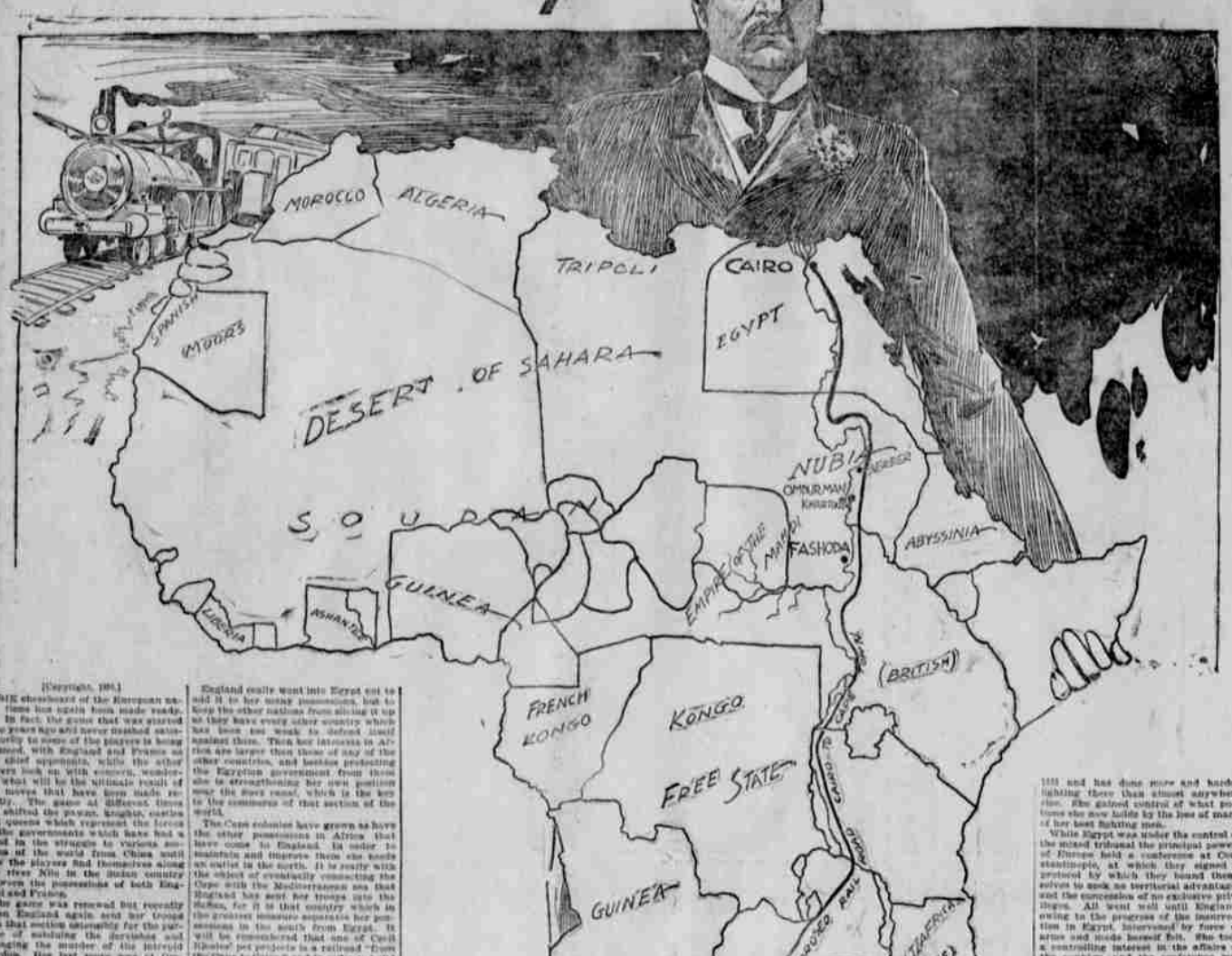
"From the Cape to Cairo."



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THE checkboard of the European nations has again been made ready. In fact, the game that was started some years ago and never finished satisfactorily to some of the players is being resumed, with England and France as the chief opponents, while the other powers look on with concern, wondering what will be the ultimate result of the moves that have been made recently. The game at different times has shifted the pawns, knights, castles and queens which represent the forces of the governments which have had a hand in the struggle to various sections of the world from China until now the players find themselves along the river Nile in the Soudan country between the possessions of both England and France.

