THE FASHODA CRISIS

A Study of Anglo/French Struggle
for the Upper Nile, 1890-98

by

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THE FASMOA CRISIS
(A Story of Anglo/French Struggle for the Nile 1899-98)

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saw one of the most significant chapters of imperial rivalries between the European colonial Powers, particularly between France and Great Britain. Though the conflicting claims of these two Powers arose in connection with several parts of the world including the Far East and the Americas, it was in Africa and particularly in the Nile Valley, that their struggle for control formed the most important phase of the colonial history of the time.

While Lord Salisbury was Foreign Secretary (1878–1880), he showed great concern for changes in the balance of power in Europe and the Near East. But British interests in Tropical Africa were, however, regarded then as falling very low in the scale. On his return to the Foreign Office in 1885, he found Africa to have become a centre of attention. Several African interests were becoming important enough to influence British policy in Europe and at times to constitute causes which might lead to war. Not all

French had to evacuate Egypt, their influence in that country had already made a deep mark. To France, Egypt remained a much significant country both for
sentimental and financial reasons and this was to lead them into an immense problem of colonial rivalry with Britain.

Napoleon’s expedition had also stirred up British interest in Egypt. However, it was in 1869 with the opening of the Suez Canal, which revolutionised the entire eastern question, that Egypt became of great strategical importance to Britain.

Meanwhile, Egypt had also proved to be a fertile field for foreign investment and both Britain and France found it their responsibility to protect the financial interests of their bondholders and also the lives and property of the large number of their national resident in Egypt. Soon the Egyptian question acquired a position which Britain and France found it impossible to ignore. As the Egyptian Khedive got into more and more financial complications, Britain and France began to exercise a deeper control in the affairs of Egypt. This finally led on 18 November 1876 to the establishment of the Anglo-French dual control over Egypt’s finances. Within three years, in June
1879, foreign influence was established on a more
firmer basis and in fact by the end of that year,
the financial control of Egypt by Britain and France
became a quasi-political intervention.

As long as this 'dual control' lasted, there
appeared to be no cause of friction between the two
colonial powers. But in July 1882, British forces
landed in Alexandria and in September of that year,
they marched into Cairo. Egypt came under British
occupation and the French experienced a nasty shock
when they realised their privileged position was
threatened. Since then and for the next two decades,
it became the central theme of French policy to get
the British out of Egypt as soon as possible.

It was the occupation of Egypt by Britain in
1882 which opened up the important phase of the Anglo/
French colonial rivalry in the Nile Valley. The
question of the Upper Nile arose as a direct result
of the above British act and in the last two decades
of the nineteenth century, it created "a terrific
explosion" which almost caused a major European war.
In the colonial history, rarely has there been a
struggle "so fraught with complications, political,
geographical and judicial."

The reason why Britain and France were anxious
to suppress the 'revolt' in Egypt was because their
own interests in that country were at stake and they
wanted to maintain their influence in it. The interests
of both these European Powers in Egypt date back to
the days when Napoleon led an expedition to that country in 1798.

Prior to the French invasion of that country, Napoleon counseled the Directory: "Really to ruin England, we must make ourselves masters of Egypt."¹ To Napoleon, Egypt was the most important country in the world,² and in fact, from his time onward, "France was never indifferent to the affairs of Egypt, not for a single day," as Charles de Freycinet, three Premier and Foreign minister of France between 1882 and 1893 declared. "At times, it even seemed to her that her prestige in the world was to be measured by the role she played on the banks of the Nile."³ Though in the latter part of the nineteenth century, French interests in Egypt did not derive from its key location, many Frenchmen did look backward over a century of achievement and claimed: "France and the Nile share the honor of having made Egypt. Our scholars,


² Quoted on title page of Evelyn Baring, First Earl of Cromer, Modern Egypt (New York, 1903).

CHAPTER I
THE BRITISH OCCUPATION OF EGYPT AND THE QUESTION OF THE UPPER NILE

During the very years in which Britain and France were establishing their financial control over Egypt, a nationalist movement was likewise developing within the country. Three distinct elements constituted this movement -- the constitutionalists, the landlords and the army officers. In 1881, these three elements converged and came to grips with the Khedive who had lost the respect and sympathy of the Egyptian nationalists mainly because of his despotism and reliance on his European counsellors. The British and the French governments were determined to support the Khedive in regaining full control and under such circumstances, a confrontation with the nationalists was inevitable.

The reason why Britain and France were anxious to suppress the 'revolt' in Egypt was because their own interests in that country were at stake and they wanted to maintain their influence in it. The interests of both these European Powers in Egypt date back to
our engineers, our manufacturers, our traders, our jurists have wrought the prosperity of the country.\footnote{1}

As far as Britain was concerned, once again it was Napoleon’s Egyptian expedition in 1798 which brought the British Government to an appreciation of the strategic significance of the Nile land. At the time, however, British policy towards Egypt still remained “rather a negative one, aimed at keeping the French out and maintaining the overlordship of the Turk rather than at establishing the authority of the British Crown.”\footnote{2} But once the Suez Canal was constructed under the direction of French engineers in 1869, the British policy was bound to change. In spite of the British Government’s attitude, the Suez Canal had become “one of the most important links, if not the most important link, in the chains of imperial communications.”\footnote{3}

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{1} W.L. Longor, \textit{European Alliances and Alignments} (New York, 1931), p. 254.
\item \footnote{2} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 251.
\item \footnote{3} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 252.
\end{itemize}
In 1875, Disraeli, the great exponent of British imperialism purchased the Suez Canal shares from khedive Ismail Pasha (1863-79) who, rapidly heading towards bankruptcy, had offered his shares for sale. Disraeli got wind of the proposed sale and quickly snapped up the stock. Consequently, British trade came up to make the bulk of the traffic through the Suez Canal and in fact in 1882, 80% of the ships passing through the canal were British. But for England, the Suez Canal was of supreme strategic and political importance and not as much economic. Speaking in Parliament on 21 February 1876, Disraeli declared: "I have never recommended and I do not now recommend this purchase as a financial investment ... I do not recommend it either as a commercial speculation. I have always and do now recommend it to the country as a political transaction and one which, I believe, is calculated to strengthen the empire."1 The significance of the Suez Canal and consequently Egypt for the British empire can not, therefore, be underestimated and in

1 Cited in Ibid.
Bismarck's words, England needed Egypt as she needed her daily bread. Egypt was like the spinal cord of the empire which connected the backbone with the brain.1

For Britain, however, it was of utmost importance to maintain friendly relations with France in Egypt.2 As to our policy (in Egypt,) declared Lord Salisbury, "the defence of it lies in a nutshell. When you have got a neighbour and a faithful ally who is bent on meddling in a country in which you are deeply interested -- you have three courses open to you. You may recuse, or monopolise or share. Resigning would have been to place the French across our road to India. Monopolising would have been very near the risk of war. So we resolved to share."3 Great Britain's Egyptian policy during the following years was, therefore, one of co-operation with France and the recognition of what was called 'parity of influence.'

1 Ibid.
2 Britain had found herself isolated in the face of the three imperial governments which were, so it seemed, attempting to solve the Balkan problem according to their own ideas. See Ibid., p. 296.
It was clear that both Britain and France wanted to maintain the de jure status of Egypt and therefore, when the 'anarchy' and 'fanaticism' of Ahmad Urabi Pasha and the Egyptian nationalists began to threaten their interests, British and French warships appeared in the harbour of Alexandria on 20 May, 1882, with the sole aim of preserving order and maintaining the authority of the Khedive.  

British opinion was demanding military intervention in Egypt against the 'rebel' Urabi, especially after the massacre of June 11 in which many Egyptians and Europeans were killed.  

However, the French Government opposed such a step and declared that it would prefer a European conference on the Egyptian problem.  

The idea won the approval of the British cabinet, and on 23 June, British, French, German, Austrian, Russian and Italian Plenipotentiaries met in Constantinople.

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3. It was de Freycinet, the French Premier, who first suggested this idea. See Sayid, Egypt's Struggle, p. 25.
destroy the fireworks if necessary, he sent an ultimatum to the Egyptian commander asking him to put under British control some Egyptian forts commanding the entrance to the harbour. The French Admiral was invited to join, but the French Council of Ministers refused to participate in such action against Egypt because the Council thought that this would constitute an act of war. When the Egyptian commander defied the ultimatum of Seymour, the latter bombarded Alexandria 'in self-defence'. As a result of this bombardment, Urabi proclaimed a state of war between Egypt and Britain and for the British a showdown with the Egyptian nationalists became inevitable.

Under these circumstances the British Government preferred to have Turkey intervene but if the latter did not, then the intervention had to represent "the united action of Europe." Turkey

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failed to intervene and the European Powers were unwilling to do likewise or to grant a mandate to England or to France to do so. The question reached a deadlock but then both Germany and Austria declared that though they would not give the British a mandate, they were willing "to make no objection" to a British intervention.\(^1\) Bismarck, "who made the British occupation of Egypt possible,\(^2\) kept Italy and Russia, hitherto hostile to the British, in line. When all seemed clear, the British Parliament had little difficulty in voting a budget for a military expedition against Urabi and his followers.\(^3\)

On the eve of the bombardment of Alexandria, both the British and the French ships stood side by side off Egypt's most important port. But when the British decided to use force to crush the 'rebellion' the French showed hesitation. As the hostilities began, the French ships sailed away.

As soon as the British began systematically and single-handedly to quell the nationalist 'revolt',

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\(^1\) Abegg, No. 11 (1882), pp. 186, 216, cited in ibid.

\(^2\) Dunning, European Alliances, p. 276.

\(^3\) Crozer, Modern Egypt, Vol. I, p. 701.
the French representative on the spot was one of the first to realise that if the British were permitted to continue their venture, the French Government might easily find itself excluded from the preponderant position it had occupied in Egypt so far. On 21 July 1882, Donet de Vorges, the acting Consul-General in Cairo, informed the French premier of this grave hazard. "If the English finish this affair alone," he wrote, "the privileged position which we have enjoyed in Egypt, will be gone for some time to come." But the French Chamber declined to vote the necessary funds to participate in the operation, and on 25 June they officially declined to co-operate in the venture.

While the British were carrying out their task of 'putting down the rebellion', the French Government made no protest. In fact, President Jules Grévy wished

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1 Vorges to Recrains, 21 July 1882, France, ministère des Affaires étrangères, Documents diplomatiques français, 1871-1944, First Series, III (Paris, 1929), No. 426, p. 443. (This series will henceforth be cited: D.D.F.)

2 Langer, European Alliances, p. 274.

then every success in their operation against the Egyptian Muslims. He declared that pan-Islam would be a great factor in the future and that he considered it of the highest importance that there should be no doubt, even for a moment, that Muslim troops could not defeat Europeans in the field.¹

In the meanwhile, General Wolseley marched against the Egyptians and on 13 September, his army defeated Urabi at Tel al-Kabir. On the following day, Urabi surrendered to the British. Armed resistance against the British ended and Egypt was under British occupation. Lord Granville, addressing the House of Lords on 15 May 1882, summed up the aims of the British intervention in Egypt as follows:

"The maintenance of the sovereign rights of the Sultan of Turkey, of the position of the Khedive and of the liberty of the Egyptian people under the firmans of the Porte, the prudent development of their institutions, and the fulfillment of all international engagements either on the part of England or England and other Powers.²"

Officially, therefore, the object of the British intervention was to keep the de jure status of Egypt and to introduce various reforms. But after having occupied Egypt, the British Government soon discovered that their failure, prior to the occupation, to secure a mandate from the Powers or even an authorisation from Turkey to intervene in Egypt, deprived the British occupation "a legal basis in international law as well as recognition by the Powers and Turkey." Consequently, the British position in Egypt became "anomalous, extremely touchy and uncomfortable." In fact immediately after Urabi's defeat, France as well as the Powers began to query England as to her intentions in Egypt.

It soon became clear that regarding Britain's position in Egypt, she could count on support from Germany, Austria and Italy but not from France, Turkey and Russia. And it was from France, whose interests in Egypt were greater than any other Power, that the greatest opposition came. France hoped and seemed to

1 Sayid, *Egypt's Struggle*, p. 32.


3 Sayid, *Egypt's Struggle*, p. 31.
have expected that after Tal al-Asmor, Britain would restore the Anglo-French dual control of Egypt's finances. In fact, on 20 September, 1882, M. Bazleres, the French Foreign Minister told the British Chargé d'Affaires in Paris that he thought it would be in the interest of England to give at an early date some notion of what her future intentions were with regards to Egypt.\footnote{1} France believed that the British would soon evacuate Egypt and re-establish the status quo ante i.e. "equality between England and France in Egypt, and their superiority over other Powers."\footnote{2} When Britain refused to do so, France "reserved her freedom of action," which meant in practice that she intended to work to enforce an early evacuation.\footnote{3} For France, Egypt now became "a sore which will not heal."\footnote{4}

At this stage, however, all that France was able to do was to reserve the right not to recognize the fait accompli.\footnote{5} According to Cromer, from that day

\footnote{1} Cited in Cromer, Modern Egypt, I, pp. 340-1.
\footnote{4} Thus described by Lord Lyons in 1887.
\footnote{5} Bazleres to Tissot, 4 Jan. 1887, A.D.E., IV, No. 994, pp. 575-77.
until the signature of the 1804 accord, French action in Egypt was more or less persistently hostile to England.¹

In the meantime, the British Government modified the existing regime in Egypt making it quite clear to the local government that in important questions affecting the administration and safety of Egypt, the advice of Her Majesty's Government was to be followed so long as the provisional occupation continued. All the ministers and the government had to carry out British advice or forfeit their offices.² The British had substituted the dual control with their own management and this was a great affront to French pride.

