

short twilight was succeeded by the swift tropical darkness. All too soon good-bye had to be said; the anchor was raised, and we were actually drifting slowly along under our head canvas before our friends took their departure. It was a lovely evening, with a light fair breeze, and although there appeared hardly any wind, it was wonderful how swiftly we crept out of the harbour, and, as sail after sail was spread, how rapidly we glided past the land.

*Tuesday, April 17th.*—About eleven o'clock we passed the island of Perim, a most desolate-looking place. To pass it we sailed through the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, or "Gate of Tears," thus called on account of the numerous wrecks which took place there in former years. Once through the straits we were fairly in the Red Sea. The colour of the Red Sea is certainly the bluest of ultramarines. In the afternoon the town of Mocha Yamen, celebrated alike for its breed of Arab horses and its coffee, was visible from the masthead. It is a large white town, full of cupolas and minarets, surrounded with green as far as irrigation extends, and looking like a pearl set in emeralds on the margin of the deep blue sea against a background of red and yellow sand-mountains.

*Thursday, April 19th.*—We passed Suakim to-day, the port of Nubia. It is about 275 miles, or 25 days' camel-journey, from thence to Berber on the Nile. The heat is intense, and we all sleep on deck at night; the sunrises and the sunsets are magnificent.

*Saturday, April 21st.*—Hotter and still hotter every day, says the thermometer, and so we say also. This being Muriel's fifth birthday, Mabelle and the doctor and the men have been arranging a surprise for her all day, and none of us were allowed to go on the port side of the deck, but after dinner we were taken to a hastily fitted up stage, very prettily decorated with flags and Japanese lanterns. On a throne covered with the Union Jack, Muriel was seated, the two pugs being on footstools on either side of her to represent lions *couchant*. Some of the men had blackened their faces, and gave us a really very excellent Christy Minstrel entertainment, in which undreamed of talent came to light.

*Sunday, April, 22nd.*—Still too hot for service in the saloon, and it was therefore held on deck. While we were at lunch, the