SIX MONTHS

IN A

SYRIAN MONASTERY.

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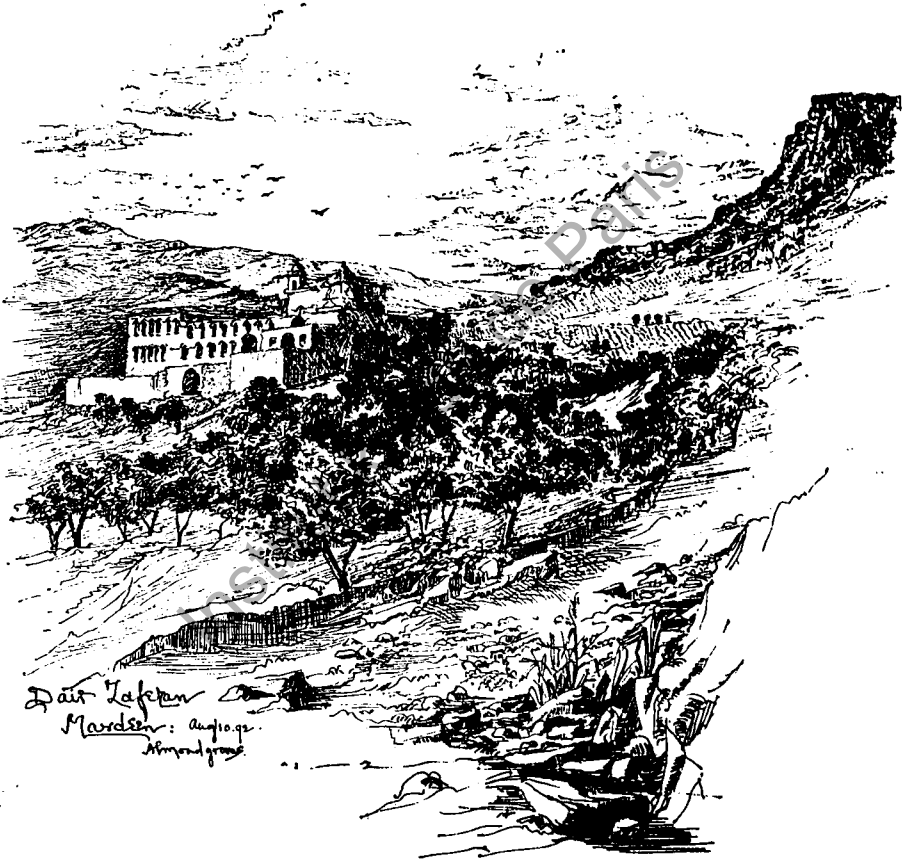
Dair Zafaran
Mardin: Anglo. gr.
Armenian gr.

SIX MONTHS
IN A SYRIAN MONASTERY,

BEING THE RECORD OF A VISIT TO THE HEAD QUARTERS
OF THE SYRIAN CHURCH IN MESOPOTAMIA,
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF
THE YAZIDIS OR DEVIL WORSHIPPERS OF MOSUL
AND EL JILWAH, THEIR SACRED BOOK.

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BY

OSWALD H. PARRY, B.A.,
Of Magdalen College, Oxford.

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR.

WITH A PREFATORY NOTE BY

THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

LONDON:
HORACE COX,
WINDSOR HOUSE, BREAM'S BUILDINGS, E.C.

1895.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY HORACE COX, WINDSOR HOUSE,
BREAM'S BUILDINGS, E.C.

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TO

D. G. HOGARTH, ESQUIRE, M.A.,

WHO FIRST DIRECTED

MY FOOTSTEPS TO THE EAST.

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OFFERT
PAR
JOYCE BLAU

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PREFATORY NOTE.

MR. PARRY has asked me to write a prefatory note to the record of his visit to the Old Syrian Church. Such an introduction appears to me to be quite unnecessary. The scope and character of the narrative cannot fail to commend it to all who watch with interest and hope the quickening into fresh life of the ancient Christian communities of the East, and are anxious to fulfil their political obligations to the Turkish Empire and to the Christians who are subject to its rule. At the same time I am glad to have the opportunity of saying with what pleasure and profit I have read the book.

Mr. Parry visited the East in 1892 on behalf of the Syrian Patriarchate Education Society, in order to inspect the elementary schools already established by the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch with the help of friends in England, and to report generally on the prospects of effectually promoting education in the churches under the Patriarch's jurisdiction.

The route which he followed through the "Syrian gates" to Aleppo, Urfa (Edessa), Diarbekr, Mardin, Mosul, is full of great memories, and yet comparatively unknown to Englishmen. As the traveller moves Eastward, Western influences gradually disappear, and he looks again on scenes of patriarchal times, which call up thoughts on human life lost

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in the hurry of our own restless days. Mr. Parry has succeeded in conveying to his readers, with vivid and natural directness, the impressions which the country and the people made upon him. His sketches of scenery and manners, of character and persons, are full of life and local colour. He describes with perfect candour and impartiality the good and bad qualities of Christian and Mohammedan; and it is no slight testimony to the power of the Gospel that he found the Syrian Christians, isolated and oppressed for centuries, to maintain a higher standard in the common virtues of personal and domestic life than their Moslem neighbours. From time to time he throws side lights on the vices of the Turkish local government as he chronicles the intrigues and corruption—Oriental, perhaps, rather than Turkish—of which he was witness; and the recent outrages on the Armenians receive a terrible illustration from the sufferings inflicted on the Yazidis while he was at Mosul.

At the same time Mr. Parry recognises the growing toleration which is now extended to the native Christians in the country which he visited. But it must be remembered that every fresh concession to Christians is opposed to the spirit of Islam, and cannot but alienate the feelings of the true believer from the Sultan who yields it, and make the Sultan more nervously sensitive to every expression of national spirit. None the less the duty of the European powers, by which the authority of Turkey is upheld, is clear. They are bound to observe scrupulously the terms of the treaties which they have made with Turkey, and to provide by watchful care that the Turks shall also observe them. In this respect it is a matter of deep

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regret that the name of England has lost something of its old power.

But great as is the value of Mr. Parry's book as a contribution to our knowledge of an important out-lying province of the Turkish empire, its chief importance lies in the view which it gives of the position and prospects of the Old Syrian Christians, the scanty representatives—perhaps 150,000 or 200,000 in number—of the Syrian element in the Church of Antioch, the earliest of the Gentile churches. Since Dr. Claudius Buchanan visited the Old Syrians in Malabar in 1806, from whom the Patriarch received a valuable present while Mr. Parry was at Mardin, interest in the ancient Oriental Churches has steadily, if slowly, increased in England, and it has received a powerful stimulus lately from the work of the Archbishop's mission to the Assyrians. The interest is natural. These independent Churches appeal with especial force to England and to the Churches of the Anglican Communion. They lie, it is true, under the imputation of contrasted heresies, dating from the controversies of the fifth century; but those most competent to speak are satisfied that in the case of the Jacobites and Nestorians of the present day the accusation rests on the misunderstanding of technical terms, and can be cleared away by mutual explanations. Meanwhile the rival Communions are eager for education. They desire to learn fully the teaching of their own ancient formularies and of Holy Scripture. They are not committed to any modern errors. Their very existence through centuries of persecution and temptation is a proof of the vitality of their faith.

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They are characteristically national Churches. They guard with the most jealous care their apostolic heritage, and are still able to express through it the power of their own life. Thus, while they cling to their liturgical language, Syriac, with almost pathetic devotion, they adopt the vernacular freely in sermons and popular services.

These general remarks apply with peculiar power to the Old Syrian Church. This seems to live in the past. Its Patriarchs still assume on their election the name of Ignatius the Martyr. The people hitherto have known Western Christianity only through the Roman and American Missions (Congregational and Presbyterian). But both missions have failed to make any serious impression on the main body of the Church. The aggressive imperialism of Rome, in spite of the dignity of its services, the strength and devotion of its missionaries, the political influence of France, repels a nation proud of their own possessions handed down from their fathers. The American Missionaries necessarily offend the same feeling of religious patriotism from another side. They have no instinctive regard for historic continuity, and look with little reverence on customs venerable by ancient use. But the Anglican Church on the other hand, strong by apostolic order and catholic sympathy, can approach the Syrian Christians without threatening their independence or disparaging the primitive traditions of a Communion older than itself. It can consistently welcome the task of building up, purifying, strengthening a body which claims tender regard for the sake of sufferings which it has borne for the Faith. It is under no temptation to seek either submission or uniformity from those whom it serves. It acknowledges

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the power of the Faith to harmonise large differences of intellectual and ritual expression, answering to differences of race and history, within the limits of the historic Creed. It can wait for the issue which it desires, taught by home experience that stable reform must come from within. It can with good hope prepare the way for reconciling divided Churches through considerateness and patience.

The first step towards the accomplishment of this great work of conciliation and enlightenment for the Eastern Churches by England—a partial acknowledgement of our debt to the East—must come through better knowledge on both sides. The Old Syrians confound our position with that of non-episcopalian missionaries; and we again are inclined to treat them as merely "nominal Christians." The understanding which we both require will come through that help in education which the Syrians seek from us. And their need is unquestionably pressing. The Syrian Christians in the villages are for the most part poor—there are not, we are told, "perhaps more than four books on an average in a village through Jebel Tur"—and those in the towns require the encouragement of a good example. So far a good beginning has been made. The late Patriarch used well the means which were placed at his disposal; and the work in the schools which he founded is on the whole satisfactory.

For rendering on a larger scale the help which is required, the present time is eminently favourable. There is good reason to hope that the new Patriarch—for the nonagenarian Patriarch with whom Mr. Parry stayed died in the past year—will be even more anxious than his predecessor for the

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extension of elementary religious schools and for the efficient education of his clergy. The noble monastery El-Za'aferan offers itself as an admirable place for a Patriarchal College. And for the larger influences of an educational mission, the rule of Turkey gives better opportunities than could be found if national and ecclesiastical differences were accentuated by the dismemberment of the Mohammedan Empire.

If the season is thus opportune and the work urgent, the English Church appears, as I have endeavoured to show, to be specially fitted to undertake it. Here also, as elsewhere, representatives of the English Church would come to learn in teaching; and the Old Syrian Church can give us several lessons which are worth consideration. Let me mention two only. The regulation of the order of Deacons—"perhaps the most characteristic order of the Eastern Churches"—deserves careful study, as likely to provide a solution of some of the problems suggested by the conditions of home work. Scarcely less interesting and important is the service of ordination for the wives of the parochial clergy, by which they are made a kind of deaconesses. Some such solemn dedication might be a help to many women among ourselves who, placed by marriage in positions of heavy responsibility, are distracted by the trivial calls of modern society.

Even directly, therefore, we might gain much from extending the work which has been most happily begun in the East. And we cannot but look to more remote and wider consequences of the enterprise. If it be fulfilled, it is likely that the controversy with Mohammedanism will enter on a new stage. The spread of Mohammedanism over Eastern Christendom was largely due to the barren controversies and

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divisions of Christians: the quickening and reuniting of the remnants of the ancient Churches may well be a revelation of the power of the Faith which will bring conviction to many devout souls, and open the way to the evangelization of the East by Eastern teachers. No doubt a long period of discipline and training must go before such a consummation, and our part is to claim now a share in the preparatory labour.

So the vision opens before us. By history and character and by the history and character of the National Church, the English nation is called to be the missionary nation of the world. It is not more surely marked out by its history to bring the Christian truth to the peoples of India, than it is marked out by the endowments of the National Church to bring new life to the Churches which represent the old Patriarchates of Antioch, and Alexandria, and Jerusalem. May it be enabled to fulfill this double call, and so to gain the blessing of fruitful service. Mr. Parry's narrative of his pioneer mission to Mesopotamia will, I trust, hasten the fulfilment of one part of this great issue.

B. F. DUNELM.

Auckland Castle,
Dec. 8th, 1894.

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INTRODUCTION.

As in old days the tide of conquest flowed westward, it is but natural that the ebb of travel should return towards the East. Year by year the region of romance is narrowed, and places which once were names for travellers to conjure with are brought one by one within the reach of spring and summer tourists. Romance now lurks beyond the Karakoram ranges or in Japan, scared away from the more familiar haunts of Syria and Greece. Nor can "the prerogative of travellers in Turkey to tell lies," which Landor tells us was in his time undisputed, be any longer exercised.

For the serious archæologist, however, or the devotee of history much still remains within the ring or in the borderland surrounding it. With such a region, the Syrian country that lies between Palestine and the Tigris, the following pages are concerned. They present a detailed study of a relic of history pursued off the track of general research. They record no adventures or unusual episodes, but they seek to present a picture of quiet life in a country much abused, and among a people that command less than their share of ordinary interest.

Among the various schemes, many fantastic enough, for promoting the union of Christendom, none seem to rest on a firmer basis than those whose aim is to secure greater intimacy and a more intelligent cordiality between the Christians of the East and West. Several societies have been formed with this purpose, recalling the similar efforts made by the Non-jurors of the eighteenth century; and it was at the invitation of the oldest of these (the Syrian Patriarchate Education Society), and as their agent, that I undertook the

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journey here described. The aims of the society, the method of carrying them out, and their prospect of success, will be apparent to the reader. It is necessary here only to record my gratitude to the society for the opportunity afforded of obtaining so unique and pleasant an experience.

Among the number of obligations which I have to acknowledge, the chief are owing to the Rev. F. E. Brightman, of the Pusey House, and the Rev. A. C. Headlam, of All Souls' College, Oxford, for much kind advice and assistance in the more strictly ecclesiastical part of my work. To Sir Frederic Goldsmid and the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society I owe thanks for valuable suggestions in regard to the transliteration of Arabic words, and for permission to consult the library of the Society. To my brother I am indebted for much arduous work in reading and correcting manuscripts and proofs.

To the translation of parts of the sacred book of the Yazidis contained in the appendix a melancholy interest attaches. The original manuscript was in the hands of the late Professor Robertson Smith, waiting to be translated, when he died. Mr. E. G. Browne, Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, and lecturer in Persian to the University, kindly undertook the work of translation, which now stands as a slight monument of love to the memory of a great Orientalist. It comprises the most authentic copy yet published of the sacred book of that strange people, with whom all who have read the works of Sir Henry Layard will be in part, at least, familiar.

I have been sparing of references to the many books which I have consulted. The chief of these are the following: the immortal history of Gibbon, to appreciate whose marvellous and accurate learning there is no surer method than to pursue some bye-path in the period of which he treats; the "Bibliotheca Orientalis" of the Assemanni, that storehouse of Eastern ecclesiastical knowledge; Dr. Payne Smith's translation of John of Ephesus, the gentle historian of the

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sixth century; the works of Renaudot and Le Quien. Of more recent books, Etheridge's "Syrian Churches," Badger's "Nestorians and Their Rituals," Cutts' "Christians under the Crescent," Maclean and Browne's "Catholicos of the East and His People," Buckingham's "Travels in Mesopotamia," Palgrave's "Central Arabia," Burton's "Pilgrimage to El Madinah and Meccah," Ainsworth's "Euphrates Expedition," Layard's three volumes on Nineveh and Babylon, and the English collection of Dr. Nöldeke's essays, have been of most value.

For the map of the Jebel Tur district I am indebted to Mr. Andrus, the agent of the American Congregational Board of Missions at Midhiat. I have not thought it necessary to insert a map showing my route through a country so well known as Eastern Turkey.

In the difficult matter of the transliteration of Arabic words I have mainly followed the system of the Royal Geographical Society, as that which seems likely to win its way into most general use. It assigns to all consonants the same value that they have in English, to all vowels that which they have in Italian. All double vowels, oo ee, are thus avoided. One accent only, the acute, is used, to mark the emphasis of the syllables. In general I have not used accents in the text, but have marked each word with great care according to its East Syrian pronunciation in the glossary. Several words, commonly used in English, have been left in their usual form, such as "Koran"; others, the English spelling of which is less defensible and the correct form less seemingly pedantic, such as "harim" (harem), "bazar" (bazaar), "beg" (bey), "Mohammed" (Mahomet), have been altered. But in so difficult a matter, especially as regards vowels, it is scarcely possible to avoid inconsistency. Of certain shortcomings, for instance in the treatment of words having the definite article prefixed, I am fully aware; I must shelter myself with the excuse that I am not a scientific linguist. Nor have I made any attempt to reconcile the system I have adopted

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with the far more scientific one of Mr. Browne, which nevertheless I believe to be practically less convenient.

Since the above was written the chief figure in the Old-Syrian Church has passed away. He had spent the summer in the monastery Deir-el-Za'aferan, and, being in unusual health, rode back on October the 6th to Mardin. On reaching his house he was seized by a sudden fit, and died at the age of ninety-five.

His has been a stormy life since the time when he left his mules and horses two-thirds of a century ago to follow the way of the Church, and for the last twenty years to rule his people. He has done a good work for his nation. Of a stern and at times fiery nature, holding, too, a singularly autocratic and isolated office, and living day by day far removed, in virtue of his position, from the softening influence of familiar intercourse with men, he yet, by the charm of a very tender heart, won from many the tribute of real and warm affection.

He has suffered much from harsh judgments; but for the building up of his Church and opening the way to larger light and fresher vigour he has done more than any who have gone before him. He rests in the mausoleum of the monastery awaiting, like his great predecessor Bar Hebræus, the day when all these schisms shall be done, "when the Lord shall be King over all the Earth, in the day when the Lord shall be one and His name one."

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SIX MONTHS IN A SYRIAN MONASTERY.

CHAPTER I.

Through the Syrian Gates.

It is a sad necessity that condemns the student of the mysterious East to enter Syria by a seaport town. Nowhere else may the ill results of inharmonious fusion be so clearly seen, bringing into foremost view the characteristic evils both of East and West. Alexandretta, the port of Aleppo, is no exception to the rule, rich though it is in memories of the past and signs of possible future greatness. The name of the town and every neighbouring hill or village recalls a vanished faith or empire. "Jacob's Well," "The Pillars of Jonah," Issus Iskanderun, each echoes the history of a long-passed age.

Over the ill-paved streets of the dirty town, one day early in April, 1892, there rumbled a rickety cab drawn by four half-starved horses, and containing two Europeans, one a smart German commercial traveller, the other an Englishman without apparent aim or occupation, out on to the broad level plain that divides the range of Amanus from the Mediterranean Sea. One age after another had marched by this same road up to the "Syrian Gates"—or pass that leads through the mountains—the armies of Cyrus, Alexander, and the Ptolemies, the mercenaries of the Lower Roman Empire, and the fate-inspired warriors of Islam. On either side was a row of

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wretched huts raised on piles above a fœtid marsh, soon giving place to groves of mulberries and aloes and fields of newly-sprouting corn. It was mid-day as we crossed the fertile fever-stricken plain, and we were glad to reach the hills and feel the air grow fresher as we neared the pass and village of Beilan. The land was rich, but failed from lack of trees to satisfy our European eyes. A palm tree here and there upon the plain, and on the hill sides small groups of splendid pines, gave some relief and shade, but all too few to overcome the general sense of desolation.

On the road itself there was life enough with the strings of Syrian camels—great tawny creatures with tufted necks and shoulders, far finer to look at than the swift dromedaries of the desert. They were a picturesque sight, but seemed to express with their long upper lips unutterable sorrow, foreboding the day when they shall pass away and the Iron Horse run where the Assyrian caravans have for three thousand years trod slowly east and west. Then we passed a detachment of Turkish soldiers marching in disorderly fashion with their wives towards Aleppo; and then came herds of sheep and goats, bells tinkling and dogs barking, as they made their slow way to some wayside fountain. Pedlars and beggars that sat by the road exposing fearful sores to our charitable gaze, even these, too, were new sights to us; fresh pages of the wonderful picture-book of the East.

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Beilan was a pleasant little town, stretching right across the gorge at the top of the pass and built on either side, house above house, with mosque and church between. Just beyond was an aqueduct, through breaks in which the water poured with the sound of melody so sweet in a thirsty land. Towards the sea to the west, and eastward over the plain of Antioch, the views were magnificent. The snow was still upon the mountains of Amanus and Taurus across the bay, and to the north upon the hills about Marash. In the eastern plain lay, like some mountain loch in Scotland, but many times larger, the great white lake, "Bahr-el-Ajub," of Antioch; and over and beside it floated clouds of mist, like flocks of sheep, in the heavy air.

The Sphinx, Gaza.
Drawn by Alexander.

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The road from this point to Aleppo was not remarkable except for a fine causeway, built over the marshes by a certain Pasha of blessed memory called Murad, and not long since restored with the road itself. A little village had sprung up by the causeway, water being plentiful, and a small stall was opened where forbidding and forbidden drinks were sold, and oranges from the groves of Tarsus. Turkeys and geese made their several noises by the water-side, tended by small brown children; and some way off, close by one of the mounds that are so abundant in this part of the country, was a group of Kurdish tents pitched there for the sake of the rich spring pasture. A little beyond these stood a large farmhouse with a village nestling round it, to cultivate the crops and gather the wild liquorice that grows plentifully in these parts. Some hot springs give the place the name of "Hammamat," and cause it to be much visited for the cure of certain diseases.

In the neighbourhood may be seen traces of the once extensive ruins of Dana, a town that lay on the high road from Antioch to the East, and the probable scene of the defeat of Queen Zenobia, in whose dominion it was, by Aurelian. Remains of cities of the Lower Empire lie scattered on every hill; and not far to the south still stand the monastery and church built to commemorate the most famous of all the Syrian Ascetics, Simeon Stylites, who, electing to spend his life in eccentric solitude on the summit of a column forty feet in height, wielded an influence over Christians and Arabs of which even the Emperor stood in awe.*

The country was in itself not interesting, although in the early morning there were fine views looking towards the northern mountains with the sun cutting across the heavy mist. The road into Aleppo was execrable, nor is it possible to describe the misery of alternately bounding over loose boulders and dragging through sloughs of gelatinous mud. The caravan road was even worse, leading in parts over rocky

* He died A.D. 459, and was buried at Antioch. A popular account of him may be read in the English collection of Professor Nöldeke's Oriental essays. The church is described in De Vogüé's great work on the Syrian churches, and in the Introduction to Neale's "Patriarchate of Antioch."

