

EGYPT'S GREAT HOPE AN INDEPENDENT STATE Children of Pharaoh to Rule Themselves

END OF THE PROTECTORATE

A year ago, six months ago even, there were three dark clouds in the British political sky. Those clouds hung over Ireland, India, and Egypt.

Today the Irish cloud has disappeared; the sun of goodwill has dispersed it. And that same kindly agent with its rays of light and warmth—the light of reason and the warmth of confidence—is now, we hope, going to scatter the cloud over Egypt. The British Government is willing to recognise Egypt as an independent State, with proper safeguards for her safety and the interests of the British dominions.

It is the misfortune of governments that they rarely submit to necessity with a good grace, but in spite of the troubles there have lately been in Egypt, those who, with Robert Browning, refused to believe that

Though right were worsted,

Wrong would triumph,

are being justified of their faith. Wisdom seems likely in the long run to prevail.

Looking to the Future

It might have prevailed eighteen months ago if Lord Milner's report had been adopted, but the opportunity passed, and the state of the country grew worse and worse.

Now another plan is being prepared. Lord Allenby, High Commissioner in Egypt, whose good sense is likely to be of great value, has returned home to consult the Government, and his advice is on the prudent, liberal side. It is clearly impossible to go on controlling Egypt under martial law, as we have done for seven years. Conciliation is in the air, and we may now look forward to the Egyptians enjoying a future more prosperous than any of their pasts, famous though these have been.

While England was inhabited by savages of a primitive type, Egypt had a high and complicated civilisation, splendid art and architecture, a leading position among the nations of the world.

Pride of Place

When Egypt came under the domination of the Sultan of Turkey it fell from its proud place, as all countries have done when subjected to that disastrous rule. Its troubles were increased by the extravagance of its Khedives; it was to save it from ruin that Britain took it over.

Lord Cromer put the country financially on its feet, the land was governed well, and the mass of the people were contented. But gradually there grew up the desire for self-government, and during the war, when it was urged that the rights of small nationalities should be recognised, the Egyptians looked forward to recovering their independence. It is the disappointment of that hope which has aroused such ill-will.

Arranging Safeguards

Now the Government is willing to end the British Protectorate and grant independence if safeguards can be arranged. The chief difficulty is to decide how to allow Britain the possibility of sending troops through the Suez Canal to defend India, a right considered especially necessary in view of the disturbed state of India. But if we can find a means of allaying the disturbances, and settling India as well as Egypt and Ireland, then we may suppose that troops will not be needed in any large numbers; and, in any case, it is not expected that there will be any great difficulty.

SHACKLETON'S CALL TO OUR BOYS

A good friend of the C.N. was Sir Ernest Shackleton. One of the last things he was heard to say before he went away was, "What a jolly little paper the Children's Newspaper is! My wife and I read it every week before giving it to the children." It is nearly two years since the C.N. printed the explorer's stirring call to the Front Line Boys of England, and we make no apology for reprinting it here. Shackleton was talking to a C.N. correspondent in the days when he was planning the expedition of the Quest.

Once, when things were at their darkest and death by slow starvation seemed certain, Shackleton overheard the following conversation between two of his men:

"I don't think we'll get through," said one voice.

"That's the Boss's look-out," came the rejoinder.

It brought home to him afresh, not only the responsibility of leadership, but its loneliness.

"Leadership," he said, "is a fine thing, but it has its penalties. And the greatest penalty is loneliness."

"You feel you must not tell your men everything?"

The Cheerful Men

"You often have to hide from them," he said, "not only the truth, but your feelings about the truth. You may know that the facts are dead against you, but you mustn't say so. One thing only makes Antarctic leadership possible, and that's loyalty. The loyalty of your men is the most sacred trust you carry. It is something which must never be betrayed, something you must live up to."

I asked him about his men.

"No words," he replied, "can do justice to their courage and their cheerfulness. To be brave cheerily, to be patient with a glad heart, to stand the agonies of thirst with laughter and song, to walk beside Death for months and never be sad—that's the spirit that makes courage worth having. I loved my men."

"Suppose you had all the boys of Britain before you, what would you like to say to them?"

Britain's Front Line

"I think," he replied, "that if I had such a splendid audience as that before me I should begin by telling them what is the most solemn truth of our situation, namely, that the fortunes of Britain are in their hands. Never before has so tremendous a responsibility come into the hands of boyhood."

"It may seem hard at first, but they'll be all the better for it afterwards. Death came before its time to their elder brothers; they must not complain that stern duty comes to them before they are men. What is that duty? It is the duty of hurrying up to take the places of their fallen brothers. Britain needs them."

"The first thing for them to learn is the value of loyalty. Let them look at their games: can any team or side hope to win a match if every member composing it is not loyal to the general interest? Life is like that."

