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DONOVAN PASHA AND SOME PEOPLE OF EGYPT

By Gilbert Parker

Volume 1.

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INTRODUCTION

To the FOREWORD of this book I have practically nothing to add. It describes how the book was planned, and how at last it came to be written. The novel—'The Weavers'—of which it was the herald, as one might say, was published in 1907. The reception of Donovan Pasha convinced me beyond

peradventure, that the step I took in enlarging my field of work was as wise in relation to my art as in its effect upon my mind, temperament and faculty for writing. I knew Egypt by study quite as well as I knew the Dominion of Canada, the difference being, of course, that the instinct for the life of Canada was part of my very being itself; but there are great numbers of people who live their lives for fifty or seventy or eighty years in a country, and have no real instinct for understanding. There are numberless Canadians who do not understand Canada, Englishmen who know nothing of England, and Americans who do not understand the United States. If it is so that I have some instinct for the life of Canada, and have expressed it to the world with some accuracy and fidelity, it is apparent that the capacity for understanding could not be limited absolutely to one environment. That I understood Canada could not be established by the fact that I had spent my boyhood there, but only by the fact that some inner vision permitted me to see it as it really was. That inner vision, however, if it was anything at all was not in blinders, seeing only one section of the life of the world. Relatively it might see more deeply, more intimately in that place where habit of life had made the man familiar with all its detail, but the same vision turned elsewhere to fields where study and sympathy played a devoted part, could not fail to see; though the workman's craft, which made material the vision, might fail.

The reception given Donovan Pasha convinced me that neither the vision nor the craftsmanship had wholly failed, whatever the degree of success which had been reached. Anglo-Egyptians approved the book. Its pages passed through the hands of an Englishman who had done over twenty years' service in the British army in Egypt and in official positions in the Egyptian administration, and I do not think that he made six corrections in the whole three hundred pages. He had himself a great gift for both music and painting; he was essentially exacting where any literature touching Egypt was concerned; but I am glad to think that, whatever he thought of the book as fiction, he did not find it necessary to grant absolution as to the facts and the details of incidents in character and life pourtrayed in Donovan Pasha.

Who the original of 'Donovan Pasha' was I shall never say, but he was real. There is, however, in the House of Commons today a young and active politician once in the Egyptian service, and who bears a most striking resemblance to the purely imaginary portrait which Mr. Talbot Kelly, the artist, drew of the Dicky Donovan of the book. This young politician, with his experience in the diplomatic service, is in manner, disposition, capacity, and in his neat, fine, and alert physical frame, the very image of Dicky Donovan, as in my mind I perceived him; and when I first saw him I was almost thunderstruck, because he was to me Dicky Donovan come to life. There was nothing Dicky Donovan did or said or saw or heard which had not its counterpart in actual things in Egypt. The germ of most of the stories was got from things told me, or things that I saw, heard of, or experienced in Egypt itself. The first story of the book —'While the Lamp Holds out to Burn'—was suggested to me by an incident which I saw at a certain village on the Nile, which I will not name. Suffice it to say that the story in the main was true. Also the chief incident of the story, called 'The Price of the Grindstone—and the Drum', is true. The Mahommed Seti of that story was the servant of a friend of mine, and he did in life what I made him do in the tale. 'On the Reef of Norman's Woe', which more than one journal singled out as showing what extraordinary work was being done in Egypt by a handful of British officials, had its origin in something told me by my friend Sir John Rogers, who at one time was at the head of the Sanitary Department of the Government of Egypt.

I could take the stories one by one, and show the seeds from which this little plantation of fiction sprang, but I will not go further than to refer to a story called 'Fielding Had an Orderly', the idea of which was contained in the experience of a British official whose courage was as cool as his wit, and both were extremely dangerous weapons, used at times against those who were opposed to him. When I read a book like 'Said the Fisherman', however, with its wonderfully intimate knowledge of Oriental life and the thousand nuances which only the born Orientalist can give, I look with tempered pride upon Donovan Pasha. Still I think that it caught and held some phases of Egyptian life which the author of 'Said the Fisherman' might perhaps miss, since the observation of every artist has its own idiosyncrasy, and what strikes one observer will not strike another.

A FOREWORD

It is now twelve years since I began giving to the public tales of life in lands well known to me. The first of them were drawn from Australia and the Islands of the Southern Pacific, where I had lived and roamed in the middle and late Eighties. They appeared in various English magazines, and were written in London far from the scenes which suggested them. None of them were written on the spot, as it

were. I did not think then, and I do not think now, that this was perilous to their truthfulness. After many years of travel and home-staying observation I have found that all worth remembrance, the salient things and scenes, emerge clearly out of myriad impressions, and become permanent in mind and memory. Things so emerging are typical at least, and probably true.

Those tales of the Far South were given out with some prodigality. They did not appear in book form, however; for, at the time I was sending out these Antipodean sketches, I was also writing—far from the scenes where they were laid—a series of Canadian tales, many of which appeared in the 'Independent' of New York, in the 'National Observer', edited by Mr. Henley, and in the 'Illustrated London News'. By accident, and on the suggestion of my friend Mr. Henley, the Canadian tales 'Pierre and his People' were published first; with the result that the stories of the Southern Hemisphere were withheld from publication, though they have been privately printed and duly copyrighted. Some day I may send them forth, but meanwhile I am content to keep them in my own care.

Moved always by deep interest in the varied manifestations of life in different portions of the Empire, five or six years ago I was attracted to the Island of Jersey, in the Channel Sea, by the likeness of the origin of her people with that of the French-Canadians. I went to live at St. Heliers for a time, and there wrote a novel called 'The Battle of the Strong'.

Nor would it be thought strange that, having visited another and newer sphere of England's influence, Egypt to wit, in 1889, I should then determine that, when I could study the country at leisure, I should try to write of the life there, so full of splendour and of primitive simplicity; of mystery and guilt; of cruel indolence and beautiful industry; of tyranny and devoted slavery; of the high elements of a true democracy and the shameful practices of a false autocracy; all touched off by the majesty of an ancient charm, the nobility of the remotest history.

The years went by, and, four times visiting Egypt, at last I began to write of her. That is now five years ago. From time to time the stories which I offer to the public in this volume were given forth. It is likely that the old Anglo-Egyptian and the historical student may find some anachronisms and other things to criticise; but the anachronisms are deliberate, and even as in writing of Canada and Australia, which I know very well, I have here, perhaps, sacrificed superficial exactness while trying to give the more intimate meaning and spirit. I have never thought it necessary to apologise for this disregard of photographic accuracy,—that may be found in my note-books,—and I shall not begin to do so now. I shall be sufficiently grateful if this series of tales does no more than make ready the way for the novel of Egyptian life on which I have been working for some years. It is an avant courier. I hope, however, that it may be welcomed for its own sake. G. P.

NOTE: A Glossary will be found at the end of the volume.

WHILE THE LAMP HOLDS OUT TO BURN

There is a town on the Nile which Fielding Bey called Hasha, meaning "Heaven Forbid!" He loathed inspecting it. Going up the Nile, he would put off visiting it till he came down; coming down, he thanked his fates if accident carried him beyond it. Convenient accidents sometimes did occur: a murder at one of the villages below it, asking his immediate presence; a telegram from his Minister at Cairo, requiring his return; or a very low Nile, when Hasha suddenly found itself a mile away from the channel and there was no good place to land. So it was that Hasha, with little inspection, was the least reputable and almost the dirtiest town on the Nile; for even in those far-off days the official Englishman had his influence, especially when Kubar Pasha was behind him. Kubar had his good points.

There were certain definite reasons, however, why Fielding Bey shrank from visiting Hasha. Donovan Pasha saw something was wrong from the first moment Hasha was mentioned.

On a particular day they were lying below at another village, on the Amenhotep. Hasha was the next place marked red on the map, and that meant inspection. When Dicky Donovan mentioned Hasha, Fielding Bey twisted a shoulder and walked nervously up and down the deck. He stayed here for hours: to wait for the next post, he said-serious matters expected from head quarters. He appeared not to realise that letters would get to Hasha by rail as quickly as by the Amenhotep.

Every man has a weak spot in his character, a sub-rosa, as it were, in his business of life; and Dicky fancied he had found Fielding Bey's. While they waited, Fielding made a pretence of working hard—for

he really was conscientious—sending his orderly for the mamour— [magistrate]—and the omdah—[head of a village]—, and holding fatuous conferences; turning the hose on the local dairymen and butchers and dategrowers, who came with backsheesh in kind; burying his nose in official papers; or sending for Holgate, the Yorkshire engineer, to find out what the run would be to the next stopping-place beyond Hasha. Twice he did this; which was very little like Fielding Bey. The second time, when Holgate came below to his engine, Dicky was there playing with a Farshoot dog.

"We don't stop at Hasha, then?" Dicky asked, and let the Farshoot fasten on his leggings.

Holgate swung round and eyed Dicky curiously, a queer smile at his lips.

"Not if Goovnur can 'elp, aw give ye ma woord, sir," answered Holgate.

Fielding was affectionately called "the Governor" by his subordinates and friends.

"We all have our likes and dislikes," rejoined Dicky casually, and blew smoke in the eyes of the Farshoot. "Aye, aw've seen places that bad! but Hasha has taaste of its own in Goovnur's mouth, ma life on't!" "Never can tell when a thing'll pall on the taste. Hasha's turn with the Governor now, eh?" rejoined Dicky.

Dicky's way of getting information seemed guileless, and Holgate opened his basket as wide as he knew. "Toorn, didst tha sway" (Holgate talked broadly to Dicky always, for Dicky had told him of his aunt, Lady Carmichael, who lived near Halifax in Yorkshire), "toorn, aw warrant! It be reg'lar as kitchen-fire, this Hasha business, for three years, ever sin' aw been scrapin' mud o' Nile River."

"That was a nasty row they had over the cemetery three years ago, the
Governor against the lot, from mamour to wekeel!"

Holgate's eyes flashed, and he looked almost angrily down at Dicky, whose hand was between the teeth of the playful Farshoot.

"Doost think—noa, tha canst not think that Goovnur be 'feared o' Hasha fook. Thinks't tha, a man that told 'em all—a thousand therr—that he'd hang on nearest tree the foorst that disobeyed him, thinks't tha that Goovnur's lost his nerve by that?"

"The Governor never loses his nerve, Holgate," said Dicky, smiling and offering a cigar. "There's such a thing as a man being afraid to trust himself where he's been in a mess, lest he hit out, and doesn't want to."

Holgate, being excited, was in a fit state to tell the truth, if he knew it; which was what Dicky had worked for; but Holgate only said:

"It bean't fear, and it bean't milk o' human kindness. It be soort o' thing a man gets. Aw had it once i' Bradford, in Little Cornish Street. Aw saw a faace look out o' window o' hoose by tinsmith's shop, an' that faace was like hell's picture-aye, 'twas a killiagous faace that! Aw never again could pass that house. 'Twas a woman's faace. Horrible 'twas, an' sore sad an' flootered aw were, for t' faace was like a lass aw loved when aw wur a lad."

"I should think it was something like that," answered Dicky, his eyes wandering over the peninsula beyond which lay Hasha.

"Summat, aw be sure," answered Holgate, "an' ma woord on't . . . ah, yon coomes orderly wi' post for Goovnur. Now it be Hasha, or it be not Hasha, it be time for steam oop."

Holgate turned to his engine as Dicky mounted the stairs and went to Fielding's cabin, where the orderly was untying a handkerchief overflowing with letters.

As Fielding read his official letters his face fell more and more. When he had read the last, he sat for a minute without speaking, his brow very black. There was no excuse for pushing past Hasha. He had not been there for over a year. It was his duty to inspect the place: he had a conscience; there was time to get to Hasha that afternoon. With an effort he rose, hurried along the deck, and called down to Holgate: "Full-steam to Hasha!"

Then, with a quick command to the reis, who was already at the wheel, he lighted a cigar, and, joining Dicky Donovan, began to smoke and talk furiously. But he did not talk of Hasha.

At sunset the Amenhotep drew in to the bank by Hasha, and, from the deck, Fielding Bey saluted the mamour, the omdah and his own subordinates, who, buttoning up their coats as they came, hurried to the bank to make salaams to him. Behind them, at a distance, came villagers, a dozen ghaffirs armed

with naboots of dom-wood, and a brace of well-mounted, badly-dressed policemen, with seats like a monkey on a stick. The conferences with the mamour and omdah were short, in keeping with the temper of "Fielding Saadat"; and long into the night Dicky lay and looked out of his cabin window to the fires on the banks, where sat Mahommed Seti the servant, the orderly, and some attendant ghaffirs, who, feasting on the remains of the effendi's supper, kept watch. For Hasha was noted for its robbers. It was even rumoured that the egregious Selamlik Pasha, with the sugar plantation near by —"Trousers," Dicky called him when he saw him on the morrow, because of the elephantine breeks he wore—was not averse to sending his Abyssinian slaves through the sugar-cane to waylay and rob, and worse, maybe.

