

Rome's Ghetto Much the Same Today as Twenty-Two Centuries Ago

ROME, Oct. 29.—Of the colonies of foreign residents for which Rome in ancient times was celebrated, all have been altered and modernized, with one single exception—the Jewish colony, which has practically remained unchanged since the year 10 B. C. And yet the Jews of Rome have been persecuted through the centuries, they have been trampled under foot and made to pay heavy taxes, they have been forbidden to have intercourse with Christians, prohibited from walking the streets and subjected to every possible humiliation.

The center of the Jewish settlement in Rome was the Porticus of Octavia, where Vespasian and Titus celebrated their triumph after the fall of Jerusalem. Among the spectators of this celebration stood the historian, Flavius Josephus, "the bass Jewish courier," to whom we owe a description of the triumph.

In the early days of the city the region between the river and the Janiculum was marshy and so unhealthful that it was chosen by the senate as a place of residence for prisoners of war whom they wished to destroy. Here the Jews were established.

The first Jewish slaves are said to have been brought to Rome by Pompey the Great after he had entered Jerusalem and taken the Holy of Holies, but the Jewish colony on the banks of the Tiber was already flourishing before the time of Pompey, other Jews having previously been driven from their native land by poverty.

Some of them became wealthy, and leaving the home of their forefathers settled in fashionable quarters in the city. St. Peter is said to have been the guest of Aquila and Priscilla, who lived on the slopes of the Aventine. The Jewish princes Herod and Agrippa lived in Rome in wealth and honor and found a home in the palace of the early Caesars. Bernice, the daughter of Agrippa, was on the point of marrying Titus and becoming empress of Rome.

Julius Caesar was the first and one of the few of the Roman benefactors of the Jews. He loosened their bonds of slavery and allowed them to form a separate caste, that of the Libertini. His murder was therefore mourned by them as a national calamity.

Augustus, the founder of the empire, was merciful to the Jews, but Tiberius and Caligula filleted the colony and determined to exterminate it. Titus employed thousands of Jews in building the Coliseum, and Vespasian obliged them to pay a tax of two drachmas, formerly paid to the temple treasury, to Jupiter Capitolinus, a custom which survived until the seventeenth century, when the Jews of Rome were made to pay tribute of 1,300 gold florins to the Camera Capitolina, to which were added thirty denari in memory of the betrayal of Judas.

Under Domitian the Jews were banished from the city to the valley of Egeria, where they lived in a state of outlawry, occupying themselves with soothsaying, love charms and mysterious incantations. Their freedom being restricted, to a basket suspended from a tree and a bundle of straw. Juvenal says that every tree of the sacred grove rendered a tax to the Roman people.

During the reigns of the early popes the Jews enjoyed considerable liberty. The Transiberic quarter still continues to be inhabited by the Jews, but after the pillage of Rome by Robert Guiscard in 1084 they migrated to the opposite bank

of the Tiber and settled among the remains of the Porticus of Octavia close by the Fabian bridge, which then acquired the name of Pons Judeorum.

