

than the School System. Its inauguration was the work of the master mind of Egerton Ryerson, one of the noblest and most noteworthy sons of English Canada. To Adam Crooks also a debt of gratitude is due, for he carried out Ryerson's work through a difficult period of transition. To the present Minister of Education is to be ascribed the credit of lifting the Public School System out of and above the ruts of party politics, and of instituting a system of art education which is destined to have most important effects in every industrial interest in the country.

EGYPTIAN RECOLLECTIONS.

CLIMATICAL INFLUENCES—SUPPOSED GOVERNMENT REMISSNESS—TIME REQUIRED TO EFFECT CHANGES—MEHEMET ALI—1811—COINCIDENCES—IBRAHIM—SLAUGHTER OF THE MAMELUKES—THEIR ARMOURY.

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By many observing people it is forgotten that the climate of the country in which they are born and educated has much to do in forming the character they possess and which they permit to influence them while they live. In the colder latitudes, where cold, and rains, and snow, and ice have to be encountered, certain adaptations suggest themselves for each individual to adopt, so that instead of these influences of the weather making the people uncomfortable they are simply instruments of pleasure and livelihood.

Nothing can change this natural system of adaptation. Our different tribes of Indians with all their different modes of life, could not be transferred to Egypt and made to live there; nor can the tribal nations of that hot country come to America and be made to subsist upon the productions and under the climatic necessities which would immediately effect them. Neither of these classes of people could live under so strong a change of circumstances and of life. They would die almost at once.

The remark is made for the purpose of introducing to the mind of the reader the fact that when we talk about the natives of Egypt, of India, of Borneo, Siam, and other oriental countries the first exclamation almost sure to be made is,—"Oh, what a poor, down-trodden people the natives are—they have no original thought, they have no art, no manufacturing establishments, they have no education! Why don't the Government go to work and improve their condition?"

Surely there must be something wrong somewhere, or inhabitants of these countries, having all the advantages of example and instruction from European residents and visitors, would attain to a much better standard of life than they now possess! The Government is altogether behind the age. It is not liberal, instructive, or progressive! What a pity it is that the people do not stand up in all their power and majesty and so direct the Government that prosperity, and all the satisfactions included in the word, shall invite commercial intercourse from every opposite side of the world.

The truth is, this side of the world on which we live, is only in its infancy, compared with the other side, and does not know that the climate of the other side has got and has had for thousands of years past, just what it is the most fitted to produce. The productions of the soil are what they were some four thousand years ago; and quadrupeds lived then as they do now; while the higher species of animal life—those possessing a mental calibre, and many reasoning faculties—have never attained to

the varied pursuits and scholastic discipline of northern latitudes.

The people have never made a demand for that industrial class called "tailors," because the climate did not suggest the propriety of the male population wearing nice fitting pantaloons and coats, and the females adding to their beauty by the use of flowing skirts, and waists fitting to their person.

In the disposal of the wardrobe as we use it, a "compensating principle" steps in by the climate giving a colour to the skin which removes the sense of impropriety from cultivated and polite vision.

And as these people sit around their tables at meals, not upon chairs, but upon their floor-mats, dispensing their food with three fingers, the article of knives and forks does not trouble them. Carpenters, as we employ them, have not been wanted on account of the wandering habits of the different tribes. Blacksmiths are dispensed with for the same reason. Shoes are either not wanted or are superseded by sandals, while hatters are displaced by each individual making his own turban.

During the thirty-one Dynasties, extending over four thousand years, preceding the Christian era, no American or European system of education claimed the allegiance of the fellah. By slow and progressive stages the intellect of these people developed its energies until at last what they have left as mementoes in the way of pyramids, tombs, temples, and mummies have become the wonders of the civilized world! Nor are these alone the product of the oriental inhabitant. The climate has had its full share, in the color of the skin, in the calibre of the brain, in the aspirations of the rulers and the ruled, and in the preservation of the monuments now standing as evidences of their skill and industry.

From a few the human race multiplied into millions, and dynasties found the multitude not only willing subjects, but subjects inheriting qualities of mind, and social habits and productive industries wholly out of their power to modify; or to change into opposite habits of culture, for the preservation of political rights, for the establishment of educational lessons, and the encouragement of social happiness.

