THE SYRIAN WORLD

MAY, 1927

PU

By sub

Ente

VOL.

The

The

My

Syria

A Sta

The

The

THE SYRIAN WORLD

SALLOUM A. MOKARZEL, *Editor.*

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE SYRIAN-AMERICAN PRESS

104 GREENWICH STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

By subscription $5.00 a year. **Single copies 50c.**

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

VOL. I. No. 11. MAY, 1927.

Contents

PAGE

The Religious Problem in the East—The Case of Rashayya 3
By S. A. M.

The Beauty of Beirut 8

My Lebanon 10
By EDNA K. SALOMEY

Syrian Folk Songs (I Wandered Among the Mountains) 11
Translation by KAHLIL GIBRAN

A Stanza of Moulaya 12
Translation by S. A. M.

The Arabic Sources of Dante — II 13
By PHILIP K. HITTI, PH. D.

The Sympathy of the Moon 17
By DR. SALIM Y. ALKAZIN

CONTENTS *(Continued)*.

PAGE

Harun al-Rashid and the Potter 18

The World of the Arabian Nights 19
By H. I. KATIBAH

The Lion in the Orchard (An Arabian Nights' Story) 24

Foiling a Despot — A Matter of Interpretation 26

Irrigation in Syria and Lebanon 27

Famous Cities of Syria (Antioch) 29

How Poets Stand 34

Agriculture in the Near East 35

Excellent Reply — Prestige Unbounded 38

Notes and Comments 39
By THE EDITOR

Spirit of the Syrian Press 44

Readers' Forum 47

Discussing a Racial Problem 52

Political Developments in Syria 57

About Syria and Syrians 59

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THIS ISSUE

A Syrian Joan of Arc.

In the Wake of Battle in Syria.

Four Illustrations of Dante's Divine Comedy

Antioch as it is now.

Relics of Old Glory.

THE
SYRIAN WORLD

VOL. I. No. 11. MAY, 1927.

The Religious Problem in the East

The Case of Rashayya

When Emperor William II of Germany visited Syria in 1898, and there posed as the friend and protector of Islam, he stood, while in Damascus, at the tomb of the great Saladin, who crushed the power of the Crusaders in the East, and gave utterance to these ominous words:

"The Christians of the East must either embrace Islam or leave the country to the Moslems."

In the light of recent events, one would be inclined to believe that the words of the German Emperor were prophetic. The religious struggle in the East continues to wax as fierce now as it ever did in the middle ages. Seemingly political, social and economic problems may be found, upon close analysis, to spring from purely religious differences. Syria, in particular, which has given the world the two monotheistic religions claiming the greatest number of followers, is still the scene of a continuous drama whose theme is the perennial and ever-recurring religious question. Religion seems to be in that country the axis upon which revolves all human activities and with which is inalienably involved the whole social fabric, from the family, to the clan, to the whole nation. Wars without number have been waged on the soil of Syria prompted primarily by religious differences — beginning with Judaism and ending with Islam. Cataclysmic changes have been wrought at various times in history by the titanic struggles engaged in on Syrian territory for the imposition or the defense of religious views. Everywhere and at all

times it has been in Syria the eternal struggle over religion, and this seems to have left its indelible mark through all successive generations on the population of the country, culminating in what we see now taking place, although on a minor scale, of the outburst of religious hatreds which, to an outsider, would not seem possible in this age of professed religious tolerance.

It is not the purpose in this short article to go into the history of the whole religious question in the East, whether past or present. The Crusades are matters of common knowledge, and the massacres of Armenian and Syrian Christians in modern times, especially the sad plight of the former, have been brought dramatically and in all their gruesome details to the attention of the civilized world. It has been proven beyond the peradventure of a doubt that the policy of the former Turkish regime was bent on exterminating the Armenian race so as to eliminate it as a cause of political complications. Underlying this policy were the deeply rooted religious differences which made the two races utterly incompatible to live together. The Greeks of Asia Minor occupied a similar position. Witness the cruel and unheard of arrangement of the exchange of populations.

But the purpose is to bring the problem nearer home to the Syrians and to carry the action even to our present day. This we find in the case of Rashayya which continues even to this very hour to be a burning issue in the politics of Syria and which furnishes the latest and the most vivid illustration in recent times of the centuries-old, bitter struggle between Christianity and Islam in the East.

Rashayya had been, previous to the fateful days of the Fall of 1925, a thriving, prosperous and populous town in the plain which separates Lebanon proper from Mt. Hermon in the southeastern part of the Lebanon Republic. Prior to the present political division of Syria, Rashayya came under the jurisdiction of the Vilayat, or State, of Syria, otherwise the State of Damascus. Its award to Lebanon was in consideration of the fact that it came within the limits of what was claimed to be Lebanon's natural boundaries. This arrangement was brought about as recently as 1920, under the regime of Gen. Gouraud.

The population of the town, consisting of about 3,000, was composed of Christians and Druzes in about equal numbers. During the massacres of 1860, the Christians of Rashayya, like their coreligionists in other sections, did not escape the vengeance of their enemies.

The first successes of the Druzes in their present revolution emboldened them to violate Lebanese territory and to carry the struggle into a State other than their own in the hope of driving the French out of the country. They attacked Rashayya along with many other border towns. The Druzes of the town joined forces with the invaders and sacked and burned the place so that not a house remained intact nor an article saved. The Christians who escaped with their lives fled, destitute, to Zahle, Beirut, and other Lebanese cities, where they have been ever since a charge on public charity, principally on contributions from their relatives in America.

The small French garrison, however, held out against the fierce attacks of the invaders in the old fortress where it had been joined by about fifty volunteers from among the Christians of the town. It had been reduced to the last extremity when relief came. Robert Poulaine, the special correspondent of the New York Times on the scene, in a dispatch published by the Times on Nov. 25, 1925, thus describes this action:

> ".....On the afternoon of Monday, the Druzes, desiring to take the fortress at Rashayya, made a vigorous attack and succeeded in penetrating the fortress itself, but the French forces by a rally equally strong, forced back the invading forces. Relieving attachments, by a forced march arrived just in time to prevent capture of the fortress which, despite fearless defense, would have soon been overwhelmed by superior numbers.
>
> "The relieving forces had not stopped for a whole day and night and upon the morning of the second day found themselves within sight of the besieged fortress. Despite the fact that they had not eaten for nearly twenty-four hours, the forces went into battle with a vigor and enthusiasm which soon compelled the Druzes to retreat. Soon afterwards, the French Air Forces arrived and flew over the village in advance of the victorious French forces.
>
> "This has equalled in dramatic intensity any of the relief expeditions in fighting against the Riffians."

In another dispatch published by the Times the day following, these further details were given:

> ".....The garrison at Rashayya was in an extremity when relieved yesterday, its ammunition having been shot

off to the last box of cartridges. The defenders who consisted of squadrons of Spahis and detachments of the Foreign Legion, fought at a great disadvantage. Though the walls of the fort were high they were contiguous to dwelling-houses — which permitted the attackers to approach with ladders by means of which they attempted to scale the walls in the true Mediæval style.....

"The scene inside the fort after the relief was a gruesome one. Druze corpses, many quite young boys, were lying all over the place and down the corridors, telling the tale of hand-to-hand fights, while the courtyard was a shambles where horses and men lay huddled in death."

It developed later that had it not been for the rare courage of a *khouriat*, or the wife of a Christian priest of the town, who braved the fire of the revolutionists and delivered to the besieged forces a message dropped from an airplane promising imminent relief, the garrison, in all probability, would have been forced to surrender. The khouriat was wounded in carrying out her brave act and was later hailed by the Lebanese as a modern Joan of Arc and was decorated by the French High Commissioner.

But all this only meant the saving of military prestige and not the saving of the town. The refugee population of Rashayya could not return to their homes because none were left and they could not rebuild because of their destitute condition which rendered them wholly dependent on charity. And thus they have been for almost two years hoping, but seemingly against hope, for some favorable development.

During all this time what has the mandatory power done for these unfortunates? Seemingly nothing. It has offered to rebuild the town and actually made an attempt to do so, but the Rashayyites refuse to return. They have asked what would practically amount to an application of the principle of the exchange of populations, insisting on either the whole town being conceded to them so that they may enjoy a certain sense of security against possible future attacks by their hereditary enemies, or that a new town be built for them further within Lebanese territory instead of at the outlying and exposed sections along the border. They hold that religious enmity is so deep, its recurring outbursts so disastrous, and their safety, in consequence, so insecure that sheer love of life would prevent them from accepting any other solution.

And for almost two years the Rashayyites have been frantically attempting to enlist the support of all political and religious agencies with apparently no result save an expression of abstract sympathy. They petitioned first, and repeatedly, the French authorities, then the heads of the Christian Churches of the East, and finally the League of Nations and the Pope, although they are not of the Catholic faith, but all this only seems to have embittered the French authorities against them, to the extent that a delegation appointed by them to lay their case directly before the French Government at Paris was refused permission to sail, and a pamphlet published in justification of their demands was confiscated.

Finally, in desperation, what do these unfortunates of Rashayya decide to do?

Here is the tragic rumor lately published by the Syrian press and loudly proclaiming the sinister turn which the Oriental mind takes in protracted differences of this nature. It is the most damning testimony as to the intolerable conditions still governing and influencing the lives of the people of the East:

"In order to insure security of life, the Christian people of Rashayya have decided to embrace Mohammedanism."

This rumor, it may well be added, has not been confirmed, but neither has it been denied. It has given rise to various comments in the Syrian press, but whatever may be the reaction of the different factions to it, the moral is obvious, evident and unmistakable. It stares us in the face. It proclaims the prevalence, even unto our very day, of the strong undercurrents of religious animosity which still wages war until death, so much so that the weaker faction does not feel life secure until it had capitulated to the stronger element. It is, in other words, not a matter of conviction, but a matter of expediency to avoid continuous strife.

To every thinking, rational person, this condition should not exist. That it exists is due only to the fact that the masses in the East are still swayed by passion and not by reason. This is all the more reason why they should be tutored until they reach that stage of political and social development when they would tolerate the liberty of others in their religious beliefs and personal convictions. Emperor William's dictum need not hold true as a finality, but its disproval will come only when national consciousness in the East will supersede religious intolerance, and when matters of religion will be conceded to be a sacred privilege of the individual.

S. A. M.

The Beauty of Beirut

A vivid description of the capital of Lebanon by an American correspondent.

As beautiful as Cleopatra is this city that for a time was Cleopatra's own. Framed by purple sea and snow-capped mountains, Beirut is in springtime a veritable Eden of glorious coloring, writes a correspondent of the Christian Science Monitor. From sky of deepest blue the sun shines down with crystal clearness on gay red roofs and gorgeous flowering trees and shrubs. The verdant green of the surrounding foothills is varied by dark clumps of pines and cheerful red-roofed villages crowding each ridge and summit. Whole slopes are colored with great sheets of flowers.

The honey-like scent of the vines perfumes the air, and their foliage glistens transparently in the clear light. Plantations of bananas and oranges extend across the little plain where St. George slew the dragon and cast him down a well. And southwards toward Sidon, a vast gray-green olive grove 'twixt sea and mountain is carpeted with anemones and cyclamens.

One day, with her present troubles ended, this fair city of the East will be famous as a resort. The French are fully alive to her charm, and for some time past have been taking steps to make her a second Cannes.

The streets and bazaars of the city are picturesque and full of interest, save where the French have razed large areas to make room for wide boulevards. The jostling crowds are for the most part handsome folk, smiling and friendly in their ways.

At every street corner tempting confections are hawked on trays mounted on tripod legs, ranging from ringshaped sesame cakes to delicious-looking flaky trifles drenched in sirup. Letter-writers and itinerant photographers there are in plenty, but not so many beggars as in other cities of the East. To watch the photographer's victim being posed is as joyous an entertainment as one could wish. A cloth is hung upon some convenient wall, usually with a large Persian design of female-headed serpents and lions with bristling manes. The victim — often a Bedouin from the Syrian Desert — braces his shoulders and the back of

his head against the wall and looks. A victim of the Inquisition could hardly have looked more upset! Then, the moment over, with an air of great bravado, he as often as not asks for his portrait straight out of the camera.

Go where you will, the streets are full of life and incident. In the wider thoroughfares camels with enormous bags of grain from the Hauran stride by with jingling bells, threading their way with lofty unconcern among clattering trams and swift-moving cars. Down in the harbor, merchandise is unloaded from the steamers in brightly colored boats, amidst much shouting, by longshoremen in baggy Turkish trousers and broad bright sashes.

Along the shore, bathing places alternate with delightful cafés built out on piles over the sea. And those visitors who know Beirut well always take their meals at one or other of these cafés instead of at a hotel. For there, while you eat good French cooked food to the strains of excellent music played by Russian refugees, there is an interesting and cosmopolitan crowd to watch. In the early evening well-to-do Syrians and Egyptian visitors foregather there; with their fingers they help themselves from a large array of tempting trifles, ranging from cucumber to pistachio nuts, olives to radishes and hard-boiled eggs.

If you lunch at one of these sea shore cafés, you can ofttimes watch mussel-divers at their work beneath the clear water, cutting the shellfish in bunches from the rocks. Each has his basket, which he leaves floating at the surface with a gourd attached to its handle to keep it the right way up. Sometimes the mussel-seeker also has a paraffin tin (that article of many uses!) with a piece of glass set in the bottom, through which to survey the sea-floor before he dives.

In Beirut, a typical city of the East though she is, American influence is very strong. Not only have a large number of her more educated men passed through the American University founded there in 1866 — lawyers, dentists and government servants in all the countries of the Nearer East claim Beirut University as their Alma Mater with the keenest pride — but to visit America has been for long a cherished ambition among the Syrians. In their independence and love of roaming, the Syrians of the coast towns seem to preserve the hardihood and trading instincts of their seafaring ancestors, the Phœnicians. And these emigrants, returning as they do in large numbers to their homes, bring back with them a strong leaning toward American ideals and customs.

Of the history of Beirut volumes could be written; it was a city of importance in those far-off days when the Pharaohs of Egypt held Syria to tribute. But of perhaps greater interest at the present moment is the memory of the great Druse leader, Fakhr ed-Din, who at the end of the sixteenth century defied the Turks, and, with the help of the Venetians, at that time a hardy seafaring people, set up an independent principality. An able leader and enlightened man, Fakhr ed-Din devoted himself to the fostering of trade. The great forests of pines to the south of Beirut are lasting memorials of his energy and wisdom; for they were planted by him to stay the encroachment of the sand-dunes that were sweeping in from the sea.

My Lebanon

By EDNA K. SALOMEY *

I dream of Lebanon by an azure sea;
Wave-kissed shores, and rocky glades;
Snowcaps on mountains, glistening gorgeously;
O sweet-scented pines' serenades.

I see a land laden with fruits of the earth;
A tropical jewel ablaze
With myriad flowers and wee children's mirth.
Rainbow sunsets prolong their days.

Purple dusk is tinted by a lustrous moon
And broidered with a million stars.
For lullabies — the sea plays a crooning tune
Of golden notes on silv'ry bars.

Blessed of Christ, O, Lebanon, my pæans
Echo the lyrics of sages.
Thy beauty is lovelier than gossamer dreams.
Thy glory shall crown all ages.

