

EGYPT, ITS NATURAL RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES.

(Abridged from the Colonial Magazine.)

The more attention is directed to Egypt, the more important and interesting will its position appear; for the progress of events, and steam navigation, are rapidly making the Red Sea the high road to India.

The present population of Egypt is estimated by the government at 3,200,000, but as the Pasha has a great moral object in stating the population at a high figure, there is little doubt that this estimate is much over-stated.

The opinion of the best informed is, that the number of inhabitants is from 2,000,000 to 2,500,000. Of the Copts there may be from 150,000 to 200,000; of these there are about 6,000 who belong to the Romish church, under the care of a bishop, who is nominated by the Pope.

There are about 3,000 Jews, somewhat under 2,000 Armenians, 7,000 Greeks, and 6,000 Catholic Franks. The remainder are Egyptians. So strong are the Muslim prejudices to a census, that Mehemet Ali has hitherto, wholly failed in his attempts to take one, although nothing could be more desirable for the better government of Egypt, than to ascertain approximately the number of its inhabitants.

The whole taxation of the country, with all its irregularities, the system of conscription, with all its sufferings, are founded on the rudest guesses as to the number of people. The productive powers of the human race in the valley of the Nile, are, no doubt, immense, and whenever there has been a short period of repose, the number of children born is surprising.

In a very few years, were the country in a state of rest, the inhabitants would be doubled, so easily is life supported, and so constant is the demand for labour. The present disproportion of the sexes is incredibly great. Even the government returns state the population of women to men to be as 130 to 100.

One of the causes of the exhaustion of the Pasha's army, is the prevalence of the nostalgia or home ache. The number of men who pine to death, sinking under the influence of this unmedicable malady, is very considerable; long before they die, they fall into a listless and inactive state.

"I cannot keep them alone," said a physician to Dr. Bowring, "when they begin to speak and talk of home." Although the mortality of Egypt is undoubtedly great, the most intelligent inhabitants are of opinion, that it is decidedly diminished of late years, owing to the establishment of medical schools. It is worthy of remark, that the Turkish race seldom perpetuates itself in Egypt; the children almost invariably die, and the Turkish population is kept up by importation.

The agricultural production of the country is in the hands of the Mohammedan fellahs. The Christian Copts exercise all the functions of scribes and accountants; the Turks are everywhere the paramount rulers; the Franks and Levantines, in their multitudinous varieties, traders and shopkeepers; and the negroes almost wholly engaged in domestic servitude.

The productive powers of the soil of Egypt are incalculable; wherever water is scattered, there springs up a rapid and beautiful vegetation. In two years an agreeable garden may be created in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, which is the least promising part of Egypt. A perpetual struggle is, however, carried on between the desert and cultivation.

In many parts of the Delta the desert has invaded and mastered the soil; in others, however, the desert has been vanquished by cultivation. In fact, were there hands to plough and water to irrigate, it is not easy to calculate what an immense tract of territory might be rescued from the waste. At present it is estimated there are about 3,500,000 feddans, or acres, fit for cultivation.

In Egypt, one necessity in agriculture absorbs all others; for unless the inundation of the Nile irrigates the lands, in vain through immense districts is the seed sown—in vain the sun shines. It is generally thought that the agricultural produce of Egypt has increased of late years. The richest district is that of Es Siout; such is the fertility of the soil, that it could, under proper management, produce a sufficiency of corn for the consumption of Egypt.

The land in cultivation in the district is about 600,000 feddans. Wheat is the principal article grown. The quantity of wheat produced in Egypt may be estimated at from 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 of ardebs, or from 630,000 to 1,260,000 qrs. In abundant years the price is 25 piasters per ardeb; but it has been as high as 190 piasters.

