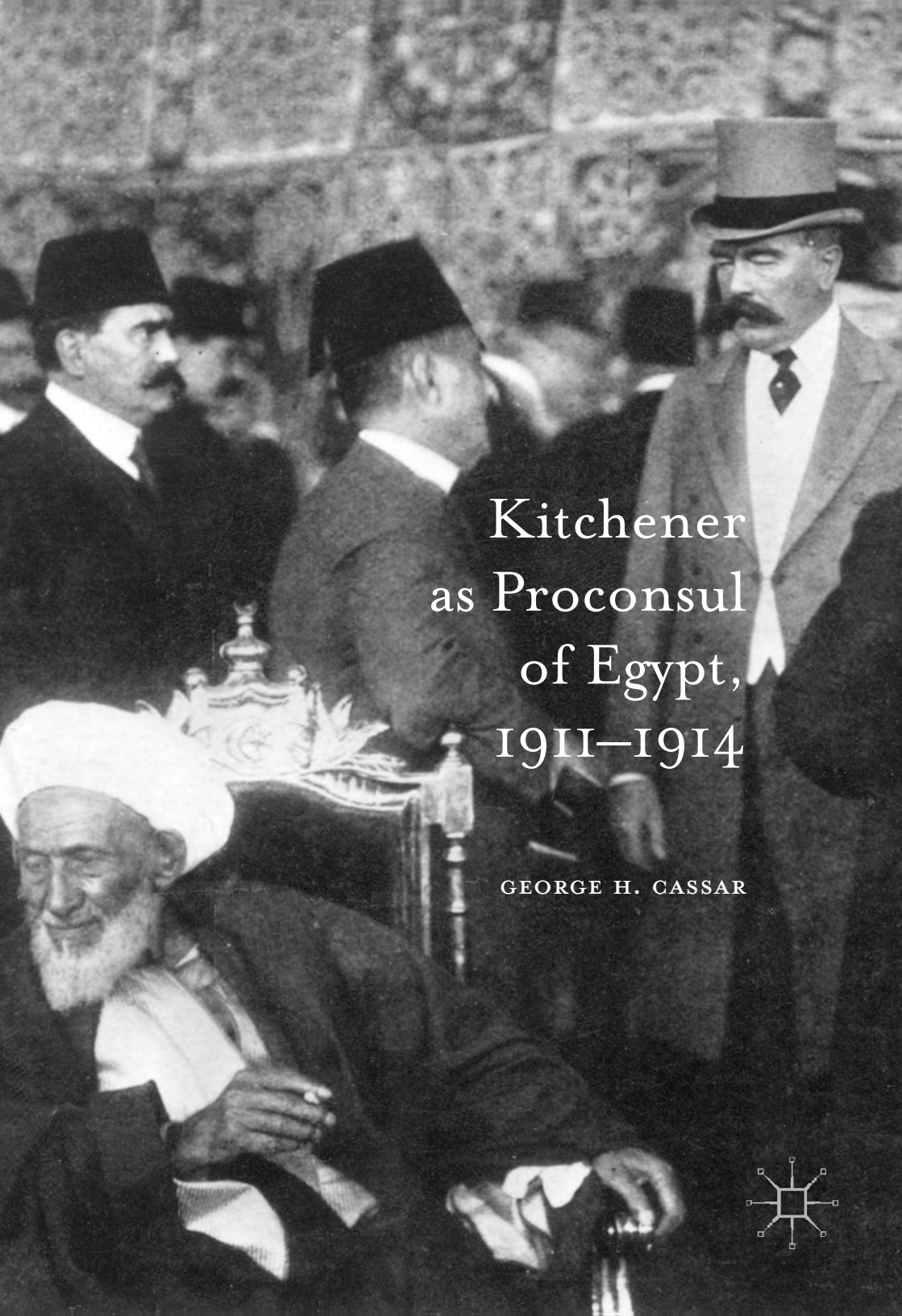


Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914

GEORGE H. CASSAR

Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914

George H. Cassar

Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914

palgrave
macmillan

George H. Cassar
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan, USA

ISBN 978-3-319-39362-9 ISBN 978-3-319-39363-6 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016948401

Cover illustration: © Chronicle/Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

To the memory of my parents

Preface

This is my third major work on Kitchener, not to mention that l also wrote an equal number of books in which he was one of the principal characters. If he has absorbed my attention for much of my professional career, it is because I can think of no other figure in British Imperial history as well known, fascinating and controversial. He became a legend in his lifetime through his spectacular achievements in the outer outposts of the Empire and exercised a hold over the British public such as few Englishmen since Wellington have enjoyed. When Britain entered the war in August 1914, Kitchener was appointed Secretary for War. Although in office for only two years before his tragic death, he already had laid the foundations for the eventual victory of the Allies.

As might be expected, there have been numerous biographies on Kitchener and studies concentrating on aspects of his life, but one important period that continued to be neglected was his tenure as Consul-General in Egypt between 1911 and 1914. It was for that reason that I undertook this study. I had three objectives in mind when I began my research. The first obviously was to cast additional light on an area overlooked in Kitchener's life and service. The second was to draw attention to his major contribution to a chapter in the history of modern Egypt. The third was to depict the role he played in the Arab-speaking areas of the Ottoman Empire until he left Egypt in the summer of 1914. His following activities in that part of the world deepened but lie outside the scope of this study. I eventually hope to produce a full account of Kitchener's involvement in the Middle East, focusing on the period between 1914 and 1916 and concluding by analyzing his impact in shaping the post-war

history of the Middle East. The rise of the Middle East in world affairs began during World War I and Kitchener played a decisive role in that ascendency.

A seasoned and successful military campaigner, Kitchener was equally at ease as a diplomat and administrator. As an avowed imperialist, he saw no conflict between the interests of Britain and the aspirations of the people it governed. He was scrupulously honest, fair-minded, patient, unpretentious and accessible to all elements of Egyptian society. He cared about the development of Egypt, worked hard and successfully to improve the welfare of the poor and, in carrying out his administrative responsibilities, respected the culture and religion of the people. He arrived in Egypt when British prestige was at a low point on account of his predecessor's unpopular policies. He quickly restored political stability, created conditions that bolstered the economy, and introduced a wave of reforms that has rarely, if ever, been matched in any comparable period in the history of modern Egypt. It is important to bear in mind that his lengthy list of accomplishments occurred within a three-year term which makes his legacy all the more remarkable. Praised and revered by the native population, he was remembered nostalgically long after his death.

For someone who had such an active life in the service of king and country, it is regrettable that Kitchener did not make more of an effort to preserve important papers. He was careless with his personal and official correspondence and what letters he kept seemed to be based more on chance than on design. The one thing that strikes a researcher poring over his collection at the British National Archives is the paucity of material during certain periods of his career. Unfortunately this is the case for the packet of papers covering his time in Egypt as Proconsul. Indeed it would have been impossible to write this study without the almost daily exchange of memos and private messages between him and Sir Edward Grey of the Foreign Office and, to a lesser extent, his letters to intimate friends and the observation of his trusted subordinates in correspondence with their relatives.

Acknowledgements

Many individuals and institutions have contributed to the preparation of this study. While I would like to think that I am as familiar with Kitchener as anyone living today, I am, by comparison, a relative novice when it comes to the history of Egypt under British Occupation. My main guide as the work progressed was Dr. Janice Terry, a long-time colleague and dear friend and one of the leading authorities on the history of modern Egypt. She was always available to answer questions or provide advice and frequently brought to my attention scholarship in related fields. Moreover, she read a late draft of this work, offered detailed marginal corrections and comments and helped me redefine and develop my ideas. I owe her an immense debt of gratitude. Needless to say she is not responsible in any way for the opinions and conclusions I expressed in this book.

Others provided assistance as well. I am obliged to my professional colleagues Dr. Steven Ramold, Dr. John Knight, Dr. Jesse Kauffman, Dr. Roger Long, and Dr. Russell Jones for assisting in a variety of ways. Renowned scholar Professor Arthur Goldschmidt kindly took the trouble to supply me with valuable ideas, information and suggestions, as well as a long list of recently published sources on Egyptian history that related to the Kitchener era. My former student assistant for many years, Matt Penix (now a PhD candidate) wrote a first rate MA thesis on the pre-war Ottoman Empire from which I greatly benefited and during the summer break from the university carried out a number of mundane but time-consuming tasks on my behalf. Although I do not know Dr. Ann Elizabeth Mayer, I consulted her lengthy and well-researched PhD thesis at the University of Michigan, and the least I can do is to express

my gratitude to her here. Her work is the only detailed study of Abbas Hilmi in English and was especially helpful in one of my chapters. Mrs. Rachel M. Trudell-Jones drew the maps with great care, thought and diligence. Jack Etsweiler, Senior Secretary of the Department, and Rachelle Marshall, Assistant Secretary, showed extraordinary patience in carrying out my endless requests. My son Michael assembled the illustrations and John Shubsda enhanced the quality of those that required it. The late and last Lord Kitchener was always eager to assist whenever I approached him and his niece Lady Emma Kitchener Fellowes extended the same courtesy by making it possible for me to contact the descendants of the Field Marshal's siblings. Finally I would like to thank the anonymous reader for his helpful comments.

During my research the personnel in the archives and libraries attended to my requests with unfailing kindness and patience. While it is impossible to mention them all, I would like to single out the following: Colin Harris, Superintendent of the Special Collections Reading Rooms at the Bodleian Library, Oxford; William Spencer, Principal Military Specialist at the British National Archives; Lianne Smith, Archives Service Manager at King's College, London; Pamela Clark, Register at the Royal Archives, Windsor; Anna Sander, College Archivist and Curator of manuscripts at Balliol College, Oxford; Vicki Perry Head of Archives and Historic Collections at Hatfield House; Debbie Usher, Archivist at the Middle East Centre, St Anthony's College, Oxford; Alexandra Healy, Collections Assistant, Mount Stuart Trust, Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute; Andrew Powers, Assistant Librarian at Eastern Michigan University; Jonathan Rogers, Head Near East Division and Sigrid Anderson Cordell, Librarian for English and History, at the Hatcher Library, University of Michigan; and Tim Utter, Manager of the Clark Library (located in the Hatcher Library). To each I owe my heartfelt thanks.

The following institutions have generously given me permission to reproduce quotations from material to which they own the copyright: the Trustees of Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives; the management of the Bodleian Library and the Bute Archive at Mount Stuart. Special thanks are due to Lord Salisbury for allowing me to examine Kitchener's letters to Lady Salisbury. Material from the Royal Archives is reproduced by the gracious permission of Her Majesty the Queen; and Crown Copyright material in the British National Archives is reproduced by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. I have not been able to trace all the copyright holders and I apologize to any not contacted.

My extensive trips to the UK were made possible by grants from Eastern Michigan University and the Earhart Foundation. Additionally, Eastern bore the costs of the maps and most of the illustrations and provided me with a leave from my teaching responsibilities to enable me to complete the writing phase of this book. For helping to expedite matters at Eastern I would like to express my debt to Dr. Thomas Venner, Dean of Arts and Science.

As usual my wife Mary gets a special note of thanks for her patience during the times when I was abroad doing research, in my office glued to my computer or unable to fulfil my domestic duties.

Contents

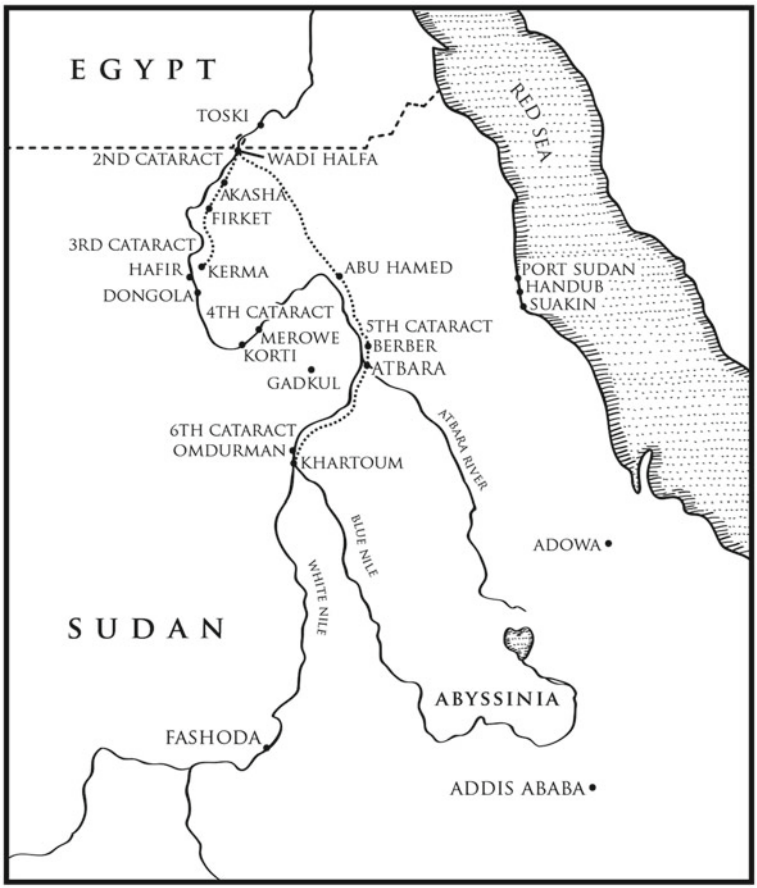
Note on Transliteration

Generally in the text I have followed a simple transliteration of proper Arabic names in the form I am familiar with from my reading over the years and as they appear in most English publications. Moreover, while I recognize that Ottoman rather than Turkish is technically the correct practice when referring to the government or army, I have, like British Imperial officials serving in the Middle East at the time, used the terms interchangeably.

List of Figures

Maps

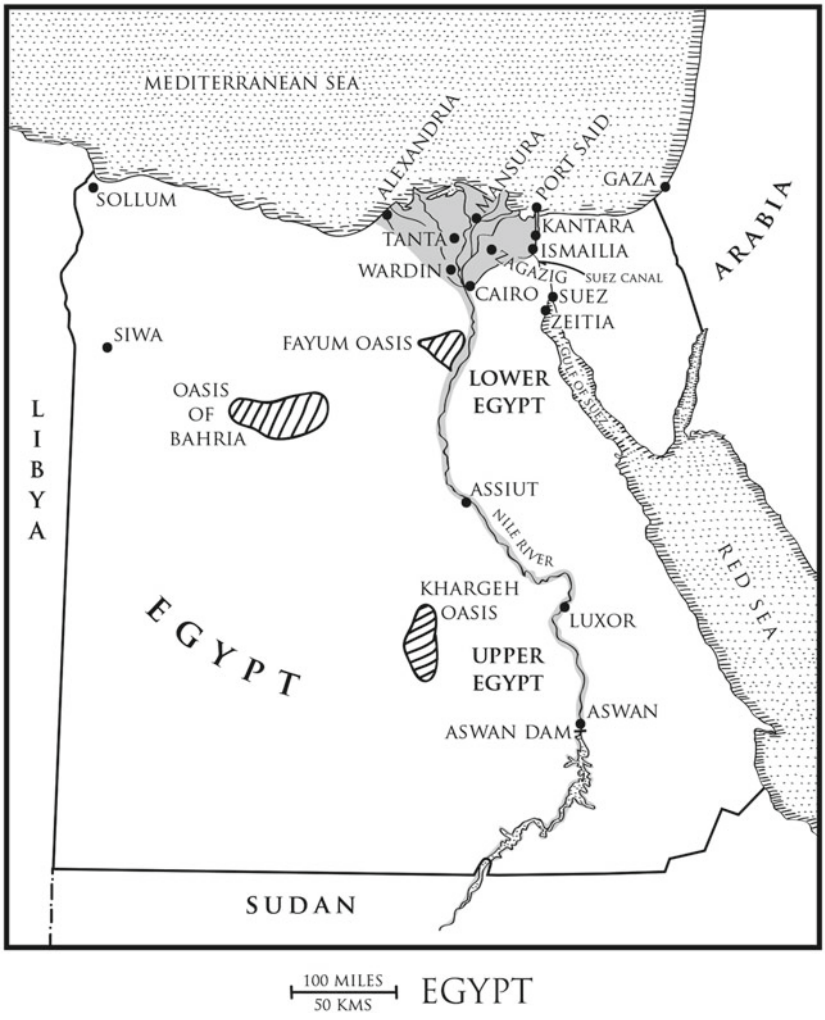
Sudan Campaign, 1896–1898



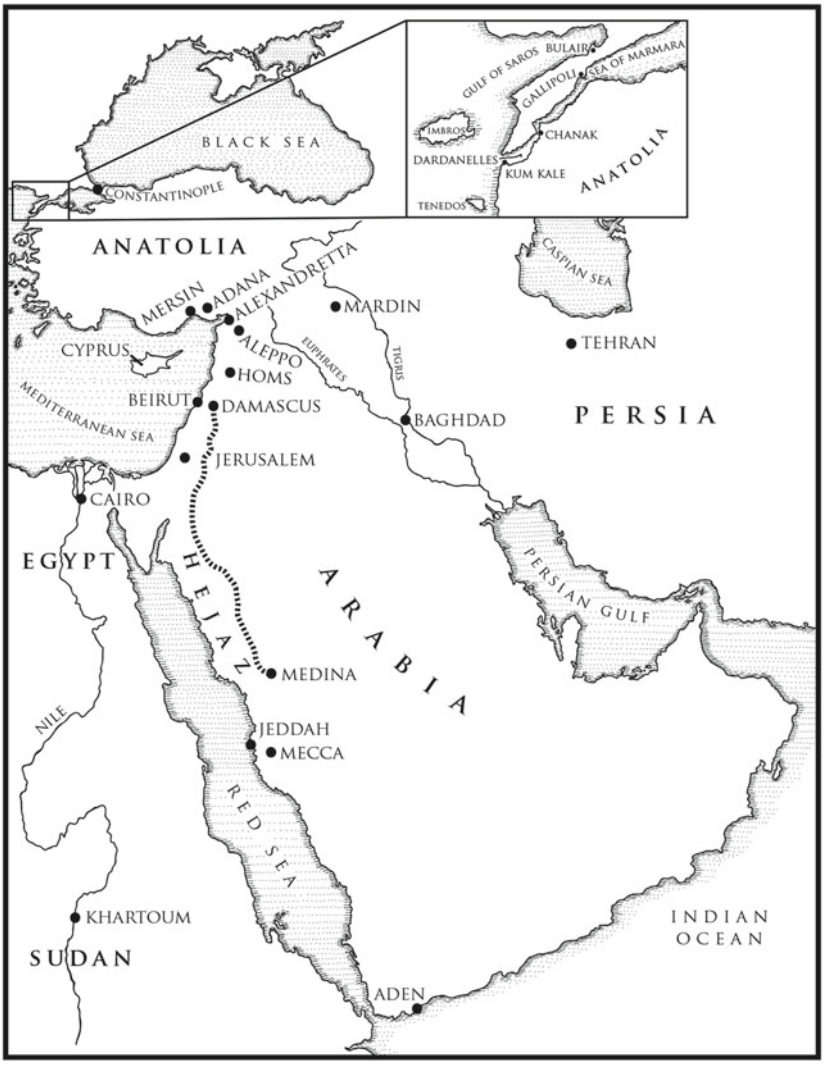
Libya


MEDITERRANEAN SEA
TRIPOLI
BENGAZI
TOBRUK
TRIPOLI
CYRENAICA
LIBYA
LIBYA
200 MILES

Egypt


MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ALEXANDRIA
MANSURA
PORT SAID
GAZA
SOLLUM
KANTARA
TANTA
ISMAILIA
ZAGAZIG
SUEZ CANAL
WARDIN
CAIRO
SUEZ
ZEITIA
ARABIA
SIWA
FAYUM OASIS
OASIS OF BAHRIA
LOWER EGYPT
GULF OF SUEZ
LIBYA
ASSIUT
NILE RIVER
RED SEA
KHARGEH OASIS
LUXOR
EGYPT
UPPER EGYPT
ASWAN
ASWAN DAM
SUDAN
100 MILES
50 KMS
EGYPT

The Hejaz, Arabia, Syria, Anatolia (now Turkey)



THE HEJAZ, ARABIA, SYRIA AND ANATOLIA (PRESENT DAY TURKEY)

400 MILES
600 KMS

CHAPTER 1

From Birth to the End of Military Service

Horatio Herbert Kitchener came from a respectable English family of moderate means. His father, Henry Horatio Kitchener, chose the army as his career and saw service in the Indian Army, eventually reaching the rank of lieutenant-colonel. At the age of 39, Henry, then a captain, married 19-year-old Frances Anne, nicknamed, "Fanny," daughter of a Suffolk vicar, in July 1845. As he was on leave, Henry, accompanied by his bride, returned at once to India. The climate of India did not suit Fanny, whose health deteriorated, leading Henry to bring her and their first born back home in 1847 and going on half-pay. Unable to find military employment in England after months of fruitless inquiry, the Colonel sold his commission and decided to start a new life in Ireland. At the time Ireland was still reeling from the failure of the potato crop—the staple food of most of the people—which had brought death, starvation, misery and ruin to hundreds of thousands. As a result the estates of bankrupt landlords were going cheaply. At a cost of £3000 the Colonel secured a 2000 acre estate called Ballygoghlan, near Listowel, County Kerry, in the south of Ireland. It was here that his third child and second son, Horatio Herbert, was born on 24 June, 1850.[1] His first name was borrowed from his father, though the family always called him Herbert.

The Colonel's estate was run down and the house itself was in such a state of disrepair that it required alterations before the family could move in. The Colonel skillfully managed his property, adding productive land by constructing an efficient drainage system, introducing up-to-date

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_1

agricultural techniques, setting up a brick factory and breeding horses. In 1857 the Colonel was in good enough financial shape to purchase a second estate in Kerry, located a mile from the village of Kilflyn, half way between Listowel and Tralee. Built during the reign of Charles I, Crotta House, with its large garden, finely-timbered grounds and view of the broom-covered Kerry Hills, was grander than Ballygoghlan. The Kitchener family settled in Crotta House but in the summer spent time at Ballygoghlan which the children preferred.

The Colonel ran his household with order and discipline as though it were a small military unit. His five children were assigned various tasks on the estate and were taught to be proud of their English heritage, adhere to a strict code of honor, fear God and revere the Queen and Country. The children rarely quarreled and led sheltered lives with few toys and no outside playmates. Young Herbert was said to be sensitive and shy, tended to be aloof and keep to himself and, apart from his obvious deep love for his mother, rarely betrayed his emotions.

The Colonel was an eccentric and one of his strange notions was the belief that schools had no merit. He employed tutors to educate his children. It was not an ideal solution, at least in this case. When a cousin, Francis Elliot Kitchener, then a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, tested young Herbert's knowledge, he reported that he had never known a boy more devoid of general knowledge.

The family received a shock in 1863 when it was discovered that Fanny's lungs had been affected by incipient tuberculosis. The Colonel was devoted to his wife and to have remained in the damp climate of southern Ireland would have caused her health to deteriorate further. In 1864 he sold his properties at a handsome profit and moved his family to Switzerland where it was hoped that the pure mountain air might restore her health. Alas, the change in climate failed to improve her condition. Before the end of the year, Fanny, to the great sorrow of her family, died of tuberculosis at Montreaux.[2]

The Colonel decided to remain in Montreaux and sent Herbert and his two younger brothers to an English boarding school at the Château du Grand Clos in the village of Rennaz near Villeneuve. It was a traumatic period for the Kitchener boys. In Ireland they had lived in comfortable circumstances and were encouraged to think of themselves as superior to the poor and benighted local population. At school they found themselves out of step with their classmates who were more articulate, confident, worldly and knowledgeable than they were. On a more personal note they were

ridiculed for their Irish accent, ignorance, and the old-fashioned clothes they wore. Coming on the heels of their beloved mother's death, the humiliating experience deepened their despondency and induced them to keep to themselves as much as possible.

Herbert realized how far behind he was compared to his more able peers and he responded by pouring all of his energies into remedying his educational deficiencies. During the two and a half years that he spent at the Château, he became fluent in French, acquired a rudimentary knowledge of German, showed an aptitude for mathematics, and studied English history and the natural sciences. Kitchener had his heart set on attending the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich and becoming an engineer—contrary to his father's wishes that he should opt for the cavalry. In 1867 he left the Swiss school and returned to England to prepare for his entrance examination. He was coached first by his cousin Francis in Cambridge, then by Reverend George Frost, a well-known army crammer in London. Kitchener placed 28 out of 60 successful candidates and in February 1868 entered the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.[3]

The Academy, nicknamed "The Shop," prepared cadets for commissions in the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers. Kitchener's period at the Academy was unremarkable and he does not appear to have made much of an impression. As he had not attended English public school, he was slow to conform to the customs and practices of his fellow cadets. The only close friendship he formed was with Claude Conder whom he had first met at Reverend Frost's house. A learned and gifted student, Conder was interested in the languages and customs of the Levant—the area consisting today of Syria, Lebanon and Israel. He introduced Hebrew to Kitchener and the two spent their spare time learning the language, an activity that drew them into the High Church ritualistic movement. Herbert's period of religious fervor did not last long, although he continued to observe Anglo-Catholic practices within the Church of England. His early development was slow and he worked extremely hard to keep up with his peers and missed an entire term because his health broke down. After two years at the Academy he successfully passed out in December 1870 and joined his father who had remarried and was living in Dinan, in Brittany, France.

The usual festivities and merriment at Christmas that year were conspicuously absent as France was approaching the end of a disastrous war with Prussia. Herbert and an English friend, Harry Dawson, saw an opportunity to gain first-hand experience of war. With the encouragement of the old Colonel, Herbert and Dawson made their way to Laval to join General

Chanzy's forces which were attempting to relieve the siege of Paris. Before they arrived, Chanzy's army of ill-trained and poorly equipped reservists and conscripts was badly defeated in a three-day battle at Le Mans. After they reached Chanzy's battered army, which was in the process of reforming, they were attached to an ambulance unit and saw plenty of harrowing sights but no action. Chanzy received fresh raw recruits and was preparing another offensive when news arrived on 28 January, 1871, that Paris had capitulated, effectively ending the war.

Kitchener persuaded a French officer to take him up in a balloon so that he could observe the distant German lines. He did not wear enough warm clothing and, in the cold upper air, caught a chill which developed into pneumonia and pleurisy. Dawson alerted the Colonel who found his son in critical condition in a cold and unsanitary billet and brought him back to Dinan. When Kitchener recovered from his illness, he returned to England.[4]

Kitchener's escapade in France had not gone unnoticed and he was summoned to the War Office to appear before the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, Field-Marshal HRH the Duke of Cambridge, to answer for his action. Kitchener's commission had been issued on 4 January, 1871, while he was in France. As a serving officer he had violated his country's strict policy of neutrality when he joined Chanzy's army. The Duke poured a cataract of abuse on Kitchener, telling him that he was a deserter, a disgrace to the British army, that his behavior was unpardonable and that he deserved to lose his commission. Shaken and fearing that his career was over before it had begun, Kitchener breathed a sigh of relief when the Duke ended by saying, "Well, anyhow, boy, go away, and don't do it again."[5]

Several years passed before Kitchener had an opportunity to escape from the uncongenial and routine service at home. The Palestine Exploration Fund had been founded in 1865 with the object of surveying Palestine, drawing an accurate map and identifying the sites referred to in the Bible. The War Office, anxious to acquire knowledge of the military geography of Palestine that could be of value in war, willingly lent engineers and equipment to the Fund. Since 1872, Kitchener's friend, Claude Conder, had been directing the survey of west Palestine as a lieutenant on behalf of the Fund. In the summer of 1874 Conder urged Kitchener to apply to replace his civilian assistant who had died of fever. On the strong recommendation of Conder, Kitchener received the appointment and, with the blessing of the War Office, embarked on his long journey. He arrived at Conder's camp in the plain of Philistia on 19 November, 1874.[6]

Kitchener was as happy as a lark in Palestine and threw himself with great enthusiasm into whatever task he undertook. He surveyed, took photographs, copied inscriptions and conducted research on biblical sites. He seemed to be emerging from his shell, showing himself to be more extroverted and sociable. He was described by a French archaeologist who saw him periodically as vigorous, frank and outspoken, cheerful and friendly in contrast to Conder's serious disposition, and possessing an inordinate capacity for work. Kitchener's high- energy level was contagious and the survey's rate of progress rose sharply, from roughly 76 to 280 square miles a month. Somehow Kitchener found time to study Arabic (which he mastered in fairly short order) and Turkish.

As if the work was not demanding enough, the members of the party had to battle such ailments as fever and dysentery. While in Jerusalem at the start of the New Year 1875, Kitchener came down with a fever that was so severe Conder feared that he might be invalided home. Fortunately, an English doctor found the right remedy and by Easter, Kitchener was back again in the field. The party was working on the coast near Gaza and its member often bathed in the Mediterranean. On 5 April Conder was caught in an undertow and it is assumed he would have drowned had Kitchener, who was a strong swimmer, not rescued him. Three months later, Kitchener played a vital part in saving Conder's life a second time. In the village of Safed in Galilee on 10 July a group of fanatical Muslims, resenting the presence of infidels on their sacred land, approached the party hurling stones, wielding clubs and shouting anti-Christian blasphemous epithets. Conder tried to stand his ground but an Arab pushed his way to the front and struck him over the head with a club. A second blow on the head would have finished off Conder but he butted his assailant so that the club fell on his neck. Still the assault caused serious wounds from which he never fully recovered. As it was apparent that Conder was in deep trouble, Kitchener, his left thigh severely bruised by a large stone, managed to reach him and parried the next blow with his hunting crop. Badly injured Conder gave orders to retire to a nearby hill, while Kitchener used his newly acquired knowledge of Arabic to hold off the mob. When his comrades were safe on the hill, Kitchener broke away and made good his escape. Suffering from the after-effects of his wounds, Conder was no longer fit to work in the field, as a result of which the Fund appointed Kitchener to replace him in command of the survey.[7]

For Kitchener the months that he was in charge of the survey increased his knowledge and had the effect of developing his leadership qualities,

managerial skills, shaping his work habits and laying the foundation for his future career. He was frequently called upon to negotiate with local officials, suspicious imams (religious leaders) and sheikhs, developing his natural tact and gaining insight as to how to engage in diplomacy with Arabs. Apart from managing his party, it was incumbent on him to find ways to overcome obstacles, deal with a host of administrative tasks like reports to the Fund and logistical situations and operate within strict economic guidelines. Kitchener understood the need to keep the men's spirit up for the work was dangerous and grueling. The countryside was hilly and lugging around heavy and awkward surveying instruments in the fierce heat was exhausting. To make matters worse, members of the party, including Kitchener himself, faced debilitating bouts of fever from time to time.

Kitchener remained steadfast and focused after war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire broke out in April 1877. At the outset of the conflict, the Ottoman government withdrew all of its soldiers from the countryside, which meant there would be no policing authority in the event the survey party ran into hostile tribesmen. The Fund authorities were inclined to think that Kitchener and his team should return home as their safety could not be assured. Kitchener saw no cause for alarm, confident that he could handle any potential danger. Nevertheless he saw the need to complete the survey in the shortest time possible lest England be drawn into the conflict on the Turkish side, in which case he probably would be recalled for special service. Thus he set an arduous pace. By driving his men to work a minimum of 12 hours a day, seven days a week, he completed the survey of Galilee in July 1877 and also of western Palestine two months later. Kitchener was justifiably proud of what he and his team had accomplished. Under trying conditions they had triangulated and surveyed about 3000 square miles of Palestinian territory, investigated and recorded all known archaeological sites, taken thousands of photographs of points of interest, corrected errors of previous map makers and compiled reports of the names, religion and water supply of every village. The Fund praised Kitchener's leadership skills, in particular for his thoroughness, energy, timely completion of his task and keeping within budgetary limits.[8]

After Kitchener sent his staff home on 22 November, he travelled to Constantinople as well as to other parts of the Ottoman Empire. He was back in London at the start of January 1878 and throughout the spring and summer worked with Conder on a map of Palestine. The glowing reports of Kitchener's work in Palestine had drawn the attention of the

government and on the day he submitted his finished product to the Fund he was assigned to survey and triangulate the island of Cyprus, acquired earlier in the year from Turkey.

Kitchener liked Cyprus and its inhabitants but it was not long before he found himself at odds with the newly appointed High Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Sir Garnet Wolseley. Kitchener wanted to produce a map based on a proper scientific survey, one that would be published under his own name and serve the needs of scholars and archaeologists. By contrast Wolseley indicated that he required only a rough survey to determine property boundaries (for tax purposes) and that he expected the work to be completed in a few months, not three years as Kitchener had estimated. Kitchener did not give in easily and there were instances when he exhausted Wolseley's patience. The tension between the two ended when Wolseley was posted to South Africa to command the British army in April 1879. Kitchener's relief turned to dismay in mid-summer on learning that there were insufficient funds to continue the survey work.[9]

Kitchener was rescued from a return to regimental chores by a fellow engineer, Colonel Charles Wilson, who was serving as Consul-General in Anatolia. Wilson had started the survey of Palestine in 1864 and, as he had a high regard for Kitchener and his work, thought he would be ideal as one of the four vice-consuls. The Disraeli government was eager to keep the Ottoman Empire within its sphere of interests and had arranged to establish an informal protectorate over Asia Minor. In exchange for guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Turkey and an annual tribute, the Sultan promised to reform his administration and end the oppression and cruelties against subject people and Christian communities—a pledge that proved to be worthless. Under the watchful eye of Wilson, the British military mission was charged with overseeing the reforms and helping to organize Ottoman military defenses against any possible aggression by Russia in the future.

Kitchener reached his new post as vice-consul in the town of Kastamonu in northern Anatolia on 26 June, 1879. Kitchener enjoyed the diplomatic side of his work, though he hated the cold winter climate of Anatolia. His reports and those of other British officials constituted a damning indictment of the incompetent, corrupt and brutish nature of Ottoman rule. They served no purpose, however, as the Disraeli government had no wish to offend the Turkish authorities.

Kitchener's stay in Anatolia ended after eight months. Major-General Sir Robert Biddulph, who had succeeded Wolseley as High Commissioner

in Cyprus, shared Kitchener's view on the value of a proper scientific survey of the island and persuaded the Foreign Office to fund it. He then offered Kitchener the post of Director of Survey at double his salary (£672) as well as an additional sum for a new registration of lands. Kitchener was tempted to remain in Anatolia which he liked. He also believed that it would further his career if he pursued the diplomatic line under Wilson's tutelage. But on second thought he decided to accept Biddulph's overture. It was fortunate that he did otherwise his career might have taken a different turn. In the British general elections in April 1880 William Gladstone unexpectedly swept back into power. An acerbic critic of the Turkish government's cruelty and misrule, he promptly withdrew all the military vice-consuls from Asia Minor.[10]

Kitchener delighted in his second tour of duty in Cyprus. Biddulph gave him whatever assistance he needed and, no less importantly, a free hand. The survey of Cyprus went well, except in the mountainous south west where Kitchener ran into some difficulty. In his time off he enjoyed the simple pleasures the island offered. He attended social gatherings in Nicosia, went out to dinner, acted as whip to local hunts and rode in local steeplechases. It was during this time that he started to collect porcelain, a hobby that would become an abiding passion. Here too he began to cultivate a moustache, though it would take another two years before it reached the dimensions which would become his trademark.

As much as Kitchener enjoyed his work and had developed an excellent reputation as a cartographer and archeologist, he fretted that he had as yet not seen active service. Since he was ambitious, he knew that he would not advance rapidly in the army unless he could prove himself on the field of battle. Looking for a suitable posting, Kitchener sounded out Wolseley in South Africa, only to be told that no vacancy existed. Kitchener's hope then centered on Egypt where stirring events were taking place.

Opened in 1869, the Suez Canal cut across a 100 miles of Egyptian desert to link the Mediterranean with the Red Sea. Though the French financed, engineered and dug the canal, it was the British who had the most to gain. The canal was a vital imperial asset, radically shortening the route to India and the Far East. Ismail, the Khedive of Egypt, was so heavily in debt that to meet his payments to creditors he was forced to sell his block of shares of the Suez Canal which he had acquired in return for granting the franchise to the French. In 1875 Disraeli hastened to buy the shares which constituted 44% of the total amount issued.[11] This did not avert the bankruptcy of Egypt the following year and, with the Khedive's

approval, an Anglo-French commission was established to manage the country's finances. When Ismail objected to the limitations imposed on him, the two powers pressured the Ottoman Sultan into removing his nominal vassal. Ismail was replaced by his eldest son Tewfik, who was dull and pliable.[12]

The growing European influence in Egyptian affairs sparked a rebellion in 1881 led by Colonel Arabi Pasha who gained control of the government. What followed was a wave of anti-foreign sentiment that culminated in the massacre of 50 Europeans in Alexandria. The French at first agreed to join the British in imposing punitive measures, but withdrew at the last moment because of political problems at home. Left to act alone, the British dispatched a fleet to Alexandria. Its commander, Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour, warned the Egyptian garrison to dismantle the shore batteries (which endangered the safety of his fleet) or else he would open fire the next day. His ultimatum was ignored.

While this was going on, Kitchener made strenuous efforts to join a military unit earmarked for Egypt. He sent off a number of telegrams to influential people he thought might arrange a posting but his requests fell on deaf ears. Kitchener, however, was not easily deterred. He asked for a week's sick leave which the High Commissioner granted. He hastened to take a steamer to Alexandria where he boarded the flagship HMS *Invincible* and reported to Lieutenant-Colonel A.B. Tulloch, the Military Liaison Officer. He explained that he spoke Arabic fluently and volunteered to accompany Tulloch for a dangerous reconnaissance mission. The two officers, disguised as Arabs, slipped ashore at night. They took notes and drew sketch-maps of Egyptian fortifications and Arabi's dispositions. They were picked up by a row boat and taken aboard the flagship in time to witness the bombardment of the Egyptian coastal fortresses and batteries. The British guns did not cease until the last fort had been silenced after 10 and a half hours.

Kitchener's little adventure had whetted his appetite for more action but his request for an extension of leave was flatly rejected and he was ordered to return at once to duty. He missed the first steamer through no fault of his own and by the time he caught the next one and arrived in Cyprus, he had exceeded his allotted week by six days. Biddulph was furious that Kitchener had taken advantage of his kindness in departing for Egypt without his permission. He severely reprimanded Kitchener for insubordination and even brought up the possibility of a court-marshal. Confronted by an angry High Commissioner, Kitchener gave up trying

to justify his action, although privately he did not think he had done anything wrong. Nevertheless he tried to regain his chief's good will, realizing the damage he could do to his career. He wrote to Biddulph on 2 August that, while he had every intention to finish the survey of the island, he was extremely anxious to see active service in Egypt and hoped that no objections would be raised if he were offered a post there. Kitchener's initiative served no purpose.

Much as the anti-imperialist Prime Minister William Gladstone wanted to keep out of Egypt, he found himself irretrievably draw in. With the need to end continuing anti-European violence, protect the canal and maintain cabinet unity, Gladstone sacrificed his scruples and consented to send an army to Egypt to suppress Arabi's rebellion. Biddulph refused to release Kitchener when a request was made for his services. The British force under Wolseley landed in Egypt on 21 August, 1882, and three weeks later destroyed Arabi's army at Tel-el-Kebir and occupied Cairo. It was announced that the British presence in Egypt would be temporary, but that proved to be wishful thinking. Quite apart from protecting the interests of foreign bondholders and the lives of European settlers, it became apparent that establishing financial solvency and administrative stability in the country would take more than a few months or a few years. Thus the man London sent out to Cairo as Consul-General was Sir Evelyn Baring (later Lord Cromer) who managed Egyptian affairs and finances with exceptional skill until he resigned in 1907. Although Egypt was not a British colony, it was in theory ruled by the Khedive and his government under the Ottoman Porte, but in practice it was Baring and an ever-growing number of English advisors who managed the country from behind the scenes.[13]

Before Baring reached Cairo, London decreed on 20 September that what remained of the Egyptian army was to be disbanded. A new army would have to be formed to preserve internal order and defend the frontiers. Accordingly Major-General Sir Evelyn Wood VC, a 50-year-old veteran of the Crimea and imperial conflicts, was appointed as commander-in-chief with the title of Sirdar, a Hindustani word meaning leader. Wood selected Kitchener as one of the 26 British officers charged with training an army of some 6,000 recruits along European lines. Kitchener, in a cunning if deceitful move, turned down the first invitation as a means to assuage Biddulph but had arranged with Wood's ADC for an immediate follow-up telegram, repeating the offer. The maneuver produced the desired results. Biddulph relented and gave his blessing, touched by his

young subordinate's apparent loyalty. An adequate replacement would be found to complete the remaining survey of the island. When the map was published in 1885, it drew high praise from experts and solidified Kitchener's reputation as a first class cartographer.

Kitchener was promoted captain on 4 January, 1883, but it was customary for a British officer to hold one rank higher in the Egyptian army. As a major, Kitchener was appointed to be second-in-command of the only Egyptian cavalry regiment. Kitchener does not appear to have been unhappy with his new assignment. Wood began his career as a sailor and he evidently did not think it was out of place to attach a sapper to the cavalry. The reaction of the cavalry commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor of the 19th Hussars, on learning that a sapper had been appointed as his assistant, is not recorded. But whatever doubts he may have entertained would be dispelled before long.

Among officers in the regular British army any discussion of converting Egyptians into an effective fighting force was apt to provoke an outbreak of laughter or ill-natured mockery. It was claimed that they were inherently cowards and that past defeats at the hands of the west and centuries of injustice and subservience had crushed their spirit. Wood paid no attention to the pessimists, confident that a regime of strenuous military exercises and training would make his Egyptian army equal to the native regiments in India. The band of Wood's British officers responded admirably to the high standards of service expected of them and a strong bond of trust and sympathy developed between them and the men they commanded.

Training recruits, mostly fellahin (peasants), of an uncertain quality for the cavalry was undoubtedly challenging. As an engineer, Kitchener knew little about cavalry tactics and had a lot to learn, but he never shied from hard work. Before long he had mastered the intricacies of cavalry drill and discipline. Kitchener, who was an excellent horseman, showed patience in driving elementary instruction into the recruits and soon had them riding in formation and carrying out basic battlefield exercises.[14] Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor was much impressed with Kitchener, describing him as clever, tactful, self-reliant and a thorough professional. Kitchener even caught the eye of the Sirdar who wrote: "This is an excellent officer in every respect—a good Arab linguist—a fine horseman—great determination and courage."[15]

The carefree days of Kitchener, when as a surveyor, he was happy, friendly and extroverted would give way in Egypt to his single-minded

pursuit of his own career. Kitchener's second-in-command Captain La Terrière of the 18th Hussars, found his chief's devotion to duty trying, remarking that he would go straight from training to his office, often without bothering to have breakfast, and that he was demanding and kept irregular hours to the chagrin of his subordinates. One of them complained that he never knew "at what time one was to get up or go to bed, at what hour one was going to get breakfast or luncheon or dinner, or whether one was going to get a meal at all."[16] Kitchener's devotion to work offended easy going fellow British officers who considered unconcealed ambition to be bad form and, adding to his unpopularity, was a lack of interest in mingling with the close knit English society.

It would be wrong to assume, however, that Kitchener took no break from work. La Terrière wrote that, while Kitchener rarely joined "in our little dinners and jaunts at Cairo," or in "our polo matches or paper chases," he had a few friends in whose company he could relax and let his guard down. He added that Kitchener was unworldly but showed an interest in the opposite sex, preferring women who were rather motherly and "unsmart"[17]—presumably a sign that he was uncomfortable in the presence of intelligent women. Tall, exceptionally handsome and brave, Kitchener would have had no difficulty in attracting women. One young lady who caught Kitchener's eye was Hermione Baker, the pretty 16-year-old daughter of Valentine Baker and niece of the famed explorer Sir Samuel Baker. Valentine Baker was a brilliant soldier whose promising career was cut short when he was cashiered from the British army for assaulting a woman in a train. Valentine was employed by the Khedive as head of a paramilitary unit formed to keep internal peace. Kitchener had met Valentine years earlier in the Balkans and became reacquainted with him in Cairo. Forming a friendship with a disgraced British officer, as Kitchener did, was not calculated to help his career. It is reasonable to assume that the ambitious Kitchener would have kept his distance from Baker if he had not been serious about Hermione. The two were often seen together and the families of both Valentine and his brother, Samuel, expected that they would marry as soon as Hermione was old enough. Little is known about the courtship which only came to light in 1959 in a biography of Kitchener by Sir Philip Magnus.[18] The love affair, however, never reached the final stage. On 21 January, 1885, while Kitchener was on a mission in the Sudan, Hermione died of typhoid fever at the age of 18. Valentine subsequently gave Kitchener a locket containing a miniature portrait of Hermione which he wore around his neck until late in his life.[19]

Kitchener never married and, because his inner circle consisted mostly of bright young officers and he became attached to a few of them, some writers claimed in the wake of his death that he must have been a covert homosexual or one whose sexual practices were never uncovered. Kitchener made many enemies during his long career of national service and if there had been any hint of homosexuality, then illegal and considered a mortal sin, it certainly would have been used to destroy his reputation. Kitchener's correspondence with his sister Millie shows that he enjoyed the company of women and named a few with whom he had flirted.[20] He was not prejudiced against the idea of marriage but neither did he consider celibacy unusual or unhealthy. Kitchener found fulfillment in his work which overrode any sexual urges. Sir William Birdwood (later Field Marshal) once remarked that his former chief had no time for marriage.[21] Still he did regret in moments of loneliness as he got older, that he had not taken the time to find a suitable mate.

In November 1883, Kitchener left Cairo to spend his leave assisting Professor Edward Hull, an eminent geologist, on a survey of the Arabah Valley (near Aqaba) on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Fund. The expedition failed to produce tangible results for it ended prematurely and unexpectedly. Before the close of the year, Kitchener received a message from Wood, announcing bad news from the Sudan—which formed part of the Khedive's realm.

A revolt had broken out in the Sudan in 1881 under the leadership of Mohammed Ahmad, a religious fanatic known as the Mahdi (the Expected One) who claimed to be a descendant of the prophet Mohammed. Calling for a return to the original piety of Islam and the expulsion of the hated infidels, his movement spread quickly and by the middle of 1883 much of the Sudan had been brought under his control. Unless the Khedive took prompt counter-measures, not only would the Sudan be lost but the thousands of Egyptian soldiers stationed in the country might be massacred. Accordingly, a force was hastily assembled and placed under the command of Colonel William Hicks, recently retired from the Indian army, for the purpose of restoring peace. That hope died on 6 November, 1883, when Hicks and his army were annihilated by a superior Mahdist force near El Obeid.[22]

Wood worried about the safety of Hull's survey expedition and was uncertain about the effect the Mahdist victory would have on the loyalty of the Arabs in the region. Kitchener decided to return to Cairo by the shortest route, a two-hundred-mile journey across the Sinai Desert that

was waterless, trackless and at that time of the year subject to intense and sudden sandstorms. The Professor who was timid and afraid of his own shadow was left to take the safer but longer route via Gaza. Wearing Arab clothes, Kitchener set out on his journey, accompanied by the four Bedouins who had brought him the letter from Wood. Kitchener distrusted the local tribes and so he avoided wearing tinted glasses as a protection against the glare of the sun which would have betrayed him as an infidel. He travelled 10 hours a day and, by his own account, was well received by Arab leaders wherever he went. The last two days of his journey were particularly difficult. A strong wind blew sand in the faces of Kitchener and his companions and even the camels had to be prodded to keep moving. The glare of the sun, together with the sandstorm, damaged the nerve endings in his face and he developed a slight squint which grew more pronounced as he got older. But he arrived safely and word of his remarkable feat of endurance was the talk of Cairo, drawing the admiration of even those who disliked him.

Kitchener returned to training the cavalry but he remained focused on the march of events in the Sudan. It was apparent to Baring that Egypt could not reconquer the Sudan on its own and that any attempt to do so would only add to its financial woes. But Egypt was a British dependency and, while the Gladstone government was anxious to avoid further responsibilities in Africa, it could not in good conscience abandon Egyptian garrisons still holding a number of cities in the Sudan, including Khartoum, the administrative capital. To oversee the evacuation of the Sudan, the British authorities selected General Charles "Chinese" Gordon, a popular hero and former governor of the country. Gordon arrived in Khartoum on 18 February, 1884, to the tumultuous acclaim of the population who looked to him to save them from the blood-thirsty religious fanatic. Almost immediately he realized that it was impossible to evacuate 40,000 people. As a man of unwavering Christian faith, he believed it was his moral obligation to stay and defend the city, even if it meant exceeding his brief. He ignored Cromer's telegrams to get out while he could. Within a month or so he was cut off from Cairo by the Mahdi's army (the British called them dervishes) and began to call for a relief expedition.

During the spring Wood sought to improve British knowledge of the Sudan in anticipation of a rescue mission or reconquest of the country. He sent Kitchener on reconnaissance missions to the Sudan and also charged him with maintaining communications with Gordon and persuading or

bribing Arab tribes to enlist on the side of Egypt. The work was dangerous and arduous. Kitchener would certainly have been imprisoned and possibly tortured and killed if he had fallen into the hands of the Mahdists, not to mention that he took his life in his own hands whenever he tested the loyalty of certain tribes for he had no way of knowing how they would react. Besides, only the most hardy could endure the conditions in the desert with the scorching heat in the day, the bitter cold at night and the endless torment of flies and insects.

Yet Kitchener reveled in his new role. It offered him the opportunity to experience the solitude of the desert, the culture of its people and the excitement of the unknown as well as the satisfaction of approaching his task in his own way. He gradually became more confident and assertive in dealing with native tribesmen. Because of his inflexible devotion to duty and the knowledge that the Sirdar relied heavily on his reports, no amount of discomfort or risk to his personal safety deterred him from carrying out his assignments. Few westerners could tolerate the searing heat (with temperatures soaring above 120 degrees during the day) as well as he could and the long, hard excursions in the desert toughened his constitution and his lean 6'2" frame filled out and became more muscular. As he moved from place to place he wore a turban and the long robe of a native and was escorted by 20 loyal Arab tribesmen.

Kitchener became increasingly concerned about Gordon's plight after establishing contact with him through Arab messengers late in the summer. It seemed to him that nothing was being done in London to aid Gordon. As it happened, the Gladstone government, suspecting (correctly) that Gordon was attempting to push Britain into a war against the Mahdi, vacillated for months but ultimately bowed to public pressure and authorized the dispatch of a relief expedition. In September Wolseley, his reputation at an all-time high, arrived from England to take charge of the force.

Kitchener preceded the expedition through potentially hostile country, making sure of the loyalty of the Arab tribes, investigating alternate routes along the way and exploring suitable sites for camps, as well as collecting information on the Mahdi's moves and maintaining links with Gordon. Back in England the public, which was engrossed in following events in the Sudan, was frequently reminded of the courage and enterprise of the man in the forefront of the relief expedition. The *West Morning News* was one of many newspapers fulsome in its praise of Kitchener: "Every War brings its heroes; and when the military operations in the Sudan are over,

the name and deeds of Major Kitchener will be remembered." Passionate about his military career, Kitchener was naturally delighted to be thrust into the limelight. In recognition of his exploits, he was gazetted a brevet-lieutenant-colonel on 15 June, 1885. Kitchener was especially grateful for the promotion, for, as he would tell Wood, "it shows me you approve of my work."[23]

Kitchener's heroics during the many months he was in the Sudan unfortunately were all in vain. To his chagrin he was ordered to Korti, obviating his hope of joining the vanguard of the relief expedition. As Wolseley's ultra-cautious and slow-moving column came in sight of Khartoum on 28 January, 1885, what caught everyone by surprise was the green flag of the Mahdi flying over the Sudanese capital. Two days earlier the Mahdi's dervishes had poured over the walls of the city, slaughtered Gordon and what remained of his garrison, and in the next six hours engaged in an orgy of rape, murder and destruction. There was no point in remaining outside the city so the relief force withdrew amid a hail of shell and rifle fire and began the long journey back.

Kitchener was at Gadkul when he learned on 2 February, to his horror, that Khartoum had fallen. He had formed a special bond with Gordon and his death, which he regarded as a stain on the country's honor, would have a lasting effect on him. "I feel that now he is dead, the heart and soul of the Expedition is gone," he subsequently told his father. "The shock of the news was dreadful, and I can hardly realize it."[24] Wolseley asked Kitchener to compile an official report on the fall of Khartoum. Kitchener interviewed such witnesses as were available and the long document he submitted is admirable and at times makes for painful reading. It is the only authentic account of the siege of the city and the death of Gordon. Kitchener ended by paying tribute to the fallen hero: "The memorable siege of Khartoum lasted 317 days, and it is not too much to say that such a noble resistance was due to the indomitable resolution and resource of one Englishman."[25]

Kitchener had expected Gordon's death to be avenged and the people of the Sudan rescued from the grip of the Mahdi but that prospect lost its immediacy when Russian moves in Afghanistan seemed to threaten British interests in India. The incident was eventually resolved by arbitration but in the initial stage it served as an excuse for Gladstone to order the evacuation of the Sudan. In disgust Kitchener resigned his commission in the Egyptian army and sailed for England. Kitchener was one of the few officers to emerge from the disastrous Gordon relief expedition with his

reputation enhanced. The press had trumped up his exploits and he was recognized and complimented wherever he went. He was presented to Queen Victoria and was a welcomed guest at fashionable house parties. He never had much experience or desire to interact with high society but understood that his career could prosper if he cultivated the nation's patrician families who played such a dominant role in national politics.

Anxious to keep his name alive in government circles, Kitchener pulled every string at his disposal for a new posting with the result that he was selected as the British representative on the Zanzibar Boundary Commission which also included French and German members. The object of the commission, established when the powers were carving up Africa, was to conduct an inquiry to define the limits of the Sultan of Zanzibar's authority. The Sultan maintained that his domain included a stretch of land some 40 miles deep opposite his island and he wanted the commission to give legal status to his claim. The negotiations dragged on and Kitchener frequently found himself at loggerheads with the German representative who had orders to limit the Sultan's rule to the utmost so that more territory would be available to Berlin. In the end the commissioners reached an agreement that the Sultan's rule over the inland strip should be 10 miles deep. Kitchener had shown commendable diplomatic skills under difficult circumstances and he was subsequently awarded a CMG and the thanks of Lord Salisbury, the new Prime Minister. Kitchener had not enjoyed his stay on the island, complaining that it offered little in the way of recreation and that it rained every day.[26]

Kitchener started on his journey back to Britain in August 1886 but, when he reached Suez, he was handed a message appointing him Governor-General of Eastern Sudan and the Red Sea Littoral with the acting rank of colonel. The impressive sounding title was misleading as Kitchener found out on arriving at Suakin on the Red Sea on 1 September. His authority extended only about 15 miles into the hinterland and he was hemmed in on three sides by strong tribes loyal to the Mahdi's successor, Abdullahi Ibn Mohammed, known as the Khalifa, a brutal and debauched despot.[27] Suakin was the last remaining town held by the Egyptians in the Sudan and the local dervish leader, Osman Digna, made periodic forays almost to the suburbs of the town. Kitchener built a line of fortifications and ditches but realized that it was not enough and requested permission to attack Osman who had taken a position at Handub, 15 miles north of Suakin. The new Sirdar, Sir Francis Grenfell, denied his request, fearing that, if Kitchener's raid miscarried, Suakin might come under siege in which case

he would face another Gordon-type rescue operation. Kitchener chose to ignore Grenfell's orders and with a mixed force of regulars and irregulars stormed Osman's camp. All went well until Kitchener's irregulars, lacking discipline, dispersed to loot, giving time for dervish reinforcements to arrive on the scene and change the momentum of the skirmish. Kitchener had moved up with the cavalry and was preparing to lead a charge to regain the advantage when he was struck by a bullet which penetrated his jaw and lodged close to his throat. His second-in-command, Captain T.E. Hickman, skillfully conducted a fighting retreat under heavy fire. The affair had not gone according to plan but Kitchener's force had killed 300 dervishes while suffering only 19 losses.

Kitchener was sent back to Cairo for his wound was too serious to be treated locally. Never mind that his spirited raid had really been a defeat, it was hailed in the nationalist British press as a victory and he received many compliments. Queen Victoria requested daily bulletins about the state of his progress and made him an ADC. Grenfell visited him in the hospital and jokingly told him that he ought to have been court-martialed for violating his instructions but admitted that he was proud of him for his enterprise. Both the Duke of Cambridge and the Secretary for War sent him a congratulatory telegram. He was promoted to the rank of brevet-colonel and the Khedive made him a Pasha.

Kitchener was uncomfortable at the solicitous attention everyone paid him and, before his wound had completely healed, was back in Suakin. He made every effort to ensure that Suakin was not abandoned as some politicians, including Lord Salisbury, were suggesting. It was common knowledge that the Khalifa intended to invade Egypt and it was pointed out that leaving the port in his hands would further his objective by allowing him to bring in arms and supplies. Kitchener, moreover, told Baring that the retention of the town was vital to preserve the loyalty of the tribes between his stronghold and the Egyptian frontier. Kitchener's long-range objective was to avenge Gordon and to use Suakin as a jumping-off place for the reconquest of the Sudan.

In the summer of 1888, Kitchener returned on leave to England. He was invited to spend a week-end at Hatfield, Lord Salisbury's country home. It was here that Salisbury informed Kitchener that he would be appointed Adjutant-General of the Egyptian Army. Kitchener was reluctant to accept the post, but he did not wish to appear ungrateful. He told his brother Arthur: "I do not much like the change as I shall not be so independent but I believe it is best to accept, which I have done."[28]

Back in Egypt, Kitchener's unpopularity with his fellow officers continued to grow. There was resentment that he should have been given such a prestigious appointment over officers who had longer experience of imperial service. Kitchener had not proven himself in the field and the only explanation, so the whispers went, was that his career had prospered because of political connections. The accusations were off the mark for Kitchener's rapid rise had been due more to merit and hard work.

Kitchener had barely begun to conform to his new administrative duties when he found himself in the field again. His nemesis Osman Digna had acquired several guns with which he was threatening Suakin. To ease the pressure, Grenfell dispatched two brigades to the area, one of which was commanded by Kitchener. On 20 December, 1888, Kitchener's brigade played a prominent part in a spirited action outside the walls of Suakin that ended in a complete rout of Osman's forces. Grenfell praised Kitchener's cool and gallant leadership and claimed that he had well sustained his previous reputation.[29]

At the end of January 1889, Kitchener returned to Cairo and settled in the spacious house allotted to the Adjutant-General. His work in his new capacity was interrupted a second time in the summer when the Khalifa made an attempt to invade Egypt. He sent Emir Wad-el-Nejumi, a brave and skillful warrior who had been responsible for the destruction of Hicks' expedition, with an army of some 13,000 men. Grenfell allowed Wad-el-Nejumi to advance a short distance beyond Wadi Halfa on the Egyptian border before confronting him in barren countryside near the village of Toski on 3 August. In charge of the cavalry Kitchener, as directed, headed off the dervish chief from trying to reach a hilly region, forcing him to stand and fight. Backed by intense artillery and rifle fire, the British inflicted a devastating defeat on the dervishes. Wad-el-Nejumi, along with thousands of his men, was killed and an additional 4,000 were taken prisoners. British and Egyptian losses amounted to 25 killed and 140 wounded. Kitchener's role in the campaign was duly acknowledged and he was awarded a CB.

The one-sided victory at Toski caused great rejoicing in Egypt for it almost certainly ended the danger of a dervish invasion. Baring understood that it was only a matter of time before the public clamored for the liberation of the Sudan. He believed, however, that such a campaign could not be undertaken for many years, or at least not until Egypt's finances were rehabilitated, its army reequipped and reorganized and a number of vital internal projects completed.