The birds of the air are different in their song and plumage in the warm countries of which we speak, from those inhabiting the climate where frost and snow are seen. The bovine animals are different in form from the ones we possess, and it is curious to observe that their horns are all different in size and shape from the horns of the animals of this country. The elephant and the camel, the lion and the leopard, the gazelle and many other creatures will not endure transportation for the purpose of perpetuity and increase. And when they are transported they do not thrive—they dwindle and die as do families of the human race, having lost the climatic genial to their nature and habits.

The conclusion is, that the present Egyptian races, whether of governors or of the governed, are to be held accountable, according to the laws of climate, and that no transient rules of political economy can change them into people who live to vote intelligently and to utilize the arts of life as we utilize them, short of some hundreds of years of experience. Perhaps we may say Europeans should go and live in Egypt in numbers corresponding with its present native population for at least a period of one thousand years, or fifteen hundred or two thousand years in order to arrive at an epoch when the present characteristics of the people will have become efficiently blended with our own.

This, we can never live to see accomplished. For our generations are of too short duration.

Since the invasion of Napoleon the first to the present day we find about the same fitful condition of state as we read about when eight hundred years before Christ, the native dynasty had been sitting about from city to city of Lower Egypt, without finding a settled resting place; being occupied during the greater part of that time with conspiracies, insurrections, civil contests, or actual warfare. This is precisely what has been transpiring during the present century, so far as the organization of a dynasty, the tactics of war, the conduct of the people and the attributes of the higher class have been concerned.

Mehemet Ali, directly after Napoleon, was archetype for Arabi Pasha and the bombardment of Alexandria; and Mehemet's acquisitions of provinces originated the Soudan war.

But Arabi possessed not the vigour and grasp of mind, nor had he the territorial advantages to work upon that Mehemet Ali had.

Of this character we will speak more at length as we proceed with our narrative. Of Mehemet Ali, as he is yet in the memory of living men, we must here talk. He is best described by remembering the boast of Augustus that he found Rome of brick and left it of marble. Mehemet was the founder of the present Egyptian dynasty. He found Alexandria a mass of ruins and rubbish, a nest of needy fishermen and pirates and left it a city. He found all Egypt a chaos, he left it a country. His immediate predecessor was Napoleon, whose impress is at the present day that the archives of the Government are preserved in the French language.

There are curious coincidences in the characters and careers of the two "men of destiny" in the East and in the West. Both were aliens in blood and birth to the countries and people over which they established their rule, and founded their dynasties. Both were soldiers by profession, and statesmen and lawgivers by intuition. Both were crafty, cruel and unscrupulous, never sacrificing the end for the means nor shrinking from acts of ruthless cruelty, when policy or self-preservation prompted their commission. The ambition of each was to found an empire, and to obtain the succession for his son and his son's son for ever; and this too both seemingly accomplished. What is stranger still, is that the heritage left by the rude eastern soldier of fortune, has lasted longer than the far greater one bequeathed by the mighty genius of modern Christendom, whose puppets and playthings were kings and crowns. As though to complete the parallel, the two were almost as kindred in fate as in renown, the end of each being equally tragic. The Corsican ate out his own heart in exile on the barren rock of St. Helena; the soldier from Caval-la died a prisoner in his own palace, the ghastly wreck of his former self, his fine mind and iron will shattered by madness, alternating between moody despondency and frenzy, until his practical deposition became a State necessity, and his warrior son, Ibrahim Pasha, was compelled to seat himself in the chair of his yet living father. As though to make this sad story sadder still, it is said the madness came from a potion administered through superstition or mistaken kindness, by one of his daughters, who was told she could thus restore the old man's waning powers, but whose fatal draught consigned him to a living death. True or false, the story is still repeated and believed in Egypt.

His dream of empire he soon converted into a reality. From insubordination to the Porte, he soon broke out into open rebellion; and not only seized on the Egyptian provinces, but invaded both Arabia and Syria, through his warlike son Ibrahim, and even menaced Constantinople. His troops actually occupied Syria, and his purpose was to found an empire like that of the caliphs, over all the Arabic-speaking people, leaving the Porte only those who spoke the Turkish tongue. But then a greater power intervened between the rebellious vassal and the powerless lord; the great Powers of Europe (with the exception of France) interposed, and by menace and force of arms wrested the prey from the old lion, and compelled him to renew his allegiance, and renounce his projects of extended empire.

