

Race to Grab a Continent.

Practically all of the African continent has been seized and divided by the European powers within the last twenty years, but there are a few million square miles left, and just now Great Britain and France are in a very determined race to acquire it. The fortunate victor will acquire domination over the richest trade territory of the continent. General Kitchener's recent defeat of the rebels at Omdurman on the Upper Nile gave the English a tremendous advantage, but the French have in a measure forestalled this by stealing a march to Fashoda, where they are said to be in direct communication with King Menelik of Abyssinia, who strongly favors their occupation of the territory. Many statesmen believe that this rivalry between England and France to seize the unclaimed territory will lead to war between the two countries. Indeed, Joseph Chamberlain has declared that if England's claim is disputed it must be fought out on the English Channel.

At the beginning of the present century a few small colonies and trading posts along the coast represented the foothold of Europe in Africa. The close sees the energetic and progressive nations of the north in full possession, or holding under so-called protectorates three-fourths of the whole of the vast continent of 11,514,000 square miles and more than ready to seize the remainder. Two nations, the British and French, hold each some three and a half million square miles, nearly three-fifths of the

of the question. With the English for neighbors on the east and southwest, she has been badly beaten in the game. The "Schurz briefs" of the young "war lord" of Berlin, so effectual when directed against weak and ignorant black princes who attempted to dispute his spread of territory, availed nothing against the greedy land grabbers of Britain. By the free use of the red palm not in London and questionable claims of ancient treaties with interior chieftains, and the aggressive "push on" of her explorers and traders, supported always by the ready presence of her colonial troops, Eng-

day's march of Khartoum, withdrew his forces and left the Mahdi in full possession as far down the river as Wady Halfa and east to Abyssinia and the Red Sea. From that time to within a few months ago no Europeans have set foot in the country except as prisoners.

Two years ago Great Britain determined upon the reconquest of the country with an Anglo-Egyptian army with the evident but unavowed purpose of permanent occupancy on her own account in consummation of her long cherished plans. Sir Herbert Kitchener with his army advanced from

at a moment's notice or dragging about their writhing bodies from which hand and foot had been severed; I have known of women tortured, of unborn babes speared with the lance, of nurslings starving on dead breasts, of gaunt, naked mothers begging for alms; nay, I have seen people living on carrion, fighting for a drink of warm blood or a decayed bone, worse still, slaughtering their own children for food. And, remembering these things, I have many a time asked myself: How long, O Lord, how long shall the nations of Europe watch unmoved? How long shall Great Britain stay her hand



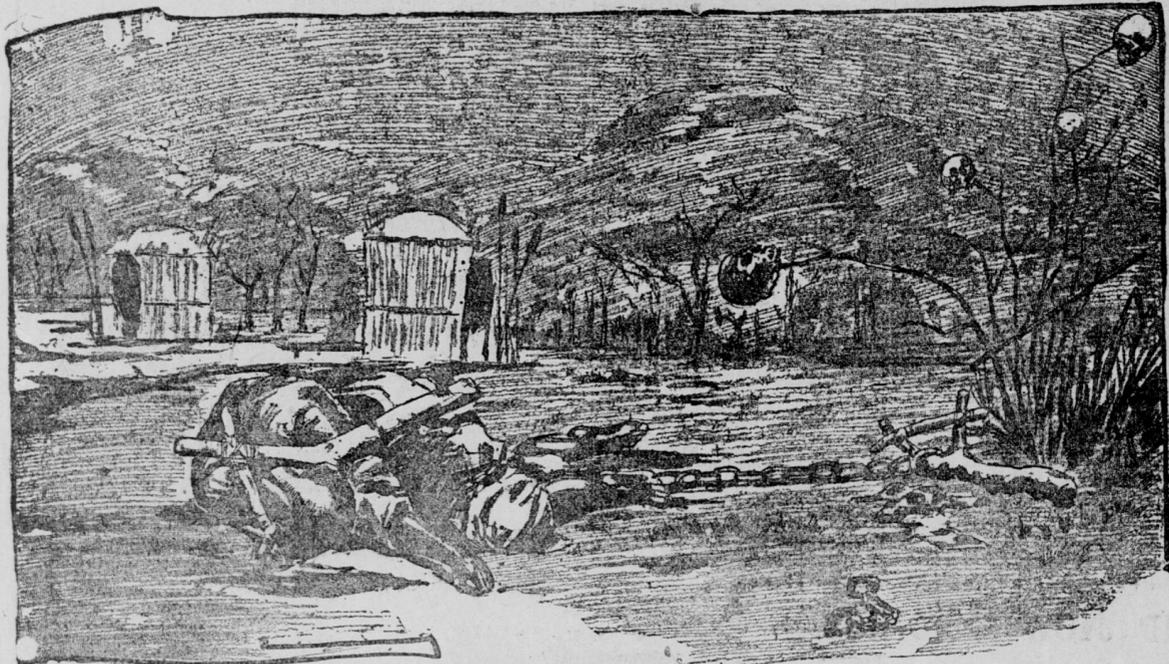
French Officers Discussing Plans for Advancing Into the Disputed Territory. Major Marchand, Who Has Just Seized Fashoda, Is Seated at the Left.

