THE SUDAN

International Boundaries
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THE SUDAN

THE SUDAN

A Record of Achievement

by

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TO

SHEILA

Quotations from official documents and speeches in this story have been taken from published papers.

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PREFACE

THE SUDAN—the territory known properly as the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan—has a total area of just under 1,000,000 square miles: an area as vast as the United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark put together. It is bounded in the north by Egypt and Libya; in the south by the Belgian Congo, Uganda and Kenya; in the east by Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Red Sea; in the west by French Equatorial Africa. Port Sudan, the only commercial port, is on the strip of coastline on the Red Sea. The total population of the country is about 9,000,000.

The Sudan was conquered by a joint British and Egyptian Army at the end of the last century. In 1899 the British and Egyptian Governments signed an agreement for its joint administration as a Condominium. In 1924 the Egyptians were expelled from active administration as a result of an armed mutiny on their part, and since then have had little to do with internal affairs. There is, under various agreements, a small Egyptian

Department for the control of the Jebel Aulia Dam and for collecting data about Nile water.

The international agreement of 1899 continued in force and was again ratified in a twenty-year Treaty in 1936. Theoretically at least, Egypt remained jointly responsible for the Sudan until October 1951. She then took the one-sided step of abrogating both the 1936 Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain and the 1899 Condominium Agreements. The British Government refused to recognise this step, holding that it was illegal and contrary to the terms of the Treaty ; and although the Sudanese themselves regard the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreements and Treaty as ended, the government of the country has been carried on very much as it was before.

How is it possible for orderly administration to continue as usual in such apparent political confusion ? The answer is to be found in the structure of the Sudan Government. Since 1899 there has been a British Governor-General, appointed by the King of Egypt on the recommendation of the British Government. He is Commander-in-Chief of all local military forces and solely responsible for internal affairs. His civil machinery consists of the small corps of the Sudan Political Service and the Civil Service. In certain Departments, notably in that of Surveys, the Sudan

Civil Service is generally recognised as being second to none. Of 9625 classified posts 8412 (87 per cent) are held by Sudanese, 993 by British, 202 by Egyptians, 18 by other nationalities. The *Governor-General's immediate* advisers are the Civil, Financial, and Legal Secretaries. The Civil Secretary controls the Political Service and the others are heads of their respective Departments; and the Civil and Financial Secretaries maintain a watching brief over every aspect of governmental practice. For matters of major policy the Governor-General has an Executive Council of seven Sudanese and five British members; and there is a Legislative Assembly of eighty-eight Sudanese and five British members.

These predominantly British and Sudanese elements in the Government have guided the country to the verge of the self-government and self-determination which are the subjects of the last chapter of this book.

J. S. R. D.

KHARTOUM,
1st September 1952.

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY YEARS

SOUTH of the 12th parallel of North latitude, service in the Sudan Government counts more towards a pension. That line is regarded as a rough division between two distinct countries; between the Northern Sudan with its Arabic-speaking Islamic population, and the Southern Sudan with its primitive Negroid and many-tongued pagan one. Beyond that broad distinction there are great diversities of origin and character.

The terrain, too, has a general line of demarcation. It varies from vast areas of desert sand in the north to sub-tropical vegetation and mud in the south. Through the middle of it all, from south to north, flows the River Nile on its way to Egypt and the Mediterranean. And how true is the saying: "He who drinks of the waters of the Nile shall drink of them again"! For whether this mighty river be barely moving in the steamy southern swamps or winding purposefully across the northern sand, there is a fascination and an

air of history about it; and in the heat of mid-day no less than in the brilliant starlight it makes the traveller aware of the generations of early peoples who have lived for a time within sight of its waters.

Man has lived in the Northern Sudan for about a million years. We know that very long ago the Nile was much wider and deeper than it is now; for it deposited gravel more than 150 feet above its present high-water mark and to a distance of several miles from the present banks. We know from stone implements and rock pictures that the desert spaces were not always so and that there was enough rain to grow crops. About ten thousand years ago there were probably climatic changes which drove the inhabitants down to the valley of the river and marked the beginnings of their division into the settled agri-culturists and nomads of to-day. The agricul-turists sowed grain in the mud-flats to replace the wild fruits they had been in the habit of eating, and the nomads tamed animals and used them for hunting. From the stone pictures of Egypt we get glimpses of these happenings from 3500 B.C. onwards.

Somewhere between 500 and 300 B.C. the "sagia" water-wheel was introduced into the country. At about the same time the first camels

appeared. These animals had their origin in a different form on the American continent in very early times and crossed to Asia by way of the Behring bridge. The Persians probably brought them when Cambysses invaded Egypt in 525 B.C. and made an abortive raid to Kharga in the south. They were soon in use on trade-routes to the west and became the national mode of transport. Homer had heard of the Sudan, and Greek merchants came there to trade their wares and their wines, as they still do. But the Romans never occupied it, although Nero sent an officer to report whether it was worth conquering. The officer, who went as far as the Sudd in the extreme south, did not recommend an expedition. In the sixth century A.D. Christianity arrived, at about the same time as it reached Abyssinia. Two obscure Christian kingdoms, one with its capital at Dongola and the other at Soba, near Khartoum, survived until the spread of Islam in the sixteenth century. From then until 1819, when the modern story begins to emerge, no single name could have been given to the country as a whole. The scene, except for the Negroid Fung kingdom with its capital at Sennar, is one of chaotic tribal war.

Of the six million people who now live in the Northern Sudan, about three million are the riverain peoples of the Nile, who still irrigate

their crops with the traditional water-wheels turned by oxen, as they did in the time of the Babylonian Empire. Of the others there are the nomad Arabs, the Kababish and the Kawahla with their great camel herds, whose lives seem to belong to the pages of the Old Testament; the Beja—Rudyard Kipling's Fuzzy-Wuzzies—who proudly maintain their ancient independence; the Baggara tribes of the west who keep enormous herds of cattle; and, finally, the people of the towns: Omdurman, Khartoum, Khartoum North, Wad Medani, El Obeid, Atbara, Port Sudan. The population of these main towns is 440,000, and of that total perhaps 500 are the new professional politicians whose vociferousness tempts one so easily to be sentimental; to look back to the days on a good riding camel; to the cool crisp nights under the stars when the young women sang and the young men joined in the chorus; to the talks round the wood fires with the Baggara; to the officials' club in the provincial town where we played chess and set the world good-humouredly to rights—to the days, in short, when we thought that "Good government is better than self-government."

The Southern Sudan presents a different picture indeed. Here, at least three million people, primitive, unclothed, pagan, and tremendously

virile, keep very much to themselves. And virility is the keynote. A man cannot hold his place if he is weak; and the women live, not in the out-of-date seclusion of Sudanic Islam, but in pristine open vigour. There are no large towns, no politicians, no newspapers. To the world at large these people do not exist; and in their hearts there is a deep hatred of the Egyptians.

Most of the Northern Sudanese regard the Egyptians, not with hate but with something like derision, and to appreciate this we must go back to where the story begins in the early relations of Egypt and the Sudan; not modern independent Egypt, but an Egypt under the sovereignty of Turkey and the personal domination of an Albanian, Mahomed Ali, who has been called the "Founder of modern Egypt." In 1517 Egypt was conquered by the Ottoman Turk, Selim I., and thereafter ruled by a Governor appointed by the Sultan of Turkey. As time passed, this Governor became a kind of constitutional monarch, and his power eventually fell into the hands of the Mamelukes, who had originally been slaves taken in the Caucasus but had become a military autocracy which ruled Egypt with a rod of iron. The confusion that followed Napoleon's victory at the Battle of the Pyramids in 1797, and the subsequent French occupation, undermined the

Mameluke influence. By their massacre in 1811 the young Albanian, Mahomed Ali, achieved supreme power. He reigned to considerable effect until 1848. He reformed a corrupt Government and his armies fought victorious campaigns in Arabia, Greece, and Syria.

In 1819 he took stock of the Sudan. In 1820 he assembled 5000 troops at Wadi Halfa, under the command of his third son Ismail, and by the end of 1821 this force, and another of 5000 in the west, had conquered the north and centre of the country. The Sudanese knew nothing of fire-arms and offered little resistance. Mahomed Ali had acquired another vast dominion for the Turkish Empire; but the next seventy-five years were to see the whole area of the Sudan reduced to a state of misery, poverty, and oppression probably unequalled at any time in its centuries of forgotten history.

The immediate effect of the new Turko-Egyptian Government had been promising. A form of administration was set up with a Governor-General at its head, and the Sudan was divided into Provinces, each with a Governor and a staff of Inspectors. The life of the people was not greatly interfered with. The hereditary chiefs of the great nomad tribes continued in office, and each settled village community elected a Sheikh, who

was responsible to a District Sheikh, responsible in turn to an Inspector. In 1830 the capital was established at Khartoum (which means " the elephant's trunk," after the shape of the narrow tongue of land on which the town stands at the junction of the Blue and the White Nile); and garrison forces of nearly 40,000 men were maintained at eight major and a number of minor stations.

But the Sudan was a poor country, barely able to sustain itself, and the additional burden of a foreign garrison and a horde of officials made matters worse. Famines were frequent, and since the success of the administration was judged by the returns in Cairo, intolerable taxes were imposed, which the Government took from the nomads in the form of cattle. Some of the cattle were exported to Egypt; some were sold to merchants who resold them to the original owners who, having no money, paid for them in slaves. The truth behind all this was that Mahomed Ali's conquest had had ulterior motives. It had been an invasion for slaves and rumoured gold. There was not much gold but an abundant supply of slaves, and the slave-trade now became the main industry. The Government itself engaged in it, and sent armed expeditions against the Nuba of Kordofan Province in the west, and

against the primitive Southern Sudanese who retreated farther and farther into their swamps. Merchant adventurers with small private armies roamed the country. The best of the slave men were taken for the army and the women were sold to the officials, officers, and troops who were themselves the scourings of Egypt and the Turkish legions. The reputation of the Sudan became as unsavoury as that of its extremely hot climate. Mahomed Ali cannot have been deceived by the reports of his frequently-changing Governors-General in Khartoum, but he went once only, in 1838, to inspect his conquest and its administration, and he died in 1848 before the clamour raised by the reports of some European explorers compelled Egypt to take action.

We live now in times when there is so little of the world left to discover or explore, that perhaps only those who have lived in Africa with the aid of modern applied science can appreciate the magnitude and dangers of the task these Victorian explorers set themselves. There were, for instance, the courageous Miss Tinne from Holland; the Prussian Baron Nernier; Lejean the Frenchman; and Petherick, Speke, Grant, and Sir Samuel Baker from Britain. Baker's capable wife, Florence, daughter of an Austro-Hungarian family, went with him on his travels.

It was Baker's description of their journey southward through Khartoum in 1861, to explore the interior and meet Speke, the discoverer of Lake Victoria Nyanza, that brought the dismal condition of the Sudan to the notice of the British public. On their arrival in Khartoum, in spite of being armed with a letter from the Viceroy in Cairo, they were given a hostile reception from the then Governor-General, an intriguer named Musa Pasha. When, after a great deal of trouble, they were about to sail south at last, Musa Pasha sent an official with a pretext for detaining them. Baker ran up the British flag " and sent my compliments to the Government official telling him that I was neither a Turkish subject nor a trader, but an English explorer ; and that if any Turkish official should board my boat under the British flag, I should take the liberty of throwing him overboard. This announcement appeared so practical that the official hurriedly departed." In their native craft the Bakers sailed slowly up the Nile to Gondokoro, a town which is of no particular importance now, but at that time it had about 600 inhabitants, was the headquarters of the Arab slave-trade in the far south, and a veritable sink of iniquity. From there they went far afield in search of the sources of the Nile, before returning to England in 1866, where they

were lionised. But Sir Samuel and Lady Baker had indeed drunk of the waters of the Nile, so we shall hear of them again.

When Mahomed Ali died in 1848 he was succeeded in the Viceroyship of Egypt by two lesser men: first, by Abbas I., then, in 1854, by Mahomed Said, who held office till 1863. Abbas I. took no interest in the Sudan at all. Mahomed Said went there in 1856 to see things for himself; and he was shocked. He pronounced the abolition of slavery; he promised that the tyrannical officials should be dismissed; he reduced taxation and ordered the Provincial Governors to hold annual meetings with the local notables for the purpose of fixing the taxes; and he divided the Sudan into four separate Provinces, each directly responsible to Cairo. But he never enforced these reforms; and by the end of his tenure of office the Khartoum Government had, in effect, lost its authority. The confusion was worse than before. Mahomed Said's omissions in the Sudan were perhaps not unconnected with his preoccupations in Egypt. To the Frenchman De Lesseps he had granted a concession for the great project of building the Suez Canal, and from then onwards the European Powers, especially France and Britain, had good reason to interest themselves closely in Egyptian affairs.

In 1863 Ismail, grandson of Mahomed Ali, became ruler of Egypt. He had undoubted qualities of leadership, but his part in international politics left his country deeply in debt and led to his personal downfall. Yet his accession to power may be taken as the beginning of a new and eventful phase in both Egyptian and Sudanese affairs. First, he addressed himself with great energy to the Egyptian scene. He took advantage of the boom in cotton caused by the American Civil War; he increased Egypt's tribute to the Sultan by £37,500 annually, and obtained for himself and his successors the new title of Khedive and for Egypt control of the ports of Suakin and Massawa on the Red Sea; and in 1869 the Suez Canal was opened. Then, in that same year, he turned his attention to the Sudan.

Egypt's European creditors, with whom she was now heavily engaged, were becoming concerned about the slave-trade. Something had to be done. Ismail found that in the Southern Sudan his authority counted for nothing. In the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province in the south-west, in particular, a remarkable character by the name of Zubeir Rahma was in control and openly refused to pay taxes to the Government. Born in a village just north of Khartoum, Zubeir had made such a success of his apprenticeship to the

ivory and slave-trades that at the age of twenty-six he had set up a business of his own. He had now withdrawn from active trading himself, but he held an over-riding interest in it in his area which enabled him to exact dues and live in luxury in his remote fastness. Ismail sent an armed expedition of 1200 men against him. The force was destroyed and it was the Khedive and not Zubeir who sought peace. Zubeir, having apologised for defeating the Egyptian expedition, was given the rank of Pasha, and as the years passed he grew steadily more powerful in his Province. North of him lay the vast and independent kingdom of Darfur, presided over by a Sultanate which had never acknowledged the authority of the Khedive nor of his Governor-General in Khartoum. Zubeir had an agreement with the Arabs of Southern Darfur that they would not molest his caravans; but in 1873 the Arabs broke the agreement and began raiding. Zubeir was a supporter of the Khedive when it suited him, and he retaliated now by capturing Shakka in Darfur and ordering the Sultan to obey the law of the Khedive. The two parties went to war; and the Khedive, who suspected that Zubeir would conquer Darfur and declare himself ruler of both Provinces, instructed the Governor-General to invade Darfur from the east. But Zubeir got there first and entered the

capital, El Fasher, in 1874. The Governor-General then complained to the Khedive of Zubeir's interference, and it was here that Zubeir made his great mistake; he decided to go to Cairo and put matters right himself. Ismail was too shrewd to allow him to return, and the man who had ruled a Province the size of France and conquered another of 140,000 square miles for Egypt, spent the rest of his life as the Khedive's "honoured guest."

Early in the course of these events the Prince of Wales made an official visit to Egypt. In the royal suite were Sir Samuel and Lady Baker, and one night, at a fancy dress ball given by De Lesseps of the Suez Canal, the Khedive led Sir Samuel aside under the stars and the fairy-lights and offered him command of a military expedition to suppress the slave-trade and annex for Egypt the territory south of Gondokoro. The Prince of Wales gave the project his blessing and Baker accepted. It was the kind of suggestion on Ismail's part that may have merited Cromer's assessment of him as "an astute but superficial cynic." But it is not easy to say just where the cynicism began. Baker, after all, owed the leisure and funds for his travels to a family fortune built on Jamaican sugar.

Baker was made a Pasha and nominated

"Governor-General of the Equatorial Nile Basin," with absolute authority over the countries of the Nile south of Gondokoro. In a letter to Lord Wharncliffe (quoted in 'Sir Samuel Baker: A Memoir'), Baker wrote that the objects of the enterprise, after crushing the slave-trade and annexing the Nile Basin, were to establish an effective government over the tribes that were fighting among themselves; to introduce cotton-growing on an extensive scale so that the natives should have something valuable to exchange for Manchester and other goods; to open the two great lakes of the Nile to navigation; and to set up a chain of trading stations in the Basin. In the same letter he described his force as consisting of ten steamers, fifty-five sailing-ships, steel ships that were to be manhandled across Africa and put together on the great lakes, and a force of 1700 infantry, cavalry, and artillery.

Early in December 1869 he and Lady Baker left Cairo for Khartoum, and once more ran into trouble with a new Governor-General. Whatever the Khedive's authority might be in Cairo, Baker in the Sudan at the head of an expedition of this character was just one Englishman in a hostile country. Even at this early stage he must have begun to realise that hardly any of its objectives would be achieved. Yet, with what must have

been amazing energy and drive, he managed to get thirty-three sailing-vessels ready and to sail from Khartoum with a motley force on the 8th February 1870.

Eight years had passed since the Bakers had last seen the Sudan, and everywhere they noted deterioration. Near Khartoum, "The rich soil on the banks of the river had been abandoned. . . . Villages once crowded had entirely disappeared; the population was gone. Irrigation had ceased. The night, formerly discordant with the creaking of countless water-wheels, was now silent as death. There was not a dog to howl for a lost master." They failed to reach Gondokoro at the first attempt owing to great blocks of "sudd" grass in the river, and set up a settlement at Taufikia, near the mouth of the Sobat River, whence Baker proposed to make a second attempt the following year. He himself returned to Khartoum to make sure of his supplies, and there discovered the magnitude of the opposition. All the territory that Baker was supposed to be conquering for the Khedive had been leased by the Governor-General to slave-traders. He was, as he wrote, "in a house divided against itself"; and it was only after devious and complicated discussions and agreements that he was able to return fairly satisfied to Taufikia, with a few more of his

European staff who had reached Khartoum, and make a fresh start. He reached Gondokoro in April 1871. There, with great ceremony, the official proclamation was read annexing the country to Egypt in the name of the Khedive and the Ottoman flag was run up at the mast-head.

For the next six months he was engaged in almost continuous war with the local traders, who stirred up the natives to attack the expedition. It was not until April 1872 that he got as far south as Masindi (now in Uganda) and informed an astonished King of the Unyoro that he was now under the protection of the Khedive. The King retaliated by carrying out a surprise attack on the representative of his new protector, who, in turn, burnt Masindi to the ground. A year later Baker returned to Cairo on the expiration of his contract and informed the Khedive that he "had conquered and pacified the country as far south as the Equator." What he had actually done was to establish a few precarious posts, incur the hostility of the natives, and theoretically extend Egypt's dominions in an area which she could not possibly control. But as the energetic Sir Samuel Baker and his remarkable wife finally leave the Sudan story at this point, for other fields of action in England and abroad, it should

not be forgotten that he had certainly struck the first blow at the slave-trade.

Ismail now had to look for a successor to Baker. At a chance meeting in Constantinople, Nubar Pasha, Ismail's Foreign Minister, had sounded Charles George Gordon; and in January 1874, on his forty-first birthday, Gordon left London for Khartoum to take up the appointment of Governor-General of the Equatorial Provinces with jurisdiction over all the country south of Fashoda. He already had a full career behind him. Having entered the Royal Engineers at the age of nineteen he had seen service in the Crimean War and the long siege of Sebastopol, and in Bessarabia and in Asia Minor; and his dramatic exploits in breaking the rebellion against Shanghai in 1863 had earned him honours from the Chinese Emperor and Queen Victoria and the affectionate title of "Chinese" Gordon from the British public. The Khedive had now appointed a man whose unusual qualities were to have a profound and lasting influence in the Sudan. Yet he was not a great administrator. For all his moral integrity and military experience, his judgment of people seems to have suffered from the optimism of the missionary and an undue reliance on first impressions. He had hardly arrived in the Sudan when he made one of these quick decisions and

persuaded the Khedive to release from gaol in Cairo a certain Abu Said, a slave-trader whom Baker had left to be tried by a special tribunal on evidence deposited with Nubar Pasha. Gordon wished to put this man in charge of the east bank of the Nile. Baker, in London, heard of it and fulminated in the columns of 'The Times'—not without reason, for in a few months Abu Said proved unreliable and was summarily dismissed.

Gordon's policy for combating the slave-trade was two-fold: to take strong measures against it, mainly by securing the normal trade-routes; at the same time to work for the confidence of the natives by recognising and supporting their own leaders. He set up military posts throughout his Province, and with Ismail's support pursued his policy for nearly three years with considerable success. He was ably assisted by an Italian named Romola Gessi, whom he had known as an interpreter in the Crimea and now made his right-hand man. Between them they surveyed and mapped the whole course of the river in his jurisdiction, and for the first time for many years the river tribes of the Southern Sudan knew peace and good government. In December 1876 Gordon left Equatoria for England, intending never to return. Though he had achieved much, he had been constantly frustrated by the bribery and

slave-dealing which went on outside his own territory. But in Cairo, Ismail, whom he liked, persuaded him to accept the Governor-Generalship of the whole of the Sudan; and in February 1877 he returned to rule an area which measured 2500 miles from north to south by 1200 miles from east to west.

He at once set about improving the administration in Khartoum. He dismissed the worst of the Egyptian officials and replaced them with Europeans and Sudanese. Emin Bey, a Prussian doctor who had served under him in Equatoria, was appointed Governor of that Province. A young Austrian officer, Rudolph Slatin, became Governor of Darfur. The telegraph line from Cairo had reached Khartoum in 1870 and the German Giegler was now put in charge of telegraphs. And in the shimmering desert heat of his immense territory the Governor-General, often alone, rode by camel on prodigious journeys, appearing unexpectedly in villages, towns, amongst travellers on the way, observing, dispensing justice, implanting the idea of better ways of living. His mental and physical energy during these two years of office were indeed remarkable; and one cannot help wondering how much it was in his mind on those journeys, in the long silences broken only by the " shif-shif " of the camel-pads,

that he was himself sowing the seeds of an upheaval that would sweep him away on its course.

He had only one serious interruption to contend with: Zubeir's son, Suleiman, staged a rebellion in the Bahr-el-Ghazal, which might have had widespread consequences if it had succeeded. But Gessi drove Suleiman to Darfur and shot him and nine of his chiefs on the pretext that they were trying to escape; and there was peace again. More; in Suleiman's decisive defeat the slave-trade was disorganised and almost wiped out.

Meanwhile Ismail, with one extravagant scheme after another, had sunk deeper into the mire of international debt; and the more he borrowed from abroad the more his creditors, chiefly Britain and France, tightened their hold on Egypt's affairs. Finally they put pressure on the Sultan of Turkey to depose him, and summarily and quietly he retired into obscurity. On the 1st July 1879 the news reached Gordon in a telegram from Cairo. He believed that Ismail had been shamefully treated and that a new Khedive would be a puppet in the hands of Britain and France. He resigned and left Cairo for England in January 1880.

Under an Egyptian Governor-General whom Gordon had twice had occasion to dismiss from other posts, the administration of the Sudan

rapidly reverted to incompetence and corruption. Indeed the year 1880 appears to have been the worst since Mahomed Ali's military intervention in 1819. The slave-trade, probably in reaction to Gordon's firm hold, broke out with renewed energy. There was misery in all the land; and in the Sudanese a feeling of sullen bitterness which was all the more intense after their experience of Gordon's rule. But the tribes were divided among themselves. They lacked a leader to unite them and to fan the flames of revolt against the "Turks"—which meant against all foreigners. The leader came, in the person of Mahomed Ahmed, the Mahdi; a humble, stern ascetic who claimed descent from the Prophet and brought to this revolt the fanatical fire of Islam which, like a bush-fire before the wind, was to roar and crackle over everything in its path. When it was all over, eighteen years later, the country was in desolation and ashes, but out of them the new Sudan was to arise.

Mahomed Ahmed was born on the little island of Lebub near Dongola, about 1844. His father, in spite of claiming to be descended from the Prophet, was never more than an unremarkable boat-builder. He moved south from Dongola while Mahomed Ahmed was still young, and died at Kerreri, near Omdurman. There were

a number of able-bodied sons to carry on the boat-building business, and the Mahdi-to-be was left free to enter upon his education in Islam. He learnt the rudiments of the Faith in little religious schools in and around Khartoum and, finally, having attracted attention during his scholastic career by his devotion and industry, came to study under a well-known religious leader named Sheikh Mahomed El Sherif. After a time he went to the island of Aba, about 150 miles south of Khartoum on the White Nile, to live a life of solitary meditation. His brothers came to join him, and he "hollowed out for himself a cave in the mud-bank and lived in almost entire seclusion, fasting often for days, and occasionally paying a visit to the head of the order to assure him of his devotion and obedience." Travellers on the river came to know of the holy man who so mortified his flesh that he saw visions.

On one of these visits he found the Sherif celebrating the circumcision of his son with dancing and gaiety, having granted a dispensation for the purpose. This was too much for the holy recluse; he protested vehemently. The Sherif was incensed by such behaviour from a disciple and bade him be off. Twice Mahomed Ahmed returned to ask forgiveness: each time he was rudely rejected. He tried a third time; and it is reported that the

Sherif, after further insults, finally said: "*Itla, ya Dongalawi*" ("Get out, you ~~dirty~~ Dongalawi.") This distinctly irreligious outburst on the part of the head of his order had the effect of driving Mahomed Ahmed into a rival camp and a partnership with a certain Abdallahi. This man was almost the exact opposite of the Mahdi. He was the practical man of affairs, ruthless and strong in leadership. It is said that his father prophesied on his death-bed that his son would be famous at the side of a great reformer, and Abdallahi was on the watch for the man who was to bring him fame. Rumours of Mahomed Ahmed's quarrel with the Sherif had spread. Perhaps this man who had dared to denounce the feasting was the one for whom he was looking; perhaps he was to be the "Mahdi," the second great prophet whom all knew would come to save the faithful in the day of trouble. The two men met and took a liking to one another; and one day Mahomed Ahmed confided to his most trusted disciples on Aba Island that he knew himself to be the Mahdi. The die was cast. Mahomed Ahmed and Abdallahi had taken up a position from which there could be no retreat. The rebellion, in fact, had begun. In secret—though it fast became an open secret—the Mahdi began to collect support from even the most distant tribes, journeying personally through

Kordofan again, speaking to the people and inspiring them. The Sudanese stirred and took notice, and for the first time, putting their faith in the fanatical visionary of Aba, they began to show signs of uniting as a people.

In Khartoum report after report was placed before the Governor-General, telling of seditious speeches, of secret letters, of restlessness everywhere. He sent Abu Saud, restored to favour since Gordon's departure, with a party of eminent men to persuade the Mahdi to come to Khartoum and discuss his claims, the object being to convince him of their falsity. The deputation was courteously received, but made no headway at all. "I am master of this country," announced the Mahdi, "and I shall never go to Khartoum to justify myself." The deputation withdrew, and in Khartoum and Aba preparations for war were begun.

On the 12th August 1881 the rebellion was under way. The Governor - General again despatched Abu Saud to Aba Island, but this time with two companies of soldiery and instructions to capture the Mahdi. News of this move was not lacking in Aba. Abu Saud arrived by steamer at nightfall, and in the engagement which followed the soldiers either shot each other in the darkness and confusion, or were struck down by the Mahdi's

followers ashore. Abu Saud could hardly have handled his mission with greater incompetence. He returned to Khartoum with only a few survivors. The Mahdi wisely retired from Aba to a position in the depths of the Nuba Mountains, inaccessible to attack in the rainy season which had now come, and remained there for a few months. It was far away from Khartoum, but within fairly easy reach of Fashoda where there was a military garrison ; and the commander of the garrison was foolish enough to march against the Mahdi in November, with a force of some 1400 men. He and most of his force were killed.

It is not surprising that the cry went through the land, " What manner of man is this ? " The Mahdi had now invested himself with even more authority by declaring that certain of the prophecies in the Koran were applicable to himself, and had bestowed on his followers the scriptural name of "*Ansar*" (helpers). More and more of the Sudanese came to give their allegiance, but still he stayed warily where he was. So far only the poor, with nothing to lose, were prepared to back him with their lives. But the Government became alarmed and mobilised 6000 men under the command of Yussif Pasha, a tried soldier ; and the Khedive dismissed Raouf Pasha, the incompetent Governor-General, and appointed Abd

el Gadir Hilmi Pasha in his place. But Yussif Pasha, in common with nearly everyone else, greatly underestimated the fanatical power of the Mahdi's movement, and almost his entire force was wiped out by the Ansar in a surprise attack in the mountains in the dawn of the 7th June 1882, and great quantities of stores and arms were captured. After this third decisive victory the Mahdi's support was secure. Revolts broke out in different parts of the country. They were suppressed for the moment; but the time to strike was approaching, and the strategy to be followed was apparent alike to the Mahdi and Abd el Gadir Pasha. It was that the Mahdi would have to capture the great Provinces of the west, Kordofan and Darfur; and, above all, the fortified garrison town of El Obeid, commanding the trade-route westwards, where there were stores and arms and wealth. Throughout the rainy season the Mahdi lay quietly in his fastness, letting his fame spread and the fires of hope grow bright in towns and villages. Tax-gatherers were killed, orders were ignored, and the Egyptian officials at their posts now went about in fear.

At the end of August 1882 the Mahdi moved. With a force of about 30,000 he camped outside the walls of El Obeid. He had many friends inside, but the Egyptian Governor had doubly

fortified the town with an inner wall round the fort and Government Buildings. The Mahdi sent envoys demanding its surrender. The envoys were immediately executed. The Mahdi, as yet inexperienced in tactics, ordered an assault. Over the outer walls swarmed the Mahdists, to be decimated by the riflemen on the walls of the inner citadel. The remnants withdrew, and in the haze of that blood-red sunset the Mahdi and his Khalifa, Abdallahi, must have conferred long and earnestly.

The defeat was a shock, but it cost them nothing in prestige. Rather had it the effect of making the fanaticism fiercer, and the tracks in the sand grew deeper as the supporters came in from the west in hundreds; on camels, on donkeys, on foot, to fill the gaps like ants rushing to the repair of the nest. In that treeless, waterless sand the white-robed hordes laid siege to El Obeid in a deepening impenetrable circle, and "the poor began to starve at the beginning of the siege, and soon were dying in quite considerable numbers. A little later matters came to a terrible pass. All the camels and cattle being finished, donkeys, dogs, mice, and even crickets were consumed, as well as cockroaches which were considered tit-bits; white ants, too, were eaten. And now the deaths by starvation had reached an appalling

figure. The dead and dying filled the streets; the space within the fortification being so limited there was not room for all the people, and in consequence many lay about in the streets and open spaces. The air was poisoned by the number of dead bodies lying unburied, while the ditch was half-full of mortifying corpses." On the 17th January 1883 the town surrendered. Mahomed Ahmed was Lord of the West.

The Mahdi was not alone in opening a new chapter in history at this point. The British Government was doing the same in its relations with Egypt. The revolt in the Sudan was primarily against misrule and foreign domination. Likewise in Egypt there had been growing a hatred of the Turkish yoke and of the interference of Britain and France, mainly since the days and debts of Ismail, in her internal and external affairs. Mr Winston Churchill, in his book 'The River War,' summed up the Egyptian and Sudanese agitations succinctly: "While men who lived by the sources of the Nile asserted that tribes did not exist for officials to harry, others who dwelt at its mouth protested that natives were not made to be exploited by creditors or aliens. The ignorant south found their leader in a priest; the more educated north looked to a soldier." The priest, in the long run, was to win. The

soldier was soon to lose, which was perhaps as well for Egypt. Since Ismail's deposition in 1879 that country had gone from bad to worse. Two Controllers-General were appointed, one British and one French, to try to bring some order into affairs; but they were empowered only to advise and could achieve little. The army, on half-pay which was always in arrears, became mutinous, and a Colonel named Ahmed Arabi emerged as the leader of a growing and seditious movement. The Khedive made concession after concession, finally appointing Ahmed Arabi as Minister of War; and the movement culminated in the massacre of fifty Europeans in Alexandria. The British Government, now deeply involved in Egyptian affairs by the purchase of 44 per cent of the Suez Canal share capital, apart from participation in sundry other enterprises, could not risk such a threat to its communications and national interests. Gladstone acted speedily. Units of the fleet bombarded Alexandria, and a force of 5000 men was landed under the command of Lord Wolseley "in support of His Highness the Khedive, as established by the Firmans of the Sultan (of Turkey) and existing international agreements, to suppress a military revolt in that country." France was invited to join the operation but declined, and Ahmed Arabi, the soldier

to whom the more educated north had looked, was defeated at Tel-el-Kabir in September 1882, exiled to Ceylon, and the Egyptian army of the day was dissolved. From that time onwards Britain occupied the country and assumed, in effect, the direction of Egyptian affairs.

In January 1883 a British officer, Colonel Hicks, was appointed Chief of Staff of the army of the Sudan and sent to Khartoum with what must have been one of the worst forces ever sent to a field of battle. The Governor-General had appealed for reinforcements, with the intention of securing the defence of Khartoum and awaiting events. The Khedive, however, was bent upon attacking the Mahdi, and the Egyptian Government proceeded to enlist about 10,000 of the men who had been dismissed from Ahmed Arabi's army, with the object of giving large numbers of discontented soldiery something to do and ridding the country of a potential menace. There were wholesale desertions on the way to Khartoum and many of the men were taken there in chains. To the citizens this army was a joke. It was undisciplined, ragged, and obviously incompetent. But Hicks marched to El Obeid with 7000 men and supporting arms and the Governor-General went with him. The officers bickered, routes were changed at the last minute, and the Mahdi's

men systematically destroyed wells and harried the force. The Mahdi sent a demand for surrender which Hicks, of course, rejected. Then, on the 3rd November, the Mahdi launched an attack with 20,000 men. By the next day there had been an appalling massacre. The Governor-General and Hicks were killed and only a few hundred of the Egyptian army survived.

In Darfur Province, far to the west, the Mahdi's capture of El Obeid and the main trade-route was decisive. Local rebels were besieging the garrisons and Slatin Pasha was at the end of his resistance. He decided that the only way of retaining the loyalty of his forces was by turning Muslim himself; but even that was useless, and in December 1883 he surrendered to the Mahdi's envoy and spent the next ten years as a prisoner in the Mahdi's camp. The news of Hicks's defeat had repercussions everywhere, not least in London and Cairo where it caused grave embarrassment. It was not wholly unexpected, but it came at a time when the British Government had just decided to reduce the number of troops in Egypt. Gladstone had in 1880 become Prime Minister for the second time, after his long struggle with Disraeli, and he wanted to change Disraeli's policy of imperial expansion to one of steady reform at home. His administration was unwilling to commit

itself to sending troops into action. At this inopportune time, however, the decision to reduce the troops in Egypt obviously had to be postponed; but as far as the Sudan was concerned the Government was adamant. Lord Granville, the Foreign Secretary, telegraphed to Sir Evelyn Baring, who had assumed the position of "Adviser" to the Khedive: "Her Majesty's Government can do nothing which would throw upon them the responsibility of operations in the Sudan. The Egyptian Government must rely upon its own resources."