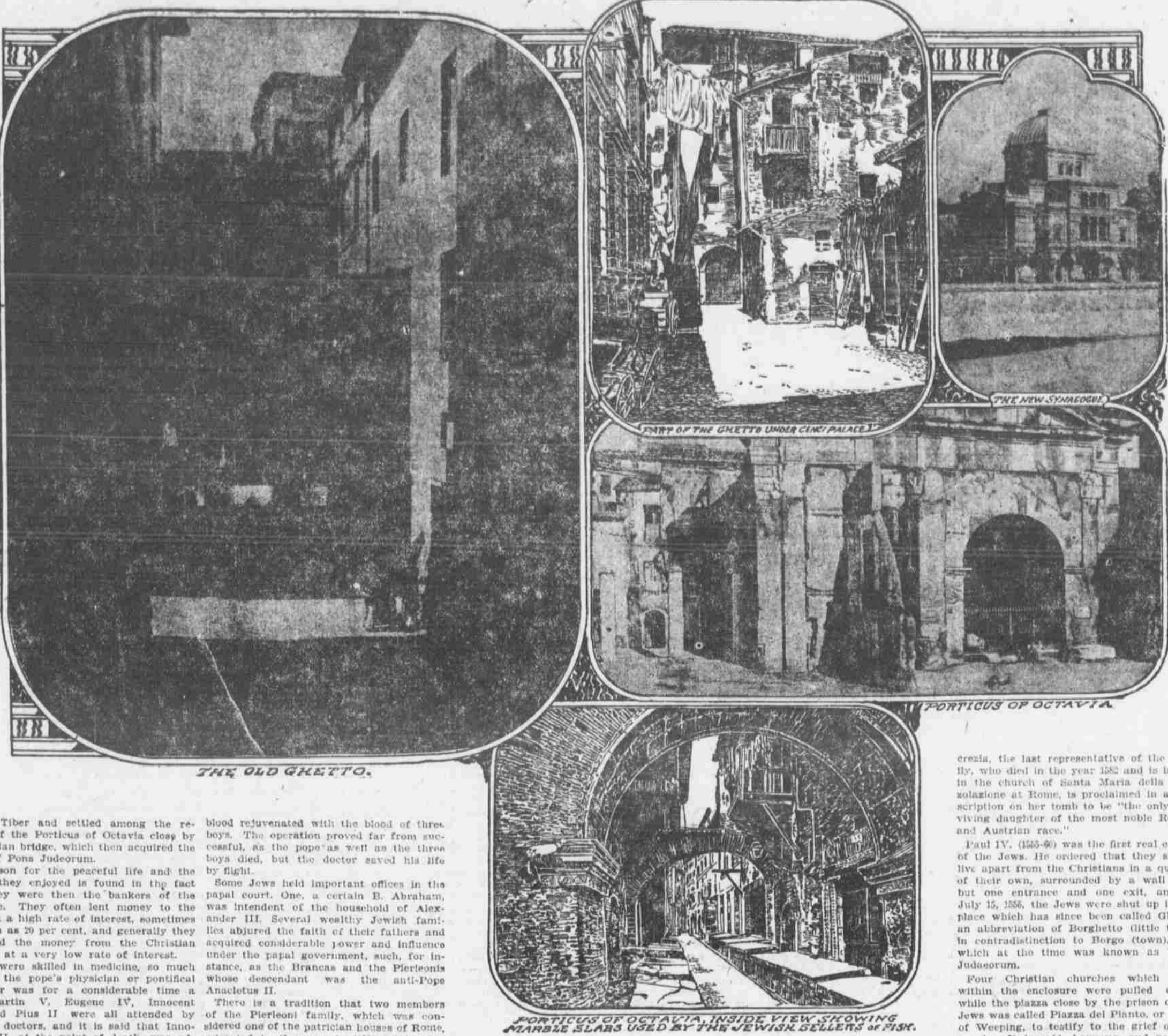
A reason for the peaceful life and the liberty they enjoyed is found in the fact that they were then the bankers of the holy see. They often lent money to the popes at a high rate of interest, sometimes as much as 20 per cent, and generally they borrowed the money from the Christian bankers at a very low rate of interest.

They were skilled in medicine, so much so that the pope's physician or pontifical architect was for a considerable time a Jew. Martin V, Eugene IV, Innocent VII and Pius II were all attended by Hebrew doctors, and it is said that Innocent VIII, at the point of death, was advised by a Jewish physician to have his

blood rejuvenated with the blood of three boys. The operation proved far from successful, as the pope's death was the third boys died, but the doctor saved his life by flight.

Some Jews held important offices in the papal court. One, a certain E. Abraham, was lieutenant of the household of Alexander III. Several wealthy Jewish families abjured the faith of their fathers and acquired considerable power and influence under the papal government, such, for instance, as the Brancas and the Pierfonis whose descendant was the anti-pope Anacletus II.

There is a tradition that two members of the Pierfonis family, which was considered one of the patrician houses of Rome, migrated to Germany in 1490 and became the heads of the Hapsburg family. Lu-



cretia, the last representative of the family, who died in the year 1832 and is buried in the church of Santa Maria della Consolazione at Rome, is proclaimed in an inscription on her tomb to be "the only surviving daughter of the most noble Roman and Austrian race."

