

# THE SYRIAN WORLD

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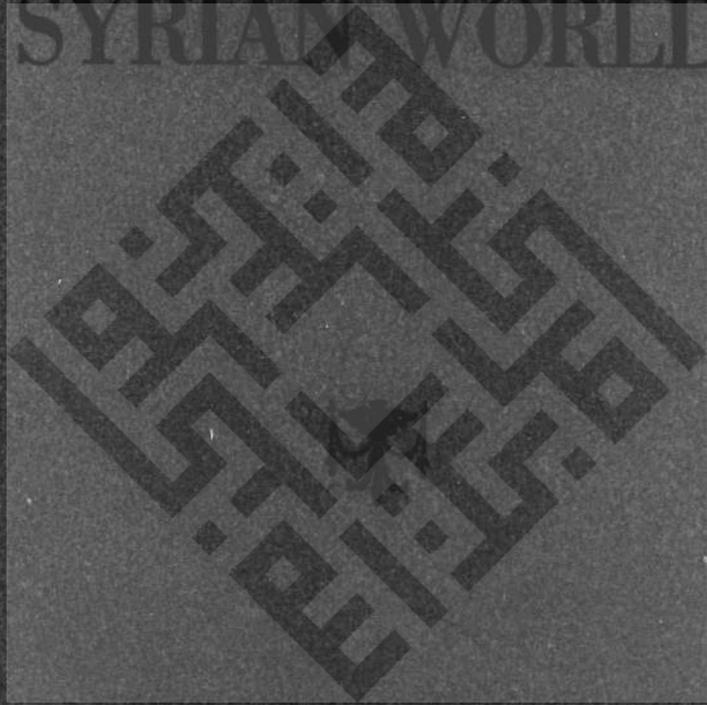
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## The Beyrouth Museum

By COUNT PHILIP DE TERRAZI

*Director, National Library and Museum of  
the Lebanon Republic*

The excavations for antiquities that have been actively pursued ever since the conclusion of the War in the rich field which is open to archæologists in our historic country have greatly enriched our Museum so that from time to time we find ourselves compelled to make substantial additions and extensions. In the latest rearrangement, an attempt was made to group objects according to sources of origin until such time as we would be permitted to make a scientific classification.

Upon entering the Museum, the visitor finds himself in a square hall in which are displayed Greek and Latin inscriptions together with fragments of statues originating mainly from Beyrouth itself. Hence we find in the center a colossal statue of Jupiter which had been deliberately decapitated by the conquerors. (\*) The breast appears fully exposed, while the shoulders and the back are partly covered and the mantle is then dropped loose and wound around the knees. The execution is done beautifully in pantelic marble. The statue was discovered in the ruins of the old Forum of Beyrouth.

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\* Who these conquerors are the writer leaves us in doubt. The logical deduction would point to the Arabs who have a special aversion to statues in any form and for whatever purpose. — Editor.

Behind this statue, ranged along the wall of the hall, may be seen: the lower section of a statue in marble of a Roman general; a large and beautiful dedicatory inscription to Jupiter of Heliopolis; Two direct lines similar to the name of M. Sentius Proculus who filled several high posts in Asia and Africa and wound up his career by being patron of Syria, then a Roman colony, in the third century. These latter inscriptions are engraved on pedestals of statues which must have formed in some manner or other, a part of a monumental staircase. Further, there are in this room: an honorary inscription in the name of Primus Sevirus, a commander of archers, engraved by order of the decurions; fragments of Latin and Greek inscriptions in the name of Vespasian and of Martinios, a Greek general; and other inscriptions of similar import.

In the center of the first room to the right is a large glass case containing precious objects, and another case is set along the wall. Four statues of children in beautiful Carrara marble in which some archæologists see the influence of the Scopos school of sculpture occupy the four corners of the room. These statues of children, nude, in a sitting posture, and in some instances holding a dove, were offerings made to the temple of Eshmoun, the god healer, which was located on the first foothills overlooking the river Bostris, known today as Nahr-el-Awali, near Sidon.

The large center glass case is divided into two sections: in the one are ranged beautiful glassware of various hues and makes and of pleasingly harmonious shapes. Some are bell-shaped with elongated necks; others are pear-shaped and having much fuller necks. The sparkling of their multiple colors suggesting those of the rainbow are a joy to visitors. The other section contains a basin, a wine-jar and other Greek vases of reddish clay, fine and lustrous, whose beautiful shape is typically Greek. Alongside are ranged potteries of Cheik Zenad, situated near the city of Tripoli, comprising bowls and vases of a black, lustrous glaze going back to the latter part of the fifth, or the earlier part of the sixth centuries. Among these is a beautiful vase surmounted on a pork's head, on the red rim of which are figures portraying Ephebian games.

In the smaller cases surrounding the central large case may be found many other objects of interest and value, such as a dozen archaic heads of the 7th century when Greek art was still in its infancy; a bust bearing a talisman and a bilingual inscription

COURTYARD OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF BEYROUTH



Here are on display art objects which would gladden any archæologist's heart as they embody the mute records of civilization from the time of the Phœnicians down.

**THE VASE WITH THE PORK'S HEAD**



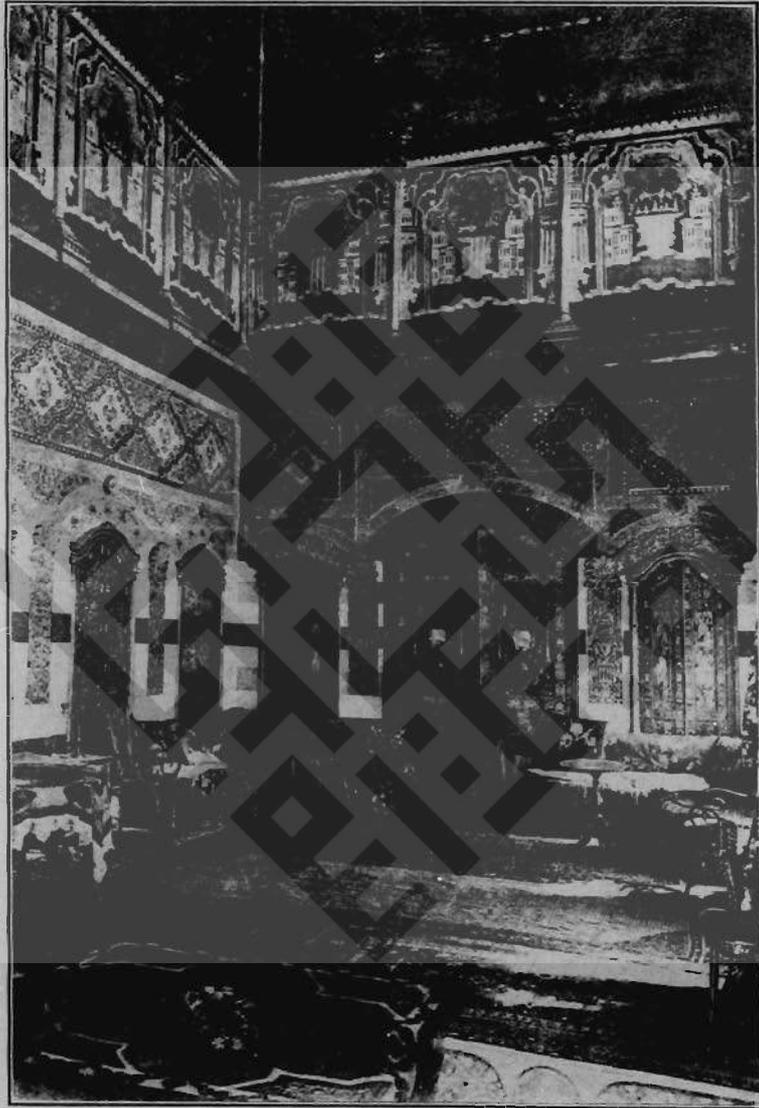
This is one of the valuable objects of art in the possession of the National Museum in Beirut and referred to in Count de Terrazi's article.

DECAPITATED STATUE OF JUPITER



The beautiful marble statue in the Beyrouth Museum which was unearthed in the vicinity of Beyrouth itself.

WHERE ORIENTAL ART IS SUPREME



Interior of one of the great palaces of Damascus, showing Oriental art and conception of luxury at their height.

which has not yet been deciphered and which some contend is a magical formula while others think it to be a forgery. Another case contains about fifty scarabs bearing hieroglyphics, together with a number of gold buckles in the shape of a flat crescent or a lion's head in bronze, bearing a ring in the mouth and having been used as ornaments for wooden coffins, are grouped around a Roman weight in lead, covered with figures of a priest driving a pair of oxen making an outline of the frontiers of the colony. Finally, several pieces of black ivory portraying in relief Christian historical scenes in period and free designs. Included among these is the resurrection of Christ; St. George slaying the dragon; two kings at the foot of the Cross, etc., etc. These are in truth little masterpieces, but the objects in this hall that are of most antiquarian value are the straight double-edged daggers studded with rivets; the curved daggers, the sickles and the razors all belonging to the age of bronze and discovered at Kafer-edj-Djarra, a historic site on the outlying foothills of Mt. Lebanon to the south of Sidon.

The second large glass case contains hundreds of Roman grooved vases either olive-shaped or in expanded centers with elongated necks and bases of the kinds that were common in the first centuries of the Christian era. There are also several vases and bowls of bronze some with and some without handles. In the case of the latter, the handles at times protrude sharply and are made in the shape of the body of a serpent topped by a human head of the Græco-Roman period.

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### SYRIAN PROVERBS

He commits murder and walks in the funeral of his victim (brazen-faced).

If the camel were to see his hump, he would fall and break his neck. (Blindness to one's shortcomings).

The tears of designing women are ever responsive.

Rather a thousand turns than a pit-fall.

Don't push the drunken man, he will stumble of himself.

Whoever is in need of fire will snatch it with his bare hands.

Rather a free dog than a captive lion.

The trip which nets you only experience is not a total loss.

An ass is an ass though he may have gold trappings.

## Good News!

*The Editor is pleased to give publicity to the following letter from IBN EL-KHOURY which is self-explanatory.*

My dear Mr. Mokarzel,

You laid me under contribution for a series of articles depicting various aspects of the simple home-life of the people of Lebanon. I wish to assure you that while I exceedingly appreciate the compliment implied by your offer, I do not feel so certain of my ability to do the subject justice. You will realize the difficulty of invoking a mental picture of incidents and scenes which date back to over a quarter of a century, as there is always the danger of losing sight of some interesting little detail which it is possible to observe only when one is on the spot. However, encouraged by your indulgence and by the appreciative reaction of the readers of THE SYRIAN WORLD to my first contribution, I promise to make as brave an attempt as possible to fulfill the commission. I fully agree with you that the changes now taking place in our East are of such a kalædoscopic and revolutionary nature that life in Lebanon as we knew it is rapidly losing its character, and I deem it indeed a privilege to contribute my feeble share in an effort to keep it alive at least in memory.

I wish to reiterate to you my thanks and my hearty appreciation and trust your readers will treat me with the indulgence which an amateurish effort deserves.

Yours very truly,  
IBN EL-KHOURY.

## Celebrating Carnival In Lebanon

By IBN EL-KHOURY

The people of Lebanon are extremely frugal. They are mostly farmers and at best they can eke out of the soil a mere subsistence by the expenditure of the greatest efforts. Tillable land is very restricted so that, perhaps, nowhere else in the world do we find the inhabitants wrestling so hard with nature by resorting to the extreme means of terracing the slopes of the mountains to prevent the soil from being washed away by the torrential rains as they do in Lebanon. Grazing grounds there are none, consequently, the only husbandry that is practicable is the raising of limited flocks of goats which subsist on the wild growth of shrubbery in the wooded sections of inaccessible localities. But the good Lebanon people are blessed with contentment. They have an adage to the effect that: "Happy is he who has a goat's resting-place in Lebanon", and they believe in it literally. They have the added satisfaction of owning each his own home, humble as it may be, and so long as they have a roof for shelter they lull themselves into the belief that they are immune against the fiercest tempests of adversity. There are families who have been in unbroken possession of the same homestead for centuries and where the family grows, the same land must be made to support the whole by means of more intensive cultivation. The Lebanese are truly a country-loving, home-devoted people.

But there is one season in the year when the Lebanon villagers think of toil least and of joy most. It is the week preceding Lent — Carnival Week, the week when they revel in feasting on meat and drown their petty worries and cares in a deluge of wine. To them *Al-Marfa'* is the season of joy unbounded; of revelry supreme; of the enjoyment of the great bounties of nature as they understand them best. *Al-Marfa'*, or Carnival, is their real Thanksgiving, only it is a week instead of a day, and they prepare for it months in advance, and when it comes they enjoy it to the full, as it marks both the culmination of their

fruitful efforts at arduous labor and their abstinence from indulging in pleasure of any form during the trying days of Lent.

To appreciate why meat is the principal ingredient in Carnival Week in Lebanon one must needs have an intimate sketch of the routine life of the Lebanon farmer. In spring he is occupied in plowing and sowing, and during a part of spring and summer he does the most intensive labor of the year. It is the time when, aside from his regular field work, he has to raise his cocoon crop, which is a task requiring, at a certain period in the life of the silk-worm, the concerted efforts of the whole family night and day. The worm grows more omnivorous as it advances in age, and the operation of gathering the mulberry leaves and chopping them fine when the worm is young, and later serving the leaves whole but in greater frequency and quantity as the worm grows, is a labor that taxes the time and strength of the farmer to capacity. Later comes the harvesting of the wheat and the gathering of the grape, fig and olive crops which keep the farmer intensively occupied, until the advent of the rainy season and the long, bleak, wintery nights, when he rests from his labors and with his granaries full and his cellar overflowing with wine, settles down to the enjoyment of the bounties of nature gathered through his tireless efforts. Throughout this all he and his partake very little of meat. It is only in the larger villages that a sheep or a calf is killed once, or perhaps twice, each week. In this respect the Lebanese are vegetarians by force, but they thrive well on their fare of whole-wheat bread and cereals.

But during all this period of intense labor there is one little detail in the life of the Lebanon farmer that is never lost sight of. It has both its sentimental and practical values. It is a custom that has been tenaciously adhered to for centuries and to miss practicing it during any year would be construed as a calamity. The children would consider themselves deprived of a privilege, the mother of a pleasant and useful pastime, and the father of the most personal and palpable reward for his yearly labors. It is the custom of raising the family lamb for Carnival Week.

So a lamb is bought in the spring and is allowed at first to gambol with the young children while the elders of the family are engaged at more serious tasks. But then a time comes in the autumn when the mulberry trees give their second crop of leaves

which are at this late time in the season used for fodder. Now the lamb comes into his own as the real pet and center of attention. The elders vie with the children in feeding him. He is allowed at first to feed all he can and then fed some more. It is a process they call "forceful feeding". They resort to the expedient of opening the animal's mouth by force and stuffing the tenderest and choicest mulberry leaves and other appetizing vegetation into it. In doing so they would all be looking forward to the time when they would enjoy his tender, savory meat. They fancy him dressed up in the most appetizing form during their greatest period of festivity and thanksgiving and they do not want to reproach themselves for having been wanting in their care of him. Hence their sustained interest and energy.

