

VOL. V. No. V.

JANUARY, 1931.

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THE SYRIAN WORLD

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE IN ENGLISH DEALING
WITH SYRIAN AFFAIRS AND ARABIC LITERATURE



A JOURNEY THROUGH JEBEL DRUZE

SALLOUM A. MOKARZEL

ANCIENT NATIONS OF THE NEAR EAST

THOMAS ASA

CHRISTMAS IN OTHER LANDS

A. F. ZAINEY

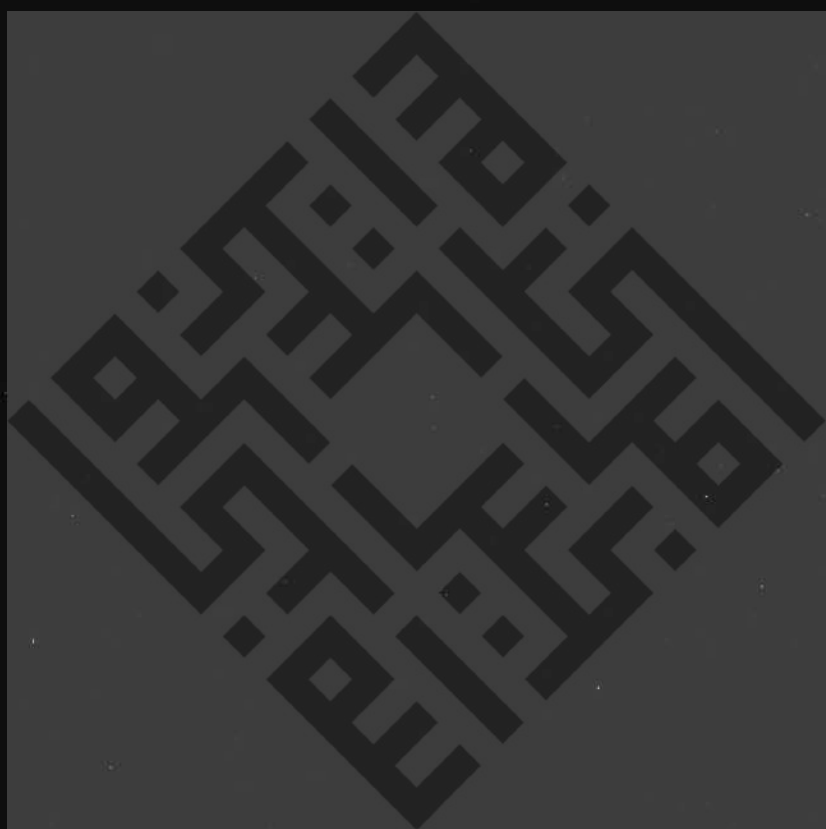
THIS YOUNG GENERATION!

AN EDITORIAL OF AL-HODA

ALI ZAIBAQ (QUICKSILVER) (*A SERIAL*)

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SYRIA

THE COPY 50c



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THE SYRIAN WORLD

Published monthly except July and August

by THE SYRIAN-AMERICAN PRESS

104 Greenwich St., New York, N. Y.

By subscription \$5.00 a year.

Single Copies 50c.

Entered as second class matter June 25, 1926, at the post office at New York,
N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>A Journey Through Jebel-Druze—I</i>	5
SALLOUM A. MOKARZEL	
<i>The Rose</i> (Poem)	14
THOMAS ASA	
<i>Ancient Nations of the Near East</i>	15
THOMAS ASA	
<i>A Marvel and a Riddle</i>	18
G. K. GIBRAN	
<i>Christmas in Other Lands</i>	19
A. F. ZAINEY	

CONTENTS (Continued)

	PAGE
<i>On a Miser</i> (Poem)	22
J. D. CARLYLE	
<i>Rubaiyat Abu-Tayeb</i> (Poems)	23
AMIN BEDER	
<i>French Author Gives Views on Syria</i>	24
Mlle. ALICE POULLEAU	
<i>Egypt</i>	28
TOUFIK MOUFARRIGE	
<i>Ali Zaibaq</i> (Serial)	30
S. A. MOKARZEL and T. S. DAYTON	
<i>Two Arabic Gems</i> (Poem)	33
DR. SALIM Y. ALKAZIN	
<i>This Young Generation!</i>	34
AN EDITORIAL OF AL-HODA	
<i>From the Arabic</i>	36
<i>Grave Situation in Palestine</i>	37
<i>Editorial Comment:—Binding Traditions</i>	41
<i>Readers' Forum</i>	43
<i>Political Developments in Syria</i>	45
<i>About Syria and Syrians</i>	48

IN THIS ISSUE

THERE is an element of mystery in Jebel Druze. The country, like its inhabitants, compels continued interest despite all that has been written about it. Every traveler sees it in a different light and gains from it a different impression.

The editor in this issue begins a series of articles in description of his recent travels to this mysterious country. He takes the reader from Damascus and its verdant oasis to the bleak and desolate land over which Mt. Hermon stands sentinel on the West and which still abounds in relics of Roman occupation. In the present installment the reader reaches the capital Soueida, in the very heart of the country, going through the section which was the scene of the desperate fighting between the Druzes and the French only a few years ago. The account does not lack of a touch of humor, because one of the editor's companions was the leader of Syrian Nationalist youth, the fascist of the country, and happily he was in a buoyant mood.

ALTHOUGH liberal in his poetical contributions, Thomas Asa treats our readers in this issue to a truly valuable lit-

erary discovery representing Voltaire's appraisal of the cultural wealth of the modern Syrians' ancestors. To bring to light all the fine inspirational material which should bolster our race pride is a distinct contribution which our scholarly collaborators are making to the national cause, and which THE SYRIAN WORLD is happy in being the medium for its dissemination. But for the research and genuine interest of our collaborators many of the fine material being presented would remain hidden to all but a few, and once they are being made available our readers cannot but share with us the feeling of appreciation of the efforts of the fine body of learned and patriotic volunteers who are so splendidly serving our racial cause. We only fear that Mr. Asa will have to pay the price of his growing popularity with our readers by sustained contributions, which so far he has given generously.

MANY are the Syrians throughout the land who are helping spread correct knowledge about our racial history and traditions in their localities. We are glad to refer to Mr. A. F. Zainey as one of

this army of able volunteers. The speech he delivered on Christmas observances in various lands, published in this issue, served him as an occasion to fittingly describe the fine Syrian customs observed at the Yultide season and paint a vivid picture of the beautiful family spirit that prevails in the Syrian home. Mr. Zainey's address furnishes profitable reading at any season.

WHAT does the veteran editor of Al-Hoda, the famous Arabic paper of New York, think of our young generation? Read the translation of his editorial on the subject and you will know. And what is more, don't hesitate to write us your opinion on this subject whatever it may be, because we believe the discussion of such an important matter as present relations between parents and children cannot fail of producing beneficial results. The young generation should have a medium of expression and we hereby provide it. Parents are also invited to give their point of view, and if they cannot write in English they may do so in their mother tongue and we will undertake the translation.

We are inviting a symposium in the hope of providing grounds for better understanding through a frank and open exchange of views.

ABU'L TAYEB Al-Mutanabbi is at last finding able admirers to give translations of his beautiful Arabic poetry. In this issue two of our poets, Amin Beder and Dr. Salim Y. Alkazin, by a strange coincidence, have drunk at the same spring, and the reader is bound to appreciate their respective selections. We have more of Dr. Alkazin's translations, and trust to receive more of Mr. Beder's.

AND again our undaunted hero, Ali Zaibaq, performs some impossible feats which only lead him on to further labors and trials. One would think that after his possession of the Magic Box of the All-Seeing Eye he should deserve a little rest, but such was not his destiny. The reader will be thrilled with the present chapter as he never was before.

THOSE who are politically-minded will find in the exhaustive accounts of the political developments in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon that which will satisfy their most sanguine interest. Especially are conditions grave in Palestine, and the account given in this issue covers reports of press dispatches as well as original material from native sources. Syria is expecting important developments since the return of the High Commissioner,

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A Journey Through Jebel Druze

By SALLOUM A. MOKARZEL

I

IN the minds of the people of Syria, the name Jebel Druze is associated with a sense of dark mystery. The country must have taken on the character of the people who have lent it their name, because the Druzes, who inhabit the mountainous region, are noted for the mysteriousness of their religious creed. They are, in this respect, not unlike our better known secret societies in that they maintain an attitude of unrelenting denial of the authenticity of all disclosures bearing on their secret tenets or rituals. But wherein the Druzes differ is that membership in their society compasses a whole people. They are initiated when born although later they are admitted to the several degrees of the order upon proper qualification passed upon by a legally constituted hierarchy. Hence, also, membership is not open to outsiders. Nor, for that matter, does their number, according to commonly accepted belief, decrease or increase, because of their belief in metempsychosis and its consequent restriction.

Such being the character of the people, the country has gained a reputation in keeping with this intriguing element of mystery. The military exploits of the Druzes, whether in the remote or immediate past, and their fierce zeal in the defense of their country against foreign aggression, lend added weight to the conception of exclusiveness. They were known to have successfully withstood the organized attacks of both Turks and Egyptians in the nineteenth century, and their revolt against the French in recent times is a record of unparalleled feats of desperate bravery. Their unbending determination is best illustrated by the fact that

instead of accepting the inevitable conclusion which could be delayed but not prevented in view of their limited numbers and meager resources as compared with the unlimited resources of a first class military power, they chose voluntary exile to surrender. This illustrates as well the reputation of inaccessibility and ruggedness which legend has woven about their country. A journey to Jebel Druze, therefore, cannot fail of taking the form of a hazardous adventure to the traveler acquainted with the history of this mysterious part of Syria. And it was in this spirit that we viewed our contemplated trip to it. Not that we entertained the least fear for our convenience or safety, for, strange as it may seem, nowhere in all my travels in Syria, mountain and plain, coast and hinterland, among city dwellers and bedou, had I met with any situation bordering on the dangerous. But it was the expectation of seeing what has been little seen, the anticipation of novel situations and conditions, the realization of a fond hope of going through a country and among a people associated in the popular conception with the unknown and mysterious, that lent our trip to the Druze Mountain the character of adventure. And in this we were not to be disappointed.

* * * *

I was frankly delighted to have for companion, beside my inseparable cousin Joseph Mokarzel, the popular Syrian Nationalist leader, Fakhry Bey Baroodi. To say, however, that I was not surprised when the latter confessed to me that never before in his life had he visited the Druze Mountain would be a contravention of truth. For here is a man of means and position and sufficient leisure to gratify a natural desire for travel to study the conditions of a country whose destinies he was helping to shape. That he had not ventured during his forty odd years to take the half-day journey to a neighboring country, considered, nevertheless, an integral part of Syria, cannot be without significance. To me this served as a further illustration of the popular belief that Jebel Druze was looked upon as forbidding and mysterious in its almost complete isolation.

Fakhry Bey spared us the need of attending to arrangements. For the benefit of prospective travelers, however, I would state that the necessary arrangements are few and simple. All one needs is a trusty car and a conscientious chauffeur, plus a good supply of potable water. I made the mistake of leaving my ther-

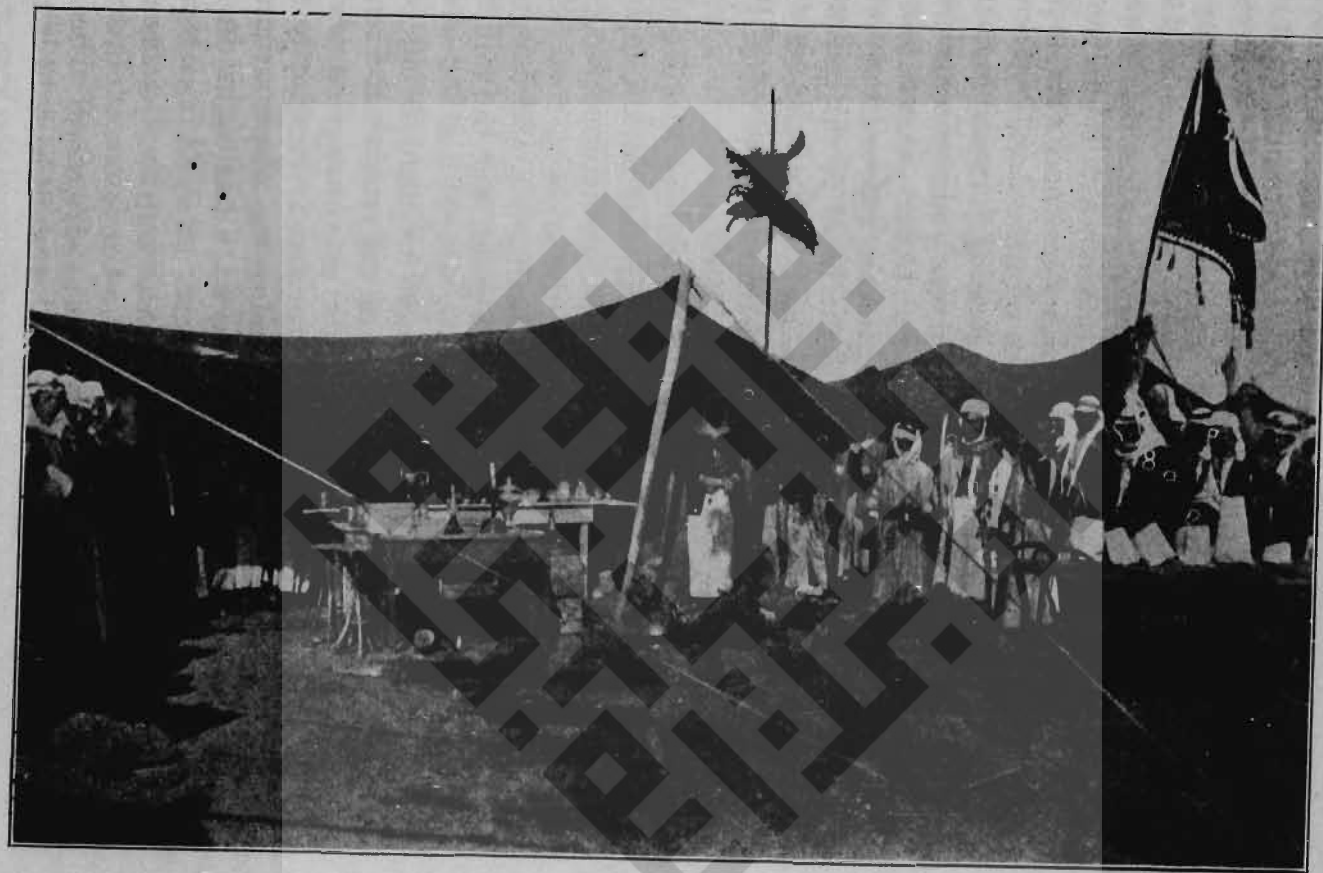
mos bottle in Beirut, and had ample occasion on this trip to lament my oversight and negligence.

