

(Mrs. Robt. Brewster)

CUS 117/111.25₂

Asso^yan

S.S. "Seti",

March 4th, 1911

Dear Mabel

Still regretting that you & the family are not here - such a delightful trip. We have come slowly up to this first cataract where the big dam has been built. We had a great day at Edfu, the gem of the late Egyptian temples & the most perfectly preserved of all ancient buildings. Among the photos. I send you will see three, not very good, but they give some idea, generations of natives had built their houses about & finally on it, which helped to keep away the Vandals. Now it is cleared and is really a gem. (Please read Hichens article on it in the Spell of Egypt which you will receive in a few weeks - a Tauchnitz edition, which I have ordered from my Paris bookseller & the delay will be in the finding). Every day on the river was a delight - a never ending panorama. We had three days at Thebes. Karnak simply takes away one's breath - top notch, as Revere would say in Winchester slang - of human effort. There is nothing like it, and old Amenhotep the 3rd must smile at the efforts of the architects of the 3500 years since he built his great temple. Thebes must have been in his day the greatest city the world has ever seen - no such magnificence of later cities has ever matched it. If you have never looked into it Breasted's History of Egypt gives an admirable summary & a specially good account of the golden age at Thebes - We had an ideal day at the Tombs of the Kings - blazing hot and we went for a couple of miles over the desert & into a valley the very picture of desolation great yellow rocks & sands, nothing else, & on, on, with several turns, until deep in the mountains we came to the place those old fellows had chosen to wait the day of the restoration of all things. Marvellous tombs - 300 - 400 ft in the solid lime stone - long corridors, deep pits, side chambers & then at the end the mortuary with the sarcophagus and mummy. The walls covered with beautiful inscriptions - texts in perfect preservation. Most of the Mummies have been stolen, but old Seti fooled them all with false passages & deep wells & his tomb was found only 12 years ago. At the end of the long corridor in his mortuary, with an electric light at his head! lies the old man where he had rested in peace for nearly four thousand years. The face & arms & chest have been unwrapped so that one can look upon the actual features of one of the greatest of ancient monarchs. I am sending Sylvia a card of the Crocodiles at the Kom Ombos temple where they were worshipped - she will be amused. I sent you yesterday from the big dam a good colored photograph which shows the sluices open and the full flood pouring through. We stay here a few days & then turn back, seeing a few places on the way. After a week in Cairo we sail on the 22nd to Naples & I hope to be back by April 1st. My love to R.B. and the sweet angel.

Yours affectionately

W^m Osler