

Its population of 13,200 includes a numerous colony of *ghawázee*, or dancing girls, of whom there is also a strong contingent higher up at Esneh. On the opposite bank of the river stands Dendera (Tentyra), whose Ptolemaic temple of Venus is one of the grandest and best preserved monuments of Egypt.

Of the other provincial capitals there remain to be more briefly mentioned—in Lower Egypt, *Shibeen*, chief town of the province of Menoufyeh, with a population of 12,400; *Benha* (5,200), capital of Galioubyeh; and Ghizeh (10,500), now rather a village than a town, but still capital of the *mudirieh* opposite Cairo, which gives its name to the Great Pyramids; and in Middle and Upper Egypt, *Beni-Souef* (7,000), a thriving town, capital of the province of the same name; *Medinet* (about 12,000), capital of the Fayoum; *Minieh* (11,000), a large and prosperous town, *chef-lieu* of its province, about 160 miles above Cairo (150 by rail), where one of the Khedive's finest sugar factories is now carried on; *Girgheh* (2,000), formerly the chief town of the Saïd, and still the seat of the oldest Roman Catholic establishment in Egypt; it is now superseded as the provincial capital by *Sohág*, a well-built and important town about twenty-five miles lower down; and finally *Esneh* (7,000), a chief emporium of the Upper Nile and Abyssinian trade, which also enjoys the repute of being the healthiest place on the river.

CHAPTER IV.

EGYPT AND THE PORTE.

The Problem of their Relation—The Conquest never Established Full Sovereignty of the Porte—Continued Power of the Mamlouk Beys—The French Invasion—MEHEMET ALI—Elected Viceroy—War with the Porte—The Treaty of 1840—His Subsequent Administration and Death—Ibrahim, Abbas, and Saïd Pashas—Accession of ISMAÏL, a New Epoch—Change of the Succession—"Khedive"—International Recognition of these Changes—Conflict of Juristic Opinion as to their Effect—*De facto* Establishment of an Arab Kingdom—"Egypt for the Egyptians"—Probable Outcome of the War—Independence or British Protection.

BEFORE proceeding to describe the administration and present condition of the territory and population thus noticed, it may be worth while to state briefly the elements of the problem involved in the international status now reached by Egypt and its ruler. We say problem, because not only is the relation of the Khedive to the Porte an anomaly in public law, but jurists differ in their estimate of its exact political effect, some regarding his Highness as virtually a sovereign prince, while others fail to see that he has advanced beyond the mere vassal rank of Mehemet Ali. A glance at the historical facts may help to suggest which of these views most nearly accords with the actual situation.

The conquest of the country by Sultan Selim I., in 1517, abolished the Mamlouk dynasty, but did not establish in its stead the full sovereignty of the Porte. The great military aristocracy of the Beys remained in unweakened force, and the conqueror was fain to conclude with them a regular treaty by which Egypt was consti-

tuted in effect a republic, feudally subject to the Sultan and his successors, but the government of which was still left in the hands of the Mamlouk chiefs, acting as a council of regency under a Pasha, whose almost only function was to receive and remit to Constantinople the stipulated tribute, and who was himself deposable at will by this Mamlouk divan. The Beys also retained the right of electing their own chief, who, in concert with his fellows, levied taxes, maintained an army, coined money, and otherwise exercised supreme authority over the country.* Shadowy as was the sovereignty thus left to the Porte, it became if possible still more unreal during the domestic turbulence and foreign wars of the succeeding reigns, until, in 1763, the then dominant Bey refused payment of the tribute, expelled the resident Pasha, and proclaimed himself "Sultan of Egypt and Lord of the Two Seas." Although this revolt was not successful, the Porte gladly compounded the treason by re-confirming the disaffected chiefs in their old powers; and the deposition of its representative, by the simple fiat of the Beys, became thenceforward an incident of almost yearly occurrence. To this merely nominal suzerainty had the authority of the Sultan been reduced when, in 1798, the French invasion under Bonaparte for three years extinguished it altogether. After its re-establishment by the victories of Nelson, Abercrombie, and Sidney Smith, the authority of the Porte was more than ever disregarded by the Mamlouk chiefs, to such an extent that one viceroy was deposed and executed, and another—Khosrew Pasha, afterwards famous as Grand Vizier—made prisoner and shipped back to Constantinople. Now it was that MEHEMET ALI, the chief figure in modern Egyptian his-

* Savary, *Lettres sur l'Egypte*, tom. ii., lettre xv. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. lx.

tory, first appeared prominently on the scene. Born in 1768, at Cavalla in Roumelia, this remarkable man had a few years before these events been sent into Egypt, second in command of a company of Albanian irregulars, and after greatly distinguishing himself in several engagements, first against the French, and afterwards against the rebel Beys, he had won such popularity with the army and among the Cairene sheikhs that, in 1805, these together proclaimed him Viceroy, and the Porte, although even then jealous of his growing influence, and suspecting his ambition, deemed it politic to recall its own nominee and ratify the elevation of the young Macedonian brigadier.