The garrisons still remaining in the Sudan in fortified towns numbered about 24,000, and in the British Government's view the only sensible course was evacuation. The Egyptian Government did not take this view, but insisted that Khartoum, the Nile Valley, and the Eastern Sudan should be held and that Turkey should be asked to provide 10,000 troops. The argument went on between London and Cairo; but when the Khedive finally refused to carry out the defeatist policy of evacuation the British Government put its weight into a confidential telegram to Sir Evelyn Baring: "It is essential that in important communications affecting Egypt the advice of Her Majesty's Government should be followed, as long as the provisional occupation continues. Ministers and Government must carry out this

advice or forfeit their offices." Baring acted accordingly and Sherif Pasha's Government resigned. The new Government, under Nubar Pasha, "entirely concurred" in the wisdom of evacuating; so, early in January 1884, it was decided that the Egyptian garrisons were to be withdrawn "from Khartoum itself, as well as from the interior of the Sudan."

There was great relief in Whitehall, no doubt, at the settlement of this troublesome question; but there still remained the practical difficulties. How was the evacuation to be carried out. It was the Editor of the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' Mr Stead, who gave the lead to the Press in suggesting what appeared to be a solution. On the 7th January 1884 General Charles Gordon returned to England from Palestine, where he had been spending a holiday among Biblical scenes. The King of the Belgians had offered him an appointment in the Congo, which he had accepted; and he had sent his resignation to the War Office. But Mr Stead interviewed him on his arrival on the proposed abandonment of the Sudan, and on the 9th January the 'Pall Mall Gazette' published a leading article headed "'Chinese' Gordon for the Sudan." It asked: "Why not send 'Chinese' Gordon with full powers to Khartoum, to assume complete control of the territory, to meet with

the Mahdi, to relieve the garrisons, and to do what he can to save what can be saved from the wreck of the Sudan ? " On the morning of the 10th the Press had taken the subject up, and that evening Granville wired to Baring : " Would General Charles Gordon or Sir Charles Wilson be of assistance under altered conditions in Egypt ? " Gordon was sounded in London and agreed to accept the appointment if it were offered to him.

The Press was not entirely responsible for this situation ; Gordon's name had already been suggested to Baring, but neither he nor the Egyptian Government was convinced of Gordon's suitability. Baring, equable, efficient and logical, was hardly the man to welcome whole-heartedly the appointment of so colourful and impetuous a personality. However, on the 18th January Gordon met the Cabinet, and that very evening set off for Cairo ; and Baring, who was essentially fair-minded, yielded to the weight of opinion and gave the appointment his full backing ; and whatever he may have thought of Gordon's actions in the months ahead, carried his support to the point of endangering his own career.

Gordon received his instructions from Granville. They were : " To proceed to Suakin to report on the military situation in the Sudan and on the measures to be taken for the security of Egyptian

garrisons still holding positions in the country and of the European populations at Khartoum. He will consider the best mode of evacuating the interior of the Sudan and of securing the safety and good administration by the Egyptian Government of the ports on the Red Sea coast. He will pay special consideration to what steps should be taken to counteract the possible stimulus to the slave-trade which may be given by the revolution which has taken place. General Gordon will be under the orders of Her Majesty's Minister in Cairo and will report through him to Her Majesty's Government and perform such other duties as may be entrusted to him by the Egyptian Government through Sir Evelyn Baring." Now Baring had previously asked for an officer "with full powers, civil and military, to conduct the retreat." In the light of that request, Granville's instructions must be taken to confer executive authority, in spite of their apparent ambiguity. But Gladstone, who had not seen the instructions before Gordon left London, did not agree; he was convinced that he had made it clear to Gordon that he was proceeding to Khartoum in an advisory capacity. Clearly, then, all criticism of Gordon for exceeding his authority must be considered alongside Baring's request, Granville's instructions, and Gladstone's attitude; for all the later misunder-

standings between Gordon, Baring, and the British Government had their roots here.

As the train took him across France, Gordon, never still, never idle, prepared draft proclamations which he posted home at Lyons. They indicate that he was making two fundamental mistakes: he was visualising the Sudan as he had known it more than four years earlier; and he was underestimating the influence of the Mahdi upon the Sudanese and the power of this rebellion. He believed, for instance, that the Mahdi would not move out of Kordofan. In the proclamations, too, he obviously regarded himself as the executive emissary of Britain, with all her powers and forces at his disposal if he needed them.

In Cairo, when he met Baring and the Khedive, everyone was friendly and confident. He was given a free hand in the use of Egyptian troops, duly appointed Governor-General of the Sudan, and it was agreed to proclaim the policy of evacuation and the restoration of authority to the families of the independent Sultans who had formerly ruled. But when all this was reported to London there came the first hint of misunderstanding. Baring, to his surprise, received a rebuke: "Her Majesty's Government, bearing in mind the exigencies of the occasion, concerned in

these instructions, which virtually altered General Gordon's mission from one of advice to that of executing, or at least directing, the evacuation not only of Khartoum, but of the whole Sudan. . . ."

In Cairo Gordon met Zubeir, who had previously held sway over the west and south-west of the Sudan. Gordon asked Baring to allow Zubeir to accompany him. He had, he said, "a mystic feeling" that, with Zubeir, he could save the Sudan. Baring refused the request. Gordon agreed to think the matter over; and departed for Khartoum.

With Colonel Stewart, who had accompanied him from England, he travelled by the Nile route to Korosko; then across the desert by camel to Abu Hamad and thence to Berber, the most important town before Khartoum. He arrived there on the 11th February 1885, published the proclamation of the Khedive concerning the evacuation of the Sudan, and set up a provisional administration in the town. On the 18th February he arrived in Khartoum where he received a tumultuous welcome and where rejoicing went on far into the night. "I come," he said to the people, "without soldiers but with God on my side, to redress the evils of the Sudan. I will not fight with any weapons but justice."

In the Mahdi's camp there was apprehension

and the Khalifas sat in council. Gordon wired Baring for Zubeir. Baring backed the request to the British Government. The Egyptian Government unanimously supported it, and everyone who had any local knowledge of the position was in agreement. But the British Government would have nothing to do with the proposal. They wired to Gordon: "Her Majesty's Government are of the opinion that the gravest objections exist to the appointment by their authority of a successor to General Gordon. . . . In any case, the public opinion of this country would not tolerate the appointment of Zubeir." By this telegram England, whether she realised it or not, had burned her boats. By prohibiting the journey of Zubeir to help rescue the garrisons, and by identifying her national honour with the decision, she bound herself to rescue the garrisons, peacefully or forcibly.

At this refusal of what he regarded as his most vital request Gordon could have resigned and retired to a place of honour. He did not do so. He lost his temper but he stayed there through an ever-mounting number of misunderstandings. He believed that his honour was involved, that he was personally pledged to carry out his mission. As a lone Christian he believed that this could only be achieved with the power and influence of

Zubeir by his side. He was to return to the charge again and again: and in vain.

On the 11th March 1884 the Cabinet met in London to come to a final decision about Zubeir. It cannot have been an easy task. On the one hand was the unanimous opinion of the men who knew the area, and the immense prestige which Zubeir would carry in the Sudan—so great, they were advised, that in him lay the only chance of evacuation and of establishing an alternative form of government when the Egyptian garrisons had been withdrawn and Gordon's task accomplished. On the other hand, there was every reason to believe that Zubeir might start up his slave-trading activities again and there was only Gordon's word for it that Zubeir could be trusted. Could Gordon's word be accepted in such a grave decision? The Cabinet is to be forgiven for doubting it: in the two months since his arrival in Khartoum he had lived up to his reputation for impetuosity in his telegrams and reports. It was finally decided that Zubeir should be forbidden to go.

In effect this meant that the Sudan had been abandoned to the Mahdi. The tribes between Berber and Khartoum rose and the telegraph line to the north was cut. The Mahdi was on the road from El Obeid to Khartoum.

There was only one honourable course left to the British Government: to rescue Gordon. Baring proposed it. He proposed that a flying column of British troops (encamped at Suakin after a campaign in the Eastern Sudan almost unequalled for stupidity in the annals of British military history) should go to Berber. Her Majesty's Government did not think this justifiable. They wished General Gordon to remain at Khartoum or "to retire by the southern or any other route which might be found available." In reply Baring made one last attempt to save Gordon, and his telegram of the 26th March 1884 shows him to have been a man of personal courage:—

"I cannot say whether it will be possible for me to communicate your Lordship's message to Gordon, but in any case I cannot reconcile myself to making the attempt to forward such a message without again addressing your Lordship. Let me earnestly beg Her Majesty's Government to place themselves in the position of Gordon and Stewart. They have been sent on a most difficult and dangerous mission by the British Government. Their proposal to send Zubeir, which, if it had been acted on some weeks ago, would certainly have entirely altered the situation, was rejected. The consequences which they foresaw have ensued. If they receive the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 25th, they cannot but understand them as meaning that they and all with them are to be abandoned and to receive no help from the British Government. . . . As a matter of personal opinion, I do not believe in the impossibility of helping Gordon, even during the summer, if Indian troops are employed, and money

is not spared. But if it be decided to make no attempt to afford present help, then I would urge that Gordon be told to try and maintain his position during the summer, and that then, if he is still beleaguered, an expedition will be sent as early as possible in the autumn to relieve him. This would, at all events, give him some hope, and the mere announcement of the intention of the Government would go a long way to ensure his safety by keeping loyal tribes who may be still wavering. No one can regret more than I do the necessity of sending British or Indian troops to the Sudan, but, having sent Gordon to Khartoum, it appears to me that it is our bounden duty, both as a matter of humanity and policy, not to abandon him."

On the 28th March Lord Granville replied :—

"We cannot accede to the proposals in your telegram. We have given it our most serious consideration, and, with the greatest wish to assist General Gordon, we do not see how we can alter our instructions of the 25th. Communicate them as soon as possible to General Gordon. We are not prepared to add to them until we hear what is General Gordon's actual condition and prospects as to security, and also, if possible, his plans of proceeding and his desires under present circumstances."

Gordon received this news, and the news of Zubeir, on the 9th April. On the 22nd March he had also received from the Mahdi the rejection of a peace offer which he had sent previously. There was to be no help of any kind. Khartoum was already virtually besieged. It was now to be war to the death, and in the long story of heroism down the centuries he was to

take his honoured place. He replied angrily to Baring, who ill-deserved it personally :—

"As far as I can understand, the situation is this: you state your intention of not sending any relief force up here or to Berber and you refuse me Zubeir. I consider myself free to act according to circumstances. I shall hold on here as long as I can, and, if I can suppress the rebellion, I shall do so. If I cannot, I shall retire to the Equator and leave you the indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Sennar, Kassala, Berber and Dongola, with the certainty that you will eventually be forced to smash up the Mahdi under great difficulties if you would retain peace in Egypt."

He would never retire.

The long siege began. A Christian among Mahomedans leading and inspiring 7000 soldiers and 30,000 citizens by sheer force of character. Stewart was still with him, and Power, a correspondent of the London 'Times.' By the end of March a column of Mahdist forces had established themselves on the north bank of the Blue Nile and begun to fire intermittently at the Palace. Throughout the blistering heat of the summer months the siege went on. In August the Mahdi moved. He had himself not come to Khartoum —he had bided his time. But now with an army of 60,000 men he left Kordofan where he had rested and turned towards the beleaguered capital. On hearing this, Gordon decided on a desperate step: to send Stewart, Power, and the French

Consul with news to the outside world of the grave position. They were treacherously murdered on the way. It was now September, and in his 'Journals at Khartoum' Gordon has left us a dramatic account of the last few months. In these journals, in the written words and between the lines, one finds the whole character of the man laid bare, and in sheer moral strength one finds nothing wanting. There was no money left to pay the troops and he issued notes, signing them with his own name; and in the city there was scarcity and disease. But his light burned brightly. Outside the walls, in like manner as at El Obeid, the Mahdist hordes gathered in their thousands. November passed, and on the 14th of December Gordon sent his steamer *Bordein* to run the gauntlet of the Mahdist arms to Shendi, which was still holding out under a brave commander. The *Bordein* carried the last instalment of the 'Journals,' and in the final entry there is only pathos: "Now MARK THIS, if the Expeditionary Force, and I ask for no more than two hundred men, does not come in ten days, the town may fall; and I have done my best for the honour of my country. Good-bye."

But the end was yet to come. Since March, Gordon's fate had been one of the main concerns of the British nation. In the Press and in Parlia-

ment there were continual attacks on the Government, and all this feeling crystallised into a national determination that a relief expedition should be sent. Gladstone resisted the pressure until August, when it became apparent that any further resistance would entail the downfall of his Liberal administration. Grudgingly, he yielded. The sum of £300,000 was voted for the preparation of an expedition. It was thought that the despatch of a brigade would be adequate, but the force was to cost many thousands of pounds more and was to number ten thousand men by the time preparations were completed. Lord Wolseley was appointed in command, and on the 5th October he moved to the Sudan frontier at Wadi Halfa. He was not aware of any need for great haste. Deliberately and methodically he organised his stores and his troops. From Canada he brought three hundred boatmen to pilot his eight hundred flat-bottomed boats (whalers) through the dangers of the Nile cataracts. He planned to move his main force by river and to send his Camel Corps units ahead as a desert column to help Gordon in the defence of Khartoum pending the arrival of the main body in about March of 1885. All England followed his every move. He was not to be reckless. Gordon got news of the expedition and Khartoum went mad with delight: but he

did not realise how deliberate and cautious its progress was to be. The Desert Column, under the command of Sir Herbert Stewart, and consisting of about 1800 officers and men in all, set off; but not until the 30th December, as the result of a secret verbal message brought from Gordon, was there any appreciation of the need for haste. They were then at Korti, 240 miles from Khartoum. On that very day Sir Herbert Stewart advanced, and on the 17th January 1885, near Metemma, he fought the most bloody battle ever fought by British troops in the Sudan. The Mahdi had sent 10,000 men against him. They were defeated, but 159 British officers and men lay dead on the field. Sir Herbert Stewart himself was killed. The force reached the river and, as they were fortifying their position, they saw four steamers coming from the south—among them the *Bordein* carrying Gordon's last 'Journal' and the latest news from Khartoum. It was the 21st January. The *Bordein* had left Khartoum on the 14th December. Sir Charles Wilson, on whom the command of the Desert Column had devolved, delayed for three days, and on the morning of the 24th sailed in the *Bordein* and the *Tell Hawein* for Khartoum. The whole journey is an annal of great courage, but everything went wrong. The *Bordein* struck

a rock and ran aground on a sandbank. They were under constant fire from the banks. On the 28th January they rounded the south-west corner of Tuti Island which lies at the approaches to Khartoum. Eagerly through their glasses they must have looked for the Turkish flag flying at the Palace masthead. It was not there. The heroic Gordon was dead and the town had fallen. The Mahdi had launched his attack on the 25th —only three days previously. There was nothing left for the gallant little band but to turn their vessels and flee for safety. There was nothing left for Wolseley to do but to withdraw his entire force. The city had fallen and the envoy was dead. There was no further purpose in the expedition. Harried by the enemy he struggled back again across the harsh desert land. One by one the remaining Egyptian garrisons surrendered. The evacuation of the Sudan was complete and the Mahdi reigned.

There is little to say of the last days of Gordon since we left him on the 14th December 1884 watching the *Bordein* leave for the north. He knew that effective resistance was ended and that the hour of attack was near. Day after day on the flat roof of his Palace he looked out across the lonely plain for signs of the expedition which ought to have come. And the rumours of its

victories and of its progress must have made his daily life an endless round of anxiety, hope, and doubt. But these rumours also had their effect on Mahomed Ahmed. The time had come when he must strike. In Khartoum there was hunger, and even the unripe grain from Tuti Island was cut and taken within the walls. The Mahdi sent a messenger asking for surrender. He was curtly informed that there would be no surrender, and Gordon authorised all who wished to leave the town to do so. Many availed themselves of the offer. Others, either through loyalty or through fear, stayed on. The level of the river had dropped, and at low water there was a weak spot in the defences across the mud-flats of the White Nile. On the night of the 25th January 1885 Mahomed Ahmed loosed his hordes through this gap. There is good reason to believe that he had given strict instructions that there was to be no undue slaughter and that Gordon was to be taken prisoner. But in the madness of their fanaticism and in the wild heat of victory his faithful thousands ran amok. The sentries, probably half-asleep from all their hardships, failed in their duty, and with scarcely a casualty the mob poured through the open space into the city. A section of it made for the Palace. Gordon came out to meet them and, at the top of the staircase, stood before

them. For a space they hesitated, standing in a group, looking up to him, the light flickering on their sword blades, and perhaps there was a momentary silence in æons of time and space; and they fell upon him and killed him and they bore his head to Mahomed Ahmed.

The Sudan entered upon a dark age. From that fateful night the Sudanese were to know a military tyranny that was to surpass even the evils and misery of the previous sixty years. For thirteen long years the military dominion of Mahdism was to hold sway, and it was to be identified in the name of Khalifa Abdallahi, who had searched for and found the little-known apostle of Aba Island years ago and shrewdly directed the Mahdi's affairs to victory.

It is one thing to blaze a new trail with all the fiery fanatical enthusiasm of a cause; it is another to consolidate when the cause has been won. With the fall of Khartoum, Mahomed Ahmed had to turn to the actual government of the country with his faithful Khalifa. He began to build up on the western bank of the White Nile a new capital around the site of the old Egyptian fort at Omdurman, which was opposite Khartoum. But he was not to live to enjoy the fruits of victory. On the 20th June, barely five months after the fall of Khartoum,

he contracted typhus fever, and as he lay dying of his fever on a simple rope bed, he said to those around him: "Lay me on the floor, for only on the earth would I meet my God." It was perhaps well that he died when he did, and there can be no doubting his greatness or his saintliness. Mahomed Ahmed was not physically a big man. He was of medium height, almost black in colour, and had three small cuts on his cheeks, the tribal marks of the Danagla. His main physical characteristics, which are described in every conversation about him, were his bright piercing eyes, his projecting forehead, his short-clipped beard, and his voice, quiet and determined and never raised in anger. It is said that he never at any one time had more than one suit of clothes, standing naked in his room while they were washed. The austerity of his day never varied, and long periods were devoted to reading aloud passages from the Koran.

The problems that beset the Khalifa Abdallahi, his declared successor, were very great. In this Khalifa we find a striking contrast to the Mahdi. He was a big man, light of colour, with no marks on his face, a large beard and a loud voice. He frightened people. He led them and drove them and dominated them. In public he wore much the same clothes as the Mahdi (a single white

robe and turban) but usually he wore knee-length boots, of the type made then in Kurmuk and elsewhere on the Ethiopian border, to hide a lameness in his left leg. Behind a public display of reasonable austerity he lived a life of comfort with several wives, and goods were brought specially to him from Suakin.

It was June 1886, and it is perhaps difficult to picture how very primitive this land was only seventy years ago. From his house in Omdurman Abdallahi looked out on a country in which there were no schools other than the small "Khalwas," which taught the rudiments of religion; no industries; no agricultural enterprises other than the scratchings at the soil by individual peasants; no forms of government other than the jealous authorities of the traditional tribal leaders in the north or the beating war drums in the south; and no civil services for administration of any kind. And outside his borders there were potentially hostile foes: Abyssinia, Egypt, Italy, Britain. And he himself had little real authority. He was a self-made man. He was to make himself a dictator, and one cannot watch his career without admiration. Almost illiterate, he was to become personal ruler of the Sudan. No sooner had the Mahdi died than he hurried to the mosque and there, until after midnight, he harangued the

multitude, using his own reputation, the Mahdi's wish, and his power of oratory. He "got" them. The oath of allegiance was taken by many thousands. He speedily collected a private army from his own tribe in Kordofan Province. Throughout 1886, 1887, and 1888 he grew in strength. Rebellions were put down in the west and elsewhere, and he conducted a major war with Abyssinia, the exact reasons for which are obscure. In March 1889 the King of Abyssinia, King John, was killed in a battle near his borders by the Khalifa's forces and his head brought back to Omdurman. The only practical result of this campaign, by which nothing was gained by either side, is that it vastly increased Abdallahi's prestige at the time, and that at the end of it there was no one in the land who could say him nay. He had set up an embryo form of administration, but he had set it up by the sword; he must needs maintain it by the sword; and a house built upon fear is built upon sand. He became obsessed with power. Time and time again in history one finds the truth of the dictum: "All power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely." So it was with Abdallahi. But he was no fool. He played off leader against leader. He sent off a small force of 5000, whose loyalty was doubtful, to conquer Egypt and to certain death. They died

and he was rid of them. And in the Eastern Sudan he suffered another defeat. Suakin, on the Red Sea coast, had been maintained as a garrison by Egyptian troops under British officers for no apparent reason other than prestige, and a force from there inflicted a serious defeat on Osman Digna in February 1891. This great leader was never to recover his power. He has been paid but scant attention in this story, since he has been outside the main stream of events. But he is a hero in his own land, and rightly so. He is the legendary character of the Eastern Sudan. He is the leader of Rudyard Kipling's "Fuzzies" who broke the British square. He had achieved victories. They have received passing mention. So too has his defeat.

But the greatest disaster had come to the Khalifa in 1889: famine—and an appalling famine—swept the Sudan. The food supply depended, and still largely depends, on the rain that falls in the months of June, July, August, and September. In 1888 the rains failed in these months when the grain is sown. In England, with a highly developed economy, it is possible to import grain in times of need. In the Sudan this was not possible. The populace knew it was not possible; and outside the grass huts far and wide throughout the little villages the people sat and

watched their withering crops. Above them was only the pitiless sun in a brazen sky—day after day, week after week. Far and wide over the Sudan the great famine left its trail of death and starvation. The dead in 1889 could only be numbered in hundreds of thousands. Whole tribes were decimated and whole towns were abandoned. And in 1890 the locusts came. It was as though the Sudan was accursed in the darkened sky. Powerless and despairing the people could only watch them swarming in millions over their grain and, in the evening, they could only walk in sadness among the barren stalks. But through all this misfortune Abdallahi somehow maintained his authority, and in Omdurman his army grew and his capital expanded and more and more power passed into his own hands. In 1891 the country was almost normal. There was one revolt by the other Khalifas. It was shrewdly and completely suppressed. He was to encounter no more organised opposition in his own land. The country was divided into Provinces, each under a governor who had to report in Omdurman at intervals and who had to provide soldiery when required. Only in the field of agriculture was there any attempt to encourage social development. More food was needed, therefore the people must plant more grain.

Bowed and oppressed, the Sudanese tilled their fields.

In June 1885 a Conservative Government in England came to power with Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister. In Egypt, more and more firmly, Britain took control, and her record of administration through the following years can stand the test of close scrutiny. Sir Evelyn Baring became Lord Cromer in 1892 and gradually collected round himself a group of able administrators whom he placed in key positions in the various Departments: always operating in theory as advisers to the Khedive. In the six years between 1890 and 1896 Cromer and his team transformed Egypt out of recognition: social services, education and, above all, finance, were put on a firm footing; to such an extent that whereas in 1890 Egypt was bankrupt, corrupt and oppressed, in 1896 she was solvent, reasonably honest in administration, and, despite all the new social services, less burdened by taxation. She became, for the first time in her history, prosperous in a national sense, with reserve funds in hand.

Cromer had also dealt with another and vital part of a nation's strength: the army. It will be remembered that the army had mutinied under Arabi Pasha and, by a British decree,

was disbanded in December 1892. A British officer, Sir Evelyn Wood, was appointed Commander-in-Chief in Egypt with instructions to form and train an entirely new army. With twenty-six British officers and some excellent drill-sergeants he set about the task with complete success, beginning in a small way with only Egyptian recruits. They were conscripted, since no one would volunteer. And gradually there grew up from these beginnings a force which was to bear little resemblance to the old army which had been irregularly paid, scorned, and despised. At its headquarters an efficient intelligence branch came into being to which came messengers from far and wide: not least from the market-place in Omdurman. And they came to a man who was to play a great part in the Sudan's affairs in the days of peace which still lay ahead: Wingate, the Director of Military Intelligence.

One day in March 1895 there came the most valuable messenger of all—Slatin, the Governor of Darfur, who had turned Muslim in vain and who had been a prisoner in the Mahdi's and the Khalifa's camps for these ten terrible years. For long he had been planning his escape; he had been in secret communication with Wingate, and on a dark night, the 20th February, he slipped quietly out of Omdurman. The Khalifa

Abdallahi could not have lost a more dangerous prisoner. Convinced that he would make his escape sooner or later but deprived of any means of recording his experiences and information, Slatin set himself to the habit of photographing everything in his mind and cultivating his memory. The Khalifa tried every means of intercepting him, but at the end of the dramatic journey a weary, travel-stained gentleman in tattered Arab dress and mounted on a lame and exhausted camel arrived safely at Asswan in Southern Egypt: to tell in minute detail of the affairs and the strength of the Khalifa Abdallahi. He then wrote a book about his experiences—'Fire and Sword in the Sudan,' which stirred the imagination of the English people. Four years previously, another prisoner, Father Ohrwalder, had escaped and he, too, had written a lurid story. Public opinion in England was in the right frame of mind. It had always been assumed since the shameful days of 1884 that one day the Sudan might have to be reconquered: the tale of Slatin Pasha in 1895 brought the day very near. And there was another and more potent factor: the general scramble for territory in Africa had begun. The French, the Belgians, the Italians were all making forays. Someone was bound to go for the Sudan, and it would be

well that Britain should proceed without delay to free the Sudanese from their tyranny and look after that part of Africa. On grounds of national honour and national interest both Britain and Egypt were at one, and Britain had by this time made Egypt into a presentable nation.

Suddenly, on the 12th March 1896, without consulting Cromer or the Khedive, the British Government gave the order to advance into and to occupy the northernmost Province of the Sudan. £800,000 was paid to the Egyptian Government as a free gift. On the 15th the Khedive reviewed the Cairo garrison and on that night the first battalions of the main force left for the Sudan frontier at Wadi Halfa, to join up with the frontier force which had been repelling occasional Mahdist raids during the years since evacuation.

Throughout March the army grew in strength at Wadi Halfa. Men and arms poured into this little town with its tall palm trees lining the river bank. Opposite it, on the west bank of the broad stream, the sun sets on the empty desolation of the Sahara and Libyan Deserts, and nearby, hewn in the high rocky banks there are the temples of the Pharaohs. On the 29th the Commander-in-Chief arrived, General Herbert Kitchener, another of Cromer's outstanding team ;

appointed by Cromer himself to command the Egyptian Army in 1892, four years previously, at the early age of forty-two and over the heads of many more senior officers. No military historian has ranked Kitchener very high as a strategist or tactician, but there could have been no better man to conduct the war against the Mahdist forces. There was no need for brilliant strategy, but there was real need for an efficient administrator and a man with a genius for organising stores and communications. This genius Kitchener undoubtedly had: efficiency, attention to detail, and the problems of military communications were the aspects of army organisation which lay closest to his heart. (It was a joke in the army of the time that he ought to have been Manager of the Army and Navy Stores.) And at his side was Wingate, intellectual and modest, with a great knowledge of the Northern Sudan and its personalities amassed through the years in Cairo. The one had built up its efficiency: the other the all-important intelligence system without which an army is blind.

The invasion of the Sudan consisted of two separate campaigns, the second of which was distinct from, though an extension of, the first. The first of these campaigns was the occupation of Dongola Province from Wadi Halfa. It

began on the 15th March 1896, just three days after the order had been given in Cairo, and ended with the capture of Dongola, the capital town, on the 23rd September. The invading army, 10,000 strong, suffered only 47 killed and 122 wounded in action, and 130 deaths from cholera, though a large number of British officers were invalided. The total cost of the campaign was £715,000, and Mahdist losses were estimated at 1200 killed and 3548 taken prisoner. As soon as the campaign was completed Kitchener went home to England. Though it had always been understood that the occupation of the whole Sudan would probably be involved, this had never been expressly stated, and the original terms of the advance were only to occupy Dongola with Egyptian Forces, and see how things went. Kitchener therefore stressed the necessity and the practicability of going on to destroy the Khalifa's power entirely. He found plenty of support. The Dongola campaign had been cheap in men and in money and the British Government guaranteed, for the first time, British Forces and financial backing.

The second campaign began in December 1896 when Kitchener returned to Wadi Halfa. But the second was to be very different from the first. Two hard years were to pass and the

Khalifa's power was not to be destroyed till the battle of Omdurman on the 2nd September 1898, at much greater cost in men and money, and after deeds of heroism and achievements of mechanical engineering that will be legendary for years to come.

The military details of the actions fought in the Dongola campaign by the Dongola Expeditionary Force have been graphically described elsewhere. But too much should not be made of them. The Khalifa Abdallahi allowed internal squabbles to take up too much of his time and he did not send any great numbers of reinforcements to his Dongola Commander.

The first campaign provided many bitter lessons which were to prove of value in the success of the second: on railway building, the clothing of troops, the control of disease, and the vagaries of the weather. But if any one aspect of the first campaign should be singled out for direct bearing on the second, that was the passage of gunboats through the cataracts of the Nile. Between Wadi Halfa and Koshah, some 106 miles south, the Nile is turbulent in several places, but once past Koshah and two more obstacles the river is navigable for over a thousand miles in the Sudan. It was desired to get gunboats and steamers to Koshah and to use them thereafter in the capture

of Dongola itself. Four such gunboats—the *Tamai*, *El Teb*, the *Metemma*, and the *Abu Klea*—had patrolled the river between Asswan and Wadi Halfa since 1885. There were also three steamers —the *Kaibar*, *Dal*, and *Akasha*—which had similar functions. These were brought to Wadi Halfa, and in addition three powerful new gunboats had been ordered from England. Under the command of a Naval Commander these seven ships were prepared for the attempt to make the passage, particularly the roaring second cataract. They were quite large vessels, being ninety feet in length. Their bows were raised and strengthened; wooden bulwarks were fitted from the bow to the stern; guns and ammunition were removed and the vessels lightened as much as possible. On the 2nd August 1896 the first two steamers, towing troop barges, left Wadi Halfa, and so began an almost incredible undertaking. Looking to-day at the rushing, leaping river with its great jagged rocks, one can only be amazed that the passage of these clumsy paddle-steamers was even considered worth attempting. However, they set off, and long before they reached the worst part of the journey we find this laconic entry in the Commander's report: "I would here mention that it was found that the troop barges were too heavy and unwieldy for the steamers to

tow, with any safety, in such narrow channels with such strong currents and violent eddies. On several occasions the steamers became unmanageable and were dashed against the rocky sides of the passages, with considerable damage to themselves and the barge. After the experience gained by the first two steamers it was decided not to attempt to tow any more barges up." On the 14th August the first gunboat, the *Metemma*, approached the fearful Second Cataract, which descends sixty feet in nine miles. In the middle is a stretch called "The Great Gate," where the whole flood of the mighty river is choked between rocky sides only thirty-five yards apart and where the river drops ten feet in seventy yards and five feet over a single ledge of rock. Great hawsers were secured to the banks, but so steep was the slope of the water that the furnace fires had to be drawn. Nearly three thousand men were marched to the spot, and they hauled these vessels through the Great Gate. It must have been an unforgettable spectacle and, though the distance requiring the maximum of these six thousand hands and arms was only a hundred yards, yet the assembly had to strain and sweat in the blistering heat for an hour and a half, moving the vessel inch by inch against the roaring mass of water. One by one the seven ships were pulled up in this way to the placid, clear river beyond,

and all arrived safely at Koshah on the 23rd August.

We find, too, in the report, mention of a young naval officer who, twenty-five years later, was to receive the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet in the misty waters of the Firth of Forth. "In presenting this report," writes the Naval Commander, "I would beg to bring to His Excellency's notice the extremely able and energetic way in which I have been assisted by Lieutenant Beatty, R.N. His services were of the greatest assistance to me, and helped most considerably in getting the operations so successfully accomplished."

Not only did the serving officers of the British Navy perform remarkable feats, so also did the men who built the three powerful new gunboats in the shipbuilding yards of England. They were of bigger design than the seven old vessels, being 140 feet long, heavily armoured and capable of steaming at ten knots. Yet they drew only thirty-nine inches of water. The vessels and machinery had been numbered, part by part, in England, taken to pieces, and transported the 4000 miles to Koshah by sea and rail and road without a single important piece being lost. And in these days of interminable delays in contracts it is worth noting that, though the builders had contracted to have the first vessel delivered at Alexandria by the 5th September, it was in

fact delivered there on the 23rd July, having been built and dismantled in the space of eight weeks, and the completed vessel took part in the final advance on Dongola on the 19th December. And there the gunboats remained while Kitchener went home to England.

The occupation of Dongola Province was consolidated and a system of civil administration was introduced forthwith under the direction of a most competent officer of the Egyptian Army, Major-General Hunter. He toured the whole area with great energy, set up eleven administrative Districts each in the charge of a Mamur, one police officer, and sixteen non-commissioned officers and men (four of whom were mounted), and arranged for the proper collation of information of every kind. The people liked him; he liked the people, and by the end of November they had settled down, after initial surprise, to living happily under something they never knew existed: an administration they could trust and which would maintain justice and order. General Hunter's directive to the various Mamurs gives, better than any description, the spirit of the new rulers. It reads as follows :—

"The new position you are about to take up is an important and responsible one.

You should always bear in mind that you are the recognised

agent in your district of a just and merciful Government, and as such you should do all in your power to gain the confidence and respect of the inhabitants who should, in their turn, be made to look to and respect the Government of which you are the representative.

In order to acquire and hold this position, you should bear in mind the following points, which are essential to the good government of your district.

You should recollect that this country has just been relieved from most oppressive and tyrannical rulers, who have plundered and enslaved the population, and engendered in them feelings of moral and physical fear, which it may take long to eradicate ; your object should, therefore, be to make the government of your district as great a contrast as possible to that of the dervishes. Every effort should be made to induce the inhabitants to feel that an era of justice and kindly treatment has come with, at the same time, a vigorous repression of crime, and a determination to put down with a strong hand any attempt of evil-doers to carry on the practices, which it is hoped, have disappeared with the flight of the dervishes.

No doubt the local people will proffer bribes, in order to try and secure the goodwill of their new rulers ; these offers must be resolutely and absolutely refused, and the people made to understand that they can acquire no benefits by such means, but are more likely to be severely punished. In all their dealings with the Government they should be convinced of its unity of purpose and justice ; nothing, therefore, should be taken from them without payment, in accordance with a fixed tariff, and every inducement should be given to them to bring their saleable articles and products to fixed market-places, where it is most important the regulation prices should be adhered to ; you should also endeavour, by all means in your power, to encourage the inhabitants to increase the amount of cultivation in the district. It is especially necessary that the women should be in no way molested, and that the Mamur of the district should be not only an example of fair-

ness and justice, but also of morality, by doing all in his power to improve the moral tone of the inhabitants in his charge, and by instilling into their minds that it is to him they should turn for a redress of grievances, being fully convinced that he will act as is best for their interest and advantage consistently with justice.

Every effort should be made to repress crime, and Mamurs have the power of sending offenders to prison for one day, but when, in their opinion, offences are committed which deserve more severe punishment, they should refer the case to the nearest Commandant, who will either deal with it in accordance with the military powers delegated to him, or will refer it to higher authority. Should it be discovered that you or any of your employees have been the recipients of bakshish of any kind from the local people, you will be liable to be tried by court-martial, and dismissed the service. In any cases of difficulty or doubt, you should at once refer to the nearest military Commandant, under whose general direction and guidance you will act."

