

BULLETIN
OF THE
SOCIETY OF COMMERCIAL GEOGRAPHY
OF PARIS

Founded in 1873 ; recognised as a public utility in 1884 ;
diplomas and medals
of Congress and expositions in
Venise, Lyon, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Marseille, Anvers,
Beauvais, Amsterdam, Nantes and Hanoi.

RÉDACTEUR EN CHEF : M. GAUTHIOT, SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL

Tome XI

1st OCTOBRE 1888 – 1st OCTOBRE 1889

PARIS

AU SIÈGE DE LA SOCIÉTÉ

5, RUE DE SAVOIE, 5

1889-1990

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Sfax. Its prosperity during the last year (1305 or 87-88).

The Arab year which has just finished shows what importance the town of Sfax continues to have in the regency of Tunis. Thanks to its harbor, the only one since Mars-el-Kébir (Oràn) which is naturally safe, the embarkation and disembarkation occurs at all times, the commercial movement of this port reached and even exceeded 70,000 tons.

The situation of our city compared to the ports of La Goulette, Sousse, Monastir and Mahédia, the principal ones of Tunisia, was as follows:

Ports	Numbers of boats	TONS OF MERCHANDISE.		Total movement of the port in tons of de merchandise
		Entrées.	Sorties.	
La Goulette	2 041	103 461	21 096	124 557
Sousse	2 085	29 343	20 215	49 558
Monastir	731	3 342	2 425	5 767
Mahédia	1 346	4383	6 673	10 056
Sfax	2 733	31 227	39 134	70 361
Totaux	8 936	161 756	88 543	250 299

CORRESPONDENCE

From the preceding table it arises that, during the year 1305 (October 13, 1887 to October 12, 1888), 692 boats more entered the port of Sfax than La Goulette and 648 more than Sousse. 1,884 more tons of goods were imported than in this last port, 18,038 tons more were exported by Sfax than La Goulette; 18,919 more than Sousse and 10,821 more than the three other ports of the Sahel together (Sousse, Mahédia, Monastir). The total commercial movement was higher by 4,980 tons of goods than the total of these ports and 20,803 than that of Sousse. Finally it will be noticed that Sfax has had itself *more than a third* of the boats which visited the five above mentioned ports, *more than a third* of the total commercial movement, a fifth of the imports and *about half of the exports.*"

The principal exports were the following ones: esparto fibre (8,296 tons); treated esparto (810 tons), (minimum figures); oils (589 tons, approximately 736,000 hectolitres); sponges (61 tons); raw wools (150 tons): dates (133 tons); various skins (36 tons); finally barley (1,588 tons) and corn (2,048 tons).

If one remembers that Sfax is in constant communication with the South, as far as Souf, that 275,000 people make it their supplies center, one sees that this commercial superiority is not exaggerated.

One of principal Sfaxien industries is oil. Two electric generating plants and one horse-gear, 60 ordinary Arab mills are hardly enough to work the fruits of the 2,500,000 olive-trees which, to an average radius of 15 kilometers, surround the city with a belt of greenery. Another crop, that of the vine, develops more and more and promise to give a good performances. Apart from the 400,000 Arab vines, there are 90,000 French. The principal vineyard is the one that, located 13 kilometers to the south of the city in the place called Mesda-el-Hajeb, already has hectares planted including 4 in their fourth sheet, 8 in their third and the remainder in their second or first. My associates (MM. Espinasse and Pic) and myself are counting on approximately 60 hectolitres. Our forecasts were realised and were even exceeded from the pecuniary point of view, since the wine is sold at a rate of 60 francs a hectolitre taken from the cellar and 65 francs when delivered downtown.

If the vine keeps its promise, we hope to see the arrival of colonists who will help us extend this culture in liaison with that of the olive-trees. Just as the oils of Sfax have always been famous and are still reckoned as having a quality absolutely higher either than Marseilles, or Nantes, in the same way our wines will perhaps manage to acquire an honorable place on the European market.

What is necessary for that? Not much, in truth: a little more speed in the execution of the transportation routes, fewer obstacles affecting agriculture, a little less indifference on behalf of the Tunisian government for anything that affects the South, this poor South so disparaged and so unknown in spite of its 300,000 inhabitants. Lastly, we would wish a little less part taken to consider Sfax (a city of 43.000 people and primarily commercial, the second city of the Regency in importance) as being an insignificant village located in the antipodes or a small oasis in the desert as a French agent in La Goulette wrote one day.

A. du Paty de Clam.

SFAX

ITS SCHOOLS.