How the new *vah* in turn baffled the intrigues of the Stamboul divan to effect his overthrow, how he made himself sole master of Egypt by exterminating the Mamlouks, rescued the Hedjaz from the Wahabees, organised a powerful army and navy on the European system, annexed the Soudan, conquered Syria, and, after annihilating the Turkish army at Koniah in 1832, would have carried his victorious standards to the Bosphorus if Russia had not interposed—need not here be narrated. Enough to say that the treaty of Kutaieh, concluded in the following year between the Porte and its great vassal, recognised the feudal sovereignty of Mehemet Ali over Egypt, Crete, Syria, and the large district of Adana, on the sole condition of his paying tribute. But the peace thus dearly purchased by the Porte was as brief as it was hollow. Fresh complications resulted in renewed war in 1839, when the total defeat of the Turks by Ibrahim Pasha, at Nezib, re-opened the defiles of the Taurus to the victors, and but for the speedy intervention of the European Powers would have again placed Asia Minor and Constantinople at their mercy. As if to atone for its

apathy in 1832, the British Government now espoused the cause of the Sultan with especial energy, and the operations of Stopford and Napier on the coast of Syria forced Mehemet Ali to surrender that province, and content himself with the international recognition of his own and his family's right to Egypt only. This was formally guaranteed by the treaty of 1840 between the Porte, Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia, and was further confirmed by the convention of the following year, to which France also became a party. The settlement thus ratified reserved to the Porte its old right of tribute, fixed the strength of the Viceroy's military forces, and imposed a few other restrictions; but, barring these limitations, Egypt became under it more than ever legally as well as practically self-governing, the order of succession being at the same time fixed in accordance with the imperial rule of descent to the eldest male of the family.

His title to Egypt having been thus affirmed by the public law of Europe, Mehemet Ali abandoned all idea of further aggrandisement, and devoted himself during the next seven years to the social and material improvement of the country, with an aggregate of results which has indelibly fixed his place in history as the "Peter the Great" of Egypt. Indeed, with the exception of some additions and further reforms made by the present Khedive, the whole administrative system of the country is his work; and, notwithstanding many admitted defects, how incomparably it is the most civilised and efficient of existing Mussulman Governments, the following chapters will aim at showing. In 1848, Mehemet Ali—then in his eightieth year—was attacked by a mental malady,* and

* He lingered in this state till August 2, 1849, when he died, leaving five sons—Ibrahim, Saïd, Hussein, Halim, and Mehemet Ali. A sixth, Ismail (the second in age), had been murdered during his father's lifetime while

was succeeded by his eldest son Ibrahim Pasha, the hero of Koniah and Nezib. This prince, however, only reigned four months, and was in turn succeeded by his nephew Abbas Pasha, a voluptuary and a bigot, during whose feeble and reactionary rule the prosperity of the country languished, and the Porte, taking advantage of his weakness, more than once stretched its prerogative beyond the limits of treaty right. To him, in 1854, followed Saïd Pasha, the third son of Mehemet Ali, an amiable and liberal-minded prince, who retrieved much of the mischief done by his predecessor, but lacked the vigorous intelligence and force of character required to give new impulse to the great work begun and so far advanced by his father. His reign will, however, be honourably remembered for the abolition of several mischievous Government monopolies established by his father, and maintained by Abbas, and, especially, for the concession and commencement of the Suez Canal. Saïd died in January, 1863, and with the accession of his nephew, ISMAIL PASHA, the second son of Ibrahim, a new epoch in the political and social history of the country begins.

Although the settlement of 1840-1 had made Egypt virtually independent, the official relation of its ruler to the Porte was still nominally that of a provincial *vali*, or governor-general, whose powers were indeed larger, but his grade little if at all higher, than that of the governor of Baghdad. In Constantinople he ranked after the Grand

commanding the first expedition to the Soudan; and a seventh, Toussoun, had also pre-deceased his father. Of the five who survived him, Halim Pasha, at present residing in Constantinople, is the only one now living. Ibrahim Pasha left three sons—Achmet, who was accidentally drowned in the Nile in 1859; Ismail, the present Khedive, and Mustapha Fazyl, who died in Constantinople in 1875. Toussoun Pasha left one son, Abbas, who succeeded Ibrahim Pasha in the Viceroyalty; and Saïd Pasha, who in turn succeeded him, also left one, Toussoun Pasha, who died last year. A note of the present viceregal family will be found in Appendix A.