*** Miss Saloomey is an American-born Syrian girl in whom the call of the blood is manifested in such tender lays for the country of her parents as she gives expression to in this poem. She is at present a resident of Bridgeport, Conn., and her many interesting letters published in former issues have elicited much favorable comment. We welcome her to the ranks of our contributors.**

Syrian Folk Songs

I WANDERED AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

Translation by KAHLIL GIBRAN

سال دمعي

وطلعت راس الجبـل فتش على طيري والقيت طيري يا امي في قفص غيـري
خشخشت له بالذهب قلت لو يـا طيري قال لي زمـانك مضى فتش على غيري

قالوا حبيبك سخن والغـد راح يمـوت ونزلت سوق الخشب وصي على تابوت
وسكّرة من ذهب ومفتاحهـا ياقـوت واستعجبت المملكه شخصين في تابـوت

لابس قميص الشعـر اسود على حلـه بيشوّك الجسـم لا يرحم ابو الحلـه
لاروح لريس ديرو وبحكيـلو وبقـلو شوفه من الحبيب بتسـوى ديركم كله

من هو الذيما عشق من هو الذيما حب من هو الذي ما مشى في وسط قلبه الرب
شوفوا رمان البسـاتين متـلان حـب حتى نجوم السمـا من بعضهـا بتنحب

يا قلب حـاجي بكي يا قلب وسليهـم هم سلـوك يا قلـب وروح وسليهـم
وان كان يا قلب عندك قصـد تسليهم لاشلعك من صـديري كرامة بعينيهـم

يا اسمر السمر يا مـا عيروني فيـك وكلمـا عيروني زاد غـرامي فيـك
انت الورد على الطبق وانا الندى بسقيك وانت قميص الملس وانا الهوى برميك
وانت الثريا وانا الميـزان سايق فيك وانت القمر بالسما وانا النجوم برعيك

I wandered among the mountains searching for my lark,
And I found him, but alas! in another maiden's cage.
With the tinkling of gold I sought to allure him into my cage;
But she sang and said, "Go your way. Your day is forever by."

They said to me, "Your love is ill and wasted, and tomorrow he will die."
Then to a carpenter I went and ordered a coffin
Whose lock is of gold, and whose key of a ruby carved;
And tomorrow, how astonished the kingdom will be
When they behold two youths in but a single coffin!

My love now wears a black shirt woven of hair.
Like thorns it wounds his skin
Luckless may the weaver be;
And restless, the dyer!
Some day I shall seek the head of the monastery
And plead for my love;
Then I shall tell him that one glimpse of love
Is holier than all monasteries.

Who among you has not loved?
In what heart does God not walk?
See how close are the pomegranate seeds;
And behold the stars how near and loving!
Be quiet, my heart, and weep no more.
He has forgotten you;
Forget him, too. But should you forget him,
Then will I tear you out of my bosom!

O dark one, how often have I been blamed for your sake;
And each time I am blamed, my love grows stronger.
You are the rose, and I, the dew that refreshes you;
You are the silken garments and I, the wind that moves you;
You are the Pleiades, and I, Orion, following you;
You are the moon, and I, the stars that watch over you.

A STANZA OF MOULAYA

واطلع لراس الجبل واشرف على الوادي وبقـول يا مرحبـــا نسّم هوا بلادي
يا الله يطوف النهـر ويغرّق الوادي لاعمـل زنودي جسر وبقطّعـــك ليّ

I'll scale the mountain summit, and scan the vale below,
And hail the gentle breezes that from my country blow.
O, may the vale be flooded, and the raging torrent grow,
For then I'd make my arms a bridge for you to cross to me!

Translation of S. A. M.

The Arabic Sources of Dante

By PHILIP K. HITTI, PH. D.

II

Six hundred years before Dante conceived his marvelous poem, the *Divine Comedy*, there existed in Arabic a religious narrative describing the Nocturnal Journey of Muhammad *(al-isrâ')* from Mecca to Jerusalem followed by a flight to the nether and higher regions. The story grew around one verselet in the Qoran, the first of *surah* seventeen. In the course of time between the eighth and the thirteenth centuries of our era, Moslem traditionists, theologians, mystics, philosophers and poets collaborated and co-operated in building up the story. Chief among these was the Andalusian Muhyi-al-Din al-Arabi, who made an allegorical adaptation of the story, and the Syrian poet abu-al-'Ala al-Ma'arri who composed a literary interpretation of it. A comparison of these versions with Dante's epic reveals such striking resemblance that one is justified in calling it dependence. Dante drew from these preceding sources. The first scholar to call the attention of the learned world to this fact was Professor Asin of Madrid. This is the gist of the first installment which appeared in the last issue of THE SYRIAN WORLD.

In 1919 there appeared in Madrid a book entitled *La Escatologia Musulmana en la Divina Commedia* by Miguel Asin. Asin, himself a Catholic priest, claimed Christendom's greatest poet a *sufi* and linked him in a chain which defies destruction with the grand master of Islam, ibn-al-Arabi, whose name is still until this very hour a potent spiritual factor from Morocco to Teheran and from Damascus to Khartoum.

Asin's thesis, as to be expected, stirred up a hornet's nest. Dantists and Dante lovers all over Europe criticized him, some approvingly but more disapprovingly. Recognizing it as a great contribution to our knowledge of interrelation between Eastern and Western thought, the Duke of Alba, at the suggestion of Lord Balfour, has had the book translated a few months ago by Mr. Sunderland into English. There is no exaggeration, on our

part, in declaring this book one of the most stimulating and interesting works published in recent years. It is this authority which we have followed in these two articles.

* * * *

In determining the literary and intellectual dependence of one work upon another, three pertinent questions should be asked and answered satisfactorily. The first is one of similarity. Is the similarity so close as to preclude any other possibility but borrowing? The second is one of priority. Was the supposed model, or prototype, prior in time, preceding in date, to the supposed copy which followed it? Did the former exist before the appearance of the latter? The third question is one of accessibility. Could the later author have known the original? Was it accessible to a man in his time, place and position? And if so, is there anything in his mentality, as revealed in his writings, to encourage the supposition that he was sympathetic and responsive to such appeal as that may have upon him?

The first two questions have already been dealt with. We have seen that the similarity between the *Divine Comedy* and its Aarabic models was such as to exclude the possibility of declaring them as two independent or original works. We have also learned that both ibn -al-Arabi and al-Ma'arri lived before Dante and that the *Mi'raj* story in its many versions was extremely popular and widespread all over the Moslem world.

We now come to the third and remaining question. Was such material within the reach of Dante and could he have been responsive to its influence?

Dante Alighieri was born in Florence in 1265. His teacher, Brunetto Latini, acted as the ambassador of Florence to Toledo and Seville. For political reasons Dante was exiled from his native town and visited the University of Bologna. In 1306 he visited Padua which was another great intellectual center in mediæval Italy.

During the thirteenth century, the century in which Dante lived, Moslem culture was more or less known all over Europe and held in universal admiration by the Christians, mainly because of the Moslem victories over the Crusaders in Syria and the Christians in Spain. Many of the returning Crusaders must have also brought back with them stories relating to the life of Muhammad. Between the eighth and eleventh centuries trading expeditions left the Caspian Sea regularly, ascending the

Volga and reaching as far as the Gulf of Finland and then, through the Baltic, to Denmark, Iceland and the British Isles. This explains the recent discovery of Arabic coins scattered in all those regions. Freed slaves, returned prisoners of wars, Crusaders, traders, Jewish merchants — any of these agencies might have proved instrumental in acquainting the people of Europe with Arabic stories.

But that is not all. The culture developed in Andalusia, southern Spain, is too well known to be dwelt upon here. The flourishing Arab courts of Cordova, Toledo and Seville were centers for radiating Arab culture. The works of ibn-Rushd were translated into Latin and used as text books in philosophy, as were the works of ibn-Sina used in the medical colleges.

Brunetto Latini, the teacher of Dante, who lived in Andalusia and whose writings contain traces of Arabic influence, may well have been the medium through which some at least of the Arabic features of the *Divine Comedy* may have been transmitted to his disciple.

But we have not yet come to the best possible link — Sicily and southern Italy.

Beginning with the ninth century Sicily presents the aspects of a country permeated with Islamic ideas. The court of the Norman king, Roger II, at Palermo was formed of Christians and Moslems. The king himself spoke and read Arabic, kept a harem, and dressed himself in Oriental costumes.

In the first half of the thirteenth century, during the reign of Frederick, King of Sicily and Emperor of Germany, Palermo resembled more a Moslem than a Christian court. The king's harem was guarded by eunuchs and his royal robe bore Arabic inscriptions.

It was this Frederick who in 1224 founded the University of Naples and made it a center of Arabic culture and Arabic philosophy. The universities of Bologna and Padua, which Dante visited, were also under Arabic influence that reached them from the University of Naples.

That the mentality of Dante as revealed in his own works was not antagonistic to the acceptance of Moslem models is not hard to prove. Though a native of Florence and by race and language a Latin, he admits in one of his works that "there are many other nations speaking tongues more pleasant to the ear and more expressive than those of the Latin people". The reference is undoubtedly to the Semitic languages of which Dante,

according to some scholars, knew two — Arabic and Hebrew. Whether he knew Arabic or not we cannot be sure, but we are sure that in some of his minor prose works he freely quotes from al-Farabi, ibn-Sina, al-Ghazali, and ibn-Rushd.

His general sympathy with Arabic philosophers is also indicated by the fact that he places in the limbo (the outer spheres of hell) such men as ibn-Sina (Avicenna) and ibn-Rushd (Averroes) together with Socrates, Plato, and Ptolemy *(Inferno,* Canto IV, 140-141). Muhammad is consigned by him to real hell not as the founder of Islam but as a sower of discord and an author of schism, *(Inferno,* Canto XXVIII, 58 *sqq).* 'Ali is shown suffering the same torture as his cousin and his father-in-law.

* * * *

Having traced back the origin of Dante's ideas into Arabic sources, the question naturally arises as to where did the Arab Moslems themselves get their ideas from? With this we are not particularly concerned in this study. Judæo-Christian precedents have undoubtedly provided the raw material for many of the Moslem versions of the narrative. The ascensions of Moses, Enoch, Baruch, Elijah and finally of Christ himself could not have escaped the attention of early Moslem devotees. The Revelation of St. John the Divine provided descriptions and details. The Persian journey of Arda Viraf was undoubtedly brought within the Moslem sphere of knowledge especially after the conquest of Persia. The journeys of the *Ka* in the ancient Egyptian Book of the dead record experiences strikingly similar to those of later times. *The Sidrat al-Muntaha,* the tree standing in the highest heaven, had its prototype in the Egyptian lotus tree.

Thus the question of origins is one of the most difficult to determine. Ideas have no race, no nationality, and no religion. They travel, they commune and they blend. Some of them prove universal and aspire to a position of immortality. Such seems to be the case with the master ideas behind Dante's *Comedy* and Muhammad's *Mi'raj.*

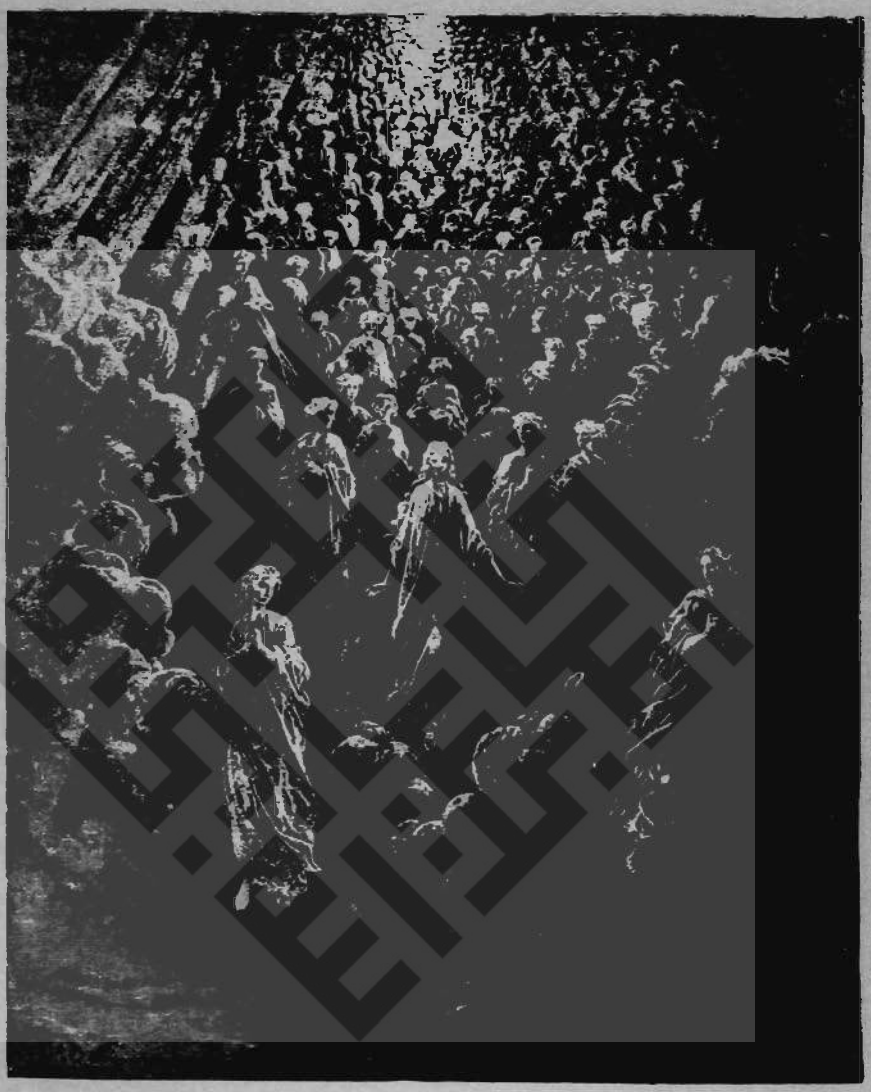
My bracelet I love, but not as much as my arm.
(Syrian proverb.)

Then "Glory to the Father, to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit," rang aloud
Throughout all Paradise: that with the song
My spirit reel'd, so passing sweet the strain.

Canto XXVII., lines 1-4.

Then "Glory to the Father, to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit," rang aloud
Throughout all Paradise: that with the song
My spirit reel'd, so passing sweet the strain.

Canto XXVII., lines 1-4.



So drew
Full more than thousand splendours towards us.
Canto V., lines 99 100.

In fashion, as a snow white rose lay then
Before my view the saintly multitude,
Which in his own blood Christ espoused.

Canto XXXI., lines 1-3.

About us thus,
Of sempiternal roses, bending, wreathed
Those garlands twain; and to the innermost
E'en thus the external answer'd.

Canto XII., lines 16-19.

The Sympathy of the Moon

By Dr. Salim Y. Alkazin

In "The Habitation of Peace," even as the City of Baghdad was called, there lived one of the foremost sages of Islam. He had learned the Koran according to the seven readings. He had learned the Hadeeth of the prophet — Allah's grace and peace be unto him! He had reached a high position in the world of letters and music. He had plunged deep into the philosophy of Persia and Greece. He had excelled in mathematics and astronomy. And in his household there was a beautiful and accomplished slave. And in her love he found the charm that made the happiness of this world perfect. He loved her more than he loved the power of sight in his eyes. She was his earthly comfort. When she moved, it was a cypress swaying in the balmy breeze of the dawn; when she smiled, it was as if the moon had swept aside her veil of gossamer clouds; when she spoke, it was the music of Ma'bed accompanying the numbers of the poets of old; when she sang, it was the voice of the bulbul courting the silence of the moonlit night.

But when the cup is too full, it is apt to run over. The liquid will run to the ground and mix with the earth. And when this man's cup of happiness seemed to be full to the brim, death came and claimed the beautiful slave. Blessed be the One, the ever-living; He that dieth not!

The lover heaped the grave of his beloved with roses and herbs of the sweetest scent. Their bloom bespoke the charms of her who was wedded to the grave; their scent breathed the essence of the love that cannot die. Night after night he lifted his voice in lamentation. On the page of the sky the stars traced the verses of the poem of grief, and in the mouth of the reeds of the stream the breeze of the night put the moan of the bereaved. He grieved and lived the happy hours once more in recollections. But can grief and recollections bring back that which is lost? As I said before, this man was learned in the lanes of the sky and the movement of heavenly bodies. Now, he knew from his observations and calculations that the moon was on the eve of a complete eclipse, and he found therein a manifestation of

the law of nature that nothing endures and that all that there is on this earth is bound to undergo a change. So he found comparative consolation in the similarity of the passing of his beloved and the eclipse of the moon. And when the hour came his voice broke the awful silence. It rang wierdly in the dead of night, and those who heard it shuddered. And this was what he sang:

"Thy sister in her grave is hid, O moon,
While thou in glory risest o'er the land!
Wouldst not, through sympathy, thy sable don,
And, deeply veiled with grief and sorrow stand?"

