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CASSELL'S  
HISTORY OF THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN.











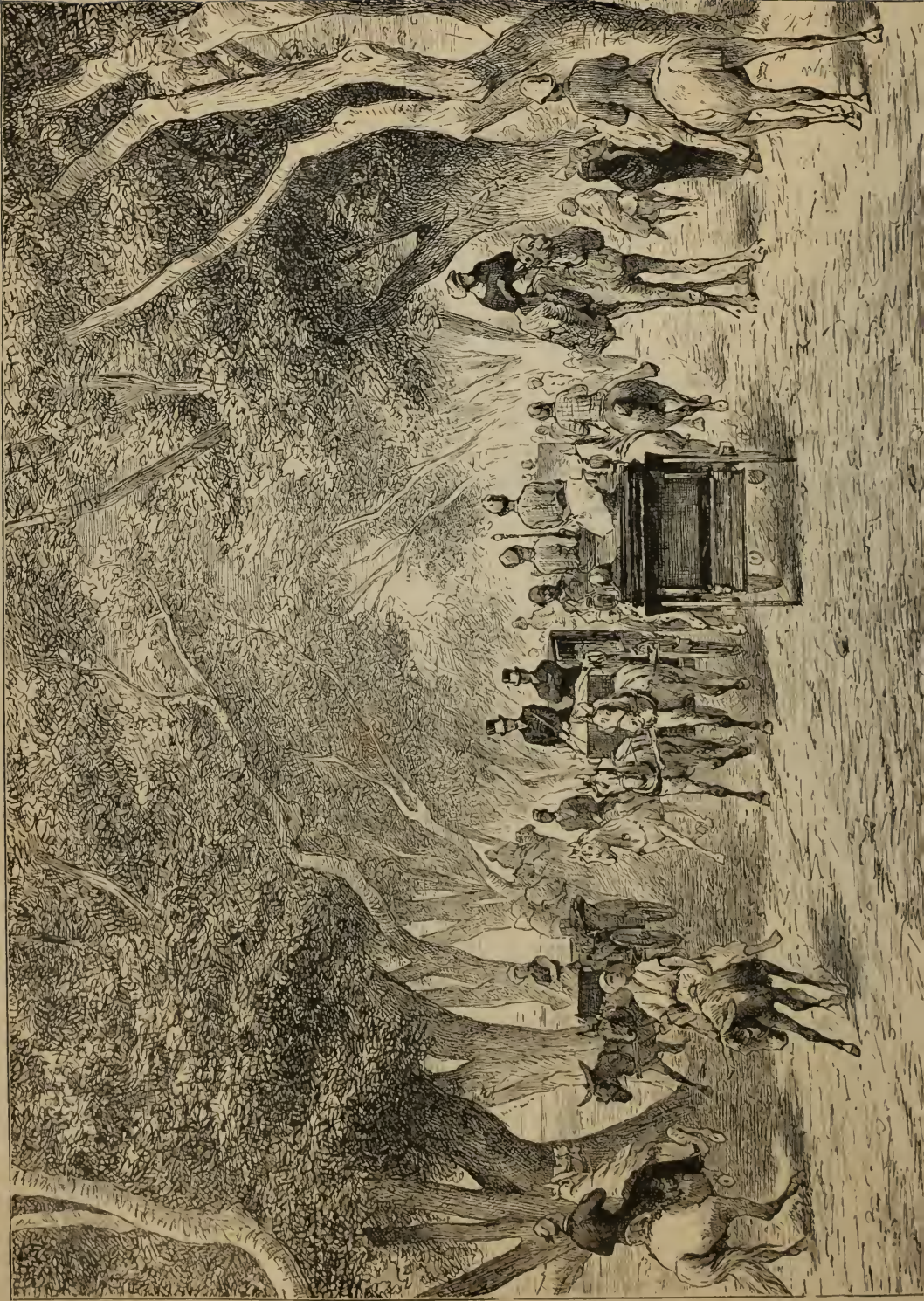


R. BRENDAWORTH & SONS, LONDON















LORD ALCESTER

CASSELL'S  
HISTORY OF THE WAR  
IN THE  
S O U D A N.

BY  
JAMES GRANT,  
AUTHOR OF "BRITISH BATTLES ON LAND AND SEA," ETC. ETC.

*Illustrated.*

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VOL. II.

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*LONDON, PARIS, NEW YORK & MELBOURNE.*

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LORD ALCESTER.

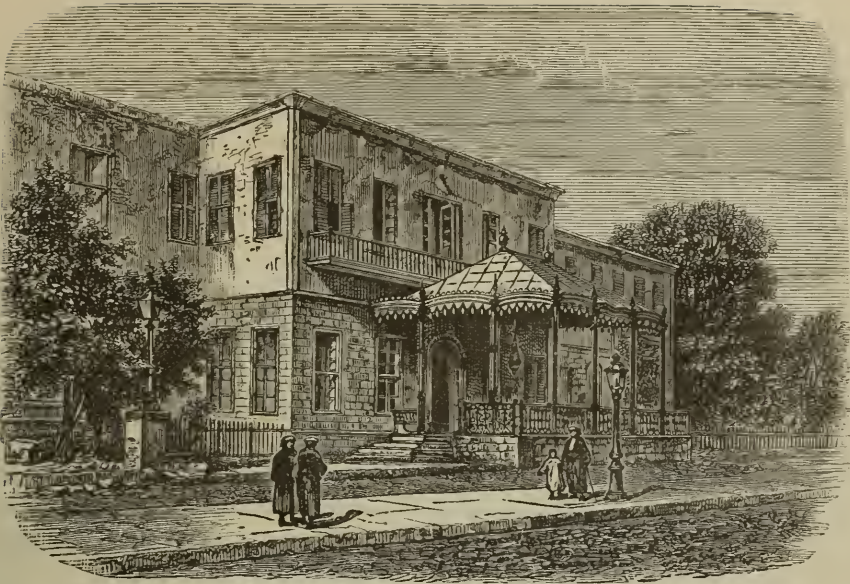
THE AVENUE AT SHOOBRA, CAIRO.

CAMP OF BEDOUIN ARABS.

CITADEL OF CAIRO.

TELEGRAPH WIRES IN THE DESERT.





SHEPHEARD'S HOTEL, CAIRO.

# CASSELL'S HISTORY OF THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE BRITISH ARMY IN CAIRO.

The Black Watch at Belbeis—Arrival of Sir Garnet Wolseley at Cairo—The City and the Citadel—In the Citadel with the Highland Brigade—Thomas Keith, Aga of the Mamelukes—Their Massacre—Cavalry Parade—Negotiations with the Sultan—The Bedouins and the Highlanders—Disbanding of Egyptian Soldiers—Judicial Commission—Return of Tewfik to Cairo—Arabi in Adversity—The Khedive's Levee—Courts Martial in Cairo—Bad Accommodation—Explosion at the Railway Station.

SIR GARNET WOLSELEY, with the Head-quarter Staff, the Duke of Connaught, and one company of the Scots Guards, on the 14th of September, went to Zagazig by railway, while a detachment of the Grenadier Guards proceeded by another train to the station of Tel Abou, to cut off any fugitives that might be in that quarter.

From Zagazig the Black Watch were sent on to Belbeis; but the train

broke down, and they had to sleep on the slope of the railway bank. At Belbeis the regiment remained for eight days, and all that time had no other rations than hard biscuits, a little tinned meat, and muddy canal water. "We had to content ourselves with lying in the kilt, without blanket or anything else to cover us," wrote one whose letter appeared in the *Edinburgh Courant*. "Other luxuries we had too—the mos-

quitoes and sandflies—who did not fail to take it out of our bare legs at night; but what is the use of a soldier if he can't put up with hardships?"

On the 16th September, Fitzroy's Naval Brigade quitted Zagazig, by an order from the Admiral, and while the troops were pushing on to Cairo it returned to Ismailia, where the battery was broken up, the guns and squads being sent on board their respective ships, accompanied, both officers and men, by the praise and good wishes of the army, "for the courage they had evinced in the face of the enemy, and for the *esprit de corps* which bore them up through all the fatigue of marching and attacking, and the cheerfulness with which they overcame dangers and difficulties alike."

It was the news of the peaceful occupation of Cairo, and of Arabi's surrender, which naturally made Sir Garnet Wolseley in haste to reach the capital, where he was received by the acclamations of the people, on the 15th of September; he was accompanied by detachments of Guards, Highlanders, and Marines. The Scots Guards and one Company of the Highland Light Infantry, under Major Campbell, came with him by train. At the station he was met by General Lowe, and, after a brief consultation, took up his quarters at the Abdin Palace.

Arabi heard of his conqueror's arrival; and, while still maintaining a quiet and dignified attitude, he solicitously desired to have an interview, which Sir Garnet Wolseley did not feel himself at liberty to accord.

In Cairo the utmost tranquillity prevailed, as our troops and the Egyptian police took every precaution against any possible *émeute* among the native fanatics, whose number was great. The Prefect of Police had contrived to afford perfect protection to one hundred and fifty Europeans of various nationalities, who had remained in the city during the revolt. Colonel G.W. Knox, of the Scots Guards, the officer commanding in the citadel, having discovered that certain prisoners had been cruelly tortured there, made the Egyptian officer, previously in command, a close prisoner, and in chains.

Though inferior in commercial importance and historical interest to Alexandria, *Masr el-Kahira*, as the Arabs call Cairo, much exceeds the great seaport in size and number of inhabitants, and excels it still more in all the attributes of an Oriental city.

Cairo, of which the British were now taking possession once again, is, in some respects, less Asiatic than Damascus, yet it presents a more lively and varied picture of Oriental life than the secluded capital of Syria, and as far surpasses Constantinople as Bagdad excels Smyrna. "In Cairo only," says the author of "Egypt as it Is," "are now to be found the scene and most of the *dramatis personæ* of 'The Thousand and One Nights,' within a stone's throw of nineteenth century civilisation in many of its latest results. A short quarter of an hour's drive from the railway station transports you into the very world of the Caliphs—the same now as when Nouredin, Abou Shamma,

Bedreddin Hassan, Ali Cogia, the Jew Physician, and all the rest of them played their parts, any time since or before Saladin. The old city itself is still a labyrinth of dark, dirty, intricate lanes and alleys, in many of which two donkeys can hardly pass abreast, and whose toppling upper storeys so nearly meet as to shut out all but the narrowest streak of cloudless sky."

The throngs that come and go are all unchanged since Eliot Warburton described them. In the quaint streets may be seen "ladies wrapped closely in white veils; women of the lower classes carrying water on their heads, and covered only with a long blue garment that reveals too plainly the exquisite symmetry of the young, and the hideous deformity of the elders. Here are camels perched upon by black slaves, magpied with white napkins round their heads and loins; there are portly merchants with turbans and long pipes, smoking on their knowing-looking donkeys; here an Arab dashes through the crowd at full gallop, or a European still more haughtily shoves aside the pompous-looking, bearded throng; now a bridal or a circumcising procession squeezes along with music that might madden a drummer; now the running footmen of some Bey or Pasha endeavour to jostle you to the wall, unless they recognise you as an Englishman—one of that race whom they think the devil himself can't frighten or teach manners to."

Cairo abounds in sumptuous reservoirs and baths; the warehouses are remarkable for their size and strength.

The bazaars are extensive; but the grandest features of the city are its mosques, its stately modern streets, and its magnificent squares. It is divided into ten districts, under as many sheikhs, separated from each other by gates that are closed at night.

The Abdin Palace, wherein Sir Garnet established his headquarters, was the favourite winter residence of the Khedive.

High over Cairo towers *El-Kaleh*, or the citadel, which was built by the Sultan Saladin in 1166, and was now occupied by Sir Archibald Alison and the Highland Brigade. It crowns the last rocky spur of the Mokattam range, which there terminates abruptly close to the Roumeyleh and Karameidan Squares. "It once contained a vast *dewan*, the roof of which was upheld by thirty-two columns of rose-coloured granite taken from ancient Egyptian temples. This is now replaced by a noble modern residence, containing splendid apartments, and one of the adjuncts of which is a spacious bathing chamber, wherein, we are told, the officers of Her Majesty's Cavalry and Infantry took their morning tubs."

The fine citadel of Cairo is in itself a small town, comprising, besides the barracks for a very strong garrison, the offices of the War Minister, the old palace of Mehemet Ali—now only used for State receptions—the great mosque of oriental alabaster built by him, which contains his own tomb, and the famous Well of Joseph; a mint, a cannon foundry, and other adjuncts

of a great military establishment. Here, immediately inside the Arabs' Gate, was the scene of the dreadful massacre of the gallant but imperious Mamelukes, in 1811, to the number of 480, whom Mehemet Ali had invited to a banquet, and whose aga was Thomas Keith, a native of Edinburgh. "On their handsome and richly caparisoned horses, in gorgeous dresses, and all the splendour of arms," says Ebers, "hardly had they entered the narrow street, shut in by high walls, which leads up to a gate of the citadel called El-Azab, than a cannon gave the signal for Mehemet Ali's Albanian soldiers to begin the massacre. Suddenly, from every window and loophole, well-aimed shots flashed and rattled from the guns of the Albanians. Hundreds of Mamelukes and wounded horses lay wallowing in blood on the paved way. Volley after volley was fired; death reaped a fearful harvest; those who escaped the murderous bullets sprang from their horses, snatching their sabres from their sheaths, their pistols from the belt—but there was no foe to face them save the hard, impenetrable walls. In unutterable confusion, horses and men—living, dying, and dead—gather, tumble, and roll into one mass—one heap; at first shouting and screaming; then silent, convulsive; and at last, as it grows in size, still, rigid, and stark. In half an hour Mehemet Ali had quenched the swift pulse, the haughty vigour of 480 lives, as he might have wiped their names off a slate. One—only one—survived, Ameer Bey, who was

saved by his noble horse, which took a tremendous leap over the breastwork of the citadel."

But one other escaped,—their aga, Thomas Keith, who was warned, it is supposed by Toussoun Pasha, to absent himself from the banquet. The son of a gunsmith in Edinburgh, he had been a soldier in the Seaforth Highlanders, and was taken prisoner when the fatal Egyptian expedition of 1807 was fitted out under General Mackenzie-Fraser. He became the slave of the Mamelukes, and eventually rose to be aga of that force, Governor of Medina, and perished in the war with the Wahabees in 1816, when leading a body of Cavalry at El Rass.

And now, from the lofty ramparts of the citadel the kilted sentinels of Alison's Brigade could see the city of Saladin lying like a map beneath them, its domes, minarets, and feathery palm clumps rising clearly and sharply in the purest of atmospheres; and in the distance the solitary obelisk that marks the site of Heliopolis, the time-defying Pyramids in the plains of Gizeli towering up against the grey background of the Libyan desert, the palm groves that wave over buried Memphis, and the winding valley of Upper Egypt losing itself in haze half-way up to Thebes.

"The splendour of this panorama, as seen by daylight," says M'Coan, "is only surpassed by the incredible beauty of a sunset viewed from the same spot, when the crimson haze of the short Egyptian twilight bathes the whole in that wondrous after-glow, to which



THE MAMELUKE'S LEAP.

neither Hildebrand nor Holman Hunt has done complete justice."

At the juncture when our troops occupied Cairo its streets presented a strange and unusual aspect. The shops were all closed, though the Boulevard Mehemet Ali, the Esbekiyeh—a large open garden-square—and every thoroughfare were crowded with natives, most of whom cast sullen and hostile glances on our soldiers, though many made no secret of rejoicing at the turn matters had taken; and as each body of troops in their different uniforms marched through the streets and squares, with bands playing and bayonets fixed, to the various quarters assigned them, they were accompanied by crowds of wondering Orientals, while the shrill voices of admiring women uttered cries of welcome from the covered balconies and curtained windows.

On the other hand, our soldiers saw much to excite their wonder too. In many of the narrow streets there was only a species of twilight at high noon and the darkness of midnight after the sunset, and then the wayfarer in old Cairo carried his own lantern, that he might not stumble over dogs and beggars or the sleeping guardians of the house-gates. In this city the traveller goes, as it were, "interminably between walls of masonry striped in black and white or red and white, passing now and again by richly-carved gateways and mosque-fronts, public fountains, where the thirsty suck their fill from brass nozzles projecting out of the masonry; by mysterious blank walls, without

door or window, which enclose perchance lovely inner courts, inlaid with rich marble and adorned with arabesqued columns and fountains; seeing now a dried crocodile swinging in the night air, or meeting a wedding procession with torches."

Already hackney carriages were to be had on hire, and among the first to use them were the Duke of Connaught and his staff. Mr. de Chair, the luckless midshipman, was now released from his durance in the citadel, where he had been carefully protected, though sometimes howled at and reviled by the mob. As the majority of the Arab populace in the capital had but few opportunities of seeing our troops or estimating their number, and absurd reports were current that men were so scarce in the land of the unbeliever, that the Highlanders were regiments of women, it was resolved to impress them by a grand display of the entire force of Cavalry in the first instance.

Accordingly, the latter paraded in marching order and made a progress through all the line of the native bazaars, on the first Saturday after entering Cairo. It consisted of the colossal squadrons of the Life Guards and Blues—each man a giant in Egyptian eyes—the two regiments of Dragoon Guards, the Hussars, the Bengal Cavalry, and the Mounted Infantry, with trumpets sounding and kettle-drums beating.

"Even to those accustomed to military spectacles," it was said, "the show of this splendid body of horsemen in their fighting kits—the men of Kas-

sassin, of Mahsameh, and the ride to Cairo—was magnificent. To the awed natives of Cairo it was conclusive evidence that the British were masters of Egypt!

The column was nearly three miles in length, and took forty minutes in passing any given point, such as the splendid façade of the Sultan Hassan's mosque, of which the Cairenes say that the royal builder, after lavishly rewarding the architect, cut off his right hand in order that he might never rival his work elsewhere. "The faces of the Egyptian crowds in the native districts of the city, expressed," we are told, "a sullen hostility that became blended with amazement as the long lines of troops filed past, and these culminated in wonder as the turbaned Indian Lancers came in sight; and the effect of these troops, with lance-points glittering and pennons waving, as they wound through the dimly-lit bazaars of Cairo, was wonderfully striking and picturesque. The lattices were crowded with white-veiled women, who peeped out with their black eyes sparkling in delight at the—to them—most strange and unwonted spectacle."

At this juncture the conquerors refused all foreign intervention, and when—after Tel-el-Kebir—the Sultan telegraphed to Sir Garnet Wolseley with the apparent object of negotiating terms of surrender for Egypt, he was simply referred to the British embassy.

Long ere this the negotiations for signing the military convention had broken down, in consequence of the peculiar views taken by the Sultan,

despite the great anxiety of his Ministry to come to a due understanding with Great Britain. He wished to uphold his *prestige* as an absolute monarch with regard to his suzerainty over Egypt. He had been urged by Lord Dufferin to relinquish three words as applied to Britain—" *intervention militaire étrangère* "—and the Imperial proclamation against Arabi; but His Majesty replied, "that it was impossible to do so for many reasons, the first of which was, that the proclamation having now been promulgated, and owing its weight to a spontaneous display of Imperial displeasure against a rebellious officer, any subsequent decree departing from the tenor of the original would imperil its value, and prove to Europe that it had been issued at the dictum of Britain."

The Earl of Dufferin wished the Sultan's autograph to the memorandum containing the conditions of acceptance, which the Ambassador had communicated to the latter's private secretary, without the influence of the Ministry. The first of these was that Colonel Valentine Baker should be Chief of the Turkish Staff; the second, that the status of the Turkish army corps should be the same as that during the Crimean war; and that the transport and arrangements of any Turkish force for Egypt should be made by Turkey alone.

But his Majesty's objections to sign increased. He urged that concessions having been made by him personally, his Imperial word had been given, and that the request for his autograph implied distrust amounting to insult;

also, that his faith had been proved by the orders published in his name in the *Official Gazette*, by which the above-mentioned matters were accurately given.

For some unexplained reason the Highland Regiments were removed

hope of getting a few damsels to bear away with them to the desert; but the Highlanders were quickly under arms, and shot about forty of them, putting the rest to flight.

Severe patrol duty was put upon the



VIEW FROM THE CITADEL, CAIRO: SCENE OF THE MAMELUKE'S LEAP.

from the citadel, and instead of being quartered in the spacious barracks of the Kasr-el-Nil, in the city, were encamped outside the walls during the months of October and November.

In October some Bedouins, whom the peculiar garb of the kilted Brigade led to conceive that the tents were occupied by the wives of the Infidel invaders, made a dash at the camp one night, in

Highlanders, by the circumstance of wandering Arabs, inflamed by hate and spite, firing random shots into their tents at night, and causing several narrow escapes.

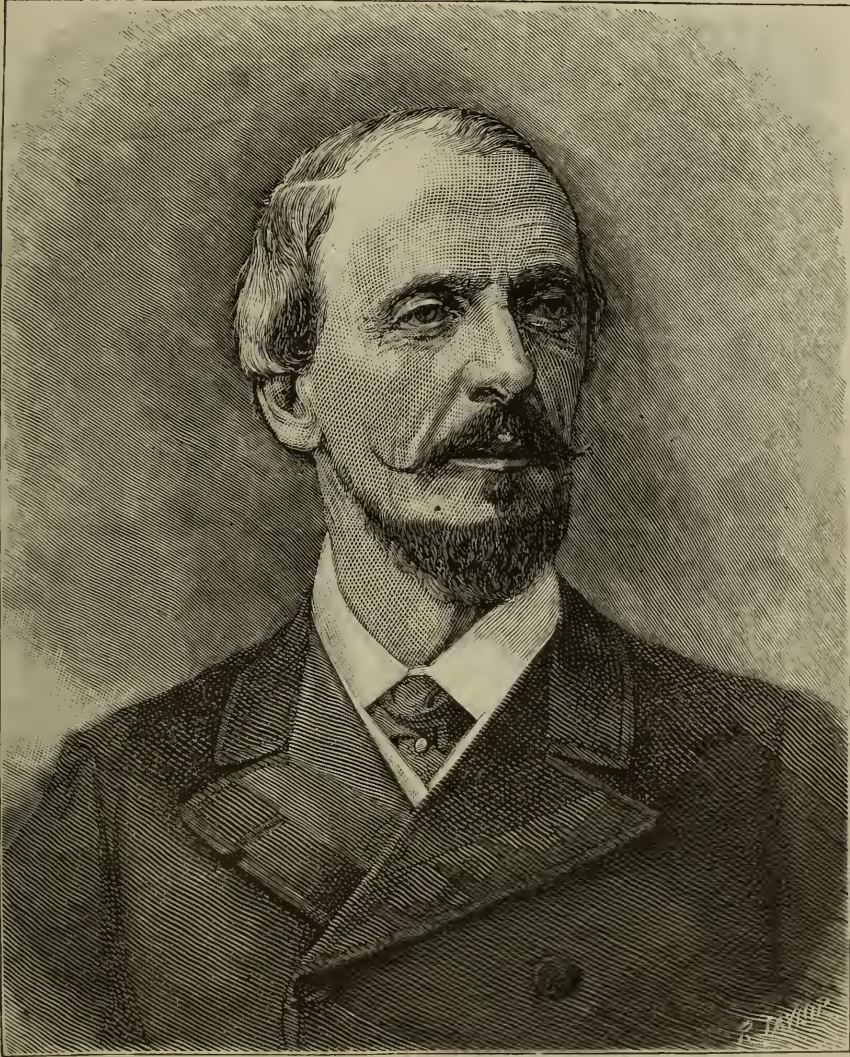
Sir Garnet Wolseley, after he found himself quietly established in the Abdin Palace at Cairo, thought himself fully justified in telegraphing home to the Government in these brief terms:—



“The war is over. Send no more troops to Egypt.”

There were thanksgiving services on

Infantry, laid down their arms, at Tantah, to only 210 of the Seaforth Highlanders. without firing a shot or



LORD DUFFERIN.

the 24th of September in all the churches of the British Isles, for our military successes in the Scriptural land of the Pharaohs.

On the 18th of September, a whole Egyptian column, consisting of 4,000

making the least show of resistance. The latter left Benha, the capital of the district named Galioubiyeh, with two field pieces, for Tantah, at the special request of the railway officials, to enforce order, as mobs of disbanded men

invaded the station, clamouring for trains to take them to their villages; and great alarm existed, as Tantah was the very focus of Egyptian revolt.

There the Cadi and two men of rank met the Seaforth Highlanders, and expressed the warmest affection for the British troops. In the market-place a hollow square was formed, and through it, after piling arms and surrendering some pieces of cannon, the Egyptians marched, and dispersed to their homes, but not before a native was hanged in their presence, for participation in the murders of the Europeans at Tantah.

On the afternoon of the 20th the Khedive, at Alexandria, drove out escorted by a guard of the Bengal Lancers, when their appearance, in semi-Eastern costume with turbans, created a singular sensation and excitement among the Egyptian populace. At this time there was present in the Palace of Ras-el-Tin, Ibrahim Tewfik, who is said to have had but an indifferent existence during the rough period in Cairo while Arabi was dictator, when he was wont—so, at least, it was rumoured—to send paid Arabs through the streets in torn and blood-stained garments, crying to excited mobs, “See how the British treat us!”

All public interest was now transferred from every point to Cairo, where, on the 20th of September, a decree of the Khedive appointed a Special Commission to sit at Alexandria, to seek out and prosecute with severity all concerned in the outrages and fire-raising there between the 11th and 16th of June—those days of pillage and murder.

This Board was composed of four European and three Egyptian members, with a native President, Abdurrahman, previously Finance Minister. All Consuls were represented, but were to be without votes, though having the power of making communications. A similar Commission was decreed to sit at Tantah, to judge of crimes committed in the Upper and Lower provinces during the revolt, under the presidency of the former Minister of Public Works, Mahmoud Falaki.

The Brigade of Sir Evelyn Wood received orders on the 15th September to hold itself in readiness to proceed to Cairo, though Alexandria was destined to be the base of the future army of occupation. His soldiers received the news with the utmost pleasure, for they had suffered intense mortification in not having shared in the glory of Kassassin and Tel-el-Kebir.

Writing from Alexandria about this time, a correspondent of the press says, “it was disgusting to hear the expressions of loyalty to the Khedive profusely expressed by many who had been the closest adherents of Arabi, but he seemed to take them at their true Oriental value. Thus many of Arabi’s supporters found the doors of Ras-el-Tin closed against them, amongst these, the Princes Ibrahim, Ahmed, and Hamil. Some of the princesses of the Khedive’s family were also said to be seriously compromised.”

On the 22nd of September the Khedive proceeded to the mosque at Abu Abbas for his usual Friday prayers, and on that occasion was, curiously

enough, accompanied by all the officers of H.M. 13th Bengal Lancers, wearing their medals and decorations.

On the morning of the 25th of the same month, our batteries fired a royal salute of twenty-one guns, announcing that Tewfik Pasha was quitting the Ras-el-Tin Palace on his return to the capital. The streets through which he passed were lined by the troops of Sir Evelyn Wood, while the old 95th Regiment guarded the railway station.

Sir Edward Malet, the British Consul-general, was with him in the carriage, which was surrounded by an escort of the Bengal Lancers. "These troops," wrote Dr. W. H. Russell, "with their rolling eyes, fierce up-curved mustaches and beards, their long bamboo lances, red and blue pennons—big-turbaned, jack-booted, and much be-belted—are admirable in the way of a picturesque body guard, and have established themselves as a feature in the varied scenery of the Alexandrian streets."

Many Europeans mingled with the natives, but the crowds in the streets were not great, and the Khedive was generally received with coolness and silence, for the secret hearts of the people were with him who wanted "Egypt for the Egyptians"—the fallen Arabi.

Major-General G. C. Harman, C.B.—an officer who had served with the 34th in the Crimea, and, at the head of the Grenadiers of the Regiment, received no less than seven severe wounds in the useless attack on the Redan—commanding in Alexandria, was at the

railway station with his staff to see off the Khedive, who thanked him for the military show, and then his train started, cheered only by a few Britons who chanced to be present.

From an early hour preparations had meanwhile been in progress at Cairo to give Tewfik a suitable reception. "Red-coated orderlies and staff-officers galloped quickly about with orders, and closely-veiled women clung to the garden railings or filled the projecting balconies, silent and hushed with expectation. By two o'clock the drum and fife bands of our Infantry and the bagpipes of the Highlanders were heard in all directions as the troops marched from their quarters in camp, barrack, and citadel, and filed along in double ranks like two human walls from the station, round by Shepheard's fashionable hotel and the Abdin to the Ismaïlieh Palace."

These were, first of all, to receive the consort of the Khedive, Emineh Khanum, daughter of the late II-Hawi Pasha, and mother of Prince Abbas Bey, with royal honours, presenting arms and lowering colours, as she was rapidly driven in a handsome carriage, followed by many others containing the ladies of the harem, while shrill cries of welcome and salute from the women greeted them from housetop, balcony, and window.

None of our officers were in full uniform; all were in their stained, tattered, and threadbare fighting kits. Sir Garnet Wolseley was at the station by three o'clock p.m., with a detachment of the Grenadier Guards,

when the Khedive's train came in; and, after the usual greetings, the restored potentate took a seat in the same carriage with the General, the Duke of Connaught, and the Consul-general.

Of the many descriptions of this important event, the following account from the pen of an able correspondent gives a life-like representation of the circumstances, and will be read with interest.

"The Khedive cannot but have been struck at his first view of the scene as he left the station. On either side were long lines of tall men on great horses—the Household Cavalry. As the carriage passed between them, swords flashed a salute, which the guns of the citadel and of a battery of artillery were already thundering out.

"Farther on, the line was taken up by the 4th and 7th Dragoon Guards, and next to these came the smart 19th Hussars. Beyond these the carriage passed between two ranks of British Infantry, standing with fixed bayonets and rifles at the *present*—officers and men absolutely motionless.

"Here the peculiar shrill greeting cries of the Arab women were almost deafening; but the deep rows of men behind the lines of infantry maintained an ominous silence. It is true that Orientals rarely cheer, but even to those accustomed to Oriental impassiveness the reception of the Khedive appeared unfortunately, but most distinctly, cold. Here and there a few of the natives salaamed, but the vast majority of the crowd remained motionless and silent. At intervals along

the line bands of native music were stationed, and these raised a deafening din as the *cortège* passed along. According to Egyptian custom, bullocks were slaughtered, and the cries of women were heard along the whole line of route."

This slaughter of bullocks would seem to be a last relic of the ancient Egyptian god Apis, who was worshipped in the form of an ox, at Memphis, Heliopolis, and elsewhere.

"A remark made by a turbaned and robed Arab who stood near me was worthy of notice," continues the correspondent. "He said to another Arab by him, 'The Khedive returns like a child in his nurse's arms.'

"As the carriage drove along the line, Sir Garnet Wolseley and the Duke of Connaught directed the Khedive's attention to the different regiments, and he manifested considerable interest and curiosity as he passed between the ranks of the stalwart men of the Highland Brigade.

"Wherever groups of Europeans, of whatever nationality, were gathered, the cheering as the carriage passed was loud and enthusiastic. So, amid the thunder of the British artillery, which Arabi would hear in his prison, and between lines of British bayonets, the Khedive passed out of sight, through the gates of his palace.

"None but officials were allowed to accompany the Khedive in his train; but I am informed, upon the authority of Sir Edward Malet, that his Highness received an enthusiastic greeting along the whole line of route. More



SHOPKEEPER OF CAIRO

especially was this the case at Damanhour, Kafrzeyat, Tantah, and Benha, where the stations were gaily decorated with flags, the platforms were crowded, and loyal addresses were presented.

“Even at the stations where the train did not stop, the population was collected on the platform and along the line to acclaim the Khedive's passage. His Highness has bestowed the Grand Cordon of the Osmanieh on Sir Garnet Wolseley. I hear upon good authority that the Khedive will shortly issue a general amnesty to all concerned in recent events, excepting only about half a dozen individuals, who will be tried for their lives on the charge of being implicated in one or other of the massacres and the conflagration of Alexandria. This step is likely to have an excellent effect.”

The Grand Cordon of the Osmanieh was also bestowed upon Sir Evelyn Wood on his arrival with his brigade in Cairo. The latter force, with the Cavalry, were quartered in the Abbasieh Barracks, while the artillery were placed at Kasr-el-Boulak, on the left bank of the Nile, to hold the line of retreat into the Upper Province. So filthy were all these places found to be, that our unfortunate soldiers envied the Highland Brigade, which was under canvas, and longed to be once again even in the arid desert.

The handsome house of Arabi in Cairo was shamefully plundered by the followers of the Khedive's delegate, Sultan Pasha, who took possession of his stud of horses; but meanwhile the fallen leader of the Egyp-

tians was making a good impression on all our officers who were entrusted with his custody. They now began to discover that though Arabi had been ambitious he had been honest in his intentions, and he founded his defence upon the *Fetma* pronounced by the Ulema deposing Tewfik from the throne, and maintained that throughout the war he had acted constitutionally.

Among his captured papers many telegrams were found expressive of sympathy, with offers of military service from Russian, French, and German officers, all of which he had, strangely enough, declined, with the exception of one from M. Minet, an old Swiss, in indifferent health, who had acted with the Red Cross Society at Kafr-dowar, and was consequently arrested.

“Before his arrest,” says the correspondent of the *Standard*, “he authorised me to state that Arabi had never written any letter to Mr. Gladstone whatever; neither had he authorised any person to write in his name. The letter purporting to be from him must, therefore, be a forgery. Arabi's object in surrendering to the British general was to ensure an impartial trial, which he could not expect if tried by those surrounding the Khedive, who are his bitter personal enemies. Arabi also declared that he had never, himself, had any political communication with the Sultan.”

The last assertion was extremely improbable.

Prior to the arrival of Tewfik Pasha, Arabi had again requested an interview with Sir Garnet, who steadily declined

to accord it, for obvious reasons. A great deputation of the Ulema waited upon the latter about the same time, and stated that they would do all that they could to ensure tranquillity and prevent any ebullition of religious rancour against the British troops.

A series of wholesale arrests was now made daily under the auspices of Sultan Pasha. Many were thrown into foul prisons for having signed the proclamation drawn up by the Council and Ulema—the document by which Arabi was authorised to prosecute the war and defy the orders and name of Tewfik Pasha.

On the 26th of September, while the Arab portion of Cairo remained in darkness and gloom, and where every solitary European was liable to be pelted and hooted, all the rest of the city—particularly the Ismaïlieh quarter, where the principal palace of the Khedive stands—was brilliantly illuminated by thousands of coloured lamps, and the streets were thronged by the bearers of torches and lanterns.

The Khedive held a levee on the following day, which was attended by more than a hundred of our officers. Nine hundred and ninety-two delegates of the villages of the Upper and Lower Provinces were present, but many men of rank who had been adherents of Arabi were excluded.

The Khedive, a short, stout, and nervous man, with features somewhat indicative of weakness of character—for he was a man who had unsuccessfully tried to please both parties and betrayed great inconsistency of charac-

ter—told the Ulema, who were present, that the first of them who forsook his proper office and meddled with politics should go to prison.

“Although he has been entirely educated in Egypt, he knows French well,” says Mr. Broadley, “and is fairly acquainted with English; but his thoughts, ideas, and modes of reasoning are, however, entirely Oriental. A constant and uncontrollable restlessness of manner affords an unmistakable indication of great inconstancy of purpose.”

In many parts of the Upper and Lower Provinces the tidings of Arabi's defeat were treated with disbelief and scorn. At Benisooef, a large town with extensive woollen and cotton manufactories, the capital of a province on the left bank of the Nile—and in the neighbourhood of which, at the village of Suarieh, Lepsius discovered a hitherto unknown rock-temple—great riots ensued in consequence of the authorities attempting to enforce some loyal demonstrations. Banners, lanterns, and devices were torn down and destroyed, while Christians were grossly insulted; and the same outbreaks occurred where there were no British troops to overawe the people.

In the streets of Cairo many openly cursed and reviled the Khedive and spat upon Christians, though the latter, who had long trembled at the prospect of a revolt, were rejoicing, while the Moslem population were full of rage and mortification.

At Damascus, the centre of Syrian commerce, and the rendezvous of all

the pilgrims from the north of Asia to Mecca, the news of Tel-el-Kebir created incredible grief and dismay. On the very day the battle was fought, reports among the ignorant but exulting

Sir Beauchamp Seymour had been stricken off with ignominy; that the British troops were departing from Egypt in disgrace, with arms reversed; and that the princess Beatrice had been



GHIZIYEH PALACE, CAIRO.

population were current in every mosque, bazaar, and coffee-shop, that the Duke of Comnaught was the miserable captive of the conquering Arabi; that the Queen, his mother, in her consternation, had been compelled to pay the latter a heavy war indemnity; that the heads of Sir Garnet Wolseley and

bestowed, as a peace-offering, upon the victorious Arabi.

The numerous Egyptian officers then under arrest at Alexandria and elsewhere were now conveyed to Cairo, for trial by court-martial, while the British authorities were careful to eliminate from the forms of justice the secret



influences of personal rancour or revenge. Without their full consent no execution could take place, and the court-martial itself was supervised by British officers of rank, with whom the final decisions rested.

So early as the 27th of this eventful September, by a decree of Tewfik, a

over by the Commission in each locality. From these Courts there was no appeal; but the judgments were to be in strict accordance with martial law. They were open to the public, and the accused were permitted to employ counsel; but thirty-six of the prisoners who were confined in the great round tower of



SIR E. B. MALET.

(From a Photograph by J. E. Mayall, New Bond Street, W.)

Special Commission was appointed to meet in the capital, under the presidency of Ismail Bey, to take close cognisance of acts of rebellion recently committed by all persons, civil or military; and the chief followers of Arabi were handed over to its authority.

Two other standing courts-martial were constituted: one at Cairo under Mohammed Renouf Pasha, and a second one at Alexandria, to try cases handed

the citadel at Cairo eluded the terror of the new tribunal there, by escaping one night by means of a stout rope. The feat was one of much peril, and in achieving it, it was evident that they had been assisted by accomplices. Within a few days after the arrival of the army, though the population continued unfriendly, Cairo began to resemble a British garrison town in some respects, from the number of red-coats

thronging its streets, which otherwise looked sombre from the vast numbers of closed shops; but every successive train brought back fugitive Europeans from Alexandria.

Among our troops there was much discontent at the vile accommodation provided for them. The Egyptian barracks required considerable sanitation and cleansing before they could be fit for habitation; but the soldiers thought of the number of spacious palaces belonging to members of the Khedive's family, and which were all empty and unoccupied; and many thought it hard that, after a rough though brief campaign, they should be placed under canvas, exposed to heat and dust by day, and cold and dew by night, on a bleak, sandy island like Ghezireh, on the left side of the Nile.

Bugs, stench, and other plagues of Egypt, fairly drove the Brigade of Guards out of the citadel.

The use of pipeclay had once more been resumed, and the troops "strove," says the *Standard*, "to look as smart as their hideous loose serge jackets would permit; but the Highlanders in karkee, with snow-white belts, spats, and helmets, easily carried away the palm as to appearance."

Sir Edward Hamley, though a general of division, occupied a tent, within sight of six empty palaces.

The Kasr-en-Noussa Palace, on the Shoobra road, was assigned to the Duke of Connaught as his quarters. It stands among beautiful grounds, on the shady border of a long line of stately sycamores and acacias, that form at once

the "Drive" and the "Rotten Row" of the harem ladies and Cairo dandies every evening.

The 28th of September saw the whole city startled by a loud and dreadful explosion, as if a great magazine had been blown up. A battalion of the 60th Rifles, coming from Benha, in the province of Galioubiyeh, to bear its share in the intended great review before the Khedive, was just being de-trained at the Railway Station when some trucks loaded with live shell and other ammunition exploded on the opposite line of rails. A great quantity of rifle ammunition in a truck close by now blew up with a terrific din. Some of it was British, and some Remington ammunition taken from the Egyptians. The explosion of live shells, in quick succession, now continued for three hours or more.

The roar of these explosions sounded like the din of a general action. Several of the 60th were severely wounded—among them a medical officer—and one was killed; and after a goods shed took fire, a spreading conflagration began.

The Brigade of Guards under the Duke of Connaught were quickly on the scene, which was one of great danger, as at half-minute intervals the shell-splinters were flying in all directions, and by one a field officer of Marines was wounded in the thigh.

The tumult and alarm caused by this event suspended the races organised by some of our officers at the Abbassieh Barracks; and, as the Arab mob gathered in great force, the troops were required to clear the streets of them.

As the thermometer stood at 106° (Fahr.), and the heat was increased by the metal roof of the railway station, it was alleged by many that the train, with its perilous load, had caught fire by spontaneous combustion; but the railway officials believed it to be the result of foul play, because "they observed that the trucks upon two separate lines of rails burst into a blaze about the same time; and subsequently to the first explosion, two Arabs were seized when setting fire to some trucks, one with a can of petroleum, while a third was detected in the act of setting fire to some of the rolling stock; but he escaped, though another was taken while wildly inciting the people to rise against 'the accursed infidels.'"

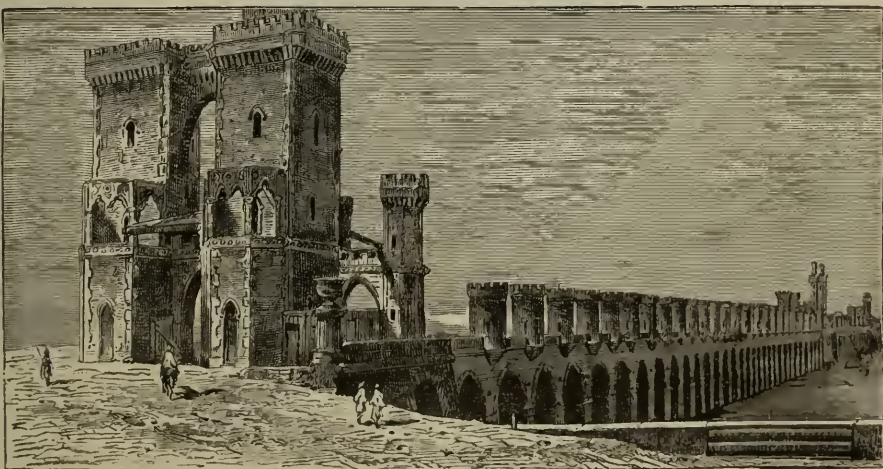
Eight persons were arrested on the 30th, charged with the incendiarism, though our officers believed that the

catastrophe originated in a fuse having been left in an Egyptian shell, which caused it to explode during a shock when the train was shunted.

By nine in the evening the fire was got under by the exertions of the troops, but not before 300 trucks, laden with ammunition and stores, and the goods sheds with ten days' rations for the army, were completely destroyed. On the following morning the flames were still smouldering, and the natives were everywhere exulting over the event, as one calculated to make Cairo less welcome to the invaders.

"This is the bonfire of the people, lit by them in honour of the Khedive's infidel friends!" shouted hundreds.

The streets were patrolled by strong pickets of the Guards, afterwards by the Highland Brigade, and then by that of Sir Evelyn Wood.



BARRAGE, OR DAM, OF THE NILE, CAIRO.



KIOSK IN THE GHEZIREH PALACE, CAIRO.

## CHAPTER II.

### MILITARY LIFE IN CAIRO.

Aspect of the Streets—The Hospitals—The Medical Staff—The Commissariat—The Grand Review before the Khedive—Abdin Palace and Square—The March Past—Arabi in Prison.

AFTER what they had undergone in the desert, and had still to endure in filthy Egyptian barracks or under canvas at Ghezireh, the luxuries to be got in the hotels of Cairo, such as that of Shepheard's, the New Hotel, the Hôtel du Nil, the Hôtel d'Orient, and others, were most acceptable to our officers.

In groups they sat smoking at the

spacious windows, looking with interest and wonder—even those who had served in India—on the streets below, where bazaars abounded and gay lamps swung to and fro, and where innumerable vendors of street goods were thronging in white turban or red tarboosh—the sellers of lily-roots, of melons, of cresses, of henna wherewith to dye the nails of

yellow-skinned beauties, the *aquaola*, tinkling his dishes and quoting the Koran—the polyglot multitude of Egyptians, Greeks, Hungarians, Cypriots, and British soldiers in red serges, clay-coloured karkee, or tartan kilts. In addition to this, the lofty streets of latticed houses, abounding in carved balconies

The composition of the court-martial by which the Egyptian culprits were to be tried excited much comment, though there was a difficulty in getting officers of good position to serve on a tribunal to judge of alleged “crimes,” of which almost the entire people of Egypt were guilty, and which the na-



SURGEON-GENERAL HANBURY.

and florid arcades, were in themselves each a picture—the mosques, with delicate domes and taper minarets, covered with exquisite tracery and arabesque; the houses of grandees and beys, and the fortified mansions of the Mamelukes of old, and now those of Cairene nobles, the architecture of which recalled the glories of the Alhambra of the Moors and a perpetual memory of the Arabian Nights.

tives fully endorsed; and one instance was pointedly adduced—that of Osman Bey, who had commanded the Artillery under Abd-el-Al, and was his comrade and friend, and who was now elected as a member, to sit in judgment on his own compatriots!

For the assistance given by the Royal Navy in conveying the wounded from the field, Surgeon-General Hanbury expressed his gratitude to Captain

Harry H. Rawson, Commander Moore, Lieutenant Grimstone, and Boatswain Richard Hurrill, of the Fleet; but now the general hospital service of the army in Egypt became the source of some severe criticism.

In one of the Cairo hospitals at this date were several hundred Egyptian soldiers, all more or less hurt in late engagements. Most of the cases were serious, the result of shrapnell shell injuries. Here 534 were treated for wounds, 27 capital cases were performed, 202 were dispatched to the field hospital at Ismaïlia, and all the more slightly injured were sent to their native villages. Concerning our own casualties, there was a debate about this time in the House of Lords, when Viscount Bury, in calling attention to the Report of the Committee on Army Hospital Services, moved, "That while the individual medical officers in Egypt behaved admirably well, the new system under which they worked did not successfully stand the strain put upon it; that the military authority exercised by medical officers is inconvenient, and that discipline in hospitals should be administered by combatant officers, leaving to the medical officers medical duties only, also that medical officers should (as of old) be attached to regiments, instead of being detailed for duty day by day from station and other hospitals." Lord Bury further observed that prior to 1873 the organisation of the army medical service was purely regimental. Since then, what was called the unification system had been established, under which general

hospitals had been instituted, and the medical officers were no longer attached to regiments, but became units in a department that in its organisation was purely general. Medical officers besides attending on the sick were responsible for the organisation of the hospitals to which they were attached in peace or war. The evil was that, under the new system, medical men not being attached to regiments had no means of becoming disciplinary officers, and, consequently, they had entirely failed in that part of their functions.

The Earl of Morley admitted that there were defects in the new administration of the hospital service, but reminded the House that the campaign had been an exceedingly rapid one, and its medical results were somewhat remarkable. "Taking the period from the 17th July to the 10th of October—which embraced the time from the first landing of the troops to the conclusion of active operations—there were 378 wounded non-commissioned officers and men admitted to hospital, of whom only eleven died: and, admitted from other causes, there were 7,212, of whom 79 died. There was a total absence of pyæmia, and not a single case of loss of sight by ophthalmia." With regard to the Army Hospital Corps, he admitted that there was a want of experience in that body, and that the Committee over which he had the honour to preside felt that it required more training, and that there should be a graduated system of promotion, so that the higher appointments should be regarded as prizes to those who were good nurses.

On September the 15th Viscountess Strangford, a humane lady, who took much interest in the sufferers in the Egyptian War, arrived at Alexandria in the Khedive's launch, and immediately visited the Arab hospital, accompanied by Salem Pasha. "You have seen in the papers," she wrote to Colonel Duncan from Cairo, "descriptions of the large hospital here, for many Englishmen have visited the 350 men now lying here from Tel-el-Kebir alone. Twenty-seven amputations were made on that field by the Arab surgeons. How much they have suffered since, I could not put into words! The number of killed and wounded there is now ascertained to be—as nearly as can be counted—about 3,000; but some are still coming in by threes and fours from the villages."

Ten thousand mules had been bought for the use of the Transport Service; but as the war had now come to a sudden close the question was, What was to be done with them?

A new Control Department had replaced the old system which prevailed in the time of the Crimean War; but it was alleged in the House of Commons (in 1883, on the Commissariat Vote) to have utterly broken down in Egypt, notwithstanding that the Commander-in-Chief there had at his command resources without limit. "Dr. Cameron asserted that in the campaign large quantities of bad flour and hay had been bought, and of the thousands of mules collected two-thirds were useless; that those brought from Syria were unfit for service, while the saddles

bought for them in the East could not be used."

On the other hand, Lord Hartington said "that the flour bought for the troops was not absolutely bad, and that medical officers were of opinion that, though the bread might have been better, it could still be eaten, and that it had been alleged that the indifferent character of the flour was due to its having been purchased by the Director of Supplies, and not by the Commissariat Department; and that flour of exactly the same description had been bought for the troops sent on the Zulu Expedition, and sent to Natal, and also to Malta during the Russo-Turkish War." If the flour was bad these admissions made the matter worse.

As one of the last acts in a brief but brilliant military drama, Sir Garnet Wolseley now issued his orders for the grand review of all the troops in Cairo before the Khedive.

On the 30th of September—the month of the victory at Tel-el-Kebir—the Review took place in front of the Abdin Palace, the official residence of the Khedive of Egypt, where, just a year before, occurred the great military *pronunciamento*, when Arabi and the mutinous colonels with their regiments besieged Tewfik, and imposed the most humiliating conditions upon him.

From a curtained and decorated balcony in front of the same palace the Khedive was to witness the march-past of that British force, a little over 18,000 men, to whose valour he now owed his restored place and power; while the ill-starred Arabi, from the

window of his prison in the vicinity of the same palace, saw the grand array of those to whom he owed his downfall.

The entire east side of the Abdin Square is occupied by the palace which gives it a name, and the locality proved somewhat small for the present purpose. The wings of the great edifice, being thrown forward, occupy fully half of the northern and southern faces of the square. The wife of Tewfik, the brave partner of all his perils and troubles, was present with her children, as were also all the ladies of the harem. Masses of apparently apathetic natives filled all the adjoining streets. We say "apparently apathetic," for in reality their hearts were full of hate and rancour against the conquering unbeliever.

Gaily decorated with banners, hangings, and garlands of flowers, a long covered balcony of wood extended along one side of the Abdin Square. In the centre of this the red Turkish flag with the crescent and star was floating; on its right was hoisted the Royal Standard of Britain; on its left that of Egypt. The whole length of this balcony was occupied by Egyptian and European officials. Wearing the Star of India, and clad in full uniform, the Khedive sat in the centre, under the Turkish standard. All his Ministry wore the same Indian order, in addition to which Riaz Pasha wore the order of St. Michael and St. George—rather an absurd decoration for a Mahomedan! The loyal Ulema who were present were conspicuous by their large gold-coloured turbans. Sir Edward Malet and the

diplomatic staff of five other European Powers all attended in uniform, and 500 guests, chiefly Europeans, occupied the wings of this long pavilion or balcony.

Guarded by a detachment of Royal Marines, in scarlet tunics, white trousers, and tropical helmets, a Union Jack, as a saluting base, floated immediately opposite the Khedive; and close by it, on a bay horse, rode Sir Garnet Wolseley, with his aide-de-camp and the chief of the staff, General Sir John Abye, K.C.B.

