

FRANCE AND MADAGASCAR

THE FRENCH INVADERS WILL HAVE A DIFFICULT CAMPAIGN.

The Natives Are Well Armed—Resources and Government of an Island That is the Scene of an Important and Interesting Expedition.

France's attitude toward Madagascar has committed France to an expedition, the result of which is by no means a foregone conclusion. It is very evident from the recent debates that the members of the French Parliament regard the matter as a very serious undertaking.

M. Melchior de Vogue, the well known Academician, though not unfavorable to the policy of colonial expansion, asks if the situation in Madagascar called for warlike action. Mr. Henry Boucher made a proposition that the military expedition be limited to the occupation of ports and strategic points on the island. But it is evident that the Government of France is urged on to this war with Madagascar by the fear that if nothing is done England will step in and annex the island.

M. Ribot, President of the committee and formerly President of the Council, pleaded in favor of the campaign and spoke of "the bold man who governs the Cape of Good Hope," referring to Mr. Cecil Rhodes, the vigorous Prime Minister of Cape Colony. It is said that loud cheers burst from the Moderate Republicans as M. Ribot returned to his seat.

A brief despatch from Port Louis, Mauritius, says that the French bombarded Fort Farafatra, four miles distant from Tamatave. The fort was defended bravely by the warlike Hovas, but they were at length forced to yield and the French are now in possession of the fort as well as the port of Tamatave and the adjacent country. From Paris it is learned that the troops that are to be sent to Madagascar will be completely organized by the 1st of February and that it is hoped that they will be able to start early in March.

It is definitely settled that the entire force shall consist of

THIRTEEN BATTALIONS OF INFANTRY, seven batteries of artillery, one squadron of cavalry, four companies of engineers, one squadron of military train, and the usual proportion of other troops of the non-combatant order. Out of the thirteen line battalions three will consist of native soldiers, one being composed of Sakalaves, another volunteers from the Island of Reunion, and the third of Houssas, or Senegales. The transport ship *The Shamrock* sailed from Toulon a week ago with 800 marines for Tamatave. The vessel will be used as a hospital during the expedition.

Military experts have already reported upon the difficulties which will beset the expedition. A French officer who has just returned from Madagascar and who has studied the ground says that the invading army can only start from Majunga, situated on the west coast, and about four hundred and fifty kilometers from the capital. The troops must be supplied with provisions for the whole march, as none can be procured on the way. There is no good military road to Antananarivo, so that one will have to be made. Stations must be established at intervals for hospitals and stores, and upward of three thousand men will be required to keep up communication and escort convoys. There are no means of transport, and it is calculated that the army will not be able to advance at a rate of more than four kilometers a day, so that from three to four months will pass before an invading army can reach the capital.

About one hundred kilometers of the journey will be through

A MALARIOUS DISTRICT, and the troops will certainly be attacked by a deadly fever, while the invading army will be constantly harassed before it reaches Antananarivo. But here the difficulties of the French invaders do not end. Antananarivo is strongly fortified. It is situated in a naturally strong position, and is already defended by one hundred guns of the most recent manufacture. It is at this point that the Malagasy Government will concentrate all its efforts, and it is estimated that at least twenty thousand French troops will be necessary to make an effective assault upon the capital of Madagascar.

A strong argument employed in favor of the expedition is that if France retreats from Madagascar England may install herself there. On the other hand, it is suspected that the British Government will only be too glad to see France in possession of the Island of Madagascar, so that an excuse may be made for the annexation of Egypt.

The historical right of France to a protectorate over Madagascar is claimed by two centuries and a half of successive treaties. In 1816, when the French ceded the Island of Mauritius to England, they were careful to retain the Island of Reunion, which is opposite Madagascar, in order to assert the right of the Government of France to interfere in the affairs of that great island, which stands very much in the same relation to Africa that Great Britain does to Europe and Japan does to Asia.