Kitchener was in his element as a full time administrator and in the autumn of 1889 he passed up spending his annual leave in England to visit India where his younger brother Walter was stationed with his regiment. On his return, Baring asked him to combine the post of Inspector-General of the Egyptian Police with his existing duties. Previous efforts to reorganize the police force in order to eliminate corruption, inefficiency and brutality had been unsuccessful. Kitchener had no desire to take on so thankless a task for, as he told Baring, he was concerned that it might damage his military career. To which Baring replied that "if you do not accept posts that are offered you, you may have *no* career."[30] Kitchener said no more on the subject.

Kitchener's British predecessors had tried to reorganize the police force along professional lines. But the police in each district were traditionally responsible to the mudir (local governor) and to have challenged their authority would have threatened the whole fabric of Egyptian society. Kitchener, using his experience of Oriental ways, amended rather than attempted to change the existing system. The results were impressive. During the year that he held the post of Inspector-General, he reduced the practice of bribery, stopped the torture of prisoners, ensured that promotion was based on merit and not on various forms of corruption, cut serious crimes by half and doubled convictions.[31]

In April 1892 Grenfell resigned as Sirdar and returned to the British army. By then Baring had become Lord Cromer and his support was crucial if Kitchener hoped to succeed Grenfell. Cromer was aware that Kitchener was generally disliked in the army. Still he had no doubt that Kitchener was the best man for the job.[32] Before becoming a colonial administrator, Cromer had spent two decades in the army and from his own military experience he was convinced that the liberation of the Sudan, once approved, would depend less on strategic brilliance than on strict economy, sound administrative management and rigorous discipline and training of the Egyptian army. He admired Kitchener's mania for economy, his knowledge of Egypt and the language, and knew that as an engineer he could overcome any logistical problem. He told Salisbury that Kitchener was an excellent officer, that he had executed his police work admirably and preferred him to the nomination of a new man from England. On Cromer's strong recommendation, Kitchener was appointed as the new Sirdar with the rank of major-general.

Kitchener's latest promotion was hotly resented in Cairo among the British officer corps. Their choice would have been Colonel Josceline

Wodehouse, a genial soldier who had served longer and possessed a better military record than Kitchener. As with Kitchener's previous promotions, the same refrain was heard, that he had advanced beyond his capability because he had formed friendships with the right people. Kitchener, moreover, had done nothing to improve his image with the British community at large. He remained unapproachable and his manner was curt and unsympathetic. He avoided the officer's club, receptions, parties and other social functions which made him feel ill at ease, and the prejudice against him was reinforced by his preference for the company of rich Arabs, Turks and Jews. He knew and did not care that he was unpopular, but he was determined to be feared and was pitiless towards lapses of efficiency from subordinates.

Kitchener's single-minded purpose in the years that followed was to improve the training and efficiency of the Egyptian army for the day of reckoning in the Sudan. He took great care in selecting his officers. During his annual visit to England he would personally interview at the Junior United Service Club candidates to serve as middle-ranking officers in Egypt.[33] He warned all applicants that the hours were long; conditions were far from ideal and the tenor of service severe. Those who met his high expectations were paid £450 a year—more than twice their former salary—in the rank of major and given a two years' contract at the end of which he would review their performance and determine whether they would stay or be sent home. Kitchener rejected out of hand anyone who was married or had immediate plans to do so. He was on a fixed budget and saw no reason to pay a married man's allowance when there were plenty of single officers available. A second consideration, in his calculation, was that domestic ties interfered with work. Kitchener drew to Egypt a group of officers who were young but keen, energetic and talented. Those who gained his complete trust became part of his inner circle and, in gratitude for his patronage, adapted willingly to his unique methods and became fiercely loyal to him. Surrounded by his "band of boys," as they were known, Kitchener constructed an impenetrable wall against the outside world.

Cromer had hoped to delay the reconquest of the Sudan until Egypt's finances had been nursed back to solvency and the Aswan Dam had been completed—which would allow farmers in parts of Egypt to obtain irrigation water all-year-around, resulting in higher agricultural production and raising the tax base. The European scramble for African territory, however, upset his plans. On 1 March 1896, the Italians in their quest to bring all

of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) under their control suffered a crushing defeat at Adowa at the hands of a superior native force. Rome requested that the British make a military move to relieve pressure on its battered army.[34] Weighing as much with the British government, perhaps, was its concern with the expansion of some of the European powers in the vicinity of the Upper Nile basin which was deemed of crucial importance to its African empire. It feared that if a hostile power, notably France, took control of the area it would threaten British interests in Egypt. Whatever the real cause, the British government, in a surprise move, authorized sending an expedition to retake Dongola in northern Sudan. Cromer was not consulted and was informed only after the decision in London had been taken.

There was talk in the War Office that Kitchener, owing to his impetuous nature and lack of fighting experience, was not the man to lead the expedition.[35] Cromer intervened and insisted that the commander of the invasion force take his orders from the Foreign Office, not the War Office. Salisbury, facing the threat of Cromer's resignation, concurred, ensuring that Kitchener would remain as Sirdar. Kitchener remained ignorant of the activities behind the scenes until the matter was settled.[36]

Kitchener had lived to avenge Gordon whose death he and many others ascribed to the Gladstone government. Whether or not Kitchener placed any blame on Wolseley for the relief expedition's poor organization and snail-like advance is not known but he was determined not to repeat the same mistakes. He had taken great pain to train and convert the Egyptian army into what he hoped was an effective fighting force and to ensure that the expedition would not be hindered along the route by logistical breakdowns.

Kitchener began the first stage of his long awaited campaign on 16 March by dispatching a column to seize Akasha, about 85 miles south of the Egyptian border, to serve as a spring-board for further advances.[37] The town was occupied almost without opposition four days later. It was fortified and linked by a railroad to Wadi Halfa to make certain that men and supplies reached the front without delay. Most of the ingredients were obtained from a nearby derelict railway line which no one but Kitchener would have deemed still useable. Broken material was repaired, old rails were gathered, straightened out and relaid by a motley collection of dervish prisoners, Egyptians and Sudanese.

Before the rail line was completed, Kitchener felt ready to advance on Firket, a dervish camp some 15 miles from Akasha. Backed by 10,000 infantry and cavalrymen, Kitchener's brilliant general, Archibald Hunter,

surrounded the town on 6 June and at dawn the next morning launched a well-coordinated attack that overwhelmed the Mahdists, killing 800 and capturing 1,100 prisoners. The casualties in Kitchener's army had been light, with 23 killed and 83 wounded. Kitchener was delighted with the performance of the Egyptian army which had proved it could fight.

After the battle, a series of calamities on the way to Dongola threatened to impose long delays, perhaps even force an ignominious withdrawal. There was an outbreak of cholera in the army which resulted in the deaths of 20 British and native soldiers, violent sandstorms, unprecedented rainfall, and, on top of everything, a severe thunderstorm that caused flash floods and washed away 12 miles of vital railway line. Kitchener somehow kept his composure and he was often on the scene, encouraging the workers, offering advice, issuing commands and even rolling up his sleeve on several occasions and helping to repair the damaged section of the railway. Early in September the army was again ready to take the field.

Kitchener had brought up gunboats to destroy dervish forts along the Nile. He was surprised to find that Kerma, with its well-constructed fortifications, was deserted. As it happened a dervish force under Emir Wad Bishara, a clever dervish leader, had taken an even more commanding position downstream at Hafir and was blocking the route to Dongola. Kitchener moved his artillery to an island opposite the enemy's entrenchment and his army close to the river's edge, while he sent his gunboats to run the gauntlet of dervish guns and push on to Dongola. The dervishes fought gallantly but their antiquated rifles and guns were no match for the concentrated bombardment of Kitchener's gunboats and howitzers. Wad Bishara, wounded by a shell, slipped away from Hafir with his army during the night. There were no remaining obstacles in the path to Dongola which Kitchener entered unopposed on 23 September. The original objective had been accomplished at a very low cost in human lives and Kitchener was anxious to continue with the next stage in the reconquest of the Sudan as soon as possible. Cromer told Kitchener that he could open a new campaign in 1897 providing the British government agreed to foot the bill.

Kitchener realized that his objective was more likely to be met if he took an active part. He arrived in London on 9 November and wasted no time in lining up political support to secure money from the British treasury. The nation was in a mood of exultation, more so than usual. The year 1897 was Queen Victoria's Jubilee and plans were under way to commemorate the occasion in grand style. While the public looked forward to

the impending festivities it was no less interested in the heroic deeds of its current Empire builder. Thanks to the on-the-spot reporting by war correspondents, Kitchener's every move in the Sudan had been followed with excitement and the anticipation that he would soon add more red to the map of Africa often dominated the conversation in the streets and pubs.[38] The British government was equally optimistic that Kitchener could bring the campaign to a fruitful conclusion and gave him permission to proceed "in the first place to Abu Hamed and afterwards possibly beyond."[39]

In between lobbying politicians, Kitchener visited friends and attended social engagements. He travelled to Windsor to lunch with Queen Victoria who found him "a striking, energetic-looking man, with a rather firm expression, but very pleasing to talk to."[40] For his leadership in the successful drive to capture Dongola, the Queen made him a KCB and he was promoted to the rank of major-general in the British army.

Back on the job, Kitchener devised a daring plan to build a railroad across the Nubian Desert between Wadi Halfa and Abu Hamed, circumventing the great loop in the Nile which included three dreadful cataracts. This overland route, furthermore, would cut the distance to Khartoum by about 300 miles and avoid endless delays. Contemporary experts warned Kitchener that the enterprise was not feasible: the terrain was difficult and much of it was unmapped, there was no water, the heat was extreme, there were sudden, terrifying sandstorms and the ever-present danger of dervish raiding parties. As a trained engineer, Kitchener ignored the skeptics and went ahead with the project. He was indeed fortunate that two wells were discovered in the desert.

The most important member of Kitchener's engineer crew was Lieutenant Percy Girouard, a 29-year-old French Canadian and graduate from the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario. Before joining the British army, Girouard had spent three years working on the Canadian Pacific Railway so he had experience in dealing with problems in forbidding wastelands, although none would match those he encountered in the Sudan. Girouard was given a free hand, something Kitchener, who liked to hold all the reins in his hands, rarely gave subordinates. Girouard not only calculated the best place to lay the rails but ordered all the necessary equipment down to the last spikes and always within Kitchener's tightly-limited budget.[41] Laying the tracks began in February 1897 and advanced at the impressive rate of about two miles a day. Its successful completion in the face of never-ending obstacles represents one of most remarkable feats of the entire campaign.

When the railway reached the half-way point, Kitchener sent a flying column of 2,700 men under Hunter to storm Abu Hamed. Hunter covered the 132 miles from Merowe to Abu Hamed in eight days and easily captured the weakly-held town, suffering only 27 losses. Kitchener next set his sights on Berber, only to receive reports, to his pleasant surprise, that the dervish stronghold had been abandoned. The way to Omdurman, the dervish stronghold and capital north of nearby Khartoum, was now clear. The ease with which the expedition had forged ahead gave Kitchener confidence that he would be allowed to deliver his final assault on Omdurman without pause or delay. But nothing is certain in war or with politicians. Kitchener realized that his Egyptian army, which had performed better than he had expected, could not possibly defeat the Khalifa's hordes without assistance. There were British troops in Egypt but the War Office was not prepared to place them under the command of Kitchener in whose leadership it harbored reservations. Anticipating the imminence of a final showdown with the dervishes, it had appointed Sir Francis Grenfell, the former Sirdar, in July 1897 to take charge of the British army of occupation. Kitchener was worried that Grenfell, arriving on the scene with British troops, would displace him in command of the expedition and receive credit for the victory he himself had made possible. To make matters worse, Cromer was opposed to an advance on Omdurman, claiming that the Egyptian treasury could not spare the funding and would be unable to do so for several years. The stress on Kitchener created by his acute personal fears over his future, the frustration with Cromer, the absence of leave for three years and the campaign itself—the building of the railway, trying to maintain his lines of communication, worry that his forward position might be attacked by a much larger dervish army—affected his health and brought him close to breaking point. He became unapproachable, sullen, irritable, occasionally erratic, kept to himself more than usual, put his men through unnecessary hardships and sacked any officer unable to carry out his orders, no matter how unreasonable.[42]

During the third week in December 1897 events forced Baring's hand and, as a result, lifted many worries from Kitchener's mind. Reginald Wingate, Kitchener's Director of Intelligence, brought ominous news that the Khalifa intended to march on Berber at the head of 100,000 men.[43] Kitchener warned Cromer that the Egyptian army would be unable to fend off the dervish onslaught without reinforcements. Cromer alerted Salisbury who was determined to avoid a repeat of the scenario that had spelled Gordon's doom. Accordingly, Kitchener was confirmed as

commander-in-chief, a British brigade under Major-General W.F. Gatacre was dispatched to the Sudan and the British exchequer agreed to subsidize the remainder of the campaign. Wingate's information turned out to be inaccurate but, from Kitchener's standpoint, it had served its purpose.

Fierce disputes within the dervish camp had kept the Khalifa in Omdurman, pending a resolution. For Kitchener the delay was fortuitous as it allowed his army to be reinforced by the arrival of Gatacre's brigade which provided him with more options. The Khalifa, without the luxury of waiting any longer, sent a young emir called Mahmoud northwards to halt the progress of the invading column and capture Berber. Intelligence and dervish deserters allowed Kitchener to follow the movements of Mahmoud's army. When Kitchener reached a place on the Atbara, close to where it joins the Nile, he learned that Mahmoud had constructed a *zeriba*—a defensive encampment formed of prickly brushwood—with his back to the river. Unable to lure Mahmoud into the open, Kitchener hesitated about whether to attack or play it safe. He felt that if he went ahead with the first option and failed or sustained heavy losses, his career would be irreparably damaged. Kitchener ultimately deferred to the recommendation of Gatacre and Hunter and gave the order to storm the *zeriba*. Even with the desertions Mahmoud had a slight numerical advantage, 16,000 compared to 14,000 British and Egyptians. But he was outclassed in every other respect.[44] The best weapons in his arsenal were old breech loading rifles and elephant guns, hardly a match against his enemy's stock of Lee Metfords, Maxim guns and 12-pounder guns. The fighting lasted about 45 minutes, at the end of which 3,000 dervishes lay dead and another 2,000 were taken prisoner, including Mahmoud. Kitchener's victory at Atbara had not been cheap but, with 74 killed and 499 wounded, neither can it be claimed that the casualties were excessive.

Kitchener, mounted on a white charger, led a victory parade through Berber on 14 April. Following behind him was a long line of bound prisoners. The claim by Magnus and other writers that Kitchener behaved in a barbaric and disgraceful manner towards Mahmoud does not appear to be valid.[45] The traditional view in recent times was that Mahmoud had fetters on his ankles and a halter around his neck and that he was lashed with whips when he stumbled. But according to Pollard, none of the records of eye witnesses, which included journalists, corroborated the supposed humiliating mistreatment of Mahmoud.[46]

Kitchener had to pause for several months after Atbara to give his men a well-earned rest, stock up on supplies and bring in additional British

infantry and cavalry forces. In June Kitchener went to Cairo on leave and after a month was back on the job of supervising the concentration of his reinforced army at Wad Hamed, about 60 miles north of Omdurman. By the third week in August all was ready. Kitchener's 25,000-man-army (8,000 British plus 17,000 Egyptian and Sudanese) stretched for three miles when it began its march along the west bank of the Nile on 24 August, and was accompanied by 10 gunboats and five transport steamers carrying a total of 36 guns and 24 maxims. As Kitchener approached Omdurman he hoped that the pitched battle could be fought outside the city but he knew that the Khalifa had other choices, two of which were cause for concern. The first was a night attack which would reduce the effect of British firepower and allow the dervishes, estimated to be in the range of 50,000, to infiltrate British positions and engage in hand-to-hand fighting. The other was that the Khalifa would refuse to engage in an open battle and retire within the city and lure the Anglo-Egyptian army into wasteful attacks on its fortifications. Kitchener was delighted when his patrols brought back information that the Khalifa and his army were heading in his direction. Kitchener halted and took up a defensive position, arranged his artillery, and deployed his army in a wide arc with its back to the Nile.

The Battle of Omdurman was fought on 2 September, 1898, a day on which Kitchener experienced one of the major highlights in his remarkable career and laid the foundation for the creation of his legend. The Khalifa, who had played into Kitchener's hands, chose tactics that belonged to another age and essentially consisted of a broad advance led by emirs with wave after wave of dervishes hurling themselves upon the invaders. The battle began shortly after dawn with a full frontal attack on Kitchener's lines. Against the concentrated fire of howitzers, maxims and rifles, wave after wave of dervishes melted away and the awe-inspiring spectacle took on the aspect of a massacre. The dead piled up in heaps and none of the dervishes reached 300 yards of Kitchener's position. Still they came on in a display of reckless courage, exhorted by their leaders that death in fighting against the infidels was a passport to paradise. At 8.30 a.m. when the last dervish assault had been dispersed, Kitchener ordered a cease fire.

Kitchener decided to advance immediately, concerned that the surviving Mahdists might hurry back to Omdurman, forcing him into a protracted siege or costly street fighting. The race to be the first to enter the city opened a half mile gap between the last brigade, commanded by Major-General Hector MacDonald, and the rest of the army. Behind the western

slope of Jebel Surgam, the Khalifa, with a second army of some 20,000, seized his opportunity to strike. At the sight of the approaching dervishes, MacDonald swung his brigade around as smoothly as if he had been on a parade ground to meet the fanatical charge. The withering curtain of fire from MacDonald's men decimated the dervishes until practically none remained. The second attack was repulsed as decisively as the previous one. Rarely has a battle been so one-sided and cheaply won. The losses in Kitchener's army totaled 48 killed and 434 wounded. By comparison over 11,000 dervishes lay dead on the battlefield and an additional 16,000 had been taken prisoner.[47] The Khalifa made good his escape southwards with the remnant of his force but 14 months later they were hunted down and he was killed in the skirmish.

Kitchener owed little of his success in the Sudan to tactical skill. In fact he readily admitted that he was no master of the battlefield.[48] What had made the difference, after his persistence to persuade reluctant politicians to authorize successive forward movements, was his indomitable will and drive, attention to detail and exceptional talent as an organizer, improviser and logistician.[49] In short, the key to victory had been to bring his army all the way to Omdurman where the overwhelming superiority of weapons had determined the outcome.

After Kitchener arranged to evacuate the wounded, he thanked his leading officers for their steadfastness and notified British officials, including the Queen, of his victory, although by then the news had reached London and wild celebrations were already under way. On 4 September Kitchener held a memorial service for Gordon outside the ruins of his palace in Khartoum. The unfurling of the Union Jack was followed by the singing of "God Save the Queen" and "Abide with Me," Gordon's favorite hymn. Kitchener hated any outward display of emotion but he was so moved by the ceremony that he broke down and, with tears running down his cheeks, signaled Hunter to dismiss the parade.

Kitchener had avenged Gordon and redeemed Britain's honor but there was still work to be done. In the first week of August 1898, he had received sealed orders from Cromer to be opened immediately after the defeat of the Khalifa. Kitchener was instructed to locate and thwart a French expedition, led by Captain Jean-Baptiste Marchand, on the way to claim the upper reaches of the Nile for France. Starting in the early 1880s empire building became the accepted policy of nearly all European powers and new holdings were established in Africa, much of which had been uncharted and free from alien penetration. The race to carve up Africa

was highly competitive and, as was to be expected, there were instances of conflicting claims.

In June 1896, Marchand and his small party had started out from French Equatorial Africa and after an incredible 3,000-mile trek across unmapped and unexplored territory planted the tricolor at Fashoda (on 10 July 1898). Alerted that the French had installed themselves at Fashoda, Kitchener left Omdurman on 10 September with a flotilla of five steamers carrying two battalions of Sudanese and two companies of Cameron Highlanders, a battery of artillery and four maxim guns. Kitchener arrived on the scene on 19 September and invited Marchand to come aboard his gunboat. Kitchener had a much more powerful force and might have been expected to take a hard line against the man who was trying to rob him of the fruits of his hard-fought victory at Omdurman. But Kitchener, speaking in French, treated Marchand with respect and sympathy and relied on diplomacy, of which he had some experience, to try to nudge his adversary into leaving willingly without causing an incident that might lead to war between France and Britain. The atmosphere was tense but cordial. Kitchener protested Marchand's presence in Fashoda and the hoisting of the French flag in the domain of the Khedive of Egypt. Marchand refused to be intimidated and simply replied that, as a soldier, he had strict orders from Paris to hold on to his acquisitions. Kitchener countered by saying that his orders too were precise and hinted that his force was strong enough to carry them out. Marchand did not disagree but maintained that if attacked his men would fight and, if necessary, die at their posts in which case there might be dire consequences. Kitchener rose to the occasion by suggesting that the Egyptian flag be hoisted alongside the French colors and that the matter be left to their respective governments to settle. Marchand accepted the compromise for in reality he had no other choice. Kitchener left a small garrison at Fashoda and returned to Omdurman.

The so-called Fashoda incident had shown Kitchener at his statesmanlike best in handling a critical moment. The tone took a sharp turn, however, when the interested powers were called upon to settle the dispute by diplomatic means. Neither side appeared willing to back down. The press in both countries whipped up hawkish sentiment and war seemed a distinct possibility. It would have been irrational for France, divided by the Dreyfus affair and facing problems of communication across the sea, to become involved in a war it could not win. After months of stalemate, the counsels of steadier minds in France prevailed and Marchand was recalled.[50]

Kitchener returned to Cairo on 6 October to be greeted by loud cheers by a euphoric public. After a short stay he left for Britain, arriving at Dover on 27 October to an even greater hero's welcome. The Fashoda incident, which previously had dominated the headlines, receded into the background as a grateful public wanted to express their thanks to the soldier who had captured their hearts as no other had in recent memory. In the weeks that followed cities competed with one another to shower Kitchener with honors to the point where he felt overwhelmed and somewhat embarrassed. His portrait appeared in public places and on commercial goods, as if he were a symbol of the nation's virility and righteousness. Parliament expressed its thanks and awarded him £30,000. He received honorary degrees from several universities and was raised to peerage, taking the title Lord Kitchener of Khartoum and Aspall. Playing on his immense popularity, he launched an appeal for £100,000 to found a college at Khartoum in memory of Gordon. Especially targeting rich men, he raised £135,000, then a large sum. Kitchener went to Balmoral to visit the Queen and stayed at homes of close friends and prominent politicians. At Hatfield Lord Salisbury informed him that he would be appointed governor-general of the Sudan while remaining Sirdar of the Egyptian army.

Kitchener arrived at his new living quarters in Khartoum on 28 December, 1898, several weeks before the British and Egyptian governments established a system for the administration of the Sudan. Under the arrangement, known as the Anglo-Egyptian condominium, Britain and Egypt would exercise joint rule in the Sudan. In reality Egypt had only nominal authority as the real power was vested in the British governor-general.

To say that Kitchener was confronted by a daunting task would be an understatement. There was little money to spend and a vast area to govern. The economy of the country had nearly been destroyed by the Mahdists and it is estimated that the population had declined by half because of famine, disease, persecutions and warfare. None of the traditional institutions remained intact and Mahdism still attracted the loyalty of certain tribes. If the country was to move forward, law and order would have to be restored, new agricultural methods introduced, navigation improved and taxation and justice made equitable—to cite a few problems.

Kitchener was given wide latitude in governing the Sudan. He sought to model his policies after British civilization as long as it did not impinge on local customs and especially religion. He made it a point to respect the

Muslim religion but would not tolerate religious fanaticism. He ordered mosques to be built in Khartoum, acknowledged Friday—Muslim holy day—as the official day of rest, and prevented evangelical Christian missionaries from proselytizing. He rebuilt Khartoum, outlawed slavery, protected farmers from rapacious money lenders and recruited talented young Englishmen of outstanding character to form the nucleus of a civil service. Kitchener performed miracles in the span of a year but, as much as he drove himself and his subordinates, the crushing workload never seemed to diminish. He was exhausted and about to seek release from his position in the Sudan when he received a call to serve in South Africa. With Wingate appointed to take charge of the Sudan and the Egyptian army, Kitchener left Khartoum on 18 December, 1899.

The Boer War in which the republics of the Orange Free State and Transvaal sought to shake free from Britain's Imperial grip proved to be far longer and costlier than expected. During the first phase, the Boer farmers had the upper hand over the ill-prepared British army commanded by General Redvers Buller. They hemmed in garrisons in Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberley and British attempts to relieve the beleaguered towns led to three decisive defeats between 9 and 17 December, 1899, in what became known as the "Black Week." The possibility that the British might lose the war, prompted London to replace Buller with Lord Roberts, one of the nation's most renowned soldiers, and appointed Kitchener as his chief of staff. The public greeted the change in command with hysterical joy.

Kitchener met Roberts at Gibraltar and the two continued the journey together, arriving at Cape Town on 10 January, 1900. The two soldiers, although different in temperament and experience, generally saw eye-to-eye on military matters and worked well together. Since the British army had no general staff, Kitchener was used in a variety of ways, in effect, acting as Roberts' second-in-command.

The tide of war turned around completely during the second phase of the campaign. On the voyage Roberts had worked out a simple but effective plan. It called for an advance across the Orange Free State, capture Bloemfontein its capital and then press on through the Transvaal to Pretoria, disposing of any Boer force that tried to bar his way. Kitchener's lone opportunity to command a force occurred at Paardeberg where 5,000 Boers, under General Piet Cronje, had been overtaken and surrounded.[51] Kitchener's attack on Cronje's laager was poorly coordinated and instructions to subordinate commanders unclear. The attack was repulsed, though

10 days later Cronje, unable to effect a sortie and his laager subjected to steady bombardment, was forced to surrender. Kitchener's tactical handling of the battle was criticized (but not by Roberts) and rightly so, proving once and for all that he was no Wellington.

Roberts advanced into the Orange Free State and, after putting to flight the Boers at the Battle of Poplar Grove, entered Bloemfontein unopposed on 13 March. Following six weeks of preparation, he resumed his drive northwards with an overwhelming force and swept into Johannesburg on 31 May and five days later entered triumphantly into Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal. The three besieged towns were all relieved. With the Boer republics occupied, their armies scattered and their political leaders on the run, Roberts returned home, leaving Kitchener to complete such mopping up operations as were necessary.

Far from being nearly over, the war entered the final and most difficult stage, lasting a further two years. The Boers were hardy frontiersmen and expert marksmen, capable of living off the land indefinitely. Instead of fighting pitched battles they resorted to guerilla warfare, harrying such targets as small army columns, railways, storage depots and telegraph sites, all aimed at disrupting the operational capacity of the British army. They struck hard and fast, vanished before enemy reinforcements could arrive and melted back into the general population. They hoped that Britain would tire of the war and offer them acceptable peace terms.

Forced to adopt new tactics, Kitchener concentrated on restricting the freedom of movement of the Boer fighters and depriving them of local support. He extended Roberts' scorched earth policy in troublesome areas, systematically destroying farms, burning crops, slaughtering livestock with the object of making it harder for the Boer commandos to survive. Since women and children could not be left to fend for themselves in the open veld, they were taken to secure camps where, owing to improper organization and administration, many died of malnutrition, unsanitary conditions and inadequate medical care. To impair the mobility of the Boers, Kitchener established fortified block houses at key points—some 8,000 over 3,700 miles—linked together by a massive hedge of barbed wire, thus dividing the wide veld into smaller areas. Sweeps by mounted columns were conducted, starting from opposite ends within the fenced areas, in order to trap small Boer units or drive them against the blockhouses. The various methods adopted worked slowly and eventually broke the resistance of the Boers who submitted in May 1902.[52]

Kitchener returned to England on 12 July and was hailed spectacularly by an adoring public. The new King, Edward VII, appointed him to the Order of Merit, he was created a Viscount and promoted to the rank of general. Additionally Parliament expressed its thanks and awarded him £50,000.

While still in South Africa Kitchener had given thought to his next assignment and decided to accept the enticing offer of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, to command and reform the country's army. Curzon had lured Kitchener to come over to India by promising him a free hand in implementing whatever reforms he deemed necessary. On his return to England, the Secretary for War, St. John Broderick, wanted Kitchener to stay at home and shake up the entire organization of the British army which had been soundly thrashed during the early stages of its conflict with the Boers. Kitchener opted to go to India because he felt his duties would be more congenial and that he would not have to grapple with politicians, as would be the case if he remained in Britain.[53] Kitchener might have reconsidered if he had known that Curzon was headstrong, uncompromising, cunning and obsessed about controlling every detail in his administration—much like he was.

Kitchener took his full period of leave before embarking for India, stopping at Khartoum to open the Gordon Memorial College.[54] He arrived at Bombay on 28 November, 1902. He had already determined before his arrival that the priority of the Indian army should be to safeguard against external aggression, not to maintain internal order. The nation that Kitchener most distrusted was Russia because of its suspected designs on Afghanistan and India. In case an invasion of India became a reality, its army needed to be ready and able to delay the invaders' advance until help from overseas arrived. Kitchener considered the current state of the Indian army deplorable. His prestige and authority allowed him to override any opposition as he implemented sweeping and radical changes.

Kitchener recognized almost immediately that the Indian regiments varied significantly in caliber. Those with poor records were disbanded and reformed with new recruits from tribes known for their martial qualities. A new numbering system was put in place to disassociate the new regiments from the mediocre ones they had replaced. The Indian army had been scattered across the country so that a battalion was apt to be broken into three or four detachments, unable to train and drill together. The Indian army was reorganized into the standard units of strength—that is battalions, brigades, divisions and corps—such as existed in the British army.

There was no clear designation among the troops stationed in isolated places between the requirements of internal security and those charged with repelling an attack from without. Kitchener, therefore, reduced the garrisons to the lowest number compatible with internal security. With the availability of surplus troops it was found that there were enough to form nine divisions grouped into two corps commands and stationed along the north-west frontier to block a possible Russian advance. A rotating arrangement was devised to ensure that all units experience active service along the frontier. Kitchener sought to efface the memory of the Indian mutiny by promoting harmony and trust between the native and British soldiers. Thus each division was to consist of one British brigade and two Indian. Kitchener improved training, increased the pay of sepoys and provided them with Lee-Metfords and modern artillery, established a staff college at Quetta, created a general staff, and took steps, against the advice of senior British officials, to begin the commissioning of Indian officers. The service Kitchener rendered by thoroughly overhauling the Indian army cannot be overstated. That the Indian army was able to perform at a high level during the Great War was due entirely to Kitchener's foresight and hard work.[55]

Kitchener and Curzon had got along well enough until they had a serious difference of opinion over the army's system of dual control. As commander-in-chief, Kitchener was in charge of operations, strategy and training but all other military matters—such as management of transport and supplies, control of the army's finances—lay within the purview of the Military Member. The Military Member served on the Viceroy's Council and his recommendations could have the effect of vetoing or altering decisions made by the commander-in-chief. Kitchener despised the system which he considered unworkable. As he saw it, the intervention of the Military Member led to delays, duplication of work, tedious arguments and precluded implementing a consistent military policy. Furthermore the current Military Member, Sir Edmund Elles, was a mere major-general but possessed the right to evaluate the proposals submitted by the commander-in-chief. Whether in Egypt, the Sudan or South Africa, Kitchener had more or less been in complete control and the prospect of sharing power with anyone, let alone an officer of lower rank, was unthinkable to him. He called for the abolition of the office of the Military Member on the grounds that no army could be efficient unless the commander-in-chief had unrestricted authority and was the sole adviser to the Viceroy.

Curzon's position was that the Viceroy had ultimate responsibility and that before he decided on big questions he was required to hear all sides and not merely the views of one man. He maintained that in case of war the commander-in-chief could not be in two places at once, conducting operations and be at the side of the Viceroy to provide him with advice and up-to-date information. Neither Kitchener nor Curzon would yield an inch. Ultimately the dispute was referred to London which ruled in favor of Kitchener—to have done otherwise probably would have brought the government down. Humiliated, Curzon submitted his resignation on 21 August, 1905, and was succeeded by Lord Minto, the former Governor-General of Canada.[56]

The new Viceroy was not only different from his predecessor in practically every way, but he was content to leave army matters in the hands of the commander-in-chief. A strong bond of sympathy and respect developed between Kitchener and Minto. The only obstacles to Kitchener's reforms were the Liberals who were pledged to retrenchment after their landslide victory in December 1905. The Secretary of State for India, John Morley, no longer considered Russia, defeated by Japan in 1904–05 and its resources depleted, a threat to India. Consequently he saw an opportunity to slash the military budget. Kitchener, himself an enthusiast for economy, believed that the cuts were too deep but he accepted the cabinet's ruling and simply delayed reforming parts of his program.

Kitchener was given an extension of two years in 1907 and did not relinquish his command until 10 September, 1909. As a reward for his service in India he was authorized to travel, at public expense, on a world tour that would include the Far East, Australasia and the United States. A cruiser was placed at his disposal and he left on the first leg of his journey on 12 September. During the seven-month tour he went through ceremonial visits, inspected forts and other military sites, attended the annual maneuvers of the Japanese Imperial army, assessed the competence of the Australian army and purchased many oriental art objects. Kitchener's return to England on 26 April, 1910, was duly noted in prominent newspapers which urged that the government find him suitable employment.

Although Kitchener was nearly 60, with achievements as a soldier and administrator that had brought him immense fame and influence, he did not want to retire if at all possible. In fact, he hoped to crown his last years of public service by succeeding Minto as Viceroy of India. Kitchener most certainly would have gotten his way with the Tories but the government

was currently led by Liberals, many of whom considered him a brutal and unfeeling soldier. As much as he hated the thought of retirement, he preferred to bite the bullet rather than accept low-level employment. But, as had so often happened in the past, events favored him and eventually he would be given the opportunity to enter into a new phase of public service.

Notes

1. The eldest, Henry Chevallier, was born in 1846, followed two years later by a daughter Frances, better known as "Millie." The third son, Arthur, came in 1852, and six years later the family was completed with the arrival of Frederick Walter.
2. Trevor Royle, *The Kitchener Enigma* (London: Michael Joseph, 1985), 5–17.
3. Philip Magnus, *Kitchener*: *Portrait of an Imperialist* (New York: Dutton, 1959), 7–8.
4. Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 23–24.
5. Reginald Viscount Esher, *The Tragedy of Lord Kitchener* (London: John Murray, 1921), 192–93.
6. George H. Cassar, *Kitchener*: *Architect of Victory* (London: Kimber, 1977), 23–24.
7. Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 31–32.
8. Magnus, *Kitchener*, 19–20.
9. Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 41.
10. John Pollock, *Kitchener* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998), 43–44.
11. Peter Mansfield, *The British in Egypt* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 7.
12. On events in Egypt that led to the departure of Ismail see, among others, John Marlowe, *A History of Modern Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Relations* (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1965), ch. 4.
13. On Baring (later Lord Cromer) see Roger Owen, *Lord Cromer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) as well as in his own book, *Modern Egypt*, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1908).
14. For an account of Kitchener at work, see John Macdonald, "Fellah Soldiers, Old and New: A Reminiscence and a Moral," *Nineteenth Century*, vol. 44 (1898), 582–590.
15. Cited in Magnus, *Kitchener*, 50.

16. Cited in Sir George Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1920), 59–60.
17. Cited in Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 1, 60.
18. Bonte Elgood to Magnus, n.d., Arthur papers, PRO 30/57/102.
19. Magnus, *Kitchener*, 66.
20. Both Royle and Pollock give the names of women mentioned in Kitchener's correspondence with his sister.
21. Pollock, *Kitchener*, 170–71.
22. Marlowe, *Modern Egypt*, 142–45.
23. Cited in Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 72.
24. Cited in Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 1, 105.
25. The report is reproduced in its entirety in Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 1, 116–24.
26. Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 75–76.
27. The Mahdi died five months after Gordon, possibly of smallpox.
28. Cited in Pollock, *Kitchener*, 83.
29. E.S. Grew, *Field Marshal Lord Kitchener*, vol. 1 (London: Gresham, 1920), 147.
30. Cited in Pollock, *Kitchener*, 84.
31. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 1, 166–68.
32. Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, *vol. 2*, 86–88; Owen, *Lord Cromer*, 288–89.
33. Magnus, *Kitchener*, 81.
34. John Gooch, "Italy, Abyssinia and the Sudan," 140–42, in Edward M. Spiers, ed., *Sudan*: *The Reconquest Reappraised* (London: Frank Cass, 1998).
35. Jealousy of Kitchener within the War Office, especially on the part of Wolseley, was used throughout the campaign to criticize him on the least pretext. See Ian F.W. Beckett, "Kitchener and the Politics of Command," 40–42, in Spiers, ed., *Sudan*.
36. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 1, 188–89.
37. Kitchener's entire Sudanese campaign is examined in detail in Michael Asher, *Khartoum*: *The Ultimate Imperial Adventure* (London: Penguin Books, 2006).
38. G.W. Steevens, a brilliant war correspondents for the *Daily News*, would leave an indelible mark on Kitchener's career. His book *With Kitchener to Khartoum* was a chronicle of the last phase of the Sudan campaign, that is, from the advance on Berber in March 1898 until the recapture of Khartoum on 2 September, and became an instant best-seller. It was Steevens who made Kitchener a household name and contributed to the creation of his legend in the public's mind. See Berny Sèbe, *Heroic*

Imperialism in Africa (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), ch. 7.

39. Cited in Magnus, *Kitchener*, 103.
40. Cited in Magnus, *Kitchener*, 102.
41. Cassar, *Kitchener*, 73–74.
42. Beckett, "Kitchener and the Politics of Command," 47–48; Lord Edward Cecil, *The Leisure of an Egyptian Official* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938), 177.
43. Ronald Wingate, *Wingate of the Sudan* (London: John Murray, 1955), 114; Cassar, *Kitchener*, 77.
44. Edward M. Spires, "Campaigning Under Kitchener," 59, in Spiers, ed., *Sudan*.
45. Magnus, *Kitchener*, 122; Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 122.
46. Pollard, *Kitchener*, 122.
47. For a well-written description of the Battle of Omdurman see Philip Ziegler, *Omdurman* (New York: Knopf, 1974).
48. Lieut.-Col. Charles à Court Repington, *Vestigia* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1919), 160.
49. Ziegler, *Omdurman*, 21.
50. Edward Berenson, "Fashoda, Dreyfus, and the Myth of Jean–Baptiste Marchand," in *Yale French Studies*, vol. 111 (2007), 137–38; Sir Darrell Bates, *The Fashoda Incident of 1898: encounter on the Nile* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); David L. Lewis, *The Race to Fashoda* (London: Bloombury, 1988), 222–25.
51. Gen. C.R. Ballard, *Kitchener* (Dodd, Mead and Co., 1930), Ch. 9.
52. Thomas Packenham, *The Boer War* (New York: Random House, 1979), in my view is still the best single volume account of the Boer War.
53. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2, ch. 58.
54. Wingate, *Wingate*, 141.
55. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2, chs. 59–70; Philip Mason, *A Matter of Honour: An Account of the Indian Army, Its Officers and Men* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974), 398–400.
56. There are differences of opinion among scholars as to which of the two men was right. David Dilks, *Curzon in India*, vol. 2 (New York: Taplinger, 1969), chs. 4, 7–9; Peter King, *The Viceroy's Fall: How Kitchener Destroyed Curzon* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1986), have argued forcibly on behalf of Curzon. Kitchener is defended with equal fervor by Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2, chs. 71–73 and his most recent biographer, Pollock, *Kitchener*, 286–326. Royce, *Kitchener Enigma*, 214, is rather ambivalent, simply saying that "the new machine contained as many flaws as the old.

But the most compelling testimony comes from Kitchener's successor in India, General O'Moore Creagh, who wrote: "After having worked Lord Kitchener's system for four and a half years I can confidently say it was a sound system and infinitely better than that it superseded." Letter to *The Times*, 22 July, 1916.

CHAPTER 2

Back to Egypt

In the spring of 1909, as Kitchener's term of office in India drew to a close, the Liberal cabinet began the search for a successor to Minto who was due to retire in 1910. The field was narrow so that Kitchener, given his outstanding record of imperial service and the King's personal endorsement, was seen as the leading candidate. Asquith wanted the government to benefit from Kitchener's great prestige, but left the ultimate decision to John Morley, the Secretary for India. Morley was an anti-imperialist much like Gladstone and, apart from his personal dislike of Kitchener, distrusted the military mind.[1] He made it clear that he would resign rather than confirm Kitchener's return to India. He claimed as justification that appointing a famous active soldier to a civilian post would send the wrong message and undo much of the good will created by the India Councils Act of 1909—as a first step towards parliamentary democracy it introduced the election of Indians to some legislative councils though the major ones remained British government appointments. Morley's preference for the post was Sir Charles Hardinge, then Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, but his appointment would raise the question of what to do with the country's most eminent soldier.

After the cabinet agonized for months the Secretary for War Richard Haldane came up with what he considered a possible solution. In 1907 he had created a new post called the Mediterranean Command, which was designed to oversee a string of British bases stretching from Gibraltar to Egypt. Haldane reasoned that in time of war any break in the chain, could

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_2

damage Britain's position in the Mediterranean and imperil traffic through the Suez Canal. The Duke of Connaught, the King's brother, was the first commander but in 1909 he resigned, finding the post uncongenial and superfluous. Haldane then tried to persuade Kitchener to take over from the Duke and, to sweeten the pill, offered him substantial material rewards, including a hefty raise in salary and promotion to field-marshal (though it was not contingent on his acceptance of the appointment).[2] Kitchener was not tempted but Haldane appealed to King Edward VII to intercede on behalf of the government. The King sent a personal plea to Kitchener, assuring him that taking the Mediterranean Command would not exclude him from consideration to any other high office that became available in the future. Kitchener felt he had no option but to bow to the King's wishes. Still in reading between the lines, he gained the impression that he could serve as the Mediterranean Commander for an interim period, that is, until the Viceroyalty in India became available.[3]

Kitchener had an audience with Edward VII on 28 April, 1910, two days after returning from his world tour, and received his field-marshal's baton. The King knew that Kitchener had his heart set on succeeding Minto and assured him of his full support. During their conversation the King, to Kitchener's surprise and delight, released him from his obligation to take up the Mediterranean Command. That evening Kitchener dined with Haldane and announced that he would have to find someone else to fill the office.[4] Kitchener proceeded to select his staff, confident that, with the King and Asquith in his corner, his return to India was a foregone conclusion.

The King was unyielding in his insistence that Kitchener represent him in India. Morley, in deference to Edward, promised to reconsider the matter before taking action. Unfortunately the King died on 6 May, 1910, less than two weeks later, and his loss was fatal to Kitchener's prospects. Asquith could have overruled Morley but his party was embroiled in a constitutional crisis and he was unwilling to force the resignation of one of his principal ministers. In June, Morley formally turned thumbs down on Kitchener's appointment and announced that Hardinge would be replacing Minto in India. Kitchener's disappointment was acute. "You are such an old friend I can tell you what no one knows or sees," he told Major Frank Maxwell, his former ADC. "The iron went in pretty deep,"[5] It was the first major setback he had experienced in his professional career.

It must have seemed strange for Kitchener, who had worked tirelessly since he was a young subaltern, to suddenly find himself unemployed.

With plenty of free time on his hands and eager to get away from London, he journeyed to southern Ireland and revisited the scenes of his childhood.[6] On returning to England he went on a tour of country estates, enjoying the hospitality of old friends such as the Salisburys at Hatfield and the Desboroughs at Taplow Court.

Kitchener hated the cold weather and with the approach of winter and still no employment in sight, decided to take a long holiday in the warmth of Africa. He left England on 5 November, 1910, and passed through Rome and Vienna on his way to Constantinople where he proposed to spend a week or two. Traditionally Britain had supported and defended the Ottoman Empire but its ascendancy there was gradually superseded by the Germans during the first decade of the twentieth century. The German Kaiser saw the advantages of forming a partnership with the Ottoman state, not only because of its geographical position but also because its sultan who was recognized as caliph, or successor to the Prophet Mohammed, as leader of the entire Muslim community, could if the need should arise, unleash the tidal wave of Islam against the more established British Empire. Kitchener was so upset at the preponderant standing of the Germans in the Ottoman capital that he cut his stay short. He wrote a letter to Lady Salisbury (wife of the former prime minister), a trusted confident, from Cairo:

> Things are not going well there [Constantinople] for us; in fact we are out of it altogether, and the German is allowed to do as he likes. There is a good deal of discontent, and I should say a row of some sort, probably war, must be the outcome of it all before long. I was rather afraid that my presence might attract attention and might mean something … so after three days I thought it wiser to go on to Alexandria.[7]

Kitchener had a delightful time in Egypt, with cheering crowds greeting him wherever he went. Besides contacts with officials, he met many native officers and soldiers who, to use his own words, "seemed really glad to see me again."[8] From Egypt he travelled to Khartoum where he was accorded another grand reception as the deliverer of the Sudan from the curse of Mahdism. He stayed with Wingate at the rebuilt palace and was pleased at the progress the city had made since his departure a decade earlier. He visited irrigation projects and the Gordon Memorial College, as well as touring the newly constructed parts of the city. Leaving Khartoum, Kitchener sailed up the Nile in a luxurious steamer Wingate had placed at his dis-

posal. He and his travelling companions, Major Arthur McMurdo (his ADC in Egypt and close friend) and Captain Oswald FitzGerald (his current ADC), stopped along the way to hunt game before taking the overland route to British East Africa (now Kenya), a British colony since the 1880s. Here he stayed as the guest of the governor, Sir Percy Girouard, his old friend and former subordinate, at Government House in Nairobi. Attracted by the countryside and the marvelous climate, Kitchener took advantage of ownership laws to acquire a large estate in the territory. Major E.H.M. Leggett, a member of Kitchener's staff in South Africa and already living in the British colony, joined the party and helped in the search for a property.

The Colonial Office—which administered British East Africa through a governor—was eager to encourage white settlers to cultivate the rich land which was currently used for grazing and hunting by native tribes. Large tracts of free land were offered for active development under strict conditions. The law required that the applicant show that he possessed sufficient financial resources, the expertise to manage the property himself, or hire a competent European if he did not and agree to live in the colony. No individual was allowed a block of land that exceeded 2,000 acres. Kitchener was hoping for a larger parcel of land. Girouard stretched the rules to accommodate his old chief, allotting him an additional 3,000 acres while FitzGerald and McMurdo each received 2,000 acres. Girouard also waived the rule on residency and in consequence the three plots were joined to form a single property known as Songhor Estates. It was arranged that Major Leggett, who had received a separate allocation, would manage the estate. Kitchener intended to spend the summer in England and the winter months on his property in Africa after his public career was over.[9] Sadly he never returned to East Africa.

Kitchener was in Mombasa when he received word that the new King, George V, wanted him to return to London at once to command the troops at his coronation on 22 June (1911). On the way back Kitchener stopped briefly in Venice and stayed with Lady Layard at whose house he was introduced to Kaiser William II—he would meet the German Emperor again a few weeks later at a luncheon given by Lord Haldane on 18 May. He arrived at Dover on 2 April and four days later learned that he was formally the owner of a mansion near Canterbury in Kent called Broome Park.

A year earlier, with retirement beckoning, Kitchener had given thought to purchasing a country estate where he could entertain in style and display

the artistic treasures he had accumulated through purchase, gifts and loot. In the autumn of 1910 his friend and solicitor, Sir Arthur Renshaw, found a house for him in Kent which had been put on the market by the financially-strapped Oxenden family. Constructed during the reign of Charles I, the 500-acre estate included a large house, a stable and a number of outbuildings and cottages. A fine example of extant Carolingian architecture in England, the residence was built of dark red brick and stood against a background of beech and sycamore trees. Kitchener was captivated by the place and authorized Renshaw to enter into negotiations with the family. The price agreed on was £14,000 but because of irregularities in the title the sale was not completed until Kitchener returned from Africa. The place was run down and Kitchener hired an architect to draw up plans for the extensive alterations he had in mind. He applied his engineering skills to lay down in minute detail sketches for restructuring the interior, as well as refurbishing and relaying of the grounds. Progress was slow because everything needed to be done according to his specifications and, in addition, there were interruptions in the construction while he was abroad.[10]

Kitchener occasionally attended social functions but most of his time was occupied with the arrangements for the Coronation. Nothing was overlooked and all duties and orders to the troops were contained in a thick volume of 212 pages. Security was among Kitchener's greatest concerns and, to control the huge crowds that were expected to line the streets through which the procession passed, he had barriers erected, a precaution that was sound but unpopular.[11] The King was pleased that everything had gone smoothly and made Kitchener a Knight of the Order of St Patrick, then Ireland's highest honor for chivalry.

The excitement over the King's coronation had been a welcome break from the troubles at home. The civility in British politics had been suspended in the wake of the Liberal Budget of 1909[12] and the ongoing discussion over the Parliament Act, which aimed to drastically reduce the power of the House of Lords. In the realm of foreign policy, the Conservatives were hammering away at the Liberals in the House of Commons for what they considered to be an absence of a clear-headed policy to counter Germany's brazen aggression.[13] In this heated atmosphere there were calls for Kitchener to be hired in some new and important capacity, to which the Liberals gave evasive replies. The press entered into the debate and frequently ran articles, questioning the government's apparent lack of confidence in Kitchener.

There was a sense of urgency because 10 days before the Coronation it was announced that Kitchener had accepted a position on the board of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway. The press, in particular, worried that Kitchener would retire from the army to pursue high paying employment in the public sector. Kitchener had no such plans. Aware that Broome Park would drain much of his capital, he looked for public positions that paid well without requiring too much work. He still nursed hopes that the Liberal administration whose key members he continue to lobby—an exercise he did not relish and at which he was not very skillful as he was ill at ease in trumpeting his qualifications—would offer him a suitable office. While he was determined not to go to the War Office in any capacity, he told friends that he would accept Cromer's old office in Egypt if it became vacant or the ambassadorship at Constantinople. Sir William Birdwood believed that his appointment as ambassador to Turkey would have better served the interests of the country. He wrote in hindsight:

> I have often wondered what might have happened if Kitchener had been our ambassador in Constantinople in 1914. He had, as I knew well, a remarkable influence—almost a dominating influence—on the peoples of the East and Near East … I feel sure that he would have wielded enormous influence in Constantinople, even though the Turkey of 1914 was hardly the Turkey he had known in years gone by. Now it was strongly dominated by German influence, and Enver Pasha[14] had undoubtedly made up his mind that Germany was invincible.[15]

Kitchener was equally confident that if given a free hand as ambassador in Turkey he would be able to regain the dominant position Britain had held for a century until recently forfeited. The main ingredient for success depended on the Foreign Office's willingness to find the funds to match the bribes the Germans were handing out with a lavish hand to corrupt Turkish ministers. Kitchener, however, doubted that the highly-principled Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Minister, would condone such a salacious practice, not to mention that he was opposed to the idea of appointing ambassadors outside the Diplomatic Service. Whether a great opportunity was lost is debatable. As Ambassador, Kitchener might have retrieved Britain's position in the Ottoman Empire in which case the costly campaigns during the Great War in Mesopotamia and Gallipoli would have

been avoided. On the other hand he would not have been available to take charge of the War Office in August 1914 where his contributions during the conflict were instrumental in the triumph of the Allies.

Kitchener's only other option was the post of Consul-General in Cairo, also under the authority of the Foreign Office, and it seemed that his chances had improved since the stability of Egypt was endangered by a host of problems, not the least was a growing nationalist movement. What had caused the change in the internal dynamics of Egypt, the development of which was progressing smoothly until the last few years of British rule?

It bears repeating that Britain's invasion of Egypt had been intended only to secure the Suez Canal and protect the interests of the bondholders. The French, who had opted out of the campaign against Arabi, later reproached themselves for allowing the British to gain control of Egypt under their nose. As the two Powers were rivals in the Middle East, the French did what they could to undermine British prestige in Egypt. A truce between the two Powers was finally achieved with the signing of the Entente Cordiale in 1904.[16]

Britain's objective was to remain in Egypt only long enough to reimpose order, solve its financial problems and restore the authority of the Khedive. Lord Dufferin, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, was sent to Egypt with instructions to study the Khedive's administration and recommend measures for the judicious development of self-government. His report proposed, among other things, that there should be two representative institutions, the Legislative Council and the General Assembly. The former was consultative only while the latter could veto fresh taxation but enjoyed no other power.[17] The Khedive's system remained in place with its authority unrestricted. It was rather self-defeating to talk about the desirability of self-government, but to create embryonic constitutional bodies with no authority to limit the Khedive's autocracy.

We already saw that Lord Cromer (then Sir Evelyn Baring), as British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, had been charged to achieve administrative stability and financial solvency. With the assistance of a dedicated and able group of British advisers, Cromer introduced a new system, known as the Veiled Protectorate, which allowed him to govern from behind the scenes, while giving the impression that the Khedive and his council of native ministers were in charge. The Khedive Tewfik, mindful that he owed his throne to the British, tolerated the arrangement and got along well with Cromer. The Consul-General expected the Khedive to

consult with him privately before selecting his ministers and to heed his advice.

During Cromer's long tenure he was the model of integrity and his administrative competence and hard work brought order out of chaos. His list of accomplishments in the face of enormous difficulties was extraordinary and included the following: restoring the financial solvency of the country; providing competent administration and relative stability; increasing agricultural production by improving irrigation service; lowering taxes; providing the resources to rebuild the army; improving the system of justice; and making possible the reconquest of the Sudan. His early experience convinced him that Egyptians were not ready for self-government and not likely to reach that stage in his lifetime. He reasoned that only through personal autocratic rule could reforms be achieved which in time would advance the country's material prosperity and educational level necessary to superimpose western style institutions. He assumed that the material benefits accruing from the British Occupation would keep the apathetic masses content. Highly intelligent and well read, he had learned Greek and Latin as well as French and Italian while still in the army and later Turkish, but despite his long stay in Egypt he never bothered to learn Arabic.[18]

During the first decade of Cromer's incumbency the nationalist movement, broken and left leaderless by Arabi's defeat at Tel-el-Kebir, was quiet with only faint resistance at the grass-root level. In the early 1890s the movement was re-energized by an elite group—that included journalists, teachers, students and lawyers—who for the most part had been educated abroad or in local schools set up by Europeans. Operating as a secret organization, the new nationalists were led by a lawyer and gifted speaker named Mustafa Kamil who favored the acceptance of all residents, Muslims and Christians, as long as they were loyal to Egypt.[19] He and his group wanted Egypt to become a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy. They resented Cromer's autocratic rule, Britain's indefinite occupation of Egypt and the increasing number of British civil servants who controlled key ministries in the Egyptian government. Kamil founded his own newspaper, *al-Liwa*, in 1900 and seven years later produced French and British editions. The campaign to end British Occupation won the support of the new Khedive Abbas II, who succeeded his father in 1892.

Educated in Switzerland and Austria, Abbas could speak Turkish, French, English and German, but incredibly no Arabic. Unlike his prede-

cessor, he was not willing to bow to the wishes of the Occupying Power. In his eagerness to assert himself and regain his birthright, he tried to stand up to Cromer and in the process was humiliated and beaten down.[20] Desperate to rid his country of British rule, Abbas indirectly supplied the nationalists with advice and money even though he did not favor a more democratic regime for Egypt. His intent was to use the nationalists as tools to help end British control and, once that objective had been gained, to discard them and bring the whole country firmly under his personal rule.

Cromer derided the political aims of the nationalists and considered them extreme, referring to them as fanatics for championing the pan-Islamic movement. He thought more highly of moderate nationalists (composed mostly of businessmen and land owning magnates) who, having accepted that independence for Egypt was a distant goal, saw the advantages in the British connection. Although Mustafa Kamil and his followers made an impression on intellectual and patriotic elements in the country, they failed to win over the bulk of the fellahin who were doing relatively well and saw no advantage in overturning the existing order. As the nationalists seemed to be losing momentum, the British unwittingly triggered an incident that played into their hands.

In the summer of 1906, a group of five British officers were pigeon-hunting near the village of Denshawai. The villagers resented the killing of pigeons which served as a local source of food. Due to a misunderstanding on both sides a fracas broke out and a British officer was killed. British officials choose to use the incident as a pretext to combat what they viewed as growing Muslim fanaticism in Egypt. A special tribunal was invoked to try the alleged culprits. Of the 52 villagers arrested, 21 were convicted with four sentenced to death and the rest to various terms of imprisonment or 50 lashes. The severity of the punishment sparked extensive emotional outpouring among Egyptians and was eagerly seized by the nationalists to discredit the British administration.[21]

After the special tribunal was convoked, Cromer returned to England for his annual holiday. Although there were few important decisions taken in Egypt that he did not determine, there is no evidence that he was consulted before the sentences were handed down. On hearing the news he conceded that a mistake had been made but felt he could not rescind the action of the tribunal. With his health in decline and the Denshawai incident casting a gloomy shadow over his administration, he sent in his resignation on 28 March, 1907, and recommended as his successor, Eldon Gorst, a former subordinate. Cromer believed that Gorst's nomination

would be an adequate guarantee that no change of policy was intended in Egypt.[22] The Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, accepted Cromer's resignation with regret on 5 April and concurred with him that "in sending out Gorst we are doing the best we can."[23] A month later Cromer left the country he had dominated for nearly a quarter of a century.

The barbarous sentences imposed on some of the Denshawai villagers, not only provoked widespread anger among all classes but also impacted the nationalist movement, leading to the establishment of Egypt's first political parties. The moderate nationalists took the initial step and founded the Umma Party (or People's Party), and were followed shortly thereafter by the more extremist Watan Party (National Party) of Kamil and the Khedive's Constitutional Reform Party—the name paid lip service to the concept of democracy but the party opposed parliamentary government.[24]

Grey's instructions to Gorst, contrary to Cromer's assumption, were to give Egyptians a greater measure of responsibility to manage their internal affairs. The new policy of conciliation, framed in response to the Egyptians' outburst over the Denshawai incident, was designed to undercut the influence of the National Party and appease hostile critics in Britain and Egypt. Gorst had served on Cromer's staff in various capacities before returning to London in 1904 as an under-secretary of state specializing on Egyptian affairs at the Foreign Office.[25] He could not have been more different than his predecessor. Cromer was aggressive, confident, domineering and possessed rare diplomatic skill, whereas Gorst was unprepossessing, tactful, insecure and wobbly in the face of criticism. If Gorst lacked a commanding presence and exceptional powers of administration, he held an advantage over Cromer in other ways. He knew Arabic and was better informed about the country and its people.

Gorst had a three-point program in mind when he picked up the reins of government. The first was to heal the Agency's breach with the Khedive Abbas, who was theoretically the head of state. It was his belief that the estrangement between the two sides could not continue indefinitely. The options were either to depose him or to seek his cooperation. Gorst tried the latter approach by regular consultations with him and treating him with dignity. Gorst hoped to use the Khedive against Kamil's nationalists but his influence with them was really more symbolic than real. The nationalist demand for constitutional government was inconsistent with the Khedive's increase in power and what little faith they had in him vanished when he was perceived as having sold himself to his country's

occupiers. Gorst's efforts to cultivate the friendship of the Khedive, however, cost him the support of the pro-British Umma Party whose cooperation Cromer had enlisted during the late stages of his administration. This promising relationship ended when Gorst formed close ties with the Khedive whom the moderates despised. The alliance between Gorst and the Khedive meant that they were no longer consulted or given important positions in the administration. The upshot was that they turned from supporters to vehement critics of British rule. It is true that the moderates represented a small segment of the population but they enjoyed disproportionate political influence through their press and the legislative organs of the government.