Kitchener returned to Wadi Halfa with a mandate to reconquer the Sudan. The immediate and all-important decision was that about a railway. He had to have it. But what route was he to follow in the five hundred and fifty miles' journey to Omdurman? There were many possibilities. He already had some miles of railway into Dongola Province which he might link up across country. Against the advice of every expert in railway construction he decided to plunge into the unknown desert spaces and drive his line two hundred miles south to Abu Hamed.

It was a momentous decision and a grave gamble. The terrain was not known; there was no guarantee of water supplies and the Khalifa Abdallahi might hold Abu Hamed in force. "Lucky Kitchener," he has been called, and very, very lucky he was. Once the decision had been taken he applied himself to it with all his talent. He was also fortunate in having on his staff an able young subaltern of the Royal Engineers, Lieutenant Girouard. To him all the detail was entrusted, and in a thick volume he worked out every single detail of the stores required. In all the story of the railway one never reads of it being short of even a length of wire. He went to England and ordered fifteen new locomotives and two hundred trucks. New workshops were set up in Wadi Halfa. Fifteen hundred additional men were recruited for the Railway Battalion, and in the shade of the trees little schools were formed to train telegraph operators, signalmen, stationmasters, in all the manifold activities of the line. Early in 1897 work began, and out into the unknown the thin strips of steel nosed their way forward across the sand to the first goal two hundred miles ahead. On the 8th May the work began in earnest. Repairs and extension to the Dongola line had been completed, and every available man was

switched to Wadi Halfa. In the little town there was the incessant din and clatter of the workshops, and out somewhere in the desert was railhead, a canvas town of 2500 inhabitants moving slowly forward into the illimitable silence of that wild and lonely area; waterless, uninhabited, treeless, endlessly flat and dotted with rocky hills. There is a beauty in the desert in the shimmering heat of the day when mirages appear on every side and the sky is brazen; a cold beauty in the early light of dawn; and a sheer loveliness in the evening light when the sand and the crags turn dull red in the rays of the setting sun and the world is a flood of colour.

Back and forwards travelled the supply trains. Onward and onward went the line, and "Lucky Kitchener" found plentiful water seventy-five miles from Halfa after boring a well to only ninety feet. On the 20th July a hundred and thirty miles of track had been laid. It was getting dangerously near to Abu Hamed, and in a wide sweep General Hunter attacked the town from Dongola, with 3600 men, and occupied it on the 7th August. The railway went on at even greater speed. As much as 5300 yards of track were surveyed, embanked and laid in a single day, and again a plentiful supply of well-water was found a hundred and thirty miles from Wadi

Halfa. On the 1st November the Desert Railway reached Abu Hamed, and what we will call the units of the "Nile Expeditionary Force," as opposed to the "Dongola Expeditionary Force," were united. As will be seen from the map, the great loop of the Nile had been by-passed, and along the two parallel lines of shining steel, stretching back two hundred miles to Wadi Halfa, men and stores could be brought in security. The gunboats, too, had reached Abu Hamed after more remarkable feats of navigation. It was well that the railway had arrived at such unprecedented speed. General Hunter, on the 31st August, had calmly occupied Berber, another one hundred and thirty miles farther south, and Kitchener had taken another gamble in deciding to hold Berber with no proper line of communication. Still onward must go the railway. Through the last months of 1897 and into 1898 it progressed steadily, and we must pause on the 8th June 1898 with the railway line near Berber, in the vicinity of which was Kitchener, now with a joint British and Egyptian Army of 14,000 men, with twenty-four guns and twelve machine-guns, facing the enemy.

The Khalifa Abdallahi has had little mention. During the campaign of the Dongola Expeditionary Force he contented himself by sending

a few thousand men and a large number of religious tracts exhorting the faithful to die in the cause. The news of the fall of Dongola, when it reached Omdurman, came as a grave blow to his prestige, and he retired to his house. Business was disrupted; there were wild rumours in the market-place, and in the houses of his enemies there were whispers. But Abdallahi, on the fifth day, came out in his strength to the mosque square and again "got" the multitude of some 20,000 persons in a magnificent speech which he thus concluded: "It is true that our chiefs have retired from Dongola. Yet they are not defeated. Only they that disobeyed me have perished. I instructed the faithful to refrain from fighting and to return to Metemma. It was by my command that they have done what they have done. For the angel of the Lord and the spirit of the Mahdi have warned me in a vision that the souls of the accursed Egyptians and of the miserable English shall leave their bodies between Dongola and Omdurman, at some spot which their bones shall whiten. Thus shall the infidels be conquered." And with his sword flashing in the sunlight he restored the public confidence and made his plans for the future.

The news of the "Nile Expeditionary Force," of the railway, and of the great reinforcements soon reached him. But again he made no move.

It appears from the evidence that he was prepared to back his fortune on a battle at Omdurman and that, in his heart of hearts, he would trust nobody in command except himself. Accordingly he never moved out of Omdurman and, correctly, Wingate, with his highly developed intelligence services and regular stream of messengers, advised Kitchener to take the apparently absurd risks which he did take by occupying Abu Hamed and Berber. And in his distrust of others the Khalifa had particular reason to be distrustful of the riverain tribes in the area through which Kitchener was coming. It was from these tribes that Wingate drew most of his spies. They were weary of Khalifa Abdallahi and his rule and, although he had toyed with the idea of advancing to Berber in the early months of 1897, nothing came of it other than great parades of his troops outside Omdurman.

The Khalifa ordered his cousin Mahmud (whom he had appointed as Commander in the west) to leave only small forces in Kordofan and Darfur and to come to Omdurman with as many soldiers as he could muster. Mahmud arrived in Omdurman in May 1897 with about 10,000 men and straightway caused trouble by disagreeing with the Khalifa's policy. He wanted to go north to attack. At length in June the Khalifa agreed

and summoned the leader of the riverain Jaalin tribe from Metemma near Shendi. Whatever happened at the interview there was a violent quarrel with the Jaali leader and open rebellion on the part of the Jaalin. Mahmud duly attacked Metemma and, in a hideous slaughter, cowed the Jaalin from that day onwards. But there the forces of Mahmud stayed while Kitchener's force came steadily across the desert. Still Mahmud tarried, and not till February 1898 did he begin to move north, having been joined by Osman Digna, the leader of the Eastern Sudan, with his forces. In the middle of March, Mahmud with his army reached a point near the junction of the Atbara River with the Nile. Kitchener with his army was twenty miles away at Berber. And there the two armies stayed for a spell, Mahmud with some 12,000 men and Kitchener with some 14,000. But Mahmud had no proper supply organisation and Kitchener held his hand in order to weaken a force already short of food. On the 8th June he pounced in the first real engagement of the campaign and the battle of the Atbara was won after two and a half hours' hard fighting. Mahmud himself was captured and 3000 of his men lay dead in the sand. In the Expeditionary Force there were 560 killed and wounded.

Now began the preparations for the final advance to Omdurman 197 miles away. Train after train travelled down the Desert Railway bringing reinforcements of men and arms. At the beginning of July the railway reached Fort Atbara, 390 miles from Wadi Halfa; and by the end of the month the Nile Expeditionary Force had grown into an army of 25,800 men, of whom nearly one-third were British, and a further third were in fact Sudanese. It had 44 guns and 20 machine-guns on land, and on its ten gunboats there were 36 guns and 24 machine-guns, and there were 2469 horses, 896 mules, 3524 camels, and 229 donkeys. When it is considered that this army was operating 1000 miles from the base in Cairo, and that its supply organisation never broke down, the greatest praise must be given to a remarkable achievement.

Meanwhile Abdallahi likewise was spending the summer months in reinforcing his army. Proclamations were sent to all the tribes summoning the people to join in the destruction of the infidels, and outside Omdurman 60,000 soldiers trained and drilled in anticipation of the battle on which, the Khalifa decided, he would stake his all.

August came, and with it the rain at the end of the long hot summer months. The river began to rise, and in the middle of August the Expedi-

tionary Force moved forward to the main point of concentration, a village called Wad Hamid, sixty miles from Omdurman and on the west bank of the Nile. The river was a solid mass of sailing craft of all kinds accompanying the gunboats with ammunition and stores of every description. On the 1st September the army crossed the first ridge of the Kerreri Hills and there lay Omdurman, six and a half miles away. The enemy still made no move, and the gunboats steamed majestically ahead to Omdurman while the army halted. They bombarded the city and reduced the Mahdi's tomb to rubble. Perhaps because of this the first real shiver of fear ran through the people, for was not the tomb indestructible. Back came the gunboats, having themselves suffered only slight damage, and scouts went out from the army to reconnoitre the Mahdist positions. The Mahdist forces did come out in the afternoon and halted. In a night attack lay Kitchener's greatest danger: his superior firepower would be neutralised, and in the confusion of legions of men milling in the darkness he might suffer a serious set-back; he might, indeed, be overwhelmed. Wingate had been busy sending messages to the various tribal chiefs warning them of the folly of attacking such an all-conquering force, and now he became even busier spreading

the rumour that Kitchener would attack after dark and that the Mahdist army ought to prepare defensive positions. Abdallahi made a disastrous mistake: he ignored the advice of his leaders to attack by night on that great open plain. Perhaps he believed Wingate's rumour; perhaps he felt that only *he* could command them in battle in the light of the day; perhaps he could not trust the bulk of his army to fight at all in the darkness when no one could see their shame—but whatever the reason the sentries of the Expeditionary Force, their eyes strained and anxious, saw the first grey dawn of the 2nd September and were greatly relieved. All night the piercing beams of the searchlights had maintained their vigil. But not only had Abdallahi made a crass error in failing to make a night attack, he now embarked on the most foolish move of all: *he* launched the attack against the Anglo-Egyptian force. Kitchener had never even given this possibility a thought, and had in fact just given his own orders for a general attack when the news was brought to him that the Mahdist army was on the move. The orders were quickly countermanded.

On that open sandy plain, the sun just rising, Abdallahi committed the last great assembly of his tottering dominion in three groups. They came on, mounted and on foot, some 52,000 men

in a dense mass five miles wide, grouped together under the flags of their leaders, and the noise of the multitude shouting in their fanatical excitement was carried on the wind to the Anglo-Egyptian force, waiting silently and concealed by a ridge. Over this ridge the first of the horde must come. The range was known. It was 2800 yards from the guns afloat and ashore, and the men behind the guns must have felt a horror at the slaughter which must ensue. Over the ridge they poured and the shells fell among them, shearing great gaps in the ranks like some mighty scythe in a field of corn. The fluttering banners fell to the ground, but into the carnage of men and of animals poured more and still more fanatical Mahdists, forward to the attack and into the withering small-arms fire of the line regiments. For four hours the battle raged. After the initial slaughter it was joined in earnest, and the gunboats and the cavalry came to the rescue in several crises. (A memorial stands above a rocky defile there where the 21st Lancers made a memorable and costly charge.) But at 11.30 A.M. on that same day, the 2nd September 1898, firing ceased. 10,800 Mahdists lay dead on the field and 16,000 were wounded. 48 men of the Expeditionary Force were killed and 382 wounded.

The reconquest of the Sudan was virtually

ended. In the evening Kitchener entered Omdurman. The long story was almost over, but the Khalifa Abdallahi was to resist to the last.

Information about the Khalifa's movements is contained in a statement given by his servant. After describing the Khalifa watching the course of the battle, he went on to say: "When he received news that the forces of Ali Wad Hilu (one of the Khalifas appointed by the Mahdi) and Sheikh Ed Din had likewise suffered defeat, and that the former had been wounded in the leg, the Khalifa rode off to his house outside Omdurman, where he rested, drank water, and blew his three Ombayas and beat his drums to collect and rally his people. Ali Wad Hilu came to the Khalifa, none others however responded but men streamed past without stopping. The Khalifa then for the first time showed signs of anxiety, and hastened away on his donkey to the mosque where he again blew his Ombayas and beat his drums, with no results. He then entered his house and I went with him. The Khalifa ate some honey and prayed. I was tired, being small and having carried my bandolier and rifle all day, so drank and rested." There the little boy slept and Abdallahi, with his principal wife and a few attendants, slipped quietly away from his capital to a place eight miles to the south where

swift camels awaited him, on which he soon made contact with the remnants of his routed army. To Kordofan he went, as had the Mahdi before him. There, among friends, he collected an army of 7000 men, and it was not until the rest of the Sudan had been pacified that a force did battle with him on the 24th November 1898.

At Omdurman, he had remained behind his forces. In this, his last battle, he stood bravely in the forefront, scorning the dangers, with his two chief lieutenants, and when British officers walked through the field they found the Khalifa laid on a prayer-mat. On his right lay Ali Wad Hilu and on his left Ahmed Fadil. So died three gallant fighters.

The war was over. The two campaigns together had cost, in money, £2,354,354, of which Britain contributed £800,000. Included in these figures are the cost of the railway and of the telegraph which became national assets. Never before in history had such a vast territory been acquired at so little cost in men and money. Jointly, Great Britain and Egypt (alias Turkey) embarked on the administration of the country under a Condominium Agreement signed in Cairo on the 19th January 1899.

This is the end of a chapter in the Sudan story. In the Condominium Agreement the administrators,

the statesmen and the soldiers of the time, felt that the reconquest had achieved its formal ending and that the future well-being of the peoples of the Nile Valley was assured. Mr Churchill, writing in 1899, summed up the general feeling when he declared the purpose and justification of the war to have been "to unite territories that could not indefinitely have continued divided; to combine peoples whose future welfare is inseparably intermingled; to collect energies which, concentrated, may promote a common interest; to join together what could not improve apart."

But time has shown this idea of unity to be only partially true. In this conception, something fundamental was missed: the character, diverse as it is, of the Sudanese themselves; their contempt and even hatred of the Egyptians, and their pride as a people. The statesmen and the soldiers knew only the riverain people through whose area they had marched, who looked like Egyptians, and who had had many contacts with them down the years. The statesmen knew very little of the east, or of the west, or of the vast hinterland of the south where the Sudanese bear no resemblance to the Egyptians. Perhaps they failed to realise that the Sudan was the gateway to Africa; to people dark, and virile, and strong.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS, 1899-1920

THE agreement of the 19th January 1899 gave the Sudan a constitution in the form of a Condominium. It recognised "the joint military and financial efforts" to which the conquest was due, and the "claims which have accrued to Her Britannic Majesty's Government, by right of conquest, to share in the present settlement and future working and development of the . . . system of administration and legislation." It provided that "the British and Egyptian flags shall be used together, both on land and water, throughout the Sudan." (The "Egyptian" flag at that time was not the green one which we know to-day, but the red flag of Turkey.) The agreement laid down that the Governor-General "shall be appointed by Khedival Decree with the consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government." It invested the Governor-General with full legislative powers, and under a separate agreement he was also given fairly wide discretion in matters of finance. The country was divided, for purposes of

administration, into six Provinces: Dongola, Berber, Kassala, Sennar, Fashoda and Khartoum, and to each of these Provinces a British officer was appointed as Governor. A detachment of British troops was sent late in January to share the duties of garrisoning Khartoum with the units of the Egyptian Army which were already there. Lord Cromer himself visited Khartoum, where he made a speech to a great assembly of tribal leaders from all parts of the country, declaring to them the policy of the Government.

The administration of the Sudan had begun. Once more it began from scratch—the thirteen years' rule of the Khalifa Abdallahi having effectively destroyed the old Turkish administrative systems. It has been estimated that the population of the Sudan was reduced in these thirteen years from about eight millions to less than three by battle, famine, and pestilence. There was no freedom from want, nor was there freedom from fear. The shortest journey was fraught with danger. Tribal unities, tribal loyalties, with their inherent social sanctions of behaviour, had been largely weakened or destroyed. There were no schools worthy of the name. There were no courts of law, no hospitals. Trade was at a very low ebb and on all sides there was poverty. There were virtually no Sudanese competent

to take even minor posts in an administrative machine.

With a small and devoted band of officers, Kitchener set about the gargantuan task of digging the foundations of a nation in every aspect of its life. At the end of 1899 he had to leave the Sudan for the South African War. He was succeeded, as Governor-General of the Sudan, by General Sir Reginald Wingate—the same Wingate to whom the messengers had come in Cairo through the dark years of the past. Wingate was to hold office for sixteen years. But before we go on to look at the great achievements of these years we must note three of Kitchener's actions just after the battle of Omdurman which were to have bearing on the future of the Sudan. The first of these was the diplomatic triumph of Fashoda ; the second was the founding of Gordon Memorial College in Khartoum, the foundation stone of which was laid by Lord Cromer on his visit to Khartoum in January 1899. The third was his directive to his new Provincial Governors : a directive that was to set the tone of British administration in the Sudan for the years ahead.

Firstly, the " Fashoda Incident."

On the 7th September 1898, five days after the battle of Omdurman, a small steamer formerly used by Gordon and captured by the Mahdists

came drifting down to Khartoum. The crew found the city captured and promptly surrendered to the British. They had a strange story to tell. They had sailed far up the Nile with orders from the Khalifa to collect grain, but, on reaching a place called Fashoda, they had been fired upon by white men and had fled downstream without more ado. In the planks of the steamer were bullet holes. The bullets were excised and found to be of modern design. Who fired them? French? Belgians? Italians? All these nations were known to be ferreting about in Central Africa.

Kitchener left on the 8th with five steamers, two battalions of Sudanese troops, two companies of Cameron Highlanders, and a battery of artillery.

Towards the end of 1896 a French expedition had been sent from the Atlantic coast into the heart of Africa under the command of Major Marchand. One of the reasons that led to Britain's decision to go forward with the re-occupation of the Sudan had been the fear that the French would lay hold on the upper reaches of the Nile. On the 10th July 1898, after a journey of hardship and persistent illness, the expedition had arrived at Fashoda and hoisted the tricolour flag of France. There were eight French officers or non-commissioned officers and 120 black soldiers from the area of the Niger. They had three steel

boats fitted for sail or rowing, and a small steam launch.

On the 18th September Kitchener's flotilla stopped some distance north of Fashoda and he sent a message to these mysterious Europeans. On the morning of the 19th a rowing boat appeared under the charge of a Senegalese sergeant with a message from Major Marchand. It announced the arrival of French troops, their occupation of the Sudan, and a warm welcome to Kitchener.

In this situation lay the seeds of a European war.

Kitchener proceeded to Fashoda, was received with the greatest courtesy, and, with equal courtesy but supreme tact, hoisted only the Turkish flag: thereby causing a diplomatic tangle of the first order. Furthermore, the loyalty of the King of Abyssinia and the influence of a British Agent there resulted in another French expedition, which was making for Fashoda, finding itself stranded without porters. British public opinion, roused by the whole Sudan story, was vociferous in its demand that the French should drop their claim. Kitchener returned to Khartoum, Marchand went to Cairo for instructions, and the French Government ordered the evacuation of Fashoda. Marchand returned to his gallant band and on the 11th December the French lowered their flag and withdrew, after all their hardships, through Abyssinia to their homeland. As the

little flotilla passed the British and Egyptian camp a guard of honour saluted them and the band played their National Anthem. The French then—honour having been satisfied—tied up to the bank and came back to breakfast with Colonel Jackson, whom Kitchener had left in command.

The second of Kitchener's great actions was the founding of Gordon College in Khartoum. Only two months after the battle of Omdurman, he appealed to the British public for £100,000 with which to build a college for Sudanese as a memorial to General Gordon. The response was immediate. In six weeks £120,000 was subscribed and Lord Cromer laid the foundation stone on the 5th January 1899. It was an act of great vision. Kitchener foresaw it as the centre of higher education for the Sudanese, and so it has become. Now, in 1952, it is a University College, but in those days fifty years ago its founder had many critics. "Too ambitious," they cried, "the money would be better spent on primary schools." But he won the day.

With regard to the third of his actions, his directive to his Governors and their assistants tells its own story :—

"1. The absolute uprootal by the dervishes of the old system of Government has afforded an opportunity for initiating a new Administration more in harmony with the requirements of the Sudan.

2. The necessary Laws and Regulations will be carefully considered and issued as required, but it is not mainly to the framing and publishing of laws that we must look for the improvement and the good government of the country.

3. The task before us all, and especially the Mudirs and Inspectors, is to acquire the confidence of the people, to develop their resources, and to raise them to a higher level. This can only be effected by the District Officers being thoroughly in touch with the better class of native, through whom we may hope gradually to influence the whole population. Mudirs and Inspectors should learn to know personally all the principal men of their district, and show them, by friendly dealings and the interest taken in their individual concerns, that our object is to increase their prosperity. Once it is thoroughly realised that our officers have at heart, not only the progress of the country generally, but also the prosperity of each individual with whom they come into contact, their exhortations to industry and improvement will gain redoubled force. Such exhortations, when issued in the shape of Proclamations or Circulars, effect little; it is to the individual action of British officers, working independently but with a common purpose, on the individual natives whose confidence they have gained that we must look for the moral and industrial regeneration of the Sudan.

4. The people should be taught that the truth is always expected, and will be equally well received whether pleasant or the reverse. By listening to outspoken opinions, when respectfully expressed, and checking liars and flatterers, we may hope in time to effect some improvement in this respect in the country.

5. In the administration of justice in your Province you should be very careful to see that legal forms as laid down are strictly adhered to, so that the appointed courts may be thoroughly respected; and you should endeavour, by the careful inquiry given by your courts to the cases brought before them, to inspire the people with absolute confidence

that real justice is being meted out to them. It is very important that the Government should do nothing which could be interpreted as a sign of weakness, and all insubordination must be promptly and severely suppressed. At the same time, a paternal spirit of correction for offences should be your aim in your relation with the people, and clemency should be shown in dealing with first offences, especially when such may be the result of ignorance or are openly acknowledged. In the latter case, they should be more than half pardoned in order to induce truthfulness.

6. Be careful to see that religious feelings are not in any way interfered with, and that the Mahomedan religion is respected.

7. Mosques in the principal towns will be rebuilt, but private mosques, takias, zawiyas, sheikhs' tombs, &c., cannot be allowed to be re-established as they generally formed centres of unorthodox fanaticism. Any request for permission on such subjects must be referred to the Central Authority.

8. Slavery is not recognised in the Sudan, but as long as service is willingly rendered by servants to masters it is unnecessary to interfere in the conditions existing between them. Where, however, any individual is subjected to cruel treatment, and his or her liberty interfered with, the accused can be tried on such charges, which are offences against the law, and in serious cases of cruelty the severest sentences should be imposed."

Early in 1900, only fifty-two years ago, the Sudan saw the results of its first year of real administration. This first year was necessarily preparatory, but the immense amount of work that was done is worthy of record. It is perhaps best divided into two parts (as, unfortunately, is all the Sudan story): the predominantly Arab

north and the wholly pagan south. Only in the matter of finance is it worth taking the country as a whole; for the figures for this first year of administration form a basis for watching the story of the Sudan's development. The revenue from the whole of the Sudan for 1899 was approximately as follows:—

From the Provinces	£78,000
Post Offices	6,500
Telegraphs	3,500
Railways	31,000
Registrations of trade at Wadi Halfa	5,500
Total	£124,500

The civil expenditure in 1899 was approximately as follows:—

Administration	£97,000
Police Buildings	5,000
Purchase of grain for the poor	8,000
Post Offices	10,000
Railways	108,000
Total	£228,000

In addition to this expenditure certain special grants were given:—

Reconstruction of Khartoum	£27,500
Equipment of Police, &c.	8,000
Telegraph construction	13,000
Railway, including Atbara Bridge	355,500
Total	£404,000

There was a further charge for the year for military expenditure of £281,000, so that the total charge to the Egyptian Government for the first year of administration in the Sudan was £430,000. The Financial Adviser ended his annual report as follows: "The conclusion at which I venture to arrive is that, while certain further capital outlay on the Sudan may be desirable, or indeed necessary, the expenses of government, apart from the railway, will, at no distant date, be covered by the revenue. The deficit is not so large as it appears, as the Customs receipts taken at Port Said and Alexandria on foreign goods going into and from the Sudan are at present retained by the Egyptian Government. This item will grow as population and trade increases." His conclusion was accurate.

The year 1899 was one of intense activity. In the Provinces, the new Governors journeyed tirelessly among the people bringing to them confidence and a sense of security, and information poured in from them to the Central Government in Omdurman giving endless facts and figures which provided the new Sudan Government with at least a general idea of the problems that lay ahead. Taxation, Justice, Ownership of Land, Education, Public Health—all these major matters were considered, and out of that consideration

there arose an administrative system which, in its broad outline, was eminently suited to the circumstances of the time and which, with modifications, has continued to the present day.

From the very beginning, the basic principle of administrative policy in the Sudan has been that of maintaining the closest touch with the people. Furthermore, in order to ensure that any important decision of major policy was soundly based, and with the widest knowledge of the Sudanese, every District Commissioner in the early days was instructed to make himself a master of the language, to identify himself with his people, and to penetrate as deeply as he could into the minds and characters of those whom he was privileged to rule. To this day, the tradition of ready accessibility of the District Commissioner to the humblest of his parishioners holds good at any hour of the day or night. "The Sudan for the Sudanese!" cry the young nationalists. They are right to proclaim their aspirations. They are wrong, like all young men, to forget that for fifty years this has been precisely the policy of British Administrators of remarkable and unfailing integrity. It is not a new slogan. It was recorded long before these young men were born: it was written in 1899.

And on this basis the new Sudan Government set about its task.

The first, and probably the most important, aspects were ownership of land and taxation. The ownership of urban property presented relatively few difficulties, but in rural areas in the northern Sudan the problem was extremely intricate. A Law Officer of the Egyptian Government was sent to the Sudan to advise Kitchener in the matter. Two Ordinances were published in the 'Sudan Gazette' covering titles to land and, in the Provinces, Mamurs and Inspectors, on camels, on donkeys and on foot, travelled from village to village, mapping, registering, and hearing interminable disputes. The sheer physical and mental efforts of these men, responsible for areas each as large as Scotland, provoke nothing but admiration. The problem itself is perhaps best described in the words of the Law Officer himself :—

"The political changes which the country had undergone," he wrote, "had produced a very general displacement of the owners of rural property. In, perhaps, the majority of cases, transfers had occurred within the family or tribe to which the land originally belonged, in return for support given to the Mahdist Government; where strangers had been introduced, they had for the most part disappeared on the downfall of the Government which had introduced them. Of the actual occupants of land many based their titles on the gift of the Mahdi or the Khalifa alone; others were able to produce decisions, for what they were worth, of the *de facto* Kadi's

Court. After the reoccupation of the country again, there was undoubtedly a considerable influx of persons who quietly returned and took possession of the land, as the representatives of the former owners. Finally, claims were made by persons not in possession (nor, in many cases, in the country), in virtue of title-deeds, the vagueness and comprehensiveness of which disclosed a very unsatisfactory condition of the land registers in the years immediately preceding the rebellion. It was recognised that if the title to any plot of land was left to be fought out in the Law Courts, when established, according to the ordinary legal rules, the settlement of land questions would be indefinitely postponed. At the same time, the unravelling of the transactions which had occurred during the fifteen years of the rebellion, most of the parties to which were dead, was a task obviously beyond the power of ordinary legal procedure.

The Title to Land Ordinance accordingly provides for the appointment of Commissions, by district, which shall determine all questions as to the ownership of land.

The Ordinance provides, as a fundamental principle, that five years' continuous possession at the date of claim shall confer an absolute title as against all persons. As the Government's only desire is to have as many persons as possible settled on the land with an undisputed title, the Ordinance further provides that possession since the re-establishment of the Civil Authority shall, in default of any claimant with a superior title, create a *prima facie* title; the title of persons so in possession would only be resisted by the Government where the land was required for public purposes or in similar cases.

At the same time, power is reserved to any person to prove his title in the ordinary way before the Commission. As it may consequently happen that an absolute possessory title may be shown by the present occupant, whilst the representative of the former owner succeeds in proving his title in the ordinary way, it is provided that the latter shall, in

such cases, be given an equivalent piece of land elsewhere. Such a course will prevent any general disturbance of the present occupants, and recognises the fact that at present the value of land is principally due to those who have, during the last few years, kept it from going out of cultivation."

Perhaps, too, lest the Sudanese forget, they should be forever grateful for a decision that foreigners should have no privileges. The Sudan has no Indian problem, neither does "big business" have any insidious control over her affairs. The Sudan was kept: for the Sudanese.

In the matter of taxation there was an inevitable clash between Western ideas of efficiency and the more devious attitude of the Orient. An investigation of the Khalifa's system of taxation showed that it was based on principles accepted in most Moslem countries, but that its application had been extortionate to a degree and limited only by how much could be extracted from the public. Broadly speaking, all that was required was that the rates of taxation should in each case be fixed by law; that the taxes should be moderate in amount, and that every care should be taken that no demands were made on the taxpayers save those which the law allowed. Ordinances were published in May 1899 laying down the rates at which the three main taxes were to be assessed—taxes on land, taxes on date trees, and taxes on herds. The land itself was divided into

four main categories: island land irrigated by native means; mainland land, similarly irrigated; foreshore land irrigated by the river flood; and land irrigated from wells. The rates varied from a minimum of 20 P. (four shillings) to 60 P. (twelve shillings) per acre, and the tax on date trees was fixed at 2 P. (fivepence) per tree. The European administrator was inevitably impatient of a system, such as that operated in the time of the Khalifa, whereby he was unable to forecast with any accuracy the probable revenue in a year, or, even more important, over a series of years. Thus flat rates of taxes were introduced, but they had as their corollary legal expropriation in cases of default, and such expropriation is wholly foreign to the ideas of a backward oriental population. A compromise with the Orient was made whereby, though the Western idea of a low flat rate was introduced, provision was made that when a summons was taken out against any man for non-payment of his land tax, the Magistrate, if he was satisfied that the crop on the land had failed through no fault of the owner or cultivator, and that the tax could not be paid without depriving the owner of the means of earning his living as an agriculturist, could adjourn the summons and report the case to the Governor-General. The latter could, if he thought fit, remit the tax.

The clothing of the owner and that of his wife and children, the tools of an artizan, the implements of a cultivator and cattle ordinarily employed in agriculture were exempted from seizure. Herd tax, which gives rise to grave abuse in that the counting of flocks necessarily devolves upon subordinate agents, was made legal in accordance with Moslem practice. And, even more important, whole Codes of Criminal Law and Procedure (which pertain to this day) were vigorously studied, drafted, and promulgated as the Sudan Penal Code and the Sudan Code of Criminal Procedure. Both were based on the Codes existing in India, and they provided the country with a system of criminal law at once simple, just, and well-suited to the people. Plans for the beginning of educational and public health services were drawn up. No aspect of government escaped preliminary attention, and far up the Nile, great islands of papyrus grass, choked and tangled, came drifting downstream bearing witness, as will be recorded later, to the bands of men, toiling, sweating, and hacking in the steamy heat to make the river navigable to its farthermost limits in the Sudan.

1899 was a year of high endeavour in all corners of the land, and Cromer, at the end of it, having studied the reports, was able to record: "I

may say that the reports leave the most favourable impression on my mind. It will be remembered that they are written by officers of the army who have little or no experience in the work of civil administration. It is, however, clear that they take the most lively interest in their civil duties. . . . I deprecate any excessive amount of interference with their actions. I have already alluded to the undesirability of attempting to govern the Sudan from Cairo. The policy of decentralisation admits, I venture to think, of being carried still further. Harm will be done if any attempt is made to regulate all the details of administration from Khartoum. Within reasonable limits, a certain amount of latitude should be left to the Governors, notably as regards the extent to which it is just and expedient to press the collection of taxes."

The first year ended. Kitchener left for South Africa and Sir Reginald Wingate took over the reins of government. The magnificent buildings of the Palace and the Secretariat were taking shape on the river front. In all the mass of detail covering the progress of the Sudanese during the following twenty years it will be best to look broadly at the various aspects of Government as they developed between the beginning of 1900 and the end of 1920.

(i) *Administration*

By the end of 1900 the whole of Kordofan Province had been occupied, and in all the other Provinces, except Bahr-el-Ghazal in the far south-west, Governors were in residence and the process of consolidation had begun. So secure and peaceful was the general state of the country that considerable reductions were made in the number of garrison troops and whole villages of ex-soldiers were created. In Darfur Province the Sultan Ali Dinar reigned. Relations between him and the Central Government were excellent. No taxes were gathered in the south and they were but lightly collected in the north. The Central Government of to-day had also taken shape, and a Civil Secretary who was Deputy Governor-General, a Legal Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Secretary for Education had been appointed, all of them British. In 1901 the first civilian administrators were chosen, and at the end of that year Wingate reported: "Order reigns supreme. The people are contented. They are lightly taxed and they now realise that there is no interference whatever with their religion. . . . I should add that the experiment tried at the beginning of the year of introducing a small number of very

carefully selected young English civilians into the administration has proved eminently successful."

During this year Khartoum itself had become one vast brick-kiln. The first buildings to be completed were the Governor-General's Palace, the Secretariat offices, the Governor's house, Barclays Bank, the National Bank of Egypt, the Khartoum mosque, and the British barracks. Thousands of trees were planted, and in the first five years the cost of land in Khartoum increased from two millièmes to two thousand five hundred millièmes a square metre. The population increased by several thousand, and in 1905 a steam tramway service was opened. While all this building was going on, Government officials continued to live in Omdurman until about 1904, crossing over daily in a ferry which plied from the South Gate to what is now the Headquarters of the Sudan Defence Force.

By 1905 the picture had greatly changed. Administration was well under way and 3925 miles of telegraph line had penetrated to the most remote districts, even to Tonj and Wau. Seventy-nine linesmen, of whom seventy-three were Sudanese, patrolled these lines over the vast areas involved and repaired the damage frequently caused by elephant and giraffe in the south and by white ants elsewhere. In the lonely places Governors

and their Inspectors learned more and more about their people and saw that justice was done. But the cost was heavy. In these first five years fourteen British officers and thirty-eight Sudanese and Egyptians died on duty and ten British were invalided. There were no proper houses for them in the Provinces and their physical discomfort must have been unbearable. From the depths of the swamps and at the end of a report we read: "I regret that I am unable to forward any reliable sketches with this Report. . . . Work has absorbed all my hours of daylight. . . . At night-time one is subject to all the torments of the insect world."

The work this report covered was the most exhausting and unhealthy in the whole country. It was the clearing of the "sudd" in the southern reaches of the Nile and the Bahr-el-Ghazal Rivers. In that area of swamp the Nile is spread out over great tracts of land, and for miles and miles on all sides these early officials could see nothing but the tall waving papyrus grass shimmering into the distance. The channel of the river itself was difficult to find, flowing as it did under a solid, tangled, floating mass of vegetation. Humid and dank and sweltering by day, with the night there rose the shrill whine of millions of mosquitoes, the raucous noise of frogs, and the sounds of

" things which go bump in the night." In these appalling conditions, two Englishmen, Peake and Matthews, with several steamers and large gangs of convicts, hacked and tore at the islands of grass where the current, never very great in that area, seemed strongest. Often they fixed great hawsers and used the steamers to pull at the islands. By the end of 1903 the rivers had been cleared to Rejaf and to Wau. A channel had been found, though to this day it varies and steamers not infrequently get stuck.

