

of Charles R. Watson, President,

to the Board of Trustees of

The American University at Cairo

For the Year 1934-35

Gentlemen:

Every year, with the expansion of our relationships and activities, I find it increasingly difficult to compress within the usual limits of my Annual Report all that seems not only interesting but even vital to a full understanding of our work and its opportunities and problems. This Report is based upon four Reports which come to the President from the executives of the four divisions of the University, plus the Treasurer's Report which gives the financial background of all of them. But again, back of these four Reports of the departmental executives lie reports from their associates. In the case of the College, there are nine such reports, so that the President's Report with its 24 pages covers a body of material exceeding one hundred pages of typewritten matter, not to count some fifty pages of the Treasurer's Report. It must be understood therefore that the President's Report touches only the main features of the year's work. Where any Trustee has a particular interest in any special phase of the work to which reference is made, he should ask for the more detailed Reports that lie back of these references and which are generally available in Philadelphia.

The dominant impression to be conveyed concerning the year 1934-35 is that it has been a year of cheer and goodwill in all the relationships of the University with the public in Egypt. Every department testifies to this changed attitude of the public, which proves what we tried to explain a year ago, that hostilities to Christian institutions, at least in Egypt, have been generally caused, or made effective, by political influences; so that, when the agitation in the press dies down, the more friendly

attitude of the people finds expression again. As the effects of the hostility of the Moslem press were most noticeable in the work of the Division of Extension, so we find there the most noticeable results of the new friendly atmosphere. In proof, let me quote the following sentences from their Report, "With the exception of the years 1931-33, when the number of programs was greatly increased by radio lectures and the popularity of the newly arrived 'King of Kings' film, we have actually sponsored more meetings this past year than any previous year and 23 more than in 1933-34. The number of lectures alone is the highest for three years... Not only did the average attendance increase 60% to the best figure for three years; but a number of institutions and individuals who were actively concerned in the boycott, returned to cooperate once again... It is surprising that while last year, Al Gihad led the attacks against our institution, this year its owner himself was one of our lecturers! More surprising still is the fact that the Headmaster of Dar-el-Ulum, the second biggest Islamic institution in Egypt, the first being Al Azhar, requested that we reserve a place on our program for the professors of his institution to give lectures on 'Arabic Literature', whereas last year, his teachers and students refused our free and repeated invitation to attend any of our lectures."

The recovery of good will was also very manifest in the Commencement exercises of the University when the Minister of Finance, member of the King's Cabinet, consented to be the speaker of honor, and the Minister of Education sat on our platform, while three other of the existing Government's Ministers were present, not to mention many other notables and high officials. There have been years when we could not secure at our Commencement the presence of a single active member of the Cabinet. ^{recounting} While/this recovery of our popularity and favor with the public, it is worth while to add the caution of one of my staff, who wrote ~~max~~ me as follows some months ago at the turn of the tide, "We do well to remember as Christian missionaries that just as we were really only slightly disliked by the people when the Moslem press was attacking us so fiercely, so now we may be only superficially liked when all people

are praising us". I venture to quote, therefore from my Report of a year ago to point out the surer ground on which we stand. "I wish to share with you three convictions which seem to me to guarantee the permanency of the American University at Cairo. The first is the certainty that the basic need for education will continue in Egypt. We are dealing not in some luxury that society might dispense with, but in one of those fundamental community needs which is bound to continue. It is hard to believe that, given courage, perseverance and creativeness, we could be shut out from the educational market. The second point is our strategic location in the Moslem world. Not unless you picture to yourself the total abandonment of all foreign missionary work in Moslem lands, can you imagine work at so strategic a center as ours and work of such a strategic type as ours being given up. The third consideration is the abiding worth of the Christian message and life. Allow for a thousand adjustments and readjustments in the methods of our approach to the Moslem, in the end you still have values to impart which Islam needs and will want and which are found nowhere else than in Christ. So we may rest assured: this work of ours is secure".