By five o'clock next day the inspection was over. The streets had been swept for the Excellency—which is to say Saadat—the first time in a year. The prison had been cleaned of visible horrors, the first time in a month. The last time it was ordered there had been a riot among the starving, infested prisoners; earth had been thrown over the protruding bones of the dear lamented dead in the cemetery; the water of the ablution places in the mosque had been changed; the ragged policemen had new putties; the kourbashes of the tax-gatherers were hid in their yeleks; the egregious Pasha wore a greasy smile, and the submudir, as he conducted Fielding—"whom God preserve and honour!"—through the prison and through the hospital, where goat's milk had been laid on for this especial day, smirked gently through the bazaar above his Parisian waistcoat.

But Fielding, as he rode on Selamlik Pasha's gorgeous black donkey from Assiout, with its crimson trappings, knew what proportion of improvement this "hankypanky," as Dicky called it, bore to the condition of things at the last inspection. He had spoken little all day, and Dicky had noticed that his eye was constantly turning here and there, as though looking for an unwelcome something or somebody.

At last the thing was over, and they were just crossing the canal, the old Bahr-el-Yusef, which cuts the town in twain as the river Abana does Damascus, when Dicky saw nearing them a heavily-laden boat, a cross between a Thames house-boat and an Italian gondola, being drawn by one poor raw-bone —raw-bone in truth, for there was on each shoulder a round red place, made raw by the unsheathed ropes used as harness. The beast's sides were scraped as a tree is barked, and the hind quarters gored as though by a harrow. Dicky was riding with the mamour of the district, Fielding was a distance behind with Trousers and the Mudir. Dicky pulled up his donkey, got off and ran towards the horse, pale with fury; for he loved animals better than men, and had wasted his strength beating donkey-boys with the sticks they used on their victims. The boat had now reached a point opposite the mudirieh, its stopping-place; and the raw- bone, reeking with sweat and blood, stood still and trembled, its knees shaking with the strain just taken off them, its head sunk nearly to the ground.

Dicky had hardly reached the spot when a figure came running to the poor waler with a quick stumbling motion. Dicky drew back in wonder, for never had he seen eyes so painful as these that glanced from the tortured beast to himself—staring, bulbous, bloodshot, hunted eyes; but they were blue, a sickly, faded blue; and they were English! Dicky's hand was, on his pistol, for his first impulse had been to shoot the rawbone; but it dropped away in sheer astonishment at the sight of this strange figure in threadbare dirty clothes and riding-breeches made by shearing the legs of a long pair—cut with an unsteady hand, for the edges were jagged and uneven, and the man's bare leg showed above the cast-off putties of a policeman. The coat was an old khaki jacket of a Gippy soldier, and, being scant of buttons, doubtful linen showed beneath. Above the hook- nose, once aristocratic, now vulture-like and shrunken like that of Rameses in his glass case at Ghizeh, was a tarboosh tilting forward over the eyes, nearly covering the forehead. The figure must have been very tall once, but it was stooped now, though the height was still well above medium. Hunted, haunted, ravaged and lost, was the face, and the long grey moustache, covering the chin almost, seemed to cover an immeasurable depravity.

Dicky took it all in at a glance, and wondered with a bitter wonder; for this was an Englishman, and behind him and around him, though not very near him, were Arabs, Soudanese, and Fellaheen, with sneering yet apprehensive faces.

As Dicky's hand dropped away from his pistol, the other shot out trembling, graceful, eager fingers, the one inexpressibly gentlemanly thing about him.

"Give it to me—quick!" he said, and he threw a backward glance towards the approaching group—Fielding, the egregious Pasha, and the rest.

Dicky did not hesitate; he passed the pistol over. The Lost One took the pistol, cocked it, and held it to the head of the waler, which feebly turned to him in recognition.

"Good-bye, old man!" he said, and fired.

The horse dropped, kicked, struggled once or twice, and was gone.

"If you know the right spot, there's hardly a kick," said the Lost One, and turned to face the Pasha, who had whipped his donkey forward on them, and sat now livid with rage, before the two. He stood speechless for a moment, for his anger had forced the fat of his neck up into his throat.

But Dicky did not notice the Pasha. His eye was fixed on Fielding Bey, and the eye of Fielding Bey was on the Lost One. All at once Dicky understood why it was that Fielding Bey had shrunk from coming to Hasha. Fielding might have offered many reasons, but this figure before them was the true one. Trouble, pity, anxiety, pride, all were in Fielding's face. Because the Lost One was an Englishman, and the race was shamed and injured by this outcast? Not that alone. Fielding had the natural pride of his race, but this look was personal. He glanced at the dead horse, at the scarred sides, the raw shoulders, the corrugated haunches, he saw the pistol in the Lost One's hand, and then, as a thread of light steals between the black trees of a jungle, a light stole across Fielding's face for a moment. He saw the Lost One hand the pistol back to Dicky and fix his debauched blue eyes on the Pasha. These blue eyes did not once look at Fielding, though they were aware of his presence.

"Son of a dog!" said the Pasha, and his fat forefinger convulsively pointed to the horse.

The Lost One's eyes wavered a second, as though their owner had not the courage to abide the effect of his action, then they quickened to a point of steadiness, as a lash suddenly knots for a crack in the hand of a postilion.

"Swine!" said the Lost One into the Pasha's face, and his round shoulders drew up a little farther, so that he seemed more like a man among men. His hands fell on his hips as, in his mess, an officer with no pockets drops his knuckles on his waist-line for a stand-at-ease.

The egregious Selamlik Pasha stood high in favour with the Khedive: was it not he who had suggested a tax on the earnings of the dancing girls, the Ghazeeyehs, and did he not himself act as the first tax-gatherer? Was it not Selamlik Pasha also who whispered into the ear of the Mouffetish that a birth-tax and a burial-tax should be instituted? And had he not seen them carried out in the mudiriehs under his own supervision? Had he not himself made the Fellaheen pay thrice over for water for their onion-fields? Had he not flogged an Arab to death with his own hand, the day before Fielding's and Dicky's arrival, and had he not tried to get this same Arab's daughter into his harem—this Selamlik Pasha!

The voice of the Lost One suddenly rose shrill and excited, and he shouted at the Pasha. "Swine! swine! swine! . . . Kill your slaves with a kourbash if you like, but a bullet's the thing for a waler!—Swine of a leper!"

The whole frame of the Lost One was still, but the voice was shaking, querulous, half hysterical; the eyes were lighted with a terrible excitement, the lips under the grey moustache twitched; the nervous slipshod dignity of carriage was in curious contrast to the disordered patchwork dress.

The trouble on Fielding's face glimmered with a little ray of hope now.
Dicky came over to him, and was about to speak, but a motion of
Fielding's hand stopped him. The hand said: "Let them fight it out."

In a paroxysm of passion Selamlik Pasha called two Abyssinian slaves standing behind. "This brother of a toad to prison!" he said.

The Lost One's eyes sought Dicky like a flash. Without a word, and as quick as the tick of a clock, Dicky tossed over his pistol to the Lost One, who caught it smoothly, turned it in his hand, and levelled it at the Abyssinians.

"No more of this damned nonsense, Pasha," said Fielding suddenly. "He doesn't put a high price on his life, and you do on yours. I'd be careful!"

"Steady, Trousers!" said Dicky in a soft voice, and smiled his girlish smile.

Selamlik Pasha stared for a moment in black anger, then stuttered forth:
"Will you speak for a dog of a slave that his own country vomits out?"

"Your mother was a slave of Darfur, Pasha," answered Fielding, in a low voice; "your father lost his life stealing slaves. Let's have no airs and graces."

Dicky's eyes had been fixed on the Lost One, and his voice now said in its quaint treble: "Don't get into a perspiration. He's from where we get our bad manners, and he messes with us to-night, Pasha."

The effect of these words was curious. Fielding's face was a blank surprise, and his mouth opened to

say no, but he caught Dicky's look and the word was not uttered. The Pasha's face showed curious incredulity; under the pallor of the Lost One's a purplish flush crept, stayed a moment, then faded away, and left it paler than before.

"We've no more business, I think, Pasha," said Fielding brusquely, and turned his donkey towards the river. The Pasha salaamed without a word, his Abyssinian slaves helped him on his great white donkey, and he trotted away towards the palace, the trousers flapping about his huge legs. The Lost One stood fingering the revolver. Presently he looked up at Dicky, and, standing still, held out the pistol.

"Better keep it," said Dicky; "I'll give you some peas for it to-night.
Speak to the poor devil, Fielding," he added quickly, in a low tone.

Fielding turned in his saddle. "Seven's the hour," he said, and rode on.

"Thanks, you fellows," said the Lost One, and walked swiftly away.

As they rode to the Amenhotep Dicky did not speak, but once he turned round to look after the outcast, who was shambling along the bank of the canal.

When Fielding and Dicky reached the deck of the Amenhotep, and Mahommed
Seti had brought refreshment, Dicky said: "What did he do?"

Fielding's voice was constrained and hard: "Cheated at cards."

Dicky's lips tightened. "Where?"

"At Hong Kong."

"Officer?"

"In the Buffs."

Dicky drew a long breath. "He's paid the piper."

"Naturally. He cheated twice."

"Cheated twice—at cards!" Dicky's voice was hard now. "Who was he?"

"Heatherby—Bob Heatherby!"

"Bob Heatherby—gad! Fielding, I'm sorry—I couldn't have guessed, old man. Mrs. Henshaw's brother!"

Fielding nodded. Dicky turned his head away; for Fielding was in love with Mrs. Henshaw, the widow of Henshaw of the Buffs. He realised now why Fielding loathed Hasha so.

"Forgive me for asking him to mess, guv'nor."

Fielding laughed a little uneasily. "Never mind. You see, it isn't the old scores only that bar him. He's been a sweep out here. Nothing he hasn't done. Gone lower and lower and lower. Tax-gatherer with a kourbash for old Selamlik the beast. Panderer for the same. Sweep of the lowest sort!"

Dicky's eyes flashed. "I say, Fielding, it would be rather strange if he hadn't gone down, down, down. A man that's cheated at cards never finds anybody to help him up, up, up. The chances are dead against him. But he stood up well to-day, eh?"

"I suppose blood will tell at last in the very worst."

"'And while the lamp holds out to burn
The vilest sinner may return—'"

hummed Dicky musingly. Then he added slowly: "Fielding, fellows of that kind always flare up a bit according to Cavendish, just before the end. I've seen it once or twice before. It's the last clutch at the grass as they go slip—slip—slipping down. Take my word for it, Heatherby's near the finish."

"I shouldn't wonder. Selamlik, the old leper, 'll lay in wait for him.
He'll get lost in the sugar-cane one of these evenings soon."

"Couldn't we . . ." Dicky paused.

Fielding started, looked at Dicky intently, and then shook his head sadly. "It's no good, Dicky. It never

is."

"'While the lamp holds out to burn . . .'" said Dicky, and lighted another cigarette.

Precisely at seven o'clock Heatherby appeared. He had on a dress-suit, brown and rusty, a white tie made of a handkerchief torn in two, and a pair of patent leather shoes, scraggy and cracked.

Fielding behaved well, Dicky was amiable and attentive, and the dinner being ready to the instant, there was no waiting, there were no awkward pauses. No names of English people were mentioned, England was not named; nor Cairo, nor anything that English people abroad love to discuss. The fellah, the pasha, the Soudan were the only topics. Under Fielding's courtesy and Dicky's acute suggestions, Heatherby's weakened brain awaked, and he talked intelligently, till the moment coffee was brought in. Then, as Mahommed Seti retired, Heatherby suddenly threw himself forward, his arms on the table, and burst into sobs.

"Oh, you fellows, you fellows!" he said. There was silence for a minute, then he sobbed out again: "It's the first time I've been treated like a gentleman by men that knew me, these fifteen years. It—it gets me in the throat!"

His body shook with sobs. Fielding and Dicky were uncomfortable, for these were not the sobs of a driveller or a drunkard. Behind them was the blank failure of a life—fifteen years of miserable torture, of degradation, of a daily descent lower into the pit, of the servitude of shame. When at last he raised his streaming eyes, Fielding and Dicky could see the haunting terror of the soul, at whose elbow, as it were, every man cried: "You are without the pale!" That look told them how Heatherby of the Buffs had gone from table d'hote to table d'hote of Europe, from town to town, from village to village, to make acquaintances who repulsed him when they discovered who he really was.

