Cassell's

History of the War in the Soudan.
GENERAL GRAHAM

(From a Photograph by H. A. E. Fradelle.)
Cassell's

History of the War in the Soudan.

By James Grant,

Author of "British Battles on Land and Sea," etc. etc.

Illustrated.

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Towards the middle of February, 1885, our force in the Soudan was of the most slender description, and so great was the pressure upon it that it was resolved by the home authorities to reinforce Lord Wolseley by way of Suakim, and, if possible, Berber. The troops detailed to join the new expedition were as follows:

No. 9 Battery North Irish Division of Royal Artillery, from Gibraltar to Lower Egypt, to be replaced by a Battery of the Cinque Ports Artillery from Alderney to Suakim; 24th Company, a Telegraph Section and a Balloon Detachment of the Royal Engineers, from England; two Squadrons of the 5th Royal Irish Lancers, from Dublin; two Squadrons of the 20th Hussars, from Aldershot; Headquarters and portion of a Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery, with No. 5 Battery of the Scottish Garrison Artillery, from Lower Egypt; 3rd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards, from Windsor; 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards, and 2nd Battalion of the Scots Guards, from London; 1st Battalion of the Shropshire Light Infantry, from Malta; 2nd Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment, and 1st Battalion of the Coldstream Guards, from Lower Egypt; of the Commissariat and Transport Corps, No. 3, 7, and 12 Companies, with a Detachment of the Ordnance Store Corps from Woolwich;Bearer Companies and Field Hospital Staff of the Medical Department; 2nd Battalion Dublin Fusiliers; 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry.

In addition to these troops, three Indian regiments were ordered to Suakim.
kim, namely, the 9th Bengal Cavalry, 700 strong; the 15th Sikh Infantry, or old Loodiana Regiment; and the 17th Poorbeah Infantry. The new contingent was estimated at 10,000 men, to be divided into two divisions, each under a Major-General.

As in the Nile Expedition, so in that to Suakim, the supply of water was a serious question. To meet the difficulties of so large a force, where some of the wells are at great distances apart, some 3,000 waterproof bags were constructed, each holding from ten to fifteen gallons, besides a similar number of light small barrels and tanks of sheet iron, to be borne by camels. For the storage of water at stations, pending the approach of the force, several hundred tanks of waterproof canvas were ordered; while for the general purposes of the expedition the British consuls in Asia Minor and Aden were ordered to purchase mules, ponies, and camels.

Lord Wolseley, who had practically the control of the selection of the officers and men to be sent to him via Suakim and Berber, telegraphed for fifty men from each battalion of the Guards, to be equipped as Mounted Infantry, each detachment to be composed of picked men, officered by a captain and subaltern. Their kit was made up of a scarlet serge tunic, Bedford cord pantaloons, two khaki drill frocks and trousers, brown helmet and puggaree, goggles, two flannel belts, clasp-knife, slung by a lanyard, tea kit, ankle boots, cloak, forage-cap, and bandolier. A Brigade order, from the home district office, ran thus:

"The following will be the strength of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, that will embark with the battalions now under orders to proceed on active service. One commanding officer and one major, mounted; four majors and four captains, sixteen lieutenants and two staff. An officer of the Army Pay Department to be attached to each battalion, for pay duties. One sergeant-major, one quartermaster-sergeant, two colour-sergeants, one quartermaster-drummer, one armourer-sergeant, two orderly-room clerks, one pioneer-sergeant, and one sergeant-cook; twenty-three sergeants, forty corporals, and seven hundred and ten privates. The 2nd Battalion of the Scots Guards will have, in addition, one sergeant-piper and five pipers. The mounted party of the battalion, consisting of one captain, one lieutenant, and fifty men each, is included in the above numbers. The colours are not to be taken. The men will leave their medals, and due care must be taken for their safe custody. The defaulter sheets will not be taken. A modified pattern of the defaulter sheets, for use during the campaign, can be obtained from Stanton's, Villiers Street, Strand. There will be no objection to a second major being mounted, provided the number of five horses per battalion, including adjutant and quartermaster, be not exceeded."

Among the first to embark was the 3rd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards, who were inspected on the 19th of February by the Queen, at Windsor. They were then formed in hollow square, facing inwards, when she delivered to the officers a brief address, which they repeated to their men, whom it filled with the highest enthusiasm:

"I have summoned you here before your departure to wish you heartily God speed, May God protect you on the day of battle; may He preserve
you in the hour of danger by land and sea, and may
He lead you to victory! Confident that my
Grenadier Guards will maintain the honour and
reputation of British soldiers, I rely on your
equalling the glorious deeds of those in the distant
lands to which you are now proceeding. My
thoughts and prayers go with you and your brave
comrades, to whom, alas, I cannot bid farewell, as I
now do heartily to you. Once more, God bless
you!"

On the 19th of February the Cold-
stream Guards left Westminster Bridge
by steamer for Gravesend, where they
were embarked upon the transport
Manora, and left the shores of Old
England the same day.

While these preparations were in
progress at home, General Brackenbury
was ordered to fall back on Korti, a
task of no little difficulty; but it was
skilfully accomplished, and his column
returned in safety to the headquarters
camp.

About the same time a similar duty
devolved upon Sir Redvers Buller,
whom Lord Wolseley had despatched
to Gubat, on hearing that Sir Herbert
Stewart was severely wounded. General
Buller’s original orders were to seize
Metemneh and march upon Berber, for
which purpose he had been reinforced
by the Royal Irish and the Light
Camel Corps.

On the 11th of February he arrived
at Abū Kru, with a large convoy
from Gakdul under the command
of Colonel the Hon. R. A. J. Talbot, of
the 1st Life Guards, and with the six
strong companies of the Royal Irish,
who had marched across the Bayuda
Desert on foot, and were ready to do it
again. The appearance of this rein-
forcement put fresh life and spirit into
the little column that lay in Major
Dormer’s trenches, watching the foe in
Metemneh; but it did not change the
impression existing in Colonel Bos-
cawen’s force, that the sooner it re-
traced its steps to the safe headquarters
at Korti, the better, as no good could
be expected of an advance on Khart-
toum, though the men were ready
even to go, if in sufficient numbers.

To all it was evident that to advance
with the troops and guns then at Abū
Kru would have been the extremity of
rashness, though finer soldiers were
never seen, and then as yet there was
still an uncertainty as to whether
General Gordon was dead or alive.
As Sir Redvers Buller had quitted
headquarters before the tidings of
the fall of Khartoum had reached Lord
Wolseley, and as these tidings reached
Sir Redvers himself only the day after
his arrival at Gakdul, he was with-
out distinct orders as to his move-
ments, or what to do, in the then
complicated state of affairs. "We had
hoped to the contrary," wrote a cor-
respondent; "but the fact remains, and
thus, as regards our future, we are no
wiser than before the arrival of the
chief of the staff and Major Kitchener,
whose face everybody was almost as
glad to see as that of the General, for
it is felt that if he had been here when
Gordon’s steamers arrived, we should
not probably have had to deplore the
dawdling which cost the three precious
days that would have saved the hero
of Khartoum. But it is of no use
now to speculate either on the past or
the future."
For the week prior to the arrival of Sir Redvers Buller, the little column under Colonel Boscawen had been strengthening the Guards’ post on the gravel hill and the earthworks on the long, narrow island opposite. The absence of tobacco was a great grievance amongst the troops, and it is high time, said the writer above quoted, “that the civilian officials in Pall Mall realised that the men would rather go without their dinners twice a week, than without their smoke daily, and that tobacco is among the actual necessaries of life for smokers—and 99 per cent. of the soldiers are smokers on a campaign. Happily, just as the men have been driven to experiment on tea leaves, yesterday’s convoy, under Buller, put them in possession of a supply of the philosophic weed, and there is no grumbling to-day, even that the tea is not made sweet enough by the still limited rations of sugar.”

To the soldiers at this time, while waiting idly and dubiously at Abu Kru, an unfailing source of interest were the two steamers which Lord Charles Beresford took over, and on which he hoisted British colours. The smaller of these was under the command of Lieutenant Poore, R.N., and she was chiefly used for bringing green forage from the island opposite and for patrolling the river.

The larger steamer—the one which
THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS EMBARKING ON THE "MANORA" AT GRAVESEND.
received a shot in her boiler—was in the habit of being run down past Metenmeh or Shendy almost daily, or up, for ten miles or so, foraging and obtaining information from the villages that were friendly to us. If a flock of sheep or herd of cattle, or a water-wheel (which was useful for fuel) were seen, a few picked Infantry shots and blue-jackets were quickly at work to bring them off. The cordon formed by the two forces would begin to fire on the Arabs, creeping stealthily with their rifles through the high reeds or crops, when half an hour’s skirmish would ensue, in which hardly any would be hit; and if a prisoner was taken he was dismissed with a copy of Lord Wolseley’s last proclamation in Arabic.

On board the steamers, as ashore, the men complained bitterly of the jamming of the rifle cartridges—an hourly occurrence. On the 8th February a party of the Guards Camel Corps, under Captain Crabbe, on board the Sofia, had five rifles useless out of twenty through the cartridge case refusing to come out after firing. In most instances, says the correspondent of the Daily Chronicle, the men had to resort to the cleaning-rod as a last resource. It is obvious that in this there was a considerable element of danger. The soldiers kept their weapons as clean and bright as the nature of the country permitted; but if any detachment was taken, then it was certain that from five to five-and-twenty per cent. of the rifles would jam after firing a couple of rounds.

Though there are better extractors than the cleaning-rod in the breech of a Martini-Henry rifle, it was clear that the fault lay less in the horseshoe lever than in the Boxer cartridge, which is an adaptation of that unscientific arrangement in brass and iron. As the lives of our soldiers in the field were at the mercy of “cartridges which would not leave the rifle when they ought to make room for full ones,” the correspondent of the Daily Chronicle did good work in calling attention to this serious state of things.

Every other country, even the realm of the despised Ottoman, used drawing cartridges which neither expand nor jam the breech-blocks of their rifles. They are not more costly than our perilous Boxer, and are waterproof, which the latter is not. “I believe there is no reason,” says a writer on this important subject, “from the existence of patents or otherwise, why we should not have drawn cartridge cases of brass, or, as in the United States army, of pure copper; but even if there were, it would not stand for a moment against the fact—which can be ascertained officially by means of a question in Parliament, that the Boxer cartridge, by jamming, endangers the lives of our troops at close quarters, and even imperils the success of our operations. If the fact should, as usual, be officially denied, it can be established by overwhelming testimony from this column alone.”

A peremptory order issued at Abu Kru on the 12th of February decreed that the sick and wounded, regardless of state or probable condition, should be
removed to Korti on the next day by dawn, and seemed to indicate a prospect of more fighting at an early period, for whether the column advanced or retired, the Field Hospital with its patients could not be left without adequate defence and attendants. The opportunity was accepted of utilising as bearers of the more severely wounded (including Sir Herbert Stewart, who had also a touch of fever) General Gordon's irregulars, whom it was wisely determined to send back to Korti or Dongola, and who could not be scattered or lost to the service; and thus the General freed himself of two causes of anxiety. To a commander operating in the field the wounded are always a serious care, and in this case we were fighting an enemy who knew nothing of the obligations of humanity, but would slay without mercy all who fell into their hands. "The departure of the Bashi-Bazouks," says the correspondent of the Standard, "places at the service of the doctors the arms and legs of fully a hundred men as dooly-bearers, and when they and their fellows are gone, with 300 men from the Hcavies, the Guards, and the Mounted Infantry to look after them, we shall all feel relieved of an incubus. It may be doing these dark-skinned persons an injustice, but one cannot, after what has happened, help suspecting their fidelity, and I have assigned reasons why they might believe the Mahdi for the future to be quite as promising a master as the Khedive. The only people among them to be trusted are those who have blood feuds with some of the Mahdi's men; but the impossibility of picking out these, makes it better that all hands should be sent about their business as soon as possible. It has certainly taken a portion of our force for the last week or so to watch them, and now we know just what we have to depend upon."

Regarding the convoy under Colonel Talbot, a correspondent wrote thus:— "I have been able to gather a few details of the attack on the convoy which left Abu Kru on Friday with the wounded. They had got about eight miles on the road from the Nile, when they were fired upon from the scrub and long grass by a party which had been seen to follow them from Metemneh, though we did nothing to check it. Colonel Talbot at once formed square on the highest ground within reach, and fought for over an hour, keeping the enemy, whose numbers were estimated at some seven or eight hundred, at a distance, but unfortunately losing one soldier and one native soldier, and having six men rather badly wounded. The enemy never showed in the open, but seemed to have had enough of it, one part of his force falling back. Just as they went away our Light Camel Corps arrived on the scene, and unhappily they were mistaken for a party of the enemy returning. Consequently the convoy gave them a volley at 800 yards, which went just over their heads; then another at 700 yards, which hit several of Colonel Clarke's men, but without wounding any; and then the mistake was found out before a third
volley, already in the rifles, was fired, and which must have cost several lives. These accidents will occur in warfare in a wild country; but it is well no cases among the wounded suffered severely "en route," and subsequently. They, however, were able to be conveyed towards Gakdul yesterday morning."

The enemy had not been idle in Metemneh while the column had been waiting at Abu Kru; and the former place was not so easy of capture as it had been three weeks before, the garrison having added very materially to its defences, with businesslike despatch.

harm was done. The loss of the enemy could not be ascertained, as the convoy—to the rescue of which we were too late in preparing to march—proceeded under the escort of the Light Camelry, and got safely here (Korti), though General Stewart and some of the worst
THE STEAMER "YARROW" TAKING WOUNDED TO DONGOLA.
Instead of an advance on Berber or Khartoum a retreat across the Bayuda Desert was ordered, and on the 14th of February the camp and works at Abu Kru were abandoned at dawn, and the whole force prepared for its march towards Abu Klea. Gordon's steamers, the *Sofia* and *Tezefkia*, were rendered useless by the removal of part of their machinery, which the Naval Brigade carried off; several Nile boats were sunk; and vast quantities of tinned meat were abandoned, with tents, stretchers, bedding, clothing, medicines, and even ammunition, all of which could not be brought away—a painful scene of waste. At 5 a.m. the whole force fell in, in rear of the Guards' Fort, when a few boxes of stores were burned, and at six the march began in the following order, the movement being directed by Major Davidson of the Marines.

First went a half troop of the 19th Hussars; the 40 dismounted Guards; then the main body in column of route, with 1,500 camels carrying the baggage and stores on the right of the column, the Mounted Infantry being on its left, and the Sussex Regiment on its left rear. The Soudanese formed the rear-guard, with two Royal Artillery guns, two companies of the Royal Irish, and the remainder of the Hussars. A small party of the latter also moved from 500 to 1,000 yards off, covering the flanks.

The enemy at Metemneh did not notice that the camp was being evacuated, and were certainly unaware of the retrograde movement until several hours had elapsed. Even then, they failed to make any use of the opportunity, and sent out only two or three dozen of scouts to observe what was going on. "The marches of Stewart and the going to and fro of convoys, during which many of the camels were occasionally five and six days without water and food, except the dry reed-like sabas grass of the desert, told fatally upon hundreds of the poor brutes," wrote a correspondent at this time. "The stamina was gone out of the survivors, and protracted rest, with good feeding, was necessary for all of them. The situation had admitted of neither, and with huge gaping wounds and terrible sores from packs and girths the wretched animals continued to be driven about. An awful effluvia, noxious as a pest-house, exhaled from the wounds of the miserable creatures, and has latterly filled the air whenever a camel convoy marches. It was therefore with the Generals not so much the minor question about the transport of stores, as whether camels enough could be mustered to carry the wounded and the barest sufficiency of water, food, and ammunition to enable the flying column to get back to Galkud or Korti."

The first day's march was quiet. According to the *Daily Chronicle*, a halt was called within ten miles of the camp at Abu Klea, the men for some time past having been unused to marching, and General Buller took the utmost precautions against a night attack. A zeriba was formed and advanced sentries thrown out. Many of the men had been on duty nearly the whole of
the previous day and night, and all were very tired.

The force was only 1,800 strong, with 200 horses, and 1,179 camels. They left the graves of our slain at Abu Kru undisturbed, and the enemy were found to have buried the greater part of their dead furtively in the night. The graves at the zeriba had been attempted by carrion birds, but the dead had been lain too deep for their talons.

Regarding the sufferings of the troops, one wrote thus: — "Perhaps there never has been a campaign when, in so brief a period, so many serious dangers have been run as by those with the flying column, or so many close calls made by the grim enemy 'Death.' Heads luxuriant but three months ago with hyacinthine locks I have now noted showing silver streaks. Never have I seen so many young heads grow grey hairs so fast."

On Sunday 15th the reveille was blown at 4 a.m., and, after an early breakfast, the column was once more on the march. About 10 a.m. a few of the enemy's scouting horsemen were visible on some distant ridges as the troops marched into Abu Klea, greatly to the surprise of the detachment stationed there.

No measures had been taken at the wells there to collect or store water; thus General Buller set parties to work at once for that purpose, and to put the place in a better state of defence; and the soldiers worked with good will, though of course ignorant of what the next move would be. One rumour was that Buller awaited instructions, and might possibly advance to Berber, joining hands with Brackenbury's column; another was to the effect that he was waiting to give the Arabs a chance, if they wished it, of doing battle.

As the camels were exhausted, and there was a great want of water and forage, a convoy of the Guards and Heavies was immediately put under orders, to push on rearward to Gakdul, whether they were to be accompanied by the heavily-worked 19th Hussars, whose chargers were in a very sorry plight, from the same causes that affected the camels.

These troops marched on the morning of Monday, 16th February, thus lessening Buller's force by about four hundred men, but making more easy the maintenance of those who remained; and now the whole of that day was spent in the erection of little detached forts in the wady of Abu Klea, or close to it.

The Royal Irish were placed on the crest of an upland two hundred yards west of the original zeriba, near the centre of the group of well-holes. The Artillery and part of the Royal Sussex Regiment were put into a zeriba and fortlet, on the right rear of Fort No. 1, the first built. Two companies of the same corps were sent to build and occupy a fort 150 yards down the wady in the direction of Metemneh, on the front.

Two hundred yards on the left rear of Fort No. 1, the Light Camel Regiment and the Mounted Infantry were formed in square behind their camels,
with orders to surround themselves by an earthwork.

About three in the afternoon, some fifty or so of the enemy’s cavalry could be seen extended, as scouts, in a line with the activity in Buller’s camp, and all the earthworks were strengthened as quickly as possible, to be ready for any contingency.

Meanwhile the General sent two

two miles long, approaching the wells from the direction of Metemneh. In their rear came about a hundred riflemen. When a hill on the left front was ascended, three lines of horsemen and several lines of Infantry were seen marching about half a mile in rear of the Cavalry. This sight added to companies of the Royal Irish forward on the right, and afterwards a third company, to check the advance of the enemy in that direction. The Irish, who were keen to have a brush with them, pushed on to within 800 yards, and then sent on a line of skirmishers 200 yards farther, and as the enemy
still came on, they opened fire on them at 800 yards’ range.

After some desultory file-firing, the Irish poured in three distinct volleys, the Naval Brigade in Fort No. 1, the Arabs continued to advance with rapidity, making straight for the commanding crests and hills in front of our left.

effect of which was to drive the enemy’s left away from our right and hurl it back upon the main body which was still coming on. At five in the afternoon, despite an occasional turn taken by Lord Charles Beresford with two of the machine guns, manned by his slender

Every tent was now struck and packed, and every man was at his post. The undulations of the ground gave the Arabs good cover, and they were not slow to avail themselves of it; and, in half an hour, some 500 riflemen and spearmen were seen rushing down from
the ranges two miles away on our left, to gain the hills, which were from about a thousand to fourteen hundred yards north-east of the wady.

As many more of the foe halted in rear of a low isolated ridge that rose at right angles to Buller's front. They had several horsemen, and all wore the white uniform of the Mahdi's army. Carrying their rifles at the trail, leaping and running, they came nearer and nearer, with all the air of trained skirmishers, till, creeping behind ledges of rock and piling up stones to make low walls, they soon had plenty of cover.

At half-past five, with one accord, or, as if by word of command, they opened a furious rifle-fire upon our lines, and they had sighted their weapons so accurately, that their bullets whistled, dropped, and struck everywhere in and about the position. Our men were bidden to lie down, and till the enemy's rifles got too hot to hold, those of us caught outside without cover had a very bad quarter of an hour.

The camel lines were in low ground between the Royal Irish and the Mounted Infantry. The miserable animals were, as usual, doubly tied down and left to take their chance of being wounded or killed. After darkness fell our fire ceased, and that of the Arabs slackened. General Buller had his quarters in No. 1 Fort, which was only fifteen yards square, and within which were 100 men, with a large pile of ammunition, consequently the sleeping accommodation may be said to have been somewhat limited.

Eight Hussar horses left at the wells, and those belonging to the staff, were placed for safety in a trench on the west side of this fort. All lights were forbidden, and no firing was to take place by our men unless they were attacked; so, without shelter or supper, all lay down to await daybreak. Though the night was cloudy and starless, and the darkest the troops had yet seen in the Soudan, the enemy kept up a well-sustained fire; and how, in the obscurity, they contrived to do so, was a puzzle to our soldiers.

About midnight rain fell, and the north wind blew keenly. As the night wore on, the Arabs crept to within six hundred yards of the position, which resulted in greater safety to the troops, as their bullets, instead of dropping among them, buzzed away through the darkness overhead.

Towards morning the coldness increased, and the enemy's fire became irregular and weak, but their leaders could be heard shouting to them to keep it up. General Buller had double sentries posted, and he, Lord Charles Beresford, and the other officers, were on the alert all night. There was but one alarm, at 8 p.m., through some of the Royal Irish firing in a blundering way at a native sentinel near their post. The crack of their rifles, and the uproar that followed, made every man on the ground grasp his rifle and rush to his post. Some of the outsiders lining the ditch at Fort No. 1, rushed into that work pell-mell, but were instantly ordered back to their stations, and a guard with fixed bayonets was placed
in the opening to prevent a recurrence of the rush.

The experiences of the column on the night of the 16th February were very similar to what it had undergone a month before, when first it came among the hills of Abu Klea. If the enemy had brought guns, it was evident that Buller would have to abandon his ground, or attack them at great disadvantage. His first instructions, we have said, were to take Metemneh and march on Berber; but events had moved fast elsewhere, and plans and possibilities less than a week old, were beyond execution now.

There was a general longing in the column for a full regiment of cavalry. "Had there been one, with the horses in good condition," wrote a correspondent, "not a small force, a squadron broken down by overwork and hardship (chiefly want of forage and water), the Mahdistas at the battles of Abu Klea and Abu Kru, and in many skirmishes, would have fared badly in attempting to occupy the positions they did. That cavalry are of great use in the Soudan—nay, almost indispensable, to enable our slow moving infantry to cope with the lithe and thoroughly mobile forces of the natives—the dismembered 19th Hussar Regiment, small as the numbers of that command with the column are, has amply proved. Had the 19th mustered even 500 strong, instead of 130 carbines, or thereby, I am sanguine enough to suppose our casualties in at least two instances, would not have been so great. This regiment (the 19th Hussars) has part of its men with the flying column, part with Earle's column, part at Suakim, and part elsewhere."

With daylight on the 17th of February the Arab fire became heavier, but when dawn was fairly in, two of the screw-guns were brought into action, and some rounds of shell and shrapnel were burst over the dark heads that were seen popping up above the little stone shelters they had built on the sides of the hills. Like our own troops, they had been busy with these overnight. The Royal Irish and the Royal Sussex too, had heaped up earth on their parapets. As the morning wore on, the Gardners were trained against the enemy, causing them to duck out of sight to avoid the storm of lead that swept over them; but neither our shells nor bullets put down the Arab fire.

If suppressed at one point, it swelled up more fiercely from another; and if ours was silent for a moment, its concentration and vigour were renewed; yet, according to General Buller's despatch, between the evening of the 16th and dawn of the 17th, we had only two soldiers killed, four officers and ten soldiers wounded.

As the day advanced the north wind increased in strength, filling the air with whirling clouds of arid sand and dust, that darkened it like fog. A morning toilet was a luxury not to be thought of at Abu Klea, but fires had been lighted, for the men required food, even while bullets were flying. The Arabs made no attempt at an assault, and
Colonel Brabazon was entrusted with despatches for Lord Wolseley, official and private, and moved out of camp in a westerly direction, under an Arab fire all the time.

Keeping down in a small hollow in rear of the position occupied by the Royal Irish, they proceeded about four hundred yards, and sought the shelter of a crest, to form for the march. On quitting the camp, Brabazon had three camels and a man wounded. It was decided to proceed by some low ground on the west, and then directly westward. The clouds of dust and the dull leaden sky aided in concealing the movement from the Arabs then posted on all the hills to the north-east,
General Buller at the same time helping the departure of the detachment by a heavy fire on the Arabs.

Captain Pigott's company of the Mounted Infantry was advanced seven hundred yards in front of the fort of the Royal Sussex, down the hollow way, to protect the watering parties and more remote wells. This position enabled Pigott to take the Arabs nearly in reverse, and his men fired well and steadily, driving them to cover apart from their low stone breastworks. As the camels given to the Light Corps were in an indifferent state at starting—as late as noon—their progress was compellingly slow, as the poor animals could not be driven out of a funeral pace; and every few minutes there was a halt to enable some soldier to remove his kit and saddle to one of the fifty remounts, his own camel having fallen exhausted, and left there to be torn and devoured, perhaps be-

"Watching our ground like hawks," wrote one of the party, "we stole along the hollows, going by an old Arab track on which we luckily struck, up across the dividing ridge, and down into the plain. By 3 p.m. we were safely out upon the open desert, without having a shot fired at us, and we now considered..."
ourselves safe. Still going onward, the Lights got upon the main caravan route. Marching till 9 p.m., they reached and passed Gebel-es-Sergain, where they bivouacked for the night. Next morning they were off by sunrise, and got into Gakdul, a distance of fifty-two miles in a straight line. Just beyond Gebel Noos, Major Gould and fifty of the Lights, were met on their way to Abu Klea with a small convoy of water and grain. These, by General Buller’s orders, were—as a precautionary measure—turned back. Leaving the troops near the last-named hill, I rode ahead with Major Gould on camel-back, getting into Gakdul with the despatches at 4 p.m. These, and my own, were afterwards sent on by a special messenger to Korti.”

From the latter place, Sir Evelyn Wood had come to look after his lines of communication. A portion of the West Kent Regiment had come in the same afternoon, and the detachment heard for the first time of the fight with the column, the death of General Earle, and also of the high excitement in Britain on the news of Gordon’s betrayal and death.

Two returns given at this time show the extent to which our troops were suffering from the sun, exhaustion, and low fever. The Guards Camel Corps left the camp at Korti 305 strong, and by the middle of February they could not muster 150 serviceable men for duty at the front. The Royal Marine detachment, though partly acclimatised at Suakim, mustered 104 men. On the 20th of February only 52 men were fit for duty.
CHAPTER II.
THE RETURN TO GAKDUL.

After about forty-eight hours of harassing work and incessant skirmishing, General Buller, on the 18th February, thinking that the whole army of the Mahdi was in motion against him, sent out Major Wardrop with instructions to ascertain, as accurately as might be, the actual position and strength of the enemy, of which he was still, to a certain extent, unpleasantly ignorant.

The duty was a perilous one, but, had it been a forlorn hope, there would have been no lack of volunteers, for the soldiers were somewhat irritated by the want of rest at night. Major Wardrop, however, selected only one officer, Lieutenant Robert Tudway, of the Essex Regiment, who had already done much good service with the Mounted Infantry in this campaign, and three troopers specially chosen for their nerve and steadiness.

Stealing out of camp, apparently quite unnoticed by the enemy, they were soon lost to view among the rocky and uneven ground. Riding cautiously through a valley, the little party of five turned the hilly ground from whence had proceeded the rifle fire which had so galled Buller's column all the previous night, and after a time they found themselves fairly in rear of the enemy's position. The major took a good look round, and satisfied himself that the Arab force was by no means so formidable as had been supposed, and he and his comrades would have ridden back as quietly as they had ridden out had they not been perceived by the enemy, whose total strength was now not much above 1,000 men.

When discovered Major Wardrop was quite equal to the perilous emergency. He and his four companions fired a couple of volleys, and then rapidly extended themselves out at some forty yards or so from each other, and then all five advanced in line, firing as rapidly as possible, with a keen sense of enjoyment at their own risk and rashness, and the ruse proved completely successful. That part of the position was held by about 100 of the enemy's riflemen, all of whom fled with precipitation, in the full belief that five British columns were advancing upon them from five different points with the intention of annihilating them.

Those in camp had now a respite for a time, but later in the afternoon the Arabs dragged a small 4-pound howitzer to the summit of the ridge on the left front, and were seen making their preparations amid frantic gesticulations and noisy hubbub, and they speedily opened with shot and shell.

Fortunately they made but poor
practice, most of the missiles going wide of Buller's position, amid the laughter and audible comments of the men. However, as it was feared they might improve with practice, Buller brought his camel battery and one of Lord Charles Beresford's Gardner guns into action, so the match became at once an unequal one. Our gunners plumped a number of shells right among the enemy, killing and mutilating many of them, and afterwards a few well-aimed cannon shot struck their gun, smashed a wheel, and dismounted it.

Meanwhile the Mounted Infantry had been smartly engaged, and effectively too, for as the afternoon wore on the Arab fire became more and more intermittent, and eventually died away altogether. Buller had now time to estimate his casualties, which, under all the circumstances, were wonderfully few, amounting to only three men killed and twenty-one wounded.

The enemy's loss was afterwards found to be very considerable. That evening the troops had their supper at leisure, and the night was passed in peace. On the 19th all remained quiet at Abu Klea, and nothing was seen of the enemy, thus the troops were at liberty to attend to various matters neglected hitherto, such as cleansing, improving, and strengthening their camp. But towards sunset some excitement was caused by a report that the enemy were in sight, and a few came in view on the summit of a ridge, which was about 2,000 yards distant.
It was supposed that bodies of spear-men and riflemen might be hidden behind the rocks and boulders, but says the *Daily Chronicle*, “was ordered to give them a shell or two to assist their studies. The range was a long

only eight horsemen were in view against the sky-line, and, though evincing no intention of advancing, they were evidently reconnoitring the position with care. “Lord C. Beresford,” one for the Gardner, but there were some good shots among the bluejackets. Only three rounds were fired, and not one went wide of the mark. One shell burst among the group, killing one of
the horsemen; the others at once cleared off, and we have seen nothing of them since."

A native came into the camp in a most exhausted condition, begging for water, which was at once given to him. He was a slave, and had been in the service of one of the tribes now garrisoning Metemneh. He was closely interrogated, but no information of the slightest value could be extracted from him.

On the 20th Buller had a welcome addition to his force in the shape of a portion of the Royal Sussex Regiment and the Light Camel Corps, under Colonel Lawley, with a convoy of stores, which were greatly needed. During the march from Gakdul they had seen nothing of the enemy till they were drawing near Abu Klea. Colonel Lawley had ordered a halt for the purpose of grazing the camels, where a patch of grass was found, when suddenly a party of armed rebels were observed watching their movements.

Some of the Camelry made a dash at them and captured six men, who made no attempt at resistance, but threw down their Remingtons and begged for mercy. They declared most positively that there was no strong force anywhere near Abu Klea; that there was a camp about two miles distant, with 600 men in it, all of whom had recently come from Metemneh. This camp had been chosen with judgment, and was situated on rising ground at the upper end of a rugged and rocky valley. It was roughly fortified, and armed with one gun, brought from Metemneh.

The prisoners were unanimous in stating that some of the Mahdi's forces had come to that place from Khartoum; and that the men who had harassed our camp on the 16th and 17th were all from Metemneh. The six had evidently come from that quarter, as all their cummerbunds were proved to be made of hospital sheets marked with the broad arrow, part of the old stores abandoned by the column.

These prisoners admitted that they had originally belonged to the Soudanese contingent of Hicks Pasha's army, and served in that series of battles which ended in its destruction. They saved their lives by desertion, and had since served the Mahdi. From a portion of Buller's position, the camp to which they referred was visible, and a white flag was seen fluttering on it. It was not, however, a flag of truce, but a company standard attached to a long spear.

"As far as I can learn," wrote the correspondent of the Daily Chronicle, at this date, "General Buller's discretion has not been fettered by the despatches which he received yesterday, and he is still free to make a dash upon Berber. Whether he will do so will depend a good deal upon circumstances, and especially upon the result of Major Wardrop's mission. The officers will endeavour to make friends with local tribes, if any remain in this neighbourhood, with a view of persuading them to send supplies, of which we are very short, and becoming shorter every day. Probably they will be able to send us from Gakdul a sufficient means
of transport, if it is decided to continue our retreat to that place; but it will be a very different matter if we are destined to march to Berber. The route is a trying one, crossing bleak, rocky hills, and wearying sand deserts. But, after all, it is not so much farther than Gakdul, and the line of march would be so directed that we should always have the immense advantage of being within one day's march of the Nile. . . . . It is now almost entirely a question of transport. All depends upon our acquiring 1,000 fresh camels. The poor brutes who have shared the fortunes of this column have had hard times, and are faring as hardly even now in camp. Necessarily they are on very short rations—even our own, to say the least of it, are not very luxurious—and they are dying fast with our limited supply of water. Only one bucketful can be spared twice a week for the camels; most of them that survive are, in consequence, in the poorest condition."

The Wells at Abu Klea, however, served the column better than was expected, thanks to careful management, and the daily labour of deepening them and keeping them clean. The forts on the hills were now completed, and excellently placed. Not one of them could have been carried by an Arab assault, and practically they commanded every avenue by which an enemy could approach the camp, in front or flank.

On the 21st February the white flag was still flying on the Arab camp, and General Buller decided that it was worth some risk to find out what it really meant, and accordingly directed Captain Pigott, with a few of his Mounted Infantry, to ride down the valley towards the fort. He started early in the morning, and rode with extreme caution in view of the possibility of an ambush, an apprehension which, however, proved to be groundless; and as the enemy made no sign, his little party reached the camp without an exchange of shots.

It was found to be completely deserted, and had all the appearance of having been so for some time. Attached to the colour-staff was found a letter, without date or signature, stating that two Lieutenants of the Mahdi desired to communicate with the General commanding the British army. Captain Pigott at once took the letter to General Buller, who dictated a reply to the effect that he could not enter into any communication with those officers without knowing what was their object; and that they would have to inform him what they had to propose, and by what means they could bring it before him.

With this answer Captain Pigott rode back to the camp, but on the way suddenly came upon a party of the enemy posted on high ground, from whence they opened fire upon him, but without effect. It was supposed they knew nothing of the flag of truce or the letter; but, at all events, they ceased firing when one of Pigott's men displayed a white handkerchief. The appearance of treachery put an end to the negotiations, and Pigott returned to the British camp, while our scouts
reported that the enemy were seen in motion towards Metemneh.

They appeared to be retiring thither leisurely, and in small parties, without make another attempt to parley with the enemy, and sent Major Kitchener, with a small escort, for that purpose. The latter had a brief colloquy with

any attempt at military formation, and the troops began to flatter themselves that they had seen the last of their troublesome neighbours, a feeling that deepened into certainty when the night and the greater part of the following day passed in peace.

General Buller now determined to them, but nothing came of it, and it was supposed that in their hill camps they suffered much from want of food and water, as, to procure these, they had to tramp all the way to Metemneh. During the same evening, Major Wardrop, who, after an adventurous survey of the adjacent country, had
PRAYER IN THE DESERT.
gone to Gakdul, now returned with despatches for General Buller, containing orders to fall back on that place.

So ended the hope of a dash at Berber, and the troops were not seriously disappointed, as without fresh camels it would have been impossible, and the Major reported that in no case could the required numbers be procured.

On the 22nd the enemy made themselves apparent during the day, but at very long range. Towards evening they became bolder, and moved northward in force, evidently to ascertain the strength and composition of a convoy that was approaching the camp from Gakdul; but their way was barred by a strong chain of out-pickets and scouts, so they drew off.

The convoy came safely in, and started on their return next day, with thirty wounded officers and men, most of them in a bad way; but though everything was done to make their rough journey as bearable as possible, it was evident that most of them would suffer greatly before reaching the Wells of Gakdul. "I decided," wrote the correspondent of the Daily Chronicle, "to accompany this convoy, interrupting the journey by a brief visit to the scene of the first battle (Abu Klea), which presented a horrible spectacle. The desert, for nearly a mile, was strewn with the bodies of the slaughtered Arabs. On our approach great numbers of carrion birds rose lazily from their sickening repast. They continued to hover around, however, till our departure. The corpses had already been shrivelled by the great heat and the dry air to the proportion and semblance of mummies, with this difference, that they lay twisted in every variety of contortion. In many instances the white bones, divested of their covering by the foul birds, stared up at the beholder.

"Truly a sickening sight, and one to be remembered with a shudder. I am glad that our brave fellows remain undisturbed in their desert graves, a fact which, I trust, will be some small comfort to their sorrowing friends at home. Having seen the convoy well on its way forward, some of us returned to camp to await the final start north of the column."

It was necessary to hasten the departure of the latter, in consequence of increased signs of the enemy in front; and ere long it was clearly known that they were on the march for Abu Klea, 6,000 strong. From the adjacent hills the staff could plainly see and estimate the strength of the rebel column, which had with it several field guns and many banners displayed. As they came from the direction of Khartoum, no doubt was entertained that they were the first long-expected installment of the victorious warriors of the Mahdi—a sight that quickened our own movements.

Preparations were hurried forward, and at seven in the evening the retrograde movement began. The march was at first a delightful one; the air was cool, the moon shone out in all her tropical splendour, and no halt was made till Gebel-es-Sergain, in the desert plain, was reached.
On the 24th February the march was resumed, till a halt was made in the valley or rocky defile of Abu Sayle, when, at a distance of eight miles, the convoy with the wounded could be seen in front.

Little time was given for rest, the march being resumed shortly before midnight. The clothing of the troops was now in a deplorable state, and scarcely a pretence of uniform was to be seen anywhere but in the ranks of the Royal Irish, whose hideous khaki equipment had been more recently supplied to them. But even they were badly off for boots; and what it is to be without a sole to one's uppers, those had reason to know (wrote one) who had to tramp over that country of wiry grass, acacia thorns, and Nubian sandstone rubble. "Yesterday" (22nd February), he continues, "when the Roman Catholics of the old 18th knelt at mass—the only chaplain here is the veteran Father Brindle—one could see that at least one sole was off more than ten per cent. of the pairs of boots. And the Royal Irish are not the worst off by any means, for some of the other corps, as one man put it, have but two whole pairs of boots among three men. So much for Government contracts."

During a halt at the end of the Abu Sayle defile, the pickets gave the alarm that a considerable force of the enemy was coming on; but these proved to be only a few scouting horsemen watching the retreat. The scare was not without its use, as it proved the celerity with which the column prepared for the defensive. The ridge on which it halted and encamped was entrenched and a zeriba was constructed. The behaviour of the troops was admirable, and General Buller hourly won their confidence and regard by his cool and collected demeanour.

On the 26th the column came safely into the camp at Gakdul, and with reference to the retreat Lord Wolseley wrote thus in his despatch:

"The manner in which the movement from Gubat to Gakdul has been carried out, reflects the greatest credit upon General Buller as a leader, and upon all ranks under him. Every retrograde step is regarded by uncivilised races as a sign of weakness and fear, and to withdraw troops in the face of a savage enemy is neither an easy nor a grateful task. Sir Redvers Buller has, however, done this with little loss, and in a way which has won the confidence of all who served under him."

In his reports to Lord Wolseley, Sir Redvers Buller acknowledges the services of Major Wardrop for threatening the enemy's rear, and says:

"I wish expressly to remark the very excellent work that has been done by the small detachment of the 19th Hussars, both during our occupation of Abu Kru and during our retirement. Each man has done the work of ten, and it is not too much to say that the force owes much to Major French and his thirteen troopers."

The transport of the wounded across the Bayuda Desert was mainly effected by the Turkish and Egyptian soldiers who had joined the British force when Gordon's admiral, Khasm-el-Moos (who was now made a pasha), came to Abu Kru.

On the first march to Abu Klea, then to Gakdul, and finally to Korti, these bearers displayed the utmost patience and perseverance, and Lord Wolseley fittingly recognised their
services when they reached the headquarters camp.

So thus ended the expedition across the Bayuda Desert, which had for its object the relief of Khartoum, and the "smashing up" of the Mahdi. After the forces which Gordon's heroic defence had detained for ten long months.

The strength of the enemy in Khartoum at this time was reckoned at 10,000 men, with all Gordon's cannon, and a million of rounds of ammunition.

By the 28th of February the wounded sent to Gakdul by General Buller were dying fast. A score of graves were added to the lonely "God's Acre" without the camp. Among the deaths were those of three poor soldiers who, being slightly wounded, traversed the desert on foot to Gakdul. "Once in, they simply and silently lay down and died."

Just outside Gakdul Sir Herbert
Men of the 19th Hussars Fencing the Grave of Sir Herbert Stewart at Gakdul Wells.
Stewart expired in his litter. The medical stores had run very low, even when he was on board the steamer at Abu Kru. Carbolic acid had become exhausted, and the medical officers were driven as a substitute to sheep-dip!

The deceased General, a Stewart cadet of the Scottish house of Gallo-
way, was born on the 30th June, 1848, so that he died in his forty-second year. He was a son of the Rev. Edward Stewart, and of his wife Louisa Ann, of Muckross, in the county of Kerry. In his twenty-first year he was appointed ensign by purchase in the 37th Foot, and in 1866 was adjutant of the corps. In 1868-70 he was aide-de-camp to the Major-General commanding in Bengal. In 1872-3 he served there as Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General, and in the latter year joined the 3rd Dragoon Guards, and was Brigade Major of Cavalry during the Zulu War.

For several months in 1882 he was on the staff of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. In that year he was despatched to Egypt, where he was present in all the battles, and at the capture of Cairo. He was appointed extra aide-de-camp to Her Majesty, and made C.B., with the medal, clasp, and order of the Osmanieh. In 1877 he married Georgina Janet, daughter of the late Admiral Sir James Stirling, by whom he had two sons, Geoffrey and Spencer. In the autumn of 1884 he embarked for the Nile to serve under Lord Wolseley; and when the intelligence of his receiving that wound, which proved mortal, reached Britain, it excited the sympathy of all classes, and the Queen telegraphed to him, through Lord Wolseley, promoting him to the rank of Major-General.

His death cast a universal gloom over the troops, though the doctors had pronounced that the character of his wound rendered recovery hopeless. He was buried in the little graveyard near the reservoirs. The scene was a very impressive one. The troops formed a procession in the valley, headed by the firing party, and the band of the Royal Sussex Regiment. The pall-bearers were Majors Gould and Byng, Lieutenants Lord, Dawson, Douglas, and Browning, and Captain Rhodes. Colonel Talbot, of the Guards, read the burial service, "and there was not an unmoist eye among all those present when the brave soldier's remains were consigned to their last resting-place amid the desert sands."

The men of the 19th Hussars raised a large cairn to his memory at the entrance of the Gakdul valley, and they also built a substantial stone wall around his grave, with a headstone carved with his name and date of death.

Around him are buried many who had died of sickness, for enteric fever, due to exhaustion, bad quarters, and poor feeding, was becoming a common cause of death. Every day added to the number of graves, over which the men's comrades, with loving hands, raised mounds of stone as a protection from wild animals. Some they adorned with rude crosses bearing the name and regiment of the deceased, with the addition—if a Roman Catholic—of the letters R.I.P. (Daily Chronicle.)
CHAPTER III.
FROM GAKDUL TO KORTI.


When his headquarters were at Korti, a town of Dongola sixty miles eastward of the city of that name, and situated on the left bank of the Nile, Lord Wolseley, on the 19th February, received tidings of the column under Brigadier Brackenbury, reporting that the river had been crossed, as already detailed, and that in about ten days he expected to occupy Abu Hammmed.

Soon after, Salleh, the most powerful sheikh of the great Kabbabish tribe, on his arrival at headquarters from Mahtul Wells, which are twenty miles south of Debbeh, was, by order of Lord Wolseley, presented with a handsome sword and robe of honour by Major Turner and Zohrab Bey. These gifts were well deserved, as Sheikh Salleh had promptly supplied us with many camels and other means of transport. The ceremony took place in the tent of the Mudir of Dongola, and at the same time lesser honours were accorded to the sheiks of the Sorabi and Hawawir tribes, who had also been useful in supplying the Expedition with transport and food.

On the 24th of February a grand durbar was held for the purpose of the investiture (already briefly described) by Lord Wolseley of the Mudir of Dongola with the insignia of St. Michael and St. George. The Sheikhs of the Kabbabish, the Sorabi, and Hawawir tribes were present, while a guard of honour was furnished by the old 50th, or West Kent Regiment, on the occasion of this somewhat grotesque ceremony.

The brevet of installation was read by an interpreter in the Arabic language, and Lord Wolseley placed the collar of the Order round the neck of the somewhat mystified Mudir, who stood in front of the headquarters tent, where the British colours were flying.

Addressing the Mudir in the floridly Oriental style deemed suitable on such occasions, as "Thou brave and valiant one," Lord Wolseley (states the Daily News) said, through the interpreter:—

"Her Majesty, my gracious Sovereign, Victoria, Queen of the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, having learned the true facts of your zeal and bravery in the service of your Government in cutting short the advance of the rebels upon these regions, and of your untiring diligence in furthering the affairs of the Soudan Expedition, in which we are now engaged, has commanded me to represent her high person in conferring upon you the rank of Emir, Commander of the Knight Companions of St. Michael and St. George. I have great pleasure in handing you the brevet bearing Her Majesty's sign..."
Lord Wolseley to convey to the Queen thanks for the honour she had conferred upon him.

At this time the native population at Korti brought supplies in freely to headquarters, and appeared on most friendly terms with our soldiers, and had no apprehension of any march northward by the Mahdi. Lord Wolseley informed the Mudir that the late General Gordon had written letters speaking of him in high terms, and of the services he had rendered; he also presented him with one of the gold decorations which that ill-fated officer had made as presents to those who had distinguished themselves at the defence of Khartoum.

When the Sheikh of the Kabbabish tribe was invested with his robe of honour, he said that the best troops of the Mahdi were engaged against us at Abu Klea, and that, after their slaughter by Buller's column, it was
doubtful if they would ever attack us again, as his followers would disperse to their homes with the plunder of Khartoum, two surmises in which the sheikh was mistaken, as future events showed.

But about this date the Standard records that "the Mudir of Dongola and the natives of this neighbourhood tracts were entered into; horses were bought at every available centre, and the Mudirs of provinces even were ordered at once to send in the first installment of 2,000 camels.

On the 25th of February it was reported at Korti that the spies of the Mahdi, and numbers of robbers, were secreting themselves among the long reedy grass on the hills between the Howeiyat Wells and Gakdul; and that a guide who was bringing one of the Mounted Infantry with despatches from Gakdul to headquarters had been seized by them; but the soldier retired some distance, halted, and from his saddle fired nine telling rounds, till observing more of the robbers closing in, he put spurs to his horse and galloped off to Howeiyat. These robbers belonged to the Hassaniyeh tribe, and it was feared they would prove very troublesome.

On the 27th General Buller, in
obedience to orders, started from Gakdul for Korti, with a strong escort. On his way he was desired to map out five equidistant positions on the route, which was about a hundred miles in length as the crow flies. These were to be placed in a state of defence, to serve as depôts for the troops when retiring to the rear.

Transport was so defective now that it was evident nearly all the men would be compelled to march across the desert on foot to Korti, as the camels would be mostly used for carrying stores and water for these equidistant depôts. But the men would be able thus to retreat gradually, and without unduly distressing themselves.

The depôts nearest Korti were to be supplied with water from that town; and it now seemed that there was no doubt of the prolonged retention of our troops in the Soudan, news which was not received with much enthusiasm; and the chief questions now were, How could the army be fed during the summer, and where could it be encamped to suffer the smallest possible risk from the coming tropical heat?

It was believed that the retention of our troops in that fearful desert during the hot season would cost hundreds of valuable lives.

"I am not alone in this belief," wrote a correspondent; "those who know what the scorching heat of this desert is like when the tropical sun pours down in all its intensity, predict that our soldiers will die like flies. There has been no sign yet of the rebels following us up. There is, however, just a possi-

bility that they may do so, trusting to obtain their water supplies from the 'pockets' in the hills. The farther the rebels move from an adequate water supply, the less formidable they become. Even at the best, the small pools on the hills can supply only a limited number for a short time. If they saw a chance, doubtless they would harass us; but up to the present I have seen none of the enemy near the camp. Whatever is done in this quarter (Gakdul) must of necessity resolve itself mainly into a question of transport."

The Kabbabish tribe, which hitherto had been carrying stores for the troops at Gakdul, under contract, now suddenly refused to extend their journeys at any price, and it became apparent that if an autumn campaign was persisted in, not less than 6,000 camels would be requisite for each column of the army. It was known that green food was plentiful enough in some parts of the desert, and that camels will last longer, of course, if not stinted in food and water; while to achieve perfect success it would be necessary to have several efficient steamers on the upper reaches of the Nile; and it would be idle to reckon on finding Gordon's shott-riddled steamers intact, if an advance was made to Metemneh again.

Meanwhile Sir Evelyn Wood was to remain in command at Gakdul, but soon after he returned to England. That there was then no intention of abandoning the desert route was evident, though a concentration was in progress at Korti. The troops were being echeloned along the entire route, while
batteries and other depots were being formed at the Wells of El Howeiyat, and other points, which would certainly not be done for a retreating column. There was every reason to believe that now the enemy were suffering from a deficiency of transport, though they were less dependent upon it than the British troops.

A medical statement was now prepared of the total losses of the desert force, from the time it left Korti to its return to Gakdul, in killed and disabled from wounds or sickness. This total amounted to thirty officers and four hundred and fifty men, a heavy percentage indeed in a force which did not exceed two thousand of all ranks.

On the 26th February news came to Korti from Handab that a large party of Arabs were raiding in that neighbourhood. The Soudanese troops of the Mudir of Dongola were despatched against them from Berti, and after a smart skirmish drove them back. The loss of the Arabs was severe, but unknown, as they succeeded in carrying off all their dead.

It was now announced that the Mahdi had forbidden the use of the Koran, substituting some books of his own, a very improbable circumstance; but it was added that he had issued strict injunctions that his troops were not to charge the British, but to fight them from a distance. "If they do this," he told them, "God will destroy their enemies."

After the arrival of General Buller, with Lord Fitzgerald, at Korti, Lord Wolseley held an inspection of the survivors of General Gordon's troops, under Captain Gascoigne. After a parade in line, they were formed in hollow square, that he might address them.

He said he was very much pleased to see them. He congratulated them on the pluck and courage they had shown, and warmly thanked them for the good and humane work they had done in the transport of the wounded across the desert.

He told them that all the promises as to pay and advantages which had been made to them by their brave leader, Gordon, would be faithfully observed, as the British always kept faith; adding that more armies were coming from Suakim and Egypt, and that the Soudan would be held by these troops till the Mahdi was crushed and Khartoum re-taken.

On his speech being translated to them they cheered loudly, and Nusri Pasha said in reply that "all the soldiers were broken-hearted by the death of Gordon Pasha, who was adored by them, and they hoped the British would yet avenge his murder and crush the Mahdi."

News now came that the Hassaniyeh tribe had looted a convoy of thirteen camels near Gakdul, and that a body of marauders had attacked another British convoy near the Wells of Howeiyat, and killed twelve men.

Tidings of General Brackenbury's column were anxiously looked for at Korti; but by the 1st of March great difficulty began to be experienced in inducing messengers to carry des-
patches, the destruction of property by the British troops, in avenging the murder of Colonel Stewart, having caused intense hostility on the part of the tribes between headquarters and Abu Hammed.

A change of intentions now began to be indicated on the part of the authorities, when, just about the time heat being most distressing," wrote one who was present. "We reached Gebel-el-Kelb, some twenty miles from Gakdul, on the 2nd inst. Somewhat to our surprise we found an excellent supply of water at that place, infinitely superior, in fact, to that of the famous Wells of Gakdul. Colonel Talbot, seeing the importance of the place to

General Buller left Gakdul, it leaked out that the latter post was to be abandoned, with all the intervening posts, and that the whole forces were to be concentrated at Korti, prior to going into summer quarters, and General Wood issued an order to the effect that Gakdul was to be evacuated on the 4th of March.

The first to depart were the Naval Brigade, under Lord Charles Beresford, taking with them four guns.

The march across the desert proved one of great toil to the troops, "the

The Wells of El Howeiyat, fifty-five miles from Korti, were reached by this detachment on the 4th March.
SANDSTORM IN THE DESERT.
"The Khamsin will, I am afraid, add greatly to the sufferings of our men in this retreat," says the writer before quoted. "It is a hot southerly wind, which generally commences to blow about this season of the year, and, as a rule, lasts quite thirty days. Its effects on the human system are very distressing, producing a sense of languor and physical weakness. Animals are equally affected—even the hardiest camels."

While Colonel Talbot was at El Howeiyat, tidings came that the Hassamiyeh tribes were gathering to dispute his progress, and the retreat generally of the whole, near the El Kalah Wells, sixteen miles distant; that they had been joined by a hundred expert riflemen from Berber, and were expected to operate from the direction of the Merawi road. This news was heliographed back, in the hope to put Sir Evelyn Wood on his guard against a surprise, and make arrangements for giving the enemy a warm reception, should they appear.

"The last stages of our journey," wrote a correspondent, "were most trying, the heavy desert road, and the fierce heat of the sun, exhausting even many of the hardy Kabbabish camels. Some of our fellows could hardly stagger along, and there were very few who did not suffer terribly. On Thursday afternoon I determined to leave the column, and make a dash for Korti. Towards evening I started, and when I last saw them, the troops were toiling on, the poor men and animals equally exhausted. That night I had another feverish attack, but was bound to push on, as I had scarcely any water with me. Ultimately I reached here (Korti) in safety, but thoroughly exhausted, having passed two nights in the desert, and having been (latterly) without a drop of water for twenty hours."

Under date March the 1st, at Korti, the correspondent of the Daily Telegraph wrote thus:—"You must spend a week or two upon the desert, living in a perpetual dust-storm; choked, baked, with nought to slake the naturally insatiable thirst which such a life engenders except soapy water, to realise the delightful rebound of feeling and comfort afforded by a return to the banks of the flowing Nile."

Tents were now erected at Korti for the reception of the troops coming in from Gakdul, Abu Halfa Wells, Megaga, and elsewhere, and also for Brackenbury's column, which was expected to be on its way to headquarters. As then disclosed, the military plan appeared to be the concentration of all the forces composing the Expedition (except those in Suakim) at Korti.

It was Lord Wolseley's wish, if by dint of the most liberal pay, the Kabbabish tribe, Gordon's Soudanese, or any other natives, could be induced to occupy advanced posts at the Megaga Wells, Merawi, and a station on the desert near Debbeh, to hold them as scouts to intervene between our troops and the enemy, and so secure the roads leading to the Nile, while our own troops were to be massed at a strategical point so as to protect the province of Dongola from invasion.
Korti was eventually to be quitted, and an entrenched camp formed where the dry and healthy desert sand had rolled down to and bordered the river; the soldiers were to be hotted for the summer in cabins of reedy grass. It was hoped and announced that they would be able to get through the tropical summer without much sickness, if the enemy did not compel exposure; and it was urged that good water and wise sanitary arrangements would minimise the death-rate. "Still," wrote one, "summer in the blazing Soudan is not to be contemplated with free-and-easy indifference to the total change from ordinary camp life. What will be done when the cool days come round again in September and October next is too remote for speculation. The questions, however, continually asked at Korti were, Will the troops in the autumn attempt to go to Khartoum, via the Nile in whale boats, or will the British public, long before then, see them shifted to Berber, and holding the terminus of the Suakim-Berber Railway?"

The advanced column did not quit Gakdul a day too soon, as the place was fast becoming unhealthy, and the men fell sick in large numbers. On the 27th of February a convoy with no less than 107 sick and wounded had been despatched to Korti—the third in one week; so General Wood hastened the work of evacuation as rapidly as could be expected, by the aid of camels from Megaga, to get the whole force out even by the 2nd March. The men were moved to Megaga, thence to El Howeiyat and Korti, the line regiments—the West Kent, Royal Irish, and Royal Sussex—being the last successively to leave the base. The change from Gakdul, after its stifling atmosphere and the frightful odour from hundreds of dead camels lying in every direction, did the troops infinite good; and every energy was now bent towards getting the force together and healthily encamped before the sun came nearer the equator and the weather became unbearably hot.

"At Gakdul, and at those places in the desert where black glistening rocks abound, the heat during the day is already scorching," wrote a correspondent, under date Korti, 2nd March, 1885. "Even here in the shade, under the trees and by the bank of the river, for two or three days past, the thermometer has been ranging from noon till 4 p.m. between 90° and 95° Fahrenheit. The doctors look forward (privately) with apprehension to a summer's residence of the troops on the Upper Nile. There is already a good deal of sickness, and a general loss of elasticity and tone is observable on all sides among the men. Soldiers, like everybody else, if overworked, and if their strength be overtaxed, suddenly give way, and what is called the 'fighting vim' and bounce leave them. There is now scarcely any longer to be seen that elated keenness to have a brush with the Arabs. The men who toiled so vigorously at the ropes and oars, dragging the whalers against the heavy stream, have become 'stale' and
want rest, or, better still, change. Camp life is always unwholesome, and how much so it will be in the Soudan I fear to conjecture. That the relief of Khartoum has failed solely and simply because of the Government's dallying, and ultimately forcing the Expedition by an almost impracticable route, passes denial. Even had all

sides among officers and men there were universal dismay and burning indignation at the catastrophe. The opinion was that we had better have lost one-half our number. The toils and dangers of these splendid soldiers had all been undergone for nought! There was no question of politics about the state of feeling, for I am glad to

gone well, it would have been near the end of March before the whalers could have reached Khartoum. The return, at so late a season of the year, of the garrisons as well as of our own men, must have led to a heavy mortality bill.”—(Daily Telegraph.)

This writer says that a portion of a previous report was struck out of his telegrams. It was to the effect that the news of Gordon’s death and betrayal caused our soldiers at Abu Kru to be horrified and exasperated. “On say our army are all Britons first and chatters after. For that black day, very few of those who formed part of the Nile Expeditionary Force will ever forgive the home officials who are responsible.”

It was now decided that the British encamped at Korti should remain until the autumn of 1885, when aggressive operations would be resumed against the Mahdi at Khartoum and Osman Digma at Suakim, though the weather was getting hotter and hotter, and
several cases of typhoid fever had occurred. It was also decided to extend the Soudan Railway, and two battalions of Egyptian troops were despatched to commence its construction, while the necessary plant and rolling-stock were ordered from Great Britain.

It was to stretch from a point beyond Sarras, to which there was already a graded line to Akash. Instead of the new line being laid by the bank of the Nile near Ambigol, it was to pass through the desert, that the heavy work of cutting the rocks might be avoided; and Lord Wolseley contemplated a further extension of it to Ferket, and if this was done, the portage of the Second Cataract would alone remain to be encountered.

About this time the increasing insolence of demeanour of the native population in Egypt towards British soldiers, which had attracted much attention, culminated in a savage assault upon two of our Hussars, who were passing unarmed through the village of Matarieh (near Abassiye), the ancient Heliopolis, a few miles north-east of Cairo. They were attacked and severely maltreated. As this was not the first time such an event had taken place, and the village had a bad reputation, it was resolved...
that summary punishment should be inflicted on the guilty, without the usual delays and frivolous formalities of Egyptian civil tribunals.

Accordingly the Provost Marshal, with a company of our Military Police, rode out to Matarieh, and on approaching the village, broke into a gallop, and taking the inhabitants completely by surprise, formed an armed cordon round it. Several who attempted to escape into the orange groves were overtaken and driven back. The sheikhs of the village were summoned, and ordered to produce the men guilty of the outrage on the two Hussars.

They, of course, professed ignorance of the whole affair; but a watch was set, and they were told that unless they produced the men they would themselves be severely flogged. This threat quickened their intelligence, and they pointed out four men as having been engaged in the maltreatment of the Hussars; and after a most animated chase through gardens and over housetops, they were captured, and two were found to be Soudanese. The four were identified by the Hussars, and they were at once stripped, tied up to a tree in front of the mosque, and were then, in presence of the whole inhabitants, soundly flogged—first with a stirrup leather, and then by a kourbash, well laid on by the Military Police.

They were then cast loose, with a warning that the police would in future shoot down all who might attack British soldiers. "This wholesome vindication of British authority," wrote a correspondent, "cannot at the present time be too highly recommended. It is the first instance which has yet occurred of the British authorities setting their foot down, and its effect will be most beneficial."

A letter from Massowah, in the Muba-shir, Arabic paper, published at this time, stated that the fall of Khartoum would cause a change in the attitude of Abyssinia towards the Mahdi. Up till this period there had been a pretty constant stream of trade between that country and Khartoum, in connection with which about three thousand Abyssinians had been living in the city.

These subjects of King John were now at the mercy of the Mahdi, who, moreover, by the fall of the city, was put in possession of all the territory between the Blue and White Niles, and thus became an immediate neighbour of Abyssinia. This circumstance, it was predicted, would lead, if the Mahdi's power lasted, to fierce disputes between him, as a fanatic Mussulman, and the King, as a bigoted Christian. It was, therefore, considered as by no means unlikely that an Abyssinian army might, within three months, cross the Blue Nile and try conclusions with the followers of the False Prophet.

On the 22nd of the preceding month, the Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa, one well acquainted with the Soudan, in a letter from Cairo, warned Great Britain of the serious danger of underrating the difficulties and dangers the projected Suakim expedition would
have to encounter. "Even supposing," said he, "that the plan to construct a railway from Suakim to Berber is successfully carried out, and Osman Digna defeated to boot, only a portion of the difficulties will have been surmounted, as the British force will have, at Berber, to meet a foe of enormous numerical superiority, and animated by the fiercest fanaticism."

On the 3rd of March Khasm-el-Moos brought to Korti from Metemneh a small body of black troops, and the same day was signalised by one of the most important and remarkable features in the war, the departure for the Soudan of the New South Wales contingent, an event possessing deep historical interest, as the first occasion on which Australian troops shared in the defence of the Mother Country or the Empire. From the date that the offer of the colony was accepted to the hour of the departure of the contingent, public enthusiasm was maintained at its utmost tension in Sydney, and the number of volunteers reached six times the required strength of the force, while there was a continuous flow of contributions to the patriotic fund, which, by the 3rd of March, amounted to £45,000.

The troops were reviewed by Lord Augustus Loftus, Governor of New South Wales, in presence of 50,000 spectators, and special services were held for the volunteers in the Anglican and Catholic Cathedrals, sermons being preached by the Primate and the Archbishop.

On the 3rd of March the streets forming the route from the barracks to the Circular Quay, a distance of two miles, were lined by masses of spectators. The troops were escorted by 600 seamen and marines from the ships of war stationed at Sydney, and accompanied by the Governor, the Ministry, and the chief officials of the Colony. Loud cheers and good wishes were heard on every side, and on reaching the Quay the men formed square, and were thus addressed by the Governor:

"Soldiers of New South Wales: I have considered it my duty, as the representative of Her Majesty, to say a few words to you at this solemn moment, before your embarkation. For the first time in the great history of the British Empire a distant colony is sending, at its own cost, and completely equipped, a contingent of troops, who have volunteered, with an enthusiasm of which only we who witness it can judge, to assist the Imperial forces in a bitter struggle for the suppression of unspeakable cruelty, and for the establishment of order and justice in a misgoverned country.

"Countless as have been the occasions on which the blood and treasure of Britain have been poured out freely to protect the feeble, to shield the defenceless, and to maintain rights, there has never been one in which humanity has been more deeply interested in the triumph of her arms than the cause which you have heroically resolved to uphold by your valour.

"You will be greeted in Egypt by the ready welcome of thousands of chivalrous soldiers who have never yet looked upon such an action as yours. The eyes of our gracious Queen will be upon your exertions; and in every part of the world where our flag floats, men, women, and children will pray for your success.

"Soldiers! you carry in your keeping the honour of this great colony, which has made such splendid sacrifices in order to send you to the front, with an equipment of which the nations most practised in war might be proud. You will have the glorious privilege of helping to maintain the honour of the Empire, and in your ranks are members who are voluntarily leaving the paths of fortune, worldly advantages, the comforts of home, and the sweetness of domestic life, for hard service in a bloody war, in which already many brave men have been stricken.
down. You are doing this to show to the world the unity of the mighty and invincible Empire of which you are members.

"Your country charges itself with the dear ones you leave behind; and all that generosity, tenderness, and gratitude can do to care for them, and to succour and console them, will be a labour of love to the nation."

Iberia, which took 600 men, the remaining 200, with the horses and stores, being conveyed by the Australasian. Enthusiastic cheers arose from the crowds on the quays, and, accompanied by a perfect fleet of steamers, the ves-

On bidding the contingent finally farewell, His Excellency said: "Our earnest hope is that it may be your glorious privilege to share in the triumph as in the service, and that you will come back to us crowned with Great Britain's gratitude, as you are now encompassed by her sympathies."

The contingent then marched on board the transports, the Infantry and most of the Artillery embarking on the sels sped on the way to the shores of Upper Egypt.

When the remainder of Gordon's Black troops, under Kasm-el-Moos, came to Korti, they were so overjoyed on seeing the lights of the camp, that they celebrated their arrival, in the usual African fashion, by discharging all their muskets in the air, which brought our outposts under arms, and caused general excitement. He
DEPARTURE OF THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINGENT FROM SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.
reported that the Sheikh Suleiman Wad Gamm, the murderer of Colonel Stewart, was, with his followers, at a point about one day's march south of Kirbekan, and that he had with him only three pieces of cannon, one of which was broken; and the Arabs who survived the battle of Abu Klea were asserting that there the British opened the square on purpose to let them in, for the purpose of slaying them all, a statement confidently believed by the natives at Metemneh.

The interview of Kasm-el-Moos with Lord Wolseley was a somewhat protracted one, according to the correspondent of the Morning Post. When congratulated by the General on his new honours, Kasm kissed his hand, and expressed profound sorrow for the fall of Khartoum and the death of General Gordon, whom they always revered, and expressed his earnest hope that, by the aid of God and the British troops, they would yet overthrow the Mahdi, and restore peace by suppressing the revolt.

Lord Wolseley replied, "That it was the fixed determination of the British Government to overcome the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, and impressed upon him to rest assured that this decision once arrived at, would not be changed. The General reiterated his assurance that whatever General Gordon had pledged the word of Britain to, would be strictly and faithfully carried out, and expressed his hope that they would all be in Khartoum by the end of the year."

Lord Wolseley then proceeded to discuss the question of Arab auxiliaries, and Kasm-el-Moos promised to give his cordial assistance in the work. His lordship then inquired as to the rumours which had reached Korti as to the advance of the Mahdi and his army from Khartoum towards Abu Kru. Kasm replied that he had been informed that shortly after the fall of the city the Mahdi did make arrangements to advance, but was dissuaded by his council, and, instead, sent some of his emirs as far as Gubat. Lord Wolseley then asked if the latter would likely come across the Bayuda Desert, and whether they would likely carry on their operations during the hot weather, or wait for a cooler season.

Kasm-el-Moos replied that the hot or the cool season made not the slightest difference to the Arabs; but that their present difficulties arose from the want of proper arrangements for such an advance, as a desert march required elaborate preparations beforehand with regard to food and water. Lord Wolseley then inquired as to the ammunition which the Mahdi had obtained in Khartoum.

Kasm said that though his forces had in their possession enough of gunpowder, and there was a sufficient number of men in the arsenal to refill such cartridge cases as they could collect, there was no one with them who could make percussion caps for the cartridges so refiled. They had always come from Egypt, and none had arrived since the time of Abd-el-Kader, four years before, and lead, Kasm-el-Moos added, was very scarce.
Lord Wolseley in conclusion remarked: "It has been said that the British Government should not have sent me up the Nile, but ought to have despatched the force by the way of Suakim to Berber."

To this observation Kasm-el-Moos answered emphatically: "If the British Expedition had not come up the Nile the province of Dongola must indubitably have fallen into the hands of the emirs of the Mahdi, and the route to Egypt would thus have been open to him at any time."

On the 4th of March the temperature at Korti was 104 degrees in the shade. Two of the staff-surgeons were suffering from enteric fever, and one of them, Dr. Turner, died on the 5th.

The news having been brought to Korti, March 6, that a party of robbers were hiding between Megaga and Gakdul Wells, Colonel Barrow started off with a detachment of Hussars for the purpose of discovering their whereabouts, and putting a stop to their depredations.

Colonel Barrow and his men concealed themselves near the camping-ground occupied recently by Colonel Clarke's column on its way to Korti, and at daybreak on Tuesday they saw a party of about thirty appear and begin searching for plunder. The Hussars at once sallied forth and attempted to cut off the robbers, but the ground was too rough for operations on horseback, and the troops had to dismount and use their carbines. They succeeded in shooting two, but the rest, who knew the district well, managed to escape.

Captain Verner now arrived from Gakdul, and reported that Lord Charles Beresford, with the Naval Brigade, Colonel Clarke, with the Hcavies, and Major Hunter, with the Artillery, would reach Korti on Sunday. General Dormer and his staff—namely, Captain Holmes, Brigade-Major, and Captain Rhodes, aide-de-camp—now established their summer quarters at Ambigol. General Dormer was to command the troops stationed there and at Korti.

On the 7th of March two movable columns were organised to be in readiness to march in any direction, and on that day Lord Wolseley issued the following general order to the soldiers and sailors who took part in the Nile Expedition:

"Camp, Korti, March 7, 1885.

"The Queen has watched with the deepest interest your doings, and has desired me to express to you her admiration of your courage and self-devotion.

"To have commanded such men is to me a source of the highest pride. No greater honour is awaiting me, please God, than to lead you to Khartoum before the year is out.

"Your efforts to save General Gordon have been unsuccessful, but not through your fault.

"On the river and in the desert you have endured hardships and privations without a murmur, and in action you have been uniformly victorious. You did everything to save your comrade, but Khartoum fell through treachery, two days before the advanced troops arrived.

"A period of comparative inaction may now be expected. This army was not formed with a view to undertaking the siege of Khartoum, and for the moment you must content yourselves with preparations for an autumn advance.

"You will, I know, face the summer heat, and the necessary but less exciting work now to be done, with the same courage and endurance you have hitherto shown.

"I thank you heartily for all you have done in the past.

"I can wish nothing better, I can ask, I think,
no more of you in the future, than the same uncomplaining devotion to duty which has characterised your conduct during the recent operations.

"(Signed) Wolseley."

The Naval Brigade as a homogeneous body was no longer now to exist. The men were to be drafted to various points along the Nile, from Abu Dom lass, and seventy rounds of ammunition, in many cases having to tow an obstinate camel."

On the following day Lord Wolseley inspected the brigade, thanking it for its services, and on the 9th it was finally broken up in the manner stated. On their last parade, his lordship

On their last parade, his lordship

The Naval Brigade as a homogeneous body was no longer now to exist. The men were to be drafted to various points along the Nile, from Abu Dom to Dongola; thus, during the summer, it was evident they would have more work to do than the troops, as they were to have entire charge of the water traffic; and Lord Charles Beresford resumed his original functions as Naval Aide-de-camp to Lord Wolseley, to whom, in his final report, he wrote thus of his brigade:

"On the 7th of March the brigade returned to Korti, having marched from Metemneh without one falling out, a creditable performance considering the state of their shoe-leather, and the fact of their having to carry rifle, cut-selected for special mention Chief Engineer Henry Benbow, R.N., whose splendid courage and resource, during the memorable trip to rescue Sir Charles Wilson and his shipwrecked comrades, were brought under his direct notice by Lord Charles Beresford. He warmly thanked and praised Mr. Benbow for his brilliant feat in repairing the boiler under the heavy and continuous fire of the enemy, and, as a testimony to his merits, presented him with his own silver cigar-case, amid the honest plaudits of the seamen.
It was now announced that eventually the Naval Brigade would be reformed and greatly increased by picked gunners and seamen sent from Britain, and that it would form an important part of the Khartoum Expeditionary force. It was also stated that Lord Charles Beresford was again to command, with Captain Frederick R. Boardman, R.N., of H.M. Salamis, as second in command.

Not only had the officers of the Naval Brigade fully justified all the eulogiums of which they were then the subject, but the men also had distinguished themselves by the great pluck and energy they had repeatedly shown in the many arduous enterprises in which they had taken part. This force had proved of immense service throughout the campaign, and had borne a large share of the burden and heat of the day. It is gratifying to know that the brilliant exploits of its gallant commander found their counterpart in the deeds of the brave men whom he so efficiently led.

Three days before the Naval Brigade was broken up Brigadier-General Brackenbury's column marched into the camp at Korti.

NEW SOUTH WALES TROOPSHIP "Australasian."
CHAPTER IV.

The Return of Brackenbury's Column.

The Descent of the Nile—The Crossing at Abu Dom—Camp at Ambigol—Concentration at Korti—Departure of the Canadians—The Mahdi and his Resources—Bad Bread—The Casualties in Egypt—Blockhouses.

General Brackenbury's command, having completed the punishment of the Monassir tribe for the murder of Colonel Stewart and his companions, was ordered not to proceed to Abu Hammed, which is at the southern end of the great desert, but to fall back and encamp at Merawi—to retire for the general concentration of the force. He left Salamat on the 27th of February.

On the 1st of March his boat-column was at Berti, en route to the base, having successfully descended three rapids, in the process of which three whalers had to be abandoned; but the men and stores in these were saved, and transferred to other boats.

The route from Salamat to Berti was found to be very difficult, the country being of the roughest and most difficult nature, much resembling the Shukook Pass, though more open. On the 28th of February the column crossed a great wady, with rocky sides, which a few brave men might have held against a very superior force.

A few spearmen were seen on some of the Nile islands, but no opposition was offered to the column, though the country people were aware that the movement was a retrograde one; and no attempt was made either to hinder Brackenbury's march or harass his rear.

All the villages passed through were found to be still deserted, and the grain crops in the abandoned fields were seen to be ripening prematurely owing to the want of rain. It was supposed that much of the crops might be saved when the villagers returned from their hiding-places, the chief of which was Abu Hammed, four days' journey distant across the desert.

General Brackenbury had the Gordon Highlanders, the Cornwall and Staffordshire Regiments with him in the whale-boats, the last half battalion acting as the rearguard of the rest. A few dervishes were seen on the rocks near Kirbekan, where they shook their spears defiantly, but seemed to be without firearms; so the boats proceeded quietly on their way to Abu Dom, the General accompanying the boat-column.

On the 28th of February Colonel Butler reached Merawi from Berti with the Hussars, the Egyptian Battery, the Egyptian Camel Corps, and the Transport Company, having kept touch with the infantry in the whale-boats. The land route along the right bank of the Nile proved to be by far the best way for cavalry advancing from Merawi to Abu Hammed; and it was intended that this line should be adopted in the event of a further advance against Berber from Korti.
During the preceding forty days, the cavalry of Brackenbury's column did some very hard work, having to march six hundred miles, at a daily average of fifteen miles; their horses were, however, in fair condition, though there was a certain amount of lameness, owing to nails and shoes running short, but still all were fit for service.

The whale boats had travelled in a direct line to Merawi 250 miles, but had covered a far greater distance by water, owing to the many windings of the river and the frequent crossing and re-crossing of the stream, selecting channels, and avoiding, when possible, rocks and rapids. The result of our Nile experiences proved, that even the most formidable series of cataracts in almost the lowest state of the river can be surmounted by British-built boats manned by our soldiers.

But, for all practical purposes, the Nile above Dongola and its shores are unmapped and unknown. The channels and the proper pilotage of the river had to be discovered yard by yard as the flotilla advanced, and thus the exploration of the Nile ahead had to be done by the cavalry, and hence an excessive amount of work was thrown upon that branch of the service and the Camel Corps of the advanced party.

"The conduct of both these arms is reported to have been most excellent, and, whatever may have been said on previous occasions of the looseness of the ties between British and Egyptian soldiers working in a common cause, nothing could have exceeded the harmony which has characterised the relations between Major Flood's squadron of the 19th Hussars and the Egyptian Camel Corps under Captain Marriott. The officers who have had most opportunity of seeing the work done by the Egyptian Camel Corps are of opinion that their numbers should be very largely increased in any future operations that may be carried on."

The Egyptian Battery also rendered excellent service, and earned the warmest commendations from General Brackenbury. The camels of both these corps and of the Transport returned from Salamat in the best condition, although the ground over which much of their march lay was declared almost impracticable for animals of any kind. The General had an ample opportunity of judging the physical features of the country, as every mile he advanced brought into stronger prominence the great advantages won by striking at the enemy in rear of their entrenchments at Kirkekan; for, if we had made a direct attack then, and merely dislodged them, they could have fallen back upon the terrible defiles of the Shukook Pass, which they had carefully prepared for a resolute defence, and in that narrow labyrinth of rocks our losses would have been most serious.

To General Brackenbury the Canadians proved of immense service in the descent of the more dangerous cataracts, and his loss by drowning was only three soldiers—marvellously small when the perils and difficulties of these unknown rapids are taken into consideration. South of Berti, the natives of the
On the afternoon of the 5th General Brackenbury held a parade of all the troops of the river column for inspection. Although after the hard work of the previous few weeks the troops looked somewhat ragged in appearance, every man on parade was in splendid condition. After the customary inspection General Brackenbury made a cheery speech to the brigade, in the course of which he warmly thanked officers and men for their splendid behaviour under unaccustomed and trying circumstances. They would shortly separate for the purpose of going into their summer quarters, and he had called them together before they broke up, in order that he might have the opportunity of expressing his acknowledgments for their past services. “The way in which this brigade has worked,” concluded the General, “will be mentioned in his-
The officers of that force had interesting accounts to give of their voyage down the cataracts, particularly at that of Shaggiyeh, a portion of the Nile deemed impassable even for small boats. The entire course was full of perils, and the danger of wreck was ever present; but the risk was forgotten in the interest and excitement occasioned by the peculiar circumstances of the voyage.

The 300 whale boats, with their soldier crews, nearly all in scarlet tunics, swept down the Nile in seemingly endless line at the rate of seven miles an hour, sometimes gliding easily with the current in comparatively smooth water, and then swooping down a rapid with a fall of several feet at terrific speed. Those who, like the cavalry, from the banks watched the progress of the boats as they swept steadily over the calm flow of the majestic river, and then leaped down the falls one after another, said that the whole scene suggested the idea of a gigantic steeplechase by water.

The steering of these boats between the countless rocks and islets was admirably done, but one serious mishap occurred. A whaler of the Staffordshire Regiment, with wounded, as it neared the Gerendid Cataract, swung round and came to the fall broadside on by some mischance or mismanagement. It capsized in a moment, and three poor fellows were swept away before they could be rescued, but the rest were saved. Altogether the experiences of this voyage appeared to have made a vivid impression, which would not easily be effaced from the memory of those who took part in its perils and excitements. The natives along the banks supplied the column freely with fresh food as it advanced.
down the Nile, and rumours were heard that the Mahdi had instructed his emirs to prevent the tribes from harassing the British troops now, as he must eventually be victorious, and the sun would finish his battles for him.

On the 8th of March, Brackenbury's column came into the camp at Korti, and was sent, almost immediately, for summer quarters, to Tani, a small village four miles north of Ambigol, where he was ordered to construct a fortified camp. "They ought to make themselves fairly comfortable," wrote a correspondent, "as much of the country near Tani is under cultivation, and they will be able to obtain a good amount of grass and other fodder in the immediate neighbourhood. I was rather struck with Tani when I passed through the place last December, as it presents a pleasing contrast to the monotonous architecture of the average Nile village, in that it boasts of a romantic-looking castle, of apparently most venerable age, and a number of Arabic rock-cut memorials."

On the same day the Heavy Camelry, under Colonel Talbot, came into Korti. The men marched in, looking thin and worn, yet in good health and spirits; but the camels had suffered terribly. Of all those that went forward with the Heavy Brigade six weeks before, only four came back with them now.

On the 10th of March, the Guards, two companies of the Mounted Infantry, and two of the Sussex Regiment came in from Gakdul, so the work of concentration proceeded rapidly; and the Canadian boatmen remaining with the force were ordered to leave for Canada. They stated that they were willing to re-engage for service next autumn, provided they received double pay.

General Brackenbury's return seemed to indicate the close of active operations at that time upon the Nile, along which preparations were rapidly made for quartering the troops; while it was thought that in another quarter General Graham would ere long give a good account of that most troublesome person, Osman Digna, and open the first stages of the road from Suakim to Berber.

It was now evident that unless the Mahdi ventured upon offensive operations in the direction of Dongola, that the work of the Nile and desert columns was over until September, an interval in which the patience and endurance of both officers and men would be severely tried. "I have not been allowed to telegraph the information," wrote a correspondent, under date Korti, 8th March, "that, at least as regards the desert column, the universal opinion is hostile to a war of revenge; and, so far as I have been able to test it, the view of the river column is identical. Nay, I may go further, and say that there are not to be found, among the troops now on the Nile, half a dozen officers who are not opposed to the continuance of operations without the formulation of some definite and distinct policy to which the operations are to lead up. If to hold Berber is necessary to ensure a quiet Nile valley, let it be known; if to hold Khartoum,
let us say so. But to go and take Berber and Khartoum, with the idea of letting the latter into the hands of the Mahdi again, or of any other hands than those of British officers, is scouted as absurd. Every army likes to have some idea of what it is fighting for, and assuredly a tangible object is more than ever necessary in the case of troops exposed to such a climate as that of the Soudan in summer. The romance went out of the expedition with the fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon; and there must be substituted for it some object, the accomplishment of which will make life worth living for the next four or five months."

With this view of matters, Lord Wolseley would have to consider precisely what the Mahdi possessed in the way of military resources and material strength; and the following figures are beyond question, though at variance with one statement made at Korti by Khasm-el-Moos. The Mahdi took from Hicks Pasha seven Krupp guns, six Nordenfeldts, and twenty-nine excellent brass-rifled pieces, called mountain guns (though not of the class known to us by that name), with 500 rounds of shot and shell per gun. Of these he had thirteen arming the defences of Khartoum. From Hicks he also took 17,000 Remington rifles and 1,000,000 of ball cartridge. At Khartoum he took 12 guns mounted on the lines, mostly Krupps, and 6 Nordenfeldts. He got also 20,000 rounds of gun ammunition, and 2,000,000 of cartridges. When the city fell, Gordon had in it 2,000 black regulars, 2,000 Bashi-Bazouks, 2,000 Shaggyehs, and 600 of the people drilled, besides 1,500 whites. Eliminating the latter, the strength of the Mahdi was now increased by 6,000 well-trained fighting men.

If it was assumed that against Gordon, and against the Desert and Nile columns, he had expended all the ammunition taken from Hicks, he would still possess 20,000 for his artillery, and 2,000,000 for his Remington rifles, which had been increased in number from 17,000 to 40,000. Thus he had certain arms and ammunition enough to arm 30,000 men with 60 rounds each, and perhaps double that number. "We must not permit ourselves," wrote one on this important subject, "any illusions, therefore, that the enemy is likely to run short of ammunition for two or three engagements. No doubt he was getting short before he secured Khartoum; but now—!. And the worst of it is that, as the firing at Abu Klea twice showed, his men handle their weapons right well when in cover. If all these facts are not duly appreciated in Britain, at least liberavi animam meam."

In addition to the state of their boots, the troops had to complain of the quality of their bread, which was not made of the best flour, and was not even good of its sort. It was the poorest English flour, and "so old that the strength has gone out of it," according to a report, "and we can't make bread without mixing it with a large proportion of Russian flour." It was not so bad as
EVENING IN THE DESERT.
the flour which, according to the evidence before the committee in 1883, stood up like hard plaster of Paris when the sacks were opened; but the bread made of it became blue-moulded July, 1882, to March, 1884, the figures stood thus:

There died of wounds 46 British troops, and 17 of the Naval Brigade; there died from other causes, 766 British troops, and 96 of the Naval Brigade, and 9 of the Indian contingent. There were also invalided home from other causes than wounds, 3,939 British soldiers, and 417 of the Naval Brigade, and 49 of the Indian contingent. The totals killed were 205 British soldiers, 45 Naval Brigade, and 5 Indian contingent. Of wounded there were 677 British, 223 Naval Brigade, and
15 of the Indian contingent. One Indian was reported missing at Cairo on the 1st of October, 1884, and was never heard of again. At the bombardment of Alexandria (continues this return) 5 were killed and 27 wounded; at Kassassin, 16 killed and 162 wounded; at Tel-el-Kebir, 76 were killed and 387 wounded; at El Teb, 35 were killed and 155 wounded; at Tamai, 107 were killed and 116 wounded; while 16 were killed and 68 wounded under the general circumstances classed as “miscellaneous.”

Among the troops now coming to the Soudan were detachments from volunteer corps. The field telegraphists of the Army Reserve (late 24th Middlesex Rifles) were equipped at Aldershot for the Soudan. Including the detachment of the postal corps, then en route, and that at the front, the number of men supplied by it for the Expedition numbered one officer and forty-seven non-commissioned officers, rank and file. The Government sanctioned the application for the strength of the corps of field telegraphists to be augmented to 100, the recruits to be drawn from London, Edinburgh, Manchester, and elsewhere.

Two blockhouses, or bullet-proof sentry boxes, constructed by Messrs. Martin, Wells, and Co., were shipped at Woolwich for the Soudan. Each house was made of seasoned oak, 12 feet at the base and 20 feet high; each had two storeys, and 24 loopholes. Some of the hospital huts were also forwarded for Suakim, each to accommodate thirty patients.
CHAPTER V.

IN SUMMER QUARTERS ON THE NILE.


Meanwhile, among the Soudan fortresses, Kassala, which, at the end of 1883, had a garrison of 1,259 men, was making perhaps the most vigorous defence, on the 2nd of February, 1885, experienced a severe defeat at Koleia, involving a loss of twenty-six officers, and six hundred and thirty-two men, a serious aggravation of the situation in the Soudan, and recalling the characteristic words of Gordon to the Ministry, "I leave to you the indelible disgrace of not saving Kassala, Berber, Sennaar, and Khartoum!"

After a brilliant success had been obtained by the garrison over the Hadendowas but a short time before, it was hoped there would be no occasion for anxiety about Kassala, as the troops had escorted a convoy of provisions safely into the town, which is 280 miles distant from Suakim.

On that occasion the correspondent of the Standard wrote to the effect that:

"However brilliant is the success which the garrison of Kassala have won over the Hadendowas, it can only temporarily relieve the pressure upon the besieged town, and it is feared that its effect will be altogether neutralised when the news of the fall of Khartoum, which had not at that time reached the neighbourhood, becomes known."

This prediction turned out to be correct. The news of the fall of Khartoum restored the spirits of the Hadendowas, and neutralised the defeat they had recently suffered; and when the brave garrison of Kassala, relying on the effect of their recent victory, made a sally on the 2nd of February, they suffered a crushing defeat, and now began to despair. For a year they had by that time made a noble resistance, and defended the inhabitants, thirty thousand in number, against their enemies; but seeing that not a soldier had been put in motion to rescue or succour them, and that they had been deserted by those from whom they had a right to look for help, they might well lose heart, and follow the examples of the garrisons of Tokar and Khartoum by fraternising with the Mahdi, and adding to his strong and well-armed forces.

As spring crept on it was evident that help could come to them only from two sources, Italy or Abyssinia; and it was thought that interest and duty would urge John, king of the latter country, to save Kassala.

A despatch of the 7th March, from Massowah, stated that the Mahdi, who was threatening Keren and Massowah, was about to send emmissaries to the latter place; but Colonel Saletta, the
Italian Commandant, took precautions to prevent their entrance.

Early in this month we began to hear for the first time prominently of the Frenchman, Olivier Pain, whose fate made such excitement further on in the year at Paris; and a letter received by M. Henri Rochefort, from Frenchmen, and it is affirmed that it was agreed to place the sum of twenty thousand pounds in the hands of a certain personage whose name was not given, but who is said to have undertaken to have it safely conveyed to the Soudan. The money was to be provided as soon as intelligence was re-

one of his friends at Cairo, gave a kind of explanation of that adventurer’s presence in the camp of the Mahdi.

The object that this French Socialist had in view in going to the Soudan was—according to this letter—the liberation of those unfortunates whom the Mahdi held as prisoners. It stated that, before he left Cairo, a meeting was held at the house of one of the leading members of the French colony there. Those who attended were all received from M. Olivier Pain that the Mahdi had consented to ransom the prisoners.

It appears, however, that the Frenchmen who met thus secretly at Cairo were not animated by the philanthropic idea of paying the ransom of the prisoners themselves. On the contrary, immediately M. Pain applied for the money, they were to advance it, but at the same time were to telegraph to the leading French journals to open a subscription to pay the ransom of the
prisoners, and to assist them after their release.

The Mubashir at this time published two reports. One was to the effect that the Mahdi had given orders to remove his headquarters from Omdurman to Metemneh, Nur Angar, thanking him for the bravery he had displayed against the British. Simultaneously he had sent him 5,000 dollars, and appointed him commander-in-chief of all the troops

The following is an extract of a letter from the Mahdi to Khasm-el-

man to Metemneh, whither he would go with his household and staff before the season of rain set in, which is the second week of May, lasting till the middle of August, by which time he meant to have a bridge of pontoons across the Nile at Shendy, and both places strongly fortified.

The other was that the Mahdi had between the Sixth and Fourth Nile Cataracts, and ordered him to attack Korti; but the want of camels and other beasts of burden made him resolve, when the time came, to take the greater part of his troops along the Nile to that place.
Moos, when on board one of the steamers near Metemneh:

"You are aware that we have been trying to save you; but you are trying to destroy yourselves. You sent to summon the British, but should the British come and take you with them to Europe, Rome, and Constantinople, remember that we shall have the victory, as promised by our Prophet.

"If you live you will see the power of the Mahdi spread over all Europe, Rome, and Constantinople, after which there is nothing for you but hell."

When the Light Camel Corps came into Korti, under the Earl of Airlie, the men were marching on foot, the greater part of their animals having perished; the few that survived were laden with baggage.

A detachment of the 19th Hussars, in command of Lieutenant Douglas, came into camp. They had marched on foot from Gakdul, having no other means of locomotion. Their horses were either killed in the battles of Abu Klea or Abu Kru, or had died from exhaustion during the march to and from Metemneh. The Hussars had lost over forty horses.

The cavalry were distributed between Abu Gus and Abu Fatmeh, the object of this arrangement being to facilitate the gathering of forage for the camels and horses; for it seemed to be now distinctly understood that when autumn came, the expedition would once more move up the river.

Great things were expected as the result of the Suakim-Borber railway. It was supposed by some that it would exert a powerful influence in pacifying the Soudan; but there were not wanting those who predicted it would be a failure, and that the gauge which had been adopted was a wrong one.

On the 9th of March, accounts, through spies, came to Korti from Khartoum, stating that the Mahdi was suffering from fears of treachery among his followers; that he had doubled his guards, and gone to visit his father's tomb on Abba Island, 180 miles up the Nile, where, he declared, he received his first mission from heaven.

Then followed reports that the Hassaniyeh tribes were mustering at the Wells of El Kalar. They were not numerous, but sufficiently so to give trouble; moreover, they were persistent marauders, and had already rendered the Gakdul route unsafe to convoys without strong escorts.

On the 11th, the Heavy Cavalry, under Colonel Wolseley, left Korti, in whale boats and nuggars, for Abu Fatmeh, while the Guards and Sussex Regiment were ordered down the river to their summer quarters between that place and Debbeh, according to the correspondent of the Standard.

On the same day some Arabs, supposed to be those mustered at the Wells of El Kalar, or dervishes from Bir Sani, made an armed raid into the fertile valley of El Ghazoli, near Abu Dom. As it was a market day, the inhabitants, who are of the Shagghiyeh tribe, were nearly all away at Tangussi, a village some miles distant, so the raiders made a clean sweep of all the cattle and other booty they could collect.

On the night of the 13th March some natives entered the cemetery beside the camp at Korti, and, to the indignation of the troops, broke down all the crosses erected over the graves.
On that day a messenger returned from Berber with a letter to the military authorities from a high official of that place, stating that the people had returned from Gobuch, a village on the opposite side of the Nile, whither they had been sent to oppose the British, should the latter have advanced from Metemneh or Abu Kru. The rebel troops in Berber the letter stated to be only 3,700 men, with 1,000 Remington rifles and four pieces of cannon. It added that all the late Government officials were loyal to the Khedive, but could not escape. The inhabitants had heard of the liberal treatment of all natives by the British troops, and were tired of the rule of the Mahdi; and Mohammed Kheir, with his troops, had returned to Berber on the withdrawal of our Nile column.

Soon after a report was received at Korti that Abu Shama, a sheik of the Beni Shaggyeh tribe, who had property in that place, and who fought against the Mudir of Dongola in the preceding year, had been deprived of his command at Nasri by order of the Mahdi, and had all his goods confiscated for not having killed a messenger sent by General Gordon to the British headquarters in December. The man had been brought to Nasri in one of Gordon's steamers.

On the 17th of March General Francis Walter Grenfell left the camp to inspect the line of communications as far as Assiout, and was directed to assume the command of the Egyptian army at the end of the month; and General Sir Evelyn Wood was to command the troops quartered between Merawi and Dongola.

A slave girl in the bazaar at Korti was recognised by one of Gordon's soldiers from Khartoum, and, on being questioned, her story proved a strange one. She was the purchased slave of an Egyptian officer in the army of Hicks Pasha. After the latter's army marched into the interior, she remained in Khartoum, and dwelt there as the servant of the widow of Gorvenini Bey, who was killed with Hicks. When the town was captured she was robbed of all she possessed, and was carried off to the camp of the Mahdi at Omdurman, where she was sold as a slave to a Kabbabish Arab, who re-sold her to her master at Korti. She added that all the women and children were carried away for sale after the fall of the city, none but men being slain, and that the army of the Mahdi was now drawing its supplies of corn and food from Ghedari.

The special correspondent of the Morning Post wrote thus of the troops at Korti: "When the altered circumstances, since the Mounted Infantry marched out on the Desert Expedition, are taken into consideration, the aspect of affairs is wonderfully cheerful. The lively tone manifested among all ranks of the force is a most encouraging feature to note at the present time. Scarcely a single word of grumbling or discontent is heard, although, besides those who have been wounded while fighting in line, there are a good many officers, as well as men, in hospital from illness. Most of these are suffering
entire force. General Brackenbury's troops are now at their new camp at Kurot, below Debbeh; General Dormer's men are in camp at Tani, where huts are being constructed as rapidly as possible with mud, rubble, and grass matting.

Except for about three days a fortnight since, the weather has not been remarkably hot; the water of the Nile is good, and the camp is well placed in a position which is shaded and dry. It seems probable that exhaustion and anxiety of mind have been the chief causes of the troops having suffered in this way. During the months of hot weather the whole force will be inactive, and it may be looked upon as certain that many more will have to go into hospital, possibly as large a proportion as 25 per cent. of the entire force. General Brackenbury's troops are now at their new camp at Kurot, below Debbeh; General Dormer's men are in camp at Tani, where huts are being constructed as rapidly as possible with mud, rubble, and grass matting.
VILLAGE IN UPPER EGYPT.

(After the Picture by W. Genz.)
THE NILE AT THE HEAD OF THE GERENDID CATARACT.
(From a Sketch by the late Colonel Cooney.)
river, between Korti and Abu Patmeh. The ordinary pinnacles, on the contrary, are constantly running upon the many sandbanks which impede the navigation. All the remaining sick and wounded, who are in a fit condition to move, are sent down the Nile as quickly as possible.

The last batch of invalids left soon after under the care of Surgeon-Major L'Estrange.

On the 23rd of March Lord Wolseley reviewed the 19th Hussars, and afterwards addressed them, warmly praising both officers and troopers for their services generally, and the gallant way in which they had performed their arduous duties, and endured the hardships of the desert. He added that the ill-fated Sir Herbert Stewart had told him, after the battle of Tamai, the regiment was the finest he had ever seen, and their recent bearing had convinced him—Lord Wolseley—that this was true. After the review he took his departure to Dongola with his staff and the officers of the Intelligence Department.

Under date the 19th of March, a soldier in the Scots Guards wrote to his relations in Edinburgh thus, after leaving Korti for New Dongola:

"A great many changes have taken place since this day two months. Two months ago we gained the Nile after two hardly-contested battles, only to find ourselves too late! Now we find ourselves on the Nile again, but only to wait till the hot season is over, and then to do our work over again. Every one here is in very low spirits, except those who were not at the front; they are hoping now for a spell at them in the autumn. You would have thought us a curious lot marching from Abu Halfa Wells. Every man had had boots; some had no tops to them, while the most had the soles worn through; some marching with their feet outside their boots, while others, again, myself among them, contrived to make a pair of sandals and tie them to the soles of our boots, which managed to bring us down as far as Korti on foot. Our trowsers were almost as bad, all patched over with red and yellow leather. A sergeant of Marines who tries his hand at rhyme, says of us in a song, 'We are a ragged regiment now;' and in another he calls us 'The Shoeless Brigade.' It was a stiff march, but it was from the centre of the desert to our old friend the Nile. We left Abu Halfa on the 4th, and arrived at Korti on the 9th, having one day's rest on the way—that was ninety miles in little over four days, and on one pint of water for twenty-four hours. Lord Wolseley inspected us on the 14th, and, in his remarks, mentioned that he would make the regiment up to its strength again, ready for the autumn advance, and then we might look forward to 'a short and brilliant campaign in the autumn.' Very good look-out indeed! And we have not even got our old consolation—it is all for Gordon.' We came down the Nile in the Nile boats (whalers), leaving Korti on the 12th, arriving here on the 16th. I believe we stay here for the summer. We are not allowed into the town, so I cannot say what it is like."

With the arrival of the Mounted Infantry, the return of the desert column to Korti was completed. The most advanced post, we have said, was Colonel Butler's, at Abu Dom, with the Black Watch as a portion of his force. An equally advanced post was Handab, to be held by the troops of the Mudir. In ascending the Nile were three stations within a few miles of each other, Korti, Ambukol, and Tani; the first-named to be held by black troops, under Commander Baker, R.N., whose knowledge of the country and acquaintance with the language well qualified him for such a command. There a strong earthwork had been thrown up, which, if garrisoned by resolute men, might defy any attempt at capture, by Arabs at least. Ambu-
Our Positions on the Nile.

Kol was to be held by the Mudir's troops; but at Tani, three miles farther down, was the movable column under General Dormer, ready to take the offensive at any moment, should the occasion require it.

Tani, seven miles from Korti, is healthily situated on a bank of dry sand, some feet above the Nile, of which it commands a fine view for several miles. A lofty conical hill a mile distant from Dormer's camp afforded an extensive view over the desert, and on the summit of it he had posted an outpicket.

Debbeh was, perhaps, in point of strategical importance, the greatest in the whole line, and would have been held by a strong British force, ready for offence or defence, had not a long occupation of the fort there, and even the surrounding country by the troops of the Mudir, rendered it so foul and unsanitary as to make it impossible for any European troops to be quartered there with comfort or safety. Thus it was left to the soldiers of the Mudir, while General Brackenbury pitched his camp at Kuros (or Kurot), three miles further down the stream.

Like that of General Dormer, this column was composed of troops representing the three arms of the service, well provided with transport, and ready to assume the defensive, or change its ground, at a moment's notice. These two columns commanded the desert routes, terminating respectively at Ambukol and Debbeh; and as these are the points at which the main thoroughfares of the desert strike the Nile, the importance of holding them in force— not only in case of an advance of the enemy, but also as a means of obtaining intelligence from the interior—could not be overrated.

Colonel Colvillé and Major Kitchener, who were both well acquainted with the customs and language of the country, represented the Intelligence Department with these columns, and all were assured that any news that might be gathered of what was happening in the solitude of the desert, or on the upper reaches of the river, would be obtained by them and thoroughly sifted.

Abu Gos, near Old Dongola, but on the left bank of the river, was commanded by Colonel Wolseley; while at Handak and Bakri, the Mudir's troops, with half the Light Camel Corps, respectively kept up the chain of posts. The last station of the troops in this part of the country was Haffir, in a fertile and well-cultivated district above the Cataract of Hannak, opposite Tombos, and there the Heavy Camel Regiment, which had suffered most severely in recent conflicts, was to pass the summer months.

This brief outline shows the various points at which the troops were posted. Each camp was under an officer of experience, assisted by a more or less numerous staff, and the erection of huts was proceeded with rapidly.

And now to take it, as nearly as possible in chronological order, we may glance elsewhere at an event which made some stir in Egypt at the time—the arrest of Zebehr Pasha by a party of British troops at Alexandria on the
14th of March, 1885, and his committal on board Her Majesty's despatch vessel Iris, under sailing orders; an arrest due to grave suspicions of treason. A little later his son was also captured and placed on board the same ship; and it was expected that some serious complications might arise, as the Se-noussi agent, at whose house Zebehr was residing, was a French protégé.

At midnight two of his friends, and his steward, were likewise placed on board the Iris, which at once got up her steam for sea. Much excitement was roused among the natives by these arrests, the legality of which they somewhat uselessly questioned. It had been noted that Zebehr, during his long and frequent visits to Alexandria, had always, when there, resided with the agent of the powerful Senoussi fraternity. On the following day, 15th of March, the police succeeded in laying hands on Zebehr's correspondence with the rebels, including many letters from the Mahdi, the sons of Hussein Pasha Khalifa, and other insurgent chiefs—all proving incontestably his intimate and uninterrupted connection with the rebels, a fact which had come to be suspected despite his most solemn assurances to the contrary. The Central News correspondent added that "the prisoners would be conveyed to Cyprus, and kept there under a British military guard, as it is almost certain if they were confined in Egypt they would find some means of communicating with their friends, and the whole object of arresting them would be thus defeated. The arrests were made under no civil law, but through military necessity. I learn that Lord Wolseley himself arranged it. The arrests have
been in contemplation for some time past."

That obnoxious print, the Cairo Bosphore, had immediately in its columns a most inflammatory article, full of bitter invectives and inaccuracies, foremost among which was a statement that the Khedive, having been consulted prior to the arrest of Zebehr, refused to sanction it. This was alleged to be absolutely false, as the Khedive had no official cognisance of the matter; and it was now supposed that if any bad news came from the front, Cairo would be proclaimed in a state of siege. The following is the version of the affair as given by the correspondent of the Times, at Alexandria:

"Very many months ago I drew attention to the position of Zebehr Pasha, whose loyalty, or the reverse, to Egypt, was fairly open to argument, but whose power for good or evil in
the Soudan was unquestioned. In these circumstances the Government may have exercised a wise discretion, or the reverse, in refusing to send him there. But when once such a slight had been offered to him, it did not admit of a doubt that it should have ordered his arrest. In consequence of information received from Lord Wolseley, and at his suggestion, this step has now been taken. What amount of proof exists is doubtful, but it was generally believed that he has been long in communication with the Mahdi. General Lennox, who was on a visit to Cairo, was suddenly sent back. The secret was well kept. The military police waited near Zebehr's house, at a café opposite, and yesterday he was arrested as he was coming out.

"He appeared surprised, but offered no resistance, and was taken on board the Iris. . . . The measure strikes the observer as singularly energetic on the part of a Government whose few acts of energy have not generally proved well-judged; and seeing that the Egyptian Government apparently exists solely to pull our chestnuts out of the fire, it is a pity that it was not so used on this occasion. It is at least singular that the British authorities, who refused to try Arabi, a prisoner of war, should arrest and deport Zebehr without formal inquiry."

Another account stated that the arrest was made in consequence of some information that General Brackenbury's column had found among the enemy's effects a correspondence which compromised him; and this was the man whom, little more than a year before, General Gordon recommended so warmly as his successor at Khartoum—the king of the Soudanese slave-traders! A sketch was then published of him, and from it the following extract is taken:

"Zebehr, whose real name is Zebehr-Rahama-Gyimme-Abel, although a captive, has had more influence in the Soudan than any Governor-General since Gordon's time. He was the chief of the great band of armed slave-hunters who, spreading southwards from Khartoum, established their zeribas, or fortified stations, far down into the heart of the Niam-niam country. In 1869 Zebehr possessed no fewer than thirty of these stations. His power rivalled that of Ismail, and it was in order to crush a dangerous rival, rather than from motives of humanity, that the late Khedive despatched Gordon to the Soudan to wage war against the slave-hunters. The following description of Zebehr's headquarters on the Bahr Gazelle is given by Dr. Schweinfurth, who visited the slave-hunters' king in 1871:

"Zebehr had surrounded himself with a court that was little less than princely in its details. A group of large well-built huts, enclosed by tall hedges, formed his private residence; within these were various state apartments, before which armed sentries kept guard by day and night. Special rooms, provided with carpeted divans, were reserved as antechambers, and into these all visitors were conducted by richly-dressed slaves, who served
THE CAREER OF ZEBEHR.

them with coffee, sherbet, and tchibouk. The regal aspect of these halls of state was increased by the introduction of some lions, secured, as may be supposed, by sufficiently strong and massive chains. Behind a curtain in the innermost hut was placed the invalid bed of Zebehr. Attendants were close at hand to attend to his wants, and a company of fakirs sat on the divan outside the curtain, and murmured their never-ending prayers.

"In 1869, Ismail," continues the sketch, "had despatched a pasha with some troops to keep watch over Zebehr. The latter, whose zeriba was the headquarters of the wholesale slave trade—as many as 2,000 small slave-traders gathered here every year—resented the residence of troops, and, taking advantage of some dispute, contrived to kill them all, including their commander. From that time Zebehr was virtual king of the Southern Soudan. His ambition growing with success, he conquered Darfour, and was made a pasha; but as he was not made Governor-General of Darfour, he went to Cairo to plead his claims before Ismail. He took £100,000 with him to bribe the pashas; but Ismail refused to allow him to return. He lived in honourable captivity, receiving £100 a month, at Cairo, and pulling the wires of all rebellions in the Soudan from that day to this. A picturesque figure is Zebehr—tall, spare, and excitable, with lions guarding his antechamber, and his court filled with armed slaves—smart, dapper-looking fellows, supple as antelopes, fierce, unsparing, the terror of Central Africa; while around him gathered in thousands infernal raiders, whose razzias have depopulated vast territories. Superstitious, too, is Zebehr—for in his campaign against Darfour he melted down 250,000 dollars into bullets, for no charm can stay a silver bullet—and cruel and relentless as death itself. A word from him raised the Soudan in revolt against Gordon in 1878; and it was only after some fierce fighting that Gessi Pasha succeeded in breaking the back of the revolt. After hunting the slave-raiders like wild beasts, he captured and shot eleven of their chiefs, including Suleiman, the son of Zebehr. Hence the blood-feud between Gordon and Zebehr, which led the latter to refuse to accompany the former to Khartoum. The slave-dealers were killed in hundreds by natives whom they had plundered. Zebehr's letters were found, proving that he had ordered the revolt; but no action was taken against him, and he continued to live in luxury at Cairo. When Baker Pasha was organising his force to relieve Tokar, he asked that Zebehr might go with him at the head of a Black contingent. Zebehr raised his Blacks, and then the Anti-Slavery Society protested against his appointment as 'improper and dangerous in the highest degree.' Sir Evelyn Baring pleaded for Zebehr, but Lord Granville was inexorable. He wrote:—

'The proposed employment of Zebehr Pasha appears to her Majesty's Government inexpedient both politically and practically as regards the slave trade.'"
When Gordon went to Cairo he was assured that the then British ministry would not do anything to save the Soudan. Then it was he said, "Zebehr is the man to govern at Khartoum." He had an interview with Zebehr, in which the latter waxed hot and furious, and violently refused to have anything to do with General Gordon.