The flood of golden sunshine was just breaking over the old city of Damascus, hurdling towering minarets and massive mosques and palaces and finding its way into the narrow and irregular streets, when we wound our way past Al-Marje, the Umayyad mosque and into the quarter of Al-Midan. It was Sunday (August 11) but the city had risen early and was already for some time in the swing of its activities. Sunday in Damascus is an ordinary workday, because the Moslem day of rest and prayer is Friday, and owing to this fact we soon discovered that we could make but little progress on our way out of the city. We were in the company of a popular leader, at a time in the seething conditions of the city when the people needed a leader and sought him for advice on a thousand and one matters. We were stopped ever so frequently by grain and feed merchants, flour and produce merchants, and all the other categories of merchants whose shops lined the street from the center of the city to its very limits. The merchants wanted advice and assistance in their many grievances. They were subjected to unfair competition on the part of foreign interests; they were willing to agree to any proposition advanced by the leaders to improve their intolerable situation. To all of which Fakhry Bey would deliver a lecture on the imperative necessity of cooperation. I later learned from him that he had been successful in organizing the native millers into a form of a cooperative and protective association, a trust, if you please, to pit their combined efforts against the foreign depredatory interests. But in this instance the "interests" were not the French, nor were the motives involved of a political nature. It was the case of some enterprising Jews installing modern flour-milling machinery, and investing in the business such large capital as to effect substantial savings in the purchase of supplies, enabling them in turn to undersell the native millers who still adhered to all methods. To meet the menace the natives had to have recourse to the modern methods of their competitors. They installed modern machinery to effect economy in production and organized to effect economy in purchase. They engaged their opponents for a time in cut-throat competition and soon regained the grounds they had lost. They now readily admit that the "interests" were their benefactors in having taught them a valuable economic lesson.

Once outside the city limits the landscape presented a desolate appearance. The waters of Barada do not flow in this direction, with the result that the land presents an aspect of desert aridity. But compensation was to be had in a different form. Standing bare in the wilderness was a great white dome, which our companion explained was a memorial erected on the very spot where stood the Prophet Mohammad when he refused to proceed any farther for fear of jeopardizing his entry into the celestial Al-Jannat if he were to enter the city of Damascus which in its ravishing beauty appeared to him as a terrestrial paradise. As we proceeded further we came to a town whose white buildings, huddling solidly together, and its many slender minarets rising sharply from a solid mass of masonry, stood in bold relief against the drab landscape and a limpid blue sky. This, as we learned, was Al-Kaswa, the historic town which marked the starting point of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, at the time when Damascus was the great rallying center of all pilgrimages. Al-Kaswa, literally translated, is the covering of Al-Kaaba. Out of reverence the Moslems of the world fashioned every year, on the occasion of the pilgrimage, a magnificent piece of cloth embroidered with gold and brocaded with intricate designs drawn from precepts of the Koran, to cover the black stone at the holy city. This covering was carried in great pomp and ceremony at the head of the pilgrimage procession. The caravan started across the desert from this town near Damascus. The ceremony of loading the rich covering of the Kaaba, Al-Kaswa, took place in it, hence its name.

The town of Al-Kaswa is preeminently the starting point into the desert and all those regions of the unknown which lie east and south of Damascus. No sooner we emerged from the shade of its walls than we began to experience that peculiar sensation which comes to him who is embarking on a desert adventure. We were now entering Hawran, the Aurentes of the Romans, where great cities and formidable fortresses once formed the outposts of the Roman Empire, but which now has been reduced to an arid land suitable only for dry wheat cultivation. One could sense in the very air a compound of mystery, the very feeling which knowledge of the lore of the Druze country gave the traveler a sense of the dramatic and mysterious. The feeling deepened as our car sped further into the country. Not alone in its present aspect, but against the background of its hoary history, the land we were now crossing in the most modern of con-

JANUARY, 1931



Typical Druze Warriors—Military Staff Holding War Council During the Revolution.

veyances impressed itself on our imagination. Everything upon which our eyes rested seemed to be reminiscent of the ages of long ago. Across the horizon, silhouetted boldly against the clear blue sky, stood historic Mt. Hermon with the refreshing sight of its perpetual snow amidst the scorching desert heat. Between the road and the mountain range were to be seen some Arab camps, whose droves of camels meandered leisurely in the vast wilderness feasting on its most abundant luxury, thistles. Here and there the newly opened dirt road crossed, or ran parallel to, some wonderfully preserved Roman road which was at once a reminder of past glory and a challenge to future effort and achievement. But aside from its dreariness there was nothing formidable about the country, nothing to substantiate the fear and awe associated with every mention of Hawran and Jebel Druze. It was somewhat disappointing. So far nothing of what we had seen was formidable, although now we were in the heart of the country. What then could have gained for this part of Syria its sinister and redoubtable reputation? Surely it cannot be the nature of the country as much as the character of the people.

About 10 A. M. we had reached Azra', a military post situated midway between Damascus, capital of Syria, and Sueida, capital of Jebel Druze. The town is not of prepossessing appearance—a few incongruous stores ranged along the crooked road with but a few habitations built of sombre basalt stone and merging perfectly with the drab landscape. At a point near the military headquarters we were brought to a halt by a rope stretched across the road. A dapper little officer advanced to examine our credentials. His manner and speech were of the proverbial French politeness. He not only let us pass but even volunteered advice as to where we could find lodgings in Sueida, directing us to the house of Geaffar Pasha Atrash. No concern was shown over the fact that one of my traveling companions was a Nationalist leader and the other a journalist who at times indulged in considerable vituperation against the mandate. Although the country was still under military rule as a result of the last insurrection, freedom of travel was apparently permitted to all classes. The apprehension of Fakhry Bey Baroody that he might be held in suspicion owing to his known revolutionary affiliations was seemingly unfounded. This open-minded policy on the part of the French authorities of Jebel Druze was later illustrated more forcibly in the capital. One could but infer that the French now feel their

grip on the situation adequately secure, and that if they fear no further outbreaks it is because they have placated the people by proving to them their genuine solicitude for the peace and progress of the country. What I saw in Jebel Druze only confirmed the belief that the French were best loved (relatively) where they were in direct control. They are in such control in the Alaouite State and in Jebel Druze, and of all the administrative divisions of Syria, these two show comparatively the most progress. Perhaps the hands of the French authorities are not here tied down by considerations of local politics, and they are thus prompted to a feeling of direct responsibility in the discharge of their duty. This would be the sounder explanation than the one accusing the French of displaying more efficiency and conscientiousness where they are in direct control simply to expose the disadvantage of relegating the administrative power to the natives.

We still had a good two-hour drive to Sueida, and while not watching the monotonous landscape we listened to the Bey's outlining of his ambitious reform program. From politics he covered the whole field of reforms that usually engage the mind of a young and enthusiastic national leader. Oh! What he would not do to improve education, agriculture, industry and raise the cultural standard, and effect the economic prosperity, and enhance the national prestige of the Syrian nation, if only the country were rid of French domination. And as behooves a man of his enthusiasm, there was no doubt in his mind as to the ability of the Syrians to look after themselves and shape their own destiny.

Then Fakhry Bey would revert to one of his frequent whimsical and light moods, displaying a surprising versatility and scope of interest. His conversation with the chauffeur was typical. This chauffeur was a native Damascene and had had an unusual career of which the Bey knew every detail. All the youth of Damascus are the protégés of the Bey inasmuch as they all acknowledge him their leader. The chauffeur was asked how he enjoyed his stay in Teheran, and he at once became voluble. "All the chauffeurs of Persia are Syrians," he began, "but in spite of their exceptional opportunities for gain they pine for the life of Damascus. I could not stand my self-imposed exile for more than a year, and here I am poorer but happier."

"Missed your sweethearts, perhaps?" suggested the Bey by way of furnishing a lead.

"La, wallah!" came the quick and frank reply. "I had six wives during the year I spent in Persia."

"Quite a harem "

"La, wallah! not all at once. A new one regularly every two months."

"Rather reckless in divorce!"

"La, wallah! rather by advance mutual agreement."

"But you are a Sunnite," came the surprised question of the Bey.

"But I was in the country of the Shiites and took advantage of their regular institutions," was the plain rejoinder.

This matter-of-fact colloquy illustrates a social-religious institution practised in some parts of the East which is given little consideration by the outside world. The Moslems, it should be pointed out, are divided into two main sects, the Sunnites, who are considered the orthodox among Moslems, and the Shiites who are the adherents of Ali. Some of the latter sect may be found in Syria and Lebanon, but their principal stronghold is in Mesopotamia and Persia. One of their religious tenets is contract marriage—an agreement between the contracting parties to live together in a conjugal state for a stipulated length of time, at the expiration of which their union is automatically annulled. The time may be a day or a year. Some instances are known where a union is entered into for but a few hours. But in the meantime the marriage is considered absolutely legal. No witnesses are required.

This form of contract marriage has been in effect in that part of the East for something like fourteen hundred years. So-called moderns in the West who preach trial and companionate marriages and the like will have to cast about further afield for originality.

The country we were now traversing presented a striking resemblance to the desert on which it bordered. True, its topography is mountainous, but the rolling hills gave one the impression of sand dunes rather than cultivated land. The whole land is planted to wheat, and the harvest had just been gathered, leaving the yellow stalks cut with a hand scythe about a foot from the ground shimmering under the bright flood of golden sunshine. Not a tree or a green shrub was to be seen in the whole vast horizon, and the only touch of color that broke the monotony of the landscape was the huge piles of black basalt stones that

were so plentiful as to be awesome. Even the patience and industry of such a resigned people as the Druze peasants must have proved inadequate to clear the land of this stone pest. Or was it only indifference that gave way to expediency? We noticed fields so encumbered with stones that they could never be tolerated in Europe or America. Yet we actually came across innumerable instances where a few straggling stalks protruded boldly from crags in the rock or from amidst a handful of earth between some stones. But even these few were not overlooked by the scrupulously efficient mower. Perhaps, even, they were originally planted by design.

Not even the few villages we passed offered a break in the monotony. They were all of the same basalt stone that denoted the volcanic origin of the country. The houses are built low, close together and have flat roofs that seem to present an unbroken surface viewed from a distance. One had to look intently to discern a village from its sombre surroundings. Hardly a tree was to be seen even in the villages. And that despite the fierce sun that beats mercilessly in these regions. An unprotected traveler would fare ill in these vast stretches of desolation which provide neither water nor shade. We met a lone woman traveler painfully winding her way along the dusty road. She was heavily dressed and her head covered with the conventional ighal. Being a native she must have considered herself immune to the midday heat, yet we noticed blood dripping from her nose.

We were now approaching Sueida with an anticipation of relief from the trying journey. A bare hill loomed ahead which was designated as the spot where the ill-fated expedition of Gen. Michaud, the first punitive column to be despatched against the Druzes in 1925, met its crushing defeat at the hands of Sultan Pasha Atrash and his men. This signal victory of the Druzes emboldened them to assume the offensive and carry the war out of their territory into the very heart of Syria and Lebanon. The French military command at that time had acted in haste and miscalculated the strength of the enemy, causing a prolongation of the conflict with all its attending suffering.

Historically the country is extremely interesting, but why should it be so bare and forbidding? The new roads being built are unquestionably good. They may be planned with military considerations in mind, but they serve commercial purposes nevertheless. Yet this is not all what the country needs. Are the

French doing anything in the way of general rehabilitation and improvement?

We noticed along the flank of the mountain overlooking Sueida a patch darker than the common aspect of the landscape. Being all strangers to the country we fell to conjecturing as to its nature. Two of us maintained that the patch was nothing but basalt rock of a darker hue than the rest. Judging by what we had seen of the country in nearly four hours of fast travel no other conclusion seemed admissible. Trees seemed a rarity unthought of in these surroundings. Still one of us maintained the dark-blue patch was vegetation, a growth of shrubs. There was life in it, a subdued dark green color without the dull reflection of the shiny black stones. This view proved correct as we drew closer. The dark patch was actually a growth of shrubbery representing the first attempt of the French at reforestation. The sight was most welcome and refreshing, accentuating our feeling of relief and delight at having at last reached the gates of Sueida.