TAMATAVE. The city of Tamatave, which is now occupied by the French, is built on a long, narrow peninsula of sand, having an eastern direction, with very deep bays on either side, that on the north forming the harbor in which ships of the largest size can find a secure anchorage. On the peninsula are the houses of the British, French, American, German and Italian residents, with their consulates. The street in which they reside is known as Royal street. The rest of the city is largely made up of little houses and stalls covered with thatch, huddled together in utter disregard of all sanitary precautions and in a way to give every facility for the whole place being consumed by fire. Close

to the bazaar stands the chapel of the London Missionary Society and the church of the Bishop of the Church of England. At the northwest of these buildings is the Hova fort, now occupied by the French.

The history of Madagascar for the last fifty years has been very largely bound up with the work of the Protestant missionaries of the Congregationalist body in England. It was under the reign of a good King named Radama, at the commencement of this century, that Protestant Christianity was introduced into the island. But in 1828 Radama died and was succeeded by his widow, Ranavalona. This cruel Queen persecuted the Christians for nearly a quarter of a century, and the persecution did not cease until the death of the Queen in 1862. The Christians are now estimated to number one-fourth of the entire population.

The monarchy of Madagascar is elective, and on April 1, 1868, the choice of the Hova Government fell upon a cousin of the cruel Queen, who assumed the name of Ranavalona II. The new reign began with the inauguration of a liberal constitution, and Christianity was recognized as the national creed. The idols of the people were destroyed.

THE TRADE AND COMMERCE of Madagascar are open to the whole world, and in one year the importations of cotton sheetings consisted of 3,000 bales of a value of \$300,000.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the Malagasy are a people basking in a burning heat, with a few shreds of muslin upon them for the sake of decency. When the cold east wind of the dry season is blowing many of them find even stout sheetings too thin for comfort. Printed calicoes sell in all parts of Madagascar, but it is not easy to hit the native taste in patterns. The Malagasy is reluctant to be guided by the fashions of Europe.

The whole foreign trade of Madagascar, both import and export, does not fall far short of \$7,000,000 annually, and the wants of the country are daily increasing. Among the articles of export are crocodile skins, india rubber, wax and coffee.



RANAVALONA, MADAGASCAR'S DUSKY QUEEN.

The cultivation of the silkworm is an occupation particularly suitable to the women and children of Madagascar. And very beautiful silk is manufactured on the island. This branch of trade is capable of very great development, as silk cocoons can be produced to meet almost any demand.

The productions of the country are such as may well excite the cupidity of a foreign conqueror.

SILVER AND COPPER exist in certain portions of the island, and specimens of gold sand have been brought from the central provinces. The interior districts abound with iron, and iron ore is so abundant in the mountain of Ambohimangivo that it is called by the natives the "iron mountain."

The valleys of the island are exceedingly fertile. They are clothed with a rich and luxuriant verdure and abound with rice, the staple food of the natives. The rivers of Madagascar are numerous and many of them are of considerable width. The gloomy and unbroken solitude of some parts of the sublime mountain scenery of Madagascar is enlivened by cataracts of various size, from an elevation. Mineral waters have also been found and the natives tell wonderful stories of the cures effected at the medicinal springs. The hot springs near the small and charming village of Ambohimangivo, "the village of God," have a great reputation.

Herd of horned cattle constitute the principal wealth of the nobility, and the grazing grounds in the country are extensive. There is no reason why, under efficient management, Madagascar should not compete with New Zealand in the meat markets of Europe. The sheep of the country appear to be aboriginal, and their flesh is to be considered to be somewhat inferior to the mutton of Europe.

Until the reign of the "good King Radama," about sixty years ago, horses were unknown in the country, but the King introduced them and established breeding paddocks with considerable success. The crocodile is regarded by the Malagasy with superstitious reverence and is called the "King of the Waters."

A Prescription

The waiter was awkward, and in taking the nickels from the hand of the guest, he muffed them, and two dropped into the soup.

"I beg your pardon, sir. Really, I—I—"

"Oh, that's all right," interrupted the good-natured guest. "The doctor told me I needed some change in my diet."

