

An American College In Egypt

(Special Correspondence of the Deseret News by Frank G. Carpenter.)

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AS SOUT, Upper Egypt, Sept. 1—At Assiout, away up the Nile valley, about as far south of the Mediterranean as Washington is south of Buffalo, some of the most enterprising of our charitable Americans have established a training college for young Egyptians which is doing a wonderful work in and out along the great river. The Nile valley is narrow above Cairo. Its width is from three to nine miles, and as the railroad took me up the river I could see everywhere the yellow sand of both sides. We were at times far out in the desert, and at times moving in and out of the irrigated lands. We passed mud villages at every turn of the car wheels. They border the river and the larger canals, and the date trees which hang over them are now loaded with yellow fruit. Upper Egypt has vast numbers of date trees. There are in this whole country something like \$6,000,000 of these palms, and they bring in, at a rough estimate, \$1 to every tree every year.

THE CAPITAL OF UPPER EGYPT.

Assiout is the largest city in Egypt, south of Cairo. It is the capital of this part of the Nile valley and is the center of its commerce and trade. Before the railroad built, caravans from the Sudan brought great quantities of merchandise from Central Africa to this point and transferred it to other caravans bound for Tripoli, Cairo or Suez. The railroad now carries the most of this trade, and the iron tracks have been extended from here southward with but one short break, supplied by steamer on the river, to the city of Khartum.

The Nile valley above Cairo is exceedingly fertile. There is not an acre of irrigated land in it worth less than \$200, and most of it would bring \$500 per acre under the hammer. The whole region is prosperous and the beggars are now comparatively few.

Egypt itself has many new buildings. Not only the modern civilization and brick houses, two and three stories which would be considered fine anywhere. They are owned by Copts, who started life poor and have become millionaires. The most of the houses of the city are Egyptian in character. They are flat roofed buildings of oars, two and three stories, facing the street. Many of them are new and substantial, built in a style which is better than when I visited Assiout 25 years ago, and the town, which now has over 50,000 people, is double the size it was then.

AN AMERICAN COLLEGE IN EGYPT.

But I started out to tell you about this big American college. It is doing so much good in Egypt that it is considered by the British government and by every tourist to be the one thing of Egyptian affairs. It is known as the Assiout Training College. It was founded about 40 years ago and its first work was done in a donkey stable. It now has seven large two and three story buildings, which cover two acres, running around a campus shaded by date palms, and among its professors are graduates of the best

of our colleges, including Princeton and Yale. It has now between 700 and 800 students, who come from all parts of Egypt and also from the Sudan and the more northern countries of Africa. The students represent more than 100 towns throughout the Nile valley. The graduates are scattered all over Egypt. Many of them are influential business men, some are lawyers, doctors and teachers, and others are government officials. The graduates of the school are anxiously sought by the government as clerks. Their training is considerably better than that of the government colleges, who are no religion, except the Koran is taught, and they are found to be more trustworthy and of a higher moral character.

MANAGED BY PRESBYTERIANS.

This college is a missionary institution, but it gives a good general education. It is run upon broad lines and has among its students Copts, Mohammedans and Christians. It is supported by the United Presbyterian church of the United States. This is not the only one of our Protestant denominations which is doing work here, the other is having apparently given up Egypt to it. This church has mission stations scattered throughout the Nile valley, and it has schools, not only in lower and upper Egypt, but also in the Southern and even on the borders of Abyssinia. There is something like 15,000 boys now being taught in its institutions. It is surprising that a large part of the money which this mission is spending upon education comes from the natives themselves. Last year more than \$100,000 was spent, and of this almost \$50,000 was subscribed by the Egyptians. Of the 15,000 now in the schools, more than 12,000 are paying tuition, so that the institutions are largely self-supporting. The Egyptians of today have learned the value of modern school training and they are anxious to have their sons go to college. They want them taught English and are all willing to pay something in order that they may get a modern education.

IN AN EGYPTIAN COLLEGE.

I went through the Assiout Training College with its president, the Rev. Dr. Alexander E. D. who has been in charge of the institution for almost a generation and to whom it is largely due that it is the most successful institution of its kind in northern Africa. Dr. Alexander is by birth an Ohioan. He was educated at Wooster university and it was shortly after he left there that he came out to Egypt. He has lived in Egypt ever since and he knows the people and their wants as well as any man I have seen. He tells me that the Egyptians are thoroughly aroused as to the advantages of modern education and that they could use more schools and better facilities than either the government or the mission can now supply. He tells me that he has to refuse many applications for entrance to the training college for lack of room and that the institution stands ready to receive more students as soon as it can raise the money. It had already bought 29 acres of land at the foot of the Nile and the great irrigating canal which runs from here to the Fayoum, and it now needs only an appropriation for additional college buildings. My careful examination shows me that the college is able and economically managed, and I know of no place where any one of our rich men can better invest his surplus and have it pay big

dividends in a charitable way than right here.

