

OCTOBER, 1951

The SYRIAN WORLD



TWO CITIES, TWO WORLDS!

HABIB I. KATIBAH

A NEW POETRY DEPARTMENT

Edited by BARBARA YOUNG

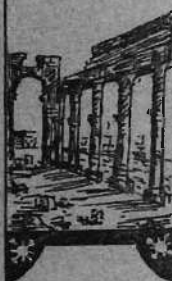
WHAT THE SYRIAN WORLD REPRESENTS
AN EDITORIAL

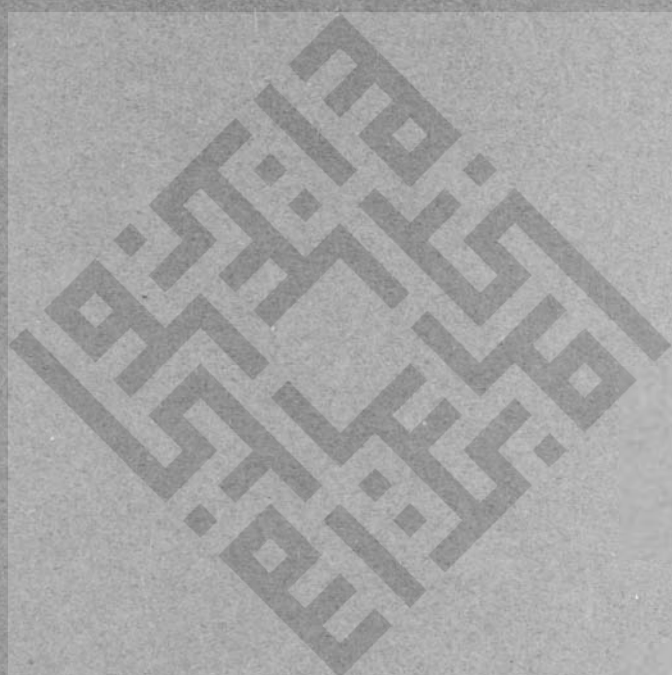
CHILD MARRIAGES IN AMERICA AND IN
ARABIA and OTHER COMMENTS

THE MYSTERY OF AORNHOLT
THOMAS ASA

A TRUE ARABIAN TALE

THE COPY 50c





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The Syrian World

SALLOUM A. MOKARZEL, Editor.

VOL. VI. NO. 2

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Two Cities, Two Worlds!

By HABIB I. KATIBAH

IT IS only about ninety miles from Beirut to Damascus, going in a slight southeast inclination across a maritime plain, two chains of mountains and a narrow valley between. In the days of muleteers, it required over four days to cross from one city to the other, with many stops between for the rest of riders and mounts alike. Then the diligence coach with its two teams of four horses harnessed a-tandem came, and the distance was shortened to a day. The diligence was so prompt with its service that Syrian peasants in villages along the newly laid route set their watches by its stops, and horses were changed more than once to keep up the brisk pace. Again progress clipped a new record of speed when in the early sixties the present narrow-gauge railway connected the newly-developed port of Beirut with the Syrian metropolis in the interior. And today, keeping abreast with time, Fords, Chevrolets, Hudsons and Dodges whizz by in both directions along a macadamized, asphalted, modern traffic road, making it possible for a busy merchant of Beirut to keep a business engagement in Damascus and return home for supper before the sun has set in the Mediterranean.

It is but a four-hour ride between Beirut and Damascus, but a world of ideas and traditions separates them. Sometimes one thinks that they are in two separate worlds. Certainly, these two cities differ in temperament and traditional associations more than New York and Los Angeles, three thousand miles across the continent of the United States, or New York and Houston, Texas, or Jacksonville, Florida. They differ more than New York and New Orleans

which in point of history belong to two different civilizations.

In spite of all its Arabic blood, and the infiltration of Arabic civilization and culture, Beirut is more of a Western city, a Western colony on the coast of the Mediterranean. And Damascus, in spite of all modern influences and invasions, has remained Oriental to the core, perhaps the most typically Arabian city in the world today, a stronghold of Semitic, Moslem culture and civilization that has persistently resisted capitulation to the West.

You have only to consider the location of these two cities and reflect a little on their histories to understand this great spiritual chasm that seems to separate them.

Beirut is a seaport on the Mediterranean sea, a direct descendant of a Phoenician city that, for a considerable period of time, was a Greek colony. From the middle of the 3rd Century A.D. a law school flourished in Beirut which became famous throughout the Roman World, and from which some of the most distinguished legal minds of the age came forth. Itself on Syrian, Semitic soil Beirut had its face turned outward towards the azure sea, and its associations were those of all sea-faring folks, cosmopolitan and xenophile.

But of Damascus one thinks in different terms and its mention gives rise to other associations and memories. It is quite significant that while Beirut can hardly name half a dozen remains of Arabian, Islamic antiquity, Damascus, the city of delight, is replete with them. It ranks perhaps first among the Islamic cities for the richness of its historic Islamic sites and monuments, perhaps only out-rivalled by Baghdad, the City of Peace and ancient capital of Haroun al-Raschid. To the single mosque of any prominence in Beirut, the Omari mosque, you could name a score of mosques in Damascus that are hoary with historic traditions and that enshrine the bones of men whose names were boldly emblazoned on the pages of Islamic history. One immediately thinks of the Umayyad mosque, on the site of which, it is claimed, Khalid Ibn Al-Walid and Abu Ubeida Al-Jarrah, the Moslem invaders of Damascus, met, and on the Western Wall of which one can still read the names of Abu-Bakr, Omar, Uthman and Ali, the first four caliphs of Islam. It was in this same mosque that the famous Moslem theologian, Al-Ghazzali, cloistered himself to write a large part of his monumental work, the *Revivification of the Sciences of Religion*.

Not less interesting are the tombs and mausoleums of this ancient capital of the Umayyads, the only truly Arabic dynasty of Islam, even if not truly Islamic. Here we come across the tomb of

QUESTIONS ANSWERED IN THIS ARTICLE

Why is Beirut a city of the West while Damascus, less than one hundred miles away, remains the most typically Oriental center extant?

Do the people of Beirut adopt Western standards through affectation?

Is the French official's observation about the inherent difference between Beirut and Damascus true?

What has helped to make Beirut the cultural center of the Near East?

Abu Ubeida himself, of Bilal al-Habashi, the muezzin of the Prophet Mohammad, of Fatima, the Prophet's own daughter, of the great Saladdin and his brother Nur-ud-Din, to mention but a few at random. The mausoleum under which the remains of Nur-ud-Din rest is about midway in the Bazaar of Clothes, (Suq al-Khayyat) a narrow canopied street joining al-Hamidiyyah with the Street Called Straight, (Suq al-Tawil), which is said to be no less than six hundred years old in its present condition.

It is only natural for a city which from ages immemorial has been the metropolis of Syria to be so rich in historic associations. To many Westerners Damascus is the city where St. Paul was converted to Christianity, and to the present day if you go there you may be shown the very spot of that historic conversion, the Church of Hananyia in the Bab-Tuma quarter, built over the supposed site of the House of Ananias, who received St. Paul and baptized him after his historic journey from Jerusalem to Damascus. And long before that, Damascus was the capital of Naaman the Syrian and other Aramean kings mentioned in the Bible. Greeks and Romans undoubtedly dominated this city as they did others of Syria, but it is highly doubtful that Damascus, for any appreciable length of time, divested itself of its Semitic character or adopted the ways of the Gentiles and Franks from across the Mediterranean.

Preeminently, perhaps, Damascus has been the oasis of the Syrian Desert, the magnificent, luxurious haven of the weary bedouin shepherd or tradesman who crosses the arid wilderness of Syria "on the palm of the Compassionate" in pursuit of his share of Al-



Courtyard of the Umayyad Mosque, Center of Islamic Influence that has Made Damascus Typically Arabian

OCTOBER, 1931



Beirut "Has its Face Outward Towards the Azure Sea, More a City of the West Than of the East."

lah's boon. No wonder he calls it his earthly paradise, and whoever named it the City of Delight must have been a bedouin himself or one speaking the longing of his hungry, thirsty heart.

And today Damascus is still the bedouin's paradise and home. You see him strutting proudly in its streets, in his outlandish garb, or sipping his cup of coffee in one of its numerous cafes as if he were as much at home as in his tent under the star-spangled sky of his desert domain. Rarely do you find a bedouin in Beirut, and whenever you spot him he looks so dejected and homesick, lost in a foreign city with those ways and manners he is hopelessly unfamiliar.

The first time I was vividly struck with the marked contrast between the people of Beirut and those of Damascus was on my last visit. I was walking with a friend of mine in one of the streets of Beirut when a typically Beirutian Moslem, with an old fashioned shirwal and shawl girdle, approached us and asked us for the correct time. It is so customary for the old people of Damascus and the interior of Syria to run their watches according to "Arabic time", which is calculated on the basis of sunset, instead of the meridian. And wishing to accomodate the gentleman, whom I assumed to be old-fashioned and "Arabic" in sentiments and traditions, I asked him whether he wanted the "Arabic" or "Franji" time. To my surprise and amusement he blurted out in his Beirutian brash and frank manner:

"Blankety, blankety blank Arabic time! Who cares for Arabic time nowadays!"

Yet this Beirutian, and many thousands like him of whom we know, may be as ardent a nationalist as you may find in all of Damascus. And you can count many Damascene Moslems, with their turbans and Kimbazes and all the appearances and appurtenances of Arabic traditions, who are more lukewarm about "nationalism" than any of the Christian inhabitants of Beirut, and some of whom are positively Francophile. But the exception here does not prove the rule, which, in this case, is that the great majority of the Beirutian Moslems, or at least a considerable part of them, favour a policy of cooperation and understanding with the French. When I first arrived at Beirut three summers ago it was election time, and Dr. Halim Qaddurah, a notable modern Moslem, had adopted a platform urging the Moslems of his city to drop the policy of intransigence to the French and try to come to some understanding with the mandated authorities guaranteeing the political rights of

the Moslem population. Dr. Qaddurah won, and his nationalist opponent, Arif al-Nimaani, lost.

The point which I wish to make here, however, is not whether the inhabitants of Damascus or Beirut are more nationalists, but that even Beirutian nationalists have more of a Western atmosphere about them than Damascene Francophiles, and more sympathy with Western ways and methods. In their manners, conversations and even mental habits you catch Beirutians adopting the Western attitude, interest and point of view. To casual Westerners, and particularly tourists, this is hastily noted down as "aping," and creates a reaction of disgust and revulsion against "imitators of the West." Perhaps that is what a French official of the High Commissariat at Beirut had in mind when he replied to my question: "Which do you like better, Beirut or Damascus?" Waving his hand in a characteristic French gesture he said.

"Beirut! Bah! Beirut has no soul, but Damascus, ah! There is a city for you!"

But what this French officer and other transient Western observers forget, or lack the sympathy and patience to observe, is that this "Westernization" of Beirutians is most often not affected by any means, and comes to them by right of historic descent as much as to any dweller on the banks of the Seine or Thames.

Beirut is not an Oriental city imitating the West. On the contrary, it is a Western city with Western traditions and associations which has never completely been Orientalized. It is the outpost of Arabian culture and civilization on the Mediterranean, one of many such outposts, but certainly the most influential and important.

Long, long ago, a little less than a century before its invasion by its Moslem conquerors, after Beirut was destroyed by a disastrous earthquake and tidal waves, a native poet lamented it in a touching poem of classical beauty. The poem was in Greek, the language undoubtedly familiar to his fellow citizens. But more significant than the language are the terms in which this disconsolate poet describes his native city in ruins, and the classical associations that were uppermost in his mind.

"Here am I," he pictured Beirut as moaning, "the unhappy city, lying in ruins, my citizens dead men. . . . The fire-God destroyed me after the shock of the earth-shaker (Poseidon). . . . Where is Aphrodite, *guardian of the city*, that she may look upon the shelterless haunt of the dead, once the abode of the graces? A tomb of tombless men is the city; under whose ashes we lie; *Beroe's thousands*, . . . Sailor, stay not thy vessel's course for me, nor lower

thy sails. . . . To some other place free of sorrow shalt thou urge with sounding ear thy advancing bark!"

And now as Beirut's sad disaster which rocked the city to its foundations and destroyed most of its inhabitants has become a distant memory of the past, and after all the vicissitudes of fire and sword through which it passed, one wonders if Beirut has not always risen from its ashes with its heart on the sea and what lies beyond it. Like Aphrodite herself, the ancient matron goddess of this city, Beirut is born and reborn from the sea foam. And perhaps it is not an accident, nor because it was the first city at which they stopped, that missionaries of all descriptions and convictions chose Beirut for their base of operation, spreading Western culture and civilization with their gospel message and sectarian doctrines throughout Syria and the Near East. That is why today Beirut is the cultural metropolis of Syria, and the most congenial city in the Near East for one with a cosmopolitan mind and a international point of view.

