

Ismailia, on its shores. This town rose like an exhilaration from the desert, with the opening of the Suez Canal—hotels, gardens and villas, with ambitious squares and streets. It now has an air of dilapidation. Here we took passage on the tiny steamer for the sail to Port Said. It was so crowded with tourists that there was hardly room to move on its narrow decks. The sail through the canal is extremely monotonous. In one place at the height of land, fifty-two feet above the sea, a cutting, eighty-two feet deep, had to be made, and over eighteen million cubic yards to be removed, by the labours of twenty thousand fellaheen. There is not much to be seen except high banks of yellow sand, with here and there a glimpse of the desert. We passed numerous dredges of enormous size, with iron spouts, about two hundred and thirty feet long, by which the excavated sand is conveyed far beyond the raised bank of the canal. I was surprised not to see more shipping. We only passed, in the whole afternoon, some half dozen steamers, huge hulks, forging slowly along; but it looked rather odd to see, around a bend in the canal, their red funnels and lofty masts sailing apparently through the desert.



THE HEAD OF SETI I.

It was dusk when we reached Port Said, a small, busy, but very wicked town, with a strange mingling of the East and West, and with a polyglot population of the many races of the Levant. It was full of tourists, waiting for steamers for Jaffa, Alexandria, Constantinople, Brindisi and other ports.

A conspicuous feature of the harbour is the enormous concrete piers, running out into deep water, one a mile, and the other a mile and a half. These were made by huge blocks of concrete, weighing twenty tons each, manufactured of seven parts of desert sand and one part of hydraulic lime. Of these, twenty-five thousand were required. A lighthouse, one hundred and sixty-four feet high, one of the largest in the world, rises here. Its electric lights are visible twenty-four miles distant.

Next morning, a few hours thoroughly exhausted the sights of the town, with its squalid Arab quarter, and its wooden, brick and stucco, shabby-genteel buildings, conspicuous among which are the consulates of every maritime nation. In the afternoon, we went on board the Austrian Lloyds steamer, and as we leaned over the taff rail the low coast of Egypt became a dim line, and soon sank beneath the horizon.