When preparations for Carnival Week begin to take shape so long ahead, it may be readily appreciated in what great delight Carnival festivities are anticipated and in what high favor they are held. And when the week does come, all the relaxation expected after the hard work of the previous season, and all the ease and tranquillity anticipated during the months of the winter vacation, find expression in the boundless joy and hilarity which are indulged in during the grand celebration.

It is called Carnival Week and a whole week of festivities it is in the fullest measure. Calls are made on neighbors and friends beginning with Sunday and parties are held amid a great deal of merriment. But the day of all days is Thursday. It has been given the sobriquet of *Drunkards' Thursday* although hardly anyone is drunk with the good, unadulterated, rejuvenating and revivifying Lebanon wine. Some men would feign being drunk to give a touch of reality to the day, but when the party breaks up in the early hours of the morning, while not even a star casts a friendly ray to guide their steps in the treacherous mountain paths, these seeming drunkards on *Drunkards' Thursday* show scarcely a sign of being intoxicated and guide their women folks home without a stumble. And for a fitting climax, and a proper night-cap, most of them gulp down a glassful of their own wine at home before retiring.

Thursday of Carnival Week is ushered in auspiciously and with all due ceremony. The sheep is led out for slaughter and many a tear may be seen to trickle down the cheeks of the children at the hour of parting with the pet which they had come to love so dearly. In a short while he is brought back lifeless

astride the shoulders of the sturdy father and the skinning operation begun in the welcome warmth of the house. The skin is salted and rolled up for future curing when it will serve as a useful addition to the furniture. Many are the silky skins of sheep that are spread around the open hearth of every Lebanese house whose soft and warm touch are most inviting in the cold, wintery nights of the mountain.

The initial operations over, the carcass is turned over to the women of the house who apply themselves with zest and pleasure to prepare it for the table. In the first place, some choice morsels of lean must be reserved for the *hors-d'œuvre*, or *maza*, and for broiling on skewers. This latter operation the men attend to between their rounds of drink. The women would be the while engaged in pounding and mixing the *Kibbe*. Strong arms and beautiful are those of the Lebanese women when they are seen circling the massive stone mortar taking turns at wielding the heavy wooden mallet. The meat must be pounded into the finest pulp before it is mixed with the *borgul*, or broken wheat, and their cheerfulness in the task they loudly proclaim by chanting sweet and joyous folk songs. Now they have reached the point where they are mixing the ingredients, and the mother takes a handful of the pudding-like mixture to the father who is squatting by the fire for sampling as to spices.

"*Sallam Allah Hal-Dayal*" (May God save those hands,) is his cheerful greeting to her, and he counters by forcing on her a goblet of wine. The brothers and sisters come in for a share of the wine, too, from the father, and the mother supplements that with a handful of *kibbe* to each. These exchanges of courtesies are kept up all the time the meal is under preparation. They are the necessary preliminaries to the grand feast.

Finally dinner is served. A boy is ordered to build a great fire that would last the whole evening without further attendance. Several logs of pine-wood are piled on the fire and presently they burst into flame with a cracking that sounds like music. Who cares about smoke? Pine-wood has the aroma of musk to him of the Lebanon. Tradition has it that its smoke is good for the eyes, and when your eyes water from smoke, that is equal to a collyrium or eyewash for your weak optics—providing the smoke be that of pine-wood.

The service must be ceremonious in order that it be befitting the occasion. The father seats himself in the center of the

room and all others follow except those who are actually needed for service. The *tablia*, a large, round table rising about a foot from the ground, is placed before them. Two children bring a large brass tray heaped with steaming dishes and place it on the table. The wine-jar is by the side of the father, and the pile of *marquouq*, the thin, large bread of Syria and Lebanon, is by the side of the mother. No sooner does the father begin than everybody falls to. Spoons and forks may be considered superfluous on such an occasion, but every Lebanese, old or young, can shape his pliable, thin bread to serve the purpose of either without trespass on the dictates of hygiene. Steaming rice with lamb stew is followed by kibbe both raw and baked. Preserved squash and grape leaves stuffed with rice and lamb meat follow. Lamb meat raw, lamb meat broiled, lamb meat cooked, are to be seen in plenty and are heartily relished. And all the while each and all would be claiming the credit for having fed the lamb so that its meat became so delicious!

When the children begin to show signs of satiation the father reaches for the wine. And one needs have no doubt of the wonderful digestive properties of Lebanon wine. Furthermore, the people of Lebanon entertain no scruples about giving wine to children. To behold children of the tenderest age being given wine to drink one would be inclined to suspect that they were baptized with it.

Finally comes the dessert. This consists principally of native products such as figs stewed in molasses and pine seeds, dried figs and raisins. For a pastime during the evening, acorns would be baked in the hot ashes and although they are at first bitter, they give a most wholesome and sweet taste when followed by a draft of water.

Now the feast is over and a brass basin and ewer are brought by one of the children to the father for his ablutions. Everyone then scurries away with some thing or other but the jug of wine remains. For is this not Drunkards' Thursday?

This particular house happens to be that of the leading man of the section, and now that night has fallen, neighbors begin to flock to it for a social party. Each new-comer is hailed with a shout of joy, and after shedding their muddy boots and slippers by the door, they enter and squat on the sheepskins by the walls. The center of the room is kept clear for a good purpose. A few rounds of wine are passed and then some-

one suggests a dance. A tambourine is produced and a dapper young man begins to play on 'it with deft fingers — but no one warms up for a dance. Then someone discloses a reed pipe and soon the room is filled with the soft and touching melodies which are so often heard as magic notes echoing in the stillness of the night through the slumbering valleys of Lebanon. A young man jumps to his feet and, with a twisted handkerchief in hand which he waves in a circling motion above his head, he takes the floor and executes a graceful dance. He would be all the time circling and bowing in all directions, but at one end of the room he comes to a sudden stop, takes a pretty maiden by the hand and raises her to her feet. The blushes that cover her face only add to her radiant comeliness, but her modesty is overcome by the clapping and the encouraging shouts of the company.

Folk-dances in Lebanon are still the graceful, modest dances of old. The nearest the dancers come together is when they touch hands at the point of making a reel. Improper, suggestive contortions are not to be countenanced by reason of the fact that they are unknown. Love in Lebanon, like all life in Lebanon, is as pure and virile as Lebanon air.

The dancing couple are spurred to greater action by the growing intensity of the piper, to which is added the rhythmic hand-clapping of the whole company, but when they begin to show signs of exhaustion they would not desert and leave an empty floor; another couple is impressed into taking their place and consequently the performance is made continuous.

But between acts the parched throats of the strenuous dancers must be moistened with a draught of wine, and for their sake the throats of the whole company. — — —

In this manner every day of Carnival Week is celebrated in Lebanon, more particularly Drunkards' Thursday. But at the stroke of midnight on Sunday all mirth and hilarity suddenly stops; everyone retires with a prayer on his lips and Monday finds every inhabitant of the village in church being branded with a large ashen cross on his forehead as a mark of penitence.

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“Be thou not impatient, nor let depression o’ertake thee;  
For success perishes between impatience and depression.”  
“Procrastination is the key to misery.” Ali.

## Syrian Folk Songs

*Some years ago the National Board of the Y.W.C.A. published a volume giving the original and an English translation of the folk songs of many peoples. Those of Syria were translated by two of our noted authors, Kahlil Gibran and Ameen Rihani. We are taking the liberty of reproducing to our readers those sweet songs of their native land in both the original and the translation.*

Editor.

### O MOTHER MINE (Moulaya)

*Translation by KAHLIL GIBRAN*

O mother mine, spread me the silken sheet,  
And let me lie down, and cover me with rose leaves.  
For love-sick am I, and flames of love consume me.  
And if I die tomorrow, Mother, I beseech you  
Call round me my comrades, the daughters of love,  
And over my bier let them sing me my dirge.

O mother mine, yesterday our secret was our own;  
Today who does not know it?  
My love has gone afar,  
And now I would write to him.  
If you deny me paper, I'll write on wings of birds;  
And if ink you deny me, I'll write with my heart's blood!

O you, who are climbing the mountain,  
A drink will you not give me from the hollow of your hand?  
In truth, I am not thirsty,  
But I would have a word with you;  
And it may be the wind will lift your scarf  
And let me look full at your face!

انا قتل الهوى وناره بتكويني  
وحببوا بنات الهوى تندب حوالي-  
والسر ما بيننا واليوم صار للغير  
وان كان ما في حبر من دم عيني-  
ماني بشأن العطش قصدي محاكاتك  
وبيان وجه لك وانظر بعيني-

يا امي افرشي الحرير بالورد غطيني  
وان مت في حيكم بالله تنادوني  
يا امي حبيبي رحل ان شالله يعود بالخير  
وان كان ما في ورق لا كتب عاجنج الطير  
يا طالع عالجل واسقيني براحتك  
والله نسمة هوا وتزيح لثماتك

# The Stranger

## A DRAMA IN ONE ACT

By DR. SALIM Y. ALKAZIN

SCENE — The interior of a mountaineer's hut.

TIME — The first watch of a winter night.

*Discovered, a small square room with white-washed walls and a floor of beaten earth. The rafters, which are merely poplars roughly dressed and were once upon a time white, are, through the action of the smoke, as black and shiny as polished ebony.*

*High in each wall there is a small square hole meant to allow the smoke to escape.*

*In the walls, right and left, are two small windows with shutters made of rough boards.*

*In the rear center is the door, which is of the same construction as the windows, and in front of which there is a depression in the floor wide enough to allow the door to swing freely inwards. Near the door there is a water jar resting in a sort of frame of rocks, round and elevated, and lined with bushes which act as a buffer between jar and rocks. An earthen-ware pitcher with a spout in the side, and a copper cooking-pot are in a row near the jar. In the corner, right, stands a barrel of dried clay about five feet in height, near the lower end of which there is a hole through which grain or flour, as the case may be, may be drawn. In the corner, left, there is a pile of bedding, poor and cold in appearance.*

*In the center and nearer the front is the fire-place. It is a primitive affair — a horse-shoe of dried clay about fifteen inches in height, with a groove in the upper inside rim for the pot to set in more firmly.*

*The floor around the fire-place is covered with a rush mat, over which and immediately in front of the fire is spread a sheep-skin; otherwise the floor is bare.*

*Squatted on the said skin are mother and daughter. Their faces are lit by the low blaze before them, whose rays but dimly relieve the obscurity of the room. The mother is over thirty:*

her face, once radiantly beautiful, is now, despite the suffering and privation indicated by her surroundings, gravely sweet and gentle. The girl is not more than eight. In the garments of both mother and daughter desperate efforts at mending are visible.

Frequent gusts of wind are heard, and in the intervals the distant roar of the sea.

As the curtain rises, the mother is seen to drop two pieces of dry bread into a bowl of water and then busy herself in picking some winter herbs which lay in a heap near the bowl. Presently, a step is heard. Mother and daughter rise to their feet and turn to the door. The girl shivers visibly.

ENTER a boy of twelve, bare-footed and scantily dressed. A rough cloak, secured around the waist by a rope, comes down to the knee. He carries on his back a fagot.

MOTHER

(Lifting the fagot from the boy's back).

What makes thee late, my boy?

BOY

The wind blows hard  
And I would fight it step by step: and once  
Among the houses, boys I met who told  
How in their houses, their mothers were preparing  
Wheat and nuts and other things. — Mother,  
To-night is wheat-boiling night.....

MOTHER

Come, thou'rt cold.

BOY

No, no, I'm not!

MOTHER

(to the girl).

More sticks upon the fire.

(BOY and GIRL squat on either side of the fire; the mother resumes her place and occupation.)

GIRL

(Bursting into tears.)

I'm cold! O, mother, mother! I'm cold!

MOTHER

Come, come, dear heart: nearer — nearer the fire.

*(She tries to gather the girl's skirt around the shivering limbs.)*

GIRL

*(Curling nearer to the fire).*

And, O! my back as if to naked thorns

Is bared.....

*(Mother picks the sheepskin and wraps it around the girl's body.)*

MOTHER

*(To boy).*

Art cold, my dear?

BOY

Not I, mother.

I am a boy!..... "My man" thou callest me!

I merely hunger.

MOTHER

*(Picking more herbs and trying the bread with her finger).*

Patience, O my boy.

The bread will soon be soaked.

*(Pause) .*

List to the wind!

The portals of the North are open wide,  
And from the cheerless depth there issue forth,  
Bristling with arrows sharp, the chilling gusts,  
Leaping from hoary peak to icy crag.

Upon the face they smite the frowning cliff,  
Then raging sweep the vale.

*(Pause) .*

They're piercing like

A leopard's naked fang, and like a steel

They're keen

*(Musingly.)*

And wretched rags to meet their sting!

And now, dear hearts, we'll eat.

*(She extracts a piece of bread from the bowl and offers to the boy, together with some of the herbs; then she offers to the girl.)*

*BOY and GIRL cross themselves and begin to eat.)*

MOTHER

Beneath this roof,

Within these walls, however bare and cold,  
 More warmth and comfort we enjoy than scores  
 Of weary travelers, blinded, benumbed,  
 That push their weary way towards no home;  
 No shelter with its friendly warmth and cheer  
 To greet their shaking limbs. Upon the sea —  
 You hear its distant roar — 'many a man  
 Hangs to a rope or mast, while through the dark,  
 Bleak night he sees nor shore nor beacon light.....

GIRL

Thou eatest not, mother.

BOY

*(Peering into the bowl).*  
 There's nought to eat!

GIRL

Thou'lt share my bread.

BOY

No, no! Take mine, mother.  
 I am a man..... Little sister, keep thy share.

MOTHER

*(Gathering her children to her breast, while tears roll  
 down her pale cheeks).*

O, cheer and comfort of my sorrowing heart,  
 O, treasure of my poverty! Kind God,  
 Thy name be praised! Nay, nay, I hunger not.  
 My darling boy, thou art our man, to thee  
 We look and hope thy sire's place to fill.  
 Our man thou art though young.

BOY

But I will grow —  
 Grow big and strong, and toil from morn till night,  
 And you and sister shall have meat,  
 And warmth like our neighbors, and..... That's all  
 The wood my back would stand, but when I grow,  
 My load will grow likewise.

MOTHER

*(Kissing the boy).*  
 Thy sire's heart!

GIRL

*(Hanging to her mother's neck).*

And I will also work!

MOTHER

I thank Thee, Lord!