Vizier, of whom both Abbas and Saïd had more than once to acknowledge the precedence. Ismaïl, however, did not relish this wide disproportion between his nominal status and his actual power; and accordingly, soon after his accession, he began negotiations with Stamboul which in 1866 resulted in an imperial firman, by which, in consideration of the yearly tribute being increased from 376,000*l.* to 675,000*l.*, he received the title and rank of *Khédio-el-Misr* (King of Egypt)—commonly called Khedive*—and the succession to the throne was made direct from father to son, instead of descending to the eldest agnate of the family of Mehemet Ali, as had been fixed by the treaty of 1840. But the old limitations of his prerogative as regarded the strength of the Egyptian army, the right of contracting foreign loans without leave of the Porte, and of concluding commercial treaties, still remained; nor was it till 1872 that these were removed by another firman, which—consolidating all that preceded it since the convention with Mehemet Ali—conferred on the Khedive every substantial attribute of sovereignty, except only the *jus legationis*, trammelled by the sole conditions of his paying the increased tribute, and lending the Sultan military aid in the event of war. It need hardly be said that these successive concessions cost the Egyptian treasury dear; every fresh step towards autonomy was, in fact, purchased from both the Sultan and his Ministers at an exorbitant price; and from Abdul-Aziz down to the fortunate aide-de-camp for whom court favour obtained the coveted mission of carrying each new *hâtt* to Cairo, heavy blackmail was extorted by the whole. It was, indeed, notorious at Constantinople that during the six or seven years over which these negotiations extended, the amount thus annually squeezed out of the Viceroy con-

* Pronounced *Khideev*.

siderably exceeded the total of the fixed tribute. In the result, however, both these firmans of 1866 and 1872 were communicated to and approved by the Powers who were parties to the settlement of 1840-1, and the new relation established by them between Egypt and the Porte may, therefore, be regarded as having similarly received international sanction.

The status thus finally created was so anomalous that it might well divide juristic opinion. It differed in many points from, and in some rose much above, that of Tunis, Servia, and Roumania, no one of which enjoys—although the Bucharest Government has recently laid claim to—the distinctive sovereign right of concluding treaties. Yet while Martens, nearly ninety years ago, and Wheaton more than forty years later, placed the Danube Principalities—whose Hospodars were directly appointed by the Porte—even then among “semi-sovereign” states, Sir Robert Phillimore questions the right of Egypt even now to this rank.* The force of this later opinion is, however, weakened by the fact that so long ago as 1836 this eminent jurist constructively endorsed† Wheaton’s recognition of the semi-sovereignty of Mehemet Ali, even before the hereditary title of the latter had been formally affirmed by the Powers; and again, in 1854, still more distinctly conceded‡ this rank to Abbas Pasha, although laboring under the erroneous impression that Tanzimat—the charter of reforms issued by the Porte in 1838—had been extended to Egypt, and that “so far the sovereignty” of the Viceroy had been “derogated from by the reservation” thus made “to the Sultan of the power of life and death over the subjects of the Pasha.” But no such derogation ever took place; for although the Porte addressed a *hâtt* in this

* *The Charkieh*, L. R. (Admiralty), vol. iv., p. 59.

† *International Law*, vol. i., p. 117.

‡ *Idem*, vol. 2.

sense to Abbas Pasha in 1852, even that feeble prince refused to acknowledge the pretension; and the power of life and death over Egyptian subjects remained, as it still does, exclusively within the viceregal prerogative, without reference to the Sultan in any case. When, therefore, it is remembered that for all purposes of internal government and of externally pledging the national credit, the Khedive is now as irresponsibly absolute in Egypt as the Sultan is in Turkey—or even more so, since he is not trammelled by even a paper Constitution—it seems difficult to deny him the benefit of Vattel's doctrine that "where the payment of tribute and homage leaves independence and supreme authority in the administration of the State, and only means certain duties to the lord of the fief, it does not prevent the state of the feudatory from being strictly sovereign."* This is exactly the case of the Egyptian Government; and as the title of the Khedive to this "supreme authority" is indefeasible so long as the conditions of its tenure are fulfilled, his claim to sovereignty of at least the second rank is incontestable if this ruling of the great Swiss civilian be good public law. The right even of Mehemet Ali to this status was constructively affirmed by the French courts nearly fifty years ago;† and that of Ismaïl Pasha was similarly recognised by our own tribunals even before the last firmans had further ratified and increased his powers.‡ It is, however, fortunate for those who have a material stake in Egyptian credit that both the rank and obligations of the Khedive and his dominion depend rather on accomplished and accepted facts—the ultimate title in politics as in common life—than on the conflicting

* *Droit des Gens*, l. i., chap. 1. So too Grotius, b. i., chap. 3.

