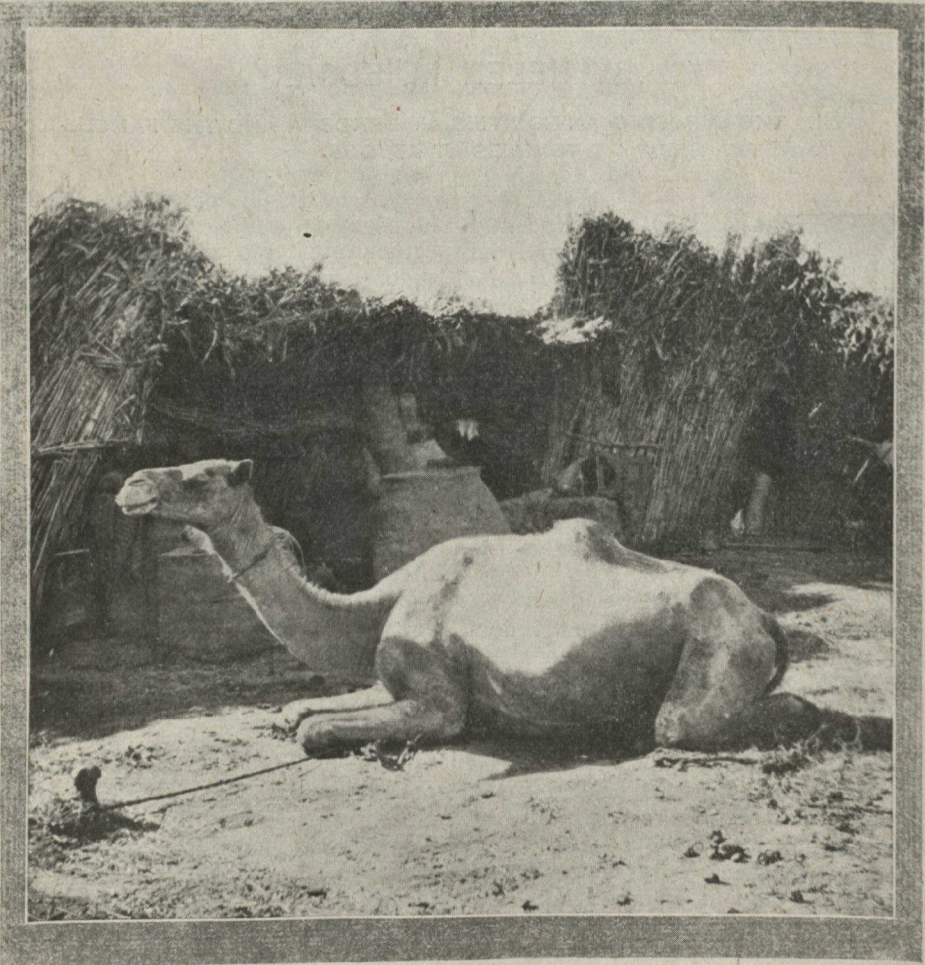


and our audience of fifteen squatted in a semi-circle in front of us, I felt that the combined spears of Achmet and Mohammed would not be sufficient defence if our worshippers got bored with the performance and decided to give us premature burial in a twelfth dynasty tomb.

We rode home towards sunset, a time when Egypt glows with so much colour that its beauty makes one speechless. Harvesting had begun. Flocks with Arab herdsmen gleaned the fruitful remains, and low-pitched tents, or rather wind-guards of sugar-cane, were scattered about, their

owners looking much as we imagine Abraham did of old surrounded by his family and flocks and herds. Camels lay before the entrance of one dwelling, and buffalo calves and long-fleeced sheep and longer-eared goats cropped leisurely their evening meal. My donkey, excited by so much animal life, kept up a braying acquaintance with all his friends till we reached the *Dodo* and dinner.

March 16th.—To-day we made some progress before the wind landed us, this time, on a sandy waste whose only virtue lay in the fact that it was near Guft, where Abderachman, our



A sugar-cane wind-break.