

THE FUTURE OF AFRICA.

BY ERNEST E. WILLIAMS.*

THE MAGNETIC CONTINENT.

I SUPPOSE for some years to come we shall go on speaking of Africa as the Dark Continent. But we shall be doing Africa an injustice. If there is one part of the world more than another into which floods of the light of Western civilisation have been poured of late, and are going to be poured in yet greater quantities in the near future, that part of the world is the African Continent. Two years ago Lord Kitchener threw it open from the north ;

When a Cook's tour will take you into the heart of a Continent it is time to leave off calling it Dark. A better name would be the Magnetic Continent ; for such it is to-day, and such it has been for all time since the history of the human race began.

Go back to the early days of Rome ; and the African question, in the person of Hannibal and the locality of Carthage, or of Cleopatra and Egypt, agitated the public mind. Turn to the first book of the Bible, and you read of the patriarch Abraham making his pilgrimage into Africa. Through-



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OLD CALABAR.

[C. F. Rey.

to-day Lord Roberts, assisted by Lord Kitchener, is throwing it open from the south—and Mr. Rhodes is going to pierce the intervening gloom with his railway and telegraph. The work of exploration and civilisation is proceeding in other quarters of the Continent—by the French working down from the north-west, by the English working inwards from the west ; indeed, from every quarter the shafts of light are probing the interior of the misnamed Dark Continent.

out the Middle Ages men told strange stories of the wonderful lands lying southwards of the country of the Moors, of the gold and ivory to be found therein, of sumptuous Ethiopian monarchs wielding sway over realms hidden among the mountains of the interior, of terrible savages and still more strange and terrifying beasts—legends surviving in Sebastian Cabot's pictorial map. In modern times the magnetism of Africa has increased rather than diminished. Spain and Portugal, the imperial nations of an earlier day, colonised and traded and raided on its coasts ; their successors, the Dutch and the

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NATIVE DANCE AT A VILLAGE IN NIGERIA.

[C. F. Rey.

English, struggled for possession of the colonies at the southern extremity, the while Napoleon was deeming his conquests incomplete till he had gained dominion in the north. Not all the horrors and perils of the dark, unknown forest could dissuade Livingstone and Stanley and the other intrepid African explorers of the nineteenth century from penetrating into the heart of the Continent and revealing the secrets of the great lakes.

To-day the glamour is potent as ever. They may call themselves scientific explorers, or missionaries, or "emissaries of civilisation," or mere trading agents; by whatever name, the Continent of the Sphinx still draws men to her. Not long since some half-dozen independent parties were racing to the shores of Lake Chad, the while their respective Governments were pondering and quarrelling over the latest practicable expansions of the Spheres of Interest.

The world follows all these developments with acute, at times with breathless, interest. The kaleidoscope is ever shifting; now it is the Jameson raid in the Transvaal, now the Hinterland struggle with France and Nigeria, anon the overthrow of Dervish misrule and the avenging of Gordon at Khartum; again, Fashoda is on every man's lips; for a year past South Africa has held our breathless interest. There is not a civilised Power but is more or less drawn into the vortex. England's interests are paramount, but France is only less embroiled; Germany has seized huge territories; Italy is there; Belgium has inherited from her king the vast lands

of the Congo Free State; even decaying Portugal and Spain retain their African possessions; and the other nations which lack land in Africa have yet a bond of interest in the international muddle in Egypt, in trade with the Continent, in the hunt for its gold. And for some time yet the African kaleidoscope will continue to scintillate before men's eyes. Fashoda was but an incident in the final delimitation of Equatorial

Africa, and a struggle may yet blaze out fiercely and with momentous issues ere the delimitation of Africa is finally settled.

ENGLAND IN AFRICA.

Against this Europeanisation of Africa certain worthy though parochial souls at times lift up their voices. The number of such has fallen off almost to vanishing point in these new days of Imperialism. Yet the cry may still at times be heard, "What right have we Europeans in Africa? why despoil the noble savage of his ancestral domains?" or words to that effect; I need not repeat the whole formula. It suffices to point out that we go to those countries for those countries' good, as well as for our own. No one can read the history of England in Africa and reach any other conclusion.

THE GUINEA COAST.

Begin with our Possessions in West Africa. Our main work there has been to save the natives from themselves. We have destroyed slavery. Sierra Leone, indeed, was specially settled as an asylum for freed slaves, whose descendants we are educating. We have abolished the bloody horrors of the hinterland of the Gold Coast Colony, erstwhile the kingdom of Ashanti, now a British protectorate. Back in the early years of the century British lives were sacrificed in the endeavour to save the inhabitants from the foul terror of the wholesale human sacrifices which made the land accursed; again, in the seventies, Sir Garnet Wolseley's soldiers

broke the power of King Koffee and destroyed his blood-reeking capital; yet again, and finally, four years ago, King Prempeh and his groves of bloodshed and his huge execution bowl, where the heads of men, women, and children had for years been dropping in horrible heaps, were swept away into the nightmares of the past, and the Union Jack came to stay, though, as the events of this year have shown, not without continued trouble and loss of life.

But colonising is not undertaken solely out of altruistic regard for the aborigine, however noble he may be. It is rather one of those beneficent acts which bless the giver as well as the receiver. In this regard one must fain admit that at the present time our West Coast Colonies are scarcely as productive as could be hoped. The deadly climate is one hindering factor; the methods of France, in seizing hinterlands and obstructing our trade thither, is another. Mayhap some day the draining of swamps and other works of sanitation will make the climate less deadly to physical health, and a lot of things may happen to make French obstruction less deadly to our trade; and then a brighter future may dawn on Gambia and Sierra Leone and Lagos and the Gold Coast.

Already the export of valuable native

woods is increasing. The very name of one Colony suggests gold, and the ancient industry has been revived during the last decade, the export being now worth nearly £100,000 a year; and who knows how soon discovery may bring West Africa into line with South Africa? Experts declare the reefs in the Gold Coast to be similar to those of the Rand; and the hindrance to development by the lack of transport for machinery is being removed by the construction of a Government railway to the mining regions. These countries are also *par excellence* the land of indiarubber; yet the industry is a new one, though the export from the Gold Coast is already worth over £300,000 a year. This industry alone, in view of the growing use of rubber, should provide our West Coast Colonies with a future.

