

CONDITIONS IN LEBANON IMPROVING UNDER NEW FORM OF GOVERNMENT

REPUBLIC PLACED UNDER DICTATORSHIP TO ENFORCE EFFICIENCY AND ECONOMY—LEBANESE EMIGRANTS GREAT FACTOR IN REHABILITATION

Annual Remittances Formerly \$10,000,000 Now Materially Reduced

(Special Correspondence to Al-Hoda.)

Beirut, October 30.—Lebanon, famous homeland of the Phoenicians of old, had the distinction of being the first republic to be established among Arabic speaking countries. The republic was proclaimed in 1926, and the Lebanese over-did themselves in copying after their older and stronger sister republics in Europe and America with the result that they built up a top-heavy government employing a large army of securities which drained the limited resources of the country.

passive, due to the obstructive tactics of parliament, had a free hand and embarked on a personal tour of inspection through the country, during which he gave particular attention to even minor details which would stop wastefulness and extravagance.

This, however, should not be taken to mean that the Lebanese house has been put in complete order. The economic situation as it effects the wage-earner and small farmer is still particularly distressing, and there is public clamor which seems to be growing in intensity and volume for a drastic reduction in taxes as well as in rents, the reduction demanded reaching to even fifty percent of the prevailing rates.

What the Lebanese hope and pray for is some kind of help to reach them from their countrymen in America and elsewhere overseas. Immigrant remittances at one time amounted to more than \$10,000,000 annually, but they are now nowhere near that figure. This makes distress in the home-land severely felt. The greater hope, however, is that the Lebanese abroad, commanding a fair amount of liquid capital, will be induced to invest it in home industries, which would bring it more rapid realization for the country and prove a benefit to the investors because of the freshness and fertility of this unexploited field.

Aside from the economic considerations back of this hope, there is the added desire that the Lebanese themselves establish their own home industries and reap the benefits resulting therefrom without being subjected to foreign interference and dependence upon foreign capital.

It will be interesting to relate how Mr. Azis was informed by the government of their choice of his composition. The "uniformed" soldiers appeared at his home one day. In answer to his anxious inquiry as to the cause of their visit, they assured him that it was not for the purpose of arrest but to honor him. He was escorted by them to the government building and there ceremoniously received and formally notified.

Mr. Azis' composition entitled "Hapsodia Number 1", was played on October 22, in the cathedral of the first regiment of field artillery at the military prison of Santiago Tlalcolec, by the Banda Especial de la Jefatura de la Comandancia de la Plaza, led by C. Mayaguez, Roman Hernandez, Director General of Music and Military Bands, and was a part of a musical celebration sponsored by the Secretaries of War and Marine Affairs, and of Industry, Commerce and Labor, to commemorate the Eleventh festival of the "Hra Anticologica de Cultura Militar Semanaria", which was instituted by the president of the Republic of Mexico.

two months in London and eight in Paris, where the people called him "Teddy Black" and almost adopted him. They also played a few months in Havana. Ted prefers playing before a visible audience because he thinks it "inspires the boys." Recently, while playing in New Haven, he discovered a young singer-saxophone player, whose high, baritone voice appealed to him. He took him with his orchestra and now he is the soloist. During the off-season when the soloist are away, Ted himself does the singing.

Besides his duties and responsibilities, he answers all his fan mail personally and autographs every picture that goes out. (He assures us that he isn't a patronizer of so-called fan-mail agencies, who, for payment of a nominal fee, insure so many fan letters a week.)

Mr. Elias Abouseleman, Ted's mother, thinks the world of her son and Ted thinks no less of her. He regards his mother as his most ardent and earnest fan and believes he inherited his musical ability from her. When Ted is broadcasting at 12:30 A. M., Mrs. Abouseleman gets up especially to hear him.

Next to playing music, Ted Black likes to play golf. He has played on links all over the country; wherever the orchestra happened to be engaged. Mr. Black is happily married, and lives in East Fifty-fifth Street, New York City, near the National Broadcasting Station.

BENEVOLENT DICTATOR



President Charles Dabbas of Lebanon

MEXICO HONORS SYRIAN COMPOSER

From Texas comes the news that one of our countrymen has been honored by the Mexican Government with the performance of one of his musical compositions in a recent festival program. The talented composer is Mr. Norman Azis, of West Brownsville, Texas.

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A. ABDALLAH N. M. SENATOR

WINS AS REPUBLICAN IN FACE OF DEMOCRATIC LANDSLIDE

(Special Correspondence to Al-Hoda.)

Santo Fe, New Mexico, November 21.—For the first time in the history of New Mexico this State has a Syrian senator in its legislature. He is Mr. Assad Abdallah, and, although a Republican, was selected despite the great Democratic landslide. His personal popularity carried him to victory. He will take his seat in the senate in January.

Mr. Abdallah immigrated to this country in the year 1913 from Boumye El Matn, Mt. Lebanon. He came first to Las Vegas, and after a short stay there moved to the town of Pecos, New Mexico, where he has established himself in a mercantile business.

