

Truth's Contributors.

EGYPTIAN RECOLLECTIONS.

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"Everything in this world is a tangled yarn; we taste nothing in its purity; we do not remain two moments in the same state. Our affections, as well as our bodies, are in a perpetual change."

The small account we gave of the Khedive's yacht, and the ashoring in of Easter Sunday morning brought us up to the time when we proposed to take the train for Cairo, one hundred and thirty-five miles distant; but there was a desire unsatisfied with us to see a little more of the ruins of Forts Ada and Pharos and to meet late in the evening again one or two gentlemen who alone could give us such information respecting the main object of our visit to Egypt as would accelerate its attainment. With these wishes prevailing with us we asked Doctor Riordan and his wife, both of whom were inspired with a love of making travel a medium for obtaining and imparting information, to accompany us as the afternoon was drawing to a close, to the sea side where the Forts were. On the way down we passed an Arab school, having in it about five and twenty children from the ages of seven and eight years to fourteen and fifteen. No doubt the young people of our own country will think it strange when we tell them that these pupils of Mahomet had no well swept floors and polished seats and desks, with good black-boards arranged upon the walls of the room as articles of furniture constructed with an especial eye for usefulness. Nothing of the kind was to be seen. The floor was of well dried clay, and this with little board tablets about sixteen inches long and nine or ten inches wide painted black, made up the sum total of the appendages supplied to the children. The teacher was dressed with a turban upon his head, no stockings, but sandals upon his feet, loose, baggy, cotton drawers, a tunic, and a girdle about his loins. The children possessed but a trifling share indeed of this world's goods to grace their pristine condition,—some of them, indeed, owned nothing more than a twine string and a fig-leaf while others manifested a long narrow piece of cotton wound about their waists.

They sat upon the floor tailor-fashion, holding before them their tablets of wood, upon which were written quotations from the Koran; and swaying themselves backwards and forwards, in a loud voice together they repeated, for the purpose of committing to memory, the prescribed texts. Generally they have a great dislike to having Christians look in upon them in a casual way, and as a token of their dislike and to insult the Christian they will spit upon the floor. In this instance they omitted the ceremony of spitting and quietly looked upon us with their large black glistening eyes—their hair the while falling unkempt straight down about their necks and over their shoulders.

It is possible we were spared the scene of spitting on a personal account; for it turned out that the teacher had an old and imperfect Koran which he wished us to buy at the moderate price of about twenty dollars. We declined his proffered book and hastened on to

FORT ADA.

This fort is surrounded by a wall enclosing an area of about ten acres of land. To the left as you pass through the gates was situated the magazine from which both forts were supplied with powder. The room was partly cut out of the solid rock and otherwise protected by a roof of timber, stone and earth five or six feet in thickness.

During the bombardment, one mile and a half outside in deep water the position was held by a squadron consisting of the "Su-

perb," "Sultan," "Alexandra," and "Inflexible." One of these ships threw a shell which penetrated the roof of the magazine, and burst, igniting the powder and blowing the whole structure into atoms, at the same time destroying two hundred and fifty or three hundred Arabs. The debris at the moment of our arrival was being in part removed, and the remains of the slain native soldiers were exposed to view. The clothing of one of the dead soldiers was taken off and kept by us as a memento of the sad scene. Among other ruins we found copper tubes used as conductors of slow matches for bombshells when thrown from the ships, and brass cups containing charges for guns.

Inside of a small room adjacent, used at one time prior to the bombardment by Arabi Pasha as an office, we found a Rebecca jar, in which drinking water was held, and a lamp belonging to the Pasha, together with considerable correspondence in Arabic relating to the conduct of the troops. This correspondence, if interpreted, might disclose some of the secrets necessarily conveyed to the officers of the army.

With careful steps we groped through immense fissures in the walls, made by destructive shells, until we reached the sea side, where gentle ripples now peacefully lay sed the shore, and invited us to gather up flowers of moss, each holding parasite shells varying in size, shape and color.

With a brilliant but warm glow the sun began to sink where the horizon was described by the Mediterranean, but to remind us that we were not to linger here, as

FORT PHAROS

was yet to be visited before the night closed in. Retracing our steps, and gathering up our mementoes to be placed in the carriage, we ordered the conveyance to hasten out through the gates. The road-way approaching the remaining fort was long and narrow. Upon it were strewn large mats made by the natives, of reeds and twine for household purposes. These articles were placed here to dry, for they were yet green and moist after having been manipulated in their manufacture. Over them the carriage was driven. Upon reaching the fort we found that the description already given of a broken and dismantled fortress would serve to illustrate what was before us. It was, though, interesting in many particulars, which we feel we must not stop to recount, as there are so many other places and events to talk about.

Late in the evening we had the advantage we expected to realize by meeting the consuls, and commissioners who were employed over the question of indemnity. We might discuss this subject, but it does not fall within our province to do it here; besides, the article of time tells us we must proceed.

THREE HOURS SLEEP

ushered us to the beginning of another day. Packing luggage is a tiresome necessity to encounter,—the more so, when letters are to be written for America by an outgoing steamer. This all accomplished, and breakfast, and hotel bill being included, we found ourselves surrounded by cordial friends ready to bid us adieu. There were many far less welcome ones yet to meet us; every donkey-boy, janizary, and man who had seen our face either in or out of service, was ready to solicit backsech; among them was the knavish old commissioner, who vaunting of his usefulness and honor, was with my band of thirteen Arabs on the shore of lake Mareotes, inciting them to indolence and a strike at the moment their energies were most needed when the seven hundred pound shells, the last and only ones to be had in the world, were being got out of the mud and sand to be loaded on the trolleys. But

little time and few regrets were spent over him.