Beirut may be a colorless city, lacking the Oriental glamour of Damascus, it may be even a city without a soul, but it is a city with a big and receptive heart!

A PRECOCIOUS ARAB CHILD

THE uncanny precocity of Ar-Rakkadh, when still four-year's old, reached the hearing of Haroun Al-Raschid who commanded that he be brought before him. As reported by contemporary Arab chroniclers the conversation ran as follows:

Al-Raschid: "What would you have as my gift to you?"

Boy Prodigy: "Your valued counsel, as with it I would gain the blessings of both this earth and the hereafter."

Al-Raschid: (After having ordered a pile of gold pieces and a pile of silver pieces to be placed before the child) "Choose that which you value most."

Boy Prodigy: "I value most the condescension of the Prince of the Faithful, but since it is his command, I shall choose these", and he grabbed at the gold pile.

The great caliph was extremely pleased and amused, and ordered that the boy be included in his household.

News and Views

By A STAFF OBSERVER

CHILD MARRIAGES

AN AMERICAN woman missionary in Arabia was reported in the daily papers of Sept. 28 as having told a congregation of the Reformed Church that child marriages form the chief problem with which the Christian educator of girls in Arabia must contend. "It is not at all unusual," she was quoted as saying, "for the school routine to be disrupted by the appearance of an angry husband of twenty-five in search of his 10-year old wife."

Equally interesting and significant was the statement in the following paragraph of the report that the American missionary lady in question "had organized one of the two girls' schools operated by the Reformed Church in Arabia and has seen it grow from a venture begun on a capital of \$35, with a student body of nine, to a flourishing institution."

The purpose of the missionary lady is obvious and it would appear futile to comment on it. She was drawing a picture of social conditions that would appeal to the Christian spirit of the sponsors of her project—those who hold the purse-strings. For had it not been for such representations how could she have developed a flourishing institution out of a venture whose initial capital was \$35! One may also venture the opinion that the Christian lady did not tell her audience anything that would reflect the brighter side of her missionary field. Otherwise they would cease to be interested in contributing towards civilizing a savage people!

Oddly enough there was published, also in the metropolitan press, and almost simultaneously, a report by Rev. Thomas A. Little of Yonkers, N.Y., wherein the assertion is made that "*of 261 child marriages in New York City forty-one were married before they reached the age of eleven years.*" The learned divine leaves no room for ambiguity. The children were still ten years' old.

There were other important statements in the report of the Rev. Little which indicate the urgent need for the application of

some missionary zeal right here at home. "In some of the homes I have visited," he asserted, "mothers of school children living in close proximity to churches of all denominations have actually confessed their total ignorance of prayer, saying that they had never heard of it before, and in these United States there are 28,000,000 boys and girls without any church affiliations."

This reminds the writer of having read some few years ago of an American missionary who returned from China to preach in New York "because the need here was much more urgent." Other missionaries in different fields, including Syria, might do well to follow his example.

And speaking of Syria, there was perhaps no more wholesome move than that of changing the name of the Syrian Protestant College to that of the American University of Beirut and severing the management from missionary connections. President Bayard Dodge proved himself a man of true wisdom and foresight by effecting this change. Now whenever the University appeals for funds in America it does so on the plain representation of helping the cause of education and none other. It has intrenched itself more strongly in the hearts of the Syrians by these methods.

The subjects of social and marital relations as they exist here and abroad is rich field for comment, especially where the American missionary lady refers to the twenty-five year old Arab husband who comes to claim his ten-year-old wife. She naturally wants to infer that the disparity in age between husband and wife is such as to be unheard of except in extremely so-called backward countries. But she and her gullible audience fail to take into account the many so-called "daddies" in America and Europe who look upon age only as an imaginary line. Also our return to "paganism" is probably something unheard of by the good Christian American missionary lady. No, we here are perfect and the people of the lands where civilization flourished when Europe was in darkness and America had not yet been discovered are all savages! But of this more later.

STARVATION IN THE U.S.A.

SPEAKING of misrepresentation, misinformation, misapplication and all the other "mis-es" of similar termination that have in them not only the elements of comedy but border on the ridiculous.

A certain correspondent in Syria wrote to ask lately whether it was true that one thousand persons died in the United States every day of starvation, and whether the United States had gone bankrupt because the Bank of United States was forced to close its doors. We who live in the United States make light of such rumors because we know how far they are from being true. But can we not see how people abroad take them seriously and believe them?

The same should hold true of exaggerated reports reaching us from abroad. We hear of a great deal of distress and misery in Syria; we hear that a rape or murder was committed; we hear that a child was abducted and we conclude that the population is in danger of extermination or that it is lawless, savage and degenerate. The trouble is that we are misinformed and the parties circulating such reports are either ignorant or deliberately malignant. We have no more right to accuse all the people of France of being cruel and murderous because one Frenchman committed a ghastly murder by cutting the body of his victim and shipping it by express in a trunk than to form a similar opinion of the people of the United States, or of the people of Chicago, for that matter, because one gang lined up some members of a rival gang against a wall and riddled them with machine guns. It is possible for such things to happen anywhere, anytime, but it is a form of stupidity, indeed, to take singular instances of this nature as the standard of conduct of a whole people.

Syrians themselves are not free from blame in spreading false information and impressions about their country and people. There are some among them who capitalize on the ignorance of the American public to the detriment of their own kind. They go about masquerading as actors of Biblical scenes and dress in outlandish styles which they represent as the accepted form of dress in their country. Some of them go to the extent of portraying Syrian home life as being very primitive and crude, citing the one illustration that Syrians use their fingers in lieu of forks and spoons in breaking their fast, but no attempt is made to give an authentic interpretation of the custom. The deduction is that Syrians who still use such crude methods of eating are benighted, to use a mild term.

There is another phase of the story. A professor from one of the principal American universities who had spent considerable time in Syria, together with a Syrian professor who is also connected with another of the principal universities, were guests on a certain occasion at this writer's house. Be it said to the credit of the guests that they felt completely at home and sat on the floor and partook of

food with their fingers, with the ready explanation that they could get more relaxation by stretching their limbs on rugs upon the floor, while eating with their hands, using the native thin, pliable Syrian bread, was more hygienic than the use of knives and forks and much more delightful. There was no question of one being savage simply because he was natural.

There is a whole world between the two points of view.

UM KALTHOUM IN SYRIA

UM! What a great time Um Kalthoum must have had during the few weeks she spent in Syria this last summer. She created a near-riot wherever she appeared in Damascus, Beirut or Aleppo. She certainly proved herself popular and, incidentally, proved many other things that were least suspected.

And, who is this Um Kalthoum? She is the Nightingale of Egypt, a girl still in her early twenties who was discovered but a few seasons ago. She is said to have been an itinerant singer who performed anywhere, anytime, for a pittance. Now, she is *the* singer par excellence of the Arabic-speaking world.

An enterprising impresario of Beirut induced her to visit Syria this summer under contract for twelve concerts. Yes, *induced* is right, for he is said to have had considerable difficulty in persuading her to sign on the dotted line for twelve hundred pounds for each concert. Lest we create a false impression, we hasten to specify that the sum is in Syrian pounds, and not Sterling. Nevertheless the twelve hundred Syrian pounds mean the round sum of 1,000 good American dollars. Not so bad for one night, on a contract of twelve nights.

What occurred exceeded the impresario's wildest expectations. There was a scramble for tickets in Beirut at one, two and three pounds for the pasteboards, and there was a riot over them in Damascus. In the latter city the police were called in order to prevent the mad admirers of the Egyptian singer from storming the theatre, and the streets leading to the theatre had to be roped off for several blocks around. There was a faint protest from the conservative Moslem element against such "degrading influences," but their protest had the chance of a whisper against a gale. The Damascenes simply went mad over Um Kalthoum, and in order to accomodate all classes of her admirers a special concert was set a-

side for the Moslem ladies who are prohibited by custom from mingling with men at any form of public entertainment.

Surely Um Kalthoum proved her popularity. Also she proved that the Syrians are a music-loving public. Also that they seem, somehow, to find the money to gratify such expensive tastes.

WHEN MAYOR MEETS KING

WHEN our jovial and debonair mayor of New York, His Honor James J. Walker, was visiting in Nice and creating fashions in men's berets and multi-colored sweaters and trousers, another distinguished personage was to visit the famous French resort and the two were expected to meet. The other visitor was His Majesty King Feisal of Iraq, hero of Lawrence's "Revolt in the Desert."

The twain of distinguished personages of the East and the West did not meet. Kipling's famous dictum had to be justified. But this is not our point.

Press dispatches at the time reported our mayor as bewailing that he did not know anything about Iraq. Before meeting its king, confines the report, the mayor of the Empire City of the Empire State of the United States had to beget himself to some sources of information so as to glean sufficient knowledge that would enable him to engage in intelligent conversation with the king.

This is not unusual, and even a mayor should not be held to task for his apparent ignorance of geography. Does anyone recall the incident of one of our Secretaries of State issuing an invitation to the Swiss navy for participation in a pageant in American waters?

The fact is "we" Americans feel too self-contained and self-sufficient, an attitude which cannot fail to reflect on the so-called small racial groups in America who suffer from this lack of understanding, or shall we say lack of interest. Syrians in this respect do not fare any better than others, if not worse. One can find any number of high-school and even college graduates who cannot locate Syria, some confusing it with Assyria and others making a wild guess that it is somewhere in Africa.

But the fault is not all theirs. It is incumbent upon Syrians to educate the American public as to their history, their culture and fine traditions, that they may be more respected through this diffusion of proper and sorely needed knowledge.



BARBARA YOUNG, *Editor*

" Poetry is wisdom that enchants the heart;
Wisdom is poetry that sings in the mind;
If we can enchant man's mind and at the same
time sing in his heart,
Then he will in truth live in the shadow of God."

Kahlil Gibran

WHEN Lord Bryce first came to these shores thirty years ago, as ambassador from England, a gentleman of the press asked him, among other questions, this question: "What in your opinion, is the outstanding need of the American people?" And without a moment's hesitation the great man replied, "Poets."

If Lord Bryce had been sent as ambassador to an Eastern land he would have, perforce, made a different answer, for the East is peopled with poets. Their poetry is expressed not only through the medium of the pen; it permeates every sentence of their daily living. In the West we make a gesture of assistance with the words, "Let me help you." The Arabic world says "I would serve you with my eyes." The grandfather, speaking of his beloved daughter's child calls her "my heart which goes before me." When wine is spilled there is no exclamation of dismay, rather a smile and the words "And for the table also a portion of your generous cup."

A few weeks ago a poet of my acquaintance was dining with one of the governors of perhaps the most powerful financial enterprise in America, and the poet asked, "What is your solution for the dilemma which confronts us and the world?" He replied, "I have none. What is yours?" "You are laughing at me," she said. "No," he answered. "I am not laughing. If the poets do not come to our aid now, then may God help us all."

Here is something to think upon. Is poetry made and read and sung for beauty's sake alone? Is it solely a literary and not a living force? If martial music carries the weary and homesick soldier-boy into the battle with head high, may not poetry refresh and renew the courage of the beaten and the disillusioned in the day's debacle? The answer is, it can and it does. I have seen it work not once but countless times.

The spiritual health of a nation is not maintained by one man or by any group of men, but by the esprit de corps. It might be an extremely interesting and salutary experiment to try lifting the thought-life of the whole people into another world, the world that the greatest of the poets have inhabited and revealed.

There is in the Arabic tongue and in the English—the two languages in which readers of this magazine are peculiarly interested—a wealth of poetry that should make any man lift his head and look out upon the world with a new vision and a heightened purpose. It is our hope that through these pages we may be able to remind ourselves of some of the forthright poetry that we have forgotten in the midst of the tumult and clamor.

Here is one; the word of a fine poet, a great naturalist, and a person with whom an hour of talk and laughter and reading was an event that does not pass from the memory.

Waiting

SERENE I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind, nor tide, nor sea;
I rave no more 'gainst time nor fate,
For lo, my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me.
No wind can drive my bark astray
Nor change the tide of destiny.

What matter if I stand alone?
 I wait with joy the coming years.
 My heart shall reap what it has sown,
 And garner up its fruit of tears.

The waters know their own, and draw
 The brook that springs from yonder heights,
 So flows the good with equal law
 Unto the soul of pure delights.

Yon floweret nodding in the wind
 Is ready plighted to the bee.
 And maiden, why that look unkind?
 For lo, thy lover seeketh thee.

The stars come nightly to the sky,
 The tidal wave unto the sea,
 Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high
 Shall keep my own away from me.

John Burroughs.

SAID a young English poet to a young American poet in my presence the other day, "True poetry is lyric. Vers libre is not true poetry." To which the other replied, "Vers libre is probably the only true poetry."