Shady Heatherby, who cheated at cards!

Once Fielding made as if to put a hand on his shoulder and speak to him, but Dicky intervened with a look. The two drank their coffee, Fielding a little uneasily; but yet in his face there was a new look: of inquiry, of kindness, even of hope.

Presently Dicky flashed a look and nodded towards the door, and Fielding dropped his cigar and went on deck, and called down to Holgate the engineer:

"Get up steam, and make for Luxor. It's moonlight, and we're safe enough in this high Nile, eh, Holgate?"

"Safe enough, or aw'm a Dootchman," said Holgate. Then they talked in a low voice together. Down in the saloon, Dicky sat watching Heatherby. At last the Lost One raised his head again.

"It's worth more to me, this night, than you fellows know," he said brokenly.

"That's all right," said Dicky. "Have a cigar?"

He shook his head. "It's come at the right time. I wanted to be treated like an Englishman once more—just once more."

"Don't worry. Take in a reef and go steady for a bit. The milk's spilt, but there are other meadows. . . ." Dicky waved an arm up the river, up towards the Soudan!

The Lost One nodded, then his eyes blazed up and took on a hungry look.
His voice suddenly came in a whisper.

"Gordon was a white man. Gordon said to me three years ago: 'Come with me, I'll help you on. You don't need to live, if you don't want to. Most of us will get knocked out up there in the Soudan.' Gordon said that to me. But there was another fellow with Gordon who knew me, and I couldn't face it. So I stayed behind here. I've been everything, anything, to that swine, Selamlik Pasha; but when he told me yesterday to bring him the daughter of the Arab he killed with his kourbash, I jibbed. I couldn't stand that. Her father had fed me more than once. I jibbed —by God, I jibbed! I said I was an Englishman, and I'd see him damned first. I said it, and I shot the horse, and I'd have shot him—what's that?"

There was a churning below. The Amenhotep was moving from the bank.

"She's going—the boat's going," said the Lost One, trembling to his feet.

"Sit down," said Dicky, and gripped him by the arm. "Where are you taking me?" asked Heatherby, a strange, excited look in his face.

"Up the river."

He seemed to read Dicky's thoughts—the clairvoyance of an overwrought mind: "To—to Assouan?" The voice had a curious far-away sound.

"You shall go beyond Assouan," said Dicky. "To—to Gordon?" Heatherby's voice was husky and indistinct.

"Yes, here's Fielding; he'll give you the tip. Sit down." Dicky gently forced him down into a chair. Six months later, a letter came to Dicky from an Egyptian officer, saying that Heatherby of the Buffs had died gallantly fighting in a sortie sent by Gordon into the desert.

"He had a lot of luck," mused Dicky as he read. "They don't end that way as a rule."

Then he went to Fielding, humming a certain stave from one of Watts's hymns.

THE PRICE OF THE GRINDSTONE—AND THE DRUM

He lived in the days of Ismail the Khedive, and was familiarly known as the Murderer. He had earned his name, and he had no repentance. From the roof of a hut in his native village of Manfaloot he had dropped a grindstone on the head of Ebn Haroun, who contended with him for the affections of Ahassa, the daughter of Haleel the barber, and Ebn Haroun's head was flattened like the cover of a pie. Then he had broken a cake of dourha bread on the roof for the pigeons above him, and had come down grinning to the street, where a hesitating mounted policeman fumbled with his weapon, and four ghaffirs waited for him with their naboots.

Seti then had weighed his chances, had seen the avenging friends of Ebn Haroun behind the ghaffirs, and therefore permitted himself to be marched off to the mudirieh. There the Mudir glared at him and had him loaded with chains and flung into the prison, where two hundred convicts arrayed themselves against myriad tribes which, killed individually, made a spot on the wall no bigger than a threepenny-bit! The carnage was great, and though Seti was sleepless night after night it was not because of his crime. He found some solace, however, in provoking his fellow-prisoners to assaults upon each other; and every morning he grinned as he saw the dead and wounded dragged out into the clear sunshine.

The end to this came when the father of Seti, Abou Seti, went at night to the Mudir and said deceitfully: "Effendi, by the mercy of Heaven I have been spared even to this day; for is it not written in the Koran that a man shall render to his neighbour what is his neighbour's? What should Abou Seti do with ten feddans of land, while the servant of Allah, the Effendi Insagi, lives? What is honestly mine is eight feddans, and the rest, by the grace of God, is thine, O effendi."

Every feddan he had he had honestly earned, but this was his way of offering backsheesh.

And the Mudir had due anger and said: "No better are ye than a Frank to have hidden the truth so long and waxed fat as the Nile rises and falls. The two feddans, as thou sayest, are mine."

Abou Seti bowed low, and rejoined, "Now shall I sleep in peace, by the grace of Heaven, and all my people under my date-trees—and all my people?" he added, with an upward look at the Mudir.

"But the rentals of the two feddans of land these ten years—thou hast eased thy soul by bringing the rentals thereof?"

Abou Seti's glance fell and his hands twitched. His fingers fumbled with his robe of striped silk. He cursed the Mudir in his heart for his bitter humour; but was not his son in prison, and did it not lie with the Mudir whether he lived or died? So he answered:

"All-seeing and all-knowing art thou, O effendi, and I have reckoned the rentals even to this hour for the ten years—fifty piastres for each feddan—"

"A hundred for the five years of high Nile," interposed the Mudir.

"Fifty for the five lean years, and a hundred for the five fat years," said Abou Seti, and wished that his words were poisoned arrows, that they might give the Mudir many deaths at once. "And may Allah give thee greatness upon thy greatness!"

"God prosper thee also, Abou Seti, and see that thou keep only what is thine own henceforth. Get thee gone in peace."

"At what hour shall I see the face of my son alive?" asked Abou Seti in a low voice, placing his hand upon his turban in humility.

"To-morrow at even, when the Muezzin calls from the mosque of El Hassan, be thou at the west wall of the prison by the Gate of the Prophet's Sorrow, with thy fastest camel. Your son shall ride for me through the desert even to Farafreh, and bear a letter to the bimbashi there. If he bear it safely, his life is his own; if he fail, look to thy feddans of land!"

"God is merciful, and Seti is bone of my bone," said Abou Seti, and laid his hand again upon his turban. That was how Mahommed Seti did not at once pay the price of the grindstone, but rode into the desert bearing the message of the Mudir and returned safely with the answer, and was again seen in the cafes of Manfaloot. And none of Ebn Haroun's friends did aught, for the world knew through whom it was that Seti lived—and land was hard to keep in Manfaloot and the prison near.

But one day a kavass of the Khedive swooped down on Manfaloot, and twenty young men were carried off in conscription. Among them was Seti, now married to Ahassa, the fellah maid for whom the grindstone had fallen on Ebn Haroun's head. When the fatal number fell to him and it was ordained that he must go to Dongola to serve in the Khedive's legions, he went to his father, with Ahassa wailing behind him.

"Save thyself," said the old man with a frown.

"I have done what I could—I have sold my wife's jewels," answered Seti.

"Ten piastres!" said old Abou Seti grimly. "Twelve," said Seti, grinning from ear to ear. Thou wilt add four feddans of land to that I will answer for the Mudir."

"Thy life only cost me two feddans. Shall I pay four to free thee of serving thy master the Khedive? Get thee gone into the Soudan. I do not fear for thee: thou wilt live on. Allah is thy friend. Peace be with thee!"

II

So it was that the broad-shouldered Seti went to be a soldier, with all the women of the village wailing behind him, and Ahassa his wife covering her head with dust and weeping by his side as he stepped out towards Dongola. For himself, Seti was a philosopher; that is to say, he was a true Egyptian. Whatever was, was to be; and Seti had a good digestion, which is a great thing in the desert. Moreover, he had a capacity for foraging—or foray. The calmness with which he risked his life for an onion or a water-bag would have done credit to a prince of buccaneers. He was never flustered. He had dropped a grindstone on the head of his rival, but the smile that he smiled then was the same smile with which he suffered and forayed and fought and filched in the desert. With a back like a door, and arms as long and strong as a gorilla's, with no moral character to speak of, and an imperturbable selfishness, even an ignorant Arab like Seti may go far. More than once his bimbashi drew a sword to cut him down for the peaceful insolent grin with which he heard himself suddenly charged with very original crimes; but even the officer put his sword up again, because he remembered that though Seti was the curse of the regiment on the march, there was no man like him in the day of battle. Covered with desert sand and blood, and fighting and raging after the manner of a Sikh, he could hold ten companies together like a wall against a charge of Dervishes. The bimbashi rejoiced at this, for he was a coward; likewise his captain was a coward, and so was his lieutenant: for they were half Turks, half Gippies, who had seen Paris and had not the decency to die there. Also it had been discovered that no man made so good a spy or envoy as Seti. His gift for lying was inexpressible: confusion never touched him; for the flattest contradictions in the matter of levying backsheesh he always found an excuse. Where the bimbashi and his officers were afraid to go lest the bald-headed eagle and the vulture should carry away their heads as tit- bits to the Libyan hills, Seti was sent. In more than one way he always kept his head. He was at once the curse and the pride of the regiment. For his sins he could not be punished, and his virtues were of value only to save his life.

In this fashion, while his regiment thinned out by disease, famine, fighting, and the midnight knife, Seti came on to Dongola, to Berber, to Khartoum; and he grinned with satisfaction when he heard that they would make even for Kordofan. He had outlived all the officers who left Manfaloot with the regiment save the bimbashi, and the bimbashi was superstitious and believed that while Seti lived he would live. Therefore, no clansman ever watched his standard flying in the van as the bimbashi—from behind—watched the long arm of Seti slaying, and heard his voice like a brass horn above all others shouting his war-cry.

But at Khartoum came Seti's fall. Many sorts of original sin had been his, with profit and prodigious pleasure, but when, by the supposed orders of the bimbashi, he went through Khartoum levying a tax upon every dancing-girl in the place and making her pay upon the spot at the point of a merciless tongue, he went one step too far. For his genius had preceded that of Selamlik Pasha, the friend of the Mouffetish at Cairo, by one day only. Selamlik himself had collected taxes on dancing-girls all the way from Cairo to Khartoum; and to be hoist by an Arab in a foot regiment having no authority and only a limitless insolence, was more than the Excellency could bear.

To Selamlik Pasha the bimbashi hastily disowned all knowledge of Seti's perfidy, but both were brought out to have their hands and feet and heads cut off in the Beit-el-Mal, in the presence of the dancing-girls and the populace. In the appointed place, when Seti saw how the bimbashi wept— for he had been to Paris and had no Arab blood in him; how he wrung his hands—for had not absinthe weakened his nerves in the cafes of St. Michel?—when Seti saw that he was no Arab and was afraid to die, then he told the truth to Selamlik Pasha. He even boldly offered to tell the pasha where half his own ill-gotten gains were hid, if he would let the bimbashi go. Now, Selamlik Pasha was an Egyptian, and is it not written in the Book of Egypt that no man without the most dangerous reason may refuse backsheesh? So it was that Selamlik talked to the Ulema, the holy men, who were there, and they urged him to clemency, as holy men will, even in Egypt—at a price.

So it was also that the bimbashi went back to his regiment with all his limbs intact. Seti and the other half of his ill-gotten gains were left. His hands were about to be struck off, when he realised of how little account his gold would be without them; so he offered it to Selamlik Pasha for their sake. The pasha promised, and then, having found the money, serenely prepared the execution. For his anger was great. Was not the idea of taxing the dancing-girls his very own, the most original tax ever levied in Egypt? And to have the honour of it filched from him by a soldier of Manfaloot—no, Mahommed Seti should be crucified!

And Seti, the pride and the curse of his regiment, would have been crucified between two palms on the banks of the river had it not been for Fielding Bey, the Englishman—Fielding of St. Bartholomew's —who had burned gloriously to reform Egypt root and branch, and had seen the fire of his desires die down. Fielding Bey saved Seti, but not with backsheesh.

Fielding intervened. He knew Selamlik Pasha well, and the secret of his influence over him is for telling elsewhere. But whatever its source, it gave Mahommed Seti his life. It gave him much more, for it expelled him from the Khedive's army. Now soldiers without number, gladly risking death, had deserted from the army of the Khedive; they had bought themselves out with enormous backsheesh, they had been thieves, murderers, panderers, that they might be freed from service by some corrupt pasha or bimbashi; but no one in the knowledge of the world had ever been expelled from the army of the Khedive.

There was a satanic humour in the situation pleasant to the soul of Mahommed Seti, if soul his subconsciousness might be called. In the presence of his regiment, drawn up in the Beit-el-Mal, before his trembling bimbashi, whose lips were now pale with terror at the loss of his mascot, Mahommed Seti was drummed out of line, out of his regiment, out of the Beit-el-Mal. It was opera boufe, and though Seti could not know what opera boufe was, he did know that it was a ridiculous fantasia, and he grinned his insolent grin all the way, even to the corner of the camel-market, where the drummer and the sergeant and his squad turned back from ministering a disgrace they would gladly have shared.