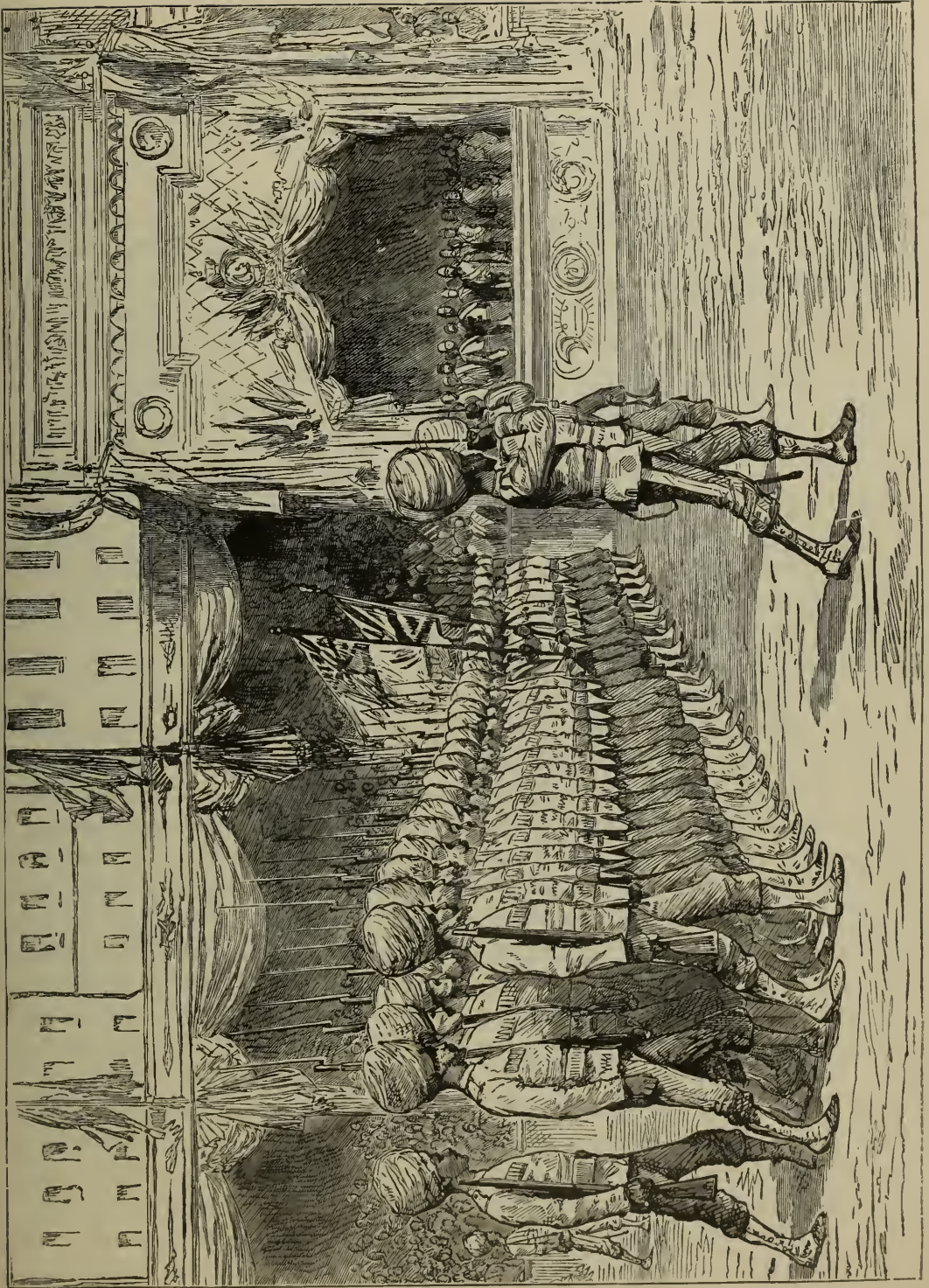
The march past was inaugurated at four in the afternoon, when a splendid battery of the Royal Horse Artillery, led by Colonel G. W. Borrowdaile, C.B. (late of the Bombay army), went clattering past, their wheels revolving as if all were on one axle. These were the guns that struck terror on the Egyptians at Mahsamah, that silenced their seven Krupps, and opened the way for the charge in the dark at Kassassin.

To the old Scottish Jacobite air, "Weel may the keel row," the 2nd Brigade of Cavalry trotted past, and then came the three squadrons of the Life Guards in sections of fours, led by Drury Lowe; the 4th and 7th Dragoon Guards, and lastly, the smartest regiment on the ground, the 13th Hussars.

The Mounted Infantry followed, each man with the butt of his rifle planted on his right thigh, the weapon muzzle upward. They were all in their fighting kits, and about sixty in number.

The Indian Cavalry, so picturesque in their costume and appointments, came next,—the 2nd and 6th Bengal,





THE REVIEW IN CAIRO: MARCH PAST OF THE BELOOCHEES.

the former wearing green faced with red, and the latter blue faced with red, and the 13th Bengal Lancers, with red and blue swallow-tailed pennons fluttering, their turbans highly peaked, and their whole array equal in discipline to the rest of our Cavalry, though their restive Arab horses at times could scarcely be restrained from breaking into a gallop or a canter.

The Heavy Field Artillery brought up the rear of this division, which, according to the *Times*, consisted altogether of 4,320 horses, with sixty pieces of cannon.

The lively Scottish reels which the bands had been playing as trotting airs for the Cavalry now changed time as the Naval Brigade under Captain Fitzroy and the men of Fisher's Ironclad Train under Commander Henderson came up, their steady tramp eliciting the first cheer that had yet been accorded.

To the air of "The British Grenadiers," the Brigade of Guards (preceded by the Royal Marine Artillery) came next, under the Duke of Connaught. "The leading (or Queen's) company of the Scots Guards attracted special attention," says a correspondent, "the men averaging six feet two in height—certainly the highest average in the British army, and the whole brigade was a remarkably fine one. After the Guards, the steady stream of British Infantry ploughed past in unbroken order, deploying into open column as they entered the square, and forming column of route at the double as they emerged from the narrow streets with unvarying and characteristic discipline."

In right of seniority, the Royal Irish (or old 18th), clad in karkee uniform, followed the Guards.

The York and Lancaster Regiment, with the Royal Irish Fusiliers, all in red serges, followed; then came the Cornwall Light Infantry, the Post Office Volunteers, and the Royal Marines. General Sir Edward Hamley, his breast covered with medals and orders, next came past at the head of the Royal Engineers, after which the band at the saluting base ceased, and mutterings were heard in the crowd which might remind the historical reader of the phrase used by Strada, the Jesuit, concerning the Scottish Brigades at the battle of Mechlin in 1578, *Scoti nudi pugnantes in prælio Mechlinensi*.

When the bands ceased "then pipes and drums were heard," says the *Times*, "and a whisper of *Scozzezi diaboli nudi* spread through the crowd, as the appearance of a one-armed general, conspicuous by his inability to salute otherwise than by a graceful bow, announced Sir Archibald Alison and his Highland Brigade. The General, who wore a sprig of his native heather in his helmet, enjoyed almost as much popularity with the natives as his own brigade, and rightly or wrongly the idea has got abroad that the Highlanders, who bore the brunt of the fighting, who were the first in the trenches, and who suffered most severely, were rather ungenerously ignored in the official despatches. At all events, the crowd seemed disposed to bestow unofficial honours, for the second cheer of

the day was accorded to the Black Watch, easily distinguishable by their red plumes, and led by Colonel Macpherson (younger of Cluny), also sporting the heather. The Gordon Highlanders followed, some companies without officers, telling their melancholy tale; then the Cameron Highlanders, and the Highland Light Infantry, whose perfect marching was conspicuous where all did well."

The Black Watch went swinging past to the air of "The Highland Laddie," says the correspondent of the *Standard*; but the Camerons to the ancient air of the "Pibroch of Donuil Dhu," which has been heard in many a Scottish and British battle-field since it was first played at "the Red Harlaw" in 1411.

"Next came Sir Evelyn Wood," says the *Times* correspondent, "looking thin and worn, with the least conspicuous, but not the least trying, part of the campaign," followed by the rest of his brigade, the Sussex, Shropshire, and Staffordshire Regiments, and the King's Royal Rifle Corps, completing the Second Division of Infantry, at twenty minutes past five.

Then followed the Indian Division. General Macpherson passed, and took up his place at the saluting point. First came a mounted battery. The hardy little animals, with their formidable load, excited general interest; after them came the Madras Sappers, "grim and stern," continues this correspondent, "they, too, flashing their eyes at the Khedive in a manner calculated to provoke nightmare. The

British and native bands joined, and played in unison the 'Blue Bonnets over the Border' as the Seaforth Highlanders, attached to this division, every man with two or more medals—the heroes of the march to Candahar—marched past as only Scottish soldiers can. The 7th Native Infantry carried past their colours fluttering in the wind."

Then came another regiment of Punjaubees, and lastly the black-and-red-clad Beloochees, tall and stalwart men, their colours torn to ribbons by battle and storm, followed by a crowd of jabbering *bheesties* and *syces*, gesticulating like monkeys, and pointing out the Khedive to each other with an utter absence of respect or self-consciousness.

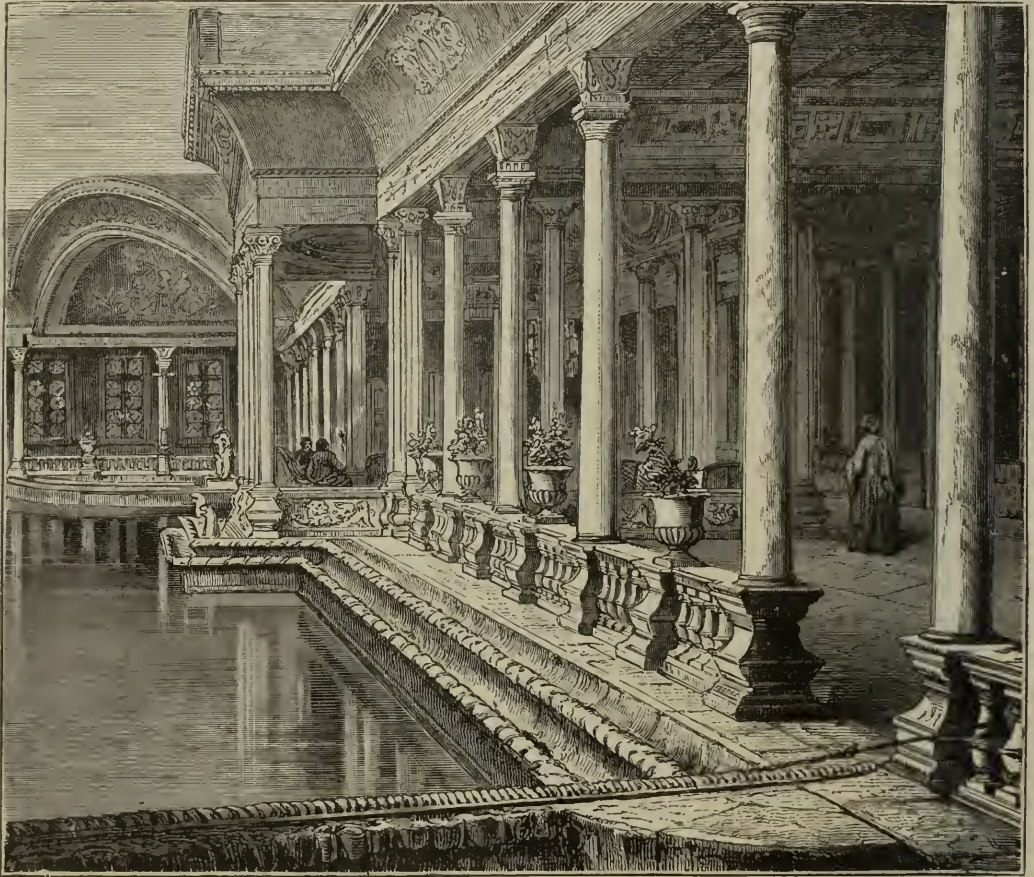
The entire march past occupied an hour and a half. There were present in all 781 officers, 17,266 men (exclusive of camp-followers), 4,320 horses, and, as we have said, 60 pieces of cannon.

Sir Garnet Wolseley rode across to where the Khedive sat. The latter shook hands with him and with the Duke of Connaught, expressing his admiration of the magnificent bearing and appearance of the troops.

"The Guards and Highlanders," says the *Daily News*, "elicited much admiration from the foreign critics. The Indian Mule Battery also excited much curiosity, each gun, with its carriage, being conveyed in six pieces on the backs of as many animals. The whole procession of mules looked as harmless and innocent as if carrying cabbages to market. Had the orders

of the day allowed, it might have been worth while to show the Khedive how the guns could be screwed together and the battery made ready in forty-three seconds to deal havoc at 4,000 yards."

however, opposite Shepheard's Hotel, a man was shouting out that the show would be rather different the next time the English army came. Whether the laughter of the people about him



PAVILION IN THE GARDEN OF SHOOBRA PALACE.

Elsewhere this writer says:—"I drove leisurely through the streets by which the regiments were still returning to their respective quarters at Abbassieh, Kasr-el-Nil, and Gezireh. From the demeanour and conversation of the people it was evident that they were much impressed. In one instance,

meant approval or only appreciation of the joke, I leave your readers to decide. The Royal Standard and Union Jack, flying side by side with the Egyptian flag over the Khedive's canopy, also attracted attention, possibly because so little symbolic of the Joint Control. The German, Austrian, and other Con-

tinental visitors and critics accommodated on the grand stand were greatly delighted at the appearance made by several of the regiments. They even

Reginald J. Thynne, of the Grenadier Guards, and Mr. Macdonald, and impressed them—as he did all who came in contact with him—most favourably



AMONG THE OLD HOUSES, CAIRO.

cried out 'Bravo' as the blue-jackets swept by, solid as walls. The 72nd Regiment was greeted in the same manner."

During the march past, almost under the window of his prison, Arabi Pasha was conversing with Lieutenant-Colonel

by the dignity and suavity of his bearing.

While the music of the many bands was making the Abdin Square re-echo as the glittering companies went past, the fallen Egyptian patriot—for such we cannot help thinking Arabi

was—said that “at the outset he had only obeyed his orders in fighting the British, and that when he was obliged to march out of Alexandria his troops were resolved to defend their native country to the last. The attack at Tel-el-Kebir,” he admitted, “was a surprise, and though, eventually, expected, was delivered ere the Egyptians were aware of the close presence of the British troops. He could have escaped, had he chosen to do so; but he did not desire to fall into the hands of the Khedive, and therefore gave himself up to Britain, in trust that he would be tried by British officers, with whose decision he would rest satisfied.”

One good effect of the Egyptian War, and of the great review of the 30th September would, it was supposed, be the impression which the Indian Contingent would take back with them to their native country. The Moslems, of

whom a very large portion of that column was composed, were not a little proud of having aided in the work of replacing a Moslem monarch on his throne, and a belief was entertained that the good reports they might convey to Hindostan might dissipate many a false impression there; but the Arab crowds in the streets watched the review with sullen eyes and in gloomy silence. Their sympathies were neither with the British nor with the Khedive.

It should be added, that much of the success of the defilade was due to the skill of the Deputy-Adjutant-General, the Hon. J. C. Dormer, who had the arrangement thereof.

To march so many thousand men, with horse and cannon, through the narrow and tortuous streets of Cairo, and through a small square, without halt or hitch, was a matter requiring no small care and consideration.



STREET DOGS, CAIRO.

## CHAPTER III.

## A DAY AT THE PYRAMIDS.

Statistics of the British Forces in Egypt—A Visit to the Ironclads—The Sycamore of Matareeyeh—The Pyramids of Ghizeh—The Great Pyramid—Conjectures about these Buildings—Interior of them—The View from the Apex of the Pyramid of Cheops—The Great Sphinx—Sight-seeing in Egypt.

ABOUT this time there was prepared a statement by the War Office, which detailed the actual strength, numerically, of the British forces then engaged on service in Egypt.

It appears from this that the Head-Quarter Staff and Regimental Staff of the Royal Artillery consisted of 36 officers, 1 warrant officer, 81 men, and 65 horses.

The Cavalry numbered 142 officers, 3 warrant officers, 2,252 men, and 2,047 horses.

The Royal Artillery, including the Ammunition Reserve Column, consisted of 79 officers, 1,802 men, and 1,406 horses.

The Infantry numbered 361 officers, 9 warrant officers, 7,799 men, and—for the staff and transport—546 horses.

The rest were included under the headings of Royal Engineers, Commissariat and Ordnance Transport Corps, Garrison Artillery, Military Police, &c., numbering 163 officers, 50 warrant officers, 3,638 men, and 1,423 horses.

These troops were exclusive of the Depôts sent to the Mediterranean in connection with the Army Corps, which formed an aggregate strength of 781 officers, 63 warrant officers, 15,572 men; or a total of 16,416 of all ranks, with 5,487 horses.

By the Indian authorities a table of

the same kind was issued, showing a detail of 199 officers, 127 warrant officers, 1,740 British rank and file, 5,497 non-commissioned officers and men of the Native forces, with 6,613 camp-followers, 1,793 horses, 5,087 mules and ponies, making a grand total (omitting the followers) of fighting men from India of 7,563, with 6,880 quadrupeds.

The army actually on service in Egypt represented at this date an aggregate total of 23,979 men, with 12,367 animals.

A few days after the review, fifty men from each regiment of the Indian Contingent were sent by rail to Alexandria to see the ironclads, which, it was rightly conjectured, would impress the native mind more than even a sight of the mighty Pyramids.

Many of our officers and soldiers now visited the latter, as well as other places of scriptural and historical interest in the neighbourhood of Cairo, such as Matareeyeh, where, according to tradition, the holy family rested in their flight from Herod, and a venerable sycamore, under the shade of which they are said to have rested, is still shown. "The tree of the Madonna," says St. John, "as it is denominated, even by the Mohammedans, consists of a vast trunk, the upper part of which, having been

blown down by storms, or shattered by lightning, young branches have sprung forth from the top, and extending their arms on all sides, still afford a broad and agreeable shade. . . . In

the mounds and solitary obelisk, which mark the site of Heliopolis, or the city of the sun-god, where the bull Mnevis was worshipped.

A day at the Pyramids became quite



THE SYCAMORE OF MATAREEYEH.

Pietro della Valle's time, a house was shown at Matarceyeh, in which the Virgin was supposed to have lived; and beneath a small window or recess in the wall, the Christian clergy resident in the country used to say mass."

Close by Matarceyeh were other objects of interest visited by our officers;

an institution while our troops were in Cairo.

The largest of these colossal edifices are named from the village in their vicinity, the Pyramids of Ghizeh, and to this day a visit to them is a favourite Sunday "outing" with the Cairenes.

"A well-kept road runs straight as a



line under the shadow of lebbek trees," says Ebers in his magnificent work; "the castle and viceregal gardens of Ghizeh, enclosed by walls, lie to our left; the dewy verdure of the fields, before us, with their sharp triangular outline. Right and left we now see wading buffaloes, now flocks of herons; here a solitary pelican within easy shot of our carriage; there half-naked labourers



AT THE FOOT OF THE GREAT PYRAMID.

intersected by canals, refreshes the eye, and a delicate blue mist veils the western horizon. The air has that purity and that aromatic freshness which are peculiar to a winter morning in Egypt. Now the misty curtain that floats over the western landscape parts for a moment—the Pyramids are

at their daily work, and their villages standing remote from the road. There soar two large eagles. . . . It is now bright and hot; before us the Pyramids stand unveiled, scarred by the injuries they have received in the course of ages."

In some respects, it is unnecessary to

describe these wonders of the ancient world, as the stereometrical form which took its name from them is so familiar to every one; but it is only when they are contrasted with some other object that an idea of their enormous vastness can be attained.

While St. Peter's at Rome is 430 feet in height, the great Pyramid of Cheops (if its summit were perfect) would measure 482 feet, thus being 52 feet taller; so that, if it were hollow, the superb Roman cathedral could stand within, "like a clock under a glass shade," says Ebers.

Neither the splendid church of St. Stephen, at Vienna, nor the famous spire of Strasburg Cathedral, is as high as the Great Pyramid; and no building in England in any way approaches it. St. Paul's, in London, which could stand with ease within St. Peter's, is 100 feet lower than this pyramid.

No edifice in the world can, in the most remote degree, compare with these Pyramids in respect of the mass and weight of material used in their construction.

The *weight* of the three great pyramids has been estimated at 12,659,460 tons; about 23 square feet thickness of skin, and 30 of height, having been lost in 4,000 years. The greater contains material enough to build a strong wall round the whole of France.

"Time mocks all things; but the Pyramids mock Time."

Herodotus states that the Egyptians detested the memories of the kings who

built the two larger Pyramids, namely, Cheops and Cephren; and hence, he adds, "they commonly call the Pyramids after Philiton, a shepherd, who, at that time, fed his flocks about the place."

The use of the Pyramids has been long a vexed question among antiquarians, but most seem to have agreed to regard them as royal sepulchres, and the sarcophagi, etc., of the dead were found in them, when first opened for the purposes of curiosity or plunder. They were repeatedly broken into and rifled in the ninth century, by the Arabian Caliph, Al Mamoon—the entrances and galleries blocked up by stones being forced and turned, and, in some parts, the solid masonry perforated.

The largest is now completely denuded of the external polished coating of limestone that covered it in the days of Herodotus; but all the internal built core of the magnificent structure remains, and contains within it—besides a rock chamber below—two higher built chambers or crypts above—the so-called king's and queen's chambers—with galleries and apartments leading to them.

The Great Pyramid contains in its interior, and directly over the king's chamber, five entresols, or "chambers of construction," as they are called, intended, apparently, to take off the enormous weight of masonry from the cross stones forming the roof of the king's chamber. These entresols are small comparatively, unpolished, and never intended to be opened; but in

two or three of them, when broken into by Colonel H. Vyse, about forty years ago, an interesting discovery was made.

The surfaces of some of the stones were found to be painted over with some rude hieroglyphics in red ochre—quarry marks written on the stones more than 4,000 years ago, and being, of course, the oldest writing in the world. The Pyramid standing next the Great one, and nearly of equal size, is said by Herodotus to have been raised by the brother of Cheops. The others at Ghizeh are usually recorded as of later date; but the exact era of the reign or reigns of their builders has not yet been determined, in consequence of the break made in Egyptian chronology by the invasion of the Shepherd Kings.

When the Caliph Al Mamoon tunneled into the interior of the Pyramids, he detected, it is said, by the falling of a granite portcullis, the passage to the king's chamber, which had been shut up from the building of the edifice to that time.

"Then," says Professor Piazza Smyth, "the treasures of the Pyramid, sealed up almost from the days of Noah, and undesecrated by mortal eye for 3,000 years, lay full in their group before him."

On this occasion, to quote the words of Ibn Abd Al Hakam, a contemporary Arabian writer and historian of some authority, who was born, lived, and died, in Egypt, they found in the Pyramid, "towards the top, a chamber (now the so-called king's chamber) with a hollow stone (or coffer), in which there was a statue (of stone) like a man, and

within it a man upon whom was a breast-plate of gold set with jewels. Upon this breast-plate was a sword of inestimable price, and at his head a carbuncle of the bigness of an egg, shining like the light of day, and upon him writ with a pen (reed?) what no man understood." This description, adds Sir James Y. Simpson, in his "Essay on the Pyramid," sets forth, down to the so-called "statue" mummy-case or cartonnage, and the hieroglyphics upon the cerecloth, the arrangements now well known to belong to the higher class of Egyptian mummies.

In Colonel Vyse's works are adduced other Arabian writers, who allude to this discovery of a body with golden armour, etc., in the sarcophagus within the king's chamber. Indeed, Alkasi testifies that "he himself saw the case from which the body had been taken, and that it stood at the gate of the king's palace in Cairo, in the year of the Hegira 511."

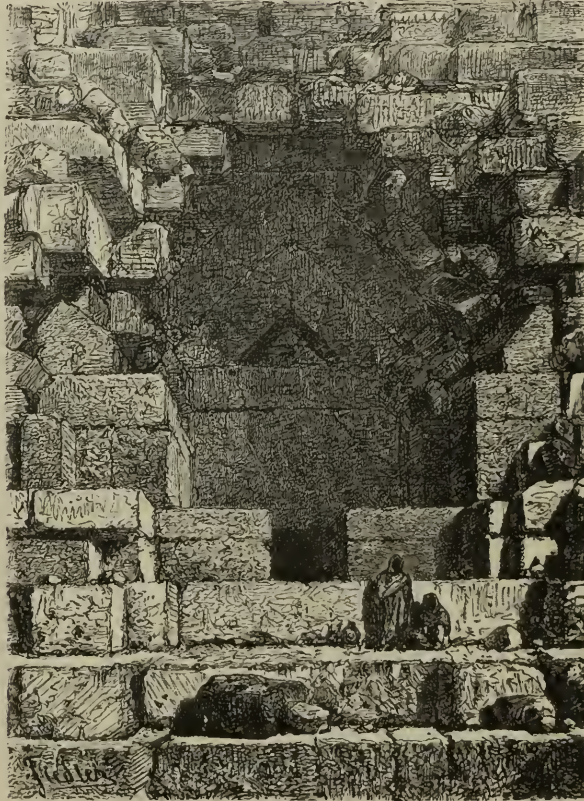
All the other Pyramids of Ghizeh seem, like the greatest, wonderfully free from lapidary decorations on their internal walls, the external now being too much time-worn to offer any distinct proof in relation to the subject; though Herodotus states that there were hieroglyphics, at least on the external surface of the Great Pyramid. The whole surface of the basalt sarcophagus in the third Pyramid, or that of Mycerinus, was sculptured. To use the words of Baron Bunsen, "it was beautifully carved in compartments in the Doric style."

Fragments of lapidary sculpture have

been found among the ruins of Egyptian Pyramids, supposed to be older even than those at Ghizeh, or those of their builders, the Memphite kings of the fourth dynasty. Thus, one of the ablest and most learned of modern

casing and other stones presenting broken hieroglyphic inscriptions.

The Pyramids of Ghizeh stand upon a platform of rock, elevated a hundred feet above the desert, and are visible distinctly at a distance of thirty miles ;

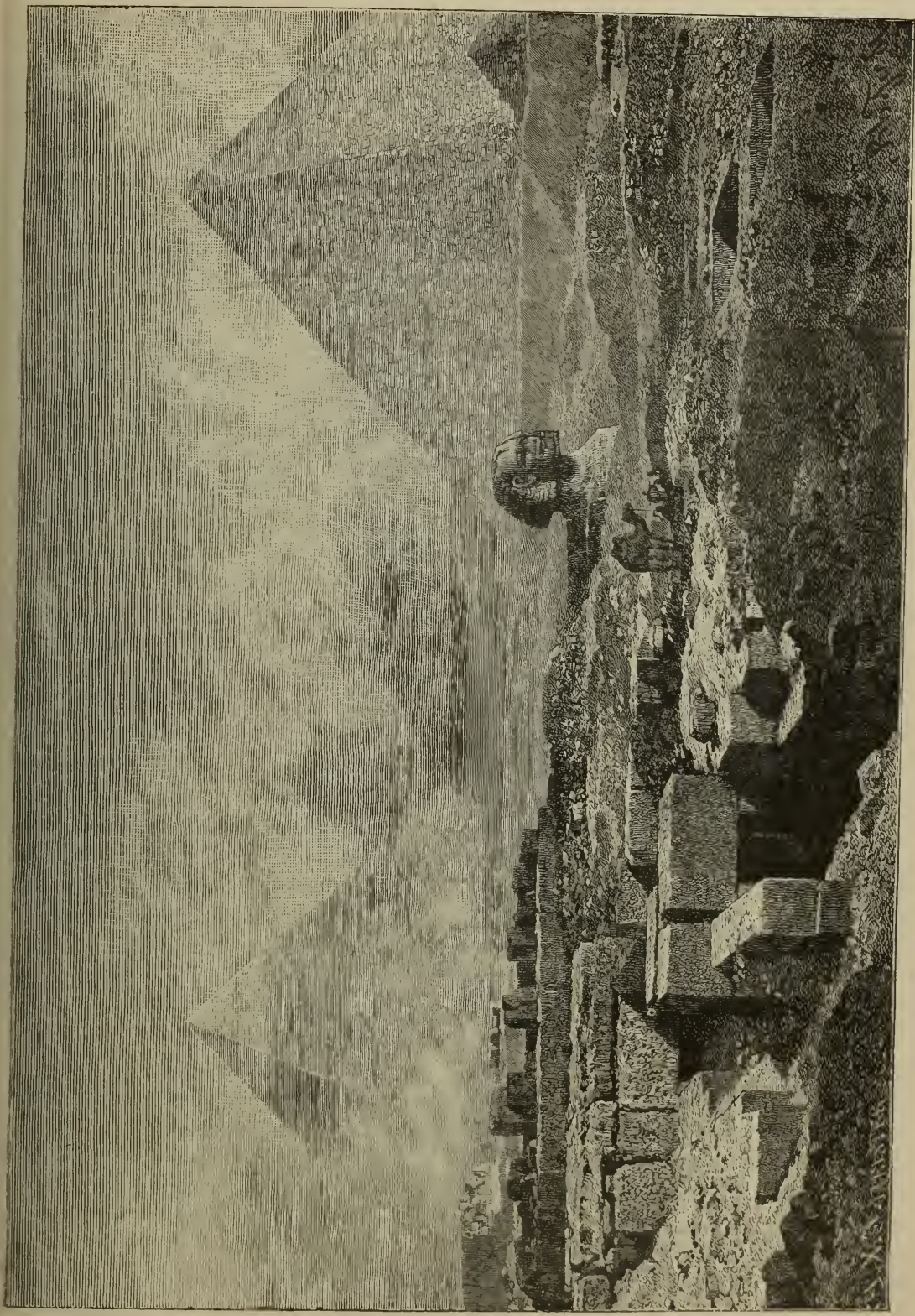


ENTRANCE TO THE GREAT PYRAMID.

Egyptologists has endeavoured to prove that the great northern Pyramid of Dashoor, twenty miles south of Ghizeh, and on the left bank of the Nile, belongs to the era of the third dynasty of kings.

Colonel Vyse and Mr. Perring, when digging among its ruins, discovered two or three fragments of sculptured

and from the moment you leave the village until you reach them they always seem close at hand. "I may as well own," says Prince Puckler Muskau, in his "Letters on Egypt," "that the Pyramids struck me as far more imposing when seen from afar than on closer view—the common fate of greatness! On ascending them the



Sphinx and Pyramids.

grand effect was in some measure restored."

Colonel Vyse's splendid work contains a vertical section of the Great Pyramid from south to north, through its passages and chambers, showing the galleries, the air-channels, and the unexplored subterranean chambers. This Pyramid has been estimated to cover the same space as Lincoln's Inn Fields, in London.

By what power these enormous blocks were raised into position is beyond modern comprehension; for in no Egyptian painting, says Letronne, do we perceive pulleys, blocks, capstans, or machines of similar description. If the Egyptians had employed such aids, we should find some trace of them in a bas-relief which represents the removal of a colossus, drawn by long rows of men, fastened to ropes, attended by others with pails to wet or grease the artificial basement along which the colossus is being dragged.

Before quitting the subject of the Great Pyramid, we are tempted to quote Ebers' account of the view from its apex.

"At last we have reached the goal! The point of the pyramid has long since crumbled away, and we find ourselves on a tolerably spacious platform. When our gasping lungs and throbbing pulses have a little subsided, and we have paid and got rid of the Bedouin who torment us to exchange our money and to buy sham antiquities, we look down on the vast space before us, and the longer we gaze and let this glorious landscape penetrate our souls, the more full of meaning and the more unique it

seems to us. Fertility and dearth, life and death, lie nowhere in such close and intimate juxtaposition as here. Out there to the east flows the stately Nile, white lateen sails fluttering across it; and fields and meadows, gardens and groves, spread along its shores like a carpet of emerald verdure. The villages that nestle under the shade of the trees look like birds' nests among the green foliage, and at the foot of the mountain of Mokattam—which at this hour is bathed in golden light—rise the thousand mosques of the city of the Khalifs dominated by the citadel, and by those slenderest of minarets which grace the mausoleum of Mohammed Ali, and are visible from the remotest distance—an unmistakable feature of Cairo. Gardens and trees encircle the city, as a garland round some fair head; there is nowhere a lovelier picture of prosperity, fertility, and life. The silver veins of the canals pervade the whole luxuriant scene, and look like some shining vital fluid. The sky is unclouded, and yet light shadows sweep across the fields; these are flocks of birds, which here find abundance of food and drink. How lavish is the goodness of God! How fair and wealthy is the earth! All is still; not a sound reaches us from far or near. Turning now to the west, the eye can see nothing but pyramids and tombs, cliffs and sand. Not a blade, not a shrub, can find nutriment on this sterile soil. Yellow-grey and dull brown are the only hues to be seen in unbroken monotony far and wide. Only here and there a white object shines among

the dust; that is the dried skeleton of some dead animal. Silent and void, the foe to everything that has life, the desert stretches before us: and where is its end? For days, weeks, months, the traveller would never reach it, even if he escaped alive from the choking, overwhelming sand. Here, indeed, if anywhere, Death is king without dispute; here, where the Egyptians saw the sun vanish every day, here, behind the mountain rampart of the Libyan desert, began a world which, compared to the blooming domain of the East, was like a corpse compared to the eager, stirring, living man. There is no more silent burial-ground on earth than this desert; and so tomb after tomb was arrayed here, and, as if to keep more closely the secret of the grave, the waste flung its shroud of sand over the tombs of the dead. Here loom the terrors of infinitude. Here, at the very gate of the other world where eternity begins, the work of men's hands seems to have evaded the common lot of earthly things, and to have won some share of immortality."

The sphinx, a figure monstrous in design, but in many instances of excellent sculpture, is an adjunct to all the edifices of ancient Egypt. This curious specimen of statuary represents the head and bosom of a woman, with the body of a lion, and is supposed to have been intended to symbolise the annual inundation of the Nile, because that occurrence, on which not only the prosperity but the very existence of Egypt depended, occurred while the sun passed through the signs of the

zodiac denominated the *Virgin* and *Lion*.

Sphinxes seem to have formed one of the principal ornaments of Egyptian architecture, for numerous figures of this description were carved on the walls and pillars of their buildings, and many entire statues are still found amid heaps of ruins; but the sphinx, which, from its colossal dimensions, is the most famous of all, is that which stands about four hundred yards eastward of the second pyramid on the plains of Ghizeh.

Though buried nearly to the neck in sand, the head and body are known to be hewn out of solid rock, and to be nearly in one. Dr. Pococke says it measures 133 feet in length, and 63 in height; the head is 27 feet in height, and exhibits the mutilated features of a female face.

M. Caviglia cleared away the sand from this vast mass, and discovered many curious objects. Between the legs of the sphinx a monolithic temple of considerable dimensions was discovered, and another in one of its paws. The remains of Greek and Roman buildings covered the ground in front of it, and on these were found many curious inscriptions, commemorative of the visits of kings and great men, who had come to see it in remote times.

Prince Puckler Muskau says, "A great part of the red colour with which it was once painted remains;" and Dr. Richardson states that the features are Nubian, and their expression singularly placid and benign. Denon says that its expression is mild and tranquil, but

that the character is African, and "the lips, which are thick, have a sweetness of expression and firmness of execution truly admirable."

Where the stone has not lent itself to the form of the lion-body, it has been supplemented with masonry. "What a spectacle it must have offered," says Ebers, "when the servants of the Necropolis kept it free from sand, and it could be seen complete, with the stately flight of steps that led up to it!"

The Arabs, he says, call this great sphinx *Aboo 'l hawl*, "the Father of Terrors." But it is a watcher of the desert, with its eyes gazing fixedly eastward. Pliny, the first author who refers to it, states that the natives called it the tomb of King Amasis, and says it had been brought there; but adds that it cannot be true, as it is hewn out of the living rock.

How many worshippers, during ages upon ages, must have mounted the now buried steps which led to the paws of this colossal image, for the sphinx was that of a mighty goddess or god! He was called Harmachis by the Greeks—Har-em-khu by the Egyptians—"the young light which conquers the darkness; the soul triumphing over death; fertility expelling dearth."

Each Pharaoh was regarded as the mortal incarnation of the sun-god; therefore the kings of ancient Egypt were willing to select the form of the sphinx as expressing allegorically the divine essence of their nature. The attribute of fiery and irresistible physical strength is represented by the

body of the lion; the highest intellectual power by the human face; love and gentleness by the female bosom.

The formation of this great sphinx was begun under King Cheops, and it was finished by King Cephren, the builder of the second pyramid. "This we learn," says Ebers, "from the large tablet covered with hieroglyphics and fixed in the breast, which also informs us that this monument must have already needed to be freed from the sand under the kings of the eighteenth dynasty, about B.C. 1500. King Thothes—so runs the inscription—in the course of a lion and gazelle hunt, in the first year of his reign, rested in this vicinity and came to worship Harmachis—*i.e.*, the sphinx. He slept in the shadow of the giant, and dreamed that the god spoke to him with his own mouth, 'as a father speaks to his son,' and required of him that he should free his image from the drifts of sand. When he woke he took the divine warning to heart. In commemoration of this vision, and of the subsequent disinterment of the sphinx, he caused to be erected this tablet, which, to this day, is but little injured."

Now, no hand is put forth to preserve it, or prevent it from being overwhelmed, and in the eighteenth century it was barbarously used as a target for the cannon of the Mameluke artillery.

It was once actually proposed to blow up the Pyramids with gunpowder, to utilise the blocks of stone; but this was not carried into effect lest Cairo might be injured by the explosion.



Regarding the "sight-seeing" by the Indian Contingent, the Cairo correspondent of the *Daily News* wrote, "Fifty men from each regiment left this of realising the sentiment awakened by such monuments. Even an intelligent, prosperous colonial merchant of Geelong lately assured me that he would not



THE SPHINX CLEARED FROM THE SAND.

morning for Alexandria, to be shown the war ships. This is more sensible than the order, since countermanded, to march the whole Contingent to see the Pyramids. The sepoy is incapable

spend a guinea on Pompey's Pillar, and that, given enough stone, an Antipodean mason could make a better column in four weeks." This does not, perhaps, say much for the merchant of Geelong.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE PROCESSION OF THE HOLY CARPET.

The Pillage of Alexandria—Baker Pasha—A New Egyptian Army—Difficulties of the proposed Reorganisation—Use of the Thumb-screw—The Sacred Carpet—The Holy Camel—The Sheikh—The Starting of the Procession—The Kooteb.

THE end of September saw the military stations our troops had occupied at Alexandria placed in the hands of Egyptians who were supposed to be loyal. The merchants, who were now able to return and examine their premises, found that by the bombardment, and the subsequent lawless pillage, their property was in a deplorable condition. All machinery had been destroyed and knocked to pieces, while mischievous robbers had flung into the Canal all that they were unable, or cared not, to carry away; and we are told that "though the attitude of the population, when face to face with Europeans, was obsequious enough, insulting cries were frequently heard at night, and bitter maledictions, while murders, committed by Bedouins, were of frequent occurrence in the country districts." And now the Turkish Government, in the form of a note, while gratefully acknowledging the services performed by Great Britain in suppressing the revolt, asked Lord Dufferin if he would assign any date for the evacuation of Egypt by the British troops.

By order of the Minister of the Interior, the Governor of Alexandria issued, on the 30th of September, an invitation to all those who might have information to communicate concerning the perpetrators of the European mass-

acre and pillage of the city; and such persons were to present themselves at the Prefecture of Police.

All who could give evidence concerning the actions or movements of Arabi, Mahmoud Sami Pasha, Suleiman Bey, and others concerned, or supposed to be so, in these outrages, were requested to attend; hence many arrests in connection with the disastrous events on and about the 11th of June took place.

Valentine Baker Pasha—sent from Constantinople—arrived at Cairo on the 2nd of October, and had an interview with Tewfik concerning the reorganisation of the Egyptian army. This gentleman, who had the reputation of being one of the best cavalry officers in the British army, was a soldier of great experience, and had served with the highest credit in the Kaffir War of 1852-3, in Basutoland, and the Crimea.

He was officially presented to the Khedive by Sir Edward Malet. The task which he proposed to undertake was certainly a most arduous and urgent one, and all were glad to think that it was committed to such able and energetic hands; for the duration of the British occupation of Egypt seemed to depend entirely upon the success and progress of his work.

At that time the re-formation of an

Egyptian army seemed imperative. The uncertain relations with Abyssinia, the existence of important possessions beyond the boundaries of Egypt proper—such as the great province of the Soudan—made it impossible for Egypt to dispense with the burden of a standing army; while other circumstances, in relation to the political situation nearer home, rendered it necessary that Egypt in her own interests, and those of Great Britain, should have an efficient weapon of defence.

It was supposed that a force of 12,000 men would suffice for this purpose, and it was to compensate for the paucity of its numbers by its discipline, mobility, and warlike qualities; but the impossibility of recruiting such a force from native sources, after recent events, soon became obvious.

The fellaheen army of Arabi had been totally disorganised and disbanded; and it was soon evident that a generation must pass before that class could be regarded as worthy of trust, or recalled from agricultural pursuits. Side by side with the new army—if one could be formed—it was suggested that there should be a Gendarmerie, probably of Albanians; and a third portion of General Baker's scheme was a municipal police for the towns, to be drawn from the most trustworthy native elements.

The task undertaken by General Baker was unquestionably onerous, for in every town and village of both provinces were soldiers of the dispersed army, many of them in possession of their rifles and ammunition,

while quantities of these were in the hands of the wild and wandering Bedouins.

General Baker, who, during his Crimean experiences, had ample opportunities for observing the Egyptian Contingent with the Turkish army, and was most unfavourably impressed with its fighting powers, was by no means in favour of a fellaheen army in any way.

Many thought at this time that a firm British rule might make Egypt a second British India; and that if our intervention simply handed back the country to the intrigues of corrupt divans, the vacillation of a weak and cunning Khedive, and the ignorance of grasping and overweening European officials, the condition of the upper-class Egyptians would be worse than ever.

“If,” said the latter openly, “the presence of your army and of the son of your Queen cannot prevent promiscuous arrests, the maltreatment of innocent and guilty alike, the plundering of the property of prisoners by a swarm of so-called loyal officials, whose loyalty is often a mere lucky accident, what must we expect when these checks are withdrawn?”

It is impossible to deny that there was some measure of truth in the native view of the action of the newly-restored Egyptian officials at this time.

“To take one slightly significant instance,” says the correspondent of the *Standard* on October 3rd. “Much correspondence has passed respecting the use of the thumb-screw. Repre-

sentations were made by Sir Edward Malet, and promises given by the Khedive, yet on Saturday I saw a native publicly marched at noonday through the streets of Cairo, by Egyptian policemen, with thumb-screws on his hands. It may be argued that

I fear that in the country districts there is, at present, a vast system of oppression and plunder being carried on under the guise of loyalty."

The better class of Egyptians admitted that the intentions of the Khedive were honest. "But so," they

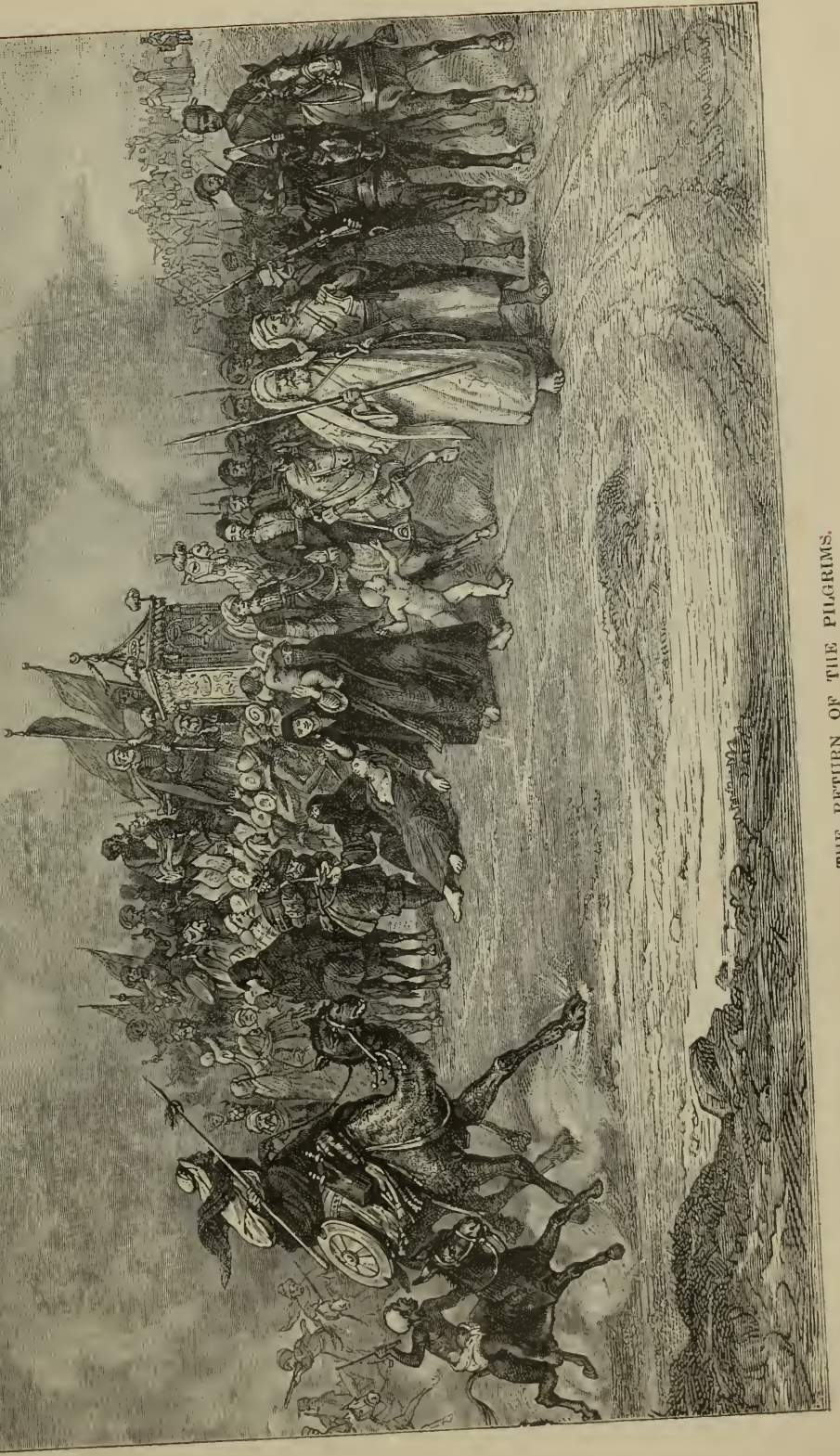


WAITING FOR THE PILGRIM SHIP, NEAR SUEZ.

thumb-screws are used here as manacles, and not as instruments of torture. The theory is very doubtful; but even admitting its accuracy, thumb-screws remain a symbol of torture; and the fact that they are openly used in this city when the British flag is still flying, shows that Egyptian officials go on in their own way in spite of the solemn promises given by the Khedive. This is a trifling matter, perhaps, but

added, "were those of Arabi. The latter, it is true, was often powerless to control his less honest followers; but will the Khedive, whose character is far less resolute than that of the brave Arabi, be more successful, when his voice is no longer backed by British cannon?"

Moreover, the whole European colony were in accord that it would be disastrous to withdraw the British troops



THE RETURN OF THE PILGRIMS.

entirely from Egypt, as it would be a long time before the state of order and tranquillity would be restored which prevailed before the commencement of Arabi's agitation to secure "Egypt for the Egyptians."

And now, on the 5th of October, there occurred an event which caused some excitement and much comment among religious parties in the British Isles—the Procession of the Holy Carpet, and the departure of the Pilgrimage to the tomb of the Prophet at Mecca, on which occasion the British troops presented arms, while the Royal Artillery fired a salute of twenty-one guns. Some people at home urged that this was like bowing down to the image set up by Nebuchadnezzar; while others averred, that to respect the religion of the natives was but just and proper.

Be that as it may, early on the morning of the 5th the troops got under arms, commanded by Sir Evelyn Wood, and formed a great hollow square in the Place Mehemet Ali. There a vast concourse of Cairenes was assembled, while crowds thronged the roadway from the citadel gates, and around the mosque wherein lies buried the sister of Mahomet.

Since the time of the Sultana Schagaret, the ceremony of sending a rich carpet to be laid on the shrine of the Prophet at Mecca has been a most solemn and momentous affair for all moollahs, fakirs, and dervishes; hence, as a matter of policy, it was, by Sir Garnet Wolseley, deemed expedient that our troops should play the part

that had hitherto been taken by the troops of the Khedive.

At half-past eight the latter came to the Place Mehemet Ali, in a handsome European carriage drawn by four horses, escorted by his guard of Egyptian Cavalry, and accompanied by all the officers of State. On the previous evening, the Sacred Carpet had been solemnly deposited in presence of the Duke of Connaught, Sir Garnet Wolseley, and Sir Edward Malet, the representatives of England at this ceremony.

When the Holy Camel appeared in its gorgeous caparisons, the band of the Khedive began to play, and the animal seemed absolutely to labour under the rich and ponderous canopy of cloth of gold fringed with massive gold lace and innumerable tinkling bells, under which, folded, and hidden from view, the carpet lay. The camel being deemed consecrated, was received by the people with reverence and bowed heads, while their lowly muttered prayers seemed to load the morning air.

Next came a camel carrying the fortunate and envied Sheikh who owned the holy animal, and a long string of other camels carrying hadjis, bound to kiss the Black Kaabah at Mecca, followed.

The upper part of the Sheikh's body "was devoid of all clothing; but his loins were girt by a sheep-skin; his long hair streamed over his shoulders in elf-locks, and he rocked himself to and fro like a madman. Other sheikhs of inferior rank followed, and a host of frantic Arabs tom-toming on drums."

Seven times—the mystical number—the procession passed round the Place Mehemet Ali, while the troops, with open ranks, officers saluting, presented arms with fixed bayonets, and a royal salute boomed from the citadel in honour of this “tomfoolery;” and then the procession slowly and solemnly moved off to the railway station, preceded by the Indian Cavalry, the Royal Irish, the York and Lancaster Regiment, the Bengal Sappers, and the Beloochees, their bands all playing the “Dead March in Saul,” during the long and protracted time, as the procession went at the slowest funereal pace.

To do the people of Cairo justice, the bulk of them seemed astounded by the part played in this matter by their unbelieving conquerors, and they were utterly unable to conceive from what impulse the honour came.

This was the first occasion—since during the viceroyalty of Said Pasha—on which the Holy Carpet was not taken across the desert to Mecca, but conveyed somewhat prosaically by railway train to Suez; and it was certainly the first occasion, since the Sultana Schagaret-ed-durr instituted it 630 years before in commemoration of Zobeide’s fatal pilgrimage, that Christian men paraded to do it honour.

On a “consecrated” truck, brilliantly painted and decorated, it was taken

away by train, amid pious invocations to the prophet to ensure its safety. To Sir Evelyn Wood was assigned the duty of superintending this rather grotesque procession, as he commanded all the troops on the ground.

At Suez a special steamer took the carpet, and the pilgrims accompanying it, to Djidda.

On the evening after this event, many of the devout in Cairo visited the Place of the Kooteb, a holy, but invisible personage or spirit, one of whose favourite stations is supposed to be at that gate of the city called Bab-Zuwayleh, “one leaf of whose great wooden door is never shut,” says Mr. St. John, “but turned back against the eastern side of the interior of the gateway, concealing a small space, said to be the Place of the Kooteb. Many persons on passing by it read a prayer, and give alms to a beggar, who is generally seated there, and who is regarded by the vulgar as one of the servants of the Kooteb. Numbers of persons afflicted with headache drive a nail into the door to charm away the pain; and many sufferers from toothache extract a tooth, and insert it in a crevice of the door, to ensure their not being attacked again by the same malady. Some curious individuals often try to peep behind, in the vain hope of catching a glimpse of the Kooteb.”

## CHAPTER V.

## THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.

The Chamber of Notables—The new Egyptian Army—Arabi's Prison—The Egyptians and the Khedive—The Returning Troops—General Order for Decorations—Review before the Queen—The Reserve Men—Suez Canal—The Khedive's Fête.