faith. But never a threat was offered. Later we learned the value of this external urbanity; when emissaries constantly appeared to convert us to Mohammedanism, with death as the penalty of refusal; when we were exposed to the rage of the mob, ordered out for execution, imprisoned with robbers, covered with vermin, starved into the fever and dysentery which carried off two sisters and a lay brother; when other sisters who had joined us as fellow-captives were wrenched from us and submitted to torture and indignity, then we understood what the smile and soft words of the Mahdi meant. Many of his followers realized it, too,

when intoxicated by victory Mohammed Ahmed threw off the mask, exchanged a life of asceticism for one of debauchery and allowed severity to degenerate into license. But his personal prestige over his infatuated disciples still remained. Only his death, due to excesses and proving him human, could shake their faith. On the day when Khalifa Abdullah, of the powerful frame and feeble brain, raised his black flag as the Mahdi's successor Mahdism expired. Then came perhaps the greatest trial of my captivity, when my dear companion, Father Bonomi, was enabled to make his escape and I was left alone,

dreaming of him on his way to the promised land. No favor had been intended, but a report had reached Cairo of my escape to Omdurman and consequently Father Bonomi was supposed to be the only captive at El Obeid. The emissary, who was risking his head, refused to go beyond his instructions, and one of the bitterest moments of my life was that on which I bid adieu to the good father with little hope of ever following him. My own life trembled in the balance and would probably have been forfeited save for the convulsion caused by the Mahdi's death. As it was I merely became a prisoner in the zansha, herded at first with smallpox patients; after a time I was allowed a hut, round which I planted watermelons and watched the chameleons at play among the leaves.

I welcomed the change to Omdurman when I was moved there in March, 1886; I could scarcely be worse off than at El Obeid, where I had suffered every privation, even to being held as slave and camel driver, eating out of the beasts' nose bags and drinking of their water. Yet Omdurman was but a sorrowful place to go to; the horrors of the Khartoum massacre were still in the air; I have known women who went blind from weeping over the memories of that hour; I have myself wandered mournfully among the Khartoum ruins, thinking of that blood-stained day when fiends were let loose and the hope



Capturing the Sudan: A Corner of Mahjud's Zareba.

A slave found shot, with his "shebba" round his neck and the chain attached to it.

land has managed to hold the "hinterland" expansion of her Teutonic cousin within very meager bounds, while she forcibly gerrymandered the map of South and East Africa until she claimed the greater and the choicest part of the whole country.

To the north, however, the conditions and the results were different. Instead of the inert Portuguese and the slow non-colonizing Germans, she has had to meet and settle the "hinterland" question with the French, of no mean experience in colonial enterprises.

These, with no great blare of trumpets, and parade of troops and ships, but quietly and surely from Algiers and Senegal on the north and west, and the Kong country and Dahomey on the Guinea Coast, have completely shut within small compass the British at Sierra Leone, Ashantee and the

Wady Halfa to Ed Damer during the last season, perfecting his lines of transport by rail and boat as he went. As soon as practicable this year he again began to move, and some days since re-occupied the Mahdi's army and occupied his capital.

While he was thus occupied the French from both sides of the continent were making a quiet play, the "demonstration" of which is now near at hand. It is to be seen whether it was a grand "coup d'etat" or will prove an ignominious failure at bluffing. Last spring a year ago Captain Marchand, with a well chosen corps of officers and a numerous and well-equipped escort of white and native troops and carriers, set out from Brazzaville, on the lower Congo, and pushing his way up that river and its branches as far as Semio, near Lake Albert, crossed over the divide to the head waters of the Bahr el Ghazil. On this stream he set up a steamboat which he had brought with him in sections and embarking thereon passed on down as far as Fashoda, on the White Nile, where he arrived some time in November of last year.

A little later in the same spring M. Bonchamps, who went with Ambassador Lagarde to Abyssinia in '96 under the favor and assistance of Negus Menelik, set out from Djibouti, the principal port of the French colony of Obock, on the Gulf of Aden, and made his way via Harrar westward to the Nile and joining Marchand at Fashoda raised there the French standard and proclaimed the sovereignty of France over the whole region traversed by them from sea to sea.

