

a long way to carry a water  
bottle! Papa asks me  
to say that he is too much  
occupied by some interesting  
business to write this  
time. He thinks he has got  
the clue unravel - most  
difficult & disagreeable - found  
by the way - to Mrs. C. & others  
a double portion of  
myself to the dear old  
kind friend - go  
onward. Believe me  
your ever affectionate  
father  
1884.  
Also love to Mariner's  
wife. She will be  
my next writing to her.

I mentioned that we have had no  
letters from home later than Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> we  
are now hoping that a mail may over-  
take us Asyout which we expect to  
reach tomorrow. We began our present  
novel mode of life last Tuesday at 10 A.M.  
I told you of five of our fellow passengers  
& in addition we found as heard a  
Rev. Canon Du Pont, Mrs Du Pont & a Miss Du P-  
eithers sister to Mr or Mrs Du - Two brothers  
named Comphel, Americans from St Louis,  
three German gentlemen. a doctor & another  
Mrs & Mrs Comphel English people. I think,

976/31/18



Considering we are a hap-hazard party  
 perhaps we are rather fortunate. The Chines  
 I least like. Our first meal together was  
 lunch, a most excellently well cooked & served  
 meal of four hot courses of meats with fruit  
 & coffee & that have since followed have  
 been equally satisfactory. Lined hardly ever  
 before we reach Bedshagan, the landing  
 place from which passengers start to visit  
Memphis. The drayman having previously arranged  
 for donkeys & this attracts to be in waiting  
 for our animal, to try to picture twenty  
 donkeys, each with an an Egyptian, Coptic  
 or Arab load in their various costumes. The  
 draymen try to suit every one & everyone  
 clamouring for the largest donkey & the best  
 of a set of best saddles, bridles & stirrups. At  
 last we start on the high roads, raised  
 about twenty feet above the general level  
 of the country, that they may always be above  
 water. The distance to be traversed was



twelve miles & occupied five hours inclusive  
 of the time spent in the tumbos. The principal  
 object each darky-boy had in view was to  
 get the trip over as soon as they could as they  
 had to return to Cairo the same night so, by  
 what you would, they urged the creatures  
 into a gallop running lightly & gracefully along  
 side with apparent ease, ready in a moment  
 to render any service one wanted. How I wish  
 I had a Mark Twain's power to make real to you  
 the ridiculous scene. Papa was on a little crea-  
 ture not much bigger than a dog, & fortunate  
 it was so, for he twice tumbled off. (With no  
 head after effects). Que & I were rather better mon-  
 tered but think of <sup>us</sup> tearing over the flat desert sand  
 wh: passed the last part of the way, like Bedouins  
 or people flying for dear life! I laughed as  
 at the time & I laugh <sup>now</sup> as I write & recall the scene  
 altho' at the time I knew my life was not worth  
 a minute's purchase. As to what we saw I find  
 disposed to refer you to the Pict. book altho'  
 no doubt you have read of Memphis of wh: there  
 are no remains except the prostrate remains



of a Colossal figure of Romulus II? but beyond  
 Memphis some two or three miles are <sup>the lake of the desert</sup> ~~are the~~  
 tombs of the sacred bulls, long, lofty corridors  
 hewn out of the solid rocks, with large rooms  
 to the right & left each having an immense  
 sarcophagus cut out of solid blocks of granite  
 & containing the mummied bull orApis. Another  
 tomb we went into, by one of these low sloping  
 passages, shuffling along in a bent position for  
 some thirty yards. the interior was covered with  
 hieroglyphs coloured & very perfect. but it is useless  
 for me to give a second hand version of these  
 fully discussed antiquities. We reached our  
 boat again before it was quite dark & had  
 time for a half hour's rest before dinner. & I am  
 glad to be able to add that none of us were  
 the worse for our scapes, indeed I enjoyed  
 it immensely. Wednesday we had a long rest-  
 ful day sitting on the upper deck reading & ad-  
 miring the shores of the Nile - a beautiful  
 grove of palms. A much better shelter  
 by palms - most picturesque at sufficient  
 distance but sadly unequal & dirty near