Sfax is, after Tunis, the city of the regency where the authority takes the most care in the development of instruction.

The city contains five schools: two church schools, two public, a Franco-Arabic school. We will examine them successively.

Boys' Church School

It is directed by five brothers of the congregation known as Brothers of Mary. The pupils are divided into four classes of which the first, the strongest, is under the direction of a brother owner with the higher certificate of instruction. The first class contains the pupils who, provided with the certificate primary study, want to make more complete studies, and those who aspire to obtain this certificate. Of 27 pupils registered, 9 have already, 6 will conclude this year; the others work to this end.

The pupils of the second class (31 registered), as with those of the first, have a course in Italian every day for half an hour led by the directing brother.

The school contains the following pupils: French, 13; Jews, 32; Italians, 38; Maltese, 111; that is to say a total of 184 registered. Of this number, 160 to 170 follow the courses assiduously. Founded in 1882, this school had in 1888 at the Exhibition of State education of Tunis a *silver medal* for the hand work of the pupils, along with instruction and its agricultural collection.

The Brothers of Mary have a college in Paris which, in the open competitions, holds second place of all the colleges of the academic district of this city.

Girls' Church School

Created in 1865, this establishment is directed by the sisters of Saint-Joseph of the Apparition. They are five of them.

199 pupils, divided into four classes, compose this school. Here there are by nationality: French, 21; Jews, 42; Italians, 27; Maltese, 108; that is to say a total of 199. registered. 160 to 170 pupils follow the courses assiduously. The first class is the strongest. It includes the pupils who are preparing for the certificate of primary study or with the simple instruction certificate.

The Italian language is taught in the first two classes.

The pupils also study the music, drawing, dressmaking, etc

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Boys' Public School

Created in October 1888, this school is directed by two French teachers. It is composed of two classes forming a total of 52 registered pupils, of which: French, 2; Jews, 38; Italians, 9; Maltese, 3.

It is seen that the Jewish element dominates there.

Since the pupils of this religion must also go to the synagogue to learn Hebrew, it follows that about thirty of the pupils can hardly attend the courses daily. To obviate this nuisance, authorization is to be obtained for a rabbi actually in the school, so that the Jewish pupils find on the spot teaching of Hebrew.

Girls' Public School

Its foundation dates from the beginning of 1888. It is directed by two French teachers. Separated in two classes, this establishment contains 133 pupils, of which: Frenchwomen, 10, Jews, 103; Italians, 20. 90 pupils follow the courses assiduously.

The first class contains the pupils preparing for the certificate aptitude and for the simple instruction certificate. For the first, there are three candidates currently; for the second, one.

The pupils study music, drawing, sewing, etc After having thought to instruct the children, the municipality of Sfax believed it wise to develop instruction among the adults by creating free public courses in the evening. These courses are of several kinds and function have operated since the month d' October 1888.

Adult Courses

Followed by 47 pupils, these courses take place Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday of each week, at the boys' public school of the, whose vast room lends itself admirably well to these conferences.

1 French, 34 Jews, 7 Italians, 5 Maltese are registered there. 35 assiduously come to take reading lessons there, or history, geography, morals, sciences, commercial bookkeeping, French, etc These courses are led by the director of the boys' public school.

Adult Courses for Arabs

Of the same kind as the ordinary Arabic courses, this course is led by the director of the Franco-Arabic School on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of each week.

17 pupils (1 Italian, 3 Maltese, 13 Arabs) come there assiduously to learn French, arithmetic, etc. The room of this school would allow courses with a much more considerable number of pupils.

Courses in Arabic for Adults

This course takes place the boys' public school, led by the director of the Arabic public school and his assistant. He is followed very assiduously

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by 25 pupils, including 15 French, 5 Italians and 5 of various nationalities. The French are civil servants, officers, soldiers, employees of the various administrations, etc

Every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday of each week; this course has to take one: great development.

Cutting/Dressmaking Course.

This takes place Monday and Thursday at the girls Public school. 17 pupils follow it assiduously and come there to learn, under the direction of the principal of the girls' public school, to cut clothing, the linen, etc

As is seen, education holds an important place in the concerns of the municipality of Sfax. But all has not yet been said. There is a wish to improve the classroom of the Church School for the girls, and to change the Boys' Church School where the boys, who are truly squeezed in, and that new courses are established for adults, in linear drawing, Italian, and music.

Nevertheless, one can say that the year 1888 will have borne much fruits from the point of view of the development of state education in Sfax. To whom is this owed? To the Resident Minister, the Director General of State education, who agreed to grant to the city what it had requested on this subject.

Comte du Pàty de Clam