And even as he sang, a shadow crept over the moon. It grew darker and more dark; the face of the moon was hid behind a veil of darkness. And all who saw and heard marveled exceedingly. They said: The moon hath shown her sympathy; but how shall man show his?

HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE POTTER

It is related that Harun al-Rashid wished to observe Abu-Shu'aib the Potter at work, for he had heard much of his skill. Abu-Shu'aib, thereupon, was brought to the court of the Caliph, where they had all the implements of his craft ready for him.

In the midst of the potter's operation, Harun al-Rashid entered to observe him. Abu-Shu'aib stopped work and rose to his feet to do him homage. But Harun al-Rashid motioned him to sit down, saying: "I did not call for you to have you stand up for me, but to demonstrate your craft before me."

The potter was as quick to reply: "Nor did I come before thee, O Prince of the Believers, to show thee the extent of my ill-breeding."

The Caliph was much pleased with this reply and rewarded the potter fittingly.

Said one to a wise man: "Who educated you?" He replied: Nobody educated me; I saw that ignorance was ugly and avoided it."

The World of the Arabian Nights

By H. I. Katibah

Like many works of its kind, the Arabian Nights are an epitome of many ages and many peoples; a panoramic undertone, so to speak, of the symphony of history of which they were sometimes a caricature and sometimes a mirror. The Arabian Nights are the "shadows of the days" which have passed in the twilight of history, and they appear unreal and grotesque, though in outline defining the objects which once were substantial and matter-of-fact.

We may rightly speak of "the World of the Arabian Nights", as a world, half bizarre and half normal, like that celebrated animal of Greek mythology, the Chimera, or like the Twin Stars, the Gemini, which appear to the naked eye as one, but under the telescope two distinct bodies, and in the light of advanced astronomical knowledge, two huge suns separated by millions of miles. Not a little of the charm of the Arabian Nights comes from this duality, which is uncanny and almost magical in its subtlety. One passes from one to the other and back again as an idle observer in the street would when he stands before one of those advertisements which, looked at from one angle, gives one picture, while from another, it gives a totally different one.

The fairies, marids, magicians and naughty 'afrites of the Arabian Nights are so human-like in their passions, so realistic in their acts and conversations that they may well pass for human beings in an enchanted world, where things are made invisible, Brobdingnagian, or Lilliputian, but behaving much like their human prototypes. While the men and women in the streets of Baghdad, Cairo or the distant city of Samarkand; the gallant princes and the charming princesses; the peddlers, the wealthy merchants and the fish mongers, yes even "the Prince of the Believers" himself, the benign and jolly Harun al-Rashid, are so rarified and fanciful that we find no difficulty in following their unpaged entrances to the world of magic or their unheralded exits to the world of realty. So real is the magic world, so fanciful is the real one; and both, enterplaying on the imagination of

the reader, reproduce to him the magic World of the Arabian Nights, spun by the artistic and clever minds of the master story tellers hundreds of years ago. Television and the movies have nothing new on the art of story-telling which has made this possible.

And like most Movies, the World of the Arabian Nights is a world of "would believe"; a wish-fulfillment world in which things come out as "ought" and not as "is". It is a world, as it has been pointed by many in philosophizing on this type of writing, in which we take refuge, in imagination, from the cruel world of realty which so often thwarts our deepest aspirations and most fond dreams, that we often are tempted to believe that it cannot be the real world after all; and perhaps it is not. Perhaps the fairy world in which we live vicariously is nearer after all to reality.

The Aladdin who rubs his lamp and presto! a marid appears to do his bidding is but a symbol of the earth-bound soul within us which in vain tries to rub the lamp of its body to do its bidding. But by his much-yearning, by dint of his cunning mind and his clairvoyant imagination, man has come to realize in fact and realty this dream of Aladdin. It lives today in our electricity. So does the flying carpet live in our aeroplanes; and the invisible jin and 'afrites that populate the World of the Arabian Nights were never more ready to fulfill the wishes of King Solomon than do our own scientific jin and 'afrites which an Edison or a Marconi conjured for the service of man. Had not our ancestors dreamed dreams, we would not have realized even the stinted reality we have. It is the future man in the child who reads the Arabian Nights with wrapt attention, lives in their world of fancy, and takes their strange creatures so for granted that he never bothers to ask for their scientific credentials. Nothing is more disheartening and pitiable than the child prodigy or the sophisticated one, who had been brought up by his parents not to believe in "such foolish things."

And thus from generation to generation does the World of the Arabian Nights, with other similar worlds, pass in procession before the mental vision of millions upon millions of readers, who at heart have not lost their child-like curiosity. And nothing shows the essential likeness and unity of the human race as the unanimity with which it has singled out some of its favorite story worlds for perpetuity. The Arabian Nights is one of these World Revues. Like the Panchatantra, of which we wrote in a

former issue, the Arabian Nights is as well-known in the East as in the West, only more so, especially in the world of little children. For the Panchatantra, due to its didactic and gnomic counsels, interspersed between the fables, lacks something of the charm of the Arabian Nights, which claims not the role of the preacher, but, like some court jesters do yet, teach while they entertain. It is said that an animal trainer who had wagered that he could teach his favorite bear to read, did so by putting raisins between the leaves of the book, so that the bear, in his search for the raisins, would turn the pages and, to all outward appearances, resemble one reading. The Panchatantra is the book with the raisins, but the Arabian Nights is all raisins, and what little wisdom it contains is sugar-coated.

Perhaps, the nearest to a sermon of the popular tales of the Arabian Nights is that of 'Abdullah of the Land and 'Abdullah of the Sea, the story in which a fisherman is carried to the bottom of the sea and shown around by a merman, an inhabitant of the Ocean World. 'Abdullah of the Land saw many strange things in his submarine visit, but the strangest of all was the way the inhabitants of the sea rejoiced when one of them died. When 'Abdullah of the Sea found out from his guest that people of the upper world mourn at the death of their dear ones he was so angry that he would not suffer him to stay any longer, calling the human race ungrateful because they tenaciously withhold from their Creator what by right is His.

But the story is told in such a delightful manner, with such utter simplicity of narration and freedom from affectation or sophistry, that a child would not suspect the author to be a philosopher as well as a story-teller.

The Arabian Nights, as they came down to us from the middle of the 15th century, are neither all original nor all Arabic. Many of them are undoubtedly both, but the larger number are taken from various sources, some of which carry one to the age of the Grecian myths, and some, to the ancient fables of India. Most of the poetic selections, which have an enhancing effect on the prose narration, are taken from well-known Arabic classics, particularly Kitab-ul-Aghani, which also supplies the Arabian Nights with many anecdotes and stories about the Caliphs.

To readers of Greek mythology the elements of the Arabian Nights which show dependence on them will be of interest. The late Suleiman al-Bustani, in his article on the Arabian Nights in the Bustani Encyclopædia, points out what must have been notic-

ed by other Orientalists also, that Queen Lab in the story of Badr Basim resembles the myth of Circe, who used to amuse herself by converting human beings to stones; while in the third voyage of Sindbad we come across the famous Cyclope Polyphemus in the guise of the Black Giant. In another story of the Arabian Nights we find a flying horse, presumably a reflection of the Greek mythical horse Pegasus.

Some scholars hold that the Arabian Nights had their origin in the Persian book "Hazar Afsana", or "A Thousand Stories", mentioned in Kitab-ul-Fihrist of al-Nadim, and Muruj-ul-Dhahab of al-Mas'udi, both of the 10th century A. D., so that the Persian origin, if this be the one, antedates the Arabic one by some four centuries. The "Hazar Afsana" has long disappeared, and we have no way of verifying this claim except by the similarity in the scheme which strings the stories together, the story of Shahrizade and her sister Dinarizade and the jealous king who married a new wife every day and killed her. In both books Shahrizade keeps the king entertained for a thousand nights and one by relating to him stories which she so contrived to postpone at the height of interest for the next night. It would be very unlikely that the author or editor of the Arabian Nights did not avail himself of some of these stories. The author of al-Fihrist describes the Persian book by saying that he read its stories and they appeared to him "insipid and vulgar". This, however, is not a conclusive evidence that our Arabian Nights is a different or superior book. For had the Arabian Nights been written in the days of the author of al-Fihrist he would have, in most probability, said the same thing of it also. We know that masters of Arabic literature and literary criticism thought as lightly of the Arabian Nights as Ibn al-Nadim thought of Hazar Afsana. It was despised by them as many a best-seller is despised by some literary highbrows today, or as the works of Shakespeare were looked at askance by the contemporary clergy and narrow-minded Puritans.

It is a mistake, however, to ascribe this contempt and lack of appreciation to obscene passages we find, unfortunately, in the unexpurgated edition of the Arabian Nights. For such writings existed long before the appearance of the Arabian Nights; they are to be found in Kitab-ul-Aghani, in the Durat-al-Yatima of al-Tha'alibi, in the Fruits of Leaves of al-Hamawi and in many otherwise respectable books.

It may be said, in passing, that many of these lascivious pas-

sages in the Arabian Nights are so evidently extrinsic, and many of them quotations from other works, that it would not be surprising if a later editor interpolated them in the text from the same motive which actuates some modern playwrights to insert bed-room scenes and suggestive lines in their plays. Only the old Arabs were more sincere about it, and did not stop at half-measures which, though more decent, are more injurious to morality. Nor must we forget that the more primitive people were less prudish and more sexually frank than we are today. Even in the Bible and the Dialogues of Plato we come across passages which, according to our modern norms, cannot be regarded as anything else but indecent.

The language of the Arabian Nights is neither the classical Arabic nor the vernacular, but a happy mixture of the two, a mixture which adds to the charm of the Arabic original. I must confess that I cannot agree with many Arab stylists that its language, for that reason, is inferior. In its way it is just as classical as the Mu'alakat of the famous pre-Islamic poets, and have just as much right to be considered literature. Personally, I give them first rank in Arabic literature, far superior to the Makamat of al-Hariri or the panegyrics of al-Mutanabi.

It is very unfortunate that Arab literature was dominated for a long period, and almost up to the present, by standards of literary excellency which derived their authority from rhetoric, not from psychological considerations. With the exception of its lyrical love poetry, and such gems as the Arabian Nights and the Romance of 'Antar, Arabic literature, we must be frank to admit it, is rather mediocre and empty. The pity of it is that it is full of suggestive themes and dramatic and operatic inspirations to supply more than one Shakespeare and more than one Wagner. Will the Arabic world produce them? We do not know; but we hope that it will; we look forward to an eclectic genius like the author of the Arabian Nights, but on a higher and more magnificent scale.

Said the famous Persian Bazur-Jumhar to Chosrau Anushurwan, "Who of your children is most beloved by you?" The Persian king replied: "He who is most anxious in learning, most abhorent of shameful deeds and most aspirant to the station that is above him."

The Lion in the Orchard

An Arabian Nights' Story.

It is related that a certain king went up to the roof of his palace sight-seeing, and he saw on the roof of a house adjoining his palace a woman more beautiful than whom his eyes had never beheld before. He turned to one of his slave-girls and asked:

"Whose is this one?"

"She is the wife of thy servant Fayrouz," replied the slave-girl.

The king then stepped down, and calling Fayrouz to his presence, commanded him saying:

"Take this letter and go to such a town and bring me back an answer."

Fayrouz bowed before the king, and, taking the letter in hand, went away to his home. He put the letter under his pillow and slept home that night, and in the morning bade his wife farewell and went in the way of the king's business, not knowing what the latter had designed for him.

As for the king, no sooner had Fayrouz left than he went disguised to his house and knocked gently at the door.

The woman, answering the knock, inquired: "Who is at the door?"

"It is the king, the lord of your husband."

Tremblingly she opened the door as she muttered under a suppressed breath:

"I take refuge in Allah on account of this visit."

"Woe to thee," cried the king indignantly, "knowest thee not that I am the king?"

"Yes," retorted the woman, "and I also realize what the poet said:

'I leave your water untouched,
Since many have drunk therefrom.
If a fly should fall over a food,
I lift my hand from it, though hungry I may be,
So also does a lion avoid a spring
From which a dog has lapped.'"

Then she added:

"Wouldst thou come to drink from where thy servant has drunk?"

The king was ashamed at this reprimand from the woman, and went away hurriedly, forgetting his sandals behind him.

In the meantime, Fayrouz had not gone very far when he discovered that he had forgotten the king's letter under his pillow. He went back in search of it, and as soon as he crossed the threshold of his house he found the king's sandals there. He suspected perfidy, realizing the real reason why the king sent him away with the letter. He did not say a word, but, taking the king's letter in hand, resumed his mission.

On his return, however, he approached his wife, and putting a hundred dinars in her hand, said:

"Go to your father's home with this present from his majesty; behold, take it and spend it on your folks!"

The woman, though a little surprised, made no complaint, but went straightforward to her father's home.

Days and months passed and Fayrouz made no inquiry about his wife, nor visited her. Her folks were troubled, for they suspected a reason for this cold treatment, but could not think of any. Finally, her brother went to Fayrouz and, demanding an explanation for his behavior towards his sister, said:

"Either tell us the cause of your disaffection, or come with us to court to settle the matter."

"Let it be the court," said Fayrouz.

Now, when the case was brought before the cadi, it happened that the latter was sitting to the side of the king's throne, and the king was listening to what was going on but spoke not a word.

"What is your complaint?" asked the cadi of the wife's brother, who replied:

"O just cadi, we turned over to this fellow an orchard in good condition, with a wall around it. He ate its fruits, destroyed its wall, and left it."

"What say you to this?" said the cadi, turning to Fayrouz.

Fayrouz replied:

"It is true that they turned over to me the orchard in good condition, and I did not leave the orchard because of any displeasure; but one day, as I came into my orchard, I found traces of a lion there, and fearing the might of the king of beasts, I withdrew from the orchard unwillingly."

Upon hearing this, the king, who was listening, as he leaned on one side, straightened himself up and said:

"Fear not, O Fayrouz, for the lion has not touched thy orchard, not even a fruit nor a leaf thereof. By Allah, I have never seen a more impregnable orchard than thine."

Fayrouz, now that his mind was put at ease, took his wife home. And it is said that neither the cadi nor anybody else in the court beside the principals knew what the true facts were.

FOILING A DESPOT

A man who was doomed to death by order of al-Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf, the despot of Kufa under the Umayyads, approached the latter's chamberlain and pleaded with him saying:

"Grant me the favor of interviewing al-Hajjaj before I am executed."

The chamberlain conveyed the wish of the condemned man to the governor, who granted him his request. When ushered into the presence of al-Hajjaj he said:

"My only request, O Emir, is to walk with thee from one end of the court hall to the other. I may remain handcuffed, for I intend no harm."

Al-Hajjaj consented, and as the two reached the end of the hall, the prisoner turned to the Emir and said:

"Now I can say that I accompanied the Emir, and none is there who is more considerate in the fulfillment of the conditions of companionship."

Al-Hajjaj smiled, saying:

"Set him free. By Allah, he is right!" Then he ordered that a reward be given him besides.

A MATTER OF INTERPRETATION

A Persian, famous for his eloquence, spoke excessively one day. Next to him sat a Bedwin. When the Persian was through, he turned to the Bedwin and said:

"What do your people call eloquence, O Arab?"

The Bedwin replied: "Brevity of Speech."

"What, then, call they ineloquence?" inquired the Persian.

"It is what you have been demonstrating all this day," promptly retorted the Bedwin.

Irrigation in Syria and Lebanon

The rejuvenation of Syria and Lebanon, and the restoration of their lost prosperity and felicity through irrigation, are envisaged in an article which appeared in *Al-Bachir*, based on a study by Edmond Bishara, a Syrian engineer, on "Irrigation in the Near East", which he gave in a series of lectures at St. Joseph's University, Beirut.

