

To Imperialists

THE publication of the two volumes which Lord Cromer gives to his countrymen under the title of "Modern Egypt" is an event of far more than mere literary interest, says the London Times. It is a contribution of first-rate importance to the applied science of statesmanship—a contribution for which it would be hard to find a parallel. For it very rarely happens that those who have taken a leading part in great affairs of state are sufficiently endowed with the critical faculty and with the judicial attitude of mind to discharge what are properly deemed to be the functions of the historian in regard to events which they have themselves largely controlled and directed. We cannot, in fact, recall any other instance of a statesman sitting down, as Lord Cromer has done, immediately after his retirement from a long and arduous term of public service, as momentous and responsible as any in the annals of our Empire, and rendering account of his stewardship with the detachment and circumspection which we are accustomed to associate with the philosophic student rather than with the man of action. In an introductory chapter Lord Cromer quotes Sir Arthur Helps to the effect that half the evils of the world come from inaccuracy, and, in order that the British people should understand the origin and nature of the responsibilities assumed by them in Egypt during the last quarter of a century, he wishes to place them in the fullest possible possession of facts in regard to which, as he modestly puts it, he has enjoyed exceptional advantages for the attainment of accuracy. He has, no doubt wisely, refrained from dealing "fully and unreservedly" with the more recent events that have occurred since the accession of the present Khedive, except as regards the Sudan, but he has nevertheless given us all that is essential for a full understanding of the solution that has redeemed the Egyptian problem from the blank hopelessness in which it was involved when he first approached it a quarter of a century ago. Nor is the interest which attaches to the solution of the Egyptian problem confined to Egypt itself. As Lord Cromer shrewdly observes, there is a great similarity in the general character of the abuses which spring up under Eastern governments wheresoever they may be situated; and the broad lines which reforms must follow are so traced out by the commonplace requirements of European civilization that they must everywhere present a certain identity of character. In setting forth the remedies successfully applied in Egypt to an Oriental polity which had been brought to the verge of ruin by a persistent neglect of economic laws as well as of the most elementary principles of legality and justice, Lord Cromer has supplied a text-book which should unquestionably be in the hands of "all those who are, or who at some future time may be, engaged in Oriental administration."

But these volumes should serve an even wider purpose. If anything can, they ought to bring home to the democracy and to those who govern in its name the immense responsibilities they incur when they allow themselves to be swayed by popular passions and prejudices—let alone the exigencies of party politics—in dealing with forces that lie entirely outside the range of popular knowledge and experience. It is a lesson which the British democracy of the present day should take to heart. There has been no more painful and humiliating chapter in our recent history than our connection with the tragic events in the Sudan which began with the annihilation of the ill-starred Hicks expedition into Kordofan in the autumn of 1883 and culminated in the fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon in January, 1885. That story has never been fully told until today. Lord Cromer has for the first time marshalled all the material facts and weighed all the evidence with such amplitude and impartiality that the final verdict of history must, we believe, be finally pronounced in accordance with this masterly summing-up of the case. We can only at present single out one outstanding feature. Two crucial mistakes were responsible for the final catastrophe, and both were committed because the British government allowed their better judgment and the informed advice of the man on the spot to be overruled by the clamor of popular emotion at home. Nothing can be more generous than Lord Cromer's appreciation of the heroic qualities for which Gordon's name will always stand in history, but that the defects of his qualities were so great as to make him wholly unsuited for the delicate mission upon which he was so hastily despatched Lord Cromer shows on evidence that seems to us absolutely irrefragable. Equally clear does he make it that Gordon was selected solely under the pressure of public opinion. That was the first and perhaps irreparable mistake. The second mistake aggravated the first one. It was the refusal of the British government to allow Zobeir Pasha to join Gordon at Khartoum. Zobeir, it will be remembered, had been in his day a powerful chieftain in the Sudan and a mighty slave-hunter, and he was then living in semi-confinement in Cairo. His name and prestige, however, were still a living force in the Sudan, which might yet have stemmed the devastating tide of Mahdism. There had been a blood feud between him and Gordon, but Gordon had "a mystic feeling" that in such an extremity he could trust him. At any rate, he was willing to take the risk, and he urged and entreated that he should be allowed to take it. In the face of his reiterated appeals, reinforced by Lord Cromer's more closely-reasoned arguments, the British government refused their consent, and upheld their refusal, as we now for