Not only to these men is the country indebted for the opening up of the southern Sudan; it owes much also to the first British officers who, at this time, went south to attempt to start some form of administration. The task in the north was simple compared with that in the south. The northern Sudanese at least knew what administration was, and they were civilised in some degree. The primitive southerner, particularly in Upper Nile Province, was quite untamed, and a handful of British officers, each with a few soldiers, went off into the unknown to gain the confidence of such people as they might meet. They could not even know the local language but, with infinite patience, they found who the local chiefs were and slowly but surely insinuated themselves into their confidence, appointing young men of the

warring tribes as personal policemen and keeping the soldiers well in the background.

By 1908 the direct administration of the country was firmly established. A few religious fanatics had arisen and been speedily dealt with; Arabs had rioted in the Nuba Mountains against the firm control over slave-raiding and that too had been quickly controlled. The change in the land is best described in a report by Gorst, Financial Adviser to the Egyptian Government, after a tour of inspection in that year:—

> "At the commencement of 1907," he reported, "I returned to the Sudan after an interval of seven years. . . . I was able to see with my own eyes the immense advance, not only in the material well-being of the population, but also in their moral and intellectual standard, which has taken place in these few years. Throughout this journey, two points of a general character were very noticeable: firstly, the good feeling and hearty co-operation existing among all the officials of the Sudan Government, from the highest to the lowest, and the activity and enthusiasm displayed in the execution of their very arduous duties; and, secondly, the hold which the Englishmen in that service have obtained over the heterogeneous people they are called upon to administer. . . .
>
> In conclusion I have no hesitation in saying that His Britannic Majesty's Government may feel entire confidence in the spirit in which these vast territories are at present administered, and they may rest assured that the existing system is the one most calculated to promote the welfare of the inhabitants."

At the beginning of 1910 the first change of

importance was made in the system under which the Sudan was governed. It had been the practice of the Governor-General during the previous years to assemble an informal council, composed of certain of the higher officials, for the purpose of asking their advice on important matters, and it was thought that the time had come when it was desirable to go a step further and create a duly constituted council to be associated with the Governor-General in the discharge of his executive and legislative powers. The proposal was approved by the British and Egyptian Governments and an Ordinance putting it into force was promulgated in January. The Council was composed of the Governor-General as President, four *ex-officio* members, and from two to four additional members appointed by the Governor-General.

The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 caused a crisis in Egypt and anxiety to the Sudan Government. Turkey was still the sovereign power over Egypt and she allied herself with Germany. It was obvious that if the fiction of Turkish suzerainty was maintained, Egyptians would be put in a position of divided allegiance and it would be impossible to guarantee either internal order or financial stability. The British Government acted promptly and firmly and

declared Egypt to be a British Protectorate. A proclamation to that effect was published on the 18th December 1914. A further proclamation was issued on the following day, in which the British Government gave notice that, in view of the action of His Highness Abbas Hilmi Pasha, lately Khedive of Egypt, who had adhered to the King's enemies, His Majesty's Government had seen fit to depose him from the Khediviate, which had been offered, with the title of Sultan of Egypt, to Prince Hussein Kamil Pasha, eldest living prince of the old family of Mahomed Ali, and had been accepted by him.

In the Sudan the anxiety was proved to be unfounded, and messages of loyalty poured in to Wingate from the northern peoples. One great northern leader, however, did break loose: Sultan Ali Dinar in Darfur. He was persuaded that the Sudan Government was not strong enough to deal with him and even went to the length of planning an invasion of the rest of the Sudan from his western fortress. After several defiant letters he formally renounced his allegiance. It was not convenient to deal with him at the time but, by the early months of 1916, his warlike preparations were having a bad effect on the other tribes in neighbouring Kordofan. A force was concentrated in Nahud in March, and opera-

tions were begun which resulted in the crushing defeat of his forces on the 22nd May, and the death of Ali Dinar himself on the 6th November. The new administration proved acceptable to the people and Darfur settled down as a member of the Sudan family.

The war saw the departure of two great Sudan figures—Slatin and Wingate. The outbreak of hostilities between Britain and Austria meant the end of the services of Sir Rudolph Von Slatin Pasha. His story has already been told from the time when he first entered the Sudan in 1878 to his escape from the Khalifa Abdallahi. In 1901 he was made Inspector-General of the Sudan Government, and from then until August 1914 he was the Government's principal adviser on native affairs.

In December 1916 Sir Reginald Wingate left Khartoum to take up the post of High Commissioner for Egypt. He had joined the Egyptian Army in 1883 and served with it practically without a break until he succeeded Kitchener in December 1899 as Governor-General of the Sudan. Under his rule the country had developed from a state of desolation to a peaceful and contented land. As will be seen he was not idle in the matter of economic development. His personal influence in the country was immense and there

was hardly a man of note in all the land who was not known to him and prepared to give him his confidence as a friend. The Sudanese should always be grateful to Wingate, a very great gentleman.

Sir Lee Stack succeeded him as Governor-General and in 1920, with fifty-two political officers distributed over fourteen Provinces and a steadily increasing technical staff, the Sudan had been welded into an entity. It was now ready for the first halting steps of political and social progress. But before we go on to review these first twenty years it will be best to look briefly at the developments that took place in some other aspects of Government and, with the purely administrative outline as a background, to picture the general condition in 1920.

(ii) *Finance*

A little table of figures from the Sudan annual Budgets tells its own story :—

	Revenue	Expenditure
1900 . .	140,000	598,000
1903 . .	462,000	618,000
1906 . .	804,000	832,000
1909 . .	1,040,200	1,153,200
1912 . .	1,758,500	1,658,500
1914 . .	1,544,000	1,533,000
1917 . .	2,195,355	1,901,941
1920 . .	4,932,000	3,552,000

To the layman such tables of figures are dull and deceptive. The value of money changes and financiers have a distressing tendency to change the basis of their figures from time to time. But these few examples of annual Budgets serve to show the steady progress in the country and the gradually increasing stability through the years. In the records of the accounts there are many amusing comments. Perhaps the two best are one by Lord Cromer in 1901 who, discovering that the item for Government stationery—estimated at £1600 for the year—had been exceeded by some £600, straightway despatched a stiff letter on the evils of writing too many letters and directions. Would that he could see the stationery to-day—the endless circular letters, the forms, the red-tape of modern bureaucracy! The Sudan Government to-day has possibly less futile paper-work than most Governments, but the stationery item in the annual Budget is now many times that figure.

We come across, too, a letter from the Governor in Upper Nile Province in 1906 apologising for the lack of revenue from his Province, but pointing out that, whereas in 1902 he had contrived to extract £500, he was now extracting £4250.

In these annual Budgets the contribution by Egypt is of relevance and importance. In 1899

the Egyptian Government paid a subvention to the Sudan Government in aid of its civil expenditure and continued to do so until 1913. The amount of this subvention, which started at £156,000 in 1899 and rose to £368,000 in 1902, had gradually been reduced until it stood at £163,000 in 1912. In 1913 a new settlement of the financial relations between Egypt and the Sudan was arrived at. It was decided, on the one hand, to discontinue the contribution paid by Egypt to the Sudan, and, on the other, to credit the Sudan with the Customs dues collected in Egypt on goods coming to and going from the Sudan which had previously been collected and retained by Egypt. The effect of this settlement was that the contribution by Egypt for civil and military expenditure, which in 1912 stood at £335,000—of which £163,000 was on account of civil expenditure and £172,000 on account of the army—disappeared from the Revenue side of the Budget, while the Customs receipts were increased by £85,000, this being the figure then estimated as the equivalent of the duties collected in Egypt. At the same time the sum of £172,000 paid by the Sudan Government to the Egyptian Government for the maintenance of the army in the Sudan was removed from the Expenditure side of the Budget, since it was recognised that the method of accounting—by

which the sum of £172,000 appeared on both sides of the Budget in order to bring out the fact that a part of the Egyptian military expenditure was properly chargeable to the Sudan—was complicated and liable to misinterpretation. After 1913 the Sudan Government had to rely, as it does to-day, on its own resources to make both ends meet.

The contribution by Egypt in those early years, though it appears to be a fairly large sum, was in fact an extremely cheap way of having peace kept for her on her southern border and her irrigation water secured. A typical year will suffice to make clear the apparently complicated accounting system. In 1904 the Egyptian contribution to Sudan Government expenditure appeared as £380,000. To find the actual contribution the following items have to be deducted :—

(i)	Sudan Military contribution repaid . .	£186,000
(ii)	Customs dues collected at Alexandria and Port Said in Egypt on Sudan goods . .	75,000
(iii)	Sudan Government stores and officials on Egyptian State Railways	32,000
(iv)	Sudan goods on Egyptian State Railways .	54,000
(v)	Sudan traffic : Egyptian Posts and Telegraphs	6,000
		£353,000

The net cost was therefore £27,000. Taking into account capital grants and loans, the all-

inclusive cost to Egypt of the Sudan can be calculated to have been an average of £90,000 per annum over these first thirteen years. Later on, in 1925, Egypt agreed to pay part of the cost of the Sudan Defence Force which was formed in that year, for it saved her the trouble of having to provide for the defence of her southern frontier. This payment ceased in 1941 and, by an agreement between the Sudan and Egyptian Governments in 1938, it was decided that £5,414,525 was a reasonable figure to charge the Sudan for all financial help for purely Sudanese development given since 1899. This sum is now being paid in instalments by the Sudan Government to the Egyptian Government.

There is no debt of this kind to the British Government. The Sudan is not like a Colony. It does not constitute a charge for the British taxpayer, neither does it pay any financial tribute to Great Britain or to any other country. It is financially independent.

(iii) *Education*

In November 1900 Mr James Currie came to the Sudan to be Director of Education and Principal of Gordon College which was then being built. The Government was faced with the tremendous

task of organising the education of an entire nation. There was nothing on which to build, and in the whole country there were only two tiny primary schools—one at Wadi Halfa and the other at Suakin—which had been set up on the Egyptian model for the small Egyptian communities there. In the conditions of widespread poverty the outlook could hardly have been more unfavourable. The only possible policy was to move slowly, to avoid expenditure on mere educational machinery, and only to embark on a system of education which would have a real and vital connection with the economic needs of the country. The immediate educational needs were: (i) the creation of a native artisan class (there were no skilled Sudanese labourers and costs of Egyptian and other imported workers were excessive); (ii) the diffusion among the masses of sufficient people of education to enable them to understand the merest elements of the machinery of Government; (iii) the creation of a small native administrative class who would ultimately fill many minor posts.

In 1900 the first small Government primary school was opened in Omdurman. By the end of the year it had twice burst out of its accommodation and boasted 120 pupils, most of whom were sons of leaders who, but two years before,

had been shouting defiance on the field of battle at Omdurman. The proportion of Sudanese to Egyptians at the little school was eleven to two. The obvious bottle-neck in any educational advance was the supply of teachers. There were none available and Egyptians were seconded to the Sudan on a temporary basis. At the same time a small training college for primary school-teachers was opened in Omdurman. Teachers for any higher educational level could only be obtained through secondary education which could not yet be begun, but, by the end of 1900, seven primary schools were being built in various centres in the country. Towering over the whole problem was the magnificent building of the Gordon Memorial College, rapidly nearing completion and, to the cynics, the most ridiculous waste of money they had ever known. Mr Currie shared Kitchener's confidence in this act of faith and, writing early in 1901, put it in its proper perspective: "The sphere of usefulness of the College," he stated, "at present necessarily restricted, will widen in an ever-extending circle as the other educational institutions of the country fructify. Useful though it can be made to-day, its value fifty years hence will be incalculable. But the magnificence of the building must not cast a glamour over us, and make us forget its actual present position as the

keystone of what is only a very humble educational edifice. No greater injustice could be done to the idea which inspired it than to attempt to utilise prematurely what has been built both in consideration of present needs, and of the certain requirements of a new Sudan. No meaner building could have been worthy of the conception or of the generosity which rendered realisation possible, but the fruit cannot be gathered in one generation. . . . I propose, as a beginning, to place the industrial school there . . . the primary school at Omdurman will also be moved there. . . ." In November 1902 Lord Kitchener returned to the Sudan to open the College formally. At the opening ceremony he said: "All I hope and trust is that it may be round this centre that the development of higher education in the Sudan may be focused for all time."

By the end of 1902, 450 boys were being educated in Khartoum Province, and by the end of 1903 Gordon College had 149 students within its walls, of whom 91 were Sudanese and 58 were Egyptians or Syrians.

The figures rise steadily and impressively: in December 1905 there were 1533 boys in Government schools. 229 of these were in higher elementary schools which had been opened in Gordon College, Omdurman, Halfa, and Suakin. 29 student

teachers were training in new colleges at Omdurman and Suakin. 723 were at primary schools in the Provinces and, such was the growing demand for education, that the first murmurs of an Education Rate in taxes were heard. The first boys to leave the Sudan schools were beginning to enter minor posts in the Government—73 were employed in minor posts by the end of 1906—and, even more remarkable, the first petition for a girls' school was presented. The position of women in the northern Sudan was, and still is, deplorable, and it is difficult to find any satisfactory answer to criticism of the Government in those early years—and even up to the 1930's—for the rather dilatory treatment of girls' education. Admittedly, in a backward Moslem country, there is strong opposition to women's emancipation, but the Government should have seized the opportunity to provide such schools whenever and wherever it knocked. Had it done so, much of the restlessness and psychological upset of the educated young men of to-day would have been avoided, and the whole social pattern would have been much farther along the road to balance than it is. But the opportunities, and there were several, were missed on the very inadequate grounds of expense, and the importance of women in society was consistently underestimated. A small girls' school

was opened in Rufaa in the Gezira area in 1907, but further expansion was left to the western missionary societies whose activities will shortly be described.

The initial difficulties of producing teachers for boys' schools was gradually overcome by the establishment of further training colleges for teachers in Khartoum, Suakin and Rufaa, where 174 sons of the most influential families in the country, between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four, attended a five-year course.

The educational edifice had been built and the story from this time onwards to 1920 is one of continual expansion. In 1914 Mr Currie resigned to take up another appointment and, with Wingate and Bonham-Carter (of whom we shall hear later), he takes his due and proper place as a founder of the nation.

By 1920 over 300 boys trained in the Gordon College workshops were employed in Government service and another 100 were satisfactorily employed elsewhere. Gordon College itself had developed and prospered. Secondary education, a distant dream in 1902, had just been established, and the appointment of a third English tutor enabled the College authorities to look forward with enthusiasm to 1921 and to plan to double the intake for advanced courses in engineering, teaching, medicine, and other vocations. In this

lay the first step towards the development of higher education proper. Technical schools in Omdurman and Khartoum had been founded, and in the primary and elementary schools in the Provinces there were just under 9000 pupils. There were five small girls' schools; and in Omdurman the first teacher training college for girls was being built.

In all this development the efforts of the Christian missionary societies should not be forgotten. The whole question of Christian missions in the Sudan will be dealt with later, but, broadly speaking, policy was, and still is, that missionary work, properly so called, was forbidden in those Provinces that were inhabited by Moslems, but that the field was left open for missionary enterprise in the pagan southern Provinces. The Sudan Government, from the beginning, was scrupulously fair in its approach to this most controversial problem, and American Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Anglican bodies were given certain spheres of influence in the south in which they could operate. No organised Islamic missionary society existed and the question of granting a sphere of influence to such a group did not arise. Mutual tolerance prevailed between Christian and Mahomedan leaders and to-day an Islamic Preaching Society is active, particularly in the Nuba Mountains. Slatin Pasha, after a

tour in the south in 1905, made the following remarks, which broadly appreciate the first twenty years (apart from the opening of two girls' schools in Omdurman and Atbara by the Church Missionary Society in 1907 and 1909): "Missionary work amongst the pagan tribes is a civilising one. They begin by teaching these savages the elements of common-sense, good behaviour, and obedience to Government authority, rather than religion. As far as I am aware, they have not baptised anyone yet, nor have they converted any of them to Christianity, but there is no doubt that they have had an improving effect on the character of the people amongst whom they have settled, and they have certainly gained their confidence." The Anglican Missionary Society opened a hospital in Omdurman in 1914 and in their medical work generally the missionary societies rendered a great service to the people.

(iv) *Communications and Trade*

Neither trade nor administration could develop in the great areas of the country without improved communications, and the only way of exporting Sudan produce was to send it by the long rail, steamer, and rail journey 1400 miles to Port Said in Egypt. On the 30th December 1899 Kitchener's railway line from Wadi Halfa was completed to Halfaya, opposite Khartoum. It

will be remembered that the Wadi Halfa line was constructed for military purposes. Great lengths of it lay across uninhabited desert sand, and every train leaving Halfa for the hundred-mile journey to Khartoum had to take with it 9500 gallons of water. There were in fact 779 miles of railway line in the country and actual earnings in 1900 were £146,258, as against working expenditure (excluding new works) of £113,350. 728 trains travelled up and down the Wadi Halfa line in the year, and the working costs were 4s. 5½d. per train mile. On the old Kerma line there was also a certain amount of traffic with dates and 348 trains were run on it. There was rapid expansion, and in 1904 work was begun on the construction of a vital line from Khartoum to the Red Sea Coast via Atbara. The original plan had been to link this line to the old harbour at Suakin, but Suakin was found to be dangerous as a port for big ships, and early in 1906 the first building of an entirely new harbour was begun at Port Sudan. The railway line was opened in 1905 and, by the end of 1907, Port Sudan harbour was receiving merchant vessels from several countries. In this same year it was decided to bring the railway right into the centre of Khartoum, and a contract was signed with the Cleveland Bridge and Engineering Company of Darlington for a bridge over the Nile. For river transport on

the southern reaches and elsewhere, tugs and steamers and barges were under construction in the dockyards. For instance, in 1908 there were launched five twin-screw tugs, fourteen barges and two new steamers, each 160 feet in length, with accommodation for twenty-four first class passengers and forty-eight second class passengers, and new quays were being constructed at the Mogren area of Khartoum. In 1909 Port Sudan harbour was formally opened, and in 1910 two great bridges were completed: the road and rail bridge over the Blue Nile at Khartoum, and the road and rail bridge which had been under construction near Kosti. This latter bridge enabled the railway to be pushed on to the heart of Kordofan at El Obeid, and in 1911 it reached that town. Civilian stationmasters were now in charge at 108 railway stations, and there were 1500 miles of open line in the country. Plans were made for a further extension to Kassala.

Railway and steamer revenue and expenditure:—

	Revenue	Expenditure
1900 . .	£146,258	£112,350
1906 . .	235,669	161,490
1908 . .	335,284	258,219
1912 . .	509,629	375,876
1916 . .	824,957	522,204
1918 . .	1,253,000	965,967
1920 . .	1,962,000	1,281,995

It is surprising to note that in 1908, letters from London to Khartoum took eight and a half days and parcels sixteen days. Surface mail in 1952 generally takes twice that time!

(v) *Trade*

Before 1900, Sudan trade consisted mainly of imported goods from Manchester and of the export of gum, ostrich feathers, ivory, and a certain amount of indiarubber. Of these gum is the only commodity of any real importance. In the year 1881, the year before the Mahdi rose in rebellion, 151,000 kantars were exported. In 1899, 42,000 were exported and in 1902, 220,000. The rest of the story in the first twenty years is one of great increase in this commodity from the forests of Kordofan and Darfur, and of increases in other goods. But the Sudan was to drive to bankruptcy many pioneers: the Anglo-German Syndicate of 1910 which tried to make briquettes out of the "sudd"; various syndicates which tried to make paper out of papyrus grass; and sundry prospectors in search of gold. It was a poor country, but in the minds of the men of vision of the time there had been simmering from the first years of the new administration the outline of a plan which was to bring wealth

and prosperity: the cultivation by irrigation of the Sudan's white gold—cotton. This was not to bear fruit until the first twenty years had come and gone, but so vital is cotton to the economy of the country at the present time that it is of interest to look briefly at the ideas and the plans which brought about the irrigation of the great Gezira plains of to-day.

In the Sudan, little less than to Egypt, the waters of the Nile are of vital importance. Though the southern Sudan has an annual rainfall sufficient for the cultivation of a variety of crops, the north has little rain and Khartoum has an annual rainfall of less than 200 millimetres. Accordingly the agricultural officers in 1900 turned their attention urgently to irrigation. Five types of irrigation were possible:—

(i) Basin irrigation: this could only be done in the natural basins along the Nile in the northern Province, which were watered from the Nile flood, one of the striking characteristics of that river. It occurs in the months between June and November and at its peak at the end of August the flow is about fifteen times that of April.

(ii) Artificial lift irrigation using the traditional "shaduf" and "sagia" types of water-lifting equipment.

(iii) Systematic irrigation fed by pumps from the river.
(iv) Flush irrigation—in the deltas of the rivers Gash and Baraka in the eastern Sudan.
(v) Gravity flow direct from a river. The Gezira scheme is of this type.

The name "el Gezira," which means "the island," was originally used to describe all the land between the White and the Blue Niles, but its use has since come to be restricted to that part which lies north of Sennar to the Kosti railway, an expanse of five million feddans of comparatively level land, with a gradual slope down from south to north which makes gravity irrigation possible. A large proportion of the Gezira is good agricultural land with a high clay content, and, since it is comparatively impervious to water, seepage losses are exceptionally low. Rainfall decreases markedly from south to north, being about eighteen inches annually at Sennar and about six inches at Khartoum. The rain is, however, very erratic, and often falls in violent storms.

Travellers in the nineteenth century commented on the possibility of irrigating the Gezira, but the first concrete proposals came from Sir William Garstin in 1904 when, after a visit to the Sudan,

he published his 'Report on the Basins of the Upper Nile.' He came to the conclusion that there was sufficient land available, that population in the area was adequate, and that water could be obtained by means of a barrage on the Blue Nile. Cotton was, however, not yet imagined on any scale, and in all these early plans the cultivation of cereals was the main consideration.

The first serious suggestion of cotton seems to have been put forward in 1903 when we read in Wingate's annual report: "There can be no doubt that cotton of good quality can be produced. The Sudan is, indeed, the original home of Egyptian cotton. Monsieur Jumel, who, in 1820, first introduced cotton cultivation on a large scale into Egypt, procured the first seed from the garden of an official who had resided in the Sudan, and who brought some cotton with him to Cairo. The reports of the exports on the small quantity of cotton now grown in different localities are distinctly favourable. Cotton is now, however, for the most part a rain crop. What is required is to cultivate the plant on irrigated lands." In that same year, experiments were carried out in the Gash and Tokar flood areas and resulted in cotton cultivation which has carried on to the present day.

But the real beginning of commercial cotton-

growing lay in the lease of land at Zeidab, about 150 miles north of Khartoum, to an American, Mr Leigh Hunt, in 1904. He developed a mixed farming enterprise with some cotton-growing, and in order to develop the scheme further, went to London and formed a small company called the Sudan Experimental Plantations Syndicate.

In 1908 Mr Dupuis, the Director of Irrigation, produced an interesting note on the possibilities of a canal scheme in the Gezira. The Survey Department had put in an immense amount of work into the area, and his conclusion was that a scheme was feasible, and that the surveys pointed to the construction of a canal with its head-works in the immediate neighbourhood of Sennar to irrigate the country from a point near Wad Medani. He considered that such a canal could command an area of 3,000,000 acres. He concluded his report as follows :—

> "The Gezira Canal may be regarded as the great hope of the Sudan, and it is hard to see how, without the execution of some such work, the country is ever to become satisfactorily self-supporting. The general conditions of the case—namely, the existence of a very large area of rich level plain, poorly cultivated under semi-arid conditions—would seem to be just those under which the introduction of irrigation is most likely to produce great developments."

The Government turned its attention seriously to the Gezira. Leigh Hunt had prospered. His

company was now called the Sudan Plantations Syndicate and an additional 40,000 feddans were brought under cultivation at Kitiab, farther south. In 1911 the Sudan Government, which was then considering major works in the Gezira, wished to prove that long-staple cotton and grain were satisfactory commercial enterprises and opened a pump irrigation at Taiyiba on the Blue Nile. They asked the Syndicate to manage the enterprise. This was followed by a pump irrigation scheme at Barakat financed by the Government, the Syndicate constructing the canals and supervising the agricultural operations. This scheme, comprising an area of 6000 feddans of which 2000 were under cotton, was first irrigated in 1914.

But with the immediate success of the Taiyiba scheme the die had been cast. Representatives of the British Cotton Growers' Association had visited the Sudan—notably Sir William Mather in 1910—and in public speeches and meetings had aroused widespread interest. The British Government therefore received favourably the first request from the Sudan which was to involve financial commitment. Wingate applied to float a loan, and in 1913 the British Parliament passed "The Government of the Sudan Loan Act, 1913," by which the British Treasury guaranteed interest at a rate not exceeding 3½ per cent on a loan

raised by the Sudan Government, not to exceed £3,000,000 and for the following purposes :—

1. Works for the purposes of irrigating the Gezira Plain	£2,000,000
2. Extension of the Sudan Railway System .	800,000
3. Other irrigation works and contingencies .	200,000
	£3,000,000

This guarantee was to be increased to £13,000,000 by subsequent amendments, but in 1914 a complete reorganisation of the Sudan Irrigation Department took place, and Lord Kitchener returned to the country to attend, with Wingate, preparations for the Sennar Dam. Work was immediately put in hand and a contract made for the construction of the main canal leading to the Gezira. But the outbreak of the First World War put a stop to most of the work, and it was not until the end of 1919 that preliminary drawings of the dam were completed. The development of what came to be known as " The Syndicate " still lay ahead, but the Sudan Government had embarked upon a project of great magnitude.

Meanwhile, normal trade in gum and other commodities had increased, and by the end of 1919 the value of external trade had reached the sum of over £7,500,000 for the year, as against £978,000 in 1910 and £500,000 in 1908.

Public Health

In the last decade or so, medical services in the Sudan have expanded to an astonishing extent, but in the first twenty years development was slow. In 1901 small civil hospitals were built in Omdurman, Wadi Halfa, Khartoum, Berber, Dongola, Suakin and Kassala, and in 1904 the first two British doctors were appointed. Through the years many thousand people were vaccinated against smallpox, and quinine was put on sale in post offices. In 1909 the existing large hospitals in Khartoum, Atbara and Port Sudan were built, and in that year, too, the first British women nurses were appointed. In the irrigation schemes at Zeidab and Taiyiba extensive measures were taken against mosquitoes, but it was not until 1920 that any real signs of expansion became apparent. New hospitals were being constructed or reconstructed at Wadi Halfa, Kassala, Malakal, Sennar, Haj Abdulla, and Jebel Aulia; and in Omdurman the first midwives' training school was completed.

Out-patients at civil hospitals were 292,932 in 1920 as against 40,862 in 1903, but medical work generally was only scratching at the surface of the many problems.

Justice

Lastly, there is justice. It is fitting that it should be last, for the whole story of the first twenty years of government should be read in the light of the achievement of a system of courts, civil and criminal, which dealt with cases equitably and expeditiously and which did more than anything else to bring confidence and a sense of security to a harassed and uneasy people. In great measure this was due to an English lawyer, Mr Bonham-Carter, who, in 1899, with only one clerk to assist him, set about the building of a legal and judicial system. The drafting of the Sudan Penal Code, the Sudan Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Civil Justice Ordinances have already been mentioned, but the greatest measure of Mr Bonham-Carter's success lay in his commonsense, which he had in abundance. He was a professional lawyer. Governors and Inspectors were amateurs, but he never allowed a legal technicality to cloud the main issue in reviewing cases when, though the prescribed form had not been followed, justice had been done. Side by side with the development of civil and criminal law, the administration of Mahomedan Law—which in the Sudan deals with nearly all questions connected with personal status—was likewise

studied. And in that sphere, too, the Sudan was fortunate in possessing a Grand Kadi of unusual enlightenment and ability: Mahomed Shakir. Writing in 1902 he stated:—

> "What consoles me with regard to the stagnant state of the Mahomedan Law in this country is the fact—deplorable though that fact be—that this state of stagnation is general throughout the Mahomedan world. And although for many centuries it has been the only law applied to the people, time has, on account of the failure of those in charge to administer it properly, necessitated the introduction of other codes.
>
> What renders this condition of things the more regrettable is the fact that some of the causes which have for long been undermining the stability of this law have become a part of its traditions, any digression from which would be regarded as a deviation from the Sharia Law. Hence, it is impossible for me to exaggerate the difficulties which obstruct the way of the reformer. Yet I hope that we may have a good opportunity in this country to improve this state of things and to bring about an unprecedented epoch of advance in the history of reform."

The Governors and the Inspectors set about their legal duties with a will, and Bonham-Carter was able to report that "in essential respects the administration of justice has reached a high level of excellence. Accused persons are brought to trial with as little delay as possible. . . . Criminal trials are not only characterised by the sense of fairness which one could have expected from the constitution of the courts, but are also as a rule

conducted with a regard for legality and a patience in exacting evidence which might not have been anticipated."

In 1907 the present Law Courts in Khartoum were formally opened by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, and a High Court of the Sudan was constituted consisting of three or more of the High Court judges sitting together.

Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter left the Sudan for Mesopotamia in 1917, and the great traditions of justice which he founded are unimpaired to-day.

These first twenty years of solid preparation for social and economic advance were years of peace.

In the northern Sudan social services had gradually been established, and in the south a handful of lone British were, slowly and relentlessly, introducing law and order to wild and warring tribes, stubborn in their independence and in their backwardness.

CHAPTER III

THE SECOND TWENTY YEARS, 1921-1939

THE end of the First World War heralded great changes in almost every country in the world. The foundations of the old social order of mankind had been shaken by four ghastly years of war, and restlessness, unhappiness, and uncertainty held sway.

The Moslem world passed through several periods of unprecedented disturbance, but, while ferment raged elsewhere, the political calm of the Sudan had been absolutely unruffled. In itself this was ample proof that the people were contented with the existing predominantly British administration, but there were signs that the Sudan was to have its first taste of internal troubles. To understand this trouble it is necessary to look briefly at Egypt in these post-war years.

In 1914 Britain had declared a Protectorate over Egypt. Throughout the war there had been growing agitation by Egyptians against this régime, and their discontent flamed into public disorder early in 1919. The British Government appointed a Commission to proceed to

Egypt with the following terms of reference: "To inquire into the causes of the late disorders in Egypt and to report on the existing situation in the country, and the form of the constitution which, under the Protectorate, will be best calculated to promote its peace and prosperity, the progressive development of self-governing institutions, and the protection of foreign interests." The Commission, under the chairmanship of Lord Milner, arrived in Egypt on the 15th December 1919, and the story of its vacillations and of the mistakes of the British Government provide a solemn lesson for to-day when, once more, Britain and Egypt are at loggerheads. They provide, too, warnings for the Sudan Government of to-day in the most difficult and anxious task of all: the handing over of power to a nation impatient of dependence. Just as the boy entering upon manhood will turn against the over-anxious mother, so will the nation turn against its foreign rulers, however benevolent and however strong the underlying bonds of affection, if freedom is not granted. Youth is a hardy plant and a Divine Providence watches over its mistakes. "Govern," cried Theodore Roosevelt, "or go."

In Egypt in the early 1920's the British Government neither governed nor went. British lives were lost and British prestige was scorned. Zaghlul

Pasha, the Egyptian leader of the extremists of the time, made it clear that he was not prepared to discuss anything with the Milner Commission except on a basis of independence ; of the abolition of the Protectorate. The terms of reference of the Commission specifically implied the continuance of the Protectorate, but within a fortnight, on the 24th December 1919, the Commission made a concession in the following statement: "The Mission has been sent out by the British Government, with the approval of Parliament, to reconcile the aspirations of the Egyptian people with the special interests which Great Britain has in Egypt and with the maintenance of the legitimate rights of all foreign residents in the country." This bargaining move, as is to be expected in the Middle East, had no effect whatever other than to strengthen Zaghlul Pasha's position enormously. He merely maintained his previous position and the Mission returned discomfited to England in March 1920, whither Zaghlul subsequently went in his own good time and to his own advantage. In August, the Mission produced a "Memorandum" containing proposals which, it was hoped, he would use for discussion and which, it was implied, would not be published as it had not been studied by the British Government. Zaghlul published them, refused to comment,

and thereby committed the British Government to a weak negotiating position in which it need never have been placed. The full Milner Report was published on the 18th February 1921 and proper negotiations began between the British and Egyptian Governments. The Commission had assumed that its proposals would ensure a friendly Egypt and that British officials would remain in office: ". . . any general or rapid displacement of the British and other foreign officials is not to be anticipated." Both assumptions were fundamentally wrong.

Throughout 1920 disorder prevailed. British were murdered in the streets and the legacy of Cromer's excellent administration was allowed to deteriorate. Politics dominated the scene and fundamental good administration was put in the background. The great mass of the people only wanted the sound, strong administration to continue, but they were just reaching that most dangerous stage in the East—that of realising that the Government was losing its grip; of finding that they could no longer get things done; of noticing that a youth in shirt and shorts was not prosecuted for shouting, "Down with the Government," "Get out, you foreigners"; and, above all, of losing personal contact with their administrators.

Attempts to negotiate all broke down on the British insistence upon a British garrison in Egypt and British control of Egyptian Foreign Affairs. An Egyptian Government of sorts was made, but the legal position and that of British officials was hopelessly confused. On the 25th January 1922 Lord Allenby, who was then High Commissioner in Egypt, resigned: ". . . . if the advice I have offered is rejected, I cannot honourably remain. I therefore beg that my resignation may be tendered to His Majesty with expression of my humble duty. Pending my removal I shall of course continue loyally to carry out your instructions." His resignation was not accepted. He was summoned to London for consultation and on the 28th February he returned to Egypt to make the following proclamation :—

" Whereas His Majesty's Government, in accordance with their declared intentions, desire forthwith to recognise Egypt as an independent sovereign state ; and whereas the relations between His Majesty's Government and Egypt are of vital interest to the British Empire ; the following principles are hereby declared :—

1. The British Protectorate over Egypt is terminated, and Egypt is declared to be an independent sovereign state.
2. So soon as the Government of His Highness shall pass an Act of Indemnity with application to all inhabitants of Egypt, Martial Law as proclaimed on the 2nd of November 1914 shall be withdrawn.
3. The following matters are absolutely reserved to the dis-

cretion of His Majesty's Government until such time as it may be possible by free discussion and friendly accommodation on both sides to conclude agreements in regard thereto between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Egypt:

(*a*) The security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt.
(*b*) The defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference direct or indirect.
(*c*) The protection of foreign interests in Egypt and the protection of minorities.
(*d*) The Sudan.

Pending the conclusion of such agreements the *status quo* in all these matters shall remain intact."

These principles were in fact almost exactly what Allenby had been recommending for some time.

On the 15th March 1922 the Khedive assumed the title of "His Majesty, King of Egypt." His claim to be King of the Sudan was turned down. In January 1924 Zaghlul Pasha became Prime Minister of Egypt, and on the 19th November there occurred a dastardly murder which was the culmination of these years of continuous disorder: Sir Lee Stack, Governor-General of the Sudan, on a visit to Cairo, was shot and killed in his car outside the offices of the Ministry of Education. And here we may leave Egypt to her troubles, shorn of British officials, 940 of whom out of a

total of 1251 had either resigned or been dismissed. As we shall see, she was soon to be deprived of any further practical part in the administration of the Sudan.

A report in 1925 covering Sudan affairs makes the statement that, "The Egyptian disturbances did not fail to have their effect in the Sudan." It then goes straight on to describe the mutiny of certain army elements in Khartoum in November 1924. No poorer political appreciation could have been written, in that it implied a general seditious movement, supported generally in the Sudan and culminating in a mutiny which was suppressed. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The immediate effect of the Egyptian disturbances in 1919 was a flood of letters to the Governor-General from leading Sudanese personalities expressing anxiety and seeking assurance that, as far as the Sudan was concerned, no interference would be tolerated in the existing British administration. This anxiety was shared by the great majority of the peoples of the northern Sudan, and, had they been literate or understanding, by all the people of the south.

