

yellowish houses having the same clean look the streets have. One would naturally expect to see nice looking people, but that is not the case. They are the very picture of dirt and poverty. Except the soldiers and other English people, you see little else than priests and beggars. In a population of 40,000 there are 300 priests. We were in St. John's Cathedral, not a very grand looking building on the outside, but the carving and the sculpturing in the inside were most exquisite. Every bit of the floor even, was artistically inlaid with inscribed precious stones. They have two organs and a grand piano; images, of course, innumerable. What I admired most, of all the things I saw in the town, was their beautiful flowers. It seemed to be the season for roses; but, I suppose, it is always so. I noticed the Cactus in their gardens, grown into a tall bushy tree.

We have not been ashore in Alexandria yet, but if I am to judge of it by what I can see from my cabin window, it is very delightful. The Palace of the Pasha is right before me, and a grand looking affair it is. It is an immense building, pure white, with a green iron railing round it, and is built so near the water's edge that I can see the spray dashing up over the steps leading to the front entrances. There seem to be lovely gardens about it, and I am sure that, in this particular instance, distance does not lend enchantment to the view. I can see his bath-house, too—much finer than the generality of dwelling houses. His beautiful yacht is lying beside us in the harbour. Both it and the palace are said to be fitted up in the most gorgeous French style. Our ship has been crowded with Arabs all day, carrying out the baggage and mails. They are continually quarrelling and fighting among themselves. They are very dirty-looking creatures.

December 9.—Since writing the above, we have been ashore, and, I can assure you, the beauty I saw in the place from my window entirely vanished from my view, when I found myself on its dirty narrow streets. It is said to be the most European city in the East; but, if it is, I am sure I cannot imagine what the other cities are like. Its filthy streets are crowded with a mixed swarm of Arabs, Jews, Turks, Greeks, Syrians, Arabians, Abyssinians, etc., each wearing his own fantastic style of dress, and jabbering with all his might. The only comfort in going ashore is to have a party of five or six, the gentlemen being careful not to leave their walking canes behind them. We could hear the noise of voices long before we got to the shore; and when we landed, such a fight as to whose donkeys we should take, or whose boat should take us back to our ship, and who should be employed as our guide to take

us through the city! This, with their never-ceasing cry of Backsheesch, makes a walk in the town anything but a comfortable one. Mr. M. went ashore alone yesterday, and felt very thankful when he got back to the ship safe and sound. To-day there were six of us, all gentlemen but myself, so I felt quite safe. There are, however, objects of great interest to be seen here, such as Pompey's Pillar, Cleopatra's needle; and, after a drive of 24 miles in the cars, you come to Cairo, where you see the famous old Pyramids of Egypt.

Dec. 15th.—When I began writing this I intended to mail it in Alexandria, but was too late for the mail. We left the Pera Saturday evening at 5 o'clock, a steamer calling for us to take us to the railway station. After waiting there until 8—for they have no idea of being up to time in Egypt—we bade adieu to Alexandria, crossed the desert, and, at 8 the following morning, got into Suez, feeling pretty tired and sleepy. The first few miles we were driving along the banks of the Nile. It looked very beautiful, and where the banks were lined with orange and palm, perfuming the air, it seemed almost like fairy land. The greater part of the journey, however, was very monotonous, and except at the stations, two of which afforded refreshments for any who wanted it, there was nothing to be seen but waves of sand. Suez is an odd looking place, but likely to be of importance at some future day. The native huts are ugly looking affairs, but, I think, the most use they make of them is to cook in. They generally sleep outside, and, as we passed on, we could see them raise up their heads out of their cloaks every here and there to look at us. A favourite resort of theirs seemed to be a number of old vessels thrown on shore at the head of the Gulf. Whenever we got to the depot, the familiar cry of Backsheesch began. We were disappointed to find our ship, the *Pekin*, was stuck in the canal, and we had orders to go to the Tanjore, belonging also to the P. & O. Co. We washed off the sand of the desert, had a good breakfast, took a few hours' sleep, and at 4 p. m. our vessel was ready to receive us. She is a magnificent vessel of 3,777 tons, and 600 horse-power—quite new and fitted up in the best style; goes at a rate of 12½ knots an hour without sails. Her cabins are quite large enough to be comfortable.

We are now within the tropic sailing down the Red Sea. It is excessively hot. Mr. M. does not mind the heat at all, but I am almost melting. On the 13th we passed Mounts Sinai and Horeb. It seemed hard to realize that they were really the very mountains we read of in the Bible, and that this is the very Sea in which Pharaoh and his host met their doom. There are two