

WAS SAM'S INVASION OF AFRICA

RECENT EXPEDITION TO ABYSSINIA AND ITS PROBABLE EFFECT ON AMERICAN TRADE

WASHINGTON, Nov. 29.—(Special correspondence.)—Our Consul-General at Harar, Robert P. Skinner, is now on his way to Abyssinia to make a commercial treaty with King Menelik. He goes as a representative of the American Government on an American gunboat, and with a company of American marines. His route will be across the Mediterranean to the Suez Canal and down through the Red Sea to Jibouti, in French Somaliland. Here he will take the new railroad which was completed last year from Jibouti to Harar, in Southeast Abyssinia, a distance of 186 miles. At Harar he will make up a caravan of mules and camels to go across the country to the great camp-like capital of Addis Ababa, where King Menelik has his court. He will spend some time there making the treaty, and investigating trade conditions, and will then return to Europe or the United States.

America in Abyssinia.
This expedition will be of great advantage to American trade. It is the first government step in our commercial invasion of Africa, and it will probably be followed by others, which will give us our share in the foreign trade of that continent. Africa is three times as big as Europe, and its population, by some estimates, is almost as large. It already buys goods amounting to many millions of dollars, and prospectively it is one of our best customers. At present most of our exports go via Europe, but in the near future there will be lines of American steamers to the African ports and the trade will be direct.

American goods are already well known in Abyssinia. The people use American petroleum, and cottons to the amount of millions of dollars every year. It is estimated that one-third of all the goods imported by the Abyssinians come from the United States, and of these the cottons alone amount to \$5,000,000. Abyssinia has a population of 3,500,000. The people wear a sort of toga made of white or gray cotton. It is about nine feet long and six feet wide. They wear close-fitting cotton trousers and cotton shirts. Much of our goods is sold in the form of gray shirtings, and there are certain makes which are especially popular, being known by their trademarks. One of the marks is a camel, another a tiger's head, and a third a Somali warrior. At present the trade is dominated by a firm of Greeks in Marseilles, who buy directly from the Americans. They have a branch house in Wall street and ship from New York to Jibouti. They formerly bought most of their goods in Manchester, but the American cotton was found to be stronger, cheaper and more popular, and it now has the bulk of the trade, notwithstanding the English and Indian cottons attempt to compete with it.

A Merchant King.
The expedition to King Menelik is a happy thought. The King controls the trade of the country. He can put on tariffs or take them off at will, and can give all sorts of rebates to his favorites. He will probably make the treaty so that a good share of the profits of the business will come to him. I understand this is so of most of the Abyssinian trade. The King has an army of 150,000 men, and if the clothing for the soldiers could be made of American cotton it would materially increase our exports. Consul-General Skinner will bring back the patterns made by the people, and some of our factories may work directly for the trade. The Abyssinian women wear a mixture of blue and red cotton. They are fond of turkey red calico and have printed cotton handkerchiefs. Some of the Abyssinian home-made cottons are white with a red stripe 12 inches wide running through the middle of each piece. They could be easily imitated and sold at a profit.