Notwithstanding the heavy expenses of cultivation, the returns on wheat production for capital are not less, on an average, than from 10 to 20 per cent. per annum; it can be probably profitably produced at a cost of 16s. per quarter. In good seasons there is considerable exportation; the pasha in one year exported 1,000,000 ardebs. In 1837-38, owing to the failure of the inundations of the Nile, grain was imported to a large extent.

ally, while many other fruits of the soil produce two or three. The average produce exceeds 2 cantars per feddan; but with an improved system of cultivation, five cantars might easily be obtained, at the cost of 200 piasters per cantar. The cultivator of cotton is not badly paid. The soil of Egypt is generally favourable to its cultivation; that in the neighbourhood of the Nile, not subject to the inundations, is preferred. The fellah is obliged to deliver all his produce to the pasha, who pays him from 112 to 120 piasters for each 120 lbs. according to the quality; from this payment, however, is deducted his contribution to the miri, or land-tax.

Raw silk is an object to which some attention has been paid in Egypt, and is likely to become of great importance hereafter. In the district of Ouaady Sonula there are 3,000 feddans of mulberry-trees, and 7,000 in other districts. The quantity of silk produced annually is about 7,000 okes; but the production is not equal to the internal demand. There is, however, no reason why Egypt, with its great capabilities, should not be an exporting country.

The sugar-cane has of late assumed considerable importance among the products of Egypt. At Rhoda, a little to the south of Manfalout, Ibrahim Pasha has 272 feddans occupied by the cane, under the management of a superintendent, from Jamaica, who augurs well of the undertaking. The produce of sugar is 27 1/2 cantars per feddan; but with better machinery, 30 cantars could easily be obtained. The net proceeds per feddan were, in 1837, 32 sterling. At Reyremon there is a sugar-refinery. Ibrahim has also manufactured some rum of a fair quality, and there is little doubt the production will largely increase.

He has also produced some tolerable wine; the white resembles Marsala; the red, the common wine of Spain. At Rhoda, Ibrahim, who is the encourager of agriculture, as his father has been of manufactures, has also planted 200,000 olive-trees, which in a short time will yield considerable revenue. Mr. Kinnear heard the profit estimated at a dollar per ton of oil, or about 20,000 per annum. His highness's gardens at Rhoda are managed by two Scotchmen, Mr. Trail and Mr. McCulloch; and are very extensive and beautiful.

Indigo is cultivated to some extent; the quantity produced fluctuates much, the estimates varying from 15,000 to 80,000 okes. Armenians from the East Indies, superintend the indigo works, all of which belong to the Pasha. Opium, to a small extent, is likewise produced. In 1825, madder-cultivation was introduced, but sufficient is barely produced for the consumption of the country. One of the most extensively cultivated and most productive objects of the vegetable kingdom, is the date-tree; it is spread all over Egypt, and administers to the comfort of the natives more than any other product of the soil. Each tree produces yearly fruit alone of the average value of from 8s. to 16s. Revenue is collected on about two millions of date-trees.

To the Pasha and his son Ibrahim, the horticulture of Egypt owes much; not only are their own extensive gardens watched over by intelligent and skilful botanists, but they have sent travelling gardeners to the East Indies, and other parts, in order to collect specimens of such vegetable productions as are likely to suit the Egyptian soil. The star-apple, the guava, teak, the papaw tree, arnotta, the custard-apple, the India-rubber tree, turmeric, arrow-root, ginger, cedar-wood, fustic, benzoin, cajeput, yam, and the bamboo-cane, have all been acclimated during the last ten years. The coffee plant has also been tried, but its ultimate naturalisation is very doubtful.

Egypt breeds but few cattle; the parts of the country which are cultivated can be much more profitably employed than in growing herbage and corn for the purpose of feeding cattle; there is no pasturage except in those parts where the soil has ceased to be cultivated, and what herbage the desert affords. Horses and cattle are generally imported; the Bedouins, however, rear a few. In Egypt, Saltpetre is made in abundance from the ruins of ancient towns, and salt from the inner parts of mummies! After the nitre has been extracted from the ruins, they become saturated again, after a few years, and may be passed through the pans, depositing almost as much nitre as before. At Esh Monnoen, out of the ruins of Hermopolis Magna, about 2,700 cantars of saltpetre are made per annum. The Pasha has a large manufactory of gunpowder at Mekyal, in the island of Rhoda; it produces fifty cwt. per day.