But in agitation in Egypt there did lie a certain amount of danger for the Sudan in a few towns, particularly in Omdurman and in the main Provincial Headquarters. The administration was

largely conducted at a junior level by Egyptians of the politically minded class. There were of course units of the Egyptian Army in the country, and many merchants in the northern riverain towns, closely linked with Egypt and thoroughly disliking the restrictions placed on their predatory habits, were potential trouble-makers. There was a growing "student class."

The first sign of political trouble in the Sudan came on the 30th May 1919 when a dismissed army officer of fanatical temperament and Egyptian parentage made a public speech in Khartoum calling upon the Sudanese to combine with Egypt to defeat the British. The Egyptian Army was in a difficult position, having taken the oath of allegiance to the Egyptian throne and yet being in practice under the orders of the Governor-General of the Sudan. When the Milner Commission report was published, Egyptian extremist factions began to try to stir up trouble in the Sudan with a view to making the negotiations with the British Government as difficult as possible. They found a ready tool in a Sudanese called Ali Abdel Latif.

In May 1922 Ali Abdel Latif published the first Sudanese nationalistic document entitled, "The Claims of the Sudanese Nation." It was treason and actionable. He was prosecuted, imprisoned,

and came out of prison in April 1923 hating everything British. He held no brief for Egyptians either. His article was concerned with the Sudanese and their independence, but local Egyptian agitators found in him the ideal agent to use while they themselves kept discreetly in the background. In May 1924 a secret meeting was held in his house to inaugurate an association to be known as "The White Flag League." The Egyptians took no open part in it. Sudanese were put in the shop window. By the end of May there were branches of the League in many of the principal towns of the northern Sudan, even in remote Fasher and Talodi. It inspired a small "demonstration" in Khartoum on the 17th June and a larger one in Omdurman on the 19th. On the 23rd the League produced its flag: it bore a rough representation of the Nile on a white ground, with a small copy of the Egyptian flag in one corner and the word "Forward" written in Arabic. Against the background of the Sudan the total membership, possibly two thousand, can only be described as minute, and there were only six leaders, but a development of this sort was entirely new to the Sudan Government of the day. The Government came up against the eternal problem that such a move presents to a foreign administration. If prosecution against the

leaders of a nationalist movement is enforced then they tend to become "martyrs" in the opinion of the public; the issues involved become confused; the importance of the movement is greatly exaggerated and they almost certainly gain many more adherents as a result. If prosecution is not enforced, they may do harm elsewhere and the populace begins to wonder if the Government has lost its grip.

Throughout the summer months of 1924 trouble simmered in Khartoum and Omdurman with no explosive incident, but on the 19th November the murder of Sir Lee Stack in Cairo set in train a decisive series of events. Lord Allenby anticipated the sanction of the British Government and at once presented the following ultimatum to the Prime Minister of Egypt:—

"The Governor-General of the Sudan and Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, who was also a distinguished officer of the British Army, has been brutally murdered in Cairo. His Majesty's Government consider that this murder, which holds up Egypt as at present governed to the contempt of civilised peoples, is the natural outcome of a campaign of hostility to British rights and British subjects in Egypt and Sudan, founded upon a heedless ingratitude for benefits conferred by Great Britain, not discouraged by Your Excellency's Government and fomented by organisations in close contact with that Government. Your Excellency was warned by His Majesty's Government little more than a month ago of the consequences of failing to stop this campaign, more particularly as it con-

cerned the Sudan. It has not been stopped. The Egyptian Government have now allowed the Governor-General of the Sudan to be murdered and have proved that they are incapable or unwilling to protect foreign lives. His Majesty's Government therefore require that the Egyptian Government shall :—

(1) Present ample apology for the crime.
(2) Prosecute inquiry into the authorship of the crime with the utmost energy and without respect of persons, and bring the criminals, whoever they are and whatever their age, to condign punishment.
(3) Henceforth forbid and vigorously suppress all popular political demonstrations.
(4) Pay forthwith to His Majesty's Government a fine of £500,000.
(5) Order within 24 hours the withdrawal from the Sudan of all Egyptian officers, and the purely Egyptian units of the Sudan Army with such resulting changes as shall be hereafter specified.
(6) Notify the competent Department that the Sudan Government will increase the area to be irrigated at Gezira from 300,000 feddans to an unlimited figure as need may arise.
(7) Withdraw all opposition in the respects hereafter specified to the wishes of His Majesty's Government concerning the protection of foreign interests in Egypt.

Failing immediate compliance with these demands, His Majesty's Government will at once take appropriate action to safeguard their interests in Egypt and the Sudan."

The document, together with another one containing more specific details, was handed to the Egyptian Prime Minister in the evening of the 22nd November by Lord Allenby personally,

at the head of his own regiment, the 15/16th Lancers. At 8 P.M. the text of the ultimatum was received in a clear telegram by the Acting Governor-General in Khartoum. It included the demand that Egypt should withdraw all Egyptian officers and purely Egyptian units and details within twenty-four hours. The ultimatum was refused by the Egyptian Government, and orders were accordingly given by the Governor-General for immediate evacuation. At the same time, the Civil Secretary to the Sudan Government ordered the deportation of certain Egyptian administrative officials known to be anti-British. Early in the morning of the 24th the Egyptian unit in Khartoum North—consisting of the 3rd Egyptian battalion and the Egyptian batteries of artillery—and also the 4th Egyptian battalion in Khartoum were surrounded by British troops. The 4th battalion in Khartoum was entrained with great difficulty and under the threat of machine-guns, but the 3rd battalion and artillery in Khartoum North refused to leave except by a direct order from the Egyptian Minister of War brought to them by an Egyptian officer. To avoid bloodshed, and because of sudden disorder in the Central Prison, a telegram was sent to Cairo asking that an officer be sent forthwith by plane. Trouble broke out in distant Talodi where the Egyptian

garrison refused to surrender, and on the 25th and 26th the Egyptians in Khartoum North used every means in their power to foment discontent among certain Sudanese units in Khartoum and Omdurman. They succeeded in Khartoum and failed in Omdurman. In the afternoon of the 27th, six Sudanese officers together with two platoons of the XIth Sudanese battalion mutinied in Khartoum and proceeded to march together with a large assembly of hangers-on towards the bridge to Khartoum North. Units of the Leicesters and Argylls were called out and, after an attempt to parley, opened fire. The mutineers invaded the British Military Hospital some little distance from the bridge, and killed a British Medical Officer, two Syrian Medical Officers, one British N.C.O., and three Egyptian other ranks. It is a typical paradox of the Sudan that throughout the afternoon, when British civilians with their families made their way to the Palace for safety, the Sudanese mob made way for them, even helping little children, and not one instance of looting in the unoccupied houses was reported. The mutineers occupied the Egyptian Officers' Mess in the hospital compound during the night when they realised that an impenetrable cordon surrounded them. The building was shelled in the morning after unsuccessful attempts to rush

it, and by the morning of the 29th November the mutiny was at an end. The orders of the Egyptian War Minister having been brought by aeroplane late in the night of the 27th-28th November, the evacuation by train to Port Sudan and thence by ship to Egypt was completed. Resistance at Talodi, and to a minor extent elsewhere in the north, collapsed, and the various units from these outposts were deported without difficulty. Not only were they deported without difficulty; they left the Sudan to the great relief of the populace and to the accompaniment of rejoicing and loyal messages in all corners of the land. The way was open for the steady progress of the Sudanese, under British trusteeship, to self-government and independence.

Legally and morally there was good reason for the abolition of the 1899 Condominium Agreement and the formal declaration of British Trusteeship. But this was not to be. In England Sir Austen Chamberlain feared the effect of such a declaration upon foreign opinion. In Egypt, Allenby feared the effect on the new Egyptian Cabinet which he had succeeded in creating. The following telegram was sent from Khartoum, but it was not sufficiently convincing: "Foundations of Condominium are proved utterly untrustworthy and we cannot rebuild army on double allegiance.

It is impossible to guarantee that we shall not have another mutiny; we can deal with it if it occurs with our present forces, but every life lost on both sides in suppressing it will be due to our not doing what, according to all opinion here, we should have done on the morning after Stack's death—viz., declaring abolition of Egyptian authority. The chance of a further mutiny will be very greatly reduced by lowering the Egyptian flag."

It was decided that the Sudan having in practice obtained freedom from Egyptian rule, the Condominium Agreement should be allowed to continue as a façade. But Britain was never to be in such a strong diplomatic position again, and the "façade" has proved to be a handicap to the Sudan ever since.

On the 12th March 1925, Egypt offered to pay something towards the cost of military forces in the Sudan and Allenby accepted: "In spite of the measures which the events of last year obliged them to take, His Majesty's Government have preserved the Condominium created by the Boutros-Cromer Convention of 1899 and they recognise, therefore, that it is only right and proper that the Egyptian Government should so contribute. They agree that the amount fixed for this purpose should be £750,000."

However, on the 17th January 1925, the Sudan Defence Force, consisting of Sudanese units and officered by British and Sudanese only, had been inaugurated and Sudanese had taken the place of Egyptians in the administration.

At the risk of over-burdening and unbalancing this chapter with politics and trouble, it is relevant to take one last look at the effect of these post-war years. There had come into being a class, small but vocal and with potential influence out of all proportion to its numbers, whose growth had been "forced" so that they were at a stage which, in normal circumstances, would only have been reached after a generation or more of normal development. A forced growth from shallow roots has little chance of becoming a healthy plant, but the seed had been sown deliberately by the British and the success of administration was to lie largely in the degree to which it satisfied their aspirations in the years which lay ahead.

And there town politics can be left—in the spring of 1925—and we can turn to the country at large, to peace and quiet, to steady progress, to the "Golden Age" of Sudan administration.

The main themes of the Sudan story in the second twenty years, from 1920 to 1939, are four in number: Firstly, the development of "in-

direct" administration; Secondly, the development of the Gezira scheme; Thirdly, the Nile Waters Agreement of 1929 with Egypt; and Fourthly, the emergence from relative obscurity of two great religious leaders who to-day dominate the Sudan scene.

Firstly, then, indirect administration. Broadly speaking there are two ways of administering any country. It can on the one hand be administered "directly" by the Central Government, which uses regional agents as minor dictators scattered throughout the land, each responsible for his area and each responsible directly to the Central Government. This inevitably develops into costly bureaucracy and very tight control. The "Regional Commissioners" appointed in Britain during the Second World War, short-circuiting in large measure the local authorities, are typical examples of this type of administration which is ideal in times of crises. On the other hand, a country can be administered "indirectly" by devolving the responsibility of security and other public services on to local authorities of one kind or another. The latter method is much cheaper, much more flexible and, the British maintain, greatly to be desired.

In 1919 the Sudan was "directly" administered by Governors of Provinces who were responsible to the Central Government in Khartoum, District

Commissioners in Districts of the Provinces who were responsible to their particular Governors, and junior executive officers in Districts who were responsible to their particular District Commissioners. Governors and District Commissioners and Assistant District Commissioners were all British. Mamurs and Sub-mamurs were Egyptian or Sudanese. The Egyptians, as we have seen, were about to be expelled. In 1920, law and order having come to be taken for granted throughout the northern Sudan, it became apparent that further development of this form of tight administration was no longer necessary. In fact, it was desirable to proceed with the building up of indigenous local authorities. It is necessary at this juncture to make one point quite clear: the term "local authority" in 1920 did not mean a Town or Rural District Council. It meant the local tribal chief with his elders and he was both the judicial and executive authority. In the southern Sudan, though legislation was shortly to be passed covering similar policy, the tribes were too backward to work it and even at the present time, though it works, it works but creakingly.

In most books covering British administration in a country like the Sudan, there is a tendency to discuss it in the abstract; to assume that the reader can imagine the scene and the "feel" of

the people. Perhaps it will help to look quickly at the policy of "indirect" administration as it evolved and then follow a District Commissioner in one typical District in the northern Sudan in the 1920's, and one typical District in the southern Sudan during the same period.

The Milner Commission to Egypt in 1921 made the first public comment towards a measure of devolution. With regard to the Sudan, the Commission reported: "The administration of its different parts should be left, as far as possible, in the hands of native authorities, wherever they exist, under British supervision. . . . Decentralisation and the employment, wherever possible, of native agencies for the simple administrative needs of the country, in its present stage of development, would make both for economy and efficiency." Between 1921 and 1927 experiments were tried under particular legal Ordinances in certain areas and on certain groups of people, but on the 24th October 1926 Sir John Maffey was appointed as Governor-General of the Sudan. With great vigour he devoted the major part of his energies to its solution. On the 1st January 1927 he wrote the following minute:—

"The appointment of natives to the public service is merely a convenience to the alien bureaucracy of which it is a part. The grant of powers to native magistrates and sheikhs is

more in keeping with the prime principle, but here again unless such machinery stands on a true native and traditional basis it is off the main drive. . . . If the encouragement of native authority in the true sense of the Milner formula is our accepted policy, before old traditions die we ought to get on with extension and expansion in every direction. . . ."

Sir John ended his note with the following two maxims :—

" (*a*) Experiment boldly with schemes of transferred administrative control, making no fetish of efficiency, remembering that in the long run the temper of his own people will do more to keep a native ruler straight than alien interference, and not forgetting that our efficiency is often more apparent than real and lacks those picturesque and *amour propre* qualities of native rule which compensate for its apparent crudities.

(*b*) Be prepared to grant a worthy scale of remuneration to the Chiefships we foster, great and small, in order to give them dignity and status, in the confident hope that we shall thereby be saved in the long run from costly elaborations of our own administrative machinery."

A further minute read :—

" By the judicious and progressive application of the devolutionary measures in districts where conditions are suitable, and by ensuring that the native agencies which are to be responsible for administering these measures are remunerated on a scale sufficient to give them their requisite measure of status and dignity, it should be possible not only to strengthen the fabric of the native organisation, but, while maintaining our supervisory staff at proper strength, gradually to reduce the number of sub-mamurs, clerks, accountants, and similar bureaucratic adjuncts in the out-districts.

The obvious line of advance towards the realisation of the

object in view has been generally agreed to be that of strengthening the authority wielded by the native chiefs over their people as judges in criminal and civil cases, for the power and status required by the chief as a judge, whether sitting alone or as president of a tribunal of elders, must naturally tend to enhance his authority as administrative and executive head of his tribe and district. . . ."

The result of this move was the enactment of the Powers of Sheikhs Ordinance, 1928, which provided for courts "presided over by a sheikh (of a tribe or District) and composed of other sheikhs and his or their tribal or District elders." At the same time an amendment was made to the Code of Criminal Procedure making legal the formation of benches of native magistrates in towns to deal with petty crimes under the Code.

This formal legislation covered devolution of justice only: the District Commissioner ceased to spend weary hours trying cases himself and the native courts took over that responsibility. But the legislation had equally important administrative implications in that the way was cleared for the amalgamation of many small tribal sections in a District to reasonably large units, and it was possible gradually to devolve on to these units more and more administrative functions—*e.g.*, upkeep of wells, buildings, and roads. One danger in this policy—the Arab and the African being equally fond of litigation—is that too much atten-

tion is paid to justice and too little to the practical and economic aspects of administration: the corollary being that the chief with legal powers obtains an exaggerated importance in the eyes of society and the chief without legal powers cannot get his roads cleared or his houses built. The British, being passionately fond of justice, tended to spend too much time with courts and too little with purely administrative chiefs, encouraging them, backing them, and training successors to build better houses, better roads, or better wells. In fact, legal and executive powers were confused, and development of modern local government institutions of to-day has been made more difficult as a result. But this point should be noted and not laboured. It is very doubtful if at the time it would have been possible to cut across the whole burden of Arab and African tradition wherein the chief is all-powerful, administratively and judicially.

But let us look first of all at a District in the northern Sudan and at a few days in the life of a District Commissioner in 1930. Western Kordofan District will serve as an example.

In any description of Provincial "Districts" in the Sudan the first aspect which has to be realised is the vastness of the area involved. Western Kordofan District is 40,000 square miles in area,

10,000 square miles greater than the whole of Scotland. Its population is some 400,000 and in 1930 it was administered by a British District Commissioner, two British Assistant District Commissioners, a Sudanese Mamur, a Sudanese Police Officer, and a Sudanese Sub-mamur. Two major tribes inhabited the area and in practice one Assistant District Commissioner looked after the northern tribe and the other looked after the southern tribe. The District Commissioner, normally a man of about thirty-five years of age and with about fourteen years' service, was responsible for the whole area. The same arrangement holds good to-day, though the nature of the work has altered for reasons which belong to the end of the story.

We will look at the District as it is to-day—for it is still essentially the same as in 1930—and then look at the work of the District Commissioner twenty years ago.

The District Headquarters is in Nahud, a market town with nearly 20,000 inhabitants and possessing, to its advantage, little communities of Greek and Syrian merchants who came there many years ago and who, in many cases, have never returned to their native lands. It is a very beautiful little country town, lying in a hollow and built astride the main trade-route between El Obeid

and Fasher. It was at Nahud that the force assembled to invade Darfur in 1916 and to complete the occupation of the Sudan. It is a town with an atmosphere all its own. Driving from El Obeid one usually approaches it at sunset and from some little distance off it appears as an oasis in the setting sun ; the sand is tinged with red and in the dusty haze the blue smoke from the innumerable fires of the evening meal rises straight up over the grass huts on the perimeter and hangs motionless overhead. The traveller may stay with the District Commissioner in his house in the centre, and at about 10 P.M. the flickering fires in the grass enclosures gradually die, the buzz of conversation and laughter grows rapidly less, the wireless in the officials' club is switched off and, of a sudden, Nahud has gone to sleep. Perhaps there is a full moon in the starry sky and its pale light silhouettes the outline of great shade trees, the minaret of the mosque, the District Headquarters built like a small fort, and the neat grey squarish flat-roofed mud buildings of the market and more prosperous residential areas. In the clear night air the cry of the ghaffirs on their rounds rings out in the silence, "*Wahid,*" "*Itnain*"—calling to one another ; reporting that all is well. In the morning the scene is changed to one of intense bustle, and the dust rises in

the streets as white-robed figures on their donkeys trot busily on their way; trains of camels follow one another in their lunging slow walk to the market laden with gum and melon seeds; and in the market itself apparent chaos prevails in the jabber of bargaining. Outside the shops the Arab sits drinking his little cup of black coffee and under the shade trees many a greybeard sits dreaming his dreams or perhaps, like Pooh, he "just sits." In his office the District Commissioner, dressed in khaki shirt and shorts with yellow badges of rank on his shoulders, interviews an endless series of citizens from the highest to the lowest, while above him, swinging relentlessly back and forward, moves the "punkah" pulled by a rope from outside by a prisoner on parole. The District Commissioner's office hours are from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M., and by the end of that time heat, shimmering heat, rises on the open sandy square outside the windows. Perhaps there is a sudden scent of coolness as a donkey tripples by, carrying bulging water-skins from the wells, but the only certainty of relief from the blinding glare is the surety that the sun must set at the end of the day. And yet, there is not a Briton in all the land who, once he gets to know the Sudanese, would cheerfully change their company for that of any other race, including his own.

They are so full of their own dignity and charm; in the country places so quietly contented with their life; possessed of a sense of humour very like our own; and impatient of humbug. So, too, was the District Commissioner in 1930, tilting at bureaucracy which even in these days had begun to rear its ugly head:—

> "The man on the spot has failed to keep us
> in touch with events,
> So they're sending a special commission of
> really superior gents.
> The Inspector of trivial imposts, the Lord
> High Director of Files
> Will rush to the spot in saloons and
> cover quite hundreds of miles
> With their wives, who play bridge in
> attendance to soothe the journey they make,
> And a Syrian clerk to interpret in case
> they should meet with a sheikh."

Laughter and happiness is the key-note of the second twenty years, and when he went out on trek and arrived at the court centre the people would flock round his lorry, genuinely pleased that the "D.C." had come to spend a few days in their village. The sheikh of the village would come to meet him, after darkness had fallen, accompanied by the President of the Court and sundry other elders, and in the light of hurricane lamps they would discuss the state of their people

and every conceivable aspect of the affairs of human society. In the morning he would sit in the court and possibly hear a few appeals. In all probability some rascal would be intriguing against those in authority and, like Solomon, he would be called on to deliver judgment. After a few days of this and inspecting the little school, dispensary, and so on, he would move on, probably by camel, to another centre leaving behind him a trail of villages looking unusually spick and span. Ahead of him columns of smoke in the sky would betray the fact that, by some devious means of intelligence, information about his probable route had been gleaned. With their disputes and quarrels settled, the people would settle down for another few months. And so the cycle of the year's work went on: a week in the office on town affairs and three weeks on trek on country affairs.

The picture in the southern Sudan is different. It was drawn in harsher and more primitive colours in 1930 and it is only now beginning, very slowly, to mellow. One of the great differences between serving as a District Commissioner in the north and serving in the south lay, and still lies to some extent, in the absence of people in the south to chat to about this and that. It was a lonely life for the white man in every way.

He had but few visitors, and conversation with these people was staccato and restricted to their simple daily preoccupations. There was not even the interest of developing indirect administration on the same broad plane as in the north; here and there small experiments were tried but they were not very successful. Administration was direct. The D.C. was concerned with all the minute details, often typing his own letters in the absence of even a clerk to help him. And in his District Headquarters everything was on a smaller scale. It was probably just a hamlet conveniently situated in the middle of his District. The people were entirely different, physically and mentally, and the Nuer tribe from Upper Nile Province will serve as an example: a quarter of a million of them, speaking their own language and warring ceaselessly with their neighbours and among themselves. The Nuer is a child of the swamps, long legged and black, naked and never without his fighting spear. His origin is unknown. He himself maintains that he began in a tree, but there is in Isaiah a verse which suits him: "Ah, the land of the rustling of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: that sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of papyrus upon the waters, (saying) go ye swift messengers to a nation tall and smooth, to a people terrible

from their beginning onward; a nation that meteth out and treadeth down, whose land the rivers divide." Were his land not so uncomfortable to live in, it would be the envy of all Africa with its priceless gift of green grazing all the year round: but, to him, it is perfection. He lives with his great herds of cattle, the horns of which are trained in the manner of the ancient Babylonian Empire, two thousand years before Christ, and neither the whine of the millions of mosquitoes by night nor the plaguing of flies by day detracts from his contentment provided his cattle, which colour his every thought, are well. He is born among them, he grows up with them, he marries with them, and he dies with them. He believes not in Islam but in his own gods. He believes, with supreme self-confidence, in himself. If he comes to Khartoum he shows some interest in the zoo; regards the magnificent building of the Palace as something that a "Turk" probably likes to live in; considers tramcars as some kind of mild eccentricity; looks round in vain for grazing grounds in the desert sand: and is off post-haste to his beloved mud and green grass by the river banks.

The D.C. in 1930 lived a supremely uncomfortable and tough life, walking across the cracked baked soil of the plains in the dry season between

November and April—waterless, dusty, and thirsty in the hot wind—to their dry season areas by the river banks, his column of porters winding like a snake along the track ahead of him. And in the rainy season he would slither often up to his knees in mud as he visited them in their inland cultivation grounds, small areas only a few inches above the level of the surrounding country. Life in this sort of country was a battle with nature: wild, strong, and free.

The Nuer talks his own Nilotic language and is not much impressed by anyone who does not know it. On trek among them, the District Commissioner usually stops in some centre for a week or more and a court meeting is held. A Nuer court is at first sight, babel. The crowd sits on the ground and the chiefs, attired in many and various garments which they have acquired from past District Commissioners, sit on deck-chairs. A deck-chair is an essential part of the equipment of a Nuer chief. He would rather be parted from his wife than from his deck-chair, extremely insecure though it generally is. Lowering his long length into it with great care, he sighs with relief when he does not crash to the ground; he spits with enthusiasm, picks up his long pipe, which has a bowl quite capable of containing the entire contents of a two-ounce tin of tobacco,

says "Ah" as one says it at the request of a doctor and settles down to the dispute before the court. The panel of chiefs theoretically responsible for trying any case usually numbers seven, but minor chiefs and many of the gallery give their advice at intervals; for the Nuer is the complete democrat and every man is as good as his neighbour.

Though most of the cases before a court concern marriage or other cattle settlements, there can be all manner of disputes, from murder to magic. The two litigants sit on the ground facing one another and each tells his story. Witnesses are only just beginning to be used, but, as a rule, each man tells the plain truth and the case is settled on the two statements. The statement, of course, begins from a point far from the point at issue, and arrives only after a long and circuitous journey. Some of the cases make good stories, and there is a legendary one, from a neighbouring District of the days before mirrors were in every local shop. The District Commissioner, it is said, had come on trek and left his shaving-mirror in the rest-house. The rest-house keeper went in to tidy up the place after he had left. He found the mirror, looked into it, and saw his father who had been dead for some years. He took his "father" back to his hut—his private hut and

not the hut which he shared with his wife. His wife was not allowed to enter this hut. The rest-house keeper made a practice of talking to his father of an evening and his wife, hearing murmurs from the hut, grew suspicious that her husband was flirting with another woman. Relations between them grew strained. The rest-house keeper flogged his wife because she had become irritable for no reason. One day when he was out, she screwed up her courage to the sticking-point and entered her husband's hut. She found the mirror, looked at it, and found the girl. The next day she went to the court plus the girl-mirror and claimed a divorce from her husband on the grounds that he was carrying on an affair with another girl and had not told her about it. The court, on the other hand, after due deliberation, granted her husband a divorce from his wife on the extremely logical ground that she had done the forbidden thing and entered her husband's hut.

It is fashionable to-day in some quarters to decry the southern D.C. of 1930, popularly known as the "Bog Baron"; to maintain that the present backwardness of the south is due to his lack of imagination; and to portray him as a strong silent man, content to smoke his "Barneys," to read 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and to try cattle

cases leisurely under a tree. The fact is that these men achieved something which northern Sudanese and some British theorists of to-day could never have done: they came out, alone, on top of people who were themselves of dominating personality and damped their love of war. They did so at the expense of their health and they made it possible for anyone to-day to walk unarmed through the land. They are due a great debt of gratitude.

The second theme of the second twenty years is the development of the Gezira.

On the 17th October 1922 a contract was signed with a British firm for the building of the Sennar Dam. It was completed in July 1925 and formally opened by Lord Lloyd on the 21st January 1926, by which time the canals were also ready. The dam is the principal engineering feature of the whole Gezira scheme. It is 3025 metres long and consists of a central section of masonry dam built of granite rubble, flanked by lengths of masonry corewall dam backed by earthern banks. There are eighty sluices fitted with steel gates for controlling the flow, and at the western end are situated the head regulator gates which admit water to the main canal. Further loans (making a total of £13,000,000) had been issued with the backing of the British

Government, and at its inception in 1926, 300,000 acres of the Gezira plain were available for cultivation by irrigation. The building of the dam was a great technical achievement in the face of many unexpected difficulties. In the last hectic months of its construction 2400 tons of stone were delivered daily at the site from the quarries fifteen miles away. The power of the Gezira scheme in the nation's economy belongs most fittingly to the end of this Sudan story. But it should be noted now that this 300,000-acre project of 1926 extends in 1952 to 1,000,000 acres; that there are 323 kilometres of main canals and branch canals, 643 kilometres of major distributaries, and 3229 kilometres of minor distributaries; and that the proceeds from the sale of cotton have been £54,400,000 in 1951, of which £17,500,000 went to the tenants. The *total* Government revenue from every source for the year 1926 was £5,857,988.

There are, however, two aspects of Gezira development which are of particular interest. The first is the power of the Mother of Parliaments when she chooses to become interested in a matter of principle. The second is the foresight and preparatory administration of the Sudan Government.

In February 1924 a Trades Facilities Bill was presented to Parliament in which was included

a Treasury Guarantee in respect of the principal and interest of the remaining £3,500,000 Sudan Government loan for the completion of the Gezira irrigation project. A Mr Johnston took exception to it. He was perturbed about the profits of the Sudan Plantations Syndicate. He was perturbed about other aspects. He led a deputation of other Members of Parliament which was received by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for State and by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. Mr Ramsay MacDonald had to write a letter to Lord Allenby in Cairo :—

"My Lord,

During the course of a discussion on the Trades Facilities Bill . . . Mr Johnston finally declared that they (the deputation) were satisfied and would withdraw their opposition to the Bill provided that the Sudan Government were asked . . . to furnish a report on the present system of taxation, both direct and indirect, in the Sudan, with particular reference to its incidence on the cultivators of cotton in the Gezira; to furnish a report on the system under which cultivators hold and develop their plots in the Gezira, with particular reference to the security of the tenure enjoyed by cultivators, with statistics as to the number of cultivators who have been dispossessed of their holdings either at the instance of the Syndicate or for any other cause.

In instructing the Sudan Government to furnish the information specified in the preceding paragraph, your Lordship should request an early reply."

Suffice it to say that Mr Johnston promptly

withdrew his opposition in the matter of profits of the Syndicate when he discovered that most of these profits had been made on financial transactions in London and that the Sudan Government had made an agreement with the Syndicate with regard to their Sudan operation of a nature far in advance of any undertaking of that time: the profits were to be divided in the proportion of 40 per cent to the tenants, 40 per cent to the Government, and 20 per cent to the Syndicate.

And opposition on the vital matter of land tenure was quashed by the remarkable facts disclosed. It has already been noted that the cultivation of the vast Gezira plain was one of the first projects considered by the Sudan Government, and by 1905 the various problems involved had been examined. The first task was to settle clearly what were the existing native rights, and the patience of those who carried out an exhaustive land settlement scheme between 1906 and 1912 is beyond praise. The matter was greatly complicated by the migratory habits of the people—a man who cultivated his land on the Gezira in the rainy season might work as a merchant hundreds of miles away at other seasons of the year or simply reside in another part of the country. And under Mahomedan law, when such a person died, his land was split up among

his heirs and the plots became a tangle of all sorts and sizes. Such confusion made any irrigation project impracticable. After the exhaustive survey, the Government rented the whole area from its registered owners for a period of forty years, and then reallotted the land to the owners in the form of cultivating tenancies which were plots of regular size of thirty acres each, the owners getting the tenancies allotted to them in positions lying as near as possible to the positions of their original holdings. The whole of this procedure was laid down in a special Ordinance in 1921, and there can be few better examples in colonial administration of producing order from chaos, of safeguarding native rights to land, and of instituting what in fact amounted to a profit-sharing enterprise on a large scale. The owner was in an infinitely better position than before he had become a tenant-cultivator and could not be turned off his land unless he neglected it. He was entitled to grow on his thirty-acre plot ten acres of cotton, ten acres of green crop for cattle, and as much grain as was required for his own consumption. Instead of relying on precarious rain, irrigation water flowed steadily to him along the tracery of the canals; instead of being at the mercy of local dealers, the Syndicate and the Government marketed his cotton crop at the best

possible price, and he had the advantage not only of free agricultural machinery but of the vigorous scientific research of the Government into the problems of seed and pests. To-day the Gezira scheme, now nationalised by the Government, still follows these lines broadly laid down so many years ago, and in the first year of its operation one little hint was given of the profound effect it was to have on standards of living: the consumption of sugar in Blue Nile Province increased by 1357 tons.

The third major event of the second twenty years was the Nile Waters Agreement of 1929 between Britain and Egypt, which committed the Sudan. This agreement is a very vexed question to the Sudanese of the present time. They were not represented in the discussions, nor in fact was any official of the Sudan Government, and it provided that Egypt should be entitled to eleven-twelfths of the Nile Waters and the Sudan to one-twelfth. Even angels should fear to tread in the technical complexities of irrigation and in the laws governing the use of water between separate States. Comment on this agreement of 1929 is therefore properly restricted to how it came about.

The agreement arose directly out of the ultimatum which Lord Allenby presented to the

Egyptian Government on the 22nd November 1924 after the murder of Sir Lee Stack. In this ultimatum there was included a demand that the area of land to be irrigated in the Gezira should be increased from 300,000 acres to an unlimited extent. On the 23rd the Egyptian Government replied that the demand was " to say the least, premature." On that day Allenby replied at once saying that this reply was quite unsatisfactory and that he had instructed the Governor-General of the Sudan to proceed forthwith with unlimited expansion in the Gezira area. Allenby was overruled by the British Government. Conversations took place in Cairo between Allenby and the Egyptian Government; and on the 26th January 1925 these were confirmed by an exchange of letters:—

". . . Moved by these considerations and in proof of their intentions, His Majesty's Government are disposed to direct the Government of the Sudan not to give effect to the previous instructions in regard to the unlimited development of the Sudan Gezira mentioned in the note of the 23rd of November, on the understanding that an expert committee composed of Mr J. J. Canter Cremers, Chairman, who has been chosen by agreement between the two Governments, Mr R. M. MacGregor, British delegate, and Abdel Hamid Suleiman Pasha, Egyptian delegate, who has been selected by the Egyptian Government, shall meet not later than the 15th of February 1925 for the purpose of examining and proposing the basis on which irrigation can be carried out with full consideration of the interests of Egypt and without detriment to her natural and historic rights."

The Commission was called upon to report by 30th June 1925 and was appointed "for the purpose of examining and proposing the basis on which irrigation can be carried out with full consideration of the interests of Egypt and without detriment to her natural and historic rights." The Commission for various reasons did not report on schedule, but on the 7th May 1929 its conclusions were accepted, on behalf of the Sudan, in an exchange of notes in Cairo between Lord Lloyd and the Egyptian Prime Minister. From the Sudan's point of view it was fairly satisfactory at the time, but the volume of water available under this agreement and subsequent minor variations is inequitable at the present time and hampers economic development in the country. Under the agreement the Egyptians were allowed to maintain their irrigation service in the Sudan and ". . . save with the previous agreement of the Egyptian Government, no irrigation or power works or measures are to be constructed or taken on the River Nile and its branches, or on the lakes from which it flows, so far as all these are in the Sudan or in countries under British administration, which would, in such a manner as to entail any prejudice to the interests of Egypt, either reduce the quantity of water arriving in Egypt, or modify the date of its arrival, or lower its level." Despite the inadequate volume

of water allotted to them the Sudanese tend to overdo their criticism of Egypt in this matter. Egypt, after all, has practically no rain and a vast and ever-increasing population. The Waters of the Nile are her very life-blood, and for thousands of miles up the course of the river Egypt has maintained, painstakingly and accurately, detailed information of the river's behaviour—records which began, in Egypt proper, in the year A.D. 641. Egypt, on the other hand, greatly overstates her claim to "control" in the Sudan on grounds of Nile Waters: for that matter, Holland should control Western Germany and Switzerland because of the Rhine. The whole question is now one for an international tribunal and for a statesmanlike agreement between the two countries.

The fourth major matter of the period was the clash of two personalities, a clash which to-day splits the northern Islamic Sudan into two from top to bottom, on both religious and political grounds; for in the Sudan the two are entwined one with the other. In the 1930's politics had not reached the stage which they are at to-day, and the clash was mainly one of manœuvring for prestige and power. The two personalities were Sir Sayed Ali El Merghani Pasha, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., and Sir Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi Pasha, K.B.E., C.V.O. The former was, and still

is, spiritual head of orthodox Islam in the Sudan and the latter, of Mahdism.