Let them who roll in hoarded riches boast  
 Of such 'a treasure and they can — then rich  
 Indeed! Dare they the widow taunt, degrade?  
 I've sown respect, and love, and tenderness,  
 Noble impulse, and I behold the bloom  
 Burst forth — the fruit anon. The widow's boast,  
 The widow's pride! Let want his fell teeth gnash,  
 Let winter creep amain: — is there not food  
 In this, is there not warmth?

*(Pause)*

Let's to our bed,

And let me fold unto my breast, and press  
 Against my heart my darling brood.

BOY

But, nay!

Forgettest thou the wheat, mother?

MOTHER

'Tis late.

BOY

No, no!..... And all the boys were telling how  
 The wheat was being washed, and how the nuts  
 Were being shelled; the juicy pomegranate  
 Will swing no more from wall or rafter.

MOTHER

The night is far advanced.

BOY &amp; GIRL

We are not sleepy,

And we will wait.

MOTHER

Well,..... well,.....

*(She rises to her feet, hesitates, then moves in the direction  
 of the door. As she goes out, she pulls off the kerchief from her  
 head. Presently she reappears with one hand behind her back.  
 She reaches for the pot, goes to the barrel and, with her back to*

*the children, she pours into the pot something which makes a sound as of seeds coming into contact with the metal. She then fills the pot with water and adjusts it upon the fire-place. The children's faces brighten, and the boy piles more wood on the fire and blows the flame to make it leap higher.)*

BOY & GIRL

We'll wait, we'll wait!

*(The mother resumes her seat and covers her face with her hands.)*

BOY

Mother, didst thou add Anise-seeds?

MOTHER

I did.

GIRL

I smell it not.

BOY

Nor I.

MOTHER

Not till they boil.

BOY

Ay, ay, then on the curling steam we'll smell  
The fragrance.

GIRL

But we have no sugar.

BOY

We'll eat it plain.

GIRL

Yes, yes, we'll eat it plain.

*(The girl turns suddenly and throws her arms around her mother's neck.)*

What makes thee weep?

*(She, also, begins to sob.)*

MOTHER

'Tis nothing, child. Now,..... now.....

Hark!

*(The faint crow of a cock is heard.)*

Hark, he crows again.... once more,.... three times!

*(Musing.)*

A stranger in the place. On such a night —  
Who can the stranger be!

Pray, children, pray  
That God may speed the stranger home: that, sore  
Of foot, mayhap, of heavy heart, forlorn,  
May shelter find.

*(Pause.)*

One night — in years gone by —  
While snow lay deep upon the village lanes  
And choked the mountain pass, while icy winds  
Made dumb the angry parley twixt the wolf  
And dog, while every villager pressed nigh  
His hearth, a traveller appeared, whence none  
Could tell. 'Tis said: his rags could hardly hide  
The efforts, hard and desperate, of chest to keep  
His soul that hovered o'er his lips from flight.  
An ancient man with beard that stole the hue  
From the bank he trod. But rich and poor  
Made answer to his knock: "No room". "No bed."  
"Try yonder door." "Away or else.....! Away  
He went with tears and sobs.

Rejected for  
Her poverty, denied the countenance  
Of fortune's first-born, far from other huts  
A widow lived — the stranger's final hope.  
She welcomed him, he shared her children's bed.  
But on the morn, her humble guest stirred not,  
Nor sign nor sound of life made he.

Alas,  
Suspicion often finds an ample space  
To make its home behind the patched robe  
Of poverty, while from the polished cloak  
And smooth, she rolls into the dust.

Afear'd  
She lifts the cover, and beneath she finds  
A heap of gold..... Hark!

*(The door is pushed open.)*

*Enter STRANGER.)*

STRANGER

Unto you be peace!

MOTHER

*(Who is already on her feet).*

And unto thee be peace! Poor our home, poorer  
Our cheer; yet, — Yet — Approach the fire and warm  
Thy limbs.

STRANGER

*(Approaching the fire).*

Fret not, good sister, 'bout my food,  
For bread I do not crave. Besides, 'tis said  
'Mong you that, Late arrivals miss their meal.  
*(He smiles.)*

MOTHER

'Tis early yet.

STRANGER

Ay, ay, not late at least!

Let us sit down.

*(They gather around the fire. The stranger throws  
some sticks on the fire and gazes on the pot.)*

STRANGER

Ah, 'tis wheat-boiling night.

GIRL

*(Pressing nearer to the Stranger).*

Yea, and mother is boiling some, and thou  
Shalt have a share.

MOTHER

*(To STRANGER).*

Thy way was long and wild?

*(STRANGER acts as if he did not hear her remark.)*

BOY

Simply boiled wheat, stranger. No nuts,  
Nor all the other things the boys told of.  
But I will grow, and, once a man, and thou  
Our guest.....

MOTHER

*(To STRANGER).*

Thy quest, to brave a night like this,  
Or vital or most urgent.....

GIRL'  
(To STRANGER.)

YOU love wheat?

MOTHER  
My dear, you tire our guest.

STRANGER  
Nay, sister, let  
The children speak; their hearts are on their tongues.

MOTHER  
And thus more visible, not hard to reach,  
To harm accessible. Sore trials have  
Their counsel wise not giv'n, nor precedent  
Its aid to harden. Ah, to him who fought  
And bled, who as a garment wears his scars  
A single thrust is nought — his days, indeed,  
Without a wound are void, are incomplete  
And lack much needed zest. But such as they.....,  
Alas!..... Well, suffering might wisdom teach,  
Still may our God be gracious unto him  
Who, ere his time, becometh wise!.... Wheat!.... wheat!  
Look round. Does this spell wheat?.... Dost understand?  
Wouldst pity have, beguile the night, tempt sleep.  
Ah, A sun may rise upon the morrow!  
Some tale relate, or legend old and quaint,  
Adventure strange; tell of thyself, thy land,  
The wonders of the road, thy kin, thy home —  
No pauper thou,.... methinks I know thy face —  
Whence comest thou, and whither goest hence?

STRANGER  
(Rising to his feet).

*(As he talks, the water in the pot begins to boil, and a thin column of steam mounts to the rafters. This, however, will not be noticed by the mother and her children, so engrossed are they in the STRANGER and his aspect.)*

So be it then!

I cross the land from east  
 To west, from north to south. The sun may pour  
 His flaming flood, the lusty winds may rage;  
 The torrent wild from crag to crag may leap,  
 And cataracts may boom and thunder loud,  
 The foaming deep may dash against its bars  
 Immovable, yet naught will stay my steps.  
 Nor mount nor vale, nor sea nor sand I dread,  
 But on and always on.

The world my home,  
 My kin, whose door resisteth not my touch;  
 Who on Love's altar casteth all to rise  
 To heav'n a cloud of fragrant offering.  
 When storm and tempest rage, and want's steel claws  
 Clutch tightly round the heart, and suffering  
 Takes shape or of complaint or fortitude;  
 When plenty harbors pride and selfishness,  
 Or gratitude and charity I go 'abroad to see.  
 When darts, blindfolded, leave  
 Th' eternal bow, some barbed with treasure rare,  
 Some winged with hardship sore I issue forth.  
 Some fall with golden wounds, and others rise  
 And thank; some drawn in blood and tears, and some  
 Wipe gore and briny drops with hope's soft hand.....  
 Thy pot hath boiled — behold, thy stones are wheat!

*(A cloud of steam rises from the pot loaded with the aroma  
 of boiling anise-seeds. Mother and children turn from the pot,  
 but the stranger has disappeared.)*

### BOY & GIRL

*(Rushing to the open arms of their mother).*

The wheat is boiling!

### MOTHER

Yea, and we shall eat.

— *Slow curtain.* —

## Present Economic Conditions In Syria

By IRVING SITT

To us of the younger generation, Syria must be of interest chiefly for the reason that we are so intimately related with people who were one time citizens of that Eastern land. All of us know, too, in a general way of the life and customs of the people of Syria during our fathers' younger days. Having these two factors as a background, we wonder how the mark of progress has left its trace on Syria, the commercial threshold between the nations of the West and those of the East.

In many ways Syria has not changed from its order of long ago, but in some ways she has shown great advancement in the understanding of international relationships as well as in politics. That is, the tenor of the life of the average Syrian who lives in the farming districts has changed but little. The manners of dress, occupation, social customs, and the primitive ways of agriculture and manufacture still remain. On the other hand, the people of the cities and the government officials, especially, have become concerned with ultra-modern problems such as the balancing of the national budget, the balance of foreign trade payments, the need of a stabilized currency and of conditions of banking and credit, as well as of political contact with the League of Nations.

The present boundaries of Syria are different from those of our fathers' boyhood. Under the present French Mandate, Syria is a state of 60,000 square miles which, for comparative purposes, is but slightly smaller than our New England States and is almost twice as large as present-day Austria. Turkey lies to the north with Iraq (Mesopotamia) and the Syrian Desert to the east, while Palestine lies to the south.

At no place is the country more than 300 miles wide while its seacost is some 250 miles in length on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

The population numbers about 3,000,000 but is a most heterogeneous one. For although the natives of Syria are known

as Syrians they are composed really of eight distinct ethnic races and their mixtures. The larger part of the population, however, is Arabian in origin and Mohammedan in religion. Nevertheless, religious sects are almost as numerous as races. The Moslems do predominate heavily but the Christians constitute a strong minority, the two principal churches being the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox. The Druzes compose the third principal religious group.

### *AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES*

The basis of the economic life of Syria lies in her agriculture. Her wealth is almost wholly derived from the soil. Because Syria has such a great diversity of climate, ranging from tropical heat in the Jordan Valley to a temperature compatible with perennial snow, she is able to grow a great variety of vegetable products, cereals and fruits.

Wheat is by far the most important of all her crops, but vegetables and fruits of all kinds compose a large part of her food supply. Cotton, tobacco, silk growing and live stock raising are other agricultural activities that are increasing in value and importance each year.

The growth of cotton, for example, has been almost phenomenal; a total of 45,000 bales being raised in 1924 from 2,000 bales in 1921. Because the possibilities of cotton production are recognized by the French a system of experimental plantings have been devised which has resulted in this great increase in so short a time, and which promises to increase the acreage planted from 50,000 to 2,000,000. The production of tobacco has also received official attention and some 3,000,000 pounds annually have been achieved.

Progress may be well recorded in certain branches of agriculture but we must always bear in mind that the methods of agriculture used by the peasants are most primitive in every respect. Farming is carried on by whole families on small farms of 25 to 60 acres each. Irrigation, fertilizing and rotation of crops are unscientifically done with the result that there is a continued and progressive improvement of the soil.

Because Syria is essentially an agricultural country and possesses an agricultural system of pronounced primitiveness, the industries arising from her agriculture assume in the same manner both primitiveness and undevelopment.

Syrian industries are home industries and their chief function is to supply the domestic requirements with as many finished products as can profitably be manufactured. The chief industries are silk spinning, brass work, weaving of cheap silk and cotton, knitting of hosiery, lace making, oil and soap, wine and spirit making, dyeing, rope and string, baskets and pottery.

The most important industries that have shown noticeable improvement in development during the past few years are the silk industry, cotton ginning, milling, cigarette manufacturing and tanning of leather.

In the silk industry great strides have occurred from the growing of the cocoons to the spinning of the thread. The year 1920 produced 1,800,000 pounds of cocoons which increased yearly until 1924 saw 6,100,000 pounds produced; an increase of some 300% within four years. During that period the construction of spinning factories increased 116% from 34% in 1922 to 81% in 1924. Although the spinning is done almost entirely by Christian women and girls in the Lebanon district, the output has been greatly enlarged.

In Northern Syria the French have erected the first power cotton ginning plant, which will in all probability be the beginning of a respectable cotton growing and ginning development. During 1925, a few modern steam flour mills were also introduced to improve the quality and increase the output of native flour.

As for cigarettes, the possibility of manufacturing them at the source of production was seen directly following the War. Machines were introduced and most satisfactory results followed. 1913 showed 360,000 pounds produced; by 1921, 2,400,000 pounds were turned out and 2,600,000 pounds in 1924.

The tanning industry was also greatly developed as a result of the War, which cut Syria off from her usual sources of supply. Since then it has been estimated that 1,000,000 sheep and goat skins and 200,000 cow and horse hides are tanned and finished yearly. A modern tanning factory with French and German machines has already been set up to further develop the industry. As a result the manufacture of shoes has almost been sufficient to shod the nation.

The manufacture of brasswork and inlaid woodwork of Damascus are well-known and are also showing signs of advancement. The export value of these articles for 1924 was over \$1,000,000, an increase of some 25% over the preceding year.

What was said of agriculture must be emphasized regarding industries. They are small, primitive and relatively undeveloped. The outlook for both these fields is promising, however. In agriculture, for example, an area of 12,500,000 acres might effectively and profitably be cultivated which is four times the present area under development. This fact alone is the true basis of Syria's future. With the advent of machinery and large scale production and proper irrigation much should be accomplished.

In the industries, machinery, scientific knowledge and technique should result in greater cotton ginnings; better leather, now impossible because of the lack of them; silk that might equal that grown and spun anywhere except in special localities of Europe; excellent flour and olive oil and perfumes and soaps and so on. The French, Germans and Belgians are investing their money in the future of Syria as are the English, Italians and lastly the Americans. We may soon see astonishing results.

#### FOREIGN TRADE

With all the antiquated methods of Syrian farming, herding and industries, her foreign trade during the last several years has shown marvelous improvement. It is still true that Syria continues to show a large unfavorable balance of trade, which seems to be a natural phenomenon of her economic life, but the spread between the value of her imports and exports has greatly narrowed.

In 1922 exports amounted to \$9,000,000 while in 1925 they totaled \$23,000,000 or an increase of 150%. Imports, however, during that same period increased from \$41,000,000 to \$46,000,000 or only 11%, truly an excellent showing.

Syria's import trade consists almost entirely of finished manufactured products and during years of poor harvests, of large quantities of foodstuffs, cotton and cotton goods, cereals and produce, building materials, fuel (coal, kerosene and petroleum), autos, chemical, paper, etc., etc. Her best source of supply is the United Kingdom, which supplies almost one-fifth of her total imports, with France, Italy, Turkey, the United States (who supplied 12% of her total in 1925) and Egypt following in order. Syria's import trade is relatively stable. Her needs are well known and, therefore, it is to her export trade that we must look for more important developments.

Even to this day we find that Syria's chief importance in international commerce is as an entrepôt (a port of entry for goods in transit) for the trade of the more eastern countries of Asia Minor, Iraq, Turkey, Transjordan and Persia. Hence we find that Syria's best customers are the eastern countries of Palestine, Turkey and the other Levant States that account for some 40% of her export trade. France and the United States follow these countries in order, the United States taking 11% of her total export trade in 1925, an increase of 21% over the preceding year.