Perhaps the first assertion of our English friend was sufficient. "True poetry is lyric." For certainly the free verse form is lyric—if lyric means singing—as are the waves and the wind and the rain from which it is patterned. And though these cannot be scanned and measured beat to balance beat, as the seasons, and day and night, and the swinging of the planets can be scanned and measured, yet their various and veritable singing is unquestionable.

Poetry has chiefly to do with beauty. If it has not then it is not poetry. And we do not mean that it shall always be agreeable and pleasant to the taste. It may be, and indeed it often is terrible in its beauty, merciless and intolerable, but it may never be ugly nor vulgar nor commonplace.

Another concern of poetry is singing. If it is not singing it is not poetry. It may be brilliant and glittering with characterization and narrative; it may be delightful satire; it may tease the mind with

subtleties or vex the spirit with vague anachronisms or with an amazement of technique, but these things have nothing to do with poetry. There must be singing or it is all an outcast from the magic circle.

Vers libre has been treated by many poets and their critics as a stepchild, and it is not a stepchild. It is one of the two true children of the Muse. To be sure, there are miles of so-called free verse that have no claim to the divine maternity. But no listener with a real sense of rhythm, certainly no poet who lives and breathes rhythm, can be deceived for a single moment. Perhaps many makers of free verse, and surely most of the readers, do not listen at all, they merely look. And that will not do. Poetry is not for the eyes but for the ears.

But the fundamental reason why there is so little fine free verse to be found in our contemporary poetry is that it is perhaps the most subtle and exacting form to execute successfully. It must swing, it must beat, it must make its music throughout the changefulness of its varying measure even as the tempest or the whisper of the leaves make their music. Vers libre is the captured song of the free elements of air and water.

What we have long been accustomed to regard as lyric is the song with the evenly recurrent line and rhyme, and this is without doubt the form in which, for the most part, the masters of the golden word, in both the Arabic and the English, have spoken to us out of the past. It is a form with infinite possibility of variations, and will never lose its almost sensuous enchantment. It is the medium for the finer musical nuances. It penetrates and shakes the heart with its persistent return to the same chord or half-chord and its white economy of magic words, for it may never be prodigal as its free verse brother may sometimes be. And in a peculiar fashion entirely its own the rhymed lyric invests the soul with the assurance of worlds beyond this world, formed as it is in the likeness of the spherical music.

We have said the soul, not the mind, for pure poetry has little to do with the intellect. A great poet said once, speaking of a little poet—and the great poet was Gibran—"judge his work leniently, remembering that it was all written from above his eyes." It was. There was hardly a heart-beat in it all. Poetry is of and for the emotion of living.

The function of the poet is not to instruct, nor to divert, nor to persuade, though he may perhaps do all of these things frequently and incidentally. The function of the poet is to recall for-

gotten loveliness, to recapture the wonder and delight that were from the beginning, and to restore the freshness to Beauty's garment and the heavenliness to her voice; it is to pour the wine that shall exalt the spirit. For this the poet sings and has always sung.

The Poetry of the Days

By HARYOT HOLT DEY. *

TRULY I do see poetry everywhere, everywhere where love and joy and order and beauty exist. I see poetry in *Luella Borgonia*, the little growing plant brought to me by a poet one night not long ago. I even see poetry in the color and orderliness of the teacups, and in the peaceful movement of an old lady's rocking-chair—an old lady who feels young and pretends she thinks she is old, pretends lest some call her names and reveal the secret first. Thus the pretending is a mere defense. I even feel poetry when the canary from China, Mr. Caruso, sings the song of a new day at six in the morning, and joyfully defies us to sleep another wink. I see poetry in the food I season with love. I feel poetry in the gift of a bag of sea-salt—the salt of the earth—brought to me by a loving friend.

It's wondrous where poetry can be found even without looking for it. I see it in the faithfulness with which the people I know meet their daily tasks. I feel poetry in all affirmative thoughts of those who appreciate and put their thoughts on paper. I sense it in the eyes of all my sons and daughters—my sons from the North and my daughters from afar. Every day I receive a love-letter from somebody, sometimes in verse, usually in prose that is too modest to line itself up with free verse.

I saw poetry yesterday when the young Italian painter who was renovating for me, gave my Winifred a pressed flower, taking it gravely from his wallet, telling her it is edelweiss and came from the Alps and was difficult to find and gather. Real poetry! Both young, contemporaries, recognizing the bond of youth, sunshine and poetry and prophesy in both faces.

* Haryot Holt Dey is a prominent figure in the American literary world. She was for ten years president of the Women's Press Club of New York. This is her message to the first issue of the poetry section of the *Syrian World*—Editor

Real poetry—it is in all longing for the unattainable, the longing to make a poem, to paint a picture, and so, as none of these things are mine as self-expression, I can only paint the days for my friends. So it's an old lady, a painter of days in an arm chair, a gay old lady who is free, and grateful for the great blessing of loving friends, especially of the poets. When a poet raps on my door, then I know that sometime, somehow, somewhere I must have done something right!

Is Poetry a Business?

FOR the benefit of some who seem not to have discovered the answer to this question, even though they sit in what the smartest *litterateurs* call high places, let us assert crisply and without qualification, it is not.

Being inoculated with the insidious germ of chronic cleverness and drowsing around in a fever of *vernacularia*, certain gentlemen of the quill and shears would spread the uneasiness of their ailment to the healthy and hearty-minded.

Mr. Mencken of the Mercury approaches poetry with a squint and a chortle. He says the poets can no longer "make a crop" though "time was when they did a brisk business." He asserts that the "American people are naturally poetic, as Rotary and Kiwanis so brilliantly demonstrate." He says that today nothing is offered (by the poets) that they (the American people) can get their teeth into." He proceeds, "one no longer hears that a certain poem is either swell stuff or dreadful rubbish, as the case may be."

And there is more, all in the vein of in-humorous wisecrackery that we expect, and get, from college freshmen. This method of comment upon literary output should have long since fallen into Mr. Cleveland's "innocuous desuetude," and has, in most mature circles where it was found to be anything but a decoration.

It is altogether likely that Mr. Mencken cares nothing at all for poetry, and comprehends it less; a silk purse is not woven from hempen threads.

For the enlightenment of the Menckens then, let us repeat: Poetry is not a business, and it is not a commodity. It is an ancient and honorable art that antedated the first sneer and will outlive the last scoffer. And it has not gone to pot, neither in the West where it grows silently in the night, nor in the East where it was born;

nor will it, in spite of the truth in the statement that "most of the stuff that makes the bottoms of the magazines pages is . . . baffling." This is the affair of the editors, not the poets.

Dignity and beauty live still in the sonnet and the lyric of twentieth century poets even as they have lived in the poetry of all ages, and clarity and simplicity still garment their expression. But the names that are most shouted in the marketplace are the names of the rhymsters and of clever artificers of words, not of the veritable poets. Sidney Lanier, a prince of song, once said, half a hundred years ago, "Art has no enemy so relentless as cleverness." And every artist has learned this well, and has learned also to take the dose without a grimace, even with relish, and with perhaps an occasional retort, for the fun of it. Which is what we are doing here.

Lute-Strings

Poets' dreams are crystals
That shine in the gloom, like stars.

* * *

My soul is like the sea-foam
That lives in evanescence.

* * *

Yonder lofty star is my guardian angel
Who fills my path with light.

* * *

The poet lingers near the sea
To hear the echo of his song.

* * *

Fir trees are nuns
Who live in silence.

* * *

The flowers weep softly into sleep
And waken with tears still in their eyes.

Najla Sabe



Current Poetry

A RIDE

You would have loved that wild wet Saturday . . .
 I skimmed the road that ribbons our lush valley
 Between stark sullen hills and bustling bay.
 The sun, with gray retreat and golden rally
 Made war on roving cloud-banks in the sky,
 And wayside puddles mirrored the high battles.
 Scared rabbits bounded out as I sped by.
 Gray gulls cut vague arcs in the air and cattle
 Stood numbly huddled in the chill green fields.
 I drove up to the ridge above the ocean
 Where fogs forever cling, and nothing shields
 Life from the wind's unending moan and motion.
 You would have hailed the men and women bent
 To gather artichokes on slopes together,
 While fat-haunched horses, drawing boxes went
 Behind, their heads bowed to the blowing weather.
 As I swept past the last steep little farm
 The soft mist thickened to a milky drizzle,
 The wind rose to a note of weird alarm,
 And mountains bared bleak beauty through the mizzle.
 I thought you rode then, thrilling by my side . . .
 You would have loved that day of sun and showers,
 Of tingling living, when I took the ride
 From town to cover your cold grave with flowers.
 Lori Petri, in *The Forge*.

CLOSE TO THE EARTH

Let the brown lark fly
 That has wings to fly.
 The ant, the beetle,
 The mole and I
 Keep close to the earth
 Where we like to lie.
 For close to the earth a beetle may
 trundle
 Its treasure below in a claw-clipped
 bundle;
 And close to the earth an ant may
 funnel
 Earthworks in turrets the length of
 its tunnel;
 And close to the earth the secret mole
 May fit to its body its cool dark hole;
 And I, who have never a wish to climb
 The sky with a lilt or a whistling
 rhyme,
 May stoop and listen and mark the
 time

Of surer songs than a bird ever
 sings—
 Songs slow with the pulse at the root
 of things.

Margaret Emerson Bailey

STRONGHOLD

We are prepared, my love and I,
 For Winter by the tarn;
 I put a saffron wing away,
 And she a spider's yarn.
 I put away a rack of oak,
 And she a cruse of oil,
 That friendliness might be obliged
 With credit to the soil.
 We are prepared, my love and I,
 For Winter on a hill;
 I stored a theme of song, and she
 A root of daffodil.

Edwin Quarles
 in *The New York Times*
 in *Harper's Magazine*



THE CHOICE OF SU'AD

THE day was of scorching heat. Not a breeze ruffled the leaves of the trees or rippled the surface of the water. The fountains in the vast courtyard of the caliph's palace played incessantly but brought no apparent relief. The caliph was extremely depressed. He finally ordered that immediate preparations be made for departure to the outskirts of the city, where the open spaces might entice a little coolness. Presently, the whole court repaired to a garden in Al-Ghouta where the caliph seated himself in an open pavillion commanding at once a view of the verdant gardens of the great oasis of Damascus and of the vast arid plains marking the beginning of the Syrian desert.

Chancing to look in the distance, Muawiya, the caliph, saw a bedouin in rags trudging his way painfully in the dust and heat of the open road. He turned to those about him and exclaimed: "Can there be among Allah's creatures one more deserving of pity than he who has to travel about in such torrid heat?"

And some of his courtiers replied: "Perhaps he is seeking the Prince of the Faithful."

"If this be the case," said the caliph, "I shall not turn him back empty-handed if he is in need, nor shall I turn a deaf ear to his plea if he is seeking justice." He then commanded one of his attendants to post himself at the gate ready to admit the bedouin if he should seek entry.

The bedouin was duly admitted and the caliph asked him of his name, his tribe and his mission, to which he replied that he was of the Ozra tribe and had come from the heart of the desert to seek of the Prince of the Faithful justice from his agent in Iraq, Mirwan Ibn El Hakam.

He related his grievance as follows:

"Know, O Prince of the Faithful, that I had a wife by the name of Su'ad who was the light of my life. I was not rich but comfortable. My livelihood was derived from a drove of camels

WAS IT A DILEMMA TO SU'AD?

Forced by her merciless father to leave her poor bedouin husband;

Given in marriage to the Governor, powerful agent of the caliph;

Brought to the presence of the caliph who himself covets her and offers her to choose between him, his agent, or her poor bedouin husband;

Whom do you think Su'ad chose?

which I tended with much care and devoted all my earnings to the support and comfort of the woman who was to me all that life was worth living for. But in a severe drought I lost my camels and all my possessions. I was reduced to a condition of actual want and my former friends shunned me. Then it was that my father-in-law disclaimed me and separated me from my wife. I was desperate and appealed to your agent Mirwan for justice. Mirwan had my father-in-law denied even knowing me. I asked Mirwan to have him produce his daughter and question her as to whether my claim to her being my wife was true or false. This Mirwan did, but immediately he set eyes on her he turned against me and ordered me to prison. He then proposed that her father give her unto him in consideration of one thousand dinars and ten thousand dirhams. The father consented and Mirwan proceeded to force me to divorce her. He ordered his servants to beat me and visit upon me all forms of cruelty until I had to grant the divorce to save my life. But Mirwan kept me in prison until the elapse of the stipulated time necessary for her to remarry, and when the nuptials were concluded he released me and banished me from the city. Now I am appealing to you in the hope that you will restore her to me and vindicate your name as the dispenser of justice to the Faithful."

