
Egypt, India, and the Colonies

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EGYPT, INDIA,

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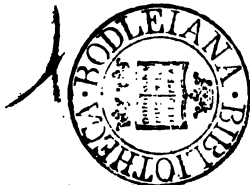
COLONIES.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

"THE SUEZ CANAL, THE EASTERN QUESTION, AND ABYSSINIA," &c., &c.



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PREFACE.

THE following pages, to a considerable extent, treat of Eastern policy. The Author has long felt much interest in the affairs of the East, and ventures to express opinions on many subjects relating to them with that confidence which is alone justifiable, and which is alone deemed in the eyes of the world at large to be justified by a full knowledge of facts. Having on former occasions publicly stated views bearing on these topics, more or less of identity in the ideas advanced will, he trusts, be observed. In two or three instances repetition of the language used has been desirable, and all will agree that no one has more right to quote the ideas of an Author than the Author who himself originated

those ideas. Some of the anticipations which, on the occasions already alluded to, were brought before the public, have been in a remarkable manner verified by events, and some of them are still as true and as applicable as at any former period.

EGYPT, INDIA, AND THE COLONIES.

THE Isthmus of Suez no longer interposes an obstacle to free intercourse between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, and the most populous portions of the world will be brought into more immediate contact with the centres of moral and physical force in Europe than at any former period, either of ancient or modern history.

The canal now exerts its influence in bringing them thus into contact, and will every day more and more do so, whatever may turn out to be the facilities or the difficulties of maintaining it in a condition fit for navigation, with regard to which prophets of evil are still to be found, as inveterate as any who, in former times, declared that this vast undertaking could never issue in aught but failure and mortification. The predictions in which they at present indulge are discredited, it is true, by the highest engineering authority, and

will hardly be very seriously dwelt on by anyone acquainted with the circumstances of the case; but at all events the piercing of the isthmus is now an accomplished fact.

Egypt has thus become possessed of a modern interest, we may, without exaggeration, say for all men, equal to that handed down from remote ages, as belonging to its early records. The canals of Egypt have always been associated with mighty names, and Moses, Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, Nelson, and Lesseps have connected those annals with many of the most striking events and tendencies of their several epochs. The destinies of the world, however, seem likely to be affected by Egypt in future, more than they ever heretofore have been, dependent as those destinies must largely be, on the world-wide intercourse and the world-wide commerce which now draw all nations together, and have already stamped a new impress, and given a new character to the relations subsisting between the different families of mankind, as well as to the domestic features distinguishing each community. To attempt to anticipate all the relations to be developed between Egypt and its canal, and distant parts of the earth, would be futile; but indications

exist of the bearing of present circumstances on the prospects of India, of our Southern Colonies, and of the British Empire generally, the vast importance of which, as well as its pressing nature, in an eminent degree merit attention.

By Article 14 of the concession to the Canal Company, granted by the Viceroy of Egypt, and confirmed by the Sultan of Turkey, it is provided that, "the Suez Canal, and the ports appertaining thereto, shall always remain open as a neutral passage to every merchant ship crossing from one sea to another, without any distinction, exclusion, or preference of persons or nationalities, on payment of the dues and observances of the regulations established by the 'Universal Company,' lessees for the use of the said canal and its dependencies."

Our government has a right to expect that the sovereign of Egypt will see that this neutrality is duly observed; the immense increase of the facilities for communication between England and India through means of the Suez Canal, the construction of railways, and the establishment of the electric telegraph has augmented the value of Indian securities, *and has made feasible the application of capital to the development of the resources of India, to an extent hitherto undreamt of.* To

such a development of resources we must mainly look for the most available means by which to maintain the permanence of our dominion in the East, while performing the duty which has been imposed upon us as a nation, of promoting as a result of our advanced civilization, the well being of those Indian millions whose interests have come to be associated with our own.

The experience already acquired of the effects to be anticipated from the making of railways and canals in India, enables us to verify our work. Men of sense value the power of verifying their work, in whatever position of life they may be placed, more than any arguments derived from theory, or from the most unanswerable reasoning, of whatever kind it may be. A nation's experience is at least as valuable as that of an individual, and there is no longer room for doubt that ample returns are yielded by these works, both directly to those who furnish the pecuniary means required for carrying them out, and to the community at large, in the incidental advantages arising from them. The benefit derived by a nation from public works, often far exceeds that derived by individuals, even when their investments of money have been most successful.

The development of the resources of India by the application of British capital, to the extent which may fairly be reckoned on, would have remained as impossible as formerly, were it not for the augmentation of the facilities of intercourse with England, which has taken place, and is every day increasing. *The additional security afforded to our Indian Empire which springs from thence counts for a great deal*, in rendering practicable the investment of money on the large scale now contemplated, by those on whom devolves the official charge of the administration of affairs, so far as it bears on the construction of these works. Very intimate, therefore, is the connection between the prospects of the Suez Canal, and of the various modes of transit through Egypt, with the expectations entertained as to the development of India, and with the measures adopted to realise those expectations. The electric telegraph, at that time working in the country, saved India at the period of the Sepoy Mutiny, in 1857—58, by causing timely notice to be given of the designs entertained, and enabled also a British army to be diverted, by the late Earl of Elgin, from its destination in China, at a moment when its presence proved to be all important at