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ground, in which the only track available for horses' feet was from hole to hole filled with thick soft soil.

Seen from the last hill-top on the north-west side, the city of Aleppo forms a striking feature of the landscape, standing in the centre of the plain that stretches many miles to north and east and south. Of the town itself there is no need to write much. The fine bazars, the beautiful mosque of Zechariah, father of John of Damascus, with the strange legend connected with its daily call to prayer, the refined inhabitants of every creed and nationality, have all been described often enough.* I was surprised to find myself in a good hotel, strange confusion though it was of East and West. There was a visitor's book and *table d'hôte*, of which I partook in company with a loquacious Greek from Smyrna, who drank more "arrak" than coffee, and half a dozen Turkish officers with sparsely buttoned hose, who sat silent through a solid English meal for the honour and glory of the thing.

Early the next morning a deputation of the Syrians of the place came with their priest and a train of rustics to wait upon me. At their head was the best of Orientals, Antonius Azar, a member of one of the oldest and most respected families in Aleppo, to whom I had letters requesting him to forward me on my way to Mardin. Nothing could exceed his politeness and hospitality. On my return from Mardin some months later I stayed in his house; but, as his wife explained, they had thought that, though their house might seem a pleasant place after living in the barbaric interior, yet on arrival from England I should be "ashamed" to stay in such an uncivilized abode.

For some time the party sat round my room in awkward silence, rolling cigarettes for each other, and occasionally examining some of my possession. But the situation becoming strained, Selim, Azar's son, who spoke some words of English, suggested that I should go to his house and see the rest of the family. I readily acquiesced, and we walked in imposing

* See especially a pleasant account in Cutts' "Christians under the Crescent."

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procession through the streets. Arrived at the house and seated in the "diwan," coffee, cigarettes, and slices of preserved citron were handed round in filagree silver dishes, and a long dull hour passed, such as is usual in a land where the polite show their breeding on a visit by the observance of a dignified silence. Such conversation as went forward related to England and the few inhabitants of that country of whom they had heard; or of the luggage I had brought with me, and the price of the various things I wore. This is the first and most polite question a Syrian can ask a stranger.

Everyone in the room smoked, including Azar's wife, an Armenian lady, who expelled both the smoke and the few words of French she knew in the same mincing manner with the tip of her tongue, as if they were gems of value which she was loth to lose. She was, nevertheless, the most refined native lady I met in Turkey, and a kind, considerate hostess. Her four daughters sat with her in the diwan, and shook hands and talked in a rational manner, very different from the custom of things further east, where women are treated like dogs, and dogs like wild animals. No less noticeable was the contrast of the simple dresses and sparse jewellery with the wealth of silk and trinkets and gold coins worn by the richer ladies of Diarbekr or Mosul; of which contrast, no doubt, the absence of railways and the ten days' journey from town to town, is in great degree the cause.

The room, in which we sat discussing the future of Turkish trade and the price of eatables in London, was a pleasant, airy diwan, decorated with green and white paint, and furnished with handsome modern carpets and cushions. There was a fine collection of old porcelain in the room, and over the doors were flaunting oleographs of the Greek and Russian royal families, with photographs of the Syrian Patriarch and several of the leading bishops. Green and red were the prevailing colours here and in the courtyard, and looked bright in the sun against the fine white plaster, for which Aleppo and Diarbekr are famous.

A large diwan for receptions, another for the ladies' use, a

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dining room where everything was in a manner *à la Franga,* formed, with the kitchens and a small summer diwan, the suite of rooms upon the ground floor. The fourth side of the court facing the north was occupied by a large open verandah or "aiwán," in which to sit on summer evenings. It was covered by a lofty vaulted roof, supported on tall marble pillars of Saracenic style, having rich capitals, and the wall above decorated with graceful arabesque designs. The inner walls were of stone, and the floor of fine marble in arabesques. Everything else in the court, the fountain in the centre and the pavement, were of Aleppo marble, which gains by exposure to the air a lovely mellow tone, the colour of old parchment. The court, with its ever-flowing fountain and sweet orange trees, was only less delightful than the broad flat roof, on which I walked at evening, and gave rein to idle fancies about the ancient city hidden by roofs and porticos below.

A walk round the chief buildings of the town brought us at last to the humble little building which the Syrians call their church. It was near the hour of evening prayer, so we sat a short while with the priest, a simple, pious old man, who made me write my name in his service book. It was most pathetic to note the contrast between the fine churches of the Roman, Greek, and Armenian communions of Aleppo and this poor little place, which is all that remains to a community that not long since numbered in the town three thousand souls. Few of the worshippers seemed to understand the words of the Syriac service, but there was no mistaking the real, though ignorant, devotion of the worshippers, who came week by week from the villages round, some many miles away, to attend their fathers' church. There was one old woman, wrinkled and with hair dyed scarlet, in the church, and a score of great village men, who, service ended, walked reverently towards the altar to kiss the silver-bound Book of the Gospels and receive, one by one, the blessing of the priest before they left the church.

It was my first acquaintance with this Old Syrian church, and details were marked clearly as they occurred. Perhaps

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I expected too much, and had courted disappointment. And yet there was something, too, in this bare little church and this ignorant worship, of which we have too little at home; more of simple trust and patient faith in Him who is the Head of all the Churches.

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CHAPTER II.

From Aleppo to the Euphrates.

In a soothing atmosphere of cigarettes and coffee, heavy with the sense of future bakhshish, we sat, Selim Azar, myself, and two stout sons of Anak, six foot four apiece, determining the rate of a journey to Mardin. It was a long affair, as such generally are; for first the good men denied the possibility of getting their animals in from spring pasture near the town at the early hour of nine on Monday morning; this in view of growing bakhshish. For Selim's sake, however, and the honour of his house they would start at ten, and charge only twice the regular fare. More coffee and cigarettes were needed to reduce the price; and after an hour we concluded a bargain to pay half as much again as I paid on the return journey. Neither in Turkey nor elsewhere is experience to be had free. The muleteers then retired, paying, after the strange manner of their kind, a certain sum to guarantee their good faith, and promised to return at 8 a.m. on Monday; "upon their heads should it be."

By a great piece of fortune having heard that a French gentleman, a government inspector, was starting that very day for Saert, I lost no time in obtaining an introduction, and it was arranged that we should travel together to Diarbekr, so that I was saved the necessity of procuring an interpreter.

To western eyes there can be few stranger or more picturesque sights than to watch the arrival of one's train at the inn gates, attended by a crowd of interested spectators, gay-petticoated, newly shaven, and well be-turbanded for a new

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week. One of the sons of Anak appeared an hour late, very differently apparelled to-day, in consideration of the journey, with one beast for my slender luggage, and another for myself. What a squeaking, and whinnying, and biting, and kicking among the number of creatures belonging to this and other caravans! Donkeys, mules, and thoroughbreds were all in the highest state of excitement, with the men shouting, and using every abusive word they knew in all their three languages. Bells clanged, and tin pots banged with coffee pounders and kettles for use upon the road, until a re-echoing bray from the chief donkey announced that the loads had all been adjusted, and the caravan was ready to start. My French companion was waiting all this time near the Serai, or government buildings just outside the town, and with him several gentlemen, Turkish and French, who had come out to escort him for the first mile of the journey.

With fantastic gyrations of our Turkish companions, and an unceasing flow of talk on the dangers of the road, to the tune of the caravan bells some way behind, we filed out of Aleppo along a route, called by courtesy a road, past the Aqueduct, built by the Empress Helena on her way to Jerusalem, and under the telegraph wire, until we reached the last of the gardens, and an olive grove, out of which rode, like an ancient knight of Arthur's court, our orderly, known in Turkish as a "zaptieh." Here everyone dismounted, watered his horse, and bade an affectionate farewell to his neighbour, as to a dearest brother, and one half turned citywards, while the rest started out towards the unknown country beyond the Euphrates.

April 4.—The last cord was cut that bound us to civilization, A wonderful sense of freedom came over us, and an invigorating buoyancy inspired by the Arab country giving us the power to perform an unbroken ride of eleven days with enjoyment.

It was a remarkable company, our caravan. The Inspector and I formed an advance guard with the zaptieh (him that came out of the wood), riding some way ahead, as we were light loads; and some days, especially when wet, reaching our night quarters two or three hours before the rest. This

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much annoyed our "Katirjis," or muleteers, who were of timid stock, and did not at all like to separate from our doughty myrmidon, though the Spirit of brigandage only knows what *he* would have done, had any occasion for his services occurred; most assuredly his place beside his wards would have known him no more. A curious creature was this zaptieh, in an ancient uniform, musty blue coat with tags of cotton braid hanging promiscuously about it, and faded trousers but ill-provided with buttons to match: over all a great coat, conglomerate of red and mustard yellow, made, it seemed, more to guide the rain to unprotected spots, than keep it out. A revolver or two, a gun of enormous length and curious construction, were combined with an evil look about his eye to keep up an appearance of ferocity, which, there is reason to think, would not have been maintained in action. Further afield he improved; a passable saddle, and reins of string, led one to admire the really fine half-breed that he rode. This horse had, perhaps, fared best of any in the caravan, as his sleek sides showed; for whenever we passed a good green cornfield, and that was often in this springtime, he turned off, and browsed as long as he might. Being an official person, with pay some months, perhaps years, in arrear, the zaptieh used his prescriptive right to feed at other people's expense. That there was any right or wrong in this, did not appear to him; and had not his father done so before him? Moreover, he was a pious Moslem, as his devotions, morning and evening, with exact lavations proved. His equipment was completed by a spotted red handkerchief, called "kefiyeh," laid over his low "tarbush," and over it wound a twist of black camel's hair, the regular Arab head-dress, and an admirable protection from the sun.

The zaptiehs belong to a large corps of mounted police or orderlies, who do a great deal of courier work for the Government, carry the post, and are supplied to travellers for protection along the high roads. The Government are obliged to give as many as are necessary to anyone who bears the proper passports, and travels along the public road. Doubtless they are not of much use in case of real danger; and

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in unfrequented places it is better to travel without an official, who only draws upon one the suspicion that the caravan is a valuable one; but in ordinary cases they guarantee that the Government accepts the responsibility for any loss or robbery, and ensure a polite, if unwilling reception into Kurdish villages. A good zaptieh may be extremely useful in small ways when evening comes, and may take the place of an extra servant, thoroughly earning the bakhshish which is his due.

Aleppo looked very picturesque, as we rode away in the morning light, with the beautiful mosque of S. Zechariah in front, and then the "Serai," or Government buildings, with the tower behind, lying round the high scarped rock of the citadel.

The country between Aleppo and the Euphrates is not ordinarily interesting or beautiful, except for the splendid ranges of snow all along the mountains of Kurdistan. Yet once it was a land of great cities, the land of North Syria, of Chalybonitis, of Augusta Euphratensis. We may still trace its former splendour in the mounds and ruins that lie scattered over the plains, and make the heart sigh for what it once was, and for what devastation has made it. Near and far these mounds, χώματα as Diodorus Siculus calls them, meet the eye, generally in fertile places near a stream, or not far from the foot of a hill, so that villages still nestle under them, for the pasture of the flocks, and the produce of a few ploughed acres. Tel-Azaz, near the river Afrin, Arfad to the north of Aleppo, Bashir near Nezib, the site of the famous battle between the Turks and the Egyptians in 1839, Birejik, and Baal Kiosk, the beautiful retreat of Jocelyn de Courtney, second Count of Edessa, on the Euphrates' banks, are but a few of the hundred mounds which mark the remains of ancient cities, once Syrian, then Roman, and now the shame of Turkey.*

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* These sites are treated fully by W. F. Ainsworth. "Euphrates Expedition," ii. 407. Azas-Arsace, a mound 250 yards in circuit. Important when the Saracens conquered Syria; held by Robert of Flanders. In an Appendix on Chalcidene, Ainsworth says: "In the time of the Romans and Palmyreans there was no great Syrian desert . . . . it would have no existence, were it not for the predatory dispositions of the Arabs, which, unrestrained by a feeble government, render sojourn or even travel insecure . . . . all tells of the past and present capabilities of this deserted region." ii. 423.

Climate, and the permanency of site that is so strong a feature of the East, to say nothing of the tendency of the Moslems, nay, even the Christians in these lands, to let a thing fall to ruins, but not often destroy it, have kept these mounds as they have been for hundreds of years. "Thou hast made of the city an heap, of the defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built."*

For an hour or two as we left Aleppo, the low hills were stony enough, except along the banks of the Kawaik,† where herds of countless sheep and cattle feed and drink. Cows these people set little store by, for pasture is hard to find in summer, nor is their milk counted so wholesome as that of goats. Sheep there are by thousands, not least valued for their wonderful tails, the fat of which is so fine that it may be used in place of butter for cooking. Their tails grow so large at times that small wheeled carts are made to support them, with shafts attached to the creatures' sides. Selection for breeding has, of course, emphasized this peculiarity. But far beyond all other creatures of the herd is the goat, the epitome of all that in an animal is worth living for; full of frolic when a baby, and knowing nothing but to jump off small eminences, and to cry mamma; conceited and pugnacious in youth; and in maturity solemn to a degree that is at times exasperating. After a long day's journey we would often sit and watch the children bring the herds in at evening, shrieking with delight as they seized the tail of this, and the hind leg of that bleating imp. Then came solemnly in the goats; and they were set upon by the same company of boys and girls, hunting them over roofs and through kitchens until all were milked by stalwart dames, and then allowed the solace of their offspring, about which there was a good deal of quarrelling among the mothers, until they had settled down, each with her own progeny. After a short respite the kids were again seized ruthlessly,

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* Not many years since, however, the builders in Aleppo began to take stone from the wonderful churches in the neighbourhood for their own use. It would be a pity if strong measures were not taken to prevent the continuance of this.

† Ainsworth i. 91, for the course and history of this river. The Chalus of Xenophon.

and cast into bell-shaped holes in the ground to work digestion's happy cure, until all goats and kids were collected, and driven into the inmost chambers of the houses for the night. In these villages the outer room is occupied by the men, an inner one by the women, and a third one by the cattle, who have thus to pass through the side of both rooms to reach their night quarters.

This work over, the children collected to stare at us, and the ladies to peep from behind corners, or prepare the evening meals, or watch their lords at play under the walls of the house.

These good people had been exercising the prescriptive right of Eastern males to do nothing in the spring, and those who had not been watching us were engaged in playing a dull game of knuckle bones, with eggs for stakes. These tall Kurds formed a picturesque group sitting under the mud walls, some in gay cloaks or "abbas," richly embroidered, others in short jackets, and all with the kefiyeh bound with a cord of camel's hair round their heads, and long white petticoats, with their boys standing round them. It was sad to see the diseases, especially of the skin and eyes, from which so many suffered, and towards which we could give little help, save by a general distribution of simple lotions. For the men it seemed a not unpleasant life, mind not considered, with plenty of wives and plenty of food; but for the women, their slaves, who knows? They have little dignity or pleasure in any sense, except with their children, while they have to do all the hard work. Of religion, there is little enough either for men or women, beyond the daily prayer-drill, led by the village "Mullah," on an open space some little way beyond the houses. The sight of Moslems at prayer is impressive when seen for the first time; but to see it day by day is to learn to doubt whether it be, for most of them, more than a mere exercise of drill; certainly it does not teach them not to lie, or cheat, or murder, nor, above all, to honour the wife as the weaker vessel.

Towards evening of the first day, we came through richer land, grassy, and with more ample crops, to the village of

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Akhterin. It was a desolate place, being built of sun-burnt brick, and destitute of trees, while the groups of conical roofs, constructed after the manner of the so-called treasuries of Mycenæ, gave it the appearance of a large rhubarb bed. We were conducted through a filthy yard to the guest-room of the head man's house, a fine, new room, with a platform on each side of the entrance, on which to sit and smoke or stand and pray. On the opposite side of the yard, a huge fire blazed in a corner just outside the stable, and on the third side, were the rooms occupied by the family and their various herds. Everywhere, except in our diwan, mud prevailed, making very necessary the large wooden clogs that all donned to cross the yard. Fortunately, the air was, as yet, too cold for mosquitos and other insects, so that we enjoyed repose unbroken, except by the music of donkeys and innumerable cocks.

Our room was large and freshly decorated with rough carving and gaudy paint of red and green upon all the woodwork, and gay weapons of antique design ranged upon the walls, with tinsel ornaments round a mirror, the most distorting it has been my fortune to behold. Near the door, a wooden balustrade divided off a space some two feet below the level of the rest of the room, where Katirjis and women might sit and gaze upon their lords. Down the two sides of the upper portions two long felt rugs were laid, on which we sat and took our ease until the appearance of supper. The sole architectural feature of the room was a large round fireplace, built half in, half outside the wall, serving well enough in calm weather, but in a wind—well, the smoke did drive the swallows out before bed-time came. There were windows, but very small and high up, for safety's sake, so that all the light there was came in at the door, which, as always in this hospitable land, stood open from morning until night. No one is refused entrance, who wishes to inspect, rob, or ask rude questions of the traveller, drinking his coffee and smoking his cigarette. Supper was a simple meal, hard-boiled eggs, bread, sometimes milk, every fourth day a starved old hen, and a little wine, so long as good Madame Azar's Aleppo

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store lasted, after which we had to rely upon the scant provisions of the Kurdish villages.

Next morning, starting early on an ample breakfast of hot milk and bread, we soon overtook a party of Armenians waiting to join our caravan. Great sallow-faced men with heavy jaws and aquiline noses starting straight from their foreheads, bushy eyebrows and coarse black hair, they did not prepossess us in favour of their race. They all rode horses, either lame or with frightful sores upon their backs, perched upon a mountain of rugs and mattresses, like inverted snails set upon their horses. Coats, kettles, tin pots, and other utensils hung from every available point of the animals, or were piled upon the saddle so that the whole erection reached not far from ten feet high.

We were passing through country far richer than the previous day, green valleys and hill slopes covered with anemones and periwinkles. Down by the streams countless goats and sheep fed, tended by shepherds of the old poetic type. Over a green slope came an aged herdsman, ugly and brown, seated on a tiny donkey that listened wrapt to the mournful strains of the reed pipe he played. Then in procession came two great yellow dogs, crop-eared and solemn; and next, with the cares of many generations on his neck, the father of the flock, followed close by a crowd of goats and sheep and lambs and kids bleating fit to break their silly hearts and drowning the quaint vagaries of the old man's pipe. Further on was another scene of patriarchal memories, a well with the stone rolled off the mouth, and children pelting the cattle with stones to let the goats and sheep drink their fill. Men were drawing the water in great skins to pour into the troughs, while women saw fair play done among the beasts. "And hither were all the flocks gathered; and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place."

In the evening we were to sup with our Armenian companions. The less said of that meal the better, except that we enjoyed one admirable dish of fine wheat boiled in milk. But

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for the rest eggs swimming in brilliant yellow grease, none too sweet, with sardines, and above all sardine oil, with the flavour of the tin upon it, how they enraptured our hosts!

Day followed day monotonously enough, nor did the character of the country change much on the west side of the river. The weather seemed set for an eternal summer, and everything looked its best in the springtime of the year. Only as we started at four or five o'clock in the morning did we feel the cold, and caused much merriment among the Kurdish villagers by our strange wide-awake hats, and the gay rugs with which we kept ourselves warm. But as soon as the sun was up we were plunged into summer warmth and, hoisting umbrellas, began to look out eagerly for wayside wells.

As we mounted the ridges that overlook the Euphrates valley by gradual stages, the heat grew more intense than ever, until my katirji, "excellent minion" that he was, as he "mounted and marched" just before me on his tiny donkey, fell fast asleep. The heat overcame the donkey too, so that suddenly, without any warning, she gave way and precipitated the big man on his nose. His violent language was soon drowned by the laughter of his fellow katirjis, delighted at the discomfiture of a rival: and it was some time before the caravan recovered its equilibrium, and was prepared to descend the slopes that lead down to the river shore.

Thousands of goats and sheep were feeding along these hills; and on the sandy shore were cranes and ibis, and turtles basking by the pools into which they were ready to slide at the sudden approach of a foe. The western shore is about four hundred yards in breadth; but on the east the rocks rise sheer above the water up to the platform on which the town of Birejik is built.* This first view of Mesopotamia, with its ancient frontier town, the Zeugma of the Lower Empire, was exceedingly beautiful. The early evening light illumined the massive ruins of the castle towards the north,

* Ainsworth (i. 214) gives an admirable description of this town, as of all the country between it and Antioch. The sculptures in the castle described by Badger (i. 351) are no longer to be seen.

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jutting out upon a crest of chalk into the broad stream, and southwards the long line of houses crowded in between the water and the hills. Lower down among some palm trees stood a graceful little minaret with a group of mosques and lattice-windowed houses looking out upon the river. Everywhere there were trees, and higher up a cluster of tall pines, to which a flock of green ibis, that had been holding council, on the western shore, disturbed by our approach had flown off to watch events from a safer and more dignified seclusion. They, like the storks, hold an immemorial charter of protection from the reverence of the Mohammedan inhabitants of Turkey. Birejik is one of the most picturesque and interesting places in Mesopotamia. It was a little way below this town that the Euphrates Valley Expedition started on its course, that was at one time to have opened a new and important page of our Eastern history. But it seems that that was all a dream, to die away within half a score of years.

