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Title: Donovan Pasha, and Some People of Egypt — Volume 4

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Release date: August 1, 2004 [EBook #6259]

Most recently updated: December 29, 2020

Language: English

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EGYPT — VOLUME 4 ***

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DONOVAN PASHA AND SOME PEOPLE OF EGYPT

By Gilbert Parker

Volume 4.

A YOUNG LION OF DEDAN HE WOULD NOT BE DENIED THE FLOWER OF THE
FLOCK THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

A YOUNG LION OF DEDAN

Looking from the minaret the Two could see, far off, the Pyramids of Ghizeh and Sakkara, the wells of Helouan, the Mokattam Hills, the tombs of the Caliphs, the Khedive's palace at distant Abbasiyeh. Nearer by, the life of the city was spread out. Little green oases of palms emerged from the noisy desert of white stone and plaster. The roofs of the houses, turned into gardens and promenades, made of the huge superficial city one broken irregular pavement. Minarets of mosques stood up like giant lamp-posts along these vast, meandering streets. Shiftless housewives lolled with unkempt hair on the housetops; women of the harem looked out of the little mushrabieh panels in the clattering, narrow bazaars.

Just at their feet was a mosque—one of the thousand nameless mosques of Cairo. It was the season of Ramadan, and a Friday, the Sunday of the Mahommedan—the Ghimah.

The "Two" were Donovan Pasha, then English Secretary to the Khedive, generally known as "Little Dicky Donovan," and Captain Renshaw, of the American Consulate. There was no man in Egypt of so much importance as Donovan Pasha. It was an importance which could neither be bought nor sold.

Presently Dicky touched the arm of his companion. "There it comes!" he said.

His friend followed the nod of Dicky's head, and saw, passing slowly through a street below, a funeral procession. Near a hundred blind men preceded the bier, chanting the death-phrases. The bier was covered by a faded Persian shawl, and it was carried by the poorest of the fellaheen, though in the crowd following were many richly attired merchants of the bazaars. On a cart laden with bread and rice two fellaheen stood and handed, or tossed out, food to the crowd—token of a death in high places. Vast numbers of people rambled behind chanting, and a few women, near the bier, tore their garments, put dust on their heads, and kept crying: "Salem ala ahali!—Remember us to our friends!"

Walking immediately behind the bier was one conspicuous figure, and there was a space around him which none invaded. He was dressed in white, like an Arabian Mahommedan, and he wore the green turban of one who has been the pilgrimage to Mecca.

At sight of him Dicky straightened himself with a little jerk, and his tongue clicked with satisfaction. "Isn't he, though—isn't he?" he said, after a moment. His lips, pressed together, curled in with a trick they had when he was thinking hard, planning things.

The other forbore to question. The notable figure had instantly arrested his attention, and held it until it passed from view.

"Isn't he, though, Yankee?" Dicky repeated, and pressed a knuckle into the other's waistcoat.

"Isn't he what?"

"Isn't he bully—in your own language?"

"In figure; but I couldn't see his face distinctly."

"You'll see that presently. You could cut a whole Egyptian Ministry out of that face, and have enough left for an American president or the head of the Salvation Army. In all the years I've spent here I've never seen one that could compare with him in nature, character, and force. A few like him in Egypt, and there'd be no need for the money-barbers of Europe."

"He seems an ooster here—you know him?"

"Do I!" Dicky paused and squinted up at the tall Southerner. "What do you suppose I brought you out from your Consulate for to see—the view from Ebn Mahmoud? And you call yourself a cute Yankee?"

"I'm no more a Yankee than you are, as I've told you before," answered the American with a touch of impatience, yet smilingly. "I'm from South Carolina, the first State that seceded."

"Anyhow, I'm going to call you Yankee, to keep you nicely disguised. This is the land of disguises."

"Then we did not come out to see the view?" the other drawled. There was a quickening of the eye, a drooping of the lid, which betrayed a sudden interest, a sense of adventure.

Dicky laid his head back and laughed noiselessly. "My dear Renshaw, with all Europe worrying Ismail, with France in the butler's pantry and England at the front door, do the bowab and the sarraf go out to take air on the housetops, and watch the sun set on the Pyramids and make a rainbow of the desert? I am the bowab and the sarraf, the man-of-all-work, the Jack-of-all-trades, the 'confidential' to the Oriental spendthrift. Am I a dog to bay the moon—have I the soul of a tourist from Liverpool or Poughkeepsie?"

The lanky Southerner gripped his arm. "There's a hunting song of the South," he said, "and the last line is, 'The hound that never tires.' You are that, Donovan Pasha—"

"I am 'little Dicky Donovan,' so they say," interrupted the other.

"You are the weight that steadies things in this shaky Egypt. You are you, and you've brought me out

here because there's work of some kind to do, and because—"

"And because you're an American, and we speak the same language."

"And our Consulate is all right, if needed, whatever it is. You've played a square game in Egypt. You're the only man in office who hasn't got rich out of her, and—"

"I'm not in office."

"You're the power behind the throne, you're—"

"I'm helpless—worse than helpless, Yankee. I've spent years of my life here. I've tried to be of some use, and play a good game for England; and keep a conscience too, but it's been no real good. I've only staved off the crash. I'm helpless, now. That's why I'm here."

He leaned forward, and looked out of the minaret and down towards the great locked gates of the empty mosque.

Renshaw put his hand on Dicky's shoulder. "It's the man in white yonder you're after?"

Dicky nodded. "It was no use as long as she lived. But she's dead—her face was under that old Persian shawl—and I'm going to try it on."

"Try what on?"

"Last night I heard she was sick. I heard at noon to-day that she was gone; and then I got you to come out and see the view!"

"What are you going to do with him?"

"Make him come back."

"From where?"

"From the native quarter and the bazaars. He was for years in Abdin Palace."

"What do you want him for?"

"It's a little gamble for Egypt. There's no man in Egypt Ismail loves and fears so much—"

"Except little Dicky Donovan!"

"That's all twaddle. There's no man Ismail fears so much, because he's the idol of the cafes and the bazaars. He's the Egyptian in Egypt to-day. You talk about me? Why, I'm the foreigner, the Turk, the robber, the man that holds the lash over Egypt. I'd go like a wisp of straw if there was an uprising."

"Will there be an uprising?" The Southerner's fingers moved as though they were feeling a pistol.

"As sure as that pyramid stands. Everything depends on the kind of uprising. I want one kind. There may be another."

"That's what you are here for?"

"Exactly."

"Who is he?"

"Wait."

"What is his story?"

"She was." He nodded towards the funeral procession.

"Who was she?"

"She was a slave." Then, after a pause, "She was a genius too. She saw what was in him. She was waiting—but death couldn't wait, so . . . Every thing depends. What she asked him to do, he'll do."

"But if she didn't ask?"

"That's it. She was sick only seventeen hours—sick unto death. If she didn't ask, he may come my way."

Again Dicky leaned out of the minaret, and looked down towards the gates of the mosque, where the old gatekeeper lounged half-asleep. The noise of the-procession had died away almost, had then revived, and from beyond the gates of the mosque could be heard the cry of the mourners: "Salem ala ahali!"

There came a knocking, and the old porter rose up, shuffled to the great gates, and opened. For a moment he barred the way, but when the bearers pointed to the figure in white he stepped aside and salaamed low.

"He is stone-deaf, and hasn't heard, or he'd have let her in fast enough," said Dicky.

"It's a new thing for a woman to be of importance in an Oriental country," said Renshaw.

"Ah, that's it! That's where her power was. She, with him, could do anything. He, with her, could have done anything. . . . Stand back there, where you can't be seen—quick," added Dicky hurriedly. They both drew into a corner.

"I'm afraid it was too late. He saw me," added Dicky.

"I'm afraid he did," said Renshaw.

"Never mind. It's all in the day's work. He and I are all right. The only danger would lie in the crowd discovering us in this holy spot, where the Muezzin calls to prayer, and giving us what for, before he could interfere."

"I'm going down from this 'holy spot,'" said Renshaw, and suited the action to the word.

"Me too, Yankee," said Dicky, and they came halfway down the tower. From this point they watched the burial, still well above the heads of the vast crowd, through which the sweetmeat and sherbet sellers ran, calling their wares and jangling their brass cups.

"What is his name?" said Renshaw.

"Abdalla."

"Hers?"

"Noor-ala-Noor."

"What does that mean?"

"Light from the Light."

II

The burial was over. Hundreds had touched the coffin, taking a last farewell. The blind men had made a circle round the grave, hiding the last act of ritual from the multitude. The needful leaves, the graceful pebbles, had been deposited, the myrtle blooms and flowers had been thrown, and rice, dates, bread, meat, and silver pieces were scattered among the people. Some poor men came near to the chief mourner.

"Behold, effendi, may our souls be thy sacrifice, and may God give coolness to thine eyes, speak to us by the will of God!"

For a moment the white-robed figure stood looking at them in silence; then he raised his hand and motioned towards the high pulpit, which was almost underneath the place where Dicky and Renshaw stood. Going over, he mounted the steps, and the people followed and crowded upon the pulpit.

"A nice jack-pot that," said Renshaw, as he scanned the upturned faces through the opening in the wall. "A pretty one-eyed lot."

"Shows how they love their country. Their eyes were put out by their mothers when they were babes, to avoid conscription. . . . Listen, Yankee: Egypt is talking. Now, we'll see!"

Dicky's lips were pressed tight together, and he stroked his faint moustache with a thumb-nail meditatively. His eyes were not on the speaker, but on the distant sky, the Mokattam Hills and the forts Napoleon had built there. He was listening intently to Abdalla's high, clear voice, which rang through the courts of the ruined mosque.

"In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful, children of Egypt, listen. Me ye have known years without number, and ye know that I am of you, as ye are of me. Our feet are in the same shoes, we gather from the same date-palm, of the same goolah we drink. My father's father—now in the bosom of God, praise be to God!—builided this mosque; and my father, whose soul abides in peace with God, he cherished it till evil days came upon this land. 'Be your gifts to this mosque neither of silver nor copper, but of tears and prayers,' said my father, Ebn Abdalla, ere he unrolled his green turban and wound himself in it for his winding-sheet. 'Though it be till the Karadh-gatherers return, yet shall ye replace nor stone nor piece of wood, save in the gates thereof, till good days come once more, and the infidel and the Turk be driven from the land.' Thus spake my father. . . ."

There came a stir and a murmuring among the crowd, and cries of "Allahu Akbar!" "Peace, peace!" urged the figure in white. "Nay, make no noise. This is the house of the dead, of one who hath seen God. . . . 'Nothing shall be repaired, save the gates of the mosque of Ebn Mahmoud, the mosque of my father's father,' so said my father. Also said he, 'And one shall stand at the gates and watch, though the walls crumble away, till the day when the land shall again be our land, and the chains of the stranger be forged in every doorway.' . . . But no, ye shall not lift up your voices in anger. This is the abode of peace, and the mosque is my mosque, and the dead my dead."

"The dead is our dead, effendi—may God give thee everlasting years!" called a blind man from the crowd. Up in the tower Dicky had listened intently, and as the speech proceeded his features contracted; once he gripped the arm of Renshaw.

"It's coming on to blow," he said, in the pause made by the blind man's interruption. "There'll be shipwreck somewhere."

"Ye know the way by which I came," continued Abdalla loudly. "Nothing is hid from you. I came near to the person of the Prince, whom God make wise while yet the stars of his life give light! In the palace of Abdin none was preferred before me. I was much in the sun, and mine eyes were dazzled. Yet in season I spake the truth, and for you I laboured. But not as one hath a life to give and seeks to give it. For the dazzle that was in mine eyes hid from me the fulness of your trials. But an end there was to these things. She came to the palace a slave-Noor-ala-Noor. . . . Nay, nay, be silent still, my brothers. Her soul was the soul of one born free. On her lips was wisdom. In her heart was truth like a flaming sword. To the Prince she spoke not as a slave to a slave, but in high level terms. He would have married her, but her life lay in the hollow of her hand, and the hand was a hand to open and shut according as the soul willed. She was ready to close it so that none save Allah might open it again. Then in anger the Prince would have given her to his bowab at the gates, or to the Nile, after the manner of a Turk or a Persian tyrant—may God purge him of his loathsomeness . . . !"