A Definition

Mrs. McBride—"John, dear, why are some grocers called green grocers? Mr. McBride—To distinguish them from cash grocers, darling."

Her Defence of Him.

"Do you think your sister likes me, Tommy?"

"Yes; she stood up for you at dinner."

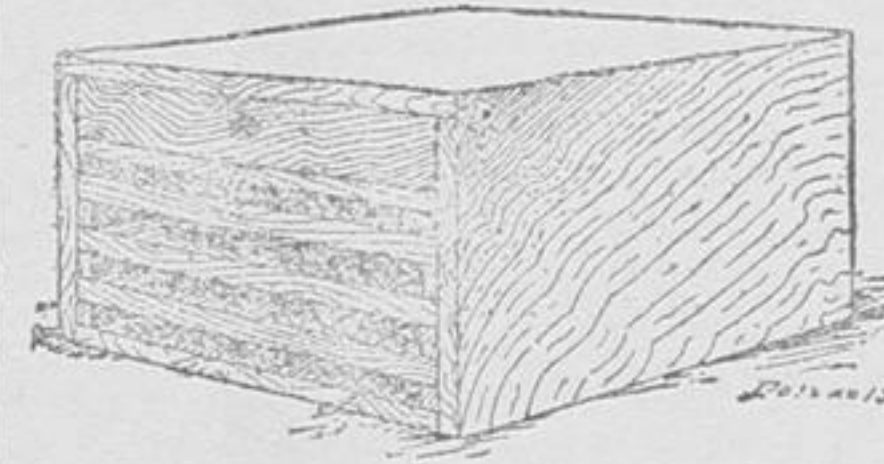
"Stood up for me! Was anybody saying anything against me?"

"No, nothing much. Father said he thought you were rather a donkey, but sis got up and said you weren't, and told father he ought to know better than to judge a man by his looks."

Household.

A Cutting Board Cabinet.

The accompanying illustration shows a cabinet having three plain boards that can be drawn out when desired—one for cutting bread and cake upon, one for cutting and preparing fish, and one on which mea-



may be cut. The drawer above is to hold the bread and cake knives and the knives that are used for cutting meat and fish. A carving knife file or a whetstone will also be found a very convenient adjunct to the drawer. The full merit of this arrangement can only be appreciated by a practical enjoyment of the use of it.

English Muffins.

The proper way of making this popular bread is as follows: One quart of flour and one teaspoon of salt in a bowl or bread pan. Make a hole in the middle, stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of yeast, 2 cups of lukewarm water 1 tablespoonful of melted butter. The mixture should be about half as stiff as bread dough. Beat for five minutes and set aside to rise. If this is done at night, stir in more butter or sweet lard in the morning, beat hard again, fill well-greased muffin rings half way to the top and set them in a pan in a warm place. When the batter has risen to the top put them in a warm oven and bake quickly. These muffins must be broken open, not cut, while they are hot. English people are fond of them split and buttered while cold and toasted like bread.

Crumpets can be made in the same way, only they call for two cups of tepid water and a large spoonful of white sugar. Mix them into a batter with a half cup of yeast and a quart of flour, adding sweet milk to thin it sufficiently. Let them rise all night in a warm place, melt a half tea cup of butter in the morning, add soda the size of a pea dissolved in a little boiling water, work this into the batter and pour it into muffin rings, and set to rise a second time. Bake in a quick oven and they will be found very nice for breakfast.

Things That Will Keep.

I have a recipe for spice or fruit cake which I have used for years and can recommend for its keeping qualities as well as goodness, says a valued correspondent. One cup of molasses, 1 cup sugar, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of butter or meat fryings, 1 cup sour milk, 3 eggs, 1 teaspoonful soda, 1 teaspoonful each nutmeg and cloves, $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonfuls cinnamon, 3 heaping cups of flour. To convert this into a fruit cake add currants, raisins, chopped citron or whatever one wishes. I usually add a heaping cup of seeded raisins which have been well sprinkled with flour.