It now transpires that instead of a small party of explorers, with the usual number of native carriers and guides, Bonchamps was accompanied by Ras Makonnen, Menelik's principal general and Governor of Harrar, the southeast province of Abyssinia, which adjoins Obock, and a large body of Abyssinian soldiers, said to now number 10,000. Furthermore, Menelik has appointed Count Leontiff, a Frenchman, Governor of Southwest Abyssinia, which he claims extends as far west as the White Nile.

Menelik has before measured swords with the British and come off with honor. In securing his alliance France not only peacefully gets its short access from the sea to the Upper Nile Valley, but a ready and strong arm to help her enterprise as well.

All this was done so quietly that none but the higher officials of the French Government were aware of what was going on. By winning Emperor Menelik to their cause on the one side and a well-timed and well-conducted dash from the other Marchand and Bonchamps have preoccupied the country to gain which first and last Great Britain has spent over \$400,000,000. Will they be allowed to stay and reap the fruit of their enterprise is now the question.

THE ONLY CAPTIVE WHO ESCAPED FROM THE DERVISHES IN TEN YEARS.

TEN years of captivity, such as I passed through, a captivity among ferocious savages, exposed continually to insult, ignominy, sickness, suffering and privation of all kind; cut off from all contact with civilization, from the comforts of our holy religion, from hope of escape; yes, that is the kind of experience that leaves an indelible mark on a man's life, changing his standpoint and affecting his views. For my escape, and for the faithful devotion which made that escape possible, I can never be sufficiently thankful to Almighty God. But when I think of the happy, hopeful young priest who reached Delen in the end of 1881, who spent his leisure hours collecting natural history specimens, I can scarcely realize that he is the man who, worn, prematurely aged, emaciated with disease and starvation, in fear of his life, fled across the desert at the end of 1891. The horrors of those ten years are ever before me; my own sufferings I could perhaps forget in time, as one forgets the agony of nightmares, but the memory of the sufferings I have witnessed under the terrible Mahdi rule will never pass from me. I have known men die in a prison of chains and starvation; I have seen them flogged to death, beheaded

whole, while Germany and Portugal have respectively 822,000 and 841,000 square miles, Spain 210,000 on the northwest coast, and Italy 203,000, including Somalia, but not her late Abyssinian holdings.

The Congo Free State, under European control, has 802,000 square miles, while the Boer republics in the south, the Transvaal and the Orange State, have respectively 110,133 and 41,484. Tripoli, a tributary of Turkey, has 338,000, and Egypt proper 400,000 square miles. Two native States, Morocco with 314,000 and Abyssinia with between 250,000 and 300,000 square miles of territory, are at present recognized as stable tenures, and the little republic of Liberia, with an area of 14,000 square



Capturing the Sudan: "Rescued."

A wounded deserter from the dervishes, who had been crawling about on his hands and knees for six weeks, was picked up in a starving condition by a gunboat. He had had no food but wild nuts and edible roots, and was too weak even to get water when rescued.

miles, has seen some eighty years of existence without any attempt at absorption by her powerful neighbors on either side of her.

