

WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 17, 1907.

HAS A LEVER IN SUEZ

Sultan May Repeal Charter of Canal Company.

WHAT IT WOULD MEAN

Why the Powers Never Carry Out War Threats

EXPLAINED BY A DIPLOMAT

The Complicated Politics Surrounding the Enterprise—Opposition Between France and England.

Recent special dispatches in The Star, coming directly from Constantinople, indicate that another demonstration is about to be paraded at the doors of Turkey, on account of Abdul Hamid's unwillingness to consent to another demand of a European power. The preparations for the naval demonstration, or the demonstration itself, are not of sufficient importance to be taken up as worthy of consideration. What is extraordinary in these pageants, authorized at different times by all the great powers, is their inevitable return to their respective ports without having accomplished anything save the amusement of the sultan, or his subordinates. If he be not present, it is, therefore, evident that a good reason must exist for such empty-handed returns. It never can be charged that any fleet which has gone to the Bosphorus was not powerful enough to destroy every port and coast village in European Turkey. But not even an ordinary life was ever shot on these occasions. The cannon were all polished, but the ammunition remained in the hold.

A Star reader wants to know what this important mystery is. The question was propounded to a prominent diplomat, who answered: "The Suez canal. Therein lies the generally accepted explanation." Then he added:

"The question is one seldom considered, and I am glad to give you some facts concerning it which will correct erroneous impressions. The powers have often threatened to seize a Turkish port or blockade the Dardanelles. If such a thing is ever attempted, nothing more may be expected of the sultan than a defiant stand; but the powers will not dare to carry out their threats because they know that the ruler of Turkey may repeal the charter of the Suez canal and would hold it for redress. The sultan's authority in the canal zone is rather obscure and often forgotten. If he should declare the forfeiture of the charter, the boys would stagger continental Europe, particularly England; for a time, at least. The British government now receives probably about 40 per cent of all tolls derived by the payment of tolls. Of course, Abdul Hamid would not do such a thing unless pressure should be brought to bear upon him, but the result would seriously affect the financial centers of Europe.

Project Centuries Old.

"The history leading to this condition of affairs is complicated, but it is interesting and timely. In view of the troubles and fortunes of the Panama enterprise," explained the diplomat, "when M. de Lesseps, the originator and builder of the Suez canal, was received into the French Academy Ernst Renan, one of the immortals, told his audience that the cutting of the waterway was one of the dreams of antiquity; that Leibnitz recommended it to Louis XIV, and that the French directory put it in its program when it undertook the expedition to Egypt. 'As in the time of Alexander,' said Renan, 'the conquest of arms was a conquest of science. The day before Christmas of 1798 our illustrious colleague, Gen. Bonaparte, left Cairo accompanied by Berthier, Monge, Berthollet and several other members of the institute, and of certain merchants who had obtained permission to join his escort. On the 30th he found to the north of Suez the remains of an ancient canal and followed it for five leagues; five days afterward he saw near Beibes the other extremity of the canal of the Pharaohs. The researches of the Egyptian commission were the starting point of all the subsequent designs. One error only, the belief in the inequality of the levels of the two seas—always denied by Laplace and Fourier—was mixed with these valuable researches, and it delayed for half a century the execution of the work planned by the heroic engineers of 1798."

Hostility of Britishers.

"The origin of the present enterprise goes back to 1854. Mehmet Ali was in the Libyan desert with 11,000 men, and his camp was near Lake Mareotis when he was joined by de Lesseps, who had known him in Paris. De Lesseps obtained there and then the concession of the canal. He made a preliminary exploration of the country with Mougel and Linant Bey; he verified the equality of the level of the two seas, which had already been demonstrated.

"Notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, then English ambassador at Constantinople, de Lesseps secured the approbation of the grand vizier. After some negotiations, it was agreed between the governments of France and England that the two leave the affair of the Suez isthmus to itself, and would consider it a mere commercial and industrial enterprise. De Lesseps met opposition in England. Lord Palmerston was very hostile to the project, and his hostility was felt at Constantinople. After four years of appeals to public opinion de Lesseps dared to make an appeal to the European public. The capital of the company was fixed at 200,000,000 francs, in 400,000 shares of 500 francs each. He reserved 85,500 shares to England, Austria, Russia and the United States, while the rest was offered to the French public. The emission was covered and the society was inaugurated.