Mr. Bishara considers it quite strange that adjoining countries like Egypt and Iraq spare no effort in increasing the acreage of irrigated lands, while agriculturists in Syria and Lebanon, rich in streams, sufficient to irrigate at least one million hectars, stir not a finger in that direction.

These two countries, declares Mr. Bishara, possess one big river, Euphrates, and four other important ones, Orontes, Litani, Barada and Yarmuk, besides others of less importance which debouch in the Mediterranean, between Tyre and Alexandretta..... With the exception of the Syrian Desert, these rivers and streams have a total basin area of 7 million hectars, only half of which is arable today.

It is possible, according to this engineer, to increase this arable area by at least one million hectars, 80,000 of which are in Lebanon, by irrigation projects which would prove in the long run profitable investments to capitalists who would undergo the venture, beside their incalculable economic benefits to an impoverished land incapable of supporting its population. One of the gravest causes of emigration would thus be obviated.

In ancient times Syria knew how to utilize its abundent waters.

Whether under the Phœnicians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks or Romans, declares this engineer, Syria knew how to exploit the waters of the rivrs, as is evident from some names and remains which have come to us from those remote times. The lake of Emesia, 12 kilometers by 4, which lay at the base of the Lebanon mountain, is an artificial one which Diocletian, the Roman emperor, caused to be dammed for the irrigation of the lands of Homs, the ancient Emesia. Similarly the conduits in the environs of Homs, Hama, Damascus and Palmyra, were laid down to conduct the infiltration of water from the surface

to arid places. The Roman aqueduct over the Beirut River was a great engineering feat as it stood 50 meters high and 240 meters long. Remains of other Roman aqueducts, such as the one in Jubail, meant to carry the waters of River Ibrahim, and the one near B'abdat, stand to the present day.

Many of the large cities of ancient Syria, which sprang on the banks or near the springs of rivers, have vanished through neglect of irrigation. Of Jubail, Kadis, Chalsis and Seleucia only the ruins remain.

Especially the Phœnicians, the original inhabitants of Syria, this authority informs us, distinguished themselves for their irrigation projects even in their African colonies. During their times Syria flourished with rich fields of wheat and barley, and orchards of vine, olive and other fruit trees.

In its present boundaries, Lebanon has an acreage of arable lands which amounts to 135,000 hectars as follows:

	Hectars
The Buka' Valley	95,000
The Plain of 'Akkar	12,000
The plain between Beirut and Sidon	13,000
The plain between Beirut and Tripoli	10,000
The Plateau of Amion	5,000
Total	135,000

Of this it is possible to reclaim 80,000 hectars by improved irrigation. Taking this as a basis, Mr. Bishara estimates the cost of the reclamation at 1,600,000 Egyptian pounds at the rate of 4 pounds a hectar, which, extended over a term of 20 years, would mean an increase of only 80,000 Egyptian pounds in annual taxes, not an unbearable burden for the government of Lebanon. This would be more than overset by the gain of the country, estimated at 400,000 Egyptian pounds annually, from the date of the completion of the project. The ratio of cost and gain to Syria is estimated at ten to one in comparison with Lebanon.

The author deprecates the false economy of the present governments of Syria and Lebanon, which has deterred them from launching on this profitable experiment, and predicts that unless undertaken now it will only add to the economic decadence of these two countries.

Famous Cities of Syria

Antioch

(The City of God)

To many the name Antioch brings to mind the story of Ben Hur and his thrilling chariot race with Massala, while to others it revives memories of the Sunday School days and the exasperating task of memorizing the complicated journeys of St. Paul's missions, which almost always began and ended in Antioch.

The city of Antioch lies at the base of the mountain known in classical days as Mt. Silpius, bounded to the north by the Orontes River. It is a sylvan retreat at the juncture of the Syrian coast and that of Asia Minor, both bending eastward at a little distance from the mouth of the Orontes.

Far enough from the sea to insure security and near enough to inspire that love of sea-faring dear to the hearts of the ancient Greeks, Antioch early became a centre of Greek settlement and culture. It was as if a typical Greek city was transplanted magically from the serrated coast of Greece, across the Aegean and Mediterranean seas, to the western coast of Syria.

Few remnants have been left to indicate the greatness of this city which was once called "the Queen of the East" and "Antioch the Glorious", and which gained eternal fame as the mother-city of Christianity, and has still remained, nominally, the see of the primate patriarchates of the Eastern churches. Chief among these remnants is the old city-wall, portions of which are still in a good state of preservation, which runs across valleys, hills and dales, showing to what extent the proud old city has shrunken. Today it is but a mocking satire of its former self, occupying about one tenth of its area at the height of its development. Its present population does not exceed 30,000, whereas in the 4th century A. D., it was said to number about half a million.

In contrast to its narrow and dark streets, ancient Antioch once prided itself on its wide and colonnaded thoroughfares, throbbing with life and activity. One of these, the main one, running

parallel to the Orontes River, was more than 4 miles long. Many public buildings, magnificent and graceful, lined this street and the one running through the centre of the city at right angles to it. Of special interest was the Nyphaeum, where public nuptial ceremonies were held.

"At night," runs a description of the city, "the streets were brilliantly illumined by lights rivaling the light of day. The Antiocheans turned night into day, not looking for security, but pleasure. Night became a part of day, and the most beautiful part. Especially were the baths and the approaches thereto illumined."

The history of Antioch was contemporaneous with that of the Seleucid Dynasty of which it was the capital and which it outlived. It was founded in the year 300 B. C. by Seleucus Nicator, the founder of the dynasty, in the 12th year of his reign. He called it after his father Antiochus, a famous Greek general under Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great. Some, however, hold that he named it after his son who was also called Antiochus.

The choice of the site of Antioch was made rather arbitrarily by Seleucus, and its population was composed of Greek veterans, some tracing their ancestry to proud Athens, and of Syrian natives and Jewish settlers who found in Greek life and culture a refuge from the irksome yoke of the Law of Moses. About 5,000 of the inhabitants were said to have been removed from the nearby city of Antegonia, built by Antigonus, which Seleucus destroyed when he conquered him.

The thing for which Antioch stands most in the minds of students of history, especially in the Greek and Roman periods, is the libertine and licentious life for which its famous suburb, Daphne, was famous.

The legend which became identified with this place is an index of its character. It is said that Daphne was a nymph which Apollo pursued, and as he drew upon her and she was almost within his reach she was metamorphosed into a laurel, or daphne tree. The legend of course was invented to explain the prevalance of daphne or laurel in that spot. Daphne was dedicated to Apollo, for whom a magnificent temple rose there. Apollo was the protecting deity of Seleucus and his family, and his temple was given the right of asylum. This meant that criminals, whatever the nature of their crimes, found refuge in it, and as long as they remained there they were unmolested.

This, perhaps, explained the large number of objectionable characters in that city. Several descriptions have come down to us of Daphne and its erotic life. It was often cited by Christian fathers of Antioch and others as a flagrant example of the effect of idolatry on morals.

Sozomen, a Christian writer of the 5th century, thus describes the place, as quoted by E. S. Bouchier in his book, *A Short History of Antioch*:

"Daphne, the celebrated suburb of Antioch, is adorned with a grove thickly set with cypress and varied with other plants interspersed. Beneath the trees the earth brings forth every kind of fragrant flower as the seasons change. A roof rather than a shade covers the whole area, and the closeness of the branches suffers not the rays to strike the ground. The abundance and beauty of the waters, the temperate climate, the breath of gentle breezes lend it only too much charm. The sons of the Gentiles tell how Daphne, daughter of the River Ladon, fleeing from Arcadia before her lover Apollo, changed into a plant named from her; and how he, not even then quiet of his passion, clasped her about though now a tree, and honored the place above any that he favoured, by making his abode there. This suburb being such as we have described, it was thought disgraceful for men of sobriety to set foot therein. The site and nature of the place, well adapted to foster luxurious ease, as well as the amatory character of the legend, doubled the passion of youth of corrupt mind on the least provocation. Alleging the myth as an excuse, they were still inflamed, and could not endure to see persons of respectability there."

An annual festival in honor of Apollo was held at Daphne, at which gorgeous processions were held, and noisy music with different Syrian and Greek instruments was indulged in. Gladiatorial games were introduced later under Roman influence, but they were never popular to the soft-hearted, pleasure-loving Antiocheans.

Antioch and Daphne boasted of many magnificent buildings, temples, baths, palaces, etc. The most celebrated of these was, perhaps, the temple of Apollo in Daphne.

"It was amphyprostyle," says Bouchier in his description of it, "with rows of columns on two sides, and had other rows in the sanctuary or cella. Its walls were bright with colored marbles, and the roof was panelled with cypress-wood. Within were statues of kings and benefactors, but the pride of the temple — in-

deed, of all Antioch — was the colossal statue of Apollo, made for Seleucus by the Athenian sculptor Bryaxis, and preserved till the destructive fire during the visit of Julian, which left the building a ruin. This statue of Apollo as Musagetes, leader of the Muses, and playing a harp, appears on the local coinage, as that of Antiochus Epiphanes, who enlarged or rebuilt the temple." This statue reached almost to the ceiling, and it was made of different materials, which the sculptor mixed up together. "The god's hair was of gold," continues the description of Bouchier, "interwined with a golden laurel wreath; his eyes were two jacinths of great size; he wore a long tunic, held a sacrificial bowl in one hand, and with the other touched a harp, his mouth open as if singing."

The age of Antiochus Epiphanes, 2nd century B. C., which was distinguished for its barbaric persecution of the Jews who resisted the Seleucid policy of Hellenizing the East, was also distinguished for its lavishness on the already Grecian city of Antioch. Even the Jews who lived in Antioch were more tolerant to other religions, and more sympathetic with the Hellenic culture. Daphne had a synagogue from an early date. Antiochus Eupator, son of Antiochus Epiphanes, restored to the Jews of Antioch a number of sacred objects brought from Jerusalem by his father, among these the bones of the seven Maccabees who were put to death by Antiochus Epiphanes one by one, followed by their mother, Asmunit, under cruel and revolting circumstances.

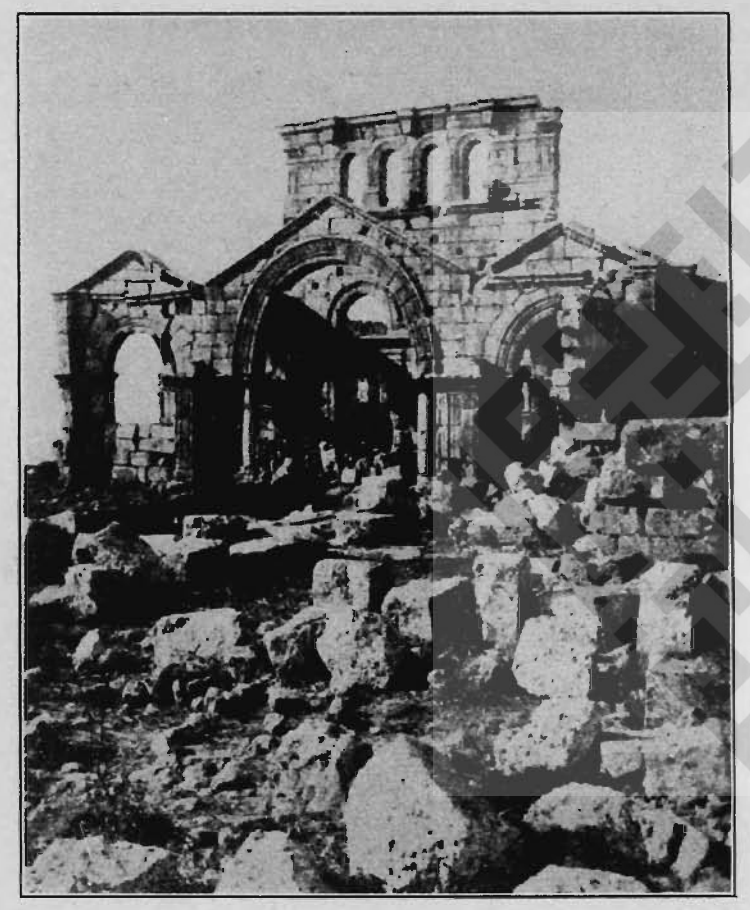
Jewish tolerance in Antioch was, perhaps, the principal reason for the progress there of Hellenic Christianity, preached by Paul, in contrast to Judaistic Christianity, espoused first by Peter, James and the other Apostles. Antioch opened its arms to Paul because it had already learned to reason like him, and because the same problems which faced this Jewish Apostle to the Gentiles faced the Jews of Antioch. For many of Paul's converts in Antioch and other cities of Asia Minor were Jews. Yet so entrenched were the Jewish traditions of Antioch in the early Christian church that Chrysostom, who deprecated this Jewish influence, preached a sermon on the occasion of the festival of the seven Maccabees, which was regularly celebrated by the Christians of Antioch. Many of the Christian women of Antioch also used to visit the Jewish synagogues to fulfill their vows, or seek the counsel of Jewish rabbis.

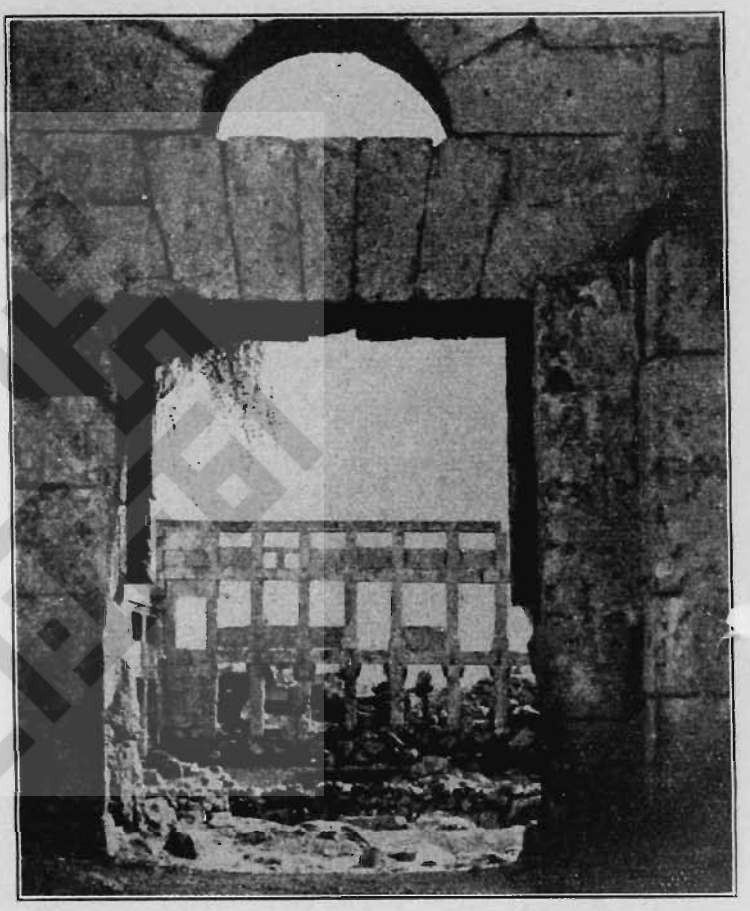
It was this Jewish influence, Bouchier believes, which made

ANTIOCH AS IT IS NOW

A view of modern Antioch from Mount Silpius. In the middle background is the Orontes River. Beyond stretch fertile plains for many miles.

RELICS OF OLD GLORY





Ruins of the Church of St. Simeon Stylites, near Antioch. The doorway of the Monaster y of St. Simeon Stylites. St. Simeon was the first and most famous of a group of hermits known as Pillar-her mits, spending their lives on top of a pillar.

Antioch susceptible to Arian and Nestorian tendencies, unlike Alexandria, which was more thoroughly Grecian, and in which the traditions of Greek Christianity was preserved through the writings of the Alexandrian school of Church Fathers, a direct heir to the decadent Platonic philosophy.

The story of the Church of Antioch goes back almost to the rise of Christianity, certainly to the rise of the Christian Church. Its first bishop, according to the church historian Eusebius, was Eudius. Others hold that Ignatius, the first martyr of Antioch, was its first bishop. Ignatius was "a hearer of St. John", and it is said that he was raised to the office of bishop by St. Peter.