The European Powers maintained an attitude of "a benevolent neutrality" which favoured the British position. It was Bismarck, the German Chancellor, who had kept the European Powers in line to suit his own interests.³ According to his calculations, so long as

² Granvelle to Saring, 4 Jan., 1834, Egypt No. 1 (1835), pp. 17-18, cited in Bayly, Egypt's Sirdar, p. 75.
³ Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy were linked in the Triple Alliance. Germany, Austria, Hungary and Russia were allied in the League of the Three Emperors. Bismarck was the strong man at the helm of these overlapping alliance systems and whatever he suggested carried great weight. For further details see Langer, European Alliances, pp. 275 ff.
France and Italy, and Britain and France were at odds amongst themselves, the German Chancellor would have little to fear. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to state that the general policy of Germany with regard to the Egyptian question in July 1882 was one of avoiding everything which might increase the difficulties of the British and this policy was consistently pursued in the following months.  

The British had been allowed to occupy Egypt and then to remain there because it was to Germany's indirect advantage that they be permitted to do so. It was clear that France could only have been able to cause difficulties for the British if France had received support from Berlin. France failed to have Germany on its side and consequently found herself alone in her attempt to force Britain to evacuate Egypt.

The British, however, encountered other difficulties in Egypt. There were many internal problems which had to be faced and solved. In fact within the first two years of the British occupation, it became evident that one of the central problems in Egypt was that regarding finances. Though in 1880, the Law of Liquidation was passed which aimed at stabilising
Egyptian finances, by 1862 it became evident that Egypt could not meet all her expenses without outside help. This meant that the Law had to be modified and a loan had to be made. For the modification of the Law, the consent of the Powers was necessary. For a loan, the consent of Turkey was required as well. British position in Egypt appeared, under the circumstances, to be depending on their "race against bankruptcy."

In April 1864, Lord Granville called a conference of the Powers to consider revising the Law of Liquidation and raising a loan for Egypt. But the conference ended in complete failure for Britain, since all their suggestions were rejected. In 1865, negotiations were

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1 The law assigned to the Egyptian Government an annual sum of £5,459,000 or about half of the revenues and the rest for the service of the Debt. See Sir Aylard Colling, The Master of Modern Egypt (London, 1906), pp. 102-4.
3 Sayid, Egypt’s Struggle, p. 38.
4 See Ibid., p. 20.
6 Sayid, Egypt’s Struggle, p. 39.
once again resumed and a compromise agreement was reached in the Convention of London in March 1885.¹

Five months later, in August 1885, Lord Salisbury, on account of the hostile attitude of France towards British presence in Egypt and the discouraging financial outlook, entered into negotiations with Turkey. The purpose was to set a date for withdrawal of British troops from Egypt.² It is worth mentioning that Gladstone himself had intended to withdraw from Egypt as soon as possible,³ and even the Conservatives had at first viewed British control in Cairo as a temporary necessity. In May 1884, for example, Gladstone and Granville showed preparedness to accept an early evacuation and Jules Ferry agreed to co-operate in the restoration of Egyptian finances in return for a conditional promise of evacuation by the end of 1885. However, the French bondholders objected to the detailed British proposals,⁴ and the

¹ Ivid., p. 40.
² According to Lord Newton, the British Government were sincerely intending to withdraw from Egypt though it could not be known for more. See Lord Newton, Lords Lyceum, VII, pp. 375 ff.

¹ Zayid, Egypt's Struggle, p. 39.
and advanced the influence of England. General Gordon, who succeeded he, was actuated by the same desire, and died in the hope that England would reach Khartoum.\(^1\) Though these two men never succeeded in bringing the Sudan under direct British influence before Britain occupied Egypt, they were later destined to play a leading role in influencing the British Government to take that decision. Baker by his press campaign and personal contacts with governmental officials and Gordon by sacrificing his life.\(^2\)

Another reason which brought the affaires of the Upper Nile basin to the attention of the British was that in 1875 the expansionist schemes of Khedive Ismail Pasha and particularly his drive to the Indian Ocean clashed awkwardly with the interests of Britain's 'client', the Sultan of Zanzibar.\(^3\) However, these

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3. Sanderson, England, Europe and the Upper Nile, p. 12. In order to forestall the establishment of European rivals on or near the Suez route to India, London was encouraging Egypt to extend her possessions on the African shores of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and at the same time supporting the hegemony of Zanzibar over the African Coast of the Indian Ocean. See ibid., pp. 12-13.
minor hitches had, as yet, not become problems of international diplomacy and it was not until 1881 and during the next four years that European complications came to the front. The two important events which brought the Upper Nile into the limelight were the British occupation of Egypt and the 'revolt' of the Mahdi in the Sudan.

When Britain occupied Egypt, her authority was extended to Egypt's southern dominion, the Sudan. The year 1882 was, therefore, not only an important landmark in the history of Anglo/Egyptian relations but it also had significance for the Sudan in that it eventually led to the dispute over that country. Also, while the 'revolt' of Urabi was materializing in Egypt prior to the defeat of the Egyptian nationalists, an important movement was taking place in the Sudan. In 1881, Mohamed Ahmad Ibn Abdalla proclaimed himself the Mahdi or the ' Awaited Guide' in the right path and he found in the malpractices of the administration excellent fuel for his revolution.¹

Mahlia, described sometimes as an extraordinary movement of religious fanaticism, 1 was about a year old when the British occupied Egypt. Until November 1885, though the Mahdist revolution was gaining momentum, the situation was not considered serious in Cairo, at least by the Khedive's ministers. The British Agent and Consul-General, Sir Evelyn Baring 2 was instructed to keep the British Government informed about the affairs in the Sudan but he was not to interfere with Egypt's policy. 3

The disturbance in the Sudan was regarded as something outside the sphere of British responsibility.

But as long as Britain remained in Egypt, it was impossible to entirely ignore the events that were taking place in the Sudan. At the end of 1885, the Mahdi's forces annihilated the Egyptian army under General Hicks, a British officer in the Khedive's services. Cromer warned that the aim of the Mahdi was "to gain control of the Sudan to his cause and then

1 Ibid.
2 First Earl of Cromer.
3 See p.
to march on to Egypt..." and that he was "planning to unite the whole of the Nile Valley under his leadership." In spite of this warning, the British Government thought that the Sudan for the moment was causing unnecessary problems and in fact the cabinet decided that the Egyptian Government should be forced to abandon that territory. On 13 December 1883, therefore, the Egyptian Prime Minister Cherif Pasha was recommended by the British Government "to come to an early decision to abandon all territory south of Assuan or at least of Wadi Halfa." He was further informed that he should either accept and carry out the British Government's advice or forfeit his office. The British recommendation was, however, rejected and Cherif's Government resigned. British 'advice' was nevertheless carried out by a different government.

There were several reasons why the British Government reached a decision to abandon the Sudan. On 3 December 1883, Sir Evelyn Baring presented a report.

1 Abd El-Khaliq Omar, The Sudan Question Based on British Documents (Cairo, 1952), p. 6; Grozner, Modern Egypt, 1, p. 274.

to the British cabinet regarding the military situation in the Sudan.\(^1\) The Consul-General made it clear that according to his belief, which was based on the advice of British military experts in Egypt and the Sudan, it would be impossible for Egypt to hold Khartoum and the districts lying north of it as far as Wadi Halfa or anywhere else if the Mahdi decide to advance from the west. This was mainly because of the inferior quality of the Egyptian troops, their low morale, bad training and equipment and the difficulties of communications.

Colonel Stewart, who had been sent to the Sudan in 1882 to investigate the situation, confirmed the views given in Baring's report and added that he was firmly convinced that the Egyptians were quite unfit in every way to undertake such a trust as the government of such a vast country with a view to its welfare. He thought it advisable to abandon large portions of the Sudan.\(^2\)

The heavy indebtedness of Egypt and her inability to finance a long war in the Sudan further

\(^1\) Baring to Granville, Y.O., 78/3560, cited in Ibid.

convinced the British that the Sudan should be abandoned. Moreover, Gladstone was even of the opinion that the Mahdi's followers were "a people struggling to be free, and rightly struggling to be free." It was, therefore, clear that the Sudan was to be abandoned by Egypt as a result of pressure from the British Government.

The Egyptian nationalists, to whom the territory then under the control of the Mahdi was of great significance, never forgave Great Britain for forcing Egypt to abandon the Sudan. According to Cherif Pasha, the abandonment of the Sudan was bound to cause a loss of prestige which in turn would result in the weakening of the authority of the Khedive in the areas where the inhabitants were either loyal or wavering in their loyalty. It would also exercise a disquieting influence over the Bedouin tribes which surrounded Egypt thereby causing Egypt to maintain a greater force for its own defense. The Sudan had also been serving as a source of recruitment for the Egyptian army and above all a success.

in the Sudan was badly needed by the Kedive's
Ministers. "To restore the prestige of the Khedivate
and give it at least some semblance of autonomy

via a via the occupying power."¹ But at the moment,
even Baring was convinced that Egypt could not hold
the Sudan except on sufferance and the best policy
was to abandon it.

Suder Pasha, who succeeded Sherif Pasha on
7 January 1884, accepted to carry out the policy of
abandoning the Sudan. He sent General Gordon to the
Sudan to report on the best method of carrying out
the evacuation.² But Baring, who was not only the
British agent and Consul-General in Cairo but also
the effective ruler of Egypt, thought that Gordon
was authorised to execute the evacuation himself.
Gordon added to the confusion and misunderstanding
himself "by communicating the various schemes which
sprouted incessantly in his fertile mind."³ His
schemes did not work out well and his 'mission'

¹ F.R. Holt, A Modern History of the Sudan
² General Gordon's mission later became a
very controversial subject. See Allen, Gordon and
the Sudan, p. 230ff.; Crouse, Modern Egypt, II,
Ch. 41 - 44.
³ Holt, History of the Sudan, p. 85.
came to a tragic end when in January 1885, the Mahdi's forces attacked Khartoum. Gordon's exhausted garrison was overwhelmed and he himself was killed in the fighting. With the capture of Khartoum, the Mahdi completed his control over a great part of the former Egyptian Sudan.

As a result of the loss of Sudan, the British Government soon realised the grave danger to which Egypt was now exposed. There were two main threats. The Mahdi had as his aim to unite the Nile Valley and once he became the master of the Sudan, there was reason to believe that he would now direct his energies to Egypt. The British Government, alive to this danger did not however think that the Mahdi was as yet capable of 'invading' Egypt.

While the British Government was pondering over the question of the Mahdist threat to Egypt, their attention was drawn to the fact that as a result of the loss of Sudan, attempts could not be overruled by any European Powers to interfere with Egypt's all important water supply. This was indeed a matter of grave concern and one has to examine the hydrology of the Nile and Egypt's dependence on it to appreciate the importance of such a fear.
Sir Samuel Baker, an outstanding authority on the Nile in the nineteenth century pointed out to the British Government from the very beginning on the terrible danger to which Egypt was exposed by the abandonment of the Sudan. "Should a civilized, or even a semi-civilised enemy be in possession of that point (Abertua)," he said, "the water of the Kana, Binder, Blue Nile and the Atbara Rivers could be diverted from their course and dispersed throughout the deserts, to the utter ruin and complete destruction of Egypt proper." Baker believed firmly that dams could be built easily across either the Blue Nile or the Atbara and declared that should any European be in command at the rebellious center of the Sudan, his first strategical operation would be to deprive Egypt of the water that is necessary for her existence. "If I were myself an enemy of Egypt," he said, "I know the place where I should commence the fatal work upon the River Atbara."  

1 See Langen, The Diplomacy, p. 105.  
2 Sir Samuel Baker, "Egypt's Proper Frontier" Nineteenth Century, July 1884, pp. 27-46.  
3 See his letters to the Times, October 9, 17, 25, 1884.
Among others who showed concern at the diversion of the Nile waters was Kizz Daana, the Egyptian statesman who in a memorandum to Baring in 1866 said:

No one will deny, so clear and evident a proposition is it that the Nile is the life of Egypt. Now the Nile means the Sudan and nobody will doubt that the sense and connections which unite Egypt to the Sudan are as inseparable as those which unite the soul to the body. ¹

He further pointed out the importance of holding Suktin because he argued that no European power would occupy Suktin "without wishing necessarily to extend its power into the interior, with a view to reaching richer districts. But if it attained its object and took possession of the banks of the Nile, it would be all over with Egypt." Egypt could never consent "to such an attack on its existence."²

In 1862, Lord Milner wrote in his book that the loss of Kaartan was indeed a serious handicap. He pointed out that the regular supply of water through

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¹ Cited in Baring, The Diplomacy, p. 574.
² Ibid.
the great rivers was to Egypt "not a question of convenience and prosperity but actually of life." and that it would be exposed to risks "as long as the upper reaches of that river are not under Egyptian control." He added:

"The savages of the Sudan may never themselves possess sufficient engineering skill to play tricks with the Nile... (but) who can say that might happen, if some day a civilised power, of a power commanding civilised skill, were to undertake great engineering works on the upper Nile and to divert for the artificial irrigation of that region the water which is essential for the existence of Egypt?"

Sir Frederick Lugard also believed that it would be preposterous for the British Government to believe that having abandoned the Sudan, they could restrain other European nations from occupying it.

The British Government was, without doubt, made aware of the importance of the Sudan to the security of Egypt. But their attitude at this time

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1 *England in Egypt* (London, 1892), pp. 197-8
was that so long as the Hamliists controlled the
Sudan, there was no danger of interference with the
Nile waters.