FORCED TO PLAY FOOTBALL.

This college is on the dormitory plan. The most of its 700 students live in the buildings and they are continually under the eyes of their professors. The training partakes somewhat of a military order. The boys must not only go to the class room, but they have to attend the chapel, the daily prayer meeting and the Sunday school.

EDUCATION AT \$35 PER YEAR.

The students are of all classes and conditions. Many of them are working their way through school, and there are three different grades of expense, graduated according to the tables at which the boys eat. There is a class which eats at the common table, where all have knives and forks, and where the food furnished is as good and of as great a variety as can be found anywhere. This is for the rich, who can pay as much as \$100 a year for room and board. The second table is filled by students who can afford to pay only \$50 a year, and the third, of those who have not more than \$35 per year. Of the students of the first class only two eat at the common table, while those of the second frequent to slight, while those of the third class are lodged in large

rooms accommodating 20 or 30, each of whom has his own bed, which he furnishes himself.

The students of the second class have simpler food than those of the first, and they eat with their fingers in native style. Those of the third class have still cheaper food, but in all cases it is as good or better than the boys get at home, for they have wheat bread and meat at least once or oftener every week.

A student must pay at least \$1 a session in money, but as far as is possible he may work out the rest of his expenses. The ordinary tuition is only \$10 a year.

THE COPTS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

Many of the students of this college are Copts. They belong to that class of natives who are the direct descendants of the ancient Egyptians. They are more intelligent than the Mohammedans and they talk naturally in English. The Copt students are divided into clerical and laymen, and as many of them are educated, they have a large part of the minor government appointments.

The British are now trying to coddle

A VISIT TO THE BIGGEST UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN AFRICA AT ASSIOUT ON THE NILE.

How the College is Supported and Managed—It has 700 Native Boys, Taught By American Professors—Some Egyptian Millionaires and Their Charities—Modeled His Church After Westminster Abbey—Among the Copts—Queer Marriage Customs of Curious Christians—Their Beliefs, etc.



FUTURE LAWYERS, DOCTORS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OF EGYPT.

Photographed for the "News" by Frank G. Carpenter.

they pay any ground rent at all, it usually is of a nominal description such as five horse-shoe miles in the shape of corse per annum. The antiquity of the land grants and the noble purposes for which they are devoted make these vast hospitals among London's most venerated institutions.

ISSUE JOURNALS.

Attached to nearly all the great London hospitals are medical schools which present exceptional opportunities to the students. It may well be imagined that such a possibility as this may be missed by a student attached to a hospital that handles from 50,000 to 100,000 cases, or more, a year. Some of the great hospitals—such as Guy's—issue weekly and monthly journals which are read by medical men all over the world. All the great physicians who attend these hospitals give lectures free to the students, and report in medical journals the "interesting cases" which come under their notice.

While most London hospitals are devoted to the care of human beings, there are many which treat only animals. There scarcely is a form of animal suffering which is not cared for on a grand scale in London. There are hospitals for dogs, horses, birds, cats, whippets, and other pets. There is even a "Home of Rest for Horses." Now that the motor bus and other forms of mechanical traction are coming in and dispensing with the use of horses, the charity disposed in England have "got together" to provide resting homes for worn-out equines. Homes for lost and starving dogs, drinking fountains for animals, anti-ticks devices for foxes, and other benevolent institutions speak well for the kindness of the Londoner. It is for these reasons that the English capital has justly achieved the reputation of being the world's most charitable city.

OTHER AMERICANS DONATE.

It has been estimated roughly that London hospitals require an annual sum of something like \$5,000,000 to keep them going, and that upwards of 2,500,000 receive the benefit of the treatment, they afford.

Mr. Carnegie is by no means the only prominent American who has assisted London hospitals. Foremost among the great helpers in this worthy endeavor is the Duchess of Marlborough—former Consul General of the U. S.—who has made donations of substantial amounts to various large hospitals, but recently built at her own expense an extensive wing to one of the largest of these institutions—the West Ham and East London, whose patients are among the poorest of the poor.

Among other Americans who have interested themselves in London hospitals, we find Mr. Andrew Carnegie, Mr. F. W. Morgan, the Countess of Craven, Bradley Martin's daughter, the Belmonts, Astors and several more.

It might be said that literally hundreds of thousands of good American dollars have gone to help London hospital charities.

ARMIES OF SUFFERING.

It is remarkable for the American reader to conceive of the extent of some of these great London houses of suffering. At St. Thomas' Hospital, Middlesex—which treat about as many patients as the three mentioned above—there are rooms for their operation. St. Thomas', though founded especially for the poor who cannot pay, has adopted the American system of receiving some "paying patients," and certain rooms are given up to these special cases. The charges are extremely moderate as compared to American hospitals of the same class.

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