The bedouin was so overcome with emotion that he fell prostrate on the ground and began to writhe as if in great pain. Muawiya was beside himself with anger at the action of his agent and forthwith wrote out an order to Mirwan to free the bedouin's wife and

despatch her to Damascus with his two trusted messengers, Al-Kumeit and Nasr Ibn Zibian, who were entrusted with the message.

At the appointed time the messengers returned with the woman and reported that Mirwan had divorced her with great reluctance and to the accompaniment of much tears. His letter to the caliph also bore witness to his deep affliction.

"Mirwan has well proven his obedience," commented Muawiya, "despite his professed admiration for the bedouin woman." He then ordered Su'ad brought before him.

It was one of those instances when reason is totally overcome by an indefinable passion that defies every attempt to control. Muawiya could not restrain his admiration for the woman of the desert and inwardly excused his agent for having fallen victim to her charms. Her beauty was a revelation even to one who had almost half of the then civilized world at his feet.

Having recovered from the effect of his first shock, Muawiya thought to test the woman as to her intelligence. He questioned her on many subjects and found her to be of flashing mind and captivating speech. Her conquest of his heart was then complete.

Muawiya ordered that her former husband be brought before him and thus spoke to him:

"O brother Arab! Your love for Su'ad should inspire you with solicitude for her comfort and happiness. You admit that you cannot adequately support her, while if you cede her to me I will have her surrounded with all forms of luxury. In return, I will award you three virgin slave-girls, and with each three thousand dinars, and shall grant you, besides, an annuity from the public treasury sufficient to maintain you in comfort for the rest of your life."

But no sooner did the bedouin hear this than he fell in a swoon from which he was revived only with much difficulty. Still the caliph was unrelenting. He pressed the bedouin for an answer.

"O powerful caliph," he finally replied. "To you I have appealed from the injustice of your agent, but to whom can I appeal from your injustice if you declare yourself my opponent? In the name of Allah, I beseech you to return my wife to me, for I will surely die without her. Allah forbid that in appealing to you from the arbitrariness of Mirwan I should be as if escaping from the heat of the sun to that of the fire."

At this Muawiya became visibly disappointed, but with apparent calmness said to the bedouin, "You have admitted having divorced Su'ad, so has Mirwan. Now she is free and mistress of

her own destiny. She shall make her own choice."

Then addressing the woman: "Between the three, O Su'ad, whom do you choose: the Prince of the Faithful with his pomp and glory and power and great palaces; or Mirwan, a simple agent insecure in his power and notorious for his cruelty; or this bedouin who has nothing to offer you but the prospects of poverty and misery."

Su'ad was unhesitating in her answer. "This bedouin, O Prince of the Faithful, although he be in rags, is preferable to me than any man of wealth and power. Want with him is better than plenty with another. His modest tent is dearer to me than the luxury of palaces. I have had happy days with him and he begrudged me not his means in his days of affluence. I could not, in justice, forsake him now in his hour of need after all the proofs of genuine solicitude and devotion he has shown me."

At this answer from Su'ad, disappointment in the heart of the caliph gave way to a feeling of unbounded admiration. "Take back your wife," he said to the bedouin, "and may you be happy with her ever after. You are assured of my fullest protection and no one hereafter shall molest you. Nor shall you be in want any longer. You shall have more than the former number of your camels, and much more of my gifts that will insure you against want for the remainder of your days."



Arab Wisdom

A CERTAIN Arab Prince held open court one day and asked to be entertained. One of those present proceeded to belittle an absent notable. And the Prince remarked:

"I judge the amount of your shortcomings by the amount of shortcomings you ascribe to others. He who seeks faults in others finds them first in himself."

Said Ibn Al-Ward: "We have been told that Wisdom is divided in decimal numbers; nine of which consist of silence and the tenth in evading the company of men."

HOME AND FAMILY



BAHIA AL-MUSHEER, *Editor*

TASTE IN FURNISHING A HOME

OUR primary, or what should be our primary object in building or hiring and furnishing a home is to have a haven in which we may find happiness, rest and comfort, and offer our guest a large share of all or at least of some of these. But how many times do we fall short of our goal! I propose in what follows to discuss just one of the many causes of our failure. On the surface of it, it may not seem so very important, but if we recall the greatly abused saying: that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, we cannot but give it due consideration as one of many ingredients that go into the making of a home. Let me then say this time something about furnishing a home.

Directly upon entering some houses, we feel creeping over us a sensation of spiritual, mental and physical relaxation. We feel ourselves enveloped by an atmosphere that rests the nerves and makes us forget our fatigue. And we seem to hear a whispered welcome by the air itself. The type of the furniture, the size, number, nature and mode of disposition of the different pieces in relation to the size and shape of the room; the colors, the background and many other things combine to create the sensations to which I have just alluded. The chairs or couch invite us to their depths, and we feel even before dropping into any one of them, that they will afford the greatest amount of comfort, and immediately realize that they were meant and are for use. In other words we find such a home "homey" and feel immediately at our ease, even without the slightest effort on the part of the host.

On the other hand, in other houses we find the reverse. The furniture may be costly, the appointments rich, but we sense a stiffness, a snobbishness, if you please, in the air which no amount of graciousness on the part of the host can dispel. We feel that here

things are meant to be on exhibition and should be looked at only and not used. And in using them one feels as if he is stepping on someone's pet corn. I am not ready to state that the nature and attitude of the owner is reflected in the furniture selected and the way in which it is arranged, for I know better. I know some people to be the soul of kindness and hospitality who will go to any lengths to afford their guests pleasure and comfort, whose purpose was defeated because they failed to give the matter of the choice of furniture the thought and study it required. Sometimes a love of show and exhibition sweeps their better judgement off its imaginary feet completely, or a sense of false pride side-tracks them, or their poor opinion of the discrimination of others leads them astray.

I fully appreciate the fact that tastes differ. Thank the Lord for that! But there should be exercised a certain amount of common sense when one is thinking of the fitness of things. You do not have to hire an interior decorator to furnish your home, nor have it fitted according to periods in order to make it cozy and comfortable and livable. What would you think of the housewife who equips her kitchen with cake pans, an egg beater and dessert forks before she ever thinks of pots and dishes? This is what I am driving at: the essentials are fundamentals. Everyone knows how comfortable a chair or a couch is directly one sits or stretches on it. And every one can form some idea on the durability of such an article by careful examination. Are not these essentials? Then comes the shape, the color, the finish and the fitness of such an article for such a place or purpose. This is more difficult to determine but not impossible. Let me repeat: in this as in everything else, I like to consider and try to acquire the essentials first.

LABAN AS INK REMOVER

I HAD heard somehow, that *Laban* was very effective in removing ink from rugs. I was skeptical about its efficiency until the other evening when I dropped a bottle of ink, spilling half of its contents on one of my rugs.

I confess that had I had some patented stain remover I would have run for it, but I had none in the house. I recalled that I had a bowl of *Laban* in the ice box. Well, it did the trick beautifully. I spread the *Laban* generously over the stain, worked it into the nap of the rug and washed it off with soap suds and warm water. Next

morning I was unable to discover any traces of the ink.

In case of ink stains that have dried, cover the stain generously with *Laban* and allow to remain from four to five hours. Should the stain not disappear completely after first application, repeat.

HOW TO COOK VEGETABLES

THE term Vitamins has become a household term relegating the calories to the dark, dark background. Take vegetables for example: We are told that in order to get the full benefit of vegetables they should be eaten raw—especially the leafy vegetables. Heat will destroy those valuable Vitamins.

If we are to cook vegetables, we should use no water, or as little as possible. In other words they should be steamed. Again we should utilize the juices that escape. These and many another thing we are told about these Vitamins which we will have occasion to refer to in subsequent issues. But when I think of all this, I marvel at the wisdom—perhaps it should be called instinct or expediency—of our forbears in preparing their food. To this side of the subject I will again have occasion to refer. At present I want to pass along a little something that may prove worthwhile. When you prepare stuffed cabbage leaves, you naturally parboil the leaves in order for them to become pliable and easy to roll. Well, in boiling the leaves, use as little water as possible and save the water to use in cooking the dish. By so doing you will not only utilize the better part of the cabbage and incorporate it in the prepared dish, but you will find marked improvement in its flavor. Yes, by all means, use garlic but be judicious about it. It will improve the flavor of the dish and it is decidedly beneficial. And when cooked it is not so objectionable. Now that I have mentioned garlic, I recall with a great deal of amusement the attitude of the American people towards it a few years ago. How different is their attitude today. They are using it extensively.

Even some of the preserved tomato cocktail that has taken the country by storm recently, is flavored with it.



The Mystery of Aornholt

A THRILLING STORY OF MYSTERY AND BRILLIANT
DETECTIVE WORK

By THOMAS ASA

(Continued from the September issue)

A WEEK had passed by, and the Swiss mountain village of Aornholt had once more, in the endless procession of seasons, acclimatized itself to the severe rigors of early winter. And as all vestiges of nature seemed immersed in a vast, impenetrable sleep, so also did the inhabitants of the village conform to the instinct of silence and rest; and, but for the presence of a few strangers in Aornholt, another uneventful year would have been added to the already heavy peace and quiet of the village annals.

The short acquaintance of the Forsyths and Monsieur and Madame de Challons had, when that consanguinity of feeling and understanding met, ripened into a friendship that was favored to endure longer than would have been expected. The week had not passed uneventfully for them, for each evening the artist and his charming wife were to be found at the picturesque villa the Forsyths had rented. Monsieur de Challons had revealed a fine tenor voice, with Captain Forsyth lending his smooth baritone, and so the informal gatherings were regularly attended with petite musicales.

Friday morning dawned ominously. Maitre Pierre, who habitually arose a few hours after daybreak, looked through the frosted glass of the balcony and shook his round, bald head.

"Ah! a bad day it will prove, monsieur," he said to Monsieur de Challons, who had just descended from his room.

"Then you do not advise me to venture out today, Pierre," the artist questioned.

"Indeed, monsieur, man or beast would perish if caught without shelter in the storm I see approaching," answered the proprieteor, with another nervous shake of his head.

As the fat, good-natured inn-keeper uttered this cheerless prophesy, it commenced to snow with a suddenness that clearly in-

dictated the impending climax of the elements of winter. A sharp, piercing wind hurtled through the valley below, sending the now swiftly falling snow in furious lateral flurries.

"It is as Maitre Pierre has said," the artist reflected in undertones. He seemed to be deep in thought for a few moments; then he addressed the inn-keeper.

"Please have *dejeuner* served in my room as usual, Pierre;" and with that he ascended to the second floor.

About eleven o'clock, Monsieur de Challons again went below, this time accompanied by his wife, who, quite in contrast with the storm raging outside, was in cheerful spirits. As they seated themselves at a vacant table before the fireplace, the artist noticed that the only other occupant in the room was the venerable Monsieur Benoit, who sat at the table he habitually occupied.

"I pity the poor gentleman, Raoul," remarked Madame de Challons in a low voice, glancing compassionately at the old man. "He is evidently still unable to proceed on his journey. It is strange to me that no news of his plight has been sent to his daughter."

"Maitre Pierre told me that Monsieur Benoit did not wish to cause his daughter any unnecessary distress, as he expected to resume his journey as soon as the weather breaks," explained the artist, watching the aged traveller with covert scrutiny.

An eager light entered the eyes of de Challons as he continued to watch without Monsieur Benoit being aware of it. His right hand, which was hidden from view, grasped a leg of the table, and under the tremendous pressure exerted, the hard knuckles almost burst the flesh.

"It is improbable that we will see anything of Captain Forsyth soon if this weather continues," the artist said to his wife, wishing to maintain the conversation as a means of hiding his observation of Monsieur Benoit, who, in the meantime, had withdrawn a soiled paper from his pocket, and which he now read with stolid impassiveness with the aid of oddly fashioned glasses.

"The wind seems to have died down somewhat, Raoul. It is quite likely that Monsieur Forsyth will come as he promised, for he was very eager to see your canvas."

The silence in the large room was unbroken, save for their subdued conversation. At this stage, Maitre Pierre emerged from his provision room, where he had been taking inventory of his supplies. Noticing Monsieur de Challons and his wife, he went quickly forward.

"Good morning, madame," he greeted, with a solicitous smile.

WHAT WAS THE MYSTERY?

Capt. Forsyth had no inkling as to the purpose of the French artist de Challons... Nor did de Challons's charming and gifted wife.

But de Challons had a purpose. How he succeeded in it and how near he came to losing his life at the hands of a desperate criminal is graphically told in this chapter.

"It is very rough weather we are having for early winter."

"Good morning, Monsieur Pierre," madame greeted in return.

"The weather is exceedingly bad, but I believe that the storm is gradually abating."

"Ah! it is but a lull in a worse storm that is soon coming, madame," the inn-keeper ventured with conviction, being well aware of the vicissitudes of mountain climate.

