

CANADIANS ON THE NILE.

THE Nile has, from the very dawn of history, been an object of interest to the most enlightened part of mankind. Allusions to it are found in the writings of the most ancient authors of which we have any knowledge. Of it Herodotus wrote and Homer sung. It could have scarcely been otherwise, on account of the important part which was played in human history by the people to whom it gave life. Ancient Egypt, which could not have existed without the Nile, was at one time the centre of civilization, and the university of the world. It was the birth-place and nursery of science, and that, too, long before Romulus and Remus were born, or Greece, afterwards the nursery of art, had begun to perform any conspicuous or important part in the history of the world.

This interest was intensified, too, no doubt, by the mystery in which the source of the Nile was involved for so many ages. The geographers of ancient Greece and Rome, baffled in their oft-repeated attempts to find it, gave it up in despair, safely concluding that it was the will of the gods that it should be hidden from all generations. Homer, in acknowledgment of his ignorance, described it as a stream descending from heaven. Herodotus tried to explore the mystery of its source, but he failed. He soon found that the solution of the problem was beyond his power. Alexander the Great and Ptolemy Philadelphus engaged in the same undertaking with similar results. They selected men supposed to be eminently fitted, by reason of their knowledge and experience, for the accomplishment of the arduous undertaking; but they, in their turn, found the difficulties in the way too great, and returned with their mission unfulfilled. And for a long time modern explorers met with no better success.

This sort of romantic interest in the Nile, however, no longer exists. Thanks to the pluck and perseverance of the intrepid British explorer, the mystery has been dispelled. As the result of the successful explorations of Speke and Baker, and Livingstone and Stanley, the secret of equatorial Africa has been laid bare. The source of the Nile is, at length, as well known as that of the Mississippi or the St. Lawrence. Perhaps it would be too