

September 21, 1922

My dear Lum:

I am inclosing two copies of my Report to the Board of Trustees. Next week I shall send you two more copies as security against loss in the mails. My thought was that the extra copies can be held in reserve and sent to members of the Board who may be absent from your meeting. Your official copy will go in with the official minutes. Of course, if it should go in with each copy of the minutes sent to each member, then you will need to make your own duplicate copies. At any rate these few extra copies may be of use to you.

Now may I beseech you, exhort you, implore you, whatever you do with this report, to secure a good reader for it and to let it come into the program of the meeting at a time when all are not asleep.

With best wishes,

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Hermann A. Lum
1120 Land Title Building

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Report of Dr. Charles R. Watson, as President
to the Trustees of the American University at Cairo

Cairo, September 19, 1922

Gentlemen:

In this letter which is meant to reach you for the meeting of the Board of Trustees, I may well pass over a large number of items which were dealt with in a letter which I addressed to you on May 15. Obviously, the intervening months being the rather uneventful summer months, the situation is for the most part the same today as three months ago. However, I may record a pleasure and satisfaction in coming back to the work this fall which is in sharp contrast with the feeling of bewilderment and strangeness which characterized the months of my first arrival in Egypt. It is something akin to the feeling of proprietorship and hominess that a sophomore experiences when he comes back to his college after the summer vacation of his freshman year - a year in which he had felt himself a mere stranger and intruder, a novice and an amateur. It will take much more than a year to gain a facile use of the Arabic, to establish lines of acquaintance and friendship in Egypt commensurate with those I left behind me in America, to feel sure of my ground as I try to weigh situations and measure personalities, but at least I can feel that my engine is going, that the car is moving a bit and that I merely need to learn how to shift the gears more easily and feed in more gasoline. (Pardon the figure, but I took my first lesson yesterday in driving the new University Oakland car).

1. General Outlook: Under this general heading, several matters may be taken up;

(1) Political Situation: In Egypt the situation is very quiet for the moment. The present Ministry has been in power long enough to remove that feeling of political uncertainty which existed a year ago when Ministries were changing every few weeks. Furthermore, the present Ministry, that of Sarwat Pasha, represents a policy of cooperation with Great Britain in working out an amicable plan for conserving mutual interests in Egypt. Along this road alone, can progress be looked for. Blind opposition to Great Britain, which is the policy of the Extreme Nationalists, only creates a dead lock, whereas Allenby and Great Britain can throw their influence in favor of such a Ministry as the present one and this again makes for solidity and permanency. An effective quietus has been placed upon political agitators by the recent arrest of a group of Nationalists who had issued a fiery proclamation. These were tried by court martial and sentenced to death. The death sentence was commuted to seven years imprisonment and a fine of \$25,000. This had a most sobering effect on political agitation. The ground for so heavy a sentence was the fact that the fiery proclamation was issued at a time when a number of Englishmen were being shot in ambush over the city and the murderers could not be traced. The proclamation and the murders appeared to be one in spirit whether the agitators were in collusion or not.

On the other hand, the Near Eastern situation as a whole is much more disturbed than before, owing to Turkish victories. The defeat of the Greeks by the Turks is always a suggestion to other areas that with a bit of good luck they too could drive the hated Christian and European out of their territories. The Arabic powers here are revelling in the good news of Greek routs, of great Turkish victories

and still greater Turkish pronouncements and of the ravaging and pillaging of Armenian and Greek cities. To some of us, it seems perfectly unpardonable that great and strong nations of the West will permit such conditions, especially when order can be so easily maintained (witness 5000 British troops in Egypt and a mere handful in India) and when disorder spells such fearful bloodshed and destruction of property.

(2) Enrolment: I wish you could all visit us today. We are in the midst of enrolment for the College for the new year. The building and grounds are dotted with students. Already 163 students have signed up, but the process is not complete. "Process" it is, for there are endless sittings. You would be pleased with this. Already, I am told, 53 have been turned down for one cause or another.

Obviously, it is impossible at this writing to give any analysis of this year's enrolment, but it is safe to assume it will be much like that of last year. A questionnaire filled out by 171 of our 200 students yielded some most interesting generalizations as to our student body. Of these, I might refer to the following:

The fathers of 82 per cent are alive; of these, the fathers of 5 bear the title of Pasha, 49 the title of Bay, 67 the title of Effendi (meaning a modern Egyptian, with Western dress), 26 the title of Monsieur (probably Armenian or foreign), 20 the title of Sheikh (Oriental Moslem type), 2 the title of Is Sayad (descendant of the Prophet), one the title of Priest (a Copt). As to chief occupations of the fathers, the replies show 62 landowners, 26 government officials, 19 merchants, 12 doctors, 6 army officers, 6 engineers, while the rest are widely distributed. This is most suggestive as to the type of education we should provide. The questionnaire covered 33 points of inquiry, most important for our proper understanding of the social, economic, intellectual, moral and religious background of the students, but it would carry us too far afield to discuss them all here.