"The work to be executed extended for 130 kilometers, and five years were judged necessary for the maritime canal. It is not easy to imagine now all the difficulties with which de Lesseps had to contend, financial, technical and economical. Mehmet's successor, in 1865 Khedive Ismail, whose expenses had been excessive, sold the 176,000 shares which he possessed to the English government at the price of 100,000,000 francs, which represented a value of 568 francs a share. When these shares were offered to England parliament was not in session, but Lord Beaconsfield bodily bought them, had them paid for temporarily by the Rothschilds, and later asked parliament for a bill of indemnity, which

he had no difficulty in obtaining. In consequence of this purchase England obtained a representation on the board of directors. As the credit of the British government was such to enable it to borrow on better terms—5 per cent being the Rothschilds' interest—a sinking fund was established, which actually redeemed the entire cost of the canal, so that England now holds about \$120,000,000 worth of property for which nothing has been paid out of the British treasury.

"The bombardment of Alexandria in 1882 and the victory of Tel-el-Kebir gave England a predominant influence in Egypt. M. de Freycinet asked the French chamber for a credit with a view to the protection of the canal; this credit was refused by 416 votes to 75 and the French retired from Egyptian waters. The British became practically the masters of Egypt, but they did not abuse their victory with regard to the canal. Lord Granville at the beginning of the year 1883 addressed a circular to the great powers. An international commission was appointed and sat in Paris. The discussion lasted several days. A paper was signed in 1888, in virtue of which the neutrality of the canal was formally recognized. Or, rather, the language of the treaty shows clearly that the powers agreed to treat the waterway as neutral; they did not agree to guarantee its neutrality.

"From the very first the Suez canal was clothed with an international character, and the original concession contemplated a neutral canal. It is a private enterprise, conducted by foreigners of various nationalities, in territory subject to international control, and under a concession from a government too weak to afford adequate protection, and itself subject to international supervision.

A Circle of Authorities.
"Egypt is the land of political fictions. Technically, the khedive is the well-nigh absolute ruler, under the suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey. In reality, the authority of the khedive is only nominal, while the actual powers of government are exercised by England. Above the sultan, above the khedive, and above the British government, is the concert of Europe, exercising an ultimate supervision.

"Protracted negotiation during the discussions of neutralization gave for the time being the impression that it was a diplomatic duel between England and France. The main question concerned the area to be neutralized. France wished to prohibit all acts of war and all acts directed immediately to the preparation of an operation of war, not only in the canal itself and its ports of access, but also in its approaches of the canal and the territorial waters of Egypt.

"England, however, sought to restrict, so far as possible, the area to be neutralized. In this she was not actuated solely by a disinterested regard for Egypt, but was wisely seeking to safeguard her own future interests. She foresaw that her occupation of that country might be permanent, and consequently wished to keep as much territory as possible free from neutrality, in order that it might whenever necessary be utilized by her as a military base. In this regard she carried her point. But the treaty was a futile attempt to reconcile irreconcilable interests, and all she has to give her supremacy in Suez, whether in theory or in practice, is the strength of her superior fleets and her position in Egypt, Gibraltar, Malta, Perim and Aden."

The Nature of Pneumonia.

From The New York Herald.
Pneumonia, usually prevalent at this season, is at present reaping an almost unprecedented death harvest. So commonly are individuals attacked with the malady that the occurrence provokes little more than a sad and passing comment. The disease is supposed to be always associated with cold and inclement weather, and we take its infliction as a matter of course. It is only when it comes home to us that we realize its gravity and the usual result which awaits its invasion. Apparently it must make its dreadful score during our ever-changing winter climates do what we may in the way of preventing an attack.