The amiable Pierre was recalled to the provision room by the approach of Jean, who was assisting him with the inventory. As he passed the bar-counter, he nodded to Monsieur Benoit, who, however, failed to notice him.

As the proprietor disappeared from the room, Monsieur Benoit replaced his glasses in a worn leather case and put the soiled paper he had been reading back in his pocket. He then arose from the chair, apparently with some difficulty, and walked slowly towards the enclosed stairway, which he ascended with still more deliberate steps.

Monsieur de Challons observed the withdrawal of the old man with the closest attention. His wife, looking up, saw the acute tension of his features.

"Is there something wrong, Raoul?" she asked, with slight misgivings clouding her face.

"Nothing, Charlotte,—nothing," her husband replied, forcing a smile.

With the passage of ten minutes or more, the artist threw his half-smoked cigarette away and arose from the table.

"There is a little matter I must attend to, Charlotte," he said, assuming a nonchalant tone of voice. "I shall be back in a few minutes," he added, as he left the table and ascended the stairway to the second floor.

Madame de Challons sat almost motionless, gazing reflectively at the fire. Her husband's peculiar behavior had disturbed her equanimity, especially as she could not account for it.

As she mused, somewhat desultorily, the tavern door opened, and, much to her surprise and pleasure, the snow-covered figure of Captain Forsyth entered the room.

"Good-morning, Monsieur Forsyth," she said, smiling in her charming manner; "I see that you did not allow the inclement weather to break your promise to come."

"Good-morning, madame," Forsyth returned in his cheerful voice, removing his hat and ulster and brushing some snow from his boots. "My mind was quite set on seeing Monsieur de Challons' painting, and I would not let the storm stop me, no matter how severe."

"Please be seated, monsieur," Madame de Challons invited; "my husband just went to his room, but will be back shortly."

Captain Forsyth sat in the chair vacated by the artist, and chatted very pleasantly with Madame de Challons, who found, in common with her husband, considerable enjoyment in his clean and virile personality.

Their conversation, not long begun, was suddenly interrupted by a loud crash that sounded from the upper floor.

Madame de Challons rose nervously from her chair, a startled look on her face.

"Come, monsieur!" she exclaimed, darting towards the stairway; "I fear that something terrible has happened!"

Captain Forsyth quickly followed her up the carpeted steps, very much puzzled by her abrupt departure and nervous utterance.

Madame de Challons almost ran down the corridor on the second floor. She opened the door of her husband's room, which was connected to the chamber she occupied, and found it empty. She looked in growing fear and indecision at Captain Forsyth, who stood back of her.

A muffled noise issued from the room at the extreme end of the hall on the right. Madame de Challons, grasping the captain's arm, walked hastily in that direction. Forsyth took hold of the door-knob of the room and turned it forcibly. The door was locked. Again a scraping sound issued from the inside, this time distinct and sharp.

"He is in that room!" Madame de Challons cried excitedly, her eyes dominant with fear.

Captain Forsyth again tried the door-knob, but finding this means ineffective, he drew back and threw his tall form against the door. It did not yield. He drew back once more, and then hurled himself against it with tremendous force. The door gave way from its solid hinges with a splintering crash. Forsyth almost fell to the floor inside, but managed to maintain his balance with great effort. There before him sprawled on the floor was Gaston Benoit, who completely covered the body of De Challons, straining with terrible intensity to force a gleaming stiletto towards the latter's throat.

Captain Forsyth leaped forward and seized hold of the artist's adversary and jerked him roughly away. Benoit regained his feet, and whirling about struck at Forsyth with the stiletto. The captain ducked the furious thrust and then struck with all his might at his opponent's jaw. The fist landed with an awful jar, and Benoit was knocked senseless to the floor, the knife slipping from his nerveless hand.

De Challons had instantly arisen from the floor, and now leaped towards the fallen man. From his pocket, he hastily withdrew steel handcuffs and shackled the hands of Benoit, who was still unconscious.

During this scene, which did not consume more than two minutes, Madame de Challons leaned against the shattered door, almost faint with terror. The artist got to her in time to catch her from falling to the floor.

"There is my pistol near the bed, captain," De Challons said, indicating with his finger where the pistol had fallen in his struggle with Benoit. "Watch this man; he is a dangerous criminal," he cautioned, as he turned towards his room, still supporting his wife, who was slowly regaining consciousness.

As they passed through the open door of his bed-chamber, Maitre Pierre and his assistant, Jean, suddenly appeared, both greatly excited.

"What has happened, monsieur! what has happened?" the proprietor questioned in an astonished voice, being considerably winded by his run up the stairs.

"It is over now, Pierre. I shall explain later," the artist said briefly, closing the door in the inn-keeper's face.

De Challons laid his wife on the bed. In a few seconds she opened her eyes, and looked up dazedly in her husband's anxious face.

"Come, come, Charlotte," he said, with great relief, gently chafing her hands. "There is no cause for further worry."

As silent tears came from deep emotion, his wife flung her arms passionately about his neck and drew him to her.

At the sight of her distress, the artist was almost unnerved, but succeeded, after a few minutes, in calming her so that she sat upright on the bed, her arms still clasped tightly about him.

"Be brave, Charlotte," he entreated tenderly, kissing her quivering lips repeatedly. "I must go to the assistance of Captain Forsyth, who is waiting for me. Remain here; I shall return soon."

De Challons left the chamber, closing the door after him. He entered the room that was occupied by Benoit, who was now a state prisoner. He could not resist an amused smile at the bewildered stare with which captain Forsyth greeted him. Maitre Pierre and his assistant were kneeling on the floor beside Benoit, who had not yet completely recovered from the paralyzing blow.

Without a word, De Challons took the pistol that Captain Forsyth handed to him. He replaced it in his pocket, and then clasped Forsyth's hand and shook it warmly.

"I thank you for your timely service, captain. Be sure it will not soon be forgotten."

Still bewildered and, needless to say, humiliated because of his attack on the aged Benoit, Forsyth was more puzzled than ever at the feeling of gratitude the artist expressed.

"I see that you do not understand, captain," De Challons said, smiling again. "The man you have so neatly put away is known to the police department as Gaspard Roman, and he has merely added to his distinguished list of aliases by conveniently calling himself Gaston Benoit. He is wanted for brutal assault and for the theft of a diamond necklace, a famous and extremely valuable heirloom owned by the Countess Saliny of Paris and Monaco. I shall now dispel the sentiment of shame you undoubtedly feel in having struck so elderly a man."

The artist took a few steps forward and suddenly bent over the recumbent figure of Benoit, who was now regarding his captors with sinister hostility. He seized several locks of the prisoner's disordered hair and gave a quick jerk. The ingenious wig, for so it proved, came off readily, exposing a closely shaven skull.

Captain Forsyth started back in great surprise at this disclosure, while Maitre Pierre and the youthful Jean almost fell over in their astonishment.

With a faint smile still lingering on his lips, De Challons felt

about the waist of the impassive criminal, and immediately withdrew a hollow leather belt, in which the stolen necklace was very cleverly concealed. He placed the belt in an inner pocket, and then stood erect.

"I shall be very thankful if you will bring me some strong cord, Jean," the artist requested of the inn-keeper's assistant, who was staring with wide open eyes.

The boy hurriedly left the room, and in a few minutes returned with enough stout line to secure several Romans.

With Captain Forsyth's assistance, De Challons tied the prisoner beyond all hope of escape, and afterwards, for greater security, he was locked in the empty room across the hall.

Maitre Pierre had watched these proceedings with extreme gravity, apparently overcome with the fact that for two weeks or more he had been sheltering a notorious criminal.

De Challons walked arm in arm with Captain Forsyth to the door of his room.

"Excuse me for a moment, captain," the artist said, opening the door; "I believe madame is sufficiently recovered to accompany us below."

He returned in a few minutes with his wife, who leaned lightly against him.

"Charlotte, thank Captain Forsyth for saving me from a most ignominious end," De Challons said in a bantering tone, but in a voice that was not devoid of feeling.

"You have put us forever in your debt, monsieur," madame said, with emotion not altogether controlled.

Approaching Forsyth, who was considerably embarrassed at this continued show of gratitude, Madame de Challons took his slightly swollen right hand, which had so suddenly ended the struggle, and caressed it with indefinable gentleness.

With this impulsive gesture, she preceded them down the carpeted steps.

The three seated themselves at the table vacated some time ago. Maitre Pierre had by this time regained a portion of his wonted composure, and, as he approached their table, his face was wreathed in a wide smile.

"A good morning's business, messieurs," he said, bowing and rubbing his fat hands. "Perhaps a little refreshment will not be amiss after so arduous an experience," he added in his suave, maitre d'hotel manner.

"You have, I believe, Monsieur Pierre, some very rare Amon-

tillado, which I should greatly enjoy at this moment," said the artist, with his searching smile.

"Amontillado, monsieur!" the inn-keeper exclaimed in surprise, a deep flush suffusing his Boniface features. "Ah! monsieur is undoubtedly joking," he said, feigning complete incredulity.

"Surely, my good Pierre, a native of Spain does not deny his own vintage," continued De Challons, still smiling, and mildly enjoying the confusion of the proprietor.

Without another word, the proprietor turned away and disappeared in his provision room. He returned shortly, carrying a fantastically shaped bottle, which he wiped with a clean cloth.

"You are very discerning, monsieur," Maitre Pierre admitted, addressing the artist, as he placed the bottle and glasses on the table. "I was born in Andalusia, and spent my early manhood there, and never quite lost my taste for this excellent wine," he added, in explanation.

"You are no doubt regarding me in the light of an imposter, captain," De Challons said, smilingly, after the inn-keeper had left them.

"No, no, monsieur!" Forsyth protested, good humoredly; "but I confess that I am still greatly confused in my ignorance of the circumstances leading to Benoit's capture."

"I shall explain, then, my dear friend. You will pardon me if I seemingly diverge from the explanation by taking you back some ten years before I had the good fortune to meet my wife." He bowed to madame, who blushed happily. "At that time, I pursued with considerable fervor the profession of painting. I had already exhibited in public with some success. It was during this period that I became acquainted with Monsieur Armand Fillon, the present prefect of the Parisian police, and about ten years my senior. Through his friendship, I acquired unusual enthusiasm in the study of criminology, and, by the gradual process of theoretical assimilation and active experience, became proficient in that branch of research. Thereafter, I was more or less officially employed as Monsieur Fillon's assistant, and gained a slight reputation as criminal investigator. Now to return to the present occasion. Two weeks before the robbery had taken place, madame and I decided to spend a belated holiday in Lucerne. On the twentieth day of our stay there, I was notified from Paris headquarters of the robbery, which, for reasons of expediency, had not been given out to the press. Through the activity of the police, the man who was suspected of being responsible for the felony was forced to quit the city, and, a

few days later, he was reported to have fled to this district, and possibly in disguise. I was instructed to take up the search at this point. After travelling for almost a week through the several small towns neighboring Lucerne in the person of an artist seeking inspiration, my wife accompanying me, and, being ignorant of my quest, greatly assisting me in my natural disguise, I was informed by a coachman, employed by the syndicate that operates the mail and passenger coaches that traverse this route, of the presence of an unknown stranger in the village of Aornholt. On first seeing this man, during the evening I had the happiness to make your acquaintance, Captain Forsyth; I was greatly disappointed, which (you remember my remark) caused me to think him a suitable subject for a canvas, because of the trouble he had unwittingly given me. I was tempted to prolong my stay in Aornholt in the knowledge of your unexpected company, knowing it would do no harm, and with the not remote possibility of finding the man I sought. It was well that I decided to do so. The disguise of this Gaston Benoit was so perfect that it fooled me. But he made the mistake the third day of our stay here of giving me a fleeting view of his teeth, which were large, white, and unusually regular. Generally, we do not associate teeth so well preserved with persons of his apparently advanced age. This observation, irrelevant as it may seem, awakened my suspicions, and I determined to pursue this faint clue. Two days later, during the early part of the afternoon, Monsieur Benoit obligingly left his room and stayed below for some time. This gave me an opportunity to break into his room, which I accomplished with the aid of a master key designed by Monsieur Fillon. The subject under suspicion made the second mistake of leaving his glasses lying openly on the dresser. These I examined and found to be utterly useless for aid in vision, for the two lenses were nothing but pieces of ordinary transparent glass shaped ovally to conform with the frame. As if to further verify my suspicions, I found, after careful search, stray strands of hair here and there about the room—some on the pillow, which indicated that he presumably slept with the wig on for fear of detection while he was sleeping, and a few strands on the wash stand. This condition, as is well known, is unnatural, for gray hair does not fall out very easily. I then quitted the chamber, and went immediately below where my wife was waiting for me. Monsieur Benoit did not seem to notice my return, and a half hour or so later he ascended to the second floor. It was through a slight negligence on the part of Maitre Pierre's assistant that I was enabled to get conclusive evidence against Gaston Benoit. Going over to the table

that Benoit had just left, I noticed, after a close but hurried examination, the distinct imprint of the thumb and forefinger of the right hand. The impression was preserved in a small space of dust near the edge of the table. The thumb mark, easily distinguished by a rough scar on the ball, corresponded exactly with the thumb print incautiously left at the scene of the robbery. This fortunate discovery made further investigation unnecessary, and—well, it is needless that I recount what little remains to be told, for you were very much concerned with it, captain."