When the United States called men to arms during the World War, Mr. Abdallah was one of the first to enlist. He is a member of the American Legion and one of its officers. Education is Mr. Abdallah's hobby. His interest in that field started when he won in his party's political career. He was elected a member of the school board, and later became its chairman.

Mr. Abdallah held various county offices and gradually established himself as one of the political leaders of the state which resulted in his party's honor him with the nomination of State Senator on the Republican ticket.

Mr. Miller speaks to Junior League. Mrs. Laura Parks Miller, promotion manager of Harper's Bazaar, and former editor of Nomad and St. Nicholas, was the guest speaker at the Syrian Junior League, Tuesday, November 22, at the League's clubhouse.

Mr. Miller spoke on books and magazines in the making, giving colorful snapshots of famous writers she counts among her friends and acquaintances. She is a painter in words; the pictures she paints being vividly described, making her subject intensely interesting to the listener.

FRENCH READY TO RELINQUISH MANDATE AND NEGOTIATE TREATY WITH SYRIA ON BASIS OF COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE

TENOR'S SONG NETS \$15,000

BUT THIS CAME TO MRS. MIDHAT SERBAGI THROUGH SETTLEMENT OF A SUIT

The warbling love notes of a Syrian tenor cost Mrs. Oliver Prescott, New Bedford, Mass., society leader and wealthy patroness of music, the sum of \$15,000, it was revealed, recently through settlement of a \$25,000 alienation of affections claim brought by Mrs. Midhat Serbagi, the tenor's wife.

As the aftermath to Serbagi's arrest last spring, when Mrs. Prescott told police he had forced her at gunpoint to sign a promissory note for \$25,000, and afterwards a dropped prosecution, news of the wife's silence for the aforementioned price came as a surprise to New Bedford society.

That her husband saw altogether too much of the New Bedford society leader was one of Mrs. Serbagi's contentions. That Mrs. Prescott took altogether too many automobile rides with her own, dear tenor was also one of Mrs. Serbagi's contentions, according to a New Bedford newspaper.

And that Mrs. Prescott penned lyrics not entirely devoted to music and addressed them to the former called, turned tenor, was considered enough provocation by Mrs. Serbagi to ask \$25,000 as the price of her husband's love, which, she claimed Mrs. Prescott had borrowed, was not stoken.

ATY, Paris Mulet of Boston admitted her suit would not be tried. "The matter was settled out of court," he said.

At the former Serbagi home in West Roxbury it was learned the family had recently moved, leaving no forwarding address.

SCHOOL STUDIES KAHILIL GIBRAN

Mrs. Wilhelm Spkyer of 7040 Colonial Road, Brooklyn, N. Y., brings us this interesting bit of news about the interest that is being shown in Kahilil Gibran by school children. Mrs. Spkyer, who is a Hollander, but "an Oriental at heart", recently visited the Washington Irving High School in New York City with the famous European actress, Mrs. Rika Hopper, who is Mrs. Spkyer's guest during her sojourn in America. They went the rounds of the class rooms, viewed the art exhibits, and then attended a class which was discussing "The Rubaiyat" of Omar Khayyam. Mrs. Spkyer, being invited to join the forum, asked if any of the students had heard of Kahilil Gibran, whose works of art and literature had deeply inspired her. The teacher was familiar with his books, and one student had just finished reading his "Prophet". The class thereupon decided to have Gibran as their next topic of discussion and to study his work, his biography, and the sources of his inspiration.

GIBRAN ON THE AMERICAN STAGE

Another interesting item concerning Kahilil Gibran centers around the American stage. Katherine Warren, who is at present on the road with Walter Hargensen as Roxanne in "Cyrano de Bergerac", knew Gibran for many years and had many interesting discussions with him in his studio on West Tenth Street, New York City. She played the character Lazarus in one of a group of five plays which was performed on the campus of a New England college.

An unusual chain of circumstances led Miss Warren to take the part of Lazarus. A young Syrian boy was given the role but his portrayal of the character did not satisfy Gibran who thought that Katherine Warren should have it. However, the rehearsals went on and a time was set for the production of the play. Two or three days before the opening, however, Miss Warren visited Kahilil Gibran. They talked over the play, and, as Miss Warren was leaving the studio, Gibran, in his characteristic way, shook his finger at her and said with determination, "But you will play Lazarus!"

The day before the performance the Syrian boy became ill and his mother informed Gibran that he could not appear. Thereupon Gibran informed Miss Warren, and she played the part of Lazarus the following day with her script written in scrollform pinned to her flowing sleeves.

HIGH COMMISSIONER PONSOT SO INFORMS SYRIAN PARLIAMENT UPON HIS RECENT RETURN FROM PARIS AND TAKES SYRIANS BY SURPRISE

DEMAND FOR PAYMENT DENIED

Political Problem of Long Standing Approaching Amicable Settlement—Treaty Between England and Iraq Unfavorable

(Special Correspondence to Al-Hoda.)

