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REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

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OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AT CAIRO

TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
For the year 1935-36

The safe completion of the year 1935-36 is a great reassurance for the future of the American University at Cairo, for it may be reasonably inferred that if the institution could survive the limitations and difficulties which beset it during that year, it can weather any difficulties that are likely to arise in the future. For our encouragement it is worth while to enumerate the difficulties. The first was financial: the more generous provision promised by the Trustees for 1936-37 was not yet even in sight. The institution had to be operated upon the same restricted budget which had been imposed upon it four years ago through the necessities of the great Depression, but the pressure for ampler resources had become more acute because in Egypt itself recovery had already set in. The second limitation was in personnel. From the staff which had been almost cut in half four years ago, two key men had to be released because of furlough requirements; one of these, Mr. Wendell Cleland, narrowly escaping a physical breakdown before he left. Simultaneously occurred the illness of Mr. McQuiston imposing a heavy strain of anxiety and sympathy upon all as he slowly yielded to dysentery and passed away on December 15, 1935. In the absence of Mr. Cleland, Dr. McClenahan had to carry a considerable burden of supervision for the Division of Extension in addition to his own work in the School of Oriental Studies. The President had to take on the duties of the Bursar and also teach three periods a week for the College. Dean Galt had very heavy extra burdens laid on him in re-organizing Mr. McQuiston's work and in making use of inexperienced new recruits while he himself had to carry a full half schedule of teaching on top of administrative duties. Dr. Amir Boktor had to carry almost single handed the burdens of the Journal and the organization of the Department of Education. The third

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limitation was the political situation. The Italian-Abyssinian war, the threat of war between Britain and Italy, the death of King Fuad, the return of Prince Farouk from England to Egypt, the downfall of the Nessim Ministry, the nationalistic demonstrations of students in the streets, for the most part in our section of the city, at one time breaking through our front gate, created such a feeling of unrest, broke up many College classes for days on end and interfered with public lectures that had been scheduled, so that our entire institution rocked like a ship at sea and all hands had to be called out for emergency duty.

No wonder we are thankful that the year is over. We are all alive. There has been some damage to the health of the personnel; there has been some serious impairment to our standards and records; but the gale is over, we hope; the institution has survived and we now can count with gratitude God's divine mercies to us and the results of our year's efforts.

Most important to note is the fact that none of the disturbances mentioned represented any hostility to our institution. Indeed the entire year was marked by good will on the part of the public toward us, culminating in a University Commencement which gave us, as an official proof of such good will, the presence in our audience of the President of the Egyptian Senate, the President of the Egyptian House of Deputies, the last Prime Minister, three members of the present Cabinet, a dozen ex-Ministers, not to mention innumerable notables of other sorts. When one's building is full to the limit of its 1150 seats and some 300 more people are standing in the aisles or seated on steps, what further proof can one offer of good relations with the public. In the section of this Report which deals with the Division of Extension, further testimony is presented as to the Egyptian public's appreciation of our work.

But this Report must rise above the mere level of an ordinary Annual Report. Recent events culminating in a Treaty between Great Britain and Egypt have ushered in a new epoch in the life of Egypt. The country is to be in a real sense independent. With a rapidity that we shall have difficulty to keep pace with, Egypt is changing. With the change in its political and national status, there are coming changes in Egypt's whole mentality and life: changes in legislation and authority, in national attitudes and ambitions. The American University at Cairo and its Trustees must face this new situation and plot out their course with foresight and wisdom. The problems so far as we may forecast them now will be presented in the latter part of this Report. <sup>However</sup> we will first review the work of 1935-36 by departments, as a historical record, as has been done in the past.

### 1. The College of Arts and Sciences

As has been mentioned, the year was one of troublesome interruptions and strain. The student demonstrations in the streets affected the College more seriously than any other department because they challenged the College students to strike or carry the odium of being unpatriotic. At times we wished we were on a back street or behind high walls instead of on an open campus along one of Cairo's main boulevards. Our policy had three points: (1) classes go on whether there are students or not; (2) students who feel they must demonstrate must leave the campus and go out on the street; (3) students who thus leave will not be excused, but will be reported to their parents as absent. For all that, scholastic standards were lowered by these disturbances and the effects were seen at the end of the year in a bad record of scholastic failures.