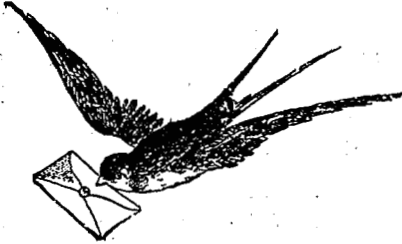


Our Foreign Letter.

KASR-EL-AINI HOSPITAL, CAIRO.



THIS hospital for natives, which is supported by the Egyptian Government and worked by English officials, was entirely remodelled in October, 1898, and has been progressing satisfactorily since, as, indeed, has everything else in Egypt since the "English motive" began to make itself felt. The staff consists of the Matron (Miss Bruce) and seven nursing sisters (English ladies), two visiting physicians, two operating surgeons, one resident physician, and one resident surgeon—all English.

There are many wards, devoted to special diseases, subdivisions—but, roughly speaking, there are about 220 beds on the male side and the same number on the "Harem" side, the new female medical side having been opened last year, enlarged and improved; formerly it was quite inadequate to the demands upon it, for this hospital also comprises a large medical school for native girls, who are taught midwifery, as a speciality, and as it is absolutely necessary, to their circumstances of the future, are also fully trained in every other branch of medical science, even ophthalmia.

After the three years course, the student receives her certificate as "Hakeema," or "lady doctor," and is licensed to write prescriptions. She is then appointed to some village, district, or town, where she works a couple of hours a day in the Hospital, and the rest of the time in the district. She receives a very moderate salary from the government, and a large augmentation from her private practice.

It will easily be seen what a chance these Hakeemas have, particularly as they have the field entirely to themselves, no jealous men invading ground that is pre-eminently women's. That they will do an enormous amount of good, there is no question; to use an Americanism, they supply a long felt want, and the Egyptian Government can't do a better work for its country than turn them out, fully equipped of course, as quickly as possible, and as many as possible, for there is a huge population calling for their services.

Besides the native Female Medical School, there is another peculiar department at the Kasr-el-Aini, which is a sort of home for foundlings, poor little creatures who are picked up in the streets by the policemen and brought in, the Government takes charge of them, they are called the "Ibu-el-Meira" (the children of the Government), they are a very mixed selection, all infants, for there is no hesitation about throwing them away, as soon as born. However, the paternal kindness of the Government now provides each policeman with a shawl, expressly that he may have something to wrap the babe in, and so no day or night passes without one of these innocents being handed over to the care of the English "sitto," and care they want, wretched spawn of vice, and they get it, thank God, from Christians. Yet most of them die, for if not absolutely loaded with syphilis (though most of them are) yet they have no

stamina, no wholesome foundation to grow up healthy upon, so they go out, and perhaps it's the best thing they can do. The very few survivors—those who have not such depraved hereditary record—are very generally adopted by charitable Moslem families, and lost sight of. Mahomedans set us an example in this charity, at any rate.

In fine, all the sick and the wounded (native) pass through this place; slaves from the Soudan and anywhere else, and seeing that the four hundred beds are generally full, several thousands must be attended to in the course of the year. The chief diseases are ophthalmia, various forms of skin disease, and the "specific," which is easily first, for not all the "regulation" of vice that has been the rule for so long, has prevented the nation being eaten up with it, and all these orientals are rotten through and through, vitality, energy, gone, anything more thoroughly decadent it is impossible to conceive—one realises it in observing the best type of Egyptian—with the smooth head, small features, and ears so small as to be almost obliterated. What ages have passed while all characteristics have been slowly effaced, however there is lots and lots of time, and doubtless there are still a few more millions of years to elapse before the final merge occurs.

And so, in musing mood we drive away through the darkening streets of lovely lovely Fostat, where much activity is being displayed, new palaces springing up, hotels lighting up, their terraces crowded with "Occidental" tourists, all this is foreign, and the pleasure and health seekers have no idea that they are literally driving out the native and obeying the mandate "*Occupy till I come.*"

EMILY CRAWFORD.

Marriage Bells.

CUPID has been very busy of late amongst the members of the Registered Nurses' Society, and as members of this Society are working in various quarters of the globe, no doubt they will be pleased to learn of the doings of their colleagues.

Sister S. Beatrix Farnsworth, who was one of the earliest members of the Society, was lately married to Mr. Freer Spreckley, of the Stock Exchange, the eldest son of Mr. T. Freer Spreckley, of Freeby, Sidcup. Sister Farnsworth was a most capable nurse with nerve cases, and will be much missed by the eminent physicians for whom she worked so successfully.

A marriage is arranged between Sister Katherine Davie—also one of the earliest members—and Mr. Quayle, a wealthy Brazilian merchant, so that, for the future, Sister Davie's home will be in Rio de Janeiro.

Sister Mathew-Lannowe, who is engaged to Dr. Dobell, of Harrow, has been the recipient of a complete canteen of magnificent table silver of the "rat-tail" pattern, given by a grateful patient whom she nursed after a very critical operation. We convey to all hearty good wishes for happy futures.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)