As the 1860's drew to a close, circumstances
threatened the extension of rival European influence
to the Upper basin of the Nile with its implied
threats to the Egyptian water supply. If such a
situation arose and Britain had to accept a forced
evacuation, it would have doubtless damaged British
prestige "throughout the Near East and possibly even
in India."1 Consequently, "protection of the Upper
Nile" became one of the key-notes of British policy
in the area. Britain now had to guard the Upper Nile
region not only from Italy, Germany and King Leopold
of Belgium but also from France -- the one Power which
greatly threatened and endangered British hegemony in
the Nile Valley.

1 Sanderson, England, Europe and the Upper
Nile, p. 69.
CHAPTER II

ENGLAND, EUROPE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR
THE UPPER NILE: 1890-1895

When the Gladstone ministry abandoned the
Egyptian Sudan in 1885, it left the advantage of
possessing the Upper Nile and its tributaries "to
the first European Power which chose to extirpate
malaria and establish 'effective occupation'".1
There were no immediate threats but by the end of
1889, the question of the strategic protection of
the Upper Nile at once ceased to be a 'hypothetical'
affair. In fact, the question of the security of
the Nile waters both in the central Sudan and in
Aquatoria became "a separate and dominating factor
in Salisbury's foreign policy."2

Events in Europe and conditions in the
Mediterranean made uncertainty increasingly dange-
rous3 and Salisbury abandoned his ambiguity and

1 F.W. Halse, "A Survey of British Policy in
the Mahada Crisis," Political Science Quarterly,
XXIV (March, 1929), p. 23.
2 Sanderson, England, Europe and the Upper
Nile, pp. 12 ff.
3 Lady G. Cecil, Life of Salisbury (London,
1925), Vol. IV, pp. 139-40.
decided that Britain was to remain in Egypt. Consequently, we now had to consider the defence of the country as much for Egyptian interests as for British.

The direct result of this British stand was that the Sudan, which was until 1865 regarded "merely as an incidental complication in an operation which had been prompted almost entirely by the needs of imperial strategy in the Near East," now became an important area for Egypt's defence. Britain had either to reconquer it from the Sudanese or make such diplomatic arrangements which would prevent any rival European Power from establishing itself in that territory. The most obvious solution was direct British annexation. This was, however, impracticable because it would have been impossible, as Salisbury and his government realised, to justify an expensive expedition to annex admittedly unprofitable territory in an age when overseas possessions were expected to be a relief and not

1 For a detailed presentation of this interpretation, see Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, with Alice Benny, Africa and the Victorians (London, 1961), Chapters 4 and 5.

a burden to the metropolitan taxpayer.¹

As a result, other solutions were, therefore, attempted to secure the safety of the Nile waters. An obvious plan at that time was to permit the expansion of British influence from Uganda into the southern Sudan. Such a scheme would not only provide a safeguard to the Nile waters but would also prevent the British government itself from getting engaged in the financial or direct administrative responsibility. This seemed possible because from Uganda the Imperial British East Africa Company, under the Presidency of Sir William Mackinnon, was ready to undertake this plan.²

A second possibility was to permit the occupation of a certain territory especially the southern Sudan by "some power thought too weak to be dangerous." Here Britain had the right person whom she could encourage to be the guardian of the Nile waters for the safety of Egypt. The candidate was, of course, King Leopold II, Sovereign of the Independent Congo State,

¹ Sanderson, "European Powers," p. 81.
² Ibid.
who, since 1884, had been contemplating an advance into the Bahr al-Shasal.¹

But before Britain could push into the Upper Nile from Uganda or install Leopold in that region, an unusual problem arose. The problem was central around the curious figure of Amin Pasha, "one of the strangest individuals to wander down the tortuous paths of African history."² After the fall of Khartoum in 1885, Amin Pasha, the Egyptian Governor of the Equatoria Province, managed with his people to hold his own on the Upper Nile against the attacks of the Khadijites. In his isolated position he appealed for help especially from England. The fact that this strange man was holding high the "torch of civilisation," while being surrounded by "barbarian hordes" in darkest Africa, captured the imagination of Europe, and in particular of the British. In 1886, a committee was formed which managed to raise the necessary funds

¹ Ibid. It is interesting to note that it was only King Leopold who was genuinely interested to acquire the Southern Sudan for its own sake and not merely in order to forestall or to influence the policy of some other power.

and appointed H.M. Stanley to lead an "MAIN FASHA Relief Expedition" into Central Africa.

Though the evidence is rather scanty, the Foreign Office seems to have approved Stanley's 'expedition' which was supposed to remove the Egyptian authority from the Upper Nile and replace it by a combination of Congolese and British influence -- while carefully evading any direct responsibility for administration and finance. However, by 1889 it seemed that the plan had failed and it became clear that the project had miscarried. Though Main was 'rescued', his refusal to co-operate with either Leopold or Mackinnon, created a vacuum of power in Equatoria and at the same time excited European interest in the Upper Nile.

Under these circumstances, Salisbury and his cabinet examined the possibility of an attack by a European Power on the Nile Valley. They thought that such an attack could either come from the Red Sea, from the Congo or from the east African coast.

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2 \textit{Ibid.}
The new Abyssinian king, Emperor Menelik, welcomed Italian support to strengthen his position among the warring feudal factions. In May, the Italians concluded with Menelik the Treaty of Jossioli by which the former claimed that Menelik recognized an Italian protectorate over the whole of Abyssinia. This implied that if the Italians wished they could even lay claim to all territory as far as the Nile.¹

Britain was not bothered until the Italians began to implement the Treaty and laid claim to Kassala which was situated below the escarpment in the Nile basin. This Italian claim indeed alarmed the British statesmen. Earlier, Baring had warned that "whatever power holds the Upper Nile must by the mere force of its geographical situation dominate Egypt,"² and had sounded an alarm by urging the necessity for re-occupying Tukar.³ In February 1890, Lord Dufferin.

¹ ibid., p. 103.
tap the Upper Nile and the Sudan."\(^1\)

It appeared that in the Nile Valley, the Italians had made the wrong choice because Salisbury at once warned them to stay away from the Nile. Salisbury was determined to defend the Nile Valley against the domination of any outside power.\(^2\) In the spring of 1891, a treaty was concluded with Crispi's successor Di Rudini, who was not interested in African affairs, by which Italy "abandoned all serious aspirations in the Nile Valley."\(^3\) On 25 April 1891, the Italians officially consented to remain out of the Nile Valley in return for British recognition of an Italian sphere of influence in the Abyssinian highlands.

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The Italian threat to the Nile Valley was indeed a great watered in the evolution of Salisbury's Nile policy. Britain had so far seen the Sudan secure in the hands of the Mahdi, isolated from the moves of any power. As a result, it seemed that the British position in Egypt was preserved, the Suez canal was secure and the sea way to India was safe. However, the Italian threat, which though in itself never assumed serious proportions, challenged this complacency. It is quite clear that the Italian designs forced Salisbury to crystallise the Upper Nile policy and to consider for the first time the eventualities of further attempts by other powers to seize control of the Upper Nile region.

Another important result of the Italian challenge was its effect upon Baring's attitude towards the Sudan question. Early in 1890 he realised that the military power of the Mahdi was in ruins and he seems to have feared that Salisbury's diplomacy was insufficiently conservative to keep the Italians...

1 The role of the Italian threat to the Nile and its impact on Salisbury's Nile policy is discussed in detail in Mounson and Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians, Ch. IX.
out of the Nile valley. His advice was a total re-conquest as the easiest and quickest solution to the whole problem of the Sudan. But his views about the military strength of the Dervishas were soon revised, especially after his experience at Tamar in February 1891 when the Madi's resistance proved much stronger than had been expected.

Haring had never abandoned the thesis that Egypt must sooner or later reconquer the Sudan. But in the years after 1891, he insisted year after year that the time was not yet ripe and tended to postpone indefinitely an operation which threatened to interfere with the smooth running of Egyptian administration and finances. From 1891 down to the inauguration of the Egyptian advance to the Sudan in March 1896, Haring used his powerful influence not to allow the Egyptian army to become involved in joint operation and risk the re-opening of "this abominable Sudan question." Throughout, he remained against a plan to launch a reconquest of the Sudan from the north.

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2 Ibid.
Sudan, the threat to the Nile waters, amidst the weakening position of the Mahdi, grew stronger and stronger. Diplomacy had indeed kept the Italians out of the Nile Valley but diplomacy alone might not keep other European powers out of the Nile Valley forever.

It will be recalled that Stanley's "Main Pasha Relief Expedition" had aroused the interest of Europe in the Upper Nile especially in Belgium and Germany. King Leopold's interest in the Nile Valley was first aroused by General Gordon who, as early as 1880, appears to have urged the King in the name of humanity, to suppress the slave trade there.² However, Leopold was not so much interested in suppressing the slave trade as in penetrating the Nile Valley. In 1885 when the Mahdists captured Khartoum, Leopold's schemes came to an end but now the question

of Amin Pasha and his unusual position in Equatoria brought a new opportunity for the King's designs. He sought to use the "Amin Pasha Relief Expedition" to extend his Congo Empire and his designs soon began to threaten the upper reaches of the Nile.

In the years 1887-90, Belgian explorers opened up the various river systems which take their rise in the Congo-Nile divide. But before Leopold could go any further, he was warned by the British government to withdraw his troops from the Congo-Nile watershed. Salisbury, however, realised that an agreement with Leopold had to be reached, the sooner the better. It is interesting to note that as far as the Nile Valley was concerned, only Leopold was able to pursue a policy of consistent territorial aggrandisement. His grand designs in this area were deflected only in the face of direct threat from the Powers. His Congolese kingdom was playing the role which often caused the Great Powers intense irritation especially by his attempts "to combine the position of a second-rate power in Europe with a first-rate power in Africa."¹ King Leopold was to play a major role

In the struggle for the Nile in 1890-94 but in 1889, the immediate threat to the British position in the Nile Valley came as a result of a fear of German encroachments into the interior of East Africa and up the Nile.

In the course of 1889, the Germans began to show an unusual interest in certain East African regions, especially along the coast and Uganda. The importance of these regions was that their hinterland extended to the source of the Nile itself. In 1890 and 1897, agreements were signed between Britain and Germany which delimited their claims on the sea coast. However, no settlement was reached with regards to the great hinterland which stretched onward to the lake country.\(^1\) In 1888, German imperial designs began directly to threaten the British position in the Nile Valley when in June of that year Karl Peters organized a German "Klein Fasha Relief Expedition" of his own. He made no attempt to conceal the fact that the relief of Fasha was but an excuse to expand the German empire in East Africa.

The British government was thoroughly alive to the dangers of the German expedition which aimed at cutting the British from the interior and from the Nile. The news of the expedition created a stir in Britain and on 3 April, the Times called attention to the dangers of having the Germans on the Nile.

For Britain, German friendship was necessary, especially for the former's position in Egypt. At the same time Salisbury realised that only a comprehensive settlement with Germany would resolve the east African disputes as well as prevent any German threat, real or imaginary, to the Upper Nile. Negotiations took place between the two countries in which it became quite clear that for Salisbury, the defense of the Nile had by 1890 become an important point in his policy. In his letter to Queen Victoria, his dispatch to Helet (the British Ambassador in Germany) and Anderson at the Foreign Office, he clearly stated that the question of protecting the Nile.

had been a dominating motive in his negotiations which finally led to the Anglo/German agreement.¹

Salisbury baited the Germans with the tempting offer of Heligoland and when they accepted the offer, the Heligoland Treaty was signed on 1 July 1890. In return for the island of Heligoland, Britain managed to acquire the recognition of a British 'sphere' on the Upper Nile extending as north as "the confines of Egypt." Under the settlement, as Salisbury explained to the queen, "the whole country outside the confines of Abyssinia and Gallaland will be under British influence up to Khartum, so far as any European competition is concerned."² It was clear that Salisbury not only removed the many potential danger spots in East Africa, but he also managed to seal the Upper Nile from possible German encroachments.

In the meantime, however, France appeared for the first time as an active competitor on the Upper Nile. To make things worse for the British, Leopold, who had so far failed in his attempts to dominate and control the Nile Valley, threatened to side with

¹ Salisbury to Queen Victoria, 10 June 1890, L.Q.V., Vol. II, p. 613.
Agreement of May 1894.\(^1\) Evidently it was the British government's policy not only to prevent the Congo State from acquiring an upper hand in the Nile Basin but also to use Leopold's Free State to check any French designs for a foothold in that region.

The Anglo/Congolese Agreement was particularly irritating to Paris, especially since Leopold himself had been negotiating with the French prior to the conclusion of the accord with Britain. It is important to mention here that France had openly objected to the British claim, which Leopold had recognised, to a British sphere on the Upper Nile. This was in sharp contrast to the silence with which

\(^1\) For text of Anglo/Congolese Agreement of 1894, see Hertzlet, *Map of Africa*, II, p. 578.
they had created a similar claim in July 1890. In fact the signing of the Anglo/Congolese accord marked the beginning of the open acknowledgement of Anglo/French rivalry on the Upper Nile.

The reason why France showed a particular interest in the affairs of the Nile Valley was because by the late 1880's, public opinion in France had undergone a considerable change with respect to colonial enterprises. Many Frenchmen were greatly aroused by the spectacular works of French explorers in Africa and there was a growing realisation in the country that France must not be left behind in the race for the acquisition of territories in the black continent. Many organisations came to the center of colonial propaganda and in 1890 was founded the most energetic of all -- the Comité de l'Afrique Française, whose members included prominent French personalities. During

1 Langer, The Diplomacy, p. 125.

2 Ibid. Among some of the influential organisations were: the Société de Geographie de Paris; the Société de Geographie Commerciale; the Société Africaine de France.
Africa in the latter part of the 19th century were directed towards this end. A definite shift was, therefore, occurring in the French attitude towards colonial enterprise during 1889-90. Whereas the previous decade was marked by a sense of weariness, bordering on fear, the new decade opened with interest and enthusiasm.