NIGERIA.

Here we tread on more spacious and more hopeful ground—more spacious, for the territories lately taken over from the Niger Company, apart from the extensive lands comprised in the Niger Coast Protectorate, stretch over more than half a million square miles; more hopeful, because the history of these territories is the record of a magnifi-

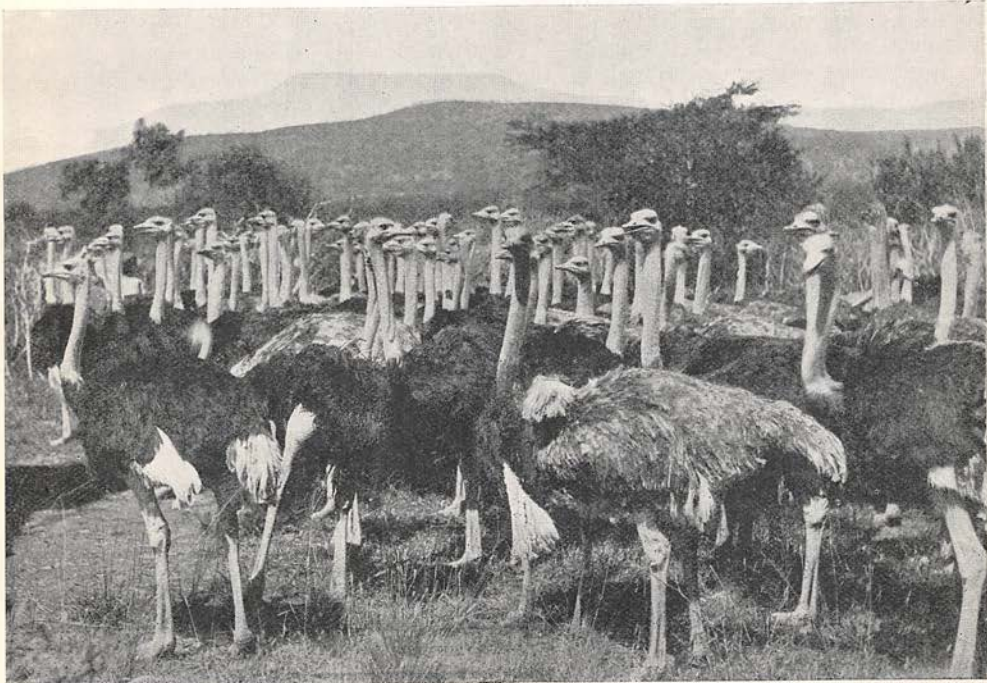


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[Neville Edwards, Littlehampton.

ON A CAPE OSTRICH FARM.

cent piece of Empire-building, crowned with success politically, and with enough success industrially to justify great hopes.

The pioneer work of Sir George Goldie's Company has been accomplished, and its domains have now been fully incorporated into the British Empire. Of late it has been the fashion among Little Englanders to decry chartered companies; if they can find ought to object to in the work of the Royal Niger Company, their powers of observation must be strangely acute. That corporation began modestly in 1879, as the United African Company, with a capital of £125,000. But Sir George Goldie saw the great possibilities before him. Three years later the Company had become the National African Company, with a capital of a million; in 1886 the Royal Niger Company. Never was a million better spent. Acknowledging the suzerainty of the Sultan of Sokoto, Sir George Goldie made treaties with his vassal kings and welded his Empire into a homogeneous whole. Native chiefs were appeased, French traders bought and crowded out, the Niger dotted with stations and factories, fleets of steamers ploughed its waters, and gradually the most populous and extensive Empire in the whole of the Sudan—the population is variously estimated at from twenty to thirty-five millions—was brought under control. Not without fighting, however—the Niger Company's troops had their share of that. And—mark again—the object of this fighting was to redeem the natives from the tyranny of slavery and oppression. The 1897 campaign against the Sultan of Nupé testifies this. It was followed by a decree abolishing slave-trading throughout the Niger Territories—a decree most appropriately dating from Diamond Jubilee Day.

In the Niger Protectorate, too, British guns have thundered out the doom of the reign of blood. Mr. Phillips's death, in 1897, was shortly afterwards amply avenged by the Imperial Government's campaign against the King of Benin—the City of Blood—and his fetish priests, and their crucifixion trees and human sacrifices.

The insatiable appetite of France for hinterlands brought England in the spring of 1898 into critical relations with her, consequent on her attempts to seize British territories in the Niger Basin. And the agreement of June of the same year, under which the dispute was compromised, though it has shorn British Nigeria of certain slices of territory, has yet left a compact and

ample empire wherein British industrial enterprise may develop under the ægis of the British flag. That the trade will be great may be gathered from the fact that in 1896 the exports from the Territories were worth more than half a million sterling, and that cocoa and coffee plantations are now being established with good prospects of success, and encouraging reports are to hand concerning the agricultural resources. That the administration will be good is evidenced by the heavy duties imposed on spirits and gunpowder, and the prohibition of the spirit trade over nineteen-twentieths of the Territories.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Coming south to Cape Colony we enter a land which has a history as well as a future. It is four centuries since a Portuguese mariner discovered the Cape, over two and a half centuries since Englishmen first took possession of it, and nearly that time since the Dutch East India Company first began colonisation, with their trading post established at Table Bay as a stopping-place on the Indian route. But before many generations had passed it was found that the great country which formed Table Bay's hinterland was worth colonising for its own sake. So began the struggle between English and Dutch for possession. England triumphed, though Holland has left her legacy of trouble in the eternal Afrikander question.