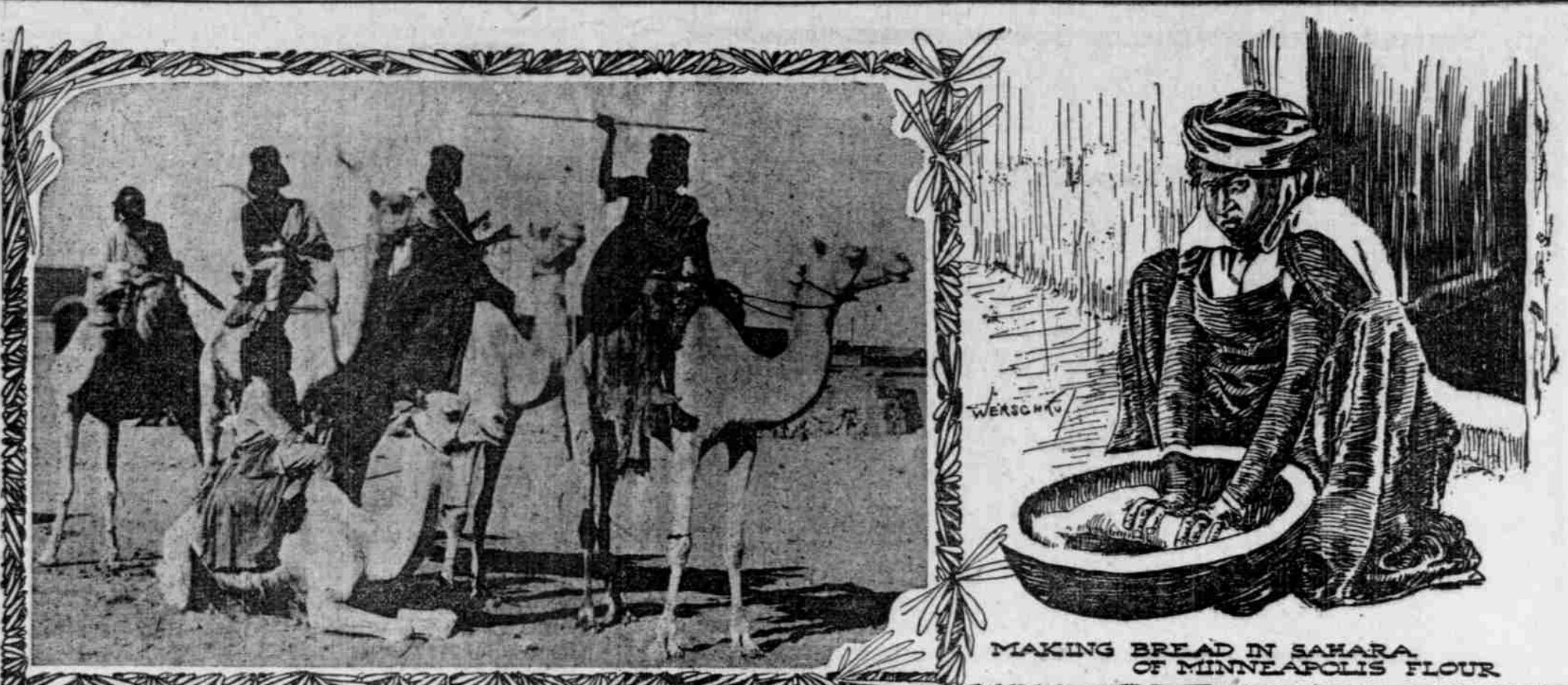
Yankee Goods in South Africa.
The American invasion of South Africa causes the British to grow more and more sleepless nights. The London papers are full of it and I saw frequent references to it in the journals of Belgium, Germany and France. Our trade there is growing about as rapidly as in any part of the world. We are now selling something like \$20,000,000 worth of goods every year to Natal, Cape Colony and the other countries of that region. This is more than we sell to all South America and more than our sales to China, the East Indies, Russia, Denmark, Spain, Austria and Norway and Sweden.

Not only that, but these countries are on the edge of their development. They are having an immense immigration from Europe; new farming territories are being opened up every day, new railroads are being built and public works instituted. Thousands of farmhouses which were destroyed during the Boer War are being rebuilt, and all sorts of farm machinery, American wagons are coming in demand. There is a market for corn-planters, harrows, cultivators, plows, reapers and mowers, threshers and all sorts of farm machinery. American goods are everywhere. The South Africans are using our locomotives on the railroads and have recently bought a lot of steel for their railways. They like our foodstuffs, and buy American flour and canned meats. Much of the American canned stuff goes to South Africa under English brands. Four million pounds of tinned meat were recently shipped from New York to London. They were rebranded Shamrock, an English trade mark, and sent on to Natal.