In his memoir, the former colonial minister of France M. Lebon, declared that "the idea of spanning Africa from west to east ... prevailed in France for many years." This desire to create a continuous

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1 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
Egypt" by posing a threat to the water supply. Pasadena was chosen because it was the chief place in the Upper Nile region, and the key to Egypt because of its location at the confluence of the Nile and the Sobat Rivers. Furthermore it was a point lying within the natural prolongation of France's West African possessions.¹

However, the organization of the mission was not only poor, which in part would explain its ultimate failure, but the decision to send a mission to Pasadena to use it as a threat against Britain "to re-open the Egyptian question" was not the official policy of the French cabinet. Neither had the Quai d'Orsay approved of it.² In fact, the Foreign minister Jules Bevelle was not even informed of the expedition inspite of its grave international implications.³

¹ Ibid.
² The first trace of this mission in the French documents occurs in a retrospective account of 7 March 1894, R.A.F., II, No. 65, pp. 96-7.
³ In June 1893, he complained that he had been left to learn from newspapers regarding the appointment of Monceau as Commander of the expedition. Moreover, at the end of July, he had received "aucune indication sur la composition et l'objectif de la mission Monceau." See Sanderson, England, Europe and the Upper Nile, p. 145.
Map 1* 
Adapted from Langl, H., "Pioneers in African Missions," 481.
Upper Nile. From now on they adopted a more vigorous policy so as not to be left behind in the struggle to dominate the Nile Valley.

When the French Chamber met on 7 June 1894, the colonialist group led by M. Stienne raised the question in a debate. He gave a historical survey of colonial affairs emphasising the sharp practices of the British in Africa and "violently condemned the British habit of making things hard for the French." ¹ Stienne was followed by M. Deloncle who explained that British policy aimed at the protection of the Nile basin and outlined all the ways in which the Anglo-Congolese agreement had violated international agreements and previous accords. Both Stienne and Deloncle asked the Foreign minister, M. Hanotaux, whether the government of the Republic was going to allow sacred treaties to be torn to pieces.² Consequently, the French Government made strong protests in London and Brussels.³

¹ Langlois, The Diplomacy, p. 133.
² Ibid., p. 135.
³ Gautier Dacier to Bourée, 26 May 1894, B.L., No. 109, p. 141. Also see Desayl to Kimberly, 28 May 1894, ibid., No. 110, p. 153.
The French claimed that the leasing of the Bahr al-Gazal and part of the Equatoria Province was an attack on the sovereign rights of the Sultan and the Khedive over the Sudan. These rights still prevailed even though the Khedivial government had temporarily abandoned, through force majeure, its Sudanese provinces. A leasing of territory was as much as a violation of another's sovereign rights as an outright secession.

The French also claimed that the accord was irreconcilable with the firman relative to Egypt. The firman of 14 April 1892 not only conferred upon the Khedive jurisdiction over the Sudan, but explicitly defined the Sudanese territory as inalienable and under no pretext was to be abandoned. Furthermore, the Anglo-Congolese agreement violated the

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1 Since the Khedive nominally governed the Sudan under the authority of the Sultan, any legal or political rights claimed by the Egyptian Government over the Sudan were ultimately vested in the Porte. For further legal aspects of the issue, see Vernon O'Kane, The Juridical Status of the Sudan and Egypt (Baltimore, 1976), pp. 142-7.

2 The juridical status of the Sudan during the years of the Mahdi domination is a much debated point. See ibid., pp. 142 ff; Survey of International Affairs, 1929, 1, pp. 237-6; Longer, The Diplomacy, pp. 566-7.

3 For the text of the firman of April 14, 1892, see State Papers, XXXV, p. 357.
international understanding reached in 1856 which bound its signatories to uphold the integrity of
the Ottoman Empire.¹

Also, the French maintained that according
to the Berlin Conference of 1878, a Power must ef-
fectively occupy a territory before being able to
claim sovereignty over it.² Britain had never oc-
cupied nor established its authority over the Sahra
al-chesul.

Finally, the Congo Free State itself was
constituted by an international agreement in 1885
which could not extend its frontiers without the
consent of the Powers.³ All these arguments had a
strong legal basis but without German or Russian
support, France could not achieve such.

On 1 June 1894, Gabriel Hanotaux became
the new Foreign Minister. While realizing where

¹ The Treaty guaranteeing the Independence
and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was signed
on April 15, 1856 by Austria, France and Britain.
For text, see State Papers, ADVI, pp. 20-6.
² See article 29, State Papers, XXXVI, pp. 11-12.
³ Ibid.
his duty lay, he did not desire for a serious breach with England. Therefore, he adopted a conciliatory attitude and hinted to the British Ambassador, Lord Dufferin, that he might be prepared to recognize the Anglo/German agreement of 1890 with its reference to the British sphere on the Upper Nile, if the Anglo/Colombian agreement were abandoned and if the British would state precisely where their own sphere ended and Egypt’s began.1 But the Foreign Office in London wished to retain “a completely free hand for the final settlement in the Upper Nile by playing hide and seek between the claim to a British sphere and the rights of Egypt for which Britain acted as a self-appointed ‘trustee’.”2

Finding London immovable, Hanotux turned to Brussels because he believed Leopold could be induced to yield. Leopold, on his part, had become active on the Upper Unangni and Hanotux declared

1 Sanderson, “European Powers,” p. 86.
2 Ibid.
that France intended to oppose fact with fact. He persuaded the French Chamber to vote 1,600,000 francs "for the defense of French interests in Africa."1 France took matters seriously and planned to drive the Belgians out of the Bahr al-Ghazal and push on to the Nile themselves. This renewed French activity created grave concern at the Foreign Office in London and Britain immediately took steps to warn France of her new schemes. Hanotaux was informed by Lord Dufferin on 29 June 1894: "If you make a mission to these parts, there will be a most serious conflict between the two countries.2

Discussions followed between Dufferin and Hanotaux. The British government were unwilling to discredit themselves further by concessions to France. Hanotaux on his side was being urged by the colonialist group to abandon conciliation and to launch Kortéll on the race for the Upper Nile. On 29 June, an impasse was reached when Hanotaux demanded the unconditional withdrawal of Article II

1 Langer, The Diplomacy, p. 136.
2 Dufferin to Hanotaux, 29 June 1894, H.P.F., XI, No. 115, pp. 245.
of the Anglo-Congolese agreement of May 1894 which referred to the Naky al-Chasal. Dufferin not only refused but denied that the French had any right to a voice in the Upper Nile region.¹ Hanotaux implied that if Leopold's claim were dropped, France would be willing to negotiate and leave the Upper Nile for the British — for a price.² This hint by the French foreign minister bears out the fact that it was not the official policy of the Quai d'Orsay to span Africa from east to west. At most the threat of a French advance to the Nile was the lever with which they hoped to reopen the Egyptian question and possibly arrive at a general African settlement.

However, hopes of getting a settlement with Britain grew dimmer and dimmer as conversations continued throughout July between Hanotaux and Dufferin. Though Hanotaux persisted in believing that an agreement with England was possible, it became increasingly doubtful towards the end of July whether the British considered French friendship worth more than a price.³ Consequently, Hanotaux

¹ Note by Hanotaux, 28 June 1894, repr., XI, No. 176, pp. 297–8.
² Ibid.
directed his energy towards putting pressure on Leopold to force him to give up the agreement. The Belgian King was "constrained and forced" into signing an agreement with France on 14 August 1894.

The most important outcome of this agreement was that the practical aim of France was achieved. The main purpose of the Anglo/Congolese agreement was defeated and all that remained of that agreement was "a British right of telegraphic communications through the Congolese territory." The barrier between France and the Upper Nile was effectively removed and the Nile was again left open to the French. It was clear that the first round of the open Anglo/French conflict on the Upper Nile had resulted in a severe diplomatic setback for the British. They could not object to this settlement between France and Leopold because England could not oblige Leopold to occupy the territory leased to him. Besides, the King secured a better frontier than he could have hoped for. Though Britain had gained a recognition of

1 Sanderson, "European Powers," p. 86.
2 Langer, The Diplomacy, p. 140.
or diplomatic jugglery on record."

From now on the question of the Upper Nile became more acute. In fact, the Anglo/Congoese agreement and its abrogation brought the Anglo/
French struggle for the Upper Nile wide into the open. Both Powers had publicly taken up positions from which they could hardly recede without a
dangerous loss of prestige.  

With the collapse of the Anglo/Congoese agreement, Britain was forced to take a decision to open talks with the French government before it
was too late. Consequently, on 16 August 1894, Lord Dufferin offered to the French Foreign Minister some
British terms. The British asked for the recogni-
tion of their sphere of influence as outlined in

1 Ibid.
2 Sanderson, "European Powers," p. 86.
3 Barauteaux to Decrais, 17 August 1894, D.D.F.
Xi, No. 303, pp. 319-21.
the Anglo-German convention of 1890, i.e. recognizing the Upper Nile region "as far as the confines of Egypt" as within the British sphere. In return, Britain promised that the rights of Egypt would only be in suspense until the Egyptian government was in a position to reoccupy the territory in question. Britain also was to promise conciliation in regulating other African affairs.  

To Hanotaux, the British proposals seemed 'unequal' because France was presented with a demand to recognize the British sphere and would receive in return only a vague promise of conciliation. He, however, favoured the idea of opening negotiations on this basis. Meanwhile, Lord Dufferin went on a holiday and Hanotaux conducted his negotiations with Sir Constantine Phlippe, the British Chargé d'Affaires, who was well versed on

1 Note by Hanotaux, Ibid., p. 521.
2 Ibid.
3 It appeared that Hanotaux was inclined to favour these negotiations because on 22 August, he sent Montell, who had at last arrived in Africa, instructions that the objective of his mission and once again been changed. Montell was consequently guided to set off instead to the Ivory Coast to fight against the rebelSamory. See Montell, *Journal de Congo*, p. 184.
Philipp was instructed not to see Hanotaux again, and the talks finally broke down. Meanwhile rumors had spread in Paris that a British mission under Colonel Selville in Uganda was preparing for the middle Nile. Hanotaux was being hard pressed by the colonial ministry which criticized his project of "mutual self-denial" with Britain. It was argued as to why should the French government thus limit itself when France could win the race for the Nile.

To the French colonial office, the whole question was a race for the Nile in which France was definitely in a better position than the British to win. They insisted that Victor Liotard, the French Commissioner of the Upper Uvagh, should at once be given full official support for a mission to the Nile. Liotard soon organized his mission and declared that he hoped to be on the Nile within a year.

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1 Anderson to Philipp, telegram, 12 October 1894, F.O. 27/9188, cited in ibid.
3 Note by Hanotaux, 17 November 1894, B.O.F., XI, No. 265, p. 325.
vigour from the French side. Though both Britain and France were a little frightened by what they had started, it was realised by both that the question of the Upper Nile would now be settled only by the activities of their respective missions in the area.

As the French began preparations for an advance to the Nile, only d’Estournelles at the Quai d’Orsay had the foresight to conclude that a French advance to the Upper Nile at this time carried with it a great risk of war. In his dispatch to Hanoteau, he clearly pointed out that he had seen with clarity that the prestige of England as a great power was fully engaged in her 'claim' to a 'sphere' on the Upper Nile. Moreover, public opinion was likely to be even more intransigent in the defence of Britain's 'rights' than the government itself.

1 Shibeika, The Independent Sudan, p. 375.
2 d'Estournelles to Hanoteau, 3 December 1884, F.D.P., 41, No. 384, p. 422.
"greater Algeria" and to this vision, the Upper Nile was quite irrelevant. But after 1864, to the new policy makers of France, the Nile project was very relevant indeed since its fundamental aim was to restore French prestige in the theatre where national pride had received its most grievous wound since 1871. It was mainly because the British occupation of Egypt was so widely felt as an intolerable affront to national self-respect that the Nile project enjoyed support far outside the ranks of convinced colonialists, once its connection with Egypt was clearly established. French policy at the time rested on a quite irrational conviction that a successful expedition to the Upper Nile must somehow lead to a favourable solution of the Egyptian question.


2. An obvious example was in June 1864 when at the close of a debate,天文台 established this connection. The Chamber voted unanimously in favour of what appeared a policy of active reprisal against the Anglo-Congolese agreement.
CHAPTER III

THE RACE FOR THE NILE (1895-97)

With the failure of the Philippine-Hannutaux negotiations in October 1894, the French Council of Ministers decided to send an expedition to the Upper Nile. In November, the Paris cabinet, prompted by Delcassé, ordered an advance from the upper Ubangi to the Nile. In early 1895, the advance was entrusted to Victor Liotard, the Governor of the upper Ubangi. However, French resources on the spot were not equal to this task, and Liotard could make only little progress.

Liotard's instructions were to establish posts throughout the Bahr al-Chams and to constitute a de facto occupation of that territory. But his expeditionary force was meagerly supplied and inadequately supported. The inconsistency of French policy was further marked by the neglect of diplomatic preparation in case a crisis arose. France had no

\[1\] Sanderson, "European Powers," p. 87.
allies on whom one could rely at the time and the
government made no move to acquire any external
support. Moreover, in the same month, Deloncle
ceased to be Colonial Minister, and his successor,
Chautemps, was not in favour of a forward policy.
Under these circumstances, Listard could hardly be
expected to make any satisfactory progress.

