

# FARMING LIFE IN NILE LAND

### Infernal Torment the Fellah's Lot Since Prehistoric Times—Poorest American a Nabob by Comparison—Better Day Coming.

Interrupting now the series on Egypt, Mr. Haskin's article on the great Pan-Protestant Alliance will be published in the issue which will open on New York Monday. Besides stating the objects of the alliance and details of its organization and growth, Mr. Haskin takes occasion to review the life, labor and philosophy of John Calvin, the founder of Protestantism.

**By FREDERIC J. HASKIN.**  
(Copyright 1909 by Frederic J. Haskin.)  
Washington, June 12.—An axiom of agricultural America is that a look at the land is a key to the welfare of the tillers of the soil. If the "dirt" is rich its productivity is always reflected in the prosperity of the farming community. This is not true of Egypt. The soil of the Nile valley has responded liberally to every tickling of the hoe for seventy centuries, yet the vast majority of those who farm its fertile acres today live in mud huts. The explanation lies partly in the fact that the population of Nileland has always been dense, but in a greater measure the condition of the Egyptian farmer is due to his having been oppressed by despotic rulers and unequal taxation since prehistoric times. Singularly enough the reign of Ismail Pasha, who reduced the fellahs to the greatest extreme of poverty, opened the way for the ultimate deliverance of the Egyptian farmer from everlasting bondage.

**Graft is Prehistoric.**  
In a purely agricultural country it is difficult for bad government to bring about ruin to the people as long as the tyrant is unable to raise funds save by extorting money from his subjects. When oppression becomes intolerable there is a change of government and quick recovery. It was when Ismail Pasha learned how to borrow money in Europe, upon his own credit, that the people found themselves under a debt which their descendants must pay. But for 7000 years before Ismail's reign, bad government had always made the farmers the bearers of the financial burdens of Egypt and extending to the throne. Today the English point with pride to

the fact that the fellah approaches the dawning of a better day.  
Even the "Corvee" Ameliorated.  
Formerly the Egyptian farmer was plagued with the "corvee" when he protested against paying ruinous taxes, part of which the tax collector stole and the rest of which went to the khedive. Even so recent a ruler as Ismail used the corvee whenever he needed money. The farmer was also driven by the whip to labor upon public works or till crown lands, or the lands of court favorites, without pay. Nowadays taxes are levied on the land in European countries, and the system of graft is obsolete. All that is left of the corvee, the system of enforced labor is that the fellahs must guard his dykes during the season of inundation. The introduction of modern irrigation has greatly reduced the need for labor on the dykes. It is believed that within a few years it will not be necessary to call out the corvee except in seasons of exceptionally high Nile. In 1901, for the first time in the history of the country, no corvee was called out north of Cairo.

**Farming as in Ramesses' Time.**  
But up to the present time the benefits have accrued to the Egyptians have not visibly affected the nature of farming operations. While there are exceptions to the rule, the Egyptian farmer to-day is no different from the one who was during the first dynasty. Looking upon the remarkably preserved features of Ramesses' time in the National museum in Cairo, it is difficult to realize that thousands of years ago the Egyptian farmer was a different man from the one who is to-day. Looking from a car window at the Nile valley farmer sowing his crops, he is more difficult to realize that this is the Twentieth century and that he is cultivating land that grows from two to four crops a year.

**"Shadoof" Man at Work.**  
Along the canals that convey water from the Nile to the farms there are seen the same devices for lifting water that were used in the most ancient monuments of Egypt were built. The shadoof is a contrivance consisting of a pole which rests upon a pivot, with a bucket at one end and a weight at the other. The man at the shadoof dips water from the canal, bucketful by bucketful, into a smaller canal, or into a smaller canal 15 feet above the level of the larger one. He works for 10 cents a day, and he is not paid for his labor. He seldom misses a day's work and rarely proves unreliable in any way. For countless generations of oppressed ancestors he inherits patience, humbleness and habits of hard labor. He has never known a day when he is not at work, and he is not at all envious of the American working man who would spend for tobacco.

**Invented by Old Archimedes.**  
Another apparatus for lifting water to the fields is the screw of Archimedes. The name suggests its ancient origin. It is a wooden tube with a spiral flange inside, and is turned by a wheel. It brings a stream of water to a level about two feet higher than its lower end. The more prosperous farmers employ water wheels. The patient water buffalo turning the water wheel without being driven, is as dependable, and almost as poorly fed, as the fellah who works at the shadoof. He, too, inherits the instinct of unceasing toil. Sometimes two buffaloes, or a buffalo and a camel, are used to turn a water wheel. There are a few wealthy landowners, for the most part, in the Nile valley who are using steam pumps, but the farmers who employ modern methods of getting water from the irrigation ditches are still a small minority.

**Guarding the Dykes.**  
One advantage possessed by the Nile valley farmer is that he does not have to wait upon rain. Like the man who cultivates the reclaimed soil of the irrigated southwest, he can count upon a certain quantity of products, representing the net result of soil and sun and of water applied in the right quantity and at the right time. But during the period of the greatest inundation the Egyptian farmer must be upon his

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IF HE GIVES TO CHARITY, IT IS FOR SHOW, AND IF HE DOES NOT GIVE HE IS A STINGY CUSS. IF HE DIES YOUNG, THERE WAS A GREAT FUTURE BEFORE HIM, AND IF HE LIVES TO AN OLD AGE HE MISSED HIS CALLING. IF HE IS ACTIVE IN RELIGION, HE IS A HYPOCRITE, AND IF HE TAKES NO INTEREST IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS HE IS A HARDENED-SINNER. IF HE SHOWS AFFECTION, HE IS A SOFT SPECIMEN, AND IF HE SHOWS NONE HE IS A COLD PROPOSITION.