Syria's export trade increased one and a half times within four years. Starting with 1922 and \$9,000,000 as mentioned above, 1923 recorded \$14,500,000, 1924, \$17,750,000 and 1925, \$22,900,000. From these figures it is evident that as Syria becomes more and more able to find herself in relation to her agricultural production and industrial development her prospects for a continued rise in exports will be most assured.

Much of Syria's export trade is of a reexport character which has been estimated to be equal to 30% of her total export trade in 1924. This transit trade passing through Beirut, Aleppo and Damascus is a most lucrative trade for the country and fitted to the genius of the middlemen of those cities. It is not so much a transit trade as it is a matter of achieving a purchase at a profit and a sale at a greater. This transit trade has led to conventions signed with Palestine, Turkey and Transjordan permitting goods to pass through each other's territory with a mutual refund of duties and a treaty with Iraq pertaining to goods bound for and coming from Persia.

Although definite signs of growth of this reexport trade are not yet prevalent, the 1924 trade showed an increase of 20% over that of 1923. The next few years will show whether it will be possible for Syria, under her new political conditions, to become the sole middleman for Palestine and Asia Minor and whether geographical conditions will allow such an expansion of commerce with Baghdad as is hoped for.

#### CURRENCY — MOTOR ROUTES

Syria's currency during the last few years has been another barrier to her economic and especially to her political peace of mind.

With the coming of the French, Syria's currency was linked up with that of the franc and 20 piastres became equal to 1 franc

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and 20 francs equaled one Syrian pound. Consequently, with each fall of the franc in world markets, the Syrian currency fell five-fold. During the last seven years the franc lost, by a steady downward movement, some 75% of its value. With each drop in purchasing power there was an attendant decline in confidence in the currency and in the issuing government. Hence all business was soon transacted by commercial bills of exchange or promissory notes drawn on a foreign currency such as the dollar or pound Sterling. Without question western influence shows itself clearly in this matter of currency and in no favorable light. For as a result of the currency debacle, trade during that period was hectic and unorganized and remained very poor right through the last half of 1925 and the early part of 1926.

While the above episode was in progress the government succeeded in achieving two vital financial results which, had they not been properly solved, would have resulted in the worst of economic and financial chaos. The balancing of the national budget and the reduction of the amount of notes in circulation helped the people to weather the storm of their depreciating currency. With a poor currency and extravagant government expenditures that are common and even necessary, when the values of everything seem to be dwindling, the government would have been forced to print money to make up the deficit incurred. Such printing would have further depreciated the value of the money, assuming proper reserves were not set up against it, and the vicious cycle would have been started which in the end would have resulted in economic disintegration, hoarding and barter.

A most vital development within Syria now progressing is the establishing of motor routes to facilitate travel and trade within the country itself but more especially with her immediate neighbors. In the North, motor transport, it is reported, has increased to such an extent that the camel caravan trade has been practically ended. The route from Beirut to Damascus to Baghdad to Teheran has attained great popularity despite the fact that the roads are not of the best. But distances throughout the country have been greatly reduced by time. The run from Beirut to Teheran, for example, a distance of 614 miles was done in 16½ hours by a high grade American car.

These routes are opening up overland travel to Iraq and Persia that must in the end stimulate Syrian commerce with all the surrounding countries.

The railroads, of which there are but slightly less than 500 miles in the country, have been competing with these motor routes by reducing rates. But Syria is still at the stage where she can use both railroads and motor routes to excellent advantage.

### LOOKING FORWARD

The future economic development of Syria rests on two major movements. The first, and perhaps the more important, is that the investigation now in progress, by the Permanent Mandate Committee of the League of Nations, concerning the political question of the state, be successfully concluded.

Second, Syria's attention must be seriously turned to her development of agriculture for she can never hope to excel in industry, a most pertinent reason being that she lacks minerals and coal or petroleum. The absence of these elements has always been a hindrance to industrial development in any area to which they could not be transported easily and cheaply.

Modern methods of agriculture must be introduced along with machinery and proper systems of irrigation. By so doing her agricultural output could easily be increased two or three-fold, which in turn would increase the importance of almost all her industries which are dependent on agriculture. A wise policy of government aid to agriculture will do much to improve the whole tenor of life and to raise the standards of the greater proportion of the people.

In a general way the country has settled down to its new size and her commerce, though restricted, is on sounder lines than in the earlier days of occupation. Her future, if not brilliant, may prove to be very comfortable.

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### SLANDER

Said al-Mamoun to one of his sons: "Beware, my son, of listening to backbiters. Never has a backbiter come to me with a slander, but his station fell in my estimation never to rise again."

"Slander is the pastime of the ungodly, and the revenge of the mob."  
Anonymous.

If they know of a good report they hide it, an evil one they proclaim; and when they do not know they lie.

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## The Sword of Emir Bashir

*The last feudal Prince of Lebanon who was an ally to the Great Napoleon and received from him this sword as a personal gift.*

An interesting relic, the sword of Emir Bashir Shehab, a personal gift to this Lebanon prince by the great Napoleon, comes into the news to reopen a page of interesting Syrian history. The Congress of the Lebanon Republic having appropriated the sum of £50 to purchase this historic sword from its present owner, a member of the Shehab family, another member of the family steps forward and outbids the government for the possession of this valuable heirloom by paying the owner the sum of £100, or what would be equivalent to \$485.00. But the Syrian press is immediately thrown into an uproar by the developments. "Is it not within the power of the nation," they ask, "to pay an adequate price for such an historic sword that should by right be on display in the National Museum while the people's money is being squandered on sinecures and futile experiments?" There is even a hint that the sword may be lost to the nation altogether as already some interested Americans are negotiating for its purchase and have made an offer of several thousand dollars for it.

What enhances the value of the sword is the fact that not only was it that of the last and one of the greatest feudal princes of Lebanon, but that it had been at one time the favorite sword of Napoleon Bonaparte, presented to the Lebanon prince as a token of friendship and a bond of alliance at the time Napoleon invaded Syria.

Emir Bashir had many swords, but this particular one he prized most both for sentimental reasons and historic associations. It is the same sword which he drew in the face of the Turkish Wali of Damascus in the battle of Al-Mezzat which was followed by the victorious entry of Emir Bashir into Damascus itself as the ally of Ibrahim Pasha the Egyptian.

The sword itself is of Slavic origin and has, inlaid on its blade in gold, a picture of the Virgin Mary and some prayers in the old Russian language. Originally it was the property of

an Austrian general who had married into a noble Russian family and on the occasion of his wedding, his father-in-law made him this sword a wedding present. This same general gave battle to the French in the war of 1797 and upon his defeat surrendered his sword to Napoleon who carried it ever after until he made a gift of it to Emir Bashir.

Emir Bashir was a most romantic figure. Through sheer personal force he placed himself at the head of the Shehab family and came to be known as one of the greatest rulers of Lebanon.

The Shehabs are Arabs of the purest stock, of the very stock from which the Prophet Mohammed is descended, the Koresish tribe. The original name is Malek; it was changed to Shehab in the days of Omar Ibn al-Khattab, the second caliph of Islam, who granted Malek Ibn al-Harth, Ibn Hisham, the town of Shahba in Hauran as a fief. His father, al-Harth Ibn Malek, was an early convert to Islam, and had fought in the battles of Badr and Hunein against the Arab heathens.

When Timurlane invaded Syria, the Shehabs moved to Lebanon, and lived in the district of Shoof.

In the year 1696 Emir Ahmad al-Ma'ni, the titular prince of Lebanon, died in Deir-ul-Kamar, leaving no issue. The choice of the leaders of the country fell on Emir Bashir Shehab I, the grand-father of our hero, known as al-Malti.

Only 21 years old when the reins of rulership over Lebanon were handed to him, Emir Bashir II came on a stage of intrigue, treachery and bloodshed.

His chief opponent was a Shehab, Emir Yusuf, and many skirmishes were fought between them, as both vied and bargained for the favor of Ahmad al-Jazzar Pasha, the despot of Akka. A battle was fought in Wadi-l-Mayman, in which Emir Yusuf was completely vanquished, and he fled to Zabadani, then to Hauran. From there he sought the pardon of Ahmad al-Jazzar, and receiving it, he appeared in person in 1789, wearing a handkerchief around his neck, a sign of absolute surrender. Al-Jazzar reinstated Emir Yusuf over Emir Bashir, for the consideration of the huge sum of 600,000 girshes, a large sum in those days, but equivalent to about \$30,000 in American coin.

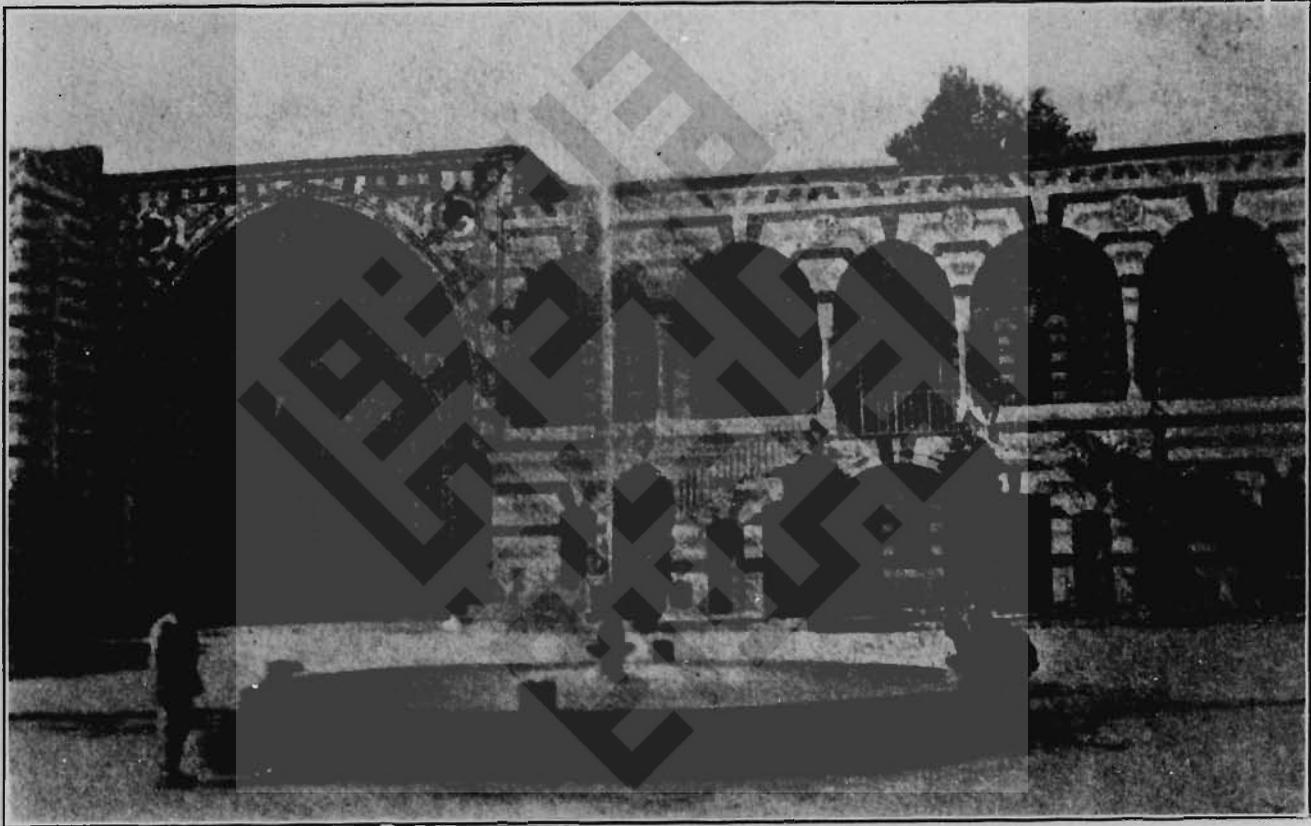
But Emir Bashir, not to be daunted, went in his turn to Governor al-Jazzar and promised him what Emir Yusuf had promised, and went back to Lebanon to supplant his veteran



**EMIR BASHIR SHEHAB**

**One of the great ruling princes of Mt. Lebanon who was a contemporary with Napoleon the Great and received from him as a gift his personal and favorite sword.**

THE PALACE OF EMIR BASHIR



At the time he was at the zenith of his power, Emir Bashir Shehab built himself this beautiful palace in Bteddin which is one of the show places of Lebanon.

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enemy. More wars followed before Emir Bashir established his rule over the intractable people of Lebanon. For they hated him at first, and many of the leaders never liked him even when his rule became famous all over Syria for justice and fair-dealing. It is quite possible that they hated him particularly for this. The people themselves complained of his onerous taxes and his many wars, but admitted at least that there was method in his despotism! He introduced many beneficial innovations, one of which was isolating cases of epidemics, which saved as many lives as he had killed, perhaps, in battle. Another one of his innovations was introduced when locusts swarmed Lebanon one year. He commanded the people to go out and gather the eggs of the locusts, which had bored their nests in the soil and laid their eggs. A huge quantity of "locust seeds" was thus gathered, and the crops of Lebanon were saved. Emir Haydar Shehab, in his History of Syria, declares that Emir Bashir was the first one to employ this method of exterminating the locusts which from immemorial times have infested Syria. Since his time it has been in use in Lebanon and Syria, along with other more modern ones.

In the year 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Syria with his victorious armies which had conquered Egypt. He took Jaffa and proceeded to Acre, to which he laid siege. Emir Bashir was a great aid to Napoleon. He sent him provisions and was sympathetic to his cause, as were the rest of the Christians of Lebanon. But the Druzes were dismayed, as the author of the article on the Shehabs in the Bistani Encyclopædia informs us. His aid did not last long, for the English admiral, Sir Sydney Smith, sent to Emir Bashir saying: "Those Frenchmen entered Egypt claiming that they are Moslems, and had destroyed the crucifixes in Rome." This had its effect on Emir Bashir, for he stopped his assistance to Napoleon, and it is said that this was one of the contributing causes to his repulse from Acre.

By this time opposition and intrigue at home was seething. The sons of Emir Yusuf, with the help of a powerful politician, George Baz, and a few of the malcontent leaders, succeeded in ejecting Emir Bashir from his governorship. He fled to Cyprus on board an English ship of Sir Sydney's fleet, from whence he went to Alexandria. In 1804 al-Jazzar Pasha died and was succeeded by Ibrahim Pasha who did not last long, then came Suleiman Pasha, one of the Mamluks of al-Jazzar. Suleiman and

Emir Bashir were friends, and it was not till Suleiman's time that "the foot of Emir Bashir was established in his principality."

Two of the events in Emir Bashir's time stand out prominently. In 1826 he helped the Turkish Government in repulsing the Greeks who had sent ships to Beirut. Five years later, Ibrahim Pasha, son of Mohammed Ali Pasha, first Khedive of Egypt, started his famous invasion of Syria with Constantinople as his ultimate goal. Emir Bashir was one of his strongest allies. While in Egypt, Emir Bashir was won over to the ambitious cause of Mohammed Ali Pasha and his energetic son. At first Emir Bashir hesitated between his loyalty to Governor 'Abdullah Pasha, successor of Suleiman Pasha, and his promise of help to Ibrahim Pasha. But he finally decided in favor of the Egyptian invader.