Paul IV. (1555-60) was the first real enemy of the Jews. He ordered that they should live apart from the Christians in a quarter of their own, surrounded by a wall with but one entrance and one exit, and on July 15, 1555, the Jews were shut up in the place which has since been called Ghetto, an abbreviation of Borgo Ghetto (little town) in contradistinction to Borgo (town), and which at the time was known as Vicus Judeorum.

Four Christian churches which were within the enclosure were pulled down, while the piazza close by the prison of the Jews was called Piazza del Pianto, or Place of Weeping, to testify to the grief of the people. It is said, however, and perhaps with greater probability of truth, that the

place was so called after the close by church of Santa Maria del Pianto, where an image of the Virgin shed tears on beholding a murder committed at its feet.

The humiliations and vexations suffered by the Roman Jews have in many cases been exaggerated. Martin V. (1411-21) caused the Jews to wear a sign by which they could be distinguished from the Christians. This sign varied. Originally it consisted of red overcoats for men and women alike. Later the letter O in yellow was worn sewed on the breast. Under Paul IV. the men wore yellow conical caps and the women veils of the same hue.

The difference in the color or cut of the clothes worn by various classes of people was a matter of custom in the Middle Ages and certainly it did not originate nor was it intended as a special humiliation for the Jews.

The races which the Jews were compelled to run during the carnival have been qualified as a cruel custom and an increase of the many humiliations to which they were subjected, and yet, together with the Jews, Christian old men and boys used to run as well, and when Pope Clement IX. abolished the races for the Jews the custom of having Christian boys run races with asses still continued.

It must be admitted, however, that as a rule common law penalties were applied with more severity in the case of Jews than of Christians, especially in crimes against morality, for which Christians were punished with fustigation while Jews were burned at the stake.

Sixtus V treated the Jews better than his predecessors owing to the fact that they belonged to "the family from whom Christ came," and he granted them the privilege to practice several kinds of trades. Clement VIII and Innocent XIII restricted their liberty to only two trades, viz: those in old clothes and rags and iron, "stracci ferraccia," which they still ply to the present day.

Gregory XIII forced the Jews to hear a sermon once a week in the Church of Santa Angela in Pescheria, and this custom was renewed in 1822 by Leo XII and only abolished in 1848 by Pius IX, who opened the gates of the Ghetto and revoked all the oppressive laws against the Jews.

Near the Ghetto, in memory of this custom, stands to this day a church called the Divine Fish, erected by a converted Jew, which bears on the outside a picture of the Crucifixion with the following inscription in Latin and Hebrew: "All day long have I stretched my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." The Jews had their synagogues and schools near the Ghetto. Originally these temples stood on the banks of the river. Later temples rose in various parts of the city, but the new synagogues have been built, following the ancient custom again, near the river and not far from the Ghetto, where the majority of modern Jews still reside.

Thus the Jewish colony, or at least the greater part of it, has kept the habits of 2,200 years ago and retained to a great extent its old identity and characteristics.

The poor classes still cling to their religion and habits, keep the Sabbath, when either they do not light any fire or have it kindled by a Christian servant, refrain from passing under the arch of Titus, erected in the year 81 A. D., to commemorate the fall of Jerusalem, and regularly walk out of the Porta Portese, by which the expected Messiah is supposed to enter Rome. The well-to-do Jews are less careful to observe old customs and it has been remarked they seem to have given up the profitable trade of lending money at usury probably on account of the successful competition of their Christian rivals.