He paused, as though choking with passion and grief, and waved a hand over the crowd in agitated command.

"Here's the old sore open at last—which way now?" said Dicky in a whisper. "It's the toss of a penny where he'll pull up. As I thought . . . 'Sh!" he added as Renshaw was about to speak.

Abdalla continued. "Then did I stretch forth my hand, and, because I loved her, a slave with the freedom of God in her soul and on her face, I said, 'Come with me,' and behold! she came, without a word, for our souls spake to each other, as it was in the olden world, ere the hearts of men were darkened. I, an Egyptian of a despised and down-trodden land, where all men save the rich are slaves, and the rich go in the fear of their lives; she, a woman from afar, of that ancient tribe who conquered Egypt long ago—we went forth from the palace alone and penniless. He, the Prince, dared not follow to do me harm, for my father's father ye knew, and my father ye knew, and me ye knew since I came into the world, and in all that we had ye shared while yet we had to give; yea, and he feared ye. We lived among ye, poor as ye are poor, yet rich for that Egypt was no poorer because of us." He waved his hand as though to still the storm he was raising. . . . "If ye call aloud, I will drive ye from this place of peace, this garden of her who was called Light from the Light. It hath been so until yesterday, when God stooped and drew the veil from her face, and she dropped the garment of life and fled from the world. . . . Go, go hence," he added, his voice thick with sorrow. "But ere ye go, answer me, as ye have souls that desire God and the joys of Paradise, will ye follow where I go, when I come to call ye forth? Will ye obey, if I command?"

"By the will of God, thou hast purchased our hearts we will do thy will for ever," was the answer of the throng.

"Go then, bring down the infidels that have stood in the minaret above, where the Muezzin calls to prayer;" sharply called Abdalla, and waved an arm towards the tower where Dicky and Renshaw were.

An oath broke from the lips of the Southerner; but Dicky smiled. "He's done it in style," he said. "Come along." He bounded down the steps to the doorway before the crowd had blocked the way. "They might toss us out of that minaret," he added, as they both pushed their way into the open.

"You take too many risks, effendi," he called up to Abdalla in French, as excited Arabs laid hands upon them, and were shaken off. "Call away these fools!" he added coolly to the motionless figure watching from the pulpit stairs.

Cries of "Kill-kill the infidels!" resounded on all sides; but Dicky called up again to Abdalla. "Stop this nonsense, effendi." Then, without awaiting an answer, he shouted to the crowd: "I am Donovan Pasha. Touch me, and you touch Ismail. I haven't come to spy, but to sorrow with you for Noor-ala-Noor, whose soul is with God, praise be to God, and may God give her spirit to you! I have come to weep for him in whom greatness speaks; I have come for love of Abdalla the Egyptian. . . . Is it a sin to stand apart in silence and to weep unseen? Was it a sin against the Moslem faith that in this minaret I prayed God to comfort Abdalla, grandson of Ebn Mahmoud, Egyptian of the Egyptians? Was it not I who held Ismail's hand, when he—being in an anger—would have scoured the bazaars with his horsemen for Abdalla and Noor-ala-Noor? This is known to Abdalla, whom God preserve and exalt. Is not Abdalla friend to Donovan Pasha?"

Dicky was known to hundreds present. There was not a merchant from the bazaars but had had reason to appreciate his presence, either by friendly gossip over a cup of coffee, or by biting remarks in Arabic, when they lied to him, or by the sweep of his stick over the mastaba and through the chattels of some vile-mouthed pedlar who insulted English ladies whom he was escorting through the bazaar. They knew his face, his tongue, and the weight and style of his arm; and though they would cheerfully have seen him the sacrifice of the Jihad to the cry of Allahu Akbar! they respected him for himself, and they feared him because he was near to the person of Ismail.

He was the more impressive because in the midst of wealth and splendour he remained poor: he had more than once bought turquoises and opals and horses and saddlery, which he paid for in instalments, like any little merchant. Those, therefore, who knew him, were well inclined to leave him alone, and those who did not know him were impressed by his speech. If it was true that he was friend to Abdalla, then his fate was in the hand of God, not theirs. They all had heard of little Donovan Pasha, whom Ismail counted only less than Gordon Pasha, the mad Englishman, who emptied his pocket for an old servant, gave his coat to a beggar, and rode in the desert so fast that no Arab could overtake him.

"Call off your terriers, effendi," said Dicky again in French; for Renshaw was restive under the hands that were laid on his arm, and the naboots that threatened him. "My friend here is American. He stands for the United States in Egypt."

Abdalla had not moved a muscle during the disturbance, or during Dicky's speech. He seemed but the impassive spectator, though his silence and the look in his eyes were ominous. It would appear as though he waited to see whether the Englishman and his friend could free themselves from danger. If they could, then it was God's will; if they could not, Malaish! Dicky understood. In this he read Abdalla like a parchment, and though he had occasion to be resentful, he kept his nerves and his tongue in an equable mood. He knew that Abdalla would speak now. The Egyptian raised his hand.

"In the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful, go your ways," he said loudly. "It is as Donovan Pasha says, he stayed the hand of Ismail for my sake. Noor-ala-Noor, the Light from the Light, saw into his heart, and it was the honest heart of a fool. And these are the words of the Koran, That the fool is one whom God has made His temple for a season, thereafter withdrawing. None shall injure the temple. Were not your hearts bitter against him, and when he spoke did ye not soften? He hath no inheritance of Paradise, but God shall blot him out in His own time. Bismillah! God cool his resting-place in that day. Donovan Pasha's hand is for Egypt, not against her. We are brothers, though the friendship of man is like the shade of the acacia. Yet while the friendship lives, it lives. When God wills it to die, it dies. . . ." He waved his hand towards the gateway, and came slowly down the steep steps.

With a curious look in his eyes, Dicky watched the people go. Another curious look displaced it and stayed, as Abdalla silently touched his forehead, his lips, and his heart three times, and then reached out a hand to Dicky and touched his palm. Three times they touched palms, and then Abdalla saluted Renshaw in the same fashion, making the gestures once only.

From the citadel came the boom of the evening gun. Without a word Abdalla left them, and, going apart, he turned his face towards Mecca and began his prayers. The court-yard of the mosque was now empty, save for themselves alone.

The two walked apart near the deserted fountain in the middle of the court-yard. "The friendship of man is like the shade of the acacia. Yet while the friendship lives, it lives. When God wills it to die, it dies!" mused Dicky with a significant smile. "Friendship walks on thin ice in the East, Yankee."

"See here, Donovan Pasha, I don't like taking this kind of risk without a gun," said Renshaw.

"You're an official, a diplomat; you mustn't carry a gun."

"It's all very fine, but it was a close shave for both of us. You've got an object—want to get something out of it. But what do I get for my money?"

"Perhaps the peace of Europe. Perhaps a page of reminiscences for the 'New York World'. Perhaps some limelight chapters of Egyptian history. Perhaps a little hari-kari. Don't you feel it in the air?" Dicky drew in a sibilant breath. "All this in any other country would make you think you were having a devil of a time. It's on the regular 'menoo' here, and you don't get a thrill."

"The peace of Europe—Abdalla has something to do with that?"

"Multiply the crowd here a thousand times as much, and that's what he could represent in one day. Give him a month, and every man in Egypt would be collecting his own taxes where he could find 'em. Abdalla there could be prophet and patriot to-morrow, and so he will be soon, and to evil ends, if things don't take a turn. That Egyptian-Arab has a tongue, he has brains, he has sorrow, he loved Noor-ala-Noor. Give a man the egotism of grief, and eloquence, and popularity, and he'll cut as sharp as the khamsin wind. The dust he'll raise will blind more eyes than you can see in a day's march, Yankee. You may take my word for it."

Renshaw looked at Dicky thoughtfully. "You're wasting your life here. You'll get nothing out of it. You're a great man, Donovan Pasha, but others'll reap where you sowed."

Dicky laughed softly. "I've had more fun for my money than most men of my height and hair—" he stroked his beardless chin humorously. "And the best is to come, Yankee. This show is cracking. The audience are going to rush it."

Renshaw laid a hand on his shoulder. "Pasha, to tell you God's truth, I wouldn't have missed this for anything; but what I can't make out is, why you brought me here. You don't do things like that for nothing. You bet you don't. You'd not put another man in danger, unless he was going to get something out of it, or somebody was. It looks so damned useless. You've done your little job by your lonesome, anyhow. I was no use."

"Your turn comes," said Dicky, flashing a look of friendly humour at him. "America is putting her hand in the dough—through you. You'll know, and your country'll know, what's going on here in the hum of the dim bazaars. Ismail's got to see how things stand, and you've got to help me tell him. You've got to say I tell the truth, when the French gentlemen, who have their several spokes in the Egyptian wheel, politely say I lie. Is it too much, or too little, Yankee?"

Renshaw almost gulped. "By Jerusalem!" was all he could say. "And we wonder why the English swing things as they do!" he growled, when his breath came freely.

Abdalla had finished his prayers; he was coming towards them. Dicky went to meet him.

"Abdalla, I'm hungry," he said; "so are you. You've eaten nothing since sunset, two days ago."

"I am thirsty, saadat el basha," he answered, and his voice was husky.

"Come, I will give you to eat, by the goodness of God."

It was the time of Ramadan, when no Mahomedan eats food or touches liquid from the rising to the going down of the sun. As the sunset-gun boomed from the citadel, lids had been snatched off millions of cooking-pots throughout the land, and fingers had been thrust into the meat and rice of the evening feast, and their owner had gulped down a bowl of water. The smell of a thousand cooking-pots now came to them over the walls of the mosque. Because of it, Abdalla's command to the crowd to leave had been easier of acceptance. Their hunger had made them dangerous. Danger was in the air. The tax-gatherers had lately gone their rounds, and the agents of the Mouffetish had wielded the kourbash without mercy and to some purpose. It was perhaps lucky that the incident had occurred within smell of the evening feasts and near the sounding of the sunset-gun.

III

A half-hour later, as Abdalla thrust his fingers into the dish and handed Dicky a succulent cucumber filled with fried meat, the latter said to him: "It is the wish of the Effendina, my friend. It comes as the will of God; for even as Noor-ala-Noor journeyed to the bosom of God by your will, and by your prayers, being descended from Mahomet as you are, even then Ismail, who knew naught of your sorrow, said to me, 'In all Egypt there is one man, and one only, for whom my soul calls to go into the desert with Gordon,' and I answered him and said: 'Inshallah, Effendina, it is Abdalla, the Egyptian.' And he laid his hand upon his head—I have seen him do that for no man since I came into his presence—and said: 'My soul calls for him. Find him and bid him to come. Here is my ring.'"

Dicky took from his pocket a signet-ring, which bore a passage from the Koran, and laid it beside Abdalla's drinking-bowl.

"What is Ismail to me—or the far tribes of the Soudan! Here are my people," was the reply. Abdalla motioned to the next room, where the blind men ate their evening meal, and out to the dimly lighted streets where thousands of narghilehs and cigarettes made little smoky clouds that floated around white turbans and dark faces. "When they need me, I will speak; when they cry to me, I will unsheathe the sword of Ebn Mahmoud, who fought with Mahomet Ali and saved the land from the Turk."

Renshaw watched the game with an eagerness unnoticeable in his manner. He saw how difficult was the task before Dicky. He saw an Oriental conscious of his power, whose heart was bitter, and whose soul, in its solitude, revolted and longed for action. It was not moved by a pure patriotism, but what it was moved by served. That dangerous temper, which would have let Dicky, whom he called friend, and himself go down under the naboots of the funeral multitude, with a "Malaish" on his tongue, was now in leash, ready to spring forth in the inspired hour; and the justification need not be a great one. Some slight incident might set him at the head of a rabble which would sweep Cairo like a storm. Yet Renshaw saw, too, that once immersed in the work his mind determined on, the Egyptian would go forward with relentless force. In the excitement of the moment it seemed to him that Egypt was hanging in the balance.

Dicky was eating sweetmeats like a girl. He selected them with great care. Suddenly Abdalla touched his hand. "Speak on. Let all thy thoughts be open—stay not to choose, as thou dost with the sweetmeats. I will choose: do thou offer without fear. I would not listen to Ismail; to thee I am but as a waled to bear thy shoes in my hand."