In taking chances the more we can learn of the real nature of the disease, its symptoms, tendencies and complications, the better we may realize the importance of such preventive measures as may be within ordinary reach. But, most of all, the proper recognition of the earlier symptoms, giving, as it does, the best hope for treatment, often turns the scale in self-directions. A main difficulty is that no one can tell whether or not a given "cold" will ultimately travel to the deeper parts of the lungs. Thus it happens that no cough, soreness of chest, chilliness or other evidence of even slight catarrhal troubles can be trusted these things may be further rests in the fact that it may go no further. There can hardly be a doubt, however, that the prompt use of proper remedies for the preliminary "cold" may often save the day. The older the person the more careful he should be. But when once the pneumonia gets a fair start it must go to its finish. It is essentially a self-limited disease and must progress through its various stages either to recovery or death. No matter how much time may be consumed in the preparation for the real onset of pneumonia is almost always abrupt and sudden, and is ushered in by a long and severe chill, followed by pain in the side, short, painful cough, hurried and difficult breathing, grunting expiration, high fever and blood-streaked expectoration. In the meanwhile the smaller air tubes in the deeper portions of the lung are being rapidly clogged by effusions in nature's effort to contract and eventually throw off the infectious material.

England's Birth Rate.

From the London Globe.
The report of the registrar-general of births, marriages and deaths in England and Wales for 1906 is issued as a blue book. It says that the population of England and Wales, enumerated at the end of March, 1901, consisted of 32,527,843 persons. From that date until the middle of 1905 the number of births exceeded the number of deaths by 1,230,575. The estimated population in the middle of 1905 was 34,152,077.

The births registered in 1905 numbered 925,261, and were in the proportion of 27.2 per 1,000 of the total population of both sexes and all ages; this is the lowest rate recorded since civil registration was established. In the year 1876 the birth rate in this country the highest point on record, viz. 36.3 per 1,000 living; since that date the rate has, with trifling exceptions, steadily fallen, until in the year 1906 it was, as already stated, no more than 27.2 per 1,000 living. The birth rate calculated in this way was 6.7 per 1,000 below that recorded in 1904, and was 1.8 per 1,000 below the average in the ten years 1895-1904.

Some of the consequences of the decreasing birth rate in this country are modified by a decreasing death rate. The deaths registered in England and Wales during the year 1905 numbered 820,681, and were in the proportion of 15.2 per 1,000 persons living. The rate was the lowest recorded since civil registration was established.

No Kissing in Church.

Vienna correspondence London Express.
Twenty Ruthenian peasants belonging to Ispas, in Galicia, have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment from a week to a month for kissing each other in church.

How England Obtained Control.

"The financial difficulties became very great," continued the diplomat. "Yet the receipts rose gradually. In 1875 Khedive Ismail, whose expenses had been excessive, sold the 176,000 shares which he possessed to the English government at the price of 100,000,000 francs, which represented a value of 568 francs a share. When these shares were offered to England parliament was not in session, but Lord Beaconsfield bodily bought them, had them paid for temporarily by the Rothschilds, and later asked parliament for a bill of indemnity, which

Authorities on Correct Dress. New York.



Women's Section. Paris.

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Going Back to Oxen.

From the Springfield Republican.
For the first time in a quarter of a century, say the Kansas newspapers, oxen are being used for plowing the prairie. This is being done by a Finney county farmer, George Estes, living near Garden City. This return to the old method has been

found to work very well. Steam and gasoline engines have been used for drawing plows in Kansas, but the method was too costly for this particular farmer, and horses and mules were very expensive. Mr. Estes calculated that enough mules to run the number of plows which he wished to use in breaking up the prairie sod would buy a

large farm in the unirrigated part of his county, and he considered the investment too large. Then the idea of working oxen came to him, and the more he thought of the plan the more feasible it seemed. Oxen had been used in breaking the prairie in the early days, and he determined to try it again. He had a local blacksmith make the yokes, and a local hardware man secured the bows for them. He had broken some

cattle of his herd for the work and the experiment promises to be a success. When he completes the breaking of his sod land he is planning to use the oxen for other work, in which he believes he will find them fully as valuable. One of the uses to which he will put them will be the drawing of the heavy beet wagons in the fall, and during the beet-slicing season at the sugar factory.

London Sunday in Paris.

Here, in the London Gentleman.
Paris has somehow lost its own particular atmosphere, while London, more fortunate, has managed to keep hers. The Paris streets are full of English tea shops, and an incredible number, and the Sunday of course, has become just as dull as any