The Rose

By THOMAS ASA

In thoughtless mood I plucked a rose one day,
And, breathing of its essence, heard it say:
"Thou soulless man! to break me from my stem,
When ah too soon I'll finish my short stay."

And leaning closer I heard it further speak—
"Thy worldly praises thrill my blushing cheek,
As Queen of Flora's kingdom I am named,—
But soon thereat you leave me deathly weak.

"The queen of thine own country you adore,
In your submission you her temper bore;
And when in regal anger gives command
To you, bend humbly to the polished floor.

"But, me, you found beautiful, mild and free,
The wold my home, my palace floor this lea;
Forthwith you plucked me to adorn your queen,—
The rustic queen outshines man's majesty!"

Ancient Nations of the Near East

Voltaire Offers to Modern Syrians High Proof of the Cultural Greatness of Their Ancestry.

By THOMAS ASA

FROM his chapters on Syria, Phœnicia, and Arabia, which are embodied in his admirable *Philosophy of History*, Voltaire, the most universal personality in the annals of French literature, presents to the modern Syrian innumerable vestiges of the antiquity and cultural greatness of his ancestry. Commenting on the topography of ancient Syria, Voltaire writes, "By all the monuments which remain for our inspection, I find that the country which extends from Alexandretta to Scanderoon, nearly to Bagdat, was always called Syria; the alphabet used by this people was always Syriac; that the ancient cities of Zobah, Balbec, and Damascus, were here situated, and afterwards those of Antioch, Seleucia, and Palmyra. Balk was so ancient that the Persians pretend that their Bram or Abraham came from Balk amongst them. Where then could that ancient empire of Assyria, of which so much has been said, be situated if it were not in the land of fables?" He continues in his chapter on Syria, "I do not, in other respects, hesitate believing that the Syrians were much more ancient than the Egyptians, for this evident reason, that the lands which are most easily cultivated, are necessarily the first peopled, and are the earliest in a flourishing state."

Concerning the Phœnicians, those bold and enterprising entrepreneurs of transmarine navigation, the French philosopher becomes more specific and increasingly eulogistic in his enthusiasm, "The Phœnicians were probably united as a body of people as early as the other inhabitants of Syria. They may not be as ancient as the Chaldeans, because their country is not so fertile: Sidon, Tyre, Joppa, Berith, and Ascalon, are barren lands. Maritime trade has constantly been the last resource of every people. They began by cultivating their land before they built ships to go in search of other countries beyond the sea. There is no mention made by any maritime expeditions, either among the Chaldeans or the Indians. Even the Egyptians looked with horror upon the

sea; the sea was their Typhon, an evil disposed being; and this makes the four hundred ships that were fitted by Sesostris for the conquest of India very questionable; but the enterprises of the Phœnicians are real. Carthage and Cadiz were founded by them, the discovery of England, their trade to India conducted by Ezion-gaber, their manufactures of valuable stuffs, their art of dyeing purple, testify their abilities, and those abilities caused their grandeur.

"Commerce necessarily required registers, which supplied the place of our ancient books, with easy and lasting signs to fix those registers. The opinion which supposes that the Phœnicians were the authors of the written alphabet is therefore very probable. I shall not aver that they invented such characters before the Chaldeans; but their alphabet was certainly the most complete and useful, as they expressed the vowels, which the Chaldeans did not. The word Alphabet itself, composed of their two first characters, is an evidence in the favor of the Phœnicians.

"I do not find that the Egyptians ever communicated their letters of their language to any other people; on the other hand, the Phœnicians imparted their language to the Carthagenians, who afterwards changed it. Their letters were transformed into those of the Greeks; what a decided proof in favor of the antiquity of the Phœnicians!"

Voltaire now centers his attention on a figure that looms pre-eminent among the historical and philosophical writers of the pre-Christian era. Sanchoniathon, whose personal history is unfortunately obscure, writes authoritatively on the origin and customs, religious and secular, of his lineal ancestors, the Phœnicians. In writing his account, Sanchoniathon was animated by the same lofty spirit and ambition that dominated the authors of the Zend and Vedam, the same influence that resulted in the work of Manethon in Egypt, and Hesiod in Greece. The great prestige of this early Phœnician writer is attested, as Voltaire resumes, "What proves the prodigious antiquity of the book of Sanchoniathon is, that the first lines of it were read in the celebration of the mysteries of Isis and Ceres, a homage which the Egyptians and Greeks would not have paid to a foreign author, had he not been one of the first sources of human knowledge."

Voltaire now proceeds to a latitude of universal interest, the sources of the different terms employed in designating the Supreme Being. "The word El, signifying God among the first

Phœnicians, has some analogy to the Alla of the Arabians; and it is probable that the Greeks composed their Elios from this monosyllable El. But what is most observable is, that we find the ancient Phœnicians had the word Eloa, Eloim, which the Hebrews for a very long time afterwards retained, when they settled in Canaan.

"The Jews derived all the names they gave to God, Eloa, Iah, Adonai, from Phœnicia; this cannot be otherwise, as the Jews in Canaan did not for a great while speak anything but the Phœnician tongue.

"What deserves particular observation, is that Sanchoniathon, in relating the ancient cosmology of his country, speaks at first of the chaos enveloped in dark air, Chaut-Ereb. Erebus, Hesiod's night, is derived from the Phœnician word, which the Greeks preserved. From chaos came Muth or Moth, which signified matter. Now who controlled this matter? It was Colpi Iah, the spirit of God, by which animals and men were created.

"We may easily be convinced that this cosmogony is the origin of almost all the others. The more ancient people are always imitated by those who succeed them. I am sensible how obscure are all the origins of the Chaldeans, the Syrians, the Phœnicians, the Egyptians, and the Greeks. What origin is not so? We know that Babylon existed before Rome; that the cities of Syria were powerful before Jerusalem was known; that there were kings of Egypt before Jacob and Abraham; but to know with precision which was the first people, a revelation is necessary."

Turning to Arabia, we find that Voltaire has caught the fiery spirit of independence that has ever characterized the ancient people of this mysterious country. Traversing with impartial judgment the existing milestones of the authentic history of this nation, the French philosopher has found them to be one of the great peoples of antiquity. "The Arabians, whose defense are their deserts and their courage, have never submitted to a foreign yoke. Trajan conquered only a small part of Arabia Patræa: they to this time brave the power of the Turk. This great people have always been as free as Scythians, and more civilized.

"Those may be properly called the people of Arabia who were the real aborigines, that is to say, who from time immemorial inhabited this fine country, without intermixing with any other nation, without having been conquered or conquerors. Their

religion was the most natural and simple of any; it consisted in worshipping a God, and venerating the stars, which seemed, under so fine and clear a sky, to set forth the grandeur of God with more magnificence than any other part of nature. They considered the planets as mediators between God and men; they followed this religion to the time of Mahomet. I believe they were addicted to many superstitions, as they were men; but detached from the rest of the world by seas and deserts, in the possession of a delicious country, above every want and fear, they must necessarily have been less prone to wickedness, and not so superstitious as other nations.

"They are not mentioned in our universal histories, fabricated in our western part of the globe. I really believe they had no connection with that little Jewish nation, which is become the object and foundation of our pretended universal histories, wherein a certain kind of authors copy one from the other, whilst they all forget three-fourths of the earth."

As a brief epilogue to this sketch of ancient history, I might say that the weaknesses and shortcomings of the modern Syrians are many, as they are men; but their cultural heritage and their magnificent leadership in the march of civilization are theirs alone, undivided and unequalled.

A Marvel and a Riddle

By G. K. GIBRAN

Long did I lie in the dust of Egypt, silent and unaware of the seasons.

Then the sun gave me birth, and I rose and walked upon the banks of the Nile.

Singing with the days and dreaming with the nights.

And now the sun treads upon me with a thousand feet that I may lie again in the dust of Egypt.

But behold a marvel and a riddle!

The very sun that gathered me cannot scatter me.

Still erect am I, and sure of foot do I walk upon the banks of the Nile.

Christmas in Other Lands

By A. F. ZAINEY

Editor's Note — Although the Christmas season has passed, the following study of the customs and practices of various peoples in celebrating Christmas is of permanent value in that it collects a wide variety of general information on the subject. The author is a member of the legal profession and is keen on the subject of bringing about a better understanding of the Syrians by the general American public. What follows is the text of a speech he delivered at the Arsenal Technical High School in Indianapolis, Indiana.

AMERICAN children and many grown ups, too, are apt to think that Christmas is celebrated in the same way all over the earth. They picture children everywhere hanging up their stockings on Christmas Eve, and dancing in glee on Christmas morning before trees gay with lights, ornaments and gifts.

It is not surprising that we should have this idea when last year five million Christmas trees were cut from Canadian farms, and that together with six million trees from the northern states of our country were then on the way to American firesides.

With the Christmas tree in the American home and before the fireside, it is pleasant to know that people in other parts of the world have charming Christmas customs, too.

Take the Yule Log! The first mention of the Yule Log turns one's thoughts to old England. But before England adopted the idea, bringing home the log amid merry cheer was part of the nature worship of the early Germans. In America, the nearest thing we have to the Yule Log ceremonies is the chopping down of a tree, then burning as large a log as our firesides will hold, or buying a log at some store and lugging it home with fun and frolic. Doing this takes us into another country than England. We have touched Norway by this custom, for there, during the Christmas festivities, father and children go to the woods, select and chop down a tree, and bring it home together.

Once upon a time Christmas was observed boisterously and the Lord of Misrule ran riot, but nowadays Christmas is a day, or season, of family reunions and of domestic happiness. The Christmas we know is a home day, and it grows so, more and more, all over the world. Every one tries to get home on Christ-

mas. Schools close. Colleges give vacations and people try to spend the day, and longer if possible, at home. Christmas has become a children's day and we are all children together when this festival comes around once again.

We know how Christmas is celebrated here in America, because we are a part of the celebration, and while each family has its own special customs and traditions, everything revolves about the Christmas stocking, Christmas tree and candlelight. But other countries have other ways of marking the day.

Finland, for example, has not Christmas trees, but Father Christmas, dressed as a Yule Goat, goes from house to house with gifts to which verses are attached. He reads each verse aloud before presenting a gift. Some are funny, others have beauty of thought. No one is left out, servants as well as relatives are remembered and the animals are especially well fed. In fact some countries give special care and attention to animals on Christmas Eve, in commemoration of the belief that animals can speak for a short period on this night. Children of Finland sleep on a little straw on Christmas Eve, because the Christ child was laid in the hay in a manger.

In Roumania on December 24th, the last day of Advent, Turte is eaten in almost every home. This is a special "kind of cake", made of layers of thin dough, with melted sugar or honey and powdered walnut. The dough is supposed to represent the swaddling clothes of the Christ child. The boys sing from house to house on Christmas Eve. Each one carries a six-cornered star made of wood fastened to a pole. A small burning candle in the middle of the star shows through the colored paper and makes a merry jungle as the boys walk. The "Stars" are carried about in this manner until the end of the month and gifts are exchanged on New Year's Day, instead of Christmas Day.

Ukraine, the country north of the Black Sea, used to be called Little Russia. There Christmas lasts three days. There is no Christmas tree, but gifts are exchanged. In the homes a jolly family dinner is served on Christmas Day and one custom which occurs during the meal is worth mentioning. For so many years, no one knows when it began, it has been the custom to present a gift to the one on the table who sneezed first. It has to be a real sneeze, not make believe, nor one occasioned by aid of the pepper shaker. Why anyone should sneeze at a Christmas table is not told. But a gift of a lamb, a pig, or a calf was the reward

of a sneezer at Christmas time in this country, that is if it was the very first sneeze at the feast.

The special dish in this country is "Kontia", a raisin cake that, according to all accounts, is delicious, and about which a tender ceremony clusters. One of the children is chosen each year to carry the Kontia to table on Christmas Eve. He crosses himself three times and bows before the ikons or pictures of the saints which are lighted by candles. Then he goes outside the door and brings in some hay. Upon the hay he puts the Kontia or raisin cake, and on top of this is placed a loaf of bread. He crosses himself again three times and bows. Then all the family bow, after which each one sits down at the table and the cake is set before them.

In Italy there is no Christmas tree, instead they have a Christmas Urn, into which the gifts are placed by "Banfanta", who takes the place of Santa Claus. For several weeks before Christmas the children learn poems and songs, and on Christmas Eve, the family gathers and listens to them. Later they sit before the hearth which is filled with blazing logs or with a big Yule Log. Gifts are not given out until the twelfth night in remembrance of the arrival of the Wise Men in Bethlehem.

The Italian home has a "Presepio" as the principal feature of Christmas. This is a miniature manger scene. The evening before Christmas the Yule Log is lighted, and at dusk the "Presepio" is lit with candles. At sunset cannons boom forth, announcing that the Holy Season has begun.

Throughout Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Russia, Czechoslovakia, and in some other countries, the Christmas tree is the symbol of the season. All Christian nations celebrate, but not in the same way. Some countries observe Christmas as a religious day, others make it wholly gay. And each country mentioned has some special Christmas viands that help to make the season different. In America we have turkey and mince pie spiced with various sorts of spices and other Oriental ingredients in commemoration of the offerings made by the Wise Men of the East.