It required the presence of an English fleet at Alexandria, to compel him to sign a treaty of peace with his sovereign, and resign his conquests; tearing out handfuls of his white beard in his wrath, under the compulsion, while he did so. But he insisted on the retention of the viceroyalty in his line for ever, and for quasi independence of the Porte in the same treaty guaranteed by the Powers which compelled the act of abdication.

What Mehemet Ali did, in and for Egypt, has passed into history. He created not only an Empire, but a people, out of the dozen different nationalities which then, as now, constitute the strange amalgam we vaguely term Egyptians.

Everywhere throughout Egypt and its dependencies, the hand of the mighty master is still to be seen in the traces it has

left—from the Mahmoudieh canal, connecting the waters of the Nile with the Mediterranean, to the fairy like pleasure gardens of Shoubra, near Cairo; from the gigantic breakwater of the Nile, to the grand old sycamore trees, which give their beautiful shade to the gardens and the roads around Cairo and Alexandria. The career of Mehemet Ali is as familiar to every one as that of Napoleon, whose footsteps he followed in the conquest of Egypt; and whose fiercest foe (the Mamelukes) he crushed at one fell blow, combining craft, cruelty, and treachery in the act which self-preservation dictated. The man's character should not be judged by this episode alone, nor weighed in our balance; for he was capable of being awayed by high and generous impulses—with more of the lion than the wolf in his nature—and the necessity was very pressing and very sore. So it is but fair to judge him by the canons of his own time, place, and people, which condoned his crime, and the terrible retribution dealt on the savage oppressors and spoilers of Egypt, who menaced his life, and meditated against him the treachery in which he anticipated them.

The circumstances of the massacre of the Mamelukes were these: Early in the spring of 1811 Mehemet Ali was obliged to be at Suez to superintend the preparations for his Arabian expedition to displace the Wahabees who had driven the Turks from the Holy Land of Arabia, Mecca, and Medina.

While there, he received information that the Mameluke chiefs, jealous of his power, intended to way-lay him on his return from Suez. Instead of remaining until the next day, as was expected, he started that night on a dromedary, and in ten hours, before the break of day, with four out of his eighteen attendants, he entered Cairo; the distance being eighty miles! This with other plots and intrigues of the Mamelukes which he had discovered, determined him to exterminate all who could be found. The day fixed for the ceremony of investing his son with the command of the army, was the 1st of March, 1811. All the principal chiefs were invited to be present. When the ceremony was over they mounted their horses, but, on reaching the gates they found them closed. A suspicion of treachery immediately flashed across their minds, which was confirmed by a shower of balls from behind the ramparts. With the single exception of Emir Bey, who took a fearful leap with his horse from the walls of the citadel, every soul perished.

A proclamation was then issued to exterminate every Mameluke found in the city. Ibrahim Bey, with 450 of his followers, perished in the citadel, and nearly 800 in the city. The uniforms which these old Egyptian soldiers wore consisted of cuirasses and helmets designed in style in the time of Herodotus, used in the middle ages, and manufactured it is not known when nor where. The helmets to distinguish the wearer from other soldiers were surmounted with a crescent. Along with this armoury was carried a long wooden or bamboo spear tipped with iron or steel, and decorated with an oriflamme which gave the horsemen an imposing appearance as he galloped against a gentle wind, and his metal uniform all dazzling as of silver or gold under the rays of a burning sun.

Fifty of these Mameluke equipments, with many others worn long ago by other soldiers of Egypt, but now thrown aside as worthless for the purposes for which they were made, were given by the Government of Egypt to the writer to satisfy the curious observers at exhibitions in America.

Could their original possessors rise from their sleep of death to discover the kind of embarrassment they have entailed upon the commissioner in their transmission from Canada to the United States, they would stand amazed at the inability to class these antique things in the list of antiquities to which they belong.

But this brings us to the ridicule by Mehemet Ali of an impediment which stood in the way of his advancement as a ruler.

By force and fraud he passed by other obstacles and proceeded on his way to be called Viceroy, or Khedive of Egypt, which means simply that he was a King, subject to easy limitations of authority under the Porte at Constantinople, and that this title, with all the power it implies, was to be inherited by his heirs forever. Of the changes now introduced for the observance of the natives of this land of the Pharaohs we will speak at another time.

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