

of the Patriarch of the Coptic Church and certain officials of the Egyptian Government, towards the American missionaries and the native converts who, under their auspices, are engaged in "Christian work" in this country,—proceedings which have reached their climax and received their interpretation in an official communication made a few days ago by H. E., Chérif Pacha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which it is stated that the Government of His Highness the Viceroy "has quite decided to take all proper measures to repress religious propagandism, whether secret or public, whoever may be engaged therein."

The persons engaged in what H. E. the present Regent of Egypt is pleased to style "religious propagandism," are the agents of the United Presbyterian Church of America. Our Mission staff consists at the present time of eight ordained missionaries, three female missionary-teachers, and a printer, together with from thirty to forty native converts who are engaged in the service of the mission as teachers, preachers, and colporteurs. We have three mission stations in Lower Egypt, viz., in Cairo since 1854, in Alexandria since 1856, and in Monsurah (half way between Cairo and Damietta, on the E Branch of the Nile) since 1865; one in Medeenet El Fayoom, in Middle Egypt, since 1865; and three in Upper Egypt, viz., in Osioot, since 1865, and in Ekhmeem and Ghooos (between Osioot and Luxor) since 1866. At these central stations, and at several out stations in the province of Osioot, the gospel is preached in the Arabic language—the vernacular of all native Egyptians—and native congregations have been formed at the different stations with an aggregate membership of nearly one-hundred and fifty males and females, and about six hundred adherents. There are also connected with the mission fourteen day-schools—8 for boys and 6 for girls—attended by over seven hundred children of all creeds and sects; two boarding schools for training female teachers, a theological academy, and an Arabic printing-press: while, over seventy volumes of Scripture, in whole or parts, and other religious and educational books, have been sold from our book-depots, and by means of colportage in our two Nile-boats during the past ten years.

Such are the agencies and operations which the Egyptian Government "has quite decided to take all proper measures to repress," and that, forsooth, under the plea of a praiseworthy solicitude for the preservation of the sovereign rights of conscience!

Before proceeding to describe some of these "proper measures" which the Government of this country has "quite decided to take" in order to put a stop to our mission work, and, if possible, drive us out of the country, permit me to make one or two remarks bearing on the probable causes of this change of feeling towards our mission on the part of the Government.

First.—Tangible proof was given a few years ago that up to that date our missionary operations were approved of by the Egyptian Government. I refer to the donation then made to our mission of a house in Cairo worth more than eight thousand pounds sterling, as a mark of the good will of the Viceroy. This

gift was presented to our mission after one of our native agents had been attacked by a Moslem mob in the town of Osioot, and almost beaten to death, under the plea that he was a "perverter of the faith of Islam," and Saïd Pasha had been compelled, at the instance of the late American Consul-General, to imprison thirteen of the leading men of the town, and fine them in the sum of £1,000, which was paid over to our agent, Faris E. C. Hakeem, in indemnification of the personal injuries which he had received.

Half a year afterwards, when a deputation from the General Assembly of the church, with which we are connected, waited upon the present Viceroy, to thank him in the name of the church for the gift made to us by his predecessor, His Highness declared to them and to us who accompanied them, that the American missionaries were doing a great and good work in Egypt as educators of the people and he not only wished us all success, but would also show his gratitude by lending us his support—"mon appui"—should we have occasion to need it. Three years after this, viz., in the autumn of 1867, the boy's school at the new station in Osioot was suddenly broken up by the boys—seventy in number—being seized by the sheykhs of their respective villages, and sent off to work for two or three months at the railway-works. We referred the matter to the Viceroy, reminding him of his promise, and asked that the favour granted to all schools alike from the days of his illustrious grandfather, Mohammed Ali, should be extended to our school at Osioot, viz., that the children should be exempted from the government levies while they were in attendance at school, when the Viceroy gave us, through H. E. Nubar Pasha, the following reply:—"The sole aim of the American missionaries is to change the religion of my subjects. In changing their religion, they change to some extent their nationality. Were I to grant the favour requested of me, I should *ipso facto* aid them in undermining my own influence over my subjects. This I cannot reasonably be expected to do." I give the sentiment, not the words.

Second.—It will be seen from the above that the feelings of the Government towards us have changed, and that the change dates as far back at least, as 1865. In 1862, we were patronized as "educators of the people;" in 1865, we were frowned upon as "religious propagandists." Now, this change in the feeling of the Viceroy towards us is not the result of any change in our missionary policy. We never pretended to be "mere educators of the people," though, from the fact that scores if not hundreds, of natives trained in our schools are now occupying influential positions in government service, we could not be regarded as "mere educators" at a time when there is a daily demand for educated young men for the railway and the telegraph. And if we admit that our only object is to evangelize Egypt, or, as the Viceroy puts it "to change the religion of his subjects," we maintain that in seeking to accomplish this object, we have not "fallen into the abuse, nor strayed from the limits which befit the enjoyment of a wise liberty," nor in any way sought "to exercise