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EGYPT AS IT IS.

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EGYPT AS IT IS.

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BY

J. C. MCCOAN.

WITH A MAP, TAKEN FROM THE MOST RECENT SURVEY.

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A

PREFACE.

THE following pages are the outcome of what may claim to be an intimate acquaintance with Egypt, acquired during a long residence in the Levant and several lengthened visits to the country, made specially within the past three years to collect statistical and other information on the spot. Whatever, therefore, may be their merits or defects, few or none of the latter can be laid at the door of previous writers, who have indeed left me almost a virgin corner in the wide field of book-making on Egypt. The antiquities of the country have been exhaustively described by a hundred pens, from Strabo to the last excellent edition of *Murray's Handbook*; but, in English at least, I know of no systematic attempt to sketch its present material and administrative condition. In German, Messrs. Stephan and Lüttke, in their *Das Heutige Aegypten* and *Aegypten Neue Zeit*, have in part done so, but on very different lines from those of the present volume, and in neither case at all completely up to the date of their publications—respectively five and four years ago—since which, too, the situation has in many respects changed. I may at once, therefore, say that my obligation to these writers is *nil*. In French the case is different. Beside Clot Bey's *Aperçu Général sur l'Egypte*—which,

although published forty years ago, contains much that is still instructive—and M. Gallion-Danglar's *Lettres sur l'Egypte Contemporaine* (1865-75)—reprints containing much that was merely ephemeral, and which necessarily omit the whole of the recent administrative and judicial reforms—De Régney Bey's *Statistique de l'Egypte*, and Dor Bey's *Instruction Publique en Egypte* (1872) and *Statistique des Ecoles Civiles* (1875)—are full of information of which I have freely availed myself, though not always adopting M. de Régney's figures up to even his date of writing. But barring these publications and such few others as are acknowledged in footnotes, my information has been either personally collected at first hand, or has been communicated direct from the best official or private sources. In these latter cases I have spared no pains to collate and, as far as possible, to test the accuracy of the statements received. That the result is in every case exact, I cannot venture to say; but that in all it is approximately so, I have little hesitation in asking the reader to believe.

Besides many minor obligations, my acknowledgments are especially due to Ali Pasha Moubarek, *Mustéschar* of the Ministry of Public Works; to Riaz Pasha, Minister of Public Instruction, and to Dor Bey and Mr. Rogers, Inspector-General and Director of the same Department, for the materials of the chapter on that subject¹; to Mr. Fowler for the admirable map,

¹ This and the chapter on "Slavery" appeared in substance in the February and May numbers of *Fraser's Magazine*.

which, better than any other yet published, depicts Egypt from the Mediterranean to the Equator, and also for much valuable information as to the Barrage and the Soudan railway; to General Marriott for details of the new railway administration; to Mr. Scrivenour and Mr. Caillard for similar information respecting the Customs and Post Office; to Mr. George and Mr. Douglas Gibbs, for particulars respecting the telegraphs; to Mr. Bartlett, a practical farmer of long local experience, for much of the chapter on Agriculture; to Mr. R. J. Moss, for many details of Alexandrian trade; to M'Killop Pasha, for nearly all I have said about the light-houses, and to Mr. Anderson, for much of my information respecting the Daira sugar factories and other works.

A word in anticipation of a possible objection by my critics: Of the social life of Egypt I have said hardly anything—for the sufficient reason that this has been photographed once for all by Mr. Lane, whose vivid portraiture of the manners and customs of both Arab and Copt is as true still as it was forty years ago. The spread of education and the influence of a much larger European society have effected a few changes, but in the main the native private life of 1877 differs but little, if at all, from that of 1835, and in the *Modern Egyptians* incomparably the best description of it is still to be found.

J. C. M.

Temple, July 2nd.

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