According to the Rassegna, an Italian paper, Zebehr's friends, the Senoussi sect of Mussulmen, which has its centre in Tripoli, were the most formidable among the allies of the Mahdi, and even the source of his religious movement.

But we may have more to record of Zebehr again.

ARAB WITH GREEN TURBAN.
(Highest type of Mohammedan.)
CHAPTER VI.

AFFAIRS AT SUAKIM, MASSOWAH, AND KASSALA.


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Following the shallow beds of the numerous watercourses or "khors," which carry off, in a north-easterly direction, the water flowing to the sea from the mountains during the periodical rains in summer and autumn.

The slope of these watercourses or khors is rarely deep or abrupt, except at special points, as, for example, the Khor Ghob, near which Tamanieb and Tamai are situated. This great khor is from 50 to 200 yards wide at the bottom, and from 20 to 60 feet below the general surface of the ground.

To appreciate properly the operations and the work of the troops in this campaign, it is absolutely necessary to bear in mind, not only the nature of the country, but also the style of warfare practised by the enemy, which consisted of long-range firing from cover, combined with desperate hand-to-
hand assaults from the bush, through and under which they could steal upon our troops unheard and unseen.

The defences of Suakim had now taken a final form. When on the ground, the Indian contingent were to form a camp on the extreme left, and the Guards another on the extreme right of the town, forming the outermost points of a semicircular advanced line of defence. These camps were connected by a curved line of redoubts 400 yards apart, and 1,800 yards distant from the inner semicircle of block wall surrounding the town itself.

All the Indian, and, it was proposed, all the colonial troops, were to be encamped to the south of the town, and the British troops to the north-west.

A soldier-servant was stabbed to death one night in the very centre of the headquarters camp, and the nearest sentry only discovered the incident by the victim staggering out of the tent wounded and bleeding. Yet the murderer escaped.

Early in February the hired Italian transport Gottardo arrived at Suakim from Massowah, where, on the 5th of that month, the Italian admiral on board the war ship Garibaldi had hoisted the Italian colours. In face of the determination of the Italians to occupy the town, the Egyptian authorities attempted no resistance, but contented themselves by handing in a stringent protest maintaining the rights of the Sultan—rights which seem doubtful, as in the seventeenth century Massowah paid tribute to Abyssinia, in the eighteenth belonged to the Sherrif of Mecca, and in 1814 to Mehemet Ali. These were, however, recognised by the Italians, who allowed the Turkish flag to float alongside that of Italy; but a battalion of bersaglieri and a battery of artillery were landed, and the town formally taken possession of. There was no excitement whatever among the population; while the captain of the French gunboat Renard, which had been watching Massowah, on seeing the proceedings of the Italians, at once steamed away to the Isle of Perim, which is the nearest telegraph station, to send the news to Paris. But the action of the Italians in the Red Sea had the tacit approval of Great Britain.

The former had no intention of interfering with the civil authorities at Massowah, but merely meant to occupy the forts conjointly with a small Egyptian garrison there. The occupation of the town by the Italians would have, it was thought, a decidedly good effect throughout the Eastern Soudan, and would materially strengthen our influence and position in that vast province, as the natives are scarcely able to discriminate between the different nationalities of Christendom.

Great interest was felt at Suakim among the British troops there, as to Lord Wolseley's answer to the Government proposal to open up the route from that place to Berber, and all were longing for action.

On the 20th of February Sir Gerald Graham was appointed to the command of the troops to be collected at Suakim; and his instructions of the same date from the Secretary of War directed him
to organise a field force, and to make such transport arrangements as were possible, to secure the most pressing object of the new campaign—the destruction of the power of Osman Digna.

He was directed to arrange for the military occupation of the Hadendowa territory lying near to the Suakim-Berber route, so as to enable the contractors to proceed with the railway which it was proposed to construct between Suakim and Berber. "In the Secretary of State's letter of February 27th, 1885," wrote Sir Gerald Graham, "my attention was again drawn to the necessity for rapidly constructing this railway. The direction of the works was to be entirely under my orders; their details and execution being in the hands of the contractors."

It will thus be seen that there were two distinct phases of the campaign contemplated after organising the force and its transport, namely, 1st, the destruction of the power of Osman Digna, and the clearance of the country for the line of railway; 2nd, the construction of that line, and the location of troops for its protection at selected points where the scorching heat of summer could be best endured.

About this time it was stated in telegrams that Osman Digna's forces were massed at Tamanieb and Hasheen to the number of 20,000 men, and that a great victory had been won by the struggling garrison of Kassala, aided by the Shukrie tribe, over the formidable Hadendowas, and Osman was said to have slain on the spot the bearer of the bad news.

Faruj Bey, then commanding in Kassala, was a veteran officer who had served in Mexico with Marshal Bazaine, and was a trusted friend of General Gordon. With his black troops he surprised the camp of the Mahdi's followers, under Sheikh Moossa, between Filik and Kassala, killing some 2,000 of them, and capturing a great store of the munitions of war. Moossa was slain.

Our friendly Arabs, under three sons of Mahmoud Ali, and 100 of the Amara tribe, now left Suakim in the Egyptian gunboat Jafferiab, for Sheikh Barghut, and soon after returned with 250 head of cattle, having killed sixty of the enemy and three camels.

The gunboat had been attacked by the Mahdists, who were beaten off by her machine and Armstrong guns. Osman Digna did his utmost to execute a night attack on Suakim, but H.M.S. Dolphin kept the electric light playing round the camp and position nightly, deterring such attempts, while Osman could not forget the damage done on more than one occasion by her long-range guns. One night, however, the enemy did actually approach within eight hundred yards of the Water Forts, and levelled to the ground some works which had been constructed during the day.

On the 24th of February H.M. troopship Humber, having on board Brigadier-General John Davis and 200 men of the East Surrey Regiment, arrived at Suakim. About the same time H.M.S. Cygnet arrived from Agig and reported that the Hadendowas had entirely disappeared from that neigh-
bourhood, thus confirming the intelligence that they had all joined Osman Digna, 200 of whose men made their appearance one morning on the hills near the town, evidently reconnoitring with a view to ascertaining if there were any signs of an intended advance.

The headquarters of the Brigade of Line Regiments to be encamped between the Water Forts and the lines of the 49th Regiment; while to the Cavalry, Artillery, Camels, and Hospital Corps were assigned positions in rear of the infantry lines.

The Brigade of Guards was to encamp on the line of the railway extension, beyond the lines of the Marines and 49th Regiment, their ground to be protected by the newly-constructed sandbag redoubts.

The Indian contingent was to be posted on the ground formerly occupied by the troops as they arrived should occupy the following positions:

General Davis now assumed the command of the troops in absence of General Fremantle, who had gone to Cairo, where a new corps of Mounted Infantry under Captain Freeman was being formed for service at Suakim.

The advanced detachment of the Surrey Regiment was placed under canvas on the right flank of the Water Forts, and it was ordered that the
RETURN OF FRIENDLY NATIVES TO SUAKIM AFTER A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK ON THE ENEMY
by the troops of General Graham's Expedition in the preceding year; while the railway navvies and coolies were to be placed near the cemetery on the plateau northward of the channel by which the harbour is approached.

Although Osman's people, since the arrival of the first reinforcements, had now relinquished their practice of coming down nightly and opening a rifle fire upon the town, they still exhibited wonderful pluck and audacity in creeping down the gullies, night after night, and attempting to destroy our defensive works in the course of erection, after the parties employed in their construction had been withdrawn. One night they succeeded in refilling a half-dug trench of the unfinished Egyptian work, and next night they would have been equally successful in the case of another unfinished redoubt which was being constructed by the Marines, had not Major Morris, who was in command of the working party there, prevented them by an ingenious stratagem. Aware that the Arabs kept a vigilant eye on every movement, an hour before sunset he marched a body of his men into the works as if to hold them for the night. After darkness fell he withdrew his men singly, leaving behind dummy sentinels, made up of sandbags, to scare the enemy. The ruse succeeded, and the works were found untouched when day broke.

"These incidents," said a writer, "although without the slightest practical importance, are yet worth recording, as showing the enterprise and pluck of the Arabs. Knowing as they do every foot of the ground, they are able to creep stealthily, with their noiseless footfalls, through our pickets, and upon dark nights it is impossible for our men, however vigilant, to detect them."

Many of our troops, now on their way to the littoral of the Red Sea, were ordered, it is stated, to proceed direct to Trinkitat, as it would be the basis of the advance on the road to Berber; and orders were sent to India for 3,000 additional camels for the Soudan; and these heavy demands on Indian resources were generally condemned at that time, in view of the critical state of affairs beyond the Indian frontier, towards Afghanistan.

Osman Digna having beheaded the bearer of the evil tidings from Kassala, the Beni Amers, the murdered man's tribesmen, sent him a message that they intended coming to Tokar to avenge his death; whereupon Osman seized and chained thirty head-men belonging to a neutral section of the Beni Amers, and held them as hostages against the fulfilment of the threat. But it was felt that however brilliant the success of the Kassala garrison near Filik, it would only relieve temporarily the pressure upon the besieged town, as it was feared that its effect would be altogether neutralised when tidings of the fall of Khartoum, which had not at that time reached the neighbourhood, became known. Moreover, the troublesome situation of the garrisons was considerably increased by the sudden and unexpected occupation of Massowah by the Italian troops, unless
the latter followed that occupation promptly by other measures.

Captain Herbert Charles Chermside, of the Royal Engineers (called Major and Colonel by various newspaper correspondents, though his local rank was Major), Commander of St. Michael and St. George, was then Egyptian Governor-General of the Red Sea littoral, and had entered into negotiations with the friendly tribes to furnish a great convoy of provisions, stores, and ammunition for conveyance to Kassala on the first opportunity; but the unexpected appearance of the Italians at Massowah increased the difficulties, as he could no longer speak with the authority of Britain as a paramount power. His measures for the relief of that splendid garrison were therefore at a standstill.

Kassala is the second city in the Soudan, and having then a population of at least thirty thousand souls, it was the keystone of the line of frontier strongholds, Senheit, Aradab, Ghira, and Gallabat, all of which were still resisting the power of the Mahdi. Kassala had by the time we write of been completely isolated for twelve months, and its garrison, increased to three thousand regular Egyptian troops and two thousand irregulars, had maintained a heroic defence, quite equal to that of Khartoum while animated by the presence of Gordon and opposed to a savage enemy.

Their supplies of provisions and ammunition were known to have been running short for a long time; and so great had the pressure become, that a short time before this, Major Chermside was prepared to despatch a reinforcement of six hundred men to the city. The commandant sent to beg him not to do so at present, as it was beyond his power to feed them.

Under such circumstances even such a victory as that he had won over the Hadendowas would do little to alleviate the position of the garrison; and it was already seeming evident that without prompt and efficient assistance the defenders of Kassala would share the terrible doom of those at Sinkat, Tokar, Berber, and Khartoum.

It was becoming clear that the relief of Kassala could be accomplished only by one of two alternatives. If, as was then said, a portion of our new Expedition landed at Trinkitat and occupied Tokar, a flying column could be sent south to scour the country, disperse and suppress the Hadendowas, while reopening communications between the border strongholds and the sea; or Italy would have to recognise the new obligations she had incurred, and, as master of Massowah, send a relief column to Kassala by way of Senheit.

The Italian commander sent 600 men as far as Bailur, and it was understood that another force was to be sent to Assab, a town on a bay of the same name, thirty-six miles south-east of the former place, and which has been erroneously identified with the Saba of the Axum inscription.

On the 3rd March the Condor arrived at Suakim harbour. She brought later news from Massowah. The Kassala garrison had not lost courage, although
Considerable gloom was now thrown over the camp by a deplorable accident that occurred, owing to the trouble which the natives gave by their nightly destruction of those works which our troops constructed under a scorching sun by day. It was resolved to give them a severe lesson, and accordingly they might have lost hope, for they had again sallied out and fought another battle with the Hadendowas near Amfiali. They retrieved their late disaster by winning a brilliant victory over the Arabs.

It was to be feared that these efforts were but the last struggles of despair, for the Emir of Kassala wrote to say that the whole population were now reduced to the direst straits, and that unless relief speedily arrived they must succumb to famine.

Ninety thousand pine sleepers were now ordered at Cairo for the Suakim-Berber railroad. On the 3rd the 15th Sikh Infantry arrived safely, but the steamer Sceptre, a hired transport, with a contingent of camels on board, went ashore on some dangerous coral reefs off the port, and sustained serious damage.

Two small mines were sunk outside the line of the advanced redoubts. Towards these they came as usual, intent on their destruction; but although they passed over the mines, the latter, from some unexplained reason, failed to explode.

Lieutenant W. B. Askwith, of the Royal Engineers, who had special charge of the mining operations, went out to make some alterations in the arrangements for explosion, and while so engaged, the mines—from some cause that
could never be discovered—went off, and he was blown to pieces. His remains were, however, collected, and interred with military honours, the General, the Commodore, and every officer off duty being present. The loss of this young officer was greatly regretted. He was remarkable for his General Graham had not arrived, and probably no battle would be fought before the middle of the month.

About this time there was a little fighting in front of Suakim. One morning a band of the enemy appeared within range of the camp of the Berkshire Regiment. Simultaneously their

zeal and activity, and took part in all the arduous and useful work which had been performed by the Engineer corps since the departure of General Graham's last Expedition.

The Sikh Regiment which landed was a body of men in the finest condition, and displaying splendid physique. They were received by General Davis, who complimented the officers upon their appearance. They expected immediate fighting, and were disappointed when informed by the Brigadier that movements were descried from the redoubt on the Hashien Hill, and a couple of rounds from one of the Krupps there put them to flight. The officers in this work now reported that from it they could see that Osman Digna was forming strong entrenchments and other earthworks in the vicinity of Hashien, though the mass of his men were moving towards Tamai.

General Graham was now at Cairo, where he was suffering from an abscess in one of his ankles, the result of an
accident he met with at Aldershot camp. Absolute rest was ordered for him for about ten days, and he was unable to attend the great military dinner given in his honour by General Stephenson, commanding in Cairo, which city, however, he left for Suakim on the 9th of March.

On the same day the 2nd Battalion of the Scots Guards arrived in the hired transport, Pembroke Castle, and were played into camp by the band of the 49th. Their tents were pitched in rear of the Coldstreams, and in their red serge tunics they outshone the khaki jackets of the latter.

At Cairo considerable excitement was now caused among the British officers of the police by the proposed appointment to the post of a sub-inspector. A short time before this all the British cadets, although thoroughly conversant with drill, and having acquired a certain knowledge of the language in the course of a year's service, had been discharged on the score of economy; and it was considered extraordinary that Nubar Pasha should propose to appoint, as an extra officer, a man ignorant alike of English, of Arabic, and of the elements of drill, his sole qualification being that he was a foreigner, and possessed great political influence.

The British circle at Cairo received a shock at this time when tidings came that Mrs. Valentine Baker, who was a favourite with them, had died of typhoid fever at Assouan, and been buried at Luxor. Considerable sympathy was felt for the luckless Baker Pasha, who within six weeks had lost both his wife and daughter.

Suakim harbour was fast assuming a crowded and busy aspect.

On the 5th March Brigadier-General Hudson, commander of the Indian contingent, arrived with his staff and a portion of the 17th Bengal Native Infantry on board the Indian Government steamship Clive. In short, in the early days of March the troops began to arrive in quick succession, and by the 12th of that month General Graham had landed a force of 10,482 officers, non-commissioned officers, and men. The work of disembarking the animals, supplies, and stores, the formation of camps, the completion of defences, the arrangements for the water supply, the general organisation of the force in every branch and department, was heavy and unceasing. A week before the above date there were only two or three officers of the Commissariat and Transport Staff, and very little transport; but a considerable accumulation of supplies, officers, and men, however, soon began to arrive from home, also camels from Egypt, Berbera, and Aden. The Government of India furnished large numbers of camels, with efficient drivers, organised in divisions under transport officers, and thoroughly equipped.

The organisation and allotment of 10,000 animals and 7,000 transport men, collected from various sources and nationalities, and of the general supply establishments for so large a force, was necessarily a work of great magnitude; but by the 18th of March both supply
and transport arrangements were fully completed.

The main difficulty of the coming campaign it was evident would be want of water. Here and there a well of brackish fluid might be found, and with labour the supply could be developed and increased; but such operations require time, and for a force moving quickly are impracticable. Thus it became a regulation that the water to drink would have to be carried for the entire force, and this entailed the employment of a large number of transport animals, which also required water to drink, whether that water was carried for them or derived from the scanty local supply obtainable at any halting-place.

A native woman who came into Suakim in the second week of March stated that there was a great scarcity of food in the camp of the Arabs at Tamai; that the sight of ships daily arriving in the harbour filled them with anxiety and alarm, and that the Amara tribe would probably desert Osman Digna on the first favourable opportunity. But the latter seemed to be preparing for eventualities, as about the same time a spy reported that he had sent all the women, children, and cattle into the mountains.

Hut-barracks for Suakim were now shipped off at Woolwich. These were formed of rough deals, and were somewhat similar to those in which our troops spent the Crimean winter of 1854-5 at Balaclava. These were afterwards re-erected on Woolwich Common, and ever since have formed a permanent camp there. The huts for Suakim were rectangular edifices, about 40 feet long by 20 feet broad; the floors laid on joists clear of the ground; the windows were glazed, and each hut was furnished with a stove, together with the usual barrack-room furniture. There was also a portable hospital, which folded up like a pocket-map, and could be entirely carried in one waggon. There was some doubt at first as to the effect of a hot climate upon it, but, with this reservation, says a correspondent, "the commodious and handsome pavilion which it forms is pronounced exceedingly well adapted for a base hospital."

On the 9th of March a party of Osman's men fired into the camp of the Berkshire Regiment and wounded three men. On another occasion they crept near the Sikhs and shot a sentry. "The audacity of Osman Digna's followers grows daily," said the Standard. "Last night a handful of these reckless Arabs, whose bravery commands admiration, made their way, under cover of the darkness, to the camp of the Berkshire Regiment, and actually succeeded in wounding three of our men with their spears. In an instant the camp was alive, and a volley was poured into the enemy, who fled on the first alarm. One of their number was seen to fall, but a subsequent search proved that his body had been carried off. The various camps, which are ranged in a semicircular form, are now strongly entrenched, and, after last night's experience, a guard of the strictest character has been commanded
and provided. I learn that the wounds which were inflicted on the three men of the Berkshire Regiment are of a very serious character.”

On the 9th of March the Egyptian troops received a general order to leave Suakim. Probably the commanders deemed them unreliable in action. On the following day the Grenadier Guards arrived in the Oriental steamer Australia, and nightly again the rebels harassed our sentries, on the 9th stabbing three Sikhs, one mortally, and on the 12th causing several casualties.

On the landing of the 9th Bengal Lancers (late 1st Hodson’s Horse), in blue uniforms faced with red and laced across the desert, their picturesque figures standing out against the glow of the western sky, was striking in the extreme, and excited general admiration. I heard many expressions of regret that we had not two or three regiments of Indian horse here a twelve-month since. Had they been here Osman’s hordes would never have rallied, and the present Expedition need not have been undertaken.”

Indeed,” said a writer, “the sight of this fine body of cavalry, as the turbaned horsemen, with their flashing lances and fluttering pennons, cantered

MOUNTED INFANTRY SKIRMISHING AT SUAKIM.

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Two nights after there was another alerte or scare in camp, when a body of Arabs, above sixty or so, crept near the General’s headquarters. What

The troops were getting now considerably exasperated, and a few hours after our scouts gladly and actively pushed forward in several directions to

their precise object was seemed uncertain, but their presence was discovered before they could perpetrate any mischief. A slight skirmish ensued, but it was soon over, as the guns of the Sphynx quickly swept the ground, yet Colonel Gordon’s groom and horse were severely wounded by spear thrusts.

obtain a clearer idea of the enemy's position, and, if possible, of their intentions.

They found them posted at Tamai, and, so far as could be judged, fully 7,000 strong. Smaller bodies were also seen in other directions. At Handoub there was a force of 2,000, and at Hasheen of 1,000, of these daring men.
The line to be taken by the intended railway was now distinctly indicated. This was the caravan route, passing through a part of the country which was inhabited by friendly natives; and the military operations would have been greatly simplified had Osman Digna's position and headquarters lain on this line. As it was, it seemed evident that our advance must be on Tamai, which lies in a south-westerly direction from Suakim; and when the task of overcoming him was accomplished, and the country cleared for the construction of the railway, a new advance would be made in a north-westerly direction.

"Early in March," says General Graham, in his despatch of 30th May, "the enemy had occupied the line of Tamai, Hasheen, and Handoub, south to north; but the main strength of their force was at Tamai, where about 7,000 men were reported to be concentrated. Handoub was subsequently evacuated by the enemy, and Hasheen became a position of some importance, as it threatened the right flank of my advance on Tamai. Screened by the bush and mountains, the enemy were able to reinforce this point from Tamai, and it was from here they sent parties to creep through the bush and harass our camp. During the first period, up to the advance on Hasheen on March 20th, the troops were subjected to continual night alarms. The enemy showed great audacity at this period, creeping through the advanced posts unseen, in small parties, attacking isolated sentries, stragglers, &c."

Subsequent to the brief reconnaissance which we have detailed, and which was made by the Lancers, three Bedouins belonging to the Amara tribe, a portion of which were friendly to us, arrived in camp at Suakim, bearers of a letter from Osman Digna to General Graham. The former now chose the time, when the British troops were being poured by thousands into Suakim, to solemnly warn their commander not to venture a step beyond his defences.

Osman's letter began by recalling the chief events of the Soudan war during the two preceding years. He recounted the defeat and annihilation of the armies of Hicks Pasha and Baker Pasha, the captures of, and slaughters at, Sinkat, Tokar, and Khartoum, with the retreat of Lord Wolseley, whom, he affirmed, the valour of the Mahdi had driven back to Dongola. After recounting these triumphs of the Faithful, he omitted all mention of the battles of El Teb and Tamanieb, but announced the fall of Kassala as imminent, and that the power of the Mahdi in the whole Soudan would soon be thorough and complete.

After this, he solemnly warned General Graham not to venture beyond the walls of Suakim, as certain destruction awaited him; his whole army would be driven into the Red Sea, none being spared save those who embraced the Mohammedan religion, and became soldiers of the Mahdi.

At the same time he sent by the three Arabs a letter to Mahmoud Ali, chief of the friendly Amaras then in
Suakim, ordering him to return at once to his allegiance to the Mahdi, whose victories now proved, beyond all question, the divinity of his mission, and threatening him with a terrible death should he continue to reside among infidels. He added that the British were doomed, for that 7,000 dervishes had arrived, and that he would "wipe Suakim from the face of the earth."

After this it could not be doubted that Osman Digna meant fighting, and was determined to oppose a desperate resistance to our advance and the intended railway; and it was certain that—to use General Gordon's phrase—Osman Digna would require to be "smashed up" before tranquillity could be restored in the Eastern Soudan, or any operations taken from Suakim towards Berber.

In reply to this letter, General Graham wrote, denouncing the barbarous war of extermination which the Mahdi was carrying on as contrary to all the teachings of Mohammed, the Prophet of Mecca. Great Britain herself was now a Mohammedan Power, and the war she was now waging was in no way a religious war, but was undertaken to restore peace and order in the Soudan. His letter concluded by recalling the victories of El Tec and Tamanieb, and he threatened Osman Digna with a still more crushing defeat unless he averted the blow by immediate submission.

The object of the British was to establish peace here, to maintain friendly relations with the Arabs, and to secure to them their just rights, provided they lived quietly, and respected all religions.

The General then goes on to speak of the submission of the hostile tribes. He says:

"You had better throw yourselves instantly upon the mercy of the English before it is too late. If your followers desire to accept this offer of peace, well and good. A perfect pardon shall be granted them, and they will escape from almost certain death. They should therefore instantly implore for pardon."

The Indian contingent were all now encamped on the left of the British, who visited them, especially the Sikhs, and expressed much well-deserved admiration of these splendid corps. One night was quite starless, when a strong gale blew from the desert in all directions. Under these conditions some anxiety was felt regarding the Indian Commissariat, which was left in the old camp, with 160 men, holding a large and irregularly-constructed redoubt, containing hay-trusses and grain-bags, and which would require a garrison of 1,000 men to hold it.

But the Coquette (screw composite gunboat) lay broadside on, ready, should an attack occur, to sweep the east face of the Commissariat Redoubt with her battery; and it was now found an awkward incident that there were in camp two sets of transport officers holding the same appointments, one appointed in India, and the other from home, superseding the former.

The stream of steamers was still pouring into the harbour from the
north and south, but owing to the excellent arrangements of Lieutenant Thomas Macgill, R.N., the harbour-master, and to the regular block system which he had established, the difficult operation of taking the great transports through the narrow channel, and bringing them to their berths alongside the quays in that small and crowded port, proceeded without a single hitch. Delays necessarily arose from the fact that the number of jetties was altogether insufficient for the large number of vessels that were then coming in; and the task of unloading could never have proceeded but for the excellent work done by the Royal Engineers in the preceding summer and autumn.

The immense value of the three jetties which they had constructed became more apparent every day, and General Greaves gave the Engineers no more than was their due, when, after inspecting the arrangements at the Quarantine Island, he said to Colonel Wood, R.E., "You have indeed done wonders here!"

But much surprise and some disgust were felt at Suakim when the Egyptian custom-house officials were permitted to levy duties upon the canteen stores of the officers' messes, and all felt that, under the circumstances of the Expedition, such unjust imposts should have been stopped.

At this time the scene at Suakim was described as being a very lively one. The plain round it was thickly studded with the camps of various regiments and departments. The work of landing stores of every kind went on hourly with the greatest activity; the harbour was crowded with ships, conspicuous among them being the great white-painted "troopers," and the streets were thronged with British and Indian soldiers, Arabs, and Egyptians.
A body of Abyssinian scouts (such as Captain Wylde raised in the last Soudan war) it was suggested would now be most useful, as they were accustomed to the tactics of that nocturnal warfare, which harassed our troops so much, as they could meet the Arabs with their own weapons, and would—when the advance against them began—be able to gain much certain information as to their position and numbers.

On the night of the 11th March, “sleeping in the open air,” says the correspondent of the Standard, “I was awakened by cries of ‘Murder!’ from the tents. Five shots followed, then confusion, muffled sounds, and afterwards dead silence. A few minutes later the Dolphin fired five rounds, and all was quiet again. A tragedy had been horribly completed.”

It would seem that a party of the enemy left Tamai the day before and passed round the rear guards or sentries of the camp, and, skirting the whole of the British force, reached, at last, the Ordnance camp, and then...
mustered under cover of a tent belonging to the *Dolphin*, a screw composite sloop, Commander S. M. Wilmot. This camp was situated on the shore, a quarter of a mile south from the *Dolphin*’s jetty, and open to an attack in flank. Although it was 1,482 yards distant from the nearest supports, no steps had been taken to entrench it, and it was defended only by a sergeant’s guard of twenty-five men of the Berkshire Regiment. The size of the camp was sixty yards by fifty, and there were only two sentries on each face of it. The electric light of the *Dolphin* could be used to sweep the ground around it, but as it was required to search the whole of the lines of the camp, it was of slight avail; and the guns of that vessel could not be employed to cover the camp owing to the position of the greater portion of it being beyond the line of fire.

At half-past three in the morning the camp was attacked by the Arabs, supposed to be about fifty in number. In the first place they were perceived by two soldiers who were smoking outside the guard tent, and saw them on the other side of the railway embankment, some sixty paces distant. They at once gave the alarm by firing on the Arabs, the whole of whom made a rush at the sentries on that side of the camp. Privates Randall and Prior, the two men who were posted there, fought desperately hand to hand with their assailants, but after killing three they fell under the sword cuts and spear thrusts of overwhelming numbers. Private Seymour also fell, terribly hacked, after having disabled one Arab, shot another, and bayonet a third. Private Russel defended himself with equal bravery, but his fingers were nearly hewn off while seizing and breaking a spear; and though brought down on his knees by a blow from the broken staff, he bayonet his opponent.

Some nine others of the brave Berkshire were wounded more or less severely, and the whole guard opposed a most gallant and desperate resistance to the odds of the enemy, who, on finding that they could not overcome the little party at the guard tent, ran “a-muck” through the camp, killing or wounding all they met. The struggle lasted seven minutes, and yet, during that time, the electric light of the *Dolphin* was not turned once upon the scene.

The enemy passed right through the camp, and then fled towards Handoub. As they crossed the line of railway the electric light fell upon them, but the *Dolphin* was unable to open fire with her machine guns because the camp intervened. Some rifle volleys were, however, delivered, and it was believed with effect, as by the light the enemy were seen to be carrying off with them the bodies of killed or wounded.

The *Condor*, gunboat, landed a party, which arrived too late to assist the defenders of the camp; but medical assistance was sent ashore from the ships. Private Saunders was found dead; Randall died a few minutes after being taken on board the Carysfort, and Prior died on board the *Dolphin*. Seven other serious cases were taken off to
the shipping, to be tended there, but several of the less severely wounded of the Berkshire remained at their posts. Many broken spears and poniards were found on the scene of the conflict. The Arabs carried off all their wounded and dead, save one of the latter who was found near the railway. Stains of blood marked the line of their retreat, and the numerous footprints in the sand showed that a large body of them, prior to the attack, had concealed themselves in a large unoccupied tent at the end of the jetty.

At daybreak they were still in sight, retiring across the plain, three miles distant, and the ships signalled at once for the cavalry to pursue them; but nothing was done until a quarter past seven, when the Mounted Infantry were sent out, too late to be of any service. Later on, as the enemy were still seen hovering about the plain, a troop of Hussars went galloping out, and after a slight skirmish drove them back to the hills. The body of the Arab found near the railway was identified as that of Abdal Ahad, the Lion standard-bearer of Osman Digna, who before the rebellion had been a dock porter. He was a man of giant strength and stature, and was, in all probability, selected as a guide from his intimate knowledge of Suakim. He was known to be a daring fellow, who had directed most of the harassing night attacks against the town. Next day the greatest activity prevailed in the camp, all the troops being set to work to strengthen their defences. "It will be difficult," wrote a correspondent, "to put them in a really defensive state, owing to the positions they occupy towards each other, which prevents any firing without great danger to friends. Another telegram states that every precaution has been taken against further attacks. Redoubts and ditches have been made round all the camps, and the sentries have been trebled."

Of the Berkshire guard that night six were killed and seven wounded, three mortally. The latter were horribly slashed and mangled. The Shropshire lost two men, and another was dreadfully stabbed, and the Surrey Regiment had two killed. The Indian camp was also threatened, but General Hudson had his front well protected. Criticism on camp arrangements was forbidden to correspondents.

Another account of an attack on the 12th March is thus given in the Daily Chronicle.

"At one o'clock this morning the double sentries in charge of the camp of the Shropshire Regiment discovered that about a score of rebels had managed to make their way unperceived to the rear of the camp, and to penetrate inside the position. Taught caution by the cunning tactics of the enemy themselves, the sentries quietly passed the word to the guard, who as quietly turned out, and hid themselves behind the tent, where they awaited the further movements of the rebels. Very soon, however, the latter caught sight of the guard, and with prompt audacity opened fire upon them, the first volley wounding Private Jukes. Between
the Guards' tent and the rear of the camp, whence the rebels fired, were several trenches and dry ditches; but these obstacles did not deter the rebels, who, nimbly leaping as they ran, made soon after buried in the sand. The whole affair barely lasted five minutes. Sergeant Purcell received a spear thrust in his thigh, Private Jukes had an elbow smashed by a bullet, and a cor-

![Map of the Environ of Suakim](image)

MAP OF THE ENVIRONS OF SUAKIM.

straight for our fellows at full speed. The Guards fired rapidly, but not very effectively, so the enemy got to close quarters. The Shropshire men, however, proved more than a match for the Arabs, who were soon driven off, some of them evidently badly wounded.

“One of the latter fell dead, and was порal had a narrow escape, a bullet striking the lock of his rifle as he was in the act of firing it.

“Although no more surprises were attempted, the enemy kept up a desultory firing from various points all through the night, worrying our men, and causing considerable excitement in the town. Just before daybreak, a
sentry on duty at the camp of the Scots Guards, thinking he saw an Arab approaching, challenged, and, receiving no response, fired. The man, who fell stone dead, turned out to be one of the sentry's own comrades.”

It had recently been observed that the enemy displayed a singular anxiety to recover the bodies of their dead. They charged a Sikh picket no less than four times to recover the corpse of one of their men, and on the 14th of March

Besides the men actually wounded, a sergeant of the Shropshire Regiment had a narrow escape. He was seized by the leg while entering a redoubt, but kicked the Arab over, leaped the ditch, and pulled in the plank by which the man had crossed. The most important feature in the night attack of the 12th of March was the use of rifles by the enemy, who hitherto had generally employed swords and spears only. There was a more striking development of this sentiment, when Osman Digna made an offer of money, and a promise that the night attacks should cease, if the body of Abdul Abad, his standard-bearer, was delivered up to him.

That night numbers of the enemy were discovered crawling all about the various camps on their hands and knees, and the desultory firing was more continuous and general than it
had been on any previous occasion. They attempted the Indian camp, but found the preparations for their reception complete. On the 15th the cavalry were out scouting without any particular result, but the camp abounded with anecdotes of the audacity and courage of the midnight assailants; and the friendly Soudanese who were employed on look-out duties near the redoubts began to do excellent service.

Next night at nine o'clock the outlying pickets sent in word that they could see several bands of the enemy creeping in their usual fashion towards our lines, so the Guards at once got under arms to receive them. Meanwhile some had crept well within range, and were seen by the Sikh picket between the Water Forts. The Indians at once fired a volley, while the fort on their right opened with its Krupp guns, which fired shell, and evidently with effect, as a subsequent examination of the ground covered by the enemy showed pools and gouts of blood, as if several had been badly wounded, but, as usual now, no bodies were found.

While the skirmish was proceeding in this quarter, our troops were engaged with the enemy almost all along the lines; but, save at two points, there was no fighting at anything like close quarters. A small body of the enemy had worked their way near the camp of the 5th Royal Irish Lancers, but were repulsed, and two of the latter were wounded.

On the noon of the following day the Arabs attempted a daring cattle raid in the face of the whole force, but the Krupp guns in the right Water Fort and those of H.M.S. Dolphin compelled them to retire without their booty.

Some curious rumours which were circulated that evening in Suakim seemed to explain the new and extraordinary anxiety evinced by the Arabs of late to carry off their dead. Horrible tales were said to have reached Osman Digna, of the customs of our Sikh soldiers in their dealings with an enemy, especially the slain. Among other things, he was fully persuaded that they were wont to cremate the bodies of their dead foes, and he feared that this had been the fate of the remains of his favourite and standard-bearer, Abdul Ahad.

"I learn on inquiry," says the correspondent of the Standard, "that there is some slight justification for the rebel fears; but they have no more substantial foundation than an idle threat made by some irascible Sikhs that they would burn the body of any rebel they might capture. The threat was bandied about the camps, whence it reached the town. It has evidently reached Osman too, which says much for his means of communication."

The total number of Indian troops in camp was now 3,000 men.

On the 17th of March the camp was re-formed and extra precautions adopted; thus, for the first time for more than a week, the night passed without molestation. The camp now consisted of three sides of a parallelogram, the right resting on the sea and the left on the town, following a line, east and west, from
the garden of Osman Digna to a point midway between the Water Forts, the troops being posted in the following order:

Facing south, commencing at the garden, were the 9th Bengal Lancers, the 28th Bombay, the 13th and 17th Bengal Native Infantry, and in rear of the 20th Hussars were the Mounted Infantry and Irish Lancers. Turning the angle and facing west were the Surrey, Shropshire, and Berkshire Regiments of the line, with the Coldstream, Scots, and Grenadier Guards. Turning the angle north were the Horse Artillery, more Mounted Infantry, the Royal Engineers, the Marine Artillery, and the Royal Marines.

On the 17th a strong force of Arab camelry and spearmen was seen in motion at the base of the hills. The cavalry engaged in scouting touched a large body of them, but, having orders not to attack, fell back—a movement which, no doubt, would be misconstrued by the enemy.

On the 10th of March General Graham ordered a reconnaissance in force towards Osman Digna's position. The Irish Lancers, the Bengal Cavalry, the Hussars, and Royal Horse Artillery were selected for this duty, which they certainly performed well. Several parties of the enemy were seen, one of some strength headed by a sheikh, but made no opposition to the movements of the troops, who returned to camp without a single casualty to report.

A good deal of grumbling went on in camp at the quality of the camels sent from Egypt. Of an entire shipload that came not one was sound, and nearly all were mangy; all were therefore sent back to Suez. Each of these animals cost £25, though the Berbera desert camels, magnificent animals, could be had for £20.

The first consignment of plant for the Suakim-Berber railway now arrived, together with a body of Messrs. Lucas and Aird's navvies. The line was to be of the ordinary full gauge of 4 feet 8½ inches, and its average length was to be about 280 miles. In a work of such magnitude and difficulty, to be accomplished in the face of an active enemy, nothing like an actual contract could have been entered into, and the position occupied by Messrs. Lucas and Aird was that of agents of the Government. The advance into the country and the plotting out of this wild and fantastic scheme was to be accomplished by the corps of Royal Engineers and a military force under an officer of high rank. The country through which it was to run rises gradually from the sea coast to Ariab, where it was intended to erect a fortified post of some magnitude.

As the military force advanced, the agents' navvies, having under them hired natives, were to make the needful cuttings and clearances, and lay the line in a substantial manner, at the rate of about twenty-five miles per week, if all went on favourably. As the line was laid, the constructors' locomotives were to traverse it, bringing on stores and materials. At this rate, it was hopefully supposed that this apparently unprofitable line would be ready
in about fourteen weeks, or, taking into consideration probable delays, it was expected that the railway would occupy in its completion about five months, and that troops and stores might be able to use it in autumn, or about July or August. The plant and material for its construction were to be sent out in Government ships in sections of ten miles, perfectly complete with sleepers, rails, points, and crossings. A couple of hundred of picked navvies and plate-layers were also to sail in a short time. The landing-stages which had been already erected by the Royal Engineers at Suakim would now be of vast service in the work of landing material. The route determined upon was to follow the line of several wells, at Handoub, Es Sibil, Tamai, Ariab, Bak, Abu Odfu, and Abu Takan, rather than running in a direct and more difficult line.

After the termination of the war, it was sanguinely anticipated that the line would possess very considerable commercial qualifications, and would, perhaps, lead to a trade of some kind. About this time we read that "private information had reached Vienna, from London, stating that a syndicate, or company, headed by the Duke of Sutherland, had obtained a concession from the British Government for the commercial and industrial development of the Soudan." It was further stated that "the Suakim-Berber railway would not be of the light and temporary character that it had hitherto been imagined it would possess; but, after Osman Digna and the Mahdi had been 'smashed,' would be ceded to the company in question. Sir Samuel Baker would be the moving spirit of the enterprise. The company, which had a capital of
RECONNAISSANCE TOWARDS THE ENEMY'S CAMP AT HASHEEN.
two millions sterling, would undertake to keep in order the country through which the line would pass."

On the 20th of March the wife of Sami Pasha, Premier of the Cabinet of Arabi, and then an exile in Ceylon, died at Cairo.

The ill-starred Arabi, in the land of his exile, had his eyes on all that was passing in that Egypt which he had fondly hoped to secure "for the Egyptians."

The Press Association published the translation of a letter written by him at Colombo, on the 2nd of March, in which he said:—

"I grieve with a great grief over the decline of the star of England, caused by her misdeeds in Egypt and the Soudan. But God has heard the cry of the oppressed, and the voice of the blood which has been shed, and the terrible cry of the widow and of the young children, and surely He has taken His vengeance on the covetous. Yet, believe me, the people of Egypt used to believe good of the English nation. It was they of all others that they trusted, as the foremost among the nations, and as the chief hope of those who sought to obtain their freedom; and they grieve now, seeing their belief a deception, and their trust a delusion. And what has England gained by her invasion of Egypt, and what in the Soudan? Rather let us say, what has she lost? For God knows she has gained nothing. She has lost her good name, the friendship of our Lord the Sultan, and of all Moslems. She has lost, too, Gordon Pasha, through acting on false counsels, Stewart, and Hicks, and Earle, and how many other officers, and she has lost the respect of all hearts by this war against free men in the Soudan. When will she cease to rush forward on her course to send armies of revenge on men who are themselves avenging their Egyptian brothers; on men defending their country, and who delight to drink the cup of death rather than that they should see an enemy left within its borders? I tell you fifteen millions of such as these occupy at this moment the Soudan country and Darfour, and all of them are partisans of the Mahdi, having made a convention with him unto death, and in accordance with the precepts of our noble Koran. Thus the Mahdi increases in strength with the English aggression."
The fermentation was spreading among the Mohammedans in various directions now, illustrating what General Gordon had predicted in January, 1884, that the danger did not arise from the Mahdi, or the chances of his marching northward, so much as from the influence which the spectacle of a conquering Mohammedan Power would exercise upon those Mussulmans whom Britain governed. Already had his success excited dangerous disquietude in Syria and Arabia, proclamations had been distributed in India, and placards had been posted in Damascus and elsewhere, calling upon the populace to rise and expel the Turks. Gordon had also predicted that, if the whole of the Eastern Soudan fell under the power of the Mahdi, the Arab tribes on both sides of the Red Sea would take fire. "In self-defence," he wrote, "the Turks are bound to do something to cope with so formidable a danger, for it is quite possible that if nothing is done the whole of the Eastern Question may be opened by the triumph of the Mahdi. I see it is proposed to fortify Wady Halfa, and prepare there to resist the Mahdi's attack. You might as well fortify against a fever. Contagion of that kind cannot be kept out by fortifications and garrisons. But that it is real, and that it does exist, will be denied by no one cognisant with Egypt and the East."

Mr. A. M. Broadley, the counsel for Arabi Pasha, in a letter to the Pull Mall Gazette of 24th November, 1884, also predicted something of the same kind. "On the 23rd of October, last year, I was at Cairo," he wrote. "It was the Moslem festival of the Kourbán Bairám. All Pashadom seemed ablaze with decorations and ribbons, and the Cairene world and his wife hastened to do homage to the recently restored Khedive, after the manner of the ordinary Egyptian. Late in the afternoon a telegram reached the palace. Its contents could not be long kept a secret; an hour after, everybody knew that the Mahdi had obtained a signal success in the Soudan, and that the rising he headed had assumed formidable proportions. In the evening I met Dr. Schwoin-fürth, the celebrated African traveller, in the historical verandah of Shepheard's hotel. He told me a great deal about his Soudan experiences, and insisted strongly on the importance of the news that had just arrived, and concluded by saying, in a tone I cannot forget, 'We have not heard the last of the Mahdi; in the movement he leads I see a danger to Egypt ten times greater than anything your
Korti, while the soldiers of the Mudir held Morawi.

Of the two movable columns formed to take the field, one consisted of General Dormer’s Brigade, comprising three battalions of Infantry, a troop of Hussars, and four guns, to be encamped near Debbeh. The other, of similar

The Nusret published the following proclamation, addressed by the Mahdi to the population of Arabia, 23rd of March, 1885:

"Before God and the Prophet, I declare that I did not take up the sword to found a kingdom on earth, or to gather treasures for myself, and live in a fine palace; but to bring consolation and succour to the faithful; to deliver them from bondage; and in order that the reign of the Moslems should shine forth once more in its ancient splendour. I am, therefore, resolved to advance from Khartoum on Dongola, Cairo, and Alexandria, and in each of those cities to hand over the power and government to the Moslems. I shall march from Egypt to the Land of the Prophet, to drive out the Turks, who govern no better than the unbelievers, and I shall transfer the country, with its two holy towns, to the sons of Israel. Be assured, O ye sons of Israel! that in a little time I will be with you, sword in hand.”

The headquarters were now to be at Dongola, but a considerable portion of the force still occupied the camp at

strength, under the command of General Brackenbury, to be posted between the Debbeh and Handak, while the Heavy Camel Corps was to be encamped opposite the Cataracts of Hannek—a district in which, according to Lepsius, a new Nubian dialect begins—and at Derr and Koroeko.

The steamer Nussif-el-Keir had now been stranded on a rock near Dongola, a somewhat unfortunate circumstance, as she had been of great service during the Expedition, and would have been of greater utility now that large
THE HEIGHTS ABOVE ASSOUAN, WITH THE ISLAND OF ELEPHANTINE.
quantities of stores were required for the use of the forces on the Nile.

At this time the weather in the camp at Korti was very hot; the thermometer early in March rose to one hundred and four degrees, under the shade of the trees near the hospital, while the south wind felt like the blast of a furnace. Sickness began to increase, and there was an outbreak of enteric fever.

On the 7th of March there were 236 cases in hospital, and many more were expected; it was becoming evident now that the boat work had taken a great deal out of both officers and men, and the former looked more fagged than the latter, and in spite of appearances refused to believe that the army was going into quarters till next autumn, extracting some grains of hope from Lord Granville's correspondence on the subject. Several copies of the "Blue Book, Egpyt, 1884," or "Further Correspondence respecting the affairs of Egypt," were in the camp at Korti, strange as it may seem; and these were handed about to inspire the home-sick with comfort; while even the chances of a war with Russia on the Afghan frontier were eagerly and hopefully discussed, so intense and universal was the desire of all to escape a scorching summer in the Soudan.

With respect to the correspondence referred to under date 25th March, 1884, Lord Granville wrote to Sir Evelyn Baring: "Having regard to the dangers of the climate of the Soudan at this time of the year, as well as the extraordinary risk from a military point of view, Her Majesty's Government do not think it justifiable to send a British Expedition to Berber." Again, on the 28th of March, the Earl wrote: "For a large body of European troops, of all arms, the military authorities regard the Expedition as impossible. The objections to sending Indian troops are no less considerable."

Yet, upon April 9th following, Sir Evelyn Baring telegraphed to Lord Granville that the revolt of the Mahdi was then so trumpery that 500 determined men could put it down. "Regret is freely expressed on all sides by the officers here," wrote a correspondent at Korti, "that this was not done, and that the troops, instead of wasting their strength and time in toiling up the Nile, were not sent forward, in November last, from Suakim to Berber," which the Daily Telegraph advocated as the easiest, safest, and quickest route.

Before leaving Korti for Dongola Lord Wolseley publicly thanked the Canadian boatmen for their unflinching and gallant behaviour in the whalers, and their loyalty. But the latter sentiment probably never entered the thoughts of nine out of ten of them. They were influenced less by loyalty than the desire for military distinction, and that craving for adventure which brought so many thousands of Canadians into the ranks of the American armies during the great Civil War.

Few deserved or won higher praise at Korti than the Camel Bearer Company, for their conduct when conveying the sick and wounded for more than two hundred miles through a scorching desert, almost void of water. Many of
the wounded were borne that distance in hand-stretchers by Gordon's black troops, whose behaviour was most admirable.

We have referred so often to the Desert, here and elsewhere in the Sudan, and even in Lower Egypt, that it may be now time to give some description of such a waste.

At the line where the irrigating waters of the Nile end the desert begins, and its limit is said to be as sharply marked as a gravel walk across a green sward. Ancient Egypt, we are told, was the granary of the Roman Empire, and the soil has lost none of its fertility; but all the vast spaces east and west of the valley of the Nile, between the fourteenth degree and the Mediterranean (above eight hundred thousand square miles), are desert. It would seem at the first glance to be utterly unfitted for the habitation of man; but as he continues to live and multiply amid the ice-floes of the Arctic circle, so he does here, in the rainfall, barren, and torrid zone. He who has never travelled through the desert (according to a recent writer on the subject) can form no just idea of that strange wondrous region, in which all the ordinary conditions of human life are completely changed.

It is essentially a waterless land, without rivers or rivulets, and almost without springs; once away from the Nile, the only supply is derived from deep wells, few, scanty, and far apart. "When I explored the great Arabian Desert, between the Nile and the Red Sea, it had not rained for three years," he continues, "and when I travelled over the Suakim route and through Kordofan no rain had fallen for two years. Between the twenty-ninth and the nineteenth degrees of latitude it never rains at all; and water becomes precious beyond the conception of those who have never known its scarcity. Members of the Catholic Mission at El Obeid assured me that the summer before, water had been sold as high as half a dollar a gallon by the proprietors of the few wells that had not dried up. When long droughts occur the always scanty crop of arvra fails away from the Nile, and the greater part of the flocks and herds, and a considerable part of the population, perish."

Colonel Colborne tells us in his work, that in the region of loose sand dunes, called by the Arabs the "Devil's Sea," a whole company of soldiers perished of thirst.

"It follows naturally that when undertaking a journey through the desert, the paramount subject is water, which is usually carried in goat-skins, suspended from the pack-saddle of the camel. These are the water bottles of the Scriptures; they become leaky from wear, and always lose a portion of their precious contents by evaporation.

"The first thing after reaching a well is to ascertain the quantity and quality of its water. As to the former, it may have been exhausted by a preceding caravan, and hours may be required for a new supply to ooze in again. The quality of the desert water is generally bad, the exception being when it
becomes worse, though long custom enables the Bedouins to drink water so brackish as to be intolerable to all except themselves and their flocks. Well do I remember how at each gorges where the sun never penetrates. The desert would be impassable without the camel. He was created for it. His broad soft foot enables him to traverse deep sands where the horse would sink.

The best water is found in natural rocky reservoirs, or in deep narrow wells the first skinful was tasted all round as epicures sip rare wines. Great was the joy if it was pronounced moga helwa, ‘sweet water;’ but if the Bedouins said moosh tayib, ‘not good,’ we might be sure it was a solution of Epsom salts.”

The best water is found in natural rocky reservoirs, or in deep narrow gorges where the sun never penetrates. The desert would be impassable without the camel. He was created for it. His broad soft foot enables him to traverse deep sands where the horse would sink.
COLONEL FRED BURNABY.
(From the Photograph by R. W. Thrupp, Birmingham.)
RIDE THROUGH THE DESERT (LOWER EGYPT).
The great desert, says Cushing, which occupies so much of Northern Africa, is composed of coarse quartzose sand, abounding in some parts with shells, or siliceous pebbles and shingle, and everywhere full of salt. In some parts the sand is soft and shifting, so that the foot sinks at every step; in others it is hardened into a sort of gravel, over which car wheels move easily. There are spots in it, few and far between, where springs rise, and around these palm trees, acacias, and small oases of cultivation are found; but again, for many hundreds of miles, it is arid and sterile, with only here and there a few patches of prickly plants, around which small hillocks of sand gather. "Thus," he continues, "on the way from Cairo to Suez, a journey of eighty-four miles, there is only one solitary gum-tree standing about midway between. In these immense plains of sand, you have the vastness and sublimity of the ocean, with additional sensations of solitude from the silence which prevails. . . . But the clearness of the sky, which aggravates the heat of the sun by day, renders the night sky unspeakably beautiful, and that is the time for the traveller to make his way over the desert."

Meanwhile, though the general face of the sand is level, the desert contains many lofty mountains of varied formation and character; and its outline is modified by rivers and seas. It is to the fact of the confluence, in the interior of Africa, of sundry mountain streams into one great river, the Nile, and the association of that river with certain ranges of mountains along the desert, that the land of Egypt owes its existence. Its animal and vegetable life, its productions and monuments, may all be regarded as the joint product of the desert and the Nile.

It is difficult, says Mr. St. John, to convey any correct idea of those desolate and barren wastes that border on the valley of the Nile. "But the face of the desert is singularly diversified," he adds. "Arid it no doubt is, and, to many, gloomy and dispiriting, suggesting ideas of death, which are certainly, in most cases, unwelcome. Yet this is by no means the effect which it generally produces, since the Bedouins are, beyond most other nations, gay and cheerful; and in my own case, never were my spirits more light, my fancy and imagination crowded with more pleasurable images, than when riding on a fleet dromedary across the sands or through the stony valley of the Libyan Desert, amid the refreshing breezes of the morning."

Elsewhere he speaks of the mirage, or, as the Arabs call it, the Goblin of the Desert, when their eyes are deluded by the motion of waves, tall palms and trees tossing their branches in the distance where the sand alone lies; "an evil spirit that beguiles the wanderer, and mocks him with a false show of what his heated brain paints in glowing colours."

But the sense of vision is not the only one which the mysterious desert mocks with fantastic tricks, for the author of "Eothen," in his experiences of Eastern travel, tells us on the
fifth day of his journey from Gaza to Cairo, of strange sounds that floated through the waste. The sun growing fiercer and fiercer, shone through floods of light "more mightily than ever on me he shone before, and as I drooped my head under his fire, and closed my eyes against the glare that surrounded me, I slowly fell asleep, for how many minutes or moments I cannot tell, but I was gently awakened by a peal of church bells—my native bells—the innocent bells of Marlen, that never sent forth their music beyond the Blaygon Hills. My first idea was that I still remained fast under the power of a dream, ... but it seemed to me that about ten minutes passed before the bells ceased. I attributed the effect to the great heat of the sun, the perfect dryness of the clear air through which I moved, and the deep stillness of all around me. It seemed to me that these causes, by occasioning a great tension and consequent susceptibility of the hearing organs, rendered them liable to tingle under the passing touch of some mere memory that must have swept across my brain in a moment of sleep."

Such is the Desert.

That there was much weariness and discontent in the camps at Korti, Dongola, and elsewhere up the Nile, the following letter from an officer may serve to show:—

"They are supposed to be going to build straw huts for us, but these are not begun yet. The sun is most frightfully hot, and the tents we have are really unbearable in the day-time. The thermometer was a hundred and twelve yesterday in the tents, and this is only March. We have nothing to read and nothing to do all day. They have stopped the parcel and newspaper post, and we are only to get one newspaper a regiment. We all want things badly, and, by the parcel post being stopped, we can get nothing. The men have no clothes except the rags they started in, and there are none for them. I wonder if no one at home will stand up for the wretched troops, as against the cruelty with which they are treated by being kept up in this awful country for the summer. It seems as if the country had no feeling for us, who have gone through all the toil and hardships of this Expedition; numbers are dying even now, though they send the sick off every day. It really seems a disgrace to the nation to treat the troops who have worked so hard for it in this way."

We should have mentioned in its place that three months before the camps were formed at Korti and Dongola, the Cameron Highlanders were marched to Korosko on the Nile, a town embosomed among mountains, to check any possible advance of the enemy across the desert in that direction, and with the object of opening the road as soon as General Earle's column reached Abu Hammed; while Major Rundle, with several hundred camels, was quite ready to move up the supplies; and the battalion, though far below its proper strength (having no other linked with it to draw from), was burning with the desire to do
something worthy of its name and its gallant old colonel, Macdonald Leith, a veteran of the Crimean and Indian wars, when news reached them that Brackenbury had been recalled while his column was actually in sight of Abu Hammed.

But Major Rundle had not waited to explore the road for the advance of the ill-fated Earle, for even before the column of the latter had made any appreciable movement, he had gone by the caravan route from Korosko to a point about twenty miles from Abu Hammed. The famous well of Morad, mid-way, he found to be, as the best authorities now described it, so bad that the water of it sickened his camels; but he found some "pockets" of water similar to those our troops had used at Gakdul and the Dog's Tooth on the Bayuda Desert route. He reported that a thousand men and a thousand camels would exhaust the entire supply of good water; so that, if ever we were compelled to use this route, which turns most of the upper and lower series of cataracts, we would have to carry water for ten days at every trip of a convoy; and, even at the lowest possible rate of consumption, this meant a proportion of one camel to every six men of the force alone.

Major Rundle's great enterprise on this occasion deserved a better fate than to be wasted. The mention of this road (says the correspondent of the Daily Chronicle) "leads me to ask..."
whether it has ever occurred to anybody in Britain to consider the inevitable effect upon the Soudan and Lower Nubia, and even Upper Egypt, of the opening up of a railway to Berber. In the first place it will entirely destroy the transport trade from and to the Soudan by the river route, and will quite useless, while even the line from Cairo to Assiout will have no small portion of its trade taken from it. Indeed, there is between Abu Hammed and Assouan no local export trade whatever, with the exception of a little gum arabic, that is to say, the country barely feeds itself, and it is scarcely too

drive into pauperism or migration the vast population that now, between the Upper Cataracts and Assiout, gains the main part of its living by working the nuggars and dahabeahs, which are now nearly all taken up by the Government. The towns, such as they are, of Abu Hammed, Merawi, Debbeh, Handak, Dongola, Derr, and Assouan, will be ruined, the Wady Halfa railway, and that at the First Cataract, will be much to predict that the effect of the Berber-Suakim railway will be to drive all but the mere agriculturists from the Nile valley over ten degrees of latitude. In other words, this vast stretch of country will, by the operation of tapping the Soudan trade at Berber, relapse into simple barbarism, and be even more useless to Egypt or to any other power than it is at present."

1ST LIFE GUARDS (CAMEL CORPS) BUILDING THEIR SUMMER HUTS ON THE NILE (PUTTING MATTING ROUND THE FRAMES).
As it was relinquished, despite all the enormous expense that had been incurred, the effects of the proposed line were, of course, never tested.

History being said to reproduce itself, it is curious to note that the task assigned to Lord Wolseley, that of establishing some solid government in the Soudan to prevent attacks on Egypt, was in some sense put in practice in the third century by the Emperor Diocletian, who punished the cities of Alexandria and Coptas for rebelling against him. He handed over the whole country south of the Soudan to the fierce tribe of the Nobatæ, on the condition that they should protect the frontier of Egypt from the attacks of tribes farther south; and they performed this service for three centuries.

Prior to the battle of Abu Klea there occurred one of the most melancholy events of the campaign, which was scarcely noticed in the newspapers at home—the fate of Captain W. H. Gordon, of the 3rd or Militia battalion of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, an enthusiastic soldier, who, serving as a volunteer in the Ashanti campaign, did such excellent work on the line of communications, that he was appointed by Lord Wolseley (then Sir Garnet) to a post in the Coast Police, with which he distinguished himself till struck down with fever. In 1876 he went to Servia and assisted Dr. Humphry Sandwith, C.B. (of Kars), in the distribution of aid to the sick and wounded, and the Servian refugees from Bosnia, for which he received from Prince Milan the golden Cross of the Takovo.

In the following year he did some similar humane work at Bucharest; and when we took Cyprus he was appointed by General Wolseley to a post in the island, from whence he got leave to proceed to Ismaïlia in 1882, but failing to get employment in the army, he returned to his post at Cyprus, where he remained for nearly two years longer. At the beginning of the Soudan war he went to Dongola as the representative of a Telegraph Agency, and subsequently to Korti as a correspondent. Resolving to accompany the desert column he unfortunately did not leave with it, but attempted to go on with Colonel Burnaby afterwards.

They missed each other, and some days after he was overtaken, in a perishing condition, with his Greek servant and two camels, at a considerable distance from the Gakdul track, and without water. His immediate wants were supplied by Lieutenant Douglas, of the Cameronian Fusiliers, then attached to the 19th Hussars; and by that officer he was put in the right track of the column, but from that moment was never heard of again. His servant, camels, and baggage also disappeared. For a long time his comrades, hoping against hope, thought he might turn up among the Kabbabish tribe—a vain expectation. Whether he was murdered by some of the many marauders who hovered about the Dog's Tooth Pools, or perished by the horrors of thirst in the desert, can never be known now.

"Captain Gordon," says the Daily
Chronicle correspondent, "was a man of considerable accomplishments, had contributed sketches to the Graphic, and when leaving Korti was commissioned to send sketches to the Pictorial World. His fate must appear to every one at home, as it has here, far more lamentable than if he, like Cameron and Herbert, had been slain in open battle."

At this time, when our troops were at Korti, Dongola, and elsewhere, the Nile was presenting some curious problems. It was already fordable at Kostambi, where it cannot be usually crossed on foot earlier than May; and at Kodokol and Rumi island, near Dongola, the sand-banks lay entirely across the bed of the stream, leaving a space not fifty yards wide, and not six feet deep, with a current of three miles an hour. Thus it was difficult to account for the volume of water careering past New Dongola, Abu Fatmeh, Korosko, Assouan, and Cairo.

"The disappearance of the water that passes Kodokol," wrote a correspondent, "would, one is inclined to think, be accounted for, long before it got a hundred miles, by evaporation, and the continual drain day and night of irrigation by water-wheels, which are sometimes to be found on both banks to the number of eighty in a mile."

Commander Poore, R.N., who had ample means then of studying the Nile, from the sea to the Gerendid Cataracts, had a theory that the river is copiously fed by great springs in its bed near the Cataracts. Certain such springs were visible above Semneh, in what is named the Wady Atireh Cataract. Others asserted that the wadis were underground rivers that rose and fed the great stream beneath its surface.

On the 20th of March it was reported at Korti by natives that the enemy were gathering at Berti, and strengthening the position by loopholing the walls and digging rifle pits. They were also stated to be raising works in the formidable Shukuk Pass, and on that day, as all the British troops at Korti were to be removed to Dongola, Captain Childers of the Royal Engineers went thither to prepare their quarters, though Commander Baker, R.N., was to remain in command of General Gordon's Soudanese troops.

Meanwhile the Mudir of Dongola was gathering forces at Handak, for the purpose of attacking the Hassaniyeh tribe.

On the 20th a messenger arrived at Korti from Omdurman with the intelligence that the new Mahdi had appeared—a holy man named El Senoosi, a native of Darfour, a small state in tropical Africa, 345 miles long by 230 in breadth. He boldly announced to the people that Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin, the so-called Mahdi, was a false prophet, and disobeyed the laws of their faith. The messenger added the old Mahdi was now at bitter enmity with Khalifa Abdullah, his principal chief, and had superseded him in command by his own uncle; and that, in consequence of this step, the Baggaras had left him. There was some indignation excited in his army from the fact of the spoil taken in Khartoum
being small, and what there was of it the Mahdi had conveyed to his old residence, the Island of Abba, in the Nile, while food was so scarce in the fallen city that the people were fain to fell palm-trees and eat the pith.

At this date we find the name of Olivier Pain, the Communist, cropping up again. The French Ministerial journal *Paris* of 20th March, commenting on the alleged reward offered for Olivier Pain, called it a "monstrous violation of the rights of nations," and added "that all honest people must hope that he will escape the paid assassins of Queen Victoria."

The Ministerialists all took the part price, as it were, on the head of a Frenchman. Such a piece of impertinence, we were told, was a flagrant violation of international law, and would never be committed by French officers. And it was now asserted that the French in Madagascar were harassed by an Englishman named Colonel Willoughby, while an ex-officer of our Royal Engineers from Woolwich was teaching the Chinese
how to make entrenchments at Tonquin.

Nothing fresh, however, had been heard about the Mahdi's supposed French adviser or adherent, and the virulent M. Henri Rochefort happily became silent about him for a time.

The Armour Packing Company of New York were now unable to fulfil within the prescribed time a further order from the British War Department.

On the 27th of March the last detachment of British troops quitted the camp of Korti for that of Dongola, a town which Ogilby in his "Africa," folio 1670, on the authority of Les Africanus, calls the capital of Nubia, "but very meanly built" in those days. The preceding day Lord Wolseley had inspected General Dormer's command, with the defences and huts, and then returned to Dongola, via General Brackenbury's camp at Kurot, of ten thousand cases of canned meat for our troops in the Soudan, but another firm in Chicago received orders to provide immediately 4,000,000 lbs. of tinned beef for the same purpose.

A messenger now came to Korti reporting that the Shukoorieh, a large tribe inhabiting the country between the Blue Nile and the Atbara River, had flatly refused to obey the orders of Mohammed el Kheir to oppose the expected British advance to Berber.
Further tidings came to Dongola of a rising against the Mahdi in Kordofan, where several tribes had pronounced for El Makkī, a new preacher of the Khattomea sect (which takes its name from the burial place of Sidi Hussein, a much venerated saint) who had slain the Emir Mahmoud, a relative of the Mahdi. This Emir was said to have put Slatin Bey to death for having held communication with General Gordon during the siege of Khartoum.

On the way from Korti Lord Wolseley inspected all the newly-formed camps on the Nile, and found the country quiet, the people friendly, and willing to supply provisions for money; but the river was low, the navigation difficult, and the weather very hot, as the Kramseen wind had begun to blow.

On the 30th March Lord Wolseley took his departure from Dongola to Cairo with his personal staff, consisting of Colonel Grove, Zohrab Bey, Captain Adye, and Dr. Pratt, mounted on camels, while Lord Charles Beresford and Major Creagh were to proceed by whale boat to Wady Halfa, from whence the party was to sail in the Water Lily on the 7th April, via Assouan, for Cairo, in consequence of orders from the Home Government, which did not then transpire.

On the 31st the Mudir of Dongola received intelligence that his troops had an engagement with the Hassaniyeh tribe (against which he had mustered them) near the Hannak Mountain, and had killed and captured a number of the enemy, with some of their cattle.

During the Crimean campaign the majority of letters about the war ("Voices from the Banks," as they were entitled when published in a volume) were from Englishmen, but during that in Egypt the majority seem to have been from Scotsmen. Of the latter we here select two, as descriptive of camp life in the Soudan. Private Whytock, of the Black Watch, then in Brackenbury's column, wrote thus to his parents in Dundee:

"Camp, Murawi, March 21st, 1885.

"Dear Father and Mother,—I have great pleasure in writing you, and to be able to say that I am well, as this is the first opportunity I have had of writing home for a very long time. We have had sad knocking about since we went up the Nile; certainly the hardest campaigning I ever experienced. However, I hope the worst is now over. I suppose you have seen in the papers all about the battle we had at Kirbakan. It lasted four hours and three-quarters. I had my helmet shot right through in that affair, and got a spear-thrust through my bullet-pouch. If spared to come home, I intend to preserve the helmet as a memorial of my narrow escape from death. We had nine men killed and thirteen wounded. I thought my last day had come, but I am still alive and well, thank Providence. I know how anxious you must all have been, especially my mother. I am sure she would be uneasy about so much delay in getting direct word.

"The fellows who brought your last letter across the desert on camels were waylaid, and had everything taken from them by the Arabs. Here we are very hard up for almost everything; it has taken me three days begging all round the camp to get this scrap of paper on which to write home. We have come down the Nile from Abu Hammed about 200 miles from Khartoum. We were too late to relieve Gordon, but, by way of avenging the death of Colonel Stewart, we have had plenty of work to do in destroying the mills and villages, &c., of the enemy. I was in the house where he was killed, and saw his steamer, riddled with as many shot as there are days in the year."
LETTERS FROM THE FRONT.

"We are, as I said, in great want of supplies of all sorts, and I hope they will soon be brought forward. Both officers and men are almost naked for want of clothes. I have no shoes nor trousers, and only one shirt. It is a mercy that we are not in a cold country, or we should all perish. On the contrary, the heat now is something terrible, especially from noon to about 3 p.m.

"We are all as busy as bees at present, and are earnestly hoping that we will get into more comfortable quarters before the hottest time of the year, or the regiment will get quite knocked up. This is by the first mail for the last two months."

The other letter, from a Cameron Highlander, was addressed to the editor of the Dundee Journal, and ran thus:

"Sir,—During the present state of affairs in the Soudan, when the smallest piece of information regarding it is eagerly scanned, perhaps a few remarks on our camp life may prove interesting to many who have sons or husbands engaged in this campaign.

"The regiment to which I belong—the Cameron Highlanders—will be well known to your readers, it having taken a prominent part in the campaign of 1882. Our regiment, mustering little over 300 strong, left Cairo on the 19th of November, 1884, it being the last to proceed to the Nile in this campaign. Taking the train from Cairo, after a miserable ride of eight hours we arrived at Assiout, where we embarked in four barges which were to convey us up the Nile.

"The sail to Assouan, where our first journey was broken owing to the First Cataract, occupied eleven days, and was accomplished without any noteworthy incident, save a few short delays occasioned by running on sand-banks, which proved to be numerous all along the route. A ride of about an hour in trucks similar to those used for the conveyance of goods at home brought us to the scene of our embarkation above the First Cataract. We got on board barges again, and were soon sailing merrily up the Nile. But this part of our voyage was not destined to pass smoothly as formerly. There being no steamers to tow us, we had to depend on the wind, which at first was in our favour, but suddenly died away, leaving us almost at a standstill. Then physical strength was called into requisition. 'Tommy Atkins' having to get ashore and pull the barges in reliefs.

"This laborious journey occupied three nights and two days, when we reached Korosko, where we now are, a dreary-looking place, surrounded by hills of rock and sand. There is a small fort, having four Krupp guns, and a trench twenty-four feet deep by fourteen wide. There are a few Egyptian soldiers in it, and it will be a great benefit to us in case of an attack, which at present is not likely to occur, as we are a long way from the fighting line. The desert route taken by General Gordon on his way to Khartoum starts from here. Yet even in this lonely place our soldiers are not devoid of amusement; there are cricket, football, and Saturday evening concerts. The New Year was heartily enjoyed here, a dinner of the delicacies in demand at that festive season being provided. Immediately after dinner our officers were hoisted on stretchers, and carried in triumph round the camp, much to the wonderment of the natives, who never beheld such an outburst of British enthusiasm.

"There were also regimental sports, which occupied two days. They were much the same as sports at home, save camel-racing by soldiers and natives, which caused much amusement by the many ludicrous positions taken by Tommy Atkins on the 'Ship of the Desert.' The proceedings were very creditable, and tended greatly to increase a good feeling between the soldiers and natives. The troops are at present building mud huts, to be used as a hospital, and to take the place of tents. The work is pretty severe, it occupying eight hours per day. The latest novelties are umbrellas, which have been sent out to the troops, also sunshades, which completely cover the neck. There is an hour's drill every morning; also church parade on Sunday. We enjoy walking up and down the banks of the Nile after four o'clock in the afternoon. There is a small village or bazaar, where articles are exposed for sale by natives, and a few enterprising Greeks, who find it to their advantage to follow the soldiers, and furnish them with articles which otherwise they could not get. We are now settled here for the summer, with little or no prospect of going farther up the country."

It was clear from such letters that our soldiers suffered considerable hardships, and in some cases the causes appear to have been preventible. How long similar complaints will accompany the gallant doings of our troops, it is hard to tell; but one must denounce in severest terms the neglect too often displayed of our men's ordinary comfort.
CHAPTER VIII.
THE BATTLE OF HASHEEN.


We have referred to the cavalry reconnaissance made by order of Sir Gerald Graham, in front of Suakim, on the 19th of March. It was fruitful of much valuable information. The staff discovered the exact nature of the country about the village and wells of Hasheen, with the generally dangerous character of the whole district.

The latter lay concealed behind the first ridge of hills which divides the plain, sloping down to the sea from the minor valleys of the mountain region. The trenches and rifle-pits which the Arabs were so confidently said to have formed, could not be seen at the gorge of the Hasheen valley; but what we did discover was, that Nature unaided had given them a position marvellously well adapted to their peculiar tactics, and especially unfavourable to the operation of European troops. In rear of the first line of hills, or rather behind the first line of detached hillocks, that rise on the verge of the plain, there lies a belt of thick black scrub and mimosa bushes about six feet high, or rather more, and though not of sufficient density to bar the passage of cavalry or infantry to-
tally, yet thick enough to hide on all sides the sight of objects twenty or thirty paces distant.

At one or two points this screen, or belt, was intersected only by strips of ground that were comparatively open, where the scrub had always been stunted, or swept away by the rush of torrents from the mountains in the rainy season. In rear of this natural belt the valley opened out into an amphitheatre surrounded by lofty hills, its mouth being flanked and guarded by two steep and conical eminences.

At seven o’clock in the morning the reconnaissance was made; General Graham inspected all the troops in Suakim, with the exception of the Shropshire, Berkshire, and Surrey Regiments. In a telegraphic despatch replies to Osman Digna’s letter. Force back in camp at 12.30. Wounded, Lieutenant J. R. K. Birch, Mounted Infantry, who behaved very gallantly. Shall form entrenchments near Hasheen to-morrow morning. Garrison employed, the East Surrey Regiment.”

The details of the movement thus briefly narrated were as follows:—

Soon after reveille on the morning of the 19th considerable excitement prevailed in camp, in consequence of the issue of certain orders which seemed to indicate a speedy general advance upon the position of the enemy; but it soon
transpired that the operations of the day were to be limited to a preliminary reconnaissance of the strength and position of Osman Digna's forces, the men taking one day's rations and 100 rounds each.

At seven a.m. the whole cavalry rode across the plain in the direction of Hasheen, and were followed soon after by the brigade of Guards, who were to act as the reserve, and by the infantry of the Indian contingent, according to the general's telegram. The cavalry advanced with great caution and in skirmishing order, and within three hours reached the hills where the enemy were supposed to be in position.

The troops, in skirmishing order, continued to advance steadily, the scouts in front ascending boulder-strewn ridges which were also covered thickly with brushwood, the narrowness of the only practicable paths, or passages, compelling them, at times, to ride in Indian file. On reaching the crest, considerable bodies of the enemy were seen massed in the valley and on the adjacent ridges, where they got into positions of shelter, only parties of thirty or forty remaining in sight.

The troops continued still to advance, and were well on the ridge when a party of Hadendowas rushed yelling from an ambush, and Lieutenant Birch, of the Surrey (serving as captain with the Mounted Infantry), was severely wounded by a spear thrust. Our men did not fire till within ten yards of the foe, several of whom were shot down, but not before three more of the Mounted Infantry were wounded, and Lieutenant O'Connor, who killed no less than four Hadendowas, had his horse shot under him.

The enemy were seen all along the range now, and apparently massing for battle; but, after a time, they fell back on some hills beyond our range, and the cavalry pushed on to Hasheen, which was found to consist of about fifty miserable huts, and completely deserted. In view of our return, they were neither burned nor injured. An examination of the ground proved that water could be obtained at a depth of eleven feet from the surface; thus, when the troops advanced again, the necessary appliances for the formation of wells would be brought by the Engineers.

Nothing was heard of the enemy after the brief skirmish, and as the object of the reconnaissance (as described in the opening paragraph) had now been accomplished, the scouts fell back on their supports (unfollowed by the enemy), and the bugles sounded for the whole force to retire.

All seen then did not number above 1,500 men; but these were not the main body of Osman Digna's forces. During the advance the scouts of the Bengal Lancers (Hodson's Horse) captured three rebels, to whom, of course, quarter was given and some valuable information expected; but one of these, as he was being marched along within touch of the Indian troopers' lances, was ruthlessly speared to death by one of our Arab "friendlies," who chanced to pass near him.

Before leaving Hasheen and falling back on the camp at Suakim, a letter
placed in a cleft stick was left in a conspicuous position, addressed to Osman Digna, being General Graham's pacific reply to his threatening missive brought into camp a week before, and recorded elsewhere.

It was found now that Osman Digna had shifted his ground and taken up a position several miles nearer Suakim, and considerably to the northward of Tamanieb, where there was an unusual feature in a Soudanese landscape, a perennial stream, clear and only slightly brackish, but diminishing in volume as it descended.

The reconnaissance, we have said, saw the enemy posted on the hills around Hasheen; and it was out of this very locality that the Arabs issued some weeks before, when attempting to cut off some cavalry sent to Handoub. The presence of any large number of men at Hasheen, where they had been so long, implied a tolerably abundant supply of water there, since no other wells were known to exist nearer than Handoub, six miles to the north. Another thing observed was that the choice of such a position indicated a bolder resolution.

At Tamai (where there was running but brackish water in two places, emerging from a sandy bed and re-absorbed after 200 yards) and at Tamanieb, Osman had in his rear a clear line of retreat, from the former towards the district of Tokar, and from the latter to Sinkat. Now it was found that he had rough hills in his rear, while the Sinkat road formed a prolongation of his right flank. It was possible, therefore, that he might find his direct track to the mountain fastness occupied, and his position turned on the right, while an attack might be delivered upon his front.

The distance from the camp at Suakim to the base of the hills below Deberet is under twelve miles, easily covered by a march in the cool portion of the morning; so that a movement in echelon, left in front, would bring the army into a line facing north-west, and so menacing his position obliquely.

"The march of the army, as described by our special correspondent," said the Standard, "shows how wild and difficult the country is wherein our troops are operating. The approach to the summit, whence the scouts obtained a view of the enemy's position lay through rough ridges covered with prickly brushwood, and the affair with the Arab outpost, or ambush, is suggestive, inasmuch as it indicates how arduous an advance might be made. On the other hand, it should be noted that the scouts closed with the enemy and drove them in by hand-to-hand fighting. The foremost troops entered Hasheen, and the object of the movement was to see the hostile levies in position, and when that was gained the troops withdrew. It is very possible the apparent retreat may have inspired the Arabs with fresh confidence, and they may interpret the incident as an evidence that they are feared."

All this was put to the test on the 20th March, and not a moment too late. There was no doubt that the powerful Hadendowa tribe and their
THE ROYAL ARTILLERY SHELLING THE VILLAGE OF HASHEEN.
THE MORNING OF THE BATTLE.

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allies, when reinforced by dervishes from the west, had their naturally warlike spirits roused to boiling heat, by what they deemed the triumph achieved in blood and massacre at Khartoum, and by the—to them inexplicable—retreat of Lord Wolseley’s hitherto liminary to the successes thought to be achieved on the Nile.

These inspiring influences increased the natural and characteristic courage of those dark warriors, who, although severely beaten at El Teb, stood again as bold as ever at Tamai and Tamanieh.

On the 20th March, the day after the careful reconnaissance, the battle of Hasheen was fought, to secure the possession of some hills which, by order of General Graham, had been selected by the officers of the Royal Engineers as the site of an entrenched camp to keep the enemy in check, and, if possible, cover Suakim.

The march of the troops from the latter place began at six in the morning, leaving the battalion of the Shrop-
shire to hold it. The column took one hundred rounds and only one day's cooked rations per man; but a quantity of reserve ammunition and more supplies followed under escort. The ground over which the march lay was very rough and pebbly, encumbered by boulders and bushes of the prickly mimosa.

First came the scouts of the Mounted Infantry, riding in a great semicircle; then followed, successively from the right, the 20th Hussars, 5th Royal Irish Lancers, and the Bengal Cavalry. Next came the advancing infantry, in hollow square, with the Royal Artillery, Gardners, and camels, with litters, hospital stores, water, &c., in its centre.

Formed in fours from the right, the front face of the square was made up by the Surrey and Berkshire Regiments and the Royal Marines. The brigade of Guards in column formed the right face; the Indian Brigade, also in column, formed the left face; the rear was open.

In this order the column reached the spurs of the outlying hills, from which the advanced parties could be seen slowly falling back. General Graham with his staff now galloped to the summit of a lofty hillock on his right front, and from thence was enabled, by the aid of his field-glass, to obtain an uninterrupted view of the plain around the Hasheen Hill, and to search the adjacent ridges. The Surrey Regiment was now sent up to occupy Baker's old zeriba, which lay on lofty ground to the right of the hillock, while the sappers immediately set about constructing redoubts on two overhanging hills, for the protection of the water supply, camels, and stores; and, continuing its progress, the column (says the Daily Telegraph) debouched upon the wide plain, which was encircled on all sides by craggy hills of volcanic origin and having crater-like summits.

After traversing the plain, the enemy were seen in a position of great strength, with banners streaming and weapons glittering; on a spur to the left front. "Within the next five minutes the bushes seemed alive with riflemen; they crowded on the Hasheen Hill; they swarmed through the underwood, and nothing could be seen but little puffs of smoke rising over the mimosa trees. Here and there a shriek, a groan, a gap in the ranks—instantly filled up—showed that some of the enemy's bullets had found a billet; but for one that hit, a thousand whistled harmlessly over us."

Against these sharpshooters, the Marines and Berkshire Regiment were now let slip, and they advanced at a rush in such splendid style, that it seemed like a rival race between the corps to reach the summits of some hillocks on the right of the ridge held by the Arabs. The Marines were first up, and instantly opened fire, to cover the advance of the Berkshire, among the hills, where the sound of the musketry reverberated like the rolling echoes of thunder tossed from peak to peak; and sharply did the Arabs respond from every rock and bush and coign of vantage.

"Volley succeeded volley on both
CHARGES OF THE ARABS.

Arabs, now increased by 2,000 spearmen and 800 riflemen, rushed at the latter, but were received by a withering fire, under which in hundreds they perished miserably, within some twenty yards of the bayonets of the front rank.

Among these was a young lad mounted on a white camel, the appearance of which had long been familiar to our troops in many an attack on Suakim, and on which he now led the charge. The camel and its rider now fell riddled by the bullets of the Guards. Re-forming, the Bengal troopers now spurred with levelled lances and gathering force and fury upon the Arabs, who, after their futile rush at the Guards, were recoiling, and scattered between the hills in every direction, for with all their splendid courage and physical strength, the enemy were destitute of anything like tactics, save skill in rushing to cover as skirmishers.

"At this time," says the Daily Telegraph, "another body of Mahdists coming round on our right reinforced them. Their courage was admirable, but their tactics seemed at this juncture somewhat bewildered. However, they were so full of fight that they could not get enough. Our troops quickly followed them up as they circled round the crests, pouring in a very hot fire, and never letting them stop to concentrate. But they were not to be cowed even by such constant punishment. All this time the firing was heavy and continuous. Our field guns were brought into play after a while, and notwithstanding the

sides," wrote the correspondent of the Daily Telegraph, "and bullets began to fall unpleasantly thick among us, the sand puffing up in spirts between the horses' legs. Where I stood with the Sikhs, the leaden hail was, by this time, whistling all around; but, after a while, our disciplined fire became too hot for them, and they cleared off. Some retired to the right, but the largest body moved off to the left of our front, the intention of the latter manoeuvre being to turn the hill held by the Marines and the Berkshire."

To check this movement the Bengal cavalry were despatched against them, and went thundering on in squadrons. A fierce conflict now ensued, and while it lasted, one of the European officers was seen, by two strokes of his sword, to cut down two Mahdists in quick succession. After completing their charge the Bengal Lancers, who made a gallant show with their tall turbans, glittering spear heads, and streaming red and blue banneroles, drew off to let the infantry pour in their searching fire among the broken masses, which then numbered about 6,000 men.

Led by an aged sheikh mounted on a camel and brandishing his spear, about forty undaunted Arabs rushed round the flank of the Indian cavalry, so fleet of foot that they actually got into their rear. The Lancers now charged home, bearing many to the earth, and driving the others round the base of a hill toward the square formed by the Guards. With headlong courage and fiendish yells the
disadvantage of position and the rough contour of the ground, they did excellent service."

By 11.30 a.m., the adjoining hills had been cleared of the enemy, and our outposts held all the points occupied by these brave Arabs. They had retreated farther into the hills on the right, and were still followed up by our troops.

Then it was that some of the Bengal cavalry were sent at speed round the outer spur of the left ridge to intercept their retreat, but the Arabs, when brought to bay, turned with the most indomitable courage, and rushed forward on foot to meet their mounted enemies. Right into the midst of the latter they plunged, throwing up the lance heads with their round shields, exactly like the Scottish Highlanders of old, and driving a thrust home ere the trooper could resort to sabre or carbine. Anon they threw themselves on the ground under the horses' bellies, and disembowelled or hamstrung them as they passed; then the throat of the rider was seized as his helpless steed rolled over with him.

In vain did the Lancers fight with desperation, often one to four or five Arabs. They were compelled to fall back upon their supports, saving their wounded, but leaving the corpses of their unfortunate comrades among the dense mimosa bush.

How heavy was the price the Arabs were made to pay for this slight success it was difficult to say, according to the correspondent of the Standard, but there is very little doubt that every wound they dealt was returned fourfold.

Meanwhile, the other ridge was securely held by the Marines and Berkshire. The Indian Brigade having by this time reached the little village of Hasheen, deployed, and formed a half square, with left front resting on the lower slope of the ridge under the Berkshire, and its right rear on the conical mound at the mouth of the valley, in rear of which the Guards' Brigade had formed square in reserve.

From the left slopes of the hill above Hasheen the artillery shelled distant ridges on the right, and plumped shrapnell into the bush, whenever a group of Arabs could be seen; while from their coign of vantage the Berkshire and Marines made some deadly practice with their rifles on the enemy in the plain below. Captain Woods, of the Royal Marine Light Infantry, killed three at over a thousand yards' range. But neither shell, nor shrapnell, nor rifle fire, could effectually clear the acres upon acres of bush and scrub that stretched all round the British position.

Far away in the plain between us and Suakim we could see party after party streaming down from the direction of Tamai, and sweeping right round in our rear to the hills and densely-wooded valley on our extreme right, where they gathered, some thousands strong, to await the moment when we should begin to fall back.

At the time the rush was made at the Guards' square, another body attempted to skirt round the lower slopes of the two hills upon which our working parties were constructing
PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF HASHEEN (MARCH 20, 1885).
redoubts; but the cavalry and Mounted Infantry charged down upon them, and either speared them with their lances or shot them down as they swept over them in headlong career.

At this point only seven Arabs escaped alive, says the Standard, but they seemed content for the opportunity of retaliation, which they knew must come whenever our force fell back.

"Nothing," wrote a correspondent, "could exceed the coolness which they displayed, as I watched the scene from the hills occupied by the 49th and Marines; they could be seen lazily sauntering about in small knots from bush to bush, or lying down under the mimosa trees, in many places not more than 200 yards from our squares, but as secure from sight and fire, under cover of the dense undergrowth, as if they had been miles away. To the west, far up the Hasheen valley, a considerable body of Arabs, some thousands strong, were retiring slowly into the hills. These, it is believed, were the Amaras, a tribe of whom many are in Suakin and have been loyal to us throughout, while those who are with Osman Digna remain out rather under coercion than from any feeling of sympathy with their fanatical leader."

It was a little before 11 a.m. that the troops occupied the positions represented in the plan, and halted to allow our working parties in rear to erect the redoubts and zeribas which General Graham determined to hold; but precisely at one o'clock p.m. he issued orders for Sir John McNeill's brigade on the hills and the Indians at Hasheen to retire upon the brigade of Guards, which was to bring up the rear and cover the retreat of the entire column.

At two p.m. the Guards began to move, the Grenadiers upon the right-half flank and front, the Coldstreams on the quarter-right flank and rear, and the Scots on the left-half front and flank—that is, of course, speaking by the direction in which they were marching, and not by the original formation. Within the square were the whole of the artillery, the greater portion of the cavalry and Mounted Infantry, the stores, ambulance train, ammunition train, camels and mules in hundreds. The moment this encumbered column got in motion, the whistle and firing of rifle bullets overhead announced that the Arabs thought that their time for vengeance had come.

Within the next five minutes the bushes in our rear and on our right flank seemed literally to swarm with riflemen; they crowded on the Hasheen Hill, they filled all the scrub, and nothing could be seen but clouds of whirling smoke streaked by sudden jets of fire, and several men fell killed and wounded. The bugle sounded a halt, for this reopening of the action was intolerable, and then, by sections from the rear, right flank, and right front, volley after volley was poured consecutively into the bush, for a few moments thus checking the enemy's fire.

Then the retrograde march began again, and then up sprang the Arabs, and the rain of lead set in worse than ever. Another hundred yards were
gained, and then the bugles sounded a halt, and fresh volleys were poured into the dense mimosa cover. Again and again these tactics were repeated, and, though the fire of the invisible foe was checked, it was never silenced; and sometimes even during the halts the Arabs would rush forward within twenty yards of the square, fire their rifles right into the faces of our men, and then throw themselves flat on the ground to escape their fire. Few of those who so flung themselves down ever rose again.

At last the column emerged from the dense belt of bush into what was comparatively open ground, but three-quarters of an hour had been occupied in marching a mile. "How many there were in the bush it is difficult to estimate," wrote the correspondent of the Standard, "but, judging from the intensity of the fire, at some moments there could not have been less than from 600 to 700 rifle-men concealed in the villainous scrub. . . . Yet, what is even more deplorable than the loss of life itself, was the answer one heard returned on all sides to the painful question, 'Was this loss necessary, or even useful?' To move a crowded square through a dense scrub swarming with such gallant foes was, at best, a dangerous manœuvre, especially when nothing was done to minimise the risks." Had the Mounted Infantry and cavalry been used to scout or skirmish through the scrub, and cover the retreat as they covered the advance; had the battery, or half the battery, of artillery been sent on with the Second Brigade, or the Indians, and posted on the hillock under the Deberet Redoubt, from whence they might have shelled the bush, the enemy's fire must have been kept down, if not silenced, and the retreat might have been effected without many casualties. But the artillery, cavalry, and Mounted Infantry, were inside the square of the brigade of Guards, useless, an encumbrance rather than a help, and exposed to this terrible fire! The only pleasant feature in the operations of that day at Hasheen was the steadiness of our officers and men. Thoroughly was it tested, and in no instance was it found wanting; but the actual results of the engagement were difficult to estimate.

"We attacked the enemy, who had been reinforced the previous night by twelve hundred 'regulars,' from Tamai," wrote a correspondent; "we drove them from the position they wished to occupy, and after the object had been obtained, we advanced into the valleys, showing the enemy our strength. Nobody doubts that we punished the rebels, except the rebels themselves, who will probably fight all the harder on Sunday, when we expect to advance again. From the experience gained to-day, it seems they know thoroughly the value of bush fighting, and justly estimate the value of a guerilla warfare. They are beginning also to prefer the rifle to the spear. At headquarters the operations are regarded as successful, and as we have the Sutreys to hold the redoubts on the hills to-night, they are partially right; but large bodies of
the enemy never came into action today."

The combat proved to our troops that their adversaries were as vigorous and valiant as those who fought at El Teb and Tamai; that they were becoming more numerous and better equipped; and that whatever may have been the first effects of an irregular mode of fighting upon soldiers trained to meet foes like themselves, these effects had now lost the advantages they derived from novelty. Their tactics had become known, and were defeated by calm discipline.

General Graham had no intention then of pushing beyond Hasheen, except so far as to enable him to sweep away the enemy should he resist; and thus the combat at the hill, wells, and village, was brought on by the inevitable tendency of the Arabs to offer a fierce resistance.

General Graham immediately despatched the following telegram to Lord Wolseley:

"March 20.

The result of to-day’s operations has been to establish a strong position commanding the Hasheen Valley, and protecting my right flank and communications in the ensuing operations against Tamai. The cavalry showed great dash and individual gallantry in very difficult ground, covered with high thorn bushes, and occupied by an agile and determined enemy. The infantry proved that when properly handled, they could master the enemy in any position. The Berkshire, supported by Marines, stormed a steep hill, strongly held, while the Guards showed an unshaken front when attacked in the thickest scrub, and protected the cavalry by steady volleys. The Indian Brigade also worked admirably. The practice of the artillery was excellent, and the positions were chosen with judgment. The Royal Engineers, assisted by Madras Sappers and Miners, and working parties of the East Surrey, planned and executed the defensive works with great skill and coolness, although repeatedly threatened with attack by the enterprising enemy, who at one time swarmed on all sides."

The losses in the engagement were one officer, Captain M. D. D. Dalison, of the Scots Guards, shot through the heart, two of the 5th Lancers, and five
THE BERKSHIRE REGIMENT ATTACKING THE ARAB POSITION AT HASHEEN.
of Hodson’s Horse, and others, making a total of twenty-one killed; while Surgeon-Major Lane, Major Harvey, 5th Lancers, Major Robertson, 9th Bengal Lancers, and forty-two men, of various corps, were wounded. How many Arabs fell was never known.

After their arduous day’s work the troops re-entered their lines at Suakim at half-past five p.m. The zeribah, or fort, committed to the care of the Surrey Regiment, was an enclosure intended to hold water, stores, and ammunition, and was so placed that four entrenched works upon a hill commanded the deposit, a precious one in that quarter. The garrison was supported by two Krupp guns and four Gardeners, and was supplied with signalling apparatus for day or night.

About thirty workmen were now despatched from the Glasgow Tube Works of the Messrs. Stewart to Suakim. These were tube-fitters, rivetters, and blacksmiths, who were to superintend the water-pipes that the firm was supplying to the Government in connection with that peculiar scheme, the Suakim-Berber railway. They were to have all their expenses going and returning, and from £16 16s. to £20 each, a month, as wages. The first contract of malleable iron pipes for the Suakim-Berber water-supply was for fifty miles—each pipe being four inches in diameter. At all stations along the projected line connections for drawing water off the main pipes were to be made.

About this time a new return was published of the casualties in the force which marched from Korti for Metemneh, under Major-General Sir Herbert Stewart, up to January 23. This document showed that in the battle of Abu Klea, on the 17th of January, nine officers were killed, nine wounded, and four admitted into hospital; of non-commissioned officers and men, sixty-five were killed, seventy wounded (of whom three subsequently died), and thirty-eight were admitted into hospital.

In the actions fought on the 19th and 21st of January, 1 officer was killed and 9 wounded; of non-commissioned officers and men, 20 were killed and 96 wounded, of whom two subsequently died. Of the total number of cases of sickness, deaths from wounds, and drowning, from September 1st to February 13th, there were 143 cases of sickness among officers, 16 deaths from all causes, 19 admissions into hospitals for wounds, 10 deaths in action, and 1 drowned; of non-commissioned officers and men, there were 4,100 cases of sickness, 240 deaths from all causes, 165 admitted to hospital from wounds in action, 85 deaths in action, 13 from wounds, and 3 by drowning.

Among several bronze medals given by the Royal Humane Society, for saving human life in the Soudan, we may here note two.

One was awarded to Private G. G. McCallum, Gordon Highlanders (old 75th), for having saved Armourer-Sergeant Haigs in the Khaihar Cataract of the Nile, on the 27th December, 1884. The rescued man had been knocked
overboard from a whaler by the fore-
mast breaking in a strong gale. He
was carried two hundred yards down
the stream, being unable to swim, as
his trousers had slipped over his ankles.

Another was awarded to Lieutenant
Alderson, of the Queen’s Own Royal
West Kent Regiment (old 97th), for
saving the life of Private Coombes, 1st
Battalion Somerset Light Infantry,
in the Nile, near Hangow, on the 11th
June. Some of the men were engaged
in towing a boat, and wading about
thirty yards from the bank, when all
at once several got out of their depth,
and were swept away rapidly down
stream by the current. Coombes was
the only one who could not regain
the bank, and he appeared to be struggling
in the mid channel. Lieutenant Alder-
son jumped overboard, swam to his
succour, and with great difficulty kept
him above water until rescued. This
young officer, who was attached to the
Mounted Infantry, was nearly drowned.

Early in August, 1885, an interest-
ing trophy of the battle of Hasheen
was brought to London, and presented
to the Zoological Gardens there by
Major Frank Groves of the 20th
Hussars. This was a pure white camel,
two and a half years old, just broken
to the saddle, and perfectly quiet, and
which he had captured in the action.
A number of Arabs mounted and dis-
mounted, tried to rush the left flank
where the Major commanded, and take
the British infantry in rear. Major
Groves had a number of dismounted
Hussars waiting for them, and poured
in several volleys at three hundred
yards’ distance, on which they turned
and fled, leaving this camel and
another behind, on which the Major
and six men galloped forward and
captured it before the Arabs could
rally. On the 28th of July it was
shipped at Suez, and arrived safely in
London. It proved a very handsome
camel of the fast kind.
CHAPTER IX.

THE SURPRISE AT SIR JOHN MCNEILL'S ZERIBA.


The wound of Surgeon-Major Lane proved so severe, that he died of it, a few hours after the battle of Hasheen. The coffin was covered by a Union Jack and placed in a boat, which was slowly towed by a steam launch. All the officers of the Scots Guards attended, as also Lord Abinger, their late veteran colonel, who was there on board the Arab. Two naval officers represented their branch of the service. As the body was slowly towed past the landing-stage, all the shipping lowered their colours to half mast. There were many other funerals during the afternoon.

The enemy made no attempt at night to disturb the Surrey Regiment in the works at Hasheen; but when day broke small parties of them were seen in position on the neighbouring heights, from whence they were driven by our artillery fire.

The funeral of Captain Dalison of the Scots Guards took place in the burial-ground on the shore of the harbour at Suakim, where now many...
THE SURPRISE AT MONELLO'S ZERIBA - A CORNER OF THE SQUARE FIFTEEN MINUTES AFTER THE ATTACK BEGAN.
McNeill, C.M.G. and V.C., an officer who had served with some distinction, left Suakim, at 7 a.m., on the 22nd March, with orders to construct zeribas in the direction of Tamai. These works were to be garrisoned by the Berkshire Regiment, while the other troops returned to camp.

Sir John McNeill, who had formerly been in the 48th Foot, and latterly Military Secretary to the Governor of Canada, had served in the Indian campaign of 1857–8 as Aide-de-Camp to Sir Edward Lugard, during the siege and capture of Lucknow, the engagement at Jounpoor, relief of Azimgur, and various operations at Juggdespore. In 1861 he proceeded with Sir Duncan Cameron to New Zealand, and served there on his staff until 1865. He was present at the engagements on the Katikara River, the Koeroa, Ranguri, the storming of the Gate Pah, and various other encounters with the natives, gaining the V.C. for saving the life of a private in a sharp encounter with the Maoris. In the winter of 1866–7 he commanded the Tipperary flying column in the petty Fenian disturbances, and was thanked in general orders by Lord Strathnairn. He served in the bloodless expedition to the Red River (that "military picnic" for which Sir Garnet Wolseley was entitled C.M.G.), but was wounded in Ashanti; and unfortunately was fated to gain a somewhat unenviable reputation in front of Suakim.

Taking with him the Berkshire Regiment, the Marines, the Indian Infantry, a squadron of cavalry, a section of the Gardner Battery, and a detachment of Royal Engineers, he marched his force towards Tamai in two squares, and in full sight of the enemy mustered in force on the Hasheen Hill, from whence they attempted to check his advance, but were checked in turn by the shell fire from the works manned by the Surrey Regiment and the vessels in the harbour, a combined cannonade from which they suffered severely.

While his two squares disappeared into the dust and obscurity of the desert, a great body of the enemy suddenly menaced Suakim under a perfect belief that General Graham's entire force had quitted the town. But they were soon convinced of their error when a heavy cannonade was opened upon them from the Water Forts, redoubts, and ships of war; so, falling back by a circular route, they followed up the expedition of McNeill, who, of course, knew nothing of their whereabouts, but had by this time partially constructed one zeria, about five miles from the coast, and had begun the formation of another. So little was any attack expected, that the baggage animals which had brought ammunition and other stores for the new forts were moving off slowly on the return journey to headquarters, when a deplorable surprise ensued, one that might have proved another Isandhlwana—a surprise caused by the neglect, apparently, of all the precautions usually taken in war, especially one with stealthy savages.

In a volume entitled "A Sketch of
the Campaign," and written by an officer who went through it, it is stated that the two zeribas were unnecessary, and unwisely placed in a dense scrub, when there was open ground adjacent that would have furnished better sites. Of the cavalry vedettes thrown out, none were more than thirty yards in advance of the working parties, who had piled their arms, and were hewing down the tough, thorny bushes; and we hear of no outpickets being distinctly posted, or of sentries.

Suddenly a trooper dashed in at full speed, reporting to the General that the enemy were in sight. While he was questioning the trooper a second dashed in, and before Sir John McNeill could question him "the air was rent with frightful yells," says the officer we quote, "the cavalry outposts came clattering in, dashing through the working parties, and a heavy fire was poured in from the enemy, who seemed all at once to have sprung out of the earth."

"The attack on March 22nd was the only serious attempt of the enemy to stop our advance. They were driven back with great slaughter, though not without severe loss on our side," wrote General Graham, in his despatch of 30th May, to Lord Wolseley, thus briefly dismissing one of the most calamitous events of the war.

"It is impossible to disguise the fact," wrote a correspondent, "that we were most completely surprised, and that only the superb courage of our troops saved us from an overwhelming disaster. Not a man of us had any idea that thousands of rebels were quietly stretched among the scrub and behind boulders, watching us as we innocently and jovially worked at our zeriba. A few pickets were out, and cavalry scouts as well, I believe—eighteen all told—and we were content!"

On all sides were now heard the cries of the officers, "Fall in, men—stand to your arms!" and never were orders obeyed with more promptitude, for every man felt that he held his life in his hands. And they rushed to their piled arms; and piling, we may explain, is the process of placing the muskets in such relative positions that the butts remain firm on the ground, and the muzzles close together in an oblique position, a custom which was adopted long ago, when the practice of "grounding arms" injured the firelocks.

The troops were scattered, many of them working at different distances from the places where their arms were piled; but courageously and by the force of discipline, habit, and order, all did their best to get into their allotted places, and strive to remedy the dreadful oversight of their General. The squares formed, but the mounted vedettes burst through them for shelter, while behind them rolled a human flood of yelling, howling; and black fantastic forms, picked out with the flashing points and blades of weapons, and accompanied by a strange mingled sound as of the crashing, crackling, and rustling of vast quantities of brushwood, or, as some officers said, like the break-
ing of a distant sea upon a rocky shore. Frantic and shrieking the Arabs charged down like madmen, sweeping right over the transport lines.

"Then came that terrible stampede of baggage animals—horses, camels, mules, in one struggling, screeching, helpless, and confused mass. I was just on the edge of the Marines' square," wrote a correspondent, "and was caught in the storm, my horse being swept bodily to the ground, pinning me to the earth. As I lay with other prostrate animals above and around, struggling frantically to rise, I received a nasty kick on the head, which, however, caused me only temporary inconvenience. Regaining my feet, I found myself in the Marines' square. Panic, even in these few moments, seemed to have disappeared, and the brave fellows were firing steadily and well." In the first ter-

mules, in one struggling, screeching, helpless, and confused mass. I was just on the edge of the Marines' square," wrote a correspondent, "and was caught in the storm, my horse being swept bodily to the ground, pinning me to the earth. As I lay with other prostrate animals above and around, struggling frantically to rise, I received a nasty kick on the head, which, however, caused me only}

rific rush some sixty Arabs got into the Marines' square, but only to be shot down or bayoneted.

Holding their cross-hilted swords in both hands, says the Daily Telegraph correspondent and others, the fanatics hewed blindly to the right and left, here slashing a camel, and there cutting down a man. The spearmen stabbed not at random, but indiscriminately; thus animals, camp-followers,
and soldiers, taken utterly by surprise, went down before them in hopeless, pitiless slaughter. The place where the orderly convoy had stood, with all its camels in square, its mules in line, and camp-followers at their stations, drawn up like a regiment, became at once, as if by some horrible beasts got loose, and, as if they were fleeing in mad flight before a prairie fire, all came thundering down on the zeriba. There was not much velocity at first, as the avalanche had not got fairly under way. The camels being haltered together and the mules chained, the poor creatures were hopelessly en-

sorcery, a gory shamble, and there went up from the terror-stricken men such a shout of agony, despair, and bloody rage, as might well make a man wake in his sleep for years to come—a wild and horrid curdling wail of pain and fear, and here and there a scream so sharp as to be heard above all the rest in its individual misery.

“But in less than a minute the convoy broke,” continues this graphic writer. “The camp-followers fled; their tangled with each other and the loads they were bearing. Each impeded the escape of the other, and the sword-blades of the Hadendoras flashed like wildfire among them as they were hamstring right and left, or fell to the ground with their throats cut, to be dragged as dead weight by those who escaped mutilation in the maddened throng.

“But in a few moments the panic was supreme, every beast frantically
struggling to be free; the ropes and chains parted, harness was kicked away, loads fell, and then, as with a simultaneous impulse, the whole seething mass dashed onward. It was a mighty wave of kicking, biting, and plunging brutes, maddened by wounds and the instincts of peril. . . . To stem the living torrent seemed impossible, and to attempt it, certain death."

However, close and steady was the fire of the Berkshire in square, while the Marines received the Arab charge with their usual bravery, and the Naval Brigade, amid the greatest difficulties, got their Gardiners into action and mowed down the foe as they came on. The latter, for a brief time, made awful work with the helpless camp-followers, cutting them down with dreadful wounds to right and left.

A regiment of the Indian Contingent, the 17th Bengal (or Loyal Poorbeahs), clad in red, faced and laced with white, had fallen back in disorder, overpowered by the mighty rush, while the Sikhs began to fire loosely in the direction of the zeriba, both regiments hitting several of our own men. At this moment of direst confusion, conspicuous in one of the rallying squares were the figures of Major Alston and the Rev. Reginald Collins fighting back to back, the reverend combatant pouring in shot after shot steadily with his revolver. The square in which he stood was imperilled by the wild firing of the 17th Bengal Infantry, and though the bugles had been sounded repeatedly for them to "cease," in that quarter, the order was unheeded. On this Mr. Collins gallantly volunteered to cross the ground, then swept by adverse showers of lead.

He knew nothing of Hindostani, and could only indicate the major's wish by dashing up the rifles of some of the Poorbeahs and levelling his revolver at the head of the nearest file, on which the firing ceased in the wrong direction, and many lives were saved. Of this episode a correspondent wrote thus:—"Stepping forward, calm and collected in demeanour, the chaplain walked, his life in his hands, across to the Indians, to whom he gave the necessary orders, and then returned as calmly to the little square he had just left. His reception must have been some compensation for the dreadful risk he ran. The men, struck with his heroism, raised cheer after cheer, and, placing their helmets on their bayonets, waved them frantically in their enthusiasm."

The Rev. Reginald F. Collins had been previously an oblate of St. Charles, at Bayswater, a community founded by Cardinal Manning, and, after spending some years with the London Mission, became an Army Chaplain; and, being sent from Aldershot to Egypt, was present at Tel-al-Kebir, where his gallantry obtained special commendation from Colonel J. N. Beasley, of the Royal Irish Fusiliers. He also won the love of our soldiers at Alexandria during the prevalence of cholera, till stricken down by fever, after which he was attached to the column at Suakim.

The steady courage of the Berkshire
Regiment did much to save the whole force from destruction. Double the number of Arabs got into its square than entered the Marine square; but they were killed, and 120 were speedily shot or bayonetted; and two companies of the regiment, the F and C—where all excelled—displayed remarkable valour.

Captain C. M. Edwards, when the onslaught was made, was serving out water to his men of the F company, after cutting brushwood, and both companies formed a rallying square on the outside of the zeriba, and apart from the mass of the regiment, which was formed elsewhere, and which they had not time to join. On this little isolated square the Arabs dashed their force again and again, but its fire, close and rapid, mowed them down in terrible heaps, the dead and wounded falling over each other, with legs and arms in the air, while many came so close as to perish under the bayonet.