Orthodox Islam has many "tarikas." A "tarika" is not quite the same as a sect. The word literally means a "path," and is applied to certain organisations of religiously minded people united by a common faith in the virtue of some particular teacher, and practising a common ritual of prayer and devotion. The differences between them are not matters of faith and doctrine, but of organisation and ritual. The basic idea underlying their existence is the belief that common man, in order to attain salvation, needs the guidance of some person endowed with peculiar spiritual virtue. Such spiritual guides were the saints who founded the tarikas in the past, and their virtue is believed to be inherent in their descendants who are at their head at the present day. The Merghania is the best known and widely distributed tarika in the Sudan. It was founded by Sayed Mahomed Osman El Kabir who was born in the Hedjaz in 1787, and derived its name from Sayed Ali Merghani, an ancestor of the founder. Sayed Mahomed Osman based his new tarika on a combination of the principles of four earlier fraternities, and travelled all over the Sudan, finally founding the village of El Khatmia at Kassala, which became the headquarters of his

family ; hence the more common alternative name of the tarika to-day, the Khatmia.

The Ali Merghani of this story was born in Dongola in 1879, and on the outbreak of the Mahdist revolt he was taken to Cairo by his father where he studied Mahomedan law and doctrine. His father died, and after the overthrow of the Khalifa Abdallahi he himself returned to Suakin and subsequently to Khartoum as head of the Khatmia. He was created C.M.G. in 1900 by Kitchener, presented to King George V. at Port Sudan on the 17th January 1912, created K.C.M.G. in 1916 and K.C.V.O. in 1919 when he led a delegation of Sudan notables to London to congratulate the King on victory in the First World War. Throughout these years he had been continuously loyal to the Sudan Government and had been, in fact, the country's unofficial leader. But in the 1930's, though still loyal, he began to show more and more interest in Egypt.

Probably the main reason for his swing to Egypt was the rise in the Sudan of a rival—Sir Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi Pasha, K.B.E., C.V.O., a posthumous son of Mahomed Ahmed, the Mahdi.

Mahdism, in general, is a Messianic belief held by orthodox Sunni Islam, that God will send the Rightly Guided One (the Mahdi) who will be the

precursor of the millennium, when perfect peace and justice will reign. In orthodox belief the Mahdi is still to come. Sudan Mahdism is frowned upon by orthodox Islam, in that many of its followers, particularly among the Baggara tribes of the west, believe that Mahomed Ahmed was in fact the Mahdi. On the other hand, the more enlightened followers view their Mahdism as a tarika, practising its own ritual and venerating its own leader, but no longer insisting on the dogmatic and millennial implication of a belief in Mahomed Ahmed as the Mahdi. But though the Moslem world may not view Sudan Mahdism with favour, it amounts to a powerful force in the northern Sudan.

The story of Abdel Rahman El Mahdi is a remarkable one. When the battle of Omdurman had been fought and won in 1898, one of the main preoccupations of the new Government was to ensure that the flames of Mahdist revolt could not break out anew, and the relatives of the Mahdi and the Khalifa Abdallahi were kept under close supervision. At the same time as Sayed Ali El Merghani was being honoured with a C.V.O., a young man, ill-dressed, and with an inexpensive donkey, could have been seen any day in Omdurman. That young man was Abdel Rahman, a son of the Mahdi, and he drew from the Sudan

Government a pension of £5 a month. Until the First World War he lived quietly and was not officially recognised, but the entry of Turkey into the war brought Great Britain into conflict with the Caliph of Islam, and the Sudan Government decided to utilise the influence of the local religious notables to counteract pro-Turkish tendencies or propaganda among the people. The Governor-General summoned him and asked him to go to the Gezira where his influence was considerable. This step constituted a deliberate recognition of Abdel Rahman El Mahdi as the leader of a section of the community, not merely for religious but also for political purposes. From that day he began to grow in stature, wealth, and power.

In 1918, Abdel Rahman began the building of his house, more aptly described as a palace in Khartoum. As a reward for his services during the war, and in recognition of the position he had achieved, he was sent to London in 1919 as a member of the delegation headed by his rival Sayed Ali El Merghani. On his return he overstepped the limits in his use of agents for the collection of religious dues and was taken to task. But once more events helped him; the Egyptian troubles of 1924 saw him exhorting the people to be calm and do everything possible to help the Government. An Honorary K.B.E. was

bestowed upon him in 1926, and throughout the 1930's his commercial projects prospered. As his wealth increased, so did the bitterness between him and Sayed Ali Merghani. Sayed Abdel Rahman professed himself unable to understand how the Government could continue to pay attention to his rival who appeared to have turned his attention to Egypt, and Sayed Ali Merghani was afraid of Sayed Abdel Rahman's aspiration, oft repeated by his followers, but denied by himself, to be crowned King of the Sudan. In the last chapter of this story, when politics and nationalism are the subjects, this fear of Sayed Ali Merghani and his Khatmia followers will be found to be the solid basis of dissension in the country. This fear will be found clothed in many garments, in differing shades of political ideas of unity with Egypt, though, except for a small minority, the protagonists of these ideas do not really wish such theories to come to pass. They only wish that one thing will not come to pass—that Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi shall be King.

The fifth major event of the second twenty years was the signing of the 1936 Treaty of Alliance between Great Britain and Egypt in August of that year: bringing to an end the long and troublous story of British rule in Egypt. Under

this Treaty, which was to be for a period of twenty years, the military occupation of Egypt by British forces was terminated, except for 10,000 troops in the Suez Canal area; a British Ambassador was appointed to Egypt and an Egyptian Ambassador was appointed to the Court of St James in London; and a small number of Egyptian troops were permitted to be stationed in the Sudan. It was further agreed that Egyptians would be eligible to enter the Sudan Government service (though few took advantage of the agreement, the climate being unsuitable to them). In practice, the internal administration of the Sudan was to continue much as before, and Article 11 of the Treaty gives the gist of the Treaty as it affected the Sudan :—

" 1. While reserving liberty to conclude new conventions in future, modifying the agreements of the 19th of January and the 10th of July 1899, the High Contracting Parties [Britain and Egypt] agree that the administration of the Sudan shall continue to be that resulting from the said agreements. The Governor-General shall continue to exercise on the joint behalf of the High Contracting Parties the powers conferred upon him by the said agreements. The High Contracting Parties agree that the primary aim of their administration in the Sudan must be the welfare of the Sudanese. Nothing in this Article prejudices the question of sovereignty over the Sudan.

2. Appointments and promotions of officials in the Sudan will in consequence remain vested in the Governor-General, who, in making new appointments to posts for which qualified

Sudanese are not available, will select suitable candidates of British and Egyptian nationality.

3. In addition to Sudanese troops, both British and Egyptian troops shall be placed at the disposal of the Governor-General for the defence of the Sudan.

4. Egyptian immigration into the Sudan shall be unrestricted except for reasons of public order and health.

5. There shall be no discrimination in the Sudan between British subjects and Egyptian nationals in matters of commerce, immigration or the possession of property.

6. The High Contracting Parties are agreed on the provisions set out in the Annex to this Article as regards the method by which international conventions are to be made applicable to the Sudan."

It was, however, a Treaty only in name. The Governor-General in Khartoum was alone responsible for internal administration of the country, but in any major matters of policy involving legislation, and in external matters, he had to seek the agreement of the Co-Domini, Britain and Egypt. The machinery of this procedure was that he wrote precisely similar despatches and sent them simultaneously to the British and Egyptian Governments. These two Governments were then supposed to consult, to agree, and notify the Governor-General simultaneously of their agreement. In practice this rarely worked. There was more often than not a wrangle between Britain and Egypt based on considerations remote from the Treaty provision of "the welfare of the

Sudanese." Egypt began in earnest her campaign that Egypt and the Sudan were one country and the Condominium Agreement of 1899, under the new conditions prevailing after the signing of the 1936 Treaty, became a millstone round the necks of the Sudanese. Prior to 1936 it had worked fairly well, in that Britain really answered for herself in England and for Egypt in Egypt. After 1936 it did not work at all. The premise of a Condominium is that the two joint trustees should work harmoniously together. That premise has never been established.

There is, however, one matter relevant to the situation at the present time which deserves more than passing mention: the sovereignty of the King of Egypt. It will be noted that in Article 11 of the 1936 Treaty this dispute is specifically shelved. No sooner had the Treaty been signed, however, than the Egyptian Government again began to play with the idea of having King Farouk crowned in Khartoum as King of the Sudan. Before and after the Mahdist rebellion and up to the declaration of the Protectorate in 1914, the Khedive of Egypt had as part of his titles the phrase "Lord of Nubia, the Sudan, Kordofan, and Darfur." On the other hand, after the reconquest in 1899 the sovereignty over the Sudan, if there was any, was probably

vested in the Co-Domini, and the British and Turkish (Egyptian) flags flew side by side. After Egypt's attainment of independence in 1922, the green flag of Egypt was flown in place of that of Turkey. The Condominium Agreement of 1899 has no reference to sovereignty at all and purports only to decide the "method of administration." The Egyptian view was that the Condominium Agreement was simply an agreement providing for a method of administration; that it left, they alleged, sovereignty over the Sudan intact and that that sovereignty was Egyptian. This implies that as a legal proposition sovereignty can be divorced from administration—*i.e.*, that administration can be in one place and sovereignty in another. As an exercise in law, sovereignty ranks among the most exhausting; but the Egyptian claim was rejected and was dropped for the time being.

At the end of these twenty years the Sudan had grown in stature.

In the capital, a great road bridge had been built across the Nile in 1927 to link Khartoum with Omdurman, and in that same year a mains water-supply came into operation, electricity having been provided two years earlier. And in 1926 the first aeroplane of Imperial Airways flew

through Khartoum to investigate a possible African service. This African service began in March 1931, and there was jubilation in the monthly reports when a London 'Times' of Monday, 31st March 1931, was delivered in Khartoum on Thursday, 3rd April.

In 1925 a School of Midwifery was opened in Omdurman which, to quote the official report, "will in time modify some prejudices and undesirable customs which are at present unassailable." This refers to the major disgrace of the Sudanese among civilised people: Pharaonic circumcision of their girls. Even to-day this practice is widely carried out in the northern Sudan, though very slowly the spread of education is building up resistance to it.

Another innovation, on a lighter plane but more difficult to carry through, has been the introduction of water-borne sewage to Khartoum, which still does not have such a system. Instead, there is a highly organised conservancy service of latrine buckets, which are removed in the dead of night from the houses and offices and transported by carts pulled by two camels. The citizens who to-day give these ghostly conveyances as wide a berth as possible in the early hours of a morning, may find a certain irony in this report of 1925: "In view of the increasing population of Khartoum

and the difficulty of obtaining carriers for the existing dry conservancy system, the possibilities of a water-borne sewage system are being explored. An expert consulting engineer, who is an authority on the subject, has been engaged in an advisory capacity and is at present drawing up a scheme." One such scheme is afoot to-day, but it has been an ill-fated project.

The world-wide slump of 1931 hit the Sudan very hardly. Trade, which in 1929 had been £13½ millions, fell to £5½ millions, and revenue dropped by £1 million. The Government tackled the problem firmly, cut expenditure by £¾ million and applied retrenchment in the cases of 1000 classified officials, 207 of whom were British. 160 officers of the Sudan Defence Force were retired and all salaries were cut by from 5 to 10 per cent.

By 1935 the country was out of the wood, and the Sudanese had come to play a steadily greater part in the administration. In 1938, Higher Schools of Law, Veterinary Science, Agriculture, Science, Arts, and Engineering had been established, and from the Kitchener School of Medicine batches of doctors had qualified and were in practice. In that year the first Sudanese set up in practice as an Advocate at the Bar in Khartoum and six Sudanese judges were appointed. A great

dam had been built at Jebel Aulia near Khartoum and the value of export trade had risen to £5½ millions. The annual Budget was balanced at about £5,000,000 and the Government's 20 per cent share of the sale of Gezira cotton was over £800,000. A comprehensive scheme for educational expansion, based on the report of an independent commission, had been approved involving a capital outlay of £½ million, and the doubling of recurrent expenditure on education by 1946. Comprehensive legislation had been passed covering the formation of Local Authorities, rural and municipal. In hospitals and dispensaries over 7,000,000 patients were being treated annually as compared with 4,000,000 in 1930. Over 3000 girls were being taught in thirty-four girls' schools throughout the northern Sudan. In 1939 the country was financially stable and major plans for progress were ready in every branch of Government: even in the southern Sudan to which less attention than was right had been paid since the slump.

But in September came the Second World War, and the Sudan was directly threatened on her borders.

CHAPTER IV

1939-1952

On the 3rd September 1939 the Sudan was pitifully weak in arms and equipment. There were only three British infantry battalions in the whole country to defend Khartoum the capital, Port Sudan the harbour, and Atbara the railway junction from any attack based on Eritrea—2500 men in all. On the frontier itself there was the Sudan Defence Force—4500 men—and the frontier was 1200 miles long. They had no tanks, no mobile artillery and literally no workable guns at all. The only guns at their disposal were four obsolete howitzers in the Palace garden at Khartoum (capable only of firing salutes to the danger of all concerned), and two fixed six-inch coastal guns at Port Sudan. As for the Air Force, there were exactly seven aged machines. Across the frontiers of Eritrea and Ethiopia the Italians had concentrated at least 300,000 men, 400 guns, and 200 aircraft. 100,000 men with powerful artillery were immediately available on the Sudan frontier; and yet, in the face of these quite hopeless odds, the Sudan was not to fall.

Had the Sudan fallen, the supply lines to the Middle East up the Red Sea and across Africa to Takoradi would have gone too. Egypt herself would have been untenable and there could have been in fact no front in the Middle East. The tale of the Abyssinian Campaigns and of Italy's surrender in that area in November 1941 has been admirably described elsewhere, but there are certain aspects of the early months in the Sudan which deserve comment.

The outstanding characteristics of the Sudanese reaction to the war were courage, loyalty, and cheerfulness. From all corners of the vast country came loyal messages offering service in any form, and the spirit of the Sudan Defence Force and of the Provincial Police was magnificent. From the day of its formation in 1925, recruitment to the Sudan Defence Force had been most careful and selective in every rank, and the British and Sudanese officers were in a class by themselves. It was a happy little force of 4500, thoroughly well disciplined, and quite invincible in its own opinion. Among its ranks were some of the finest soldiers in the world—the hill-men of the Nuba Mountains in Kordofan Province. They fear no one and with their enormous feet they were the bane of the Cairo street boot-black when they moved for duty in the Middle East later on. (A " shoe-shine " was a novelty of

which they never tired and they were to be observed in the main streets of Cairo moving along in staccato manner, patting the enraged Egyptian on the head as he bent over yet another already gleaming army boot.) The police were to play their part full well and they, too, being under the command of District Commissioners in their own Districts, had an extremely strong spirit of loyalty. The total strength of the Sudan Police Force is 120 officers and 6500 men. There are only eleven British Police Officers. In each Province Headquarters there is a Commandant of Police responsible for general lines of training. The story is told of one such gentleman whose Arabic was atrocious but who was much beloved by all. He called for a parade of the Headquarters police and at some length harangued them on the crisis which faced the nation. He called for volunteers to go to the front and at the end he cried, "All those who will go into battle, one step forward march!" In a solid phalanx the entire parade took one step forward. Deeply moved, the Commandant returned to his desk. . . . A fortnight later an officer of the Defence Force met a sergeant of police on the frontier and engaged him in conversation, asking where his home was and if he was in good heart. The sergeant assured him that he was in very good heart but could not understand quite why he

had been sent to the frontier with his men. The officer was perplexed and said, "Did you not volunteer? did the Commandant in X Province not address you?"

"*Ya Salaam* (Goodness me)," said the sergeant, "that explains it. About a fortnight ago the Commandant made a long speech to us. We couldn't understand a word of it but at the end he said, 'One step forward march.' Thanks be to God!"

The activities of the Sudan Frontier Force constituted an extraordinarily successful bluff. There were six motor machine-gun companies, the normal establishment of which was seven armoured cars carrying Vickers guns and Boyes anti-tank rifles; eight unarmoured vans carrying Bren guns, and trucks to carry two infantry platoons. By furious endeavour in rushing here and there, bobbing up in the most unlikely places and spreading tales of their numbers, they succeeded in deceiving the Italians completely as to their actual strength, and the captured Italian intelligence reports bear witness to whole battalions which never existed and to automatic weapons where only quick-firing Sudanese soldiers passed the time of day. In all the stories of bluff and daring, perhaps the tale of the small force of one British District Com-

missioner with twelve Nilotic policemen and four Lewis guns from Upper Nile Province is one of the best. This little party had gone on a forward reconnaissance into Ethiopia a hundred and thirty miles ahead of the advancing King's African Rifles. Before retiring to hide for the night they fired off some rounds into a nearby village, greatly to its consternation. But even more greatly to the embarrassment of the patrol out in the blue, the chief of the village came slinking up and handed over the keys, inviting them to occupy it. This they did, and at the same time sent off an urgent signal to the main force over a hundred miles away asking for reinforcements. For four days they stayed bluffing the Italian forces in the neighbourhood by every possible means, until a force arrived and the little patrol again went about its business.

It would seem from such tales, simply and briefly told, that the Italian forces were poor units. This was not the case. Their forces included many white formations, both regular troops and the Blackshirt battalions formed from the fanatics of the Fascist party. The facts simply are that two decisions saved Africa: the first was that of General Platt in the Sudan that his little force should carry on tactics of aggressive bluff incessantly and tirelessly by night and by

day, and the second was that of the British Government and the Dominions to reinforce the Middle East in 1940, despite the hourly fear of invasion of the British Isles. The reinforcements arrived on the Eritrean frontier in the nick of time, and the scene changed to the clash of armies and the heroism of Keren. Both these decisions were taken in the best traditions of great faith and high courage, and it is probably no exaggeration to say that Africa owes the freedom that she has to-day to the "excellent little army" of the Sudan.

But the war pulled the Sudan right out of its "arcadian backwater" and, under the stimulus of events abroad, the fires of nationalism which had been but smouldering burst into flame. It would have been proper to include in the last chapter the first moves which presaged the end of the "Golden Age," for they occurred in 1938, but for the sake of clarity it is best to look at the developing Sudanese political scene as a complete picture. In 1938 the Sudanese politician became an administrative reality. But just before we go on to look at this development—at impassioned speeches, at articles in the local vernacular press, and in the last two years, at "Down with the British"—let it be understood that these are the cries of a minority in the towns

and that in the country areas the great multitude of the people and their leaders go quietly and happily about their business to-day.

It will be remembered that the first expression of Sudanese nationalism was the violent and Egyptian-inspired movement of 1919-1924. The failure of that movement led to a reorientation of Sudanese nationalism under the slogan of "The Sudan for the Sudanese." Throughout the 1920's and the 1930's this did not amount to a national movement, but the signing of the 1936 Treaty with Egypt sharply stimulated the steadily growing national consciousness. Educated Sudanese resented the fact that it had been concluded without any reference to the Sudanese themselves. They also resented the appearance of the Egyptians in their new guise of equal partners with the British. They felt that since Britain and Egypt had agreed to be equal partners in the government of the Sudan for the next twenty-five years, it was for the Sudanese to show the "High Contracting Parties" that the Sudan was no longer a passive entity whose destiny could be shaped without reference to its own wishes.

The first concrete idea of a general meeting of graduates (of schools higher than elementary), to elect a permanent body to represent the educated

Sudanese, was mooted in the summer of 1937. The idea soon caught on and in February 1938 the "Graduates' Congress" was born. In May of that year the bell was rung for the first round of the fight which must come in every land where the British conduct their policy of developing backward nations. It is a fight to stop the over-ambitious fledgling from plunging to disaster and the last round is the most difficult of all. The following letter was received in the Secretariat :—

"OMDURMAN,
2nd May 1938.

CIVIL SECRETARY,
KHARTOUM.

DEAR SIR,

It is with the earnest wish for good understanding and sympathetic feeling that we, the educated class of this country, with due respect submit our following communication, hoping that it will be received with the spirit which inspired its writing.

As you are aware, the Sudan Schools Graduates, prompted by a sense of duty towards their country as its most enlightened elements, and by a sincere desire to co-operate with the Government, in such ways as may be opened to them, in furthering their country's welfare, held last February a Congress at the Sudan Schools Club, Omdurman, to decide on the necessary steps to give effect to these aims. The Congress was met with a ready response. 1180 out of 1600 members, a fair number of them from provincial centres, attended and elected a council of 60 members. These in their turn elected from amongst themselves 15 members to form

the Executive Committee, who have the honour to be your present addressors.

A copy of our constitution is attached herewith.

Our duties, as we envisage them, will lie in two main and distinct spheres :—

I. The sphere of internal matters, relating to us and lying outside the ambit of official Government concern, such as social reform, charities, &c.

II. That of matters of public interest involving the Government or lying within the scope of its policy and concern.

With regard to the matters of the former category, we shall act independently, but always in the spirit of friendly co-operation and obedience to the requirements of the Law and local regulations governing the same.

With regard to the matters of the latter category, we hope that the Government will give due consideration to the views and suggestions which we may submit from time to time on such matters.

It is not our intention in any way to embarrass the Government, nor is it to pursue lines of activity incompatible with the Government policy. Most of us are Government officials and are fully conscious of our obligations as such, but we feel that the Government is aware of our peculiar position as the only educated element in this country, and of the duties which we, in this peculiar position, feel to be ours.

We also do not claim a position prejudicial to that of important elements in the country, but it is our duty to offer our contribution in thought and effort to the welfare and the progress of the country as a whole.

The Government has been in the habit of seeking and welcoming advice from the educated Sudanese individually. We submit that the time has come when it will be more advantageous to the Government, as well as more reassuring

and gratifying to the educated Sudanese, if such advice is sought and welcomed from them as a body, through their Committee of the Congress, in whom the whole class has placed its confidence. Our belief that we can render a special service to the country has inspired us to write this letter to you, and we are anxious to see mutual confidence, good understanding and co-operation well established between us and the Government.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) ISMAIL EL AZHARI,
Hon. Secretary,
GRADUATES' GENERAL
CONGRESS."

To which the Civil Secretary replied :—

" *22nd May* 1938.

DEAR SIR,

I am directed to reply to your letter of the 2nd of May informing me of the decisions of a congress of graduates from Sudan educational institutions of a standard higher than elementary, which was held at Omdurman.

It is manifest that without the support of educated members of the public, measures designed for the welfare of all the inhabitants of the country cannot attain their maximum efficiency. I therefore note with sympathy the desire of the graduates, by an organisation, to increase their individual contributions to the service of the country and engage in philanthropic activity.

It appears that the congress, whilst neither seeking formal recognition as a political body, nor claiming to represent the views of any but its own members, nevertheless wishes to be regarded as a semi-public organisation interested in philan-

thropic and public affairs and competent to hold and express opinions on such matters as come within its purview.

It recognises that the inclusion in its membership of a number of Government officials would preclude participation in any line of action likely to bring it into conflict with Government policy or with constitutional authority: it seeks to achieve its purpose in close co-operation with the Government.

If I have thus correctly interpreted the intentions of the Congress, I am happy to assure you that communications made to me on its behalf will receive my most careful consideration and, further, that the Government is fully alive to the important contribution to a healthy development of the country which may be made by more progressive elements in the community."

It will be seen that while in their letter Congress claimed to represent the educated class as a whole, and expressed the hope that the Government would consult the opinions and wishes of that class through Congress alone, the Civil Secretary pointedly refused to entertain that claim, and based such recognition as he accorded them on the interpretation that the Congress did not claim to represent the views of any but its own members, who, incidentally, amounted to a little over a thousand—about a fifth of the "graduate" class.

However, when war broke out, Congress sent a loyal message and no trouble occurred until the visit to the Sudan in February 1940 of Ali Maher Pasha, Prime Minister of Egypt. Congress

obtained permission to entertain the Premier at a tea-party which was attended by about 800 graduates. The President made it clear that the Sudanese did not regard themselves as Egyptians, but as a separate and autonomous entity which wished to develop along its own lines though in the closest possible co-operation and friendship with Egypt. At the same time this speech was an indirect answer to the Egyptian suspicion that Congress was a body created by the Sudan Government to oppose Egyptian penetration. Excited by the success of this tea-party, Congress submitted a memorandum to Ali Maher Pasha asking for financial help for various social projects in the Sudan. This action, involving as it did delicate constitutional principles, was improper and marked a turning point in relations between Congress and the Sudan Government. From that day relations with the Sudan Government became steadily more and more strained and the Egyptian Government became more and more convinced that Congress was the embryo of a genuine Sudanese nationalist movement in which Egypt should take a sympathetic interest. In his statement to the Egyptian Senate on his return to Cairo, the Egyptian Premier mentioned Congress specifically as a body expressing the aspirations of the educated Sudanese. In 1942

Congress shed all pretence of being a non-political body and submitted a long memorandum which involved all kinds of political and constitutional issues. They were abruptly snubbed by the Civil Secretary, and the first real signs of dissension appeared in its ranks. Gradually, the more moderate elements lost control, and after the elections in November 1944, Congress fell into the hands of its extreme pro-Egyptian group and has remained in their control to this day. And here, for all practical purposes Congress may be left, discredited by the vast majority of the Sudanese. It still exists, though in different guise. In its early days it was the only political party, counting among its members some Sudanese who now, wiser and older, hold high office in the country, and who, by their moderation and genuine nationalist beliefs, rendered great service to their countrymen. Most Egyptians in Egypt, who have never set foot in the Sudan, still remember only Ali Maher's tea-party . . . and that was æons ago so far as the Sudan of to-day is concerned.

During 1944 the Congress had come under the domination of the wider ambit of the first real political party with a definite policy in the Sudan. This party called itself the "Ashigga," which literally means "Blood-brothers," and its policy was unity of the Nile Valley under the Egyptian

Crown. Its leaders had only a small following, but throughout 1944 the development of this party caused concern to those to whom any idea of Egyptian sovereignty was anathema; and in February 1945 the second political party in the Sudan was formed—the "Umma," which means the "Peoples' Party." The principle of this party was "The Sudan for the Sudanese," and its object was to work for the independence of the Sudan within its recognised geographical frontiers while preserving friendly relations with Britain and Egypt. The party demanded independence as soon as possible; it included among its members prominent Sudanese in Government service and on the retired list, and most of the tribal leaders in the northern Provinces. All this, of course, did not remotely interest the south. In these two parties lies the basis of Sudan political structure; those who wish unity with Egypt and those who do not. Many other parties sprang up, some consisting of not more than ten members, all with slight variations on these two themes. But behind the political differences of these two main parties there lay something fundamental to the northern Sudan which has been previously noted—the bitter enmity of the two great religious Sayeds—Sayed Ali Merghani and Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi.

The antagonism between these parties was far more the result of religious division than difference in political theory. The Ashigga could count on the support of the Khatmia of the eastern Sudan and the main towns, and the Umma could count on the support of the Mahdists of the western Sudan and of the riverain peoples a little south of Khartoum. Either Sayed had only to lift a finger to command the obedience of hundreds of thousands of people who had never heard of the word " politics," nor will they understand it for years to come.

With the end of the war, the Sudan was, so far as the educated classes were concerned, a very different country from what it had been in 1939. The Atlantic Charter had kindled great hopes in the hearts of these Sudanese and the inevitable restrictions of war-time had caused a feeling of continual irritation. More vernacular newspapers had come into being; rumours of a revision of the 1936 Treaty between Britain and Egypt were rife, and unprecedented developments were taking place in many fields of administration.

The likelihood of Treaty negotiations became so obvious that, for a brief spell, the political parties did unite (though not the two Sayeds), and what is known as the " Sudan Delegation " went to Cairo in March 1946. The Ashigga part

of the delegation, with Ismail El Azhari—the same Azhari who had signed the Congress letter in 1938—shrewdly beat the pistol and took the first plane to Cairo. There Azhari announced himself as the representative of all the Sudanese and associated himself with a statement of the Prime Minister a short time previously : " Regarding unity of the Nile Valley—Egypt and the Sudan—the principles of the new era justify its realisation particularly since this unity conforms to the wishes of all the people of the Nile Valley." This was altogether too much for the Umma members, who, after a spell of wrangling, returned to the Sudan in high dudgeon. Azhari, for his part, informed the Egyptians that he had " dismissed " these members of " his " delegation.

Fortunately the Foreign Secretary in the British House of Commons had made the following declaration on the 26th March 1946 :—

" HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT look forward to the day when the Sudanese will be able finally to decide their political future for themselves. It is not proposed by His Majesty's Government to influence the eventual decision in any way. His Majesty's Government have no object in the Sudan other than the true welfare of the Sudanese, and this principle has likewise been proclaimed by the Egyptian Government in the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936. The welfare of the Sudanese cannot be secured unless stable and disinterested administrations are maintained in the Sudan. The objects of such administration must be to establish organs of self-government

as the first step towards eventual independence, to accelerate the process of appointing Sudanese to higher government posts in consultation with Sudan representatives, and to raise the capacity of the mass of the people for effective citizenship. These are the objects of the present Sudan Government, and His Majesty's Government fully support them. In the meantime, His Majesty's Government consider no change should be made in the status of the Sudan as a result of the Treaty revision until the Sudanese have been consulted through constitutional channels."

Here was a pledge and here was strength. It satisfied the Sudanese for the time being, and encouraged the loyal little band of British administrators who had been growing increasingly anxious at the spread of Egyptian propaganda which they, in their neutral position under the Co-Domini, were unable to counteract. However, on the 9th May, the British Government formally agreed to open negotiations with Egypt for a revision of the 1936 Treaty, though they were in no way bound to do so under the twenty years' agreement of the Treaty itself. The Egyptian Government promptly fired a broadside in the traditional oriental manner. They demanded the Sudan. They maintained that any Treaty revision must recognise the Sudan as an integral part of Egyptian territory and must admit Egyptian sovereignty over the Sudan. The British Government was caught on the wrong foot again with

Egypt and, though any revision of the Treaty should have been on British terms, Britain was in fact put on the defensive. The negotiations dragged on inconclusively, but in October the Egyptian Prime Minister, Sidky Pasha, went to England, where, as Mr Bevin reported later in the House of Commons, " As a result of the conversations which I had with Sidky Pasha, we were able to reach, on a personal basis and subject to the approval of our respective constitutional organs, full agreement on the texts of a Treaty of mutual assistance, an evacuation protocol (covering British troops in Egypt) and a Sudan protocol. Sidky Pasha undertook to recommend the texts to his Government, and I undertook, for my part, to recommend them to the Cabinet if they were endorsed and put forward to me officially by Egypt.

" Of the questions in dispute by far the most difficult was that of the Sudan. My own position in the matter was that I had given a pledge in this House on the 26th of March last that no change should be made in the status of the Sudan as a result of Treaty revision until the Sudanese had been consulted through constitutional channels. After taking, however, the highest legal advice, I felt that, for the sake of an agreement which would have been as much in the interests of the Sudanese

as of either of the other parties, I should be justified in alluding, in the Sudan protocol, to the existence of a symbolic dynastic union between Egypt and the Sudan, provided always that no change was introduced into the existing system of administration, whereby the Sudan is administered by the Governor-General under the power conferred on him by the 1899 Agreements as confirmed and interpreted by the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, and provided that no change took place in the arrangements under which the defence of the Sudan is assured. The text agreed upon by Sidky Pasha and myself on the above basis read as follows :—

" ' The policy which the high contracting parties undertake to follow in the Sudan, within the framework of the unity between the Sudan and Egypt, will have for its essential objectives to assure the well-being of the Sudanese, the development of their interests, and their active preparations for self-government, and consequently, the exercise of the right to choose the future status of the Sudan. Until the high contracting parties can, in full common agreement, realise this latter objective, after consultation with the Sudanese, the Agreement of 1899 will continue and Article 11 of the Treaty of 1936, together with its annex

and paragraphs 14 to 16 of the agreed Minute annexed to the same Treaty, will remain in force notwithstanding the first Article of the present Treaty.' "

An agreement of this nature was neither wise nor honest. In it there is perhaps an echo from the days of Queen Victoria when she said to one of her ministers: " My Lord, I was brought up to know what was right and what was wrong. Never let me hear the word ' Expedient ' again."

Sidky Pasha returned to Egypt in mid-October and allowed the Sudan protocol to leak out. Furthermore, he let it be known that he had brought back from England the Egyptian Crown for the Sudan.

At all events the Sudanese lashed out at what they rightly considered a betrayal of the pledge of His Majesty's Government, and the Sudan Government was faced with the first breakdown in public security since the 1924 troubles. At the end of October a situation of extreme tension arose in Khartoum and Omdurman and elsewhere; British members of the Sudan Government planned to resign, and Sir Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi flew to England where he saw the Prime Minister. But at the head of affairs in the Governor-General's Palace there was

a man of unequalled influence with Sudanese and British alike — one of those rare Englishmen, strong, straight, impatient of humbug, and a man of complete integrity—Major-General Sir Hubert Huddleston ; the same man who, twenty years before, as Commanding Officer of Sudan military forces under the Governor-General, had recommended that the Egyptian flag be pulled down in the land. Now, by the irony of circumstance, he was faced with serious trouble which could never have arisen had his advice been taken. He, too, flew to England. On his return he restored confidence and order, and persuaded the independence groups, who had declared a political boycott, to collaborate again with the organs of the Sudan Government instituted to promote the association of the Sudanese with the Administration. Finally, on the 27th January 1947, the Egyptian Government notified the British Government that they had broken off negotiations for a revision of the 1936 Treaty. The end of this incident, now known as the Sidky-Bevin protocol, is perhaps best described by Mr Bevin himself in his speech to the House of Commons on that day. After dealing at length with the course of these events, he concluded by saying :—

" I could not, after what had passed . . . recommend the Sudan protocol to the Cabinet and to Parliament without

securing an agreed interpretation of its terms which could not run counter to what the people of this country regard as the natural order of things—viz., that peoples having achieved self-government shall have the ultimate right to self-determination, including a right to independence if they want it. I regret that all my efforts have failed to reach anything in the nature of an agreed interpretation, whether in the form of an exchange of letters or of agreed statements to be made by the spokesman of both sides, or even of agreed statements in which the difference separating the parties would be honestly declared in the hope that it could be composed later, since the question at issue cannot become a live one for at least some years. I offered, in addition, if any of these proposals were adopted, myself to make a public statement to reassure Egypt as regards the aims of British policy in the Sudan. I have offered every guarantee for the safeguard of Egyptian interests in the Sudan—for no one realises more clearly than His Majesty's Government how vital, for instance, is Egyptian interest in the waters of the Nile—I have offered to sign the treaty of mutual assistance and evacuation protocol and thus realise one of Egypt's most eager aspirations—and to discuss the Sudan question *de novo* at a conference with ourselves and the Sudanese. To all these proposals I have received either an uncompromising negative or proposals which will involve my re-entering negotiations committed to the thesis that the right of the Sudanese to self-determination must be subject to permanent union between Egypt and the Sudan. I have even found myself accused of pursuing a policy of endeavouring to filch the Sudan from Egypt.

My hope is that broader and less stubborn councils may come to prevail in Cairo, for it is evident that the interests of both countries call for a fresh treaty and would justify a further effort to reach agreement so as to enable the two countries to co-operate for their mutual interests and defence. It is unfortunate that in the negotiations His Majesty's Government have had to deal with a minority Government. I stated

to this House of Commons that the question of the Government was a matter for the Egyptians themselves. If, however, we can deal with a more fully representative Egyptian Government, and if our negotiations can thereby avoid being the subjects of Egyptian party conflicts, there will be a much better chance of carrying them through to a successful conclusion in the right spirit. Meanwhile the Treaty of 1936 will be adhered to."