Another general impression gained of the year's work has to do with the outreach of our influence. The American University at Cairo was founded in the hope that it might touch areas of life in Egypt and regions beyond the limits of Egypt, hitherto untouched by conventional missionary methods. This year shows further achievements in this direction. The College enrollment shows 13 nationalities in its student body. The School of Oriental Studies has nine different nationalities represented in its student body. The outreach of influence through the Division of Extension may be judged by the following: "Twenty-one of our 43 lectures were published in toto by daily newspapers or magazines; and others in part, many times with editorial comment. In two cases, at least, our lectures were used by journals in Syria and Iraq. Such a broadcast distribution of ideas from our platform cannot fail to have its effect in

liberalizing public thought. Furthermore, when the volume of lectures by Mohammed Kurd Ali and Taha Hussein, now being printed by Elhas' Modern Press, is published, the effect will go farther and be more permanent". Amir Eff. Boktor, whose knowledge of conditions in his own country is very accurate and extensive, ventures the following judgment as to the influence of the American University in educational circles in Egypt: "Never has the philosophy of American Education penetrated the minds of Egyptians until the last seven or eight years, or little after the foundation of the American University. Seated in its small building in the proximity of the Ministry of Education, in spite of its comparatively limited activities, it has been able to uproot some of the worn out theories of Education, to make the authorities question their existing practices, to copy, adapt, and adopt modern ones and above all to introduce to the Egyptians the outstanding educators of the world, notably those of America, their best ideas and ideals. The American University has been the greatest single factor to bring to the notice of intelligent Egyptians in such a short period the best there is of the culture and civilization of America. It has been able to make the people realize that America is more than a distant curious land where automobiles, actors, actresses and eccentric incidents are produced". Surely such evidences of the outreach in influence of the University indicate that it is fulfilling one of the important aims cherished by its founders.

Before passing to a separate consideration of the several divisions of our work, I wish to record another impression of the year's work of which I am deeply conscious and yet which I find very difficult to deal with. It is the prevailing feeling within our own staff of limitation and feebleness with reference to the scale of our operations and our resources of personnel. This feeling is wholly natural and even commendable, although deeply distressing at the same time. For one thing, it is the natural result of the success of our enterprise. Fifteen years of foundation

laying have yielded a harvest of opportunity in almost every direction. Arriving in the Near East 50 years after the great Near East Christian Colleges, we have not been permitted to develop slowly in the area we undertook to occupy. Nor have we had time to build up a big endowment such as the American University of Beirut possesses. We have been thrust suddenly into a most significant position of leadership, or rather let us say, a position exacting from us leadership far beyond our limited resources of money, of brain power, of personnel. Another factor has aggravated the situation. Three years ago, when we reduced our budget seven-seventeenths, every department fought devotedly to maintain the work that was dear to its heart and that had been so painfully built up. Double loads were assumed in the face of reduced staffs. A skeleton organization was maintained in the hope that we could soon get back to where we were. Now that the third year has come of such depleted resources and personnel, I can see a real danger of breaks to health or what is worse, to courage. Likewise, I see an impairment of what was a distinguishing mark of our institution, namely, buoyancy of spirit and margins of time and strength for extra-curricular activities. Thus we see disappearing many attractive features of our life and work, e. g. a full time librarian, The A. U. C. Review, Sports Day, the Science Exhibit, the dramatic performances, a permanent man for Treasurer. All this is rehearsed not by way of complaint, for the staff recognizes the financial limitations of the Trustees, but because, as President, I find myself perplexed as to the best course to be followed: that of some drastic abandonment of some sector of our program or that of the continued maintenance of a program which taxes to the limit our present strength.

1. The College of Arts and Sciences.

The past year has witnessed several basic changes which were outlined in my Report a year ago.

The Preparatory Course (or what remained of it) together with Freshman Year of the College, was to be converted into a British course of studies leading,

for this year, to the Oxford-Cambridge Certificate examinations and hereafter to the London University Matriculation examinations. This has laid upon all teachers a heavy burden of change in text books, in methods and emphasis on subject matter. Six students went up for their examinations this June and four passed. The Faculty counted only one of the six really qualified, because the class had been following the British course but one year. Furthermore, the faculty judge it imperative to open classes for the first three Forms of this class, if we are to successfully compete with other schools and have a creditable number of passes in examinations; at this time we only offer Forms IV, V and VI. The British Residence has sent us word that the London Matriculation examinations will be open to our students in the spring of 1936, although a later conversation seemed to imply the necessity of securing the consent of the Egyptian Ministry of Education, which was expected.