America in the Gold Mines.
I am told that American goods are found throughout the gold region. They are used in Kimberley, the diamond mining center, and have made their way right into the mine themselves. Much of the American territory there was opened up by American mining engineers, and these engineers early began the importation of American goods. Kimberley has ice plants from Chicago. It has a narrow-gauge railroad made of American rails laid on ties of California redwood, with locomotives that came from the United States. It has a big plant with an American manager, and the diamond mines themselves are in charge of an American.

The same is true of the gold mines. The Rand is not unlike parts of Nevada, and the prospecting is done with American diamond drills, which the miners say are "lighter than the English drills and more easily worked." Much of the ore is dug down with American picks, loaded up with American shovels, and carried through the tunnels over American rails. The timbering is done with carpenter tools from New England, and the American saw and the American ax being everywhere found.

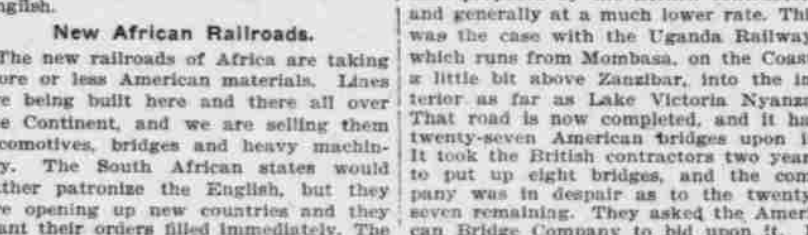
Our Trade Increasing.
What troubles the English and Germans is the steady gain in American trade. We are increasing our exports at the rate of 9 per cent and upward a year. In one year we gained \$300,000 in machinery and exportables, \$130,000 in household goods, and more than \$500,000 in iron. We are now shipping more flour than ever, sending it direct from New York and San Francisco to Cape Town and Durban. The flour goes in bags of 20 pounds or barrels of 136 pounds, but bags are preferred. We sell patent medicines in South Africa. Any drug store there will give you our liver pills, favorite soaps, refined castor oils and our best-known patent medicines. We sell electrical goods, typewriters, cash registers and musical instruments such as the phonograph and graphophone. There is a big demand for wire fencing and for galvanized iron sheets for roofing and building. This material is