For coconut pudding I use about a pint of bread or cracker crumbs to one quart of rich, sweet milk, two beaten eggs, a cup of sugar, a cup of desiccated coconut, a pinch of salt or a bit of butter. This is baked and then frozen. It is not allowed to thaw in the least until wanted, when it is placed in the steamer. It tastes fully as good as when freshly baked. One of these puddings was passed to a neighbor who was just home from a long journey when unexpected company arrived. She afterward gave the pudding due praise, adding that she covered it with a meringue made by beating the white of an egg to a stiff froth, sweetening, flavoring and browning in the oven.

The Candy-Maker.

Chocolate Candy.—Three cups of granulated sugar, one cup of grated Baker's chocolate, a piece of butter the size of a walnut, a cup of hot water, a teaspoonful of vanilla and a pinch of salt. After it begins to boil allow it to be on the fire for ten minutes only. Stir constantly. The candy should become of the consistency of thickened molasses. Butter some tins and pour the candy in, and stir back and forth with a silver knife until it begins to sugar. Then make off into squares and put away to cool.

Sugar Taffy.—Three cups of brown sugar (light brown), one-half cup of vinegar, butter the size of a walnut, one cup of boiling water. Boil together without stirring until it hardens when dropped in water. Pour into buttered pans, in which any kind of nut may be spread if desired.

Molasses Taffy.—One cup of butter, one cup of granulated sugar, one cup of molasses. Boil together till it spins a thread. Stir in peanuts and pour into tins, which need not be buttered.

Recipes.

Coconut Pie.—For one pie use a quart of milk. Let it come to the boiling point; then add half a tea-cupful of sugar, the yolks of two well-beaten eggs, and a dessertspoonful of cornstarch dissolved in a little milk. Cook. Then add a teaspoonful of grated coconut. Bake with only one crust. Beat the whites of the eggs to a froth, and mix in two teaspoonfuls of sugar. Spread this over the pie when baked, sprinkle with coconut, and place in the oven to brown slightly.

Rice Pudding.—There is but one sort of rice pudding that can be made perfectly, and if these directions are followed you will have a creamy, delicious pudding as a result: Put one quart of milk into a pudding pan, add about a quarter teaspoonful of grated nutmeg, quarter a cupful of layer raisins, unstoned, two tablespoonfuls of

rice, and two tablespoonfuls of sugar. Do not heap the spoons. Stir until the sugar is dissolved, and then stand the pan in a moderate oven. As soon as the milk is hot, and a little scum forms over the top, stir it down, and stir the rice from the bottom of the pan. Do this as fast as a crust forms. The crust should be papery, and light in color. When the milk begins to thicken, and the rice seems to come to the surface stop stirring and allow a thin brown crust to form. Stand away in a cool place, to quickly chill. Now, if this is too thick, you have cooked it too slowly and too long. If it is thin and milky, you have not cooked it long enough.

Genuine Pumpkin Pies.—These are to be really pumpkin, and neither squash nor custard. The pumpkin should be of dark yellow skin and heavy in proportion to its size—the flesh thick and fine grained. Pare and cut in inch cubes and cook it in a little water until soft, being careful that it does not burn. Then press through a colander, put it back into the kettle with some molasses or sugar and spice, and let it mull away until it is a rich red amber marmalade. This must be done a day or two before the pies are made, for it is a work of time. One cupful of such pumpkin is ample for a deep pie, and real pumpkin pie is never baked in a shallow plate. A good proportion for a pie is a cup of pumpkin, an egg, three or four cups of milk, a half cupful of sugar, a little salt, a half a teaspoonful of ginger, a fourth teaspoonful of cinnamon, and a little nutmeg. Bake rather slowly.

MICHIGAN FARMERS IN WANT.

Failure of Fruit and Potatoes the Cause of the Destitution.