Meanwhile, the Comité de l’Afrique Française,
abandoning its previous indifference, began to ad-
vocate for reinforcements and full backing to
Listard’s mission on the Nile. Similar views
were expressed in public by leading French colonial-
ists. In February 1893, De Brazza, Governor of the
French Congo, declared in an interview he gave at
Algeria that an advance to the Upper Nile "was the
only way to settle the Egyptian question in accord-
ance with French interests." 3

The above ideas was further elaborated by
Député François Deloncle a few days later. Deloncle

1 J. Darcy, France et Ancienneté: Jour
In Britain, the period was marked by the aggressive 'imperialistic' approach to colonial problems by Sir Percy Anderson at the Foreign Office. He had his exact counterpart in Paris, the 'experts' of the colonial ministry who were now vigorously demanding a forward policy in colonial affairs. As 1938 drew to a close, it became certain that the Anglo/French colonial rivalry in the Upper Nile was heading for an unwarranted crisis.
the mouth-piece of the French Chamber declared:
"today, having opened for ourselves access to the
Upper Nile, we are in a good position to take our
rivals in the rear, thus providing our diplomacy
with new elements for negotiations. This, I con-
sider to be indispensable within a short time, with
a view to bringing about at last the much-promised
evacuation of the Khashia vil territory." He spoke
enthusiastically of the Franco-Congoale accord and
said: "Today, the English dream of possessing the
Upper Nile and the Egyptian Sudan has been ... for
ever upset."

Meanwhile, the renewed French activities on
the Upper Nile convinced the British that it was
France's avowed interest to join, in an uninter-
rupte series of possessions, Senegal to the Red
Sea and thereby to thwart British ambitions of a
straight Cape to Cairo chain of possessions. It
was on 5 March that the Times sounded the alarm.
"It was perfectly evident from Delcassé's speech,"

1 ibid., Langer, The Diplomacy, pp. 265 ff.;
Sander, England, France and the upper Nile, p. 212;
Ranke's, Al., vol. 404, footnote.
2 Langer, The Diplomacy, p. 131.
very moment might be within the reach of the Nile. Britain's position in the Nile Valley was very definitely being threatened and the Times asked what the Government proposed to do in face of this attack revealed by the French activities.  

On 11 March, the issue was brought forth in the House of Commons and Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, a Francophobe and an ardent imperialist, questioned the government with regards to the various utterances of de Brazza and Deloncle. Was there any foundation to French claims that the Franco-Congolese accord gave them access to the Nile and the means of placing the Egyptian question on a new basis? Could not the government clearly state that the whole Nile Valley was within the...
from west Africa to the Red Sea. If realised, he
continued, it would make all of North Africa, in-
cluding Egypt, a French possession, and the
Mediterranean would be bound to become a French
lake. He concluded by saying that it would be a
matter of great gravity if France were to be al-
lowed to establish herself on the Upper Nile.
Asmussen-Bartlett was not the only Francophile.
His views were shared by many colonialsists in the
Parliament.

Meanwhile, the Jovy declaration nearly
brought about an unde crisis. The French ambas-
sador in London, Baron de Courcel, in his dispatch
to Nanotaux, described the declaration as a 'naughty
statement'. He immediately lodged a written protest
with Kimberley, the British Foreign Secretary. In
Courcel's opinion, a direct blow had been struck at
France with the almost unanimous support of the
British Parliament.\footnote{Courcel to Nanotaux, 29 March 1895, B.D.P.,
XI, No. 419, pp. 627-8.}

\footnote{R.G.V., II, pp. 490-1}
Jean-Baptiste Marchand, a former companion of Monteil on the Ivory Coast, who was then on leave from his duties in West Africa. Marchand enjoyed "a brilliant reputation both as a fighting soldier and a military explorer," and had a plan for an expedition.¹ In Paris, he soon gained the ear of the permanent officials at the colonial ministry to which he explained his plan. He believed that a small but well-planned expedition could, under his command, reach the Upper Nile without much difficulties. Once this was done, the expedition's presence would call for a conference of the Powers and the result would be the settlement of the Sudan question and possibly also the Egyptian question. Marchand greatly impressed Cournet who immediately instructed the former to study the possible extension of the French influence "particularly in the direction of the Nile" and to work out a plan for a mission.²

In his interview with Hanotaux, Marchand explained that he would need only 200 men and 600,000 francs for the expedition. He insisted that the

¹ 10 November 1895, E.L.P., XII, No.192, p. 350.
² Shibata, The Independent Sudan, p. 382.
mission should perform no act of occupation and make no political treaties — it should not even hoist the French flag unless confronted with a rival expedition. It appears that though Nanotex was impressed, the Foreign Minister took no decision one way or the other concerning it. He could hardly have overlooked the obvious danger inherent in Marechand’s plan and he seems to have preferred to evade a decision rather than openly oppose the daring scheme which had been outlined so many times. In October, Nanotex and Chauvelin fell from power and the idea of organising a mission was postponed.

Marechand, however, pressed M. Guisy and M. Berthelot, the new Foreign and Colonial Ministers respectively, for an immediate launching of a mission to the Nile. The plans were once again under way to organise a mission headed by Marechand and the Colonial Ministry clarified the object of such a mission. It was to be of a non-military character with the aim to reach the Nile, and once

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there, the presence of the French mission would put France in a position "to intervene usefully in settling the question of the Egyptian Sudan."\(^1\)

However, during the first two or three months, nothing came out of Marchand's plan and this was mainly because the leading French officials were at the time incapable of formulating a consistent policy regarding French interests in the Nile Valley. As late as November 1895, Saïyès was still enquiring from the Quai d'Orsay as to what were the real intentions of the government in this area. Was the government intending only to hold on to the existing feeble position in the Aâbr el-Cherah or was it really planning to expand towards the Nile disregarding the consequences?\(^2\) It seemed nobody in the government was sure about anything.

Marchand did not give up easily and he managed to convince Bartholot of the importance to France of an active policy in the Nile Valley and in Central Africa as a whole. In less than a week

\(^1\) Shiobaka, *The Independent Sudan*, p. 354.

on 24 November, BertheLOT gave his verbal assent to the plan of penetration into the NILE valley. On 30 November, the Foreign minister wrote a note to GUEYSE, affirming that in the eyes of the government the object of the mission was to assure to FRANCE a voice in the regulation of the EGYPTIAN-SUDAN question. The authorisation of the Marchand mission was indeed looked upon by the French as a race towards the Nile between them and the British from Uganda. What the French failed to realise was that such an expedition could not have been tolerated by the British unless Marchand’s position was reduced to the status of a mere private traveller or at most “an emissary of civilisation”, a phrase which was later to become famous.

The Marchand mission was finally launched on 24 February 1896. Michaud was to be Marchand’s

1 Gueyse to BertheLOT, 21 November 1895, [P.R.O.], XII, No. 219, pp. 904-5.
2 BertheLOT to Gueyse, 30 November 1895, [P.R.O.], XII, No. 219, pp. 922-9.
3 It was Delouze’s description according to London. See Great Britain, Foreign Office, British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1886-1914, ed. G.F. Soch and H. Tupperly (London, 1926-1936) 1, 10 September 1896, p. 56. (This series will hereafter be cited as B.D.)
immediate superior and was authorised to modify his plan of procedure as he saw fit. Guéyasse, in the meantime wrote to Bichard in strong terms that the aim of the mission was to reach Massada as soon as possible.  

An interesting point to take note of is the great emphasis laid on the need to achieve the co-operation and the good relationship of the Khadis. The French looked forward to the achievement "if not (or) an alliance, at least of a certain friendly understanding" with the Khalifa. Some French politicians even hoped that the Khalifa would welcome a French alliance if he could be brought to understand the difference between Anglichmen and Frenchmen. Marchand was instructed to try and win their favour and active support and if the Khadists showed "une hostile arqade", his expedition was to retire.  

The expedition might have been further delayed if it were not for the Anglo-Egyptian


\[2\] It was not until the end of 1897 that France finally gave up the idea of lining up the Khadists on their side. Marchand himself remained one of the strongest supporters of the Franco/Khadist alliance until June 1896. See Sanderson, "European Powers", p. 56.
By on 26 April Menelik's advance party immediately departed for Africa with the object of reaching Fashoda as soon as possible. Later, in the meanwhile, was to continue his work of making friends with the natives and establishing a series of posts throughout the Bahr al-Ghazal.

In the face of all these French activities, it was clear that the reconquest of the Sudan by the British was only a matter of time. When the British Prime Minister asked Cromer in early 1895 how he evaluated the French intentions in the Nile region, and whether experts judged that the Bahr al-Ghazal could successfully be traversed, Cromer's reply was that the Khedivial government was "a good deal agitated" by the news of the French advance. The opinion of the military advisers was that the French would have little difficulty in capturing the Bahr al-Ghazal.1

Cromer and always opposed the policy of a reconquest of the Sudan because as he put it: "I have persistently put forward the objection to the adoption of a forward policy... The Sudan is worth a good deal to Egypt, but not worth bankruptcy and extremely oppressive taxation."¹ But now he admitted that the presence of the French in the neighbourhood of the Upper Nile had definitely changed the situation. It is interesting to note that the Egyptian Ministers themselves were a great deal disturbed by the French advance on the Nile and Cromer was certain that they favoured the reconquest of the Sudan and Khartoum in particular as soon as possible. The only reason the Egyptian Ministers were not outspoken in this matter was probably because they knew that Cromer was himself very much against the idea.²

In Cromer's opinion, Britain's position in Egypt was about to be challenged and he admitted to necessity that the presence of the French in the

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.
Abi named.¹ From all this it becomes clear that by
January 1895, even the conservative Cromer had
changed his views with regards to the reconquest
of the Sudan. For the first time he admitted that
the Upper Nile as well as the northern and central
Sudan were vital to Egypt and the question now was
"... when and how we shall move forward." He even
aired his view that war with France was "a not
impossible solution to the whole mess."²

By the beginning of 1896, the reconquest
of the Sudan became a dominant factor in Salisbury's
policy.³ There were two courses open for the opera-
tion, one of which was from the north i.e. from
Egypt. But Egypt was not yet in a financial posi-
tion to advance into the Sudan. The other course
was from the south, from Uganda. But here again
the British position in the lakes area was still
isolated and the railway connection with the east
coast of Africa was not yet made. Britain, it seemed,
was to take its own time in reconquering the Sudan.

¹ Marquess of Zetland (Lord Dandie), Lord
² P.O. 655/C, No. 205, Cromer to Salisbury,
12 April 1895, cited in Anderson, England, Europe
and the Upper Nile, p. 296.
Sat on 12 March 1896, only two weeks after Galayeas had launched the Marchand mission, news reached the French government that Britain had decided to reconquer the Sudan. The reason for this sudden change of policy was the defeat of the Italians at the hands of the Abyssinians.

By their agreement of 1891 with the Abyssinian King, the Italians established themselves in the whole of Abyssinia but they were getting into a lot of trouble. In 1895 a full-scale war broke out between the Italians and the Abyssinians and on 1 March 1896, the former were heavily defeated by the latter at the battle of Ada. Though Salisbury was against any premature advance on the Nile, on 10 March, while Massaua was surrounded by the Bersa- ches, he decided to help the Italians. The result was the 'Dongola expedition' which marked the beginning of the reconquest of the Sudan.

The reasons behind the British decision to reconquer the Sudan are not easily comprehensible.

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It was Salisbury himself who initiated the Dongola campaign and in his letter to Cromer he declared that his cabinet’s decision “was inspired especially by a desire to help the Italians at Kassala, and from preventing the Servians from winning a conspicuous success which might have far-reaching results.”

In the same letter, Salisbury added: “In addition, we desired to kill two birds with one stone, and to use the same military efforts to plant the foot of Egypt farther up the Nile.”¹ This seems to indicate that it was the anxiety for the Sudan that determined Salisbury to take action. Whether the British were specifically aware at this time of the dispatch of the Marchand mission is uncertain. Yet they knew enough of French plans to realize that Britain’s position in Egypt would soon be challenged in the Upper Nile region. Therefore, if there was one single factor which predominately initiated the Dongola campaign, it was the intention of the British government and especially of Salisbury to protect the waters

¹ Zetland, Lord Cromer, p. 223; L.Q.Y., III, p. 33, 37.
Liotard and Marechand. Berthelot, the Foreign Minister, described the British move as "essentially offensive" and declared that the French government would not change their plan of an advance towards the upper Nile.¹

An important outcome of the Dongola phase was that it opened wider the rift between England and France over their interests in the Nile Valley. France was convinced that the Marechal mission should not be delayed any further and on 25 April 1896, Marechal's advance party sailed for Africa with the aim of arriving at Pashoda within eighteen months.²

Meanwhile, another ministerial change took place in Paris four days later in which Jules Méline became Prime Minister and Hanotaux once again returned at the Quai d'Orsay. Hanotaux's return to office at the "critical hour", as he saw it, did not change the scheduled plan for Marechal's departure.³

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² Note by Bourgeois, 16 April 1896, B.B.P., XI, No. 529, p. 455.

³ The departure was planned in three stages: April 25, May 10 and 15.
more so because no one in France at the time would have accepted a withdrawal of the mission. Marchand's final instructions were to reinvigorate the earlier ones and the main objective of the mission -- to reopen the Egyptian question -- still remained the same. The mission was instructed to:

"... remove all pretext for the occupation of Egypt by the English and to put an end to the advance of our dear friend, and wish to unite Egypt with the Cape and their possessions in East Africa with those of the Royal Company."

