected to see them produce cutlasses and carve each others ears off but the only casualty was one fierce-looking guy who got his turban knocked off after thumbing his nose at one of the Indians. We couldn't see much of the city except for a few palm trees and Farouk's palace facing the Mediterranean and well supplied with pointed domes and minarets. At noon, a trumpet sounded from one of these and all the cursing stopped while they faced the East and said their prayers.

The following morning we were at Port Said and here we finally got ashore for a few hours after a violent argument with the military police who wanted us to pay for the privilege of being allowed to pass them to get down the gang-plank. We won the argument because we couldn't understand Egyptian and didn't know what we were arguing about. It's tough trying to fight with anyone who doesn't fight back so they gave up and we found out afterwards what it was all about. Port Said is a small place but quite pretty with striped buildings with tiers of balconies and lots of palm trees. As soon as we stepped on shore, we were surrounded by street venders shoving their wares under our noses and yakking at the top of their voices. The racket attracted others half a mile away and soon we couldn't move because of the crowd so escaped by hiring a horse-drawn carriage driven by a Spaniard who said his name was Maurice and that the horse was Jim Palooka. We jogged along through the narrow streets holding our noses to keep out the stinks. Women were dumping garbage and pails of water from the balconies but they were polite and waited

until we were almost past before dumping them so we were only moderately splashed. I don't know why they bother to build houses because everyone lives in the streets, eating meals, bathing babies, getting haircuts and teeth pulled. There were bazaars everywhere selling queer-looking foods and clothing. The women were dressed all in black with veils covering their faces except for two little port-holes so they could see where they were going. It's impossible to describe these places so I won't even try and besides some of it isn't printable.

That afternoon, we headed into the Suez Canal which looked like any other canal except that there was nothing but desert as far as we could see. We saw several camel caravans and occasionally an Arab tent village, barges being pulled by ropes by gangs of men walking along the shore. The sunset was gorgeous with smoke drifting across the sand dunes from evening cooking fires in the villages. At one point there is a double canal so ships going in opposite directions can pass. Intervening sand dunes hide the other canal so it appears as if the ships were just gliding across the desert.

The next day we were in the Gulf of Suez with more desert and mountains on either side. We passed Mount Sinai about noon. At this point, summer arrived overnight and we shed our winter clothes and got into shorts. All through the Red Sea we spent the time acquiring suntans and occasionally stirring ourselves long enough to play deck tennis or quoits or shuffleboard. We spent the rest of the time watching the sharks, porpoises, flying fish, and whales. After dark, we stayed on deck watching the phosphorus shining in the water.

Late in the afternoon of the 13th, we arrived at Aden and were there for four days. It's an interesting place to visit but I'd hate to live there for any length of time. The town is perched on the sides of an extinct volcano and, as the ground is solidified lava, there is scarcely a tree or blade of grass. We rented a car and drove up the side of the volcano and then into the crater where we visited the Queen of Sheba water reservoirs; then out into the desert past camel caravans bringing things to market; past miles of salt mills where the sea water is pumped into shallow trenches, allowed to evaporate and the salt scooped up; to several Arab villages; to an oasis in the desert where we crossed the border into Saudi-Arabia and saw a beautiful white palace out in the middle of the sand; and finally the oil refineries. Another day we got a car and went to a Bri-