It took nearly an hour to collect our scattered caravan upon the shore, ready to embark upon the most antiquely fashioned barge this side of India. Half-a-dozen of these huge arks were moored below the town, two of which soon made their way across the stream to the place where we were standing. The bows were lofty and massive, with a platform upon which stood a man with an immense pole shaped at the end for use as a rudder, and fastened at the nose of the ship. Embarkation was a work of some difficulty, for, although the beam ends were cut down nearly level with the water, yet the stern could only come within two or three yards of the shore, and everything, including the baggage mules, had to wade and then make a gigantic leap or scramble up on to the platform. One man seized the head, and another the tail of each successive beast, the one to pull the other to keep him straight; everyone shouting and getting very wet, until with a desperate effort and all the skin off his knees, the animal plunged into the barge. The donkeys, who could scarcely do more than see over the bar, came off the worst; but my katirji carried his in! Last of all the zaptieh, who in his

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official soul thought to give himself airs, dashed into the water like a second Cæsar, determined to scale the barge or die; but his horse, either having eaten too much green corn, or wishing to spite the man, missed hold of the beam and getting entangled in the ropes, tumbled straight back, and left his valiant rider in the stream clinging to the barge. This damped his fine spirit, and he submitted to be helped up by the two murky half-clad Armenians who guided the craft behind. We humbler people were borne upon the backs of other mermen, and deposited in doubtful safety between the hoofs of our horses and the deep sea of the "fourth river which is Euphrates."

It was like a dream, this passing of the Euphrates, with all the thoughts conjured up by the wonderful stream; Abraham's flocks may have crossed here, or Senacherib passed by here with his hosts on the way to Jerusalem, and many a Roman Emperor, and Persian King, Saracen Amir, and Crusading Count; but the first was the passing, on which one preferred to think, the passing of the great Patriarch, to whom all the country looks back as to its father, the man of peace and of submissive will, the "Friend of God."

After a swing across and down the stream, we were towed up by the Arabs who stood on the middle shallows, and then swung right across down the full stream a hundred yards below the landing place, to which we were again towed and rowed, by men on shore and others at the helm, one with the great rudder, and a second with a monstrous punt pole, and both with countless imprecations, while the rowers cried, "Ya Allah, ya Allah,"* keeping time to the oar strokes. It was a perilous voyage, especially as the zaptieh's horse had elected to make himself conspicuous, kicking all the other horses, and ridding himself of his saddle, which fell into the foul bottom of the boat. But

* I think I never heard a Moslem of the lower orders speak, but every other sentence contained the name of the Almighty. The boasted regard for His power has a dark as well as a bright side, and a Christian cannot walk through any Turkish town without being shocked a hundred times a day by the reckless use of this name.

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at last it was all over, and, with sundry bakhshish, we escaped up to M. l'Inspecteur's office, where coffee and cigarettes awaited us.

After sitting in silence for more than an hour on very hard official benches, the never-to-be-hurried Turkish clerk entered with many salams and grovelling expressions of regard, and some business was transacted. We retired to our khan to settle for the night, until an invitation came to dine at the bureau. This was pleasing news, nor did the dinner, *à la Turca* of course, disappoint us. We enjoyed, for the first time, real *poisson d'Euphrate* and rice pilaf, arrowroot, and chicken, crowned by a lordly dish of leben, or curdled milk, a dish for heroes on a hot day. All this we ate without knives or forks, sitting on small string-covered stools at a huge tin tray placed upon another such. The postprandial wash followed, very desirably, and, last of all, very delicious coffee and unlimited cigarettes.

After sitting another hour in polite silence we were glad to bid good-night and find our way, under the guidance of our new zaptieh with his lantern, to our khan. No man of any position walks abroad at night without a lantern, varying in height according to his station, from one to three feet. It consists of a lamp placed within a huge case of glass and tin, and is carried almost on the ground by a servant preceding his master. It is a necessary precaution in such rocky streets as those of most Eastern towns, and explains why the Psalmist spoke of "Thy word a lantern unto my *feet*." We were not long in falling asleep, although in the middle of the night I woke to hear M. l'Inspecteur's katirji complaining to the moon how the custom-house officer at the ferry had robbed him of thirty pounds Turkish for conveying gunpowder contraband from Aleppo to Mardin. When accused he was quite calm, and paid the money down like a man. But reflection brought sorrow in its train; not that he could not afford the money as well as most muleteers in Turkey, but he had been outwitted, and, all said and done, thirty pounds is a good round sum in Turkish gold. In consequence, he never recovered his temper for the remainder of our journey.

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The rest of our company, the five Armenians, were all drunk, having taken advantage of an early arrival to "make keif" in a liberal way during the evening. They had thus celebrated the first stage of our journey, and inaugurated the morrow's start to traverse the country of the common father, Abraham.

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CHAPTER III.

Birejik to Diarbekr.

More than usual bustle attended our departure from Birejik, not only on account of our katirji's ill-humour, but of the very steep road that led up to the table-land above the river. The road, atrocious in itself, was rendered more so by the network of streamlets that sought their way down to the "Father of Rivers." It was occupied by crowds of quarrelsome magpies, and a company of lordly Arabs, travelling westward with long strings of camels and hungering after our wealth. The cold air above, and a crying sense of emptiness within, combined to make us thoroughly miserable. But as the sun arose and we began again to descend to smoother lands, matters improved, and the true beauty of the province of Osroëne, the kingdom of the Abgari of Edessa, began to spread itself before us.

The country was, if anything, richer than before, and the outlines of the snow mountains to the north still more beautiful. But, as afternoon came on, and we were within a few miles of our destination for the night, down came the rain, with the suddenness that characterizes a break-up of fine weather in the East. In ten minutes, those who had no mackintoshes were wet through, and we had scarcely time to dry ourselves in the sun that blazed out as soon as the rain was over, when we found ourselves at the village of Shishan, and soon after sitting round a blazing fire with bowls of rich, bubbling goat's milk before us.

We were loth to leave these admirable quarters next

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day, and start on an eight hours' ride, during which the rain poured without ceasing. It is impossible to imagine anything more dreary than sliding along hour after hour at a walking pace, while the rain soaked slowly but surely through one's clothes. The country for miles was enveloped in a grey mist, through which appeared dimly, as at a great distance, the other members of the caravan. All day long a gloomy silence reigned, save for the monotonous patter of the rain, and the sound of hoofs sliding in the mud. We rode over low stony hills with intervals of rich pasture between, and covered with carpets of flowers, orchids, anemones, periwinkles, narcissus, and iris, which would have made the journey on a fine day really enjoyable. At mid-day, we rode down into the loveliest valley that we had yet traversed. At the bottom was a small lake, round which crowded, for a mid-day drink, countless sheep, cattle, and horses. Frogs, too, in myriads, croaked at our unwelcome intrusion, and multitudes of magpies, sparrows, finches, butterflies, and moths, every imaginable kind of creature, made the place alive with their protestations, a veritable eastern crowd. The sun came out for a few minutes upon a scene almost tropical in its brilliancy and multitudinous variety of life. So it appeared in spring. Were one to return in the late summer months there would be, but for the whispering willows of the marsh, a silence like that of the Dead Sea.

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But we, being very wet, and the day not being one on which to enjoy watery places, were only anxious to reach a dry floor, and a good fire. Yet, with the ill luck of a wet day, we took twice the usual time to find quarters that night, being directed first to a wretched hovel, scarcely ten feet square, and smelling exclusively of cattle. Our next essay was crowned with success, and we found a fine new diwan, furnished with large windows, and an altogether unrivalled fire-place, to which we were glad to escape out of the rain.

It was a stormy sun with which we rose the next morning, crossed by strong bars of black and purple, and gilding murky clouds above it. But we had only one shower all day, although it was a thunder shower, with pelting hail

and rain, that lasted half an hour. The atmosphere seemed very clear, but everything looked dull and flat under the direct glare of the sun, with no shadows, and nothing to relieve the monotony except the lovely flowers that clothed every hill. It was to be a very wet spring, with numerous thunderstorms, lasting right through May, and we had little enjoyment of any kind for the remainder of our journey, while our poor Armenian companions seemed still worse off, for their bedding was very insufficiently protected. Arriving at Karajerun, we found the Agha of the village engaged in building himself a fine new house of two storeys, with balconies for evening use. One of these rooms he gave up to us, and we reached the door by riding over the roof of another house, and running the gauntlet of half-a-dozen fierce dogs. Outside the room was a group of splendid-looking Kurds round a small boy, a son of the Agha, who had just come in with his crop-eared greyhound, carrying a fine pair of blue hares. He was swelling with pride, and impatient to see his father, who was conducting us to our quarters. He received all the praise he wished for, and soon started off to catch more hares on the other side of the village. His father looked proud, too, and turning to us said, "His mother is dead, the one I loved, and I fear he may be captured if he goes too far; but I dare not send another with him; he would be angry if another shared his sport. Allah guard his head!" However, the child returned safely before dark, bringing another hare, and spent the evening nestling by his father near our fire. The Agha, in his zeal to make our room cheerful, had ordered a fire to be lit, but the wind being in a wrong quarter, and there being no windows, it was soon full of smoke. The fire was of the animal fuel, so largely used in villages where wood is scarce, of which the smoke is peculiarly thick and unpleasant. It much disconcerted the swallows, who had engaged spring quarters in the beams of the newly-built room, and made matters so much worse by their excited chatter that no one could hear his own proposals for remedying the state of affairs, to say nothing of those of his neighbour. At last a man of action arose, and suggested

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that the two large stones closing the holes that served for windows in the wall should be knocked out, upon which out came smoke and swallows in a procession that lasted nearly half an hour. We entered and took possession, but, in spite of the hospitality of the worthy Agha, we did not sleep very well that night; there were too many swallows, not to mention smaller creatures, about.

The Agha, whose house was, as usual among the Kurds, the meeting place for the whole village after the sun went down, entertained us hospitably, while a regular succession of small coffee-cups was handed round by one of his sons. In these rooms there is always a professional coffee maker sitting in the middle serving out the beverage to anyone who comes in, in number according to his degree. It was eleven o'clock before the company broke up, the Agha retiring to his "harim," and only a few strangers remaining in one room. It is a rule in these villages that every traveller can claim hospitality at the house of the chief man, who receives a certain amount from the other men of the village to maintain the hospitality.

The next day after a ride in the rain over terribly heavy ground, with the thermometer at 45°, and our tempers nowhere, we arrived at the town of Sewerek, of all places I visited the very dirtiest and most odorous, always however excepting, in the latter character, Mardin, that Cologne of Mesopotamia. But the town contained several good khans, in one of which, near the market-place, we established ourselves, fortunate to have a good room, with glazed windows, and the prospect of a more civilized meal than those to which we had been lately accustomed. At this time I did not know that there were Old Syrians in the town, and therefore did not avail myself of the hospitality which in the absence of their Bishop they pressed upon me at their church on my return journey.

In November I brought a letter from Diarbekr. The priest, however, and some of the chief Syrians, entertained me admirably, putting the Bishop's diwan at my disposal, and providing an excellent supper. At the evening service, I was

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a little startled during the singing of psalms to see the priest suddenly dart out from his place, and summarily expel a Moslem boy, who had come in to mock. Whether he would have stayed to pray or not I do not know; but he at any rate had not the chance. The Bishop had come some months since from Midhiat, a large village in Tebel Tur, in order to superintend the building of this church, and was to return as soon as it was completed.

The Qaimakam, or governor of the town, on whom we called in order to obtain a fresh zaptieh, was an intelligent-looking Turk, dressed "à la Franga," with his lower garments attached in the usual precarious fashion. He sat in a large diwan, attended by a great number of servants and soldiers, and was inclined to be more or less polite in consideration of M. l'Inspecteur's office.

But to return to our khan with the glazed windows. As we sat there waiting for some supper, various persons entered to transact business with my companion. Clerks and inspectors came, all equally unpromising to look upon. One came in who had an eye so forbidding that I felt nervous. M. l'Inspecteur was as usual immovable, and, bearing the glare of the eye with a fortitude worthy of the occasion, motioned the man to a corner of our impromptu diwan. He walked forward with a sickly obeisance, shed his shoes after the manner of a snake, and sliding down on to his heels, sat with a vacant stare awaiting his chief's commands. The latter was an honest man, and inspired fear in the bosom of this clerk, a true type of many a minor official, mean, cruel and cringing. Others came in to sit and talk, until our supper arrived; but none were so ill-favoured in face and manner as this fellow.

There are the remains of a castle and a fine mosque in Sewerek; but we had no opportunity to visit them, nor was my companion interested in anything of the kind. So we retired soon after supper to sleep, in view of an early start next day for another eight hours in the rain.

About twenty miles south-west of Sewerek we passed a large stone carved on its upper surface with a fine Maltese

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cross, a relic of the days when there were Christian Counts of Edessa. Just outside Mardin, again, there is a fine old Saracenic building, vaulted and pillared, seemingly a fountain house; and across the wall of one room is a true old Plantagenet leopard, painted in black colour, some eight feet long, a fine memorial of the days when the cross was in the ascendant in this land.

In the same district we saw remains of Roman pavement, and a great many ancient stone wells and reservoirs, pointing to former civilization of the province.

Leaving Sewerek, we passed out over a country of black soil, well planted with wheat and grapes. Further out, where habitations ceased, flowers began to abound, marsh tulips, and purple orchids lining every stream. The black stone, of which the town is built, cropped up everywhere, and the way was enlivened by multitudes of lovely birds. There were numbers of the graceful little owls from Sewerek, attracting notice by the lovely rose tinge of their wings, black and white tits, great hawks, yellow, white, and black, beside a host of wagtails and hoopoes, and a small bird not unlike a blackcap, but very distinctly marked with white and black. Down by every stream was a heron or two, on every tree or ruined building a crane or stork, and always before us marched a goodly company of crested larks and magpies, with a dozen more beside. But there was little to enjoy in all this under an unceasing downpour of rain, and all we could think of was, how much further remained of the road to Diarbekr.

The road from Sewerek to Diarbekr is not a little thought of by the great men of the earth in these parts, and adequately represents its class. All that can be said of it is that it is not the worst in Turkey. Stones the largest and roundest that could be found, collected from all round by the forced and unpaid labour of the village people, were laid promiscuously in muddy weather upon what was once a good caravan track, so that it was hard to know whether to follow a track upon the wilderness of boulders where each horse placed his foot exactly where the one in front placed his, or to wade through the marsh below. An especially aggravating

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feature of this road was, that in places where a little engineering was required, either to cut through a piece of rock, or carry a bridge over a ravine or marsh, the good builders of it lost heart, and, like a ghost that has been never laid, or only badly laid, the road kept disappearing and coming up again at irregular intervals. Imagine such a road over the dreariest of hillsides, the lower spurs of the Karaja-dagh, where barren trees clutched the thin soil, and the grey rocks lay about like bones pushing through a half-starved horse; where the shrubs looked as if they grew there to spite each other, the very evil spirits of dry oaks, withered, bristling with a few scraggy branches just to boast their nakedness. All this was a scene for Childe Roland:

> "I think I never saw
> Such starved, ignoble Nature; nothing throve.
> For flowers—as well expect a cedar grove!
> But cockle, spurge, according to their law
> Might propagate their kind, with none to awe,
> You'd think: a burr had been a treasure trove."

There were two halts between Sewerek and Diarbekr, of which the first, Kainak, called from its boundless seas of mud, was, of all the villages I lodged in, the foulest and most ill-provided. It provided, however, three additions to our party; the one a very solemn young man, shoeless, with lank black hair and red silk trousers, accompanied by a tiny donkey, and an ancient man, his father. It was a nice little donkey, and he was a nice old man, always looking at his watch for prayer time, which he observed most diligently. But the young man was very dull; I think he had once cut off the donkey's tail in a rage, and never forgiven himself. Regularly as clockwork he raised a long metal key, and smote the little creature on the quarters, and each time the ass gave a surprised reproving leap, as if it was his first experience of the key, and subsided again into his former measured tread.

The last night was spent at a large khan, five hours from Diarbekr. It was full of men and beasts of all kinds, amongst whom were some Nestorian priests on the way to Urmi.

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They had been to Aleppo, and were glad to meet an Englishman, before whom to parade the few words they had learned of the language from the English missionaries to their Church. They joined us for the last day, with another man, an unfortunate with the whole of one side paralysed. We gave him what we could to eat, and helped him along a little. I saw him a week later in Mardin, while I was buying some embroideries. It was a heart-rending sight; but there are many such in Turkey, where such poor creatures "afflicted of God" get little sympathy, being left to wither in the streets, or find a last home, for some petty theft, in prison.

Just as we were riding over the last hill into Diarbekr—and a glorious view of the Black city, the Kara-Amid, appeared across the plain—we met two other miserable men, hurrying towards Sewerek. They begged some alms, and, having got a few paras, hastened on, until a happy thought seemed to strike the zaptieh. He rode after them, and, having asked some questions, finally assured himself that they were prisoners escaped from Diarbekr. The righteous indignation from the man of office rose to bursting; down he bore upon them, knocked them off the road, and threatened to whip them to death if they did not immediately follow him into the town. Down they went on their knees, with the result that he nearly rode over them, and then fled. He made as though he would shoot them, then remembering that we were by, muttered that he would telegraph from the next village to Sewerek for police to catch them. Poor wretches, we hoped they got away.

We rode slowly down towards a rich plain, along an aqueduct bringing the fresh water of Karajadagh down to the city. Some good Pasha had made this channel, or, more probably, restored a Roman work, covering it in with stone. But thirsty travellers had broken it open, or, perhaps, wanton Kurds, for every fifty yards it was open to the air, and used not only for drinking, but the daily lavations of the Moslem villagers. We were at the end of our journey, and glad of it, considering the rain and the difficulty which I had in com-

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municating with any member of the caravan, from M. l'Inspecteur down to my great katirji.

Half way between Sewerek and the Euphrates a road leads southwards from Karajerun to Urfa. Being anxious to visit this city, hallowed in the minds of Syrians and Moslems alike as the home of their father Abraham, I determined on my journey homewards in November to choose this route, rather than that by which I had travelled in the spring; the rather as it was the seat of one of the chief Bishops of the Syrian Church. I shall, perhaps, be excused, therefore, if I turn out of my way to give some short account of this most interesting and beautiful city before finishing my journey to Diarbekr.

From Karajerun to Urfa was a long and tedious ride, made more so by the early November rains, which had transformed a hard and level caravan road to the semblance of a ploughed field. Our katirji was, moreover, a bad-tempered man, and loudly complained of the heavy loads, rendered doubly heavy by the soaking rain. For the last two hours, during which we ploughed through dense mud up the hill that leads to Urfa, he never ceased from a low undertone of imprecations on our heads and the heads of all European travellers. Riding for twelve hours in such weather over such ground was certainly trying to any man's temper, ours no less than his; but there was no help for it but to draw meagre comfort from the "Kismat" of Islam.

Passing a large encampment of camels we seemed to thread interminable gardens before we found the Convent of St. George, whither we had been directed. Late in the evening we arrived and had some difficulty in awaking the old gate-keeper, who slept in a room some way from the door, and in revenge for the disturbance we caused, showed us a room without volunteering any offer of supper. We made up some sort of a fire, and, contenting ourselves with such food as we had with us, retired early, to sleep off the effects of a very tiring day.

The following day was Sunday, so, by force of habit, waking early, I went into the church, where I found an old friend,

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one of the monks of Deir-el-Za'aferan, the monastery in which I spent the summer, commencing the celebration of the Eucharist. It was a fine church, newly re-built among the gardens just outside the town to the south-west, where was once a large monastery. The only adornment of the church consisted in some good coloured glass behind the altar; all else was white and bare.* The congregation was small, as the church was at some distance from the town, and most of the Syrians preferred to attend the large church in the monastery within the town. There was, however, one little group of worshippers which attracted my attention—half a dozen small boy-deacons, in long blue tunics, a uniform of those who attended at the school by this church. As soon as service, which lasted three hours, was over, we were conducted by the chief deacon, a large man in an astrakan coat, to see the Bishop, whose diwan was attached to the church within the town walls.

This church of the Syrians in Urfa is a large building, and has a considerable number of rooms attached to it, some of which form the house of the Bishop, and others apartments for clergy and visitors. Morning service had been finished only a short time, and the diwan was, in consequence, full of people paying the regular Sunday visit to the Bishop. From a broad balcony, reached by a handsome stone staircase, and with a fine balustrade of Italian style, we entered a pleasant room, to which the gaily-papered walls gave a most unusual appearance of comfort. At the end of the room, seated on a low diwan was the Bishop, Georgios, an old man with a long white beard, and the most kindly and intelligent face that one could wish to see. A grey Angora cat sat on his knee, enjoying the high honour of reposing on his lordship's silk Sunday robe; and a busy hum of talking was going on among the few priests and laymen who sat at the top of the room. After

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* This church was built about fifty years ago, and is peculiar in having the women's gallery over the west door (so built at Dr. Badger's suggestion), instead of in one of the aisles.

the usual formalities were over, and it was understood that I had been the Patriarch's guest at Mardin, the flow of conversation continued.

There were few people whom I met among the Syrians who combined so much charm of manner with real intelligence and kindliness as this old Bishop. He was a great favourite with the Patriarch, and always has taken his place as his representative when the latter has been abroad. Urfa is, moreover, a more civilised and modern place than either Mardin or Mosul, of which the evidence is manifest in the behaviour of its inhabitants.

After an admirable breakfast, the Bishop deputed one of his younger deacons to take us to see the town, one of the most picturesque in interior Turkey.