the first time fully realized, in obedience solely to popular clamor and out of fear of an adverse vote in the House of Commons. The same popular sentiment which had demanded the sending of Gordon on a forlorn hope vetoed the sending of Zobeir to his assistance in the hour of his desperate necessity because, forsooth, Zobeir's record was tainted, and, rather than abate one iota of a legitimate repugnance to the slave-trader, it irrationally sacrificed the last chance of saving the Sudan from a relapse into barbarism far more oppressive and cruel than in the days of Zobeir and his like. Mr. Gladstone subsequently defended the action of his government on the ground that, had they decided in favor of sending Zobeir, their decision would have been reversed within forty-eight hours by the House of Commons, and that, moreover, though their action represented the judgment of the cabinet, "it was also no less the judgment of parliament and of the people." Lord Cromer's matured comment is so cogent that his own words must be quoted: "Without doubt there is much truth in the argument. But there was this notable difference between the government on the one side and parliament and the people on the other side—the former were well informed of the facts and arguments; the latter were in a great degree ignorant of them."

If Lord Cromer passes judgment in this matter against the government of the day, he does so assuredly from no desire to minimize his own share of responsibility. No one who reads those pages can doubt the poignancy of his own regret that he did not himself oppose a more uncompromising resistance to decisions of which he clearly foresaw the disastrous consequences. But in the reluctance which he felt on that occasion to go to extreme lengths in pressing his own views upon those who must in the last resort be responsible for the policy of the Empire is to be found the real key to his subsequent achievements. The strongest impression to be derived from a perusal of Lord Cromer's volumes is that the secret of his splendid successes lies in his supreme sanity. In 1884 he had only just entered upon his new duties as the representative of the British government in Cairo. If we have read him aright, he never displayed a higher sense of duty than when he subordinated his own judgment to that of others, not so much because he mistrusted its soundness, as because he felt that the time had not yet arrived when he could claim to speak with absolute authority. Some ten years later, as we know, though the episode belongs to a later period than his present work deals with, there arose a crisis in Egyptian affairs upon which he did express his views with uncompromising determination. He had by that time established his right to be firm, and the British government accordingly yielded to his views. Lord Cromer could never have achieved the magnificent record he has left behind him in Egypt had he not possessed in ever-increasing measure throughout his long tenure of office the complete confidence of successive governments at home, to whose loyal support he himself bears handsome testimony. In this respect he has perhaps been more fortunate than any other of our great proconsuls, and the results which the Empire has reaped from his work, thanks to the continuity of that support, should teach us how indispensable it is to success. But if for many years past he has enjoyed in an exceptional degree the confidence of the British nation and of its rulers, he too had to conquer it for himself by perseverance, patience, and self-restraint. He, like other men, knew moments of disappointment and rebuff, but he never allowed them to disturb the serenity of his judgment or to affect the steadfastness of his purpose. His well-disciplined mind accepted the limitations which discipline imposes upon public servants, however great, in every well-ordered state. Tout vient à point à qui sait attendre. Lord Cromer knew how to wait for his opportunities, but waiting did not mean with him inactivity, but preparation for action. When his opportunities came, he knew equally how to act. Pliant on occasion, but indomitably tenacious, he overcame one by one, by sheer force of character, the manifold difficulties of his Herculean task, because he had ever present in his mind the wise maxim of Bacon, which he appropriately places at the head of his opening chapter: "It were good that men in their innovations would follow the example of Time itself, which, indeed, innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived."

