

less rich summits. Proceeding to rivers—their source—length, with increasing depth and breadth, the character of the soil along their banks, the uses to which the river is applied by man, turning the wheels of mills, boating and fishing, might be drawn from the children. Again, climate might be taught by contrasting a fine summer's day with a day in winter—pointing out, not only the effect of each upon man, but also upon the face of nature. The summer's day—warm, a clear sky, and the trees, plants, and flowers in all their glory. The winter's day—dark, cold; the ground covered with ice and snow, and all nature, with but few exceptions, to all appearance dead. And so we might proceed with other geographical subjects. As the minds of the children expanded, other countries might be introduced to their notice. The mountains and rivers of the vicinity might be contrasted, and compared with any of the other mountains and rivers in the world. A fine summer's day would give to the children a fair idea of the tropical regions: a winter's day, of the polar regions. The children would at once comprehend the fact of the beauty and luxuriant vegetation of the one, and the bleak, desolate, and sterile character of the other. When this stage had been arrived at, the notice of the children might be directed to maps. A map, or plan of the schoolroom, and its contents, might be roughly sketched upon a black-board: thence we might proceed to sketch a map of the surrounding district, and finally of a country. The children should in each case be permitted to reproduce these maps on paper, and afterwards to plan districts without any assistance. By this method, the nature and uses of maps will be best taught.

"Over the map my finger taught to stray,
Cross many a region marks the winding way,
From sea to sea, from realm to realm I rove,
And grow a mere geographer by love."

INCA, in *Pupil Teacher*.

IV. Papers on Education in other Countries.

1. RAGGED SCHOOL IN EGYPT.

"Moslem girls will not come to school; you are sure to fail." Such was the dictum again and again repeated when the intended effort was spoken of. "Among Copts," it was said, "some chance of good might possibly be expected; but Mohammedan girls, and of the lowest class, too—it was certain to fail!" Even a native gentleman, educated in England, echoed nearly the same thing that had been said (both at home and here) by Europeans, though he cordially wished success to every project that had for its end the good of his country. "They do not wish for education in the lowest class," said he, "especially for girls who are, as you know, looked on as inferior beings altogether by Moslems. Besides, if you collected a few, who would come from curiosity, some bigot would soon frighten away the children, and tell the parents you wanted to make Christians of them."

"We shall tell them, then, that we cannot make Christians—no human being can. In Ireland the priests have cleared our schools again and again by threats and persecution; but the children soon return, and when they find it useless they give up the point. The Word of God has a marvellous power in itself, and one point in our favor is that the Moslem religion does not forbid the reading of our Scriptures."

"True," he replied; "they even speak of them with respect, though maintaining that Christians omit a part of the Gospel which alludes, as they pretend, to Mohammed. But as to a school"—and here followed an enumeration of a whole host of difficulties and hindrances to such an undertaking. We could only reply, "Time will show."

Perplexed, but not in despair, the little room was made ready in spite of all. The poor Syrian family who occupied the lower part of the house (and whose eldest girl, though but thirteen, was to be my sole teacher and assistant), took a lively interest in the affair, and their children helped to nail up a few prints, and texts in Arabic, the latter written out fair by the father for that purpose. A work-basket was stocked, and alphabet cards provided (nothing more was needed to begin with, benches and tables being unnecessary for an Egyptian school). All was ready except the pupils; how to procure them was the problem.

Our servant had been sent to ask some of his wife's friends to send their daughters, and though a devout Moslem, he seemed to take an interest in the novel concern, and promised to spare no eloquence, (that is to say, he told us he would talk "plenty.") Meantime, I, my little teacher, and her mother, looked as anxiously out at the windows as if listening for some one's chariot-wheels. The good woman hailed the old seedsman opposite, who was just eating his breakfast with his three young daughters, and in most conciliatory tones asked him to send Cadiga and her sisters to learn

to read and work. "But we are Moslems, and don't want to learn," was the reply, given in a most sullen voice.