Left at the corner of the camel-market, Mahommed Seti planned his future. At first it was to steal a camel and take the desert for Berber. Then he thought of the English hakim, Fielding Bey, who had saved his life. Now, a man who has saved your life once may do it again; one favour is always the promise of another. So Seti, with a sudden inspiration, went straight to the house of Fielding Bey and sat down before it on his mat.

With the setting of the sun came a clatter of tins and a savoury odour throughout Khartoum to its farthest precincts, for it was Ramadan, and no man ate till sunset. Seti smiled an avid smile, and waited. At last he got up, turned his face towards Mecca, and said his prayers. Then he lifted the latch of Fielding's hut, entered, eyed the medicine bottles and the surgical case with childish apprehension, and made his way to the kitchen. There he foraged. He built a fire; his courage grew; he ran to the

bazaar, and came back with an armful of meats and vegetables.

So it was that when Fielding returned he found Mahommed Seti and a savoury mess awaiting him. Also there was coffee and a bottle of brandy which Seti had looted in the bazaar. In one doorway stood Fielding; in another stood Mahommed Seti, with the same grin which had served his purpose all the way from Cairo, his ugly face behind it, and his prodigious shoulders below it, and the huge chest from which came forth, like the voice of a dove:

"God give thee long life, saadat el bey!"

Now an M.D. degree and a course in St. Bartholomew's Hospital do not necessarily give a knowledge of the human soul, though the outlying lands of the earth have been fattened by those who thought there was knowledge and salvation in a conquered curriculum. Fielding Bey, however, had never made pretence of understanding the Oriental mind, so he discreetly took his seat and made no remarks. From sheer instinct, however, when he came to the coffee he threw a boot which caught Mahommed Seti in the middle of the chest, and said roughly: "French, not Turkish, idiot!"

Then Mahommed Seti grinned, and he knew that he was happy; for it was deep in his mind that that was the Inglesi's way of offering a long engagement. In any case Seti had come to stay. Three times he made French coffee that night before it suited, and the language of Fielding was appropriate in each case. At last a boot, a native drum, and a wood sculpture of Pabst the lion-headed goddess, established perfect relations between them. They fell into their places of master and man as accurately as though the one had smitten and the other served for twenty years.

The only acute differences they had were upon two points—the cleaning of the medicine bottles and surgical instruments, and the looting. But it was wonderful to see how Mahommed Seti took the kourbash at the hands of Fielding, when he shied from the medicine bottles. He could have broken, or bent double with one twist, the weedy, thin-chested Fielding. But though he saw a deadly magic and the evil eye in every stopper, and though to him the surgical instruments were torturing steels which the devil had forged for his purposes, he conquered his own prejudices so far as to assist in certain bad cases which came in Fielding's way on the journey down the Nile.

The looting was a different matter. Had not Mahommed Seti looted all his life—looted from his native village to the borders of Kordofan? Did he not take to foray as a wild ass to bersim? Moreover, as little Dicky Donovan said humorously yet shamelessly when he joined them at Korosko: "What should a native do but loot who came from Manfaloot?"

Dicky had a prejudice against the Murderer, because he was a murderer; and Mahommed Seti viewed with scorn any white man who was not Fielding; much more so one who was only five feet and a trifle over. So for a time there was no sympathy between the two. But each conquered the other in the end. Seti was conquered first.

One day Dicky, with a sudden burst of generosity—for he had a button to his pocket—gave Mahommed Seti a handful of cigarettes. The next day Seti said to Fielding: "Behold, God has given thee strong men for friends. Thou hast Mahommed Seti"—his chest blew out like a bellows— "and thou hast Donovan Pasha."

Fielding grunted. He was not a fluent man, save in forbidden language, and Seti added:

"Behold thou, saadat el bey, who opens a man's body and turns over his heart with a sword-point, and sewing him up with silken cords bids him live again, greatness is in thy house! Last night thy friend, Donovan Pasha, gave into my hands a score of those cigarettes which are like the smell of a camel-yard. In the evening, having broken bread and prayed, I sat down at the door of the barber in peace to smoke, as becomes a man who loves God and His benefits. Five times I puffed, and then I stayed my lips, for why should a man die of smoke when he can die by the sword? But there are many men in Korosko whose lives are not as clean linen. These I did not love. I placed in their hands one by one the cigarettes, and with their blessings following me I lost myself in the dusk and waited."

Mahommed Seti paused. On his face was a smile of sardonic retrospection.

"Go on, you fool!" grunted Fielding.

"Nineteen sick men, unworthy followers of the Prophet, thanked Allah in the mosque to-day that their lives were spared. Donovan Pasha is a great man and a strong, effendi! We be three strong men together."

Dicky Donovan's conversion to a lasting belief in Mahommed Seti came a year later.

The thing happened at a little sortie from the Nile. Fielding was chief medical officer, and Dicky, for the moment, was unattached. When the time came for starting, Mahommed Seti brought round Fielding's horse and also Dicky Donovan's. Now, Mahommed Seti loved a horse as well as a Bagarra Arab, and he had come to love Fielding's waler Bashi-Bazouk as a Farshoot dog loves his master. And Bashi-Bazouk was worthy of Seti's love. The sand of the desert, Seti's breath and the tail of his yelek made the coat of Bashi-Bazouk like silk. It was the joy of the regiment, and the regiment knew that Seti had added a new chapter to the Koran concerning horses, in keeping with Mahomet's own famous passage

"By the CHARGERS that pant,
And the hoofs that strike fire,
And the scourers at dawn,
Who stir up the dust with it,
And cleave through a host with it!"

But Mahomet's phrases were recited in the mosque, and Seti's, as he rubbed Bashi-Bazouk with the tail of his yelek.

There was one thing, however, that Seti loved more than horses, or at least as much. Life to him was one long possible Donnybrook Fair. That was why, although he was no longer in the army, when Fielding and Dicky mounted for the sortie he said to Fielding:

"Oh, brother of Joshua and all the fighters of Israel, I have a bobtailed Arab. Permit me to ride with thee." And Fielding replied: "You will fight the barn-yard fowl for dinner; get back to your stew-pots."

But Seti was not to be fobbed off. "It is written that the Lord, the
Great One, is compassionate and merciful. Wilt thou then, O saadat."

Fielding interrupted: "Go, harry the onion-field for dinner. You're a dog of a slave, and a murderer too: you must pay the price of that grindstone!"

But Seti hung by the skin of his teeth to the fringe of Fielding's good- nature—Fielding's words only were sour and wrathful. So Seti grinned and said: "For the grindstone, behold it sent Ebn Haroun to the mercy of God. Let him rest, praise be to God!"

"You were drummed out of the army. You can't fight," said Fielding again; but he was smiling under his long moustache.

"Is not a bobtailed nag sufficient shame? Let thy friend ride the bobtailed nag and pay the price of the grindstone and the drum," said Seti.

"Fall in!" rang the colonel's command, and Fielding, giving Seti a friendly kick in the ribs, galloped away to the troop.

Seti turned to the little onion-garden. His eye harried it for a moment, and he grinned. He turned to the doorway where a stew-pot rested, and his mind dwelt cheerfully on the lamb he had looted for Fielding's dinner. But last of all his eye rested upon his bobtailed Arab, the shameless thing in an Arab country, where every horse rears his tail as a peacock spreads his feathers, as a marching Albanian lifts his foot. The bobtailed Arab's nose was up, his stump was high. A hundred times he had been in battle; he was welted and scarred like a shoe-maker's apron. He snorted his cry towards the dust rising like a surf behind the heels of the colonel's troop.

Suddenly Seti answered the cry—he answered the cry and sprang forward.

That was how in the midst of a desperate melee twenty miles away on the road to Dongola little Dicky Donovan saw Seti riding into the thick of the fight armed only with a naboot of domwood, his call, "Allala-Akbar!" rising like a hoarse-throated bugle, as it had risen many a time in the old days on the road from Manfaloot. Seti and his bobtailed Arab, two shameless ones, worked their way to the front. Not Seti's strong right arm alone and his naboot were at work, but the bobtailed Arab, like an iron-handed razor toothed shrew, struck and bit his way, his eyes bloodred like Seti's. The superstitious Dervishes fell back before this pair of demons; for their madness was like the madness of those who at the Dosah throw themselves beneath the feet of the Sheikh's horse by the mosque of El Hassan in Cairo. The bobtailed Arab's lips were drawn back over his assaulting teeth in a horrible grin. Seti grinned too, the grin of fury and of death.

Fielding did not know how it was that, falling wounded from his horse, he was caught by strong arms, as Bashi-Bazouk cleared him at a bound and broke into the desert. But Dicky Donovan, with his own horse lanced under him, knew that Seti made him mount the bobtailed Arab with Fielding in front of

him, and that a moment later they had joined the little band retreating to Korosko, having left sixty of their own dead on the field, and six times that number of Dervishes.

It was Dicky Donovan who cooked Fielding's supper that night, having harried the onion-field and fought the barn-yard fowl, as Fielding had commanded Seti.

But next evening at sunset Mahommed Seti came into the fort, slashed and bleeding, with Bashi-Bazouk limping heavily after him.

Fielding said that Seti's was the good old game for which V.C.'s were the reward—to run terrible risks to save a life in the face of the enemy; but, heretofore, it had always been the life of a man, not of a horse. To this day the Gippies of that regiment still alive do not understand why Seti should have stayed behind and risked his life to save a horse and bring him wounded back to his master. But little Dicky Donovan understood, and Fielding understood; and Fielding never afterwards mounted Bashi-Bazouk but he remembered. It was Mahommed Seti who taught him the cry of Mahomet:

"By the CHARGERS that pant,
And the hoofs that strike fire,
And the scourers at dawn,
Who stir up the dust with it,
And cleave through a host with it!"

And in the course of time Mahommed Seti managed to pay the price of the grindstone and also of the drum.

THE DESERTION OF MAHOMMED SELIM

The business began during Ramadan; how it ended and where was in the mouth of every soldier between Beni Souef and Dongola, and there was not a mud hut or a mosque within thirty miles of Mahommed Selim's home, not a khiassa or felucca dropping anchor for gossip and garlic below the mudirieh, but knew the story of Soada, the daughter of Wassef the camel- driver.

Soada was pretty and upright, with a full round breast and a slim figure. She carried a balass of water on her head as gracefully as a princess a tiara. This was remarked by occasional inspectors making their official rounds, and by more than one khowagah putting in with his dahabeah where the village maidens came to fill their water-jars. Soada's trinkets and bracelets were perhaps no better than those of her companions, but her one garment was of the linen of Beni Mazar, as good as that worn by the Sheikh-Elbeled himself.

Wassef the camel-driver, being proud of Soada, gave her the advantage of his frequent good fortune in desert loot and Nile backsheesh. But Wassef was a hard man for all that, and he grew bitter and morose at last, because he saw that camel-driving must suffer by the coming of the railway. Besides, as a man gets older he likes the season of Ramadan less, for he must fast from sunrise to sunset, though his work goes on; and, with broken sleep, having his meals at night, it is ten to one but he gets irritable.

So it happened that one evening just at sunset, Wassef came to his hut, with the sun like the red rim of a huge thumb-nail in the sky behind him, ready beyond telling for his breakfast, and found nothing. On his way home he had seen before the houses and cafes silent Mussulmans with cigarettes and matches in their fingers, cooks with their hands on the lids of the cooking pots, where the dourha and onions boiled; but here outside his own doorway there was no odour, and there was silence within.

"Now, by the beard of the Prophet," he muttered, "is it for this I have fed the girl and clothed her with linen from Beni Mazar all these years!" And he turned upon his heel, and kicked a yellow cur in the ribs; then he went to the nearest cafe, and making huge rolls of forcemeat with his fingers crammed them into his mouth, grunting like a Berkshire boar. Nor did his anger cease thereafter, for this meal of meat had cost him five piastres—the second meal of meat in a week.

As Wassef sat on the mastaba of the cafe sullen and angry, the village barber whispered in his ear that Mahommed Selim and Soada had been hunting jackals in the desert all afternoon. Hardly had the

barber fled from the anger of Wassef, when a glittering kavass of the Mouffetish at Cairo passed by on a black errand of conscription. With a curse Wassef felt in his vest for his purse, and called to the kavass—the being more dreaded in Egypt than the plague.