In the Eastern countries, Armenia, Syria, and Greece, lamb is the chief article of diet at Christmas. Old England gave the boar's head the place of honor at the Christmas dinner and the second place of honor in those great festivals of the Middle ages was given to the peacock, whose head was placed at one end of

the platter, its body stuffed with spices in the center of the platter and the beautiful spreading of its colored tail at the other end of the platter.

Throughout Germany, little frosted spice cakes shaped like stars and animals belong to the Christmas Eve. The children save their pennies to buy them. In France, bakeries turn out cakes in the form of animals and people and are given away to customers.

Syria, of which Palestine is a provincial State, is the birthplace of Christianity. There in the little town of Bethlehem about ten miles south of Jerusalem, Christ was born. Syria is my native land and it is appropriate at this time to mention how Christmas is observed in the Holy Land. We do not have trees or Yule Logs, nor do we exchange gifts. We do, however, extend to our fellowmen the season's greetings. At midnight of the 24th, Mass is sung in the neighborhood churches lasting till two o'clock in the morning, at the end of which the congregation remains until the priest gives the season's blessings.

A family reunion takes place on Christmas morning and a council is held to determine ways and means of celebrating the holidays which extend until New Year's Eve. The male members of the family go forth and visit the neighbors and friends while the female members remain at home to receive. On each visit the visitor extends his greetings to the hosts and receives in return the hospitality of rare wines and sweetmeats and Turkish coffee. The greetings are expressed with hopes that the receiving family may live for a good many years to come to enjoy the blessings of the Christmas festivities, that all the grievances and trespasses be forgotten and forgiven and other expressions relating to the words of Christ—"Peace on earth and good will to all men."

On a Miser

Translated from the Arabic by J. D. CARLYLE

"Hang her, a thoughtless, wasteful fool,
She scatters corn wher'er she goes"—
Quoth Hassan, angry at his mule,
That dropt a dinner to the crows.

Rubaiyat Abu-Tayeb

Translated from the Arabic

by AMIN, BEDER

ما كل ما يتمنى المرء يدركه تجري الرياح بما لا تشتهي السفن

Not all thy hopes, O Man, canst thou attain
Some few are quickly won—the rest are vain,
For favoring winds the venturing sailors pray;
Yet what they meet is calm or hurricane.

إذا غامرت في شرفٍ مرومٍ . فلا تقنع بما دون النجوم
قطعم الموت في امرٍ حقيرٍ . كقطعم الموت في امرٍ عظيمٍ

But if indeed thy soul aspires to rise,
Aim for the highest—aim beyond the skies;
The pang of death is anyhow the same—
For all the way, or half the way likewise.

تريدون ادراك المعالي رخيصةً . فلا بدّ دون الشهد من ابر النحل

If fame thou seekest, wed thyself to toil,
Divorce thy consciousness from earth's turmoil;
To rob a honeycomb is hard indeed;
A sting thou mayest expect before the spoil.

افاضل الناس اغراض لدى الزمن . يخلو من الهمّ اخلاهم من الفطن

The best of men are targets of their time—
And O, the fatal shots they meet before the climb;
Worry forsakes the ones with little sense;
They live to eat, their pleasure is sublime.

French Author Gives Views on Syria

Mlle. Alice Poulleau Defends Her Latest Book and Strikes Back at Her Critics.

Editor, THE SYRIAN WORLD

Permit me at the outset to thank you for the fairness of your review of my book, a courtesy which certain Lebanese papers did not display towards a woman in that they dealt out to me all sorts of insults and calumnies as regards my last work "In Damascus Under Bombardment."

Every journalist has the right to criticism providing it conforms to truth. Every book is subject to criticism especially if it deals with such a controversial subject as the Syrian Question. But, on the other hand, every author also has the right to vindicate his viewpoint and discuss it with those who disagree with him. This, unfortunately, I am unable to do because of the impossibility of my getting a hearing in Syria where my answers, like my book, are put under a ban, all of which is calculated to prevent me from justifying my stand. But I do hope that in America, the land of liberty, you will be good enough to publish this reply which I feel I must make to your review of my book.

You are right in your appraisal of my book as a human document on the revolutionary period in Damascus, seen in the light of a "delicate feminine sensibility." It was not meant otherwise. In part, it is neither a historical compilation, nor a report of the Foreign Office, but rather a simple note-book to which was added a brief exposé of the Syrian Question in order to enlighten on the subject the average Frenchman who has little knowledge of it.

Perhaps I would not have brought myself to the decision of publishing this personal diary, had I not been so amazed at the number of books on the affairs of Damascus published in France by people who were never in Syria and had no first-hand information coming to them from a single source—the High Commissariat. This had the result of having all the history of the Syrian revolution appearing in France colored by the mandatory

viewpoint, and, consequently, unfavorable to the Syrians.

In view of these conditions, and although French, it was indispensable that I bring on the question the testimony of an author who, *having seen*, should be given the priority of belief over those other authors who only reported what they *heard* long after the incidents took place.

In all these books referred to I found only malice and ill-will towards the Syrian people. It is apparent that the responsibility for the war is placed at the door of the Syrian people only as a means of supporting the mandatory policy, and under the mistaken belief of justifying France. The net result was the creation of a false "historical truth" which was transmitted by the press to the French people without anyone rising to correct the false impression. And this is what I wanted to do.

In the discussion of politics the victims were forgotten. Under the circumstances it became imperative for a Frenchwoman who had lived among the innocent people and was at the same time a stranger to political manoeuvres to demonstrate, according to the saying of our good king Henri, that "the worst off is not he who holds the handle of the frying pan, but he who is being fried on it."

In order to appreciate the spirit in which my book was written and, consequently, to be able to pass impartial judgment on it, it is perhaps necessary to explain the evolution of my ideas and opinions during my stay in Syria. I had gone to the country with the object of creating an educational work designed to raise the feminine standard of intellect. For that reason I was indifferent to the march of politics. I even shared the prevailing French ideas on the question of the mandate. But then a double evolution took place in me. My relations with most Frenchmen in Damascus convinced me that they were far from being drawn from our best classes, hence it hurt me to think that the Syrians formed their opinion of France based on their experience with those Frenchmen who were among them. On the other hand, I found in that circle of Syrians with which I came in contact those marks of education and culture to which I had been accustomed while in France. The result was such that while in Syria I found myself drawn nearer to the Syrians than to the French, a paradoxical situation, indeed, which explains my attitude towards the two factions.

This, also, was the cause of the revision of my ideas on the

mandate. Astonished at the mediocrity of the Frenchmen I encountered, I applied myself to a study of the politics of the mandatory administration and I discovered that it was far from conforming to the principle of liberty as we understand it in France. I could hardly believe that France could oppose the aspiration of another people to that independence which it has so persistently advocated and defended at home, while the French are eminently known for their logic. In the meantime the war broke out in Syria.

Now, whatever was the provocation, this war in my judgment was inexcusable because it could have been averted by the Mandatory Power. It was not, like our war of 1914, inevitable. I would not be French were I to accept without question the killing of our soldiers unless under extreme necessity. I have many proofs that from the outset this necessity did not exist.

All these considerations made me look upon the Syrian insurgents as true patriots fighting for their liberty not against France but against the mandate, (to which a group of Frenchmen is still opposed.) I could not, therefore, side with the Frenchmen of Syria against the Syrians. The duty of being true to one's conscience takes precedence over that of patriotism (especially if patriotism is understood in terms of hiding the shortcomings of one's countrymen.)

This is what converted me into a champion of Syria, not against France, but against the mandate at least in the manner I saw it then applied. Every reader of my book should keep this in mind that no wrong conclusions may be drawn. Unfortunately, the book appeared too late. Like Diogenes, I sought for four years a publisher who would be a *man*, without finding one. But courage is not always a masculine virtue. I finally had the book printed at my own expense.

Because of its tardy appearance, it is only with difficulty that it is expected to counteract that "historical truth" which I referred to previously and which was officially broadcast by any number of books and newspapers under subsidy. Amidst this pro-mandatory chorus, the contradictory yet isolated voice of my book can hardly be heard.

Perhaps, too, it has come a little late for the Syrians. Had it only been published at the time of the upheaval in Damascus it would have rallied all their man-power. As it happened, there was during that period an admirable unanimity of national sen-

JANUARY, 1931

27

timent reinforced by the common sharing of suffering.

Four years passed.....

Syria was torn into small factions which fought against each other without realizing that thus it was only making little of what was much. France, realizing the necessity of pursuing such a policy as that suggested by my book, reformed its Syrian policy and began to grant in degrees those liberties for which the Syrians fought in 1925. As a result, many were they among them who, having quickly forgotten they had been "insurgents," do not like my book to remind them of the fact. Personal interest is usually one of the most potent factors for the changing of one's opinion.

Nevertheless, despite the delay which I have so much deplored, the publication of this book has been to me one of the greatest joys of my life. It has given me proof of the honesty, loyalty and nobleness of France. In fact, from the hundreds of newspapers and people of distinction who received my book I have had nothing but acclaim and commendation. *In all France*, (please mark well what this means,) I have received but one reproach, that of *La Croix*, a Catholic paper which meekly reprinted the slanders of *L'Orient* of Beirut which, by the way, I have since forced to retract. On the other hand, there were any number of distinguished personages from among the people, the press, literary circles, from Parliament and even from foreign countries who congratulated me for having dared to champion the cause of France against these Frenchmen of the mandate who would in time have compromised its time-honored reputation.

Thanking you in advance for the courtesy of publishing my reply for the information of the readers of *THE SYRIAN WORLD*, I wish you to accept, sir, the assurance of my highest consideration and sincere appreciation of your work which so splendidly serves the cause of a country dear to me

ALICE POULLEAU
Member, Literary Society of
the French Provinces.

Nolay, France, Dec. 9, 1930.



Egypt

Editor's Note — This prose poem originally written in Arabic, was published by the London Graphic in its issue of November 22. The author though a resident of Egypt, is of Lebanese descent. The poem was composed at the suggestion of the Graphic's editor for their special Egypt number.

By TOUFIK MOUFARRIGE

EGYPT, gift of the Nile, the crossroad of nations, the bride of the desert, the cradle of wisdom, mother of civilization yesterday and its prey today.

The caravan of days and generations has passed her by, from the Hyksos to the Pharaohs, from Greek to Roman, Arab, Turk. Egypt has ever moulded the conqueror to her pattern. She changed nations, played with them, but herself kept changeless.

Famine, scarcity, stagnation sweep across her, then blessings rain down. In either state she stays smiling, untroubled by impoverishment, unscathed by glitter.

Her grandeur is like the waters of her Nile river—it falls and rises. Her history is a reservoir of greatness and story, brimming with glamour; her history from yesterday feeds today's glory.

The Nile hangs upon her neck and pours at her feet dominion and ever-old memories.

Not water but pure gold flows along the Nile stream. But for it, Egypt would be a desert that scorches like Sinai or the Empty Quarter.

In Egypt, none gainsay the truth "and we have created of water everything alive."

The Sphinx records how that Egypt brought forth young, and through three score centuries nourished them at a breast holding a secret which is not revealed—a secret that is the riddle of generations and ages.

The Sphinx tells nothing and does not talk; yet it speaks and is never silent.



The Sphinx and Pyramids
Imperturbable guardians of the ancient glory of Egypt

And thou, Egypt's Pyramid, temple of her immortality, sarcophagus of her kings and priests and sages —

A king desired thee, and thou wast fetched forth, a mountain of stone in lovely design, that lifts the heart with awe.

These are not stones in the Pyramid, they are tears petrified from the eyes of a poor people, to stake a tyrant's desire.

Omar beheaded thee, and thou livest a headless body. And those forty centuries resting in thy shadow, at what do they look? They gaze at Egypt, her youth, her ever-beating heart, her splendid destiny.

Egypt, mother of civilization yesterday and its daughter today! Forty hundred years watch from behind the Pyramids. The past is hers and is resplendent; the present is hers, holding work and breeding toil; but the future is God's.

ALI ZAIBAQ

(*Quicksilver*)

THE UNPARALLELED ADVENTURES OF THE
CHIEF OF POLICE OF THE CALIPH HAROUN
AL-RASHID, OF THE CITY OF BAGDAD.

Translated from the original Arabic by

SALLOUM A. MOKARZEL and THADDEUS S. DAYTON

CHAPTER V.

WHAT BEFELL QUICKSILVER IN THE ENCHANTED CITY

QUICKSILVER forthwith proceeded to the palace of the King and at his request was given a body of two thousand horsemen with which to make an immediate attack on the army of the Blacks. They sallied forth with Quicksilver at their head and assailed the camp of the Blacks under cover of darkness.

Then ensued a conflict such as can hardly be depicted, for brave met brave and the hoofs of war steeds trampled on the breasts of the fallen, and cries like thunder reached the ears of heaven.

The plain was covered with a surging, fighting multitude, weapons flittered in the darkness like flashes of lightning as swords and spears and shields clashed together. It was not long before the ground was drenched with the blood of the wounded and the dying. The brave held their ground fearless of death while the craven fled seeking safety but finding none in that terrible scene of carnage where the Judge of Death sat on his blood-stained throne mercilessly dealing out his sentences. The night was a night of woe and sorrow to the Blacks because of the heroic Quicksilver who waded through seas of blood attacking the thousands of the enemy and dealing destruction with his deadly sword.

