

have none of the new inventions or new ways. It seems as hopeless to attempt to change him as it would be to convert a pyramid into a Congregational meeting-house.

For the political economist and the humanitarian, Egypt is the most interesting and the saddest study of this age ; its agriculture and its people are alike unique. For the ordinary traveller the country has not less interest, and I suppose he may be pardoned if he sometimes loses sight of the misery in the strangeness, the antique barbarity, the romance by which he is surrounded.

SCHOOLS.

Letting our dahabëeh drift on in the morning, we spend the day at Assiout, intending to overtake it by a short cut across the oxbow which the river makes here. We saw in the city two examples, very unlike, of the new activity in Egypt. One related to education, the other to the physical development of the country and to conquest.

After paying our respects to the consul, we were conducted by his two sons to the Presbyterian Mission-school. These young men were educated at the American College in Beyrout. Nearly everywhere we have been in the East, we have found a graduate of this school, that is as much as to say, a person intelligent and anxious and able to aid in the regeneration of his country. It would not be easy to overestimate the services that this one liberal institution of learning is doing in the Orient.

The mission-school was under the charge of the Rev. Dr. John Hogg and his wife (both Scotch), with two women-teachers and several native assistants. We were surprised to find an establishment of about one hundred and twenty scholars, of whom over twenty were girls. Of course the majority of the students were in the primary studies, and some were very young ; but there were classes in advanced mathematics, in logic, history, English, etc. The Arab young men have a fondness for logic and metaphysics, and develop easily an inherited subtlety in such studies. The text-books in use are Arabic, and that is the medium of teaching.

The students come from all parts of upper Egypt, and are almost all the children of Protestant parents, and they are, with an occasional exception, supported by their parents, who pay at least their board while they are at school. There were few Moslems among them, I think only one Moslem girl. I am bound to say that the boys and young men in their close rooms did not present an attractive appearance ; an ill-assorted assembly, with the stamp of physical inferiority and dullness—an effect partially due to their scant and shabby apparel, for some of them had bright, intelligent faces.

The school for girls, small as it is, impressed us as one of the most hopeful things in Egypt. I have no confidence in any scheme for the regeneration of the country, in any development of agriculture, or extension of territory, or even in education, that does not reach woman and

radically change her and her position. It is not enough to say that the harem system is a curse to the East ; woman herself is everywhere degraded. Until she becomes totally different from what she now is, I am not sure but the Arab is right in saying that the harem is a necessity ; the woman is secluded in it (and in the vast majority of harems there is only one wife) and has a watch set over her, because she cannot be trusted. One hears that Cairo is full of intrigue, in spite of locked doors and eunuchs. The large towns are worse than the country ; but I have heard it said that woman is the evil and plague of Egypt—though I don't know how the country could go on without her. Sweeping generalizations are dangerous, but it is said that the sole education of most Egyptian women is in arts to stimulate the passion of men. In the idleness of the most luxurious harem, in the grim poverty of the lowest cabin, woman is simply an animal.

What can you expect of her ? She is literally uneducated, untrained in every respect. She knows no more of domestic economy than she does of books, and she is no more fitted to make a house attractive or a room tidy than she is to hold an intelligent conversation. Married when she is yet a child, to a person she may have never seen, and a mother at an age when she should be in school, there is no opportunity for her to become anything better than she is.

A primary intention in this school is to fit the girls to become good wives, who can set an example of tidy homes economically managed, in which there shall be something of social life and intelligent companionship between husband and wife. The girls are taught the common branches, sewing, cooking, and housekeeping—as there is opportunity for learning it in the family of the missionaries. This house of Dr. Hogg's with its books, music, civilized *ménage*, is a school in itself, and the girl who has access to it for three or four years will not be content with the inconvenience, the barren squalor of her parental hovel ; for it is quite as much ignorance as poverty that produces miserable homes. Some of the girls now here expect to become teachers ; some will marry young men who are also at this school. Such an institution would be of incalculable service if it did nothing else than postpone the marriage of women a few years. This school is a small seed in Egypt, but it is, I believe, the germ of a social revolution. It is, I think, the only one in Upper Egypt. There is a mission school of similar character in Cairo, and the Khedive also has undertaken schools for the education of girls.

In the last room we came to the highest class, a dozen girls, some of them mere children in appearance, but all of marriageable age. I asked the age of one pretty child, who showed uncommon brightness in her exercises.

"She is twelve," said the superintendent. "and no doubt would be married, if she were not here. The girls become marriageable from eleven years, and occasionally they marry younger ; if one is not married at fifteen she is in danger of remaining single."