How the Great Steam Route Across Africa is Being Constructed

HALFAYA.—(Special Correspondence to The Bee.)—I am in the Soudan, at the end of the northern section of the Cape to Cairo railway. This part of the route is now completed from the Mediterranean sea to where the Blue and White Nile join to form the mighty stream which has built up the land of Egypt. I have gone on the railroad through the rich regions of the lower Nile valley, and am now in the border of Nubia, at the railroad station of Halfaya, which lies just opposite Khartoum. My distance from the Mediterranean is equal to a straight line from the Atlantic ocean to the borders of Colorado, and I am just about as far south of Alexandria as New Orleans is south of the booming city of Wheeling. From here I can get steamers which will take me up the Nile for more than 1,000 miles, and there are something like 800 miles of available waterway between that point and the other end of the road which has been constructed from Cape Town northward to far beyond the Zambesi river.

Steam from Cairo to Cape.

In thinking of the Cape to Cairo route most people consider it as a continuous railway system or of one iron track running north and south through Africa from Cape to Cairo. This is not the case. We shall go by steam from Cairo to the Cape; but almost one-third of the way will be over navigable rivers and lakes. This was the idea of Cecil Rhodes, and it is the idea of every practical engineer who has examined the country and its traffic possibilities. There will be one railroad running from Cape Town as far north as Lake Tanganyika, and another practically continuous rail system from here to Alexandria. The rest of the route will be made up of rail and water. The White Nile above Khartoum may be paralleled here and there by iron tracks, but for a generation or so, at least, the traffic will be by steamers as far as the Belgian Congo, at Gondokoro, a distance of over 1,100 miles. At that point there will be a railroad strip of 100 miles or so to Dufala, and then the Nile will again be used and steamers will go up to Lake Albert and across that lake to its southern shores. Between Lakes Albert and Tanganyika will be a little more than 300 miles of railroad, with a sixty-mile ferrage across Lake Kiou, which lies between. Then will come the long stretch of Lake Tanganyika, consisting of a deep waterway 400 miles long, and then the southern section of the road, going almost straight south to Cape Town.

So far more than 3,000 miles of iron track have been laid on the northern and southern ends of the system. The southern section is now about 2,000 miles long. It has been extended from Cape Town northward a distance of almost 400 miles above the Zambesi river, and there remains only 450 miles to construct before the trains can connect with the little steamers now on Lake Tanganyika. This section will probably be completed in the near future, as the late Mr. Beit, one of Cecil Rhodes' partners, set aside in his will at least \$100,000 for that purpose. I have before me a diagram recently issued by the African World, which shows the line of the route, and the extent of water and rail it will contain when completed. Ac-

ording to this the total distance will be about 6,900 miles, of which about 4,000 miles will be railway and the balance taken up by the rivers and lakes to which I have referred.

Up the Nile by Railway.
I should like to take you with me over this first great section of the Cape to Cairo railway. We shall need four days to go from the Mediterranean to the junction of the White and Blue Niles, where I am now, but the trip will be comfortable and there are great sights all the way. We start at Alexandria, the chief seaport of the Nile valley, and, in three hours, our express train carries us across through the delta to Cairo. Both Alexandria and Cairo have good railroad depots. The first city contains more than 400,000 people, and the second more than 1,000,000, so that



ARMED SOLDIERS GUARD THE MAIL.

there is a rapid and frequent train service between them.

We take the express, and as we go first class we pay 2 cents a mile. The second-class fare is only half as much as the first, and the third is still cheaper. Every train has first, second and third class cars. Those of the first are divided into compartments and are patronized by tourists and officials. The second class cars are much like those of our American trains, having an aisle through the center; they are used by merchants, commercial travelers and well-to-do natives. The third class cars are cheaply gotten up and their seats are wood benches; they are always filled with the common Egyptians, and foreigners seldom travel in them. Our tickets are little blue cards with the price printed upon them in English and Arabic. We have to show them to the

How the Mails Are Guarded.

Most of the Egyptian trains have a mail car next to the engine, an express car back of that and also cars for animals. Our train carries one, in which are two blanketed horses, with Syrian grooms to take care of them. They probably belong to some rich nabob of Cairo, and are going south by express.

The postal cars are carefully watched. The bags of mail are carried to them on red trucks made for the purpose. The trucks are pushed by the Arabs and mail is handled by them; but a dark-faced soldier, with rifle and sword, marches along with the mail and watches the bags taken in and out. When a truck is loaded the soldier goes with it to the postoffice wagons. There is always a guard on such Nile steamers as carry mail, and the let-

ters are never left without some armed official to watch over them.