By the time that morning dawned the battle was ended and the army of the Whites, after gathering together the vast treas-

ures and riches of the conquered Blacks, returned triumphantly to their city. Thereupon the King called his court about him and ordered the ruler of the Blacks to be brought into his presence.

The Black King was in terror and pledged himself by the most solemn oaths never again to cross the borders of the Kingdom of the Whites, whereupon he was unbound, and, together with the captives from the army, was escorted outside the city gates and set upon the road to his own country and nothing was ever heard of him thereafter.

The inhabitants of the Enchanted City spent that night in peaceful slumber. The next morning the King summoned Quicksilver and the latter related to him every detail of what had occurred at the Island of Enchantment. The King was amazed at Quicksilver's success in bringing back with him the magic box of the All-Seeing Eye, and expressed the wish that he might see it. Quicksilver thereupon went to the palace of the Princess and returned with the box which he uncovered and placed in full view of the King and all his court. All of them marveled exceedingly, and the King said:

"Verily, O Quicksilver, you have succeeded in accomplishing what no other mortal has done before. The sage who made this wonderful treasure was accustomed to carry it to the top of yonder mountain and there to sit viewing with it the whole earth which lay spread out before him with all its riches and splendors."

"If this sage did this in the olden times," replied Quicksilver, "surely we can do the same thing now, and if it please you, O mighty King, tomorrow we shall go to this same mountain and test the magic of this wonderful creation."

The next morning the King, his wazir, Quicksilver, Hassan and all the dignitaries of the kingdom proceeded to the summit of the mountain, taking with them the magic box of the All-Seeing Eye, and there, in succession, each viewed the whole world with its treasures and riches, its rivers and seas and cities, all spread out before them whichever way they turned.

Such was the King's amazement over this marvelous thing that he coveted it. They returned to the city and as night drew near he called to him his Grand Wazir and said to him secretly:

"How is it that this Egyptian comes to my country from a far-off land and takes this wonderful box of which there is no counterpart in all the earth when in reality it is my property, since it belonged to my father and my grandfather before me? It was

found in my country and surely I should be entitled to its possession. Now it is my command that you devise some means of putting Quicksilver and his companion to death so that this heritage from the great sorcerer shall be mine."

"This man Quicksilver has done to us nothing but good," answered the Wazir. "He delivered your daughter, first of all, from the Blacks, and then rescued your kingdom from these same people. Therefore it would seem to me most ungrateful to recompense him in such a way."

"If you do not obey my commands," the King replied, "I will straightway sever your head from your shoulders."

"O mighty King," responded the Wazir in terror, "it is not within our power to overcome this man by force, for swords have no effect upon him, and spears are all too short to reach him. In the morning, therefore, do you say to him: 'Arise and come with me that I may show you the wonders of this great city,' and upon his so doing take him to the enchanted fortress. Once he is within, make some excuse to retire, closing the door behind you. Then Quicksilver, and his companion, finding no way of escape, will surely die of thirst and hunger."

This counsel pleased the King exceedingly.

Now there was in that city a famous stronghold, known as the enchanted fortress, which had been built in immemorial ages past. Its only entrance was by one great door of massive iron to which there was but a single key.

Such was the place in which the King and his Wazir intended to confine Quicksilver and his companion, for there seemed no means of their escaping therefrom.

When morning came Quicksilver and Hassan repaired to the King's palace to bid him farewell, but the King insisted that before their departure they should view the wonders of his city, as their own King would no doubt inquire of them respecting it.

When the King and his Wazir, Quicksilver and his companion, finally reached the great fortress, the King said:

"Know, O my friend, that this stronghold was created by the same sorcerer who made the magic box of the All-Seeing Eye, which is now in your possession, and he embellished its interior in a manner that would bewilder the mind. If you are inclined to enter and view its marvels, I shall be glad to open its gate to you."

Quicksilver replied in the affirmative, and the King unlocked

the great door which disclosed a dark passage which the King and the Wazir hesitated to enter, expressing their fear. Quicksilver laughed and responded that he had no fear. Saying which, he passed over the threshold followed by Ibn El-Husry. Once they were within the King made a sign which caused the door to be closed. Upon perceiving this treacherous act Quicksilver cried out to the King.

"Death will be your companion here. There is no escape," answered the King as he turned the key and made his way back to his palace, overjoyed at the success of his plan.

"Such was the King's treachery," said the tale teller. "On the morrow, as we sit beneath the eternal stars, I will tell you of what came of it."

Two Arabic Gems

By DR. SALIM Y. ALKAZIN

TRUE DEATH

يا سائلي عن السبب الملحق
أهل الحياة بالاموات
هو برد يطفى حرارة طبع
وسكون يأتني على الحركات

Call him not dead who 'neath earth's friendly crust
Hath found a rest, but him whose Fires are cold,
Whose heart hath no more wonders to unfold,
And on the Way e'en stirreth not the Dust.

WEAN IT WHILE TENDER

والنفس كالطفل ان تهمله شبّ على
حب الرضاع وان تقطعه ينفطم

What of the soul? 'Tis like a nursling child—
Wean it while tender, and it will forego
Its mother's breast; neglected, it will grow
And for the nursing have a passion wild.

(This is a translation of a couplet from the "Burda", the most famous ode in the Arabic language in praise of Mohamad.)

This Young Generation!

An Editorial of AL-HODA

WHAT may be termed the extreme of ignorance is that the young generation, be they young men or young women, should presume that they are more intelligent than their parents... more learned than their parents... wiser than their parents and, in general, that they are modern while their parents are lagging helplessly behind on the road of progress. Under the circumstances it would seem that the great crime of the parents is that they toiled and suffered and underwent untold privations to support and educate and keep in good circumstances the child who thus shows them his gratitude.

Oh! how ugly are these presumptions!

Who of the young generation who can lay a just claim to being intelligent and educated can at the same time deny that he is what his parents are, that he is a "part" of them, and that if their material is inferior so also is his. There may be some fools who claim that narcissus sprouts from a lowly tube, that diamonds originate from coal. But how can we deny the logic of the situation that but for the tube and the coal there would be no fragrant flower or diamond. We may even go farther and say that but for the fertilizer the earth would not give its beautiful crops.

And what is this modernism of which the ignorant rather than the wise youth boasts?

It is in spending the night in dancing and drinking and riotous licentiousness.

It is in pretending wealth, power and influence through sheer and unpardonable vanity.

It is in being prodigal with the hard-earned savings of those "old-fashioned" parents.

It is in borrowing from this, that and the other for no legitimate and honorable purpose, but simply to indulge in reckless adventures.

* * * *

Faith to one's parents is a duty and not a favor.

The mother merges her own life into that of her child. Every mother is an example of unselfish sacrifice.

The father toils and sweats to provide both sustenance and protection for the family. And how often do parents give of their own luxuries and even of their necessities for the sake of their children. How often do the parents go almost naked to cloth their children, go hungry to feed them, go thirsty to satiate them, and sacrifice of their comfort and well-being and very often mortgage whatever property they possess to educate them. If after all this the children prove ingrates where then is our boast of human virtues!

It is the duty of the parents to provide a good education for their children until such time that the latter are fit to take up the struggle of life. Children who continue to depend on their parents after they become of working age are parasites.

Children should also realize that their parents can in no way be obligated to them. Rather, children should understand that it is their paramount duty to care for their parents even if the latter are possessed of independent means.

* * * *

Parents at times act on the mistaken notion that they would only be showing their children marks of natural affection when they let them have their way. They must realize that this policy might prove not only ruinous but perhaps tragic in that it might lead the children to laziness, continued dependence and perhaps a criminal career.

Do we not hear the remarks of spendthrift boys and flapper girls that the fault lies with their parents in that, by neglecting to train them properly, they caused them to drift into the habit of spending without earning? This, it must be admitted, may be partly true, but the spoiled child should not find therein an everlasting excuse for nursing a grudge against his parents and refusing to work.

Yes, young men. Your father may not be dressed according to the most approved fashion, but remember that he is the one who, depriving himself, made it possible for you to appear in your fashionable attire.

Yes, young lady. Your mother may not be able to dance, but she has more genuine culture than you can ever claim. She cooks, sews, mends and perhaps fasts for your sake, while you in your conceit feel ashamed of her. The truth of the matter is

that your mother is an angel while you, if you disrespect her, are nothing more nor less than a despicable imp.

Be the case what it may, the self-evident fact is that the children who disregard their obligations towards their parents are liable to disregard all other obligations of whatever nature. Nor will they be prone to have any loyalty or show honesty or practice honor. Employers should inquire carefully into the relations of parents and children, and if the latter are found dutiful and loving, then they may be trusted to fulfill their work conscientiously. But employers will beware of all young men and women who look lightly upon their filial duties and be so self-centered as to forget that which should be considered the paramount obligation in life.

From the Arabic

DESERVING OF PARADISE

An Arab of exceptional qualities of masculine pulchritude had taken for wife a woman of extreme ugliness. This came about as a result of the custom of consummating matrimonial matches without the principals seeing each other.

One day, the ugly-looking wife gazed admiringly into the face of her handsome husband and exclaimed: "The joys of Al-Jannat (Paradise) are assured us both."

"And what prompts you to such a conclusion?" demanded the astonished husband.

"Because," she said, "my virtue of gratefulness for my lot is equalled only by your virtue of resignation to yours."

ADVICE ON MATRIMONY

Said an Arab to Al-Hassan, son of Ali, "O grandson of the Prophet! Allah has given wisdom to thy house. Advise me on the qualities of the man to whom I could give my daughter in marriage." Al-Hassan replied: "Give her to a god-fearing man, for if he should come to love her he will honor her and surround her with comforts, and if he should not come to love her he will at least be merciful and tolerant of her,"

Grave Situation in Palestine

*Jewish Elections Show No Disposition to Compromise, While
Arabs' Reply to the British White Paper Reaffirms
Former Stand.*

RECENT events in Palestine point to the continuance of the bitter struggle between Arabs and Jews over mastery of the Holy Land. If anything, the British White Paper and the disappointment it has created among the two factions only tended to aggravate the situation as shown by the popular elections lately held for the Jewish-elected Assembly. The results permit of a single interpretation, which is that both the Jews and the Arabs are more determined than ever on pursuing their prescribed courses without the least hint of a compromise.

Upon the issuance of the British White Paper the world witnessed manifestations of the great indignation of Jewry over what they termed their betrayal by the British government. And if the Arabs were pleased, it was because of the comparative admission by the government of their inalienable and prior rights. But how far the British government was ready to act on its professed convictions still had to be seen. Only a short time after the issuance of the White Paper the British government showed signs of faltering in face of the formidable Jewish opposition and made some recession from the stand it had taken. This served to inspire the Arabs with still more distrust of the honesty of the British in dealing with the Palestine situation.

The Arab stand is clearly re-stated and elucidated in their latest official pronouncement on the political situation as embodied in the Arab Executive's reply to the British White Paper. This reply, according to the English Edition of the Arab newspaper Falastine, published in Jaffa, had no necessity to be delayed "owing to the uncertainty of the precise meaning of the White Paper. Not that the average reader could not understand it, but the propaganda of the Jewry obliged the British Cabinet to give new meaning to that paper. Even to this hour the Arabs are not certain whether the execution of the White Paper would not give it a new form if not new meanings. The reply of the Arab Executive, however, takes its stand upon unalterable principles and

indisputable facts, and, what is more admirable, rests independent of political interpretations and opportunist explanations...."

Reporting on the Arab reply, the Jerusalem correspondent of the New York Times, in a dispatch dated January 11, states that the Arab Executive accompanied the reply with a letter to the High Commissioner in which it asks him to transmit copies of the statement to the British Colonial Office and to the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations and then summarizes the demands from previous Arab congresses as follows:

1. Abolition of the Balfour Declaration and mandate as contradictory to the promise given by the British Government to the Arabs during the World War and as contrary to Article XXII of the covenant of the League of Nations.
2. Establishment of a government responsible to an elected representative assembly.
3. Prohibition of the sale and transfer of land owned by Arabs to non-Arabs.
4. Cessation of Jewish immigration into Palestine.

The letter says the Arabs enjoyed national, regional and municipal self-government under the Turkish régime and were fully associated with the Turks in administration of the country and urged that measures be taken to ameliorate the distress of landless Arab peasants by giving them State lands, especially in Northern Palestine, which are now farmed on an extensive scale under concessions held by wealthy Syrian and Arab groups.

If statements by the press may be taken as an indication of popular sentiment, then the temper of Palestine Arabs goes beyond the sedate phraseology of the Arab Executive's reply. *Falastine*, in its issue of December 27, shortly before the issuance of the official Arab reply to the British White Paper, thus portrays the Palestine Arabs' feelings: "****The Arab reply shall be translated into English so that the British nation, whose reputation was responsible for the Arabs' faith in the Macmohan promises, may know that the Arab allies have been wronged, maltreated and misrepresented. After all, the replies and counter replies are nothing but polemics. Nations who intend to be independent have to be self-dependent. The Arab can not plead exception. If he wants his rights he has to sacrifice for them, and if he can but sacrifice no one can rob him of the heritage which is his right."