Being built half way up the Jebel Nimrud, on a hill above a rushing torrent, it never lacks water, or the sound of the perpetual fountain that gained for it in the old days the name Callirrhoë. Water in basins, in drinking places, in small mills, water in the torrents, in the springs, and down the sides of streets, everywhere is heard the same bubbling sound so dear to Oriental ears. And with it are trees innumerable, great forest trees in the gardens, with walnuts and pomegranates, and fruit of all sorts; gardens everywhere, within and without the town; and, a thing seldom to be seen in an Eastern town, the large court-yard of the Serai grass-grown, with seats and spreading trees on either side. The bazars, too, and the streets seem all to share in the charm that water lends; nowhere else are there such vaulted corridors, tall and airy, for the market, such splendid caravanserais, built by some munificent old Turk, of an order since passed away; and where, above all, can be matched the exquisite Mosque of "Ibrahim-el-Khalil"—Abraham, the Friend of God—with its stately minaret and marble court-yards reflected in the silent, shady pool?

The city is walled, but the walls, which are in circuit between two and three miles, do not enclose the citadel, nor many other public buildings. Masses of rock terraces appear all round the gardens outside the town, and among the

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vineyards cemeteries stretch far in every direction, bearing witness to the antiquity of the town. In one of these vineyards is a spring remarkable for the way in which at certain times it gushes out with great roaring and foam; it supplies the stream Daisan, which runs in the deep ravine in the middle of the city, and even in summer forms somewhat of a torrent.

From the citadel above the town may be seen a glorious view over the lower spurs of the hills toward the range of Abd-el-Aziz. There is little of interest left in this building, except two columns with Corinthian capitals, and an old Syriac inscription, containing a reference to Hadrian. The outside is more imposing, especially the moat, cut out of the living rock, said by Dr. Badger to be 90ft. wide by 250ft. deep.

The great mosque of Urfa, the "Ulur Jamisi," had, like the mosque at Diarbekr, been once a Christian church, of which the nave has been turned into a courtyard. In the latter were many capitals and pillars of Roman workmanship, some ranged round a fountain of later date, and a tall hexagonal belfry at the top of a square tower. It is now used as a minaret for the mosque, and is an object of great beauty, especially the hexagon, which seems to belong to a later date than the tower, perhaps to that of the Crusades.

But by far the most beautiful building in Urfa is the mosque of Abraham. Down below the western wall of the citadel, over the side of which could be seen the pillars, forming, report says, part of the machine with which Nimrod hurled Abraham down into the furnace he kindled at the spot, is a basin, built of beautiful white marble, some eighty yards long. The water, supplied by springs a little to the north, is of exquisite clearness, and filled with, as one traveller who counted them asserts, twenty thousand and one fat carp, descendants of the fish that the great Patriarch loved! All round are gardens of pomegranates, from which the pool is called the Basin of Pomegranates, and by the water's edge is a broad paved way, on which the pious may stand well provided with maize by the ever

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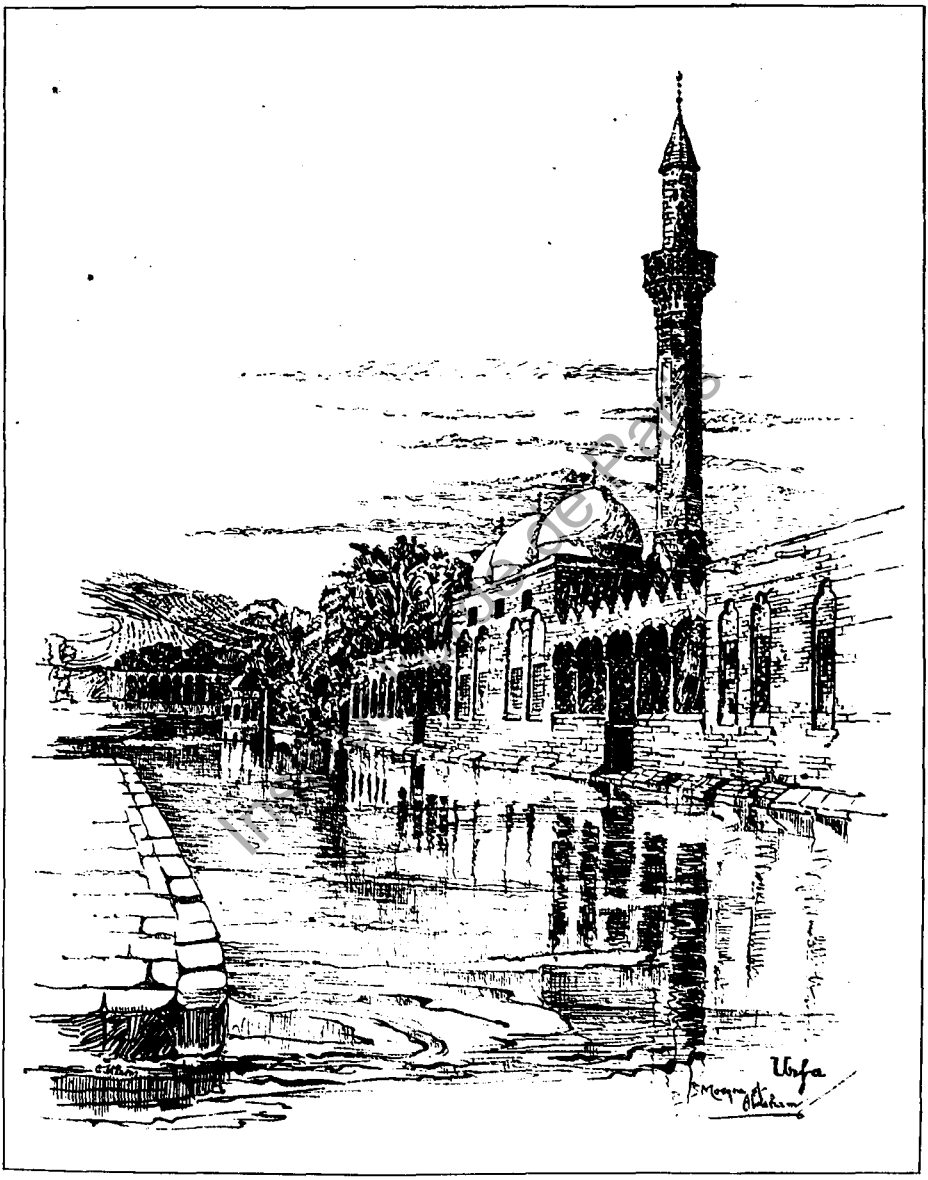
Urfa

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present vendors, and pay honour to the "Friend," by feeding his fish.*

The great beauty of the Saracenic front to the mosque, with its exquisite minarets and light arches, was further increased by the groves of beautiful trees, just turning to autumn tints, and the delightful sense of shade and coolness. A graceful little kiosk stands at one end of the pool, and is connected with the mosque by the buildings in which the teachers and students of the place live.

The city contains about four thousand families of Armenians, five hundred of Old Syrians, five hundred American, and a few Latin converts. It is within the borders of the Armenian country, and there is constant friction between them and the Turkish officials, whose suspicions of the Armenians have been, during the last few years, carried to an almost intolerable point.† It was most remarkable to notice the change in freedom of speech and general toleration of the Christians as one came from Mardin—practically a Syrian town—to Urfa, where Armenians form the bulk of the Christian population. This has its effect on the Syrians, whom I found here far more nervous and less ready openly to greet a stranger than the inhabitants of cities further south. Nor were they so willing to show the books and other things contained in their fine new church. The church is dedicated to S. Peter and S. Paul, and is much larger than most, being, like that of the Armenians, built more after the Western plan, with naves and aisles quite separate. In the Armenian church is a picture which the deacon hesitatingly shows as that which was sent by our Lord to Abgarus.‡ It is a printed handkerchief, with the head of Christ, of the late Renaissance type.

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* Ainsworth considers these fish a remnant of the old fish-worship of Syria. It is not impossible that the Christian symbolism of the fish is connected with this worship. i. 199.

† This is strongly borne out by Dr. Badger, i., 329, who gives a rather full account of his visit to Urfa.

‡ The original is said by tradition to have been sold by the Saracens to the Court of Constantinople for 12,000 pounds weight of silver and the redemption of 200 Moslem captives, and a perpetual truce for the province of Edessa.

More interesting is the picture of the Holy Virgin and Child, richly framed, and said to have been painted by S. Thaddæus, one of the Seventy. These two churches are among the very finest built in modern times in the East, and their size and general character bears witness to the improvement in the general position of the Christians under the rule of the Porte.*

When I had seen the whole town, calling on the various church dignitaries of the place, I returned to the Bishop for supper, and, having bade farewell with all the formalities such a process demands in the East, retired to the church without the walls, where we were lodging. It was a pleasant place, with its gardens and fountains, and we were sorry to have to prepare for an early start towards Birejik.

Urfa may justly claim to be one of the most ancient cities of the world. For years the home of Abraham and Laban, it rose again into importance fifteen hundred years later as a Macedonian town under the name of Antiochœa ad Callirrhoen.†

"And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from the Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran and dwelt there."

About twenty-five miles south-west of Urfa, and ten miles west of Harran, is the district of Seruj, well watered—a tempting spot upon the highway of Assyrians, Greeks, and Romans, known later to the Romans as Batnæ, or Batna Sergi, the name Batnæ meaning, in its Syriac original, "the meeting of waters in a valley." Remains of colossal lions point to its connection with Assyrian kings. But the district

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* This remark does not have reference to the Armenians generally. The Imperial policy with regard to them depends on local influences, and on influences not connected with a general policy towards Christians.

† Ainsworth, ii., 414, discusses, in a most interesting appendix, the whole question of the Fatherland of Abraham and his genealogy, with the significance of the names scattered about this locality (cp. also Badger, i., 331).

is perhaps most interesting as bearing the name of the grandfather of Terah. Terah was the father of Nahor, and we find in Genesis xxiv. 10, that Haran is called the city of Nahor. Now Haran was the name of Abram's brother, and "Haran died before his father, Terah, in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees" (Gen. xi. 26).

There are, therefore, three sites—Urfa, Harran, and Seruj—all bearing names that would lead one to identify this country with the country where the Patriarchs settled after leaving their ancient home in Chaldea. It is generally considered that the original Ur of the Chaldees was in the land of Babylonia, and it has been identified with Warka in Chaldea, as well as with Mukayir, "the place of bitumen," on the right bank of the Euphrates, for we read how, "journeying from the East, they found a plain in the land of Shinar . . . . and they had brick for stone, and bitumen had they for mortar." (Gen. xi. 2.) And it was there seemingly that Babel was built.

Apart from the identity of the names, local tradition is very strong in identifying "Abraham's fatherland" with the district round Urfa. Here are the fish beloved by him; here it was that Nimrod cast him into the furnace. At a spot not far below Birejik the Arabs assert that their great Father lost many of his cattle in crossing the Euphrates. Again, in the Old Testament narrative, it was to the city of Nahor that Abram sent his servant to seek a wife for Isaac (Gen. xxiv. 10), and hither it was that Jacob came, when he dwelt with Laban, Rebekah's brother, in the land of Padan-Aram, or Mesopotamia (Gen. xxviii. 7). When he fled from Laban's wrath he passed over the great river, the Perath, or the Phrat, as the Arabs still call the Euphrates; and Laban pursued him seven days to Gilead, which is actually some 300 miles on the direct way to the "South Country," that is, the country south of Jerusalem, where Jacob dwelt. Now 300 miles is just about the distance a man in great haste would be likely to travel in seven days. Again, it was from Padan-Aram that Jacob came to Shalem, in the land of Canaan (Gen. xxxiii. 18). Thus it is that Dr. Ainsworth concludes that

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Urfa still marks the site of the home of Abraham, and thus we find that Eastern tradition is a good guide in regard to the history related in the books of the Old Testament.*

Of the Macedonian and Roman occupations of Urfa, or Edessa,† as its name became, little is known, except that near here, at Charræ, almost certainly the same as Haran, great disaster befel the Roman arms under Crassus. Edessa became (A.D. 14) the seat of Abgarus the Second, who rebuilt the city. The first Abgarus lived at Abgar Shat, which has been thought to be Nisibis, and was the man who contributed to the defeat of Crassus. It was his successor, of whom Eusebius relates the widely-received story of a correspondence with our Lord. Eusebius relates of S. Thaddæus, "that after Christ's resurrection from the dead and his His ascent into heaven, Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles, under divine inspiration, sent Thaddæus, who was also numbered among the seventy disciples, to Edessa as a preacher and evangelist of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Caracalla sent the last of the princely house of Abgarus in chains to Rome. Later the same city saw the capture of Valerian by Sapur the First. In Heraclius's day it fell into the hands of the Saracens, and has remained subject to the Moslems ever since, with the exception of the forty years during which it formed a principality of the Crusaders under Baldwin in 1097 A.D. While the wave of conquest swept the Saracens westwards, Edessa fell, in 1144, before Zenghis, Prince of the Atabaks of Syria, who celebrated his victory by a frightful slaughter, thereby rousing the spirit of horror that inspired the second Crusade. Again, it was the scene of devastation, on account of its prominent position, and was

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* It is remarkable in connection with the number of Yazidis in this district, that the Arabs and other natives hold the tradition that it was Job's home. The Bir-Ayub, near the south gate, is a "ziyarah," or place of pilgrimage; and it is mentioned in the Book of Job that he was plundered by the Sabians (Job i. 15) or Chaldeans (cp. chapter on the Yazidis). The name Ur—fire or light (cp. Isaiah xxiv. 15), supports this, referring, no doubt, to the ancient fires of the Chaldeans. There is at Haran also the ruin of a temple to the moon.

† Edessa became a Roman colony in 216, under Severus.

ravaged by Hulagu the Mogul, and the terrible Tamerlane the Tartar. With its final conquest by the Seljukian Selim, who restored the ancient name of Urfa, it attained a certain respite from trouble, which it has enjoyed until the present day.

Most interesting for us, however, is Urfa, as the seat of a great university in the fifth century. Here it was that Nestorius gained so many followers after his condemnation at Ephesus; and to such a height had his influence reached, that in 489 the Emperor Zeno broke up the school. The Bishop Rabulas, a strong adherent of Cyril, had done much, some time before, to suppress the teaching, and had thereby driven its authors into Persia, where it was freely tolerated. The school, having been closed by Zeno, was transferred to Nisibis, another great centre of religious teaching, which has remained, with a small portion of its ancient glory, to the present day. But both places have passed into the hands of the Jacobite Syrians, and the Nestorians have practically disappeared from this side of the Tigris.

Lastly, Edessa was the home of a greater than these, the holy Efrem (Ephraim) the Syrian, a man beyond all others since apostolic days honoured of the Syrian Church, which sings his hymns, and reveres his writings to this day. Near to Edessa on the south side he is said to be buried, and on his tomb the holy Eucharist is consecrated by the Syrians. Hence, too, came his beloved teacher, St. James of Nisibis; hence, too, another James, he who consolidated the old Syrian Church in the sixth century. Strange that from the same city should have come Ibas and Barsumas, the great teachers of Nestorian doctrine to the East, and James Bardœus, raised to be Bishop of Edessa, who lived to be the bulwark of a church that has ever claimed Cyril as one of its greatest fathers.

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CHAPTER IV.

Diarbekr.

It is time to resume our journey on the road from which we turned back to visit Urfa. It was the last stage on the road to Diarbekr; nor had we long left the khan of Sersink before we caught sight of black walls about towers and domes that gleamed in the rising sun. High above the Tigris rocks fifty white-capped minarets stood clear against the sky; and round the walls for miles stretched groves and gardens, with here and there a country lodge nestling among them.

The old name of Black Amida has been changed to Diarbekr, black from the basaltic rocks of which the walls and houses are built. Splendid walls they are, like some old Greek fortress, and thick enough to contain many a large chamber, and form a fine road upon the top. The rain had cleared off, and the sun came out in full brilliance as we approached the town. It was early spring, and the contrast of the brilliant green of the gardens with the gloomy walls, which they encircle, was exceeding beautiful. Fruit wonderful in variety and quantity is grown in these gardens, in one of which Mr. Palgrave has laid the scene of his faithful and romantic story of Eastern life, "Hermann Agha."

Past pools peopled by thousands of croaking frogs we rode up to the "Bab-er-Rum," or great gate of Diarbekr. My baggage mule, impelled by thirst or the Siren charms of the frogs, rushed headlong into the water, and was rescued only by the gallant efforts of my katirji upon his tiny donkey. A dozen soldiers lounged about the gate, near which was once

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the entrance to the great Syrian Monastery of the Virgin. They were busy sunning themselves, and we had almost passed into the town before one of their number, on whom the lot fell to exert himself, came up and demanded our "teskerehs" or passports. M. l'Inspecteur presented his papers, and passed faithlessly on to lodge with the French Consul. I unfortunately had no "teskereh"; for what with my ignorance and the hurry at Aleppo, I had no time to obtain this very necessary document, and had determined to run the chance of possible difficulties, depending instead upon my English passport. So far I had escaped; but Diarbekr being a town of military pretensions, the seat, too, of a "wali," or governor of a province, I was marched off without ceremony to the police station. This was a gross breach of etiquette, foreigners always having the right to be examined, if necessary, at the house of their Consul. But being ignorant of this I rode meekly after the soldier, who drew my attention with evident pride, but in an unknown tongue, to the walls and antique fortifications of the town, which made up amply in his eyes for the entire absence of more modern means of defence. We soon reached a large court before the "Serai," or government buildings, on one side of which was the police station. Here sundry amiable officials strolled about in an obsequious manner; one of whom asked for my passport with the politest of bows. It was handed to him, and became the object of extreme wonder; lions with tails like strawberry-runners, one-horned stags with tails to match the lions, curious pictures of Herculean men, samples of botany and the musical art, and to crown all an official possessed of such a multifarious designation as "The most honourable the Marquess of Salisbury." They turned it this way and that, looked at it through magnifying glasses, and finally having found nothing authentic upon it but a Turkish seal, which having been affixed in London where Gladstone (not a popular personage among the Turks) lives, was probably false, they handed it back in despair, and sent a zaptieh to scour the land for some one who could speak English, French, or German; or, failing these, Latin, the last a forlorn hope indeed, for the

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interpretation of a modern passport to a Turkish police-officer. After half an hour a young Chaldean arrived, who had learned some French in the Jesuit college of Beirut. With a great effort I summoned all of that language that I knew, and adjured him by the length of his father's beard to help me to explain the mystery of the rampant lion and the Herculean men, laying due stress at the same time on the majesty of the name of Salisbury, than whom no European inspires greater respect in the East. However the Chaldean explanation failed to satisfy the official, for whose letter-abiding mind it was enough that I had no teskereh. I heard afterwards that a telegram had arrived from Aleppo, saying that a prisoner had escaped thence, and gone towards Diarbekr. Escaped prisoners do not generally have teskerehs; I had no teskereh; obviously, I was the fugitive! Could the case be clearer to a Turkish official with his mind firmly fixed on possible bakhshish?

After waiting another hour for something to turn up, no one knew or cared quite what or whence, the welcome form of Mutran Abdullah, Bishop of the Old Syrians in Diarbekr, appeared. Having spent two years in England, he proved of great service in explaining the situation, and was about to carry me off to his house, when the servant of the British Vice-Consul arrived, with an invitation to come direct to his house. The Bishop was an exceedingly handsome and refined-looking man, and the dignity of his appearance was considerably enhanced by his long black cloak, purple cassock, and silver-mounted ebony staff. He walked slowly up, preceded by the head priest of the Syrians, and said in fairly correct English that he was delighted to see anyone from his friends in London, but "ashamed" to find me in such circumstances. Why did I not inform him of my coming that he might send some of his people to meet and bring me to his house?

We threaded a dozen dirty narrow streets before we reached the house of the Consul, whom we found with his kind English wife sitting under a patriarchal fig tree, and prepared with invitations for me to remain as long as possible in their

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house. No doubt the arrival of a stranger from England is a pleasant incident in the lives of exiles from their native land; but I cannot forbear to add my witness to that of others, who record the uniform kindness and hospitality of our consuls and other residents in these little-visited corners of the world. Mr. and Mrs. Boyajian were no exception to the rule, and several very pleasant days were passed in their house, until the Bishop had made his preparations to receive me at the church. The latter regretted the arrangement, but I am afraid that I scarcely disguised my unwillingness to leave a comfortable English house, when its hospitality was so kindly pressed upon me.

I had been on one day in contact with four different nationalities and churches, to say nothing of their Papal and Protestant varieties, namely, Old Syrian, Nestorian, English, and Armenian. Three Nestorian priests had been our companions for the last day's journey into Diarbekr; I had brought letters of introduction to Giusep Efendi, a Papal Armenian; the Consul was a Protestant Armenian; Mrs. Boyajian, English; and our friend the Bishop, Old Syrian. Talk of sects in England; they are but a tithe of the divisions of this land; there are enough to set a fire of *odium theologicum* ablaze all through Asia. God grant it may burn for light and not for destruction. Yet, for all this, there is a toleration among the sects, not of the doctrines, but of the persons of others, that is truly edifying. It is most striking, when one first visits the East, to find a mixed company thoroughly enjoying each other's society, which, when analysed, would be found to contain an Old Syrian or two, a Protestant, half-a-dozen Moslems, and a substantial quota of the Papal varieties. Yet they are all talking together in perfect good-fellowship, smoking each other's cigarettes, and discussing with quite marvellous tact the latest political news. This in the towns; in the villages, knives are apt to come out. But there is far more interchange of external politeness between those that differ than we see at home, although one may have an uncomfortable consciousness of sitting rather too near a volcano.

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It would not be hard to stir up a new crusade in Turkey, were it not for the rivalry of long standing between the various Christian bodies. Things are much as they were in the quarrelsome times of the fifth and sixth centuries, many of the old divisions and disputes still festering under the Moslem rule. Strained relations between conqueror and conquered have perhaps lessened these divisions, although the feeling of nationality inherent in the idea of an Eastern Church has not at all been crushed; but men have learned prudence, and, for the most, avoid scrupulously debateable ground in conversation. It is but fair to the much-abused Turk to add that in few countries is official toleration of all sects and forms of religion so widely spread. Persecution there is, as in all half-civilised countries; but it is unofficial, except in flagrant cases of idolatry or Atheism.