After fighting for some time desperately, this "grand-division square," as it would have been called a few years ago, fell back on the zeriba held by the Marines. It was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel W. J. Gillespie (formerly director of the Gymnasium at Bombay), and all the six company officers were present.

Sir John McNeill, when the alarm was first given as related, was on horseback outside the Berkshire zeriba, where the men fought in their shirt sleeves, where Colonel Alfred Huyshe commanded, and where he pistolled the Arabs in quick succession when the mêlée began. McNeill attempted to gain the shelter of that zeriba towards which he attempted to spur his horse, but it threw out its forefeet, and obstinately backed towards the swiftly advancing enemy. His Aide-de-Camp, the Hon. Alan D. Charteris, Lieutenant of the Coldstream Guards, and third son of the Earl of Wemyss, gallantly rushed to his rescue. He dashed aside the rifle which one Arab was levelling at the General, hewed down a second with his sword, but was speared in the arm by an Arab boy of ten years, who fought like a polecat, till he was shot to death, and the General got to a place of safety. The valour and devotion of Charteris on this occasion, recalled those of his elder brother Alfred, who went so gallantly through the Ashanti War, and died of fever on the homeward voyage.

Another officer who greatly distinguished himself in the calamitous affair, was Brigade-Major Kelly, who, while fighting like a paladin outside the zeriba, would have been slain, but for the noble efforts of Commander Domville, of the Condor gunboat.

When the first wild rush of the enemy was checked, the position was safe, and the heavy file-firing poured into the masses of Arabs, from the faces of the zeribas and improvised squares, with the incessant shower of shot from the Gardner guns in the redoubt, under Lieutenant Paget, swept to destruction all who charged along the front. The whole affair was over in half an hour, says one account—a quarter of an hour, according to another;
and the Arabs sullenly withdrew, firing all the time to a certain period, when they fled with precipitation, vanishing into the bush, as suddenly as they had emerged from it.

Sir John McNeill now endeavoured to concentrate his column and put it in some order, but so dense were the clouds in the uniform of the Mahdi—even the women—and one of the three standards found on the field was a special gift from him, and bore a legend, purporting that who ever fought under it should prove victorious. Only here and there was a body seen, with long shaggy locks, and naked all save a loin cloth.

As at first reported to the headquarter staff, our total losses were as follows:—Naval Brigade, Lieutenant Seymour and 6 men killed; Berkshire, Lieutenant Sholto Swinton and 13 men killed, 17 wounded; Marines, 8 killed and 12 wounded. Among the killed were two Engineer officers, Captain Romilly and Lieutenant Newman; of the Indian Contingent, there were about 25 killed and 70 wounded. Among the former was Major James W. W. von Beverhoudt, of the Bengal Staff Corps, serving with the 17th Bengal.

of smoke that had settled down, and so dark those of the sand-dust that had risen over the scene, that for a time nothing could be seen or quickly done. When a light breeze cleared these off, the whole ground in and around where the squares were, or had been, was thickly encumbered by dark and yet bleeding bodies, with those of our soldiers who had perished ere they could reach shelter or the piles of arms. Over one thousand Arabs lay dead there alone. Among them several women and boys were found. Almost all were clothed

INSIDE MCNEILL'S ZERIBA FIVE DAYS AFTER THE SURPRISE.
Among the wounded was Major Drury. This officer, in striving to save one of his men, says the Daily Chronicle, vainly attempted to stay the mad rush at first, but in a moment, they were hacking at him with their swords and spears. "Grander heroism was never shown on any field of battle. For several minutes Drury fought with at least twenty rebels, and with his single sword kept them from their prey; nor did he abandon his efforts till a spear wound in the neck and the danger of being hopelessly surrounded compelled him reluctantly to retire."

Four of the Poorbeahs were missing. The Commissariat and Transport Corps had several casualties and seven missing. Other casualties and many of the details were not given in the first reports.

"At six p.m., in the Berkshire zeriba, the dead were laid out in rows. I counted," says the Times correspondent, "13 privates of the Princess Charlotte of Wales (Berkshire) Regiment and Royal Engineers, 6 of the Naval Brigade, and 2 of the Army Hospital Corps. Near them lay Lieutenant Swinton of the Berkshire and Lieutenant Seymour, the total number killed in this zeriba being 23. In the Marines' zeriba, there are 6 dead, and the grand total is 36 killed. This is the number at present laid out in the zeriba, but no doubt many more are lying outside."

There was no moon when darkness fell, at half-past seven, and a deep silence reigned all over that terrible plain—a silence broken only by the sighs and
hollow moans of the wounded; but by
ten the moon shone out brilliantly.
"A walk round the zeriba by its light
makes the battle-field even more ghastly
and impressive," wrote the corre-
dent above quoted. "Here, within the
zeriba, the ground is encumbered with
dead and wounded camels and horses,
and is littered with the clothing and
portions of the kits of the dead and the
living. In the centre of the zeriba, a
few water barrels, ranged in line, form
a rendezvous for the officers. All over
the ground are patches of blood and
brains. In one corner of the zeriba
lie two rows of our dead. Looking
from our zeriba over the plain, which
is nearly free from bushes for the dis-
tance of a hundred yards, the moonlight
reveals a fearful spectacle. The bodies
of the enemy lie thick over the plain
in every imaginable attitude. Imme-
diately beneath the zeriba hedge they
are most numerous—a proof of the
desperate gallantry with which they
came on with spear and shield, knob-
kerry and camel stick. But there were
others still more brave; for, from our
zeriba alone, seventy or eighty bodies
were dragged out into the plain, before
nightfall. The dead animals it was
impossible to move. At one a.m. the
electric light from the Dolphin in the
harbour six miles away is visible at
intervals. As its long and brilliant
beam sweeps around the plain, and over
us, it cheers our hearts. This anxious
and weary night is rendered more trying
by the cries of a wounded Arab outside
the sandbag redoubt. He calls on the
name of 'Allah' incessantly, and is
answered by a comrade at a long distance.
Now and again, a sharp, shrill cry comes
from the bush—no doubt from parties
of the enemy seeking their outlying
wounded. No attack has been made, and
the only sounds that break the deep
silence, besides those which I have
spoken of, are the occasional stamp of
a horse, or the groan of a wounded
camel; and the only light seen is that of
a match as some of the men light their
pipes."

However, there was one scare at
10.30 p.m., when a mule, breaking
loose, galloped madly across the bi-
vouac. Two or three shots were fired,
and the whole Berkshire stood to their
arms, and instantly there burst from
all sides of their square a rolling fire
that would have destroyed every living
thing within 500 yards, had not Colonel
Huyshe, an officer who had served in
the China campaign of 1860, ordered a
bugler to sound "cease firing," when
the fusillade ended as suddenly as it
had begun.

One of the most extraordinary fea-
tures of this ghastly battlefield, said
the Times, is the great number of
camels that were killed—certainly
two-thirds of all that came out with
the column; 600 were supposed to
have been slain by our own fire, or
ripped open by the enemy. Scores of
the patient and unfortunate animals
were left outside the unfinished zeri-
bas and fell beneath our bullets, as the
enemy were swarming behind them;
and the disposal of the bodies of all
these camels became a matter for
serious consideration, if the position

...
where they lay was to be retained. It was now but too evident that the attempt to storm these advanced works was but a portion of a grand scheme devised by Osman Digna. Had it succeeded, an attack on Suakim would at once have followed, and the situation of our little garrison at Hasheen would have been rendered desperate.

The terrible night of the 22nd passed, and already, when dawn stole in, a sickening odour of blood pervaded the air; and, though shots whistled out of the bush, where the enemy were still lurking, the burial parties were detailed for their grim and sorrowful work—the interment in hasty graves of young comrades who but yesterday were full of life and manhood.

This affair produced some acrimonious correspondence in the newspapers at home, and, with other matters connected with the campaign, came before Parliament, when Sir George Campbell asked a question concerning the promised inquiry into the circumstances of the surprise of Sir John McNeill's zeribas.

To this the Marquis of Hartington replied thus:—"As Lord Wolseley was about to proceed to Suakim, he was instructed to make personal inquiries on the spot, and to give his opinion upon the events referred to. In a despatch, in which he acknowledged the receipt of these instructions, Lord Wolseley strongly deprecated any further inquiry. I may perhaps be allowed to read a short extract from the despatch:—'But, at the same time, I would point out that I myself strongly deprecate (save in the most extreme cases) inquiring too rigorously into the conduct of commanders after unsatisfactory engagements. It is hopeless to expect to find a General who does not make mistakes. The history of war shows that the greatest Generals have done so often. There may be cases in which these mistakes are of such a character as to call for the immediate removal of their author from his command. But, short of this, to examine minutely into any faulty dispositions that have been made, and to publish to the world a condemnation of them, simply takes away from the General implicated all the confidence of his troops, without, as far as I can see, any compensating good result whatever.' Up to the present time Lord Wolseley has not sent any further report on this subject. Under these circumstances, H.R.H. the Field Marshal Commanding in Chief is of opinion, in which I concur, that it would be advisable to await Lord Wolseley's return from Egypt before coming to any final decision on the whole question."

Another most important matter, brought before the House by Lord Bury, was the defective ammunition which was served out to the troops, and caused the jamming of rifles and machine-guns at more than one disastrous crisis. To this Lord Morley made the curiously indifferent reply that "up to that time the authorities had no reason to suppose that the ammunition was in any way defective, and at present the War Office knew
little as to the cause of jamming; but Lord Wolseley's representations were under consideration." This was hardly

"The Press censorship at Suakim," wrote the correspondent of the Standard some three months after these events,

satisfactory, and from that moment the subject was selfishly dropped; but such answers found an echo in all our camps in the Soudan where the honour and lives of our soldiers were thus left at issue.

"although exercised with the utmost courtesy and forbearance, naturally discouraged criticism. Nor can it be denied that, under the present conditions of war correspondence—restricted,
THE FIRST CATARACT OF THE NILE.

(After the Picture by Bernhard Fiedler.)
as it is almost entirely to telegraphic reports—it would be impossible, or at least hazardous, to allow complete latitude in this respect; and, if granted, it would be a doubtful boon, of which few correspondents, with a due sense of responsibility for the interests of the force they are allowed to accompany, would probably care to avail themselves. But the considerations which seal a correspondent’s lips in the field no longer hold good when the campaign is over, and the events with which he has to deal from day to day, under the exciting influences of the moment, have passed into the domain of history. I do not think I need make further apology for venturing to draw attention, in somewhat plainer language than I was able to use at the

and which sheer pluck and steadiness alone redeemed from the most disastrous consequences. Under the first impression produced by the newspaper reports from Suakim, several pertinent questions as to the conduct of recent operations were asked in the House, and even Lord Hartington himself was constrained to promise that an inquiry should at least be made into the causes which led to the fatal surprise at McNeill’s zeriba on the 22nd
March. But, like many other ministerial promises, the public still waits for its fulfilment. The political blunders of the Government seem to have driven into the background the military blunders of the responsible Generals; yet surely the latter involve a question which affects the interests of the country no less materially than the former, and, in justice to those who laid down their lives at Hasheen, and in the two actions later at the zeriba, the report (if any there be) should not be allowed to rest in the safe shelter of the War Office pigeon-holes.”

He then proceeded to ask twenty-three pertinent and stinging questions, as to the management of the Suakim portion of the campaign, with direct reference to two of the leaders therein. These were never satisfactorily answered, and to insert them here is apart from our narrative, but they made much noise at the time.

MEN OF THE INDIAN CONTINGENT IN KHAKI UNIFORM.

A, Men of the 45th Sikhs; B, of the 15th Sikhs
CHAPTER X.
OPENING OF THE ROAD TO TAMAI.


The night of the 22nd March was, as may be supposed, one of no small anxiety to those in the unfinished zeri-bas. In such unpleasant proximity to the bush, it was impossible not to expect another attack from a foe now inspired by vengeance for a double defeat, if Hasheen could be considered one; and that was done now which should have been done before the working parties began to break ground—patrols were thrown out and outpickets were strengthened; and all other requisite precautions were taken; while every man lay with his arms by his side, ready to fall into his proper place at the least alarm; but none was given, and, save for the brief scare made by a runaway mule, the night passed peacefully.

Sir Gerald Graham arrived at noon, on the 23rd, from Suakim, and marched on the corpse-strewn ground amid the joyous cheers of McNeill's column. He brought with him the Brigade of Guards, the Mounted Infantry, and 700 camels; and a new zeriba was constructed at some distance from the vicinity of the enemy's dead, while preparations were made to transfer the numerous wounded to Suakim, by a convoy which started in the afternoon escorted by the Grenadier Guards; but the Scots and Coldstreams remained behind. All the wounded were ordered on board the Hospital Ship Ganges. It was proposed to send home 250 sick and wounded to Britain speedily.

Nearly all the enemy killed on the 22nd were Hadendowas. The ground round the zeriba presented a terrible spectacle by daylight. The bodies of the Arabs lay over each other in layers and heaps, mingled with those of the camels and baggage animals; while all between lay spears, swords, shields, knives, knobkerries, and Remingtons. Owing to the labour involved it was resolved at one time not to construct another zeriba, and the troops were employed all day dragging the bodies of Arabs well to leeward of the works.

Lieutenant Richardson, of the 5th Lancers, was now found to be missing, and the worst was feared for him. On this day the numbers of killed and wounded were increased by those discovered in further searches round the zeriba.

The medical arrangements were excellent, and all the wounded before being carried away by the convoy were well cared for, while zeriba hospitals, built of biscuit boxes, were formed for future contingencies; but complaints were already heard on all hands of the insufferable odour arising from the bodies of men and animals. Mean-
while the entrenched positions seemed impregnable and the enemy showed no desire or design of attacking them.

The wounded Arabs confessed that many of the late Berber garrison had been in the attacking force—no pleasant story to hear, as it was one of the many garrisons we had come to rescue!

“The fanaticism of the Arabs is amazing,” wrote a correspondent. “After the fighting was virtually over, single Soudanese came dancing up to the zeribas to be shot. When our men were sent out to bring in the wounded rebels lying about in the bush, these latter crept bleeding on all fours, with spears in their mouths to attack them, and even hobbled on broken legs towards them. The enemy were busy all night removing their dead, and arms, and searching for the standards lost in the fray, one of which, when the Gardner was rushed, was actually planted on the gun.”
On all hands regrets were heard for the loss of brave comrades sacrificed in consequence of insufficient vigilance; and the old lesson of the uselessness of cavalry vedettes in a thick bush, and the folly of leaving any portion of a camp inadequately protected, while a cautiously-worded despatch to Lord Wolseley. It says not one word of any omission of duty; but rather praises Sir John McNeill:

"Suakim, March 23rd, 6.30 p.m."

"Advanced to zeriba, at 12 noon. Arrived there with the Guards and a large convoy."

"Am sending in wounded and baggage animals with the Indian Brigade and Grenadier Guards under Fremantle, leaving two battalions of Guards with McNeill's brigade. A stronger zeriba has been constructed, and I consider the position secure against any number of the enemy."

"The attack yesterday was very sudden and determined, and came unfortunately on our weakest point. The Sikhs charged the enemy with the bayonet. The Berkshire behaved splendidly, clearing out the zeriba when entered and capturing three standards. The Marines also behaved well. The Naval Brigade was much exposed and suffered severely. The Engineers also suffered heavily, being out working when attacked."

"The enemy suffered severely, more than 1,000 zeriba is being constructed, were there learned at a terrible price, as the graves lying in rows attested. Another such mishance must have led to the gravest results."

On the 23rd the enemy were seen to be active in all directions; parties were hovering near the town on the north and south, and others were moving at a distance towards the north and west.

The following is General Graham's
bodies being counted. Many chiefs of note have fallen.

"I deeply regret our serious loss; but am of opinion that McNeill did everything possible under the circumstances. The cavalry (5th Lancers) did their best to give information, but the ground being covered with bush, it was impossible to see any distance.

"The troops behaved extremely well. All the staff and regimental officers did their utmost. The enemy charged with reckless courage, leaping over the low zeriba, and although they gained a temporary success, they have received a severe lesson up to the present time, and have not attempted again to molest the zeriba."

Captain Garston of the 9th Bengal was reported to have been saved from a spear wound, by a shirt of mail which he wore under his tunic. However, it appeared that this shirt of mail consisted of a few small strips of chain work, picked up by the merest accident in a native bazaar, before leaving India. It occurred to him that these might serve a good turn when engaged with the enemy, and, with this end in view, his wife had fortunately contrived to fasten them here and there, within the lining of his uniform.

A despatch that was published at a subsequent period, gave some account of the cavalry operations on the eventful 22nd of March.

It stated that a squadron of the 20th Hussars which marched at 10 a.m. on that day, saw small parties of the enemy in their front between Suakim and McNeill's zeriba. These retired, and no fighting occurred, thus the squadron reached the latter place at 1 p.m. Half an hour later, Major Graves of this regiment, received a despatch from Major-General McNeill, and in consequence marched out. About two miles from the zeriba, his Hussars met a squadron of the 9th Bengal Lancers. Just then heavy firing was heard at the zeriba; the 20th and 9th were at once formed together, and hastened there. They had proceeded about a mile, when they encountered a large number of camels and other baggage animals, with many camp-followers, some native infantry, and a few British soldiers (scattered workers doubtless) in full flight for Suakim, and closely pursued by the Arabs, who were cutting them down, unresisted, on every hand.

Major Graves, on perceiving the state of affairs, with great presence of mind, changed front to the right, dismounted half his men on the direct line of pursuit, and some half-dozen volleys were fired, which had the effect of stopping it. Leaping to their saddles again, the cavalry pushed forward at full speed, repeating these tactics, and succeeding in driving back the Arabs.

About this time they were joined by a troop of the 5th Lancers (Royal Irish), just when a considerable body of the enemy were observed to be endeavouring to turn the left flank of the entire mounted force by the way towards the sea, in order to resume their pursuit of the helpless transport. Lieutenant Peyton was consequently ordered to take one troop of the 9th Bengal Cavalry and intercept them. This he did most effectually, and was fortunate enough to overtake and succour some twenty wounded men of ours, and eventually the pursuers were completely put to flight.
A few days after the attack on this luckless zeriba we find the following passage in the letter of an officer stationed at Suakim:

"We marched back (from Tamai) to the zeriba that night and bivouacked among the corpses outside, which, though buried, asserted their presence in the most emphatic way. Next day we marched back to Suakim, never again, I hope, to see McNeill's zeriba. 'Tom Cringle' ought to have been there to paint adequately the horrors of that six miles' march. When going from Suakim, the last three miles of the march were marked at every step by graves, Arab and Indian, so shallow, that from all oozed dark and hideous stains, and from many protruded mangled feet, half-striped grinning skulls, or ghastly hands, still clenched in the death agony, though reduced to little more than bone or sinew. Strewed around, thicker and thicker as we neared the scene of Sunday's fight, lay the festering bodies of males and camels; and round them hopped and fluttered, scarcely moving when our column passed, hundreds of kites and vultures. The ground was also thickly sown with hands and feet, partially dragged from their graves by the hyænas, and the awful stench and recoil of carrion which loaded the air will never, I think, be forgotten by any of us. Day after day we passed and re-passed over the same sickening scene with our convoys in blinding dust and under a scorching sun, obliged to move at a foot's pace to keep up with the weary camels and pick our steps carefully, for fear of setting foot on one of these dreadful heaps of corruption. I have not exaggerated in the least the horrors of that awful road.... I am now at Handooh, where we have plenty of water, a luxury which you in England can't possibly appreciate, nor ever will, till you spend a week in your clothes in a sand-storm, with the thermometer at 112° or thereabouts."

Before transference to the Ganges Hospital Ship, all the wounded were first brought to the Base Hospital at the H Redoubt in Suakim—a transference effected as quickly as possible—to keep the wards clear for fresh cases from the front. The sick-tents were pitched within an earthwork defended by 200 men of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. The Hospital, which was in charge of Brigade-Surgeon Tanner, was a model of cleanliness. Every comfort was ready there, including champagne, ice, arrowroot, and beef tea. On the 21st of March there were brought fifty-seven wounded from the zeriba, including Dr. Matthew Digan, R.N., of H.M.S. Sphinx, who had a gunshot wound in his arm-pit. Several were severely wounded by rifle-balls, and some by spears.

In the Ganges there had been, up to this date, 103 admissions since her arrival on the 15th of March, including eight officers. These were the Hon. Alan Charteris, with a spear wound in the left ear; Lieutenant Birch, of the East Surrey, with a spear wound in the arm; Majors Harvey, of the 5th Lancers, and Robertson, of the 9th Lancers, with a spear wound in the thigh; Lieutenant Campbell, of the Royal Marine Artillery, Staff-Surgeon Buckle, R.N., both with intermittent fever; Lieutenants Benson, of the Royal Artillery, and R. B. Finnie, 2nd Scots Guards, slightly affected by the sun. For coolness, the Ganges was moored at the farthest point out seaward in the harbour. The medical officer in charge, with four nursing sisters, was Surgeon-Major G. C. Gribben, formerly of the King's Own Borderers.

In his despatch of the 30th of May to Lord Wolseley, General Graham states that in the preceding March "the 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 28th, and 30th, strong convoys proceeded to the zeriba. Those of the 24th and
26th were attacked in the bush, the enemy being repulsed on each occasion with great loss. As the enemy were reported to have withdrawn from Tamai, a reconnaissance was made on April 1, which proved that they were still in some force, and I determined to advance and endeavour to compel them to fight. And here," he adds, "I instant, his letter containing statements for which we cannot vouch:

"A worse or more dangerous position for a camp it is hard to imagine, and a better might have been laid out by a boy fresh from Sandhurst. I do not know whether you have heard of all the nightly attacks to which we have been subjected regularly since yesterday week, when five fellows stole past our scattered redoubts and outposts and made their way up to the head-quarters camp, which was also-

may be permitted to remove a somewhat confusing idea — that Osman Digna is a great and warlike character. The facts, as ascertained, are, that he himself never appears on or near the scene of conflict, but is content to urge on his men from some safe position or inaccessible fastness."

And now we shall give the details of the operations disposed of in this brief paragraph. As regards the position and strength of our post at Suakim, an officer wrote thus, on the 16th

lately unprotected, and stole Gordon's favourite horse and nearly cut his groom in pieces. I assure you we have had a hard time of it, and it is only for the last two nights that we have had any feeling of security. Our little camp is now fortified by a ditch, earthworks and bastions, and has a guard of two hundred and fifty men, and although we are called out two or three times every night, we feel safer than we have done. Our great danger now is being fired on by the other camps, for though so placed as to be too far apart for mutual protection, we are near enough to cause reciprocal damage. Any night during the past week, if the Arabs had made a raid in any numbers, we must all have had our throats cut. No less than two thousand men were on guard every night, and what with fatigue duties all day, we are nearly worked off our legs. The thermometer is eighty-seven degrees in the tents at night."
PROPOSED ROUTE OF THE SUAHEBER RAILWAY—WADI YUMGA, NEAR ARIAB.
Several other letters, about this time, appeared in the public prints, with the same complaints.

On the 23rd March, the zeribas in front had the first of the series of daily supplies of rations and water, sent out under a strong escort, while prowling parties of the enemy were still visible from Suakin. It was reported under this date, that the railway had now been constructed as far as the camp, and that a locomotive was running on it regularly with excellent results, but that the further construction of the line had been suspended, awaiting the results of the forthcoming military operations.

During all the 24th of March, the Guards and Sikh Infantry, in advanced positions, were cutting and burning a wide road through the bush to the front. The emaciated appearance of many of the enemy's dead, whom they found scattered about, seemed to confirm the rumour of the scarcity of food in Tamai. All that day our troops at the zeriba were busy burying the dead. Besides the bodies of women—said to be some thirty by one account—they found those of old men and boys, thus showing the fierce religious rancour of the tribes.

On that morning the Sikhs and Sappers under escort, started on the Tamai road to construct another advanced zeriba.

"I am just returned," wrote a correspondent, "from accompanying a convoy sent out with stores to the forces in front. We advanced three miles in the direction of the zeriba, and at that point overtook the Sappers and Sikhs, who had started some time before but had been busy road-making. The enemy, still full of fight seemingly, was hovering about us in small parties of mounted men; we therefore waited on the way for the Guards and Marines, who had been directed to join us and take on the supplies. We halted thus in the bush-covered plain for more than an hour, every precaution being taken to prevent another surprise; the troops standing to their arms in a well-formed square; the camels and mules all hobbled to prevent any sudden stampede on the part of these nervous beasts."

Soon after heavy volleys were heard in front of this halted party, and it proved to be a smart rifle-fire delivered by the Guards advancing from the zeriba, who had been assailed by clouds of the enemy's skirmishers, ere they could form the junction with the party from Suakin. Three officers, Captain Hon. North Dalrymple, of the Scots Guards (son of the Earl of Stair), Lieutenant MacLurcan, and Lieutenant A. E. Marchant, of the Marines, were wounded, the first-named in the leg. The Guards carried with them Private Leigh, of the Coldstreams, who had received a similar wound, and they reported that they had seen several women fighting in the Arab ranks. These African Amazons bore spears and shields, and one, at least, had been shot down. The zeriba, they added, had been fired into on Monday night, the 23rd, and also attacked, but only in a desultory and
half-hearted fashion at dawn of morning. All had the same story to tell, that its neighbourhood was in an awful and truly horrible condition; that the air all around it was loaded with sickening odours from the corpses of men and camels festering in the fierce sun, before they could be buried; and that the water stored near at hand had become infected by the foul atmosphere and heat, and become black and fetid.

According to the latest official return, now issued on the 24th inst., the British losses in the engagement of Sunday last, exclusive of camp-followers, were 6 officers and 94 men killed, 6 officers and 136 men wounded, and 1 officer and 70 men missing. These casualties include those of the Indian Contingent, who had 3 officers and 52 men killed, 4 officers and 71 men wounded, and 38 men missing. The missing were still unaccounted for.

The loss inflicted on the enemy in the skirmishing of the 24th was reported as being over 700 men, and that no fewer than thirty-four women were killed.

On the summits of the hills the cold at night became very trying now, as contrasted with the intense heat in the daytime; and on the 25th the Hasheen zeribas were evacuated by the Surrey Regiment without loss, although several thousands of the enemy were in sight during the movement, and appeared to be threatening the retreat of the corps, which, however, they abstained from attacking, deterred by a couple of rounds from a Krupp gun.

The Surreys destroyed the zeribas and redoubts, and marched safely into camp. Their deserted works were immediately occupied by the enemy.

At this time the absence of so many troops at the advanced posts, together with the necessity for furnishing strong escorts for the convoys that traversed the sandy plain daily, rendered the task of guarding the extensive lines at Suakim one of difficulty and anxiety; but no precaution was neglected. Nevertheless the Arabs, undismayed by the bright, weird flashes of the electric light from the harbour, continued to prowl about the neighbourhood, and to do to death any unwary straggler; thus, on the night of the 24th two Greek civilians were barbarously murdered by a band of them.

The Engineers' Balloon Corps, under Major Templar and Lieutenant MacKenzie, made their first essay in connection with actual operations on the 25th March at Suakim. The balloon was successfully inflated and sent up, to the blank astonishment of the natives, who were all agog at a phenomenon which seemed to exceed even the wonders of the electric light and the telegraphic wire, and throughout the day the frequenters of the bazaars were in a ferment on the subject. They were unable to satisfy themselves as to the origin and uses of a war balloon, and it was known that the wild theories of the native wiseacres would lose nothing in colouring by the time they reached the ears of Osman Digna.

The balloon was taken to the right of the Water Ports and filled from compressed reservoirs the night before
the ascent. At daylight, when the convoy was ready to start on the 25th for the zeriba, Lieutenant Mackenzie ascended to an altitude of 200 feet, tenant Mackenzie reported that the bush, which, when seen from the ground, is dense and obscures the view, seemed quite open from a height.

He saw the enemy's camel posts a mile out on the road towards Hasheen. A body of them was observed retiring towards Tamai, and a third, near the sea-shore, he could see engaged in capturing or destroying McNeill's stampeded camels. The enemy were

and was then towed by a rope attached to a waggon in the centre of the marching square. Major Templar was in charge below, a post requiring much care and attention, in order to keep the waggon steady, if possible, so as to avoid breaking the rope. Lieu-
also seen at 400 yards’ distance from the convoy, and they came out into the space left in front to examine the balloon, doubtless with fear and great wonder. Messages were passed between Lieutenant Mackenzie and tenant Mackenzie what he would do in the event of a disaster below,” wrote the Times correspondent. “He replied that he had thought of that point while in the air, and had decided to come down and anchor 50 feet from the ground, and defend the anchor from the balloon until rescued.”

Major Templar was completely satisfied with the result of the ascent, as proving that a war balloon can render good service far from home, and remain up nine hours with gas made at Chatham. Besides the balloon, he had a portable lime-search-light, which was constantly used in the camp and zeriba.
The same correspondent had an interview with the chief of our "Friendlies," who stated that Osman Digna had issued orders to his followers to pursue the following tactics:—Small parties of his men were to lie concealed in bushes or hollows scooped in the sand, while others diverted our attention by attacking us with their fire. Those in ambush were then to try and break the square, and, if successful, the main body was to attack in force. The chief also asserted that in the assault on the convoy, when the Guards had some men hit, the men told off for the attack hesitated, owing to the experiences of the 22nd March, and were taunted as cowards by Osman Digna, who, according to General Graham's despatch, seemed particularly careful how he exposed his own person to the chances of lead or steel.

The convoy, over which Lieutenant Mackenzie and his captive balloon floated, did not reach the zeriba without experiencing some little opposition; but that which started at seven in the morning of the 25th under General Graham, with the bulk of his staff, had a sharp encounter. The convoy was laden chiefly with water, and was escorted by the Grenadier Guards, the 70th, 53rd, and 28th Native Infantry. The 20th Hussars covered the advance. Four miles from the town the convoy was attacked by the enemy, who were not in great strength, but showed the utmost determination. Steadily was their onslaught met, and file-firing was poured into them with the most deadly effect. They were 5,000 strong, yet only three of our men were wounded by bullets, but not a camel-load was lost, and ultimately the enemy retreated to the hills, leaving behind them about two hundred dead, among whom were found the bodies of three women and a boy—four boys and one woman, according to another account. With the exception of one combined charge, they contented themselves with a very ineffective rifle fire upon the square, as their bullets went high overhead. Their charge was chiefly checked by the Grenadier Guards.

It was an extraordinary sight to see these Arabs, rushing on to certain destruction, apparently mad with excitement and fanaticism, without a hope of victory and inspired only with one desire—to die in battle. "It was noticeable," wrote a correspondent, "that a great change has taken place since the encounter on Sunday 22nd. The enemy then attacked with a resolution and courage begotten of their confidence in their superior numbers. On that day they fought as if they hoped to win. In the last two attacks upon our convoys this has not been the case. The majority hung back, and evidently shrank from coming to close quarters with the terrible line of fire round our square, while those who charged did so in the spirit of the Afghan Ghazis, desiring death, but hoping to kill at least one foe before dying."

The square continued firing for half an hour, in volleys, whenever the Arab groups showed themselves in force
among the mimosa bushes. At the end of that time they retired out of sight, their retreat being hastened by some shells from the Artillery who were signalled to come out from the zeriba and meet the column.

One of our three wounded received his injury from an Arab, who had been wounded as he charged the square, and then shamming death lay perfectly rigid, till the front face of the square marched over his body, when he rose on his elbow, and speared one of the Grenadier Guards, by whom he was at once despatched.

The arrival of the convoy was hailed with cheers by the troops in the zeribas, as they were very short of water, some camels which had bolted from the convoy of the 24th, and were lost, having been chiefly laden with that liquid, so priceless in the desert. The consequence was that, in the zeribas, the troops had been on the extremely small ration of a pint per man, with a gallon to each camel. This was at a time when the heat was increasing seriously, and though the pleasant sea breezes tempered it, even at noon, there were, on this day, several cases of sunstroke on the march, and among the holders of the zeribas.

There, wrote one who was present on the 26th, "the stench is still terrible, in spite of the efforts which have been made to minimise it, by burning the carcases of the animals and burying the dead. Unfortunately, many of the bodies of the native followers and transport men, killed in the stampede on Sunday, still remain unburied in the bushes; this state of things is unavoidable, as burying parties going out to search for them would be liable to attack, and has created a bad impression in the minds of the rest of the natives."

A serious difficulty now occurred with the native labourers employed by the officers of the Transport and Commissariat, when they all struck work, demanding higher wages. Whether this movement was the result of outside emissaries, or was simply a strike for pay was unknown.

The Grenadiers remained at the zeribas, but the Scots Guards returned with the column and convoy to Suakim.

Later on in the day, General Graham's scouts captured a woman who, in the agonies of thirst, had left her people to seek for water, and was brought into Suakim. For a time she was very reticent, but the kind treatment she received afterwards impressed her favourably, and she gave some valuable information respecting the state of matters at the camp of Osman Digna. She stated that 900 of the Amaras under Ali Rebak had deserted him on Wednesday 25th March—the preceding day—and retired into the mountains. That those encountered by the convoy were part of 5,000 men he had sent to pursue and punish them; and that Osman's forces at Tamai mustered 20,000 men, divided into four columns of equal strength, and each displaying seven standards. But notwithstanding the apparent intelligence of the woman, and the inherent probability of her statements, the account she gave was
not confirmed by the observations of our spies.

On the night of the 25th, four Government Staff nurses, and two belonging to the Princess of Wales’s
faces of our sick and wounded men brightened up when they saw them passing through the wards.

It was suggested that the ropes by which the war-balloon was towed should

branch of the National Aid Society arrived at Suakim, and were distributed as follows:—One Government nurse to the Ganges, three to the Base Hospital, and the other two to that on Quarantine Island. Much satisfaction was felt at the arrival of these humane ladies; all heartily welcomed them, and it was touching to see how the pale
be cased, several feet from the ground with a protecting shield, capable of resisting the cut of an Arab sword or of deflecting a chance bullet or spear thrust, for if once the balloon got adrift, both it and the officer in the car might be lost. “It would appear we have made a huge mistake,” said the Globe, at this time, “in the course we have
adopted for reducing the Soudanese to submission. The balloon sent up from Suakim has terrified them more than all the fighting we have done; and if, as suggested, rockets were used against them in the bush, they would be more terrified still. A rocket would, of course, continue its way until spent, on his final advance into the hills, the troops who had fought so splendidly at El Teb and Tamai, became hopelessly demoralised and disorganised by the terrible heat. The British soldier is not a salamander, nor is the Indian sepoy either, for the matter of that, and after the temperature rises beyond any obstacles it might meet with only deflecting it, and rendering it still further an object of awe and wonder. Cannot some one suggest any other resources of civilisation?" But it is somewhat singular that these missiles which were so effective in the Zulu bush, were not yet resorted to in the war in the Soudan.

The increased cases of sunstroke were now creating anxiety and alarm. "General Graham," said the Globe, "is having precisely the same experience as he gained this time last year, when a certain level, both are liable to fall to pieces in a military sense. The worst of it is, that the marching and fighting must be performed in the daytime, as it would be too risky to attempt nocturnal operations in the presence of such vigilant enemies. Nor will there be very appreciable diminution of the heat when the hill country is reached. On the summits there may be something of a breeze which, by the help of a very powerful imagination, might be considered cool and refreshing; but in the valleys, and on the slopes, the atmo-
sphere will be more unbearable than even in the Suakim plain. If, then, sunstroke is already making gaps in the ranks, what may be expected when the real summer heat sets in? Those who have travelled in the Eastern Soudan at that season, describe the heat as absolutely prostrating. An egg placed in the sand, becomes roasted in a few minutes, and even the Arabs, case-hardened as they are, keep out of the sunshine as much as possible. It is a profound mistake to suppose that Europeans in tropical climates soon become acclimatised to the heat. Quite the contrary is the case. At first their physical strength, acquired in more favoured climes, enables them to stand the exhaustion, but as that becomes sapped they suffer more and more, until at last they become completely enervated."

On Friday, the 27th of March, no convoy was sent to the zeriba, as it was necessary to give at least one day’s rest to the overworked troops. On the preceding night the enemy fired some shots into the zeriba on the Tamai Road, but no one was injured.

The comparative monotony of the campaign was broken, on Sunday 29th, by the arrival in the harbour at midday of the Iberia, with the first portion of the Australian Contingent, consisting of the artillery and some infantry. The crew of H.M.S. Carysfort manned the rigging, and welcomed them with three hearty British cheers, to which they vigorously responded. On landing, they were met by General Ewart, commanding the line of communication, and his Aide-de-Camp. The column consisted of 28 officers, 500 privates, 30 men of the Ambulance Corps, and 30 of the Artillery, Colonel Richardson commanding the whole.

All the infantry wore scarlet tunics, with white helmets, and black knapsacks. The artillery were armed with repeating carbines. Headed by the drums and fifes of the Surrey and Shropshire Regiments, they marched along the causeway from the Shore Island, the whole route being lined by an extraordinary heterogeneous gathering, which, in itself was a remarkable sight—Sepoys, British privates, Arabs of the town, Aden camel-drivers, Greeks and camp-followers of all kinds; and strong and deep was the enthusiasm with which the troops received them, all the more perhaps, that they wore the familiar red coat, a rare sight in Suakim then. In line the Australians received Sir Gerald Graham with a general salute as he rode along their front, and then, forming them in hollow square, he addressed them thus:

"Colonel Richardson, officers and soldiers of New South Wales—In the name of the force which I have the honour to command, I give you a hearty welcome. You are our comrades in arms, who will share the toils, and I hope the glories of this expedition. I am proud to command such a force! You belong to our Empire on which the sun never sets, and every British heart beats with the glorious spirit which knits it into an Empire. We honour the feeling which led you to leave your pleasant homes, to war against the desert and its savage inhabitants. You are soldiers as well as Britons and will cheerfully submit to the privations and severe discipline necessary for the safety of an army in the field. The eyes of our common country are on you, and I am sure you will do credit to the splendid colony which sent you out, and the race to which you belong."
Three cheers were then given for the Queen and the General, after which the Contingent marched to its camp near the right Water Fort. This remarkable force was composed of men belonging to all the social classes; prosperous colonists—men strong, straight, and well set-up, from the country and the bush, retired soldiers and artisans. Their physique was splendid; their average height was in excess of any British infantry, and they were no "boy-soldiers of the new system," as their average age was over thirty years. The medical staff spoke highly of their stamina and general health; and their hearty expressions of patriotism were a perfect revelation of Colonial pride in the Mother Country.

On the preceding day a large convoy of animals laden with water had been escorted without molestation to the zeribas; but there were some cases of sunstroke, especially among the men of the Berkshire Regiment. During its march the convoy heard the din of artillery. This was caused by the Krupp gun in McNeill's zeriba, which had opened on a force of the enemy coming from Tamai. Their intention had evidently been to attack the convoy, but a few rounds put them to flight.

The zeriba was found to be greatly improved in every respect. Profiting by the lesson of the 22nd, a rough wooden tower had been constructed, affording a wide view of the adjacent country; and there watchmen were constantly on duty, so that during daylight none could approach unseen; therefore Major Templar's balloon was used very sparingly, and more with a view to excite the superstitious fears of the Arabs, as its use was utterly beyond their comprehension.

The Arabs were reported to be looting the transport Arafat, which had gone ashore westward of Gebel Teir, so the Carysfort was sent to succour and protect her crew, who were making a desperate struggle for their lives. The Carysfort found her full of water; all on board had escaped, and the Arabs plundered her as soon as she was deserted.

Great disappointment now began to be felt by rumours that Osman Digna did not intend to make any stand at Tamai after all, and that the lessons of the recent fighting had been taken so much to heart by his followers, that they were deserting in thousands, and that he had now but a few hundreds under his standard. On the other hand our spies asserted that he had only shifted his headquarters to Tamanieb.

Tamai is situated in a rocky ravine, about four miles from McNeill's zeriba; there the intervening plain slopes gently upwards to the base of the first hills, in a vale or wady of which the village lies. These slopes are clothed with underbrush, scrub, and high grass, dotted with groups of mimosa and cactus, in some places seven feet in height, and interspersed with dry stony water-courses. They terminate abruptly, half a mile from Tamai, where a strip of broken, rocky ground occurs, traversed by long hollows sixty feet deep and from 200 to 300 feet wide, with steep sides impassable for cavalry. This diffic-
cult terrain is backed by a ridge of red granite and gneiss, a most formidable position, now held by Osman with whatever troops adhered to him and a chief named Ali Saoud.

Instead of being added to the 2nd Brigade as was at first intended, the Australians were attached to that of they had been well drilled and had many old soldiers in their ranks. The Colonial Artillery was brigaded with the Royal Artillery.

On Monday 30th March a convoy went to the zeribas, and returned without a sight of the enemy; nor for two preceding days had anything been seen

the Guards, an honour which yielded them great gratification; and the officers of the Scots Guards gave their officers a dinner in camp. The utmost anxiety to meet the enemy prevailed among them; and, after having come so far to fight, every rumour of the dispersal of Osman's men caused them keen disappointment. They had now donned their khaki uniform, and, by the manner in which they went through their evolutions, showed that of them in the vicinity of these forts. A white flag was seen flying over the village of Hasheen, and some bodies of Arabs were visible retiring up the valley of that name. The General regarded all this news as important, and held frequent conferences with the Intelligence Department, the local Government officials, and the chiefs of the friendly tribes, as it was possible that the veiled movements of the Arabs were a ruse to lull us into security, and
enable them to burst from an ambush on any advancing force attempting to reach Tamai.

On the 31st it was reported that even the latter place had been abandoned by Osman Digna, who had gone, some pursue Osman into his fastnesses among the hills. He proposed to push the railway as far on as Handoub, and strongly fortify that place.

It was now generally supposed that, if the Egyptian colours were removed

said to Tokar, others to Berber, sending all the women of his force away two days before. A squadron of the 5th Irish Lancers and a troop of the 9th Bengal Cavalry, now rode to Hasheen, and when returning, saw a party of the enemy, thirty men on foot and twenty on camels, who fired fifteen shots at our troopers without hitting one, so their fire was not returned. But the General decided, for the present, not to

from Suakim, and the British alone left flying, many of the hostile tribes would capitulate, and that the labour of those starving people might be utilised upon the railway. As the white flag was still fluttering at Hasheen, General Graham decided to ascertain, if possible, whether it meant that the enemy were anxious to treat. Some Hussars rode out, and returned reporting that nothing could be seen
anywhere of the enemy, who had evidently abandoned their advanced position. So, in view of the inexplicable and mysterious movements of the enemy, an advance upon Tamai, which was to have taken place next day, was wisely postponed.

The alleged desertion of Osman’s men was said to be due to the terror of General Graham’s letter left at Hasheen; and current reports said that, when its contents became known in the rebel ranks, it led to the departure of the Amara tribe. The latter pointed out to Osman that they had been badly beaten in almost every engagement, even with small parties of the British; and whilst those who remained with him were in constant danger of being slain, the friendly tribesmen were well treated at Suakim, and paid liberal wages for working on the railway and wharves.

Osman was said to have been greatly enraged by this plain speaking, and sternly warned the tribe that any man deserting the cause would be put to death. Notwithstanding these threats, they went off in a body, but were pursued by the Hadendowas. A sanguinary conflict ensued, in which some hundreds of the Amaras were slain, and the remainder were afterwards compelled to return to Tamai.

After a short time, it was discovered that his forces, as an army, had disappeared; that its posts in all directions, Hasheen, Tamai and Tamanieb, had been abandoned, and that there was no combined strength within a considerable radius round Suakim.

Finding himself deserted by all but a few hundred, he had now retired to his home at Erkowit. Such was the story brought in by spies and friendly natives; but it was urged, that any immediate withdrawal of our forces, like that which took place after our victories last year, would enable him to regain his prestige and authority, when the whole work would have to be done over again, whereas, if we could push on the railway, and take a firm hold of the country, he would never more be able to hold up his head.

Any intention of leaving had not yet been mooted; while the 17th Company of the Commissariat and Transport Corps, 200 strong, under Commissary-General Collard, and a company of the Royal Engineers, under Lieutenants Cotter and Baldwin, were sent to strengthen Suakim garrison, together with Captain C. F. C. Beresford, and forty-five non-commissioned officers and men of the Post-Office Volunteers, to work the telegraph lines, in addition to Lieutenant-Colonel Lee and Captain Dorn of the Royal Engineers—all in the Ghoorka, B. I. Steamship, which had on board 700 tons of stores for Graham’s column.

On the 29th of March, a Guardsman, writing from Suakim to his parents in Dundee, said, “I have done a little of everything here—slaying, grave-digging, and body-snatching. We had to drag the dead and bury them as they lay about, like rotten sheep. I never saw anything like it. I shall be glad when the time arrives for us to come home again. I cannot get any water to drink.”
CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL GRAHAM'S ADVANCE TO TAMAI.


"On the 2nd April," says General Graham, "the force advanced to the zeriba, and thence to the Teselah Hills, near Tamai, and on the 3rd occupied and destroyed Tamai itself, the absence of any formidable opposition proving that Osman Digna—notwithstanding his boasted intention of driving the British forces into the sea—had not forgotten his defeat at the battle of Tamai last year, and that the actions at Hasheen and the zeriba, and the repulse of the attack on the convoys, had rendered him quite unable to collect any body of men to meet us in the field.

"I did not advance to Tamanieb, because there seemed little or no probability of the enemy making any stand, and much labour would have been required to make the water at Tamai sufficient for the horses and transport animals of the force preparatory to a move.

"The enemy had now been driven from the positions they had taken up at Hasheen and Tamai, and their forces were destroyed or dispersed. I therefore determined to endeavour to fulfil the second part of my instructions, and proceed to open the route for the railway. This work could not have been commenced earlier with advantage. Indeed, had time permitted, it would have been better to have delayed the commencement of the railway till the rolling stock and plant had been disembarked."

The details of the operations thus summarised were as follows.

On the 2nd of April the troops at Suakim found the situation suddenly changed. The day before it seemed almost as if there was to be no more fighting, and the energies of the column were to be devoted to the more peaceful work of railroad-making; but now it was about to move forward, and fight, perhaps, another desperate battle with the Arabs, leaving the Loyal Poorbeahs and Details to hold Suakim.

It was a beautiful moonlight morning, when, at 2 o'clock on the 1st April, the bugles blew reveille at Suakim, and the troops turned out with alacrity; but the start was delayed for some time in consequence of the difficulty of getting into marching order the great and unwieldy convoy, which consisted of one thousand camels, and fifteen hundred mules, laden with many stores, but chiefly with water. Thus it was four o'clock before the column got in motion, and formed in one great hollow square around the transport.

The marching force consisted of the Scots and Coldstream Guards, the Australians, the Royal Marines, the
53rd (Shropshire), the 70th (Surrey), the 15th Sikhs (late Loodiana Regiment), and the 28th Bombay Light Infantry. The sight of the column, with all its points glittering, was most picturesque in the silver light of the moon, but seemed even more so when plain was found to be deserted by the Arabs—large numbers of the latter were seen hovering on the hills. Colonel Grant, who was in command of this reconnoitring force, considered that a further advance, unsupported as he was, would be hazardous, and therefore

he returned to the zeribas, and heliographed rearward the result of his reconnaissance, which created quite an enthusiasm; “and it was singular,” we are told, “to see how the demeanour of the troops, who were looking forward with disgust to a long period of inactivity, varied only by harassing night attacks, was instantly transformed. All was briskness and excitement; the Australians, whose disappointment at the reported retirement of the enemy had been intense, being extremely

the latter became blended with the rosy Egyptian dawn, while, with its centre crowded by so many animals, it made a passage slowly through the dense bush. The work became more easy as the daylight broadened, but it was not until nine a.m. that McNeill’s zeribas were reached.

Long before this the latter had been left at daybreak by the Mounted Infantry and Indian Lancers, who advanced in the direction of Tamai. On approaching the latter—though the
MOUNTED INFANTRY SKIRMISHING NEAR TAMAI.
enthusiastic when they found that their long journey had not, after all, been in vain."

It was supposed that the discrepancy between the reports of the spies and the facts discovered by Colonel Grant and his party, arose from the circumstance that Osman Digna's forces, learning we were about to advance, had sent their wives, children, and stores into the mountains in case of a reverse, and rumour, on which small dependence could be placed, stated his strength to be 25,000 men. However, it was thought possible that he might have been reinforced from Berber, and the appearance of these succours had brought back the tribesmen, who had retired to the hills, and determined them on making one more effort to crush us.

On the other hand, two chiefs of the Nurab tribe made their submission on the preceding day at Suakim with 3,000 of their followers.

At the zeribas the column halted an hour for breakfast, when the march was resumed. The 28th Bombay Infantry took charge of the posts, relieving the Grenadier Guards, which, with the Berkshire (or old 49th) and the Naval Brigade, were now added to the column for the general advance on Tamai. Hitherto the heat had not been oppressive, but after the zeribas were left the sun seemed to gain in power, and before the next objective point had been reached, several men became quite exhausted and had to fall out. Generally, however, the mass of the column bore the fatiguing march exceedingly well.

The cavalry scouts were thrown across the front and far away on the right and left flanks, but no sign of the enemy was seen, save about a hundred men on camels moving along the hill-sides on the right. The square formation was kept, and the foot of the Teselah Hills was reached an hour before sunset, "but without firing a shot," says the Daily Chronicle. Tamai and its well-known springs were now two miles in front.

Major Templar's balloon, which was inflated without difficulty, did excellent service on the march, the look-out men in the car instantly detecting lurking bodies of the enemy, who, under ordinary circumstances, would have escaped all notice. The conditions were not particularly favourable for ballooning, in consequence of the strength of the wind, which, indeed, dashed the balloon against a mimosa tree. The damage done was not great, but reparable, and pending which, through the forethought of Major Templar, there was another balloon available.

At Teselah Hills the column halted while the Mounted Infantry and a squadron of the Bengal Cavalry pushed on to Tamai, which they found to be deserted by the enemy, small parties of whom, scattered along the steep slopes, fired shots at them, but at too long range to produce any effect; and having achieved their purpose, our men fell back on the column, when, on receiving their report, General Graham determined to postpone further operations till next day, and the troops at once set about
making themselves as comfortable as they could for the night.

The ground on which they were to bivouac was a hollow between the Teselah Hills, and was almost the same spot occupied by General Graham's force in the preceding year before he attacked Osman Digna.

The hills were taken possession of by a wing of the Grenadier Guards, with some guns, while the rest of the troops proceeded as usual to cut down bushes and form a zeriba. According to the Daily Chronicle, "the troops passed an almost uneventful night, the bulk of them in the main zeriba, and others in similar positions on the spurs immediately adjacent."

According to the Standard, "the evening passed off quietly, and the troops, who had been on their feet nearly twenty hours, were sleeping soundly, when towards midnight they were roused by a dropping fire being opened upon them by small parties of the enemy. Distant as the fire was, it was by no means ineffective. The bullets pattered into the great enclosure, killing one man (of the Surrey), wounding two others, and killing several of the transport animals."

The Grenadier Guards on the heights at once commenced volley firing, while the Artillery burst two or three shrapnel shells over the heads of the Arabs, who at once decamped, and the bivouac was not disturbed again; but this affair gave promise of a skirmish before reaching Tamai.

At sunrise on the 3rd the bugles sounded the "rouse" and "fall in," and the column prepared to move forward, when it was joined by the cavalry, who came clattering up from a rear zeriba, where they had passed the night. The 53rd, 70th, and Naval Brigade remained at Teselah Hills to guard the post formed there, and with it a great proportion of the transport animals, while the column, thus reduced to 7,000 men, now pushed towards Tamai, where all hoped to find Osman Digna.

The formation now adopted for the advance was one suggested by General Hudson (commanding the Australians), who had used it during the Sutlej campaign, where it proved admirably adapted for hill-fighting, its chief feature consisting in deploying from the rear, which in a military sense is the act of unfolding or expanding a force.

The 49th in line were the front face of the formation, with the Marines on their right flank and the 15th Sikhs on their left. In the intervals on either flanks were two companies of the Guards.

The brigade of the latter came next, in open column of companies—we are not told at what distance, whether quarter or wheeling, the Grenadiers on the right, the Scots in the centre, and the Australians on the left. The Coldstreams were in rear, marching in quarter column of companies. They were flanked by the Madras Sappers and Miners. Six guns of the Royal Horse Artillery were out on the right flank, and mule and rocket batteries (we read of the
latter for the first time) were on the left.

Tamai consists of a group of five Arab villages with the wells in the and prepared to open fire, while the mule and rocket batteries were held in reserve at the base of the slope. The ground over which the troops advanced

centre. Two villages on the right of the line, by which we advanced, were waterless, and had been abandoned by the enemy. In those on the left, parties of Arabs could be seen moving, and against them the column advanced, as it did so deploying for attack.

Mounting some high ground on the right, the Royal Artillery unlimbered was very rough and broken. It was free from scrub, but was torn into deep stony gullies, and encumbered by jutting rocks and great boulders. Over, or between, these obstructions, the troops worked their way steadily and quietly, while managing, not without an effort, to keep their line with excellent precision.
BURYING A COMRADE AT TAMAI.
Every man was on the alert, for at any moment the enemy might leap out of the deep gullies, and hurl their yelling thousands on our front. But except from ridges on the opposite side of the valley, where some two hundred, armed with rifles, kept up a fire at about a thousand yards' range, there was no sign of the enemy.

The troops on that flank returned their fire briskly; but the foe lurking among the rocks afforded them but a dubious mark, while their own solid formation presented an ample target to the Arab rifles, and several casualties occurred. Precisely at 10 o'clock a.m. Tamai was reached, and the villages were found to be deserted; but it was quite evident that they had lately been occupied by a large force. Most of the huts bore unmistakable traces of having been tenanted only an hour before, and had been hastily evacuated, as the prevailing confusion plainly proved.

Fresh traces of camels and cattle were scattered all over the place, and altogether it was apparent that more than a thousand men had been there over-night. No time was wasted in the village, the immediate anxiety of the troops being to secure the wells in the wady, and draw therefrom a welcome supply of cool water. The result of their examination was most disappointing. Not only were they found to be newly filled up, which had been half expected, but on being sounded, it was discovered that the water was practically exhausted.

It was thought extremely probable that this failure of the water supply had much to do with the disappearance of Osman Digna's forces; for in the preceding year, after our victory, a fair supply of water was found in the wells, though that battle was fought three weeks earlier than this second advance, and the wells might well have been dry at that date. Great though our convoy was, it had brought only three days' water supply for the whole force, and this serious failure of the wells at Tamai determined General Graham to abandon his intention of following Osman, who had retired to Tamanieb, where also would, no doubt, be found waterless wells; in which case the position of the force would be most serious, and great suffering would be endured on the return march to the sea-coast.

Leaving the village, the square formation was abandoned for a time, and the troops made straight for a sandy nullah, where it was known they would find wells. The order of the return march was the reverse of that in advancing. The Artillery halted occasionally and shelled the Arabs on the hills; and the Cavalry, before they followed, gave to the flames the five villages of Tamai.

Moving on the left of the column, the Mounted Infantry came upon a small party of fifty resolute Arabs, who were actually attempting to turn the flank of several thousand men! A fire dispersed them, but not before they had shot one of the Mounted Infantry and one of the Berkshire Regiment. The other casualties during the day
amounted to twelve wounded, including Lieut. Lalor of the Marines.

"As we fell back," wrote one who was present, "it was curious to see the handful of Arabs making their way, parallel with our march, on the distant hills to our right, running from rock to rock like rabbits, and keeping up a constant fire upon a strong column, but in a half-hearted way. The nullah, however, was quickly and practically occupied without much opposition, save from some upon a ridge, who were cleared off it by the Berkshire and Marines."

Thus, owing to the unfortunate failure of water at that most critical time, the whole course of the intended operations had been arrested. It may have been that Osman Digna would have fallen back from El Tamai on Tamanieb at our approach, as he did; still, it would have been a satisfaction to every man in the column could it have occupied that position also. But now it seemed impossible, in any case, to follow him into his fastnesses among those waterless hills.

"It was a severe disappointment to the troops," wrote a correspondent, "after their immense exertions, after the efforts of the Transport Corps in preparing for the advance, after the marches in the scorching sunshine, after the heavy loss of life in previous engagements, and after the enormous cost of the whole expedition, that the enemy should refuse to wait our attack, and that the want of water should prevent our following him up. The temporary occupation of five wretched villages was a poor result to show after so much toil, effort, and suffering."

Two days of such work fully justified General Graham's remarks to the Australian Contingent, in which he placed the dreadful desert as the first and deadliest enemy to be encountered, its fierce denizens being almost a secondary consideration.

Meanwhile the Sappers had taken possession of the chief well in the nullah, and set to work to improve it, the Arabs having done their utmost to spoil the scanty water supply. It was almost filled with sand, and when, after much labour it was finally cleared, the result in water was miserable indeed. Attention was now turned to the other wells, six in number, the working parties of Sappers being protected the while by the Guards and Australians.

Not one of these seven wells was worthy of the name. What little water was there was unfit to drink by man or beast. Close by a pool was found, but it contained only a foul, black-looking liquid, unfit even for the camels to drink.

So much for the wells of the desert! While the Madras Sappers were at work an intermittent fire was daringly kept up by the Arabs, but caused little damage. Ten Marines under Captain Woods, and several picked marksmen, were sent up the nullah to silence their fire. They took cover with judgment, and soon compelled the foe to withdraw.

Meanwhile, the Guards and Australians, relieved of the duty of protecting the Sappers, were having quite a little affair of their own, together
with the Sikhs. Some of the Arabs having taken up positions in a neighbouring ravine, the above-mentioned troops were ordered to disperse them. Our men mounted the hills skirting the nullah, and—as stated—soon drove Graham to consider the situation, and to decide quickly as to his future movements, for the day was wearing on and the Arabs had vanished; so he made up his mind to return to McNeill's zeriba, while the Artillery covered the

off every rebel; so the fighting now was over. Every man in the force behaved well, but the brunt of the work fell on the Royal Marines and the Berkshire Regiment. Great praise was accorded to the loyal Australian Contingent, which answered all expectations, displaying great spirit and dash when necessary, combined with the most admirable steadiness.

It was now necessary for Sir Gerald retrograde movement, which was performed via the Teselah Hills—a trying march under a hot sun.

It was known that Osman Digna had long been drawing supplies from Tokar and its vicinity. An attack on Handoub was now thought of. The water in the wells there was not of much account, but it was supposed that plenty could be got by digging and the use of the bore-pump—sufficient at any rate
BURNING THE VILLAGE OF TAMAL.
for a fairly strong garrison without the weary necessity, as in the case of McNeill’s zeriba and the Hasheen redoubts, of sending out daily convoys. Extra precautions were taken during the halt at the former place, lest the destruction of the villages at Tamai might exasperate Osman and his followers to follow and make a night attack.

The troops returned to Suakim on the 4th of April, and as there was no reason to continue the occupation of the advanced zeriba it was abandoned on April 6th.

"The troops began their return march from Teselah zeriba at 2.15 p.m. yesterday, and arrived at No. 1 zeriba at 5.50 p.m.,” says Sir Gerald Graham in his despatch to the Secretary for War, dated Suakim, 4th April.

"General Fremantle [commanding there] reports everything most satisfactory. They are now marching back, and will be here with the convoy about noon. I consider the troops of all arms deserve very great credit for the way in which they have borne the fatigues of these ten days, and for their readiness in constructing a zeriba at the end of a long march on their arrival at the Teselah Hills; also for their steadiness and good discipline when under fire during the night and the following morning at Tamai springs.

"The Australian Contingent have cheerfully borne their share of our hardships, and showed themselves worthy comrades in arms. I regret that they have had two men wounded."

A later and more detailed despatch was as follows:

"From Lieutenant-General Sir G. Graham to the Secretary for War.

"Suakim, April 5th, 1885.

"Troops returned to Suakim, noon yesterday. Out of a force of 8,175 officers and men only eleven men fell out during march. Altogether there were 17 wounded and 33 sick.

"The marches, though not very long, were very trying, owing to the many delays, the deep sand, and hot sun.

"There is much delay and fatigue in escorting a large convoy of tired, thirsty animals, with continued halts to re-adjust or shift loads.

"This force escorted 1,752 camels, 1,049 mules, and 1,773 followers, and only very steady, well-disciplined troops could have brought this large convoy in through the bush without loss.

"Large provision was made for carriage and attendance of sick and wounded, which happily was little needed.

"There were eight ambulance wagons, besides mule carts and dholies, affording carriage for 70 men, and two field hospitals with accommodation for 200 men.

"This expedition to Tamai, and the destruction of that place after Osman Digna’s proclamation threatening to drive us into the sea, must have greatly discouraged his followers."

Ali Redab, of the Nurab tribe, one of the two chiefs before mentioned as having made their submission at Suakim, now asked permission to come there with 600 followers. As his faith was doubtful no immediate reply was sent him; but if an arrangement was made it was intended to send him down to the district of Massowah, where every day the Italians were adding to the strength of their garrison and its defences.

The spies of Ali Redab confirmed the statements formerly made by our Intelligence Department, that the enemy was demoralised and might
never face our troops again. Their belief in Osman’s invincibility had been seriously shaken, and dissensions had broken out among the tribes under his banner; and it was becoming the general belief that a military occupation of Tokar, which was the chief granary of the rebels, would suffice to break up the insurrection altogether.

Meanwhile, active measures were being taken to push on the railway to Handoub, though delays were feared, as difficulties had arisen with the navvies, who proved somewhat unmanageable under military officers.

On the 4th of April the Coldstream Guards and Australian Contingent marched out five miles in the direction of Handoub to build a fortified zeriba, and a strong, permanent blockhouse, with timber and sandbags, as the then intention at head-quarters was to push straight along the route to Berber, building such fortifications at every five miles of the way, previous to taking the railway so far. Messrs. Lucas and Aird, the contractors for the latter, complained of being much hampered by the exigencies of the Commissariat and Transport Departments, which, though unavoidable in the interests of the Expedition, had greatly delayed the landing of the requisite railway plant, the piers, rolling-stock, and men, their workmen being frequently requisitioned for military purposes. The contractors, however, expressed themselves confidently as being able to push on the line as fast as the troops could move forward, delayed as they would be by the erection of the zeribas and blockhouses.

An intended cavalry reconnaissance, proposed after they came in from Tamai on the 4th, was abandoned, as it was found that a day’s rest was absolutely necessary for the horses after the severe work they had been undergoing. During the preceding fortnight they had been afoot at an average fourteen hours per day.

The line of railway, it was now proposed, should go through the Wady Otai and Tambouk, and on to Es Sibil, fifty miles from Suakim. Es Sibil occupies a very elevated plateau, and there Sir Gerald Graham intended to put the troops into summer quarters. But whether the whole force could remain there during the scorching months of that season would depend entirely upon the attitude of the tribes.

The accounts of spies now stated that Osman Digna had retired among the hills to a ridge between Erkowit and Sinkat, and had there taken post, with a large body of men. They added that the total loss of the tribesmen in recent encounters had been four thousand men; and that among the slain was Osman’s favourite son, a boy of ten years, whom he had sent forward to encourage the Arabs in their attack on our convoys on the 24th and 25th March, and who was shot in an encounter with the Coldstream Guards and Marines.

On the 6th of April the General commanding reported thus to the Secretary for War:

“A large convoy of over two thousand camels, and one thousand five hundred mules, escorted by four battalions under Sir John McNeill, marched
at 5 a.m. to clear out Zeriba No. 1, bringing in the garrison, 28th Bombay Native Infantry, and will arrive about 5 o'clock.

The railway has been advanced towards Handoub, protected by the Scots Guards and a troop of Cavalry. The Australians and Coldstreams, with the 17th Company Royal Engineers, under General Fremantle, are forming Station No. 1, five miles beyond the West Redoubt. The morning very hot, no wind; one Australian and four Coldstreams fell out, one sent back.

"To-morrow the working parties will be cutting a road through the bush, which grows thicker towards Handoub, and on Wednesday this force will advance there, the Scots Guards moving up to No. 1 Station.

"Last night the enemy fired into McNeill's Zeriba for three hours, wounding one man and two mules. They were replied to by Gatlings and rifles."

The advance on Handoub was, however, postponed, and, owing to the heat of the weather, the number of sick greatly increased.

Rumours of our probable abandonment of the Soudan were already abroad. Under this date the Correspondent of the Standard at Rome wrote thus: "I am assured that the Council of Ministers, at which the King presided yesterday, considered the position in which the Italian troops at Massowah would be placed if Britain should retire from Suakim and abandon further operations against the Mahdi. The Rassegna has a long article discussing the same subject, and considering the further possible danger from the Negus [or Emperor] of Abyssinia, into whose country large quantities of arms have been introduced. The same writer also refers to statements from Tunis respecting French intrigues for the occupation of Tripoli by France, which the Rassegna considered by no means
improbable.” The Italian squadron of war vessels, which had been for some time in the harbour of Suakim, sailed for Massowah on the 6th of April.

All military operations towards Tamaí were abandoned now, and the whole force was concentrated for the protection of the Railway works. If once the metals could be laid as far as Handoub, the difficulties of supplying the requisites for a farther advance would be greatly overcome, as a zeriba there could be stocked with a sufficiency of stores to supply another camp five miles in advance, without unduly straining the resources.

Large provision was made for carriage, and attendance of sick and wounded. There were eight ambulance wagons, besides mule carts and dhoo-lies, affording carriage for seventy, and two field hospitals, with accommodation for 200 men, as stated by the General.

Several lady-nurses from the Guards’ Hospital in London were now under orders to proceed to Suez and to Suakim, for duty with the Guards’ Field Hospital at that place. They were to embark at Tilbury Fort in one of the Peninsular and Oriental Company’s steamers, which was taking out a great quantity of medical stores and appliances, for the sick and wounded.

In the early days of April, “so far as
we have information on the subject,” said the Lancet, “the health of the troops employed in the Soudan has been good, and the arrangements made by the medical staff for the prevention, so far as possible, of disease, for its treatment when it occurs, and for affording aid to the wounded, have been most successful; indeed, they are described by the special correspondents as ‘admirable.’ But we must not lose sight of the fact that a period is now coming on when the resources of the medical service will be very severely tested. The enforced inaction of the troops during the hot season must undoubtedly prove very injurious, and the effects of the solar influences on the men, who must necessarily be exposed to it, cannot fail to tell upon the sick list. This is, indeed, beginning to manifest itself at Suakim, where, during the late operations, several cases of sunstroke occurred. We may look for a somewhat heavy list of such cases, and of heat-fever, dysentery, and probably cholera. A number of cases of enteric fever are already stated to have been admitted to the hospital, and there seems good reason to believe that they will increase as the season advances. It is satisfactory to know that every provision has been made which foresight could dictate; that there is abundance of medical comforts at hand; that adequate arrangements have been made for the careful nursing of the sick; that an ample supply of ice is to be had, as required; and that the means of transport in hospital-ships, fitted up with every appliance for the treatment of the patients, and the efficiency of the medical service, have been provided on a very liberal scale. We have not the least doubt that everything will be done by the heads of the medical service which practical experience and scientific knowledge can suggest; but we cannot help feeling very anxious about the health of the troops during the coming hot season.”

While on this subject a few details as to the climate of the Soudan may not be out of place. So many different factors constitute what is termed a climate, says a writer, that it is only after a series of observations that any exact knowledge of the climatological conditions of a country can be determined. In most tropical countries, the conditions, be these what they may, are to a great extent fixed in character, and one day is greatly typical of the climate of that part of the year. So one year is typical of others.

In the Soudan the changes of weather experienced are much less pronounced than in countries situated in the temperate zone, so that if the principal characteristic is one of intense glare, a relief from it is of exceedingly rare occurrence. The highest mean temperature of the world is in Central Africa, and the Soudan is situated at about the position where the maximum of heat is attained. There, as in all parts of the globe, the sun is the prime mover, and since in the tropics it is vertical to each place twice in the year, complications are introduced which are unknown in the temperate zones.

In the Soudan the desert constitutes
a very important factor in the climate, since the winds blowing over these arid tracts become dried in their course, and meet with nothing from which they can imbibe moisture or coolness. Consequently, the climate is one of extreme dryness. It scarcely ever rains, springs are scarce, and the evaporation is excessive. It must, however, be borne in mind, that with nearly similar conditions Lower Egypt is very fertile.

Various series of weather observations have been made, chiefly by German authorities, for periods varying from a few days to nearly twelve months; among the principal were those made at Khartoum from June 14th to November 14th, 1852. They show the following results:

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The mean temperature for the whole period was 91°; the means would, however, be somewhat high, since no night temperatures were taken. The hottest part of the day was at five o'clock in the afternoon, the mean for this hour being 90°; the coldest at seven o'clock in the morning, when the mean was 84°. The highest temperature reached in the sun was 143°, at two p.m. on Oct. 24th.

The warmest months of those for which these observations were made were June and October. This is due to the fact that months towards the end of the summer and early autumn are relatively cooler by occasional rains. At Khartoum the wind blows almost exclusively in the direction of the valley. The south and west winds alternate in June, and in the subsequent months the south winds prevail until September. A change takes place in October, when the winds come from east-north-east, while northerly winds prevail in November.

The chief wind current is of the monsoon nature, southerly in summer and northerly in winter. The extreme rarity of the atmosphere, and the absence of vapour in the smallest degree, is shown by the ordinary weather observations. Out of 144 days the sky was clear on 111, cloudy on 20, and overcast on 12. During that period rain fell on 21 days. The occasional rains occur generally from July to October. They are the ordinary tropical rains, and extend but a short distance north of Khartoum.

Then the Nile begins to rise a month before the commencement of the rainy season, while at Gondokoro, in the parallel of Fazogliou, the southern limit of the Khedive's dominions, it does not begin to rise for two months after the setting in of the rainy season, which proves that the rise does not have its origin in the weak rains of the valleys, but in the stormy torrents near its mysterious sources.

Khartoum, bounded as it is by the Blue and White Nile, is more favourably situated than other parts of the
Soudan, and is like an oasis in an endless desert.

To the south, however, there is vegetation to a greater degree, owing to more frequent rain and the less scorching power of the sun, its direct rays being parried by clouds. Gondokoro, which is six hundred miles nearer the equator than Khartoum, has a mean temperature, singular to say, 11° cooler. As meteorological observations do not appear to have been made in the winter months, it is not possible to give any precise details of the climate at that season; but since the sun at this period of the year is vertical to the south of the equator, Khartoum information which exists is so fragmentary that no deductions can be made; but the materials at hand fully support the series made at Khartoum, and point to a climate probably nowhere surpassed, if even equalled, for its excessive dryness and scorching heat.

The General reported that on the 6th of April the advance was made towards Handoub, which was occupied on the 8th, Otao on the 16th, and Tambouk
SIR HERBERT STEWART'S MARCH FROM KORTI TO GAKDUL WELLS—A CONSULTATION OF GUIDES.

(From a Drawing by T. Walter Wilson.)
700 light camels were sent back to Suakim, under an escort of the Bengal Lancers, leaving the outpost largely provisioned. If our spies were to be believed, Osman Digna was using every effort to get his followers to attack Handoub; so the garrison was in constant readiness for any such attempt.

The position was a strong one; a company of the Coldstreams took possession of the hill on the north-east of Handoub; while another of the Australians established themselves on the south-west. The remainder of the force was to garrison the zeriba, till another forward movement was made with the line of railway, which was then close to No. 1 Station, five miles from Suakim.

General Graham, escorted by Cavalry, came out to Handoub in the afternoon, and after inspecting the works, returned, leaving Brigadier Fremantle in command. It was a source of satisfaction that there was an ample supply of water at Handoub, as it relieved the Transport Corps of one of its heaviest duties, and set free the animals for other work; so

Under date 8th of April, the correspondent of the Daily Chronicle wrote: “In view of our bitter experience of the ferocity of Osman Digna’s warriors, we had long given over hope that any of the many camp-followers and drivers, missing since the terrible affair at McNeill’s zeriba, last Sunday fortnight, had escaped with their lives. To-day, however, an Indian driver named Harroo, who was supposed to have been killed in the affair at Hasheen, on Friday, March 20th, walked into camp, and I have just had an interview with
him. He stated that when he got separated from the troops at Hasheen he endeavoured to make his escape to Suakim, but his retreat was cut off by prowling parties of the rebels. He was pursued by several Hadendowas, and had almost given himself up as lost when a happy idea flashed across his mind. Falling upon his knees, he called out in Arabic that he was a Seyd, or scion of Mahomet, and begged for mercy. He was seized by the rebels, who, after asking him a few questions, decided to spare his life. He was soon after taken under guard to Hasheen, where 2,000 rebels were encamped. While there two other Indians, both camp-followers, were brought in as prisoners. After a few days' durance at Hasheen, they were taken across the hills to Tamai."

Harroo further stated that he witnessed the departure of the flower of Osman's force for the attack upon McNeill's zeriba, and the return of the broken-hearted survivors of that dreadful affair. The Arabs spared the lives of no fewer than ten Indian drivers, who, with other camp-followers, had been attempting to reach Suakim after the frantic stampede of the transport animals, and these he believed to be then alive, beyond the Tamai range of hills.

"Harroo," adds the Daily Chronicle, "brings full confirmation of the reports furnished by our spies to the effect that the fearful losses sustained in the attack on McNeill's zeriba have completely cowed the rebels, and that the resumption of serious operations by them is very improbable for some time to come, if at all. Small parties of the enemy have returned to Tamai, and are encamped near the charred remains of the village huts. Harroo has been able to give our Intelligence Department information of considerable value. It was supposed that after the destruction of Tamai, the bulk of the rebel forces would be compelled to retreat to Tamanieb. It appears, however, that there are running streams in the hills behind Tamai, affording abundance of water for a considerable force. The rebels are, however, very short of provisions. They have little flour, and scarcely any meat."

Harroo candidly admitted that he had made his escape from the Arab camp because he could not get enough to eat, and added that there was much quarrelling in the Arab camp, and no fresh men joining it.

Mahomet Ali Bey, of the Amaras, remained with the garrison at Handoub, hoping to prevail on the whole of his tribe to submit.

Under date Cairo, April 8th, on the occasion of the retirement of Sir Evelyn Wood from the command of the Egyptian Army, Lord Wolseley expressed his thanks to that force for the assistance they had afforded the British Expedition, and more particularly for the gallantry displayed by that portion which served in the recent battle of Kirbekan. On the same day considerable excitement was caused at Cairo by the suppression of the French organ Le Bosphore Egyptien for having reproduced, on the 7th, a proclamation
of the Mahdi in Arabic. The French diplomatic agent protested vigorously against the suppression in the name of his Government, but Nubar Pasha stated that it had been done in direct accordance with precedent and international law.

Its whole tone for months had been bitterly hostile to the British and Egyptian Governments, and it had added greatly to the difficulties of the situation. Thus it was resolved that these systematic attacks should no longer be permitted to continue. Accordingly, at four o'clock on the evening of the 8th, Colonel Fenwick, with a strong force of police, went to the office of the paper, which they closed and on which they affixed seals, and declared the Editor under surveillance in his own house, on which a guard was placed. The French Consul arrived promptly on the scene with his cavasses while the proceedings were in progress, and watched the reading of private papers, as the Editor was strongly suspected of being in secret correspondence with the Mahdi. A large crowd collected and remained for some time on the spot; but all passed quietly. It was generally believed that these proceedings were taken after an understanding arrived at with the new French Ministry, as for the preceding six months the paper had been at work exciting the people to a dangerous extent against the Government; but the public had not heard the last of the Bosphore Egyptien.

"The warlike tone of the Paris Débats with reference to the suppression of the Bosphore Egyptien only produces amusement in Cairo," the correspondent of Times at that place says, "even among the French colony, the respectable portion of which welcomes the disappearance of a sheet that had become a disgrace to it. Indeed, the only disapproval expressed by this class of Frenchmen is of the action of the French Consul, who seems, quite unnecessarily, to have placed himself in a ridiculous position by publicly offering to oppose the Government's decree by force. His conduct might fairly form the subject of diplomatic complaint on the part of the Anglo-Egyptian Government; but it is advisable to ignore it as the error of an over-zealous inexperienced official. On one point the Débats is correct. The responsibility for the measure rests with the English, not with the Egyptian Government, and to the English, not to the Egyptian Government must France address her complaint, if she be so ill-advised as to make one. The proprietors of the Bosphore Egyptien itself adopt a more practical view, and are evidently taking precautions to substantiate a claim for damages. On this point the Egyptian law is unsatisfactory; for while the Government possesses an undoubted right to suppress a newspaper, it is contended that the closing of a printing office, which alone makes the suppression practicable, is contrary to the Capitulations, as interfering with the ordinary trade of the printers. It is, therefore, quite possible that the Government may be condemned to pay damages. The real remedy lies in maintaining the rights
of printers to conduct their ordinary trade while giving the Government power to close a printing-office if its managers continue the publication of any suppressed journal subsequent to the decree of suppression."

At Suakim the Shropshire and East Surrey Regiments moved out on the 8th to a zeriba, which they had formed a mile beyond the western redoubt, along the railway line, and on the same day the headquarters camp, which had been pitched to the right of the Water Forts, was removed to new lines on the right of the railway.

"Now that the chief work in the landing of the troops and stores is accomplished," writes the correspondent of the Standard, "it is only right that it should be stated that the highest credit is due to Lieutenant McGill, and the other officers concerned, for the admirable manner in which all the arrangements of the harbour work have been conducted. The entry and departure of great ships and their berthing in this crowded port have been performed without a hitch or accident taking place, and the difficulty of the task can only be properly estimated by those who are acquainted with the intricate channel, the tortuous approaches, and the small space in which the vessels have been worked. As to the discharging of the cargoes, it is not too much to say that the work would have been altogether impossible had it not been for the facilities afforded by the piers erected by the Royal Engineers last autumn."

On the line of the growing railway there was a great want of locomotives, but the difficulties of the ground were few. The camp at Handoub was strengthened, and all along the line military pickets were stationed to protect the British gangers and their native assistants. The work, however, progressed with extreme slowness. Water-pipes were laid along the line to keep the thirsty workmen supplied, and telegraph poles were set up and wires run along them as the line progressed; while the engineers in the service of Messrs. Lucas and Aird, the contractors, when surveying as far as Handoub, reported that they had found auriferous quartz and mica.

While these and other works were in full progress, perplexing reports appeared in the public prints at this period. The Cairo correspondent of the Times stated that a general impression prevailed in usually well-informed military circles that the Soudan garrisons and camps were to be withdrawn, adding that it was estimated that the troops on the Nile could be concentrated at Dongola in eleven days, and be on board in three weeks later. At Rome, according to the correspondent of another paper, it was currently reported that the British Government was negotiating with that of Italy to hand over Egypt to that country for occupation in the event of war with Russia; and a similar statement was made by the correspondent of the Standard at Rome as regarded Suakim; on the other hand, stern-wheel steamers were being prepared for conveying the army to Khartoum in autumn.
Cassell's

History of the War in the Soudan.
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**LIST OF PLATES.**

**SIR EVELYN WOOD**

- Church Parade at Korti on Christmas Morning (1884).

**ISMAIL PASHA, EX-KHEDIVE OF EGYPT**

- With the Camel Corps—Coming Down A Steep Place.

**PRINCE HASSAN, BROTHER OF THE KHEDIVE TEFUIK.**
By the 10th April the railway was laid down to within half a mile of the zeriba that stood midway to Handoub, but nothing was seen of the enemy, who were reported to be so much in want of food as to be compelled to eat their camels. The interest in affairs diminished greatly among the troops when the conviction became general that Osman Digna was crushed. All eyes were turned to the East, the liveliest excitement prevailed, and new hopes arose among officers and men at the prospect of a war with Russia on the Afghan frontier, and their transference thither from the hated Soudan.
tobacco for distribution. Another firm sent out a consignment of 25,000 oranges, and other luxuries, which in such a climate as that of the Soudan were most acceptable, and for all of which the soldiers were sincerely grateful.

On the 11th of April General Graham telegraphed thus to the Secretary for War:

"I inspected the line of rail and Handoub to-day. Convoy of 1,100 camels and thirty-five carts, with water and supplies. The Engineers' stores arrived there with the Scots Guards; all precautions taken for the protection of the convoy. The Berkshire and Marines escorted it part of the way; Cavalry well cut. The Australians from Handoub met the Scots Guards on the way. Working parties at the head of the railway, covered by the East Surrey and a squadron of Bengal Cavalry scouting. The railway now advanced to No. 1 Station, with one company in the Blockhouse there. East Surrey and Shropshire encamped in rear. All satisfactory at Handoub; excellent work done in cutting (down) wood, and in the defensible forts and camp. In force 1,600, only five sick. Water, plentiful for cattle and washing purposes, found only three feet below the dry bed of a water-course. To-morrow a force 500 strong, Australians, Cavalry, and Engineers, will move from Handoub to Otao, eight to ten miles of open country, and with them Mahomet Ali, on a friendly mission to the Amaras, to try and get them over."

The advance to Otao was postponed, however, as several sheikhs offered to submit when the British advanced to Tambouk. It was now confidently thought that Lord Wolseley, who had arrived at Cairo from the camp at Dongola, would come to Suakim; "but," adds the Standard, "he has no idea of abandoning the autumn campaign in the Soudan, for which he is making every preparation. Stern-wheel steamers and other boats necessary for ascending the Nile are being got ready, and Lord Wolseley hopes yet to take Khartoum." Moreover, it was stated that Sir Henry Bulwer had made an offer of 5,000 Zulu warriors for service in the Soudan; but Lord Derby was unable to accept the proposal.

On the 12th the heat was overpowering at Suakim, and several men suffered from sunstroke, while glanders broke out among the horses. The Cavalry made a reconnaissance from Handoub to Hasheen. Only half-a-dozen Haden-dowas were seen by them in the distance; the village was deserted, but small bodies were known to be at the Hasheen and McNeill zeribas.

About this time two Egyptian soldiers, deserters from the Berber garrison, arrived at Merawi, and gave themselves up to our officials. They stated that they had deserted when the enemy fell back from Berti, and that their force then consisted of two thousand men, all armed with rifles, who were compelled to abandon Berti owing to the scarcity of food, as the district had been swept of all supplies while our column was there. The aspect of these two men confirmed their story. Their faces were hollow and haggard; their clothing was in rags, and they begged to be allowed to return to their homes in Lower Egypt, which they were permitted to do.

Negotiations with the Amaras were still in progress, and it was known that if we succeeded in gaining that powerful tribe as allies, the future course would be comparatively easy; but the question depended entirely upon whether Gene-
ral Graham could offer them guarantees for their future protection, a promise beyond his power of fulfilment. "This," said a correspondent, "will be a work of difficulty after their past experience of the vacillation of British policy towards the friendly natives at the time that Mr. Brewster was conducting negotiations with them as Deputy-Governor of Suakim, under Admiral Hewett."

The Cavalry now visited Otao on 13th April, eight miles in front of Handoub, and found the district free from hostile Arabs, and it seemed that there would be no difficulty in completing the railway to that point. The reconnoitring party purchased goats and other supplies from the natives, who seemed disposed to be friendly, if their fears of Osman's vengeance, when the British withdrew, could be overcome. The correspondent of the Daily News at this time insisted that a fixed policy was essential to the success of our operations, as the natives were afraid to declare themselves on our side, and urged that this fear would undoubtedly continue so long as any uncertainty prevailed as to our ultimate occupation of the country.

The incident of the Bosphore Egyptien now began to assume such grave proportions that it was thought that it might lead to the fall of Nubar Pasha. M. Taillandier, the acting French Consul, demanded from him a full reparation for the suppression of that obnoxious paper. Nubar inquired what it was that he wanted. M. Taillandier replied the immediate reopening of the Bosphore printing-office, and the dismissal of the official who had laid hands on the French Chanceller. Nubar said that this was out of the question. The French Consul-General then demanded if he was prepared to take the consequences of refusing to comply with his request, and on receiving a brief reply in the affirmative, at once left the Ministry.

The situation was undoubtedly becoming strained. Thus, notice was given to the printer of the paper that should he present himself at the offices next day he might reopen them and continue his business, conditionally on his agreeing no longer to print the Bosphore. But he ignored the notice, and, in consequence of the Chief of Police anticipating disturbances, on the 14th of April the guards were doubled at Cairo and the troops confined to barracks. Though an attempt was made by a low class of French residents to organise a demonstration before the office of the suspended paper, the effort proved a failure.

On the 17th the formal protest of the French Government against the action of the Egyptian and British authorities in suppressing the paper reached Cairo. Its terms were courteous, but decided. On the 20th Nubar Pasha replied that the Capitulations having been agreed to by the Porte, he could not give a definite answer until after a consultation with the Ottoman Government as to the form of reply which that of Egypt should give, and time was to be accorded him for this not unnecessary step.
On the following day, however, the French diplomatic agent intimated to him, that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs was not satisfied with the reply made to France for reparation on account of the suppression of the Bosphore Egyptien. The French representative, printing-office, and entered an action for damages against the Egyptian Government, notwithstanding that he had daringly printed in Arabic the Mahdi's proclamation calling upon all Egypt to revolt and destroy the power of the Khedive. It was insisted on at

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Paris, that there had been an absolute violation of the domicile of a French subject, and that acts of violence were committed against the representatives of French authority. On these grounds it was maintained that France had a right to demand reparation, although the French Government would not make any claim relative to the suppression of the paper, as it came under the regulations of the press in Egypt.
On the 22nd April the Journal des Débats said: “As Mr. Gladstone does not disclaim the responsibility of his Government in the affair, it is to Britain

Notwithstanding the intemperate utterances of a section of the Parisian press, the representations of the French Government were received in a con-

that we must address ourselves to obtain satisfaction. We would fain believe that the British Government does not share the violent and rancorous passions which the English press displays against us. In any case, we shall maintain our rights and assert them. We shall not lack the means to that end.”

ciliatory spirit, and ere long the matter was settled, through Sir Evelyn Baring, in a manner satisfactory to all parties, in accordance with the legal merits of the case, and eventually the Bosphore Egyptien was allowed to re-appear, but only for a time.

While stern-wheel boats were being
constructed, and other preparations made for the advance to Khartoum, as told to the troops by Lord Wolseley, the policy of the Ministry was curiously illustrated by the correspondence, given in the Blue Books about the same time, regarding that step from which Lord Wolseley was distinctly averse—a general withdrawal from the entire Soudan.

This correspondence included a long despatch from Lord Wolseley, dated 6th March, in reply to the Government's first intention to destroy the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, and one from the Marquis of Hartington, dated 13th April, stating that: "In the condition of Imperial affairs it is probable that the Expedition to Khartoum may have to be abandoned, and the troops brought back as soon as possible to Egypt."

In replying to this startling announcement, Lord Wolseley telegraphed from Cairo on the 14th of April: "There will be no difficulty in withdrawing the troops; but for the position in Egypt it is most essential that the announcement of withdrawal should be accompanied by an authoritative statement from you that you are determined to leave a British garrison;" and on the 15th April Lord Wolseley telegraphed to Lord Hartington thus:—

"Mine yesterday deal exclusively with military matters, unconnected with policy of retreat indicated in yours of 13th inst. I venture to express the following opinion upon that policy. At and south of Assouan I have about 7,500 British fighting soldiers. Retreat policy will require at least 2,500 on the frontier, leaving 5,000 available. For the sake of this handful, is it advisable to reverse the Soudan policy? Retreat from Dongola hands the province over to the Mahdi, and renders the loyalty of the Ababdehs and other frontier tribes very doubtful. On them we rely very much for peace in Egypt. Troops now in the province of Dongola seriously threaten the Mahdi; block his advance northwards, and encourage his enemies. He might now at any moment be joined by his regular troops, the backbone of his military strength. Many circumstances may lead to his sudden disappearance; time is a great element in our favour if we rest on our arms where we are. This policy entails no risk, for we could concentrate near Dongola or Hannek, whenever we wished, and I would strongly recommend its adoption as most befitting our national dignity, and most likely to secure eventually the objects we have in Egypt.

"Withdraw Graham's force if necessary, this will not seriously disturb Egypt; but hold on to the Dongola province. As long as you do this you prevent Mahdist spreading into Egypt, secure the allegiance of frontier tribes, save hitherto trouble, disturbances, and possibly local risings, which a policy of retreat will probably entail, and which will necessitate increased garrisons in Egypt, and the military occupation of large towns."

In another and long despatch, dated Cairo, April 16th, Lord Wolseley wrote thus:—

"From questions recently put to Ministers in Parliament and from articles in such journals as have yet reached me, on the subject of the best policy to adopt in the Soudan, it appears to me that the reasons which make it almost imperative upon us to destroy the Mahdi's power at Khartoum are not at present fully grasped in Britain. I propose, therefore, to lay before your lordship some of the conclusions which my experience of Egypt and the Soudan has led me to arrive at. The result of that experience is, that I hold in the strongest possible manner, that both from a military and a financial point of view, and also with regard to the wellbeing of Egypt proper, the growing power of the Mahdi must be met, not by a purely defensive policy on the frontier, whether at Assouan or Wady Halfa, but by his overthrow in the neighbourhood of Khartoum. In fact, the programme enunciated by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, and communicated to me in your lordship's telegram of the 7th February, must be carried out in its entirety.

"It is, I believe, the intention of Her Majesty's Government to maintain the British garrisons in Egypt till such time as this country is strong enough.
to stand by itself. Until then, we are bound to prevent its falling a prey to the Mahdi, or any other invader, and to take such steps as may be necessary for the preservation of order and internal tranquility. As long as our troops remain in Egypt we are responsible for its safety against external attack and internal revolution. The task of destroying the Mahdi's power and influence therefore falls on us. We can do this in two ways; either by pursuing our original plan of advancing and destroying his power in the neighbourhood of Khartoum, or by adopting a purely defensive attitude on the frontier of Egypt. The first is an operation of which we can see the end. If adopted, it would ensure the inhabitants of Egypt, and many of the frontier tribes being well disposed towards us; and if these tribes did not actually side with us, they would certainly refrain from acts of aggression and hostility. Many of the preparations also for this advance have already been made, and much of the necessary expense has already been incurred. The second course would result in a long series of petty operations, almost certainly winding up with a war as serious as that now before us; it would turn against us all the frontier tribes, would unsettle the minds of the native Egyptians so much that British garrisons in towns like Kenet and Tania, and others would become a necessity, and would derive no benefit from—in fact, render absolutely wasted—all the money that has been spent and all the lives that have been lost in the campaign just concluded... To sum up. The struggle with the Mahdi, or rather perhaps with Mahdiism, must come sooner or later. We can accept it now, and have done with it once and for all, or we can allow all the military reputation we have gained, at the cost of so much toil and hard fighting, all the bloodshed and all the expenditure of the past campaign, to go for nothing, and stem the final struggle off for a few years. These will be years of trouble and disturbance for Egypt, of burden and strain to our military resources, and the contest that will come in the end will be no less than that which is in front of us now.

"This is all we shall gain by a defensive policy. In conclusion, I will only observe that I have in this despatch carefully abstained from entering upon general matters of policy, or of touching upon the question which of the two courses is most befitting to our national dignity and honour. To do so would be beyond my province, and were it not would be hardly necessary. There can be but little difference of opinion as to which line of action is the more worthy of the British nation."

On the 3rd of May, Sir Evelyn Baring informed Lord Granville that the reports he received of the state of Upper Egypt were very disquieting, and he earnestly hoped that Government would reconsider that portion of their policy which related to the withdrawal from Dongola, believing it would be far the wisest plan to remain at and about that city for six months, or perhaps till the end of the year.

But we are somewhat anticipating the current of events.

The movement to Khartoum was still on the tapis in the middle of April, when orders were issued to all officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Reserve Depot at Cairo, of the Nile Expeditionary Force, to be in readiness to join their respective corps.

In handing over the Egyptian army to General Grenfell, Sir Evelyn Wood wrote thus, in orders:

"The Sirdar thanks most warmly the officers of all ranks for the support he has invariably received from them in the difficult task in which they have been associated with him for two years. He believes that no body of British officers have ever worked with more unremitting devotion to duty; and Sir Evelyn Wood knowing how much he is indebted to their efforts for the measure of success now obtained, assures them he will ever remember the aid received from each of his comrades."

After the Gymkana sports of the Indian Contingent were over—sports to witness which all in camp gathered to see the tent-pegging and superb riding of the Bengal Cavalry, on the 13th of April—General Graham ordered a reconnaissance from Handoub to Otão, where two wells were found. Those at the former place proved to be full of
organic matter, and the water was unfit for human consumption.

In view of a forward movement, all the horses and camels were carefully inspected by the veterinary officers, and were reported to be in excellent health; hostile to us, and who was reported to be at Hasheen with a large armed band.

Near Deberet, a convoy of sheep and camels, guarded by Hadendowas clad in the uniform of the Mahdi, and en route to Osman Digna, was captured after a slight resistance; and the Mounted Infantry brought into camp 40 prisoners, including women and children, 12 camels, and 500 sheep.

On the same day a large consignment of railway plant, sufficient to cover fifty miles, arrived from England, for the extension of the Nile line running between Wady Halfa and Sarras to Farik; and for the Berber-
ON THE OLD CANAL, CAIRO.
Suakim line, there arrived, some time after, twelve hundred plate-layers and labourers under Captain Constable, from Bombay, in the *Jumna* transport. Meanwhile transport carts, with broad wheels to travel easily over the sand, were being prepared at Alexandria, for the expected new campaign in the Soudan.

The strength of the Egyptian regular forces, now co-operating with ours south of Wady Halfa, was 150 officers, 3,290 non-commissioned officers and men. The Cavalry was composed of 15 officers and 347 men; the Artillery of 14 officers and 210 men, with 10 guns, 130 camels, and 34 horses. The Infantry comprised 112 officers and 2,530 men; the Camel Corps 6 officers and 135 camels.

The *Times* correspondent at Suakim, under date the 15th April, wrote, that there was something "comic" in the manner in which it was proposed to open up communications with Osman Digna. Not being able to find him or discover precisely where he was, "or get him to come to us or at us by terrestrial means or terrestrial messengers, it was determined to reach him through the air." Letters were prepared by General Graham and Major Chermside, addressed to Osman, inviting him and his fighting men to come to terms. "The letters," he continues, "will be sent up in a balloon and dropped at Tamai and Tamanieb. Major Templar has charge of this celestial post-office; and it is hoped that this experiment may at least draw some reply from the strangely silent enemy."

Nothing had been seen of the latter for some time; but there was every reason to believe that Osman was endeavouring to re-muster his scattered forces, and make good his threat of driving us into the sea. He had invented many plausible explanations of his past disasters, and was wont, by turns, by menace and cajolery to induce the tribesmen to rally round his standard once more. It was considered doubtful at headquarters if he would succeed in getting together more than a few hundred fanatics, and even then, he would have to lose no time in attacking Graham's column, which commanded all his facilities for obtaining food and water.

It was proposed now that Handoub should be the secondary base for operations.

The prisoners taken by the Mounted Infantry were set free. Our people offered to purchase their cattle and sheep; but on second thoughts it was deemed more advisable to requisition the whole for the Commissariat Department.

General Graham now completed his arrangements for the formation of a Camel Corps, on the pattern of that which Lord Wolseley had found so useful elsewhere. The Royal Marines contributed a captain and 30 men; the Berkshire Regiment, a subaltern and 40 men; the East Surrey Regiment, 30 men; and the Shropshire Regiment an entire company of two officers and 90 men. It was the General's intention to use this Camel Corps as a flying force, concentratable at any point or moment, when the railway was menaced.
A captain of the Scots Guards was appointed to the command, according to the Times, and it was confidently hoped that this corps would be of immense service in future operations, which would be of a somewhat different character to those that had marked the campaign so far.

On the 16th, the Scots Guards, one squadron of Cavalry, with two mountain guns, and a company of the Royal Engineers, marched to Otao, and proceeded to construct a zeriba there. Although a general feeling of doubt prevailed as to whether the British Government really intended to persevere with the various works undertaken in the Soudan, the military measures showed no sign of abated energy.

On the following day a deserter from Osman's camp was brought in by some vedettes of the Bengal Lancers. According to his statement Osman had only a hundred men with him, all in want of food. The Indian camp followers taken at Hasheen were in his camp, where they were badly treated and kept hard at work. One had a hand struck off by order of Osman, who resented his complaints of want of food. It was also stated that the tribes were broken in spirit by the heavy losses they had sustained, and would, in most instances, submit, could they be assured of permanent protection; but Osman always pointed to the vessels in the harbour, saying that the Infidels were about to pursue their tactics of last year, and deterred the tribes with threats of the vengeance of the Mahdi.

The Canadian voyageurs having now all returned home, Lord Wolseley addressed the following letter with reference to their services to the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Governor-General of Canada:

"Cairo, April 13.

My Lord,—The Canadian voyageurs who have recently been employed with the Nile Expedition, having now all returned to Canada, I am anxious to express to your lordship my high sense of the services they have rendered, and of the value they have been to the Expeditionary Force. With a few exceptions they have been thoroughly competent boatmen; they worked exceedingly well. They have undergone the hardships of this arduous campaign without the slightest grumbling or discontent; and they have, on many occasions, shown not only great skill, but also great courage in navigating their boats through difficult and dangerous water. I much regret that in so doing some of them should have fallen victims to the dangers they were attempting to overcome. The officers, and especially Colonel Donison, have shown much energy and goodwill, and have proved themselves of considerable value. I beg to ask that your lordship will have the goodness to convey the purport of this letter, both to the officers and men of the Canadian voyageurs and also to the authorities in Canada, certain unfounded statements having appeared in various papers, to the effect that their employment has been attended with unsatisfactory results. I desire to place on record, not only my own opinion, but that of every officer connected with the direction and management of the boat columns, that the services of these voyageurs have been of the greatest possible value, and, further, that their conduct throughout has been excellent. They have earned for themselves a high reputation among the troops up the Nile. It was, moreover, a source of much satisfaction to these troops to find the Canadians represented on this expedition, and sharing with them their privations and risks. At a time when English, Scottish, and Irish soldiers are employed, the presence with them of Canadians shows in a marked manner the bonds which unite all parts of our great Empire. In the advance up the Nile next autumn, I propose to employ a considerably larger number of voyageurs than that employed in the past winter. Lastly, I am anxious to express to your lordship personally, my sincere thanks for the trouble you have taken with regard to the engagement of these voyageurs, and all the other arrangements connected with them."

THE CANADIAN VOYAGEURS.
CHAPTER II.

AN UNEVENTFUL INTERVAL.


If anything were needed to convince the troops that the proposed Expedition to Khartoum was to be carried out in its entirety it was the accounts of the stern-wheel steamers which appeared in the public prints about the middle of April, as being in preparation for the use of the force that was to “smash up” the Mahdi, and avenge General Gordon.

Though they struck many as novelties, they had been familiar to the Americans for fully thirty years, as they used them on the smaller tributaries of the Mississippi and elsewhere. In the autumn of 1884, the Messrs. Yarrow of Millwall were first commissioned to build two stern-wheel steamers, for the use of Lord Wolseley. Being ordered late, they arrived after the operations had actually begun. One was bolted together at Alexandria, the other was carried in portions by steamer, railway, and nuggar to
Semneh, and there constructed. Both the *Water Lily* and the *Lotus*, as they were named, were of great use, and found very fast. Complaints were made that the vibration was too great, and though considerable, it was thought scarcely sufficient to justify the assertion made by officers and seamen, "that build others—two of 120 feet in length, 23 feet beam, and 18 inches draught; and three of the same length and beam, but armour-clad, and having a draught of 27 inches only when in fighting order. They were inspected by Colonel J. Alleyne of the Royal Artillery, who served as a subaltern on the Red River Expedition, in command of the seven-pounder mountain guns, who had been sent home in April to examine them, together with Mr. Benbow, the engineer, now popularly known in the service as "the man who mended the boiler," a service most inadequately recognised.

The first five steamers were to be used, as the *Lotus* and *Water Lily* had been, in the transport of stores up the Nile, and sick and wounded down. The three fighting steamers were made in floatable sections, so that riveting-
up on the Nile would be avoided. The construction of these boats was very peculiar. The machinery was on the main deck, protected by armour, while every part was accessible in a moment if repairs were needed. The vessels were sheltered by a hurricane deck from the rays of the sun, and upon it was a cool and convenient saloon, with bunks for the crew, while invalids were to occupy cots and stretchers. On this deck was also the pilot-house, placed in American fashion, and giving a fine view all round.

Each vessel was armed with two one-inch four-barrelled Nordenfeldt guns forward and two aft, so as to be able to sweep the banks of the river with streams of bullets; while the powerful rudders, three in number, would give the most complete control over each vessel, either in the narrow passages of the cataracts, or in the more perilous straits between hidden rocks and sand-banks, where the fullest command of the vessel is often imperatively needful, within the limit of a few inches.

A very ingenious apparatus, for discovering the draught of the river ahead, was invented by the Messrs. Yarrow. This, in their own words, consisted of employing two poles about 50 feet long, at the end of which were suspended two vertical iron rods, the bottom extremity of which came about one foot below the level of the boat itself. One pole projected from the port side, the other from the starboard. Attached to each of these was a wire rope, which passed on board and was connected with the whistle on the boiler, and the gear was so arranged that immediately this indicator touched a hidden rock or sandbank the steam-whistle blew. This plan, in the first instance, drew the pilot's attention to the fact, and also pointed to him on which side of the vessel the rock or bank lay, and thus warned him in what direction to steer.

"This," said the contractors, "is the more important, when it is borne in mind, that the river Nile at some periods of the year, is even worse in opaqueness than the Thames."

Now these objections, wrote a correspondent, present themselves to those who know the Nile well. In the first place, its banks are so shelving that the rods will frequently prevent the steamer from getting alongside a good landing-place. In the second, the rods would infallibly be broken, if the steamer took the ground at full speed. And in the third, the Nile when it is muddy is deep, and when it is shallow is clear enough for the pilot to see from his perch aloft all that he needs to know of surface indications, of rapids, rocks, or sand-banks; and it was feared that if all this gear, could not, at will, be raised above the surface, it might do quite as much harm as good, when the advance began. One admirable appliance, afterwards to be added, must be noticed.

This was a steam capstan on the main deck, so fitted that the vessel could haul herself up the rapids, either by getting a rope ashore, or by laying-out a stream-anchor, with the aid of the Dongola swimmers. At the construction of these remarkable vessels, the men
of Messrs. Yarrow worked in relays by day and night. "It may seem to some people," wrote a correspondent at this time, "that we are spending a great deal of money in this direction, when we know that the campaign in the autumn may, after all, be countermanded; but it might well be wished that no more money were wasted than on these steamers, for they will be needed, and be most useful on the Nile for years to come, even if there should be never another shot fired between Wady Halfa and Khartoum."

Mr. Brewster, a Scotsman in the Egyptian Civil Service, and one of the most distinguished Arabic scholars in the country, on the 18th of April, with a party of "Friendlies," pushed on to Tambouk, which he found deserted, while a preconcerted reconnaissance was made by the 15th Sikhs from Suakim, the Mounted Infantry and Australians from Handoub, and the Scots Guards from Otao, who scoured all the hills beyond Hasheen, the three columns meeting in the Deberet Valley; but of the enemy nothing was seen, save some two hundred Arabs on camels making off into the obscurity of the desert about five miles away. Next day the Scots Guards proceeded to Tambouk, the other two battalions of the Guards, and the Second Brigade, also advancing another stage.

Ever since Graham's expedition to Tamai, Mahmoud (or Mahomet) Ali, sheikh of the friendly portion of the Amara tribe, had urged the General to allow him to make a raid or rush at Tamanieb, and endeavour to capture Osman Digna, whose following had dwindled away again, and whose circumstances were desperate. General Graham finally consented, and the old sheikh, whose services and losses in the British cause deserved all the confidence that could be reposed in him, started with seven hundred of his men on this expedition, which proved a failure; while, on the very day he departed from Suakim, a sensational report was spread in the Bazaar that Osman had fallen a victim to the growing disaffection of his men, and been slain by some who rebelled against his authority.

Every effort was now made to push on the railway beyond Handoub, which lies twelve miles from Suakim, while Tambouk is twenty-five, as the crow flies. On the same day of the reconnaissance from Deberet, a messenger came to General Graham with one of the usual tantalising rumours that the Amaras and other tribesmen, to the number of 5,000 men, were willing to join him and fight against Osman Digna.

The reconnaissance of the 18th showed the enemy that we could move through their hilly districts, and by marching from three different points we covered a considerable amount of country. The Scots Guards from Otao marched for twenty miles over steep hills without a man falling out. The Australians marched fourteen miles through a most difficult pass for nine hours, the commanding officer conducting in an excellent manner, and only one man fell out. The Sikhs from
Suakim marched twenty miles at a swinging pace, only three men falling out.

On the 19th, the Scots Guards and a wing of the Coldstreams, with two pieces of cannon, half a company of the head of the railway the Berkshire Regiment, the Marines, and the Madras Sappers; at Handoub the Colonial Contingent, the Shropshire and Surrey Regiments, a squadron of Lancers, half a company of Mounted Engineers, and half a company of Mounted Infantry, advanced to Tambouk, without meeting with any opposition.

"On Tuesday next (April 21st) the following will be the position of the troops," wrote the Standard correspondent:—"Those enumerated above will be at Tambouk; at Otao there will be half a battalion of the Coldstreams with two guns, half a company of Engineers, and a company of Mounted Infantry; at the Early in April, the Iberia transport,
Captain Shannon, belonging to the Orient Company, which left Suakim with wounded, came into Portsmouth Harbour. She had a good passage, during which her wounded and invalided passengers, for the most part, transport, were buried at sea. There were few invalids on board the *Iberia*, but most of them were suffering from gunshot wounds, and curiously enough, a large proportion of these were in the back—the result of fighting in a square,

made good progress. A private of the Berkshire Regiment died from dysentery, and two of the Guards and one of the Commissariat died from gunshot wounds. Private Ellis of the Royal Engineers also succumbed during the voyage; he was so terribly mangled by spear thrusts and gunshot wounds that it was astonishing he lived to reach the ship. All these poor fellows, like many others with each returning all sides of which were assailed at once.

These men had formed part of General Graham’s division, and received their wounds either at Hasheen on the 20th of March, or McNeill’s zeriba on the 22nd, or as members of the convoy on the 24th. The officers who returned in the *Iberia* were Colonel Gildea, Assistant-Quartermaster-General (to General McNeill), who came on board.
invalided; Captain Sir Rodney Riddell, paymaster of the 90th Regiment, invalided; Major Robertson, 9th Bengal Lancers, with a spear wound in the leg; Captain the Hon. N. C. Dalrymple, of the Scots Guards, whose shoulder-blade was smashed in the engagement of the 24th, while acting as Brigade Major of the Guards; Lieutenant Gunn, R.N., invalided; Lieutenant the Hon. Alan Charteris, Coldstream Guards, with a spear wound; and many more.

Three men had each lost a leg and two were minus an arm. "In one hammock lay a man of the 49th Berkshire, watched over by two nurses, and, under their kindly influence, he looked forward without dread to having a leg amputated to stop the haemorrhage from his wounds. Here was to be seen a head bandaged; there an arm in a sling; elsewhere a man walking slowly about the deck assisted by his sick comrades." Most of the men were confined to their hammocks, and all were in the best of spirits to see their native shore again, and anxious to get to Netley Hospital. Several suffered from dysentery and sunstroke, but with the exception of one fatal case, they all made satisfactory progress.