Dicky said nothing for a moment, but appeared to enjoy the comfit he was eating. He rolled it over his tongue, and his eyes dwelt with a remarkable simplicity and childlike friendliness on Abdalla. It was as though there was really nothing vital at stake. . . . Yet he was probing, probing without avail into Abdalla's mind and heart, and was never more at sea in his life. It was not even for Donovan Pasha to read the Oriental thoroughly. This man before him had the duplicity or evasion of the Oriental; delicately in proportion to his great ability, yet it was there—though in less degree than in any Arab he had ever known. It was the more dangerous because so subtle. It held surprise—it was an unknown quantity. The most that Dicky could do was to feel subtly before him a certain cloud of the unexpected. He was not sure that he deceived Abdalla by his simple manner, yet that made little difference. The Oriental would think not less of him for dissimulation, but rather more. He reached over and put a comfit in the hand of Abdalla.

"Let us eat together," he said, and dropped a comfit into his own mouth.

Abdalla ate, and Dicky dipped his fingers in the basin before them, saying, as he lifted them again: "I will speak as to my brother. Ismail has staked all on the Soudan. If, in the will of God, he is driven from Berber, from Dongola, from Khartoum, from Darfar, from Kassala, his power is gone. Egypt goes down like the sun at evening. Ismail will be like a withered gourd. To establish order and peace and revenue there, he is sending the man his soul loves, whom the nations trust, to the cities of the desert. If it be well with Gordon, it will be well with the desert-cities. But Gordon asks for one man—an Egyptian—who loves the land and is of the people, to speak for him, to counsel with him, to show the desert tribes that Egypt gives her noblest to rule and serve them. There is but one man—Abdalla the Egyptian. A few years yonder in the desert—power, glory, wealth won for Egypt, the strength of thine arms known, the piety of thy spirit proven, thy name upon every tongue—on thy return, who then should fear for Egypt!"

Dicky was playing a dangerous game, and Renshaw almost shrank from his words. He was firing the Egyptian's mind, but to what course he knew not. If to the Soudan, well; if to remain, what conflagration might not occur! Dicky staked all.

"Here, once more, among thy people, returned from conquest and the years of pilgrimage in the desert, like a prophet of old, thy zeal would lead the people, and once more Egypt should bloom like the rose. Thou wouldst be sirdar, mouffetish, pasha, all things soever. This thou wouldst be and do, thou, Abdalla the Egyptian."

Dicky had made his great throw; and he sat back, perhaps a little paler than was his wont, but apparently serene and earnest and steady.

The effect upon Abdalla could only be judged by his eyes, which burned like fire as they fixed upon Dicky's face. The suspense was painful, for he did not speak for a long time. Renshaw could have shrieked with excitement. Dicky lighted a cigarette and tossed a comfit at a pariah dog. At last Abdalla rose. Dicky rose with him.

"Thou, too, hast a great soul, or mine eyes are liars," Abdalla said. "Thou lovest Egypt also. This Gordon—I am not his friend. I will not go with him. But if thou goest also with Gordon, then I will go with thee. If thou dost mean well by Egypt, and thy words are true, thou also wilt go. As thou speakest, let it be."

A mist came before Dicky's eyes—the world seemed falling into space, his soul was in a crucible. The struggle was like that of a man with death, for this must change the course of his life, to what end God only knew. All that he had been to Egypt, all that Egypt had been to him, came to him. But he knew that he must not pause. Now was his moment, and now only. Before the mist had cleared from his eyes he gave his hand into Abdalla's.

"In God's name, so be it. I also will go with Gordon, and thou with me," he said.

HE WOULD NOT BE DENIED

"He was achin' for it—turrible achin' for it—an' he would not be denied!" said Sergeant William Connor, of the Berkshire Regiment, in the sergeants' mess at Suakim, two nights before the attack on McNeill's zeriba at Tofrik.

"Serve 'im right. Janders was too bloomin' suddint," skirled Henry Withers of the Sick Horse Depot from the bottom of the table.

"Too momentary, I believe you," said Corporal Billy Bagshot.

At the Sick Horse Depot Connor had, without good cause, made some disparaging remarks upon the charger ridden by Subadar Goordit Singh at the fight at Dihilbat Hill, which towers over the village of Hashin. Subadar Goordit Singh heard the remarks, and, loving his welted, gibbet-headed charger as William Connor loved any woman who came his way, he spat upon the ground the sergeant's foot covered, and made an evil-smiling remark. Thereupon Connor laid siege to the white-toothed, wild-bearded Sikh with words which suddenly came to renown, and left not a shred of glory to the garment of vanity the hillman wore.

He insinuated that the Sikh's horse was wounded at Hashin from behind by backing too far on the Guards' Brigade on one side and on the Royal Mounted Infantry on the other. This was ungenerous and it was not true, for William Connor knew well the reputation of the Sikhs; but William's blood was up, and the smile of the Subadar was hateful in his eyes. The truth was that the Berkshire Regiment had had its chance at Dihilbat Hill and the Sikhs had not. But William Connor refused to make a distinction between two squadrons of Bengal Cavalry which had been driven back upon the Guards' square and the Sikhs who fretted on their bits, as it were.

The Berkshire Regiment had done its work in gallant style up the steep slopes of Dihilbat, had cleared the summit of Osman Digna's men, and followed them with a raking fire as they retreated wildly into the mimosa bushes on the plain. The Berkshires were not by nature proud of stomach, but Connor was a popular man, and the incident of the Sick Horse Depot, as reported by Corporal Bagshot, who kept a diary and a dictionary, tickled their imagination, and they went forth and swaggered before the Indian Native Contingent, singing a song made by Bagshot and translated into Irish idiom by William Connor.

The song was meant to humiliate the Indian Native Contingent, and the Sikhs writhed under the raillery and looked black-so black that word was carried to McNeill himself, who sent orders to the officers of the Berkshire Regiment to give the offenders a dressing down; for the Sikhs were not fellaheen, to be heckled with impunity.

That was why, twenty-four hours after the offending song was made, it was suppressed; and in the sergeants' mess William Connor told the story how, an hour before, he had met Subadar Goordit Singh in the encampment, and the Subadar in a rage at the grin on Connor's face had made a rush at him, which the Irishman met with his foot, spoiling his wind. That had ended the incident for the moment, for the Sikh remembered in time, and William Connor had been escorted "Berkshire way" by Corporal Bagshot and Henry Withers. As the tale was told over and over again, there came softly from the lips of the only other Irishman in the regiment, Jimmy Coolin, a variant verse of the song that the great McNeill had stopped:

"Where is the shame of it,
Where was the blame of it,
William Connor dear?"

It was well for Graham, Hunter, McNeill, and their brigades that William Connor and the Berkshires and the Subadar Goordit Singh had no idle time in which to sear their difficulties, for, before another khamsin gorged the day with cutting dust, every department of the Service, from the Commissariat to the Balloon Detachment, was filling marching orders. There was a collision, but it was the agreeable collision of preparation for a fight, for it was ordained that the Berkshires and the Sikhs should go shoulder to shoulder to establish a post in the desert between Suakim and Tamai.

"D'ye hear that, William Connor dear?" said Private Coolin when the orders came. "An' y'll have Subadar Goordit Singh with his kahars and his bhists and his dhooly bearers an' his Lushai dandies an' his bloomin' bullock-carts steppin' on y'r tail as ye travel, Misther Connor!"

"Me tail is the tail of a kangaroo; I'm strongest where they tread on me, Coolin," answered Connor. "An' drinkin' the divil's chlorides from the tins of the mangy dhromedairy has turned me insides into a foundry. I'm metal-plated, Coolin."

"So ye'll need if ye meet the Subadar betune the wars!"

"Go back to y'r condinsation, Coolin. Bring water to the thirsty be gravitation an' a four-inch main, an' shtrengthen the Bowl of the Subadar wid hay-cake, for he'll want it agin the day he laves Tamai behind! Go back to y'r condinsation, Coolin, an' take truth to y'r Bowl that there's many ways to die, an' one o' thim's in the commysariat, Coolin—shame for ye!"

Coolin had been drafted into the Commissariat and was now variously employed, but chiefly at the Sandbag Redoubt, where the condensing ship did duty, sometimes at the southeast end of the harbour where the Indian Contingent watered. Coolin hated the duty, and because he was in a bitter mood his tongue was like a leaf of aloe.

"I'll be drinkin' condinsed spirits an' 'atin' hay-cake whip the vultures do be peckin' at what's lift uv ye whip the Subadar's done wid ye. I'd a drame about ye last noight, William Connor dear—three times I dramed it."

Suddenly Connor's face was clouded. "Whist, thin, Coolin," said he hoarsely. "Hadendowas I've no fear uv, an' Subadars are Injy nagurs anyhow, though fellow-soldiers uv the Queen that's good to shtand befront uv biscuit-boxes or behoid thim; an' wan has no fear of the thing that's widout fear, an' death's iron enters in aisy whip mortal strength's behind it. But drames—I've had enough uv drames in me toime, I have that, Coolin!" He shuddered a little. "What was it ye dramed again, Coolin? Was there anything but the dramin'—anny noise, or sound, or spakin'?"

Coolin lied freely, for to disturb William Connor was little enough compensation for being held back at Suakim while the Berkshires and the Sikhs were off for a scrimmage in the desert.

"Nothin' saw I wid open eye, an' nothin' heard," he answered; "but I dramed twice that I saw ye lyin' wid y'r head on y'r arm and a hole in y'r jacket. Thin I waked suddin', an' I felt a cold wind goin' over me— three toimes; an' a hand was laid on me own face, an' it was cold an' smooth-like the hand uv a Sikh, William Connor dear."

Connor suddenly caught Coolin's arm. "D'ye say that!" said he. "Shure, I'll tell ye now why the chills rin down me back whin I hear uv y'r drame. Thru things are drames, as I'll prove to ye—as quare as condinsation an' as thru, Coolin; fer condinsation comes out uv nothin', and so do drames. . . . There

was Mary Haggarty, Coolin—ye'll not be knowin' Mary Haggarty. It was mornin' an' evenin' an' the first day uv the world where she were. That was Mary Haggarty. An' ivery shtep she tuk had the spring uv the first sod of Adin. Shure no, ye didn't know Mary Haggarty, an' ye niver will, Coolin, fer the sod she trod she's lyin' under, an' she'll niver rise up no more."

"Fer choice I'll take the sod uv Erin to the sand uv the Soudan," said Coolin.

"Ye'll take what ye can get, Coolin; fer wid a splinterin' bullet in y'r gizzard ye lie where ye fall."

"But Mary Haggarty, Connor?"

"I was drinkin' hard, ye understand, Coolin—drinkin', loike a dhromedairy—ivery day enough to last a wake, an' Mary tryin' to stop me betimes. At last I tuk the pledge—an' her on promise. An' purty, purty she looked thin, an' shteping light an' fine, an' the weddin' was coming an. But wan day there was a foire, an' the police coort was burned down, an' the gaol was that singed they let the b'ys out, an' we rushed the police an' carried off the b'ys, an'—"

"An' ye sweltered in the juice!" broke in Coolin with flashing eyes, proud to have roused Connor to this secret tale, which he would tell to the Berkshires as long as they would listen, that it should go down through a long line of Berkshires, as Coolin's tale of William Connor.

"An' I sweltered in the swill," said Connor, his eye with a cast quite shut with emotion, and the other nearly so. "An' wance broke out agin afther tin months' goin' wake and watery, was like a steer in the corn. There was no shtoppin' me, an'—"

"Not Mary Haggarty aither?"

"Not Mary Haggarty aither."

"O, William Connor dear!"

"Ye may well say, 'O, William Connor dear!' 'Twas what she said day by day, an' the heart uv me loike Phararyoh's. Thru it is, Coolin, that the hand uv mortal man has an ugly way uv squazin' a woman's heart dry whin, at last, to his coaxin' she lays it tinder an' onsuspectin' on the inside grip uv it."

"But the heart uv Mary Haggarty, Connor?"