England has achieved great things at the Cape in the years since 1820, when 4,000 settlers, aided by a British Government grant of £50,000, landed at Algoa Bay. Of Cape Colony's 177,000,000 acres—that includes British Bechuanaland—more than 126,000,000 acres have been settled. The Cape now ranks high among the self-governing Colonies of the British Empire, and its combined white and coloured populations, including the Griqualand and other appurtenances, is little, if at all, short of one and a half millions, of whom rather less than a third are whites. Here, again, England's presence has been wholly for the good of the natives, whose numbers in many of the districts doubled between the census of 1875 and 1891. Out of care for the natives, Basutoland has been set apart for their exclusive use, European settlement being prohibited, although the country is well watered, has a fine climate, is said to be the best grain-producing country in South Africa, and has grass-lands which enable the

Basutos to rear immense herds of cattle. Northwards, in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, the solicitude for native welfare is displayed in the prohibition of the sale of spirits.

But the white men have not neglected their own industrial development. In the year ended May, 1898, 2,000,000 bushels of wheat were produced, and about 3,000,000 bushels of oats, barley, mealies, Kaffir corn and rye; 6,000,000 lb. of tobacco, over 43,000,000 lb. of wool, over 250,000 lb. of ostrich feathers, and over 3,000,000 lb. of

development shall have extended northwards till they join hands with those coming steadily down from Egypt. Already the home-produced exports of the Colony are worth some seventeen millions a year.

Natal is overshadowed by her greater sister—or should we say her mother?—but she, too, has honourable record and fair promise. Between 1879 and 1891 her European and Indian populations more than doubled, and her Kaffir population made such progress that the total of the Colony's inhabitants rose from 361,587 to 543,913.



A CAPE VINEYARD IN FEBRUARY.

butter. The Colony's vine stocks yielded 4,250,000 gallons of wine, 1,400,000 gallons of brandy, and 2,000,000 lb. of raisins. It held 2,250,000 head of cattle. Moreover, that test of advancing development, the establishment of manufactures, may likewise be called in evidence. The 1891 census is the latest available. In that year nine and a quarter million pounds' worth of manufactures were produced in Cape Colony. These sample statistics not only show the progress which has been made, but are an earnest of the greater things to come, when British rule and British railways and British

A few years ago her borders were enlarged by the promising additions of Zululand and British Amatongaland. Though at present her wealth is mainly agricultural, as that word is understood among us northerners, such new industries of the field as sugarcane and tea plantations are now taking their place among Natal's industries. The other fields beneath the surface also look like furnishing Natal with much wealth in the future. She may not possess much gold, but she has stores of iron and the best sort of coal, and now that she has direct communication between the goldfields of

the Transvaal and the port of Durban, her mining industry is destined to rapid development.

SCHISMATIC SOUTH AFRICA.

Until the present year this was the description of two territories in the midst of English South Africa. But the Orange Free State and the South African Republic, which were once under the British Crown, took a course which has brought them under the British Crown again.

The Orange River Colony, a country now containing over 6,000 farms situated in excellent grazing land, producing diamonds, whose value in 1896 was £468,165, containing garnets and other precious stones, and rich coal mines, and at least some gold, was annexed by England in 1848. Six years later Little England, enthroned at Downing Street, in deference to a noisy faction of the inhabitants, but in violation of the wishes of the rest and of the feeling in Cape Colony, in deference, above all, to its own miserable Cut-the-painter theory, abandoned the Orange River Sovereignty to its disaffected Dutchmen, and permitted them to form an independent republic. The gratuitous folly of this proceeding has since been made quite plain.

But the Orange Free State, until it threw in its lot with the Transvaal Boers, did

behave itself, and in this respect was unlike its sister Republic. Some of the most melancholy chapters of the modern history of the British Empire centre around the Transvaal. Unwisely, as events have so plainly and so unhappily shown, England in 1852 recognised its independence. The congeries of squabbling factions which comprised the new Republic made a wretched attempt at self-government. Bankrupt and helpless before its native enemies, it became clear within a quarter of a century that the continued independence of the Republic was a standing menace to the peace and prosperity of South Africa; and at the beginning of 1877 British sovereignty was resumed. Though President Burgers was wise enough to see the benefit of this resumption, his narrow-minded and ignorant subjects preferred to "stew in their own juice," even at the cost of war. War came, the Boers having been encouraged in their resistance by Gladstone's misleading oratory. For Gladstone, now in power, sent a few soldiers to reduce the rebels to submission, and when, owing to mischances and bad leading, the British troops were severely—though, of course, only temporarily—defeated, Gladstone gave them back their independence, under British suzerainty, in the Convention of 1881. In 1884 a new Convention was granted, which fatuously glided over the suzerainty, though it did not abolish it.



Photo by]

THE HOME OF THE PINEAPPLE.

[Neville Edwards, Littlehampton.



A KIMBERLEY DIAMOND MINE.

Transvaal affairs went afterwards from bad to worse. So unfitted for self-government were the Boers that our Conventions with them had to make very express stipulations that the Swazis under their protection should be decently treated; but there should also have been included more detailed stipulations that white men should be decently treated. As all the world knows, they have been shamefully maltreated. In other countries nationalisation suffices to give an immigrant full rights of citizenship in the adopted country. Not so in Kruger's land. The best half of the population, the half—more than half, to be accurate in numbers—which produces nearly all of the country's wealth and represents all its intelligence is reduced to the status of helots, to quote the High Commissioner's word; and by all sorts of foolish and unjust means the industry under their control has been hampered.

All this was the more intolerable in that the country which Oom Paul misruled has splendid industrial resources. There is no need to speak of the prolific goldfields; they are in everyone's minds. And gold is not the only wealth; there are silver, copper, and lead mines (though for the last five years their working has been suspended); there are tin mines in Swaziland; the country abounds in iron and coal. There are magnificent agricultural and stock-raising lands, though their development has scarce begun.

Now that the Transvaal is once more within the British Empire it should have a future worthy even of that Empire.

CENTRAL AFRICA.

