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THE WAR IN EGYPT.

The interest of England in Egypt is not merely material; though the Suez canal, as a short road to India, is of great importance to her, and though she is deeply interested as a creditor-nation in the well-being of Egypt, the duties she owes to civilization have higher claims upon her. There is in Egypt a large number of Europeans, including British subjects, whose lives and property were menaced by the attitude of the military acting under Arabi Pasha; and the first duty of the powers was to protect these subjects. Upon England, in the first instance, has fallen the chief burthen of doing so; though the bombardment of Alexandria was undertaken by her alone, she had the concurrence of Germany, France and Italy, in what she undertook. The duty of preserving civilization in Egypt is one morally binding on all the nations of Europe; and England is only doing what it was absolutely necessary some one nation, or more, should undertake. The massacre of ninety Europeans showed the necessity for speedy action; and as the bloody work of murdering Europeans in the streets of Alexandria was renewed on the third day of the bombardment, there is urgent necessity for following up the first blow which was struck with terrific force against the forts.

What is wanted is promptitude of action on the part of England, if she is to do the work alone; of the allies if she is to have active assistance. The English fleet is more than sufficient for all the duties required of it, but the silencing of the forts is not likely to end the trouble. The Egyptian soldiery may be expected to make a stand in the country; and it is desirable that the naval victory should be followed up by the rapid action of land troops. Here there is room for some of the approving nations to assist the operations of England. From England and from India troops will be landed, and the Egyptian army will be placed between two fires. Every day's delay places the Europeans at the mercy of the fanatical and infuriated soldiery of Egypt. British troops from these two points are on the way; but it would have been better that they should have been ready to march as soon as the fleet had done its work. Any delay will put in the greatest peril all the remaining Europeans in the country. The new massacre, which took place on Thursday, ought to stir up to immediate action the nations whose subjects have been sacrificed. Whether England be assisted, or left to do the work of Europe alone, the result will be the same,

up to a certain point: in any event the overthrow of Arabi and his partisans is certain. But where time is so precious, as it is in this war, it is desirable that the Arabi faction should be crushed at once by an overwhelming force. Those who have most to do in bringing the war to a successful issue will have most to say in making peace. The future moral preponderance of England in Egypt seems certain; and in the actual condition of affairs, it is the best thing that could happen. There is no national party in the country capable of holding its own and carrying on a constitutional government.

Though all Europe may well, in the interests of civilization, feel concern for the present state of Egypt, the material interests at stake are much greater in the case of England than in that of any other nation. Across Egypt England finds her nearest and most economic route to India—the traffic of the Suez canal is of great importance to Egypt—among the creditors of Egypt, England stands foremost; she is, besides, the holder of some of the Suez canal shares. Still, all these reasons, if they stood alone, would not justify her in making war on Egypt. But the protection of the lives and property of her subjects, in Egypt, is a paramount duty, the fulfilment of which she could not have avoided without dishonor.

More than three-fourths of all the vessels that passed through the Suez canal in 1881—82 per cent—bore the British flag. The danger is that the canal may be temporarily destroyed; for it does not seem possible that any available means of protection could be brought into play that would prevent an injury to the works, so easily inflicted that it could be done by a little dynamite or a few barrels of gunpowder. To cut off Great Britain from ready access to 200,000,000 of her subjects, in the East, would carry with it the most serious consequences, especially as it would not be easy at once to command, at moderate rates, the vessels necessary to carry on the traffic by the old round-about route.

The sympathy of the civilized world is strongly in favor of England, in the expedition she has undertaken. The Irish Fenians would make this their opportunity, if they could; but there is little chance of encountering them in the open field. Irish assassins prefer to do their bloody work under cover of night and the shelter of the highway hedge. American Fenianism pricks up its ears, and there are stories about its activity so near as Buffalo. What all this portends we shall learn before many days pass over. The consequences of the Egyptian campaign may be felt in Canada; a fact which cannot fail to quicken our interest in the subject.

THE RECENT RAILWAY AMALGAMATION.

The tendency of the larger railways to swallow up the smaller, now being developed, can scarcely be without its effect on future railway construction. Railway projectors in search of bonuses know that nothing takes like promises of new competing lines by which passenger and freight rates shall be reduced. The Toronto, Grey and Bruce and the Wellington, Grey and Bruce

railways were both quickened into life by this consideration. Now both these roads have fallen under one management. The Great Western no longer exists as a separate line; and the Grand Trunk is, in respect of all these roads, master of the situation.

It may be taken for granted that if this result had been foreseen, the bonuses so profusely granted would for the most part have been withheld. A bonus, if it fails to give low rates, fails entirely in its object; for no direct return on capital is bargained for. The stockholder takes his chance of a dividend, and the bondholder looks for his half-yearly interest; but the giver of a bonus bargains for nothing but local accommodation and low rates. If the bonus giver obtains a voice at the Board, it is but a whisper which is scarcely heard amidst the general din; and if any interest is to be sacrificed, that of the bonus giver is the first to go. We have, in the amalgamation of the Great Western with the Grand Trunk, a demonstration of the fact that bonuses to railway companies are by no means certain to secure the advantages they are intended to attain; and this consideration can scarcely be without its effect in the future. But what has happened, if not in the precise form this amalgamation has taken, was from the first liable to occur. If railway promoters do not, as a rule, enjoy the reputation of being the most scrupulous of mortals, the bonus-begging fraternity are not likely to improve the general reputation. The truth is that begging, in any form, is more or less demoralizing, unless the object to be attained raises it above the common level. The personal element enters largely into this business; and projectors who use this means are almost always ready to sell out to the highest bidder. In this way they can turn to private account what was asked on public grounds.

But even in the case under consideration, all is not lost. For a number of years, the roads have had an independent existence, and have greatly benefited the sections of country through which they ran. There are local advantages conferred by the roads which even amalgamation cannot destroy; but the chief stipulations of the contract between the bonus-giving municipalities and the railways are broken. The question may be tried some day whether rights bought and paid for in this way can be enforced at law, or whether bad faith can be practised by railway companies with impunity. At all events, future bonuses, if granted at all, should only be given on express conditions which should be made binding on the recipient companies. This guarantee is very likely to be asked for, in future, and if it be insisted on it will have to be granted.

There is some uneasiness among the mercantile community less the practical effect of amalgamation should be a material rise of rates between non-competing points. If the companies were satisfied with the benefits of the economies which the union may enable them to practice, nobody would grudge them that advantage—Sir Henry Tyler puts the saving down at £200,000 a year;—but an increase of local rates will not be permitted without a protest and possibly it may cause resistance. Sir Henry Tyler says he does not want the people of Canada to know how