In the year 1840 the European Powers intervened and put a stop to the victorious advance of Ibrahim Pasha against the Turks, after he had reached the northern borders of Syria. The Egyptian forces were withdrawn from Syria, and Emir Bashir was left alone to bear the brunt of the revenge of the Ottoman Government. From that year dates his decline.

He was exiled to Malta, hence his surname of "Maltese", but later, through the efforts of friends, he was allowed to take up his residence in Constantinople where he died in 1850 and was buried in the Armenian Catholic Cathedral.

Popular traditions about Emir Bashir soon sprang up after his death. He was one of those romantic figures about whose personality cluster many tales of popular fancy, to which distance lends charm and plausibility. His lion-like features helped these tales and traditions to persist in the minds of coming generations. He was a tall, square-shouldered man, heavily-built, with broad, bushy eyebrows. His voice was deep and heavy, and his angry looks made offenders who were brought before him tremble with fear. Among the stories about his impressive augustness is one in which it is related that when he was an exile in Constantinople the grand vizier called him to his house. When he appeared the grand vizier arose and with him stood all the Ottoman dignitaries present. But, upon Emir Bashir's departure, the friends of the grand vizier remonstrated with him for showing the Emir undue respect. He promised that the next time he came he would receive him seated. So he invited him another time, but as the Emir appeared, the

grand vizier again arose, remarking afterwards that something irresistible in the appearance of Emir Bashir made him jump to his feet.

But of all the traditions told of Emir Bashir, none is more interesting, nor throws so much light on his integrity and the iron hand with which he established peace and order in Lebanon than the one about the lonely woman going to her home at night. It is related that a man came to Emir Bashir and said to him: "O prince, last night I saw in the Wadi of al-'Ullaik a young woman walking alone, under the wing of darkness. I approached her and said, 'Fear you not to walk alone at night?' and she replied, 'I walk not alone, for Abu Sa'da (referring to Emir Bashir) walks to my side.'"

The Emir patiently listened until the end, then snapped back at his informer: "The young woman was right. But how dared you speak to her. What business had you to approach a woman alone in the dark of the night?" The story adds that the Emir punished the man severely for that seemingly slight offense.

The Shehab family is one of the leading Maronite families of Syria and is well-represented among the Syrian immigrants in the United States and elsewhere.

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### THE SPHINX

By ALFRED G. MUSSAWIR

Mute, as the rock from which the hand of man  
Has carved his ponderous face,  
Colossus of the desert sands,  
Magnificently there he stands,  
Upon that naked waste.

Passive, massive, stone,  
Alone  
Upon a silent sea of hell-hot sand,  
And looking down upon that sterile wilderness,  
Where, clinging to the desert's palsied empty breast,  
There grows  
    A desert rose  
The Sphinx, unseeing, unimpassioned, gazes on,  
But the rose, still clinging,  
Grows!

## Whence Our Fables Come

By HABIB I. KATIBAH

Of all the books of ponderous speculation and mystical philosophy that emanated from India — that land of ascetic Yogis, of lazy cobras, ferocious beasts and impenetrable jungles— none has attained the popularity and wide-spread influence throughout the world as did the book of simple, practical wisdom “by the tongues of animals”, known as the PANCHATANTRA — literally, “The Five Books”.

Few Syrians there are who would recognize this polysyllabic name, but who of the older folks, whose early school-days were spent in Syria does not know of Kalila wa Dimna? Who of them does not recall the sweet memories of the school-room, by the church, or “under the oak tree”, when the thunderous voice of the despot with the pomegranate twig prompted the timorous pupil as he stumbled in his reading of these fables which invariably began with, “Said Dabshalim the king to Baidaba the philosopher, give us a fable, etc.”?

The reading and rereading of those delectable “fables without fables” of “Kalila wa Dimna” is one of the few joys which, I am afraid, the younger Syrian generation are missing from their elders.

Kalila wa Dimna is simply the Arabic translation through the Pahlavi, *i. e.*, Persian, of the original Sanskrit — the Panchatantra.

The name of the Arabic book is taken from the two chief characters — two foxes — one of them the villain, in an animal drama which has its king, queen, viziers, intrigues, ambitious and tragic mistakes. It is a drama in which the wisdom and folly of men are mirrored in the action of animals, who are supposed to talk and feel like human beings. The names from which the Arabic ones are corrupted appear in the original as Karataka and Damanaka. But one need not hastily suspect that the Arabic translation of the book does not give justice to the Sanskrit. Those who are competent to judge, have been rather surprised, despite the many alterations and free changes, at the fidelity with

which the Arabic approaches the Sanskrit, although, as we have said, the Arabic itself is a translation of a translation.

Perhaps the Panchatantra would have been introduced to our readers more properly by calling it the chief source of a great many fables known to the literature of the most civilized countries, and the model and inspiration to as many more. It forms one of the sources of La Fontaine, and, as far back as the 6th century B. C., the famous Aesop drew freely, it is claimed, from the floating sources which later chrySTALLIZED into the Panchatantra. The fables of the Panchatantra were popular in the Middle Ages, and the little collection of romances belonging to that period of history, "Aucassin and Nicolette", contains one such fable, while in the 15th century a German translation of the Kalila wa Dimna, through the Latin, "attained a great popularity for a number of centuries."

Arthur W. Ryder, in the introduction of his beautiful, modern translation of the Panchatantra calls it a book which "for more than 20 centuries has brought delight to hundreds of millions."

"The Panchatantra," he enthusiastically comments, "contains the most widely known stories in the world. If it were further declared that the Panchatantra is the best collection of stories in the world, the assertion could hardly be disproved, and would probably command the assent of those possessing the knowledge for a judgment."

Actual composition of the Panchatantra is assigned by Johannes Hertel, the German scholar who is considered the greatest living authority on the subject, to the 3rd or 4th century A. D. But it must have existed in its oral form centuries long before, while the individual legends from which the book drew its material go back perhaps to immemorial times, and must have certainly preceded Aesop. Thus India, in ancient and in recent times, and mainly through the Panchatantra, establishes its claim as the cradle of the fable, and the mother teacher of wisdom "by the tongues of animals".

The scheme of the Panchatantra is so simple that, like so many great books of history, it appears to one almost inevitable.

A Hindu king who had three dull sons became worried about them as he approached old age, fearing to leave the destinies of his kingdom in their charge. Every effort to educate them through the regular channels having failed, the king gave out a

great prize to the one who would succeed in inculcating wisdom through their thick skulls. At last came a wise Brahmin, his beard white with old age, and his venerable, wrinkled features commanding the respect even of kings. He bowed before the king saying that he would teach his three sons within six months, declining any reward for his service. The result was the Panchatantra, through whose engaging fables the wise Brahmin sought to teach the three dull sons of the Hindu king the practical wisdom of life, and the intricacies of court morals, subtleties and manners.

These fables are grouped around one main story, itself a fable, or rather branching out of it, and rebranching, until one is sometimes lost in the maze of complicated discourses and illustrations, carrying along with them fables within fables.

Naturally enough, the hero of the main fable is the Lion, the king of beasts, who ruled supreme in a secluded jungle. One day a stray Bull was heard bellowing on the border of the jungle, and the Lion, who had never seen a bull before, concluded from his lusty bellowing that he must be a formidable animal whom it would be hazardous to encounter. The Lion, therefore, kept to his den, while his subjects brought him his meals at the proper times. A scheming fox, Dimna, who had noticed the anxiety and timorousness of the Lion, wished to make capital of it for his own advancement in the royal court. To this, his brother, Kalila, remonstrated by advising him to keep to his lowly, contented station, and not aspire to the precarious companionship of kings. But Dimna, of a more ambitious and adventurous mettle, would not listen to him.

Dimna went and humbly presented himself before the Lion, obsequiously ingratiating himself to him, with the slyness and skill characteristic of his tribe. After winning the confidence of the Lion and playing on his fear of the Bull, Dimna promised to bring the Bull submissively before him. This the ambitious Fox did, and was duly rewarded by the Lion for his friendly service. But not much time passed before the Lion and the Bull became such friends that the Fox was neglected, and soon forgotten. Dimna, not to be daunted, planned day and night to resume his former grace and popularity at the Lion's court.

One day, after a long absence, he appeared before the Lion, gloomy and melancholic. The Lion asked him the reason for his absence and for his changed features. Dimna at first hesitated,

but when pressed for an explanation unrolled a tale of despicable lies and calumnies about the Bull, saying that he was belittling the Lion before his courtiers, and inciting the soldiers of the King to mutiny. Then he went to the Bull and told a similar story about the Lion, saying that he was contemplating to devour him and feed his friends of his meat, declaring that the Bull was a stranger in the jungle, belonging to the herbivorous family, fit only as prey to the superior beasts.

Thus inciting one against the other and supplanting their friendship with suspicion, Dimna succeeded, by his treachery, in removing the Bull.

But Dimna was no less secure, now that his rival had been eliminated, than he was before. He had many enemies in the court of the king who envied his station, and despised him at heart, as one who was unworthy of it. The Lion grew morose at the death of the Bull, and regretted his haste in killing him.

One time late at night, as the Tiger was returning from the court of the king, he overheard Kalila rebuking Dimna for his treachery against the Lion and the Bull. The Tiger told the Lion's mother, who hated Dimna most, exacting from her a promise not to tell the Lion. But the Lion's mother did not rest till she brought about the indictment of Dimna, who was sent to prison. There a companion prisoner, in a dark, inner cell, overheard at midnight a conversation between Kalila and Dimna which corroborated the testimony of the Tiger and brought about the conviction of the guilty Fox. Dimna was paraded in the jungle, a warning to other beasts, and hanged to a tree.

This, briefly, is an outline of the most famous, and perhaps the greatest fable in the history of literature. It would be fatuous to add that it does not begin to give justice to the artless beauty of the simple narrative, the flourish of Oriental imagery and subtle philosophizing, or the classical purity and eloquence of the Arabic translation of the Panchatantra.

Little is known of the translator, Abdullah Ibn al-Mukaffa'. The name, which means "the Son of the Cripple One", tells a sad story about his father, a Persian, who was employed as a tax-collector in the court of al-Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf, the notorious despot of Mesopotamia under the Umayyads. He was accused of extortion and put to torture.

Abdullah, the son, entered the service of 'Isa Ibn 'Ali, the paternal uncle of the first Abbaside Caliph, Abu-l-'Abbas as-Saf-

fah. He abjured his Persian religion, Mazdeism, and became a convert to Islam. But his conversion was always held in suspicion, being accused of practicing Mazdeism in secret. On a trivial pretense, he was executed by the Caliph al-Mansur in 757 A. D.

One feels pardonably sorry, even at this long interval, for the fate of this otherwise obscure Persian convert who gave so much joy and instruction to countless future generations through his translation of the Panchatantra. For it was through the Arabic translation that this most delightful of books came to be widely known to the world.

Ibn al-Mukaffa' made his translation from the Persian version of Burzueyh, a scholarly physician in the court of Chosrau Anosharwan (531-579 A. D.), who tells us in his introduction, also translated by Ibn al-Mukaffa', of the adventures he courted in copying and smuggling the book from India.

A Syriac translation, from the Persian, was made in 570 A. D. But the Syriac version, except for scholarly purposes, is comparatively of little historic importance. It was the Arabic *Kalila wa Dimna* which became the progenitor of the European and other versions till very recently, when scholars began to go further back into the original Sanskrit.

*Kalila wa Dimna* was translated into Old Spanish c. 1251. An earlier translation into Hebrew was made by Rabbi Joel in the 12th century. Joel's translation was done into Latin by John of Capua, a Jew convert to Christianity, between 1263 and 1278. From this Pforr's popular German translation was made. Another translation into Spanish from Capua's Latin appeared in 1493, while an Italian named Doni turned the Latin translation into Italian, and from the Italian translation we have the English of Sir Thomas North, "The Moral Philosophie of Doni", in 1570, the first English text of the Panchatantra fables. It was reprinted in 1601 and later in 1888.

Another English translation, that of Knatchbull, 1819, was turned from a French edition by Sylvestre de Sacy. This translation was reprinted in Cairo as late as 1905.

This does not exhaust the descendants of Ibn al-Mukaffa's translation. There was a Greek one made in the 11th century, a Syriac made in the 10th century, and, strange as it may appear, a Persian, by Nasrallah, in the 12th century. For the translation of Burzueyh had been lost, and the translation current today

in Persian, under the name of "Anwari Suhaili", is in fact a later translation of the Arabic by Husein Ibn Ali al-Wa'iz. This latter Persian translation in turn invaded the West and found its way to most European languages.

Due perhaps to its unprepossessing name, whether as the Panchatantra or as Kalila wa Dimna, this most popular of books in the East, and at former times in the West, is little known to most modern readers of the English language. A popular edition put up by E. P. Dutton, under the title "Fables within Fables", did not have any too large a circulation, I am informed, and has since been discontinued from the "Everyman's Library" series. Yet the Panchatantra is one of the very few Oriental books which do not depend for their appreciation and enjoyment on any thorough knowledge of the East, or the Hindu philosophy in particular. Its sound, practical wisdom is not necessarily Hindu. Rather is it a little un-Hindu-like in its emphasis on smug security and worldly happiness. It has been even characterized as Machiavellian in its tenor, and in the shrewdness of its courtly advices.

There is no good reason why the Panchatantra should not become more popular, and our sincere hope is that Ryder's translation would help to make it so, in spite of its formidable name.

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### SOME ELOQUENCE IS RUINOUS

It is related that when Shirawaih, a Persian king before Islam, defeated his father Kisra Abriwiz in battle, and wrested the kingdom from his hands, one of the common subjects met him on his way back from battle and congratulated him saying:

"Praised be Allah who caused the death of Abriwiz at thy hands, and made thee reign in his place, and rid the Sassanids of his cruel and unjust rule!"

The victorious king, hearing this, asked the man:

"How didst thou fare in the days of Abriwiz?" The man replied that he fared well.

The king then asked: "What made thee censure him to me, when he neither took away thy livelihood nor wronged thee; and what business have the subjects with the affairs of kings?"

Then, turning around, he commanded that the man's tongue be torn out, as he remarked: "Verily some dumbness is better than some eloquence!"

# Famous Cities of Syria

## *Damascus*

To the weary traveler in the Syrian Desert who suddenly emerges from the serpentine windings of al-Taniyyah ravines into the vast expanse of arid, sterile sand that stretches endlessly before him, broken here and there by the mirage-like verdure of a lonely village, Damascus gradually rises and expands before him like a magic city majestically rising from its subterranean chamber.