The Jews, on the other hand, show equal determination to make England live up to the spirit and letter of the Balfour Declaration as a binding obligation. Aside from the commotion raised by Jewry all over the world to bring pressure to bear upon England, the Jews of Palestine have shown by their recent election to their special Assembly that they are as militant and uncompromising as ever. The several Jewish parties seem to differ not so much on principles as on methods; they are all agreed on aggressive Zionism and determined to carry it out. Among the Jews of Palestine there seems to be no such party as moderates.

The elections for the Jewish-elected Assembly were held throughout Palestine January 5 and indicated a victory for the Laborites who oppose the employment of Arab workers in Jewish agricultural enterprises. The Revisionists, who constitute the opposition, would even take more radical colonization measures. Before the elections, the national president of the Palestine Zionist Revolutionary party made the following statement:

"Palestine Jewry understands at last that small colonization by a handful of families yearly and immigration of a few thousand families each year is devoid of any political or even economic importance. Until now the Jewish masses believed Jewish sacrifices of money and human efforts would induce Britain to enlarge the possibilities of Jewish immigration.

"The people therefore did not believe in the Revolutionary warning that small colonization could only endanger Jewish national rights for mass colonization and mass immigration. They now recognize that they have lost all.

"Revisionists and Spanish Jews as a future majority on the Jewish National Council have decided therefore to take direct action at Geneva and Washington and in Paris and other European capitals in order to mobilize Gentile public opinion throughout the world against England's breach of its solemn obligations. We do not recognize any negotiations by Dr. Chaim Weizmann and Zionist leaders in London who are no longer authorized to act in the name of world Jewry or the Jews of Palestine. As long as the White Paper remains we shall have nothing to do with the London Government which endorsed it."

What the various Jewish political factions in Palestine stand for, as well as the reaction of the Arabs to the result of the elections, were discussed by Fakhry Bey Nashashibi, prominent Moslem and notable leader of the Arab moderate party, according

to the Jerusalem correspondent of the New York Times.

"If any hope has been entertained in the past regarding the possibility of a reconciliation with the Jews on political questions, that hope has now vanished with the victory of the extremists in the Jewish National Assembly elections," said the Arab leader.

Fakhri Bey also said that from the Arab Nationalist point of view the results of the elections should be welcome, because they proved, first, the Arab contention that the Jewish intransigent elements always gained the upper hand on important issues and prevented any suitable rapprochement being effected between the Arabs and the Jews, and secondly, that the Jews among themselves were divided as witnessed by the bickering between the Palestine Jewish Labor party and the Revisionists during the balloting. Undoubtedly, he asserted, the discussion would be carried to the Jewish Assembly, where the Laborites and the Revisionists would be at loggerheads and it would serve to show the British Government, the world at large and even the Zionist movement itself that the Zionists were in discord over methods of constituting a Jewish national home.

It was natural, he continued, that the Arabs should regard the division in the Jewish elements as advantageous to the Arab cause. The moderate Arabs, who in the past few months have observed a faint possibility of some working arrangement with the non-militant element among the Jews, now cannot envisage any *modus vivendi*, he said.

The Jewish labor organization is definitely inimical to allowing the present proportion of employment of Arab workers in Jewish orange groves to continue, as proved by incidents among the Petacs, Tikhus and Wess Zionas, as well as in other colonies, while the Revisionists are adamant in their desire for a Jewish majority in Palestine. Therefore, Fakhri Bey said, so long as both elements were in the Jewish Assembly it was impossible to accept their views as otherwise than diametrically opposed to both the economic and the political interests of the Arabs.

The Jewish Assembly election returns show the Labor party gained more than 22,000 votes, or 46 per cent of the local ballots, entitling it to about thirty-two seats, while the Revisionists, with almost 10,000 votes, will hold fourteen seats, though their position probably will be strengthened if the local Oriental Jews, with fifteen seats, join their ranks, as is anticipated.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

BINDING TRADITIONS

BEING comparatively newcomers to America, the Syrians now are going through that stage of transition which many earlier immigrant groups have passed. And for the Syrians the transition process may be harder because of their special handicaps. It must be realized that they did not come in large numbers and settle in rural districts and thus through their relative seclusion succeed in retaining those characteristics peculiar to the motherland. Thus to this day, and despite the passing of many generations, we have distinctive types in the Pennsylvania Dutch, the Louisiana French, the Wisconsin German and the Minnesota Scandinavian. Even in large cities where communities of large proportions admit of a condition of self-efficiency, we find old traditions clinging desperately and giving way only slowly. The instinct of self-preservation would seem to apply to racial traditions and native characteristics as much as to more fundamental conditions of life.

In time, to be sure, America is bound to be fused into one homogenous nation as regards language and social forms. This process may per-

mit of further acceleration now that, in addition to the influence of the public school, has come the restriction of immigration and the fusing faculty of easier contact through rapid transportation.

But there is bound to remain in every race certain native characteristics which will adhere as tenaciously as some highly revered and cherished family traditions. The descendants of certain racial stocks, giving in time more care to the study of their racial background, will come to appreciate that which is best in their heritage and cultivate rather than stifle it. Now that we are a young nation still struggling against divergent forces, there may be some overzeal in condemning all that which is "foreign". But once our homogeneity is assured in the sense of banishing from our minds all doubt and distrust of our various elements, we will cease to look upon everything imported as being "foreign" and calculated to introduce an incongruous element. As we grow we will look upon things in their true meaning and significance and welcome that which will add to our store of culture.

Viewing the situation in this

light, we must admit that the sooner we perceive the value of that which is distinctively good in our racial heritage and act to preserve and strengthen it the richer we will ultimately become. What we need, under the circumstances, is to search our soul for the exploration of its hidden treasures and try to shape our destinies along definite, systematic lines.

The Syrians are endowed with many distinctive traits worthy of preservation, not the least among which being what may be described in general terms as family cohesion and devotion. The Syrian, whether he originate from the upper reaches of Lebanon or from the plains of Syria and Palestine, is governed by the same strong traditions respecting family relations. The love of the parents for their children knows no end to sacrifice, while filial devotion may be said to be carried close to the point of ancestral worship. It is a beautiful manifestation of one of the loftiest and most constructive human virtues.

We are squarely placing the matter at the door of the younger generation because they are our logical constituents. It is to them that we wish to bring a proper appreciation of their racial heritage, and no higher or more valuable trait could be

found than our characteristic family devotion. We believe it devolves upon the children to sympathetically study those sturdy characteristics in which their parents were brought up even as on their mothers' milk, and to adopt all that they can possibly assimilate. Prompted by their steadfast love, the parents may in all reason be expected to give proper regard to those influences of modern conditions which of necessity render some of their practices impracticable and obsolete.

There are virtues that are fundamental and everlasting, more refined perhaps among some peoples than among others owing to longer adherence in practice, and these are what could and should be preserved.

The editorial of *Al-Hoda*, published elsewhere in this issue, might have been prompted by some flagrant breach of filial respect. Its scathing denunciation, however, should only prove the high indignation that such action arouses among Syrians. Although aimed at ingrate children, it carries a timely admonition to those who may be wavering in their filial obligations. Home ties are strong and sacred among Syrians, and our young generation is bound to gain ultimately by adhering to this tradition viewed and valued as one of our finest.

Readers' Forum

AGAIN THE FEDERATION

Editor, The Syrian World.

You will surely be pleased to learn that the Syrian youth of Witchita, Kansas, have decided to organize a club for the promotion of their racial interests. We are acting on the conviction that the Syrians have decided to make America their permanent home, are thinking with an American point of view, and are gradually coming to a solidarity of race consciousness. Under the circumstances we realize all the more the necessity of the Federation of Syrian Societies in the United States which you advocate and would like to receive information tending to enlighten Syrian-American youth on methods of organization so as to more effectively work together for the welfare of the rising generation.

William F. Farha.

Witchita Kansas.

ENDORSING A SUGGESTION

Editor, The Syrian World.

I have followed your recent travels abroad in Syria with the greatest pleasure and interest, especially as I had the opportunity of traveling practically the same itinerary two years after the late war. It has also been especially fortunate for me in the position of inactive participant in your travels to compare the conditions prevailing in Syria today and the conditions of a few years ago.

In closing my appreciation for your splendid endeavors, I wish to

say that I heartily endorse the suggestion of Rev. W. A. Mansur to make your travel articles available in book form.

Thomas Asa.

West Brownsville, Pa.

THE SYRIAN WORLD AND THE LIQUOR BUSINESS

Writing encouragingly and enthusiastically, Dr. C. Assid Corban of Kihikihi, New Zealand, makes the following remarks a propos of the Syrian World Corporation:

I see you have launched out into a potential corporation—a wise policy. Reminds me of the policy of the "Liquor Trade" a few years ago in N. Z. It issued shares to the public promising 10 per cent dividends. It worked very well, and at a time when the trade may have been in danger of extinction, quite a number of new enthusiasts considered its interests a little more because they were financially concerned. I have heard it said that in a certain Southern city half of the parsons took shares, which of course, is a gross exaggeration, but usefully illustrates the point. I doubt now if they will ever get prohibition in N. Z.—at least in the near future. The tide has turned the other way. All of which doesn't mean to suggest, of course, that the Syrian World is in danger of annihilation when one views this latest manoeuvre. But there's nothing like increasing the number of your propagandists. If one man like yourself has been able to do so much creditably, the magazine by all rules of the game should

survive, but it also shows how much more might be done if you get others feeling they have a finger in the pie. I rather expected when the next issue was due to find the amount oversubscribed, yet such is the nature of our folk that they often can't see a good thing when it's offered to them, or are so "cussed" and contrary that they exhibit apathy in no small degree. So I hardly expect you to go very far at the moment in raising \$25,000 if only you measure it in terms of my present subscription. Rather reminds me of the story in one of your former issues when a certain prince who made a present of a black slave to some higher dignitary. There was in the refusal of the gift a reference to the fact that there was no color worse than black, and no number smaller than one. Yet the intention may have been good.

(Editor — There can be no question as to the esteemed doctor's intention. He has shown it by an actual subscription, and ever since the appearance of the magazine has been quite active in interesting his friends in it and making numerous gifts. He may rest assured that his subscription, although limited to one unit, does not fall in the category of black slaves but rather of that of the beautiful white slave-girls noted for their accomplishments and so highly-prized by the Arabs. Nor is his gift in danger of being refused.)

AN INVITATION

Open to anyone who can afford the cost!

Editor, The Syrian World:

As a subscriber to your valued magazine in a distant land, permit me to express my admiration for the

highly educational and entertaining value of the publication. There can be no disagreement on the fact that the Syrian World is an important factor in bringing about a closer unity of the Syrian race throughout the world.

Especially do I wish to record my appreciation of the rendition into English of the fine selections of Arabic poetry, which, upon analysis, prove on a par with, if not superior to, that of any other language.

Following up the splendid work you have started to bring about unification and cooperation between the scattered Syrian communities in English-speaking countries, may we hope for a visit from you or any other racial representative to our shores? We would be particularly anxious to show Syrian-Americans the fine country which their brothers of New Zealand have adopted.

Simon Keruse.

Nelson N. Z.

AN INSPIRATION

Editor, The Syrian World:

What an inspiration to read such lofty sentiments as expressed in the sayings of G. K. Gibran and Dr. Salim Y. Alkazin! In fact the high standard maintained by The Syrian World is a credit to our people and speaks plainer than words can express of the ability of your contributors. It makes me feel proud of being a Syrian. Would that your message could be carried into every Syrian home in America that our young generation may appreciate the worth of their racial extraction.

Joseph S. Joseph.

Cleveland, Ohio.

Political Developments in Syria

SYRIA

The present political situation in Syria permits of two interpretations: either the problem is so hard of solution that those at the helm of affairs cannot see the light out of their difficulties; or that they are confident of their hold on the situation and are deliberately procrastinating for reasons of their own. The plain truth is that matters have dragged so long through the apparently dilatory tactics of M. Ponsot that many observers are admittedly at sea as to what to make of his motives.

But one of the most outspoken statements coming from a responsible source is the assertion of the Syrian correspondent of *Al-Mokatam* of Egypt that far from being at a loss for a solution of the Syrian problem, the French are deliberately introducing elements of delay to wear out the patience of the Syrians. What lends more weight to the statement is that the paper publishing it is manifestly of Nationalist sympathies, advocating complete independence for Syria on the assumption that the Syrians can and should rule themselves. That it should give expression to such a feeling as that contained in the letter of its Beirut correspondent would indicate the existence of a grave turn of affairs admitting complete mastery by the French over the situation.

Analyzing the evolution of the political problem in Syria, the correspondent makes the bold assertion that the French now are deliberately putting off the elections or the taking of any definite steps towards a

final solution because of their conviction that this is the most effective remedy for tempering the radicalism of the Syrians.

"The French High Commissariat," according to the correspondent "intends to continue the policy of procrastination which it has so far pursued in dealing with the Syrian problem and withhold from setting a definite date for the elections. By this policy it expects to temper the excesses which the various Nationalist blocs in Damascus indulged in in framing their demands. It holds the belief that the more it temporizes the more the Syrians will become weary of politics and give up the struggle. As a matter of fact, it cannot be denied that this policy has brought about the desired result in that the extreme Nationalists have somewhat moderated, and the French, scenting their advantage, are inclined to pursue it to the fullest limits."