The game was renewed but recently when England again sent her troops into that section ostensibly for the purpose of subduing the dervishes and avenging the murder of the intrepid Gordon. The last move was at Omdurman, while some distance away, at Fashoda, the French troops have put in an appearance, and from the present outlook here chessed their queen, for it is a well known fact that France holds no friendly feeling toward England, so far as Egypt and the Soudan country are concerned. There will have to be some decided defensive playing done during the next few moves of the contestants are likely to find themselves in positions from which it will be difficult to recede gracefully. They are now in neutral territory which both have long coveted, as its possession would give either a better control over the rest of the dark continent and would enable the one who gets it not only to increase its territory, but to connect it that which it now has and incidentally to shut out its hated rival.

From the time the fleet of England bombarded Alexandria she has had her hands full to control the natives in the Soudan and hold the dominant position in Egypt that the years ago mapped out for herself. She has expended enormous sums of money and has sacrificed the lives of thousands of her fighting men, and it might be said here that among them were many of her bravest sons and some of the best military men the world has ever seen. England has fought her way along the Nile, gaining possession and control foot by foot, and while she has said that she will give up her protectorate over Egypt when that country can maintain and operate a government, it is a thought for the statesmen of Europe that she has spent no spare blood in that section of the world to relinquish any claim that she may have upon it.

It has been one of the pet projects of the English government to acquire new territory at every possible opportunity. She has done this with a remarkable degree of success and while it is true that she has in a large measure purged upon peoples who were weak in comparison with her she has invariably improved the possessions acquired and benefited those whom she has subjugated. When England has wanted anything, she has contrived to get it, in a peaceful manner if possible and by force of arms if necessary. She looked with longing eyes on Egypt for many years before she finally started out to get it "footfree." There were many reasons why it was necessary for her to have some possession near the Suez canal. When the time was ripe, she took a leaf out of a book and from a "friendly" she now has a controlling interest, notwithstanding the fact that the other nations with their mixed tribunal from which England was excluded, opposed every thing she wanted. France and Russia were the objectors then, and France and Russia are the objectors now.

England could not let Egypt out to suit it to her many possessions, but to keep the other nations from slicing it up as they have every other country which has been too weak to defend itself against them. Her interests in Africa are larger than those of any of the other countries, and besides protecting the Egyptian government from those who is strengthening her own position near the Suez canal, which is the key to the commerce of that section of the world.

The Cape colonies have grown as have the other possessions in Africa that have come to England. In order to maintain and improve them she needs an outlet in the north. It is really with the object of eventually connecting the Cape with the Mediterranean sea that England has sent her troops into the Soudan, for it is that country which is the greatest measure separate her possessions in the south from Egypt. It will be remembered that one of Cecil Rhodes' pet projects is a railroad "from the Cape to Cairo," and in order to build it it is necessary to gain possession of the country through which it will pass. This mammoth problem has caused England no end of worry and the other nations which have possessions in this section of Africa much concern. None of them is anxious to have the British build such a road, as it would materially weaken their holdings. France controls considerable territory on both the east and west coasts of the dark continent. She, too, is anxious to increase her sphere of influence by securing control of the land in the Soudan along the White Nile.

Then, again, France is additionally opposed to the proposition that England should build the railroad, as it would afford the latter another portal for maintained her "preponderance" over Egypt, besides giving her commensurate greater power in Africa. France is violently jealous of England and would like to have her exclusive Egypt altogether, but from all appearances England intends to remain. And, by the way, the Soudan has been the cause of more trouble and dissension among the nations than any other section of the Nile country. Nearly all the great powers would like to control it, but neither has ever sent troops in to subdue its natives, who are as daring fighters as the world has ever seen. Some of the best of her troops have been defeated by these wild soldiers. The name of "Gordon" therefore is still fresh in the minds of the people. He was one of England's foremost military men and lost his life at Khartoum. To keep the public good humor the British newspapers have been saying that the expedition recently went into the interior went for the purpose of avenging his death, but Mr. Balfour's words at Dover contradicted this.

