

dredges are constantly at work removing the sand which drifts in with the wind or is washed in by the tide. The canal is said to follow the route laid out more than three thousand years ago by Rameses II. About thirty-five hundred ships pass through the canal each year, an average of nearly ten a day. Somewhat more than that passed during our stay, some of the ships being loaded with Russian soldiers from Japan and others crowded with pilgrims returning from Mecca.

On the afternoon of the fifth day the head physician came out and released us and at the same time conveyed to us the cheering, but somewhat belated, information that the three men taken from the ship did not have the plague; we had, however, been so courteously treated that we did not complain of the board bills or quarantine fees, even though the detention proved to be unnecessary. The spread of the plague through Europe would be such a calamity that we realize it is better to err on the side of over-caution. At any rate, we have added to our experience and are carrying the yellow flag (the quarantine signal) home as a trophy.

A few hours ride brought us to Cairo, the metropolis and capital of Egypt. It is not an ancient city, as they count time in Egypt, having been founded about a thousand years ago, but it has in the business portion the appearance of a European city and contains a population of more than half a million. Of its inhabitants thirty-five thousand are European, the Greeks leading with about ten thousand, and the Italians, French, English, Austrians and Germans following in the order named. The British would outnumber the French if the garrison were included, but the city reminds one much more of France than of England. Many of the buildings recall the streets of Paris, and the sidewalks adjacent to restaurants and saloons are filled with tables and chairs, as in continental Europe.

Cairo is a city of mosques and minarets as one quickly discovers when he takes a bird's eye view of the city from the citadel which stands upon an eminence in the suburbs. While the main streets are suggestive of Europe, the native quarters and bazaars are distinctly Oriental, many of the streets being too narrow for a carriage. The shops are for the most part little open booths, and each line of business has its particular section. On one street silver and gold smiths monopolize the space; another street is gay with red shoes; in another the red fez, the universal hat, is conspicuous; and still another is given over to vegetables. Some of the larger stores handle Persian rugs, silks, brass ware, inlaid work and patchwork reproducing the drawings found on tombs and temples. The bazaars also abound in interesting reminders of the land of the mummy, the pyramid and the sphinx.

We had not been in Cairo long before we visited the banks of the Nile, that wonderful river without whose fructifying waters there would have been no Egypt. It is one of the most remarkable—in some respects the most remarkable—of all the rivers of the earth. No wonder the ancient Egyptians included a Nile god among their deities, for next to the sun, to which they raised their obelisks, nothing was so necessary to their existence as this almost magic stream. The Nile renders fertile two narrow strips, one on either bank, four thousand miles long, and but a few miles wide. For thirteen hundred miles it flows through a desert and receives but a single tributary in that distance, and yet, after supplying irrigation for the crops of some ten millions of people, it pours into the ocean a scarcely diminished stream. The annual rise of the river not only supplies water but it renews the land by deposits of alluvial soil. Someone has described the Nile valley as appearing, if seen from above, like a strip of green carpet on a floor of gold, so yellow are the sands that hem it in. No one who has not visited an arid country and noted the influence of water upon the thirsty soil can imagine how distinctly the line is drawn between the verdant field and the barren desert that adjoins it. Where the waters of the Nile can be brought upon the land, a farm will rent for \$30 per acre, while a few feet away the land can not be given away. Lord Cromer, in a recent report, gives the income and expenditure of a number of the fellaheen, or farmers. The statements show that a hundred dollars worth of cotton is sometimes produced from a single acre or about thirty dollars worth of corn. The average income, taking all crops together, often runs as high as \$50 per acre.

An increasing quantity of land is being brought under the canals, but irrigation from wells is still the main reliance of a large proportion of the people. Water can be found at the

level of the water in the river, and the landscape is dotted over with old-fashioned well sweeps and with water wheels, where blind-folded camels or oxen tread their patient round. The land produces so abundantly and there is such a variety of garden and farm products that one recalls that passage in the Bible in which the children of Israel are described as longing for "the flesh pots of Egypt." Coming from India to Egypt we could not but notice the difference in the appearance of the people. In the former country they looked so emaciated and hungry; in the latter they are strong and robust and seemingly well fed. In the markets, too, the food is heaped up in big baskets while in India it is exposed for sale in tiny piles that speak only too plainly of the poverty of the people.

For ages upon ages the fellaheen has drawn from the inexhaustible storehouse of the Nile. Cheops, Khephren and their successors built pyramids, and the fellaheen fed the builders; Thutmosis and Sethos and their descendants constructed tombs and temples, and the fellaheen supported the laborers; the Rameses added gigantic statues to the stupendous works of their ancestors and the fellaheen still furnished food; the Persians overran the country and still the hand of the fellaheen supplied the necessaries of life; then came Alexander the Great and the Ptolemies, Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, and the fellaheen plowed on; after the Roman came the Arab, and after the Arab the Turk, followed by Napoleon and later by the Briton, but through all this change of dynasties the fellaheen kept "the noiseless tenor of his way," and as a middle man, handed over the bounties of the Nile valley to the rulers and their armies—and he is doing so today. Of the eleven hundred thousand land owners, nearly nine hundred and fifty thousand hold less than five acres each, and almost half of the total acreage is owned by twelve thousand three hundred persons. More than one-tenth of the tillable land is owned by sixteen hundred Europeans.

