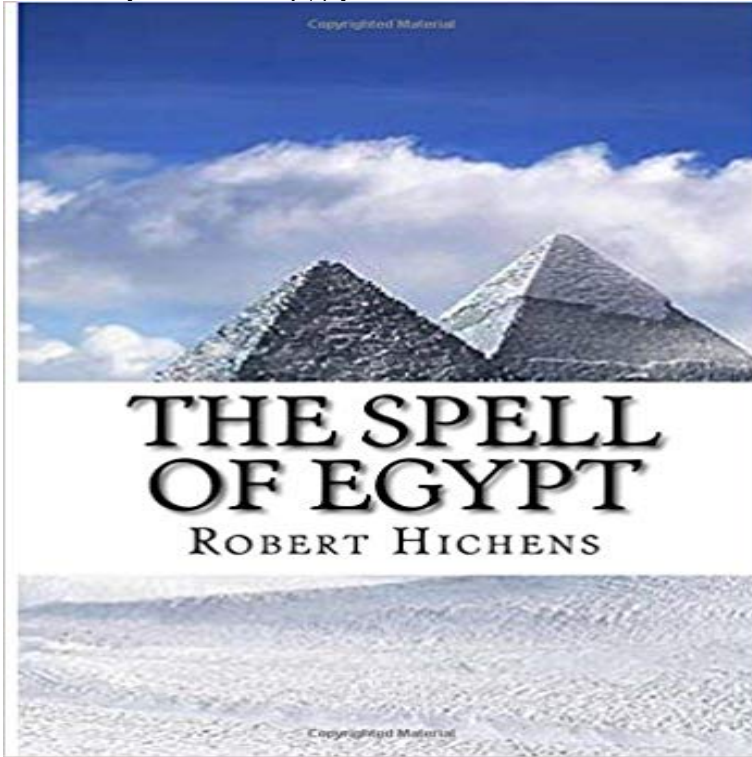


The Spell of Egypt



Robert Hichens (Robert Smythe Hichens, 14 November 1864 – 20 July 1950) was an English journalist, novelist, music lyricist, short story writer, music critic and collaborated on successful plays. He is best remembered as a satirist of the Naughty Nineties. **THE SPELL OF EGYPT THE PYRAMIDS** Why do you come to Egypt? Do you come to gain a dream, or to regain lost dreams of old; to gild your life with the drowsy gold of romance, to lose a creeping sorrow, to forget that too many of your hours are sullen, grey, bereft? What do you wish of Egypt? The Sphinx will not ask you, will not care. The Pyramids, lifting their unnumbered stones to the clear and wonderful skies, have held, still hold, their secrets; but they do not seek for yours. The terrific temples, the hot, mysterious tombs, odorous of the dead desires of men, crouching in and under the immeasurable sands, will muck you with their brooding silence, with their dim and sombre repose. The brown children of the Nile, the toilers who sing their antique songs by the shadoof and the sakieh, the dragomans, the smiling goblin merchants, the Bedouins who lead your camel into the pale recesses of the dunesthese will not trouble themselves about your deep desires, your perhaps yearning hunger of the heart and the imagination. Yet Egypt is not unresponsive.

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