

position to the effort. Under her auspices, and at her private cost, an old palace in one of the most populous quarters of Cairo was purchased, in great part rebuilt and adapted to the necessities of school life, with accommodation for 200 boarders and 100 outside pupils. Even thus sponsored, however, the scheme was so far in advance of public opinion that, although it appealed to the poorest classes, offering free board, lodging, clothing and education to all who chose to come, it was with difficulty the first batch of pupils was obtained. But, the spell of prejudice once broken, the school rapidly filled with both residents and outsiders, and since then the applications have been many hundreds in excess of the accommodation. The pupils, ranging from seven to twelve years of age, are of all ranks, races, and creeds known to Egypt—from Pashas' daughters to slave-girls; Arabs, Copts, Nubians, Jews, and Levantine Christians of every cross of blood. The course of instruction, which will spread over five years, includes reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, geography, Turkish, French, music, the Koran (for Moslem pupils), plain and ornamental needlework, cookery, laundry, and general housework—all thoroughly taught by a staff of fifteen masters and mistresses, two of the latter of whom and the directress are Europeans. Periodical lottery sales are held of all needlework beyond the personal clothing of the pupils, and the proceeds given to a dowry-fund for the poorest girls.

The great success of this first effort to rescue Egyptian womanhood from the ignorance and apathy of harem-life, and so to lay the true foundations of a really national education, soon led to the opening of a second school

have only one each, and the fashion thus influentially set is now generally followed in the upper ranks of native Cairene society. In fact, among the new generation monogamy may now be said to be the rule.

with a less extensive course, mostly with a view to domestic service, in another part of the capital, where, under a staff of nine teachers, of whom the directress and one mistress are Europeans, 147 pupils (76 boarders and 71 outsiders) were last year maintained and instructed at the charge of the Khedive's first wife. Both these institutions, adequately endowed by their foundresses, are now under the control of the Ministry of Public Instruction, and rank amongst the most flourishing and important of the schools of Egypt. A third is in course of erection, and will be at work before the close of the present year, and, in compliance with numerous petitions, arrangements are in progress to open others in the chief provincial towns. In fact, popular prejudice has been completely overcome, and if this movement in favour of female education be continued, as there is every reason to hope it will, in another generation the most essential of Eastern reforms—the social emancipation of women—will in Egypt be an accomplished fact.

The first established School for the Blind is also little more than two years old, but it last year usefully instructed eighty-eight non-resident pupils in arithmetic, Arabic grammar, and the Koran, for all of which an excellent series of raised-letter text-books has been prepared and is in successful use. Similar instruction is given in a second recently-opened school of this class, in addition to which the pupils—many of them adults—are also taught mat-making, knitting, wood-turning, chair-making, and other handicraft suited to their condition.*

The Normal School, which is also a recent addition to the system, is an effort of great importance to raise the level of education in the Arab primary schools, by train-

* A second school for the blind has since been opened, and is now in vigorous operation.

ing a class of masters of much higher qualification than the present illiterate *fikis* and *moadibbs*. With this view, instruction was last year given in mathematics, geography, history, writing, elements of physics, and the Koran to thirty-five non-residents, chiefly recruited from amongst the most promising students of the Azhar, who, if qualified at the end of a two years' course, are appointed to country schools, with a fixed salary, and the prospect of further promotion. In connection with this institution, there are also classes for actual teachers of primary schools who desire to improve themselves, and so qualify for Government pay and employment. These persons receive gratuitous instruction and a pound a month till they either succeed or fail, during the same term, in passing the necessary examination.