It is quite impossible to describe the sensation of that first vision or communicate it to one who had not experienced it personally. Sensuous dreams of fragrant, fruit-laden orchards are heightened by the insatiable thirst, slackened occasionally by the brackish water from mildewy rain-water reservoirs on the road. Sparkling fountains in Moorish squares, on whose spotless marbles clatter the wooden kubkabs of dainty, houri-like ladies in seducing négligées, break upon the inner eyes of the dusty traveler, as his nostrils pick the stray scents of jasmine and rose wafted on the wings of the cooling noontide zephyr coming from the near, yet distant city.

Some such vision, some such transport of delight must have been back of the Arabic tradition that when Mohammed first cast his eyes upon the city of Damascus, he hesitated to enter it, saying that Allah vouchsafed every man one paradise, and since Damascus was the earthly Paradise, he did not want to wager his chance of entering the Heavenly one.

Long after, when the power of Islam cast its shadow on the choicest lands of the East and West from the borders of Cathay to the Pyrénées, and from the outskirts of Constantinople to the wilds of Sudan, another tradition still gave Damascus the preeminence among all the "beauty spots" on the face of the earth.

That Damascus should have become inevitably a great city of commerce and industry from immemorial times seems to have been preordained by its geographic position. It is literally an oasis in the midst of a literal desert. Only ten miles from the outer walls of the city bring one into the Syrian Desert on

the east or south, while on the west it is hedged off by Mt. Hermon, and on the north by a barren spur of the Antilibanus.

Damascus is the natural emporium of the Syrian Desert and the hinterland of Syria; it is also the natural market for Beirut, Jerusalem and the harbors of the Mediterranean cities on the Syrian shore. Northward, the roads of Damascus lead to Palmyra and Baghdad, and southward to the Persian Gulf and Arabia. In ancient times it was a central link between great empires: Babylonia, Egypt, Persia. Only for a brief period of time was its supremacy as the "bride" of Syria ever challenged.

Caravans laden with spices and ivory from the land of Sind and Hind stopped to rest in the spacious khans of Damascus before speeding on to the boats awaiting them on the shores of Phœnicia. Most likely the Queen of Sheba stopped there on her way to visit the king-sheik — Solomon.

In time Damascus became famous for its industries especially weaving and iron works. The English word Damask is a reminder of ancient skill in fine silk weaving, and Damascene blades were famous all over the world from very remote times.

Any bit of green in that particular spot would have sprouted out into a city of some importance. But nature seemed to have taken pleasure in lavishing its tender caresses and munificence on that privileged city. It gave its earth abundant fecundity, and poured through its plains and valleys the liberal libations of living waters. From this conjugation of nature sprang forth al-Ghouta, the famous orchards of Damascus, about 30 miles by 8, and 2300 feet above the sea-level. On the north, the Ghouta is traversed by the seven streams of Barada, on the south by Barbar and A'waj (the Abana and Pharphar of the Bible). In this comparatively narrow and restricted valley grow all conceivable kinds of fruit and shade trees. Groves of poplar, willow and walnuts intermix with orchards of apricots, apples, pomegranates, pistachios, almonds and peaches. The grape-vines of al-Ghouta are unexcelled anywhere in the world, perhaps. No wonder the people of Darayya, a suburb of Damascus, claim that the seeds of their grapes were cast down from the orchards of Paradise above!

The city itself is about a mile long from east to west and half a mile from north to south, with an extension almost a mile long southward known as al-Midan. The city is thus, as it has been pointed out, mallet-shaped, with the mallet head lying

northward, where another extension, separated by Barada, rises on the hills of Salihyyah. Its population is about 300,000.

How old is the city of Damascus? One passage in the Bible (Gen. 14-15 and 15-2) connects the name of the city with the story of the patriarch Abraham. The chief servant of Abraham was a certain Eliezer of Damascus. Even earlier than that the name occurs in a list of cities annexed by Thotmes III in the 16th century B. C. A century later the name again appears in the Tel-Amarna tablets, consisting mostly of diplomatic letters between the local governors of Syria and their lords, the Egyptian Pharaohs.

In the Biblical period Damascus came under the influence of the Arameans, and was called the City of Aram or Aram of Demeshek. Sometimes the Hebrew gives a variant spelling with an "r", Darmeshek. The Arabic name to the present day preserves the Aramic original, Dimashk. The relations between the ancient Hebrews and the Arameans were sometimes friendly, as in the days of David, and sometimes otherwise, as in the days of Ahab (9th century B. C.). At one time the Jews established quarters in Damascus, — concessions — at another the Arameans established quarters in Samaria. While these two little States were occupied thus in bickering disputes, the formidable shadow of Assyria in the north and east was growing and drawing near. In 854 B. C., the combined forces of Aram, Samaria and other Syrian States went down in defeat before those of Shalmaneser II in the battle of Karkar. In 733 B.C., Tiglath-pileser annexed Damascus along with other Syrian cities and northern Israel. He executed its king Rezin and carried its people away to captivity.

From that time dates an eclipse of Damascus which lasted for several centuries. It came into relative prominence under the Persians as a seat of authority and prosperity. Cambyses, a great Persian king who had successfully invaded Egypt in the 6th century B. C., died in Damascus on his way back to Persia.

Under the Greeks, following the death of Alexander the Great and the partition of the Greek Empire, Damascus became part of Selucidæ, whose capital now became Antioch, owing to its advantageous position in the western section of the new kingdom, and its nearness to the Mediterranean Sea. For some time Damascus played a secondary role to that of Antioch. In the Roman period Damascus attained a sort of independence under the rule of the Arabs, Nabataeans. When St. Paul went to

A PANORAMIC VIEW OF DAMASCUS



This historic city of Syria is reputed to be the oldest city in the world, but its heart still pulsates with the blood of youth. The great Umayyad Mosque appears in the upper right hand corner.

COURT OF THE GREAT MOSQUE OF THE UMAYYADS IN DAMASCUS



Damascus to persecute the new sect of the Nazarenes, it was an ethnarch under king Aretas (the Arabic Harith) who held the city. It came under the rule of the Romans in 63 A. D., or the 9th year of Nero.

Visitors to Damascus, today, are still shown the supposed opening in the old wall from which St. Paul was let down in a basket, to flee from the wrath of king Aretas.

Damascus again came to its own with the rise of an Eastern empire — Islam. For about 100 years it was the capital of the Umayyad Caliphate — the most powerful dynasty of those times in the world, surpassing in military power and extent of occupation the Roman empire at its height.

When we think of Damascus, it is the Damascus of the Umayyads that first comes to our mind; it is the Damascus of scented bazaars, of pompous courts, of singing slave-girls, of transient caravans, the meeting center of the many strange races of the East that mingled freely and loosely within the amorphous body of the Islamic empire.

It was in the year 634 A. D. that the city of Damascus fell into the hands of the Arab warriors under the leadership of Khalid Ibn al-Walid and Abu 'Ubaida al-Jarrah. The demoralized forces of the Byzantines fled before the zealous Arab hordes, fresh from the deserts of Yemen, Najd and Hijaz.

Tradition has it that part of Damascus was vanquished by Khalid Ibn al-Walid who entered the city from the eastern Gate, Bab Tuma, while the other part surrendered to Abu 'Ubaida al-Jarrah. The two met in the center at the Cathedral of St. John. After asking the advice of Abu Bakr, the first Caliph of Islam, in Medina, it was decided to treat the city as one which had surrendered, and not as one which had been vanquished. On the site of St. John's Cathedral, which in turn had been a heathen temple, it is said that al-Walid Ibn Abdulmalik, the Umayyad Caliph, built the Umayyad Mosque in the year 710 A. D. It is said that he put 10,000 men for 9 years to work on this great edifice.

After the caliphate passed from the hands of the Umayyads into those of the Abbasides in the year 750 A. D., and Baghdad became the capital of the Moslem world, Damascus remained a city of the first magnitude. At the time of the Crusades, it was the capital of Saladin and his successors. It was never taken by the Crusaders, who centered their energies on Antioch. In the

14th century Timurlane invaded Damascus and killed several thousands of its inhabitants. He carried most of its craftsmen with him to Samarkand, and from that time the beautiful art of making Damascene blades was lost. In 1860 trouble between the Mohammedan and the Christian populations, in which political intrigues and religious fanaticism played the chief roles, led to a massacre of the Christian inhabitants. Coming to our times, Damascus became the capital of the short-lived Arabic kingdom under Faysal in 1919. More recently it has attracted the attention of the world, and figured prominently in the news of the day when it became actively involved in the Syrian revolution and was bombarded by the French.

According to recent dispatches, a project is on foot to renovate the ancient city by building up the destroyed sections on modern lines. Two long avenues with traffic roads and sidewalks shaded with evergreen trees are planned to run through the city. The plans also call for several squares and parks.

When this project is carried through, Damascus, like Cairo today, will become a city of contrasts in which the ancient and modern contend. Even now, and regardless of the planned improvements, the ancient Damascus is giving way slowly before a newer and more modern one. The Hijaz railway station, the Scottish Mission and French Hospitals in Kasa; some of the hosteries and private homes especially those of Salihyyah, emerge with their red-tiled roofs side by side with such gems of ancient Arabesque art as the Sinaniyyah Mosque, the palace of al-Azm, and the canopied bazaars of al-Hamidiyyah, where pious, white-turbaned merchants chant the Koran, squatting on the raised mastabas in front of their little doll-like shops waiting patiently for customers to buy their quaint mother-of-pearl inlaid articles or their dainty, fragrant sweetmeats.

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The unrighteous ones pursue the faults of men and avoid their virtues, as flies which flock around the diseased parts of the body and leave alone the healthy parts. Ali.

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If you find a slanderer try that he does not make your acquaintance, for the most miserable friends are those of the slanderers.

## EDITOR'S COMMENT

### WE ADHERE TO OUR POLICY

Those of our readers who have followed *THE SYRIAN WORLD* since its foundation will bear testimony to the fact that its editorial policy has been conducted without the least trace of prejudice or bias. It has striven to give the truth always, and nothing but the truth. It has realized that the Syrian house is very much divided on itself, and from the beginning refused to be a party to increase the strife or accentuate the division. Its aim has been that of serving the truth, stating the facts, and striving to fulfill this duty disinterestedly, fearlessly, and with the single object of catering to the highest interest of the Syrian-American community. It stands on its record of achievement in the line of unbiased public service and challenges anyone to prove the contrary.

In the present situation of the heated controversy among the different Syrian factions, this publication can truly claim for itself the distinction of reflecting the opinion of all parties concerned in all faithfulness and honesty. The Syrian of American birth who is unaware of the bitter feuds which rend the ranks of the old generation of Syrians because of his inability to read the Syrian papers can perceive in *THE SYRIAN WORLD* a panoramic view of the whole situation in all its true and divergent details. Our American readers will find also therein a symposium which presents the case from all its aspects, a condition most essential to form an adequate idea of the forces which are now agitating the body politic and social of the Syrians both at home and abroad.

In view of present troubled conditions in the fatherland, we find it necessary to reiterate that *THE SYRIAN WORLD* will adhere hereafter, as it has heretofore, to its policy of unbiased, unprejudiced public service. In all its departments it shall continue to state facts whole and unaltered because it believes, in the first place, that the intelligence of its readers so requires, and, in the second place, that conscientiousness to public service will not permit of any other course. It is at this time just as staunch in its adherence to its professed editorial policy as when it first

made its appearance. And we deem it fitting at this juncture to restate a paragraph succinctly defining this policy and published in our first issue. It reads:

"Be it therefore clearly stated that THE SYRIAN WORLD will not be subordinated to any faction or party, whether religious or political; that it will not lend itself to the promulgation or dissemination of principles, views, or other materials of partisan propaganda in the interest of any one faction or party and to the detriment of the whole; that it has no religious belief, or political creed, or social tenet; that it strives to publish the truth for its own sake without prejudice or malice; and all this to the end that this publication shall not be the means of perpetuating in this new country the factional strife that has been for ever so long the curse of the old country, and poisoning the minds of our youth in America with the virulent potions of old-world drugs."

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### A SERIOUS QUESTION

The case of Dr. M. Shadid of Elk City, Okla., has attracted widespread attention. We welcome the opinions of our readers on the subject and are glad to give them publicity. If there are merits to Dr. Shadid's arguments they should be given through appreciation and recognition; otherwise it is well to dispose of our old idea of restlessness once for all. It has been the contention of some careful observers that the factor which retarded the progress of the Syrians in America most was the notion under which they labored in the earlier stages of their immigration, namely that of coming only for a temporary stay. It is interesting to learn how many still harbor such a notion. But if this idea is proven to have ceased to be a factor in the lives of the Syrians in America; and if, at the same time, there are grounds for dissatisfaction prompted by an intolerable display of racial prejudice, then it behooves us to ponder the causes seriously with a view to remedying them by some form of concerted, energetic action.

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### GIFTS OF VALUE

It would not be altogether compatible with a decorous sense of modesty for us to claim that THE SYRIAN WORLD is a gift of real value, but many of our friends seem to believe it so, and

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it is but proper and fitting to register our thanks to them publicly. It is particularly gratifying that the magazine is being helped by these friends to serve one of its chief purposes in getting Americans better acquainted with us, and in this respect it gives us pleasure to mention the additional patrons who have made gifts of the magazine to some personages of high station or to educational institutions.

Mr. Abdallah Sleyman of New York, who made gifts of ten subscriptions principally to Public Libraries of cities in which he had once resided.

Mr. Najeeb Samra of Flint, Mich., who presented the magazine to the Governor of the State of Michigan, to a member of Congress from Michigan, and others.

Miss Louise Yazbeck of Shreeveport, La., who presented it to the history department of the High School of that city.

Mr. Faris Antoon of Uniontown, Pa., who presented it the Mayor of the city.

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### WE INVITE SUGGESTIONS

An intellectual leader among the Syrians declared to us on a certain occasion: "I buy an American magazine for some single article published in it, and don't expect every bit of reading matter in the magazine to be in exact conformity with my taste. As for THE SYRIAN WORLD, there are more articles of general appeal in each of its issues than could be found in any other single publication, especially where the intelligent class of Syrian readers is concerned."

We may be permitted to state in this connection that we are sparing no pains at making the educational and entertainment value of THE SYRIAN WORLD complete from every angle. History, politics, literature and items of general interest may be found in every issue. The Syrian world has expanded immensely in our times, the Syrian race being well represented in almost every country of the globe, and it should be of vital interest to us to be posted on our different conditions and activities. Of literary talent in particular, we can boast of a goodly number, and to them we owe a special measure of thanks for their whole-hearted co-operation in making this publication what it is. This, further, is getting us better "acquainted with ourselves" and the sentiment thus created should prove of inestimable value.