IN ORDER TO ENJOY LIFE PROPERLY AND TO BE ALWAYS HEALTHY HE MUST EAT, SMOKE WHEN HE WANTS TO, SEE THAT THE AIR IS PROPERLY STERILIZED BEFORE BREATHING AND DRINK "RHEINGOLD."

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## ENGINEER'S REPORT ON STEAM ROLLERS

City Engineer Recommended the Buffalo Pitts Rollers in Preference to Others.

**Roller Report.**  
June 11, 1909.  
Committee of Streets of the Executive Board, Gentlemen:  
In the matter of road rollers I wish to report that owing to delay in the arrival of 10-ton gasoline rollers I was not able to get the different rollers together for the purpose of making a test until May 12. The following morning, between Front and Ohio streets has a 30 per cent grade and has recently been improved with crushed rock and filled with sand. The Contractor Supply company furnished a Monarch roller, standard 10 tons with rear rollers 66 inches in diameter. The Barber Asphalt roller was able to climb the grade to within about 100 or 110 feet from the top of the hill, but could get no further. The Buffalo Pitts roller, however, was able to climb the grade to the top of the hill, and was able to descend the grade without any difficulty. The Buffalo Pitts roller, therefore, is much more powerful than the Monarch roller. I suggested to Mr. Evans, manager of the Buffalo Pitts company, to send one of his rollers with a 20 inch face in order to make a fair comparative test. The following morning Mr. Evans sent out a Buffalo Pitts roller with rear rollers of 18 inch face. Beal & Co. also sent out a 10 ton gasoline motor roller. The Barber Asphalt company sent out a 10 ton Iroquois roller, this roller, however, not being new but having seen considerable service. The gasoline roller went up the 20 per cent grade occupying 5 minutes in length. The same Monarch Pitts roller, with 18 inch face rear rollers, was not able to ascend the grade but when the Barber Asphalt roller was sent out it was able to ascend the grade as far as the Monarch, while the Iroquois roller only ascended about 60 feet and then the roller took a sharp turn in returning home met with an accident, getting away from the engineer and running into a telephone pole breaking the casting, necessitating sufficient delay in which to get these repairs made. On May 28 on East Sixth street from Hawthorne north I tried out four rollers in picking up an old gravel street. Each roller was given a separate block same on each. The gasoline roller did not do as much good in picking up the street as the other rollers. It was possibly owing to the fact that their picks were quite short, about three inches in length. The heavy Buffalo Pitts roller was also tried out on another block. The Buffalo Pitts Roller company furnished one Standard 10 ton roller, actual weight claimed 12 tons, and also furnished a nominal eight ton roller which they claim the actual weight is 30,000 pounds. On May 29 the rollers were tested with top surface crushed rock street having bank gravel screeners for a filler. Each roller was given a block and the conditions were practically the same on each. Owing to a meeting I was unable to be present at the time the rollers were tested. The report of Mr. Hanson, deputy engineer, who made a report on the same of which is attached hereto. Each of the steam rollers was given 400 pounds of coal. They were in operation three hours and seven minutes in using up this coal, and in the same time according to Mr. Hanson's report, the gasoline roller used up 9.3 gallons of gasoline. The cost of the fuel for each of the steam rollers was \$1.50 during this time, while the cost of the gasoline was \$1.42. The heavy Buffalo Pitts roller made very much better time than either of the other rollers and did effective

work. The lighter Buffalo Pitts followed next, and then the Monarch. Based on this report it would appear that the Buffalo Pitts heavy roller, or what is known as the Standard 10 ton roller, would be the most economical for the city to purchase. If the board has decided to purchase one of these rollers I would recommend that the rear rollers have a 24 inch face. Yours respectfully,  
CITY ENGINEER.  
Order of Executive Board.  
Portland, Or., June 11.—To the Ex-

ecutive Board of the City of Portland: Gentlemen: Your committee on streets to whom was referred the annexed bids for furnishing road rollers having had the same under consideration, respectfully recommend that the city purchase one Buffalo Pitts 10 ton road roller, weight 24,000 pounds, at \$3250. Also one gasoline road roller at \$3150, upon condition that satisfactory guarantee is made that the quantity of gasoline required to operate the road roller shall not exceed 15 gallons for each eight hours' operation and that the said roller prove satisfactory after 30 days' trial, and that all other bids for furnishing said road rollers be rejected and the certified checks submitted with the rejected proposals be returned to the respective bidders. Respectfully submitted,  
ISAAC SWEET,  
Committee on Streets.  
It will be noted that the executive board ordered the Buffalo Pitts roller direct without any conditions, while the gasoline machine was taken on 30 days' trial, during which its consumption is not to exceed 15 gallons per day.

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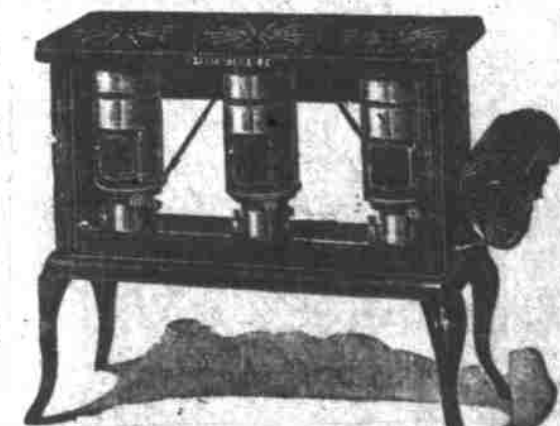
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