As we go north, annoyance over past mistakes gives place to undiluted enthusiasm over future prospects. We approach the great work of Mr. Rhodes. It is twenty-two years since Mr. Rhodes unrolled his map of Africa, and, sweeping his hand upwards from the Cape to the Zambesi, said, "That's my dream—all this to be English." Already his dream is more than realised—it is now all English, and much higher up than the Zambesi. Under the aegis of the British South Africa Company, South Africa merges in Central Africa under the Union Jack. During the eighties it became clear that Matabeleland and Mashonaland, the great countries lying north-east of Bechuanaland, could not much longer remain under the cruel sway of Lobengula. The reports of goldfields and possible harvest-fields, and the obvious designs thereon of the neighbouring Boers and Portuguese, convinced Mr. Rhodes, who convinced the Imperial Government, that the time had come to extend our effective sphere of influence. The work was assigned to the great Chartered Company. Colonisation began first by arrangement with Lobengula, in 1890, but ere three years had elapsed it

became clear that the power of this monarch, which was being exercised to the oppression of the Mashonas, who were under British protection, would have to be broken. Under the leadership of Dr. Jameson it was broken, and Matabeleland and Mashonaland, with a combined area of 141,000 square miles, became Southern Rhodesia under the British flag and the South Africa Company's administration. Two years ago an Order of the Queen in Council advanced the constitutional government of this great province a further stage.

Crossing the Zambesi, we come to Northern Rhodesia and Nyassaland, or British Central

ment, consolidated a territory of some three hundred thousand square miles of what is described as the best land in Africa. And, again mark it, slavery has been rigidly and effectively suppressed over a region hitherto devastated by Arab slave-raiders. Now, distant though it yet is from civilisation, Nyassaland is progressing towards prosperity under British law and order. Big crops of coffee are being gathered, rice is said to grow to perfection, and the farming associated with temperate regions has also excellent prospects. The Company has been absorbed into the British South Africa Company, though its territory is now administered from the Foreign Office



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THE MARKET-PLACE, JOHANNESBURG.

[Neville Edwards, Littlehampton.

Africa proper. Imperial work in Nyassaland has a longer history than Rhodesia's, dating from Livingstone's Zambesi travels some forty years ago. Here, too, we have development by chartered company. The Livingstone Central Africa Company began to make settlements and open up to navigation the lakes and rivers of this region in 1878; enterprising Scotchmen connected Lakes Nyassa and Tanganyika by road, planted coffee, taught the natives industry. Under the name of the African Lakes Company the corporation continued the good work, and, aided by agreements with Germany and Portugal, negotiated by the Imperial Govern-

as a Protectorate. With respect to the rest of the country south of the Congo State and dividing the Portuguese East and West African Possessions, it has since 1891 been placed by Her Majesty's Government under the control of the South Africa Company, which is now charged with the development of a vast estate comprising about 251,000 square miles, with a native population estimated at 650,000. As yet, of course, settlement is in its infancy, but the work is going forward. The country, according to Mr. Rhodes, is not yet quite ripe for the agriculturist, but his time will come. At present the quest of minerals, and chiefly gold, is deemed the main business.

Development in this and other industrial directions will receive a big fillip if Professor Forbes's plan of utilising the waters of the Zambesi at Victoria Falls for transmitting electrical power to the nascent Rhodesian goldfields achieves fruition.

CAPE TO CAIRO.

But real progress in these regions awaits the railway; and here is a convenient place to remind ourselves of Mr. Rhodes's great scheme. The Cape to Cairo Railway has been called a dream—has indeed been smiled at as a dream; it is more correctly described as a vision. And the vision is quickly materialising. Already the railway runs from Cape Town right through the Colony, right through Bechuanaland, well into Southern Rhodesia, through Bulawayo, to Gwelo and beyond. Already the railway from Cairo comes downwards through Lower and Upper Egypt into the Egyptian Sudan to Khartum.

The Imperial Government was asked to give a guarantee to facilitate the raising of the needed capital for the Tanganyika section of the Cape to Cairo line, and Mr. Rhodes's assurance that the recently opened line to Bulawayo already more than paid its way should have spurred the Government to generous compliance. Unhappily, the Imperial purse-strings were not at the time controlled by an Imperial imagination, and the conditions attached to the aid eventually offered were such as obviously precluded acceptance. But English investors had more faith, and the necessary money has been easily found. The tremendous undertaking of linking North and South Africa by railway will do more than aught else to consolidate England's great African dominion, and the Government should have been grateful that it had a man to take the work largely on his own shoulders. The Russian Government has had itself to undertake the planning and construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway, a work of similar magnitude; the English Government was only asked to guarantee some interest in connection with the Cape to Cairo Railway.

Even supposing the traffic on the railway were destined to be small, and the undertaking commercially unprofitable, the construction would be worth the cost. But there are no grounds for fearing that the line will not have a bright future, even commercially. As Mr. Rhodes told the Cape Legislature, that section of the scheme at present under discussion—the Tanganyika

Railway—is alone bound to enhance the prosperity of Cape Colony. Rhodesia will quickly develop when it has the line, and many commodities will be needed from the Cape, which will also be brought by the railway into touch with the Congo State. Furthermore, great irrigation works are needed and in prospect in Cape Colony, but the present dearness of labour there hinders their construction. The railway is expected to bring down a plentiful supply of the cheap labour of which the Congo State has a surplus.

BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

Here again we have to record the magnificent pioneer work of a chartered company. The vast region once known colloquially as Ibea, from the initials of the Imperial British East Africa Company, is now divided into three British Protectorates—the East Africa, the Uganda, and the Zanzibar. As the boundaries on the north and the west have not yet been delimited, it is not possible to say exactly how large a territory is covered by the term British East Africa; but it is not less than a million square miles, and the intrigues and restlessness of Frenchmen and Abyssinians will doubtless soon cause England to make a delimitation on a generous scale, and bring the total area to well upwards of a million square miles. It can hardly be said that we have yet begun to colonise in East Africa, unless it be in Uganda, which has an exceedingly fertile soil and will doubtless ere long be dotted with coffee plantations. Development awaits transport, and this the Imperial Government is providing. Appreciating the need for a railway, the Foreign Office decided not to wait for the private capitalist, but itself projected, and has already partly constructed and opened, a railway from Mombasa, on the Zanzibar Coast, to the Victoria Nyanza. The natural difficulties are and have been great, but according to the latest reports success seems assured. But one serious mistake has been made—the line is constructed on a gauge which just falls short of the gauge adopted on the railways of Upper Egypt. This is an extraordinary mistake, seeing that the Uganda Railway is to be joined to the Upper Egypt Railway. The present arrangement will entail all the bother and expense of transhipment, and the economy in construction is infinitesimal.