On the 20th General Graham reported to the War Office, that he had visited Tambouk in the Hadendowa country, a post held by General Fremantle, with the Scots Guards, two screw guns and a company of Engineers, while Otao was held by the Coldstream Guards, with one company of Mounted Infantry. He found both positions strong; the health of the troops good, and no appearance of the enemy. That great essential, water, was abundant at Otao; but at Tambouk, only six hundred gallons a day could be got from the wells, where it was found to be five feet lower than last year, and the boring was arrested by rock at a depth ten of feet. Beyond dry water-courses he found the country to present few obstacles to the line of railway.

Near Tambouk he found a very deep water-course with banks at least twenty feet high. The bed of the valley was flat, covered with loose rocks and bush, with occasional high cliffs, round the base of which the rail could wind; but beyond Tambouk the line would enter among wild hills, where there was not a drop of water to be found for fully twenty miles; thus a further advance was, for the time, postponed. But now the Arabs in the country north of Suakim, hearing of the reverses suffered by Osman Digna, and fearing to be cut off by these successive advances of the British troops, moved southward, and four hundred of them were seen moving westward of our works at Tamanieh, to rejoin the force hovering among the hills near that place.

Mahomet Ali with his friendly Arabs was still out among the hills; but the presence of the tribes in some force now, in the Deberet Valley, rendered it very doubtful whether he would be able to achieve the coup de main he projected for the capture of Osman Digna; indeed we need scarcely say that it proved a failure.

"I arrived here [at Handoub] early
from Suakim," wrote the correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*. "Whilst galloping along during the night, I met some Amaras, who were coming from the opposite direction. At first sight their intentions appeared doubtful, and I had already seized my revolver, when my servant pronounced them to be friendly, and they shortly afterwards disappeared in the direction of Suakim, whence I had come. On arrival here, I found some little stir, as a body of rebels had been seen near the railway. Beyond this, however, nothing was certain; but an extra guard was placed on duty against a possible surprise. Spies report that Mohammed Ali is among the hills, treating with various tribes for the capture of Osman Digna. His success, however, is dubious. The friendlies state that Osman is again at Tamai with 500 followers, and eager to face us again. The railway works are proceeding briskly, and the track is already nearing Otao; but Tambouk, the next station, has been found to contain only a poor supply of water. As this is the case, the troops at present there will be withdrawn to Otao again, as the work of sending daily convoys has been found too great a strain upon the transport. Once, however, the railway links the two places, all difficulty as to supplies will at once disappear."

Mr. Brewster, who served as Chief of the Intelligence Department, came to headquarters to urge the necessity of giving some definite reply to those wavering, but would-be friendly tribes, who sought some guarantee for their protection in the future. "The best possible reply to them," wrote the *Standard*, "would be to hoist the British flag over Suakim. This would be equivalent to the presence of two brigades at Suakim. In any case it is imperative that the Government should arrive at a decision, as otherwise the fruits of the campaign will certainly be lost. Unless all results are to be abandoned, a considerable force will have to be retained here throughout the summer."

Lord Wolseley still seemed to expect an advance to Khartoum, for when passing through Wady Halfa, towards the end of April, he spoke in most decided terms against the adoption of the Suakim route, and declared his intention to return by the way of the Nile when he resumed the command in July.

The subject of defective cartridges and stores now cropped up again, when on the 20th April it was stated in Parliament that the troops in some parts of the Soudan "were without clothes, except the rags of what they had started in," and that the newspaper and parcel posts had been stopped, and thus they would get nothing sent to them.

To this the Marquis of Hartington replied that the Ministry had not received any account showing that an extraordinary amount of suffering prevailed among the troops on the Nile. All arrangements for their accommodation had been made locally. Large supplies of clothing and other requisites had been sent out, but it would
be impossible to state how far the means of transport at the disposal of the military authorities in Egypt enabled the troops to reap the advantage of them. The subject then dropped.

Inquiries instituted at Suakim regarding the occasional jamming of the Martini-Henry rifle resulted in the conclusion that the desert sand was not so much the cause of it as the defective manufacture of the cartridge metal, which was reported to be altogether "too thin and papery," and in too many pieces. When the charge is fired the metal expands, and thus jams in the chamber; while the case of the cartridge is so thin, that it often bends and breaks in the men's pouches when it is carried loose, as it must be. If kept well greased it does not jam; but this is not always possible in such a climate as the Soudan.

The general opinion was that the case should be "solid drawn," thus obviating the necessity for so many component parts. The cartridge was regarded as a theoretical one, which failed in active service and left the soldier defenceless. In fact, wrote the correspondent of the Times, the officers and non-commissioned officers have had to employ themselves in action, in driving out the jammed cases with the cleaning-rod; but this is not long enough until a piece called the "jag."
is screwed on, and, when this is done, the rod cannot be returned. A man cannot in action use the rod, but must lie down or pass the rifle to another, useless, and this occurred under the enemy’s fire—the British soldier being supplied with cheaper ammunition than the Soudanese! The men threw them away, and took up the rifles of their dead or wounded comrades. The sand, in the Colonel’s opinion, had nothing whatever to do with the jamming, as the whole of the rifles were inspected the same morning, and were seen to be in perfect order. With the rifle itself no fault was found; it was voted a perfect

and the delay and danger of such an operation, especially in close fighting, must always be serious.

The colonel of one of the regiments most hotly engaged in the critical battle of the 22nd March stated that some of his men’s rifles were jammed at the very first shot and rendered
weapon, the deadly efficiency of which was at once proved by the terrific slaughter at McNeill's zeriba. It was also mentioned again that the bayonets did not all stand the work which had to be done, as after the battle many were found bent, twisted, and useless. Another lesson taught by this campaign was the absurdity of arming mounted infantry with long rifles, which are unsuitable to saddle work in a dense bush, and for which a repeating carbine should have been substituted.

At this very time, when orders were issued to test the swords of the 2nd Dragoon Guards and 7th Hussars at Aldershot, more than one half were found unfit for use even after recruit drill. "The lives of our soldiers are precious," wrote a correspondent with reference to these matters; "they surely run sufficient risks, and it is villainous and unpatriotic that these risks should be greatly multiplied by sending them to fight with cheap, defective weapons, through the oversight or connivance of stay-at-home officials."

The disclosures of the gross defects of the rifle cartridges in the Soudan brought about, in September, 1885, an important change in the construction of the ammunition for that weapon. It was then decided that the complicated wrapping of the thin sheet brass was to be used no longer, and that drawn brass tubes be substituted. The advantages of the change were obvious, says the Army and Navy Gazette. The new form of covering is often described as a "solid-drawn tube," but it is, of course, a paradox to call any tube solid.

On the 22nd of April the startling news came to Suakim of Mr. Gladstone's statement, that, after all the toil, suffering, blood, and treasure wasted in the Soudan, further operations there were to be suspended. But the tidings were certainly welcomed by many, as the prospect of an indefinite occupation of the seaport, without any tangible purpose, and unrelieved by the excitement of actual warfare, was almost universally distasteful, and the effects of the daily increasing heat were beginning to be severely felt.

The hope that some improvement in this respect might prevail as soon as the advanced condition of the railway would allow the troops to encamp in the hilly regions, had not as yet been realised. The heat in the enclosed valleys of Tambouk and Otao was greater even than at Suakim, 105° having been registered as a day temperature under canvas. Sickness, in consequence, began to increase; and, though hitherto the general health of the troops had not been satisfactory, they had to reckon on a further increase of some twenty degrees in the temperature during the summer months.

Under these circumstances, which tell upon the morale of troops not less than their physique, the chance of those impending events which might draw the forces to a scene of more stirring warfare, evoked the greatest enthusiasm, and nothing was spoken of in camp but battles on the Afghan frontier.
"One of the most satisfactory features of the Eastern Soudan campaign of 1885," wrote the correspondent of the Standard at this time, "has been the great improvement in the Transport, Commissariat, and Medical Departments since 1882. The praise already given in my telegrams to the Naval Transport, under Captain Fellowes, is equally due to the Land Transport, under Colonels Walton and Robertson and Captain Decasson, upon which the most severe demands have been made, more especially in the matter of water convoys. The above officers were ably assisted by Lieutenant Bayley, especially detailed from the Indian Army, and by the Hon. Guy Dawnay, Member of Parliament for the North Riding of Yorkshire, who has now returned to England. The Commissariat, notwithstanding the difficulties thrown in their way by perpetual changes at headquarters, have supplied the enormous requirements of the Expedition with hardly a hitch. With regard to the medical service, I cannot do better than quote the words of a distinguished professor who came out specially to study surgical cases. He said:—'I have never seen, and still less did I expect to see, such perfect arrangements, whether at the base or in the field.' The censorship of the Press unhappily prevents my mentioning some quarters in which praise is not equally applicable."

The Cavalry remounts committee now ceased to purchase horses; but Major Hutton was ordered to Beyrout, with instructions to proceed to Constantinople, if necessary, with letters from Sir Evelyn Baring, to facilitate the export of two hundred and fifty horses recently purchased, but which the Turkish authorities would not allow to leave Syria; and meanwhile, as General Graham had not received any fresh instructions from the War Office he continued the construction of the railway, and also made preparations for an advance with the Camel Corps to Es Sibil, nearly fifty miles from Suakim.

The excitement prevailing there received a new impetus when it was announced that another French transport had arrived in the Suez Canal. These two had two thousand French troops on board. Their orders were not clearly known; but they stayed a week in the canal, followed and closely watched by the British Ironclad Invincible, whose sealed orders, it was believed, were to prevent the landing of these French troops, anywhere in Egypt. Unless in connection with the Bosphore Egyptien incident, it is difficult to know what brought them into the Canal.

Notwithstanding Mr. Gladstone's statement, the stores for the railway continued to arrive fast. By the 22nd of April, the harbour authorities, work as they might, found it utterly impossible, with the small landing-place, to keep pace with the arrival of stores from Britain; and at that date, no less than twenty ships, all laden with the railway plant, were awaiting their turn to unload.

After a little interval of quiet, the enemy began to reappear once more,
and caused a thrill of excitement to pervade the monotony of camp life at Tambouk, Otao, and Handoub. Day, then, passed after day, under a scorching sun, without any incident more interesting than the arrival and departure of convoys; but the Scots Guards, in their advanced post at Tambouk, had the hardest time of it, owing to the scarcity of water. Only six gallons for twenty-four hours, were yielded by the wells, though, of course, the convoys from Otao kept the garrison supplied with condensed water from Suakim.

Between the town and Handoub there was only one post, known as “Station No. 1,” where, as stated, a blockhouse and wooden tower had been built. There, Lieutenant Haggard, of the Kings (Shropshire) Light Infantry, with thirty men, five of whom were Lancers, for scouting, was placed in a small but strong zeriba.

On two successive mornings parties of the enemy, on foot and on camels, were observed skirting the mountains in the direction of Deberet, where a brief reconnaissance had been made. Haggard’s little detachment remained under arms the entire night; for as darkness closed in, the peculiar...
RENEWED ACTIVITY OF THE FOE.

signal whistle of the Hadendowas, which resembles the shrill cry of a bird, was heard in the bush all round the zeriba; but no attack was made, though it seemed likely enough that Osman’s fanatics had made up their minds to dan, the line was pushed vigorously on, and there were no signs of an approaching retreat. A body of Hadendowas, were now reported to be in arms among the hills, two miles distant from Tambouk, where the new Camel

measure strength with us once more; either by falling headlong on us, when the next step forward was taken, or by attacking the convoys.

Six new wells were now dug by the troops at Otao; and a platform a hundred yards in length was constructed for the discharge of supplies arriving by railway, and in spite of the telegrams received, announcing the intention of our Government to abandon the Sou-

Corps arrived at midday on the 23rd of April.

On the following morning General Graham with his staff rode to Tambouk, to inspect the position, and returned to Suakim by train from Handoub, while a force of six hundred of the Camel Corps, fifty Mounted Infantry, and two hundred of Mahomet Ali’s friendly Arabs, marched from Tambouk to Es Sibil; but they returned
the same evening, as Mahomot, who had a private feud with the chief sheik of that place, declined to remain there during the night with so small a force. On the preceding night several rifle shots—one account says forty—were fired into Tambouk, but did no damage.

On the 24th a balloon was sent up at Ambuk, with some friendly Arabs in the car. They had a good view of the country for fifteen miles around, but saw only a few stragglers of the enemy mounted on camels. The main camp of the Scots Guards beyond the Wells of Tambouk was a strong position at the foot of high hills; three of these were occupied with screw guns. The camp was girt by a zeriba, and the great stones that encumbered the adjacent ground, and might afford cover to the enemy, were all cleared away to form roads and camp surroundings.

Almost every night now parties of Osman's men came down from the hills and harassed the advanced camps. To check this, on the night of the 25th, Colonel A. H. Paget, of the Scots Guards, with twenty picked men of that corps, went out and lay in ambush on a hill a thousand yards due south of Tambouk, from whence the enemy had fired on the preceding night; but, greatly to their disappointment, none of the Arabs appeared. The whole force in Tambouk had orders to be in readiness to fall back on a three hours' notice. More firing on Tambouk and Otao ensued on the night of the 27th.

In reference to the alleged interference with the newspaper and parcel post, we may here quote a General Order issued at this time:—"The General officer commanding in Egypt has drawn attention to the inordinate number of newspapers which have been sent out for the use of the Nile Expeditionary Force, many of which have to be detained at Wady Halfa, owing to the difficulty of transport up the Nile. He advises the friends of officers and soldiers in the Soudan to restrict the newspapers to a limited number of weekly papers. He remarks that a large quantity of daily papers, from their bulk and weight, interferes with the delivery of parcels, the quick transport of which is of far more importance. The General officer also recommends that parcels should be packed in boxes of tin or wood, sewn up in strong sheeting, and very legibly directed, in order to ensure their safe delivery at their destination."

The laying down of water pipes along the railway line was now abandoned, and a great stir was caused in camp by the receipt of instructions from London directing the Royal Marines, who had been serving under General Graham, to return to England with the least possible delay, there to be transferred to various vessels, ordered for foreign service; and so peremptory were these instructions, that the Marines were embarked on the following day on board the transport Australia, which sailed on the 29th, on the night of which the Arabs again opened a fire on the camp at Otao, and the railway was now ordered not to be continued beyond that point till further instructions were given.
On that night also the Arabs scooped the sand from under the sleepers of the railway at Handoub and set them on fire.

These were Hadendowas from Ha-sheen, who also burned a large pile of sleepers near the line, and carried off some telegraph wires and a quantity of other material.

Their fire into the camp at Otao wounded three of the Coldstream Guards and several camp-followers, but was responded to by a rifle fire, a few rockets, and shells from the screw guns. And next morning, at half-past eight, a body of Hadendowas opened fire upon the camp at Tambouk, but at 2,000 yards, consequently it was quite harmless, and a dread of our screw guns prevented them from lessening the range. About the same time some more of these restless Hadendowas—encouraged, no doubt, by rumours of the approaching retreat of the British troops—assisted by Egyptian convicts who had made their escape to Osman Digna—cut the telegraph wires and destroyed the metals in several places between Handoub and Suakim; while spies brought the information that 300 of them had solemnly sworn on the Koran to rush one of our positions, cut off a convoy, or do something equally desperate.

On the 30th the Cavalry and Mounted Infantry issued from Handoub, and rode six miles up the Hasheen Valley to Theroubat, where it was known that the rebels had been in hundreds that morning; but they had dispersed before our troops reached the spot. The same force, together with the Camel Corps and Mahomet Ali's Amaras, made a reconnaissance as far as Es Sibil, of which nothing came, though a belief was prevalent that they might capture Osman Digna alive or dead.

From Major Templar's balloon a look-out was kept above Tambouk, with a small pilot balloon in a higher current of air; and two "friendlies," who were taken up as "a treat" in the former, came down very sea-sick, to the amusement of the soldiers in camp.

The temperature at six o'clock in the morning then averaged 63°; at noon 92° to 102° under a double tent; and night and day the limelight of the heliograph sparkled from the tops of the fortified hills over the zeribas, to the terror and bewilderment of the hovering Arabs.

Some mining engineers, who were officers of the Australian contingent, found, when experimentally blasting a reef of rock two miles from Tambouk, a promising quantity of copper ore.

On the 30th, with a view to check the annoyance caused by the night attacks of small bodies of rebels, a portion of the 70th Regiment marched out of Handoub in the afternoon and posted themselves in ambush, and the expectation that they would renew their attempts to injure the line was justified by events.

About dusk some 200 Arabs passed in a body right along the front of our ambushed men, who opened a rattling fire on them. So scared were they by this unexpected reception, that
they made no attempt to return the fire, but fled across the hills. Our men fired carefully, and evidently with effect, for numerous gouts of blood were seen when day broke, indicating

that several of the enemy had been hit; but, as usual, they had succeeded in carrying off their killed and wounded. The men of the 70th were in excellent spirits with the success of their manoeuvre in meeting the wily enemy with their own tactics.

Two days before this General Gra-

were more amply protected now, as, under Osman Digna's renewed threats, in the face of the vow sworn by 200 of his fanatics on the Koran, the General could not entrust 300 camels en route to the escort of half a squadron of cavalry, as he had been doing lately.

"Although there seems to be little
CHAMBER IN THE MUSAFFIR KHANA, CAIRO, IN WHICH THE EX-KHEDIVE, ISMAIL PASHA, WAS BORN.
doubt," wrote a correspondent at this
time, "that Osman Digna suffered a
far more serious loss than we knew of
at the time in the victory of the 22nd
of March, which was gallantly snatched
from the jaws of defeat by the British
private soldiers, and that he is too
crippled for further serious attack, it
is certain that he is now sufficiently re-
covered to renew his harassing tactics."

Definite news regarding the immi-
nence of a war with Russia was now
eagerly awaited by all our army in the
Soudan, and a feeling of relief and
enthusiasm pervaded all ranks at the
prospect of more active and worthy
service; and in every tent and hut,
Cyprus, Gallipoli, Smyrna, and India
were discussed as the possible destina-
tion of the force, which would un-
doubtedly have formed the nucleus of a
fine fighting army. In such specula-
tions as these many a weary hour
was whiled away pleasantly enough.

At Suakim the proposed aban-

donment of work upon the railway to Ber-
ber and the return of the several
hundred coolies who arrived in the
Jumna, puzzled and bewildered the
column of Sir Gerald Graham; but not
more so, perhaps, than many other
remarkable occurrences during that
most singular campaign. "In existing
circumstances," wrote a correspondent,
"the line, as it is at present being con-
structed, could hardly reach Berber
within two years. As there has been,
and can be, no satisfactory declaration
of our policy to the tribes through
whose country the rail must pass, if we
really intend to lay it all, the general
impression is, that fifteen or twenty
miles of railway, ending abruptly in
the desert, will be an admirable type of
Britain's past policy towards the Sou-
dan. Doubtless Osman Digna and
Sheikh Taher, the religious head of the
insurrection, and that scoundrel Sa-
doun, will so proclaim it, and when we
retire will proceed to give the Suakim-
ese another lively summer, by coming
down to the harbour and firing into
their windows nightly. Mr. Wyllie
will have another bullet-hole to show
in his side-board, and M. Marquet, the
French Consul, will again barricade his
bed on the house-top. Then in the
autumn, Britain, or some other power,
will have to begin again to stem the
tide, which has not lost much of its
strength through any effort of ours
during the past six weeks." This view
of the situation was strongly flavoured
with pessimism, as this narrative has
already shown, and subsequent events
abundantly confirmed.

In his despatch of the 30th May, to
Lord Wolseley, Sir Gerald Graham
refers thus to the occurrences at Suakim
in April:

"Looking upon all these operations
merely as trying the qualities of the
troops, it cannot be denied that they
were severe tests, and that no troops
could have stood them better. The
harassing night alarms, with enemies
having all the stealthy cunning and
ferocity of wild beasts prowling about
in their midst, only served to increase
the vigilance of the men in outpost
duties, and while teaching caution,
made them more eager to meet their
enemy in fair fight. The long marches and toilsome convoy duties under a tropical sun; the repulse of the enemies' sudden charges in the bush; the toilsome ten nights' watch in the zeriba, amid the carnage of a battlefield, are achievements of which any troops may be proud. As an instance of the high spirit that animated the whole force, I may mention, that the 1st Battalion of the Berkshire Regiment, who bore so glorious a share in defeating the enemy's sudden and desperate onslaught of March 22nd, continued to form part of the garrison of the zeriba until the final advance, and though suffering great hardship, declined to be relieved.

"During the progress of the railway," continued the General, "the troops were not annoyed by the enemy beyond desultory firing at night, and some attempts to injure the telegraph and railway. They had, however, heavy duties to perform in clearing the bush, and the heat continued to increase. Although the enemy was now cowed, full preparations had to be made to meet any attempts to interrupt the progress of the railway; and successful reconnaissances were directed in advance, and also into the neighbouring valleys, to clear them of Arabs, who, according to the information received, were collecting for the purpose of harassing our line of communication. The troops who took part in these reconnaissances showed great spirit and powers of endurance. On one occasion the 2nd Battalion of the Scots Guards marched a distance of nearly twenty miles, over rough mountain passes, without a man falling out. The 15th Sikhs on several occasions displayed their splendid marching powers, and at the surprise of, and attack on, Mohammed Adam Saadoun, in the Thakool Valley, the Camel Corps and Mounted Infantry marched all night, dismounted at daybreak, came fresh into action, and then, after climbing steep hills in pursuit of the enemy, they returned to camp, having made a march of over forty miles, half of which had been under a hot sun. This was done without a loss from over fatigue.

"Not only did the troops cheerfully undergo the strain put upon them by their heavy duties in such a climate, but they readily responded to any call on them for extra duty, especially for any service involving some chance of adventure. Volunteers were easily obtainable for night ambuscades on the railway or for service in the armoured train; and the Camel Corps was to a great extent manned by volunteers. Before the great heat came, men also volunteered for work on the railway."

Lord Wolseley's generous tribute to the gallant behaviour of the British soldiers in the Soudan war was certainly richly merited by these brave men. This History will have been written in vain if the author has not succeeded in demonstrating that the qualities of perseverance, patience, and pluck, were evinced to a very high degree by our troops.
CHAPTER III.
REVOLT AGAINST THE MAHDI.

On the 3rd of April, our ally, the Mudir, accompanied by his harem, household, and personal staff, left Dongola at sunset for Cairo, and many assembled to bid him farewell, believing that, under the pressure of British influence, he was about to be superseded. There was no demonstration of any kind, except by an old woman, who threw dust at him as he was passing. The Coptish Christians regarded his departure with delight; but the Arabs, jealous of his alliance with us, were indifferent about it, and a petition drawn up in the form of a testimonial, testifying to his loyalty, influence, and the respect he commanded, proved a complete failure. The Vakeel performed his duties in his absence.

Next day some deserters from Khartoum reached Merawi, with tidings that a portion of the Kordofan army had left the Mahdi and set out on their return home, stating that they had been a sufficient time under arms, and that in capturing the city the object of the campaign had been achieved. The Mahdi pursued them with a body of troops, but was defeated by their leader, Abdal Hamed Walad Essawad, after heavy fighting, near El Obeid. Yet he announced that he would attack Dongola, in three months, after the feast of Ramadan.

The health of the troops in General Dormer’s camp was then good, the sick having much improved since leaving Korti. The camp was strongly guarded, with a line of out-pickets established on hills that rose on both its flanks.
SIR EVELYN WOOD.
ENCAMPMENT IN UPPER EGYPT.
The Hassaniyeh tribe round Berti were still actively hostile.

On the 7th of April news came from Abu Gusii, stating that a brisk slave trade was carried on from the province of Kordofan; but the traders carefully avoided the vicinity of every station occupied by British troops; and on the same day the following proclamation, from Constantinople, regarding the Mahdi, was circulated at Dongola and elsewhere:

"CONSTANTINOPLE, April 7.

"The false Mahdi having acted hitherto in a manner contrary to the principles of Islamism, and consequently in opposition to the elevated ideas and conciliatory views of his Majesty the Sultan, it is not impossible that he may have carried his audacity and seditious spirit so far as to issue a fresh incendiary proclamation against the Ottoman domination.

"The existence of such a proclamation is, however, doubted, as nothing is known of it by the authorities of the Hedjaz or Yemen, whom the Arab population, in their fidelity to the Imperial Government, never fail to keep informed of the acts of this impostor.

"However this may be, there is no doubt that the Arabs, in all the regions of the Empire inhabited by that race, show their devotion to the Imperial throne and the Caliphate by constantly sending deputations to Constantinople; and that the Arabs, equally with all other Mussulmans, will treat this new appeal made by fanaticism and barbarism with the same profound contempt as previous incitements of a similar character.

"The proclamation in question, therefore, will produce no effect on the minds of the Mussulman population, who regard the Soudanese agitator as nothing but an impostor and a robber chief of the worst kind."

On the 13th deserters reported that the rebels had left Berti and retreated to Berber, while those that were in Metemneh, under an Emir, had been withdrawn to Khartoum; and large numbers of Bishareen Arabs, who had joined Osman Digma, had received such severe lessons in their conflicts with the British troops, that they had left his country with their families and retreated to Berber.

"We are leading an uneventful life here," wrote the correspondent of the Daily Chronicle, from Dongola, under date the 20th of April; "but though we have very little in the way of excitement, we have by no means settled down to the dull monotony of hot weather in the Soudan. There is still hut-building going on, and news telegrams, especially just now, furnish topics of conversation which help to make us forget our surroundings. Most of the troops are in huts. The 19th Hussars are still in tents; but they were the last to arrive at Dongola, and consequently are behind the others in hut-making. The general plan of the huts is twenty feet by forty, with two or more doors, and they are about eight feet high. A framework of uprights and crosspieces is first made, and over all this are lashed mats of dhurra stalks, which are made by the natives. Two layers of mats afford an ample protection against the sun, and serve to keep out the dust, whilst a mud wall, about a foot or eighteen inches high, keeps the dust from being blown in at the bottom. One of these huts hold from fifteen to twenty men. The officers' pattern is a long hut divided into three compartments—one for each officer, twelve feet by twelve feet."

Dongola proved to be the best of the summer stations on the Nile. There were more provisions obtain-
able there than at others, such as milk, butter, and eggs, though all of an inferior quality, and very dear. There were also plenty of vegetables—pumpkins, onions, and tomatoes—and the natives lost no time in planting rows of water-melons on the island opposite where the falling Nile had left the mud, and where their daily growth was watched with intense interest by the thirsty garrison.

The Dongolawi, as countrymen of the Mahdi, did not like us, nor cared to conceal the fact, but they seemed determined to make the most they could out of our troops while there. The people were fairly respectful, but they taught their children to say, as the soldiers passed them, "Ingleses mush kwyees" ("English no good").

The Nile was very low now at Dongola, so low that even the whale boats were constantly grounding, and the Guards' Camel Regiment had crews in daily training for certain projected regattas. Their mess hut was burned by accident, and with it perished their entire mess kit with four officers' huts, which sent up the price of knives, forks, and spoons in camp to a premium.

"The announcement a few days ago," wrote a correspondent, "of the recall of the Camel Corps was received with cheers by the Guardsmen here, but their faces looked very long when it was officially denied next day; they are a cheerful lot, however, and intend to make the most of the Dongola season. The officers have built a truly magnificent mess hut (in the best style of Captain Pearson, Royal Marines, the architect of their hut-barracks), where every one receives a welcome, and can get a drink of cold water or even ginger-beer, both of them most acceptable drinks in this hot, liquor-forsaken country. The Greeks who have brought up stores so far as this deserve all praise, though their prices are exorbitant. They are the only people who have attempted to supply us with tinned provisions, and one of them penetrated even as far as Gakdul."

It was curious that, while our troops were settling down so quietly in the camps on the Nile, the Mahdi should have such a rough time of it in Khartoum and elsewhere; and the troops were not without surmises that when autumn came his life, or at least his power, might be ended. Meanwhile the news of further preparations continually arrived in the camp at Dongola, though many then urged that the preparations were on too petty a scale for an advance, and were rather intended for a movement down the river.

A certain amount of khaki clothing was served out to the troops all round; and not a moment too soon, as they were clad in rags. Umbrellas also arrived, but were chiefly used by orderlies; and from the General came that (to smokers) most timely gift—the briarwood pipes, prior to which one pipe frequently did duty for fifteen men. The health of the troops was good, the percentage of sick being 7.81, which, the Medical Staff alleged was less than would be the
case if the camp were down in Lower Egypt. With reference to Lord Wolseley's incessant references to boy soldiers, "it must be remembered," said the Daily Chronicle, "that nearly all the wrote one, "and the difficulties with Russia give us an excuse for saying openly that we are sick of it."

It was now known confidently at Dongola that the tribes in revolt weakly—in fact, practically speaking, all—have been weeded out long ago, and only the fittest survive in the Soudan."

It was on the 22nd of April that news of Mr. Gladstone's remarkable speech reached Dongola, and was received with joy by the troops there. "Every one is sick of the Soudan," against the Mahdi—those of Fellata, Gowameh, Ghodiat, and Hawazura—had defeated him with heavy loss at Dar el Ahomdah. They were led by the Sheikh Abuonga; and on the following day, the 17th of April, news came from Sennaar that the garrison of that place was holding out valiantly and well against him, having been
reinforced by the Mudir of Tokar and Said Osman, though fresh troops were sent from Khartoum against it under a warlike sheikh named Walad Joubara, and camels were forcibly collected for troops going against that brave garrison, and for warfare in Kordofan. Sheikh and Hawazura Arabs had pillaged El Obeid and carried off the spoil to Gebel Dair. And on the 25th it was stated that the troops in Omdurman were wavering in their allegiance, and that smallpox was raging among them. A brisk sale in slaves

Matters were said to be fast becoming worse for the Mahdi, as on the 20th it was stated at Dongola that the Arabs on the White Nile above Khartoum were deserting him, as he was robbing every one of anything worth seizing, and that those in Berber were in open revolt against him, under the leadership of a sheikh named Migummi, the quarrel having its origin about some treasure; while the Mawai still went on in Khartoum, and all the Christian prisoners taken were said to have been sent to the island of Abba.

At Dongola the heat about this time was intense, the thermometer registering 113 degrees Fahr. in the shade.

Abu Anga, one of the Mahdi’s most trusted lieutenants, was now slain in Kordofan, and a paper emanating from an orthodox Mussulman, refuting the
latter's claims, was being circulated among the native population, by whom it was eagerly read.

It was now reported at Dongola that a new Mahdi, named Muley Hassan Ali, made a triumphant entry into El Obeid on the 12th of March. He bore a naked sword in his right hand, rode on a pure white horse, and was followed by a dervish of the town, by prisoners, and by his adherents with their swords drawn. When he passed the people prostrated themselves and kissed the ground, and during his prayers in the mosque, a large pile was made on which a copy of the new Koran, prepared by the old Mahdi, Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin, was publicly burned. The new Mahdi, Muley Hassan Ali, told the assembled people that Mohammed, the Prophet of Mecca, had given him the sword he bore, wherewith to extirpate the old Mahdi and all his followers.

"Reports," said a correspondent at Dongola, "continue to reach headquarters here, almost daily, of the rising in Kordofan, and all confirm the belief that it is of the most serious character to the Mahdi. I have received to-day important information on the subject from a trustworthy source. The rising is something more than mere discontent on the part of the Mahdi's rank and file, for it is directed by two formidable sheikhs, old antagonists of the Mahdi, and able men. One of them, Abdul Essawad, was one of those leaders who opposed the Mahdi's first attempt to conquer Kordofan. Abdul Essawad raised a formidable force, with which he defeated the Mahdi at Gebel Dair. He could not, however, prevent the subjugation of Kordofan; but he retired with a portion of his forces, and, as a matter of fact, never sustained a defeat at the hands of the False Prophet. The other malcontent is El Nawai, Sheikh of the Hawazura tribes, a well-known warrior, possessing considerable influence. There seems to be little doubt that the whole of Kordofan is now in open revolt, and that Abdul Essawad and El Nawai may yet simplify Lord Wolseley's task, by relieving him of the necessity of 'smashing' the Mahdi. El Obeid has been closely invested by the rebels for some time past. Reports have reached here that the place has been taken by storm and sacked; and that Abdul Essawad has retired for a while to Gebel Dair with his share of the plunder; but this is by no means certain. It is reported, also, that the garrisons in Sennaar and Kordofan still hold out."

A messenger who left Khartoum about the end of March reached Dongola, with information that the market in the former place was literally glutted with slaves, male and female, who were sold at prices varying from five to thirty dollars a head. He confirmed the report that the garrisons of Sennaar and Kassala were holding out gallantly; but he bore terrible marks of ill-usage, having been captured, pillaged, and beaten by robbers, who teemed about all the wells in the Bayuda desert.

On the 28th April, the Sheikh Salem Isawi, of the Kabbabish tribe, was
solemnly invested with a robe of honour by the British authorities at Dongola, in recognition of the valuable services he had rendered during our advance towards Khartoum, not only in supplying camels, but in capturing convoys of the enemy.

About this time the regular troops of the Mudir of Dongola made a most successful raid upon Abdassi Island, near Berti, and slew its principal sheikh, who for a long time had been a strong advocate of the Mahdi, and prevented the people from paying their taxes; but on the 28th, when the villagers of Nourri, eight miles from Dongola, were holding their weekly fair, they were attacked by the Hassamiyeh tribe from the Sarniyeh wells, who killed a number of their leading men, and carried off many women and cattle (the former to be sold as slaves) almost within cannon-shot of the British troops, who were now experiencing great difficulty in getting sufficient wood and matting for their huts.

To turn elsewhere, the Sub-commission charged with that important subject, the regulations for the freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal, was fast approaching the completion of its task. At the sitting held on the 1st of May an accord was come to on all the points of which the delegates of the Powers had made reservations. In addition to this, the text of the clause, stipulating that in case of damage being done to the Canal by ships of war, the Power to which they belonged should reimburse the Suez Canal Company for that damage, the repairs being under-

taken at once by the Company, was adopted unanimously. The Committee held another sitting next day, at which the proposal made by Britain, and accepted by France, to the effect that the territorial Power was to be charged, to the utmost of her ability, with the observance by all the Powers of the regulations enacted for the freedom of navigation through the Canal, was officially discussed. "From unofficial conversations which have been entered into by the delegates there seems every reason to believe that this question will not give rise to any serious divergence of views. As for the principle of the right of the Powers to exercise supreme supervision over the application of the regulation for the freedom of navigation, it has been unofficially recognised by the delegates of all the Governments. This being the case, and France being willing to accept any fit means that may be proposed, it is confidently hoped that this last point will be settled to the satisfaction of all the Powers, and that by the end of next week, at latest, the International Commission will have brought its labours to a successful termination."

We have detailed in its place the sudden arrest of Zebeh Pasha, who, on the 12th of March, with his two sons, his foster-son, and one faithful servant, was brought to Gibraltar in H.M.S. Iris (from Alexandria via Malta), where they were placed in what is known as The Cottage, the Governor's summer residence, where all arrangements were made for their comfort. The barrier gates which isolate
the residence and its garrison from external communication were ordered to be kept closed day and night, experienced in communicating with these five prisoners, as the interpreter at Gibraltar did not understand Oriental Arabic.

while a subaltern, with eleven non-commissioned officers and men, were told off as a strict and permanent guard on this secret friend, and now known coadjutor, of the Mahdi. On the first evening the greatest difficulty was experienced in communicating with these five prisoners, as the interpreter at Gibraltar did not understand Oriental Arabic.

The Government, though pressed strongly by their agents in Egypt, had kept silent as long as possible about the late General Gordon's clamant applications for Zebehr. The Opposition getting some knowledge of it,
displayed an anxiety to damage the Government, and, coûte que coûte, began to raise a hue and cry against Zebehr. Public opinion, no doubt uninformed, and unaware of the arguments which were used by Gordon and Sir Evelyn Baring, was, for a time, outraged by the very suggestion of Zebehr's appointment. "But," said a print of the time, was not surprising, considering all the circumstances of the case.

Before reproducing General Gordon's renewed application for Zebehr to be sent to Khartoum, we may quote Lord Kimberley's emphatic declaration as to the duty of acting upon Gordon's recommendations of the then undiscovered traitor:

"In the case of a place so distant as the Soudan, they must interfere, if they interfered at all, with very much less knowledge than those upon the spot; and he thought it would have been a great mistake to have taken the responsibility upon themselves, and have dictated to General Gordon everything he should do in regard to affairs about which he must know a great deal more than the Government. Was it possible to conceive an operation of greater difficulty, or one in regard to the carrying out of which they must
more completely trust the man they employed? It was out of the question for the Government at home to devise the exact measures by which he was to succeed. It was only the peculiar qualities of General Gordon, and the peculiar knowledge he possessed of the country, that gave him a chance of success." But when these peculiar qualities and knowledge were brought to bear upon the question of what Government was to be set up at Khartoum, the Ministry overruled them.

In a series of telegrams in March, 1884, General Gordon explained why Zebehr must be sent to him, thus:—

"I see the impossibility of the immediate withdrawal of all the Egyptian employés, and the remedy I propose is to send up Zebehr as my successor, who would receive for a time a subsidy from the Egyptian Government to enable him to maintain an armed force. As to Egyptian employés, I mean that I appoint men of the Soudan to places which they do not care to accept for fear of compromising themselves with the Mahdi, and that is my difficulty, which arises from haziness of the future. This would be all over if Zebehr was here.

"The combination at Khartoum of Zebehr and myself is an absolute necessity for success, and I beg you and Lord Granville to believe my certain conviction that there is not the slightest fear of our quarrelling. To do any good we must be together, and that without delay. . . . Believe me I am right, and do not delay. Things are not serious, although they may become so if delay occurs in sending Zebehr. My weakness is that of being foreign, and Christian, and peaceful, and it is only by sending Zebehr that prejudice can be removed."

Thus wrote the luckless Gordon, in ignorance of the secret character and schemes of the man for whose cooperation he prayed. And on this point the equally ill-fated Colonel Donald Stewart was quite as strong:—

"It seems to me," he wrote, "that it is impossible for us to leave this country without leaving some sort of established Government which will last, at any rate, for a time, and Zebehr is the only man who can assure that. Also, we must withdraw the Sennaar and other besieged garrisons, and here also Zebehr can greatly assist us. . . . I assure you none are more anxious to leave this country than Gordon and myself, and none more heartily approve the Government's policy of evacuation. Unless, however, Zebehr is sent here, I see little probability of this policy being carried out. Every day we remain finds us more firm in the country, and causes us to incur responsibilities towards the people which it is impossible for us to overlook."

But on the 5th of March Lord Granville still refused to appoint Zebehr, and in Parliament he said:—

"General Gordon went for the double purpose of evacuating the country, by the extrication of the Egyptian garrisons, and of reconstituting it by giving back to those chiefs their ancestral powers, which had been withdrawn or
suspended during the period of the Egyptian Government. I have told the House already that General Gordon had in view the withdrawal from the country of no less than 20,000 persons in the military service in Egypt. The House will see how vast was the trust placed in the hands of this remarkable person. We cannot exaggerate the importance we attach to it. We were resolved to do nothing which should interfere with his great pacific scheme—the only one which promised a solution of the Soudanese difficulty—by at once extricating the garrisons and reconstituting the country upon its old basis and local privileges. It was our duty, whatever we might feel as to the particular position of the garrisons, to beware of interfering with Gordon's plans generally, and, before we adopted any scheme that should bear that aspect, to ask whether, in his judgment, there would or would not be such an interference."

Gordon still continued to urge that Zebehr, being a native of the country, could rally all the well-affected round him, as they knew he would make his home in Khartoum, and that giving him a subsidy for some two years or so would be in contradiction to the policy of entire evacuation."

"As for slave-holding," he wrote, "even had we held the Soudan, we could never have interfered with it. I have already said that the treaty of 1877 was an impossible one; therefore on that head Zebehr's appointment would make no difference whatever. As for slave-hunting, the evacuation of the Bahr-Gazelle and Equatorial provinces would entirely prevent it. Should Zebehr attempt—after his two years' subsidy was paid him—to take those districts, we could put pressure on him at Suakim, which will remain in our hands. I feel sure that Zebehr will be so occupied with the Soudan proper, and with consolidating his position, that he will not have time to devote to those provinces."

"As for the security of Egypt, Zebehr's stay in Cairo has taught him our power, and he would never dream of doing anything against Egypt. He would rather seek its closest alliance, for he is a great trader. As to progress made in the extrication of garrisons, all I have done is to send down from Khartoum all the sick men, women, and children of those killed in Kordofan. Sennar is quite safe and quiet. Kassala will hold out without difficulty, after Graham's victory, but the road there is blocked, as is also the road to Sennaar. It is quite impossible to get the roads open to Kassala and Sennaar, or to send the white troops, unless Zebehr comes up. He will change the whole aspect of affairs," continued Gordon, in his blind and perfect confidence. "It is impossible to find any other man but Zebehr for governing Khartoum. No one has his power. Hussein Pasha Khalifa has power only at Dongola and Berber. If you do not send Zebehr you have no chance of getting the garrisons away. This is a heavy argument in favour of sending him. There is no possibility of dividing the country between Zebehr and the other chiefs;
none of the latter could stand for a day against the Mahdi's agents.

There is not the least chance of Zebehr making common cause with the Mahdi. Zebehr here could be much more powerful than the Mahdi; and he would make short work with the Mahdi. The Mahdi's power is that of a Pope; Zebehr's will be that of a Sultan. They could never combine—Zebehr is fifty times the Mahdi's match."

All this praise reads curiously in the light of the discovered secret correspondence, and the arrest and deportation of Zebehr.

"He is also of good family," continued Gordon, "well known, and fitted to be Sultan; the Mahdi in all these respects is the exact opposite, besides being a fanatic. I dare say Zebehr, who hates the tribes, did stir up the fire of revolt, in hopes that he would be sent to quell it. It is the irony of fate that he will get his wish if he is sent up." But better reasons were needed.
To all this Sir Evelyn Baring replied that sending Zebehr and giving him a command was in harmony with the principle of evacuation, and that he had always contemplated some arrangements for the future government of the Soudan. As to slavery, he pointed to General Gordon's last and vehement request:

"With regard to ourselves we have had confidence in Gordon, and believe it will be fully justified. I would remind you that Henry IV. expressed great remorse, and gave a pledge for the future, when he found that one of his best ministers had been prevented doing that which was for his—the King's—good, in consequence of the too strict injunctions with which he hampered him; and I would go much farther than he did. I happened to open an interesting book the other day on Chinese literature, and the first thing I found was a sentence attributed out that we must either virtually annex the country or accept the inevitable consequences of abandonment, adding, "I believe that Zebehr may be made a bulwark against the approach of the Mahdi." But the Government still refused to alter their decision, and Lord Granville spoke thus in the House of Lords on the 6th of March, the day after he had finally declined to accede
to no less a person than Confucius. It was, 'If you suspect a man do not employ him, but if you do employ him do not suspect him.' I cannot help thinking that this maxim is as applicable in this country at this time, as it was a great many thousand years ago with regard to the administration in China."

But notwithstanding all this, when subsequently General Gordon appointed Zebehr, on his own account, Deputy-Governor-General of the Soudan, the Government wisely prevented his departure, as we have related elsewhere, by the action of their police.

Early in March, 1885, when Zebehr alleged a reason for declining to accede to Miss Gordon's request that he should intercede with his correspondent, the Mahdi, for the recovery of her brother's papers and effects at Khartoum, he had the effrontery to say that he could not communicate with Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin, as the latter was quite unknown to him, and in no way allied with any of his—Zebehr's—people.

On the 2nd of April a Maltese, who spoke several languages, was arrested at Assouan as a suspicious character, and on being searched several letters written by Zebehr to the Mahdi were found on him, and the contents of these alone justified the Government in arresting Zebehr and deporting him to Gibraltar. The Maltese was forwarded, under a strong guard, to Cairo.

On the 17th Zebehr's interpreter arrived at Gibraltar, with the whole of his correspondence in Arabic, to be submitted to the Governor for perusal. The latter frequently visited Zebehr, who refused to take exercise within the guarded precincts of the house he occupied, and boldly stated that he ignored the Mahdi, and came from the interior of the Soudan simply to transact private business at Alexandria.

On the 20th of the same month one of the Orderly Dragoons, carrying letters to the citadel of Cairo, was shot at twice, in mere wantonness, by a Soudanese, a relative of Zebehr Pasha. The soldier was not injured, but the police arrested the man in his house, to which he had fled, and it was resolved to make an open example of him for the sake of public order.

During March and April, 1885, Prince Hassan came on a bootless mission to the Soudan. He was the second brother of the Khedive, and was born in 1853. He married, in January, 1873, Khadijah Khanum, a daughter of old Mehemet Ali Pasha (who died in 1861), and by whom he had a son, Aziz Bey, and a daughter, Aziza Khanum. He was Minister of War, and the mission undertaken by him was by the invitation of Sir Evelyn Baring, acting on the request of Hassan Fehmi Pasha, then in London. The step was considered as being in the interest of the Sultan rather than that of the Khedive, and by many it was deemed as being the first move on the part of Britain to hand over the Soudan—not to Egypt, for whom we had been absurdly seeking to re-conquer it—but to Turkey! The appointment was received with much adverse criti-
cism, and was regarded as still farther complicating the situation, and leading to future difficulties.

He was accompanied by a suite of twenty-four persons, with eighty camels, and left Cairo for the Soudan on the morning of the 2nd of March, 1885, taking with him a pack of hounds with which to hunt antelopes in the summer months, which was about the only thing he achieved. On the 30th of the month Lord Wolseley left Dongola for Wady Halfa, where Prince Hassan awaited him; and the former expected to leave that place in the Water Lily on the 7th of April for Assouan, en route for Cairo.

On the 6th Lord Wolseley and his staff arrived at Wady Halfa, having performed the whole journey on camel-back, and inspected all the military stations on the line, and leaving instructions with regard to the various depôts for food, grain, and ammunition, which had been established along the banks of the Nile, at Abu Fatmeh, Kaibar, Abasart, Dal, and Akasheh. Lord Wolseley expressed his satisfaction at the arrangements which had been made to facilitate the progress of the troops upward, in the autumn, and gave particular instructions to the officers in charge at the above-mentioned stations.

The hospital arrangements in these were now very complete, and the transport of the sick was managed with the minimum of inconvenience to the sufferers. They were, perforce, conveyed in whalers to Akasheh, but from thence the journey was performed in comparative comfort by portage and rail, the line of which was proceeding rapidly, notwithstanding a deficient supply of plant. It extended now twenty-two miles beyond Sarras, and it was hoped would by August 15th reach Ferket.

Lord Wolseley dined with Prince Hassan on the 6th at Wady Halfa, and it was now announced that the latter would return with him to Cairo, having done nothing towards his mission in the Soudan, and he arrived in the capital about the 17th of the month.

The 24th of April saw, at Cairo, the excitement concerning the suppression of the Bosphore Egyptiane culminate, when M. St. René Taillandier formally pulled down the French flag at his Consulate, an action taken by the French Government, it was supposed, under the following circumstances.

On the 23rd a rumour was circulated in Paris to the effect that the Ministerial authorities there were about to disavow the action lately taken by M. Taillandier in support of the paper; and he had telegraphed that if the prestige of France was to be maintained in Egypt some vigorous line of conduct must be adopted. Hence, on the 24th came instructions for him to break off diplomatic relations and leave at once. He, however, deferred his departure till the 25th; yet Nubar Pasha gave no sign of yielding or giving any reparation "as demanded by France for the violation of M. Serriere's domicile."

On the 26th M. Taillandier, in answer to a message to await further
instructions at Cairo, and not go to Alexandria until specifically ordered to do so, telegraphed to the French Government that, in consequence of the indignant and excited state of the French colony, he thought it better that he should leave at once. That afternoon brought him an order to proceed forthwith to Alexandria, and there embark. Accordingly he quitted Cairo by the six o'clock p.m. train, leaving M. Legueux temporarily to transact current business; but it was further arranged that all French subjects were to be under the protection of the representatives of Germany.

We need hardly say this arrangement excited the most bitter feelings, and many French subjects declared that rather than put themselves under the protection of the German Consul, they would place themselves under the Egyptian sovereignty, even at the risk of hereafter forfeiting all their privileges as French citizens. The excitement which prevailed at Cairo was heightened and intensified by the menace of the French Government to refuse their sanction to the Financial Convention, which would mean a further postponement of the payment of the war indemnities, and create disaster in commercial circles, a threat which caused a strong revulsion of feeling against France in the minds of the natives.

For the preceding year France had been posing in Egypt as the champion of the natives, against British influence, especially in the matter of insisting upon relief being accorded to the commercial classes in their financial difficulties; and this threat, the moment her own interests, or supposed honour, were in the least degree affected, opened the eyes of the people to the real character of the aims and ends of France.

It was then suggested that were Britain to step forward and advance the loan wanted by Egypt she would largely diminish French influence and prestige in that country, and gain the confidence alike of the Egyptians and foreign residents. There was no doubt that the public in London, but more especially in Paris, were led by the violent language of the press, particularly of the République Française and the Journal des Débats, to attribute to the unpleasant affair of the suppression of the Bosphore Égyptien a degree of importance which facts did not in any degree warrant; and it was even asserted that France was sending transports with 4,000 men on board to remain at Suez, as a menace to Britain and Egypt together.

On the other hand, M. de Freycinet openly stated in a diplomatic salon that "there had been no communication whatever on the subject with Britain, as the act was one for which the Egyptian Government was solely and exclusively responsible. He had instructed the French agent at Cairo, in the event of his not obtaining the satisfaction demanded, to withdraw to Alexandria and to notify that until that satisfaction was granted, they would not submit the Financial Convention to the ratification of the French Chambers, which was requisite to make it operative. M. de Freycinet added that it was hardly
necessary to say that the measure was not in any way directed against Britain, but simply to uphold the Consular jurisdiction which had existed in Egypt from time immemorial; and he had every reason to believe that under the advice of the British, the Egyptian Government would accede to the legitimate demands of France, and that the affair would be satisfactorily settled.”

By the 27th of April an amicable arrangement of the matter seemed certain at Cairo, when, on his return from Alexandria, the consul received an enthusiastic reception from the French colony, though most of the latter disapproved of the action of their Government in the affair of such an obnoxious print as the Bosphore. On the same day it was stated, semi-officially, that Essad Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador at Paris, had made representations there regarding the matter in dispute. The Foreign Minister replied in courteous terms, expressing great consideration for the Sultan, but at the same time declaring that France viewed the question solely as concerning the Khedivial Government, which, according to the Imperial firman, was alone responsible for the interior administration of Egypt.

The next move in the matter was the French Chancelier in full uniform, with his cavasses, proceeding, with great formality, to reopen officially the printing office of M. Serriere. But it was stated, on the best authority, that since the British Government did not disclaim the responsibility for the decision of the Egyptian in suppressing the Bosphore, they had no hesitation in associating themselves with the regret expressed by Nubar Pasha, when he was compelled to visit M. Taillandier on the 3rd of May. So the paper reappeared, but only to be suppressed again at a future time.
CHAPTER IV.

LORD WOLSELEY AT SUAKIM.

Condition of the Troops at Kurot—Daring of the Arabs—The Patrol Train—Osmain Digna and his People—Arrival of Lord Wolseley at Suakim—Wail from Debbeh—The Canadian Voyaguer—Death of Colonel Kennedy—Expedition to Dinkal—Inspecting the Troops at Otao—Questions in the House—Review at Suakim.

About this time a letter appeared in the Standard of the 5th of May, which led to questions in Parliament. An officer in the camp at Kurot, near Debbeh, wrote thus of the state of things which he alleged to prevail there:—

"I wish we had a correspondent here to see the sort of life we are leading, and stand up for us. It is really too awful to think of. We are all in miserable bell tents, and the huts cannot be finished till August, so we have nothing but these miserable bell tents to keep out the sun. The temperature is now 120 degrees; each day is twenty-four hours of physical torture and mental suffering. Seven of our men have died of enteric fever within the last twelve days, and though we only began to form our camp here five weeks ago, we have already one hundred and fifty sick. It is a disgrace to keep us in such a fiendish country! Nothing can excuse it. The food is bad, and we are still in rags, as no clothing has come up yet. No one speaks, thinks, or hopes anything, but to go down. Anyhow, if they do keep the troops here all the summer, none left will be worth a straw. For God's sake write about it, and get other correspondents to take it up. They are generally the best friends the troops have, and now that they are gone, everything is concealed, and there is no one to say a word for the soldiers. Believe me, the half of us will be lunatics before long."

Another officer wrote thus:—

"The temperature is now 120 degrees all day long in the tents. The men are building huts, but cannot finish them before summer. We are all in the dark as to what is going on in the outside world, and letters take eighteen days in coming up from Cairo. There are between one hundred and seventy and one hundred and eighty sick here, and we have fifty-six ill out of five hundred and sixty-five."

Colonel Nolan called the attention of the Secretary of State for War to these letters, with reference to the condition of our troops in Kurot.

The Marquis of Hartington replied that he had seen these statements, which must have been written two or three weeks before; that he had no information on the subject, "but trusted the inconvenience then described had since abated;" and the subject then was dropped. He added afterwards that on the 24th of April Lord Wolseley had reported that nearly all the troops were in huts, and that on the 1st of May Sir Redvers Buller had telegraphed that the whole force was under cover, "meaning, I suppose," said the Marquis, "something better than tents. I do not understand the reference to unlined bell tents. Indian tentage for 13,000 men is up the Nile, so that there should be a good reserve in hand."

On being asked the general percentage of sick, he admitted that "it was impossible for him to calculate exactly what was the percentage of sick," and could not have done so without data furnished to him from the Soudan. Letters from Tani and Kurot stated that provisions were becoming so short at those stations, that the authorities threatened to put the men on half rations. "At present they have only supplies of meat
and biscuit, the vegetables, sugar, and coffee being entirely consumed. Even salt is fast becoming scarce, consequent on the break-down of the transport. There are now only three hundred camels available for transport between

in the erection of barrack-huts and similar work, and on the same day seventy patients were transferred from the Hospital of the Base to the Hospital Ship.

Two days before this Lord Wolseley

had landed, at five o'clock in the evening, and was received by General Sir Gerald Graham and his staff, with a detachment of the Grenadier Guards as a guard of honour, while a salute of seventeen guns was fired from Fort Carysfort. In every way the troops showed the greatest enthusiasm at his safe arrival from Suez. On the 3rd he paid a visit to Major Chermside, Governor-General of the littoral of the

the railway and Abu Patmeh. Last week there were only three tons of supplies delivered at the last mentioned place. The unusually low state of the Nile also increases the difficulty of pushing on supplies."

At Suakim, on the 4th of May, it was practically decided that the railway coolies on board the Joanna—which sailed on the 20th ult., and was telegraphed to return—should be employed
ROYAL ENGINEERS CLEARING THE RAILWAY NEAR SUAKIM OF BURNING SLEEPERS.
Red Sea, and was received by another salute. At this time it was supposed he would remain only a week at Suakim. No orders had yet been received for the withdrawal of the forces from the Soudan. Lord Wolseley was believed to be strongly opposed to the abandonment of the Expedition to Khartoum in autumn, for the use of which the Panama now came with eleven stern-wheel steamers, by means of which its supplies could be taken up the Nile. "Ten of these vessels," wrote a correspondent from Alexandria, "will be put together here, and one at Akasheh. The arrangements made by Colonel Ardagh, of the Royal Engineers, are so complete that some of the steamers will be afloat in a week after their arrival here."

Lord Wolseley at first took up his quarters in the transport Queen. He was accompanied by Colonel Grove, Military Secretary, Majors Creagh and Adye, and Captain Lord Charles Beresford.

The rebels were now growing more and more daring and persistent in their attacks. One night they surrounded both Tambouk and Otao, firing heavily, but at a long range. Thus a forward movement against them was becoming necessary. On the same night the patrol-train, manned by thirty men of the Grenadiers, kept moving up and down the line till day broke; thus the enemy did not make any of their usual attempts to burn the sleepers. The Shaterab tribe—which can put fifteen hundred men in the field—now tendered their submission; and the Marahs, the principal herdsmen and graziers of cattle, and which, like the Shaterabs, are a branch of the great Hadendowa sept, sent in to say they were ready to tender their unconditional surrender. They numbered three thousand souls, and with all their flocks and herds were then encamped along the coast, at a distance of eight miles from Suakim.

On the 3rd of May Major Templar started at daybreak, with a troop of Hussars and the Egyptian Camel Corps, to visit the Gasal Wells, ten miles eastward of Merawi. When he came within sight of the village the inhabitants, fearing that his force had come to make a raid, took to speedy flight. The wells were found amply sufficient for a large force. The position was an important one, as it would serve the enemy as a point of concentration for any attack in force upon our post at Merawi. Although it was then the dry season, Major Templar found plenty of vegetation in the vicinity of the wells. His troops were careful not to disturb in any way the property of the villagers, and having fully reconnoitred the locality, returned in the evening.

The work of hut building at Merawi being completed, the troops were now sent to repair their whale boats against the time of the supposed autumn campaign. "The sick there are doing well," wrote a correspondent, "and the medical officers report that there is a very marked improvement in many of the cases since they were removed into the newly-erected hospital tents. Indeed, the heat in the tents and mar-
quest was so great that the sick had but a poor chance of doing well. It is found that since the occupation of the new quarters slight cases mend rapidly. The sick list of the British troops here is only five per cent. of the whole strength, showing that Merawi is—for the Soudan—a healthy position."

One night General Graham went in what was called the patrol-train (and which he describes in his despatches as an armoured one), that ran in the dark hours between Suakim and Handoub, to endeavour to arrest the incessant attempts of the natives to injure the line; but, while the engine was getting in water at Handoub, the Arabs succeeded in setting fire to the sleepers in his rear in no less than six places, and burning them for about two hundred yards.

When the light of this conflagration was seen, the train was at once steamed swiftly back to the spot; but the enemy had fled in safety before its arrival. The men at the first look-out station had seen numbers of them retreating in the direction of the Hasheen Wells; so the General started for that place next morning with the Cavalry, but could see nothing of them. Yet during the subsequent night some hundred shots were fired at random into the zeriba, or advanced camp, at Otão, and on the following morning the Camel Corps, the Australians, and the Madras Sappers and Miners, retired from it into Suakim.

An advance in several columns in the direction of Tamanieb was arranged by Lord Wolseley to take place on the 5th of May in the evening, hoping to take Osman by surprise in the night or early morning; but it was postponed sine die, the reports of spies being to the effect that his followers were so dispersed that there was no chance of the columns falling in with any of them. Moreover, they said that it would be impossible to catch Osman himself, which would be the main object of the expedition, for though he was generally in the neighbourhood of Tamai, he always retired into the mountains at sunset, and never slept for two consecutive nights in succession at the same place.

But the accounts of these spies varied strangely, for others asserted that twelve hundred of his followers, who deserted him after his unsuccessful attack on McNeill's zeriba on the 22nd March, had now returned to him, and that his force then consisted of three thousand fighting men. Some five hundred Hadendowas, under their Chief Ali Adam Saadoun, were hovering at this time within two miles of Otao; consequently, officers and others were strictly forbidden to go out as hitherto, singly or in parties, to stalk the deer which abounded in the level places. Yet, with all these reports, when the head of the Intelligence Department, with Captain Molyneux and an escort of the Bengal Lancers, went out to McNeill's old zeribas and reconnoitred the country for a mile beyond these posts, they could not discover a single trace of the enemy.

Numbers of Arabs who, with their families, flocks, and herds—their only
wealth—had collected near Tokar, now sent in word imploring the British to come and save them from the persecution of Osman Digna. The officers of the political section of the Intelligence Department at the front, were now con-

strata in the vicinity of Tambouk, now reported that gold was there, but not in sufficient quantities to pay for working; but he added that the adjacent hills contained rich and very profitable deposits of copper ore.

The mining expert with the Australians, who went out to examine the gold veins said to exist in the rock

continually receiving messages from nearly all the warlike tribes in the neighbourhood, who were unanimous in declaring that they were sick of the war, and were willing to submit if the British would only promise to remain in the country. But this the Department were in no position to guarantee.

The atmosphere was fast becoming unbearable; cases of heat apoplexy were greatly upon the increase, and Lord Wolseley, being indisposed, remained on board the Queen.

On the night of the 4th of May the enemy succeeded in uprooting and removing a number of sleepers on the railway, and cutting the telegraph wires—of which they had a curious abhorrence—between Handoub and
Suakim. They also made a vigorous, but unsuccessful, attempt on a friendly tribe near Otao. Under the same date it was reported “that the despatch of chartered for the conveyance of railway plant to Suakim are on their way back, and on their arrival in England will be utilised for the conveyance of army stores to Egypt, Malta, Gibraltar, and such other places as may be necessary. Some of the vessels will take coals to British coaling stations. It is probable that as the contracts expire, they will not be re-engaged.”
With regard to what was termed "the wail of wretchedness from the camp near Debbeh" and elsewhere, a print of the time contained these just remarks:

"Not a man among our soldiers and sailors has ever complained of the hardships incidental to operations against the enemy, or of the severity of the conflict in which he has taken part. A British force is never so cheerful as when it is brought face to face with the foe; and certainly the ferocious hordes of fanatics that have been the victims of the Mahdi's imposture have not spared themselves in their efforts to overwhelm our troops. All this, including harassing night attacks, has been borne without a murmur. The British soldier knows how to accept the inevitable, and he has regarded heat and thirst as unavoidable discomforts to be encountered without complaint during his movements in the desert. But men who go into a summer encampment have a right to expect that no effort will be spared to provide them with quarters as comfortable as the circumstances of the case will permit. There comes, however, quite a wail of wretchedness from the camp near Debbeh, where bell tents are in use, without any prospect of the substitution of huts of any kind for some months to come. Our correspondent, who accompanied Sir Herbert Stewart's column, pointed out long ago, and in emphatic language, what might be expected in the neighbourhood of Debbeh when the hot weather came."

We give in its place the following letter addressed by Sir Charles Tupper, the High Commissioner for Canada, to the officer in command of the Canadian Voyageurs when in London. It expressed "Her Majesty's appreciation of the services they have performed with the Expedition on the Nile. I have waited upon the Earl of Derby, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and expressed the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's communication has been received by the Voyageurs, and their gratitude at the gracious recognition by the Queen of the services they have been able to render Her Majesty's forces. I added that they were much impressed with the sympathy of Her Majesty in the loss they have sustained by the recent death of one of their officers. Lord Derby will convey to the Queen the representations I had the honour to make."

With all their nautical skill, some of that force owed their lives to a red-coat. The silver medal of the Royal Humane Society was conferred on Captain E. G. M. Short, of the Prince of Wales's Royal Canadian Regiment (also curiously now named the Leinster), for saving a boat's crew, composed of seven Canadian Voyageurs and eight Egyptian soldiers, on the Nile near Ambigol. Captain Short was steering a Nile craft down the rapid when she struck a rock. One of the natives was knocked overboard and swept away, while the boat was wedged so firmly on the rock that the efforts of the crew to get her off were unavailing. It was soon seen that if she was not released before dark she
would, through the fall of the water, break up, and all hands on board would be drowned. The sole plan for saving the boat and her crew appeared to be by fixing a line of rope to a rock in the mid-stream. To swim direct to this spot, however, owing to the rapidity of the current—apart from chance crocodiles—remained for some one who would attempt the hazardous feat of swimming down the rapid until he could get into back-water and make it possible to reach the desired point. This task Captain Short undertook, and accomplished successfully after a perilous struggle. The rope having been fixed, or lashed to the rock, four soldiers got upon the latter and towed the boat off.

And here, to take it chronologically, we may glance at an episode occurring at home, in connection with the war in the Soudan—the untimely death and funeral of the officer commanding the Voyageurs, left behind, broken in health, in London—the death referred to in the letter of Sir Charles Tupper.

Colonel William Nassau Kennedy, of Winnipeg, descended, as his name would import, probably from one of the Scottish colony planted there by the Earl of Selkirk, died in London on the 3rd of May, 1885, and his funeral took place at Highgate Cemetery three days after. He was on his way back to Canada from the Soudan, accompanied by eighty of his men, and, taking England on the way, was attacked by illness and died in Highgate Hospital, whither he had been taken at his own request. At 10 a.m. on the 6th, the coffin, bearing a magnificent wreath sent by the Field Marshal Commanding, and a cross of flowers from the Canadian detachment, was brought from the Wesleyan Chapel. Many officers of rank were present, and among them was Sir Charles Tupper. The Voyageur detachment from the Wellington Barracks of course attended, under Quartermaster Remington.

The Rev. William Allen, Chaplain to the Forces in London, before the funeral, said of Colonel Kennedy:—

"Lord Wolseley, who was his guest for some time, became acquainted with the rare qualities of the departed soldier on the Red River Expedition, in conducting which his own fame was first established, and he sought the services of Colonel Kennedy, whose hardy men were required to carry the boats and munition of war up the falling Nile and its dangerous cataracts. Colonel Kennedy was a man beloved and honoured in his own country and his own religion, a statesman in council, a philanthropist, and, though a man of wealth, he cheerfully left the Dominion to hazard his life in the special duties assigned to those adventurous Canadians who were with him that day. It was the spirit of patriotism that induced him to say farewell to his wife and five children, to peril his life for the honour of Great Britain, who might well be proud of her colonists. Colonel Kennedy was above all a devout man, who feared and loved God, and served his generation by the will of God."

The band and drums of the Essex Regiment, from the Tower, were in
especially upon Captain Clark, of the Royal Engineers, and the officers of the political branch of the Intelligence Department under him; as not only did they obtain the most exact information respecting the number and position of the enemy, but Captain Clark planned and timed the march of the Expedition, which, for the first time in that campaign, succeeded in effecting a complete surprise of the Hadendowas, led by the ablest and most vigilant lieutenant of Osman Digna, the Sheikh Adam Ali Saadoun.

The latter had posted himself at Dhakdul with a thousand followers (having with them their women and

And now to return to the scene of operations at Suakim.

From there an expedition was planned against the village of Dhakdul, otherwise called Thakool, twenty miles westward of Suakim, in the Deberet Valley, under the personal command of General Graham; and the operation was a most successful one, reflecting the greatest credit upon all concerned,
LORD WOLSELEY INSPECTING THE GARRISON AT OMA.
children, flocks and herds), his avowed intention being to harass the British outposts, to cut off convoys and stragglers without mercy, and to damage the railway whenever occasion offered; so it was resolved to attack him in force.

On this service there marched from Suakim, at one in the morning, on the 6th of May, the Camel Corps, the Bengal Lancers, and detachments of the 20th Hussars and Mounted Infantry, under General Graham, who, en route, was to be joined by the 15th Sikhs, and two hundred friendly Arabs from Otao, a post ten miles to the southward of Dhakdul.

The night was one of exceptional darkness and gloom, and in advancing, via Hasheen, up the valley, General Graham, whose force was only a thousand strong, had to take the greatest care to keep the road, and avoid the many natural obstacles that encumbered it. Without incident the Well of Deberet, twelve miles from Suakim, was passed. It was feared that some of Adam Ali Saadoun's men might be posted there, and give an alarm; but all was quiet and still, and the column debouched upon the plain, south of Dhakdul, just as day began to break.

Towards the village the Bengal Lancers and Mounted Infantry rode in extended order, the reserve being formed by the new Camel Corps. The village—when day was fairly in—was seen to be situated at the junction of the Deberet Valley, with another that leads to Otao. The Arabs were quite unaware of the approach of the British troops till the latter were close upon them, and then in an instant the wildest confusion was seen to prevail, as the natives, in the highest excitement, endeavoured to get their flocks and herds together; while their scouts brought in the alarming tidings that another force was advancing against them through the valley of Otao, leaving no escape in that direction.

The latter consisted of fifty-nine men of the Mounted Infantry under Captain Briggs, the friendly Arabs under Captain Clark of the Royal Engineers and Mr. Brewster, and a party of the 15th Sikhs, the old Loodiana Light Infantry. The men of Saadoun were thus completely hemmed in—caught in a trap—and every one of them must have been taken or shot down but for some narrow gorges or chasms in the rocks known to themselves alone. These led to the westward, and down through them Saadoun and most of his men fled with the utmost precipitation when they saw our troops approaching.

Hotly pursued by our cavalry, they were speared, shot, or cut down in numbers, though while flying they kept up a running fire, but made not the least attempt to rally or stand. Some of the more resolute men in the village took to the nearest eminences, and facing about opened a rifle fire; but our men dismounted, advanced on foot, and swept them from their position in splendid style.

We killed one hundred and fifty of the enemy, and captured all their goats and sheep, to the number of two thou-
sand, according to the despatches, with nine prisoners, three of whom, being women, were released at Otao. Our casualties consisted only of a bad spear wound, suffered by Lieutenant A. R. Austin of the Shropshire Regiment, and bullet wound through the thigh of Corporal Lock of the Grenadier Guards, both serving with the Mounted Infantry, but several horses were injured by spears and bullets.

This little affair was well planned and well carried out. Coming from different directions, the two columns arrived on both flanks of Dhakdul within three or four minutes of each other, and it was hoped that the complete success of the surprise would have the effect of dispiriting the followers of Osman Digna, who had hitherto considered themselves, in their fastnesses, safe from any vigorous attack on our part; but after the sudden onslaught at Dhakdul, and the loss of men and so many animals, it was supposed they would never feel safe within striking distance of us again.

Before falling back from Dhakdul, four hundred sheep and goats were sent off to Suakim in charge of ten of the Bengal Lancers, who got as far as Hasheen without seeing anything of the enemy, but were there furiously assailed by a party of the ubiquitous Hadendowas.

It fortunately happened that when the columns had first advanced a signal party had been left on the summit of Dhibbat Hill, eight hundred feet in height above Hasheen. It consisted of Major Browell and Captain Sawyer, with an escort of a hundred men of the 28th Bengal Native Infantry under Lieutenant Aitken.

From the lofty position they occupied, these officers could see the Hadendowas lying in wait for the slender escort of the Bengal Lancers, and Lieutenant Aitken, taking with him thirty-seven of his men, at once doubled down the hill and attacked the Hadendowas, but not before they had repulsed the Lancers and captured the flock. The Sepoys poured several volleys into them, killing a number and putting to flight the rest. Thus the greater portion of the sheep and goats were re-taken; but, in spite of the double blow just inflicted on them, the Arabs came down next night and damaged the railway and telegraph wires near Handoub.

On the 7th, after the affair was over, Lord Wolseley and his staff rode out to Otao and Handoub to inspect the troops, and before doing so he complimented the Australian Artillery and the Sikhs, and promised a native officer of the latter a sword of honour for special gallantry.

In this affair at Dhakdul, Captain R. H. F. W. Wilson, of the 10th Hussars, particularly distinguished himself, but his services remained unnoticed. "I know," says a writer in the Army and Navy Gazette of September 26th, 1885, "that Sir Henry Ewart strongly recommended him for promotion in the unpublished despatch of Colonel A. P. Palmer, C.B., of the 9th Bengal Lancers, detailing the successful operations against Mohammed Adam Saadoun on May 6th. That
officer brought Captain Wilson's services to Sir Gerald Graham's notice in the most prominent manner. Wilson, in this affair, acted as senior Staff-Officer to Colonel Palmer, and his readiness of resource, based on a very extensive war experience, was most notable. It certainly seems unjust that a member of the Cavalry Brigade Staff, whose conduct at Hasheen was most unfavourably commented on in presence of the enemy, both by the Chief of the Staff and the senior officers of the Royal Engineers, should be rewarded with a brevet, while Wilson, the mainspring of the brigade, should be left out in the cold.

Captain Sawyer, an officer of the garrison, now did much valuable work in sketching the country, and completed a series of drawings of the whole surrounding neighbourhood, which would prove most useful if required for strategical purposes.

The wells at Dhakdul were blown up by gun-cotton, after which General Graham returned with the Mounted Infantry, and from which place the troops, under Colonel Walmer, of the Bengal Cavalry (as stated by correspondents), were ordered to follow via the Deberet and Hasheen Valleys. As they left Dhakdul the enemy appeared on the hills, and, following them up quickly, opened a rifle fire. The Colonel at once halted the column, and, after firing a few volleys, charged and routed the enemy, of whom more than forty were killed and a great number wounded.

In this skirmish, Mr. Lambie, the correspondent of the Sydney Morning Herald, was shot through the leg, and a sergeant and two privates of the Camel Corps were also wounded.

"I am prevented," added the correspondent of a London paper, "by the press censorship, from telegraphing certain details connected with the engagement of yesterday, and also certain items of intelligence."

These were supposed to be embodied in certain questions put in the House of Commons a few days after, when Mr. J. Morley asked the Secretary of State for War whether it was in accordance with the policy announced in presenting the estimate for Mr. Gladstone's Vote of Credit, that "the engagement of the 6th May took place at the village of Dhakdul, in which an encampment of Arabs, with their women and children and flocks, was attacked by General Graham, and one hundred and fifty men killed, although it was alleged by an eye-witness that they never made any serious attempt at a stand?"

Ere the Secretary could reply, he was asked by another member whether his attention had been called to the following statements by a special correspondent: "Daylight broke almost imperceptibly. We were near the village of Dhakdul when the friendly scouts came running in with the news that the inhabitants were at prayer, and that if we attacked at once we should catch them. General Graham pushed on with a troop of Bengal Lancers. . . . The enemy fled on camels in all directions, and the Mounted Infantry and Camel Corps coming up
gave chase. Some two hundred attempted to stand, and showed a disposition to come at us, but evidently lost heart, not before at least twenty men had been killed. . . . It was curious to witness the desperate efforts of the enemy to drive their flocks up the mountain side, turning now and again to fire on the Bengal Lancers. The ‘friendlies’ tried to cut off the flocks, and succeeded in capturing some hundreds of the animals. The village was looted and burned. We also destroyed the wells with gun-cotton. But for our being unaware of some narrow hillock-walks, up which the enemy retired, we might have exterminated them.

Our loss has hitherto been only two Mounted Infantry men wounded. We have done the enemy all the harm we could, thus fulfilling the primary object of the war.’ Whether Her Majesty’s Government approved of this mode of carrying on warfare, and if not, whether immediate orders would be sent to the commanders of the British forces in the vicinity of Suakim, ordering its cessation?”

Mr. Corbet also asked “whether it was true that Her Majesty had telegraphed to General Graham, congratulating him on this massacre?”

The Marquis of Hartington replied: “I am afraid I can say little on this
subject. I have carefully examined the official despatch, and also all the accounts of the operations which are given by the correspondents, and it appears to me that the object of them is perfectly clear, and that it is not inconsistent with the declaration made by my right honourable friend in laying the Vote of Credit on the table. I have referred to that statement, and I find that the Suakim railway would be continued to a point which may be decided on consultation with the military authorities. Therefore no pledge was given; on the contrary it was distinctly intimated that the progress of the railway would be immediately stopped. It appears from the official despatch that the force at this place (Dhakdul) was the only organised force of the enemy which appears to be in existence; and it appears also from the several correspondents' reports, that it is believed that this tribe has been engaged in constant attacks on the railway, and upon the troops employed in guarding it. Under these circumstances it appears to me to have been a perfectly legitimate operation on the part of General Graham to make an expedition against that place, and to disperse this force, and thus—so far as it was in his power—to obviate the necessity of further fighting. I have no knowledge of the telegram referred to by the honourable member for Wicklow.

It had been sent, nevertheless, as the Standard states that General Graham received it from the Queen, congratulating him and his troops upon the successful action at the village of Dhakdul.

About the same time the matter of our troops in the Soudan was brought before the House of Lords, when General the Earl of Longford, G.C.B., rose to move for a return of the number employed there and in Egypt, and inquired whether the troops were completely equipped and supplied as regarded shelter, clothing, and rations suitable to the climate. He said the reserve which had been maintained by Mr. Gladstone's Government had been injurious to the service. It conveyed the appearance of indecision, and indecision at home and abroad reacted on those who had charge of the Army. Assuming that the Government had some good reason for maintaining those forces in the Soudan, Parliament and the country most anxiously inquired whether everything was done, or was being done, to ensure the health and efficiency of the troops. In 1882, notwithstanding the lavish expenditure, and notwithstanding every official disposition to supply the troops in Egypt more liberally, many serious failures occurred; supplies which were sent out did not reach them in time to be of any use. He had no wish, Lord Longford continued, to anticipate any failure in this department, but hoped to be assured that all had been done that could be expected for troops in such a climate. Since he had put his question on the paper, he observed that a similar one had been asked in the House of Commons, and the Marquis of Hartington's answer was anything but satisfactory. His answer was that he was not fully informed; the General on the
spot had reported that the shelter from the sun was not complete; but that there was some shelter, and the Marquis believed it was something in the nature of a shed. There was a Secretary of State, at the head of a great department, being able to say nothing more than he believed that, with a temperature at 120 degrees, the shelter was something in the nature of a shed! He hoped to hear that everything had been done that Parliament and the people expected.

The Earl of Stanhope inquired whether any of the troops were to be sent to Cyprus.

The Earl of Morley replied that it would be contrary to all precedent to give the strength of troops engaged in actual operations, and for the same reason he declined to answer the question of Earl Stanhope. He had, however, no objection to state approximately that the number of British troops in Egypt and the Soudan was between 24,000 and 25,000. That included the Departmental Corps, but excluded the Indian contingent and the Australian troops. The noble Lord had by no means a monopoly of the intense desire to do all that was possible for the comfort and safety of the troops, and his wishes were entirely shared by all departments. He could not say exactly the order in which the stores had reached the many stations on the Nile, which were at considerable distances from each other. Lord Longford would know that when the Nile was falling there were considerable stretches of the river which were extremely difficult; but weekly reports had been received from Dongola, Merawi, and other stations, that stores had been forwarded up the Nile as rapidly as possible. There was no reason to suppose that there was any default in forwarding the stores, or that the latter were defective in quality or quantity. He understood that, with the exception of a few articles, the stores were extremely satisfactory.

Lord Morley avoided all reference to the bad flour, already spoken of, the defective boots, and cartridges that jammed in the rifles and machine guns. He added, generally, that he had no doubt that the officers were doing their utmost to afford shelter to the troops. As to the rations, he would only weary the House if he went over all the supplies which had been sent out to Egypt. All he would say was, that there was no reason to believe that there was not a superabundance of supplies, and that these were sent up the river by various means of transport without any loss of time. He believed that it was quite inevitable, whatever arrangements might be made, articles of clothing would sometimes not reach their destination, but there was no want of energy on the part of the department at home. As far as his knowledge went, the troops were completely equipped and supplied as regarded shelter, clothing, and rations suitable to the climate.

On the 8th of May, early in the morning, Lord Wolseley held a review of all the troops at Suakim. The forces on the ground mustered 127 officers and 4,410 men, with fourteen pieces of cannon.
The march past was in quick time, the Artillery at close intervals, the Cavalry by squadrons (in double troops), the Camel Corps and Infantry in columns of companies. After the troops were re-formed in line, Lord Wolseley called the commanding officers to the front, and praised the appearance of the troops in general, but made special references to the Royal Horse Artillery and the Cavalry. The Grenadier Guards, Australians, and Madras Sappers were particularly lauded, but most of all the 15th Sikhs, whose appearance and marching past were perfection, each company exhibiting marvellous precision and regularity.

Lord Wolseley made several suggestions to General Graham's new Camel Corps, and enjoined the men of it "to perfect themselves in drill, as he might require them up the Nile next autumn."

All the Engineers were in line, and the Infantry Brigade in a line of quarter-distance columns. The first brigade was composed of the Grenadier Guards, the Australians, and the East Surrey Regiment. The Indian Brigade consisted of the Madras Sappers and Miners (a corps whose first honours were won at Seringapatam), the 15th Sikhs and 28th Bombay Native Infantry, the last named forming the left of the line. The reserve ammunition, the water transport, and the hospital equipments, were drawn up in rear of the Infantry.
ARAB SPORTSMAN OF THE SOUDAN.
At this date the sick in Suakim were doing fairly well, but there was a notable increase of enteric fever. The total numbers on the list were 510 British and 227 natives, while 470 British and 108 natives had been sent away invalided up to the 8th of May.

At the H. Redoubt there were in hospital 169 men, twelve of them bad cases of fever, and the total number of deaths had been thirteen. Brigade-Surgeon Tanner reported "that within the last week sickness has increased, and cases of enteric fever are double what they were ten days ago. He cannot speak too highly of the nursing sisters, Ireland, Norman, and King, and he considers that their presence produces an excellent effect among the sick. Their very uniform, with its little red cape, brightens up the ward-tents. Up to this date there have been eighty-seven cases of dysentery and twenty-seven of enteric fever admitted."

At the Auxiliary Hospital, on Quarantine Island, Surgeon-Major Corry had ninety-seven non-commissioned officers and men, eighteen of whom were suffering from dysentery, and twelve from fever. The nursing sisters, Macher and Byham, were on duty there. This hospital consisted of four well-ventilated wooden huts, admirably kept, with a capacity for a hundred beds.

"I recently," wrote the Times correspondent at Suakim, "made a complete round of visits to the hospitals afloat and ashore. I first went on board the Ganges. The position of her flag, at half-mast, betokened that some poor fellow had passed away. I found it was Sergeant Atwood, who had died of an abscess in the liver and dysentery. This is the second death since the Ganges came. Her books contain the names of eighteen officers and 128 non-commissioned officers and men. The following are the names of some of the officers: Grenadier Guards—Lieutenants Fox, Pitt, Davis, and Pakenham; Scots Guards—Lieutenants Home-Drummond, Moray, and Scott-Murray; 20th Hussars—Lieutenant Lecham; Royal Artillery—Captain Fox and Lieutenant Vores; Commissariat and Transport Corps—Captains Hare and Staepole; Royal Marine Light Infantry—Lieutenant Brine; Medical Staff—Surgeons—Majors Boult and Crean; Quarter-master T. Thompson; Chaplain, the Rev. Father Foran. Sister Wallace is also sick, and will shortly leave; the other sisters, Cole, Burleigh, Brown, and Irving, are well, and working hard. Among the men are eighteen cases of dysentery and nineteen of diarrhoea. Among the officers, two suffer from dysentery and two from diarrhoea. The men include sixteen of the Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Berkshire) Regiment; fifteen of the East Surrey Regiment; fourteen of the Mounted Infantry; eleven of the Commissariat and Transport Corps; and ten of the Medical Staff. Surgeon-Major Gubbon (formerly of the King's Own Borderers) informed me that since the marked increase in the temperature, the types of disease are growing more severe and less amenable to treatment. The temperature on the upper deck was
eighty-one degrees on April 25, and is now eighty-nine degrees.

"The next ship I visited was the Bulimba, lying astern of the Ganges. Here, again, I found a death had occurred, that of Private Ford, of the Commissariat and Transport Corps, of dysentery. There were on board six officers and eighty men. The officers included the following: The Berkshire Regiment, Captain Rhodes and Lieut. Inglis; Mounted Infantry—Captain Freeman; Commissariat—Major Remington; Transport—Lieutenant Mac Mahon; Army Pay Department—Captain Lysacht; all doing well. The Bulimba being a transport is not fitted up as a hospital with the same completeness and comfort as the Ganges displays. Surgeon-Major Bate informed me that although the heat is becoming very great, the sick are generally in good condition, and the ship is in an unsatisfactory state. Next comes the Czarevitch, a fine old sailing vessel, used as a hospital for the Indian contingent. The accommodation for officers is small and bad, there being only room for four; but for the men it is decidedly better than in the Ganges and Bulimba. There is a possibility that the doctors will adopt the simple but effective plan of ventilation, consisting in the removal of a plank along the whole length of the vessel on each side. The 125 beds are all occupied by the sick, and a few badly wounded men, from the battle of the 22nd March. Fifty per cent. of the cases are those of dysentery, which Brigade-Surgeon Morice tells me is mainly caused by the rice diet, the rice being insufficiently cooked, and by the indifferent water drunk. The officers on board are Captain Muir, of the Staff, Lieutenant Alban and Dr. Burness of the 28th Native Infantry, and Captain Wilkinson of the Royal Engineers. Besides those in the Czarevitch, the Indian contingent has ninety sick on shore, in camp, and in the hospital at Fort Euryalus."

By the 10th of May the heat in the tents was 100 degrees, and almost daily troopships were departing home with invalided officers and men; by the 12th the heat was intensified. Thus, the three hospital ships named, the Base Hospital, and that in Quarantine Island, being all full, two new hospitals were organised, while, we are told, that amid the delay of distinct and final orders from London, which were impatiently expected, "the present state of uncertainty and suspense" took all heart out of work of every kind, and irritated and disheartened the troops.

Regarding the treatment of the sick and wounded at Suakim at this time, Professor Ogston, of the University of Aberdeen, who had been serving there as a Volunteer Military Surgeon, stated publicly that no civil hospitals with which he was acquainted were provided more thoroughly with all the means of antiseptic surgery in all its forms than at Suakim. He added, that, in the field, no sooner was a man wounded than he was under treatment; except during a rapid and active movement, made under the pressure of circumstances, a wounded man within thirty seconds was in the hands of the
found that the Arabs had not disturbed the last resting-places of any of our dead, and then rode back by a line nearer the shore of the Red Sea than that which led direct to the zeriba.

The raid to Dhakdul was now producing its effect, for numbers of tribesmen were seeking permission to come

The Australian troops now offered to form out of their ranks a body of mounted scouts, if horses were given them—an offer greatly appreciated by Lord Wolseley, who, now accompanied by the entire staff, visited McNeill's zeriba, and had the nature of the fatal surprise explained to him. The party in and submit, particularly the Amaras, Samaras, and Fedlahs, who came to Otao when Lord Wolseley was inspecting the Scots Guards. To these natives (who were about 1,000 in number) rifles and ammunition were given, and they were certain to be valuable auxiliaries, as Osman Digna had given orders to Adam Ali Saadoun to destroy them root and branch, and carry off their women and cattle.

"That these orders were issued was known to the tribes themselves," wrote a correspondent, "and has made them
CHURCH PARADE AT KORTI ON CHRISTMAS MORNING (1881).

(after the Picture by G. Durand.)
enjoy to come in and make common cause with us. If the people in Britain could realize the terrible fate which will befall the natives who have helped and trusted us, if we now entirely abandon them, they would never allow such a step to be taken. A very small number of troops would now suffice to hold all the south, and reopen the caravan route.

This was keenly felt by all at Suakim. So much had been spent in men, toil, and treasure, that it seemed as if only a little more were needed now to attain great and lasting results; and that it would be grievous

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then arriving from the front at a very serious rate. In two days eleven officers and eighty men arrived, all more or less in a state of prostration; as many more were coming next day, while ninety came from Wady Halfa alone. And at this time incredible irritation was excited in the camp at Kurut, by the suggestion of some meanly economical persons in authority, that each officer was to build himself a hut at his own expense—at the cost of £80—after they had erected mess-huts at a very high figure. They boldly rejected the proposal, and representations on the subject were presented to the Chief of the Staff.

Eleven thousand cigars (a present from Major Frank Gibson to the troops at Suakim) proved a gift that was gratefully received; and now Mr. Bennett Burleigh, the correspondent of the Daily Telegraph, wrote to urge upon the attention of the British people the terrible position of our troops in the Soudan. He said:

"Our soldiers for eight weary months have been campaigning under the most exceptionally trying circumstances. The object sought to be gained by the campaign has been irretrievably lost, and the morale of the force has, as in all armies, fallen in consequence. How have the men fared for the most part? They have borne incessant hard work—fighting, marching, digging, and guard duties; in ragged clothes, worn-out boots, their beds the bare ground, their abodes often a mere blanket to shade them from the noonday glare, with, latterly, ill-adapted tents and a few rudely-built huts of dhurra stalks; their food rough soldier fare—tinned and fresh meat, coarse bread made from native flour, intermixed with millet grain, a pinch of compressed vegetables, with a scant dole of tea or coffee and sugar. Surrounded by a population that dislikes the 'infidel' more than it fears the Mahdist, the position of our troops is now a disheartening one. Without the excitement of conflict to arouse them, quartered within the tropics in a greater than Indian heat, without one of the comforts or appliances to make life bearable which the humblest private there enjoys, devoid of interest or faith in any proposed autumn campaign, having no longer the inspiriting cry, 'On to Khartoum,' is it any wonder that what was foretold is happening—namely, widespread sickness and death?"

Undoubtedly the circumstances in which our soldiers were now placed were of the most trying description. But it must not be forgotten that they bore their privations and discomforts with great fortitude. If they complained they complained among themselves, or in letters to friends at home. They made no public outcry, and indeed it may be questioned to what extent they would have approved all the statements that were published then and since by people who were professing to act on their behalf and in their interest.

On the 7th of May the Geelong left Suakim for Portsmouth, with 150 soldiers and 200 navvies, all invalids, on board.
CHAPTER V.

TROUBLES OF THE MAHDI.

The Governor of Kassala, a Circassian officer, called "a second Gordon," was still holding out valiantly against great odds. The population of the town was estimated at from 25,000 to 30,000, and his garrison, as given in the tabular statement sent by Sir Evelyn Baring to Lord Granville at the end of the year 1883, was somewhere about 1,200 of all ranks.

A Greek merchant, who reached the Italian garrison at Massowah about the 8th of April, stated that when he escaped, or passed through the enemy's lines at Kassala, the garrison was still holding gallantly out, though painfully straitened for food. He added, that the enemy had for a time almost abandoned the blockade of the town, and hopes were entertained that news of Osman Digna's defeats at our hands might so far intimidate the tribes in that neighbourhood, the people of Zabderat, Algeden, and the Desert of El Hawede, that the garrison might be able to obtain supplies from the surrounding country.

On the 13th of April a letter from the Governor of Kassala was received at Suakim, in which he wrote thus:

"Having heard of the advance of the British troops, we are still holding out with the hope that we shall be relieved. We have eaten all the donkeys, and are now living on sesame. Although I have orders to cut my way out, I will not leave my people." And so, with the memory of the fate of those who defended Tokar, Sinkat, and Khartoum before them, he and his garrison resisted steadily and doggedly.

"It is impossible," wrote a correspondent at this time, "to express the feeling at Cairo for the forlorn hope of this brave garrison, which has now held out for over a year, and was in a position so remote—two hundred and sixty miles in a straight line from Suakim, and two hundred and thirty from Khartoum."

At this time Sir F. Milner asked the First Lord of the Treasury in Parliament whether he was aware that the Italian Government would send assistance for the relief of the garrison of Kassala if directly pressed by Her Majesty's Government; and whether, in the interests of common humanity, he would make an earnest appeal to the Italian Ministry to lend a helping hand before it was too late.

Though the relief of the Soudan garrisons had been one of the primary objects of the Expedition, Mr. Gladstone said that although it had been quite understood all along that the garrison of Kassala was not within the sphere of British military opera-
assertion that the Italian Cabinet was prepared to attempt the relief of Kassala. There had been communications of a confidential character with the Italian Government on the subject; but Her Majesty’s Government had considered the various proposals embracing the subject of the relief, and offered such suggestions as occurred to them, but, he was sorry to say, at present without any positive result. In regard to Italy, he was not aware of the state of the facts to which the honourable gentleman referred—namely, the he had nothing to declare with regard to them.

Sir John Hay then very naturally asked whether the Kassala garrison did not come within scope of the instructions given to General Gordon and Admiral Hewett; but Mr. Gladstone replied that the withdrawal of the
garrison, if it could be effected, was an object of interest certainly, but it never came within the sphere of British military operations.

So little is known, as yet, of all the places we have to refer to from time to time in the Soudan, that every item of information is of interest, and we may sand-islands, where she has buried her eggs. The native spies out the place, and on the south side of it—that is to the leeward—he makes a hole in the sand by throwing up the earth on the side on which he expects the crocodile. Then he hides himself, and if the crocodile has not observed

here quote, from the scarce Travels of Dr. Rüppell, the mode in which the natives of Dongola caught the crocodile, a reptile abounding in the river there, and for the fishing of which—if we may use the term—the people of the Mudir are famous, as many of our soldiers saw.

"The most favourable season for catching the crocodile at Dongola is the winter, when the animal usually sleeps on sand-banks to enjoy the sun, or during the spring, after pairing time, when the female regularly watches the him, it comes to the usual place and soon falls asleep in the sun. Then the Dongolese darts his harpoon with all his might at the heart. To succeed, the iron end ought to penetrate at least to the depth of four inches, in order that the barb may hold fast. The wounded crocodile flies to the water, and the huntsman to his canoe. A piece of wood fastened to the harpoon by a long cord, floats on the water and shows the direction in which the crocodile is moving. The huntsman, by pulling this rope draws the beast to
the surface, where it is soon pierced by a second harpoon.”

Rüppell adds that the flesh and fat of the crocodiles were eaten by the Berbers. “The four musk glands of the crocodile are a great part of the profit of the capture, as the Berbers will give as much as two dollars in specie for the four glands, which they use as a perfumed unguent for the hair.”

On the 3rd of May tidings came to Dongola that the Mudir (then en route to Cairo, which he reached on the 7th) had dismissed the Emir of Berber, Mohammed el Kheir, for disaffection; and that the forces of the Mahdi, under Abdul Karim and Shujar el Kheir, had been defeated by the garrison of Sennaar at Mesalamieh, and that both these leaders had been severely wounded. This place was described in Colonel Donald Stewart’s paper as being situated one hundred and thirty miles distant from Sennaar, and fifty from Khartoum, and on the shore of the Blue Nile. The city of Sennaar is situated on a hill, but only high enough to secure it against the inundations which take place in the rainy season, when the river rises twenty feet. In 1884 the garrison consisted of about 3,900 men. The rising against the Mahdi was now spreading rapidly in Kordofan, where a famine was threatened, and the Baggara and Homar Arabs were said to have joined it.

The remnant of his forces, who lost their train of guns at Mesalamieh, retreated from thence to Abu Harar, and sent a request, but in vain, to Khartoum for reinforcements, which were not available.

On the 9th of May Major-General Dormer with his staff went to Debbeh, to assume command on the Upper Nile, in the absence of Sir Evelyn Wood, who had gone to Cairo.

It was about this time that a serious fire broke out in the camp of the Guards at Dongola. The troops turned promptly out for fire duty, and managed to check the flames, but not before six of the wooden huts were completely destroyed.

The troubles of the Mahdi were certainly increasing. A spy who returned to Dongola now reported that El Obeid was closely invested by Abu Essomad, Sheikh of the Bedernaya Arabs, and several other warlike chiefs. A vigorous but unsuccessful attempt to raise the siege was made by Abu Angu, who advanced to the relief of El Obeid at the head of a large force; but after a sharp conflict with the besiegers he was defeated and compelled to retire to Eddafui, near Abba, where the Mahdi was then in position. The forces of Abu Essomad consisted of 8,000 fighting men and 1,000 slaves.

On the 10th of May, Osman Digna, with a party of followers, visited Berber, from whence the Emir of that place had gone to Khartoum to seek for troops to attack Lord Wolseley at Suakim. But small-pox was raging in the vicinity of Khartoum and Omdurman, and many Arabs were departing, saying that the British loaded their guns with the pestilence in order to
kill those of their enemies who escaped in battle.

With reference to Lord Hartington's declaration in the House of Commons concerning British policy in regard to the Soudan, the Government of the Khedive, on the 13th May, stated that it was absolutely necessary that Egypt should retain a hold upon the city and entire province of Dongola; and, concerning this subject, on the 14th Sir Evelyn Baring telegraphed to Lord Granville as follows:—

"The question of establishing some Administration for the Province of Dongola being mainly a military one, I consulted Lord Wolseley and General Buller on the points mentioned in your Lordship's telegram of the 9th instant. Lord Wolseley thinks that if the railway were completed to Hannek the province might be held by a small force of black soldiers, with four armed steamers, until the Mahdi can make an attack in force; that when he does so Dongola will fall into his power. The defence of Dongola might be attempted with a British battalion at the end of the railway at Hannek, supported by two Egyptian battalions to hold the railway at Wady Halfa. Lord Wolseley thinks this experiment embraces dangers, but might be worth trying, as preferable to handing over Dongola to the Mahdi and anarchy.

"General Buller thinks the extension of the railway to Hannek at this moment would be a waste of money; that no force of blacks which we could get would be sufficient to hold or reconquer the province of Dongola, and that no reliance can be placed on them; that the Mahdi's Emir Ezzain will occupy Merawi the day after our troops leave. He reports that all his Copts and officials wish to leave Dongola. In a subsequent telegram General Buller says his opinion might be materially altered and the whole condition of things changed by a great misfortune, such as a crushing defeat at the hands of Sheikh Osman Morghani, happening to the Mahdi, an event which may take place now at any time. I have the honour to point out to your Lordship that General Buller's opinions are in several respects similar to those expressed by the Mudir of Dongola. I have also consulted General Stephenson, Nubar Pasha, Ad-el-Kader Pasha, and Colonel Watson, on this subject.

"We are unanimous in the opinion that to endeavour to establish any Government at Dongola, if the British troops are to be withdrawn at once, would be quite useless. In view, therefore, of the decision of Her Majesty's Government, we think that instructions should be given to General Buller to send down all troops, arms, and ammunition, and as many of the civil population as wish to leave Wady Halfa; that the British rear-guard should be the last to leave. Your Lordship will understand that we make this recommendation only because we consider it to be the necessary consequence of the decision of Her Majesty's Government to abandon the Province of Dongola at once, but that it is in no way to be taken to imply our agreement with that decision. Nubar Pasha, on behalf of the Egyptian Government, requests me to make a final and most earnest appeal to the Government of Her Majesty to postpone the departure of the British troops from Dongola for, say, six months, in order that there may be at least a chance of establishing a Government there. Nubar Pasha fears that the retreat of the British from Dongola will react on Egypt, and especially on the southern provinces, to such an extent as will render it impossible for the Khedive's Government to maintain order, and that they will be forced to appeal to Her Majesty's Government for help to preserve order in the country, and that thus the present system of Government, which Her Majesty's Ministry have been at so much trouble to maintain, will be found no longer possible.

"I have ventured to request your Lordship by telegram to send me a very early answer as to whether instructions are at once to be sent for the total evacuation of Dongola by the Egyptian forces. Sir Redvers Buller is pressing for a decision on several points of detail. Pending reference to your Lordship, I have told him to make all necessary arrangements for the retreat of the Egyptian troops and such of the civil population as wish to come away."

From Suakim, on the 18th May, Lord Wolseley telegraphed thus to the Marquis of Hartington:—"Buller telegraphs that he has instructed Baring to send down all the Egyptian troops, civil employés, stores, guns, &c. He can only feed his rear-guard at Fatmeh until 20th July, and the transport question for a large number of
and the gallant garrison of Sennaar had won another victory over the Mahdi. At this time the Mubashir paper announced that the two Mahdis, the old and the new, had sent delegates to the Sheikh Senoussi, in Tripoli, inviting him to visit Kordofan and decide as to which was the true Prophet and which the false; or, if age should prevent him travelling so far, to send a fitting
representative, or, at least, a letter stating his opinion. The delegates, however, failed to find Senoussi at home, the wily old Sheikh having taken a long journey so as not to be

beguiled into giving an opinion till the rivals had decided the matter by the sword. And on the 17th of May the Mahdi lost Abdullah Taashi, his chief khalifa and master spirit, who died of small-pox. This man was a powerful adherent, and his followers at once dispersed to their homes on his death. Hussars had athletic games and other sports.

The Mahdi, among his rivals and enemies, was now decidedly having the worst of it in all his recent encounters with them, and by the 22nd of May was withdrawing his troops everywhere to Gebeletin, leaving his war steamers at
Sobat (or Soba), on the Nile, where there are the ruins of an ancient city, the building materials of which are conveyed to Khartoum and distances beyond it.

The Akbar stated that the Mahdi, Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin, had applied to the Sultan of Wadai, requesting the latter to aid him with 6,000 men against his troublesome rival, promising to cede to him several towns in Darfour in return for his assistance. But the Sultan, being a friend of the Khedive, declined, reminding the Mahdi that Darfour was an Egyptian province to which he (Mohammed Achmet) had no claim whatever.

Meanwhile Mustapha Yaver Pasha, the Mudir of Dongola, was at Cairo, advocating energetically before the Khedive the retention and protection of his province; but the chief difficulties arose from the question of expense, and parties of fugitives, in dread of the future, began to leave it fast. On the 21st of May 500 left for Cairo or Lower Egypt; on the 26th 1,700; and on the following day 2,300, all more or less in misery and destitution.

The Emir of Berber now gave out that the British meant to retire because the African sun was killing them by burning off their noses and lips, and a force of the enemy, with one piece of cannon, was gathered at Berti, under the Emir Lekalik, with the intention, if an opportunity offered, of attacking our post at Merawi.

"In my journey down the Nile from Korti," wrote the correspondent of the Standard at the time, "I have been able to give some attention to the British posts on the bank of the river. Everything in and about them is maintained in the highest state of efficiency. The hospitals en route, which serve as resting-places for our poor fellows coming home invalided, are admirably organised, comforts are plentiful, and the care which is bestowed upon the sufferers is almost affecting through its extreme thoughtfulness. The attention to their wants is much valued by the sick and wounded, who all speak in the highest praise of the arrangements made to lessen their sufferings. I have also taken special observation of the new posts which are destined to be occupied by our troops during the summer months. The sites are as pleasant as could be selected, though that is not saying a great deal. All the places are well, though simply, defended."

The proposed extension to Ferket of the railway from Sarras would now render it necessary to alter the then sites of many of the camps. Sarras is 800 miles from Cairo, at the seventeenth gate of the Great Cataract. There the rocky hills are several hundred feet in height. In the letters of the late Lieutenant-Colonel Eyre, of the South Staffordshire Regiment, the locality of this post is thus described:—"I was out before 6 a.m., and, after going through the camp, went for a ride across the strip of desert and through a pass in the hills to see what was on the other side, and it well repaid me. A grand, wild scene: a desert about a mile wide in parts, with the boldest
rocks, a few hundred feet high, at the sides, and these all different shades and colours—a perfect picture. I rode on—not a living thing to be seen—and came back through another pass. I am sure that thousands of years ago these sand hills were the banks of the Nile; the whole of the valley we are in was once the bed of a river more like a sea. This, I think, must have been so from the appearance of the rocks and bold cliffs on the hill sides, which clearly show they were once washed by strong water.”

Elsewhere this officer, who was so soon to be cut off in battle, wrote of Sarras:—“Up at daybreak, and went for a ride along the edge of the desert. It was some religious day among the Arabs; they had flags at all the small tombs, which are scattered near Arab villages. Their graveyards are not enclosed, but mere spots in the desert, no boundary where each tribe bury. The graves were closed and marked by a pile of pebbles off the desert on the grave, and at the head an earthen-ware vessel, in which they burn a light all night on anniversaries. At one place there was a gathering (of mourners?) of some hundreds in a line about four deep, all dressed in long white or sky-blue robes and white turbans—no other colours. They were facing the east, praying, and a few hundred children were running round dancing and yelling. It was a most curious sight; I never saw one like it.”—United Service Magazine, 1885.
CHAPTER VI.

BREAKING UP OF THE SUAKIM FIELD FORCE.

Gossip at Suakim—Another Parliamentary Paper—Military Correspondents and General Graham—Osman Digna again—Hard Case of an Officer—Departure of the Australians—Lord Wolseley’s Last Order—Sir G. Graham’s Despatch—Sir Gerald’s Farewell—The Queen at Netley Hospital—Reception of the Marines.

At this time the armour-plated patrol train ran nightly up and down the line from Suakim to the posts in front. It was furnished with a brilliant lime-light, and carried thirty riflemen, with their officers. Moreover, that the rebels had friends outside was proved when, in May, the Egyptian coastguard discovered a schooner landing—to the westward of Alexandria—a quantity of gunpowder, destined for transmission to the Soudan.

The coastguard gave chase, but the schooner effected her escape in the dark, her crew, as she fled under all sail, throwing a number of barrels overboard. For some time it had been suspected by the authorities, British and Egyptian, that supplies of powder were secretly landed for the Soudan; but this was the first actual discovery of the matter.

Before the middle of May was reached the period of suspense regarding the ultimate destination of the Suakim field force was unbearably protracted—whether they were to advance to Khartoum in autumn, as Lord Wolseley had not ceased to say; to be sent to the Afghan frontier to fight the Russians; to garrison Lower Egypt; or to return home. All was dark and vague! “This outlandish place,” wrote one from Otao, “is as full of rumours and gossip as the Stock Exchange.”

One day it was said that the railway was to be torn up; next that the Guards and Australians were going to London; then that the line was to be
held by the Indian contingent, while the Guards went to Cairo, there to remain till the autumn campaign opened. "We know nothing for certain," he continued, "excepting that our men are engaged all day in protecting the navies, scattered along the line, from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening, and that at night they lie fully accoutred round a large camp of non-combatants. However, the extraordinary number and variety of rumours—which remind some here of long-gone Crimean days—serve to keep the brains as well as bodies busy in this not very exciting locality, for lately we have been denied any nocturnal entertainment by the enemy."

The arrival of the yacht Stella at Suakim, with another large and generous supply from the National Aid Society, gave great satisfaction to the troops. "Too many thanks," wrote another correspondent, "cannot be bestowed upon the members of that Society, who, among other comforts, have brought out a large store of oranges, tobacco, cocoa, and condensed milk, and which are most generously and largely distributed among the troops. Need I say how thoroughly these things are appreciated by our men?"

The chief annoyance arose from the swarms of flies, which rendered eating and drinking a misery before sunset. Mosquitoes as yet were few, and the flies ceased from troubling after night-fall.

A Parliamentary paper, containing further correspondence respecting the military operations in the Soudan, was now published. It extended from the 23rd of March to the 18th of May, and
amongst the earlier communications was one from Lord Wolseley to the Marquis of Hartington, in which he detailed his views upon the situation consequent upon the fall of Khartoum and sacrifice of Gordon, and recommended that, as it was impossible for him to undertake any further operations until the end of summer, the power of Osman Digna should in the meantime be crushed, and that a railway should, without delay, be constructed in the direction of Berber.

On April 13th Lord Hartington would seem to have telegraphed that, owing to the condition of Imperial affairs, it was highly probable that the expedition to Khartoum might have to be abandoned, and the troops sent down as fast as possible to Egypt, and Lord Wolseley was instructed to consider the best means to be promptly taken for their safe withdrawal. Lord Wolseley replied that there was no difficulty in withdrawing the troops, but urged that Wady Halfa and Korosko should be held as outposts.

This would enable the British troops to concentrate near Dongola or Hannek whenever it was necessary; it would secure the allegiance of the frontier tribes, and save trouble, disturbance, and possibly local risings. Lord Hartington, in reply, intimated that the Government did not insist on precipitate retirement, but also that they did not contemplate an indefinite retention of British troops at Dongola. A subsequent communication from the Secretary, dated April 15th, announced that the Suakim-Berber railway would be suspended, but that Suakim would be held for the present.