Monsieur de Challons had given this detailed explanation without an interruption, and now leaned back in his chair with complete relaxation.

Madame de Challons regarded her husband with eyes filled with commingled pride and relief. Captain Forsyth had listened to De Challons' account with the closest attention.

"But, monsieur, you were certain of the man's identity! Why, then, was he not apprehended in the customary way?" questioned Forsyth, with a puzzled expression on his face.

"That was the disgusting part of the whole matter, captain," De Challons answered, shrugging his shoulders. "Before I entered his room I drew my pistol. Fortunately, the door was unlocked. Turning the knob noiselessly I threw the door open and leaped inside. Benoit was so completely surprised by my abrupt entrance that I had him covered with the pistol before he could turn around. I then locked the door for greater caution. Benoit realized by my decisive manner that continued subterfuge would be futile. He pretended to be overcome with dejection and fear. Drawing up to him I began to search his pockets for concealed weapons. I was deluded with this weak resistance; my attention lagged for a second, and that period, brief as it was, proved costly. In some inexplicable way, and quite in keeping with the craft of his profession, he knocked the pistol from my hand and threw himself violently against me. Losing my balance I fell to the floor with him on top. I was slightly stunned by the fall, but I recovered in time to perceive that he had drawn a stiletto. Exerting myself to the utmost, I caught his arm as it descended with the blade pointed at my throat. I do not know how long this position lasted, but I shall always remember the terrible tension of the moment."

Madame de Challons visibly paled at the conclusion of the recital.

"Why did you not shout for assistance, monsieur?" Captain Forsyth asked.

"I had no thought of that, captain," was the somewhat laconic answer from De Challons.

"Even at the point of death this man did not falter in the stern regimen of the police," mused Forsyth inaudibly, his admiration for the artist-detective increasing boundlessly.

Early the following morning De Challons dispatched a messenger to the nearest large town southeast of Aornholt. Late that afternoon the messenger returned, being accompanied by two specially commissioned gendarmes from the Canton of St. Gallen, who immediately placed themselves under Monsieur de Challons' orders. An hour later found the officers on their way back with the prisoner, —Gaspard Roman, alias Monsieur Gaston Benoit.

A month later, Captain Geoffrey Forsyth stood gazing reflectively through a window of his London apartment in Westminster which overlooked Hyde Park. The sudden ringing of the bell at the outer door recalled him from his reverie. Walking over, he opened it, and confronted the smiling visage of a delivery boy from the express office. He signed for the package that was handed to him, and then closed the door. The package, which was large, but quite light, and very carefully boxed, bore the postmark of Paris. He loosened the top strips of wood and slowly removed the thick paper and pasteboard covering with which it was wrapped. An extremely beautiful painting framed in handsome walnut, depicting mountain scenery in a representation of winter solitude, lay before him. A small white card was conspicuously wedged in a corner of the frame, and picking it up he read, with considerable surprise and pleasure, this legend:

*To my esteemed friend,
Captain Geoffrey Forsyth
Raoul De Challons*

VISITANT

By NADA SABIRAH

The son of Beauty came
And where he walked
There is a path of light
Upon earth's floor.
There is a shining circle
Where he knocked
On earth's green door.



INTRODUCING A NEW DEPARTMENT

By A. HAKIM

THE term "Younger Generation" is a relative one. One cannot think of it without calling to mind the older generation of which it is the offspring. Hence, obviously, the necessity of bearing in mind the two when speaking of each. They are inseparable in all treatment of social subjects and are more so here in the sense that I believe this department of the SYRIAN WORLD is meant to cover. In other words, it is intended to treat of the Syrian home in America insofar as it affects the relationship between parents and children under the influence of radically different conditions which the parents are forced to face and the children have to endure. It is, indeed, a social problem of the first importance which exists nowhere in such virulent form as it does in the United States owing to the flow of immigration and the necessity of moulding a homogeneous American nation out of heterogeneous elements that go into its making. And the Syrians in America are perhaps more affected by the operation of this amalgamation process than is any other race for reasons that will be later explained.

For the editor of the SYRIAN WORLD to have invited me to conduct this department is both a compliment and a privilege, and both, as I feel convinced, undeserved. The compliment is implied in the assumption that I can properly treat this social problem with impartial analysis; the privilege, in the opportunity of addressing our younger generation through the SYRIAN WORLD on what should be a matter of concern to all of them. What a great privilege, indeed, to realize that one could be instrumental in bringing a better understanding between bitterly opposed views; of restoring confidence where there was suspicion; of mending relations that had been

foolishly broken through misunderstanding and ignorance; of keeping together a family union that was being threatened of falling apart; of substituting love for hate, understanding for mistrust and, finally of bringing the two opposite camps—parents and children—to the point of *thinking* out their problems in order to iron out their differences.

The trouble with most of us is that we give little thought to the study of the fundamental forces that go into the building of our social structure. Perhaps it is the fault of the times. We are living to the tempo of a world that is moving at a terrific speed. If we stop for anything we are in fear of being left behind, and we fail to stop even to *think*. It is a pitiable situation.

What I shall attempt to do in this department, if this meets with the approval of the editor, is to survey our home life in America and analyze the forces that are agitating and affecting it, be that constructively or otherwise. Every effort will be made to lay each case in the most impartial spirit, in the hope of getting first to the cause—diagnosing the symptoms—and then trying to discuss the effect and prescribe whatever remedy would be possible. Readers will please bear in mind that no claim of superior knowledge or infallibility is here advanced. The writer may be as wrong in his deductions as the individuals concerned in the presentation of the problem. What might be truthfully stated, however, is that this department will be conducted in a spirit of absolute fairness and with the sole purpose of bringing better order to our fast disintegrating family life. This is an admission that the editor of this department feels constrained to make at the outset as representing his honest and unshaken belief in the present condition of our home relations in America. Two opposing forces—two sets of diametrically different ethical conceptions and standards—are developing in our social order, which if not treated rationally and in time will threaten not only our race entity but our individual happiness.

The subjects to be treated in this department will cover the whole range of adult relationship, whether between the younger generation and their parents or between the younger generation themselves. Courtship and marriage will be given the fullest consideration.

And may it also be here stated that the editor of this department is not of the so-called younger generation. But although he has reached certain convictions on our social problems which he will gradually discuss, he will entertain whatever objections to his views

may be taken by the readers and give them publicity in this very department, in accordance with the terms of an understanding reached with the editor of the magazine. The object is to create an open forum where our younger generation could meet to discuss their various problems. And this, indeed, is a valuable opportunity that should be taken advantage of to the fullest extent.

Let us hope some good will develop from this effort.

Reflections on Love

By KAHLIL GIBRAN

When a man's hand touches the hand of a woman they both touch the heart of eternity.

* * * * *

Love is the veil between lover and lover.

* * * * *

Every man loves two women; the one is the creation of his imagination, and the other is not yet born.

* * * * *

Men who do not forgive women their little faults will never enjoy their great virtues.

* * * * *

Love that does not renew itself every day becomes a habit and in turn a slavery.

* * * * *

Lovers embrace that which is between them rather than each other.

* * * * *

Love and doubt have never been on speaking terms.

* * * * *

Love is a word of light, written by a hand of light, upon a page of light.



EDITORIAL COMMENT

WHAT THE SYRIAN WORLD REPRESENTS

THE SYRIAN WORLD is not the product of an impulse; nor is it designed to be a mere instrument of gain. It is the child of an ideal, a physical expression of a spiritual desire to serve and to preserve. The service, on the one hand, is to be in the dual role of bringing to the young Americans of Syrian origin a finer appreciation of their spiritual heritage and racial culture, and of providing a medium for a deeper understanding by the general American public of these inherent Syrian qualities; while on the other hand, the desire to preserve would follow as the natural result of the eagerness to serve. But service must have a plan and a goal. The goal here is the preservation of that priceless racial heritage which comes to us as the legacy of centuries of culture and advanced civilization, which if properly appraised and carefully nurtured, will bloom into greater glory with the opportunities at hand. This we take to be our most distinctive racial contribution to our adopted country.

After all, the New World was settled by immigration from the Old World, and regardless of the date of our coming and of our ethnologic extractions, we all should feel the necessity of giving the best that is in us to the country that withholds from us nothing in the way of opportunities.

It was on these basic considerations that the SYRIAN WORLD was brought into being, and, as is expected of every basically class enterprise, it had to undergo the test of time and the trial of struggle for the establishment of its ideal. Its days of trial are not yet past.

The SYRIAN WORLD is now in the early stages of its sixth year. Before the conclusion of its fifth year we held a symposium on the necessity of continuing it, and in case this should be found advisable, whether its name should be changed so as to lift it from the sphere of a strictly class publication and thereby insure for it more public appeal. The verdict of public opinion was to continue it under its present name.

Those responding to our appeal for an expression of opinion were agreed on the question that the publication was not receiving the share of public support which it deserves. They were hopeful that with its continuation sufficient public sentiment might be aroused

to render the enterprise self-supporting, if not profitable.

To arouse this sentiment is now our immediate aim. We do not advance any claims of popularity because that would be misleading. Nor do we care to win popularity in its accepted meaning at the expense of deteriorating our standard. As announced in the first issue of our sixth year we shall concede to the demand of popularity only insofar that it shall not be interpreted as a recession from our main ideal.

To that end we have readjusted our editorial policy to what we believe is a great step towards meeting popular demand. This has been achieved so far by creating a number of new departments in charge of most capable associate editors who are proving themselves unsparing in the contribution of their time and talent towards the ideal for which the publication stands. Other improvements, both editorially and in the typographical presentation, will be introduced gradually and progressively.

This, if at all, should be interpreted as an advance and not a recession. It is in keeping with what we consider to be our duty in the promotion of the ideal underlying the publication of the SYRIAN WORLD.

A NEW POETRY DEPARTMENT

Edited by Barbara Young

WE ARE happy to announce the introduction with this issue of a poetry department conducted by no less a figure in the American literary world than Barbara Young.

Not only recently, but since the first year of the publication of the SYRIAN WORLD, Miss Young has been an occasional contributor to our pages. To have her now as a constant contributor and an associate editor is, we feel confident, what our readers will concede to be a distinct privilege.

Miss Young will be appreciated not only for her intrinsic poetical merit and fine literary discernment, but also for her genuine love for Eastern culture in general, and particularly for her partiality towards all that is of Syria and Lebanon. Because of her deep feeling of that sense of spiritual kinship that attracts and binds her to all that is of those ancient lands, she asserts with pride and sincerity, "My heart is Lebanese."

Miss Young will be remembered as the friend and biographer of our beloved countryman, Kahlil Gibran. In a former issue of the SYRIAN WORLD we reproduced a short biographical sketch, more in the nature of a literary appraisal, by her of our immortal poet which had been published in a large number of American papers throughout the United States. Since Gibran's death she has compiled a more extensive biographical account of him which will be published in brochure form and is announced for release about November 15. She most assuredly is the one person best qualified for such a task, and her work should prove authentic and authoritative. She now is the literary executrix of Gibran and had been his literary associate for many years before his death. It is a task of devotion she has undertaken for which Gibran's countrymen owe her a debt of undying gratitude.

We heartily welcome Miss Young to our family circle. And from her department, as may be expected, shall "flow the wine that shall exalt the spirit," to make fitting use of her own words.

DECORATIONS

A NAME shall permanently adorn the pages of the SYRIAN WORLD and the name is that of the gifted American artist, Margery Haney, who has implied volumes in the exquisite sketches she has drawn for some of our titles. In this issue we introduce two of the drawings, "Poetry" and "Our Younger Generation". The former is a canvas replete with fine original conception and symbolism; the latter, a masterly visualization of Gibran's immortal message to Young Americans of Syrian origin wherein he says: "It is to stand before the towers of New York, Washington, Chicago and San Francisco saying in your heart, 'I am the descendant of a people that builded Damascus, and Biblus, and Tyre and Sidon, and Antioch, and now I am here to build with you, and with a will.'"

More of Mrs. Haney's work will appear later. She has contributed materially towards the artistic decoration of the magazine. She, like her mother, is generous in her sympathetic appreciation of the East. Her mother is Barbara Young.



Questions and Answers

IRAQIS AND SYRIANS

A Question on the Iraqis' Origin Answered by Professor Hitti.

