

HISTORY OF THE A.U.C. PROPERTY
in Kasr el Aini Street.

MEMORANDUM of an Interview with AMIN SAMI PASHA, May 7, 1930.

Amin Pasha has for about forty years been very active in the preparation of material on the history of Egypt during the past century. He was very active in the Ministry of Education for many years and is an authority on these historical matters. His three volumes on the History of Egypt covering the last 150 years is a monumental work and perfectly unique in every way.

In consulting him about other matters, conversation turned to the story of our A.U.C. property. He told me that Ahmed Khairy Pasha was of Turkish origin and in the times of the Khedive Ismail he had risen to the position of head of the Khedive's Diwan, his special duties being to receive from Constantinople all official documents and have their orders distributed as was necessary throughout Egypt. This was in the days before the organization of government was as complete as it is now, so that direct decisions were issued from the Palace in larger and smaller matters as Constantinople and the Khedive might decree. After the deposing of Ismail Pasha, the Khedive Khairy Pasha became First Minister of Education and later Minister of the Interior under the Khedive Tawfik. The former office he held for about six months and the latter for a year or more. He died about 1883 and his son Hassan Bey Khairy is living in Zamalek, Gezira.

Amin Pasha also told me something of the Palace, known as the 'Ismailia' which stood just across the street from our property. It was built in the times of Ismail, who also had Palaces at Abdine, Gezira, Giza and one or two others. Ismail lived in the Ismailia Palace from about 1872-1878, when he invited his son Tawfik Pasha to come and occupy it. For many years it was kept as the residence of the Turkish representative at Cairo, Mukhtar Pasha, who held a position of great authority in Egypt owing to Egypt being a vassal state. His residence and the grandeur of the palace, reflecting so much Turkish prestige, was not very acceptable to the British authorities after they came in in 1882, so that when Mukhtar Pasha withdrew a few years afterward, Lord Cromer gave orders for the Palace to be torn down, which was done.

It seems very probable that an interview between the Khedive Tawfik and General Gordon, which was intended to be and resulted in a reconciliation between these two, did occur in this palace. General Gordon had intended to reach the Sudan by way of the Red Sea, but was induced to come to Cairo so that misunderstandings between the Khedive and himself might, if possible, be straightened out. The plan was changed for him to enter the Sudan by way of the Red Sea, which probably could not have been accomplished. General Gordon went up the Nile directly and did get in but was shut off with the consequences which are known to history.

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AT CAIRO

History of Building : To the best of our knowledge the main building of the American University at Cairo was originally erected by Ismail Pasha, then Khedive of Egypt, in his efforts to develop the building of palatial buildings in the territory between Cairo of his day and the river Nile. The whole area now occupied by Garden City was then taken up by various royal palaces. It is reported that Ismail Pasha, who had a very extensive harem, had one of his wives living in the old palace now occupied by the American University. Wearying of her, he divorced her. She proved to be too important to simply divorce and so he gave her to one of his wealthy pashas. To make the gift quite acceptable he threw the building in with her. So the property came into possession of an important pasha family, Khairy Pasha, who later was Minister of Education ^{and Keeper of the King's Seal.} The family occupied the building for residential purposes for some three or four decades, when the building was sold and came into the general market in connection with a speculation and land boom. It was taken over by a Greek tobacco firm which made the building their chief administration building. The property was greatly improved and the building very highly decorated.

The grand stairway, done in the finest Moorish art, is one of the most beautiful stairways in Cairo. The varied designs of its decoration, its stained glass windows and its artistic doorways make it well worth a visit. It is used by the classes in art for purposes of special study of the designs that are to be found on its walls.

in 1908

The building then came into the open market and was rented by the Egyptian University. This educational experiment was an indigenous Egyptian venture, motivated by a spirit of nationalism, ~~and by a feeling of hostility to the British.~~ It was said that the British ~~were not~~ ^{were not} developing lower education, manual training, but ~~were~~ not allowing the Egyptian higher education. A committee of important and representative Egyptians was formed to organize an Egyptian University along modern lines in contradistinction to the Azhar that was recognized by these progressive Egyptians as entirely medieval and antiquated. For seven years this Egyptian University was conducted in the main building of the present American University. Outstanding lecturers were brought from Europe to lecture on literature, history, law and other subjects. The courses, however, were not coordinated, nor did they lead to any particular degree or serve any other purpose than that of a general intellectual stimulus. During the war the Egyptian University moved out of the building and the property was occupied by a Government school.

The period of the occupation of the building by the Egyptian University is, however, extremely interesting. It gave to the property a recognized place on all city maps and a conspicuous place in the public mind. It gave to the property a prestige which has served greatly as an advertisement to the American University. Furthermore, the Board of Directors had for a period as its Chairman a young prince who at that time thought he had no political future. He occupied the office now occupied by the President and

naturally visited the building repeatedly. His name was Prince Fuad. He is now the King of Egypt. This fact establishes a point of sympathetic contact and of living interest between the American University and the Palace. The King has graciously given an autographed copy of his picture to be hung in the room which he formerly regarded as his office.