On April 16th Lord Wolseley, then at Cairo, again addressed Lord Hartington as to the best policy to adopt in the Soudan. He urged that the reasons which made it almost imperative upon us to destroy the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum were not sufficiently grasped by the people of Great Britain, and he stated openly, as the result of his experience of Egypt and the Soudan, that he held in the strongest possible manner, both from a military and a financial point of view, and also with regard to the general well-being of Egypt proper, that the growing power of the Mahdi must be met, not by a purely defensive policy on the frontier, whether at Assouan or Wady Halfa, but by his overthrow in the neighbourhood of Khartoum.

This despatch we have already given at length, and in another, dated Suakim, May 11th, he again strongly deprecated such doubtful policy as the withdrawal indicated.

On that day the military correspondents had an interview with Major Collen, the Military Secretary of General Graham, in order to draw up a missive to the latter expressing their indebtedness for the courtesy and kindness so invariably shown them by the military authorities. On the 11th Lord Wolseley visited the Anchorage, where a magnificent fleet of white-painted "troopers" lay moored; and on the following day he visited the Scots Guards at Tambouk, and was delighted with the appearance of the bat-
talion, under all the circumstances, and said the Scots fully maintained their high reputation.

Parties of Arabs of various tribes now continued to come into the Guards’ outpost at Otao, where eventually a special encampment had to be formed for them; and it was hoped that this movement was the commencement of a general submission on the part of the septs in this part of the Soudan, and an admission of the futility of further resistance to British power.

The Habbab section of the Beni Amer tribe between Suakim and Massowah were also anxious to make submission, and it was believed that the tribes in the south and Amaras in the north would together form a strong barrier against Osman Digma, who was now reported to be at Tamai, together with Adam Ali Saadoun, who was in dire disgrace with the former for suffering himself to be surprised by General Graham at Dhakdul. Osman’s followers were stated to be only a few hundred strong, but any information on such a point was most unreliable. On the 14th of May their combined forces were numbered at a thousand men.

Anxious, however, as the troops were to get away from the scorching and blinding desert, it was hoped by all that Government would not destroy the whole fruits of a most arduous campaign by showing too suddenly to the Arabs an intention of abandoning the Soudan, and leaving the friendly tribes who aided us to the vengeance of a merciless enemy.

Osman was said to be short of grain, to have few camels, and only 150 cattle. His followers had replaced the huts we burned at Tamai by others, and his scouts were posted on the Teselah Hills.

H.M. Troopship Tyne sailed from Suakim on the 14th May with invalids in charge of Drs. Mapleton, College, Holmes, and Beevon, numbering twelve officers and 120 men; but still the percentage of sick was very high; and the case of one invalided officer, which found its way into the Times, was a peculiarly hard one—that of a sub-lieutenant of the Royal Navy.

He had served throughout the Egyptian war since 1882, and was invalided for rheumatism. After being a month in hospital at Malta, he was “surveyed” and sent home to Haslar, where, after a few days, the doctors informed him that his only chance of permanent recovery was to proceed immediately to German baths. To enable him to follow their advice, he had to be “discharged to the shore” for two months, which means that he was deprived of every farthing of pay for that time, and was left to find his way to Germany as best he could, keep himself, and pay his own doctor’s bills. “He hopes,” continued the writer in the Times, “that he may yet be allowed 2s. 6d. a day; but what is that for a sick man in the position of a gentleman? It is not the half-pay of a railway navvy. An army officer of any rank similarly invalided draws his full pay, however small that may be, and I am not aware that his expenses are greater than his brothers in the navy.
When I first heard of this officer's case, as there is no such thing as half-pay for a sub-lieutenant, I was persuaded that the Admiralty intended to promote him, as he had been an acting lieutenant at Suakim for a couple of months, filling a death vacancy, as one of the lieutenants of his ship was killed on the Auxiliary Hospital on Quarantine Island stood on an old burying-ground, and that great sickness prevailed there in consequence of the unhealthiness of the situation; and, if so, whether he would not at once take steps to have it removed to a more suitable position. The Marquis of

March 22nd at McNeill's zeriba. Instead, however, of being confirmed in his acting rank, as is invariably the case on active service, he is 'discharged to shore,' doubled up with rheumatism, to do the best he can on half-a-crown a day, to ruminate on the glories of his profession, and honours and rewards to be obtained on active service.'

With regard to the health of the troops at Suakim, Lord Edward Cecil, in the House of Commons, asked the Secretary of State for War whether he could ascertain if it were true that Hartington replied that the Auxiliary Hospital on Quarantine Island was certainly stationed on an old burial-ground; but in answer to a telegram he was assured the spot was most salubrious, as it was six years since any interment had taken place there, and it did not appear that the graveyard had rendered the rest of the island in any way unhealthy.

The 9th Bengal Lancers now presented General Graham with one of the handsome standards, taken by them at Dhakdul, which he said he
EVACUATION OF THE SOUDAN.

would ever prize as a souvenir of the gallantry of "Hodson's Horse." And now a very general feeling was expressed in camp that the Australian Contingent, prior to its departure home, should be taken to England and shown to the people of London. Such a step, our soldiers thought, would be much appreciated in the distant colony from whence their comrades came, and would

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exhaustive search in the bush round it, with orders to bury any of the bodies of our people which had been as yet undiscovered. They came upon a party of Arabs, and killed several; the rest fled wildly, and though they fired a few shots we had no casualties. Later in the day the Shropshire company of the Camel Corps found, and buried near the fatal zeriba, the bodies of two troopers of the 19th Hussars, who had been missing since the action at Handoub, just before the commencement of this last campaign. The remains had been stripped of everything, but were un mutilated, and in a wonderful state of preservation.

On the same day the troops engaged in this sorrowful duty found and re-interred near the zeriba a considerable number of bodies, which had been dragged out of their graves by the jackals. "The men," said the Daily Chronicle, "brought back harrowing reports of the shocking scenes they had witnessed. It must, however, be recorded, to the credit of the rebels, that they did not appear to have interfered in any way with our dead." It was now estimated that 14 per cent. of the troops had been invalided.

At last the long-expected orders for home came!

The garrison of Suakim was to consist of one battalion of British Infantry, the 15th Sikhs, the 7th Bengal, and 28th Bombay Native Infantry regiments, the Madras Sappers and Miners, a mounted battery of Royal Artillery, and the Egyptian Camel Corps. The rest were to quit the Soudan at once.

Lord Wolseley made a farewell inspection of the Australian Contingent, and expressed "the great pride he felt to command them, and his deep regret in not having had the opportunity of being more with them personally. He considered that their work, bearing, and behaviour, had been deserving of the highest praise. The fact of New South Wales being able to send such troops would probably deter any power from hastily entering upon a war with Britain. The Australians had, individually and collectively, deserved the esteem of their comrades in arms, and took with them the best wishes of the whole troops."

In response the Australians gave three hearty cheers for the Queen, for Lord Wolseley, and Sir Gerald Graham.

When the Hon. W. Bede Dalley, Acting Colonial Secretary, received a telegram from the Agent-General for New South Wales, saying, that the services of the Contingent being no longer required in the Soudan, it would return to Sydney at such time as the Imperial Government determined, and that arrangements for its transport would be made by the colony of New South Wales, he added:—"We desire you on the part of this Colony to thank the Imperial Government for the honour conferred on our troops. Though the men are no longer required for the service of the Empire, the spirit which animated the country is strengthened by the generous way in which the services of the men have been recognised by Great Britain."

Since that telegram had been received,
Her Majesty's Government had made arrangements for the conveyance of the colonial troops home in the Arab. Sir Saul Samuel, having reported this offer to his Government, received the following reply:—“Convey to the Imperial Government the hearty thanks of the colonists of New South Wales for their generous offer, which we accept with gratitude. Hand over all the horses to the War Office as a gift from the Colony.”

On the same day the Australians were inspected General Graham paid a farewell visit to the old 70th Regiment before their departure, and addressed them in the highest terms of praise, saying that their steady volley-firing had produced the greatest effect every time they were in action, and that they had, during this campaign, fully sustained their splendid reputation, and that won by their predecessors in Guadaloupe and New Zealand.

On the day after the inspection of the Australian Contingent, Lord Wolseley issued the following special and important general order to the soldiers, sailors, and marines of the army of the Soudan:

"Her Majesty's Government having decided to withdraw most of the troops from the Soudan, I desire, when bidding you farewell, to express to all my deep sense of your admirable conduct. The army in the Soudan has not only fought with courage and firmness, and cheerfully borne no small amount of hardship; it has shown, in addition, higher qualities than were required for the patient endurance of privation, or for the defeat of the brave but cruel enemy with whom it has been engaged. Crime has been almost unknown in the ranks; the highest standard of discipline has been maintained; and the behaviour of the troops, British, Indian, and Colonial, has been in every way creditable to them, and to the service to which they belong.

"My best thanks are due to all ranks of the Royal Navy, and of the Marines, who have taken part in the recent campaign in the Soudan. Wherever hard work or hard fighting was to be done, the men of these services were to be found, and I am at a loss to say whether they were more remarkable for their hard work or for their hard fighting. From the beginning of the operations in last September to the present date, both officers and men of the navy have been untiring in their exertions, and all they had to do has been done effectively and well.

"I would also thank the soldiers of the gallant New South Wales Contingent, not only for the services they have rendered, but also for the sympathy which prompted them to come from afar to take part in a war undertaken by the Empire to which we all belong.

"They will carry home with them the thanks of our Sovereign, and the best wishes of those with whom they have fought side by side here. They have borne themselves well, both in action and in camp, and I trust that, should any serious war be forced upon our Empire in the future, we may again find ourselves shoulder to shoulder with Australian troops, facing a common enemy.

"The deeds of the force in the Soudan have added one more chapter to the glorious records of our national prowess, and all of you who have belonged to it, British, Indians, and Australians, may feel with pride that the high reputation of our army and navy has gained, not suffered, at our hands.

"Among the many and varied memories of the recent campaign, the remembrance of your keen, soldier-like spirit will be the pleasantest to dwell upon. I shall always feel proud of having commanded you.

(Signed) "WOLSELEY, General.

"Suakim, 16th May, 1885."

The Colonials now handed over all their stores and horses to the Royal Artillery, and the greatest excitement prevailed among the troops at the approach of a speedy departure, and on every hand the most active preparations were made for embarkation.

The hired transports, Oregon, Vancouver, Deonia, Bolivia, Egypt, Erin, City of Oxford, Egyptian, Monarch,
Abyssinia, Peruvian, and France—all stately and commodious ships—were ordered to be completed for the conveyance of the troops from Suakim to Cyprus, Gibraltar, and Great Britain. The two first named were fitted to receive 250 cavalry each; the others were fitted to receive 900 men and 44 horses each.

Of the last services of his column at Suakim, prior to the arrival of Lord Wolseley, Sir Gerald Graham (with some details not to be found in the public prints) wrote thus in his despatch to Lord Wolseley of May 30, 1885, dated from Alexandria. But, previously to giving extracts, we may remark that in the official despatches and the Honours Gazette Lord Wolseley, his final despatch, alludes to the disaster of M’Neill’s zeriba as having broken up the power of Osman Digna, the inference being that it was an action which reflected credit on the commander; whereas the author referred to—an officer who was there—states, “It remains a fact, that cannot be contradicted or gainsaid, that this terrible loss of life was occasioned by neglect in taking proper precautions, and a foolhardy carelessness, combined
SPORTS AT SUAKIM TENT-PEGGING ON A CAMEL.
with a total disregard of the most ordinary principles."

The escape from a crushing disaster, then, was simply due to the heroic courage and splendid discipline of the regimental officers and their men, and yet their reward was not a very extravagant one.

"It was found here (at Suakim), as elsewhere," wrote Sir Gerald Graham, "that a certain amount of work, even during the hot season, tended to keep the troops in condition, and enabled them better to resist the enervating effects of the climate. The troops in the front, at Tambouk and Otao, suffered less than nearer the base, and the medical statistics of the campaign tend to show that, had the operations been prolonged into the summer months, the best chance of keeping the troops in health would have been by moving them into the hills, and not by keeping them too long on the same spot.

"It was unfortunate that the campaign should have been closed just when I had obtained the means of organising flying columns so as to move across the country, as I did on May 6th. The Camel Corps was most successful, but, owing to the lateness of the arrival of the camels, its organisation could not be commenced before April 18th. Five hundred riding camels had been asked for by me before leaving Britain, and that number was ordered from India; out of these about 300 only were used for service, as no more men could be spared from the Infantry. These riding camels were very fine animals, and were equipped with saddles for two men each, so that 300 camels could carry about 500 fighting men, besides one native to every third camel. The remaining camels were employed to carry infantry on the 'ride and tie' system. The New South Wales Battalion and the 3rd Grenadier Guards were especially trained in this mode of camel riding; and, as the Camel Corps could also apply the 'ride and tie' system to any untrained infantry, I had the means of moving for any emergency about 1,800 infantry, one-half being always mounted. With the Camel Corps, Mounted Infantry, and Cavalry, I could form a formidable flying column, and was preparing to make a simultaneous advance on Sinkat and Tamanieb, when the announcement of the intended recall of the troops rendered further movements on an extensive scale inadvisable.

"At the same time that the Camel Corps furnished me with the means of rapid movement, notwithstanding the great heat, the arrival of pipes and pumps under the contract of Messrs. Edwards and Tweddale promised to solve the greatest difficulty of the campaign—the want of water. The supply of water to troops in the front before the railway was made and in advance of the line was a most difficult service, involving great labour and responsibility. The weight of water for each man's daily rations was at least 12lbs., his ordinary rations weighing less than 4lbs.

"The work of cleaning and filling the water-tins preparatory to a march
Sir Gerald Graham's Despatch.

had to be done at night. They had to be packed on camels, every camel carrying two tins of twelve and a half gallons each, and were then started off before daybreak to join the convoy. On arrival at their destination, the tins were either emptied into storage tanks, or piled and guarded preparatory to issue to the troops. Much water was, of course, lost in transit from leakage and other causes. Incessant vigilance was required to guard the water amongst soldiers and camp-followers, many of whom suffered from intense thirst; and the fact that so little was stolen is another proof of the high sense of duty and discipline that pervaded the force.”

The General continued to say that from the date of his arrival at Suakim he had endeavoured to gain the confidence of the Amara tribes in the hope of being able to induce them to form an alliance with him against Osman Digna—an alliance which would include all septes hostile to the latter or weary of his cruelty and despotism, but that little progress in this measure could be made until the preliminary operations had been concluded and the advance along the route to Berber began; and until Major-General Lyon-Fremantle had been appointed, on April 20, as Political Officer at the front and furnished with detailed instructions for his guidance. But the chief difficulty with which he had to contend was the impossibility of guaranteeing permanent protection to friendly tribes.

The capture on the 15th of April of a great number of cattle intended for Osman Digna acted (said Sir Gerald) as a strong discouragement to those of the Amara tribe who were still supplying him with provisions, while the break up of the force under Adam Ali Saadoun at Dhakdul on May 6th produced a powerful impression throughout the country, the result being that many chiefs opened at once direct communication, and large numbers of tribes gathered, as we have related, in an improvised camp at Otao; and the General was of opinion that, had that advanced post been retained in our occupation, the whole of the tribes lying north of the Berber road would have been at our disposal, while a number of the adherents of Osman would have followed suit.

Thus it would seem that when the sudden evacuation of the advanced posts began the political question was practically solved, as numbers of the Amaras had submitted to General Graham, and some of the fierce Haden-dowas also. It seemed, hence, to be a matter of regret if the abandonment of these posts precluded further advantage being won, the more so that the abrupt dissolution of the Amara league, when in its infancy, increased the power of Osman Digna, and restored his prestige.

“This campaign,” said the General in his despatch, “will at least be memorable as the first in which Her Majesty’s Colonial forces have taken a part with British and Indian troops. The New South Wales Contingent took its share in all our hardships and dangers. The New South Wales
On the 15th of May orders came for the withdrawal of the Guards, the Royal Horse Artillery, and the British cavalry. The Grenadiers and Scots Guards were placed on board the Jumna, with ninety invalids, all under General Lyon-Fremantle, while General Greaves was to remain to

infantry had some men wounded at Tamai, and during subsequent operations were always in the front. Had the contemplated advances on Sinkat and Tamanieb taken place, they would have formed a portion of the troops engaged. The officers and men were, as I have stated previously, trained to

camel riding, in which they soon acquired sufficient proficiency. The New South Wales battery moved to Handoub, and by constant drilling became fairly efficient, considering the many difficulties they had to contend with. The spirit of good-fellowship between the men of the Australian Contingent and the British troops was very noticeable. The highest credit is due to Colonel Richardson and to the officers under him for the excellent discipline and cheery readiness shown on all occasions."

superintend the final arrangements, and the permanent garrison of Suakim was to be under General Hudson. The Jumna sailed with her freight on the 17th, and on the preceding day, at 5 a.m., the General inspected the Berkshire regiment. He complimented the men highly, as they well deserved to be, for their brilliant conduct during a heartless campaign, especially for their gallantry at the zeribas on the 22nd of March, and for the unselfish manner in which they
volunteered, to a man, to remain there, amid discomfort, danger, and the dead, to Otao and bade farewell to the Shropshire regiment and Colonel R. H. Truel

for ten days. He mentioned, in particular, Colour-Sergeant Cloke, whose distinguished gallantry would be brought before Her Majesty. He then rode (a veteran of the Indian wars under Lord Clyde), and thanked the soldiers for the spirit in which they had borne their arduous labour.
On the 15th he visited the Indian Contingent, and praised their conduct under all circumstances, adding that "the steadiness of the Sikhs and Bombay Infantry at McNeill’s zeriba, the gallantry of the Bengal Lancers at Hasheen, their admirable scouting upon all occasions, stamped them as amongst the finest soldiers to be found anywhere." He spoke especially of Subedar Goordat Singh of the Sikhs, to whom Lord Wolseley had presented a sword of honour in recognition of his bravery.

The following is an extract from the General Order issued by Sir Gerald Graham on the relinquishing of his command of the Suakim Field Force.

"Suakim, May 19.

"Orders have been received to break up the Suakim Field Force, and General Lord Wolseley, Commanding in Chief in Egypt and the Soudan, in his Special General Order of this date, addressed to the Army, of which this force is a portion, has expressed his approbation in terms which will always be remembered with gratification.

"I desire, before relinquishing the command which I have had the honour to hold, to convey to all ranks my high appreciation of the soldier-like spirit, gallantry in action, and cheerful endurance of hardship which they have uniformly shown.

"During the early days of the campaign the work thrown upon officers and men, in every rank and in every department, was severe and unceasing. It was necessary to prepare for the active operations required to overcome the power of a brave and fanatical foe, so as to clear the country for the special objects of the expedition. This work was performed under the harassing conditions of incessant night attacks by a cunning and resolute adversary, entailing constant vigilance and readiness on the part of the whole force.

"Whether engaged with the enemy or labouring under a burning sun in the deep sand of the desert, often with but a scanty supply of water, the Suakim Field Force has displayed the true qualities of good soldiers. . . .

"The New South Wales Contingent has furnished a bright example of the martial qualities of the Anglo-Saxon race, and has shown to all the latent military strength of the Empire. The soldier-like spirit which has pervaded all ranks of the Contingent is the theme of universal admiration, and it will be a valued remembrance to all who served in the Suakim Field Force to recall this, the first time when their fellow-countrymen from the Colonies served and shared with them the fortunes of a campaign. . . .

"In now bidding it farewell, I thank every officer, non-commissioned officer, and man, for loyal help, and I wish to one and all success and fortune in following the path of duty to our Queen and country.

(Signed)

"GERALD GRAHAM, Lieutenant-General."

After dining with the officers of the 28th Bombay Infantry, the General, whose departure was much regretted, as he was most popular with all ranks of the Expeditionary Force, embarked with his staff—Majors Collen and Groves, and Lieutenants Stopford, Anderson, and Lindsay—on board the Deccan, which sailed for home on the 17th May.

Mr. Frank Roberts, Reuter’s special correspondent, having died of fever on the 15th May, was buried next day at five o’clock in the evening, the burial service being read by the Rev. Mr. Bullock, Chaplain to the Forces. All the special correspondents, with Colonel Palmer, of Hodson’s Horse, and Surgeon-Major Patterson, who attended the deceased in his last illness, were present in the little dreary burying ground at Suakim, within sound of the Red Sea.

The news of our approaching departure spread like wildfire among the natives, wrote the Standard correspondent on the 17th of May, and hence
large numbers of Arabs have joined Osman Digna, "consequently his power, which we had practically broken, must now inevitably and rapidly rise again, and will probably become greater than before. The 53rd Regiment will garrison Otao, the 49th Handoub, and the friendly natives Tambouk; the whole of the remaining forces are in Suakim."

In consequence of no other power agreeing to take over the now useless railway plant, and the friendly tribes neither understanding its use nor how to defend it, no more troops were to leave the Soudan for the present.

"Thus," as a Member of Parliament said, "within a few weeks the expedition was suddenly abandoned; the valuable lives had been thrown away for nothing. You know that a whole railway plant and material were sent out by Government to Suakim to be laid across the desert from there towards the Nile. Perhaps you may also know that as much of that railway as was laid has been abandoned; that most of the plant and material was never even unloaded at Suakim; that it was brought back to London; and that the total cost generally for this useless transport of this material was no less a sum than £200,000, which might just as well have been thrown into the British Channel. Nay, better, because then the valuable lives that were lost in those useless attempts would have been saved."

Thus, for the reason above given, the further evacuation of Suakim was abruptly suspended on the 17th of May; but negotiations were still in progress between Major Chermside and the eminent Arabic scholar, Mr. Brewster, with the friendly Arabs, with a view to their holding the railway, a property beyond their comprehension, but no satisfactory result seemed likely to be arrived at.

And meantime, by way of a change of scene, we may take a glance at what was passing in "old England" at this very date with reference to our Sudanese campaigners—the Queen's visit to Netley and the reception of that ever popular corps, the Marines.

The Queen, accompanied by the Princess Beatrice and Prince Henry of Battenberg, left Windsor and reached Netley Hospital on the 16th of May. Her visit was understood to be a private one; thus there was no ceremonal. She was received by Lieutenant-General Sir G. H. Willis, commanding the southern district, with his brilliant staff, and at the entrance to the hospital there was a considerable assemblage of ladies and gentlemen. The convalescent soldiers, who were not among those for whom the visit was specially designed, were allowed to congregate outside and salute the royal party when it drove up.

On alighting Her Majesty was escorted by Surgeon-General Murray, the principal medical officer of the hospital, who had been in waiting with Surgeon-Major Faris and other members of his staff. Ascending to the first floor, the Queen proceeded to the rooms of the lady superintendent and nursing sisters, where she remained a
few minutes, and, after passing through the quarters of the nurses, inspected the medical division on the same floor. Here were 146 men from the army in Egypt under treatment. The majority of these unfortunate patients were suffering from enteric fever, dysentery, sunstroke, and ophthalmia.

which may long be cherished by the rough lumberman from the Dominion. In various beds of the wards the more serious of the cases were explained by the medical officers, and there were few bed-sides at which the Queen failed to stop and speak a word of sympathy to the poor invalids.

The whole of these, who were well enough to be up and dressed, were paraded outside their respective wards in the corridors, and saluted the Queen as she passed them, and stopped now and then to ask a question or speak a few words of sympathy. One of these was a Canadian voyageur, who was suffering from acute rheumatism and enteric fever contracted on the Nile at Dal. "Poor fellow!" said the Queen; "are you suffering yet? I hope you will soon be well"—simple words which may long be cherished by the rough lumberman from the Dominion. In various beds of the wards the more serious of the cases were explained by the medical officers, and there were few bed-sides at which the Queen failed to stop and speak a word of sympathy to the poor invalids.

After making a tour of this division she ascended to the second floor, where there were seventy-one "Egyptians" suffering from wounds of various kinds. Of this number twenty-eight belonged to the Berkshire (49th), and the majority of these had received their wounds in the conflict at McNeill's zcriba two months before. There were also nineteen Guardsmen, nearly all of whom had bullet wounds, mostly received when on convoy duty. The line of soldiers who greeted the Queen
THE WELLS AT HANDBU: LANCERS WATERING THEIR HORSES.
in this corridor was indeed a striking one: some on crutches, others with heads bandaged, arms in slings, or with empty sleeves pinned across the tattered tunic, telling of missing limbs. But all looked cheerful, and their wan and wasted faces brightened when the Queen addressed them. "Many poor fellows who had undergone recent amputation or had bullets still lodged in them were unable to rise," wrote one who was present, "but at each bed-side Her Majesty stopped to say a word of sympathy, which brought back colour to the cheeks of the wounded soldiers and bright gleams to their eyes, as with tenderness she inquired how they received their hurts and wished them a speedy recovery."

One of the Berkshire men named Foley, who received nine wounds and had his brain exposed by a sword-cut in one of the night attacks at Suakim, was pointed out as a wonderful case of recovery, he being then rapidly on the way to convalescence. The Princess Beatrice also exhibited the same interest as her mother in the soldiers, and conversed pleasantly with them, while old Sir George Willis, always a favourite with his men, a veteran of the Crimean War, shook hands with many whom he recognised as having served under him in more recent years.

The tour of the divisions occupied an hour, and before leaving the Queen expressed her satisfaction at all she had seen. Since her last visit there in 1882 many improvements had been made at Netley, including hot-water apparatus for warming the corridors and a lift for conveying the patients to the different floors. That morning's statement showed a total of 679 patients under treatment; but these were added to the same evening by eighty-one newcomers in the Australia from Egypt to Portsmouth.

Warm indeed was the reception given there the same day to the Marines who came from Suakim in the Australia, and it was with undisguised regret that they and Colonel N. F. Way learned, on the arrival of the ship at Spithead, that a favourite officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Ozzard, had just died in Forton Barracks.

He had served with the Royal Marine Brigade in the Crimea in 1855, and with the combined force before Sebastopol; also with the expedition to Kertch, and the occupation of Yenikale. He served in the China war of 1857-59, and was at the destruction of the junks in Fatshan Creeks and Macao Broadway, at the occupation of Canton, and in the North-China Expedition of 1860. Lastly, he had borne a part in the Soudan war, and lost his health in the final campaign.

On the Australia, with her freight, passing the St. Vincent, opposite Haslar Hospital, the yards were manned, and the Marines were cheered vociferously, and then by the crews of the Victory and the Wellington, flagship. The battalion was welcomed at the Dockyard by Major-General Williams, D.A.G., of the Marines, by the Commandant and all the officers of the Portsmouth division.
It was then formed in square and thus addressed by General Williams:

"I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to convey to you the high appreciation they entertain of the manner in which you have performed the duties devolving upon you, from the formation of the battalion for service in the Red Sea up to the present time. My Lords fully recognise the spirit evinced by you when you submitted to those hardships by garrisoning the forts at Suakim for so long a time, a great portion of which was during the hot season, and they recognise also your patient endurance during those incessant and irritating night attacks which, under your orders and from your position, you were unable to return at the time. They also recognise your unvarying good conduct both in camp and quarters. When it was decided that a force should be formed at Suakim to advance into the field, they decided that you should form part of that force, and, knowing the spirit that pervaded your ranks, they knew that you would share in the dangers and the glories of those operations. That you appreciated these privileges is shown by your bearing at all times—at the battle of Hasheen, at the fierce onslaught on the zeriba on the 22nd of March, in the attack on the convoy, where you were vastly out-numbered, and, at the same time, encumbered with baggage-animals in no sort of order, and working in a country which incapacitated you from moving freely, but which gave shelter to your enemies, and concealed them up to the moment when they made their wild rush, you have displayed that courage and discipline for which the Royal Marines have always been distinguished; and I say it with pride, and there are many around me who will have the same feeling in common with me, that you have nobly maintained the reputation of the corps. The success that you have gained could not have been obtained without some sacrifice. We have all to deplore the loss of many a gallant friend who fell on the field gloriously, and you have also had losses by wounds in action and by sickness. We mourn those who are gone, and we hope that those who are disabled will recover and be restored to us, to their ranks, and their comrades. I have passed down your ranks, and though my inspection has been casual, I have had satisfaction in seeing that you are in fine condition for further service, and it will be my duty so to report upon your efficiency to the Lords of the Admiralty. It is well known to you that your late commanding officer, Colonel Ozzard, died this morning. It is a matter of deep regret to the service, for it is entirely owing to the effects of the work he has gone through. He was there from first to last. Then, as to another officer belonging to your corps, who by a coincidence came home in the ship severely wounded—I refer to Major Poe. Though not actually on the strength of the battalion, he commanded a force taken from it, the Fourth Company of the Camel Corps. During those operations on the Upper Nile he and those with him sustained the character of the corps, and it is with feelings of great pride that I was permitted to speak to him to-day. Every arrangement will be made to return you to your divisions as soon as possible, when you will obtain your furloughs, and I hope you will have some pleasant time with your friends before you are called upon for further service."

General Williams's remarks were followed by loud cheers.

ON THE GULF OF ADEN.
CHAPTER VII.
RETROSPECTIVE.

Fatal Brawl—Departure of Lord Wolseley—His Farewell Orders—A Rival Mahdi—The Slave Trade—Ismail Pasha—Kitchener's Report—Khartoum during the Siege and after the Fall—Gordon's Bonds.

Early in May, an unfortunate circumstance, the first of its kind which had occurred during the campaign, took place at the village of Kodurmeh, when a collision occurred with a convoy of British troops. Colonel Trotter, who was in camp near the village, hearing shots fired at midnight, proceeded to the spot from whence these hostile sounds came, and found the natives in a state of the greatest excitement. It turned out that in a brawl our soldiers had shot dead two slaves and severely wounded several others. Two soldiers were at once arrested, and on the following day tried by a General Court Martial on a charge of murder.

Sentence of death was passed upon one of them, a private of the 38th, or 1st Battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment; and it was read out to the assembled troops on the 7th of May. It was commuted to penal servitude for life; the other prisoner was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. Besides these there were four other soldiers tried by Court Martial. The natives, we are told, were favourably impressed by the promptitude with which these offenders were tried and sentenced, "especially as the two men killed were only slaves."

At Kaibar, near the same place, were seven state prisoners, relatives of the Mahdi. They protested their innocence of all complicity in his actions, and were most devout in the orthodox religious observances. They were held in the greatest veneration by the peasantry, who were always bringing them presents of kids and rice.

On the 18th of May Lord Wolseley inspected and bade farewell to the Indian Contingent; he thanked the officers and men for their gallantry, and regretted that he had been compelled,
by the exigencies of the service, to leave them at Suakim. He felt sure, however, that they would maintain their reputation at its highest point, and in autumn, should their services be required, be as efficient as they were then. The latter was a distinguished officer, who had served in the Eusofzye Expedition of 1858, under Sydney Cotton, and was mentioned in the despatches, receiving a medal and clasp. He served in the New Zealand war as

On the 19th he sailed for England, in the transport Queen, accompanied by the members of his personal staff, including Lord Charles Beresford, Sir John M’Neill, Lieutenant the Earl of Wiltshire (Coldstream Guards), Colonel Grove, Majors Creagh, Adye, and Browell, R.E., whilst Major-General Sir E. R. Greaves, K.C.M.G. and C.B., assumed the command at Suakim. D.A Q.M.-General from January, 1862, to January, 1866, and piloted the gunboats Avon and Pioneer up the Waikato River; and was repeatedly mentioned in despatches “as being always conspicuous for his energy and daring.” It was now considered imperatively necessary that the number of British troops under his orders should be reduced to a minimum compatible with
the safety of Suakim, as sickness—enteric fever especially—was rapidly increasing. The care and attention, however, bestowed by the doctors, the liberal supply of comforts, and the frequent transmission of invalids to Netley, tended to keep the mortality low.

Negotiations with the friendly tribes were now hopelessly broken off; and the Shropshire Light Infantry was ordered to remain as a permanent garrison, as it was intended to keep the line of railway open as far as Otao, by means of an armoured train, armed with a gun. Already people began to recall the words of General Gordon, "The moment it is known we have given up the game every man will go over to the Mahdi. All men worship the rising sun." The immediate future, however, dealt very roughly with pessimistic prophecies like this. Within a few months the Mahdi died, and the withdrawal of the troops from the Soudan led to no disturbance anywhere. In fact, this step probably had a sedative and restoring effect upon the natives.

As Lord Wolseley had now quitted the Soudan, we may give the following extracts from his despatch to Lord Hartington, dated Cairo, June 15th, 1885—

"Great credit is due to Colonel Butler, C.B., and to Lieutenant-Colonel Alleyne, E.A., for the care and thought with which the whalers for Nile service were designed and fitted out under their immediate superintendence. The experience they had gained in boat work during the Red River Expedition of 1876 enabled them to bring to this matter, and, later on, to their work on the Nile, an amount of special knowledge possessed by few men. Without these whalers, or had they been less efficiently organised and equipped, the assembling of the troops at Korti at the date it took place, and the subsequent advance of the two columns, one across the desert and the other up the Nile, would have been impossible. The great bulk of the provisions taken with the first column and the whole of those taken with the second were conveyed to Korti in our British whale-boats. In a similar manner the retirement from our positions on the Upper Nile to Abu Fatimah would have been extremely difficult but for these boats, as the river at this season is un navigable by nuggars or other native craft.

"This is the first time that Colonial troops have been employed outside the colonies in any of our wars.

"The result has been so satisfactory that I trust the noble and patriotic example set by New South Wales may, should occasion arise, be followed by other colonies. The officers and men of the New South Wales Contingent, under Colonel Richardson, were a credit to their colony and the parent race from which it sprang.

"The Dominion of Canada supplied us with a most useful body of boatmen, under the command of Colonel Denison of the Ontario Militia. Their skill in the management of boats in difficult and dangerous waters was of the utmost use to us in our long ascent of the Nile. Men and officers showed a high military and patriotic spirit, making light of difficulties and working with that energy and determination which always characterised Her Majesty's Canadian forces. . . .

"In conclusion, I would only add that, though the Expedition was not crowned with success, the spirit and behaviour of the troops which took part in the operations, whether on the Nile or at Suakim, may be viewed with satisfaction by every Briton. The army under my command was unable to accomplish the object set before it, and to save the lives of the gallant General Gordon and of the garrison of Khartoum. But this was from no fault of its own, from no lack of courage or discipline, or dash or of endurance. It overcame physical difficulties of the greatest magnitude; it swept from its path in every encounter an enemy almost its equal in bravery and greatly superior in numbers; and its advanced guard reached the outskirts of Khartoum only two days too late!

"No one can regret the fall of that place more than I do, but, in common with all my countrymen, I look back with pride to the gallant struggle made by our troops to save Khartoum and its heroic defender."
And now, concerning all this, we have something to say of retrospective interest before returning to our narrative of events at Suakim and elsewhere.

The lull that ensued in the movements northward of Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin—a lull that arose from dissensions among his followers—induced another fanatic to proclaim himself a rival and the true Mahdi, would appear to have had some influence in finally determining the British Government to abandon the Soudan, thereby leaving it a prey to internal divisions, while giving it free scope to a renewal of the slave trade.

"The contention between the rival Mahdis at an end," said a writer in the autumn of 1885, "the old traffic in human flesh will again manifest itself, and all the energetic efforts of Sir Samuel Baker and General Gordon, at the instance of the Khedive Ismail, to bring about its extinction will have been thrown away. Indeed, while we write, the news arrives that the Mahdi has already established a large slave-market at Omdurman, near Khartoum. It is, however, not only the revival of the slave trade that has to be feared. Egypt will always be subject to an irruption of fanatic Arab hordes, and the peace of the Moslem world, which Europe is interested in maintaining, will be continually threatened so long as religious fanaticism is the ruling power in the Soudan."

To hope, suggests this writer, that the existing weak government of Egypt, fettered as it is by many conflicting influences, will be able to cope with the difficulty which the abrupt abandonment of the Soudan by Britain has prepared for it, is out of the question. The only solution of the problem is to give Egypt a strong government, with a firm and able ruler at its head, one who could stem the tide of Arab fanaticism; and it has been urged that no False Prophet would have been allowed to attain to power in the Soudan, while it was ruled by so firm and unflinching a pro-consul as General Gordon proved himself to be; and some have turned their eyes to the discarded Ismail, the father of Tewfik Pasha.

Mr. A. M. Broadley, in his able and entertaining volume, "A Story of Egypt and the Egyptians," makes these remarks:

"It has been said that the absent are always in the wrong; so it has happened with the Khedive Ismail, who has lived long enough, not only to hear himself spoken ill of by his former friends, but to witness the unedifying spectacle of one whom he has especially benefited unblushingly take credit for having systematically undermined him with a view to his overthrow. Ismail committed many mistakes, but he will make a better figure in history than either Tewfik or Nubar. He went too rapidly and too recklessly ahead in his wild career of developing Egypt by what he called European contact; his plan of concentrating commercial enterprise in his own person was an error of the first magnitude; but the greatest blunder of all was to entrust to foreigners like
THE EX-KHEDIVE ISMAIL AND SUITE DRIVING OUT AT CAIRO.
Nubar Pasha the government of the country, in the very teeth of growing national sentiment, in a great measure of his own creating."

Mr. D. Mackenzie Wallace, holds Ismail answerable for the later mic-
also habitually acquired land in the same way; but the public works on which the money was so lavishly spent were by no means confined to the localities in which the Khedivial properties were situated, but benefited,

fortunes of Egypt by the creation of a national debt; but Mr. Broadley urges that he forgets how much of the borrowed money miscarried before it reached Egypt, and to what extent it was spent on public works, including the Suez Canal, which pays the country nothing, and yet is exclusively responsible for one-fifth of her liabilities.

"Ismail, it is true," he continues, "inherited great estates, and purchased others. The members of his family more or less, the whole of Egypt. Ismail expropriated no one, nor did he take any man's land without payment. The parallel of Naboth's vineyard is hardly a just one. The reproach is a still harder one for Ismail to bear now, when all his possessions, along with those of his family, have been surrendered as the guarantee for two public loans... Then as to the tyranny of Ismail," continues Mr. Broadley, "the kourbash existed before his time,
and it has survived his departure. There was, however, more banishment, exile, and imprisonment, during the two years of Riaz's paternal administration than in all Ismail's reign. If the soles of the peasant's feet can testify against the father, the shores of the White Nile are equally eloquent witnesses against the son. Ismail, like many other rulers, only just missed achieving a great success. When he realised his error, and the extent to which he had been betrayed, he resolved to give Egyptian Nationalism a fair trial. Europe refused to allow him to complete the experiment, and he went into exile. Darker days have overtaken Egypt since he quitted it, and the once strong ruler is now very generally regretted."

In a work called "Gordon and the Mahdi," we are told that a few days before the former departed for the East, alone on his noble and yet somewhat grotesque mission, to extricate the beleaguered Egyptian garrisons, then numbering, according to Sir Evelyn Baring's statement, 32,430 men, he visited his sister in the neighbourhood of Southampton, and Lord de la Warr was present at an interview in which, among other things, the General said:

"Gloomy and fraught with danger as the outlook in the Soudan certainly is, I already see in the course of events some chance of the ultimate fulfilment of my constant prayers for the liberation of the Soudanese out of the hands of their cruel oppressors, the slave-dealers. It is difficult for any one to realise the nature and extent of the horrors of African slave-dealing. I can call up, even now, visions of the desert, covered with the skeletons of children torn from their homes to die, after unspeakable sufferings, on the road to the coast. The present rebellion is the result of a combination between the slave-dealers and the ill-used inhabitants of the country. The former play the part of the professional agitators of the Soudan movement. The one furnishes the igniting match, and the other is the brushwood. Since I left Khartoum Turkish Pashas have come to the Soudan with empty stomachs, and the process of filling them as rapidly as possible meant ruin and war to the much-wronged Soudanese. The propagandists of slavery, therefore, address themselves to willing hearers. Fanaticism also comes into play, and the force born of the union of these different interests is undeniably formidable."

The ex-Khedive Ismail stood high in the estimation of Gordon. He evinced this at the end of April, 1885, when his messenger delivered to Ismail, then at Naples, a packet containing an Arabic letter signed and sealed by him seven weeks before his death, together with a well-executed decoration, one of those, which we have recorded elsewhere, he had prepared for the officers and soldiers defending Khartoum—a crescent and star, with certain words from the Koran, and a date. His letter ran thus:

"To his Highness the august Ismail Pasha, ex-Khedive of Egypt,

("May God protect him,")

"Amidst the many honours which your Highness was pleased to shower upon me during your
glorious reign, you have bestowed on me many decorations of which I am proud, and for which I am grateful. Having been appointed Governor of the Soudan, I repaired at once to my post, and arrived safe and sound at Khartoum. Two months later communication with the north was cut off, and the city was besieged. During the siege, it has been my lot to witness many cases in which soldiers, civil employees, and leading men of the country, have displayed courage and self-sacrifice in valiantly undergoing difficulties and privations.

"To reward their commendable conduct and fidelity, I have caused decorations to be made for distribution amongst them. I had previously sent a specimen of this decoration to your Highness by the steamer Abbas; but, as I fear it may never have reached you, I send you to-day another for your acceptance.

"Receive it, Highness, in remembrance of my grateful devotion, and the respectful homage I your grateful and faithful servant,

(Signed) "C. G. GORDON.
"Khartoum, Dec. 3rd, 1884."

Regarding the fall of Khartoum and Gordon's death, Major Kitchener, in his Report to the War Office early in October, 1885, brought to light some new items which—save with reference to the alleged treason of Farag Pasha—do not materially interfere with the narrative of these events already given in these pages; but some that refer to a period prior to the point where we took up the story, as then known, of the double catastrophe, may not be without a certain melancholy interest to the reader.

The last accurate information about Khartoum was contained in General Gordon's diary, under date 14th December, 1884, eleven days after the date of his letter to Ismail Pasha, when he recorded that the state of the city was very critical, and that it might "fall in ten days."

The fort of Omdurman had been cut off from communication with Khartoum since the 3rd of November, at which date it had provisions for about six weeks; and by sending steamers to meet the expected relief, Gordon had so weakened himself that he found it impossible to keep open communication with the fort, and to check the Arabs on the White Nile.

We have already mentioned the amount of food he had in store in December; but he found it necessary, he recorded, to give 96,000 lbs. of biscuits to the poor, and added:—"I am determined, if the town does fall, the Mahdi shall find precious little to eat in it."

By the 1st of January the town was completely environed by the rebels, and Gordon, seeing that the garrison were reduced to great want, invited the habitants to leave, which they did in large numbers, bearing with them, as stated, a letter from Gordon to the Mahdi, requesting him to feed them.

It was estimated that 14,000 only remained out of the total of 34,000 inhabitants.

It is unknown when the fort of Omdurman fell into the hands of the Mahdi; but it must have been a serious blow to the garrison of Khartoum, who thus lost their only position on the western bank of the White Nile; and we have related how the garrison were reduced to eat dogs, cats, rats, and the fibre of palm-trees.

"On the 20th of January," says Major Kitchener in his Report, "the news of the defeat of the Mahdi's picked troops at Abu Klea created
consternation in his camp. A council of the leaders was held, and, it is said, a considerable amount of resistance to the Mahdi’s will, and want of discipline, were shown. On the 22nd, news of the arrival of the British on the Nile at Metemneh, which was thought to be Rumours were also prevalent in Khartoum of the fighting at Abu Klea, and the arrival of the British at Metemneh.”

On the 23rd General Gordon had a stormy interview with Farag Pasha, which an eye-witness stated was owing

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ISMAIL PASHA, EX-KHEDIVE OF EGYPT.
On the night of the 25th many of the famished troops left their posts on the fortifications in search of food in the town; some of these were too weak from want of nourishment to go on duty of any kind.

According to Major Kitchener's view, "the accusations of treachery have all been vague;" yet many held to it resolutely that the gates were secretly opened by Farag Pasha, whose treason may be explained by the affront put upon him.

At about 3.30 on the morning of Monday, the 26th, a determined attack was made by the rebels on the south front, says the Major. The principal points of assault were the Buri Gate, at the extreme end of the line of defence on the Blue Nile, and the Mesalamieh Gate, on the west side near the Blue Nile. The former post witheld the attack, but at the latter the rebels, led by the Emir Wad-en-Nejumi, filled up the ditch with bundles of straw, brushwood, and bedding, and—whether aided by treachery or not the Major does not say—fought their way in; the defenders fled, and Khartoum was at the mercy of the enemy. "Farag Pasha," he says, "has been very generally accused of having either opened the gates of Khartoum himself or to have connived at the entrance of the rebels, but this has been denied by Abdullah Bey Ismail, who commanded a battalion of regular troops at the fall of the town, as well as by thirty refugee soldiers who lately escaped and came in during the last days of the British occupation of Dongola."

Hassan Bey Balmassawy, who commanded at the Mesalamieh Gate, certainly neither defended his post nor warned Gordon by the telegraph, which ran round the fortifications, of the peril the town was in; and this certainly looks like treachery, all the more so that he immediately took a commission under the Mahdi and marched on the Kordofan Expedition under the Emir Abu Anga; but Major Kitchener is of opinion that "Khartoum fell from sudden assault when the garrison was too exhausted by privations to make proper resistance. It is difficult from the confused accounts to make out exactly how Gordon was killed. All evidence tends to prove that it happened at or near the palace, where his body was subsequently seen by several witnesses."

It was dressed in light clothes.

The Soudan custom of beheading and exposing the heads of adversaries slain in battle was apparently carried out in Khartoum, as it was done by the Mudir of Dongola after the battle of Korti. "The Baggara savages seem to have had some doubt as to which was Gordon's body, and great confusion occurred in the Mahdi's camp at Omdurman as to which was his head, some recognising and others denying its identity. One apparently reliable witness, however, relates that he saw the rebels cut off Gordon's head at the palace gate after the town had fallen into their hands."

In looting the city the rebels ordered all the inhabitants out of it. They were closely searched at the gates as
they passed out in succession, and taken over to Omdurman, where the women were distributed as slaves among the rebel emirs and sheikhs. The men, after being kept as prisoners closely guarded for three days, were stripped of their clothing and turned adrift to get their living as best they could.

"The presence of Gordon as a prisoner in his camp would have been a source of great danger to the Mahdi, for the black troops from Kordofan and Khartoum loved and venerated Gordon, and many other influential men knew him to be a wonderfully good man. The want of discipline in the Mahdi's camp made it dangerous for him to keep as a prisoner a man whom all the black troops liked better than himself, and in favour of whom, on a revulsion of feeling, a successful revolt might take place in his own camp. Moreover, if Gordon was dead, he calculated that the British would retire and leave him in peace."

We have related how Farag was slain because he could not show where the imaginary treasures of Gordon lay. This took place in the open market of Omdurman, while many were put to torture to disclose where their wealth lay hid, with varying results.

"The number of white prisoners in the Mahdi's camp," says the War Office Report, "has been variously stated. A Greek who escaped from Khartoum reported that when the place fell there were forty-two Greeks, five Greek women, one Jewess, six European nuns, and two priests. Of these thirty-four Greeks were murdered. The survivors are all at liberty, but in extreme poverty. Abdullah Bey Ismail relates that all the European ladies are at Omdurman living in a zeriba, where they form a little colony, guarded by the European men. They earn a meagre sustenance by sewing, washing, &c. Not a single one was taken by the dervishes. They all wear the Moslem dress. A letter from the Mahdi was received relating to the white prisoners, who, he declared, preferred to remain with him. The document bears ninety-six signatures of Europeans; but some of them are undoubtedly spurious, as that of Father Luigi Bonomi, who escaped from El Obeid, never having been at Khartoum. A large number of the Baggara Arabs left the Mahdi shortly after the fall of Khartoum, much disgusted at their failure to obtain a larger amount of loot. On the Mahdi attempting to bring them back by force, they joined the party in Kordofan who are now fighting against his cause.

"The memorable siege of Khartoum lasted 317 days, and it is not too much to say that such a noble resistance was due to the indomitable resolution and resource of one Briton. Never was a garrison so nearly rescued, and never was a commander so sincerely lamented."

Whether as regards the peculiarity of his mission, or the extraordinary ability with which he defended Khartoum for many months against overwhelming numbers of courageous Arabs, no person will deny to the memory of the brave and gallant Gordon the
tribute due to one of the greatest of British heroes. And there is no more significant proof of the respect and affection which he had inspired in the Soudan itself than the undoubted fact that his death filled his black troops, and many of the Arabs themselves, with deep sorrow even unto tears.

Among the monetary curiosities of the day are the paper assignats of Gordon, many of which found their way to Cairo, and are now in course of liquidation, with the other bonds which that gallant soldier gave during the siege of Khartoum. The Mahdi had his own coinage. He issued a large quantity of money in gold and silver, which is very well minted indeed. Some of the gold pieces which have reached Cairo are of the size of an Egyptian pound, which is very little different in value or appearance from an English sovereign, and they carry about the same value, though they weigh slightly more. They have almost the same appearance as the Egyptian pound, with this difference, that in place of the monogram of the Sultan they bear the following inscription:

"Ahmed ibn Ard Allah"
(Ahmed, son of God's servant).

Born in Egypt in 1255.
CHAPTER VIII.

MISSION OF ADMIRAL HEWETT TO KING JOHN OF ABYSSINIA.


The necessity for preserving the historical sequence of the battles and other stirring events during the war in the Soudan, rendered it undesirable to record in its place, chronologically, the important embassy or mission of Admiral Sir William N. W. Hewett, K.C.B., K.S.I., and V.C., to John H. (Kassa), King of Abyssinia, crowned in 1872. We now proceed to describe it.

It had been projected early in 1884, and on the 7th of March the correspondent of the Standard wrote thus concerning it:

“Ten days ago I telegraphed as to the extreme necessity of our Government carrying out, without delay, the negotiations they had so hotly commenced with Abyssinia. The long delay which (as usual) has taken place, has—as I predicted—caused great irritation in Abyssinia, where the vacillation of the British Government, after King John had so frankly accepted their offer to negotiate, is viewed in the light of an insult; and unless steps are taken promptly all sorts of complications will arise. The latest news from Massowah shows that the position is already serious. Kassala, whose garrison could, a fortnight since, have been drawn off without the slightest difficulty through Abyssinia, is now altogether surrounded by the enemy, and the troops will soon be in a position similar to those of Sinkat and Tokar a short time since. The case will be so much the worse, from the very large size of the town, and the number of the inhabitants, who would be massacred were the place captured by the enemy. Even now timely presents to King John, with definite promises of the cession of Massowah and Sinkat—which, now that the Soudan has been abandoned, are no longer of the slightest use to Egypt—and the arrival in Abyssinia of a mission from the Queen, would almost certainly result in the Abyssinians undertaking the rescue of Kassala and the neighbouring posts.”

The Abyssinians have always cast longing eyes on Massowah, which, as Suleiman Pasha at Suakim told Admiral Hewett in December, 1883, they greatly coveted.

Though delays still ensued, when, on the 23rd March, Major Chermside arrived at Suakim, in order to assist in the negotiations for opening up the Berber road, Admiral Hewett, who was still at that port, was sanguine of success in that respect, and proposed to divide the route into sections, making each of the Bedouin tribes responsible for the section passing through its territory.

Three days after this we find the
Journal des Débats urging upon the French Government the occupation of the island of Dessi, near the coast of Abyssinia, as a precautionary measure against Great Britain, to keep open the navigation of the Red Sea, as the highway to French possessions in Tonquin, Réunion, and Madagascar, and this was instantly followed by a leader in the République Française evidently intended to prepare public opinion for French action on some portion of the coast of the Red Sea. The latter print intimated that France could not remain perpetually disarmed against the consequences which the policy of Great Britain inevitably entailed. "The convulsed state of the region of the Upper Nile," it said, "has caused a deep perturbation in the Moslem world from the centre of Africa to the northern frontier of Syria. It is vain for the British to publish bulletins of victory, since every fresh battle is marked by the advance of the Mahdi on the route to Khartoum, and the growth of the glory of the Prophet among the Moslem populations imperils the safety of sundry Christian colonies in Asia as well as Africa, and against such contingencies the Government of the Republic is bound to provide."

The République urged the immediate adoption of the measure recommended by the Journal des Débats—the seizure of Dessi off the coast of Abyssinia—and held it would be sufficient to enter into relations with that kingdom for the occupation of the following commercial and strategical points—namely, the islands of Dessi and Ouda Adulis, the Land of Bogos, and the Barka territory. How far the occupation of these points by French troops would interfere with our operations in Egypt and the Soudan, and our position on the Red Sea, would—if it had been attempted—have become a matter for the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

On the 2nd of April, at the time when Osman Digna was attempting to cut off the water supply from the friendly tribes at Handoub and Tamanieb, and the Sheikh of the Amaras (Mahmoud Ali) was raising a force to oppose him, Admiral Hewett, on the first step of his mission, left Suakim in H.M. corvette Euryalus for Massowah, where he landed on the 7th of the same month.

Massowah is situated on a rocky island of the Red Sea in the northern extremity of Arkiko Bay, about a mile and a quarter in circumference, and two hundred yards from the mainland. The most considerable buildings in the town are the mosques, the deholah's and banyan's houses, and a stone-built bazaar, in which jowari, dates, tobacco, beef, mutton, and fowls are sold. This island is the ordinary starting-point to the interior of Abyssinia from Egypt, and the great outlet of the Abyssinian trade. All the ivory brought from Abyssinia, the Galla country, and the south-western parts of Africa passes through this port. A caravan proceeds from Arkiko regularly in the month of April into the interior of the territories of King John, and is more or less numerous, according to the number of ships
which arrive from India by the passage winds.
In the course of the seventeenth century, as the Turkish power in the Red Sea declined, the Bashaw of Massowah, who gave a governor to Suakim, was obliged to pay tribute to the King of Abyssinia. The ordinary houses of the town are built of poles and bent grass, as is usual in Arabia. Those which are of stone are two storeys in height; the stone is taken from the seashore, and is interesting as exhibiting remains of shell-fish fossilised in it.
On the 7th of April Sir William Hewett left Massowah on his mission to the court of Abyssinia. He was accompanied by Captain Tristram Speedy, Lieutenants and Commanders Fritz, H. E. Crowe, of the gunboat Coquette, Lieutenants Graham, Herbert H. Paris, Richard P. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Horace Smith, Acting Secretary, all of H.M. corvette Euryalus, and Lieutenant T. F. A. Kennedy, of the Black Watch. He had also with him the Rev. Mr. Todd, Chaplain, Mr. Wylde, an East African merchant, Mason Bey (representing the Egyptian Government), and Dr. Thomas D. Gimlette, of the flag-ship Euryalus. 

The mission was escorted as far as the Abyssinian frontier by a detachment of Bashi-Bazouks, and halted for the first night at Shuati; on the second night they were at Ailet (or Ailat), a village in the valley of Modat, in Abyssinia, twenty miles from Massowah, and where there are medicinal hot springs, much resorted to by natives afflicted with cutaneous diseases. 

There they were welcomed by much tom-toming, were hospitably entertained, and rested till the 9th, when an Abyssinian officer with thirty men arrived as an escort, and relieved the Bashi-Bazouks of the charge of the mission and the presents they were
carrying for King John, and on the 10th the forward march was resumed.

On that evening Sir William and his party halted at Satagumba, and on the 11th they traversed the Rara Pass, and reached the narrow valley of the Genda. There Sir William remained a day, awaiting the arrival of the Lieutenant of the great Abyssinian Chief, or General, Ras Aloola; and he came eventually, accompanied by a rather tattered regiment, to escort them through the mountain passes to Aloola's camp on the plateau of Asmara.

"The first few miles of the route," wrote the correspondent of the Daily News, who was accompanied by Mr. F. Villiers, the special artist of the Graphic, "lay through very fine mountain scenery, not unlike the Scottish Highlands, and very like the Balkans. Birch, cedar, and acacia trees, box and orchids, covered the sides of the gorges; flowers in profusion, maidenhair fern and lichens brushed us as we toiled up the mountain. A few of the Abyssinian guard in front of the Admiral played upon pipes roughly made out of the bark of trees, and the notes, very mellow and sweet, seemed to start all the birds along our route into song."

Other birds that were not of song occasionally soared up, or sat on rocks watching the party—the African or Egyptian vultures (or Pharaoh's chickens), to which we have already referred as hovering over many a battlefield. "The unburied slain on a field attracts them in flocks from a great distance," says a writer; "the death of any beast in the open calls an assembly to the banquet. Sailing on their wide and ample wings, they sweep from the higher regions of air to their repast, on which they often gorge themselves till unable to rise from the spot."

As the party proceeded the scenery changed in character, and became more tropical, and when evening fell the tents were pitched in a beautiful but narrow valley, amid a grove of Euphorbia caudlebra gigantica, brilliant with clusters of red and yellow blossoms. The march of the following day proved the most difficult and trying, as the route lay through the Maïensi Pass, one of the steepest tracks in the habitable globe.

"It was impossible to ride any horse up it," wrote the News correspondent, "so we all took to mules. Presently the route narrowed to a rocky defile, and we suddenly emerged on the Abyssinian plateau. Immediately Her Majesty's representative was sighted the slight eminence on our right and the plateau on our left became alive with horsemen galloping towards us, and when we were well in the open more than fifteen hundred cavalry charged straight at our group, throwing up their spears and waving their shields."

They reined up their horses skilfully within a few paces of the mission, and then, spurring round its flanks, they formed a kind of irregular column, and followed its route in rear.

These wild horsemen wore the usual Abyssinian costume, a large mantle of red and white cotton cloth, which they
wrapped round them, and to which were added close drawers, reaching to the middle of the thigh; but among the Gallas, a numerous tribe, a short petticoat, like the Scottish kilt, is worn.

The headgear of these horsemen consisted of coloured handkerchiefs, worn in different modes, though a few wore a white fillet round their close curly hair, while others wore a lion's mane, fringing their swarthy visages with its bristling hair, and rendering themselves almost as wild in aspect as the animal itself. They bore round shields of hippopotamus skin, with bolts and bosses of bright silver; they were armed with swords and spears, and the metal trappings of their horses, being brightly burnished, flashed and glistened gaily in the sunshine.

Soon after this meeting the camp of Ras Aloola was reached; and near the entrance of his tent Sir William Hewett dismounted and was met by the chief, who walked forward and shook hands with him. Then, amid much beating of drums, the Admiral, Mason Bey, and Captain Speedy entered the tent, and there ensued a brief conference, during which the customary presents and compliments were exchanged.

To Ras Aloola the Admiral gave some shot-guns, military rifles, and accoutrements, with ammunition, silks, carpets, a Turkish basin and ewer; while he received in return a handsome robe of honour, and a splendidly caparisoned mule. Aloola proved to be a man of about the middle height in stature, forty-five years of age, with a massive head, the crown of which was closely shaven, fine glittering eyes, and a face which—save that it was of negro blackness—was somewhat of the Roman type; and when he threw his striped mantle, in toga fashion, over his left shoulder, there seemed something quite classic in his manner and bearing.

Though perfectly cordial in his welcome, he seemed curiously reticent as to the whereabouts of his master, King John; and though he must have known perfectly well, he somewhat perplexed the Admiral and his party by invariably replying that "only God and his Majesty knew."

After his trying ride over the plains and through the steep rocky passes, Sir William Hewett deemed it advisable to rest for the day. Next morning the journey was resumed, under the escort of Ras Aloola and his troops, the cavalry ever and anon performing wild and barbaric evolutions round the little party in honour of the Admiral, and perhaps to impress him with an idea of their skill and prowess in war.

In many places the country was fruitful; the plains showed forests of orange and citron trees, with pomegranates and jessamine. Tulips, pinks, lilies, red and white roses, and the ranunculus, grew in the wild places.

On the 26th of April the Admiral and his party reached Adowa, the capital of Tigré in Abyssinia, and for some time the residence of the sovereign, after the Gallas gained possession of Gondar, which is the proper capital of the kingdom.
Ras Aloola's House, Adi Trcklai.
At Adowa he expected to have his interview with King John. Eleven miles east of Axum, it is situated on the slope and at the base of a hill, "Adowa," says the Edinburgh Gazetteer, "is the channel by which the communication between the coast and the interior is almost exclusively carried on. The provinces to the south of Adowa abound in cattle and corn, which, with salt, constitute their chief articles of barter. About a thousand slaves pass through Adowa, to be shipped at Massowah and other ports on the Red Sea. The commercial character of the place causes it to be inhabited by a

which commands a magnificent view of the mountains of Tigré, and round which sweeps the Hassam—a fine stream. Rüpell estimates its altitude at 6,216 feet above the level of the sea. It contains about 10,000 inhabitants, who excel all other Abyssinians in the manufacture of cotton cloth.
considerable number of Mohammedans, who are the only class of the population at all animated by the spirit of trade."

In a letter from Adowa, dated 29th April, the correspondent of the Daily News stated that there was no one in the town deputed to receive the mission on its arrival. Ras Aloola, however, had gone forward to Makuki, with a copy or draft of the treaty to lay before King John, and had returned with a promise from that potentate to come to Adowa.

Though the statistical work we have quoted states that the inhabitants of Adowa "are more civilised than is usual in Abyssinia," Sir William Hewett and his companions found them very rude and offensive, and, for some time, they were actually prevented from supplying the mission with food, even for money.

Though, by the fall of Khartoum, three thousand subjects of King John living in that city were at the mercy of the Mahdi, who was now in possession of all the country between the Blue and White Niles, and had thus become an immediate neighbour and Mohammedan enemy of Abyssinia, whose king was a Christian, the latter did not seem to be in much haste to do honour to our ambassador.

The terms of the treaty which the latter bore were stated to be as follows:

Firstly, Massowah was to be a free port.
Secondly, the country of Bogos Senheit to belong to Ethiopia.
Thirdly, the Khedive of Egypt to give facility to King John in the appointment of an Abuna, the head of the Abyssinian church, then nominated by the Egyptian authorities.

Fourthly, King John to give all possible assistance to the garrisons of Kassala, Kalabat, and Amalib, allowing them to withdraw through his country in peace and safety.

Fifthly, all difficulties arising between Egypt and Abyssinia to be settled by the arbitration of Great Britain.

Though the treaty was signed it bore no remarkable fruits, as King John did not then intervene; but when Mason Bey telegraphed from the far eastern Soudan the fall and capture of Ghedarif, he added, that King John intended to march his army on Barka, and had gathered three thousand Gallas round Adowa.

Sir William Hewett, returning from his mission to King John, reached the coast on the 13th of June, and reported that he had successfully accomplished the objects in view; and that King John had promised to secure the relief of the garrison of Kassala by the way of the Gallabat district, and that the Gallas were mustering at Adowa for that purpose.

The Popolo of the 19th of May remarked that Mr. Gladstone's declaration that Kassala never entered the sphere of England's operations was somewhat startling in the face of the causes which led to General Gordon's and then to Lord Wolseley's Expeditions. Now, an isolated expedition to Kassala would be pure Quixotism, for which Italy was in no wise disposed. The Tribuna enlarged on the unreasonableness of inviting Italy to do what England shrank from attempting, while declaring that it was desirable on the
score of humanity. But, continued the Tribuna, if Mr. Gladstone has made such proposals, clearly the attitude of the Italian Ministry authorised him to do so.

On the 24th of July, it was reported at Suakim, H.M. gunboat Woodlark, having on board the Abyssinian envoy, had left Massowah with an elephant and other presents, from King John to Queen Victoria, on board. On that same day an earthquake occurred at Massowah, which destroyed or damaged nearly every house in the place, the population of which, chiefly Arabs, was estimated at 250,000 in 1874. All the ships in the harbour rocked violently and strained at their moorings, while the inhabitants, in alarm, fled inland.

While Sir William Hewett was journeying in Abyssinia, and our troops were daily having petty skirmishes in defence of the Suakim-Berber railway, the inhabitants of Assouan and its neighbourhood, panic-stricken by the news of the fall of the latter place, were taking to flight in considerable numbers. In consequence of this, Captain Bedford visited the town with an armed steamer, the appearance of which had a reassuring effect.

Assouan, on the Nile, opposite the island of Elephantine (now called Gezeeret-Assouan, or the island of Assouan), became at that period a place of especial interest, as it was to form the chief frontier town of Egypt proper if the British Government should ultimately determine to evacuate the Soudan; while Nubia might be left to take care of itself as best it could. Indeed, both geographically and ethnographically, it may be said that, at Assouan, Egypt terminates and Nubia begins; though, as Colonel Donald Stewart remarked, the name of the Egyptian Soudan has taken the place of all others for the whole of the Egyptian territory below Assouan, where the Nile has the appearance of a narrow lake surrounded on all sides by arid, picturesque rocks, mostly of granite, with some syenite and porphyry. A little to the south are the remains of an ancient Saracen town, of the former importance of which some idea may be formed from the fact that Mackreezee says 21,000 of its people died of a plague in the year of the Prophet 806.

A detachment of Egyptian troops was despatched there in the middle of April, 1884, under Colonel Duncan, and a regiment of British troops had been ordered also, but they were stopped at Assiout, the terminus of the railway from Cairo. The town of Assouan contains now about 6,000 inhabitants, and its trade consists in dates, senna, henna, wicker baskets, and slaves. In the time of the Khe- dive Ismail it was considered the termination of a tourist's peregrinations, as it was situated on the First Cataract. There is a small railway there, which transfers goods and passengers to and from the boats above and below the cataract. Thence to Wady Halfa, the Second Cataract, the Nile becomes again navigable. A scheme was at one time proposed for a Soudan railway from Assouan to Khartoum, and
a study of the proposed line was made by two British subjects, Messrs. Walker and Bray, but nothing came of it.

Sir John Hawkshaw also recommended the canalisation of the cataract, while Mr. Fowler proposed to construct a ship railway overland, utilising the descending water as the mechanical force. Here lies the palm-fringed island of Elephantine opposite Assouan, elevated, rocky, and barren (3,000 feet long by about 900 feet thousand islets, some rugged, black, and bare, others covered with verdure, reeds, and tamarisks. On Elephantine once stood a great temple dedicated to the god Knuphis, of which not a vestige now remains save its portal. Two other temples were demolished to make barracks for the Pasha’s Black Infantry.
SIR W. HEWETT'S EMBASSY: ABYSSINIAN WATER-GIRLS BRINGING WATER TO CAMP—A LADY OF ADOWA.
Generally the isle is covered with heaps of shapeless ruins.

"Assouan," says Ebers, "is, in fact, at the very threshold of Egypt, and the Egyptian name Soun seems admirably well chosen, meaning 'allowing the entrance.' From this name Soun came the Greek Syene, and then Assouan, from the Coptic Suan. In very early times the chief town of the district to which it belonged stood on the island opposite, and was called like it, Ab, the town of elephants or of ivory, probably from the abundant supply of that material, which was an important article of commerce with the Soudan."

Under the Greeks, who gave the opposite island the name of Elephantine, the garrison town on the eastern shore took precedence over that of the island, and, in spite of the many attacks it suffered from the Blemmyes and their successors, it continued a flourishing town, while that of Elephantine fell into decay.

Now little remains of the ancient Suan.

Its granite quarries have lain unworked for centuries, as the Mohammedans erect little for posterity. The vines, which in the time of the Pharaohs were so extensive, have vanished, like the famous well of Syene, which must have been situated exactly under the tropic line, since it was shadowless at noon. And this circumstance was taken advantage of by Eratosthenes, who had been invited to Egypt by Ptolemy Euergetes I. for the purpose of measuring the surface of the earth.

At the present day a visitor to Assouan, the moment he lands, is besieged by a host of dealers in ostrich feathers, eggs, ivory rings, gold and silver bracelets, Soudanese weapons, and by dusky Bisharcan Arabs, clad only in a loin cloth, selling amulets or talismans to bind on the arm.

The First Cataract, which, it will be remembered is situated here, is not properly a waterfall, and even in the most difficult places the gradient is not more than one foot in 15 feet. Black rock rises abruptly from the foaming current, and here and there vast blocks, fallen from above, form islets of 150 and 200 feet in height.

The arrangements for the embarkation of the Egyptian troops for Assouan, as made at Boulak, about two miles from Cairo, were admirably carried out under the personal superintendence of Mr. T. Cook. They embarked from the Arsenal, Sir Evelyn Wood overseeing the whole. They numbered 1,300 men, with four British officers, on board of three steamers and four barges.

In the April of 1884 it was confidently stated that a conference upon Egyptian finance was to be summoned. The announcement, however, was somewhat premature, but the discussions to which it gave rise on the Continent proved of some service to Egypt and to Great Britain. Hitherto it had been assumed by those who had agitated for the withdrawal of our troops from the delta of the Nile that, if their advice were adopted, the Egyptians would be left to work out their political destinies in their own way.
It could not be contended, however, that there was much justification for this view, as the tone of the most influential French journals showed distinctly that, if Britain abandoned Egypt, her place there would be immediately taken by France. "As long as we maintain our present supremacy," said a writer at the time, "the French Government will not dispute our claims; but, were Britain to abandon the task she voluntarily undertook, the Republic, with the cordial consent of all classes of Frenchmen, would only be too glad to find an opportunity of asserting its supposed rights. France has more than a merely sentimental interest in Egypt, and it would be unreasonable to expect that she would permit the country to fall into a state of anarchy."

Eventually, when a Conference of the signatories of the Treaty of Berlin was proposed to settle the financial affairs of Egypt, each Power seemed to consider the matter in its own way. Russia and Italy, who always appear to gain something out of every European difficulty, accepted the task at once; Turkey hesitated, on the plea that the affairs of one of her dependencies were scarcely a matter for international adjustment; and Germany and Austria declined to commit themselves until it was known what France meant to do; and for months before the French Press, official and popular, had been girding at Britain's policy in Egypt and the Soudan, and latterly their tone had become extremely aggressive.

The memorandum addressed by Lord Granville to the Powers clearly detailed the financial troubles in May, 1884, and suggested a loan of £8,000,000 as necessary to restore the equilibrium; but delays ensued, as France insisted on the scope of the Conference being enlarged, and that the political future, as well as the financial settlement of the country, should be discussed.

Early in May that year an expedition was organised at Cairo, under Colonel Stuart-Wortley and Majors Kitchener and Rundle, to reconnoitre the banks of the Nile as far as Assouan. In this operation they were to be assisted by the Bedouin tribes on the banks of the river, while an escort of 500 Gawazi Bedouins accompanied them. This force had orders eventually to form a cordon between Assouan and Dongola, with its headquarters in the oasis of Khurga, from whence patrols were to be despatched in order to prevent the passage of emissaries of the Mahdi.

At this time Sir Samuel Baker suggested that Egypt should be divided into two provinces, Upper and Lower Egypt; that the former should extend to latitude 13°, and that its capital should be Khartoum. In a letter to the Times he urged that "Khartoum is the key and strategical point upon which the security of Lower Egypt must unquestionably depend," and that if this city passed from our control, we might by-and-by have to undertake an expedition compared with which any effort that was then being made, would be of trifling importance.
CHAPTER IX.

THE FUTURE OF THE SOUDAN.


And now to resume our narrative of occurrences at Suakim and elsewhere in May, 1885.

On the 20th General Sir G. R. Greaves, K.C.M.G. and C.B., visited Otao and Handoub, accompanied by Colonel Le Mesurier, commanding the Royal Engineers, to concert plans for the defence of Suakim after the withdrawal of the main force. He afterwards conferred with Colonel Truel of the Shropshire Regiment, and arranged that his battalion should be hotted as soon as possible, and provided with every suitable comfort, so far as the available commissariat means would allow.

In place of General Sir John McNeill, who had gone home, the command of the second brigade was assumed by Colonel William Henry Ralston, of the second battalion of the East Surrey Regiment, who had served with the old 70th in the New Zealand War of 1863—5, and was present in the engagement with the Maoris at Katikara and Riangawhia, and commanded, as Major, the expedition which landed at the White Cliffs.

Orders were now issued for the Lancers, Hussars, and the Berkshire Regiment to proceed to Suez for Cairo, but not for Britain, taking all their camp equipage with them.

The erection of huts was proceeded with steadily on Quarantine Island and at the H Redoubt, while a series of permanent field-works was constructed
by the Engineers outside the town; and a sufficient number of transport animals was left at Suakim to enable General Hudson to form a movable column whenever such a force might be necessary; and it was supposed out much effect; either they had not the range or their rifles were wrongly sighted. Hence General Greaves at once despatched the armoured train, with two Gardner guns and an escort of Infantry, to protect the line of rail-

that a knowledge of its existence might render the enemy cautious, and prevent them from harassing the troops, while the selection of the Shropshire Light Infantry, the Sikhs, and the Bombay Infantry for garrison duty gave much satisfaction in camp.

On the afternoon of the 20th May a party of Arabs advanced from Hasheen and opened a fire upon the vedettes of the Camel Corps at the front, but with-

way, and on the approach of this force the enemy fell back in the direction of Tamai.

On the same afternoon the military police and the invalids began their journey down the Nile for Cairo from the Soudan.

On the 21st of May General Greaves determined, in consequence of the resolute attitude of the marauders of the previous day—encouraged, no doubt,
by a knowledge that our troops were fast departing—to resume night patrolling on the railway by means of the armoured train. At 11 p.m. it ran to Otao. It was found that on the preceding night, favoured by the extreme darkness, the enemy had heaped up brushwood and earth on the line to obstruct the engine, which returned unmolested, the obstructions being easily removed. Thus it started for Otao again at seven on the following morning.

Ten per cent. of the garrison were now reported on the sick-list. The strength was expected to be fixed at 3,500 men.

On the 22nd some excitement was caused at Alexandria when instructions arrived from the War Office ordering the three battalions of the Foot Guards to encamp five miles from the city "and remain there pending further orders," instead of proceeding at once to London. Three thousand tents were sent from Cairo for a camp at Ramleh.

By the same date Otao was evacuated by the Shropshire Regiment, which came into Suakim by train, and was ordered to furnish one company towards the formation of the corps of Mounted Infantry.

Glancing elsewhere, the evacuation of the Soudan may be said to have commenced in earnest, when in the middle of May the first batch of refugees—i.e., natives who dreaded the vengeance of the Mahdi on the departure of the British—to the number of 250 unfortunate creatures, started from Dongola for Upper Egypt, and by the 27th of May the number increased to above 2,300.

On the 14th of May the rebels who recently left Sani, where Ezzein, the chief Emir of the desert tribes, was in command, moved to the neighbourhood of Handab.

The Mudir of Dongola's troops advanced from that place and gave battle to the enemy, whom they completely routed, without themselves losing a man.

The Mudir's men returned in triumph to Handab with twenty-seven cattle and ninety sheep, which they captured from the rebels.

Tumbal Hamid, a descendant of the ancient kings of the island of Argo in the Nile, a place still famous for an ancient temple and two magnificent colossal statues of red granite, accepted the government of that part of the province lying between Sukkot and Handak (or Handah), a town on the left bank of the river forty miles south of New Dongola; but, in consequence of the circulation of many absurd and alarming rumours as to our manner of evacuating the Soudan, it was deemed advisable to placard notices in Arabic to the effect that we had no intention of burning the city.

Sir Charles Wilson and Colonel Walter Rice Olivey, C.B., Chief Paymaster, and formerly of the 12th Foot, left Dongola on the 25th for Cairo; and two days after Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed from that place that the British troops had begun to withdraw from it on the preceding day. A troop of the 19th Hussars and the 1st Bat-
talion of the West Kent Regiment were to be left at Wady Halfa, and the 1st Battalion of the Sussex Regiment at Korosko, while the remainder of the Hussars, the 2nd Battalion of the Essex Regiment, and a battery of Artillery, were ordered to be stationed at Assouan until the railway extension was finished; and meanwhile the Black Watch and other troops at Merawi began their journey northward.

At this time Colonel F. Duncan, C.B., of the Royal Artillery (previously Superintendent of the Records of the Royal Artillery), commanded at Wady Halfa, and he bore testimony to the excellent work done by the officers and men of the Army Medical Department. At least 2,500 men, women, and children, refugees, were sent from Khartoum to him, and he had to distribute them among the frontier villages. The difficulties were great in the long line of communication, and the wounded had to undergo much suffering, as they were conveyed partly by camel litters, partly by boats, and partly by railway.

At a public meeting in October, 1885, he related an anecdote showing how admirably the medical officers did their duty. A doctor in charge of a convoy fell over a cliff and broke two of his ribs, but bound himself up as well as he could and said nothing about his mishap, and rode five and a half days under a burning sun, in pain and weakness, till he safely landed his convoy at Wady Halfa.

The sufferers in his charge spoke earnestly of the fatherly way in which he had taken care of them on the march. The news of his accident had reached the camp at Wady Halfa previously, but the brave doctor refused to be attended till every man of his convoy had been seen to. He then went to his tent, when he fainted from pain and exhaustion, and for many days was in a feverish and critical state.

A meeting of traders interested in the Soudan was held in Alexandria at the beginning of the troubles, at which it was stated that there were in that province 15,000 Christians and 40,000 Egyptians, and that there were no less than 1,000 commercial houses owned by Europeans and 3,000 by Egyptians, and that the import and export trade was valued at £13,000,000 annually. The Ministry of War drew up a statement on the subject of the evacuation of the Soudan to the effect that there were 21,000 Egyptian troops and eighty-four guns in the Soudan between Dongola and Gondokoro. The removal of the supplies of ammunition stored at Kassala and Khartoum (before the siege of the latter city) would require 4,000 camels, or 6,000 if the supplies of war from King John's frontier were also to be withdrawn.

The Soudan had been a continual drain upon the Exchequer of Egypt. The first step deemed necessary to retrieve matters was the construction of a railway from Suakim to Berber, or, what was thought at one time more advisable, on the Nile to Shendi, where, according to Burckhardt's "Travels in Nubia," the wholesale trade was con-
ducted through brokers, and where a caravan no sooner arrived than every merchant’s house was crowded with them; but the avidity and parsimony of all parties were too great to allow them to bring their transactions to a required to run from Suakim to Berber, on the Nile, being only sixteen hours, and that the cost would be under a million and a half. The completion of the enterprise would, they urged, at once change all the elements of the

speedy conclusion. At Shendy, Burckhardt states, that “No merchandise has its fixed price; there is no such thing as a price-current, and every one sells according to the prospect he has of cheating the buyer and bribing the broker.”

The promoters of the Suakim route maintained that the construction of their line would bring Cairo within six and a half days of Khartoum, the time problem, and, instead of being a burden on the Egyptian Exchequer, the Soudan would become, with anything like good management, a source of wealth to the Government.

The financial condition and possibilities of the Soudan have very important bearings upon the question of the utility of the country, Egypt. In this respect the Budget of the Soudan

NATIVE OF THE SOUDAN: THE WHITE OR SACRED IBIS.
VILLAGE NEAR ASSOUAN, ON THE BORDERS OF THE ARABIAN DESERT.
for 1882, before the troubles became vitally serious, will be interesting.

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The budget of the Soudan, with £6,756 Surplus.

**In addition to this deficit, there is charged against the Soudan a further one of £6,756 for a section of the Nile Valley Railway, bringing the deficit (less surplus) up to £103,525. In 1881 the deficit was only £36,840. Under General Gordon's rule for the first time the Budget was balanced.**

What had hitherto prevented the development of the resources of the Soudan was the difficulty of getting machinery into the country, and of conveying natural products to the shore of the Red Sea. The finances of the Soudan, once rehabilitated, the provincial administration would no longer be forced to visit its subjects with those heavy exactions which were too surely at the bottom of the recent revolt.

Sir Samuel Baker—perhaps, next to General Gordon, the best authority on the subject of that sun-baked province—agreed in this opinion with Lord Dufferin.

"To sacrifice the Soudan," he wrote, "is to fling away the granary of the world; to abandon Khartoum is to surrender what will be the richest commercial entrepôt in the Old World. If the Soudan were in British hands in a very few years you would be entirely independent of the United States, both for cotton and corn. You have no idea what a country it is; soil fertile beyond belief, and the whole traversed from end to end by two great highways known as the Blue and White Niles, along which you can steam without interruption for hundreds of miles. Many a time I have ridden through deserted districts, in which the corn or dhurra was growing literally high enough to hide an elephant, and that without the slightest cultivation. Gordon was only a soldier, but even he was impressed by the luxuriance of the vegetation and the boundless wealth of the Nile valley. When that region passes into civilised hands it will be the richest on the whole continent. An almost virgin soil, a tropic sun, the Nile water, and a population which is most tractable and peaceful; there you have all the elements required for the production to almost any extent of the necessities of your great industrial population in this country.

"To tap this immense reservoir of undeveloped wealth, all that is necessary is a short railway from Suakim to the Nile and a decent Government. It wants no elaborate administrative system, but it does want a ruler whose word can be trusted, and whose officials are kept in hand. There ought not to be the slightest difficulty in holding the whole of the Nile valley down to the lakes from Khartoum. There
are no fewer than fifteen steamers at Khartoum, some of them great river boats of 300 tons. With these [Sir Samuel wrote before the fall] there ought not to be the least difficulty in patrolling the river from end to end; and the river is everything in the Soudan. The power that commands the stream has the lives of the population on its banks absolutely in its hands. The whole of the irrigation, without which nothing grows, depends on the river. The cattle come down to drink of its waters. It is the vital artery of the Soudan; and a capable man established at Khartoum would be able to prevent any living being showing any hostility from end to end of either of the Niles. I am not a prophet, but I know the country, and as I predicted that Hicks would be lost the moment he was left to be sacrificed by the ministry, who hated him because he was an Englishman, so I predict that the present crisis will only become more and more serious if an attempt is made to evacuate the country."

On the 20th of May a Council of Ministers was held at Cairo, when a lengthy discussion ensued in regard to a note recently addressed by Earl Granville to Musurus Pasha, on the subject of the armed occupation by Turkey of certain ports on the Red Sea, particularly Suakim. In the event of the Turkish Government refusing troops for this purpose, the Foreign Secretary declared that Great Britain would feel compelled to make arrangements for the occupation of Suakim and the other ports specified by some other European Power. This somewhat humiliating note added, that, as soon as order and a stable Government had been established, the British troops would be withdrawn from Egypt and the Soudan. On this matter the Grand Vizier had a private audience with the Sultan, the result of which did not readily transpire; but the note was not acted upon.

On the 23rd of May the Berkshire Regiment evacuated Handoub, and as it was falling back on Suakim the enemy showed in some force and opened fire. The Berkshire men responded with such effect that the Arabs fell back. There were no casualties, and that day, at noon, the battalion with the East Surrey Regiment embarked on board the transports Conway and Loch Ard respectively, which at once put to sea, as the Romeo did, with a detachment of Indian troops, for Bombay.

All the troops now quartered at Suakim had leisure to moralise on the unpleasant fact that Handoub, Otao, and all the other positions in front, laid out, fortified, and constructed amid so much toil, suffering, and loss of life, were now in possession of the enemy; and to the soldiers it was plainly apparent, says the Daily Chronicle, "that we had directly played into the hands of Osman Digna." The tribes were now returning to his standard in large numbers, and even the "Friends," who were so recently in our camp, and were supplied with arms and ammunition from Her Majesty's stores, overcome by their fears of
punishment, returned to their allegiance to the pertinacious Arab chief. Within two months, up to the 23rd, over eleven hundred

Sickness was now steadily increasing among both the British and Indian troops. The heat seemed equally trying to both, but much of the sickness was attributed to the unsanitary conditions of Suakim. Soldiers had been sent away invalided, and with their constitutions seriously injured. In addition to these, there were many sharp cases of fever on board the hospital ship *Ganges*. 
Whatever might be the health of the troops there and at other stations, those at Merawi were not much affected at this time, even by the steadily increasing temperature, which then rose to 116 degrees in the shade; and this was attributed by the medical staff to occasional severe thunderstorms, which cleared the air and conduced to the satisfactory condition of that peninsular district, which is described as very luxuriant and well irrigated.

At daybreak on the 26th of May all the troops stationed there, including the Hussars, Camel and Land Transport Corps, under Colonel Butler, marched from Merawi, with orders to pick up the Mounted Corps at the stations between that place and Dongola; while the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch and the Egyptian detachment started in their whale-boats for the Lower Nile, together with the Naval Brigade and the Royal Engineers.
The troops welcomed these orders, which, however, caused the utmost consternation among the natives who had befriended us, and now anticipated an attack from all the tribes favourable to the Mahdi. A few useful articles were given to them, and then the rest of the stores were sent down the river in boats.

On the afternoon of the 24th of May the armoured train left Suakim with the Gardner guns and fifty rank and file of the Shropshire Regiment, and the same number of Sikhs and Bombay Infantry, and came swooping down upon the enemy, who were busy tearing up the line. The troops opened a rattling fire on them, killing and wounding some hundreds, on which the Arabs fled to the hills. Another body who were severely damaging the line at Handoub escaped without any casualties.

Thirty vessels which had been lying in the harbour, laden with railway plant, began their return to Britain on the same day.

Lord Dufferin was of opinion that if this line of railway was carried out it would do more to repress the inhuman slave trade than any other measure we could adopt, as the Power that holds the Delta of the Nile is naturally marked out as the proper custodian of the great trade of North-Eastern Africa.

When the opinion of General Gordon was invited in 1882 about the construction of this railway, he replied as follows:

"Speaking from a long experience in the Soudan, I feel convinced that until such a communication is made, no real progress can be reckoned on in these countries. Their being so near Egypt, and yet so backward as they are, is simply owing to the great difficulty in getting to and from them to the Red Sea; a belt of arid sand of two hundred and eighty miles separates them from civilisation, and till this is spanned no real progress can be made. There can be not the least doubt but that the route, Suakim to Berber, is the true natural route to be opened. Had this route been opened when I was in the Soudan it would have been infinitely more simple to have governed those countries. The hidden misery of the people in the dark places of the Soudan exists because no light is thrown on those lands, which light this railway would give; and it is certain when it is known that the railway is completed, an entire change will take place in the whole of this country. As long as the present state of affairs—with no communication—exists, there will be revolts and misery, and this will entail many thousands per annum on the Exchequer of Egypt, for it is certain that Egypt cannot throw off the Soudan and allow other countries to hold it. I conclude by saying that the railway is a sine qua non for the well-being of the Soudan."

By the 25th of May the construction of large and airy barrack-huts, for the accommodation of the troops at Suakim, was rapidly being proceeded with; but it was now necessary to convert the hulk Underwriter into an additional hospital ship. Her 'tween decks were spacious and lofty, and everything was done by the medical staff on board to ensure the comfort of the increasing number of sick.

It was now reported at headquarters that 800 Arabs were in possession of our abandoned fort at Handoub, a permanent menace to the unfinished line of railway.

About this time it was stated in Alexandria that a movement was in progress on the western frontier of Egypt, spreading through Tripoli and extending even to Tunis, that was
fraught with more danger than even the power and appearance of the Mahdi; and that an active, but secret, traffic in arms and ammunition was going on along the whole coast. It was said that it was practically impossible to prevent the landing of these arms and other war-like stores, which were intended for use in an ultimate outbreak of fanaticism; and the detection of a schooner landing powder for the Soudan, some miles westward of Alexandria, and when pursued by British vessels throwing the powder barrels into the sea, was but a portion of this scheme or conspiracy.

Dr. Schweinfurth, the traveller, urged the necessity of depriving the Mahdi of the means of communication with the sea, and suggested the formation of an International Surveillance on the coast between Derna, or Beled-al-Sur, a town of Tripoli, thirty-five miles south-west of Ras-el-Tin, and Benghazi, in order to keep a watchful eye on the headquarters of Zebeh Pasha's friends, the all-powerful Senoussi sect in Jarabub.

On the 29th of May General Dormer evacuated Tani with his troops for Cairo.

One of the proposals now under the consideration of Brigadier-General Francis Wallace Grenfell, commanding the Egyptian army, and formerly of the 4th Battalion of the Rifles, was the increase of British officers for the purposes of organisation and discipline; for many of the British officers who formerly served in that army while Sir Evelyn Wood was at its head had now resigned out of it, after the last campaign.
CHAPTER X.

THE RED SEA PORTS.

In May, 1885, for the first time, some official light was thrown on the diplomatic and military proceedings which resulted in redistribution of the ports of the Red Sea, of the littoral of which Major Chermside was Governor-General, with his headquarters at Suakim.

The narrative is contained in a batch of papers, published in a Blue Book at the end of the month. No small industry was required to select the more important features from the mass of details, and to intelligibly account for the parts played respectively by Great Britain, Egypt, Italy, Turkey, and France, who all appear to have had a share in the partition of the territories in question.

It is somewhat perplexing, though perhaps needless, to add, that, like most documents framed by our Foreign
Office for the perusal of the British public, the narrative breaks off just at the point where it begins to have some general interest. So far as it goes, at Baring at Cairo that the various aboriginal tribes would probably endeavour to drive out the Egyptian garrisons from the ports on the gulf of Aden.

It would seem that in December, 1883, Major Hunter, the Assistant-Resident at Aden, warned Sir Evelyn not because they had any sympathy with the Mahdi, but to take advantage of the turmoils in Egypt.

Certain of these ports, particularly Zeila and Berbera on the Gulf shore, were necessary for the alimentation of our garrison at Aden, and the British Government was advised to take mea-
asures for their protection. The latter port is one of importance, as sometimes during the monsoon 150 vessels anchor in the harbour, near the town (which contains more than 5,000 huts), where the pilgrims and merchants embark for Jiddah and Mecca. As a temporary expedient a couple of gunboats were at once despatched thither.

Meanwhile Earl Granville wrote to Lord Dufferin that the British Government had advised that of the Khedive "no longer to occupy with their forces territory the retention of which had caused a constant drain of money and men, and which Egypt had neither the financial nor the physical power to hold." He further intimated that the British Government desired to propose to the Sultan "that he should resume direct jurisdiction over the ports on the Egyptian coast of the Red Sea (including Suakim), and should occupy them with his troops."

Harar it was proposed to hand over to some member of the family of the most powerful local chief, while Zeila and Berbera were to be seen to by the garrison of Aden. About the same time (May, 1884) the Egyptian Government were informed that a party of Frenchmen from Obok (or Oboc) had visited Tajurrah and announced their intention of hoisting the French flag there. This place is a town of wooden huts with two mosques, on the Adal coast of Eastern Africa, in a bay in which are the islands of Mosha and Muskah, which were acquired by our Government from the Sultan of Tajurrah—a land of aridity and utter desolation, though it carries on some trade with Aden.

Difficulties arose with respect to Harar when the evacuation by the Egyptian troops was stated to be a work of peril. Nubar Pasha counselled delay, and asked that a British officer (Major Hunter) should be sent to superintend the withdrawal.

Sir Evelyn Baring and Earl Granville demurred to involving any British officer in what seemed to be a dangerous enterprise; but eventually, Major Hunter was sent, at the instance of the Government of India, to negotiate with the chiefs and see to the security of the ports on the Somali coast, that portion of the continent of Africa which extends between the Gulf of Aden on the north and the Indian Ocean on the south, or from Guardafui to the Riodos-Fuegos, inhabited by a people whom Bruce and others have represented as too savage to have any connection with.

The Turkish Government, whose only reply to the suggestion concerning the ports of the Red Sea was that it required, with that slow and obstructive people, consideration, was informed through Lord Dufferin on the 29th of May that, as Berbera, Tajurrah, and Zeila were to be evacuated by the troops of the Khedive, the Porte had better occupy the last two; but, as his Majesty had no rights over the Somali coast from Zeila to Cape Hallow, that territory, including Berbera, would be disposed of by the Government of Great Britain.
On being pressed for a reply about two months later, the Grand Vizier told Lord Dufferin that it was necessary to await the decision of the Council of Ministers. Later still, Musurus Pasha in London endeavoured to convince Earl Granville that the Porte had distinct claims to Berbera, which, however, the Foreign Secretary refused to acknowledge. So in this quarter matters became pressing; and on the 1st of August Major Hunter, who had come to terms with the chiefs of Harar, a town in the Somali territory, 100 miles eastward of Ankobar, in Abyssinia, and on the route from that place to Berbera, warned the Government that, as disturbances between certain tribes were imminent, the safety of the Egyptian garrisons in the interior would be imperilled unless that of Zeila was strengthened by a British force.

Earl Dufferin was therefore instructed to inform the Sultan that, unless the Turks occupied Zeila, the British would have to do so. But his Lordship replied, somewhat sadly, a fortnight later, that "from day to day the Minister for Foreign Affairs had promised me an immediate reply, each day preferring some new excuse for delay."

Nubar Pasha at the same time was raising objections, and finally proposed that the issue might be delayed till the arrival of Lord Northbrook. To this Earl Granville replied that the latter had nothing to do with the subject in hand, and that the British Government, being convinced that the advice they gave "was wise and good," had no intention of reopening the question.

Nubar Pasha consequently intimated to the Egyptian Governor of Harar that he was to withdraw his garrison under the superintendence of Major Hunter, who was to oversee the evacuation and maintain order at Zeila with British troops.

Notwithstanding this determination, we find Earl Granville on the 2nd of September urging the Sultan, through Musurus Pasha in London, to send Turkish troops to the Gulf of Aden. To this Assyv Pasha responded by asserting the rights of the Sultan over Berbera, and intimating that a telegram had been sent to the Khedive Tewfik, instructing him to protect Imperial interests in that quarter against the aggression of Great Britain or any other foreign power.

While this grotesque controversy was in progress with the Porte, and while Major Hunter was preparing to occupy Zeila and the Somali coast with the aid of troops from Bombay, Sir Evelyn Baring telegraphed on the 30th September that the French flag had been hoisted on Ras Ali and Angar, thus practically disposing of Tajurrah!

A few days subsequently Earl Granville informed the Turkish Ambassador that, as the claims of the Porte to Berbera were founded on an uncompleted and unfulfilled convention, the British Government could not admit their validity. To the Gulf of Aden little further interest was attached, though British troops were despatched in due
course to Zeila and Berbera. British rights were asserted at Mosha, an island in the sea of Bab-el-Mandeb, at the mouth of the Anazo in Abyssinia, and at Ivat Island, in the same sea, ten miles north of Zeila.

The Danakils, in October, having compelled the Egyptian garrison of Tajurrah to retire, the French forthwith annexed it, together with the adjacent coast. Arrangements having been completed for the supervision of the Somali country, the coast line from Zeila to Ras Hafoon (on the east) was, on the 6th of February, 1885, handed over to the care of Her Majesty’s Indian Government, and Earl Granville added “that the control of the Indian authorities might, for convenience, be extended to Zeila also, Red Sea; and it is in a despatch to Sir Evelyn Baring, dated 8th of October, that we first get an intimation that the Italians had their eyes on Egypt. Earl Granville says in that document:—

“Her Majesty’s Government are of opinion that, in view of the intended withdrawal of Egyptian rule from the Eastern Soudan and the African coast of the Red Sea, considerable benefit may accrue to the tribes in the vicinity of Assab Bay through an extension of subsequent to the relinquishment hereafter, should the Porte accept the proposals of Her Majesty’s Government for the re-establishment at that port of the authority of the Sultan.”

The centre of interest now changed to the north of Bab-el-Mandeb, the strait leading from the Indian Ocean into the
the civilising influence of Italy in those parts; and I have therefore to instruct and direct Major Hunter to be careful to avoid, in his dealings with the local sheikhs, anything which would have a 

London. The abandonment of the Soudan by Egypt, the reluctance of Great Britain to extend the sphere of her operations, and the persistent refusal of Turkey to replace the Egyptian 

tendency to throw difficulties in the way of an extension of Italian authority inland from Assab.”

The latter is a town on a bay of the same name on the Danakil coast of the Red Sea. Three weeks later, Signor Mancini explained his views on this matter to the Italian Ambassador in garrisons, excited alarm in his mind, about the little colony, already limited on its southern side by the French settlement of Obok, should any other power intervene between Assab and Massowah.

“Considering, moreover,” wrote Signor Mancini, “the position of Britain in
the Red Sea, it seems to us that an occupation by a power other than Italy would not be consistent with British interests; and, if we have not misunderstood the constant and friendly confidence which has been shown to us by the Queen's Government from the commencement of the Egyptian difficulties, we must assume that Great Britain would look without jealousy upon a moderate extension of our colony of Assab, and would prefer that, on the aforesaid coast, the authority of Italy, for whom friendly relations with Britain are a constant political tradition, might be established in whatever form it would be found convenient.”

The despatch suggested the occupation of Beilul and some adjacent territory, and asked for the opinion of the British Cabinet. Lord Granville replied that, on consulting his colleagues, the British Government felt no jealousy of the extension of Italian influence over that part of the Red Sea coast mentioned in the despatch of Signor Mancini, and would, on the contrary, be prepared to welcome it. “At the same time,” Lord Granville added, “Her Majesty's Government could not undertake to give away that which did not belong to them; and I would suggest the desirability of coming to an arrangement with the Porte on the matter.”

Lord Granville was now pressed by the Italian Government for the views of that of Britain as to the ultimate disposal of the entire coasts of the Red Sea, and particularly whether it would permit any foreign power to make an establishment thereon. On the 22nd of December Count Nigra had a conversation with Lord Granville on this matter, but the latter declined to commit himself beyond the apparent facts that the ports would be evacuated by Egypt; and added that if Italy had any intention to occupy them it was a matter for arrangement with the Sultan, remarking that the British Government had no objection to Italy adding Massowah to her previous programme.

A rumour having got abroad that the Italian army was to assist the British in the Soudan war, Musurus Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador, went to the Foreign Office on the 31st of December to interrogate Lord Granville as to the intentions of the King of Italy, when Lord Granville replied that the idea of military co-operation was new to him. He admitted that there had been pourparlers about the ports, but reminded the Ambassador that the British Government had done their best to induce the Porte to resume his ancient authority over them.

But the latter was now thoroughly alarmed by the proceedings of the Italians, and feared an extension of their activity on the Red Sea coast; and, on the 10th of January, Lord Granville was able to inform Musurus Pasha that he had received from the Italian Ambassador “the most positive assurances that there was no foundation for the rumour of Italian designs on Tripoli.”

Considering the procrastination of the Porte in its dealings with this and almost every other question, it is, in a
sense, amusing to observe the state of anxiety and alarm into which the Sultan's advisers are thrown when delay and neglect at length threaten to produce their natural results.

Fifteen days afterwards the Khedive telegraphed to the Sultan that an Italian Expedition was on its way down the Red Sea, and that, in the event of its landing on the shores of Egypt, he could neither give assistance to the Governor of Massowah nor uphold his authority to the south; and, a few days later, M. Waddington came to the Foreign Office to endeavour to learn something respecting the designs of Italy and the occupation of Massowah. Lord Granville disputed the right of the French Ambassador to question him on the subject, more especially as France had herself seized a portion of the Soudan coast, without warning any one, and without permission accorded. He assured M. Waddington, however, that there was no alliance between Britain and Italy, though the conciliatory manner of the latter had greatly increased an emotion of friendship between the two Powers. But, in the meantime, the alarm of the Sultan became more patent.

The Khedive was instructed to protest formally against the landing of the Italians at Massowah, or anywhere else upon the coast of Egypt; and Musurus Pasha was desired to inform Lord Granville that the Sultan was "profoundly surprised" at a declaration made by Signor Mancini that Italy had a secret agreement with Britain respecting the occupation of Massowah and Beilul by the former. The assistance of the British Government was also asked to prevent the Italians from carrying out their enterprise.

Lord Granville assured Musurus Pasha that the report of Signor Mancini's speech was quite incorrect, and, after adding that Britain regretted that Turkey had not taken her advice on a previous occasion, disclaimed all responsibility for the action of Italy. On the 5th of February Assym Pasha thereupon telegraphed as follows:

"By this action (alluding to the occupation of Beilul) Italy has attacked the sovereign rights of the Empire, which rights she has declared to us, both through her ambassador at Constantinople, and through our Chargé d'Affaires at Rome, that she desired to respect. We have therefore thought it our duty to protest at Rome against this inexplicable action, and to renew the demand to Italy to withdraw her troops. This action being also in violation of international law, the Ottoman Government further appealed to the other Powers, and has again recourse through you to the Government to which you are accredited."

This protest, however, from such a source, could not be expected to carry weight. Remonstrance from France—if such were really seriously offered—was admirably met by Lord Granville's retort to M. Waddington about French annexation on the Soudan coast, alluded to above. If the Porte were not strong enough to hold its own, there was no special call upon us to assist it.
CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL GRAHAM’S LAST DESPATCH.


General Sir Gerald Graham, then at Alexandria, in his final despatch, dated the 30th of May, refers thus to his successor at Suakim, and the services of our Engineer Volunteers at that place:—

“In bringing to special notice the admirable conduct of the troops I had the honour to command, I wish to record my sense of the loyalty and devotion shown by the staff and regimental officers, who never spared themselves, and set the troops a bright example of courage and endurance. The departmental officers also worked with the utmost zeal and intelligence. I wish especially to express my high appreciation of the services rendered to the force by Major-General Sir G. Greaves as Chief of the Staff. That officer combines rare qualities, being a thorough soldier in the field and very hardworking in office. Having a perfect knowledge of every detail of duty, and being himself full of zeal and energy, Sir G. Greaves was invaluable in assisting me to organise the force, and in carrying on the arduous work of Chief of the Staff during the campaign . . . .

“The work done by the Royal Engineers was of a very extensive and varied character. In the con-
WITH THE CAMEL CORPS—COMING DOWN A STEEP PLACE

(After the Drawing by Frank Dadd.)
struction of zeribas, and in forming defensive posts at Suakim, Hasheen, Handoub, Otao, and Tambouk, in the clearance of dense bush, and in the formation of ground for the railway, in the development of the water-supply, and in generally supplying the numerous engineering requirements of an army in the field, the energies of officers and men were heavily taxed, and I cannot speak too highly of the campaign. Of these, thirty came from Newcastle-on-Tyne and Durham, and the remainder from the 1st Lancashire Engineer Volunteers. These men were all of trades suitable for railway work, and their services would have been of great value had the campaign lasted longer. As it was, the volunteers worked well with their comrades, and the officer commanding the company reports most satisfactorily the admirable spirit and discipline shown by them. It is interesting to note this fact, as it may be considered the first experiment in associating the Volunteer force with a combatant branch of the Regular Army on active service. The balloon detachment under Major Templar, 7th Battalion King's Royal Rifles, was attached to the Royal Engineers, and proved useful in reconnaissances on several occasions. On March 25, a balloon accompanied the convoy to the zeriba, and probably (its appearance) frightened the natives, as no attack was made. Unfortunately the prevalent high winds made it impossible to employ the balloon."

way in which all this work was performed. The officers on all occasions proved their readiness and resource, while the men worked cheerfully under the most trying circumstances. The Telegraph Service was admirably carried on, and proved of the utmost use to the force. During the action of the 22nd of March communication was maintained by telegraph with the zeriba. The railway owes much to the Royal Engineer officers employed in connection with it; while the 10th Company maintained the narrow-gauge line and took charge of the water supply at the base. This company, which landed on the 7th of April, had thirty-nine men from Volunteer Engineers who had enlisted for the campaign.
Sir Gerald Graham omitted to mention the useful services of the volunteer telegraphists from Edinburgh, Liverpool, and elsewhere.

After referring to the Signalling Department, which was worked well by Major E. T. Browell, R.A., Captain Rhodes, Berkshire Regiment, Lieutenant Lloyd and Colour-Sergeant Sibbald, both of the Grenadier Guards, and Corporals Graham, 5th Lancers, and Taylor, of the Berkshire Regiment, the General adds:

"The chaplains attached to the field force, whether Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, or Wesleyan, were zealous and active in their duties; and I desire to acknowledge the services of the Rev. W. H. Bullock and of the Rev. R. Collins, Roman Catholic Chaplain, who displayed great coolness and presence of mind at the fight of the zeriba on March 22nd."

The army postal duties were carried out under Major G. C. Sturgeo, of the 24th or General Post Office Rifle Volunteers.

About the end of this despatch, which we cannot give at full length, the General says:

"I have to acknowledge my obligations to Colonel Chermside (local rank), the Governor-General of the Red Sea Littoral, for service rendered by him to the Expedition. Colonel Chermside was appointed Egyptian Military Commissioner, and was always anxious to give me every information and assistance in his power. Mr. A. B. Brewster, Director of Customs at Suakim, acted as chief interpreter and Secretary to the Intelligence Department, and his services have been of much value to it."

On the 30th of May some of the military arrangements were finally made. The 1st Battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment and the 1st Battalion of the East Yorkshire Regiment were to be stationed at Assouan; the 1st Battalion of the Cameron Highlanders at Korosko; the 1st Battalion of the West Kent Regiment at Wady Halfa; the 2nd Battalion of the Essex Regiment, the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch, and the 2nd Battalion of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry at Cairo; while the 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders was bound for the Mediterranean, and the 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, with the 1st Royal Sussex, were to return home.

On May the 31st Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed to Cairo that the Black Watch had reached Dongola, "all ranks looking well and healthy." Refugees were still flying in hundreds from Dongola; and on the same day a council of Ministers at Constantinople was again discussing futile another note of Lord Granville's proposing the Turkish occupation of Suakim and other ports of the Red Sea Littoral.

A Greek refugee arrived at Dongola on the 31st of May from Khartoum. The poor fellow was in a pitiable condition, having been thirty days on the road, and in hourly terror of being captured, and but too probably tortured. He says that at the time he left there were in the city twenty-two nuns, priests, and Greeks. They were unmolested, but had lost everything and were poorly fed. At the capture of the city no less than thirty-four Greeks suffered death. The survivors, who numbered eight, embraced Mohammedanism to escape a similar fate. The number of the Mahdi's adherents was
but few, the terrible fear which had been inspired by the brilliant successes of the British forces being paramount.

A native spy also made his way in on May 31. He stated that up to eight days before no news had reached Khartoum of the withdrawal of our forces.

On the 1st of June it was reported at Suakim distinctly that several of the once friendly tribes, in rejoining Osman Digna, stated that they now saw in him a true and not a false prophet, his words having been strictly fulfilled; that the large promises of the British were untrue, and had left them nothing but the fierce enmity of the Mahdi, whose emissaries were entering Suakim daily, where the number of sick was still on the increase, and also among the Italian garrison at Massowah.

The Mahdi was stated to have sent ten pieces of cannon to Osman Digna, who expected soon after a large supply of arms and ammunition.

On the 1st of June an Egyptian vessel with tribal or native police on board surprised a party of Osman's people at a place named Adig, slew twenty of them, and captured a number of prisoners, with 150 camels and 1,000 cattle, and came safely into Suakim Harbour the same evening. At the same time the Arabs elsewhere made a most threatening demonstration with the object of severely wrecking the railway, but the guns were sent to the front, and a few cannon shot dispersed them.

In the beginning of June the Ministry of Public Works decided, for sanitary reasons, not to open the Khaleig Canal, which traverses Cairo in a perfectly straight line from one end to the other, and is said to have been projected by Amroo to connect the Nile with the Red Sea. On the other hand, numerous petitions were presented to the Khedive, signed by the Cadi and other religious chiefs, protesting against the violation of sacred customs. "We stand here where it starts," says Ebers; "this is old Cairo, the humble author of a magnificent daughter, the Fostát of the Arabs in the first century of Islam."

At this time (in June) a statement appeared in the Paris papers to the effect that, on his return to London, M. Waddington had an interview with Lord Granville, for the purpose of laying before him important proposals made by the French Government with reference to the Egyptian and Soudanese questions. But this statement was not founded on fact. M. Waddington, it would seem, had spoken to the Foreign Secretary about the Suez Canal Commission, then sitting in Paris, and which, he said, had come to a deadlock.