The enrolment of students in the School of Oriental Studies is dependent, of course, on the number of new recruits received by the Missions. The number is much the same as last year.

(3) Visits of Trustees: I wish to express our great appreciation of visits of our Trustees to Egypt. Dr. Kyle was here the year before my arrival. This past year Mr. W. S. George came. I understand there is a good hope of our seeing Dr. W. B. Hill, the Chairman of our Board of Trustees this coming winter; perhaps also this year, or else next year, Mr. Frackelton. To this list we may add visits to Egypt before the launching of the University on the part of Mr. Innes, Dr. McClurkin, Dr. Robinson and Prof Beach. This is a splendid record and means much for effective administration. The visit of Mr. George this past winter meant much to me as it brought an encouragement, a courage and a guidance which I greatly needed just at the time of his coming. I trust he will pass on to the Board his impressions especially as regards the out-of-town site on the road to the Pyramids.

(4) Under this heading of General Outlook, I wish also to speak a word of hearty appreciation of both the promotion and administration work that has been done by Mr. Lum since I left America. As the promotion work was my own work in America, you can imagine my interest in it. Furthermore, on the administration side, I am in a peculiar position out here to know the extent and value of Mr. Lum's work. For punctuality, clearness, definiteness and efficiency, his letters and his handling of business matters have been splendid. His promotion work I view at a greater distance out here, but on the whole it has appeared to me most satisfying and in several respects indicative of peculiar resourcefulness and initiative. Looking into the future, I have felt a deep conviction that Mr. Lum should visit Egypt at an early date. Such a visit and a first hand acquaintance with conditions are essential to adequate promotion activities and make for greater efficiency in administration. Indeed the economies resulting from such knowl-

edge make the expense of such a visit a good investment. I will not dwell further on this proposal here for I have written at length about it to the Chairman of the Board and to the Chairman of the Finance Committee. I hope Mrs. Lum can accompany Mr. Lum on such a visit to Egypt.

Mr. Lum has had occasion to refer repeatedly during the year to the cordial cooperation of the Trustees with him at every point in his work. As I myself have enjoyed this cordial support in the past and know something of its value and power, let me thank you all for your continuance of this generous helpfulness in my absence and for your manifestation of it to Mr. Lum.

3. My Own Activities: I feel I should give the Trustees some picture of my duties. In general, I may say that both before arriving here and since, I saw the imperative need of avoiding the mistake of being drawn into routine administrative work. This has been very difficult both because I find myself naturally drawn to certain types of activity and because one is naturally desirous of trying to relieve somewhat one's associates who are carrying enormous burdens. Yet it is clear as day that the University project as a whole needs some one who will make its development his chief concern or it will become the victim of arrested development, maladjustment of relationships and inefficiency in administration. At three points in particular, I have found myself chiefly engaged in an effort to contribute to the life of the institution as a whole:

(1) Religious Influences of the Institution: When an institution is in process of organization, it is no criticism of its administrators to refer to any phase of its work as calling for development and strengthening. Everything cannot be done at once. "First the natural and then the spiritual." Every member of our staff has been heavily burdened with secular administration. We must have some one person soon as Religious Director, to give his time and thought to the religious life of the institution. Mr. Trowbridge has been considered as a possibility for this position.

Meanwhile I have invested some time and thought to emphasizing and glorifying the religious aims of our work. Last year, this meant emphasizing the value of activities already devised and in operation: chapel, Bible study in the curriculum, personal interviews, Students Union. This year it contemplates a Sunday service of which I shall have chief charge for the student stratum of society in Cairo. In all this work, the problem is not that of quantity, but the discovery of really vital ways of indicating what Christianity means, in a land where Mohammedan misconceptions and Oriental Christianity have made a travesty of real, vital, spiritual life. With a view to finding a solution and discovering better ways of influencing students, we called two conferences which lasted for several hours each for the discussion of this problem. These were most stimulating as we drew on the rich experience of such people as Miss Buchanan formerly of the Girls' College, Miss Atchison, its present head, Mr. Jeffery and Mr. W. B. Smith formerly in India and several others.

(2) Educational Policy of the College: Here again I found need for stimulating self examination of our methods and curriculum. It will not do to merely copy Assiut or Oxford or America. It is all very well to break away from a Government curriculum whose limitations are clear, but it is far more difficult to determine what are the right ingredients of a suitable curriculum for an Egyptian student. This is not a matter in which one can ask for a fixed and final solution, but one can ask for a constant pursuit after the discovery of the best curriculum for Egyptian students. The questionnaire already referred to was one method used to open up to our College Faculty the importance and complex character of our problem. We held some four or five extended conferences on the whole subject.

