

at Brindisi would be coming with me as far as Beyrout.

At the hour appointed we were all three in readiness; and a brown man like a wizard, in flowing Eastern raiment, with the word 'Cook' written large on a linen ephod, was faithfully awaiting us, who convoyed us across the harbour to a vessel of moderate size about half a mile away. We were somewhat apprehensive as to the sort of accommodation that might be in store for us; but our apprehension only heightened our pleasure at what we found. The saloon and cabins were not merely clean, they were luxurious; a *déjeuner* which we ordered revealed the hand of a *chef* who would, without any exaggeration, have been a prize to a London dinner-giver; and, best of all, we three were the only first-class passengers.

And now, for the first time since I started, I felt that I was really travelling. During the earlier part of my journey I had been in a sort of trance. On the boat from Brindisi I had been perfectly wide awake; only camp stools, novels, canvas boots, and opera glasses had given the deck an aspect of Margate jetty; and men haunted the bar, their moustaches wet with cocktails, who suggested a garrison town and breathed Angostura bitters. But here suddenly all had become different. Instead of majors and doctors and young ladies going out to be married, there were strange steerage passengers in turbans and floating draperies. I was very soon conscious of