The British and French Commissioners each took up their stand upon different texts, and this seemed likely to go on indefinitely. M. Waddington therefore intimated to Lord Granville that the French Government would not insist on the adoption of their text, if the British Commissioners were prepared to form another providing guarantees which France and the other Powers regarded as essential.
OLD CAIRO.
"I gathered, in the course of conversation," wrote the Paris correspondent of the Standard, "that there is none of that tension at present existing between the two Governments that was observable some time ago, and there is absolutely no warrant for the hostile attitude towards Great Britain attributed to the French Cabinet by several organs of the London Press."

On Tuesday, the 2nd of June, the Black Watch, in a squadron of whale-boats, passed down the Nile by Abu Fatmeh; and, by the arrangements in progress, it was proposed that the whole of the troops in that quarter should be conveyed down the stream by the 23rd, when Colonel Grant and other staff officers were to leave, General Brackenbury accompanying the rear-guard.

The Nile was then very low—natives said, lower than it had ever been seen before—thus causing much shoal-water, and increasing the troubles of the voyage. Abu Fatmeh had proved a very fortunate station, as its ample gardens supplied the large hospital with fresh fruit and vegetables, and also the sick convoys.

"The whalers still continue to take the sick to Akadeh (El Akasha?)," wrote a correspondent; "capital rest camps have been built en route to the head of the railway, which can be reached by a fortnight's march. The heat to-day (2nd of June) is 118 degrees. The natives are passing north; all that are able to do so are leaving the neighbourhood."

On the following day Korti was
occupied by a body of the Mahdi's troops, who announced their intention of marching on Dongola as soon as the British quitted it. The Mahdi announced his intention of annexing it. A newspaper, called the Dongola News, was published in our camp there, and circulated among the soldiers. The result of the Derby was among the last home news reported in it. As soon as the last of our troops withdrew, the chiefs of Ambigol, with their followers, flocked to the standard of the Mahdi.

At this time, Major Rundle brought to Cairo several Korosko chiefs, for whom quarters were found at Boulak, and with whom, and the tribes they represented, it was proposed to treat for the defence of the Nile approaches to Wady Halfa.

On Sunday, June 7th, the Black Watch, with other troops following, left Abri, and, though pulling their whale-boats most of the way, were not much inconvenienced by the intense heat upon the water.

On the 8th of June Sir Charles Wilson reached Cairo on his way to London. He announced his conviction that the Mahdi meant to advance slowly upon Egypt, and that the invasion had a fair chance of success. He entirely repudiated the idea that, by any possible means, he could have reached Khartoum in time to prevent its capture, or to save Gordon.

Had he been able to go thither direct, he asserted that the earliest possible moment at which he could have reached that place would have been the afternoon of the 26th, but it was at the dawn of that day that the town was betrayed and the enemy admitted; and "that if there were any really preventible delay in the last stages of the drama, it must be looked for in the twelve days lost at Gakdul."

On the same day, the 8th of June, a number of fugitive Greeks arrived in Cairo, with the startling story, revived from time time, that General Gordon was still alive, and that they had actually seen him in the town of Berber!

On the preceding evening Suakim was again attacked by the enemy, whom the guns on the Water Forts drove off; but a spy came in with tidings that a scarcity of food prevailed among the rebels, and that they were being decimated by the smallpox, which had spread among them as far as Kassala and Berber—a combination of evils which caused desertion among the followers of Osman Digna and the Mahdi; but did not prevent those of the former from harassing our Suakim garrison by nightly attacks, which exasperated the guards and outpickets.

The final act in the abandonment of the Soudan was said to be consummated when Sir Redvers Buller and his staff quitted Dongola on the 18th of June, after first searching every house to see that no one was left behind. The town was then absolutely empty, waiting to be re-peopled by the men of the Mahdi.

"I had a conversation with Nubar Pasha this afternoon," said the correspondent of the Standard at Cairo. "He appeared to have some hope
of more energetic action on the part of Great Britain, adding, however, that, with six months more of the present paralysis Egypt would be dead. With reference to Lord Wolseley's despatches on the abandonment of the Soudan, and especially of Dongola, Nubar Pasha remarked to me:—'He says in these pages what I said in three lines in my last message to Earl Granville, through Sir Evelyn Baring—a message which was not among those selected for publication, and which was as follows:

"For the last time, before it is too late, I pray you to reconsider your decision to abandon Dongola. It will be an irrecoverable blow to Egyptian and English reputation, and is certain to bring fatal consequences."

A squadron of four French ironclads now came to anchor off Alexandria, and their presence on the one hand, with our departure on the other, persuaded the Egyptian public that this unexpected visit was in some way connected with the secret current of political events.

That the abandonment of Dongola was having a fatal effect on the terrified people of that province was evinced by the fact that, before the day on which Sir Redvers Buller left, twelve thousand eleven hundred refugees, including soldiers from Berber and Khartoum, had quitted it to seek shelter in Lower Egypt within the space of six weeks.

"What provision have our Government made for the unfortunate people who are now trooping out of the Soudan by the thousand?" asked the Globe, at this crisis. "Britain cannot shake off, without incurring infinite dishonour, this responsibility. But for her, the Dongolese and others who have just sought refuge in Egypt proper might have remained in their own towns. The Mahdi would not have touched them had they not given help to the infidel. They did so, too, partly under compulsion. Originally the greater part of the tribes were as much inclined to welcome the false prophet as a true one, and the Mudir of Dongola was often put to sore straits to hold his own until our troops arrived. When these last began to pour in, the local tribes hastened to profess friendship and loyalty, not doubting that the English came to annex as well as conquer. From that time they gave us most valuable help in many ways; indeed, but for them the Expedition must have been starved long ago. Recognising their good services and the utter shamefulness of leaving them to be massacred, the Government accompanied their decree of abandoning the Soudan by an offer to assist the migration to Egypt of any Dongolese who might prefer flight to certain death... So far our promise is fairly redeemed. But to merely transport these poor wretches to Egypt, there to die of starvation, would be a curious sort of kindness. That fate will inevitably overtake them, nevertheless, if their maintenance is left to the Egyptian officials. The Khedive will give orders, no doubt, that their wants shall be attended to at the public expense; but his treasury is nearly
empty, and were it full the native officials would certainly pocket the greater part of any sums disbursed for the relief of the Soudanese refugees. The only question is, therefore, whether England will see to it that they do not perish for lack of food. She has rescued them from the Mahdi; but that will be only a poor performance of her duty unless she follows it up by rescuing them from starvation.”

But we never heard publicly whether Great Britain moved in the matter.

The unusual influx of starving fugitives, with the fear of further eventualities, caused then the greatest uneasiness in Egypt; and still at this date we read of a new expedition in prospect, for the printed orders we have quoted record that “Lord Wolseley and a party of officers made a successful trial trip yesterday in one of the new stern-wheel steamers which have recently arrived at Cairo from England for the use of the Nile Expedition.”
On the 15th of June a letter from the Mahdi, which was believed to be genuine, had been received at Dongola, before General Buller left the town, bearing the signatures of many Christians, among others those of Slaten Bey (who was said to have been put to death at Khartoum) and Lupton. Copts, Greeks, and Syrians, who avowed themselves as being no longer Christians. At the time this letter arrived, there came to Dongola the brother of Khasm-el-Moos, of the Shagiyeh tribe, who had made his escape from Khartoum, and he reported that the Christian prisoners were treated well.

Those who signed stated that they were perfectly happy, and wished to remain with the Mahdi. This letter came as a reply to one proposing to exchange the Mahdi’s Christian prisoners for his relatives in our possession. He stated that these relatives had no claim upon him, and he viewed them now as enemies. The letter finally exhorted the British to embrace Islamism. It was dated from the camp at Omdurman, and was signed by ninety-five persons, mostly

Other accounts were different. The Vaterland, of Vienna, about the same date, published a letter from Cairo, sent by Father Egyer, announcing that the Vicar Apostolic, Monsignor Francis Sogaro, had left that city for Rome on the 5th of June, after an absence of more than two years, chiefly spent in Khartoum. This letter stated that the fate of the missionaries captured by the Mahdi was then still uncertain. The lost men described their situation “as most painful,” adding that all
attempts to procure their release or send them money were vain.

Through the Austrian Consul-General at Cairo, Monsignor Sogaro obtained leave from the Emperor Francis Joseph to intercede with the Mahdi in his Majesty's name, and Zebehr Ramah Pasha promised to forward a letter on the Emperor's behalf, but was prevented from doing so by the Egyptian authorities. Monsignor Sogaro then sent Father Vincentini, with letters of recommendation given by Lord Wolseley. Starting from Dongola on the 17th of October, 1884, the Father reached the town on the 16th of November, and, after long and prudent negotiations, he confided a letter to an Arab named Abdel-Djabber, who left for Omdurman on the 13th of December and returned on the 26th of February, 1885, with a piece of linen, on which one of the prisoners had traced in pencil a few words stating that he was in the utmost distress.

Two messengers since then had been sent with remittances to the prisoners, one to El Obeid, and the other to Omdurman; but up to the date of the letter in the Vaterland neither of them had been heard of. It concluded by stating that the Roman Catholic missionaries in Cairo were educating a number of negroes and negresses who had been brought from Khartoum. Several of these had been baptised, prepared for confirmation, and intended for missionary work in the Soudan. On the 12th of October, 1885, the papers stated that Father Bonomi, Bishop of Sogaro, lately a prisoner with the Mahdi, had safely reached Vienna.

On the 12th of June, the Sheikh Morghani and the officers of the Khedive's garrison at Gallabat arrived at Suakim en route for Cairo, bringing with them two standards captured in their last sortie from the town.

On the same day H.M.S. Falcon (a screw composite gun vessel), Commander J. E. Pringle, arrived to strengthen the naval force at Suakim, which was not attacked, as had been predicted, on the first day of the Feast of Ramadân, though some of the enemy were seen moving towards Tamai. General Greaves had now left the garrison for England, via Alexandria, the next senior officer taking over the command.

To turn to useful account a great portion of the surplus plant of the Suakim railway, new lines were extensively laid down with it in a more peaceful quarter, namely, on the Experimental Range and General Practice Range in the Government marshes adjoining the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, and some 400 men were set to work on them. One of these lines extended across the marshes for two miles, to the second powder magazine and the gun-cotton magazines.

A field of 18 acres was made over to the Royal Engineers for the storage of the Soudan railway plant, and June saw the engines and trains, marked "Suakim—Berber," at work, and forming an aggregate of some two miles in length.

Some of the carriages were literally travelling houses, built solidly of wood, so thick as to be bullet-proof.
CHAPTER XII.

HOME-COMING OF THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINGENT.


In reference to the operations at Suakim, the following despatch was received at the Admiralty from Admiral the Right Hon. Lord John Hay, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief on the Mediterranean Station:

"Alexandria, at Malta, June 8th, 1885.

"Sir,—Be pleased to lay before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the enclosed Report, dated May 26th, by Commodore Molyneux, C.B., on the services rendered by the Red Sea Division of the Mediterranean Squadron in the course of the operations which have extended over a year in a climate, and generally under circumstances, of a somewhat trying character.

"The fact stated by the Commodore that the immense number of vessels, some of great length, were piloted without a single accident to vessels or piers, in a channel so narrow and with such sharp turns, is as creditable as the result is astonishing, considering the difficulties to be contended with.

"I refrain from referring in detail to the services of the officers and men, to whom full justice is done in the Commodore's report, further than to add my testimony to the admirable manner in which the service has been carried on, and which has—without exception—given me entire satisfaction. It is perhaps unnecessary to state how fully sensible I am of the admirable manner in which Commodore Molyneux has performed the duties of senior officer in the Red Sea. He has displayed tact, intelligence, and judgment, in dealing with an infinite variety of circumstances, and always with credit to himself, and with advantage to the public service.

"John Hay, Admiral."

The report from Commodore R. H. M. Molyneux, C.B., of H.M.S. Sphinx, dated at Suakim, 20th May, says:

"In a narrow and intricate harbour like this, much depended on the manner in which the large transports were piloted and handled. This service was performed with conspicuous ability by Lieutenant Thomas MacGill (H.M.S. Sphinx), the Harbour Master, ably seconded by Lieutenant William B. Fawceter, also of the Sphinx, who acted by my order as Assistant Harbour Master, and Lieutenant William Scullard of the Carysfort also assisted occasionally when necessary.

"The entry and departure of large transports was, for a few weeks, almost incessant, and included vessels up to 450 feet in length; that these were taken in and out, berthed along the piers, or secured elsewhere by these officers, without a single accident to either ship or pier, is sufficient evidence of the nerve and judgment displayed, and I strongly recommend Lieutenant Thomas MacGill to your Lordship's very favourable consideration.

"The arrangements made by the Admiralty for the supply of water to the troops were on so liberal a scale, that, after the arrival of the condensing and tank vessels, there was never any possibility of a failure. Nevertheless, the service required constant and close supervision to ensure efficiency, and to maintain the purity of the water, and this was well performed by Lieutenant William M. Maturin and Mr. Francis Ford, Chief Engineer, working under the principal Transport Officer. The arrangements for the water supply previous to the arrival of the British condensing ships have been already fully reported to your Lordship.

"The work of the Naval Transport Department was exceptionally heavy, as, in addition to the ordinary requirements of a force of 12,000 men in the field, the nature of the country required a very large number of camels and other transport animals, with their drivers, forage, &c., while the simultaneous construction of the railway added enormously to the tonnage and people to be landed and provided for."

Most people were now under the impression that by the evacuation of Dongola and the Nile camps, Great Britain would be enabled to withdraw large bodies of her troops from Lower
Egypt generally; but this impression was entirely wrong. Two battalions of infantry only were to leave the country, while the force had been lately augmented by one cavalry regiment.

Early in June the Khedive, in recognition of their services with the Egyptian army, conferred the rank of Bimbashi, or Major, on all British officers serving with the force and then holding the rank of Captain.

In the first week of June a serious riot, requiring the intervention of our troops, broke out at Suez, which has among its population a mixture to be found in all Egyptian ports—Italian loafers, cut-throat Greeks, and the lowest sweepings of the Levant, with whom the average Egyptian police are quite inadequate to cope.

On the night in question a Greek, well armed, entered a drinking den in a very low quarter of Suez, the landlord of which was a Belgian. The Greek, who was in a quarrelsome mood and bent on mischief, struck a table with his cudgel and demanded that a certain pretty waitress whom he named, also a Hellenist, should serve him; but the landlord simplified matters by drawing a revolver from his girdle and shooting the noisy customer dead. All the Greeks in the house now rushed forth, giving the alarm and uttering cries for vengeance. So the Belgian was fain to escape and take refuge in a neighbouring house.

Very soon the entire Greek population, who, as elsewhere in Egypt, form at Suez almost the majority of the
Scene in Suez.
townspeople, and are very "clannish"—avenging en masse any injury done to a compatriot, and in an indescribably reckless manner—were under arms, with revolvers, sticks, knives, and daggers, and, storming the house where the Belgian was hidden, killed him and literally hacked his body to pieces.

The police were soon on the spot, but were useless. The Egyptian policeman, though a formidable figure in his scarlet tarboosh, smart red and grey uniform, with clanking sabre, rifle, and bayonet, is without courage and utterly helpless in a time of emergency like this. And, apropos of the tarboosh, we may here note that it is supplanting the turban more and more, because it is worn by all officials and men of mark in Stamboul, the metropolis of the Moslem East. The Greeks had now drawn blood, and they grew simply mad with fierce excitement, and proceeded to loot all the adjacent dwellings, which were chiefly kept by Italians, and were places of the worst repute. Yells, shrieks, and oaths loaded the air, and the work of sack and pillage went on, till the Greek Consul and the Governor of Suez came upon the scene, and by their influence a kind of order was restored. But still the Greeks went raving about in armed gangs, vowing death to every Belgian they might lay hands on.

After a time the British Consul brought out a body of British troops, who cleared the streets with the bayonet. Yet in this riot at least three lives were lost, and many persons were cut, slashed, or otherwise severely wounded. But our troops were relieved of their patrol work on the arrival of Captain Fenwick with a body of gendarmerie by train from Cairo.

"With a few stout London policemen," wrote a correspondent, "this serious affair never would have occurred. A simple tavern fray could never have assumed the grave proportions of a riot, attended with destruction of property and a panic among the people. It may be as well to recommend that a special body of gendarmerie, enrolled in Europe, should be added to the Egyptian police and distributed in towns like Port Said and Suez, where such a mixed, excitable, and far from respectable mass of people, form the major part of the population."

This correspondent stated that the evacuation of Dongola and the general retreat of our forces from the Nile was exciting the liveliest alarm at Cairo in the early days of June. Though aware that fugitives from the former town, Wady Halfa, and elsewhere, would flood the lower provinces, the authorities were satisfied to think that the terror-stricken crowds of fugitives, bearing with them their aged, their children, and infirm ones, would be in a position to bring with them abundant supplies, or sufficient to last them till they could "get something to do. Telling this to a high Egyptian official," he adds, "I was met with this very characteristic reply:—"This is no business of ours; these people have left Dongola on their own account, and they must just look after them—"
selves. Whether they are well supplied with food or not is their affair—not ours.'

"I regret to state," he adds, "that a report is in circulation to the effect that the English are no less callous, and this is quoted by the anti-English among the natives, who are legion, and by those in our midst who have a sneaking kindness for the Mahdi. There is no doubt that the unhappy countries in and adjoining the Soudan, which have suffered the inconvenience, if not the horrors, of war, are in a fair way of being visited by the twin sisters, famine and pestilence. The fleeing of whole 'cityfuls' of people, and the steady migration of whole tribes who have lost all hope in the Mahdi's mercy, on account of their connection with the British, is a very serious matter, and requires attending to before it assumes a more alarming proportion. It seems that poor Egypt will have to feed a host of refugees, after having had to pay a pretty stiff account in fighting, or, rather, whetting the appetite of the Mahdi."

On the 8th of June the Khedive, with his Ministers and Court, left Cairo for Alexandria, where he meant to pass the summer at the Ras-el-Tin Palace, by the sea. He received a wonderfully enthusiastic reception from his Alexandrian subjects, the same people who in 1882, after the bombardment of their city, threatened to take his life. At this time Tewfik was much disturbed by rumours that the ex-Khedive, Ismail, was about to return, or that Prince Halim was to replace him on the throne. But Sir Evelyn Baring gave him ample assurance of steady support by Britain, the Government of which was in every way satisfied with him.

"Tewfik, smiling sadly," wrote a correspondent, "asked if the Government were sure of their own position, and quoted the old proverb touching King Stork and King Log. What with the palace intrigues, general dissatisfaction among his subjects, that dreadful indescribable disturbance, the Khedive is far from being a happy or a hopeful man."

We read that three days after this, the State reception held by the Khedive, in celebration of the anniversary of his Highness's accession, was attended by the patriarchs of the different religious creeds, the diplomatic body, the principal officials, and the European notabilities.

The 23rd of June witnessed the return home—to take it chronologically—of our Australian Contingent from the scene of its service in the Soudan, and it was made the occasion of a demonstration and welcome quite Australian, inasmuch as the whole of the Colonies voluntarily sent representatives to congratulate the troops, and to express their high sense of their conduct in the duties they had done.

Victoria was represented by Sir George Verdon; South Australia by General Owen; Queensland by Colonel Muir; Tasmania by Colonel Legge; and New Zealand by Colonel Haultain. The Government lent great im-
portance to the occasion by ordering the day to be observed as a public holiday, and by massing in the metropolis the whole of the available forces, numbering about 5,000 men; while Rear-Admiral George Tryon, C.B., G.C.B., Admiral Tryon, Commander-in-Chief of the Australian station, and a number of other officials, while the people, full of enthusiasm, mustered in their thousands.

The troops having been reviewed by

The Arab, with the Contingent on board, was placed in quarantine for a brief time at Sydney, and on the morning of the date above given the official landing took place. Among those present were Lord Augustus Loftus, the Governor of New South Wales, Lord Augustus Loftus, who was also ex-officio Commander-in-Chief of the Land Forces, thus addressed them:

“Soldiers,—On behalf of Her Majesty and the people of this country, I offer you her thanks and their welcome on your return to the Colony. We rejoiced at the privilege accorded us of sending you on the service for which you were despatched, and our joy is the greater at receiving you back again, after having performed that service to the credit of
A NIGHT OF THE RAMADÁN.
your country, to the entire satisfaction of the Imperial officers under whom you were placed, and to the advantage of the Empire the story of whose exploits is inextricably interwoven with some of the most glorious passages of military history. They received you with respect; they laboured by your side in your short campaign, and would have gladly and confidently shared with you the glory of the conflict. It is twenty-six years ago—on January 28th, 1859—that a great English statesman, a great orator, and one of the greatest men of letters of this age, said at a public banquet in London, speaking of the Australian Colonies, these simple but memorable words:—"It may happen that the time will arrive when the other great Powers of the whole world will rise up against the venerable parent of so many noble children. If that period should ever arrive, I believe the Colonies will not by unmindful of the tie which binds them to the mother country. I believe their vessels will come thick and fast across the ocean to her assistance, and that voices will be heard universally among them saying, in effect, that while Australia lasts England shall not perish. Your action has, as far as the sympathy of the Colonies is concerned, made the late Lord Lytton's hopeful words a prophecy for purposes of defence, and has practically established an Imperial Federation."

The troops were then dismissed, after giving three ringing cheers for Queen Victoria.

About this time a Blue Book was published containing correspondence respecting the offers so patriotically made by different colonies of local troops for service in the Soudan. The offers of men and artillery for the force at Suakin came from Canada, Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, the Fiji Isles, from the Regent of Perak in the Straits Settlements; but the Australian Contingent was alone accepted by Her Majesty's Government, which, through Lord Derby, conveyed her thanks on the 21st of May to the New South Wales Government for the grand patriotic action taken by the colony, and acknowledging the valuable services of its soldiers.

It was now understood that three of our battalions—one being the Black Watch—which left the Soudan for Alexandria were to form a portion of the temporary garrison there.

When news now came to Cairo that Sir H. Drummond Wolff was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and British Plenipotentiary in Egypt, in place of Sir Evelyn Baring, it was received by the British colony there with satisfaction, as indicative of some change of policy on the part of the Government.

It must, however, not be thought that any blame was attached to Sir Evelyn Baring personally for the blunders that had been perpetrated in Egypt, and more particularly in the Soudan, during his tenure of office; but it was felt, from the moment the order was issued for the abandonment of the country, after the outpouring of so much blood and treasure, "he was committed," as a correspondent wrote, "more or less to a line of policy that was radically wrong."

In the middle of June a letter from the Mahdi was shown at Cairo, one merely prophetic in its tenor; but every document that came from the hand of so remarkable a personage had some interest. He would, he stated, shortly arrive at Wady Halfa, and after the Feast of Ramadan at Cairo.

Ramadan, to which we have had so often to refer, is a month the most sacred of the Mohammedan year. Before it is ushered in, says Ebers,
festivals of peculiar significance are kept, as, for instance, the solemn night of the middle of the preceding month, Shaaban, in which the future fate of mankind is weighed and meted out, when God separates the good from the bad, while the faithful pray and tremble. "It is the month of my people," said the prophet, "the month in which their sins are forgiven them."

In this month all the canonical books of the Moslem religion were revealed, the revelation to Abraham, the Law of Moses, the Gospel of Christ, and Koran of Mohammed. It is during the last third of this month that the "Night of Dignity" occurs, in which the seas become sweet, the gates of Paradise open, and God grants pardon to the world.

Although Ramadán often falls, says Ebers, in the middle of the hottest summers, the command forbids the tasting of any food from the rising to the setting of the sun. "Not a morsel must mitigate the most gnawing hunger, and not a drop of water passes the burning lips; nay, even the beloved cigarette is forbidden, for the Arab 'drinks' his tobacco smoke. Only such as are sick, travelling, or on the field of battle, are exempt from this ordinance, and then only on condition that they take the first favourable opportunity of repairing the omission."

So it was at the close of this stern month of fasting and penance that the Mahdi promised and threatened to come swooping down on Cairo.

Improving on the ten commandments given to Moses, he now issued twelve. Among them was an edict that all foreigners were to be put to death unless they embraced Islamism, and then paid taxes. When he reached Cairo he would suppress the tribunals, the consulates, government offices, and all newspapers, save one, which was to be edited by himself.

About the same time several new documents of his appeared in the columns of the Aekhar, two of which may suffice as specimens. In a letter to the Emir of Shendy he wrote thus:

"Thou tellst me that the residence of the former Sultans of Shendy has been destroyed, and that the jackals and lions are living therein. Herewith thou receivest a sum of money—six hundred thalers—to defray the cost of repairing the palace, for I think of instituting there a Medresseh, or School of Divinity, for two hundred and fifty Talmiers, or Divinity Students. To this purpose I intend to devote one third of the ransom which I shall receive for the Christian missionaries and musul whose in my hands."

The other document was a proclamation to his army, which ran thus:

"To all the faithful who are fighting for God, the Prophet, and their serva, Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin.

"How are you faithful, when you are again murmuring because you are prevented from making pilgrimages to Mecca by the continuance of the war? Do you not know that killing an infidel is more agreeable to God than offering prayers for a thousand months? Do you not know that, not only from Mecca, the mother of cities, but also from every field of battle, a path leads to Paradise?

"Oh, ye faithful! I assure you that if you die in the morning, fighting against the infidels, you will, even ere it is noon, be with the Prophet in Paradise. There silken robes of green will clothe you, and golden bracelets adorn you. You will repose by the banks of cool rivers, and sip refreshing drinks, while sixty ever-youthful honis, each bright as the moon, will smile upon you."

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CHAPTER XIII.

DESERTED DONGOLA.


The Ackbar, ere long, published another circular addressed by the Mahdi to his emirs, in which he said that the conquest of Egypt was far from being his sole object; and that he would never rest until all the states and provinces of Northern Africa, including Tunis and Algiers, were liberated from the Christian yoke, and restored, as of old, to the entire and exclusive dominion of Islam.

It was now decided that we should hold the province of Dongola as far as Akasheh. The railway between that place and Wady Halfa was to be completed about the 15th of July, and after that date a detachment of British troops was to occupy the former place.

Concerning the intended mission of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, which was ere long to assume so much importance, "A Twenty Years' Resident in Egypt," now wrote a remarkable letter, as follows, to the Times:

"For the past three years Englishmen in Egypt, without distinction of party, have been crying out against the Liberal Government of King Log. It appears to me they are likely to have still greater cause for complaint against the Government of King Stork."
Of all appointments, it would be difficult to suggest one more fraught with danger to the interests of Egypt than that of Sir H. Drummond Wolff. Lord Rosebery, in his clever speech at Edinburgh, has already done good service by calling attention to this appointment. . . . Sir H. D. Wolff is intimately associated with Lord Randolph Churchill, and it is hardly denied that his mission is likely to be hostile to the present Khedive, whom Lord Randolph has charged with perjury and murder. It is not necessary to clear the Khedive from such charges, which probably the Secretary for India regrets; but I cannot avoid asking the British Government to hesitate before it adds the betrayal of Tewfik to the betrayal of Gordon in the history of our intervention in Egypt. The real charges against Tewfik Pasha are weakness and indecision in his government of Egypt. The charge, therefore, against Tewfik resolves itself into this: that he has loyally followed the counsels of the British Government. I have followed the events in Egypt, during the last five years, with the advantage of intimate knowledge of the Khedive and of the British representatives,
and I assert, without fear of contradiction, that in no single instance has the former acted except under the direct advice of the latter.

"By so acting he has incurred much unpopularity among his own subjects and co-religionists. We have subjected him to the taunts of 'Englishman,' 'Christian,' and now we are ready to throw him over. Is Tewfik to be sacrificed? Let him go, but mark the result. What has been the one cardinal fault in our administration in Egypt? The absence of stability and continuity. We have had one policy for Monday, another for Tuesday, and a third for Wednesday. We supported Clifford Lloyd one day and abandoned him the next. The prevailing idea in Egypt has been that the support of Britain's rule means desertion by England." Tewfik, he concludes, "has loyally—not too loyally—sacrificed his own opinion to the instructions which he has received. Had his own advice been followed, the condition of Egypt would have been totally different to what it is to-day, and no man living is better fitted to carry out the only policy which can be successfully adopted in Egypt—the absolute assumption of all the responsibilities of government."

Under date 5th July, we read that the Austrian press still continued to comment upon Sir H. Drummond Wolff's mission to Egypt, and, almost without exception, in unfavourable terms. Even those papers which had most opposed the Gladstone Government looked upon this appointment as a mistake.

As every item regarding the fall of Khartoum is of interest, we may here give some information that was published at Cairo as given by two of Gordon's soldiers, dated 6th of June:

"Statement by Sergeant Ibrahim el Kadi, who had been in the Soudan for three years with the garrison of Khartoum under Hassan Bey el Bahnassyw.

"All the troops in Khartoum were distributed along the fortifications, and ceased not to fight against the enemy day and night.

"The food of the troops consisted principally of biscuit; and, as other provisions failed on account of the siege, gum was eaten and the pith of the date trees. The officers' horses were eaten, and a soldier was thought clever if he could get hold of a piece of meat.

"When the soldiers of the Mahdi knew there were no provisions in Khartoum, they attacked the town at dawn, having crossed from Omdurman during the night. They killed, frely and pillaged the goods of the merchants. At the end of three days the town was in ruins; the men, including the old and sick, were killed, but the women were saved alive.

"About fifty soldiers who had not been killed, including the sergeant who relates this, were brought before the Mahdi, who ordered them to be stripped naked and let go.

"The soldiers of the Mahdi killed Gordon Pasha on the first day they arrived in Khartoum. They called on him to submit and become a Mussulman, but he refused, and was killed by a blow of a sword, after he had killed ten of those who attacked him."

(It is notable that this is another version of Gordon's death, and that Sergeant Ibrahim makes no allusion to the alleged treachery of Farag Pasha, though his comrade does.)

"Ibrahim Bey Fawzig, Hassan Bey el Bahnassyw, and the doctor Abdoo Effendi, are still alive.

"The Mahdi is a man about forty-five years of age, with an affable countenance. He wears a robe of dark-coloured cotton, and sandals. His prestige and influence with his army are very great.

"The narrator and some other soldiers walked to Berber, begging for food on the way. Berber was in ruins and governed by the Emir Mohammed el
TALE

Khoir, who had two steamers. The sergeant continued his journey on foot as far as Assouan from whence he was sent to Cairo.

"Cairo, June 6th, 1885."

"Statement by Sergeant Ahmed Mohammed Saleh, who was attached to the troops that garrisoned the palace of Gordon Pasha.

Khartoum was in a critical state for want of food for some time before it was captured. An ardeb of maize cost a thousand dollars; an oke of lentils thirty francs; an oke of rice ten francs.

The Mahdi ordered Walad el Neghourry, with twenty-five thousand men, to fill up the ditch of the fortifications and make the ground level. This was done with the knowledge and connivance of several of Gordon's officers, such as Farag Pasha, Ahmed Bey Ali Gallob, and Hassan Bey el Bahnassawy.

After the ditch had been levelled during the night, the rebels rushed in at dawn and killed every one they met. They attacked the palace of Gordon Pasha, and killed him, after he had killed ten of them. They cut off his head and sent it to the Mahdi. The massacre was continued, and the soldiers of the Mahdi pillaged everything.

When the steamers with the British soldiers arrived at Khartoum the army of the Mahdi kept up a heavy fire upon them, and made them go back.

The coming of the steamers was made known beforehand to the rebels by the Arabs, who told them daily of all that happened in the north.

The fortifications of Khartoum were very strong, and the entire garrison was about eighteen thousand men. Without treachery the enemy could never have got in. Once masters of the town the rebels killed the greater part of the soldiers. Farag Pasha and Ahmed Bey Ali Gallob were also killed, but Hassan Bey el Bahnassawy was sent to the Mahdi.

The women were sold as slaves, the most beautiful being kept for the Mahdi himself. All that happens in Egypt is made known to the rebels by letters which are sent from there.

The sergeant heard that the Emir Nur Aaga had been sent by the Mahdi with 25,000 men to Kordofan, against those who were in rebellion, and that another, Walad el Negourm, with 15,000, had been ordered to Dongola, but had not started.

It was said that 20,000 (?) people were killed in Khartoum, many of whom remain unburied.

Slaten Bey was a prisoner with the Mahdi, and kept in chains. There were fifteen other Europeans with the Mahdi at Omdurman, who were dervishes (Christian religious).

The sergeant remained for two months with Hussein Pasha Khalifa, after which he escaped to Egypt, and arrived at Assouan on the 27th of April. He heard that the British soldiers had killed in all about 25,000.

"Cairo, June 6th, 1885."

Early in the next month the Akbar reported that the chief of the Kabbahish tribe, hitherto the most trusted of our "Friendly" Arabs, had been slain, in his desertion by us, to send a mission to the Mahdi, offering to conclude a treaty of peace and amity with him. It was also reported that the famine in Kordofan was assuming terrible proportions, and that the scarcity of food at Khartoum was great; but there was no advance as yet on Dongola.

Writing under date June 12th, the military correspondent of the Daily News, with reference to the refugees, gives us a curious picture of that city as deserted. He said, that were any one unacquainted with the fact of the desertion of Dongola to enter the town now, he would be under the impression that the inhabitants had been just warned of the approach of some most ruthless enemy, from whom they were flying with all speed. As he wandered through the deserted streets, where it was a most risky thing for him to linger, he could see open boxes and shattered bales, with scattered garments of all kinds thrown about; the half-starved animals, on whose backs they had been packed, having been unable to travel away with them. Doors everywhere stood open, some torn from their hinges, and if he entered the silent houses he would see rooms, once comfortably furnished, now with the mat-
last meal, the feast of the Passover, eaten in hot haste, with staff in hand, and loins girded for the long journey to the land of the Pharaohs. "Proceeding onward through the winding covered earthen floors strewed with every conceivable kind of rubbish, broken jars, of beautiful and classical shapes, made from the red clay of the Nile, old pots, cunningly made by the Arabian donkey-boy. bazaar tinsmiths from old preserved meat tins, and angeribs, the Soudanese term for bedsteads, constructed of wood, with cowhide cut in strips.

There, too, were painted plates, stuck perpendicularly in the mud walls by way of ornament, and pretty little scarlet-headed birds, common to Dongola, seeking for the crumbs of the alcohys the stranger comes to a large door, blue painted, and even boasting a brass knocker of quaint device. In front of it are camels, some heavily laden with gaily-painted boxes, some saddled with ladies' chairs, sedan-shape, some with bedsteads transversely placed, and resting on the flank of a huge box, and others with odd-looking
trunks containing the household goods. The door is only partially open, but men are seen hurrying and bustling about, while the wailing of women is heard, and now and then that piteous shriek of grief peculiar to Oriental ladies in distress. The family circle is breaking up; the female portion of it are weeping as in ecstacies of grief, for are they not leaving, and for ever, what has been to them for years a happy home? And those cries, plaintive and wild, are the lamentations of early associations of much that gladdened their life."

In the market-place, under the far-stretching branches of the ancient sycamore trees, were crowds of wild-looking women, scantily clothed, but with their jetty tresses carefully plaited and oiled, selling all sorts of articles, which they had collected when the
exodus commenced—looking-glasses, tumblers, plates, and rubbish of every kind. All over this strange market-place, in a whole mob of confusion, were barterers and buyers of broken-down donkeys, mangy ponies, and diseased camels, all living skeletons, and almost in articula mortis, and dealers in damaged sugar, putrid meat, &c., condemned even by the British commissariat, and abandoned by it.

The gates of the bazaar which the soldiers of our Guards were wont to call, laughingly, the “Burlington Arcade,” were close by. There the wealthier Dongolese merchants were wont to exhibit their goods, but all were vanished now; the merchants were gone; and the goods had been sold at a fiftieth part of their value; near at hand, under some dwarf pillars, was the police zaptieh; but there no longer was a culprit prostrate on his face, and yelling under the strokes of the kourbash. Here were some dirty-looking Egyptian soldiers, there some hock-nosed Greeks, with drawn knives, squabbling over plunder picked up.

“What is this?” asks the correspondent. “A Greek has accursed another of having obtained from him £150 worth of stores. The other cannot bring it to his recollection, and suggests to the first that he must be mistaken. Whereupon Greek the first attacks him with a long knife, but runs against some half-drunk Bashi-Bazouks, who knock him down and whip out their knives, which they still carry, though they have been disarmed. Tableau—a free fight with knives in picturesque costumes. As many of the Bashi-Bazouks are of Hellenic origin, this is a case of Greek meeting Greek.”

Though thousands upon thousands had fled from Dongola, the bazaar still seemed choked. Many of the Greeks looked weary and broken-hearted, offering their goods at reduced prices prior to flight. The poorer classes of Egyptian merchants, squatted on their haunches, strove to dispose of damaged paper, cases of salmon and lobster, sardines, pots of jam, scarfs, crockery, matches, the last relics of their stores, all at nominal prices, for it was their last chance, as they had to fly in turn if they did not desire death at the hands of the coming race, or on the day signified by the Intelligence Department.

A jabbering mob looked on, but none bought anything save some soldiers of the rear-guard. Higher up some Greeks, whose occupation seemed gone, were collected in a filthy café, gambling, quarrelling, and drinking mastick; and the visitor, now come to the end of the uncovered bazaar, and, reaching the “grand” one, formerly devoted alone to the dealers in cottons and silks, would find it abandoned and the stalls blocked by deserted and overthrown wardrobes.

The adjacent mosque was swept clean for the expected new-comers—the men of the Mahdi.

In the Christian or Coptic quarter, the mud-built church, whose outer gates were a short time nailed up by the then vacillating Mudir of Dongola, were thrown open by his new Vakeel.
A few women in black cloaks and some fewer men were seen to go in for the last time to worship and pray for protection through the long and toilsome journey that lay before them to penury, toil, and starvation. "Outside are their camels, with huge burdens piled on their backs, kneeling, sounding their tremulous and guttural half-growl, half-roar. Poor beasts! they look as if they could not last a day's journey. There, too, stand their only friends, the donkeys, the picture of patience, saddled for the road, awaiting their masters and mistresses. On through the narrow winding lanes and thoroughfares all is silence, except when a dog howls at a deserted portal, or a small group of disconsolates sit weeping and moaning, wringing their hands, awaiting the member of the family who has gone for the one camel allowed by Government."

At this period the Daily Telegraph stated that no decision had been arrived at by the Ministry in regard to the occupation of the province of Dongola, and that the abandonment of it had been condemned by the highest military authorities at Cairo; and the Times, commenting on the Egyptian policy of the Government, said:—The announcement that Akasheh, in the province of Dongola, is to be retained as the provisional frontier and garrisoned by a body of British troops is not in its immediate effect a material departure from the principle that the Egyptian dominions should not be allowed to extend to the south of Wady Halfa. Akasheh is not many miles farther up the Nile than Wady Halfa, and, as the railway would be opened for traffic to the former point within three weeks, there would be a superfluity of cant in abandoning it. If the Government were content to limit their ambition, so far as the southern frontier of the Khedive's dominions was concerned, to keeping the British outposts at the farthest points to which the railway extends, they would provide with the least possible amount of risk for the gradual development of Egyptian influence in the Nile valley.

On the 30th June the Monassir tribe made a fierce raid on Old Dongola, and carried off more than a hundred camels.

At this crisis there arrived at Dongola a messenger from Kassala, the gallant commander of which, we have said, served under Marshal Bazaine in Mexico till the embarkation of the latter at Vera Cruz in March, 1867. This messenger, whose narrative was rather picturesque, had undergone an infinity of toil, much peril, and been no less than five months on his journey from Kassala to Dongola. Said Osman had given him a note to General Gordon, of whose fate he (the bearer) was till then ignorant. This he concealed in the saddle of his camel. He had three other letters—one to Massauhed, one to Mohammed Achemet, the Mahdi, and a third to the Mudir of Dongola.

Pretending that he was going to the Mahdi, he showed his missive addressed to him, and thus got through the blockading force unmolested. The Arabs, he stated, mustered then from
six to ten thousand strong; there was fighting every day, and every day numbers of them were killed. The messenger was disguised as a camel driver, and everywhere gave himself out as a Mahdist. Little food sufficed him; for ten consecutive days he had nothing to live on but dates.

He had to avoid the villages, was always alone, and thus found the journey alike weary and dreary, as he slept by night in wild and lonely places; but he was determined to reach Gordon and seek assistance for Kassala, as he never doubted that by that time the British relieving column would be in Khartoum.

At Metemneh he heard that Khartoum had fallen, and he was then made prisoner by Wadna Juma, who believed that his mission to the Mahdi was all a pretence, but did not kill him, as he was uncertain as to the truth or falsehood of his story; so Wadna Juma wrote to the Mahdi on the subject, ordering the prisoner to be well
watched. However, he managed to escape. His camel, he said, was a fine animal (quies kateer—is very good). "He knew me well and I knew him well; I saw him feeding, and I sprang but failed to hit. Well done, my camel," he continued, "for he did not like the camels he was with. I gave
him a sign before mounting and he knew it well. He cared not for the food he was getting. Off! off to the desert went he, and towards the setting sun. Who so fleet as to catch us? They pursued for miles; but I laughed at them as we dashed the yellow pebbles aside. 'If it so pleases Allah,' I cried, 'you will see my face no more, not one of you.' On, on, rapid strides into the night. I came to Abu Klea, the wells where the battle was. We passed the skeletons grinning up at the moon, for it had now risen high. I stopped for water—no one was near; I was alone in the desert, and free from my enemies, thanks to my good camel."

According to the military correspondent of the Daily News, who took his narrative at Dongola, it would appear that at Handak and other places the people seemed afraid of this wandering Arab, though some admitted to him that they wished for the presence of our troops, as many emissaries of the Mahdi had come there and threatened them with condign punishment for having supplied the British with food.

"Alas!" said they, "we are a people to be pitied; we were robbed by the dervishes before, and by the Bashi-Bazouks after we had driven the dervishes away; and now, behold, we shall suffer a third time, for we have helped the British and they have left us to our fate. We are in great dread. Happy would it have been for the fertile valleys and plains where the dhurra waves and the palm trees cast their shadows on the banks of the Nile, where the Baggara, the Hassaniyeh, and the Shagiyyeh tribes watered their flocks and herds in peace until lately, if the British had restored peace. Now what will happen? There will be endless fighting, bloodshed, and rapine, tribe warring against tribe, and sheikh against sheikh. No one can foresee what will be the end."

By the 2nd of July hopes were entertained that Kassala would hold out till relieved by King John of Abyssinia, as the garrison had lately obtained provisions and other supplies; and the Mubashir reported that the King had declared his readiness to advance if Britain, Italy, and France would guarantee his present possessions and consent to his annexing the whole of the Red Sea coast south of Suakim, including the town of Kassala itself.

By the 15th came other tidings that the garrison was reduced to the last extremity, though holding out in the hope of relief, not from the British, but the Abyssinians. The enemy had made one most furious attack, but had been repulsed after hard fighting; and word had been sent to the Abyssinian general, Ras Aloola, that, if he succeeded in relieving the garrison, he would receive a hundred thousand pounds, together with a great store of arms and ammunition.

Major Chermside telegraphed to Cairo that in the last attack, made on the 15th and 16th of June, in achieving the repulse the garrison slew 3,000 of the Mahdists and captured 1,000 oxen, 1,000 sheep, and 700 rifles.
On July the 27th the state of Kassala and probable fate of it was brought before the House of Commons by Sir William Barttelot, who made some inquiries of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who replied that he could not announce what steps Her Majesty's Government were taking with a view to the safe withdrawal of the garrison of Kassala.

Sir William Barttelot next inquired whether they were taking any steps at all, and was answered in the affirmative. But the matter dropped, and Kassala was left to its fate.

On the 22nd Sheikh Idriss, at Cairo, had reported that the garrison might hold out for two months.

Early in the month it was announced that, besides having resolved to raise a civil action in the London Law Courts against Colonel Smith and Lord Wolseley, for having put a price on the head of Olivier Pain, the French journalists, to make capital out of a myth, had decided that a grand funeral solemnity should be organised and celebrated in one of the largest halls in Paris. The Bureau of the Republican Press Association did not fail to let M. de Freycinet know what they proposed to do; but it was believed that the Minister for Foreign Affairs regarded the action taken in the matter as fantastic and ridiculous, and was disinclined to be dragged into it.

The Temps of 2nd July contained, however, the following note:—"The Minister for Foreign Affairs has addressed a telegram to M. Taillandier, our agent at Cairo, requesting him to collect all the information he possibly can concerning the death of Olivier Pain." But it was considered remarkable that not one Republican paper had the courage to comment individually on the proposed action of the Press Association and the contemplated "funeral solemnity."

The announcement that the new British Government meant to reoccupy Dongola, or rather, a portion of it at Akashel, gave considerable satisfaction on the Continent in some quarters. Austrian critics spoke of the measure as a step in the right direction, and one imperatively dictated by a due regard for Egypt, for the safety of which Great Britain had now rendered herself responsible. And the favourable impression which the news was calculated to produce, did not fail to increase the goodwill of Germany and Austria towards the new Cabinet. By their refusal to allow the lead to France in the Suez Canal question, the two Allied Empires had already evinced their friendliness to the British Government.

Upon that subject M. de Freycinet had addressed a circular letter to the Powers before the new Cabinet was formed; and, after the accession of the Government to office, the French Premier wished to bring pressure to bear on Britain by the same methods that were employed when Lord Granville was in the Foreign Office. But now the two German Powers made their influence felt, and gave France to understand that, in their view, the question was by no means so pressing
as she had attempted to make out, and that, at all events, it would only be right and decent to leave the new Ministry time to make up their minds as to the policy they would think it proper to pursue with regard to Egypt.
To stir up the Suez question at a moment when the Ministerial crisis was barely over, would, in the opinion of Austria and Germany, have been a decided mark of ill-will, and, at the same time, so unfair, that none of the Powers could be expected to follow France in such a course. Upon this distinct intimation, M. de Freycinet deemed it prudent to let the matter drop; and he did so the more readily as Lord Salisbury was well advised enough to meet the French Cabinet with friendly overtures.

As a proof that the Italians meant to take a firm footing in Egypt, a delegate, Signor Stefanoni, arrived at Cairo to negotiate with the Egyptian Government, and induce it to hand over the entire custom-house at Massowah to Italy. The difficulty of granting this was that all the customs receipts, including those of Massowah, were pledged to the unified debt.
About July the 7th it was reported and confirmed in Cairo that Hussein Pasha Khalifa, a previous governor of Berber, was on his way to the former city, charged with letters from the Mahdi to the Khedive, but had been detained for several days at Korosko. The object of his mission was not distinctly known; but, as a pretext to get away from Berber, he promised to distribute among the Abbade Bedouins a proclamation, as a prelude to the invasion of Upper Egypt by the Mahdi and his followers.

Intelligence received by the Aokbar, from Suakim, at this time, stated that the Mahdi was at Omdurman, and busily engaged in increasing his army for this purpose, but that in his efforts to carry out this bold design he was meeting with great difficulties, as the Soudanese were sick of a profitless war. They were suffering from want of food, as only half the soil usually cultivated had been sown in the preceding winter, owing to the unsettled state of the country. The exportation of grain had totally ceased, and whatever money was in the treasury of the False Prophet was sent out of the Soudan for the purchase of arms and ammunition, in Tripoli and Bengazi, on the east coast of the Gulf of Sidra.

This paper also reported the arrival of Osman Digna at Omdurman, to congratulate the Mahdi on the conquest of Khartoum. The latter sent out four emirs and a hundred and fifty finely-appointed horsemen to meet him half way at Kerreri. On the visitor's arrival at Omdurman the Mahdi embraced and kissed him, and afterwards presented him with five thousand thalleries and a magnificent dagger, embossed with silver, a gift to the Mahdi from his admirers in Cairo.

When the messenger who brought this news left Omdurman, the Mahdi had in camp 6,000 men and 800 camels. Half the troops were clothed with a shirt and girdle only, as all articles of dress were extremely scarce. The Mahdi himself usually appeared in a white camise, or coat, and trousers, his feet being cased in costly sandals embroidered with gold.

In the first days of July rumours were rife concerning the co-operation of Turkey in the affairs of the Soudan, and semi-official advices from London, in the Vienna papers, stated that Lord Salisbury was about to open negotiations with the Sultan, with a view to carry out General Gordon's idea in these matters; and, according to the Daily Chronicle, positive assurances had been received to the effect that the British Government had decided, in spite of the protests of Lord Wolseley, Sir Evelyn Baring, and Nubar Pasha, that the defensive frontier of Egypt should be at Wady Halfa. The Politische Correspondenz went the length of stating that the British Government had consented to forego the payment of outstanding interest on the Suez Canal shares which it held, and had furthermore advised the Egyptian Government, through Nubar Pasha, to withhold payment also of very considerable debts, so as to enable the
official salaries for June to be paid. But no resolution on the military situation in Egypt or the Soudan was to be taken until the arrival of Lord Wolseley in London.

Concerning Nubar Pasha, whose name we have so frequently mentioned, Ebers says that the success of the ex-Khedive Ismail in carrying out his most important reforms was—in addition to his own restless industry—due to the zeal and talent of that distinguished Egyptian statesman. Nubar Pasha it was who also brought to a happy termination those transactions with the Porte, which secured to the Khedive and his family the perpetual right of succession to the eldest son, besides the privileges of coining money, of raising loans, of concluding treaties, and of maintaining an army of some 30,000 men. This firman procured by Nubar cost the ruler of Egypt untold millions, and laid him under an obligation to pay to the Porte an annual tribute of 133,635 purses, or about £700,000 sterling; and it was not bought too dearly, for it was not until then that the cherished plans of the deceased Mehemet Ali, which had failed again and again, through the opposition of the European Powers, were carried out, “and the throne of Egypt was secured to the family of the Khedive, who increased his now independent territory by taking possession of the Somali coast, which is bathed by the Indian Ocean, and rich in almost every kind of produce, and by acquiring the kingdom of Harar and the Abyssinian provinces of Bogar and Gallabat. He extended the limits of his kingdom still farther by the conquest of the Negro States near the White Nile, and of Darfour, in the heart of Africa, till then an impenetrable region, and the extent of his frontier was not reduced even by the unfortunate issue of the last Abyssinian war. Not even the most prejudiced adversary,” continues Dr. Ebers, “can refuse the ex-Khedive (Ismail) the title of ‘Increaser of the Kingdom,’ and no one can venture to grudge him the fame he well earned by his liberal concessions and grants to those European servants who made his country their study, and by the intelligent care he bestowed on the monuments of antiquity, which had so long been abandoned to ruin and neglect.” And in all these works he was ably seconded by Nubar Pasha.

At the same time that the reports of Turkish co-operation (which never came to anything) were in circulation, there were others current of a disturbing nature to the Khedivial family, raised by the adherents of the ex-Khedive and Prince Halim, as to the intentions of the British Government with regard to Egypt. “The international gang of speculators, and those helpers of the press who have linked themselves together against the present rulers of Egypt,” says a correspondent of the Standard of 4th July, 1885, “are engaged in various intrigues to get Ismail restored to the Khediviate, or to supplant Tewik by Prince Halim. Their latest stratagem is to represent the Cabinet as favourable to these schemes. Such representations, which
are persistently urged in the various organs at the disposal of this clique in London, are calculated to do the Cabinet harm in the eyes of Continental authorities, unless authentically exposed as baseless fabrications. With regard to Prince Bismarck, there is not a word of truth in the rumour that he has recommended the appointment of Prince Halim or the restoration of Ismail, the prince whom he was most active to assist in deposing. All reports as to the German Chancellor having repented of his action with regard to Ismail, are inventions emanating from the same source as the canards respecting the views of the Conservative Cabinet."

And here a brief outline of the Tewfik Pasha dynasty may not be out of place.

It was as a subaltern in the Turkish army sent against the French in 1802 that the man first trod Egyptian soil, who, by his unhesitating energy and statesman-like talents, was destined to effect a revolution in the position of affairs in the Nile valley.

Mehemet, or Mohammed Ali Pasha (of whom we gave a portrait in Vol. I., page 17), was a native of Kavala, a town of ancient Macedonia, not far from the shores of the Grecian Archipelago, where his father, Ibrahim Aga, was head of the police. Born in 1769, he was a hero and a victor, who, but for the intervention of the European Powers, would have won, not only Egypt, but the throne of Turkey. Few know all he did for the internal development of the former, or understand that the country owes
RECRUITING UNDER MEHMET ALI.
to him that impetus towards innovation which has proved a blessing to the present, and on which rest all Egypt's hopes in the future. To him Alexandria owes the renewal of its splendour, and it is with good reason that his equestrian statue now decorates the finest piazza, named after him, of the beautifully-built Frank quarter.

In 1841 he was granted, by firman, the hereditary Pashalik of Egypt, but ranking as a Vizier of the Ottoman Empire. He died at Alexandria in 1849. He had sixteen children; of these only five, three sons and two daughters, were surviving about 1850, viz., Said Pasha, Admiral of the Egyptian Fleet, born in 1818; Halim Bey, born in 1836; Mehemet Ali Bey, born in 1833; Nazlech Hanum, born in 1797, widow of the Defterdar Mohammed Bey; Zeinab Hanum, born in 1824, and married in 1845 to Kiamil Pasha. Halim Bey was four years in Paris, where he received a liberal education.

Mehemet Ali's second son (after Ibrahim Pasha, who commanded in Syria) was Tusoun Pasha, born at Kavala, who left an only son, Abbas Pasha, born in 1813, and for a time Viceroy of Egypt. Tusoun died of the plague in the camp at Damanhour in 1816. Mehemet Ali had also, at Kavala, by the same wife, a third son, Ismail Pasha, who died in the Sennaar war. Another son of Mehemet Ali, Hussein Bey, born in 1826, died in 1847 at Paris, where he had been sent for his education.

Ismail Pasha, G.C.B., born December 31st, 1830, son of Prince Ibrahim—eldest son of Mehemet Ali—succeeded his uncle, Said Pasha, on January 18th, 1863. The succession was made hereditary in the direct line, by firman, the title of Khedive (a Turkish word for Viceroy) was conferred upon him in June, 1867, and the complete autonomy conceded, while the right of unlimited augmentation of the army and navy, &c., was further ratified by firman on the 29th September, 1872. His children were, according to McCoan's "Egypt":—

1. The Princess Tawfideh, born in 1850, married in 1868 to Mansour Pasha, son of the late Achmet Pasha, and nephew of Mehemet Ali.

2. Prince Mehemet Tewfik Pasha, his heir apparent, born in 1852, married in January, 1873, Emineh Khanum, daughter of the late Il-Hawi Pasha, by whom he has a son, Abbas Bey, born July 14th, 1874.

3. Prince Hussein Kamil Pasha, born in 1852, married in January, 1873, Ain-el-Haat, daughter of the late Achmet Pasha, by whom he has a son, Kemal-ed-dyn Bey, born in December, 1874.

4. Prince Hassan Pasha (whom we have referred to elsewhere), born in 1853, married in 1873 Khadijah Khanum, daughter of the late Mehemet Ali Pasha (who died in 1861), by whom he has a son, Aziz Bey, born in 1873, and a daughter, Azizah Khanum, born in 1875.

5. Princess Fatima Khanum, born in 1852, married in 1873 to the late Tusoun Pasha (son of Said), who died in 1884.
7. Prince Mahmoud Bey, born in 1863.
8. Prince Fuad Bey, born in 1867.

When Ismail Pasha was deposed for alleged tyrannies, his son Tewfik was made Khedive in his stead; but General Gordon remained to the end a devoted adherent and admirer of the former. "Nothing," he wrote, "has so much contributed to make the Mahdi’s cause popular, and his success possible, as the weak administration, or pretence at administration, which has gone on at Cairo ever since Ismail was deposed. With the Arabs nothing is so strong as power. Nubar Pasha may succeed, because he is capable of resisting the intrigues of Tewfik, which have hitherto been fatal to every one of his ministers. It was my knowledge of Tewfik’s weakness, and the certainty I felt of his failure, which induced me to throw up my command at Khartoum four years before. When I heard that my friend Ismail was no longer Khedive of Egypt, I first determined to hold the Soudan in his name against all comers. How could I forsake one who was ever loyal in the support he gave me against the slave dealers? I prayed for guidance, and, as I would not incur the mighty responsibility of a great shedding of blood, I preferred to retire. Nubar’s dream is as old as Ismail’s time. He would rule Egypt at any price as an Armenian regent. To achieve this he would be ever loyal to Britain. But this must not be allowed. If Egypt is to have a ruler or regent capable of maintaining a strong and efficient government, Ismail must be the man. He is the worst used man in Europe. He was the best and most capable ruler Egypt ever had, with all his faults, and the calamities we are now witnessing are the natural consequences of the withdrawal of his master-hand."

Sir Drummond Wolff’s alleged hostility to the Khedive Tewfik gave him, on his nomination to his important mission, a new interest in the eyes of Ismail’s adherents, who forgot that Britain was bound, by every pledge that could be considered binding, to support Tewfik; and the following were some of the remarks made by one of the most enlightened Pashas to the correspondent of the Standard at Cairo.

He argued that it was of the highest importance that “whatever Khedive Egypt might have, he should be a man having some interest in the country, and possessed of sufficient intelligence to enable that interest to bear fruit. In spite of all that people might say about a puppet Khedive, no one outside the ministerial world can understand the immense weight attaching to the Khedivial name. The strongest protectorate, or the most earnest minister, will always be paralysed unless the co-operation of the Khedive can be secured.”

“My informant,” adds the writer, “spoke cautiously, and evidently in-
tended to imply more than he cared to speak openly."

On the 3rd of July a number of Osman Digna's followers penetrated the lines at Suakim, having gained access by an outlying garden, where some rough traces of their presence were found in the morning; and on the 5th it was announced that, after further correspondence with Lord Wolseley, the Government had decided to hold the line of railway as far, at least, as Akasheh. This post turns the greater part of the cataracts, and is most useful for strategic purposes, as it enables an army to be advanced into the Soudan at any time.

The Pyramids and Sphinx.
CASSELL'S

HISTORY OF THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN.
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SIR REDVERS BULLER.

THE HEART OF CAIRO.

LORD AND LADY WOLSELEY, AND THE HON. FRANCES WOLSELEY.

ABDUL HAMID II., SULTAN OF TURKEY.

LORD WOLSELEY'S HEADQUARTERS AT KORTI.
PRINCE HASSAN, BROTHER OF THE KHEDIVE TEFIF.

(High Commissioner of the Egyptian Government in the Soudan.)
CHAPTER I.

HOME-COMING OF THE TROOPS.


On the 1st of July Lord Wolseley, having received instructions to return to London, took his departure from Alexandria at daybreak of the 7th in the Iris, despatch vessel, travelling via Venice, accompanied by Sir Redvers Buller, Lord Charles Beresford, and Lieutenant-Colonel Grove.

Before leaving, on the 5th of July, he conferred the chief command of the British force in Egypt upon Lieutenant-General Sir F. Stephenson.

Lieutenant-Colonel Green, of the Black Watch, was appointed Brigadier-General of the troops at Assouan.

The British forces then in Egypt, or on the strength of the army of occupation, under date 15th of July, were as follows, exclusive of Indian troops:

On the 19th and 20th Hussars.

Guards.—3rd Battalion Grenadiers; 1st Battalion Coldstreams; 2nd Battalion Scots. (At Cyprus.)

Artillery.—G Battery B Brigade, at Suakin; 1st Battery Southern Division; 5th and 6th Batteries of the Scottish Royal Artillery; I Battery 2nd Brigade Garrison Artillery; 9th Battery 10th Brigade Irish Artillery; 2nd Battery 11th Brigade Irish Artillery.

Royal Engineers.—3rd, 11th, 24th Companies and the Field Pack.

Infantry, in order of precedence.—2nd Battalion East Surrey; 2nd Battalion Duke of Cornwall's
Light Infantry; 1st Battalion South Staffordshire; 1st Battalion Black Watch; 2nd Battalion Essex Regiment; 1st Battalion Royal West Kent; 1st Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry, Suakin; 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders; 1st Battalion Cameron Highlanders; 2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

Commissariat and Transport.—7th, 9th, 11th, and 17th Companies, the latter at Suakin.

Thus it will be seen that, though the war was supposed to be over, we had still a considerable force in the country.

On the 4th of July, three days before the departure of Lord Wolseley, a considerable meeting of British subjects was held in the Bourse at Alexandria, at the close of which a telegraphic despatch was sent to Lord Salisbury, soliciting in the most urgent terms payment of the indemnities. It was also resolved to draw up a petition to his lordship praying that arrangements might be made for the immediate payments of these demands, at least to British subjects.

On the 6th the Camel Corps marched into Alexandria, and were embarked on board the Poonah, pending the arrival of the hired transport Queen, which was to convey the men to England.

A curious episode connected with the war was reported in the Swedish papers about this time, which is given for what it may be worth. At Orkened, in Scania, there was shot a crane which had tied to its neck a strip of parchment, on which was written in ink—

"I come from the burning sand
Of Soudan, the murderer's land
Where they told the lie
That Gordon would die."

The bird had been wounded in one of its wings, and was much exhausted.

The departure of the 20th Hussars from Cairo to Wady Halfa, on the 9th July, seemed to infer that disturbances were not supposed to be at an end; yet leave of absence being once more granted, all who could avail themselves of the privilege obtained it, and the result was that every berth was at once taken in the next troopship returning home. But all public business was at an utter standstill in Cairo. The feast of Ramadân was then being observed, and with that of Bairani to follow, the lesser feast of the same name beginning with the full moon of the ensuing month, Shawal, combined, with the gloomy uncertainty of the political future, to produce a stagnation.

The Mounted Infantry from the Soudan came into Cairo on the 13th, when the corps was broken up, and the men rejoined their respective regiments.

Lord Wolseley, accompanied by his staff, reached London in due course, and met with a most enthusiastic reception. His party was conveyed across the Channel by the Chatham and Dover Company's special steamer Breeze, after the General had been joined by Lady Wolseley and their daughter at Calais.

As we have in other instances detailed the Queen's reviews of homeward Egyptian troops, we cannot omit some mention of her inspection of that remarkable force—a new one in our warlike annals—the Camel Corps, on Wednesday, the 15th of July, before the Royal Residence at Osborne. Having expressed
her intention of inspecting the corps
on its return from Egypt, the officer in
command was apprised at Malta of her
desire, and on the evening of the 14th
the transport Australia entered the
Solent by the Needles passage, and
took up her moorings near the Hector
guard-ship.

On the morning of the 15th three
gunboats commenced the work of
transhipping the corps from the Aus-
tralia to the Trinity Wharf, the private
Royal landing place, on the East Cowes
side of the river Medina; and as the
three ship-loads of officers and men ar-
rived on the pier the band of the 93rd
Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders,
who had marched in from Newport
early in the day to take part in the
ceremony, greeted them with "Home,
sweet Home," amid the cheers of the
bystanders.

General Willis, commanding at
Portsmouth, had all under his personal
superintendence. The men were in
their war-worn fighting kits, and the
following was the "parade state"
of the corps, reduced by sickness and
service, as it started from the wharf
for Osborne at 10 a.m.

"Heavy Camel Corps, consisting of 4 officers and
37 men 1st Life Guards, 2 officers and 27 men
2nd Life Guards, 1 officer and 22 men Royal Horse
Guards, 2 officers and 23 men 2nd Dragoon Guards,
26 men of the 4th Dragoon Guards, 2 officers and
26 men of the 5th Dragoon Guards, 20 men of the
1st Royal Dragoons, 2 officers and 24 men of the
Royal Scots Greys, 25 men of the 5th Royal Irish
Lancers, and 29 men of the 16th Lancers, making
a total of 13 officers and 265 men.

"Foot Guards Camel Corps: 2 officers and 94 men
1st Grenadiers, 3 officers and 32 men 2nd Grena-
diers, 2 officers and 35 men 3rd Grenadiers, 2
officers and 27 men 1st Coldstreams, 3 officers and
35 men of the 2nd Coldstreams, 2 officers and 30
men 1st Scots, 3 officers and 33 men 2nd Scots,
making a total of 17 officers and 226 men."

In addition to these were 2 officers
and 26 men of the Royal Marine
Light Infantry; in all, 32 officers,
517 non-commissioned officers, rank
and file.

The Highlanders furnished the
Guard of Honour, and a double line,
facing inwards, at the entrance to the
Royal grounds. On being drawn up
in front of the house, the sun bronzed
soldiers received with a royal salute
the Queen, the Princess Beatrice, and
other members of the Royal Family,
who were on the lawn, while every
window of the mansion was crowded.
The Queen went along the ranks, per-
sonally inspecting the men, while the
band played a Scottish slow march.
She then summoned the officers and
shook hands with them all.

According to one correspondent, she
said:—

"I am very pleased to see you here;
I welcome you all back to England,
and thank you for all you have done."

"May it please your Majesty,"
replied Colonel Boscawen, "in the
name of the Camel Corps I beg to
thank you for the honour you have
done us in ordering us here."

The corps was then taken back to
the Australia, and the scene, as the
gunboats steamed from the Trinity Wharf,
was most exciting, both sides of the
river being crowded by spectators,
while all the bands on shore played
"Auld Lang Syne."

With the exception of those belong-
ing to the Queen's Bays, Irish Lancers, and Marines, the Camel Corps started for London the same day.

On their arrival at Waterloo station, from Portsmouth, they were marched in two detachments to the Wellington Barracks, the whole route being lined on both sides with enthusiastic spectators, who were struck by the impressive appearance of the men in their stained, patched, and tattered fighting kits. After inspection by the Duke of Cambridge, they were dismissed to a dinner specially provided for them, and then the scene became a very extraordinary one. The men were literally mobbed by spectators and their old comrades, and were embraced and kissed by relatives and friends in a very demonstrative manner.

In the sergeants' mess of the Coldstream Guards, those of the Camel Corps received an effusive welcome. “The hero of the hour, however, was certainly Sergeant-Major Slade, an old favourite, who went through the campaign with great distinction, and was several times reported dead.”

The 2nd Life Guards' detachment received similar ovations at Windsor, and were played into barracks by the band of the Seaforth Highlanders.
MONCK'S REDOUTS, ON THE ROUTE TO OTAO, HELD BY THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS
The Army Postal Corps, who returned about the same time, under Major Sturgeon, from Suakim, received a warm welcome from the crowds at St. Martin's-le-Grand, and were publicly thanked by the Postmaster-General, who "congratulated them on their return to England once more, after serving their Queen and country under circumstances of no ordinary peril and discomfort," and in the name of the Department he thanked them for all they had done.
CHAPTER II.

DEATH OF THE MAHDI.

Cairo News—Proposed Loan of Nine Millions—Life at Suakim—Treatment of the Indian Troops there—Meeting of the Notables—Death of the Mahdi—Effect of the News upon the Arabs.

The stagnation in business at Cairo and elsewhere received a fillip when tidings came from Paris that a new loan for nine millions would be issued shortly. "The Powers have assented," said the Débats of the 16th July, "to the proposal of Lord Salisbury, under the reserve of the guarantee being accepted by their Parliaments. The loan is to be issued in London, Paris, Berlin, or Frankfort. Germany has asked that one-third of the loan should be offered to the German financial market, and the Foreign Office has assented."

On this the correspondent of the Standard remarks, "I believe this statement is correct so far as Germany is concerned, but I have reasons for supposing that as regards other Powers it is somewhat premature." On the 19th it was stated that all the Powers had given their consent to the immediate issue of the loan of nine millions agreed upon in the Egyptian Financial Convention.

Even the prospect of the loan, however, infused new life into both the commercial and administrative circles at Cairo, and among other schemes at once proposed was one for diverting the Nile into a new channel nearer the city, so as to save the buildings on the opposite bank at Boulak, which contains a naval arsenal and dockyard, a custom-house, several Government factories, and an Arabian college. Its site was once an island, but the bed of that portion of the river which cut it off from the land on the east side between it and Cairo is now filled up.

With regard to the standing army of Egypt, it was now proposed for the future to maintain only a force of 3,000 men in the Lower Province, with another of 4,000 on the frontier.

On the 18th of July, for the benefit of the voyage probably, one half of the first battalion of the Shropshire Light Infantry was ordered to Cyprus, there to remain for six weeks, after which it was to return to Suakim, relieving the other half of the battalion, also ordered for a trip to Cyprus, instead of encamping on the Mokattam heights at Cairo, as had been first proposed.

According to a Constantinople telegram, published in the Cologne Gazette, Lord Salisbury had recently had an important conversation with Musurus Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador in London, in the course of which he was said to have explained the policy of the new Cabinet with regard to Egypt and the Soudan.

"It was their intention," he said, "in their dealings with them, to adhere generally to the lines laid down by their predecessors. Britain would keep her pledge to evacuate Egypt; but it was impossible to fix a date for
the withdrawal of the British troops. In no case, however, would Britain take any fresh steps of importance on the banks of the Nile without consulting and obtaining the assent of the Sultan and the other Continental Powers."

These explanations (which were very improbable), the Cologne Gazette added, were received with extreme satisfaction at Constantinople.

With reference to an article in the Standard of 22nd July, headed "Life at Suakim," in which the writer described the place as being unfit for a dog to live in, an officer wrote thus:

"I cannot help wishing that the people at home knew the exact state of affairs out here. If they could only hear the exclamations of rage and vows of vengeance which are uttered when some one reads aloud a statement that 'the climate of Suakim is pleasant,' they might think there were two opinions on the subject. If being held in a vice of fearful heat is pleasant, Suakim is decidedly so. If men dying suddenly from heat-apoplexy is a sign of a healthy climate, Suakim may be called salubrious.

To live in a place where the temperature never goes below 95°, and rises frequently to 112°-120°, is to drag out such an existence as none who have not experienced it can possibly imagine.

"To make matters worse, the epidemic of enteric fever continues unabated, and a melancholy procession to the cemetery may always be seen once, sometimes twice, a day. At the present rate of mortality, more than half of the European troops here will be in their last resting-place within a year, and the other half will have been invalided home two or three times over. Our present sick rate is twelve per cent., and that does not represent the true state of affairs, because every week a large number of sick are sent away, reducing the rate at once."
Some weeks back I saw stated in an English paper that the sick rate, on a certain date, at Suakim was three per cent. Yes, because on that very day a large number of men had embarked for England. Before that week was out the rate had risen to over nine per cent. What with the odours from want of drainage, the fearful torturing heat and the condensed water, which is often putrid, Suakim is about the last place to keep Englishmen in.

The Shropshire Regiment, which came out over nine hundred strong, is now about seven hundred, and will be less when the next draft of sick men leaves. They lost only two killed in a late night alarm, and have had a reinforcement of fifty from Suez. Can anything speak more plainly than this? Last year the Marine Battalion, five hundred strong, invalided one thousand five hundred men away, which means that it took two thousand men to keep the regiment to the small strength of five hundred. Egyptian troops behind walls are quite strong enough to keep out Soudanese, who never attack a walled city.

Under date the 8th of the same month, another officer wrote thus:

"Behold the average temperature of the last fortnight in a mess-hut with double roof and sides: maximum, 110°39' Fahr.; minimum, 91°46' Fahr. We have a death every day from sunstroke, heat-apoplexy, or typhoid fever. I am very well but for a feeling of general limpness, which we all experience. Heaven preserve us from an autumn campaign! The last straw—one ice ship disabled; the other ordered off; no more ice from to-morrow. Sick percentage: European, twenty per cent.; Indian, sixteen per cent."

Assertions having appeared in several English papers to the effect that general satisfaction was felt by the Indian Contingent, or that portion of it left with the garrison at Suakim, with their service there, and to the
effect also that they were comfortably quartered in mat-covered tents, we shall extract the following from a brief narrative written by an officer of the force:—

"Whatever the motive of such palpable and mischievous misstatements," he says, in his preamble, "their effect must be to make readers believe that the Indian soldier likes being at Suakim, and that he is treated with some consideration there." He then proceeds to give us a short account of the Indian soldier's experiences during the campaign.

It was in the preceding February that the Indian army was called upon to supply a contingent for the Soudan, and the call was responded to with equal alacrity and enthusiasm, though the men knew well that arduous service in a very bad climate was before them, against a foe who had already made himself more than respected by European troops; still they were proud to fight in Britain's quarrel, and they knew, or thought they knew, poor fellows, that Britain ever treats those who serve her with justice and consideration, if not with liberality.

Arrived at Suakim, their first fortnight was spent in continuous coolies' work at the three wharves, in company with the coolies of the country, who, as the Indian soldiers knew well, received two shillings daily for only six hours' work done per day; whereas, the Indian soldier worked day and night, and the wretched pittance called "working pay" was denied him!

When this period of drudgery was over, how the Indian soldier bore himself in the subsequent fatigue and fighting we have told elsewhere; but about the middle of May the campaign suddenly collapsed, and the British portion of the forces began to leave the Soudan, until, save the Shropshire Regiment and a few details, the Indians were left to battle as best they might with one of the worst climates in the world, and without an effort being made by the Government they had served with such devotion, to protect them from the fierce African sun, or in any way to alleviate their miserable lot.

The small British force left at Suakim was, of course, to take its share in garrisoning the place, but its presence neither improved nor lightened the work of the Indian soldier. On the contrary, his duties would seem to have been rather increased thereby. While the British soldiers were located on the best sites, within two securely entrenched camps, and furnished only sentries for these, the Indian troops had to protect an outer line of defence, five or six miles in extent, in a position curiously chosen as if with the object of combining the minimum amount of safety with the maximum expenditure of guards and sentries.

In consequence of the soldier's proverbial propensity for strong liquors, the troops, British and Indian, were prohibited from entering the town; and though last, not least, their juxtaposition served to bring out in stronger relief than ever the difference in the "care" taken of the soldiers of the two nationalities.
On the exodus of the bulk of the British troops in May, 1885, every exertion was made by the Royal Engineers and the Madras Sappers and Miners to build huts for the Europeans left behind, and the Indian soldier had to toil with pickaxe and shovel in forming trenches for the protection of the British camp. For his own protection, however, not a finger was raised till the fierce sun and furnace blast of the desert wind were at their fiercest and hottest, and then a few bamboos and matting, enough to cover, perhaps, half a dozen tents, were handed to the Indian regiments, and they were told to cover their huts, some thirty or forty per regiment, with these!

"Now, having read thus far," continues this writer, "you are acquainted with the truth regarding the force here. It rests with you whether or not your readers remain in ignorance of the return that has been made, and is being made, to men who have risked life, limb, and health in our service, and who, by their courage in the hour of most imminent peril, saved the British force from disaster, and the nation an immense extra expenditure of men and treasure. The small Indian force here (at Suakim) is merely, as it were, a sample of a magnificent army of over one hundred thousand men. It must be remembered that the eyes of their countrymen are on them, and that the treatment they meet with will be taken as a sample of what all may expect who enter the British service. Our Indian soldiers have on this, as on many other occasions, proved themselves second to none in all the qualities most prized in soldiers. Loyal, brave, and uncomplaining under privations of all kinds, they cost, perhaps, one-eighth of what the British troops do, and move with one-quarter the amount of transport, and can be fed almost anywhere. Treat them with common justice and ordinary consideration, and we shall be enabled to enlist freely men like them in the time of need, which is surely coming; but if, after having thrown away millions for next to nothing, we, for the sake of a few hundred pounds, allow our fellow-subjects of the Empress-Queen to see that they are looked upon as mere mercenaries, and treated as such (the utmost amount of work being exacted from them, and every farthing grudged), then the result must be to the prejudice of a service on which we may shortly have in a great measure to depend for the protection of our Indian Empire."

This officer, who wrote with the expectation of a war with Russia being imminent, concludes his statement by adding that should it in any way direct the attention of those in authority to the injury that was most surely being done to our splendid Indian army, by injuring its recruiting, his task will not have been in vain; and he hoped that, even at the eleventh hour, much of the harm might be undone by a little liberality, and the Indian soldiers would return from the Soudan to their own country with better feelings towards those whom they had served.

The Contingent entertained some
expectation of being relieved at Suka-kim, in autumn, by two or three battalions of Native Infantry—two from Madras, and one from Bombay.

to the efforts of Sir William White; and the promise made by Lord Salisbury to bring the question of the Bulgarian tribute before the Powers,

By the 25th of July the Imperial firman authorising the Khedive to contract the proposed loan of nine millions sterling was despatched from Constantinople to Cairo. While the Porte displayed a very friendly spirit in connection with this matter, it was understood that the prompt promulgation of the document was chiefly owing contributed to render the Porte more conciliatory, and to hope for a rapprochement with Great Britain.

So the Khedive came to Cairo to open the Assembly of Notables, which was then convoked for the first time since the promulgation of Lord Dufferin’s famous electoral law, which provided that the Assembly should be
ON THE BANKS OF THE NILE.
summoned at least every two years. Twenty-six months, however, had elapsed, and the excuse put forward for calling the members together excited some amusement among the lively Cairenes, as Article 35 of the Decree provided that no loan shall be made without the consent of that Assembly; and accordingly, now that all the Powers had agreed to the nine millions loan, the Assembly was convoked to ratify their decision.

Fourteen days before this period—about the 11th of the month—a rumour of the death of Mohammed Achmet, the formidable Mahdi, first reached Cairo, when General Brackenbury telegraphed from Fatmeh announcing the receipt of a letter, dated July 8, from a merchant at Handak, stating that the Mahdi was dead, and his followers were fighting among themselves. In a second telegram the General reported the arrival at Fatmeh of a refugee Egyptian soldier, who stated that he saw at Abu Dom, on the 1st of the month, an Arab from Khartoum, who confirmed the startling tidings, which at first were doubted by all.

On the 23rd there came to Cairo a third telegram, but from Major-General Grenfell, reporting that the Handak merchant, who announced the Mahdi's death on the 8th, had seen several sheikhs from Khartoum, who positively affirmed that the Mahdi had died on the 22nd of June, of small-pox; and one of them asserted that he had witnessed his funeral.

General Brackenbury telegraphed again that fierce quarrels were in progress among the troops of the Mahdi; that fighting was reported between the tribes at El Obeid; but it was impossible to say what importance was to be attached to these rumours.

But these seemed quite consistent with others that appeared in the Arabian paper, the Mubashir. Owing to the sudden withdrawal of the British troops, it stated, complete anarchy reigned throughout the whole territory between the Red Sea and the Nile. All caravans had to pay a heavy toll, or ransom, to Osman Digna, who was levying such on every traveller and every camel that came within his reach, while all the roads to Berber and Khartoum were rendered perilously unsafe by bands of roving banditti; and the intention, announced by the Mahdi, to visit Berber and other places after the Feast of Ramadan, was received with anything but rejoicing, as it was feared he would levy heavy contributions.

Major Chermside, on the 25th, telegraphed to Cairo news that the Mahdi had certainly died on the 22nd July, after being ill from the 19th, of small-pox, which was so prevalent among his troops.

Osman Digna held a public lamentation among his followers on receiving the intelligence; but the satisfaction it must have given the Khedive and his Court was somewhat damped by tidings from Hussein Pasha Khalifa, who had been despatched by the now defunct rebel leader to Cairo, and who positively stated, that, unless a powerful expedi-
tion was launched against the Mahdists yet in arms, the movement would reach Upper Egypt before the end of the year.

Respecting the death of the Mahdi, the Arab paper, Ackbar, published some additional particulars which it had received direct from Suakim. "Mohammed Achmet," it said, "fell ill at two o'clock in the afternoon of Friday, June the 19th, and, by his own desire, was immediately conveyed to a tent outside the camp. As there was no doctor present, two Christian missionaries, who were prisoners, and who had a slight knowledge of medicine, were called in. They declared the Mahdi to be infected with smallpox. Thereupon the Mahdi nominated his nephew Abdullah as his successor, and gave him his sword. Becoming worse during Saturday night, he bade a last farewell to his family, admonishing Abdullah to continue the war against the Christians. "The Mahdi died at five o'clock on Sunday morning, and was buried the same day, after sunset, in his tent, which was afterwards burned."

On the same subject, the following particulars were also published:—"General Brackenbury had learned from Fatmeh that thirty persons who were on route to Khartoum had, on reaching Gabra, returned, reporting that the Mahdi was dead, and that his followers were now fighting and killing each other. They said, too, that the Sheikh of Tani, Mahmoud, had intended with others to proceed from Handak and Dongola, to submit themselves to the Mahdi, but were stopped at Gabra. They sent a spy to Omdurman, who brought them news of the Mahdi's death, a fact which they said his adherents were endeavouring to keep secret. An Egyptian soldier too, a fugitive from Berber, on reaching Fatmeh, stated that he had also heard, from a Khartoum Arab whom he met in the desert, news of the decease of the Mahdi."

On the 31st of July, Major Chermside again telegraphed from Suakim, to the effect that the deepest sorrow, owing to the death of the Mahdi, existed in the camp of Osman Digna, who was most desirous of attacking the town and garrison, but the tribes were then averse from the movement.

It need not surprise us that the sudden quenching of that persevering spirit should have produced a damping effect upon the mutinous Arabs of the Soudan. At least while the news of the Mahdi's unexpected decease was fresh upon them, these brave men needed time to consider the situation from their own point of view. Nor is it necessary to dwell upon the undoubted fact that the disappearance of one of our most obstinate opponents made an enormous difference in the scene, and almost demanded a total change of front on the part of British statesmen. The Mahdi gone, and Osman Digna thoroughly thrashed, the outlook seemed to be decidedly more hopeful, and suggested a speedy end to the unfortunate campaigning.
CHAPTER III.

LIFE AT SUAKIM.


The health of the troops at Suakim was before Parliament on the 3rd of August, when, in reply to the questions of several members, Mr. W. H. Smith stated that the temperature from the 4th to the 10th of July had averaged 97 degrees at 9 a.m., and 102 degrees at 3 p.m.; that the percentage of sickness during the week ending 3rd of July among the European troops was sixteen, and the number of deaths twelve, of whom six had died from enteric fever, and six from sunstroke.

No return had been received as to the health of the Indian troops. He added that no more European troops would be detained at Suakim than were absolutely necessary for the defence of the place; and that steps would be taken to relieve them, and also, he hoped, the Indian troops, in October next.

On the same day Mr. V. Stuart asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he was aware that in the remoter provinces of Egypt the arbitrary and capricious use of the kourbash still continued; that no progress had yet been made in reforming the system of forced labour; that
the peasantry were still compelled, under the lash, to excavate canals with their fingers in lieu of shovels; that neither tools, nor food, nor shelter were reforms necessary for the development and prosperity of the country had remained in abeyance owing to the bankrupt condition of the Egyptian

provided for them; that no steps had been taken to deal with the evils of village usury, or to emancipate the unfortunate peasantry from its baneful consequences; that these and other

Treasury, and whether, now that the financial difficulties had been surmounted (by the nine millions loan), her Majesty's Government were prepared to press forward all urgently
needed reforms, and to win thereby the goodwill of the Egyptian people. Mr. Bourke replied that her Majesty’s Government had not received any information on the matters referred to by the hon. member.

On the 5th the affairs of the Soudan were before the House of Lords, when the Earl of Wemyss and March asked the Marquis of Salisbury whether any steps were to be taken for the protection of those tribes who had been friendly to us in the Soudan, and which were suggested in General Gordon’s Diary.

The Marquis replied, that he was afraid, to use a well-known phrase, that many things had happened in the Soudan since General Gordon wrote those words. Whether there were any “Friendlies,” now in existence for us to protect, was a matter on which he would not like to hazard a hasty assurance. He knew that a great many had been killed, and that those who had not been killed had ceased to be friendly. No appeal had reached him on behalf of any of the tribes described as “Friendly,” and now suffering danger in consequence of their conduct towards us. The Marquis, however, quite recognised and admitted the responsibility which rested upon this country in respect of those masses of the population; but he was unaware then of any call on her Majesty’s Government to take any steps for the protection of any people of this kind, and he was afraid the time was past when such a protection could be given by anyone.

As to the Soudan generally, he would only say that it was a matter very specially belonging to the mission on which his right hon. friend, Sir Drummond Wolff, was about to start, and that it would not be for the advantage of the public service or consistent with usage, that he should indicate the recommendations which had been made to his Majesty the Sultan and other persons on that subject. He further assured the Earl that, after the immediate needs of Egyptian finance were happily disposed of, there was no subject which claimed more earnest attention for her Majesty’s Government than the condition of the regions to which he referred.

It was now reported that, like Kassala, the garrison of Sennaar was holding out well and stoutly, and daily inflicting great damage on the rebels; and there were rumours of negotiations between the British and Italian Governments for the relief of the former place, which the King of Abyssinia seemed slow in undertaking.

Yet an Arabian paper, the Afret, reported from Adowa that the negotiations between the King of Abyssinia and Major Chermside respecting the relief of Kassala were proceeding well. According to that print, the Abyssinian general, Ras Aloola, was to advance with 5,000 men in October (a movement which we shall record in its place) from Adowa, along the Barca river, towards Kassala; while another Abyssinian general, Ras Markol, was to advance with 5,500 men from the province of Samia, along the bank of
the Sabit river, and an Anglo-Egyptian corps of 800 men, and an Italian corps of 1,200, would also march towards Kassala, so that the besieging rebels would be attacked on all sides.

About this time, the 5th of August, a private letter written by an officer of high position at Suakim said:—“What a difference one man's life may make! I do not think there can be a doubt that had Burnaby lived to take command when Stewart was wounded, Khartoum would have been saved. Never was there an occasion on which an impetuous commander was so much required as then, and Burnaby missed his chance by twenty-four hours. As it is, we may mourn him as a friend, as a man of indomitable energy and pluck. Had he lived another forty-eight hours I am sure the nation would have mourned him as a great commander.”

The same officer wrote under date July the 15th, before the report of the death of the Mahdi became current:—“I am certain that, at last, the late Government did the right thing in withdrawing from the Soudan. I quite admit Lord Wolseley's argument, that our retirement will bring troubles upon Egypt, but I do not admit that going to Khartoum is the best way of quitting these troubles. There we could not give the Mahdi a crushing defeat; here (at Suakim) we can destroy him and all his followers. If his arrival at our outposts be the sign of a general rising in Egypt, so much the better for us; we shall know who are our enemies and get rid of them. But if you mean to stay in Egypt you must keep troops there, and plenty of them.”

Concerning a soldier's life at Suakim, some glimpses are given us in the letter of “a senior officer, trustworthy in every way,” of the Shropshire Light Infantry, under date the 12th August. He stated that the regiment had lost one officer and thirty men, dead from sickness; nine officers and one hundred and fifty men actually invalided home; four officers and fifty men invalided to Cyprus; in the hospital there were seventy men. This was all in addition to four officers and two hundred men sent to Cyprus as a sort of “pick-me-up,” making a loss to the regiment of eighteen officers and five hundred and fifty men.

"We landed here," he continued, “about eight hundred and fifty strong, and have now only three hundred worn-out, tired, and weary men to hold this important position, Graham's Point. I don't see that we should do very much good, as the space is so large—half a mile one way, and one-third of a mile the other, without very much entrenchment or defence to prevent a rush—that we could not possibly cover it with such a small force.”

The men fell sick, he wrote, at the rate of three or four, or more, a day, not serious cases, but all from the climate, and were pro tem. incapacitated, while the provisions made for their habitation "were awful, and utterly unsuited to the climate.” The men got sunstroke and heat exhaustion.
under their Indian tents and thinly matted pent-houses; and to show how horrible it was, he added, “I am writing in an almost nude state, with a sponge upon my head to keep it within quarters,” as the force was in garrison, and not in the field; and, in consequence of that, the agent of the National Aid Society declined to send from Suez any more of the comforts
bounds. I have given up writing three or four times, as I have such a splitting headache, all from the heat in the hut. The roughest dog-shed you would give your setter or pointer would be a paradise to it.”

These huts were white-washed externally to parry the sunshine, but inside they were glaring, being of white, unpainted deal; and these dens were dignified by the name of “officers’ subscribed for, to ameliorate the condition of the troops.

“I saw,” wrote the officer we quote, when passing through Suez, “some thousand pounds’ worth of things, and thousands of cases piled up in the sun; champagne, clothes, books, tinned food, &c., that fond mothers and rich givers think are at all events aiding to keep well some of the poor devils in this burning hell. On application for
things for my detachment and company, as I found to my cost, I was almost snubbed for asking."

He added that though naturally of a tough and strong constitution, he had been compelled to spend the last few days on his bed, in a state of utter exhaustion from the breathless heat; and reflected that, if the officers, with tolerably cool and suitable clothing, were in this state, what did their poor men suffer, with only their coarse and filthy brown drill (cotton) soaked with perspiration? The soldiers all loathed the idea of the hospital, and dozed about until they dropped, with sun and heat-exhaustion, in the breathless and stifling air.

"This and much more of agonising life in this dog's-hole makes a sad impression on us," wrote another. "Never, I believe, before has a British regiment been destined to spend the worst months of the year in this dreadful place; and now that the din and excitement of war are over, the compassionate flow of English kindness and help seems denied to our poor soldiers, who are at this moment enduring harder times in this dreadful state of inactivity than when facing the enemy in the desert. If with all our resources in the way of Indian troops and well-trained Africans we cannot, under present improved circum-
stances, garrison this dreaded town on the Red Sea without sacrificing one of the best regiments in the service for that purpose, I feel that our War Office authorities must be slow in expediets, or blind to the exigencies of the case."

At this time the War Department prepared a consignment of stores addressed to "The Managing Director of the Soudan Railway, at Wady Halfa." These stores consisted chiefly of railway engines and bogie trucks, amounting to nearly five hundred tons, embarked on board the Dotterel steamer at the Victoria Docks for Egypt. No railway metals were sent, as it was believed there were plenty still remaining in the Soudan from the Suakim-Berber line; and great numbers of iron camel tanks, which had just come home, were transhipped once more in company with the railway stores.

A return issued concerning the railway material shipped for Suakim for the construction of the Suakim-Berber Railway, shows that twenty-seven transports, which loaded at Hull, Newport, and London, returned to London after a stay at Suakim, with their cargoes practically intact. These amounted to 37,308 tons, and the total hire of the vessels to £93,773. Five vessels discharged part of their cargoes, amounting to 7,076 tons, and their hire cost £20,507; six others entirely discharged their cargoes, amounting to 8,764 tons, costing in hire £17,933; while two others, which loaded 2,691 tons at a cost of £2,454, never left England at all. The total cost of the hire of these forty transports was £134,667, in addition to which, coal, canal dues, stevedores for loading and discharging them, cost £70,000.

Sir Andrew Clarke, C.B., Inspector-General of Fortifications (who was long employed on special service in New Zealand, and made many surveys in presence of the enemy there), now completed his plans at home for the utilisation of sixty miles of rails, sleepers, and fittings, all of the best manufacture, intended for the Suakim-Berber Railway, and landed at the different south-coast Ordnance Stores in as good condition as when sent to Suakim. He considered it necessary that a line of rails should be laid down in rear of the forts protecting Chatham, Portsmouth, and Plymouth. In each of these places the forts are long distances apart, and it was deemed necessary to connect them by railway, so that they could be quickly reinforced in case of a sustained attack. The whole of the remaining Suakim-Berber railway plant at disposal was ordered to be utilised in this manner, with the exception of a few miles to be employed at the new heavy ordnance ranges at Lydd, to facilitate the transport of men and material over the extensive stretch of sand to the targets.

About the 7th of August a print stated that the Mahdi did not die a natural death, but was murdered in revenge by certain Arabs whom he had reduced to penury by his heavy exactions. More recent accounts attributed his death as much to poison as to smallpox. It was also asserted that the
British Government had seized certain correspondence, which described how the Mahdi and his people received arms and intelligence from Egypt. This referred perhaps to the papers of Zebehr Pasha.

The Ackbar recorded that, after the burial of the Mahdi, his nephew and successor, Abdullah, left the camp at Omdurman, with all the enormous treasure collected by Mohammed Achmet, and proceeded to Khartoum, where he took up his residence in the palace, or Government House. He entrusted the care of the city and of his own person to the Baggara tribe, to which he himself belonged, and which had faithfully served his uncle, the Mahdi.

The troops of the latter at Omdurman sent a deputation to Abdullah, requesting him to distribute among them a portion of the Mahdi’s treasure, and to select his body-guard from amongst the different tribes that were loyal to him. He agreed to comply with the latter request, but flatly refused to part with any of the treasure, which he required for the continuance of hostilities against the infidels. Two days afterwards, according to the Ackbar, an affray occurred at Khartoum between the Baggara warriors and the inhabitants of the town, to whose assistance troops came from Omdurman shortly after. Abdullah attempted to restore peace by going into the midst of the combatants with an open Koran in his hand, but was stabbed in the abdomen, and carried in a sinking condition back to the palace. The Baggara tribe eventually routed their opponents, and became, for a time, complete masters of Khartoum.

This was probably the riot or conflict which was reported at Cairo as having occurred on the 20th of July, when a letter was received at Akasheh, from Abdoola Hamza (who was the first to announce the death of the Mahdi), stating that in a fight on that day, both Abdoola Ettaishi and Mohammed el Kheir, together with their vakeels, were slain.

On the 8th of August Father Bonomi, who, as elsewhere related, succeeded in making his escape from the Soudan after a long captivity in the camp of the Mahdi, reached Rome, where he was welcomed at the railway station by the Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa. He stated that it was only on reaching Dongola that he heard from Major Turner the rumour that he and his companions in misfortune had embraced Islamism, at which he expressed the greatest indignation. With regard to the Mahdi, of whose fate he now heard, he expressed doubts about his death, and was of opinion that if it had really occurred it must have been due to poison rather than disease; and that with his disappearance from the scene, the Soudan question might be considered as settled. If Abdullah died, other pretenders to power might be easily subdued. Father Bonomi was reported as expressing surprise at the reputation won by Osman Digna in Europe, as in the Soudan he was only deemed the chief of a band of marauders.
The Abyssinians were now decidedly in motion for the relief of Kassala, but received a letter from the camp of Ras Alcola, dated 30th of July, reporting a conflict with the rebels at Algeden, near the river Settima, some fifty miles eastward of Kassala, the garrison of their movements were somewhat tardy. On the 10th of August Major Cherm-side telegraphed to Cairo that he had
which was pressed by hunger now, though elated by tidings of the Mahdi's death.

Ras Aloola repulsed the rebels, who lost 300 men and seven sheikhs, with their principal chief, Mohammed Ibrahim. Prior to advancing, Ras Aloola was now engaged in collecting fresh levies. The garrison of Kassala captured cattle after their last victory, but were almost destitute of grain.

On the 16th of August Marcopolo Bey, the Egyptian Sub-Governor of Massowah, who was also secretary to Major Chermside, left that place with a despatch from the Major to Ras Aloola, relative to the relief of Kassala, and from the Ras the Italian Commandant, Colonel Saletta, received several friendly letters, in which the latter showed himself desirous of cooperating in the relief of the garrison.

It was now stated that the Sheikh Noussa had occupied Dongola, with the Arabs of the Shagiye tribe. The assistance of the Abyssinians had proved to be of very great service to us. Had their help been secured at an earlier period in the war with the Soudanese chiefs, it is more than likely that the one campaign would have sufficed for the effectual crushing of the Mahdi's fanatical movement. In future they would constitute a factor with which aspiring leaders of Arab revolts would have to reckon, as well as with the Egyptian and British Governments.

It was now stated in the Cairo papers that payment of Indemnity awards would begin at Alexandria on the 16th of August, and that it was hoped that all claims might be settled by the end of that month.
CHAPTER IV.

LIFE IN CAIRO.


On Thursday, the 9th of July, the cutting of the Khalig Dam took place with great ceremony at eight in the morning. After allowing the full stream to run for four hours, the greater part of it was dammed again, to prevent too great a flood in the Ismailia Canal. The Nile, which had been rising rapidly for a few preceding days, had already reached the highest point of ordinary low water, though six weeks before the usual time.

In the first week or so of July, the correspondents reported that scarcely a day passed in Cairo without some shooting case or stabbing affray, or shots fired in the open streets by infuriated disputants, attempted assassinations, or bold and barefaced robberies. "We hear the report," says the Globe, "but not a word of the malefactors, for they generally escape, the police invariably being, by her Majesty's ex-Government, 'too late—too late;' or else the criminal calmly poohpoohs the idea of police interference by simply quoting the Capitulations and referring to his consul."

Cairo, he added, was fast harking back to the good old times, when every man did that which seemed right in his own eyes; and the city can give points to many an American town in the matter of bravoes and lawless characters in picturesque costumes, all armed to the teeth, ready to fire on the least provocation. The police were inefficient, and, in spite of all reforms, were likely to remain so.

"But the disorders are not to be ascribed solely to this fact," continued the Globe correspondent. "In the first place, the capital, as well as the other large towns, are infested by the refuse of the Levant—hordes of Greeks of the criminal class and of the most desperate character, with no more respect for the sanctity of human life than a Thug. These men come here to spoil Egypt, and some of them are, in addition, retained by private persons as bullies, if not assassins. Appeal to the Greek Consul, and he will tell you that he can do nothing in regard to the idle and disorderly characters, though the French, Italian, and German authorities deplore the same class of their own countrymen on the first complaint."

If a crime were committed, such as murder, or robbery with violence, the culprit fortified himself in his own house, while his Consul raised trivial objections against his arrest, thus facilitating escape by giving him time to achieve it. And even if arrested, it was ten chances to one but he was released after a few days' detention, as the Government and people of Greece..."
do not look upon a little poniarding as we do, and the Hellenes are so clannish and vindictive against all foreigners in matters regarding their countrymen, that the Greek bully or bravo seems to do precisely what he pleases in Cairo, Alexandria, or Suez, "under the shadow of the Capitulations and the favouring influence of the flag."

Thus the looseness of public morality in regard to mean and town, both as regards life and property, and the polyglot and heterogeneous character of the population, infuse something reckless and free-and-easy into the life of an Egyptian town, and contribute to an unfavourable condition of society.

"Looking at this matter calmly and quietly," wrote one, "especially emphasising the immunity certain classes of criminals enjoy, this question seriously forces itself upon the observer. Would it not be better to abolish the Capitulations, and establish in their place a system of international law, having equal authority over all, and backed by a strong Government, whose agents would be able and willing to preserve public peace, and ensure respect for the law? It has been said that this question will shortly be considered, as well as that important subject of organising and consolidating the governing power of the country, which now lacks cohesion, and is feeble, dislocated, and ineffective."

Writing of Cairo and the life of the people there, Dr. Ebers says, whoever desires to learn something of the character of a nation, must take part in its diversions, and study the people at their festivals, public and private, and on occasions alike of mirth and sorrow; and in this spirit, before describing the public festivities of the Cairenes, he describes an Arab house in the City of the Caliphs, the house of a well-to-do merchant, "and we note," he says, "with some surprise the simplicity and bareness of the outside facing the street. On the lowest floor there are either no windows at all, or only narrow ones strongly barred, and above them are the mashrebeeeyeh balconies."

The narrow entrance door is usually shut and bolted, or if open, nothing is seen within but a long passage, with a seat for the door-keeper, an old and trusted servant, who even at night is there, on his bed of palm branches. Any glimpse of the interior is carefully screened, for, however rich and splendid the Cairene's house may be, its external aspect must be simple, a precaution which is a relic of the days of the grasping and exacting Mamelukes. Wooden figures, paintings, mottos, or stuffed animals, are placed over the doorways, and supposed to protect the dwellers within from evil influences. A whole crocodile, and even a young elephant, stuffed, are to be seen in some instances; and the gate- or door-keepers referred to are generally Berbers from Lower Nubia, who, like the Swiss Guards of old, have a reputation for incorruptible fidelity.

The passage leading into the interior of a house rarely goes straight into the court, lest any one should see therein from the street. "The door-keeper, after warning the women—who fly
him to the mandara, the private sitting-and reception-room of his master. This is on the first floor, and, as we enter, our guide pulls off his shoes, as it is considered a piece of Frankish ill-breeding to soil the clean floor of the screaming at the approach of a man—conducts us,” says Ebers, “into the court, which is roofed by the blue sky, and in many houses filled with plants, and surrounded by light seats and couches. A servant is lifting the bucket from a draw-well, which, however, yields a brackish water, serviceable only for cleaning purposes. Passing by him—for we desire to speak to the master of the house—we now, as it is summer time, go up a few steps into a hall or gallery open to the north, and having pillars to support the roof. We take a seat on the divan, but are shortly invited by a young eunuch to follow sitting-room with the dust of the streets. We return the master’s greeting, touching our forehead, lips, and breast—a symbolic action, signifying that in thought, word, and heart, we are his.”

The mandara of a well-to-do Cairene is always richly furnished, cool, and spacious, and the alcoves without windows seem to be constructed for conversations that are not to be over-
KA'AH IN THE HAREM OF SHEIFH SADAT, CAIRO.
heard. The middle of the paved floor has in it a hollow, inlaid with mosaics of marble, always moist with the spray of a graceful fountain that cools the air. At the upper end of the room is the Leewan, covered with soft carpets, having in it luxurious divans, where, while conversing, the eyes can dwell with pleasure on the richly-decorated ceiling, the earthenware tiles that form a dado round the lower portion of the walls, and the beautiful brackets that project from the latter, and support finely-wrought vessels.

Every one takes off his shoes before he steps upon the Leewan, lest he may defile the carpet upon which prayer is usually said. The origin of this practice goes back to the earliest antiquity as a mark of extreme humility; and it was to inspire this feeling that the Lord said to Moses, out of the midst of the bush, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus iii. 5).

In some houses there is another room, called a mukād, for the same use as the reception room, having an open front, with two or more arches and a low railing. In the upper rooms of the houses of the wealthy there are, besides the large windows of lattice-work, others of stained glass, representing floral bouquets, peacocks, and other gaudy objects. These painted windows are mostly from eighteen to thirty inches in height, and are generally placed along the top of the projecting lattice windows in rows.

On the walls are often frescoes representing the Temple of Mecca, the Tomb of the Prophet, or flowers, kiosks, and palm-trees. Sometimes the walls are decorated by Arabic inscriptions or maxims, written in letters of gold and scarlet or green, and enclosed in glazed frames. No chambers (says Mr. St. John) are furnished as bed-rooms. The bed, in the day-time, is rolled up, and placed, perhaps, in an adjoining closet, which, in winter, is a sleeping-place, for in summer most people lie on the flat house-tops. A mat or carpet placed upon the stone floor, and a divan, constitute the furniture of a room. Every door is furnished with a wooden lock, of curious and simple but ancient construction.

In the plan of every dwelling there is an utter want of regularity, while the principal aim of the Oriental architect is to render it as private as possible, particularly that part which is apportioned to the women; and even the most intimate friends of the master are forbidden entrance to the harem, an Oriental name, signifying something forbidden or unattainable. "When the European visitor hears it said that the master is in the harem, he usually conceives of something the reverse of the truth, for this reply simply conveys the fact that he has withdrawn into the bosom of his family, the refuge where none of the cares and worries of business can pursue him, and where he can give himself up wholly to an undisturbed sense of rest, and to the tranquil joys of domestic life." "Any one who has lived in the East for a lengthened period," continues Ebers,
whom we quote, "learns to recognise this feeling of the sanctity of home, and to understand its necessity; he must have a retreat where the turmoil and stress of life cannot penetrate—and this place, where the children spring to meet their father, and where he finds the women, who never have any part in his business cares, is the harem, whose inhabitants by no means regard themselves as prisoners, however unworthy their existence may seem to their European sisters—an existence devoted to the care of their children, to dress, to smoking their nargilehs, and to trifling amusements, and many of them have assured the ladies of our European circle who have visited them, that they would not exchange lots with them."

The harem is generally situated in an upper storey, and its chief apartment, the ka'ah, is furnished like a reception-room, but with richer fittings. If the house is in a street, the windows are filled in with pierced mashrebeeyeh, to allow the ladies to see what is going on in the streets, without being seen in turn; but the use of glass windows, at one time wholly unknown in Cairo, is now quite fashionable there. The back rooms of the mansion consist of the kitchen and offices, among which are often a mill and a bakehouse.

The Ezbekeeyeh, a large square, containing 450,000 square feet, which during an inundation was formerly covered with water, and at other times a corn-field, was beautifully planted in 1863, affording, says Hoskins in his "Upper and Lower Egypt," "the greatest of all luxuries in a hot climate—delicious shade."

There, under the trees, are cafés, where coffee, sherbet, and punch may be had, and where a band plays, or used to play, in the evenings. On Sunday this promenade is crowded—now with Franks and Turks with Europeans in their Nizam dresses, and now with the British soldier in his scarlet tunic, and the Highlander in his white jacket and tartan kilt. European tradesmen who do not adopt any Oriental costume always don the red tarboosh, while their wives and daughters appear in European dresses, though not in the best taste. "The groups that will interest the stranger most," says Hoskins, "are the citizens playing at dominoes, chess, and backgammon, and the peasants collected round the jugglers. If the cafés were good, and the gardens better taken care of, few promenades in the world would be more delightful. Some of the houses which surround it are handsome, especially the palace of the late Pasha's sister, and Shepheard's large hotel—with all its defects the best in Cairo—as well as the Hôtel d'Orient, the next best, on the opposite side of the square; but the artist will admire more the old houses, with their picturesque lattice-wood windows, or mashrebeeyehs. The minaret of a mosque surrounded by trees adds to the effect."

Here in the Ezbekeeyeh square may, at times, be seen the festival called the Dawsah, or "treading," which occurs on the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet, when perhaps two or three-
hundred men will prostrate themselves on their faces, so close as to form a species of human pavement. Some dervishes, loudly tom-toming, will run over them first, to ascertain that no portion of the earth is uncovered; and those of the wealthier class of the inhabitants are composed of soft stone quarried in the Gebel Mokattam ridge, and are often three storeys in height. Many of the streets are not above three feet wide, and few are more high.

The greatest ornaments of Cairo are its four hundred mosques or more, all more or less adorned by lofty and ornate minarets, and which are so numerous as to appear from a distance like the masts of ships in a crowded harbour.

There are many picturesque architectural attractions in the streets of this wonderful city of the Arabian Nights, but the crowds that animate
LADY OF RANK DRIVING IN CAIRO AFTER SUNSET.
them are more attractive still. Rich and poor, high and low, are all conge- 
glomerated together, and every shade of complexion may now be seen, from 
the dark Nubian to the fair-skinned English lady, or Circassian; but the 
strangest groups of all are the women in the bazaars, whose costume leaves 
nothing human distinguishable except their fine black sparkling eyes, the rest 
of the body having the appearance of a bale of goods, so covered is it by folds 
of linen and silks, hiding almost their yellow boots; and they are usually attended 
by slaves or some elderly relation.

The women of Cairo have greater liberty than in any part of the Turkish Empire (says Birkbeck's Encyclopedia), and on Friday a mosque without the walls is frequented by them as a pilgrimage of pleasure.

Strings of camels enhance the difficulty of getting through the bazaars in the busy time of the day, and noise adds not a little to the scenes there; the auctioneers shouting the merits of the articles on sale, and half-naked donkey boys screaming shrilly "Yemé-

nak" (to the right), "Shimalak" (to the left); while amid all the bustle and confusion the shopkeepers sit in front of the stalls, cushioned on Persian carpets, smoking their long pipes, cool and collected, silent and stolid as metal idols, apparently regardless of all around them.