Beirut, October 30.—The political situation in Syria is still in a confused state. The return of High Commissioner Ponsot, recently, seemed to add another element which intensified rather than clarified the atmosphere. The Syrian Parliament held the first meeting of its regular session on Saturday, October 28. First in the order of business was the election of officers, and Subhi Bey Barakat was chosen president by a majority of 43, there being only one dissenting vote which was cast by Hashim Bey Atassi, his one time rival for the presidency of parliament. Hashim Bey Atassi was also formerly a candidate of the Nationalist Party, president of the republic.

This total of 42 does not represent the full membership of parliament because the Nationalist bloc, controlling strength over since High Commissioner Subhi Bey Barakat, to whom they were bitterly opposed.

The second meeting of parliament is set for October 31, at which the Nationalists are expected to attend because of the probability that the ministry will render a report at this meeting as to what has been accomplished. There seems to be no doubt that the ministry will receive a vote of confidence which will insure its continuation in office inasmuch as it is supported by the party in control.

Such is the political situation in Syria as it appears on the surface; but there is an undercurrent of uneasiness which portends great possibilities. This has been developing and growing in London ever since High Commissioner Ponsot returned to Syria.

The way this situation was developed may be considered a stroke of genius on the part of M. Ponsot and French diplomacy. It seems to have taken Syrian politicians unaware, for M. Ponsot seems to be in perfect control of the situation and undoubtedly has the upper hand in his negotiations with the Syrians.

This state of affairs was brought about by the fact that Syrian political leaders during all the time that M. Ponsot was absent in France were busy laying plans to gain control of the internal situation. They desired to divide the ministry with a view of dominating all the political plums among themselves.

But the very day that M. Ponsot arrived in Syria he hastened to Damascus and called the Syrian leaders into conference, announcing that France was willing to enter immediately into treaty relations with Syria in compliance with

the Syrians often expressed demands. This the High Commissioner meant as a concession on the part of France to Syrian Nationalist aspirations. But, strangely enough, it had the effect of throwing the whole Syrian political situation into confusion because of the complete unpreparedness of the Syrians to deal with France on such a basis. The Syrians had expected some resistance on the part of the French, but when the latter expressed their readiness for a complete compliance with Syrian demands relative to the placing of relations between the two nations on a treaty basis, thus alleviating in a sense the odium of a mandate, they had no concrete suggestion to offer as a basis of negotiations.

With the same suddenness that the High Commissioner made his proposal he demanded an answer on the ground that the continuation of the unsettled political situation in the country was detrimental to its progress, immediate action being therefore rendered imperative. The Syrian leaders went into conference to map out a plan of action and draft a reply to the High Commissioner, but all they could do in the limited time at their disposal was to fall back on a recent precedent, saying that the treaty governing their relations with France as mandatory should be along the same lines as that existing between England and Iraq.

The French, judging by the comments of their political writers such as Pertinax, are apparently perfectly willing to establish their status in Syria along the same lines as that of England in Iraq, for at the time the treaty between England and Iraq was presented, the French press criticized it severely, revealing that newsmen were trying to get the better of the bargain, and that in every instance England had dictated the terms of the treaty to her own benefit and advantage.

Such is the political situation as it now stands, and it seems doubtful that even the completion of the treaty would clear the political atmosphere to the satisfaction of everyone or even to that of the majority.

A rumor that at one time had wide credence was that France was perfecting a plan to relinquish control of Syria if the latter were willing to reimburse France in the sum of twelve billion francs (about \$480,000,000) which would represent France's expenditures during her occupation of the country. France, her countrymen, it is rumored, would be willing to give Syria complete and unconditional independence. But this proposal was received with indignation by the Syrians who could not conceive of the idea of obligating themselves to pay for the payment of such a huge sum which would hold Syria in continual bondage for an indefinite period of time. French authorities, however, soon afterwards denied the truth of the rumor, and it is rumored that they had cast a "trial balloon" to test the extent of the Syrian desire for independence and to ascertain if they would be willing to buy their freedom for cash since they had been so clamorous for it.

U. S. STAND ON IRAQ REJECTED BY BRITAIN

The United States contention that it has the right to be heard regarding the future of Iraq after expiration of the British mandate, which has been the subject of correspondence between London and Washington, since March, 1931, has been firmly denied by the British. The British view is that the matter was disposed of by the entry of Iraq into the League of Nations last month. All correspondence has been forwarded to the League.

The position taken by the State Department.

CIGARETTES NOW 100 YEARS OLD

A writer in the Daily Telegraph of London says that the cigarette of today—tobacco rolled in thin paper—was about simultaneously invented in Cuba and Egypt, just 100 years ago.

In Ibrahim Pasha's camp against the Turks in 1832 a load of tobacco and a quantity of pipes were sent to an Egyptian unit as a reward for their valor in storming St. Jean d'Acre in Syria.

A grenade had blown the pipes to pieces, but an Egyptian soldier was not to be deprived of his smoke for that reason. Rolling a piece of Indian paper over for wrapping up powder into a tube, he rammed it full of tobacco—and the first cigarette was made.

The story is probably as authentic as any other, and the soldier's name and his invention are, in fact, known to be honored in a fitting manner.