

coming back to them, were certainly good enough to put their most poetical side foremost, and it was not till I found myself in Shepherd's Hotel at Cairo, till I saw the white shirt-fronts and black coats of the waiters, and heard some brilliantly dressed English ladies talking at the *table d'hôte* about 'the officers,' that I felt I had actually collided with fact in all its nakedness. After dinner I discovered a few acquaintances, who seemed to me like dead people come to life again; and I went with one of them to a glittering *café chantant*, where the gilded walls and the quick crash of the music produced in the mind a dream-like feeling of Monte Carlo.

In a day or two I discovered people who were more than acquaintances—who were friends—and I went with some of them the day before I left to the Shoubra Palace, which is a few miles from the town. It is a fantastic quadrangle, filled with a marble lake; on each of its sides is a shadowy wide colonnade with horse-shoe arches, and a ceiling daubed with pictures of pashas; and at each corner is a saloon—in its own way magnificent—with gold furniture and heavy brocaded curtains. All four of them struck me as curiously interesting. They are triumphs of the finest workmanship enslaved to the vilest taste. They are perfect embodiments of a barbarism which has gone to school with civilisation, and has only learnt from it just enough to be meretricious.

The palace, or rather the palaces, stand in a