The British troops have been successful, and the strongholds of the dervishes have fallen. This gives the English complete control of the Nile for more than 1,000 miles. It also takes for ever, as the past has also led to show, when the expedition was sent out, "to subdue the natives along the Nile and avenge Gordon's death." The railroad that the troops are laying is one of the light military line, but from what can be gathered from reports is a "well built road, constructed to stand the wear and tear of the country." As the army advances the road is put down with such rapidity that Congress.

It was not until the troops under General Sir Herbert Kitchener, the sirdar of Egypt, and the accompanying authorities on Indian matters reached that place that it became known that Major Marchand, at the head of the French force which started from the French Kongo many months ago, had arrived and were occupying Fashoda, only a few hundred miles to the south and in the very country in which the British troops are fighting to oust the natives and incidentally get control of it. The presence has naturally put a material different aspect upon the situation, and the diplomatic world is wondering what it all means and what the outcome will be.

On top of this comes the report that France is showing her strength in that section by sending re-inforcements to Major Marchand. A number of commissioned and non-commissioned officers have already been started from France to join the troops now at Fashoda. Matters are taking an interesting turn even for the nations that are not directly interested in the Soudan or the dervishes, while for England and France they look decidedly squally. The former is determined to hold the territory she has fought so hard to get control of, while France, from present appearances, is sticking to and her off, although up to the present time she has taken no step to indicate her intention.

Reports recently received state that Chief Menelik, with some Abyssinians, has started to join the French at Fashoda. It will be remembered that Menelik gave the Italians a good thrashing when they visited Abyssinia a few years ago, and since that time he has added to the control of the Soudan. It is thought that he has taken sides with France in the matter, feeling that he will have a powerful ally in England should succeed in ousting the dervishes and then should look for an opening on the Red sea through his territory. The matter is complicated, and with other country takes a more decided step it will remain so. England, so far as her occupation of the Nile country is concerned, has left nothing to be desired.

It was decided at a conference held by the representatives of the same important powers some time ago that England was not to be interfered with in her administration of affairs in the Nile country. This agreement was made in Paris and has never been violated until recently, when the French troops entered the Nile valley. It has long been an open secret that France has been desirous of getting in and claiming it as her possession before England could grab it.

The movement of the French troops into this section of the Soudan country is therefore looked upon as a breach of the agreement, and it is thought they may be compelled to withdraw. At any rate, another is certain, and that is that General Kitchener, the sirdar of Egypt, is on his way to Fashoda with English and Egyptian troops and is determined to plant those two flags over that city. At France, according to reports, already has been there, it has remained so to be seen which country will hoist down her colors first.

In speaking of the matter a short time ago a prominent English statesman said: "England will never consent to French occupation of Fashoda. She has sacrificed too much blood and treasure in the Soudan to allow the fruits of her hard earned victory to be snatched from her at the moment of final triumph. Many of the possessions of England have given notice from time to time to the other powers that no foreign interference would be allowed in England's management of affairs in the Soudan. It means that England will consider any movement of the powers to change her course in this section of the world and that she will not give up a foot of the territory she has gained by hard fighting to any other nation without a struggle, and France, who is the chief opponent in the Soudan, is in no condition to last conclusions with England with her armed forces at present, as the lands then elsewhere."

The territory of which both these countries are anxious to gain control in order to strengthen their holdings in the dark continent is a part of the great desert of Sahara and for the most part is a barren wilderness except near the water courses, which are at the best limited. What few crops are grown are found along the valley of the White Nile and its tributaries. The country is neither fertile nor healthy except to the natives. It has but one value to other Europeans or Powers, and that is to connect their possessions that are remote. It is bordered on Abyssinia, which the Italians have on the east, and Gulla tribes, the most warlike of the British possessions in Africa. It is south of Egypt and separate that country from the English possessions on the south, while it cuts off the French territory in the west from the Red sea. England has had troops in this section at different times ever since 1883 and has done more and harder fighting there than almost anywhere else. She gained control of what portions she now holds by the loss of many of her best fighting men.