It is St. Paul, however, who was the true founder of the Antiochean Church, the first and for a time the foremost of the Hellenized churches which, under the leadership of St. Paul, emancipated itself completely from Jewish traditions and influences. As a separate church, it was Antioch, not Jerusalem, which saw the birth of Christianity. The story of how Christianity came to be independent of Judaism, as related in Acts, Chap. 15, and Galatians, Chaps. 1 and 2, is one of the most fascinating and romantic chapters in the checkered life of St. Paul.

Of the many subsequent bishops of Antioch, none stands out more prominently than St. Chrysostom "the golden mouthed", orator of the Church. He preached in a magnificent church built by Constantine, closed by Julian and then restored to Christian use by Jovian. It was of octogenal plan, with a domical roof and of great height. Its walls were richly ornamented with mosaic and statues.

Ten Church Councils were held in Antioch between the years 252 and 380. For several centuries, beginning with the 4th A. D., Antioch plied a thriving trade with the Far East, and we have today many descriptions of this city by Chinese merchants and travelers who visited it, and on whose imagination it left a lasting impression.

A great earthquake destroyed Antioch in the reign of Justin, 526 A. D., and it was restored to its former splendor by Justinian. It was after this that Antioch received its name, *Theopolis* (the City of God), which we still encounter in official Church documents. The Arabic translation, "Madinat-Allah Antakia", is doubtless familiar to some readers of this magazine.

The Arabs occupied Antioch, along with the rest of Syria, in the campaign of Khaled Ibn al-Walid and Abu 'Ubaida al-

Jarrah in the year 635. Its last Greek emperor was Heraclius, the "Herakl" of the Arabs.

After four centuries of Mohammedan occupation it was restored to Christian rule by Nicephorus Phocas in the 10th century, only to fall in the hands of the Seljuks in the year 1084 A. D. Fourteen years later it was occupied by the Crusaders. "Boemond I, the son of Robert Guiscard, became Prince of Antioch; and its history was again Christian for nearly two centuries, till the time of Boemond IV, when it fell under the power of the Sultan of Egypt and the Mamlukes in 1268 A. D." From that date, we are told, its decline has been steady and continuous.

In more recent times the two outstanding events of Antioch were its conquest by Ibrahim Pasha, the Egyptian aspirer to a Syrian kingdom, in 1832, and its occupation by the Allies in 1918.

The trade of Antioch before the Great War was considered insignificant and must have grown more so since the secession of Syria from Turkey, for Antioch was a trade post between Syria and Anatolia, and Turkish is still spoken in the city equally with Arabic and Armenian. Licorice is exported from Antioch to America, and maize to Europe. Antiochean knives are famed for their quality.

Whatever fate holds for the economic and commercial future of Antioch, it will always retain its scenic charm and beauty. The late Prof. William H. Hall of the American University of Beirut, in his article on Antioch in the American Geographic Magazine of August, 1920, was, perhaps, not far wrong when he advanced the suggestion that St. John had this city in mind with its wide and brilliant streets, with the river passing in the midst thereof, when he described the glories of heaven, the New Jerusalem.

HOW POETS STAND

Al-Nabigha al-Ja'di, the poet of the tribe of Beni Ja'da, refrained from poetry forty days, his muse not being in the mood to inspire him. Then, one day, when Beni Ja'da won a victory in a raid against a neighboring tribe, the poet was moved by joy and recited a poem.

His tribesmen came to him and congratulated him saying, "by Allah, we rejoice more that our poet has resumed reciting poetry, than at our victory over our enemy."

Agriculture in the Near East

This information was prepared by Mr. Chas. D. Martin, of the Agricultural Implements Division of the Bureau of Domestic and Foreign Commerce, and published in "Commerce Reports" of April 11, 1927. It is based chiefly on reports of American Consular agents and commercial attachés and gives a comprehensive idea of the agricultural situation in Syria and other countries of the Near East as indicated by the demand for agricultural implements. EDITOR.

The countries of western Asia have not yet adopted modern farming methods to any great extent. Certain factors have combined in nearly all the countries in this part of Asia to hinder and obstruct the development of agriculture along modern lines. Among them are the innate conservatism of the people; their lack of education and money, and the general dryness and aridity prevailing over large areas.

TURKEY.

Some progress has been shown in Turkey since the war in the introduction of modern agricultural implements, although a setback occurred in 1926, as unfavorable climatic conditions caused a material decrease in the agricultural production of the country last year. The economic and commercial situation was generally uncertain throughout the year, and this was aggravated by the enactment of new measures of taxation and the creation of a number of State monopolies. In 1925, however, there was a general improvement in the agricultural and economic situation, which stimulated the trade in agricultural implements. However, purchase of American implements decreased considerably in 1926, amounting to only $115,670, as compared with $267,065 in 1925.

The Turkish market gives decided preference to American power farm and harvesting machinery. Imports of tractors from the United States in 1926 amounted to 8, valued at $7,882, as compared with 23, valued at $21,246, in 1925. However, a large number of tractors have been sold in Turkey which came into

the country from various Mediterranean ports, and consequently do not appear in the statistics of shipments to Turkey. Total imports of American tractors in 1925 amounted to over 700 machines most of which were light wheel tractors. Many power harvesting units are imported from France and Germany, but they are largely of American origin. Most of the tractor plows used in Turkey are also of American make.

Horse plows and old-fashioned reaping machinery are the most important items among the horse-drawn implements imported into Turkey. Excepting for the Smyrna, Aidin, and Magnesia districts, the horse plows used in Turkey are mostly of German and Czechoslovak makes. The preference for German plows is largely the result of sales by the Bagdad Railway Co. of German implements of various kinds to farmers along the line of their railroad.

In general the use of modern farm equipment is increasing steadily but slowly in Turkey, and the Government and agricultural schools are making a strong effort toward acquainting farmers with the use and advantages of up-to-date machines. The principal imports of implements into Turkey are plows, reapers, binders, and threshers, imports of other classes of implements being unimportant.

SYRIA.

Syria is of moderate importance as an agricultural country, and modern agricultural implements and machinery are used, but the poverty of the population and the abundance of relatively cheap labor serve to prevent the extensive use of such equipment. The demand for implements in Syria is limited, and imports of agricultural machinery from the United States in 1926 were negligible, amounting to only $7,898. However, the farm land is well adapted to use of machinery, and, although this market does not offer much inducement at present, there are possibilities for creating a demand for modern implements.

PALESTINE.

The market for implements in Palestine lies principally among the Jewish and German colonies, of which over 100 exist in the country. Most types of modern implements are used in these colonies, and a favorable factor tending to their greater use is the rapid increase in the number of young farmers with skilled knowledge of modern agriculture. The native Arabs still cling

to the primitive methods of their ancestors, but a number of British steel plows have been sold to the Arab farmers. Germany is the chief source of supply for the implements used in Palestine, followed by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Czechoslovakia. Shipments of farm equipment from the United States to Palestine decreased from $30,420 in 1925 to $5.552 in 1926. The chief factors limiting the sale of American implements are higher prices and transportation costs. Less expensive implements are generally preferred in the simpler types, but quality is the most important factor in the more complicated implements.

ARABIA—IRAQ.

The Arabian Peninsula consists of a large desert area with the exception of a few fringes around the coast. There is, of course, some agriculture in this region, but none of any importance. The agricultural methods prevailing in Iraq (Mesopotamia), which lies to the north of the Arabian Peninsula proper, are similar to those in vogue in the same region centuries ago and, consequently, the country does not yet rank as an important market for agricultural implements. Its annual purchases are small and the chief promise for an increase lies in the development of irrigated areas. The country is largely dry and arid and irrigation is essential to agricultural development. At present there is an ample labor supply to cultivate the crops grown on existing irrigated areas, but when the various agricultural schemes in contemplation are completed it is expected that the demand for labor will exceed the supply, and this will naturally create a demand for labor-saving farm equipment. A few tractors have been introduced, nearly all of one American make, and a few reapers and binders are being used in the country. There is some demand for pumping outfits for irrigation work but, on the whole, the present market for agricultural machinery is negligible.

PERSIA.

Conditions in Persia are similar to those in Iraq. Present agriculture is still in the primitive stage in which it has been for centuries. The ox is the work animal of the peasant and a primitive wooden implement serves as a plow. The water supply is insufficient throughout a large part of the country, but little has been done toward establishing modern irrigation works, although

some irrigation is effected by a system of shallow and open ditches owned and administered by the large landholders. The principal problem is one of water conservation, as the water supply is dependent upon the winter snowfall, except in the Caspian and Gulf littorals, where precipitation is heeavy. The most encouraging features about Persia as a market are the recent economic improvements in the country and the favorable attitude of the Government toward the introduction of modern agricultural implements.

EXCELLENT REPLY

When al-Fadl Ibn Sahi was killed in battle, the Caliph al-Mamoun went to his mother to console her.

"Grieve not, mother, for I shall be a son in his place to you," said the Caliph.

"How shall I not grieve," replied the mother, "over a son whose substitute is the Prince of the Believers?"

The Caliph was so surprised at the excellence of her reply that he remarked to those around him: "Verily, I have never heard a better reply, nor one that mollifies the heart more."

PRESTIGE UNBOUNDED

The Umayyad caliph Abdul-Malek Ibn Marwan asked concerning an Arab chieftain, Malek Ibn Misma', and his prestige and extent of power. He was told:

"If Malek Ibn Misma' should be moved to war by wrath, a hundred thousand swordsmen would rally to his call, not one of whom would ask why he was wrathful."

"This, by Allah, is true lordship," declared the Caliph envyingly.

The child is a trust in his parents' keeping.

Al-Ghazali.

He who wishes to add to his knowledge should mix with people other than his own (Arabic)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

By THE EDITOR

And now it is the professional promoter of sight-seeing tours through the Syrian quarter in New York who advertises the show in true showman's fashion, exacts what he terms only a "nominal charge", and seeks to show his patrons strange people in their native habitat.

For such tours to be conducted on a frankly avowed business basis there would be some semblance of an excuse, but to allure patrons by high--resounding and appealing names, such as "Reconciliation Trips" and "Fellowship of Faiths", and to neither reconcile nor create any fellowship, is a plain travesty on truth. Nay, the trips that are being conducted in the Syrian quarter, and quite naturally in other quarters, give us the impression that they are designed and planned in such a manner as to appeal to the sense of humor, to satisfy the sense of curiosity, and to give the patrons a feeling of a sense of superiority. In this respect these trips run adverse to their advertised purpose because they antagonize and embitter instead of reconciling, and engender a feeling of distance and repulsion instead of nearness and sympathy. And it is for this reason that we resent and oppose them as at present conducted.

These trips seem to have been conducted for a long time, but, as it seems also, in a secretive manner and unbeknown to the general public of the sections visited. For this reason they have gone unchallenged for a long time. But, at sometime or other, no secret but shall be revealed, as the gentleman who conducts these trips well knows.

The last such trip to take place was on Saturday evening, April 9th. On that particular day Washington Street, the hub of the Syrian quarter, was almost deserted because most Syrians had gone home to make ready to attend a play given by the Committee of St. Nichola's Orthodox Cathedral and advertised long before. A few stragglers remained who had to have their dinner at the restaurants. The editor of THE SYRIAN WORLD happened to be at the Sheik Restaurant, and just about when the few patrons were preparing to leave in began to file some two-score American young women for whom special tables had been re-

served for a dinner party. A Syrian young man, who proved to be the speaker of the evening, arrived later. The party was chaperoned by a Mr. Clarence V. Howell who explained to his proteges some of the secrets of the Syrian culinary art, principally that the recipes of the dishes they were eating antedated the time of Christ. He then announced that the party was to break up and a section would go to attend the Chinese theater while those remaining would be entertained by a speech.

The Syrian speaker, having arrived rather late, was, of course, unprepared, but Mr. Howell said the party would be satisfied with the previous speech he had delivered on a former occasion to a similar group. They wanted that speech verbatim—with no additions or omissions. It was educational and entertaining — well designed for reconciliation purposes. Here is the gist of it:

"Syria, geographically, was intended by nature to be one single unit. France, as the mandatory power, has divided it up into several small States to frustrate any attempt at unity.

"He, the speaker, as a Syrian nationalist, appeals to the Americans present to use their influence with their government to prevent a settlement of the war debts that would be favorable to France, because she would use the money in equipping military expeditions against the Syrians.

"Secretary of State Kellogg is incompetent and should be relegated to a country school-house. (We doubt that the speaker is even an American citizen.)

"All statements to the country notwithstanding, the American University of Beirut has had an active part in the Syrian revolution, and its alumni favor and work for the success of the liberation movement, even if the Faculty and other deluded gentlemen here and abroad lack the backbone to admit the fact.

"The Syrian Christians are the ones responsible for France's occupation of Syria. The Christians were traitors, never loyal to their country or government. This is sufficient justification for the many massacres that had befallen them. If the Moslems and the Druzes massacred six thousand Syrian Christians in 1860, France has more than evened the score by massacring ten thousand of them in the past two years. Islam is more tolerant than Christianity.."

The speaker was a Christian.

And his speech was the exact one he had delivered on previous occasions!

The editor of THE SYRIAN WORLD sat through it all. He felt that free speech was the privilege of everybody, whether in religious or political matters. But he resented the branding of Syrian Christians as traitors deserving of massacre. He told Mr. Howell so in as forceful language as he could command. These trips, he argued, when conducted on partisan lines and with preconceived prejudice, can have no other result than injury to the Syrian name. Hurling accusations of treason on the Syrian Christians, under the auspices and with the knowlelge and connivance of a Christian minister of the Gospel, such as Mr. Howell is, will only widen the breach between Christians and Mohammedans. Of this intolerance we have had enough in our country of birth, and we do not intend to permit it to grow and thrive here in our country of choice. The trips of Mr. Howell, therefore, are misnomers in that their outcome is exactly the opposite of reconciliation.

We have warned Mr. Howell in a personal letter that if he were to persist in conducting his trips along former lines he could not be welcome among the Syrians. We are only anxious to have people understand us as we are, and in such an effort our best elements will gladly co-operate. But we refuse to be exploited for the benefit of anybody and to our hurt and detriment. Mr. Howell had as guests on that occasion a number of Syrian young women. Their reaction to what was said and done was one of shock and disgust. He need entertain no doubt that the sentiment of the whole community will be of the same trend once his activities become known.

And it is our intention to uncover and make known all such activities and run them down to the ground. People who want to exploit and misrepresent us are not welcome with us. But, we repeat, those who come to us with an open mind and a willingness for sympathetic understanding we stand ready to welcome at all times with open arms. There can be no compromise on this issue, as it affects the honor of the race, and of our race we have ample reason to feel proud. America herself would not want us otherwise now that we have become a part of the nation and are making honest and sincere efforts at bringing about the desired national homogeneity. Those who work to antagonize and alienate prospective Americans by such tactics and methods are the worst enemies of America. We propose to be good Americans by opposing such tactics.

THE LAST WORD

In his personal letter to the editor accompanying his contribution published in this issue, Dr. M. Shadid remarks that "all the replies but one seemed to side with your view of the matter. I can hardly believe that on my side of the controversy I do not have more supporters. I feel I am entitled to the courtesy of amplifying my position as the matter seems to be debatable and according to the rules of debate the affirmative has the last word."

We trust that this remark of the esteemed physician does not carry the imputation that we are applying discrimination against him in the conduct of the debate. He may rest assured that we are as anxious to give publicity to the views of his supporters as to those of his opponents. It is true, as he remarks, that he has struck a sensitive chord in touching on the subject of discrimination and the advisability of the return of Syrians to their homeland, but it was not a sympathetically responsive chord. The doctor should concede to others the liberty of thought and action and think well of them besides.