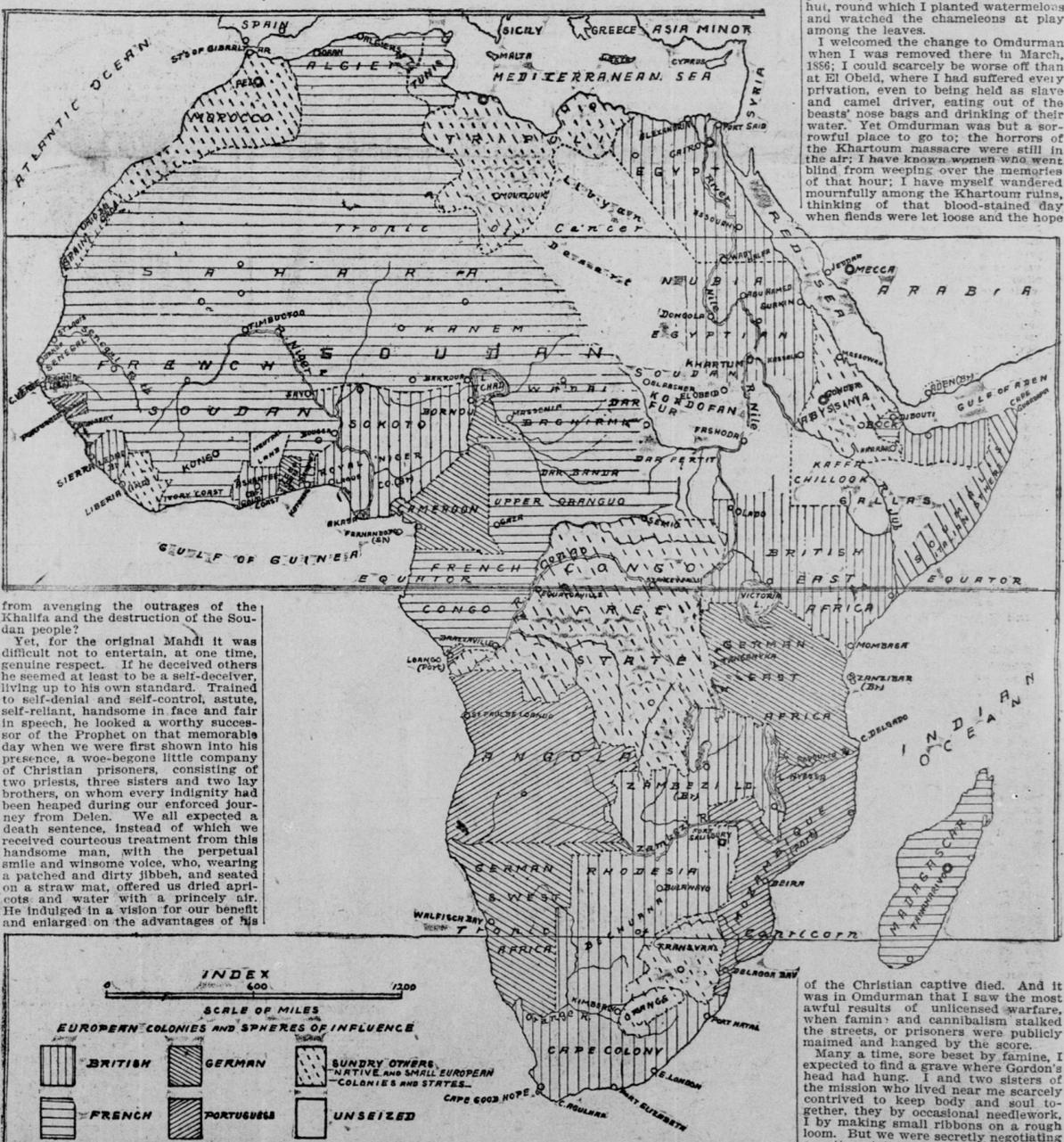
The Libyan desert lying to the southwest of Egypt is too poor and dry to tempt any effort at settlement, but with the vast region over a million square miles in area, fertile and populous, lying in the eastern part of the Sudan and in the Upper Nile Valley it is another question. Great Britain and France have both planned for its possession for some years past and the matter seems now about to reach a settlement. Whether by diplomacy or by force of arms will doubtless soon be determined. Great Britain had her first foothold in Africa, from the Dutch, at Cape Colony in 1815, while France began the conquest of Algiers in 1830. Until the all her rivals in the former had distanced though the latter was a close second as to the number of square miles. By the treaty of Berlin in 1884 all the coast line from Cape Blanco south around Cape Good Hope and up to Cape Guardafui was allotted in quite fair proportions to the participating nations, England, France, Germany, Italy and Portugal, leaving the questions of "hinterland" and "spheres of influence" to be settled between the nations having contiguous interests. Italy's Abyssinian colonization career was, as is well known, short and disastrous, though she still holds on to the Somali coast, a property of very doubtful value to her. Portugal had by discovery and occupation more literal than any of the others, but has made no extensions inland of much consequence. Germany has been so circumstanced in the four quarters where she obtained sea frontage that any great widening of influence has been

Lagos country, and effectuated their title by occupation and governmental administration over nearly the whole of West Africa, including the fertile and populous Upper Niger region, besides the Central Sudan, north of Sokoto.

From the French Congo on the Atlantic as a base the active Gaul has developed the possibilities of the "hinterland" expansion up the Congo and north and east toward Lake Tchad and the Upper Nile Valley even more effectively in his own interest and given it a new meaning in the ears of the overconfident Ministers in Downing street. They have at last waked up to the fact that France is now in actual possession of a foothold and a claim on the Upper Nile—whereas last year she halted on the verge of that rich and much coveted basin.

Agreeing with Germany as to the eastern boundary of the Cameroon country, up to Lake Tchad, to the northern shore of which she had already brought her Algerine "hinterland," France forestalled the British extension from Sokoto eastward, and flag over Wadai, Baghirmi and the Upper Obangui country, adding some hundreds of thousands of square miles to her dominion.

Now comes the final move. Between 1895 and 1884 Mehmet Ali, Khedive of Egypt, and his successors, had conquered and held in some sort of section all the Nile basin down to Lake Albert and Lake Victoria, but with the rise of the Mahdi in 1882, the massacre of Hicks Pasha's army at El Obeid in 1883 and the siege of Khartoum and the death of "Chinese Gordon" in 1884-5, Egypt retired down the Nile as far as Assuan, and Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had advanced with a British army from Suakin on the Red Sea to within a



HOW AFRICA HAS BEEN DIVIDED AND SUBDIVIDED AMONG THE EUROPEAN NATIONS.

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