THE QUESTION

Submitted by David Zail, Los Angeles, Calif.

What is the race, (not nationality) of those born and reared in Iraq? Although both speaking the same Arabic tongue, it stands to reason, as is generally held, that a person born in Mosul or Bagdad who has never been in Syria, is not a Syrian.

THE ANSWER

By Professor Philip K. Hitti, of Princeton University.

The people of al-'Iraq are Semites. The original stock—whether Babylonian, Assyrian, Chaldaean or Aramaean—was mixed with the later Arab stock; but all these peoples were branches of one family, the Semitic family, which comprised, in addition to all that, the Hebrews and the Phoenicians. The 'Iraqis are not a race, nor are the Syrians. To speak of a Syrian race is wrong. The Syrians are a separate nationality, and so are the 'Iraqis. The basis of classification in nationality is political; in race it is biological. Even when we speak of the Semitic "race" we are stretching the meaning of the term "race" to include all those historical peoples who spoke or still speak a Semitic tongue: Arabic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Assyro-Babylonian, Aramaean, etc; but we have no assurance that these peoples were all descended from the same ancestors. Strictly speaking, "Semites" and "Semitic" are linguistic terms. The word "race" therefore should be used very sparingly, and scientifically speaking, the race to which the 'Iraqis, Syrians, Arabs, etc. belong is the white race.

Editor's Note—Scientifically speaking, Professor Hitti's restriction of the use of the term "race" is admittedly correct. The term, however, has come to be used in a much broader sense, especially in the United States. The American government classifies immigration by "races" applying the term to all distinct groups of immigrants coming from given countries. Hence "Syrian Race," "American Race" etc; are explicitly used.

As inferred by Prof. Hitti, the Syrians and the 'Iraqis are two distinct nationalities. Hence a person born in 'Iraq is not a Syrian. Nor are all those speaking the Arabic tongue Syrians. Almost all the Arabic-speaking element in the United States is of Syrian origin, but this is no indication of Arabic-speaking peoples elsewhere.

Political Developments in Syria

SYRIAN NATIONALISTS INSIST ON REPUBLIC

Refuse All Forms of Compromise and Adhere to the Constitution of 1927

The Syrian Question seems as far as ever from a solution. The French are said to have laid a program which is expected to be acceptable to all the Syrian factions, but the exact nature of the French proposals has not been learned. There is one Syrian faction, however, that has anticipated the new French declaration of policy by flatly rejecting any form of government for Syria that will not conform to its platform. That faction is the Nationalist bloc which is admittedly the strongest party now in the political field in Syria. From this quarter the French High Commissioner may expect much trouble in whatever attempt he might make to settle the Syrian Question upon his return from Paris.

The Syrian Nationalist Party held a convention in Damascus in the middle of September to discuss their stand upon the reported intentions of the French to give Syria a monarchical form of government and establish one of the sons of the late King Hussein of Arabia on the throne. At the conclusion of the deliberations Hashem Bey Al-Atasi, Nationalist leader and former President of the Constituent Assembly, gave a press interview in which he declared that the unalterable decision of the Party representatives was to stand by the

Constitution adopted in 1927 by the Constituent Assembly as the only legal representative body elected by the people. This constitution declared for a Republican form of government for Syria.

Some Syrian papers, however, stated on the authority of a prominent Syrian Nationalist leader that the decision of the Nationalists might be amended if a king can win for the country more political rights than they have been able so far to win themselves in their bargaining with France.

The Syrian press gives special emphasis to the fact that the Nationalists' declaration followed immediately upon the return of King Feisal of Iraq from Europe. This is taken to indicate that they were in receipt of authentic information that the new French policy revolved upon making a monarchy of Syria and establishing former King Ali of Arabia, a brother of King Feisal, on the throne. King Feisal, while in Europe, had numerous conferences not only with several high French officials but with a number of prominent Syrian leaders who met him by special appointment in Vienna.

In other quarters the Nationalist declaration is taken as an indication not so much of the improbability of establishing a monarchy in Syria as of the impossibility so far of King Feisal and the Syrian Nationalists reaching an understanding. The effect of these latest developments has been to further confuse the political situation in Syria which has resisted all efforts at settlement for the last

twelve years.

As has been previously reported, the solution now being considered by France for the Syrian Question is to give Syria a wide latitude of independence and enter into treaty relations with it similar to those existing between Great Britain and Iraq. But before any of the proposed conditions are made public an undercurrent of dissatisfaction is now evident among the Syrian population especially as regards the national army. According to the special correspondent of *Al-Ahram* of Cairo in Beirut, whatever form Syrian independence might take conscription is inevitable, as there would be little hope of raising an adequate army by the volunteer recruiting system. The Syrians are said not to have had undergone such compulsory service for centuries and they would naturally balk at conscription. On the other hand, France's greatest inducement for relinquishing her hold on Syria would be the assurance of having in the latter a strong ally, possessing an army capable of national defense, as otherwise France would be at a disadvantage in maintaining a large army in Syria for the protection of its territorial integrity against foreign enemies while enjoying no adequate political advantages in return.

There is, besides, the question of military co-operation between Syria and the Republic of Lebanon in national emergencies. This is expected to prove another stumbling block in any effort to settle the Syrian Question.

COMING ELECTIONS IN LEBANESE REPUBLIC

There are no less than eighteen prospective candidates for the Presidency of Lebanon in the forthcoming elections of 1932. It is now evident that President Charles Dabbas will not be a candidate for a third term, and the scramble for the office has re-

solved itself into a free for all affair. There seems to be an understanding, however, that the office this time will fall to a Maronite, inasmuch as representation in Lebanon is still based on denominational considerations.

With High Commissioner Ponsot still absent in Paris, the Lebanese are now mainly occupied with internal affairs. The only important incident was the flurry caused by the supposed declaration of Emile Eddy, one of the more prominent Presidential candidates, that the logical solution of the differences between Syria and Lebanon was for the latter to cede the port of Tripoli to Syria and thereby help create of Lebanon a preponderantly Christian country. This was later emphatically denied, but it tended to show the undercurrent of sentiment prevalent in the country.

The little Republic is grappling with a serious internal problem, that of balancing its budget. Despite the insistence of the native government to have the French High Commissariat pay to it its proportionate share of the customs' proceeds, the latter refuses to make any inroads on the reserve it has decided to maintain, with the consequence that the Lebanese government had to devise other means of meeting the deficit. Its first step was to decide on reducing by 10 per cent. the salaries of small officials, but this aroused such cries of protest from press and public that the reduction was made to apply to all government functionaries, from the president down. The attack of the press was directed principally against the members of the Legislative Assembly who long have been accused of exploiting the public treasury for their own personal gain, to the extent of exempting their personal property from taxation. This victory of the people over those whom the press calls profiteers was received with a good deal of elation.

THE SYRIAN WORLD

NEWS SECTION

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FINDS CLUES IN SYRIA TO CITY OF 1931 B.C.

French Archaeologist Believes In-
scriptions Are Earliest Known
Literary Efforts.

TABLETS 3,300 YEARS OLD

How the history and arts of a vanished people who flourished in 1931 B.C. is being pieced together and corroborated through legends of forgotten wars told in unknown tongues was related Oct. 9 before the French Academy of Inscriptions by Professor F. A. C. Schaeffer of the University of Strasboroug, who reported on the third season's excavations of the royal tombs at Minet-el-Beida and Ras-Shamra in Northern Syria, according to a special cable dispatch to the New York Times from Paris on Oct. 9.

A wealth of new finds has been made this year by a mission representing the French Academy, the National Museum and the Ministry of Education, which a year ago attracted the world interest of archaeologists by the discovery of what was thought to be the world's oldest dictionary, inscribed on stone tablets in six languages, two of which were previously unknown.

These tablets came from a library attached to the Ras-Shamra sanctuary, dating from the thirteenth or

fourteenth century before Christ. More of these texts, unearthed this year, have added interest, constituting what probably are the earliest efforts in literature and poetry thus far brought to light.

"These new texts," said professor Schaeffer, "are composed of words in two languages and divided into syllables, and they belong to a series of epic poems written on large tablets in several columns. They form a very valuable addition to the episodes of the astonishing poems read before this academy by M. Virolleaud, their translator, who has shown their great importance as regards Semitic philology and the history of religions.

"Several of these tablets were found incorporated in masonry of an ancient construction, which indicated they had already been discarded as texts and which gives us hope that we shall later find texts even more ancient than these and probably dating as far back as twenty centuries before the Christian era." Professor Schaeffer's expedition brought back a large number of several thousand art objects, utensils and images unearthed this season. Important among these were six curious necklaces in multi-colored glass, each bearing pendants of an unidentified nude goddess, done in hammered gold.

"What greatly increases their interest," Professor Schaeffer said, "is the fact that each is in a different

form, showing the strange goddess, from the simplest kind of representation down through various stages of perfection until done with the greatest faithfulness to nature.

"In one of these representations she is shown standing on the back of a lion on whose shoulder is placed a rosette or solar sign. The goddess is wearing a Hathorian headdress and holds two bouquets in her hands, and from her lips spring serpents in a manner which recalls the famous goddess entwined with serpents found at Gnossus.

"Three different techniques of workmanship are found in these pendants, which resemble in style relics found in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Crete and Anatolia. I would not hesitate to recognize in this figure the divine Astarte, if the epic poetry on the tablets at Ras-Shamra did not reveal the pantheon of a goddess whose attributes were similar, and for that reason I deem it prudent to reserve identification until they are further investigated."

In the excavations at Minet-el-Beida, on the site of an ancient harbor, where these necklaces were found, no human bones have yet been discovered, but, because of the richness of the art objects, jars, vases and utensils found, the investigators believe they surround the tomb of some extremely distinguished princess whose burial place will be found intact during the later researches.

More than four hundred objects unearthed this season have been brought back by the expedition, including what are believed to be vanity boxes and beauty accoutrements of that princess. These consist, said Professor Schaeffer, of a score of elegant little flasks and vases in alabaster of an Egyptian type, together with a number of little boxes for cosmetics, done in ivory, whose covers all are

carved with the head of a water fowl finely executed.

At Ras-Shamra was found the effigy of a princess identified by inscriptions as of the royal house of Egypt, Princess Chnoumit Nofre, whose tomb had been discovered near the pyramid of Amenemhat II at Dahshur. This statuette evidently had been willfully shattered, probably by hordes, who, coming from Asia Minor in the eighteenth century B.C. conquered Syria and Palestine and finally Egypt, which had dominated this region of Syria.

Further confirmation of this invasion was found in evidences of the partial burning and destruction of the tombs and a sanctuary at this date.

"This damage at Ras-Shamra probably was a consequence of an invasion by the sea people of the Syrian coast in the thirteenth century B.C. who were beaten back from the Egyptian frontier by the armies of Rameses III," said Professor Schaeffer. "These invaders probably used the city as a base for operations and only demolished Egyptian sanctuary, as would be indicated by the discovery we made of several rude native images left intact. The city never recovered its importance and probably was definitely destroyed in the course of the thirteenth century by the Assyrians."

TURKEY PLEASED WITH PROPOSED SYRIAN SETTLEMENT

Reports from Angora indicate that the Turks are highly elated at the prospects of France granting Syria complete independence because that would relieve them of the worry of having to contend with a strong neighbor. They claim to entertain no further designs on Syria, but with France out of the country they feel that their Syrian border would require less of their attention for purposes of defense.

SYRIANS OF CAROLINAS GATHER AT COLUMBIA

A spirit of solidarity and co-operation seems lately to have been awakened among the Syrians throughout the United States. They are holding gatherings and festivals in widely-scattered sections. But what is more significant is that they are harkening to the appeal of patriotic organizations to form their ranks and learn to work collectively for the betterment of their standing.

In the preceding issue of the *Syrian World* we had accounts of three extensive group meetings in widely scattered sections. The Mahrajans of Bridgeport, Conn. and Detroit, Mich. under the auspices of the Lebanon League of Progress of New York, and the convention of Syrian societies in the Southwest sponsored by the Young Men's Amusement Club of Port Arther, Texas, were notable events; while the forthcoming convention of Syrian societies in the Eastern States to be held at Lawrence, Mass., promises to be well attended.

We are now pleased to copy from a local paper of Columbia, S. Carolina the following account of a Syrian gathering which took place in that city on Sept. 6 last.

The Syrian-American society of Columbia, S.C. was host on Sept. 6, 1931 to about 500 Syrians from all over the State of South Carolina and of North Carolina.

This gathering, held at Dunaway's Place, near Pontiac, was for the purpose of fostering good-will and fellowship among the Syrian citizens of South Carolina and North Carolina.

George Wackym was master of ceremonies for the occasion, and introduced the president of the Syrian-American society, E. S. Mack of Lexington, who delivered the welcoming address on behalf of the Syrian-American society of Columbia. The

aim and object of this society was fully explained by President Mack, who said this society, the first organized in South Carolina, was the result of several years' work.