Very few horses are seen in the country, the beasts of burden being the ox (there are a few water buffaloes also), the donkey and the camel. The ox resembles the American rather than the Indian ox in that it has no hump on its shoulders and the drawings on some of the walls represent cattle with horns as large as those formerly worn by the Texas steer. The donkey—poor, patient creature—has not changed materially in the last four thousand years. The pictures drawn of him by the ancient Egyptians show him just as he is now. Then, as now, a large part of his nourishment went to the development of his vocal organs and left the rest of his body woefully small for the large burdens which he was called upon to carry. If his disposition was as gloomy in the days of the Pharaohs as it is at present, he probably annoyed them when he lifted up his voice and wept as he now annoys the tourist.

The camel, however, if the test is special fitness for the country, is the king of beasts. He pulls the plow, turns the water wheel, draws the wagon, carries burdens, and for long distance travel outstrips the horse. Equipped with emergency water tanks he can go for several days without drinking and for this reason is of inestimable value on desert journeys. He kneels to receive his load, though sometimes with pathetic groans, and is as docile as the horse. He has sometimes been styled "the ship of the desert" and seems to have been fashioned for this peculiar region. His large, padded feet do not add to his beauty, but they enable him to cross sandy plains into which a horse's hoof would sink.

The Bible says that the plague of flies brought upon Egypt when Moses was endeavoring to secure the release of the Israelites was removed when Pharaoh promised to let the people go, but one is inclined to think that they afterwards returned when Pharaoh again hardened his heart, for nowhere have we found flies like those of Egypt. They bite with unusual vigor and are very persistent in their attentions. At first we thought it strange that people should carry horse-hair brushes as a protection against the flies, but we were soon driven to follow their example. These flies seem to be especially attracted to the eyes of children. As these flies, like those in other countries, carry disease, it is not strange that sore eyes should be especially prevalent here. Blindness seems to be more common than elsewhere, and a very considerable percentage of the people have lost one eye. So wide spread is this affliction that Sir Ernest Cassel has established a fund of forty thousand pounds, the interest on which is to be devoted to the treatment of diseases of the eye. Already the fruits of this beneficence are being enjoyed by the poor. The Mohammedan women in Egypt wear

veils—a custom which is but slowly giving way to western ideas—if the eyes of the children were protected with half as much care as the faces of the women, what benefits would result!

The government of Egypt defies definition. Nominally, the Khedive is the supreme authority, aided by a native legislative council and assembly (their business is to advise, however, rather than to legislate), but back of the Khedive is Lord Cromer, the agent and consul-general of England, whose power is undefined and almost unlimited. England's authority in Egypt rests upon the articles of capitulation signed after the bombardment of Alexandria in 1882. In these articles it was announced that England's occupancy would be of brief duration, but in 1904 she secured from France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy consent to postpone the fixing of a date for her withdrawal, she at the same time announcing that it was not her intention to interfere with the political situation in Egypt. England's reasons for remaining in Egypt are very clearly stated by Lord Milner in his book entitled "England in Egypt." He says: "On the one hand, our commercial interests in Egypt are so great and growing that her prosperity, which would be immediately wrecked by misgovernment, is a matter of concern to us. Secondly, and chiefly, the geographical position of Egypt compels attention to her political condition. We have nothing to gain by owning the country ourselves, but we should have a great deal to fear from its falling into the possession of another power."

England's interests in Egypt are numerous. She takes most of the exports of Egypt and sells more than any other country to Egypt. In the last report of Lord Cromer it is shown that Great Britain has the benefit of considerably more than half of the contracts (above five thousand dollars) entered into by the Egyptian railways for supplies. Then, England's citizens own land in Egypt and they are also interested in the Egyptian debt, which, by the way, amounts to about five hundred million dollars or, approximately, one hundred dollars per acre of the tillable land.

The irrigation schemes now developing will require the expenditure of large sums on contract and these will give opportunities for English capital.

The second reason given by Lord Milner is emphasized by him and is probably the paramount one, viz.: that she can not afford to have the valley of the Nile held by a rival power. Her interests in the Soudan and in India lead her to guard the Suez canal with jealous care. Lord Milner suggests as a reason why England should remain in Egypt that her withdrawal might be followed by such an abuse of government as to lead to bankruptcy and French intervention. The old argument "if we don't do it somebody else will" is presented as the strongest support of British interference.

English influence, however, has been less harmful in Egypt than in India, and this is probably due, in the main, to two causes: First, her influence is exerted through a native government whose authority she acknowledges; and second, because the interests which other nations have in Egypt make them oppose any encroachments on the part of England while in India she has a free hand. As an illustration I might cite the fact that she compels the Indian to support the Indian army while she pays the ordinary expenses of the three thousand British soldiers in Egypt and only asks Egypt to pay for the extraordinary expenses. It is no reflection upon England to say that she is better for being watched. We believe that in regard to our own public men, and it is simply a recognition of the frailty of human nature. Lord Cromer has been in Egypt for twenty-six years, and his reports indicate a desire to advance the welfare of the people of Egypt. He has doubtless been helpful to the Khedive. He has insisted upon honesty in the public service and has been a friend of education. While the national debt contains a large amount of usurious interest and is therefore much heavier than it ought to be, it has been funded at a lower rate of interest and is being gradually paid off. The debts that are being incurred for the extension of irrigation will be more than redeemed by the sale of the land reclaimed, and the country will then have the benefit, not only of the reclaimed land but of the increased value of lands indirectly benefited. Although the salt tax (contrary to Lord Cromer's advice) is still over two hundred per cent, the per capita rate of taxation has been reduced; agricultural and postal banks have been established, and the government railway telegraph and telephone systems have been extended. In his 1903 report Lord Cromer presents an argument in favor of govern-