It was necessary to go out into the highways and urge them to come in. The matron, therefore, assumed her white veil, and we set out together, and went first into the street, and then into the lane, near the house, where girls of all sizes appeared to be a plentiful article. Every woman we met we stopped and accosted in a friendly way, and then began to speak of the intended school, and urged her to send her children. Some laughed and passed on, others said, "Very good," and at last we returned with the promise of several girls, feeling quite triumphant and thankful.

As we re-entered the house, a woman, wearing a quantity of coral and silver ornaments, though otherwise poorly dressed, came in with us; she was accompanied by a nice-looking child, of nine or ten years old. She was invited in with the customary salutation, "Be welcome!" and after throwing back her burko, or black crape face veil, she began to pour forth a volley of words, of which all I could make out were, that her child was timid and afraid to stay, but she would send her to-morrow. Here was disappointment! The first fish seemed just hooked, and now it was escaping the fisher's hands! However, I reassured the child by caresses and kind words, and they went away, promising again to return (which they did the next day); and I heard it reported afterwards that the woman had said, approvingly, "She kissed my child!" And she did send her next day, but at the time I could not be sure the promise would be kept. Presently, however, two little girls, about eight years old, trotted in, followed by their respective mothers, and I think their grandmothers also, for several women of different ages and degrees of rags came in, and there was a great deal of unveiling, and saluting, and chattering. At last the grown-up children departed, and two little scholars, with two Syrian children (sisters to the young teacher), were established on the mat, and were soon joined by several more, till at length by about ten o'clock, we had nine pupils seated in a semi-circle—all Moslems! No recruiting sergeant was ever half so pierced with a handful of future soldiers, for it was beating up for recruits for the Lord! Each was now asked her name in turn, and then who had made her, to which the elder ones replied, "Allah." Several little ones said, "Mohammed."

The first verse of the Bible, "In the beginning," &c., was then repeated to them, and they were taught to say it, first each one by herself, and then altogether. This was the beginning of instruction for them, poor children! The young teacher was too inexperienced to be able to explain it, so I did what I could in that way; and then we both set to teaching the five first letters of their difficult alphabet, till they seemed to be getting tired; they were then allowed a rest, and afterwards a singing lesson was commenced.

The neighbours might have supposed a set of cats to be the pupils, if they listened to the distant sounds which the first attempt at a gamut produced; but, as the proverb says, "Children and fools should not see things half done." Three months later a stranger visiting the school was delighted at the sweet singing of the hymns! The mewling and squeaking were nearly forgotten by that time.

The children were delighted when the work-hour arrived, the real inducement to most of them and their mothers having been the needlework. Perhaps the teachers were not sorry when every little brown middle finger was supplied with a new thimble, and they could sit down for a few moments. No one who has not tried it can conceive the difficulty of teaching those who have not only no wish to learn, but no idea of what learning is, or what possible good is to be gained by all this trouble; and, of course, the strain upon the mind is greatly increased when one's knowledge of the language is very limited indeed.

The children all took willingly to sewing; indeed, they had many times in the course of the forenoon thrown down the cards, and cried out, "The work! give us the work!" The English needles and scissors gave much pleasure, and were eagerly examined by some mothers and elder sisters who paid visits to the school room in the course of the day, to see what the foreigner was doing with their little ones; for, if ignorant, they were usually very fond parents. Some brought bread, bunches of raw carrots, or some such dainty, and, after giving it to the children, would squat down on the mat to watch the proceedings. Of course it did rather interfere with business, but it will not do to strain a new rope too tight, and, besides, Eastern manners are unlike ours, and I thought it wisest never to meddle with them, unless some real evil was in question.

Though ragged and dirty, the children had not in general the starved looks of too many scholars in our beloved country; nor do ragged clothes and dirty faces imply such a degree of poverty as with us. In the higher classes, a child is often intentionally kept dirty to avoid the evil eye; and, perhaps, this feeling may have given the idea that ragged clothes were no disgrace. In the country villages, a blue cotton shirt is the unvarying costume of boys and