That very night the conscription descended upon Mahommed Selim, and by sunrise he was standing in front of the house of the Mamour with twelve others, to begin the march to Dongola. Though the young man's father went secretly to the Mamour, and offered him backsheesh, even to the tune of a feddan of land, the Mamour refused to accept it. That was a very peculiar thing, because every Egyptian official, from the Khedive down to the ghafhr of the cane-fields, took backsheesh in the name of Allah.

Wassef the camel-driver was the cause. He was a deep man and a strong; and it was through him the conscription descended upon Mahommed Selim— "son of a burnt father," as he called him—who had gone shooting jackals in the desert with his daughter, and had lost him his breakfast. Wassef's rage was quiet but effective, for he had whispered to some purpose in the ear of the Mamour as well as in that of the dreaded kavass of conscription. Afterwards, he had gone home and smiled at Soada his daughter when she lied to him about the sunset breakfast.

With a placid smile and lips that murmured, "Praise be to God," the malignant camel-driver watched the shrieking women of the village throwing dust on their heads and lamenting loudly for the thirteen young men of Beni Souef who were going forth never to return—or so it seemed to them; for of all the herd of human kine driven into the desert before whips and swords, but a moiety ever returned, and that moiety so battered that their mothers did not know them. Therefore, at Beni Souef that morning women wept, and men looked sullenly upon the ground—all but Wassef the camel-driver.

It troubled the mind of Wassef that Mahommed Selim made no outcry at his fate. He was still more puzzled when the Mamour whispered to him that Mahommed Selim had told the kavass and his own father that since it was the will of God, then the will of God was his will, and he would go. Wassef replied that the Mamour did well not to accept the backsheesh of Mahommed Selim's father, for the Mouffetish at the palace of Ismail would have heard of it, and there would have been an end to the Mamour. It was quite a different matter when it was backsheesh for sending Mahommed Selim to the Soudan.

With a shameless delight Wassef went to the door of his own home, and, calling to Soada, told her that Mahommed Selim was among the conscripts. He also told her that the young man was willing to go, and that the Mamour would take no backsheesh from his father. He looked to see her burst into tears and wailing, but she only stood and looked at him like one stricken blind. Wassef laughed, and turned on his heel; and went out: for what should he know of the look in a woman's face—he to whom most women were alike, he who had taken dancing-girls with his camels into the desert many a time? What should he know of that love which springs once in every woman's heart, be she fellah or Pharaoh's daughter?

When he had gone, Soada groped her way blindly to the door and out into the roadway. Her lips moved, but she only said: "Mahommed—Mahommed Selim!" Her father's words knelled in her ear that her lover was willing to go, and she kept saying brokenly: "Mahommed—Mahommed Selim!" As the mist left her eyes she saw the conscripts go by, and Mahommed Selim was in the rear rank. He saw her also, but he kept his head turned away, taking a cigarette from young Yusef, the drunken ghaffir, as they passed on.

Unlike the manner of her people, Soada turned and went back into her house, and threw herself upon the mud floor, and put the folds of her garment in her mouth lest she should cry out in her agony. A whole day she lay there and did not stir, save to drink from the water-bottle which old Fatima, the maker of mats, had placed by her side. For Fatima thought of the far-off time when she loved Hassan the potter, who had been dragged from his wheel by a kavass of conscription and lost among the sands of the Libyan desert; and she read the girl's story.

That evening, as Wassef the camel-driver went to the mosque to pray, Fatima cursed him, because now all the village laughed secretly at the revenge that Wassef had taken upon the lover of his daughter. A few laughed the harder because they knew Wassef would come to feel it had been better to have chained Mahommed Selim to a barren fig-tree and kept him there until he married Soada, than to let him go. He had mischievously sent him into that furnace which eats the Fellaheen to the bones, and these bones thereafter mark white the road of the Red Sea caravans and the track of the Khedive's soldiers in the yellow sands.

When Fatima cursed Wassef he turned and spat at her; and she went back and sat on the ground beside Soada, and mumbled tags from the Koran above her for comfort. Then she ate greedily the food which Soada should have eaten; snatching scraps of consolation in return for the sympathy she gave.

The long night went, the next day came, and Soada got up and began to work again. And the months went by.

II

One evening, on a day which had been almost too hot for even the seller of liquorice-water to go by calling and clanging, Wassef the camel-driver sat at the door of a malodorous cafe and listened to a wandering welee chanting the Koran. Wassef was in an ill-humour: first, because the day had been so hot; secondly, because he had sold his ten-months' camel at a price almost within the bounds of honesty; and thirdly, because a score of railway contractors and subs. were camped outside the town. Also, Soada had scarcely spoken to him for three days past.

In spite of all, Soada had been the apple of his eye, although he had sworn again and again that next to a firman of the Sultan, a ten-months' camel was the most beautiful thing on earth. He was in a bitter humour. This had been an intermittent disease with him almost since the day Mahommed Selim had been swallowed up by the Soudan; for, like her mother before her, Soada had no mind to be a mat for his feet. Was it not even said that Soada's mother was descended from an English slave with red hair, who in the terrible disaster at Damietta in 1805 had been carried away into captivity on the Nile, where he married a fellah woman and died a good Mussulman?

Soada's mother had had red-brown hair, and not black as becomes a fellah woman; but Wassef was proud of this ancient heritage of red hair, which belonged to a field-marshal of Great Britain—so he swore by the beard of the Prophet. That is why he had not beaten Soada these months past when she refused to answer him, when with cold stubbornness she gave him his meals or withheld them at her will. He was even a little awed by her silent force of will, and at last he had to ask her humbly for a savoury dish which her mother had taught her to make—a dish he always ate upon the birthday of Mahomet Ali, who had done him the honour to flog him with his own kourbash for filching the rations of his Arab charger.

But this particular night Wassef was bitter, and watched with stolid indifference the going down of the sun, the time when he usually said his prayers. He was in so ill a humour that he would willingly have met his old enemy, Yusef, the drunken ghaffir, and settled their long-standing dispute for ever. But Yusef came not that way. He was lying drunk with hashish outside the mosque El Hassan, with a letter from Mahommed Selim in his green turban—for Yusef had been a pilgrimage to Mecca and might wear the green turban.

But if Yusef came not by the cafe where Wassef sat glooming, some one else came who quickly roused Wassef from his phlegm. It was Donovan Pasha, the young English official, who had sat with him many a time at the door of his but and asked him questions about Dongola and Berber and the Soudanese. And because Dicky spoke Arabic, and was never known to have aught to do with the women of Beni Souef, he had been welcome; and none the less because he never frowned when an Arab told a lie.

"Nehar-ak koom said, Mahommed Wassef," said Dicky; and sat upon a bench and drew a narghileh to him, wiping the ivory mouthpiece with his handkerchief.

"Nehar-ak said, saadat el Pasha," answered Wassef, and touched lips, breast, and forehead with his hand. Then they shook hands, thumbs up, after the ancient custom. And once more, Wassef touched his breast, his lips, and his forehead.

They sat silent too long for Wassef's pleasure, for he took pride in what he was pleased to call his friendship with Donovan Pasha, and he could see his watchful neighbours gathering at a little distance. It did not suit his book that they two should not talk together.

"May Allah take them to his mercy!—A regiment was cut to pieces by the Dervishes at Dongola last quarter of the moon," he said.

"It was not the regiment of Mahommed Selim," Dicky answered slowly, with a curious hard note in his voice.

"All blessings do not come at once—such is the will of God!" answered Wassef with a sneer.

"You brother of asses," said Dicky, showing his teeth a little, "you brother of asses of Bagdad!"

"Saadat el basha!" exclaimed Wassef, angry and dumfounded.

"You had better have gone yourself, and left Mahommed Selim your camels and your daughter," continued Dicky, his eyes straight upon Wassef's.

"God knows your meaning," said Wassef in a sudden fright; for the Englishman's tongue was straight, as he well knew.

"They sneer at you behind your back, Mahommed Wassef. No man in the village dare tell you, for you have no friends, but I tell you, that you may save Soada before it is too late. Mahommed Selim lives; or lived last quarter of the moon, so says Yusef the ghaffir. Sell your ten- months' camel, buy the lad out, and bring him back to Soada."

"Saadat!" said Wassef, in a quick fear, and dropped the stem of the narghileh, and got to his feet. "Saadat el basha!"

"Before the Nile falls and you may plant yonder field with onions," answered Dicky, jerking his head towards the flooded valley, "her time will be come!"

Wassef's lips were drawn, like shrivelled parchment over his red gums, the fingers of his right hand fumbled in his robe.

"There's no one to kill—keep quiet!" said Dicky, But Wassef saw near by the faces of the villagers, and on every face he thought he read a smile, a sneer; though in truth none sneered, for they were afraid of his terrible anger. Mad with fury he snatched the turban from his head and threw it on the ground. Then suddenly he gave one cry, "Allah!" a vibrant clack like a pistol-shot, for he saw Yusef, the drunken ghaffir, coming down the road.

Yusef heard that cry of "Allah!" and he knew that the hour had come for settling old scores. The hashish clouds lifted from his brain, and he gripped his naboot of the hard wood of the dom-palm, and, with a cry like a wolf, came on.

It would have been well for Wassef the camel-driver if he had not taken the turban from his head, for before he could reach Yusef with his dagger, he went down, his skull cracking like the top of an egg under a spoon.

III

Thus it was that Soada was left to fight her battle alone. She did not weep or wail when Wassef's body was brought home and the moghassil and hanouti came to do their offices. She did not smear her hair with mud, nor was she moved by the wailing of the mourning women nor the chanters of the Koran. She only said to Fatima when all was over: "It is well; he is gone from my woe to the mercy of God! Praise be to God!" And she held her head high in the village still, though her heart was in the dust.

She would have borne her trouble alone to the end, but that she was bitten on the arm by one of her father's camels the day they were sold in the marketplace. Then, helpless and suffering and fevered, she yielded to the thrice-repeated request of Dicky Donovan, and was taken to the hospital at Assiout, which Fielding Bey, Dicky's friend, had helped to found.

But Soada, as her time drew near and the terror of it stirred her heart, cast restless eyes upon the whitewashed walls and rough floors of the hospital. She longed for the mud hut at Beni Souef, and the smell of the river and the little field of onions she planted every year. Day by day she grew harder of heart against those who held her in the hospital—for to her it was but a prison. She would not look when the doctor came, and she would not answer, but kept her eyes closed; and she did not shrink when they dressed the arm so cruelly wounded by the camel's teeth, but lay still and dumb.

Now, a strange thing happened, for her hair which had been so black turned brown, and grew browner and browner till it was like the hair of her mother, who, so the Niline folk said, was descended from the English soldier-slave with red hair.

Fielding Bey and Dicky came to see her in hospital once before they returned to Cairo; but Soada

would not even speak to them, though she smiled when they spoke to her; and no one else ever saw her smile during the days she spent in that hospital with the red floor and white walls and the lazy watchman walking up and down before the door. She kept her eyes closed in the daytime; but at night they were always open—always. Pictures of all she had lived and seen came back to her then—pictures of days long before Mahommed Selim came into her life. Mahommed Selim! She never spoke the words now, but whenever she thought them her heart shrank in pain. Mahommed Selim had gone like a coward into the desert, leaving her alone.

Her mind dwelt on the little mud hut and the onion field, and she saw down by the foreshore of the river the great khiassas from Assouan and Luxor laden with cotton or dourha or sugar-cane, their bent prows hooked in the Nile mud. She saw again the little fires built along the shore and atop of the piles of grain, round which sat the white, the black, and the yellow-robed riverine folk in the crimson glare; while from the banks came the cry: "Alla-haly, 'm alla-haly!" as stalwart young Arabs drew in from the current to the bank some stubborn, overloaded khiassa. She heard the snarl of the camels as they knelt down before her father's but to rest before the journey into the yellow plains of sand beyond. She saw the seller of sweetmeats go by calling—calling. She heard the droning of the children in the village school behind the hut, the dull clatter of Arabic consonants galloping through the Koran. She saw the moon—the full moon-upon the Nile, the wide acreage of silver water before the golden-yellow and yellow-purple of the Libyan hills behind.

She saw through her tears the sweet mirage of home, and her heart rebelled against the prison where she lay. What should she know of hospitals—she whose medicaments had been herbs got from the Nile valley and the cool Nile mud? Was it not the will of God if we lived or the will of God if we died? Did we not all lie in the great mantle of the mercy of God, ready to be lifted up or to be set down as He willed? They had prisoned her here; there were bars upon the windows, there were watchmen at the door.

At last she could bear it no longer; the end of it all came. She stole out over the bodies of the sleeping watchmen, out into the dusty road under the palms, down to the waterside, to the Nile—the path leading homewards. She must go down the Nile, hiding by day, travelling by night—the homing bird with a broken wing-back to the but where she had lived so long with Wassef the camel-driver; back where she could lie in the dusk of her windowless home, shutting out the world from her solitude. There she could bear the agony of her hour.