The day after our arrival was Holy Thursday, marked for the English mind by Queen's pence and Westminster alms, and in Austria by the ancient ceremony in which the Emperor washes the feet of twelve poor men. In the morning the Bishop sent his "peace" to me by the mouth of a man called Yakob, whom he placed at my disposal for as long as I wished. He was a tall, fair-complexioned Syrian, with thick hair, and a beard of five days' growth. Having been in New York for nearly six years, earning money as a ribbon-weaver, he spoke English fluently, but with the most unusual grammar, and affected a good many mannerisms, which did little credit to his American teachers. An incipient beard is a matter of course in the middle of the week. Saturday is shaving day, and on it the clergy have their heads and the lay people their beards shorn; for no layman, unless quite an old man, wears hair on his chin, nor any of the clergy on their heads; but beards for the latter and moustaches for the former are the inevitable rule. Some, too, of the laity shave their heads in summer, but this fashion is going out, and it is more usual to see the younger men with their heads clipped, with a long wisp left in front just under the "tarbush." For this purpose a regular European clipping machine is used.

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The rule that clergy should shave the head is strictly observed, and the Syrians look with as much horror on a priest with the Roman tonsure, as one with a shaven chin.* No one ever shaves at home; and consequently the barber's trade is a profitable one.

The charge for shaving is optional; wealthy men generally give a pound at the end of the year, or perhaps pay nothing, in consideration of the prestige that their custom brings to the barber; others pay according to their means. The result of the system is not altogether good; for if a man misses the Saturday or the day before a feast on which it is usual to be shaved, he will go on to the next Saturday, with an incipient growth, which makes a European long for something definite, either a beard or a clean shaven chin.

Yakob was in his fifth day's beard, and, like so many of his countrymen, terribly marked by smallpox, that scourge of Eastern towns. But in spite of a not prepossessing appearance, and a terrible affectation of European dress, he turned out admirably. He was most devoted and faithful, often under very difficult circumstances; he had a perfectly imperturbable temper and a very good heart, and he was for an oriental, or indeed for a European, extraordinarily honest. This became apparent whenever he had any purchases to make, or bargains to conduct, which he did with all the zeal natural to a Syrian, and as if he were saving his own purse instead of mine.

It is a charming illusion in Turkey the ease and mutual accommodation with which bargains are begun; but this is only a cover under which to escape the obligation of naming

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* Cp. Maclean and Browne, p. 96, where the same customs are noticed among the Nestorians; and it is wisely recommended that all missionaries in Turkey should wear beards. In Jebel Tur, and in the country districts, men and boys still shave the top of their heads, leaving long hair behind, as a protection for the neck against the sun. One of the first things the Patriarch did when he visited India was to insist that the tonsure should be abolished and their heads shaved by the priests of his community. Maclean and Browne quote Is. vii. 20, 2 Sam. x. 4, 5, on which the modern custom is an interesting comment, for no one in Turkey thinks of going without at least a moustache.

the price, in the hope that the other party will name one higher or lower according to the case in hand. It is scarcely necessary to add that one never pays more than half the price asked, except for the necessaries of daily life, whose price generally varies only within a few piastres. Yakob had one point greatly in his favour—he was not a professional dragoman; it was therefore not his interest to tell lies, except (a reservation which at times caused me intense exasperation) for what he really thought my or his nation's good; then he lied honestly, and to a good purpose, but not with the view of obtaining bakhshish or a good testimonial.

My muleteer now had to be dismissed, and this caused some delay. For not only did he insist on having English sovereigns "with a horse on them" (perhaps a point of professional honour), but he wanted one more than he had bargained for. It took three hours to settle the difference—in his favour, for he was Armenian; but he had to leave his horse to follow with me to Mardin in a week's time, and by grasping lost all bakhshish.

This business kept us rather late, and when we reached the Syrian church, we met the Bishop just coming out of his diwan on his way to church. "Excuse me," he said; "to-day Our Saviour washed his Apostles feet; we do the same in His memory to-day." He had some preparations to make, and told us to follow him later, whenever we should be inclined.

The church is dedicated to S. Mary, and before the nave was destroyed, as the Syrians assert it to have been many years ago, must have been a noble building. At present it consists of a square nave, and three sanctuaries, but the Syrians say that this nave was formerly the sanctuary, and the present sanctuary a mortuary chapel. For this statement there seems little foundation, nor is it borne out by comparison with other churches, which it closely resembles in plan. In spite of the excessive flatness of the dome the whole effect of the church would be good were it not for the horrible daubs painted on the walls.

The central altar is surmounted by a large baldachino of painted wood, a very handsome piece of work; a richly

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embroidered linen cloth covers the altar, another is laid upon the Book of the Gospels, a third upon the Cup and Paten. Great folding doors of workmanship similar to that of the baldachino stand always open between the beautiful marble pillars that flank the sanctuary arch. In the east wall of the side sanctuaries, about fifteen feet from the ground, are built two very fine Greek capitals, whose origin no one seemed to know. In the east wall of the centre sanctuary is the "Treasury of the Cross," a hole in the wall, containing the great silver cross that is brought out only on Good Friday. Then all the people come and bow before it, and offer a special prayer to the Redeemer. The reverence paid to the Cross by all good Syrians is very noticeable. It is not of the nature of worship, in spite of the extravagant language with which it is at times addressed. For such language, it is almost a commonplace to say, has a very different meaning when employed by the self-restrained piety of the West, or the less temperate enthusiasm of the East.* As in the earlier days of Christianity, so now in a Moslem country, the sign of the Cross is considered to have a special significance, and by the more ignorant a certain efficacy, and is used on every possible occasion. During the daily services the worshippers continually kiss the Cross wherever it occurs painted on the walls, or worked upon the hangings. So the people sign themselves more than once during the liturgy in the name of the Holy Trinity, and make the sign over every meal of which they partake. One of the chief insignia of the Bishop's office is the little silver-gilt cross with which he blesses the congregation. In a

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* Cp. Maclean and Browne, 236, who speak of this veneration being partly due to the absence of pictures among the Eastern Syrians. The recent introduction of pictures among the Western Syrians of course weakens this statement. Cp. the same, p. 276, where the sign is looked on as a charm even by Moslems. Some of the Nestorians of Urmi count the "sign of the cross" as one of the seven sacraments, p. 248. Its use argues no more superstition than the custom of kissing the Patriarch's hand. Dr. Grant, the noble American missionary to the Nestorians and a staunch Protestant, bears witness to the harmless nature of this practice: ("The Nestorians" p. 52, 62.)

Mohammedan country it is strange to find this symbol of our faith used to an extent that in Christian Europe might seem extravagant.

The windows of the church are few, and confined to the dome; whereas most of the light enters through the west doors. There were at one time large windows in this and in other churches, but, whether for protection against the cold or for defensive reasons, they have generally been blocked up. Recently-built churches, however, frequently have larger windows, which are often glazed. The very earliest churches of all, however, sometimes have very small windows, perhaps a relic of the primitive days when Christian buildings were seldom safe from the attacks of the heathen.

The west door leads through a portico supported by beautiful marble pillars into a courtyard, where there is usually a group of women round the fountain, or of children who have just run out to play from the school that occupies another side of the square.

The main part of the service was prefaced by the singing of psalms and hymns in Syriac, interpersed with readings from the Bible in Arabic or Turkish for the space of nearly two hours. A dais containing thirteen chairs, six on each side and one at the east end, had been already placed before the altar rails; in which at five o'clock twelve men, deacons and priests, took their places to represent the twelve Apostles. Each bore in his right hand a lighted taper, and wore a white surplice with a stole tied crosswise over his back and breast.

When the copper ewer had been brought with soap and basin, the Bishop came down, his robes covered with a linen apron, and took his seat in the remaining chair, saying a short prayer before he began to wash the feet of the twelve. Silk napkin in hand he knelt before each disciple to wash and dry his feet, while a little boy deacon held the ewer and basin to bathe the feet in Turkish fashion. Last of all he came to Peter, the head priest of the church, whom, as in the gospel narrative, he rebuked for his remonstrance, and then washed his feet.

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This ceremony over, all returned through the two lines of surpliced choir boys in the chancel to the sanctuary, and the singing continued, until the Bishop came forward to preach, and then the service ended.* The Bishop has a great reputation as a preacher, there being very few beside the Patriarch who have any capacity or training in such matters. However, since he visited England the Bishop has greatly encouraged preaching. Every Sunday afternoon a preacher comes in from a village near Diarbekr, and there is a special service, just like the University sermon.

Good Friday at the heart of Islam; it seemed a curious mockery; and great swelling thoughts about the meaning of things, of the promise of early Christendom, the blight of Eastern controversies, and the mysterious rise of the Crescent, thrust themselves up in this land, where the streams of many waters meet.

Mr. Boyajian was to preach at the Armenian Protestant Church at six o'clock, a.m. I went with him, although I understood not a word; but I wished to contrast old and new, and learn something of the effect that Nonconformist teaching has had upon the members of the old Churches of the East.

After breakfast several young Syrians, who had learned English and other undesirable accomplishments in New York, came to show me the town and its surroundings, at the Bishop's request. Through the gate of the police court by the north walls, shady with budding fruit trees, the steep cliffs above the Tigris, immediately outside the town, were reached. The winter snows had not yet melted, so the river flowed neither deep nor strong. The banks lay broad and sandy on either side, with a wide belt of trees and shrubs under the rocks, rich with all manner of fruits. Across the river a few villages stood under the hill crests, and beyond, to north and west and east, rose cap after cap of snow on the mountains of Kurdistan. A lovely sight it was in spring

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* The same ceremony is maintained among the Armenians (cp. Mrs Bishop's "Journeys in Persia," i. 273).

time, before the heat had turned the leaves yellow and the grass dead brown, or the valleys were stripped of their harvests, and the hillsides of their grapes. Bushes of lilac, white and pink, gorgeous pomegranates, with snowy cherry trees and almonds bright against the glistening green of walnut, ash, and poplar, all gave promise of a fruitful summer. For miles the gardens stretched up and down the Tigris shore, climbing the hills on either side, and giving place to vineyards as they rose; while in mid-stream a single raft of a hundred poles floated down on inflated skins to Mosul.

The foreground of this scene was occupied by a large Government, and therefore Mohammedan, "madrasah" or college overlooking the river. It is free to all subjects of the Sultan, Moslem or Christian, but it will be readily guessed that few of the latter avail themselves of an advantage which subjects them to every insult from their Moslem neighbours, and gives no opportunity for study in the subjects that lie nearest to their hearts. Its main attraction lies in the fact that it is becoming the only road to the official employments, which year by year are reserved more exclusively for Mohammedan subjects.

The College led my Syrian friends to express their views on politics. Discontent with the present state of affairs, and the continually increasing strain of petty oppression, could suggest no remedy but the interference of Russia. The experience gained of the Russians during the war impressed the natives of Armenia favourably, and it is to them, failing the English, that the Christians of Turkey look. France has never gained much prestige in this part of the East, in spite of all her diplomacy; nor does her championship of Papal interests find favour among the members of the old Churches. England has given too little proof of her willingness to aid or protect; while her Philo-Turk policy in the war has made many look with suspicion upon her; of Russia alone are they sure, in spite of grim rumours that reach their ears of her oppression and tyranny. It is a sad but certain truth that the natives, both Christian and Moslem, of interior Turkey, seem unable to trust England. They would like to trust her, for,

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to her honour be it said, she is ever regarded as the champion of the oppressed; but they can find no abiding surety of her real sympathy either with the Turks as an imperial power, or the Christians as co-religionists to be protected.

The mid-day call to prayer was sounding through the town as we re-entered the gates, and passed a ruined bath, whose only patron was a stork, with a wife and thriving family, such as seem to claim a prescriptive right to all domes and towers in Turkey. For some hundred and fifty yards from the wall, in which the old cells may still be seen, to the present church of St. Mary, once stretched the great monastery of the Syrians. Now only the church remains, and a few houses, the rents of which accrue to the Patriarch.

The streets and bazars were not crowded, as it was Good Friday, so that we soon reached the gate of the church, and found our way up to the Bishop's diwan. The house was built by the late Patriarch Yakob, and is the finest belonging to any of the Syrian churches. From a fountain court on the ground floor, a flight of outside steps leads up to a row of monks' rooms, a large diwan for reception, and a smaller one which formed the private apartment of the late Patriarch. This last is now the only diwan in regular use, while the Bishop has two small rooms upstairs for his private use. These he has fitted with European windows and certain comforts of which he learned the value in England, among them a raised bed. The house is built entirely of the dark basaltic stone in common use in Diarbekr, relieved by various designs in white plaster of an exceedingly fine quality. Along the top of the diwan, which we enter, and down the two sides are broad benches cushioned and carpeted for the native manner of sitting, and the floor between is covered with a fine Persian carpet, on which inferiors squat and say their say. The ceiling is of round beams painted red and green, on which are laid planks of the same colour. At the top of the room, beside a fine inlaid cabinet, that serves for all his writing purposes sits the Bishop, shoeless, in stockings of his own making. He has on a purple cassock, a broad black girdle,

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and a long black gown, with the episcopal "turband" on his head. His whole appearance speaks the man of neat refined habits of mind and body, something very different from what we expect to see in Central Turkey. One of the most charming men it is possible to meet, he unites all the polished courtesy of the East with the mental refinement and untiring good faith of the West—one of the few that contact with the West has not spoiled. He is a man that has no enemies, and to whose simple piety and learning members of all creeds bear witness. Hating the corruption and intrigue of politics, he confines himself to the service of God, and of his flock. It was a touching sight, day after day, to see him the resort of all that were in trouble, a judge and an adviser, protecting the helpless, and going from village to village, or from house to house, ministering to the needs, and stirring up the consciences, of his people. A true Bishop, and a most simple God-fearing man, from whom one could learn wonderful humility and goodness.

As we entered, he gave the usual hearty welcome, and introduced me as the Moses and Joshua of his people to those who were present. There was a brief contest of honour, and shifting of positions in the diwan, until our places were satisfactorily settled, and we remained so until "a more honourable came," and a fresh contest and adjustment took place. The same ceremony was performed as coffee was served, and it got cold during the various expressions of unworthiness, but after a few minutes all settled down into the post-salam tranquility of cigarettes.

Conversation ran on neutral subjects, a company mixed in creed and nationality always acting as a drag upon free talk, so the formal visit being soon brought to an end, I was glad to get a few quiet hours, such as I had not enjoyed since arriving in Diarbekr.

Saturday morning was devoted to a stroll through the bazars, and suk or markets. They are unusually good in Diarbekr, especially for silks and fine cloth. For the purchase of Turkish antiquities, carpets, embroideries, or inlaid wood, and metal work it is a good place, being out of the

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beaten track. People do not live at home much during the day, so it is in the bazars that one sees the native life, in the barber's shop as in Roman days, or in the coffee houses. These last, called "Qáhwahs," often belie their name, and are the headquarters of arrak-drinking, gossip, and lounging, and often worse things, being not unlike certain Parisian houses of the same name. Thus it is easy enough, without ever entering the house of a native, to see much of Eastern life, and hear the daily talk, if only one dons a tarbush to avoid undue attention. Instead of the semi-European refinement of Aleppo, Diarbekr gives a far truer ring of the East. We miss the cosmopolitan confusion of Smyrna and the sea ports, with all its hateful accompaniments, and find, instead of the insinuating Greek, the heavy American, the polite Syrian, the reserved and stately Turk. The native dress predominates over the Levantine fashion of covering, and hats are unknown. Europeans too are a rarity, coming at times on business, commercial, archæological, or diplomatic, and, casting shadows months long before them, obtain no slight consideration in these parts. Arabs seldom penetrate further north than this; nor are many to be seen even here; one catches sight now and then of a little shock-headed scamp in a scant and very dirty shirt, darting among the flowing robes of "mullas" and "muftis" on his way to some town friend of his tribe; or there is a dark son of Ishmael, swinging stealthily along, switch in hand, or looking out from under his eyebrows as he sits in the stall of a friend. He is cautious, and unobtrusive here among the hated Turks; but meet him on the plain, his eye gains fire there as he sits his darling mare, and he looks one of Nature's princes.

It was "Ramadhan," the great Turkish fast, during which no food or drink or smoke may touch a Moslem's lips from sunrise to sunset. Fortunately, it fell early this year; but it may be imagined what that fast means when it falls about May time and the days are long and hot.

It was amusing to sit and watch the fasting Turk from the stall of a little old watchmaker, Yakob's uncle, which stands

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facing a corner and commands a good view down three streets. In the morning, few Moslems are to be seen, for they eat and do their business at night during this month, and sleep all the morning. There are plenty of Christians bustling about and wrangling; a few stray Kurds, too poor to keep fasts, bent double under huge weights of mountain wood for burning; an Arab or two, with a string of solemn, stupid camels, fastened one to the other by cord and chain, causing a stoppage of all traffic in the crowded street. The scene of crowd and confusion, mud and noise, reminds one of the dangers of Roman streets in the days of the Empire, so vividly portrayed by Juvenal.

Towards evening Moslems resort much to the little glass window of the watchmaker, and become very inquisitive about the time. Up goes the little pane as the "mufti," or "qadhi," sweeps by in green silk turband and long white robe, and haughtily asks the time to a second. He is followed by an official, a sneaking, bullying kind of man, whom our watchmaker answers with a tone of quiet contempt. Rattling his amber beads, he passes on, followed by a small son, the miniature of his father's form and manner. Among the rest comes the "dallal," a most useful person in the East, general agent between all those who wish to buy or sell private property. He generally has a small stock of old china, carpets, gems, coins, or embroideries, which he will sell or barter for other goods for which the purchaser has no need. To-day he brought a lovely wooden box inlaid with ivory. A Turkish Beg was bidding for it; but as he was at present drunk and incapable at home, and the owner was not disposed to wait, I secured the treasure. There are two ways of buying in Turkey; either the owner gives a reserve price and intending purchasers bid as at an auction, or a regular bargain, in which the buyer beats down the seller, is gone through. Needless to say, the former is more satisfactory; it is also the method usually followed by the dallal.

There are several fine mosques and minarets in Diarbekr, which give the town a most picturesque appearance when seen from below the walls. The chief of them is contained in

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the great court of an ancient Christian church.* Three sid s remain and enclose a space 230ft. by 115ft.; the southern side has been destroyed. There are two arches in the centre of the east and west wall; but they give no clue to the original use of the building. Two rows of Corinthian pillars, one above the other, run along the east and west sides, with capitals and friezes of the richest workmanship imaginable. The carving is all of the richest Roman-Byzantine work, while below the friezes carved with fruit and flowers run fine Cufic inscriptions of later date. The arches of the north side are lower and are singularly like those of the Ducal Palace at Venice, both in design and in the wealth of their capitals. The effect of the whole is astonishing, especially when we remember that it is in the centre of Turkey, with its profusion of marble pillars, all colours, and a grandeur of proportion worthy of the Greeks. There are a few more specimens of such work scattered about, but nothing nearer than Palmyra and Baalbek so fine as this.

The mosque, of course, was not for us to enter; for it was Ramadhan, and Turks, never friendly to Christians or foreigners, become even more jealous than usual when they see a heretic so near one of their treasures. Their savage looks warned us not to linger, or the children, perhaps, who played round the beautiful Saracenic fountain in the centre, half drowning each other, might begin to pick up stones. It was the wrong time of year, and midday prayer was soon to begin, so without time to enter the mosque or examine even the court in detail, we walked away. It is not as it is in the sea towns of Turkey, where a few piastres will procure admission into the holiest shrines; in the interior it is almost impossible for a Christian to enter a mosque, and during all the time I spent east of Aleppo, I was only once admitted into one.

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* "The great Church of Amida," probably this building, was begun in 629 A.D. by order of Heraclius, and finished 770 A.D. In 848 it was burned and restored (cp. Badger, i. 38). The similarity to Baalbek argues that this is the remains of a Roman temple. There are no traces of a sanctuary, nor of a portico. It is not unlikely that it was a Roman temple adapted for use as a church (cp. the account of Nisibis).

Easter Day, the "great feast" of the Easterns, as Christmas is the little feast, found everyone in church at five o'clock in the morning. No Syrian worth the name would dream of missing this Easter celebration, so it may be imagined that the church was crowded. When service was over, all the men came to the Bishop's diwan. Coffee, cigarettes, and "rahat-el-lakum" followed each other in rapid succession, accompanied by frequent salutations and healths, and by a "general post" as soon as any fresh-comer arrived. Being the Bishop's own guest there was a great stir when I arrived, in order that I might have a seat at the top next to him; there was a general movement all round the room, until everyone had gone down one place. The Bishop looked dreadfully tired; his strength was quite worn out by the fatigue of the week's services, nor had he slept the previous night. However, it was useless to say anything of the unnecessary strain that the rules of his church put upon him and all the clergy during Lent.

The evening was spent at Yakob's house, to whose tender care I had been confided by the Bishop. As we entered we heard his small nephew of twelve years old reading aloud with great dignity from a large Turkish Bible the Gospel of the day; this was followed by a few prayers from one of his uncles, and some of the indispensable but excruciating hymns of Mar Efrem and Mar Yakob. The boy was a great favourite with the family, grandmother, uncles, and all, and was as sharp as most of these Syrian boys are. He was, moreover, chief coffee server, and lighter of cigarettes to the diwan, an office which he performed with a manner quite inimitable, laying his hand upon his girdle, and with the other touching his heart and forehead, with a final grand sweep of his whole person as he received back the cup and he retired from each. Servants do not as a rule perform this office, except in very rich houses, a custom which is much to be commended. After a little general conversation on the English Church, and the Americans, I retired, to find my way back to my room in the Bishop's house.