The Somaliland Protectorate, on the north-eastern horn of the African coast, was, until a year ago, reckoned officially as



NATIVE FISHING-TRAPS ON THE CONGO RIVER.

a part of Asia, and was placed under the Indian Government. Now, however, it is transferred to the Foreign Office, and ranks officially—as it is geographically—among our East African Possessions, to which it adds a territory of some 68,000 square miles. It may some day be found to possess industrial value, but it was occupied by us for strategic purposes connected with the safety of our route to India. When the trade of the interior increases, British Somaliland, with its ports on the Red Sea, may exercise a useful commercial function as a point of concentration for trade routes; but among Englishmen it is chiefly valued, at present, by Nimrods in search of big game. It would also seem to have an historical interest, for prehistoric implements have been found in such large numbers that Mr. Seton-Karr puts forward the theory that British Somaliland is really the cradle of the human race. It would be quite appropriate that the British Empire should contain within its borders the site of the Garden of Eden.

EGYPT AND THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN.

I have left until last those Egyptian Possessions which the "smashing of the Khalifa" made to loom so largely in men's minds, and which are consequently so well known by report to Englishmen that they

do not need here the detailed reference they would otherwise justly claim.

Englishmen have done much to enhance the prosperity of other lands, but surely nowhere have their magnificent administrative capacities been so splendidly shown forth as in the land of the Pharaohs. We went there in 1882, to a country torn by rebellion, made bankrupt by the foolish prodigal who essayed to rule it, though his wretched people were ground into dire poverty by taxation, and though the country was endowed with natural resources to make it wealthy. We went there when France, notwithstanding that she had coveted Egypt and regarded it as in a sense her own, shrank from the task of helping it in its need. We have stayed there in spite of governmental chaos and the constant harassings of the disappointed and jealous Frenchmen; we have fought the spectre of bankruptcy, brought the finances into something like order, reduced the debt, reduced the taxes, made justice possible, and, by the construction of magnificent water-works, husbanded the waters of the Nile, Egypt's life stream. If ever a man saved a country, Lord Cromer has saved Egypt.

Nor has our work stayed at the boundaries of Egypt proper. We have broken the hideous dominion of the Dervishes, and after the sacrifice of the flower of our men—Gordon is but one—we have, with

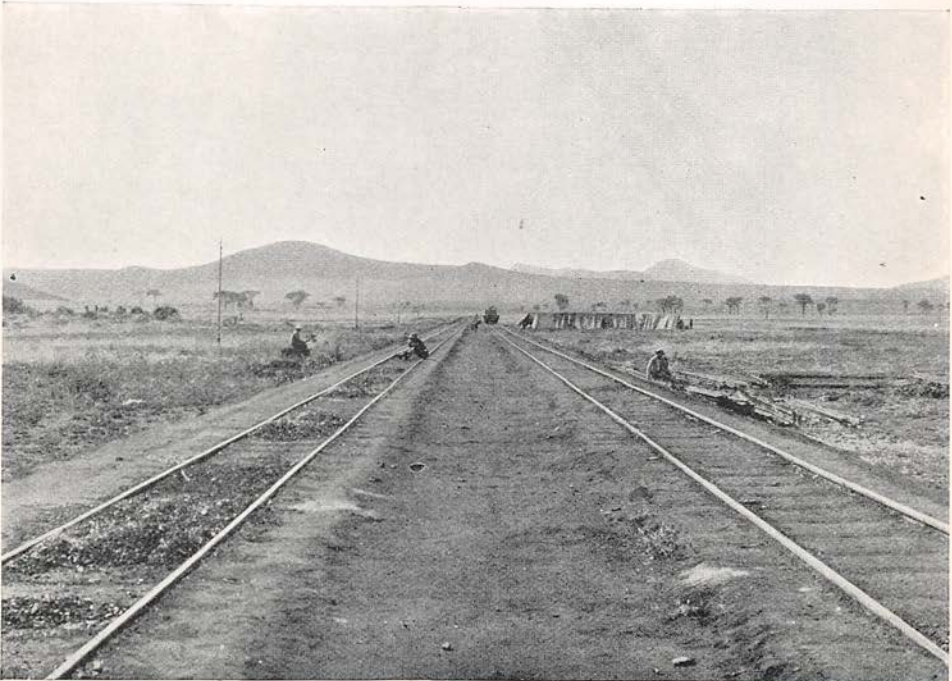
the final victory over the Khalifa at Omdurman, completely restored to Egypt her great Possessions in the Sudan, which had been temporarily wrested from her. And now by every right, by higher rights than conquest, Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan are ours. Still, unfortunately—for the present unsatisfactory system is productive of considerable misunderstanding and hindrance to the development of the country—England refrains from making formal declaration of the very real protectorate she exercises over Egypt; but it is to be hoped that, when the present troubles disturbing the world are over, the formal declaration of our protectorate will not be delayed.

THE BROKEN CROSS.

When Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan are incorporated, the drawing of the Red Cross of British Empire over the map of Africa will be well in process of achievement. It will not be completed then. The cross will still remain broken in more than one place; for in the councils of Downing Street in the earlier ante-Imperial days the Empire's expansion was usually regarded with aversion and dislike, and when it was encouraged the encouragement was fortuitous and haphazard,

and no statesmanlike plan was followed. All this has got to be altered. Comparatively little of Africa remains now outside European influence, and nothing is more certain than that within a generation or so that little will have been absorbed. What is to be our portion? "Our portion is the Red Cross. "Have we not enough, or more than enough?" the Little Englander may cry. In a sense we have; in a sense we have not. We have rivals and enemies on all sides, we have needs and aspirations and methods which are other than theirs. For this and for other obvious reasons needs must that we consolidate our Empire, and, *à fortiori*, our African Empire must be consolidated. This cannot be done effectively unless we join up the Broken Cross. Our various African Colonies must dovetail into each other.

