



## An Egyptian Journal

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Aboard a dilapidated cabin cruiser with a crew of five, Mr. and Mrs. Golding chug slowly up the Nile and discover a world vastly different from that seen by the ordinary tourists who glide swiftly by on their streamlined ferries. When delayed at various intervals because of engine and crew problems, Golding makes the most of his misfortune by conversing with local people; as a result, Egypt becomes much less mysterious to him. He talks with Nubians who had been forced to abandon their villages and resettle when their land was flooded to form Lake Nasser; he visits the model city of Hassan Fathy; he chats with a brilliant architect who used cheap local materials to build a town featuring attractive arches and exquisitely-designed houses with domed ceilings for cooling, only to have them spurned by the immovable Fellahin. He also visits the outskirts of Quena, where all the houses were built of pots--not shards, but whole or nearly-whole flagons of 4-5 gallon capacity which had been cracked or holed in the firing, making the original cavity wall, cool in summer, warm in winter.

The “absurd journey” has its share of irritations, and Golding is honest enough to admit publicly to a surfeit of ruins and temples, but this account is well written and features some striking photographs. It will make a pleasant companion for the armchair traveler.

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