

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
Of the American University at Cairo
To the Board of Trustees
For the year 1936-37

While it is possible that some future year may bring to Egypt events more significant for her life than the year 1936-37 has done, — for example, some unimaginable debacle of the British Empire and the occupation of Egypt by Italy, — still it is likely that even fifty years hence the past year will be regarded as marking the beginning of history for Egypt, an independent Egypt. Rarely have political events of such far reaching significance been crowded into so brief a period: the death of King Fuad, the return to Egypt of his son Farouk, the negotiating of a treaty between Egypt and England with all its military implications, the revoking of the Capitulations, the admission of Egypt to the League of Nations, and the investiture of Prince Farouk as King of Egypt. Of course it will take years to work out the implications of these events and at many a cross road of her future development Egypt may take a turning that will be fraught with danger, retrogression and regret, or with the happy opposites of all these. For example, even now one can see two opposing forces contending for domination in the life of the country. There are the progressives, Europeanized in their outlook, leaders committed to progress along Western lines, who would modernize in every respect the State and the national and social life of the country. Over against them are the conservatives, mostly the old time Moslem religious leaders, who would like to make Egypt the spear head of a great Moslem Empire, re-enact Moslem law, and govern the country along the old lines of State and Church, as against the modern ideas of a secularized State. Lesser conflicts are also discernible, such as the conflict of parliamentarianism with royalty; this raises the question whether the Palace, with its young and inexperienced King, shall dominate as formerly in the days of King Fuad, or whether the Premier, now Nahas Pasha and his Wafd Party, shall control Egypt's destiny, with the King relegated

to an innocuous official position, as is the case of Italy under Mussolini.

For foreigners, however, both in business and in missionary work, the coming of independence to Egypt is bound to be a major experience, for, more and more, freedom of action and indeed continuance in service will depend upon the good will of the country rather than upon legal rights and diplomatic protection. It behooves all those engaged in such work to study afresh and comprehensively their policies, their plans and especially the spirit in which their work will be conducted.

However, for the missionary enterprise, this restudy of policy and plans ought not to be interpreted as raising questions about the basic duty of Christian missionary effort. The basic reason for establishing the American University at Cairo, as stated in our By-Laws was "to discover to the Moslem world those living springs which are to be found in Christ and which alone suffice for the energizing of the intellectual life, the regeneration of society and the redemption of the individual life". All the rest is a question of method. The great objective may have to be realized in one way, or yet in another. It may be easy; it may be difficult. It is inconceivable, however, that it should become impossible in Egypt and in our generation, since it has never yet been found impossible in any other country across the past nineteen centuries of the Christian era. Of course the supreme and only reason there could be for quitting, namely, that the task has been accomplished, is not yet even upon our horizon. By all means let plans and policies, our attitudes and the spirit of our approach be reviewed, but let us not waste time or give place to doubt by questioning the basic duty of going on making accessible to the rising generation of Egypt and Moslem lands the living streams that flow from a knowledge of Christ. If it cannot be done in one way, let it be done in another.

With this distinction clearly before us, I would endorse the importance of a fresh appraisal of our program. This is the more appropriate for us because the University is just now at the cross roads in respect to its program for the removal of the College to the suburbs. For this department as for the whole institution the question needs to be asked, What kind of an institution do we wish to develop? I venture now to discuss a few of the major problems facing us at this time.

Already we have developed four departments: A College of Arts and Sciences, a School of Oriental Studies, a Division of Extension, and a Department of Education (or Teacher Training). The last two units seem to have found a warm reception in the mind of the public; they have attracted a gratifying constituency for their support and offer reasonable hope for further development within the limits of our financial resources. In connection with the other two departments, the College and the School of Oriental Studies, there is a feeling that further adjustments are required if our ideals for them are to be realized. In the case of the School of Oriental Studies the diminishing stream of missionary recruits sent out by the various missions has reduced the enrollment of those whose training constituted our primary object. The enrolment of commercial and diplomatic students helps temporarily to maintain the School, but the basic problem remains of how we may enable the School to fulfil its original purpose of being a Christian School of Religion, not merely for the training of Christian workers in the Moslem world, but also as a center of religious research to which Moslems as well as Christians, inquirers as well as workers, may come who wish to explore the sources of religious truth and knowledge in a judicial and scholarly way and in an atmosphere of sympathy and tolerance.