"'Twas loike a flower under y'r fut, Coolin, an' a heavy fut is to you. She says to me wan day, 'Ye're breakin' me heart, William Connor,' says she. 'Thin I'll sodder it up agin wid the help uv the priest,' says I. 'That ye will not do,' says she; 'wance broken, 'tis broke beyond mendin'.' 'Go an wid ye, Mary Haggarty darlin',' says I, laughin' in her face, 'hivin' is y'r home.' 'Yes, I'll be goin' there, William Connor,' says she, 'I'll be goin' there betimes, I hope.' 'How will it be?' says I; 'be fire or wateer, Mary darlin'?' says I. 'Ye shall know whin it comes,' says she, wid a quare look in her eye."

"An' ye did?" asked Coolin, open-mouthed and staring; for never had he seen Connor with aught on his face but a devil-may-care smile.

"Ordered away we was next avenin', an' sorra the glimpse of Mary Haggarty to me—for Headquarters is a lady that will not be denied. Away we wint overseas. Shlapin' I was wan night in a troop-ship in the Bay uv Biscay; an' I dramed I saw Mary walkin' along the cliff by—well, 'tis no matter, fer ye've niver been there, an' 'tis no place to go to unheedin'. Manny an' manny a time I'd walked wid Mary Haggarty there. There's a steep hill betune two pints uv land. If ye go low on't ye're safe enough—if ye go high it crumbles, an' down ye shlip a hunder fut into the say. In me drame I saw Mary onthinkin', or thinkin' maybe about me an' not about the high path or the low—though 'tis only the low that's used these twinty years. Her head was down. I tried to call her. She didn't hear, but wint an an' an. All at wanst I saw the ground give way. She shlipped an' snatched at the spinifex. Wan minnit she held, an' thin slid down, down into the say. An' I woke callin' 'Mary—Mary' in me throat."

"Ye dramed it wance only, Connor?" said Coolin, with the insolent grin gone out of his eyes.

"I dramed it three times, an' the last time, whin I waked, I felt a cold wind go over me. Thin a hand touched me face—the same as you, Coolin, the same as you. Drames are throe things, Coolin."

"It was throe, thin, Connor?"

A look of shame and a curious look of fear crept into Coolin's face; for though it was not true he had dreamed of the hand on his face and the cold wind blowing over him, it was true he had dreamed he saw Connor lying on the ground with a bullet-hole in his tunic. But Coolin, being industrious at his

trencher, often had dreams, and one more or less horrible about Connor had not seemed to him to matter at all. It had sufficed, however, to give him a cue to chaff the man who had knocked the wind out of Subadar Goordit Singh, and who must pay for it one hour or another in due course, as Coolin and the Berkshires knew full well.

"It was throe, thin, William Connor?" repeated Coolin.

"As throe as that yander tripod pump kills wan man out uv ivery fifty. As throe as that y'r corn-beef from y'r commysariat tins gives William Connor thirst, Coolin."

"She was drowneded, Connor?" asked Coolin in a whisper.

"As I dramed it, an' allowin' fer difference uv time, at the very hour, Coolin. 'Tis five years ago, an' I take it hard that Mary Haggarty spakes to me through you. 'Tis a warnin', Coolin."

"'Twas a lie I told you, Connor—'twas a lie!" And Coolin tried to grin.

Connor's voice was like a woman's, soft and quiet, as he answered: "Ye'll lie fast enough, Coolin, whin the truth won't sarve; but the truth has sarved its turn this time."

"Aw, Connor dear, only wan half's throe. As I'm a man—only wan half."

"Go an to y'r condinsation, Coolin, fer the face uv ye's not fit fer dacint company, wan side paralytic wid lyin', an' the other struck simple wid tellin' the truth. An' see, Coolin, fer the warnin' she give ye fer me, the kit I lave is yours, an' what more, be the will uv God! An' what ye've told me ye'll kape to y'self, Coolin, or hell shall be your portion."

"He tuk it fer truth an' a warnin', an' he would not be denied," said Coolin to Henry Withers, of the Sick Horse Depot, two hours afterwards, when the Berkshires and the Sikhs and the Bengalese were on the march towards Tamai.

"The bloomin' trick is between the Hadendowas and the Subadar," answered he of the Sick Horse Depot. "Ye take it fer a warnin', thin?" asked Coolin uneasily.

"I believe you," answered Henry Withers.

As for William Connor, when he left Suakim, his foot was light, his figure straight, and he sent a running fire of laughter through his company by one or two "insinsible remarks," as Coolin called them.

Three hours' marching in the Soudan will usually draw off the froth of a man's cheerfulness, but William Connor was as light of heart at Tofrik as at Suakim, and he saw with pleasure two sights—the enemy in the distance and the 15th Sikhs on their right flank, with Subadar Goordit Singh in view.

"There's work 'ere to-day for whoever likes it on the 'op!" said Henry Withers, of the Sick Horse Depot, as he dragged his load of mimosa to the zeriba; for he had got leave to come on with his regiment.

"You'll find it 'otter still when the vedettes and Cossack Posts come leadin' in the Osnun Digners. If there ain't hoscillations on that rectangle, strike me in the night-lights!" said Corporal Bagshot, with his eye on the Bengalese. "Blyme, if the whole bloomin' parallogram don't shiver," he added; "for them Osnun Digners 'as the needle, and they're ten to one, or I'm a bloater!"

"There's Gardner guns fer the inimy an' Lushai dandies fer us," broke in Connor, as he drove a stake in the ground, wet without and dry within—" an' Gardner guns are divils on the randan. Whin they get to work it's like a self-actin' abbatoir."

"I 'opes ye like it, Connor. Bloomin' picnic for you when the Osnun Digners eat sand. What ho!"

"I have no swarms of conscience there, Billy Bag; shot. For the bones uv me frinds that's lyin' in this haythen land, I'll clane as fur as I can reach. An' I'll have the run uv me belt to-day, an—" he added, then stopped short as the order came from McNeill that the Berkshires should receive dinner by half-battalions.

"An' 'igh time," said Corporal Bagshot. "What with marchin' and zeribakin' and the sun upon me tank since four this mornin', I'm dead for food and buried for water. I ain't no bloomin' salamanker to be grilled and say thank-ye, and I ain't no bloomin' camomile to bring up me larder and tap me tank when Coolin's commissaryat hasn't no orders."

"Shure ye'll run better impty, Billy boy," said Connor. "An' what fer do ye need food before y'r execution?" he added, with a twist of his mouth.

"Before execution, ye turkey-cock—before execution is the time to eat and drink. How shall the bloomin' carnage gore the Libyan sands, if there ain't no refreshment for the vitals and the diagrams?"

"Come an wid ye to y'r forage-cake, thin-an' take this to ye," added Connor slyly, as he slipped a little nickel-plated flask into Billy Bagshot's hand.

"With a Woking crematory in y'r own throat. See you bloomin' funder!" answered Billy Bagshot.

"I'm not drinkin' to-day," answered Connor, with a curious look in the eye that had no cast. "I'm not drinkin', you understand."

"Ain't it a bit momentary?" asked Bagshot, as they sat down.

"Momentary betimes," answered Connor evasively. "Are you eatin' at this bloomin' swaree, then?" "I'm niver aff me forage-cake," answered Connor, and he ate as if he had had his tooth in nothing for a month.

A quarter of an hour later, the Sikhs were passing the Berkshire zeriba, and the Berkshires, filing out, joined them to cut brushwood. A dozen times the Subadar Goordit Singh almost touched shoulders with Connor, but neither spoke, and neither saw directly; for if once they saw each other's eyes the end might come too soon, to the disgrace of two regiments.

Suddenly, the forbidden song on William Connor and the Subadar arose among the Berkshires. No one knew who started it, but it probably was Billy Bagshot, who had had more than a double portion of drink, and was seized with a desire to celebrate his thanks to Connor thus.

In any case the words ran along the line, and were carried up in a shout amid the crackling of the brushwood:

"Where was the shame of it,
Where was the blame of it,
William Connor dear?"

That sort of special providence which seems to shelter the unworthy, gave India and the Berkshires honour that hour when the barometer registered shame; for never was mercury more stormy than shot up in the artery of two men's wills when that song rose over the zeriba at Tofrik. They were not fifty feet apart at the time, and at the lilt of that chorus they swung towards each other like two horses to the bugle on parade.

"A guinea to a brown but Janders goes large!" said Billy Bagshot under his breath, his eye on the Subadar and repenting him of the song.

But Janders did not go large; for at that very moment there came the bugle-call for the working parties to get into the zeriba, as from the mimosa scrub came hundreds upon hundreds of "Osnum Digners" hard upon the heels of the vedettes.

"The Hadendowas 'as the privilege," said Billy Bagshot, as the Berkshires and the Sikhs swung round and made for the zeriba.

"What's that ye say?" cried Connor, as the men stood to their arms.

"Looked as if the bloomin' hontray was with the Subadar, but the Hadendowas 'as the honour to hinvite sweet William!"

"Murther uv man—look—look, ye Berkshire boar! The Bengals is breakin' line!"

"Oscillations 'as begun!" said Bagshot, as, disorganised by the vedettes riding through their flank into the zeriba, the Bengalese wavered.

"'Tis your turn now—go an to y'r gruel!" said Connor, as Bagshot with his company and others were ordered to move over to the Bengalese and steady them.

"An' no bloomin' sugar either," Bagshot called back as he ran.

"Here's to ye thin!" shouted Connor, as the enemy poured down on their zeriba on the west and the Bengalese retreated on them from the east, the Billy Bagshot detachment of Berkshires rallying them

and firing steadily, the enemy swarming after and stampeding the mules and camels. Over the low bush fence, over the unfinished sand-bag parapet at the southwest salient, spread the shrieking enemy like ants, stabbing and cutting. The Gardner guns, as Connor had said, were "fer the inimy," but the Lushai dandies were for the men that managed them that day; for the enemy came too soon—in shrieking masses to a hand-to-hand melee.

What India lost that hour by the Bengalese the Sikhs won back. Side by side with them the Berkshires cursed and raged and had their way; and when the Sikhs drew over and laid themselves along the English lines a wild cheer went up from the Berkshires. Wounded men spluttered their shouts from mouths filled with blood, and to the welcoming roars of the Berkshires the Sikhs showed their teeth in grim smiles, "and done things," as Billy Bagshot said when it was all over.

But by consent of every man who fought under McNeill that day, the biggest thing done among the Sikhs happened in the fiercest moment of the rush on the Berkshire zeriba. Billy Bagshot told the story that night, after the Lushai dandies had carried off the wounded and the sands of the desert had taken in the dead.

"Tyke it or leave it, 'e 'ad the honours of the day," said Bagshot, "'e and Janders—old Subadar Goordit Singh. It myde me sick to see them Bengalesey, some of 'em 'ookin' it to Suakim, some of 'em retirin' on the seraphim, which is another name for Berkshires. It ain't no sweet levee a-tryin' to rally 'eathen 'ands to do their dooty. So we 'ad to cover 'em back into the zeriba of the seraphim—which is our glorious selves. A bloomin' 'asty puddin' was that tournamong, but it wasn't so bloomin' 'asty that the Subadar and William Connor didn't finish what they started for to do when the day was young."

"Did Janders stick the b'y?" asked Coolin, who had just come in from Suakim with the Commissariat camels. "Shure, I hope to God he didn't!" He was pale and wild of eye.

"Did a bloomin' sparrow give you 'is brains when you was changed at birth? Stick William Connor—I believe you not! This is what 'appened, me bloomin' sanitary. When I got back be'ind the 'eavenly parapet, there was William Connor in a nice little slaughter-house of 'is own. 'E was doin' of 'isself proud—too busy to talk. All at once 'e spies a flag the Osnum Digners 'ad planted on the 'eavenly parapet. 'E opens 'is mouth and gives one yell, and makes for that bit of cotton. 'E got there, for 'e would not be denied. 'E got there an' 'e couldn't get back. But 'e made a rush for it—"

"A divil he was on rushes," broke in Private Coolin, wiping his mouth nervously.