The second objective was gradually to bring more Egyptians into top administrative positions held by the British. In implementing this policy, Gorst faced formidable opposition from angry British officials. Trained under Cromer and imbued with his philosophy, they were convinced that Egyptians were not qualified to run the complex machinery of government built over the years. Additionally they could hardly accept with equanimity the news that their career prospects were in jeopardy. Gorst replaced his most vocal critics but he was not able to surround himself with a staff that shared his views. It may have been politically expedient to replace Englishmen by Egyptians at the highest level of the administration but only at the cost of losing maximum administrative efficiency. There were not enough Egyptians with the required skills to do the job, to say nothing of the friction that was created between the new and old officials. In short, Gorst should have realized that the change in key personnel, from British to Egyptian, needed to be done gradually, at least over a generation. If Egyptians were to be inculcated with western values, this could only be achieved by leaving British officials with supreme authority for the foreseeable future.

Finally, Gorst aimed to enlarge the powers of the new political bodies created in the early months of the Occupation and restrict interference only to matters affecting British interests. As a prelude to meeting Egyptian demands for self-government, Gorst extended the authority of the provincial councils which hitherto had been accorded very little power. Under Gorst the councils were given control of the local needs of the country, particularly over education. Gorst, moreover, relaxed the restraints on the Khedive's personal authority as another step in the march towards independence but, in reality, it was incompatible with his objective—though he eventually recognized his misstep. Another concession was to give the

central legislative bodies a say in shaping government policy.[26] His most important move in that direction was to allow the General Assembly to decide whether the government should accept the Suez Canal Company's offer of extending its concession of 99 years after the opening of the canal (set to expire in 1968) for an additional 40 years in return for the sum of £4,000,000 and a share of the profits. The government, hard-pressed for money, favored such an accord, as did Gorst, but there was a huge popular outcry, led by the nationalists, who resented the Suez Canal Company as a greedy, exploitative symbol of European imperialism. Caught by surprise at the intensity of opposition, Gorst referred the matter to the General Assembly which, save for one member, was unanimous in rejecting the Company's proposal.[27]

The slow-pace of Gorst liberalizing reforms failed to satisfy the Watanist nationalists who turned to violence after the premature death of Kamil early in 1908. With the removal of his moderating influence, his less capable successor Mohammed Farid was unable to hold the party together or prevent its downward spiral towards pan-Islamic extremism. The incidents in which nationalists were involved in street fighting or other forms of public disturbances became more frequent. Gorst did not help matters when he adopted a tolerant approach towards those who had been arrested. He would learn belatedly that failure to act firmly in the face of political agitation undermined the maintenance of public security. In February 1910, the Prime Minister, Butrus Ghali Pasha, a Copt, was assassinated on the street outside his office by a twenty-three-year old member of a terrorist society. The death of Butrus Ghali ended all hopes of uniting all Egyptians regardless of religious beliefs as a necessary step to the orderly and gradual attainment of independence. It not only stiffened the British government's resolve to confront political lawlessness head on but brought home the message that the Egyptians were too immature to govern themselves. It led to new laws to control nationalist activities. Gorst's policy of gradual reform in Egypt came to an end.

Gorst was generally perceived as weak and assailed by his enemies who attributed the assassination of Butrus Ghali to his liberalization policies and to his loss of control over the nationalist extremists. His pursuit of strengthening the authority of the Khedive was in conflict with the enlargement of powers of the elected bodies. The alienation of the Umma Party made it more difficult to achieve political stability. The assassination of Ghali had widened the divisions between Copts and Muslims. The liberal reforms had failed to mollify the radical nationalists who wanted nothing

less than the immediate exit of the British. Finally there was a widespread feeling among the British community that Gorst had betrayed them by introducing Egyptians into top administrative positions, an action that threatened their privileged standing in the country.

Gorst was seriously ill when he returned to England in April 1911 and, before many weeks passed, it became common knowledge in political circles that he was dying of cancer and a replacement would have to be found to take over the British Agency in Egypt. Kitchener learned of Gorst's fatal condition early in May and, as much as he wanted to return to Egypt, he was not overly optimistic about his prospects. He should have been the obvious choice but, with the current Liberal administration, nothing was certain. Kitchener was anathema to left-wing Liberals who, using his quarrel with Curzon to strengthen their case, were loud in proclaiming that his military training made him unsuitable for a post that was primarily political and diplomatic. The final word, however, rested with Grey. He recognized that the liberal experiment in Egypt had failed and there was need of a strong government. Still he had some reservations about whether Kitchener could adapt himself to a civilian gubernatorial appointment, notwithstanding that support for him throughout Britain was overwhelming. Cromer's intervention at this crucial moment may have tipped the scales. The former Consul-General had not supported Kitchener in 1907 when his name was bandied about as his possible successor because he judged him to lack administrative and diplomatic experience.[28] But Gorst's failed policies and the erosion of British prestige in Egypt led him to change his mind about Kitchener. In a letter to Grey he argued that in recent years Kitchener had mellowed and his knowledge broadened and, in view of increased nationalist agitation in Egypt, he was the only logical choice to succeed Gorst.

Grey notified Kitchener on 17 June that he wanted to see him and the meeting occurred two days later in the afternoon. Grey told Kitchener that a strong hand was needed in Egypt to check the burgeoning nationalist movement but implied that he did not favor a reimposition of Cromer's high-handed policy. He wanted the Egyptians to channel their energies towards constructive work rather than join groups which opposed British rule. In short, Grey wanted to know whether Kitchener could maintain order without reversing Gorst's liberal reforms. Kitchener replied that he was confident that he could. He understood that the appointment was civilian in character and claimed that it would not be an obstacle to keeping the peace and guiding the country along progressive lines. That

seemed to satisfy Grey. On 20 June, Grey wrote to Kitchener: "The King approves very cordially of your going to Cairo, and the arrangement is one which has evidently given him much pleasure, so that it may now be regarded as settled."[29]

Kitchener had a second interview with Grey on 12 July—ironically on the same day that Gorst died. On 16 July Grey announced in the House that Kitchener had been appointed Consul-General in succession to Gorst in Egypt and, to assuage the fears of some Liberals, insisted that no change from civil to military administration was contemplated. There were a few questions from disgruntled Liberals but most members of the House were pleased with the appointment.

As might be expected, the London dailies, which for months had called on the government to employ Kitchener in a meaningful capacity, were overjoyed at his selection to the post. It was an indication that the government had abandoned its liberal experiment in Egypt in favor of re-imposing a firmer policy in the management of the country's affairs. *The Times* spoke for the nation when it reported the news on 17 July: "The official announcement of Lord Kitchener's appointment has been received here with satisfaction and there is a striking unanimity in the approval which his selection for the post of British Agent has called forth."

Kitchener rejoiced over his return to Egypt but in his mind his crowning achievement still lay ahead. He was determined to make his tenure dazzling and memorable, one that would open the way for him to succeed Hardinge as Viceroy in India in 1915. He spent the next two months making preparations for his trip, deciding what belongings he should take with him, assembling his staff, periodically motoring to Broome Park to inspect the alterations and consult with his estate manager, and embarking on a tour to bid farewell to his close friends.

Kitchener, accompanied by his party that included FitzGerald and a French chef, left for Egypt from Liverpool Street Station on 16 September. Kitchener's departure was unannounced but somehow a troop of Boy Scouts found out and came to see him off. After returning from East Africa Kitchener had become interested in the recently established Boy Scout movement which led to his acceptance of the Presidency of the North London Association of Boy Scouts. In the summer the scouts were given permission to camp on the grounds of Broome Park. Kitchener was touched by the scouts who had come to bid him farewell. He alighted from the train, gave a brief talk, and returned to his seat. They waved at him as the train pulled out of the station.[30]

Kitchener received near unanimous acclaim from every quarter in Egypt. Most of the Arabic press expressed warm words of welcome, though probably none exceeded the pro-British hyperbole of a*l-Bassir*: "If a man like Lord Kitchener existed in every country," observed the leader after his arrival, "the dead would return to life, the poor would be rich, science and freedom would spread, and everybody would be happy."[31] In a more restrained tone, a*l-Ahram* wrote: "If we are to be ruled, let us be ruled by a manly man. Lord Kitchener's appointment should be welcomed, since he is so well known to us. His justice in the army is proverbial, and Egypt is hungry for justice."[32] In particular those engaged in business were delighted at the prospect of a return to the firm rule and general security of Cromer. Moderate Egyptians were hopeful; Copts who had major grievances against Gorst were more optimistic that their rights as a minority would be secured; while the only discordant note came from the extreme nationalists who were outraged by the appointment.

Kitchener's ship docked at Alexandria on the afternoon of 27 September and the following morning a few Egyptian officials called on him informally where he was staying. In the afternoon he was driven in the royal coach, escorted by mounted police, to the Palace of Ras-el-Tin to present his credentials to the Khedive. It was important that the two men learn to work together, at least in an atmosphere of civility, but that would depend on whether they could repair their relationship which had become strained in the aftermath of an unhappy incident.

The seeds of their estrangement had been planted while Kitchener was Sirdar of the Egyptian army. Abbas mounted the throne in 1892 at the age of 18 but, unlike his father, never accepted the rigidity of British rule which made him feel inferior. In 1894, he announced his wish to inspect Egyptian units along the frontier with the Sudan. His real purpose was to humiliate and force the resignation of the British officers who almost exclusively commanded the Egyptian army. From the moment Abbas began the tour his complaints and criticism of everything under British control were ceaseless and grew bolder. Kitchener reacted calmly for a time at the young Khedive's petulant behavior. The Khedive pushed his luck too far when after a past march of the entire garrison at Wadi Halfa he turned to Kitchener and exclaimed: "To tell you the truth, Kitchener Pasha, I consider it a disgrace for Egypt to be served by such an army."[33] Kitchener was so incensed that he indicated that under the circumstances he had no alternative but to resign. The Khedive obviously realized that he had overplayed his hand and tried to make amends. Kitchener observed that the Khedive's pejorative remarks about the state

of the army were subversive of discipline and morale. He added that, by being publicly rebuked, the British officers would probably resign and that it would be impossible to find replacements. Abbas begged Kitchener to forget what had occurred, stressing that his remarks should not be taken so seriously. Kitchener broke off the parade and withdrew to his headquarters. Though he did not persist in going through with his resignation, he proceeded to inform Cromer of the incident.[34]

Cromer was already miffed at Abbas for appointing a crony, Maher Pasha, as deputy war minister, without his consent while he was in Scotland. Maher was anti-British and there were signs that he was attempting to subvert the loyalty of the Egyptian army to its British officers. He may well have encouraged Abbas to adopt the line of conduct that had so offended Kitchener. Cromer had the opportunity he was waiting for to clip the young ruler's wings once and for all and bring Egypt more firmly under his control. With the backing of Lord Rosebury, then the Foreign Secretary, Cromer instructed the Khedive to dismiss Maher and publicly express his complete satisfaction with the training and discipline of his army and especially with the quality of the British officers.[35] Abbas' options were either to accept British conditions or abdicate. He chose the former. Kitchener was willing to let bygones be bygones. When he returned to duty, he told the Khedive "that it should go no further."[36] That it did must be laid at the doorstep of Abbas. Unfortunately he never forgave Kitchener for the humiliation he had suffered at his hands and for which he had no one but himself to blame.[37]

At their encounter on 28 September 1911, Kitchener and Abbas greeted one another cordially without any hint of their previous clash. Kitchener read a brief speech in French—the international language used in Egypt—which was paraphrased in Egyptian newspapers as follows:

> I am particularly pleased with the prospect of being called upon to maintain the deep sympathy which animated my predecessor in his relations with your Highness, and I hope that this sympathy, added to a friendship to Egypt of long date, will facilitate for me the task I have at heart, namely, watching over to the best of my power, and with the approval of your Highness, the prosperity of Egypt.

Abbas followed with an equally brief speech in French during which he welcomed Kitchener as a representative of His Majesty the King and expressed a desire to maintain the same warm relations with him as he had

with his predecessor. Abbas recalled the years of Kitchener's earlier service in and attachment to Egypt and was convinced of the Consul-General's wish to help his people and further the development of the country. He gave assurances that Kitchener could count on his firm support in carrying out his task.[38]

Kitchener left for Cairo by special train later in the afternoon. When he arrived at the rail station, the platform was packed with high dignitaries who had turned out to greet him. The General Manager of the Egyptian State Railway was Brigadier-General Robert Blakeney, a sapper who had served under Kitchener in the Sudan as part of the crew building the desert railway and later in South Africa. He was delighted that his former chief was the new King's representative in Egypt and he had gone to great lengths to ensure that the welcoming ceremony was lavish and dignified. A red carpet had been spread over the platform on which stood Egyptian cabinet ministers, British notables, leading religious figures, senior army officers of both armies, powerful businessmen and a Guards' band. Outside the railway station a huge crowd had gathered and the organizing officials were a bit concerned about the effects of a serious railway strike that had not completely dissipated and the radical nationalists stepped up anti-British polemics in their press which referred to Kitchener as "the Butcher of Khartoum".

At the sight of Kitchener stepping out of the train around 7.30 p.m. the band started to play the national anthem. Heeding Grey's suggestion, Kitchener wore civilian clothes—grey frock-coat and top hat—to emphasize the political and diplomatic nature of his office, though henceforth, he would do so only on rare occasions. Towering above everyone, Kitchener inspected the Guards of Honor and, as he proceeded to walk down the line of army officers, he was most friendly and warm, occasionally pausing to greet old friends and subordinates. But when he shook hands with the high political officials he was courteous but stiff. After the exchange of idle talk was over, he emerged from the building and began to walk down the steps leading to the Agency's waiting carriage. "For a moment our hearts stood still," Blakenley wrote. "Then came a wild yell of delight from the populace. They closed in and followed the carriage, cheering yelling and clapping hands, the whole way to the Agency."[39] It was unusual for the Egyptians to show such outward emotion—it never happened when the Khedive passed through the streets of the capital—which was a testament to the immense prestige and popularity Kitchener enjoyed among the masses in the country. He

was escorted to the Agency by a squadron of the 21st Lancers which had taken part in a celebrated but ill-advised charge away from the battlefield at Omdurman. Kitchener had been so upset by the unnecessary loss of life that he came perilously close to court-martialing its commander, Colonel R.M. Martin.

Kitchener was dismayed at the chaotic condition within the Agency which obviously had been neglected during the months of Gorst's terminal illness. Shortly after his arrival he wrote to Lady Salisbury, with whom he kept in regular contact: "The house was in an awful state and I have hardly a place to sleep in but … we are getting it done by degrees. I have had the whole place thoroughly disinfected."[40]

The Egypt that awaited Kitchener was quite different from the one he had left behind a dozen years earlier. A European recession had seriously affected Egypt's economy that coincided with Cromer's departure in 1907. There had been a reduction in agricultural output over the next two years, in particular a sharp fall in the yield of cotton, the country's cash cow. Many people were hard pressed to repay their debt or meet their mortgage payments and the inevitable fall in purchasing activity shook the confidence of businessmen and investors. The economy was starting to recover when Kitchener arrived on the scene.

Added to the struggling economy were the unfortunate consequences of Gorst's liberal policy of relaxing direct British control over the Egyptian administration. The late Consul-General was detested by the pro-British elements in Egypt for his mismanagement and concessions to extreme nationalist groups. He was blamed for a rise in crime. British officials resented the employment of Egyptians in the civil service and were less than loyal in implementing his policies. He alienated moderate nationalists by his firm alliance with the Khedive. A resurgence of pan-Islam had widened the breach between Coptic Christians and Muslim nationalists, culminating in the assassination of Butrus Ghali. Finally despite Gorst's efforts to introduce an element of democracy to the country's political institutions, nothing served to calm the passions of extreme nationalist groups which, although of differing views, were united by their call for Egyptian independence.

The events of the past four years had demonstrated to the vast majority in Egypt the desirability of a strong government. There were expectations that Kitchener would adopt measures to reinvigorate the economy, stifle nationalist disturbances and provide better security. The press cheered Kitchener on; it too was confident that he would set matters right.

Kitchener had a lot on his plate but it was not in his nature to be overawed by the challenges he faced, no matter how daunting. He had the advantage of speaking Arabic, knew the country well having lived there for 14 years during his service in the army and liked and appreciated the culture of its people. No less important his military achievements had given him immense prestige among the masses, opening many doors in a society where personality weighed more than policies. These assets ensured that Kitchener's tenure would begin with a flourish.

Notes

1. Stephen E. Koss, *John Morley at the India Office, 1905–1910* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 119.
2. Philip Magnus, *Kitchener: Portrait of an Imperialist* (New York: Dutton, 1959), 240.
3. Trevor Royle, *The Kitchener Enigma* (London: Michael Joseph, 1985), 226.
4. Sir Ian Hamilton, Kitchener's former chief of staff in South Africa, was later given the post.
5. Cited in John Pollock, *Kitchener* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998), 349.
6. Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 233.
7. Cited in Sir George Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan, 1920), 306.
8. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2, 306.
9. Magnus, *Kitchener*, 256.
10. Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 234–35.
11. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2, 308–09.
12. The so-called people's budget introduced a revolutionary new principle whereby the government increased taxes on the rich to pay for social programs to help the poor.
13. The European scene was again shaken by Kaiser Wilhelm II when he dispatched a gunboat (called the *Panther*) to the Moroccan port of Agadir, ostensibly to protect German nationals in that unstable region, but in reality to extort colonial concessions from France. The British were already angry and upset at Germany's large naval build-up which threatened the security of their island kingdom and its empire. They wrongly believed that in dispatching the *Panther*, the Germans meant to convert Agadir into a naval base on the Atlantic.

14. He was, or at least believed to be, the dominant member of the Turkish government.
15. Field-Marshal Lord Birdwood, *Khaki and Gown* (London: Ward, Lock and Co., 1942), 209.
16. Although not a military alliance, the treaty settled all outstanding colonial differences between the two nations. In particular Britain gave France a free hand in Morocco in return for recognition of its control over Egypt.
17. Peter Mansfield, *The British in Egypt* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 56–58.
18. Cromer's political views, challenges and accomplishments are well documented in Roger Owen, *Lord Cromer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
19. Israel Gershoni and James P. Jankowski, *Egypt, Islam and the Arabs: The Search for Egyptian Nationhood, 1900–1931* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 16.
20. John Marlowe, *Cromer in Egypt* (London: Elek Books, 1970), 161–66.
21. Mansfield, *British in Egypt*, 167–69.
22. Archie Hunter, *Power and Passion in Egypt: A Life of Sir Eldon Gorst 1861–1911* (London: Tauris, 2007), 161.
23. Hunter, *Power and Passion*, 161.
24. Robert L. Tignor, *Modernization and British Colonial Rule, 1882–1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 286–87; M.W. Daly, "The British Occupation, 1882–1922" in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol 2, ed. by M.W. Daly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 244–45.
25. Peter Mellini, *Sir Eldon Gorst* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1977), chs. 3–6.
26. Hunter, *Power and Passion*, chs. 14–16, 218; John Marlowe, *A History of Modern Egypt and Anglo–Egyptian Relations* (Hamden, CN: Archon Books, 1965), 198–99.
27. Hunter, *Power and Passion*, 212–22; Lieut.-Col. P.G. Elgood, *The Transit of Egypt* (London: Edward Arnold, 1928), 193–94.
28. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2, 311–12.
29. Cited in Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2, 312.
30. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, 313.
31. Cited in Royle, *Kitchener Enigma*, 240.

32. Cited in Arthur E. Weigall, *A History of Events in Egypt from 1798 to 1914* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), 238.
33. Ronald Wingate, *Wingate of the Sudan* (London: John Murray, 1955), 98; Roy Pugh, *Wingate Pasha* (Barnsley, S. York: Pen and Sword, 2011), 37–38.
34. Kitchener to Cromer, 19 January 1894, FO 141/304.
35. Rosebery to Cromer, 21 January, 1894, FO 141/304; Earl of Cromer, *Abbas II* (London: Macmillan, 1915), 52ff; Magnus, *Kitchener*, 86–88; M.W. Daly, *The Sirdar*: *Sir Reginald Wingate and the British Empire in the Middle East* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1997), 57–59.
36. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, *My Diaries*, vol. 1 (New York: Knopf, 1922), 129.
37. Kitchener's despatches explaining Abbas' behavior are judicious and objective and his low opinion of the Khedive does not differ significantly from the views of other officials, Egyptian as well as British, on the scene. Kitchener's reports in which he describes the difficulties Abbas is causing the Occupation are free of emotion and self–righteousness, concentrating instead on ways to deal with him. Kitchener is not always negative and does occasionally give Abbas credit when it is due. See Ann Elizabeth Mayer, "Abbas Hilmi II: The Khedive and Egypt's Struggle for Independence," vol. 1 (PhD thesis, University of Michigan, 1978), 35–36.
38. The speeches by Kitchener and the Khedive have been reproduced in their entirety in *The Last Khedive of Egypt*; *The Memoirs of Abbas Hilmi II*, trans. and ed., by Amira Sonbol (Reading: Ithaca, 1998), 276–77; Kitchener to Grey, 29 September, 1911, FO 371/1115, No. 39287.
39. E.W.C. Sandes, *The Royal Engineers in Egypt and the Sudan* (Chatham: Institute of Royal Engineers, 1937), 538.
40. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 22 October, 1911, Salisbury papers.

CHAPTER 3

Personality, Thoughts and Methods of a Benevolent Autocrat

Kitchener had initially been drawn to Egypt as a means of advancing his military career. That is not to say that he was unaware of the principal factor that had inspired Britain's involvement in Egypt. He knew of French designs in the Levant and that the only sure way to avoid Britain's threat to its vital communications system was to occupy Egypt. When he returned to Egypt the second time, the new imperial movement was at its height and through his experience and observation, he had come to share in Disraeli's vision of the correctness of Britain's colonial empire. He favored its expansion, not by gratuitously adding more territory but in selecting areas that were strategically located and would strengthen the country's military power. There is no evidence, one way or the other, but the economic argument advanced then by excitable politicians and their jingoistic captains of industry may also have played a part in shaping his attraction to empire-building. The economic dominance that Britain had enjoyed in Europe for decades through the advent of the industrial revolution had narrowed considerably as the twentieth century approached. Britain was threatened with losing its wealth and security. By enlarging its empire and acquiring new markets and sources of raw materials, it was hoped that Britain again would outdistance its rivals. This proved to be an illusion, however. More recent scholarship would show that colonies in general were non-profitable and in many cases were actually a drain on the nation's treasury.

Kitchener never gave much thought about the ethics of expropriating territories inhabited by non-western people, only that the less advanced

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_3

world would benefit from an extension of British rule. It was an attitude held by nearly all of Britain's colonial administrators. Kitchener's travels in the Ottoman Empire and earlier stay in Egypt and later in India had shown that native rulers in general were cruel, hopelessly incompetent and oppressive. There was a moral component in his makeup that was the basis of responsible imperialism, namely a belief in the application of a standard of security and justice for peoples in all places occupied by Britain for its benefit. He was convinced that Britain's paternalistic policy made it more suited to lead colonial peoples to a safer and brighter future than most of its European contemporaries whom he perceived as avaricious and exploitative. In many ways a man of vision, he did not sense that the constant changes in world politics made the demise of the British Empire a historic inevitability.

Before Kitchener left for Egypt, Grey had given him contradictory orders: he was to promote strong government while continuing to guide, in the manner of Gorst, the country along progressive lines. Kitchener discharged the first part of his instructions but, as a rule, either ignored or reversed his predecessor's policies. It was only on rare occasions that he emulated practices adopted by Gorst and, if one happened to be unpopular when introduced, it was accepted without dissent as his god-like status shielded him from the kind of criticism heaped on his predecessor by the British and European communities.

Kitchener never doubted that Gorst's efforts to give Egyptians a greater voice in managing their internal affairs had come at the expense of administrative efficiency. Under his watchful eye the English dominated the top administrative positions as they had during Cromer's tenure. Kitchener found that his arrival had a calming effect on the country and that he could delay making any political changes. He told Grey in his first annual report: "I am glad to be able to report that … the consideration of practical reforms for the good of the country has apparently become more interesting to the majority of the people than discussion on abstruse political questions which are unlikely to lead to any useful result." He was less pleased with other changes that had taken place during his absence from the country. He admitted that he had been "forcibly struck by the fact that the formerly homogenous body of intelligent Mohammedan inhabitants who constituted a collective community based on fixed social laws is now split up and divided into parties and factions of a political character." Kitchener was adamant that he considered Islam to be incompatible with western political institutions: "Whatever the value of a party system may

be in Western political life, it is evident that its application to an intensely democratic community, the essential basis of whose social system is the brotherhood of man[1] … is an unnatural proceeding, fraught with inevitable division and weakness." As he saw it, only the firm, direct guidance of a British colonial government could bring order and prosperity to alien people. The inference in his report was unmistakable:

> The development and elevation of the character of a people depends mainly on the growth of self-control and the power to dominate natural impulse, as well as on the practice of unobtrusive self-reliance and perseverance, combined with reasoned determination. None of these elements of advance are assisted in any way by party strife. Calm and well-considered interest in political affairs is good for both the governed and those who rule, but fictitious interest, generally based on misrepresentation and maintained by party funds and party tactics, does nothing to elevate or develop the intelligent character of an Oriental race.[2]

A shy man, Kitchener neither sought nor enjoyed publicity. If he gave an interview, which was rare, he did so for charitable purposes (such as to encourage donations for the Gordon Memorial College) or to gain public support for a project he had in mind. Although he was single-minded and unyielding, he did not hold grudges. For example he had quarreled with Gorst while he served as commander of the Egyptian army. As financial advisor to the Egyptian government, Gorst had begrudged or resisted the funding requested by Kitchener during the Omdurman campaign and later in the reconstruction of the Sudan. Kitchener's differences with Gorst were forgotten when he moved on to his next assignment. In fact in the opening paragraph of his first annual report as Consul-General he paid tribute to his predecessor for devoting a good part of his life to promoting the welfare of Egypt. He pointed out that in view of Gorst's marked success in previous posts held, it was only natural that he succeed Cromer at the Agency "where he worked indefatigably until his death." He concluded by saying: "So many tributes to his memory have already been paid, both here and at home, that it would be superfluous in this report to dwell further on Sir Eldon Gorst's eminent services."[3]

Kitchener got along well with his superiors as long as he was given a wide berth and left free to execute his orders in his own way. It was no different with Grey whom he liked and respected, though their relationship was never close. Kitchener never undertook a major project without seeking authorization from the Foreign Office and he invariably

received it. While Grey occasionally questioned or expressed misgivings about a course of action Kitchener proposed, he rarely overruled him on an internal matter. Grey's knowledge of Egypt was limited and he was astute enough to realize that management of the country was best left in Kitchener's hands. He had no reason to complain. He had his hands full in coping with the turbulent international scene and Egypt was one area that gave him no trouble.

On the first day that Kitchener arrived at the Agency, Ronald Storrs, the Oriental Secretary, was cooling his heels in the Chancery waiting to be summoned by his new chief. The son of a vicar, Storrs was an interesting character. He knew a number of Oriental languages and was full of energy, highly cultured and probably the most brilliant English official in Egypt. Storrs owed his original appointment to Gorst with whom he was on intimate terms. He knew that Kitchener and Gorst had not gotten along in the past. As a protégé of Gorst, Storrs half-expected to be sacked.

When the bell rang, Storrs entered Kitchener's dark study, carrying a tray overflowing with congratulatory telegrams signed by reigning royalty, political and military leaders, as well as business moguls. Kitchener looked up and inquired about the papers. Storrs explained what they were and, when asked what he proposed to do about them, suggested that different forms of acknowledgement be used depending on the status of the sender. Kitchener told him curtly that all should receive the identical letter of appreciation. The interview was brief and Storrs left, happy that he still had a job.

Kitchener was a good judge of talent and in Storrs, who quickly acclimatized to his techniques, he found a highly intelligent and trustworthy aide with connections to higher circles of Egyptian life. Storrs could always be counted on to honestly speak his mind when his advice was requested. The two men worked together happily and without strain. Kitchener had so much confidence in Storrs that whenever he assigned him a task he would end by saying "take it away and let me hear no more of it."[4] Storrs in his memoirs reflected fondly on the time that he served under Kitchener in Egypt:

> By any who had the good fortune to enjoy in close association his confidence, his ready and humorous adoption of constructive suggestions and the free hand he accorded, with entire absence of fussing over detail, for their carrying out, his loyal and constant support … he will also be gratefully remembered as the Perfect Chief.[5]

Kitchener's personal prejudices and impatience of delay often caused him to disregard departmental etiquette, a practice that older civil servants resented. Storrs warned Kitchener that a number of British officials were threatening to resign or take early retirement rather than remain in his service. Kitchener tapped a drawer on his desk and said: "You'd better go down to the Club and let it be generally known that I've always kept printed acceptance forms for resignations, only requiring the name to be added to become effective." Storrs circulated the news but not a single resignation was submitted. Curious to see how the forms ran, Storrs opened the drawer in question and, to his amusement, only found a box of cigars.[6]

Kitchener's approach to his work was unconventional and he invariably relied on trusted subordinates accustomed to his ways and methods. High officials in the government who were not sufficiently accommodating were replaced. A case in point was Sir Paul Harvey, the highly competent Financial Adviser to the Egyptian Government, who was unceremoniously sacked. Harvey became expendable when he opposed an expensive land reclamation scheme that Kitchener had in mind. Kitchener appointed in his place Edward Cecil, his former ADC. A son of Lord Salisbury, Cecil knew little about finance but he had other attributes which commended him to Kitchener. He was intelligent, a good administrator, industrious and above all, could be trusted to carry out the Consul-General's orders without question.[7]

Cecil has left his impressions of Kitchener and his work habits in his memoirs and letters to his wife. He was in a good position to observe Kitchener as he met with him practically every day. Kitchener had always been a centralizer by instinct and in Egypt he continued the practice of dealing with details best left to subordinates. It did not help that his trusted aides were inadequate in number for the amount of work that required to be discharged day-in and day-out. Cecil told his wife: "I think that if he is going to govern the country personally that he must have a larger staff. He has very good men but not enough to run the whole show."[8]

If Kitchener wanted a task carried out immediately, he would assign it to the first dependable subordinate that he encountered, or happened to be nearby, regardless of his normal duties. Cecil grumbled at times that Kitchener "treats us all as personal staff and one does all sorts of work we were never meant to do."[9] On one occasion Kitchener announced he was going to Alexandria and that he was taking him along. Cecil did not look forward to the trip as he told his wife: "K. is doing this which means he wants me to act as a cross between a clerk and a reference for some 12

hours a day. It is awfully tiring and meanwhile my work [accumulates] up here until my table looks like a waste-paper stack."[10]

Cecil admitted half-jokingly to his wife that Kitchener's "methods still alarm me," but that "it is wonderful how he gets things done."[11] He marveled at his chief's energy, capacity for work and the vitality of his mind. He remarked that Kitchener was never satisfied, that he was always planning something new or ways to improve the old—in short he generated a feeling of haste which sometimes exhausted his aides. He observed that Kitchener was always willing to learn, that he had no vanity and if he ran up against a problem that was beyond his knowledge he did not hesitate to ask someone who could shed the necessary light.[12] Kitchener possessed a rare quality as an administrator that is essential for a quintessential leader. Whenever he inherited an acute problem, he did not complain, seek to assign the blame to anyone or find excuses to delay taking action until he could pass it on to his successor, but rather turned his attention to finding a solution.

Storrs, like Cecil and other key aides, was acutely aware of the oddities and contrasts in Kitchener's character. As an example he noted that Kitchener never shied from normally giving credit where it was due but he had a peculiar habit, whenever he invited an opinion, that annoyed his aides. If he liked a suggestion, he was apt to ridicule it, then next day introduce it as his own.[13]

Kitchener approached the planning process of a project like an engineer, carefully and exhaustively, viewing all sides. He often spoke out loud as he strode around his office, puffing on a cigar, weighing all the pros and cons before making a decision. Once his mind was made up, he tolerated no contrary opinion or interference.

Kitchener maintained an open door policy, much in the manner of an oriental ruler, receiving deputations or individual callers seeking an audience. The stream of visitors was constant and he claimed that he was "being rather hunted by too many people wanting to see me at the same time on every subject under the sun."[14] He declined to receive women petitioners out of fear that they might faint or make a scene but he was accessible to all men without regard to race, status or age. They came from all parts of Egypt, often with an exaggerated expectation that he could perform miracles. He greeted callers with a handshake and a few words in Arabic about their trip or state of their health to put them at ease. Then sitting under a tree in his garden he would listen sympathetically to their complaints or aspirations and they left in good humor, satisfied that their

case would receive attention. For the first time Egyptians found someone in authority whom they perceived was on their side and they warmed to his strength and simplicity of manner.

Kitchener's contact with the indigenous people was not only confined to the Agency. From time to time he toured the countryside in his special train to inspect the progress of his projects and listen to the aspirations, and see for himself the condition of the fellahin. Everywhere he went he was received with sycophantic adulation. He would normally sit on a dais with local notables and listen to welcoming addresses and classical poems chanted in Arabic by advanced students before receiving petitions and taking questions from the audience. In the background over a huge colored portrait of the Field Marshal would appear such legends as "Welcome Lord Kitchener, the Friend of the Fellah."[15] The tours were extremely popular and, in addition, brought Kitchener much pleasure. Aides who accompanied Kitchener's visit in the provinces recalled that they had seldom seen him radiate such an air of contentment.

Kitchener had disliked and avoided large social gatherings and parties as a young officer but his attitude began to change in India when his position demanded that he entertain. He gave lavish dinner parties and balls and spared no effort or expense to ensure that his guests had a good time. He seemed to enjoy entertaining and he supervised every detail. People close to him noticed that he was less brusque and easier in his manner as he welcomed and circulated among his guests. His regal style of entertaining continued on an even larger scale in Egypt and his dinner parties became famous for their culinary excellence. His garden parties were attended by several hundred people and included many Egyptian officers whom he warmly welcomed—in contrast to his predecessors who invited only a few token native officers to their social gatherings. Since Kitchener was a bachelor, Evelyn Byng (later Lady) wife of the commander of the Egyptian army, served as the hostess when one was required.[16]

Kitchener's experience in the East led him to believe that pomp and ceremony would impress the natives and raise the prestige of the Agency in Cairo which had been damaged by Gorst's exaggerated simplicity and perceived weakness. He rode in a well-turned-out carriage and revived the practice of having syces run alongside the horses. Since he had always disliked the drab-like appearance and layout of the main rooms at the Agency, he made plans for a thorough overhaul. His most ambitious project was to build a new ballroom at an approximate cost of £4000. He justified the expense on the grounds that it would raise the status of the Agency

and allow him to entertain on a proper scale.[17] With Grey's approval, his request was forwarded to the British Treasury which saw things differently. It maintained that the building would cost twice as much as the estimated sum and that, even with modifications proposed by architects, the figure could not be reduced to less than £6000. Consequently it did not believe that it could sanction the expenditure of such an amount on a ballroom in Cairo "where the conditions of life and native customs are so different from those prevailing at European capitals."[18] Grey asked the Treasury Board for a reconsideration of its decision on the following grounds. (1) If entertainment at the Agency did not rise to the level expected by foreign officials in Cairo, British prestige would be adversely affected. (2) There was not enough room at the Agency to entertain young officers stationed in Cairo, necessitating moves to Levantine owned hotels where the festivities were frequently marred by scandalous incidents to the embarrassment and dismay of the commanding officers. (3) The absence of a suitable room at the Agency made it very difficult for the British community in Cairo to hold meetings, often heavily attended, to discuss issues of common interest or concern.[19] As a result of Grey's intervention, the Treasury relented and gave the go-ahead, authorizing the expenditure of up to £6000 to erect the new structure. Kitchener took great pride in the new ballroom which was built mostly to his specifications and decorated with style and imagination.

There were other notable changes in and around the Agency. The old ballroom was turned into an attractive reception room; and a hideous drawing room was converted into a showcase for his growing collection of porcelain and Byzantine icons. The gardens were extended, highlighted by myriad beds of flowers, and the lawn and shrubs neatly manicured. His native servants were impressively turned out and their dull brown dress was replaced with scarlet and gold Turkish costumes.

As Cairo was a favorite winter resort of wealthy Europeans, the Agency dutifully entertained a constant flow of guests, not all of whom were appreciated. Storrs in a letter to his mother remarked about one such party: "Prince George of Saxony, his fiercely mustachioed sister, his Bourbon wife and her not unattractive sister, Maria Immaqlata, with their unsurpassably tedious suite, at dinner."[20] Kitchener arranged sightseeing tours and other forms of entertainment for old friends, such as the Desboroughs and Salisburys, to whom invitations had been extended.

Kitchener never concealed from friends or trusted aides that the two men he admired most were Gordon and Lord Salisbury.[21] Kitchener had

idolized Gordon, a national hero after returning from China, even before being introduced to him as a young cadet at Woolwich. In 1884 in Cairo it appears that Kitchener again met Gordon who was on his way to Khartoum. In the months that followed Kitchener's veneration for Gordon grew as their lives intertwined. The skill with which Gordon organized the defense of Khartoum and maintained the morale of the population, his tenacity, courage and unwavering Christian faith, would leave an indelible mark on Kitchener for as long as he lived.[22]

Kitchener had an almost contemptuous regard for politicians with whom he clashed more often than he would have liked, but in the case of Lord Salisbury he made one of his few exceptions. Kitchener always remained loyal to friends and appreciative towards those who had shown him kindness. He never forgot that Salisbury had done much to advance his career, especially when it counted most.

Kitchener was close to his siblings, especially Millie, and while he did not see them often, kept in touch with them through occasional exchange of correspondence. The Parkers, Millie and her husband Harry, stayed with him on their way from New Zealand to England. Unfortunately Harry fell ill and died while still in Egypt. Kitchener had never been on intimate terms with his brother-in-law but he did what he could to console Millie. A deeper personal loss for Kitchener occurred in March 1912 when his younger brother Walter died unexpectedly from a botched appendicitis operation.[23] Walter had served with Kitchener in the Sudan, India and South Africa and was the Governor of Bermuda at the time of his death. On hearing the news, Kitchener, who rarely displayed emotion, lapsed into a tearful silence, oblivious to any distraction, and it was clear to members of his staff who understood him that his grief was intense. Walter's wife preceded him in death and his only son Hal, owing to impaired hearing, had been forced to leave Sandhurst without a commission. Hal enrolled at McGill University in Montreal to study mining engineering and, when Walter died, Kitchener covered his expenses. When the Great War broke out, Hal returned to Britain with the first wave of Canadian troops and soon after joined the Royal Flying Corps.[24]

Kitchener was intensely patriotic and for him, like many English soldiers, the monarch was his liege lord to whom loyalty, devotion and reverence was due. He served three sovereigns—Queen Victoria, King Edward VII and King George V—and they honored him by inviting him to Balmoral whenever he was in England and regarding him as a personal friend.

When the newly crowned King George V and Queen Mary were scheduled to pass through the Suez Canal on their way to India, Kitchener organized a royal reception for them in Port Said. Kitchener, his military commander, leading British officials, and Sir Reginald Wingate, the Governor of the Sudan, along with the Khedive and a number of Egyptian ministers, were on hand to greet His Majesties who arrived on 20 November (1911). The usual military honors were paid and welcoming speeches were read by the host party.[25]

Kitchener used the occasion to do a very noble act. An old ex-Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire, Kamil Pasha, had been expelled by the Young Turks after their revolution and was currently staying in a hotel in Cairo. No one paid any attention to the 90-year-old former Vizier but Kitchener, who had known him when both were consuls in Anatolia, paid him a visit. After the two men exchanged warm greetings, Kamil reminded Kitchener in perfect English when they had first met. To which Kitchener replied: "Yes, but Your Highness achieved higher and swifter promotion. I was Consul then, and it has taken me 30 years to become a Consul-General."[26] Kitchener took a delighted Kamil along to meet the King for it was no secret that he was pro-British. On arriving in Port Said, Kamil and Kitchener went aboard the *Medina*, the ship carrying the royal couple. A group photograph was arranged and the King insisted that the Vizier sit in the chair next to the Queen while he stood in the back row between the Khedive and Kitchener. It was a generous gesture on the part of Kitchener and widely applauded in Egypt.

Two years later Kitchener again entertained the royal couple when they stopped at Port Sudan, a port on the Red Sea, on their return from a tour of India. It was a large and festive gathering attended by the most prominent sheikhs of the Sudan anxious to pay homage to the King. Kitchener towered above the King and stood out in his full dress uniform. Each sheikh, in turn, was brought up and introduced to the monarch and at the same time given a coronation medal.

As Consul-General Kitchener visited the Sudan, over which his formal authority extended, on three other occasions. Once to open the El Obeid Railway—an extensive railway system linking the chief towns of the country with the capital of Kordofan—in December–January, 1912–1913; and again in January 1914 to visit the Gezira works (see below).[27] Kitchener had been pleased by the progress in the Sudan since his departure a little more than a decade earlier. He had been especially struck by the relative prosperity of its inhabitants whom he described as free of debt, content

and loyal. As the annual revenue was insufficient to cover the needs of economic development it was left up to Egypt to cover the deficit. Egypt had to subsidize its own expensive projects and its subventions to the Sudan had been decreasing over the years. Kitchener strongly endorsed Wingate's request to the British government to provide a £3,000,000 loan to the Sudan to construct a large irrigation scheme to exploit the vast cotton growing potential in the Gezira. Kitchener saw that the Sudan would only lessen its financial dependence on Egypt through the rapid development of its economy. With Kitchener's backing, London reacted favorably to Wingate's appeal and authorized the loan in 1913. That same year Egyptian subventions to the Sudan ended. Although Kitchener kept watch over the Sudan and occasionally involved himself in its affairs, he had enough confidence in Wingate to give him a free rein.[28]

Although a strong nationalist and imperialist, Kitchener, unlike many of his countrymen, did not harbor any racist sentiments whatsoever. Included among his coterie of friends were a significant number of wealthy Egyptians, Turks and Jews. Although he deplored the existing cleavage between Egyptians and Europeans, the action he took at the Gezira Sports Club threatened to exacerbate racial differences. The club was open to wealthy and wellborn Europeans and Egyptians and they got along well for the most part. However a group of Egyptians close to the Khedive had a habit of airing their political views and openly condemning the British. Tired about hearing that the club's harmony was being disturbed, Kitchener warned the troublemakers to desist or there would be serious repercussions. When his admonishment was ignored, he mandated that all Egyptians be asked to resign and, if they should refuse, be expelled immediately. The result would make the club exclusively British and this generated ill-feelings among a number of the unaffected members. Some threatened to resign in protest and a few did but Kitchener remained unmoved. As he saw it, the privilege of belonging to an exclusive club had been abused and could not be tolerated. The incident continued to be resented by some wealthy Egyptians, both Muslim and Christian, but produced no adverse publicity. Another club under specific guidelines opened later in which both British and Egyptians were welcomed as members.

Kitchener's authoritarian disposition was lightened by a keen eye for the ridiculous and a sardonic sense of humor. After the Battle of Omdurman, he sent Cromer a telegram saying: "The effect of having killed 30,000 Dervishes is that I have 300,000 women on my hands, and I should be much obliged if you could instruct me how to dispose of them as I have

no use for them myself."[29] On another occasion, this time while he served as Consul-General in Egypt, he poked fun at the expense of Sir Rudolf von Slatin, an old friend. Although an Austrian, Slatin had been employed by the British in various capacities in the Sudan before he was promoted Governor-General of Darfur in 1881, a post he held until forced to surrender to the Mahdists two years later. After 11 years of captivity he made a daring escape with the help of Wingate, then in the Egyptian Intelligence Department. He subsequently became Inspector-General of the Sudan—an office that Wingate had created especially for him after he became governor—and was allowed to define his duties without interference from anyone. It was little more than a sinecure and no one held the office after he left.

In Cairo, Slatin had invited himself to lunch to discuss with Kitchener the possibility of a pension which he felt he deserved. At an appropriate moment he broached the subject indirectly and there followed a light hearted exchange between him and Kitchener:

S. Well Lord Kitchener, I am afraid I've not made a great financial success of my life.
K. No one who knew you, my dear Slatin, ever thought you would.
S. Here was I, for 12 years prisoner of the Mahdi, naked, often in chains, captured on active service—and yet not one piastre of pay throughout.
K. Well Slatin! You can't say your out-of-pocket expenses over the period amounted to much.[30]

As a man of action, Kitchener was aided by flashes of intuition that were often uncannily accurate. It cannot be claimed, however, that he was either a scholar or an intellectual. He never published anything but, it should be noted in passing, that his many official reports and memos were a model of clarity and insightfulness. He was not a serious reader, though occasionally he would send FitzGerald to bookshops to purchase a few novels. He had no interest in music or science but throughout his adult life had cultivated a passion for collecting porcelain and ancient art works. As a diversion from work he enjoyed visiting bazaars and antique shops and he was not above using his status to get desired objects at bargain prices. When visiting residences of the wealthy, if an art object took his fancy he would gaze and comment on it, well aware of the Arab tradition that anything admired by a guest was his. According to the son of Reginald Wingate, family treasures were hidden whenever Kitchener's visit was expected.[31] Kitchener's only

indoor recreation was an occasional hand of bridge and on long journeys he liked to play chess at which it was said that his heart was better than his head. An interest that was more than a simple hobby was his passion for Broome Park where someday he hoped to retire and display his vast collection of art works. Every week when the overseas mail bag arrived at the Agency, Kitchener immediately went through the pile of letters to see if there was a long narrow envelope from Arthur Renshaw, containing an up-to-date report on the state of renovations in Broome Park.[32] According to one of his secretaries, he spent practically "all his spare time on studying improvements to be carried out at his home near Canterbury."[33]

Kitchener took no time off from his duties in Egypt, but in 1912 and 1913 spent his two-month leave in England. After disposing of official business in London, his days were filled with leisurely activities—entertained by friends, as a guest of the royal family at Balmoral, attending social engagements and dinner parties. Whenever he could spare the time he hurried down to Broome Park and inspected the changes made and, if certain features failed to meet his specifications, they were dismantled and rebuilt. His concern about getting every detail absolutely right accounted for the slow pace of progress and rising costs. For all the effort and wealth that he poured into Broome Park he never got to live in it as the renovations, incredible as it may seem, were not complete at the time of his death.[34]

Much as Kitchener enjoyed his annual leave in England, he resented many of the social and political reforms introduced by the Liberal Government. In particular he deplored the Parliament Act of 1911 which increased the powers of the House of Commons at the expense of the House of Lords. He grumbled at the reduction of military and naval expenditures which were designed to offset the rising costs of social programs. Nothing, however, provoked his ire as much as the highly controversial Home Rule Bill of 1912. It proposed to give Ireland its own parliament and executive, which would have control over nearly all domestic issues. It was clear that the bill would pass into law in 1914 since the House of Lords could only delay it for two years. No provision was made in the bill for the Protestant districts of Ulster who were about to be submerged in an Irish Catholic state. Their impending fate drove them to threaten to defend by force their union with Britain. Their resistance enjoyed the support of the Conservative party which equated Home Rule with removal altogether of Ireland from Great Britain, rather than simply the establishment of a parliament in Dublin with limited powers.

Kitchener was unalterably opposed to Home Rule and there were a number of prominent British military officers with Irish connections who felt the same way he did and some willingly lent their name to the unionist cause. As a public servant under the direction of the Foreign Office, Kitchener kept his thoughts to himself, except when he was communicating with, or in the company of, Conservative friends.

Even from Egypt, Kitchener tried to keep abreast of the tortuous, drawn-out fight over the bill. "What is going to happen," he asked Lady Salisbury during the early stages. "I suppose the government may get over their present self-created difficulty—but it will have been a blow that will probably have effect later."[35] Asquith showed little initiative or imagination in trying to negotiate a settlement. His only solution was to suggest an amendment which, accompanying the third passage of the Home Rule Bill, would have provided for a six-year delay in Ulster's entry into the Irish parliament. Asquith, however, was unable to bring the two sides into agreement. Ireland appeared to be drifting towards civil war. Kitchener seemed to place the blame, or most of it, on John Redmond, the nationalist leader, for the collapse of the compromise plan but, in reality, his protestant counterpart, Sir Edward Carson, was equally at fault. Kitchener poured out his feelings in a letter to Lady Salisbury in May 1914:

> We all hoped that the Ulster question was in a fair way to settlement but the last telegrams look bad again. Redmond's attitude towards our amending bill appears fatal but out here one cannot tell … You cannot run an Empire with civil war going on at the centre of Government, and this Ulster business is doing us incalculable harm. I sincerely hope it may soon be over otherwise we may have much bigger troubles to deal with.[36]

The rising tension prompted the King to call the party leaders together in conference at Buckingham Palace on 21 July. His plea for a settlement fell on deaf ears as neither side was willing to make concessions. After the conference broke up in deadlock and the members rose to leave, Grey announced that he had received news that Austria had sent an ultimatum to Serbia. The European crisis now took precedent over Ulster and a week later Britain became engulfed in World War I. Home Rule was passed into law but its application was postponed for the duration of the war.

Of more immediate concern to Kitchener, was the disruption and unwanted publicity his niece Frances had brought down on the family. Kitchener's annoyance over her joining the suffragette movement turned

to anger on learning that she had been arrested during a demonstration. Many of the imprisoned suffragettes, including Frances, went on hunger strikes and the government reacted by force-feeding and the "Cat and Mouse Act" which allowed for early release of those in poor health and for the resumption of their sentence when they had recovered. Kitchener's hostility towards the suffragettes ran deep, describing them as "fiends."[37] His attitude was shaped not only because of the tactics they employed—such as smashing windows, defacing property and physically attacking politicians to draw attention to their cause—but because they dared reject the Victorian idea of separate spheres for men and women. He had paid for Frances' education at Cambridge and considered her a selfish ingrate, without any concern for the embarrassment her action would cause him and her family. He did not mince his words to Millie about her daughter:

> Please do not send any suffragette ladies to me as you know my feelings on the subject. I am quite disgusted to think what Frances may have attempted. Whatever her feelings on the subject may be I cannot help thinking she might have some consideration for her family.[38]

Kitchener, on the other hand, enjoyed cordial relations with Frances' brother, Alfred Chevallier known as "Wallier." Following the family's military tradition, Wallier went to Sandhurst and joined the Royal Sussex Regiment in 1895. He saw active service on the North-West Frontier and in the Sudan with Kitchener's army. Wallier's quiet and unassuming demeanor belied toughness and endurance and, determined to rise and fall on his own initiative, was careful not to betray his connection with his famous uncle. Wallier moved steadily, if not spectacularly, up the ranks in the army and in 1912 accepted command of the Police School in Cairo. In his new capacity he was responsible to the Consul-General, and while he liked and respected his uncle, he rarely visited the Agency as a guest.[39]

Kitchener was always scrupulously clean and neatly attired, whether in civilian clothes or military uniform. Practically a chain-smoker, he was wedded to cigars both at work and when relaxing. He drank moderately, a little wine at meal time, followed in the evening by a glass or two of whisky. There is no evidence that he was ever intoxicated, not surprising for a man who always wanted to be in control. Although he did not often attend church or speak openly about his faith, friends who knew him intimately were certain that he was an earnest believer in Christ. Yet without compromising his own faith he respected the Islamic religion and practices that it considered sacred.

While Kitchener in public gave the impression of being aloof, austere and reclusive, in his private life he was in fact lonely, a state that had increased since the break up of the band of boys years earlier. He hated to dine or spend evenings alone and to keep him company relied on his immediate entourage, especially FitzGerald and Colum Crichton-Stuart. A member of the 18th Bengal Lancers, FitzGerald was unmarried and had been with Kitchener since 1905, first as his ADC and then as military secretary. He was efficient, modest, good-natured, selfless and put his chief's interest above everything else. He established himself deeper than anyone else in Kitchener's trust and affection and, except for a brief period in 1910, never left his side until both met their death together on the fatal voyage to Russia in 1916.

Son of the 3rd Marquess of Bute, the 25-year-old Crichton-Stuart had entered the diplomatic service a year earlier and in the beginning was somewhat bewildered by his new master's unusual and exacting expectations. He remarked to his mother that in assigning work, Kitchener never took personal requirements into account and there were "no such things for him as office hours and meal time punctuality."[40] It did not take long, however, for the young newcomer to warm up to Kitchener, describing him as a "good master," never in a bad temper, always ready to give advice, and most kind about requests for leave.[41] When Crichton-Stuart completed his two-year probationary period, Kitchener appointed him as one of his secretaries. On making the recommendation Kitchener told Grey: "During the time he has served under me at this Agency, he has shown himself thoroughly competent in every way and has a good knowledge of French and German."[42] Crichton-Stuart became a favorite of Kitchener for, apart from his talent, he was witty, genial and imaginative. "Colum is doing well and lives with us in the house," Kitchener told Lady Salisbury. "He is quite a nice fellow." Colum's service as a civil servant ended in 1920 and two years later he was elected as a Conservative Member of Parliament for Norwich constituency in Cheshire, a post he would hold until 1945.

When neither FitzGerald nor Crichton-Stuart was available, Kitchener frequently turned to Storrs who quipped that the informal invitation was taken as a summons.[43] As Kitchener drew closer to Cecil, he too was invited to dinner, by the latter's account on an average of twice a week.[44] With his closest aides, Kitchener could relax and enjoy the moment during which he required little prodding to reminisce about his earlier experiences or listened, with amusement, to the latest gossip about the social scene in Egypt.

Kitchener was 61 in 1911 but the decades that he had spent in the hot desert sun had taken a toll and made him appear older than he actually was. His cheeks were almost purple in color, the lines on his forehead and around his eyes were pronounced, his eyes lost the clear blue of his youth, and his vision was poor, requiring him to wear glasses while at work in his office—though he never wore them outside. Photographs taken of him in Egypt show that he had put on weight in recent years and that he was portly with prominent jowls, a condition resulting at least partly from his lack of mobility. Kitchener had played sports in the past but he was forced to confine his physical activity after suffering a serious accident while he was in India. On the evening of 15 November, 1903, Kitchener was riding alone and, as he was half way into a narrow badly-lit tunnel, a native suddenly jumped out from one of the alcoves, causing his mare to shy and collide with one of the supporting beams. Kitchener's left boot jammed against the beam, causing the spur to dig into the side of the horse which bolted forward. Kitchener's left leg twisted and both bones snapped above the ankle. In frightful agony, he was transported in a rickshaw to Snowden where his broken leg was set by army surgeons. The procedure was bungled and, after the cast was removed, it was discovered that the two bones which had knitted together were crooked. Kitchener was destined to walk with a slight limp for the rest of his life.

The worst part was that Kitchener's ankle continued to give him considerable trouble. In 1911 he was in such pain that he decided, contrary to medical opinion, to have his leg broken again and reset. He found a brilliant surgeon in Germany willing to take him on as a patient but his commitments would not allow him to leave Egypt. The following year Kitchener was ready to go through with the operation again. According to Crichton-Stuart "FitzGerald may go there with him for a few days, but his companion during the weary weeks to follow will, I think, be his nephew and heir, at present employed at the Admiralty."[45] A bizarre incident, however, led to the cancellation of Kitchener's trip to Germany. It seemed that while in Berlin the wealthy financier Lord Alfred Rothschild had picked up rumors that there was a plot to disable Kitchener during the course of the operation. The gossip was too fantastic to be credible but it sufficiently alarmed the King who weighed in and remarked that Kitchener was too valuable to jeopardize his life in Germany. In 1914 Kitchener considered giving up part of his summer leave to go to Germany which meant that he probably would be unable to accept Lady Salisbury's invitation to Hatfield on 20 July. In reply he wrote: "If I am in England you may count on me

but I am not sure I shall not have left by that date for Germany where I think I ought to have my leg reset. If I do not get it done at once it will not be strong when I have to come back again."[46] Once in England, however, the turbulent international scene in the wake of the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand prevented him from following through and the procedure never took place.

Kitchener had mellowed over the years and he was not the severe taskmaster that he had been while directing military operations in the Sudan and South Africa. Cecil who came to respect and admire Kitchener had a different opinion of him during the Omdurman campaign, describing him as selfish, inconsiderate and possessing a surly disposition. He noted:

> I served with him through the campaign, and cannot truthfully say that I liked him in that period. He was much more uncouth and uncivilized at that time than he was later. He used to have little consideration for anyone, and was *cassant* and rude. He was always inclined to bully his own entourage, as some men are rude to their wives. He was inclined to let off his spleen on those round him. He was often morose and silent for hours together. He was an uncomfortable chief, too, as he never let you know when he was going to do anything … He would take his meals at any hour, and after a tiring day in midsummer in the Sudan the staff might have to wait till ten for their dinner, which maybe was then eaten in solemn silence.[47]

While it does not justify Kitchener's meanness and boorish behavior, it should be pointed out that he was under incredible pressure during the Sudan campaign with never-ending problems that at times seemed insurmountable and, in addition, there were recurring rumors that he might be superseded which, in effect, would have ended his military career. It did not help at the time that his digestive system was erratic, that the desert heat was extreme and suffocating, probably triggering the chronic headaches which plagued him periodically. A dozen years later, it was a different Kitchener who returned to Egypt. He was at the apex of his professional career, relaxed and confident in a place he considered his spiritual home, and with an understanding that his reputation gave him an immense advantage in handling the affairs of state. On a visit to Cairo, Ian Hamilton, who had occasionally witnessed and also been subjected to Kitchener's wrath while serving as his chief of staff in South Africa, was pleasantly surprised by his former chief's disposition: "I talked a great deal to him and he was all I could have wished," he told his wife. "Never found him nicer."[48] Lieutenant-Colonel P.G. Elgood, a long-time resident of

Egypt, with service in the ministries of war, interior and finance, also wrote of Kitchener in the following terms:

> If his mind was as vigorous and his imagination as quick, his flashes of intuition were fewer, his curiosity was less, and his passion for economy had grown colder. Time had subtly changed the man. Angularities of temper and character had gone: he was less brusque in manner, more easy of approach.[49]

Kitchener could still be irritable when dealing with professional bureaucrats at the Agency but in personal interactions with outsiders he showed a good deal of patience. Nothing illustrates this point better than the dispute over a will that dragged on for months and should not even have involved Kitchener and his staff, much less the Foreign Office, but for the incomprehensible attitude of Italian authorities. A certain Joseph Khouri Haddad died at Alexandria in March 1913, setting off a quarrel among members of his family as to who should inherit his property. The native court hearing the case ordered that seals be attached to the property pending a decision.