Easter Monday is the great day among the Christians for

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paying complimentary visits. At ten o'clock the Bishop sallied forth, robed in his best, a great silver-mounted ebony staff in his hand, and attended by a deacon with a list of persons to be called on, and one of the chief Syrians to support him. The deacon knocked at the doors, and a small boy, the Bishop's servant, dressed in his smartest clothes, carried the staff while his master sat in the rooms.

They were all visits of state to the chief men of other communities; we had to swallow innumerable cups of coffee, varying very much in flavour, and smoke a cigarette or eat sweetmeats at each house. It was a most tedious affair both for the Bishop and myself, and I am sure it was unwholesome. The rooms were monotonous in their uniformity, except when we came to the house of a Greek physician, or the Chaldæan Bishop; the only variety being afforded by the carpets and china, or the particular royal personages, Greek, Russian, English, or Italian, cased in hideous green frames, that the householder affected. It was a noticeable fact that not one contained any picture of the Sultan. Some of the houses, especially those belonging to middle class people, contained most gorgeous carpets; but the majority prefer the new fashions in weaving and colour, imported from Germany or France. Among the houses that we visited was that of the Armenian to whom I had brought a letter of introduction. The court was full of servants and boys, through whom we had to pass in order to reach the stone steps, with a fine iron-wrought balustrade, leading to the diwan. Below was standing a handsome Arab horse, covered with silver-mounted trappings, on which the owner was about to pay a round of visits, such as we were engaged in. Sleek servants lounged about, and ladies came in and out of the room with quite European shamelessness. The diwan was a strange mixture of East and West, Austrian wicker-chairs and aimless little round tables of alarming instability took the place of the usual comfortable cushions. The coverings blazed with livid green, and carpets spotted with great pink roses, and fat garland-encircled Cupids with background of yellow ribbons, were the order, all in the brightest of aniline dyes, such as

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adorned English drawing-rooms of twenty years ago. The coffee, as might be expected, was quite the worst we drank that day.

A second house of similar tendency contained a most pitiable old Broadwood piano, which I, being English, was bound to play. It had left its heart behind it, and uttered fearful sounds, as if to bemoan its luckless exile.

Our poor little Mercury grew sleepier in each new house; he was tired of lakum, and his smart clothes; so he clung to the precious staff, and dozed, oblivious of everything, until the offer of a cup of coffee aroused him into confused disgust; and he ran to the Bishop without a thought of etiquette, and bursting into tears begged leave to run home. The omen was accepted, for we were glad to accompany him back to some dinner and rest, after the tedium of three hours' state visits.

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CHAPTER V.

Mardin—The Patriarch's Diwan.

Easter was over, and the various Christians were settling down to business again, when we said good-bye to the Bishop, and started for Mardin. Mutran Abdullah was lavish with Oriental expressions of regret and regard, couched in terms very confusing to modesty; but he was especially troubled to think I should see the depression of his church, which he had so little power to remedy.

About five o'clock we started from the Gate of the Romans to the place where we were to find the caravan, outside the walls, and say good-bye to the Syrians collected there out of official view. A monk stood in the middle of a number of men, some of them Yakob's relations; and a group of women covered entirely with white sheets, all except their eyes and noses, stood a little aside, while a small boy of five with an inexpressibly wicked expression was mounted on my horse. The monk repeated the Lord's prayer, and then we said good-bye, amid violent weeping from the women, and profuse kissing between the men who were brothers. Yakob's mother and sister could not kiss him in public, so they stood aside and wept.

In the spring, when grass is abundant, it is usual for caravans to start late in the afternoon for a village a few miles off, by that means securing a start at three o'clock the next morning, and a long afternoon during which the animals may graze. As the mornings are bitterly cold, the misery of alternate freezing and roasting may be easily imagined.

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An hour's ride down through the gardens to the river past a fine old bridge* across the Tigris, and between hedgerows and cottages that whispered of England, brought us to the village of Tcherukiyah. We lodged in the house of a Syrian friend, from the roof of which we watched the sun go down behind the yellow rocks and river, with "Black Amida" above.

Rain threatening all next day made still drearier a road already dreary with a brigand reputation. There was little danger, indeed, except for people carrying much property; but the place was ominous enough. The road differed little from many we had already passed. Bleak sheep and goat pastures alternated with well-watered, corn-growing valleys, with here and there, perched above a pass, an ancient fort, telling of Saracenic or later Kurdish chiefs. Past flowery meadows and streams or coppices, alive with the plash of cows or scream of jays, the road led on to Mardin, crowded with donkeys heavily laden with wood or charcoal, and noisy with the talk of children and impertinent magpies. What a contrast to the long parched months that follow the short-lived joy of an Eastern spring!

A fearful jerry-built bridge led on to the so-called road into Mardin, which had been built, as usual, for a few miles, just to show what Turkish engineering could do, enticing the unwary traveller out a certain distance from the town and then suddenly deserting him. There were the foundations of a good road, which, under the force of winter storms and the neglect that stifles all progress in this land, were going rapidly to ruin. A strong guard of mounted zaptiehs was driving at a cruel pace, like cattle, along the road to Diarbekr a gang of escaped recruits; some were old and grey headed, others were young, and some had thought to escape service by mutilation, all were half clad and famished, with "Kismat" written in their eyes. It is not the Christians alone that suffer from their masters.

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* Bar Hebræus speaks of the building of this bridge in 743 A.D. by the Saracens.

The road rose gradually, until, turning the shoulder of a high hill, we caught the first sight of Mardin and the boundless plain like a sea before. The snow and rain had washed huge rocks and streams of lighter soil down below our feet, and for ten miles stretched a valley up to the frontier hills upon the plain. It was rich, and covered with Kurdish tents pitched here for the spring grass, and near the town where they could sell their milk. Past groups of children tending horses and cattle wound the road across the valley, then up again to the town, perched on the other side of the highest crest towards the plain. A few houses peeped round the side, and on the north countless gardens covered the hills. Above all upon the small plateau stood the castle, like an eagle's nest upon a crag.

It was a hard pull for the animals up the hill to Mardin at the end of a long day. The castle was no doubt built on the most commanding and inaccessible height in the neighbourhood, and the town grew up naturally below it; otherwise it would seem that only a madman could have chosen such a place to plaster his town against the rock.*

In the valley to the north a man would naturally build his town in peaceful days; for there is every requisite, including good water, whereas the people of Mardin have to depend for their supply entirely on what is collected from the winter's rain in the wells. The castle is said to have completely defied Tamerlane, who, after a siege of many weeks had succeeded in entering the large circuit of the town walls. The number of caravans and droves increased as we mounted the hill, past the old Saracen fountain with its Plantagenet leopards frescoed on the walls, and the portly Moslem coffee-maker who drives a roaring trade in a shady khan beside the road. At the top we came to the extensive premises of the

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* One tradition does indeed explain the name of the town as "The Madman's Town." It was here that Tamerlane captured Sultan El Melek El Dhaher.

A.D. 1326 Mardin was captured by Osman Beg.

A.D. 1350 Haliku, grandson of Zenghis Khan, attacked Mardin.

American Congregational mission, close by the ruined western gate of the city. A ride of a few minutes through breakneck streets brought us to the church of the "Arbain," or Forty Saints, and the house of the Patriarch.

Through a great gateway with doors plated thick with iron and covered with nails, appeared a large graveyard, with an ancient mulberry tree in the middle just bursting into leaf. Across the yard was the church, and on the south and west sides two fine schoolrooms. The north side was occupied by the Patriarch's house, to which a flight of steps leads. One of the first questions he asked was whether I had noticed the cross on the arches above the steps; he laughed when he said that he had put them there that all Moslems who came to see him might have to pass beneath the symbol of the Nazarenes.* A broad balcony ran in front of his Holiness's diwan and the guest room, which was to be my home for some weeks.

There was, of course, some stir among the people and boys collected among the gravestones below just before the evening service, as an old priest, in a long fur cloak and red fez bound with a black turband, came out to conduct me into the diwan, which in the simplicity of Eastern life satisfies all the requirements of the Patriarch awake or asleep.

It was a well-furnished room with a long diwan down each side, and at the top covered with fine Persian carpets. A few pictures, Her Majesty at the age of twenty, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, the Russian Royal Family, and some photographs adorned the walls. One of the many recesses in the wall contained about fifty books neatly arranged, and bound in old red leather, church histories, gospels, and liturgies, others were filled with silver cups, ink stands, and a vase of anemones. Cigarettes and other necessaries were, of course, kept at the lower end. These little arched recesses, together with the larger canopy of Saracenic design at the

* Nasrani—a Nazarene—is the common term applied by Moslems to Christians, conveying a reproach.

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head of the room, are common to many houses in Mardin, and give them an extremely picturesque appearance. The absence of writing materials was remarkable; but it is considered derogatory for great men in Turkey to write with their own hands, all letters, unless of supreme importance, being composed by the secretary in another room, and then brought in to the Patriarch, read out to him, and sealed with the large seal of the Patriarchate, in the red ink which it is the prerogative of royal persons only to use. A few letters lay scattered about on the cushions at the head of the room, others were bundled together with documents of all kinds in a large cloth bag; the Syrians have little idea of the importance of such things, and do not often trouble to lock them up. The room was about thirty feet long, and roofed by two vaults according to the usual Mardin plan. An arch divided the vaults, richly carved, like every other space in the room that gave an opportunity, the wood-work of cupboards and the barrier at the bottom of the room being painted in the usual style, red and green.

It was a true Eastern picture, especially as one's eye fell on the three mattresses covered with rugs and Damascene silk pillows on which the aged Prince reclined like a lion, watching all that passed. He smoked a "shibuk" of beautiful Mosul workmanship, some six feet long, as he listened to the news of his priests, or some tale of a mountain Syrian seeking redress for robbery or murder. A more imposing sight it would be hard to imagine than this head of a persecuted Church, the descendant of Ignatius, "Moran Mar Ignatius Peter III., exalted Patriarch of the Apostolic See of Antioch, and of all the Jacobite Churches of Syria and in the East."

The Queen, whom he had the honour of visiting twice when he was in England, saw in him the embodiment of her idea of Abraham; such he looked with his ninety-four years, "his eye not dim nor his natural force abated." He sat there hearing every word that passed, seeing to read as clearly as men fifty years younger. Only his brow betrayed many a trouble gone through; something too of the impatience as

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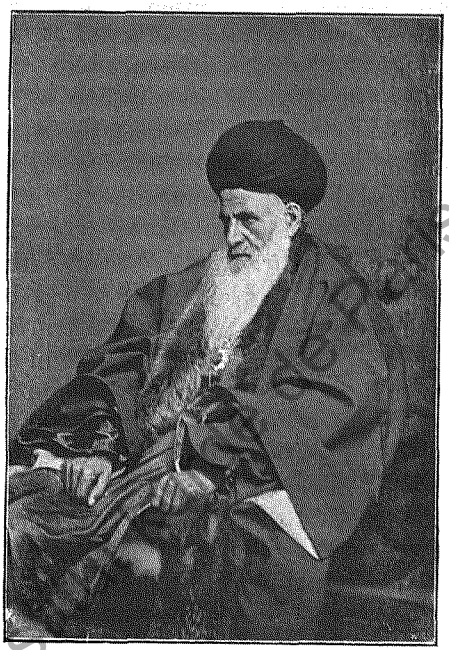
well as of the dignity and power of the lion showed there. But a peculiarly soft smile overcame the slight sign of pain as he rose to his full height of six foot and more, and, stroking



THE PATRIARCH.

his long silvery beard, spoke in courtly Arabic his words of welcome, leaning on his monk's shoulder as he paid the delicate compliment of shaking hands.

His Holiness knows how great a line he represents and is proud of his title. Nor is it an empty one; for besides two hundred thousand subjects of the Porte that acknowledge him their head, he counts under his rule three hundred thousand or more of the Queen's subjects on the Malabar coast, and in Ceylon. It is little enough that the majority know of him, or he of them, for times are evil and communication slow; but there is enough of unity left to justify the hope that one day we may again see a great and Apostolic Church acknow-

ledging Antioch as its head, as one of the chief powers of the Catholic communion in Christ.*

The Patriarch had been suffering acutely from influenza, and was too tired to receive us for long. I took a seat near to him, and Yakob next to me; for, having visited Jerusalem and been tatooed with the sign of the cross at the Syrian church, he was a Haji, and treated with a Haji's honour. A large brazier stood in the middle of the room, into which a deacon threw some broken berries brought from Antioch, and smelling much like incense. Candied fruit was handed round, followed by sherbet, cigarettes, and coffee; after which we retired to my room to be received by the chief Syrians of Mardin. It is in Turkey a mark of politeness to call on a newcomer as soon as possible, and stay as long as you can; also to hover about your friend when he departs, impeding the packing and generally getting in the way. When practicable it is usual to ride out several hours to meet or escort an arriving or departing friend, sometimes sleeping a night away from home.

A solemn crowd of blue-robed dignitaries of the Syrian Church sat round my room, and rose to salam, and welcome the Patriarch's guest. They remained a long time, said a great many polite and inquisitive things that I did not understand, and after a tedious hour took their leave. I then proceeded to make myself as comfortable as possible with my rugs, travelling bed, and other contrivances, until supper arrived. This meal, like all others, was served in my own room, and not with the Patriarch, who always eats alone; my meals being shared by Yakob and occasionally a guest. The room was large and airy, and not overburdened with furniture. Only in a recess at the end decorated with tawdry blue paper and Turkish flags, which the Patriarch alone among the Eastern ecclesiastics of the empire is allowed to fly, stood the Tughra, a large design of gold on a red ground displaying the Sultan's signature and various

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* I would guard these words from misconstruction by referring the reader to the account of the Syrian Church in the second part.

benedictions on the heads of his loyal Syrian subjects, framed in a massive gilded frame, and altogether presenting an extremely magnificent appearance. It was considered extremely fortunate to sleep under it; but to confess the truth I became heartily tired of the gaudy thing before a week was over. There was a plentiful supply of carpets, which I carefully sprinkled with a certain powder of magic charm, and by adding to the existing furniture a few of my own possessions, my room presented quite a homelike appearance by the time that supper arrived.

A visit of an hour or more to the Patriarch became part of every day's proceedings, and passed in general pleasantly enough, as we talked of England, and the wonderful things he had seen there, or discussed the current topics. From morning till night men came and went, some with business political or ecclesiastical to transact, others on visits of compliment, Bishops of other communities, or Moslem officials of the town. Then there was the set of men for whom the diwan is the recognised place of meeting, the priests of the Church, the deacons, and the chief men of the Syrian community. Morning service over, several of them always came and sat with the Patriarch for a time, gave him the news, discussed the affairs of the nation, or if it was mail day, heard the contents of his Holiness's correspondence; for there was little privacy there, and everyone, except he were a Moslem or a member of a rival community, sat to hear the letters read aloud.

Of the more regular frequenters of the diwan the two priests came first, with one of whom, a "khuri,"* I came a good deal in contact.

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* Cp. Maclean and Browne, p. 182. Probably short for chorepiscopus, an office not existing among the Nestorians since the 13th century. In Syria the word seems to denote merely a parish priest, and is used by the Latins as equivalent to the French *curé*. As seems to have been the case in the early Church, they are not consecrated, as to a higher order, but hold the title as parish priests with certain work as overseers superadded.

Bingham (i. 183), however, considers them to have been Bishops. Dr. Bright (History of Ch. p. 6) speaks of them "as an inferior class of consecrated bishops." They seem from the case of Armentarius, considered at the Council of Ttiez in Nov., 439, to have been at any rate subordinate to diocesan bishops.

He was the eldest Syrian priest in Mardin, and holding much the same position as a rural dean, carried a tall ebony stick of office. Being something of an antiquarian, he soon found out I took an interest in his hobby, and brought in upon me a flood of dealers offering everything from French coffee cups to gold Roman coins at equally exorbitant prices. To this day I cannot tell whether the old man wittingly defrauded me in selling three palpable forgeries. He left them with me, saying I could take them to England, and sell them for him. A week after I returned them, as worthless; but unfortunately he had paid the man who had brought them and the latter had disappeared. I trusted the words of the holy man, and bought some wisdom rather dear.

This is a bad introduction to our friend, who was an excellent man, excepting the one whim, which is by fate assigned to all the dwellers in Mesopotamia. I never met a man there without one distinctive mark of this kind. The khuri soon took me under his charge, made me sit next to him in the diwan, drew me out in conversation, took me to call on the lions of Mardin, and in general managed me. It was a bondage that had to be broken, but with discretion. I got a little tired of the old man, and his continual wink, which seemed to say, "You and I know the world, let us make it pay." One good characteristic he had, he was really patriotic, and desirous for the improvement of his people. And I believe he would have sacrificed much for that.

The second priest presented in every way a contrast to the last, a quiet pious man, spending all the time not occupied in the service of the church and parish or in attendance at the Patriarch's diwan, in the pursuit of the divine wisdom that is embalmed in the great folios of the Patriarchal library. Day after day he was to be seen poring over the pages of Old Syriac, in which he saw his beloved Church admonished by S. Efrem or S. James, and read their endless commentaries on God's word. A most simple and withal a businesslike mind, to whom the Patriarch had committed the management of most of his accounts and affairs, trusting him more than any of his brother ecclesiastics.

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Next to Qas Gibrail in the Patriarch's favour stood "Rahab" (monk) Elias, who with Rahab Efrem acted as steward of the small household. To Rahab Efrem, a plain monk of Edessa to whom I owe thanks for continual kindness and attention, was committed the charge of the cash box in the absence of His Holiness. All money in the interior of Turkey, where banks are things known only by report, and considered mere concerns to defraud people of their honest gains, is stored in strong boxes, which stand in the inner rooms of houses; it is, of course, all in hard cash; nor do its owners look upon these stores as capital to be distinguished from current income; all is thrown in together, to be used as the household requires. The Patriarch had his boxes, like other people, in his diwan, where he kept a jealous guard over them; but when he was away, Rahab Efrem slept in the diwan and was not allowed to let the keys go out of his hand. Several years ago, a secretary of the Patriarch having disappeared with a large sum of money, His Holiness brought an action. When, however, the judge asked how much had been lost His Holiness could only place one hand above the other and say "so much," about three inches depth of his strong box. This vague computation was determined to represent about £300, which in time was obtained from the thief. An exact mind is not characteristic of the East.

Imagine a short stout man with a tendency to blink one eye, adorned with monstrous silver-bound spectacles, a most confidential manner and an inability to see a joke, combined with a duck-like walk and a masterful tongue of which everyone from the Patriarch to the small boys in the school below stood a little in awe (for they knew him to be an honest man), and Rahab Efrem stands in his shoes before you. His companion was of an altogether different style, handsome, suave, and inclined to follow the first speaker's lead. He was a son of our old friend the Khuri, but a hundred times the better man. Absolutely devoted to the Patriarch, it was touching to see how he watched every motion of the old autocrat, smoothed his pillows, filled his shibuk, served every morsel that was set before him, standing with arms

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crossed upon his breast ready to bring the water and towel as soon as the simple meal was done. Sometimes he would not sleep all night, when His Holiness was unwell, and apt to be more exacting than usual, and he nearly always looked tired; yet his devotion never slackened, although the only return he obtained was the honour of carrying the Patriarchal staff at the head of the little procession when His Holiness rode abroad.

The Patriarch is allowed by the Government two Qawwases, or armed servants dressed in an official uniform, but prefers the services of these two monks, who add, if not so much pomp, at least more quiet dignity to his retinue.

A "Shammas," or deacon, performed the lower duties of the household, and, with the cook and porter, completed the establishment. None received any pay except the cook, the monks, of course, living on the presents they receive from the Patriarch and the people, the porter on the bakhshish of visitors, and the Shammas on his prospects.

Day after day, at meal times, Rahab Efrem would come and open wide my folding doors, followed into the room by Rahab Elias, carrying a large metal tray covered with various dishes, while the Deacon walked behind with tea or wine, according to the time of day. All stood as Yakob and I ate, and the meal was enlivened by a rapid flow of conversation, broken only by a rush of all three to fill my glass with fresh water. The meal finished, water to wash the hands was brought, with coffee and cigarettes, unless the latter were served in the Patriarch's diwan.

One morning, as Yakob lifted the heavy leathern curtain that hung before the door of the diwan, as in an Italian church, the Patriarch was opening a box that had arrived from his people in India, containing some money and a gold cross of beautiful workmanship, set with gems.

The contents of the day's letters led naturally to a discussion of the size of the Syrian community, but it soon became evident that His Holiness's information was neither very ample nor accurate. He had no idea how many subjects he ruled in Turkey, putting their numbers, in fact, at three

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times the reality, and being quite ignorant how many priests or monks existed in the towns and villages. The rough census that I was able finally to draw up was obtained from a large number of different people, and varying accounts balanced one against another. The main reason that prevents not only the Patriarch from keeping any roll of his people, but also the natives of any particular village from telling a stranger their true number, is to be found in the policy universally pursued of giving false returns to the Government in order to escape full taxation. But of that more hereafter. The continual migration from one church to another, for political or religious reasons, presents another difficulty in assigning their right numbers to native churches, Romans or Protestants. However, by continual asking of questions in the Socratic vein, some approach to accuracy is attained.

Among other interesting letters that arrived about this time was a letter from Lord Salisbury acknowledging the Patriarch's condolences on the death of the Duke of Clarence, and a note of invitation from the Old Catholic congress which was to meet in September at Lucerne. This caused a considerable flutter in the diwan, and the Patriarch was all for going in person; but it seemed impossible at his age, and considering that he had only just recovered from a sharp attack of influenza, to undertake so long a journey. It was settled therefore that Mar Gregorius and a Rahab should go as his delegates, collecting the necessary funds from the people. The people, however, failed to show adequate enthusiasm, and the plan fell through; so that His Holiness contented himself with sending a letter of sympathy with the object of the congress and a copy of the creed in use in the Syrian Church.