And now that Dr. Shadid has said the last word, and that others have been found who support him in whole or in part, we feel that the case has been given a fair trial at the court of public opinion and hope that future discussions of this subject will be devoid of personal references and confined to the general treatment of the problem in its wider aspect without mention of individual cases. Our purpose is to protect individuals and direct discussions towards a more general channel. The relative phases of the economic, social and political conditions of Syrians at home and abroad may be treated according to the various viewpoints with the fullest liberty of expression, but references to individuals should be eliminated in the future, otherwise the editor will freely exercise his prerogative of rejecting communications or deleting objectionable references of this character. In the case of Dr. Shadid, we believe now as heretofore that he has shown exceptional moral courage in citing his own case as an illustration of his point and in support of his arguments, but neither will it be fair to him nor productive of any public benefit to have the controversy continue to revolve around his personality.

Our readers, therefore, are invited to express themselves in general terms on the two pivotal points of the controversy, namely:

1 — Are the Syrians discriminated against as a race, and if so, why?

2 — Is it advisable for Syrian emigrants to return to their homeland, and if so, on what grounds?

We believe a continuation of the discussion on the above premises cannot fail to be productive of good results in that it will either shake loose or stabilize definitely the unsteady and wavering elements amongst us who, by their dual allegiance, or lack of allegiance, occupy an anomalous position and are capable of producing no benefit either to one country or the other. This publication stands for unequivocal, unstinted allegiance and loyalty to the United States as our country of choice, but with sympathetic interest in our country of origin.

AN HONEST ORGAN

It is our ambition to make this publication as representative and as widely informative as possible. We believe that for it to justify its name, it must record and interpret the activities of the Syrian World in all their phases; that it should serve as a clearing house of information about everything Syrian; that through it may be established a point of contact among Syrians in the different parts of the world, especially the English-speaking world, in all matters touching on the common problems of the race; and, furthermore, that by virtue of its publication in the English language, other races will find in it a source of authentic and accurate information about us which will admit them to our inner councils and afford them the opportunity of properly understanding us.

It is with this object in view that we are endeavoring to cover as wide a field as possible. History, literature, political developments, social changes, intellectual and educational activities,— all are given space and treated in the most unbiased and disinterested spirit. The department of "The Spirit of the Syrian Press" is a fair gage of this policy, besides being an accurate record of the trend of Syrian public opinion as well.

Competent critics have judged THE SYRIAN WORLD the ideal publication in its field, and, on the whole, a well-balanced publication in every respect.

Nevertheless, we wish to assure our readers that criticisms and suggestions for improvement are always welcome.

Spirit of The Syrian Press

Under this caption we hope to present from time to time a microcosmic picture of the Arabic press, not only in this country, but wherever Arabic dailies and magazines reflect the opinions of responsible, thinking writers who are treating the different problems that confront the Arabic-speaking world from all conceivable angles. Needless to say, we will take no part in the discussions reproduced, nor assume any responsibility. Our task will simply consist in selecting, to the best of our knowledge and with utmost sincerity, what we think is representative of the public opinion as expressed in these editorials. **Editor.**

GENUINE BENEVOLENCE

True generosity in these days is to be found among the peoples of the West.

True giving which accrues to the benefit of learning, civilization and humanity is to be found with them.

They say that France, in proportion to her population, is foremost among the nations of the world in charity. We think, rather are convinced, that it is the United States which carries the standard of useful charity in this age; and that she gives in millions of dollars where others give in francs.

At any rate the charity by which is meant self-advertising is not charity.

How noble is the text: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

Arab generosity was vain and boastful, and no benefit to humanity accrued from it. The man who used to slaughter his camels, sheep, or even his spirited steeds for his guests, then follow them when they had departed to rob them, could not be considered generous. Nor is one considered generous whose generosity is not for some humanitarian purpose. Where are the hospitals, the orphanages and the asylums which our rich men have built in Syria? Nay, but where is their magnanmity concerning the trusts with which they have been entrusted?

(Al-Hoda, N. Y., April 13, 1927.)

FRANCE RESORTS TO DIABOLICAL TRICKS

It is sometimes asked, what does France with the money which she has mulcted from her victims? And our answer is: that she desires to help with it the Armenians whom she transported to Syria; that she is preparing the way for adding 70,000 Armenians to the army she has now there.

France was requested by the League of Nations to accept these Armenian refugees in her own country. She refused them, although she is in need of them to balance her decreasing birth-rate, but she consented to accept them in Syria. It is a diabolical trick, worthy of Belzebub! The Syrians are in great straits, emigrating from their country by the thousands in search of livelihood and security; what, then, will be their condition when these additional thousands pour in on them?

Yet in spite of all these oppressions and heavy taxations you find many of the oppressed themselves

who seek justice from the mandatory government. It was our impression that the Syrians are a brilliant people, why then do they allow themselves to be stung by the same snake twice; why do they circle around the candle flame, like silly butterflies, despite the fact that they had been burned by the same fire repeatedly before, and many of them had fallen down lifeless at the foot of the candle?

Never did it cross our minds before that deserted places are taxed till France took charge of our affairs in Syria. Nor did we ever dream that there was ever a government in the world which would justify to itself snatching the mouthful of charity from hungry infants, poor women and old people who have no protector in the world.

(Miraat-ul-Gharb, N. Y., April 13, 1927.)

FRENCH SACRIFICE CHRISTIANS

The Druzes in Syria revolted against the Government of the French Mandate and committed strange and savage atrocities. Yet in spite of what befell them; in spite of their subsequent defeat and surrender, their victory over France and over the peaceful Christians was considerable. For their united strength compelled France to resort to various excuses to grant them amnesty, one individual after another, and one band after another, until hardly any of them has been touched by harm. Whereas the unfortunate Christians toss on a thorny bed of sorrow and suffering, because of the atrocities which were committed against them, yet scarcely does the Mandate Government deign to cast a glance at them, because they are weak; because they are disunited; because all the Christians of Syria, and many of their number in the countries to which they emigrated, show no concern in defending their oppressed Christianity and their wrecked nationality.

(The Syrian Eagle, N. Y., April 2, 1927.)

HOW MOSLEMS OF NEAR EAST VIEW CHINESE MOVEMENT

The Chinese movement still occupies a precarious position, for while it has succeeded in stemming the British policy to an extent which compelled the English to recoil from the thought of war, it has not advanced enough to be free from danger.

This in brief is the general situation in the Far East; and we as Easterners of the Near East, forming a huge nation, the Arab nation, parts of which are waging a war of independence, should ask ourselves what sympathy or bond is there which unites us with the Chinese, our brother Easterners, or rather in Islam, for there are no less than 33 million Chinese Moslems in the district of Yunan?

The first bond which should unite us with the Chinese is the Oriental one, in its broad sense. The Chinese are struggling to attain self-government, and to remove the foreign influence from their country. We are fighting, therefore, a common enemy, even though our countries, geographically speaking, are far apart, and our cultures differ. To the enemy we are all a prize to be won, a sweet morsel to be devoured.

If then in the sight of the enemy our countries are as one, a prey upon which he would pounce and tear to pieces, must not we, who are driven by his staff to the same slaughtering

place, unite our forces and gather our scattered energies to thwart him and stop him at his limit?

Secondly, the nationalist movements in the Near East are moral fuel to each other. The people of this generation have not forgotten what effect the victory of Japan over Czarist Russia had on the spirits of the Oriental peoples generally. Were not the victories of the Turks over the Greeks, of Abdul-Karim over the Spanish and the French, and the success of the Egyptian movement in 1919, of material benefit to the East, especially the Near East? And how do we know what effect the Syrian revolution will have on succeeding movements?

Thirdly, we Arabs, in that we are considered the pillar of Islam and the Moslems, should desire for our 33 million brethren in China liberty, independence and the pursuit of success and happiness.

Finally, it is the unchangeable law of Creation that the weak should prop one another in face of the strong who aspire to subjugate them. It is for the Eastern nations to unite and to support one another, for this better serves themselves and defies their enemy.

An Arab in Al-Jamiat al-Arabiat.
(Copied by Al-Bayan, N. Y.,
April 1, 1927.)

BLINDNESS TO TRUTH

The francophile papers look at what is taking place in Syria from the two ends of a telescope; they look at the evil deeds of France through the small end, and at the good deeds, if they find any, through the large end. Worse still, these papers ascribe the evil deeds of the French to others, and fabricate good deeds which have no existence. In so doing they go contrary to the most fundamental principles of journalism: fidelity in relating news, and the service of the public by giving publicity to evil deeds and evil doers.

If a newspaper does not bind itself by such principles, the subscription paid for it is a price paid for reading lies, libel and misleading statements, shameful things which nobody should go after, let alone paying money for.

(Al-Bayan, N. Y., April 13, 1927.)

HUMANITY OF THE DRUZES

We are grateful to the editor of "al-Watan" for his testimony that the Druzes are not all murderers, and must say that he has shown fairness this time. But we do not admit that the Druzes were the ones to start the quarrel, neither in this revolution nor at any previous time. The Druzes are a rough people in time of war, and no one will deny this, but they are rough in the sense of being stubborn and patient, not in the sense that they permit license or commit inhuman atrocities.

The Druzes do not kill children and women, nor do they attack the helpless or dispatch the wounded, as do those civilized French... under the command of military officers graduated in Paris... The Druzes did not throw bombs on children or women, nor would they have done it even if they had had aeroplanes. Nor would the Druzes fire their guns, if they had any, on the population of a city like Damascus without any warning, and kill 1500, mostly children and women, under its debris. How often have the Druzes caught compatriots of theirs in the ranks of the enemy and set them free?

(Al-Bayan, N. Y., April 8, 1927.)

Readers' Forum

DR. SHADID REPLIES TO HIS CRITICS

Editor The Syrian World:

In the February number of "The Syrian World" appeared an article by me entitled "Syria for the Syrians" which seems to have touched a responsive chord.

Most of the replies, however, do not meet the arguments as presented, and I will briefly recapitulate them. I stated that of all countries Syria is the country of choice for Syrians to live in for the following reasons:

1. Because the majority of the Syrians can fare as well economically in Syria as in the U. S., as from both an agricultural and industrial standpoint, Syria is a virgin territory.

2. Because Syrians in the U. S. have been subjected to social ostracism, and in many cases to economic boycott, not alone by native Americans, but by all those peoples belonging to the branch of the Nordic race.

3. Because educational and cultural advantages are within easy reach in Syria to those having children to educate.

The editor gave us a dissertation on the principles of true Americanism, the bigotry of the Ku Klux Klan, the impracticability of a wholesale exodus of Syrians (which, by the way, I did not have in mind) from America to their native land. all of which is true and to the point. The fact remains that we are facing a fact and not a theory. The fact is that Syrians, like Jews, are socially ostracised and cannot be assimilated. "It is regrettable," continues the editor, "that he (Dr. Shadid) should have settled in a town to which, apparently, he has rendered splendid professional services as proven by his financial success, and whose narrow-minded citizens refuse to associate with him socially, merely on account of his racial extraction."

An echo to this sentiment is voiced by a contributor to the March issue, who signs himself E. K. S., in the following dictum: "In the case of Dr. M. Shadid the diagnosis is Elk City-itis". My friend F. H. Barkett makes the same observation in his reply in the April number.

The inference to be drawn from this observation is that social ostracism in my case is strictly a personal and a local matter and is not applicable in other parts of the United States. This is erroneous. I have lived in New York, Saint Louis, Oklahoma City and other places and my observation has been that a Syrian is discriminated against by reason of his swarthy color and his racial extraction. I met the same discrimination in my college days in Saint Louis that I am meeting now in Elk City, Oklahoma. The disease is not as E. K. S. would have us believe ELKCITYITIS but AMERICANITIS. In my college days I was never asked to join any of the secret fraternities. Other Syrian students will tell you the same thing. American snobbery is as real and cruel as any caste in India. The American may like you personally and be very friendly, but because

of his racial prejudice you are socially "Taboo". His racial prejudice is a bar to social intercourse with you and oftentimes takes the form of an economic boycott.

The fact that I once was candidate for Congress and that I have achieved professional success does not disprove the foregoing assertion. I was candidate of the farmers and laborers, or at least the intelligent section of them and these are totally free from any prejudice against a man's nationality or religious affiliation — if they were not they would still be voting the same old reactionary party tickets.

While a candidate for Congress I received from a physician at Granite, Oklahoma, (T. Nunnery, M.D.) shortly after I made a speech there, a letter which contained the following:

> "Now be informed I am not in sympathy with your so-called farmer-labor, socialist rot. Neither do I think you are competent to tell us Americans what we should do. And if you are bent on governmental change go back where you come from and tell them."

Now in my speeches I never uttered unpatriotic sentiments. I spoke as a progressive American in favor of social change for the betterment of the masses of the American people and these speeches were based on the platform of Robert M. Lafollette who headed the ticket. And yet I received the most insulting letter from an American who has studied in college and medical school. The chances are 10 to 1 he is a Kluxer, but the Ku Klux Klan is made up of the 100 per cent. Americans, so-called, who wield social, political and business influence at least in the middle and far West.

No, the disease is Americanitis. Americans possess many laudable traits. I like them as a people. I like their ways and customs and mode of life. I like their outlook on life. I like their institutions. I am not averse to the principles of true Americanism, but it must be said in truth that racial prejudice is a dominant trait in the American make-up. I am not even finding fault with them on that account. Their environment, their history, their position in the world today promotes this feeling among them. I have a letter from an ex-resident of Beirut telling me that that prejudice is to be found among Americans even in Syria. He says the wives of Missionaries are afflicted with a "Superiority-Complex", to use his own word for it. This is another term for racial prejudice.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. I appreciate the American character. Syria and most of the world owe a debt of gratitude to America, and as E. K. S. says, "America has been too benevolent for us to permit one or one hundred bigoted so-called Americans to cause us to lose faith with our adopted country." I have not lost faith with America but I, for one, prefer to live where I do not have to contend with racial prejudice. I am very sensitive to this air of superiority of my fellow Americans with whom I have to rub elbows in a business way. Life is too short to live here with an inferiority-complex in my subconsciousness.

Joseph K. David, of Jacksonville, Fla., opines in the April number that this is a manifestation of a "spirit of defeat" on my part. I do not think so. On the contrary it is a spirit of undaunted courage and resolute self-respect on my part to confess to my honest convictions. It is an easy matter for me to hyp-

notize myself into the belief that (as A N. Adwon does in the March issue) I and my family are as well thought of and as highly respected in my community as any hundred per center, and I would have as much reason as Mr. Adwon and Mr. Barkett have for doing so, but it would be beyond the truth and will have as much palliative effect as a dose of a narcotic drug would have in curing cancer.

In the matter of the economic argument, the editor, in his comment on my first article, says:

"Viewed in this perspective, we fail to see the wisdom in advocating the return of the Syrian immigrants to Syria. Not only do we deem it inadvisable but it may readily be seen that such a course is utterly impractical. The Syrians are mainly of the mercantile and industrial class; those of them who are engaged in agriculture are few in number, etc.

"Furthermore, the factors giving rise to the emigration movement in Syria have not been eradicated. Not only in the pre-war period, but even now in post-war times we find the flow of Syrian emigration constantly on the increase. For this steady movement there must be an inherent cause, etc."

Syria is a virgin territory for agricultural and industrial enterprise. The progress that the Jews have achieved agriculturally and industrially in the short period of time they have occupied Palestine is amazing and shows the numberless opportunities for economic development in the country. The "inherent cause" for Syrian emigration to foreign lands is the lack of Syrian agricultural development. If Syrians would take advantage of the agricultural opportunities in Syria, the inherent cause for Syrian emigration would be removed and Syria would become a prominent country. Agriculture is the basic industry in Syria and with the development of agriculture all business will take on a new life. The article in the March number of "The Syrian World" by Irving Sitt on the "Present Economic Conditions in Syria" ably illustrates this argument.