As soon as the court's order went into effect, the Italian Consul-General in Cairo protested on the grounds that Haddad was an Italian subject and threatened to tear down the seals himself unless they were removed at once. A compromise was reached with the Italian Agency by which the seals were to be left intact and the courts were to postpone a decision until the question of nationality was determined. An investigation by the Egyptian government proved conclusively that Haddad was a local subject and Kitchener requested that the proof be submitted to the Italian Consul-General in Cairo. At the same time Kitchener indicated to the Foreign Office that the Egyptian government could not afford to yield as a matter of principle because there would be no end to local subjects pleading foreign nationality whenever it suited their purpose.[50]

The Foreign Office conveyed the results of the investigation to Rome, enclosing a dispatch from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that included compelling evidence. One of the pieces was a document sent to the Italian Agency on 29 June, 1871, stating unequivocally that Khouri Haddad and his father were of Syrian origin. The case proven, or so it was assumed, the Egyptian government requested that the Italian Consul-General withdraw his pretensions.[51]

The Italian government made no attempt to refute Egyptian arguments. In a note on 28 June it maintained that Haddad had been inscribed

as an Italian subject on the Consular rolls for 40 years and that, unless his right to such nationality was disproved, the claim to consider him an Italian citizenship must be upheld.[52] Grey returned to the charge, asking Rodd to remind Rome of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry's dispatch which invalidated the subsequent entry of the Haddad names on the Italian Consul registrar.[53]

Kitchener was surprised to hear from the Italian Agency that it had received a communication from Rome asserting that, as the Foreign Office had not replied to its note of 28 June "His Majesty's Government may be supposed to have acquiesced in the Italian point of view." Kitchener dismissed the Italian Agency's contention for he knew that the Foreign Office had already replied to the Roman note of 28 June. He contacted Rodd and requested an update on the state of the negotiations and urged that he hold firmly to the British position: "Question is extremely important as precedent."[54]

The Foreign Office was upset over the Italian claim. Grey sent a telegram to Rodd (on 1 September) to seek an explanation from the Italian Government as to why its Agency in Cairo had made such a false statement and adding that he was still waiting for a reply to his own note of 22 July.[55] Several days later the Foreign Office received a memorandum from Kitchener (actually written by Cheetham) with further proof that the Haddads were Ottoman subjects. This evidence, supplied by the Egyptian government, consisted of two documents from the archives of the Ottoman Court of Personal Status at Damascus, which indicated "that at 43 and again at 30 years previous to the present date the grandfather and father of Khouri Haddad were recognized as Ottoman subjects." Kitchener drew attention to the fact that the interested parties were anxious for a settlement and that it was becoming increasingly difficult to arrange for further postponements with the native court hearing the case.[56]

Grey forwarded a copy of the memorandum to Rodd to pass on to the Italian government with a statement that the additional evidence "appears conclusive" and that the Foreign Office expected an early and satisfactory reply.[57] The Italians did send a reply but, instead of attempting to refute the evidence presented, simply rejected it without discussion.[58] The Italians realized that they had no case and looked for a compromise. The British, however, would not rise to the bait. Kitchener refused to wait any longer and took the matter in hand. He saw his Italian counterpart and pointed out that he had waited in vain for five months for his side to produce proof that Khouri Haddad was an Italian subject. As the case

had been thoroughly studied by British legal experts who determined that the Italian claim was unfounded, he could no longer delay proceedings in the local court. He made it clear that no compromise could be accepted as it would create a bad precedent. Kitchener ended by saying that he was prepared to make the necessary face-saving arrangements so that the Consul-General could withdraw his claim "in a friendly manner." The Italian diplomat's only recorded comment was that he would send a telegram to Rome and recommend that the case be dropped—which it was.[59] Kitchener had to wonder why, in view of the trivial nature of the case, the Italians had not bowed out gracefully when it was apparent they lacked evidence, instead of prolonging the dispute for months to no apparent purpose. Through it all, Kitchener would have been more than human if he had not been exasperated by the senseless intransigence of the Italians but, to his credit, he had held his tongue and kept his composure.

Egypt had changed considerably since Kitchener had left it 11 years earlier. Still it was not as if he was starting from scratch as he knew the language and had extensive knowledge of the country and its people. On his way over to Egypt he had already determined what projects he would commence to work on as soon as he settled at the Agency. But Kitchener had barely set foot in Egypt when his plans were delayed by external events.

Notes

1. In many ways Islam is restrictive and intolerant but, in this context, Kitchener was referring to its relative lack of racial and class barriers.
2. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1911*, House of Commons Sessional papers, (Cd 6149) Egypt no. 1, (1912), 2.
3. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1911*, 1.
4. Sir Ronald Storrs, *Memoirs* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1937), 136.
5. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 140.
6. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 116–17.
7. Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer*, vol. 1 (New York: AMS Press, rep. 1970), 147–48.
8. Cecil to his wife, 6 February, 1912, Cecil papers (part of the Violet Milner collection), Box 23, C73.
9. Cecil to his wife, 6 February, 1912, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.
10. Cecil to his wife, 5 May, 1913, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.

11. Cecil to his wife, 6 February, 1912, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.
12. Lord Edward Cecil, *The Leisure of an Egyptian Official* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938), 185–86.
13. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 124.
14. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 14 May, 1913, Salisbury papers.
15. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 128.
16. Viscountess Byng of Vimy, *Up the Stream of Time* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1946), 87.
17. Foreign Office Note, 23 August, 1911, FO 371/1115, No. 33254.
18. Treasury to Grey, 2 February, 1912, FO 371/1361, No. 4870.
19. Grey to Treasury, 19 February, 1912, FO 371/1361, No. 4870.
20. Storrs to his mother, 27 October, 1912. The Storrs papers are housed at Pembroke College in Cambridge, but can be viewed, as I did, on microfilm. Micro, R 494, reel 3, box 2, folder 2, Egypt 1904–1913.
21. See for example, Storrs, *Memoirs*, 126.
22. John Pollock, *Kitchener* (New York, Carroll and Graf, 1998), 22–23, 60, 66–67.
23. Harcourt to the Foreign Office, 7 and 9 March, 1912, FO 371/1362, Nos. 10192 and 10365.
24. Pollock, *Kitchener*, 362–63.
25. Kitchener to Grey, 25 November 1911, FO 371/1115, No. 48159.
26. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 119.
27. M.W. Daly, *The Sirdar: Sir Reginald Wingate and the British Empire in the Middle East* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1997), 194.
28. Kitchener, *Annual Report for the Sudan for 1911, 1912 and 1913*—added at the end of the Reports for Egypt; M.W. Daly, *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898–1934* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 222–23; Terje Tvedt, *The River Nile in the Age of the British* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 92–93; Roy Pugh, *Wingate Pasha* (Barnsley, S. Yorkshire: Pen and Sword, 2011), 116; Gabriel R. Warburg, *Egypt and the Sudan* (London: Frank Cass, 1986), 62–63.
29. Cited in Reginald Viscount Esher, *The Tragedy of Lord Kitchener* (London: John Murray, 1921), 29.
30. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 118.

31. Ronald Wingate, *Not in the Limelight* (London: Hutchinson, 1959), 21.
32. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 122–23.
33. Colum Crichton-Stuart to his mother, 11 December, 1911, Crichton-Stuart papers, Bu 96/12/15.
34. Kitchener left the estate to his nephew Henry Franklin, known as Toby, who became Viscount Broome in 1916. Toby lacked the funds to operate and complete the reparations of Broome Park. He sold Kitchener's dream house in 1928 and since then it has changed hands several times and is now a golf and country club.
35. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 17 November, 1912, Salisbury papers.
36. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 17 May, 1914, Salisbury papers.
37. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 14 May, 1913, Salisbury papers.
38. Cited in Trevor Royle, *The Kitchener Enigma* (London: Michael Joseph, 1985), 248.
39. H.V.F. Winstone, ed., *The Diaries of Parker Pasha* (London: Quartet Books, 1983), chs. 1 and 2.
40. Crichton-Stuart to his mother, 11 December, 1911, Crichton-Stuart papers, BU 96/12/15.
41. Augusta Crichton-Stuart to her mother-in law, Gwendolyn, Dowager Marchioness of Bute, 21 January, 1912, BU 97/8/7. Augusta was the wife of Colum's brother, John, 4th Marquess of Bute.
42. Kitchener to Grey, 1 May, 1913, FO 371/1638, No. 21816.
43. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 126.
44. Cecil to his wife, 19 December, 1913, Cecil papers, Box 23, C 73.
45. Crichton-Stuart to his mother, 28 April, 1912, Crichton-Stuart papers, BU 96/13/5. The nephew Crichton-Stuart was referring to was Toby, son of Kitchener's oldest brother (Henry Chevallier) and the future 2nd Earl Kitchener. He held different posts in the navy and during the war commanded the battleship *Ajax* and then the monitor *Raglan*. He retired from the navy in 1923 with the rank of captain and died in June 1928 at the age of fifty. As Toby preceded his father in death, the title passed to his eldest son Henry Herbert who was born in 1919. Henry Herbert was unmarried and when he died 2011 the title, which Britain's archaic law barred his niece from inheriting, sadly became extinct.
46. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 9 May, 1914, Salisbury papers.
47. Cecil, *Leisure of an Egyptian Official*, 177.

48. Hamilton to his wife, 26 March, 1912, Hamilton papers, 5/1/31.
49. Lieut.-Col. P.G. Elgood, *The Transit of Egypt* (London: Edward Arnold, 1928), 199.
50. Kitchener to Grey, 15 May, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 23654.
51. Grey to Rodd, 4 June, 1914, FO 371/1639, No. 23654.
52. Rodd to Grey, 1 July, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 31039.
53. Grey to Rodd, 14 July, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 31039.
54. Cheetham to Rodd, 28 August, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 39817.
55. Grey to Rodd, 1 September, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 40109.
56. Cheetham to Grey, 31 August, 1913, FO 371/1639, No.41272.
57. Grey to Rodd, 15 September, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 41272.
58. Note from the Italian Government, 22 September, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 43874.
59. Kitchener to Grey, 6 October, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 45556.

CHAPTER 4

The Challenge of Neutrality

On the day that Kitchener arrived in Cairo, Italy, driven by imperial ambitions, sent an ultimatum to Constantinople, announcing its intention to occupy provinces in the modern state of Libya—Tripoli in the west and Cyrenaica in the east—and citing, as a pretext, the need to protect its local nationals. Italy had obtained French and British consent to remain neutral in advance so that no major obstacles stood in its way to achieve its goals. Rome was confident of a quick victory as its invading army, numbering 34,000 men, would be facing less than 5,000 Turkish soldiers posted in garrisons. Naturally anxious to avoid war, the Turkish government replied that it would accept an Italian protectorate but not full sovereignty. The compromise would have been comparable to the arrangement in Egypt which was formally under Ottoman suzerainty but controlled by the British. Deeming Turkey's reply unsatisfactory, Rome declared war on 29 September.

Britain's occupation of Egypt made it less dependent on Turkey's good-will for access to the route to India and lessened the need to prop up its empire. In 1908 the British turned down Constantinople's proposal for an alliance as they did not wish to alienate the Russians. Shortly after the outbreak of the Turco-Italian war, Constantinople again approached the British, seeking a formal alliance, either bilaterally or with the Triple Entente as a whole. As relations with Constantinople were becoming increasingly strained (for reasons which will be explained in the last chapter) the Foreign Office had already concluded that it must favor Italy over

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_4

Turkey. Italy appeared to be ready to move in a new direction as its rift with Austria was growing and it was slowly turning away from Germany on account of concern over the Kaiser's aggressive colonial policy. The British saw an opportunity to wean Italy away from the Triple Alliance. Still the British did not want to tip their hand lest it imperil their broad interests in the Ottoman Empire as well as give the impression that they were condoning Italy's aggressive behavior, which would have offended millions of Muslims under their rule. Consequently the Foreign Office informed the Turks that His Majesty's Government intended to observe a strict neutrality.[1]

Britain's pro-Italian bias was transparent and did not fool anyone. On 28 September, *Tanin*, the main Young Turk newspaper, maintained that Britain could have restrained Italy if had so chosen and strangled the Tripoli question before birth. The paper implied that Britain had leaned towards Italy, hoping it might leave the Triple Alliance in favor of the Triple Entente.

A day after the outbreak of the war the Italian Ambassador in London visited the Foreign Office and asked Grey how Egypt would respond to appeals for assistance from Turkey. Grey admitted he had not given the matter any thought but that it seemed to him "that to allow Egypt to be used for military operations while we were in occupation of it would not be consistent with proclamation of neutrality."[2] The announced policy greatly benefitted Italy and naturally delighted the Ambassador.

Kitchener, who had never held an important civil office before, was entrusted with the responsibility of keeping Egypt out of the conflict. This was easier said than done as the neutral status of Egypt was unpopular with the public which had been aroused by Italy's unprovoked attack on Tripoli and Cyrenaica. The Egyptians had little affection for the Turks but, as Muslims, they were solidly behind them in the conflict. Prohibited from giving active support they did what they could to help the Turkish war effort. Committees were formed to solicit contributions which netted large sums of money. Wealthy Egyptians and members of the royal family donated jewelry and other valuables which were auctioned off at special bazaars. The Red Crescent Society set up field hospitals to tend to wounded Turkish soldiers.

Kitchener's most urgent need was to establish an efficient security apparatus to enforce the country's neutrality laws but in the early weeks he faced other significant problems: how to control dissenting newspapers from exciting public opinion; how to maintain his ascendency over the

masses whose support was vital; and how to squelch the military ardor of Egyptian zealots. There were some like Harry Boyle, the former Oriental Secretary to the Agency, who believed that the magnitude of the task was beyond Kitchener's ability, requiring the gifts of a great statesman. On the day the war broke out Boyle wrote: "The Italo-Turk business looks pretty hopeless now, and in that case the position of Egypt will certainly give rise to very serious complications, and of a most interesting character. I have no doubt whatever that Kitchener is distinctly *not* the man to conduct such a delicate matter to a safe conclusion."[3] Kitchener's critics underestimated him because he was a soldier and did not have the breadth of vision or political detachment of Cromer. True enough, he was no Cromer but he had assets that more than compensated for those he lacked.

Within Egypt the most strident criticism of the government's position came from elements of the native press. They were outraged that their country was forbidden from actively supporting their co-religionists. They likened Italy to a barbarous nation which had, like pirates, attacked their brethren by surprise with the object of detaching part of the Ottoman Empire. They lashed the Egyptian government for bowing to the will of the occupiers who, they claimed, had trampled on Egyptian laws and the principle of Ottoman suzerainty, wounding the Egyptian people without regard for its sentiment and wish. In so doing they accused Britain of proclaiming its solidarity with Italy, not the Ottoman Empire. The inflammatory rhetoric used in the press was intended to incite the population to resist the government's non-intervention policy.

As it was, the anti-government press campaign was never more than an irritant because Kitchener never allowed it to get out of hand and to add to his difficulties of administrating the country. Offending papers were warned to moderate their language and, if they failed to do so, the government was ready to invoke the Press Law of 1881.[4] After two warnings, the Egyptian council of ministers was empowered to suspend or close down a newspaper, providing there was reference to London before any action was taken. Permission from the Foreign Office was granted automatically.

Kitchener was fortunate that the masses accepted the law of the land without dissent. Their allegiance to Kitchener was never in doubt, thanks to his reputation and the reverence with which he was held. They admired his sense of justice, approachability and cordiality and saw him as a friend who would not let them down. Given the many years that he had spent in Egypt and his knowledge of the language and the people, he liked to cultivate the image that he was one of their own. As an example a

sheikh, presumably explaining a problem in the village, was overwhelmed by Kitchener's reaction. "He put his hand on my shoulders," cried the old sheikh, "and said to me, 'Am I not your father? Will a father forget his children?'"[5] In the early months of the war, Kitchener contributed £100 to the Turkish Red Crescent to aid wounded Turkish soldiers, a gesture that was widely applauded by the Egyptian people. This public relations coup gave Egyptians the impression that Kitchener was on the side of Turkey—which was not the case as will be seen in a later chapter. Kitchener's gratitude for the loyalty of the general public is evident in his first annual report:

> The excitement caused by the war was widespread and deep, but notwithstanding the mischievous efforts of some of the more irresponsible native newspapers, the people of Egypt have displayed … an admirable devotion to duty, law, and order, in spite of the intensely sympathetic and religious feelings raised by the long struggle which has been going on so close to their frontier.[6]

The only disturbance of any significance following the early weeks of Kitchener's arrival occurred in Alexandria and it had nothing to do with the government's non-alignment stance. The publication in a newspaper of an Ottoman victory in Tripoli—which incidentally turned out to be erroneous—produced great excitement in the city. A leaflet circulated in Alexandria called upon its citizens to meet on the quay to celebrate the occasion. A large crowd, consisting mainly of teenage boys, assembled on 31 October and, according to Kitchener, the affair would have passed without disruption if it were not for the injudicious action of an (ethnic) Italian policeman. Apparently the constable attempted to remove an Egyptian flag in the midst of the jubilant throng. The crowd turned on the man who was roughed up and in imminent danger when a British police officer intervened and dragged him to safety. Suddenly, from a third floor balcony of a nearby house, shots rang out striking individuals in the crowd. The shots were fired by Europeans, reportedly either Italians or Greeks. There was confusion at first and then the mob incited by this provocation went on a rampage, smashing street lamps, breaking store windows and looting.

Thomas Russell, who was deputy commander of the Alexandria police, in the absence of his chief Hopkinson Pasha, rushed mounted troops to the scene with orders to charge and break up the mob. He then sent

European plainclothesmen to stop the indiscriminate shooting from the balconies. The police were kept busy until late at night. As the demonstrators reached the town's central square, the mounted troops, with more room to maneuver, drove them into the side streets where they gradually melted away.[7]

There were 15 casualties at the end of the rioting, though evidently not all were victims of the snipers—one died almost immediately from a knife thrust, six were taken to hospital with bullet wounds and of these one was in grave condition, while the rest were slightly injured. There were numerous arrests and 106 persons were tried in court and charged with various crimes. About half were acquitted and the remainder paid fines or served brief jail sentences. Two Greeks were arrested for firing on the crowd and turned over to the Greek Consulate-General to judge their case. They were later released as the evidence against them was deemed insufficient or so it was claimed.[8]

As it happened Kitchener was in Alexandria when the disturbances broke out. Alexandria with a large population of lower-bred Greeks and Italians was the center of amusement and excitement, and not surprisingly punctuated by occasional disturbances. According to Kitchener the dangers had been accentuated because Europeans had recently armed themselves with revolvers and were apt to fire on natives from balconies on the slightest pretext. After the row had subsided Kitchener thought that a display of force would have a calming effect. Accordingly sailors from the British ship *Lancaster*, in the harbor at the time, accompanied by an Egyptian battalion, marched through the streets of the city. They were greeted by Egyptian onlookers with cheers and applause.[9]

Kitchener had a unique way of dealing with Egyptians and Arab tribesmen eager to join Ottoman forces in Tripoli and Cyrenaica. During the opening weeks of the conflict, a delegation of notables visited the Agency to inquire about the possibility of sending several Egyptian battalions to aid the Turks. Kitchener replied that it was a good idea but pointed out that he would have to bring in English battalions to substitute for the departing troops. There was no further discussion on the subject. On another occasion several Egyptian officers asked to be allowed to volunteer for the Ottoman army. Kitchener gave his permission on the understanding that junior officers would be promoted to replace them so that when they returned they would be put on the retired list. In yet another instance Bedouin sheiks asked for permission to raise desert levies to assist the Turks in Libya. Kitchener commended them on their warlike spirit

and, to ensure that men of such fighting quality would be available to serve Egypt in the future, proposed to abolish their treasured exemption from military service on their return. The request was withdrawn. Such incidents occurred frequently and all required tactful handling.[10]

Italy and the Ottoman government held contrasting expectations of Egypt at the start of the war. Italy, on friendly terms with Britain, only requested that Egypt be kept strictly neutral. On the other hand, the Turkish army in Libya was understrength and stood little chance of resisting the much larger Italian force without help from home. As a nominal vassal of the sultan, Egypt was expected to provide troops and permit Turkish forces, on their way to Libya, to pass through its territory. But Britain's declared policy of neutrality was also extended to Egypt, to the outrage of Constantinople, which was compelled to revise its plans overnight to keep in touch with the defenders in its threatened provinces. No longer able to transport its forces en masse through Egypt, it was left with three options, none of which was reliable or effective: sending assistance by sea but the Ottoman navy was weak and, given the continued presence of Italian ships in the area, could not be counted on to get through to the coast; moving soldiers and officers across Egypt in small groups disguised as civilians; relying on sympathetic Egyptians to surreptitiously permit infringement of the laws of neutrality.

The Ottoman authorities were able to use the unsettled conditions in Egypt to their advantage during the opening months of the war. As the cable linking Tripoli to Constantinople had been cut, the Turks sent messages through Egypt, thanks to the cooperation of Egyptian telegraphers. With friendly Egyptian police turning a blind eye, small convoys under Ottoman officers made their way from Alexandria to the frontier of Libya. Officers travelling together were allowed to use the Khedive's private railway to carry them to their destination. Bedouin tribes in the western desert ran guns into Tripoli and Cyrenaica for the Turks. An Ottoman vessel unloaded a large cache of arms on the coast some 60 miles northwest of Alexandria with the connivance of some Egyptian coast guards. A party of four officers and about 50 men disembarked as well and escorted the cargo, which was transported by camels to the frontier of Libya, eluding the vigilance of Egyptian patrols. In the process two Egyptian soldiers were captured and taken along.[11]

Since no standard blueprint existed, Kitchener followed the age old method of trial and error in adopting preventative measures. These were introduced piecemeal and by the end of the year the sum total went a long

ways towards inhibiting the Turks from maintaining contact with their forces in Libya. Telegraph operators were admonished and those guilty of continued collaboration were removed. As the Khedive could not be trusted to halt Turkish officers from using his railcars, two intelligence agents were placed at each stop station along the way to turn back any travelling illegally to the war zone. A passport office was opened in Alexandria from which a visa was required from all those wishing to enter Cyrenaica from Egypt. Nominally in charge of the office, Thomas Russell found himself constantly matching wits with Turkish soldiers who tried to pass themselves off as belonging to professions other than their own in order to qualify for a passport. He personally attended to every applicant and came to suspect that many were non-commissioned Turkish officers. One day a group of six men walked in and wanted a visa, claiming they were grocers and butchers. Russell suddenly called them to attention in Turkish and "up they sprang like ramrods." On another occasion an individual posed as a barber which led Russell to inquire the whereabouts of his tools. He replied they were outside, excused himself and returned half an hour later "with a razor, a bit of soap, a shaving brush and a towel." Russell normally allowed the suspects to pass through. He explained in his memoirs that he lacked proof of their true profession so he gave them the benefit of the doubt.[12]

On the day Kitchener notified the Foreign Office of the Ottoman navy's first successful gun-running operation (as noted above), he requested that British warships be sent to assist patrolling the coast "because I fear Turks will try again and difficulties of country are great."[13] Grey replied that he had approached the Admiralty to send a man-of-war but that its presence "is not simply to stop gun-running by Turks, but to ensure that neutrality of Egypt is not infringed by either side."[14] The Admiralty responded by sending a ship to patrol the area. In the meantime Kitchener further tightened security arrangements as defined in a memo to the Foreign Office. All camel corps units that could be spared from other parts of the country were to be withdrawn and concentrated on the coast line, adding 110 men to those already there. The reinforcements would allow seven posts to be set up, each under British officers with a garrison of 30 camel corps men. Their duties were to patrol the entire coast from Alexandria to Sollum (near the border of Cyrenaica) and to be ready to pursue any gun–running parties. No camels from Egypt were allowed to enter Libya unless it could be ascertained that they were not carrying contraband goods. Since the camels that carried the arms were mostly from Libya,

none would be permitted to cross into Egypt. Finally Ottoman officers staying in Alexandria, suspected of having orchestrated the infractions of neutrality, would be sent back to Turkey. Kitchener ended by saying: "I am loath to use British troops, but if necessary, I propose to send camel corps and two squadrons of cavalry to march along the western border … and reinforce coast-line posts. Everybody is acting energetically and I hope you will consider these measures satisfactory."[15] Grey was pleased with the steps taken and reminded Kitchener to remain vigilant, observing that if Egypt's neutrality laws were not rigorously enforced, "we would not be justified in objecting to Italians patrolling the coast of Egypt and damaging Egyptian commerce by an extensive exercise of the right of search."[16]

As the preventative measures took hold, Kitchener was happy to report that the illegal Turkish traffic along the coast had been stopped, forcing Constantinople to devise an alternate route via the Suez Canal. Kitchener had received information that a contingent of Ottoman troops was concentrating at Gaza with the aim of smuggling a large amount of guns and ammunition through Egypt. Kitchener had collected a total coast guard force of 611 officers and men—19 officers and 400 other ranks were in the infantry; six officers and 106 men belonged to the camel corps; and, in addition, there were 80 irregular Bedouins—to guard the stretch between Port Said and Zeitia, at the southern end of the Gulf of Suez. At each of the three ferries of Kantara, Ismailia and Suez, there was a small force of coast guards and police with both east and west banks of the canal patrolled constantly day and night. All travel by ferry was suspended at night and no boats were allowed to remain on the east side of the canal so that the Turkish caravan, even if fortunate to reach it, would be unable to effect a crossing. But Kitchener was certain that the Ottoman column would be halted by superior Egyptian forces before reaching the eastern side. Kitchener thought it would be advisable "to represent these facts to the Grand Vizier and to the Turkish Ambassador in London, in order, if possible, to dissuade the Turkish government from such fruitless attempt, which can only do them harm."[17]

The Foreign Office contacted Sir Gerard Lowther, British Ambassador in Constantinople, with a request that he bring the substance of Kitchener's note to the attention of the Ottoman authorities and urge them to send immediate instructions to those connected with the planning process to shut down the enterprise.[18] The Turks heeded the advice and the expedition ended before it had really got under way.

The Ottoman government had not anticipated that the laws of neutrality in Egypt would be applied with such vigor. In an article in *Tanin*, the writer, presumably reflecting the sentiment of the Porte, regretted the undue severity shown by the Egyptian officials to Turkish officers and men proceeding via Egypt to Libya and protested at the treatment to which they were subjected on the frontier. While he understood the delicate position of a non-aligned nation to prevent breeches of its laws, he regarded the acute severity of Egypt in the supervision of its policy as a breach of neutrality towards the Ottoman Empire. He pinned his faith on Kitchener to redress the imbalance, referring to him as a semi-Ottoman official. He pointed out that the Consul-General was for a while in the service of the Ottoman Sultanate and currently in that of the Khedive. The writer ended by saying that with Kitchener's "experience of Egyptian and Ottoman life and conditions, he will, no doubt, within the limits of his official duty, do what is consonance with the long–standing relations of friendship between the two countries."[19]

Egypt's tightening noose exacerbated the sense of desperation felt by the Ottoman authorities. At the start of January 1912, the Grand Vizier sent a telegram to the Khedive, asking him to use his personal influence with Kitchener—not knowing that he had very little, if any—in order to ease the military restrictions against the Ottoman state. The Khedive sounded out Kitchener who maintained that, since his hands were tied, he could do little to accommodate the Turks. He asked Abbas to respectfully convey to the Grand Vizier his answer in which he explained the reasons that limited his freedom of action:

> Although I am sincerely imbued with a warm desire to be of assistance to the Porte, I cannot see my way to allow relaxation of military measures taken. They have become necessary from the infraction of article 5 of the Hague Convention of 1907, as well as of her own laws, by which the introduction of arms into the country is strictly prohibited.
>
> Recently, as his Highness the Grand Vizier is doubtless aware, four Turkish officers marched with an escort of over 50 armed men for three days through Egyptian territory. They were carrying arms, and they, moreover, even took prisoner two Egyptian soldiers and carried them away with them. His Highness will agree, I feel certain, that persistence in such action must inevitably lead sooner or later to a conflict between Turkish troops and those who are entrusted with the duty of maintaining public order and security in Egypt. His Highness will also appreciate the very grave consequences that would probably be entailed by the outbreak of any such conflict.

> However distasteful it may be, Egypt is bound in the circumstances to take precautionary military measures to protect the country from the results of a violent infraction of her territory. I should be glad, however, to consider how the present arrangements can be modified in the sense of the Grand Vizier's wishes, providing his Highness will effectively stop the introduction of arms in contravention of the law.[20]

The Turkish government was disappointed with Kitchener's unwillingness to be more flexible but clung to the hope that it might obtain better results by pleading its case directly to Grey. In London the Turkish Ambassador (Ahmed Tewfik Pasha) handed an *aide mémoire* to the Foreign Office, protesting against the restrictions placed on telegraphic communications, and on the passage of Turkish individuals and provisions through Egypt. Grey asked Kitchener to comment on the memorandum so as to enable him to reply effectively to the Ottoman government.[21]

Kitchener indicated that the ban on the use of the telegraph had been imposed because of a serious case of gun-running which had been carried out with the connivance of the Turkish government. The matter was now under control and 10 days ago he had lifted the restrictions, allowing telegraphic messages along Egyptian lines to pass freely between the military authorities in Tripoli and Constantinople. He added that there was no merit to the second charge: "Only Turkish officers and soldiers, or persons who are obviously proceeding to Cyrenaica for the purpose of joining the Turkish forces, are turned back at the frontier, and there has never been serious interference at any time with merchants or other inoffensive individuals desirous of proceeding to Tripoli, or with merchandise or provisions transported in the ordinary way of trade."[22] On 16 March Grey forwarded a note, containing the gist of Kitchener's observations, to the Turkish Ambassador.[23]

While the Turks complained repeatedly that Egypt's neutrality laws were crippling their war effort in Tripoli and Cyrenaica, the Italians were equally troublesome, although for a different reason. From practically the start of the conflict until well into the summer of 1912, various Italian officials—Ambassador in London (Marquis Imperiali), Chargé d'affairs (Count Grimani) in Cairo and Consul-General in Alexandria—on behalf of their government, regularly approached either the Foreign Office or the Agency in Cairo, with a list of supposed Turkish infractions against Egypt's neutrality. Each time a complaint was registered, Kitchener and his team had to launch an investigation and almost

always the charges proved to be exaggerated or unfounded. Kitchener told Grey:

> There is absolutely no foundation for the statement that numerous Ottoman officials continue to enter Cyrenaica from Egypt, as well as arms, and munitions, and provisions. I am aware that a few such persons have succeeded in passing the frontier … but in very restricted numbers only. It is, of course, always possible for persons disguised as Bedouins to cross the desert towards the frontier, and there is practically no means of stopping them if they wish to go … In any case, I am convinced that there has been no organized passage, on anything like a large scale, of arms and munitions of war from Egypt, where, indeed, there are no arms to be purchased, and only of such provisions as are required for the inhabitants … and for ordinary purposes of trade.

Kitchener believed that many of the stories originated from unfounded statements made by the native press or ill-informed Italian agents in the field who assumed that caravans moving in a westerly direction must necessarily be carrying arms and contraband. As a case in point he alluded to an Italian agent who was out duck-hunting one evening on Lake Mariut when his attention was drawn by a pack of camels heading towards the war zone. He asked his native boatman whether caravans frequently proceeded in that direction. Told that they did—as traffic between the Nile valley and western oasis was normally heavy—he reported to Rome that he had seen a column of camels carrying a large cache of arms and provisions to Cyrenaica and that such convoys made the journey almost daily.[24]

Kitchener and Milne Cheetham (the Chargé d'affairs in Cairo) in memos and letters to Grey, gave many other instances of wild-goose-chases into which the Agency had been led. As the list was long, it will suffice to provide only a few additional examples of the reckless charges made by Italian officials. The Italian Foreign Office notified London that it had received intelligence, described *de bonne source*, that about 200 cases of arms were on their way to the war front on board a Khedival mail steamer. A search of the only two vessels which could have contained such a cargo proved that the report was baseless. On another occasion the Italian Consul-General at Alexandria went to the house of the police chief Hopkinson Pasha late at night, woke him up and informed him that a large supply of arms and ammunition had been placed on the train at Wardin about to leave for Tripoli. Hopkinson immediately proceeded to the rail station with the Consul-General and examined the contents

of the train. None of the cases contained arms and ammunition. Then too an Italian agent reported that 200 camels laden with ammunition had passed through the Suez Canal at Ismailia on their way to Tripoli. The result of the inquiry showed that the number of camels in question was only between 40 and 50 and that they belonged to a Bedouin trader who was on his way to regions in the Delta. No contraband was found. Finally the Italian office in Cairo notified Harvey Pasha, the police chief in the city, that a caravan under the leadership of three Turkish officers and seven Albanians had left the Fayum Oasis for the western oasis of Bahria, carrying 50,000 (Egyptian) livres in gold and contraband. Agents of the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior were immediately sent in the direction of Bahria to intercept and capture the convoy. They reported that there were no signs that a caravan had passed by the alleged route. An investigation conducted at the Fayum was unable to obtain any information. It was supposed that the rumor had originated from a large British Camel Corps patrol, which at the time was passing through the Fayum Oasis. About a quarter of the 100 camels were carrying "darees"—a form of hay fed only to camels belonging to the British army.[25]

It was bad enough that rarely was there any substance to the charges made against alleged Turkish misconduct in Egypt, but what especially galled Kitchener were the frivolous Italian complaints of which he gave several examples. One objected that French, instead of Italian, vermicelli was supplied to the Red Crescent Mission; another appeared to question the reason why Kamil Pasha, the former Grand Vizier, had made a special trip to Cairo to see Kitchener, his old friend. Kitchener dismissed the implication which, to use his own words, "would be impertinent if taken seriously."[26]

Kitchener received word from the Foreign Office that the Italian Ambassador had suggested that Egyptian civil servants and British officials be concentrated in places on the coast and in the interior of Egypt from where Turkish movements could be more effectively detected. One can only imagine Kitchener's initial reaction. Here was an Italian diplomat in London with no experience of what the work entailed, knowledge of the number of men already employed for the task or topography of the country and routes leading to Libya, offering impractical advice on how to check Turkey's alleged transgressions against Egypt's neutrality. Kitchener replied to Grey "that a very heavy burden has already been placed on the resources of the Egyptian Government and that it would be impossible to give effect to the wishes of the Italian Government in this matter." He

proceeded to list the places where he had stationed forces—nearly 100 men at Sollum and a similar number at Siwa and patrolling between these two places were coast guards and, in addition, a contingent of trackers and police had been organized to oversee the area stretching from Alexandria to Sollum. The coast guards dispersed along the shore between Sollum and Alexandria and those on the three cruisers in service had explicit instructions to prevent gun-running. The customs officials at Alexandria were told to keep an eagle eye on incoming cargo and Kitchener considered it practically impossible for arms to enter Egypt through that port. Finally special police officers had been placed on the Mariut line (the Khedival railway) in order to supervise traffic and turn back any Turkish officers and or soldiers attempting to make their way to Libya. Kitchener concluded by saying that he hoped the information contained in this memorandum and others sent earlier "will enable you to reply to the Italian Ambassador, should he again complain of the attitude of the Egyptian Government."[27] Grey agreed that the Italian government "cannot with justice insist on Egyptian government doing more than at present."[28]

When everything is said and done the best compliment that Kitchener had done his job well came from the often-complaining Italian Ambassador himself near the end of the war. Grey explained to him all that Kitchener's work had entailed. He read part of a memo Cheetham had sent him in which he maintained that Egypt had fulfilled its obligations of neutrality as defined by the Hague Convention and perhaps even exceeded them. Cheetham pointed out that Egypt's supervisory role to combat contraband had come at a high cost. From January 1912 to the end of August, the various Egyptian departments and the War Office had spent together about £20,000. He went on to say:

> In addition to this expenditure the Government have suffered great inconvenience owing to the necessity of sending men and officers to the western frontier and northern coast. The Sudanese police, who are the best in the service, have been used for this purpose; and the provinces of the interior have been depleted in a manner which has almost certainly led to an increase of crime. The extra work thrown upon the administration … must also be taken into consideration.

The Marquis evidently saw that Egypt, at considerable inconvenience and expense, had taken all practical measures to block Turkish aid from reaching Libya to the enormous advantage of the Italian army. Grey wrote that

in "the course of our conversation the Italian Ambassador expressed himself as quite satisfied that, from the moment when we said that Egypt would be neutral, the obligations of neutrality had been performed."[29]

In the early weeks of the war the Italian army captured key places along the coast of Libya and it appeared that before long the Turks would sue for peace. But the Turks changed strategy and aided by natives and the powerful Senussi tribe resorted to guerilla warfare, staying close to the Italians and harassing them at every opportunity. For a year the Turks and their allies conducted a successful guerilla war against the Italians and prevented them from breaking out from their positions along the coast to occupy the interior. The war was taking a heavy human and financial toll on the Italians and it looked as though they might have to abandon their imperial adventure. But nothing is certain in war and the end came suddenly for the Turks. Threatened by more urgent troubles near home, they were forced to open negotiations with Italy and ultimately accept its terms. On 18 October 1912, the two powers signed the treaty of Lausanne in which Turkey ceded the contested territory to Italy.[30] However peace in that region of North Africa proved elusive as the Senussi refused to lay down their arms and fought on until after the First World War.

Kitchener breathed a sigh of relief when the conflict in Libya ended. It had been an arduous and hectic year. On top of his own work, he had to be constantly on alert for any infringement of the neutrality laws, supervise his security forces, engage in a chess game with the combatants and divert resources where they were needed. He had shown both patience and firmness in his dealings with the belligerents and, while irritating them at times, had not alienated them or deviated from the course of Britain's foreign policy. He had kept the country quiet thanks to his eminent standing, knowledge of the Arab temperament, kindly-regarded gestures, guile and repression of opponents. All-in-all it was an impressive display of his skill, authority and prestige.

Kitchener did not have time to savor his release from enforcing Egypt's neutrality. No sooner did the Ottomans sign a peace treaty with the Italians than they became involved in another conflict, known as the First Balkan War. In October 1912, the Balkan states of Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Montenegro joined forces to wage war on Turkey in order to snatch its remaining possessions in Europe. The British Ambassador in Constantinople, Gerard Lowther, asked the Foreign Office how it would react if the Porte invited the Khedive to send a contingent of troops, as his predecessor had done in 1876 (during the Russo-Turkish War).[31] Grey

had apparently made up his mind on the matter but he nevertheless contacted Kitchener to ask for his opinion:

> I think we had better say that breach of neutrality by Egypt would lay that country open to attack, and must therefore be prevented by HMG, as we are bound, being in occupation, to defend the country from attack. The adoption of this attitude prevented Egypt from suffering any loss during the war between Turkey and Italy and we must continue it.[32]

Back came Kitchener's reply: "Your proposed statement to Turkey, re neutrality seems to me to meet the case in the best way."[33] Ten days later Kitchener had second thoughts in view of early Turkish military debacles. He thought it would look bad if Egypt declared its neutrality at the present moment.[34] Grey was adamant that the same attitude must be adopted as in the Turco-Italian war, though he did not propose any proclamation or public declaration of Egypt's neutrality.[35]

The public and press in Egypt had less interest in the Balkan conflict than in the Turco-Italian war, apparently because of the remoteness of the struggle. That general attitude, together with Turkey's surprisingly rapid defeat, averted any complications Kitchener might have faced. Within a month the Balkan states had won a series of victories and were on the verge of overrunning Constantinople when the European Powers intervened to prevent the total collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

After the conclusion of the First Balkan War, Grey thanked Kitchener for the manner in which he had steered Egypt through the difficult times: "All of Europe is up to its eyes in complications, and it is a great relief to hear that Egypt remains so quiet: for which we owe you much gratitude."[36]

The Foreign Office initially hoped that the war in the Balkans would end in a stalemate, or with neither side achieving a clear-cut victory, but its attitude changed when it became apparent that the Ottoman army was on the brink of collapse. Grey was prepared to yield to the demands of the Balkan states as long as Constantinople remained in Ottoman hands. While he was ready to accept the expulsion of the Ottomans from Europe, he wanted the Empire to become strong enough to be able to manage its Asiatic possessions properly.[37] Kitchener was less optimistic than Grey, doubting the long-term viability of the tottering Ottoman Empire. If it should fall, as he expected, it would open the way for Egypt to become fully integrated into the British Empire. This he saw as the first step in the creation of a great Arab Empire under British suzerainty in the Middle East.

Kitchener did not follow the peace negotiations, only relieved that the fighting was over. The two wars coming in quick succession had exacted a considerable price from Egypt. They had kept the country in a state of unrest, interfered with the work of Kitchener and government personnel, imposed additional costs for security arrangements and, as we shall see, adversely affected the crime rate. Now after some 15 months Kitchener was at last free to turn his undivided attention to running the state.

Notes

1. Joseph Heller, *British Policy Towards the Ottoman Empire 1908–1914* (London: Frank Cass, 1983), 43–56.
2. Grey to Rennell Rodd (British Ambassador in Rome), 30 September, 1911 in Great Britain: Foreign Office. *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898–1914*. ed. by George P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, vol. 9, part 1, no 254 (London: HMSO, 1934), 287.
3. Clara Boyle, *Harry Boyle*: *A Servant of the Empire* (London: Methuen, 1938), 216.
4. The Press Law had fallen into disuse because Cromer ignored the outpourings of unruly newspapers but Gorst resuscitated it, driven as he was to take action against the deliberate spread of false news.
5. Cited in Arthur E. Weigall, *A History of Events in Egypt from 1798 to 1914* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), 258–59.
6. Kitchener, *Annul Report for 1911*, House of Commons Sessional papers (6149), Egypt no. 1, (1912), 1–2.
7. Sir Thomas Russell Pasha, *Egyptian Service 1902–1946* (London: John Murray, 1949), 146–47.
8. Kitchener to Grey, 25 November, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 46992. The stories in the European and British press had greatly exaggerated the scope and consequences of the disturbances in Alexandria. Kitchener's report was intended to answer questions that were being raised in the House of Commons.
9. Kitchener to Grey, December 1911, Grey papers, FO 800/47.
10. Sir George Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan, 1920), 315.
11. Kitchener to Grey, 15 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 50297.
12. Russell Pasha, *Egyptian Service*, 157–58.
13. Kitchener to Grey, 15 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 50297.

14. Grey to Kitchener, 28 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 51484.
15. Kitchener to Grey, 10 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 50346.
16. Grey to Kitchener, 18 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 50477.
17. Kitchener to Grey, 29 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 52212; Kitchener to Grey, 31 December 1911, FO 407/178, Enclosure No. 10.
18. Grey to Lowther, 29 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 52212.
19. Lowther to Grey, 10 January 1912, FO 407/178, No. 1926. The translation of the article is in the letter.
20. Kitchener to Grey, 1 January, 1912, FO 407/178, No. 390.
21. Grey to Kitchener, 16 February, 1912, FO 407/178, No. 6312.
22. Kitchener to Grey, 24 February, 1912, FO 407/178, No, 9169.
23. Grey to Tewfik Pasha, 16 March, 1912, FO 407/178, No. 9169.
24. Kitchener to Grey, 10 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 50346.
25. Cheetham to Grey, 28 September, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 40651.
26. Kitchener to Grey, 25 November, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 48162.
27. Kitchener to Grey, 10 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 50346.
28. Grey to Kitchener, 20 December, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 50346.
29. Cheetham to Grey, 22 September, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 40651; Grey to Dering (Chargé d'affairs in Rome), 8 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 42760.
30. Charles Stephenson's recent book, *A Box of Sand*: *The Italo-Ottoman War 1911–1912* (Ticehurst, E. Sussex: Tattered Flag Press, 2014) is excellent in covering the war which in the past had barely drawn the attention of military writers.
31. Lowther to Grey, 15 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 43461.
32. Grey to Kitchener, 16 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 43461.
33. Kitchener to Grey, 17 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 43708.
34. Kitchener to Grey, 28 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 45625.
35. Grey to Kitchener, 29 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 45625.
36. Grey to Kitchener, 30 April, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
37. Heller, *British Policy*, 72–75.

CHAPTER 5

Striving to Advance Egypt

Kitchener faced another pressing problem on his arrival in Cairo, one that he had inherited, namely the widening gulf between Copts and Muslims. The Coptic Christians were the principal non-Muslim minority in Egypt and before the war numbered about 700,000—constituting ten or twelve percent of the population. They were good businessmen and in urban areas were often prosperous and, moreover, were well represented in the country's civil service. The Copts shared many practices and customs with Muslims and the two religious communities had lived side-by-side in relative harmony for centuries. What caused a breakdown in their traditional relationship during the latter part of the British Occupation was the growth of an extreme nationalist movement and the modernization of the country which eliminated positions in the bureaucracy normally held by Copts. As a result, the Copts felt increasingly isolated by what they perceived was rising Islamic intolerance and neglect by the British occupying power. The assassination of the Coptic Prime Minister, Butrus Ghali Pasha, by a Muslim fanatic added to their fear. To protect their rights, they called for a Congress which convened at Assiut early in March 1911. The delegates demanded specific guarantees, including better representation in political bodies, employment in government based on merit, the designation of Sunday as an official holiday and a guarantee of religious instruction for Coptic students in state schools.[1]

Gorst had remained aloof from the discord in the early stages, thinking that it was not his place to reconcile political differences. By delaying British involvement until a religious element was inserted into the

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_5

dispute, he allowed the mutual hostility of the communities to grow and fester. After an investigation, Gorst reported to Grey that the Copts had no legitimate grievances of any importance. He indicated that no group had prospered as much as the Copts had under British rule as evidenced by some in their community who were among the wealthiest men and largest landowners in the country. He showed that they held a disproportionate number of civil service jobs and that in some departments they actually outnumbered Muslims. He rejected the request that Sunday, in addition to the Muslim Friday, be declared a day of rest on the ground that it was impractical. He indicated that the government had already taken steps to address the issue of religious instruction in state schools. He deplored the results of the Coptic Congress which had created a backlash in the Muslim press and among nationalists.[2] *The Times* correspondent in Egypt wrote on 19 March: "If the Coptic claims are exaggerated, as is the opinion of many persons who are neither Copts nor Mussulmans, the latter have nothing to gain by indulging in a campaign of indiscriminate abuse, which can only produce a deplorable impression of their political capacity both in Egypt and abroad."

As Gorst had predicted, the Muslims responded with a Congress of their own which met 29 April–4 May in Cairo. Far from approaching the consideration of Coptic claims in a calm and conciliatory spirit, the delegates, in a prolonged uproarious scene, dismissed all of them with scorn. They implied that the Copts had fabricated grievances to justify forming a separate faction in the Legislative Council with interests that differed from those of the majority. They feared that Coptic power would grow at the expense of the Muslims and that they would be aided in their designs by the Christian occupying power. They declared that Islam must continue to be the official religion of Egypt; that teaching of Christianity carried on at government schools must be abandoned; and that top-level posts in the administration like that of a governor (mudir) of a province, should be held only by Muslims.[3]

By the time the Muslim Congress was held, Gorst had left Egypt and would not return. He had tried to be even-handed but had not pleased either group, least of all the Copts who despised him for his supposed pro-Islamic leanings. Serious differences remained and were kept alive by the acrimonious press campaigns of the two communities. It was left up to Kitchener to draw the two sides closer together.

Kitchener, like Gorst, did not want Egypt divided along religious lines. His reputation gave him a good head start. The Coptic organs expressed

their satisfaction at Kitchener's appointment and stressed his reputation for impartiality which they welcomed as a refreshing change over his predecessor. The Muslim newspapers, save for those controlled by the extreme nationalist publications, also expected Kitchener to show fair treatment to all segments of the population, just as he had to his officers when he was Sirdar of the Egyptian army.

Kitchener suspected that a major problem in the Coptic community was the absence of an outstanding leader like Butrus Ghali who had provided guidance and kept in check youthful hotheads. That impression was reinforced when he visited the old Coptic Patriarch. The Pontiff told him that Coptic agitators were doing much harm, that they were beyond his control and would not listen to his advice. He identified their ringleader as Bashra Bey Hanna. Not long afterwards Hanna and his brother called on Kitchener at the Agency. Kitchener was anything but accommodating as he proceeded to rake them over the coals. He conveyed the results of his interview to the Foreign Office:

> I told them that unless they gave up their present attitude as agitators they must not expect anything from me. They were very submissive, and promised to do as I told them. I then said that … they must make peace with those that did not agree with their action amongst the Coptic community, and possibly recant their former attitude, acknowledging their mistake; also they must make sure that the Coptic papers showed that a change of policy on their part had taken place, and give up all pinpricks and criticisms directed against Mohammedans. I said if I felt sure that all this was done and was genuine on their part, I would after some time see them again [and] hear what they had to say about grievances.[4]

When the Hanna brothers rose to leave, they promised to conform to Kitchener's wishes. He followed up by arranging meetings with moderate Muslims and Copts who were prominent in their community. He did not offer concessions to either side but relied on exhortations and appeals for compromise, to smooth over differences. Oddly enough a by-product of Kitchener's campaign against the extreme nationalists proved helpful as well. The radicals became more concerned about Kitchener's strict restrictions against them (as we shall see in the next chapter) and in their struggle to survive as a relevant movement came to view the British, rather than the Copts, as their primary enemy. Within a few months the collective measures taken had the desired effect. Kitchener in his first annual report to Grey observed that the causes for the strained relationship between

the two communities had disappeared. He indicated that both sides had acted in a responsible and dignified manner and, in the spirit for common good, gave up any idea of further Congresses. Kitchener was optimistic about the future: "I feel sure that an era of peace and concord has now been established which must be beneficial to all, and which I hope will prove lasting."[5] With the potentially explosive religious issue resolved to the satisfaction of both sides, Kitchener could move on and deal with other internal matters.

Kitchener understood that the best way to win support for his administration as well as silence possible sources of discontent was to advance the material prosperity of the Egyptian people. Egypt was an agricultural country with few industries. Cotton, known for its high quality and wide demand, was the backbone of the economy. During the British Occupation Egyptian farmers were encouraged to grow cotton, sometimes at the expense of other crops such as grain. By 1912 cotton accounted for 80.1% of the value of Egypt's exports which went mainly to England to feed the textile mills.[6]

For centuries the Nile River overflowed its banks once a year and deposited layers of nutrient-rich silt into basins converting otherwise arid land productive and fertile. There were some years when there was a decrease in summer rainfall and the water level of the river barely rose, causing drought and famine. In other years, however, the Nile produced heavy flooding which washed away the top soil and inhibited crop production. Moreover during the period between 1897 and 1912 there was a rapid increase of the rural population which outstripped the availability of arable land. To increase agricultural production, the Nile had to be controlled. In 1898 construction of a dam across the Nile at Aswan was begun and completed four years later. As the dam could not always hold back the water of the Nile, work was initiated in 1907 to raise it by five meters. It was officially opened by Kitchener in December 1912. With the Aswan Dam's reservoir storage, the Nile could be regulated and distributed all year round to cultivated areas and virgin lands. As a result the new area brought under the plough rose by 100,000 feddans (a feddan was equivalent to 1.038 acres) between 1899 and 1913. But the output per feddan of cotton and other crops fell steadily between 1895 and 1914.[7]

The construction of the Aswan Dam had created a number of problems, some of which were not understood or easily resolved. In the Delta the drainage system was incapable of keeping pace with the new abundance of water and as a result the land was becoming waterlogged. The

new dam also deprived the land of silt that was deposited by the annual flooding of the Nile. Perennial irrigation made it possible to grow crops in both summer and winter and the continual practice led to the exhaustion of the soil. The cultivation of cotton, it should be noted, contributed more to the impoverishment of the soil than practically any other crop. To revitalize the ground, farmers became increasingly dependent on artificial fertilizers which were expensive and imported from abroad.

Another factor that affected agricultural production was the ravages of insects and, among these pests, the cotton-worm was one of the most virulent. Although the worm attacked different plants, it was especially destructive in the case of cotton and, unless kept in check by removing the affected leaves immediately, spread rapidly and could ruin the entire crop over a wide area.[8] Poor drainage of the soil—after the construction of the Aswan dam—which produced conditions under which the cotton-worm flourished, together with the indiscriminate destruction of bird life, had led to an enormous increase of the pests. In 1911 there was an alarming attack of cotton-worm, the severity of which Kitchener attributed mainly to the apathy of farmers who failed to act when the first batches of eggs appeared. The search for a remedy led to numerous suggestions by amateurs for certain insecticides which were deemed impractical or dangerous. The government took the matter in hand and appointed a commission of technical experts charged with conducting experiments and gathering information from other countries on steps taken to contain analogous insects.

Kitchener wasted no time in adopting the recommendations of the commission and added a few measures of his own. These included the introduction of parasites which had worked well in India and other countries in attacking the cotton-worm; increasing the number of inspectors so that proper investigation could be carried out in all provinces; hiring more men devoted exclusively to cotton-worm work to be supplemented in the summer by a large prison labor force—that is persons found guilty of misdemeanors who had the option of working in the fields instead of paying a fine or imprisonment; a law designed to protect bird life though Kitchener admitted that it was probably too late to save many species useful in the fight against the cotton worm; and proper drainage to convert waterlogged land to relatively arid soil. While the cotton-worm badly ravaged the fields until the middle of July in 1912, the pests had practically disappeared by the third week in August. This was significantly due to a protozoan disease—which frequently appeared in other countries

but was hitherto unknown in Egypt—that destroyed masses of eggs. The government's anti-cotton-worm operation was repeated in 1913 with success. It was also revealed that the protozoan disease of the previous year had the effect of producing many fewer eggs in 1913 and even the worms hatched were feeble and seldom came to maturity. While Kitchener noted that the attack by the pests in 1912 and 1913 had been severe in places, he maintained that they had not significantly affected the annual cotton crop.[9]

The same could not be said about the ravages of another insect, the boll-worm, which hitherto had attracted little attention and, as a result, spread steadily, destroying large quantities of cotton annually. An entomologist was dispatched to India to bring back a supply of parasites which were the natural enemy of the boll-worm. Live examples of these parasites were subsequently produced in Egypt. The measures taken for the destruction of the boll-worm were effective and in 1913 Kitchener reported that the insect did not damage the cotton crop as severely as in the past.[10]

Kitchener considered the fellahin the mainstay of the Egyptian economy. The central feature of his program was to foster the growth of a conservative and prosperous class of peasants who would be attracted to a regime that promoted impartial justice and honest and efficient administration. But Kitchener had also formed a strong sympathetic bond with the simple peasants, when as Sirdar they made up the bulk of his army. Given their importance to the economy and his feelings for them, it was only natural that he should be interested in improving their condition. He knew that they had suffered hardships because of a severe recession that began in 1907 (caused by a sharp decline in the American stock market) which had left them with deeper liabilities than ever, and that they were fleeced and cheated by moneylenders and held in contempt by the upper classes. Cecil wrote in hindsight: "No one was perhaps in a sense more dictatorial, but no one was more truly just or had more reverence for the rights of his poorer fellows."[11]

Many of the ideas that Kitchener implemented were borrowed from India where agricultural conditions were similar to those in Egypt. During the first year in office Kitchener passed two important measures, the Five Feddan Law and the Cantonial Justice Law (see next chapter). The former was inspired by a version of the successful Punjab Alienation Act passed at the turn of the twentieth century.[12] It was intended to protect the small cultivator of five feddans or less by forbidding expropriation of his land for debt. It did not prevent him from selling his land, if he so chose, or raise money

on his crops. The law was made necessary, according to Kitchener, because the small landowners had not acquired the habit of thrift and tended to spend more than they could afford on lavish weddings and frivolous activities. That explanation overlooks other factors. A severe recession in Europe had affected the export of Egypt's cotton output in 1908 and for the next two years. As small farmers had difficulty meeting their mortgage payments they turned to foreign usurers who were happy to lend them money at exorbitant rates of interest, sometimes as high as 30 or even 40 percent. Once in the clutches of the moneylenders there was no escape for the fellahin until his property was expropriated. What Kitchener had done was save the fellahin from their own folly and spendthrift habits. While the small farmer could no longer pledge his land as security to borrow money, he could meet current expenditures by obtaining monetary advances on his crops. Freed from traditional shackles and forced to live within his means, he and his family could, so it was proclaimed, enjoy a modest standard of living.

The law was controversial and produced an outcry from several quarters. Cromer, who continued to follow events in Egypt with a good deal of interest, had serious reservations about the legislation, observing that it was unenforceable without an army of inspectors. The greatest criticism came from the British and, to a lesser extent, Egyptian moneyed classes. They saw it as an unwarranted intrusion on individual rights as well as impeding the development of agriculture by depriving it of necessary capital. Resistance to the law was led by the Agricultural Bank of Egypt and the National Bank of Egypt. The directors of the Agricultural Bank protested loudly to both the Agency and the Foreign Office that the measure would destroy the main part of their financial institution's business and, at the same time, fail to attain the desired objective. They maintained that the fellahin, unable to use their land as collateral for loans, would have no recourse but seek usurers who would accept imperfect security in exchange for very high rates of interest.[13]

The directors of the Agricultural Bank had good reason to worry. Founded in 1902 to lend money to the fellahin at low interest rates, compared to what the usurers charged, the bank had not fully recovered from the financial trouble caused a few years earlier by its injudicious lending policy. Kitchener was convinced that the Agricultural Bank had outlived its usefulness and could no longer operate without heavy losses. The cost of investigating applications for small loans made such transactions uneconomical. Still Kitchener went through the motion of trying to mitigate the bank's losses. After meeting with directors of the bank, he wrote in

his report that the government made a number of concessions "such as increased security for payment on advances on crops and other extensions to their present authorized operations." He went on to say that if the village agricultural cooperative societies multiplied from the handful already in existence in Egypt, 'it would naturally fall upon the Agricultural Bank to provide them with the necessary funds for carrying on their work."[14] Alas, government help, such as it was, proved insufficient to save the bank from bankruptcy in the long run.

Kitchener had to convince the Foreign Office of the merits of his intended measure. In a paper (written by Cheetham), he replied to the general charges that the law would injure the prospects of the banks without producing the intended results. On the first point it was explained that the Egyptian government had supported the banks in the hope of accomplishing certain results—though these were not defined. As the objectives had been only partially met, it was legitimate to consider other means. To counter the second complaint, Kitchener based his arguments on a memo he had enclosed along with his own. It was drawn up by Sir William Brunyate, Judicial Adviser to the Egyptian Government, who had studied the proposed legislation. He contended that there was no greater danger of the fellahin turning to a usurer than his fellows, such as tenants and small merchants, who require loans for their businesses, but have no land. The question therefore was whether it was to the advantage of the small holder to be able to borrow on his land. Based on the experience in other countries, the answer would appear to be in the negative. Pointing to Brunyate's reasoning, Kitchener's comments continued:

> The criticism that the new law would not prevent the alienation of land is beside the mark, in that it was never supposed that this effect could be produced by legislation, nor would it be wholly desirable. The object of the law was to improve the position of the small land-owner and thereby safeguard his tenure.
>
> The third reason is that the law as it stands can be evaded. This possibility was recognized when the law was drafted, but it is a question really of procedure rather than policy. It was decided to draft the law as simply as possible in order to facilitate its enactment. The Government had always recognized that it might need amplification and amendment by subsequent legislation, which, if necessity arises, could be introduced.[15]

Still the Foreign Office was less sure than Kitchener of the intended consequences of the law. It detected possible flaws and would have liked more time to evaluate the proposed legislation. In the final analysis it chose

not to step in on what was perceived as a *fait accompli*. According to one official: "The present system … must now be given a fair working chance, without comment or criticism from us."[16] The Foreign Office's standard reply when contacted by financial institutions seeking the repeal of the Five Feddan Law was that its policy was not to intervene in measures deemed advantageous by the Egyptian government.

A detailed survey shows that there were many more non-interested parties that supported the law than opposed it. Lieutenant-Colonel Elgood claimed that the measure was beneficial to the country, noting that it "checked borrowing and it encouraged thrift, two very great achievements."[17] Lord Lloyd, a former civil servant in Egypt and author of the classic study, *Egypt Since Cromer*, probably provided the fairest assessment of the law:

> It was perfectly natural … that the money-lenders should foment an agitation against such interference with individual liberty and should try to stir up pity for the poor cultivator who would now be unable to secure capital or credit. But such criticism was not justified: the small landowner could still borrow upon the security of his crop or upon personal security. It was a piece of legislation … which has proved itself by encouraging thrift and checking borrowing. The 5 Feddan law … was successful in preventing the eviction of small landholders, and in promoting much healthier standards of lending and borrowing. The ideal remedy was, of course, the cooperative society, but the growth of the cooperative spirit cannot be other than slow, especially in backward communities, and meanwhile some more drastic remedy was essential.[18]

The late British historian, Peter Mansfield, among the most seasoned observers of the Arab scene during his lifetime, agreed with Lloyd that peasant indebtedness could have been solved only through the cooperative system but the legislation "at least gave a temporary boost to the fellahin's morale and a feeling that the Government was on their side."[19]

Taking into account the needs of the growing population, Kitchener was anxious to reclaim uncultivated areas. He eventually focused his attention on the barren reaches bordering the Mediterranean. Without waiting for an elaborate survey, Kitchener proposed to resolve the drainage question by building a chain of gigantic pumping installations at the tails of the main drains to expel the water into the sea. Professional opinion did not for the most part favor Kitchener's scheme, quite apart from the huge costs involved. It was pointed out that a scientific survey would have

shown whether land below the water level was worth reclaiming and what portion of the water, after the run off caused by gravity, needed to be pumped into the sea. Kitchener, as was his habit, paid no heed to contradictory opinion once he had made up his mind.[20] He had calculated the costs and determined that it was well within the country's budgetary limits. He was always happy to remind people that, as a trained engineer, he was confident in the soundness of his scheme. Kitchener went up north to inspect the project when it got under way in 1913. He conveyed his impression to Lady Salisbury: "It was very interesting and when completed will make a great change in all that country—A vast area is completely out of cultivation owing to the waterlogged conditions of the land—2 years after the pumps get to work it will be all growing cotton."[21] The work was suspended on the outbreak of war. In the meantime it became increasingly evident that Kitchener had been correct and after the war the drainage operations were resumed on an even bigger scale than before.