An address of welcome in the Syrian language was made by Miss Olga Hykil. Interesting talks were made by G. M. Hykil, vice president of Syrian-American society, and B. J. Baroody of Timmons ville, who spoke on "Syria, Past and Present, and Its Contribution to Civilization." The founder of the Syrian-American society, and its past president, S. A. Sabbagha, was then introduced, and he explained that his ambition of several years had become a reality in organizing the society which was functioning in an excellent manner. Interesting talks were also made by N. Arrab of Florence, and J. J. Bashere of Charleston.

Dinner was then served after which Syrian music was rendered by a quartet. Swimming and boat-riding was enjoyed by the younger set.

The officers for 1931-1932 are: E. S. Mack, president; G. M. Hykil, vice president; S. Koosa, secretary; George Wackym, treasurer, and J. S. Mack, F. A. Masad and S. N. Bar-koot, trustees.

CHARITABLE EXPENDITURES OF SYRIAN SOCIETY

The published report of the Virgin Mary Conference of St. Vincent de Paul Society, attached to the Virgin Mary Syrian Melchite Catholic Church of Brooklyn, covering the fiscal year of June 1, 1930 to May 31, 1931, shows receipts of \$3,900 and expenditures of \$2,948. Receipts were from individual contributors and the proceeds of dances and entertainments. The report, published in Arabic by the Syrian-American Press, lists all the individual contributions received.

SYRIAN JOURNALIST BECOMES FLORIST

Business is bad with the Syrian papers in the United States. On previous occasions we referred to the recurrent complaints of the editors about the delinquency of subscribers in remitting their dues. We mentioned also that several papers had to reduce their size for reasons of economy. Now the first casualty has occurred by the *As-Sayeh's* implied admission of defeat in the struggle against the adversity of the times. *As-Sayeh* has suspended publication for well over half a year.

If hope springs eternal, there are those who still entertain the notion that *As-Sayeh* will some day resume publication. The paper had an interesting and colorful career. It was at first a weekly, then graduated to a semi-weekly, and for some time joined the ranks of daily newspapers. It was in the habit of publishing each year a special number to which many prominent literateurs in Syria, Egypt and the United States contributed. Gibran had taken *As-Sayeh* under his patronage.

What portends ill for *As-Sayeh*, but should augur a prosperous future for its publisher, Mr. A. Haddad, is the fact that the latter decided to turn florist, catering the natural, fragrant and apparently the useful and needed article in lieu of the poorly appreciated intellectual product. We are in receipt of a circular letter in which he makes the announcement that he has joined the florist shop of Santomarco at 6914 Fort Hamilton Parkway, Brooklyn. The language he uses is frank and flowery. After describing the artistic qualifications of his Italian partner he turns to himself and says: "As for myself, I have been intrigued by the fascination of this profession which now I am studying seriously. It has for me the appeal

of the fragrance and the delicate coloring of the flowers. In the meantime, I attend to the actual management of the establishment."

There are only a few instances when the newspaper profession among the Syrians proved to be a paying one, and for Mr. Haddad to have renounced it is no reflection on his ability. He has our best wishes for a flowery and fragrant future.

RELIEF MOVEMENTS AMONG U. S. SYRIANS

Meraat-Ul-Gharb, a Syrian daily of New York, is vigorously agitating for the creation of a national Syrian committee in the United States to take care of relief work during the coming winter. It emphasizes the fact that the Syrians were never public charges during their whole record in America, and advocates the maintenance of this record by having a relief body composed of themselves to take care of their own needy this coming winter. Undoubtedly there would be a number of Syrians who would feel the weight of distress which has fallen heavily on the country, but it is now proposed that they should help themselves instead of depending on general relief agencies. No tangible result has yet developed from this press campaign.

The Syrian Ladies' Aid Society of New York, an old organization engaged in charitable work, receives funds which it employs judiciously in helping needy families. Its funds were recently augmented by a sum of \$1,291 representing half of the proceeds of a benefit performance which the committee of Al-Kalemat, an Aleppian organization, gave last season.

The St. Nicholas Young Men's Society of New York has announced its willingness to devote half of the

proceeds of an entertainment which it is giving on Oct. 17 towards public relief.

PATRIARCHATE QUESTION REMAINS UNSETTLED

The Orthodox Church of Syria has made little progress in its efforts to solve the knotted problem arising from the election of two incumbents to the same office. Lately the French authorities of the High Commissariat are reported to have taken a constructive step towards a settlement by inviting the two Patriarchs to appoint each two members of a mixed ecclesiastical tribunal invested with authority to settle church litigation. Patriarch Arsanius of Latakia, refused to be a party to this arrangement on the ground that he alone is the legally elected Patriarch and should exercise supreme authority.

The Orthodox Arabs of Palestine are still agitating for the election of a native Patriarch to succeed the demised Greek Patriarch. The movement has spread to the United States and has been given a purely racial turn, since Christians and Moslems of Grand Haven, Mich., united in petitioning the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem to exert his influence in bringing about the election of a Patriarch who would be Arab "body and soul."

LEBANESE IN URUGUAY HIGHLY ESTEEMED

An exchange of courtesies has been going apace lately between the Western republic of Uruguay and the Eastern republic of Lebanon. The cause of this extreme cordiality is the high position of esteem which the Lebanese community in Uruguay enjoys with the people and the govern-

ment of the South American republic.

On Sept. 1, a new school was dedicated in Montevideo, the Uruguayan capital, which was named the "School of the Lebanese Republic." The President of Uruguay in person attended the ceremony and complimented highly in his address the civic virtues of the Lebanese community. He touched on the fact that because of the high esteem in which the Lebanese are held by the government of Uruguay the latter decided some time ago to name one of its principal streets after the republic of Lebanon, a compliment which the latter graciously returned by naming one of the streets of its capital, Beirut, after the republic of Uruguay. Now Uruguay wants to further prove its love for Lebanon by naming one of its new school after it.

Representing the Lebanese Republic at the ceremony was the French Minister in Uruguay and a number of local Lebanese notables, one of whom made a fitting response to the address of the President.

During the exercises, according to reports, 150 pupils of the new school sang in chorus the Lebanese anthem in the Arabic language, a gesture of extreme friendliness which highly touched the hearts of the Lebanese, in view of the fact that the pupils were natives.

Commenting on this latter incident, *The Sphinx*, a Lebanese paper of South America, expresses surprise that the American University of Beirut has never shown such courtesy to Lebanon although located in the Lebanese capital. We doubt that the criticism is deserved, and an explanation of the attitude of the American University of Beirut by one of its faculty or alumni will be cheerfully given space in the *Syrian World*.

FATHER KILLS DAUGHTER TO AVENGE HIS HONOR

Aleppo was the scene of a cruel murder whose victim was a young woman killed by the hand of her own father. The details of the gruesome tragedy can hardly be duplicated in the wildest fiction.

As reported by the Syrian press, Fatoum, daughter of one Mahmoud Moakeh, went to live with a certain Taher Hafiz as his common-law wife. Fearing the wrath of her father, she cautioned Hafiz against admitting him to the house, and for further security the two went to live in a distant quarter.

The father soon found himself unable to stand the jeers and disdainful looks of the neighbors and decided to leave the city. He was all the while, however, making secret inquiries for the whereabouts of his daughter until he located her, his two sons in the native police assisting in the search.

One day the father called at his daughter's house and was admitted by the brother of her lover who did not suspect his motive. The daughter remained in hiding until she felt sure by her father's attitude that he intended no harm. When finally she appeared in the reception room the parent returned her greeting with apparent affability, but a few moments later he asked for a glass of water which the lover's brother hastened to go out to bring. But during the brief moments that he was absent the father savagely attacked his daughter with a dagger, inflicting mortal wounds. The other man, upon his return, raised an alarm and immediately two policemen appeared at the door and seized the murderer red-handed. They conducted him safely through a howling mob until they reached a secluded spot in the outskirts, and there set him at liberty. They were his two sons who had wait-

ed at the door by prearrangement and had encouraged their father to do the deed that would blot out the family shame with blood.

ARMENIANS IN SYRIA A VEXING PROBLEM

Although welcomed after the war as refugees and guests of the country, the Armenians in Syria and Lebanon now present a serious problem. Due to their native industry and extreme necessity, they have competed with native labor in such manner as to cause general complaint. The French mandatory authorities and the native governments are expected, furthermore, to contribute to the support and maintenance of these strange guests, and now that the economic depression is acutely felt in the country, the Armenians are viewed in the light of an unnecessary national burden.

When, therefore, reports were circulated that negotiations were set on foot to transfer the Armenians now in Syria to Soviet Armenia, the Syrians hailed the news with a sigh of relief. Of the Armenians now in Lebanon alone, it was stated, 3,000 have already signified their assent to the transfer.

OTTOMAN PRINCESS BURIED IN SYRIA

On Sept. 25 the body of the Turkish Princess Saniha arrived at Beirut and was sent by train to Damascus for burial in the cemetery of Sultan Salim. The Princess is the daughter of Sultan Abdul Majid, last of the Turkish sultans who saw his dynasty swept away by the tide of Turkish democracy. She died in Nice, on the French Riviera, and her grave will adjoin that of her uncle Sultan Wahid Ud Din.

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A biographical sketch by BARBARA YOUNG, American poet, who was closely associated with Gibran and is now his literary executor, will be published about November 15.

This story of the great son of Lebanon, "The Poet of the Cedars," will appear in the form of a brochure, and will contain a wealth of detail concerning this rich life, illustrated with hitherto unpublished photographs of the poet.

The first edition will be limited to 250 copies, serially numbered, and autographed by the author.

Orders for this edition will be filled as received, and may be sent in advance of publication either to the office of THE SYRIAN WORLD, or to the author, at The Gibran Studio, 51 West 10th. Street, New York City.

The price of the brochure, First Edition, will be \$2.50.

Gibran's Message To Young Americans of Syrian Origin

By G. K. GIBRAN

Author of "The Prophet,"
"Jesus the Son of Man,"
etc.



(Written Especially for
The Syrian World)
Reprinted from the First Issue of
The Syrian World, July, 1926

I believe in you, and I believe in your destiny.
I believe that you are contributors to this new civilization.
I believe that you have inherited from your forefathers an ancient dream, a song, a prophecy, which you can proudly lay as a gift of gratitude upon the lap of America.

I believe you can say to the founders of this great nation, "Here I am, a youth, a young tree, whose roots were plucked from the hills of Lebanon, yet I am deeply rooted here, and I would be fruitful."

And I believe that you can say to Abraham Lincoln, the blessed, "Jesus of Nazareth touched your lips when you spoke, and guided your hand when you wrote: and I shall uphold all that you have said and all that you have written."

I believe that you can say to Emerson and Whitman and James, "In my veins runs the blood of the poets and wise men of old, and it is my desire to come to you and receive, but I shall not come with empty hands."

I believe that even as your fathers came to this land to produce riches, you were born here to produce riches by intelligence, by labor.

And I believe that it is in you to be good citizens.

And what is it to be a good citizen?

It is to acknowledge the other person's rights before asserting your own, but always to be conscious of your own.

It is to be free in thought and deed, but it is also to know that your freedom is subject to the other person's freedom.

It is to create the useful and the beautiful with your own hands, and to admire what others have created in love and with faith.

It is to produce wealth by labor and *only* by labor, and to spend less than you have produced that your children may not be dependent on the state for support when you are no more.

It is to stand before the towers of New York, Washington, Chicago and San Francisco saying in your heart, "I am the descendant of a people that builded Damascus, and Biblus, and Tyre and Sidon, and Antioch, and now I am here to build with you, and with a will."

It is to be proud of being an American, but it is also to be proud that your fathers and mothers came from a land upon which God laid His gracious hand and raised His messengers.

Young Americans of Syrian origin, I believe in you.

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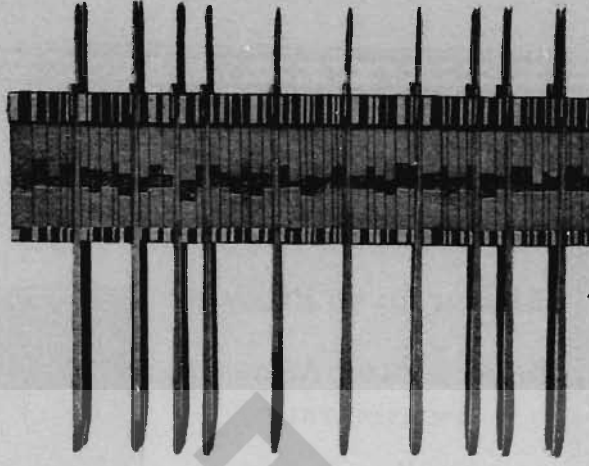
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