There was obviously more to a French policy than a simple expedition of some 200 men. Marchand's force was merely the small, but extremely essential link uniting the French Congo and the projected outposts strung through the Bab al-Chalal to the Nile Valley. The plan was that a subsidiary force, advancing from the west through the Abyssinian territory was later to supply the necessary reinforcements to the mission because without this aid, Marchand's task would have been a very difficult, if not an impossible one.

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1 Lescot to Miotard, 23 June 1896, B.D.E., XII, No. 611, pp. 244-6.

The French government believed that the Negus of Abyssinia could be induced to support France and its Mediterranean mission. Consequently, they even began serious negotiations with the King. The main reason for this urgency was the strategic geographical position which Abyssinia held, i.e., in relation to its closeness to the Nile where Marchand was to arrive. The rumor that British agents were at the time trying to gain influence over the Negus induced France immediately to send Léon Lazard on a special mission to Addis Ababa in December 1898.  

In the previous month, confident of the success of Lazard’s mission, Léon, the Colonial Minister charged two expeditions concurrently with traversing the Abyssinian plateau as a means of providing the best route of access to the Nile in the direction of Asmara. The missions came under the respective command of Captain Clochette, a colonial administrator who was already in Abyssinia, and Gabriel Bouvetot, an experienced explorer.  

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1 Hanotaux to Léon, 30 November 1898, D.2.F., XII, no. 33, pp. 62-4.  
2 Ibid., p. 283.
because if those two missions were given all the importance and encouragement, they could have, by working closely with the Abyssinian armies, provided an overwhelming force advancing from the east to Fashoda.¹

Despite the fact that so much was at stake, the Colonial Minister seemed not to have taken immediate action to send reinforcements or any help at all. This was not, however, an unusual practice of negligence on the part of the French policy makers. Later, even the famous Marchand mission, with all its importance and the implications it was to have on the international scene, was given similar treatment.

As far as the progress and the achievements of the missions to the Nile through Abyssinia was concerned, the whole project, as it turned out to be, resembled nothing more than an arrow shot into the dark jungle -- and then forgotten. This did not mean, however, that France had become less interested in the Nile Valley but judging from the

¹ Marchand, who was leading a small force, was heavily counting on the reinforcements from the Abyssinian missions from the west.
activities of the policy makers in France, it was
clear that the French expeditions were doomed to
ultimate failure. Though undertaken by energetic
and daring explorers, the French missions revealed
irresolute government action combined with in-
sufficient means to achieve the desirable results
and the Marchand mission was no exception.

On practical lines the Marchand mission
was nothing but an attempt to put France in a po-
sition where she could force Britain to reopen the
Egyptian question but the repercussions were much
too significant on the international scene. The
mission embodied the entire French scheme and desire
of getting control of the Upper Nile and any minor
achievements on the part of the practical achieve-
ments of Marchand was bound to create an inter-
national crisis.
CHAP. IV
THE FASHODA CRISIS: 1897-98

With the defeat of the Italians by Menelik's forces at Adwa and the subsequent British advance to Dongola, the question of the Upper Nile entered its final and most dangerous phase. The British march to Dongola was intended, among other things, to anticipate action by the French on the Upper Nile. The Dongola expedition, however, made the French more determined than ever to beat the British in the race for the Upper Nile.

Dongola was occupied by the Anglo-Egyptian forces in the autumn of 1896 but as Salisbury realised, an advance as far as Khartoum was necessary for the complete reconquest of the Sudan. Addressing the House of Lords in June, Salisbury declared: "We shall not have restored Egypt to the position in which we received her, and we shall not have placed Egypt in that position of safety in which she deserves to stand, until the Egyptian flag floats over Khartoum." Unfortunately, an advance...

1 W.D.V., III, pp. 72, Crozier, Modern Egypt, II, p. 94; Dnger, MacDiplomacy, p. 356.
to Khartoum was not an easy task. The Egyptian government did not have enough money for such an expedition and it was in no position to borrow an amount of one to two million pounds. The British Parliament certainly could not give permission for such an undertaking because of the huge expenses involved. Moreover, Salisbury was still, as always, of the opinion that a military advance from the south in Uganda should be prepared first, in order to meet the push from the north. But as matters stood then, the Uganda Railway still needed two more years for completion.¹

All these difficulties contributed to the suspension for some time of any military operations farther than Dongola. Once again the British government, and Salisbury in particular, wanted to settle the matters at their own convenience and time. But once again the French moved made the British hasten their operations and prepare for an advance to Khartoum before matters got out of hand.

¹ H.R.V., III, p. 85.
The major development at this time which aroused great concern among the British was the progress of the Marchand mission. By August 1897, Marchand's forces had crossed the water-sod of the Nile and the Congo and had joined histord in establishing posts in the Fahl al-Salal area. Meanwhile, the French were also trying to get in touch with the Khalifa at Oudaraa so that they could assure his good will. In return, France was to offer support for the Khalif against the British advance from the north. Though this move failed, the French had greater success with King Menelik of Abyssinia. In 1897, a treaty of friendship was signed with him. Such a treaty was necessary for France because the French had always planned to match their expeditions from the west with another from the east.

The British government was fully aware of all the French activities in the area, especially France's successful attempt in winning over King Menelik to their side. In early 1897, therefore,

1 Langer, The Diplomacy, p. 540.
2 ibid., p. 546.
Ronald Rodd, a former assistant to Lord Cromer in Egypt, led a British mission to Abyssinia to improve relations with Menelik. Rodd's mission was "to ensure it possible that there would be no cooperation with the Khalifa, and to obtain a more intimate knowledge of the internal conditions." The mission, however, failed to gain any advantage for Britain and on Rodd's return to London in June 1897, he gave an account of the French activities in Addis Ababa. He urged Salisbury that under the prevailing circumstances, an expedition from Uganda should be pushed forward immediately along the Nile and Fashoda. Salisbury had, however, already made a decision to organize such an expedition from Uganda.

It was during March/April 1897 that Salisbury became aware through circulating reports that Warrand had indeed reached the Nile. On 25 April, he asked Parliament for 25,000 pounds for "sending an expedition to the east bank of the Nile to make friends".

with the tribes before the French got there from the west." 2 After much deliberation and arguments, Colonel James Macdonald, who had much experience in Uganda, left England in June 1897 with instructions "to explore the districts adjacent to the Italian sphere ... and to cultivate friendly relations with the tribes residing in that portion of the British sphere." 2

Macdonald was being sent to beat off Marchand in the race for the Nile but unfortunately his expedition met with little success. Hardly had he begun his march in September when his expedition was disrupted by the Sudanese troops who mutinued. The mutiny was followed by a rising among the Waganda in Uganda and Macdonald was thus forced to march no further than the territory still under nominal British control. 3 When news reached London of Macdonald's failure, the government turned its attention to devise other plans which could block the French.

1 Sanderson, England, Europe and the Upper Nile, pp. 256 ff.
3 Ibid. in Sanderson, England, Europe and the Upper Nile, p. 257.
schemes on the Nile. Lord Wolseley, the Commander in Chief of the British forces, was pressing for an immediate advance by Kitchener's troops from Aba Namei to Khartooh with British assistance. He declared that: "... the French are now working hard to forestall us on the Upper Nile, and if they do so we may have to face serious complications when we attempt the job in the autumn of last." The government opposed such an advance mainly because it would be too hard on the troops and moreover, the financial aspects of the problem proved hard to settle.  

In spite of the growing volume of positive evidence, notably a report in June 1897 that the Marchand mission was concentrated at the N'tom-Uale confluence and another in September which hinted about Marchand's arrival at Bein Zaneir, 3 Salisbury

1 loc.cit., III, p. 206.
2 Ibd.
insisted that "we have heart of no (French) force up the Ubangi." He rather doubted at this stage whether the presence or absence of either a British or French force on the Upper Nile would greatly affect the situation. "I am not greatly impressed by this danger," he wrote to Lansdowne, "because we shall have to meet it anyhow."¹ What Salisbury's remark seemed to imply was that if England tried to apply the Anglo-German agreement in 1890, which defined her sphere on the Upper Nile, a row with France was inevitable whether France reached the Nile or not. Therefore, he saw no urgent need for an advance in Khartoum.

Salisbury still put much weight on his thesis that so long as the Sudanese were strong in the Sudan, they would prevent the French from getting an upper hand in the region. "It is to be remembered," he informed Lansdowne, "that by destroying the servitaries, we are killing the defender who is holding the valley for us now."² As far as

¹ Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne (London, 1929), pp. 147-8; Setland, Lord Cromer, p. 278; Mackenzie, Ill, p. 206.
² Setland, Lord Cromer, p. 280.
Gromer's views were concerned, he did not believe that the forestalling of the French was an objective of sufficient value to justify the dispatch of British troops. However, he decried if the French would ever reach the Nile, in which case, he pointed out, action in the southern Sudan might lead to the acquisition of "large tracts of useless territory which it would be difficult and costly to administer properly." Gromer concluded that Her Majesty's Government "should not allow themselves to be hurried by fear of French activities," and that no British troops should be sent to the Sudan unless it became clear that the Egyptian army could no longer maintain its existing position.

By the beginning of November 1897, therefore, it seemed that the reconquest of Khartoum, and consequently any Anglo/Egyptian military action on the Upper Nile was indefinitely postponed. Meanwhile, an agreement was signed between Britain and France in June 1897 regarding their disputes in West Africa.

1 Sanderson, "Contributions from African Sources," p. 72.
2 Ibid.
As a result, both France and Lebanon, the Foreign and Colonial Ministers of France respectively, expressed their desire that since the crisis in West Africa was settled by a compromise, there was no reason why a similar compromise could not be reached with respect to the Nile Valley. But with regards to the British view concerning the Nile Valley, there could be no compromise and on 10 December 1897, Britain made her position clear by a note to Hanotaux from Sir Edward Monson, the British Ambassador in Paris:

"Her Majesty's Government must not be understood to admit that any other European Power other than Britain has any claim to occupy any part of the Valley of the Nile. The views of the British Government upon this matter were plainly stated in Parliament by Sir Edward Grey some years ago, and were formally communicated to the French Government at the time. Her Majesty's present Government entirely adheres to the language that was on this occasion employed by their predecessors."

1 Shibulika, The Independent Sudan, p. 431.
2 Salisbury to Crozer, 2 August 1898, B.P., p. 160; B.P.J., Affaires du Haut-Nil, 1897-8, No. 1 p. 407.
It was clear that any settlement between Britain and France with regards to the question of the Upper Nile was, for the moment, out of question. The French Government, however, delayed themselves with the hope that in face of a Fait accompli, Britain would resign itself to negotiate.

In November 1897, any advance further than Dongola was postponed but just two months later on January 26, 1898, Kitchener got an authorisation to advance to Kassala.¹ It is not at all clear as to the reasons behind this reversal of decision by the British Government. It was claimed to have been imposed by the fear of a Mahdist offensive on Herber but that fear did prove groundless.² However, it was clear that for an effective reconquest of the Sudan, Kassala too had to be captured. Moreover, in face of renewed French activities in the area, characterised by the progress of the Marchand mission, the British Government had to act quickly. It was just a matter of time before this decision was taken and when that

² See Sanderson, "Contributions from African Sources," p. 73
moment came, Kitchener supported by several bat- talions of British troops, led the Egyptian army to Khartoum. Salisbury, who had always maintained that there was no 'remedy' for the Upper Nile until the Bombay Railway was complete,¹ now changed his opinion as a result of Kitchener's success. For the first time he began to look upon the advance from the north as a possible 'remedy'.

Before the advance to Khartoum began, a decision was reached in London, with Gosser present, that once Khartoum was reconquered, the British and Egyptian flags should fly side by side in the Sudan.² On his part, Kitchener was to push up the White Nile with a small force as far as Fashoda or beyond as he thought possible. His attitude was entirely to depend on local circumstances and he was instructed to acknowledge no claims by either France or Abyssinia to any part of the Nile Valley.³ He had to avoid a collision with Kenoiki's troops at all costs and should he meet

¹ L.O.Y., III, p. 218.
² L.O.Y., 2 August 1898, No. 105, p. 159.
³ Ibid.
a French force there, he was to try to convince the French commander that "the presence of the latter in the Nile Valley is an infringement of the rights of both Britain and of the Kedive."¹

The Khartoum campaign achieved extraordinary success and in September 1896, the Khediva was completely defeated and soon the Egyptian and the British flags were hoisted side by side at Khartoum.² In England, the victory at Omdurman brought great enthusiasm and according to Winston Churchill, the whole country had gone mad with the lust of fighting glory.³

In the meantime, Marchand was heading north towards Fashoda. It was then just a matter of time before he and Kitchener, with their respective expeditions, came on a head-on collision with each other. Only two days before the occupation of Omdurman, Kitchener learnt that a French force led by Captain Marchand had arrived at Fashoda. With Kitchener at Khartoum hoisting the Anglo-Egyptian flags and Marchand's arrival at Fashoda, the long-awaited 'crisis' finally set in.

¹ Sibert, *The Sudan*, p. 431.
² *I.B.,* 8 August 1898, No. 188, p. 140.
It was on 10 July 1896 that Marchand finally arrived at the Shilluk village of Fashoda. Two days later, in the presence of the sheik and the notables of the Shilluk, Marchand ceremoniously hoisted the French flag and took possession of Fashoda in the name of France. Kitchener learnt of Marchand’s presence at Fashoda on 7 September. Three days later, Kitchener left Khartoum with five steamers and a force of Sudanese, supplemented by a small force of British troops. A week later, Kitchener’s force approached Fashoda and on 15 September both the officers came face to face. After due exchanges of salutations Kitchener informed Major Marchand that he intended to occupy Fashoda in the name of the Khedive of Egypt. In a letter to Addi, Kitchener stated that he made it known to the French major that “the presence of a French force at Fashoda and in the Nile Valley was regarded as a direct infringement of the rights of the Egyptian government and that of Britain and I protested in the strongest terms against the occupation of Fashoda and their hoisting the French flag in the dominions of His Highness the Khedive.”