Now look at the map. Work upwards from south to north. We possess uninterrupted communication northwards to Lake Tanganyika; but then comes a break of some four hundred and fifty miles (including the Lake itself, which occupies the greater part of the distance). This intervening territory is occupied on one side by the Congo Free State, on the other by German East Africa. With one or both of those



MWANI STATION, ON THE CAPE TO CAIRO RAILWAY.

Powers we must arrange for a cession of a strip of land to connect Northern Rhodesia with Uganda. It is a mere matter of business, and should be easily accomplished. The rights of pre-emption given by Belgium to France might complicate the acquisition by England of any of the Congo State lands. With respect to German territory, there is Mr. Rhodes's suggestion that we should exchange our Possessions in Walfish Bay for a strip of German East Africa. Germany has far more land than she knows what to do with, and a slice of her unexplored hinterland would not be missed by her, while she would gain real advantage by getting into her possession Walfish Bay, which is set in the midst of her South-West African Colonies, and appears to be one of the very few harbours on the coast worth the name.

It is when we come to the lateral arms of the Cross that the breaks appear more serious. Working from west to east, we are confronted with France's extravagant claims to hinterland. She has jockeyed the rest of Europe out of pretty well the whole interior of West Africa. In view of the possessions of the other Powers on the coast, and of France's inability to make any effective colonising or commercial use of the tremendous area she claims, her pretensions must be set aside to

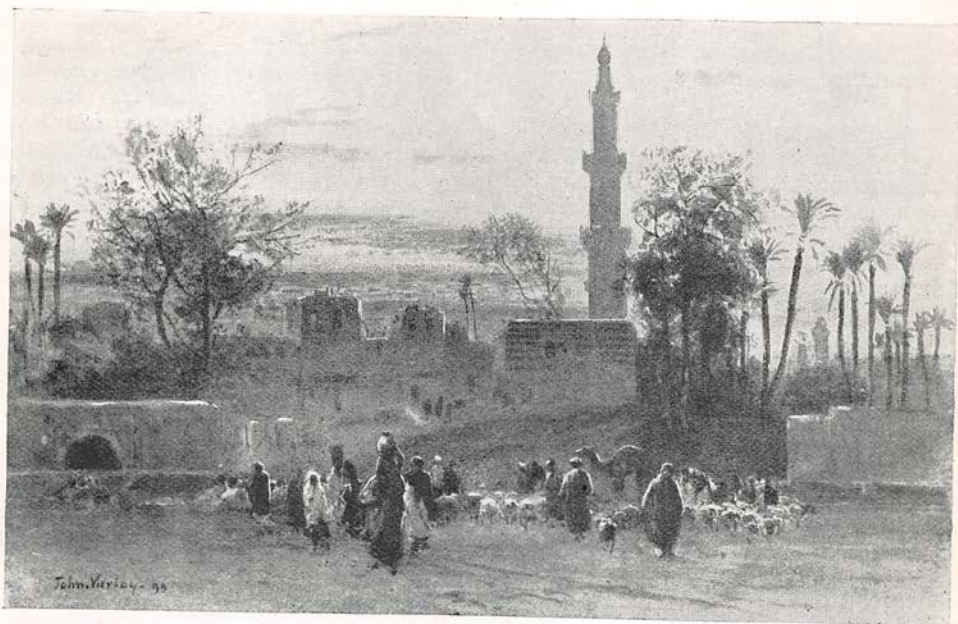
the extent of making over to us a strip of territory through the French Sudan and the hinterland of Dahomey. She might have compensation. We might give her Gambia, which at present divides her Senegalese Possessions. From Germany we need the end of her back yard, so to speak, in Togoland. Then on the east of Lake Chad we must negotiate for a strip from France; and as to the Wadai State, we might well share that with France, giving her the southern part as an extension of her Ubangi dominion, and ourselves taking the northern. We should then have a clear run through the Egyptian Sudan to Abyssinia. Well, Abyssinia is an independent kingdom just now. It thinks itself civilised—an opinion which civilised nations do not seem to share. As matter of fact, it is doomed to go the way of the rest of Barbarous Africa. France certainly has designs upon it, despite the friendship which she finds it convenient at present to profess towards Menelik. For a few years prior to 1896 Abyssinia was an Italian Protectorate, and when the inevitable partition comes Italy might well resume her protectorate over the northern portion, leaving to France the central portion bounded on the south by the Harrar Railway, which she is vigorously pushing forward, and



From "Pyramids and Progress,"

DATE-PALM WOOD ON THE SITE OF LOST MEMPHIS.

[by John Ward, F.S.A.]



OUTSIDE CAIRO: SUNSET NEAR RODU.

From a water-colour by John Varley; reproduced by permission of Mr. John Ward, F.S.A., from his "Pyramids and Progress."

to England the southern portion, which would then join up, as a northward extension, with British East Africa. Thus the Cross would be completed. It would be a bit crooked in design here and there, 'tis true, but it would represent an effective consolidation of our great African Empire. It is the duty of English statesmen to accomplish it.

'Tis needful, however, to bear in mind that other expansions of our African Empire are possible and may become advisable. There are the Dying Nations to be considered; and the Dying Nations have their footing in Africa. Portugal and Spain hold between them nearly a million square miles of African territory. It is doubtful whether they will be able or will want to hold them much longer. Certainly Portugal is not equal to her 826,730 square miles; in her present lame and bankrupt condition she should be only too glad to sell at least a portion of them, and Portuguese East Africa will doubtless be divided between Germany and England, her neighbours. England must be heir to the southern half, which includes Beira, whence runs the railway into Rhodesia, and Delagoa Bay, the sea entrance to the Transvaal. If rumours are true, this partition is already provided for as a future contingency. I am not proposing any high-handed treatment of Portugal. We should only besmirch our good name by adopting

the methods of the United States in respect to Spanish Colonies. I am only anticipating the time when Portugal shall, on her own motion, bow to the inevitable renunciation of an African Empire to which she is unequal.