While Egypt was under the control of the mixed tribunal the principal powers of Europe held a conference at Constantinople, at which they signed a protocol by which they bound themselves to seek no territorial advantages and the concession of no exclusive privileges. All went well until England, owing to the progress of the insurrection in Egypt, intervened by force of arms and made herself felt. She took a controlling interest in the affairs of the country, and the conference was dissolved, but the nations did not have a very friendly feeling toward England, and since then they have done everything possible to hinder her further progress. Since then England has given assurance that she will evacuate Egypt as soon as that country is capable of maintaining a powerful government. She has not done so, but, on the contrary, has strengthened her position. It is a well known fact that when England once sets a footing she seldom if ever gives it up, and she has been striving not only to improve her position in Egypt, but to secure control of some of the country interposing toward the south, so that her one great object, that of connecting the "Cape with Cairo," might be accomplished. To doubly secure her position she has a representative who acts as "financial adviser" to the khedive. He has a seat in the cabinet and exercises the right to vote any financial measure. He also exerts a dominating influence in all important acts of the government.

The troops are controlled by English officers, and there are several thousand English regulars stationed in the larger cities of Egypt who draw their pay from the treasury of the khedive. The Nile is patrolled by English gunboats, and there is little about Egypt that is not directly controlled by the Britons, much to the dissatisfaction of the other nations, especially France, which still has a large amount of money of Napoleon and the pyramids.

While England has been criticised as to the manner in which she got control of Egypt and some of her possessions in Africa, it must be said of her that she has done more to improve the condition of the dark continent than any other nation, and she has transformed the wilderness into a land of plenty. Under her rule Egypt has grown wonderfully, while her possessions in the south have become enormously wealthy. It is through her energies that a new dam is under construction at Assouan, and it was through England that the passage, the great Nile dam, was resumed, and subsequently regulated, thereby completing the canal system of that river. She has constructed the railroads in Egypt, and before she is through the Cape and Cairo will be connected, and England will have something what she set out to do.

ARTHUR TYCOMB.

Fodder Scarce in Australia.

Drought has made short fodder so scarce in Australia that thousands of men are being employed in the various districts cutting the boughs of oak, apple and other trees for feed for the starving animals and in skinned the sheep that perish in the end of the falling water holes.

QUEER RITES OF AMERICAN ABORIGINES.

Mr. James Mooney, who had charge of the installation of the Indian exhibit at the Nashville exposition, is now in the extreme southwest section of the United States engaged in studying the social and religious organization of the aboriginal tribes there. His special investigations heretofore have been into what has proved to be a complete system of heraldry in use among certain Indian families during centuries, the signs and symbols with their specific significance and responsibilities having been communicated from father to son for generations.

In the course of his researches as a representative of the bureau of ethnology of the department of the interior Mr. Mooney joined the Kiowa-Apaches, a nomadic tribe which lives in an almost primeval state. He was admitted to full membership several years ago and has ever since annually passed about two-thirds of the time with them, quietly pursuing his investigations without exciting the suspicion or distrust of those red men brethren.

He found that among the Kiowa their most important religious ceremony was what is known to the white as the "sun dance," a solemn ceremony formerly observed by them each year, but now only held at rare intervals and without the fantastic pomp that originally attended its performance.

Their sun dance differs, however, very materially from the gyrations of the same name practiced by the northern Indians, who lacerate their bodies in a horrible fashion. With the Kiowa the dance is what its name suggests, fantastic evolutions of the limbs and body, continuing until the dancer fairly exhausted. This terpsichorean exercise has been known to last four days and nights without intermission for sleep or food, until the subject dropped to the ground.

In addition to being a religious ceremony the convocation was a gathering of the tribe for consultation as to choice of hunting grounds for the ensuing season, decisions regarding the wars to be waged on other tribes and the settlement of various family matters. It was then also that the displays of the heraldic insignia were made in complete fullness.

The last of these great gatherings of the amalgamated tribes of the Kiowa and Apaches was in June, 1897, and it is the desire of Mr. Mooney to reproduce this encampment, historically correct in every detail, as a part of the ethnological exhibit of some future exposition. The representation will be comparatively in miniature, for the original camp, which covered a circular section of country about ten miles in diameter, will be shown on an area of three acres. The tepees of the Indian families will be arranged in a great circle facing the center, close together and presenting an unbroken line except where except at the east, where a wide space indicates the entrance.

The encampment will consist of 20 tepees, each about 24 feet in height and of the same diameter. These miniature houses have been made by Indians and are historically correct representations of those in the first convention to which reference has been made. There will also be correct reproductions of the shields and heraldic devices which were used in the days of the old regime.