(3) School of Oriental Studies: I have found it necessary also to

give a good deal of time to the organization and to our assimilation of this department of the University. As you know, this was formerly the training school for missionaries maintained by the several missions. In taking it over, we found a very loose organization and many irregularities of operation. We endeavored to operate it as closely as possible on the very lines on which the Missions had operated it, retaining all the personnel formerly related to the institution. We did this for two reasons. We thought thereby to allay any fear that the University would be subversive of missionary policy, and we also desired to acquaint ourselves fully with all the best in past policy before suggesting changes. However, we have had a peculiar experience in this. On several points, the Missions had already become dissatisfied with the policy of their training school and when the University took it over and operated it along these same lines, the University became "residuary legatee" of complaints that had been brewing for some time past. With our discovery of some of these criticisms of long standing, we have taken steps to acquaint ourselves fully with the mind of the Missions and hope we can introduce changes which can be agreed upon mutually.

Owing to the indefiniteness of the Faculty organization and owing to certain inter-mission rivalries, and owing also to the newness and relative youth of Mr. Jeffery (who was our only University man on the staff), I found it necessary to assume the chairmanship of the S.O.S. Faculty and to give considerable time to the organization of its administrative activities. However, the School is a great opportunity and time or money invested in it is well worth while.

(4) Other Activities: While the three foregoing spheres of activity are those in which I have found it necessary at once to render particular service, my time has, otherwise, been claimed by three lines of work;

(a) Language Study: My schedule involves fourteen hours a week of language study. My French is thawing out more freely, but my Arabic looks to me like a discouraging lot of linguistic junk, left over from boyhood days, very rusty and twisted out of shape.

(b) Office Work: Then there is my office work, where with the efficient help of Miss Walker, I endeavor to keep up my correspondence and my contact with friends in America. My schedule provides twelve hours a week of my own time for this work. In the winter, an avalanche of tourists occupies much of this time and crowds into other time too. To this I should add much time given to committee, faculty and Council meetings and also to personal interviews.

(c) Relationships: Maintaining friendly relations with outside organizations occupies considerable time and claims considerable thought and nervous energy. Reviewing the past months, I could itemize under this heading such matters as these: Repeated preaching at the American Mission, special addresses at annual conferences of Missions, attendance and address at Protestant Prayer Conferences, numerous committee meetings and more numerous social calls, five weeks absence from Egypt while attending the meeting of the International Missionary Council's executive committee meeting in London.

4. Staff and Faculty: In my letter of May 15, I reviewed our plans for building up the staff and faculties of the University.

(1) General Administration: Under this heading, emphasis should be laid upon our need of a permanent Bursar. This position is one of the most vital to the efficient and economical administration of the University and to the upkeep and conservation of its buildings and property. It remains to be seen whether Mr. Currie or anyone else on the staff will qualify for this position, but as a salary liability it must be placed well to the front.

(2) School of Oriental Studies: Here we have but one man on our

present budget, Mr. Jeffery. Of his value, devotion, and remarkable intellectual attainments, I cannot speak too highly. Our financial resources in the case of the S.O.S. are being conserved by our policy of getting the Missions to continue their free provision of men, for full or part time, for much of the supervisory work at this training center. But even so, we will need to add one more person to the staff or subsidize several persons for part time, if we are to favorably impress the Missions with our taking over of this institution and if we are going to really improve the great opportunity which is ours here.

(3) College of Arts and Sciences: Here I cannot do better than repeat much of what I said in my letter of May 15.

At present the staff consists of

Dr. R. B. McClenahan, Principal
Wendell Cleland
W. C. McQuiston
Russell Galt
Arthur Jeffery
Joseph F. Leete

To these should be added the list of American and Egyptian instructors.

The above list is, however, rather fictitious, for Mr. Cleland is really slated for University Extension work, Mr. Galt for a future school of Education and Mr. Jeffery belongs to the S.O.S. Mr. McQuiston until recently was slated for a School of Agriculture.

On the other hand, there are other men under appointment, or practically so, who would fill the vacant places. The Collegiate staff would then be in terms of these expected additions:

1. R. B. McClenahan, Principal
2. Joseph F. Leete, Chemistry
3. H. W. Vandersall, (1923)
4. W. C. McQuiston, Biology
5. Wm. A. Eddy, (1923) English
6. Religious Education
7. College Pastor
8. History
9. Mathematics

The above would appear to be a full complement of permanent professors, sufficient, in the light of the Assiut College experience, for a fairly extended period. For a short time one person might serve as College Pastor and as head of Religious Education. It is also possible that an Egyptian could be found to take charge of the teaching of Mathematics, placing the headship nominally under the Chemistry or Physics professor. The need for a man in History is likewise not so pressing.

The significance of this forecast lies in two directions:

(a) The problem of personnel is already half solved. (b) The financial measurement of this full development of the Collegiate staff calls for an annual income of about \$75,000/ from America, which is only \$15,000. in excess of our present requirements for the Collegiate department. Of course, we are assuming in this an increased income from a larger number of students.

In other words, the end is in sight for this department of our