Still, if our readers entertain any suggestions for improvement, we should be glad to have them communicate them to us,

## PRODUCE PROOF

Mr. Jamile J. Kanfoush of Syracuse, N. Y., is a graduate of an American College and sends an interesting letter which is published in the Readers' Forum of this issue. He mentions, among other things, that Syrians are insulted in College text books. This is a serious statement to make and we would like to have it substantiated. It is one thing to have aspersions cast on the Syrians in the daily press, which is subject to many mis-statements and distortions of facts, and quite another to have derogatory remarks occur in College text books which are supposed to give only the incontestable facts. Such references to contortations of historical facts have been made before and seem to find credence merely on the strength of the maker's word. But we believe concrete data should be given as to the objectionable passages and an open mention made of the colleges in which such text books are used. It is incumbent upon every Syrian having knowledge bearing on this subject to make such knowledge public, and towards the promotion of this necessary service THE SYRIAN WORLD will lay its pages open to communications. It should be our resolve to have this condition proven either an actuality or a myth, and in the case of the former, no means should be spared in correcting it.

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## With Our Contributors

COUNT PHILIP DE TERRAZI is one of the picturesque figures of Syria whose all-absorbing thought has been for all his life the disinterested service of his country in some useful public manner. A native of Beyrouth and a scion of one of its leading families with independent means, he has shunned a life of ease and contentment and voluntarily courted public service of the least remunerative nature financially, but of the most beneficial results educationally, and cultur- ally. To his efforts may be traced many notable public services among which was his compilation of the history of Arabic journalism. But his outstanding work is in sponsoring and promoting the National Library and Museum in Beyrouth. He has been indefatigable in his efforts to build, enlarge, and enrich this most worthy of national institutions, and it is most gratifying to record that his endeavors are meeting with a well-deserved success. It is the ambition of

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Count de Terrazi to make the Beyrouth Museum one of the richest in the East, and that is by no means impossible, at least from the point of view of Phœnician civilization in all its ramification which had its locus on the Syrian littoral. It is, then, with gratification that we announce to our readers a series of articles by Count de Terrazi on the archæological treasures of the Beyrouth Museum of which the one published in this issue of *THE SYRIAN WORLD* is the first instalment.

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Dr. SALIM Y. ALKAZIN will prove a delightful revelation to our readers. His is a masterful conception expressed with consummate art. A Lebanese by birth, he has as a racial inheritance that subtle thought, that appreciation of beauty, that artfulness of expression which is born of the nature of the grace and charm and serenity of beautiful sunrises, the singing brooks and the clarity of atmosphere of historic Lebanon. His early education was in the American University of Beyrouth, and when he came to America he entered Harvard and graduated from its School of Dentistry. He is now a successful practitioner in Brooklyn, New York, and although at one time he had been a liberal contribut-

or to Arabic newspapers, his ability as author in English was known only to comparatively a few. One of his literary achievements was a masterly translation of *Ivanhoe* into Arabic under the title of "The Return of Richard Cœur de Lion". We are happy to have him join our family of contributors, and it is no idle promise to announce to our readers that "The Stranger", Dr. Alkazin's first contribution appearing in this issue of *THE SYRIAN WORLD*, is but a forerunner to many other delightful contributions by him in both poetry and prose.

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IRVING SITT is one of the promising economists of the Syrian-American generation. Being a son of one of the pioneer Syrian immigrants in America, and having added to his racial aptitude the advantage of a thorough technical education, he brings to the treatment of his subject both personal interest and ability. At present he is connected with the department of economics of one of the largest banking institutions in New York where his opportunities for studying the economic conditions of Syria are of the highest, and we feel sure that the results of his studies which he gives our readers in his present contribution will meet with full appreciation.

## 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.

### THE OLD AND THE NEW

Our new homeland stands in no need of our old one, and places no obligation on us save that of integrity and loyalty to it.

But our old homeland stands in need of everything that the new one can give, especially energy, co-operation and persistent labor.

Our first homeland is one of the most ancient; our second homeland is one of the newest. Withal, the new one finds nothing to benefit from the old one except traditions, antiquities and respect for past glory. For the old is slumbering, and the new is awakening.

It is our duty to transfuse into the veins of the old the blood of vigor and energy which animates the new, and this we shall do.

(Al-Hoda, N. Y., Feb. 23, 1927.)

### EMPTY NOISE

They (the Syrian Nationalist delegation) came to us from across the sea, carried by aspirations and hopes; they came to attend a conference supposed to be patriotic and open to all the liberals in the land of liberty, representing all sects and religions; they attended the conference and saw what they saw, but ask

them not about the report, and behold they are now ready to depart.

They will return, after they had seen and heard much, yet with all that they heard, they heard naught but the empty noise of a drum; they heard much noise, but saw little grinding, as the proverb says.

Whereas in America, the hope of the liberals, there have been true patriots serving the cause of true patriotism without tumult or fanaticism. These the members of the delegation could not see, for they were in one valley, and the delegation in another.

(As-Sayeh, N. Y., Feb. 21, 1927.)

### STATUS OF SYRIA AND LEBANON

If Syria is granted much of her demands, she has also sacrificed much and suffered much. Nor would she be granted anything that is not hers by right. Neither to France nor to anybody has Syria any debt of gratitude. The only gratitude she owes is to herself, for she struggled in the way of her liberty.

As for Lebanon, there will be no need for substantial sacrifices in the realization of its nationalistic aspirations and its usurped rights. But it

must not indulge in idle dreams nor empty promises, nor be satisfied in mere wishing, as does the Representative Council of the farcical Republic. Independence is never achieved by prayer. It is necessary for Lebanon also to beware of the intriguing and plotting militarists who have not ceased contriving plots against it since they stepped on its soil, using it for their own ends and desires, then mocking and ridiculing it. How often have they deluded it into believing that in the unity of Syria lies the danger of Lebanon's destruction, whereas Lebanon's life is not complete without that unity; and how often have they made it appear that Lebanon's interests will not be secure except in its enmity to its neighbors; whereas its interests are bound up with its neighbors'.

The colonizers were never sincere either to Syria or to Lebanon; but had entered as a wedge between them to destroy both of them, to enslave them. Their plan has succeeded all this time long, but we doubt that they will succeed from henceforth.

(Mirat-ul-Gharb, N.Y., Feb. 19, 1927.)

#### AS IN CHINA, SO IN SYRIA

The Chinese leaders are not unlike the Syrian leaders at the present time; some of them, the Nationalists, struggle for the independence of their country from foreign oppression, imitating other countries, much smaller in size, especially the Balkan States.

The other faction or leaders oppose the Nationalist leaders in pursuance of their selfish ends. As the leaders of the old Chinese government, they are subservient to the foreigner, fighting in his behalf against their own countrymen, of-

fering themselves on the altar of foreign interests. All this they do in consideration for an office from the hand of a foreigner, whereas, if they only realize, they are more entitled to grant than to receive from the foreigners.

The division of the Chinese people, who are Oriental like us, resembles in some of its phases the division of the Syrians. But the hope of the Chinese in unity and co-operation is much stronger than that of the Syrians. For Russia is behind the Chinese, and shall rub the noses of those who oppose the voice crying aloud. "China for the Chinese."

(Al-Bayan, N. Y., Feb. 14, 1927.)

#### FRANCE TOO LENIENT

Come ye Syrian and Lebanese immigrants and act singly and collectively in demanding the rights of your suffering brethren. For today is the day of great defense. Today M. Ponsot is conferring with his government concerning the fate of the sufferers, and those who committed atrocities against them. Rain him and his government with protests against the leniency of the mandatory in its dealings with the aggressors; insist on demanding the punishment of those treacherous ones who inflicted their atrocities without mercy or compassion, and on removing them away from your suffering brethren.

Say to the ministry of France, and to M. Ponsot, that non-committal, "stupid" High Commissioner, that you do not care to know Rashayyah as your town until justice takes its course against the aggressors and those who committed atrocities, that Rashayyah may be retained to its civilized, peace-loving Christians.

(Syrian Eagle, Feb. 17, 1927.)

## Readers' Forum

### SYRIANS HAVE

#### FAITH IN AMERICA

Editor Syrian World.

In the case of Dr. M. Shadid the diagnosis is "Elkcitytis", that depressing affliction which overcomes so many folks, including Americans. For further information consult Sinclair Lewis' "Main Street".

Somehow, we can't forgive Dr. Shadid for his surrender and advice. We credit to him a greater degree of wisdom and culture than usually is possessed by the average man. His professional ability combined with his inherent culture should make him impregnable in the situations described in his letter. He claims twenty eight years spent exclusively with Amtricans, and those should have meant a more than fair chance to attain that place in their society which apparently he craves. That he isn't the master of the situation may be due to the limited social advancement possible in a small town, half of which may be composed of cousins to the twenty-fifth degree, and feels sufficient in itself.

Despite all one's efforts to find for one's self a niche in the American community, which is American in every aspect, there is always that door through which one may not enter. The password is fourth generation Americanism. There are many who constantly feel obliged to express the opinion that to be truly American one must be able to claim a great grandfather born in the country. To a certain class this is the most vital qualification because it cannot claim any other distinction; whereas, the glory rightfully reverts to the pioneers who paved the way.

We remember that during our childhood, when we sang "America", we tried so hard to justify the fervor which we sang into the phrase "land where my fathers died". And, we also remember that we finally solved the problem satisfactorily to us. The child in us concluded that George Washington, the father of our country, must be our father because this is our country. We loved every word and phrase of "America", and no one can ever persuade us that our childish conclusion was wrong, and that we did not have as much right to sing the anthem as anyone else here.

For the foreigner who comes to these shores, imbued with the desire to be truly patriotic, there is the seemingly inevitable danger of losing his identity. Impulsively we reach out for the new things, and tend to lose sight of our own goodness. That transcendant process is naturally more difficult for Syrians. Unlike the Nordics and other Europeans, our people were not early settlers, and have yet to make their impression on the community.

There is nothing for us to conceal; on the contrary, we have much to reveal to our American brethren. Syria once led the world both in cultural and commercial pursuits, and we cannot be entirely devoid of the progressive qualities which made the name of Lebanon world-famed. We must always remember that the need for acquiring new ideals does not necessarily mean discarding the old. By dealing exclusively with Americans and excluding Syrian companionship, we will surely find ourselves betwixt and between, not a part of either group. We should be

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We

proud of being our own true selves, and we know from experience that our American friends admire us for what we are. It is difficult enough for an American housewife to convince her husband that her pies are as good as those his mother made! Why should we try to convince the husband when his own compatriot fails? Why bake pies if we can excel in kibbe? "Know thyself" is as true today as when the Greek philosopher uttered it. Before trying to be like someone else, we must know our limitations, as well as our possibilities.

It is surprising that Dr. Shadid is not grateful for having his children ignored by snobbish people. Why should anyone object to "being looked down upon or considered inferior" by snobbish Americans? To be considered inferior by an intelligent American... that is a question worthy of consideration. From Dr. Shadid's letter, we infer that he studied medicine in this country and was awarded his degree here; therefore, he certainly ought not to complain about being considered inferior.

As for the Ku Klux Klan, whose growth Dr. Shadid likens to a mushroom's, whereas it has existed for nearly one hundred years, we shall disregard its activities while we have a group of true Americans who have manifested their friendship for us by giving unstintingly to our Syrian schools and colleges. In a town the size of Elk City we suppose entertainment must be provided to break the ennui. The Klan provides it. In our opinion the Klan personifies that type of humans whose righteousness is perverted so as to magnify the faults of others and diminish its own.

We may be partly to blame for

not not having the proper entree into the American community. Dr. Shadid partly solved the reason why Syrians have been somewhat isolated, when he mentions the "Syrian colony... awaiting pacification before returning". Until we assume our share of all the community's responsibilities, we have no right to expect consideration and friendship. Who lives for himself must live by himself. As long as we have among us a group that assumes a "fly by night" attitude, we will be unable to take our position in any American community. The effect of a colony cannot be undone by one person, even though he be a professional man.

The ideas of rehabilitating Syria are splendid, and worthy of praise. From information gleaned for the past ten years, we are under the impression that there is a great number of unemployed in Syria. This number would, undoubtedly, be sufficient for undertaking the projects described by the doctor. Our presence in Syria is not as necessary as our financial assistance and the leadership of those who are qualified to be leaders.

The world as a whole does not consider a man's religion, his nationality, nor political belief with the stress that it did in former days. And the truth of this statement is unfortunately apparent only in times of disasters. Then, do nations arise to the need of their suffering brethren, just as America did at the time of the Japanese earthquake. Whether our neighbor thinks in terms as magnanimous as does the world at large is immaterial to us, for he has a right to his opinion, even though it may be bigoted. Hasty conclusions are detrimental to our welfare. Last summer we

read daily of the difficulties experienced between the American tourists and Frenchmen. Where the fault lay does not interest us as much as the fact that war was not declared. The sailing lists of Americans bound for France are as long as money will provide.

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. A hegira of all Syrians to Syria may hardly be termed a remedy, and should not be considered even lightly. Dr. Shadid is a pioneer in Elk City. All the more honor to him when he reaches his goal.

E. K. S.

#### ANOTHER VOICE FROM THE MIDDLEWEST

Editor Syrian World.

I read Dr. Shadid's article in your February issue with great interest, also your editorial comment on same.

I live in a small town of about 2500, all Americans, with the exception of three Syrian families.

This section, unfortunately, was at one time the hot-bed of the so-called Ku Klux Klan. However, we have not been molested in any manner, and we believe we are respected as much as any of the so-called 100 per cent. Americans.

It is ridiculous to think or state that the Southwest is so infested with this propaganda that a foreigner cannot live here. There are hundreds, and safe to say, thousands, of foreign-born Syrians living in this country who are enjoying the sunshine and liberty and friendship in equal degree as the American citizen.

I have lived in the Southwest for

27 years, mingled with the Southwestern inhabitants of the United States, and I want to say that there is no better locality for a man who attends to his own business and obeys the laws of the country, to live in.

I note Dr. Shadid's article wherein he advocates emigrating back to the land of his birth, where his children may enjoy the same privileges as other children, and he will be respected among men.

I desire to say that my experience is that any Syrian conducting himself properly will be respected anywhere he goes.

My children attend the public schools of this country. They are on a par with any American-born children. They receive the same attention and courtesy as is shown any American pupil, and their scholastic and social standing is equal to that of any so called 100 per cent. American child.

If more of Dr. Shadid's type of men would emigrate back to Syria, carrying with them the ideas and civilization of America, it would be of great advantage to our mother-country, and every Syrian citizen of the North American continent would be glad to see him go back there and sow the seeds of liberty and advanced civilization which we have experienced in the United States.

The greatest trouble with the Syrians of the old country is lack of unity. If they would only unite in a common cause, they could do great things. If religious hatred and prejudices which now exist among the four factions of the mother-country could be blotted out, it would be a great godsend to the nation.

A. N. Adwon.

Wilson, Okla.