In conclusion, there is one side of the question that I have not pressed into service as an argument in favor of SYRIA FOR THE SYRIANS and that is the unselfish argument having been satisfied with appealing to self-interest alone. As a matter of fact our country is poor and backward financially, industrially, politically, socially. Our country needs us who have been away and imbibed Western ideas in all fields of human endeavor. Our country needs us more than we need her. Remember that a man gets out of life the same measure he puts into it. We are all struggling for happiness as we have a right to do. After I have been on this planet for fourty-five years and while I am still in the prime of my intellectual growth I affirm with all the power at my command that there is no real happiness in the world except that which comes to you without your seeking. The only happiness there is in the world is that happiness which comes to you as a reward (unsought) to your efforts in making other people happy. If you can digest this bit of wisdom which is not original with me but which bit I rejected myself earlier in my career till I had had enough of the experiences of life, you will agree with me that the selfish motive should not be the only motive governing our return to our dear old country M. Shadid, M. D.
Elk City, Okla

OUR NEEDS AS A RACE IN AMERICA

Editor The Syrian World:

Permit me to write a word in reference to the controversy brought about by Dr. Shadid's article.

Both the affirmative as well as the negative have missed the vital point.

In all defects, physical, moral, or sociological, the cause must be revealed, dealt with and the result becomes understandable.

The chief complaint made by Dr. Shadid and his supporters is: that Syrians are not receiving proper recognition, and are discriminated against.

The opponents of this idea deny this and attempt to prove their contention by citing individual cases.

Neither side is wrong, and neither side is right.

Syrians are not considered on the same par as other races. This is an undeniable and uncontradictable fact; and to this extent Dr. Shadid is correct. On the other hand Syrians are not disregarded because of prejudice directed against them as a race. Such a claim is wholly absurd.

The seeming ostracism is not an organized or intentional hatred, as some would convey, but only because the Syrians do not control sufficient political, sociological, commercial and numerical strength, to command the standing held by Germans, Irish or Italians. It soothes the theoretical sense to be idealistic; but the practical truth is that we receive in the same proportion we give. This would indicate that the doctrine of "Might makes right" is, after all, a correct one. It is. We do not like to admit it in a land of Democracy. Personally I am getting rather dubious about the correct definition of Democracy. We can say with a satisfying sense of propriety, however, and sooth our sensibilities to a consoling degree that: "Might makes influence".

When I think of our disorganization, because of the multiplicity and lack of definitiveness in our organizations, few of which embody the precepts conducive to a national unity, I am pleasantly surprised that we receive the attention that we do.

Let us busy ourselves in discovering our defects, correct them, and fearlessly and honestly meet the situation with unflinching purpose, with the fixed thought to become a part of the great country we are living in, and as a nationality, coordinate our efforts and fully cooperate with every National American movement. If we must help Syria let us do so as philanthropic sons who do not forget their motherland, but who are loyal to the extreme to their adopted country, actively alive to every movement directed to her benefit and progress.

Let us forget ourselves for a time and stop praising the ancestry we came from, remembering the great Arabic poet who said: It is not my origin which makes me, but rather what I myself am."

Our remedy can be summed up in few words: loyalty to adopted country, unselfishness, correction of our own defects, National organization, assimilation, and amalgamation.

Dr. H. A. Elkourie.

Birmingham, Ala.

RACIAL PREJUDICE EXISTS

Editor The Syrian World:

Although I am a high school student I take enough interest in civic affairs to warrant my voicing an opinion on the controversy agitated

by Dr. Shadid. I do not agree that foreigners in general and Syrians in particular are discriminated against, nor does Dr. Shadid claim this to exist. He claims, and I am thoroughly in accord with him in this viewpoint, that there is a class of prejudiced Americans who are intolerant both in matters of religion and race. I have experienced such incidents myself when I was a party to an argument engaged in by my father and a so-called 100 per cent. American on the supposed residence of the Pope in the United States. This American showed such intolerance that he threatened the Pope with murder in such an eventuality. There are others who show just as bitter intolerance in racial matters.

Thomas T. Shiya.

Niagara Falls, N. Y.

PRESIDENT CALLES OF MEXICO A SYRIAN

Editor The Syrian World:

I am enclosing a communication addressed to "Brooklyn Daily Eagle" by one of its readers pertaining to Calles' religion.

It seems timely that The Syrian World inform its readers on that subject dwelling particularly upon the seeming paradox of having a Protestant Syrian as far back as over one hundred years ago.

You will probably be able to receive some details from some Syrians living in Sonora, Mexico, about the birth-place of Calles.

Basile G. D'Ouakil.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

The letter in the "Brooklyn Daily Eagle" follows:

CALLES' RELIGION

A few evenings ago in The Eagle, in writing about the marriage of the daughter of President Calles of Mexico, you made the statement that President Calles was a Roman Catholic. In the interest of truth and to keep the records accurate I desire to advise you as follows:

President Calles is a native of Cajame, Sonora, Mexico. His grandfather was a Syrian peddler of wearing apparel, who rambled into that country selling his wares. President Calles' father was born in Sonora, as was the President himself. He was baptized a Protestant and has never had any connection with the Catholic Church. He acted as a minister of a Protestant Church in Sonora, and also taught in a private school. Later on he became interested in a flour and feed store with an American named Smithers, which he disposed of in order to join the revolutionary forces under Carranza. In Sonora President Calles is still called "The Turk."

President Calles married Natalie Chacon, a Protestant lady, in Hermosillo. They have six children, three boys and three girls, none of whom have been baptized Catholics. One of his sons, Plutarco Junior, married in Monterey, three years ago, a sister of Aaron Saenz and Moses Saenz, the latter Secretary of Education in President Calles' cabinet. The family of Saenz is also Protestant.

Fernando Torroblanco, a Catholic, married a daughter of President Calles, in Mexico City about four years ago. This wedding was solemnized in the Catholic Church, upon the insistence of Torroblanco.

The extraordinary situation is now presented in Mexico of having a Protestant President of a country 15 percent. of the population of which is Catholic. A READER.

Richmond Hill, L. I., March 14, 1927.

Discussing a Racial Problem

The American Syrian Federation of New York called a special meeting on April 15th to discuss the subject around which a controversy is now being waged in The Syrian World, on whether the Syrians in the United States are being discriminated against. President Joseph W. Ferris of the Association conducted the discussion and introduced as the speaker of the evening Dr. F. I. Shatara who read a paper which he said was intended for "family consumption" in which he analyzed the various social ailments of the Syrians and, while lauding them for their many virtues, pointed out some faults which he said he hoped would be corrected. Dr. Shatara did not deny, however, the existence of a certain amount of snobbery on the part of Americans, which he attributed to a consciousness of national superiority.

"It is a well known fact," said Dr. Shatara, "that a nation at the zenith of its power and civilization always looked down upon immigrants into its country, especially if they came from a weaker or a less cultured nation. As instance, the attitude of the Arabs of the Abbaside period towards foreigners may be cited. The Arabs then ruled supreme; they had pushed their conquests into three continents. While the rest of the world was in utter darkness, they were the guardians of science, literature and other branches of learning. Baghdad was then what Oxford and Cambridge are today. No man, irrespective of his race, was considered educated unless he knew the Arabic language. The Arabs referred to foreigners as "A'jam", the same epithet which they applied to dumb animals.

"Some Americans of the first generation," continued Dr. Shatara, "like the nouveaux riches, are more apt to look down upon immigrants than are the older stock. This is human nature. The sons of foreigners are more apt to despise foreigners than are Mayflower descendants." Then, following a more or less intimate discussion of the subject, Dr. Shatara concluded with these remarks:

"We have a distinct mission to perform in our adopted country. That mission is to contribute ourselves to our beloved America at our best — to combine the wise men of the East and the wise men of the West. Let us contribute that kindly, sympathetic and hospitable gentleman, shrewd in business but honest and dependable — his word as good as his bond; industrious but not permitting material pursuits to dim his philosophy of the true significance of life; thrifty but not materialistic, egoistic or self-centered; religious but not fanatic; home-loving, but not home-domineering; peace-loving, law-abiding, yet ready to fight when occasion demands; strong individually, but willing to be led and to abide by majority rule — remembering that it is better to be united under one weak leader than divided under several good ones."

President Ferris then declared an open forum discussion and asked several members to give their views on the subject. We copy from the minutes of the meeting some of the more salient points occurring in the remarks of the speakers.

MILHEM A. SAIDY: Of course, as

immigrants, we cannot all be like Dr. Shatara, or Mr. Ferris, or Mr. Mokarzel. We came here to escape persecution and we came penniless and had to carry the pack or go to work in brickyards, farms, factories and everything imaginable but honest in order to earn our living. None of us came here with a single dollar in his pocket — and we are not ashamed of it at all. Today among us we have the millionaire, the successful business man, the successful banker, the successful manufacturer, the successful lawyer, the successful doctor and the successful man in all professions. This speaks well for the Syrians. Of course, we have our lower classes and we have our uneducated people. These people have not caught up as yet with the times; we have to be patient with them. But they are getting old and soon they will pass away. The younger generation will come and do honor to the memory of the fathers. * * * There is no Syrian who should be ashamed to face anybody in this country for anything he has ever done. He should be proud. He is a good, law-abiding citizen. Gentlemen: education will do more to save us than all the criticism in the world. Please send your children to school. Send them to colleges. Spend your last dollar to educate them. This is the only thing that will put you to the front: Education."

DR NAJIB KATIBAH: I would like to point out that pride — not in the bad sense but in the good sense — self-esteem, pride, is one of the characteristics of the human being. There is a kind of pride that no human being can afford to ignore and that is the pride of race. The Japanese, the British, the French, the Germans and all other races have their pride. If pride is killed and the individual loses, or the nation loses, or the race loses that pride, then they are done for. It dwindles down to what we call in English the inferiority complex. A man knows that he is lower than the other fellow. When he gets that idea into his head, when he gets to be in that condition, his ambition, his vision, his aims in life have a cloud on them. * * * We are in a period of transition. Transition is the change from one state to another, and this is one of the hardest imaginable conditions to be in. It means sacrifice and it means sometimes a good deal of bravery to meet the issue. I commend the Syrians for what they have done. And, after all, the individual who has risen up is the one who is respected and who will transmit that respect to his fellow countrymen.

S. A. MOKARZEL: I have been impressed very much by some of the things that have been said here this evening, and especially by the last remarks of Dr. Katibah on pride of race and achievement. I believe he hit the nail on the head when he said that every race should feel proud of itself and that the race which allows itself to slide backwards to the extent of feeling any vestige of an inferiority complex is surely going to lose its identity and be swallowed up in the valley of oblivion. We hope we will never come to that. * * * I maintain that if the language should die it should not follow that the racial characteristics should die with it. There are characteristics among our racial traits — those things that we should be proud of — that we should not allow to die. These things that we should feel proud of are up to us now, especially in this dangerous time of transition, to take the necessary and proper steps to prevent from dying. How can we do that? If we are to permit ourselves to

drift on aimlessly like derelicts on the open sea, we shall certainly get nowhere, and we will be at the mercy of the tempest which will batter us right and left, and no matter how strong our ship may be it will be a prey to the waves in the end. But if we have a good captain at the helm; if we are sure of the strength and staunchness of our ship; and if we apply the intelligence, the industry that is necessary and required to bring our ship safely to port I think that will be to our credit—so much so that future generations will feel proud of us who had been able to weather the storm at those dangerous times.*** Whether it is for good or bad that such a controversy was started, it is certainly within our power to extract the good that is in it and to try to bring the question to a fruitful conclusion. It seems to me that the only concrete suggestion I can give—although you can see that I have not been able to work out the details—came to me just now while I was listening to the intelligent discussion that has been going on here this evening. There should be some kind of concerted movement started by this association which should be truly representative and which should embrace the flower of our intellect in New York—for New York, as you all realize, is looked up to by all the rest of the United States as the leader in every intellectual movement. And we should not try to treat the negative side alone; we should try to do something positive and get some benefit out of all that we have heard tonight. We can if we only try to apply our ideas. We have had the negative side, but that pride of ours is a good connecting link with the positive side. We should encourage pride of race and not defeat our own purpose by negative, destructive criticism. *** Talking of pride of race, not every German, or Englishman, or Frenchman, or every man of any other nationality has done distinctive things to be proud of so that he could consider himself possessed of that superiority complex mentioned here. A few distinguished individuals of each race created the good name and the good reputation for the race. And the Syrians have had and have now distinguished individuals. We have a background in history that we may be justly proud of. It is simply up to us to try to bring this to the fore, so that the common run of our people will know and get to feel a sense of pride in their race. That is the way we would be encouraging the Syrians to attain and maintain the position that is due them in the United States if it is not accorded them now. And if it is not accorded them it is mainly due to one cause and that is the lack of co-operative action. We lack the proper civic spirit. This lackness manifests itself not only in work among ourselves, but in our failure to make ourselves known among the American nation. That is what goes to the root of the matter. But perhaps now we are beginning to take a little more interest. This is a good sign. We should encourage it. And these are exactly the lines that I want to propose to you gentlemen tonight. We should become active here. We in New York, by virtue of the fact that we are looked up to as leaders in intellectual movements, should do something that would have nation-wide effect; that would not be restricted merely to our own conditions here in this city, but that would give the lead to others to follow up — so that when we and others join hands we can do something that will really make us feel proud

that we are Syrians, and in the eventuality that one of our race does commit a crime, and goes to jail, there will be applied to us the law of averages and the ninety-nine per cent. of us will not be condemned through the action of that single one.

DR. SALIM Y. ALKAZIN: I would like to call your attention to one thing that probably you did not touch on: I have had my experience in New England — and it is said that a New Englander is the straightest back in the country -- but in not one city in my experience in New England have I found that anyone of those people really intentionally looked down upon a foreigner. In fact, many foreigners up in New England are really admired and respected by the people there — provided they are known and their work is known. What I wanted to point out to you was this one fundamental thing: the so-called White race --- in contradistinction to the Brown and Black—and the European races, look on the Oriental races as foreign and strange to them; perhaps not because they are inferior to them, but because they do not understand them. I say that when it comes right down to it, no white man or Occidental will degrade an Oriental or think that the Oriental is below him unless he misunderstands him. I do not blame them. We, as somebody has remarked, have our pride in our race, and we thought, once upon a time, that every outsider was a gentile and that we were God's chosen people. You cannot overcome that; it is in the make-up of the race. It is the Oriental against the Occidental "and never the twain shall meet", excepting when one knows the other and understands him and reaches such station as Kipling referred to when he said they will never meet unless they will consider each other men. There is no East or West when two men meet! Now, my point is this: they have their prejudices and their ideas; we have our prejudices and our ideas. They have their culture and they put themselves in a position to look down upon other races. They are misguided, perhaps, and perhaps they are not. But how are we going to overcome that condition? It exists. You cannot deny the fact. To overcome it we must prove to them that we are capable individually. We have proven it individually in many instances, but how are we going to prove it collectively? Now, that is the question I would like you to ponder and think over. Indvidually, in many instances, we have proven that we are equal to them in many positions. How are we going to prove to them collectively that we are equal to them, too?

MAJOR HABEEB A. SAIDY: There has been a great deal said about racial pride, individual pride, religious pride and all that. Now, gentlemen, you have got to remember that that is one of the most important phases of this question. The minute a man loses pride in those things of which he should be proud, you might as well call him a dead one, because he is gone. It is for that reason that I, for one, am always proud to say that I am a Syrian, to say that I am of Syrian parentage, that whatever Syrian traditions are in my favor I never hesitate to claim them. * * * The previous speaker has said something about knowing that in individual cases the Syrian has shown that he is equal to the task placed before him. But you must give this race a little chance. We are very, very young in this country. How long have we been here? Thirty or forty years. We came here entirely desti-

tute of finance and entirely destitute of education. Seeing this was a wonderful country we decided to stay. Some of us did not have the opportunity of educating themselves; some of us had to carry the pack on their shoulders; but as time goes on are our children carrying the pack? So, after all, give us the opportunity, and I think we are all availing ourselves of that opportunity. The basis of all this is education, and when we would have given our children the opportunity of education, I think their Syrian traditions—the strength that is in the blood, will show itself, and they will be proud to say that they are of the Syrian race and of Syrian blood, and those around them will be proud to call them their adopted brethren.