MAKING BREAD IN SAHARA OF MINNEAPOLIS FLOUR



THE ABYSSINIANS WEAR AMERICAN COTTONS



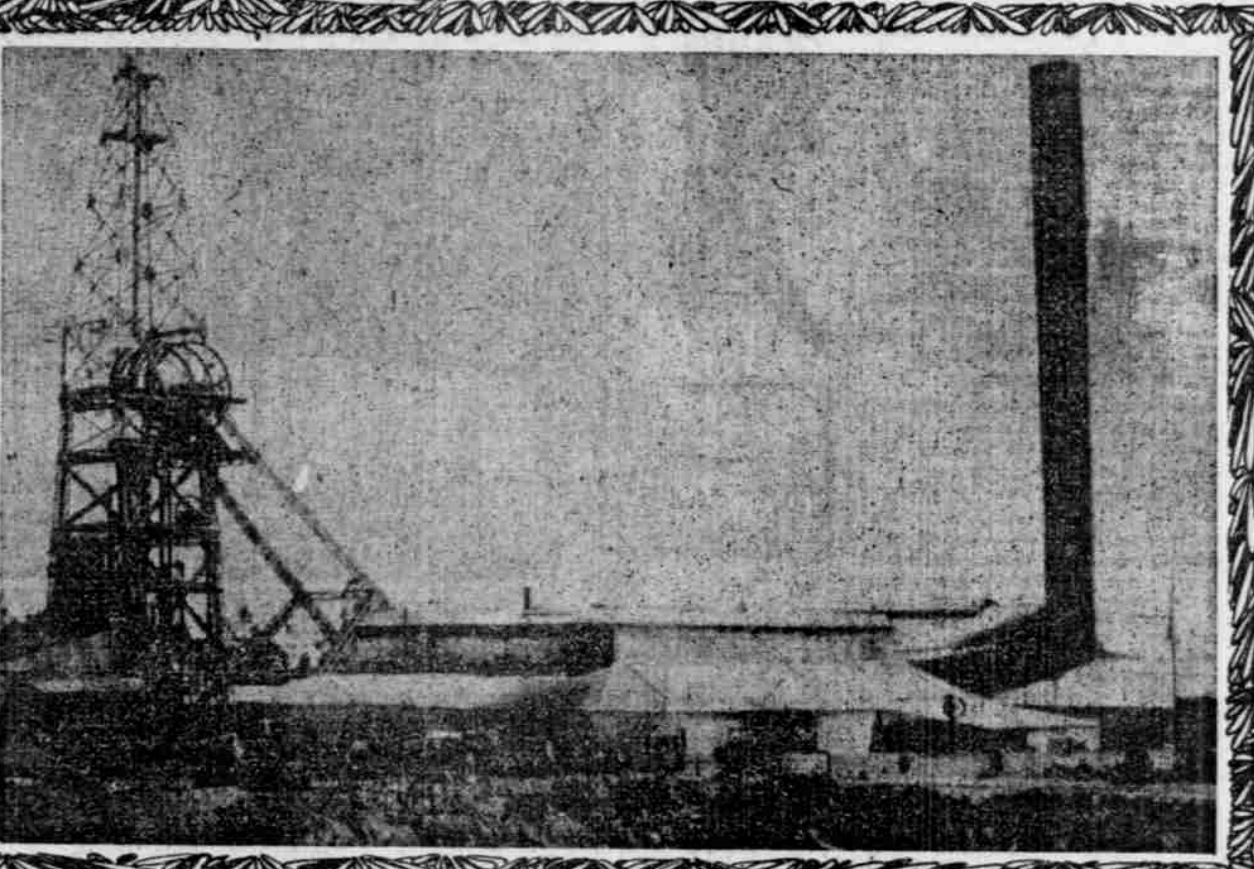
PROSPECTIVE AFRICAN CUSTOMER

RECOLLECTIONS OF THOMAS FITCH

A SUPERINTENDENT of a Lower California mine residing in San Diego, Cal., was approached by a half-breed, who represented himself as the friend and partner of several Indians, who had been mining near the Alamo. He stated that they had found an exceedingly rich vein of gold-bearing quartz, and that from a half ton of it they had panned out in a half hour about 80 pounds of pure gold, which they had melted into a crude bar; that the Mexican Government would not let them know of the find—permit the Indians to retain the gold, or hold the location; that the aborigines had, therefore, brought the gold brick up with them overland from Ensenada, and had it at their camp in the brush near Oceanside; that they desired to obtain the services of my friend in marketing the gold bar, and on securing title to the mine; that an superintendent of a rich mine could dispose of a bar of gold without exciting suspicion, and that his relations with the Mexican authorities were such that he would have no difficulty in locating and holding the mine, and the half-breed proposed that if he would take hold of the business they would give him for his services one-fourth the proceeds of the mine, and a one-fourth interest in the mine. He averred that they needed no money until the bar should be disposed of.

The story was entirely unlike the usual fairy tale about stolen bullion, and my friend accepted it as true, and went out to see the Indians. He found two of them camped in the chaparral near Oceanside. They were shy and suspicious and denounced their companion for bringing a stranger to the camp. They finally permitted their victim to take a look at the gold bar, which was wrapped in a grain sack and hidden under a manzanita bush. The answer to him was another day for another interview, when he would bring the necessary implements for sampling the bar. He was requested to bring at the same time a bottle of cough medicine, as one of the Indians was suffering from a severe cold.