1 H.P. 14 August 1896, No. 125, p. 135.
2 Danger, The Diplomacy, p. 552.
3 Kitchener to Addi, read. 29 September 1896, H.P. I, No. 107, p. 147.
An interesting point to note here is that Kitchener claimed to be acting on behalf of Egypt and not Britain and thus embarrassed Marchand because the French policy in the Nile Valley was for a long time based on “respect for the rights of the Sultan and the Khedive.” It was unlikely, as Marchand realised, that any of the policy makers of France would have instructed him forcibly to defend the “rights of France” against Egypt.1 Marchand yielded, therefore, on condition that the hoisting of the Anglo/Egyptian flag should not prejudice the political status of the country which was to be referred to their governments for settlement.2

Meanwhile, in Britain, where the victory at Omdurman was celebrated with great enthusiasm, the Fashoda episode appeared as a “discordant note” in the general rejoicing. The public reaction was that “a friendly power” had, unprovoked, endeavoured to rob them of the fruits of their victories.3 In the British press the French act came under heavy attack.

1 Ibid., No. 190.
3 Churchill, The River War, pp. 311 ff.
Some liberal papers, avoiding hasty assumptions, believed that an opening could be found for a peaceful adjustment. However, other British journals adopted not only an adverse tone but appeared uncompromising on the issue. Marchand's party was described as a band or "irregular marauders" and as the "scum of the desert." The question of maintaining Egypt's rights against the "trespasser" became a burning issue and the whole Marchand mission came to be regarded by some British as a demonstration of "inhospitable hostility" and of "conscious antagonism" to England.

"There is no need to argue the point," declared the Evening News, "if a householder finds a man in his back garden, he does not go to arbitration about the matter or enter into elaborate arguments to show that he, the householder, is the owner of that garden. He simply orders the trespasser out, and if he will not go out of his own accord, he has to go in another fashion." Other newspapers expressed similar views maintaining that the intruder had to be

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ejected. "It is quite clear," stated The Spectator, "that Sashoda must be retained, even at the cost of war."

On 10 October, the Times remarked: "We can not conceal from ourselves that Lord Salisbury and his colleagues have taken a position from which retreat is impossible. One side or the other will have to give way. That side can not ... be Great Britain." It appeared quite clearly that the press was more or less unanimous in its view of ejecting the intruders by threat of war if necessary. In the political circles, unanimity was also reached and the Opposition party came out in full support of a firm policy.

The attitude of the British government, which had not been entirely unprepared for the event, was that it intended to take a firm stand on the issue. Salisbury assumed an attitude that fundamentally precluded discussion. It also appeared that some members of his cabinet preferred war to the least concession.

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1 The Spectator, 1 October 1896, cited in Reid.

Salisbury himself hardly needed all the encouragement and prudence the prime and the opposition was accord-
ing to him. On 2 August, he wrote to Cremer in Egypt that "nothing should be said or done which would in
any way imply a recognition on behalf of Her Majesty's
government of a title to possession on behalf of France
or Abyssinia to any portion of the Nile Valley." He
declared:

"By the military events of the last week, all the territories which were subject to the
Khallifa passed by right of conquest to the
British and the Egyptian governments. Her
majesty's government does not consider that
this right is open to discussion." 2

Salisbury also realized that in the question of the
Nile, the British public simply would not consider
or discuss claims by France to any part of the Nile
Valley. In a letter to Queen Victoria during the
peak of the crisis he wrote: "no offer of territorial
concession on our part would be endorsed by the public
opinion here." 3 Salisbury, therefore, stuck to his
guns and declined to discuss any French claims until

1 Cited in Shoiseka, The Independent Sudan,
p. 358.
2 Mem., 9 September 1898.
3 See Lord, III, p. 72; Cremer, Modern
Egypt, II, p. 344; Danger, The Diplomacy, p. 958.
Delcassé foresaw how awkward it would be for a mere handful of Frenchmen to face Kitchener's army of 40,000. When the crisis did break out, Delcassé immediately informed Ambassador Monson of his hope that both men (Kitchener and Asquith) would settle their differences amicably "by the exercise of patience and conciliation," and report the matter to their home governments. He then expressed his desire of avoiding serious difficulties with England.

However, in France, the conflict was raised to a high pitch through the Fascian press. Delcassé was hard pressed in the French Chamber, especially by the colonialist group, to maintain a firm stand against any British ultimatum. On September 30, Delcassé informed Monson:

"It is impossible for the French Government to give up Florence, their right to occupy which Her Majesty's Government even do not choose to discuss. Neither this nor any other ministry could submit to what would be the humiliation of France. Any formal demand of this nature would be considered as an ultimatum and rejected."

2 Ibid.
Delcaned further made it known that he did not think that England would wish to go to war over such a question "but France would, however, unwillingly, accept war rather than submit."  

But at Fashoda it appeared quite clearly that France's changes were absolutely secure because of several reasons. A military victory against the British at Fashoda was out of question because Marchand's band was no match to Kitchener's Anglo/Egyptian force. As far as support from Meliki was concerned, the Abyssinian king was far to abate to play the French game and to risk a war with Britain. France's attempt to acquire help from the local Sudanese tribes also did not pay off. Even if the latter rallied to the French cause, which was in any case uncertain, they would have been of little military value. Under the circumstances, France could hope to achieve nothing by merely having Marchand at Fashoda. For France, therefore, a conciliatory attitude was the only sensible one to take during this time especially when the country was undergoing a serious domestic crisis -- the Dreyfus affair.

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1 Newton, April Disarmament, pp. 147-8.

but Salisbury's statement\(^1\) made it clear that from the British point of view, Sudan belonged to Great Britain and Egypt and there was nothing to negotiate about. What followed in the coming weeks were the detailed arguments advanced by both Britain and France trying to prove and disprove the French right to be at Fashoda. According to Langer, no international dispute since the Crimean war "had been clouded with such contradictory and illogical argumentation.\(^2\) Both sides being in the wrong," remarked J. Blunt in his diary, "each saw the other's wickedness and so believed itself right.\(^3\)

It would indeed be a dreary undertaking to examine the arguments put forward by these two colonial powers who had during the past two decades made several attempts to gain control over the Upper Nile and finally found themselves face to face in a position where none was prepared to back out.

1 See footnote 39.
The French claims were repudiated in strong terms by Salisbury and throughout his dispatches to the British ambassador in Paris, there is enough evidence of the Prime Minister's quiet but unalterable decision. "The White Nile belongs to Egypt and Great Britain," he wrote to Monson in Paris, "and that having conquered the Sudan, there could be no longer any question of their rights." Salisbury made it clear to the French government that by ancient sovereignty and by more recent negotiations and right of conquest, Fashoda belonged to Britain and therefore France had to dismiss Major Marchand as "an emissary of civilisation." France had to accept the more convenient theory of his mission — even if it did not exactly correspond with the diplomatic facts — that he was an ardent and heroic explorer, whose achievements reflected honor on his nation, but who could not, on that account, be permitted to involve two great nations and perhaps as a consequence the whole of Europe in war.\(^1\)

\(^2\) Ibid.
repeated his earlier taunt that France should pack up and go, and reiterated his deep conviction that honest discussions would remove all causes of misunderstanding and that France would prefer to have Britain as an ally rather than Russia. Salisbury, however, informed Crouel on 27 September that there would be no compromise or negotiations whatever so long as the French flag flew at Fashoda and that he could neither give nor imply any promise of British concession after its removal. 3

Great Britain was on weak grounds when she claimed the territory for Egypt. First, because the

1 Memo to Salisbury, 26 September, 1898, Add. p. 171.
3 B.I.I, No. 214.
Though none of the British papers wrote as if war was imminent, it was clear that tension in Britain had reached a high level. On 25 October, shares in the stock market dropped to their lowest level. The British government made no official declaration of the need to prepare for a war with France but clearly the government was taking precautions. The British dockyards, for example, bristled with activity and the navy was put in readiness to act at the shortest notice. According to Sir Thomas Barclay, war was much nearer than people realised.

Weighing the pros and cons of such a resort as of going to war with Britain, Delcassé rationalised that in themselves, the possessions of the Suez Canal and Fashoda — "a miserable swampy bog" — were not worth a war. Even if France decided to declare a war against Britain, from a military and naval standpoint, France could not have won such a war. Moreover, France was at the time torn by domestic turmoil and the French people lacked the unity and enthusiasm.

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1 Times, 26 October 1898.
necessary for waging a war. Delcassé was, therefore, finally realizing that France had no alternative but to give in. In Paris he was still under pressure from the parliamentary colonialist group who asked him to refuse the evacuation of Fashoda "and damn the consequences." But in absence of either German or Russian support, Delcassé was faced with the unpleasant alternatives of withdrawal or certain defeat. There was indeed no real choice but to retreat.

Delcassé's final preparation for withdrawal took shape of a skillful press campaign in which the French public was informed that Fashoda was not the outlet for which France was looking for and that the abandonment of the post would be compatible with France's honor. The public opinion in France was in the meanwhile, prepared for this move and when it came, "French sentiment for the most part backed the Foreign Minister."

With humiliation on one side and disaster on the other, Delcassé saw a means to turn a temporary

1 For a detailed discussion on the absence of German and Russian support for France's aims, see Langley, The Diplomacy, pp. 550 ff.

defeat into a permanent victory. He realised that he could use this temporary humiliation as a stepping-stone to an understanding with Britain. This was the occasion for the two great powers to find a common ground and to meet upon it loyally and fair-mindedly, to sink the question of a trading post in central Africa into the greater one of a delimitation of the frontier of their respective territories.

Finally, therefore, "crippled by naval inferiority, by ignorance of the local position and by the profound division of the public opinion," the French government gave way. The final resolution was adopted by a meeting of the French cabinet on 3 November and the British government was duly informed that Maseda would be evacuated with the least possible delay. The next day Salisbury announced in a speech at the Mansion House that the French had yielded.

2. *Sanderson, Middle East and the Upper Nile*, p. 373.
In France though there was some hostile criticism in the press, the prevailing sentiment seemed to be that Saloné had made the best of a bad bargain. On 21 March 1899, an agreement was finally signed. 1 France was obliged to renounce all claim to the Nile Valley and was excluded from Sahl al-Qasr. However, it managed to strengthen its position in west and central Africa where France was left undisturbed and the whole Sudan region from Darfur in the west to Lake Chad in the west. 2

With the agreement, the great Anglo/French struggle for the Upper Nile came to a close. Though the 1899 convention was by no means an adjustment of all the existing difficulties which contained the germ of war, 3 the advance of the French on the Nile was checked, and the treaty subsequently signed.

1 The text of both documents - the first convention concluded on 19 January 1899 and the second on 10 July 1899 - together with Grosser's highly important account of 10 November 1898, which was their genesis may be read in J.C. Grosser, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, a documentary record. (Princeton, New Jersey, 1956), Vol. I, pp. 210-218.

2 B.D. Rev. 24: 7/5.

3 This was because the convention had made no mention about British position in Egypt.
COME was the Senate Senate of 1964.
CONCLUSION

The Anglo/French colonial rivalry, not altogether a new phenomenon in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, reached its breaking point in the 1890’s over the question of the struggle for the Upper Nile. This new colonial rivalry between the Powers began in Egypt when that country was occupied by Britain in 1882. From Egypt the rivalry extended to the Upper Nile and finally culminated at Fashoda in 1896. The struggle began, both for the British and the French, with an acute territorial dispute with King Leopold and it developed over the years into the most important and critical phase of the Anglo/French dispute over Egypt.

As a result of the rise of a new age of imperialism especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, the French were anxious to acquire the Sudan for two main reasons. First of all, southern Sudan would have proved an invaluable link in their trans-African possessions.
in the affairs of Egypt throughout the 19th century continued to grow. With the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, France’s position was challenged; it was a rude blow which no French government could accept.

Successive French ministries tried to restore French influence in Egypt. This sentimental interest in Egypt was combined with a feeling of inferiority which dated from 1871 when France lost the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine to Germany. When Britain acquired control over the affairs of Egypt, France was excluded from its privileged position in that country and this setback was second to importance only to the humiliation inflicted by the Germans a decade earlier.

To the French people, the important question now was, as to where all these national humiliations would end. It was indeed a question of national honor and it was pride more than anything else which dictated that the French should not acquiesce in the British action. If Egypt was vital to Great Britain for strategic purposes, it was equally vital to France because of tradition and prestige.
a certain ministry, turned out sometimes in the same
year to be among the least important issues with an-
other. To take an example of the inconsistency in
French policy, Montalvi discovered to his horror in
1892 that as a result of a ministerial change, the
new colonial minister, Beulanger, knew nothing about
the former's mission which was at that time supposed
to be the great project in France's new political
move to re-open the Egyptian question with Britain.

