

What's What the World Over

New Phases of the World's Thinking Recorded in Current Periodicals

Adventures in Egypt

Whole Shark Family

War Sermons

Spies and Snipers

Limitations of the Movies

ADVENTURES IN EGYPT

*More Oriental Vagaries as Recorded by
Earl Cromer*

THE reminiscences of the Earl of Cromer, from which we quoted last week in this department, seem so interesting as to justify further quotation from the same distinguished source. Referring to the customs of Egyptian rulers, he says:

Ismail Pasha, the Khedive of Egypt, was a very curious example of a man who remained a thorough Oriental, albeit his Orientalism was covered by a thin veneer of Occidentalism. He was illiterate. He probably never read a book of any kind. He wholly misunderstood European politics and the motives which guide the actions of all high-class Europeans. He was surrounded by people who habitually robbed and deceived him, and he took a great delight in deceiving them. On one occasion, when he was engaged in the familiar process of issuing a loan which was to fund its outstanding Treasury Bills, he had an interview with a foreign capitalist who was negotiating the matter. The door of the room in which this interview took place was open, but a portiere, which did not reach quite to the ground, hung over the opening. In the course of the conversation Ismail Pasha, looking under the portiere, noticed a pair of brown trousers which he recognized as belonging to one of his staff. He said to the loan contractor in a loud voice that he agreed to his conditions and that, if the contract were brought to him the next day, he would sign it. The brown trousers at once disappeared. On the following day, when the contract was submitted to him, he made objections, said he had not fully understood the matter and refused to sign. At that time the most furious speculation was going on in Egyptian stocks. Scarcely had the loan contractor left the room when the wearer of the brown trousers rushed in in a great state of excitement and protested violently on the ground that he had heard Ismail himself say the day before that he agreed to the terms. Ismail choked with laughter and said: "Mon cher, j'ai reconnu vos pantalons bruns. Vous avez achete; vous auriez du vendre."

In this episode the education in European trickery came into play. In the following, the purely Oriental habit of thought was prominent. It once happened that Ismail was suffering from toothache. He sent for a European dentist who told him he ought to have the tooth out. Ismail said that he was afraid it would be very painful. He was informed in reply that if laughing gas was administered to him he would feel nothing. He still doubted, but told the dentist to bring his apparatus to the palace and he would then discuss the question. It was accordingly brought and the process explained to him. Ismail then summoned an attendant and told him to send up the sentry who was at his door. The man was then ordered to sit down in a chair and the dentist was requested to take out a tooth on either side of his jaw. He was then asked whether he had felt anything, and replied in the negative. Ismail, however, was not yet satisfied. He said that the sentry was a young, strong man, and that he would like to see the experiment tried on somebody of weaker physique. Accordingly, a slave girl was summoned from the harem and a couple of her teeth were extracted. He then consented to have his own tooth out. It is related, though possibly this portion of the story is apocryphal, that the dentist then received an order on the Egyptian Treasury for £1000 and that when the draft was presented it was not honoured, though it was presumably, with many other claims of a similar nature, eventually funded in the Unified Debt.

No incidents excite greater interest in the unregenerated East than those cases of patriarchal and capricious justice on the part of despots of which history records so many examples. There is no more characteristically Oriental episode related in the Bible than the story of the judgment of Solomon. Creasy tells us that a poor woman once complained



By Acclamation!

—Carter, in New York Evening Sun.

to Bajazet I. that a man in his employment had stolen some milk which belonged to her and had just drunk it. That dreaded Sultan had sworn a mighty oath that justice should be dealt out "indiscriminately to every man or woman within his dominions." He accordingly directed that the stomach of the accused man should be cut open to see if the milk was there. The woman's story turned out to be true. If this convincing proof of the presence of the milk had not been adduced she would herself have been killed. As it was, the Sultan dismissed her with the words: "Thou hadst just cause of complaint, now go thy way, for the injury done thee has been punished."

The Oriental method of administering justice has this advantage, that it occasionally enables a matter to be settled summarily which would puzzle the most acute judicial authorities in the West. I once had to pay a matter of £10 for the hire of some tents which had been pitched in my garden on the occasion



The sending of Franz Joseph to the Front to raise the spirit of the army.

—From Lukomorye, Petrograd.

of my giving a ball. I gave the money to my butler, who was a Madrassi, and told him to hand it on to the Egyptian to whom it was due. Shortly afterwards, I noticed a man hanging about the door of my house and asked him what he wanted. He said he had come to receive his £10. I told him that I had already paid it. He denied ever having received it. I then confronted him with the Madrassi. The one said that the money had been paid; the other stoutly denied that it had been received. I had not the least idea which was telling the truth, so I asked the Egyptian Governor, who had a wider experience than myself in dealing with such matters, to enquire into the subject and let me know the result. Shortly afterwards he informed me that he had "made a thorough enquiry" and that the Madrassi had really paid the money. I subsequently learned what was the nature of the proceedings at the "thorough enquiry." The Governor summoned the two men concerned. He asked the Madrassi whether he had paid the money, to which the reply was "Yes." He then asked the Egyptian whether he had received it, and the reply was "No." The Governor then said to the Egyptian: "You're a liar; go away and get it," an order which was at once obeyed. I am inclined to think that in this case what is generally called "substantial justice," which is often no justice at all, was done, but I am not at all sure.

To sum up, it is the contrast between East and West rather than their similarity which constitutes the great attraction of Eastern politics. No European can really deal effectively with Eastern affairs unless he has sufficient powers of observation to notice these contrasts in small things as well as in great, and sufficient imagination to realize their consequences. The display of sympathy in dealing with Easterns is certainly a very necessary quality; so also is the extension of indulgence to what in Western eyes appear at times defects. The extent to which the East will be improved by being occidentalized to a greater extent than at present may be a matter of opinion, but it is quite certain that the further this process is carried the less interesting will Eastern affairs become.

WHOLE SHARK FAMILY

As Many as Seven Are Found in New York Waters

IN attempting to fix responsibility upon the particular manner of shark guilty of recent fatalities, it will be of interest to consider the various species which regularly or occasionally visit the coasts in the neighbourhood of New York, says a writer in the New York Times. Of these there are no less than nineteen distinct kinds, but several of them are so rare as scarcely to be known to science. Such of the others as are important from our point of view fall into the following fairly natural groups:

Requin sharks, comprising the common, smooth dogfish, the various ground sharks, and the tropical blue shark and tiger shark.

Spined dogfishes, of which only one species is found in our shallow coastal waters.

Hammerhead sharks, including the true hammerhead, and the small, Southern shovelhead shark which rarely reaches our latitude.

Thresher sharks, with one local species.

Sand sharks, with one local species.

Basking sharks, with a single, pelagic species that is at once the largest and most inoffensive of our sharks.

Mackerel sharks, a group including the white shark, or true man-eater, besides one or two smaller, commoner kinds.

The species to be considered is the truly "man-eating" white shark, *Carcharodon carcharias*, or "the biter with the jagged teeth." Large man-eaters are of a leaden white colour, but young ones have a blue-gray back. According to Linnaeus, this shark was the leviathan that swallowed Jonah. It is closely allied to the swift-swimming mackerel shark, but it is stockier, more powerful, with somewhat dif-