THE NAVY ESTIMATES

THE debate on the Navy Estimates were certainly not very inspiring. The House was perhaps still somewhat bewildered by Mr. Asquith's truly heroic efforts in the debate on Mr. Murray Macdonald's resolution to reconcile the irreconcilable and to ignore, though he could not conceal the fundamental antinomy, which underlies Lord Tweedmouth's statement, between the rival claims of economy and even retrenchment on the one hand and of national security on the other. For the moment the battle is a drawn one. Neither side can claim a victory. Economy—Mr. Lee did not hesitate yesterday to call it "cheeseparing" economy—has prevailed in matters of detail, subject, as we have already indicated, to the

expectation that supplementary Estimates may become necessary before the financial year is ended and will have to be sanctioned by the Cabinet should they become necessary. On the other hand Mr. Robertson stated explicitly that the Board of Admiralty were satisfied that the Estimates, as finally settled by the Cabinet at a figure appreciably lower than that originally presented by the department, were adequate to maintain the two-power standard. So far the debates of Monday and of yesterday have served to clear the air, not, indeed, as much as could be wished—on this point we concur with Mr. Balfour—but perhaps as much as could be expected and sufficiently for practical purposes, due regard being had to the exigencies of parliamentary tactics and the difficulties of ministers who had to face in two directions with as much grace as they could command, and as much consistency as they could pretend to. Yesterday the significant silence of the spokesmen of the Admiralty made it abundantly clear that the rather paltry economies of this year will have to be paid for in full next year, and that, unless the two-power standard is to be abandoned of the international situation changes quite unexpectedly in the meanwhile, the shipbuilding programme of the next few years must be enormously increased. On the whole, then, it may be admitted that the two-power standard is safe at any rate for the present, nor can it be denied that, if words mean anything, even the present government will not dare to abate it in the future.

We say "even the present government" not because we entertain any serious distrust of their declarations and intentions, but because an ingenious German writer, quoted this morning by our Berlin correspondent, openly avows, with a mixture of naivete and gaucherie which is truly engaging, that recent naval policy in Germany has been based on the reckoning that the present government might be expected to be less mindful than their predecessors of the paramount requirements of national security—in fact, that they might be willing to starve the navy. Foreign observers not well versed in the niceties of our parliamentary tactics might perhaps be tempted to draw some such inference as this from some of the double-faced utterances of Monday's debate; and indeed there might have been some danger in the direction indicated by the German writer in question if the German government itself had not materially helped to avert it by its introduction of the bill for vastly increasing the strength of the German navy and greatly accelerating its rate of increase. But for the warning thus opportunely given to all whom it might concern—and no one can doubt that it concerns the British nation and its government very closely—the debate of Monday might have taken a different turn, and the estimates presented yesterday might have stood at a different figure. But in vain is the spread in the sight of any bird. A Liberal government, pledged as it may be to retrenchment, knows well enough that the country will never allow it to neglect the things which belong to its peace. The standard which is necessary to this country . . . the standard which we have to maintain is one which would give us complete and absolute command of the sea against any reasonably possible combination of powers." That is the answer which Mr. Asquith gave by anticipation on Monday to the ingenious and ingenious calculations of our German friends. It is an answer which, if faithfully acted upon, must entail upon us a very heavy expenditure in the future in spite of the economies of this year. But the burden will be patiently borne because it must be borne. We note with unfeigned interest that the same writer thinks that the strain of naval preparations threatens to produce financial disaster, and he wonders whether the idea of some reciprocal arrangement may not ultimately be entertained. Every one knows that this country has more than once offered to entertain such an idea. The obstacle does not rest with us. If the idea ever comes to be seriously entertained elsewhere, we shall not be slow to reciprocate.