PERSONS who had suffered from the outrages, subsequent to and consequent on the bombardment of Alexandria, whether by fire, pillage, or wanton destruction of property, were now anxiously waiting the decision of the European powers, about the constitution of the International Commission, which was to be charged with the adjudication of their claims for compensation.

The re-construction of the Chamber of Notables was proposed in some quarters as a means of giving motive power to the Khedive's new government; but the suggestion met with little approval. That Chamber was always found to be reduced to impotency when pressure from without was put upon it. The Notables could neither stand between the country and the Control nor between the Viceregal Court and the mutinous army. Every man in the body had his price; they were truly Oriental and corrupt to the core; and it was notorious that some leading members of the Chamber had shamefully abused their office when Arabi was in power. Profiting by their position to an incredible extent, they had exercised, in the interior, the most shocking tyrannies wherever they had local connections.

With regard to the constitution of a new Egyptian army, some were in

favour of foreign mercenaries, and others of one composed of the fellaheen. General Baker was distinctly averse to the latter, having a contempt of their fighting qualities; but he knew that the employment of foreigners would only tend to perpetuate the grievances which had brought about the late revolt. It was the Circassian question which began the troubles, and the dismissal of Circassian officers which precipitated hostilities. On the other hand, the fellaheen hate military service, and so long as they can escape conscription, care very little who takes their place in the ranks.

In the morning of the 5th of October Arabi and Toulba Pashas were, by orders from Sir Garnet Wolseley, handed over, by Colonel Thynne, to the new Egyptian authorities, who placed them in apartments at the Garde Meuble, guarded by British troops without doors, and by Egyptian troops within, to preclude rescue or escape. But there was no chance of the former now. The Cairo street cry of the preceding July, "May God grant you victory, O Arabi!" was now no longer heard.

In the same prison the State prisoners, to the number of eighty, had been lodged on the 4th of October.

On the afternoon of the 5th Arabi was first brought before the Court, on



charges of rebellion and treason, and though absolute secrecy was observed during the earlier proceedings, none could quite foresee his ultimate doom.

The most of our troops were now under orders for home, or India, and

the Duke of Connaught and his staff proceeded on a steamer excursion up the Nile. The lower classes were still strongly imbued by a hatred of the British. They failed somewhat to realise, even yet, that defeat had befallen



BAKER PASHA.

the only interest we had in Egypt seemed to centre in the general reorganisation of the country. Sir John Adye was now returning to England, and was succeeded by Colonel Dormer as chief of the staff. The British troops were withdrawn from Tantah and Damanhour, the mudirs of both places having expressed their belief that no disturbances were to be apprehended; and

Arabi and the National cause, and found with surprise that our soldiers, if conquerors, curiously enough allowed themselves to be hustled in the streets with good nature, and submitted to the extortion of pedlars and the impudence of donkey boys.

“Among that section of the middle class, brought by their commercial affairs in frequent contact with Euro-

peans," wrote Mr. Cameron, of the *Standard*, "a better feeling prevails. Interest, with them, overcomes any half-hearted promptings of patriotism, and their fatalism leads them to accept enhanced profits as a full compensation for national defeat. A brisk trade and good harvests are all they demand from Allah, and from whomsoever rules Egypt. Among the rare but influential native circles, where men are sufficiently educated to understand the position, anxiety regarding the future is far stronger than concern regarding the past. Strength, moral or material, is the only quality which inspires respect among Orientals. They respected Arabi because he was morally stronger than the Khedive. They respect the British because they are morally stronger than Arabi; but even British bayonets cannot restore respect for the Khedive. They hold that from the day he sanctioned the presence of the Anglo-French fleet in Egyptian waters, still more from the day when he took refuge under British protection, he became a party to the infidel invasion of Darul Islam."

The issue of medical stores from the depôts at home had now been stopped, and the supplies which were coming in daily under existing contracts were sent to Netley and other military hospitals in the British isles, while, to allow of ample room for our sick and wounded on their homeward passage, orders had been sent to the principal medical officer with the army in Egypt, that the Oriental steamer *Lusitania*, one of the largest transports, was to be at his

disposal. Seven other vessels were devoted to this duty, two—the *Malabar* and the *Orontes*—being Her Majesty's ships, and five hired transports.

Before the end of October the squadrons of the Household Cavalry had all returned to their old quarters in London or at Windsor. Everywhere they were received with acclamation and enthusiasm by immense crowds of spectators, who remarked with the kindest interest the bronzed faces of the men, their faded trapping and rusted accoutrements.

The Royal Marines landed about the same time at Portsmouth from the *City of Paris*. "The men," we are told, "looked bronzed and thin, the extreme youth of some of them exciting comment; but most gratifying to the home-returning troops was the reception they met with everywhere."

The following general order was issued from the Horse Guards on the 17th of October, 1882, concerning the military decorations for those engaged in the war:—

"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 recent operations in Egypt, which resulted in the defeat of the rebel army at Tel-el-Kebir, the surrender of the rebel chief, Arabi Pasha, and of the fortresses and troops under his orders.

"2. The medal will be granted to all troops who landed in Egypt, and served in that country between July 16th and September 14th, 1882, both dates inclusive.

"3. Her Majesty has been pleased to approve of the grant of a clasp, inscribed *Tel-el-Kebir*, to those troops who took part in the night march from Kassassin, which ended in the assault on the enemy's entrenchments at Tel-el-Kebir about daybreak on the morning of September 13th, 1882.

"4. Rolls to be forwarded to the Adjutant-General of the Forces without delay.

"5. Staff officers and special service officers will forward their applications through the generals under whom they served. General officers, who served as such, will forward rolls in favour of themselves and their respective staff.

"6. Officers who served as heads of departments will furnish returns of officers and others who served under their command. The names of men who, under Articles 910 to 912, Army Regulations, Vol. I., have incurred forfeiture of the medal are also to be included in the rolls; but in the fourth column, the reasons which have rendered them ineligible are to be stated.

"By Command, R. C. H. TAYLOR, A.G."

Four hundred officers and men received these medals from the hands of the Queen at Windsor on the 21st of the subsequent November.

On the 18th of that month London mustered its thousands to witness the great review of the Egyptian troops by Her Majesty, the luckless army of occupation (chiefly composed latterly of Highlanders) excepted.

The Guards, Artillery, Blue-jackets, and Infantry that passed the Queen in review order, were a portion of the same force that had defiled before the Khedive at Cairo. Special cheers were accorded to the Naval Brigade, under Captain Fellowes, and the stately Life Guardsmen, under Colonel Ewart, now no longer in frayed clothing, with ugly solar topees, but in all the glory of cuirass and shining helmet, snow-white breeches, and long jack-boots. But none received a warmer ovation than the grey-haired and war-worn Albany Highlanders—still in their fighting kits, their trews and doublets patched with various hues, and their colours, the same under which their colonel fell at Candahar, and which, since 1857, they had borne in India and

Afghanistan, reduced to ribbons— as they went gallantly past, with pipes playing and drums beating. The representatives of the Indian Contingent, under Colonel Pennington, the *beau idéal* of a cavalry officer, were cheered to the echo. Even in London no such objects of interest had been seen before as the Rissaldars of the Bengal Cavalry, in green tunics and ample turbans; or the Rissaldar Tahour Khan, of the 6th Bengal, a veteran of forty years' service, yet with a noble bearing, an eagle eye, and a breast covered with medals, among them the Punnar star of 1843. With these were the Rissaldar Major, of the 13th Bengal Lancers, an Afghan from Peshbolak, far beyond the Khyber Passes, and on the left of all rode the venerable Sheikh Rissaldar Urbal Sing, of Loodiana—who in early life had fought against the soldiers of Hugh Gough—and others, their breasts glittering with stars, crosses, and orders of merit, won in the great wars of India.

Though the result of the war secured Tewfik Pasha his throne, it failed to render him popular with his subjects; and his destruction was certain to succeed the departure of the last British soldier from Egypt. Thus an army of occupation was detailed to remain in that country till further orders.

In Cairo, the column was to consist of the 7th Dragoon Guards and 19th Hussars, a battery of the Royal Horse Artillery, a battery of the 1st Brigade of the Royal Artillery, and two batteries of the Scottish Division of the Royal Artillery, with the 35th, 38th,

49th, and 53rd Regiments, and four of Highlanders—namely, the 42nd, 74th, 75th, and 79th.

In Alexandria, the garrison was to consist of the Royal Irish, the 46th, and a wing of the West Kent Regiment, the other wing proceeding to Cyprus.

“A very serious question in settling the arrangements of this Army of Occupation,” wrote a correspondent, “is, as to what is to be done in reference to the Reserve men and time-expired men, of whom nearly 3,000 of the best troops out here should return to civil life, now that the campaign is over. The Reserve men are already grumbling. They say, and with truth, that if they are to be retained here for six months they will lose their civil appointments. If allowed to serve on their time for a pension, the greater proportion would gladly do so, but to be forced to commence civil life anew will be very hard on them. There can be no doubt that British soldiers, once accustomed to a military life, greatly prefer long service with a pension, to a short service which has sufficed to remove them from their local connections, and to render it difficult in the extreme to obtain civilian employment, especially as they are apt to be called upon to join the Reserve.”

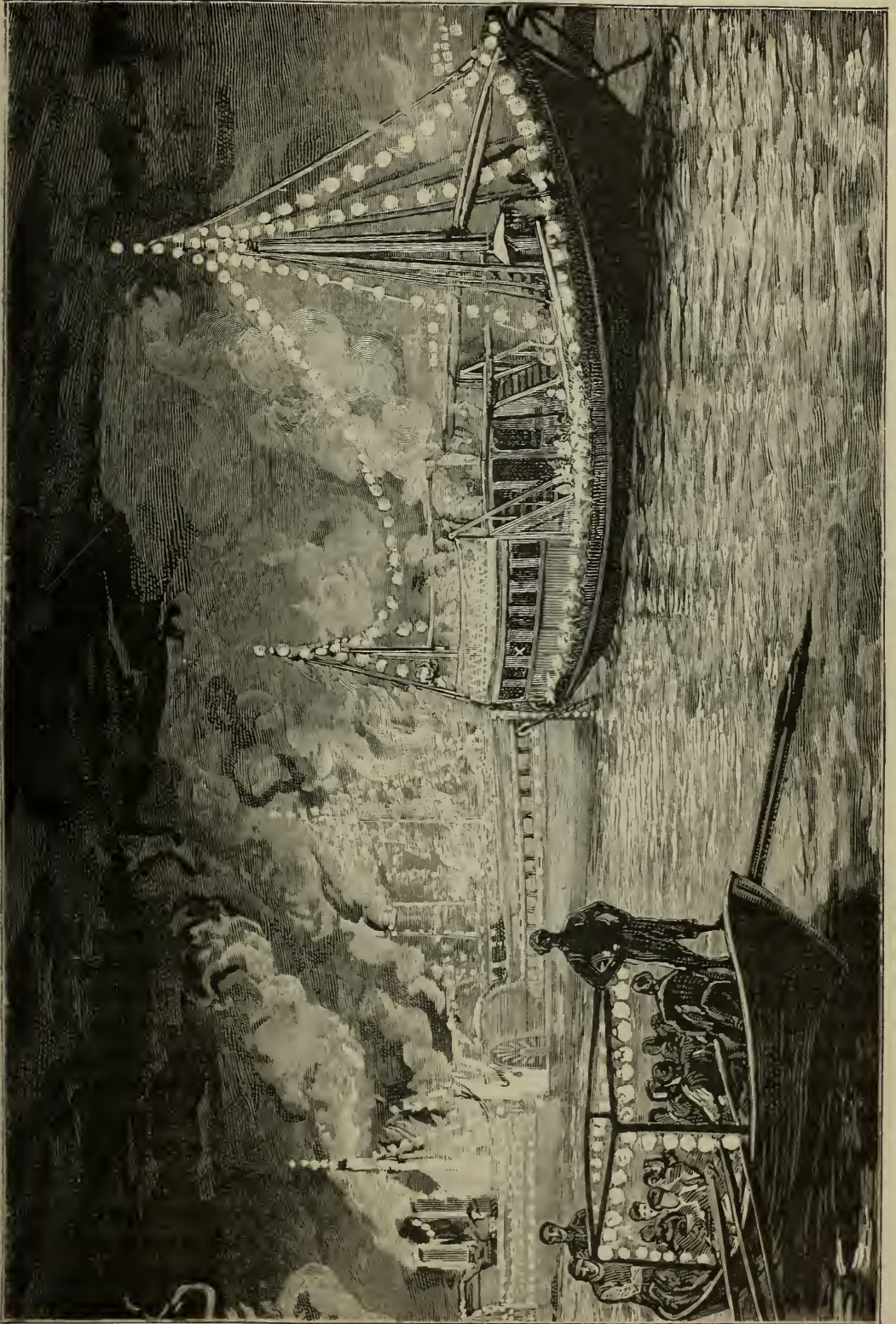
Turkey viewed with extreme jealousy the formation of the Army of Occupation, and other Governments regarded it with similar disfavour; but our interests in the Suez Canal rendered the military control and protection of it of paramount importance. “By the

springing of a single mine, at the right time and place,” says Colonel Vogt, in 1883, “Britain might lose the use of this important passage for a long time, and we believe she will find the proper means to secure her object. Besides the control of the Canal, a considerable force is required to pacify the country, excited as it has been by religious fanaticism and foreign oppression.” Five out of every six vessels that traverse the Canal carry the Union Jack.

The Egyptians, however, still looked upon our army as a kind of military police, sent by the Sultan to enforce order and restore the Khedive.

They thought that what we deemed the crowning victory at Tel-el-Kebir was only the peaceable and voluntary submission of Arabi Pasha and his generals, and this view, or construction, of the state of events, was sedulously propagated by the Ulema, to hide their own defeat.

On the 2nd of October the Khedive gave a dinner to Sir Garnet Wolseley, the Dukes of Connaught and Teck, all the Generals and their Staffs, Admiral Hoskins, and Sir E. Malet. They wore uniforms and decorations, and Baker Pasha appeared in the dress of a Turkish General. Afterwards a magnificent garden *fête* was largely attended by the officers of both services and by civilians. The Ghezireh Gardens were brilliantly illuminated by the electric light, which, however, was thrown into the shade by 2,000 rockets, while the bands played British and Arab music. The royal party withdrew at midnight after “God save the Queen” had been played.



THE FÊTE AT THE CHEZIREH PALACE—DAILABEYEH'S AND STEAMBOATS ILLUMINATED ON THE NILE.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE TRIAL OF ARABI.

The Soudan Expeditionary Force—The Indictment of Arabi—Preliminary Examination of Witnesses—Counsel appointed—Mr. Broadley's Description of Arabi—Insults offered to him—The Trial and Sentence—Grievances of the Army of Occupation—A Scottish Festival—Sir Archibald Alison and the Highland Brigade—Donald Cameron—Execution of Suleiman.

THE fate of Arabi Pasha was decided in the face of our Army of Occupation.

All was quiet in Egypt, and the expeditionary force, which was afterwards dispatched to the Soudan, in consequence of the hostile measures of Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin, the Mahdi, or false prophet, was being organised; and though negotiations for the definite settlement of the Upper and Lower Provinces were in progress, the propositions with which the Earl of Dufferin was accredited were kept a profound secret.

Major the Hon. John Colborne, a Crimean officer of the 77th, or old East Middlesex Regiment, was appointed to the expeditionary Soudan force, with Baron Seckendorf under him, with the rank of captain. While this force was being organised, the wire-drawn arrangements for the trial of the fallen Arabi and others were the leading theme of all in Egypt, where many urged that it would be better to shoot the unfortunate man at once, or exile him to some distant land, rather than hand him over to the Khedive, the nominal ruler of Egypt, who held his authority backed by the Army of Occupation; and the sentiment was general, that whether Arabi was acquitted or not, the responsibility of his fate rested with Great Britain.

About the end of November, 1882, the indictment against him, drawn up by Borelli Bey, was ready, and consisted of four principal counts of great importance. It ran as follows:—

“Arabi and others are accused—

“1. Of having hoisted the white flag at Alexandria, on the morning of the 12th July, in violation of the laws of war and *jus gentium*, and at the same time of having withdrawn his troops, and caused the burning and pillage of the said town.

“2. Of having excited the Egyptians to arm against the Khedive (a crime provided for by Article 5 of the Military Penal Code; and Article 55 of the Ottoman Penal Code).

“3. Of having continued the war notwithstanding the news of peace (a crime provided for by Article 3 of the Ottoman Penal Code).

“4. Of having excited civil war, and carried devastation, massacre, and pillage into Egyptian territory (a crime provided for by Articles 56 and 57 of the Ottoman Penal Code).”

A very elaborate preliminary examination of witnesses was made, and Suleiman Bey Sami—if it were possible to believe his assertions, even on oath—adhered to his statements that Arabi knew of a proposed massacre, and approved of its inauguration, and of the general pillage of Alexandria.

This evidence was further corroborated by the manager of the Oriental Bank, and several other Europeans, who affirmed that the houses were not fired by an exasperated mob, but by the regular Infantry of the Egyptian line, who were marched down from the

Rosetta Gate, where the streets were, in succession, assigned to certain battalions for destruction, after being deliberately pillaged of that property of which quantities were found in the lines at Kafrodwar.

These witnesses further stated that on the night after the bombardment, Arabi and Suleiman Bey Sami occupied the same apartment near the Rosetta Gate; that they left the city together, and were firm friends till the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, after which Suleiman quitted the insurgents.

In addition to all this, two members of the Ragheb Ministry swore by the Koran to hearing Arabi declare in open council, that if Admiral Seymour fired one shot against the city, it should be so destroyed that not one stone would be left upon another—a proposed outrage so wanton and so useless as to excite doubts whether Arabi ever suggested or endorsed it.

He, on the other hand, emphatically denied having issued any orders for either pillage or fire; “but his chief defensive plea was urged in a letter in the *Times*, from his counsel, Messrs. Broadley and Mark Napier, repudiating the charge of rebellion, and declaring that if time were allowed them, they would prove that the Sublime Porte, from first to last, approved their action.” For the feeling was pretty general in Egypt, and in this country, that though Arabi was technically a traitor, his treason was secretly approved of by that Suzerain who had decorated him. Mr. A. M. Broadley, barrister, was instructed on the 19th of September,

1882, to repair to Cairo, and undertake the defence of Arabi before the court-martial. He was promised that he should have free access to Arabi—a promise reluctantly fulfilled.

The Minister of the Interior, Riaz Pasha, at first refused to permit either of the two English barristers to visit their client; and after he was compelled to do so, with peculiar Oriental cunning and tergiversation, he put every tedious obstacle he could think of in their way.

After some interviews with Borelli Bey, the legal adviser of Riaz Pasha, a code of procedure was drawn up, and three points were won in favour of Arabi by his counsel—admission to the preliminary inquiry (which is forbidden by the law of France), a right to address the court, and a right to argue the cause from a political point of view.

The rules for the trial were signed on the 21st of October, after which the two barristers saw Arabi for the first time.

The apartment in which he was confined, says Mr. Broadley in his book (“How we defended Arabi”), was about twelve feet, or so, square, lighted by two narrow windows, but partially darkened by iron gratings and half-closed Venetian blinds. The sole furniture was a handsome Shiraz rug, a mosquito curtain, a mattress and some pillows, an embroidered prayer-carpet, a Koran, and some brass and earthenware vessels.

Arabi wore a pair of military undress trousers, with a white shirt and jacket;

but he sometimes changed the latter for a black Stambouli or Turkish frock coat. He held in his hand nervously a Mohammedan rosary of beads, and welcomed his visitors with very good grace.

He complained bitterly of the ill-

fail to excite an impression of forbidding sullenness, but I soon found out that this was the effect of deep and constant thought rather than of moroseness or bad temper. Arabi's habit of perpetually thinking has gained him many enemies amongst those who judge



MR. A. M. BROADLEY, ARABI'S SENIOR COUNSEL.

treatment to which his mother and all his family had been subjected since the British captured Cairo, and did so with the timid and hunted aspect of one who feared to speak.

While he did so, Mr. Broadley states that he had a good opportunity of studying the face of one about whom all Europe had heard so much, and describes him thus:—

“In repose, an almost fixed frown and knitting of the brows can hardly

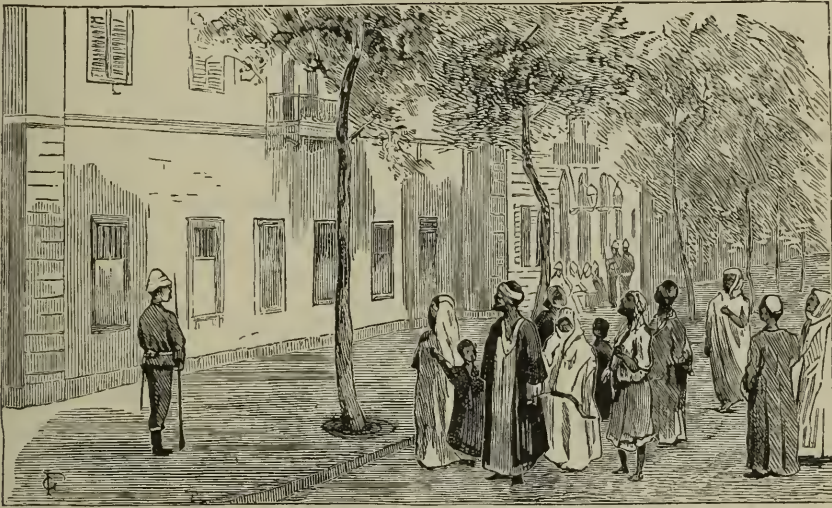
by first appearances. When his countenance lights up with animation, the change wrought in his expression is so wonderful that you would hardly recognise him as the same man. His eyes are full of intelligence, and his smile is peculiarly attractive. His complexion is lighter than that of his son, but his nose is too flat and his lips too thick to allow me to describe him as a handsome man. He is considerably over six feet in height, and broad in proportion.



During his imprisonment his appearance was materially changed by the growth of a grey beard. After the manner of the fellaheen, a blue band was tattooed round his wrist, and he rarely, if ever, loosened his grasp on a small black rosary he perpetually ran through his fingers when talking. The cloud of anxiety which seemed to over-

barred the way, and at Tel-el-Kebir the aspirations and hopes of an entire people were wrecked.

"If you inquire," said he, "you will discover and be able to prove that all Egypt was with me—the Khedivial family, the old men of Mehemet Ali's time, the Ulemas, the army, and the peasants. But," he added, nobly, and



ARABI'S PRISON—ARAB SYMPATHISERS GAZING AT HIS WINDOWS.

shadow him at first gradually lifted, and before his imprisonment was ended he became almost cheerful. During the reading of Mr. Blunt's letter he frequently smiled, and raised his hand to his forehead in token of gratitude and acquiescence. This habit of Arabi's when perusing his correspondence always struck me as singularly graceful. His peculiar courtesy of manner has rarely failed to impress those with whom he has come in contact."

He had led the Egyptians, he said, in a struggle for freedom, and had achieved partial success, till our arms

sadly, "in the presence of prison, arrest, torture, and threats, who will own me now? I should not be surprised if my very children denied me to my face before the Commission of Inquiry."

He then stated, in writing, that he had given up his sword and person to General Lowe, in good faith, while there were still 35,000 Egyptian troops in Cairo. "On the 5th October," he continued, "I was put into the Egyptian prison, where I was insulted in a way which cries out against the honour of England and every Englishman; for I was searched by the servants and

agas of the Khedive's palace, and that was repeated four times, even to the length of taking my boots off my feet; and on the night of the 9th October, after I had fallen asleep, my door was opened, and ten or more persons entered my room, and one of them said, 'Arabi, do you know me?' I said, 'No; who are you, and what do you want at such a time?' He said, 'I am Ibrahim Aga, whom you were searching for—you dog!—you pig!' and he spat upon me three times, and insulted and abused me in such a manner, that I believed he had been ordered to kill me that night. . . . Conduct such as this could never please the faith and honour of England, especially towards me, who gave up myself in trust and confidence in the honour of the English nation."

In his house the furniture had been demolished in the search for treasonable papers; the divan was ripped to pieces, the floors were torn up, and the ceilings pierced. Even when his child fell ill no "loyal" doctor would attend to it, but two European physicians, Dr. Sieveking and Dr. Grant Bey, did so. At last, as Mr. Broadley records, an American named Bernard, correspondent of the *New York Herald*, proposed a scheme for purchasing Arabi, by a happy combination of the resources of Messrs. Gordon, Bennett, and Barnum. "Nothing," he wrote, "could be easier; Bennett's yacht will take him off quietly. After the first twelvemonth, Arabi shall write three-quarters of a column every week for the *Herald*, and then Barnum will run him on the platforms in the States. We will give

£250,000 down, and allow Arabi £1,000 a year."

After Messrs. Broadley and Napier had been formally appointed as his counsel, Arabi spent six days most industriously in the preparation of a clear and concise statement of his case—a document in which he recited all the subtle intrigues, all the grinding tyranny, and all the gross abuses of the Administration he had overthrown.

He was not the sole client of the two English barristers, who had accepted retainers from Toulba Pasha, Osman Pasha, Yacoub Sami, and Ahmed Bey Rifat.

The Court of Preliminary Inquiry sat for the first time on the 31st of October, and after some coffee had been partaken of, and cigarettes smoked, the President, Ismail Pasha Eyoub, received with every respect the two English barristers, who—to his eyes—must have seemed somewhat grotesque in their wigs and gowns.

He remarked with truth, "that their presence there formed an epoch in the history of the country, and was a landmark of progress," adding, impressively, "it is the first time these several thousand years that foreign lawyers have appeared before an Egyptian Court; and I hail it as a sign that Britain has determined to give us judicial reform and better tribunals."

Mr. Broadley, after examining Arabi's papers, sixty-nine in number, asserted "that if Arabi was a rebel, he was one who led five millions of people, and was at the head of the whole Egyptian race."

The actual trial began on the 3rd December, and the negotiations between counsel on both sides led to a species of compromise, by which it was granted, or admitted, that Arabi was not responsible for the calamitous events at Alexandria; that all the charges against him and his adherents, with the exception of simple rebellion, were withdrawn, and to this accusation it was arranged they would plead guilty for form's sake. It was, moreover, distinctly arranged that a sentence of death would be recorded against Arabi, Toulba, Mahmoud Fehmy, Mahmoud Sami, Abd-el-Al of Damietta, and Yacoub Sami; but the said sentence would be instantly commuted into one of exile from their native country.

They were to be stripped of all their property, their civil and military rank, and to bind themselves to proceed to any place of banishment Great Britain might suggest.

The princesses of the Khedive's family made no secret of their strong sympathy with Arabi and his cause, and one wore a dress trimmed with buttons each of which bore his likeness, made for her in Paris.

On the morning of the 25th December Arabi had his last interview with the English counsel to whose care and skill he too probably owed his life. He was full of gratitude; but all that he had to bestow as mementoes were his prayer-carpet, a little black rosary, and his photograph; and then he and his friends departed for Ceylon, the land of their exile.

In the December of the following

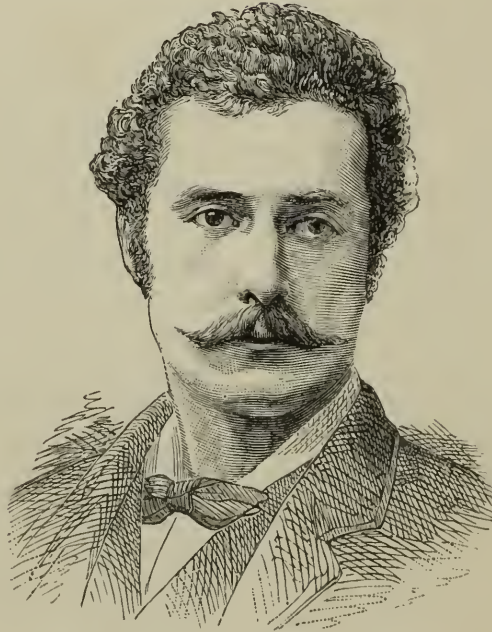
year he was visited there by the correspondent of the *Daily News*, who found him residing comfortably in a handsome villa about three miles from Colombo. "He was seated under a verandah in the beautiful tropical garden, intent on acquiring the English language, in which he had made considerable progress. He spoke frankly of men and affairs in Egypt, to which he had no desire to return till she was free—at least from the subordination of Tewfik Pasha. Ismail he spoke of as being clever and unscrupulous, but of Tewfik he expressed a very poor opinion indeed, adding that now his own chief ambition was to learn English."

And here this fallen soldier, who we cannot help thinking was at heart a patriot, and who wished his country well, passes out of this history.

For a time the career of our Army of Occupation in Egypt was a peaceful one; but it underwent some changes. In 1883 it was constituted as follows:—the 19th Hussars and two brigades of the Royal Artillery, with a battery of the 1st Brigade of the Scottish division of Garrison Artillery, the Sussex and Cornwall Regiments (one battalion each), 1st Battalion of the Black Watch, 3rd Battalion of the King's Rifles, 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders, and the Cameron Highlanders. Prior to the close of the preceding year much severe sickness prevailed in the force—it was estimated that 12 per cent. of the whole were in hospital—so Colonel Sir Andrew Clark, C.B., of the Royal Engineers,

was sent to Cairo to improve the sanitary arrangements there. But many of our men perished of cholera, enteric fever, and other ailments, and on Christmas Day, 1883, many of the dead, who were buried at Helouan, had their graves shamefully violated, and

absence, our correspondent points out, falls very heavily on the soldier, and more heavily on his family. After he has sent his remittance home each month, he finds that he has barely enough left for the common necessities of life;" and many inquired why they



HON. MARK NAPIER, ARABI'S JUNIOR COUNSEL.

their headstones carried away for sale. By the end of that year our married soldiers in Egypt began to complain bitterly, and even to address the public prints, on the long continuance or retention of the troops in Egypt, and their separation from their families. One urged "that if they keep silent they will find themselves in the same position a year hence as now." "The Rifles have endured nearly four years of separation," says the *Standard* of 20th December, 1883. "This enforced

were not relieved by the regiments in Gibraltar or Malta.

On St. Andrew's Day there was a great national festival celebrated by the Scottish regiments in the Ezbekeeyeh Gardens at Cairo. "Cluny" the younger, of the Black Watch, was in the chair, supported by Sir Archibald Alison, and upwards of sixty officers in the kilt, who, as Dr. W. H. Russell records, drank the Queen's health with Highland honours, to the amazement of the French and Levantine waiters;



ARABI PASHA.

*From a Photograph in his Prison.*

and here we may quote a paragraph or two from Sir Archibald's farewell address to the tartan brigade which he was about to leave :—

“It was the dream of my youth to command a Highland brigade; in my old age it has been granted me to lead one in battle. This brigade has been singularly fortunate in having assigned to it so important a part in what must ever be considered as one of the most brilliant victories won by our arms in modern times. There is one thing which I wish to impress upon you; it was not the fiery valour of your rush over the entrenchments of Tel-el-Kebir, but the disciplined restraint of the long night march over the desert preceding it which I admired most.

“That was one of the most severe tests of discipline which could be expected from men, and by you it was nobly borne. When in the early dawn we looked down from the summit upon the camp of Arabi lying defenceless at our feet, and his army dissolving in distance before us, the first thought that came into my mind was, that had my dear old chief, Sir Colin Campbell, risen from his grave, he would have been proud of you. He would have thought you had well maintained the reputation of the Highland regiments and the honour of the old Scottish name; he would have deemed you worthy successors of that now historic Highland brigade which he led up the green slopes of Alma.”

By the city of Glasgow, on his return home, Sir Archibald was presented with a magnificent sword of honour—a clay-

more, with a basket-hilt of solid gold, studded with precious stones—to place beside the similar sword of honour, which the same city presented to Lord Clyde, who, on his death-bed, bequeathed it to Sir Archibald.

The citizens of Dublin, some time after, presented Lord Wolseley with a beautiful sword of honour, and the freedom of the city.

When Major-General Graham, commanding the Army of Occupation, issued the war medals to the troops, on the 21st of February, he made some flattering remarks to the Cameron Highlanders, and remarked that when he inspected their rooms on New Year's day, he had been particularly struck with seeing the name of young Donald Cameron reproduced frequently among the floral decorations.

“Now, who was he?” said the General; “the first man who mounted the trenches at Tel-el-Kebir, where he was killed. It is well that you should remember your fallen comrades, even in your mirth. These men are dead; but their memories do not perish. They live in the history and traditions of the regiment, which links them with the past.”

The British forces in Egypt on 1st December, 1883, under the command of General Stephenson, a veteran of the campaigns in the Crimea and China, amounted to only 6,367 men. It had at one time been proposed to reduce this slender force to 3,000 men; but the storm of war gathering in the Soudan, where the False Prophet was about to raise his standard, forbade it.

The last act we performed in the operations to restore Tewfik Pasha, was the execution of Suleiman Sami Pasha, at Alexandria.

At three o'clock on Friday evening a scaffold had been erected among the ruins of the once beautiful great square of the city. It was placed upon the exact spot where the doomed Suleiman had sat smoking, and laughingly directing the soldiers in the work of destruction. At two a.m. groups of Europeans and Arabs began to assemble, gravely and silently, and just as dawn began to redden the summit of Pompey's Pillar, an escort of gendarmes, under a Queen's officer, entered the square at a very slow pace, caused by the painful necessity of carrying the half-insensible form of the culprit, and amid a dead and solemn silence they approached the scaffold, which was overlooked by so many roofless and

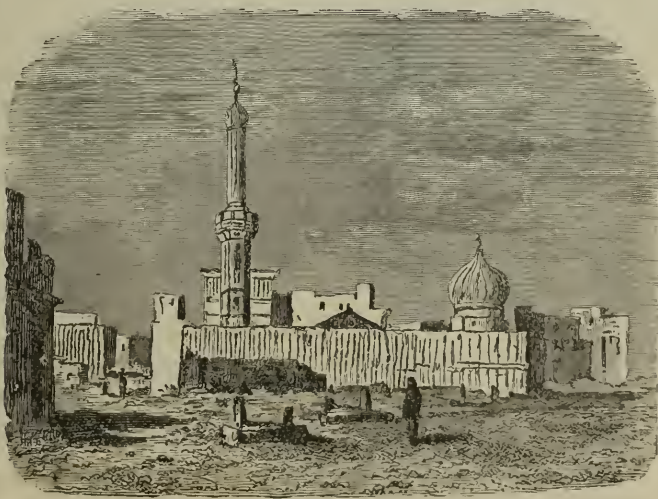
blackened walls, and empty and gaping windows.

An Egyptian officer then said to Suleiman, who seemed to be scarcely conscious of existence, as the degrading rope was knotted round his neck—

“You are to suffer death, Suleiman Sami Ibn Daoud, according to the law, for your atrocious crimes, to which the ruins around us bear silent witness. Make your peace with God, and repeat after me—‘God is one God, and Mohammed is His Prophet.’”

But the miserable Suleiman was past making any response, though some who were present averred that he murmured “*Mazloun Arabi!*” that is, “victimised by Arabi.” He was all but dead when the drop fell.

Surrounded by crowds of Arabs and Europeans, the corpse swung there for hours; but little or no sympathy was expressed for him by any one.



ARAB CEMETERY, ALEXANDRIA.



A "BIT" ON THE BAHIR-EL-GAZELLE.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MAHDI.

State of the Soudan—Career of the Mahdi—His Personal Appearance and Habits—Hicks Pasha—His Services—The New Egyptian Levies—The Government of the Soudan.

NOTWITHSTANDING the presence and influence of the British Army of Occupation—if a force so slender could be named an army—the Government of Tewfik Pasha, patched up as it was by ours, was perhaps the weakest in the world, and the troubles in the Soudan—a province of which a brief account will be found in our opening chapter—were brought about by the attempted re-conquest of that arid and wretched territory, by the ministry of the Khedive—a territory of vast extent, destitute of roads—other than camel tracks—of railways, rivers, or canals; yet inhabited by many fierce and warlike tribes, all professing the same faith, in the de-

fence of which they are ever ready to court death.

We have related how Sir Samuel Baker, in 1869, conquered the equatorial provinces of which General Gordon was appointed Governor-General in 1874, and the troubles that ensued at his departure, when a host of Turks and Bashi-Bazouks were let loose among the people as officials.

Under the new *régime* the taxes were gathered by these officials, whom Colonel Stewart described as "swaggering bullies," who robbed and plundered the people with impunity, adding, that probably for every pound that reached the Egyptian treasury the people were



pillaged of an equal amount by these men, who, as soldiers, were utterly worthless.

So terribly oppressive was the taxation levied, that whole districts were

spired alike by religious enthusiasm and rancorous hate. Levied by conscription, the Egyptian troops were dispatched against them, in many instances chained together, to meet tribes-



THE EXPEDITION INTO KORDOFAN—TROOPS ABOUT TO BREAK CAMP AT SUNRISE.

reduced to destitution, and land that might be cultivated lay waste and desolate. This was the nature, and these were the results, of that local administration against which the Mahdi began a revolt, a rising which, when it was once inaugurated by bloodshed, proved so difficult of repression. "The insurgents, brave and resolute men, were fighting for their native land, in-

men who were up in defence of their homes, their fields, and cattle."

The Mahdi first took up arms in July, 1881; but in the spring of the following year was defeated in the south of Sennaar, after which he returned up the Blue Nile, gathering fresh recruits as he marched, and invaded the country watered by the Bahr-el-Gazelle, where, in July, 1882, 6,000 Egyptian

troops, led by Yussuf Pasha, were surrounded by his army and cut off nearly to a man.

This remarkable adventurer, Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin, is a native of the province of Dongola, where his father, Abdullah, was a carpenter on Napt Island, in the Nubian Province of Dongola. While the latter was resident at Shendy, on the Nile, south of Berber, he apprenticed the future Mahdi, "the forerunner of the end of the world, as foretold by the Koran," to his uncle, Sheriff-ed-deen, a boatman at Shakabel, an islet near Sennaar.

It would seem that the future prophet was not without his failings, for one day his uncle was under the necessity of giving him a sound flogging, after which he fled to Khartoum, and joined the free school of a learned dervish, whose abode was near the tomb of a saint—the Sheikh Hoghai, patron of the city—a holy personage, from whom the dervish claimed descent, and thus, of course, through him, from the Prophet of Mecca.

Though studying religion closely for some time at this school, Mohammed Achmet made but little progress in either reading or writing; but six months after he completed his pious education at another free school in Berber. From thence he repaired to the village of the Tamarind Tree, near Kaua, and attached himself as a disciple of a sheikh named Nour-el-Daim, and then made his home on the sequestered islet of Abba, in the White Nile, where he dwelt in a kind of pit, or subterranean repository for grain,

which he had dug with his own hands, and there he passed his life in fasting, praying, and burning incense day and night, and in repeating the name of Allah for hours at a time, till he would fall on the ground faint and exhausted.

If any one addressed him he made no reply, save sentences from the sacred books of Islam. All earthly things, save the daughters of the Baggara sheikhs, seemed only to inspire him then with disgust and pity. He made a solemn vow to absorb himself in the contemplation of divine protection, and to weep all his life for the sins of mankind; but his copious tears did not destroy his power of vision, and he kept it remarkably open to business, and to the rich offerings which were found daily deposited at the mouth of his pit.

"Imagine a man of about forty years of age," says a writer, "of medium height, and lean, with a mahogany complexion, coal-black beard and eyes, and three vertical slashes on his pallid cheeks; add to these a long cotton shirt as a garment, a narrow turban as a head-dress, a pair of wooden sandals, and in the hands—dry as those of a mummy—a string of ninety beads, corresponding to an equal number of the divine attributes, and you have the Mahdi. Those who have seen him say that Mohammed Achmet plays to perfection the part of a visionary dervish, waving his head when walking, and murmuring constant prayers, with his eyes fixed on heaven."

In 1878 offerings of the pious, or the

foolish, had made him so rich that he felt the necessity of declaring that Allah, in a vision, had ordered him to take unto himself some wives, whom, like a practical man, he was careful to select from among the daughters of the wealthy Baggaras, the most opulent slave-traders on the White Nile.

“To keep within the legalised number (four),” says the ill-fated Colonel Stewart, “he was in the habit of divorcing the surplus and taking them on again according to his fancy. About the end of May, 1881, he began to teach that he was the Mahdi foretold by Mohammed, and that he had a divine mission to reform Islam, to establish a universal equality of goods, and that all who did not believe him should be destroyed, be they Christian, Mohammedan, or Pagan. Judging from his conduct of affairs and policy, I should say he had considerable natural ability. The manner in which he has managed to merge the usually discordant tribes together denotes great tact. He had probably been preparing the movement for some time past.”

The Mahdi reads and writes with difficulty, and some of his proclamations, running in his name as “the Lord of Age, who will shortly himself appear,” were found to be singularly rambling and incoherent.

Among others, he wrote early to Sheikh Mohammed Saleh, an influential fakir of Dongola, directing him to collect his dervishes and friends, and join him at Abba. This sheikh, instead of complying with his request, informed the Government of it, declaring that

the man must be mad. This information, along with that collected in other quarters, alarmed Renouf Pasha, at Cairo, and the result was the expedition of the 3rd August, 1881.

The Mahdi, in August, 1882, advanced against El Obeid, the capital of Kordofan, but suffered a defeat at Bara, and was again repulsed when assaulting the former town; yet, strangely enough, without the alleged sanctity of his mission being doubted.

The February of 1883, after various turns of fortune, saw nearly the whole of the Egyptian forces in the Soudan almost isolated in Kordofan, a district lying between Darfour on the west, and Sennaar on the east, while the vicinity of Suakim was thronged by enthusiastic followers of the Mahdi, 5,000 of whom were defeated on the 29th of April by the Egyptian forces under Colonel Hicks, formerly of the Bombay Army, with the loss of 500 men, including the Lieutenant-General of the False Prophet.

In the June of that year Hicks Pasha telegraphed to Sir Evelyn Wood to the following effect:—“The Government have been asked to send 5,000 more troops to Khartoum. These can only be collected by dragging unwilling men from their fields and homes, and sending them away in chains; and these men are to be taken at once before the enemy, having been previously in no way organised, and with what kind of officers? Of course I have no kind of reliance whatever on them. Will you send me instead four battalions of your new army, and I shall be content?”

They should return in six months. Fifty-one men of my Krupp battery deserted, though in chains."

It was stated in Parliament by Sir Michael Hicks Beach, that Sir Evelyn Wood replied:—"You are not aware of our position. It is impossible to comply with your request." Sir Michael asked why these important telegrams had not been included in the Egyptian papers laid before Parliament, and received the usual official answer, that "Her Majesty's Government were not aware of the telegraphic communications referred to."

As little is known of the military services of the unfortunate Hicks Pasha, a notice of him may not be out of place here, for he was a valuable officer of high distinction and great experience.

Colonel William Hicks obtained his first commission in the old Bombay Fusiliers—latterly the 109th Regiment of the Line, and under the new system grotesquely called the 1st Battalion of the Royal Leinster Regiment. After serving through the war of the Mutiny, in 1857-9, he was employed on the staff till the Abyssinian Expedition, during which he held the post of Brigade-Major. After the fall of Magdala he returned to Poonah, where he served on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Mark Kerr, an old personal friend.

Three or four years later he retired on his Colonel's allowance, and after travelling abroad for a time, settled at Brighton; but his constant desire for active service was at length gratified by his appointment as Chief of the

Staff to Suleiman Pasha. Soon after the army of the Soudan marched for Khartoum—early in the September of 1883—he wrote to friends in England, stating that very hard work was before it; but that his troops seemed staunch, and that he, and all of them, were looking forward to a stiff and decisive battle. He prepared his wife, whom he had married in 1854, and who was Sophia, youngest daughter of Mr. W. F. Dixon, of Page Hall, Sheffield, for irregularity of news from him, explaining, that with communication so difficult to maintain, it was very possible she might only hear from him at long intervals; but he wrote always in the highest spirits, as was only characteristic of his happy, genial temperament and courageous bearing. He was then in his fifty-fifth year, and his wife, with their four children, was residing at Brighton.

Col. Hicks served in Bengal in 1857-8-9 with the 1st Belooch Battalion, as staff officer to the Punjaub Movable Column; in the Rohilcund campaign with Major-General Penny's force, and was present at the action of Kukrala, the action with Feroze Shah's force before Bareilly, and the occupation of that town; in the combats of Bunnee and Mahomdee, and the attacks by the rebels on Shahjehanpore, and in the campaign of the subjugation of Oude. He was present at the capture of the fort of Rampore Kussia; at the surrender of the Fort of Amcethee; he subsequently accompanied Clyde's force at the occupation of Sunkerpore, and in the defeat of the enemy under Beni

Mahdeo at Dhoondia Keria, and the capture of the Fort of Buxar.

He served under Lord Clyde throughout the operations across the Gogra; was present at the action with the forces of the infamous Nana Sahib at Brijidea; at the combat at Churdah;

1867-8, and was present at the capture of Magdala, on which occasion he was again mentioned with honour in the despatches.

Such were the varied services of this brilliant British soldier, who was to meet such a terrible fate in the Soudan.



HICKS PASHA.

and took part in the capture of the Fort of Mujeediah.

He commanded the right wing of the 1st Belooch Battalion, detached with Brigadier Horsford's column, at the passage of the Raptce in Nepaul; and was present at the defeat of the enemy at Sikat Ghaut and the capture of their guns, for which he received a medal and was mentioned in the despatches. He served, as Brigade Major, with the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division of Infantry, during the campaign in Abyssinia in

The composition of his army was unsatisfactory—even deplorable—but this was due, in some measure, to recent events. On the 23rd of October, 1882, the Moslem festival of the Kourbán Bairam saw Egypt without an army, as, a few days before, the short and most unwise edict of the Restoration had decreed that “the Egyptian army is dissolved;” and before the nightfall of the 23rd, all at Cairo knew that something must be done to stay the advance of the Mahdi and to save

the Soudan, and it was said on all hands, if the defeated men, who fought at Kafrdowar and Tel-el-Kebir, had been treated with more generosity, Hicks Pasha would have had more success before the enemy.

“The suicidal policy of retaliation was in its first vigour, when it became necessary to think of the Soudan,” wrote Mr. Broadley, in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 24th November, 1883. “What was to be done? Colonel Hicks and his gallant comrades were hastily commissioned; the process of disbanding and disgracing was interrupted, and as many of the disbanded and disgraced soldiers as could be conveniently collected were ordered to follow the flag of Colonel Hicks. I saw myself the nucleus of the Soudan reinforcement leaving Cairo for Suez. It was a sorry and not easily to be forgotten spectacle! The Egyptian soldiers were placed in vans and cattle trucks, like animals. They quitted the capital without arms, as prisoners, and with all the circumstances of dishonour. Their native officers were selected from those who were most obnoxious to the new *régime*, and this very appointment was an avowed and undisguised measure of punishment and repression. On the 1st of January, 1883, two steamers were moored alongside the wharf at Suez. The deck of one was crowded by the disgraced and disbanded soldiers of the First Regiment, of which Arabi had been colonel; upon the deck of the other stood Arabi and his six companions. An hour or two later, this unpromising contingent for the army of

the Soudan was forced to witness, in sullen silence, the *Mareotis* steaming down the Red Sea, bound for Ceylon. When subsequently it became necessary to send further reinforcements to the Soudan, they were provided after the same fashion. Egyptian soldiers were again sent to the front, unarmed, beaten, and in chains. With such materials as Colonel Hicks was furnished with, any other result than defeat would indeed have been a miracle. Egyptian soldiers are never to be trusted much in the battle-field; but Egyptian soldiers compelled to fight under such circumstances as these were worse than useless. Nobody should have known this better than Omar Pasha Loufti, the present Egyptian Minister of War.”

At this time that obnoxious paper, the *Bosphore Egyptien*, afterwards suppressed, was violently upholding the right of Turkey alone to interfere in Egyptian or Soudanese affairs. But in the Soudan no administration succeeded so well as Ismail Pasha's plan of practically independent governors, invested with plenary powers.

The moment a proposition was made to rule these vast and extensive provinces from Cairo, the fermentation under the Mahdi began. To this fatal policy must be ascribed the calamities which will be recorded in these pages. Though it is impossible to re-write history, one cannot but wonder at the short-sightedness which, in blind disregard of the teachings of the past, attempted to introduce the bureaucratic system of government in countries for which it was totally unsuited.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE BATTLE OF KASHGATE.

Hicks Pasha's Staff—The Soudan and its People—Difficulties of the Country—The Capital of Kordofan—Hardships of the March—The Battle of Kashgate—Death of Hicks—The Story of the Dual Command—Letter from two ex-Officers of the Egyptian Army—Service in the Soudan—Disaster near Suakim.

HICKS PASHA left Alexandria in February. He was accompanied by 6,000 native Egyptian troops, of the kind we have described; but the number was subsequently increased by reinforcements, till it was estimated that the Khedive's army in the Soudan mustered 25,000 men.

On the 4th of March, Hicks had reached Khartoum; but the Mahdi had then taken Kordofan and El Obeid, and even Khartoum itself was menaced, the Soudanese being in great strength along the banks of the White Nile.

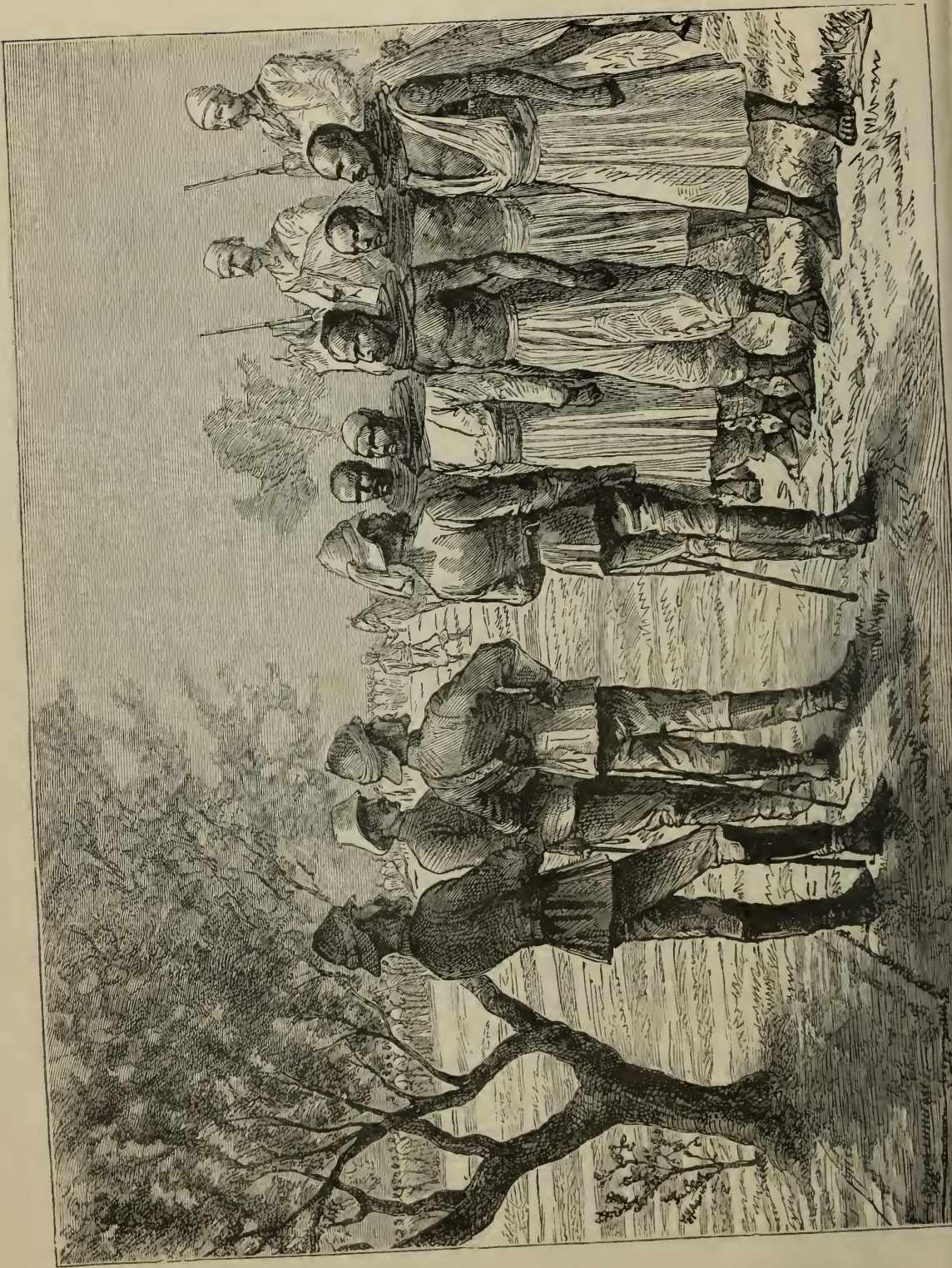
On the 29th of April, as related, Hicks attacked and defeated them, with the loss of 500 men. Some weeks afterwards, he started from his headquarters to reach El Obeid, where the False Prophet was reported to be in great strength. Hicks had with him 10,000 men, and 2,000 camp followers, and had to make his way along the White Nile. He was accompanied by several European officers. Among them were Colonel Farquhar, chief of the staff, Majors Warner, Evans, Seckendorf, and Massey, Captains Heath and Walker, and Surgeon-Major Rosenberg. Besides these, he was said to have with him Mr. Edmond O'Donovan, the correspondent of the *Daily News*, so well known by his famous journey to Merv; Mr. F. Vizetelly, artist of the *Graphic*;

and a correspondent of a German illustrated paper.

