

School

As for its headmaster, he is His Excellency the Right Honorable Ismail Sidqi Pasha. As for its students, they are divided into three categories: candidate-students — namely those being groomed for ministerial office from among the members of Parliament and from outside Parliament. Only one condition is required of them, a condition we all know and all acknowledge: that they not be from the opposition, nor from the supporters of the opposition! Rather, there must appear clearly in them a fine readiness to support ministries no matter what they may be, and to support His Excellency Sidqi Pasha in particular.

And working-students — they are Their Excellencies, Their Beatitudes, and Their Honors whom the Prime Minister actually selects, entrusting them with managing the affairs of state under his masterful supervision and in the shade of his wise policy.

And dismissed-students, either because they went too far in success, or because they went too far in failure during the period of study and training. These are those ministers who are transferred, or dismissed, or who resign. Some of them serve in the state's embassies, and some of them rest at home; both the former and the latter wait for the Prime Minister to need them, whereupon he returns them to the school to benefit from his competence, or to train and exercise them once more.

As for the teaching staff in this school, it is a single individual in whom God has gathered many individuals, a single person whom God has composed of persons, a single competence that God has fashioned from competences. And this unified, assembled individual, this harmonious yet diverse person of confined yet dispersed competence, is His Excellency the Right Honorable the Prime Minister. He may be assisted by assistant professors, as the university people say, and he may be assisted by instructors as well. These aides vary: some of them are Egyptian, some of them are English, and some of them are Europeans in general.

As for the duration of study in this school, it varies in length and brevity, and varies in breadth and narrowness, according to the readiness the students enjoy for success and excellence, or for failure and incapacity. Among them is he who spends a month in the school and then is transferred; and among them is he who spends a year in the school and then is entrusted with another task. And among them is he who spends two years in the school and then graduates; and among them is he who spends two months and then resigns. Thus has God willed that there should arise in independent Egypt this strange school to which no nation has preceded us save the friendly Italian nation, and which no one founded before our Prime Minister except Italy's great leader, Signor Mussolini. For all people have observed, and the various European newspapers have reported, that the Italian leader has established a school of governance in which he prepares Italians to understand the new Italian system. He gathers ministers and disperses them, he confirms them and unsettles

them, and he wishes to prepare for Fascism generations of ministers, so that when one generation passes, another generation succeeds it.

And none has imitated him in this manner of instruction except our great Prime Minister!

As for Hitler, he has taken up the burdens of rule in Germany with two examples before him: he can look to Italy and benefit, and he can look to Egypt and profit. And it is most likely that he will look to both countries together, for each of them is worthy of teaching, and of teaching well.

Let the politicians and journalists say what they will in interpreting this patchwork that was introduced into the ministry yesterday morning. Let some of them explain it by a breeze blowing from the right, or a wind raging from the left. Let some of them seek its interpretation in the obstinacy of the Ittihad Party, or in the greed of the People's Party. As for me, I explain it by one thing only: that the Prime Minister has established a school of governance, so he governs on the one hand, and on the other he teaches rulers and graduates them!

And the Prime Minister did not go to Rome in the summer in vain, nor did he meet its great leader in vain, nor did he build upon his methods of governance in vain. Nor did he promise that he would benefit from these methods in vain. No sooner had he returned from Europe and settled in Egypt for months than he showed that he had profited from meeting the great Italian leader: he removed from the ministry and added to it. Then, hardly had he settled for two months thereafter than he distanced from the ministry and drew near to it, despite the illness that befell him and the pain and sickness he endured.

It is, then, a plan that the Prime Minister has laid down for himself in steering the ship of the ministry. This ship may be favored by a breeze, so it steadies and straightens; and it may be assailed by the wind, so it sways and trembles until God permits it to rest and to give rest.

You may grow weary of this manner of interpretation and exegesis, and ask me to follow the path of other writers and exert myself in understanding and interpretation. But what is your opinion of the fact that I do not love this seriousness, nor am I inclined to it, nor can I force myself into it? And how do you want me to write seriously about Egyptian politics when this politics itself is not serious and has no love for seriousness? And who can claim that our politics is serious when it is based on neglecting the people and denying them, turning away from what they love, turning toward what they hate, shunning what they want, and desperately pursuing what they reject? And how do you want our politics to be serious when our Prime Minister does not scruple to say in the letter he submitted to His Majesty the King that he has finished establishing order, and so he can leave the Ministry of the Interior to another minister?

Is it true that he is leaving the Ministry of the Interior because he has performed his mission and established order? Or is the truth that he is leaving this ministry because from today onward he cannot carry its burdens along with the other burdens he carries? And finally, how do you want our politics to be serious when the Prime Minister gathered to him the parliamentary body of his party and informed it that he had decided upon and executed the cabinet reshuffle, whereupon the body

listened and was moved and congratulated him, then departed to renew the emotion and the congratulations and the thanks in the Chamber of Deputies!

No, our politics will be serious only on the day when the affairs of the people belong to the people, and on the day when the affairs of the people are decided in public, and on the day when the parliamentary bodies are consulted, and not merely informed and listened to for the greetings and congratulations and thanks and praise they offer.

So, until that day comes when Egyptian politics becomes serious and compels us to be serious in understanding and interpreting it — indeed, in exerting all the effort we possess to straighten it if it becomes crooked, and to direct it if it deviates — until that day comes, it is fitting that we trifle with our trifling politics.

You will ask me: and when will this day come? Who knows? Perhaps it will be closer than you think and than I think. So let us wait, smiling.

Kawkab al-Sharq, 14-1-1933, No. 2339, p. 230.