

legislation, the constitutional evolution of Egypt is of exceptional importance; for Egypt is an international microcosm, and the government there has to face practically the international legislative and judicial problems which in other states are still largely academic. This book, therefore, of M. Vercamer has an application which goes beyond its immediate subject; and lucidly written and excellently documented as it is, it may be recommended to the notice of jurists as well as to those who are concerned with the constitutional progress of the old-new centre of civilization.—*The Law Quarterly*.

EVIDENCE OF PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS.

The Court of Criminal Appeal, this week, in quashing the conviction of an appellant from the London Quarter Sessions, pushed to the fullest extent the doctrine that evidence of the previous conviction of a prisoner may not be given at the trial. In the case in question, the chairman of the sessions had inadvertently asked a question of the prisoner, which resulted in an admission that he had previously been convicted, and, in spite of the fact that he endeavoured as far as possible to counteract the effect of the admission in charging the jury, the court held that the conviction ought to be quashed. There is, of course, a well-known general rule of law, applicable both to civil and criminal cases, that nothing may be given in evidence which does not directly tend to the proof or disproof of the issues raised. Thus in *Makin v. Attorney-General for New South Wales*, 17 Cox C.C. 704, the Privy Council laid down that "it is undoubtedly not competent for the prosecution to adduce evidence tending to shew that the accused has been guilty of criminal acts other than those covered by the indictment, for the purpose of leading to the conclusion that the accused is a person likely, from his conduct or character, to have committed the offence for which he is tried." This principle was also referred to by Mr. Justice