In a report furnished to the Foreign Office by Colonel Stewart, the Soudan is stated to be from north to south, or from Assouan to the Equator, about 1,650 miles in length. Its width from Mas-sowah on the Red Sea, to the western limit of the province of Darfour, is from 1,200 to 1,400 miles.

To include this immense tract of country under a single name is misleading. In the first place, it is inhabited by two totally distinct races. In the northern half—to the north of the 11th parallel of north latitude—the inhabitants are pure Arabs, nomadic tribes, professing more or less adulterated Mohammedanism. South of the 11th parallel, the country is peopled by Negroes, who, though classed as Moslem, are, in reality, gross pagans.

Besides these main divisions of race, there are many localities, the inhabitants of which cannot be classed under either denomination. The Negroes are generally sedentary and cultivators; the Arabs nomads and idlers. When the Egyptians turned their attention first to the Soudan (in the time of Mehemet Ali), it was divided into a number of petty kingdoms, that lived in a chronic state of war with each other. In later years, in their efforts to subjugate the Soudan, the Egyptians





have had the assistance of several able Europeans, among them the German Munzinger, Sir Samuel Baker, and General Gordon; but the disastrous war with Abyssinia in 1876 was a serious blow to their efforts, and in 1883 the Soudan still remained, in a sense, conquered, but never subdued or

groups of bare hills are met with. The villages and patches of cultivated ground are few and far between. Water is scarce, and stored in wells and trunks of baobab trees."

Through such a country the march of Hicks Pasha was necessarily one of great toil. The 20th of September



EDMOND O'DONOVAN, CORRESPONDENT OF THE "DAILY NEWS" WITH HICKS PASHA'S EXPEDITION.

pacified. The physical difficulties which barred the successful progress of the Egyptian forces will be understood from the description given by Colonel Stewart of the district in which Hicks Pasha was engaged.

"Of the country west of the White Nile, between the parallels of Khartoum and that of Kaka (or Caka), about 11° N. lat., the general appearance is that of a vast steppe covered with low thorny trees, mimosa, gum trees, &c., and prickly grass. Occasionally, low

came, and there was no sign of the rebels submitting. Great anxiety was felt in his army about the probable supply of water so far inland; the heat was intense, and there was a considerable loss of life among the baggage camels.

On the 23rd a water station was seized, and tidings came that the enemy were 30,000 strong at El Obeid, which is the capital of Kordofan, and ten days' march from Khartoum. It is composed of several large villages of

mud huts, with conical roofs of reed, which are renewed every year after the wet season. Business of any kind goes on at sunrise, as the mid-day heat is insupportable. The greatest traffic there is in slaves.

On September 26th the army was at El Duem, from which the first aggressive march was made that day. The advanced column reported that there seemed to be sufficient water, but suffering and hardship were anticipated; also that the enemy seemed resolute, though the inhabitants, who number above 30,000, were flying.

The circuitous route to El Obeid is 230 miles—or a month's march. Much loss from sickness, thirst, and hardship ensued. The utmost vigilance was necessary; Hicks and his officers expected hard fighting to secure a successful result; but all were in the best spirits, despite the difficulties to be overcome.

On the 30th Hicks occupied an entrenched camp 30 miles south-west of El Duem. In consequence of the difficulty of inducing small bodies of troops to escort stores, as the Arab tribes were clustering on the line of march, the plan of establishing a line of fortified posts to maintain communication with the Nile as a base of operations was abandoned, and the army pushed on as rapidly as possible towards El Obeid.

“The camels are daily dying in considerable numbers,” telegraphed Mr. O'Donovan, “but we hope to be able to carry all the biscuits to the end. The enemy (now 12,000 strong) are reported

to be close by. They have sent a force to prevent the expected junction of the friendly Tegelli Arabs. So far, water has been mostly found on the surface. It is hoped for throughout. There will be no communication with the external world for the next few weeks.”

About the 10th October Colonel Farquhar reconnoitred for 30 miles in front of Hicks's camp, then 45 miles south-west of El Duem, and ascertained the pools were barely sufficient for a rapid march to Sarnaker, where wells were known to be.

The disaffected portion of the Kordofan through which they marched was found well-nigh deserted by all but women, children, and old men. All the young and able-bodied Arabs had joined the standard of the Mahdi.

From the moment that Hicks Pasha began his advance beyond El Duem, every report that reached Europe boded ill for the success of his expedition. The cry was still the same. The enemy was always near, but ever retiring; the heat was intense and the water becoming scarcer, as the troops were lured on through a dry and desert tract of Africa, where water was only to be found in the indentations of steppes, in which it dried up whenever rain ceased; and, amid all this, the unfortunate Hicks had to train his loosely-constituted army to the formations of the battle-field as he advanced.

At last, a Coptish Christian, disguised as a dervish, arrived at Khartoum with tidings that on the 3rd of November Hicks Pasha with his army was annihilated in a dreadful battle, the actual

details of which we shall never learn, "as only one man, described as a European artist, attached to the army, escaped to tell the tale."

This encounter was at a place called Kashgate, near El Obeid, though no such place appears in any ordinary map, and another account, in the *Daily News*, calls it Kamua.

From the account given by the Copt, Hicks divided his army in the advance on El Obeid from Melbas to Kasgil. As the two columns united, they were formed in square, with baggage in the centre, and, no doubt, cannon at the angles, to withstand the attack of the enemy, 300,000 strong, which is no doubt an Oriental exaggeration. The square was broken after three days' hard fighting, its living walls were dashed to pieces, and levelled under the feet of the furious conquerors.

The army of the Mahdi was composed of dervishes, Bedouins, and Mulattoes, with some regulars, many of whom had fire-arms, the rest swords and spears. The Mahdi sent on the dervishes first, declaring that they must vanquish with the aid of Heaven.

To fight three days in square would seem more like the defence of an entrenched position. Be that as it may, the conflict ended in the complete extinction of Hicks's army, of which, when the fugitive Copt left the field, he "counted a hundred and fifty seriously wounded, amongst whom was a European artist named Power."

These, doubtless, would soon be put to death.

Mr. Frank Vizetelly, of the *Graphic*,

and fifty soldiers, who were outside the fighting lines, came in, and were taken prisoners to El Obeid by the rebels (according to the *Times*); and 36 Krupps, Nordenfeldt, and mountain guns, with all the standards, camels, and munitions of war, fell into the hands of the Mahdi.

In the fight, "General Hicks charged at the head of his staff," says the *Times*. "They galloped towards a sheikh, supposed by the Egyptians to be the Mahdi. General Hicks rushed on him with his sword, and cut his face and arm. This man had on a Darfour mail shirt. Just then a club thrown struck General Hicks on the head, and unhorsed him. The horses of the staff were speared, but the officers fought on foot till all were killed. General Hicks was the last to die."

The Mahdi was not in this battle, but came to see his body; and, according to an Arab fashion, every sheikh thrust his spear through it as it lay on the ground.

Among those who served and perished with this ill-fated officer were Colonel Fraser, Lieutenant-Colonel Farquhar (late of the Grenadier Guards), Major Martin (late Captain in Baker's South African Horse, and commander of the Cavalry), Major Warren, Captains Massey (late of the Middlesex Regiment) and Forrestier-Walker, who commanded the Artillery, Dr. Rosenberg, Sergeant-Major Brodie (late Royal Horse Artillery), and several others, including 200 officers.

Major the Hon. J. Colborne escaped this slaughter by being on sick leave at

Cairo, as did Colonel Coetlogon (late 15th and 70th Regiments), who, before the fatal news arrived, had succeeded in clearing the White Nile district of the rebels, and was at El Duem, when a trustworthy sheikh in the Khedive's service arrived, and took him in safety to Khartoum, when he at once arranged

sympathies of the people, and was surrounded by the halo of victory.

Three days after the battle the Mahdi is reported to have gone over the battlefield, piercing with his spear the ghastly corpses of his enemies, and exclaiming, "It is I—I, the Prophet, who destroyed the heretic!" adding, that he alone was



COLONEL FARQUHAR, CHIEF OF HICKS PASHA'S STAFF.

for the defence of the city, and the repression of an expected revolt, by calling in all the outlying garrisons.

He and the *Times* correspondent were the only two Britons surviving in the Soudan, and by that time Kordofan was virtually lost. With Hicks's army the military resources of the Soudan were almost annihilated; and there seemed to be nothing to resist the onward progress of a Prophet (false or otherwise) who carried with him the

the only great and powerful Messiah, announced of old by Mohammed himself; that the Sultan of Constantinople was no more the supreme Caliph; that it was he—Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin; and he ordered his own name to be invoked in prayer, after that of Allah.

M. Marquet gives an explanation of the course of Hicks Pasha's army, gathered from the best evidence which could be collected at Khartoum, and



THE MARCH THROUGH THE DESERT.

we give it here for what it may be worth.

Four days prior to the battle, disputes arose between Hicks Pasha and Aladeen Pasha; the former, relying on a report made by Colonel Farquhar, proposed to take a route north of the mountains, direct on El Obeid; but the latter, deceived by the chief camel driver, proposed to adopt the southern route to Melbas, and to rest at a lake there before attacking. The parties eventually separated, each taking his column his own route. Hicks Pasha met and repulsed the enemy, but hearing firing in the direction of Aladeen Pasha's force, went to his succour. In the dark the two columns took each other for the enemy. There was a general confusion, and at daybreak, when exhausted and demoralised, the troops were easily surrounded and starved out by the hordes of the enemy.

M. Marquet discredited the first rumour that there were three survivors of the Egyptian force, which may be explained by the fact that the following Europeans were said to be in the camp of the Mahdi—Major the Baron von Seekendorf's servant, Klootz, who was wounded and taken on the field; Mr. Vizetelly, of the *Graphic*; an Austrian priest, who became a Moslem before the fall of El Obeid; and Georges Stamboulis, a Syrian renegade, who for two days had charge of the British Consulate at Khartoum, and had now joined the Mahdi, on whom he exercised considerable influence.

It was supposed that the evils con-

sequent on a dual command would be obviated by the appointment of the ill-fated Hicks Pasha as Commander-in-Chief of the army of the Soudan. In the meantime the agents of the Mahdi had been exceedingly busy, and an ominous murmur on all sides seemed to warn that an outbreak of greater dimensions was at hand; the last intelligence received being that the discontented of the entire country between Suakim and the Nile were in a state of fermentation, and assuming a threatening attitude.

Forty miles of telegraph wire were pulled down, so that there was no communication between Khartoum and Suakim, which, to all intents and purposes, may be deemed the harbour of the former city, as it was there that all supplies and reinforcements had to be landed. Besides, it was becoming apparent that should the insurrectionary movement spread to the north, and the wells along the route to Berber be filled up, the troops would find themselves in an awkward predicament, surrounded as they were by a hostile population.

About the time the army of Hicks was destroyed a spy was caught, trying to make his way to Berber. He proved to be one of the Mahdi's chief advisers, and the bearer of letters to several powerful sheikhs, calling upon them to rise in arms, with all their followers. He announced that the Mahdi had filled up, or otherwise destroyed, all the wells between the Nile and Bara, and that he had eighteen pieces of cannon at El Obeid.

As a specimen of the documents cir-

culated by the Mahdi, we may give extracts from one taken from this man, and signed by two ex-officers of the regular Egyptian army.

“In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate. Thanks be unto God, the Bountiful Ruler; prayers and salutations unto our Lord Mohammed, and to his people resignation. From the servants of God, Sheikh Mohammed Iskender and Sheikh Yusef Mansoor, formerly officers in the Kordofan army, now auxiliaries of the Mahdi (peace be unto him !), to all Muslim officers of the regular troops in Khartoum, and to the Bashi-Bazouks, and to civil employés from the rank of general down to that of second lieutenant. We warn you, oh friends, and counsel you conscientiously, by the traditions of the Prophet (peace and salutation unto him !). He has said, ‘The faith of man will not be perfect until he loves his brother as he loves himself.’ We have not been constrained to write you this our warning; but, fearing your worldly destruction and a bad end, we freely offer you advice.

“The Mahdi seeks nothing but God. He is kind, and speaks civilly to all. He abhors falsehoods, and his pride is to spread the glory of our religion. He fights in the path of God, and only with those who refuse to obey him. His daily life (peace be unto him !) is quite opposed to worldly matters, nor does he care for its enjoyments. He is simple in his diet and plain in dress. Kisaret dourra (millet) steeped in water is all that he eats. A plain shirt and trousers made from the native cloth is all that he wears. He is always smiling, and his face is as resplendent as the new moon. His body and form is of the sons of Israel, and on his right check is a mole (khal), and also other marks which are written in the books of the Holy Law are stamped upon him. He neither honours the rich for their riches nor does he neglect the poor on account of their poverty. All Muslims to him are equal.

“We and you, God willing, shall fight infidels, the enemies of the Faith. If you are believers in God and His Prophet, strengthen yourselves by rebellion, and avoid assisting infidels. And remember that victory comes from God, and He gives it to whom He pleases. With the numerous army of the Mahdi, which is about two hundred thousand fighting men, whose souls are offered to the Lord, we have also Remingtons, cannons, and rockets, which have been taken from the Turks, besides an ample supply of ammunition. The Mahdi (unto whom be peace !), however, trusts to God only, and will prevent

fighting by fire-arms, spears, and swords. He fights with and his connection with the angels is well known, as we well know from the history of Mohammed. If you still prefer worldly enjoyments, and insist upon fighting with us, you should remember what happened in the battles of Abba, Fashoda, Ghedeer, and Kordofan, and at the time his army was small, especially at Ghedeer, where he had no fire-arms nor weapons, when most of his followers had sticks only. By the great God, the God of all times, he has not bidden us to write this; but we ourselves do so of our own free will, fearing for your safety. We have begged Khalifa Ledceek and the Prince of the Mahdi’s army, Abdallah, son of Sayed Mohammed, to write this letter for us. Our Lord the Mahdi was opposed to its being written. For our sake he consented. The matter stands as we have explained, and we think it well of you to accept our advice. If you go against it you will repent; but your repentance will not avail you when destruction comes. Peace!

Seals of { SHEIKH YUSEF MANSOOR.  
          { SHEIKH MOHAMMED ISKENDER.

“El Obeid, 13th Shaban, 1300 (16th June, 1883).”

The Sheikh Yusef Mansoor and Mohammed Iskender Bey were officers of the Egyptian army in Kordofan, and prisoners in El Obeid.

When tidings of the disaster to Hicks’s army reached Cairo, it was decided, the regular Egyptian troops being too young for active service, to send the gendarmerie to Suakim. “It was naturally supposed, and with good reason,” wrote Major Giles (of that force), some of whose spirited sketches appeared in the *Graphic* at this time, “that the reserve regiments, being composed mainly of Turks, would be the backbone of such a force. Unfortunately, evil influences had been at work with the men, and it was with horror that the news was made known that they would not go to the Soudan. They had a certain amount of right on their side, having been promised, when they

were enlisted, that they should have to serve only in Egypt, and having been made a short time since, by a special decree of the Khedive, a civil instead of a military body. However, there the matter stood—the men could not be forced to go, and the only thing that remained was to call for volunteers.”

viewed as equal to a sentence of death.

It was estimated that Baker's force would amount to 3,000 men, to be exclusively employed in restoring communication between Suakim and Berber. The first column to start was composed of 600 Egyptian troops, with 100 mules



FRANK VIZETELLY, ARTIST OF THE "GRAPHIC" WITH HICKS PASHA'S EXPEDITION.

And more than once serious quarrels ensued between the latter and the Egyptian cavalry men on their way to the Red Sea.

None of the Egyptian officers refused to go, says the correspondent of the *Standard*, but many of them wept when they heard of their destination; and some of the Turkish officers had previously gone to Baker Pasha, and plainly refused to go to the Soudan, as their contract was for service in Egypt alone. Service in the Soudan they

(another account says 750 gendarmerie), which left Cairo on the 3rd December, under Colonel Sartorius.

Meanwhile a fresh disaster occurred near Suakim.

It would appear that the Nubian soldiery at Massowah had been growing very discontented of late at their inaction, and when the rebels were attacking some of the ports, the Governor of Suakim summoned them to the scene of the conflict; and as the rebels had been harassing the Egyptian outpost for



some days before, he sent out a body of 500 blacks, 200 Bashi-Bazouks, 20 cavalry, and a mountain gun, to make a reconnaissance. This was on the morning of Sunday, the 2nd December, 1883.

Towards four o'clock in the afternoon

major of the Blacks came in with ten of his men—eight of whom were severely wounded—and two officers, with six Bashi-Bazouks. These all reported that, on the enemy attacking, the Blacks formed one square and the



NIGHT ON THE RED SEA.

of the same day, a staff officer, with a few Bashi-Bazouks, returned to Suakim, and reported that they had found a few small bodies of the enemy in the plain, but had driven them off and pursued them into the hills, when, suddenly, an Arab gave a strange signal cry, and they found themselves surrounded by an overwhelming force, with which fighting was going on when his party left.

Later in the evening a sergeant-

Bashi-Bazouks another. The latter were first assailed and broken, on which the men fled wildly.

The Black square, while retreating, was also broken into; a general *mélée* and flight ensued, the Arabs pursuing fiercely with sword and spear; and, though the Egyptian troops were furnished with 200 rounds per man, they fired only ten.

The second party stated that they

had left the field at sunset, when the combatants could scarcely distinguish friend from foe, but that fighting was still in progress, a small body of the Blacks having taken up a separate position, which they were defending with desperation. Eventually they were overwhelmed, and only forty-five men escaped.

The *Standard* reported that above 700 Egyptian troops perished there within three hours' march of Suakim,

and that this was one day before the arrival of the first detachment of Gendarmerie sent from Cairo.

A despatch received there on the 10th confirmed the destruction of this battalion, and added that now Sennaar was in revolt; and the Austrian Consul-General at Cairo instructed the Consul at Khartoum to call upon the missionaries, all Austrian subjects, and others under his protection, to quit that city forthwith.



WAR-DANCE OF THE BARI TRIBE.

## CHAPTER IX.

## AT SUAKIM.

Mahmoud's Attempt to relieve Tokar--Death of Consul Moncrieff--The Mahdi and his Mission--Defeat of Baker at the Wells of El Teb--Disgraceful Panic of the Egyptian Soldiers--Suakim--Description of the Town--The Haddendowa Arabs--The Defences--Tidings from the Beleaguered Garrisons--A False Alarm--The Red Sea.

THE strength of Baker's relieving force has been variously stated. An Arabic official paper, *Wakaie-el-Missiye* (quoted in the *Standard*, under date 12th December), says it consisted of 2,300 Gendarmerie (of whom 500 were horse), 1,500 Black troops, 4,000 Bedouins, with three mitrailleuses and two mortars, and that this force was in addition to that at Suakim; that Colonel Sartorius was to command the Gendarmerie, and Zebehr Pasha the Black troops and half of the Bedouins, while the other half, under the command of Hussein Pasha Khalifa, were to proceed up the Nile *viâ* Korosko, enrolling recruits on the way, and that both forces were then to effect a junction between Berber and Suakim.

After sacrificing the best battalion of troops Egypt possessed in an inconsiderate and ill-ordered reconnaissance, which had failed even to relieve the garrison of Sinkat, the unwise Governor of Suakim was about to send forth the first relay of Gendarmerie to equally certain destruction, but was only stayed by the production of positive orders from Baker Pasha.

It seemed now to have become a melancholy military necessity to abandon the gallant garrison under Ibrahim Bey to its fate, as it was impossible with a small force to push

through the dangerous passes on the road, held as they were by more than 15,000 well armed and resolute men.

By their recent victories it was estimated that Arabs of the Nubian desert were in possession of at least 15,000 rifles, several cannon and mitrailleuses, and of many Egyptian captives able to teach the Mahdi's army the use of these formidable weapons of precision.

Before leaving Cairo, Baker Pasha had a banquet given him by the Europeans of the city. He was accompanied by Morice Bey (another ex-British officer), the Inspector of the Coastguard, as Paymaster of the expedition. Morice Bey, an energetic and capable Englishman, took with him a considerable quantity of wire to form entanglements, together with crows'-feet (that ancient device of Robert Bruce), and other inventions useful in carrying on war against barefooted savages.

But after all his care, anxiety, and energy, Baker's column behaved with less resolution than that of Hicks, when attacked on the 4th February, 1884, *en route* to relieve Tokar, as we shall relate in its place. Prior to his advance, a gallant attempt to relieve the beleaguered garrison there had been made in the beginning of the preceding November under Mahmoud Pasha

Tahir and Commander Lynedoch Moncrieff, R.N., H.B.M. Consul at Suakim.

From the proceedings of a court of inquiry into that catastrophe, it would appear that Mahmoud, though he formed his troops in square, neglected

court expressed some surprise that under such circumstances Mahmoud effected his own escape.

Commander Lynedoch Moncrieff was the son of the late Lieutenant-General Moncrieff, who died Provost of St.



CONSUL MONCRIEFF.

(From a Photograph by A. Bassano.)

the precaution of sending out scouts on his flanks and in front.

Consequently, while marching in this unguarded manner over ground covered by tall, waving weeds, his force was suddenly attacked by a large body of Arabs, some twenty or thirty of whom broke, sword in hand, into the square, and created a panic.

Mahmoud stated that Commander Moncrieff, who was by his side, shot four of these Arabs at the first onset before he fell mortally wounded. The

Andrews. He was only in his fortieth year, and left a widow and child.

While the inquiry was pending, Mahmoud was permitted to despatch a second force towards Tokar, but it was almost annihilated soon after leaving Suakim; and the troops of the Mahdi were now stated to be 300,000 strong, doubtless a great Oriental exaggeration.

According to the Koran, one of the seventeen signs of the end of the world is the coming of the Mahdi, or

“Director,” as prophesied by Mohammed. This person the Shiites believe to be now alive, concealed in some secret place, and assert that he was born at Sermanrai in the year 255 of the Hegira; but the Eastern world has seen more than one avowed Mahdi.

Among others, singular to say, a woman, the wife of Abu Cahdala, a

Soudan is thus a Mahdi,” he wrote; “but our religion teaches us that before the advent of the last Mahdi seven men shall successively rise in various parts of the Moslem world, and by religious propaganda shall prepare the way for him. Each of these seven men shall be called either Achmet or Mohammed. In my opinion this



FORTIFIED BRIDGE CONNECTING THE ISLAND OF SUAKIM WITH THE MAINLAND.

magician of the Tribe of Tamum, who obtained a great following in Yamama, and whose end is unknown. Another, whose name is familiar to the English reader, was Hakim Ebn Hashem, or the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan.

A learned Moslem, in a London paper for December, 1883, expressed some doubts whether the Mahdi of the Soudan believed in the holiness of his own mission.

“Any man who raises a religious enthusiasm and leads a host is a Mahdi or leader, and the present rebel in the

Soudan Mahdi is the third. Senoussi was the first, Arabi the second, and he the third agitator, bearing one or other of the prescribed names. The real Mahdi shall appear on Mount Arafat at the time of the Towaf, or sacred procession of the Haj. His coming will be foretold by the dumbness of the seven Imaums, who shall in turn attempt to recite the *Khutbet* (or Moslem creed), and fail. Then the Mahdi will ride out from the crowd of worshippers on a white horse, and he will at once be accepted by the whole

Moslem world. There will then remain forty years of domination of Islam after conquest, during which year Christ will come from Syria and rule our empire. Then we believe that our last decadence will set in, and some nation from the farther East will occupy our countries—probably the Chinese.”

In concert with the Mahdi's revolt in the Western Soudan, the whole of the tribes in the East broke out into open rebellion, completely environing the Khedive's garrisons in Sinkat, Tokar, and elsewhere; also menacing Suakim, where they were held in check only by the presence of our gunboats in the harbour.

When, on the 4th of February, the unfortunate, but gallant, Baker Pasha, leading the men he had tried so hard to train to the relief of Tokar, was attacked, even at the first sight of the yelling Arabs the miserable Egyptian soldiers refused to make the least attempt to defend themselves, but lay grovelling on their faces and screaming for mercy.

No efforts of General Baker, fronting them, and calling on them as he did, with a sword in one hand and a revolver in the other, could induce any of those who sought safety in wild flight and uncontrollable terror to turn round and face the enemy. They abandoned him, and he, with Colonel Fred Burnaby of the Guards, Major Harvey, Mr. Bewlay, and another officer, had to hack their way out and through a forest of Arab spears, alone and unattended.

Writing from the scene of action, Major Giles says, “Everything that

good management could do was done by Colonel Baker; he had marched in good order, and with every military precaution observed.”

Then describing the charge of some Turkish Cavalry on a body of mounted Arabs, whom Baker was to disperse, the major thus continues:—“After rallying them and getting them together, and while endeavouring to get in rear of the square which General Baker had formed on the enemy's attack, we found that a furious fire had been going on. For a moment we thought all was well, but in closing saw that the force had broken up, a stream of soldiers, camels, and horsemen making off. It seems that in less than a quarter of an hour the Egyptians forming the square had thrown away their arms and were in full retreat, and the battle was lost. Some of the Soudanese and Turks still fought on a hopeless fight. Baker Pasha himself rode slowly from the field, with a few mounted men round him. Close behind, and pressing hard upon the Egyptians, were the rebels, running along at an even jog-trot pace, stopping occasionally to stab or cut down the Egyptian soldiers as they came up with them. All around us the fugitive Egyptians had thrown away their arms, and had not even the pluck to attempt any self-defence, but allowed themselves to be slaughtered like sheep. The shooting, too, of the Egyptians, both cavalry and infantry (while they had their arms), was most dangerous, as they blazed off their rifles without putting them to their shoulders, and without the smallest

care which way the shot went. The conduct of the Egyptians was indeed disgraceful! Armed with rifle and bayonet, they allowed themselves to be slaughtered, without an effort at self-defence, by savages inferior to them in numbers, and armed only with spears and swords."

Such was Baker's defeat at the Wells of El Teb.

The seaport of Suakim, so much associated with the name and labours of Admiral Sir William Hewett, V.C., and K.C.B., was taken by the Turks in 1558, and made the seat of a Bashaw, who then ruled over the whole Red Sea, of which it was the emporium, and one of the richest cities of the East. De Castro, in the fifteenth century, considered it superior to every other city he had seen, except Lisbon; but since those days it has declined, and the beginning of the nineteenth century saw it a mass of ruins, and in lieu of stately argosies were only a few wretched Arab dhows. It is supposed to be the Soter Limen of Diodorus Siculus, and the Theon Soter of Ptolemy, according to the old "Edinburgh Gazetteer" of 1827.

It occupies an island near the end of a narrow, rocky, and shoaly inlet, twelve miles in length by two in breadth. Marmol, an ancient writer, states that the town once had kings of its own. It is separated from a suburb named El Geyf, on the mainland, by an arm of the sea five hundred yards wide, and as it affords anchorage for ships of any draught, there our gunboats lay.

The approach to the port is rendered dangerous by rocks, and its *core* or

mouth is so narrow as to render it impracticable to enter with any wind but a favourable one. The population is about 8,000, of whom 3,000 live on the island, and the rest in El Geyf. It has two slender minarets and three mosques, which—like the other edifices—being whitewashed, look better from the sea than they really are. On the island are the Custom House and Government Offices. On the mainland is the native town with its bazaar, the former consisting of huts, in many instances mere sunshades formed of branches and mats, the more permanent edifices being of sun-baked mud.

The natives are, for the most part, as black as negroes, but have a different type of features. The Haddendowas, to whom we may have often to refer, are remarkably handsome, with noses straight or aquiline, save in cases where there has been a mingling of race. In all cases their hair partakes of the woolly nature peculiar to the people of Western Africa.

Both sexes invariably have the head uncovered, the hair in the case of the men being made up with grease into a mass on the crown of the head, and hanging down behind with similar masses on either side. Through the former a long bone pin is stuck transversely.

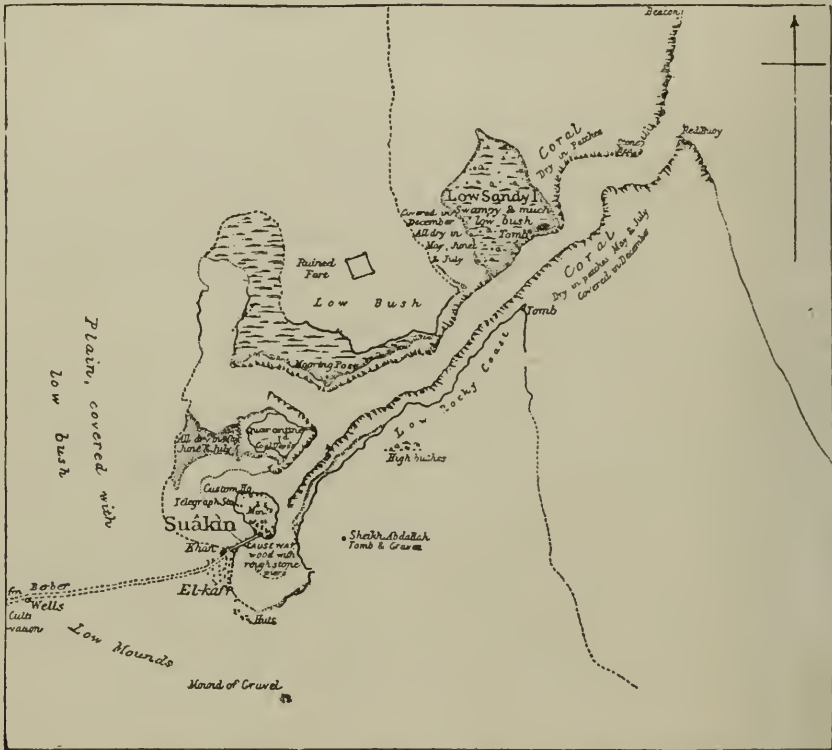
The hair of the women is plaited into tails a quarter of an inch in breadth, with frizzed ends, that only reach below the ears. Both sexes have three long vertical scars on either cheek as an ornament; but the backs and shoulders of some of the females are

symmetrically scarred, so that their skins resemble doublets of the sixteenth century.

Outside Suakim the dress of both male and female is of the scantiest nature, little girls wearing only a cinc-

the Crusaders ages ago. War dances are a favourite amusement of these Haddendowas.

Two or three hundred form a circle, in the centre of which sit a few men hammering on the heads of conical



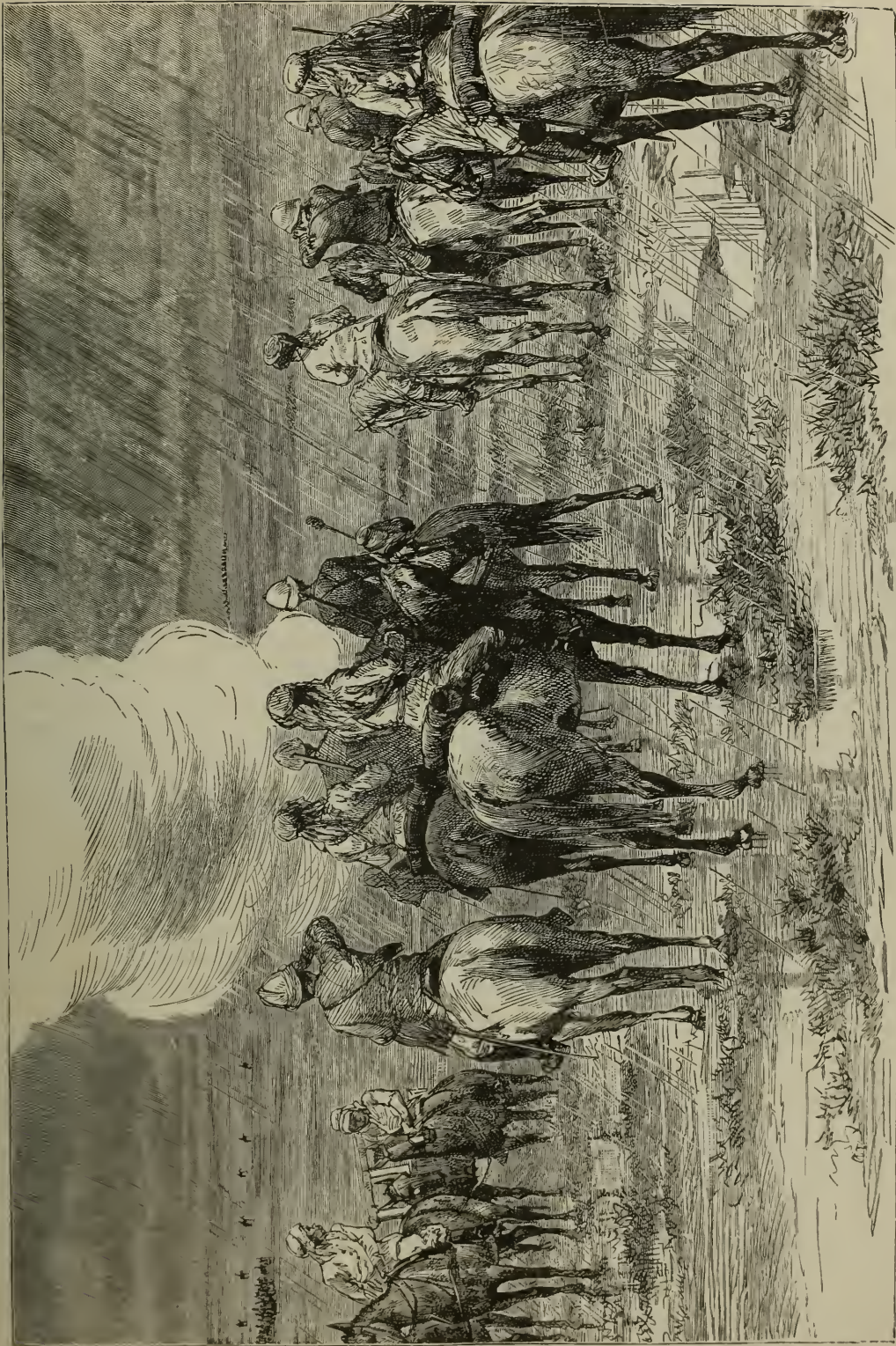
PLAN OF THE HARBOUR AND TOWN OF SUAKIM.

ture of slender thongs bound round the loins. The weapons of the adults are broad-headed javelins, swords, and frequently bows and arrows, with a leaf-shaped dagger. As a defence they carry a shield of hippopotamus hide, two feet in diameter, not on the arm, but in the hand, by which the handle is grasped. Their swords are long and straight, and, having cross hilts, have evidently been modelled after those of

drums. Each warrior takes a sword or lance, and, assuming a savage contortion of visage, goes through a series of bounds, cutting the while with the former, or stabbing with the latter.

Suakim is, nevertheless, an important trading place. It exports to Jeddah, Hodeda, and other Arabian ports, commodities received from Eastern and Central Africa, such as stones, gold, tobacco, incense, ostrich feathers, mats,





ATTEMPT OF THE EGYPTIAN TROOPS TO RELIEVE TOKAR (FEB. 4).

horses, and dromedaries. From Jeddah, and other places in Arabia, are imported Indian and other tissues, as dresses and ornaments for women, with household utensils, sugar, coffee, onions, dates, and iron for lance-heads and knife-blades. Many African Mohammedans visit Suakim on their pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina.

The town is connected with the mainland by a causeway, opposite to which was moored H.M. gunboat *Ranger*, with a Gatling in her top, and her larger cannon so levelled, that if the troops of the Mahdi attempted to gain Suakim by a rush, she could mow them down like grass if they ventured to come within range. "It only remains for me at present to repeat," wrote a correspondent at this crisis, "that unless Baker Pasha sends from Egypt some very much better troops than those already here, and well supplied with transport and commissariat, an advance into the interior will not be practicable for a long time to come, while the march to Berber and Khartoum must be postponed to the indefinite future. In the meantime, Sartorius Pasha, who has long Indian experience to aid him, is doing his best, with very indifferent material, and in spite of the covert opposition of Egyptian officials, to evoke some degree of order out of chaos."

He added, that with three gunboats, and its zone of defensive works, Suakim might be considered as secure. As completed by Baker Pasha, the defences were these:—

The main line of entrenchments, in

the shape of a fortified camp, encircled the suburb of El Geyf, beyond the above-mentioned causeway, at a radius of a thousand yards. The centre strength of the main line were Fort Euryalus, then manned by a Naval Brigade of 160 men, and Fort Carysfort, manned by 194 men. The Nubian Infantry held the entrenchments extending from the first-named fort to a redoubt which flanked them. Twelve small redoubts were formed at a radius of two thousand yards from the main line, each a quarter of a mile distant from the other, all having ditches and deep profiles.

The sharp crows'-feet, brought by Morice Bey, were thickly strewn in the vicinity of each and in the dry ditches. In each redoubt fifteen black soldiers were placed, with plenty of ammunition. A Krupp and a mountain gun armed the great Water Fort. The lesser Water Fort and the centre line were held by two companies. H. M. S. *Sphinx* (a composite vessel, built specially for service in the Persian Gulf) flanked the right of the external line; the gunboat *Decoy* flanked the left outer line; while the guns of the *Ranger* would, as stated, sweep the whole line of the causeway.

About the middle of December an attempt was made by Mahmoud Ali, a friendly chief, to pass some provisions into the half-famished garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar, but he failed, and had to return with his cattle to Suakim. He reported that the number of the enemy had so greatly increased that it was impossible to pass through them; that the Bishareen Arabs were joining

Osman Digna, the Mahdi's lieutenant, who was now in the vicinity of Suakim, with about 20,000 men, 1,200 of whom were armed with good Remington rifles, and well supplied with ammunition. The rest were said to be mere hordes armed with swords and spears, but whose courage and fanaticism rendered them most formidable antagonists to the timid and untrustworthy troops they meant to fight.

"It is said," reported the *Standard* at this time, "that the food of the garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar is now nearly exhausted, and that they will be able to hold out only for about another fortnight. Sinkat, in addition to the garrison and fighting men, contains upwards of a thousand women and children, and when the place falls there can be no doubt that all these will—as has happened in other towns captured by the Mahdi—be slaughtered."

He adds that he had often watched the Egyptian troops at drill; that the only movement they were capable of was forming square, after much shouting and confusion, and that the company officers were miserably inefficient.

It was fast becoming evident that the Mahdi would not be content with the victories he had won; that before many months the tide of invasion would roll down the valley of the Nile, and that a resolute advance on Khartoum would only be possible if attempted by a British, Turkish, or Indian Army.

Tidings came to Suakim on the 16th of December that the town would be attacked in the night by an over-

whelming force; and though its defence would be easy with trustworthy troops, the result seemed perilously doubtful with its present garrison.

Captain Nesham, R.N., of H.M.S. *Woodlark* (a double-screw vessel with three large guns), ordered the little squadron to throw shell over the open ground, across which the attacking force must come. The garrison were under arms the entire night, but no assault was made, the Arabs having been disconcerted by the flashing and booming of the guns, and the crashes of the shells as they exploded.

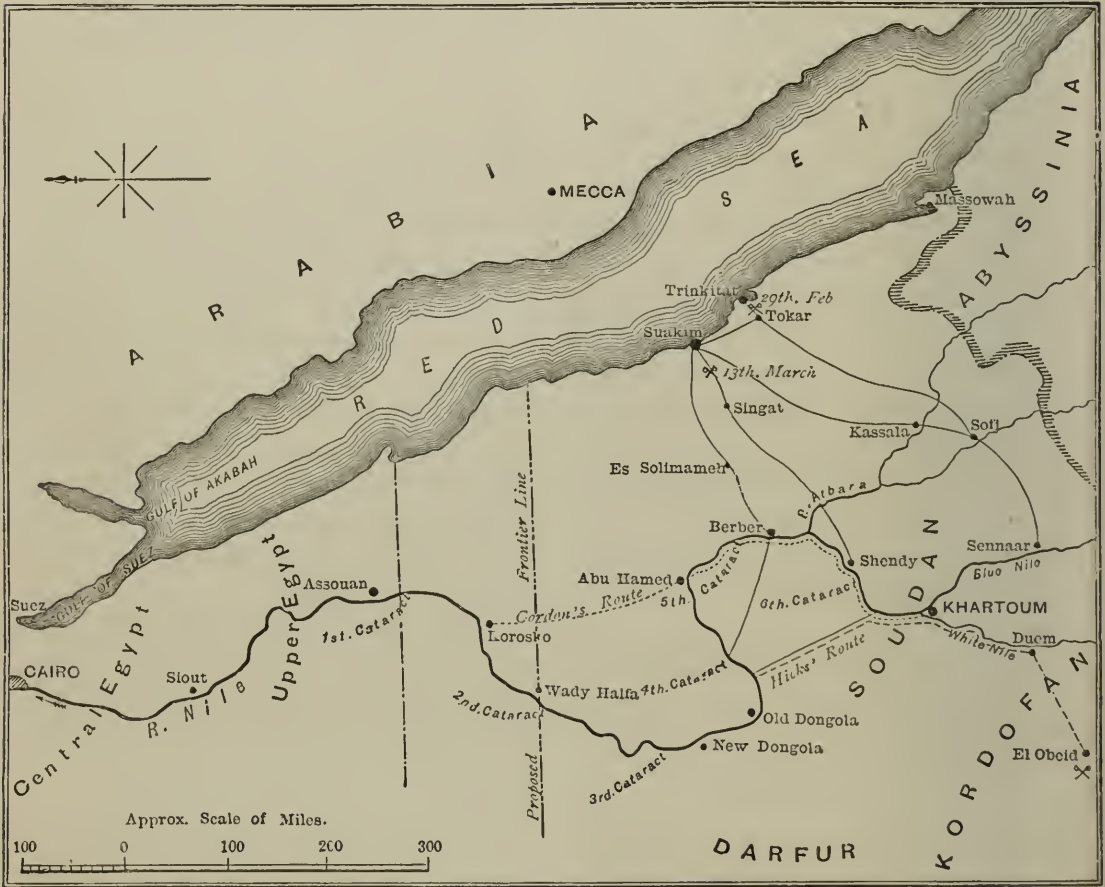
On the following day Admiral Hewett arrived, and assumed the command. He immediately had an interview with the Governor-General, Suliman Pasha, and informed him that the shipping would undertake the defence of the town, and leave him and his troops free for operations in the field.

Suliman failed to see much pleasure in this prospect, and expressed great anxiety for the safety of Massowah, on the Red Sea, then garrisoned by 2,442 of the Khedive's troops, as he feared the Abyssinians would take advantage of the situation and obtain possession of that island, which they coveted greatly, as it is the ordinary starting-point to the interior of Abyssinia, and the great outlet to the trade of that country; so Sir William Hewett agreed to send gunboats to Massowah without delay.

Then, with respect to the suggestion of taking the field, Suliman was compelled to admit that he had no confidence whatever in the troops under his

command; that three large columns of the enemy, flushed with recent victories, were not far distant from Suakim, the security of which would be imperilled if he attempted the relief of either

disciplined Black troops could establish order near Suakim, and overawe the tribes as far as the base of the mountains. Events soon proved that without large reinforcements it was impossible



MAP OF THE COUNTRY BETWEEN EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN.

Sinkat or Tokar, and that "in order to open the road to Berber," 50,000 Egyptian and Nubian troops would be necessary, with a force of 20,000 Sepoys, to hold the wells along the line of march.

On the other hand, General Sartorius was of opinion that one brigade of well-

disciplined Black troops could establish order near Suakim, and when the first day of his inspection ended the Admiral came to the conclusion that any forward movement would end only in massacre and disaster.

Osman Digna, the Mahdi's second in command, despatched a missive to the officer commanding in Tokar, summon-

ing him instantly to capitulate, adding that the garrisons in the Soudan were fast falling into the hands of his holy master, who was now about to invade Egypt, a rumour which made excitement spread far and fast along the shores of the Red Sea.

The origin of the name of this sea

Mount Sinai, the whole bay, of which that village is the port, red as blood, the open sea keeping its ordinary colour. The wavelets carried to the shore, during the heat of the day, a purple mucilaginous matter, and left it upon the sand, so that in about half an hour the whole bay was surrounded



OSMAN DIGNA MARCHING ON SUAKIM.

perplexed every new-comer, as at Suakim, Massowah, and elsewhere, its waters are of the deepest blue, unlike those of the Suez Canal, which are of the clearest green. Moquin-Tandon states, says a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "that the Red Sea was so called from the prevalence of a minute bright red plant, so small, that 25,000,000 find room to live in one square inch. He quotes a passage from Ehrenberg, who tells us that he saw from Tor, near

by a red fringe, which—on examination—proved to consist of myriads of tiny fibres about the twelfth of an inch long—namely, the red trichodesmium: the water in which they floated was quite pure." To the Hebrews it was known as the *Yam Súph*, or sea of sedge. By the Greeks in the earliest times the name of *Red Sea* was applied to the whole Indian Ocean, including both the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, then and afterwards styled the Arabian Gulf.

## CHAPTER X.

## OSMAN DIGNA.

Sketch of Osman's Family and Life—The Meeting under the Sycamore Tree—Progress of the Revolt—State of Tokar—Parade of the Forces in Suakim—Colonel Giles's Skirmish—The Story of the Black Nun—The Mahdi's Brother-in-law—British Protectorate at Suakim—Spread of the Insurrection—A Brave Arab Boy.

OSMAN ALI, or, as he is sometimes called, Abubekr Digna, the Emir of the Mahdi, is stated by a writer in the *Daily News* to be the grandson of a Turkish merchant and slave dealer, who settled at Suakim in the beginning of the present century, and consequently before the seaport passed to Egyptian rulers. Ahmed Agaël Digna, as he was named, married a woman of the Haddendowa tribe, and in accordance with the custom of these semi-nomads, the children born of this marriage assumed the nationality of their mother, and Ahmed Aga's eldest son, Abubekr, was regarded as a pure Haddendowa. To his two sons Osman and Ahmed he bequeathed a prosperous business in European cottons and cutlery, and also in *djellabs*, as the slave-dealers term their human wares.

When the brothers succeeded, the house was in the zenith of its prosperity at Suakim, in the suburbs of which was the garden of Osman, "where nowadays the British soldier off duty, and with his hands in his pockets, may be seen smoking the pipe of contemplation." The Suakim branch of the business was managed by Ahmed, but Osman, being active and restless, was the travelling partner, and procured gum, ivory, pepper, and slaves, to be sold at various places inland, or men

on board the dhows of the firm, for sale in Arabia.

He thus became acquainted with the leaders in Egyptian politics, and those movements which, though not culminating in revolt till 1881-2, were distinctly recognisable three years before. He detected the spirit of rebellion that was spreading through the inner Soudan, especially its south-western regions, which were studded with the zeribas, or fortified camps, of Zebehr Pasha and other chiefs, when pursuing their man-hunting expeditions.

About the year 1870 the prosperity of the Digna family began to wane, and one of the causes of its earlier good fortune suggests rather unflattering reflections on Turkish rule generally. Osman's brother had filled, for several years, the office of sheikh of the mercantile community at Suakim. As such he was the intermediary between that body and the Government, and had abundant opportunity of assisting his own firm in the sale of slaves.

He was, however, suspended in office, and about the same time sustained serious losses, when some of his dhows, laden with slaves, were captured on their voyage to Jeddah by a British cruiser, and Suakim became so closely watched that his caravan leaders had to deposit their captives, by twos or

threes, at solitary spots on the shore, for transmission across the Red Sea, as opportunities offered.

Anon came the Anglo-Egyptian slave Convention, to the disgust and dismay of the free-traders in human flesh; and it was then that Osman Digna, reduced to poverty and despair, began his first schemes of rebellion. "The spot where this occurred is the prettiest in the neighbourhood of Suakim. It is close to a splendid sycamore-tree, which overshadows the principal well from which Suakim is supplied, and over which, in the rainy season, it seems to float like a Brobdingnagian green bouquet. To this spot, about a mile from the town, Osman Digna invited some of his friends to a secret conference," and he harangued them in a violent speech.

He denounced the alliance of a Mohammedan Power like Egypt with Frankish infidels, and predicted the commercial ruin of the Soudan if the slave trade were prohibited. He further suggested on that very night that they should surprise and disarm the weak garrison in Suakim, and, suddenly producing a Koran, invited all to swear eternal fellowship with him in the enterprise of revolt and revenge.

"The Haddendowas, the Amarars, the Beni Amers, and all the tribes of the Eastern Soudan," said Osman Digna, "will support us!"

But on this occasion Osman's friends stared and smiled at him in doubt and perplexity, and one suggested that it would be wiser to petition Ismail Pasha. Then Osman screamed with passion.

"Ismail is a Frank!" he exclaimed; "he is a traitor to the Prophet, and has leagued with the Infidels to destroy the customs of Islam; and the Christians wish the liberation of our slaves, that they may possess them."

Finding his hearers still obdurate, or indifferent, he cursed them bitterly, and turned his steps towards the Erkowet Mountains, the summits of which are visible from Suakim, thirty miles distant.

"This," says the correspondent we quote, "is, in its main features, the story which its present writer gathered at Suakim. During the next six years Osman appears to have been engaged in travelling about the Soudan, extending his visits to Khartoum and beyond it."

He was somewhere in the Central Soudan when, in the summer of 1881, Mohammed Achmet, from his retreat at Abba, in the White Nile, proclaimed himself the true Mahdi, and the moment the insurrection was started Osman cast his lot with him. By the capture of El Obeid, in 1883, the Mahdi gained a holy influence and military reputation, which subsequent events greatly enhanced.

In the spring of 1883, Osman Digna, his head busy with schemes and his heart inflamed with rancour, reached El Obeid, and paid his reverence to "God's Prophet," and left it, with the title of his Emir, with letters for the tribal sheikhs, who were ordered to obey the authority of Osman.