† The case of *M. Solon*, Phillimore's *International Law*, vol. ii., pp. 133-9.

‡ In the unreported case of *Melanidis v. Ismaïl Pasha*, tried in the Court of Common Pleas in June, 1866, and again in January, 1869.

dicta of jurists. Already, the foundations of an Arab kingdom, as distinct from Turkey in all but the temporary incidents of tribute and military aid as Portugal is from Spain, are laid beyond reasonable fear of disturbance from any possible outcome of the Eastern Question; and in view of this fact, which is now tacitly recognised by all Europe, it is idle any longer to regard Egypt as

"A patient province of the Great Mogul."

Fifty, or even thirty, years ago there was still an influential "Ottoman party" in the country, but hardly the tradition of this now survives. Among the peasantry, too, the more or less active sentiment of loyalty to the Porte which then prevailed has similarly died out—yielding to a personal sense of an exorbitant tribute for which nothing has been received in return, and of yet heavier extortions, which, though recorded in no budget, have been known to and felt by every Fellah between Assouan and the sea. With few (and certainly unconfessed) exceptions, "Egypt for the Egyptians" is now unmistakably the national aspiration, and no one who knows the country can doubt that, if the Khedive were to proclaim his independence tomorrow, he would be supported by every class of the population. At the same time, the totally distinct sentiment of religious fealty to the Caliph has lost none of its force, and in any struggle involving positive peril to *Islam*—not merely political danger to the Porte—the Arab would infallibly make common cause with the Turk—just as Ireland, if there were no Foreign Enlistment Act, would similarly help the Pope. But this impulse of religious sympathy would be quite as strong with both Khedive and Fellah if the political tie between the two countries were completely rent, and conflicts in no way with the other logic of events which points clearly to that inevitable

and not distant consummation. The general loyalty with which the Porte's requisition for a contingent has recently been responded to argues nothing against this view of the *set* of national feeling, nor will it retard by a day the shuffling off of the tributary yoke. It would as yet be premature to forecast the outcome of the present war to any of the interests concerned; but nothing can be more certain in unaccomplished events than that, suffer who may, Egypt will be a gainer in the result. If the Porte escape heavy loss and humiliation, the Khedive will have earned the right to new concessions, tending to sever the few remaining fibres of the thread that still binds him to Stamboul; while in the worst event of Turkish dismemberment, he may safely count on emerging from the general wreck, piloted by British friendship, it may be into complete independence, or at worst—or best—exchanging the costly suzerainty of the Porte for the fostering and disinterested protection of Great Britain.

CHAPTER V.

ADMINISTRATION.

L'État, c'est le Khédive—Council and Ministers merely Executants of his Will—His Early Life—After his Accession—Abdeen—Routine of his Highness's Daily Life—His Personal Character—The Ministries—The Late Moufettish—His Inordinate Power—The Present Ministry of Finance—of Foreign Affairs—of the Interior—of War and Marine—of Commerce—of Public Works and Agriculture—of Public Instruction and the Wakfs—The Custom House and Post Office—Provincial Administration—Mudirs, Mâmours, Nazirs, and Sheikhs-el-Beled—The Chamber of Delegates—Character of Egyptian Officials.

BASED on the treaties, firmans, and accomplished facts noticed in the previous chapter, the present Government of Egypt consists of—the Khedive. The formal work of administration is carried on through a Privy Council and eight Ministers, nearly as originally organised by Mehemet Ali, who in the machinery of government as in most else revolutionised everything, and introduced a system of Ministers—as of infantry and artillery—fashioned chiefly after European models. But in the hands of the present sovereign, as in those of his grandfather, councils and ministers are the mere agents of his personal will, without responsibility—except to himself—as without power.* From the negotiation of a treaty or a loan, to the approval of a contract for coals or machinery, he is cognisant of every detail of public business, and nothing above the importance of mere departmental routine is done without having first passed under his eye. His relation to and ac-

* To this rule the gradually usurped semi-independence of the late Ismail Pasha Sadyk, in the Ministry of Finance, has been the only exception.