

The features of Seti, even in decay, suggest that the man was kingly, that he was not lacking in grandeur or nobility. The face of Rameses, on the other hand, is that of an arrogant, narrow-minded sovereign, obstinate, supercilious, inhuman in his pride. Tothmes III., the most warlike and powerful of all the sovereigns of Egypt, has features small, almost puny, and his frame is that of a boy. Of all the men who lie in that upper chamber at Gizeh, he is the last we would select, were we searching for the Egyptian Alexander.

In the same room is a plain, unvarnished figure, three or four feet high, commonly called "The Village Chief." It is a speaking portrait, a model object. Bull-headed, obstinate, yet honest and good-natured, we have the man before us. Were we to meet him in Oxford Street we would recognize him. Yet this is old as the pyramid of Cheops, old as the fortieth century before Christ.

I must not omit to mention the very interesting visit which we made to the Gamil-Azhar, or great Mahometan University. It has been used for this purpose for over nine hundred years, and is thus probably the oldest, as it is the largest, university in the world. It has an attendance of from ten to twelve thousand students, who are taught by about three hundred professors. The course of instruction, however, is extremely meagre, consisting chiefly of comments on the Koran, and some principles of religious and secular law, logic, poetry and rhetoric.

It was a curious sight. The great "Sanctuary," or hall of instruction, is a large area of about three thousand five hundred square yards, with a low ceiling, resting on three hundred and eighty columns of granite and marble, all of ancient origin. On mats on the floor around these columns were numerous groups of students in long gowns and turbans, crouching cross-legged before a sheikh or professor, who sat in front of one of the columns, repeating in a loud voice his comments on the Koran.

Some of these students were quite young, and many were from remote parts of the Moslem world—North and East Africa, Turkey, Arabia, and even India. They remain from three to six years, and become fanatical propagandists and missionaries of the Moslem faith. They pay no fees; their food is supplied by the revenues of the Mosque, and they sleep on mats in the large chambers of this vast structure. Some lay around fast asleep at mid-day, others were diligently counting their beads, swaying backwards and forwards, and repeating in a monotonous voice the prayers of the Koran. Others were being taught to read from letters painted on plates of tin. They are exceedingly fanatical, and we are instructed to avoid comment, or gesture of amusement, lest it should provoke their hostility. There is a special class of blind students, who are often the most vindictive and fanatical of their sect.