The latter was now joined by his brother Ahmed, who had sold all the little that remained of their property

at Suakim; but a more influential ally came—the Sheikh Mohammed Tahir, originally of Damer, a district near Berber. Many slave-dealing chiefs joined in the movement for obvious reasons,

of Khartoum, laughed at Osman, and until it was too late, despised the many warnings he received, and jokingly called him a *magnoon*, *i.e.*, ape, or fool, and said that the Haddendowas, des-



LANDSCAPE ON THE BLUE NILE.

others from genuine religious fervour, and some from tribal and dynastic motives. Sheikh Tahir had a great reputation for piety, and was always surrounded by crowds, desirous of kissing his hands, his feet, or the edge of his raiment.

Suliman Pasha, the Governor-General

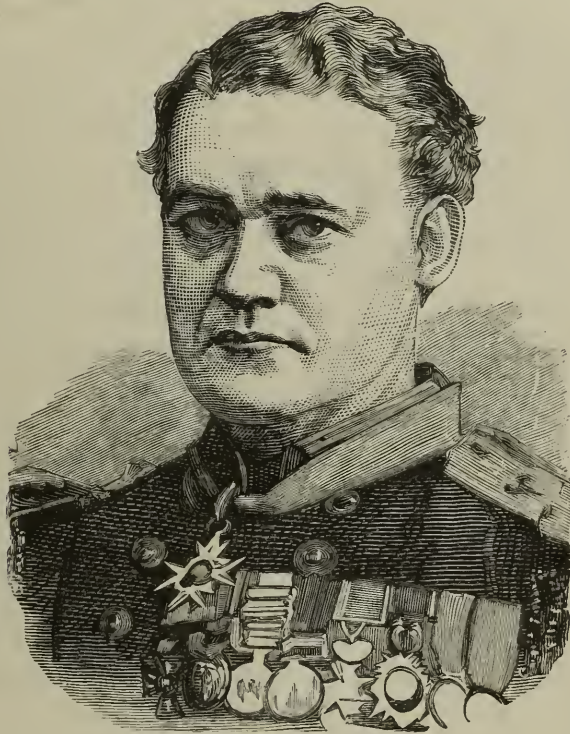
pite their swords and spears, were no better than sheep.

“Up to that time a crowd of Haddendowas would have cowered at the sight of an Egyptian with a gun on his shoulder. But the time was near when a multitude of Egyptian warriors would bolt for dear life at the sight of a



solitary Haddendowa. This sudden change in the conduct and spirit of the Haddendowas is perhaps the most extraordinary fact in the new history of the Soudan. The change can be explained, but the explanation is too long

troops near the black glistening rock not far from Tamai, which Mr. F. Scudamore, one of the correspondents with General Graham's army last year, appropriately named after the Egyptian leader, Mount Kassim" (*Daily News*).



ADMIRAL SIR W. HEWETT.

for our present space. In the month of August, 1883, Osman Digna, with his friend, Sheikh Tahir, appeared in the Erkowet Hills, and in the Mahdi's name issued his proclamations and warnings to the tribal sheikhs and the officials of the Egyptian Government. Just at the time—November 4 or 5, 1883—when General Hicks's army was perishing of thirst, and under the spears and fire of the Arabs at Kashgil, Osman Digna's band was slaughtering the Egyptian

On the 27th of December, 3,300 Egyptian troops made their way into Khartoum from Fashoda, the chief Government station in the Shillook country, which was finally subjugated by Egypt only in 1870, and is already the centre of a considerable trade, in which raw cotton forms a principal staple. They met no resistance, singular to say, having found the route by which they marched perfectly quiet, and raised the garrison to 4,000 men.

By the destruction of Baker's force, the situation of Tokar became more than ever desperate, and the commander wrote that it was impossible for it to become worse. The wells outside the town had been filled by the enemy, and those within were foul and brackish. The troops were suffering from diarrhœa, and a capitulation within three days was imminent. They had been without grain for three months; had neither meat nor ghee; had only from ten to twenty rounds per man in their pouches, and were fired on day and night by the enemy.

On the 13th of February General Gordon had left Berber. Before quitting Cairo he had telegraphed to Khartoum, telling the troops to be not afraid, as he was coming, and on the 18th he was in the city, and issued the proclamation to the people which remitted taxation and—to the surprise of people in Britain—partly sanctioned the slave trade!

The state of Sinkat was nearly as desperate as that of Tokar. Sir William Hewett now commanded the entire littoral of the Eastern Soudan, and after the arrival of H.M. turret-ship *Monarch*, the land forces, British and Egyptian, were placed under the command of the Lieutenant-colonel of our Marines.

On Christmas Day, 1883, there was a grand parade of all the troops in Suakim. Altogether there were on the ground 1,300 Infantry of the Gendarmerie; 400 Egyptian Infantry of the Line; 400 Foot Bashi-Bazouks; 47 European Police; 400 Mounted Gendar-

merie; 100 Turkish Cavalry; 90 Mounted Bashi-Bazouks; with 200 Egyptian Artillery. Incessant drill had wrought a wonderful improvement, and the credit of all this was due to British officers.

General Sartorius was appointed to command the force, acting under Baker Pasha as Commander-in-chief, with Colonel Harrington as Chief of the Staff. A native runner from Sinkat succeeded in getting through the troops of the Mahdi, and arrived at Suakim with a letter from Tewfik Bey, who now wrote that by existing upon the most slender rations, he might hold out until the 23rd of January. He had never ceased to display the most indomitable spirit, and was a man of very different mettle from the majority of Egyptian officers.

Colonel Giles, who commanded the Cavalry, about this time made a reconnaissance thirteen miles into the interior, to where the Black troops had been annihilated; and while his party were examining the half-decayed and half-devoured bodies, the enemy were seen coming on in force, keeping up a scattered fire, and plunging into ravines, as if to cut off his line of retreat. As he was not to risk his command, he fell back upon Suakim, estimating the attacking force at 1,000, with 5,000 in their rear, and these with the forces blocking up Sinkat and Tokar made about 15,000 men.

On the 3rd of January, 1884, the German Consul-General at Cairo received a telegram from Khartoum stating that a Black nun had arrived there

from El Obeid after a twenty-one days' journey, having left that place on the 6th of December with a caravan. She declared that not one Egyptian soldier escaped the massacre, and that the only European prisoner brought in was the servant of Baron Seckendorf, a Pomeranian Uhlan. According to her report, the Mahdi spent his whole time in reviewing forces, and preparing his commissariat for a final attack on Khartoum.

About the same time Berber was attacked by 4,000 Bishareen Arabs, who were repulsed by the Bashi-Bazouks, but this evinced that the revolt was assuming dangerous proportions.

The brother-in-law of the Mahdi was now brought a prisoner to Cairo, having been captured at Esneh, a place, according to McCoan, famous only for a numerous colony of *ghawázee*, or dancing girls. He denied that the Mahdi assumed any apostleship, and asserted that he was only in arms to defend his native country from the foreign invaders, whose part the British had taken; against exorbitant taxation, and the suppression of a trade which he deemed just—that in slaves—all of which causes were reducing the Soudan to beggary. His statements created a painful impression at Cairo, and the Khedive expressed a wish in consequence to send an emissary to treat with him through his Tripoli ally, Sheikh Senoussi; but fear of his fanatical character made all who were offered it decline the perilous mission: It was evident that a wide-spread propaganda against the foreigner

had been preached in Africa, and the most serious consequences were apprehended.

By the 10th of January tidings came to Suakim that 8,000 of the Mahdi's men, under Osman Digna, were encamped among the hills about eleven miles distant, and that he could, at any moment, concentrate 28,000 men to oppose any attempted relief of Sinkat.

At that very time the Ministry of War at Cairo had drawn up a statement on the subject of the total evacuation of the Soudan. It said, that at that crisis there were 21,000 Egyptian troops with eighty-four guns between Gondokoro and Dongola in Upper Nubia; that the removal of the stores at Kassala and Khartoum would require 4,000 camels, or 6,000 if the war supplies along the Abyssinian frontier were to be withdrawn. This report added, that a march from Berber to Wady Halfa, through the desert, was a physical impossibility, and, as the homeward journey would be by the Nile, 1,300 boats would be necessary.

We have related how Baker's force, after all his toil and care, in attempting to drill and discipline it at Suakim, was routed at El Teb on the 4th of February, 1884, and while the spies of the enemy were hovering close round the town, he held a melancholy parade of the remnants that had escaped.

On that occasion a mixed battalion of Egyptians and Nubians, which had come from Cairo, refused to obey orders of any kind. On this, Baker surrounded them by a Soudan battalion, compelled the mutineers to lay down their arms,

and marched them to the edge of the water, when, with Sir William Hewett's

from the President of the Council at Cairo, he was appointed Civil and



NATIVES READING THE PROCLAMATION OF THE BRITISH PROTECTORATE, SUAKIM.

consent, they were lodged on board the *Orontes* troopship as prisoners.

On the 10th of February the Admiral notified by proclamation that, in accordance with a telegram received

Military Governor of Suakim by the Government of the Khedive, consequently he declared the town to be in a state of siege and under martial law.

On the following day Baker had

another parade of all the troops he could muster, for the inspection of Sir William Hewett. On the ground were 3,000 men, and their apparent steadiness was wonderful, considering the recent disastrous exhibition they had made at the Wells of El Teb.

Before the beginning of February the insurrection was spreading southwards as rapidly as northwards. Mr. Schuver, formerly a correspondent of the *Standard* in Albania, was barbarously murdered at Bahr Gazal (in South Kordofan), and the Governor of that



SOUDANESE SLAVE.

Half of those present were Nubians, and Baker, while re-officering them from their own ranks, awaited with impatience the arrival of those British officers who had volunteered to command battalions and brigades.

All this time the camp of the enemy, under Osman Digna, was distinctly visible from the tops of the *Euryalus*. It was about nine miles distant, at the brow of the hills that overlook Suakim.

place, an ex-Austrian officer, urgently demanded reinforcements. He had under his orders only 1,000 troops, regular and irregular. Matters seemed desperate everywhere.

The Austrian Consul at Khartoum, writing to the President of the Oriental Museum at Vienna, gave it as his opinion that the Egyptian power over Central Africa was at an end. "Kordofan and Darfour are already lost,

and Fashoda and Farokl are forsaken by the Egyptian garrisons. There has been no communication with Lado since April, and the steamer which left last June for Mishr-Reck has never returned. The reinforcements which are expected to arrive here from Suakim may suffice for the defence of Khartoum, but will not prevent the rebels starving out the garrison, as was the case last year at El Obeid. As for me I must face the utmost danger, unless I relinquish all I possess; and, if the Mahdi knows how to take advantage of the occasion, he will—before twelve months have passed—proclaim himself Ruler over the Eastern Soudan in the Palace of Khartoum.”

A circular issued before the middle of February, by the Secretary of State for War in London, announced that the Commander-in-chief had approved of officers on full pay being seconded for service under the Egyptian Government—a false system, by which their regimental duties were thrown upon others. Every officer taking service in Egypt was to be master of the French language, and able to pass an examination in Arabic within six months of his engagement. He was to be free to quit the Egyptian service on giving three months' notice.

Pay at the following rates (sterling) was to be issued monthly in arrear:—Cavalry: One Commandant, £750 per annum; one second in command, £550 per annum. Artillery: Colonel commanding, £1,000 (he will command also the batteries officered by Egyptians); Commandants, each £600. Infantry:

Brigadier, £1,200; Commandants, each £750; second in command, each £550. Supplementary: Officers for Cavalry, Artillery, and Infantry, each £450. Officers for Regimental Duties: One Commandant, £750; one second in command and Adjutant, £550. No quarters were to be expected by any of these officers.

Two examples of the value of the Egyptians for fighting purposes were shown about this time.

Colonel Slade went to the Abbassieh Barracks at Cairo, to superintend the departure of a battalion from Suez. Inspired by fear they refused to go, unless with Zobeir Pasha, who had enlisted them. On being told they would find him at Suez, they next loudly refused to move, unless with two months' pay in advance. Colonel Slade thereupon called for a force of Cavalry, under Major Kitchener, who drove the Infantry to the station, and posted pickets to prevent desertion. Finally, after five hours' delay, the train started.

The other instance was when an Egyptian vessel of war was sent to Trinkatat, the port of Tokar, as a moral support to the garrison of the besieged place, which lies fifteen miles inland. The ship was fired on in the night by some Arab riflemen. Her crew responded with their heavy guns, and in the morning steamed away, her officers considering “the position untenable.”

That the spirit of the Arabs was very different was evinced on every occasion. A boy of fifteen, a spy, was discovered outside the camp at Suakim,

lying on the sand. He was surrounded, and fought desperately with his spear, till he was bayoneted and borne to the ground, bleeding with wounds, from which he was not expected to recover. His courage excited the admiration of his captors. When asked if he wanted anything, he replied, "Let me spear one Egyptian before I die!" "This is a good example of the spirit animating the people whom we are going to fight with our inferior troops," says the correspondent of the *Standard*.

The natives in and about Suakim naturally kept Osman Digna informed of all that went on within Admiral Hewett's lines. "We lately made a camp—or zeriba, as it is called—a few miles outside," wrote the correspondent of the *Telegraph*, "advancing to disperse the rebels near the place, but they knew the night before of our intentions." Osman Digna quietly called his head men, and said, "Not all the

dogs are coming out this time. Leave them alone, for later they will advance all together, and then their annihilation will be certain."

On the 9th of February a heart-rending letter came from Tewfik, the gallant commander in Sinkat. At the time he wrote he was ignorant of Baker's defeat, and he implored that assistance might be sent to him. The men were now starving, and chewing the leaves of the trees to allay the pangs of hunger; and they had at least 1,000 women and children with them. This letter was read by the British officers with emotions of pity, humiliation, and indignation, impossible to describe.

"The fact that no British troops have been sent down to relieve Sinkat and Tokar," says a correspondent, "causes a general belief among the natives that Britain cannot wish to save the Egyptian towns and garrisons from the Mahdi."





TEWFIK BEY, THE DEFENDER OF SINKAT.

## CHAPTER XI.

### LORD WOLSELEY'S DESPATCH.

The Sortie from Sinkat—Fall of the Place—British Marines Landed at Suakim—Night Attacks—Strength of the Soudan Garrisons—Lord Wolseley's Despatch—Preparations to relieve Tokar—More Mutineers—Wreck of the *Neora*.

ON the evening of the 13th February, 1884, there came to Suakim the bitter but long-expected tidings of the fall of the heroic garrison, who had so long defended Sinkat against such overwhelming odds, and the narrow streets of the town, and those of its suburb El Geyf, were filled with crowds of women, wailing, weeping, and casting dust and ashes upon their dishevelled heads.

Tewfik Bey, the brave defender, is reported to have pointed out "that by a vigorous sortie they might save themselves, while by remaining longer all must die in a few days of hunger, as flight would then be impossible."

Ere this crisis came the last bones of the starving street dogs had been cooked and gnawed there. Tewfik, having inspired his men with his own bright courage, gave his stores to the flames, spiked the guns, blew up the magazines, and making all fill their pouches to the number of 600, he put himself at their head, sword in hand.

Forth came the famished and desperate sortie, and while yells rent the welkin, down rushed the hordes of Osman to the attack with sword and spear. Tewfik and his soldiers fought nobly, but in vain. By one tremendous rush the Arabs shrivelled up their hollow square,





WOMEN IN THE STREETS OF SUAKIM BEWAILING THE FALL OF SINKAT.

a general massacre ensued, and scarcely a man escaped.

Two hundred Royal Marines were landed at Suakim on the 15th of February from H.M.S. *Carysfort*, and marched through the town, when their steady and disciplined aspect produced an excellent impression upon the people, accustomed as they were to the loose-looking Khedivial troops; and, at the same time, Admiral Hewett telegraphed to Bombay, for the military authorities there to buy up all the water-skins that could be procured, and forward them by steamer, as it was now evident that a British expedition against the Mahdi was about to be prepared at last.

The Marines, with the seamen, occupied a detached fort outside the town, well supplied with water and in a strong position.

With a large supply of cannon, discovered in possession of the Governor, General Baker had now at his disposal 3,000 muskets, 400 rifles, and 540 carbines. He could thus arm a considerable force, were worthy men obtainable.

Five men of the Sinkat garrison, with a few women, now made their way into Suakim, and confirmed the report of the massacre, adding that Osman and other insurgent leaders had promised to spare the lives of those in Sinkat, provided that Tewfik was surrendered to their mercy.

The troops to form the proposed relieving column would require to bring everything requisite for the field with them, except 200 horses, ridden by Baker's runaway troopers, which would be of some service in mounting the Hussars, who were coming from India.

Mahmoud Ali, the chief of some friendly tribes, warned Admiral Hewett to be on his guard against a night assault, as Osman Digna, who still occupied the mountains near Suakim, had announced his intention of attacking the town with the guns he had captured from Baker's force.

Accordingly, on the night of the 17th February, a strong body of the enemy came close to Suakim, and for two hours fired heavily into the camp, where many of their bullets passed through the headquarter-tents; but when dawn came in they drew off, and from the mast-heads of our gunboats large bands of them could be seen retreating over the sandy plain in the direction of the mountains.

Mahmoud Ali now sought permission of Sir William Hewett to join Osman Digna, for the alleged purpose of learning his plans, and of sowing discord in his ranks; but as he was shrewdly suspected of endeavouring to keep in good odour with both parties, his curious request was declined for the present.

On the 18th there was another *alerte*.

Baker Pasha reported to the Admiral that native scouts had come in to state that the enemy were mustering for an assault at eleven o'clock that night. To meet this, a boat's crew, with a Gatling gun, was sent to protect the causeway and the Custom House, and while Baker's 3,000 men got under arms, a Naval Brigade, amid the silence and good order peculiar to our seamen, fell in with muskets and cutlasses, in their shore-going kits; but on this occasion, as on several others, the alarm passed off.

“ I must remark,” wrote a correspondent at this time, “ that it is scandalous that the ships of war on the Indian station are not fitted with the electric light. Had the vessels now here (at Suakim) possessed this apparatus, an attack would have been impossible. It is unfortunate that the French ships have not arrived. They would certainly have electric lights, for the French men-of-war (unlike ours) are always well supplied with modern scientific apparatus, while the apathy of our own naval authorities as to such matters is lamentable.”

However, Osman Digna, by permitting the night of the 18th February to pass without making an attack, lost for ever the chance of capturing Suakim by assault, as the troops to compose the British expedition began to arrive fast, but not until affairs were as black and as desperate in the Soudan as they could well be.

According to a tabular statement, given by Sir Evelyn Baring to Lord Granville, at the end of the year 1883, the following is a list of the principal garrisons in the Soudan. But many small places, such as Sinkat and Tokar, are not recorded in it.

1.—On the Nile, north of Khartoum :—				
			Men.	
Old Dongola ...	...	...	897	
Berber ...	...	...	616	
			—	1,513
2.—At Khartoum ...				2,490
3.—Eastern Soudan :—				
In Suakim ...	...	about	1,800	
Kassala ...	...	...	1,259	
Amadeh ...	...	...	881	
Sennaar ...	...	...	3,891	
Kalabat ...	...	...	593	
			—	8,424

4.—Darfour :—				Men.
El Fasher ...	...	...	...	4,863
5.—On the White Nile :—				
El Duem ...	...	...	...	1,087
El Koweli ...	...	...	...	500
Fashoda ...	...	...	...	2,131
				—
6.—Bahr Gazal ...	...	...	...	886
7.—Equatorial Province :—				
Gondokoro ...	...	...	...	2,131
				—
Total ...	...	...	...	24,025

This is exclusive of the troops at the following stations :—

Massowah ...	...	...	...	2,442
Senhit ...	...	...	...	1,571
Ghizeh ...	...	...	...	501
Hanar ...	...	...	...	3,595
Berhera ...	...	...	...	306
				—
Total ...	...	...	...	8,415

Among the British officers who fell in this desultory and ill-omened war was Captain Barton, late of the 1st Dragoon Guards, who had served in the Zulu Campaign, and in that against Arabi Pasha. He was killed at Trinkatat early in February.

On the 12th of the month the following despatch to the General commanding our Army of Occupation in Egypt was issued by Lord Wolseley :—

“ The forces to collect at Suakim with the object of relieving the Tokar division, if it can hold out; if not, of taking any measures necessary for the defence of posts.

“ General Graham to command the forces. Redvers Buller to command the Infantry Brigade, and to be second in command. Herbert Stewart to command all mounted troops.

“ The two last named, and Wauchope, deputed Assistant Adjutant-General, to start to-night. Select other staff officers—as required—immediately. Make arrangements at once, settling all details yourself.

“ Select the three best battalions in your command, with the 2nd Fusiliers now in the *Junna*, and the

battalion of Marines, to form the Infantry Brigade under Buller. If you deem it advisable, bring the garrison of Alexandria to Cairo while the expedition lasts. Report if you wish to do so, as orders will be sent to the Fleet to hold Alexandria temporarily. Whilst so held, a naval officer will command there.

“The 19th Hussars, 19th Infantry (*sic*), and any reliable native horsemen now at Suakim, to constitute the native force under Stewart. Complete

troops. Employ camels as much as possible. The baggage to be on the lowest scale, as the troops ought to be back in Cairo in three weeks. Obtain from the Egyptian Government means for carrying water on camels. Turn your best attention to the carriage of water.

“Stretchers of three or four per company, and make best arrangements you can for the conveyance of the wounded. Tents to accompany the force to



BRITISH WAR-VESSEL FIRING FROM SUAKIM ON THE REBELS.

the 19th from country horses, leaving behind, for a time, the English horses with the Egyptian Cavalry.

“One garrison battery of the Royal Artillery to take over guns, equipment, camels, and camel drivers from Woods’ camel battery. If it has started from Cairo, it must be started back at once for this purpose. It can take the ordinary field guns with it up the Nile. Send one of its officers with the camel drivers. Baring will give the necessary authority. Admiral Hewett will furnish machine guns, manned by sailors if required. Do not send field guns on any account with the expedition.

“Regimental transport to be taken with the

Suakim or Trinkatat, as the case may be. The troops to bivouac on the line of march.

“Provisions for men and horses for a fortnight to be embarked. Arrange for sending (more?) on afterwards for one or two more weeks. The naval authorities may be indented on (*sic*) for first need to be landed from the ships. All sea transport to be arranged with the naval authorities.

“Three months’ supply of groceries for 6,000 men, and a reserve of 180,000 lbs. of preserved meat, and 400 tons of forage, will be shipped from Britain immediately. You will telegraph any further arrangements.

“Send your best doctor as principal medical

officer. Two hundred and fifty rounds per man besides seventy in pouch, and furnish every man with an ample puggaree. The 10th Hussars from the *Jumna* will be lauded to protect Suakim, and a few of them might be mounted, as it is desirable to be strong in cavalry. Order all good horses now there to remain for this purpose, and tell Parr to do his best to obtain land transport.

“The naval officer commanding at Alexandria to

Colonel Taylor as Brigade-Major of Cavalry was confirmed. Major Wodehouse and Lieutenant Carter, in obedience to the above orders, were to take the Egyptian Camel Battery, manned by 120 native volunteers.

Admiral Hewett had orders leaving



ARAB PRISONERS, GUARDED BY BASHI-BAZOUKS, THROWING UP ENTRENCHMENTS ROUND SUAKIM.

arrange for conveyance from Suez to Suakim. Communicate with him at once. Two medical and two commissariat officers will start at once for service in your command. All confidence is felt in your judgment and experience to settle all necessary details. Communicate this to Sir E. Baring and Hewett at once, and arrange details with the latter.

“The greatest publicity to be given to the determination to relieve Tokar by British soldiers.”

Colonel Green was now added to the strength of the Intelligence Department at Cairo, and the appointment of

him free to attempt the relief of Tokar as soon as he considered himself strong enough to move. If the garrison was in extremity, it was supposed he would advance as soon as possible; but if it could hold out a little longer, he would wait the arrival of the whole force, as his chief weakness was in Cavalry, to scour the country when advancing.

General Baker requested permission to join the expedition, and to place his

services and knowledge of the country at the disposal of the Government. "Every one here, at Cairo, hopes the offer may be accepted," wrote a correspondent, "for the feeling is very strong that Baker has been rather badly treated by all parties, English as well as Egyptian. Major Lloyd is organising the transport of the army. He will have 1,000 camels for the use of the expedition before Saturday, 16th February."

"A field telegraph company," according to the orders, "will be attached to the force, that the earliest information of the result of General Graham's operations will be sent by it to the coast, and then brought by the *Ranger* to Suakim, whence it will be transmitted to England by the newly-laid cable."

By an urgent order on the 14th February, sent to Upnor Castle, 1,500,000 small-arm cartridges were prepared and packed for service in Egypt.

A sample of the insubordinate spirit that prevailed among the Egyptian troops was given on the 17th of February, when five native artillerymen and an *onbashi* (corporal) presented a petition to the Khedive, signed by twenty-six of their comrades, saying that Egyptian soldiers did not wish to be officered by British or other unbelievers, or to take any part in the present expedition. The Khedive at once sent for Sir Evelyn Wood, who, upon his arrival, tore off the *onbashi's* stripes, and put him and his companions under arrest.

A court-martial, under the presidency of Colonel Duncan, brought to light the fact, that this insubordinate movement was provoked, in the first place, by the removal of all the native officers from the Camel Batteries, and their replacement by British officers. Secondly, that it was the outcome of resentment, caused by the silly horseplay of some Englishmen who had overturned a tent in which these six gunners were.

On the same day the whole of the riders in the Camel Corps deserted, rather than serve under a British officer; and their places had to be filled up by 200 volunteers from various regiments.

On the morning of the 18th General Graham and his staff left Cairo by train for Suez, *en route* to Suakim.

On the 18th it was reported that there had been the greatest difficulty experienced in getting the camels on board ship. They were therefore ordered back, and mules were sent in their place. "Thus," wrote a correspondent, "all the money and labour spent in the purchase and organisation of a train are apparently wasted; but, of course, it is possible that the camels may be sent on later, should the expedition advance inland, as in a badly-watered country, such as that in which the force would operate, these animals could exist when mules would perish of thirst."

The difficulties connected with an expedition of the kind projected were extremely serious, and sufficient allowance was not made for this by many of the critics at home and abroad of the British preparations.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE EXPEDITION TO TOKAR.

Available Forces—News from Tokar—Threat of Osman Digna—Arrival of Reinforcements—Graves Violated by the Natives—Fugitives from Tokar—Fall of the Place—Sir Gerald Graham's Instructions—Gordon's Mission—Meeting of Black Troops—Want of Horse Artillery—Graham's Force.

THE harbour of Suakim being too small for the transports of the new expedition, Admiral Hewett ordered them to rendezvous forty-five miles south-east of Suakim, at Ras Raudi, where there is safe anchorage.

The land forces available for service in the Soudan were as follows:—

The 19th Hussars; B Brigade, G Battery, 2nd Brigade, I Battery, of the Royal Artillery; 5th and 6th Batteries of the Scottish Division, Royal Artillery; 2nd Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry (old 32nd Foot); 1st Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment (old 35th Foot); 1st Battalion Royal Highlanders (old 42nd Foot); 1st Battalion West Kent Regiment (old 50th Foot); 3rd Battalion King's Royal Rifles (old 60th Foot); 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders (old 75th Foot); 1st Battalion Cameron Highlanders (old 79th Foot).

In addition to these were the 10th Hussars in the Suez Canal, on their way home from Bombay, after their long and arduous career of service in Afghanistan.

A Council of War was now held at Cairo, when the following corps were selected to form the column to relieve Tokar, which was closely environed by the enemy, who cannonaded it hourly with the Krupp guns taken from General Baker at El Teb:—The 13th Hussars, under Colonel Webster, formerly of Lind's Moultahee Horse in the War of the Mutiny; the 3rd Battalion of the King's Rifles, under

Colonel Ogilvie; the Black Watch, under the veteran Colonel Green; and the Gordon Highlanders, under Colonel Daniell. This force made altogether only 2,500 men, or half what was destined for Suakim. The other half was to be made up by the Brigade of Marines already there, 1,000 strong, and the York and Lancaster Regiment from Aden. Major-General Graham was appointed to command the forces in the Soudan, which were to be further strengthened by an Egyptian regiment led by British officers, and a Camel Battery of Artillery worked by British gunners; the latter, and the regiment of native Foot, proceeding from Cairo, where a very mutinous spirit existed among the Egyptian troops, which a well-known French paper, the *Débats*, oddly asserted was caused by the removal of *La Garde Noire*, as it called the famous Black Watch, in the belief that it was a regiment of Nubians.

About the 19th of February letters came to Suakim from the commandant at Tokar, written in a hopeful strain, and as believing that it was possible to hold out till our coming column raised the siege. "The rebels in their letters to him," he wrote, "demanding his surrender, say that the Egyptians submitted to be slaughtered without resistance, because they knew they were

fighting in an evil cause. They promise life to the garrison if they will surrender and acknowledge the Mahdi. No doubt the same condition was annexed to the summons to Tewfik (at Sinkat), and this accounts for the refusal of that gallant officer to accept the conditions, even when in direst extremity."

In answer to the British proclamation to surrender or disperse, Osman Digna is reported to have declared that he would not cease fighting till he had driven the invaders into the sea, which was regarded as a sign that he had no intention of falling back, whether or not we relieved Tokar. Eventually he sent a letter to Admiral Hewett stating that as soon as he was finished with operations against that place, he would treat the British soldiers and their ships, and all at Suakim, as he had done their brethren — meaning the Egyptians.

At about the same moment a Khar-toum telegram came from General Gordon advising our officers commanding in Suakim to assemble the tribes "and argue with them;" a hopeless suggestion. His view of the revolt was wholly mistaken. At first it may have been political, but latterly it became rancorously fanatical and anti-Christian, and the only prevailing argument was from the cannon's mouth; and now rumour asserted that Osman meant to bar our way at the head of 30,000 tribesmen.

Among the first to arrive at Suakim were the 10th Hussars, 300 strong. For them the horses of the Egyptian

Cavalry were in readiness. When they saw their old Colonel, Valentine Baker, looking thin and war-worn, in his Egyptian tunic and tarboosh, "he was instantly recognised by the regiment, and such a glorious, hearty British cheer was sent up as had rarely been heard on that Eastern air." And Colonel Wood commanding immediately telegraphed to Mrs. Baker expressing "the deep pleasure it had given to him, to his brother officers, and the whole regiment, again to meet at Suakim their former Colonel."

Next came the Irish Fusiliers, 400 strong, cheered joyously by seamen and marines, while Baker's band played them in to the air of "Auld Lang Syne."

On the 20th of February the 10th Hussars paraded at Suakim on their new horses, and looked well; but the aspect of the Rifles and Irish Fusiliers, who came from Cairo in the *Junna*, in their stained and tattered fighting kits, contrasted most unfavourably with the clean scarlet tunics of the Marines, fresh from the comfort of the war-ships.

On the 21st February a mishap occurred, when the transport *Neora*, with the 19th Hussars on board, grounded on an unknown reef nineteen miles from Suakim. Admiral Hewett despatched the *Sphinx* and *Ranger* to her assistance; the *Humber*, screw troopship, and the *Hecla*, torpedo depôt ship, were moored near her, and a portion of the Hussars were brought by the *Retriever*, telegraph ship. This event caused great anxiety till the danger was obviated, for if she went to

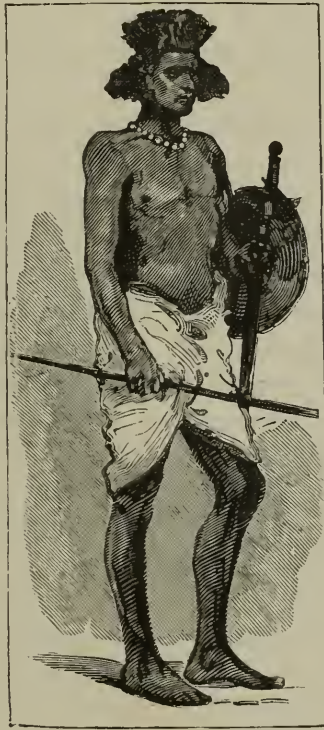


pieces on the reef the horses would be lost, and the expedition would be short of Cavalry.

While this was causing excitement at Suakim, the enemy were suddenly seen in considerable force moving towards Osman Digna's position,

stores, and performed other work, even to making nose-bags out of old canvas for the chargers of the 10th Hussars.

"The orders which have been issued for the movements of the British Expedition," wrote a correspondent at this time, "are subjected to much hostile



ONE OF THE MAHDI'S MEN.

leaving little doubt that there was a muster of the tribes in progress. Some came so close to our outposts that the Krupp guns were opened on them, while the *Carysfort* shelled a body of others who were hovering on camels near the lagoon.

Our seamen carried on their multitudinous labours with such activity that the soldiers had little more to do than look on; they unshipped horses,

criticism here (at Cairo), as it is argued that should Osman Digna fall back and decline to fight, the troops, under the present arrangement, will, with the rescued garrison of Tokar, sail from Trinkatat for Suez on Wednesday next, and the enemy can then concentrate the whole of his forces against the small garrison left for the defence of Suakim. However, appearances at present point to a stubborn fight before

Tokar is reached. Strongly adverse comment, too, is expressed here at the manner in which the whole conduct of affairs has been taken out of the hands of persons on the spot, and the situation—both military and political—handled entirely at home, where the necessities as they arise, and the changing circumstances, cannot be so thoroughly understood as they are here. This course adds a hundredfold to the difficulties of carrying out matters properly and promptly.”

He next recurs to the violation of our soldiers' graves at Helouan, which was now discovered to be the work not of religious fanatics, but of plunderers. “This was proved by the seizure by the military police of a soldier's cloak offered for sale. Upon being examined it was found to bear the regimental number of a soldier who died of cholera at Helouan, and was buried there, wrapped in this very cloak. Comment on such ghoulish conduct as this is needless, but no wonder need henceforth be expressed at the occurrence of any fresh outbreak of cholera, or at the spread of epidemics in this country.”

On the morning of the 22nd five Egyptian soldiers came in and reported that they had escaped from Tokar, where the Civil Governor, in despair of relief, had entered into negotiations with the enemy, and agreed to surrender, on a promise being given that the lives of all should be spared, adding that as they were dissatisfied with the spirit of this capitulation, they had made their way out of the town before the enemy entered it, and that other soldiers would soon follow them.

Absolute credence could not be placed upon their story till it was confirmed. They were examined apart, and all their narrations were coherent and tallied. “This afternoon,” says a correspondent, “confirmation has been received of the report; and there can be no doubt that the tardy and timid resolution of the British Government was taken far too late to save Tokar, as it was to prevent the destruction of the garrison of Sinkat.”

Two spies sent to Tokar, acting on the Admiral's instructions, soon returned, and their account completely agreed with the account given by the fugitive soldiers. The garrison were so harassed by the constant fire of the five Krupp guns worked by Nubian gunners, taken by Osman, that they lost all heart, and allowed the people of Tokar, who had long been in favour of capitulation, to arrange as they pleased.

Accordingly, 150 of the inhabitants went out with the Civil Governor to the besiegers, and made terms with them, on the basis that none should be injured if the town surrendered at once; and the former took an oath on the Koran to hold to the terms faithfully.

In more than one of his letters the Governor hinted that ere long he would be compelled to capitulate; and, as he was a known adherent of Arabi, he may—not unnaturally—have preferred surrender to his co-religionists, to receiving aid from the “Infidel British.”

The spies' report was, that the Civil Governor, the Adjutant-Major, and others, to the number of 150, went out

to the rebels, were feasted by them, and swore allegiance to the Mahdi. The fugitive soldiers asserted that the garrison had about fifty rounds per man in their pouches, and that there were 40,000 in reserve; also, that Tokar was in no way threatened with assault, as there were not more than 1,000 of the Mahdi's men in its vicinity, the main body being at the Wells of El Teb, awaiting our advance from the ships at Trinkatat.

Prior to all this, an extraordinary change had taken place at Suakim in the few days that succeeded Admiral Hewett's assumption of the command there. There were no longer bands of mutinous Egyptian troops rambling about the streets, a terror to all peaceable people, or knots of natives scowling at every European. All had been regulated in man-o'-war order.

The Admiral had an Orderly Room ashore, where every morning he sat to hear all complaints, as Governor of Suakim. These included not only complaints against the soldiers for violence, but all kinds of strange domestic quarrels.

It was generally supposed that the creation of so strong a transport train portended more protracted and extensive operations than the mere relief of Tokar, as that town was within a day's march of the landing-place; and many supposed that it was formed with a view of relieving Kassala, then also invested, and which the author of the "Wild Tribes of the Soudan" says is in one of the richest provinces in that part of Africa. He adds, that a few years

before an enterprising Briton at great expense built a flour-mill there, with which he ground *dhurra*, at one-eighth of the price the natives were wont to pay for it; but that popular superstition was too strong for him. They refused to have their *dhurra* ground at his mill, as they said it was *afreet*, or pertaining to the devil. He was obliged to give it up, and the ruined mill remains a memorial of the ignorance of the inhabitants.

It was now confidently asserted that the garrison of Tokar would fight their next battle against the British troops, which had been despatched to their relief.

Sir Gerald Graham now wrote home for fresh instructions, which the new and complicated situation rendered necessary. "He would probably be opposed did he advance beyond Trinkatat, and, although he might burn the enemy's encampments and destroy the winter crops, he could not retake Tokar, which is a fortified place, and could hardly be captured without artillery, of which he had only mountain guns, altogether useless for battering purposes. It was possible, too, that were the force to advance, the enemy might, in absence of the troops, carry by a rush, the outer fortifications of Suakim in the night-time, burn the town on the mainland, and retire, ere morning, to the desert, before the Marines in the detached forts could punish them."

There was another contingency to be considered. Now that Tokar had fallen, Osman Digna was free to fulfil his threat to the Admiral, by mustering

his entire strength, and marching openly upon Suakim. Decision was difficult; nevertheless, General Graham, in a letter to General Stephenson at Cairo, announced his intention of pushing onward to Trinkatat.

Meanwhile, all at Suakim looked forward anxiously for explicit orders from home, as the chief object for which the column of relief had been prepared had vanished!

At Cairo no further instructions had been received as to the despatch of a force to Assouan, a long and straggling town on the slope of a barren hill; but twenty British officers arrived on the 22nd February, to take in hand a new Turkish brigade of the Egyptian army, which—beyond a few dirty-looking ruffians—existed chiefly on paper. So they established themselves at Shepheard's Hotel to await the turn of events.

Along the whole line of coast near Suakim Osman Digna had now massed his troops, and he occupied the forts, or zeribas, which General Baker had erected across the lagoon within three miles of Trinkatat; and so forward and confident were his Arabs, that, on the 25th, a patrol of ours, numbering 1,000 men, with 40 camels, at the distance of only half a mile, was driven in and followed by them, so greatly had the fall of Tokar, after the massacre at Sinkat, encouraged his followers. Meanwhile, all Europe looked on our operations in Egypt with a species of contemptuous wonder.

"We must wait the development of events," wrote M. Lemoine in the

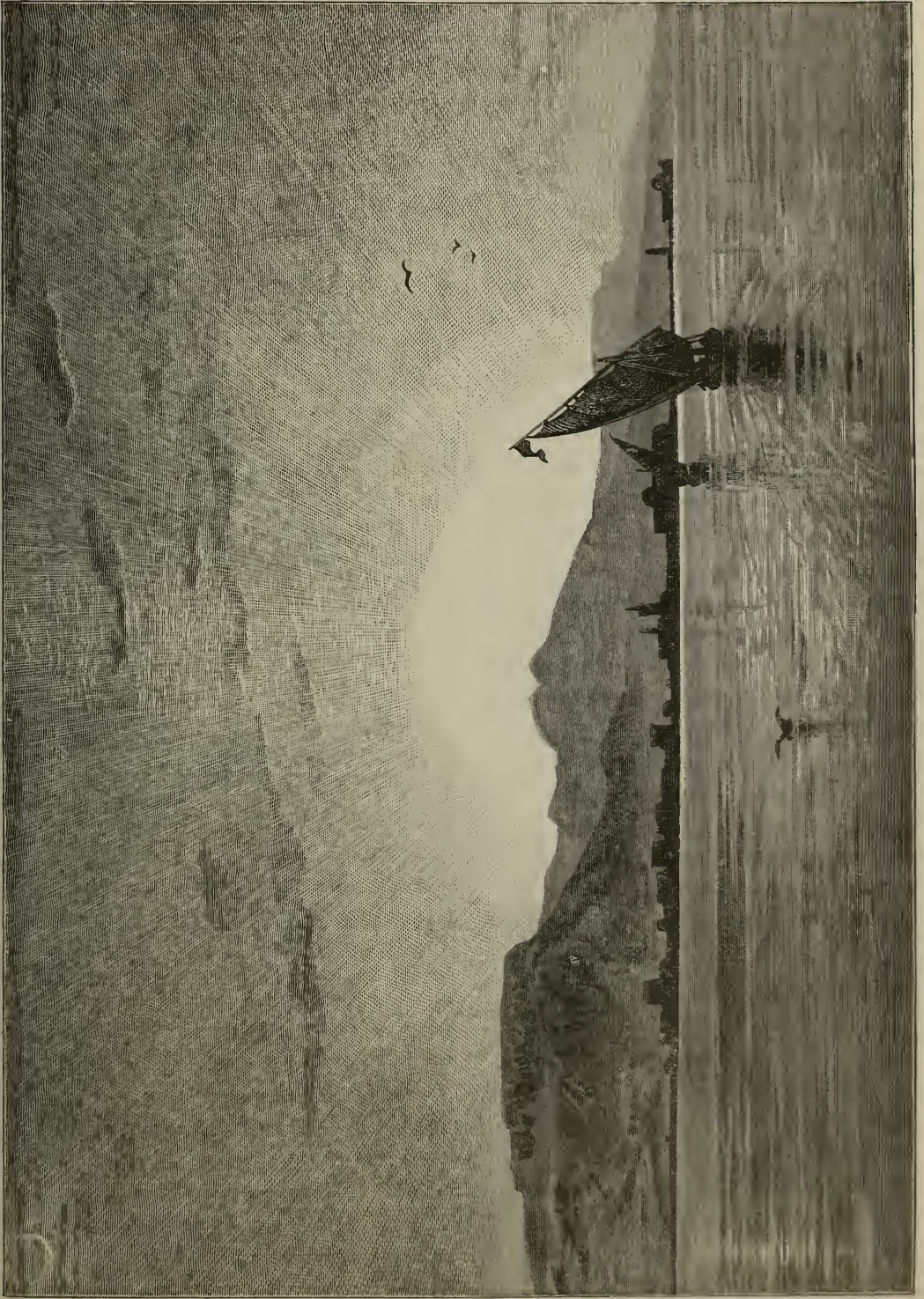
*Débats*, "and the consequences of the extraordinary expedition undertaken by that other prophet called Gordon. For the time being it is he who is the real Mahdi. His arrival at Khartoum, and his dealings with the population, belong to the realms of phantasy. It is really a subject matter for historical pictures, and makes us doubly regret the untimely death of the unfortunate artists sent out by the illustrated papers."

General Gordon continued to send cheerful telegrams, but gave no definite news of any progress made towards the carrying out of his most singular mission.

At Suakim the black troops now broke into mutiny, and refused to pile their arms when ordered to do so. Dispersed in noisy bands through the bazaar, they openly threatened to join Osman Digna *en masse*. They alleged that their bullets would not pierce the Arab shields, and protested against being required to take the field, now that British troops were about to do so. Thus, the Admiral resolved to send them to Cairo as useless; but eventually, after being disarmed, some of them were turned into camel drivers.

Sir Gerald Graham and Sir William Hewett arrived at Trinkatat on the 23rd of February. There the disembarkation of troops proceeded rapidly, and all were full of ardour to meet the enemy. From the tops of the shipping, the flag of Osman Digna could be seen floating out on the hot wind of the desert beyond the lagoon, but there was no other sign of his presence.

Valentine Baker was now appointed



ON THE COAST OF THE RED SEA.

chief of the Intelligence Department, with Colonel F. Burnaby and Majors Harvey and Hill under him.

In the little harbour of Trinkatat there lay, at this time, nine vessels, two of them great white troopships, and all there was life and activity, with crowded boats shooting perpetually to and fro. "The entire beach swarms with our soldiers," wrote a correspondent, "and the strains of the bagpipes of the Black Watch reach us here on board. Spies tell us that the enemy pray every morning that more unbelieving soldiers may arrive here to be slaughtered. The soldiers are here, but the slaughtering will be a different matter, and not wholly on one side."

It was evident to the staff, however, that the forward movements would require to be made with caution. The motions of the enemy were quick and fearless. Practically, they represented—though on foot—the qualities of a great force of wild irregular cavalry, and would require to be met in the open, as if they were really mounted.

They did not advance as the equally valiant Zulus did, in heavy masses, but in loose and extended order, thus presenting a front on which the musketry fire of our raw and half-trained rifle-shots might have a deficient effect.

That we had no Horse Artillery was felt to be a serious defect; even one battery, it was admitted, would have been invaluable, for the camel batteries seemed almost useless, in consequence of the light calibre of the pieces they

carried, and their extreme slowness of movement, which rendered them incapable of venturing from under cover of the Infantry fire, in face of such an enemy as the fleet and furious Arabs.

Parties of the latter now came frequently down to the opposite side of the lagoon to observe what was in progress at Trinkatat; and, on the 26th, a reconnaissance of the country beyond it was made by 100 of the 19th Hussars, with the Mounted Infantry.

Through all Egypt, in the Upper and Lower provinces, Nubia and the Soudan, the active emissaries of the Mahdi were busy.

"I am coming—be ready!" was the simple message, passed from town to town, through every bazaar and mosque.

General Graham now gladly accepted the services of the time-expired men coming home in the *Jumna*. Like gallant fellows as they were, they volunteered to join the troops on shore, and for the fighting that was sure to ensue, such well-trained soldiers were certain to be invaluable.

The main body of Osman Digna's force was now known to be encamped at El Teb, on the same ground where he had cut Baker's wretched troops to pieces; and the orders of General Graham were to march there and fight the enemy if he found them, but to proceed no farther if Osman retired before him—apparently a strange and useless demonstration now. He was also to bury the bodies of all Baker's Europeans.

The force under his orders amounted

to only 4,300 men, while that of Osman was estimated at fully 12,000. The Naval Brigade, under Commander Rolfe, had Gardner machine guns, and numbered 125 of all ranks.

As to the order of battle to be assumed against an enemy so peculiar, nothing was settled as yet by the staff, but the Infantry officers were all in favour of an advance in hollow square, four deep, and the Black Watch took the initiative by practising this formation on the sands.

The whole of the stores were landed by the 27th, and the order for a general advance was impatiently awaited, as bodies of the enemy could now be seen hovering in the distance, but, to all appearance, under strict discipline. Numerous mounted Sheikhs were observed among them, and spies reported that they were assured of a victorious if bloody encounter. Seeing that on their way down to the shore they had to pass over the two last battle-fields, strewn thickly by the dead bodies of the troops of Hicks and Baker, their conclusion was not altogether an unnatural one.

On the other hand, the chief subject of discussion among our officers was whether the enemy would or would not fight.

Subsequent to the Cavalry reconnaissance already referred to, the Gordon Highlanders and Irish Fusiliers moved across the lagoon, or salt marsh, and took possession of Fort Baker, as the zeriba was named from its constructor. A squadron of the 19th Hussars, the Mounted Infantry, and guns of the camel battery accompanied them.

In some places the road across the isthmus was very bad; thus, in order that the column should not show a diminished front, the Gordon Highlanders took off their shoes and tartan hose, and, with legs and feet bare, advanced in line through the swamps of the lagoon.

As they and the Fusiliers entered the zeriba the Arabs withdrew from the margin of the lagoon, and took post, in considerable strength, on a ridge about a quarter of a mile distant.

When our Cavalry began to advance they held their ground, and opened fire, but with indifferent effect. "Their dark figures could be vividly seen against the clear sky-line, as they danced defiantly and brandished their spears, in hope to lure our troops on, and there was every belief that a vast force lay concealed beyond the ridge; and now it was that the serious want of Horse Artillery began first to be keenly felt, as a few well-thrown shells might have unmasked their whole force."

The camel guns had only case and common percussion shell, which were unsuited to the purpose. "For this want of field artillery," wrote Mr. Cameron, of the *Standard*, "the British military authorities at home are to blame. Lord Wolseley's distinct order that all field guns were to be left behind, and nothing but camel guns to be taken, has been strongly disapproved of by every military authority in Egypt. The Admiral is sending on two 9-pounders with the Naval Brigade; but, with this exception, the force will be practically without artillery."

All that day, till evening fell, our Cavalry continued to watch the enemy, and then fell back on Trinkatat, leaving the two regiments of Scottish and Irish Infantry in the fort.

The following is the composition of the force under General Graham on the 28th of February, 1884, the night before the battle of El Teb:—

Cavalry Brigade: the 10th Hussars, 328; the 19th Hussars, 410; the Mounted Infantry, 126. Artillery: 126, with six 7-pounders, ten brass mountain guns, and four 9-centimètres (Krupps). Naval Brigade: 62 men, with two 9-pounders, three Gatlings, and three Gardners, under Commander Rolfe, of the *Euryalus*, and Flag-Lieutenant Graham. 1st Brigade: the King's Royal Rifle Corps, 610; the Gordon Highlanders, 751, and the

Royal Irish Rifles, 334. 2nd Brigade: the Black Watch (Royal Highlanders), 761; the Royal Marine Light Infantry and Royal Marine Artillery, 361. Engineers, 100; details, 200. The 1st Battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment, 400. This last regiment arrived only recently at Trinkatat, just in time to take part in the expedition, the *Serapis*, on board which they were brought from Aden, having broken down. Including these, the force at General Graham's disposal was as nearly as possible 4,000 men and 206 officers. This computation did not include the transport service, camel drivers, and natives. There were some 600 camels used for transport, and 350 mules and 100 camels for the ambulance service, while the camel battery was composed of 80 camels and about 100 men.



GAZELLES.

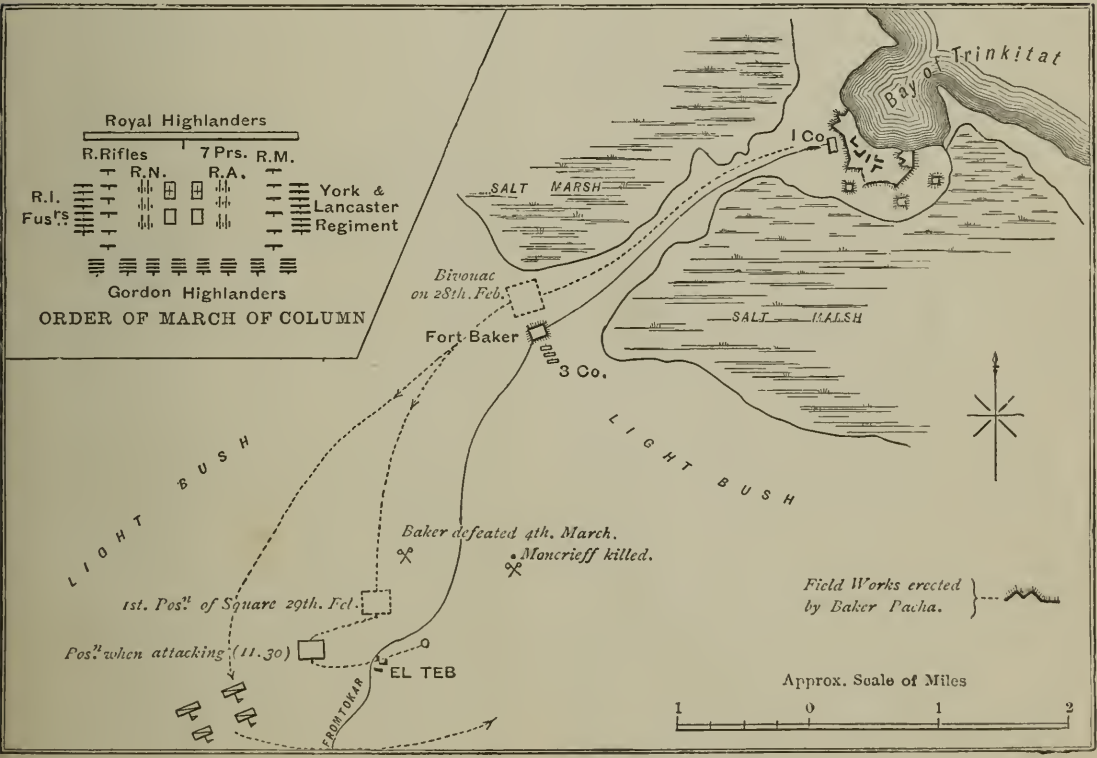


## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE BATTLE OF EL TEB.