"'E's the pride of 'is 'ome and the bloomin' brigade, bar one, which is the Subadar Goordit Singh. For w'en the Subadar sees Connor in 'is 'ole, a cut across 'is jaw, doin' of 'is trick alone, away goes Subadar Goordit Singh and two of 'is company be'ind 'im for to rescue. 'E cut with 'is sword like a bloomin' picture. 'E didn't spare 'is strength, and 'e didn't spare the Osnum Digners. An' 'e comeback, an' he brought with him William Connor—that's all what come back."

"How long did William live?" asked Coolin. "He was a good frind to me was Connor, a thru frind he was to me. How long did the b'y live?"

'E lived long enough to 'ave McNeill shake 'im by the 'and. 'E lived long enough to say to the Subadar Goordit Singh, 'I would take scorn uv me to lave widout askin' y'r pardon, Subadar.' And the Subadar took 'is 'and and salaamed, and showed 'is teeth, which was meant friendly."

"What else did Connor say?" asked Coolin, eagerly. "'E said 'is kit was for you that's spoilin' a good name in the condinsation of the Commissaryat, Coolin." "But what else?" urged Coolin. "Nothin' about a drame at all?"

"Who's talkin' about dreams!" said Bagshot. 'E wasn't no bloomin' poet. 'E was a man. What 'e said 'e said like a man. 'E said 'e'd got word from Mary—which is proper that a man should do when 'e's a-chuckin' of 'is tent-pegs. If 'e ain't got no mother—an' Connor 'adn't 'is wife or 'is sweetheart 'as the honour."

"Oh, blessed God," said Coolin, "I wish I hadn't towld him—I wish I hadn't towld the b'y."

"Told 'im wot?" said Bagshot.

But Coolin of the Commissariat did not answer; his head was on his arms, and his arms were on his knees.

THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK

"E was a flower," said Henry Withers of the Sick Horse Depot.

"A floower in front garden!" ironically responded Holgate, the Yorkshire engineer, as he lay on his back on the lower deck of the Osiris, waiting for Fielding Pasha's orders to steam up the river.

"E was the bloomin' flower of the flock," said Henry Withers, with a cross between a yawn and a sigh, and refusing to notice Holgate's sarcasm.

"Aw've heerd on 'em, the floowers o' the flock—they coom to a bad end mostwise in Yorkshire—nipped in t' bood loike! Was tha friend nipped untimely?"

"I'd give a bloomin' camomile to know!"

"Deserted or summat?"

"Ow yus, 'e deserted—to Khartoum," answered Withers with a sneer.

"The 'owlin' sneak went in 'idin' with Gordon at Khartoum!"

"Aye, aw've heerd o' Gordon a bit," said Holgate dubiously, intent to further anger the Beetle, as Henry Withers was called.

"Ow yus, ow verily yus! An' y've 'eard o' Julius Caesar, an' Nebucha'nezzar, an' Florence Noightingyle, 'aven't you—you wich is chiefly bellyband and gullet."

"Aye, aw've eaten too mooch to-day," rejoined Holgate placidly, refusing to see insult. "Aw don't see what tha friend was doin' at Khartoum wi' Goordon."

'E was makin' Perry Davis' Pain Killer for them at 'ome who wouldn't send Gordon 'elp when the 'eathen was at 'is doors a 'underd to one. 'E was makin' it for them to soothe their bloomin' pains an' sorrers when Gordon an' Macnamara 'ad cried 'elp! for the lawst toime!"

"Aw've taken off ma hat to Goordon's nevv-y-he be a fine man-head for macheens he has"—Holgate's eyes dwelt on his engine lovingly; "but aw've heerd nowt o' Macnamara—never nowt o' him. Who was Macnamara?"

'E was the bloomin' flower of the flock—'e was my pal as took service in the Leave-me-alone-to-die Regiment at Khartoum."

"Aw've never read o' Macnamara. Dost think tha'll ever know how he went?"

"I ain't sayin' 'as 'e went, an' I ain't thinkin' as 'e went. I'm waitin' like a bloomin' telegarpher at the end of a wire. 'E was the pick o' fifteen 'underd men was Macnamara."

"What sent t' laad to Goordon?"

"A-talkin' of 'isself silly to two lydies at onct."

"Aye, theer's the floower o' the flock. Breakin' hearts an' spoilin' lives—aw've seen them floowers bloomin'."

'E didn't break no witherin' 'earts, an' 'e didn't spoil no lives. The lydies was both married afore Macnamara got as far as Wady Halfar. 'E break 'earts—not much! 'E went to Khartoum to be quiet."

"Aw'm pityin' the laads that married them lasses."

"'Ere, keep your bloomin' pity. I wuz one. An' if your pity's 'urtin' yer, think of 'im as 'adn't no wife nor kid to say when 'e's dead, 'Poor Peter Macnamara, 'e is gone.'"

"A good job too, aw'm thinkin'."

"An' a bloornin' 'ard 'eart y' 'ave. Wantin' of a man to die without leavin' 'is mark—'is bleedin' 'all mark on the world. I 'ave two—two kids I 'ave; an' so 'elp me Gawd, things bein' as they are, I wouldn't say nothin' if one of 'em was Macnamara's—wich it ain't—no fear!"

"Was Macnamara here you wouldn't say thaat to his faace, aw'm thinkin'."

"I'd break 'is 'ulkin' neck first. I ain't puttin' these things on the 'oardins, an' I ain't thinkin' 'em, if

'ee's alive in the clutches of the 'eathen Kalifer at Homdurman. There's them as says 'e is, an' there's them as says 'e was cut down after Gordon. But it's only Gawd-forsaken Arabs as says it, an' they'll lie wichever way you want 'em."

"Aye, laad, but what be great foolks doin' at Cairo? They be sendin' goold for Slatin an' Ohrwalder by sooch-like heathen as lie to you. If Macnamara be alive, what be Macnamara doin'? An' what be Wingate an' Kitchener an' great foolks at Cairo doin'?"

"They're sayin', 'Macnamara, 'oos 'e? 'E ain't no class. 'Oo wants Macnamara!'"

Holgate raised himself on his elbow, a look of interest in his face, which he tried to disguise. "See, laad," he said, "why does tha not send messenger thaself—a troosty messenger?"

"'Ere, do you think I'm a bloomin' Crosus? I've done the trick twice-ten pounds o' loot once, an' ten golden shillin's another. Bloomin' thieves both of 'em—said they wuz goin' to Homdurman, and didn't not much! But one of 'em went to 'eaven with cholery, an' one is livin' yet with a crooked leg, with is less than I wuz workin' for."

Holgate was sitting bolt upright now. "Didst tha save them ten sooverins to get news o' Macnamara, laad?"

"Think I bloomin' well looted 'em—go to 'ell!" said Henry Withers of the Sick Horse Depot, and left the lower deck of the Osiris in a fit of sudden anger.

II

Up in Omdurman Peter Macnamara knew naught of this. He ran behind his master's horse, he sat on his master's mat, he stood in the sun before his master's door, barefooted and silent and vengeful in his heart, but with a grin on his face. When Khartoum fell he and Slatin had been thrown into the Saier loaded with irons. Then, when the Mahdi died he had been made the slave of the Khalifa's brother, whose vanity was flattered by having a European servant. The Khalifa Abdullah being angry one day with his brother, vented his spite by ordering Macnamara back to prison again. Later the Khalifa gave him to a favourite Emir for a servant; but that service was of short duration, for on a certain morning Macnamara's patience gave way under the brutality of his master, and he refused to help him on his horse. This was in the presence of the Khalifa, and Abdullah was so delighted at the discomfiture of the Emir that he saved the Irishman's life, and gave him to Osman Wad Adam, after he had been in irons three months and looked no better than a dead man. Henceforth things went better, for Osman Wad Adam was an Arab with a sense of humour, very lazy and very licentious, and Macnamara's Arabic was a source of enjoyment to him in those hours when he did nothing but smoke and drink bad coffee. Also Macnamara was an expert with horses, and had taught the waler, which Osman Wad Adam had looted from Khartoum, a number of admired tricks.

Macnamara wished many a time that he could take to the desert with the waler; but the ride that he must ride to Wady Halfa was not for a horse. None but a camel could do it. Besides, he must have guides, and how was he to pay guides? More than once he had tried to get a word with Slatin, but that was dangerous for them both—most dangerous for Slatin, who was now the servant of the Khalifa Abdullah himself. Slatin was always suspected, and was therefore watched carefully; but the Khalifa knew that Macnamara had no chance to escape, for he had no friends in Cairo, no money, and no more could have bought a camel than a kingdom. Escaping from the city itself, he could but die in the desert.

He had only one Arab friend—little Mahommed Nafar the shoemaker. The shoemaker was friendly to him for a great kindness done in the days when they both lived in Khartoum and ere the Arab deserted to the camp of the Mahdi. But what help could Mahommed Nafar give him unless he had money? With plenty of money the shoemaker might be induced to negotiate with Arab merchants coming from Dongola or Berber into Omdurman to get camels, and arrange an escape down the desert to Wady Halfa; but where was the money to come from?

One day, at a great review, when the roar of the drums rivalled the hoarse shouts of the Mahdists, and the Baggaras, for a diversion, looted one quarter of the town, Macnamara was told by his master that Slatin had been given by the Khalifa to Mahommed Sherif, and was going to Darfur. As a kind of

farewell barbecue, whether or not intended by the Khalifa as a warning to his departing general, ten prisoners had their feet and hands cut off in the Beit-el-Mal, and five lost their heads as well as their hands and feet.

"It makes my blood run cold," said Slatin softly in English, as Macnamara passed him, walking at his master's stirrup.

"Mine's boilin', sir!" answered Macnamara.

Slatin's eyes took on a more cheerful look than they usually carried, for it was many a day since he had been addressed with respect, and the "sir" touched a mellow chord within him—memory of the days when he was Governor of Darfur. Suddenly he saw the Khalifa's eyes fixed on Macnamara, and the look, for a wonder, was not unfriendly. It came to him that perhaps the Khalifa meant to take Macnamara for his own servant, for it flattered his vanity to have a white man at his stirrup and on his mat. He knew that the Khalifa was only sending himself to Darfur that he might be a check upon Mahommed Sherif. He did not think that Macnamara's position would be greatly bettered, save perhaps in bread and onions, by being taken into the employ of the Khalifa. His life would certainly not be safer. But, if it was to be, perhaps he could do a good turn to Macnamara by warning him, by planting deep in the Khalifa's mind the Irishman's simple-minded trustworthiness. When, therefore, the Khalifa suddenly turned and asked him about Macnamara he chose his words discreetly. The Khalifa, ever suspicious, said that Macnamara had been thrown into prison twice for insubordination. To this Slatin replied:

"Sire, what greater proof could be had of the man's simplicity? His life is in your hands, sire. Would he have risked it, had he not been the most simpleminded of men? But you who read men's hearts, sire, as others read a book, you know if I speak truth." Slatin bent his head in humility.

The flattery pleased the Khalifa.

"Summon Osman Wad Adam and the man to me," he said.

In the questioning that followed, Macnamara's Arabic and his understanding of it was so bad that it was necessary for Slatin to ask him questions in English. This was a test of Macnamara, for Slatin said some things in English which were not for the Khalifa's knowing. If Macnamara's face changed, if he started, Abdullah's suspicions, ever ready, would have taken form.

But Macnamara's wits were not wool-gathering, and when Slatin said to him, "If I escape, I will try to arrange yours," Macnamara replied, with a respectful but placid stolidity: "Right, sir. Where does the old sinner keep his spoof?"

It was now for Slatin to keep a hold on himself, for Macnamara's reply was unexpected. Ruling his face to composure, however, he turned to the Khalifa and said that up to this moment Macnamara had not been willing to become a Mahommedan, but his veneration for the Mahdi's successor was so great that he would embrace the true faith by the mercy of God and the permission of the Khalifa. When the Khalifa replied that he would accept the convert into the true faith at once, Slatin then said to Macnamara:

"Come now, my man, I've promised that you will become a Mahommedan—it's your best chance of safety."

"I'll see him on the devil's pitchfork first," said Macnamara; but he did not change countenance. "I'm a Protestant and I'll stand be me baptism."

"You'll lose your head, man," answered Slatin. "Don't be a fool."

"I'm keepin' to what me godfathers and godmothers swore for me," answered Macnamara stubbornly. "You must pretend for a while, or you'll be dead in an hour—and myself too."