It is also important to note that French
policy on the Upper Nile was dictated more by a
desire to restore the national pride than by any
rational assessment of their interests or even of
their diplomacy and military resources. It was,
therefore, not at all surprising that the outcome
of their policy turned to be sterile and self-
defeating.
a new and dynamic Egyptian policy. Its theory was that the only way to reopen the Egyptian question was by threatening Britain through occupying a strategic position in the Nile Valley. The plan put forward was, of course, to send an expedition to occupy Fashoda, in the Egyptian Sudan. But as matters turned out, only the brave French officials, Montel, Biotard and Marchand carried out their duties with any success. And it was Marchand, who, in the most difficult of circumstances in the interior of Africa with only a handful of Frenchmen, planted the French flag at Fashoda.

The French Government realised the importance of the diplomatic preparations but the only move in that field was that of lining up the Negus of Abyssinia on France's side. Moreover, the French programme organised through Abyssinia was characterised by the same traits which had earlier marked French action throughout. It was the inconsistency and the lack of continuity of French policy, their failure to provide enough funds to their expeditions on the Nile, their ignorance of actual circumstances in Africa and above all a want of realization of the effects of such a policy which not only wasted the
would have enabled her to force Britain to evacuate Egypt.

So the struggle for the mastery of the Nile Valley ended with the British victory in reality complete. Egypt had at last come in the hands of the British and by the 1899 agreement, the vast territory of the Sudan was to all intents and purposes placed under British administration. After years of diplomatic and military efforts, it was a crowning achievement for Britain because the settlement reached went far behind anything that was necessary for the defence of the Nile waters or indeed for defensive strategy in general.

In the long run, the Soudan crisis settled the question of Egypt and also that of the Upper Nile. It was clearly demonstrated at that moment that Britain would rather fight than be forced to evacuate Egypt against her will. The French attention was gradually diverted from Egypt to Morocco and the ensuing international situation made it necessary for both Britain and France to reach a greater understanding in their relations. However, it is worth noting that the accord which the two Powers finally
questions was saved rather by international considerations which brought about the final agreement.
Image of certain territories by Great Britain to the Congo State. West shore of Lake Albert and watershed between the Nile and the Congo.

**Article 1** - Great Britain grants a lease to H.M. King Leopold II, of the territories hereinafter defined, to be by him occupied and administered on the conditions and for the period of time hereafter laid down.

**Boundaries:** The territory shall be bounded by a line starting from a point situated on the west shore of Lake Albert, immediately in the south of Mahagi, to the nearest point of the frontier defined in paragraph (a) of the preceding Article. Thence it shall follow the watershed between the Congo and the Nile up to the 25th meridian east of Greenwich, and that meridian up to its intersection by the 10th parallel north, thence it shall run along that parallel directly to a point to be determined to the north of Pechuda. Thence it shall follow the "railway" of the Nile southward to Lake Albert, and the western shore of Lake Albert to the point above indicated south of Mahagi.

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1 The lease granted by this Article was annulled, except as regards the Lake Exclave and 25 km. strip, by the Agreement of May 1896. (See IBID.)
This lease shall remain in force during the reign of His Majesty Leopold II, Sovereign of the Independent Congo State.

Lease of Territory by Congo State to Great Britain between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Albert Edward.

Art. III. The Independent Congo State grants under lease of Great Britain to be administered when occupied, under the conditions and for a period hereafter determined, a strip of territory 25 km. in breadth, extending from the most northerly point on Lake Tanganyika, which is included in it, to the most northerly point of Lake Albert Edward.

This lease will have similar duration to that which applies to the territory to the west of the 30th meridian west of Greenwich.

Self-denying declaration.

Art. IV. His Majesty King Leopold II, recognises that he neither has nor seeks to acquire any political rights in the territory ceded to him under lease in the Nile Basin other than those which are in conformity with the present Agreement.

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1 This Article was withdrawn by a Declaration, signed 23rd June, 1894 (See J.C. Harewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, Princeton, 1935, Vol. I, pp. 219-220.)

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And whereas it is desired to give effect to the claim 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 said system of administration and legislation;

now it is hereby agreed and declared by and between the Undersigned, duly authorised for that purpose, as follow:-

ART. 1. The word "Soudan" in this Agreement means all the territories south of the 22nd parallel of latitude, which -

1. Have never been evacuated by Egyptian troops since the year 1882; or

2. Which, having before the late rebellion in the Soudan been administered by the Government of His Highness the Khedive
were temporarily lost to Egypt, and have been reconquered by Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government, acting in concert; or

3. Which may hereafter be reconquered by the two governments acting in concert.

Art. II. The British and Egyptian flags shall be used together, both on land and water, throughout the Soudan, except in the town of Khartum, in which locality the Egyptian flag alone shall be used.

Art. III. The supreme military and civil command in the Soudan shall be vested in one officer, termed the "Governor-General of the Soudan." He shall be appointed by Khedivial Decree on the recommendation of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, and shall be removed only by Khedivial Decree, with the consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

(There are nine more Articles in the agreement which deal with details of the regulation of law and good government of the Soudan.)


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CONCLUSION

The Anglo/French colonial rivalry, not altogether a new phenomenon in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, reached its breaking point in the 1890's over the question of the struggle for the Upper Nile. This new colonial rivalry between the Powers began in Egypt when that country was occupied by Britain in 1882. From Egypt the rivalry extended to the Upper Nile and finally culminated at Fashoda in 1896. The struggle began, both for the British and the French, with an obscure territorial dispute with King Leopold and it developed over the years into the most important and critical phase of the Anglo/French dispute over Egypt.

As a result of the rise of a new age of imperialism especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, the French were anxious to acquire the Sudan for two main reasons. First of all, southern Sudan would have proved an invaluable link in their trans-African possessions.
stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. However, the primary motive was to acquire control of the waters of the Upper Nile and thereby threaten Britain to evacuate Egypt. This can easily be deduced from the planning of the various French missions on the Nile, the aims and motives of which were not kept secret at all.

On the other hand, Britain was equally anxious not to allow any European Powers to hold the Upper Nile at its mercy and thereby threaten her position in Egypt and the Suez canal, and pause a problem for the British imperial strategy as a whole. The idea of acquiring control of southern Sudan and using it as a stepping-stone in the Cape to Cairo route was more sentimental than realistic. It was the former reason, namely the conviction that "whoever controlled the waters of the Upper Nile, controlled Egypt," which made the Nile Basin all the more important in British eyes. It was clear, therefore, that the Upper Nile problem was of deep significance for Britain and realizing all its ramifications,
in the affairs of Egypt throughout the 19th century continued to grow. With the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, France's position was challenged; it was a rude blow which no French government could accept.

Successive French ministries tried to restore French influence in Egypt. This sentimental interest in Egypt was combined with a feeling of inferiority which dated from 1871 when France lost the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine to Germany. When Britain acquired control over the affairs of Egypt, France was excluded from its privileged position in that country and this setback was second in importance only to the humiliation inflicted by the Germans a decade earlier.

To the French people, the important question now was, as to where all these national humiliations would end. It was indeed a question of national honor and it was pride more than anything else which dictated that the French should not acquiesce in the British action. If Egypt was vital to Great Britain for strategical purposes, it was equally vital to France because of tradition and prestige.
However, French policy in the Sudan lacked continuity and consistency and this was mainly because of the frequent changes of ministries which led to as many revisions of plans. Many a times a major issue like the Egyptian question, while being an important factor in French political history with a certain ministry, turned out sometimes in the same year to be among the less important issues with another. To take an example of the inconsistency in French policy, Montell discovered to his horror in 1892 that as a result of a ministerial change, the new colonial minister, Boulanger, knew nothing about the former's mission which was at that time supposed to be the great project in France's new political move to re-open the Egyptian question with Britain.

It is also important to note that French policy on the Upper Nile was dictated more by a desire to restore the national pride than by any rational assessment of their interests or even of their diplomacy and military resources. It was, therefore, not at all surprising that the outcome of their policy turned to be sterile and self-defeating.
to occupy Fashoda, in the Egyptian Sudan. But as matters turned out, only the brave French officials, Monteil, Édouard and Marchand carried out their duties with any success. And it was Marchand, who, in the most difficult of circumstances in the interior of Africa with only a handful of Frenchmen, planted the French flag at Fashoda.

The French Government realised the importance of the diplomatic preparations but the only move in that field was that of lining up the kings of Abyssinia on France’s side. Moreover, the French programme organised through Abyssinia was characterised by the same tracts which had earlier marked French action throughout. It was the inconsistency and the lack of continuity of French policy, their failure to provide enough funds to their expeditions on the Nile, their ignorance of actual circumstances in Africa and above all a want of realization of the effects of such a policy which not only wasted the
As far as Britain was concerned, she had made her position in Egypt quite firm by the late 1880's and all French obstructions proved an annoyance rather than a real hindrance to the British. The Upper Nile region had already acquired a great importance as far as the safety of Egypt and thereby the Suez canal was concerned. The issue was widely discussed and by 1896, not only Salisbury and his cabinet but also Lord Cromer, who had opposed the idea of reconquering the Sudan, were all in agreement to defeat thesandists and restore the Sudan to the Khedivial authority. The reconquest of the Sudan became a necessary undertaking and the only question that remained was with regards to the timing and the place from which the reconquest ought to have taken place. It was the Italian/Abyssinian war which accelerated the British plan.

Earlier, Britain had, by a series of accords with Italy, Germany and Belgium, staked off the Upper Nile region as a British sphere of influence. France realised the need to counter these diplomatic activities and it was Comité de l'Afrique française which was mainly responsible for spearheading the move for
worked out in 1904, which gave Britain a free hand in Egypt and which also gave France its compensation in Morocco, was not a result of any brilliant diplomatic move of France. The face of France in African questions was saved rather by international considerations which brought about the final agreement.
APPENDIX

A. The Anglo-Congolese Agreement (18th May, 1894)\(^1\)

His Majesty the King of the Belgians, Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo, having recognised the British sphere of influence, as laid down in the Anglo-Gordon Agreement of the 1st July 1890, Great Britain undertakes to give to His Majesty a lease of territories in the western Basin of the Nile, under the conditions specified in the following articles:

**Boundary north of German Sphere. Interseals between the Nile and the Congo.**

Art. 4 - (a) It is agreed that the sphere of influence of the Independent Congo State shall be limited to the north of the German sphere in East Africa by a frontier following the 30th meridian east of Greenwich upto its intersection by the watershed between the Nile and the Congo, and thence following this watershed in a northerly and northwesterly direction.

(b) (begin with the frontier between the Independent Congo State and the British sphere to the north of the Zambezi).

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Lease of certain territories by Great Britain to the Congo State. West shore of Lake Albert and watershed between the Nile and the Congo.

art. III

Great Britain grants a lease to H.M. King Leopold II. of the territories hereinafter defined, to be by him occupied and administered on the conditions and for the period of time hereafter laid down.

Boundaries: The territory shall be bounded by a line starting from a point situated on the west shore of Lake Albert, immediately in the south of Mabagi, to the nearest point of the frontier defined in paragraph (a) of the preceding article. Thence it shall follow the watershed between the Congo and the Nile up to the 25th meridian east of Greenwich, and west meridian up to its intersection by the 10th parallel north, whence it shall run along that parallel directly to a point to be determined to the north of Asahoda. Thence it shall follow the "shalweg" or the Nile southward to Lake Albert, and the western shore of Lake Albert to the point above indicated south of Mabagi.

1 The lease granted by this Article was annulled, except as regards the Lake and the 25° Am. strip, by the Agreement of May 1896. (See ibid.)
This lease shall remain in force during the reign of His Majesty Leopold II, Sovereign of the Independent Congo State.

Lease of Territory by Congo State to Great Britain between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Albert Edward.

Art. I. The Independent Congo State grants under lease of Great Britain to be administered when occupied, under the conditions and for a period hereafter determined, a strip of territory 25 km. in breadth, extending from the most northerly point on Lake Tanganyika, which is included in it, to the most southerly point of Lake Albert Edward.

This lease will have similar duration to that which applies to the territory to the west of the 30th meridian east of Greenwich.

Self-swaying declaration.

Art. IV. His Majesty King Leopold II recognises that he neither has nor seeks to acquire any political rights in the territory ceded to him under lease in the site basin other than those which are in conformity with the present Agreement.

1 This Article was withdrawn by a Declaration, signed 22nd June, 1894 (See Ibid., p. 984).
Art. V. (Deals with 'Telegraphic Communication.')
Art. VI. (Deals with 'Equality of Treatment in Territories leased.')

B. Agreement establishing a Condominium in the Sudan between and Egypt. (14 January 1899.)  

Whereas certain provinces in the Sudan which were in rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive have now been reconquered by the joint military and financial efforts of Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of His Highness the Khedive;

And whereas it has become necessary to decide upon a system for the administration of,


and for the making of laws for, the said reconquered provinces, under which due allowance may be made for the backward and unsettled condition of large portions thereof, and the varying requirements of different localities;

and whereas it is desired to give effect to 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 said system of administration and legislation;

now it is hereby agreed and declared by and between the Undersigned, duly authorised for that purpose, as follows:

Art. 1. The word "Soudan" in this Agreement means all the territories south of the 22nd parallel of latitude, which

1. Have never been evacuated by Egyptian troops since the year 1862; or

2. Which, having before the late rebellion in the Soudan been administered by the Government of His Highness the Khedive
3. Which may hereafter be reconquered by the two governments acting in concert.

Art. II. The British and Egyptian flags shall be used together, both on land and water, throughout the Soudan, except in the town of Suakin, in which locality the Egyptian flag alone shall be used.

Art. III. The supreme military and civil command in the Soudan shall be vested in one officer, termed the "Governor-General of the Soudan." He shall be appointed by Khedivial Decree on the recommendation of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, and shall be removed only by Khedivial Decree, with the consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

(There are nine more Articles in the agreement which deal with details of the regulation of law and good government of the Soudan.)
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