In the meanwhile Mr. Asquith's declaration stands. If, as the Kolnische Zeitung assures us, Mr. Asquith's attitude can be received with nothing but gratitude by Germany, so much the better. But there must be no mistake, either here or abroad, as to what that attitude is. "Things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be. Why, then, should we deceive ourselves. Why indeed? If our parliamentary proceedings were conducted according to this profound maxim of Bishop Butler, there would be no need to ask the question. From this point of view the brief speech delivered by Mr. Balfour yesterday, shortly before the speaker left the chair, demands especial attention, not only for its uncompromising exposition of the imperative need for greatly increased expenditure in future years, but also for the very striking endorsement it elicited from Mr. J. Ward on behalf of the Labor party. Other critics of the government had dealt largely with questions of detail, highly important in themselves, but some of them not very well fitted for discussion in general debate. But Mr. Balfour went straight to the root of the matter when he declared that "you are bound to look not merely at the adequacy of a particular sum for a particular year, but at our naval policy as a whole," no one can possibly doubt that our naval expenditure will and must increase. That is the net result of the two days' debate, and it is a result which the government, so long as they are true to their pledges, cannot possibly dispute although, under the pressure of their parliamentary exigencies, they accepted it only by their very significant silence on the point—a silence which should deceive no one, least of all our good friends across the North Sea, who are kind enough to calculate on the betrayal of the national security by the Liberal party. At any rate, it does not deceive the Labor party, if Mr. Ward may be regarded as the exponent of its views, for, though he regretted the coming increase of expenditure on the navy, he seemed to regard it as inevitable.

Colonial Methods

FEW years ago I was on my way to Egypt, sailing from Marseilles by the Messageries steamer, when I happened to share a cabin with a French gentleman who was being sent out by his government on a tour of inspection of British colonies. His instructions were to visit Egypt, India, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, and then report on our methods of colonial administration, no doubt with the hope of thereby increasing the success of French colonies.

It was an eloquent, though silent, tribute to the marvellous results that have followed British rule in any part of the globe, which are deservedly the envy and admiration of other nations. It set me thinking: "Have not the French something to teach us in such matters, and would it be worth the while of our colonial office to despatch a representative with a similar mission to the foreign possessions of France?"

I could not early rid myself of this thought. I had been born in India, where my father held a high position in the Indian civil service; and after completing my education in England I had spent some years in the French colonies of Tunis and Algeria, where extensive journeys had brought me in contact with the natives, whose language I had acquired, and into whose life and thought I had obtained considerable insight. They had told me in confidence things that they would have confided to none but an Englishman.

Several times when travelling with my tents and camels in the outlying parts of these provinces I was visited by Arabs of good position, and after the customary interchange of civilities, the eager request was urged upon me that I might obtain for my visitor the rights of British citizenship. Keen was the disappointment my guests felt when I had regretfully to inform them that money alone could not secure that privilege.

In this and similar ways I was permitted to see behind the scenes, sometimes as host and more often as guest of Arabs of some education and standing. I never found any of them satisfied with French rule. They accepted the inevitable with true Moslem resignation, outwardly, though still chafing within at the yoke of an "infidel" power.

It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that my cabin companion's mission set me thinking, and that during the next four years that I spent in Egypt I made many a mental note as to the differences in spirit, methods, and results between the colonial administration of these two great friendly powers.

I am well aware that for political reasons the foreign office still maintains the polite fiction that Egypt is not a British colony, but it is such notwithstanding for all practical purposes, though the existence of the mixed tribunals and other rights granted to certain foreign countries under the "capitulations," as well as the jealousy of some of the foreign commissioners of the Egyptian Debt, has hampered considerably our development of the country. These considerations only serve to bring out in stronger relief the success of our administration and the marked progress that may fairly be attributed to British influence, energy, and wisdom.

Now, it is noteworthy that the British have been supreme in Egypt since 1882, and the French in Tunis since 1881. What result can each show for a quarter of a century, and to what are these results to be attributed?