Drinking the water of the Nile, eating the crumbs of dourha bread she had brought from the hospital, getting an onion from a field, chewing shreds of sugarcane, hiding by day and trudging on by night, hourly growing weaker, she struggled towards Beni Souef. Fifty—forty—thirty—ten— five miles! Oh! the last two days, her head so hot and her brain bursting, and a thousand fancies swimming before her eyes, her heart fluttering, fluttering—stopping, going on—stopping, going on.

It was only the sound of the river—the Nile, Mother of Egypt, crooning to her disordered spirit, which kept her on her feet. Five miles, four miles, three miles, two, and then—she never quite remembered how she came to the hut where she was born. Two miles—two hours of incredible agony, now running, now leaning against a palm tree, now dropping to her knees, now fighting on and on, she came at last to the one spot in the world where she could die in peace.

As she staggered, stumbled, through the village, Yusef, the drunken ghaffir, saw her. He did not dare speak to her, for had he not killed her father, and had he not bought himself free of punishment from the Mudir? So he ran to old Fatima and knocked upon her door with his naboot, crying: "In the name of Allah get thee to the hut of Wassef the camel-driver!"

Thus it was that Soada, in her agony, heard a voice say out of the infinite distance: "All praise to Allah, he hath even now the strength of a year-old child!"

IV

That night at sunset, as Soada lay upon the sheepskin spread for her, with the child nestled between her arm and her breast, a figure darkened the doorway, and old Fatima cried out:

"Mahommed Selim!"

With a gasping sound Soada gathered the child quickly to her breast, and shrank back to the wall.

This surely was the ghost of Mahommed Selim— this gaunt, stooping figure covered with dust.

"Soada, in the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful, Soada, beautiful one!"

Mahommed Selim, once the lithe, the straight, the graceful, now bent, awkward, fevered, all the old daring gone from him, stood still in the middle of the room, humbled before the motherhood in his sight.

"Brother of jackals," cried old Fatima, "what dost thou here? What dost thou here, dog of dogs!" She spat at him.

He took no notice. "Soada," he said eagerly, prayerfully, and his voice, though hoarse, was softer than she had ever heard it. "Soada, I have come through death to thee—Listen, Soada! At night, when sleep was upon the barrack-house, I stole out to come to thee. My heart had been hard. I had not known how much I loved thee—"

Soada interrupted him. "What dost thou know of love, Mahommed Selim?
The blood of the dead cries from the ground."

He came a step nearer. "The blood of Wassef the camel-driver is upon my head," he said. "In the desert there came news of it. In the desert, even while we fought the wild tribes, one to ten, a voice kept crying in my ear, even as thou hast cried, 'What didst thou know of love, Mahommed Selim!' One by one the men of Beni Souef fell round me; one by one they spoke of their village and of their women, and begged for a drop of water, and died. And my heart grew hot within me, and a spirit kept whispering in my ear: 'Mahommed Selim, think of the village thou hast shamed, of Soada thou hast wronged! No drop of water shall cheer thy soul in dying!'"

Fatima and Soada listened now with bated breath, for this was the voice of one who had drunk the vinegar and gall of life.

"When the day was done, and sleep was upon the barrack-house, my heart waked up and I knew that I loved Soada as I had never loved her. I ran into the desert, and the jackals flew before me—outcasts of the desert, they and I. Coming to the tomb of Amshar the sheikh, by which was a well, there I found a train of camels. One of these I stole, and again I ran into the desert, and left the jackals behind. Hour after hour, day and night, I rode on. But faintness was upon me, and dreams came. For though only the sands were before me, I seemed to watch the Nile running- -running, and thou beside it, hastening with it, hastening, hastening towards thy home. And Allah put a thorn into my heart, that a sharp pain went through my body—and at last I fell."

Soada's eyes were on him now with a strange, swimming brilliancy.

"Mahommed—Mahommed Selim, Allah touched thine eyes that thou didst see truly," she said eagerly. "Speak not till I have done," he answered. "When I waked again I was alone in the desert, no food, no water, and the dead camel beside me. But I had no fear. 'If it be God's will,' said I, 'then I shall come unto Soada. If it be not God's will, so be it: for are we not on the cushion of His mercy, to sleep or to wake, to live or to die?'"

He paused, tottering, and presently sank upon the ground, his hands drooped before him, his head bent down. Old Fatima touched him on the shoulder.

"Brother of vultures didst thou go forth; brother of eagles dost thou return," she said. "Eat, drink, in the house of thy child and its mother."

"Shall the unforgiven eat or drink?" he asked, and he rocked his body to and fro, like one who chants the Koran in a corner of El Azhar, forgetting and forgotten.

Soada's eyes were on him now as though they might never leave him again; and she dragged herself little by little towards him, herself and the child—little by little, until at last she touched his feet, and the child's face was turned towards him from its mother's breast.

"Thou art my love, Mahommed Selim," she said. He raised his head from his hands, a hunger of desire in his face.

"Thou art my lord," she added: "art thou not forgiven? The little one is thine and mine," she whispered. "Wilt thou not speak to him?"

"Lest Allah should strike me with blindness and dry up the juice of my veins, I will not touch thee or the child until all be righted. Food will I not eat, nor water drink until thou art mine—by the law of the Prophet, mine."

Laying down the water-jar, and the plate of dourha bread, old Fatima gathered her robe about her, and cried as she ran from the house: "Marriage and fantasia thou shalt have this hour."

The stiffness seemed to pass from her bones as she ran through the village to the house of the Omdah. Her voice, lifting shrilly, sang the Song of Haleel, the song of the newly married, till it met the chant of the Muezzin on the tower of the mosque El Hassan, and mingled with it, dying away over the fields of bersim and the swift-flowing Nile.

That night Mahommed Selim and Soada the daughter of Wassef the camel- driver were married, but the only fantasia they held was their own low laughter over the child. In the village, however, people were little moved to smile, for they knew that Mahommed Selim was a deserter from the army of the Khedive at Dongola, and that meant death. But no one told Soada this, and she did not think; she was content to rest in the fleeting dream.

"Give them twenty-four hours," said the black-visaged fat sergeant of cavalry come to arrest Mahommed Selim for desertion.

The father of Mahommed Selim again offered the Mamour a feddan of land if the young man might go free, and to the sergeant he offered a she-camel and a buffalo. To no purpose. It was Mahommed Selim himself who saved his father's goods to him. He sent this word to the sergeant by Yusef the drunken ghaffir: "Give me to another sunset and sunrise, and what I have is thine—three black donkeys of Assiout rented to old Abdullah the sarraf."

Because with this offer he should not only have backsheesh but the man also, the fat sergeant gave him leave. When the time was up, and Mahommed Selim drew Soada's face to his breast, he knew that it was the last look and last embrace.

"I am going back," he said; "my place is empty at Dongola."

"No, no, thou shalt not go," she cried. "See how the little one loves thee," she urged, and, sobbing, she held the child up to him.

But he spoke softly to her, and at last she said: "Kiss me, Mahommed Selim. Behold now thy discharge shall be bought from the palace of the Khedive, and soon thou wilt return," she cried.

"If it be the will of God," he answered; "but the look of thine eyes I will take with me, and the face of the child here." He thrust a finger into the palm of the child, and the little dark hand closed round it. But when he would have taken it away, the little hand still clung, though the eyes were scarce opened upon life.

"See, Mahommed Selim," Soada cried, "he would go with thee."

"He shall come to me one day, by the mercy of God," answered Mahommed Selim.

Then he went out into the market-place and gave himself up to the fat sergeant. As they reached the outskirts of the village a sorry camel came with a sprawling gallop after them, and swaying and rolling above it was Yusef, the drunken ghaffir, his naboot of dom-wood across his knees.

"What dost thou come for, friend of the mercy of God?" asked Mahommed Selim.

"To be thy messenger, praise be to God!" answered Yusef, swinging his water-bottle clear for a drink.

V

In Egypt, the longest way round is not the shortest way home, and that was why Mahommed Selim's court-martial took just three minutes and a half; and the bimbashi who judged him found even that too long, for he yawned in the deserter's face as he condemned him to death.

Mahommed Selim showed no feeling when the sentence was pronounced. His face had an apathetic look. It seemed as if it were all one to him. But when they had turned him round to march to the shed where he was to be kept, till hung like a pig at sunrise, his eyes glanced about restlessly. For even as

the sentence had been pronounced a new idea had come into his mind. Over the heads of the Gippy soldiers, with their pipestem legs, his look flashed eagerly, then a little painfully—then suddenly stayed, for it rested on the green turban of Yusef, the drunken ghaffir. Yusef's eyes were almost shut; his face had the grey look of fresh-killed veal, for he had come from an awful debauch of hashish.

"Allah! Allah!" cried Mahommed Selim, for that was the sound which always waked the torpid brain of Yusef since Wassef the camel-driver's skull had crackled under his naboot.

Yusef's wide shoulders straightened back, his tongue licked his lips, his eyes stared before him, his throat was dry. He licked his lips again. "Allah!" he cried and ran forward.

The soldiers thrust Yusef back. Mahommed Selim turned and whispered to the sergeant.

"Backsheesh!" he said; "my grey Arab for a word with Yusef the ghaffir."

"Malaish!" said the sergeant; and the soldiers cleared a way for Yusef.

The palms of the men from Beni Souef met once, twice, thrice; they touched their lips, their breasts, their foreheads, with their hands, three times. Then Mahommed Selim fell upon the breast of Yusef and embraced him. Doing so he whispered in his ear:

"In the name of Allah, tell Soada I died fighting the Dervishes!"

"So be it, in God's name!" said Yusef. "A safe journey to you, brother of giants."

Next morning at sunrise, between two dom-palms, stood Mahommed Selim; but scarce a handful of the soldiers sent to see him die laughed when the rope was thrown over his head. For his story had gone abroad, and it was said that he was mad—none but a madman would throw away his life for a fellah woman. And was it not written that a madman was one beloved of Allah, who had taken his spirit up into heaven, leaving only the disordered body behind?

If, at the last moment, Mahommed Selim had but cried out: "I am mad; with my eyes I have seen God!" no man would have touched the rope that hanged him up that day.

But, according to the sacred custom, he only asked for a bowl of water, drank it, said "Allah!" and bowed his head three times towards Mecca— and bowed his head no more.

Before another quarter was added to the moon, Yusef, the drunken ghaffir, at the door of Soada's hut in Beni Souef, told old Fatima the most wonderful tale, how Mahommed Selim had died on his sheepskin, having killed ten Dervishes with his own hand; and that a whole regiment had attended his funeral.

This is to the credit of Yusef's account, that the last half of his statement was no lie.

ON THE REEF OF NORMAN'S WOE

> "It was the schooner Hesperus
> That sailed the wintry sea;
> And the skipper had taken his little daughter
> To bear him company.
> ——————————-
> Such was the wreck of the Hesperus
> In the midnight and the snow!
> Christ save us all from a death like this,
> On the reef of Norman's woe!"

Only it was not the schooner Hesperus, and she did not sail the wintry sea. It was the stern-wheeled tub Amenhotep, which churned her way up and down the Nile, scraping over sand banks, butting the shores with gaiety embarrassing—for it was the time of cholera, just before the annual rise of the Nile. Fielding Bey, the skipper, had not taken his little daughter, for he had none; but he had taken little

Dicky Donovan, who had been in at least three departments of the Government, with advantage to all.

Dicky was dining with Fielding at the Turf Club, when a telegram came saying that cholera had appeared at a certain village on the Nile. Fielding had dreaded this, had tried to make preparation for it, had begged of the Government this reform and that—to no purpose. He knew that the saving of the country from an epidemic lay with his handful of Englishmen and the faithful native officials; but chiefly with the Englishmen. He was prepared only as a forlorn hope is prepared, with energy, with personal courage, with knowledge; and never were these more needed.

With the telegram in his hand, he thought of his few English assistants, and sighed; for the game they would play was the game of Hercules and Death over the body of Alcestis.

Dicky noted the sigh, read the telegram, drank another glass of claret, lighted a cigarette, drew his coffee to him, and said: "The Khedive is away—I'm off duty; take me."

Fielding looked surprised, yet with an eye of hope. If there was one man in Egypt who could do useful work in the business, it was little Dicky Donovan, who had a way with natives such as no man ever had in Egypt; who knew no fear of anything mortal; who was as tireless as a beaver, as keen-minded as a lynx is sharp-eyed. It was said to Dicky's discredit that he had no heart, but Fielding knew better. When Dicky offered himself now, Fielding said, almost feverishly: "But, dear old D., you don't see—"

"Don't I?—Well, then,

"'What are the blessings of the sight?—
Oh, tell your poor blind boy!'"