"You—that's a different nose on me face," answered Macnamara. "But suppose I buck when I get into the mosque—no, begobs, I'll not be doin' it!"

"I'll say to him that you'll do it with tears of joy, if you can have a month for preparation."

"Make it two an' I'm your man, seein' as you've lied for me, sir. But on wan condition—where does he keep his coin?"

"If you try that on, you'll die bit by bit like the men in the Beit-el- Mal to-day," answered Slatin quickly. "I'm carvin' me own mutton, thank ye kindly, sir," answered Macnamara.

"I've heard that part of his treasure is under his own room," went on Slatin quickly, for he saw that

the Khalifa's eyes had a sinister look- the conversation had been too long.

"Speak no more!" said Abdullah sharply. "What is it you say, my son?" he added to Slatin.

"He has been telling me that he is without education even in his own faith, and that he cannot learn things quickly. Also he does not understand what to do in the mosque, or how to pray, and needs to be taught. He then asked what was impossible, and I had to argue with him, sire."

"What did he ask?" asked the Khalifa, his fierce gaze on Macnamara.

"He wished to be taught by yourself, sire. He said that if you taught him he would understand. I said that you were the chosen Emperor of the Faithful, the coming king of the world, but he replied that the prophets of old taught their disciples with their own tongues."

It was a bold lie, but the Khalifa was flattered, and made a motion of assent. Slatin, seeing his advantage, added:

"I told him that you could not spare the time to teach him, sire; but he said that if you would talk to him for a little while every day for a month, after he had studied Arabic for two months, he would be ready to follow your majesty through life and death."

"Approach, my son," said the Khalifa to Macnamara suddenly. Macnamara came near. He understood Arabic better than he had admitted, and he saw in this three months' respite, if it were granted, the chance to carry out a plan that was in his mind. The Khalifa held out a hand to him, and Macnamara, boiling with rage inwardly and his face flushing—which the Khalifa mistook for modesty—kissed it.

"You shall have two moons to learn Arabic of a good teacher every day, and then for one moon I myself will instruct you in the truth," said Abdullah. "You shall wait at my door and walk by my stirrup and teach my horse as you have taught the English horse of Osman Wad Adam. Thy faithful service I will reward, and thy unfaithfulness I will punish with torture and death."

"I'll cut the price of the kiss on those dirty fingers from a dervish joint," muttered Macnamara to himself, as he took his place that evening at the Khalifa's door.

One thing Macnamara was determined on. He would never pray in a Mahommedan mosque, he would never turn Mahommedan even for a day. The time had come when he must make a break for liberty. He must have money. With money Mahommed Nafar, who was now his teacher—Slatin had managed that—would move for him.

Under the spur of his purpose Macnamara rapidly acquired Arabic, and steadfastly tried to make Mahommed Nafar his friend, for he liked the little man, and this same little man was the only Arab, save one, from first to last, whom he would not have spitted on a bayonet. At first he chafed under the hourly duplicity necessary in his service to the Khalifa, then he took an interest in it, and at last he wept tears of joy over his dangerous proficiency. Day after day Macnamara waited, in the hope of making sure that the Khalifa's treasure was under the room where he slept. Upon the chance of a successful haul, he had made fervid promises, after the fashion of his race, to the shoemaker Mahommed Nafar. At first the shoemaker would have nothing to do with it: helping prisoners to escape meant torture and decapitation; but then he hated the Khalifa, whose Baggaras had seized his property, and killed his wife and children; and in the end Macnamara prevailed. Mahommed Nafar found some friendly natives from the hills of Gilif, who hated the Khalifa and his tyrannous governments, and at last they agreed to attempt the escape.

III

A month went by. Lust, robbery, and murder ruled in Omdurman. The river thickened with its pollution, the trees within the walls sickened of its poison, the bones of the unburied dead lay in the moat beyond the gates, and, on the other side of the river, desolate Khartoum crumbled over the streets and paths and gardens where Gordon had walked. The city was a pit of infamy, where struggled, or wallowed, or died to the bellowing of the Khalifa's drum and the hideous mirth of his Baggaras, the victims of Abdullah. But out in the desert—the Bayuda desert—between Omdurman and Old Dongola, there was only peace. Here and there was "a valley of dry bones," but the sand had washed the bones clean, the vultures had had their hour and flown away, the debris of deserted villages had been covered by desert

storms, and the clear blue sky and ardent sun were over all, joyous and immaculate. Out in the desert there was only the life-giving air, the opal sands, the plaintive evening sky, the eager morning breeze, the desolated villages, and now and then in the vast expanse, stretching hundreds and hundreds of miles south, an oasis as a gem set in a cloth of faded gold.

It would have seemed to any natural man better to die in the desert than to live in Omdurman. So thought a fugitive who fled day and night through the Bayuda desert, into the sandy wastes, beyond whose utmost limits lay Wady Halfa, where the English were.

Macnamara had conquered. He had watched his chance when two of the black guard were asleep, and the Khalifa was in a stupor of opium in the harem, had looted Abdullah's treasure, and carried the price of the camels and the pay of the guides to Mahommed Nafar the shoemaker.

His great sprawling camel, the best that Mahommed Nafar could buy of Ebn Haraf, the sheikh in the Gilif Hills, swung down the wind with a long, reaching stride, to the point where the sheikh would meet him, and send him on his way with a guide. If he reached the rendezvous safely, there was a fair chance of final escape.

Moonlight, and the sand swishing from under the velvet hoofs of the camel, the silence like a filmy cloak, sleep everywhere, save at the eyes of the fugitive. Hour after hour they sprawled down the waste, and for numberless hours they must go on and on, sleepless, tireless, alert, if the man was to be saved at all. As morning broke he turned his eye here and there, fearful of discovery and pursuit. Nothing. He was alone with the sky and the desert and his fate. Another two hours and he would be at the rendezvous, in the cover of the hills, where he would be safe for a moment at least. But he must keep ahead of all pursuit, for if Abdullah's people should get in front of him he would be cut off from all hope. There is little chance to run the blockade of the desert where a man may not hide, where there is neither water, nor feed, nor rest, once in a hundred miles or more.

For an hour his eyes were fixed, now on the desert behind him, whence pursuit should come, now on the golden-pink hills before him, where was sanctuary for a moment, at least. . . . Nothing in all the vast space but blue and grey-the sky and the sand, nothing that seemed of the world he had left; nothing save the rank smell of the camel, and the Arab song he sang to hasten the tired beast's footsteps. Mahommed Nafar had taught him the song, saying that it was as good to him as another camel on a long journey. His Arabic, touched off with the soft brogue of Erin, made a little shrill by weariness and peril, was not the Arabic of Abdin Palace, but yet, under the spell, the camel's head ceased swaying nervously, the long neck stretched out bravely, and they came on together to the Gilif Hills, comrades in distress, gallant and unafraid. . . . Now the rider looked back less than before, for the hills were near, he was crossing a ridge which would hide him from sight for a few miles, and he kept his eyes on the opening in the range where a few domtrees marked the rendezvous. His throat was dry, for before the night was half over he had drunk the little water he carried; but the Arab song still came from his lips:

"Doos ya lellee! Doos ya lellee!
Tread, O joy of my life, tread lightly!
Thy feet are the wings of a dove,
And thy heart is of fire. On thy wounds
I will pour the king's salve. I will hang
On thy neck the long chain of wrought gold,
When the gates of Bagdad are before us—
Doos ya lellee! Doos ya lellee!"

He did not cease singing it until the camel had staggered in beneath the dom-trees where Ebn Mazar waited. Macnamara threw himself on the ground beside the prostrate camel which had carried him so well, and gasped, "Water!" He drank so long from Ebn Haraf's water-bag that the Arab took it from him. Then he lay on the sands hugging the ground close like a dog, till the sheikh roused him with the word that he must mount another camel, this time with a guide, Mahmoud, a kinsman of his own, who must risk his life-at a price. Half the price was paid by Macnamara to the sheikh before they left the shade of the palm-trees, and, striking through the hills, emerged again into the desert farther north.

In the open waste the strain and the peril began again, but Mahmoud, though a boy in years, was a man in wisdom and a "brother of eagles" in endurance: and he was the second Arab who won Macnamara's heart.

It was Mahmoud's voice now that quavered over the heads of the camels and drove them on; it was his eye which watched the horizon. The hours went by, and no living thing appeared in the desert, save a small cloud of vultures, heavy from feasting on a camel dead in the waste, and a dark-brown snake flitting across their path. Nothing all day save these, and nothing all the sleepless night save a desert wolf stealing down the sands. Macnamara's eyes burned in his head with weariness, his body became

numb, but Mahommed Mahmoud would allow no pause. They must get so far ahead the first two days that Abdullah's pursuers might not overtake them, he said. Beyond Dongola, at a place appointed, other camels would await them, if Mahmoud's tribesmen there kept faith.

For two days and nights Macnamara had not slept, for forty-six hours he had been constantly in the saddle, but Mahommed Mahmoud allowed him neither sleep nor rest.

Dongola came at last, lying far away on their right. With Dongola, fresh camels; and the desert flight began again. Hour after hour, and not a living thing; and then, at last, a group of three Arabs on camels going south, far over to their right. These suddenly turned and rode down on them.

"We must fight," said Mahmoud; "for they see you are no Arab."

"I'll take the one with the jibbeh," said Macnamara coolly, with a pistol in his left hand and a sword in his right. "I'll take him first. Here's the tap off yer head, me darlin's!" he added as they turned and faced the dervishes.

"We must kill them all, or be killed," said Mahmoud, as the dervishes suddenly stopped, and the one with the jibbeh called to Mahmoud:

"Whither do you fly with the white Egyptian?"

"If you come and see you will know, by the mercy of God!" answered Mahmoud.

The next instant the dervishes charged. Macnamara marked his man, and the man with the jibbeh fell from his camel. Mahmoud fired his carbine, missed, and closed with his enemy. Macnamara, late of the 7th Hussars, swung his Arab sword as though it were the regulation blade and he in sword practice at Aldershot, and catching the blade of his desert foe, saved his own neck and gave the chance of a fair hand-to-hand combat.

He met the swift strokes of the dervish with a cool certainty. His weariness passed from him; the joy of battle was on him. He was wounded twice—in the shoulder and the head. Now he took the offensive. Once or twice he circled slowly round the dervish, whose eyes blazed, whose mouth was foaming with fury; then he came on him with all the knowledge and the skill he had got in little Indian wars. He came on him, and the dervish fell, his head cut through like a cheese.

Then Macnamara turned, to see Mahmoud and the third dervish on the ground, struggling in each other's arms. He started forward, but before he could reach the two, Mahmoud jumped to his feet with a reeking knife, and waved it in the air.

"He was a kinsman, but he had to die," said Mahmoud as they mounted. He turned towards the bodies, then looked at the camels flying down the desert towards Dongola.

"It is as God wills now," he said. "Their tribesmen will follow when they see the camels. See, my camel is wounded!" he added, with a gasp.

IV

Two days following, towards evening, two wounded men on foot trudged through the desert haggard and bent. The feet of one—an Arab—had on a pair of red slippers, the feet of the other were bare. Mahmoud and Macnamara were in a bad way. They were in very truth "walking against time." Their tongues were thick in their mouths, their feet were lacerated and bleeding, they carried nothing now save their pistols and their swords, and a small bag of dates hanging at Macnamara's belt. Prepared for the worst, they trudged on with blind hope, eager to die fighting if they must die, rather than to perish of hunger and thirst in the desert. Another day, and they would be beyond the radius of the Khalifa's power: but would they see another day?

They thought that question answered, when, out of the evening pink and opal and the golden sand behind them, they saw three Arabs riding. The friends of the slain dervishes were come to take revenge, it seemed.

The two men looked at each other, but they did not try to speak. Macnamara took from his shirt a bag

of gold and offered it to Mahmoud. It was the balance of the payment promised to Ebn Mazar. Mahmoud salaamed and shook his head, then in a thick voice: "It is my life and thy life. If thou diest, I die. If thou livest, the gold is Ebn Haraf's. At Wady Halfa I will claim it, if it be the will of God."