Egypt, however, was not content to leave the dispute there. She took it to the United Nations Security Council, where the case opened on the 5th August 1947. Sudanese politicians went to Lake Success and four advisers from the Sudan Government also attended. This again caused anxiety in the Sudan, but after a few weeks of fruitless discussion the matter was dropped. No further crisis was to occur in the international sphere till October 1951.

The war brought prosperity to the Sudan in the rising prices of its major exports—cotton and gum; and the Sudan Government began to work out a programme of economic and administrative development which can only be described as frightening. In this programme a people are being made to jump hundreds of years and many generations.

Local Government on the British model of Town and County Councils became policy early in the war, and the first Municipal Council was

constituted in Port Sudan in 1942. Unofficial Councils in Omdurman and Khartoum were soon formally reconstituted, and after the visit of a British Local Government official in 1948, his report was accepted as a basis upon which to go ahead whenever the opportunity offered. Now—in 1952—there is a separate Local Government Branch in the Central Government controlling fifty-six Councils, of which seventeen are Urban Councils and thirty-nine are Rural Councils—all of which have their own Budgets. Forty-one of them have Warrants or Charters from the Governor-General, and the Local Government Ordinance of 1951 codifies Local Government practice throughout the country and grants very wide powers to Warranted Councils. In El Obeid, the capital town of Kordofan Province, there is no longer a District Commissioner, and the town (of 65,000 inhabitants) is run entirely, in theory at any rate, by the city fathers. Even in the far south a few embryo Rural Councils are working. A development of this sort—a complete switch on paper from the District Commissioner to the Town or Rural Council—is nothing short of a revolution. It is, in fact, the abrupt and uncompromising introduction of western democracy to a people (the northern Islamic Sudanese particularly) whose ability

to be democratic overnight is a matter of dispute.

Not only in Local Government has the picture changed completely in the last twenty years; it has also changed to such an extent in the sphere of Central Government that self-government by the end of this year can only be postponed by some disagreement among the Sudanese themselves: the Sudan Government, backed by the British Government, has promised the Sudanese self-government by the end of 1952, and it is of interest to trace this remarkable development in brief outline.

It will be remembered that, in 1910, a Governor-General's Council was constituted and the legislative function became the responsibility of the Governor-General in Council. This Council was composed of officials, four *ex-officio* members and five appointed for a term of three years by the Governor-General. In addition, leading Sudanese were called in for consultation. It carried on until May 1944, when an Advisory Council for the northern Sudan was set up consisting of twenty-eight ordinary members, with the Governor-General as President and the Civil, Financial, and Legal Secretaries as *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents. All the ordinary members were Sudanese, three from each of the six Arabic-speaking Provinces of the

northern Sudan. Eight other Sudanese were appointed by the Governor-General "with a view to securing representation on the Council of the more important social and economic interests, including agriculture, education and health," and two further members were elected by the Chamber of Commerce. Most of the members were tribal chiefs, generally from among the members of Province Councils which had been previously formed as a link between Central and Local Government. This Northern Advisory Council was not popular with the younger educated classes, who considered it a relatively useless body composed of grey-bearded gentlemen. But it did a lot of good, and raised (the right of initiative being with any five members) a number of vital issues: Sudanese nationality and the nationalisation of the Gezira Scheme being two. Then in 1946 the Governor-General set up a Sudan Administrative Conference, including representatives of all political parties except the Ashigga, which started work on proposals for modifying further the constitution in the direction of increased self-government for the Sudanese. The recommendations of the Conference were endorsed by the Governor-General in July 1947 and submitted by him to the Co-Domini.

The new proposals were for the creation of

two bodies, a Legislative Assembly and an Executive Council. Over four-fifths of the members of the Assembly would be elected by a purely Sudanese electorate, and its Leader chosen by the members of the Assembly. A number of Ministers (all of whom must be Sudanese, not being Government servants), including *ex officio* the Leader of the Assembly, would be appointed by the Governor-General. The Executive Council, not less than half of the members of which must be Sudanese, would consist of all the Ministers, certain high officials, and a number of Councillors. All members of the Executive Council, plus the Sudanese Under-Secretaries, would be *ex-officio* members of the Legislative Assembly, if not already elected members.

These proposals were accepted by the United Kingdom Government, but on the 26th November 1947 the Egyptian Government in a Note to the United Kingdom proposed various modifications. The U.K. Government's reply on the 15th January 1948 stated that many of the Egyptian proposals would be incorporated in the draft Ordinance, and suggested that in order that the "achievement of this eagerly awaited step towards Sudanese self-government should not be delayed," consultations should at once be held between the Co-Domini. After

some delays full agreement was reached in Cairo on the 28th May 1948 between the British Ambassador and the Egyptian Foreign Minister, subject to the approval of the Egyptian Government. The terms of the agreement provided for the nomination of Egyptian officials serving in Egyptian departments in the Sudan to the proposed Executive Council, and the formation of an Anglo-Egypto-Sudanese Committee to supervise the implementation of the policy of extension of Sudanese self-government. On the 14th June the agreement having been rejected by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Egyptian Senate, Mr Mayhew, U.K. Foreign Under-Secretary, told the House of Commons that in view of this rejection and the increasing popular impatience for the reforms in the Sudan, the U.K. Government felt they could no longer stand in the way of the Governor-General's promulgation of the draft ordinance.

Egyptian criticism of the Ordinance was based broadly on the fact that it recognised the continued validity of the 1899 Condominium Agreement and failed to enshrine the principle of the unity of the Nile Valley under the Egyptian Crown; but, as Mr Mayhew emphasised at the conclusion of his statement, "these negotiations covered only the practical question of the proposed Ordinance and were never intended to reconcile

the conflicting views regarding the status of the Sudan, on which both Governments have previously and publicly reserved their positions."

On the 19th June 1948 the Ordinance was promulgated at Khartoum and on the 8th July the Egyptian Government formally protested. The provisions of the Ordinance were, however, put into effect, and the first elected Sudan Legislative Assembly began its work on the 23rd December 1948. It is noteworthy that under this Ordinance the Assembly has full legislative powers (exercised in exactly the same way as in other free Parliaments) except in respect of certain reserved subjects for the consideration of which the prior consent of the Governor-General is necessary. These subjects are :—

(1) The provisions of the Ordinance itself.
(2) The relations between the Sudan Government and the Co-Domini.
(3) The relations between the Sudan Government and foreign Governments.
(4) The nationality of the Sudanese.

With regard to the first, not even the Congress of the United States is empowered to amend its own constitution. The other three must by their very nature remain reserved subjects until independence is granted.

The effective part played by the Legislative Assembly (with its overwhelming Sudanese majority —eighty-eight Sudanese members and five British) in the development of the Sudan is evidenced by the passing of legislation providing, *inter alia*, for schooling 40 per cent of the population by 1956, for making Arabic the common language of the southern Sudan, for the settlement of trade disputes, and for the establishment of trade unions (these last two being private members' bills). The vitally important Gezira Scheme Bill (passed on the 16th May 1950) was built up from the start on the recommendations of the Assembly, and was considerably altered in its passage through the Assembly to meet the wishes of the Gezira tenants as expressed by their representatives in that body. It provided ample proof of the way in which through the elected Assembly the people of the Sudan have been enabled to shape their own destiny.

To the Assembly there came as members, in 1948, thirteen representatives of the southern Sudan, and their presence has its origin in the Government's general deliberations of 1946, when the difficult question of the future of the southern Sudan came under review and it was decided, after a conference with representative southerners in Juba, the headquarters of Equatoria Province,

that future policy should be that of fusion with the north and that all barriers should be removed which might render that fusion in any way difficult. The decision was a major one. On theoretical grounds it has many opponents: the south is pagan, there are a few Christians; the tribes are negroid or Nilotic with nothing in common with the Islamic Arab north; the people are backward and fear the northerner as they feared his slave-raiding only fifty years ago. On practical grounds the decision is less liable to opposition, though it must be regarded with misgiving: the north and the south are bound by the Nile; Christianity is not necessarily the religion most suited to these people; the men of some southern tribes are far stronger in character than the northerners; there is nowhere else for the southerner to go; the south needs the financial support of the north; the northerner no more likes living in the south than the Egyptian likes living in Khartoum. The only alternative is to keep the southerner living in a zoo; the real danger to the south in an independent Sudan is neglect. At all events, for better or for worse, and in good faith, the south was committed to the rough and tumble of life in a unified Sudan.

It may be felt that since 1899 it always *has* been a unified Sudan and that this statement is

misleading. To understand the position of the south it is necessary to recapitulate a little.

The southern Sudan is what is popularly known as "darkest Africa." The people are African; black, primitive, superstitious to a degree; naked or dressed in bright colours—the men in shorts; and their dances are African. The distinction must be stressed, and I repeat here what I have written earlier. They number 3,000,000. They are a third of the whole population of the Sudan. They have nothing in common with the Arab of the northern Sudan, who wears white robes, prays to Allah, shuts up his women, and talks Arabic. Before the conquest of the Sudan by Britain and Egypt the south was the happy hunting ground of slave-traders. These slave-traders were the Arabs of the northern Sudan. The conquest put an end to the slave-trading but not to the hatred of the Arabs of the northern Sudan in the breasts of the southerners. This hatred was bitter, and the British administrator was compelled to introduce legislation, not forbidding, but restricting trading activities by northerners in the south—for no better reasons than the safety of the northerners themselves. At the same time this very primitive area promptly drew Christian missionaries to it. These were allowed in under permit and in

those early days the Sudan Mahomedan was not missionary-minded.

Inevitably Christian missions—Anglican, Roman Catholic, and American Presbyterian—began to colour southern policy. There have been saints among them: notably Dr and Mrs Fraser of Lui in Equatoria Province, Mr and Mrs Macdonald of the Nuer and Nuba Mountains, and Dr Heasty of Doleib Hill on the Sobat River in Upper Nile Province; but no one of great vision came to dominate the ecclesiastical scene, and Kitchener's dream of what we might now call "A Church of South India" failed to come to pass, even in Khartoum. The Government was forced into what is now called "the Sphere System," whereby certain missions have certain areas and the deplorable divisions of Christianity appear in the first generation of primitive African people. A little bewildered and understanding not at all, they may pray here to the Virgin Mary; they may pray there to be absolved from sin though sin they know not in the real Christian sense; and there again they may be of the belief that they need to be "confirmed." It is sad that such things should be.

But the south was given over to mission education, and a further consideration led to its being regarded as rather a remote place: the obstinate

backwardness of the southerners themselves. They resisted any attempt to bring in more advanced forms of government, preferring war among themselves rather than the more sober state of civilised living, and the District Commissioner of more intellectual bent was not sent there. The direct, military sort of character was more suited to the life and in any case more competent to maintain law and order. So even in his administrators, the southerner tended to be cut off from the main stream of development in the north. There were one or two exceptions, and the resulting differences can be seen to-day, notably in Upper Nile and the Bahr-el-Ghazal Provinces.

Until 1926, education in the southern Provinces was wholly in the hands of the various missionary bodies, but in 1927 the Government instituted a regular system of subsidies to approved mission schools, thereby becoming directly concerned with the type and standard of education given in the schools. As recently as 1935 we find the following declared as educational policy for the south: " The aim of the Education Department in the southern Provinces is, in the words of Lord Lugard, ' to fit the ordinary individual to fill a useful part in his environment, with happiness to himself.' The tribes of the south are pagan and very primitive; but it is recognised

that education, varying from tribe to tribe with the degree of development reached, is essential to every African social unit if it is to sustain the impact of advancing civilisation."

There is something in this of the "Zoo" mentality, a little pompous and out of touch with reality. What is more the pity; it was completely out of balance with the race for education, as an end in itself, that was beginning in the northern Sudan and which was to leave the south far behind. "Happiness" in this race for education cannot, in the very nature of the development, find any prominent place. In the second or third generation, when educated parents exist, there may be some chance of happiness for the children, but it is impossible for the first generation to avoid being embittered; to have their inevitably unbalanced dreams of self-importance shattered; and to be perhaps: expendable. It was not till 1946 that the Government really "got a hold" of southern education; consolidated purely Government schools with non-mission headmasters and teachers, and began the attempt to catch up the lost ground. In the light of this background the position of the southerners should be understood. Education on the part of purely mission schools has not been very satisfactory: the place of the mis-

sionary being properly that of chaplain; but in the realm of medical work and of technical education, particularly by the Roman Catholic missions, the southerner owes a great deal to many unselfish persons who have spent the best part of their lives in his service.

The Conference of 1946 not only brought a new interest to education and administration in the south; it gave added impetus to economic development. The southern Sudan had no Gezira Scheme, or any industries on a large scale, and the people in many areas in the early 1940's had little use for money. As late as 1945 some of the Nuer people, for instance, still paid their taxes by giving bulls from their vast herds to the Government, viewing money almost with disfavour, preferring the time-honoured system of barter. But the Government was much exercised with the urgent need for formulating a "remote areas" economic policy which would counteract in some measure the great obstacle to the development of southern Sudan, its remoteness, which precludes the export of all except the most valuable agricultural products. In a memorandum entitled, "A Suggested Experiment for the Social Emergence of Indigenous Races in Remote Areas," the Director of Agriculture of the time set the ball rolling in December

1943 by suggesting a policy which was " to make these areas very nearly self-contained and to enable them to market sufficient manufactured products in the 1000 mile coastal belt to enable them to obtain the comparatively small amount of sterling funds for self-sufficiency." The area chosen for the experiment was that of the Zande people in the far south-west corner of the Sudan, about 20,000 square miles in area and with about 180,000 of a population. The Zande themselves are a near-Bantu tribe with a very strong social discipline under their chiefs which makes them easy to organise. They are reasonably industrious. They have no cattle, because of tsetse fly, and are therefore more " agriculture-minded " than the pastoral peoples to the north of them. It was proposed that the scheme would be established with Sudan Government capital and on a partnership basis to rule out the possibility of exploitation, and that management of the commercial and industrial undertakings and supervision of agricultural production should be conducted by a Board formed under charter from the Governor-General. In 1946 all this came to pass: the " Equatoria Projects Board " was formed, entrusted with the management of production and trading projects in Zandeland and possibly, later, in other parts of the Equatorial

Provinces of the Sudan. With £1,000,000 of capital the Board went to work on what was a great social experiment. Production of cotton was the economic backbone of the scheme, but development of health services, education services, and communications were all an integral part. By the end of 1948 the gigantic task of resettling almost the whole population was two-thirds completed in new and dispersed villages of fifty families, each covering an area of two or three square miles in which each family was allotted an area of thirty to forty acres for cultivation on a long-term grass rotation system. To-day this project has overcome its teething troubles. The Board runs shops which do a roaring trade in locally produced goods; a cotton ginnery is in operation; a sugar factory is in production, and some 40,000 of the Zande are now cotton farmers. The new textile mills can produce 3,000,000 yards of cloth in the year, and a soap factory has been started with a production capacity of 400 tons a year.

With agricultural development established in the south, it is of interest to turn to the burning plains of the Gezira where, in the past few years, quite astonishing prosperity and change has taken place.

The Advisory Council had brought up the question of the concessions of the Sudan Planta-

tions Syndicate and its subsidiary, the Kassala Cotton Company, which were due to end on the 30th June 1950. The Government decided to terminate the concessions and to nationalise the scheme. The first step was for the Financial Secretary on the 16th July 1949 to send a letter to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly in which he outlined the important part played by the Gezira Scheme in the economy of the Sudan. A note was appended containing proposals for the future administration of the scheme. A Select Committee was set up in October 1949 to consider and report on these recommendations, and on 29th and 30th March 1950 the report of the Committee was debated in the Assembly. With some small modifications it was agreed to, and with the passing of the Gezira Bill the story of the Sudan Plantations Syndicate came to an end. It is a great story, dating back as we have seen to 1904, and no one who has ever visited it has left without professing unstinted admiration for the industry and loyalty of the British Syndicate "Block" inspectors, many of whom have spent twenty years or more in that unattractive and dusty waste. Nor could the visitor leave without being impressed with the uniquely happy relations prevailing between inspector and tenant. In 1946, Dr Mahomed

Afzal, Director of Research of the Pakistan Central Cotton Committee, reported, after a comprehensive tour: "The Gezira is one of these outstanding experiments in socio-economic problems of the current century and its success is so great that it deserves to go down in history as a great romance of creative achievement. The rich fields and the smiling faces of the workers on the land, who were until recently nomads of the desert, going back and forth eking out a miserable existence from an inhospitable country, are a running commentary on the success of this great experiment and everyone who visits this scheme cannot but be strongly impressed by its success." And to close the tale the Deputy Speaker, in moving that "the Assembly endorses the recommendations of the Select Committee on the Future Administration of the Gezira in general," declared :—

"It will be an historic day when this great scheme, with all the complicated organisation, patiently built up through a quarter of a century, becomes the absolute property of the Sudanese people. Recruitment of Sudanese Inspectors has already started, and the gradual Sudanisation of the administration until the day when it is managed entirely by Sudanese, will constitute an advance towards practical self-government of the most far-reaching importance.

I cannot let the occasion pass without a tribute to the work of the Gezira Companies, without which the scheme could never have come into existence. The scheme has effected a complete revolution in the way of life of the Gezira inhabitants.

That this has taken place without serious dislocation and trouble even in bad years, while at the same time a high level of efficiency and organisation has been inculcated, is a monument to the sympathetic understanding and tireless and patient devotion of the men who have built this organisation, an organisation of which we are justly proud. A high standard has been set. To maintain that standard, and even more, to improve on it, will be a task to tax the capacity of the Sudanese to the utmost; let no one deceive himself that it will be an easy one.

Critics of this Assembly have been trying to make out that it has no power, and that it is not a democratic body. Yet I venture to claim that the part played by the Assembly in this question of the future administration of the Gezira Scheme, a question of absolutely vital importance to the country itself, constitutes a complete rebuttal of these criticisms. As my colleagues can testify, we have been given absolute freedom in making our recommendations; the information and the results of practical experience that we needed to base our conclusions upon have been unreservedly put at our disposal. . . ."

To-day the Gezira is managed by the "Gezira Board." There are 26,000 tenants in 40-acre holdings with a Tenants' Representative Body to watch their interests; Local Government bodies in all areas; social development schemes of wide implications, and their own Arabic newspaper 'El Gezira.' Sudanese of ability have been appointed as Block Inspectors; the old division of profits is now 40 per cent to tenants, 40 per cent to Government and 20 per cent to research, social development, and Board management ex-

penditure. The financial figures from the scheme are remarkable :—

Crop Year	Tenants	Government	Syndicate
1925-26 .	£936,246	£713,347	£622,008
1940-41 .	1,180,897	1,147,076	709,871
1946-47 .	2,715,870	2,696,510	1,465,512
1948-49 .	5,527,932	5,527,932	2,763,967
1949-50	Gross proceeds, £19,353,813	Tenants, £6,412,343	
1950-51	,, ,, 54,400,000	,, 17,500,000	

These last figures mean that the *average* tenant will receive, for ten acres of cotton, £650 net, and some tenants will get up to £1000. In 1938 the average tenant drew £20.

The British are often accused of being weak in matters of economic development. These figures may help to disprove that criticism in the Sudan, coupled with the fact that a £24,000,000 development programme for 1951-56, for widespread and large-scale schemes of agricultural development elsewhere in the country, is already in operation.

Another criticism frequently levelled against British administration is that of dilatoriness in educational development. In the Sudan, despite the ignorant cries of some educated Sudanese, it would be far more accurate to say that there are very real grounds for saying that the Sudan Government has expanded educational services

much too quickly. In the past twelve years educational programmes have been drawn up and scrapped; doubled and scrapped again, and everywhere there is the cry for more. In 1939 there were 59,179 pupils in 652 schools in the Sudan. At the beginning of 1950 the figures were :—

(*a*) Government Schools :—

Boys —Secondary and Technical	.	11	1,916
Intermediate	. . .	19	2,684
Elementary	. . . .	188	30,604
Sub-elementary	. . .	604	49,669
Girls —Secondary and Intermediate	.	6	482
Elementary	. . . .	136	14,097
		964	99,452

(*b*) Mission Schools in the southern Sudan :—

Boys —Elementary and Intermediate	.	50	5,997
Sub-elementary	. . .	307	14,650
Trades and Teachers' training	.	12	512
Girls —Elementary	. . . .	12	1,479
		381	22,638

(*c*) Non-Government Schools in the northern Sudan :—

		Boys	Girls	Total
Egyptian Schools (Public subscription) .	7	722	110	832
Private Schools . .	22	4,635	..	4,635
Mission Schools . .	61	2,736	2,089	4,825
Community Schools .	40	4,323	872	5,195
	130	12,416	3,071	15,487

So the number of pupils attending 1475 schools in the Sudan in January 1950 was :—

Boys	Girls	Total
118,448	19,129	137,557

Of these, 1993 boys and girls were receiving a secondary or technical education.

Teachers are trained at two colleges: the Institute of Education at Bakht El Ruda, which has 382 men students, and the training college for women teachers in Omdurman, which had 59 vacancies competed for by 388 girls. It has 166 women students. At Dilling in the Nuba Mountains a new training college has been opened.

Before any comment is made on this phenomenal expansion it is fitting to remember Lord Kitchener in 1902 standing quietly before a great building which, among the untidy mud buildings of Khartoum in these early days, must have stood out like a palace amid slums. This building was *his* venture of faith: the centre on which the development of higher education in the Sudan might be focused for all time. This development has been noted through the years, and in 1945 the Secondary School of Gordon Memorial College was shed as had the elementary and technical schools been shed before. The Higher Schools of Law, Veterinary Science, Agriculture, Arts,

Science, and Engineering were joined together to become the new Gordon Memorial College, separate from the direct administration of the Sudan Government and governed by an independent Council. At the same time an arrangement was made with London University whereby the best students of the College would take external London Degrees. By this arrangement the college could gain recognition of its academic standards until such time as it was proper that it should become a full university in its own right, awarding its own degrees.

After the first batch of graduates with B.A. and B.Sc. Degrees of this kind had qualified at the end of 1950, the next step was taken and the "University College of Khartoum" was established, incorporating Gordon Memorial College and the Kitchener School of Medicine. To-day the University College contains faculties of Agriculture, Arts, Engineering, Law, Medicine, Science, Veterinary Science, and a School of Administration. There are just over 400 students (including a few women) and a senior staff of 61. All students on entry must have reached a standard which qualifies them to be recognised as matriculated students of London University. Those who do not reach degree standard, at present the majority, sit for the College Diploma: an examination based on

approximately the same courses as for the degree, but marked to a somewhat lower standard.

The college is entirely residential, and two imposing new hostels have recently been completed, holding eighty students each with two to a room and self-contained in their feeding and social arrangements. Large teaching extensions to the faculties of Agriculture and Science have also been built, and all this building is but the first instalment of an extension programme which aims at providing the University College with teaching and residential accommodation for about 700 students in the course of the next five or six years.

The college depends for its capital scheme of development on grants from the Sudan Government, and for its recurrent expenditure, partly on the interest from a gift of £1,000,000 by the British Government, and partly on a grant-in-aid from the Sudan Government. Although fees are charged, according to a student's capacity to pay, the income derived from this source is at present negligible, and is likely to remain so for a good many years.

Kitchener's dream has come true and his venture of faith has been more than justified. Now, no longer a Palace amid desolation, it is a building taking its proper place in a modern

Khartoum, and one feels that he would approve of this passage taken from a statement of aims which the College Council adopted at its first meeting: " The college seeks that its students should acquire not only a high standard of academic and professional knowledge, but also those qualities of mind and character which are necessary for good citizenship and professional competence. It tries to develop in all its students cultured and balanced minds, objective interest in work and study, a sense of responsibility, and a genuine desire to serve their country."

Educational expansion of this order has only been achieved by sacrificing previous standards and by accepting for employment as teachers some candidates who, before the war in 1939, would not have been considered good enough. Few Sudanese realise the peril of this attitude, but in this expansion lies probably the greatest venture of faith of all.

Political development in the Sudan can only be understood against this background of expansion in every aspect of the national life. In 1946 there were, as I have written, two main political parties: the Umma Party standing for independence and dominated by Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi; and the Ashigga Party

standing for Unity of the Nile Valley with Egypt and dominated by Sayed Ali Merghani. The situation was clear cut: two political parties consisting of a number of educated people in the towns. One, the Umma, with a political creed of independence for the Sudan, and counting on the backing of thousands of religious followers of Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi. The other, the Ashigga, with a political creed of Unity of the Nile Valley under the Egyptian Crown, and counting on the backing of thousands of religious followers of Sayed Ali Merghani. The one counting on the support of the "Ansar," the other counting on the support of the "Khatmia." It is important that these two names for the two followings should be remembered; for they must appear again and again in any appreciation of Sudan politics.

So it continued until after the Security Council in August 1947 and, with minor variations, until August 1949, when the National Front was formed and promptly commanded the support of a large body of the Khatmia. This "National Front Party," known in the Sudan as the "Jebha," was formed by a body of educated Sudanese who were tired of the corruption of the Ashigga and of their extreme views on unity with Egypt. This party formulated a policy of union with

Egypt but only to the extent of what the British understand by Dominion status. Sayed Ali Merghani gave it his blessing, and it became forthwith the accepted party of the best of the Khatmia, counting among its members many distinguished citizens. These Sudanese sincerely believed that, under a Constitution of this nature, the Sudan's future must lie. They believed this on geographical, economic, and cultural grounds. Their argument was plausible, but it failed to assess two factors: firstly, the three million people of the southern Sudan who were strongly anti-Egyptian; and, secondly, the strength of the Egyptian desire to dominate the Sudan.

In 1950 the political set-up was briefly this: the Umma Party for independence; the National Front Party for Dominion status with Egypt; and the minority Ashigga for Egypt to the extent of being an Egyptian colony in the British understanding of Colonial status. Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi continued to back the Umma; Sayed Ali Merghani had two parties to deal with—the Ashigga and the National Front—though the latter party counted most of his followers amongst its members.

By the end of 1950, relations between Egypt and Britain were growing steadily more strained.

After the failure of the Sidky-Bevin agreement and the dispute before the Security Council in 1947, discussions between the two Governments were virtually abandoned, but in 1950 exploratory talks were held between the respective Foreign Ministers and Ambassadors. They were of little avail. In the speech from the throne in the Egyptian Parliament in November 1950 the Wafdist Government under Nahas Pasha, which had come to power, declared itself determined to achieve Egyptian national aspirations: evacuation of British troops from Egyptian soil and unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown. The Government even went so far as to threaten abrogation of the 1936 Treaty and 1899 Condominium Agreements if these aspirations were not realised. The talks went on, covering the same old ground, over and over again: Britain insisting that the defence issue in the Middle East and the Sudan problem were two entirely separate issues, Egypt insisting that they were not separate issues but must be taken together; Britain providing proposals for discussion, Egypt simply refusing to discuss them at all. In Egypt, the Wafdist Government was persistently attacked for its failure to achieve results, and some idea of the prevailing tension and complete lack of sense of proportion is given by the following

statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Egyptian Parliament when under heavy fire in debate on the 8th May 1951 :—

" God knows," he said, " that I want to get results as soon as possible, whether they are good or bad. If you want me to summarise the position precisely, and dot some i's and cross some t's, then I will say, firstly, that the British proposals are as far as could be from meeting our national demands ; secondly, that the Egyptian Government has answered these proposals with counter proposals which are nothing but the full Egyptian demands for complete evacuation and unity of the Nile Valley ; thirdly, that if we have not reached the point of breaking off negotiations we have reached a critical stage at which either Britain concedes our demands, or the result will be what you are asking."

In August 1951 the British Government switched to a new tack : a proposal to invite Egypt to join in an allied Middle East Command consisting of Britain, France, Turkey, and America. Negotiations went on between these Governments in this direction, but early in September the Egyptian Foreign Minister officially informed the British Ambassador in Cairo that he would have to make a statement to Parliament before the end of the

Parliamentary Session in October, and he let it be known that his statement would have to include an undertaking to abrogate the Treaty and Agreements if he had nothing to present to Parliament in the way of concrete agreement with Britain. He wanted also acceptance of the sovereignty of King Farouk over the Sudan. Britain simply could not agree to this. To have done so, however carefully hedged about with words such as " symbolic sovereignty," would have had a disastrous effect in the Sudan and on a far bigger scale than after the Sidky-Bevin attempt to deal with this in 1946. Any such agreement would have been a betrayal of the Sudanese.

On the 6th October the British Ambassador in Cairo informed the Egyptian Government that the new proposals covering defence and the Sudan would be ready in a few days, but on the 8th October, very late at night and to a packed and hysterical assembly in Parliament in Cairo, Nahas Pasha, in a seventy-five minute speech, announced the unilateral abrogation by Egypt of the 1936 Treaty of Alliance and 1899 Agreements with Great Britain. He went even further. He presented three Bills to the Egyptian Parliament covering constitutional changes for the Sudan. The first two of these concerned the status of the Sudan and the other proclaimed King Farouk

as " King of Egypt and the Sudan." The third was a Bill creating a new Constitution for the Sudanese. This provided for a Constituent Assembly and the formation of a Sudanese Cabinet : the Ministers in which would be appointed by the King of Egypt and could be dismissed by him at any time. Also, all matters concerning foreign affairs, defence, army, and currency would be reserved solely to the King of Egypt. The King of Egypt would have to sanction all legislation passed by the Constituent Assembly and could also dissolve that Assembly if he wished at any time.

On the 13th October the British Ambassador presented to the Egyptian Government the joint defence plan and the British proposals with regard to the Sudan. The Sudan proposals were as follows :—

" 1. His Majesty's Government do not agree that the defence of the Middle East and the Sudan question are in any way connected. Nevertheless, they have given careful consideration to the possibility of meeting the views of the Egyptian Government on the Sudan and are now prepared to make the suggestions which follow.

2. His Majesty's Government would be glad if the Egyptian Government would give most careful consideration to the suggestions, with a view to discussing them fully with His Majesty's Government in order that the two Governments may examine together their detailed application.

3. It is pointed out that not only do these suggestions

represent great care on the part of His Majesty's Government to understand and meet the Egyptian point of view, but also they appear to be the only way to provide adequate safeguards for Egyptian interests in the Sudan.

4. The Proposals are :—

(*a*) An International Commission to reside in the Sudan, watching over the constitutional development of the country and tendering advice to the Co-Domini.
(*b*) A joint Anglo-Egyptian statement of common principles with regard to the Sudan.
(*c*) The establishment of a Nile Waters Development Authority to develop the Nile, possibly with assistance from the International Bank.
(*d*) An international guarantee of the Nile Waters Agreements.
(*e*) An agreed date to be fixed for the attainment of self-government by the Sudanese as a first step on the way to the choice by the Sudanese of their final status.

Annex I

Statement of Principles

1. In view of the dependence of both Egypt and the Sudan on the waters of the Nile and in order to ensure the fullest co-operation in expanding the supplies available and in sharing them, it is essential that the friendliest relations should link the two peoples.

2. It is the common aim of Egypt and Great Britain to enable the people of the Sudan to attain full self-government as soon as practicable and thereafter choose freely for themselves their form of government and the relationship with Egypt that will best meet their needs as they then exist.

3. In view of the wide differences of culture, race, religion,

and political development existing among the Sudanese the process of attaining full self-government requires the co-operation of Egypt and the United Kingdom with the Sudanese.

4. The two Governments therefore propose to set up an International Commission, to reside in the Sudan, in order to watch over the constitutional development of the country and to tender advice to the Co-Domini.

Annex II

1. The International Commission would have no right to interfere in the day-to-day administration of the Sudan. The exact composition of the Commission would be for negotiation, but might consist of both Co-Domini and, if they would agree, the United States Government. Sudanese agreement would have to be obtained in due course to the setting up of such a Commission, and Sudanese participation would not be excluded.

2. It is true that the Ashigga party have refused to take part in the work of the Constitutional Commission. In spite of their non-participation, however, the report of the Constitutional Commission may be taken to be broadly representative of political thought in the Sudan. Nevertheless, in the normal course of development, there will be a period between the attainment of self-government and the determination of the Sudan's final status and relationship with Egypt, during which all political factions would have an opportunity to influence the future of the Sudan by normal democratic means."

To these proposals the Egyptian Foreign Minister replied to the British Ambassador on 15th October :—

" With reference to our interview of Saturday, 13th October, and to the proposals which you communicated to me on that

date, I have the honour to inform you that the Royal Egyptian Government has instructed me to communicate to Your Excellency :—

1. That it cannot consider the said proposals or any other proposals relating to the difference existing between Egypt and the United Kingdom as long as there are British Forces of occupation in Egypt and the Sudan.
2. That the proposals mentioned above differ hardly at all in substance from the proposal which the United Kingdom has already presented to the Royal Egyptian Government on the 11th of April and the 8th of June 1951 and which the Royal Egyptian Government has rejected in their entirety and in detail."

Copies of this letter were sent to the French, Turkish, and American Ambassadors and once again the position was one of complete deadlock. Against these British proposals for the Sudan should be read those of Egypt which had been presented earlier in the year and which were :—

(*a*) The unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown.

(*b*) Self-government for the Sudanese within the framework of this unity within two years.

(*c*) British forces and officials to be withdrawn from the Sudan and the present régime in the Sudan to be terminated immediately upon the expiry of these two years.

> In the event of the principles outlined in (*a*), (*b*), and (*c*) being accepted, the Royal Egyptian Government agreed to set up a Tripartite Commission in order to help attain the goal in (*b*).

The division is wide and fundamental.

Discussions again lapsed, but once again Egypt gained publicity in the United Nations, this time through the agency of the Egyptian Foreign Minister in Paris on 16th November, when, in the matter of a plebiscite in the Sudan, he "threw out a challenge" to the British Government. This "challenge" failed to find support even from his own Government and, though a plebiscite in the Sudan under certain conditions might be made to work, the proposal coming from the Egyptian Foreign Minister was about the most preposterous piece of propaganda ever mooted in public. The challenge ran as follows :—

"We know beforehand what our Sudanese compatriots would opt for : we know that they will reaffirm their loyalty to the King and their natural unity with the rest of the people of the Nile Valley ; we know above all that the indivisibility of the Nile Valley cannot be validly contested and we know as well that neither tradition nor law would countenance such a plebiscite ; nevertheless I do from this rostrum and before this common forum of the United Nations declare as a challenge to the United Kingdom that for our part we accept to with-

draw our officials and our armed forces from the Sudan on the condition that the United Kingdom will do the same so as to allow the Sudanese freely to express their will through a plebiscite for which the necessary machinery, atmosphere, and preparation could be provided with the co-operation of the United Nations.

This is a frank and clear-cut challenge which I make to the United Kingdom and which I am more than sure the British will not dare to take up."

Formal negotiations between Britain and Egypt ceased altogether; wilder and wilder statements issued from Nahas Pasha and the state of public security became so bad that British armed forces in great numbers were rushed to the Canal Zone. By the latter half of December they were in complete control. It became apparent that King Farouk was giving the Wafd Government enough rope on which to hang itself. This it duly did, in open encouragement of terrorist activity against foreign nationals, particularly British, culminating in the ghastly Cairo riots of the 26th January 1952, when thousands ran amok, robbed, plundered, set the heart of the city ablaze, and caused damage estimated at £40,000,000. For the third time in his stormy career Nahas Pasha, with his Wafdist colleagues, was dismissed by King Farouk.