"You see likewise in the bazaar at Cairo," says Hoskins, "wealthy Turks on splendid horses, with saddle-cloths embroidered with gold; soldiers in various uniforms; fierce-looking Arabs (Soudanese) of the desert; the degenerate Fellahen, in their immense white, red, and green turbans, commonly put on in horizontal folds, their dress consisting of large blue or white linen and woollen gowns; Copts, a wealthy race, with large turbans and gowns, generally black; and in rags and dirty, the picturesque water-carriers, and sellers of not only water, but other cool drinks, so requisite in this parching climate."

We have already referred (Vol. II.) to the wedding processions as among the sights that excited the surprise of our soldiers after the capture of Cairo. In these, the brides may be seen, wearing crimson dresses and coronets of paste diamonds, walking under a canopy borne by four men, and preceded by musicians with drums and cymbals. Heading these processions are always some little boys about eight years old, dressed in gold-embroidered jackets, mounted on Arab horses, and going to be circumcised. "As their faces were entirely covered," says Hoskins, describing one of these processions, "except little holes for their eyes—the brides for delicacy, and the boys to save them from the Evil Eye—we could not tell their ages, but from their size we judged the boys were eight and the girls eleven or thirteen years old."

The Evil Eye is firmly believed in by the inhabitants of Egypt, as by other Easterns. It has been remarked that, in order to counteract its influence, Mohammed sanctioned the use of charms, which he forbade in connection with almost everything else.
"The eye," said he, "has a complete influence; because verily, if there were a thing to overcome fate, it certainly would be a malignant eye."

Ebers tells us that the choice of a wife is much less easy to the Cairene than it is to us, since all social intercourse between youths and maidens is impossible; under these circumstances the intending husband is compelled to have recourse to a go-between, the Khatbeh, or Betrother, who visits those families having marriageable daughters often as a dealer in ornaments or cosmetics. The result of her critical observations are communicated without delay to the youth who wishes to marry and to his family. Then his nearest female relations take an opportunity of convicting themselves ocularly of the truth of the Khatbeh's report, and, if satisfied, the latter proposes, on the part of the young man, for the hand of the girl, who is scarcely consulted, though she has the right of refusal; but any such measure is of rare occurrence, and in the East would be deemed an almost inconceivable thing.

Continuing our glance at the habits of the Cairenes, and before returning to the Soudan, we may add that among the Fellahaen and labouring classes, whose daughters must also live by some handiwork, and cannot live veiled in seclusion and luxury, the husband, of course, chooses his wife as best he can, and according to his own views.

When two families have come to a general agreement, various discussions begin with the bridegroom and the father of the bride as to her dowry, which the former must secure, as a fixed sum, to his future wife, paying down two-thirds at once. The remainder he detains, to be paid in chance of a divorce, and the contract is concluded. Soon after the bridegroom visits the home of his betrothed with two friends, and is met by the father of the bride with his two chosen friends and a Fikée, or Reader, who gives forth the first chapter of the Koran, which is very short, and contains only the following:—

"Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures; the most Merciful; the King of the Day of Judgment. Thee do we worship, and of Thee do we beg assistance. Direct us in the right way of those to whom Thou hast been gracious; not of those against whom Thou art incensed, nor of those who go astray."

Then the bridegroom and the father, seated on a carpet, press each other's right hands, thumb placed against thumb. After more of the Koran, a meal is partaken of, and the Fikée departs with a handkerchief, in the corner of which is tied a piece of gold. The marriage is now accomplished, and then the wedded pair meet for the first time. After many ceremonies, too long for relation here, by a procession such as we have referred to, the bride is conducted to her husband's house, where she sits in silence with downcast eyes, a pose required by ancient custom and modern etiquette, while her friends gather round her, with exhortations, representing that now she has quitted her parents for ever, and belongs exclusively to her husband.
“A wedding,” says Dr. Russell, “is one of the principal opportunities which women have of displaying their wardrobes, and for this reason they bring a variety of apparel with them, or nurse, and mother and a sister, it she has them. Even the latter now leave her to the bellaneh, who throws a shawl over the head of the blushing and half-terrified girl. At a signal

and change their dress two or three times. In Hindostan they do it more frequently, often nine times during the nuptial assembly, especially the bride, whose last suit is the richest, and over which she wears a veil of red gauze, striped with gold or silver.”

By degrees the female guests retire, and she is left alone with the Bellaneh, the former withdraws, and the bridegroom enters.

Man and wife are together for the first time. “In the name of God, the compassionate and the merciful!” says the former, and lifts the shawl from the face of the bride, who says, “God bless thee.” If he is pleased with her beauty he announces the fact
BRIDAL PROCESSION IN CAIRO.
to a group of women who are waiting outside, and who then utter shrill cries of delight. In the opinion of the Semitic races, says a writer, the exclamation of the pleased bridegroom is one of the most delightful sounds that leave the human breast, and we learn that the idea is no growth of yesterday, from the passage in the Gospel of St. John, chapter iii. verse 29: "He that nath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice."

And now to glance at the Cairenes in their time of supreme sorrow.

"Unrelenting death," begins Ebers, in describing a Cairene funeral, "is calling on our friend Sheikh Alee; he is dangerously ill. He lies on his bed of sickness with the calm resignation of the true Moslem; only the exclamation 'Allah!' that breaks from him now and then, betrays that he is suffering. Thus it was when we quitted him yesterday. Early this morning a common acquaintance brought the information that during the night death had released him from his sufferings. As he felt his end approaching, with his son's help he performed his ablutions as if for prayer; his wives and children stood round him in deep grief. When he was at his latest breath, they turned his face to Mecca, and cried out incessantly, 'There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet. There is neither might nor power but with the Almighty and exalted God. We are the Lord's, and we return unto Him.'"

When Ebers's friend breathed his last, amid the rites prescribed by his faith, then the women began their lamentations—the "Walwalah"—with hideous cries, which went out into the starry night—cries of "Oh, my master! Oh, my garment! Oh, my camel!"—while they tore their hair and beat their breasts, and the men silently and gravely prepared for the funeral, by wrapping the body in sheets, muttering pious texts from the Koran, and watching till dawn.

Then friends and acquaintance come streaming in, and the wailing and shrieking of the women increase, while in the chamber of death many dignified and turbaned heads are bowed in truer sorrow and regret. The Fikées, or reciters of the Koran, appear, and the sixth chapter, revealed at Mecca, is specially quoted; and, after being bathed, the dead are ready for the last journey, but not before an official of the Beyt-el-Mal arrives on his ass to administer the property. "The creditors now make their claims," says Ebers, "for it is the custom first to satisfy those demands which are preferred while the corpse is above ground; hence his friends in business, and the dealers who supplied him, hasten to inscribe their names and claims in the register, and during these proceedings the house of mourning becomes a scene of the most revolting haggling and bargaining. Presently a violent squabble breaks out among some of the creditors, which is carried on with uproarious shouts, and continued even in the street. The noise is frightful, for
the wailing of the women is not yet reduced to silence, and the dwelling is more like an auction mart than the house of the dead.”

At last the body is brought forth on a bier—a simple wooden trough, without a lid—covered by a scarlet Cashmere shawl, and borne, head foremost, in a procession, preceded by boys, one of whom carries the Koran on a desk of palm branches, while the others chant incessantly, “My heart adores the Prophet, and Him who bends over to bless him.” Immediately in front of the bier walk four youths, with coloured silk scarfs round their loins, bearing vessels of rose water, with which they sprinkle the escort, and the whole cortège, motley and clamorous, goes through the streets—not decorously, as in Europe, but at a swinging round pace.

A peculiar custom follows at the mosque—a sort of judgment of the dead—a matter of form, as with the ancient Egyptians; after which the procession hurries again through the streets and out of the city to the cemetery in the desert, where the grave has been prepared, a low brick structure, lying nearly north and south; and, after a brief prayer, the body, wrapped in cloths, is taken from its bier, and pushed into an opening at the northern end of the tomb, so that the head lies towards Mecca, and the body rests on its right side, so that the face may look in the direction of the holy city. In family vaults there is one place for men and another for the women.

When the opening is closed by stones and sand, the dead is reminded by the Fikées how he is to comport himself to the two angels of the tomb, Munkar and Nâkir, who are supposed to beat the impenitent dead with hammers after partial revival, into the seventh limbo, from which he returns to his grave, and this process is repeated seven times.

The Fikées, the bearers, and the wailing women, are all paid at once beside the freshly-closed grave, while bread, dates, and grease are distributed among the poor, when the procession disperses, and each takes his own way back to Cairo; but on every Thursday, till the sun has set forty times, friends assemble at the house of mourning to bewail the dead, and every Friday, for forty days, at early morn, the survivors lay reeds and palm branches on the grave, and distribute food to the poor, and the memory of the dead is perpetuated by the beautiful custom of making benevolent donations to the necessitous.

Among the singularities which appear extraordinary to a stranger in Cairo, may be mentioned the number of dogs that roam the streets, and the kites which skim over the houses, frequently with doleful cries; for the Mussulman will kill neither of these, though they are both held to be unclean; on the contrary, they often throw to them fragments of food; and Volney, in his time, 1785, refers to the turtle-doves, which built their nests in the houses of Cairo, and were never molested even by children.

Devotees sometimes endow charitable
find it difficult to appreciate. Nevertheless, let the fact remain to the credit of the Oriental character, which we have too frequently had occasion to animad-

foundations of bread and water for dogs, who otherwise have recourse to the sewers, which does not prevent them from suffering from hunger and

thirst, yet canine madness is unknown in Egypt.

Many different kinds of animals are treated in the land of Egypt with great kindness. Some of them are regarded even as sacred, and, in that respect, are allowed an impunity which people of other countries—less superstitious, perhaps, but certainly more cruel—would

vert upon in terms far from favourable. But the Eastern peoples display an odd mixture of temperament, and in some respects are a mass of contradictions. Side by side with much humility and real tenderness will occasionally be found a ferocity of disposition and a duplicity to be met with perhaps nowhere else in the whole world.

FUNDERAL PROCESSION IN CAIRO.
In the end of July, 1885, grave doubts were entertained at Cairo as to the efficiency of the irrigation system introduced by Colonel Scott Moncrieff, and worked under the supervision of himself and his assistants, who had been trained in India. It was said that certain districts would be ruined for want of water, and others inundated, while some of the costly experiments made by the Irrigation Department would prove failures. On the other hand, it was asserted by many that an immediate success could not be expected from this Nile inundation, but that, considering circumstances, the new works and improvements would have good results; but the proof of either could not be known till the Nile should overflow its banks, until which event the one opinion was as sound as the other; but meantime the British and French engineers were hostile to each others' views, and the professed journal of the latter—the Bosphore Egyptien—made the outlook as gloomy as possible.

Frank Power, in his "Letters from Khartoum," called it a halfpenny evening paper, ever full of attacks, personal and filthy, on Sir E. Baring, Clifford Lloyd, and all British officers, "with horrible stories about our Queen."

That print waxed furious when the death of Olivier Pain was announced, and summed up the report then current, of that vagrant journalist being at Pondicherry or at the Congo, as a clever
trick on the part of the agents of per-
fishious England to rid themselves of
responsibility incurred by the alleged
decapitation order. "The whole of the
articles which have appeared in the
French press," says the Cairo cor-
respondent of the Globe, under date 25th
July, "are based on the famous editorial
in Rochefort's paper, which was founded
on the assertion of 'a friend lately re-
turned from Egypt.' Now this friend is
M. Paul Giraud, the editor of the
Bosphore Egyptien, who left Cairo for
Paris on the conclusion of the cause
célèbre relating to his sheet. M. Giraud
saw Olivier Pain just before the sup-
pression of the Bosphore. The latter
was staying at Helorian, and he told
the editor all his plans, and was sup-
pposed to be the bearer of a compromising
letter to the Mahdi. The inevitable
subscription has been started here in
aid of the family of the deceased
journalist; but it does not seem likely
to show big figures, for the French
have spent all their available cash over
the Fourteenth of July festival, and
the Egyptian Gaul, though lavish of
enthusiasm, does not like parting with
money."

The Egyptian army was now being
daily strengthened, and to receive an
additional number of British officers,
whose appointments were to be per-
manent. It was proposed that the most
of them should be taken from the
Indian army, as more familiar with
Orientals. As heretofore, the leading
conditions of the service were ability
to carry on official correspondence in
French, a conversational fluency in
that language, and a knowledge of
Arabic. After a six months' sojourn in
the country, the officer had to pass a
preliminary examination in Arabic, and
a further one in twelve months; those
passing with honours to receive a
donation of £100. Previous to dis-
ensuring with the services of any officer,
the Egyptian Government were to give
him three months' notice and a gra-
tuity of one month's pay for each year's
service in Egypt; this gratuity to be in
no instance less than three months' pay.
The passage money granted was £30
from Britain and £55 from India.

One sign of the expected permanency
of the occupation was the opening of
classes at Cairo and Alexandria, under
the authority of the War Office, and
at the expense of the Military Depart-
ment in the former city, for non-com-
mmissioned officers and privates in the
study of the Arabic language, as it had
been found that they suffered much
inconvenience when their duty brought
them in contact with natives who spoke
no tongue but their own. "Our soldiers
are not famous for picking up lan-
guages," wrote one on this matter,
"and this free instruction of the
Egyptian vernacular will be of great
benefit to them. Perhaps if a few
lessons in French were added it would
be a great gain to the soldier, for this
is the language of the European portion
of the inhabitants, and without at
least a colloquial knowledge of it, the
resident feels himself completely at sea.
English is being more spoken than it
used to be, and is gaining ground every
day; but it will never supplant French
at Cairo as the language of society, diplomacy, and the law courts."

At the end of this month (July) the Egyptian Government were busy studying plans to relieve the gallant garrison of Kassala; and men, money, and arms were to be sent to Ras Aloola, to whom the succour of the town was entrusted.

As in all Mohammedan towns, the birthday of the Prophet, the 26th of the month Safar (corresponding to our March), is duly celebrated at Cairo, amid much excitement.

In the street of Giama-el-Bevat (i.e., Mosque of the Girls) the cavalcade begins. At its head rides a man bearing a green banner; behind him on a mule comes a white-bearded Sheikh; then a number of men, all turbaned, on foot or mounted on asses, and ere long a dense crowd fills the whole street, from wall to wall; yet nothing more is to be seen but a plainly-dressed young man, seated on a stone, at the door of the mosque—the son of a famous saint—whose hand all are anxious to kiss, and whose blessing they wish to receive, while a great meeting is being held at the house of the Cadi to determine the beginning and end of the festival of the Prophet's natal day. All sects and guilds have their share in it after being at the Mosque of the Girls. No other festival is carried out with such zest and ardour as this. Outside Cairo, on the right of the road to Boulak, on an open space, are pitched a number of magnificent tents or pavilions, in the form of a square, in the centre of which high masts are set up and stayed by ropes pegged into the ground, and hung with coloured lamps in thousands. In front of these are scaffolds for the display of those fireworks in which all Orientals excel.

In the streets, stall after stall is erected for the owners of see-saws, roundabouts, jugglers, tumblers, snake-charmers, and buffoons, with others for sherbet-mixers, coffee-sellers, cooks, and confectioners; and when the night of the festival has fairly closed in, long trains of torch-bearers perambulate the city, chanting the praises of the Prophet. The booths are brilliantly lighted, and on every hand refreshments are sold from jar or fruit baskets to the crowd, now dotted here and there by British redcoats. "Coffee is made in this red-and-white tent, while the customers listen to the story-teller; and from yonder mosque, which is so closely curtained, and where Karakush (the Egyptian Punch) is carrying on his too-graphically natural performances, proceed rounds of song and laughter. Close beside it a baker has established himself, and draws his beautifully-browned round cakes out of his little oven under our very eyes, and, all hot as they are, they are excellent eating. ... We escape from the crowd for a moment to draw a deep breath of the fresh aromatic air of the spring night, and then fall into the line again to see what is going on in the side alleys, hastily run up round the large enclosed space. To the left hand are the tents of the police, the governor, the ministers, and the Vice-roy; on the opposite side are those of private persons, and for religious con-
gregations. Every tent we pass is full of men engaged in their devotions. They sit in large circles round a reader, who discourses on the history of the birth of the Prophet, and all the signs and wonders that accompanied it; this right or left, or round and round on its axis. The director of the whole performance, the Munshid, stands in the middle and conducts the consensaneous utterance of the words and the motions of the body by calling out

is an ancient custom, handed down from the earliest days of Islam. Or they take part in performing the religious exercise called a Zikr. This consists of a constant repetition of the name of God, of the Moslem confession of faith, or a form of praise of Mohammed, with the accompaniment of a little measured movement of the body in time to the chant, inclining it forward, or to the and clapping his hands to the measure. The religious excitement is often increased by music and singers. To Europeans, the participation in these exercises seems to have something degrading in it, and not altogether without reason; but, as in other religions, a deep spiritual meaning underlies these senseless usages. The Koran prescribes to the Mohammedan a constant mention
of the name of God, just as the apostle Paul exhorts Christians to pray without ceasing."

The first tent of the line of dignitaries is that of the Khedive, where the Notables and highest Sheikhs pay him official visits, and enjoy the fireworks and general features of the festival, which is protracted for twelve consecutive nights, and even the ladies of the harem appear on the scene in close carriages, guarded by eunuchs. About twelve on the last night of the festival, an immense torch procession is got up with great magnificence, filling the whole Boulak road with one vast stream of flame. The next day brings an extraordinary finale to these yearly rejoicings—the Dawsah, or "Treading," which we have referred to elsewhere.

With regard to the latter, Ebers
sends that it has often been asserted that the religious and nervous excitement that leads to such a scene are the result of smoking hasheesh; but this, he avers, is very exceptional. The vigil of the previous nights, the perpetual reciting of the Koran, and the excitement before the slowly-advancing danger, are certainly sufficient to produce a nervous state and convulsion, particularly when we take into consideration the extraordinary predisposition of the Oriental character for religious transport. The East was originally the fatherland of the mysterious phenomena of “Possession,” and so, at the present day, under the promptings of a keen superstition, hundreds are ready to fling themselves before the hoofs of the Sheikh's horse.

Among other grand festivals celebrated by the Cairenes is the Mooled el Hassaneyen, whose head is buried in his mosque. It takes place on the 7th of November. The long bazaars are brilliantly illuminated by a line of entirely glass chandeliers, lighted with oil, the smallest having thirty or forty burners, the largest two hundred, producing wonderful effects on the beautiful architecture of the streets, the white and red mosques, their tall minarets, and the spouting fountains. Hoskins, in 1863, described the bazaars and streets on this occasion as presenting a sea of snow-white turbans, and only a few wearing the red tarboosh. Amid the crowd, Fikées on all hands recited the Koran; and though very few Moslems now fulfil all the five Mohammedan duties, which are called “the pillars of Islam”—namely, war against the infidel, pilgrimage, almsgiving, fasting, and praying—the two great festivals of Ramadân and Bairam are certainly held with fasting and prayer by the people of Cairo.

Before Ramadân, the most sacred month of the Mohammedan year, one month is dedicated to fasting; and before it is ushered in festivals of peculiar significance are kept, as, for instance, the solemn night of Sha'aban, in which the human destiny is weighed and determined, and when the hand of God is supposed to separate the withered leaves from the green on the tree of Fate—the wicked souls from the good. Ramadân “is the month of my people, in which their sins are forgiven them,” said the Prophet, who in that month received the Koran from heaven, according to the second chapter thereof. Although the feast often occurs in the heat of summer, his command forbids the tasting of any food from sunrise to sunset. Not a morsel must alleviate the most gnawing hunger, nor can a drop of water moisten the burning lips. Even cigarettes are forbidden.

When night comes, however, the Cairene makes up for his day of fasting by a term of festivity, abundance, and gaiety. The streets are illuminated, and the lights of the mosques and citadel shine over Cairo like stars in the sky. The houses of the rich and great are crowded by guests till from the minarets the call of dawn is heard, and all strengthen themselves with final food and drink for the fast of the coming day, which is kept till the
boom of a cannon in the citadel announces that the sun has set, and then mirth and abundance abound again.

In the subsequent nights of Ramadán people generally go to bed about twelve o'clock, but the coffee-houses are filled to overflowing, for there the singers and tale-tellers are in full request, and do not close till morning.

At the end of the month comes the feast of Little Bairam, when the necessity for this baleful fasting ends—the Great Bairam being held by the pilgrims at Mecca. The places of worship are all lighted up, and Zikrs are performed in the mosque of Mohammed Ali. Next morning is devoted to visits, which often extend to friends who are lying in the cemetery.

The great reception in the palace of the Khedive begins soon after sunrise, on his return from the mosque. He receives the members of his family, the Notables, the Ulemas and dignitaries in learning, the foreign consuls, and European merchants of high position.

In more humble houses the rooms are thronged by visitors, and even in the poorest Arab dwellings cakes have been baked, and all hold high holiday; and it is the custom to make presents of new clothes and shoes, particularly to children and servants, at Bairam. "It is amusing to see the little ones showing each other their red and yellow slippers, and to observe the conscious pride with which the old door-keeper struts about in his new blue robe, which will rarely be taken off his back before the end of next

Ramadán brings him another. Everything that we see looks clean and festive, and merry faces shine and grin under the turban. Indeed, even the foreigner whose creed is farthest removed from that of the Moslems, feels some ray of joy penetrate his soul at this festival, the Easter of Islam."

Every Friday at two o'clock is the time to visit the Kasr-el-Ainee, or the College of the Dervishes, few of whom are distinguished by their dress, some having high caps, long robes, and long hair depending to the waist, and which, when dishevelled by their exertions, gives them a peculiarly wild appearance. The Sheikh wears a white turban; his assistants wear them of green.

The Dervishes, about thirty in number, formed a ring, wrote a visitor, and the Sheikh set them in motion by moving his head backwards and forwards, beginning with a species of snort, and ending in an unmistakable howl. They continued this ungraceful movement of the head, increasing its rapidity for nearly an hour, some bursting into wild exclamations, and others throwing themselves on the ground. Drums and flutes assisted to increase their excitement, and to render them unconscious of all around them. "There appears to be something catching in the mania," he continues, "as I observed several grave-looking Turks, who were merely spectators like ourselves, moving their heads like the Dervishes. These men have no pretensions to be called 'dancing Dervishes' (who whirl round and round
with arms extended); but 'howling Dervishes' they may certainly be called, 'There is but one God, and Mohammed is his Prophet,' being the burden of their song."

Formerly they used to cut and hack themselves with knives, as certain Pasha. His gardens were forty acres in extent, and the rest of the isle is covered by stately acacia and sycamore trees, where not occupied by a large gunpowder manufactory.

The principal palace of Cairo, that of Shoobra, which we have mentioned

Indian Fakirs still do; but these are now hung on the walls of the Kasr-el-Ainee, and they are forbidden to touch them on account of the barbarous uses to which they were once put.

Roda, near Old Cairo, is justly celebrated for its beautiful gardens, the result of the care and skill of their superintendent, Mr. Traill, a Scotsman, who died some thirty years ago, or more, and was employed by Ibrahim more than once, is on a bank of the Nile, and the road to it from the city, the "Rotten Row" of the Cairenes, is a shady avenue formed of noble sycamores. "On one side," says D'Israeli, "are delightful glimpses of the river, with its palmy banks and sparkling villages; on the other, often a certain tract of vivid vegetation, the golden sands of the desert, and the shifting hillocks which it forms; or perhaps the
FRONT OF A HOUSE IN CAIRO.
grey peaks of some chain of pyramids. The palace of Shoobra is a pile of long, low buildings looking to the river. The gardens, however, are vast, fanciful, and kept in admirable order. They appear to me in their character entirely Oriental. You enter them by long, low winding walks of impenetrable shade; you emerge upon open ground, sparkling with roses, arranged in beds of artificial forms, and leading to gilded pavilions and painted kiosks. Arched walks of orange trees, with the fruit and flowers hanging overhead, lead to fountains, or to some other garden-court, where myrtles border beds of tulips, and you wander on mosaic walks of polished pebbles; a vase flashes amid a group of dark cypresses, and you are invited to repose under a Syrian walnut-tree by a couch or a summer-house. The most striking picture, however, of this charming retreat is a lake surrounded by light cloisters of white marble, and in its centre a fountain of crocodiles carved in the same material."

Every year a great caravan from Abyssinia arrives in the neighbourhood of Cairo, on the banks of the Lake of Pilgrims; a vast number of the latter are wealthy merchants who avail themselves of the religious opportunity of proceeding to Mecca to conduct their traffic en route. Before a new state of things was inaugurated they used to bring as many as 1,200 negro slaves for sale; now their wares are enormous quantities of elephants' tusks, ostrich feathers, gum, gold dust, parrots, and monkeys. This caravan has been known to exceed 3,000 camels, laden with the merchandise of the West, and sometimes reaches the number of 100,000 souls.

In the past time the slave market of Cairo was filled with wretched creatures, brought from Abyssinia, Nubia, Kordofan, and the Soudan.
CHAPTER VI.
LIFE IN CAIRO (concluded).


In July 1885 a pamphlet purporting to be written by "an English Resident in Cairo"—a lady—and dealing with the subject of slavery in that city, created a very great sensation there. Among other somewhat startling revelations, the author pointed to the Khedive Tewfik as being a trafficker in slaves, stating that, among other things, he had a strong predilection for the Abyssinian variety, and darkly hinting that Zebehr Rahama Pasha, the ex-king of the Soudanese slave-dealers, was not the only person who had a monetary interest in the infamous traffic.

There was brought forward the case of two of the female Circassian slaves belonging to the Princess Mansour, who escaped in consequence of her ill-treatment, and took refuge in the British Consulate; and other instances reflected severely on the family of the Khedive, who, it was boldly alleged, were not above reproach in the matter of holding human chattels.

Save in one or two cases, the old horrors of slavery in Egypt have ended, for many hundreds had been set free, before the abuse culminated at Mansourah in the Lower Province, when, in 1873, our Consular-Agent (in rank not even a Vice-Consul) emancipated no fewer than 1,700 in a single month, and would soon have liberated the whole slave population if the Cairo authorities, deferring to a general outcry among the heads of families, had not interfered.

In Cairo, slaves of both sexes are, generally speaking, well and even lovingly cared for, and the lot of many a slave there is infinitely preferable to that of a number of domestic servants in London and other English towns. When a Circassian is seen wearing a rich uniform, secretary to his master, enjoying his confidence, and seeming probably well-to-do, excellently educated, it seems not such a hard fate to be a slave, but for the name and idea. There are scores of such men in Cairo, who have been born in slavery, or sold into it, as a horse or a mule may be sold. So that, as a writer noticing the pamphlet referred to says, "as in every other instance, the rule holds good that there are slaves and slaves."

The same writer says that if Tewfik did not traffic in the latter, "he still retained his harem à la Turque," while professing to be a strict monogamist, and loving only the Vice-Queen, Emineh Khanum, who has a wonderful influence over him.

In the end of July, the police of Cairo, acting under European orders and influences, took steps to close at midnight the Brasseries, Assommoirs,
read the "resumé" of the scandalous articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which are published by the French and other foreign journals here, with embellish-
ment and the strongest commentaries. One paper heads its remarks "The Saxon Ogre," and goes on with a string of vituperative adjectives and phrases, winding up with a recommendation to the Egyptians to beware of wolves in sheep's clothing, and asking them if we are a fit people to pose as philanthropists and moralists,"—and so on, and so on.

It is with deep regret that Englishmen in Cairo," says the correspondent of the *Globe* under date 28th of July, proprietors, who invoked the Capitulations and Consular protection. But the closing was enforced by a police patrol consisting of a sergeant and six men with fixed bayonets, who went round by night for that purpose.

"Old Cairo, from the Island of Roda."
In the first days of August the rise of the Nile continued with unprecedented rapidity, and the prospect of a disastrous inundation caused the gravest anxiety both in the Department of Public Works and in the Railway Administration. Within twenty-four hours it rose over two feet, to the height of twenty-one pics, as recorded by the Nilometer at Roda, and there was fear that if it continued to rise at the same rate it would lay a large portion of Upper Egypt under water. Any height above twenty-five pics is disastrous.

It was telegraphed from Wady Halfa that the river was still rising there, while the authorities were taken unawares, and were without preparations for controlling the flood; and there seemed to be little doubt that the railway line near Barrage, and several of the canals in Lower Egypt, would be destroyed before the extreme height was reached; but after the 8th a subsidence took place for three days, especially at Assouan.

With reference to the customs of the Cairenes in common with the modern Egyptians, we cannot omit a glance at their existing superstitions.

In the great capital of the "Arabian Nights," the centre of the circle of Islam, where...
whatever is most remarkable in the habits and opinions of the Eastern world may be said to flourish in the greatest perfection, it would seem at first sight (says Mr. St. John) that the Arabs of Egypt, being brought frequently into contact with Europeans, ought by this time to have adopted something of our way of thinking, and to have imbibed some small portion of our learning. "But this is not really the case," he adds. "The two races regard each other with suspicion rather than sympathy; and there will be many ages before the Arabs project themselves—if they ever do—into the sphere of our ideas and opinions." Especially will this be the case before they get rid of their superstitions. Their belief in the existence of Jinn and Efrits is as strong as when Haroun Alraschid reigned. It is commonly believed that malicious and wicked Jinn often station themselves on the flat roofs of the Cairo houses and throw bricks and stones into the streets below. The author quoted was told of a case of this kind which alarmed the people of the principal street for a whole week. Many bricks had been flung from some of the houses every day for that period, yet no one was killed or wounded. He found no one who denied the descent of the bricks, or had the slightest doubt it was the work of invisible Jinn.

Efrit is the name of the evil-disposed Jinn, and the Koran is quoted for their existence where the sentence occurs:—"An Efrit from among the Jinn answered." They are powerful and always malicious, but in other respects of a similar nature. The Moslems believe that the world was inhabited before the time of Adam by a race of beings different from ourselves in form and strength, and that seventy-two pre-Adamite kings, who bore the name of Solomon, successively governed this people. The last of their kings was named Ga'n Ibn Ga'n, whence the plural Jinn, who can assume when they choose the forms of the dog, the cat, and other animals, but have no power over ought that has had the name of God pronounced over it.

The Arab's sources of enjoyment are not many; thus his fancy dwells with delight on these fantastic beings with which he peoples the elements. Generally he is in a trance of delight when a fairy tale is being told. He beholds around him spiritual existences—some good, others malevolent, but all capricious—who may some day take it into their heads to make a sheikh or an emir of him, or shower on him boundless wealth and render him master of the lawful number of fair wives. "I used to observe this especially in my interpreter Suleiman," says Mr. St. John. "He had known what it was to be poor and in bad health; but whenever he walked abroad at dawn or twilight it was obvious that he expected some benevolent Jinn to discover to him a hidden treasure. His eye and his smile were full of this anticipation, more especially when on the Nile and at midnight, in the delicious calm of those latitudes, and sur-
rounded by the ruins of temples and palaces, he used to keep me awake by recounting the wild adventures of some Arab hero or heroine."

Created of fire, the Jinn are supposed to have their principal abode in the mountains of Kaf, which by the Moslems, who believe the earth to be a flat surface, is thought, with the ocean, to encompass the habitable world. Falling stars are supposed to be darts thrown by God to slay evil Jinn, and when the Egyptians see them they exclaim, "May Allah transfix the enemy of the faith!"

Stories of haunted houses are very common in Cairo; thus frequently excellent ones are deserted and suffered to fall into decay because Efrits are said to have taken up their abode in them, reports at times traceable to the malice of neighbours, though generally mysterious noises, occasioned by unknown causes, give rise to them. St. John relates a story of one house that was haunted by spirits of a tradesman who had been murdered in the court thereof, with two slaves, one a black girl, who had been destroyed in the bath, where her spirit was wont to appear.

During the month of Ramadân the Jinn are confined in prison, or limbo; and hence on the eve of the festival which follows Bairam many of the women in Cairo, as elsewhere in Egypt, with the view of preventing these objects of dread from entering their houses, sprinkle salt upon the floors of the apartments, saying, while they do so, "In the name of God, the compassionate, the most merciful!"

According to the traditions of Islam there are three orders of created beings, angels, genii (or Jinn), and men. Of the last, if evil, the Jinn are deadly foes, and frequently carry off beautiful women and keep them as their wives.

Lane, in his "Englishman in Egypt," tells a story of a house that was haunted by an Efrit which tormented all the family, till it was shot by a servant! He describes this episode in the man's own words:—

"'The Efrit passed me in the gallery, and repassed me, when I thus addressed it: 'Shall we quit this house, or you do so?' "You shall quit it," he answered, and threw dirt in my right eye. This proved he was a devil. I wrapped my cloak round me and watched the spectre as it receded. I observed its appearance attentively. It was tall and perfectly white. I stooped, and before I moved again discharged my pistol, which I had concealed. The accursed thing was struck down before me, and here are the remains.' So saying he picked up a small burnt mass resembling more the sole of a shoe than anything else, but perforated by fire in several places and literally turned to a cinder. This, the man asserted, was always the relic when a devil was destroyed, and it lay under a part of the wall where the bullet had entered. The noise which succeeded the report, and which filled me with horror (as of a creature struggling and gasping for breath), is, and must ever remain, a mystery. On the following morning we closely examined the spot, but found nothing that could throw
light on the subject. The burnt remains do not help us to a conclusion. One thing, however, I cannot but believe, that one who had personated and One Nights’ who were bottled up and thrown into the sea by order of Suleiman, the son of Daood.”

A curious relic of ancient Egyptian

the spirit suffered some injury, and that the darkness favoured his escape. It is truly very ridiculous in these people who believe that the remains of a devil resemble the sole of an old shoe. It reminds me of the condensed spirits of whom we read in the ‘Thousand superstition may be noted here. It is believed at Cairo that each quarter of the city is under the protection of a guardian genius, or Agathodæmon, which bears, when seen, the form of a serpent; while all the ancient tombs and dark recesses of the ruined temples
are the temporary abodes of Efrits and Jinn.

The whole city is divided into ten towns, or quarters, each of which is closed from the other by gates at night. These are the Ezbekeeyeh, or modern European quarter, in which, with the adjoining district, Ismailieh, the chief municipal improvements and embellishments have been carried out; the Bab-Sharyé quarter; the Abdin (the Cairene Sublime Porte) Darb-el-Gammamiz, Darb-el-Ahmar, Geemelyé, Chessan, Khalifa, Boulaq, and Old Cairo. Of these Ezbekeeyeh, with the Ismailieh and part of Abdin, now form a handsome European town, "intersected," says McCoan, "by broad, well-paved, and gas-lit boulevards, flanked by shops and villas worthy of the Riviera, owned for the most part by Pashas, Beys, and wealthy foreigners to whom the Khedive has granted free building sites, on the sole condition of the houses erected being of a certain architectural merit." ("Egypt as it Is.")

Cairo, he adds, besides numerous special bazaars for the different trades and handicrafts, contains no less than 523 mosques, most of them chefs-d’œuvres of Arabian architecture, but many sorely dilapidated; 30 Christian churches, 10 Jewish synagogues, 1,300 khans, 1,200 cafés, and 70 public baths.

In every country a lunatic asylum is a piteous spectacle, but nowhere on earth, according to all accounts, can there be seen anything more terrible, more loathly and disgusting, than the madhouse of Cairo, "where," says St. John, "as may be inferred from the ferocious aspect of the keepers, and the appearance of the victims, lacerated and covered with wounds, scenes of suffering and cruelty cannot elsewhere be exhibited out of hell!"

In the centre of the court is a square pool, called a fountain, but which is, in reality, no better than a common sewer. Impregnated by its fearful exhalations, the atmosphere surpasses that of a dissecting-room in July. Green and ropy matter covers the walls and pavement, suggestive of the horrors to be witnessed in the cells. A dingy wall surrounds this court, wherein are a number of holes grated with iron, like the neglected dens of wild beasts, and in each of these is a human being, pressing his attenuated form close to the rusty bars, through which he glares, grins, and shrieks, generally stark naked.

From the heavy iron collar encircling his torn and skeleton-like neck is a massive chain that runs festoon-wise along the wall to the opening of the next den, linking him with his companions in madness, so that when one, infuriated, retires into his cell, another is necessarily dragged forward in proportion.

"In the first cell commencing on the right was a young Arab sunk in lethargy, from which nothing could rouse him. He turned his eyes after us as we passed, otherwise he might have been taken for a statue. The next was an Arnout soldier, who, becoming mad in Candia, had been sent thither to spend the remainder of his life in chains. He sat cross-legged, close to the grating, perfectly nude, his arms
crossed upon his breast, and his eyes closed as if in a dream. Being roused and called upon by the bystanders, he slowly opened his eyes while presented with a flower, which he smelled and regarded with interest, smiling when addressed, but uttering not a word, and when we quitted he relapsed into his dreamy state. The individual occupying the next cell, lying in a corner, rolled up in a blanket and mat, stared wildly at the spectators, and, covering himself again, refused to come forth. Seated by the next grating was a youth about eighteen years old, who, having been forced away from his native village as a conscript to the army, had become mad with the thoughts of home, but by proper treatment might probably have recovered. . . . Close to this man was a religious fanatic, who, discovering us to be Franks, was lavish in his terms of abuse, which none but a madman could utter now with impunity in Egypt.” (‘Egypt and Nubia.’)

The old Arab keeper who showed the building, rendered callous by long habit, was utterly insensible to the misery he saw, and laughed heartily at the incoherent babbling of the patients, who were visited at rare intervals by medical men.

From such a scene as this it is pleasant to turn to the beautiful Opera House of Cairo and the French Comedy Theatre, where, from October till April, the best troupes that money can procure afford, on alternate evenings, lyrical and dramatic entertainments scarcely to be surpassed in Paris or London. In addition to these are the Greek and German brasseries and musical cafes, in which mixed Bohemian bands and native performers on the oka'noon, the 'oo'd, and the kemun'gah give the visitor a choice between the lively strains of Strauss and Wagner and the plaintive, if discordant, airs of the Arab race.

Writing of the harbour of Boulak, at Cairo, Ebers says, “Side by side with a splendidly-fitted steamship lies a clumsy Nubian barge, with ragged lateen sails, in form just like the boats we see on the monuments of Pharaonic times, bringing the tribute of the Soudan to Egypt. Not far from the port stands a magnificent museum, in which the monuments and relics of antiquity are arranged in accordance with the highest requirements of science in the West. Of all the Egyptians who pass this building, scarcely one in a hundred can tell his own age, and could hardly say whether the ‘Pharaoh’—under which name he designates the whole pre-Christian history of his country—lived three hundred or three thousand years ago. And yet it is among these ignorant men that the efforts of learning also find their home. In that vast building at Boulak, slender Egyptian fingers pull from European steam-presses carefully printed sheets, covered with Arabic texts. . . . This wonderful city is like a mosaic picture of contrasts. Still, to this day, the background of the picture is of Oriental colouring; but one Eastern figure after another is displaced by a European one, and those who desire to become intimate with
This city of the dead—scarcely less in extent than a third of the area of that of the living—is a little to the east of Cairo, on the sandy skirts of the dreary desert. On the south of the city is another great cemetery, in which is the burial-place of the Khedivial family, and called El Karafeh. It is one of the most popular resorts of the pious, whether native or foreign, who visit Cairo, in order to seek out the graves of the saints and offer up their prayers.

There the Cairenes frequently make pilgrimages on a Friday, starting before
EL KARAFEH CEMETERY, OUTSIDE OF CAIRO.
sunrise, and regularly on certain holy days, particularly the Eid. Men, women, and children, may be seen crowding the streets that lead to the cemetery, and the city of the dead, usually so deserted and silent, is filled with gay and active life. Palm branches are laid on the graves, alms and food are given to the poor, and the spirits of famous sants or saints invoked. In the Karâfch stands the beautiful sarcophagus of the great general, Ibrahim Pasha, and there the Koran is read early and late.

With the reign of the present Khedive began the real expansion of commerce in Cairo, and in Egypt generally. In 1862, when the revenue was under £5,000,000, the total value of exports and imports—exclusive of goods in transit—was about £6,445,000. In 1873 and 1874, the trade totals, though showing an advance on previous years, were nearly stationary; but in 1875 exports fell off above £2,000,000, reducing the double total to £18,500,000, while the revenue further increased from £10,689,070 to £10,772,611 in 1877.

A letter in the Scotsman of October 24th, 1885, signed "Scoto-Egypto," written by a thirty years' resident in Egypt, bore witness to the remarkable progress which that country is making in the path of national development, adding that although Europeans in Cairo, Alexandria, and the other chief towns of the Delta of the Nile, pursue their avocations in peace and security, while most of the elements of civilized government are in full working order, people in Britain have a very different impression, and seem not to have divested their minds of the Alexandrian outbreak of 1882, and that, "curiously enough, they confound the disturbances in the Soudan frontier—a thousand miles distant—with the condition of Egypt proper, which enjoys as absolute repose as this island."

He attributes this mistake to the "mis-telegrams, published in certain London journals, whose correspondents gather up, and transmit in hot haste, the gossip retailed in the verandah of Shepheard's Hotel."

This thirty years' resident asserts that Lower Egypt enjoys not only peace, but comparative contentment, and that when he lately left Alexandria, merchants there were chiefly busy speculating on the extent of the coming cotton crop, and everywhere gratifying evidence was visible of the reconstruction of the burned and bombarded portions of the city, in a style exceeding even the grandeur and magnificence of the former buildings. He states that the only limit to progress, in the latter respect, is the paucity of capital, and, perhaps, of well-directed enterprise.

"But in addition to capital," he continues, "Egypt sorely requires intelligent captains of industry, of whom this country possesses a superabundance in search of employment. In Alexandria in particular, where we have been accustomed to dwellings only suited to the tastes and defective habits of a Levantine community, we want British architects and builders
who will furnish house accommodation, provided with all the conveniences and comforts of Europe, for which a rapidly-growing demand is springing up, and which would yield a handsome return to investors. Some houses and offices there at present yield as high as twenty-five per cent. on the capital invested, and I can aver from personal knowledge and experience that ten per cent. net may be regarded as the minimum return, while in favourite quarters it is a good deal more. It must be borne in mind that house-rents in Egypt are paid in advance, some half-yearly and others annually, and most new house and office accommodation is secured by tenants also in advance, on completion of plans and specifications by the architects. . . . Alexandria has a great future before it. As a measure of the progress it has made in recent times, I may remind you that, under the infamous régime of the Mamelukes, the population dwindled down to about 5,000; the harbour became choked with sand, and the environs became a sterile and marshy wilderness.”

Further decay was arrested by the vigorous hand of Mehemet Ali, who constructed the docks and quays and other improvements; thus the commercial capital of Egypt has now a quarter of a million of souls, one-fourth of whom are Europeans, besides a large body of Syrian Christians. It is well paved, lighted with gas, and has everything necessary in the way of churches, schools, and hospitals.

“European residents who supply the motive force to all industries, subsidiary to agriculture,” continues this writer, “are rapidly increasing, and though perhaps we may not in our own time see the city of Alexandria restored to its ancient glory, as when Cleopatra held high festival within it—when it was the resort of artists, scholars, and men of science, and when it was surrounded by other famous cities, such as Nicopolis, Canopus, Eleusis, Shedia, and Nacerates—I, for one, firmly believe that within the remaining quarter of this century it will probably contain little short of half a million of inhabitants, and will again become the most important city and port of the Mediterranean.”

This pleasant dream is not beyond the bounds of possibility. But many factors will have to work together in order to make it come true. The country and people of Egypt will need absolute peace, and a cessation of that interference by outside Powers in its internal affairs is imperative. That meddling was the fons et origo of recent evils, and so long as this system of “control” is in vogue so long will the natural development of the country be hampered and kept back. Let but a sense of security possess the natives, and prosperous times will dawn upon the land.

It may be idle, says another writer, to hope that the Alexandria of the Khedives will ever revive the magnificent glories of the Ptolemaic capital, but it already symbolises the New Civilisation with its virtues and its vices nearly as completely as the latter typified the Old.
CHAPTER VII.

THANKS AND REWARDS.

Some of Gordon’s Men—The Nubian Soldier’s Story—The Vote of Thanks—Past Military Exploits in Egypt—“Frontier Field Force” constituted—Decorations for British Officers—Heat at Suakim—Rumours about Kasala—Assouan.

Early in August, 1885, in connection with the reorganisation of the Egyptian Army under General Grenfell, it was decided to designate the four Egyptian Batteries of Artillery as follows:—

1st Battery, the Horse Artillery; 2nd, the Garrison Battery; 3rd, 1st Camel Battery; 4th, 2nd Camel Battery; all chiefly organised by British officers.

On the 17th of August Captain Montgomerie arrived at Cairo in the steamer Nil, bringing down with him fourteen of General Gordon’s men, who had made their way, in a sad plight, to Dongola. Some of these were not regular soldiers, but were seamen, firemen, and stokers, who had served in his steamers under Admiral Khasmel-Moos.

Captain Montgomerie was much impressed with the patience and good behaviour of these poor fellows during their voyage down to Cairo, and instanced their physical courage by citing the case of one man, who had been shot through the shoulder at Khartoum nine months before, and had never mentioned his wound until he reached Cairo. Captain Montgomerie stated that these fourteen men had “been made a great deal of, especially by the women,” wherever
the Nil stopped, and of this an amusing example happened at Dongola before leaving. A Dongolese came on board, and asserted that one of General Gordon's men had stolen his wife.

On this the captain at once called up the man, the woman, and the Dongolese. The soldier declared that the woman was his wife, who had been stolen out of Khartoum. Each disputant brought three or four witnesses to prove the truth of his assertions; so, finding a difficulty in deciding, Captain Montgomerie desired the woman to choose for herself, which she did by giving the Dongolese a furious box on the ear, and then passing over to the side of the black
soldier, whom she loyally accompanied to Cairo.

There the party was visited by the correspondent of the *Standard*, who found the wounded man with his shoulder roughly bandaged up, and somewhat uncommunicative. He said, however, that he knew General Gordon well, but had not seen him during the latter part of the siege, having been much on outpost duty, and was wounded near Metemneh. On being asked if he intended to enter the regular army again, he shook his head, and said the whole Egyptian forces were not worth his old slipper.

Pointing contemptuously to a group of Egyptians sitting forward at their mid-day meal, he remarked, with a fierce sneer on his black face, "all they were good for was to eat and to drink, and he would not fight alongside them. When they see the Arabs, a whole regiment will run away, throw down their arms, and yell for mercy, lying on their faces, and they soon get the mercy of the spear, and always in their backs."

Another soldier, a master-smith, had a clear recollection of the events of the siege. He said that one of General Gordon's mistakes "was his too great confidence in seamps—Farag Pasha, for instance, whom he liberated from chains and made a Pasha, after being twice degraded and imprisoned by the late Khedive, Ismail, first at Fashoda, and then at Khartoum, of which Gordon made him Lieutenant-Governor. He was always working against Gordon. I remember," continued this soldier, "before the fall of the city, he read and circulated a paper, which, he said, was signed by Gordon, to the effect that there was no more victual in the place, and nothing remained but to surrender. There were many inferior officers of the same stamp. Another mistake was sending the steamers down the Nile to Metemneh to meet the relieving column; for while they were at Khartoum the rebels never got near it. We used to build and mend them as well as you do here in Cairo. They were a fine serviceable flotilla. Before we left for Metemneh, Gordon came to the front of the palace and spoke to us in Arabic. He said we were sure to find the British either at Metemneh or Shendy; and if we did not find them the first day not to be discouraged, as they were certain to be there the next. When we got down to Metemneh we were fired on from all sides. We lost two steamers on the way down. We landed some of our guns, mounted them on high places, and held our own, according to instructions, till the British came. Then we heard that Khartoum had fallen—Khartoum, where all our wives, our families, and possessions were! If only the English had pushed on a little quicker, they would have got there before Gordon conceived the unfortunate idea of sending away his steamers to meet them."

The correspondent then asked him about Colonel Stewart, under whom he had served, and whom he called Stouard Pasha. "I went down in one of the boats with him," he replied. "We wanted him to keep to the main branch
of the river, but he insisted on going down the channel where he struck. We knew he had been murdered, but dared not tell Gordon so, and the latter believed he was in the British camp. So we did not insist, but let him continue in his belief."

He was then asked about Hassan and Said Pashas, whom Gordon declared, in his diary, to have been "judicially murdered," adding that, "if it had not been for outside influences they would have been alive now."

The Nubian soldier exculpated Gordon from his quasi self-accusation, and at the same time seemed to throw some light on the ambiguous terms in which Gordon alluded to the event.

"The Pashas," he said, "not only broke their own men and let the enemy in, but killed many of them with their own hands. Their tents, too, were found full of ammunition, ready to be handed over to the enemy. The soldiers went to Gordon in a great rage, and demanded justice, and Gordon promised that the matter should be inquired into. In the evening he gave secret orders for the Pashas to be taken away somewhere, and put out of the city, if possible. But before his orders reached the soldiers, they had killed them in the presence of a whole regiment."

On being asked if it was not after a court-martial these two Pashas had been executed, he said, the soldiers might have held some such court, but that Gordon did not, he believed, know they were killed, till long after all was over; and when Said Pasha's son came to him next morning, and reproached him with his father's death, Gordon answered that he had not killed him, and that he had disappeared.

"The man's story," added the correspondent, "may be taken for what it is worth; but, at least, of being first-hand from one who was present at the time. I asked this man, too, what he intended to do with himself, and if he meant to join the new Egyptian army, or the Police, which had organised a Soudanese battalion. He said he did not want to enlist, but if they forced him he would go. I told him, that for the present the days of forced conscription were past. After finishing my fourth cigarette, and distributing all the rest in my case, I left the boat amid many voluble salutations, delivered with broad grins from the tatterdemalion remnant of Gordon's garrison, who seemed perfectly happy, mending their shirts in peace, after their long campaign."

On the 12th of August the Marquis of Salisbury moved this resolution in the House of Lords:

"That the thanks of this House be given to General Lord Wolseley, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he planned and conducted the Expedition of 1894-5 by the Nile to the Soudan:

"That the thanks of this House be given to Lieutenant-General Sir Gerald Graham, K.C.B., V.C., for the distinguished skill and ability with which he conducted the expeditions of 1884 and 1885 in the Eastern Soudan, which resulted in the repeated defeat of the Arab forces under Osman Digna:

"That the thanks of this House be given to Admiral Lord John Hay, K.C.B.; to Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Charles Arthur Stephenson,
K.C.B.; and to Vice-Admiral Sir William Nathan Wrighte Hewett, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., V.C., for the support and assistance they afforded to the forces employed in the operations in the Soudan; and to the officers and warrant officers of the Navy, Army, and Royal Marines, including her Majesty's Indian Forces, European and Native, for the energy and gallantry with which they executed the services in the Soudan campaigns of 1884 and 1885, which they were called upon to perform:

"That this House doth acknowledge and highly approve the zeal and gallantry with which the troops of his highness the Khedive have co-operated in the Soudan with her Majesty's Forces there employed:

"That this House doth acknowledge with admiration the distinguished valour, devotion, and conduct of Major-General Charles George Gordon, C.B.; Major-General William Earle, C.B., C.S.I.; Major-General Sir Herbert Stewart, K.C.B.; and of those other officers and men who have perished during the campaign in the Soudan in the service of their country; and feels deep sympathy with their relatives and friends."

The Queen at the same time was pleased to confer the rank of Viscount on Lord Wolseley, G.C.B., by the name, style, and title of Viscount Wolseley, of Wolseley, in the county of Stafford, with the title of Viscountess in remainder to his only daughter, Frances Garnet Wolseley, spinster; and after her decease the dignity of a viscount to the heirs, male, of her body, lawfully begotten.
VILLAGE BETWEEN ASSOUAN AND PHILÆ
In the Commons the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the vote of thanks to the Army, which, he said, deserved well of the country. No one could contend that the Suakim expeditions had been failures, as the first had crippled the power of Osman Digna, and the second obtained a position from which there was every prospect of securing the goodwill of some of the most important Arab tribes. Perhaps the most distinguishing feature, he added, in the recent campaigns was the proof they afforded of the vast resources of the British Empire. The presence of the Colonists with our soldiers showed the depth of loyalty which animated her Majesty's Colonial subjects. So long as such a feeling existed this country need not fear the result of any emergency, as the fund of strength in the Colonies would enable us to face the world. If the expedition to Khartoum had failed of its chief purpose—the relief of Gordon and his garrison—still it had shown what difficulties we were able to overcome.

Though some of the leading members of the previous Government were conspicuous by their absence on this occasion, Lord Hartington desired to associate them with himself in the vote of thanks by seconding the motion. If there had been failure, it was not the fault of the officers or the men. The conduct of the Nile Expedition was said to have excited the enthusiastic admiration of Count von Moltke; it had done credit to the military and naval forces of the Crown, and proved that the ancient courage of our soldiers and sailors had not deteriorated; and that the intelligence, resource, and knowledge of their profession possessed by both officers and men had considerably increased; and that for the purposes of war, as for those of peace, the British Empire was not a name, but a great reality.

Commenting on the vote of thanks, the Army and Navy Gazette stated that, a short time before, it had indicated some of the conditions which gave to these Egyptian campaigns, and in that part of the Khedive's dominions called the Soudan—which has now ceased to belong to the Pashalik—peculiarly interesting and romantic attributes. Lord Salisbury (said the writer) would have been greatly astonished had he been told a few years before, when he was induced by M. Waddington to depose Ismail Pasha, that the consequence would be a revolution, a military coup d'état, an armed British intervention, the bombardment of a great city, the creation of two peerages, the fighting of six desperate battles and innumerable skirmishes, the loss of the Soudan, of thousands of lives, of millions of money, of the Dual Control, and the creation of a new Eastern Question on the Nile, which all Europe would engage in discussing.

In passing the vote, however, the orators, in their fervour, somewhat forgot what British soldiers and British generals had done on the sands of Egypt long ago. The expedition of Bonaparte was a bold and chivalrous
THE REBELS STILL ACTIVE.

one. He had to pass over a sea that was in the hands of his enemies, and to land on a coast where he had neither friends nor supplies, and to undertake in the midst of summer a campaign in the burning desert, in which the armies of France, after the reduction of the Mamelukes and their Arab auxiliaries, were called on to face the enormous levies of the Sultan of Turkey and the descendants of the British, to whose enterprise the destruction of the French fleet had given free scope. But Sir Ralph Abercrombie had to do quite as much. He had to land his army on an open coast in the face of the long victorious veterans of France, and to undertake to wrest Egypt from the bayonets of the conquerors of Europe; and nobly he did it, at the sacrifice of his own life. When we are filled with well-justified exultation at the services rendered by the Indian Contingent, we may recall the circumstances under which Sir David Baird effected his descent on the Red Sea, and marched across the desert from Kosseir to Keneh, and down the Nile to join hands with the British at Alexandria. It is not to disparage the endurance and valour of our soldiers and the skill of their generals in the present day, that we cite these examples of similar qualities in the armies of the past, says the writer. The behaviour of the forces in action and the ability of their officers have been acknowledged by the best judges, and have sustained the reputation of our arms in the eyes of the world, while at home they have won the rewards which are the truest and best that generals and soldiers can obtain.

In the middle of August a telegram from Suakim was received at the War Office to the effect that since the departure of the Guards and other troops under Sir Gerald Graham, no attempt had been made by the natives to destroy the military railway, which had been constructed over a considerable district, and that it was hoped the line might yet serve for some useful purpose. At the same time it was stated from Cairo that the British Government was not disinclined to a proposal of the Khedive to despatch an expedition composed entirely of Egyptian troops for the re-conquest of the province of Dongola, and it was proposed that, when the season permitted, it should start for that place, under the command of Mustapha Yarer Pasha, the former Mudir of Dongola.

But, on the 19th of August, General Grenfell telegraphed to Cairo that the rebels were still active and in motion; and that a letter had been received at Akasheh from Sheikh El Abre, dated 17th August, confirming the occupation of Debbeh and Abu Goossi by them, and compelling the men in these places to adopt the Dervish uniform or costume.

The Times correspondent added that the enemy, under Abdul Mejid, left Goleh for New Dongola on the 11th, ordering the natives of Argo Island and Haffir to send forage and grain to New Dongola by the 16th, under pains and penalties. By the 24th the latter place was occupied by 4,000 Dervishes,
with 800 rifles and seven pieces of cannon.

On the 20th of August General Stephenson inspected the 19th Hussars at Cairo, and presented bronze stars to those men who had arrived in the country after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir; and in the evening of the same day the among the members of our Army Hospital Corps at a decision being come to, that no “batta” was to be allowed for the troops who did not go farther south than Wady Halfa. The largest hospital on the line of communication was at that place, and the men there were subjected to continuous and arduous

Sheikh Morghani, of the Beni Amer tribe, left the city for Suakim, charged with a conciliatory mission to, and with numerous presents for, the Sheikhs of the neighbourhood; and it was now decided that a strong contingent of the Egyptian Army was to form part of what was called the “Frontier Field Force,” under Major-General Grenfell, at Assouan; while a Depot Battalion for the regiments of the Native troops serving with that force was formed at the Abbassieh Barracks, Cairo.

Considerable discontent was now felt duty, in no respect less wearing out than that of their comrades farther south; and it was openly stated that, if this decision was maintained, it would have a serious effect on the recruiting for the Army Hospital Corps, a large number of whom—especially in such a climate—must necessarily always be left along the line of communications in a campaign.

The Khedive now conferred the following decorations on the undermentioned officers, in recognition of their services with the Egyptian army:
Colonel Francis Duncan (formerly Superintendent of the Royal Artillery Records), commanding the Egyptian Artillery, 3rd Class of the Order of Osmanieh; Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Singleton Wynne (formerly 51st Foot), commanding the 4th Egyptian Battalion, 3rd Class of the same order; Major D. C. Carter, of the Egyptian Artillery, 4th Class of the order. The following is a copy of the military order issued by Major-General Grenfell, commanding the Frontier Field Force, with reference to the first-named officer:—

"Colonel Duncan, R.A., commanding the Egyptian Artillery, on relinquishing his command, will proceed to Cairo, en route for Britain. During the twelve months that Col. Duncan has commanded at Halfa, in addition to his other duties, he has passed through his station, to the front and back again, the Nile Expeditionary Force. He has arranged the withdrawal of refugees from Khartoum and Dongola, and, including the refugees of 1884, has passed about fifteen thousand to their homes. The Major-General Commanding cannot let Colonel Duncan leave the command without mentioning these services, and recalling the good work he has done during the lengthened period in which he has been on duty at Halfa."

A special Army Circular, directing the issue of a gratuity to the troops employed on the Nile Expedition and at Suakim, was issued from the War Office, on the 25th August, 1885, in the following terms:—

"1. A gratuity will be issued to the European troops engaged in the recent operations in the Sudan. Every officer, warrant officer, non-commissioned
officer, and private, who was employed at or south of Wady Halfa, on the Nile, or who was, between March 1 and May 14, 1885 (both dates inclusive), on shore at Suakim, will be entitled to participate in the grant.

2. The unit of the scale will be £5 for the Nile Expedition, and £2 for the operations in the neighbourhood of Suakim.

3. The gratuity will be issued according to the rank or relative rank of the recipient upon the following scale, which is reprinted from Clause 110, Army Circulars, 1884: General, 400 shares; lieut.-general, 152 shares; and major-general, 76 shares (each with 100 shares extra if in chief command); brigadier-general, 57 shares (with 50 shares extra if in chief command); colonel—Staff or Departmental officers, or officers having regimental rank of colonel, 40 shares; colonel, except as above defined, and lieut.-colonel, 32 shares; major, 16 shares; captain, 12 shares; lieutenant, 7½ shares; warrant officer; 4 shares; non-commissioned officers and men according to classification, contained in Article 1,032, Royal Warrant of June 10, 1884, i.e., class 1, 3 shares; class 2, 2½ shares; class 3, 2 shares; class 4, 1½ shares; class 5, 1 share.

4. The amount due to officers will be paid to them by the agent of the corps or department to which they belong, and charged against the public in his accounts, the charges being supported by a certificate signed by the officer commanding the corps or department that each officer was actually on shore at Suakim between the dates mentioned in Par. 1, or employed at or south of Wady Halfa, as the case may be.

5. Warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men will be settled with by the paymaster or other officer in whose payment they were on Aug. 15, 1885, the charge being supported by a similar certificate to that required in the case of officers, and by proof of payment.

6. Each paymaster and other accountant referred to in Par. 5 will transmit to the War Office, as soon as may be practicable, a list of the warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men who should be settled with by him in accordance with Par. 5, but whom he is unable to settle with owing to death, discharge, transfer to the Reserve, or any other cause. No payment will in any circumstances be made to any person whose name has not been included in the list sent to the War Office.

7. In cases in which warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, or men become non-effective from any cause before Aug. 15, 1885, the instructions contained in Pars. 5 and 6 will be carried out by the paymaster or other accountant, by whom the warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, or men were last paid before becoming non-effective.

8. A gratuity in accordance with the scale in Par. 3 will be issued to officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Egyptian Army who were employed with the Nile Expedition at or south of Wady Halfa. The unit of the scale will be £2, except for British officers in the service of his Highness the Khedive, in whose case the unit will be £5.

9. The payments to the Egyptian troops will be made by the District Paymaster in Egypt, upon certified lists, which will be furnished to him by the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army.

Regarding the heat at Suakim, in August, we may give the following five extracts from the private Diary of an officer serving there—

August 6th.—I am a seasoned vessel by this time, and not likely to cry out about trifles; but anything like the heat as I was coming down the harbour in a boat, between eight and nine a.m., I have not experienced in Suakim. There was not a breath of wind, and one felt, under an umbrella, just as if in front of an enormous furnace, and everything was burning to the touch.

7th, one o'clock p.m.—No words in English or any other language can do justice to the terrific heat of this most overpowering day. I have just come down the creek from town in a boat. I bolted off the pier, across the Parade, into my tent, and positively the skin on my face was crackling with the refraction from the ground, and my clothes were literally scorching my flesh. The sun, through a thick double umbrella, made my back feel more unpleasant than if standing before the hottest kitchen fire; but it is no use attempting to convey any idea of the reality. There is hardly a breath of air; the thermometer under a double roof, and in a draught, marked 111 degrees. Nay Heaven the heat does not increase, or existence will become a problem indeed. Yesterday was a scorcher; but to-day takes the shine for direct sun fury of all yet.

8th, seven a.m.—But all yet was child's play to last night. Imagine being in a close room at the back of a furnace, with occasional jets of half-condensed steam turned on; that is something like it. Eight p.m.—Beginning to be exhausted and down; yesterday and last night might have satisfied a salamander.

9th.—A terrible night—not a motion on air, sea, or sky—the thermometer somewhere between
90 and 100 degrees. I spent the night in crawling between my bed in tent and my chair in the open air, but the difference was hardly perceptible in temperature. This sort of thing cannot go on; seven men sick this morning, and five more this afternoon. I hear that the first lieutenant of the Dolpin, which came in yesterday, was knocked down with sunstroke, and died as she was casting anchor. Everyone agrees—natives and residents—that such severe and long-continued weather has not been known for many years. The inhabitants are perishing like flies.

"10th.—Heard at daybreak three volleys over the water. Our old friend the Kameen is breezing up from Equatorial Africa. Five p.m.—The promise of the morning has been amply fulfilled by a southerly of an afternoon, 108 degrees in the coolest corner; but the breeze has come, and we breathe once more. When once the thermometer touches a certain height every day for weeks, it will at one time or other reach that point or near it, so that one cannot comfort oneself with excuses about exceptional weather. The hospitals on land are all full, so now they are starting one on board ship. Three more volleys! . . . ."

Small as the matter may sound or seem, few stores were a source of greater solicitude to our troops in the Soudan than the care they had to take of their lucifer matches. Without these they would not have enjoyed the solace of a pipe on their desert marches, and would have been compelled to consume their food in the state it left home, for though they had the newest fire-arms, these were unavailable for a "flash in the pan," like the old "Brown Bess" of other years.

Many strange and vague rumours about Kassala prevailed at this time. Indeed, there was nothing known of the actual state of its devoted and unfortunate garrison. One account said that it had fallen; another, that it had come to terms with the Hadendowas on the 30th July, and that the soldiers and rebels were now living amicably together in Kassala, while Osman Digna was infuriated that the former had not been all put to the sword.

The Times correspondent wrote that the above news had been received at Cairo, but was kept secret three days by the authorities, as they believed the tidings had no foundation; yet from three different sources the same came to Suakim, with the additional details that the garrison had been forced to surrender, through want of provisions, after eating all the donkeys, dogs, and grass in the place, though the garrison, a few days before the end of July, had repulsed an attack, and driven the Arabs back, while Sennara was still holding out.

The truth was, that nothing with certainty was known of the fate of the fortress, towards which Ras Alboola was still on the march with his Abyssinians.

On the 30th of August, General Grenfell, Commander of the Frontier Field Force at Assouan, telegraphed to Cairo that there were then only 3,000 Mahdists in New Dongola, 300 on Argo Island, and 200 at Hassir. Assouan now became virtually the key of Egypt, which, if seized by the Mahdists, would open an avenue to an invading force from the Soudan. It was thought that after the experiences of what Egyptian troops, if properly officered, had done at Khartoum and Kassala, they were qualified to defend their country at its weakest and most critical point; and if this were so, why was a mixed force of British and Indian troops left to be roasted at
Suakim, where there could be no possibility of opening a door to invasion? If the Egyptian troops could hold Assouan—the last town in Upper Egypt before crossing the Nubian frontier—they were, à fortiori, equally well qualified to hold Suakim, a much less important place. All really needed just then, at the latter place, was the power of standing a deadly climate.

"Neither European nor Indian troops have that power," wrote one at the time, "and to call upon them to do duty at Suakim is to expose them to destruction without any valid reason whatever. But Egyptian soldiers could bear it well enough, and it is the only serious thing they would have to bear. Even if Suakim were swallowed up by the Soudanese, Egypt itself would be in no immediate peril; and if, as is possible, it remained secure, it would be at the cost of troops whom we cannot spare without shameful cruelty to such enemies as heat and disease. We cordially hope that an Egyptian force is competent to guard Egypt, and that our authorities are well advised in laying this heavy trust upon them; this being so, every pretext for leaving a British garrison at Suakim falls to the ground."

It was also urged, at the time, that if Egyptian troops were incapable of holding Suakim, what words were strong enough to describe the singular policy of keeping our best forces at the less important position, and sending the inferior to the crucial position at Assouan? If it was prudent to entrust the latter to Egyptians, it was useless barbarity to keep our troops at Suakim, and to the effects of the terrible climate there, without just and ample cause.
NEAR SUKIM: DIFFICULTIES OF TRANSPORT.
CHAPTER VIII.

THE HONOURS GAZETTE AND DESPATCH.


On the 25th of August, 1885, the Secretary of State for War acknowledged the receipt of Lord Wolseley's latest despatch relative to the then recent operations on the Upper Nile—a document of importance, as it led to the granting of a shoal of honours and rewards, and caused much heart-burning in many quarters. As it is of great length, we can only give a few extracts from it.

"Cairo, June 15th, 1885.

"Sir,—All the troops on the Upper Nile are now quitting Dongola. Some have already embarked for Britain, and others are on their way to their allotted destinations. The withdrawal of our forces to a defensive position on the Wady Halfa Railway, in accordance with the orders I have received, is now nearly completed. I therefore think it desirable that, before leaving Egypt for England, I should place on record my opinion as to the manner in which all ranks under my command have carried out their respective duties. I wish also to bring to your notice the names of some officers who have specially distinguished themselves, almost all of whom, I think, it would be in the interests of the service to promote while they are still young and efficient.

"It is a source of great pride to me as a soldier, and of satisfaction as a British subject, that on each fresh occasion when I am brought in contact with her Majesty's troops in the field, I find the army more efficient as a military machine than it was the last time I was associated with it on active service. This improvement is evident in all grades and in all arms and departments, but it is, I think, most marked in the rank and file. Military spirit—the essence of military efficiency—is now established in our army in a higher form and on a sounder basis than formerly. The soldier is prouder of himself and of his calling than he used to be, and his self-esteem has been raised by the healthy feeling of liberty arising from the knowledge that, if the army does not suit his tastes, he can easily quit it, instead of being bound to it for ten or twelve years. Our rank and file are morally better and militarily more efficient than formerly. The general conduct and bearing of our men in the Soudan left nothing to be desired, and was not only creditable to the British army, but should also be a just source of pride to the British nation. The physical appearance of the soldiers who assembled at Korti in last December and January spoke well for the efficiency of our present recruiting service. I have never seen a finer body of troops in the field, and both their appearance and the noble spirit which animated them made me feel that I was safe in relying on them to accomplish any enterprise where success was possible."

It would, perhaps, have been well had Lord Wolseley paid some heed to the time-honoured maxim about comparisons being odious. Certainly, the tenor of this paragraph of his despatch in its unfortunate allusions to our armies of the past excited much indignation in military circles and no small comment in the military papers. It was said that Lord Wolseley, whenever he has occasion to eulogise, and deservedly so, the services of those who have fought under his orders, it is too apt to draw comparisons that are most unfair to our dead heroes of other days, and it was insisted that it was not possible for the soldiers who served in Egypt or the Soudan to surpass in valour and hardihood the veterans of the Peninsula and Waterloo, of Inkerman, Delhi, Lucknow, and a thousand other glorious conflicts. Lord Wolseley
was also taxed with forgetting that the troops who served on the Nile were not fair samples of the reformed army, but were the flower of our home service men—the Guards, the Camel Corps, the Reserves—and that all others had been carefully weeded out. The flower of any army ought to display exceptionally high soldierly qualities; and the very flower of the British army was essentially represented by the Soudan Field Force. Hence its success.

His despatch complimented generously and warmly all the brigadiers and heads of departments, particularly Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., and Sir Evelyn Wood. Of the former he said:

"When the late Sir Herbert Stewart was wounded, and Colonel Burnaby, whom I had appointed to command at Metemneh, had been killed, I ordered General Sir Redvers Buller to take command of the Desert Column, and he carried out to my entire satisfaction the difficult operation of withdrawing it from Gubat to Gaidual in the face of an active enemy—an operation requiring great nicety of execution and a thorough knowledge of the military art. When I received orders that the army was to fall back from its summer quarters on the Nile to the Wady Halfa Railway, I entrusted him with the details of this movement, which was most skilfully effected. I beg to recommend this officer to your favourable consideration."

Somewhat briefly he also recommended Sir Evelyn Wood, "who, as General of Communications, brought the utmost zeal to bear upon the arduous and difficult duties of that position"—a line by rail, river, and desert from Alexandria to Gubat of 1,500 miles in length. Brigadier Brackenbury and Sir John McNeill came in for an equal amount of praise, though, as a matter of fact, their services were somewhat different; and the officers and men of the Suakim Field Force were warmly recommended to the military authorities. He adds:

"The various departments were administered to my entire satisfaction by the following officers:—In the Intelligence Department, Col. Sir C. Wilson, K.C.M.G., C.B., R.E., kept me fully supplied with information as to the enemy's doings and intentions, and showed himself eminently qualified to conduct the duties of that department. At Suakim similar information was furnished by the exertions of Major Grover and Major Chessam, both of the Royal Engineers. The last named was Governor-General of the Red Sea Littoral, and has rendered valuable service to the State for a lengthened period. The Medical Department was administered with ability by Deputy-Surg.-Gen. O'Nial. I have never seen the sick and wounded better cared for. The arrangements were good, and the medical officers worked with untiring zeal and great devotion to their duties. At Suakim, Deputy-Surg.-Gen. Barnett and Hinde directed all medical matters with great credit to themselves and to their Department. Both there and on the Nile the work done by the nursing-sisters was highly appreciated by doctors and patients. The Commissariat duties were well performed throughout, the Department being excellently directed by Assist.-Comy.-Gen. Hughes. At Suakim, Assist.-Comy.-Gen. Robertson did good work; all his arrangements were satisfactory. Lieut.-Col. Purse, the Director of Transport, carried on his duties in a most creditable manner, and produced good results under considerable difficulties. The system of settling those duties from those of the Commissariat answered admirably. Lieut.-Gen. Graham speaks in high terms of Lieut.-Col. Walton, who was the Director of Transport to the Suakim force, and of Lieut.-Col. Beckett, who was in charge of the Indian Transport. Assist.-Comy.-Gen. of Ordnance Pease, on the Nile, and Assist.-Comy.-Gen. Skinner at Suakim, evinced a thorough knowledge of the detail and working of the Ordnance Stores Department. All the officers under them worked zealously and well. Owing to the great length of the line of communications up the Nile Valley, and to the number of stations upon it, the work of the Pay Department was difficult and very heavy. Great credit is due to Col. Oliver for the efficient manner in which it was performed. The pay duties at Suakim were satisfactorily carried out.
The long list of officers specially named occupied a column and a half of the Army and Navy Gazette, and those appointed, promoted, and specially decorated, filled a closely printed column and more of the Standard; yet, curiously enough, failed to give satisfaction; though it was calculated that the number of clasps given with the Egyptian medal, beginning with the bombardment of Alexandria, is now equal in number to those given for the grand old war in the Peninsula, wherein, if the same system had been adopted, no less than fifty-five clasps per man, must have been awarded!

It was a source of bitter comment by Lieut.-Col. Craig. The Rev. J. Brindley, the senior chaplain with the Army up the Nile, won the esteem of all by his untiring devotion to his sacred duties, and by his unfailing and cheerful kindness. Vet.-Surgs. Burt and Waters well performed the work that fell to them. The Volunteers were represented by men of the Volunteer Engineers and of the Post Office Corps, who, both by their zeal and their soldier-like bearing, sustained the reputation of the service to which they belong.

The Indian Contingent, "for their soldier-like qualities, which were of the utmost value in the operations round Suakim," the Naval Brigade, and Colonels Butler and Alleyne, who had the fitting out of the Nile flotilla, and the Australians, under Colonel Richardson, were not without due laudation from the General, who adds:

"The Dominion of Canada supplied us with a most useful body of boatmen, under the command of Colonel Denison, of the Ontario Militia. Their skill in the management of boats was of the utmost use to us in our long ascent of the Nile. Men and officers showed a high military and patriotic spirit, making light of difficulties and working with that energy and determination which have always characterized her Majesty's Canadian Forces."

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"The Dominion of Canada supplied us with a most useful body of boatmen, under the command of Colonel Denison, of the Ontario Militia. Their skill in the management of boats was of the utmost use to us in our long ascent of the Nile. Men and officers showed a high military and patriotic spirit, making light of difficulties and working with that energy and determination which have always characterized her Majesty's Canadian Forces."

The long list of officers specially named occupied a column and a half of the Army and Navy Gazette, and those appointed, promoted, and specially decorated, filled a closely printed column and more of the Standard; yet, curiously enough, failed to give satisfaction; though it was calculated that the number of clasps given with the Egyptian medal, beginning with the bombardment of Alexandria, is now equal in number to those given for the grand old war in the Peninsula, wherein, if the same system had been adopted, no less than fifty-five clasps per man, must have been awarded!

It was a source of bitter comment by Lieut.-Col. Craig. The Rev. J. Brindley, the senior chaplain with the Army up the Nile, won the esteem of all by his untiring devotion to his sacred duties, and by his unfailing and cheerful kindness. Vet.-Surgs. Burt and Waters well performed the work that fell to them. The Volunteers were represented by men of the Volunteer Engineers and of the Post Office Corps, who, both by their zeal and their soldier-like bearing, sustained the reputation of the service to which they belong.
LORD AND LADY WOLSELEY, AND THE HON. FRANCES WOLSELEY.

(From a Photograph by J. Thomson, 70, Grosvenor Street, W.)
that in the list of officers deserving to be specially mentioned, forwarded by the General, and which professed to include those at Suakim as well as up

lions, see some of their officers promoted, the Marines none! Every one of the Marine officers up the Nile is thought worthy of mention, and no

the Nile "who have done best work," not one single officer of the Marines at Suakim was mentioned, and no Naval Medical Officer appeared in that long roll. One of the former popular corps, wrote thus about this matter, on the 31st of August:—"The Guards, Artillery, Engineers, and Line Battalions, one grudges such appreciation of their services; but it is hard for their brethren on the Red Sea, that their splendid work up the hills at Hasheen, and their bravery at the zeriba, when they never budged an inch, should pass absolutely unrecognised. If General Graham is not in a position to see justice done to
the Marine Battalion that served there so well, then I appeal to the First Lord of the Admiralty, who, as a soldier, must know that such disregard of signal service breeds disgust and discontent."

The ignoring of another branch of the service was referred to in another print at the time.

A correspondent of the Army and Navy Gazette, of October 3rd, 1885, with reference to the distribution of honours for the War in the Soudan, drew attention to the fact that the Transport Department, more especially that portion of it which came from India to Suakim, for the British Expedition, seemed to be scurvily treated. As honours were so lavishly bestowed in regiments, it seemed difficult—he wrote—to understand why this branch of a department, which all who were at Suakim recognised as being most efficient, should have been ignored, with the exception of one Cross of the Bath, conferred on the commanding officer. It was composed of some thirty officers chiefly belonging to H.M. Indian army, some wearing the Egyptian and many other medals, and most of them those won in Afghanistan. He urged that surely this would have been a fitting opportunity to have treated those deserving officers a little more liberally, as all of them had to wait eleven, twenty, and twenty-six years respectively for the ranks of captain, major, and lieutenant-colonel. Not only had they the mortification of being on service with men of less experience than themselves—in the majority of cases at least one rank higher,—but they had also, by a recent Gazette, seen men of about half their service pass over their heads; and in more than one case men who, only a few weeks before, were—in the same campaign—a rank lower, as captains and subalterns, were made lieutenant-colonel and major.

In his book on "The River Column," General Brackenbury bears high testimony to the behaviour of the troops of his brigade: "Their life was one of incessant toil from the first to the last day of the Expedition. In ragged clothing, scarred and blistered by the sun and hot work, they toiled with constant cheerfulness and unceasing energy. Their discipline was beyond reproach; and I do not hesitate to say that no finer, more gallant, or more trustworthy body of men ever served the Queen."

In recognition of the peculiarly gallant services of the 1st Battalion of the Princess Charlotte of Wales's Berkshire Regiment in the action at Tofrek (McNeill's zeriba), near Suakim, on March 22, her Majesty was pleased to direct that its facings should be changed to blue, and that it should be designated the "Royal" Berkshire Regiment. This battalion was the old 49th, raised by Colonel Edward Trelawney in 1743, and now linked with the old 66th, raised by Lieutenant-General Edward Sandford in 1758.

The Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief now issued the following general order in reference to the recent campaign in the Soudan:

"1. The Queen has been graciously pleased to signify her pleasure that a Medal be granted to all
her Majesty's forces employed in the Soudan in commemoration of their arduous labours in the ascent of the River Nile, and their gallantry in the operations which ensued, and also for the operations in the Eastern Soudan, in the vicinity of Suakim.

"2. The Medal to be similar in pattern to that already granted for service in Egypt and the Soudan.

"3. Individuals already in possession of the decoration specified in Paragraph 2 will only be eligible to receive such of the clasps specified hereafter as they may be entitled to.

"4. All officers and soldiers who served south of Assouan, or before the 7th March, 1885, will be held to be entitled to the medal, except those who are already in possession of it.

"5. All officers and soldiers, who were on duty at Suakim between 26th March, 1884, and the 14th of May, 1885, will also be entitled to the Medal, except those already in possession of it.

"6. Her Majesty has further approved of clasps being issued as follows: (1) A clasp, inscribed "The Nile, 1884, 1885," to those officers and soldiers who served south of Assouan on or before 7th March, 1885. (2) A clasp, inscribed "Abu Klea," to those officers and soldiers who took part in the action fought there, on 17th January, 1885, under the late Major-General Sir Herbert Stewart, K.C.B. (3) A clasp, inscribed "Kirbekan," to those officers and soldiers who took part in the action fought there on the 10th of February, 1885, under the late Major-General Earle, C.B., C.S.I. (4) A clasp, inscribed "Suakim, 1885," to those officers and soldiers who were engaged in the operations there, between the 1st of March and the 14th of May, 1885 (both days inclusive. (5) A clasp, inscribed "Tofrek," to those officers and soldiers who were actually present in the action fought there on the 22nd March, 1885.

"7. Rolls to be forwarded to the Adjutant-General's office without delay.

"8. General officers will forward rolls for themselves and their Staffs. Special service officers will forward their applications through the general officers under whom they served.

"9. Officers who served as heads of departments will furnish rolls of officers and others who served under their command.

"10. Officers commanding Batteries of the Royal Artillery, Companies of the Royal Engineers, Regiments of Cavalry, and Battalions of Infantry, will forward rolls of officers, warrant and non-commissioned officers, and men who served under their command.

"11. The rolls to be prepared in duplicate, in conformity with the form in the Appendix. The names of the officers and warrant officers to be entered in order of rank; those of the non-commissioned officers and men strictly in alphabetical order, without reference to troops or companies, in the case of Cavalry and Infantry.

"12. The names of men who, under Articles 810 to 912 Army Regulations, Vol. 1 (Royal Warrant Relating to Pay), have incurred forfeiture of the Medals, are also to be included in the rolls, and the reasons which have rendered them ineligible to be stated.

"13. The addresses of men who have been discharged since the operations should also be inserted.
CHAPTER IX.

THE GUARDS AT CYPRUS.


It may not be without interest to note here that in addition to the Mahdi who gave Napoleon Bonaparte some trouble above named, began an insurrection under an aged Sheikh, who called himself, like Mohammed Achmet, a heaven-sent Prophet, and promised them victory in the name of Allah. “And certainly,” says a writer, “his cause was one which might well have been supposed to merit a blessing from above; nor, as will be seen, did his mild character and humane disposition ill-become the holy mission with which he may have supposed himself to be entrusted.”

during his campaign in Egypt, another appeared in 1844, near Medeenet Haboo, in Upper Egypt, on the west bank of the Nile, a village situated among ruined temples, colossi, and sphinxes, which appear to have been a portion of Thebes. At that time a number of Soudanese and other Arabs were in open rebellion against Mehemet Ali, and 300 mustering at Beirat, near the place...
DEALER IN ANTIQUITIES ON THE ROAD FROM LUXOR TO KARNAK.
However, he did not disdain to employ human means, and set about to procure from the chief of Gournon arms and ammunition for his followers—one of whom, more savage or more zealous than the rest, proposed to behead all the Coptish Christians they could find. "Nay," said the new Prophet, "if you are attacked you may slay, but not otherwise."

Some considerable fighting took place in the neighbourhood of Thebes between his adherents and those of Mehemet Ali. The insurgents soon mustered 3,000 strong; among them were the Arabs of Luxor and Karnak, who put to flight the governor of the former place. Next morning 400 regular troops arrived from Gizeh and Gannounli. These sacked and destroyed the village of Beirat, in which the revolt began, and then retreated.

The fighting and sacking of villages increased apace, till the old Sheikh became rather appalled by the magnitude of the enterprise he had undertaken, and, instead of marching upon Assiout, he began to fall back, and send his men home to their villages, stating that the great and final conflict would take place at the First Cataract; and he asserted that he could bring angels down from heaven to fight his battles, adding to his followers: "It is not you who fight; I can see Mohammed and his angels doing battle for us." This they all believed, and said, "if cannon shot were fired they would not be touched by them."

When the Pasha's regular troops arrived, several desperate encounters took place on the plains of Thebes. Many prisoners were taken, blown from the cannon's mouth, and their remains cast into the Nile, while mobs of captured prisoners were shot down en masse by Piedmontese and Sardinian officers who commanded Turkish battalions. The revolt was thoroughly quenched in blood; but what became of the False Mahdi who raised it was never known. He was supposed to have escaped into the desert, and to have been protected and concealed by the Bedouins.

In the last days of August, 1885, Cairo was filled with consternation by a story published in an Arabic journal—corroborated by a paragraph in the local French paper—to the effect that the Mahdists, 80,000 strong, were advancing on Wady Halfa, and the Europeans noted, with growing dismay, that great activity prevailed in military circles, and that interpreters were re-engaged; but the story originated in the forward movements of the rebels from Dongola, and a report that they had captured some of the stern-wheel steamers, several of which were now plying on the Nile.

Messrs. Elder and Co., of Glasgow, being first in the field, secured the contract for constructing fourteen stern-wheel fighting steamers. On the 17th of May, Mr. Carmichael (one of the firm's engineers) reached Cairo with a squad of workmen and the floatable sections of these boats, which were conveyed to Alexandria, and by the 1st of September eleven of them were running on the Nile, and the rest
were speedily being got in readiness. One of them ran between Cairo and Assouan as a hospital ship, transporting sick and wounded; but the majority were fitted up as gunboats, combining speed and lightness of draught with offensive and defensive powers; the former being of such a character as to admit of running (like Gordon's boats) a gauntlet of bullets, while effectively replying to the fire of Arabs holding the banks of the river.

These armoured vessels were then patrolling the upper reaches of the Nile as far as Korosko. The hulls were protected by mantlets of steel, and each was fitted with a circular turret on the main-deck armed with a 9-pounder, in addition to which they had Nordenfeldts; while the upper deck was provided with a conning tower, from the fore-end of which the vessel was steered, by either steam or tiller. Paddle and boiler were alike sheathed in steel, so that they could not run the risk (like Lord Charles Beresford's vessel) of being partially disabled.

The crew of each boat consisted of a Reis, or native pilot, a few natives to work her, and a British captain-engineer; but, as they were perpetually running ground, it became evident that European crews would have to be engaged, and a sharp eye kept on the native pilots, who were extremely untrustworthy, being subject to secret influences.

The stern-wheel gunboats of Messrs. Yarrow and Co. were put together at Boulak, under Mr. Broadmeir, amid considerable difficulties, and many im-

pediments from stupid Arab workmen and the heat of the season.

These also had iron mantlets to protect the hull above the water-line from the shot of ordinary guns. Each had three decks—a main, upper, and hurricane; and each had a turret and conning tower, bullet-proof, the latter constructed so as to permit seven riflemen at a time to use its loopholes. The armament consisted of a nine-pounder each on the upper deck forward, and eight Nordenfeldts, four on the hurricane, and four on the upper deck, two being trained forward and two aft. The engines were service-condensing, and the boilers were supplied with fans. The advantage of the latter was found when the steamer had to cross a rapid or cataract, where a strong head of steam was necessary. Then the fanning apparatus brightened up the fires, thereby increasing the steam, and consequently the propelling power. On the lower deck was the captain's cabin, and one for the surgeon, opening into the saloon for sick or wounded. On the upper deck was an officer's cabin, with folding berths, to be used either for sitting on or sleeping in.

"I was witness," says a correspondent, "to the work of piecing one of these steamers. Each section was dropped into the water, no launching apparatus being required, and the whole hull was bolted together and ready to receive the engines in five hours. Each of these compartments, which are as dry as possible, is fitted with a steam syphon, so that if by chance any one
of them was penetrated by a ball, the water could at once be ejected; but such an accident would be entirely due to some extraordinary combination of circumstances which these swift fighters were not intended to meet. To sum up, the advantages of these steamers passing through a country swarming with Arabs, firing from the river banks, and dispersing the enemy, or silencing his rifles. As we expect some hot work on the Nile, it will be interesting to see how these steamers behave themselves. I have no doubt, and I repeat the

are, firstly, the simplicity of their construction—each section is easily transportable, so that a steamer can be carried by camels from one point to another on the river, and put together again if required, disjointed and rejointed with equal rapidity, and so on, ad infinitum. Then their lightness of draught admirably adapts them for duty on a river so variable as the Nile. Again, their quickness and armour qualify them for river duty and fighting, especially when it is a question of

dictum of military authorities, that they will fulfil the purpose for which they have been built in a manner exceeding expectation. The parting word must be one of praise for the way in which the contract has been executed by the London firm and their engineers."

The next prominent event in connection with the Soudan War was the return of the Brigade of Foot Guards. On the 28th of June the Brigade had been ordered to embark for
THE GREAT HALL OF PILLARS AT KARNAK.
Cyprus, and Sir R. Biddulph had been, before that, in communication with Lord Wolseley, on the subject of encamping the force at Troodos, which is 6,000 feet above the level of the sea. A reference to the medical statistics of the army showed that the health of the troops quartered in the pine forests there since 1879 compared favourably with that of any other military station at home or abroad. Health apart, there was another reason for sending her Majesty's Guards there, as the cloud of war was still hanging over the Afghan frontier.

The 3rd July saw the 3rd Battalion of the Grenadiers and 1st of the Coldstreams at Limasol, the ancient Nicosia, and the 2nd Battalion of the Scots Guards followed from Alexandria on the 10th. The Army and Navy Gazette stated that on reaching Cyprus (which is the most easterly isle of the Mediterranean off the Syrian coast), the Guards were agreeably surprised at the excellent arrangements which were made for the move up to the wooded mountains, as they had been told that the roads were frightful and dangerous, and that they would be weeks in getting away from Limasol, the principal seaport, which, from a mere fishing village, has now become a flourishing little town, with 6,000 inhabitants.

It possesses no hotel, but there is a club, styled the "United Service Club," frequented by British residents, and a mile out of town is the "Depôt," where our Royal Engineers were quartered; it stands on the way to the well-wooded sides of Troodos, that tower up into the bare summit of Mount Olympus.

The Grenadiers and Coldstreams were ordered to encamp among the woody spurs that overlook the Nicosia road; and the Scots Guards on a high ridge to the south, on the road to the "Hog's Back," as well known on Troodos as the ridge of the same name in Surrey is to our soldiers at Aldershot.

A specialty of Troodos, which the Guards could very well have dispensed with, is a peculiarly fine dust, of bright red colour, which rises in little clouds from every footpath. The breezes wafted it into the tents, where it gathered on clothing, arms, and everything, and there is no brushing it away.

For a couple of months the Guards idled pleasantly here, their favourite lounge being the "Hog's Back," which was situated a mile and a half from the camp, where the road passes along the steep side of Troodos, there partly barren and partly clothed with bright fern, growing under the pines and cedars down the precipitous slope, to where a stream runs through the valley a thousand feet below.

From Cyprus the brigade was ordered home, and the last of it—the Coldstreams—arrived in London on the 11th September, 1885, and vast crowds assembled to welcome the return of their favourite corps d'élite. The men of the Coldstreams, it was remarked, looked far more comfortable in their grey great-coats than did their comrades, the Grenadiers, in the fantastic khakie, in which they had
figured for some six months. Beneath their overcoats were their red serge tunies and blue trousers, faded and worn with service; and several yet wore the bandoliers of the Mounted Infantry. Many of the officers gave a little colour to the scene by discarding their overcoats and appearing in their full scarlet uniforms. It was also remarked that if the Coldstreams, like the Grenadiers, had not brought home so many ornithological specimens as the Scots Guards, they seemed better off in the way of heavy luggage, among which were various specimens of Egyptian pottery, several heavy chests full of arms, and some small pet goats.

Bursts of enthusiasm welcomed the returning Guards, as usual, along their whole route to barracks. They marched with the air of men who were conscious of having done their duty, of having acquitted themselves bravely, and of being among old friends again. The sallow faces and worn frames of many bore witness of the ordeal through which they had passed in that sun-scorched land, the Soudan, which may now be called the grave of armies.

Subsequently, on the 24th of September, there was held, in Hyde Park, a review of the brigade, which was somewhat remarkable as showing the effects of the late campaign on the troops. There was an absence of very young soldiers in the ranks, and their active campaigning had told its tale—that in learning the realities of warfare they had lost much of that extreme polish and Prussian-like precision, in which our Guards generally surpass even the line, and that there was a looseness in their marching and dressing.

"The falling off, however marked it was," wrote a spectator; "was much less than might have been expected after the rough work the brigade has gone through. It is impossible for men to be at once parade machines and soldiers in active campaign. During the hard work of war the polish of the barrack-yard—a polish effective to look at, but of no real utility—is necessarily lost; and it is creditable alike to officers and men that in so short a time after its return the brigade should have made so excellent a show."

The Times of the 16th of October, 1885, stated that a number of men of the brigade of Guards who took part in the Soudan campaign, and who were unable to take their discharge at the proper time in consequence of the unexpected detention of the three battalions at Cyprus, had during the past week obtained their discharges on the expiration of the first period of their service, and were then transferred to the 1st Class Army Reserve.

A number of men who were entitled to demand their discharges, re-engaged to complete twelve, and in some instances twenty-one, years with the colours, in the latter instance virtually reverting to the long service system of the days of Marlborough and Wellington—those days when the romance of war was irresistibly attractive, and when the veterans of our army cherished a strong attachment for the regiment with which so many of their best years had been spent.
CHAPTER X.
THE OLIVIER PAIN INCIDENT.


On the 1st of September it was reported to the War Office from Cairo that there was a very decided improvement in the health of the British troops at Suakim, that the weather was cooler, the men more cheerful, and there had been no more cases of enteric fever or heat-apoplexy.

About the same time the Mubashir reported from Suakim that "the tranquillity at present prevailing in the Soudan is not likely to endure much longer. From Khartoum it is announced that the Soudanese Emirs have sent the Ulema Mohammed el Muri with a letter to Senoussi, the famous Sheikh of Tripoli, requesting him to assume the leadership, and promising to revere him as their father and to obey him as they did the Mahdi. If, however, owing to his great age, he is disinclined to abandon a religious life in favour of the sceptre and the sword, they beg him to come at least for a short time to Khartoum and choose the most worthy Emir as the successor of Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin."

In the meantime they had appointed twelve Ulemas, with the Mufti Zadik
Galim at their head, to manage all religious affairs. From the camp at Omdurman 3,000 soldiers had been permitted to return home for a time to cultivate their fields, but were ordered to leave their arms and ammunition behind them.

With reference to the statements in the Mubashir, the Paris Temps of September 5th remarked that, should Senoussi accept the offer of the Council of Emirs, the result would be a concentration of the whole of Islam, which would constitute a new danger to all States having connections with Northern Africa.

On Saturday, 5th of September, the last number of the Bosphore Egyptien appeared at Cairo, that journal having been again suppressed in deference to the orders of the French Consulate. Nothing can be imagined more virulently mendacious than the attacks upon high British officials that had appeared in some of the preceding numbers. In consequence of this M.
Taillandier had been compelled to intimate verbally that, unless the tone of the paper was moderated, he would be compelled to co-operate with the Egyptian Government in its entire suppression.

The editor refused to take any notice of this verbal intimation, and so at 6 o'clock p.m. on the date already given an official letter was handed in stating that "the line taken by the Bosphore was offensive in the last degree to the friendly Powers, and that, unless it was changed, the paper would be suppressed."

The substance of this letter was reproduced in a later issue, the editor adding that, on account of his unwillingness to enter into a conflict with the French Authorities, he had decided to suspend publication. It was generally believed, however, that the whole affair was arranged beforehand, the Bosphore wishing to veil the fact that discontinuance of publication had become a necessity, the financial condition of the paper being unsatisfactory. Another scurrilous native organ was simultaneously prosecuted before the native tribunals.

In nothing was French journalism more embittered against Britain than in the Olivier Pain incident—a true episode of the Soudan War. To this person we have already adverted briefly. His death, M. Rochefort and others, in defiance of all evidence to the contrary, were determined to lay at the door of Lord Wolseley's staff. These circumstances we shall now relate with some detail.

So far back as June and July, 1884, the name of Olivier Pain began to come prominently before the public. In the Intransigéni of 29th June, Rochefort published a long statement, made by some friend in Egypt, according to his own account, who, he said, was instrumental in enabling Olivier Pain to reach the Mahdi's camp. That person, who was unnamed by M. Rochefort, affirmed that Olivier Pain's object in going there was to ransom the Christian prisoners. After the British fell back from Metemneh, Gubat, and elsewhere, M. Pain, the bearer of letters and instructions from the Mahdi, left Khartoum, on his way back to Egypt. This news was brought to M. Rochefort's mysterious friend, at Cairo, by one of the Bedouins who had conducted Olivier Pain to El Obeid, and accompanied him from thence to Khartoum. The same Bedouin informed him that he had seen notices posted up at all the gates of Debbé, Merawi, and Dongola, offering a reward of a hundred pounds sterling for the head of Olivier Pain; nevertheless, his arrival at Cairo was looked forward to as a certainty. M. Rochefort's friend in Egypt adds:

"Suddenly I ceased to receive news of Pain. His progress north seemed to be interrupted, when one day I met Monsignor Sogaro, chief of the Catholic missions in the Soudan, who accosted me sorrowfully, saying, 'A great misfortune has just happened—Olivier Pain is dead.' 'Dead!' I exclaimed. 'Of what?' 'I had sent a Father of the Mission to Dongola,' replied M. Sogaro, 'and it was reported there that"
the Mahdi had, in one of those hallucinations to which he is subject, had him killed.’ That reply was, for me, a revelation. How could the Mahdi have Pain killed at Khartoum, when he was then at Debbeh, at a distance of more than thirty days’ march from the camp in the Soudan? Evidently this absurd news comes from the English themselves! They were certainly aware that the French journalist was on his way back, because after the cry of horror, provoked by the proposal of assassination, drawn up by Lord Wolseley, Sir Evelyn Baring had sent away twelve despatches, worded thus:—‘Let M. Olivier Pain pass unmolested.’ Now,” continued this ridiculous, but mischievous document, “at the moment when that counter order was sent to the advanced positions, the assassination of Pain was already an accomplished fact, since I received news of it through Monsignor Sogaro, before the publication of Sir Evelyn Baring’s despatch. It was when the British Government perceived that it was impossible to make people believe in the fable of Olivier Pain having been put to death by order of the Mahdi, that the assassin, Wolseley, imagined the fever, from which we would have us believe our friend died. It is so glaring an imposture that it repeats itself. Olivier Pain died, therefore, assassinated by English emissaries, who have certainly received the promised reward. Moreover, Mgr. Sogaro, who is now in Italy, at Verona, will confirm all that I have to-day asserted.”

Most of the Paris journals repeated this inflammatory letter from the Intransigéant; but the Figaro asserted that Olivier Pain never reached the camp of the Mahdi, having been assassinated by Bedouins. His story now began to assume mysterious proportions; an Italian engineer, named Berti, under date 26th July, at Ismailia, wrote to the Bosphore Egyptien, declaring that he had seen him alive and in good health at Korosko, on the 8th of that month, after recovering from a serious illness.

About the same date, the Temps printed a telegram from its correspondent at Alexandria to the effect that “Olivier Pain had arrived at El Obeid, in August, 1884. He was there deprived of all his belongings, kept a prisoner, and taken before the Mahdi, who then proceeded to Omdurman. According to the same version, Olivier Pain remained with the Mahdi, and died of fever in his camp, about the end of October, before he could reach Omdurman.”

The matter grew fast, and abominable articles appeared in succession in the Intransigéant, which had one headed, “Vengeance,” wherein Rochefort recommended that the death of Pain should be revenged on the Prince of Wales, and on the person of the British Ambassador. After virulent abuse of our commanders in Egypt and the Soudan, who were described as “the murderers of Olivier Pain,” Rochefort recommended the Brisson Cabinet to demand and exact of the British Government full and complete reparation, and then proceeded to write in this offensive strain:—
is, in fact, the seat of the British Government in Paris. It is of that Charge d’Affaires of the band that we will demand a reckoning for the hein-

If by chance the Brisson Ministry should refuse to exact it, we give it fair warning before, that we shall manage to obtain it for ourselves. It will be impossible for us to make such abject beings as Wolseley, Wood, and Kitchener pay for the brutal murder of Olivier Pain, but they are represented here by one of their own countrymen—the Ambassador, Lyons, whose hotel

ous crime committed by those who delegated him to represent them among us. His old skin is the pledge of the satisfaction that is due to us, and which we will pursue till it has been given us in its entire plenitude.”
In consequence of these foul-mouthed utterances, the French authorities deemed it necessary to have the British Embassy guarded, and watched by police in plain clothes, lest some hot-headed Communists and Socialists should take M. Rochefort *au sérieux*.

And now, to add a little to the mystery, on the 18th of August it was reported from Bombay that a Russian spy, calling himself Father Kanovics, arrested some weeks before at Cochin, was Olivier Pain in disguise. In the course of examination Kanovics admitted that he had been recently in Egypt, and that he knew Olivier Pain. He mentioned some incidents in the life of the latter, but declined to answer certain questions of the magistrate, or to say when he had seen Pain last. Several witnesses from Bombay left for Cochin to identify the prisoner, "with whom Sir Evelyn Baring's description of Pain tallies," said the *Globe*. "The evidence adduced up the present time, however, has not proved sufficient to establish the prisoner's identity."

Rochefort, meantime, still continued to rave on the subject, and recommended that Lord Lyons should be attacked in the streets. He stated that Colonel Taylor, commanding the Egyptian Cavalry at Assouan, had started with a party of troops to cut off the French journalist, who, "finding himself pursued, distanced his pursuers, and it was only on his return, after spending seven months with the Mahdi, that he fell into the hands of these banditti, stationed at Debbeh, where he was murdered."

M. Rochefort challenged Colonel Taylor and Lieutenant Stuart-Wortley to "dare to refute these facts;" and as a reason for the anxiety of our staff officers to get hold of Pain, M. Rochefort asserted that they knew his pockets were full of proofs establishing the cowardice of the British troops!

The *Liberte* announced a belief that a price was really put upon the head of Olivier Pain; but that as he went out to the Soudan at his own risk and peril, without any kind of passport, French diplomacy could claim no satisfaction, even were it proved that the British had treated him as an enemy.

The correspondent of the *Matin* wrote that he had not been able to interview Captain Wilson, who was in Egypt, as head of the Intelligence Department at Dongola; yet that, from careful inquiry and information obtained from sources of credence, he was in a position to assert that an order, promising a reward of £50 for the capture of a Frenchman, was really signed by the officer above named, who had been told by some spies that a "Frenchi"—the name given by the Arabs to all Europeans without distinction—had been seen in front of the British positions; and that Captain Wilson, considering it important to capture the "Frenchi," whoever he might be, offered a reward of £50 for him, but that the name of Olivier Pain did not appear in the offer, as no one knew who the "Frenchi" was.

White faces were, however, seen in the rebel ranks. According to the *Daily News*, the chief marksman of the West Kent Regiment fired two shots at a
European, whose face he saw too distinctly to make any mistake; and some of our men declared that they saw Europeans or Americans leading a body of the rebels at Metemneh.

The Main correspondent added that the words “alive or dead” did not appear in the order referred to; and, moreover, that the “Frenchi” was never captured at all.

However, the hostile party in France were determined not to rest. The disappearance of the notorious Bosphore Egyptian now furnished M. Henri Rochefort with an opportunity of affirming that not only did the French Ministry and their representatives in Egypt know where the body of Olivier Pain was buried, after he was assassinated by the English, but that the editor of the Bosphore had to cease publication because he attacked the English for their crime.

On the 22nd August Sir John Walsham, the British Plenipotentiary Minister at Paris, wrote to M. de Freycinet, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the effect that the story of Pain’s death, as given in the journal L’Intransigéant, was pure invention, proof of which was found “in the energetic denial given by Major Kitchener to the accusations against him. This distinguished and gallant officer denies having received from the British Government any instructions concerning Olivier Pain, or ever having attempted to make him prisoner.”

Sir John Walsham enclosed a telegram from Mr. Egerton, dated Cairo, August 21st, 1885, which ran as follows:

"Pain went up the river, in the spring of 1884, with the avowed purpose of joining the Mahdi. He was obliged to return to Wady Halfa and Esmeh; but he succeeded in the month of July—thanks to the influence of the Bedouins of a French Inspector of a sugar works at Ermant—in starting for El Obeid, where he arrived last year. Then he went to join the Mahdi at Bahad. He did not go with the latter to Khartoum, but died last autumn upon the White Nile when on route for Omdurman.

"This is confirmed by several independent witnesses. Thus, the account reproduced by your telegram of adventures which happened to Pain six months after his death is an absurd invention."

Notwithstanding this clear statement, M. Selikovitsch, an ex-interpreter, who had been dismissed for bad conduct from the staff of Colonel Lanyon, in Egypt, sent a letter to the Intransigéant, in which he reiterated all the former statements, with a tone of authority on the subject, and accused the British authorities of “seeking to disredit the witness by perfidious insinuations and calumnious imputations.”

In the meantime, the name of Olivier Pain became a species of ori de guerre at the meetings of Revolutionists, Socialists, and Atheists in Paris, and threats against Lord Lyons were renewed, Rochefort leaving nothing undone or unwritten to provoke a hostile manifestation against the British Embassy. The Baron de Ring called there, on the 24th of August, to express officially, in the name of the French Government, “the deep regret it felt at the infamous outrages against the Royal Family of Great Britain and the British Ambassador, which had been printed in the Intransigéant,” adding that “he was ashamed such scurrilous
attacks should have been published in any French paper."

But Rochefort was irrepressible; he renewed his attacks and insults, and prepared for a great mass meeting of ing sufficiently large to contain all who wished to attend; and he would be glad to do so, "because then the English assassins would be able to count how many good people there

Communists and others to "protest against the assassination of Olivier Pain by the English." On this occasion, some 4,000 men met in the Salle de Rivoli. The streets outside were crowded by other thousands, and M. Rochefort promised to hire a build were in Paris who hate and curse them."

The French Government, which he assailed virulently for its apathy, was more active in the matter than he cared to reveal. It had instructed all its agents in Egypt to ascertain every
particular connected with the life, doings, and death of the journalist-adventurer, who, it was supposed, had been killed by a soldier of our 10th Hussars, serving in the Soudan. It stated:—“I see people are making a good deal of fuss about the death of Olivier Pain. Well, I was at Debbeh when the European who was thought to be Olivier Pain was arrested, and I am certain that,
instead of being assassinated, he was treated with great courtesy by our generals. After the commencement of the retreat by our troops, a reward of fifty pounds was offered for his capture, but of course it was his papers that were wanted and not himself, for obvious reasons. Our men thought he was an emissary, and not a simple traveller."

From this letter, and from what certain English prints announced and admitted, the Républice Française regarded the offer of a reward for Olivier Pain as "an established fact," and asked who was the European that was arrested, and what became of him after he "was treated with courtesy?"

The Républice is not the only semi-official journal which asserts that there can be no doubt a reward of fifty pounds was really offered for the capture of Olivier Pain. The Temps, which is, perhaps, even more closely connected with the present Cabinet than its Opportunist contemporary, makes the same assertion, and in proof of it publishes the text of an order signed by Captain Wilson, bearing date the 16th of March, 1885. It is as follows:

"Reward of Fifty Pounds Sterling.—The above reward is offered to any one who shall deliver up Olivier Pain (and his papers), dead or alive. He left Debch on a camel on the 16th of March, 1885. His description is: White complexion, light hair and beard, height about five feet seven inches, eyes blue, slim figure, thin lips, hard expression of countenance, reserved in manner and conversation. The expression of his eyes is characteristic."

On the 27th of August it was announced in the Paris that the French Government intended to provide for a liberal allowance to the widow and children of Olivier Pain.