The words were thick and broken, but Macnamara understood him, and they turned and faced their pursuers, ready for life or death, intent to kill—and met the friends of Ebn Haraf, who had been hired to take them on to Wady Halfa! Their rescuers had been pursued, and had made a detour and forced march, thus coming on them before the time appointed. In three days more they were at Wady Halfa.

Mahmoud lived to take back to Ebn Mazar the other hundred pounds of the gold Macnamara had looted from the Khalifa; and he also took something for himself from the British officers at Wady Halfa. For him nothing remained of the desperate journey but a couple of scars.

It was different with Macnamara. He had to take a longer journey still. He was not glad to do it, for he liked the look of the English faces round him, and he liked what they said to him. Also, he was young enough to "go a-roaming still," as he said to Henry Withers. Besides, it sorely hurt his pride that no woman or child of his would be left behind to lament him. Still, when Henry told him he had to go, he took it like a man.

"'Ere, it ain't no use," said Henry to him the day he got to Wady Halfa. "'Ere, old pal, it ain't no use. You 'ave to take your gruel, an' you 'ave to take it alone. What I want to tell yer quiet and friendly, old pal, is that yer drawfted out—all the way out—for good."

"'Sh-did ye think I wasn't knowin' it, me b'y?" Macnamara's face clouded. "Did ye think I wasn't knowin' it? Go an' lave me alone," he added quickly.

Henry Withers went out pondering, for he was sure it was not mere dying that fretted Macnamara.

The next day the end of it all came. Henry Withers had pondered, and his mind was made up to do a certain thing. Towards evening he sat alone in the room where Macnamara lay asleep—almost his very last sleep. All at once Macnamara's eyes opened wide. "Kitty, Kitty, me darlin'," he murmured vaguely. Then he saw Henry Withers.

"I'm dyin'," he said, breathing heavily. "Don't call anny one, Hinry," he added brokenly. "Dyin's that aisy—aisy enough, but for wan thing."

"'Ere, speak out, Pete."

"Sure, there's no wan but you, Withers, not a wife nor a child av me own to say, 'Poor Peter Macnamara, he is gone.'"

"There's one," said Henry Withers firmly. "There's one, old pal."

"Who's that?" said Macnamara huskily. "Kitty."

"She's no wife," said Macnamara, shaking his head. "Though she'd ha' been that, if it hadn't been for Mary Malone."

"She's mine, an' she 'as the marriage lines," said Henry Withers. "An' there's a kid-wich ain't mine—born six months after! 'Oo says no kid won't remark, 'Poor Peter Macnamara, 'ee is gone, wich'ee was my fader!'"

Macnamara trembled; the death-sweat dropped from his forehead as he raised himself up.

"Kitty—a kid av mine—and she married to Hinry Withers—an' you saved me, too!—" Macnamara's eyes were wild.

Henry Withers took his hand.

"'Ere, it's all right, old pal," he said cheerfully. "What's the kid's name?" said Macnamara. "Peter—same as yours."

The voice was scarce above a breath. "Sure, I didn't know at all. An' you forgive me, Hinry darlin', you forgive me?"

"I've nothing to forgive," said Henry Withers.

A smile lighted the blanched face of the dying man. "Give me love to the b'y—to Peter Macnamara," he said, and fell back with a smile on his face.

"I'd do it again. Wot's a lie so long as it does good?" said Henry Withers afterwards to Holgate the engineer. "But tell 'er—tell Kitty— no fear! I ain't no bloomin' fool. 'E's 'appy—that's enough. She'd cut me 'eart out, if she knowed I'd lied that lie."

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

I

Dimsdale's prospects had suddenly ceased by the productive marriage of a rich uncle late in life; and then his career began. He went to Egypt at the time when men who knew things had their chance to do things. His information was general and discursive, but he had a real gift for science: an inheritance from a grandfather who received a peerage for abstruse political letters written to the Times and lectures before the Royal Institution. Besides, he had known well and loved inadvertently the Hon. Lucy Gray, who kept a kind of social kindergarten for confiding man, whose wisdom was as accurate as her face was fair, her manners simple, and her tongue demure and biting.

Egypt offered an opportunity for a man like Dimsdale, and he always said that his going there was the one inspiration of his life. He did not know that this inspiration came from Lucy Gray. She had purposely thrown him in the way of General Duncan Pasha, who, making a reputation in Egypt, had been rewarded by a good command in England and a K.C.B.

After a talk with the General, who had spent his Egyptian days in the agreeable strife with native premiers and hesitating Khedives, Dimsdale rose elated, with his mission in his hand. After the knock-down blow his uncle had given him, he was in a fighting mood. General Duncan's tale had come at the psychological moment, and hot with inspiration he had gone straight off to Lucy Gray with his steamship ticket in his pocket, and told her he was going to spend his life in the service of the pasha and the fellah. When she asked him a little bitingly what form his disciplined energy would take, he promptly answered: "Irrigation."

She laughed in his face softly. "What do you know about irrigation?" she asked.

"I can learn it—it's the game to play out there, I'm sure of that," he answered.

"It doesn't sound distinguished," she remarked drily. Because she smiled satirically at him, and was unresponsive to his enthusiasm, and gave him no chance to tell her of the nobility of the work in which he was going to put his life; of the work of the Pharaohs in their day, the hope of Napoleon in his, and the creed Mahomet Ali held and practised, that the Nile was Egypt and Egypt was irrigation—because of this he became angry, said unkind things, drew acid comments upon himself, and left her with a last good-bye. He did not realise that he had played into the hands of Lucy Gray in a very childish manner. For in scheming that he should go to Egypt she had planned also that he should break with her; for she never had any real intention of marrying him, and yet it was difficult to make him turn his back on her, while at the same time she was too tender of his feelings to turn her back on him. She held that anger was the least injurious of all grounds for separation. In anger there was no humiliation. There was something dignified and brave about a quarrel, while a growing coolness which must end in what the world called "jilting" was humiliating. Besides, people who quarrel and separate may meet again and begin over again: impossible in the other circumstance.

II

In Egypt Dimsdale made a reputation; not at once, but he did make it. The first two years of his stay he had plenty to do. At the end of the time he could have drawn a map of the Nile from Uganda to the Barrages; he knew the rains in each district from the region of the Sadds to the Little Borillos; there was not a canal, from the small Bahr Shebin to the big Rayeh Menoufieh or the majestic Ibrahimieh, whose slope, mean velocity and discharge he did not know; and he carried in his mind every drainage cut and contour from Tamis to Damanhur, from Cairo to Beltim. He knew neither amusement nor

society, for every waking hour was spent in the study of the Nile and what the Nile might do.

After one of his journeys up the Nile, Imshi Pasha, the Minister of the Interior, said to him: "Ah, my dear friend, with whom be peace and power, what have you seen as you travel?"

"I saw a fellah yesterday who has worked nine months on the corvee— six months for the Government and three for a Pasha, the friend of the Government. He supplied his own spades and baskets; his lantern was at the service of the Khedive; he got his own food as best he could. He had one feddan of land in his own village, but he had no time to work it or harvest it. Yet he had to pay a house-tax of five piastres, a war-tax of five piastres, a camel-tax of five piastres, a palm-tax of five piastres, a salt-tax of nine piastres, a poll-tax of thirty piastres, a land-tax of ninety piastres. The canal for which he was taxed gave his feddan of land no water, for the Pasha, the friend of the Government, took all the water for his own land."

Prince Imshi stifled a yawn. "I have never seen so much at one breath, my friend. And having seen, you feel now that Egypt must be saved—eh?"

This Pasha was an Egyptian of the Egyptians—a Turk of the Turks, Oriental in mind with the polish of a Frenchman. He did not like Dimsdale, but he did not say so. He knew it was better to let a man have his fling and come a cropper over his own work than to have him unoccupied, excited, and troublesome, especially when he was an Englishman and knew about what he was talking. Imshi Pasha saw that Dimsdale was a dangerous man, as all enthusiasts are, no matter how right-headed; but it comforted him to think that many a reformer, from Amenhotep down, had, as it were, cut his own throat in the Irrigation Department. Some had tried to distribute water fairly, efficiently and scientifically, but most of them had got lost in the underbush of officialdom, and never got out of the wood again. This wood is called Backsheesh. Reformers like Dimsdale had drawn straight lines of purpose for the salvation of the country, and they had seen these straight lines go crooked under their very eyes, with a devilish smoothness. Therefore Imshi Pasha, being a wise man and a deep-dyed official who had never yet seen the triumph of the reformer and the honest Aryan, took Dimsdale's hands and said suddenly, with a sorrowful break in his voice:

"Behold, my friend, to tell the whole truth as God gives it, it is time you have come. Egypt has waited for you—the man who sees and knows. I have watched you for two years. I have waited, but now the time is ripe. You shall stretch your arm over Egypt and it will rise to you. You shall have paper for plans, and men and money for travel and works-cuttings, and pumps, and sand-bags for banks and barrages. You shall be second in your department—but first in fact, for shall not I, your friend, be your chief? And you shall say 'Go there,' and they shall go, and 'Come here,' and they shall come. For my soul is with you for Egypt, O friend of the fellah and saviour of the land. Have I not heard of the great reservoirs you would make in the Fayoum, of the great dam at Assouan? Have I not heard, and waited, and watched? and now . . ."

He paused and touched his breast and his forehead in respect.

Dimsdale was well-nigh taken off his feet. It seemed too wonderful to be true—a free hand in Egypt, and under Imshi Pasha, the one able Minister of them all, who had, it was said, always before resisted the irrigation schemes of the foreigners, who believed only in the corroe and fate!

Dimsdale rejoiced that at the beginning of his career he had so inspired the powerful one with confidence. With something very like emotion he thanked the Minister.

"Yes, my dear friend," answered the Pasha, "the love of Egypt has helped us to understand each other. And we shall know each other better still by-and-by -by-and-by. . . . You shall be gazetted to-morrow. Allah preserve you from all error!"

III

This began the second period of Dimsdale's career. As he went forth from Cairo up the Nile with great designs in his mind, and an approving Ministry behind him, he had the feeling of a hunter with a sure quarry before him. Now he remembered Lucy Gray; and he flushed with a delightful and victorious indignation remembering his last hour with her. He even sentimentally recalled a song he once wrote for her sympathetic voice. The song was called "No Man's Land." He recited two of the verses to himself now, with a kind of unctiousness:

"And we have wandered far, my dear, and we have loved apace;
A little hut we built upon the sand;
The sun without to brighten it-within your golden face:
O happy dream, O happy No Man's Land!

"The pleasant furniture of spring was set in all the fields,
And sweet and wholesome all the herbs and flowers;
Our simple cloth, my dear, was spread with all the orchard yields,
And frugal only were the passing hours."

A wave of feeling passed over him suddenly. Those verses were youth, and youth was gone, with all its flushed and spirited dalliance and reckless expenditure of feeling. Youth was behind him, and love was none of his, nor any cares of home, nor wife nor children; nothing but ambition now, and the vanity of successful labour.

Sitting on the deck of the Sefi at El Wasta, he looked round him. In the far distance was the Maydoum Pyramid, "the Imperfect One," unexplored by man these thousands of years, and all round it the soft yellowish desert, with a mirage quivering over it in the distance, a mirage of trees and water and green hills. A caravan lounged its way slowly into the waste. At the waterside, here and there devout Mahommedans were saying their prayers, now standing, now bowing towards the east, now kneeling and touching the ground with the forehead. Then, piercing and painfully musical, came the call of the Muezzin from the turret of the mosque a quarter of a mile away. Near by the fellah worked in his onion-field; and on the khiassas loaded with feddan at the shore, just out of the current, and tied up for the night, sat the riverine folk eating their dourha and drinking black coffee. Now Dimsdale noticed that, nearer still, just below the Sefi, on the shore, sat a singing-girl, an a'l'meh, with a darkfaced Arab beside her, a kemengeh in his lap. Looking down, Dimsdale caught their eyes, nodded to them, and the singing-girl and the kemengeh-player got to their feet and salaamed. The girl's face was in the light of evening. Her dark skin took on a curious reddish radiance, her eyes were lustrous and her figure beautiful. The kemengeh-player stood with his instrument ready, and he lifted it in a kind of appeal. Dimsdale beckoned them up on deck. Lighting a cigarette, he asked the a'l'meh to sing. Her voice had the curious vibrant note of the Arab, and the words were in singular sympathy with Dimsdale's thoughts:

"I have a journey to make, and perils are in hiding,
Many moons must I travel, many foes meet;
A morsel of bread my food, a goolah of water for drinking,
Desert sand for my bed, the moonlight my sheet. . . .
Come, my love, to the scented palms:
Behold, the hour of remembrance!"