Steps are being taken to give a professional character to the three College years now leading to the B. A. degree and a start will be made along lines of Journalism. The demand for a purely cultural college course is as yet very feeble in the entire Near East and it is hoped that the new professional character of these years of advanced study (i.e. in advance of Government standards) will attract more students to it.

The Government Secondary Course, which we were offering in Arabic and which the Trustees felt should be maintained, has been operated with the usual success and limitation. It has been a link between us and the national system of education in Egypt. As a proof of the good will of the Ministry of Education, a grant of L.E.100 has been paid to us. Most significant however are the future possibilities of this course if certain reforms pledged by the new and brilliant Minister of Education, Naguib el Hilali Bey, are carried out. His Report condemned the Government course at the very

points at which our College faculty had felt so outraged by its quality and spirit that they had recommended its discontinuance. Should the Minister's Report really become effective, it would be possible for us to achieve many of our high educational ideals in and through the Government course instead of through foreign courses, whether British or American. At any rate the outlook is very hopeful for our future cooperation in the Egyptian system of education.

Most eager will the Trustees be to learn what success has attended the new system of Optional or rather alternative, courses in respect to religious education. The classes, teachers and subjects taught were as follows:

Mr. Kiven - "Biographies of Great Men" - Form IV and conscientious objectors
of Forms V & VI

Dr. McClenahan - "An Introduction to the Bible" - Form V

Dean Galt - "Gospel of Mark and II Kings" - Form VI, 9 Christians, 3 Moslems,
and 3 Jews, offering Bible in the London Examinations.

Dean Galt - "The Modern Use of the Bible" - Sophomore Class.

Dr. C. C. Adams - "Introduction to Philosophy" - Juniors and Seniors.

Abdel Gawad - "Government Ethics Course" - Third Year Government

No one available - None - Fifth Year Government

It should be explained that the difficulties of handling Fifth Year Government are so great, in respect to language (Arabic), to religious sensitiveness (mostly Moslems) and crowded curriculum, that it requires a person of the highest equipment to carry such a course successfully with this class and no one with the necessary equipment was available.

As to the operation of the daily Assembly period, Dean Galt reports, "The launching of the alternative exercises was a most difficult task in connection with the Assembly exercises. The Faculty feared that unless the matter was properly presented, the non-Christian students might bolt completely to the secular meeting. Consequently,

all the students of the College were requested to attend two regular Assembly exercises in order to see the nature of them. After this, they were allowed to make their choice. Of the 82 non-Christian students only 15 voted to attend the alternative."

Much else of interest concerning the College is reported by Dean Galt, but space forbids its inclusion here. There are valuable reports on the year's experiences in Biology, Physics, Chemistry, English, French, the Social Sciences, outside field work, athletics and extra-curricular activities, and on the Scholarship Grants. We pass these by regretfully and conclude with a statistical summary.

Enrollment Statistics: Forms IV - VI, 51; College (Sophomore, Junior, Senior), 29; Government, 75; Total, 155. New students, 74; old, 81. Men, 142; women, 13. Egyptian, 192; Armenian, 16; Palestinian, 14; Greek, 4; American, 4; Italian, 2; British, 5; Syrian, 3; and one each of French, Iraqi, Malayan, Sumatran, Belgian, Thirteen different nationalities in all.

2. School of Oriental Studies.

In his Report on the year's work in the School of Oriental Studies, Dean McClenahan emphasizes the changed situation which affects this School. Where formerly it was for the most part a missionary training school, in so far as language study is concerned, the diminishing stream of missionary recruits has required the cultivation of a supplementary constituency in non-missionary circles. To meet the requirements of this group has called for many changes, e. g. other courses of study, developing a knowledge and use of a business and secular vocabulary, not merely religious and Biblical; a yearly calendar running from September to June, instead of from November to November with the inconvenience of a summer break; and also a program of publicity reaching Government, diplomatic, business and other circles. These changes have been imminent for a number of years but it seemed impossible to get them made until the School was given a full time Dean in Dr. McClenahan, who could carefully and patiently