Message to the Sheikhs—The Eve of Battle—The Advance in Square—Looking for the Enemy—Marching under Fire—The Charge of the Arabs—Burnaby Wounded—Defeat of the Enemy—Losses of the British—Victoria Cross Awards—Sergeant Cramp's remarkable Wound.

OSMAN's troops were now known to rely on the contents of their water-masses about the different springs of bottles alone. As the native drivers El Teb, within a semicircle of fifteen were deemed unworthy of trust, the



PLAN OF THE MARCH TO EL TEB (FEB. 23-30, 1884).

miles round Trinkatat, but Graham knew that they would concentrate and give him battle the moment he advanced.

No transport for water or baggage was to move beyond Fort Baker; thus, for the day of battle, the troops had to

mules with the reserve ammunition were in charge of British soldiers, chiefly Hussars who were without horses.

Before advancing, General Graham had, on the 27th, sent to the outposts a white flag fixed to a pole, which was

planted in the sand by Major Harvey, with the following letter, written in Arabic, appended thereto:—

“From the General commanding the British army to the Sheikhs of the tribes between Trinkatat and Tokar. I summon you in the name of the British Government to disperse your fighting men before daybreak to-morrow morning, or the consequences will be on your own heads. Instead of fighting with British troops you should send delegates to Khartoum, to consult with Gordon Pasha as to the future settlement of the Soudan provinces. The British Government is not at war with the Arabs, but is determined to disperse the forces now in arms in this neighbourhood and near Suakim. An answer must be left at the same place before daybreak to-morrow, or the consequences will be on the heads of the Sheikhs.”

The white flag and the letter were deemed by the poor Soudanese some diabolical and magical charm, so their only response was to pepper them both with their Remingtons till darkness fell.

When the day dawned on the 29th February, the enemy opened a heavy fire on our Mounted Infantry, but at a very long range, while our Artillery threw a few percussion shells among them from a Krupp gun; but these seemed to fall harmlessly. Ere long their rifle bullets reached to Fort Baker, and as the Arabs were seen throwing up earthworks, it was supposed they were assisted by the late garrison of Tokar, to whose relief General Graham had been sent by the British Government!

“During the past night the troops had bivouacked round Fort Baker, and the fires which they lighted gave a weird and picturesque aspect to the whole scene. The men lay in long

lines sleeping, as they were to stand to their arms and march on the morrow, while many gathered round their watch-fires, smoking and talking of the coming conflict. “Mingling with them, and listening to their conversation,” wrote one who was present, “I found that the men fully realised the rush with which their foes were likely to attack them, and thoroughly understood the necessity for meeting it steadily. Towards morning the rain fell heavily for a time, soaking us all where we lay; every one was glad when the *réveillé* sounded, the fires were piled higher, and the men tried, as they best could, to dry themselves.”

After a very frugal breakfast, at 8 a.m., they stood to their arms by sound of bugle. The ranks were formed, and a move forward made for 500 yards, to be free from the fires and *débris* of the bivouac. The companies and battalions were formed with accuracy, and leaving 300 men to hold Fort Baker, and 150 under Colonel Ogilvie in Trinkatat (all sickly and weakly), the advance on the position of El Teb began with steadiness and alacrity, the troops being formed in a rectangle, having an interior space of about 200 yards by 150.

The march was over barren and sandy soil, and the whole way was encumbered by hundreds of black, decaying corpses, the relics of Baker's men, from which clouds of gorged carrion birds flew away with angry croaks as the great hollow square swept onward. By half-past ten, a three miles' march brought our troops in sight of the

enemy, who had evidently formed some earthworks on which they had planted their cannon and banners.

"It was a fine sight," says the writer before quoted, "to see our fellows step out as if upon parade. It gave a grand idea of the power and pride of physical strength. The bagpipes played gaily, and the Highlanders, instinctively cocking their caps and swinging their shoulders, footed the way cheerily."

"In front," says Sir Gerald, in his despatch, dated from his camp at Tokar three days after the battle, "were the 1st Gordon Highlanders; in rear the 1st Royal Highlanders; on the right the 2nd Royal Irish Fusiliers (supported by four companies of the 3rd King's Royal Rifles); on the left the 1st York and Lancaster, supported by 380 of the Royal Marine Artillery and Light Infantry. On the march the front and rear faces moved in company columns of fours, at company intervals, and the flank battalions in open column of companies. Intervals were left at the angles for the guns and Gatlings, the Naval Brigade occupying the front, and the Royal Artillery the rear angles. The men marched with their water-bottles filled, and one day's rations. The only transport animals were those carrying ammunition and the surgical appliances, all being kept together in the centre of the square.

. . . . The front and left of the square were covered by a squadron of the 10th Hussars; the right by a troop of the 19th Hussars, the Cavalry being in our rear under Brigadier Stewart."

The scouts of the enemy were now seen to be falling back as the square advanced, precisely as they had done before Baker's force on the same ground fifteen days previously. As the great rectangle, with more than four thousand bayonets flashing in the sun, continued to advance, the masses of the enemy seemed to melt away from the position where their banners were floating and their guns posted.

General Graham was now in doubt whether they awaited him in rear of the brow on which they had been first seen, or were making hidden movements to take him in flank. He therefore ordered the square to change its direction, and swerve off to the right, by the same route that Baker had taken to the Wells.

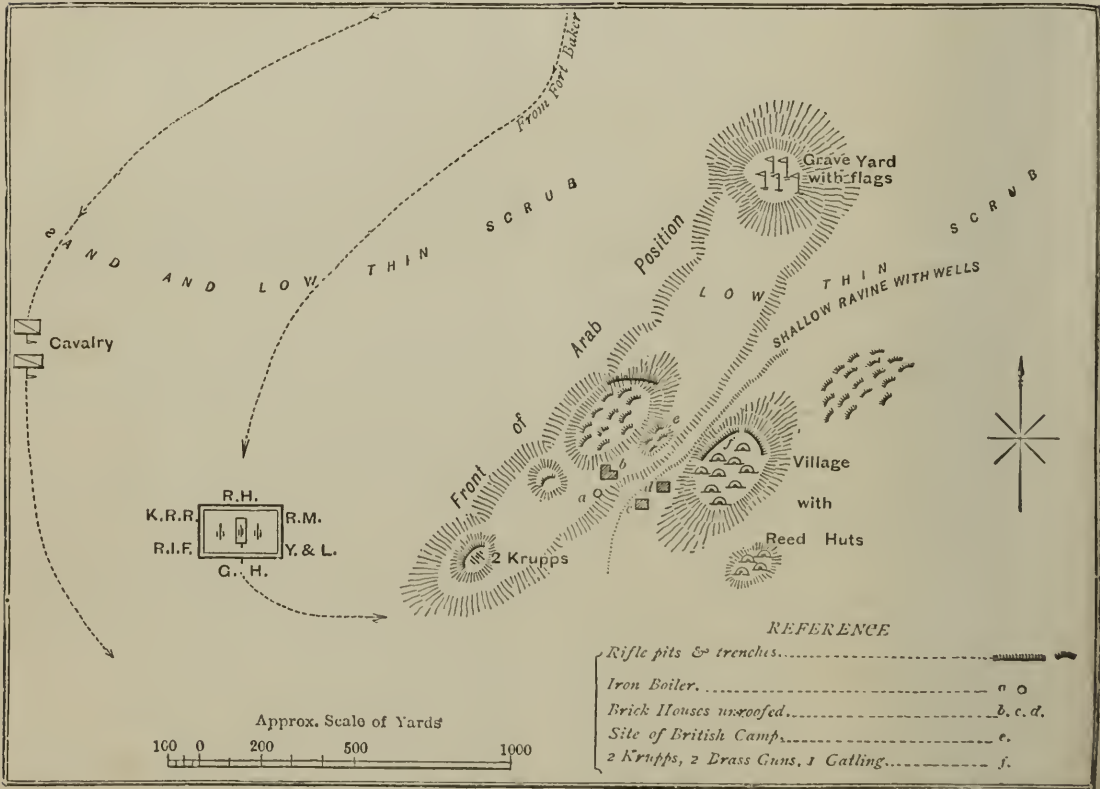
Whenever the orderly bugle sounded a halt, which was not unfrequent, the faces of the square fell into their fighting position, the files turning outwards to practise it and be ready for the reception of an attack quickly and without confusion.

Still not a man was visible in the enemy's position. The banners were seen floating out on the wind, but the place seemed silent and empty. Away to the right was a cemetery decorated with flags, and in rear of what was supposed to be the position was a village composed of red huts and some roofless edifices of sun-baked brick.

It was now past ten o'clock, and our troops were fast nearing the enemy's line. "The pipes of the Black Watch," says the correspondent of the *Standard*, "struck up a cheerful air, enlivening

the march of the column, and brightening the faces of the 42nd, who had been rather glum at finding themselves in rear of the square, instead of their favourite position in front. The joke, that as the Royal Highlanders could

yards away. If we had but a battery of Horse Artillery we could soon make them clear out from their position—which is evidently entrenched—and either fall back or charge us in the open.” The *Sphinx*, in the harbour, had



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF EL TEB (FEB. 29, 1884).

not be in the front rank they had determined to frighten the enemy with their unearthly music, ran round the square, and the column moved forward in lighter spirit. Ten minutes later the Cavalry scouts in front are seen to halt. We halt too. The enemy can be seen now, although partially concealed by the bushes. They are in force some fourteen or fifteen hundred

opened fire with her long 6-inch guns, but was signalled to desist, as her shot fell short of the position.

The forward march was again resumed, and a few minutes before eleven o'clock the Cavalry scouts trotted round the flanks of the square, leaving its front uncovered, and face to face with the Arabs, whose dark faces and heads of long black hair could be seen popping

up incessantly from behind the green scrub and their sandy entrenchments, but no forward movement was made by them.

The line of march pursued by the square was past their left front, rather than towards them, at 400 yards' distance; and now suddenly from the

the square, and ordered the men to lie down, while he brought his four Royal Artillery guns and the machine guns into action at 900 yards, and soon silenced the enemy's Krupps, which were now taken in reverse.

The onward movement of the square was resumed, but under the enemy's



MAJOR MONTAGUE MAULE SLADE, 10TH HUSSARS.

(From a Photograph by Messrs. Hughes and Mullins, Ryde.)

sable hordes there came a biting rifle fire, while with two Krupp guns, doubtless worked by artillerymen from Tokar, they opened upon the square with case and shell, at about twenty minutes past eleven.

These guns, however, were so badly handled that few casualties occurred from them, and meanwhile the rectangle succeeded in working round till it got into the left rear of the enemy's position. General Graham now halted

rifle fire. The first serious casualty was in the ranks of the Gordon Highlanders, and the falling of men right and left showed that the aim of the Arabs was beginning to tell. The pipes again struck up; the square pressed steadily on, while the shrapnell shell of the enemy, thrown now with dangerous precision, burst ever and anon overhead.

By a fragment of one of these General Baker was severely wounded in the

left cheek; but his face was bound up by Surgeon-Major MacDowall. This incident was referred to at the time in a stirring ballad in *Punch*, of which a verse may suffice:—

“They charged in the grand old fashion,  
 With furious shout and swoop,  
 With a ‘Follow me, lads!’ from the Colonel,  
 And an answering roar from the troop.  
 On the staff, as the troopers past it,  
 In glory of pride and pluck,  
 They heard and they never forgot it,  
 One following shout, ‘Good luck!’  
 Wounded and worn he sat then,  
 In silence of pride and pain,  
 The man who had led them often,  
 But was never to lead again.  
 Think of the secret anguish!  
 Think of the dull remorse;  
 While the 10th Hussars swept past him,  
 Unled by the old white horse!”

The enemy's movements could be distinctly seen; the wind carried away the smoke of the musketry, and the forenoon was clear and bright. The Arabs were all scattered about, without military order, but taking advantage of any cover the position afforded they clung to it gallantly.

“If they won't charge us, why don't we charge them?” our soldiers began to cry with impatience, as the stretchers filled fast with wounded. Thousands were massed darkly in front, and hundreds were menacing the flanks of the rectangle, which still swept on towards the position of the foe unswervingly.

“It is not a charge,” wrote one who was there, “but a steady solid movement in the formation which has all along been observed. It looks, however, all the more formidable, for enthusiasm and discipline are equally marked as the troops are cheering while their

square sweeps down towards the enemy.”

When the two bodies were 200 yards apart, the fire of the Arabs ceased; they flung aside their fire-arms prior to charging, like the Scottish Highlanders in the last century, and grasping their swords and spears made a frantic rush on the square, with a force and fury inconceivable. In many instances, torn and streaming with blood from bullet wounds unheeded or unfelt, they flung themselves, a living torrent, full on the levelled bayonets of the square, and many came within five paces of it before they were shot down.

On the men of the Black Watch, standing shoulder to shoulder with the York and Lancaster, the first brunt of their headlong onset fell heavily. Though hurled back by a close and deadly breechloader fire, on they came, again and again, in groups of twenty or thirty, yelling like fiends and leaping at breakneck pace over heaps of their dead and wounded; “sometimes by twos and threes, and sometimes alone,” wrote the correspondent of the *Standard*. “They dash forward against our ranks with poised spear, but not a man reaches the line of bayonets, for all are swept away by the terrible musketry fire. For a moment on the other side of the square the matter seems to be in doubt; so hotly do the Arabs press onward, that the troops pause in their steady advance. It becomes a hand-to-hand fight, the soldiers meeting the Arab spear with cold steel, their favourite weapon, and beating them at it. There is not much shouting, and only

a short sharp exclamation, a brief shout or an oath, as the soldiers engage their foes. At this critical moment for the enemy the Gardner guns open fire, and their leaden hail soon decides matters."

Under Brigadier Stewart, the main body of our Cavalry now swept at a gallop round the right flank of the square, and in three lines charged to their right front, falling with the united and dread force of some mighty engine on the masses of the enemy, who had tumultuously to change front to meet this most unexpected attack, in which Colonel Barrow, C.M.G., of the 19th Hussars, was severely wounded, with twenty others, who all received spear thrusts, including Major Slade of the 10th Hussars, Lieutenants F. A. Freeman of the 19th Hussars, and Probyn of the 9th Bengal Light Cavalry, while the Arabs opened out as the Cavalry came charging on, and, crouching among the scrub, hamstringed the horses with their cross-hilted swords, and despatched the falling riders.

Here Colonel Burnaby had his horse shot under him, and a ball passed through one of his arms, but he could still handle a double-barrelled gun, and shot down Arab after Arab in quick succession. Eventually he was borne down, but was saved by a few of the Gordon Highlanders.

Sir William Hewett, who was present as a spectator, now led the Naval Brigade over the piles of fallen Arabs and made a furious rush on their works, which proved to be only a bank of sand. Captain Wilson of the *Hecla*,

a volunteer (fighting for fighting's sake), crossed the bank, and in protecting a fallen soldier from an Arab, broke his sword over the head of the latter, who, though nearly blinded by his own blood, fought like a tiger, and wounded Captain Wilson in turn, but was struck down and bayoneted.

To re-form the square the "halt" was now sounded, for that face which was composed of the Rifles and Irish Fusiliers had become loose and open. As yet the Arabs had no idea that they were being beaten, and resisted obstinately, opening fire again with their rifles and two Krupp guns, while we replied with a captured Krupp and the machine guns.

The "advance" again sounded, and that part of the position now reached by the square consisted of a few trenches, with many holes or rifle-pits. Out of these the Arabs started, as the column pressed on, and flung themselves on the keen bayonets, only to perish under their points. Every inch of ground was contested by them with the most reckless and brilliant valour; but at last the miserable village, with its red huts, wells, and ruined walls, was carried, "and the close of the fight," says the *Standard*, "was announced by a loud cheer from the Gordon Highlanders, as they passed out at the front of the enemy's position, and by a triumphant peal from the bagpipes."

This was at two in the afternoon, when the enemy were seen streaming away in the wildest disorder towards Tokar and Suakim.

The last work, taken by the Highlanders, was in the form of a semicircle, and formed of bags and barrels filled with sand.

It was difficult to estimate the strength of the enemy. "In my first telegram," wrote the General, "I put it at 10,000. Subsequent native testi-

no desire to fight the British soldiers, with whom they had no quarrel, but only their oppressors, the Turks and Egyptians, adding that, until they saw the white faces, they knew not whom they were to meet, as their chiefs had concealed the fact from them.

Many of the late Tokar garrison lay



LIEUT. FRANK MASSIE ROYDS, H.M.S. "CARYSFORT."

mony makes me estimate it at 6,000 fighting men, and I am informed they admit a loss of 1,500 killed. In the immediate neighbourhood of El Teb, 825 dead bodies were counted, and I am informed it is the custom of these people to carry off their dead when practicable. I am also informed that the women of the tribes were present with hatchets to despatch our wounded."

The Arabs now said that they had

among the dead, side by side, with the half-devoured bodies of Baker's force, all the spoil taken from which now fell into our hands.

Our loss in killed and wounded of all ranks was only 188. Among the former was Lieutenant Royds of the *Carysfort*, who died of a mortal wound, Quartermaster Wilkins of the Rifles, who had been distinguished for his valour in Zululand, Lieutenants Freeman and Probyn (before referred to),





THE BATTLE OF EL TEB.

and Major M. M. Slade of the 10th Hussars, who had served with that regiment throughout the war in Afghanistan, and was on his way home from India.

General Baker's wound was from a shell which exploded fifteen yards in front of him. The iron fragment, three ounces in weight, struck him in the right cheek immediately below the eye, and could not be extracted from the jaw till the following day by Dr. Logan.

In the *mêlée* of the Cavalry charge Colonel Barrow was saved only by the brilliant courage of two sergeants and a trooper of the 19th Hussars, and that their deed was one of daring may be inferred from the fact that no other wounded man escaped alive. One unfortunate trumpeter was so gashed by spears, that he was brought out only to expire. When Colonel Barrow fell, Sergeant Marshall seized a loose horse, and was attempting to place him on it, when Private Boosley, to whom it belonged, and who had been thrown out of his saddle, came up on foot, and under a heavy fire supported his officer into the Infantry lines, assisted by Sergeant Fenton, while Marshall rejoined his troop. A corporal of the 19th had four horses killed under him, one by lances and three by rifle balls.

Private Frank Hayes of the 10th Hussars showed great courage in the second charge here, in dismounting, attacking, and killing a chief who was endeavouring to escape. Finding that his horse would not face the spear, he undauntedly attacked the Arab on foot, and killed him in single combat.

The Victoria Cross was conferred on Captain Arthur R. Wilson, R.N. This officer, on the staff of Rear-Admiral Sir William Hewett, at the battle of El Teb, on the 29th of February, attached himself during the advance to the right half battery, Naval Brigade, in the place of Lieutenant Royds, R.N., mortally wounded. As the troops closed on the enemy's Krupp battery, the Arabs charged out on the corner of the square, and on the detachment who were dragging the Gardner gun. Captain Wilson then sprang to the front, and engaged in single combat with some of the enemy, thus protecting his detachment till some men of the York and Lancaster Regiment came to his assistance with their bayonets. But for the action of this officer, Sir Redvers Buller thinks that one or more of his detachment must have been speared. Captain Wilson was wounded, but remained with the half battery during the day.

The Cross was also bestowed on Sergeant Marshall.

After the battle, the daring of the scouting may be gathered from the fact that Sergeant James Fatt of the 19th, finding himself alone, and close to Tokar, rode in without knowing what town it was.

Sergeant Cramp of the 10th had a miraculous escape. A detachment was sent to the relief of the 19th (says the *South Eastern Gazette*), and the scouts-men passed. A short distance from Cramp was an Arab chief, of whom he took no notice, but who stole up behind the sergeant, and with a double-edged

sword dealt him a blow which severed the skull from the left eye to the back of the head, cutting off the upper part of an ear and through a main artery. Cramp fell from his horse, but hurled his carbine at the Arab, who rode off with it.

“The remarkable thing is, that though Cramp’s skull was laid completely open he never lost consciousness, and when taken to the hospital was able to explain to the medical staff his feelings, and to give a ‘last message’ to his friends.”

The arteries were gathered up and tied, and, marvellous to state, he recovered, to return to his native town, Canterbury, but with the loss of all feeling on the left side of his head.

The enemy’s loss was found to be greater than the General supposed. The *Standard* stated that by the 5th of March we had buried 2,300 of them. Osman Digna explained his defeat by asserting that he had given his men a wrong charm against lead and steel;

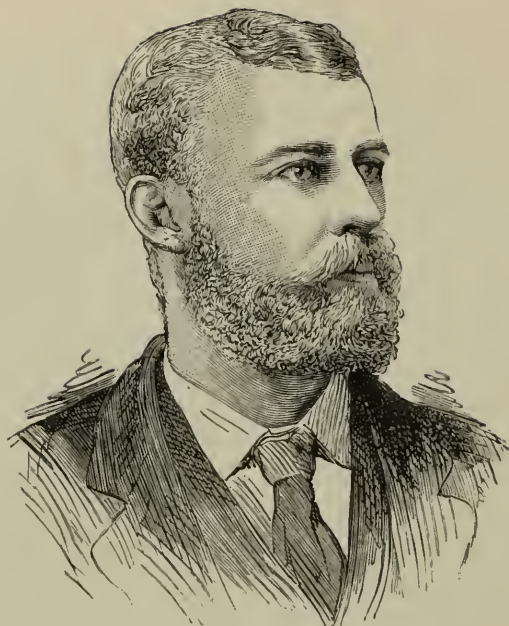
but this failed to soothe their doubts, and during the battle they flogged and slew without mercy their Tokar gunners if they made a bad shot.

The want of artillery on this occasion was brought before Parliament in March. Sir H. Tyler asked Lord Hartington when General Stephenson had applied for a battery of artillery to accompany General Graham’s column, and the reason for refusing his request.

The Marquis replied, that General Baker had advised that a battery of Horse Artillery should be sent; but that General Gordon, before his departure from London, emphatically deprecated its employment in desert warfare, and partly attributed the defeat of Hicks to his being encumbered with too many field guns; and in a memorandum on this subject, written by Lord Wolseley, he had stated, that to send field guns with the Tokar relief force would have added to the difficulty of the water supply.



YOUNG GALLA.



COMMANDER ROLFE.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE MARCH TOWARDS TOKAR.

Searching the Bush—Tokar Entered—General Graham's Order—The Second Advance—The Enemy in Sight—A Cavalry Skirmish—Commander Rolfe's Daring—The Double Square Formation.

ON the morning subsequent to the battle, the troops, at 9 o'clock, began their march towards Tokar, leaving a wing of the Black Watch entrenched, with orders to bury the dead Europeans of Baker's army. This search proved a successful one. The bodies of Morice Bey, Dr. Leslie, Forrestier-Walker, Wilkins, and others, were found, and interred in a place over which the Highlanders set up some crosses.

The entrenchment they formed was for the security of the wounded, and was armed with two of the captured Krupp guns and some brass howitzers.

On the march towards Tokar, the

Cavalry were disposed on the right rear, says the *Times*, with scouts thrown out on the flanks.

The front line was composed of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the 1st York and Lancaster Regiment, with the battalion of Marines. The second line was formed by the Gordon Highlanders, flanked by the Rifles and the other wing of the Royal Highlanders.

About 11 o'clock the "halt" sounded, for the purpose of searching the bush, which had been gradually thickening on the left, but was found unoccupied; and other halts were occasionally found necessary to rest the troops, as the day

was one of intense heat, and the toil of dragging the guns fell heavily on the Naval Brigade.

General Graham had been informed by spies and prisoners that the enemy were

were received by a few survivors of the half-starved garrison with every demonstration of delight, the women uttering shrill glad cries of joy, and the men discharging their rifles in the air.



BEDOUINS OF THE SOUDAN.

in some force at Tokar, and by mid-day a report came from the officer in command of the advanced Cavalry scouts that the town was then visible four miles in his front. A second report announced that shots had been fired from the loop-holed walls; but when the General and his staff rode boldly forward, they

The march over dry and parched sand, though only eleven miles, proved extremely trying, yet just one man fell out. The troops bivouacked outside the town. There, in some large huts, were found 1,250 rifles, a brass gun, a Gatling, and some ammunition, all taken from Baker's massacred force, together

with heaps of portmanteaus, saddlery, clothes, stationery, band and medical instruments, and all manner of articles useless to the Arabs.

The rifles were destroyed and the ammunition buried, after which the Black Watch and Rifles fell back for El Teb and Fort Baker respectively.

All the wounded were sent on board the *Jumna*, and Lieutenant Royds, R.N., was buried at sea.

Tokar was found to be a small town of the ordinary Arab kind, surrounded by a dry ditch and wall, which in many places could have been carried by a rush of resolute men. Plenty of grain was found, so that the garrison could have held out longer, had not its commander been in league with the enemy.

General Graham now issued the following order:—"The objects of the Expedition are now achieved. Tokar has been relieved, and the rebels so thoroughly humbled, that the force before Tokar may safely retire; but, before the force is broken up, the General desires to record his sense of the gallantry and good discipline displayed by all arms. The Cavalry have shown that dash which has always characterised that arm of our military force, and have rendered invaluable service in reconnaissance and scouting. The action of the Infantry generally has been characterised by steadiness and firmness in the presence of the enemy." He concluded by thanking the Naval Brigade, the Artillery, and Staff. "The General especially commends the absence of all crime on the part of the troops. He is proud to

command them; they deserve well of their country."

The General and Admiral Hewett proceeded to Suakim on the 5th March, with the object of having the troops embarked as quickly as possible, after issuing another useless proclamation to the revolted Sheikhs, calling upon them to lay down their arms, and surrender five pieces of cannon, then said to be in the camp of Osman Digna, otherwise they would march with their whole force to seize them, and put to the sword all who opposed the movement.

To this a defiant reply was returned on the 10th March, so preparations for a further advance were resumed. All prisoners taken asserted that Osman would never surrender; but, if forced to retire among the mountains, he would keep the rebellion alive there, and swoop down again on the withdrawal of the British force; and subsequent events proved the truth of these predictions.

He was still in position at the Wells of Tamanieb when, on the 8th of March, he urged his followers to continue the contest, assuring them of victory, and the twenty-one chiefs who signed the defiant reply to General Graham asserted that they could, with ease, place in the field 10,000 tribesmen. The tone of that letter, and the savage threats it breathed, inspired the troops with anger, though there was some discontent among them at the prospect of a second advance.

They had come from Cairo in the lightest marching order, on the under-

standing that they had merely an eleven miles' march to Tokar and back. Only one shirt and one pair of socks were allowed per man, and, owing to the scarcity of water, washing was impossible. The short march to Tokar entailed great hardship from thirst, and with the total absence of all transport, the next march presented a still harder prospect, and all felt that the casualties in the last battle were mainly due to the force being without Horse Artillery.

On Sunday the 10th March the Black Watch—as usual ever the first in everything—advanced again from Suakim and took possession of General Baker's zeriba. The heat was literally awful, and, after being detained for some time waiting for artillery, the regiment marched without it. The air was burning, close, and breathless; five cases of sunstroke occurred, and many more men were temporarily disabled by heat and exhaustion, for each man, in addition to his arms and accoutrements, carried 100 rounds of ball cartridge. The water-bottles, full at starting, were soon empty, but were refilled at the zeriba, where some smokers unluckily set fire to the dry grass and scrub covering the plain. A faint breeze that came carried the rolling flames southward of the zeriba, but the Highlanders prevented them from catching the bush in its vicinity. They formed an entrenched camp, in which the water was carefully stored. Camels and mules conveying the latter and provisions had been passing to the front all day, and by evening 10,000 gallons of water—there a priceless commodity—were in their rear.

Some time prior to this, one of the Black Watch wrote thus, in an Edinburgh paper:—

“By break of day on the 15th February we were safely entrained at Suez, *en route* for the Eastern Soudan. We embarked 743 officers and men, under the command of Colonel W. Green. . . . The train stopped at Tel-el-Kebir for about twenty minutes, just giving us time to see the handsome cemetery that has been formed as the last resting-place of our comrades who fell in the late campaign. The principal headstone is that erected to the memory of our late Sergeant-Major M'Neill. Those who got nearest the graves of the Black Watch collected feathers from the red hackles of those around—what Scottish soldier does not know the famous story of the Red Hackle?—made tiny bunches, and placed them at the head of each. Looking at these from the train as we passed, they seemed like some bright-hued flowers lighting up the scene. The act was perhaps a silly one for grown men to do; but, after all, it was one that indicates very plainly that, even in the wearing of a distinctive coloured feather, the young members of the regiment are proud of and value what has been won for them by those who have 'gone before.' They paid their dead, in fact, the highest compliment they knew of.”

During the few preceding days Osman Digna had been considerably reinforced, and all accounts placed his strength as at least 8,000 men, armed somewhat differently from those who fought at El Teb; consequently, it

was thought that if our troops could maintain their position in square, they would escape the casualties caused by the fire of cannon and rifles, as Osman meant to rely chiefly on the swords, spears, and fanaticism of his followers in the conflicts to come.

The Highlanders could see from the zeriba the dim outline of some low, dark hills of red granite and syenite looming against the sky, about six miles distant, whereon Osman's followers were in position. In rear of the zeriba the cacti and mimosa bushes grew to the height of seven feet.

On the 12th March the troops, instead of embarking for Suez, came from Suakim and joined the Black Watch in their camp, after which the whole were formed in two hollow squares, with the medical appliances in the centre of each, when the force came within three miles of Osman's position.

The heat and the light dust raised by the motion of the feet proved nearly suffocating.

Of the enemy several large bodies had been visible early in the day; but these disappeared before the advance began, though small parties were visible in the distance. The column advanced slowly, as there was no saying where the enemy might be lying. A troop of Cavalry in loose order scouted over the ground in front and flank, while the main body of that force followed the Infantry. Many halts were made, and only seven miles of ground were covered in four hours, between the camp and where General Graham had taken up his position.

The two squares were oblong, the flanks of each being formed of half battalions, and, as they marched abreast, they presented a frontage of a quarter of a mile. As usual, the Naval Brigade had the heavy work of dragging their guns over the soft hot sand.

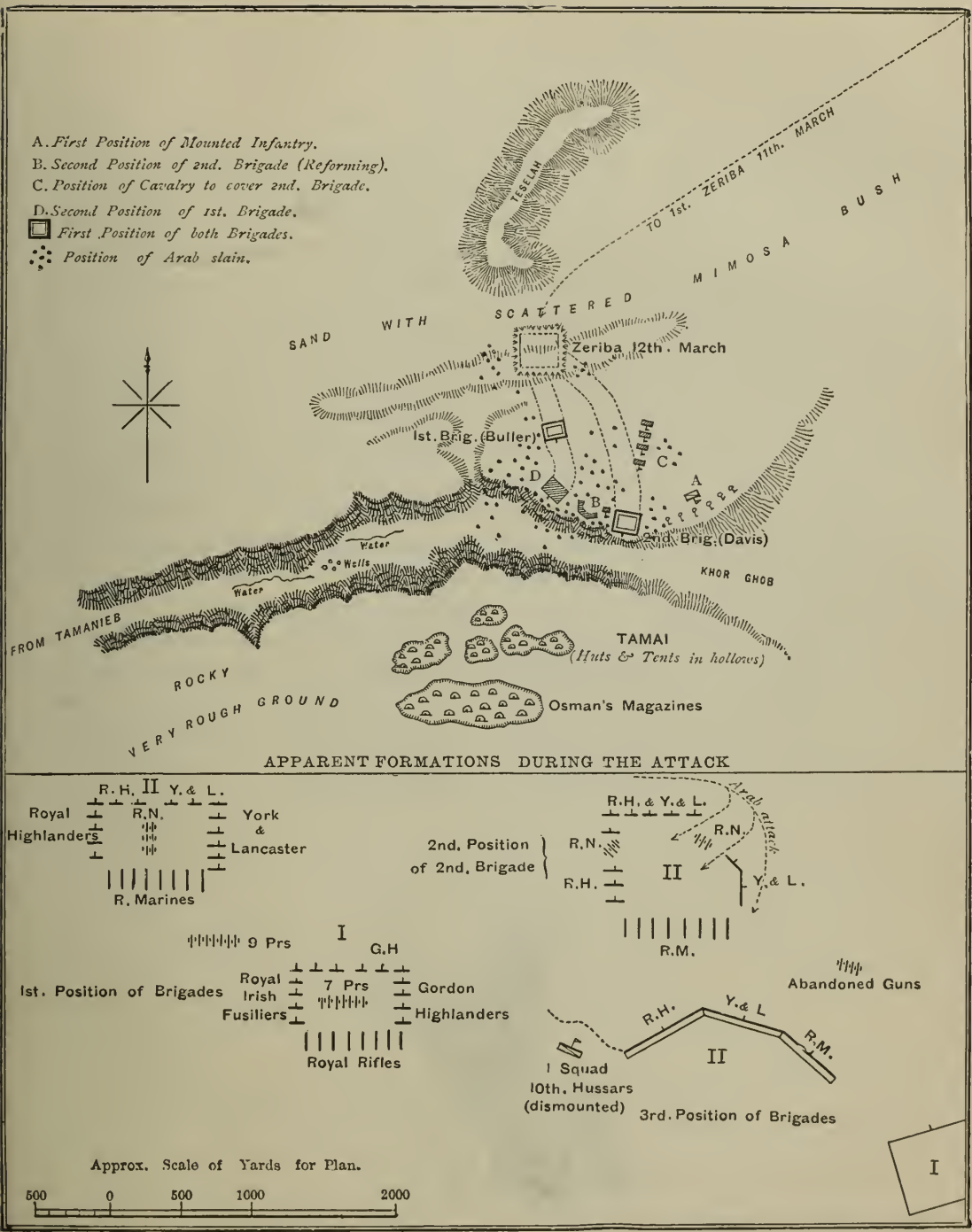
At four o'clock the Cavalry in front became engaged. At first only dropping shots were fired, but these developed into steady firing. "We wheeled left shoulder round," wrote one who was there, "and then took up ground to the left, so as to turn the line which the enemy appeared to be occupying; but the firing became so heavy that it was supposed their main body was at hand, and we formed up accordingly to receive their expected charge. The firing, however, died away, the enemy disappearing abruptly from the front of the Cavalry. As it was apparent that no attack was intended, we moved forward until we reached a piece of ground suitable for our night bivouac."

The troops passed the night in square.

The Mounted Infantry now reported the enemy as 6,000 strong, a spy at 7,000. The fires in their camp could be seen burning luridly after nightfall, at the distance of a mile and a half away. The bugles sounded at 8 p.m., and an allowance of grog was served round.

About eleven o'clock a deed of daring was performed by Commander Rolfe, R.N. He stole out of the bivouac alone to reconnoitre, heedless of what number of the enemy might be lurking among the thick bushes close by.





PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF TAMI (MARCH 13, 1884).

He made his way to a place where a few shells had been thrown after the bivouac was formed, and found three men lying dead. Not far off he saw the Arab pickets asleep round their watch-fires and near the wells. He reported that evidently no attack was in contemplation, so the troops were ordered to lie down and get what sleep they could, after a day of toil, and the last sleep, on earth, it proved to many.

The moonlight was bright and clear.

The men were at breakfast next morning, when General Stewart, with the Cavalry, came riding up from a zeriba in which they had passed the night, which, after the fires died out, proved a chilly one to all who were unprovided with blankets.

The Infantry formed in front of the zeriba at 8 o'clock on the morning of the 13th, and began their march in the same formation as that of the preceding day, by brigades, 1,000 yards apart in

echelon, the Second Brigade leading. It was composed of the Black Watch, York and Lancaster Regiment, the Royal Marines, and Naval Brigade, with Gardner and Gatling guns. In the First Brigade were the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the Gordon Highlanders, Royal Rifles, and more Royal Marines. "The former moved to the left under General Davies, and with it were the General and his staff. As the squares advanced the Cavalry fell back, followed by the enemy, who in great force could be seen crowded beyond the bush in front, their bright weapons flashing, and their black skins standing boldly out in the glare of the sunshine. They were 1,200 yards distant, but the main body was a mile away."

The two oblong squares pushed steadily onward, over ground intersected by rough, dry watercourses, towards a deep hollow, full of great boulders and rugged rocks.



SOUDANESE ARAB.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE BATTLE OF TAMAI.

A Square Broken—Temporary British Repulse—Valour of the Black Watch—The Battle Won—Losses—Victoria Cross Awards—Osman's Camp destroyed—Individual Bravery—Osman Proclaimed—At Suakim—Presentation of a Standard of the Mahdi's to Queen Victoria.

FROM the left, General Stewart now sent forward two squadrons of Cavalry, together with the Abyssinian scouts, to skirmish, and a lively conflict soon ensued between them and the enemy, till a forward movement of the latter, led on by their wild and daring Sheikhs, compelled the former to fall back, and then the leading brigade—the 2nd—pressed onward, firing steadily as it went.

Our fire became inconceivably hot when the edge of the stony hollow was won, and despite orders and bugle calls, our men could be got neither to reserve their ammunition nor expend it steadily. Their breechloaders filled the air with a stupendous roar, and the whole of the troops became enveloped in dense smoke, which there was no wind to carry away. Under cover of this, the active and stealthy foe crept up the side of the rough ravine, and like living waves made a succession of wild and furious dashes on the bayonets of the front ranks.

On the points of their weapons some forty or so literally hurled their bare breasts, and perished of the most dreadful wounds, in front of the Marines and York and Lancaster Regiment. And now, as the terrible tumult increased, and with it the pressure, the weak points of our unsteady square

became tested. "The companies of the 65th and Black Watch (or front face) swept forward against the foe," says an eye-witness, "but the remaining companies of those regiments, which formed the sides of the square, and were also expecting an attack, did not keep up with the rapid movements of those in front, and the consequence was that many gaps appeared in what should have been a solid wall of men."

Cheering loudly and advancing rapidly at the double with bayonets charged, the front face, by its quickness of action, increased still more these gaps in the flank faces, at a moment when the Arabs were swooping down chiefly on the right face, the front of which was compelled to halt. Every effort was made by the officers to close up these most fatal gaps, and steady the men to withstand the onslaught, but the storm of rifle fire that burst from the front and other flank faces drowned their voices.

"The 65th gave way and fell back upon the Marines," says the *Daily Telegraph*, "throwing them into disorder, though many men disdained to turn their backs, but kept their faces to the foe, firing and thrusting with the bayonet; but both regiments were inextricably hurled together, and through the smoke at this dire crisis

the dark and demon-like figures of the foe could be seen rushing on unchecked, even for a moment, by the hailstorm of bullets, and then the fight became hand to hand."

In their collapse, the writer adds that the two broken English regiments threw even the Black Watch

wedged and jammed up by a mass of our soldiers, were unable to use their guns, and were compelled to abandon them, with the loss of three officers and many seamen, but not before the sights were removed, to prevent their use by the enemy.

"We came back about 800 yards,'



LIEUT. MARLING, V.C.

(From a Photograph by Messrs. Elliott and Fry.)

into disorder, and the square no longer existed. Striking with the spear, or hewing with their hatchets and long cross-hilted swords, the Arabs pressed on in wild *mélée*, slaying many, and being slain in turn, for many went down under bayonet and bullet, when the Highlanders and Marines fought back to back.

The whole of this column now began to recoil, despite the vigorous efforts of its officers; and the Naval Brigade,

wrote the correspondent of the *Telegraph*, "moving in a more easterly direction than the line of advance. By this time the fire from the first brigade, on our right as well as front, and the Cavalry on our left, held the Arabs; and the officers succeeded in checking the retreat, the Black Watch, who were fairly in hand, and a portion of the Marines, largely assisting in stopping what might have been a more serious disaster to the brigade. It was

re-formed, and the men who had got out of their regiments were sent into their own lines again. I must revert again to the way in which several hundreds of Marines and Highlanders fought back to back, firing and retiring in excellent order. They were over two hundred yards to the brigade

and knocked his helmet off, and he was bareheaded under a burning sun, till gallant Norman MacLeod (a Lieutenant) gave him his helmet and wrapped a cloth round his own head. When we rallied and formed line, I imagined I must be the only officer left alive; but to my joy we all met:



MAJOR AITKEN, BLACK WATCH.

(From a Photograph by Messrs. Elliott and Fry.)

front when it was halted and re-formed, and to their great coolness and steadiness is largely due the final success of the day."

"All our officers fought like devils here," wrote a captain of the Black Watch. "The colonel is a splendid man. He shot two Arabs dead, and would have shot more, only the Government ammunition missed fire. An Arab threw a spear, and just missed the colonel, and then threw a stone

old Charlie Eden, as cool as if on partridge shooting; little Brophy, lame, but pretending to be sound; Sandy Kennedy, with eye-glass in his eye and his wife's watch round his neck; Bald, a gigantic subaltern, perspiring, with a sailor's hat on, as he had lost his helmet; Sir John MacLeod's son, Duncan, wounded; old Bob Coveny, smiling with confidence, and Norman MacLeod with his firm lips; Speid looking calm as a judge, and

young Macrae of Argyleshire, cool, who had only joined us the day before, armed with a spear. All our officers had hand-to-hand fights with the Arabs, who pulled the kilts off our men. One of them tore the green ribbons off mine, but I killed him."

Two officers of the Black Watch, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, slew many of the enemy with their double-edged claymores, running the blades up to the hilt every time.

When the 2nd Brigade was re-formed, supplied with fresh ammunition, and returned to the point where it was broken to re-take the lost guns, the hour of nine had come, and a fresh force of the Arabs were seen issuing from the rocky ravine in which they had hitherto been concealed. Their charge was met with renewed confidence, and of those naked warriors, dark-skinned and supple, who with loud yells, streaming hair, and gleaming blades, came storming and swarming down upon the square, few or none went back, the last survivors falling in front of the bayonets of the front ranks, under the withering fire poured in by those in rear.

The mass of the enemy now began to fall back, followed by a galling shell and rifle fire, to which they replied with coolness, facing about from time to time. They had got one of our Gatlings into the ravine, where somehow its ammunition limber caught fire, and it hissed and blazed, sending shots perilously in every direction for half an hour after. "General Buller's Brigade—the 1st—halted on the edge of the ravine, while forward, and across it,

went the 2nd. Buller was in square; the Gordon Highlanders on the front and right face; the Royal Irish Fusiliers on the left; the Rifles in the rear, and nine 7-pounders under Major Gough in the centre. Here the objective point was a second intervening ridge, 800 yards distant, and formed of sharp, hot, red granite rocks and boulders; but it was carried with a cheer, the men firing as they went on at the enemy's main body gathered on the opposite ridge, which was also carried, General Graham directing the advance in person, and on the summit being gained, in the valley of Tamai Ghab, 180 feet below, could be seen the tents and huts of Osman Digna, with all the loot of his former victories."

The field of Tamai was now virtually won, and at half-past ten General Graham re-formed the whole force prior to marching on the Wells, which were three miles distant, and where, on different points of the horizon, several parties of the enemy were visible. Among the scrub many wounded Arabs were lurking, refusing quarter, and shooting or stabbing wildly at all who came near them, till they were despatched like reptiles. One attacked no less than six Hussars at once, and fought with such insane fury that he was not slain without incredible difficulty. This was when the Cavalry were clearing the bushes.

"The roll up," as it was called, of Davis's Brigade, resulted from the rapidity of its advance, and a momentary forgetfulness of the perilous nature of

a movement in square, with an Arab rush on its flanks. "I passed over the battle-field," says the correspondent of the *Standard*, "and from what I saw there I should increase my estimate of killed to at least 3,000. The Arabs lay in heaps, as the Egyptians did on General Baker's battle-field. Alongside of them are the skeletons of the black regiment annihilated here three months ago, and now terribly avenged."

Few or no prisoners were taken.

Our casualties of all ranks were 91 killed and 111 wounded, with 18 missing. The latter were soon after added to the list of killed. The Black Watch lost no less than eight sergeants—Fraser, MacClay, Campbell, Reed, Duncan, Johnston, Gray, and King, with a total casualty of 90 of all ranks. Among their officers who fell was Major Aitken, in attempting to save whom Private Ronald Fraser died, fighting to the last like a young Achilles.

The Victoria Cross was awarded to Lieutenant Marling of the Rifles, for bravery on this day, in carrying out of the press a wounded private of the Royal Sussex Regiment, and thus saving his life. It was also bestowed upon Private Edwards of the Black Watch, for the valour displayed by him in defending a gun of the Naval Brigade, to which he was attached as mule-driver.

General Graham destroyed by fire the entire camp and stores of Osman Digna in the valley. The flames rose to a great height, together with mighty columns of dark smoke. After the ammunition caught fire, for more than

an hour, there ensued an explosion of shells and roar of rifle cartridges as if a sharp engagement were in progress. The General was heartily cheered by the troops, while the latter and the sailors frequently cheered each other. Returning from Tamai, the Cavalry came upon a flowing stream, a joyous sight alike to horse and rider.

Two of the 10th Hussars saw an Arab lying on the ground severely wounded, and, as a riderless horse passed near, he mustered strength enough to give the harmless animal a deadly stab in flank. Enraged by this wanton cruelty, one of the Hussars hewed off the hand which grasped the spear, on which the Arab picked up the weapon with his left, but was run through and slain by the other Hussar.

"What occurred in Section 1 of B Company," says the *Telegraph*, regarding the Royal Highlanders, "will illustrate the nature of the terrible contest where the fight raged fiercest. Of twenty men who went into the first charge of our troops up to the edge of the nullah—the regiment was obeying orders; it would have been wiser had they felt their ground, advancing steadily—but three escaped alive, and they were badly wounded. One of the finest and strongest men in the Black Watch was with Section 1—namely, big Jamie Adams, and he was pluckily backed by Sergeant Donald Fraser. Both men faced the rushing horde of nearly naked Arabs, and charged down into the nullah. The battle was too fierce to permit of time to draw empty cartridges, let alone load rifles. These

men, and their comrades, opposed steel to steel, fighting with all the physical power they possessed, which was vastly greater than even the sinewy strength of the swarthy savages. The two Highlanders made a dozen of their foemen bite the dust before they fell by loss of blood from cuts by thrown spears. While they fought, they used not only their rifles, the butt as well as the bayonet, but, when the Arabs closed in, hit out with their fists. Another man of the same section, George Drummond, who came out alive with three wounds, while bayoneting an Arab, was cut over the head by a man on a grey charger, with one of those huge cross-hilted swords. His helmet and the swerving of the horse saved him. Though stunned, he drove his bayonet through the Arab's body. While tugging to get it out, another rushed at him, spear in hand, but his fighting comrade Kelly shot the savage. Poor Kelly was killed almost immediately afterwards, and Drummond had his work cut out to get away."

The rider of the grey horse was Osman's cousin, General Mahmoud Moussa.

On the night after the battle the scene near the camp was a sad one, while the farewell volleys of the burial parties rang out in the dark, still atmosphere. All over the field could be seen dusky groups of Soudanese searching—when the moonlight shone out—for missing friends, and their shrill cries of passionate grief, as they stumbled over heaps of gashed and gory dead, made our soldiers, after the fierce ex-

citement of the day, marvel to each other to what useful end was all this slaughter and suffering.

When morning dawned, save the dead not an Arab was visible.

On the 16th a meeting of thirty friendly Sheikhs was held at Suakim. It was attended by General Graham and Admiral Hewett, who told them that "though we had conquered Osman Digna, we had no desire to occupy the country, and wished for peace. The British were here only for the safe withdrawal of the Soudan garrisons. Could the Sheikhs open up the country with their tribes and secure the trade routes?"

They replied that the tribes could only do so with the aid of the British troops.

It was now that the highly improper proclamation, offering 5,000 dollars for Osman Digna, dead or alive, was posted up at Suakim, and distributed in the country. It ran thus:—

"I, the British Governor and General, Civil and Military, at Suakim, make known that whoever will bring in the rebel Osman, the murderer, who by his lies has caused the blood of the tribes to be spilt at El Teb and Tamanieb, alive or dead, shall receive Five Thousand Dollars Reward."

An Arab, whose six brothers had fallen in the last battle, and who was brought in from the field where he had lain all night in his blood, said, with bitterness of heart, that "Osman was a liar! The British bullets had not been turned aside, but had killed thousands of Haddendowas; and the British were not the terrible cut-throats and beasts he described them as being."





THE BLACK WATCH AT TAMAL.

On the 16th the expediency of a march to Sinkat was under the consideration of the General, who had concentrated the forces at Suakim, and believed that such a movement would impress the natives, and confirm in their minds the impression of our victories.

Four miles distant from the scene of the last fight, Osman was reported to be lurking at the head of the Vale of Tamanieb, mustering fresh forces; but as the local tribes had lost more than 6,000 men, through simple belief in his false statements of miraculous powers, it seemed doubtful if he could gather enough to face us again in the field, though he had registered a vow to slay every man, black or white, who did not agree with him.

On the morning of the 18th of March, three native messengers, who had been sent into the country with Admiral Hewett's peculiar proclamation, returned to Suakim, and reported that Osman was encamped near Tamanieb with 2,000 fighting men and a great number of wounded, for whom there was, of course, no medical aid; but all were declaring their readiness to do battle again. "Osman had told them that when the Prophet first began his mission he had been several times beaten, but was grandly victorious in the end. So had he, himself, been beaten by the Egyptians and their infidel allies, but eventually he would triumph over them all.

"The natives admitted (to the messengers) the severity of the defeats they had suffered, and that their loss was great, varying from 3,500 to 5,000, all

of whom were now in Paradise; that they were not taking the trouble to bury their dead, saying this was altogether unnecessary, as they know their souls are in happiness."

Thus it was that on the 16th they were becoming the prey of flocks of vultures, and herds of barking jackals, and yelling hyenas.

The proclamation offering 5,000 dollars for Osman, dead or alive, was publicly burned, with every mark of contempt, by the Sheikhs at Tamanieb, and on the 21st it was withdrawn, in consequence of instructions from home.

On the morning of the preceding day the 10th Hussars rode out to intercept a caravan of forty camels laden with grain, reported as being expected by Osman from Tokar. Of this convoy they could see nothing, but only eight men mounted on camels, who made swiftly off to the hills the moment the Cavalry came in sight.

As no more fighting was expected now, the troops at Suakim looked anxiously forward for orders to return home, or to proceed to Cairo. The want of water in these deserts seemed a more serious obstacle than Osman Digna's Arabs. Along the Berber road it was reported that water might be found for 500 Cavalry, but no more; hence a march of Infantry in that direction, with the necessary baggage animals, was deemed, at that time of the year, utterly impracticable.

Sir Cromer Ashburnham, Colonel of the Rifles, an officer distinguished for brilliant services in India, was now appointed Governor of Suakim, *vice* Sir

William Hewett, who was about to proceed on his remarkable embassy to John, King of Abyssinia, and who left among the natives a reputation for justice and moderation.

The Admiral was sanguine of success in having the Berber route opened up for the garrison and fugitives who were expected to come from Khartoum under Gordon, though practically they were still as isolated and helpless as if the last two battles had neither been fought nor won; and Captain Chermiside arrived at Suakim to assist in the negotiations concerning this Berber route; though it now seemed, that unless we meant to take military possession of it, to be futile to keep a column any longer at Suakim, where the climate was already telling severely on the health of the troops.