Kitchener rarely miscalculated but he had one notable failure. A year before work on the drainage scheme began, Kitchener arranged to plant colonies of fellahin on hitherto uninhabited land in Gharbiyeh province in the Delta. The Mudir of Gharbiyeh, Muhib Pasha, had no faith in the feasibility of the experiment but gave it his endorsement, anxious as he was to ingratiate himself with Kitchener. The settlers chosen were for the most part unsuitable. Some were disreputable while others were poor workers. At the completion of the two model villages, Kitchener came down for the opening ceremony at which he handed out title deeds to a house and five feddans of uncultivated ground to the landless peasants.

It was not an especially joyous occasion for the poor fellahin who had accepted the plot of land reluctantly and out of fear of the Mudir. They knew that it would take three years of sacrifice and hard work to wash the land of salt before it was fit for cultivation. Kitchener had seen men plowing the land on his arrival and he assumed that crops could be grown immediately. The Mudir had put on a good show and kept the villagers from expressing their concern to Kitchener. On one occasion, when a name was called out, no one stepped forward, prompting the Mudir to grab a bewildered and unsuspecting fellahin at random and lead him up to the makeshift platform where Kitchener was standing to accept the title deed. Since the new property owners had no means of surviving in the interval, it was not surprising that the scheme failed; the villages fell into ruins and the land reverted to its former state.[22] Still the experience was

helpful for another such trial, carried out later with better advice and careful preparation, proved successful.[23]

In 1913 Kitchener established a Ministry of Agriculture, a step that was long overdue in in view of the country's almost total reliance on farming, especially the cultivation of cotton. For years the government had neglected agricultural requirements and, predisposed to the policy of noninterference, was content to allow private groups to fund research and technical programs in agriculture. The government succumbed to pressure in 1910 when it established a Department of Agriculture and attached it to the Ministry of Public Works. It proved so useful that Kitchener decided to enlarge its organization and extend its functions by creating a separate ministry.[24] The new ministry soon assembled a core of topnotch researchers who investigated problems that were of special interest to the country. It also took an active role in looking out for the interest of the cultivator, sending inspectors to educate him on ways to improve the quality and quantity of his crops by scientific methods. In particular the fellahin were urged to use water more sparingly, avoid frequent rotations of cotton crops, leave more space between the plants and replace old seeds which had deteriorated.

To prevent the peasants from being defrauded by merchants to whom they sold their cotton, the ministry set up a system of state-controlled agencies where cotton was weighed and stored and the daily market price of the crop was posted. The government made arrangements to sell improved cotton seeds to the small landowners at a price lower than they had been accustomed to pay merchants for inferior quality. For the benefit of the poorer cultivator, the government was ready to provide money to purchase the seed and collect it with the tax after the crop was harvested at the end of the year. Government measures met with considerable opposition from merchants and private scale-owners but they were welcomed by the small cultivators.[25]

Kitchener extended or instituted other measures that benefited, not just the fellahin, but all segments of society. He introduced small banks in villages so that the fellahin could deposit their savings and be encouraged to practice thrift. He arranged to send to each village one or two barbers who had undergone a short course of training and, under the supervision of a doctor, they could administer treatment for various ailments and diseases. To reduce child mortality, Kitchener started a program to train midwives in the countryside and, on entering their duties, were supplied with the necessary medical supplies and constantly supervised to ensure that the

proper methods taught were strictly carried out. He made arrangements to build more hospitals, set up roving first-aid tents to treat infections, diseases and parasitic ailments such as hookworm and bilharzia and increased the number of government dispensaries where the poor were treated free of charge. He provided for an increase of beds and staff in asylums and changed the procedures to ensure that the insane were treated with more consideration.

Under Cromer and Gorst little had been done to improve the standard of public health among the poorer elements in the cities. Kitchener attributed the spread of contagious diseases and destructive epidemics, especially cholera, to improper sanitation standards and habits. Taking the matter in hand, he was responsible for introducing public latrines in cities, providing a water filtration system, sewerages and street cleaning, in addition to encouraging the use of receptacles to minimize the accumulation of rubbish on private property. He insisted on a biological examination of all persons coming from countries where communicable diseases were rife and those found to be infected were quarantined.[26]

Kitchener approved of the construction of roads and light railways to facilitate communications between villages and cities. To keep pace with the motor-car traffic he advocated paving and widening streets and building major throughways, including the highway between Alexandria and Cairo. He spent money on bridges, public buildings and preserving ancient Egyptian monuments. For a soldier who had built a reputation in the past for strict economy, Kitchener completely reversed his stance and showed no hesitation about opening the purse strings when it mattered, confident that the treasury was strong enough to stand the strain.

Kitchener showed an interest in schools and colleges of agriculture for obvious reasons but generally the one area he neglected, as was true of his predecessors, was education. If the British proposed to leave at some point in the future they were required to introduce a westernized system of education so that the Egyptians would be capable of managing their own affairs. But it was not a high priority for Kitchener. He could have justified it by drawing attention to the immense nature of the task, the need to circumvent rules that placed the Islamic religion as the center piece in education, and staggering costs. There was also another compelling reason, although Kitchener would not have admitted it except perhaps to close friends. He had no objections to limiting and controlling the type of education given to Egyptians so as to eliminate illiteracy in rural districts, produce civil servants for the bureaucracy and professional men,

and expand technical and agricultural training essential for the material advancement of the nation. On the other hand he was not disposed to creating an elaborate system of education based on the western model, convinced that it would lead to the growth of an Egyptian political elite that would almost certainly take control of the nationalist movement and agitate against Britain's rule.

Kitchener had not shied from imposing policies that broke centuries-old-tradition in Egyptian society with happy results. He had kept the peace with the help of his commanding personality and firm conduct of the government, and his many popular reforms had sent a surge of electricity throughout the country, providing employment and an immense boost to the economy. All this created, compared to the obvious failure of the Gorst administration, a feeling of security and contentment. Lord Lloyd summed up Kitchener's three-year tenure by saying: "The general effect of these measures was very beneficial not only from the practical point of view but also by their moral effect. The country was stirred by the general activity and development which Kitchener's personality and program inspired, and an atmosphere of confidence and optimism was engendered."[27] British prestige had never stood as high in Egypt since the Occupation began. The phrase "Egypt for Egyptians," the rallying cry of nationalists when Gorst was at the Agency, was no longer heard.[28] Professor A.H. Sayce, a renowned archaeologist, who had spent time in Egypt during most of the Cromer era, revisited Egypt in 1913 and, in conversation with a native, was told "Grenfell and Scott were our fathers,[29] but Kitchener is our master."[30]

During the summer of 1913 stories began to circulate in the press in Cairo that Kitchener would soon be transferred to India. These appeared credible as nationalists in India, pushing for self-government, had engaged in violence and acts of terrorism. The Viceroy, Sir Charles Hardinge, was seriously wounded when a bomb was thrown at him as he entered the city of Delhi in 1912. The Germans insinuated themselves in the upheaval and spared no effort to fan anti-British feelings in India. If the dark storm clouds hovering over Europe should suddenly burst, London could not ignore that its forces might become involved in a major conflict and, if so, open an opportunity for the Indian separatists to advance their cause.

The general public in Egypt was more than dejected and, in fact, approached the panic mode on learning that Kitchener might leave the country. Letters from various individuals in Egypt were sent to the Foreign Office, pleading that Kitchener be allowed to remain in Egypt to finish his

work. The desperate reaction of Egyptians may be gleaned from a long note sent by Mohammed Shafik, Headmaster of Mussulman Benevolent School. The Headmaster had a little trouble expressing himself in English, but the sense of what he conveys is clear enough:

> I find it the duty of a true patriot not to hesitate to express to the English Government the shade of sorrow and grief left on the faces of many Egyptians either parents of my pupils, notables, landowners or others, since they heard these news. For Lord Kitchener knew how to govern the Valley of the Nile, how to gain the love and respect of the true patriots and how to satisfy the poor and middle class by the sense of courtesy and justice His Lordship always displays to the fellah. His Lordship is called among the villagers "the father of the fellah." … My little English fails me to eulogize His Lordship's work in Egypt in extent and even 10 pages cannot suffice … His Lordship started some golden reforms and he should remain to carry out these projects with his keen ability until we gain their fruits. You must not spoil these splendid schemes by transferring him any where for the sake of sincere villagers who beseech your Excellency to adjourn such a decision forever.[31]

No one seemed to know how the rumors got started. Kitchener kept denying reports that his departure from Egypt was imminent. He told Lady Salisbury: "I have had to contradict reports that I'm going to be Viceroy [of India] next year, it rather upsets the people here to learn that I may leave Egypt."[32] Storrs received numerous news reporters from the London dailies, all exhibiting private cables from their editors requesting whether it was true that Kitchener was going to India in the near future. Storrs categorically denied the reports and circulated the same message to the local and foreign press.

The Asquith government never seriously considered making a change in India. If it had the obvious question would have been whether Kitchener would have accepted the assignment. He gave no hint one way or the other, even to his closest aides or friends. It was no secret that Kitchener desperately wanted the Viceroyalty of India but, at the time, he was completely exhausted and the task of reestablishing firm control would have been considered herculean, not to mention that he had not yet completed his work in Egypt. Storrs told his mother: "That he will finally go seems likely enough but I am inclined to place it at the beginning of 1915, by which time he would be quite prepared to leave Cairo."[33] Rumors kept surfacing periodically but, until the Great War broke out in the summer of 1914, Kitchener remained Consul-General to the delight of the people.

1. Lord Cromer (author's collection)

2. Sir Eldon Gorst (author's collection)

3. Abbas Hilmi II (author's collection)

4. Kitchener embarking for Egypt aboard the *Nubia* (ILN)

5. Kitchener caricatured as "El Lord" taking Egypt and its gods by surprise (Mary Evans)

6. Kitchener entering the Khedive's stagecoach on his arrival at Alexandria (ILN)

7. Kitchener shortly after his arrival in Cairo (Mary Evans)

8. Kitchener with the governor of the Suez Canal (Mary Evans)

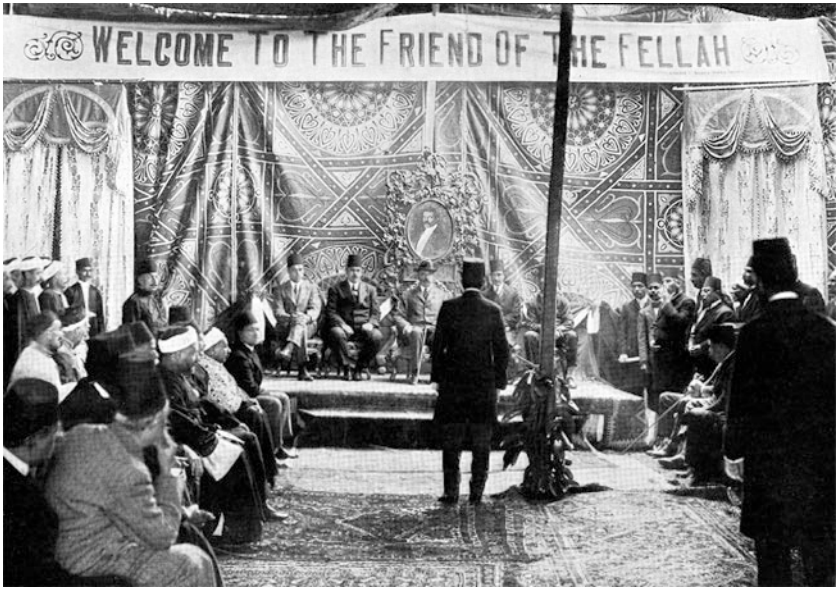
9. Kitchener standing with King George and the Khedive on his right. The Queen is seated in the first row next to the ex-Vizier of the Ottoman Empire (Mary Evans)

10. Kitchener in discussion with the King on board the *Medina* at Port Said (Bridgeman)

11. The Prime Minister and Kitchener in a group taken at the Verdala Palace in Malta (Mary Evans)

12. Kitchener laying the foundation stone of an Agricultural College near Luxor (Mary Evans)

13. Kitchener and the Khedive at the opening of the Aswan Dam in December 1912. Kitchener, wearing a frock coat and top hat, is in the foreground on the left of the group. Facing him is the Khedive (ILN)



14. The fellahin welcoming Kitchener (Mary Evans)

15. Kitchener watching an army sporting event at Heliopolis in the company of Egyptian ministers and British officers on 18 April 1914 (ILN)

16. British Agency in Cairo at the time of Kitchener (Lord Howick/University Library, Durham)

Notes

1. Kyriakos Mikhail, *Copts and Muslims Under British Control* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1911), chs. 2 and 3.
2. Gorst to Grey, 18 March, 1911, FO 371/1111, No. 45625.
3. Barbara L. Carter, *The Copts in Egyptian Politics* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 14–15.
4. Kitchener to Grey, 30 September, 1911, Grey papers, FO 800/47.
5. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1911*, House of Commons Sessional papers (Cd. 6194) Egypt No. 1 (1912), 2.
6. Robert L. Tignor, *Modernization and British Colonial Rule in Egypt, 1882–1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 226.
7. Samir Radwan, *Capital Formation in Egyptian Industry and Agriculture 1882–1967* (London: Ithaca Press, 1974), chs. 2 and 4.

8. A.E. Grouchley, *The Economic Development of Modern Egypt* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1938), 155–56.
9. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1912*, House of Commons Sessional papers (Cd. 6682) Egypt no. 1 (1913), 22–23; and *for 1913*, House of Commons Sessional papers (Cd. 7358) Egypt, no. 1 (1914), 29.
10. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1912*, *23.*
11. Lord Edward Cecil, *The Leisure of an Egyptian Official* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938), 187.
12. Roger Owen, "The rapid growth of Egypt's agricultural output, 1890–1914, as an early example of the green revolutions of modern South Asia: some implications for the writing of global history," *Journal of Global History*, vol. 1 (2006), 82, 87, 93.
13. Agricultural Bank of Egypt, Memo to Grey, 14 August, 1912, FO 371/1364 No. 34524; to Grey, 4 December, 1912, FO 371/1364, No. 51985; Cheetham to Grey, 21 September 1912, FO 371/1364, No. 40652.
14. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1912*, *5*, *47.*
15. Cheetham to Grey, 21 September, 1913, and Memorandum by Brunyate, FO 371/1364, No. 40652.
16. Foreign Office notes, 15 April, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 17264.
17. Lieut.-Col. P.G. Elgood, *The Transit of Egypt* (London: Edward Arnold, 1928), 205.
18. Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1933), 149–50.
19. Peter Mansfield, *The British in Egypt*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971), 198.
20. Lloyd, *Egypt*, vol. 1, 147–48.
21. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 20 April 1913, Salisbury papers.
22. J.E. Marshall, *The Egyptian Enigma* (London: John Murray, 1928), 117–18.
23. Mansfield, *British in Egypt*, 199; Lloyd, *Egypt*, 148.
24. Kitchener to Grey, 15 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 51902; Kitchener to Grey, 29 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No.53946.
25. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1911*, *2*, *15*; and *for 1912*, 23–24
26. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1911*, 37–38; *for 1912*, 42–44; and *for 1913*, 49–51.

27. Lloyd, *Egypt*, vol. 1, 150.
28. George Young, *Egypt* (London: Ernest Benn, 1930), 195.
29. Gen. Francis Grenfell preceded Kitchener as Sirdar and Sir John Scott was a prominent jurist.
30. A.H. Sayce, *Reminiscences* (London: Macmillan, 1928), 407.
31. Shefik to Grey, 15 August, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 38950.
32. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 30 November, 1913, Salisbury papers.
33. Storrs to his mother, 30 November, 1913, Storrs papers, Micro R 494, reel 3, box 2, fol. 2, Egypt 1904–1913.

CHAPTER 6

Public Safety

Before western judicial influence was felt in Egypt, public order had been maintained through terror and arbitrary rule. During the nineteenth century a westernized legal structure modeled on the Napoleonic code and French law (as the French had taken a leading role in the modernization of the country) was introduced, replacing the autocratic and inefficient judicial methods. After the Occupation the British took over the management of Egypt's finances but otherwise interfered as little as possible in the domestic life of the country. For that reason they saw no purpose in changing a system of jurisprudence that the Egyptians were familiar with and found satisfactory. Western law, however, was not suited to a simple and uneducated population. Its central feature depended on the active cooperation of the country's citizens but Egyptians, fearful of entanglement with local administrators, were loath to come forward and present evidence in criminal cases. Consequently it became difficult to convict criminals in a court of law and there was little the government could do. This in turn opened the way for some criminals to terrorize a community with impunity as fear of reprisals made peasants hesitate to testify against them in court. Then too there were family feuds involving violence and blood revenge (to retaliate for a death by killing the murderer or a member of his family) that had lasted for generations. These were so deeply rooted in village culture that the new codes had no effect in displacing the traditional way of settling disputes with the result that local authorities, try as they might, were unable to maintain public tranquility.[1]

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_6

The absence of a single judiciary system applicable to all inhabitants of Egypt further handicapped the administration of justice. At this point it would be useful to give a brief description of the most important courts in Egypt. The native courts handled all cases involving Egyptian subjects, except matters of personal status between Muslims. The religious courts were based on Sharia Law and administered by the Grand Qadi (Islamic supreme judge) who was appointed by Constantinople. The Assize Courts handled serious crimes. The Mixed Courts were created to ensure that foreign nationals were not subject to the legislative authority of the state. These courts had exclusive jurisdiction in civil and commercial suits between Egyptians and foreigners and between foreigners of the same nationalities. Finally the Consular Courts tried civil cases between their own nationals; prosecuted cases in which their nationals were charged with criminal offenses; and matters relating to personal status—such as divorce, domestic relations and wills.[2] Arabic was the language used in the native courts while the proceedings in the Mixed Courts were in French. A number of European and a few American judges were appointed to the bench but most did not speak Arabic and had to rely on translators.

While the British had attained financial stability under Cromer, the task of administering justice and maintaining order remained unfulfilled. The Foreign Office was especially perplexed at the soaring crime rate from the 1880s onward which, except for a brief period when it slackened, rose again sharply. Kitchener adopted a dual strategy in tackling the vital issue of public safety: his first initiative, in keeping with Grey's instructions, was to restrain the extreme nationalists and restore order; and the other was to devise measures to stem the escalating crime rate.

Kitchener had the benefit of useful instruments to combat the die-hard nationalists because of legislation passed under his predecessor. As the turbulence caused by the radical nationalists threatened to get out of hand, Gorst had responded by introducing repressive measures. As previously noted, he reimposed the Press Law of 1881 empowering the government to suspend or suppress newspapers guilty of libel or advocating sedition.[3] A new press law later came into effect which aimed at improving judicial means of prosecution. A Conspiracy Act made membership in any secret society committed to the use of force against the state punishable by a term of imprisonment. Finally a School Discipline Act was intended to curb political activity in government schools.

Armed with these powers, Kitchener struck hard against the nationalists and severely restricted their ability to cause trouble. Leading politi-

cal activists were closely supervised and arrested if they stepped out of line. A number of radical newspapers, including the influential *al-Akhbar*, were shut down and their editors were either imprisoned or driven into exile with some of their followers, many taking refuge in Constantinople. Kitchener took the teeth out of the movement and it was basically reduced to disseminating propaganda against British rule in its press and with leaflets or pamphlets on the streets.

Posing a greater threat to the country's stability were the secret pan Islamic societies which represented the extreme fringe of the nationalist movement. They embraced a strict Islamic code, resented all Christians, especially Copts, and often discussed killing or intimidating Egyptians collaborating with the British. The Mutual Brotherhood Society which attracted little attention after its formation in 1905 was one such organization. That changed when, as discussed earlier, a young member of the group, Ibrahim Natif al-Wardani, shot and mortally wounded Butrus Ghali on 20 February, 1910. Despite his proven ability, the prime minister was reviled by radical Islamists, not only for his Christian faith, but supposedly as a puppet of the British. Wardani may have had help, notwithstanding that he insisted that he had acted alone and a subsequent investigation conducted by the police failed to reveal that he had co-conspirators. Although the home of Mohammed Farid had been searched and faild to uncover evidence implicating anyone else, the nationalist leader had been forewarned and in the past admitted that he "had destroyed papers to protect certain individuals."[4] Tried in an Assize Court, the assassin was sentenced to death and hanged late in June.[5]

The murder of Butrus Ghali led to the formation of a bureau, the purpose of which was to investigate and keep an eye on the activities of secret societies and other extremist groups.[6] As a consequence the police were better prepared in succeeding years to cope with a new wave of plots to assassinate key government officials.

In late August 1912 the police in Alexandria arrested a young man carrying copies of a seditious manifesto. The defendant, Ahmed Effendi Mukhtar, was an Egyptian of Circassian origin and a student at the military academy in Constantinople. The document in question advocated the systematic formation of terrorist societies for the purpose of assassinating Egyptian government officials. It went on to say that after due reflection on recent experience the only possible means of action were those employed by Wardani. Under questioning, Mukhtar claimed that he had been sent by Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Shawish who was well known to the police. A radical Islamist and former editor of *al-Liwa*, Shawish

was currently living in Constantinople which had become a hotbed of anti-British activity. Cairo turned to the Turkish authorities and requested their assistance in conducting an investigation. At the time Kitchener was on leave in England and Milne Cheetham, the Chargé d'affairs, was acting head of the Agency. Cheetham wanted Shawish, if sufficient evidence could be found, brought back to Egypt to face conspiracy charges. He first requested permission from the Foreign Office: "It appears to me … imperative to make every endeavor to break up the Nationalist headquarters at Constantinople, as there are numerous secret societies in Egypt which may become dangerous if allowed to be inspired from an organized centre." If Grey had no objections, Cheetham thought it would be desirable for the British Ambassador at Constantinople to apply pressure on the Turkish authorities to cooperate.[7] Grey concurred and responded by contacting Charles Marling (Chargé d'affairs in Constantinople) with the following instruction: "You should take such action as you consider most likely to have desired effect."[8]

Marling made representations to key Ottoman officials, including the Grand Vizier, and received their commitment to render the necessary assistance. The Ottoman police searched Shawish's home where they impounded a number of documents and on 3 September placed him under arrest.[9] They turned him over, along with what evidence they had collected, to the Egyptian police. The elation in Cairo was tempered when it was discovered that the evidence from Constantinople was flimsy and that the case against Shawish rested principally on Mukhtar's testimony. Cecil thought it was a great blunder to have arrested Shawish in the first place: "We successfully frightened him out of the country and now they have got him back without any legal evidence to try him on with the result that we shall have to release him."[10]

Kitchener shared Cecil's concern when he returned from his summer leave in England. He told Grey that the evidence of Shawish's complicity rested on the testimony of Mukhtar who, he described, as "a very doubtful witness." He did not propose to try Shawish unless the prosecutor-general could assure him that there was a fair chance of conviction. Further efforts to obtain more compelling evidence from Constantinople proved unsuccessful and, as the charges could not be substantiated, Shawish was released and sent back to Constantinople. Mukhtar later recanted his accusation against Shawish, apparently made "to shift responsibility from his own shoulders."[11] Tried in an Assize Court, Mukhtar was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment.[12]

The unlawful behavior of radicals like Mukhtar and Shawish was far less serious than the active plots engineered by fanatics or Islamists to assassinate Kitchener and leading officials of the Egyptian government. On 28 June, 1912, the secret police learned through an informant that a group of young extremists belonging to the National Party, as well as to a pan-Islamist society, had targeted for assassination the Prime Minister, Mohammed Said Pasha, the Khedive and Kitchener in what came to be known as the Shubra Conspiracy. The members of the cabal were identified as Mohammed Imam Waked, Mahmud Taher al-Arabi and Mohammed Abdel Salam.[13] All three were known to the police. The reported plan called for Arabi to kill both the Prime Minister and Kitchener, while Waked tracked down the Khedive who was travelling in Europe.

Special police measures were taken to protect the Prime Minister, currently in Alexandria, and Kitchener who was leaving for Tanta that afternoon. Photographs of Arabi (reproduced from the frontispiece of an inflammatory pamphlet he had published earlier) were issued to the police and a copy was given to FitzGerald who accompanied Kitchener. Extra precautions were adopted at the Cairo Station when Kitchener returned from his trip on the afternoon of the 30th. Both Kitchener and FitzGerald stepped into a waiting motor-car and drove off. Outside the station gates FitzGerald recognized Arabi advancing towards the motor-car with a hand inside the breast of his coat as though he intended to pull out a pistol when suddenly he turned and was lost in the crowd.

The detectives, who were in touch with the informer, were told that the conspirators were to meet at a café in Shubra on the evening of 1 July. Disguised as fellahin, the police motored to the café in question, arriving there before the conspirators. The police waited outside the café until the three men, plus another one—apparently the informer—entered the premises and seated themselves at an isolated table in the garden that was set against a thick hedge. The detectives went through an adjoining house and approached the table on the other side of the hedge. From there they were able to overhear and jot down the conversation of the plotters. Mohammed Salam taunted Arabi for having failed twice to accomplish his mission. Arabi claimed that he had traveled to Alexandria and tried to approach the Prime Minister, but the presence of a bicyclist policeman by his side deterred him from following through. He returned to Cairo and had been at the station on the 30th when Kitchener alighted from the train but he was so well guarded that he remained outside the gates. When Kitchener passed by he was unable to react because the motor-car was going too fast.

The men then discussed future plans during which it was agreed that Waked should travel to Europe to kill the Khedive. When they left the café three of the conspirators were arrested but a fourth one escaped—presumably the informer. The man who instigated and directed the plot, Mohammed Waked, was sentenced to 15 years of hard labor while the other two received an equal number of years in detention. No evidence was found of a wider conspiracy, although two of the extremists were associated with the *Evening Standard* whose editor was a prominent official in the National Party.[14] At the Agency the consensus was that the plot had been hatched by the nationalists. Cheetham told Louis Mallet, who had succeeded Lowther as British Ambassador in Constantinople:

> For the moment we can only suspect, but not prove, that the plot was directed, as well as inspired by the Nationalist organization, and very likely from Constantinople. There is very little doubt in my mind that, with opinion going against them, violent action was thought to be necessary to save the party from extinction as a force in the country.[15]

There were other attempts on Kitchener's life but only one came close to succeeding. In April 1913, outside the gates of the railroad station in Cairo, a radical Egyptian nationalist suddenly emerged from the crowd and pointed a gun at Kitchener. FitzGerald, walking slightly behind, stepped in front of his chief. Kitchener walked around him and asked the gunman what he wanted. Stunned and intimidated by Kitchener's audacity, the man dropped his weapon and fell to his knees, raising his hands in mute supplication. A guard rushed up and drove his sabre through the would-be assassin.[16]

Kitchener used the failed plots against him to further intimidate and weaken the leadership of the extreme nationalists and radical Islamists. The secret police were given wide powers to crack down on the suspected centers of agitation.[17] The information uncovered led to arrests and helped firm up cases under investigation. The campaign had a welcome effect in the country. The faint-hearted left the National Party. Mohammed Farid departed hurriedly for Constantinople rather than submit to an interrogation over a speech he had made at the party's general assembly criticizing the government's economic and social policies.[18] He would never return to Egypt. Practically the entire native press poured scorn on the nationalist movement which had been so influential three years earlier. Moderate Egyptians who had kept quiet out of fear of the nationalists, now spoke

out and many established ties with the British. Cheetham was overly optimistic when he predicted the eventual breakup of the National Party,[19] but it had been dealt a crippling blow and ceased to be a disruptive element in Egyptian society. It was with considerable satisfaction that Kitchener informed Lady Salisbury that at a meeting of Egyptian nationalists in Geneva their leader had concluded "that they could do nothing with the people of Egypt as long as I was there and that they must wait a bit."[20]

If Kitchener had been successful in stifling the troublesome activities of radical nationalists, his efforts to rein in traditional crimes failed to produce the same results, though to be fair it was hardly his fault. His report to the Foreign Office for 1911 showed that there was an increase in all categories of crime as compared to the previous year. He pointed out that there appeared to be little concern for human life and, as an example, related an incident in which a man shot and killed his neighbor for walking across the end of his garden. Many of the crimes were the result of sudden quarrels, family feuds and revenge that were unrelated to public security. To cope with such cases he encouraged local committees of arbitration and reconciliation (formed in 1909) to become more active and to enforce a respect for law and order. Kitchener admitted that in the final analysis only the spread of education and civilized ideas could curtail murders or attempted murders arising from trifling motives.

Kitchener claimed that in the interest of public security serious offenses could be reduced through tougher sentences. During the last six months of the year, the cases brought before judges in the Assize Courts involving willful murder and premeditation had resulted in 80 convictions, but with only three death sentences imposed. These courts showed the same inclination towards leniency in treating other forms of crime such as robbery, burglary, rape and assault causing bodily harm. Still Kitchener maintained that he had no intention of applying the Supervision Law of 1909 until all legal and administrative remedies at his disposal had been exhausted.[21] He pointed out that judges could obviate the need for the Supervision Law by handing out more severe sentences, particularly in districts where crime was wide-spread.

Other factors also adversely affected public security. Kitchener made no mention of what was plainly evident, namely that hundreds of policemen were unavailable to keep the peace because they were involved in enforcing Britain's neutrality laws. But he did allude, as already mentioned, to an outbreak of cotton-worm in the Delta provinces in the summer of 1911. He went on to say that it was so severe that officers and men of the police

force were requisitioned to work in the fields with the result they were unable to perform their regular duties for several months. Kitchener took immediate steps to improve the organization to combat the cotton-worm so as to avoid such a recurrence in the future.[22]

The extra territorial rights conferred on European residents within the Ottoman Empire, however, was probably the greatest impediment to the reduction of crime as they placed serious limitations on Egypt's sovereignty. These privileges, known as Capitulations, had their origin in the sixteenth century when the Ottoman Sultan made special provisions to protect European merchants and traders doing business in his realm. The arrangement worked reasonably well until the nineteenth century when Egypt increasingly separated itself from the Ottoman Empire, encouraging European Powers to exert pressure on the Khedives, Mohammed Ali (1805–48) and his successors, to broaden the exemptions for its nationals. While the Turkish government resisted European encroachment, the Khedives in Egypt, either through weakness or in return for monetary inducements, willingly surrendered a portion of their political authority. Increasingly the Capitulations came to be regarded, not as a privilege, but as a right. By the time of the British Occupation the dispensation granted to aliens included immunity from direct taxation and Egyptian law and the right to leave the country at will.

European engineers, architects and entrepreneurs attracted to Egypt in the nineteenth century contributed immensely to the progress of the country but with them came thieves, swindlers, vice peddlers and other undesirable elements who were protected under the Capitulations. The Egyptian police were forbidden from searching the domicile of a foreigner until the consul of the subject's nationality was present. Aliens could not be arrested without the consent of their consuls. If charged with a criminal offense, they could only be tried in their consular courts where they were frequently released without proper trials. No laws applicable to foreigners could be changed by the Egyptian government unless approved by all 14 Powers. With consular courts practically possessing veto power, adventurers and crooks could commit any form of crime with impunity.[23]

Kitchener's analysis of the figures in 1912 showed that the overall level of crime had not diminished. Kitchener admitted that, while there was a small reduction in the number of serious crimes (murder, attempted murder and robbery), when compared to the previous year, lesser offenses had increased. A feature of the recent statistics, which especially disturbed Kitchener, was that most of the murders or attempted murders contin-

ued to be caused by silly motives like revenge, feuds or sudden quarrels. He hoped that by administrative repression and strict application of existing laws he could check this spirit of lawlessness without adopting more extreme forms of deterrent. The one welcome change for Kitchener was that the judges on the Assize Courts sentenced twice as many murderers to death as in 1911.

Kitchener considered deficiencies in the security apparatus as partly responsible for the increase in crime. In 1910 Gorst had introduced a program designed to improve the competence of the ghaffirs, village watchmen initially restricted to night patrol work. They were a relic of the old regime and the need to economize was seen as the principal reason why they were appointed, instead of regular police, to check local crime and protect property. They were generally mistrusted by the police for they lacked discipline and training and, because their pay was too meagre to support an adequate standard of living, were apt to connive with criminal elements. Under the Gorst reforms, the new ghaffirs were recruited from volunteers and potential army conscripts who agreed to serve in their own village for three years. Besides the pay (meagre as it was), a further inducement was that the men in both groups were exempt from serving in the army. It was assumed that thousands of recruits would come forward, allowing for the selection of an ample number of qualified men. The policing hours of the ghaffirs were extended to cover the entire day. The recruits spent two-and-a-half months in a camp receiving rudimentary training and instructions which undoubtedly improved their discipline and efficiency. But arming them with Remington rifles raised questions in view of the association of many with criminal activities.[24] If Kitchener had any doubts about the wisdom of this decision he kept it to himself. His only comment was that the new system would be completed in a few months (actually it was closer to a year), after which it would have an opportunity to prove its worth.

Kitchener adopted reforms of his own to upgrade the police and improve the system of justice during his second year in office. The native policemen were essentially recruited from agricultural laborers and it cannot be said that they were a competent force. They were strong, of average intelligence and their presence inspired confidence in the community but on the debit side they tended to be complacent, were not always aware of the full extent of their duties and most were illiterate. The ideal solution would have been to appoint British officers to head the police force everywhere and not just in the major cities. In places like Cairo and Alexandria

the efficiency of the police force was much superior to that in the provinces. But the reorganization would have been contrary to the policy laid down by London which called for less, not more, British interference in Egypt's affairs. Kitchener began a program tailored to address the police's weaknesses and improve their performance. In 1912 he reorganized the Department of National Security in the Ministry of the Interior and appointed a Director-General. Kitchener sought to establish closer collaboration between the police and the parquet, officials of the judicial department charged with the investigation of crime and for prosecution of cases in courts. They were the only arm in the Egyptian criminal justice system with the requisite qualifications. The object in any crime committed was not only to apprehend the culprit but to prove the charge against him in court. But since the duties of the parquet overlapped with that of the police the rivalry for power and influence between the parties had inevitably led to friction, at times resulting in loss of vital evidence. What was needed was to clarify their functions so that they could work closer together in the investigation of crime and preparation of court cases.

Kitchener felt that more could be done by the mudirs, who were in charge of security in the provinces, to contain crime. He appreciated that in recent years their work load had increased exponentially but that the question of public security must remain their first priority. He referred to a few instances, in which the mudirs had seriously taken the issue in hand, that had resulted in considerable improvement. He indicated that the government was ready to provide assistance and encouragement to mudirs who tackled the problem with method and perseverance, for he was confident that their efforts would be crowned with success.[25] In particular he wanted the mudirs to collaborate with the omdahs (village mayors) to convene reconciliation committees to prevent feuds from escalating into violent outbreaks. The chief drawback to entrusting the mudirs with the whole process of detection and prosecution, one that Kitchener does not mention, was that many were mediocre and owed their position to political connection or family ties.[26] They were more interested in feathering their nests than attending studiously to public security and their other responsibilities.

The creation of the Cantonal Courts was another example of using local authorities to resolve small disputes and help keep the peace. Kitchener introduced a system that called for the appointment of notables as unpaid magistrates in areas containing several small villages. The notables were selected annually by the minister of justice from a list prepared by knowl-

edgeable government officials. To qualify, the candidate had to own property, be at least 25 years old and reasonably well educated and enjoy a good reputation in the district. These magistrates of Cantonal Courts, under the watchful eye of Markaz judges (district), were empowered to render justice based on local custom which the peasants understood. Before the case came up in court, they were to try to work out a settlement between the litigants. The object was to resolve minor disputes locally and so spare the fellahin the cost and time of travelling long distances to the Markaz tribunal. Additionally it was hoped that the Cantonal Courts would not only bring about the prompt resolution of cases but reduce crime. The measure had been tried in three provinces and its success had led to its extension to the rest of the country. It was further noted that the omdah in each village, would not in any way be shorn of his important functions by the changes, but serve alongside the magistrates presiding over the Cantonal Courts.[27]

Kitchener next proposed to make changes in the Assize Court which he had criticized as too lenient in the past. He was driven to take action when he perceived that a grave miscarriage of justice had occurred in the Assize Court at Tanta. A French citizen, Anthony Boni, was in a carriage with his daughter and a lady friend heading to Dissuk when the driver pulled up his horses. Suddenly shots ranged out, injuring Miss Boni and killing the other lady. Boni, who escaped unharmed, identified one of the culprits. The authorities arrested two men who were tried in an Assize Court. Legal authorities were unanimous in their opinion that the case was proven beyond doubt against the accused, one of whom had a history of trouble with the law. Yet they were both acquitted by Egyptian judges known to be nationalists and suspected of basing their verdict on ethnicity and religion. Kitchener saw the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice and, while both agreed that the judges' findings had been a travesty, they informed him that under current law no grounds existed for an appeal to the Court of Cassation (Supreme Court). As Kitchener saw it, the only legal course to bring the defendants to justice was to apply the Supervision law. However, in refusing to take so drastic a step, he had to swallow a bitter pill, one that would allow the killers of the French girl to escape punishment. To avoid a similar injustice, however, he proposed to change the composition of the Assize Courts.

Kitchener submitted a memorandum to Grey, opening his statement by questioning whether the Assize Courts in Egypt afforded adequate protection to Europeans against violent acts committed by natives. He noted that European public opinion could not always be certain that the

verdict in criminal courts presided over by only native judges would be fair and impartial. He added that when Assize Courts were introduced it was originally intended that there should be at least one European among the sitting judges. That stipulation was relaxed owing to the small number of European judges and in some chambers all the magistrates were Egyptians. Thus Kitchener proposed, as was originally intended, that a European judge be appointed in each of the Assize Courts, not in just some of them as was now the case; that whenever a violent act was committed against foreigners, the Assize Courts should be composed of a majority of European judges; that the Court of Cassation should be given further powers to revise a verdict or to order a new trial in cases of a miscarriage of justice.[28] Grey gave his consent to the changes, after which Kitchener, in discussion with the Egyptian Prime Minister, arranged to carry out each one into law separately.[29]

If Kitchener was determined to ensure that Europeans were treated fairly in Assize Courts, he was no less interested in fixing the system that gave them immunity from the laws of the land. Early on both he and Grey realized that the only way for Egypt to extend its jurisdiction over foreigners was to modify the Capitulations. The task was extremely complicated, as will be seen in the next chapter, but Kitchener was not deterred by the onerous challenge. He was still hard at work when a scandal broke out.[30]

In May 1913 the Egyptian police arrested Alexander Adamovitch, a Russian expatriate, in Alexandria. The police had acted at the behest of the Russian consul but not because he had broken any laws in Egypt. The Tsarist government had declared Adamovitch a revolutionary for organizing a strike among crews of merchant ships in Odessa in 1912. The strike collapsed and Adamovitch was arrested and thrown in prison but a few months later escaped and sought refuge in Constantinople. There he carried on with his union activities until the Balkan war broke out, prompting him to move his headquarters to Alexandria. Living under an assumed name, he began to publish a journal called *The Morak* (the sailor) until his true identity was uncovered and he was placed under arrest.

The above accepted version of events is somewhat different from the one given by Adamovitch. He admitted that his early efforts to improve the pay and conditions of sailors in Odessa had landed him in a Russian jail where he remained for a year. When tried in court, however, he was acquitted and, with his political account squared with the government, he left Russia and eventually made his way to Alexandria. From his new home he published a newspaper and sought every opportunity to board Russian

ships arriving at the port to disseminate pamphlets (presumably containing anti-Tsarist propaganda).[31] At any rate one thing about Adamovitch is indisputable. After his arrest he was kept in an Egyptian jail awaiting deportation to Russia to stand trial.

The incident would have gone unnoticed if Sydney Moseley, editor of the Egyptian *Daily Mail*, had not learned of it by chance and waged a relentless campaign to keep it before the eyes of the public. Moseley pointed out that there were a plethora of Russian secret agents in the country operating with the assistance of the Egyptian police to silence critics of the Tsarist repressive regime. He alluded to other incidents in which Russian individuals had been arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned without the benefit of a trial. Appeals had been made to Kitchener and, while he invariably expressed his empathy, his customary reply was that existing laws barred him from interfering.[32] That was undoubtedly true in theory, but Kitchener could have found a way to circumvent the age-old precedent if he had a mind to do so. One can only speculate why he acted the way he did. It is worthwhile to consider that Britain's recent rapprochement with Russia, once a traditional enemy, may have had a significant bearing on his attitude. It is certain that he would not have wanted to provoke a diplomatic dispute that might have strained the fragile relations between the two countries for what was standard procedure in the arrest of a foreign national.

Kitchener regarded Moseley's crusade as principally responsible for blowing the Adamovitch affair out of all proportion and he was annoyed that it was consuming a good deal of his time and hampering his current work. Before other newspapers joined the *Daily Mail's* cause, Moseley published several stinging pieces about what he considered was Russia's ruthless and unethical behavior. The Russian consul was so incensed that he complained personally to Kitchener about the contents of the articles. Consequently, Kitchener asked Storrs to contact the editor of the *Daily Mail* to ask him to adopt a softer line in his columns, especially about the Russians. Moseley kept a diary for years and in his book revealed his exchange with Storrs over the telephone:

S. "About the Russian business. Lord Kitchener has requested me to tell you that that he wants you to tone down those Russian articles."
M. "For what reason?" I asked him.
S. "The Russian Consul-General, M. Smirnoff, has been around complaining to Lord K., and he would rather not have him come around complaining."

M. "Has the Russian Consul pointed out where we have departed from strict facts?"
S. "That is not the point. I am merely repeating Lord Kitchener's order."
M. "I am afraid it is not possible for me to relinquish what I conceive as a public duty."
S. "Lord Kitchener does not want you to relinquish. He wants you to tone down."
M. "I'm afraid that's impossible too."[33]

The press in London learned of the incident presumably through Moseley's contacts back home or articles in the *Daily Mail*.[34] The revelation, not only caused a furor among human right activists troubled over the arbitrary arrest of Adamovitch, but also seemed to suggest to them that Kitchener was trying to intimidate, if not censor, the press. The Foreign Office was flooded with letters protesting the arrest of Adamovitch for conduct that would not have been a crime in any European country outside of Russia. Ramsay MacDonald, leader of the Labour Party, implored His Majesty's Government to intervene to prevent the surrender of Adamovitch to the Russian authorities. Many Trade Unions strongly shared MacDonald's views. A few examples will suffice. The National Union of Railway men passed a resolution at its meeting expressing indignation over attempts to constrict free expression in the press and denying the right of asylum to political refugees. Moreover the London Branch of the Amalgamated Union of Operative Bakers and Confectioners urged that the British Government at once order the release of Adamovitch.[35]

One of the few dissenting voices came from Cromer who was adamant that the Egyptian government had followed the proper procedure in the Adamovitch affair. In a letter to *The Times* on 11 June, he wrote:

> It must … be understood that under the *regime* of the Capitulations, political offenders who are not accused of any offence at common law are liable to be deported from Egypt and that the fact of a British garrison being in occupation of the country in no degree lessens the liability.

From behind prison bars in Alexandria, Adamovitch appealed in writing to the British people and government for justice. The letter eluded the vigilance of prison authorities and was published initially in the *Daily Citizen*. Adamovitch asked why, if he had committed no offence in Egypt, either political or criminal, he should be delivered into the hands of Russian

authorities and "buried alive in some Siberian prison cell?" He further pointed out that even if what he had done could be construed as an offense, should he not be tried in compliance with the legal system where it occurred—he was disingenuous in implying that the supposed misdeed had taken place in Egypt—rather than according to the barbarous and merciless laws of the country he had left? By entrusting his fate to the British people he hoped that their system of justice and sense of fair play would allow him to preserve his freedom.[36]

Adamovitch's impassioned plea was given wide currency when it was picked up by other dailies, provoking more questions to those already asked in the House of Commons. Parliamentarians in particular wanted to know why His Majesty's Government had cooperated with the brutal autocratic Russian regime in the unjust arrest of Adamovitch; if Kitchener had been consulted before the arrest was made; and if it was true that Kitchener had summoned and reprimanded the editor of the *Daily Mail* for his paper's criticism of the methods of the Russian police. As Grey could not provide definitive answers to these questions, he referred them to Cairo.[37]

If Egypt had been a British Protectorate, the arrest of foreign subjects would have been within the competence of His Majesty's Government but, under the current circumstances, as Kitchener maintained, his hands were tied by the existence of the Capitulations which made it impossible to interfere with the consular jurisdiction over their own nationals. As for the second question, Kitchener claimed that he learned of the arrest only after it had occurred but that the Egyptian police had acted within the letter of the law. Finally Kitchener refuted any allegation of impropriety in dealing with the *Daily Mail*. He explained that the Russian Consul had called on him on 28 May and protested about the inflammatory language used by the *Daily Mail* in two articles. As a result, to use his own words, "I told my Oriental Secretary to see the editor and ask him to be careful. That is all that happened. I did not see the editor myself."[38]

To compound matters Adamovitch tried to escape but was caught outside the prison walls and, according to an eye-witness, was beaten mercilessly by his captors. The incident was played up in the *Daily News* and *Daily Mail* which accepted the statement of the onlooker without question. Kitchener launched an investigation which concluded that the charge was unfounded as the Inspector-General of the Prison was on the scene at the time and the prisoner was subsequently examined by four doctors. Included in Kitchener's report were statements by the Inspector-General of the Prison and the attending doctors.[39] On the morning of 10 June

Adamovitch was placed aboard a ship without incident and returned to Russia.[40]

The previous day Grey had written to Kitchener with the following request:

> As members of parliament who ask questions seem to be making acquaintance of Capitulations for the first time it would be worthwhile for you to send a short despatch describing what happens when a Foreign Consul arrests and imprisons one of his nationals and giving as illustrations one or two precedents not of Russian origin.[41]

In compliance with Grey's wishes, Kitchener produced a document which was submitted to both houses of parliament in July 1913. In the prelude he outlined the terms of the Capitulations and the manner in which they were applied to Egypt. He admitted that no mention in the Capitulations compelled the Egyptian police to arrest and turn over a foreign subject at the request of his consul. On the other hand the Ottoman state had recognized long ago the rights of foreign governments to try their nationals living in its territory for breaking their own laws. The Egyptian police were not obligated to make arrests but no sovereign state could permit foreign agents to operate with impunity inside its borders. This meant that the Egyptian police necessarily had to cooperate with consular authorities in making arrests. Kitchener referred to reputable legal scholars to support his contention that it was consistent with the right accorded to foreign governments and a sort of codicil to the Capitulations. He further strengthened his position by listing a number of similar past incidents which involved subjects other than those of Russian nationality. Kitchener made it clear that once an individual was turned over to the consul, the Egyptian government had no say as to whether he was given a trial or the type of punishment imposed.[42]

Although Kitchener's despatch did not misrepresent the facts, it failed to mollify a large section of the press in Egypt and England. Kitchener was assailed for exceeding the limits of the Capitulatory system, for allowing the Egyptian police to cooperate with the arbitrary methods of Tsarist agents and for permitting flagrant violations of elementary justice. Moseley wrote an article for the *Daily News* which was in the forefront of the protest in London. He described the nature of the charge against Adamovitch and emphasized that it had neither been committed in Egypt nor recognized as a crime under its law. He claimed that the text of the

Capitulations was loosely phrased and in his view the authority granted to the consul was limited to offenses committed in Ottoman territory. He alluded to a past case when Turkey, strongly supported by London, had refused to turn over to Austrian authorities Louis Kossuth and his companions.[43] He added: "Lord Kitchener offers no explanation of the change in the British attitude. The law may have driven him to act as he did, but he fails to make the legal necessity plain."

Other British newspapers weighed in. *The Manchester Guardian* pointed out that Kitchener himself had admitted that the Egyptian police were not bound under the Capitulations to effect an arrest on behalf of Russia. The daily hinted that it would have found it less objectionable and within the parameters of the Capitulations if the Russian Consul had gathered his own policemen for the job—an absurd stipulation which no sovereign state would have permitted. The paper summed up its main point by declaring: "It is one thing to say that we cannot prevent Russia from doing her own dirty work, it is another and a very different thing to take a hand in it ourselves." *The Daily Graphic* was equally pitiless in its comments, concluding that Kitchener had no defense to offer in the Adamovitch case. It saw nothing in the written definition of the Capitulations that gave consuls the right to arrest and deport nationals for crimes committed in their own country. It scoffed at the jurist Kitchener cited to support his interpretation of the Capitulations, noting that another one with better credentials had expressed a contrary opinion. It lamented that the British authorities, who controlled Egypt, allowed foreigners to be arrested, oblivious to the charges against them, and held in jail without the benefit of a trial. "These are abuses which strike at the very root of the British conception of justice," the paper insisted, "and they are all the more indefensible because they are actually not justified by either the letter or spirit of the Capitulations."

In Egypt the reaction of the press was much the same as in England. A case in point was the French newspaper *Bourse Egyptienne* which maintained that as long as the Capitulary system exists in Egypt, the cry of the people for any individual seeking political asylum for running afoul of authorities in his native country should be "Do not give him up."[44]

Kitchener disliked the press (almost as much as politicians) even though he had throughout most of his earlier career been treated rather generously by it. He was annoyed by its stinging attack simply because he had followed an age-old precedent, not to mention that it had ignored the unequivocal endorsement of no less a respected authority than Cromer.

But the firestorm over Adamovitch was brief. It was, and still is, the habit of the press to rush and go all out to milk a story that has wide public interest, then abandon it as quickly with perhaps only a few subsequent brief references, when another controversial issue comes along.

Kitchener had managed to work around the troublesome Adamovitch affair in 1913 to deal with the issue of public security. Crime for the year had risen above the previous two, although there was a slight decrease in the number of murders and attempted murders. As in the past, practically all the violent offenses did not occur during the commission of a robbery but rather were due to quarrels and blood revenge. Pointing to a recent case, Kitchener told of an incident in which a man struck another on the head with a hoe and killed him. The family of the victim refused to give evidence at the inquiry, simply explaining that he had died after accidently falling on the hoe. Thereupon the suspect was released, but his victim's relatives caught up to him one day and beat him to death with a hoe. For such lawlessness there was no immediate solution. Thus Kitchener turned his attention to what could be achieved.

The year saw Kitchener completing or carrying into effect additional measures to prevent the rise in crime. As the brain child of Gorst, the reorganization of the more than 31,000 ghaffirs along semi-military lines was completed. More than 75% committed to serve a three-year period, though about 10% were discharged for falling below required standards. To attract a higher caliber of men, the pay of the ghaffirs was raised.[45] Kitchener introduced peasant patrols to assist the ghaffirs to contain crime in or near the villages. Statistics showed that arson, thefts of cattle and destruction of crops were among the most common offenses and these, in his view, could be prevented by systematic patrolling. In localities where peasant patrols had been organized in a serious and intelligent manner, the results were encouraging. Unfortunately in 1913 Mother Nature intervened and forced a temporary suspension of the measure in the Upper Nile owing to the low level of the river. All hands that could be spared elsewhere were diverted to help raise the elevation of the water.[46]

Another useful step in the realm of internal public security was the revision of the list of suspects which had grown to an unmanageable size. In the future only the most notorious characters would be registered so that local authorities could exercise more effective supervision over them. Kitchener vigorously continued Gorst's policy of preventing the spread of firearms (Arms Act). The police seized illegal possession of arms and local authorities undertook a background check to ensure that applicants were responsible and did not

have a past criminal record before they were allowed to purchase guns. It was Kitchener's intention in the near future to pass a new Arms Act which carried more stringent provisions. The budget for 1914–1915, included more funds to pay for the higher salaries of the mudirs and police, for an increase in the number of officers and staff, as well as account for inflation.

During the opening days of 1914, Kitchener proposed a plan to decriminalize the illicit possession of hashish. He believed that the enforcement of the existing laws, although stringent, had failed to check the introduction of the drug into the country and that a different approach must be tried. As the solution he sought was controversial, he first needed to win over Grey. In a detailed memo, he began by pointing out the almost insuperable obstacles in the struggle to repress the contraband traffic in hashish. These included the following: (1) Large quantities of hashish were smuggled by steamers carrying no other cargo and landed on the coast of Egypt. It was unrealistic to suppose that with Egypt's limited resources the extensive coastline could be effectively patrolled. (2) Small parcels concealed in merchant ships were dropped overboard, picked up by local boats and taken ashore. (3) Passing through customs the intoxicating drug could be concealed in countless different ways such as in boxes with false bottoms, machinery, kegs of butter, barrels of wine and inside legs of piano. (4) Smaller quantities could be carried by individuals, either inside the soles of boots or in their hats, and even by women simulating pregnancy. Kitchener maintained that, notwithstanding the seizure of some 20,000 kilos annually, the drug could be purchased in almost every village at a reasonable price. He observed that widespread demand for the drug made prevention against evasion of the law practically impossible. He debunked the notion that the drug was used only by a limited number of individuals. He admitted that a handful of "intemperates" utilized the drug to excess, but that the great section of the population used small quantities for medicinal purposes—mainly to aid their digestive system.

Kitchener alluded to the undesirable features associated with the enforcement of the current policy of prohibition. Smuggling hashish was extremely profitable so that large sums were available to bribe authorities and occasionally there were some who succumbed. Those charged with suppressing the drug trade were invariably required to deal with secret informers who were themselves members of the smuggling community, a state of affairs Kitchener deplored as "very wrong and dangerous." Lastly the departments involved spent a disproportionate amount of time and energy, to prevent, without much success, the entry of this one item.

Kitchener explained that hashish ought to be carefully regulated by the state in much the same way as alcohol. According to him, hashish would only be brought into the country by licensed importers. It would be sold by licensed retailers who would be under strict guidelines as to the amount supplied and its purity. The Egyptian government would impose a moderate duty on the importer and a heavier one on the internal supplier to keep consumption within due limits.

Kitchener cited the example of India to bolster his case. Acting on the recommendation of a commission in 1893, the Indian government adopted a course that would control and restrict the use of intoxicating drugs derived from the hemp plant. The policy was successful, providing the state with revenue that continually increased while lowering consumption per capita. Kitchener ended his paper by saying that if the experiment did not fulfil expectations, "a return to the present system was always a possibility."[47]

The Foreign Office staff thought that Kitchener's case was convincing but wanted confirmation from Indian officials that the course suggested would not lead to increased consumption of the drug. A note was sent to Lord Crewe, Secretary of State for India, asking for his assessment of Kitchener's proposals that would allow the importation of hashish into Egypt under a system of license and duty. The Foreign Office notified Kitchener on 19 February, 1914, not to expect an answer for a long time, though no reason was given for the anticipated excessive delay.[48]

Crewe replied during the second week in June that the Indian government's experience led it to support Kitchener's plan. It maintained that it was easy to justify the change as the present policy was costly and wholly inefficient and the new system was likely to diminish consumption.[49] The Foreign Office gave Kitchener the green light on condition that he first submit a draft of the regulations. Kitchener was spending his holidays in England when he received the news. He wrote to Cheetham on 25 June: "I should like E. Cecil to draft hashish regulations and bring them home for me to see before submission to FO."[50] However, Kitchener's scheme never reached fruition, displaced as it was by a cataclysmic event three days later. On 28 June the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir apparent to the Austrian throne, was assassinated by Serbian nationalists in Sarajevo, setting Europe on a path to a catastrophic war that would still be felt a century later.

It is unrealistic to have expected Kitchener to make inroads in reducing crime after only three years on the scene. The gigantic task even for

someone as energetic, bold and imaginative as Kitchener would have required at least a decade. Before the desired results occurred, the culture in Egypt had to change, more measures were required to improve the public security apparatus, a higher quality of police and top officials like mudirs had to be found and the removal of the Capitulations, as currently existed, was an absolute requirement.

Notes

1. Robert L. Tignor, *Modernization and British Colonial Rule in Egypt, 1882–1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 123–45.
2. Jasper Y. Brinton, *The Mixed Courts of Egypt* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), ch.15.
3. Peter Mellini, *Sir Eldon Gorst* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1977), 180–82.
4. Malak Badrawi, *Political Violence in Egypt, 1910–1924* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), 47.
5. Donald M. Reid, "Political Assassination in Egypt, 1910–1954," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4 (1982), 627–28; Samir Seikaly, "Prime Minister and Assassin: Butrus Ghali and Wardini," *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1 (1977), 112–22.
6. Harold Tollefson, *Policing Islam* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 150–51.
7. Cheetham to Grey, 27 August, 1912, FO 371/1363, No. 36219.
8. Grey to Marling, 28 August, 1912, FO 371/1363, No. 36219.
9. Marling to Grey, 1 and 3 September, 1912, FO 371/1363, No. 36735.
10. Cecil to his wife, 29 September, 1912, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.
11. Kitchener to Grey, 20 October, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48; Kitchener to Grey, 8 December, 1912, FO 371/1363, No. 53330.
12. Note by Russell, August 1912, Russell papers, 1/10.
13. Badrawi, *Political Violence*, 86–87.
14. "Note on the Conspiracy", 15 July, 1912, Kitchener papers, PRO 30/57/42. The investigation provides a background of the suspects and their associations. Cheetham to William Tyrrell (private secretary to Grey), 10 July, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48. Enclosed is a document entitled "The plot to assassinate Lord

Kitchener and others," compiled by Ronald Graham who was the advisor at the Ministry of the Interior. Cheetham to Grey, 22 July, 1912, and 15 August, 1912, FO 371/1363, Nos. 31892 and 35949; Kitchener to Grey, 3 July, 1912, FO 371/1363, No. 28284; Cheetham to Kitchener, 14 July, 1912, Cheetham papers, GB 165–0055, file 3.

15. Cheetham to Mallet, 19 August, 1912, FO 371/1363, No. 354.
16. Sir Philip Magnus, *Kitchener*: *Portrait of an Imperialist* (New York: Dutton, 1959), 274.
17. Tollefson, *Policing Islam*, 166.
18. Arthur Goldschmidt, "The Egyptian Nationalist Party: 1892–1919," *in Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, ed. P.M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 327.
19. Cheetham to Mallet, 22 September, 1912, FO 371/1364, No. 41009.
20. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 3 October 1913, Salisbury papers.
21. The law gave the government the authority to deport the most notorious criminals to a penal colony in the Khargeh Oasis in the Western Desert, even though they had not been convicted in a regular court. It did reduce crime in the short run but its inherent defect was that it provided opportunities for men of influence to settle personal vendettas. It was abandoned by Kitchener.
22. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1911*, House of Commons Sessional Papers (Cd. 6149) Egypt no. 1 (1912), 30–32.
23. Viscount Alfred Milner, *England in Egypt* (London: Edward Arnold, 1909), ch. 4; Brinton, *Mixed Courts*, 1–6; Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer* (London: Macmillan, 1933), 6–8, 17, 20–35, 54–55, 58, 106, 143. Tollefson, *Policing Islam*, 40, 65, 122–24, 155.
24. Lloyd, *Egypt*, 154–55
25. Kitchener, *Report for 1912*, House of Commons Sessional Papers (Cd. 6682) Egypt no. 1 (1913), 34–36.
26. Lloyd, *Egypt*, 151, 153.
27. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1912*, 5, 47.
28. Kitchener to Grey, 27 June and 1 July, 1912, FO 371/1363, Nos. 27388 and 28824, respectively.
29. Grey to Kitchener, 1 July, 1912, FO 371/1363, No. 27333; Kitchener to Grey, 3 July, 1912, FO 371/27338, No. 28290.
30. John Marlowe, *Cromer in Egypt* (London: Elk Books, 1970), 8–12; Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid, *Egypt and Cromer* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 5–6; Lloyd, *Egypt*, ch. 2; Tignor, *Modernization*, 51–52.