We now come to the manufactures of Egypt. For nothing has Mehemet Ali been more severely censured, than for endeavouring to make Egypt a manufacturing country; and in no respect do we think more unjustly or unnecessarily. Had the semi-civilized Pasha no other excuses than that of having been desirous of rendering his country independent of foreign nations, or of having been fascinated by the prosperity which he elsewhere saw proceeding from manufactures, his justification would be ample. And even had his manufactures wholly failed, they must have been productive of great good; through them Europeans have settled in Egypt, and by their presence diffused civilisation and toleration, and led the Pasha into a policy more agreeable to the principles of political economy. But, in fact, Mehemet Ali had no alternative but to commence his improvements with manufactures—the amount of the population of Egypt would not have allowed Egypt to have become an agricultural country.

The Pasha now possesses forty-four cotton-factories in Egypt; they are divided into three departments—each department has an inspector-general over it; and the whole are under the direction of the Council of Public Instruction. The three inspectors try who can produce calico the cheapest, with the least expense for repairs; this system of competition is very injurious: it has brought the machinery, which was not originally good, having been made either in France or from French models, into a very wretched state; and as long as it is continued, Mehemet will never have factories nor machinery fit to compare with other nations. Besides the cotton factories for spinning, weaving, bleaching, dyeing, and printing, the manufactures consist of linen, woollen, tarbouch, paper, type-foundry, printing, sugar, rum, salt, saltpetre, indigo, naron, penna, gunpowder, leather, mats, pottery, glass, flints, aquavita, chemical works, oil, rice, flour, iron, copper, brass, muskets, small arms, and accoutrements.

GATHERING OF THE CHARTISTS AND RADICALS AT LEEDS.—The great demonstration, as it has been styled—took place at Leeds, on Thursday the 21st January, and passed off very quietly.—The object of the promoters of the Meeting is to obtain an extension of the Franchise—the vote by ballot—and shorter Parliaments. In fact to unsettle the system of representation as defined by the Reform Bill.

The Chartists, who go the whole hog—a step or two beyond the Radicals—having exhibited an inclination to meddle with the demonstration, they were taken into partnership to prevent an open quarrel; and at the meeting, the Leaders of the two sections spoke alternately, but the Chartists were determined to have a Preliminary Meeting; and about 3,000 assembled at Holbeck Moor in the morning, when the following resolution was carried:—

"That we, the working people of the West Riding of the county of York, as well as the rest of England and Scotland, represented by their several delegates, in this public meeting assembled, do hereby resolve, from this day forth, not to join in, or countenance, any agitation for any measure, other, than the accomplishment of Universal Suffrage; being well convinced, that so long as one man's property constitutes another man's title to the ownership of such property will have it in his power to exercise a destructive influence over the elective franchise; thereby (however speciously right may be said to be conferred, or however secretly its use may be exercised) leaving an unjust controul in the hands of the owners of suffrage property; and which, in point of fact, was the one evil principle sought to be abolished by the Reform Bill."

The chief characteristic of the Meeting was the abuse lavished on Mr. O'Connell. The Town had been placarded many days before, with an address to the working classes, in which Mr. O'Connell was thus pictured. "This friend, Daniel O'Connell! sold the political rights of 300,000 forty-shilling freeholders of Ireland, for a seat in Parliament for himself and his tools; and thus procured the turning out of their holdings upon the wide world, as vagrants and wanderers, thousands upon thousands of his brave countrymen."

"This hollow-hearted friend exerted his blood-and-life-bound power to prevent the establishment of a rightly grounded Poor-law for the relief of these vagrants; and he wandered, hoping thus to starve them off the face of the earth, that they might no longer remain living-in-death monuments of his unparalleled treachery."

"This personification of Deceit, constituted himself the 'Factory Child's Chancellor,' and then sold their blood, their tears, and their lives, for £1,000!! which he received, full tale, from the mill owners of Manchester, though conscious that every copper of the sum was the devil's price for an immortal soul!"

"This foul-mouthed traducer of everything good, everything virtuous, had the monstrous hardihood to declare 'that out of twenty English women who were married, nineteen of them were mothers before the marriage!'"