When he returned the next day the noble red men had again suspicions. When the cough medicine was produced, the sick man expressed some doubts as to the motives of the stranger, and intimated that it might be poison with which he proposed to end their days so as to secure the gold bar. To dispel this unjust suspicion, the victim drank about one-third of the bottle of medicine, which was unpalatable in taste and unpleasant in consequences, but who shall shrink at stomach trouble when wealth will be the reward of sacrifice? With drill and chisel, the bar was sampled at each corner, and the bullion speculator departed with the chisel, and a one-fourth interest in the reward of sacrifice? With drill and chisel, the bar was sampled at each corner, and the bullion speculator departed with the chisel, and a one-fourth interest in the reward of sacrifice? With drill and chisel, the bar was sampled at each corner, and the bullion speculator departed with the chisel, and a one-fourth interest in the reward of sacrifice?



THE KIMBERLY DIAMOND MINES USE AMERICAN MACHINERY

had done, offering to complete the whole within seven months after the foundations were ready. The contract was accepted and the job was done on time. The bridges were built in Philadelphia and shipped in train steamer to Mombasa. American engineers superintended the work and East Indian coolies performed the hard labor. The Uganda Railroad is partially operated by American locomotives.

The Sudan Railroads.
A number of railroads are to be built in the Sudan, that wide strip of country which runs across Africa between the Sahara and the Congo Valley. The Egyptian Railway is to be extended south from Khartoum, and English and American capitalists are now having a railway surveyed from Khartoum to Addis Ababa, the capital of Abyssinia. If this is built it will be followed by a road connecting it with the French line at Harar, making a continuous road from Khartoum to Jibouti on the Red Sea. Other sections have been planned along the Cape to Cairo road, and the Germans are building a line from the coast opposite Zanzibar which will connect with that road somewhere in the vicinity of Lake Tanganyika. The French propose to continue the line which now runs from Algiers and Constantine to the oasis of Biskra, south to Lake Tchad or Timbuktu, across the Desert of Sahara, and there are several lines either planned or in construction from the Gulf of Guinea into the interior. The Belgians have some railroad projects along the Congo, the road which

No. XIV=Clever Crooks and Honest Men

ward toward the Mexican line, which was a few miles away. An hour or two afterwards we reached Charleston, where we were to stop for the night. "It is strange you did not know that man," said one of my companions; "he seemed to know you so well." "Oh, I knew him well enough," was my reply, and he knew that I knew him, the fearless devil. That was the outlaw, Curly Bill. "Why," said my companion, "there is \$200 reward offered by the territory and the Southern Pacific Company, and Wells-Fargo Company, for the capture of that man. And we could have taken him just as well as not, for his horse and arms and comrade were gone." "Yes," I answered, "and my wife was with them. Besides, I am no thief-taker, and owe no duty to either Wells-Fargo Company or the Southern Pacific Company."

Mr. Hunt was accused of assault with intent to murder, and being a very bad man, he hobbled into court with ankles encumbered with shackles. I demanded their removal. The presiding Judge refused my request. Thereupon I whispered to the defendant: "If you are convicted I will obtain a new trial, for it is your absolute right to be tried without irons." The jury disagreed, and the case was again set for trial. "You will not have this point next time," said I, "for the Judge will discover his error and will order your irons removed."

The prisoner was an illustration of the maxim that "a little learning is a dangerous thing." For a week afterward when his trial was called, he came into court with his right leg below the knee in the clasp of a heavy steel Oregon boot. "Didn't you ask the Sheriff to take that off?" said I. "He tried, but couldn't," said the prisoner. "I poured some shot into the key-hole so that the lock wouldn't work. Oh, I've got 'em dead to rights." "You are an idiot," I remarked. Just then the judge called me up to the bench. "You were right," said he, "the other day, and I directed the Sheriff to remove the prisoner's irons. He tells me that the defendant has been tampering with them, and that the steel boot cannot be removed without cutting it off with a cold chisel, and that will take a day. I do not feel justified in delaying the trial, and if you demand the removal of the irons I shall be compelled to state the reason why they were not removed—maybe you had better not call attention to the matter." I thought so, too, and the prisoner was again tried in irons.