31. Sydney A. Moseley, *With Kitchener in Cairo* (London: Cassell, 1917), 110–11; Adamovitch's account published in the *Daily Citizen* FO 371/1638, No. 23346; Cheetham to Robert Vansittart (then junior clerk at the Foreign Office), 29 September, 1913, FO 371/1638, No. 46353.
32. Moseley, *With Kitchener*, 107–110.
33. Moseley, *With Kitchener*, 112–13.
34. Moseley is not clear on who conveyed the information to London. His explanation was that "the news of Lord Kitchener's representations had been immediately cabled to London, where it had been produced and commented upon in the Press." Moseley, *With Kitchener*, 114.
35. Foreign Office notes, FO 371/1638; and a collection of objections from some of the unions, FO 371/1638, No 23346.
36. A copy of the letter is available in the Foreign Office archives, FO 371/1638, No. 23346.
37. Grey to Kitchener, 29 May, 1913, and 6 June, 1913, FO 371/1638, Nos. 24576 and 26037 respectively.
38. Kitchener to Grey, 7 June, 1913, FO 371/1638, No. 26102.
39. Kitchener to Grey, 7 June, 1913, FO 371/1638, No. 26143; Inspector-General of Prison to Kitchener, 7 June, 1913, FO 371/1638, No. 27353.
40. Kitchener to Grey, 10 June, 1913, FO 371/1638, No. 26636.
41. Grey to Kitchener, 9 June, 1913, FO 371/1638, No. 26102.
42. Kitchener, *Despatch Respecting the Arrest of Alexander Adamovitch* (*Cd. 6874*), Egypt. No. 2 (1913).
43. Moseley is referring to the Hungarian leaders who led the revolution against the Austrian Empire. When Hungary's bid for independence failed, Kossuth and other officials fled to Turkey.
44. The information and quotes from the newspapers hostile to Kitchener's version of the events are taken from Moseley, *With Kitchener*, ch. 7.
45. Tollefson, *Annual Policing Islam*, 171.
46. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1913*, *House of Commons Sessional papers* (Cd. 7358) Egypt, no. 1, 41–42.
47. Kitchener to Grey, 3 January 1914, FO371/1964, No. 1262.
48. Foreign Office to Kitchener, 19 February 1914, FO 371/1964, No. 26172.
49. Foreign Office notes, 10 June, FO 371/1964, No. 26172.
50. Kitchener to Cheetham, 25 June, 1914, FO 371/1964, No 26172.

CHAPTER 7

The Capitulations and the Organic Law

After the British took over control of Egypt, they found themselves hampered at every turn by the privileges conferred by the Capitulations which they, along with 13 other European nations, enjoyed. Whenever reformers brought up the question of modifying the arrangement that impeded the progress of the country, they were confronted by opposition groups that invariably presented the standard arguments. As the British, by their own admission, intended to withdraw from Egypt someday, they did not want to be left at the mercy of a legal and administrative native system they distrusted and so insisted on adequate guarantees to counterbalance the current privileges. The only way to ensure that foreigners would be fairly treated if the Capitulations were abolished was for Britain to annex Egypt outright or establish a permanent protectorate. At the time neither option was contemplated in London. Thus trying to deal with the Capitulations under the existing conditions posed a challenge to authorities that was practically impossible to overcome. Both Cromer and Gorst had recognized that the Capitulations were the source of major problems in the country but their effort to find a formula that would end the trammels of the system, for various reasons, never went beyond the preliminary stage.[1]

Kitchener had been in Egypt barely a month when he received a note from Grey who wanted him to take concrete steps to free Egypt from the Capitulations. Grey believed that it was a propitious moment for the realization of this reform. Through open discussion, public opinion in Egypt had been conditioned to expect a change while the great Powers, when

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_7

approached, had pledged their support if an arrangement could be devised to protect the interest of their nationals.[2] Kitchener shared Grey's desire to abolish the Capitulations which he readily acknowledged were incompatible with public security and the welfare of the state. Furthermore both men recognized that it would give Britain a freer hand in Egypt.

Kitchener prepared a list of recommendations which he submitted in mid-December 1911. He proposed to abolish the judicial authority of the Consular Courts, except in matters of personal status, and transfer civil and commercial cases to the Mixed tribunals. The principle of a foreign majority on the bench in all cases involving outsiders would be maintained. Criminal cases in which the defendant was an alien would be tried by Courts of Assize, composed of three judges, of whom two were foreigners, and assisted by four assessors (lay judges) of foreign nationality with the right to vote. In the event that some of the accused were natives, two of the assessors would be Egyptian. If found guilty of a misdemeanor and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, an outsider would have the right of appeal, before the sentence was enforced, to a foreign judge or a court containing a majority of foreign judges. Arrest warrants against alien subjects would be valid for only four days, afterwards detention would be illegal without the authorization of a foreign magistrate.

Kitchener conceded that the judicial system he laid out should not be taken as necessarily complete and that it might be desirable to introduce further safeguards. Still he was confident that its principal features, under the control and supervision of the British authorities, "would provide adequate guarantees for the protection of the lives and liberties of foreign residents in Egypt, and security for their property, while at the same time enormously facilitating the task of government which we have had to assume in this country, and which the continued existence of these obsolete arrangements so seriously impedes."

Kitchener was equally anxious to end the principle of immunity that the European Powers enjoyed over Egyptian legislation of which they disapproved but in a way that did not threaten their current rights and protection. He suggested that the Powers transmit their right of veto to Great Britain, which, given its record of good government in Egypt, was a guarantee that no injustice to their nationals would ensue. Still to allay any apprehension that British subjects would receive preferential treatment, or that the existing laws would be replaced by the British legal system, he gave the following assurances: foreigners would receive the same treatment as natives in all circumstances; legislation regarding foreigners would

be applied without distinction of nationality; and that Egyptian criminal and civil laws would be compatible with the principles of justice and equity generally recognized in Europe. To further set European governments at ease, Kitchener would allow the right of appeal by an interested party to the Supreme Court for any law it considered a violation of the pledge. In return for the guarantees, the European Powers would cease to intervene in any way in Egyptian legislation involving foreigners, leaving Britain to exercise full supervision.[3]

The plan lacked detail in some instances and logic in others. If in the long run Kitchener wanted to establish the principle of equality for all residents, it would have made more sense to begin by introducing more democratic measures in the courts. The removal of judicial authority from the Consular Courts was certainly desirable but it was such a revolutionary step that it would perhaps have been wiser to do it in stages rather than all at once. As if that was not bad enough, Kitchener's guarantees rested on the premise that Britain's occupation of Egypt was permanent, contrary to its declared intention to eventually withdraw. In sum no safeguard proposals for foreigners would have been adequate for the Powers, even if there was the likelihood or even possibility that the Occupation would end someday.

Anticipating the abolition of the Capitulations, Kitchener considered it necessary to render the courts more efficient. He first set out to reform the Mixed Courts. It is sufficient to give a brief explanation of the main features of these tribunals. There was a Court of Appeal in Alexandria and three district courts in the first instance established in Alexandria, Cairo and Mansura. The higher court was composed of two chambers and in each there were eight judges, five Europeans and three natives. There were five judges in each of the district courts with the Europeans constituting a majority. As a rule, foreign judges were drawn from the 14 European Powers and almost always selected by their own government.[4] They varied in terms of professional qualifications, integrity and outlook. Under the charter, the Mixed Courts lay outside the control of the government and exercised considerable authority over Egyptian legislation. They not only interpreted the law but had the authority to withhold its application. They also enjoyed financial autonomy—as judicial fees were a major source of income—thus removing the government's attempts to control or influence their functions. Because they enjoyed judicial independence, they were able to stand up to the government and issue rulings that restricted the sovereign power of the state. Changes in the structure of the Mixed

Courts could only be achieved with the unanimous assent of the European Powers.

During the last month of 1914 Kitchener submitted a plan that would retain the Mixed Courts subject to certain guarantees and modifications. The main defects, as he saw them, were twofold. The first was the lack of organization in the administration of justice and the absence of effective control over the work of the judges in the courts; and the second was the tendency of some judges to be swayed by political passions and prejudices from which they should be free.

Kitchener claimed that there was no standard method to supervise judicial administrative matters because the judges of the Mixed Courts were a law unto themselves and more or less did what they pleased in carrying out their duties. He was critical of the Court of Appeal for its reluctance to interfere in the internal arrangements and exercise control over the work of the tribunals. Kitchener went on to rail against the work habits of the magistrates in the tribunals. With special reference to the Cairo tribunal he pointed out that dedicated and well-intentioned judges, far from receiving encouragement from their superiors to work hard and clear-off arrears, were actively dissuaded if they proposed to do anything more than the bare minimum of judicial output. The few that persisted and held extra sittings to diminish the backlog often found that the files of pending cases were neither indexed nor registered. Kitchener was by no means exaggerating when he used the word "chaotic" to refer to the state of affairs in this court. He ascribed much of the problem to the manner in which the presidents of the tribunals were chosen. As matters stood the president was in the hands of his colleagues, upon whose votes he depended for his election and thus he was reluctant to exercise any effective control over them.

Kitchener was equally scornful of conditions in the Court of Appeal. He claimed that the court was staffed mainly by old men who were past their prime and should retire. As there was no age limit, several were over 70 and the president was reported to be 86. He accused them of taking more time off than they were legally entitled to and that during four months of the year there was a complete cessation of work. For that reason there were insufficient sittings with the result that arrear cases kept piling up and had now reached an abnormally high number. There was no prospect of reducing them unless new energetic measures were introduced and the present arrangements transformed.

Kitchener's second objection was over the outside political influences at work in the courts. He maintained that the judges were drawn from

all the different European Powers which were normally concerned with their own agenda rather than with the efficiency of the Egyptian judicial administration. While Kitchener praised the men who sat on the bench in the early days as possessing unusual ability and dedication, he generally viewed the newcomers in a different light. The majority were mediocre and unable to cope with the demands of the job. Many were elderly and worn out when they came to Egypt and considered a post in the Mixed tribunals as a comfortable and lucrative sinecure for their remaining years before retirement. Finally, given the manner of their selection, it was not surprising that they should regard themselves as the political agents of their own governments.

According to Kitchener the ideal remedy would have been to establish a national court by amalgamating the mixed and native courts, unhampered as much as possible by the international immunities, in order to provide an efficient administration of justice to the whole community, indigenous and foreign alike. Since that was out of the question, the next best course to achieve something akin to a system of national tribunals, was to reduce, as much as possible, the differences separating the mixed courts from the native courts and subjecting them to the supervision and control of the Egyptian government. The specific changes he had in mind would come close to meeting his objective and included: reducing the excessive number of judges, from eight to five in both chambers in the Court of Appeal and from five to three in the tribunals of the first instance—this would permit single judges to preside over more sittings and so reduce the backlog of unheard cases; fixing the age limit at 70 at which judges would be obliged to retire; foreign judges to be selected by the Egyptian government which would also be free to promote first instant judges to the Court of Appeal without the latter's interference; the Ministry of Finance to exercise financial control of the mixed courts, just as it did in the native tribunals; and the nomination of presidents to be decided by the Egyptian government.

Kitchener emphasized that the proposed modifications did not in any way affect the independence and jurisdiction of the courts; or the principle of the foreign majority in all cases, civil and criminal, which should be acceptable to the Powers, without undue difficulty.[5] A month later Kitchener followed up with a second memorandum, in which he went over the same ground, a move obviously intended to bolster his case. He indicated that the moment could not be more favorable as both the public and the press had come to expect radical improvements in the organization of the courts.[6]

Kitchener's proposals to reform the mixed courts appealed to Grey and engaged his serious attention.[7] However, negotiations failed to produce unity among the Powers whose consent was required before judicial reorganization could take place. Adjustments to meet the objections of one Power, was apt to convert to opposition with another which had previously given its approval. All the Powers resented the provision which left the appointment of judges in the hands of the Egyptian government, which put an end to their practice of imposing their own nominations. The Foreign Office could read the writing on the wall and did not extend the talks. Kitchener was informed that it would be best if any adjustment of the judiciary and Capitulations were treated together.

After Grey evaluated Kitchener's formula to amend the Capitulations, he submitted his reply during the second week in April 1912. His overall view was that it did not go far enough to advance Egypt's interests while conceding too much authority to the Powers. He pointed out that, as the French were about to request complete judicial control in Morocco, they were bound to accept His Majesty's Government's revisionary program for Egypt. Grey had already acquired Germany's assent to follow France's lead in the matter of the Capitulations and he did not anticipate any serious objections from the remaining Powers. He suggested that if the goal was the ultimate fusion of the native courts and mixed courts, the authority of the former ought to have been extended rather than that of the latter. In asking for revision of the document, Grey suggested that the emphasis should be not so much on ways to conciliate the Powers as on recommendations best suited to the needs of the country.[8]

Kitchener tried to conform as much as possible to the suggestions raised by Grey in his second draft which he submitted on 25 April. He suggested that the existing system of mixed, consular and native tribunals be replaced by National Courts with the authority to deal with the civil, commercial and criminal cases of all Egyptian residents. The National Courts would be divided into two parts, a European and a native. The European section would handle all cases currently within the purview of the mixed courts, along with the criminal affairs and matters affecting the personal status of the foreign population. There would be a European majority on the bench for all business coming before it. Foreigners accused of committing a felony would be tried by Assize Courts before three judges, two Europeans and one native, assisted by four lay assessors—two of whom were to be of foreign nationality—with the right to vote. The rest of the proposals remained unchanged. As for the other division, the natives

would face the same procedure as existed in their present courts. The one difference was that foreigners could be tried by a native judge if that was their preference.[9]

Grey requested a few more alterations that were minor or technical and, as instructed, Kitchener prepared a final draft convention which was conveyed to the Powers in September.[10] The Foreign Office concentrated its attention on the French government without whose endorsement the plan to abolish the Capitulations was doomed. It instructed Lord Bertie, its Ambassador in Paris, that together with a copy of the document, he was to jog the memory of the French government of its earlier pledge, not only to give Britain unreserved support should it decide to modify the Capitulations, but also to lobby hesitant Powers to fall into line.[11]

There was no reaction from the French for months, prompting the Foreign Office to send them a reminder at the start of the New Year. Only then did the French authorities take up the issue.[12] Their decision was forwarded to the Foreign Office on 17 February, 1913. Their general impression was that the draft articles in the proposed convention were too vague to allow them to judge whether the rights and immunities their nationals currently enjoyed under the Capitulations would be adequately protected. They proceeded to list a number of questions on which they wanted more information (see below).[13] Grey asked Kitchener to reply to the French memo.

Kitchener took great pains to deal with each issue raised by the French in a memorandum which he completed in mid-March. In his introductory remarks he indicated that it would be highly impractical and inconvenient to express in advance details of the legislative, judicial and fiscal machinery designed to replace the existing privileged system. He pointed out that if the action of the government was restrained by a treaty, it might not be able to change, without engaging in fresh diplomatic negotiations, certain parts of its system which were shown to be defective or unsatisfactory. For that reason he had thought it advisable to lay down a broad set of principles that avoided complications and yet constituted sufficient guarantee to safeguard the interests and rights of foreigners.

Kitchener next focused on answering the French questions beginning with their concern in the future legislative authority in Egypt regarding foreigners. Kitchener, as already observed, thought that it would be unwise at this time to “stereotype future legislative institutions by incorporating them in the express terms of a treaty with the foreign Governments concerned.” He went on to say that under the present constitution the

Legislative Council had no authority to initiate, amend or reject legislation proposed by the Egyptian government. He gave assurances that when the Capitulations are abolished, "the legislation applicable to foreigners will continue to be passed under precisely similar conditions by the same or similar body." As the Egyptian government operated in such matters on the advice and guidance of His Majesty's Government, no legislation was applicable to foreigners that did not receive the latter's consent. Thus all guarantees and safeguards the British government deemed necessary to protect the interests of its own nationals would be equally extended to the citizens of France and other nations.

Kitchener turned to the second inquiry "whether Great Britain will exercise any effective control over the nomination of judges and functionaries in Egypt." Kitchener replied in the affirmative except for the Mixed Courts which would disappear (as already explained in his convention) and be replaced by a judicial system over which Britain would exercise control of the selection of all the judges and functionaries.

The French also wanted to know if the British would accept responsibility for claims resulting from the working of the new institutions. Kitchener maintained that foreign claims for compensation against the Egyptian government would not be affected by the abolition of the Capitulations. Passing on to the following question whether Britain would establish above the courts and tribunals in Egypt a higher judicial authority in London, Kitchener did not entertain any such move. A more natural solution in his view would be to set up a Supreme Court in Egypt, presided over by competent European judges with sufficient experience of Egyptian law and practice.

A further French inquiry centered on whether the British proposed to intervene in the formulation of Egyptian legislation and, if so, in what manner. Kitchener indicated that as matters stood Britain had effective control over Egyptian legislation and no change was contemplated as long as the status of Egypt remained unchanged. He did not think it would be wise, however, to specify or precisely define in a document the conditions under which such control would be exercised. The final French question was whether London would guarantee that the Egyptian government would observe treaties and principles of international law in dealings with foreign powers, as well as the impartial treatment of alien residents, irrespective of their nationality. Kitchener noted that it was usual for states exercising a protectorate or semi-protectorate over others, to guarantee

the observance of treaties and obligations by their clients but that His Majesty's Government would have no objections, as long as the British Occupation lasted, to making such a commitment. As for the second part of the inquiry, Kitchener referred to an article in his convention stipulating that legislation was applicable to all foreigners alike without any distinction of nationality. Kitchener suggested that if considered necessary, the British government might insert a provision in the treaty that, in the event the Occupation ended, the present rights of the Capitulary Powers to consent or reject legislation affecting their subjects would be reinstated.[14]

All the high ranking officials at the Foreign Office—such as Eyre Crowe, Robert Vansitart, Herman Norman and E. Davidson—as well as Grey, were impressed by Kitchener's reply to the French note.[15] Grey embodied Kitchener's main arguments, often word for word, in a memorandum—except to replace "would" for "might" in regard to the insertion of the aforementioned provision in the treaty—which he sent to Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London on 7 May.[16]

The French took their time to assess the British document. During the third week in October Kitchener, his patience exhausted, contacted the Foreign Office to inquire how matters stood with the French.[17] Grey had already approached the Quay d'Orsay (French Foreign Office), declaring that it had been a year since the British proposals had been laid before the French authorities and underscoring that "His Majesty's Government would deprecate further delay in receiving a reply, which they trust will be satisfactory."[18]

Grey had assumed that Britain's friendship with and close ties to France would bring its government around to a reasonable frame of mind. If not, he felt that he held a trump card that would wring the desired concessions from the French. While the negotiations were going on, Cambon approached the Foreign Office, requesting London's support for the possible abolition of foreign consular jurisdiction in Morocco. Grey told Kitchener that "as it will be to the interest of the French Government to obtain the assent of His Majesty's Government to the change in Morocco without delay, it will be made clear to His Excellency that such an assent on our part will only be given if a reasonable spirit on the part of the French Government is shown in regard to the question of the Capitulations in Egypt."[19] The Foreign Office was well aware that the two cases were not analogous. France had just declared a Protectorate over Morocco (30 March 1912) and was assuming charge of the administration of the country. This meant that the French intended to remain permanently in the

country with its leading official (Resident-General) empowered to accept or reject all legislation. The analogy would have been valid only if Britain had adopted in Egypt the same course as France in Morocco. With Britain in permanent control of Egypt, France and the other Powers could not have argued that the interests of their nationals would be endangered by the disappearance of the existing privileges. However, in the event that the British Occupation ended, there was no guarantee that foreign minorities would be fairly treated, especially if the native government fell into the hands of the radical nationalists.

The Foreign Office had devised an answer to offset the differences between the two systems. Vansitart, in a note for internal use, summed up the main points:

> France is asking for practically unlimited sovereign control in Morocco—for far wider powers, that is, than we are asking in Egypt. The French legislation allows British subjects most favored nation treatment, and gives them a position differing little from that of its own citizens, but no assurance is offered that their position shall not be altered for the worse by subsequent legislation. The British proposal, concerning Egypt, consists largely, in fact, of precisely such assurance, unlimited as to time.
>
> Again in pursuance of this comparison, great stress was laid in M. Cambon's note of February 17, on the absence of precise information as to the nature of the future legislative system where foreigners are concerned. The scheme of the French government contains even less guarantees or assurances on these points. The legislative powers in Morocco appear to be quite unrestricted, [resting on] an act of the French Resident General. The proposed Egyptian system offers at least as great, if not greater guarantees. Under the British proposal all laws would have to be submitted to the Legislative Assembly … and so far as such laws are to be applicable to foreigners, they would … require the assent of the British Government. This is at least as good a guarantee as the visa of the Resident General. In short their elaboration goes no further than the British—indeed considerably less far—simply for providing for those very essentials which they themselves have raised as stumbling blocks to their acceptance of [the] British way.[20]

When the French government got around to answering the British communication of 7 May, 1913, it laid down two main conditions before it would consent to the withdrawal of its consular jurisdiction in Egypt.[21] The first was a desire for full details of the proposed new regime, in particular how the organization of the courts, the personnel of the judges and the law and procedure were to be applied. The other was the insistence

that the French colony should be exempted from laws enacted by the Egyptian government. It seemed to Grey that the French may have had in mind the creation of a legislative body with the authority to pass laws exclusively for Europeans. All in all he doubted that further diplomatic correspondence would expedite a settlement. Consequently he recommended that Kitchener appoint a legal specialist of the Egyptian government to thoroughly examine the matter and draw up detailed proposals of how the actual conventions, laws and decrees were to operate when the Capitulations were abolished. With all the documentation in hand, the man should proceed to Paris and work out an agreement with the French, embodying the results in a memorandum for consideration by His Majesty's Government.[22]

Kitchener went a step further and appointed a commission of prominent jurists in December 1913 to study, and prepare a report on, the questions raised by the French—the most crucial in his view was their concern about the proposed legislative machinery. The men appointed to the new body consisted of Malcolm Mcllwraith, the judicial adviser, Sir William Brunyate, the Khedival counsellor, and J.H. Percival, a judge of the Native Courts of Appeal. Kitchener conveyed the information to Grey, adding that on completion of the commissioner's work, one of the men would be available to give any desired explanations in London and subsequently conduct personal negotiations with a representative of the French government. Kitchener, however, was not optimistic that a settlement with France could be reached. It was evident to him that the French were attempting to force on the British the same type of institutions they were creating in Morocco. The choice, as he saw it, was either to allow the iniquitous and archaic system of Capitulations to continue or, that the British, like the French in Morocco, declare Egypt a Protectorate, "thus removing the suzerainty of Turkey, which is apparently considered an insurmountable obstacle to the reform we advocate." Kitchener was clear that until the French modified their qualification "any elaboration of guarantees, or of legislative and judicial systems, will be really only academic, and therefore possibly only a waste of time, as they will have little or no effect on the solution of this important problem."[23]

The commission sat together for slightly over four months and completed its report late in May 1914. Kitchener forwarded the lengthy document—consisting of six sections—to London on the 27th. The first part examined the numbers and distribution of foreigners as shown by the census. Of the total number of 148,000 inhabitants, 132,000 or 90%,

were concentrated (in the Governorates) in Cairo and Alexandria and the three Canal Ports—Port Said, Ismalia and Suez. The remaining 10% were in the Mudirias (provinces) with about a third living in the three towns of Mansura, Tanta and Zagazig. The commissioners concluded that the government would be able to maintain safeguards and facilities in the cities and Canal Ports but only if the courts were restricted to single judges or to a limited number. In areas where foreigners were widely scattered they felt that it was more important to distribute police officers than European judges.

The second part focused on the reorganization of the judiciary with the following courts proposed: a supreme court, four courts of appeal, eight central tribunals, Mudirieh Courts (judges sitting in Mudiria towns and Governorates) and Markez Courts. The commissioners discussed the idea of judges sitting alone as opposed to a court composed of a plurality and came down strongly on the side of the former as having greater advantages. There was a difference of opinion among the commissioners on the question of the composition of the Courts of Assize with Brunyate casting a dissenting vote. The other two recommended that natives be tried, as at present, by courts consisting of three judges; and foreigners by courts of three judges and four assessors (who could vote) with a five to two majority required for a conviction. Brunyate, in a separate note, preferred that both natives and foreigners be tried by courts of four judges, a majority of three to one required for conviction. Kitchener, in offering his own opinion, thought it would be undesirable to propose any changes at the present time.

The commissioners saw the urgent need to create a Supreme Court or a Cassation Court, separate from the Courts of Appeal. It would decide if final decisions from the lower courts on a question of law could be referred to the Court of Appeal and have powers of review similar to those of Indian High Courts. It was proposed that the number of judges at the outset be fixed at 10, of whom four should be natives, three British and three continental Europeans.

The commissioners called for the Markaz Courts, which the Egyptian government had begun to phase out, to be revived and restricted to the Governorates. The judges on these courts would be competent to try all offenses involving contravention and petty misdemeanors and could not impose punishment heavier than two years, though in reality they could not sentence an individual to more than three months, except in cases of theft which called for six months, and a fine of 20 livres. Mudiria judges

would have the authority to try all offenses, excluding those punishable by death or penal servitude for life, with sentences confined to no more than three years' imprisonment or a fine with no limit set. Assize Courts would have the exclusive right to try all offences punishable by death or imprisonment for life and pass any sentence authorized by law.

The third part focused on criminal prosecutions with an attempt to combine French and British ideas on the subject. The commission believed that criminal inquiries were important and delicate and that it was vital to have a uniform system. As matters stood the police tended to investigate most of the minor infractions, at times even serious crimes, although these were within the jurisdiction of the Parquet. The commissioners wanted to restrict the formal powers of the police to recording complaints with the exception of conducting inquiries in cases of "flagrante delicto" that is when criminals were caught breaking the law. As for the Parquet he currently combined the role of investigating magistrate and prosecutor—which was not popular with the foreigners. Discussing the various options, the commissioners arrived at the conclusion that justice would be best served if the Parquet acted as public prosecutor and provided legal advice to the police, leaving it to the courts and the investigating magistrate to safeguard the rights of defendants. As a result the commissioners thought it logical to transfer the Parquet from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of the Interior where, as public prosecutors, it would have its own department. The move would avoid confusion between the duties of the investigating magistrates and the Parquet; and by being in the same ministry make the Parquet more familiar with police problems, reduce the friction between the two branches of the law and engender a spirit of cooperation.

The fourth part was devoted to a consideration of the law and procedure to be applied by the tribunals. The commission indicated that revision of the codes was immediately necessitated by unification of the courts. Here was an opportunity, it was claimed, to redraft the codes which were defective and obsolete. Thus in reviewing each code the commissioners laid down the broad outlines of what was needed to fix them and bring them up to date.

The fifth part centered on the rights and safeguards of foreigners. Although there was to be one judiciary, it was to be composed of two sections for the trial of foreign and native cases. As recommended earlier to the French government, foreigners were to be entitled to have a foreign judge or a foreign majority on the bench. The commissioners proposed that no European was

to be arrested without a warrant provided by a European magistrate, except in a case of flagrante delicto. No search was to be made in the residence of a foreigner unless a warrant had been issued by a European magistrate.

The sixth and last part was related to the selection and personnel of judges. The commissioners did not anticipate that the number of native judges would change owing to the fusion of the courts but that there probably would be a slight increase of European magistrates because of the elimination of the Consular Courts. They considered it undesirable to set the ratio between British and continental judges, either on the whole bench or a particular court. Promotion was to be made solely on individual merit, regardless of nationality. Finally it recommended that future judges whether British or non-British Europeans should enter government services as young as possible.

Kitchener did not have time to study the exceptionally long document—at least 35,000 words—but a cursory examination led him to believe that it was thorough and he hoped that it would be an important step in freeing Egypt from the constraints of the Capitulations.[24] Grey, however, was unhappy with the draft convention because it only covered the judicial side of the question and failed to address how the laws and decrees would work as he had requested. Although he conceded that the report made valuable recommendations it did not go far enough to allow him to communicate it to the French government. Consequently he wanted the commission to prepare another report framed in a form that would answer French concerns. He added that he would be grateful if an explanatory statement was included, showing on what points, if any, they marked a departure from the preliminary plan already communicated to Paris.[25]

By the time Grey revealed his appraisal of the latest convention, Kitchener was already in England on his holiday. He would have been more than human if he had not been upset by the sharp rebuke. Given the considerable amount of effort he and others in Egypt had spent during the last two years, he was no closer to completing his task than when he first began. The worst part was that there was no light at the end of the tunnel. Kitchener told Vansitart in an interview he was convinced that "as things stand at present, we shall merely be wasting our time and strength by persevering with the present scheme."[26] He indicated that no plan would satisfy the Powers. Most of their representatives—even of Russia which had practically no interests in Egypt—had unofficially represented to him that the stumbling block to abolishing the Capitulations was Britain's ambiguous position in Egypt.

Grey had not abandoned hope that an agreement with the French was still possible but members of his staff had come to the conclusion that it was hopeless. As already noted the Foreign Office had offered to insert a provision that would automatically revive the Capitulations in the event the Occupation ended. But the French declared that such a stipulation was worthless and the other European nations had agreed.[27] While all the Powers undoubtedly wanted to ensure the safety of their nationals, they were no less interested in keeping their privileges which allowed them to profit by circumventing Egyptian law. Vansitart and others at the Foreign Office were satisfied that the only way to achieve a settlement with Europe was for Britain to declare a Protectorate over Egypt—which was not likely to happen in the foreseeable future. Everyone was at their wit's end to discover a way out of the labyrinth. The war brought the curtain down on the exchange of ideas and it was not raised again until after the restoration of peace.

The suspicion among the European Powers that the Occupation was only intended to be temporary had been the principal factor in their unwillingness to cooperate to end the Capitulations. The Foreign Office and Kitchener did nothing to dissipate that perception when they brought up the idea of extending representative institutions in Egypt. It was not a good idea to pursue two incompatible objectives simultaneously.

Gorst had shown himself sympathetic to Egyptian political aspirations but Kitchener, while not totally reversing his predecessor's policy, was unwilling to go as far. He was prepared to make limited concessions for tactical reasons and only under controlled circumstances. He realized that constitutional reform was necessary to satisfy the Liberal government in Britain and moderate nationalists in Egypt. But he had no patience for those who wanted to introduce in Egypt democratic institutions based on Western models, convinced that they would have a deleterious effect on the people. He had in mind a political system that would extend responsibility, not to the politicians, but to landed interests that were well disposed towards the British Occupation.

On 24 April, 1912, Kitchener sent a memo to Grey in which he alluded to the Khedive's announcement (during his speech at the opening of the General Assembly earlier in the year) that the Egyptian government was studying ways to improve the process of representative government. In tackling the issue, Kitchener threw cold water on any thought that the Egyptians had the capacity to take a responsible part in a parliamentary system such as existed in the West. He maintained that

evidence from the recent proceedings of the Legislative Council showed there were elements that displayed unruly behavior, lack of stable judgment and political foresight. He was of the opinion that it would be beneficial if the modifications made gave the smaller land-owning class greater representation and, to that end, he proposed to study the matter and eventually submit proposals. It must not be supposed, he pointed out to Grey, that any such measures would satisfy the extremists who would consider nothing less than a Western-style representative system. Kitchener expressed the belief that with future maturing progress—that is with the advance of education, the tranquility and prosperity of the state and the development of the political process—the day was not far off when a greater and more comprehensive representation of the views of the Egyptian people would be established. When that moment came, he hoped that the government would be reformed along Oriental, not Western, lines of thought and religion. Kitchener was not always in the vanguard of modern political thought but in this instance he showed unusual insight—more so than western politicians a century later. He wrote:

> Mere copying of Western methods will give no real stability. The East must evolve an Oriental, democratic, constitutional system of its own for its people, and avoid the examples set by Turkey and Persia, in attempting to run on purely European lines, forgetting their individuality, their nationality, and their religion.[28]

For several months or so, Kitchener was distracted by a host of pressing problems but eventually he selected a few of his most trusted subordinates to work out the details of his contemplated political system. As usual he wanted instant results. Cecil, in particular, did not enjoy the pressure-filled experience, especially as the work was outside his supposed area of responsibility. He told his wife: "I am working every minute at the constitution. The changes are slight but very tiresome to fit in and K. wants everything done by next morning."[29]

In mid-November 1912 Grey sent a note to Kitchener, in which he pointed out that in the House of Commons recently a question was raised as to whether there had been any thought of establishing a chamber of deputies (presumably on the French model) and, if so, whether he could impart any information as to the method of the election and composition of the new body.[30]

Kitchener replied that since his earlier communication on the subject, a rudimentary study had been made and a committee, chaired by him, had been set up to carry on the work. Kitchener claimed that events associated with the Turco-Italian War had delayed proceedings but that he had now arranged for the meetings to begin. He expected that before long he would be able to provide the Foreign Office with further information.[31] A week later Kitchener notified Grey that several meetings of the committee had already been held and that in due course its proposals would be sent for his consideration and approval. He hoped that in the meantime parliament could be induced to leave the matter alone as it would only excite the small body of extremists in Egypt. Kitchener made it clear that he did not approve of creating a political system that would end the Egyptian government's right to override opposition from the Legislative Council (or such similar body). He claimed that Mohammed Said (then Prime Minister) had told him that it would be impossible to manage the country unless the government was provided with the means to pass laws even in defiance of the legislature whose members were often swayed by momentary and unreasonable popular excitement. Kitchener indicated that he was willing to extend the authority of the new representative body but not at the risk of creating a deadlock between it and the government which he thought would be disastrous for the country, entailing either its dissolution by the Khedive or the resignation of the ministry.[32]

At the close of December 1912, Kitchener submitted his preliminary proposals to reform the government and, to lend weight to his recommendations, returned to a familiar theme in his preamble. After a brief discussion of Egypt's constitutional development since the Occupation, Kitchener concluded the evidence was clear that the Legislative Council and General Assembly, as presently constituted, could not be trusted with the powers of a real representative body in the modern sense. He considered it vital for the future government to meet the requirements of an Eastern people, not veer in a direction that was incompatible with their traditions and welfare. He pointed out there was an attraction among a segment of Egyptians for the introduction of western style institutions in the mistaken belief that the prosperity and stability in countries like Britain and France would be replicated in their own nation. Kitchener warned that party politics to a Muslim would be like a strong drink to uncivilized Africans.[33]

Kitchener considered the two legislative chambers as similar in character so that one of these was redundant. His scheme, when he eventually

worked out the details, called for a new Legislative Assembly to replace the two old bodies and the inclusion of unrepresented interests and minorities such as Copts and Bedouins. It was to be composed of 90 members with 66 elected, 17 nominated and 7 council (cabinet) ministers. The latter could attend the sittings of the Legislative Assembly and offer explanations if requested but could not vote. The elected members were chosen by indirect suffrage. The mandate of the members was limited to six years with a third retiring by rotation every two years. No legislation could become law without first being introduced to the Assembly for discussion.[34] Its members were permitted to interrogate ministers and compel them to justify government proposals. The Assembly could amend any draft law of which it disapproved and even introduce legislation on non-constitutional matters, but the last word lay with the executive. Kitchener stressed—probably for the benefit of Grey and Parliament—that after the thorough airing out of an issue it was unlikely that the government would overrule the Assembly's recommendations without "very grave reasons." In short the Assembly could obstruct and delay legislation of which it disapproved, but it had no veto power save as a check on proposals for increases in direct taxation. In spite of its extended functions, the new body remained essentially a consultative and deliberate body. Finally the Khedive, with whom Kitchener was on bad terms, could only dismiss the Legislative Assembly with the consent of the council of ministers whereas under the old law he was not subject to any such restrictions.[35]

Kitchener's object in reorganizing the government apparatus was to give greater representation to the agricultural classes which, if protected from the influence of noisy extremists and political agitators, could materially assist the government in bringing about reforms and improving the conditions of life. He thought that the evolution towards a more representative political system would occur only when those in authority showed that they were capable of carrying out more important and arduous responsibilities. By contrast, and as a means of defending his suggested plan, he wrote: "No Government would be insane enough to consider that because an advisory Council has proved itself unable to carry out its functions in a reasonable and satisfactory manner, it should therefore be given a larger measure of power and control."[36]

Before Grey offered an assessment of the proposed scheme, he asked Kitchener for his opinion on two points: whether it would be better to defer reforming the Egyptian government until after the European Powers had given their consent to abolish the Capitulary system; or

to move forward at once despite possibly adding to the unrest caused by the Balkan war. Grey tried to cover his lack of knowledge about Egypt and Muslim culture by requesting whether Kitchener would like to invite the views of Cromer on which of the two options he would prefer.[37]

Kitchener should have jumped at the suggestion that the two issues be treated separately. By then he had begun to hear rumors that the Powers would be reluctant to agree to modify the Capitulations as long as they suspected that the British might end the Occupation someday. And he should have known that this impression would be strengthened by introducing constitutional changes in Egypt that seemingly gave the legislature greater authority.

Kitchener, however, argued on 2 March, 1913, that there was no need of a delay as he (erroneously) saw no connection between the two measures. On the other subject, he noted that, despite the natural public sympathy for the Turks, the country remained perfectly calm. This he attributed partly to the nationalists' loss of influence and possibly to the hope that the British government was prepared to grant a larger consultative voice in the management of Egypt's internal affairs. As to whether Cromer's input should be solicited, it was apparent, by reading between the lines, that Kitchener did not welcome the idea. He indicated that in framing his plan he had consulted the Egyptian government's law experts. While he did not express an opinion one way or the other, he left it up to the Foreign Office to decide.[38]

On the same day Kitchener sent Grey a private letter in which he elaborated on the need to promote the aspirations of the educated public to participate more fully in the administration of the country. He thought, furthermore, that the confirmation of public support would aid the council of ministers in checking the undue and demoralizing influence of the Khedive. Thus far the ministers had been unable to control him, forcing the Agency to step in when things threatened to get out of hand. While well-informed Egyptians appreciated that the British would not permit any overt act of tyranny, they were at the same time troubled at having to rely on the interference of a foreign power in their affairs. Kitchener assured Grey that the confidence of those who loyally supported the British would be shaken if his suggested modest reforms were put on hold without any other steps taken to improve the existing unsatisfactory conditions. The only other option that he could see was to establish a Protectorate which would legalize Britain's position in Egypt, as well as provide continuity and assurance of proper government. Kitchener had no

illusions that such a policy would gain traction at the Foreign Office. He told Grey: "This course may, however, be far from your views and entirely out of the question."[39] Why he included the suggestion he knew was unacceptable was evidently intended to induce Grey to approve his proposed constitutional changes without excessive delay. His strategy worked.

Grey replied on 10 April, accepting all of Kitchener's proposals and only requesting minor changes in the wording of a few articles. Kitchener drew up a new draft, went over the details with the Egyptian Minister of Justice and Judicial Adviser, and submitted it to Grey for the approval of the British government.[40] Consent was readily given and in July the new Organic Law came into being.

The elections to the Legislative Assembly were held in December 1913. The electoral law provided for indirect balloting with voters over the age of 20 participating in the selection of electors who, in turn, chose the members of the Legislative Assembly. Kitchener's goal was to bring together a collection of men free of party politics and factionalism and dedicated to working together to advance the well-being of the country. He put in place safeguards that would ensure the election of mostly conservative men to the new body. Property qualifications for electors and representatives of the new chamber were so high that only a handful qualified and these came mostly from supporters of the Umma Party. The delegates chosen by registered electors consisted mostly of wealthy landlords, 49 out of the total of 66. There were practically no extreme nationalists sitting in the chamber when it met for the first time as most lacked the means to qualify as electors, not to mention that few, if any, were likely to be supported by the wealthy in either rural or urban districts. A number of Copts ran for office but, for obvious reasons, none were elected. The new Assembly contained 21 elected and 4 nominated members who, at one time or another, held seats on the old Legislative Council and General Assembly.[41] Kitchener was reasonably pleased by the outcome of the elections, declaring that the new chamber "contains much good material in the shape of men knowing the real needs and desires of the country and able to give expression to them."[42]

The Legislative Assembly opened its proceedings on 22 December, 1913, preceded by a dignified ceremony that included the swearing in of the members and a speech by the Khedive in French, and attended by the heads of the diplomatic agencies, religious leaders and other persons of note.[43] The government had appointed a president and a vice-president and in the first order of business, the Legislative Assembly, with the right

to choose the 2nd vice-president, elected the wildly popular Saad Zaghloul Pasha almost unanimously. A gifted parliamentarian and orator, Zaghloul had served as a cabinet minister until 1912 when he resigned after falling out with the Khedive.[44] He was expected to work hand-in-hand with his old colleagues but, as it turned out, he emerged as the most vitriolic and persistent critic of the government. Zaghloul's troublesome conduct was occasioned by his desire to gain an extension of the rights of the Legislative Assembly and perhaps a bruised ego—angry that those in authority shrugged off his advice.

Kitchener had counted on the wealthy landlords elected to combine with the 10 that had been nominated to provide strong support for the government. In the beginning the Assembly, while containing a handful of irreconcilable members, was rather well disposed towards the government. The landlords, however, had little ability or education, held no definite political views and seemed unable to understand the responsible role of the Assembly or the difference between criticism and obstructionism. On top of this they were intimidated and bewildered by the virulent rhetoric of Zaghloul and his followers. They became almost passive spectators in the Opposition's campaign to discredit the Prime Minister and his ministers. Zaghloul was familiar with the workings and weaknesses of the government and he relished baiting ministers or engaging them in debate, no matter how trivial the issue.

Pouring oil on the fire was the intrusive hand of the Khedive. His pride had been hurt and his financial condition rendered precarious by the government's action in cancelling the sale of his railway to an Italian group and in putting an end to his corrupt practices—both episodes will be described in the next chapter. He bore a bitter grudge against Mohammed Said and was determined to replace him so as to show that no ministry could carry on without his confidence. He repaired his frayed relations with Zaghloul by being especially gracious and inviting him on special occasions to the Palace. His agents visited legislative members who were wavering or supporters of the government and subjected them to every variety of cajolery and intimidation. Abbas used the native press that he controlled or subsidized to the advantage of the Opposition, which was extolled as a model of disinterested patriotism while the government was disparaged and misrepresented and its supporters ridiculed and portrayed as traitors to the national cause. The Khedive's methods were effective as one observer noted: "The Egyptian notable who will put up for any length of time with being abused in the Press and cold-shouldered at the Palace,

unless with the prospect of some immediate advantage before him … can be counted on the fingers of one hand."[45]

An element of uncertainity about the Assembly started to vex Kitchener even before it met and he was less optimistic about its ability to produce constructive results. He wrote in his last report:

> If outside … influence and foolish counsels prevail, and the Assembly by unjustified hostility to the Government, unseemly bickering, unreasonable and futile attempts to extend its own personal importance … it will convince all reasonable men that this country for the present is not fitted for those representative institutions which are now on their trial in Egypt.[46]

During the early months of 1914 the increasingly tumultuous proceedings in the Assembly confirmed Kitchner's worst fears. The proceedings degenerated into a sort of free for all, animated by a spirit of hostility, mistrust and suspicion of the government. In these conditions it was not surprising that the new body failed to accomplish much. A number of important pieces of legislation were prepared but it was decided not to introduce any of them. Indeed the atmosphere in the Assembly was so toxic that its members were relieved when the session ended on 17 June. The Assembly had held 43 sittings.[47] The war intervened before the next session and it never met again.

Notes

1. Roger Owen, *Lord Cromer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) 229, 332, 339; Archie Hunter, *Power and Passion in Egypt*: *A Life of Sir Elton Gorst*, *1861–1911* (London: Tauris, 2007), 234.
2. Grey to Kitchener, 17 November, 1911, FO 371/1115, No. 45679.
3. Kitchener to Grey, 15 December 1911, FO 371/1115, No. 51357.
4. Earl of Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1908), 318.
5. Kitchener to Grey, 15 December 1911, FO 371/1112, No. 51358.
6. Cheetham (for Kitchener) to Grey, 20 January, 1912, FO 407/178, No. 3739.
7. Grey to Kitchener, 23 February, 1912, FO 407/178, No. 7947.

8. Grey to Kitchener, 12 April, 1912, FO 371/1364, No. 15835.
9. Kitchener to Grey, 25 April, 1912, FO 407/178, No. 18816.
10. Grey to Kitchener, 17 May, 1912, FO 371/1362, No. 18816; Kitchener to Grey, 9 June, 1912, FO 371/1362, No. 25597.
11. Grey to Bertie, 5 September, 1912, FO 371/1362, No. 439.
12. Bertie to Charles Jonnart (French Foreign Minister), 22 January, 1913; Jonnart to Bertie, 27 January, 1913; Bertie to Grey, 29 January, 1913. All the correspondence can be found in FO 407/180, No. 4512.
13. Paul Cambon (French Ambassador in London) to Grey, 17 February, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 7811.
14. Kitchener to Grey, 16 March, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 13056.
15. Grey to Kitchener, 30 April, 1913, FO 800/48, Grey papers. For the comments of Foreign Office staff, see FO 371/1636, No. 13056.
16. Grey to Cambon, written on 6 May, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 13056. The document was turned over to the French Ambassador the next day.
17. Cheetham to Crowe, 19 October, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 48600.
18. Bertie to Stephen Pichon (succeeded Jonnart as Foreign Minister), October 15, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 47621.
19. Crowe (for Grey) to Kitchener, 7 November, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 48600.
20. Note by Vansitart, 7 January, 1914, FO 371/1636, No. 870.
21. Cambon to Grey, received 10 November, 1913, FO 407/181, No. 51029.
22. Grey to Kitchener, 5 December, 1913, FO 407/181, No. 51029.
23. Kitchener to Grey, 21 December, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 58054.
24. Kitchener to Grey, 27 May, 1914, FO 371/1964, No 25255. I hope the reader will not think ill of me if I admit that I based my account on the abbreviated version of the document.
25. Grey to Cheetham, 17 July, 1914, FO 371/1964, No. 25255.
26. Note by Vansitart, 27 July, 1914, FO 371/1964, No. 34345.
27. Cambon memorandum, 10 November, 1913, FO 407/181, No. 51029.
28. Kitchener to Grey, 14 April, 1912, FO 407/178, No. 16575.
29. Cecil to his wife, 12 November, 1912, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.

30. Grey to Kitchener, 14 November, 1912, 407/179, No. 48408.
31. Kitchener to Grey, 23 November, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 51060.
32. Kitchener to Grey, 30 November, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 52215.
33. Kitchener to Grey, 29 December, 1912, FO 407/180, No. 395.
34. Kitchener to Grey, 30 June, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 30953.
35. Kitchener to Grey, 30 June, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 30953; 29 December, 1912, FO 407/180, No. 395.
36. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1913*, House of Commons Sessional papers (Cd.7358), Egypt no. 1, 6.
37. Grey to Kitchener, 17, February, 1913, FO 407/180, No. 395.
38. Kitchener to Grey, 2 March, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 10780.
39. Kitchener to Grey, 2 March, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
40. Kitchener to Grey, 12 June, 1913, FO 407/180, No. 26973; Kitchener (Draft Law) to Grey, 30 June, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 30953.
41. Ronald Graham, "Notes on the First Elections for the Egyptian Legislative Assembly," 29 December, 1913, FO 371/1964, No. 15252.
42. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1913*, 8.
43. Kitchener to Grey, 30 January, 1914, FO 371/1964, No. 5574.
44. Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1923), 169.
45. Ronald Graham, "Report on the First and only Session of the Egyptian Legislative Assembly," 26 June, 1914, FO 371/1969, No. 53391.
46. Kitchener, *Annual Report for 1913*, 7.
47. Graham, "Report on the First and only Session."

CHAPTER 8

The Royal Rebel

From the moment that Abbas succeeded his father (Tewfik) he refused to accept the role in which he had been cast by the British. Technically he was a constitutional monarch, unable to act without the consent of the council of ministers. Nevertheless he held a fair amount of personal power and influence. He was the representative of the Ottoman sultan, embodying a prestigious semi-religious position. He was a direct descendant of Mohammed Ali, founder of the dynasty. He had access to huge financial resources with which he did not scruple to bribe politicians and members of the press. He was known to be vindictive, never failing to come down hard on any Egyptian who incurred his serious displeasure. As a result few were willing to risk offending him.

Still Abbas never understood that he did not hold enough trump cards to successfully challenge the authority of the Consul-General. When the high-handed Cromer blunted his direct efforts to gain administrative autonomy, he resorted to intrigue, seeking to build alliances with any group or Power that could help him resist British control.[1] Cromer came to see, rightly or wrongly, the Khedive's fingerprints behind French challenges to British rule—until 1904—as well as nationalist agitation in Egypt. The low-keyed tug-of-war between the Agency and the Palace persisted until Gorst's appointment as Consul-General. Gorst believed that it was in the interest of the Occupation to mend fences and gain the confidence and support of the Khedive. To that end he extended a friendly hand, frequently asking Abbas for his advice and assistance in official mat-

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_8

ters. After years of Cromer's uncompromising rule, Abbas was grateful for the considered treatment he received from Gorst and a strong friendship developed between the two men. The Khedive's rapprochement with the Agency ended when Gorst died and was replaced by Kitchener.

The Khedive resented and hated Kitchener and not only because he had been humiliated by him in the frontier incident of 1894. After the Gorst years he knew that he would no longer have any influence in the management of the country. On top of this, Kitchener's commanding presence, style and well publicized personal and professional activities—his tours in the countryside, his open policy at the Agency where he received all classes of Egyptians, his contribution to the Red Crescent Society during the Turco-Italian War and a stream of constructive reforms—had combined to raise his already considerable standing to dazzling heights and practically displaced him as head of the country in the eyes of the general public.

Abbas made no effort to reach an accommodation with Kitchener, presumably in the unrealistic belief that in the end he would triumph in a test of political will. Abbas was reasonably intelligent, but he kept repeating the same mistake and British observers were not far off the mark in concluding that he lacked wisdom and common sense. Caught in rapid flowing waters, he would have been well advised to swim with, rather than against, the current. But Abbas did not want to emulate his father, who, determined to hold on to his throne, had cooperated loyally with the British. It may be argued that there was nothing admirable in accepting the position of a mere constitutional façade for British rule but it is difficult to censure Tewfik as no other option existed.

Kitchener had too much on his mind during the early months of his tenure to concern himself with Abbas. If during that period the frontier incident had come up in a discussion with members of his staff, he probably would have shrugged off the Khedive's tactless behavior as due to poor advice or youthful indiscretion. Kitchener assumed that Abbas had learned his lesson and, now that he was older and more mature, would be reconciled to the British Occupation. Initially he was patient with the Khedive and made allowances for his missteps. In fact it often annoyed his aides at the Agency that he was too indulgent towards the Khedive. Storrs told his mother: "K. was at the beginning very gentle with him, and only put on the screw when it became apparent that bad faith was intended."[2] By all accounts the Khedive had few admirable qualities. He was self-indulgent, corrupt, a tortuous intriguer, an inveterate liar, oppressor of the weak and a sexual libertine.[3] In time Kitchener came to view Abbas with contempt

and, while he tried to maintain civil relations with him, looked for an excuse to have him deposed.

In much the same manner as Cromer, Kitchener ignored the Khedive as much as possible and ran the government from the Agency. Deprived of any meaningful role in the affairs of state, Abbas retreated to his palace on the outskirts of Cairo and ventured out only on rare occasions. In his isolated surroundings he sought ways to loosen Kitchener's iron grip over the country and improve his own political standing. His only course of action was to pursue his campaign indirectly. He could rely on the support of the press that he subsidized, but what he required above all was the support of the nationalist movement. The Khedive tried to mend his frayed relations with the nationalist party but his overtures were rejected. The nationalists had a long list of grievances against Abbas, charging him with being a vile traitor, allowing the British to exploit the country and cooperate with them in stifling political dissent, possessing no backbone and for the immoral conduct that he and his court displayed.[4]

Kitchener often learned of the Khedive's mischievous conduct after he ordered the submission of complaints and petitions sent to the Agency, instead of the Palace—a reversal of Gorst's policy. The news that Abbas was engaged in political intrigues and machinations, set off non-stop clashes between the two with each dispute usually ending the same way. The recurring setbacks did not induce Abbas to mend his ways but rather strengthened his determination to avoid falling under Kitchener's heel the next time.

In the summer of 1912 the British proposed to construct defensive works outside Alexandria, in reaction to rising tensions in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. The nationalists were up in arms over the project, claiming that it was the first step in Britain's long-range objective to convert Egypt into a colony or protectorate. Their press went on the offensive, and the lone exception was *al-Moayad* which had a close association with the Palace. The newspaper initially joined the anti-British chorus but, presumably on the Khedive's orders, suddenly fell silent. Although extremely anti-British, Abbas would have had a good reason to intervene. If a paper, known to be under the influence of the Palace, published inflammatory articles against the British, Kitchener's wrath was certain to be directed at him. As a means to deceive Kitchener, the Khedive persuaded the editor of *al-Ahram*, which had no direct ties to the Palace, to carry the fight against the construction of the forts. Abbas hoped that, while Kitchener would be unable to connect him to the violent attacks against the British, word of

his action would leak out and help restore his credibility with the nationalists.[5] The ploy, however, completely missed the mark. It failed to narrow the gap with the nationalists and also riled Kitchener who discovered that he was behind the articles in *al-Ahram*.

Abbas' next idea was to piece together a new party of moderate nationalist elements. That prospect received a boost when the National Party of Mohammed Farid split up between moderate and radical factions. British officials at the Agency saw signs of Abbas trying to rally remnants of the National Party and enter into close relations with some of its prominent members who were invited for private talks and entertained on special occasions at the Palace. On top of this, it was hardly a coincidence that the newspapers at the disposal of Abbas should have initiated a well-organized campaign at about the same time. Taking the lead the *al-Moayad* in restrained tones called for a new party (by fusing old ones together) on the basis of support for the Khedive, maintaining a connection with Constantinople and avoidance of violent methods.[6]

Matters came to a head during the return of Sheikh Shawish, the radical nationalist, who had been extradited from Constantinople where he had fled to avoid prosecution. As already mentioned, Kitchener doubted that the trial should be held since there appeared to be insufficient evidence to gain a conviction. He suspected that Abbas was somehow behind the move to try Shawish, although he was unsure of the reason. That became more apparent during a conversation with Mohammed Farid (before fleeing to Constantinople) who had continued to maintain civil relations with the British. Farid tried to dissuade Kitchener from sending Shawish back to Constantinople after his release, and in the process, let slip that it would upset Abbas. Farid's inadvertent comment convinced Kitchener that Abbas' plan all along was to use Shawish as his agent to coax the nationalists to join his party. He made it clear to Farid that he would not tolerate the formation of a new party under the aegis of the Palace. "I let it be known," Kitchener announced to Grey, "that the so called moderate party had better cease to exist."[7]

Still nothing, not even Kitchener's threats, seemed to deter Abbas from his long-range purpose of setting up his own political party. The Khedive delayed taking his holidays until early autumn and braved the summer heat so that he could coordinate his numerous plots. Initially he concentrated on winning over the main elements of the National Party whose support was central to his objective. He hired a French journalist named Raymond Colrat, who was the editor of the newspaper *Le Nil*, to write

scurrilous articles about Kitchener and the British. Colrat had a low reputation outside French journalistic circles, lived well beyond his means and it was common knowledge that his services were available to the highest bidder. Colrat took advantage of the latitude given to foreigner journalists under the Capitulations to carry out the Khedive's directive. Abbas did not conceal his connection with Colrat. His purpose in openly inviting the Frenchman to his Palace and reportedly paying him large sums of money was undoubtedly intended to draw the attention and sympathy of the nationalists.

Colrat's vituperative articles appeared on almost a daily basis and were infectious, leading other French journalists to adopt the same tone. It would have been complicated, not to say politically embarrassing, for Kitchener to try him under the Press Law. Kitchener asked the French Consul-General to put restraints on Colrat and other local French journalists, but to no avail. He complained to Grey that the indifference or lack of cooperation by his French counterpart in Cairo seemed hardly compatible "with the Anglo-French agreement and the Entente between the two countries." Kitchener claimed that he would have ignored the attacks anywhere but in Egypt as even "well-disposed natives cannot understand that statements so hostile to Great Britain can be allowed to appear unless they contain at any rate some measure of truth, while the dissatisfied class is only too glad to make use of them for propagating anti-English and anti-Christian sentiments among the ignorant and easily influenced masses." Since the French Agency was unwilling to curb the anti-British line of its national journalists, Kitchener reluctantly asked for permission to begin procedures to shut down *Le Nil*.[8] Grey advocated postponing such action, pending consultation with the French Foreign Minister. He did reassure Kitchener that if the desired results were not forthcoming from Paris, he would authorize the adoption of administrative measures to stop the circulation of *Le Nil*.[9] In Kitchener's view all of this would take time and, in the interim, it was unlikely he would gain a respite from Colrat's venomous articles.[10]

Adding to Kitchener's frustration were the Khedive's latest series of machinations. Abbas, it was reported to the Agency, was exerting every effort to court the Copts in the hope of making them part of the nationalist movement—an effort that ultimately failed.[11] He used strong arm tactics to induce members of the government to work in the upcoming elections (for the Legislative Assembly) for candidates who were likely to support the nationalist cause.[12] He sent an educated lawyer to London to lobby anti-imperialist politicians and journalists to rail against the

Occupation and to attack Kitchener.[13] At the same time he paid *al-Ahram* to write articles depicting him in flattering terms in his supposed struggle to stand up to the British.[14] His elaborate campaign began to produce results, as evidenced by notable nationalists appearing at Palace functions, but it was short-sighted of him to think that it would not draw the attention of Kitchener.

By the summer of 1913 Kitchener had concluded that Abbas was beyond redemption and, while in London, sounded out British officials, past and present, about getting rid of him in favor of his son. Kitchener received no encouragement from the Foreign Office which worried more about the political consequences of dislodging Abbas from office than his dubious conduct. Grey told Kitchener that he did not think there was sufficient evidence to warrant his removal.[15] A second dissenting voice came from Cromer who advised Kitchener to be patient and wait on events. In the first place Abbas' deposition would raise questions about Egypt's status and complicate Britain's relations with the Ottoman Porte. Cromer declared that he would not be surprised if an event occurred before long that would sweep away the Ottoman Empire in Asia. If that should occur, the British government might find it convenient to annex Egypt "pure and simple."