"This cowardly trickster, when you sent a missionary to hold out the hand of fellowship to the working men of Ireland, in their own metropolis, in order to a good understanding and unity of action between both sections of the operative community, packed the meeting room with his hired tools, and refused to hear the voice of your ambassador of peace."

"This disgrace to the human form, when your faithful friend Frost was betrayed by Government spies into the hands of the soldiery at Newport, and when twenty of your brethren were laid dead upon the field by their murderous fire, this 'man' (!) set up a yell of savage satisfaction, and blurted out, 'Serve 'em right! Serve 'em right! O! I thank God it was my own boys, under Sergeant Daly, who did it!'"

"This hideous lump of hypocrisy took the chair at a public meeting, in the year 1829, in London, at which the Political Union for the attainment of Universal Suffrage was formed; he also was one of six members of Parliament who drew up the 'People's Charter,' telling you to agitate for, and procure its passing into a law; when you did as he bid you, and your agitation had become so formidable as to alarm faction, this horrible dissimulator turned round, and denounced both you and Universal Suffrage, and offered to bring 500,000 Irishmen into England to put you down; to force you to tamely bear the wrongs and sufferings which injustice and want have inflicted upon you!"

Several Chartist leaders addressed the meeting, and a series of resolutions in addition to the above, were adopted, condemning the Ministers, and styling Mr. O'Connell "the most profligate politician ever known in this or any other age or country."

THE REFORM MEETING.—Took place at four o'clock the same day, in a newly-erected mill, the property of Messrs. Marshall, flax-spinners. Several thousand persons were present, but Mr. O'Connell was not there as was expected.

Mr. G. Marshall presided, and the great concourse of persons were addressed first by Mr. Hume, who moved the following Resolution:—"That the great evil made, by means of the Reform Bill, to improve the condition of the country, had failed to attain its end desired by the people; and a further reform had become necessary, it is the opinion of this meeting, that the united efforts of all Reformers ought to be exerted to obtain such a further enlargement of the franchise as should make the interests of the representatives identical with those of the whole country, and by them secure a just government for all classes of the people."

FRIDAY MORNING.—Mr. O'Connell did not appear at the meeting yesterday, and I believe that it was fortunate he did not do so, for some persons were apprized by the police, having daggers in their possession! This is a fact of which I have been informed with authority, on the correctness of which I have every reason to rely. It was to oppose and shout him down, that the Chartists were organised in such numbers, and it is for this purpose, too, they had supplied themselves with whistles, the effect of which they first tried upon the chairman, upon Mr. Hume, and then Mr. Roebuck. The meeting itself was, as far as numbers went, a magnificent one, their being present at least 8,000 persons, and of these there were not less than 1,500 Chartists; the remainder were Reformers, who look forward by Ballot, Household Suffrage and Re-distribution of the Electoral Districts, Triennial Parliaments, and no property Qualifications for Members.

SINGULAR DEATH OF SCOTT, THE DIVER.—On Monday afternoon a fatal accident occurred to the man known as "Sam Scott, the American diver," while preparing to leap from the summit of Waterloo-bridge into the Thames. Scott has exhibited his feats on Southwark and other bridges, but on Waterloo, and for some days past, in order to attract as many sight-seers as possible, a placard had been tacked throughout the metropolis, of which the following copy:—"Challenge to the world for 100 guineas, on a Monday next, Jan. 11, 1841, and during the week, Samuel Scott, the American diver, will run from Goswell, White Lion, Drury-lane, to Waterloo-bridge, and up into the water, 40 feet high from the bridge, and in back within the hour, every day, between one and two o'clock. S. S. will be in attendance every day the above house,