A detachment of our Cavalry and Mounted Infantry, which advanced about dawn on the 22nd from Handoub to a place called Tambouk, came back to report that they had proceeded through districts where the tribes seemed friendly and quiet. Thus an impression began to prevail that Osman's people had deserted him; but the staff at headquarters thought differently, and it was proposed to advance against him once more, for the purpose of cutting off any followers he might have, and dispersing them utterly.

"At this time it was believed and asserted in Constantinople, where our operations in the Soudan were closely watched, that notwithstanding our victories at El Teb and Tamai over

the followers of the Mahdi, the spirit of his fanatical hordes was not yet broken, and that the struggle, which, on the part of the Arabs, had assumed the character of a *Jehad*, or Holy War, might go on for many years, and render the position of Britain in Egypt a difficult one. According to an old prophecy, the coming of a new Prophet, or Mahdi, will be marked with a struggle with unbelievers for forty years, after which the triumph of his cause will be assured, and he shall become the ruler of the world."

Mohammed Achmet Shemseddin had thus thirty-nine years before him, from the battle of Tamai, to accomplish this task; hence he had no reason for despair as yet. Had the Sultan's troops been ranged with our own in the conflict, the impression and the result might have been different; for "even the Mahdi," wrote one at this time, "recognises Abdul Hamid in his character of Caliph of the Mussulmans, and the presence of his Majesty's troops, side by side with our own, would at once deprive the movement in the Soudan of that religious character whence it now derives its principal strength."

On the 23rd of March there came into Suakim three Sheikhs who had served under the banner of Osman Digna. They now asserted that he had only from 500 to 1,000 men with him; but Colonel Slade, whose reconnoitring force had penetrated within two miles of where his camp was said to be, could discover no signs of them anywhere. The three Sheikhs asserted

that they had joined the revolt because they genuinely believed in the holy mission of the Mahdi.

About this time Lieutenant Wilford Lloyd, of the Royal Horse Artillery, presented to her Majesty at Windsor Castle a standard of the Mahdi, which had fallen into the hands of our troops at Tokar. It was eight feet long, by

six broad, composed of red and yellow silk, and had on one side an inscription in Arabic, stating that it had been presented by the Mahdi to the Governor of Tokar, his friend; and on the other a text from the Koran:—

“There is no God but God, and Mahomet is His Prophet. Every one professes the knowledge of God.”



SOUDANESE ARAB WITH HIS WEAPONS.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## GORDON'S OPERATIONS AT KHARTOUM.

Gordon's Despatch of 7th March—Fighting at Khartoum and Halfiyeh—Rescue of the Chaggias—Treachery—Spread of the Revolt—Investment of Khartoum—Sieges of Kassala and Berber.

WHILE these events were in progress at Suakim, General Gordon had been struggling to maintain his command in Khartoum at the head of nearly 2,500 men.

About the 7th of March, or the day before Lord Granville had expressed such unlimited confidence in the General, the latter had telegraphed for the immediate despatch of Zebehr Pasha to take over the Government of Khartoum, the establishment of his own authority being excluded by his instructions from Mr. Gladstone's Ministry, and his own engagements to the King of Belgium. The following is an extract from his most remarkable despatch, explaining why he demanded "the King of the Slave Traders," as Zebehr is called in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, as his successor at Khartoum:—

"To withdraw without being able to place a successor in my seat would be the signal for general anarchy throughout the country, which, though all Egyptian element was withdrawn, would be a misfortune and inhuman. Even if I placed a man in my seat unsupported by any Government, the same anarchy would ensue. Her Majesty's Government could, I think, without responsibility in money or men, give the commission to my successor on certain terms which I will detail hereafter.

"If this solution is examined, we shall find that a somewhat analogous case exists in Afghanistan, where Her Majesty's Government give moral support to the Ameer, and go even beyond that in giving the Ameer a subsidy, which would not be needed in the present case. I distinctly state that if Her Majesty's

Government gave a commission to my successor, I recommend neither a subsidy nor men being given. I would select and give a commission to some man, and promise him the moral support of Her Majesty's Government, and nothing more. It may be argued that Her Majesty's Government would thus be giving nominal and moral support to a man who will rule over a slave State, but so is Afghanistan, as also Socotra. This nomination of my successor must, I think, be direct from Her Majesty's Government.

"As for the man, Her Majesty's Government should select one above all others, namely, Zebehr. He alone has the ability to rule the Soudan, and would be universally accepted by the Soudan. He should be made K.C.M.G., and given presents.

"The terms of nomination should be as follows:—

"1. Engagement not to go into Equatorial or Bahr-Gazelle provinces, and which I should evacuate.

"2. Engagement not to go into Darfur.

"3. Engagement, on payment of £200 annually, to telegraph height of Nile to Cairo.

"4. Engagement to remain at peace with Abyssinia.

"5. Engagement not to levy duties beyond four per cent. on imports or exports. Of course he will not have Suakim or Massowah.

"6. Engagement not to pursue any one who was engaged in suppressing his son's revolt.

"7. Engagement to pay the pensions granted by the Egyptian Government to old employés. To the above may be added other clauses as may seem fit. P.S.—I think the decision of any Council of Notables for the selection of candidates for the post of my successor would be useless. Zebehr's exile at Cairo for ten years, amidst all the late events, and his mixing with Europeans, must have had great effect on his character. Zebehr's nomination, under the moral countenance of Her Majesty's Government, would bring all merchants, European and others, back to the Soudan in a short time." (Egypt, No. 12, p. 72.)

Colonel Stewart was of opinion that this policy "would greatly facilitate our

retirement from the country." Sir Evelyn Baring in forwarding the proposal said:—"There is no necessity to decide at once, but I believe Zebehr Pasha to be the only possible man. He undoubtedly possesses energy and ability, and has great local influence."

In a series of telegrams, in the first days of March, Gordon urged that "the combination at Khartoum of Zebehr and myself is an absolute necessity for success," and he begged Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville to have no fear of their quarrelling.

On the 13th March a large force of the Mahdi's men—estimated at 4,000—were seen in the evening drawn up under arms, with banners waving, on the right bank of the Nile, opposite the Palace of Khartoum. At 3 a.m. next day, the *Times* correspondent was awakened by a heavy rifle fire; he could see the flashes from the roof of the palace. This continued till day-break, when the Soudanese, now increased to 6,000, drew up "in four ranks nearly two miles long." Later in the day they commenced the erection of tents and huts. He subsequently discovered that the cause of the firing was an attack on a party of 300 soldiers, who had been sent down the Nile for fire-wood. The following are General Gordon's words on the subject:—

"My arrangements of last night have unfortunately been put a stop to by the following circumstance. It appears that, by some unaccountable negligence, 300 of the black troops had been left on the Nile below. These were cut off by the advance of the

Arabs, and they attempted to get into Khartoum at night by means of boats. When passing Halfiyeh they were seen by the rebels, who opened fire on them, killing 100. In consequence of some further disgraceful negligence, the steamers that should have gone to their rescue did not get under weigh for six hours after the event. This sad loss, with the intelligence brought me later that some Chaggias, who had been blockaded in Halfiyeh, had gone over to the rebels, and combined with the vast accumulation of these latter, on the other bank of the Nile, have decided me to restrict myself to the defence of Khartoum, and not risk any outside expedition, further than may be necessary to keep the environs clear."

On the 13th the *Times* correspondent had an interview with General Gordon, who gave the following reasons for an attack on the rebels on the subsequent day:—

"I have 800 men to whom I have given arms, and who have remained faithful to me, shut up at Halfiyeh, some miles north of Khartoum. The presence of the enemy round Halfiyeh blocks our line of communications by steamer. For instance, the *Bourdain* yesterday attempted to pass, and the rebels opened fire, wounding three soldiers. The rebels cannot be more than 4,000, and I shall make my attack on three sides—one from that of Khartoum, one from that of the beleaguered garrison, and one from armed steamers. The rebels have entrenched themselves along the river bank, being thus en-

abled to fire with impunity on passing steamers, and I must dislodge them. This assemblage of rebels has not, apparently, interfered with the forwarding of supplies to the town market; 100 camels carrying food arrived here to-day. This is above the usual daily number, and the fact shows that the people would not rise unless they were urged on by some malcontents. They would be quiet if they believed the Government had any backbone."

Thus, the necessity for rescuing the garrison at Halfiyeh led to the postponement of an attack on the enemy outside Khartoum.

Halfiyeh, fourteen miles distant from the latter, is, according to Fullarton's "Gazetteer," a large and pleasant town, and was the ancient Meroë, so celebrated for its wines. Its still more ancient name was Saba, but Cambyses gave it that of Meroë, from his sister, according to Herodotus and others. The surrounding country, says McCoan, is well-watered table-land, broken by low ranges of hills, still rich now, as of yore, in the elements of prosperity; but Holroyd describes the modern Meroë as "a ruined and deserted town, brought to its present dilapidated condition by oppression and bad government. Within a very recent period of my visit to it, no less than twenty-seven water-wheels had been deserted, their owners having absconded to Berber and other places." At this place are seven ancient temples and seventeen pyramids.

On the morning of the 15th of March the expedition, consisting of 1,200 men, in three steamers, started

down the Nile, to relieve the blockaded Chaggias in Halfiyeh. "We were bound in honour to make the attempt to extricate them, however perilous defeat might be. The steamers were defended with boiler plates, and carried mountain guns protected by wooden mantelets. The troops were concealed in the holds, and in large iron barges, to protect them from the entrenched Arab marksmen on the banks, who, owing to the lowness of the Nile, commanded the river."

The expedition proved a complete success; by the evening the steamers returned in triumph, amid great rejoicings, bringing the rescued 500 men of the garrison at Halfiyeh. "They have raised the siege," wrote the *Times* correspondent, "and saved the men, with the loss of only two, capturing seventy camels, eighteen horses, and a quantity of arms and cattle. There was a great demonstration by the townspeople in honour of General Gordon."

On the 16th he suffered a repulse by the Mahdi's troops at Halfiyeh, chiefly through the misconduct of Hassan Pasha and Said Pasha, who had been previously a Bey, till promoted by Gordon. On charges of treachery before the enemy, he had them both tried by court-martial and instantly shot. Towards the end of the month he reported that "ample supplies were coming in from the White Nile, while it was asserted that the rebels at Halfiyeh were in want of food, and that a famine was apprehended. Two emissaries of the Mahdi had arrived at Khartoum with drawn swords in their hands, and

declared that he would not recognise his appointment as Sultan of Kordofan. He advised General Gordon to embrace Mohammedanism, and added that the European prisoners were well cared for."

This referred to the chief of the

in his household. The reason for this was, that old legends about the expected Mahdi described him as having such marks.

By the 24th of March the whole country south of Berber was in a state of revolt, and Khartoum was becoming



BERBER, FROM THE WEST.

Catholic Missionaries at El Obeid, eleven Syrians, twelve Greek merchants, and Gustav Klootz, the only survivor of Hicks's army.

About this time the Mahdi suddenly appeared with a number of warts on his right cheek; these were said to be produced artificially with the aid of a German, named Schöndorper, formerly a clown, and afterwards a hair-dresser

closely invested, and fighting went on almost daily.

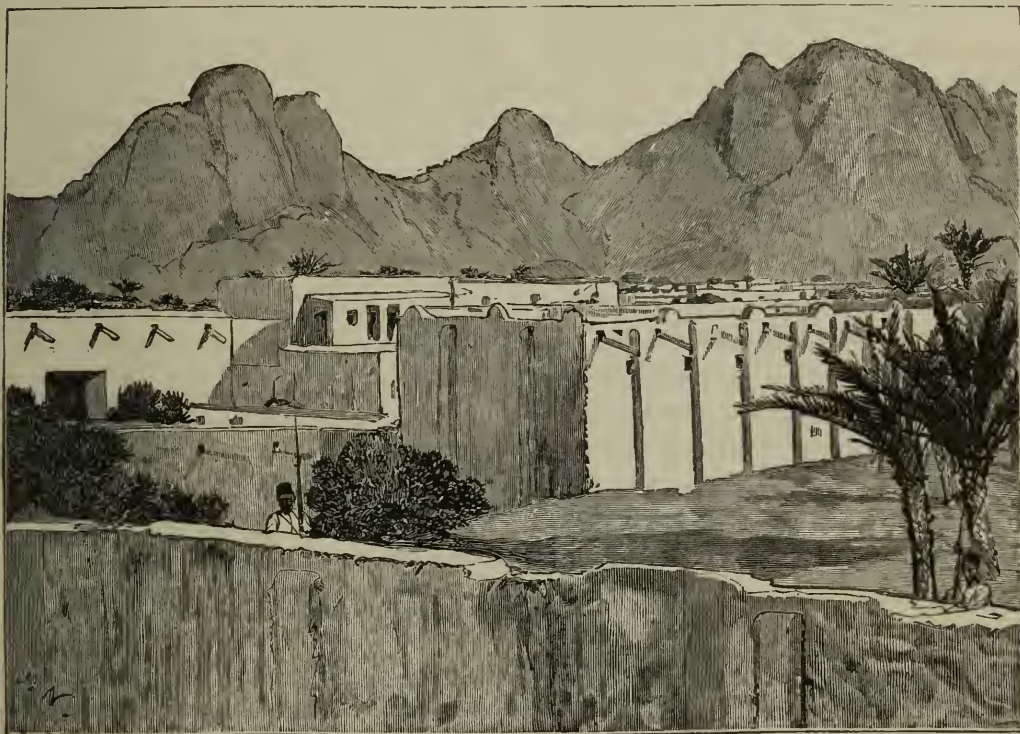
On the 24th a steamer was sent down the river to shell the rebels at Halfiyeh, and, after firing for some time, returned safely. On the following day, 250 irregular troops, who refused to obey an order given for the occupation of some villages on the opposite bank of the Nile, were promptly disarmed by



Gordon, whose steamers from Khartoum on the 26th shelled the rebel camp on the Blue Nile, killing about fifty of the enemy and sixteen horses.

On the 27th they advanced close to the city, and for several hours kept up a galling fire. They were answered by

yet Gordon reported that the rebels had "only two rounds of ammunition left, and one gun, the other two being spiked. He continues to speak confidently of his power to hold out, and so long as the garrison remain faithful he will probably be able to do so, as



KASSALA, NEAR THE BORDERS OF ABYSSINIA.

a Krupp gun, which did great execution, the killed alone being estimated by General Gordon at 200 men.

On the 30th some Bashi-Bazouks attacked the enemy's advanced posts, but were forced to retreat into Khartoum; not, however, until they had killed about fifty of the enemy.

During the whole night of the 31st they kept up a heavy fire on the city;

provisions continue to come in freely; but the enemy show increased boldness, and the news from Berber is far from reassuring."

On the 7th April the *Times* correspondent wrote, "Since I last telegraphed, the rebels have almost daily been engaged, principally the steamers. Khartoum is at present the centre of an enormous rebel camp. The rebel tents

are within sight, and their bullets often strike, or go over, the palace, in which a man was thus killed last week. We have killed several of the rebels, but our store of Krupp ammunition is rather short, and the situation is now very critical. We are now trying to run a steamer through the rebel lines to Berber. Yesterday, owing to the severity of the rebel fire, she had to return. The day before yesterday an attack of the rebels on Omdurman was repulsed, and we have mined the plain in front of the fortifications."

The writer adds that he had two sources of hope in that most desperate crisis; first, the expectation of a relieving column composed of British troops; secondly, the plan of a retreat across the Equator. He then went on to remark that it was becoming but too evident already that Gordon had been abandoned by the very ministry that had employed him, and that without the aid of Zebehr Pasha he could never defeat the rebels, and would be driven by them into Central Africa. "For to-day (7th April) an unciphered telegram, sent from Sir E. Baring to Berber, came saying that no British troops would be sent to that place; in a word clearly indicating that General Gordon and others, who have been faithful to the Government, are thrown over. To retreat to Berber is impossible! Sir Evelyn Baring's unciphered telegram to that place will quickly be spread abroad, and the Arabs will learn that the British Government have turned down their thumbs while Gordon is struggling here."

On the following day Gordon telegraphed thus to Sir Samuel Baker:—

"I have received a message from Sir Evelyn Baring, stating that the British Government do not intend to send troops to open the road to Berber, but that negotiations are proceeding with the Arabs for opening the road. You will be able to judge of the value of these negotiations, and also of the time such arrangements will last, after the withdrawal of the British troops from Suakim. Our position is as follows: We are provisioned for five months, but are hemmed in by some 500 determined, and 2,000 tag-rag, Arabs. Our position will be much better with the rising of the Nile. Sennaar, Kassala, Dongola, and Berber, are quite safe for the present. Do you think if an appeal were made to the millionaires of Britain and the United States £200,000 would be available? Here you might obtain the permission of the Sultan of Turkey to lend us 2,000 or 3,000 Nizams and send them to Berber. With these, we could not only settle our affairs here, but could also do for the false Prophet, in whose collapse the Sultan is necessarily interested. I would put Zebehr in command. If the loyal way in which the troops and townspeople here have held to me under these circumstances of great difficulty were known, I am sure this appeal would be considered to be fully justified. I should be mean indeed if I neglected any steps for their safety. Rumour says that Zebehr is at Korosko, but no official confirmation has come from Cairo, and it is remarkable that I am not informed."

About the same time the *Daily News* announced that Kassala was besieged by 6,000 rebels, who fired on the town every night, but the garrison, 3,000 strong, had sufficient food for some months; that Osman Digna's followers were increasing; that his present force was 2,000 men, and that if he attacked, the chances were decidedly against the Egyptian garrison, who were hated, and that all neutrals would join him in great numbers.

On the 8th April, Nubar Pasha received a most desponding telegram from Hussein Pasha Khalifa at Berber.

He stated that the population generally were assuming an attitude of menace, and that in a few days he expected Berber to be surrounded on every side, and taken by the rebels.

About the same time a steamer which started from Shendy with 300 refugees, who hoped to make their way to Berber, ran on a sand-bank near El Baala, where it was attacked on every side by the Arabs, who massacred all on board, and it was supposed the insurrection would ere long reach to Assouan.

A German Catholic missionary, who arrived at Cairo from the Soudan on the 9th of April, described General Gordon's situation as one of desperation. He was practically imprisoned in the palace, and could scarcely greet the rising sun from his windows without running a risk from rebel bullets. Ever since the disgraceful defeat of his forces by a handful of Arabs, through the treachery of the two black Pashas, Hassan and Said, he had been surrounded by traitors and enemies; the roads between Berber and Khartoum were now occupied; relief by the way of the Nile was impossible, while all the land routes were impracticable owing to the intense heat, which would steadily increase till June. The missionary added that Gordon could not possibly defend the place with his present garrison. The defence would require at least 6,000 men, as the opposite banks of the river were occupied by an enemy strong in numbers and able to use the guns they had captured.

By the 25th of April the road to

Khartoum was closed. Unable to proceed thither, the last messenger returned to Berber, where the situation was fast becoming desperate; and even Korosko, the inhabitants of which are peaceable, intelligent, and honest, was reported to be unsafe.

One of Gordon's last communications was a telegram, received by Sir Evelyn Baring at Cairo, on the 21st of April, 1884, "expressing the utmost indignation at the manner in which he had been abandoned by the British Government, and stating his resolution to cut himself entirely adrift from those who had deserted him, and on whom will rest the bloodguiltiness for all lives hereafter lost in the Soudan."

Zebehr had received at Cairo, on the 16th of the month, Gordon's appointment as Assistant-Governor of the Soudan, but he wisely declined it.

General Gordon, it was maintained by the supporters of the Ministry, received a pacific mission to release the garrison; some even averred he had exceeded his instructions. As the Khedive's Governor-General of the Soudan, Gordon had been instructed to restore justice and order, and maintain tranquillity in the country. Nor could it be asserted that these were only Egyptian duties for which the British Government were not responsible, for on the 6th of March Mr. Gladstone explicitly stated that his Government was responsible for all General Gordon's acts so long as he continued to be, with the sanction and authority of the British Government, the agent of the Khedive in the Soudan.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE MARCH TO THE WELLS OF TAMANIEB.

Sufferings at Suakim—A Reconnaissance—Skirmishes at Tamanieb—Shooting of the Mounted Infantry—Submission of Sheikhs—Medal for the Campaign—Return of Troops to Cairo—News from Berber—The Garrison in Suakim.

FOR a final expedition against the troops of the Mahdi, General Graham's force paraded at Suakim at 2 p.m. on the 25th of March, 1884. The weather

was known for certain that, if Egyptian troops took their place, all that we had done would have been done in vain.

The Admiral had completely failed

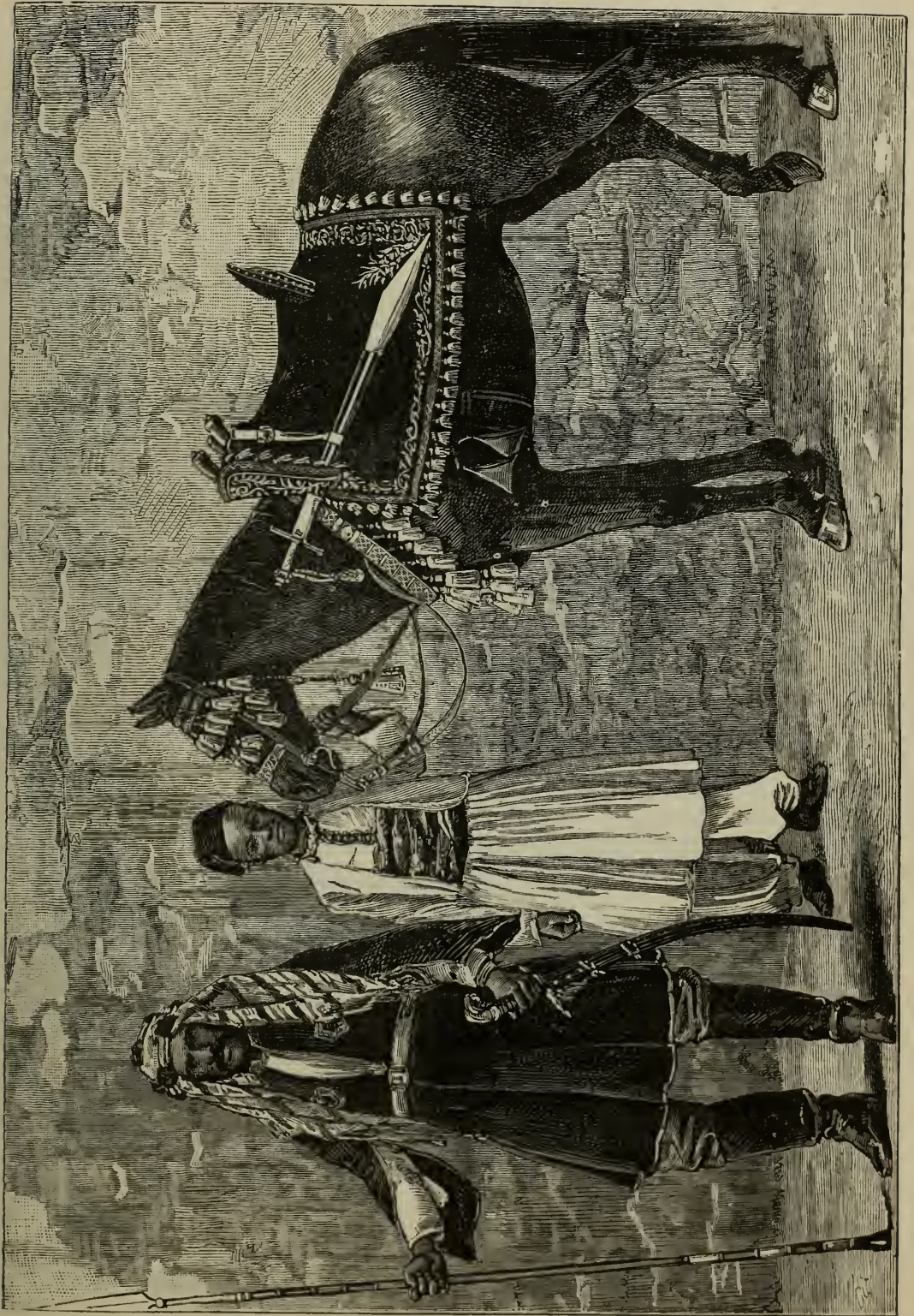


SENNAAR, ON THE BLUE NILE.

was now very hot, and it was obvious that marching would prove severe work for the troops.

Admiral Hewett, who had not yet departed on his Abyssinian mission, landed 200 men to hold the town in the absence of the troops. As yet the Government had shown no intention of permanently garrisoning Suakim; thus, no accommodation had been made for our men during the hot season, and it

to obtain the appointment as Bey for Mr. Brewster, a Scotsman in the Egyptian service, whose assistance he had found invaluable in the arduous task of restoring order at Suakim. "Our ships and soldiers held the place; but everywhere the red flag of Egypt floated ashore; not a Union Jack was to be seen, and our soldiers were beginning to be sick of their vague and purposeless work."



ZEDEIR PASHA

It was the hour of four in the afternoon when our troops started in quest of Osman Digna's camp, unaccompanied by a Naval Brigade, owing to the difficulties of the road for the conveyance of machine guns; and, in consequence of sickness and recent casualties, the present expedition was a somewhat weak one.

The old zeriba was reached about eight in the evening by General Graham, after a most harassing march, during which more than twenty-five per cent. had to succumb to the heat, and there were many cases of sunstroke.

"The rear of the column resembled a routed army, the men marching without their rifles," wrote a correspondent; "and it was really sad to see so much suffering for an object which is not clearly understood."

But for the ton and a half of ice carried by the Ambulance Corps many deaths would have occurred.

The force encamped outside the zeriba. There was no moonlight then, and though the skies were starry, the nights were very dark. By dawn, many of those who had fallen out rejoined their companies; but the troops could not have sustained a second day's march. They bivouacked in square, the men sleeping beside their piles of arms, with their accoutrements on, and fifty rounds per man in their pouches. "In the morning the men looked better and fresher than could have been expected after the exhaustion of the previous day, which told most severely upon the young lads of the York and Lancaster Regiment. Thus the General resolved

to halt the Infantry at the zeriba for the day, and make a Cavalry reconnaissance towards Tamanieb in search of Osman, with some friendly natives as guides."

Eventually he resolved to support his Cavalry with the Gordon Highlanders, 89 Marines, and the Artillery.

After leaving the zeriba, the Cavalry brigade under General Stewart proceeded at a walk towards Tamanieb. General Graham's orders were, that operations should be confined to reconnoitring, the Cavalry falling back on learning the actual strength and position of the enemy. In echelon of troops from the right the Brigade advanced, the 10th Hussars leading and furnishing scouts, under Major Hugh Sutlej Gough. For a time, the Mounted Infantry under Captain Humphreys rode in rear of the two Hussar Regiments.

For the first five miles it was easy riding over the plain, between sparse mimosa trees, and on patches of sand, gravel, and loose pebbles. At the base of the hills the ground became rough, with sharp pieces of splintered gneiss, "making the horses," says the correspondent of the *Telegraph*, "walk as gingerly as cats on a broken glass wall, and laming several, despite the utmost care. It was the worst piece of ground we have yet traversed in this campaign."

Under Chermside, our Native auxiliaries, 168 in number, moved in line parallel with the 10th Hussars. To get the benefit of a light breeze that came from the sea, the force pressed

onward to the left, and also to turn the right flank of the enemy's position, while having all rifle smoke carried away from our lines.

About the base of the hills some small parties of Arabs were seen hovering on our flanks and in front. They were chiefly on foot, though a few rode swift dromedaries. They disappeared, and on reaching a hill about 600 feet in height the General established there a heliographic station, and flashed signals to the zeriba, five miles in the rear.

Six native auxiliaries were now advanced well in front, with orders to tell all Arabs they met that "the British troops had no quarrel with them, and would not injure any one, unless fired upon; whilst, as to Osman Digna, if he would surrender and come in, his life would be spared."

Three natives galloped forward to communicate these tidings to any Hadendowas they might meet; and some of the Mounted Infantry were well advanced, that the enemy might discover what accurate shooting was, from long rifles instead of short carbines.

Ere long the Cavalry found themselves among mountains nearly 4,000 feet in height, and the Arabs were seen posted along the edge of a nullah, in groups of ten to twenty. In their rear were the wells and running waters of Tamanieb Khor, as it is named in the *Daily Telegraph*. Heaps of stones, like Scottish cairns, marked the nullah ridge for miles, the monuments and graves of departed Sheikhs, and stood up against the sky line.

Chermside and some of his natives went to within 800 yards to talk with the Arabs, a volley from whose Remingtons ended all hope of peaceful submission.

It was now past one o'clock, and the Mounted Infantry, pressing on to within 700 yards of the enemy, who numbered about 3,000 men, kept up a sharp rifle fire that was briskly responded to. Until three the skirmish was maintained, and though the enemy showed very little of their dusky forms, many were seen to drop.

The object of the reconnaissance having been achieved, General Stewart ordered the Cavalry to fall back, a movement jeered by the Arabs, who evidently held a strong position, out of which Infantry alone could drive them. Our loss was but one horse, shot through the head.

General Stewart and the Cavalry retired to the first signal station, and was there met by the Infantry column under General Buller, who had left the camp that afternoon. General Graham, the Staff, and the rest of the force, soon arrived; bushes were cut, a zeriba was formed, and a halt made for the night, prior to attacking Osman on the morrow.

At 4.30, on the morning of the 27th, the pipes and bugles sounded *réveillé*, and the troops fell in just as day broke. At six the march began, the battalions at measured distances, ready to form square in a moment. Buller's Brigade led, Colonel Slade acting as guide.

The natives, under Major Chermside of the Royal Engineers, were all armed

with their own weapons—swords and spears. In order to distinguish them from the enemy, each man wore round his head a fillet of red calico, and Sheikh Morghani accompanied them, a part acting as his body-guard.

The troops were in splendid order and condition, having been completely refreshed by the night's halt; and now that they believed Osman to be close at hand, they were burning with impatience to settle him and close a bootless campaign.

On the mountains the air was clear—almost bracing—and unlike the oppressive atmosphere of the sandy plains.

The route of the column lay up a valley, by the bed of a dry and winding watercourse, so that the artillery avoided the broken stony ground of the general surface. The Cavalry scouted far ahead, and every knoll was crowned by them in succession, trooper and horse appearing suddenly and picturesquely against the sky line. A little after seven, shots were heard as they became engaged with the enemy. The Mounted Infantry rode quickly in support, and by dint of well-directed volleys at long ranges, drove the Arabs back, without loss on our side as yet.

"It was impossible," wrote the correspondent of the *Standard*, "to estimate our opponents' numbers, owing to the nature of the ground, which afforded them abundance of shelter, but not more than 150 men were visible at once. The Mounted Infantry proceeded to flank this force, whatever it was—first on the right and then on the left—in a thoroughly workman-like

manner, at the same time moving cautiously, so as to avoid surprise."

The Arabs at last took post on a ridge of rocks, several hundred yards long, flanked on either side by precipitous mountains. The guns were sent to the front, and opened on them. The shells were thrown too high, but the sight of them exploding overhead proved quite sufficient for the enemy, whose dark forms vanished from the ridge, and they fired only a few shots from distant heights, and did no harm to the troops, who pushed eagerly forward to where the water lay, in a deep gully, where it bubbled and rippled over its pebbled bed, a welcome and delicious sight in that parched and desolate land.

Quickly the horses of the Cavalry scented it; they whinnied and shook their bridles with impatience, and by the bit alone were prevented from rushing at it to quench their thirst. Among the Infantry discipline was strictly maintained. Each officer and man took a long draught and filled his water-bottle in turn.

Osman had fled into mountain fastnesses, where General Graham had no intention of pursuing him, and so ended the skirmish by the Wells of Tamaieb.

During that morning the shooting of the Mounted Infantry had been most excellent, and must have proved to Osman's fanatics how ineffectual his spells and charms were. One officer shot a man on a camel at fully a thousand yards' range, while the appearance of the rocks in rear of which the enemy took cover showed a reason for this



prompt retreat. On one boulder were counted twenty-eight bullet marks; on another, sixteen, fired at over 600 yards' range.

By the 28th of March the troops had all returned to Suakim, save a few

Eight subsidiary Sheikhs, who represented a fighting force of 5,000 men, between Suakim and Kassala, and had signed the letter of defiance to Admiral Hewett, now came in, gave assurances of friendship, and promised to do



BERBER FROM THE DESERT, OR EAST, SIDE.

left to guard some stores in a zeriba. It was then believed that Osman had but few followers left, and that his whereabouts was known to himself alone.

The 10th Hussars returned the Egyptian horses they had used in this—to them—unexpected campaign, and embarked on board the *Jumna* for England. The Royal Marine Artillery and the York and Lancaster Regiment were ordered to leave at the same time.

their utmost to capture Osman Digna, who seemed then to have lost all *prestige* with the tribesmen. They also promised to open up the route to Berber.

Telegraphic communication was again restored between that place and Shendy. The eight Sheikhs were received by the Admiral and General, to whom they said that the chief requirement of the Soudan was a stable government, with-

out which the tribes would break into civil war as of old.

They were then asked whether they would prefer Egyptian or British masters; and, after a little hesitation, declared in favour of the latter. Two Sheikhs that came from Tokar now prayed for a British Governor to be sent there.

"If I send the present Egyptian Governor of Suakim, will you establish him at Tokar?" asked the Admiral. "Send him with British soldiers first," said they, "and after a time we shall guarantee the peace of the country."

They now stated that Osman Digna had again gathered 300 men, so spies were sent to ascertain his movements; and meanwhile Major Chermiside began to arrange with Mahmoud Ali about opening the Berber road, but the latter would not guarantee his safety for fifty miles beyond Suakim; so the General forbade him to start.

At this time Majors Kitchener and Rundell left Cairo for Berber, which was expected to be the base of the next campaign against the Mahdi, whose march northward was openly wished for by the inhabitants of all the larger towns in Upper Egypt, particularly at Girgeh.

Reports reached Suakim on the 29th March that several of the Soudan tribes were discontented with their chiefs, and letters from Kassala and Berber, stating that the power of the Mahdi—who was still blockading Khartoum—had been sensibly affected by our victories at El Teb and Tamai, and by his defeat by steamers sent down the Nile by General

Gordon about the middle of the month, while many expressed doubts of his claims to sanctity and a miraculous mission. Osman Digna, however, urged that the loss of men in recent battles was due to their want of faith, and declared that the new prophet would yet be victorious.

On the 28th the Gordon Highlanders embarked, and the departure of other troops followed speedily.

A deputation of the leading people in Suakim, mostly merchants, now waited upon Admiral Hewett before his departure next day for Abyssinia, to thank him publicly for the peace and justice enjoyed by the people of the town under his care. They prayed that the whole of the troops might not be withdrawn, urging that it was more than probable Osman Digna would assert that their retreat was due to the virtue of his cause.

On this, the Admiral promised that 300 British soldiers and one ship of war would in future remain at Suakim.

Soon after this, a general order was issued by the Duke of Cambridge, stating that Her Majesty had been pleased to signify her pleasure that the Egyptian medal (pattern 1882) should be granted to those troops engaged in the Soudan Campaign who had not previously received it, with a clasp inscribed *Suakim* to those who had. All troops who landed there, or at Trinkatat, between the 19th of February and 26th March, were entitled to receive either the medal or the clasp, according to circumstances.

Her Majesty further approved of a

clasp being issued to all who were present in the actions of the 29th February and 13th of March, the clasp to be inscribed *El Teb—Tamai* for those who were in both actions, and *El Teb* or *Tamai* for those who were in one or the other, but not both.

As it was finally arranged that a British garrison was to remain at Suakim, suitable quarters should have been prepared long before. The hot weather had now the mastery; and the stenches were frightful, owing to the enormous discharge of sewage into the small harbour.

The main body of troops had barely been gone a day, when spies reported at Suakim that Osman had mustered 1,000 men at his camp of Ashitat, near Tamanieb, and was preparing to take vengeance on all friendly tribes. On the 31st of March he came within a mile of Suakim, and carried off some camel fodder.

On the 7th of April General Graham reached Cairo in the morning, and in the evening a train arrived with the Black Watch from Suez, completing the return of the troops who were so suddenly despatched to the Soudan; and the enthusiastic reception that was accorded to the different regiments as they arrived, showed how fully their services were appreciated.

The first to come in were the Gordon Highlanders, with Sir Redvers Buller, on the night of the 5th, when the whole city gave them a hearty greeting. Sir Evelyn Baring, Generals Wood, Stephenson, Dormer, and Baker, with all the principal officers in Cairo, were on the

platform; the cheering was tremendous as the train came steaming in, and was renewed as they marched, with pipes playing, past Shepheard's Hotel, the balconies of which were crowded by European residents. At the citadel they passed in through lines of the Cameron Highlanders, who afterwards escorted them to a supper prepared in their honour. The 19th Hussars arrived on Sunday, and proceeded to their old quarters in the Abassieh Barracks.

On the 7th Captain Molyneux arrived at Cairo, after making his survey of the Nile as far as the Second Cataract. He stated that everywhere along the route he found a strong belief in the Mahdi, and that the natives had none in the reported victories won by the British in the Eastern Soudan. He expressed the opinion that the Nile was practicable for naval operations, with launches and small steamers, as far as the Second Cataract.

Sir Cromer Ashburnham, who had succeeded Admiral Hewett in command at Suakim, about the middle of April, issued a proclamation to the friendly chiefs, informing them that the Government had decided to remit all taxes due, and that in future none would be collected. He advised them to remain tranquil in their own districts, and if attacked to defend themselves as they thought best. He urged them to assist the Government in opening the roads to Berber and Kassala; but Osman was gaining influence again, and by the 20th of April was reported to have 2,000 men in his camp.

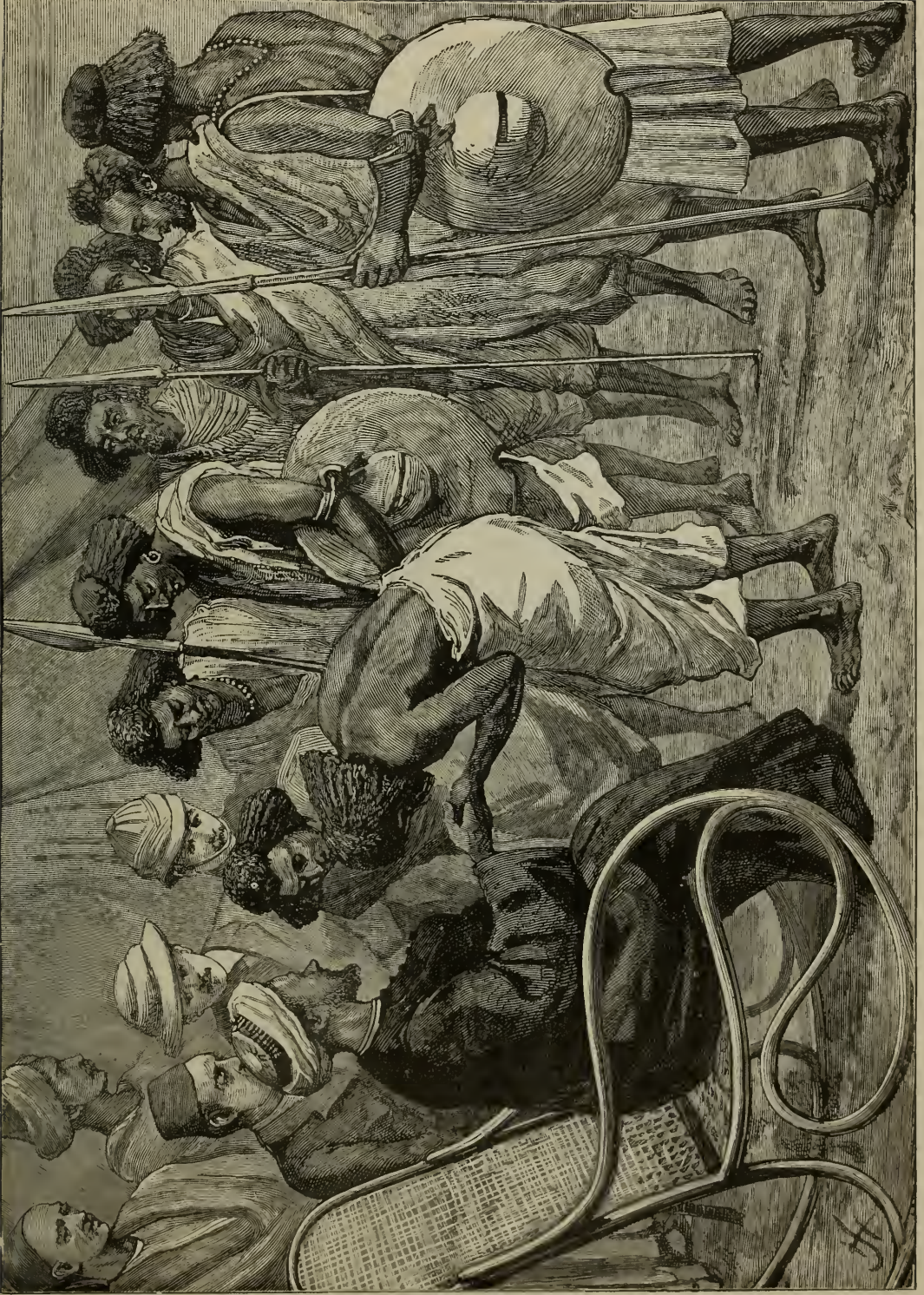
Mahmoud Ali offered to attack him forming the garrison at Suakim, was at the head of 2,000 men, if arms, food, reported to require serious consideration.



NATIVE OF GIRGEH.

and horses were given him ; but his wish and his ability were deemed very doubtful. Meanwhile the state of the unfortunate battalion of the Royal Rifles,

Owing to the neglect of the authorities, insufficient camping ground and want of water were reducing them to a state of great hardship and dis-



FRIENDLY NATIVES DOING HOMAGE TO THE SHEIKH EL MORGHANI

tress. They were obliged to wash their clothes in the sea (says the *Standard*), and were to be seen going about all day clad in only great-coats and helmets while their clothes were being dried.

It was announced at Cairo, on the 29th of April, that four sanjaks or divisions of Shukoorieh Bedouins, together with 500 soldiers, had joined the Mahdi, leaving Khartoum more than ever helpless; and that no amount of money could guarantee the delivery of any letter from Berber then, as all the inhabitants were now at the mercy of the rebels.

Acting on instructions sent to him, to evacuate the town if possible, the Governor of Berber merely proclaimed his orders, and the result was that the whole inhabitants fled northward, while his troops marched off to join the Mahdi, so that the whole country was considered lost now, down to Wady Halfa.

If Gordon's appeal to the millionaires of Great Britain had succeeded, and 3,000 Turkish troops had been sent to him, he had expressed his confidence that "they would settle the Soudan and the Mahdi for ever. I do not see the fun," he added, "of being caught here to walk about the streets for years as a Dervish, with sandalled feet: not that I will ever be taken alive! It would be the climax of meanness, after I had borrowed money from the people here, to go and abandon them, without using every effort to relieve them."

On the 8th of May a Greek in the employment of a merchant at Khar-

toum reached Cairo, after a twenty-five days' journey. He reported that General Gordon had cut a trench between the palace and the rest of the town, thus dividing himself from the bulk of the disaffected population. He had told the Greek merchants that he expected British troops to relieve him, and had publicly shot four men for treachery. It was believed in Cairo that even yet Gordon might escape, if he would make the attempt alone; but he was resolute to hold his isolated post to the last.

On the 9th of May, a spy at Suakim having reported that Osman Digna meant to attack the town that night, the Marines were landed at the Custom House, to hold the caravanserai and the water forts. The seamen had charge of the causeway and gate, while armed boats were lowered, and the ships prepared for action.

False alarms and reports like this were of constant occurrence throughout the campaign. However, it spoke well for the vigilance observed by the British officers and men that they were always able to cope with complete success with every attack made by the persistent and daring Arabs upon Suakim. This was all the more creditable, because—as has been abundantly shown in these pages—the European soldiers had to submit to an amount of discomfort and anxiety that would have tried the patience and temper of the most disciplined and hardened troops. That they stood the test nobly was readily admitted even by those who felt the utmost repugnance to the war.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## SPREADING OF THE REVOLT.

The British Troops at Cairo—The Mudir of Dongola—Trotter's Forward Movement—The Mahdi Reinforced—Messengers to Gordon—Capture of Debbeh—The Mahdi's Indian Proclamation—Another Mahdi—The Expedition of Major Kitchener.

WE shall now, for a chapter or more, give an account of the progress of those events in Egypt and the Soudan which led to the presence in the latter province of a British army under Lord Wolseley.

In the middle of May, 1884, bitter disappointment was felt, and no small indignation expressed by our troops in Egypt, when the Marquis of Hartington's declaration became known, that no vote of public thanks was to be given to them for the gallant work in the Soudan. "The four or five regiments which are here (at Cairo)," wrote one, "have gone through two campaigns and suffered a visitation from cholera. They are now very discontented, and the men are leaving in considerable numbers, both on the expiration of their terms of service and by buying their discharges. Within the last few weeks, in one regiment alone, twenty discharges have been bought, and twenty-eight time-expired men have refused to serve any longer."

In reference to this subject when brought before the House of Commons, a return showed that about the middle of May the 19th Hussars lost 31 troopers by free discharge, by time-expired men, and invalids; the Royal Sussex, from the same causes, 40 privates; the Royal Horse Artillery, 16

men; and on the 19th of May the *Orontes* alone took home 262 of these men.

Nor was the indignation of the troops allayed by the War Office proposal of a money gratuity for their services in the Soudan, issued according to the rank of the recipient—a General receiving 400 shares, of £2 each, and so on, down to one share for a private.

By the 14th of May the revolt in the Soudan was rapidly approaching Dongola in Upper Nubia, and Debbeh was the last station to which the telegraph extended. The Mudir of the former place requested that reinforcements, or at least arms and ammunition, should be sent to him; but it seemed difficult to accede to his wishes, on account of the unreliable nature of himself and his troops.

The whole Egyptian Cavalry was now under orders to start from Cairo; but they were to proceed by slow marches, rather for the purpose of making a demonstration, than for actual service in such a difficult country as the Soudan. Still, movements were made in that direction, and Colonel Trotter, a Scotsman, commanding the 3rd Regiment of Egyptian Infantry, was ordered to advance up to Wady Halfa, and leave two companies at Korosko; while the Mudir of Dongola

was informed that, for reasons above suggested, no reinforcements would be despatched to him, and that if his forces were insufficient to make a stand against the rebellion, discretionary power was given him to withdraw the garrison.

The idea really entertained by the British Government as to the date within which it was supposed to be feasible to establish a stable Administration in Egypt before our troops could withdraw, was thought to be indicated when Captain Applebee was appointed, on the 16th of May, to the command of the Ordnance Company for five years.

The forward movement for the relief of Berber and Khartoum was initiated by the departure of Colonel Trotter's slender force towards Wady Halfa by steamboat and barge, Major Kitchener having succeeded in securing the services of 500 Arabs of the Ababdeh and Bishareen tribes to act as scouts. They were sent into the desert towards Abu Hamed, and, with a further contingent of 400 Arabs, had orders to push forward to Korosko, a village of Nubia, situated at that point of the Nile where the river bends westward to Derr, forming an abrupt angle, enclosed on all sides by lofty hills. "One thousand sailors and Marines, with a dozen small gunboats," wrote the correspondent of the *Daily News*, "could take General Gordon and his garrison from Khartoum and Sennaar at Nile time, with the certainty of success, and the minimum cost of blood and money."

But no such expedition was sent,

and doubt and procrastination became the order of the day, while the tide of rebellion flowed on. The same correspondent reported that a Government official who had escaped from El Obeid, stated that Slatin Bey had surrendered El Fasher to one of the Mahdi's commanders, named Zugel Bey, who at one time had been Mudir of Dara, and one of the first Egyptian officers who joined the False Prophet. The latter was now secure from an attack in his rear, where he had behind him an enormous tract of Central Africa, inhabited by a fanatic population of Mussulman Arabs and Negroes. El Fasher supplied him with 9,000 old soldiers and 20,000 Remingtons.

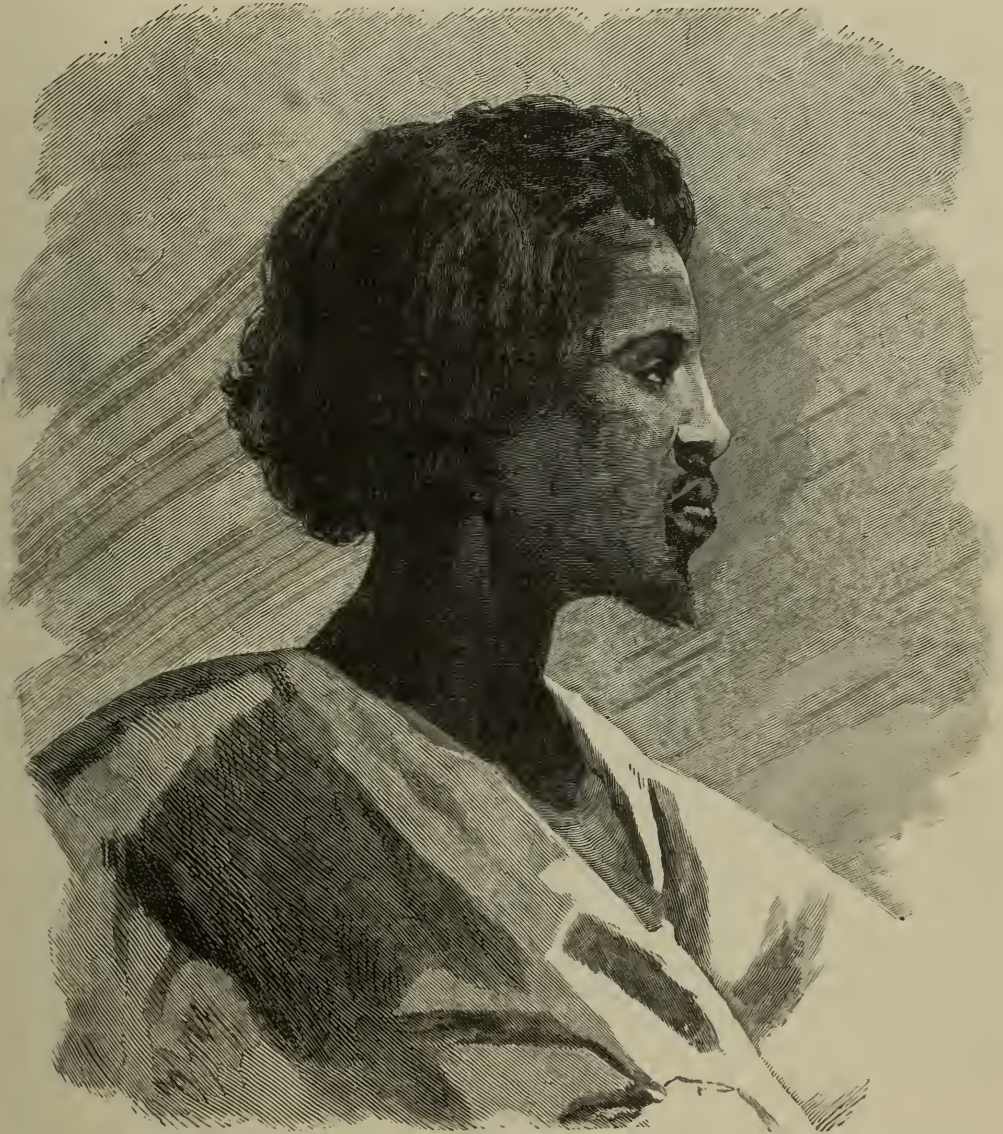
"He now disposes," continues the correspondent of the *News*, "of 50,000 or 60,000 breechloaders, and an unknown quantity of older firearms. He has also a formidable cavalry, as the Baggara, Gowameh, and Hamar tribes, with Darfour, can put 100,000 horse-men in the field."