On another point, Cromer noted that, although Abbas was unpopular in Egypt, it was important to avoid creating an incident that would help him attract public sympathy and serve as a rallying cause for nationalist extremist. Cromer suggested that Kitchener should take steps to humiliate Abbas like forbidding him to attend the council of ministers except by special invitation. There was a chance that Abbas might abdicate rather than put up with such treatment. Cromer had no more use of Abbas than Kitchener. In fact while at the Agency he came perilously close to dethroning the Egyptian monarch but instead had stripped him of most of his authority. Nevertheless, while he conceded that Abbas had abused his position, he thought it was best to leave him where he was because, if forced out, it was certain he would cause trouble for the British. Whether Kitchener was influenced by Cromer's arguments is unknown. What is certain is that he did not attempt to force the issue even though he knew that the war of nerves between him and the Khedive would continue and probably intensify. He did not have to wait long before locking horns with the Khedive again.[16]

While in London Kitchener learned, to his dismay, that the Khedive had been active in trying to form a new nationalist party. Kitchener was

under the impression that the idea had perished, so on returning to Cairo he arranged a meeting with the Khedive. After the usual exchange of disingenuous amities, Kitchener pointed out that it had come to his attention that efforts were being made in his absence to resuscitate the nationalist party in Egypt. The Khedive replied that he was unaware of it. Kitchener expressed astonishment, noting that the *al-Moayad* (the mouthpiece for the Khedive) came out almost daily with pieces urging the reconstitution of the nationalist party and there was mention of it even in the English papers. Abbas' only comment was that he never read the *al-Moayad*. Kitchener, who had information that articles in the *al-Moayad* were concocted in the Palace, told Grey that it was "a clumsy untruth," and two Egyptian cabinet ministers to whom he had repeated the Khedive's statement agreed that it was so.[17] Kitchener's concern about the possible emergence of a new nationalist party receded into the background when he became involved in the first serious open clash with the Khedive over, of all things, the sale of the royal railway.

In 1899 Abbas received British permission to construct a railway line from Alexandria to his Mariut estates—large agricultural holdings—at the edge of the western desert. The British hoped that the Khedive would be sufficiently distracted by his new venture to avoid getting into mischief. The Egyptian government even helped with the project, occasionally supplying him with second-hand railway material and sleepers as well as gangs of convicts to help with the construction. Abbas gradually extended the line well beyond his property so that by 1913 it had reached a point some 280 kilometers west of Alexandria. As the mounting costs added to his financial woes (as we shall see), he came to the inevitable conclusion that he must sell his railway. He informed Kitchener of his decision and inquired if the state would be interested in purchasing the line. Kitchener did not rule it out but Abbas failed to pursue the matter because he received two excellent offers from outside the country, one from an Italian syndicate and the other from a German company represented by the Dresdner bank.[18] Weighing the bids, Abbas chose the Italians, with an option to extend the railway to Sollum on the Libyan frontier. Under the terms of the agreement signed in March 1913, he was also to receive 50% of the profits. Abbas was jubilant over his good fortune and told Mohammed Said, the Prime Minister, that he had found an Italian purchaser for his railroad. Said then duly passed the information on to Kitchener.[19]

Kitchener had no wish to see Italy, a close ally of Germany, gain possession of the Mariut railway. He had learned in January 1913 that an

agent was negotiating on behalf of the Khedive to sell the railroad line to an Italian syndicate. Kitchener was unconcerned since he knew he could stop it. He told Grey that, as the railroad was built on government land, the Khedive could not dispose of it without the approval of the council of ministers.[20] Kitchener was evidently surprised when Said notified him that Abbas had already struck a deal with the Italian syndicate.

Kitchener, working through the Egyptian Prime Minister, informed Abbas that he had over-stepped his bounds by selling property that was not legally his. Looking for a way out of his dilemma, Abbas instead offered to sell the railroad to the government. Kitchener remained non-committal though he indicated that under certain conditions he would advise the council of ministers to make the purchase. If they went ahead and made an offer, it would be based on an expert's assessment of the actual value of the line. That figure, Abbas realized, was bound to be well below what the Italians were offering. In fact the Italians had given Abbas what amounted to a sweetheart deal as they were counting on him to use his good offices to persuade the Senussi tribesmen to lay down their arms.[21]

The thought of losing a substantial sum by abrogating the deal with the Italians prompted Abbas to reconsider selling the railway to the state. Kitchener warned Abbas that if, in defiance of the government, he went ahead and illegally sold the railroad to the Italians, a court might assess the damages against them, in which case the payment would have to come out of his pocket. Such a judgement would have ruined him. Abbas was deeply in debt because of his lavish spending and his credit rating was so bad that it was unlikely he would have been able to borrow money anywhere.[22] The Khedive was alarmed but felt he could not afford to yield. The British would pay no more than the current value of the railroad, which would not have come close to straightening the state of his finances. The Khedive wanted much more, setting the price at 800,000 livres, a figure that Kitchener regarded as grossly inflated and thus unacceptable. Kitchener told Abbas that he proposed to send him a letter outlining the government's formal position on his action in regard to the Mariut railroad. Abbas begged Kitchener not to send the letter, worried of the effect it would have on public opinion if it were known that his own financial interests had determined the decision to sell his railroad to an Italian syndicate. Kitchener went ahead and drafted the letter, forbidding the sale of the Mariut rail line to any foreign Power and allowing the government, if it so chose, to buy the Khedive's property but only on a commercial basis. Kitchener warned the Khedive that his continued recalcitrant

behavior would cause His Majesty's Government to take "your Highness's whole position into most serious consideration."[23] However, the Egyptian ministers, who were normally terrified of Abbas, were unwilling to sign the letter over his objections.

Thereupon Kitchener called on Grey to intervene to assure the ministers that they would be shielded from harm if they signed the letter. Grey complied with the request, assuring the ministers that they had the legal right to overrule the Khedive. They then proceeded to sign the letter which Kitchener personally delivered to Abbas.[24] Kitchener was overly optimistic when he commented: "I think that the message will clear the air and bring the Khedive to his senses."[25] Although threatened with dethronement, Abbas refused to bow gracefully to defeat. Once outmaneuvered, as was often the case, his habit was to fall back, consider if he had any options and, if so, strike from another direction.

While avoiding Kitchener as much as possible, the Khedive took out his anger by tormenting his ministers for deserting him. At a meeting early in May, he lost all self-control, raising his voice, making false accusations and berating them like willful children. Informed of what had occurred, Kitchener accurately surmised, "that Abbas' rage was due to their having sent the letter on the Mariut Railway and Abbas' frustrations over his aborted negotiations with the Italians."[26]

As late as the summer of 1913, Abbas refused to acknowledge that the writing was on the wall and was thinking of ways to revive his arrangement with the Italian syndicate. He journeyed to Constantinople to repair his strained relations with the Ottoman Porte and in so doing hoped to persuade it to make representations to the British on his behalf. Abbas' mission failed because the leading Turkish authorities were unwilling to expend what little credit they had left with London for someone they disliked.[27]

As the year wore on, Kitchener delivered an unexpected blow to the Khedive to try to end his systematic frauds and swindles and, as it turned out, indirectly resolved the sale of the Mariut railway. The Waqf Bureau, which administered large funds bequeathed by pious Muslims for religious, educational and social purposes, was under the control of the Khedive. It was common knowledge in British circles that the Khedive was diverting funds from the Muslim charities to his personal account to maintain his life of luxury and to use as bribes to exert his political influence. As a Christian and foreigner Cromer had been reluctant to intervene, while Gorst, for obvious reasons, had shown less sympathy about the complaints

against the Khedive's transgressions. Kitchener had no inhibitions about taking the matter into his own hands. By then realization of the Khedive's embezzlement of charitable funds had spread into the Muslim community and this gave him the opening he needed. With the cooperation of the Egyptian ministers, an investigation was launched which showed that the Khedive and members of his court had recklessly despoiled the charitable foundation, by an amount estimated to be £80,000 annually, for their own ends. It was also revealed that the sale of decorations to people who had done little to deserve them had brought in half that amount.[28]

Backed by undeniable proof of the Khedive's corrupt practices and aware that his misappropriation of charitable funds was common knowledge in Egypt, Kitchener believed that the time had come to transfer control of the Muslim endowments to a new government ministry. While the Khedive was away during the summer of 1913, Kitchener sounded out the Grand Vizier in Constantinople on his thoughts about placing the Waqf under the control of a government ministry. The Grand Vizier who was pro-British and on cordial terms with Kitchener gave his approval to the proposed change.[29]

On 6 November Kitchener, confident that he held all the trump cards, informed the Khedive at a meeting that the British Government had decided that the administration of the Waqf should he turned over to a new government ministry and that the present scandal caused by the sale of grades and decorations must cease. Once these issues were settled he would be prepared to discuss the Egyptian government's purchase of the Mariut railway for a price that could be justified by the ministry of finance. Heavily in debt, the Khedive was shaken at the prospect of losing two important sources of income. While he did not address the sale of decorations, he objected to the removal of the Waqf from his authority on the implausible grounds that it would violate Islamic religious law. Kitchener replied that the issue was not open for discussion as he was simply executing a directive from London. The Khedive insisted that he had done nothing wrong and that Kitchener had been misinformed by troublemakers, despite the lengthy list of his misdeeds. He wanted to know what he had done to lose the confidence of the British authorities. Kitchener could have spoken at length on that subject but confined his answer to their distrust and dissatisfaction of his entourage. Abbas shot back, "No it is me you mean." Kitchener repeated the same statement, prompting Abbas to exclaim "Lord Cromer always said the same thing about my entourage," as if to suggest that it could not be a serious matter. Kitchener replied "I

did not know it, but much regretted that so long had elapsed without improvement." The Khedive yielded in the end, at least in principle, and requested that before the change was effected he would like to consult the Grand Qadi and the Porte, a process that would take about a week. Kitchener agreed to the delay.[30]

Kitchener's real objective had been to undercut the Khedive's remaining political authority in Egypt but he had just cause to worry about the vile men who dominated the royal court. They were corrupt, many were hardened criminals and some had been involved in assassination plots abroad while others indulged in lewd behavior.[31] Abbas had drawn such men to his side because they reinforced his prejudices, could be counted on to disseminate anti-British propaganda and carried out his criminal practices without question. But apart from the reprehensible character of Abbas' inner circle, there were rumors of a cabal at the Palace. The Prime Minister told Kitchener to be careful as he had heard there was some sort of Palace plot to have him assassinated by a certain Mohammed El Abd. Kitchener dismissed the idea but a day or two later a native friend visited him at the Agency and warned him to "beware of the Palace." Kitchener asked him what he meant. He explained that after one of Kitchener's interviews with the Khedive over the Mariut railway, "His Royal Highness had thrown his tarboosh against the wall and sworn … before some of his entourage, that he would either have me out of Egypt, or that I should be killed." This was confirmed by one of the Agency's paid informants who pretended in public to be a nationalist. The man had invited a Palace lackey to dinner and, after plying him with plenty of alcohol, learned that they had found the right man to do the job. Kitchener doubted there was any substance to the rumors, rationalizing that the Khedive would not be foolish enough to become involved in "a plot of this sort."[32] If a conspiracy hatched by the Palace to assassinate Kitchener had existed, it was never carried out.

Kitchener had no sooner sent a memo to the Foreign Office containing the results of his interview with the Khedive on 6 November than he was approached with unwelcome news. On 8 November members of the Egyptian government reported to Kitchener that the Khedive, acting contrary to their advice, had gone back on his decision to accept the requested transferal of the Waqf. Kitchener conveyed the information to the Foreign Office with the recommendation that, in case of the Khedive's continued refusal, it should be made clear to him that "action will be taken for his deposition." Kitchener did not anticipate any adverse consequences if such a step were adopted as the Khedive was hated throughout the country and

the Grand Vizier had already indicated though an agent that the Turkish authorities also held him in low esteem.[33]

Foreign Office officials, in response to Kitchener's latest telegram, discussed the pros and cons of removing Abbas. It was pointed out that he was unpopular, thoroughly corrupt and worthless, could not be trusted whatsoever, would not hesitate to sacrifice anything to gain his personal ends, and was very anti-British. Who would Kitchener put in his place was the next topic of conversation? There was general agreement that Abbas' son (Abdul Moumeim), the obvious heir, was only 14 and unqualified for the succession at present. This seemed to be the main stumbling block and at this point the members dispersed to give the matter further consideration. When the discussion resumed later in the day, the attitude had changed and it was decided that, if the Khedive could be closely monitored and kept from straying, it was best to keep him where he was. The following entry summed up the conclusion of the leading personnel of the Foreign Office: "An unpopular Khedive makes things easier for us."[34] Thus the idea of getting rid of Abbas was set aside and Kitchener was so informed (12 November).

In the same letter, Grey instructed Kitchener that the purchase of the Mariut railway was to be Abbas' *quid pro quo* for giving up control of the Waqf and decorations.[35] Kitchener was stunned by Grey's statement which was inconsistent with his previous position. His reply on 15 November was less than diplomatic in tone. He referred to their meeting in London last September in which he had been given to understand that he was to insist that the Khedive put an end to the scandal caused by despoiling the Waqf funds and the practice of selling grades and decorations and, as compensation for his consequent loss of revenue, the Egyptian government was to offer for the Mariut railway a sum over and above its commercial value.[36] The latest telegram from the Foreign Office now essentially left it up to the Khedive to accept or reject the proposed new arrangement. To do so, Kitchener insisted, was to acknowledge the right of Abbas to carry on his corrupt practices which was contrary to the firm British resolve to inculcate honest government in Egypt.[37]

While this was going on, Kitchener continued to carry on discussions with the Khedive through intermediaries over the transferal of the Waqf from his control. As a compromise, Abbas suggested referring the question to Constantinople for its consideration. Abbas was confident that the Ottoman authorities would take a jaundiced view of British interference in a purely religious matter. Kitchener had already cleared the ground

with the Grand Vizier so he raised no objections. Abbas was surprised and crushed on receiving the answer from the Grand Vizier who supported Kitchener's position, pointing out that a Ministry of the Waqf already existed in Constantinople and he saw no reason why one should not be established in Egypt.[38] The Grand Vizier later told the British Ambassador in Constantinople that it was a mistake to assume that the Caliphate was opposed to reform if aimed at the suppression of abuses. He added that the Caliphate had received an unending stream of complaints from Egyptians, begging it to intervene to put a stop to the scandalous peculations of the Abbas administration.[39]

The Khedive continued to drag his feet, notwithstanding that his only possible lifeline had been severed, but he came around, bit by bit, urged on by his ministers, and agreed to accept Kitchener's demands. The changes occurred during the third week in November with the government in control of both the Waqf and decorations. In return the Khedive received 376,000 livres but part of that amount was used to pay off some of his outstanding debts.[40] Public opinion in the country applauded the transferal of the Waqf to a new ministry of the government, as did most of the press.[41]

Kitchener informed Grey of his deal with the Khedive before receiving a reply to his telegram of 15 November.[42] In a private letter, Grey made no reference to his earlier instructions, only tried to explain in a rambling manner that it was not for want of confidence in Kitchener that he had declined to depose the Khedive. In a stark departure from his previous attitude, he insisted that to stop the Khedive's scandals he would have requested permission from the British government to remove him from power. He praised Kitchener on his success and a fortnight later when the details of the arrangement with the Khedive had been ironed out, he sent a note approving of the settlement and again congratulated him "on having secured a reform much needed in the interest of honest administration."[43]

Kitchener had no illusions that Abbas would mend his ways, even after suffering two humiliating defeats in a row. He did not have long to wait. Intelligence reports began to filter into the Agency that Abbas was again involved in political intrigues with Italian authorities. The British government was already annoyed with the Italians for going behind its back to work out a deal with Abbas to purchase the Mariut railway. During the spring of 1913 Rodd had approached the Italian Foreign Minister and expressed concern about the breach of protocol. The Foreign Minister half-apologized, admitting that his government should have sought per-

mission from London before allowing the Italian syndicate to enter into negotiations with the Khedive and led him to believe that another such incident would not happen again.[44] Judging from later developments, it's hard to resist the conclusion that the Italians were either disingenuous or their memory was faulty.

The Khedive's motives for his latest involvement with Rome were at first unclear but they would soon become apparent to officials defending Britain's hegemony in Egypt. For years Abbas had searched for a foreign power to act as a counterweight to the British. His efforts to induce the Turks to move in had not borne fruit and it was futile to make overtures to either the French or Germans as their interests lay elsewhere. On the other hand Italy, with a stake in North Africa, was a power worth pursuing in earnest. Abbas laid the groundwork for a possible alliance with Italy when he switched sides during the Turco-Italian War. His ties were further strengthened with his participation in the settlement between the conflicting parties and his sale (later overturned because of British pressure) of the Mariut railway.[45]

During November 1913 Kitchener heard rumors that the Khedive had made an agreement with the Italian government to send a deputation to try to work out a settlement with the Senoussi. The Senoussi chief, Sidi-el-Senoussi, barely spoke to the Khedive's men—after initially declining to grant them an interview—merely telling them that he would not negotiate with the Italians unless they accepted his conditions. The deputation returned without having accomplished anything. Undaunted, the Khedive arranged to dispatch a second mission to the Senussi. According to Kitchener's sources the Khedive received £25,000 from the Italian government and, if his efforts proved successful, he was promised an additional £75,000. Kitchener doubted that Abbas would be able to effect a reconciliation between the Senussi and the Italians.[46] During the second week in December Sidi-el-Senoussi sent a message to Kitchener informing him that the proposals for peace had failed. He and his men were still determined to defend their country against the Italians to the end.[47]

In January 1914 Kitchener learned that the Khedive's negotiations with Rome had commenced the previous summer while he was absent on leave in England. As far as he could determine, payments to the Khedive were to be made through the Banco di Roma. Kitchener pointed out to Grey that the Khedive had acted on his own initiative, without consulting him or the Egyptian government. After Kitchener returned from England the Khedive had made no mention of the matter even though

they had met on several occasions and he had plenty of opportunity to do so. Kitchener, however, thought it best not to say anything. Although it was not in Britain's interests to allow Abbas to act as a surrogate for a foreign power in the enemy's camp, legally Kitchener could not forbid him from mediating a dispute between two warring parties.

With information mostly supplied by Kitchener, the Foreign Office lodged a protest against the Italian government early in March 1914, charging it with communicating directly with Abbas for political reasons—in reference to the missions sent to the Senoussi—without the knowledge of the British Consul-General and Egyptian government. Grey urged Rodd to "point out that this is entirely contrary to the assurances of the Italian government, and say that … such proceedings should be abandoned."[48] The Italians paid no attention to British representations. That became apparent when the Khedive's brother, Mohammed Ali, visited Rome where he was given a reception befitting a head of state. He had an audience with the King, was cordially received at the headquarters of the Banco di Roma (which, as noted, was suspected of financial dealings with Abbas), and engaged in talks with a number of prominent Italian politicians, including the Foreign Minister. One of the most popular Italian newspapers reported Ali's visit as an indication of the strengthening bonds between the two countries.[49]

The plot thickened when Kitchener found out that a certain Abd al-Hamid Shadid, who was the sub-manager of the Banco di Roma's branch in Alexandria, had been in regular contact with the Palace and was receiving regular reports on the state of the Khedive's negotiations with the Senoussi. In an interview with the Italian Consul-General in Cairo, Kitchener wanted to know why a commercial establishment that was only allowed to trade in Egypt had been secretly involved in serious political issues affecting the country without permission or knowledge of the government. The Italian assured Kitchener that he knew nothing about such matters.[50] Even if Kitchener was prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt it did not change the obvious, that the Italian government, in order to mask its activities with the Khedive, was operating through representatives of the Banco di Roma instead of its own formal agents.

Rodd broached the subject to the Minister of the Colonies, Fernando Martini, adding that the indirect approach by the Italian government did not alter the import of what had been done. Martini, who also happened to be a good friend of Rodd, spoke with frankness and did not try to conceal Rome's secret maneuvers. While he personally disapproved of

what had occurred, he impressed upon Rodd that conditions were such in Cyrenaica that his government was inclined to clutch at any straw which might prevent further bloodshed and end the fighting. Rodd replied that it was the second time that he had drawn attention to inappropriate conduct on the part of the Italian authorities in Egypt to which the British government could not continue to remain indifferent. He advised that in the future the Italian government would be much better off to rely on the good-will and assistance of the British than to attempt to operate behind their backs.[51]

The Italians always expressed remorse when caught operating inappropriately but, once out of view of the British, had no compunction about returning to their deceptive pattern of behavior. The reports of intrigues between the Italian government or its surrogate Banco di Roma, and Abbas in the spring and summer of 1914 to undermine British ascendancy in Egypt showed no signs of abating. If anything, the conspiracy was broadening and growing in seriousness. The British intercepted an important message sent by Shadid to a fellow conspirator, revealing the existence of a secret agreement between Abbas and the Italian authorities. Apparently the Italians were prepared to build a naval base at Tobruk (slightly west of the Egyptian border), plus raise the level of their army occupying Libya to 40,000 men, supposedly as a means to intimidate the British and elevate the Khedive's standing in the country. In return the Italians wanted, among other things, Abbas to use his connections to organize a boycott of British goods in Egypt.

In what came as a surprise to the British was the deepening involvement of the Italian government in the internal politics of Egypt. The Italians provided subsidies to politicians to elicit support for the Khedive. Similarly they supplied funds to the nationalists and invited their leaders to Rome for strategy sessions. Their objective was to mobilize the nationalists to work in tandem with their agents and the Khedive. At the same time Shadid was funneling money to certain Egyptian newspapers to write pro-Italian articles. The Egyptians still nursed bitter feelings towards Italy and that animosity had to be overcome before a formal alliance between Rome and the Khedive could take place.

The most detailed arrangement between the Khedive and the Italian government was contained in a letter (Shadid sent to the President of the Banco di Roma) which fell into British hands in June. Under the agreement the Khedive was to do everything in his power to convince the Senoussi to discontinue their resistance; foster the growth of an anti-British move-

ment in Egypt and abroad; turn the Egyptian army and the public against the Occupation in the event of an outbreak of war between the competing alliances; provide assistance to Italian troops seeking to blockade the Suez Canal in case of a conflict; engineer a boycott of British goods and use his influence to promote Italian and German trade in Egypt; and finally urge Egyptians businesses to transfer their accounts from British banks to the Banco di Roma. The Italians for their part promised to defend the Khedive and prevent any change in the status of Egypt.[52]

This latest development was especially worrisome to Kitchener and the Foreign Office. If both parties carried out their end of the bargain, it was certain to cause the British plenty of trouble in Egypt. The events that followed could not have eased Kitchener's concern. There were articles in the Egyptian press about the country's tightening relationship with Italy. A piece in the *al-Moayad* on 10 June went so far as to claim that Italy's rivalry with Britain and France would enhance Egypt's chances for independence.[53] During the latter part of June a British agent in Italy reported that there was an upcoming conference of Egyptian nationalists in Rome, at which time an anti-British demonstration was planned.[54]

Rodd confronted Italian officials with plenty of circumstantial evidence about their secret dealings with the Khedive, but, as was to be expected, they disavowed any involvement to undermine the British in Egypt. The Italians were under the impression that simply by denying any wrong doing they could continue to operate in the same manner with impunity. It's just as well that such calculation was not put to the test. It is unlikely that the intrigues between the Italians and Abbas would have been tolerated in Cairo and London much longer. Kitchener was close to the end of his tether. He reminded Grey in May that, after the chapter on the Mariut railway had been closed, he warned the Khedive that any recurrence of bad behavior "might affect His Highnesses' situation in the country." Yet despite the threat, Kitchener remarked, Abbas was carrying on negotiations with the Italians "of possibly a far more important nature than those of which you disapproved last year."[55] At any rate the alliance between the Khedive and the Italians fell apart before the summer was over because of two events: the attempted assassination of Abbas in which he was wounded[56]and the outbreak of World War I.

It was inevitable that the sharp differences between Kitchener and Abbas should spill over into the realm of domestic politics. During the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, Kitchener heard rumors from several sources in March 1914 that Abbas had dismissed his cabinet, an

action that would have required his consent. Kitchener sent the Minister of Justice to seek an explanation from the Khedive. When approached, the Khedive denied the reports, saying he would not contemplate replacing the Prime Minister without authorization from the Consul-General. Kitchener knew better than to trust the Khedive's word. As matters stood he saw no reason for a cabinet change. He felt that the ministry had the support of a majority in the Assembly while the Opposition, confined merely to noisy nationalists supported by the Khedive, numbered no more than a dozen. As for the Prime Minister, Mohammed Said, he had not, in Kitchener's eyes, done anything to warrant dismissal. He did not always get along with his ministers, but he was a British ally and had always carried out whatever task he had been asked to perform. Kitchener believed that the Khedive held a personal grudge against the current ministry for stopping the sale of the Mariut railway to the Italians. If a change of ministry became necessary he proposed waiting until the autumn when both he and the Khedive returned from their summer holidays.[57]

Grey replied that it was important to avoid doing anything that would unnecessarily provoke a grave crisis in Egypt. He agreed that he was not aware of any reason that would necessitate a change of ministry at present, but if one should be required later "I am willing to approve the course in the last sentence of your telegram."[58]

Just as Kitchener suspected, it was not long before the Khedive, no longer able to count on Mohammed Said's loyalty, made an open bid to relieve him of his office. Said had been appointed to succeeded Butrus Ghali because it was generally felt that he could exercise a calming and conciliatory influence on the various conflicting elements in the country. He had the full confidence of the Khedive at the time but friction gradually developed between the two and in recent months it had become acute in character. According to Cecil, Said, no longer able to maintain his balancing act of pleasing both Kitchener and the Khedive, had come down on the side of the former. Said's pro-British tilt had "made the Khedive loath him more than ever."[59]

On 23 March the Khedive informed Kitchener that because Said had forfeited his confidence, he wanted to make a change as soon as possible. He indicated that he would accept Mustapha Fehmi (a former head of the council of ministers) as Said's replacement and saw no need to make any further changes in the ministry unless required by the new prime minister. Kitchener tried his best to change the Khedive's mind. He searched for a compromise and, when that failed, pointed out how inopportune

the moment was to bring in a new prime minister while the Legislative Assembly was still in session. He suggested waiting until Abbas returned from leave in the autumn. Abbas remained adamant and requested that the matter be referred to the Foreign Office for its opinion, to which Kitchener agreed.[60]

In the evening Kitchener sent for Cecil to ask him how he should react if Abbas insisted on sacking Said. For someone who normally laid down the law, it was, to say the least, very odd behavior. Kitchener was under the impression, or claimed, that it was better to avoid an open rupture with the Khedive lest it cause a political crisis. But by thinking along those lines he was really deluding himself. Why then was he prepared to defer to the Khedive, given that in the past he had avoided haggling over differences and simply dictated what he wanted done? Kitchener would never have admitted any form of weakness but it was actually the poor condition of his health that lay at the bottom of his decision to step back in the face of the Khedive's intransigence. Kitchener, in effect, was having a nervous breakdown, as a result of which he had momentarily lost the will to confront Abbas. The responsibility as the *de facto* ruler of Egypt weighed heavily on him and, along with the long hours that he spent each day receiving petitioners and at his desk writing memos and engaging in other administrative work, had taken their toll. What may have driven Kitchener over the edge was news of the death of Major Arthur McMurdo and, since he was an old and dear friend, he felt his loss deeply. McMurdo had saved Kitchener's life in a skirmish near Suakin in 1888 (possibly when he was struck in the jaw leading an attack on Handub) and, as Cecil commented to his wife, "the old man is a very faithful and oddly enough [a] warm-hearted friend."[61]

Cecil arrived to find Kitchener in a state of near collapse. Kitchener discussed his meeting with the Khedive and showed Cecil the draft of a telegram to the Foreign Office in which he indicated that perhaps the Khedive was right in wanting to replace the Prime Minister. Cecil was livid at what he considered was an abject surrender and uncharacteristically engaged in a bitter dispute with Kitchener. He later confided the details to his wife:

> We had a most awful row and I told him this was ruin and destruction, that it would be a fearful blow to British prestige, that he had several times assured the Ministers that as long as they stuck to us they had nothing to fear and that if he now threw them over we should never be trusted again and so on. … He amazed me by saying that the Khedive had the right to

> dismiss his ministers and that he (the Khedive) had said that if he did not get rid of Mohammed Said he could not be responsible or go on leave himself. I pointed out that the Khedive was not responsible but we were, that if he dismissed his Ministers against our wishes it was an inimical act and that he would never dare to do it, and finally no one cared a rap whether the Khedive went on leave or not.[62]

Cecil succeeded in persuading Kitchener to modify his telegram to the Foreign Office to read that he thought that, under the circumstances, "it will be very difficult to oppose change of P.M."[63] The discussion continued when suddenly Kitchener, on his own, decided to sound out Fehmi who was spending the winter in Luxor. He had always liked and respected Fehmi who was known to be ardently pro-British.[64] He called in Storrs and asked him to draft a letter to Fehmi. In it Kitchener offered Fehmi the post of prime minister which he intimated was to be accepted without any other changes in the cabinet. Cecil argued forcibly but unsuccessfully against approaching Fehmi. He wrote: "It was an awful mistake as if it became known it would make Mohammed Said's position quite impossible and everything is known in Egypt." Cecil had a difficult time rationalizing Kitchener's conduct as he later explained to his wife: "He is hopelessly weak and for some reason funks the Khedive. I suppose it is health and he has had a nervous breakdown but it puzzles and worries me. … I should just as much have expected the Nile to run south as for him to behave like this."[65]

Fehmi's answer reached the Agency on the 25th. The old man maintained that his health did not permit him to accept the offer unless changes were made in the ministry and in the system. Kitchener found the first condition unacceptable and was unsure of the meaning of the second. He sent Storrs down to Luxor to personally work out an arrangement with Fehmi along the lines he initially proposed. Storrs was received cordially at Luxor and the first question he posed to Fehmi was what did he mean by a change in the system. Fehmi replied that he was referring to the administrative system, that he considered the mudirs were disgracefully out of control and the central authority needed to bring them back into line. When Storrs brought up the second question, Fehmi saw no point in going into detail since he had already declined Kitchener's offer. Storrs was thrown into confusion. After collecting his thoughts he told Fehmi that his letter had been interpreted differently by Lord Kitchener who imagined that his acceptance was subject only to ironing out the details.

Fehmi claimed that he was too weak and ill to take on such a heavy burden. Storrs argued with him for an hour and a half but to no avail. A second interview later in the day brought no change in Fehmi's position. Before Storrs left he asked whether Fehmi would reconsider if his doctor declared him fit enough to re-enter the political scene. The matter was left up in the air but Storrs doubted that any solution would be reached partly because of Fehmi's frail health and partly because of irreconcilable differences over the composition of the new cabinet.[66]

While the negotiations with Fehmi were going on, Kitchener heard from the Foreign Office. It had been puzzled by his telegram of the 23rd which seemed to contravene his previous one about Said. Grey wanted more information as to the reason why the Khedive wanted to dismiss Said. It was apparent that he did not favor a change and instructed Kitchener to tell the Khedive that he must be guided by the advice of HMG. Although the Foreign Secretary was reluctant to force a showdown with the Khedive in view of Britain's worsening relations with Turkey, he concluded that if "he is distinctly in the wrong we must make our decision and support it."[67]

Kitchener conveyed the gist of Grey's telegram to the Khedive, in effect telling him that HMG were not of the opinion that a change of Prime Ministers would be in the public interest at present. Abbas made no comment on receiving the message and Kitchener assumed that the matter would not be reopened until the fall.

Kitchener was encouraged by reports that Fehmi's frail health was improving and that in a few months he would be fit enough to take charge of the cabinet. When Kitchener informed Grey of his meeting with the Khedive, he also indicated that he had sounded out Fehmi "and it had been found that some time must elapse before his health is sufficiently restored to allow of his assuming office." Since no change in the ministry was expected until the fall, Kitchener maintained that the delay of a few months did not matter.[68]

It now remained for Kitchener to make a case for the removal of Said. On 28 March he contacted the Foreign Office and in describing the political situation in the country was less supportive of Said than he had been in the past. In fact Kitchener's continued praise of Said's loyalty, cooperation and efforts to allay fanaticism, was overshadowed by a long list he had compiled of his faults—that the Egyptian Prime Minister had a predilection to use tortuous methods to gain his ends; that he had impaired the solidarity of the cabinet by being frequently in conflict with his colleagues; that he

lacked tact and discretion; that he antagonized members of the Legislative Assembly; and that he had become unpopular in the country owing to a defamatory campaign conducted by newspapers subsidized by the Palace. Kitchener claimed that he had rescued Said from difficult circumstances on several occasions and questioned whether Britain's position might not be compromised in the future by his actions. On the other hand Kitchener praised Mustapha Fehmi, as a loyal supporter of His Majesty's Government, one of the few politicians unafraid of the Khedive, honest and straightforward and in whom he had the utmost confidence. All in all Kitchener could not help but admit that his appointment as prime minister would "be attended by an improvement in the native administration of the country." According to Kitchener, the only impediment to his selection was the state of his health which he was happy to learn had improved.[69]

Fehmi informed Kitchener that he would accept the appointment providing that certain conditions, which he did not specify, were met.[70] On 4 April Fehmi travelled to Cairo for a meeting with Kitchener. His medical advisers had initially refused to clear him to hold office and only agreed on the understanding that he should confine himself to being prime minister without a portfolio and transact all business from his home. It became evident to Kitchener during the interview that Fehmi had fallen under the influence of his son-in-law, Saad Zaghloul, and eventually planned to make a clean sweep of ministers who had been loyal to Britain. The substitutions he proposed were known, not for their talent, but rather their devotion to Zaghloul. A radical cabinet was unpalatable to Kitchener and all appeals to Fehmi failed to induce him to modify his attitude.

Fehmi had upset Kitchener's plans and left him in a sorry predicament. Later in the day Kitchener went over to the Palace to work out a new arrangement. Since the publicity had made it impossible to keep Said in place (as Cecil had predicted), it meant that the Khedive would be able to influence his successor. Kitchener and Abbas discussed possible candidates and eventually agreed on Hussein Rashdi, an able lawyer and good speaker. Rashdi consented to form a cabinet and submitted names for its composition. Kitchener accepted the proposed ministry, subject to Grey's approval.[71] The Foreign Office was bewildered by Kitchener's latest announcement, likening his rapid and complete change of views to the "boring of a compass." Still it raised no objection to the new ministry.[72]

The selection of Rashdi did not favor the Occupation as he was more likely to represent the interests of the Khedive. It is no wonder that informed observers considered his appointment as a victory for Abbas.

Cecil wrote that it was "the most awful defeat I have ever been in" and was right on target when he maintained that it had badly damaged British prestige.[73] To be sure, it was the most severe check suffered by Kitchener during his term as Proconsul.

During the period marked by Kitchener's struggle with ill-health and loss of nerve, the Khedive went on a royal tour of the Delta region. The trip was designed to show that he remained a popular figure in the country and, with his annual revenue significantly reduced, also provide him with an opportunity to raise the monetary level of his coffers. His prestige had taken a severe blow as a result of the adverse publicity over the sale of the Mariut railway and the fraudulent administration of the Muslim religious trusts, and he wanted to burnish his image by demonstrating, as a good monarch, his interest in the well-being of his dutiful subjects. His reception was warm and friendly wherever he went. The crowds were huge and enthusiastic and he went out of his way to be agreeable and friendly. For individuals willing to personally meet the Khedive the fee was outrageously high, even drinking a cup of coffee with him reportedly cost 200 livres. District officials paid as much as 1000 livres to be invited to lunch or to an event where they could be introduced to the Khedive. The amazement of British officials at the public's wild response to the Khedive's tour may be inferred from the following excerpt in Graham's memo:

> The Khedive's journey can be said to have been an unprecedented success. The weather was almost perfect, and all the arrangements passed off without a hitch. Everywhere he went he was greeted with an enthusiasm which, in view of the popular enthusiasm towards him on previous occasions of a similar nature, can only be described as astonishing.[74]

As Abbas made his way through the Delta, he diverted his journey to visit the homes of two prominent nationalists. In each instance there was a certain amount of fanfare during which Abbas delivered brief speeches, thanking each for his service to the country. To gain maximum publicity there were journalists on the scene to reproduce his speeches in their newspapers.[75] The event was seen as an important step in the Khedive's objective to reassert his control over the nationalist movement.[76]

Kitchener resented the Khedive's tour in the Delta, principally because the population was influenced into spending more money on the occasion than it could afford. Large sums were lavished on decorations and entertainment and considerable amounts were paid by individuals to induce

the Khedive to visit them at home. The total sum collected was estimated at between £50,000 and £80,000, and, as such, replaced about half the amount generated by the Khedive's plunder of the Waqf and sale of decorations. Kitchener saw that it would be difficult to check the Khedive's abuse. In the first place there was no coercion and the people willingly disbursed their own money even if they incurred debts in the process. Second any attempt to halt the Khedive's tours would have initiated a campaign in the nationalist press, which would charge that he was being prevented from personally seeing his subjects and inspecting how the country was being administered. Kitchener heard that the Khedive was so pleased with the financial windfall resulting from his tour that he considered undertaking another one in Upper Egypt the following year. Kitchener was determined to stop the Khedive's exploitation of the masses and he simply intended to tell him that His Majesty's Government opposed his taking such tours in the future.[77] Grey approved of the warning Kitchener proposed to make.[78]

Kitchener should have been concerned less with the Khedive excursion in the Delta than with his ongoing political activities. Abbas followed up his tour by bringing more prominent nationalists into his camp and collaborating with them on schemes against the British Occupation. After fluctuations in his fortunes, Abbas succeeded in rallying all the disparate nationalist factions, save for the extremists. He subsidized or gained control of practically all the remaining Arabic papers to further advance his agenda and that of the nationalists. He buried the hatchet with his arch enemy, Saad Zaghloul, and both worked to transform the Legislative Assembly into an organ of opposition to the British. His obstructionism and interference had been so effective that he had been able to remove a prime minister of whom he disapproved. Like a Phoenix rising from the ashes, his influence over the government was higher than it had been since the time of Gorst. The Egyptian government lacked the moral courage to openly oppose abuses of Khedival authority. The ministers had always been intimidated by Abbas because he was ruthless and vengeful but with his new popularity they were practically paralyzed by his mere presence at meetings. They put up with his personal insults and frigid disdain and capitulated easily under pressure rather than incur his wrath by holding out or conforming to Kitchener's wishes.[79] Cecil summed it up when he wrote: "At no meeting at which he [Abbas] is present does one hear a single voice raised against anything in which he is known to be interested."[80]

Cecil was probably correct when he claimed that Kitchener's apathy had allowed Abbas to become more brazen and to reinvent himself.[81] Barely able to function, Kitchener looked forward to his two-months of annual leave. On returning to Egypt he would have been fully rested and undoubtedly determined to re-establish his unquestioned political dominance. A showdown with Abbas would have been inevitable. Kitchener was fed up with the Khedive's troublesome conduct and had abandoned any hope that an entente between them could be reached. Before leaving for England there was a rumor circulating in Cairo that Kitchener had made plans to depose Abbas. He never followed through, so the story goes, because the man he had selected to replace Abbas turned him down.[82] It is highly unlikely that such an incident occurred. In the first place Kitchener was much too exhausted to have engaged in so complex a move and second the removal of Abbas would have required the consent of the Ottoman government and the Foreign Office—neither of which at the time was approached.

The Khedive embarked on a long itinerary that would end in Constantinople shortly before Kitchener's departure for England. Travelling through Europe, he very much wanted to cross over to London. The Khedive feared that his position was insecure since he had heard the rumors about Kitchener's search for his replacement. He wanted an audience with George V to assure him of his good intentions and to request that some restraint be placed on Kitchener.

The last thing that Kitchener wanted was for Abbas to proceed to Constantinople with his prestige enhanced. He sent a private letter to Grey in which he argued against honoring Abbas' request to visit London:

> You will have gathered from my dispatches and letters that His Highness' behavior during these past months has been the reverse of satisfactory. His attitude in forcing on the recent Ministerial crisis, his incitement and support of a factious opposition in the Assembly, his systematic attacks on British policy in his subsidized organs of the press, his recent tour in the Delta out of which he has made not only pecuniary profit but also as much political capital as possible, finally his intrigues with Italy show a general tendency on his part which renders it undesirable that he should receive encouragement or that his position should be in any way strengthened.

Kitchener maintained that the Khedive's sole purpose was to make political capital out of the reception accorded to him. Kitchener suggested that Abbas should be told that the British government would not regard his

proposed visit with favor on the pretext that he had failed to remove the objectionable elements in his entourage, as he had been requested to do on several occasions.[83]

Just as Kitchener was starting for England on 18 June, he was pleased to learn that he was to be created an earl. He landed at Dover on 23 June and six days later the King received him in audience. The King recorded in his diary: "I had a long talk with him about Egypt and the Khedive who is behaving abominably and intriguing against us."[84] When the Khedive arrived in Paris he was officially informed that if he came to London, the King would not grant him an interview. The news disheartened the Khedive and, as Kitchener had anticipated, he gave up the idea of going to London. As he went on to Constantinople, he was uncertain of his future and must have wondered if he had overplayed his hand. He had reason to worry. Abbas never returned to Egypt and, for that matter, neither did Kitchener.

Notes

1. Donald D. Mckale, "Influence without Power: the Last Khedive of Egypt and the Great Powers, 1914–1918," *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 33 (1997), 21.
2. Storrs to his mother, 16 November, 1913, Storrs papers, Micro R494, Reel 3, Box 2, folder 2, Egypt 1904–1913.
3. See Mckale, "Influence without Power," 21; and especially Ann Elizabeth Mayer, "Abbas Hilmi II: The Khedive and Egypt's Struggle for Independence," vol. 1 (PhD thesis: University of Michigan, 1978), Chs. 2 and 6.
4. Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 250 ff.
5. Mayer, "Abbas" vol. 1, 256–57.
6. Cheetham to Tyrrell, 15 September, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
7. Kitchener to Grey, 20 October, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48; Kitchener to Grey, 18 October, 1912, FO 371/1363, No. 43908.
8. Kitchener to Grey, 16 May, 1913, FO 371/1639, No. 23658.
9. Grey to Kitchener, 9 June, 1913, FO 371/1639, No 23658.
10. Grey's intervention did produce happy results for in June Colbert left for Paris.
11. Cheetham to Tyrrell, 21 September, 1913, Cheetham papers, GB 165-0055, file 3.

12. Cheethem to Tyrrell, 15 September, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48; Cheetham to Grey, 4 September, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 40874.
13. Graham to Tyrrell, 12 May, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
14. Cheetham to Tyrrell, 21 September, 1913, Cheetham papers, GB 165-0055, file 3.
15. Grey to Kitchener, 24 November, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48. Grey referred briefly to his decision that summer in this note.
16. Cromer to Kitchener, 30 July, 1913, Kitchener papers, PRO 30/57/44.
17. Kitchener to Grey, 9 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 51862.
18. Kitchener to Grey, 16 March, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 13055.
19. Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 267–68.
20. Kitchener to Grey, 19 January, 1913, FO 371/1637, No. 2803.
21. Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 268.
22. Kitchener to Grey, 15 March, 1913, FO 371/1636, No. 12152.
23. Kitchener to Grey, 28 March, 1913, FO 371/1637, No. 14171.
24. Grey to Kitchener, 31 March, 1913, FO 407/180, No. 14423.
25. Kitchener to Grey, 29 March, 1913, FO 371/1637, No. 14171.
26. Cited in Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 271.
27. Cheetham to Tyrrell, 21 September 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
28. Sir George Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener*, vol.2 (London: Macmillan, 1920), 342–43; See also Kitchener to Grey, 15 November, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
29. Kitchener to Grey, 7 November, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
30. Kitchener to Grey, 7 November, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48; Kitchener to Grey, 9 November, 1913,

FO 371/1640, No. 51862.

31. Note by a police official listing some of the shady characters the Khedive attracted to his inner circle, 11 April, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
32. Kitchener to Grey, 7 November, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
33. Kitchener to Grey, 9 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 50813.
34. Foreign Office notes, 10 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 50813.
35. Grey to Kitchener, 12 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 50813.

36. Kitchener drew up a memo after his discussion with Grey while they were both vising the King at Balmoral in September 1913. The document can be found in the Kitchener papers, PRO 30/57/42.
37. Kitchener to Grey, 15 November 15, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
38. Kitchener to Grey, 12 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 50813.
39. Mallet to Grey, 6 July, 1914, FO 371/1968, No. 31345.
40. Kitchener to Grey, 4 February, 1914, FO 371/1966, No. 5458.
41. Kitchener to Grey, 29 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 53945.
42. Kitchener to Grey, 20 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 52761.
43. Grey to Kitchener, 24 November, 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48; Grey to Kitchener, 8 December, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 53945.
44. Rodd to Eyre Crowe (Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), 23 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 58211
45. Mayer,"Abbas," vol. 1, 272–75.
46. Kitchener to Grey, 16 and 27 November, 1913, FO 371/1640, Nos. 52916 and 54993 respectively.
47. Kitchener to Grey, 13 December, 1913, FO 371/1640, No. 56219.
48. Grey to Rodd, 2 March, 1914, FO 371/1965, No. 4389.
49. Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 276.
50. Kitchener to Grey, 28 April, 1914, FO 371/1965, No. 18757.
51. Rodd to Grey, 22 April, 1914, FO 371/1965, No. 18237.
52. Meyer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 277–81.
53. Kitchener to Grey, 14 June, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 27992.
54. Graham to Cheetham, 25 June, 1914, FO 371/1965, No. 29577.
55. Kitchener to Grey, 26 May, 1914, FO 371/1965, No. 24476.
56. Abbas was in Constantinople and on his way to pay a call to the Grand Vizier on 16 July when a young Egyptian fired into his carriage, wounding him in the cheek and arm. For the details see Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 2, 507 ff.
57. Kitchener to Grey, 16 March, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 11780.
58. Grey to Kitchener, 18 March, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 11780.
59. Cecil to his wife, 6 May, 1914, Cecil papers, Box 23, C 73.
60. Kitchener to Grey, 23 March, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 12976.

61. Cecil to his wife, 5 May, 1914, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.
62. Cecil to his wife, 6 May, 1914, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.
63. Kitchener to Grey, 23 March, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 12976.
64. When Fehmi died, even some of his admirers joked that he ought to have been laid in his casket wrapped in a Union Jack.
65. Cecil to his wife, 6 May, 1914, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.
66. Storrs, Interview with Fehmi, 26 March, 1914, Storrs papers, Micro R 494, reel 4, box 2, fol. 3, Egypt 1914–1915.
67. Grey to Kitchener, 25 March, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 12976.
68. Kitchener to Grey, 27 March, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 13607.
69. Kitchener to Grey, 28 March, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 14825.
70. Cecil to his wife, 6 May, 1914, Box 23, C73.
71. Kitchener to Grey, 5 April, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 15032.
72. Grey to Kitchener, 6 April, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 15032.
73. Cecil to his wife, 6 May, 1914, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.
74. Graham, "Tour of his Highness the Khedive in the Delta," n.d., FO 371/1967.
75. Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 286.
76. Memorandum, "The Khedive and the Nationalists," 21 May, 1914, Kitchener papers, PRO/30/57/45.
77. Kitchener to Grey, 14 May, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 22998.
78. Grey to Kitchener, 2 June, 1914, FO 371/1967, No. 22998.
79. Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 287–90.
80. Cecil, "The Position of the Khedive," 1913, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
81. Cecil to his wife, 6 May, 1914, Cecil papers, Box 23, C73.
82. Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 1, 295.
83. Kitchener to Grey, 23 May, 1914, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
84. RA KGV Diary, 29 June, 1914.

CHAPTER 9

Prelude to World War I

At the dawn of the twentieth century Germany began an intensive construction program to build up its battle fleet to eventually challenge Britain's ascendancy on the seas. The British, which relied on its huge navy to protect its far-flung colonial empire and secure the country against invasion, responded by launching a new shipbuilding program of its own in order to maintain its margin of superiority over its rival. The increase in naval construction, especially of the new dreadnoughts, then the most powerful ships, put a strain on the budget of both nations. The British were sufficiently worried to approach Berlin in February 1912 with a proposal that would limit the number of dreadnoughts both sides could build. The mission sent to Berlin, however, accomplished nothing. The Germans demanded as the price for agreeing to London's overtures, a promise that Britain would remain neutral in the event of a Continental war. Such a condition, however, could not be entertained.

The diminishing chances of finding a diplomatic solution to limit naval expansion, together with the rapid growth of Germany's sea power, led Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, to announce a sweeping reorganization and redistribution of Britain's naval forces. Churchill wanted to concentrate British naval strength in Home Waters on the grounds that it was absolutely vital to the safety of Britain. Under his scheme he would bring back all the battleships from the Mediterranean, leaving only a squadron of cruisers at Malta. The Admiralty conceded that in case of war with the Triple Alliance, it could not guarantee the safety

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6_9

of British communications in the Mediterranean until the Royal Navy had established unquestioned superiority in the North Sea, a step that might take several months.[1] The Foreign Office was the main opposition to the Admiralty's proposed policy, contending that it was too narrow and did not take other British interests into consideration.

As policing the Mediterranean was relevant to the defense of Egypt, Grey sent a personal letter to Kitchener early in May 1912, asking him to attend a preliminary meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defense (CID) at Malta. Called by the Prime Minister (at Churchill's request), its purpose was to discuss the Admiralty's suggestion for a change in naval strategy. Grey's spelled out his fears about the consequences of denuding the Mediterranean of its most powerful ships. He maintained that, contrary to the idea advanced by some, there was no assurance that France could be counted on to make up the difference for British ships recalled from the Mediterranean. No alliance existed between the two countries and it would be wrong to assume that France would automatically assist the British in a conflict if it was not involved. Grey pointed out that under the Admiralty's plan there was no assurance during the early stage of a major war that British communications through the Mediterranean could be protected. Additionally if it became known that the Mediterranean was weakly defended, it would have serious implications for Egypt and the Sudan. It was unlikely that they could be held against an attack by Turkey or any great European Power. Grey even questioned whether there were enough British troops in Egypt and the Sudan to control native risings that might result from Britain's involvement in another theater of war. If the answer was no, how could reinforcements reach them unless there was a considerable fleet in the Mediterranean to ensure the safety of transport ships? Grey ended by underscoring the importance of Kitchener's presence at the meeting at Malta so that the Prime Minister could hear his views first hand.[2]

Kitchener shared Grey's concern and indicated that he would be happy to attend the gathering at Malta. Kitchener maintained that any reduction of naval forces would endanger Britain's position in Egypt and compromise its prestige and influence in neighboring countries. It would have the undesirable effect of forcing Egypt to look to India instead of Britain for supplies and reinforcements. If it came to war with Germany alone and if removal of battleships was only a temporary measure, Kitchener was unconcerned about the defense of Egypt. That sentiment held true even if the Turks joined the fray on the side of Germany and attempted to invade

Egypt. He pointed out that there would be enough small British ships in the Mediterranean to deter a Turkish assault by sea and he was confident that an operation by land, which would have to be made through the desert east of the Canal, would be repulsed. He reasoned that it was almost certain the Ottomans would be unable to concentrate an army large enough to force a passage across the canal defended by sufficient troops and three or four gunboats which presumably the Navy would be able to spare. On the other hand, war with the Triple Alliance would change the odds, making it unlikely that that the Mediterranean coast of Egypt could be held. In defending the interior of the country, the British would have to rely on reinforcements from India. It was therefore of critical importance that the government of India be able to send three or four divisions whenever they might be required.[3]

Kitchener arrived at Malta towards the end of May in the armored cruiser HMS *Hampshire*—a tragic irony to say the least.[4] Kitchener's only dealing with Churchill in the past had been during his campaign in the Sudan and in circumstances that he probably would have preferred to forget. As a young subaltern serving in India with the 4th Hussars, Churchill desperately wanted to join the expedition and he exploited his family's considerable connections to press his case. Kitchener, however, refused to appoint him to his army. He had risen to fame through hard work and solid achievement and he considered Churchill a "young whippersnapper" seeking to gain publicity and advance professionally on the basis of political influence rather than merit. Eventually Churchill managed to get himself attached to the 21st Lancers thanks to the intervention of Sir Evelyn Wood. He served with gallantry, escaping unscathed during the charge of the 21st Lancers and later wrote an account of the Omdurman campaign entitled *The River War* in which he was occasionally critical of the Sirdar.[5] For Kitchener it was bad enough that he had been outwitted and overruled but to be censured by a junior officer serving under him was a bitter pill to swallow.

Churchill resigned from the army in 1899 to enter national politics where he enjoyed a meteoric rise. By 1912 he had become a key member of Asquith's cabinet and politically he was more powerful than Kitchener. Crichton-Stuart confided to his mother that he would have given much to witness the initial meeting between the two men.[6] If he had, all he would have seen were two men shaking hands. Their earlier run in was not mentioned for they had more important things on their minds.

As the conference (29 May–1 June) was informal, no minutes were kept. Kitchener was well prepared with facts and figures in putting up a

spirited defense against the diversion of any fleet from the Mediterranean and impressed Churchill, Asquith and the Admirals by his firm grasp of naval strategy. "It seems to me," Asquith later remarked, "that Lord Kitchener is giving them [Admirals] the information we expected them to give us."[7] Asquith's estimation of Kitchener was strengthened after he met privately with him. "I had a long and interesting *tête-à-tête* with Kitchener," he remarked in a letter to his wife. "He is the only soldier with brains since Wolseley."[8]

Kitchener, with occasional support from Asquith, kept up steady pressure on the First Lord and in the end induced him to modify his position. The preliminary draft arrangement that followed satisfied both Kitchener and the Foreign Office. The agreements included: (1) that the Admiralty permanently maintain in the Mediterranean two and preferably three battle cruisers, in addition to a squadron of four armored cruisers; (2) that a pact be sought with france whereby the Royal Navy would commit to defending its northern coast in return for the French keeping their Mediterranean fleet sufficiently strong so that with the British ships stationed there, their combined strength would be more than a match for both the Italian and Austrian navies; (3) that a flotilla of submarines was to be maintained at Malta and Alexandria; (4) that the Admiralty, if deemed necessary, would provide four gunboats for the defense of the Canal.[9]

Kitchener wanted HMG to modify its policy *vis à vis* Turkey so as to keep it neutral in case of a European war. He thought that drawing Constantinople closer to Britain would check German influence there. In discussion with Asquith, he laid down his case for an entente with the Ottoman Empire after its war against Italy was over. He added that, while Britain should take no responsibility for Turkey's complications in Europe "we might be very useful to Turkey in Arabia, Syria and the Far East."[10] The suggestion found no echo in the chambers of the Foreign Office.

Kitchener wrote to Lady Salisbury on his return to Cairo: "I have had a very interesting trip to Malta and much enjoyed the change. I think I was able to be of some use in the discussions." He pointed out, however, that the provisional agreement would not come into force until the CID formally gave its approval.[11]

At the 117th session of the CID on 4 July, in a heated six-hour debate, the conclusion reached was that, subject to the essential requirement of acquiring a reasonable margin of superiority over the Germans in Home Waters, there was the need to maintain a fleet equal to a one power standard in the Mediterranean—that is, more than the two or three battle

cruisers called for in the compromise between Kitchener and Churchill at Malta. This recommendation was subsequently endorsed by the cabinet.[12]

Earlier at Malta, Churchill had impressed upon Kitchener the importance of equipping Alexandria with adequate defenses to enable the Admiralty to use the port as a base for submarine operations in the eastern portion of the Mediterranean, in addition to protecting wireless stations in Egypt against foreign aggression. Kitchener remarked that Egypt's pecuniary condition would not permit a large outlay on such a scheme, but that it might be able to finance small works if Britain provided the required armament and personnel. Churchill assured the Consul-General that the Admiralty could provide the necessary guns and mountings and would station a permanent defense ship in the harbor. Asquith concurred with Churchill and both argued that, if the fortifications at Alexandria were erected along the line proposed, it would have certain strategic advantages. Kitchener was therefore requested on his return to Egypt to study the matter carefully and draw up a blueprint.[13]

Back in Cairo, Kitchener wasted no time in discussing the project with Mohammed Said and the Khedive and received assurances of unqualified support from both men. An incident occurred which precluded work from commencing quietly and without fanfare. Churchill's announcement in Parliament of the plan to fortify Alexandria raised a firestorm of protest in Egypt. As we have already seen the nationalists saw it as a prelude to Britain's annexation of Egypt and the severance of its ties with Turkey. The nationalist press did not conceal its hostility to the British scheme. "It would be better if England's measures for defense were confined to her own colonies and waters and the independence of Egypt respected," wrote a*l-Afkay* (30 July).[14] "If … England intends to swallow Egypt and ignore treaties and promises," fumed a*l-Shaab*, (25 July) "it will prove that her statements have not the wisdom they are reported to possess." The radical a*l-Liwa* expounded along similar lines on 28 July: "We are now at the commencement of the naval occupation of Egypt. … What interests us most just at present is, what are the Egyptian Government doing in the matter?" The Khedive financed *al-Moayad* gleefully weighed in on 25 July: "This [The fortification of Alexandria] is a grave and important thing as it changes the purpose of the Occupation and is not in agreement with the suzerainty of the Sultan—contradicting the promises made by the British people concerning the Occupation and the pretentions of their Ministers for 20 years."[15]

Because public opinion in the country had been alarmed by the violent reaction, especially of the nationalist press, Said and the Khedive expressed grave doubts about whether work on the project should move forward, at least at the present time.[16] Said felt that it would be helpful to obtain the consent of the Porte before the work commenced. He did not consider that Constantinople would raise any objections, in which case it would disarm the opposition.[17] The Foreign Office, in reply to Kitchener's request, indicated that it would approach the Ottoman government at the first favorable opportunity.[18] When contacted in late October, Lowther raised the matter with the Turkish Foreign Minister who gave no indication how the Porte would react.[19] As it turned out, the Ottoman government expressed no opinion on the subject, presumably because its attention was focused on the Balkan war. This allowed Kitchener to argue that Constantinople's silence implied consent.

On learning that the Porte had been approached, the Khedive thought that the construction of the works could begin quietly but Said wanted a brief delay during which he proposed to rally friendly newspapers to placate public opinion. Kitchener agreed to Said's suggestion as did Grey.[20] The Admiralty raised no objections to the idea but hoped that the work would not be unduly delayed.[21]

As promised Said had articles placed in some newspapers, discussing the question moderately and fairly. Playing both ends against the middle, The Khedive tried to counteract Said's effort. While he gave assurances to Kitchener of his strong support, he was secretly intriguing with *al-Ahram*, a moderate pro-French publication, to conduct a virulent campaign against the fortification project. Kitchener found out about the Khedive's double game and believed that it was inspired by his hatred of Said.[22] It may also be because Abbas wanted to burnish his image with the nationalists. At any rate public passions eventually subsided, allowing Kitchener to have the terrain examined, plans prepared and an estimate of the costs to be borne by the Egyptian government.[23] Before the work was put in hand, he asked and received confirmation from the Admiralty that it would supply the armaments and necessary personnel.

The navy was not the only arm of the service that drew Kitchener's attention. The Army Council, which periodically reviewed the defense of Britain's overseas possessions, at one time thought that it was possible for the Ottomans to invade Egypt by way of the Sinai Peninsula. The matter was referred to the General Staff which considered that Turkey had the resources to carry out such an operation. Since then, Turkey's defeat in

two wars, especially its pathetic performance in the last one, demonstrated that its military capacity had been overrated. The Army Council no longer regarded Turkey a threat to Egypt but, as a precaution, wanted confirmation from experts at the Foreign Office.[24]

Grey naturally solicited the opinion of Kitchener who agreed that the Army Council was correct in determining that Turkey was in a weakened state and in no condition to invade Egypt. However, he knew that the resources at the disposal of the Army Council were limited and that it would want to reduce the armed forces of any British-held territory that was relatively safe from external aggression. Since he was always worried about possible internal disturbances in Egypt, he argued against any reduction in the size of its army. In so doing he created a scenario that was supposed to be possible but, in fact, much closer to implausible. As soon as the Balkan War was formally over, a large number of Ottoman troops would return to Syria and Asia Minor. Filled with bitter hostility towards all Europeans and Christians, they would in all probability require considerable time before settling down and returning to their former peaceful occupations. The excitement already present in places like Syria and Palestine was likely to be exacerbated by the return of defeated soldiers, producing a source of anxiety for some time to come. He stressed again against downsizing the country's already small defensive force, noting that the material and moral effect of such action could not fail to be considerable and inevitably would encourage agitation.[25] The Army Council probably expected a military analysis of Turkey's capability, or lack thereof, not a plea against reducing Egypt's garrison.

