

very important influence, both on the conduct of the administration and on the general policy pursued by the British Government and its responsible agents. Most of the accounts which have up to the present time reached the public, whether of the actions or the character of Abbas II., have been incomplete or distorted, sometimes by reason of political partisanship, which when due to a genuine albeit often erroneous view of what constitutes the real interests of the Egyptian people is, to say the least, comprehensible; sometimes from sheer venality, which is far less excusable; but more often owing to the fact that no really trustworthy information, on which to form an independent opinion, has been forthcoming. Generally speaking, however, it may be said that my countrymen, who in the aggregate are always good-natured and at times perhaps somewhat unduly credulous,¹ have until

¹ The following remarks made by Sir Edwin Pears (*Turkey and its People*, p. 89), whose long residence at Constantinople enables him to speak with authority on the politics of the Near East, are topical: "In the worst periods of Abdul Hamid's reign, many English and other European statesmen who visited Yildiz came away with the conviction that the Sultan was possessed of a remarkable zeal for reform and for far-reaching projects for the welfare of all his subjects, as to whom, whether Christians or Moslems, he would never make any distinction, 'for he loved them all equally.'"

Amongst the many distinguished individuals who visited Cairo during my tenure of office, Lord Rosebery appeared to me to be easily first in his power of rapidly gauging the real characters of the leading personalities with whom he was brought in contact.