According to reports that have come into Grand Rapids, the farmers in western and northern Michigan are, many of them, having a hard time of it to get through the winter. The zone of suffering extends from Ottawa County northward along the lake shore and inland two or three tiers of counties. Most of this territory was once covered with pine, but the timber has been stripped away and farmers have moved in to take possession of real estate that can be had almost for the asking. The land runs a good deal to sand, especially near the lake shore, and under the best of circumstances does not richly reward the efforts of the agriculturists. Near the lake shore fruit has proved profitable and farther inland potatoes have yielded immensely. Last summer a prolonged drought wrecked the fruit crop, reducing it to a minimum, and the potatoes fairly dried in the hills through the lack of rain. The loss of the potato crop was especially severe, as many of the farmers, encouraged by the success of the crop in former years, put their entire capital into potatoes, especially those farmers who were just starting in to make a home for themselves. Now that winter has come in earnest the farmers are finding it difficult to keep their heads above water. They can have all the wood they want by going to get it to the neighboring forests, and no questions asked, but when it comes to food and clothing and other supplies which require money to buy, it is different. The failure of the crops left them without resources, and many of the small farmers see starvation staring them in the face, with asking for charity as an alternative. No general appeal for aid has been made, and it is probable that none will be, as the several counties are able to take care of such cases as need assistance, at least through the winter, but the suffering nevertheless exists, and in some quarters will be of the acute type, where the unfortunates are too proud to ask for assistance.

ODD KINDS OF RENT.

Horseshoes, Nails, a Red Rose and Other Payments in Lieu of Cash.

Suit and service for the desirable properties known as "The Forge," in St. Clement Danes, and "The Moors," in the County of Salop, were duly paid by the City of London to the Crown, the rent consisting of six horseshoes, sixty-one nails and two bundles of faggots, one of which has to be cut with an axe and the other with a bill-hook. Mr. Crawford, the City Solicitor, acted as woodcutter, the Queen's Remembrancer officiated as referee, and the interesting ceremony took place at the Law Courts in the presence of a number of ladies and gentlemen. For 600 years and more the rent has neither been raised nor lowered, but has always consisted of the same number of horseshoes, the same number of nails and the same number of cut faggots.

The Queen's Remembrancer, Master Pollock, explained to the company that though now the idea of rent was something paid in hard cash, originally it was some service or thing rendered; and in former days when lands were granted by great lords and knights to tenants, it was on the promise to furnish horses, men, and so on. In process of time these services came to be exceedingly irksome and troublesome, and were commuted into a money payment. An ancestor of Sir Walter Scott held certain lands by payment of one red rose per annum. The rent paid by the city in the reign of King Henry III, for the properties mentioned had never been commuted.

A Knock-down Argument.

Skeptic—"You have given me many messages from departed friends, but not one of them has told me anything I didn't know."

Medium (with dignity)—"I would have you understand, sir, that the spirits of the dead have something better to do than to come back to earth and teach school."

A Society Introduction.

First Gentleman (just introduced)—"By the by, I did not quite catch your name."

Second gentleman—"My name is Wilkins. I didn't hear yours either."

"My name is Bilkins. What is the name of the gentleman who introduced us?"

"Give it up. Never saw him before."

A PERILOUS POSITION

The Narrow Escape of a Traveller on a Sacred Mountain in China.

A traveller in China tells how he ascended the sacred mountain, Siao-outai-shan, and how he made the descent also, at a moment when he least expected it. He had reached an altitude of over nine thousand feet, and having lost the trail, branched off, and climbed a lower peak, to see if he could discover the right track. He managed to crawl to the top, and there opened his paint box to make a sketch. He says—

As I was sorting out my brushes the stone on which I was sitting gave way, and I started sliding down the almost perpendicular slope. I tried to clutch the ground with my nails. I seized every projecting stone, in the hope of stopping my precipitous descent, but at the speed at which I was going, it was no easy matter to hold on to anything which I managed to clutch.