What, in the correspondent's opinion, is uppermost in the mind of the High Commissioner is the reorganization of the political bureaus of the various Syrian States and accelerating the economic rehabilitation of the country. The first task will fully take a month, according to the correspondent, and the High Commissioner has been busily engaged at it ever since his return from France. The economic program, on the other hand, waits upon the arrival of a commission of experts which is scheduled to arrive from France sometime in February or March. Upon the findings of this economic commission will depend the inauguration of the enterprises ex-

pected to bring wealth and prosperity to the mandated territory.

From other sources it is learned that preparations for the coming elections are going apace in Damascus. Some reports would set the date of the elections as early in March, and that instructions already have been issued by the High Commissariat to prepare lists of qualified voters. In this connection it is said that the government of Sheikh Tajeddin is active in lining up its forces for the coming political struggle and that all indications are in its favor. Some minor parties, it is asserted have promised the government support, while the Nationalists are said to have been isolated and have otherwise lost hope of success due to defections in their ranks. The delay attending the definition of the new administrative policy has had the effect of disorganizing the Nationalists, it is claimed, and many of their leaders have given up the struggle in despair and decided to devote their attention to their own private affairs, long neglected. Rumor even persists that some of the Nationalist leaders have entered into negotiations with Sheikh Tajeddin, having become convinced of the futility of active resistance.

The Beirut correspondent of *Al-Bassir* another Egyptian newspaper, discussing the evolution of the political situation in Syria, makes the unqualified assertion that the French now have reached a point in their study of the Syrians that they know the Syrians better than the latter know themselves, and calls on the French to depart from the policy of experimentation and proceed to concrete action. Procrastination, he asserts, has been carried beyond reasonable limits, and it is now expected of the mandatory authorities to settle on a stable policy which would

give the country some form of assurance as to what it may expect.

Reports from Damascus indicate that government orders bearing on the coming elections required the supervisors of election districts to submit their lists of qualified electors before January 10.

So far M. Ponsot has refrained from making any official statement as to his future policy, but unusual activity has been observed at headquarters since the High Commissioner's return from France. All his political representatives in the various Syrian States were summoned to a secret conference, and upon their return to their respective posts they began to call the leading tribal and local chiefs for apparently important and confidential communications. Generally speaking, the Syrian press now reflects a spirit of expectancy not devoid of confidential hopes for a decisive and fair solution.

LEBANON

The Lebanese government is now occupied with purely administrative matters, and such as are not of a very important nature. Aside from the flurry of excitement which attended the reception of Marshal Franchet d'Espesey, who came on a tour of inspection of the mandated territory, and the unveiling of a monument in Beirut to the Syrian martyrs who were executed during the war by Jamal Pasha for their political activities for independence, the capital went about its routine of squabbles among the deputies. Somewhat of a sensation, however, was created by a certain Moslem deputy who in all earnestness introduced a bill demanding direct French administration in Lebanon and the curtailment of the native ministers' powers. This move was so radical

that it bordered on the ridiculous and it was so treated by the Representative Assembly. It transpired that the deputy in question, who happens to be a large landowner, had taken exception to some policies of the Minister of the Interior affecting taxation. The upshoot was that he showed his lack of faith in all native officials and invited complete control by the French. What lent more significance to his action was that he is normally of the party opposing the mandate.

Of the other important happenings lately reported from Lebanon is the rising up in arms of the members of the Representative Assembly against what they termed disregard of their dignity and standing in matters of procedure in official functions. On two specific occasions when the deputies were invited they were assigned places beneath numerous subordinates of the High Commissariat. And on the two occasions mentioned the deputies refused at first to attend and swallowed their pride only after earnest representations by high government officials that their action might be misconstrued as an insult to the French authorities.

A proposition was advanced to build a railroad connecting Lebanon with Palestine, but when the mandatory authorities were approached for a verification of such a project they declared they could never sanction it for the obvious reason that it would spell the ruin of the port of Beirut by diverting trade to the port of Haifa. Even under present conditions, it was explained, Beirut importers are storing goods in Alexandria for transshipment as needed, but if storage facilities were to become available nearer home the practice is liable to become general and cause severe losses to the home

port. Port interests in Beirut are controlled by French capital.

Further details on the proposed treaty between France and Lebanon, which is supposed to be the forerunner of a similar treaty to be later entered into between France and Syria, emphasize the arrangements for Lebanon's political representation abroad, by which Lebanon is to enjoy the right of maintaining political representatives not alone in Paris, but wherever there are large Lebanese colonies, especially in North and South America. During the earlier stages the Lebanese representatives will serve as attaches with French consulates or legations, but their status is to undergo a gradual modification so that in time they will become privileged to act independently. No time limit is set for this change.

The treaty further stipulates that France will use all possible influence to facilitate Lebanon's entry into membership of the League of Nations at the earliest possible opportunity.

In discussing the proposed treaty the press draws particular attention to those clauses affecting French control of the finances of the country and warns native authorities against undue concessions. The inference is that France seeks to so control fiscal management, customs regulations and development of economic enterprises as to paralyze native initiative.

As regards military affairs, France undertakes to furnish advisers to help create an independent native military force, to be used exclusively for home defense, while in case of war the Lebanese government agrees to place all its port and transportation facilities at the disposal of the French government.

About Syria and Syrians

NEW YORK SYRIANS

HELP ALLEVIATE DISTRESS

Three days of every week a long line of men may be seen forming in Washington street and extending at times deep into Rector street. The line would move slowly to St. George's Melchite church at 103 Washington street whence the men would emerge with a neatly wrapped package and a contented smile. Inquiry reveals the fact that Mgr. Bernardos Ghosn, rector of the church, distributes on each of these three days almost four hundred double sandwiches to the unemployed. It is his contribution to public charity in the present economic crisis.

Many other charitable agencies among the Syrians of New York are contributing their share to alleviate the distress. The Syrian Ladies' Aid Society this year has met the demands upon its resources splendidly, helping scores of deserving families in a sustained and silent manner.

The Syrian Junior League gave a Christmas party at the club-rooms of the American-Syrian Federation to about a hundred children and added to the cheer of entertainment substantial gifts of food and clothing.

The Syrian Chapter of St. Vincent de Paul Society attached to the Virgin Mary's Melchite church of Brooklyn gave an entertainment and dance for raising funds to help the poor under direction of the pastor, Mgr. Paul Sanky.

The Al-Kalimat Society of New York is giving a play on January 31 half of whose proceeds will be

given to the Ladies' Aid Society for local charity, while the other half will be devoted to the home for the aged which the Al-Kalimat Society maintains in Aleppo. The commendable custom of devoting the price of wreaths in funerals for some charity or public institution is growing more general among New York Syrians. While all Syrian papers are devoting liberal space to appeals for donations to charity.

Considering the situation by and large the Syrians of the United States are suffering less than the average, owing to their industry. Only the papers are raising a pitiable wail from lack of sufficient remittances.

PAPERS ON DISINFECTION

BY SYRIAN SCIENTIST

Five separate papers, representing as many stages in the science of disinfection three of which are the separate work of Dr. George Knaysi and the other two prepared in collaboration with Dr. Morris Gordon of Ithaca, N. Y., were published in the October, 1930 issue of *Infectious Diseases* and later reprinted in pamphlet form. The papers cover the whole range of disinfection in the most exhaustive scholarly treatment. Suffice it to give the titles as an indication of the wider range: 1—The development of knowledge of disinfection. 2—The manner of death of certain bacteria and yeasts when subjected to mild chemical and physical agents, 3—The taking up of iodine by yeast cells. 4—Do bacteria die logarithmically? 5—Some properties of frequency curves and their use in studies of disinfection.

SYRIAN GOLF CLUB HOLDS FIRST DINNER

It was a gay affair that the Syriamar Golf Club of New York held at the Della Robia Room of the Vanderbilt Hotel on the evening of Saturday, January 24th. This occasion, however, was not one of wielding niblicks and driving to holes. It was a purely social endeavor calculated to promote a spirit of good fellowship, cultivate a proper appreciation for the clean, healthy game of golf and help drive away the gloom and depression that seem to have taken possession of men's souls. Golfers, as a class, are incorrigible optimists, and what was seen of their buoyant spirits on this occasion proved them to be confirmed enthusiasts of the good things of life.

The dinner and the music were excellent, and the 250 attendance went at the dancing and merry-making, figuratively speaking, in their shirt sleeves. The figure applies to men, because ladies were conventionally unsleeved, and they represented a fine collection of figures. The dancing lasted until the wee hours of the morning.

The courses of entertainment were as varied and wholesome as the courses of the dinner. There were speeches and singing and music. Richard Macksoud, chairman of the entertainment committee, acted as master of ceremonies. He proved both masterly and unceremonious. Miss Elvira Halal, who was said to be headed in a bee line for the Metropolitan Opera, gave a fine exhibition of her talents. Henry Hadad, President of Syriamar, made a public profession of faith in the omnipotence of the golf mania, the fact that it desolates so many homes and creates so many so-called golf widows notwithstanding. His wife was

a patient auditor and witness. Miss Emilia Hall niece of George A. Ferris, dean of Syrian lawyers in New York, gave several well appreciated piano selections, as did her teacher and uncle the well-known composer Alexander Maloof. Gene Trabulsi led a men's quartet in a number of breezy songs.

A glance at the program is sufficient testimony to the spirit of the club and an indication of its efficient management. It tells in picture and legend the story of the evolution of golf from Adam (of blessed memory) up to our contemporary age. Judging by the chronological portrayal, it would appear that clubs and balls were wielded throughout all ages and to very good purpose. It was not before known that the club's president was a poet, but he must have been exceptionally inspired since he took up the game, as shown by the three well directed strokes, (here meaning stanzas) which may be interpreted not only as a golfer's excuse for his desertion of home but a bid to join Syriamar. They are copied from the program.

YOU DON'T PLAY GOLF

Brother, I tell you when your health
is low,

When your lively pace has become
too slow,

When lines of worry have started
to grow,

There is one thing wrong that I
want you to know...

You don't play golf.

When you reach your home on
dragging feet,

Your wife, tho smiling, you fail to
greet;

You sit at the table but cannot eat,
The thing that's wrong—I want
to repeat

You don't play golf.



Miss Elvira Halal, gifted young Syrian singer

If at length you take to the green
and sky
And count your strokes, where'er
you lie
And watch them mounting hundreds
high;
You try to improve, but the more
you try
The more you dub, the more you
sigh...

Don't swear my friend — don't
wonder why

You don't play golf.

—Henry Hadad

LOS ANGELES SOCIETY GIVES BENEFIT DANCE

The Syrian Young Men's Society of Los Angeles California, held a Benefit Charity Dance on December 19 the proceeds of which were de-

voted to help Syrian families in need in and around Los Angeles during the Christmas season. Although the admission was set at 50c voluntary donations of money, clothing and food were expected to swell the total of the charity fund and otherwise provide comfort and cheer to the needy.

FORMER U. S. CONSUL IN SYRIA DIES

William Stanley Hollis, former American consul in Syria during the World War, died at his home in Chevy Chase, Md., at the age of 66, following a stroke.

Through the courage and resourcefulness of Mr. Hollis thousands of refugees who were fleeing the Turks were aided in their escape from the

country. He was also charged at that time with the protection of allied subjects and interests.

At the end of the war he was detailed to duty in London, and was later transferred to Lisbon where he served for seven years.

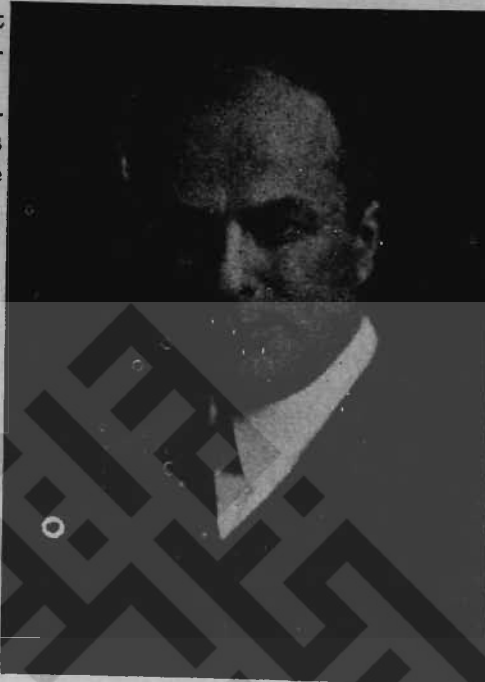
MALOOF PLAYS FOR EINSTEIN AND TAGORE

(From the Musical Courier, New York, January 3, 1931.)

Alexander Maloof, one of New York's well known musicians, was soloist at the Ritz Carlton Hotel on December 7 for the New History Society at a special reception given in honor of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, the poet and philosopher. The affair was sponsored by Louis Stuyvesant Chanler, former Lieutenant Governor of New York State, and Mrs. Chanler.

Mr. Maloof's piano playing won instant recognition especially when he played his own Rhapsody Orientale. This number is an original composition and he performed it in a manner which convinced his audience immediately of his qualifications as pianist and composer. After Tagore's entrance, Mme. Fedora Kurban, a soprano, sang a song composed by Mr. Maloof for the occasion. The music was set to a poem by Tagore, and after Mme. Kurban's rendition the original manuscript was presented to Tagore by the composer. The famous poet was deeply touched.