open to any wager." The above announcement had effect, long before the time appointed, of drawing to Waterloo-bridge a great concourse of persons. At ten minutes past two o'clock, Scott left Drury-lane, proceeded to Waterloo-bridge. His clothing consisted of a blue striped shirt, white canvass trousers, and a silk handkerchief tied over his head, but he had no shoes nor stockings. A sort of scaffolding had been erected, consisting of five poles, two placed perpendicularly, and three crosswise, at intervals of three or four feet, and the centre of the second and third poles from one another, over the centre of the second arch of the Middlesex and Somerset-house side of the bridge, Scott, on making his appearance, was hailed with plaudits from the multitude. He immediately ascended the scaffolding, and having adjusted a rope, which he carried with him to the top pole, gave a tin box to several of his friends to make a collection for the observing, "I think you are all cranky." He commenced by placing his head in the noose of the rope, and suspending himself by the chin for three or three minutes. His next feat was to perform an evolution with his feet in the rope. He then ascended the summit of the scaffolding for the third time, having divested himself of the handkerchief round his head, and attached it to one of the perpendicular poles, and exclaimed at the top of his voice, "I'll now show you once more how I can dance upon nothing before my dive." With that he, for the second time, put his head in the noose and swung himself off. He hung for three or four minutes, when a person named Brown, who was standing near, observed that he was hanging himself in reality; to which he replied, "Oh, no, he has not hung himself in usual time yet." In an instant after, shouts were raised from the populace on all sides to 'cut him down.' On hearing this, Mr. Brown ascended the ladder and cut up Scott's arm, which, on his relinquishing it, fell back to the man's side. The shouts now became louder, with cries of "Cut him down." Some bystanders and several of the F division of police got up the ladder, and after some delay succeeded in cutting the rope, and removing Scott to the bridge. Mr. Havers, a gentleman of York-row, and another medical gentleman from the spot, pressed forward. A vein in the arm, and the jugular, were opened by them, but only one or two drops of blood flowed. Scott was then placed in a Hospital, to which institution he was followed by hundreds of persons. On his arrival there it was found that life was not quite extinct, and the following day he was resorted to:—In the first place, he was placed to the galvanic process; secondly, to cupping on the shoulders; and, lastly, he was placed in a warm bath, in which he had not been more than a few minutes when it was discovered that he was dead.—Lancet Paper.

FRENCH OPINION ON THE PROGRESS OF POPULATION IN ENGLAND.—"England," observes the *Univers*, "at the present moment, Catholicity is regaining its lost ground in a most striking manner; for we hesitate not to predict our firm belief and hope that this progress of the religion will not be arrested, that it will go on daily increasing and gaining force, that the prediction of our publicist, Le Maistre, will yet be accomplished, and the time approaches when England, returning to the bosom of the Church, will place power and her genius at the service of the religion."

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ENORMOUS DISTANCES OF THE STARS.—In the portion of 100,000 to 1, then, at least, must the distance of the nearest fixed star from the sun exceed that of the sun from the earth. The latter distance, as we already seen, exceeds the earth's radius in the portion of 24,000 to 1; and lastly, to descend to our standards, the earth's radius is 4000 of our miles. distance of the nearest star, then, cannot be so small as 4,800,900,000 radii of the earth, or 19,200,000,000 miles!! How much larger it may be we know not.—*schel, on Astronomy, Cabinet Cyclopaedia.*

BRANDY AND SALT.—There appears to be a dissension as to the efficacy of this medicine; some tending that it is mere quackery—others that a universal panacea. Two cases of its efficacy have, ever, come to our knowledge this week. The one a man who had had a large wen upon his head, several years, which he rubbed with the mixture of this awkward appendage had entirely disappeared; the other case it was applied for ear-ache by a man who had been almost deaf for many years—the result stroke of lightning. The mixture cured the ear-ache, but its efficacy went further. In a short time after application the patient felt a loud crack within the which he describes as being like the report of a gun immediately after which he could hear almost as well as ever he could. Previous to the brandy and salt being applied, he was so deaf as to be unable to hear the octave of a fife, even when he was himself playing he can now hear the ticking of the clock, the rustle of the leaves, &c. These are facts.—*Yorkshire Guardian.*

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CHARLOTTETOWN: Printed and published by COOPER & BREWSTER, Printers to the Honourable the House of Assembly, at their Office, East corner of Pownall and Water Streets.—TERMS 15s. per annum, payable half yearly in advance.