It was also during this period that ex-President Roosevelt passed through Egypt on his way from hunting in Africa, returning to America. The Egyptian University thought that it would be an interesting experience to have Mr. Roosevelt give an address under its auspices. (It was thought that he would give an address complimentary to Egypt, indicating its readiness for self-government. Owing to disturbances in the country and the murder of the Prime Minister two months previously, Mr. Roosevelt ventured to rebuke lawlessness and to give a vigorous message as to the importance of law and order. The message was regarded as a rebuke to Egypt and great indignation developed. It was indeed feared that he might be shot before he would leave the country.) That address was given in what is now the College Library.

The present School of Oriental Studies is housed in a building which was a part of the original Palace plant. In the Orient every palace has, on the edge of the ground, an administration building where the Pasha may meet with his men friends and transact business without having them invade the privacy of his palace and harem. The building occupied by the School of Oriental Studies was the selamluk, or administration building of the palace. Outsiders could come in from the street. The Pasha could reach it from the rear. His friends would get no further than the selamluk where full provision was made for their entertainment. Of course on state occasions there might be the limitation of the women to certain rooms while the main building would be thrown open to the public, but such occasions would be rare.

Property Values : The total valuation of the University property and equipment is now placed at \$635,000, distributed as follows :

University grounds.....	E.E.55,385.058	\$276,925.29
Buildings.....	19,406.637	97,033.19
Auditorium Apartment Bldgs..	27,780.285	138,901.42
" Equipment.....	1,911.443	9,557.22
General Equipment.....	994.650	4,973.25
University Library.....	2,741.885	13,709.42
Departmental Equipment, i. e.		
Labs. S.O.S., Extension,		
Dept. of Educ., Dining		
Hall & Kit., Student Hall		
& Child Welfare.....	3,844.842	19,224.21
Total Cairo Plant.....	221,112,864.800	\$ 569,324.00
Suburban Property.....	14,795.149	73,975.74
Mandara Camp Site.....	53.465	267.35
GRAND TOTAL.....	E.E.126.913.414	\$ 634,567.07

20-10-1930

The following is part of an open letter addressed to the President of the House of Deputies of the Egyptian Parliament by one Mohammed Mady Abou el Azaim, who signs himself, 'Chairman of the Mohammedan Caliphate Society of the Nile Valley'. The letter was printed in 'Al Siassa' of the date of April 22nd, 1930.

After considerable review of the coming of Islam into Egypt in the Seventh Century and the relations which he says existed between Moslems and Christians which he says were always friendly, the writer puts the following questions before the President of the House of Deputies:-

1. Is it right to encourage Coptic preachers of Christianity, such as Kamil Mansour and the like, and allow them to oppress the Mohammedans to such an extent as will drive them mad with anger? Don't you mind that our religion is dearer to us than even our persons, our riches and our children? Did you not see how the whole nation madly revolted against our enemies, the English, to restore independence? How much more madly our religious revolt will show itself if we feel our religion insulted! In case such a revolt takes place, you and your Coptic people will be the first to regret and grieve bitterly for it. We have as an example the Moslems of India and the Hindoos who broke into insurrection for things less important than religion.
2. Why does the parliament take so neutral an attitude towards this matter while it stirs for less important matters?.
3. Are we to be blamed if we think that activity in preaching work, after banishing Dr. Zwemer from Egypt, is due to the fact that you are the chairman of the parliament?
4. Do you hold yourself responsible for what results from the indignation of fourteen million Moslems on half a million of Christians? Nothing results less than drawing back our confidence from those who encourage preachers to insult our religion. Will you prove yourself innocent of the guilt of encouragement by causing such a tumult in the parliament as will urge the government to avenge herself on Kamil Mansour who unjustly hurt our feelings and caused so great a bitterness and resentment?

5. Do you think that the English who want to be friends with the Eastern nations approve such a rash preaching movement? In my opinion, the English absolutely disapprove such a movement for I saw them with my own eyes fire guns in the Sudan in honour of some religious Mohammedan men. If they behave in such a friendly way with Mohammedan men, will they approve any insult to befall the prophet, the founder of Mohammedanism?

Before ending this message, I beg you sir, to consider the matter very carefully and do your best to keep unity between Moslems and Christians and thus prove that you follow the steps of our late pioneer Saad Pasha Zaghloul. Again, I ask you to bear in mind that true authority, whether in parliament or government, only rests on the goodwill of the nation.

Mohed. Madi Abu El-Azaim

Chairman of Mohammedan Caliphate Society.