

almost household pets. A plum pudding was our dignified sweet. As we sipped our Turkish coffee in the luxurious half-hour that followed, we heard great shuffling of feet outside the dining-room door (for privacy's sake we always dined below when in port), and Abderachman and Mohammed entered, supporting the apparently fainting form of Abdullah, our smart "laundry maid". His gallant turban was all askew and his "Horus" lock in which he took so much pride lay limp and curlless on his cheek. We were all properly horrified at the spectacle, but a merry twinkle in the dark eye of Abderachman gave us hope that this scene was not as tragic as it might appear. After a dramatic pause Abdullah feebly raised his head and in the faintest of voices recited an appalling domestic tragedy. He spared us no details of the brutal murder of his only and beloved wife and week-old daughter at the hands of his brother whom he had trusted to be her protector. Had we not remembered that it was only a few short weeks before that leave had been granted him to visit his wife and new-born son, we might have believed his story, so anguished was his state, such real tears coursed down his cheeks.

The procession retired in the same order, and then Abderachman was summoned to give his version of the "play". It seems Abdullah had met an acquaintance in the bazaar who had offered him a slightly higher wage than his contract with us allowed, therefore he must make an appeal to us for leave of absence and full pay. This C. could not grant, for our crew was now reduced to a minimum, and there were yet many miles to go before the *Dodo* reached her final anchorage. The judgment having been pronounced, it was conveyed by Abderachman to the suppliant, who received it with a groan, flinging himself on deck and writhing in agony. I was glad to hear later that complete recovery occurred at the end of half an hour;

and domestic sorrow, having served no useful end, was laid quietly aside.

It was practically over Abdullah's prostrate body that we had to step as we left the *Dodo* on our way to the railway station. We were quite a solemn procession, for most of the crew accompanied us, not, I fear, so much in sorrow as in the hope that P's generosity would burgeon forth in a second dole of bakshish. Suffragi alone was missing. His joy at becoming the owner of P's khaki outfit, five sizes too large for him, paralyzed both speech and action for some time.

Our farewells were short, for our train was just leaving. A wave of the hand and a promise to write, inadequately conveyed all our regrets for breaking the chain of happy days and experiences together.

March 22nd.—We were a very dusty and tired couple when we reached Cairo early this morning. The *Dodo's* uncertain methods had made it impossible to engage a compartment in advance, so we were considered to be lucky in finding an empty second-class one. The hard wooden ledges on which we tried to sleep had a Procrustean quality that racked every bone in our bodies.

Late in the afternoon we were sufficiently repaired in mind and body to visit the mosque of el Azhar, the great Mohammedan University where the Faith gathers its students from every quarter of the world. We slipped our feet into large felt shoes before we ventured into the enormous courtyard with its 140 pillars, each a centre of a group of students who swayed their heads while reciting in a monotonous tone verses and chapters of the Koran. The students numbered between six and seven thousand. The volume of sound was considerable, although not more than two thousand were gathered in this hall of learning. Our examination of this vast building was difficult, for my felt shoes kept slipping off, and not being allowed to desecrate the pavement with a French heel I had to make frequent stork-like pauses