As we sat, people came in and out. Those of some degree put off their shoes at the bottom of the diwan, and having made their salam with their hand upon the forehead and breast and kissed the Patriarch's hand, sat down in a place according with their rank. It was strange how each seemed to have a recognised place, although at times a less frequent

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visitor would enter, and would cause quite a commotion among those already seated, until a short contest of politeness found him his level. Often the Bishop of Deir-el-Za'aferan would come in, but having been brought up from a boy at the Patriarch's feet, would never take a seat until specially bidden. Moslems would enter with the usual official salam, occupying as by a prescriptive right the highest seats, while the best cigarettes and preserved fruits would be served, sometimes followed by tea, as for a most honoured guest. The tea was of the weakest, and exceeding sweet, milk moreover was out of the question. I once watched the operation of making it. Each time tea was needed, a few fresh leaves were sprinkled over the old ones already in the pot, and cold water added as required; this was put on the charcoal fire and left to boil; sugar being added to suit the Moslem taste. The leaves were cleaned out about once a week.

Monks, deacons, and those of lower degree would come to the end of the diwan, and having made a very low obeisance there, or come to kiss the Patriarch's hand, return, and stand at the foot of the room, or sit bolt upright, their hands upon their knees and their legs tucked as far under the seat as possible, on the very edge of the diwan. Among these Yusef Efendi, the Patriarch's secretary, generally found his place, unless he stood reading, or sat writing at His Holiness's feet. He was a straightforward, unassuming man, most useful when anything had to be done with the officials, having once held some minor post in the Government, and of a good nature which it seemed impossible to overtax. He had many a hard half hour with the rather varying moods of his master, but always laughed them off as the whims of an old man, whom sorrow and misfortune had made a little impatient. This man proved of great use to me more than once in smoothing difficulties and warning me of possible storms.

Conversation seldom flagged; the Patriarch was full of anecdotes gathered during his travels, with which to entertain his guests; or there were matters of political or national interest; or again he would be sternly rebuking some misdemeanour among his people.

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Visits of ceremony from Turkish officials occurred from time to time, varying the monotony of provincial conversation with discussion of Constantinople politics. The Patriarch has not many friends among these Efendis, for he disapproves thoroughly of the dissolute lives of most of them, and confines himself to an official banquet at the monastery once or twice a year as a means of keeping up goodwill. The advent of a new official to fill any of the important posts—a pretty frequent occurrence—is generally the occasion of a small feast or entertainment at the monastery, or in the private house of a Syrian; but they are very formal affairs, and do little more than keep up appearances.

Last, but not least, of the Patriarch's household, was a beautiful Arab mare, bay coloured, that no one except His Holiness and Rahab Elias, who exercised her, was ever allowed to ride. Graceful as every well-bred Arab, with legs like a doe and temper gentle (discreet, the Arabs say) as the summer breeze. How she was petted and fondled, and how she seemed to care for her aged rider as he rode along the slippery streets! But towards autumn she fell ill from a severe kick, which led to inflammation, and, not receiving any medicine, seemed likely to die. I had been away, and, coming back, asked why she was left so. "It comes from God," said the Patriarch, "and if she dies, she dies."* It was obvious to reply that all things come from God, but that God helps him who helps himself; but the old man had other horses, and if God willed that his beauty should die, who was he to complain? I suggested medicine, but the Patriarch disapproved of that, as usual, so I took matters into my own hands, gave the case over to the kind American doctor, and the mare was soon on her legs again. It is strange how this fatalism, or perhaps it might be called resignation, reigns like a spell over the East. When the Patriarch himself lay nearly dying for want of food and a little medicine, and scarcely

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* A very common manner of speech in the East (cp. Israel's words, Gen. xliii, 14: "If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved"). The style is therefore older than the fatalistic influence of Islam."

able to lift his eyes from exhaustion, his Bishop and attendants stood round, and merely said it was God's will if he died, until one cup of tea and some toast restored the old man. It makes the blood of a European boil to see such things; the stupid helplessness, the waste of noblest powers and thoughts that God has given man, and all because the East lies under a spell that should have died two thousand years ago, but for the dead hand of Islam.

As I left the diwan towards evening, the sound of chanting from the church mingled strangely with other voices. Away from the roof of some Moslem house came the sound of the pipes and drums accompanying the mournful, stately wedding dance, and of cymbals banging at intervals. Five hours they had danced (for Ramadhan, the Moslem months of fasting, was over), and would dance three hours more. Then came the gun from the Serai as the sun went down, and the cry of the "Muëddhin" was caught up from minaret to minaret, calling the faithful to prayer: "Great is Allah and Mohammed, the prophet of Allah! There is no God but Allah! Come to prayer."

The dancing goes on, but the patriarchal mulberry tree is deserted, save by a monk or two, and the groom of His Holiness's stable, for whom no one cares but two starving cats that keep up a gay accompaniment to the Turkish pipes, and anxious for their supper mew a mournful grace, rubbing their skinny sides against his legs; poor wretches, they get little more from him than the half-starved dogs pick up in the dirty streets behind the church. Moslems and Christians are not often cruel to animals, but they neglect them shamefully; yet it is a sin to kill a dog, however ill or wounded, so that one sees at times sad sights about the market.

There was a very different scene in the morning, groups of children chattering, or playing leap-frog round the court, and solemn gossips spinning or carding wool upon the tombstones; all gaily dressed, while the smaller ones, stout with well-girdled petticoats, stalked about in an important manner, and watched their elders. Now all have gone, and as the sunlight fades away one can just make out the form of an aged

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man, too helpless even to lift his hand to eat, seated between two tombs, as if he would be near his last resting place, while his wife places food between his toothless gums, then smoothes his dress, and washes his face, laying him gently down with a handkerchief over his head to sleep among the graves. He has been many years like this, growing weaker year by year, and his wife's devotion never fails. Sometimes at night one hears a doleful voice moaning "O God, my God, I am dying, take me home. Oh, let me come." He seldom speaks, but loves to sit all day there among those he knew and loved twenty years ago, until he shall sleep with them. At last even him we can see no more, only the black mulberry tree outlined against the sky; then stars blaze out one by one, and the fires light up all along the horizon where the Arabs burn the Kali. Only the wedding drums are heard, and the Moslems go on dancing.

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CHAPTER VI.

Mardin and its Syrian Inhabitants.—I.

Mardin is a large town, whose chief characteristic for an unprejudiced stranger is the prominence of smells. As all drainage is conducted, with an artless simplicity quite Oriental, from the courts of the houses straight into the streets, it may be imagined that the raised pavements or stepping stones that line them are not to be despised.

Away from the streets there was no lack of good air in such an eyrie as Mardin; and upon the Patriarch's balcony there was always a fresh breeze blowing day and night from far away across the plain. Except where the hills of Sinjar stretch like a great arm across the level west of Mosul, and the low western ranges shut out the Euphrates, the plain lies all along the south from the hills on which Mardin stands as far as the eye can reach, broken only by the old Assyrian mounds dotted like mole hills over a field. Under many of them nestle villages, inhabited some by Arabs, others by Syrians. May and June deck the plain with a carpet of flowers, mallows, anemones, cornflowers, and balsams, which, splashed in rich spaces among the green or yellow wheat, light up a view long to be remembered. The magnificence of the scene may be imagined, when in May the thunderstorms chase one another across the sky, venting their last fury before the summer, and, casting black shadows, fill up great lakes that enhance the brilliance of the plain.

The town stands about four thousand feet above the level of the sea, and presents a striking appearance when seen

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from outside the walls; for the houses are of good limestone, and well built; while the designs of some, with their arched and richly carved porticos and doorways are quite beautiful.

This is especially noticeable as one sees the town from the gardens to the west, house rising behind house up the steep hillside, so that every window that does not look on a court-yard has the same glorious view across the plain. Three minarets break the monotony of the flat roofs, contrasting with the domes below them, and the short but graceful bell-towers that crown each Christian church; behind all stands the high rock with the castle on its top, yellow and grey against the brilliant sky. Lower down the houses lose themselves in gardens and the tan yards, among which may be seen many an ancient rock-cut tomb. As each house is overlooked by that above it, the roofs are less used in Mardin than in other Turkish towns; large balconies taking their places for the purpose of sleeping and promenade.

Mardin contains about twenty thousand souls, and is the centre of government for the "Mutserrafiyah" or division, of which there are three in the province of Diarbekr, the seat of the Wali or Governor.

Having fully established myself as the Patriarch's guest, I soon fell into the ordinary routine of Eastern life. Rising about 6.30 a.m., my room was open to visitors until breakfast arrived, some time between eight and ten; and, as my room was a kind of ante-room to the diwan, all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children, took advantage of occasional delay in their reception by His Holiness to visit or inspect the strange creature from Europe.

Some of the visitors came regularly three or four times a week, among whom were the priests and rahabs above described, the secretary, and several leading members of the Syrian community. Of these there was one man, Abu-Selim, known generally as Hawajah* Abu, of whom it is hard to

* Hawajah, a term strictly applied to merchants, but commonly used as a title of respect among Christians in preference to Efendi. Europeans are generally addressed by the title; so too the American missionaries as a body are called "the Hawajat."

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speak. Among much that was so disheartening, and disagreeable to look back upon, it will always be the intensest pleasure to remember the loyal friendship, the perfect and courteous hospitality, of this good Syrian. It is seldom given to anyone to meet a man, to whom month after month under most trying and difficult circumstances one can go and converse, asking advice and getting full sympathy and help in such a way as was possible with Abu Selim. For some years he had been the representative of the Syrian people of Mardin in the Government, and has always been treated with the utmost trust by the Patriarch, to whom his perfect uprightness and invincible loyalty have combined with thorough good sense and a good knowledge of Syrian history and language to make him invaluable. It was this man who became my best friend, and without whom life in Mardin would have been far more difficult than it was. It required wise help at times to avoid shoals and keep a clear course through sundry intrigues and jealousies that are sure to fall in the way of a European living as the guest of an Oriental.

One morning Abu came in to my room with his two sons, to deliver a formal invitation to attend the celebration of the Eucharist at the church on Mar Mikaïl on the following morning, it being the feast day of the Saint. At the same time it was requested that I should visit the school attached to another of the Mardin churches, namely that of Mart Shimuneh, and acquaint myself with the learning of the Syrian boys.

The next day therefore, as the Celebration was to begin according to the usual custom at a very early hour, we were careful to rise almost with the sun; nevertheless when we reached the church we found the service already half finished. The church is the oldest in Mardin, and, standing just outside the walls, forms a conspicuous object in the landscape as the traveller approaches Mardin from the plain. The Saint to whom it is dedicated is one of local fame, not the S. Michael of the heavenly hierarchy. Little is known of him, although his fanciful adventures form on holy days an ample subject for the wayward eloquence of the parish priest.

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The church is strongly built for protection against Arabs, and presents more the appearance of a fort than a place of worship. A low door * on the west side, scarcely high enough for a sheep to enter, leads into a courtyard, on the south side of which is the church, on the north the few rooms occupied by the priest, and one used as a meeting-room by the committee of the church. We left a very large crowd of people on the hillside outside the building, to find nearly as many crowded in the little courtyard.

The feast of Mar Mikaïl is one of the few besides those of the New Testament Saints which have not fallen into disuse. The present Patriarch, who by his reforming tendencies at one time nearly fell into disfavour with his people, has done much good in disencumbering the Church of unnecessary feast days and certain antiquated ceremonials, to which, however, the people cling with considerable fondness. On this account they make no small stir over this feast day, although I think it is renowned more on account of the antiquity of the church than the fame of the Saint, of whom I could gain no surer information than that he rode a white horse and fought against the infidels. It used to be said that what with Fridays for the Moslems, Sundays for the Christians, and the countless holy days of Syrians, Armenians, Romanists, and Moslems, scarcely a day remained on which one could be sure of buying bread in the market.

The court was a pretty sight crowded with women and children, all dressed in their gayest, for whom there was no room in the church. It seemed like a fair, and the children and babies seemed thoroughly to appreciate the scene and their own fine clothes. When we had made our way through these crowds into the church, a stool was placed for me among a number of friends, and I watched the course of the service. It did not vary from the usual Celebration, except that the offertory plate was handed round more frequently. Ignorant

* These low doors are often found in the mountain churches, especially among the Nestorians. The learned say that they teach humility; the worldly that they are so built to keep cattle out, or prevent the Kurds stabling their horses inside.

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of this I gave all my small donation at once and was surprised when the verger wished to hand back the greater part of it in small change, for refusing which I no doubt gained a considerable reputation for bounty.

The offertory and hymns were followed by an Arabic discourse from the Priest, presumably "fairy tales from the life of Mar Mikail rather than sermony,"* as an eager little Reformer described such exercises to me. That it met the approval of the hearers was evident from the frequent "Amens" and "God so award" that greeted each period of the preacher, a worthy, thoughtful man, but not endowed with eloquence. It is worth noting here that this man, having recently lost his wife, and thinking it unseemly for a widower to visit the private houses of his parishioners, was intending, in accordance with Syrian custom, to leave his parish with a view to entering some monastery.

After the Celebration was over every man and boy came up to the altar to receive the blessing of the priest and the sign of the Cross with the holy water; after which they kissed the Book of the Gospels, partook of the "Antidoron" or blessed bread, and went out. The women did not do this; for them two small boys presided at a font of holy water outside the door, and being left by the authorities to their own devices enjoyed themselves not a little. During service the women had sat behind a screen of trellis work that shut off part of the north aisle, whose seclusion gave them an opportunity for discussing affairs, of which, to judge from the noises which at times proceeded from this sanctum, they were not slow to take advantage. Their number, as usual in the native churches, was far fewer than that of the men, although at the Protestant service the proportions seemed to be reversed.

Some finely inlaid woodwork, a ninth-century tomb of a bishop, and a fine piece of Persian embroidery on the altar were all the treasures of which the church could boast,

* Like the Pre-Reformation sermons in England described as being taken from "uncertain stories and legends" in the Sarum use.

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although is was said that there were many valuable things stored in the house of one of the deacons, it being considered unsafe to leave them in the exposed building. According to the inscription on the tomb the church was built about the year 155 A.D. (466 of the Seleucid era); but of the truth of the tradition there were no means of judging except that the date was several centuries earlier than that assigned to the Patron Saint, Mikail. Having seen all there was to be seen in the church, we were conducted to the large diwan on the other side of the court, where coffee and cigarettes were being busily circulated; but when we had enjoyed these for a short time we took our leave, anxious to return to the church of the Arbain and obtain a somewhat more substantial breakfast.

The church of the Arbain is dedicated, as its name implies, to forty saints, said in the oriental "Acta Martyrum" to have suffered in the thirty-sixth year of the great persecution begun by Sapur the Great in 340 A.D. Their leaders were S. Abdé and S. Ebedjesu, who are celebrated on May 15 and 16. Nothing external shows the building to be a church, except a graceful little campanile surmounted by a cross. erected by the present Patriarch. By the great western door there is also a finely sculptured tomb of a bishop. The interior is divided into four aisles by three rows of four massive pillars, directly from which, without any capitals, about eight feet from the ground springs the vaulting of the roof. The massiveness is demanded by the immense weight which the pillars have to support, the whole space between the vault and the flat roof being filled up with rubble, with one good result at least, that the church is as warm in winter as it is deliciously cool in summer.

Upon the altar, before which hangs a curtain of most beautiful and rare Mardin silk, stands a fine casket of silver *repoussé* work, also made in Mardin, but spoiled by a slight excess of gold and red tinsel. In a recess in the east wall of the nave are preserved some of the bones of Mar Behnam, the much-reputed evangeliser of Mosul, and son of King Sennacherib (not the Assyrian monarch). It is hard to say

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to what part of the saint's body the treasures belonged, but their green colour clearly proved them to be the bones of a saint; and, if a saint, why not Mar Behnam? These were the only relics that I saw in any Old Syrian church; nor did they seem to be the object of any particular veneration.

The paintings with which the walls of some of the Syrian churches have been of late years embellished are remarkable less for beauty than for the characteristic realism with which they are executed. Elijah's ascension is a favourite subject, for he is one of the most popular of Eastern saints, both with Moslems and Christians, and the flames afford unrivalled opportunities for scenic display. The Last Judgment, again, is frequently pourtrayed, interesting for the varied studies of character, which issue at times in grimly humorous results. The figures are as a rule treated, if not with accuracy, at least with a certain stolid power and spirit, being all executed in deadly earnest, despite the grotesqueness of the result. Another subject frequently recurring is the Beheading of S. John Baptist. It was generally realistic enough—the bleeding head, the grimly delighted expression of Herodias's daughter, the sorrow of the Disciples accumulated in one massive tear upon the cheek of one sorrowing member of the band, with, to prevent all possible mistake, the name of the Baptist inscribed in large Greek capitals round the edge of the plate which received the blood.

Of the remaining churches of Mardin, two only are of much interest—one, a splendid old Roman basilica, built of stone and having a brick dome, which belongs to the Chaldæans, or Papal Nestorians; the other, of the same type but later date, to the Papal Armenians. The Papal Syrians possess none of the old churches or monasteries in or near Mardin, but have built for themselves a fine church and patriarchal establishment inside the town, as well as a large convent just outside. Relations are, as is natural, strained between them and the Old Syrians, while an old bishop, who belonged to neither party, assured me that there is as much ill-feeling between the various Papal communities as there is between either the Papal and Syrian, or Protestant bodies.

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As soon as our frugal breakfast was over, and Abu Selim had finished his coffee and cigarettes, we started on our way to the church of Mart Shimuneh, whose school we were that morning to inspect. The streets were, as usual, busy, and filled with the motley coloured crowd that lends to the dullest town of the East a peculiar beauty. Mardin, moreover, like Diarbekr, Aleppo, and Urfa, presents, on account of the fine stone of which it is built, a far less squalid appearance than many Turkish towns. True, the outskirts are as unpleasant as elsewhere, and the actual pavements not inviting. Slimy pools and noisome dust-heaps abound, into which some dashing equestrian may push you as you walk. But this drawback is outbalanced by the pleasure felt at the absence of European fashions, that have not had hitherto a favourable effect upon Eastern towns. One may see an officer lounging in semi-Russian uniform outside a (so-called) coffee stall, or an orderly slouching along in the uncouth, unbuttoned hose ordained by the "Tanzimat." All else is indescribably Eastern. There passes a beautiful white ass, with gorgeous trappings, led by a white-turbanded slave, and bestrode by a shapeless mass enveloped in black silk. The precious burden is betrayed by a slim ankle, green clothed, and protected from the clumsy brass stirrup by a bright yellow slipper. Further on, small Arabs dart in and out of groups of solemn blue-robed townsmen, resplendent in gay girdles and heavy watch-chains. Presently we pass a small procession escorting a bishop on a state visit, and all give and receive "Peace, and the blessing of the Messiah." He wears the head-dress peculiar to Armenian clergy—a dark purple robe, on which a rich gold chain and cross glitter. Beside him walk a black-robed monk, bearing his staff, and a small boy with a huge umbrella for use in open spaces. Then we reach the open market, filled with sellers of fruits and vegetables; beggars parading all manner of foul diseases; donkeys loaded with brushwood for burning, or to make awnings before the shops; boys bare-legged, and shouting to their animals or friends in Arabic and Kurdish; while some magnificent Turk or proud Arab strolls, with a look of fine

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contempt, through the scene. When we returned two hours later all had dispersed to sleep during the mid-day heat, except a few small boys that lay coiled up by their donkeys under the shade of a wall. From the market were steps leading down an arched alley below the "dukkans" (shops) to a lower street, and thence we dived still further, making our way down the face of the hill, until an open platform was reached in front of the church. Here we were received by a small party of the chief members of the congregation, and escorted to the schoolroom below the diwan, built at considerable expense some years since as an episcopal residence. After I had been conducted to a cushioned seat at the top of the room next to the teacher, the boys made all a sweeping salam, and began to chant, to the tune of the Turkish national song, the following hymn in my honour. A copy was handed to me in an envelope addressed to "The Right Rev: the Mister Master the Inspector," and was translated as follows into English: "To my dear Sir the Mister Master. Welcome my dear Sir, we are very happy to have you to this hour. and both much obliged by your visit to us, and very glad of it. and that fill my heart gladness—i pray from God. that grant the happy health peace and prosperity to miss queen Vehtorya, and many thanks. i am beg you to accept my best wishes on the present accasion. May God bless you and give you a happy life at all events. My whereas unskilful to the English languag. therefore I beg your pardon and take cary of yourself—." The Arabic, of which this was a translation, was extremely elegant. The Syrians are a poetical nation, and our friend "Mu'állim" (teacher) Ablahad was no exception, composing odes of various beauty on every occasion that presented itself. He was a man of some originality, having been well educated at the Papal Syrian school, and had a great enthusiasm for teaching and considerable power of imparting knowledge. The devotion of the sixty boys to him was most remarkable; all their holidays were spent in expeditions with him into the country, or games under his direction in a garden. My visit had inspired him with an absorbing desire to learn English, and the above

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effusion was translated and written after only three or four days' study. He would come, too, phrase-book in hand, and insist on inflicting an English conversation extracted therefrom on any luckless stranger with five words of English at his command.