He left El Obeid after news of Graham's victories had reached him, and then dissatisfaction began to show itself along the valley of the Nile south of Abu Hamed. This was partly produced by the indiscretion of some of General Gordon's officers, who fired rather indiscriminately on the villages from their steamers. Villages like Chorgia, which had always been faithful to the Government, were thus fired on, and at once joined the rebels.

On the 20th of May Zebehr Pasha sent secret messengers from Cairo to Khartoum, to ascertain the fate of



Gordon and his garrison. They went that General Gordon had declared that, by three different routes, and could as the British Government had refused



ARAB OF THE ABABDEH TRIBE.

not return for three months, if they ever returned at all; and two days later a startling despatch from the Mudir of Dongola came, to the effect his demands for a relief expedition, he had determined to embrace the Moham-medan faith; but the Mudir gave neither date nor source for this information.

The Cairo correspondent of the *Telegraph* at this time wrote thus:—“Every effort is being made here to communicate with General Gordon. Messengers conveying despatches leave almost daily. They are paid beforehand, with a promise of a liberal reward if they bring back General Gordon’s answer. The despatches confided to them are often hidden in quills, and the messengers take every possible precaution to prevent the discovery of these receptacles upon their bodies if searched.”

On the 22nd May, Government resolved to send 1,000 rifles to the Mudir of Dongola, who on that day telegraphed to Cairo thus:—

“Khartoum is closely surrounded. The messenger conveying Government despatches to General Gordon has not returned, though due long ago. No report of his capture having reached me, I assume that the messenger duly arrived at Khartoum, but is unable to get out.

“It is reported that the Mahdi has instructed his followers to capture General Gordon, and bring him to El Obeid alive. If a sufficient force be despatched, I understand how to deliver the town. Reinforcements ought to come through here, as the march will be an easy one, there being plenty of water.

“It is reported that the Mahdi is at Urabad near Kordofan. He intended to advance on the White Nile, but his followers disagreeing with that project, he stopped at Nourabi. It is also reported that the Mahdi has left for Zebelhadin. Others say that he intends proceeding to Abba Island.”

Sixty Blue-jackets were now under orders to proceed to Upper Egypt to patrol the Nile, under the command of Captain Bedford.

Tidings next reached Cairo that the rebels had captured Debbeh, a town on the left bank of that river, near old

Dongola, and a commercial centre for ivory, gum, and other products of Darfour, Kordofan, and the Western Soudan, and also for European merchandise conveyed into these provinces.

It was now proposed to form a British flotilla on the Nile, to consist of three steamers, each manned by twenty Bluejackets, and to act independently of the Egyptian army, under General Stephenson. No preparations for an autumn campaign to relieve Gordon had as yet been made at the British headquarters, beyond the arrangement of plans, and the Suakim-Berber route was canvassed as offering the fewest obstacles.

By the 24th of May Colonel Trotter had reached Wady Halfa and taken possession of the fortress there, with all its arms and ammunition, expelling the Bashi-Bazouks. He experienced sullen opposition, but no fighting; for the time, Wady Halfa was considered safe, the more so as the Naval patrol under Captain Bedford was established between that point and Assouan.

On the departure of Mr. Clifford Lloyd from Cairo for home, the correspondent of the *Standard* wrote thus:—“The whole administration is now handed back to the Pashas, and the work of the last nine months is finally and formally thrown away. Whilst discontent and sedition are on the increase in the provinces, a Secret Society, composed of Irish, French, and Arabs, meets almost daily in Cairo itself. Britain is blindly, or, as some think, designedly, allowing the cabal against her to gain force, and even while ap-

parently preparing an expedition to the Soudan, neglects the commonest precautions against internal treachery."

A native paper, *El Ahram*, published at Alexandria, openly incited the natives to rise in arms, at a time when 25 per cent. of our troops at Assiout were on the sick list.

At this period the Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* obtained a copy of the proclamation which the Mahdi was circulating in India. It purported to emanate from "The Slave of God, Mohammed-el-Mahdi, son of Seyd Abdullahi."

"The document which, according to Mohammedan fashion, is plentifully interspersed with texts from the Koran, begins by dwelling on the merit of engaging in a holy war, and warns the people that God has forbidden them to accept His enemies as their superiors. 'Learn ye,' it proceeds, 'that God hath chosen me for the Khilafat-el-Kuhara' (that is, principal Vicegerency), and 'Mohammed hath given me the joyful news that my companions are equal to his.' The writer then goes on to say that he sends Sheikh Othman-el-Bakree, whom he has appointed Holy Ameer of the Bedaween tribes and of the other peoples who follow the path of safety. He directs them to obey the Sheikh, and to give him every assistance, adding, 'Whoever shall accompany him shall be considered to have accompanied me, and shall be included in the honours mentioned above for my companions.' Then follows a warning addressed to the people of Suakim. Those who are friendly to the Mahdi are told to leave

the town, and go to such place as Sheikh Othman may point out; while those who fail to do so are threatened with condign punishment. The faithful are then promised victory and the spoil of their enemies, and are exhorted not to fear the strength and numbers of their opponents, because all these are strangers to God, and small parties of men have often overcome large bodies through God's grace."

"It would appear from the context" (the correspondent adds) "that this proclamation was intended rather for the Arab tribes than for Indian Mussulmans. It is, however, significant that it should have penetrated to India; and it is clear that the circulation of such appeals to religious fanaticism is dangerous to the peace of the Indian Empire."

At Cairo, on the 29th May, a curious telegram was received, illustrative of the prevailing religious excitement. It stated that a new Mahdi had made his appearance at Darfour, a region which was scarcely known to Europeans even by name when Brown visited it in 1793, and reached Cobbeh, its capital. This new Prophet claimed, and was supposed to have, the gift of making himself invisible at will. Mohammed Achmet, the old Mahdi, hearing of his pretensions, sent a body of men to capture him, but—so said the telegram—when they surrounded him, sitting on his divan, he vanished into thin air.

Several battalions of the Egyptian army were now ordered to be in readiness to march for Upper Egypt, and it was resolved to strengthen the garrisons

of Korosko and Wady Halfa, in consequence of a rumour brought to the former place by a wandering Arab that a body of rebels had arrived at Murhat, midway between Abu Hamed and Korosko, which they meant to assault; but Major Kitchener, then at Assouan, expressed his doubts of this.

The distribution of the Egyptian army was now to be as follows:—Five battalions at Assouan and one at Suakim. Two more battalions were ordered to be formed, one of Egyptian volunteers and the other of Turks; and on the 1st of June, Major Kitchener, accompanied by a friendly tribe, left Korosko to make a reconnaissance in the direction of Murhat to ascertain whether any hostile force was in that quarter.

On the 2nd of June, the following despatch reached Cairo from the Mudir of Dongola:—"It is untrue that Berber has fallen. On the contrary, Hussein Pasha Khalifa has beaten the rebels. Neither has Khartoum surrendered; General Gordon continues fighting the rebels. The province of Dongola is completely pacified as far as Merawe."

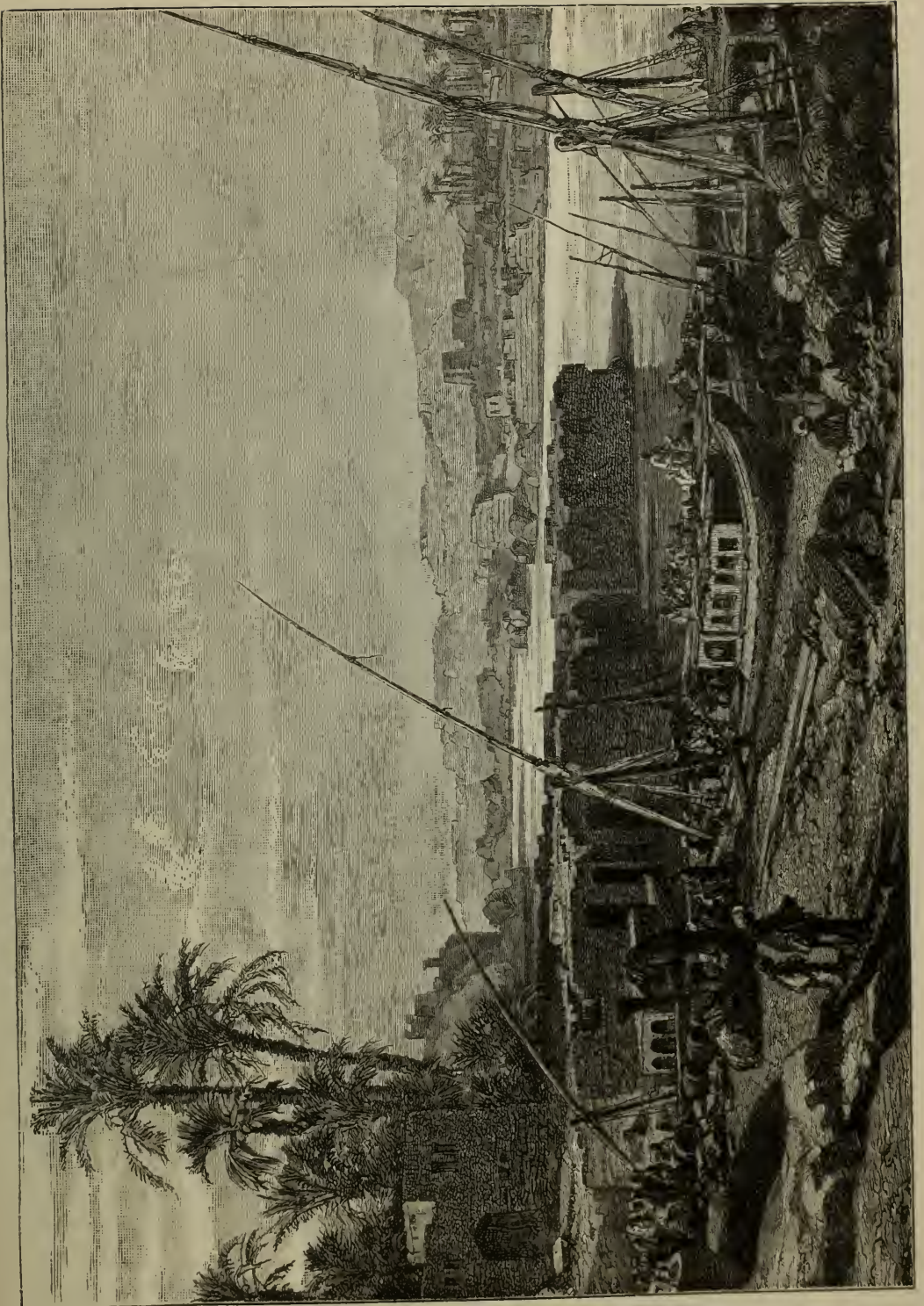
Despite the Mudir's telegram of 2nd June, on the 10th there came another, reporting that Berber had fallen nine days before, and that Hussein Khalifa (the Governor), his whole family, his garrison, and all European traders in the town had been put to the sword. These tidings created great consternation in Ministerial circles at Cairo, though received with extreme caution by the British military authorities.

Some anxiety was now felt at Cairo at the position of Major Kitchener, who, as stated, had left Korosko on the 31st May with a hundred Fagalla Bedouins, his object being to push on as far as the first wells on the Abu Hamed road, about one hundred and twenty-six miles from Korosko. These wells were reported to be in possession of the same Fagalla tribe, whose clansmen formed the adventurous Major's escort.

On the 3rd June Sir Evelyn Wood received a telegram from Captain Eager at Korosko, stating that the following despatch had come from Major Kitchener:—

"Yesterday I met Sheikh Sala at six o'clock in the morning, midway between Murhat and Abu Hamed. I had sent Sala on May 26th to form posts along the road. He reached Murhat. The rebels had been there two days before and had left, after ordering the guard under threats to destroy the wells. The guard and Sala went on to a distance of three hours this side of Abu Hamed. Sala reports that the rebels are in force near it. The Ameer of Shanut is sending emissaries all over the country of Bishareen to win the inhabitants. He reports that Berber is closely invested, and no communication with the town is possible. Haddendowas are moving northwards, and, after Ramazan, will march on Assouan. A force from (the) Kabbabish is reported to have gone towards Berber, intending to move on Dongola; and it is rumoured that the Mahdi has gone to Khartoum, the surrender of which place is shortly expected."

On the 5th a telegram came from Major Kitchener at Korosko, announcing his return to that place, and supplementing Captain Eager's tidings by those that 30,000 rebels were preparing to march on Assouan, but it was hoped that the arrival of British troops would arrest the movement.



PORT OF ASSOUAN.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## EVENTS AT DONGOLA AND SUAKIM.

Difficulties at Dongola—Suspected Treachery of the Mudir—The Christians forced to become Mohammedan—Osman attacks the Friendly Tribes—Cowardice of the Egyptian Cavalry—Fighting at Suakim—Fall of Berber—Operations near Assouan.

PRIOR to some of these events, about the 12th of May the commandant of the garrison at Dongola had telegraphed to the Khedive that the restless Mahdi had sent emissaries to raise troops for the capture of Dongola, with a view of marching direct on Cairo, so full was Egypt, the upper province especially, of vague, wild, and disquieting rumours, and so convulsed by strife and bloodshed. The commandant added that the telegraph posts between Berber and Merawe had been burned by the rebels, and he begged the Khedive to send him immediate support and categorical instructions for the garrison at Dongola.

Under the same date the superintendent of the Telegraph Department at Berber reported from Korosko that he had fled from the former place; that his *employés* had lingered in Berber waiting for camels but had not received them, and had started on foot for Abu Hamed, but had all been captured in the desert and massacred. He added that the route between Berber and Korosko was now quite impracticable, being completely in the hands of the rebels.

On the same day the Mudir telegraphed to Cairo that the situation at Dongola was becoming more and more alarming, that the greatest panic pre-

vailed among the inhabitants, and that only four companies of Infantry and 200 Bashi-Bazouks were left in the town, the rest being scattered over the province in detachments.

Though urged to do so, the Mudir declined to abandon Dongola, and on the 16th again asked for reinforcements, stating that if his request were granted he should be able to reconquer the Soudan provinces. The *Times* correspondent stated that the order to evacuate Dongola was given "in spite of the strongest contrary advice from every person whose military or local knowledge entitled them to express an opinion. Without presuming to indicate the origin of such orders, I think it advisable, academically, to deprecate any attempt to control the military operations in the Soudan by civilians in Downing Street!"

By the 19th of May doubts began to be conceived of the good faith of the Mudir of Dongola, and also of that of his commandant, who was a Turkish officer.

On the 21st the former was peremptorily ordered to withdraw with his garrison at an early date; but he was then at Merawe, beyond the reach of the telegraph.

Early in July the Assouan correspondent of the *Daily News* reported

that news fully confirming the treachery of the Mudir had arrived by letter from Dongola. From this source it was stated that an envoy of the Mahdi had visited the town, and all Christians there had been compelled to adopt the Mohammedan religion. Seventeen soldiers, who escaped from Berber, had reached Dongola, and confirmed the news of the fall of the former town. The Mudir had a friendly interview with Sheikh Houdah commanding the rebels at Debbah, and was recognised as Ameer by the Mahdi.

The letter, which was written in Greek, came from a Maltese merchant who was a British subject. The *Daily News* correspondent stated that he had twice telegraphed to Dongola without eliciting a reply, as the Mudir controlled the wires, and was deceiving the Government at Cairo.

The Maltese merchant stated that on the 21st of June "the inhabitants of Dongola assembled outside the Mudir's house, and the Christians were asked to change their religion; on their refusing, the Mudir put them all in prison. In the afternoon he visited them there, and told Franco (the writer) and his companions that they should become Mohammedans because the town was in danger of an attack from the forces of the Sheikh Heideyd and Mohammed Achmet's relation, who had arrived in the town, and assured him (the Mudir) that if all the inhabitants of Dongola would take an oath of fidelity to the Mohammedan religion, no attack would be made." He added: "You see I advise all Mohammedans to take the oath

of fidelity, as from to-day we are under the orders of Mohammed Achmet (the Mahdi); I am no longer Mudir, but an Emir by his orders. Under the influence of fear, the Christian prisoners consented to change their religion. They were all rebaptised (*sic*), receiving Moslem names." No one was allowed to leave the town; but the Mudir went to Debbah to visit the rebel Sheikh Heideyd.

During May and June some skirmishing ensued at Suakim, which is supposed to take its name from the Sukkiims, who, with the Ethiopians, are mentioned in Scripture (2 Chron. xii. 3).

On the 13th of the month Osman Digna discovered certain tribes who were friendly to the British at the stream at Tamanieb, and attacked them with great fury, killing several, and putting the rest to flight with the loss of their cattle.

Six days after about 200 of his men fired upon the town in the night for four hours, but took to flight when they discovered our Marines were being landed. Only two men were slightly wounded.

It was reported at Suakim on 26th May that Osman Digna's influence was becoming weak, and that he was constrained to seek the aid of the friendly tribes, who did not respond to his advances, but clamoured for arms and ammunition from the store at Suakim to avenge their blood feud against him. At the same date he captured, just outside Suakim, a messenger from Berber. His companions, however, succeeded in

escaping, and informed the commandant that the False Prophet was prevented from leaving Kordofan, owing to the hostile attitude assumed by the Baggara, Kabbabish, and other warlike tribes, though many were pressing round Khartoum.

On the 30th of May two men of the friendly tribes who had been made pri-

assailants fled panic-stricken, throwing away their arms; but the regular Egyptian Cavalry, on both nights, showed great cowardice, deserting Major Pigott as soon as the first shots were fired, and several were consequently put under arrest.

On the 1st of June a spy came to Suakim and reported that Osman Digna



SHEPHERD OF THE SOUDAN.

soners by Osman Digna reached Suakim with their right hands cut off. They reported that he was at Salalat with 2,000 men, and that he had imprisoned forty of those who had fled when the electric light from the ships had been turned upon them.

Next night there was another attack on two points, though the enemy seemed not above 300 strong. The Marines and Bluejackets were landed again, and the *Albacore* (composite gunboat) fired her four big guns and Gatlings by electric light, on which the

had mustered 3,000 men, with four pieces of cannon, and was daily exercising them prior to attacking the town; but, unless his force gathered together and then melted away again, the rumours that came savoured of Oriental exaggeration, for when the attack was made, at 11 o'clock on the night of the 2nd, only 200 men advanced against the town, but with great resolution. The forts at once returned their fire, and were supported by all the guns of the squadron, and all available forces were landed to support the Rifles. For



some hours a fire of artillery and musketry was kept up, till the enemy retired. "There was no loss on our side," said the *Standard*, "and, so far as can be ascertained, the enemy left only two killed and one wounded on the field."

On this occasion they were pursued by Pigott and the Cavalry.

On the 4th of June 250 marines embarked at Port Said, on board the

but are now rejoining the rebel standard in consequence of British inaction. Osman Digna threatens that he will come with a strong force to Suakim within the week, and defensive preparations are being made."

On the 6th he attacked Suakim again, and fell back with the loss of only one man, so far as could be ascertained.

On the 10th there was another



THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, SUAKIM.

despatch vessel *Iris*, to join the garrison at Suakim.

On the 5th it was reported that Osman Digna was beginning to be very aggressive; night attacks were of regular occurrence. In these affairs, the regular Egyptian troops, led by British officers, behaved fairly well.

"Great rejoicings have been held in Osman Digna's camp," says the *Standard*, "the rebel leader asserting that he has received some important news from the west. He has collected up to the present 3,000 men, including several tribes who quietly dispersed after the battles of El Teb and Tamai,

attack, the ships and forts replying; and next day the British army sergeants attached to the Egyptian troops on three months' probation for commissions tendered their resignations, owing to the intolerable cowardice of the Egyptian officers and men in the water forts on every occasion when attacked.

The following amusing incident is related of the Suakim garrison, as showing the artifice they had to adopt in dealing with their savage foes, and the cunning which Osman Digna's tribesmen displayed in outwitting the British troops:—"There was one par-

ticular spot from which the Arabs annoyed the garrison nightly," says the *Army and Navy Gazette*; "firing seemed to have little or no effect, and at last some one's ingenuity suggested that a thick carpeting of broken glass bottles would inflict severe punishment on the bare feet of the enemy. The proposal was acted upon. At great pains all the available broken glass was collected and carefully planted about the locality, and those of the defenders who had been most harassed congratulated themselves that at last they would get peace. The first part of the night passed quietly, but towards morning the annoyance recommenced. At daybreak the trap was anxiously inspected, and lo! not a vestige of glass was discernible. The Arabs had covered the bottles to a depth of a couple of inches with sand."

So now Berber had fallen beyond all doubt. On the 24th of April Mr. Gladstone said in the House of Commons "we have no reason to believe that there is any risk at Berber of any such catastrophe as happened at Sinkat, where 600 men were murdered in cold blood." "When Berber fell, General Gordon reported that 5,000 perished! The houses to this hour are full of decaying bodies. Upon that terrible spectacle of carnage and of rapine the curtain falls on the fourth act of the great tragedy of the Soudan—an ominous warning of the fate that was preparing for our betrayed and abandoned emissary at Khartoum." (*Pall Mall Gazette*.)

It was the fall of Berber that seems

to have scared the Mudir of Dongola, and caused dissatisfaction among his troops.

At Suakim the Egyptian troopers who deserted Major Pigott were sentenced to seven days' imprisonment, without a court-martial, and, disgusted by their cowardice, he—like several other British officers—resigned. When a battalion of Egyptians arrived soon after, officered by Egyptians, the people of Suakim said, "Why are these men brought here? Do the British want to ruin our town, or do they wish us to be destroyed in the event of an attack by the rebels, when these Egyptians would certainly run?"

On the 16th of June the Mudir of Dongola telegraphed to Nubar Pasha at Cairo that a messenger had come to him from the Mahdi, with letters naming him Emir—or Ameer—of Dongola, and exhorting him at once to join his standard if he hoped for salvation at the last day. At the conclusion of a long and fanatical peroration came the practical advice, that the Mudir was to hold Dongola for the Mahdi if he could, but if the Turks should prove too strong for him, he had better leave and join the Mahdi at El Obeid.

Early in June Major Marriott and two naval officers completed a survey of the Nile, up to the Third Cataract.

On the 9th of June Major Cherm-side telegraphed as follows, from Suakim to Cairo:—"A paid scout of mine left Berber six days ago, after returning from that place to Khartoum, whither he had been sent in a boat by Hussein Pasha Khalifa. During a

short stay of three hours at Khartoum he was met by an Englishman, who handed him a bulky letter. Between Berber and Suakim the scout was pursued and killed by the rebels, who seized the letter, which was too big to be swallowed. His companion, however, succeeded in escaping, and reports all quiet at Khartoum. The town was still in the hands of the Government, and provisions were cheap."

On the 25th June the 17th Company of our Royal Engineers left Cairo for Suakim, *via* Suez; and on the following Sunday, the trooping of colours in honour of the Queen's birthday and accession to the throne took place in the cool of the evening in the Abdin Square, after which the Victoria Cross was presented to Lieutenant Marling, and medals were distributed to many soldiers.

On the 31st of July there was a serious revolt in the Mansoorah prison, owing to the prisoners having been informed that the power of flogging them had been taken away from the Governor, Dr. Crookshank. "It is quite evident," wrote a correspondent, "that unless flogging for insubordination is permitted, we may expect serious trouble before long in the prisons. The Council of Ministers to-day deliberated on the advisability of allowing Dr. Crookshank to exercise this power in the face of the present situation."

A telegram from Assouan to the *Times* about this period, stated that the commander of the rebels at Berber was a Fakir from the village of Ghrobeh. Encouraged by his success he had sent

to the Etbaie tribe and asked them to assist him in attacking Assouan; but his request was refused, and all was quiet then, a new position to the north was being fortified in accordance to orders from Cairo.

The steamer *Mahmoudiyeh* had arrived with two officers, fifteen men, and a Gardner gun; so Captain Bedford had then four gunboats on the Nile, two below and two above the cataracts, thus enabling him to leave one steamer always at Korosko, another at Wady Halfa, while a third patrolled the river. The current of the Nile was found to be strong, and to increase with the rising of the stream, so that gunboats could make little head in running against it.

Colonels Duncan and Taylor took the Cavalry inland for twenty miles on the caravan road from Berber to Komombo, along which it was proposed to establish posts of observation.

The 1st Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment, 670 strong, arrived at Assouan, under the command of Major W. Tolson, formerly adjutant of that corps. At Suakim every precaution was being taken by the military authorities, in the view of a possible fanatical rising there before the end of the great festival of Ramadan; and from there came a report that out of the Egyptians in Darfour the Mahdi had formed a corps 3,000 strong, with fifteen guns, to protect his dominions against his neighbours.

About the 12th of July the Sheikh of the Kabbabish tribe sent assurances of loyalty, and asked for arms. "In



BAZAAR IN ASSOUAN.

connection with this request," says the correspondent of the *Standard*, "I may mention that Sir E. Wood recently remarked to me that it does not matter whether the required arms are sent or not, as the Remington rifles and ammunition are so bad as to be worse

to Assouan at this period, 200 deserted *en masse* from Cairo, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the Major could get even seventy to start. Forty of these deserted, and on the 16th of July a detachment of twenty-four men of our 35th Regiment was ordered to



DERVISH OF THE SOUDAN.

than useless. He states that this has been, perhaps, the cause of much injustice to the Egyptian soldiers, who have been naturally afraid to use arms more dangerous to themselves than to the enemy. So many accidents occurred with them that three British officers, who were instructing the men in musketry, declined to continue the course."

As an example of the bad spirit existing in the troops of the regular Egyptian army, when a battalion of Turks, under Major Grant, was ordered

guard the remainder at Assiout, till they could be sent back in chains to Cairo. Major Grant followed thirty-two Turks across the river in a boat, attended by only ten horsemen. Having come up with them at a Sheikh's house, he demanded surrender, and, on refusal, shot one dead and wounded two others, whereupon the rest submitted." But on every occasion the cowardice, incapacity, and insubordination of these raw and hastily-collected Egyptian troops were painfully apparent.

## CHAPTER XX.

## GORDON AND THE MAHDI.

Gordon's Letter to Sir E. Baring—Dr. Schweinfurth's Telegram—Progress of the Siege of Khartoum—About the Fall of Berber—Assiout a Military Base—The Mudir's Change of Mind—His Personal Appearance—The Route by the River.

It was not until the 5th of August, 1884, that the Ministry asked for and received a Vote of Credit for £300,000 in the House of Commons, as part of the sum necessary to fit out an expedition to relieve Khartoum.

For some weeks prior to this, news, at detached intervals, came of the futile struggle maintained by Gordon against overwhelming odds, and his despatches were always cheerful and hopeful; till latterly, when the conviction came upon him that he had been betrayed or abandoned, and that if rescue came, it would come—as it did—too late.

On the 30th of July he wrote thus to Sir E. Baring and Nubar Pasha:—

“Your telegram of the 5th of May received. Thanks for kind expressions. Nile now high, and we hope to open the route to Sennaar in a few days. Stewart was slightly wounded in the arm near the palace. He is all right now. Be assured that these hostilities are far from being sought for, but we have no option, for retreat is impossible unless we abandon *employés* and their families, which the general feeling of the troops is against. I have no advice to give. If we open Sennaar and clear the Blue Nile, we will be strong enough to retake Berber, that is, if Dongola still holds out.

“Not one pound of the money you gave me got here; it was captured at Berber. We want £200,000 sent to Kassala. The expenses of these garrisons must be met. Khartoum costs £500 per diem. If the route gets open to Kassala, I shall send Stewart there with journal, that is, if he will consent to go. You may rely on this, that if there was any possible way of avoiding the wretched fighting I should adopt it, for the whole war is hateful to me. The people refuse to let me go out on expeditions, owing to the bother which would arise if anything

happened, so I sit on tenter-hooks of anxiety. If I could make any one chief here I would do it, but all the good men were killed with Hicks. To show you that Arabs fire well, two of our steamers which are blinded (*sic*) received 970 and 860 hits in their hulls respectively. Since our defeat on the 16th of March, 1884, we had only 30 killed and 50 or 60 wounded, which is very small. . . .

“We have made a decoration with three degrees—silver-gilt, silver, and pewter, with an inscription. ‘*Siege of Khartoum*,’ and a grenade in the centre. School children and women have also received one, consequently I am very popular with the black ladies of Khartoum. We have issued paper notes to the amount of £26,000, and borrowed £50,000 from the merchants. I have sent, in addition, £8,000 paper notes to Sennaar. What Kassala is doing for money I do not know. Of course we only get taxes paid in lead, so you are running a good bill up here. The troops and people are full of heart. I cannot say the same for the Europeans. . . . I expect it will end in a terrible famine throughout the land.”

In reply to a question, why he did not quit Khartoum, “knowing that Government meant to abandon the Soudan,” he stated that, if the road were opened, the people would not let him go unless he gave them some good government, or took them with him, which he could not do. “No one would leave more willingly than I, if it was possible.”

His case was more desperate than he admitted, for about the 18th of the same month the following appeared in the *Times*:—

“From Dr. Schweinfurth, Berlin, to the Anti-Slavery Society, London.—You forget Gordon, whose fate in a few weeks will be sealed. It is the

eleventh hour! Under party disputes your noblest citizen's cry for help is suffocated. The horrors related of his sufferings are unexampled. He is hopelessly abandoned. The defence of his house against increasing numbers is desperate. Appeal in this supreme moment to the whole nation."

To this the *Daily News* adds, "A private telegram was received in London from Dr. Schweinfurth, the well-known traveller, stating that native messengers leaving Khartoum reported that General Gordon was hemmed in in his residence, and engaged in daily conflict with the followers of the Mahdi; but the Foreign Office have received no confirmation of the report, and discredit it."

Towards the end of the month it was telegraphed from Suakim to Cairo that Gordon had defeated four tribes in a recent sortie from the beleaguered city, among whom was a powerful tribe from Shendy. Reports added generally that Gordon kept the rebels between Khartoum and Berber in constant terror by the fire from his war steamers.

On the 25th July a merchant who arrived at Assouan stated that two Englishmen were with the Mahdi—one short, dark, and stout, the other with light hair. Both were dressed as Mussulmans, and were well treated. He added that the General had often written for their release, but without success.

Early in August Major Kitchener telegraphed from Dongola the following text of a letter from General Gordon to the Mudir of that place, whose alleged treachery, perhaps, precluded his receiving it, and whose name will figure prominently in our pages:—

"Khartoum and Sennaar are still holding out up to the present, and the messenger who brings you

this—Mohamed Ahmed—will give you news of me. When he arrives give him all the news you have, and tell him at what place the expedition coming from Cairo now is, and numbers coming. We have 8,000 soldiers at Khartoum. The Nile has risen. Give 100 dollars from the Government to this messenger. Dated 28 Shaaban, 1301 (signed)

"GORDON."

The bearer of this letter reported to the Major, that General Gordon, Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, and Mr. Power, were all well, but that they had received no news from the outside world. The besiegers had retired from their first positions, but still enforced the blockade. Their numbers were now estimated at 17,000 men; but Gordon had seven armed steamers on the Nile, and made sorties in all directions. Lately he had sent out three steamers to capture a supply of maize that was on the way to the rebel camp under a large convoy. He waited till the men composing the latter had expended their ammunition, and then landing, defeated them and captured the provisions.

By this time, with a view to the coming expedition, the British authorities made preparations for establishing four great coaling stations on the Nile, and orders were issued to send on 3,000 tons to Wady Halfa.

With reference to the letter brought by Mohamed Ahmed, Lord Fitzmaurice stated in Parliament that, by telegrams from Major Kitchener, provisions were cheap in Khartoum, and the besiegers' force consisted of at least 16,000 men. "Gordon has seven armed steamers, and goes out in different directions and fights the enemy.

Gordon sent letter to Hussein Pasha Khalifa, at Berber, by some messenger. Hussein Khalifa told him to wait for reply. While waiting there Berber fell. He says Berber fell by treachery of Hussein Pasha Khalifa,

This account is corroborated by thirteen soldiers from Berber, who came over to Mudir of Dongola from Heddar last battle. Messenger went from Berber to Khartoum to tell Gordon. After three days he was sent again to Dongola.

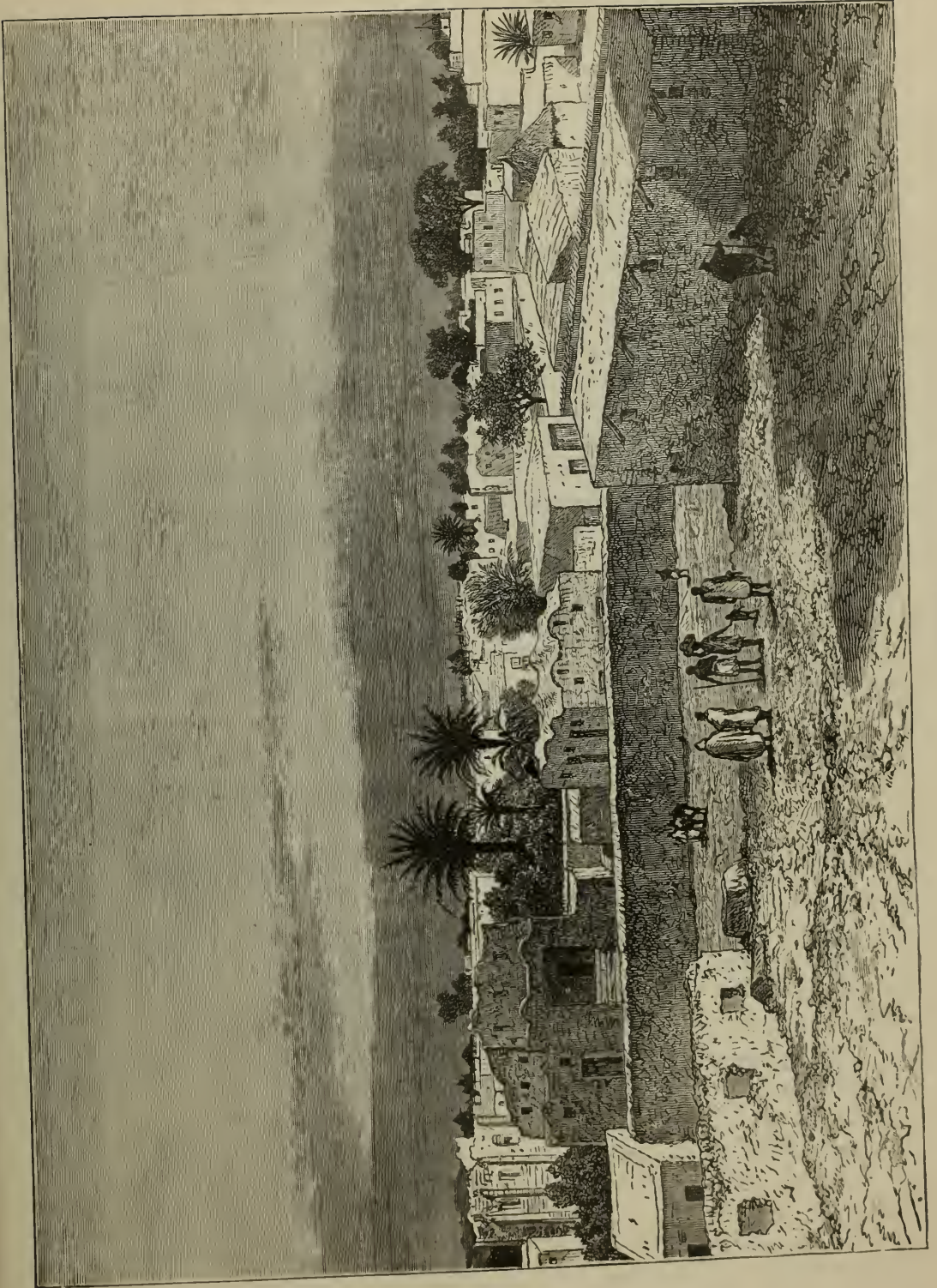


GOVERNMENT HOUSE, KHARTOUM, IN WHICH GORDON RESIDED.

who placed his Arabs on part of fortifications, and let enemy in that way. The soldiers fought well. After the enemy entered many people were killed. Hussein Pasha Khalifa did not appear during fight. He saw him afterwards, and asked for letter for Gordon. Hussein Pasha Khalifa would not give one. He said, 'The town is taken. Tell Gordon what you have seen. I will write to him no more.' He was not wounded.

He passed by east to Shendy, and thus across to Debbeh. He says, 'All the people want the old Government back, but are afraid of the Mahdi's Arabs.' After messengers returned to Khartoum from Berber, Gordon heard that the enemy had brought 7,000 ardehs of dboura to Gereif, from Mesalamieh, with 11,000 men. He took three steamers to bring boats, killed a great many of the enemy, and seized all the





KASSALA

dhoura. Gordon's men did not fire till the enemy had expended ammunition. They then landed and defeated them. News has come to the Sultan of Darfour that people there have given up the Mahdi and elected Ibrahim Bey, cousin of Sultan, to be Sultan. Mahdi's Vakeel asked for men, but was recalled. It is also reported that force around Khartoum have asked for support and have been refused by Mahdi."

On the 26th of July three patrolling steamers received orders to proceed upon the Nile from the first cataract, and forty men of the Royal Sussex Regiment were ordered down from Keneh (or Ghenneh) on the right bank of the river to Assiout, to act as a guard for them, and form a military base at that point.

If the story recorded in the public prints of the treachery of the Mudir of Dongola and his fraternisation with the Mahdi were true, he seems soon after to have changed his mind, as we find in the *Standard* that, about the 8th of August, he telegraphed to Cairo that he would provide as many men as possible to accompany Major Kitchener, and that he had instructed his Vakeel to render every assistance, the men to receive their rations and three piastres a day. According to a later telegram, a steamer had been pulled through the Second Cataract by one thousand of these men; also, that the Mudir would supply the Government with two thousand more out of his province, and had written to a neighbouring Sheikh to send another thousand, who would be at Wady Halfa in a few days.

Regarding this doubtful personage a writer in the *Daily News* says:— "Imagine, a small, slight, delicate man, with a pale, sad, pensive face, lighted up by two black luminous eyes, which seem to be always looking into space, or engaged in counting the beads on which good Moslems tell their prayers, and from between these eyes 'projects a preternaturally large nose, hooked, like a vulture's beak,' and you will have an idea of the personal appearance of Mustapha Bey Yower, the Mudir of Dongola.

"When he speaks, his voice has a low, querulous tone, which seems to reproach the interlocutor with disturbing the pious man in his religious meditations, and, as if to emphasise the protest, the large black eyes look into space, and the long, thin, white fingers nervously tell bead after bead, while the lips move in silent prayer, as though no mortal was within sight and the Mudir was prostrated at some holy shrine. But notwithstanding this air of abstraction, the cunning Mustapha has been listening attentively all the time, though when you have ceased speaking he will not reply immediately, but continue telling his beads, and reflecting and moving his lips till the last word of the verse from the Koran he appears to be reciting is reached."

On the 12th of August Major Kitchener telegraphed to Cairo his firm belief in the truth of the Mudir of Dongola, and the latter reported, a day or two after, that all the arrangements had been completed for assembling at

Sarrash the men and camels necessary for the transport of a British force.

On the 13th, Sir Evelyn Wood, with his staff, departed from Cairo up the Nile, in order to inspect the fortifications and the state of the British and Egyptian camps.

By the 16th the Mudir had collected a great number of boats, 500 camels, and 1,200 men, to assist the Government steamers up the cataracts, as an earnest of his good intentions; and two days afterwards the following troops at Cairo received letters of readiness to start up the Nile for Wady Halfa:—The 2nd Battalion of the Essex Regiment; the 2nd Battalion of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry; the 1st Battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment; a squadron of the 19th Hussars, and a corps of Mounted British Infantry.

These troops had with them £12,000 for their own use, and £11,000 for Sir Evelyn Wood.

Meanwhile universal dissatisfaction was felt at Cairo regarding the proposed river route to be taken by the so-called Relieving Expedition. None of the high authorities in Egypt, civil or military, British or Egyptian, viewed the plan with favour. The first freshet had passed and the water been sinking for more than a week. The Second Cataract was already deemed impassable even for small boats. Our first base at Wady Halfa was at such a distance from Cairo that it was calculated that it would take longer to bring supplies up than from Portsmouth to Berber; and from Dongola to Khartoum the route was long, difficult, and beset.

And now to give some account of that great water way, up which our troops were to toil to the seat of war.



YOUNG SOUDANESE.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE GREAT RIVER.

The Nile—Object of Worship—The Tracing of the Source—The Water of the River—Crocodiles—Inundation  
—The Nilometer—Other Meters—Mouths of the Nile.

THE Nile, the great river of Egypt and of Eastern Africa, is composed of the union of three head-streams, the western of which is the Bahr-el-Abiad, or White River; the eastern, the Atbara, or Black River; and the central, Bahr-el-Azrek, or Blue River.

“As to the nature of this stream,” says Herodotus, “I have not been able to learn anything from the priests or any other persons, although I very much wished them to inform me why the Nile began to rise at the summer solstice, and continued to do so for a hundred days; and why—after having risen this number of days—it then retired, and fell to such an extent, that it remained a small stream during the winter, continuing in this state until the return of the summer solstice.”

The ancients were ignorant of the sources of the river, and the moderns were long unacquainted with them also. Bruce assures us that he was the first European who saw the fountains from which the Nile had its source; but his examination of Kircher's account of the latter, is supposed to prove that Kircher had previously seen that source himself, or received his information from others who had done so. The extent of the inundations of the Nile has ever been watched with

the utmost eagerness from the most remote ages; and at the present time, says Ebers, we hear views expressed, and customs prevailing, with reference to it, old as the epoch of the Pharaohs, though during the widely different dominance of Christianity in Egypt and of monarchs wholly converted to Islam, the ancient worship of the river was strictly prohibited.

But some portion, continues Ebers, of every discarded religion becomes engrafted upon its successor, which discards it as a supplanted superstition, and thus we learn from a document of the sixth century, that the rising of the Nile in its time was no longer attributed to Osiris, but to a certain Saint Orion; and as the priests of antiquity taught that a tear from the eye of Isis led to the overflowing of the Nile, we hear the Egyptians of the present day say that “a divine tear” has fallen into the stream and produced its flood.

The ancient Egyptians worshipped the Nile, and raised temples to it; and it is believed that the river possessed its own priests in all the towns situated on its banks.

From the earliest periods of civilisation men sought to discover the source of this mysterious and classic river. In the first century of the Christian era the Emperor Nero ordered two Roman

centurions to attempt to trace it; but after traversing Ethiopia, these two adventurous officers came to enormous tracts of impassable marshes, with two great rocks rising in their midst, from between which they alleged the river rushed forth impetuously.

In the sixteenth century, two Portuguese Jesuits felt certain that they had reached the source of the Nile; but it was proved that the two reverend fathers had missed their way, and followed only the course of the Blue Nile, which is a tributary. In more modern times it has often been asserted that the real sources of the river were in the recesses of the Gebel-el-Kamar, or "Mountains of the Moon," 800 leagues

from the Delta. "These mountains," says Humboldt, in his "Tableaux of Nature," "form on our old maps an immense continuous girdle, traversing Africa from east to west. The existence of these mountains appears certain, but their extent, their distance from the equator, and their general direction, are still so many unsolved problems."

But this interesting matter need not be pursued any farther in these pages.

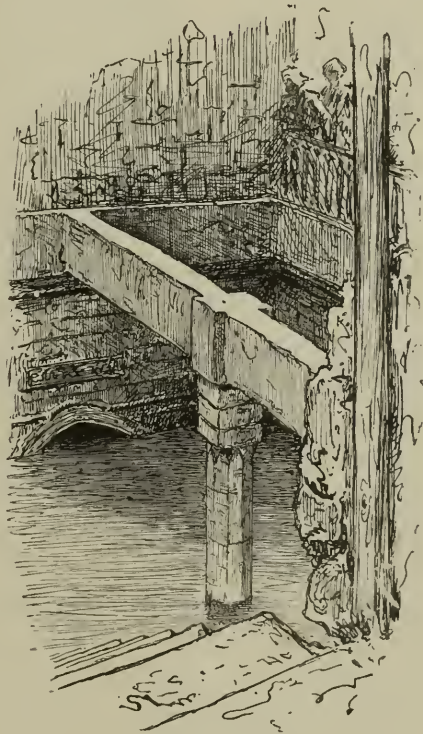
To this day a curious remnant of the old river worship is still practised, when—at the cutting of the dykes—a coarsely moulded figure, made of Nile mud, called by the people "the bride," is flung into the stream amid much rejoicing, and is considered a substitute for a beautiful young girl, who, it is said, used to be richly attired as a bride and cast into the Nile to propitiate its power.

When, after the founding of Fostât, the Nile failed to rise to the usual level, the Copts implored the Governor of Cairo, Amroo, to permit them to offer such a victim, he refused; but when the low state of the river menaced the land with famine, Amroo made the Caliph Omar acquainted with the

desperate state of affairs. His messenger returned with a royal letter, which he was ordered to cast into the obstinate river. The missive of the Commander of the Faithful ran thus:—

"To the blessed Nile of Egypt. If up to this time thou hast flowed only by thine own will, then cease to flow! But if thy stream was obedient to the command of the most high God, we

up to this time thou hast flowed only by thine own will, then cease to flow! But if thy stream was obedient to the command of the most high God, we



THE NILOMETER.

up to this time thou hast flowed only by thine own will, then cease to flow! But if thy stream was obedient to the command of the most high God, we

beseech God, that He will grant thy necessary increase."

By next night the Nile had attained its proper level of sixteen ells. "This pretty legend is hardly credible," says Ebers, "because the ancient Egyptian faith forbade human sacrifices as strictly as the Christian religion itself. However, in pre-Islamite times some kind of offering was no doubt cast into the stream, though not a maiden; and Makreezee tells us, so circumstantially as to exclude all doubt, that, in the fourteenth century, the Christians were wont to throw a reliquary with the finger of a saint, to secure a good inundation."

The waters of the Nile are thick and of a reddish colour during the greater part of the year, in consequence of the mud with which they are mixed. From this extraneous matter they are easily purified by filtration, or by being put into vessels rubbed with almond paste; and when once made limpid, they are not subject to corruption by keeping or carriage; and when cooled by evaporation, form a beverage so pleasant that the natives are said to induce thirst that they may indulge in drinking it, a fact which lends energy to the words of Moses:—"The Egyptians shall loathe to drink the waters of the river."

The crocodile of the Nile, the immense lizard, supposed to be the Leviathan of the sacred scriptures, has been found sometimes to attain the length of twenty-five feet. It is oviparous, and deposits eggs to the number of about one hundred, each about the size of that

of a goose, in the sand and ooze on the banks of the river, to be hatched by the heat of the sun.

Thus, according to Erasmus Darwin:

"So from his shell, on Delta's showerless isle,  
Bursts into birth the monster of the Nile;  
High on the flood with speckled bosom swims,  
Helm'd with broad tail, and armed with giant limbs,  
Rolls his fierce eye-balls, clasps his iron claws,  
And champs with gnashing teeth his massy jaws;  
Old Nilus sighs, through all his care-crowned  
shores,  
And swarthy Memphis trembles and adores."

Herodotus tells us how the crocodiles of the Nile were caught in his time.

"The huntsman puts the chine of a young pig on a hook and lets it down into the river. In the meantime he takes his station on the bank, holding a young pig, which he beats in order to make it squeal out. The crocodile, on hearing this, makes towards the sound, but meeting with the bait on his way, swallows it down. Then the man begins to pull, and after he is fairly hauled out on dry land, the first thing the huntsman does is to plaster up the crocodile's eyes with mud. If he succeed in doing this, there is no difficulty in managing the beast; otherwise it is a very troublesome affair."

So much depended upon a sufficient supply of the waters of the Nile to all cultivated parts of the country, that, in order to ensure fertility, the inundations were anxiously watched and accurately ascertained. For this purpose graduated pillars, called Nilometers, were generally erected on the islets in the channel of the river.

This invention is, by some Arabian writers, ascribed to Joseph, during his

government of the kingdom ; but, like many other useful inventions for which the Egyptians of old were justly celebrated, the origin of the Nilometer cannot now be accurately ascertained.

The famous Nilometer, on the island of Roda, near Cairo, was, it would seem, not transferred from Memphis till after the founding of Fostât. In 1417, Makreezee saw the remains of a still older one ; and its successor, after considerable improvement and restoration, indicates, to this day, the inundation which every one watches with expectation and anxiety throughout Egypt.

It is placed within a covered vault or chamber, the roof of which is supported by simple wooden pillars, built to replace an earlier structure, which was swept away about the end of the 18th century. The quadrangular tank, in which stands the octagon pillar, is walled all round, and communicates with the river by a canal. The pillar is supported by a beam at the top, and on it are inscribed the ancient Arabic measurements.

Among the Kufic inscriptions preserved on the walls, the finest owe their existence to Mamoon, the son of Haroun-al-Raschid, who restored the *Mikyas* or Nilometer in 814.

The Pharaohs early understood the necessity of knowing the exact amount, or deficiency, of the inundations of the Nile, and meters are preserved, which were erected far up the river in Nubia, by monarchs of the old empire. If the meter failed to rise to sixteen ells, a drought was the result in the higher fields.

The Nilometer was protected by

the magical power of unapproachable sanctity, and the husbandman has been, from the earliest times to the present, forbidden to glance at it while the river is rising. In the time of the Pharaohs, it was the priesthood that declared to the king and the people their estimate of the inundation, and at the present day it is the Sheikh, who is sworn to secrecy, and is under the control of the Cairo police, having his own Nilometer, of which the zero point is somewhat below that of the ancient standard.

The engineer officers of the French army first detected this fraud, by which the Government every year endeavoured to secure the full amount of taxation.

Before leaving the great river, it may be mentioned that after the fall of the Fatimite dynasty, and the death of the Sultan Saladin, in 1192, the cultivation of the Delta of the Nile deteriorated under the sway of the Mameluke princes and the greedy and rapacious Pashas and Beys.

In process of time the mouths became choked, and the flood had to find a new and deeper bed. The eastern forced a passage into the sea at Damietta. The western, or Canopic branch, was diverted into an artificial channel, the Bolbitinic mouth, known as the Rosetta branch.

The ancient main branches of the river gradually disappeared entirely ; these were even led throughout the interior of the Delta by subsidiary channels, and it is by these, almost exclusively, that, in the present age, the Nile pours its flood into the sea.

Since the time of the Romans, says Ebers, the veins, so to speak, that traverse the Delta in all directions have changed beyond recognition, and that which is true of the river courses is equally applicable to the vegetation which owes its existence to the Nile. New and foreign products have replaced the lotus and the papyrus, and, to some extent, even the grain of ancient Egypt. Trees of new species cast their shadows over the paths and villages.

"All the arable land that was lost to culture under the rule of the Mamelukes and Turks has been reclaimed under the fostering care of Mehemet Ali, and his successors, more especially under Ismail Pasha. Bonaparte's saying that, under good management, the Nile would extend to the desert, and under bad management the desert would extend to the Nile, has been verified; and the traveller visiting Damanhoor in the month of October, where the

French troops proclaimed loudly that they were starving, will see with double surprise the endless spread of fields of maize as tall as a man, when the golden spathes, swelled with grain, await the reaper, though some are only a few weeks risen."

The water of the Nile, when purified, is said to be among waters what champagne is among wines, though our soldiers in recent campaigns failed to find it so; and the priests of Apis would not give it to the sacred bull lest he should become too fat.

Benjamin of Tudela describes it as both drink and medicine; and Purchas goes further: "Nilus water I thinke to be the profitablest and wholesomest in the world by being both bread and drink."

During the visit of the Pasha of Egypt to this country, he brought from Cairo many great jars of Nile water, to use during his absence from home.



ARAB TENTS.











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