For the moment Dimsdale ceased to be the practical scientist—he was all sentimentalist. He gave himself the luxury of retrospection, he enjoyed the languorous moment; the music, the voice, the tinkle of the tambourine, the girl herself, sinuous, sensuous. It struck him that he had never seen an a'l'meh so cleanly and so finely dressed, so graceful, so delicate in manner. It struck him also that the kemengeh-player was a better-class Arab than he had ever met. The man's face attracted him, fascinated him. As he looked it seemed familiar. He studied it, he racked his brain to recall it. Suddenly he remembered that it was like the face of a servant of Imshi Pasha—a kind of mouffetish of his household. Now he studied the girl. He had never seen her before; of that he was sure. He ordered them coffee, and handed the girl a goldpiece. As he did so, he noticed that among several paste rings she wore one of value. All at once the suspicion struck him: Imshi Pasha had sent the girl—to try him perhaps, to gain power over him maybe, as women had gained power over strong men before. But why should Imshi Pasha send the girl and his mouffetish on this miserable mission? Was not Imshi Pasha his friend?

Quietly smoking his cigarette, he said to the man: "You may go, Mahommed Melik; I have had enough. Take your harem with you," he added quickly.

The man scarcely stirred a muscle, the woman flushed deeply.

"So be it, effendi," answered the man, rising unmoved, for his sort know not shame. He beckoned to the girl. For an instant she stood hesitating, then with sudden fury she threw on the table beside him the gold-piece Dimsdale had given her.

"Magnoon!" she said, with blazing eyes, and ran after the man.

"I may be a fool, my dear," Dimsdale said after her; "but you might say the same of the Pasha who sent you here."

Dimsdale was angry for a moment, and he said some hard words of Imshi Pasha as he watched the two decoys hurry away into the dusk. He thought it nothing more serious than an attempt to know of what stuff he was made. He went to bed with dreams of vast new areas watered for summer rice, of pumping-stations lifting millions of cubic metres of water per day; of dykes to be protected by bulrushes and birriya weeds; of great desert areas washed free of carbonates and sulphates and selling at twenty pounds an acre; of a green Egypt with three crops, and himself the Regenerator, the Friend of the Fellah.

In this way he soon forgot that he had remembered Lucy Gray, and the incident of the girl ceased to trouble. His progress up the river, however, was marked by incidents whose significance he did not at once see. Everywhere his steamer stopped people came with backsheesh in the shape of butter, cream, flour, eggs, fowls, cloths, and a myriad things. Jewels from mummy cases, antichi, donkeys, were offered him: all of which he steadfastly refused, sometimes with contumely. Officials besought his services with indelicate bribes, and by devious hospitalities and attentions more than one governor sought to bring his projects for irrigation in line with their own particular duplicities.

"Behold, effendi," said one to whom Dimsdale's honesty was monstrous, "may God preserve you from harm—the thing has not been known, that all men shall fare alike! It is not the will of God."

"It is the will of God that water shall be distributed as I am going to distribute it; and that is, according to every man's just claim," answered Dimsdale stubbornly, and he did not understand the vague smile which met his remark.

It took him a long time to realise that his plans, approved by Imshi Pasha, were constantly coming to naught; that after three years' work, and extensive invention and travel, and long reports to the Ministry, and encouragement on paper, he had accomplished nothing; and that he had no money with which to accomplish anything. Day in, day out, week in, week out, month in, month out, when the whole land lay sweltering with the moist heat of flood-time, in the period of the khamsin, in the dry heat which turned the hair grey and chapped the skin like a bitter wind, he slaved and schemed, the unconquerable enthusiast, who built houses which immediately fell down.

Fifty times his schemes seemed marching to fulfilment; but something always intervened. He wrote reams of protest, he made many arid journeys to Cairo, he talked himself hoarse; and always he was met by the sympathetic smiling of Imshi Pasha, by his encouraging approval.

"Ah, my dear friend, may. Heaven smooth your path! It is coming right. All will be well. Time is man's friend. The dam shall be built. The reservoirs shall be made. But we are in the hands of the nations. Poor Egypt cannot act alone—our Egypt that we love. The Council sits to-morrow—we shall see." This was the fashion of the Pasha's speech.

After the sitting of the Council, Dimsdale would be sent away with unfruitful promises.

Futility was written over the Temple of Endeavour, and by-and-by Dimsdale lost hope and health and heart. He had Nilotic fever, he had ophthalmia; and hot with indomitable will, he had striven to save one great basin from destruction, for one whole week, without sleeping or resting night and day: working like a navvy, sleeping like a fellah, eating like a Bedouin.

Then the end came. He was stricken down, and lay above Assouan in a hut by the shore, from which he could see the Temple of Philoe, and Pharaoh's Bed, and the great rocks, and the swift-flowing Nile. Here lay his greatest hope, the splendid design of his life—the great barrage of Assouan. With it he could add to the wealth of Egypt one-half. He had believed in it, had worked for it and how much else! and his dreams and his working had come to naught. He was sick to death—not with illness alone, but with disappointment and broken hopes and a burden beyond the powers of any one man.

He saw all now: all the falsehood and treachery and corruption. He realised that Imshi Pasha had given him his hand that he might ruin himself, that his own schemes might overwhelm him in the end. At every turn he had been frustrated—by Imshi Pasha: three years of underground circumvention, with a superficial approval and a mock support.

He lay and looked at the glow, the sunset glow of pink and gold on the Libyan Hills, and his fevered eyes scarcely saw them; they were only a part of this last helpless, senseless dream. Life itself was very far away—practical, generous, hot-blooded life. This distance was so ample and full and quiet, this mystery of the desert and the sky was so immense, the spirit of it so boundless, that in the judgment of his soul nothing mattered now. As he lay in reverie, he heard his servant talking: it was the tale of the Mahdi and British valour and hopeless fighting, and a red martyrdom set like a fixed star in a sunless sky. What did it matter—what did it all matter, in this grave tremendous quiet wherein his soul was

hasting on?

The voices receded; he was alone with the immeasurable world; he fell asleep.

IV

When he woke again it was to find at his bedside a kavass from Imshi Pasha at Cairo. He shrank inwardly. The thought of the Pasha merely nauseated him, but to the kavass he said: "What do you want, Mahommed?"

The kavass smiled; his look was agreeably mysterious, his manner humbly confidential, his tongue officially deliberate.

"Efendina chok yasha—May the great lord live for ever! I bring good news."

"Leave of absence, eh?"—rejoined Dimsdale feebly, yet ironically; for that was the thing he expected now of the Minister, who had played him like a ball on a racquet these three years past.

The kavass handed him a huge blue envelope, salaaming impressively.

"May my life be thy sacrifice, effendi," he said, and salaamed again.
"It is my joy to be near you."

"We have tasted your absence and found it bitter, Mahommed," Dimsdale answered in kind, with a touch of plaintive humour, letting the envelope fall from his fingers on the bed, so little was he interested in any fresh move of Imshi Pasha. "More tricks," he said to himself between his teeth.

"Shall I open it, effendi? It is the word that thy life shall carry large plumes."

"What a blitherer you are, Mahommed! Rip it open and let's have it over."

The kavass handed him a large letter, pedantically and rhetorically written; and Dimsdale, scarce glancing at it, sleepily said: "Read it out, Mahommed. Skip the flummery in it, if you know how."

Two minutes later Dimsdale sat up aghast with a surprise that made his heart thump painfully, made his head go round. For the letter conveyed to him the fact that there had been placed to the credit of his department, subject to his own disposal for irrigation works, the sum of eight hundred thousand pounds; and appended was the copy of a letter from the Caisse de la Dette granting three-fourths of this sum, and authorising its expenditure. Added to all was a short scrawl from Imshi Pasha himself, beginning, "God is with the patient, my dear friend," and ending with the remarkable statement: "Inshallah, we shall now reap the reward of our labours in seeing these great works accomplished at last, in spite of the suffering thrust upon us by our enemies—to whom perdition come."

Eight hundred thousand pounds!

In a week Dimsdale was at work again. In another month he was at Cairo, and the night after his arrival he attended a ball at the Khedive's Palace. To Fielding Bey he poured out the wonder of his soul at the chance that had been given him at last. He seemed to think it was his own indomitable patience, the work that he had done, and his reports, which had at last shamed the Egyptian Government and the Caisse de la Dette into doing the right thing for the country and to him.

He was dumfounded when Fielding replied: "Not much, my Belisarius. As Imshi Pasha always was, so he will be to the end. It wasn't Imshi Pasha, and it wasn't English influence, and it wasn't the Caisse de la Dette, each by its lonesome, or all together by initiative."

"What was it—who was it, then?" inquired Dimsdale breathlessly. "Was it you?—I know you've worked for me. It wasn't backsheesh anyhow. But Imshi Pasha didn't turn honest and patriotic for nothing—I know that."

Fielding, who had known him all his life, looked at him curiously for a moment, and then, in a far-away, sort of voice, made recitative:

"Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray,
And when I crossed the wild,

I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child."

Dimsdale gasped. "Lucy Gray!" he said falteringly.

Fielding nodded. "You didn't know, of course. She's been here for six months—has more influence than the whole diplomatic corps. Twists old Imshi Pasha round her little finger. She has played your game handsomely—I've been in her confidence. Wordsworth was wrong when he wrote:

"No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor:
The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door—'

For my wife's been her comrade. And her mate—would you like to know her mate? She's married, you know."

Dimsdale's face was pale. He was about to reply, when a lady came into view, leaning on the arm of an Agency Secretary. At first she did not see Dimsdale, then within a foot or two of him she suddenly stopped. The Secretary felt her hand twitch on his arm; then she clenched the fingers firmly on her fan.

"My dear Dimsdale," Fielding said, "you must let me introduce you to Mrs. St. John."

Dimsdale behaved very well, the lady perfectly. She held out both her hands to him.

"We are old, old friends, Mr. Dimsdale and I. I have kept the next dance for him," she added, turning to Fielding, who smiled placidly and left with the Secretary.

For a moment there was silence, then she said quietly: "Let me congratulate you on all you have done. Everybody is talking about you. They say it is wonderful how you have made things come your way. . . . I am very, very glad."

Dimsdale was stubborn and indignant and anything a man can be whose amour propre has had a shock.

"I know all," he said bluntly. "I know what you've done for me."

"Well, are you as sorry I did it as I am to know you know it?" she asked just a little faintly, for she had her own sort of heart, and it worked in its own sort of way.

"Why this sudden interest in my affairs? You laughed at me when I made up my mind to come to Egypt."

"That was to your face. I sent you to Egypt."

"You sent me?"

"I made old General Duncan talk to you. The inspiration was mine. I also wrote to Fielding Pasha—and at last he wrote to me to come."

"You—why—"

"I know more about irrigation than any one in England," she continued illogically. "I've studied it.

"I have all your reports. That's why I could help you here. They saw I knew."

Dimsdale shook a little. "I didn't understand," he said.

"You don't know my husband, I think," she added, rising slowly. "He is coming yonder with Imshi Pasha."

"I know of him—as a millionaire," he answered, in a tone of mingled emotions.

"I must introduce you," she said, and seemed to make an effort to hold herself firmly. "He will have great power here. Come and see me to-morrow," she added in an even voice. "Please come—Harry."

In another minute Dimsdale heard the great financier Arnold St. John say that the name of Dimsdale would be for ever honoured in Egypt.

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 Mahomedan 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 Mahomedans.

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.
Shintiyān—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 shintiyān.

Zeriba—A palisade.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Anger was the least injurious of all grounds for separation
Dangerous man, as all enthusiasts are
Oriental would think not less of him for dissimulation
The friendship of man is like the shade of the acacia
Vanity of successful labour

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