What Fielding told him did not alter his intention, nor was it Fielding's wish that it should, though he felt it right to warn the little man what sort of thing was in store for them.

"As if I don't know, old lime-burner!" answered Dicky coolly.

In an hour they were on the Amenhotep, and in two hours they were on the way—a floating hospital—to the infected district of Kalamoun. There the troubles began. It wasn't the heat, and it wasn't the work, and it wasn't the everlasting care of the sick: it was the ceaseless hunt for the disease-stricken, the still, tireless opposition of the natives, the remorseless deception, the hopeless struggle against the covert odds. With nothing behind: no support from the Government, no adequate supplies, few capable men; and all the time the dead, inert, dust- powdered air; the offices of policeman, doctor, apothecary, even undertaker and gravedigger, to perform; and the endless weeks of it all. A handful of good men under two leaders of nerve, conscience and ability, to fight an invisible enemy, which, gaining headway, would destroy its scores of thousands!

At the end of the first two months Fielding Bey became hopeless.

"We can't throttle it," he said to Dicky Donovan. "They don't give us the ghost of a chance. To-day I found a dead-un hid in an oven under a heap of flour to be used for to-morrow's baking; I found another doubled up in a cupboard, and another under a pile of dourha which will be ground into flour."

"With twenty ghaffirs I beat five cane and dourha fields this morning," said Dicky. "Found three cases. They'd been taken out of the village during the night."

"Bad ones?"

"So so. They'll be worse before they're better. That was my morning's flutter. This afternoon I found the huts these gentlemen call their homes. I knocked holes in the roofs per usual, burnt everything that wasn't wood, let in the light o' heaven, and splashed about limewash and perchloride. That's my day's tot-up. Any particular trouble?" he added, eyeing Fielding closely.

Fielding fretfully jerked his foot on the floor, and lighted his pipe, the first that day.

"Heaps. I've put the barber in prison, and given the sarraf twenty lashes for certifying that the death of the son of the Mamour was el aadah—the ordinary. It was one of the worst cases I've ever seen. He fell ill at ten and was dead at two, the permis d'inhumation was given at four, and the usual thing occurred: the bodywashers got the bedding and clothing, and the others the coverlet. God only knows who'll wear that clothing, who'll sleep in that bed!"

"If the Lord would only send them sense, we'd supply sublimate solution— douche and spray, and zinc for their little long boxes of bones," mused Dicky, his eyes half shut, as he turned over in his hands some scarabs a place-hunting official had brought him that day. "Well, that isn't all?" he added, with a quick upward glance and a quizzical smile. His eyes, however, as they fell on Fielding's, softened in a

peculiar way, and a troubled look flashed through them; for Fielding's face was drawn and cold, though the eyes were feverish, and a bright spot burned on his high cheek-bones.

"No, it isn't all, Dicky. The devil's in the whole business. Steady, sullen opposition meets us at every hand. Norman's been here—rode over from Abdallah—twenty-five miles. A report's going through the native villages, started at Abdallah, that our sanitary agents are throwing yellow handkerchiefs in the faces of those they're going to isolate."

"That's Hoskai Bey's yellow handkerchief. He's a good man, but he blows his nose too much, and blows it with a flourish. . . . Has Norman gone back?"

"No, I've made him lie down in my cabin. He says he can't sleep, says he can only work. He looks ten years older. Abdallah's an awful place, and it's a heavy district. The Mamour there's a scoundrel. He has influenced the whole district against Norman and our men. Norman—you know what an Alexander-Hannibal baby it is, all the head of him good for the best sort of work anywhere, all the fat heart of him dripping sentiment—gave a youngster a comfit the other day. By some infernal accident the child fell ill two days afterwards—it had been sucking its father's old shoe—and Norman just saved its life by the skin of his teeth. If the child had died, there'd have been a riot probably. As it is, there's talk that we're scattering poisoned sweetmeats to spread the disease. He's done a plucky thing, though. . . ." He paused. Dicky looked up inquiringly, and Fielding continued. "There's a fellow called Mustapha Kali, a hanger-on of the Mudir of the province. He spread a report that this business was only a scare got up by us; that we poisoned the people and buried them alive. What does Norman do? He promptly arrests him, takes him to the Mudir, and says that the brute must be punished or he'll carry the matter to the Khedive."

"Here's to you, Mr. Norman!" said Dicky, with a little laugh. "What does the Mudir do?"

"Doesn't know what to do. He tells Norman to say to me that if he puts the fellow in prison there'll be a riot, for they'll make a martyr of him. If he fines him it won't improve matters. So he asks me to name a punishment which'll suit our case. He promises to give it 'his most distinguished consideration.'"

"And what's your particular poison for him?" asked Dicky, with his eyes on the Cholera Hospital a few hundred yards away.

"I don't know. If he's punished in the ordinary way it will only make matters worse, as the Mudir says. Something's needed that will play our game and turn the tables on the reptile too."

"A sort of bite himself with his own fangs, eh?" Dicky seemed only idly watching the moving figures by the hospital.

"Yes, but what is it? I can't inoculate him with bacilli. That's what'd do the work, I fancy."

"Pocket your fancy, Fielding," answered Dicky. "Let me have a throw."

"Go on. If you can't hit it off, it's no good, for my head doesn't think these days: it only sees, and hears, and burns."

Dicky eyed Fielding keenly, and then, pouring out some whiskey for himself, put the bottle on the floor beside him, casually as it were. Then he said, with his girlish laugh, not quite so girlish these days: "I've got his sentence pat—it'll meet the case, or you may say, 'Cassio, never more be officer of mine.'"

He drew over a piece of paper lying on the piano—for there was a piano on the Amenhotep, and with what seemed an audacious levity Fielding played in those rare moments when they were not working or sleeping; and Fielding could really play! As Dicky wrote he read aloud in a kind of legal monotone:

> The citizen Mustapha Kali having asserted that there is no cholera, and circulated various false statements concerning the treatment of patients, is hereby appointed as hospital-assistant for three months, in the Cholera Hospital of Kalamoun, that he may have opportunity of correcting his opinions. —Signed Ebn ben Hari, Mudir of Abdallah.

Fielding lay back and laughed—the first laugh on his lips for a fortnight. He laughed till his dry, fevered lips took on a natural moisture, and he said at last: "You've pulled it off, D. That's masterly. You and Norman have the only brains in this show. I get worse every day; I do—upon my soul!"

There was a curious anxious look in Dicky's eyes, but he only said: "You like it? Think it fills the bill, eh?"

"If the Mudir doesn't pass the sentence I'll shut up shop." He leaned over anxiously to Dicky and gripped his arm. "I tell you this pressure of opposition has got to be removed, or we'll never get this

beast of an epidemic under, but we'll go under instead, my boy."

"Oh, we're doing all right," Dicky answered, with only apparent carelessness. "We've got inspection of the trains, we've got some sort of command of the foreshores, we've got the water changed in the mosques, we've closed the fountains, we've stopped the markets, we've put Sublimate Pasha and Limewash Effendi on the war-path, and—"

"And the natives believe in lighted tar-barrels and a cordon sanitaire! No, D., things must take a turn, or the game's lost and we'll go with it. Success is the only thing that'll save their lives—and ours: we couldn't stand failure in this. A man can walk to the gates of hell to do the hardest trick, and he'll come back one great blister and live, if he's done the thing he set out for; but if he doesn't do it, he falls into the furnace. He never comes back. Dicky, things must be pulled our way, or we go to deep damnation."

Dicky turned a little pale, for there was high nervous excitement in Fielding's words; and for a moment he found it hard to speak. He was about to say something, however, when Fielding continued.

"Norman there,"—he pointed to the deck-cabin, "Norman's the same. He says it's do or die; and he looks it. It isn't like a few fellows besieged by a host. For in that case you wait to die, and you fight to the last, and you only have your own lives. But this is different. We're fighting to save these people from themselves; and this slow, quiet, deadly work, day in, day out, in the sickening sun and smell-faugh! the awful smell in the air—it kills in the end, if you don't pull your game off. You know it's true."

His eyes had an eager, almost prayerful look; he was like a child in his simple earnestness. His fingers moved over the maps on the table, in which were little red and white and yellow flags, the white flags to mark the towns and villages where they had mastered the disease, the red flags to mark the new ones attacked, the yellow to indicate those where the disease was raging. His fingers touched one of the flags, and he looked down.

"See, D. Here are two new places attacked to-day.

"I must ride over to Abdallah when Norman goes. It's all so hopeless!"

"Things will take a turn," rejoined Dicky, with a forced gaiety. "You needn't ride over to Abdallah. I'll go with Norman, and what's more I'll come back here with Mustapha Kali."

"You'll go to the Mudir?" asked Fielding eagerly. He seemed to set so much store by this particular business.

"I'll bring the Mudir too, if there's any trouble," said Dicky grimly; though it is possible he did not mean what he said.

Two hours later Fielding, Dicky, and Norman were in conference, extending their plans of campaign. Fielding and Norman were eager and nervous, and their hands and faces seemed to have taken on the arid nature of the desert. Before they sat down Dicky had put the bottle of whiskey out of easy reach; for Fielding, under ordinary circumstances the most abstemious of men, had lately, in his great fatigue and overstrain, unconsciously emptied his glass more often than was wise for a campaign of long endurance. Dicky noticed now, as they sat round the table, that Norman's hand went to the coffee-pot as Fielding's had gone to his glass. What struck him as odd also was that Fielding seemed to have caught something of Norman's manner. There was the same fever in the eyes, though Norman's face was more worn and the eyes more sunken. He looked like a man that was haunted. There was, too, a certain air of helplessness about him, a primitive intensity almost painful. Dicky saw Fielding respond to this in a curious way—it was the kind of fever that passes quickly from brain to brain when there is not sound bodily health commanded by a cool intelligence to insulate it. Fielding had done the work of four men for over two months, and, like most large men, his nerves had given in before Dicky's, who had done six men's work at least, and, by his power of organisation and his labour-saving intelligence, conserved the work of another fifty.

The three were sitting silent, having arranged certain measures, when Norman sprang to his feet excitedly and struck the table with his hand.

"It's no use, sir," he said to Fielding, "I'll have to go. I'm no good. I neglect my duty. I was to be back at Abdallah at five. I forgot all about it. A most important thing. A load of fessikh was landed at Minkari, five miles beyond Abdallah. We've prohibited fessikh. I was going to seize it. . . . It's no good. It's all so hopeless here."

Dicky knew now that the beginning of the end had come for Norman. There were only two things to do: get him away shooting somewhere, or humour him here. But there was no chance for shooting till things got very much better. The authorities in Cairo would never understand, and the babbling social-

military folk would say that they had calmly gone shooting while pretending to stay the cholera epidemic. It wouldn't be possible to explain that Norman was in a bad way, and that it was done to give him half a chance of life.

Fielding also ought to have a few days clear away from this constant pressure and fighting, and the sounds and the smells of death; but it could not be yet. Therefore, to humour them both was the only thing, and Norman's was the worse case. After all, they had got a system of sanitary supervision, they had the disease by the throat, and even in Cairo the administration was waking up a little. The crisis would soon pass perhaps, if a riot could be stayed and the natives give up their awful fictions of yellow handkerchiefs, poisoned sweetmeats, deadly limewash, and all such nonsense.

So Dicky said now, "All right, Norman; come along. You'll seize that fessikh, and I'll bring back Mustapha Kali. We'll work him as he has never worked in his life. He'll be a living object-lesson. We'll have all Upper Egypt on the banks of the Nile waiting to see what happens to Mustapha."

Dicky laughed, and Fielding responded feebly; but Norman was looking at the hospital with a look too bright for joy, too intense for despair.

"I found ten in a corner of a cane-field yesterday," he said dreamily. "Four were dead, and the others had taken the dead men's smocks as covering." He shuddered. "I see nothing but limewash, smell nothing but carbolic. It's got into my head. Look here, old man, I can't stand it. I'm no use," he added pathetically to Fielding.

"You're right enough, if you'll not take yourself so seriously," said Dicky jauntily. "You mustn't try to say, 'Alone I did it.' Come along. Fill your tobacco-pouch. There are the horses. I'm ready."

He turned to Fielding.

"It's going to be a stiff ride, Fielding. But I'll do it in twenty-four hours, and bring Mustapha Kali too—for a consideration."

He paused, and Fielding said, with an attempt at playfulness: "Name your price."

"That you play for me, when I get back, the overture of 'Tannhauser'. Play it, mind; no tuning-up sort of thing, like last Sunday's performance. Practise it, my son! Is it a bargain? I'm not going to work for nothing a day."