Grey added his own assessment when he submitted Kitchener's remarks to the Army Council. He thought that Turkey's aggressive force would have been diminished by its recent military disasters and that a movement against Egypt was unlikely. He did think that once the Turks were expelled from Europe, they might drive their remaining military strength towards the south.[26]

The Ottoman army's recent military failures, coming on top of Austria's annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria's declaration of independence, and Crete's union with Greece, deepened popular disenchantment with the recent revolutionary regime in Constantinople which had begun its early days in power by raising liberal hopes. Backed by the army, a group known as the Young Turks—a disparate coalition of parties which had the common aim of ending the despotic rule of Abdul Hamid II—seized control of the government in Constantinople in 1908

and compelled the Sultan to reactivate the liberal constitution of 1876 and to convene a parliament elected on the basis of universal manhood suffrage. The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the dominant faction within the Young Turks, proclaimed freedom of the press and the equality of all peoples. It began to reform the bureaucracy and educational system, and indicated that the evils that had plagued and undermined the Empire for so long were a thing of the past. The impression given was that the Ottoman Empire would become more secular, turning away from pan Islamism and adopting the western concept of government. The revolution generated so much enthusiasm that many believed the Ottoman Empire would again become a power to be reckoned with, a prospect that concerned some of its European neighbors.

But the promise of a brighter future for the Ottoman Empire never materialized. The CUP faced an insurmountable task in rectifying the corruption and mismanagement of the Sultan and his predecessors. It was further handicapped by inexperience, adoption of harmful policies such as centralized rule and Turkification of ethnic peoples, inability to modernize the economy, and severe infighting. Presiding over the loss of huge tracts of territory after committing itself to preserving and strengthening the Empire was no less damaging. As opposition to the CUP's rule intensified it became more authoritarian, abandoning all pretense of liberalism and equal treatment for non-Turks.

Kitchener's attitude on the subject of the Ottoman Empire had evolved as its fortunes declined. In 1908 he told a friend that he believed that Britain's position in Egypt and India would be strengthened and Russian encroachment forestalled if the Asquith government supported Turkey and arranged to assist in reorganizing its army.[27] The missed opportunity had repercussions as Kitchener discovered. In 1910 he visited Constantinople and saw first-hand the predominance of Germany and, by contrast, the disappearance of British influence. As we have already seen his dismay was reflected in a note to Lady Salisbury. Kitchener's respect for the fighting abilities of the Turks was evident in a discussion with the French Ambassador in Cairo. In the midst of the Turco-Italian War when it was not certain which side would win, Kitchener expressed concern that an Ottoman victory over a European Power would be a source of pride in and incite the entire Muslim world, threatening France and Britain's position in Asia and Africa.[28] As a precaution he suggested to Asquith at Malta (as already mentioned) that at the end of the conflict it would be in Britain's interest to draw the Ottoman Empire into its orbit. But in the

fall of 1912 the Ottoman Empire was forced to the negotiating table by Italy and, on top of this, was badly defeated in the opening battles by the Balkan states, leading Kitchener to conclude that, even if bolstered by an outside power, its collapse was imminent.

Towards the end of 1912 Kitchener thought that the moment was ripe to pressure the enfeebled Ottoman government to accept an arrangement that would consolidate British rule in Egypt. Accordingly he laid before the Foreign Office a six-point program that would recognize the Turkish government's sovereignty over Egypt in theory but nothing else. He listed the proposals as follows: the authority of the Sultan could not be exercised without the advice and consent of His Majesty's Government; the appointment of the Khedive should be made either by or on the recommendation of His Majesty's Government; Egypt should appoint its own consular officials; the Grand Qadi should be appointed by the Egyptian government; the post of Ottoman High Commissioner should be abolished and any Turkish interests in Egypt entrusted to a representative of the Khedive; any right claimed by Turkey in the Sudan should be transferred to Egypt. "If these points were settled in a satisfactory manner," Kitchener concluded, "we should be fairly clear of Turkey, and any question of annexation might, I think, be avoided, at least for the present."[29]

Grey cautiously turned down Kitchener's proposals, even though he did not disagree with the concept of eliminating the last vestiges of Ottoman authority in Egypt. Thus far none of the major Powers had given an indication that they intended to exploit Ottoman weakness. Grey saw no reason to create conditions that would alter their outlook. Britain was already in control of Egypt and any change in its status would entitle the Powers to claim a share of the war spoils.[30]

The following year (autumn of 1913) the Khedive approached Kitchener with an offer to back Egypt's demands for independence from the Ottoman Empire. As a servant of the Sultan, Abbas had in the past, at least on the surface, shown himself to be a loyal subject. His new attitude was born out of self-interest, not because he suddenly had become sympathetic towards the British. Abbas' cousin, Said Halim Pasha, a man he distrusted and feared, had been elevated to the position of Grand Vizier. Halim normally would have been in line for the succession to the Egyptian throne but for a change in the law under Ismail. Halim's branch of the family had not abandoned its claim and enjoyed much greater support from dissident groups than Abbas. From the time of Cromer, Abbas lived with the fear that the British might depose him some day but that prospect

moved closer to becoming a reality now that there was a popular candidate in waiting.

Much as Kitchener liked Abbas' idea for Egypt to make a unilateral declaration of independence from the Ottoman Empire, he knew that the Foreign Office would not give its approval any more than it had for his own proposal. He replied to the Khedive in somewhat disingenuous terms that it would not be proper for Britain to desert an ally in its hour of need.[31]

A key development during the pre-World War I period was the deteriorating relationship between Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire. Britain had for generations protected the Ottomans against encroachment by Russia, but its attitude towards Constantinople changed shortly before the onset of the twentieth century. In the first place HMG (or more accurately some of its officials overseas) wanted to expand British territory and influence at the expense of the Ottoman state. Second Britain could not afford to jeopardize its recent arrangements with Russia. Third the announced policy of the new Ottoman regime to reform and modernize the state threatened the welfare of the British Empire.[32]

The Ottomans, for their part, had ample reason to believe that they could no longer rely on Britain to intercede on their behalf. As we have seen, Britain had twice turned down Constantinople's request for an alliance, once in 1908 and again after the start of the Turco-Italian war.[33] Britain's neutralist policy in Egypt during the Turco-Italian war was interpreted in many quarters as an unfriendly act—the Anglophile Grand Vizier, Kamil Pasha, in fact, claimed in a statement to the press that Egypt's neutrality had caused Turkey's defeat in the war.[34] The Grand Vizier expressed himself in similar terms to the British Ambassador. Lowther commented in a letter to Arthur Nicolson (Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office) that even Kamil Pasha had reminded him on more than one occasion that "Britain had deserted Turkey in her hour of need."[35] During the negotiations at the end of the First Balkan War, the Ottomans became more aggrieved when the British failed to support their desperate effort to retain Adrianople in order to salvage something from their debacle.

While the Young Turk revolution was in its infancy, optimism was high that the Empire would be transformed and revitalized. There was talk in the administration of perhaps mounting a campaign to regain lost rights and territory. One area the Young Turk government had never lost sight of reestablishing its control over was Egypt. To that end they cooperated secretly with the nationalist party whose activities were directed at expelling the British from Egypt.

The point man for the Young Turks in Cairo was their High Commissioner who was supposed to represent Ottoman interests in Egypt. Since 1908 three Ottomans had occupied that office and all were anathema to the British because of their intrigues with the Egyptian nationalists. Kitchener chafed at the system which allowed Ottomans to play a disruptive role in Egyptian politics.

Kitchener had been in Egypt less than two months when he notified the Foreign Office that there was no justification for keeping a High Commissioner in Cairo. As Kitchener saw it, his functions were undefined, he was often engaged in anti-British activities and his presence was naturally resented by the Khedive who was the proper representative of the Sultan. Kitchener maintained that an Ottoman High Commissioner for Egypt was "anomalous and unnecessary," and his solution was that, once the current occupant, Raouf Pasha, left office, no successor should be appointed. The timing appeared propitious. Kitchener learned that Raouf had suddenly departed from Cairo and he interpreted the official Turkish explanation that he was going on a pilgrimage to Mecca as possibly a cover for his dismissal. The Consul-General thought it would be advisable if Lowther investigated the matter.[36]

The Foreign Office had objected to Raouf Pasha's appointment in September 1909 but was reluctant to make an issue of it. That attitude changed when prodded by Kitchener. Grey now concurred with Kitchener's suggestion to eliminate the post of High Commissioner. The general feeling was summed up in a note Nicolson forwarded to Grey:

> When Raouf was appointed we entertained strong objections but waived them in order not to embarrass the new government in Turkey. It might be possible to get the post abolished, or to let it die of emptiness, now without embarrassing the present Cabinet if it is done quietly. But we should then have to send instructions to Sir G. Lowther at once, so that he could act before anyone else was nominated, for … once an appointment were made the difficulties would be increased. … We must first find out if there is any foundation for the supposition that Raouf has been dismissed.[37]

Advised to act quickly, Lowther visited the Grand Vizier, then Mehmed Said Pasha, to discuss some unrelated business and then took the opportunity to inquire whether there was any truth to the rumor that Raouf Pasha had resigned. The Grand Vizier replied that he had no information to that effect and, as far as he knew, Raouf was currently on a pilgrimage to

Mecca. Lowther observed that the post of Ottoman High Commissioner served no purpose as the Khedive was the proper representative of the Sultan. The Grand Vizier claimed that he shared that opinion and also considered it a useless expense.[38] The inference, or so it was interpreted by Lowther, led him to conclude that the Porte viewed the matter in much the same light as the British government.[39] As it turned out he was wrong. The Young Turks were in no hurry to remove their conduit to the nationalists.

A year later Mohammed Said called at the Agency to tell Kitchener that the Khedive had received a telegram from the new Grand Vizier, Said Halmi, offering to replace Raouf Pasha by Marshal Fouad Pasha. Kitchener told Said not to reply until he found out the views of the Foreign Office. In communicating the news, Kitchener told Grey that, while he did not object to the person proposed, he favored blocking the new appointment if at all possible.[40]

To obtain more details, Lowther paid a visit to the Grand Vizier, only to be informed that there had been a misunderstanding. Fouad Pasha had requested to become High Commissioner but the Porte had not promised him the appointment. Said Halim indicated that there was no question of Raouf Pasha resigning. Under the circumstances Lowther felt that it would be inopportune to press for the abolition of the post and he recommended that the Egyptian Prime Minister postpone his reply.[41] Grey signaled Lowther that the Grand Vizier was to be told that, upon the retirement of the current High Commissioner, His Majesty's Government hoped that there would be no successor.[42]

In an effort to assuage the British, the Ottoman government, through its Chargé d'affaires in London, announced that it would appoint Jevad Bey as High Commissioner in succession to Raouf Pasha. The Chargé d'affaires maintained that Jevad Bey was a particularly warm friend of the British and had been personally chosen by the Grand Vizier, who was anxious that the new man should be *persona gratissima* to His Majesty's Government.[43] If so, Said Halmi miscalculated for the revelation came as an unwelcomed surprise. It was not the individual selected that troubled the Foreign Office, but rather the continued existence of the office of High Commissioner.

The British Chargé d'affaires in Constantinople, Sir Charles Marling, was directed to seek an explanation from the Grand Vizier. In the course of the interview, Marling insisted that Lowther, while not receiving categorical assurance, had been definitely led to believe by the previous

Grand Vizier that Raouf would not be replaced when he retired; that in fact he had been under the impression that the Porte viewed the worth of the High Commissioner no more than the British government did. Halmi indicated that Raouf Pasha had not yet resigned but, in the spirit of goodwill, promised to withdraw Jevad Bey's name as the replacement. He refused to acknowledge, however, that his words implied that on Raouf's resignation the post of High Commissioner would not be filled.[44]

Kitchener was frustrated that the Foreign Office was not applying enough pressure on the Ottomans to induce them to comply to act. He was convinced that the absence of a firm hand with the Turks only encouraged them to misbehave further. On the last day of 1913, he informed the Foreign Office of the intrigues he suspected were in progress involving the Young Turks, the Khedive and the High Commissioner:

> A number of prominent Young Turks are now here, and are, I understand, actively working with the Khedive and Nationalist Party on Pan Islamic lines … I also hear that the Turkish High Commissioner is corresponding very actively with Constantinople just now. I should be grateful for information if you have any knowledge of the nature of these communications or what game the present Ottoman Government are playing.[45]

Grey contacted the new British Ambassador, Louis Mallet, with a request that the matter of the High Commissioner again be raised with the Turkish authorities.[46] Mallet replied that an interview with the Grand Vizier at present would serve no purpose on account of the wave of pan Islamism sweeping across Turkey. Mallet gave examples of some of the recent changes that had taken place: Christians, although no longer obliged to serve in the army, were required to pay a high exemption tax; a decree ordered the closing of all Muslim shops during the hours of Friday prayer; the native press was overtly Islamic and often used the word Mussulman instead of Turk or Ottoman; and intemperate anti-Christian literature was disseminated among the masses. To Mallet the inescapable conclusion was that the Young Turks intended to make Turkey a purely Islamic state.[47] Here the matter rested until the outbreak of the Great War.

While Kitchener and Grey were worried about the Young Turks' association with the Egyptian National Party, the fledgling Arab nationalist movement had not escaped their notice. The Arabs had warmly applauded the Young Turks seizure of power but the honeymoon ended almost as quickly as it began. Contrary to Arab expectations of partnership and

equality, the Committee of Union and Progress, aspired to bring about centralized rule and assimilate all the nationalities of the Empire. CUP's centralizing measures were really aimed at the Arab provinces and were intended to forestall the rise of separatist movements that might, like other past subject nationalities, lead to independence. The Arab provinces resented the CUP's process of Turkification which resulted in the removal of their own nationals from positions of authority, their officers discriminated against in the Ottoman army and particularly the adoption of Turkish as the only language permitted in courts and in the government. The Ottoman defeats at the hands of Italy and the Balkan states convinced the Arabs that Turkey no longer had the strength to rule over them or, mindful of what had happened to Libya, protect them against greedy imperialistic powers. Arab activists established societies, either at home or in Europe, some seeking Arab equality within the framework of the Ottoman Empire while others called for more drastic political solutions.

Hardline organizations would settle for nothing less than separation from Turkish rule. As far as the Foreign Office was concerned, any response to Arab nationalist groups requesting British assistance had to be viewed within the context of its implications for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire in Asia. Grey had no affection for the Turks but the survival of Ottoman rule in Asia was seen in London to favor British interests. Kitchener's views on the subject differed from those of the British government.

Kitchener was very much interested in the Eastern question, which was to be expected of someone who had spent much of his life in the Middle East and could speak Arabic and Turkish, allowing him to converse directly with local leaders and giving him "a pull in seeing what was going on behind the scenes." According to Kitchener, Britain's position in India and Egypt could not be maintained without the friendship of Arab states. That being the case, it was in Britain's best interest to support Arab independence movements. A dedicated imperialist, Kitchener envisaged at some point the establishment, under British suzerainty, of an Arab Empire that would consist of Egypt and the Sudan, plus territories sheared from the Ottoman state.[48] Such an entity would rival that of the British Empire in India but it could not have become a reality in the immediate future, if at all. Kitchener was a realist and it is highly unlikely that he gave any thought to his place in this possible future kingdom. India's viceroyalty still remained his most coveted prize.

During the prewar period, the development of Arab nationalism as a significant political movement was purported to have originated in Syria (which at the time also included much of present day Lebanon, Israel, Palestine and Jordan). The dissidents had differing visions for the future of Syria with many Muslims wanting the country to be occupied by Britain or annexed to Egypt, while the majority of Christians preferred the protection of France. Notable Muslims from Damascus were so adamant that they wanted to send a delegation to Cairo to ask Kitchener for a British protectorate over Syria.[49] Asquith and Grey, however, made it clear that Britain's resources were badly over-extended in defending what territory it already possessed and had no desire for further expansion.[50] Kitchener may have been discreet in opposing French claims to Syria in the hope that someday the Conservative party would assume power and change British policy, but he was not about to act openly in contravention to the current position of the Asquith government. Thus Kitchener declined to meet with the proposed delegation so the idea of approaching him fell through.

There were wild rumors, usually emanating from the French press, about supposed British intrigues—that Britain was finalizing plans to take over Syria or that Kitchener would be travelling to the province to encourage the people to request British occupation. The French with a long history of cultural, economic and political interest in Syria were inclined to believe that there was a basis for the rumors, notwithstanding the Foreign Office's disclaimers. Their suspicions were strengthened with reports that some officials from the Egyptian Agency were travelling to Syria and interacting with known British sympathizers. Whether they were there strictly on holiday, as they professed, or sent by Kitchener to encourage pro-British agitation, is not clear. In any case these visits were resented in Paris, as Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London, would impress upon the Foreign Office. Grey had no wish to disturb the good relations with Britain's partner over territory in which the Asquith government definitely had no interest. The attitude of Kitchener and action of some of his subordinates irritated officials at the Foreign Office. Nicholson for one expressed his feelings in a letter to Lowther:

> I myself think that it is unfortunate that the members of the Cairo staff should be allowed to tour about Syria, and I think that Kitchener should have asked your or our permission for allowing his young gentlemen to perambulate Turkish territory at this moment.[51]

On 5 November, 1912, Cambon again visited Grey to further discuss Britain's reported involvement in Syria. Grey had never deviated from the idea that Syria was primarily within the French sphere of interests. He insisted that it was neither feasible nor desirable for His Majesty's Government to entertain expanding into Syria. He showed him a recent telegram from H.A. Cumberbatch, the British Consul-General in Beriut, who denied the accusations of intrigue in the French press. Cumberbatch claimed they were all lies intended to justify France's lack of popularity in the region. Cambon seemed to be satisfied with Grey's explanation, though there were groups in France and certain newspapers, like *Le Monde*, that remained unconvinced. To put an end to lingering French apprehensions Grey contacted Kitchener and instructed him to issue a statement, denying that "we are intriguing in Syria to get the country." Kitchener told Grey that he had in the past denied the accusations against him, and like Cumberbatch, maintained that they had grown out of French resentment at strong pro-British feelings in Syria. Although annoyed at French persistence, he submitted the requested dispatch. Grey read it to Cambon, reinforcing what he had said to him earlier.[52] Still the French did not rest easy until 1916 when the Sykes-Picot Agreement confirmed their post-war dominance over Syria.

There were two more episodes involving Kitchener in the Arab question. The first was his key role in freeing Aziz Ali al-Misri, a popular Egyptian officer in Ottoman service. Founder of *al-Ahd*, a secret society of Arab army officers, al-Misri was arrested, convicted on trumped-up charges and sentenced to death. In Egypt his arrest and conviction produced widespread popular indignation which vented itself in mass meetings and demonstrations, as well as in a press campaign. A deputation of relatives and friends visited Kitchener and pleaded with him to intervene on his behalf. Kitchener took the matter in hand and urged the Foreign Office to bring pressure to bear on Constantinople and deserves much of the credit for the eventual release of the Arab army officer who was given a hero's welcome when he returned to Egypt in April 1914.[53] Kitchener's part in the affair was widely publicized in the press and further increased his stature among the Arabs.

The other significant event centered on Kitchener's contacts with Amir Abdullah, the second son of Sharif Hussein, custodian of the holy places of Mecca and Medina in the Hejaz district in the Arabian Peninsula. Kitchener first encountered Abdullah in 1912 or possibly 1913 at a reception at Abadin Palace in Cairo where he was staying as a guest of the Khedive.

The only record of their meeting then and another one two days later at the Agency, is provided by Abdullah in his memoirs and in an account he gave the Anglo-Arab historian George Antonius. The Khedive introduced the two men and referring to Abdullah said, "This is his father's right-hand man and he was wounded in one of his father's campaigns." Kitchener pointed to his own neck and remarked, "Here is a wound I got in the Sudan." To which Abdullah replied in jest, "Your Lordship is a target which cannot be missed … but short as I am, a Bedouin hit me."[54] The two chatted about trivial matters at their initial meeting. Kitchener expressed satisfaction at the Sharif's treatment of Britain's colonial subjects on pilgrimage. He especially appreciated the Sharif's punitive campaigns against the hostile tribesmen who often robbed pilgrims on the road between Medina and Mecca.[55] Abdullah had more to say when he repaid Kitchener's courtesy visit:

> On the occasion of my visit to him, Kitchener displayed a marked interest in Hejaz affairs and questioned me as to the form of its administration, the relations between Vali [Governor] and Sherif, and the degree to which the Turkish officials tried to exert control in purely religious matters. I did not feel at liberty to answer his penetrating questions as fully as I should have liked, yet tried to give him a general idea of our fears and anxieties. I had liked him and been greatly impressed with the power of his personality, and we parted on very cordial terms.[56]

Later in the day Abdullah went over to see the Ottoman High Commissioner in Cairo to report his conversation with Kitchener. The relations between Hussein and the Ottoman government had recently become strained and Abdullah wanted to avoid any "misunderstanding and misinterpretation."[57] It probably had the reverse effect with suspicious Turkish officials wondering what had been the purpose of the meeting.

The Hajaz was a poor district, infertile and with few natural resources, but it held special interest to Constantinople for its control was crucial to the Sultan's claim to leadership of the Islamic world. In contrast to other vilayets (districts), the Ottomans had refrained from imposing their strong rule over the Hejaz, content to leave it semi-autonomous. After the Balkan wars this relationship changed when the Ottomans proposed to tighten their control over the region. They sent a new vali, accompanied by more troops, to enforce a law passed in 1912 that removed Medina from the jurisdiction of Hussein and to make arrangements to extend

the Hejaz railway from Medina to Mecca. The shift in the *status quo* was bitterly opposed by both Hussein and local tribes, the former because his political authority would practically vanish, and the latter because it would affect their livelihood, depriving them of hiring out their camels to pilgrims travelling between the holy cities. The Ottomans made no secret of their intention to remove Hussein from office if he continued to resist their centralization policy.[58] This is how matters stood when Abdullah, on his way to Constantinople, stopped in Cairo in February 1914 and was again the guest of the Khedive.

According to Abdullah, Kitchener visited him in his apartment in the royal palace and they engaged in small talk. He returned the call two days later and this time their discussion had political significance. Abdullah had always been circumspect in the presence of Kitchener but now spoke more openly. He described the circumstances that had led to deteriorating relations between the Turkish authorities and his father. He feared that his father, appointed by the Porte, was liable to arbitrary dismissal in which case it would probably trigger a revolt among the Arab tribes in the Hejaz. Kitchener interjected to point out that the Porte was unlikely to exercise the right to depose the Sharif. Abdullah asked Kitchener whether Britain would extend assistance to the Hejaz in the event of its rupture with Constantinople. Kitchener replied that it would not be proper for Britain to meddle in the affairs of a friendly state. Abdullah could not resist pointing out that Britain had done so in the past, specifically alluding to its interference in the dispute between the Turkish government and the Sheikh of Kuwait. Kitchener laughed as the rose to leave, saying he would communicate their conversation to the Foreign Office.[59]

Kitchener's report to Grey of his talk with Abdullah showed that he gave no encouragement that the Hejaz could expect aid from Britain in case of a break with Constantinople. Kitchener appeared less adamant when he wrote to Grey at the beginning of April 1914. He indicated that in dealing with the Arab question great care had to be taken so as not to arouse Turkish suspicions. Still, he went on to say, it would be unwise to lose sight of Britain's interests in the Holy Places on account of the annual pilgrimage made by thousands of Indian and Egyptian Muslims. He maintained that the welfare and safety of the pilgrims had been adversely affected by the deepening crisis between Turks and Arabs resulting from Constantinople's recent policy of centralization.[60]

A fortnight or so later Abdullah, returning from Constantinople, made his habitual stop in Cairo and called on Kitchener. Abdullah, according

to Storrs, "appeared to have something to say but somehow did not reach the point of saying it."[61] Almost immediately Kitchener received word that the Porte, suspicious that the British were intriguing with the Sharif, frowned upon such meetings. Consequently Kitchener stopped seeing the Amir who then asked Storrs to give him a call. Kitchener gave Storrs instructions before the meeting took place. Storrs was to avoid giving Abdullah the slightest hint of possible British aid in case the Hejaz rebelled against Ottoman rule. He was to make clear that beyond the safety of Indian and Egyptian pilgrims, HMG had no interest in the affairs of the Hejaz.[62]

We have only a summary of what passed between Storrs and Abdullah during their two hour meeting. Abdullah was more forthcoming with Storrs than he had been with Kitchener. He was disappointed with the results of his visit to Constantinople, especially in the government's determination to extend the railway to Mecca. He gave further details about his father's dispute with the Porte and implied that a rupture was inevitable. At some point Storrs conveyed Kitchener's position which reinforced what he had said earlier. While Abdullah did not receive even a faint hope of military assistance, he asked whether Britain would supply his father with half a dozen machine-guns. When Storrs inquired the purpose of the machine-guns he was told they were to be used to defend against the Turks. Storrs did not need special instructions to inform Abdullah that Britain could not supply arms for use against a friendly power. Abdullah was not surprised at Storrs' reply and the two men parted on friendly terms.[63]

Kitchener wrote to Mallet (as well as to the Foreign Office) about the meeting between Storrs and Abdullah. He thought the Turks would be excessively stupid if they pushed the Arabs to revolt on such a question as the extension of the railway to Mecca which affected the livelihood of the camel owners of the Hejaz. He added: "The Arabs of Arabia are fairly well armed and if they combine would give the Turks all they could do to conquer them, besides the blaze that would be lit throughout the Moslem world by war at the Holy Places."[64]

Kitchener saw the importance of extending British influence into western Arabia where, in the eyes of Muslims, Mecca and Medina were considered sacred ground. As ruler of the two cities, the Sharif's standing as a holy and revered figure was second only to that of the caliph. While Kitchener's meetings with Abdullah had not produced instant results, it had strengthened in his mind the depth of Arab hatred towards the Turks and their desire for independence. That knowledge, aided by his personal

connection with Abdullah, would pay huge dividends during the Great War.[65]

During Kitchener's tenure as Consul-General he did not confine his interests only to developments within the Arab world. Ever since he was a young officer in the Middle East, he had been fascinated by Ottoman culture, politics and power struggles. In the last few years regular reports, in particular by Lowther and Mallet, raised his alarm over growing German penetration of the Ottoman Empire. The deepening ties between Berlin and Constantinople culminated in the appointment of a German military mission at the end of 1913 to train and reorganize the Ottoman army in the wake of the Balkan Wars.

"What do you think it signifies?" Kitchener asked Major John R. Taylor, the American Military Attaché in Constantinople, with whom he was having lunch in Cairo. Taylor was of the opinion that if war broke out in Europe, Turkey would probably side with Germany. If that should happen, he added, Russia would be compelled to divert a significant part of its army away from the European theatre of operations to fight the Turks in the Caucasus and on the Russo-Turkish border. Kitchener paused for a few moments and then replied, "I agree with you."[66]

After six months in Turkey German officers had achieved spectacular results, converting an undisciplined and ragged rabble into an army that had become practically Prussianized. The American Ambassador, Henry Morgenthau, who was well placed to know what was going on in Constantinople, wrote after witnessing a grand military review: "The German officers were immensely proud of the exhibition, and the transformation of the wretched Turkish soldiers of January [1914] into these neatly dressed, smartly stepping, splendidly maneuvering troops was really a credible military achievement."[67]

For Kitchener such disclosures emanating from Constantinople only deepened his anxiety as the mounting troubles in Europe inched the prospect of war closer. With intimate friends and staff, Kitchener did not conceal his feelings that he held British diplomacy responsible for driving Turkey into Germany's arms. He saw that in the event of war, Germany could count on a partner that would be able to, not only lessen the pressure facing its army on the main European front, but close the Dardanelles Straits and so seal the warm water route to Russia, move into the Balkans from the southwest, and threaten Britain's interests in the Middle East and its control of the Suez Canal. To rein in the Turco-German union he considered two possible solutions: one was to eventually detach a large

area from the Ottoman Empire that would include part of southern Syria and bring it under the protection of HMG, ensuring that British influence would be unbroken from Egypt all the way to the Persian Gulf; the other was to encourage the Arab provinces to become autonomous and, by keeping them closely tied to Britain, allow HMG to maintain indirect control over a wide swath of territory stretching "from the Mediterranean seaboard in the west to the Persian frontier in the east."[68] Kitchener knew that at the moment he stood no chance of selling either plan to the British cabinet. His only recourse was to look to the future and hope that someday the march of events would afford him the opportunity to make his move. Little did he realize when he left for England in the summer of 1914 that he would run out of time.

Notes

1. Arthur J. Marder, *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 287–89.
2. Grey to Kitchener, 8 May, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
3. Kitchener to Grey, 19 May, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48. The letter was reprinted in *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914*, ed. by G.P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, vol. 10, pt. 2 (London: HMSO, 1938), 592.
4. Kitchener lost his life when the *Hampshire*, on which he was travelling, struck a mine and sank west of the Orkneys in June 1916.
5. Roy Jenkins, *Churchill: A Biography* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001), 34–35, 38–41.
6. Crichton-Stuart to his mother, 26 May, 1912, Crichton-Stuart papers, BU 96/13/5.
7. Sir George Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan, 1920), 336n.
8. J.A. Spender and Cyril Asquith, *Life of Herbert Henry Asquith, Lord Oxford and Asquith*, vol. 2 (London: Hutchinson, 1932), 18.
9. Kitchener to Grey, 2 June, 1912, in *British Documents*, vol. 10, part 2, 594–95.
10. Kitchener to Grey, 2 June, 1912, in *British Documents*, vol. 10, part 2, 594.
11. Kitchener to Lady Salisbury, 7 June, 1912, Salisbury papers.
12. Paul G. Halpern, *The Naval Mediterranean Situation, 1908–1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 37–40.

13. Kitchener to Grey, 30 June, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 30954.
14. The excerpt, drawn from an article, can be found in Kitchener's papers, PRO 30/57/42.
15. The three excepts can also be seen in Kitchener's papers, PRO 30/57/43.
16. Kitchener to Grey, 30 June, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 30954.
17. Cheetham to Grey, 4 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 41620; Kitchener to Grey, 11 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 42670.
18. Grey to Cheetham, 6 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 41620; Grey to Kitchener, 15 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 42670.
19. Lowther to Grey, 29 October, 1912, FO 407/179, No.46581.
20. Kitchener to Grey, 8 December, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
21. Grey to Kitchener, 17 January, 1913, FO/180, No. 1149.
22. Kitchener to Grey, 8 December, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
23. Kitchener to Grey, 30 June, 1913, FO 371/1635, No. 30954.
24. War Office to Foreign Office, 27 February, 1913, FO 371/1637, No. 9566.
25. Kitchener to Grey, 15 March, 1913, FO 371/1637, No. 13054.
26. Grey to War Office, 8 April, 1913, FO 371/1637, No. 13361.
27. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 2, 281–82n.
28. See Kitchener's conversation with the French Ambassador in Cairo in Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 1871–1914, 3 ser., vol. 2 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1931), 445n.
29. Kitchener to Grey, 3 November, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
30. Grey to Kitchener, 14 November, 1912, Grey papers, FO 800/48.
31. Mayer, "Abbas," vol. 2, 431–33.
32. Joseph Heller, *British Policy Towards the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1914* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 158.
33. William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774–2000* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 32–33.
34. Kitchener to Grey, 17 October, 1912, in *British Documents*, vol. 9, part 2, 30.
35. Lowther to Nicolson, 28 November, 1912, Nicolson papers, FO 800/360.
36. Kitchener to Grey, 13 November, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 45075.
37. Nicholson to Grey, 13 November, 1911, FO 371/1115, No. 45075.
38. Lowther to Grey, 20 November, 1911, FO 407/177, No. 47164.

39. Marling (British Chargé d'affaires in Constantinople) to Grey, 13 October, 1913, FO 407/181, No. 46538.
40. Kitchener to Grey, 13 November, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 48408.
41. Lowther to Grey, 18 November, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 49175.
42. Grey to Lowther, 25 November, 1912, FO 407/179, No. 49175.
43. Grey to Marling, 1 October, 1913, FO 407/181, No. 43836.
44. Marling to Grey, 13 October, 1913, FO 407/181, No. 46538.
45. Kitchener to Grey, 31 December, 1913, FO 371/1964, No. 1/14.
46. Grey to Mallet, 6 January, 1914, FO 371/1964, No. 1.
47. Mallet to Grey, 25 January, 1914, FO 371/1965, No. 4585.
48. Arthur, *Lord Kitchener*, vol. 3, 153–54; Magnus, *Kitchener*, 273.
49. Eliezer Tauber, *The Emergence of the Arab Movements* (London: Frank Cass, 1993), 41, 121, 135.
50. Keith Robbins, "Sir Edward Grey and the British Empire," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1872–73) 213–21; C. J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*: *British Foreign Policy 1902–1914*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 18.
51. Cited in Rashid Ismail Khalidi, *British Policy Towards Syria and Palestine*, *1906–1914* (London: Ithaca Press, 1980), 274.
52. Khalidi, *British Policy*, 278–79.
53. George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening* (Safety Harbor, FL: Simon Publications, 2001), 119–121.
54. King Abdullah, *Memoirs*, ed. by Philip P. Graves (London: Jonathan Cape, 1947), 94. The excerpt was too good to pass up but I was informed by an Arab expert that the English translation of Abdullah's memoirs is incomplete and not always reliable.
55. Randall Baker, *King Husain and the Kingdom of Hejaz* (New York: Oleander Press, 1979), 24.
56. Abdullah, as told to Antonius in *British Documents*, vol. 10, pt. 2, 832.
57. C. Ernest Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 60.
58. Dawn, *From Ottomanism*, 14 ff.
59. Kitchener to Grey, 6 February, 1914; Abdullah, as told to Antonius in *British Documents*, vol. 10, pt. 2, 827, 832; Antonius, *Arab Awakening*, 127.
60. Kitchener to Grey, 4 April, 1914, in *British Documents*, vol. 10, pt. 2, 830.

61. Ronald Storrs, *Memoirs* (New York: G.P. Putnum's Sons, 1937), 135.
62. Kitchener to Mallet, 20 April, 1914, Mallet papers, IV, 3.
63. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 135: Kitchener to Tyrrell, 26 April, 1914, in *British Documents*, vol. 10, pt. 2, 831; Antonius, *Arab Awakening*, 128.
64. Kitchener to Mallet, 20 April, 1914, Mallet papers, IV. 3.
65. After Turkey joined the war on the side of Germany, Kitchener made a concerted effort to persuade Hussein—whom he remembered months earlier was on the verge of breaking with the Porte—to cast his lot with Britain. Kitchener calculated that Hussein had the authority to counter the Ottoman Sultan's call for Muslims to wage a jihad against Britain and its Allies. He saw, moreover, that the Sharif's endorsement would inspire huge numbers of Arabs outside the Hejaz to rise up against the Ottomans. Here was an opportunity to put in the field a large army that would drain Turkish resources without requiring much British involvement. To entice Hussein, Kitchener offered him inducements that included material support and protection against Ottoman aggression, plus the implication that the Caliphate would be transferred to Mecca once Turkey was defeated. Hussein agreed to the concessions after protracted negotiations and in June 1916 raised the standard of revolt with an army of Bedouins and other tribesmen estimated at anywhere between 30,000 and 50,000. The Ottoman's appeal for a jihad was met with indifference in the Arab world. On the other hand the Arabs contributed significantly to the Allied cause, tying down, as Kitchener had hoped, tens of thousands of Turkish troops. These might otherwise have been used to attack the Suez Canal and reinforce Turkish troops contesting British advances into Ottoman territory. For the full details see Storrs, *Memoirs*, 162–67; Elie Kedourie, *The Anglo-Arab Labyrinth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), ch. 2; Jonathan Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration* (New York: Random House, 2010), 32–41; David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace* (New York: Avon Books, 1990), Ch. 10, 173–74; Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 276–78.
66. The discussion was reported in Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador's Morgenthau's Story* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1919), 46. Try as I might, I was unable to locate Taylor's report in the US archives.
67. Morgenthau, *Morgenthau's Story*, 47.
68. Antonius, *Arab Awakening*, 129.

Epilogue

Ten days after Kitchener arrived in London the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, was assassinated in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. A month later, Kitchener was having breakfast at the home of a friend when he learned that Serbia had refused to accept all of Austria's exacting demands. He had no doubt that a war would break out and he expressed the fear that Britain might be dragged into it.[1] As the war clouds gathered over Europe, the Foreign Office on 31 July ordered all heads of overseas mission to return to their posts. Three days later Kitchener was on his way to Dover to catch the 1 pm boat train to Calais where a cruiser would take him to Egypt. Boarding the boat on arrival, Kitchener was on the deck waiting impatiently for the captain to give the signal to start when he received a telephone call from the Prime Minister instructing him to return to London. On 5 August with Britain's entry into the war, Asquith, anxious for a strong man to take charge of the War Office, called him to 10 Downing Street. Kitchener was not attracted to the offer. As a soldier, free for the greater part of his career to execute orders as he saw fit, he knew that he was not suited to team work. Besides he disliked the idea of working alongside politicians, against whom he lacked the verbal dexterity so vital for the cut and thrust of Cabinet debate.[2] Asquith admitted that "K. was to do him justice, not at all anxious to come in, but when it was presented to him as a duty he agreed."[3] Kitchener accepted the position of Secretary of War on condition that he be allowed to return to Egypt (presumably in the event he should fail to succeed to the Viceroyalty of India) at the end of the conflict.

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6

The Foreign Office expected the war to be over in a few months and did not try to find a substitute for Kitchener in Egypt. For the time being, Cheetham was left in charge of the Agency. Kitchener continued though his dedicated and loyal team in Cairo to manage the internal affairs of Egypt and then indirectly after a temporary replacement (Sir Henry McMahon) had been appointed in January 1915.

The First World War gave Britain the opportunity to tighten its hold over Egypt. When the Ottoman Empire seemed certain to enter the war on the side of Germany, Sir John Maxwell, the new British Commander in Egypt, proclaimed martial law on 2 November, 1914, which allowed him to take arbitrary measures without the consent of the Capitulatory Powers. Three days later war was declared and the status of Egypt, still legally part of the Ottoman Empire, posed an awkward question for London. Kitchener and the British Agency in Cairo were divided over which course should be adopted. Kitchener favored abolishing the monarchy and incorporating Egypt into the British Empire as a Crown colony. Cheetham and Maxwell dreaded the thought of annexation which would have abolished the Egyptian government and obliged them to assume more administrative responsibility to their already heavy load. They wanted to maintain the *status quo* and simply remove the flimsy veil over what was in fact a British Protectorate. They argued with Kitchener about the consequences of Britain's annexation of Egypt—that the British were ill-equipped to deal with complex administrative, judicial and religious difficulties they foresaw would arise; and that the population was more likely to accept unpopular measures necessitated by the war coming from a native rather than British administration.

The fear of disturbances in Egypt was a decisive factor in persuading both Kitchener and Grey to defer to the men on the spot. On 18 December a Protectorate was formally proclaimed. Abbas, who was in Constantinople when the war started and naturally spoke out in support of his hosts, was deposed and replaced by his uncle Prince Hussein Kamel, the senior member of the Khedival family.[4]

The war, especially the last two years, caused serious problems for the British in Egypt and slowly frittered away the huge reservoir of goodwill Kitchener and his administration had built up. At the outset the British, anxious to avoid possible disorders, vowed not to actively involve Egypt in the war but within days broke their pledge by sending artillery units of the Egyptian army to assist in the defense of the Suez Canal. As the war dragged on ever-increasing demands were made on Egyptians to serve,

either in colonial campaigns in Africa or as labor troops in British military operations. When the number of volunteers began to fall off in 1917, the British shrank from the odium of imposing conscription and resorted to the age old traditional method of the *corvée*. The mudirs in the provinces were required to produce "voluntary" recruits with a warning that they would incur dire penalties if they failed to meet their allotted quota.[5] Press gangs were formed for the purpose of coercing and leading the fellahin to the nearest recruiting center. The army's growing need to transport supplies for the Palestine campaign led it to arbitrarily requisition camels and donkeys. While the British paid the market price for the animals, it deprived the fellahin of the means vital for his livelihood. There were more stifling demands on Egypt. A poor cereal yield in 1917 and the army's increased food demand, necessitated restrictions on the acres devoted to the production of cotton, the most profitable crop.

These high-handed measures were probably the most unpopular but the British imposed other requirements on the population such as requisitioning buildings and homes for military administrative purposes, press censorship and rounding up and interning suspected enemy sympathizers. The British authorities were so preoccupied with prosecuting the war that they had lost touch with popular sentiment. Through their policies they had unwittingly caused resentment among all the classes, including the fellahin who had been their best friends, and eventually the rising tensions led to a violent explosion in 1919.

Kitchener would have found the landscape changed appreciably in Egypt if he had survived the war and returned to his old post. Whether he would have been able to reassert his grip over the country is a question that cannot be answered. Some historians like Peter Mansfield doubt that Kitchener's luck would have lasted if he had spent more time in Egypt.[6] For Egyptians, however, Kitchener could do no wrong. Even after he accepted a new assignment in 1914, he remained a very popular figure and his death two years later was mourned nearly as much in Egypt as in Britain and the Empire. At any rate the legacy he left in Egypt should be based on his record, not on idle speculation.

It is not always possible to assess the value of an administrator whenever his tenure is brief but in the case of Kitchener the picture is clear enough. He faced formidable challenges on his arrival in Egypt. The country was wracked by unrest and nationalist disorders resulting from the Gorst experiment; the economy was struggling to emerge from the recession of 1907; a war had broken out between the Ottoman Empire

and Italy; and relations between Muslims and Copts had degenerated into an endemic feud.

It cannot be denied that the moment Kitchener stepped on Egyptian soil he enjoyed advantages that were unavailable to his predecessor. The glamor of his past military victories and the strength of his personality silenced potential opposition and made it easier for him to attain his objectives. But it must not be overlooked that he had the courage and energy to carry out schemes that no one else would have dared and, if in the execution of a plan he detected a serious flaw, he was unafraid to switch into reverse and try something else.

Kitchener's first task was to enforce Britain's policy of strict neutrality during the Turco-Italian war in a country where the people were partisans of Turkey. In a tribute to his stewardship he steered the country through a political minefield without forfeiting the goodwill of either the Egyptians or the belligerents. At the same time the political scene was largely untroubled, thanks to his cool temperament, steady hand and firm handling of nationalist agitators. Many Egyptian supporters of the Occupation, silent during the unpopular Gorst administration, reestablished their ties with the British. In the early weeks Kitchener mended, rapidly and with a minimum of effort, the nasty breach between the Muslims and Copts.

Kitchener saw that the material progress of Egypt was the surest way to obviate possible sources of discontent. He understood that the economy rested on the prosperity of the agricultural population, especially the small landholder. He was concerned with the welfare of the fellahin who were often in debt to usurers and dispossessed of their land by foreclosure. The Five Feddan Law he introduced was designed to prevent farmers, who did not own more than five feddans, from eviction for non-payment of debt. It was controversial and pushed through despite the misgivings of the Foreign Office and the fierce resistance of financial interests. The measure proved to be beneficial and lasting. It not only protected the small farmer from pledging his holding as security for, or seized for failure to repay, a debt, but in addition promoted healthier standards of lending and borrowing.

Kitchener continued the development of perennial irrigation which fundamentally and permanently altered the life of the country. With the native population growing rapidly the availability of water meant that arid land could be brought under the plough. For the fellahin access to a permanent supply of water meant that they could grow two crops, instead of

one, and increase their productivity and income. The rise of exports augmented the revenue of the government and helped subsidize Kitchener's numerous projects. Additional cultivation in the summer and excessive use of water, however, did create problems which were solved, albeit slowly. Continued cropping exhausted the soil and restoring and maintaining its richness became dependent on artificial fertilizers. Overuse of water rendered some areas waterlogged. It was necessary to educate the fellahin to use the water more sparingly and to construct improved drainage systems.

Kitchener's interest went beyond the betterment of agriculture and farmers, and many of his reforms were aimed at the well-being of the entire population. Public health and sanitation, areas long neglected, were improved. Additional hospitals were built, patients received better care, more staff were hired and facilities expanded in asylums, public latrines were set up in cities and various steps were taken to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Kitchener, moreover, found funds to assist the traveler by building light railways, roads, super highways and bridges.

Although the Liberals in Britain desired a western system of democracy for Egypt, it was not what Kitchener had in mind. To satisfy his critics at home and moderate nationalists in Egypt, he introduced a new Organic Law in 1913, as a form of constitutional advance. While Kitchener's personal rule was not affected, he did contribute, perhaps unwittingly, to the development of representative institutions. Although the Legislative Assembly had no power, except to veto requests for the increase of direct taxation, its members could voice their opinion on current questions and request ministers to provide information or justify the government's proposals.

Kitchener experienced a few disappointments along the way, though it was not for want of trying. His first experiment to reclaim barren land along the sea was unsuccessful but it was a start and in time improved methods would lead to better results. The odds were stacked against him when he set out to abolish the Capitulations. No conceivable plan would have been supported by the European Powers as long as Egypt's status remained undetermined. Kitchener also failed to make progress in the realm of public safety. Here again there were mitigating circumstances. The obstacles in his path were so formidable that it would have required many years to rein in crime.

The one area in which Kitchener is open to criticism is his neglect of the educational system. It can be argued that the cost would have exceeded the capacity of the treasury, that the task was herculean, that the stronghold

of Islam in scholasticism was a barrier to educational evolution, and that in the final analysis the undertaking might have been a colossal failure. All of this may be true but Kitchener could have done more without trying to reform the entire educational system. For Kitchener, however, enlightenment of a broad section of the Egyptian population was not a priority for he feared it would breed future political resistance to British rule.

While in Egypt, Kitchener believed that the opportunity existed to separate Arab lands from the Ottoman Empire and to bring them under the direction of the British. Such a development, in his view, would be beneficial for both Britain's imperial security and the progress of the peoples of the Middle East. Kitchener had no sympathy with some European nations who expanded for avaricious reasons—solely to exploit the natives for their own benefit. He felt strongly that the British had a moral duty in territories controlled by them to provide the inhabitants with stability, justice, good government and economic advancement.

No agent of change in a society can claim to have tackled all major problems or succeeded each time he undertook a project. Kitchener was no different but his sins of commission and omission were remarkably few. Kitchener was not a politician and it was not in his nature to boast or inflate his accomplishments. If asked to rate his tenure as Consul-General, he simply would have answered that, like all his previous assignments, he had carried out his work to the best of his ability. Few would deny that in Egypt he had accomplished his mission extremely well.

Notes

1. Sir Ronald Storrs, *Memoirs* (London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1937), 137.
2. George H. Cassar, *Kitchener's War: British Strategy from 1914 to 1916* (Washington, DC: Potomac, 2004), 21.
3. The Earl of Oxford and Asquith, *Memories and Reflections*, vol. 2 (London: Cassell, 1928), 24.
4. Cassar, *Kitchener's War*, 51–52.
5. John Marlowe, *A History of Modern Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Relations* (Hamden, CN: Archon Book, 1965), 222–23.
6. Peter Mansfield, *The British in Egypt* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 202.

Appendix

List of Grand Viziers under the Young Turks Prior to the Great War

Mehmed Said Pasha (22 July 1908–6 August 1908)
Kamil Pasha (5 August 1908–14 February 1909)
Huseyin Hilmi Pasha (14 February 1909–14 April 1909)
Ahmet Tevfik Pasha (14 April 1909–5 May 1909)
Huseyin Hilmi Pasha (5 May 1909–12 January 1910)
Ibrahim Hakki Pasha (12 January 1912–30 September 1911)
Mehmed Said Pasha (30 September 1911–22 July 1912)
Ahmed Muhtar Pasha (22 July 1912–29 October 1912)
Kamil Pasha (29 October 1912–23 January 1913)
Mahmud Shevker Pasha (23 January 1913–11 June 1913)
Said Hilmi Pasha (12 June 1913–4 February 1917)

Ottoman High Commissioners in Cairo (1885–1914)

Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha (1885–1908)
Ali Rida Pasha (1908–1909)
Raouf Pasha (1909–1914)

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6

Bibliography

Archival Collection

Foreign Office, National Archives (vols.)
FO 141/304
FO 371/1111
FO 371/1112
FO 371/1115
FO 371/1361
FO 371/1362
FO 371/1363
FO 371/1364
FO 371/1635
FO 371/1636
FO 371/1637
FO 371/1638
FO 371/1639
FO 371/1640
FO 371/1964
FO 371/1965
FO 371/1966
FO 371/1967
FO 371/1968
FO 407/177
FO 407/178
FO 407/179
FO 407/180

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911–1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6

Private Papers*

Sir George Arthur, National Archives
Lord Edward Cecil, Bodleian Library, Oxford
Sir Milne Cheetham, St. Anthony's College, Oxford
Lord Colum Crichton-Stuart, Mount Stuart Trust, Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute
Earl of Cromer (Sir Evelyn Baring), National Archives
King George V, Royal Archives, Windsor
Sir Edward Grey, National Archives
Sir Ian Hamilton, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College
Earl Herbert Kitchener, National Archives
Sir Louis Mallet, Balliol College, Oxford
Sir Arthur Nicolson, National Archives
Thomas Russell Pasha, St Anthony's College, Oxford
Lady Salisbury, Hatfield House, Hatfield
Sir Ronald Storrs (on microfilm). The actual papers are housed at Pembroke College, Cambridge
*The location is London unless otherwise indicated

Official Reports

Great Britain: Foreign Office. *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898–1914*. ed by George P. Gooch and Harold Temperley. vol. 9, pts. 1 and 2. London: HMSO, 1934; and vol. 10, pt. 2. 1938.
Kitchener, *Annual Reports* (on Egypt and the Sudan) for 1911, 1912, 1913. House of Commons Sessional papers.
Kitchener, *Despatch Respecting the Arrest of Alexander Adamovitch*, Cd. 6874, Egypt. no. 2 (1913).
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 1871–1914. 3 ser., vol. 2. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1931.

Primary and Secondary Sources

Abdullah, King. 1947. *Memoirs*, ed. Philip P. Graves. London: Jonathan Cape.
Al-Sayyid, Afaf Lutfi. 1969. *Egypt and Cromer*. New York: Praeger.
Antonius, George. 2001. *The Arab Awakening*. Safety Harbour, FL: Simon Publications, rep.
Arthur, Sir George. 1920. *Life of Lord Kitchener*. 3 vols. London: Macmillan.
Asher, Michael. 2006. *Khartoum: The Ultimate Imperial Adventure*. London: Penguin Books.

Badrawi, Malak. 2000. *Political Violence in Egypt, 1910–1924*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.

Baker, Randall. 1979. *King Husain and the Kingdom of Hejaz*. New York: Oleander Press.

Ballard, Gen.C.R. 1930. *Kitchener*. London: Dodd, Mead and Co.

Beckett, Ian F.W. 1998. Kitchener and the Politics of Command. In *Sudan: The Conquest Reappraised*, ed. Edward M. Spires. London: Frank Cass.

Berenson, Edward. 2007. Fashoda, Dreyfus, and the Myth of Jean-Baptiste Marchand. *Yale French Studies* 111: 129–142.

Birdwood, Field-Marshal Lord. 1942. *Khaki and Gown*. London: Ward, Lock and Co.

Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen. 1922. *My Diaries*, vol 1. New York: Knopf.

Boyle, Clara. 1938. *Harry Boyle: A Servant of the Empire*. London: Methuen.

Brinton, Jasper Y. 1968. *The Mixed Courts of Egypt*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Byng of Vimy, Viscountess. 1946. *Up the Stream of Time*. Toronto: Macmillan.

Carter, Barbara L. 1986. *The Copts in Egyptian Politics*. London: Croom Helm.

Cassar, George H. 1977. *Kitchener: Architect of Victory*. London: Kimber.

——— 2004. *Kitchener's War: British Strategy from 1914 to 1918*. Washington, DC: Potomac Books.

Cecil, Lord Edward. 1938. *The Leisure of an Egyptian Official*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Cromer, Earl of. 1908. *Modern Egypt*, vol 2. London: Macmillan.

———. 1915. *Abbas II*. London: Macmillan.

Daly, M.W. 1986. *Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898–1934*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

——— 1997. *The Sirdar: Sir Reginald Wingate and the British Empire in the Middle East*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society.

——— 1998. The British Occupation, 1882–1992. In *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol 2, ed. M.W. Daly. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dawn, C.Ernest. 1973. *From Ottomanism to Arabism*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Dilks, David. 1969. *Curzon in India*, vol 2. New York: Taplinger.

Elgood, Lieut.-Col.P.G. 1928. *The Transit of Egypt*. London: Edward Arnold.

Esher, Reginald Viscount. 1921. *The Tragedy of Lord Kitchener*. London: John Murray.

Fromkin, David. 1989. *A Peace to End All Peace*. New York: Avon Books.

Gershoni, Israel, and James P. Jankowski. 1986. *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs: The Search for Egyptian Nationhood, 1900–1930*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goldschmidt, Arthur. 1968. The Egyptian Nationalist Party: 1892–1919. In *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, ed. P.M. Holt. London: Oxford University Press.

Gooch, John. 1998. Italy, Abyssinia and the Sudan, 1885–1898. In *Sudan: The Reconquest Reappraised*, ed. Edward M. Spires. London: Frank Cass.
Grew, E.S. 1920. *Field Marshal Lord Kitchener*, vol 1. London: Gresham.
Hale, William. 2000. *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774–2000*. London: Frank Cass.
Halpern, Paul G. 1971. *The Naval Mediterranean Situation, 1908–1914*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Heller, Joseph. 1983. *British Policy Towards the Ottoman Empire 1908–1914*. London: Frank Cass.
Hilmi, Abbas. 1998. *The Last Khedive of Egypt: Memoirs of Abbas Hilmi II*. trans. and ed. Amira Sonbol. Reading: Ithaca Press.
Hunter, Archie. 2007. *Power and Passion in Egypt: A Life of Sir Eldon Gorst 1861–1911*. London: Taurus.
Jenkins, Roy. 2001. *Churchill: A Biography*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Khalidi, Rashid Ismail. 1980. *British Policy Towards Syria and Palestine, 1906–1914*. London: Ithaca Press.
King, Peter. 1986. *The Viceroy's Fall: How Kitchener Destroyed Curzon*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson.
Koss, Stephen K. 1969. *John Morley at the India Office, 1905–1910*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Lewis, David L. 1988. *The Race to Fashoda*. London: Bloomsbury.
Lloyd, Lord. 1970. *Egypt Since Cromer*. New York: AMS Press, rep.
Lowe, C.J., and M.L. Dockrill. 1972. *The Mirage of Power: British Foreign Policy 1902–1914*, vol 1. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Macdonald, John. 1898. Fellah Soldiers, Old and New: A Reminiscence and a Moral. *Nineteenth Century* 44: 582–590.
Magnus, Sir Philip. 1959. *Kitchener: Portrait of an Imperialist*. New York: Dutton.
Mansfield, Peter. 1971. *The British in Egypt*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
Marder, Arthur J. 1961. *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*, vol 1. London: Oxford University Press.
Marlowe, John. 1965. *A History of Modern Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Relations*. Hamden, CN: Archon Books.
———. 1970. *Cromer in Egypt*. London: Elek Books.
Marshall, J.E. 1928. *The Egyptian Enigma*. London: John Murray.
Mason, Philip. 1974. *A Matter of Honour: An Account of the Indian Army: Its Officers and Men*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
Mayer, Ann Elizabeth. 1978. Abbas Hilmi II: The Khedive and Egypt's Struggle for Independence. 2 vols. PhD thesis: University of Michigan.
Mckale, Donald M. 1997. Influence without Power: The last Khedive of Egypt and the Great Powers, 1914–1918. *Middle Eastern Studies* 33(1): 20–39.
Mellini, Peter. 1977. *Sir Elton Gorst*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press.
Mikhail, Kyriakos. 1911. *Copts and Muslims Under British Control*. London: Smith, Elder and Co.

Milner, Viscount Alfred. 1909. *England in Egypt*. London: Edward Arnold.
Morgenthau, Henry. 1919. *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page and Co.
Moseley, Sydney A. 1917. *With Kitchener in Cairo*. London: Cassell.
Owen, Roger. 2004. *Lord Cromer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
———. 2006. The Rapid Growth of Egypt's Agricultural Output, 1890–1914, as an Early Example of the Green Revolutions of Modern South Asia: Some Implications for the Writing of Global History. *Journal of Global History* 1: 81–99.
Packenham, Thomas. 1979. *The Boer War*. New York: Random House.
Paoletti, Ciro. 2008. *A Military History of Italy*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
Penix, Matthew D. 2013. The Ottoman Empire in the First World War: A Rational Disaster. MA Thesis: Eastern Michigan University.
Pollock, John. 1998. *Kitchener*. New York: Carroll and Graf.
Pugh, Roy. 2011. *Wingate Pasha*. Barnsley: Pen and Sword.
Radwan, Samir. 1974. *Capital Formation in Egyptian Industry and Agriculture, 1882–1967*. London: Ithaca Press.
Reid, Donald M. 1982. Political Assassination in Egypt, 1910–1954. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 15(4): 625–651.
Repington, Lt.-Col. Charles à Court. 1919. *Vestigia*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
Robbins, Keith. 1972–73. Sir Edward Grey and the British Empire. *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* 1(2): 213–221.
Rogan, Eugene. 2015. *The Fall of the Ottomans*. New York: Basic Books.
Royle, Trevor. 1985. *The Kitchener Enigma*. London: Michael Joseph.
Russell Pasha, Sir Thomas. 1949. *Egyptian Service 1902–1946*. London: John Murray.
Sandes, E.W.C. 1937. *The Royal Engineers in Egypt and the Sudan*. Institute of Royal Engineers: Chatham.
Sayce, A.H. 1928. *Reminiscences*. London: Macmillan.
Schneer, Jonathan. 2010. *The Balfour Declaration*. New York: Random House.
Sèbe, Berny. 2013. *Heroic Imperialists in Africa*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Seikaly, Samir. 1977. Prime Minister and Assassin: Butrus Ghali and Wardini. *Middle Eastern Studies* 13(1): 112–123.
Spender, J.A., and Cyril Asquith. 1932. *Life of Herbert Henry Asquith, Lord Oxford and Asquith*, vol 2. London: Hutchinson.
Spires, Edward M. 1998. Campaigning Under Kitchener. In *Sudan: The Conquest Reappraised*, ed. Edward M. Spires. London: Frank Cass.
Stephenson, Charles. 2014. *A Box of Sand: The Italo-Ottoman War 1911–1912. Ticehurst, E.* Sussex: Tattered Flag Press.
Storrs, Sir Ronald. 1937. *Memoirs*. New York: G.P. Putnum's Sons.
Tauber, Eliezer. 1993. *The Emergence of the Arab Movements*. London: Frank Cass.

Tignor, Robert T. 1966. *Modernization and British Colonial Rule, 1882–1914*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Tollefson, Harold. 1999. *Policing Islam*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
Tvedt, Terje. 2004. *The River Nile in the Age of the British*. London: I.B. Tauris.
Warburg, Gabriel R. 1985. *Egypt and the Sudan*. London: Frank Cass.
Weigall, Arthur E. 1915. *A History of Events in Egypt from 1798 to 1914*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
Wingate, Ronald. 1955. *Wingate of the Sudan*. London: John Murray.
———. 1959. *Not in the Limelight*. London: Hutchinson.
Winstone, H.V.F., ed. 1983. *The Diaries of Parker Pasha*. London: Quartet Books.
Wright, Patricia. 1972. *Conflict on the Nile: The Fashoda Incident of 1898*. London: William Heinemann.
Young, George. 1930. *Egypt*. London: Ernest Benn.
Ziegler, Philip. 1974. *Omdurman*. New York: Knopf.

Index

G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener as Proconsul of Egypt, 1911-1914*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-39363-6