ABRAHAM DAOUD (of Atlantic City): My experience with the American people has been very pleasant. Nominally they regard us as foreigners, but foreigners can be distinguished one from the other.

PRESIDENT FERRIS: There was a reaction, however, I understand, in Atlantic City at one time, when the Syrians were not very well known, but when your organization, the Syrian American Club, put the Syrians before the public I understand that there was a complete reversal of feeling and a change of sentiment towards the race as a whole.

ABRAHAM DAOUD: We have an organization there of about eighty members and they are well thought of in that commmunity. We do not feel foreign or persecuted in any way.

AZIZ TRABULSI: A few years ago, after I came out of the United States Navy in which I served during the war, I took it upon myself to go where the Indians live out West. I was salesman for a large concern and made about five or six towns a day. Whenever they asked me my nationality I told them I was a Syrian. A Syrian? they would ask. "Is that Jewish?" Naturally, I had to go to the trouble of explaining it all. But I found no prejudice against the race. Everyman stands on his own individually.

DR. SHATARA: I would like to say that if this paper has done nothing else it has at least brought out the interesting discussion we have had here tonight. * * * We are faced with a certain condition and I want you to think of that condition. I do not say that we should be ashamed of being Syrians at all. I want you to realize that this feeling of being looked down upon does exist in many situations. The point I tried to bring out is: what are those characteristics of ours that are the underlying cause of the trouble, not what are our virtues — we have lots of them. * * * So much has been said of the second generation. I am afraid, gentlemen, that the second or third generation is not going to be distinguishable from the Americans at all. They will be completely assimilated. This will be very nice in a way, but it is going to be a pity in another way. Because I feel that we have a distinct mission in this country. If your children are going to forget entirely that they have any Syrian blood in them, that will be a great pity, because they will not be able to make those wonderful Syrian traditions which their parents brought over a part of their contribution to this great country.

PRESIDENT FERRIS: I want to thank the several members who addressed the organization tonight. This problem of assimilation, as you all no doubt know, is a question that confronts every nationality and every race in this country.

Political Developments in Syria

M. Henri Ponsot, French High Commissioner in Syria, is still in Paris with no authentic information as to the time of his return. Due to his protracted stay, there had been rumors that he had tendered his resignation as a result of the refusal of the Cabinet to approve his program for administrative reform in Syria. But this rumor proved to be unfounded and the latest report as to his intentions sets the early part of April as the date of his return. But no account of the activities and intentions of M. Ponsot can be confirmed as he still maintains his taciturnity with seemingly no concern for what is said about him.

The extended stay of M. Ponsot in Paris, however, gives ample reason for the belief that he met with considerable opposition to his reform program. That he seems ready now to return to his post may be taken as an indication of his success, finally, in getting his program approved. But the contents of this program still remain a mystery. The nearest guess as to their nature is what was reported to have been a statement from a semi-official source to the effect that M. Ponsot is now more concerned over the economic situation in Syria and Lebanon than he is over the political situation. His first attention, the report states, upon his return to Syria, will be directed towards improving the economic situation in an effort to stem the tide of emigration and bring relief to the population from the intolerable conditions which have almost become chronic. He is reported as determined to give especial attention to the promotion of summer-resort facilities in Syria and Lebanon as the most ready and logical means of improving the general economic situation. In his opinion, so the report states, the political situation can afford to wait and will gradually take care of itself.

Of the many other rumors published about M. Ponsot, the one that had met at one time with much credence was the one reporting him preparing to return to Syria by way of Turkey in order to effect a new political agreement with the Kemalist government. This, also, was subsequently denied, together with other rumors reporting him to have broken silence, finally, and given an interview on political and economic conditions in Syria while in Geneva. M. Ponsot seems bent on making for himself a reputation for firmness, and if he should succeed in carrying out his program for administrative reforms to the extent he has succeeded in resisting all temptations to speak, then there is real hope of something concrete and decisive taking place soon in Syria.

The most important political move undertaken by the Syrian Nationalists during the last month was the presentation by Ihsan Bey Jabery, their representative in Geneva, of a memorandum to Herr Stresemann, in his capacity of President of the League and the member from Germany, outlining anew the demands of the Nationalists and appealing to Germany, as morally responsible in part for approving the French mandate over Syria, to place the case of Syria before the League in the hope of getting redress. The Memorandum states that Syria will

never consent to the French mandate, as France has refused to follow in Syria the policy followed by England in Iraq. Syrian demands in this appeal to Stresemann are reduced to three main points:

1—Appointment of an impartial Committee of investigation to ascertain the demands of the Syrians.

2—If that should be impracticable at the present time, then the League should take over the direct mandate by the appointment of a mixed commission for the administration of Syria.

3—If this also should be found impracticable, then the League is asked to declare the absolute independence of Syria and to admit it to full membership of the League.

The government of Ahmad Nami Bey in Damascus has had, according to reports in the Syrian papers, a sharp rebuff from the acting French High Commissioner in Syria. It so happened that at the time President Nami Bey was on a tour of inspection in northern Syria, members of the city council, together with a large number of notables, sent a telegraphic petition to Paris supporting the demands of the Nationalist Party. Upon the President's return, he was infuriated at the action of his political enemies and he peremptorily issued orders for the dismissal of many high officials. The acting High Commissioner, however, stayed the execution of the orders pending the return of M. Ponsot, and this was hailed as a great political victory over the President by his opponents as it is the general belief that the orders will never be executed. On the other hand, this action is being interpreted as an indication of a change of policy on the part of France in that it is taking advantage of every opportunity to placate the leaders of the Nationalist Party in Damascus in an effort to bring about peace and order in the State of Syria, now that it has almost succeeded in putting down the revolution in the Druze Mountain.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

A recent statement by the Syrian Information Bureau in Egypt, conducted by the supporters of the revolution, announces that a general war council was convoked lately by the leaders of the armed forces in Jebel Druze in which the general military situation was discussed and important decisions arrived at. The leaders were agreed that the war should be pushed with more energy now that the spring season has set in and the terrain become more favorable to military operations. Special measures were also taken for supplying the fighting forces with arms, ammunitions and provisions.

The statement contains the significant announcement that at this war council it was decided to form a new fighting unit which is to be known as the regiment of Abi Bakr, in honor of the memory of the first Moslem Caliph who dispatched military forces against the Romans in Syria to wrest the country from their hands.

Coinciding with the publication of this report was the issuance of a communique by the French High Command in Syria detailing the latest military operations against the remnants of the Druze revolutionists who had entrenched themselves in what was supposed to be the impenetrable mountainous section of Lajah. The report states that on March 30-31 and April 1, a strong

punitive expedition was dispatched against that section which searched all caves and crannies and succeeded in driving away all remaining insurgents. A military observer writing in "Al-Mokattam" of Cairo, a nationalist sympathizer, concludes that for the French to have succeeded in accomplishing this, they must have had the assistance of the local Arab tribes who are bitter enemies of the Druzes, and whose men must have acted as guides to the invaders, as the rocky nature of the district permits a handful of sharpshooters to resist a whole army if not properly guided.

About Syria and Syrians

LEBANESE SOCIETY AIDS MISSISSIPI SUFFERERS

Following the publication of President Coolidge's appeal for aid to the sufferers of the Mississipi flood, "Al-Hoda", the leading Syrian daily paper of New York, announced in its issue of April 25 that the Lebanon League of Progress of New York of which Mr. N. A. Mokarzel, editor of "Al-Hoda", is Supervising President, has contributed $100.00 towards the relief fund and that it stands ready to donate more if necessary.

SYRIANS IN NEW YORK ENTERTAIN LIBRARIANS

The Bowling Green Neighborhood Association of New York and its Syrian friends held a reception on April 6 to the School of Library Service of Columbia University. The visiting members of the school were about 125 young women drawn from all sections of the United States. The program consisted of a visit to the house and library of the Association; an entertainment in the auditorium; a visit to the publication office of "Al-Hoda", to the business establishment of A. Cassatly & Co., and to St. George's and St. Joseph's churches in Washington St.; and a special dinner at the Sheik Restaurant.

The New York Library Club Bulletin for May published the following account of the reception:

"Syrian friends and members of the Bowling Green Neighborhood Association gave a reception to students of the Columbia School of Library Service at Bowling Green on April 6. This included a visit to the settlement house and library; greeting from Mr. Alexander Cleland representing the Association; a program touching on Syrian contributions to American life; a visit to outstanding places of interest in the Syrian colony, and a special Syrian dinner.

"Mr. Salloum Mokarzel, Editor of "The Syrian World", expressed the hope that this glimpse of Syrian life in New York would lead the Columbia students from various cities of the United States to seek out Syrians when they return home and establish friendly library relations with them.

"Miss Harriot Hessler is librarian of the community library at Bowling Green which serves people of 20 nationalities through books furnished by the Extension Division of the New York Public Library."

The Syrian artists who contributed their talent for the entertainment were Miss Anna Bader, soloist; Miss

Mary Shakty, dancer; Princess Sultana, dancer-soloist, and Mr. Toufik Moubaid, music accompanist with the 'oud.

Miss Anna Leonard, of the Bowling Green Neighborhood Association, with her sympathetic understanding of the Syrians, deserves special credit for the arrangement of the program.

AUTOMOBILES IN SYRIA REPLACING CARAVANS

Slowly but surely, the commercial relations between the countries of the Near East which had been disrupted by the World War are being restored to normalcy. Not only that, but with the appearance of the automobiles and trucks a golden age of trade activities is prophesied by those who keep their ears to the ground.

Already, declares an article in "al-Ahwal", trade exchanges between Syria and Persia are progressing at a rapid pace. The old caravan routes which carried spices from India, via Persia and the Syrian Desert, have become accustomed to the grinding noise of the heavy trucks, and the rattling of the Fords. The trading company of Kuwatli and Tawil is carrying on a thriving business with Persia, which, we are informed, owing to its political complications with Russia, is thinking of turning the bulk of its trade from the Russian route, via the seaport of Rasht, to that of Syria, via Teheran and the Syrian Desert.

SYRIAN YOUNGSTER A VIRTUOSO

The Syrians of Brazil have praised to the skies and feted elaborately a youngster of their race, Blanche Shweiri, 13, who won first prize for vocal and instrumental music in a national contest held a few months ago in the capital of Brazil and sponsored by the Federal Government. The contest was open for children of 14 years or younger, and contestants from different parts of the Republic took part.

Miss Blanche Shweiri received a golden medal as part of her prize, together with a sum of money which she donated to charity. She was offered also free tuition in Europe for three years, but her parents declared their ability to educate her at their own expense.

MOTHER SEES TWO CHILDREN DROWN

The Syrian papers of Brazil of March 8 report a sad tragedy of a Syrian mother who lost her two children while attempting to save one from drowning. Mrs. Michael Andary was promenading along the banks of Poso Alegri river, carrying an infant son on her arms while besides her walked her three-year old daughter. The latter noticed some pretty flowers growing in the water and waded in to pick them. She slipped and cried for help. The mother, with the child still in her arms, dashed in to save the little girl. She, too, slipped in the muddy bed of the river and dropped her infant and was rescued while on the point of death, while her two children drowned.

ON HONORING AN ENEMY

The latest mail from Syria reports the arrival in Beirut of Azmi Bey, the Turkish wali, or governor of the city during the war. His visit to the acting French High Commissioner and to the President of the Leb-

anon Republic was returned by these officials, and this gave rise to a great cry of indignation from the native press which recalled the atrocities of this tyrant who is claimed to be responsible for the many executions of Syrian and Lebanese patriots during the war, together with the then governor of Syria, Jemal Pasha. There was one paper, however, which lauded the administrative and disciplinary ability of the former governor and insinuated that, in a way, conditions under him were more tolerable than they are now under the French administration.

The announced visit of Azmi Bey is for the purpose of establishing factories in Syria for the production of oriental rugs, due to the presence in the country of a large number of Armenian refugees who are skilled at this work and who furnish ample and cheap labor.

ARMENIAN HANDKERCHIEFS FROM SYRIA

"Consular Reports" publishes the following report from Mr. Harry L. Troutman, American Consul in Aleppo:

"Owing to a slump in demand, declared exports of Armenian handmade handkerchiefs from Aleppo, Syria, to the United States dropped from a total of 29,067 dozen, valued at $35,135, in 1925 to 9,210 tozen, with a value of $13,485, in 1926. The increase indicates that higher grades of handkerchiefs were shipped, but it is partly attributable also to more exact declared values in 1926. In addition to a decreased demand, the industry was also somewhat adversely affected by a scarcity of workers at times during the year. Linen imported for handkerchiefs is exempt from duty, but a deposit is required at the time of importation. The formalities and length of time required to obtain refunds of such deposits are said to have discouraged some concerns from undertaking this business."

A SYRIAN-AMERICAN CLUB

Although it is not our policy to give space to announcements of club and society elections, we make an exception in the case of the newly-formed club in Tyler, Tex., whose members aim at strengthening racial ties among the Syrians and for that reason invite correspondence from other clubs. Herewith is the letter of Mr. Jos. H. Campbell on the subject:

Editor The Syrian World:

The younger Syrian-Americans of Tyler, Texas, have organized a social club the purpose of which is to promote closer relations among its members and the advancement of our social and civic standing in the community. The club consists of both sexes, young men and women. No person is barred from membership because of religious or political affiliations.

The following officers have been elected for the ensuing year:

George S. Saleh, President.

Joseph H. Campbell, Vice President.

Evelyn Saleh, Corresponding Secretary.

Paul A. Peters, Recording Secretary.

Fannie Saleh, Treasurer.

The club has been named "The Good Fellows Club". It desires to correspond with any other similar club. Address: Evelyn Saleh, 435 E. Erwin Street, Tyler, Texas.

ASSURING OUR FAITH IN NEW YORK CITY

REAL ESTATE is the basis of all wealth,
Said Theodore Roosevelt.

NEW YORK CITY vacant lots are gold pieces with soil on, Say we.

LET YOUR MONEY work for you, while it is as safe as in a safe deposit box.

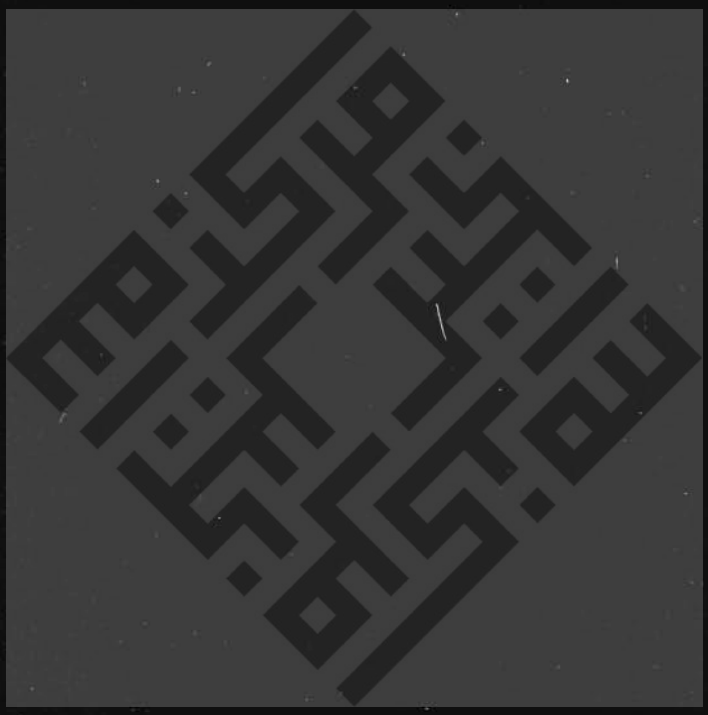
A FOREMOST OPPORTUNITY for a sound investment of rapidly rising value.

OUR PROPERTY is located within a few minutes' walk from the Subway Station.

A SMALL DOWN PAYMENT will put you "on the ground floor" while predevelopment prices prevail.

WITHOUT OBLIGATION SEND FOR FULL INFORMATION

E. J. KASON

151 WEST 40th STREET

15th Floor NEW YORK CITY