Of the twenty-three municipal Civil Schools which complete the roll of the purely Government institutions, perhaps the most important, though not the largest, is that founded three years ago by Prince Tewfik Pasha, the heir-apparent, on his estate at Kobbah near Cairo, where, in addition to a very complete course of secondary instruction, practical farming is taught to ninety pupils, fifty of whom are boarders and the remainder gratis outsiders. This institution, like the two girls' schools, is wholly supported by its founder, and so costs the education budget nothing. Besides it, there are sixteen other schools of this class, in or near Cairo, which receive no boarders, but, as before remarked, provide free instruction for those who cannot afford to pay for it, and levy only a trifling charge for those who can. These last year collectively registered 1,683 pupils. In Upper Egypt, three similar schools have been established in the towns of Beni-souef, Minieh, and Assiout, which together educated 631 pupils; but of these 502 were residents, fed

and clothed at State cost. A fourth is in successful work at Benha, in Lower Egypt, 233, all residents; and finally two in Alexandria (of which one was founded and endowed by Rattib Pasha) complete the tale with respectively 139 and 129 *externes*.

During the past year this list of Government institutions has been increased by the establishment of three industrial schools, in which the least promising pupils of the primary schools are taught trades, instead of, as was formerly the custom, being drafted into the army. In these the instruction is free, and half the proceeds of the work done—less a deduction of five per cent. for pocket-money—is applied towards forming a fund to provide the pupils with free kits of tools and other aid to a start in life at the end of their five years' course.

Next in official order after these Government seminaries come the mosque colleges and Arab primary schools, which are mostly supported by their own endowments (*wakfs*), and, with few exceptions, are independent of State control. At the head of this second category stands the great college of El-Azhar ("the splendid"), the oldest mosque in Cairo proper, and which has long been famous as the chief university of Islam. Last year this great centre of Moslem learning registered 11,095 students, attracted from all parts of the East, and representing in unequal proportions the four rites or sects into which Soonee orthodoxy is divided,* lectured by no fewer than 325 sheikhs or professors. Each "nation" has its separate *riwack*, or cloister, with

* The Hanafeites, the Shafeeites, the Malekites, and Hambalites, called after the four great doctors of Soonee theology. The first of these includes nearly all Turkey and the remoter East, the second most of Egypt and Syria, the third North-western Africa and Morocco, and the fourth (which sent only twenty-three pupils last year to the Azhar), the Wahabees of Central Arabia, and a few fanatical sectaries of Bagdad and Nablous.

its library and staff of teachers proportioned to the number of its *moogawareen*. The present chief sheikh, or head of the mosque, belongs to the Hanafee rite, and has at all times been an important personage in the official hierarchy of Egypt. The present occupant of the post is Sheikh-ul-Islam for all the dominion of the Khedive. As might be expected, the instruction here given is much less liberal and modern than the curriculum of the upper Government schools. It is in fact, as before remarked, limited to the mental gymnastics of Arabic grammar, logic, rhetoric, Koranic law and theology, and to such a smattering of pre-Copernican astronomy and mathematics as is requisite for an almanac-maker, or the time-keeper of a mosque, with a view to precision in the hours for prayer; for it is still both "science" and doctrine at the Azhar that the earth is flat, that the sun moves round it, and that the sky consists of seven superimposed canopies. At the Government schools reason and knowledge ridicule this old-world dogma, but here in the mosque faith clings to it still. Before the secularisation of the mosque lands by Mehemet Ali, the Azhar enjoyed large endowments, but these are now reduced to the rents of some adjoining houses, which merely suffice to furnish rations of bread and beans to a majority of the students, who, however, further receive from the Government distributions of clothes and provisions during Ramadan and on the occasion of the other great religious festivals. The instruction is of course free, as the professors are unpaid, and maintain themselves by private tuition, copying the Koran, and other clerical work. Up till 1872 these sheikhs were, in a manner, self-elected; but in that year the Government interposed with an order that for the future they should be admitted to teach only after passing an examination in

their respective subjects, and should be classified in three grades, promotion from the lower to the higher of which should also depend on a similar test of qualification. The result has already been a marked improvement in the quality of the instruction given; but even yet, for all modern and practical purposes of education, this great college is centuries behind the secular State schools.

