

**1, A MEMOIR ON THE COTTON
OF EGYPT. 2, AN APPEAL TO THE
ANTIQUARIES OF EUROPE ON
THE DESTRUCTION OF THE
MONUMENTS OF EGYPT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649045761

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Cover @ 2017

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GEORGE R. GLIDDON

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N^o. 1.

A MEMOIR

ON THE

COTTON OF EGYPT.

BY

GEORGE R. GLIDDON,

LATE UNITED STATES' CONSUL AT CAIRO.

" Qui si fa quel che si sa ;
E si sa quel che si fa."



LONDON :

JAMES MADDEN & Co.

(Late Parbury & Co.)

8, LEADENHALL STREET.

MDCCCXLI.

DEDICATION.

TO THE
HONOURABLE LEVI WOODBURY,
LATE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
OF THE
UNITED STATES, &c., &c., &c.
WASHINGTON.

SIR,

WHEN, in February 1838, I had the honour to take leave at the Treasury Department, you were pleased to place in my hands a copy of the "Letter on the Cultivation, Manufacture, and Foreign Trade of Cotton," which in the year 1836, as Secretary of the Treasury, you transmitted to the Senate of the United States; and you requested me to fill up certain blanks therein, which the want of materials had obliged you to leave, in relation to Egyptian Cotton.

In the following sheets I have attempted to meet your desire; making use of all the materials I could obtain, in a country wherein I have been a sojourner for the greater part of twenty-three

years; and in taking the liberty of dedicating to you the result of my inquiries, I trust your goodness will look at the endeavour thus made to acquit myself of the charge confided to me, rather than test its imperfections by comparing it with your own elaborate work.

I remain with much respect,

SIR,

Your obliged and humble servant,

GEORGE R. GLIDDON.

Cairo, March 31, 1841.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

London, June 1841.

SINCE my arrival in London, I have had, for the first time, an opportunity of consulting the "Report on Egypt and Candia," drawn up for presentation to both Houses of Parliament, in 1840, by Dr. Bowring. Had I been aware of the prior existence of the greater part of the Cotton Statistics collected in the following Memoir, I should not have endeavoured to supply the deficiency. There are, however, some points the Report has passed over in silence, which to the reader of the following Notes may afford a transient interest, that induce me not to abandon the subject; and I am much gratified in finding the account I have imperfectly traced, of the utter worthlessness of Mohammed Ali's administration in agricultural and commercial affairs, confirmed (in spite of the exceedingly favourable colouring this Document gives to the Pasha's system) by authorities so high

as Dr. Bowring, and those whose communications are quoted in the Report. Wretched as was the state of the Fellàh, when Dr. Bowring visited Egypt in 1838; and miserably mismanaged as had been every branch of interior administration up to that period, I can, with the utmost confidence, assure the Reader, that, without one solitary exception, the state of that unfortunate country has in every way deteriorated.

A MEMOIR
ON THE
COTTON OF EGYPT.

PREVIOUSLY to the year 1820, the Cotton* grown in the valley of the Nile, known in Egypt by the name of "Belledi," or Native, was small in amount, and consumed chiefly in the country itself.

The cushions of the Divan, and the bedding of the better classes, were filled with this material, which from its cheapness was, at the same time, well suited to the ruder manufactures of the people. For the higher branches of the weaving art, cotton twist was imported from India, and eventually from

* According to Forskal's "Flora Ægyptiaco-Arabica," 1775, two species of the Cotton Plant appear to have existed in Egypt, the "Gossypium Rubrum," and the "Gossypium Arboreum."

In the "Description de l'Égypte, Histoire Naturelle et Botanique," three species of the Cotton Plant are recorded, namely:—
Gossypium Herbaceum, an annual.

———— Frutescens.

———— Vitifolium, Cavanilles, or Gossypium Arboreum.

In Wilkinson's "Topography of Thebes," &c., only one

Europe, as well as various qualities of raw cotton from Syria, Asia Minor, and elsewhere, for the higher numbers of the silk and cotton webs.

It was reserved for the enterprising genius of Mohammed Ali, to introduce an article of produce, which, singly, should exceed in value all the former productions of Egypt; and which in eighteen years should effect an entire change in the features of its export trade.

This, indeed, was done to an extent no less detrimental to the prosperity of the country, and the real interests of the Government, (viewed as distinct

species is mentioned, the "Gossypium Herbaceum," which by the French savans is stated to be an annual, but here, on the contrary, is said to be renewed every third year.

Whether the original seed of the "Jumel" Cotton was solely derived from the Ethiopic plant found in Mahò Bey's garden, or whether previously to 1820 the same species existed in Egypt, are points upon which, for want of authentic evidence, it might be presumptuous to hazard an opinion. It is possible, that, at present, under proper botanical research, many varieties of the Cotton Plant might still be discovered in this country.

The original seed of the Cotton Belledi is said to have been brought into Egypt from the neighbourhood of St. Jean d'Acre, and its staple appears to have improved by transfer to the Eastern Provinces of the Damietta branch of the Nile. The best was called "Sherkâwi." Another variety bore the name of Izmeerli, or of Smyrna; the seed having been imported from Asia Minor. The want of Cotton Belledi is now much felt by the natives to fill the mattresses and cushions of the Divan, for which purpose it is preferred to the Jumel. Previously to Mohammed Ali's usurpation, the crop of Cotton Belledi averaged about 30,000 cantars per annum. In the year A.D. 1824 (Hegira 1233) the price was as high as 14 dollars the cantar of 43½ okes. It gradually fell; and in A.D. 1828 (Hegira 1237), the Cotton Belledi was obtainable as low as six dollars in Cairo, while the Jumel was selling at Alexandria as high as fifteen dollars.