

long been stricken from the hands of Rome. Athens and Corinth exert less influence upon mankind than a fourth-rate Scottish city. Palestine is a desolation. Egypt is the down-trodden province of a distant barbarian power. The country from which Augustine sent blessed light over all Christendom has scarcely a relic of its glories past. Round and round the great inland sea you read everywhere as in letters of flame that old warning "Repent, or I will remove thy candlestick out of its place." What is the prowess of the mightiest nation against Him at whose coming the mountains tremble! what its culture and knowledge against His judgment word, giving it up to a strong delusion to believe a lie.

#### CAIRO.

Cairo is a great city of the true Oriental type. It has a population of some 400,000 souls. Not less than 400 mosques, it is said, point their minarets like so many fingers to the heavens. Ninetenths of the people dress in the loose flowing robes of the East, and these of every colour—red, blue, white, black, yellow, green—give a singular picturesque quality to the narrow crowded streets, whose topmost stories almost touch each other. All was very strange to us; it seemed a sort of phantasmagoria. You have in Cairo a great many nationalities represented. You almost feel in walking along its streets as if you had a fair mixture of all colours from the white Briton through every intermediate shade to the jet-black African from the centre of Negro land. Among these are Christians from the various Churches of the East, to whom the American missionaries especially devote themselves, and of whom their Churches in Egypt are chiefly composed, the largest number of their converts coming of course from the native Egyptian Christians or Copts, who represent that portion of the Egyptian population who refused to conform to Mahometanism when the tide of Moslem conquest poured over this often conquered land. The Copts in Egypt number about 500,000. They have

a Church of their own, with a Patriarch at its head, and a regular hierarchy under him. There is no doctrine of Patriarchal or Church infallibility held by them, but in their doctrines and rites they are as superstitious as the Church of Rome. The Copts worship the Virgin and believe in purgatory, and think to gain heaven by their bodily mortifications. At the same time they are the most intelligent portion of the Egyptian people, and more particularly in Upper Egypt. The Americans have had considerable success among them. In one congregation at the large city of Asiout they have added during the year about one hundred and fifty Copts to their membership, and in the mud villages of the Nile valley you have now turbaned elders and deacons, and children who might successfully compete with our own Sabbath scholars in repeating the Shorter Catechism.

But little impression has been made on the Mahometans, who constitute eight-tenths of the Egyptians. To abjure the false prophet is a capital crime. The government jealously guard against the circulation of any anti-Mahometan books. Lately, for instance, a Persian missionary has written a book against Mahometanism, which has been translated into Arabic, the spoken language of Egypt, but not a copy has been permitted to enter this country. Dr. Pfander's book is withal, perhaps, destined to play a great part in the future. It has been answered at length by a learned Mahometan, who in his turn assails the Bible with great vehemence, and challenges Christians to answer him. It is said his co-religionists believe his work to be unanswerable; and taunt Christians with their silence. It is perhaps God's way of opening the door to the free discussion which is all we want. Dr. Lansing (the head of the American Mission in Cairo), who can speak Arabic as well as his own language, and is a capable man, is hopeful that he may have the opportunity he has long desired, of public debate, whether with pen or lip.