The other principal *medressehs* are those attached to the mosque of Ahmadi at Tanta, and to that of Ibrahim Pasha at Alexandria, the former of which was last year attended by 3,827 students, with thirty-six professors, while the latter registered respectively 413 and sixty-five. The instruction given in these seminaries is similar to, though more limited than, that provided at the Azhar, and, like the latter, both are supported mainly by their own endowments.

Comparatively wide, however, as are the scope and influence of the institutions thus briefly noticed, the true measure of instruction among the great body of the fellaheen is supplied rather by the *kouttábbs*,* or Arab primary schools, most of which date back from the early years of Moslem rule in Egypt, and rank, educationally, below the Irish hedge-schools a quarter of a century ago. As every village possesses one or more of these elementary nurseries of learning, the total number of them throughout the country probably exceeds 5,000, the whole of which were, up to three years ago, entirely free from Government control or inspection in any way. Last year, however, a sort of educational census was taken, which, though confessedly imperfect, registered an aggregate of 4,685 *kouttábbs*, attended by 111,803 pupils. Of these, Cairo returned 265, with 8,875 scholars, and Alexandria respectively 137 and 3,114; the

* Properly *makatibb* in the plural.

remaining 4,283 and 99,814 being scattered throughout the other fourteen provinces. About half these primary schools have, or originally had, small endowments; but between these and the others which depend wholly on the voluntary contributions of the pupils—averaging a piastre a week each for those who pay anything at all—there is little or no difference in either the method or quality of the instruction given. The chief aim and limit of the whole are to teach the reading and learning by heart of the Koran, supplemented or not by writing and the most elementary arithmetic, beyond which modest range the scholarship of the *fiki* (teachers, plural properly *foquah*) seldom or never extends. Many of them, indeed, are not merely illiterate, but blind to boot, and depend on their great powers of memory and the adroitly used help of an *arif*, or monitor, for at all decently acting their part. Their emoluments however are, as a rule, on a par with their qualification, averaging commonly not more than an Egyptian pound (20s. 6d.) a month.*

In the case of schools with endowments, this modest wage is supplemented during the month of Ramadan with gifts of a tarboosh, a piece of white cotton for a turban, and another of blue stuff for the usual long blouse, from the funds of the *wakf*; to which the wealthier parents add gratuities of a few piastres as soon as their children can read or have learned by heart one or more of the 114 chapters of the Koran. As the office of schoolmaster, too, of whatever grade, is looked upon as semi-clerical, the *fiki* further adds to his earnings by reciting the sacred book at funerals, mar-

* The maximum salaries of the teachers in the secondary schools under Government control are 750 piastres (about 7l. 14s.), and the minimum 200 piastres (2l. 1s.) a month.

riages and circumcisions, where he is always a welcome, and generally a remunerated guest. Within the past couple of years, most of these primary schools have been induced to submit themselves to the Ministry of Public Instruction, to the extent of accepting periodical inspection, and in many instances a higher class of teachers furnished from the Normal School. But a few still conservatively resist State interference, and remain at the low ebb they sunk to after the Turkish conquest.

Still, rude and limited as is the instruction provided by even the worst of these *koultábbbs*, they educate the great mass of the fellaheen up to a level which, low though it be, is much above that reached by the Mussulman peasantry in Turkey proper, amongst whom ability to spell out the Koran and scribble the simplest *mektoub* is a very rare accomplishment indeed. Any very considerable improvement of these primary village schools must, however, of necessity be a work of years, as their very number and the cost of a higher class of teachers preclude rapid reform. But the policy of Riaz Pasha, the present Minister of Public Instruction, is to gradually bring the whole under State control, and by a better administration of their endowments, to increase the pay of the *fiki*, and so attract higher qualification, without either unduly swelling the education budget, or sensibly adding to "local rates." Much may, no doubt, be done in this way; but even Pharaoh can no longer make bricks without straw; and progress in public instruction, like the extension of railways or canals, must be regulated, not by what there is room for, but by what the country can afford. At present, without reckoning the military and naval academies (which are charged to their respective ministries), or the liberal donations made by the Khedive from his privy purse to the non-Moslem and