

THE COAL RESOURCES OF THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN AND ABYSSINIA

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So far as the geology of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan is known with certainty, there is little chance of finding large deposits of coal. The area of the country is 5,624,000 square kilometres, and it can be stated roughly that Nubian sandstone covers the northern half, reaching as far south as the 14th parallel of latitude. Igneous and metamorphic rocks cover an enormous area in the eastern portion, between the Nile and the Red Sea, and outcrop among the sandstone over the entire extent of its deposit in this country, particularly near the cataracts of the Nile and in the Butana, east of Khartoum.

Gneisses and schists apparently form the main extent of the surface south of the 14th parallel of latitude. In central Kordofan, schists and later igneous intrusions form hills, isolated or in ranges, covering some hundreds of square kilometres, and rising to heights of over three hundred metres above the general level of the plain. In the Bahr-el-Ghazal and Mongalla provinces schists and gneisses prevail.

At the town of Dongola in Dongola province, Captain Hodgson, of the Egyptian army, discovered a thin bed of lignite in April, 1903, while sinking a well near the river bank. The deposit consisted of a layer, about 9 centimetres thick, and 9 metres below the surface, in the form of a carbonaceous bed in whitish, clayey sandstone. Mr. G. R. Carey, on behalf of Messrs. Lake and Currie, mining engineers, searched the neighbourhood in the winter season of 1903-1904 and sank several bore-holes with a diamond drill to considerable depths. His report is not now available; but it is certain that he failed to discover any beds worth working.

It is rumoured among the Arabs, that coal, or lignite, exists in Darfur, but as this territory has not been visited by Europeans for many years, nothing definite is known and even the general geology of the district is doubtful.