ARE SYRIANS INSULTED IN  
TEXT BOOKS?

Editor Syrian World:

I cannot resist a brief comment on the article contributed by Dr. Shadid of Elk City, Okla., on "Syria for the Syrians", and on your views as set forward in your Editorial Comment. Personally, I believe Dr. Shadid is right because I have experienced a similar fate. The occasion I have reference to occurred several years back when I applied to a local steel chief chemist for work. Everything was alright and I was assured of a job until I had to fill an application blank. Among the several questions asked were the questions pertaining to nationality and place of birth. Having glanced over the application sheet, I noticed a change in his countenance, and he politely told me that the jobs were all filled and that he would notify me as soon as a vacancy occurred. As for the notification, it never materialized. A similar incident also traversed my path not very long ago. You in New York, perhaps, do not come across such discrimination owing to the fact that New York is strongly cosmopolitan; but outside of New York, things are mighty different.

You say that it is practically impossible for Syrians to return to Syria and try a "doubtful experiment" in agriculture. There is nothing doubtful about the experiment except the willingness to work. If Syrians would work just half as hard in Syria as they do here and elsewhere, things would be altogether different and Syrians would not need to emigrate. Syrians are not only discriminated against in the professional lines, but they are ridiculed and insulted even in the college text

books of the U. S. A.

J. J. Kanfoush.

Syracuse, N. Y.

Editor, Syrian World.

As an interested reader of "The Syrian World" since it was first published I would like to make a few comments on some of the features which it contains.

I looked forward to the time when I would receive the first issue of "The Syrian World" and finally when it did come, I can truthfully say that it exceeded my highest expectations. It seemed that nothing was left undone to make it the best possible.

Its dimensions are such that it is very easy to handle and when one is through with it, it can be put away in the bookcase with other books, which quality makes it easy to refer to any volume of the magazine at any time without trouble or delay.

The two sections which attract and hold my attention most, however, are, "Readers' Forum" and "About Syria and Syrians". These sections I believe are two of the main features of "The Syrian World" because they serve to establish a link between the Syrians who are scattered in all sections of the world. They serve as a place for Syrians to express their ideas and also as a place to make note of achievements of Syrians, so that the rest of us may know about it, and share in the joy and pride which it brings to know the place that Syrians are taking wherever they chance to be. For one I would like to see more opinions voiced about different subjects, and I would like to see both of these sections grow larger.

Edmund P. Karam.

Oswego, N. Y

## About Syria and Syrians

### PLAYS BY GIBRAN

The Book Review section of the "New York Times" of a recent date carried this announcement.

"Kahlil Gibran, author of "The Prophet" and "Sand and Foam," is working on a volume of seven one-act plays for publication in the near future. The titles of the plays are "Lazarus and His Beloved," "The Blind," "Behind the Veil," "Homecoming," "Muraina," "The Hidden City" and "The Musician."

### LEBANON NATIONAL BANK ACQUIRES NEW BUILDING

The Lebanon National Bank of New York has bought from the Knickerbocker Club the building located at the northeastern corner of 32nd St. and Fifth Ave. for use as uptown headquarters. The banking facilities of this building are ideal, as it had been until recently occupied by the American Exchange-Irving Trust Company, and the Lebanon National Bank has come into possession of all the fixtures, vaults, and other conveniences. It is a great step forward for "our bank" and this move will help it enlarge its field of service and cater more adequately to the needs of its many customers in the uptown district. Its present location at 59 Washington St. will be maintained as a branch office. The Lebanon National Bank was organized about five years ago chiefly through the initiative of Mr. Joseph Mandour, its president. It is controlled by Syrians and its management has been so efficient that it has

been able to double its capital during this comparatively short time. Besides Mr. Mandour the officers include Jeremiah F. Connor, Vice President, formerly secretary to Governor Alfred E. Smith; and Joseph W. Griffith, Cashier, formerly of the Guaranty Trust Company of New York.

### LEBANESE GIRLS IN UTICA FORM CLUB

"The Observer-Dispatch" of Utica, N. Y., publishes an interesting letter by Miss Mamie Salamey on the occasion of the visit of Mr. Shaiban G. Kadair, traveling representative of The Syrian World, to that city. Miss Salamey tells of a meeting at the home of Miss Josephine Peters at which Mr. Kadair was guest of honor and which was largely attended by American-born young women of Lebanese and Syrian parentage. The result of the meeting was the formation of a club under the name of "The Lebanese Daughters of America" for the purpose of promoting a proper spirit of Americanism, with due attention to the diffusion of knowledge on the good qualities of the Syrian race, carrying on the idea set in motion by The Syrian World.

### SYRIAN MUSIC TEACHER HONORED

In a recent issue of the Shreveport, La., Journal, an account is given of a meeting held by musical adepts of that city over which Miss Louise Yazbeck, a Syrian teacher in

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music, presided. The paper reports that "congratulations were showered on Miss Yazbeck for her recent article appearing in the current issue of "The Etude," the world's leading musical magazine, which is an article of vital interest to all music instructors. This was a signal honor for Miss Yazbeck, who is a valued member of the Progressive Music Club, as all articles for "The Etude" must be passed upon by a board of music critics before they are accepted."

#### ALL-SYRIAN TEAM

##### WINS AT BASKET BALL

A correspondent in Canton, Ohio, sends in a clipping of a local paper reporting a game of an all-Syrian basket ball team which defeated an opposing team from Canton, Ohio, 47 to 17. Both teams belong to the St. George Syrian church of each city. The Akron team is composed of A. Haddad, A. Sawan, H. Haddad, Ghiz, Abraham, F. Haddad; and the Canton team of K. Shaheen, M. George, Nicola, G. Esber, A. Esber, W. George.

##### FIFTY YEARS IN TEACHING

Friends of Prof. Jabr Dumit, Professor Emeritus of Arabic in the American University of Beirut, are planning a golden jubilee in his honor on the first of the coming month of May.

For fifty years, Prof. Dumit taught in various schools, and for the greater part of that time in the American University of Beirut, formerly the Syrian Protestant College, as incumbent of the chair of Arabic literature.

Prof. Dumit is one of the foremost authorities in the Arabic-speaking world, hence in the world, on Arabic literature and rhetoric. He is perhaps the first Arabic-speaking schol-

ar who who applied the principles of modern, literary criticism to Arabic literature. His books on "Rhetoric" and "The Philosophy of Style" are standard works, and the latter is unique in the history of Arabic literary criticism.

The Syrian World sincerely wishes the best of success to the committee in charge of the Golden Jubilee, and doubts not that with the enthusiasm and energy of its chairman, Prof. Anis Houry al-Mukdisi, the jubilee will be a great success.

#### A SCHOOL IN FRANCE

##### TO TEACH ARABIC

A dispatch from Paris published by the Syrian press announces the intention of the French Government to found a graduate school for teaching Arabic to prospective French officials in Syria and North Africa. A large sum of money, it is said, has been appropriated for this purpose.

Most of the Syrian papers commented favorably on this project and took occasion to discuss the difficulties the Syrians and Lebanese had with the French judges sent to Syria who were ignorant of Arabic. Mention is made of the fact that the English saw the necessity of following such a course long ago and it proved the means of creating better understanding between them and the natives.

#### LEBANON MINISTRY IN PARIS

The Lebanese House of Representatives has approved a bill authorizing the establishment in Paris of an independent Lebanese ministry whose functions would be confined to the encouragement of tourism, promoting the financial and economic interests of the Republic, and caring for Lebanese emigrants.

## Political Developments in Syria

To have a diversified view of the Syrian revolution it would seem that one has to turn, first to America. The stage appears to have shifted from Syria to the United States, and in lieu of actual hostilities the attention of the revolutionists seems to have turned to propaganda. Only spasmodic reports are given of fighting in the field, and fighting in its present form is nothing but occasional raids conducted by bands of what was once the powerful revolutionary army from across the borders of the Syrian Desert. Rather, more apprehension is being felt at the appearance of a few terrorizing bands within Lebanon than at what is of actual fighting in the Hauran district.

Of developments in revolutionary activities in the United States, the outstanding event was the holding of the convention of the New Syria Party in Detroit, Mich., beginning January 15th. The convention lasted a week and the result of its deliberations as officially given out for publication was:

- 1—To send cabled protests to the League of Nations and to the leading World Powers against acts of depredation committed by the French in Syria.
- 2—To send delegations to the different countries of North and South America with the object of establishing branches for the New Syria Party among the Syrians and of collecting relief funds.
- 3—To publish a book detailing the work of the Party and giving an account of what it has accomplished in conjunction with other supporting organizations.

4—To lend every effort towards raising contributions in the sum of \$500,000 for the relief of war sufferers.

5—To publish a bilingual magazine in English and Arabic in support of the Syrian cause.

How far the Party will succeed in carrying out its programme, especially in the matter of raising the half million dollars, remains to be seen. One Syrian paper announces that collections during the convention totaled \$10,000, and this amount just covers the cost of holding it. Mr. Nasim Saybaha, the delegate representing the Central Syrio-Palestinian Committee and in charge of collecting funds, remains in Detroit and some opposing Syrian papers hint that "his teeth have been extracted," meaning that his activities have been curtailed, and that he is scheduled to sail back soon. Another delegate, Mr. Toufik Yazegi, remained in the United States but a fortnight. A delegate designate, Dr. Abdul-Rahman Shahbandar, who had been in the United States before on a political mission, could not attend the convention for the reason, as given by "Al-Bayan", the organ of the revolutionary party in America, that the Allies refused to vise his passport. The last heard of his whereabouts was that he was in Baghdad, and the fact that Iraq is under English control would indicate that England acted on the protest of France and refused Dr. Shahbandar a vise. "Al-Bayan" complains bitterly of this treatment.

The head of the delegation, and the one who is the storm center of the protests of Syrian Christians in

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Arslan. No visiting Syrian ever created such a storm of bitter feeling before. The State Department in Washington and members of Congress were deluged with protests coming from all parts of the country denouncing him and asking for his deportation. The principal instigator of this movement was Mr. N. A. Mokarzel, editor of "Al-Hoda" and president of the Lebanon League of Progress of New York who, besides prompting the Christians to make protests prepared a statement which he sent to government officials, members of Congress, and the American press. In this he had the active support of many Syrian-American organizations throughout the country.

The principal charges against Emir Arslan were that he had been instrumental in persecuting and starving the Christians of Syria during the War, causing the death of 165,000; that he had been, and still is, the enemy of the independence of Mt. Lebanon for no reason other than that it is chiefly Christian; and that his presence in America is bound to engender discord and strife among Syrian immigrants which might lead to the danger of bloodshed.

To these charges Emir Chakib Arslan appears to have been extremely sensitive, so much so that he chose to break the silence he had steadfastly maintained ever since his arrival in the country and began the publication of a series of articles in "Miraat-ul-Gharb" of New York, recapitulating the events of the War and defending his actions at the time he was in Syria as an aide to Djemal Pasha, the Turkish military governor. He lays particular stress on the borders as a sign of protest against the rule of France in Syria.

on the exigencies of War and asserts that the Christians suffered no more than those of other religious denominations. He would lay the blame for the suffering and famine in Syria during the War more on the Allies who blockaded the Syrian coast than on Turkey and Germany. The two "ships of mercy" carrying provisions to Syria from America could not reach their destination, according to his version, because the Allies themselves so decreed, fearing the provisions would be seized and appropriated by the Turks. He even relates the opposition he encountered from Mr. Elkus, the American Ambassador in Constantinople, in the way of releasing the ships from Alexandria to continue on their way to Syria, and plainly states that Ambassador Elkus, after many dilatory tactics, refused definitely to permit the ships to continue to Beirut "because the United States was about to enter the War on the side of the Allies."

Some Syrian papers hint that Emir Chakib Arslan is being watched closely by two agents of the Department of State, and that his departure from the United States is bound to come in the very near future.

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#### PONSOT IN PARIS

M. Henri Ponsot, French High Commissioner in Syria, left Beyrouth the latter part of January, traveling by land in easy stages, visiting first Palestine and then crossing to Egypt, whence he sailed to France. During his travel in Palestine his official reception was attended with all marks of ceremony and courtesy, but the Arab Nationalist press decided to publish special editions with mourning the United States against his presence in the country is Emir Chakib

A general strike by Moslem shopkeepers was also suggested, but no untoward incident or other unfriendly public manifestation took place. M. Ponsot is also reported to have conferred with Syrian delegations in Cairo and in Alexandria, but aside from listening patiently, no indication emanated from him as to his probable course of action.

The editorial effusions of the Syrian press would show that all eyes are now turned on Paris. A state of mind exists where the people seem to be anxious for any form of solution, providing it is forthcoming quickly. Business in the country is stagnant and the unsettled condition of the money market causes great uneasiness and apprehension. M. Ponsot remained non-committal during all the time he spent in Syria, and now that the revolution and its attendant disturbances have lasted for over a year and a half, the country feels itself on the verge of ruin. Everyone, therefore, has reached the limit of patience and is anxiously awaiting the final decision of Paris which is hoped to settle definitely the political status of the country.

It would be futile, in view of M. Ponsot's silence, to speculate on what he is to recommend and on the amount of truth to be credited to the different rumors that are being set afloat on his probable action. The subject most discussed, however, is the repartition of Syria and the granting to Syria proper of the city of Tripoli as a seaport, it now being deprived of an outlet, Tripoli being a part of Lebanon. The Lebanese press asserts that no change of this nature is contemplated, as Prime Minister Poincare is reported to have explicitly assured the Prime Minister of the Lebanese Republic while the latter was in Paris, that the present boundaries of Lebanon

would not be altered under any circumstances.

#### NEWS BREVITIES

Lebanese papers report that the President of the Lebanese Republic is about to sail for Paris, to be there, perhaps, while M. Ponsot is still conferring with the Cabinet, for the purpose of negotiating a new treaty to embody, among other features, a clause providing for a treaty of amity and defense between France and Lebanon for the term of fifty years.

Reports emanating from revolutionary sources are to the effect that Sultan Pasha Atrash, leader of the Druze revolution, has reconciled himself to his present condition and is building for himself a palace in the district of Al-Azrak, and homes for the ten thousand refugees who fled with him from Hauran. This would indicate that he has given up any idea of returning to his former home and that he and his followers have decided on settling in Al-Azrak, which is described as an oasis situated between Transjordan, Syria and the limits of the Arabian kingdom of Ibn Saoud. It is reported also that the French have lodged a protest with the English authorities against the Druze rebels taking refuge in that district.

"Al-Bachir," a pro-French paper of Beyrouth, publishes a report to the effect that two Druze officers representing revolutionary refugees, visited the office of the Syrian-Palestinian Relief Committee of Cairo for the purpose of examining its books, and discovered a shortage of £40,000 that could not be accounted for. They wrecked the place and were haled to court. Revolutionary sympathizers deny the charge.