OUR NEIGHBOURS IN AFRICA.

The neighbour which most concerns us is France. France has seized about three and a third million square miles in Africa—considerably more than a quarter of the whole Continent. This abnormal greed is the more remarkable in that France is essentially not a colonising nation; her sons are naturally stay-at-homes, her daughters cannot keep their own population going; and French administration of new lands and subject races can scarcely be described as successful. On the confession of French writers the motive of France is national vanity and jealousy, fostered by the small but sufficiently noisy Chauvinist faction which calls itself the Colonial Party. Some time ago M. Gastin Donnet wrote in the *Revue Bleue*—

"I once asked a Government official why we held the Congo?"

"For pecuniary reasons," he replied; "for the purpose of sowing, planting, reaping, and selling!"

"Quite so; but, unluckily, we neither sow nor reap, consequently we have nothing to sell." He acquiesced and I insisted.

“Then pray explain to me why we keep the Congo?” He thought a moment.

“Probably in order to spite Germany or Belgium.”

The rest seems to be done to spite England. Nor do French ambitions seem yet to be satiated, as the notorious effort in '98 to seize the Bahr el Ghazl Province of the Egyptian Sudan testifies.

Looking at the map, and regarding the French acquisition of the larger part of Western Africa north of the Equator, one naturally inquires what France wants with the great Sahara Desert, which is included in that acquisition. True, scientists are fond of picturing a future time when the world's population shall be much greater, while the world's food-producing lands shall have shrunk in value, and of telling us that in that future time we shall grow our food in the inhospitable soil of the Sahara, made hospitable by irrigation works. But it is no such remote speculation which has prompted France to make her indecent grab. Her reason really is that she wants to connect her Mediterranean and West Coast Colonies, and make a Trans-Saharan Railway, which, commencing in Algeria, shall run down either to Lake Chad, Timbuctoo, or St. Louis on the Senegambia Coast, and drain the trade of North and Central Africa—the avowed purpose being to strike a blow at English commercial power. England need not dread this railway in the least, for it would be a most valuable outlet and inlet to Nigeria. At present the chances of a Trans-Saharan Railway do not look promising, though the scheme is still spasmodically mooted in France. A two-thousand-mile railway across a waterless desert, infested with brigands, is like to prove a costly and cumbersome weapon of offence against England, particularly if, as seems certain, England would get most advantage out of the trade it would bring.

The Belgian Congo State represents a curious experiment in the Europeanisation of Africa. There was much of altruism in its origin and earliest development under the enthusiastic guidance of the Belgian King Leopold. It began life as the International African Association—a sort of chartered company independent of any European Government. Thence it naturally developed into an independent State, and when the Berlin Conference of 1885 ratified its authority the optimistic confidently hoped that it would prove an effective buffer against designs of individual aggrandisement upon the part of the Powers. The territories of the Congo

Free State—over 900,000 square miles in area—were the prize lands in the heart of Central Africa, largely for the acquisition of which the Powers were seizing points of vantage on the neighbouring coasts. It was thought that all sorts of grave complications and mischief would be averted by what was meant to be a neutralisation of the coveted interior, a neutralisation which would throw open the country to the free trade of the whole world, so giving it the advantages of acquisition by a European Power, while dividing amongst the world the advantages to flow from its exploitation. But financial difficulties soon broke down the free-trade basis of the State. King Leopold's will, under which the sovereign rights of the State are left to Belgium (who has given a right of pre-emption to France), has destroyed the dream of internationalism. To say that the country is very sparsely populated by white men hardly conveys a notion of the infinitesimal character of European settlement; and, as a consequence, the agricultural operations for which this vast territory is well suited have not yet begun, save in tiny patches round the stations, and the country's store of minerals still remains intact. Nor have the relations between the few white men and the natives been altogether of that altruistic character which the State's founders intended. Yet, in spite of these disappointments, the Congo State will doubtless have a big future, and Belgium a rich heritage in Africa.

German Africa need not detain us. It is the result of Bismarck's ambition to found a colonial empire, and began with the seizure of territory under the British sphere of influence to the north-west of Cape Colony. Its extension has been marked by the stirring up of bad feeling between England and Germany; but so far England has had little cause to envy Germany her possessions in Togoland, in Cameroons, in South-West and in East Africa, any more than Germany has had cause to congratulate herself on the successful colonisation of those regions. Nevertheless, there is good colonising blood in Germany, and when she learns, as she seems now to be doing, not to treat the natives to a reign of Blood and Iron, she may yet find wealth in her African Possessions.

WEALTH IN AFRICA.

Having consolidated our African Empire, what are we going to do with it? There is one right excellent thing which we have

already done with it—we have removed the curse of slavery and of blood ; we are introducing freedom and order and Christianity. But in an economic view what are we going to do with it ? Much wealth lies latent in our African lands. But can it all be exploited, in what directions, and to what extent ? At present these questions are not easy to answer.

In Africa the climate has always to be reckoned with. The little colony of brave Scotchmen on the Blantyre Highlands in Nyassaland disproves the pessimistic theory that the central parts of the Continent are uninhabitable by white men, but it would be foolish to maintain that the eastern and western coasts, and the Equatorial interior,

we must look in connection with the development of Africa. There is plenty of native labour available. The Negro and the Bantu, it is true, have conceptions of labour which would not long keep an Englishman out of the workhouse ; but much may be accomplished by gradual training, and the supply is plentiful and cheap.