Firstly, the great mass of the people seem to be far more contented under British rule than under French, and in northern Nigeria there has been considerable emigration from the French and German spheres into the British ever since our rule was firmly established. This shows that there must be some marked characteristic of British rule that the native mind appreciates. What is it? I believe it is that there is less of a gulf between the native and the Englishman than exists between the native and the official of any other nation, as the following considerations indicate. The Englishman is more ready to trust the native, and nothing wins the confidence of children or of natives like making them feel that you trust them. Probably the Englishman has a quicker insight or intuition of the native's character, recognizing good qualities where they exist sooner than a Frenchman would, and then he honors the possessor of them and treats him as a man and in some sort as an equal. This always has an inspiring effect, and begets reciprocal trust and satisfaction. The officials that make a government unpopular are those who sneer at every man whose skin is a shade darker than their own as a "nigger," and who maintain that the "touch of the tar brush" makes it impossible to treat him as anything but an inferior being, as if the worth of character under a dark skin could never equal that under a white one. Now, it is this assumption of superiority, the haughty tone, that keeps the native at arm's-length, and constantly reminds him that you consider yourself to be on a higher level than he. This, I think—which happily is the exception with the British official—is the rule with the French. Unfortunately, the exceptions that occur are so pronounced and blatant that they do us a great deal of harm, but, in spite of these, the native subjects of the British empire recognize on the whole that they are fairly and kindly dealt with by men who do their best to come down to the level of the natives and to appreciate all that is good in them.

As only one symptom of this spirit, notice that the French military men never wear muffin in the colonies. The officer is always in evidence in his uniform, as a constant reminder of the power of the sword by which the country

has been subdued, whereas the British officer constantly wears civilian dress.

Secondly, we content ourselves with holding strongly a few strategic points, but French military posts are legion. Travelling on the southern slopes of the Atlas mountains, hundreds of miles from anywhere, you arrive at a little native village—for example, Neggin, a few score mud-houses, a cluster of palm trees, and a stream of water. You expect to be quite undisturbed by Europeans, but no, there are the inevitable blockhouses, and presently a French soldier comes to you to say the commandant wants to see you. The latter turns out to be a young French subaltern, who with half a dozen men swagger as a petty king in the little village. Nothing like this exists under British rule, where every possible post is filled by natives. Thus, in Egypt, in every small town or village such appointments as officials of post offices, telegraphs, and railway stations are all filled by natives; whereas in Tunis and Algeria all such petty places are occupied by Frenchmen, eking out their existence on a trifling sum, it is true, to a European, but one which would be a big salary to a native, and go further to make him satisfied with French rule than anything else that could be done. The French seem to look upon a colony as a sort of dumping-ground for small officials of customs, excise, telegraphs, post offices, and every other grade; whereas the British seem to make it a rule to employ native agency as far as possible for such work, the latter only needing to be occasionally looked after by a European district inspector.

As regards commerce, again, France has been playing a selfish game by her protective tariff; but it has really injured her colony more than it has benefited France, since the colonists as well as natives, owing to the tariff, have not been able to buy the best goods in any market, or even to supply themselves sometimes with the materials required for their own manufactures or domestic use.

Thirdly, France has been far more slow than Britain to develop the natural wealth and the mineral resources of her possessions. For instance, the minerals of Tunis are as yet barely touched, yet as an asset they are quite as valuable as the agricultural produce of the Nile valley. It is calculated by experts that the iron mines of Tunis alone would yield forty million tons of ore giving fully 50 per cent. of iron. But the French government have been very chary in spending any capital on the development of such sources of wealth, while the British, by contrast, have not hesitated to sink millions of pounds on the great dams at Luxor and Assiout, which have added tremendously to the agricultural wealth of Egypt.

One or two things we must credit France with doing better than the British—namely, general sanitary administration, and enforcing a proper standard of weights and measures, with due inspection of the same. In these respects Egypt lags far behind Tunis and Algeria.

And, lastly, if we contrast the great custom house at Alexandria with that at Tunis, the comparison is all in favor of the latter. At Tunis only two officials need to sign the manifesto enabling a merchant to obtain his goods in half an hour at most, often in fifteen minutes; but at Alexandria you have to dance in attendance on no less than thirteen native officials in as many different bureaux, several of whom take care to keep you waiting if you happen to be an Englishman, for they must have a cigarette between whites. It reminded me strongly of Turkish custom houses, only there one expected to pay the backsheesh, and did not grumble, but under British rule one could not do so for the honor of the flag, and had to spend one's precious time in vain wondering whether ever we in Egypt should take a lesson from the French in this respect that would bring blessing to every traveller and trader in the land of the Nile.—Herbert Havri.