On the night of the following 29th, the second great meeting "of protestation against his assassination" was held in the Winter Circus, by at least 10,000 persons, amid frantic cries of "Vive Rockefeller!" That person took the chair, and said:

"The murder of our friend, Olivier Pain, raises two questions—one concerning the deep infamy of the English Government, and the other the cowardice of the French Cabinet. Both have combined in lying in order to escape—the one, the responsibility of its crime; the other, the necessity of demanding reparation. To the exposure of M. Selikovitsch our ministers have contented themselves with replying. 'M. Selikovitsch affirms, but the British Embassy denies.' Now every one in Egypt has long been aware of what happened to Olivier Pain, for a first attempt at assassination had already been perpetrated. As my own son was with him at the time, I know better than any one the details of that adventure. Both had been arrested by the British outposts just as they were about to enter the desert. My son returned to France to perform his military duties, and Olivier Pain, remaining in Egypt, found two Arabs who offered to aid him to penetrate into the Soudan, and to reach the Mahdi; but our friend had not gone far into the desert when his guides attacked him and tried to murder him. Fortunately Olivier Pain had a rifle which my son had given him as a parting gift, and which he used to protect himself against his aggressors, who, unable to dispose of him with their daggers, abandoned him, without provocation and without water, in the sandy plains of Upper Egypt. It was a poor Fellah who, finding him almost dead, carried him on his shoulders to the nearest camp. Now, what did the English do when they discovered that the Arabs whom they had charged with the task of ridding them of the 'accursed Frenchman' had failed to accomplish the dark deed? They threw our friend into prison, where he remained eight days, notwithstanding the protestations of the French colony in Egypt, and of the Bosphore Egyptian!"

"Did the French Government make any sort of complaint about this violation of the rights of men? Oh, no—nothing of the sort. It much preferred to
grant an indemnity to the English missionary, Shaw, who had been retained for a couple of hours on board the ship commanded by Admiral Pierre. And the Brisson Cabinet has no more demanded repairation of Britain for the assassination of Pain, than did the Ferry Cabinet for his sequestration. I will only add one word: the contemptible attitude of the Government places us for the future at the mercy of the bandits of the 'five (sic) quarters' of the globe. What Frenchman can feel himself in safety now abroad? It is proved that his life may be taken with impunity. The Brisson Ministry has not only openly displayed its cowardice in the eyes of all Europe, but has rendered itself guilty of a veritable incitement to the assassination of our countryman."

Many absurdly violent speeches followed this harangue, and a number of equally absurd letters of sympathy from Irish Invincibles in Paris were read, and we are told that a more than ordinary bloodthirsty speech made by M. Chauviere was "frequently interrupted by thunders of applause." A dreadful uproar ensued eventually, blows were freely exchanged and many persons were seriously injured, after which Rochefort read the following resolution, which was carried amid shouts of "Vive Rochefort!" "Vive la Commune!" "A bas l'Ambassade Anglaise!":

"That 10,000 citizens assembled in the Winter Circus, affirming the solidarity of the French people and the British people against the Governments that dishonour and oppress them, and convinced that Olivier Pain was assassinated by Wolseley, Kitchener, and other agents of the British Government, condemn and reprobate (méprisent) those assassins and their accomplices of the French Government, and declare that, resolved to avenge the victim, and to make the French nation, which has been wounded in its honour and dignity, respected, they will persevere till they have brought the guilty to punishment."

In the hands of these demagogues this absurd story was assuming such serious proportions that their statements were, at the instance of the Comité de Paris de l'Arbitrage, carefully inquired into under the direction of the Committee of the International Arbitration Association (38, Parliament Street), assisted by members of the Workmen's Peace Association. The sittings began on August 29th. On the 31st the following resolution was adopted, on the motion of Mr. W. R. Cremer, of the Workmen's Peace Association, seconded by Mr. Price Williams, of the Arbitration Association, Mons. Auguste Desmoulins, hon. secretary of the Paris Committee, supporting:

"That this Committee of inquiry, after making all the efforts in their power to ascertain the truth of the statement that Olivier Pain was shot or executed by British soldiers, or under their authority or cognisance, have failed to discover any evidence justifying such assertion, and express their belief that the statement of Selikovitsch is without foundation."

At another sitting on September 5th, this further resolution, moved by Mr. Britten, of the Workmen's Peace Association, seconded by Mr. R. G. Janion, of the Arbitration Association, was adopted: "Resolved—That it is evident that there was a desire on the part of British staff officers to obtain possession of papers which Olivier Pain might be expected to bring from the Mahdi; that there was a report that he was on his way from Omdurman northwards, and that persons were posted at the Wells in the neighbourhood of Debebeh to watch the routes by which he would come, and that reports were current that such a reward
for his arrest had been issued at Sarras (on the north of the Soudan); but that the only direct evidence is the telegram sent by Mr. B. Burleigh, who, however, declines to afford any information on the subject, and that this evidence is invalidated by the statements of two other special correspondents who were

Mr. Hodgson Pratt having proceeded to Paris, taking with him all the documents in evidence, on Monday evening the whole proceedings were reviewed at a full meeting of the Comité de

Afterwards a third resolution, moved by M. Desmoulins, was carried, to the effect that the brutalising influence of war and of the passions aroused thereby is shown by the allegations of M. Selikovitsch having been regarded as credible by large numbers of persons in Paris. Further, a declaration was agreed upon, affirming that it is needful, in the interests of liberty and civilisation, that any misunderstanding arising between France and England
THE DESERT NEAR CAIRO.
shall be speedily cleared up, so that cordial relations may be permanently maintained.

With regard to M. Selikovitsch, the late interpreter attached to the Intelligence Department, Major Kitchener had found him of little use from his scanty knowledge of Arabic, and the most serious complaint against him was that on several occasions he had been detected talking politics with Egyptian soldiers. The Matin correspondent put the question plainly, "Have you ever seen Pain?" "Never in my life," replied the Major, "and if he was a gentleman I should have received him politely and treated him as such."

As for having any one who might have been mistaken for Pain shot, Major Kitchener said, "Never! I have, with regard to that point, given my word of honour, and I give it to you again." The Major added that he was at Debbeh on the 17th and 18th of April; that on the latter day he went with an escort to Saleh to visit the most powerful chief of the Kabbabish tribe, and that he was present at no military execution. Hussein Pasha, Governor of Berber, who was made prisoner by the Mahdi's troops, arrived at Omdurman at the same time as Pain, and was present at the audience granted to the latter by the Prophet, to whom he gave himself out as the agent of his political partisans in Europe, and offered to procure arms for him via Tripoli, also to assist the Mahdi with his advice; but the False Prophet replied, "My arms are the arms of God, and I will accept nothing, either from Franks or Infidels."

Major Kitchener supposed that after this interview the Mahdi must have given orders for Pain to be sent to El Obeid, and that he died on the way to that place from Omdurman. Whatever might have been the fate of the luckless Olivier Pain, the categorical denial of the Major that he had ever set eyes on him should have carried conviction to every impartial mind that the mischievous story of Selikovitsch was false. Yet the mystery was somewhat added to when, soon after, his assertions were in some points corroborated by an Egyptian lieutenant and a negro named Youssouf.

The Intransigent published a long account of Pain's adventures in the Soudan, communicated by Selikovitsch, who stated that he had obtained the information contained therein while attached to the British Intelligence Department. It was from a young Egyptian Milazim-sani, or lieutenant, who had belonged to Hicks Pasha's army, and who stated that he had seen Pain at El Obeid, where he (the lieutenant) had been taken after escaping the massacre of his force, but from whence he had just fled, and reached Hannek, a place between Dongola and Korti, in February, 1885. He stated that at El Obeid Olivier Pain was the guest of the Hadji, Said Abdul Nobe, a Musulman notable, who had studied at the Mohammedan College of El Azhar at Cairo. Pain was then generally believed to have embraced Islamism,
and the lieutenant related that by
going to the mosque he won great
notoriety. He also described Pain as
having met the Mahdi at a religious
ceremony. Concerning Pain's alleged
sojourn at Khartoum, M. Selikovitsch
affirmed that he obtained information
from two slaves, and from the negro
Youssouf, who is described as having
deserted from the army of the Mahdi,
in which he had been a subaltern
before he became Major Kitchener's
servant.

Youssouf stated that Pain arrived at
Khartoum three days before the cap-
ture of the city by the Mahdi; and
that he—Youssouf—left three days
after that event. At that time, the
Frenchman, he said, had his right foot
so swollen that he could scarcely walk.
And it was now deemed curious, that
the statement made by Youssouf, and pub-
lished by Selikovitsch, in the Intrane-
sigant, to prove the Major's assertions
untrue, should, in a manner, corroborate
them.

Major Kitchener believed—as stated
—that Pain was sent by the Mahdi
from Omdurman to El Obeid, and that
he died on the way. Now, Omdurman
and Khartoum are close together, and
Youssouf, who saw Pain there a few
days before its fall, says he had a sorely
swollen foot; thus, his death, while
being led back a prisoner to El Obeid,
was extremely probable. However, the
French Radical papers, were still deter-
mined to persevere in their campaign
against "the perfidious English."

Of Pain's presence in the camp of
the Mahdi another proof was given by
an independent witness, the Italian
Missionary, Signor Luigi Bonomi, in
the course of a conversation with the
Editor of D'Arena, a Veronese journal,
on the 1st of September:

"I saw Olivier Pain several times in the camp
of the Mahdi. He was well received by the latter;
but never employed by him in any confidential
service, as has been reported. He was ill when he
left the camp; in the course of his journey he fell
from his camel and died a few hours afterwards,
but more from the fever of which he had been
suffering, than from the effects of his fall. I know
that the French wish it to be believed that he was
assassinated. A person, calling himself first
Frederico Berti, then Paolo Rossignoli, and lastly
Ferreti, was sent to the Soudan to gather informa-
tion on the subject. He gave out that he was going
to liberate his father, a prisoner in the hands of the
Mahdi's troops. But I can assure you he never
had a father in the Soudan. Many persons have
begged me to say that I saw Pain assassinated. As
you may imagine, I declined the honour."

On the 10th September M. de Frey-
cinet informed his Cabinet that he was
taking measures definitely to ascertain
what had become of Olivier Pain, and
also to discover the whereabouts of
Père Bonomi, the Catholic missionary
priest; and on the 12th September the
Politische Correspondenz published the
report of another interview with the
latter, and also with Bishop Sogaro, in
which the fate of the Frenchman was
fully discussed.

Both missionaries energetically de-
nied that Pain had been assassinated.
Bishop Sogaro stated that he met him
at the First Cataract, and warned him
of the risks he ran; but Pain replied
that "he preferred a tragic to a prosaic
death." The Bishop saw him some
months later, when he had embraced
Mohammedanism, or pretended to do
so, for, as a French Socialist, his conscience was doubtless a flexible one; and for this reason, Father Bonomi refused to give him letters of recommendation to the other missionaries. Bonomi acted as interpreter between Pain and the Mahdi, who never ceased utterly to distrust the French adventurer, and consequently without authority; that the chief leaders of the Soudanese were a number of fanatical dervishes; and that current rumour said the Mahdi had been poisoned by one of the women of his harem. Two regular priests, three friars, and six nuns, were then detained at Omdurman, and Father Bonomi said that he meant to return to the Soudan and achieve their release, if possible, at the peril of his own life.

As a sequel to the story of Olivier Pain, we may add the following interesting narrative of Dimitri Zagada, a Greek refugee from Khartoum, who made his escape from that city, on the 14th October, 1885. According to his statements, which appeared chiefly in the Standard, he quit the camp at Omdurman, in company of two sisters stripped him of all he possessed, even to a new Arab costume, clad in which he had arrived at the camp. Olivier Pain showed open hostility to all Christian prisoners, to the last never returning the polite greeting of the captive nuns and missionaries; and both the Bishop and Father Bonomi re-asserted that he died in the desert.

They further related that the rebels were totally disorganised, that the Mahdi’s successor was not a pure Arab, but one of the Baggara tribe,
of charity—one, a white woman, named Marietta, the other a black, named Fortunata—leaving four nuns behind them, who were supposed to be married to Greek prisoners.

Zagada escaped by the aid of an emissary, sent up by his brother with the promise of a large reward, and reached Cairo on the 13th November.

At one time he had been a wealthy merchant in Kordofan, where he acted as a contractor for supplying rations to the troops of the Khedive. He lost all his property and for two years was a prisoner of the Mahdi, and like the rest was closely watched and forced to pray five times daily. He achieved his escape one evening when a violent storm was raging.

His account of Olivier Pain—like that of Father Bonomi—dispelled all the ridiculous stories circulated by Henri Rochefort. Having left Esneh, with two attendants, Pain, on his protestations or offers of service, but made him a close prisoner, and forbade the other Europeans to have any interview with him. Nevertheless, he, Slatin Bey, and Dimitri Zagada contrived, by cutting slips from a newspaper, to give Gordon some tidings of the Relief Expedition. Fifteen days after, Pain, when in the hands of the Mahdi at Shat, fell ill. From thence the Mahdi marched to Duem, and then down the White Nile to the camp at Omdurman. Half a day's march distant from that place, Olivier Pain died, after falling twice from his camel in a
state of exhaustion. Finding that it was impossible to rally him, the Arabs dug a grave beside him, and with the help of Zagada, buried him close by the river ere he was cold.

"Just before the fall of Khartoum, all the rebels," continued Zagada, "were extremely terrified by the approach of the British, except the Mahdi, who kept up his courage." After the surrender of the city he went across the river in a steamer, and said his prayers in Khartoum.

General Gordon’s head was hung up on a butcher’s hook, for five days, in the bazaar at Omdurman, when every passer spat upon it, and hurled stones, slippers, and mud at it in contempt.

The death of the Mahdi took place on the 9th day of Ramadân. No one knew precisely what he died from; but he had grown so enormously stout, that it needed five men to raise him from his seat. Zagada first heard the news of his death in the bazaar. Not believing it, he went to inquire, and met the Mahdi’s chief eunuch, who had been Zagada’s own eunuch. He confirmed the story. The Mahdi left one hundred and forty wives—amongst whom were many members of Zagada’s former harem, and a European girl, named Kleine, daughter of a tailor murdered in Khartoum. Khalifa Abu Laik took the command on the Mahdi’s death.
CHAPTER XI

THE SOUDAN GARRISONS.


Much dissatisfaction existed now in our Indian Army at the injustice done to the Indo-British Transport in the late Expedition to Suakim. When a large British force was ordered there (says the Army and Navy Gazette), the Indian Government were directed to supply it with the necessary transport. The latter was of considerable proportions, both in followers and animals, and was controlled by twenty-nine officers, of whom twenty-four had previously great experience in the field.

The work of raising, equipping, and organising this transport was almost unprecedentedly heavy, and the rapidity with which it was completed was due to the strenuous efforts of Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Benjamin P. Bromhead, Bart., of the Bengal Infantry, and other transport officers at Meean Meer, who, as their divisions were completed, proceeded with them at once to Suakim. On arriving there the Indian Transport was put under the orders of the British Transport; and during the campaign nearly all the carriage work of our troops was carried on by the former.

Not a hitch occurred. On the Indian Transport officers fell some of the hardest labour of the campaign; but how were the services of the twenty-nine officers attached to it recognised? Colonel Beckett, the Director, was made a C.B., and there the honours ended. The others, being regimental officers, had only promotion for their services in the field to look forward to, and not a single brevet was given them, as elsewhere stated. "Taking into consideration the success of the British Indian Transport," says the journal above mentioned, "and the nature of the work performed, there surely must have been some deserving officers whose services were worthy of recognition. These, briefly epitomised, are the facts; and it must be admitted that there are some grounds for the complaints of the Indian Transport officers."

On the 5th of September, while treasure to the value of four thousand pounds was being conveyed from the railway station into the town of Assiout, in Upper Egypt, it was intercepted by a party of Arab brigands, who attacked the military escort, wounded several, and succeeded in carrying off the money.

While false rumours were circulated that Osman Digna had been slain in a brawl with seven sheikhs at a place called Gadamay, he suddenly reminded the world of his existence, a few days after, by one of his periodical skirmishes near Suakim, whither came a Sheikh named Tamboul, with intelligence that several thousand rebels (800 of whom were riflemen), with some...
Mohammed el Keir, of Berber, and other Emirs, had fallen into the hands of the British authorities; and a high Egyptian official at this time expressed his belief “that half the Pashas and Beys in the Egyptian service were and had been adherents of the Mahdi and the rebel cause.”

Soomaarl was now nearly overrun by the Mahdist, but its garrison, 10,000 strong, still held out bravely, and its commander, Hassan Bey Sadik, was gaining over many adherents to the Khedivial cause. The houses of the town are built of sun-dried bricks, and roofed with hafsa, a species of grass, dhurra and straw, or reeds. Colonel Stewart, in his report on the Soudan, gave a very unflattering account of the place and its people. For six months of the year the district, which lies in an
MID-DAY PRAYER IN SIOUT (ASSIOUT).
angle between the White and Blue Niles, above Khartoum, wears the aspect of a sterile waste, but as soon as the rain falls it becomes a sea of mire, and on this, without any preparation of the soil, is sown the dhurra, the characteristic produce of the province. In three months, by the end of October, the whole land is covered with ripe grain, and the harvest is gathered. Sennaar has a history dating back to the days of Herodotus, who describes its people as the Macrobii—the most remote of the Ethiopians, whose gold provoked the cupidity of Cambyses. Until 1883 Sennaar preserved its independence—slavery being one of the conditions of social life. The upper classes live in indolence, and all are addicted to intoxication.

According to a Reuter’s telegram of 23rd September, the Sennaar garrison consisted of 40,000 men.

Kassala, where another garrison was still defending itself, was built about 1840, after the annexation of Taka, a province of Nubia, by Egypt. It is strongly fortified in the Arab fashion, and though the walls, which are built of brick and sun-dried mud, and loopholed for musketry, are utterly incapable of resisting artillery, it is deemed by the natives impregnable. The houses of the town are poor, being built of sunburnt brick, smeared with clay and cow dung. Kassala, being situated almost on the Abyssinian frontier, is deemed an important military station, and has a population of some 8,000. Thence direct roads run both to Suakin and Khartoum and into Abyssinia.

It was known on the 15th of August, 1885, that all went well with the garrison of Kassala. They had made a truce with the Hadendowas, who had been fighting among themselves, and the victorious party offered to fraternise with the garrison. Only two Hadendowa Sheikhs were then in the town, and the terms of the truce were in favour of the garrison, who then heard that the vanguard of the Abyssinian relief had started, and that the remainder, 10,000 strong, were to move on the 11th of September, under Ras Aloola.

The garrison had received a supply of cattle through the Beni-Amer tribe, but it was reported at Cairo that the fortress would surrender if not relieved by the 30th of October.

The Mudir of Sennaar was now reported to have adopted a strong line of action with respect to the Soudan rebels, by summoning the garrison of Khartoum to surrender in the name of the Khedive, giving them notice that if the summons were not obeyed, he would march and storm the city, where great anarchy prevailed among the chiefs, and, Mohammed el Keir, the rebel governor of Berber, having gone there to quell it, it was supposed that most of the important leaders had been killed, as he was not a Khalif, but an Emir.

The Italian garrison at Massowah was now increased to eighteen hundred rank and file.

Sent home from the army in Egypt, the 1st Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment landed at Portsmouth on the
12th of September. In coming down the Nile, between Wady Halfa and Dongola, two of their nuggars were wrecked, and two men were drowned. Although this corps passed through the whole campaign, strange to say, only five or six men were killed in action (according to the Hampshire Telegraph), though many were wounded, but recovered. A number were invalided home on account of wounds and sickness, and from the latter cause the battalion lost 150 men since 1882, including thirty-seven from cholera. The battalion crossed the Bayuda Desert on camels, accompanying the Camel Corps.

On the 12th of September, several bodies of Hadendowas kept up a continuous and persistent rifle fire upon Suakim, but were eventually driven off by the Bengal Cavalry, with the loss of some killed and wounded.

The Mubashir of the next day announced intelligence from Suakim that the dissensions among the rebels had been steadily on the increase since the death of the Mahdi, and that the new Mahdi, Sid Muley Achmet Abdullah, was stated to have sent a deputation to Khartoum declaring war against the Emirs there, who had refused to acknowledge his succession, and that he was making extensive military preparations in Kordofan, while the Emirs in Khartoum were taking measures to defend themselves against him.

On the 16th September, 300 officers and men of the Shropshire Light Infantry arrived at Alexandria from Cyprus, and proceeded at once to reinforce the garrison of Suakim, for which place more artillery were ordered, while the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and one company of Mounted Infantry had orders to proceed up the Nile from Cairo.

There, all being peaceful now, an influx of strangers and tourists was expected. "The hotel-keepers are furbishing up their places, and getting in readiness to receive visitors," wrote the correspondent of the Globe. "Music-halls, cafés, gambling saloons, and caterers generally, are equally busy in preparations to fleece the unsuspecting traveller. Two new bars, with the inevitable baccarat and roulette tables—both an unmitigated curse, as many British officers can testify—are in process of construction, and an enterprising Greek is meditating the establishment of an hostelry, or rest-house, close by the Pyramids of Ghizeh, which every globe-trotter makes a point of seeing. As the preparations, so the prospects, and hotel-keepers and the genus just alluded to, are firm in the hope that Cairo will receive a larger number of visitors this year than hitherto, as we are in piping times of peace here, and there are a number of British officers who have doffed war toggery, and can leisurely unbend themselves. The cold season promises to be very favourable, and, as a Cairo entrepreneur told me, we shall have a first-class French opera company, with a Turkish and Armenian troupe in the two leading theatres."

We have related how the Bosporhe Egyptian was suppressed, but the
French now published, in its place, a leaflet called *L'Indépendant Égyptien*. If not exactly under the same proprietors it was at least under their influence—a part set off by the line of policy adopted, and the employment of some of the staff of the defunct journal. It was a feeble production, but as there was no other French or English journal in Cairo it held its way.

On the 29th September the Mounted Infantry, under Colonel Barrow, left Cairo by train for Assiout, in order to arrive in Upper Egypt before General Stephenson, who started up the Nile on the preceding day in the Khedivial yacht, and, as it was confidently expected there would be some fighting ere he returned, he was accompanied by Mr. Fitzgerald as Political Officer. Yet he was going ostensibly on a tour of inspection.

At this time the new Governor of Wady Halfa was General Butler, who was accompanied in his exile there by his wife, so well known in the world of art as Miss Elizabeth Thompson, the painter of "The Roll Call," "Scotland for ever!" &c.

According to the *British Medical Journal*, the discomfort experienced by our troops at Suakim towards the end of September was very great. "The British soldiers are a pitiful sight—not
one man is in a fairly healthy condition, while even the Indian troops are grumbling, and almost mutinous. The heat is tremendous, the frequent sandstorms are most distressing, and the deaths very numerous. But if Suakim is bad, Massowah, which the Italians have occupied, is worse. A private letter says: We called in at Massowah and had to anchor for the night, and a more frightful and horrible night I never spent. Not a breath of air, and the thermometer 132° Fahr. This is no exaggeration. We were panting on deck. The heat seemed to choke us; sleep was out of the question. Some negroes appeared to feel the heat more than the Europeans, and were groaning and pouring buckets of water over their heads, which was of very little use, as the temperature was between 95° and 100° Fahr. Five Italian officers have committed suicide, and no wonder! Aden, after Suakim and Massowah, is a perfect paradise!"

The Rev. Luigi Bonomi, whom we have already mentioned, in a long letter to Monsignor Sogaro, Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa, related the particulars of his imprisonment in the Soudan, and the treatment to which he was subjected. He told how, on the surrender of El Obeid to the hordes of the Mahdi, the missionary, priests, and the nuns were threatened with death, unless they would become Mohammedans, but continued firm in their faith; and among other interesting facts, his published letter relates his mode of making ink to write to Cardinal di Canossa. For this purpose he burned a piece of bone, crushed it between two stones, and then dissolved it in water, to which he added a little gum.

Then he made a pen from a reed, and wrote upon a small piece of paper, using the sole of his shoe as a desk. In this way, also, he wrote the Via Crucis, and other practices of piety for the use of the Christians, as far as he could remember them. He referred to the defeat of Hicks Pasha, and said that of the thousands he commanded only one European escaped the massacre, Gustave Kloetz, a Prussian by birth, formerly a sergeant of Uhlans, and attendant on O'Donovan, correspondent of the Daily News. He was taken by the troops of the Mahdi, and brought before the latter. Bonomi's letter was published in the Nigrizia, a fortnightly review, issued in Verona by the Institute of the African Missions.

He and Bishop Sogaro hoped to achieve the release of two priests, the sisters of charity, and three lay brothers, who were still prisoners at El Obeid or Omdurman. These captives suffered much ill-treatment, especially the women, who were severely beaten, and had their nostrils slit.

"Such treatment," says a print, "was perhaps only to be expected from the cruel and brutal disposition of the Mahdi, who, notwithstanding the popular enthusiasm he originally excited among his followers, seems by his conduct during the last months of his life to have incurred the hatred of those about him."

His successor, Khalifa Abdullah, was utterly unable to maintain any authority
over the fiery Arabs; and here we may mention that Khal'ifah is an Arabic word, signifying a vicar or successor, and Abdullah means "the Servant of God."

It was then intended that Father Bonomi should return immediately to the Soudan; but Bishop Sogaro informed the Times correspondent at Vienna that news he had received from Egypt convinced him that there was a strong probability of the European prisoners of the Mahdists being ransomed for money—among them Lupton Bey and Slatin Bey. "The Mahdi himself," the Bishop said, "never had such popularity, nor wielded such authority, as was supposed in Europe. He was execrated for his cruelties, and at one time the arrival of a few hundred British soldiers at Khartoum would have been enough to break his authority and save Gordon. It would, indeed, have been enough that the arrival of British soldiers should be known to be imminent, for the Mahdi kept on saying that the British dared not attack him, and much of the homage that he obtained was given under the belief that the Soudanese had no better master to expect than he."

Bishop Sogaro related a conversation which he had with General Gordon, when the latter was on his way to Khartoum, and his last words to him were, "Do not forget me in your prayers. Catholics and Protestants are but soldiers in different regiments of Christ's army—yet it is the same army, and we are all marching together."

The Bishop stated that Lord Wolseley's plan of taking the Relief Ex-

pedition up the Nile was believed to be the best, but thought it a mistake to wait for boats of special construction, instead of requisitioning all the light craft used on the river. "The soldiers," he said, "should have been pushed forward anyhow, but at once." Criticism of this sort, however useful, is deprived of much of its value when delivered after the event. Of Lord Wolseley's general conduct as a commander, of his justice, humanity, and perfect courtesy towards all who were brought into relations with him, Bishop Sogaro spoke in the highest terms. He was also enthusiastic in his praise of Major Kitchener, whom he described as an admirable soldier, possessing an extraordinary knowledge of Egypt and the Soudan.

The interviewer having raised the question of the evacuation of Egypt, Monsignor Sogaro said he could not believe that the British would ever totally abandon Egypt. "If they do," he said, "the proceeding will be every way deplorable, as it will retard the civilisation of Egypt for an indefinite time. It will remain on record that a Christian power tried to establish itself in the country but failed, and Christianity, with all its influence, will suffer for an incalculable time from that failure."

This pessimistic view of the situation did not recommend itself to the general opinion. Should Christianity suffer in consequence of the Soudan wars, that result will rather be due to the fact of a Christian nation attempting to crush a brave people "rightly struggling to be free."
CHAPTER XII.
THE BATTLE OF KUFIT.


On the 30th of September the following telegram from General Grenfell, then up the Nile, was received by the Khedive at Cairo:—"Two steamers and an Egyptian camel company arrived on Tuesday (29th) at Saadeen Fanti, where they arrested fifteen rebels. A number of dervishes have advanced as far as Kaibar, where I am sending the steamers." On this the Khedive despatched another steam yacht to accompany the General up the river, and he was to await its arrival at Luxor. "Throughout this country," a Cairo correspondent wrote at this date, "there has been a marked difference of feeling in the shape of more tranquillity and more confidence in the future. In consequence of this the reforms contemplated by Britain have been going on more steadily and rapidly. But Mr. Gladstone's manifesto has already destroyed this feeling. It has brought about a renewal of uncertainty and want of confidence; it tends to make all reform much more difficult, if not impossible. This result is particularly noticeable in Cairo and Alexandria."

By the end of September, 1885, the Governor of Sennaar had cleared the caravan route to Medin and retaken from the Mahdists four of General Gordon's armour-plated steamers.

On Thursday, the 1st of October, shots were exchanged between our outposts and the Arabs near Ferket. No importance was attached to that event, as the situation on the Nile was rapidly assuming a character similar to that at Suakim—plenty of desultory fighting, but no concentration of force and no fixed idea of advancing; but on the 2nd a telegram from the front announced at Cairo that the dervishes were pushing on, and that a thousand of them had arrived at Haffir, which was within eighty miles of the most distant British outpost.

On the 4th October orders were received at Cairo from London countermanding the instructions for the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and desiring the Berkshire Regiment to proceed at once up the Nile. It was considered rather hard upon the latter battalion that, after a trying campaign at Suakim, it should be again sent to the front, and when mustering only five hundred bayonets.

The 6th of October saw the irresistible Mahdists within a day's march of Wady Halfa, and reports stated that their advanced guard had exchanged shots with our soldiers at that place, but that their numbers, leaders, and constitution, were unknown. Certain it was that our stern-
THE HEART OF CAIRO.

(From the Picture by Bernhard Fiedler.)
wheel gunboats patrolling the Nile had been fired upon more than once, “and orders have been given,” wrote the *Globe* correspondent, “to send other steamers of the same class, two of which are now on their way down the Upper Nile, while in Egyptian circles it is said that a scratch lot of Egyptian braves are to be despatched to Wady Halfa with the utmost expedition. One fact is worthy of remark. The Mahdists, true to tradition, are pursuing the same tactics as when they opened the ball about two years ago: first allowing the enemy into their country, then disappearing, afterwards suddenly springing up as if from the ground, and assaulting in enormous masses; anon retiring for another leap, but always advancing with slowness, sureness, and a terrible persistency. Three months ago the idea of the Mahdists reaching Akasheh would have been laughed at; to-day their presence at Wady Halfa is a stern reality.”
Ras Aloola, the Abyssinian hero and long-expected deliverer of Kassala, was still advancing, according to the reports of our Intelligence Department, but was in want of arms. To supply these an agent was despatched to Birmingham to purchase 30,000 Winchester rifles, says the same correspondent, “and a complete ammunition outfit, and if they are not captured en route by the Mahdists, they ought to enable Ras Aloola to effect the relief of the beleaguered town. Is he to be trusted with so many weapons? That is a question which his master is asking, but which our people simply ignore. The arms business is looking up, for two large orders have been sent to firms in Britain for improved rifles, presumably for our soi-disant faithful allies, but perhaps eventually to fall into the hands of the enemy.”

Of the Egyptian troops who were to take part in the expected operations, the same correspondent said that they looked well upon parade, were satisfied with their pay and treatment, but were wanting in courage, and disliked active service of any kind, especially under Christian and British officers, and that it was feared, in the tug of war, they would prove no better than those who fled in the battles of Hicks and Baker.

In connection with the reorganisation of the Egyptian Army, it was ordered that on joining the service, a surgeon was to rank with a lieutenant, and receive pay at the rate of £E.12 per month, and, on promotion, the rank of captain, at £E.20 per month, to be increased after five years to £E.25. Among the British officers who joined this new and somewhat unsatisfactory force, we may mention Captain Herbert Swayne Fitzgerald, of the 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry, who was appointed Staff-Captain in the Intelligence Department, on the staff of Major-General Grenfell, commanding the Frontier Field Force, with headquarters at Assouan; Colonel A. M. Harington, late of the Rifle Brigade, who was appointed Divisional Inspector of the Assiout District of the Egyptian Gendarmerie; Colonel Bewley, Inspector of the same force for Cairo; Captain H. O. D. Hickmore, 2nd Battalion Yorkshire Regiment, who was taken on the strength of the Egyptian Army by desire of General Grenfell, and employed on special duty in the Adjutant-General’s Department at Cairo; Major H. Lovett, who received the Order of the Medjidie for his services in connection with the Sudan refugees; Major E. Lloyd, of the Bengal Staff Corps, who was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel of the 4th Egyptian Battalion, vice Colonel Wigmore, resigned; Major J. H. Wodehouse, R.A., who took command of the Egyptian Artillery, vice Colonel Rundle; Major Robert Leith Shaw, of the Royal Dublin (formerly Bombay) Fusiliers, who was appointed to command the Rescue Depot at Ramleh; Captain J. Reginald Bray (formerly 14th Hussars), who served on the Egyptian Staff; Lieutenant P. S. Marling, V.C. (3rd Battalion King’s Royal Rifle Corps), appointed as captain to the Mounted Infantry; Colonel Hag-
gard and Surgeon-Major Galbraith, members of the Recruiting Commissions; and Mr. A. B. Brewster, the secretary of the Intelligence Department at Suakim, who had the rank of Bey conferred upon him by the Khedive for his services in the Expedition under Sir Gerald Graham.

"If the truth were known," wrote the correspondent of the Globe, "the British officers are heartily disgusted with the material out of which they are supposed to mould soldiers, and as there is no entente cordiale between them and the native officers, who are good in theory and nothing more, the Egyptians would be worse than useless for active work in the field. We have abolished flogging in our army, but though desirous to conform to the practice of the British service, the officers of the Egyptian force are compelled to resort to the lash to bring the men up to their work. Without the whip you can do nothing with an Egyptian, and it is no unusual thing to read of a native soldier receiving fifty stripes for insubordination or desertion, though this is only in cases of an extremely aggravated character. Mehmet Ali won his battles with Egyptian soldiers, but then the Kourbash was king, and the Circassian and Turkish element compelled the Fellah warrior to fight, unless he preferred to fall under the fire of these valorous fellows."

Early in October, 1885, the incident known as L'affaire d'une Princesse made some noise in Egypt, and became somewhat mixed up with Sir H. Drummond Wolff's mission to Constantinople—a story which touched the family of the Khedive and the interests of so-called Egyptian justice. This lady, the Princess Zeinab, was married to Mohammed Pasha, brother of the Khedive (born in 1863), who passed some time in England and in France, and there contracted habits of extravagance. The Princess possessed one of the largest fortunes in Egypt, consisting of rich lands and well-invested funds. Generous to the verge of prodigality, she was the victim of greedy speculators, and soon found herself in debt to a considerable amount, which, however, her means, if properly administered, could clear off.

She had a claim against the Egyptian Government for £50,000, as well as one of £80,000, which came under the will of a deceased sister, and she took steps to recover these amounts, in order to satisfy her creditors, whose demands came to nearly £100,000.

In order to invalidate her claim and enrich a near relative of the Khedive, her case was privately brought before a Mussulman tribunal, which regulates the offences of minors, incapables, and what the French call interdits, without observing certain indispensable formalities prescribed by law—such as an inquiry into the facts alleged, or investigation of the motives of the action, and a trial of the whole case in open court.

The tribunal, simply on the evidence of two obscure witnesses, and the production of a list of the Princess Zeinab's debts, on a charge of extravagance amounting to mental incapacity,
handed over her entire monetary affairs to a Pasha, who was appointed "curator of the administration of the Princess's fortune." The unfortunate lady was thus debarred from entering any action in respect of the claims she had against the Government of her brother-in-law, the Khedive.

The Pasha, in managing her estates, sold large quantities of valuable land to another interested party, at a ridiculously low figure, and committed many other acts of injustice, to the prejudice of the Princess, who was compelled to live on a pittance, and eventually on the charity of her friends. She, finding her affairs going to ruin, petitioned that the curator should give an account of his stewardship. This was refused, and, as a last resource, she employed European counsel, and sent him to Constantinople to procure the intervention of the Porte, and failing that, appealed to the British Envoy, Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

"The tribunal, and the power that works it, became alarmed," wrote a correspondent, "especially as Ismail Pasha, the ex-Khedive, promised to use all his influence in favour of the Princess Zeinab, and against the Viceroy, and a counter-mission was sent to Sir H. D. Wolff, courteously protesting against foreign interference in a domestic affair, and against any attempt to meddle with the course of Mussulman law as administered by the tribunal."

After a good deal of negotiation, it was finally decided that the whole matter should come under the super-

vision of Sir H. D. Wolff, through whom it was hoped the Princess would get her rights again, as he was certain to direct his attention to the law courts of Egypt, where, in consequence of the mixed courts—the native tribunals, and the Consular Courts—justice is almost an impossibility, and where might, not right, almost invariably prevails.

On the 7th October the Royal Berkshire Regiment (or old 49th) embarked at Kasr-el-Nil, for conveyance in the Nile steamer to Assouan, there to be stationed under Colonel Huyshe, C.B.

One of the most important of recent events in the Soudan, was the battle of Kuft, Kelt, or Kuft, fought by Ras Aloola, on his way to relieve Kassala. From Abyssinia, the land of whirlwinds and sandstorms, facing many of the latter, he had descended to meet the army of Osman Digna. As our officers and soldiers referred to sandstorms so often in their letters, we may here give a description of one from Ensor's "Journey through Nubia to Darfour," and which he terms one of the most sublime and appalling sights in the Desert.

In one of these, at two miles' distance, he saw seven lofty pillars of sand, travelling swiftly over the waste. One was vertical, the others leaned slightly towards it, while an eighth, about half a mile behind, inclined towards them at an angle of forty-five degrees and fast overtook them. At the base of these columns the sand was lashed by a whirlwind into a raging sea, while scattered trees were uprooted, and swept away like reeds.
SPORT IN LOWER EGYPT: GROUSE-SHOOTING NEAR THE PYRAMIDS.
"The whirlwind, or sandspout, called by the natives zobishah, shortly after subsided, but the cloud of sand and grass, which had been raised high in the heavens, continued to darken the setting sun for more than an hour. The smaller column travelled behind, increasing till it reached the site of the break-up of the other, and thus added its mite to the general confusion. With my sextant, as I stood in security, I measured the height of the centre column of sand; it was 850 feet. The others round it rose during the time I observed them (about a quarter of an hour), from 600 feet to a height equal to, or greater than, that of the centre column. When the junction of them all took place, the sudden eruption of sand, leaves, and grass, reached a total height of over 3,000 feet, but this was only an approximate calculation. . . .

One morning as we sat at dinner in our tent, pitched in the valley, midway between steep and lofty rocks on each side, we were startled in our pleasant occupation by the sound of a tremendous wind-storm close upon us. Before we had time to express any wonder as to what it could be, or to swallow what we had in our mouths, the tent was carried clean away from above our dinner, the candles were blown out, and the two tables placed side by side were upset, and the whole of the first course was gone. It was a fearful tempest; all the tents, with the exception of one, placed under the shelter of a great rock, were torn off from the pegs, and whirled along until stopped by the trees; a gongaloe, standing near us, after bending once or twice before the blast, was laid low with a horrid crash on the earth. There were no clouds in the sky, the air all round was clear; it was simply an awful and angry rush of wind up the gorge, such as we had already experienced in a minor degree at the spring of Jebel Ain."

Kuft, the scene of the encounter between Ras Aloolo and Osman Digna, is the ancient Coptos in Upper Egypt, which, during the reign of the Ptolemies, was the great emporium of its commerce, the productions of the province being brought there and conveyed by caravan to Berenice, on the shore of the Red Sea, by night, owing to the intense heat by day. Plutarch says the name of the city signifies privation, because Isis, when there, received tidings of the death of Osiris, and cut a lock off her hair, as indication of grief; and Strabo records, that there stood a statue of Memnon, which, when touched by the rising sun, emitted sounds like the statue at Serapis.

Kuft flourished under the Roman Empire, but incurred the resentment of Diocletian, and was reduced to ashes. The original city was never afterwards inhabited, but an Arab town was afterwards built in its immediate vicinity; and, most of the commerce being transferred to Keneh, Kuft fell into insignificance. The ruins of the city destroyed by Diocletian remain in nearly the same state the fire left them, and exhibit splendid fragments of porphyry and granite columns. The Arab town is surrounded by a wall of unbaked bricks,
and to the east of the old town are two large basins, which appear to have been reservoirs of water.

The Arab town Ras Aloola is reported to have found strongly fortified when he approached it, with what was supposed to be a column designed for the relief of Kassala.

This was on the 23rd of September. The muster for the expedition was held at Asmara on the first day of the Abyssinian month named Moskerem, or thirteen days before the battle—corresponding to the 15th of September, or feast of St. John, the dwarf and anchorite who inhabited the wilderness of Secté, in Egypt, in the fifth century. The levy must have been an imposing one, ascriers proclaimed throughout Abyssinia "that all who failed to respond to the roll-call would be liable to the defaulters' penalty." The whole proceeding was something on the plan of the old Scottish fiery cross, for the original scheme of Ras Aloola was to take the field with a much larger army than that which eventually followed him. All commissariat arrangements, however, devolved on the Government of Egypt, represented by Major Chermside, their able Governor-General of the Red Sea littoral; but, owing to the great difficulties of transport in such a region, it was deemed necessary to limit the force of Ras Aloola to eight legions of 1,000 men each, each legion being divided into companies under centurions; while a further contingent of two legions, also of 1,000 men each, under Belada Kabru, Governor of Senheit and right-hand man of Ras Aloola, acted as a reserve and convoy.

The commissariat arrangements were for the most part entrusted to the Moslem tribes of Beni-Amer and their allies, who furnished a train of 2,000 camels. When the legions were mustered all the elderly men were furnished with breechloaders and fifty rounds of ball-cartridge each in their belts, and a bag of flour to last four days, carried over the shoulder. The sheikhs of the Beni-Amer and other tribes rode with Ras Aloola, and the most perfect concord and amity prevailed.

For some time before their relieving column was spoken of, considerable dissatisfaction had existed among the rebel Arabs, who were all well armed with Remington rifles and spears; but after Osman Digna's appearance on the scene their forces had become concentrated, and that redoubtable chief, who, since the death of the Mahdi, might be well considered the head of the movement, had evidently resolved to leave nothing undone to inflict a crushing defeat upon the Abyssinian Christians, and with this view had taken up a strong position near Ku-fit, where he had entrenched his troops formidably to await the arrival of the enemy.

Ras Aloola would appear to have advanced to within a hundred and twenty miles of this position with great caution, and then sent forward his scouts to reconnoitre thoroughly and report on the best mode of delivering an attack. The plan he finally
decided upon was a very gallant one, as it compelled perfect working to save his force from certain defeat.

It consisted in forced marches, timed so as to arrive within striking distance of Osman Digna at nightfall; but of this, in some respects important battle, to cut off fugitives, while holding himself back with a body of his troops as if to receive an attack to be delivered on his front. The fighting began at dawn, while Osman Digna, who had hurried on by forced marches from Suakim, had thrown himself across the road (with trenches), by which the Abyssinians would have to advance to Kassala.

In this battle the dervishes were completely defeated, with an alleged loss of 3,000 men, while the friendly Beni-Amer and El Gudru tribes killed all who took to flight, and Ras Alooda, who was mounted, had his horse shot under him.

all the accounts are vague and most unsatisfactory.

It began in the morning and lasted till noon. Ras Alooda is stated to have disposed of a portion of his force, consisting of 8,000 foot, in echelon on both flanks of the Arabs during the obscurity of night, throwing out a body of Beni-Amer cavalry and Abyssinians far into the rear of their posi-
Osman Digna was said to be among the slain, but his body was not satisfactorily identified, as the sequel proved; while Ras Alooda returned to Keren, awaiting a reply to a letter he had sent to the Mudir of Kassala, which at this date was said to be well provisioned.

and (I inform you) that Osman Digna with his der-
of Kassala and the natives of Algeden, who again carried off the victory.

"Ras Aloola has returned to Senheít (Keren), and in two days he intends sending Belada Kabru on to Kassala, together with Sheikh Moussa of the Beni-Amers. Sheltà Rayah states that Kassala is well provisioned.

"No doubt I shall receive a letter in a few days from Kassala, and learn the truth about their situation. I am now going to send a messenger in to Kassala with letters for the Mudir; and trust to be able soon to send good news. Please send the enclosed telegram on to Aden, &c.

"Marcopoli."

Two points were not a little commented on after the arrival of the news of this battle at Kufit. First, there was the meagre authority for the death of Osman Digna; and secondly, the suspicious withdrawal of Ras Aloola towards Senheít instead of an advance, as victor, on Kassala. Doubts as to the identification of Osman’s body were strong, for, among the attacking force, few, or none, knew his features, but the Sheikh Morghani. Thus, until further details came, the story of his fall was accepted with reserve.

"Before, however, attaching undue importance to Ras Aloola’s withdrawal," said a writer at the time, "we must consider the actual situation of the Kassala garrison, with which the Abyssinian General had been in frequent communication up to the date of the action. The population consists of some fifteen thousand Moslems, many of whom, before the war, were bound by ties of amity, and even relationship, with the neighbouring tribes, who later joined the rebel cause and constituted the beleaguering force. They largely outnumber the garrison, which is com-posed for the most part of Bashi Bazouks, under a Circassian Mudir. After being reduced to the last extremity, the town came to terms with the besiegers, by whom they were supplied with provisions, and with whom they resumed relations, which may almost be deemed friendly, and both parties probably benefited by this arrangement."

Dr. Williams, in his "Life in the Soudan," says that Kassala is situated 1,900 feet above the level of the sea, and surrounded by a rampart of bricks baked in the sun, and plastered over with mud and the refuse of cattle. The Kassala mountain, which is just outside, he describes as an enormous and almost perpendicular mass of granite, several thousand feet in height, rising straight out of a plain, and visible for miles in every direction. "The population," he adds, "was, in 1882, something like 25,000, without reckoning the garrison, which consisted of 1,000 Nubians. There are large numbers of cows, goats, sheep, and camels in the neighbourhood, and a great deal of camel-breeding is carried on here."

The agreement with Ras Aloola was that Kassala and all Government money and stores there should become his, if he succeeded in relieving the town, which the British Ministry had been unable to succour. But rumour stated that on his army coming in sight the population had risen and either massacred the garrison or fraternised with the force outside to defend the place against the Abyssinians, and, after looting it, had given to the flames.
Anyway, Ras Aloola resolved not to advance farther until he heard from the Mudir of Kassala; and another cogent reason was the hazardous march of some hundred and fifty miles over a barren country, in which he had left his commissariat in the rear. This circumstance, for which the Egyptian Government were in some sense to blame, would seem not to have warranted his further advance just then, while private spies informed him that, so far as supplies went, Kassala was not in want of immediate relief; thus the whole situation for a time was dubious and hazy.

On the 9th October intelligence from Massowah stated that in compliance with a request from Ras Aloola, Colonel Saletta, the Italian Commandant there, had sent two of his medical staff to attend to the wounded—particularly the Abyssinian General; and the 13th passed without any news of a farther advance on Kassala, and anon rumour began to state that the fall of Osman Digna was a canard; that the tribes about Kassala had been ordered to Khartoum, where there was to be a great concentration, while the Abyssinians were retiring towards Asmara, before the 6th of November, 1885.

Anon, the Rassegna, a Roman paper, before the end of that month published a letter from Massowah, announcing that the battle of Kufit had proved terribly fatal to Kassala, and that Osman Digna was still alive; while to avenge the death of the principal prisoners, who were hanged by the Abyssinians after their retreat to Asmara, he had ordered the inhabitants of Kassala to be massacred. The Europeans and the Egyptian Governor were among the murdered; and it was further stated that Kassala was then destroyed by fire, and is now a mass of ruins.
CHAPTER XIII.

MISSION OF SIR H. D. WOLFF CONCERNING EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN.

Sketch of the Career of Sir H. D. Wolff—His Departure to Turkey—Continental Rumours—Conferences with the Sultan—Attentions paid to the British Envoy—The Sultan plays a Waiting Game—The Convention Signed—Sir H. D. Wolff's Departure for Cairo—His Reception by the Khedive.

From time to time we have referred to the mission of Sir H. D. Wolff, a detailed account of which we now propose to give.

Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, G.C.M.G., and K.C.B., is the son of the celebrated missionary, afterwards Vicar of Isle-Brewers, a small parish in Somersetshire. His mother was Lady Georgiana Mary Walpole, daughter of the second Earl of Orford. He was born in 1830, and educated at Rugby. He received an appointment in the Foreign Office in 1846, and was afterwards attached to our Legation at Florence. When the Conservatives came into office, in 1858, he acted as private secretary successively to Lord Malmesbury and Sir E. Bulwer Lytton. Between 1859 and 1864 (in which year the British Protectorate ceased) he held high and confidential positions in connection with the Ionian Isles.

In 1878-9 he represented Great
Britain in the European Commission for the Organisation of Eastern Roumelia; and from 1874 to 1880 sat as M.P. for Christchurch. In the latter year he was elected M.P. for Portsmouth, which seat he retained till the country for a mission so delicate; but deemed it too probable that he might fail, owing to the tergiversation of the Orientals, and the inherent difficulties of the case. "The fact is," he adds, "we want the Sultan to interfere with the Sultan's interference in Egyptian affairs just so far as suits our own interests, but no further; and the Commander of the Faithful naturally does not see why he should be made a cat's-paw to pull our chestnuts out of the fire. Moreover, the Turks have had good cause to distrust Britain ever since Mr. Gladstone came into office, and as the November elections may restore him to power [which they did], why should the Sultan trouble himself..."

NATIVES OF MASSOWAH.
himself to oblige the nominee of a Cabinet which may have vanished into thin air?"

On the 8th of August, 1885, Sir H. D. Wolff left Charing Cross by the morning express train, accompanied by Mr. Cartwright, Official Secretary, Lieutenant Stuart-Wortley, Military Attaché, and Mr. Bruce, Civil Attaché; and then all kinds of rumours filled the Continental papers. Among them the Temps guaranteed the following:

"Sir Drummond Wolff is to strive to get the Porte to accept the combination it has always rejected. He is going to offer the Soudan [to the Sultan], and consequently the right to send troops to that province of Egypt; but, in order to satisfy Turkey, Britain will authorize her to occupy temporarily several points in Egypt, without, however, allowing the Sultan to interfere in the internal government of the country. The British Cabinet would willingly make certain concessions to Turkey on this last-mentioned matter; but it apprehends the deplorable effect which that policy would have on certain groups of the Conservative party, and which the Liberals would know how to turn to good account in the electioneering campaign. In reality the mission of Sir Drummond Wolff is only a bait, held out with the object of inducing Turkey to come to an understanding, and to conclude with Great Britain an offensive and defensive alliance, with a view to affairs in Afghanistan, which constitutes Britain's real pre-occupation."

In his first audience with the Sultan, Sir H. D. Wolff delivered a message from the Queen, recalling the old friendship between Britain and Turkey, especially in the time of His Majesty's father, Abdul Medjid, adding her desire that the Egyptian question might be settled according to His Majesty's wish, and so as to improve the condition of the Egyptian people.

The Sultan made a courteous reply, which was merely an exact counterpart of the Envoy's address, and added that he would send some one to negotiate privately with Sir Henry on the following day. He took exception to one phrase in the address, which set forth that the "co-operation" of the Turks in Egyptian affairs was desirable. That word wounded Turkish susceptiblity, so another was substituted for it.

With regard to the chances of a successful termination to his mission, the Envoy had a difficult task before him, as Said Pasha, the Grand Vizier, had a great fear of Russia, whose power he had been made to feel ever since he adopted an official career, and he had a well-known dislike of entering into any engagements with a Power whose foreign policy was liable to change with its Ministry. Mr. Gladstone's return to office within three months was feared, and the impression was deeply rooted in the Turkish mind that he would undo all his predecessors might have done—a belief assiduously fostered by the French and Russian Ambassadors, who sought to shape the policy of the Porte in accordance with their own views and against us.

In obedience to the Imperial invitation, Sir H. D. Wolff dined at Yildiz
Kiosk, on which occasion he was admitted to lengthened audiences, both before and after the repast; but the 30th August had come, and as yet no member of the Cabinet had been designated or charged by an Imperial Irâdé to conduct negotiations with the British envoy. On the 2nd of September, however, Assym Pasha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Kiamil Pasha, Minister of Evkâfs, were appointed for that purpose. But people were still kept much in the dark, and, according to the Havas Agency, an announcement was made in the Paris press, that "Sir H. D. Wolff would not seek to conclude an offensive or defensive alliance with Turkey. In so far as the occupation of Egypt was concerned, all the British Envoy is reported as seeking to obtain, is the assistance of the Porte in the Soudan, and its authorisation to recruit the cadres of the Egyptian Army from the officers of various races who serve in the Ottoman Army. The cadres thus constituted would form the basis of the reorganisation of the Native Egyptian Army. The spontaneous declaration of the Powers recently made by the British Government, repudiating a British Protectorate over Egypt has," says this semi-official communication, "produced a most favourable impression on the statesmen of Europe." The document proceeds to express the conviction that, "after the loyal declaration, all the Cabinets will feel more disposed to support the efforts of Britain to reconstitute a Native Army, capable of maintaining order in the interior of Egypt, and driving back any invasion of Soudanese hordes."

On the other hand, it was asserted that the Sultan was demanding great concessions, which the Envoy was not disposed to make.

While the European press teemed with all kinds of rumours, the first interview between the Envoy and Assym and Kiamil Pashas took place on the morning of the 3rd September, but their business was confined to an exchange of full powers and some preliminary discussions.

The choice of these two Pashas was generally supposed to augur well for the eventual success of the special mission, as Assym was a colleague of Sir H. D. Wolff on the Eastern Roumelian Commission, while Kiamil possessed a thorough knowledge of Great Britain, and was deemed the most Anglophile of all the Cabinet.

Turkey was alleged to require, first and foremost, the withdrawal of our Army of Occupation, or to have a date for that movement, and the acceptance of six reservations made in the Imperial Irâdé, sanctioning the issue of nine millions as an Egyptian loan.

On the 5th of September the second conference lasted several hours, yet no concrete point was discussed: only a general plan of deliberations was agreed upon. "Sir H. D. Wolff," says the Standard, "has not up to the present formulated any proposition on the subject of his mission. In his private audience of the Sultan, the British Envoy made no allusion to the precise nature of the proposed co-operation
between Britain, Turkey, and Egypt. At this interview the Sultan expressed a great desire that matters in Egypt should be arranged, and his rights in that country should be formally recognised, and that some measures should plans. It seems certain that they will not demand the fixing of a date for the evacuation of Egypt by the British troops. The rumour that a force of five thousand Turks is in readiness to proceed to Egypt, is without the least be found by Sir H. D. Wolff and the Ottoman Delegates to bring about a normal state of things in Egypt. The British Envoy will neither propose a British Protectorate under the auspices of the Sultan, nor any arrangement outside Britain's internal arrangements. The Turkish delegates evince a very friendly disposition, without appearing to wish to suggest themselves any foundation. According to trustworthy information, the mixed occupation of Egypt will not take place, and there is no probability of a Turkish Expedition to the Soudan.”

From this meeting Sir H. D. Wolff returned in the evening to Therapia, charmingly situated on the shore of the Bosphorus, in the steamer Mouche, which the Sultan had placed at his disposal.
The Envoy was of opinion that the latter possessed many means, even without the despatch of troops, to assist Great Britain in Egypt, and that his influence as Caliph might be known. It was also said that in the negotiations with our Envoy the evacuation of Egypt was always made a *sine qua non* of any retrospective action by the Porte; that for an eventual re-

Though little oozed out concerning these conferences, the rumours were endless. According to the most eminent French authorities, the Sultan was resolved to enter into no binding engagements with Britain till the result of the next General Election was organisation of the Egyptian Army, which would become necessary upon the withdrawal of ours (for which France was ever most anxious); the Porte offered to supply the cadres and a thousand bayonets; and also, that the Porte was in entire agreement with France!

The matter dragged on wearily.
The next meeting was productive of nothing, as in Turkey all matters proceeded slowly. The Ottoman delegates were models of caution and reticence, never taking upon themselves to give a reply to the most simple question from Sir H. D. Wolff without proceeding to the Vizierial apartment to consult his Highness, who, in turn, went to the palace to submit the point to the Sultan. Each side endeavoured to fathom and foil the views of the other—a method likely to facilitate delay and promote doldrums!

At a meeting on the 5th September with Assym and Kiamil Pashas, the British Envoy explained the difficulties connected with the affairs of Egypt, and indicated ways in which they might be solved, without making any definite proposal in the name of his Government or binding himself to any fixed line of policy; while Kiamil and Assym, on their side, also avoided pronouncing themselves in a decided sense, as it appeared certain they had received no definite instructions. So the "angling" went on, and the French press began to assert that the Egyptian business and the Drummond Wolff mission were a stumbling-block between Britain and France, or between Downing Street and the Quai d'Orsay, the French Foreign Office affecting to think that, since France had interests in Egypt second only to those of Britain she had suffered a slight by the fact that Sir H. D. Wolff had not passed through Paris on his way to Constantinople.

Sir H. D. Wolff had two other conferences with the Ottoman delegates, and, though all parties were extremely reticent, it was believed (according to the Standard) that fair progress had been made towards an understanding. In some quarters matters were represented to have reached very near a definite entente, but there was reason to believe that there was still a mass of detail to be got through before this desirable result could be attained. Many propositions, among others that of officering the Egyptian army by Turks, were referred to, but were not put in a definite form.

Sir H. D. Wolff's movements now became uncertain, and H.M.S. Iris was sent to the Dardanelles to be at his disposal. Meanwhile every attention was paid to him by the Sultan and his Ministers. At the Selamik he and his suite were accommodated with seats in the courtyard of the mosque, which his Majesty visited for the Friday midday prayer. On passing, the Sultan acknowledged the salutation of the Envoy by raising his right hand to his fez. At a later hour he sent Ismael Pasha, commander of the Yildiz garrison, to visit Sir H. D. Wolff, who was afterwards present at a State ball given by the Russian Ambassador at Buyukdere, though fears existed that the mission might be damaged in its interests by Muscovite intrigues.

Meanwhile the Egyptian question continued to be a source of coolness, if not actual tension, between the Cabinets of Britain and France. M. Camille Barrère, who had been suddenly ordered to resume his post at
NEGOTIATIONS STILL PENDING.

Cairo, made it seem possible there might be another incident like that which arose out of the dissolution of the Assembly of Egyptian Notables. The real cause of the step was semi-officially stated to be the refusal of the Assembly to sanction the irrigation scheme of Colonel Scott-Monerieff. The French Government seemed to think that the sum provided for the purpose was to come out of the International Loan, and that hence the Powers should have a voice in the matter.

Day by day went past, and clouds seemed still to rest on the mission. "The Sultan," wrote the Vienna correspondent of the Standard, "is most anxious to dissipate the distrust existing in more than one European Court since the negotiations with Sir H. Drummond Wolff commenced, but his Majesty considers Egypt too much his own simply to accept the views entertained at Vienna and Berlin. If an understanding with Britain which would even partially restore the Sultan's former position in Egypt be possible, Sir H. D. Wolff's mission will be successful, without having recourse to such unnecessary sacrifice on the Sultan's side as Egypt's internationalisation. The Sultan at the present moment simply plays a waiting game, which is justified by circumstances. Thus, he invited Baron Calice to dinner on the 12th of this month, having previously entertained the Prussian Minister, Herr Lucius, and he continues earnestly to follow the negotiations with Sir Drummond Wolff; and this attitude of pleasing the Austro-German Alliance, and, at the same time, Britain, is, after all, the wisest at the present moment."

On the 15th September it was stated in diplomatic circles that the Porte had agreed upon certain proposals to be made by the Envoy concerning the re-organisation of the Egyptian army and the control of Egyptian finance, whereby Turkish influence in both these matters would be increased. It was added, however, that Musurus Pasha had been instructed to sound Lord Salisbury upon these proposals before they were formally submitted to the Envoy.

Said Pasha, at his own request, was entrusted by the Sultan with the general direction of affairs in the Turkish interest, having expressed to the Porte a hope of arriving at a satisfactory result with Great Britain; and it was now stated that there was no foundation whatever for the reiterated rumours that the Sultan was awaiting the results of the General Election in the British Isles.

On the 19th of September it was reported that the negotiations were progressing satisfactorily, and that, at last, certain general principles had been agreed upon as a basis for an eventual arrangement, and were under the consideration of the British and Turkish Governments; but the latter sittings were not held on the days appointed, Sir H. D. Wolff having sent cipher telegrams to Lord Salisbury, asking for instructions. He had also telegraphed to Mr. Egerton, at Cairo, for others necessary for his guidance.
“Up to the present (19th),” we are told, “the British Envoy and the Turkish Commissioners have discussed no point which could affect the susceptibilities of the European Powers, who all have an interest in placing Egypt in a position of governing herself and fulfilling her international obligations. Sir H. D. Wolff is anxious to avoid furnishing any Power with a pretext for intervention by a false interpretation of his proposals. Nothing authentic has yet transpired regarding any points of divergence between Sir H. D. Wolff and the Ottoman negotiators. It appears certain, however, that the latter require the evacuation of Egypt by the British as a basis for agreement, while the basis proposed by the British Envoy is the co-operation of Britain and Turkey in restoring a state of normal things in Egypt, which should be first sustained by British occupation. This course, it is thought, would ultimately permit the maintenance of order being entrusted to the country’s own resources.”

According to rumours then current in the Turkish capital, the Ottoman negotiators had agreed that the Sultan would co-operate with Britain by furnishing officers as Army Instructors, and some thousand chosen Turkish soldiers as the nucleus of a reorganised Egyptian Army, to be carried out under the auspices of both countries, and to operate equally in the Soudan; while not only Turks, but also Albanians and Circassians, were to be drafted into the cadres of this new force. One fact was
certain, however, that no such proposal as this had as yet been made to Sir H. D. Wolff, whose mission, it was thought, would be greatly facilitated, about the 22nd of September, by the \textit{Telegraph} reported, as the result of several conferences between Sir H. Drummond Wolff and Kiamil and Arifa Pashas, that the basis of a general understanding between Turkey and

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... events occurring in Roumelia, though he now spoke of going to Cairo, his visit to which was postponed on the 28th, when the Porte informed him that negotiations—which the Bairam Festival had interrupted—would be resumed, and new delegates appointed. On the 10th of October the \textit{Daily}...

... Britain had been at last arranged, for the reformation of the entire civil, military, and financial administration of the Egyptian Government to such an extent as to enable it to administer the country by itself, and to conclude an advantageous settlement with the hostile Soudan.
This basis excluded the despatch of Turkish troops in any way, and established the principle of British evacuation when it was feasible to effect it. The arrangement, as then agreed upon, was embodied in a brief document, which, it was stated, had been signed by all the Cabinet, and submitted to the Sultan for his approval. But Sir H. D. Wolff had, however, received no communication from the latter on the subject.

"The British Special Envoy," adds the Telegraph correspondent, "is still waiting instructions from Lord Salisbury concerning the basis arranged by him with the Turkish Ministers. As soon as he has received the sanction of Lord Salisbury and the Sultan, the details will be added without the formality of appointing fresh Ottoman delegates, since Sir Henry D. Wolff and Kamil Pasha are agreed upon the principles. When all the points have been determined on, the British Special Envoy will proceed to Cairo, accompanied by an Ottoman Commissioner, and will institute an inquiry into all the branches of the administration."

Though the Imperial İrade, sanctioning all these arrangements, had not appeared by the 17th of October, the Envoy received an intimation that he would be received at a farewell audience by his Majesty the Sultan; while the opposition to the basis, on the part of certain Continental Embassies, was withdrawn, the Envoy having assured them "that it would merely bring about a settlement of Egyptian affairs in strict accordance with the Sultan's sovereign rights, and could not, in any way, injure the individual interests of any one Power."

It was arranged that a Turkish Commissioner was to accompany him to adjust, if possible, the affairs of the Soudan, and, in some degree, to consider those of Egypt.

It was generally understood that the Convention contained six articles; that it declared that the Turkish Commissioner, Sir H. D. Wolff, and the Khedive, were to consult together as to the means to be employed for the pacification of the Soudan; the reorganisation of the Egyptian Army, and of the civil and financial affairs of Egypt; providing, also, that the British occupation was to continue until everything was arranged and in good working order; all international treaties and firmans to remain in force, and to be again recognised by the Convention.

On the 20th of October the Envoy dined with the Sultan at the Yildiz Kiosk, and had a three hours' interview after; and, meanwhile, Sir Edward Thornton was at Sebastopol awaiting his departure, before resuming the duties of his post at Constantinople.

The labours of the Envoy had thus, apparently, after a delay thoroughly characteristic of the nature and traditions of the Turkish court, borne solid fruit; and the Sultan seemed anxious to do him every honour before his departure from the shores of the Bosphorus; while all the great Powers, outwardly at least, approved of the substance and avowed purport of the Convention.
SIGNING OF THE CONVENTION.

It was formally signed on the afternoon of the 24th October. Up to that moment Sir H. D. Wolff had to contend with many difficulties and petty intrigues; and prior to this the Sultan's principal objection had been a stipulation in the Convention to the effect that the co-operation of the Ottoman Commissioner in the reorganisation of the Egyptian Army should not be confined to an inquiry, but that he—the Sultan—should afford all possible facilities for the said reorganisation, such as the recruiting in Turkey of a certain number of soldiers for the army of the Khedive.

Another point which he objected to, was the suppression of the slave trade in Egypt, although by a previous Convention between Great Britain and Turkey all traffic in negroes had been abolished.

The chief difficulty, however, that presented itself to the mind of the Sultan was said to have arisen from his anxiety to await the progress of the general negotiations then proceeding between the great Powers, before committing himself to an engagement with Britain.

Sir H. D. Wolff, we are told, strongly urged the Porte to accelerate the conclusion of this most tedious Convention, and appoint the Ottoman Commissioner, urging that he had to leave Constantinople without delay; stating, at the same time, that he had been authorised by Lord Salisbury to make some concessions, including one in reference to that vexed point, the reorganisation of the Egyptian Army. The Sultan, on his part, also made a few, and the Imperial Iradé was issued, sanctioning and authorising the Turkish Representatives finally to affix their signatures to the document.

On the 26th Sir H. D. Wolff embarked on board the Inogène for Besikta Bay, where H.M.S. Iris awaited him, without the Turkish Commissioner, who was to accompany him, having been appointed. He duly arrived at Cairo, after being met at Alexandria by Admiral Lennox, Nubar Pasha, and Mr. Egerton, and drove to Shepheard's Hotel, escorted by a guard of honour of the Cornwall Regiment, a squadron of the 19th Hussars, and detachments of Egyptian troops.

On the morning of the 30th October Sir H. D. Wolff had an official and cordial reception from the Khedive, who placed his yacht, the Azizieh, at his disposal for a trip up the Nile. His Highness received from him a copy of the Turkish Convention, with a letter from the Marquis of Salisbury, accrediting him to the Egyptian Court; and it now appeared as if nothing was likely to disturb the goodwill existing between her Majesty's Ministers and those of the Khedive.

In transmitting the copy of the Convention, signed, with the object of guarding the suzerain rights of the Sultan—one of the shadows referred to in the Times—and consolidating his Highness's own position, while protecting the interests of natives and foreigners alike, Sir H. D. Wolff begged to express a hope that the Khedive would assist in the execution of
that instrument, and that in his efforts to carry out the mission confided to him, he might meet with the support of his Highness and his Cabinet.

Tewfik answered briefly that he was happy to welcome the British Envoy and hear his sentiments; that he might rest assured that all measures agreed upon by her Britannic Majesty and the Sultan, tending to promote the welfare of Egypt, would have his most earnest support. This was so far satisfactory.

Later in the day, the Khedive, in Oriental fashion, returned the visit at Shepheard’s Hotel, in the “historical balcony” of which (as it is now named) he was received by Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

It was now reported that a considerable force of Mahdists was marching upon Abu Hammed, and that Dongola was garrisoned by some ten thousand of them, mostly pressed men. Were these Arabs never to be at rest?
ABDUL HAMID II., SULTAN OF TURKEY.

(From the Portrait by T. D. Scott.)
CHAPTER XIV.

PROGRESS OF EVENTS.

Jealousies at Cairo—Dismissal of Said Pasha—Poisoning Case at Cairo—Military Claims for Honours—The Gordon Monument at Southampton—Another Fugitive from Khartoum—Lord Wolseley's Starling Despatch—Moukhtar Pasha appointed Ottoman Commissioner in Egypt—Award of Medals for Gallantry—Exhibition of Soudan Relics—Cost of the Sunkim Expeditions—The Electric Light in the Suez Canal—Manners and Customs of the Egyptians—Magicians of Cairo.

Disputes and jealousies between British and Egyptian officials had begun to occur at Cairo and elsewhere. In the first days of October it became evident that unless speedy action were taken at the former city there would be a repetition of the scandalous intrigues which terminated in the ejection of Dr. Sandwith from the head of the Sanitary Service. The authorities refused to Dr. Greene any real power in the matter, the Khedive, under the influence of ignorant and prejudiced native doctors, declining to give him any decree investing him with power of control, though Nubar Pasha remonstrated, but without effect.

Meanwhile, at Constantinople, the dismissal of Said Pasha, who was known to have strong Russian proclivities, together with the necessity felt by the Sultan to have at least one strong ally among the Powers, had greatly assisted the negotiations of Sir H. D. Wolff for a settlement of Egyptian affairs.

On the 9th of October the military authorities began to make arrangements for the establishment of a military post at the north end of the Ammara Cataract, twenty miles southward of Mokrako, or Mograt.

The British troops in Egypt were now ordered to discontinue wearing summer clothing after the 15th October, when the khakee uniform was to be used only for fatigue and other rough work, as the commanding officers might sanction, from time to time; and, indeed, as a species of workhouse garb, it was fitted for nothing else.

At this date a remarkable poisoning case, before the native courts at Cairo, was attracting universal attention, from the circumstance that the prisoner had long occupied the lucrative post of Chief Secretary to the Governor of Cairo. Information having been given of peculations alleged to have been committed by the accused, which offered also to prove the charges made, the informant, along with two others, was invited by the said Chief Secretary to eat and drink with him, an invitation they rashly accepted, and on which he took the opportunity to poison them all. Owing to the great wealth and high influence of the accused, there appeared to be considerable chance of his escaping, as it was supposed he had bribed—no difficult matter—all the native judges. The charge, however, having been brought under the notice of Nubar Pasha, a commission of inquiry was ordered into the matter; the case was adjourned for a fortnight, and there the charge would seem to have ended.
At home, at this time (according to the Army and Navy Gazette), a good deal of pressure was being brought to bear upon the Horse Guards authorities, to induce them to recognise the claims of many of those officers who were overlooked when the honours were so lavishly distributed for the Soudan campaign. Friends and relations were very exacting in their demands, and many were the attempts made to secure even "simple brevets" for those who had been omitted in the lists. But, in most instances, the powers that be were obdurate. "The selections," they said, "were made after full consideration of the merits of respective claimants, and as the list of rewards was a very full one, it would not be quite expedient to increase it to any considerable extent. Already there has been a supplementary Gazette, and it is said there may be another. Especial emphasis is laid on the word *may*, but, beyond that, the powers that are will not go, and very properly too, we think."

On the 16th of the month a memorial to General Gordon was inaugurated in the Queen's Park at Southampton, which town was often his residence while in England, and where his sisters resided. It consists of a cluster of polished red Aberdeen granite columns, about twenty feet in height, surmounted by richly-carved capitals, and over all an ornamental cross, on the front of which is a dove with an olive-branch, and at the back a passion-flower. Beside the foliated carvings on the pedestal are the arms of the Gordon clan, those of the borough of Southampton, and—curiously enough—the General's name in Chinese.

The inscription, which occupies the four sides of the lower part of the pedestal, alludes to his threefold character as soldier, philanthropist, and administrator; mentions those parts of the world in which he served, and closes with a quotation from his last letter to his sisters:—"I am quite happy, thank God! and, like Lawrence, I have tried to do my duty."

The Akbar now announced that, after the supposed death of Osman Digna at the battle of Kufit, Berber had declared itself independent, and elected the Emir Hamajum as governor of the town and adjacent territory. Also, that he had offered his submission to the Khedive on condition of being confirmed in his office.

On the 16th of October General Stephenson was at Wady Halfa, and about this time we hear again of Monsignor Sogaro, Bishop of Trapezopolis, and of Father Luigi Bonomi, who both asserted at Vienna that the Mahdi had been poisoned by a favourite wife, for what reason they did not allege. They spoke in the warmest terms of Britain, and said, "There is at this moment such anarchy in the Soudan, that a very small effort on the part of England would win back all that had been lost there." They describe Khalifa Abdullah, the Mahdi's successor, as "a poor creature and a coward, who has only a shadow of authority—afraid to move from Khar-
toum, lest he should fall into the hands of one of the chiefs whose faction-wars are ravaging the country."

On the 22nd of October Sister Cipriani, one of the Catholic nuns, reached our outpost at Akasheh, after a sixteen days' journey on foot from Khartoum, through the desert, accompanied by a single Arab. She stated that Khartoum was almost empty, but that Omdurman had a large population, and had become a kind of second Mecca, as Arabs were arriving from the most distant parts of the East to visit the tomb of Mohammed Achmet Shomseddin. A strong force of dervishes was there, with four war steamers, while other vessels were being constructed at the arsenal, to be worked by Egyptians; food was scarce, but there was a plentiful supply of arms and ammunition.

She added that an army had left Omdurman for Berber and Korosko on the 15th of the preceding month (September); that Sennaar fell in the middle of August, and there was now not a single Egyptian garrison in the Soudan; that the Sennaar garrison had been surprised when out foraging for food, their retreat cut off, and the town then surrounded and captured. She also repeated the story of "a Frenchman who fell off his camel towards the end of December last from illness, and was buried before he was dead by the Arabs, who were hurrying forward. The sister saw his grave, which is one day's journey beyond Omdurman. A French journalist about thirty years of age, and of a fair complexion, as well as another Frenchman, were with Abdullah Khalifa at Omdurman. Three other sisters still remained there," where Slatin Bey, Lupton Bey, and Signor Cuzzi, were yet kept in chains.

She added that news had reached Omdurman that the Arab garrisons had retired from Ghedarif owing to want of water in Khorbarka, Abuanga, and Nuranga, and had proceeded to Kordofan for six months to procure accessions of strength.

The old Mahdi was dead; Osman Digna, supposed also to be dead, had for a time disappeared from the scene, and had left no successors deserving of the name. The only result of the partially successful revolt for freedom on the part of the Soudanese had been to create universal anarchy and foster internecine warfare; thus they were almost inclined to look back with regret on the Government they had overthrown. Bad and despotic as it was, it now seemed preferable to chaos.

And now, under date about the 23rd of October, there occurred, or came to light, at home one of the most startling events in connection with the Soudan War—Lord Wolseley's despatch on the alleged incompetency of regimental commanders.

"Lord Wolseley," says the Times, "wrote a despatch upon this subject to the late Secretary of State for War, who, after he left office, put a motion for its production upon the notice paper of the House of Commons. But in consequence, as it is understood, of the usual professional objections, it has
never been made public. Its general purport, however, is an open secret, and we have good reason for believing that Lord Wolseley went so far as to say that the incompetence of some—and not a small proportion, too—of the commanding officers was such, that although regiments were composed of good materials, he did not feel justified in sending them to the front, out of regard to the safety of the men and the efficient execution of the public service. The state of things thus disclosed may not surprise those acquainted with the personnel of the army; but when it is officially recorded by the commander-in-chief of an expedition, that the lives of the men and the honour of the country are endangered by the incompetence of those who command regiments and who exercise the greatest influence upon efficiency, it is manifest that no Secretary of War can suffer the continuance of the new system under which those officers are permitted to attain the position. seniority as the qualification for command must promptly disappear."

On this most grave subject—the allegation by Lord Wolseley that certain officers in command of battalions in the army under his orders in Egypt, were so unfit for their duties and responsibilities that he actually kept the battalions thus handicapped in the rear, because he could not expose them to the consequences of incapacity—the Army and Navy Gazette had a forcible article.

It was doubted whether such a lamentable exhibition of the results of the seniority system could, or would be, obviated by the adoption of the principle of selection, which opens the door to favouritism. Nevertheless, if the selector was to be an officer who would remove incompetent colonels in the face of an enemy, and allow the force under his command to be diminished and deprived of the services of whole regiments thus afflicted, it was difficult to understand how unlimited power of selection would enable him to put an end to the defect of allowing inefficient colonels to hold command—an allegation never before made since Britain had an army as constituted at the Union in 1707.

"The General-in-Chief had, we maintain," says the periodical to which we refer, "full power and authority to remove the colonels whom he stigmatises, and no Secretary of State for War, no commander-in-chief, and no Cabinet Minister, would have dared to object, if the commander of the Queen's army in the field said, 'I have felt it necessary to remove Colonel A from the command of the Regiment, and have placed Colonel B in his place.' But he did not use his power. He preferred to complain of seniority, and to ask for selection which he had in his hand. If any one takes the trouble to examine the distribution of the various regiments under Lord Wolseley's orders, he will be able to ascertain pretty clearly the identity of the luckless battalions, and of the incompetent colonels, who and which were out of it; and he will probably wonder that a man of the promptitude—
and readiness to incur responsibility of the Adjutant-General of the Forces, conscious that he had behind him the power of the Crown, which enables the Queen to dispense with the services of any officer whatever, hesitated for a moment to act on his own convictions. But we will go further, and say that it was distinctly censurable to allow men who were not fit to lead their regiments into action to remain at the head of their men in the rear."

Return we now to Sir H. Drummond Wolff. Nothing was yet fixed as to his future movements.

One of the questions that, early in November, occupied his attention concerned the Egyptian military pensioners, to the number of 8,500, who received small sums annually, and were now to undergo medical examination with a view to fixing a fair basis for the commutation of their allowances.

By the 5th of November it was known that an Imperial Iradé had been issued, appointing Moukhtar Pasha Special Ottoman Commissioner in Egypt, in accordance with the Anglo-Turkish Convention, negotiated with our Envoy, and it was generally thought that no better selection could have been made than this distinguished general. Declining the Khedive's offer of a palace, he resolved to hire a private house for himself and family. Although no precise date was fixed for his departure, it was deemed high time that he should come, as public opinion had already begun to doubt the good faith of the Porte, and more than one French organ, in a leader, echoed this feeling, saying that the delay in the nomination of the Ottoman Commissioner had produced a just suspicion as to the success of the Anglo-Turkish Convention; and the forced inaction of Sir H. D. Wolff seemed to render all hope of a good result quite illusory, while the departments of the army and police were somewhat neglected. "This latter Department needs urgent attention," wrote the Standard correspondent at this date, "and energetic help, if Baker Pasha is to be held any longer responsible for public safety. For instance, for the last three months (prior to November, 1885) the whole Battalion of the Reserve has been without a superior officer, though nominations have been approved by the Council, and the salaries voted by the Budget, and Baker Pasha has written repeatedly on the subject; finally, in despair, disclaiming all responsibility for this body of men unless officers are given them."

About the middle of the month a telegram announced the arrival of the rebels at a spot five miles north of Abu Fatmeh, where Mohammed el Kheir, the ex-Governor of Berber, still remained with some force, and it was announced that in case of any fighting ensuing, General Stephenson would, of course, go at once to the front.

On the 15th General Grenfell telegraphed that 2,000 Mahdists had advanced to Shebban, twelve miles distant from Abu Fatmeh, but that their leader was unknown; and about the same time some Arab Sheikhs sent to the Sultan a proclamation, issued by the new Mahdi, exhorting his followers to continue the
struggle against the British, and all who afforded them assistance—a document of which his Majesty expressed his strong disapproval.

The 25th of the same month witnessed at Windsor Castle a ceremony connected with the war, when the Queen personally conferred a medal on certain non-commissioned officers and men for express acts of gallantry displayed during the recent operations in the Soudan. The recipients were about fifty in number, and the following were the more notable and interesting cases among them:

**Guards Camel Regiment.**

Colour-Sergeant G. Ditchfield, 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards.—After the battle of Abu Klea, when detailed with the rest of his company to carry the wounded down to the Wells, he set a brilliant example of discipline and endurance. The men, who were suffering severely from thirst, fell out in large numbers, and left the stretchers. Sergeant Ditchfield never fell out, collected men to carry the wounded, and remained behind till the last man was brought into hospital.

Colour-Sergeant J. Drew, Royal Marine Light Infantry, and Sergeant G. Symons, 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards.—On the occasion of the attack on the sick convoy on the 13th of February, 1885, being with the advance guard, and ordered to fall back at once under fire, these two non-commissioned officers showed the greatest coolness in assisting to get the camels back to the column, and it was mainly owing to their exertions that they were brought in safety.

Sergeant W. Pearson, 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards.—When his company was pressed from the rear at Abu Klea, owing to the rear face having been broken, he set an example of steadfastness and coolness to the men, and rendered most valuable assistance to the officers, on all occasions when under fire displaying conspicuous bravery.

Private R. Craig, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards.—Having been hit in the arm on the 19th January, he refused to fall out; and when wounded again in the knee, he again refused to fall out, and tried to struggle on, till compelled to enter a cacolet.

Lance-Sergeant Perker, 1st Battalion Scots Guards.—Was shot through the chest shortly after leaving the scriba on the 17th of January. He was attended to by the doctor, but at once fell into the ranks again, refusing to get into a cacolet until compelled to do so by weakness and loss of blood.

Private Fox, 1st Battalion Scots Guards.—Was struck in the thigh on the 17th January, and after being attended to by the doctor, resumed his place in the ranks, and, though lame, remained there throughout the day.

**Mounted Infantry.**

Private B. Fagan, King's Royal Rifle Corps.—Though wounded, he rejoined his company on the Arabs charging, and remained with it throughout the day. Although wounded a second time on the 19th of January, he refused medical assistance, remarking that “there were many who required the doctor's help more than he did.”

Private G. Wood, the Rifle Brigade.—At Abu Klea, though twice wounded, remained engaged with the enemy, and after the action rendered the medical officers such able assistance as to call for special mention of him.

Sergeant G. Small, Connaught Rangers.—At Abu Klea he repeatedly, and alone, charged the enemy who had entered the square, and by his personal courage and example contributed much to their ultimate expulsion.

Private Griffin, King's Royal Rifle Corps.—Good and valuable services during the reconnaissance of the 17th of February, 1885, and causing the enemy to abandon a strong position.

Colour-Sergeant W. Birch, Coldstream Guards.—Though severely wounded, he persisted in leading his division (section?) while under fire, thereby evincing great courage and disregard of personal suffering.

Colour-Sergeant Scudamore, Royal Marine Light Infantry.—Displayed much courage in action, and whenever orders were conveyed to him, they were re-delivered with perfect coolness and correctness, though sometimes under a heavy fire.

**Royal Engineers.**

Sappers T. Bennett and W. Leitch.—Behaved with exemplary coolness at Abu Klea on the 16th and 17th, and at Gabat on the 18th of January, in
the construction of hasty defensive works under a very heavy cross fire.

Lance-Corporal J. Dale.—Displayed the utmost coolness in arranging "biscuit boxes" as defences, when the heavy cross fire had induced most of his party to seek cover, and, although wounded, he accompanied the Infantry moving out in square, and rendered much good service.

Private C. Payne.—Was sent from the nuggar to Sir Charles Wilson's camp to ask for assistance; made the way there alone at night, and afterwards returned.

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Lance-Corporal J. Dale.

Private C. Payne.
Necropolis at the Foot of the Citadel, Cairo.
with native transport, when quick work is required in the presence of an enemy. On the 17th of January he went into the open under fire and collected the rifles of the killed and wounded, in order to arm those men who were without weapons, and assisted to carry a wounded officer from the square just before it left the zeriba to the hospital fort, under a very heavy fire.

Privates Newton and Inglis, of the 16th Lancers, having been transferred to the 2nd Dragoon Guards, and then en route for India, were unable to receive the medals awarded to them for the following services:

Having saved Lord St. Vincent, when wounded, from falling into the hands of the enemy, who attacked them while in the act of getting him from under his camel, which had fallen dead above him.

About the same time these medals were so worthily dispensed there was shown in London a curious exhibition of Soudan relics, consisting of miscellaneous articles brought from Egypt by officers and soldiers of the British army. Among the chief exhibitors were General Viscount Wolseley, Generals Sir Gerald Graham, Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir Redvers Buller, and Brackenbury, Colonels Boscawen, Kitchener, and others whose names are equally familiar to the reader.

Lord Wolseley exhibited a suit of chain armour, similar in pattern to that worn by the Christian knights at the time of the first Crusade, presented to him by the Khedive, and a brace of beautifully-ornamented pistols, at one time in possession of the ill-starred Arabi Pasha.

The Koran of Osman Digna was lent by Sir Gerald Graham, together with other relics from Suakim, contributed by Admiral Hewett, with fragments of a carpet from Kharjoum which belonged to General Gordon, and was lent by Colonel Kitchener. Among the other articles was an equipment for the Camel Corps, a Field Post Office, and a quantity of Soudanese arms and armour.

The two expeditions from Suakim, directed by Mr. Gladstone's Government, according to a Parliamentary Return published early in December, 1885, cost exactly £3,345,483. "This includes," says the Naval and Military Gazette of 19th December, "£865,369 for a railway. The first expedition consisted of 246 officers, 4,960 warrant officers, &c., and men, with 611 horses; the second of 576 officers, 13,004 warrant officers, &c., and men, with 1,811 horses."

The Suez Canal was now, as usual, attracting attention. In presence of the continued increase of the traffic through it, even during the then commercial crisis, and the still greater increase that was anticipated in consequence of the abolition of the pilot dues and the lowering of the tariffs, by which merchandise now reaching Europe from the East and from Australia by the route round the Cape, will be able to be sent through the Canal, the Company for the two preceding years had been making experiments with electric lights, with a view to enable passing vessels to continue their voyage through the Canal during the night.

These experiments by the month of November, 1885, proved so successful that it was resolved, after the 1st of January in the following year, to permit all ships of war and postal vessels provided with the requisite
electric lights, to proceed by night through that portion of the Canal comprised between Port Said and kilometre fifty-four. Therefore, in almost half that portion of the Canal, where ships have to put into sidings to allow other vessels to pass them—in the Bitter Lakes they pass each other without stopping,—vessels of war and postal craft, that represent twenty-two tons per cent. of the total traffic, would be able to continue under weigh at all times of the night as well as by day.

This constituted a great saving of time, and M. de Lesseps in his circular expressed the confident hope that the trial would be so successful as to enable him to authorise within a brief period navigation by night to all vessels through the entire length of the Canal. "I have been favoured," wrote a correspondent at this date, "with a copy of the rules and regulations for this night navigation; but it is needless to say more about them than they appear to be very clear, and that each vessel is to carry the electric light, destined to illuminate the Canal for twelve hundred metres, or just three-quarters of a mile ahead, and thus enable the ship to navigate the Canal with safety."

As to the habits and disposition of the Egyptians, it should be understood that the natives of that ill-fated land are an inoffensive and peaceable folk. Naturally mild and timid, according to Baron de Tott, they are also sprightly and temperate. All their affections partake of this character; they are terrified by the least accident, and familiarised by the least encouragement. The taste of this people for dancing has introduced into Egypt female dancers who have neither modesty nor reserve, and only please by their extreme extravagance.

We have already referred to their kindness for certain animals. Among these are more especially cats. "Though the death of a cat," says Wilkinson, (writing in 1838), "is not attended with lamentations or funeral honours now, it is looked upon by many of the modern Egyptians to be wrong to kill, or even to ill-treat them; some have carried their humanity so far as to bequeath by will a fund for their support, in compliance with which these animals are daily fed in Cairo at the Cadi's Court and the Bazaar of Khan El Khalil." Ebers calls Egypt the "El Dorado of cats."

The jealousy with which women are guarded prevents a male traveller from forming any correct notion of Egyptian domestic life; but Mrs. Poole, in 1844, by her work on Egypt, did for that country much that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu did at a previous time for Turkey, and gave a full and pleasing description of the household and harem of Habeeb Effendi, of whom she was a visitor.

After Mrs. Poole (the sister of the well-known F. W. Lane) had resided in Cairo for some time she made several acquaintances among the Cairene ladies, and in her visits to them obtained a more minute insight into the economy and manners of an Eastern harem than has—to our knowledge—ever yet been furnished, even of the apartments of the wives of Mehemet Ali.
Her brother, in his "Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians," among many other travellers, records the strange belief and stranger practice of this peculiar people in divination and magic; and he is credulous enough to tell us wonderful things of the former art by ink. A piece of paper inscribed with mystical numbers has a blot of ink poured into it, and therein, by the aid of magic, all sorts of things are seen. At Lane's request, a boy was asked to see Lord Nelson, of whom the boy had never even heard, and looking into the ink, he said, "A messenger is come back and has brought a man in a black European coat, and the man has lost his left arm." Then, after a minute's consideration, he added, "No, it is only laid across his breast."

"This amendment," adds Lane, "makes his description more striking, as Lord Nelson was in the habit of wearing the empty sleeve fastened up to the breast of his coat."

From the 44th chapter of Genesis we
LECTURE IN THE UNIVERSITY MOSQUE OF EL-AZHAR, CAIRO.
learn that it was by his cup that Joseph prophesied; so the superstition is not one of yesterday. One anecdote among many will suffice as an illustration.

Leon Laborde describes how a magician of Cairo, named Achmed, "a respectable man, who spoke simply of science, and had nothing of the charlatan about him," poured ink into the palm of a boy eleven years old, and told him to look for the reflection of his own face. "The child said he saw it. The magician then burnt some powders in a brazier, and bade him tell when he saw a soldier sweeping a place; and while the fumes from the brazier diffused themselves, he pronounced a sort of litany. Presently the child threw back his head, and screaming with terror, sobbed out, while bathed in tears, that he had seen a dreadful face. Fearing that the boy might be injured, Monsieur Laborde now called up a little Arab servant, who had never seen or heard of the magician, and the ceremony being repeated, he said he saw the soldier sweeping in front of a tent. He was then desired to bring Shakespeare, Colonel Craddock, and several other persons; and he described every person so exactly as to be entirely satisfactory. During the operation the boy looked as if intoxicated, with his eyes fixed and the perspiration dripping from his brow. Achmed disenchanted him by placing his thumbs on his eyes; he gradually recovered, and gaily related all he had seen, which he perfectly remembered."

Magical preparations of all sorts, says Ebers, are still used as remedies in illness; even the alchemy and astrology of the ancient Egyptians have not been forgotten by their descendants; and both were eagerly practised when Cairo, with its famous university attached to the Mosque of El-Azhar, flourished as the centre of all the learning of the East.

The belief in amulets is strong in Egypt; and to this day, the people say that Ibrahim Pasha, the father of the ex-Khedive Ismail, passed through all his bloodiest battles untouched, because he wore a talisman.

Dr. Hume describes the serpent-eaters of Egypt, who masticate and swallow these reptiles living. Horror and fury are said to be depicted in the countenance of the ophiophagus who performs this disgusting operation—a spectacle but seldom exhibited in public now.

Of the method of instruction practised in the Mosque and University of El Azhar, Ebers says that none of the professors treat of any independent branch of science in separate and connected courses of lectures. This mode of teaching is "foreign to the Orientals, and even the most learned among them, now that the creative and constructive spirit has gradually become extinct, are content merely to interpret certain texts, or to comment on commentators." The lecture commonly lasts for about two hours. At the close the students rise, go up to the teacher one by one, kiss his hand in leave-taking, and place their copies of the text in their portfolio.
CHAPTER XV.

THE BATTLE OF GENNIS.


Towards the middle of December, 1885, Father Bonomi, who, as we have recorded, made his escape from Khartoum, failed in his intention of returning there to achieve the relief of his former companions in misfortune, being compelled to retrace his steps, when en route to Dongola, by the advancing Mahdists, while the Vicar Apostolic at Cairo wrote to the Propaganda Fide that he could obtain no tidings of the Christian captives who were supposed to be still in Khartoum.

About the same time a correspondent of the Vaterland, writing from Cairo, gave some details collected as to the murder of the Austrian Consul Hansal on the capture of the city.

"Our unhappy friend," he wrote, "was slain while descending the stairs of his house, not by Arabs—as the Mahdi had given orders to spare him—but by a man named Mohammed, who had been Hansal’s cavass, and subsequently, upon his recommendation, appointed Gaffir, or watchman of the European cemetery. This man, on seeing the Consul, cried, ‘Let him not live, as he is an unbeliever,’ and thrust his lance into Hansal’s body. Mohammed then killed the Consul’s dog, and for ignominy laid the animal beside his master’s corpse, saying that ‘instead of an angel a dog had come for him.’ This happened on the day of the fall of Khartoum, and for two more the body lay untouched. On the third it was thrown into the river opposite the Consulate, where, owing to the low level of the water, it lay till the May floods washed the bones away. Hansal’s youngest son, who had been born in Khartoum on the 18th of January, and christened Martin Albert Sebastian by Father Bonomi, was about to be enslaved by the Arabs when the Mahdi desired the boy to be brought to him for protection. In May the Mahdi made a feast to celebrate the circumcision of his own son and of young Hansal, who is now (December) living in the same house with the Mahdi’s widows and children."

On the 27th of November it was known in Cairo that bodies of Soudanese had been seen near our frontier post at Kosheh, on the Nile, where the Cameron Highlanders and a Black battalion were in garrison, with three guns, and some Royal Engineers. Fighting was expected, as the enemy were 4,000 strong; but two days subsequently their movements were reported to be apparently peaceful. Events showed that they were evidently reconnoitring, so Colonel Baker forwarded to Esneh 300 Egyptian Gendarmerie as a precautionary measure; and being strongly entrenched, the Camerons and Blacks were confident of holding out.
On the 30th a Cavalry patrol, supported by the guns of the Lotus, had a skirmish with the rebels before Kosheh. Spies reported their losses to be heavy, while our casualties were an Egyptian wounded and two of the Mounted Infantry missing; but the enemy still held their position in front of Kosheh. From the meagre details given, the enemy seem to have advanced in skirmishing order, to which they seemed now trained.

Their front was towards Kosheh, and great numbers were reported to be at Akasheh, cutting off inland communication, while others extended towards Dongola; and spies reported another body, 2,000 strong, in motion with eight field pieces, and many mules laden with ammunition. Everywhere their number and aspect grew more menacing, and it was evident that a reinforcing of the Nile garrisons would become necessary. On the 31st General Grenfell left Assouan for Wady Halfa and the front, and now the Khalif Abdullah Akbar was announced as being at the head of the movement. Before starting on his proposed invasion of Egypt, he posted the following proclamation in the mosques and streets of Abu Hammed:

"Abdullah, the servant of the Almighty and Prince of the Faithful, sends his greeting to all inhabitants of the Soudan who truly believe in the Prophet and rigidly observe his laws. God's blessing and protection be with ye all. Ye know full well that before Mohammed Achmet, the last teacher and leader sent by the Prophet, left this world, he appointed me, his most unworthy servant, to succeed him, and commanded me to continue the struggle against the unbelievers until they should be totally annihilated, and not one of them should be left in the Soudan or in Egypt. The time has come for me to carry out this mission, in order that God, his Prophet, and the Mahdi may rejoice their servant and crown him with favours. Gird up your loins, ye faithful; take up your swords and your faith; leave your horses, your fields, and your herds, and come out to fight the unbeliever and his allies! The Prophet and ten thousand angels will fight on
LORD WOLSELEY'S HEADQUARTERS AT KORTI.
your side, and your enemies will be mown down. If ye shall fall yourselves ye will be gathered unto God's garden, and there the Prophet himself will greet ye. Arise and join in battle against unbelievers, fear them not, neither their rifles nor their guns, for what can they avail against God and His Prophet? God is with us, while Satan is with our enemies, and he will leave them in blindness until they shall be annihilated."

On the 14th of December it was reported from Wady Halfa that a reconnaissance made by General Butler met with no opposition, and that Ferket had been pillaged and abandoned by the enemy. The telegraph to Kosheh was intact. It was stated by the Times, that continuous firing had been heard there for three days, but the
casualties were slight. The rebels occupied the sandhills on the west bank, and fired across the river. General Grenfell will proceed to Akasheh to-morrow (15th). A great many dead were found outside Mograt, and deserters estimate their loss at 250 men." It was evident now that the Soudanese, encouraged by our retreat from Dongola, were disposed to utilise that rich province as a base for operations against Upper Egypt; and our position on the frontier at this crisis was as follows.

To many officers there seemed something faulty in choosing a point north of Dongola as a position of defence, while our leaders declined to retire at once on Wady Halfa, because it would seem too like a retreat to Arab eyes, and because from Akasheh, where Butler commanded, a fresh advance could be made towards Dongola if deemed necessary.

At Akasheh Butler had 900 men. At Sarras the railway station was held by 500 men, and at Wady Halfa Grenfell had 1,500 men. This latter place is described as a succession of little hamlets—about 1,000 houses in all. If the activity and resources of the Arabs were great on one hand, our precautions were great on the other, if our strength was small. They easily cut the telegraph wires; but the heliograph proved an excellent substitute.

As many as forty Arab standards were at one time counted in front of Kosheh, where deserters reported the enemy to be 5,000 strong. Petty skirmishes ensued daily during December along our Nile frontier. On the 3rd a determined attack was made on our post at Ambigol, in charge of the railway, while a heavy fire was opened upon the Lotus, two miles from Kosheh, by two Krupp guns, with rifles from the sandhills, manned by blacks. The Gatlings of the Lotus did great execution, and completely put down the enemy's fire.

On the 4th the Turret Fort at Ambigol, held by only fifty men of the Berkshire and some Engineers, was attacked with one gun; but after a three hours' fight the Arabs were repulsed, with a loss unknown. Our casualties were only two.

On the 5th, to punish this attack, Butler advanced from Akasheh at dawn, while Colonel Huyshe, with four companies of the Berkshire, advanced from the north. On this the Arabs fell back, and the line which they had injured was repaired. The Times correspondent reported that their works and cannon were skilfully placed so as to oppose any attack from our steamers; that their total force was reckoned at 8,000, only a portion of whom had rifles and spears—the rest being a mere rabble; and that the headquarters of the 20th Hussars had now reached Akasheh.

The Akbar now announced that the Khalif Abdullah had ordered every male in the Soudan who had reached his sixteenth year to join the Holy Standard, under which he expected to have 30,000 men, with 3,000 more from the Sultan of Darfour.

On the 10th of December General Stephenson left Cairo for Assouan. On
the following day 3,000 Arabs attacked Mograt, held by 250 Egyptians of the 3rd Regiment, under Major Besant, whose loss was only two, though he signally repulsed the enemy; but in the desultory fire upon that village and Kosheh, Captain F. H. Thompson and three privates of the Cameron Highlanders were dangerously wounded. On the 16th it was reported that the Camerons at Kosheh were still fired upon by the Arabs from the cover of some sandhills; that Colonel Hunter, Major N. Guthrie Chalmers, and Lieutenant William Cameron, were wounded, the latter mortally, as he died three days after. He was the son of General Cameron, C.B., and was transferred from his father's old regiment, the 4th, to the 79th, as he wished to be in a corps in which he had an hereditary claim, it having been raised by Sir Alan Cameron of Erracht. He was a young officer "who had displayed exceptional qualities of courage and devotion to duty." (Despatches.)

On the 22nd five more Highlanders were wounded—two dangerously, one of whom, D. MacKenzie, died in the night.

On the 28th Generals Stephenson and Grenfell were at Ferket, where the fighting force was massed. The first was in command, of course, while the second was to lead a division, and General Butler and Colonel Huyshe each a brigade.

The enemy were entrenched at Gennis, on the east bank of the Nile, at a little distance from Kosheh. The houses were loopholed, and they had another position opposite. Ten surgeons, together with Surgeon-General O'Nial, now came from Cairo to join the staff.

Two more of the Cameron Highlanders—MacLaren and Kennedy—were killed by the enemy, who had constructed a fresh embrasure on the west bank of the Nile, and run through it a gun to replace one destroyed by the shell-fire of our artillery.

There were now about 5,000 British troops face to face with the enemy at Ferket, Kosheh, and Gennis.

General Stephenson now resolved to take the offensive, hoping by one vigorous blow to end the annoyance and loss of life, chiefly suffered by the 79th Highlanders, for many days past.

At 6 a.m. on the 30th December, 1885, he attacked the enemy, and the following are the somewhat scanty details of the encounter, as given in his despatches.

The troops marched from camp, near Kosheh, at 5 a.m., the 1st Brigade, led by General Butler, making a sweeping detour of three miles south-eastward into the desert, while the Cavalry and Camel Corps were on the left, and the 3rd Brigade, under Colonel Huyshe, was in echelon one mile from the Nile. Precisely at 6 a.m. the screw-guns opened fire and shelled Kosheh, after which the Cameron Highlanders and Egyptian Battalion advanced along the river's edge, and stormed the village at the point of the bayonet; but the enemy made a desperate resistance in their mud houses, clinging to them to the last. Colonel Huyshe's brigade now wheeled round to the right and
joined the Camerons, after which both brigades rushed on to attack the chief village of Gennis.

There the Arabs made an anticipatory attack upon the British, but were unable to withstand their steady and furious advance in line, with the fire of the screw-guns and Camel Battery falling among them. They bravely, however, with arms and ammunition; several banners and dervishes were taken. She was most useful during the attack, in which the Egyptians captured four pieces of cannon. Twenty banners were taken.

Our casualties were as follows:—Lieutenant J. F. Soltau, of the 1st Berkshire (formerly of the Devonshire Militia), killed, with Lieutenant Wigan of the same corps wounded, and twenty-three rank and file (generally), two mortally. Among the killed were Lieutenant Mohammed Hamdy and four Egyptians; and fourteen men of the Camel Corps wounded, including two officers.

Our success at Gennis had one good effect. It convinced the Arabs on the Nile between Kosheh and Assouan that it was unsafe to reckon on the early coming of the followers of the new Mahdi; and the blow demonstrated to
BATTLE OF GENNIS—THE LAST ATTEMPT AT A RUSH.
them that, at any rate for the present, if not for the future, they will be unable to make common cause against us, while it gave complete safety to General Stephenson’s line of communications.

The total loss of the Arabs was never stated. General Stephenson telegraphed to the Khedive, congratulating him on the fine behaviour of the Egyptian troops, “who, for the first time, proved themselves more than a match for the enemy in the open.”

This Gennis battle, in short, though it did not create the same widespread interest as some of the previous conflicts, served an exceedingly useful purpose in breaking the back, so to speak, of the Arab confederation. Our brave foes had drained the cup of defeat and disaster to the very dregs, and would not be able to combine against the forces of England—even if they wished to do so, which was by no means evident—for a long period to come.

Notice, too, the marked improvement in the conduct of Egyptian troops in the field. We have seen how worthless, how little to be depended upon, they were in the earlier actions—in those, for instance, under Baker, and even in the hands of Arabi Pasha. Nor was this altogether surprising. The poor and miserable fellaheen, crushed and oppressed from time immemorial, hewers of wood and drawers of water to every petty official despot, could hardly be expected to manifest soldierly qualities all at once. Discipline, however, showed that they possessed the materials out of which good fighting men could be made. And General Stephenson’s emphatic testimony that they had proved more than a match for the foe in the open should not pass without due comment, after the strictures which we were compelled to pronounce upon the untrustworthiness of the Egyptian troops in the early period of the war.

We have now reached the point at which it may be said that the task which we undertook has been accomplished. It was our duty to narrate the history of the campaigns in Egypt and the Soudan. The strange vicissitudes of fortune, the extraordinary incidents of the fighting, from the bombardment of the historical city of Alexandria to the splendid defence of Khartoum, and, still later, to the plucky battles at Kosheh and Gennis, have combined to make the Soudan War unique in the military annals of Great Britain. It will be useful if we present a brief résumé of the scenes through which we have passed, before laying aside the pen.

At the very outset we were confronted with that singular event—the rising of Arabi Pasha—which precipitated British interference on behalf of the Khedive Tewfik. The prompt quelling of the insurrection by the rapid and efficient strategy of Lord Wolseley, will be almost as familiar in
our readers' mouths as a household word. But with the downfall and exile of the unhappy Arabi, and the restoration of Tewfik, British intervention did not cease. The ill-fated expedition of Hicks Pasha had created a restlessness among the natives of the Soudan, and the activity which was thus developed asserted itself at various points, studiously maintained as it was by the adroit harangues of the False Prophet, in whom, to their loss, the people had undoubtedly a great amount of faith. The unfortunate Egyptian garrisons in Sinkat, Tokar, Berber, Kassala, Khartoum, and elsewhere, were closely besieged; and even in the neighbourhood of Suakim the Arabs manifested a menacing attitude which only the successful battles, under Sir Gerald Graham, at El Teb and Tamai, could thoroughly destroy.

Then we have seen how the gallant Gordon undertook the "pacific mission" of the relief of Khartoum, and how the task exceeded the hero's powers. This remarkable episode opens up the magnificent defence of Khartoum and the expedition under Lord Wolseley to rescue Gordon. During the period of the British advance up the Nile, the public mind was kept at fever-heat with the continued arrival of news from that burning seat of war, in which the sufferings of our soldiers were so great. Bloody but successful engagements with the followers of the Mahdi, including such fields as Abu Klea and Gubat were recorded; and British hearts thrilled at the heroism and devotion of the two Stewarts, of Earle, Eyre, and Burnaby, who all perished gallantly doing faithful service for their beloved country.

Then suddenly came the dark tidings that just as the relieving column was almost ready to join Gordon, who had sent his steamers down the Nile to co-operate with it, Khartoum—after a defence scarcely surpassed in the annals of war—had fallen by storm and treachery, and the people of Britain were left to mourn the untimely loss of one of the most remarkable men of the nineteenth century.

Then ensued a period of comparative inaction, during which arrangements were made for withdrawal of the troops from the Soudan. And while these events were transacting themselves on the Nile, exciting scenes were being performed at Suakim and in its neighbourhood. Here, too, the mother country witnessed an unexampled sign of the affection of her colonies. The Australian Contingent had arrived from Sydney, and had displayed a degree of confidence and of endurance under unusual trials and hardships, which excited general admiration. The services of the Indian Contingent off the Red Sea, and of the Canadian Voyageurs on the Nile, indicated new sources of strength upon which Old England could rely in the hour of her danger.

To discuss the future of the Soudan is obviously beyond the scope of the present work. General Gordon expressed his opinion that the Soudanese in many respects were a fine people, and "deserved the sincere compassion and sympathy of all civilised men. I
got on very well with them,” he added, “and I am sincerely sorry at the prospect of seeing them handed over to be ground down once more by Turkish and Circassian oppressors. . . . They deserve a better fate. It ought not to be impossible to come to terms with them, to grant them a free amnesty for the past, to offer them security for a decent government in the future. If this were done, and that government entrusted to a man whose word was truth, all might yet be re-established.”

It may, perhaps, be confidently asserted that, whatever the Future may have in store for the Soudan, the fears of the gallant Gordon will never be realised. It would undoubtedly be a great calamity if ever the brave Arabs of the Soudan were to be brought under the Ottoman yoke. But that contingency will never come to pass. The men who faced death, fearing not British pluck and British steel, hold their future in their own hands. This is the only conclusion upon which there is absolute unanimity in connection with the Soudan War.

THE END.
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