

CHAPTER V.

EXCURSIONS FROM CAIRO.

I HAVE already said that the favourite ride or drive is in the direction of Ghezireh, where on Fridays and Sundays there is always a crush of carriages; but those who love peace will be happier on the roads leading to the Pyramids, or Heliopolis, or Shoobra, all soft, good roads, well shaded by the sycamore-fig or other trees.

Desert.—For visitors who can ride a great treat is in store. The desert can be reached on all sides most easily, and supplies a capital galloping ground and invigorating air which seems to put fresh life into both horse and rider. The popular idea in England is that a desert is always one vast plain of dazzling sand without undulations and without signs of life, and that at every step the luckless traveller must sink ankle-deep in tiring sand. The reality is a series of hills and valleys with innumerable changes of colour, and of lights and shades, and a crisp, firm ground upon