There I had death staring me in the face for another hundred yards would bring me to the edge of a precipice, over which I must inevitably go, taking a leap of several hundred feet. My hair stood on end as I approached the dreaded spot, and I will remember the ghastly sound of my heavy paint-box, which had preceded me in my descent.

I shall never forget the hollow sound of it, banging from boulder to boulder, echoed and magnified a thousand times, from one mountain to another. Then there was a final bang far, far below; the echo weakly repeated it, and all was silence once more. Another half minute, and the echo would repeat a hollower sound still. I shut my eyes.

A violent shock, which nearly tore my body in two, made me think I had gone over; but no, as luck would have it, I had suddenly stopped.

I opened my eyes, but I did not dare move, for my position, though much improved, was far from being safe. My coat and a strong leather strap, slung under my arm, had just caught on a projecting stone; but a single false movement on my part might still place me in great danger.

Slowly, as my back was slightly resting on the almost perpendicular slope, I tried to get a footing; when this was done, the great difficulty was to turn round. After several anxious minutes, which seemed ages long, the feat was accomplished, and there I stood, half-lying, with my body on the ground, clutching the rock that had saved my life.

Then, when my commotion had entirely passed away, I managed to crawl up, in a cat-like fashion, to a position of safety.

PEAT AS FUEL.

It is Largely Used in Some Parts of Europe.

In Friesland and other parts of Holland the "black turf" is made into fuel for brick-kilns, litter for stables, and mould for mixing with sewage. Some of it is exported to Bremen, Brunswick, and Belgium, and it is stated that 280,000 tons of the fuel, worth £133,000, are annually consumed throughout the Netherlands. The Dutch canals facilitate the transport of the peat, and, as the subsoil of the moors is always cultivated after the peat is lifted, the barges that take away the peat bring back manure for the ground. At Groningen, for instance, all the sewage of the city is applied to the reclamation of the surrounding turf-moors. In Denmark, where there is no great supply of peat, it is chiefly used by the peasants as fuel, or as bedding in the dairy farms. In Sweden, on the contrary, there are bogs extending for hundreds of square miles, and of late years over 600,000 acres of the moorland have been brought under the plow. The peat is prepared as fuel, and largely consumed in making iron, glass, or brick, either alone or mixed with coal and fire-clones. In southern Sweden there are factories solely engaged in manufacturing peat-fuel for sale, as its use is steadily increasing, and some 30,000 tons a year are employed in metallurgical operations.

In southern and central Sweden there are some twenty factories for preparing peat-litter and mould, each factory turning out from 15,000 to 30,000 bales a year, fetching about 2s. a piece. The mould is used for gardening in Sweden, while stuffing for mattresses or furniture, and surgical bandages are made from the white moss of the moors. In France the peat is moulded into "briquettes" with tar and resin, teased into litter, or woven into fabrics, which are used in the army, its barracks and hospitals, as blankets, mattresses, and saddle cloths, or for stuffing cofferdams and certain parts of machinery.

The Discovery of Coffee.

Towards the middle of the fifteenth century a poor Arab was travelling in Abyssinia. Finding himself weak and weary, he stopped near a grove. Being in want of fuel to cook his rice, he cut down a tree, which happened to be covered with dried berries. His meal being cooked and eaten the traveller discovered that these half-burned berries were fragrant. He collected a number, and on crushing them with a stone he found the aroma increased to a great extent. While wondering at this, he accidentally let the substance fall into a can which contained his scanty supply of water. Lo, what a miracle! The almost putrid liquid was partially purified. He raised it to his lips. It was fresh and agreeable, and after a short rest the traveller so far recovered his strength and energy as to be able to resume his journey. The lucky Arab gathered as many berries as he could, and, having arrived at Aden in Arabia, he informed the mufti of his discovery. That worthy was an inveterate opium-smoker, who had been suffering for years from the influence of the poisonous drug. He tried an infusion of the roasted berries, and was so delighted at the recovery of his former vigour that in gratitude to the tree he called it camuh which in Arabic signifies "force."