The symbols emblazoned on the tepees of these Indians have a peculiar significance, as the decorative work is accompanied by the most solemn religious ceremonies. One of the novelties here of the tribe prohibits any member from making a decoration which belongs to any subdivision except the one of which he is a member. After the conditions of Indians had been improved sufficiently to allow the models of the tepees to be made Mr. Mooney has stated that he was obliged to secure the services of one or more Indians in each of the six subdivisions into which the tribe was formerly divided. The subdivisions were Rise, Elk, Kiowa proper, Big Shields, Kiowa-Apache and Black Boys. The work was finally accomplished, and the models are now being made.

In obtaining representations of the shields in the proper order difficulty was encountered. The tribal law forbidding the making of a tepee of another subdivision applies with even greater force to the making of the shields.

In order to get representations of these shields Mr. Mooney was obliged to ask one member of the tribe for each of the many different kinds of decorations and learn from him the significance of the design, its origin and the ceremony commencing its consecration. This was a most laborious task, but it has been accomplished, and the complete system of heraldry of these Indians has been formulated, the significance of which has thrown light upon the dark annals of the tribe and affords the means of tracing the travels and at least origin of this branch of the human race.

There is no doubt but that the installation of such a subsidiary camp of the Indians at some exposition will afford a subject for the consideration of the student of ethnology and an important exhibit representing the history and progress of the American Indian.

"Abandon Ship" Drill.

A naval officer thus describes the realistic "All hands abandon ship" drill: "Two minutes after the word has been passed every ship's boat has swung from its davits into the water, and a minute later every boat is thoroughly provisioned and watered. Within four minutes, and often in much quicker time, every man of the ship's company, from the commanding officer down, is occupying the station in the boat allotted for by his ship's number, and then the command 'Shove off!' is given. The boats are hurried away a couple of hundred feet from the deserted vessel, and she rides without a human soul aboard her, often, when the drill is made through in quick time, in a boat that has brought a deserted turtle. Then the word 'board' is passed, and within eight minutes at the most all hands are not only on board again, but every boat has been refueled in the davits, all of the provisions, water, ammunition and other articles have been secured, and the ship's company is to a dollar way to get to sleep again."

FACTS FOR THE CURIOUS.

Cassy Hamilton, near Lexington, Ky., was married to a band of Louisiana Cheroket J. M. Hamilton, who fell at San Juan.

The Hamilton (Ohio.) Spectator traces the evolution of the war's peace prospectus in the following dialogue: The Czar—I will build two big battleships. John Bull—I will build four. The Czar—I will build eight. John Bull—I will build 16. The Czar—Let us have peace.

The respective Colonel Goode, chief office of the military staff of Captain General Macias in Porto Rico, becomes significant when coupled with the fact that his action is due to his desire to remain in Porto Rico instead of returning to Spain where the Spanish troops are withdrawn from the island in accordance with the conditions of peace.

It is estimated that Rear Admiral Dewey will receive about $1,000 in prize money and that Rear Admiral Sampson's share will be about $[illegible].

Mr. H. A. Cuthell of Milledgeville, Me., has made a wonderful patchwork quilt the centerpiece of which is a bit of line boasting from a signal flag saved from the battleship Maine.

The monument design of Eugene Bouché, the marine painter, and Charles Garnier, the architect of the Opera House in Paris, recall the fact that both men started life as poor boys. The former was originally a sailor and the son of a Bordeaux chef. The mother of the latter was a vendor of vegetables.

Twenty thousand children are unable to secure accommodation in the schools of New York city. The city owns notice to build schools just enough for the rising generation.

Bridget Riley of Iron Belt, Wis., is only 14 years old, but she has been engaged as a schoolmaster there. She was a third class certificate a year ago.

Pillows and mattresses for ship boxes are being made of rubber or other waterproof material in a number of navy yards and inflated. The different sections have been attached and can be used for life saving.

Colonel James Forney, who was in charge of the Spanish prisoners at Seavey's island, Portsmouth, N. H., fought under Farragut in the civil war and raised the Greek flag over the custom house at New Orleans after the subjugation of that city. He commanded the second battalion of marines during the labor riots of the summer of 1877 and was highly complimented by the secretary of the navy and by General Hancock for his gallant conduct.

Germany maintains 12 textile schools and 48 commercial schools as aids to its manufacturing interests.

They are going to run cars up Pike's peak by electricity instead of by the present rap system. The locomotive is getting in everywhere.