He watched the effect of his words anxiously, for he saw how needful it was to divert Fielding's mind in the midst of all this "plague, pestilence, and famine." For days Fielding had not touched the piano, the piano which Mrs. Henshaw, widow of Henshaw of the Buffs, had insisted on his taking with him a year before, saying that it would be a cure for loneliness when away from her. During the first of these black days Fielding had played intermittently for a few moments at a time, and Dicky had noticed that after playing he seemed in better spirits. But lately the disease of a ceaseless unrest, of constant sleepless work, was on him. He had not played for near a week, saying, in response to Dicky's urging, that there was no time for music. And Dicky knew that presently there would be no time to eat, and then no time to sleep; and then, the worst!

Dicky had pinned his faith and his friendship to Fielding, and he saw no reason why he should lose his friend because Madame Cholera was stalking the native villages, driving the fellaheen before her like sheep to the slaughter.

"Is it a bargain?" he added, as Fielding did not at once reply. If Fielding would but play it would take the strain off his mind at times.

"All right, D., I'll see what I can do with it," said Fielding, and with a nod turned to the map with the little red and white and yellow flags, and began to study it.

He did not notice that one of his crew abaft near the wheel was watching him closely, while creeping along the railing on the pretence of cleaning it. Fielding was absorbed in making notes upon a piece of paper and moving the little flags about. Now he lit a cigar and began walking up and down the deck.

The Arab disappeared, but a few minutes afterwards returned. The deck was empty. Fielding had ridden away to the village. The map was still on the table. With a frightened face the Arab peered at it, then going to the side he called down softly, and there came up from the lower deck a Copt, the sarraf of the village, who could read English fairly. The Arab pointed to the map, and the Copt approached cautiously. A few feet away he tried to read what was on the map, but, unable to do so, drew closer, pale-faced and knockkneed, and stared at the map and the little flags. An instant after he drew back,

and turned to the Arab. "May God burn his eyes! He sends the death to the village by moving the flags. May God change him into a dog to be beaten to death! The red is to begin, the white flag is for more death, the yellow is for enough. See—may God cut off his hand!—he has moved the white flag to our village." He pointed in a trembling fear, half real, half assumed— for he was of a nation of liars.

During the next half-hour at least a dozen Arabs came to look at the map, but they disappeared like rats in a hole when, near midnight, Fielding's tall form appeared on the bank above.

It was counted to him as a devil's incantation, the music that he played that night, remembering his promise to Dicky Donovan. It was music through which breathed the desperate, troubled, aching heart and tortured mind of an overworked strong man. It cried to the night its trouble; but far over in the Cholera Hospital the sick heard it and turned their faces towards it eagerly. It pierced the apathy of the dying. It did more, for it gave Fielding five hours' sleep that night; and though he waked to see one of his own crew dead on the bank, he tackled the day's labour with more hope than he had had for a fortnight.

As the day wore on, however, his spirits fell, for on every hand was suspicion, unrest, and opposition, and his native assistants went sluggishly about their work. It was pathetic and disheartening to see people refusing to be protected, the sick refusing to be relieved, all stricken with fear, yet inviting death by disobeying the Inglesi.

Kalamoun was hopeless; yet twenty-four hours earlier Fielding had fancied there was a little light in the darkness. That night Fielding's music gave him but two hours' sleep, and he had to begin the day on a brandy- and-soda. Wherever he went open resistance blocked his way, hisses and mutterings followed him, the sick were hid in all sorts of places, and two of his assistants deserted before noon. Things looked ominous enough, and at five o'clock he made up his mind that Egypt would be overrun with cholera, and that he should probably have to defend himself and the Amenhotep from rioters, for the native police would be useless.

But at five o'clock Dicky Donovan came in a boat, and with him Mustapha Kali under a native guard of four men. The Mudir's sense of humour had been touched, and this sense of humour probably saved the Mudir from trouble, for it played Dicky's game for him.

Mustapha Kali had been sentenced to serve in the Cholera Hospital of Kalamoun, that he might be cured of his unbelief. At first he had taken his fate hardly, but Dicky had taunted him and then had suggested that a man whose conscience was clear and convictions good would carry a high head in trouble. Dicky challenged him to prove his libels by probing the business to the bottom, like a true scientist. All the way from Abdallah Dicky talked to him so, and at last the only answer Mustapha Kali would make was, "Malaish no matter!"

Mustapha Kali pricked up his ears with hope as he saw the sullen crowds from Kalamoun gathering on the shore to watch his deportation to the Cholera Hospital; and, as he stepped from the khiassa, he called out loudly:

"They are all dogs and sons of dogs, and dogs were their grandsires. No good is in a dog the offspring of a dog. Whenever these dogs scratch the ground the dust of poison is in the air, and we die."

"You are impolite, Mustapha Kali," said Dicky coolly, and offered him a cigarette.

The next three days were the darkest in Dicky Donovan's career. On the first day there came word that Norman, overwrought, had shot himself. On the next, Mustapha Kali in a fit of anger threw a native policeman into the river, and when his head appeared struck it with a barge-pole, and the man sank to rise no more. The three remaining policemen, two of whom were Soudanese, and true to Dicky, bound him and shut him up in a hut. When that evening Fielding refused to play, Dicky knew that Norman's fate had taken hold of him, and that he must watch his friend every minute— that awful vigilance which kills the watcher in the end. Dicky said to himself more than once that day:

"Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's woe!"

But it was not Dicky who saved Fielding. On the third day the long- deferred riot broke out. The Copt and the Arab had spread the report that Fielding brought death to the villages by moving the little flags on his map. The populace rose.

Fielding was busy with the map at the dreaded moment that hundreds of the villagers appeared upon the bank and rushed the Amenhotep. Fielding and Dicky were both armed, but Fielding would not fire until he saw that his own crew had joined the rioters on the bank. Then, amid a shower of missiles, he shot the Arab who had first spread the report about the map and the flags.

Now Dicky and he were joined by Holgate, the Yorkshire engineer of the Amenhotep, and together the three tried to hold the boat. Every native had left them. They were obliged to retreat aft to the deckcabin. Placing their backs against it, they prepared to die hard. No one could reach them from behind, at least.

It was an unequal fight. All three had received slight wounds, but the blood-letting did them all good. Fielding was once more himself; nervous anxiety, unrest, had gone from him. He was as cool as a cucumber. He would not go shipwreck now "on the reef of Norman's woe." Here was a better sort of death. No men ever faced it with quieter minds than did the three. Every instant brought it nearer.

All at once there was a cry and a stampede in the rear of the attacking natives. The crowd suddenly parted like two waves, and retreated; and Mustapha Kali, almost naked, and supported by a stolid Soudanese, stood before the three. He was pallid, his hands and brow were dripping sweat, and there was a look of death in his eyes.

"I have cholera, effendi!" he cried. "Take me to Abdallah to die, that
I may be buried with my people and from mine own house."

"Is it not poison?" asked Fielding grimly, yet seeing now a ray of hope in the sickening business.

"It is cholera, effendi. Take me home to die."

"Very well. Tell the people so, and I will take you home, and I will bury you with your fathers," said Fielding.

Mustapha Kali turned slowly. "I am sick of cholera," he said as loudly as he could to the awe-stricken crowd. "May God not cool my resting- place if it be not so!"

"Tell the people to go to their homes and obey us," said Dicky, putting away his pistol.

"These be good men, I have seen with mine own eyes," said Mustapha hoarsely to the crowd. "It is for your good they do all. Have I not seen? Let God fill both my hands with dust if it be not so! God hath stricken me, and behold I give myself into the hands of the Inglesi, for I believe!"

He would have fallen to the ground, but Dicky and the Soudanese caught him and carried him down to the bank, while the crowd scuttled from the boat, and Fielding made ready to bear the dying man to Abdallah—a race against death.

Fielding brought Mustapha Kali to Abdallah in time to die there, and buried him with his fathers; and Dicky stayed behind to cleanse Kalamoun with perchloride and limewash.

The story went abroad and travelled fast, and the words of Mustapha Kali, oft repeated, became as the speech of a holy man; and the people no longer hid their dead, but brought them to the Amenhotep.

This was the beginning of better things; the disease was stayed.

And for all the things that these men did—Fielding Bey and Donovan Pasha—they got naught but an Egyptian ribbon to wear on the breast and a laboured censure from the Administration for overrunning the budget allowance.

Dicky, however, seemed satisfied, for Fielding's little barque of life had not gone down "On the reef of Norman's woe." Mrs. Henshaw felt so also when she was told all, and she disconcerted Dicky by bursting into tears.

"Why those tears?" said Dicky to Fielding afterwards; "I wasn't eloquent."

GLOSSARY

Aiwa, effendi——Yea, noble sir.
Allah——God.
Allah-haly 'm alla-haly——A singsong of river-workers.
Allah Kerim——God is bountiful.
Allshu Akbar——God is most Great.
A'l'meh——Female professional singers
Antichi——Antiquities.

Backsheesh——Tip, douceur, bribe.
Balass——Earthen vessel for carrying water.

Basha——Pasha.
Bersim——Grass.
Bimbashi——Major.
Bishareen——A native tribe.
Bismillah——In the name of God.
Bowab——A doorkeeper.

Corvee——Forced labour.

Dahabeah——A Nile houseboat with large lateen sails.
Darabukkeh——A drum made of a skin stretched over an earthenware funnel.
Doash——(Literally) Treading. A ceremony performed on the return of the Holy Carpet from Mecca.
Dourha——Maize.

Effendina——Highness.
El aadah——The ordinary.
El Azhar——The Arab University at Cairo.
Fantasia——Celebration with music, dancing, and processions.
Farshoot——The name of a native tribe.
Fatihah——The opening chapter of the Koran, recited at weddings, etc.

Feddan——The most common measure of land—a little less than an acre. Also dried hay.
Fellah (plu. fellaheen)——The Egyptian peasant.
Felucca——A small boat, propelled by oars or sails.
Fessikh——Salted fish.
Ghaffirs——Humble village officials.
Ghawdzee——The tribe of public dancing-girls. A female of this tribe is called "Ghazeeyeh," and a man "Ghazee," but the plural Ghawazee is generally understood as applying to the female.
Ghimah——The Mahommedan Sunday.

Gippy——Colloquial name for an Egyptian soldier.
Goolah——Porous water-jar of Nile mud.
Hakim——Doctor.
Hanouti——Funeral attendants.
Hari-kari——An Oriental form of suicide.
Hashish——Leaves of hemp.
Inshallah——God willing.
Jibbeh——Long coat or smock, worn by dervishes.
Kavass——An orderly.
Kemengeh——A cocoanut fiddle.
Khamsin——A hot wind of Egypt and the Soudan.
Khedive——The title granted in 1867 by the Sultan of Turkey to the ruler of Egypt.
Khiassa——Small boat.
Khowagah——Gentleman.
Koran——The Scriptures of the Mahommedans.
Kourbash——A stick, a whip.

La ilaha illa-llah——There is no God but God.
Mafish——Nothing.
Magnoon——Fool.
Malaish——No matter.
Mamour——A magistrate.
Mankalah——A game.
Mastaba——A bench.
Mejidieh——A Turkish Order.
Mirkaz——District.
Moghassils——Washers of the dead.
Moufetish——High steward.
Mudir——A Governor of a Mudirieh or province.
Muezzin——The sheikh of the mosque who calls to prayer.
Mushrabieh——Lattice window.

Naboot——Quarter staff.
Narghileh——The Oriental tobacco-pipe.
Nehar-ak koom said——Greeting to you.
Omdah——The head of a village.
Ooster——One of the best sort.

Ramadan——The Mahommedan season of fasting.
Reis——Pilot.

Saadat el basha——Excellency.
Sais——Groom.
Sakkia——Persian water-wheel.
Salaam——A salutation of the East; an obeisance, performed by bowing very low and placing the right palm on the forehead and on the breast.
Sarraf——An accountant.
Shadoof——Bucket and pole used by natives for lifting water.
Sha'er——A reciter. (The singular of Sho'ara, properly signifying a poet.)
Sheikh-el-beled——Head of a village.
Shintiyan——Very wide trousers, worn by the women of the middle and higher orders.
Sitt——"The Lady."

Tarboosh——Fez or native turban.
Tarah——A veil for the head.
Ulema——Learned men.

Waled——A boy.
Wekeel——A deputy.
Welee——A favourite of Heaven; colloquially a saint.

Yashmak——A veil for the lower part of the face.
Yelek——A long vest or smock, worn over the shirt and shintiyan.

Zeriba——A palisade.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

A look too bright for joy, too intense for despair
His gift for lying was inexpressible
One favour is always the promise of another

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK DONOVAN PASHA, AND SOME PEOPLE OF EGYPT — VOLUME 1 ***

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