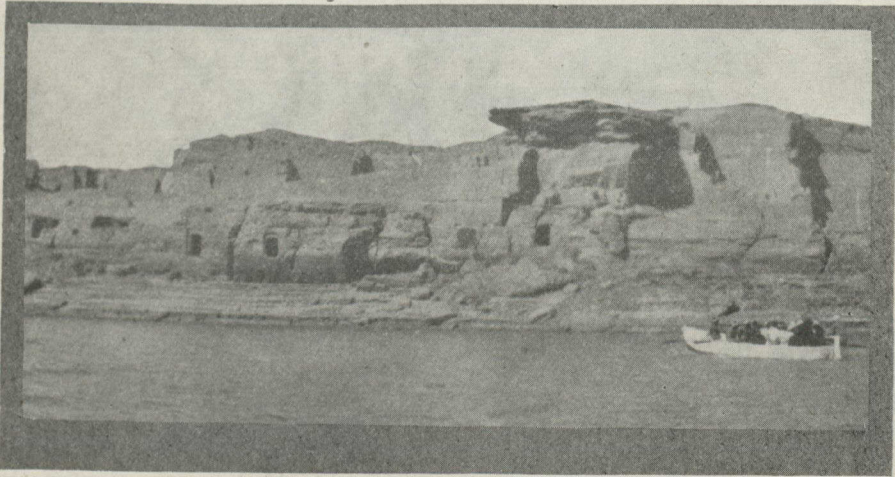


Dahabeah Dodo,
Sixty-five miles from Cairo,
January 28th.

We have now had four days, I was going to say straight sailing, but when I consider that three collisions have already taken place I can scarcely call our journey a direct one. The day we passed the second bridge initiated us into Egyptian seamanship.

We rested for the night near Gizeh and continued our journey with a light wind about 11.30 on the 26th. It was delicious, the air balmy, the awnings toning the sun's rays to just a genial warmth. We passed old palaces with sinister staircases leading to the river's brink, and over which many a sack had been carried with its human freight and sent on its unwilling journey to the sea. Nests of villages

captain, who calls on Allah with uplifted hands and lets the ropes look after themselves. Our second night we rested under a most lovely grove of palms, through which the full moon played hide-and-seek. We dined literally by the light of the moon, for the awning was taken off the shore side and we sheltered ourselves behind the other two and enjoyed the view as well as a very good dinner. Afterwards we wandered through the grove and towards an inland village, but did not attempt to enter, as C. said it would not be safe at that time of night. In the morning the place looked even more beautiful, for added to the scenery was the human interest of watching all the women of the village carrying their huge jars, poised with perfect grace on their heads, to the river to fill and incidentally do their washing.



Some of the Countless rifled tombs along the Nile

with low stone or mud buildings were linked together by the never-ceasing journey of laden camels, slow-moving buffalo and veiled and fluttering figures, all silhouetted against the saffron sky. This "frieze" is broken from time to time by a "sakiyeh" with a blindfolded buffalo walking forever round and round. Day and night the wheel is turned and the clay pots dip and rise with soothing monotony. Palm trees, graceful and serene, group themselves at every available spot. To our left stretches the Arabian desert bounded by great limestone cliffs, which we can see pierced by the openings of countless rifled tombs. To our right the Libyan waste is spread, but the immediate bank is green and bountiful with crops of wheat and sugar-cane.

Our second collision occurred rhythmically on our second day, and was a mere trifle, but shook our confidence in our Berberee

Camels came laden with sugar-cane which gave them an ostrich-like appearance, and were unloaded with many groans and snorts of contempt, only to be reloaded with large panniers of Nile mud. In isolated spots stood solemn figures with their best garment spread out before them, kneeling, and smiting the ground from time to time with their heads. This praying seemed to occupy a large part of the native time. Our crew are great adepts, and generally choose the top of the fore-castle (or kitchen) to perform their rites. On the palm grove at night, being full moon, we were entertained by an elaborate ceremony, the crew squatting round their Rais and acting chorus to his elaborate compliments addressed to the sky.

Our third day was heavenly. A light breeze had borne us safe and sound to another moon-lit anchorage, over which the