In the case of the College, the problems have been more complicated and baffling. Several years of experimenting with various types of education have led us to the operation of three distinct courses: a Government Secondary course taught mostly in Arabic; a six year course leading to the London Matriculation Examinations and taught in English. Both these courses reach up to an educational level approximately equal to the completion of Freshman Year. The third course is the Senior College course of three years, leading to the B.A. degree. Great credit is to be given to Dean Galt for the careful study of educational conditions which has led us to the adoption of these courses, each of which makes appeal to a special constituency: the Government course largely to those whose eyes are set upon Government service; the London Matriculation course with its British values, some of which get recognition also in Egypt; the Senior College course with its lure of a higher degree, even though Egypt officially grants it little if any recognition. Nevertheless there is a deep seated feeling that the College has not yet gained for itself a secure place nor yet succeeded in giving a sufficiently distinctive training as to challenge wide interest. And this is in spite of heroic efforts on the part of its staff and repeated experimentation in various directions. To be sure in Cairo and Egypt we are at a center of unparalleled competition. Here are English schools, which can make greater claims than we can in respect to a British education. Here are the strongest of the Government schools, which far outshine us in respect to passing students in the Government examinations. The Senior College course is indeed distinctive but on the other hand its value other than cultural is accepted to such a limited degree in Egypt that the stream of students taking it is a mere trickle.

Two main suggestions have been made for undergirding the College. The one is Dean Galt's plea for the institution of a Primary School, so that the

whole gamut of education from the kindergarten up shall be offered under the University's auspices. He feels that the place to catch students who will become permanently attached to the University and its type of education is in the lower grades. So far the Trustees have not felt able financially to carry such a load and have also questioned the propriety of putting under a University administration and on a University campus schools for elementary or primary education.

The other suggestion is that the entire atmosphere and character of the College be changed, transforming what is now practically a day school in which contact with the American staff is increasingly limited to class hours, into a residential school in which the whole American College staff will be in vital contact with the students even beyond class hours, and in which a distinctive "college life" may be built up as in American colleges and preparatory schools. Of course it is recognized that not all students, perhaps barely a third of them, might be residential. However, the proposal really concerns the faculty and staff fully as much as it does the students, for it means that the future College faculty will be developed on the basis of its members having residential contacts with the residential core of the student body by living on the same campus and sharing in its life. In this way, it is felt, we can win a distinctive place in the life of the country by moulding the characters and personalities of our students, in contrast with other schools which are generally mere "bureaus of information" with no interest in the student's life. In spite of much personal interest of our teachers; in spite of a commendable adviser system introduced by Dean Galt and in spite of an effort to maintain an Alumni Association, our present equipment in the city, and the day school pattern we follow prevent the realization of our original ideals for sending forth a stream of students so superior

in character, mental discipline and thoroughness of training, as to be recognized at once as the distinctive product of the American University at Cairo. This analysis of the situation must not be regarded as disparaging past efforts which have been rightly described as heroic and which have done much towards solving the purely educational or curriculum problems of the College. In facing removal to the suburbs, however, it would be a supreme tragedy if we merely carried the idea over to a less accessible location of a day school. Unless the future College staff is prepared to share in the development of the residential ideal by being itself residential on the campus, my own judgment as President is that we should stay where we are. Our present proposals for removal to the suburbs are based wholly on the promotion of a residential life in which the entire faculty will cooperate.

In addition to a need for clarified vision on the foregoing problems, there is a need for a clearer financial policy. Our present budget seems to mark the present limit of our supporting constituency; perhaps it is really in excess of their normal contributions, since for two years deficits have been averted only through an eleventh hour contribution in five figures from a single source. The answer to this situation of anxiety, if not of peril, is obviously the building up of our endowment funds until the income from endowment shall take up the shortage of a dependable annual income from living donors. But this in turn requires that the operating budget shall not keep on increasing. As President I have been loathe to say to each Department head that the present resources of his Department must be regarded as quite stationary, fearing that this would cut the nerve of creative planning. I therefore suggest this compromise, that at its annual meeting in the fall the Board fix the sum total within which the work on the field

must be conducted during the school year immediately beyond that in which the Board is meeting. Should any emergency developments require additional funds, these would require to be first approved by the Trustees and then provided for beyond and outside the budget; otherwise the Departments will know what to count on for their permanent and continuous maintenance and yet would have the privilege of working up, for special and separate presentation, any particular advance projects which they felt desirable and urgent.

We now pass to a review of the work of 1936-37 by Departments.

1. The College of Arts and Sciences

Two gratifying experiences marked the year. The first was the continued growth of enrollment. The enrollments of the past six years have been as follows:

1931-32.	388	students (the maximum ever reached)
1932-33.	263	"
1933-34.	178	"
1934-35.	155	"
1935-36.	190	"
1936-37	220	"

It was in 1932-33 that the depression caused abandonment of several classes and courses which had supplied a considerable enrollment and it was during 1932-34 that the anti-missionary attacks connected with the case of Abdel Kader Hussein reduced attendance still further. It is gratifying to find ourselves now on the way to recovery with an attendance of 220. Of these, 101 were in the Government section, 68 in the Junior College, and 51 in the Senior College. Ninety were Moslems, about 40%. Seventeen different nationalities were represented.

The other extremely gratifying experience was the venture in developing a course in Journalism, and in exploring its future possibilities with the help