

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS

Winter Goods—Petley & Petley
Music Lessons—Miss Flora Coulter.
Cinanga—P. G. Savage.

The Liberal.

RICHMOND HILL, Thursday, Feb. 12, '85

THE EGYPTIAN QUESTION.

The subject of all conversation at present is Egypt, the land of the Pyramids and the Sphinx, to which the recent fall of Khartoum and the tragic fate of its heroic defender, Gordon, have lent an intensely painful interest. We think that our readers will esteem it a favor if we furnish them with a brief description of the scene of England's late disaster, and also with a succinct narrative of the affairs of that country from the time that its history became a concern of our own.

EGYPT.

Egypt Proper, occupying the north-eastern corner of Africa, is in size rather less than one third of Ontario, and has a population of about 5,500,000, consisting of Copts (the native Egyptians), Turks, Arabs and a few Europeans. Its great natural feature is the Nile, whose source remained a mystery to the world until British pluck revealed it. On the periodic overflowing of this river the soil is mainly dependent for its fertility. Its chief productions are wheat, barley, rice, cotton and sugar-cane. It is governed by a hereditary Khedive, over whom the Sultan of Turkey enjoys a nominal suzerainty. The Government is among the worst in existence; the religion is that of the Koran.

ISMAIL PASHA.

In 1864, Ismail Pasha, who had spent many years in the great capitals of Europe, became Khedive. The result of his Western training soon manifested itself, for at once he began a rule of the utmost magnificence. Determined to develop to their full extent the resources of his country, he plunged wildly into schemes for its improvement. The Government was remodelled; railroads, canals, harbors, telegraphs, &c., were projected and carried on regardless of expense. He lived, moreover, a life of splendor which only an Oriental imagination could conceive. Manufactures were galvanized into a short-lived activity by government subsidies. But all nature, the very stars in their courses fought against his impracticable designs, and the result was inevitable. In fifteen years Egypt had contracted a debt of \$400,000,000, due chiefly to English and French capitalists. In 1876, the interest on the bonds could not be raised; the army was in mutiny because its pay was months in arrears. Repudiation seemed certain, but to avert it England and France resolved on the most drastic measures. They determined to curtail the insane government expenditure, and, as a first step to this end, Ismail Pasha was deposed, and in his stead was placed on the Khedival throne his son

TEWFIK PASHA.

Egypt was now really governed by English and French comptrollers. But the economists were met with difficulties on all sides. Extravagance is the besetting sin of the Oriental. To this vice was joined a hatred of Western interference. The country was soon ripe for rebellion, and in 1881, it burst out.

ARABI BEY.

Urged on by Arabi Bey, then only a colonel, the officers of the army entered into a conspiracy, the object of which was to restore the ruinous rule of Ismail Pasha, and to get rid forever of English and French influence. The Khedive was asked to restore the old Chamber of Notables and to pay up the army. This request was refused, and then ensued the rebellion. In 1882 the Chamber of Notables was assembled, and a Ministry, of which Arabi Bey held the portfolio of War, was formed. Its first act was to deprive European officials of all share in the management of affairs. Tewfik Pasha was virtually deposed. The English and French called on the Sultan of Turkey to use his power for the downfall of the new government, and the upholding of the Khedive. But whilst openly promising to comply with these demands, the Sultan secretly abetted the rebellion, for he too was anxious to expel the detested foreigners. Arabi's government did, indeed, resign, but the army continued mutinous. Then England and France determined to resort to force, and a demonstration was made before Alexandria. At all costs it was

imperative on England to possess a controlling power in Egypt, especially since the construction of the Suez Canal was completed. This triumph of French skill was now the highway to India, and Russia, which had taken advantage of the Franco-Prussian war to contravene the Treaty of Paris by placing a fleet on the Black Sea, had become a standing menace to British rule in India.

The bombardment of Alexandria by Admiral Seymour, and Wolsley's victory at Tel el Kebir crushed the ambitious schemes of Arabi Bey. The latter surrendered himself a prisoner of war, and was banished for life to the island of Ceylon.

THE MAHDI.

In the meantime a fanatical movement which has since assumed gigantic proportions began in that vast stretch of country lying to the south of Egypt, and known as the Soudan. Peopled by fierce tribes of Arabs, it was nominally subject to the Khedive. The heart and soul of this movement was one Achmet who claimed to be the Mahdi, that is, the true successor of the great prophet Mohammed. He declared his mission to be the restoration of the worship of the faithful as contained in the Koran, and with him, as with his predecessor, the sword was the key of Heaven. The Arabs flocked to the standard of the impostor in tens of thousands. One after another Turkish governors and generals were defeated by him. For a time his march was kept in check by an English officer, Hicks Pasha, but in November, 1883, he with his army were annihilated by the Mahdi at El Obed. Constantinople was the avowed goal of the false prophet, and England saw herself forced again to interfere, for her rights in Egypt were threatened by a greater and more dangerous enemy than was ever Arabi Bey. The victory of El Obed threw all Nubia and the Soudan into rebellion against Egypt.

But here we may bring our sketch to a close, for even the most careless do not require to be told of the events of 1884 and 1885. The defeat of Baker Pasha by Osman Digna, the leader of the rebels, the defeat of the latter by General Graham, Gordon going alone to Khartoum, his heroic defence of that city for over a year, the capture and massacre of the garrison of Berber by the Mahdi in June last, Wolsley's last expedition, still in progress, Canada's contribution of a contingent of voyageurs, Colonel Sir Herbert Stewart's victory near Metemneh and the last terrible news of the fall of Khartoum and the massacre of Gordon and his garrison—these are facts too fresh in the memory of all to need recounting. We wish from the depth of heart that when we next write on the affairs of Egypt, we shall have done with disaster, for victory is, by birth-right and precedent, the appanage of the Britannic Empire.

THE C. P. R. SYNDICATE.

Look out for the Syndicate. They are after the Government again. The proposal now to be made is for the Government to take back at two dollars an acre the 25,000,000 acres of land for which the Syndicate paid the former exactly one dollar per acre. Do our readers see now how last year's loan of \$30,000,000 is to be converted into a gift? It is true that one of the great missions of the C. P. R. was to colonize all the North-West. It is true that the C. P. R. has sold some of the choicest portions of the land which they are about to ask our Ottawa administration to redeem at one hundred per cent. profit. It is also true, Sir Leonard Tilley being witness, that in the six months ending December 31st, 1884, our national debt was increased \$7,195,951. It is true that Sir Charles Tupper, our High Commissioner, is receiving for his wonderful services (we do not know what they are) over \$40,000 a year. It is true that over \$100,000 was spent last year in subsidizing Tory newspapers. It is true that our revenue is falling off. But what of that? The C. P. R. wants more money. Sir John says it must have more, and, therefore, Ontario, O Plug that never kicked, pay up, pay up, for on thy power to furnish the sinews of war depends thy only right to existence!

JOE BOUDIN, M. D., Hull, P. Q., writes: "Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil commands a large and increasing sale which it richly merits. I have found it exceedingly helpful; I use it in all cases of rheumatism, as well as fractures and dislocations. I made use of it myself to calm the pains of a broken leg with dislocation of the foot, and in two days I was entirely relieved of the pain."

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