

ambition without Marlborough and Rooke he would have succeeded). It came to an end during the first phase of the struggle with Napoleon, a struggle which but for the intervention of England would quite conceivably have ended by Napoleon making himself master—for his lifetime—of the civilised world. Waterloo finished Napoleon, and for just ninety years we have not fired a gun at France or broken a peace which has been of incalculable benefit to the peoples on either side of the English Channel. Once indeed, fifty years ago, British and French troops marched as allies in a somewhat sorry cause, but with the intention of preserving the balance of power in the Eastern world. Then our relations with France became less satisfactory, this being due as much as anything to the vacillation and shortsightedness of the statesmen who ruled over Britain's destinies (and ruled but indifferently, so far as foreign affairs were concerned) between 1855 and 1875. We stood by, running no risks but vaunting greatly our Liberalist notions, while France poured forth money and men to make Italy a great and independent nation; and when Napoleon III. sought to indemnify his country for the sacrifices she made in that direction by adding to France Savoy (a small tract of absolutely French-speaking country south of the Lake of Geneva) and a few miles of Mediterranean coast (Nice), we said and wrote the most insulting things about French greed. Later on we expressed some cheap and pious satisfaction at the defeat of France by Germany, and defended Germany not only for taking back to herself Strasburg and Alsace (in which she was right, judged by historical associations and community of language) but also Metz and French-speaking Lorraine (in which—judged by the same tests—Germany was wrong). Then in 1881 and 1882 (just prior to our own descent on Egypt) came the usual denunciations of France for entering Tunis (by prior agreement with an English statesman) to found the Protectorate in that part of Africa which has been one of the best examples that can be cited of how a European country should educate an African State and raise it without injustice