This morning's temperature we found cheerful and pleasant as we made our way to the railway-station. Arrived there the process of weighing luggage was more submitted to than willingly assisted; for accommodation in transporting personal effects are so much more accessible with us than abroad that we are almost drilled into giving instructions instead of gracefully yielding to a discipline of the kind. The Arab porter was not slow in finding an unoccupied carriage for us, nor was he tardy in expectations of a "tip."

Our train made ten stoppages between

ALEXANDRIA AND CAIRO.

The first at a suburban place. The second, Sidi Gabier; third, Abon Homos; fourth Damanhour; fifth, Kafrzagat; (twenty minutes for lunch, it being one o'clock p. m.) sixth, Tanta; seventh, Birkit-el-sab, (a mud town); eighth, Benha; ninth, Tokh; tenth, Calouh. Here our carriage was surrounded by thirty or forty Arab women bearing baskets of good oranges on their heads for sale. At 3.30 p.m. we arrived at Cairo station. We did not expect to find the trip interesting and accordingly provided ourselves with reading matter; but there was no occasion to use it. From the moment we left Alexandria until we drew up at Cairo our sight was fastened upon the country, its expanse, its mud villages, the waters of the Nile at different points, upon the dense population, cattle, horses, asses, camels, produce and many other objects, all curious to a stranger and many of them explanatory of history.

Between the two places there is not one hill to be seen, it is a dead level. The soil is a rich, black unctuous earth. It is all the same as far as vision can carry you. Not one single stick of timber to be cut off the whole area. Not one bee-hive did we see; not one pig; not one flower nestled about a cottage door or climbed a wall to proclaim its existence and beauty as in Old England. No copious showers to distil their blessings over the country. The whole surface has to be irrigated by artificial means. And the whole surface appears to be under cultivation of some kind.

Look where you will you will see men, women and children either in groups or separately at work, or in a state of quietude. There are no concession roads adapted for wheels. All conveying of whatever kind of freight there may be locally is done upon the backs of asses, camels or other beasts. Hence the roads are more like foot paths than highways for commercial traffic; and along these common tracks are to be seen constantly Arabs of ages from infancy to old age with packages, bundles "truck" and articles of all kinds, either in their hands or on the backs of animals. Yet you see no barns or houses scattered over the country as in America, and some other parts of the world.

The people live, if existence can be called living, in villages made of mud houses. The houses are built back to back, irregularly and without any shapely doors and windows; their roofs are flat. The streets are neither straight nor defined. Everything appears to be in a confused condition.

In many places the ditch on either side of the railway track, by throwing up earth for trading purposes, is filled with water from the Nile. In other parts a canal appears to have been dug and supplied from the same quarter with water. It is not clear and pleasant to look at. It is dirty, and resembles a large mud puddle in America after a heavy fall of rain. Notwithstanding this impurity you will frequently see the young

and old, regardless of sex, in it making a bath. We are reminded by these people of the

NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS,

only there is this difference,—these people have habits of industry and will toil for the purpose of earning their bread, while the Indian roams in search of game. There is this further difference, too,—these people appear to be of the most pacific disposition, if not actually amiable, and they extend charity to the needy among themselves, whereas the Indian when roused is ferocious and vengeful.

But in size, color, and inability to apprehend political subjects and educational systems they appear to correspond.

Any way, they live on year after year until hundreds of years roll by and history among them is lost without improving their condition. Should they change and adopt different habits, modes of thought, and customs of architecture and house appointments they immediately lose their original conditions, and become extinct as a distinct race of beings.

The entire population of Egypt is estimated at 8,400,000. Of this number 8,000,000 are Egyptian Arabs, 200,000 Copts or Christian Egyptians, 15,000 Turks, Bedouin Arabs, 70,000; the balance Syrians, Greeks, Americans, Jews, Franks, white slaves and negro slaves. When it may be asked, will the major part of these people see the light of an advanced civilization? If the love of a better system of life is not instinctive with them how is it possible to inspire them with a principle which comes alone from the Great Author of all creatures living? When can fellow-man grapple with that which is natural and transform it into the bloom and developed beauty of another and totally different animated and intelligent form of existence? We very much doubt whether another Mahomed or another Christ will again visit this earth and make disciples as the one and the other did in their day. And we very much doubt whether a warrior amid the most brilliant of military achievements can by any plan of education or by any tactics induce a totally different style of living from that we see now everywhere around us. We are not, therefore, prepared to stop and conclude our life in a vain attempt to effect a reformation. We are rather prepared to take things as they are, to make the best of them, and to enjoy whatsoever is good and within the reach of a considerate possibility.

We would very much like, if we thought the reader were interested in our rambles, to introduce another reflection as to the time to be taken to transform the races of Egypt to the tectonic character, and to couple with the reflection the importance of English occupation. The space of TRUTH closes down upon our pen and we retire for another week, if not from our subject, at least from our reading and forgiving friends.

The Kings.

The King of Greece is the founder of a dynasty.

King Humbert was 17 years old before a kingdom of Italy existed.

It was an act of abdication that made Francis Joseph Emperor of Austria.

Don Carlos is watching to pounce upon the crown of the young Alfonso.

The King of the Belgians is about the only European sovereign who was born to a throne and reached it.

The Kings of Prussia, Portugal and Sweden were born younger sons, the King of Denmark a distant cousin, and the Queen of England but fifth in succession of the reigning sovereign.