The soil is fertile. It is not all swamp and desert in Africa, and even deserts have their oases, and a lot can be done with a drained swamp. The arid Sahara will yield water for the digging, and when water is obtained the hundreds and thousands of date-palms planted on the Algerian border prove that cultivation may follow. The same dreaded Sahara is fringed with grass-land on

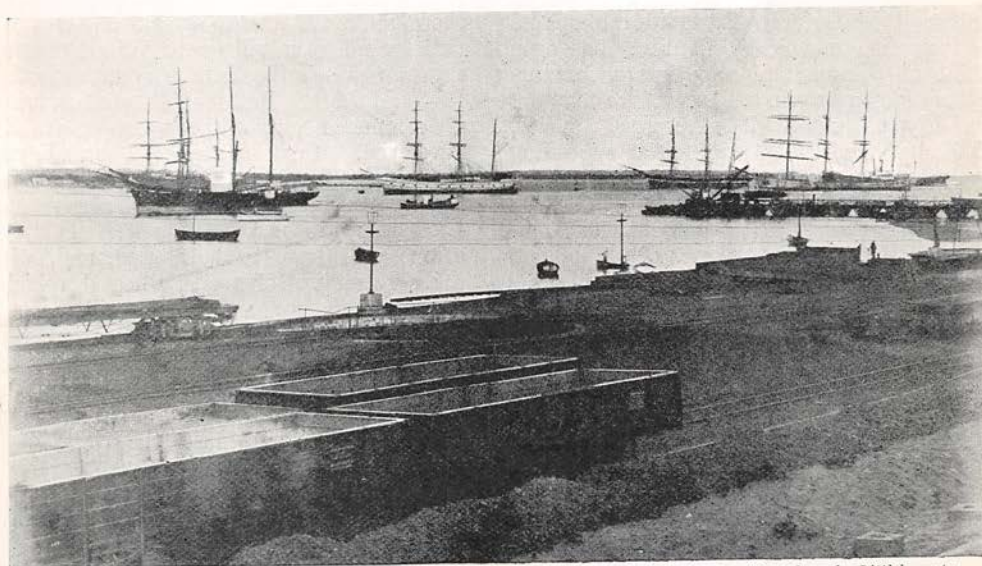


Photo by]

DELAGOA BAY.

[Neville Edwards, Littlehampton.

are salubrious. Pending further knowledge, we can only say with certainty that some portions—South Africa, of course, and the Rhodesian lands up to the tenth parallel—are fit for colonisation : invalids are ordered to the Cape. Similarly, it is common knowledge that Englishmen can live in health in Egypt, even those who cannot stand the winter at home. And we shall no doubt find, by experiment, that many parts of Tropical Africa are possible for the English colonist. There are two sorts of colonisation. There is the colonisation of the man who goes to till fields with his own hands, and there is the colonisation of him who goes to superintend native labour. It is more to this latter kind of colonisation that

its southern borders, whereon no doubt many thousands of cattle and sheep will browse in time to come. Concerning the great area of Central Africa, we have Mr. Scott Keltie's authority for the statement that there can be no doubt of the fertility of the soil over at least one half of the area. There you have great forests, from which may be obtained illimitable quantities of rubber, cocoanut and palm oils, fibres, gums, and other articles of high commercial value. It is impossible to set bounds to the amount of tropical and subtropical fruits which might be cultivated. We know that rice, and maize, and indigo, and cotton, and tobacco, and coffee, and sugar can be raised ; experiment has proved this, and conjecture fails to set bounds on

the quantities which might be raised. The world-market might be inundated with such products from Africa. And it will certainly be well that England should be able to produce these things within the bounds of her own Empire, instead of being dependent upon foreigners. With the growth of the world's population outside Africa, and with the growth of the native population in Africa—which is certain under the humane conditions now beginning to prevail—and with the growth in their wants, the market for all these products is bound largely to increase. There is every reason, moreover, to believe that both the precious and the base metals will be found in large quantities in Central as in Southern Africa.

When conjecturing Africa's industrial future it is obviously futile to attempt to circumscribe oneself by figures; but even these may be used to some extent for purposes of comparison. Thus, Africa may not unfairly be compared with India. Now, India has an area of 1,500,000 square miles, and its exports reach an annual value of some £90,000,000. (And India's industrial development is as yet a long way off completion.) Africa has an area of 11,500,000 square miles, and its annual exports only reach a value of about £60,000,000; and of these about £40,000,000 come from the Mediterranean States and Egypt, at one end of the Continent, and South Africa at the other. Thus the whole of the vast fertile interior only exports some £20,000,000 worth of goods a year. Even, then, if Africa can only be developed to a degree corresponding with India's present development, the exports should be worth about £700,000,000 a year. Or let us rather make the comparison from British Africa only. Within the Red Cross lie Africa's most fertile lands and richest mines. Those lands, including Egypt and the Sudan, but without the other additions I have been speaking of, contain over 3,250,000 square miles. On the Indian comparison, therefore, they should be worth in exports over £185,000,000 a year.

But all this future development awaits the development of transport. The monotonous regularity of the African coastline, with its lack of inlets to the interior, is an unfortunate geographical feature, and in spite of the Nile, and the Congo, and the Niger, and the Zambesi, and the other great rivers, there is a great dearth of navigable inland waterways. Probably by canalisation many of the rapids, particularly those on the Nile, will be overcome in time, and navigation made practicable where at present it is impossible, or nearly so. When this is done several great highways into the heart of the Continent will be opened; but even then Africa in the main will not be well off for inland waterways. Save in the comparatively well-settled fringe of the Continent, there are no roads to speak of. Narrow paths wind from village to village, caravan routes traverse the Sahara and the Sudan here and there. But much more is wanted if commerce worth the name is to be developed. Camels are used in Egypt, donkeys in Somaliland, but at present, over the greater part of Africa, the only beast of burden is the native himself. That, of course, will have to be altered, and, with the construction of roads, wheeled vehicles drawn by horses and cattle will become possible, and there is a suggestion that elephants, as in India, should be utilised. But the great means of opening up the country will be by railways; and it is encouraging to recognise the signs of a railway-building era having set in. When the great Cape to Cairo scheme is achieved, when the Uganda and Congo Railways have penetrated the Continent, and when (if ever) the French Trans-Saharan Railway is completed, when further progress in railway building has been made in our West African Possessions, and when the railways already constructed or projected have thrown out their feeders hither and thither, then indeed will African development commence in earnest, and the Dark Continent will be fully lightened.