In November 1950 the Sudanese were upset by the speech from the throne in the Egyptian Parliament, which included a passage claiming

Egypt and the Sudan to be one country. They had passed through a very restless year of growing political consciousness, of fear of being "sold out" in bargaining between Britain and Egypt over the defence issue on the Suez Canal, and of impatience at the lack of any definite move forward by the Sudan Government. On the 5th December 1950 all this feeling was crystallised in a motion tabled in the Legislative Assembly: "That an address be presented to His Excellency the Governor-General in the following terms—we, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the Sudan are of the opinion that the Sudan has now reached the stage at which self-government could be granted, and request Your Excellency to approach the Condominium Powers with a request that a joint declaration of the grant of self-government be made before the end of the third session of this Assembly."

The Governor-General agreed to allow a debate on the motion—an act which in itself aroused hostile Egyptian comment—and the debate on the motion in the Assembly was fast and furious and extremely interesting. An amendment was moved to delete all the words after "of the opinion that the Sudan" and to substitute the following words: "has made good progress towards the stage at which full self-government

can be granted, and request Your Excellency to press on urgently with such measures which, while consistent with the maintenance of good government throughout the country, will ensure not only that such self-government shall be full and complete, but also that, in working towards that end, all sections of the community and all parties may co-operate in developing the institutions of government so as to hasten the day when this goal is attained." Here was a note of caution, sounded by some country members and the southerners.

The debate began on the 13th and finished at 12.30 A.M. on the 15th, after scenes of unprecedented enthusiasm. All members were solid in their desire for self-government, but there were many who thought the motion was premature. It was finally passed by thirty-nine votes to thirty-eight. No action could be taken by the Governor-General on such a narrow majority, but from that day onwards the whole tempo of Sudan politics changed. Self-government was in the air. Political parties composed memoranda, and telegrams to the British and Egyptian Governments from these parties became something of a pastime.

Four days after the motion that gave rise to this debate, an even more far-reaching motion

was tabled: "That an address be presented to His Excellency in the following terms: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the Sudan, do request Your Excellency to appoint a Commission of whose members at least half should be Sudanese, to re-examine the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Ordinance, 1948, and, in respect of any of its provisions . . . to make such representations to Your Excellency for its amendment as they may consider will increase the value, and enhance the efficiency, of the Assembly and Council as a practical instrument of democratic government with a full measure of parliamentary control within the framework of the existing constitutional agreements."

It will be remembered that the National Front and Ashigga Parties had boycotted the elections to the Assembly. It had since become an open secret that many prominent Khatmia no longer agreed with this policy. The Commission provided an opportunity to take part in constitutional development, but the greatest difficulties were encountered by the Sudan Government in forming it at all. The various political parties were informally approached, and after much discussion the composition of the Commission was agreed upon by the National Front, the Umma, and the

Ittihadiyin (a minor group but of similar political persuasion to the National Front). The Ashigga, now completely on their own, did not co-operate. The coalition comprised a British Judge as Chairman, a British official as adviser, eleven educated Sudanese townsmen, one southerner, and one tribal leader from the northern Sudan. It was agreed that, when discussing electoral rules, four further countrymen would join the Commission.

The greatest difficulty occurred when the National Front members objected to the terms of reference of the Commission as defined in the resolution of the Assembly. They objected to the phrase, " within the framework of the existing constitutional agreements," and held that the proposed terms of reference would debar the Commission from making proposals for full self-government. It was patiently explained that any Commission appointed by the Governor-General must be within the framework and that any proposals outside the framework would involve the future status of the Sudan, upon which the Sudan Government could not legislate. In the informal talks with the National Front leaders it was clear that they realised this, but that they hoped by changing the wording of the terms of reference to convince their followers that they had achieved something more than

the motion passed by the Legislative Assembly. These leaders were in a difficult position. They wished to participate in the Commission, but they realised that there was little value in their doing so unless the conditions agreed upon had the backing of Sayed Ali El Merghani and his followers. Very strong pressure was being brought to bear by the Ashigga Party and by Egyptian Government representatives in the Sudan on all persons who were considering taking part in the proposed constitutional reforms. They declared that any persons who did so would be condemned as traitors to the cause of the Unity of the Nile Valley.

In the meantime the Umma Party, not to be outdone by its political rivals, published a statement that the Executive Committee of the Umma Party had decided not to participate in the next Assembly elections unless the elections were held on a basis of full self-government; in private conversation, however, this was explained to be a "political manœuvre" to show the National Front that they were not tied to the British. However, on the 26th March 1951, the Commission was finally appointed ". . . to recommend to me the next steps to be taken in the constitutional advance to full self-government." The politicians heaved a sigh of relief; the Commission

settled down to work ; and the general excitement died down.

The ensuing calm was abruptly shattered in August 1951 by the ever more destructive statements of Egyptian politicians and the obvious inability of Britain and Egypt to achieve agreement about anything and particularly about the Sudan. Abrogation of the 1936 Treaty was spoken of as a possibility, but the actual abrogation on the 8th October came as a surprise. The Acting Governor-General issued a Proclamation :—

> "The Royal Egyptian Government has to-day made an announcement claiming that it has abrogated the 1936 Treaty of Alliance and the 1899 Condominium Agreements with Great Britain.
>
> His Britannic Majesty's Government maintain that the Treaty cannot be abrogated by one party alone and therefore remains in force.
>
> In the circumstances the Sudan Government under the authority of the Governor-General will continue to administer the country, to maintain law and order, and to press on with its declared policy of assisting the Sudanese people towards the attainment of full self-government.
>
> I call upon the people of the Sudan to assist the Government by standing firm and maintaining their standard of conduct and behaviour which is known throughout the world ; and by refraining from any action which would render more difficult the work of the Commission which is aiming at the achievement of constitutional reforms generally acceptable to the people of the Sudan."

The British Government, on the 11th October

1951, reiterated the two fundamental principles of their policy towards the Sudan—namely, that they would agree to no change in the status of the Sudan without consultation with the Sudanese, and that they would maintain the right of the Sudanese freely to choose their ultimate status. The British Government also declared that they would give their fullest support to the Governor-General in continuing to administer the Government of the Sudan in accordance with the Condominium Agreements of 1899 and in his aim of assisting the Sudanese in the attainment of self-government at the earliest possible moment. The Governor-General, who had been on leave, returned to the Sudan by air on the 13th and made his position clear: ". . . my duty is to administer the Sudan in accordance with the Condominium Agreements of 1899 and I shall continue to do so. Any attempt from outside to interfere with the administration as laid down in that agreement would be resisted and I shall take such steps as might be necessary to see that resistance is made ineffective."

But all this, strong though it was, was not good enough for the Sudanese. They had regarded abrogation of the 1936 Treaty as probable; they had regarded abrogation of the 1899 Condominium Agreements as unlikely; and they had never in

the slightest degree anticipated the outrageous act of the Egyptian Government in providing, out of the blue, legislation for a Sudanese constitution entirely subservient to Egypt and produced without any apparent consultation with Sudanese at all. In fact, the Egyptian Foreign Minister *had* consulted Ismail-el-Azhari, President of the Ashigga Party and leader of the Congress tea party to Ali Maher nine years before. This action of the Egyptian Government turned all political parties against Egypt except the Ashigga. Even the leader of the National Front sent a telegram to Nahas Pasha deploring this legislation, and the Khatmia and the Ansar were brought closer together than ever before.

Once more the Egyptian flag might have been pulled down, but once more the British Government did not do so. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that they could not do so without incurring the probable consequence of having to occupy and administer Egypt again. And in 1951 this was not possible.

But the result of not being able to do so, and of maintaining that both the 1899 Agreement and the 1936 Treaty still existed legally, produced a feeling of uncertainty and unreality in the Sudan. Sudanese of all parties were agreed that here was a chance to end the hated and stifling

Condominium Rule. The plain fact was that—however much legal pundits might argue—the Treaty and the Agreement had in fact been torn up by Egypt and the Sudan was free. The Sudan Government was bound by the attitude of the remaining partner in the Condominium—Britain—and Britain stood firm on the sanctity of international agreements and the illegality of unilateral abrogation.

The proceedings of the Amendment Commission were completely upset by this state of affairs. Sovereignty over the Sudan rested jointly in the Co-Domini, Britain and Egypt. Egypt had abrogated the agreement and it was obviously not possible to say that the sovereignty rested in Britain. It was even more fantastic to say that it rested in Egypt, despite recent legislation to that effect. The members of the Commission as individuals and with one exception, therefore, sent a telegram to U.N.O. appealing to that body to appoint an International Commission " to reside in the Sudan, endorse the constitutional development of the country and supervise the implementations of self-government . . . and to advise the Sudanese on the setting up of a Constituent Assembly to exercise self-determination on or before December 1953 under the supervision of the said International Commission." Nothing

came of this telegram, and the Commission broke up on the issue of sovereignty on the 21st November, but not before they had in fact completed their report on constitutional matters. The sovereignty issue was in any case outside their terms of reference.

October and November 1951 were momentous months in the Sudan story and, despite all the excitement which in other Middle Eastern countries would have been quite enough to endanger public security, the Sudanese, apart from a few demonstrations by hooligans and some students of the University College in Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman, remained relatively calm. Perhaps these months can be summed up in the following motion which was laid before the Assembly by six members, including two southerners, on the 25th October :—

"That this Assembly deplores the Egyptian Government's attempt to impose Egyptian sovereignty on the Sudan without consulting the Sudanese people and refuses to recognise the Constitution promulgated by the Egyptian Government for the Sudan, as well as other actions recently taken by the Egyptian Government which infringe the natural rights of the Sudanese people; further that this Assembly records its warm appreciation of the repeated declarations made by the British Government that the future of the Sudan shall be decided by the Sudanese themselves and of the British Government's refusal to use the Sudan as a bargaining point in their efforts to reach a new defence agreement with the Egyptian

Government, and that telegrams conveying this resolution be sent in the name of Mr Speaker on behalf of the Assembly to the British and Egyptian Governments and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Organisation."

The motion was passed almost unanimously, not only by the Assembly but by the whole country.

Finally, there was Mr Eden's statement in the House of Commons on the 15th November :—

" In view of the uncertainty caused in the Sudan and elsewhere by the Egyptian Government's unilateral action in purporting to abrogate the 1936 Treaty of Alliance and the two Condominium Agreements of 1899 His Majesty's Government finds it necessary to reaffirm that they regard the Governor-General and the present Sudan Government as fully responsible for continuing the Administration of the Sudan.

His Majesty's Government are glad to note that the Sudan has for some time been and is now moving rapidly in the direction of self-government. In their view this progress can and should continue on the lines already laid down. His Majesty's Government will, therefore, give the Governor-General their full support for the steps he is taking to bring the Sudanese rapidly to the stage of self-government as a prelude to self-determination, and now await the recommendations of the Constitution Amendment Commission. His Majesty's Government are glad to know that a Constitution providing for self-government may be completed and in operation by the end of 1952.

Having attained self-government, it will be for the Sudanese people to choose their own future status and relationship with the United Kingdom and with Egypt. His Majesty's Government consider that the attainment of self-government should

immediately be followed by active preparations for the ultimate goal of self-determination. They will support the Governor-General in his efforts to ensure that the Sudanese people shall be able to exercise their choice in complete freedom and in the full consciousness of their responsibilities.

His Majesty's Government, with whose support the Sudan Government have brought the Sudanese people to their present stage of progress, are confident that they will work with united enthusiasm towards their goal. His Majesty's Government meanwhile guarantee to ensure the defence and security of the Sudan during the intervening period."

All this excitement and general tension had an upsetting effect on a class of society which has not yet received mention: for want of a better term—"the workers." During the war the rise in the cost of living and the reports of labour troubles elsewhere had unsettled this class of society, and minor strikes had occurred. They were not properly organised, but after the war general organisations were formed, notably the Sudan Railway Workers Affairs Association. But the immaturity of this Trade Union movement led to mistakes from the beginning. The Railway Workers Association led the movement and proved intractable with its new-found power, opposing the formation of Works Committees in various departments of Sudan Railways for the discussion of wages and conditions of service, and at the beginning of 1949 they led opposition

to legislative measures for registering Trade Unions and regulating industrial relations.

These measures were far and away in advance of Trade Union Legislation anywhere else in the Middle East and were contained in three Ordinances —the Trade Union Ordinance, the Regulation of Trade Disputes, and the Trade Disputes (Arbitration and Enquiry) Ordinance. The Trade Union Ordinance provided for compulsory registration of Trade Unions (to prevent overlapping small Unions springing up) and the submission of funds for proper accounting. Neither provision suited the officials of the Railway Workers Association, though both protected the workers in a country with no industrial background and where the majority of the working class is illiterate and quite unsophisticated.

However, the Railway Workers Association took the lead in organising a " Workers' Congress," which took shape in 1949, and in the spring of 1950 the President and Secretary of the Railways Association, who had by now styled themselves President and Secretary of the Workers' Congress, approached the Government's Trade Union Adviser for assistance in drawing up a Constitution for the Congress. He suggested the formation of (*a*) a Federation of Unions of Government Industrial Workers, and (*b*) an overall Trade Unions Congress

to which this federation and all other Unions would be affiliated. They proceeded instead to draft a Constitution giving a "Sudan Trade Unions Federation" wide powers of compulsion over its affiliated member Unions which numbered forty-eight. At its first meeting the President and Secretary of the Railways Union were appointed President and Secretary of the new Federation and straightway passed resolutions threatening the Government with general strikes if certain Government measures were not cancelled. These consisted of disciplinary measures taken against a number of secondary schoolboys for having broken up their school in a senseless riot about food; and of certain proposed amendments to the Defence of the Sudan Ordinances, which were at that time under discussion by the Legislature and which were finally enacted on the 26th November 1950, giving powers to the Government to declare a state of emergency in case of serious strikes, famine, and other crises. These amendments were specifically designed to protect the life and well-being of the community as a whole, as can be seen from the wording of the Ordinance :—

"In the event of the invasion of the Sudan, or upon the occurrence of such of the following events—namely, war, insurrection, civil commotion, riot, strike, lock-out, famine,

pestilence or other happening as in the opinion of the Governor-General shall constitute an imminent threat to the defence of the Sudan or to the public safety or to the life or well-being of the community or any substantial part thereof, the Governor-General may by proclamation (hereinafter called a 'proclamation of emergency') declare that a state of emergency exists in the whole of the Sudan or the part or parts thereof as threatened."

The Federation accompanied its threat of general strikes with a demand for an immediate and general 75 per cent wage increase throughout the country, and sent a threatening and offensive telegram to the Governor-General on the 20th November.

Meanwhile, the intervention of Communist agitators in the Labour movement and the growth of Communist organisations and societies of various kinds, had created a serious situation involving a threat to public order. On the 25th November the Government were obliged to issue a decree declaring Communist-controlled associations to be unlawful associations within the meaning of the Unlawful Associations Ordinance of 1924. Government also proposed about the same time that representatives of the Federation should appear before two independent Commissions which were being set up to review and co-ordinate wages and all other conditions of service of Government employees, in order to give evidence.

After a few days of indecision in the second half of November 1950, the Sudan Trade Unions Federation withdrew its threat of strike on the issue of the secondary schoolboys and the amendment of the Defence of the Sudan Ordinance. And at the same time a dispute between the Sudan Railway Workers Union, as it was now renamed, and the management over the demarcation of the duties of locomotive firemen led, on the 28th November, to the Union instructing firemen to refuse the disputed portion of their duties. The management refused to yield and railway services were interrupted for over fourteen days. This dispute was finally settled by an agreed compromise. But on the 2nd December, and before the settlement was reached, a circular signed by the General Secretary of the Railway Workers Union was distributed among the railway workers and general public at Atbara, the headquarters of the railway administration. The circular was couched in inflammatory terms and accused the railway management of cruelty, oppression, sucking the workers' blood, terrorising them, starving and depriving them of food, clothing, medical care, and education. Individual charges of criminal defamation under Section 437 of the Sudan Penal Code were brought against the Secretary-General and six members of the Central

Executive of the Railway Workers Union, and on the 26th December six of seven accused, including the Secretary-General who had drafted the circular, were convicted by a Major Court. The maximum penalty for such an offence is two years' imprisonment. One of the men was acquitted as not being implicated in the preparation or distribution of the circular, the Secretary-General was sentenced to one month's imprisonment, and the remainder were released on probation under bond.

The promulgation of these sentences by the Major Court was the signal for a Sudan three-day railway strike from the 27th to the 30th December. No notice was given under Section 238 of the Sudan Penal Code, which reads as follows :—

> " Whoever being an employee engaged in any work connected with the public health or safety or with any service of public utility ceases from such work in prearranged agreement with two or more other such employees without giving to his employer fifteen days' notice of his intention so to do, shall, if the intention or effect of such cessation is to interfere with the performance of any general service connected with public health, safety or utility, be punished with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with fine or with both."

The reason for the strike was expressed as " in protest against the trial." On this occasion the responsible leaders of the strike (fifty-two in number, including the five probationers) were

arrested and charged under the Penal Code with criminal conspiracy and striking in public utility services without giving statutory notice. All pleaded guilty, were convicted, and fined. The fines ranged from £3 to £10, and half the bond of £50 given by each of the five probationers in the earlier trials was forfeited. The Sudan Trade Unions Federation notified a one-day general strike for the 2nd January 1951 "in protest against and condemnation of the Government's obstinate policy towards workers." A Government representative explained to the President that such a strike was not in furtherance of a trade dispute and so not protected by the labour laws. This opinion was given wide publicity, and member Unions of the Federation refused to obey the strike call. From the first the Sudan Railway Workers Union had refused to participate in this strike, and the threat was withdrawn.

The Federation declined to send representatives to independent Commissions reviewing wages and conditions, and thereby failed to respond to the opportunity offered to them by the Sudan Government as *de facto* representatives of the Trade Union movement. Its leaders nevertheless reviewed their demands for a general 75 per cent wage increase, and accompanied by an ultimatum, delivered by the individual Trade Unions, of another five-day

general strike. This was first reduced to two days, and finally to one day, and took place on the 17th February. In the same month the Federation applied for registration as a Trade Union. It had always had the intention of so doing but had delayed until its Constitution had been finally agreed between its members. After consideration the Registrar of Trade Unions decided in April 1951 that he was unable to register a Federation of Trade Unions as an individual Trade Union, under the law as it stood. The Government further decided against amending the existing law to permit such registrations. The position resulting from these decisions was that the Federation had full liberty to co-ordinate the action of its member Unions and advise them. It could also represent their views to Government and act as a negotiation body. But it was not protected by law if it initiated collective action or took to itself any of the proper functions of a Trade Union.

The task of building up a balanced Trade Union movement in the Sudan is an immense one, beset with the greatest difficulties of ignorance and illiteracy and of necessity with human material who are the prey to "Communist" agitators, though neither they nor the agitators have the faintest idea what Communism really is. The other frightening thing is the lack of moral courage

in Sudanese on an issue of this nature: the fear of unpopularity, of loss of "face," weighs heavily with them, and a Sudanese Government in the near future will find this problem of labour probably the most difficult of all to handle. Neither educated Sudanese (with a very few exceptions in the Labour Office) nor the workers understand the real nature of Trade Unionism. They cannot reasonably be expected to do so in the space of five short years.

But although strikes and disturbances are the mainstay of the Press, a great deal has been achieved in the Sudan in the field of industrial relations. Between March 1949 and December 1950, forty disputes were correctly notified under the legislation in force. The Labour Office conciliated successfully in five cases in 1949, twenty-three cases in 1950 and forty-two cases in 1951. This steady progress has been maintained and the fact that eighty-five Trade Unions are now registered under the Trade Unions Ordinance is in itself an indication that the policy of encouraging sound Trade Union development is bearing fruit. The encouragement of wages councils, joint consultation and arbitration, adjustment of wages and conditions, and the promotion of housing development is continuous; but the Sudanese have a long way to go before they fully understand constructive Trade Unionism.

By November 1951 the Federation of Trade Unions had come to stay and, furthermore, its leaders had just begun to nibble at politics. Mr Eden's statement of the 15th November went very far indeed by all previous standards, being more specific even than the British proposals presented to Egypt in October, and it was firm on the subject of dates: self-government by the end of 1952 and immediate preparations for self-determination. The political parties chewed on it: the Umma Party with the Ansar in the background and the National Front with the Khatmia in the background. They wanted a definite date for self-determination; they wanted it on the 1st January 1953. The Umma talked of a plebiscite; the National Front talked of the United Nations.

But a remarkable thing happened.

Two things stand out in this story: firstly, the dislike of Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi and Sayed Ali Merghani, the one for the other; and, secondly, the fact that politicians in the Sudan are a small townee group of Khartoum and Omdurman in a vast country of greatly varied people.

The personal intransigence of the two Sayeds, religious at heart, had become embedded in politics. It had done so in an insoluble manner,

and caused both sides to make political claims and proposals for the future which were considered not on their merits but on confused secular and temporal manœuvres for position against the other side. Throughout the country there was a great mass of opinion which was heartily sick of both the secular quarrel of the two Sayeds and of the temporal manœuvres of their politicians. This mass of opinion was not restricted to countrymen alone: it included many of the most sane educated Sudanese with any experience of affairs, who were, and are, deeply afraid of the practical difficulties of running the country themselves with such a dangerous dearth of Sudanese competent to do so. The opinion of this body of Sudanese could be roughly summarised as being: firstly, we want self-government by the end of 1952; secondly, we want self-determination when the Sudanese Parliament thinks the time is ripe; thirdly, we want a democratic republican régime in an independent Sudan; and, fourthly, we want to be members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Early in December 1951 a political party embodying this policy was born after some vicissitudes and entirely by the efforts of country leaders who had become impatient of the manœuvres of their educated friends. A group of members of the

Legislative Assembly had also had the courage to decry, in a published statement after a Press Conference on the 16th November, the airy flatterings of the politicians, and had also sounded a note of caution about the practical difficulties for self-government. The party called itself the "Socialist Republican Party" and on the 18th December 1951 published its aims in a long statement, the beginning of which summed up the Sudanese problem fairly clearly :—

"*Preamble.*

It is our duty towards the people to whom we are appealing for support in the formation of the Socialist Republican Party, to let them know in brief the aims and political objectives for which this party has been formed.

Present Political Status.

National circumstances prevailing in most parts of the country have been responsible for wide strides in the direction of political progress as a result of which various political parties have been formed, each pursuing national aims different from the other. Though numerous, these parties are generally pursuing the realisation of two different objectives—viz., complete independence and unity with Egypt. In view of the status of the country, support for these political attitudes has not been based on logic. The country has experienced misfortunes and been subjected to the trials which should have prompted Sudanese to come together in spite of their conflicting ideas. This, however, has not been possible mainly because of the deep-rooted difference between the two groups and the main concern over the national interest has been centred round party gains.

The Pro-independence Call.

The Pro-independence elements have not been able to win the support of many who believe in the question of independence. In fact, it may not be wrong to say that many have been compelled to take a counter attitude in view of the sectarian colour attached to that call charged with working for the creation of a certain local monarchy, the denial of which has tended to make it firmly established.

The Call for Unity.

This has been laid bare by the Egyptian Decrees which contained basic provisions for that unity and by which a status has, without consultation with Sudanese, been imposed on them. That status amounted to robbing the Sudan of its entity among nations with the result that many of those who had been wishing for specific political relations with Egypt have been frightened away.

To-day's Problem.

Present complications are attributed to these factors and the state of affairs has been worsened still by the fact that Sudanese are about to become free to take over the affairs of their country—a crucial stage at which all faithful Sudanese should do their utmost to realise unanimity for laying down sound principles through which Sudanese could manage the affairs of the country and preserve their full independence."

The statement then went on at length to give a dissertation on the reasons for calling the party "Socialist" and "Republican." The party was called "Republican" because it opposed, as is generally believed, the desire of Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi to become King of the Sudan;

and it was called " Socialist " because it opposed the gradually growing monopoly in irrigation schemes held by one or two wealthy Sudanese, and feared that the progressive development of such ownership would in time equal the inequality of wealth in Egypt. In this party there are both Ansar leaders and Khatmia leaders: it cut right across the traditional integration of religion and politics in the Sudan, and the profession of allegiance to it, on the part of ex-Umma members in particular, required real courage.

Into the field, and destructively, came the Federation of Trade Unions on 18th December 1951, publishing its official views:—

" (1) Immediate evacuation of economic, political, administrative, and military foreign administrators from the Sudan.

(2) Preserving for the people their full right to self-determination free of foreign influence.

Methods—

(1) Non-co-operation in any form with imperialism since co-operation consolidates its existence.

(2) Working for unity of the Sudanese people in a United Front by co-operation with political organisations and others whose objectives bear a similarity to those of the Federation."

A small group of politicians began to try to recruit the Federation of Trade Unions, forming

what they called "A United Front for Sudan Liberation." In this group were the ubiquitous Ashigga Party, the professional agitators, and a few small Omdurman parties of little consequence.

Sudan political structure, therefore, comprised five groups at the beginning of 1952 :—

Firstly, the Umma Party backed by Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi and standing for the independence of the Sudan. The party had its greatest influence in the western Sudan and in the area a little south of Khartoum, and, on gaining power, would hold a plebiscite to determine whether or not the Sudan should have a monarchy.

Secondly, the National Front, backed by Sayed Ali Merghani, and standing for Dominion status with Egypt. The party had its greatest influence in the eastern Sudan and in the towns of the northern Sudan.

Thirdly, the Socialist Republican Party, cutting across sectarianism and standing for an independent Sudanese Republic probably seeking Dominion status with Britain. The party had the support of country leaders in all parts of the northern Sudan and hoped to gain the support of the south. It was bitterly opposed by Sayed Abdel Rahman at its outset, and Sayed Ali Merghani had taken the opportunity to express

cautious approval in private. It was further supported by the more able and progressive of the educated Sudanese.

Fourthly, the United Front for Sudan Liberation consisting of the Ashigga and other pro-Egyptian parties and the Federation of Trade Unions. It commanded relatively little support except that of the Federation claiming to represent possibly 100,000 workers, though not necessarily commanding their political votes, and its policy tended to be "anti-authority extremism."

Fifthly, there was the southern Sudan, its 3,000,000 inhabitants distrustful of all the northerners, desiring strong constitutional safeguards and the continuance of the existing régime for some years.

On the 17th January 1952, the Report of the Chairman of the Constitution Amendment Commission was published, together with two Government White Papers containing explanations and putting forward certain questions on which the Governor-General desired guidance. The Report and the White Papers were tabled in the Legislative Assembly and members of the public were invited to send in their comments. The Assembly spent the greater part of the first half of February debating the Report and the

White Papers. The debates showed the existence in the House for the first time of a party—the Socialist Republicans—in organised opposition to the Umma. Yet the seventeen resolutions passed showed that the views of the Assembly differed little in broad principles from the recommendations made by the Commission. The Assembly's resolutions were subsequently considered by the Executive Council and these, together with other views put to the Governor-General, were drafted into a Constitution by the legal experts.

The draft of the Self-Government Statute was laid on the table of the Legislative Assembly by Sir James Robertson on the 2nd April. It provided that the Government of the Sudan should consist of an all-Sudanese Council of Ministers and an all-Sudanese Parliament of two Houses: an all-elected Chamber of Deputies and a Senate. The Council of Ministers would be responsible to Parliament for all the administrative and executive functions of internal government. The powers of the Governor-General as Head of the Constitution would be limited to an exclusive responsibility for external affairs and to a "special" responsibility for the public service and the southern Provinces.

The draft Constitution met with general approval. The debate on its provisions began on the 7th

April and lasted until the 23rd; and it was sent to the Co-Domini early in May. The Umma Party and the Socialist Republicans expressed official agreement with its principles, and approved of it as a suitable instrument for the government of the country during the interim period before self-determination. All parties expressed their insistence that self-determination should come not later than the end of 1953. The pro-Egyptian party leaders found themselves in an awkward position. On their own admission they found the Constitution far more satisfactory than they had expected and there was pressure from party members to accept it. On the other hand they were committed, by frequent public utterances, to their pre-occupation with the alleged illegality of the position of the Governor-General, Egypt having unilaterally abrogated the 1899 Condominium Agreements and the 1936 Treaty of Alliance.

Two developments then occurred, arising directly out of these reactions. The first concerned Egypt and the Umma Party, and the second concerned the pro-Egyptian parties in the Sudan.

Regarding the first, the debate on the Constitution in the Legislative Assembly in Khartoum and the favourable reactions to it caused anxiety in Egypt. When the Egyptian Government

realised that the British Government intended to stand firm in the matter, Neguib El Hilali, Prime Minister at the time, decided that his best move would be a direct approach to Sayed Abdel Rahman El Mahdi. He therefore invited Sayed Abdel Rahman to send representatives to Alexandria to have a friendly talk. The Sayed eventually agreed and sent five representatives on the 27th May as a "personal" mission in no way committing the Umma Party. They returned on the 12th June, and though they maintained secrecy over their discussions it became clear that the Egyptians' line had been that if the Sudanese would accept the nominal sovereignty of King Farouk over the Sudan, the Egyptians would consider reviewing the problem of Nile Waters and the constitutional decrees affecting the Sudan passed by the Egyptian Government in 1951. Hilali's Government then fell, and Hussein Sirry, who had succeeded to the Premiership, invited Sayed Abdel Rahman to come personally. He agreed to do so on his way to Switzerland at the end of July, but Egypt, after having had five Governments collapse in some six months, then suffered a military *coup d'état* on the 23rd July, the full effects of which cannot be assessed for some time to come. The Sayed's visit was postponed *sine die*.

The proposed visit attracted more notice than it merited, though it may yet take place, and some reports gave the erroneous impression that the Sayed would be representing the Sudan and that the Sudan problem would be solved.

That it would not be solved in this way became apparent from two reactions: firstly, telegrams and petitions to the Secretariat from sundry Ansar asking the Government to prevent Sayed from going, and veiled references by some of his most loyal followers that he must be taking leave of his senses; and, secondly, the reaction of the pro-Egyptian followers which has been mentioned.

In negotiations for this visit Sayed Ali Merghani was not consulted. It may be that the Egyptian Government took his "loyalty" for granted. But this *faux pas*, coupled with the pressure of the great majority of the moderate Khatmia to accept the Constitution, resulted in the relatively sudden demise of the National Front Party. Its founder, Sayed Mahomed Osman, had fallen grievously ill and its leadership had passed to other hands. Now what is left of it has joined the United Front for Sudan Liberation and the numerous moderate Khatmia appear to have only two courses open to them: to join the Socialist Republican Party or to form a party

of their own. The founders of the Socialist Republican Party may yet regret the inclusion of the word "Socialist"—it was unnecessary and it is not very popular.

There are, then, these five, or possibly four, political groups to take part in free elections at the end of this year in constituencies throughout the country. The new Constitution gives the Sudanese complete control over all matters except Foreign Affairs and Defence, which will be handed over to them when they themselves decide what form they wish their independence to take. The British Government has promised to abide by the decision of a fully representative Sudanese Parliament, whether that decision be independence with treaties of alliance, or Dominion status under the British Crown, or Dominion status under the Egyptian Crown; or any other arrangement freely chosen: thereby maintaining to the end their backing of the Sudanese for no other reason than that of the sanctity of a trust.

The Sudanese have come a long way from the dust and desolation of only fifty years ago and now, with self-government promised to them by the end of 1952, and with external trade worth more than £E.60,000,000 in the year, it is fitting to end this Sudan story with the closing words of Sir James Robertson's speech

to the Legislative Assembly on the 2nd April 1952 :—

"I should like to say just one thing more. Everyone knows that there are political and sectarian differences amongst the Sudanese; I know also that nowhere in the world does any Constitution in all its detail satisfy all the people. There *must* be compromise. It is no good for an individual saying, 'I do not agree to this point or that point,' and for that reason making no attempt to co-operate in working the scheme as a whole. I believe that in this draft Constitution there exists a unique opportunity for the Sudanese as a whole to unite to go forward together over the last stage of their country's constitutional advance. . . .

I hope that everyone both inside this Assembly and outside it will study the Statute in sincerity and good faith; just as I can assure you that it has been drafted by the Governor-General in sincerity and faith, believing that it is a suitable Constitution for the Sudan, and based, as it is, on the recommendations of the Sudanese themselves. . . .

I have now served in the Sudan for nearly thirty years, and I am proud to have presented this draft Constitution to this House before I retire. I hope that before I leave the country I shall have seen this Statute become law, and the establishment of a Sudanese Government and Parliament to guide this country in the tasks that lie ahead.

May I give you a final word of advice: Don't throw away the substance for the shadow! Take this Constitution and work it, and the day of self-determination will come all the sooner."

There could be no more vital advice to the Sudanese. If they reject it—if the fear of being in the minority invokes the purely destructive party weapon of boycotting elections, then the

Sudanese may incur the advice of many Commissions, implying for them a more tangible yoke than any Condominium rule. They may find themselves, for a season, like Israel of old, "scattered upon the hills as sheep that have not a shepherd."

If they accept it, they will achieve a Parliament of their own, freely elected and fully representative. The achievement of such a Parliament is the real answer to the academic problems of sovereignty. It is the one sure way to independence.

EPILOGUE

THIS book has been called " A Record of Achievement." What has been achieved in the Sudan ?

In these pages, an outline of material progress has been recorded : the story of a people whose social institutions have been developed from primitive chaos to orderly government in the brief space of fifty years. Some may think the development remarkable, others may think that more could have been done ; nevertheless this material progress is of great interest and importance in the world to-day. But the real achievement in the Sudan lies in something much deeper. It lies in an attitude of mind on the part of the British who have lived uncomfortably in that hot, harsh land and have loved its people. It has its roots in the reciprocal affection of the Sudanese. It is perhaps in this reciprocal affection of the Sudanese that the key to the paradox is found. The British administrator in the Sudan is no martyr. He stays there because he is happy ; because in some strange manner and almost in spite of himself he finds, in the service of the Sudanese, fulfilment of life.

This bond between Sudanese and British, between East and West, shows itself again and

again: in a packed Anglican Cathedral in Khartoum where, unbidden and unexpected, all sorts and conditions of Sudanese recently gathered to pay their memorial tribute to a much-loved administrator who had left the country some years before; or on the aerodrome where a retiring British Governor-General turned away from his Sudanese Guard-of-Honour unable to speak; or in a garden in Britain when the young Sudanese at a British University speaks quietly of his hopes and fears to his former District Commissioner.

In these things there is greatness of spirit. In their atmosphere we can feel that, in De Quincey's phrase, "Some greater interest was at stake, some mightier cause than ever yet the sword had pleaded or trumpet had proclaimed." In their shadow, words like "sentimentalist," "imperialist," or "coloniser" have no lasting place.

This is the real achievement in the Sudan: the kindling of the spirit of humanity, freedom, justice, and integrity.

Whatever turmoil lies ahead, these qualities shall endure. They must endure; for they are the very breath of life in the human family.

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and Records.' This journal has been published regularly since 1918, sometimes quarterly and sometimes bi-annually. The articles contained in it are nearly all contributed by officers serving in the country, and the Editorial Board maintains a very high standard. It is obtainable from the agents in England: Messrs Luzac & Co., 46 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1. The annual subscription is 18s.

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