Mr. Maloof's playing at Tagore's reception was so enthusiastically received by the large audience that the New History Society re-engaged him to play at the reception given in honor of Prof. Albert Einstein, December 14, in the grand ballroom of the Ritz Carlton Hotel. His play-



Prof. Alexander Maloof

ing again was well received. It was on this occasion that Einstein delivered his first speech in America, the subject of which was world peace.

Mr. Maloof has done considerable concert work of late, and at one of his concerts given for the N. Y. Tribune Fresh Air Fund at the Marks Memorial Auditorium, he played before a large Dutchess County audience the Twelfth Hungarian Rhapsody by Liszt, also the second and the Rondo Capriccio (Mendelssohn) and several Chopin numbers, all of which were well received and warmly praised by the press.

Mr. Maloof is also widely known as a conductor, having done considerable radio work for the National Broadcasting Co. and the Bamberger Symphony Orchestra over WOR with success. He has also made records for the Victor Company and some piano recordings for the Duo-Art.

This talented musician needs no

introduction to the musical world whenever Oriental music is mentioned, as he is recognized as one of its foremost exponents in America, having written several volumes of this kind of music and having perfected this type to the extent that it is sought after by large symphony orchestras and well-known conductors. He wrote the music to the Oriental Ballet performed by Adolf Bohm and the music for the late Rochanaia's Oriental dances. These numbers were played at Carnegie Hall by the New York Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Walter Damrosch. However, Mr. Maloof does not confine his composition to Oriental music only, as he has to his credit many Occidental compositions, one especially well known entitled, *For Thee America*, a national anthem endorsed by Mr. Damrosch and other well-known celebrities. This anthem was officially adopted by the New York Board of Education and also in other cities in America and is sung daily at many of the public schools throughout the United States.

were apprehended in Syrian territory.

Now Mr. Crane has sailed from New York on January 23 to visit King Ibn Saoud of Al-Hijaz whom he characterizes as the "most important man in the Arab world since the time of Mohammed."

Mr. Crane is also the friend of Imam Yahya of Al-Yaman to whom he has made lately a gift of a modern bridge to be erected in a pass on the road leading to the capital San'a.

From Arabia Mr. Crane will proceed to China where press dispatches report that he has been appointed honorary political adviser to the Nanking government. His first connection with Far Eastern affairs was in 1908 when he was named by President Taft Minister to China. At a stop-off in Chicago en route to China a speech he made angered Japan, and he was recalled before sailing. Later he joined the Democratic party and was named Minister to Peking by President Wilson.

For many years Mr. Crane has contributed generously to various philanthropies in China.

CRANE SAILS TO VISIT KING IBN SAOUD

Charles R. Crane and his movements will ever be a subject of interest to Syrians because of his own great interest in them and in Arabic-speaking countries and Eastern peoples in general. It will be recalled that this wealthy and philanthropic American had a memorable experience with the French authorities in Syria in 1923 when he was accused of having indirectly incited the Syrians to revolution. It was erroneously reported at the time that he had been court-martialed and sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment if he

AL-YAMAN SHOWN IN MOTION PICTURE

Al-Yaman, an independent country along the southwestern coast of the Arabian Peninsula now ruled by Al-Imam Yahya, has for the first time on record been shown in motion pictures. This has been made possible through the enterprise of a Soviet-German Commission which obtained a special permit from Al-Imam for the purpose.

As a film of exploration and travel, Al-Yaman should hold forth special interest particularly to those interested in Arabia. It is being

shown by the R. K. O. Corporation at the Cameo Theatre. New York.

Reading Rihani's latest book "Arabian Peak and Desert," dealing particularly with Al-Yaman, one gets a vivid impression of this little frequented part of Arabia. But the impression is naturally greatly enhanced by the motion picture scenes. The architectural beauty of the dwellings of Sana, the capital, is fully demonstrated.

Only in the sense that music is given with the pictorial presentation may Al-Yaman be called a talking picture. An attempt was made to introduce Oriental tunes as accompaniment, but the effort falls short of expectation. The value of the film rests solely on its pictorial merits, which are considerable.

INSTALLING WIRELESS IN ARABIAN DESERT

Press dispatches from London on January 6 stated that a contract had just been signed between King Ibn Saoud and the Marconi company for fifteen wireless stations, which will link every important centre in the joint kingdom of Hedjaz and Nejd. Within eighteen months it will be possible to flash instantaneous messages from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf across the desert which Colonel T. E. Lawrence took weeks to cross during the World War.

Even the holy city of Mecca will have its wireless telephone and telegraph. Within the sacred precincts, where none but believers may enter, a Mohammedan engineer will be placed in charge of installing the powerful receiving and transmitting apparatus.

The dispatch further stated that the King has also ordered four portable sets, fixed on motor trucks,

so he can keep in constant touch with his capitals, Mecca and Riyadh, during the journeys into the desert.

Commenting editorially on this development, the New York Times, after referring to the hardships undergone by Doughty and Lawrence in their wanderings in the desert, gives expression to the following friendly sentiment:

"And now what was the solitude is to become audible and is also to speak in its own language to the rest of the world. Even the sacred city, which only believers are permitted to enter, may hear giaour voices. Across the stretches of desert music will sing to villages and walled towns that have sat solitary and voiceless by the water of oases in the midst of a land of 'rocky lava drifts girt in by savage crater peaks.' May their own voices be strong enough to reach our shores and let us share with them the charms of the vast desert. If another wish were to be added, it would be that we might hear voices that have spoken there in the ages past, evoked from its long silent ether."

IRAQ ENTERING INTO FAMILY OF NATIONS

A wireless dispatch to the New York Times from Baghdad on Jan. 23 announced that the Iraqi government had just adopted a resolution authorizing King Feisal to sign the Iraqi-Anglo-American treaty and protocol which were concluded January 9.

The treaty embodies an acknowledgment by the United States of special relations between Great Britain and Iraq. Under the treaty American citizens are to enjoy all rights given to citizens of members

of the League of Nations, while the United States also agrees to suspend capitulatory rights which are not granted now to any League member. Article III authorizes Americans to hold property in Iraq in accordance with international law, without any preference or concession over other powers.

The protocol acknowledges that Iraq has the right of eminent domain. Religious liberty is guaranteed to Americans as well as all other foreigners, while Iraq maintains the right to apply laws for the maintenance of public order, security and the like to all American institutions in the country.

One of the most important articles of the treaty stipulates that, although the relations established between the United States and Iraq under this treaty are based on the special relations between Iraq and Britain, any modification introduced into the latter's relations will not affect America's rights unless acknowledged and approved by her.

The treaty is to terminate when the special relations between Iraq and Britain end which will come about when Iraq joins the League of Nations next year, thus abrogating the triple treaty and requiring negotiations between the United States and Iraq for a new agreement.

RICH DISCOVERY OF GREEK ART IN SYRIA

What is considered the most important archaeological discovery in Syria of Greek colonial architecture has just been made at Alexandretta, which used to be the main port of Syria in the time of Alexander the Great, according to a wireless dispatch from Beirut to the New York Times dated Jan. 24.

Pere Boulos Shammas Kaldans, a native Syrian priest, working independently, uncovered a magnificent Greek palace in excellent condition, dating back to the fifth century B. C. Several compartments and corridors shed new light on the life, customs and culture of ancient Greek aristocrats.

The first room, which was named after Hercules, contains a statue of this Greek god handing a wand to Mercury, who is standing near by. The same chamber contains a large porcelain bath with water pipes leading to it. In the middle of this bath is a tall fountain encircled by pillars which have been dislodged from their original position, probably owing to an earthquake. Apparently this "Hercules room" was a luxurious bathroom for a noble Greek family living in ancient Syria.

In the southern part of the room was found a mosaic portico of a beautiful design, while near by was a shattered statue of a man and woman.

Two other rooms lead off this chamber, one containing a statue of a goddess, bearing a legible inscription in ancient Greek, "Aritotha the First." Facing the statue is a fountain constructed in mosaic. The second room contains a bust of Archelaus, hero of the Greek wars, bearing an inscription in this name.

Another room has a statue of Cupid with his two wings intact, bearing bow and arrows. This room was named after the bird of paradise which with a pomegranate tree, form a statuary group in the middle of the room. The same chamber also contains a statue of an ancient plower, as well as a statue of Nineveh, builder of the old Syrian city of the same name.

Another room contains a splendid statue of the sea god Poseidon, car-

rying a serpent and trident, while to the left Cupid rides a dolphin, at the same time extracting a red fish from the ocean.

Among other discoveries were a considerable number of coins, chandeliers, porcelain jars and earthenware still bearing the trade-mark of the manufacturers, while bronze candlesticks cast in one piece were also found.

Probably the most outstanding find of this marvelous collection is a representation of a terrestrial globe spinning on its axis, with both north and south poles clearly shown.

The French authorities have placed the excavations under a very strict guard.

SYRIANS OF BOSTON JOIN IMMIGRATION PROTEST

The proposal to halt immigration into the United States entirely for periods of from two to five years prompted leaders of various racial groups in Boston to hold a meeting of protest and communicate their disapproval to Congress.

Greeks, Italians, Jews and Syrians were represented at the meeting which was held on December 13 and reported by the Boston Herald of that date. The spokesman for the Syrians was Elias F. Shamon, an attorney and president of the Massachusetts Syrian Association of American Citizens. The Boston paper reported him as having summed up the objections to the proposed complete ban on immigration as follows:

Only 123 Syrians are permitted to enter the United States yearly, and to pass the proposed measure would do a great injustice to a land which has been sorely neglected by the so-called ethnologists set up by

Congress to determine the nationality of people in this country under the national origin act.

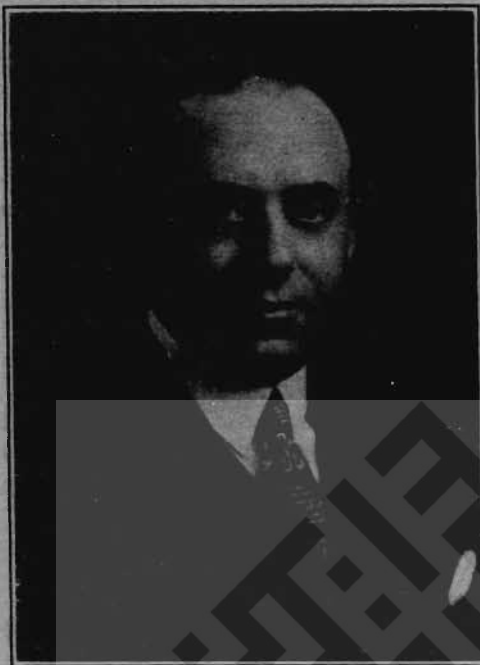
The present protective law is sufficient, and to pass an act of complete annihilation of immigration will be interpreted by the world not as a protective measure, not as an aid in the interests of ameliorating economic conditions, but rather will be viewed, and rightly so, in the light of the vindictive and acrimonious proponent of the national origin act, as more fuel added to the fire which preceded the welding of that act.

SYRIAN-AMERICAN BANK PROJECT MEETS SNAG

The Beirut papers of December report that the project of the Syrian-American Bank which had started with great promise has been temporarily discontinued owing to differences among the organizers.

The principal mover in this enterprise had been Mr. Paul Knabenshue, now American consul at Jerusalem and for many years previously stationed at Beirut. He was in America last year in the interest of enlisting the support of American financiers for the proposed institution. It was reported at the time that he had succeeded in raising in New York a large proportion of the necessary one-million capital.

The principal cause of disagreement, according to reports, is that Mr. Knabenshue insisted upon receiving 5 per cent. of the capital investment as his commission for organizing the bank, to which the Syrian stockholders objected, and upon finally breaking with Mr. Knabenshue they entered into direct communication with American capitalists for a new basis of understanding.



George C. Dagher
Popular Political Leader

REPUBLICAN CLUB TO HONOR DAGHER

It is a pleasure to note the continuous rise of our countryman George C. Dagher in esteem and popularity.

The Brooklyn Times reports that members of the 1st A. D. Republican Organization, of which George C. Dagher is leader and executive member, are making plans for their 21st annual ball to be given at the Elks' Club on Boerum Pl., Tuesday night, Feb. 10.

It will mark the first ball under the leadership of Dagher. continues the paper, and because of his successful bringing together of the various factions which existed prior to his assuming the leadership role, his friends have designated the event as "Dagher Night" in honor of the leader.

The annual ball has always drawn many prominent persons from Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens.

FAR ROCKAWAY MERCHANTS HONOR SYRIAN MEMBER

The civic zeal of A. J. Tannous, prominent Syrian merchant of Far Rockaway, N. Y., has so impressed members of the local Chamber of Commerce that they gave a banquet in his honor which was held at the principal local hotel the latter part of November and was attended by over a hundred representative business men.

Mr. Tannous was chairman of the Dollar Day Committee whose activities under his leadership were attended with exceptional success. He was presented with a silver cigarette case as a token of the business men's appreciation.

SYRIAN BOY'S BRAVERY HAS TRAGIC RESULT

On the afternoon of December 8 a hold-up man entered the grocery store of a Syrian, Thomas Rizk in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in the guise of a customer and when the proprietor was off his guard whipped a gun and ordered him to hold up his hands. Rizk complied and the robber was about to rifle the cash register when Rizk's son, a lad of nine, entered the store and quickly realizing the situation picked up a butcher's knife to attack the robber in defense of his father. The robber, thwarted in his designs, fired a shot at the father and fled the store. The shot proved fatal and the little hero was overcome with grief.