a stretch of desert - nearly yellow, <sup>except</sup> with a back  
 ground of literally bare hills & sometimes  
 a group of cranes or storks at the edge of  
 the water. On this day at sunset, or rather  
 after, there was the most lovely after-glow, we  
 wished you ~~it~~ had been here to try to  
 sketch it. However, one of the three Germa-  
 nents paints beautifully & succeeded in taking  
 a group of palms with the crimson glow as  
 back ground. Even two made a beginning but  
 has not finished. Thursday we had another  
 donkey boat to the rock tombs of Bernihasson  
 but the billings at which we landed having  
 the worst repute of any on the Nile for  
 lawlessness, & a gentleman, one of the passengers  
 by the last boat - two weeks ago - who had land-  
 ed there to shoot wild duck & accidentally had  
 some of his shot in two or three little kegs -  
 which circumstance might be made a plea for  
 anger against the English, made it necessary  
 to use great caution. The dragoman consequent-  
 ly told us we must keep closely together &



thirty says I savages we have encountered, because we are most favourably impressed with the native peasant population - they have a fine bearing, are in dustrious & appear happy & generally good temper. These houses, as rather hawels, are dirty & cluttered they are ignorant & backshook from strangers is their cry from infancy to old age - until the word is inherited not taught, still they are reclaimable & we shall hope per little days make an enlightened government for this Country.

We are now on our way to Asquat, a town at wh: we hope to find ourselves in the morn., where we can mail letters & may find some awaiting us. Paper & Ence are both in bed & so are all our fellow passengers except the Germans who are making good music out of a shockingly bad piano & a good plate - the first time they have tried. & I suppose they chose this late hour to test the experiment minus an audience. So I too must away.

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> I dated at the beginning 18<sup>th</sup> it ought to have been 17<sup>th</sup>. This morn. we find that we are not to reach Asquat till about 3 P.M. but there is no



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reason to regret this - the scenery retains its charms, a  
fine chain of absolutely bare rocky hills has extended  
along the left bank from a little above Cairn until now  
at one place receding from the shore leaving the latter  
much wherein grows the greenest & most luxuriant crops  
& at others forming bold cliffs. This morn. we have passed  
some very fine cliffs penetrated for a mile at a stretch  
with rock tombs & at one or two places where there  
was a black village seeming with people - have made  
these tombs also in the rocks. I should have referred  
to yesterday's sight of a visit to a very large  
sugar factory. We reached the site just at sundown  
but as they are worked night & day we saw them  
by gas-light. Tell Eric I am using a description  
of them to tell him if he promises not to question  
me too closely about the machinery. I shall  
also ask Gampel to make a drawing of the two  
ways by which the Egyptians lift water from the Nile.

It has just occurred to me that this may much  
give me to your birthday so accept of my loving good  
wishes. We are told there a finer quality of  
water bottles are made at Asyut than at other  
parts of the Nile. I wish I could get one there at once  
for this. but even with Careful packing it is a long



& that he wd. charge the donkey boys  
 to go slowly to prevent the chance of over-  
 scattering. The distance was only three miles  
 to the site of the tombs & as easy to return so  
 it was not at all fatiguing. Papa was  
 much interested in the geology - finding  
 a number of fossils. Nothing we have  
 ever heard or read exaggerates the misnomer  
 of "halskuch". On our return from this  
 trip, on the bank where we were to go  
 on to the boat, a mob of over a hundred  
 men & boys joined our donkey boys  
 & shrieked & clamoured & jostled us, making  
 me believe they wd. take papa's purse out of  
 his hands, we had to fight our way  
 through & from the boat the same boys and  
 description they shouted & gesticulated sta-  
 hoping that something not be thrown to them,  
 but immediately our steam was applied  
 to me so as to distance the first scally