This time the jury acquitted him and he was free to go. He limped into the Sheriff's office and said, "I suppose you want this Oregon boot." "Well," drawled the Sheriff, "it will have to be cut off. It will be destroyed in doing it. We will take a blacksmith a day to do the job; there are no county funds available to pay him and I don't feel inclined to contribute any funds myself. Besides there is nothing mean about the

of the Congo and the Dutch also take a share of the trade. The chief English shippers are Elder, Dempster & Co. This firm sends steamers to most of the ports on the West Coast, and it is trying to develop the trade that they can carry to Liverpool in every possible way. It has recently opened up cotton plantations in Lagos, and has brought cotton experts from America to oversee them. The same has been done by the Germans, the latter having taken negroes from Booker T. Washington's school at Tuskegee to teach the people how to handle the cotton.

This experiment, as far as the English colonies are concerned, is not new. It was tried during our Civil War when prices went skyward. The result was a shipment of 1700 bales in 1864 and of 15,000 bales in 1865. Shortly after that the business began to decline. It fell to 574 bales in 1869, rose to 3000 bales in 1870, and dropped to one bale only in 1871. Since then but a few hundred bales have been annually exported. The cotton from West Africa is of the short-staple variety. It has a poor color and it does not bring as much as middling American cotton. The British ship owners claim that they can carry it to Liverpool as cheaply as cotton can be brought from America, for the reason that they can take back full cargoes of manufactures to Africa, whereas the return cargoes to the United States are light.

Our Liberian Commerce.
One would think that the United States ought to have the bulk of the trade of Liberia. It has not as much as Great Britain. The country is comparatively poor and its total imports amount to only \$1,000,000 a year. The population numbers 2,000,000, but only 60,000 of these are of American descent, and so far our colonizing schemes have not been a success. In Liberia all accounts are kept in American dollars and cents, and the most common money is English. The Germans are doing what they can to get the trade. They are now sending two steamers a week from Hamburg, and the Dutch have also established direct steamship connections.

We have some trade with the French Congo, and quite a good deal in the way of cotton goods with the Congo Free State. Still farther south American cotton is used in the Portuguese territories, and American tobacco is to be found almost everywhere. It is used for chewing, snuffing and smoking in the Congo Valley, being sent there in a leaf shape. It is smoked in cigarettes and cigars throughout South Africa. 175,000,000 cigarettes being annually imported by one firm alone.

The African Mediterranean.
There is a big chance to increase our trade on the African Mediterranean. American cotton goods can be sold in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, and also Tripoli and Egypt.

At present the French have the bulk of the trade of Northwest Africa. They have built up a big business in Algeria. When they took possession of that country in 1830 their annual exports to it were only \$1,500,000. They are now more than \$20,000,000 every year.

The French are colonizing the country, building roads and railroads, opening up its wheat fields and making it one of the great food-supply points of the republic. Our exports to Algeria are now worth about \$3,000,000 annually. They are made up of tools of all kinds, including reapers and mowers, threshers and portable engines.

It is the same in Tunisia, which also belongs to France. We annually sell \$125,000 worth of agricultural machinery to that country, and also quantities of tobacco, pork, corn and petroleum. The Tunisians use American saws and carpenter tools and all sorts of American hardware.

The Egyptian Market.
The biggest market of this part of the world, however, is Egypt. That country is controlled by England, and is nominally under the Sultan, and the United States is now getting a fair share of its trade. The building of the Atbara bridge was a great object lesson to the English engineers, and much of our machinery is now being used. The new railroads have 200 American cars and quite a number of American engines. Egypt is largely irrigated with American petroleum; it takes thousands of acres of American cotton, a small amount of American cotton. There is, however, no American house in Egypt, and such business as is done is through foreign importers.

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