Rules of the Game of Life

"Some people say it is wrong to regard life as a game. I don't think so. Life to me means the greatest of all great games. *The danger lies in treating it as a trivial game*, a game to be taken lightly, and a game in which the rules don't matter much. The rules matter a great deal. The game has to be played fairly, or it is no game at all. And even to win the game is not the chief end. The chief end is to win it honourably and splendidly. To this chief end several

things are necessary. Loyalty is one. Discipline is another. Unselfishness is another. Courage is another. Optimism is another. And Chivalry is another.

"I go so far as to say that Britain must suffer frightful things unless the present generation of youth is striving with all its might to fit itself for this great game of life. The strain has begun, but its maximum is to come."

"It is like our experience in the Antarctic. Our ship found herself in summer time among unexpected ice."

Locked in the Ice

"We charged into it, cut our way through, and slowly forced a passage toward the new land of our search. But the ice thickened. It closed us round in a ring. We were a part of it."

"Our last hope, and a desperate one, was that the ice might carry us into open water. This hope was not fulfilled. The ice thickened. The pressure began. For weeks the Endurance stood that titanic pressure. We blessed the shipwright at home whose work had indeed been well and truly done: no better ship ever encountered so stoutly such overwhelming antagonism on the part of Nature. But the pressure continued, and finally the Endurance cracked."

Our Little British Ship

"Well, I feel now as I felt in those days when I listened to the pressure of the ice. I seem to hear now as I heard then the distant roaring of gigantic forces all around this little ship which is our British home. Will Britain stand the strain? Will she hold her own against the pressure of the world on every side of her? She has lost the flower of her youth. The boys coming up to work from school, with ambitious and brave hearts, and all the discipline learned in school games, have been mown down by the scythe of War. Those who were children then are now becoming men. What sort of men? Only the pressure of the world can decide that question."

When the Fog Lifts

"I am sure that loyalty is not enough. I hate sentimentality, but I believe in sentiment. I should like to think that all the boys of England were inspired by the sentiment of their country's greatness, that they loved England, and were ready to suffer for her. People are asking for ease and comfort. The Briton's longing for hardships seems to be out of fashion. That's bad. Civilisation ought never to content the true Briton. He should be always looking to fields of new adventure."

I asked him if he had any feeling for the beauty of the countryside.

He smiled very openly. "I like it," he said, "for about two hours. But I like the savage for always. Pastoral scenery is all right for getting your butter and roast mutton; but it's the other kind of scenery that challenges the best in a man's soul. I can't tell you what it means to an explorer marching through a fog in a new land when suddenly the fog lifts and he finds himself looking at mountains no human eye has ever seen."

SURPRISING EVENTS TERRIBLE DISASTER AT WASHINGTON

Kinema Roof Falls in Under Heavy Snow

TRAIN PERILS

However carefully we take precautions against accident, we are always at the mercy of the unexpected, the unforeseen, the apparently unpreventable.

Who would ever have imagined that a kinema theatre could have its roof broken in by the weight of snow? Regulations are made to prevent fire, to guard against panic and overcrowding, to ensure that the walls are strong enough to support the roof. Now it will be necessary to see that roofs themselves are stronger—at all events in Washington.

The American climate prepared an awful disaster when a blizzard raged for many hours and covered the city with two feet of snow. Just after nine, when the "second house" at one of the largest picture palaces had begun to enjoy itself, cracking was heard from above. Before those who noticed it could discover its cause, the roof fell with a fearful crash, and over a hundred people were killed.

No less unexpected was the accident to a London and North-Western train. Somehow the footplate on the engine worked loose. Another train passing at express speed tore it off and flung it against a carriage window. Damage was done to both trains, and the man sitting by the window was killed outright. No blame, it appeared, could be laid on anybody. It was just a mishap, one of the unforeseen mysterious occurrences of our complicated mechanical life. But it seems only a month or two since a piece of iron was flung through the window of a train, and on that occasion, too, a passenger was killed.

NATURE MUSIC

Like Summer on a Gloomy Day

BETTY GOODDEN AND HER CLEVER FINGERS

If you should be in London some cold, rainy afternoon, with the barometer falling fast, the mud splashing in the gutters, and the street lamps glittering long before tea-time; and if you should turn on such a day into Steinway Hall, and seem to fancy that you hear a babbling brook, or catch a glint of sunlight, or feel the soft breath of a summer wind; and if there should seem to be fitting past a host of butterflies and lovely moths with gauzy wings; if you should seem to hear the tide move slowly up, or catch the lilt of some joyous sound in an English wood, or feel that there are larks above the hayfield—if you should turn into a dream like this from some cold, rainy London street, it will be Betty Goodden's fingers on her beloved piano.

We found it so the other day; we found Miss Goodden sitting there, choosing such pieces as have souls within their notes, and playing them as if the keys were truthfully for her the keys of Heaven.

Happy, indeed, the child who learns of her, to whom music comes through ways so bright and so original. We wish that we were young again, or that, being young no more, a day had another hour in it, that we might learn from Miss Goodden what music, sweet music, is.