LIONS AND THEIR WAYS

"If a lion or a tiger suddenly appears before you, just hold a chair out in front of him and he won't do a thing," says Allen Williams, who, in the course of his experience with wild animals has been in that predicament often enough to know. "These creatures have a much more limited intelligence than is generally supposed. They can take in only one thing at a time, and the four legs of a chair would keep any lion busy thinking for a long time."

"That is the reason why animal trainers carry two whips when they are in the circus ring—one for cracking and awing the performers, the others for emergencies. If one of the lions tries to attack him the trainer simply holds the reserve whip in front of him. The two objects together are too much for the lion's intelligence and he is immediately subdued."

Another proof of the very limited intelligence of the cat tribe, say trainers, is the fact that their performances must always come in the same order of succession. If by some accident the order is broken the animals are completely lost, and the trainers are very few who can keep them in submission once they become confused. In fact most trainers consider themselves lucky in a case of this sort if they can get the lions quietly back into their cages. The whole cat family, moreover, is as treacherous as it is stupid. No matter how long a trainer has associated with his charges, he knows that fear is the only thing that keeps them down and that they would be at his throat in a minute if he permitted himself to become careless or overconfident.

This is particularly true of animals that were not born in captivity.

TRAGEDIES

Tracks That

Food

Houstonian. The nature of woods are now during the winter the best. A thick six inches to the entire length of the harsh line and dropping a in the narrow magic touch evidently objects things of ro Along the roads fences and stone out by drifts. A out from the farm-houses.

Up among the trees, and a few feet from the ground, the wood some spell, wall spring to stir the through the sciously slacken eye and ear to

Indication of. Frequently, he indicated for an over the hills a hidden beneath the endless bever winds peep the hills. Near brook chafes a usual clatter su mur.

Suddenly a breaks the still pecker hanging dead limb sink the wood of a flock of snowbirds intruder rise in and settle in a lock-chirping f

A faint breeze of the trees drifts slowly to of its passage. falling clear an From a grove ridge across the fiftelike note of ness mellowed scattered flock way toward the back and forth sharp eyes did the black spot

The intruder of their vigilan ward. As he a ridge his eye f allel lines of d describable in glance he recoo pair of foxes, f scarcity of fo

thinned cold spe beneath a foot bline their size the phase. Cle trail shows on be considerably Evidently they ster who still l into the myster the lines alvea

beared off to t hollow stump, f part of a mou cedar bark. F draw close tog and recess, fo as the two an racing side by

growing in pre over each o ly they subse dated as before The youngest as they enter gazes far out o beneath. Seem his peace of mi the ground and swinging lops

Half-way dow tree, its bulk above the grou ving aside the at a bound, his the air like a f rattling, the distance, w the point of a little hollow th place. A hund

travelling, the uses in a chain few inches ap a massive log, a crumbling sto fered hollow be a round ball and dead leaves ar

Although seeml sly, nose twi his long ears a faintest sound, and nearer, the as himself forw near the end, such an emerge one side, just o ping jaws. Be or himself the rabbit's tail ha of the hill.

Meanwhile th been more fort The trail runs long distance. thick cedar. On of uneven little gray squirrel-w his bulky nest head and has now in search. The dainty zoo out among the straight for the they cease alto a tumbled hair three, reddish tered hairs tel The mother fo her time an ha

her when he ca younger, comi forgot his keen ing the rabbit's his long fast.

The fox trail northward and through a level surface is inde work pattern le footed mice. At swept ridge, boy of big hemlock the drifting sn tracks over w some time. Th large, equaling heavy dog, but are almost rou dress of long