Government Railroads Pay.
Before we go on with our trip, let me tell you how the railroads are managed. Both those of Egypt and the Soudan are under the government, and both systems pay. Those of Egypt, according to Lord Cromer's last report, are now earning about 8 per cent on their capital stock, and their working expenses are only about 60 per cent of the gross receipts. The business is rapidly increasing. They will carry 2,500,000 more passengers this year than last, and more than 1,000,000 tons more freight. Egypt now has something like 1,500 miles of railroads which belong to the government, and in addition 600 or 700 miles of agricultural roads managed by private parties. The earnings of the latter are increasing, and they carry more freight and passengers from year to year.

The main lines are managed by Egyptian and European officials. The superintendents of departments, who receive \$3,000 and upward a year each, are mainly Europeans, and the inspectors and sub-inspectors, who get from \$50 to \$200 a month, are in the main foreigners. Under these men are the native guards, track workers and mechanics of various kinds, who receive less wages. They are almost all Egyptians, there being something like 2,400 of them to about 100 Europeans.

As to the Soudan roads, they go through a thinly populated country, but the receipts are considerably more than their working expenses and they are rapidly increasing. In 1906 they were double what they were in 1902, the chief increase being from fourth-class passengers, who are natives.

This division of the Cape to Cairo road

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mils one of the richest countries on earth. I mean the delta of Egypt, which is more thickly populated than any other part of the globe. The land is as black as your hat and it raises two or three crops a year. It is worth from \$50 to \$100 an acre, and furnishes a heavy traffic of cotton and grain. The distance from Alexandria to Cairo is 233 miles, and all the way is through luxuriant farms. There is no desert in sight until you reach Cairo. Cotton is piled up at every depot, there are boatloads of it on the canals which the track crosses, and at the stations cars of cotton bales fill the side tracks. The freight of this region alone would probably pay the expenses of the road, and in addition there is the big passenger travel from Cairo to Alexandria and from all parts of the delta.

Scenes on the Cape to Cairo Road.

The next division above Cairo goes to Assiut, which is 200 or 300 miles further north. Then comes the road from Assiut to Luxor, which is 200 miles further north, and it is then that you reach the narrow valley of the Nile, with the desert in sight all the way. For almost 1,000 miles above Cairo the celebrated Nile strip varies in width from nothing to about nine miles. In many places it is less than three miles wide. The river winds this way and that, but the railroad is comparatively straight, and it is often far off from the river amid the sand and rocks. Such parts of the strip are uncomfortable. At times the sands are blinding, the dust fills the cars, and our eyes smart. These discomforts are somewhat obviated in the first-class cars. All of them have shutters and

Soudan Military Railway.

This road is a part of the Soudan military railway, which extends from Wady Halfa to Halfaya. The line all told is 576 miles long, and it has a gauge of only forty-two inches. It is the road which was built by Kitchener during the war with the Mahdi. It was constructed in less than eighteen months by the English engineers and the soldiers, and is one of the most remarkable examples of railroad building on record. A large part of it was laid at the rate of one and one-fourth miles per day, and at one time more than three miles were laid in one day. The track was constructed during the hottest time of the year, and the work was so well done that trains carrying 200 tons and drawn by engines weighing, without their tender, fifty tons, could travel safely over it at the rate of twenty-five miles per hour. It was built through a waterless desert, which had never been mapped until the surveyors went over it, and the survey camp was kept about six miles in advance of the rail head during its construction. There was always danger of attack by the dervishes and the road was built through a hostile country.

Today the cars move as smoothly over Kitchener's tracks as they do over those of Egypt, and they give that country regular connection with the Soudan. There is now a train de luxe connecting Khartoum with Wady Halfa, and this has both sleeping and dining cars.

Soudan Sleepers and Dinners.

The sleepers are divided up into compartments about seven feet square with two berths to each compartment. There



BAGGAGE IN EGYPT MUCH THE SAME AS IN AMERICA.

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