The interior of the school was a sight familiar to all who have visited the East; at the top of the room a chair and desk covered with red calico, at which the teacher sat, and a broad low bench all round the walls, where the boys placed their mats and sat on their heels behind the boxes, which contain their books, and on which they write. Each had his own brass ink-bottle with long pen-case attached, carried at other times in the fold of their ample girdles. The whole effect of colours was quite brilliant, the white plaster walls, the teacher in his bright yellow tunic, with long grey coat and scarlet "tarbush," surrounded by boys of various sizes dressed in all the colours of the rainbow; while here and there some small aristocrat blazed out in a paste ring or a silver-mounted girdle, and a pale blue broadcloth jacket or frock coat. The boys were dressed precisely as their fathers, and looked in many ways like little old men. Upon the floor in front were placed rows of red slippers, into which the boys snuffled, as they descended to say a lesson, or make a display of algebraic gymnastics upon the blackboard. In the middle was a carpet spread, on which the smallest boys, for whom there was not room above, sat and twiddled their thumbs in open mouthed awe at the learning of their elders, pretending all the while to learn Mar Efrem's Syriac hymns. It was a picturesque dress that they all wore, and serviceable in a country where bright colours harmonize well in the blazing sun, and the heat makes stockings and tight waistcoats intolerable. It was a little trying to have to listen to the schoolmaster's effusion, especially when a hopeless pronunciation crowned the absurdity of the English. An irresistible temptation to laugh at the mock solemnity of the whole scene was disguised by a smile of imperial approval, which my close connection with "miss queen Vehtorya" surely warranted. Sherbet and cigarettes were brought to sustain us, while the

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parish fathers watched intently to see the impression made upon me by their boys' display of ability.

The good order of the boys, their general quickness and eagerness to work, especially when the absence of all competitive stimulus was taken into account, were quite astonishing, and showed Mu'allim Ablahad to be a man of ability and the boys worth teaching. But the excellence of this school was only one of a few exceptions to the general rule of mediocrity, such as was found in most of the schools in towns and villages. Arabic, Turkish, Syrian, and sometimes Persian are the subjects usually taught, with geography, arithmetic, and a species of history. For religious teaching the Gospel is read in a perfunctory way, and its meaning sometimes expounded, while all else is comprised in a short Catechism lately printed at Deir-el-Za'aferan.

As soon as the formalities demanded by the occasion had been gone through, and sufficient polite speeches made, we were escorted out into the street, and found our way slowly back to the church of the Arbain.

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CHAPTER VII.

Mardin, and its Syrian Inhabitants, II.

The chief function to which I was invited during my stay in Mardin, was a dinner party given by the leading Syrians at the house of Abu Selim. I was sitting one morning in his dukkan, which stands in the centre of the great bazar of Mardin, when a formal invitation was presented, requesting my company that same evening at twelve o'clock *à la Turka*, that is at sundown, to which time I determined, in order to show my appreciation of the honour, to be punctual. Meantime I sat in the dukkan and watched the progress of business. The bazar is a large space about a hundred yards square, completely covered by very lofty vaulting supported on square stone pillars. Between these are rows of dukkáns, facing each other, and divided by a narrow passage along which the world may pass. It was mid-day and we found the place crowded, for it is always very cool, and dark; and on the small platform in front of each store, which generally measures about ten feet square, lounged the gossips of the town talking to the owners, who sat cross-legged displaying their wares to some Turkish servant, or a stalwart unveiled dame from the Kurdish mountains. The coffee seller passed up and down as purchasers took their places to inspect the goods, and were regaled with cigarettes and coffee at the merchant's expense; and at one corner a tall Armenian from Diarbekr presided over an ice pail and a dish of maccaroons, while a boy walked up and down crying out the charms of this novel

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luxury. The dukkans seemed to contain nothing but cloths and calicos piled from floor to ceiling, mostly of European manufacture, Manchester cottons, and French muslins, Austrian broadcloths, such as Efendis love for their flowing robes, and the thick striped silks from Diarbekr or Aleppo, that are so much used for the tunics of men and boys.

There was little air of business about the stalls, except among those who were engaged in making up accounts. For the most part no one seemed anxious to buy, nor did the lordly merchants court custom. I have many a time sat an hour in one of these dukkans, without seeing five customers in any of the neighbouring stalls. Gossip is always rife, and very interesting it is, as soon as familiarity has removed the restraint imposed by a stranger's presence in this land of suspicions. There are very few Moslems who do business in these bazars, nearly all the trade being in the hands of the Christians, who occupy various quarters of the building according to their church. Round Abu Selim's store was quite a group of others belonging to various members of the Syrian church. In one, belonging to Melki-Qas-Elias, who is considered in virtue of his age to be the leading man in the community, I spent several hours talking of politics, so far as that was possible in a public place, of education in England and Turkey, of the Syrian Church and the prospects of Christian and Moslem; or at times the conversation would turn on agriculture, in which Melki, who was a considerable land owner, showed great interest, and being very anxious to find the means of importing from England a steam plough, made numerous inquiries as to its price and power of work. Few men that I met in Turkey, showed so much appreciation of progress, or so good an idea of how it might and should be advanced in Turkey. But alas! such things seem at present a dream. It was a pleasant place to lounge in, and hear the news, eating slices of cucumber and sipping coffee; and all that made itself felt of the mid-day heat was a shaft of sunshine shooting almost perpendicular down through the grated opening in the roof, and giving just light enough for the transaction of the quiet business of the day.

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At six o'clock the same evening Yakob and I were due at Abu Selim's house for the dinner party to which he had invited us. Having had a hint of the time over which such entertainments are spread, I arrived, in spite of my former resolution, an hour late, and was a little surprised to find myself even then almost the first arrival. Others soon came, and a feeble stream of conversation trickled on, until the arrival of a tray full of glasses, containing a warm dilution of a soft brown colour strongly flavoured with cinnamon, and very sweet. I was inexperienced enough to ask its style and title, and was told with injured surprise that it was tea, prepared *à l'Anglaise*, though that was one of the last names with which I should have connected the beverage. Tea is becoming a favourite drink in Turkey, not instead of coffee, but of the sherbet or cooled drinks that are handed to guests; it comes generally from Russia, and although a trifle dear on account of the carriage, is extremely good, when properly made. And this was tea I was drinking.

Abu Selim's house was comparatively new, and rather handsome, for he was a well-to-do man, and with his two brothers kept a large establishment. It is curious how even late in life the younger brothers generally continue to occupy a position of inferiority in the house, unless they separate from the paternal roof, and set up homes for themselves. Selim's brothers were no exception, and were treated more as upper servants, serving us as we sat at meals, and taking altogether a lower position in the diwan than our host. The families of all three lived in this one house, and filled the five immense bedsteads that stood in the balcony.

From the ground floor, containing the courtyard, entered by a large iron-bound door, the stables, and kitchens, in which the women sit during most of the day, cooking, washing clothes, or weaving, a narrow stair leads into a large open "balakhana" (balcony) about fifty feet square, paved with fine yellow limestone, and enclosed on the open side by a beautiful stone balustrade, that lends a quite Italian character

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to the house. This court forms the chief living place during the summer, being filled with large wooden beds for lounging during the day and sleeping by night. The view, as from all the open balconies of Mardin, is glorious over the roofs and across the boundless plain below. Into this court open various rooms, in one of which, lately built in the handsomest modern style, guests are received. Windows, doors, and every spot that gives any opportunity to the ingenious architect, are covered with a profusion of carving in rich Arabesque design, good though somewhat lacking in originality. Persian carpets enrich the room, and in an alcove stands a magnificent wardrobe of walnut wood, inlaid with ivory and olive wood, to contain the bedding during the day time. Third-rate glass and crockery from France or Austria bedeck the walls, ranged with gaudy prints of ballet dancers and amiable European sovereigns framed with their blue-eyed progeny in German-gilt frames, and blazoned in all the glory of Russian oleography. A photograph of the Patriarch and another of a bishop complete the decorations; for it is hard so to classify the mirrors hung about the room, which betray the self-satisfied with reflections of weird distortion. The other apartments that form the ordinary dwelling rooms are far less elaborate, being arranged facing each other round a square space, from which they are divided by a low wooden balustrade. Here the ladies and children hide during an entertainment, and engage in the mysterious concoction of coffee and other delights.

We sat down for some time listening to the apologies for the inferiority of Mardin to London, that pass for politeness, until cigarettes and coffee appeared, followed by a string of guests with the usual train of servants and boys, who took up their station at the lower end of the diwan, in expectation of the fragments that should fall to their lot from our table. It is usual, when one dines out, to be accompanied by a servant, who carries the lantern through the streets, keeps the narjilah full and lighted, fetches water, and makes himself generally useful to guest and host, receiving in return a good supper and an occasional glass of arrak. Last of all arrived

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the musicians, with a violin, cymbals, and kanun*; a fourth sang, or rather emitted vocal sounds. Abu Selim's son had been entertaining us on the kanun for some time, as well as Yakob, who played it uncommonly well. Selim, too, had sung some of his favourite hymns in a manner quite excruciating; but his evident delight at thinking that he pleased us quite outbalanced the pain he caused. Such of the Turkish tunes that Yakob played, would have been excellent, if one could get accustomed to the doleful system of tuning the instrument in a minor key, and the frequent use of quarter-tones. There was plenty of talking and laughing among the guests, about what I scarcely understood, while Selim read to me extracts from a splendid copy of Bar Hebræus in his possession, and told me how great a calligraphist he himself was. He is, indeed, a most exquisite penman of Syriac, and has written some hundred copies, chiefly portions of the Scriptures, the Psalms, and service books, for different churches. He was much troubled, however, by the wretched binding with which he has to be contented; the printing press at Beirut does admirable work in other departments, but there is still much to be desired in their book-binding. Nor do the Dominicans at Mosul, even if Selim would allow one of his precious manuscripts into their hands, show much better results. An account of English workmanship in binding and printing only caused a hopeless sigh, although Selim has hopes that some day work may be done on the Patriarch's press of which the Syrian people may be proud.

After waiting two hours, supper began to cast its shadow before it. A man came in and spread a gaily-printed cloth upon the floor, while another placed a low stool in the centre for the monstrous metal tray that was rolled in after him by two boys. Others followed with cushions to recline on, a profusion of towels, more or less discoloured, for napkins, and baskets of bread cut into long, thick strips, which they placed all round the tray for use, Vergilian fashion, as plates or

* A kind of zither played with the finger tipped with metal.

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scoops for gravy. A few knives and forks to be shared among the guests, and a number of wooden spoons, with which to drink the sour milk, or leben, completed the preparations. Then the chief guests were invited to sit down to a succession of dishes, crowded one after the other on to the tray, sweets and meats, regardless of any fantastic laws of order or digestion, and as rapidly swept off by jealous hands to make room for other dainties. There was seldom time for more than one mouthful from a dish, as the attendants, who depended for their own supper on the amount they could rob from us, stood over us like harpies, very ravening, if the dish was savoury. One delicious compound of almond paste and dates I retained by means of keeping my knife in it, while its contents were ladled with a fork; but not for long, for it was soon snatched jealously away by the hungry boys.

As dishes came and went, some of the guests grew freer, declaring that knives and forks were a vain invention, that fingers were made first, and other whimsical aphorisms. So fingers took the place of forks, and plunged into the dishes, which, as they grew less to my taste, suited theirs the better; until the appearance of sour cream and garlic evoked a most ecstatic grunt of delight, that warned me to forbear. Last and chief came the lamb, roast whole, in an enormous copper cauldron swimming with rice and gravy, and stuffed with every delicacy of the season. This is one of the Syrian ideals of bliss; and as, by this time, all Frankish conventionalities had been discarded, limb was torn from limb, until all that remained to tell the tale were a few bones and a paltry pile of rice.

Rose water in a metal ewer and a large basin were welcome, as we rose panting from the fray, which had lasted in all not more than fifteen minutes. Nor were we sorry to drink some iced water from a lovely little silver bowl as we settled down again to coffee, cigarettes, and quiet talk. "Arrak," a liqueur distilled from grapes and very powerful, that forms a sort of *vade mecum* of most Syrians, had been flowing most of the time, and increased the general hilarity, and especially

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that of the musicians, who had kept up an appalling noise all through dinner, except when relieved by a chorus of Syrian hymns, led by a teacher in one of the schools and sustained by small boys of the household. I had once told Abu Selim that I was interested in these ancient hymns, with the result that my arrival was always a signal to the thoughtful old man to start a succession of them. But, to speak truth, there are few things more trying to English ears. But the hymns only filled intervals between the performances of the professional musicians. The violin was held upside down, tuned in a minor key without reference to fifths, and scraped with a bow that had never known resin. The second in command beat time with the cymbals, which he sent out from time to time to be warmed, in order that the tone might be sustained. The performer on the kanun was the most tolerable, had it not been for a most diabolical whistle, which he uttered occasionally by way of a diversion, placing two fingers in his mouth and bringing the sound by slow and agonising degrees down to a whisper.

Two of these men shared a cigarette between them, which a small boy kept alight, smoking it when it was not occupied, and handing it from one to the other as required; he was not an accomplished smoker, swallowing most of the smoke, and turning very pale. The vocalist, however, was the most noticeable of the musicians, but for his eye rather than his voice. As soon as he began to sing, his right eye would shoot to the right top corner, and his head begin to shake in the most distressing manner, shaking his eye to its place, if it did not go there at once. The louder he sang, the more he shook, and the further went his eye, until at fortissimo, he had to hold his jaw with both hands to sustain the effort. To this accompaniment conversation dragged slowly on in the general groove of politics and trade. Much interest was aroused when someone asked how much such a grand feast would cost in England,* or London, which was satisfied when I replied Sphinx-like, that London

* England and London are interchangeable terms in Interior Turkey.

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was one place and Mardin one place, and it would be hard to obtain such a feast in my own country. It was now past eleven o'clock, and as the little schoolmaster was walking solemnly up and down the room with a reed-pen in one ear, and a lighted cigarette in the other, it was clearly time to go to bed.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Mardin, and its Moslem Inhabitants.

"Whence comest thou?
What is thy country? and of what people art thou?"—Jonah.

One day in May the city of Mardin was in a ferment of excitement owing to the expected arrival of a person who was not only a General of the Turkish Army, but one of the numerous brothers-in-law of His Sublime Majesty the Sultan. As much splendour, therefore, as the place could command had been arrayed to meet and do him honour. But, unfortunately, just as the great man, with all his troops, was halfway between Diarbekr and Mardin, the rain began to pour in the most pitiless and unreasonable manner, and continued to do so for two whole days.

The Patriarch had borrowed a fine mare that I might go out with the Bishop of Deir-el-Za'aferan and Khuri Ibrahim and meet the Mushir (for such was his military title) halfway down the hill upon the north side of the town—a ceremony always demanded by the arrival, in official character, of any personage of sufficient grandeur.

The first person I met in the crowd, into which we were soon swept, was a Papal Armenian priest, who, ever since the day that my muleteer brought him to my room at the church after my arrival, had been a frequent visitor. Being a born gossip, he spent all his time that was not occupied in the daily services of the church conversing in the barber's dukkan with other men who had plenty of spare time, or calling on newly-arrived dignitaries from Europe or the

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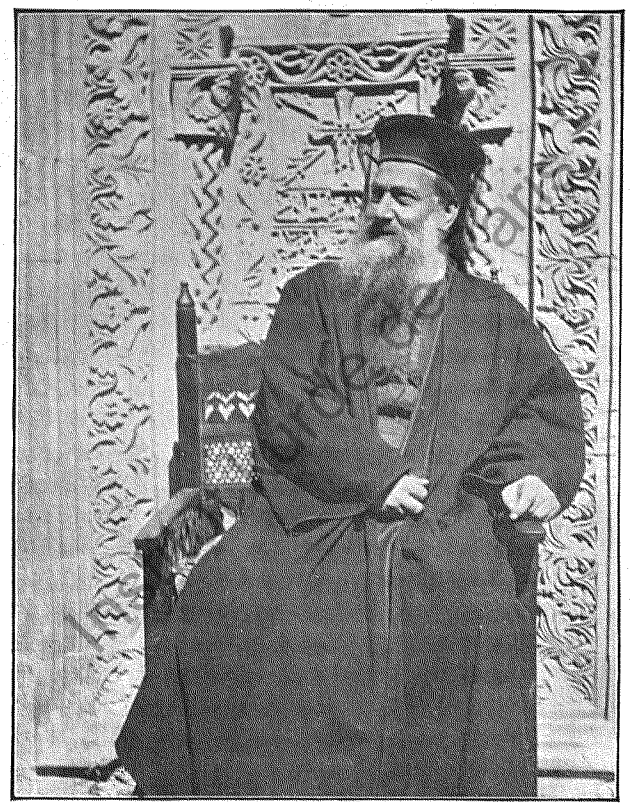
South. He spoke passable French, learned during a stay in Paris, and, being a man of refinement, which found little to satisfy it in Mardin, whither he returned to make a home for an unmarried sister, loved to talk of Venice and his home at the Armenian convent, or of the picture galleries and other



THE ARMENIAN PRIEST.

wonders he saw in his travels. Among other accomplishments, he had the art of making feeble copies of the old masters, and adorned his little room with these—a strange contrast to the surroundings of an Eastern house. On this day he was slipping along over the wet stones and drains in

his high-heeled polished goloshes, and had all the work he could manage in keeping up against the wind and rain with his great maroon umbrella, and long crape veil upon his head. He was very envious of those who were fortunate enough to have horses, as he shouted after me to remind me of the promise I had made to be at home the following day. However, we had to leave him, to catch a sight as best he might of the Mushir, and make our way through the dense crowd without any danger of being trodden under foot by the excited Nizam (regular troops), or, as it is easy to do in Mardin, falling down the chimney of an adjacent house.

The flat housetops were crowded, chiefly with women and children, the former all in their long veils, if not too poor to have them, or too old and ugly to need them, and the latter in all the gaiety of their red tarbushes, striped tunics, and silver buckles, forming such picturesque groups as only the East can afford, as they looked over one another's shoulders, and enjoyed themselves in spite of the rain.

There were streams of people riding, or on foot, upon the road for some distance from the town, until we reached two companies of ragged police and soldiers lining the road in readiness to salute His Highness. Soon we saw the Mushir and his officers winding round the lower bend of the road, where the coffee-house is, and the Saracen fountain-house under the walnuts, and a few horsemen dashed up towards us in an aimless way, followed by a motley company of cavalry. After them came a group of some dozen officers, gorgeously dressed, and among them the Mushir, conspicuous by his plain, white astrachan cap, and jacket of Russian fashion. It was a very pretty sight as the company moved slowly on, and man after man out of the crowd dismounted to kiss his hand, and, retiring to mount again, fell into the disorderly cavalry behind. He was a young-looking man, very handsome, and with a more European appearance than accorded with his company; he had travelled a good deal, and seemed prematurely grey. The bishop, following the example of the others, dismounted to deliver a welcome from the Patriarch, while I stood aside. We then mounted again,

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and fell into the miscellaneous guard, which was now difficult to distinguish from the cavalry. Here I found the value of a mare who would answer every vibration of the rein in a motley crowd, scarcely half of which could do more than keep their seats, for though these people are, from the nature of the country, on horseback from children, yet it is the rarest thing to find one who can ride even passably. Indeed, they ride by the dim light of nature, on very small saddles, and with their knees nearly level with their hips, and retain their balance by means of the mane, bridles being usually considered superfluous; so that they sway like poplars, and do all the guiding with a whip, seldom cantering more than a few hundred yards without a fall.

The procession ended in a large number of half-breed Arab-Kurds, enrolled at Diabekr as irregular cavalry, who were to escort the Mushir down across the plain. They looked very fine, for they were in themselves far more picturesque than their companions, whom they despised as slaves; and were upon horses that they rode well. As we drew near the town we heard sounds of cheering, and general appreciation of the honour which was being done to Mardin; but all was drowned by the ardour of the combined choirs of the Syrian churches, who, all in their white surplices, and gaily-coloured stoles, and undeterred by the rain, broke out into a fine Arabic hymn in praise of Mushirs, Sultans, Sultans' brothers-in-law, and "Tanzimat." This effusion was composed by the Syrian teacher at the church of Mar Shimunah, who had written the touching hymn for my welcome, and was created Poet Laureate to the Syrians by the Mushir on the spot.

At this point, owing to the narrowness of the street, I lost the Bishop, and got entirely entangled among the Arab recruits; and, being unable to turn, was swept along until we reached the open space before the Serai, where the Mushir disappeared, and I had to ride back alone between the admiring crowds that still lined the streets. Turning up the lane leading to the church of the Arbain, I nearly rode over the Armenian priest, who was in a terrible state of mind, having

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gone by the wrong road, and missed the whole procession. His only hope was to call immediately on the Mushir and give him the welcome he felt was expected. I discouraged his plan, and advised him to join our party the following day, when the Patriarch would pay a state visit to the Mushir in the Serai, and take some following with him. To this he agreed, and I parted from him to go home and make myself warm and dry.

There was always a good deal of stir in the Patriarch's house when a state visit was in prospect; so that the next morning my room was turned into a sort of ante-room, and crowded with those whom His Holiness refused to see. Great preparations were being made; the best robes were brought out, a crimson tunic, bound with a white and gold embroidered girdle, and a black satin "Abba" crossed by a long green sash, on which were sewn the seven orders that the Patriarch wore on such occasions. His beard had to be trimmed, and such washings of hands gone through as made one feel quite cool, and then the old man sat and had his breakfast while his attendants prepared themselves, and adorned their master's mare with the purple and silver trappings proper to the day.

In the middle of the morning the procession started. First walked two monks, Elias and Efrem, the one bearing the Patriarchal staff, the other the cross; behind them came the Patriarch on his mare, with a deacon on each side to clear the way, and keep beggars from hanging round the horse and kissing the Patriarch's hand. A few piastres were distributed to the poorest, to the rest the answer was continually given, "God is beneficent," obviously implying that the Patriarch was not. It is as much as to say to one who asks "Bakhshish," "Mafish" (I have not anything); only the Oriental has butter under his tongue.* Behind walked Yusef the "Katib" (secretary), and then came a few Syrian elders mounted on mares, with myself. It was curious to notice how magnificent an effect was made by such a small procession in an Eastern town, as

* See Burton, "Mecca and Medina," i. 8.

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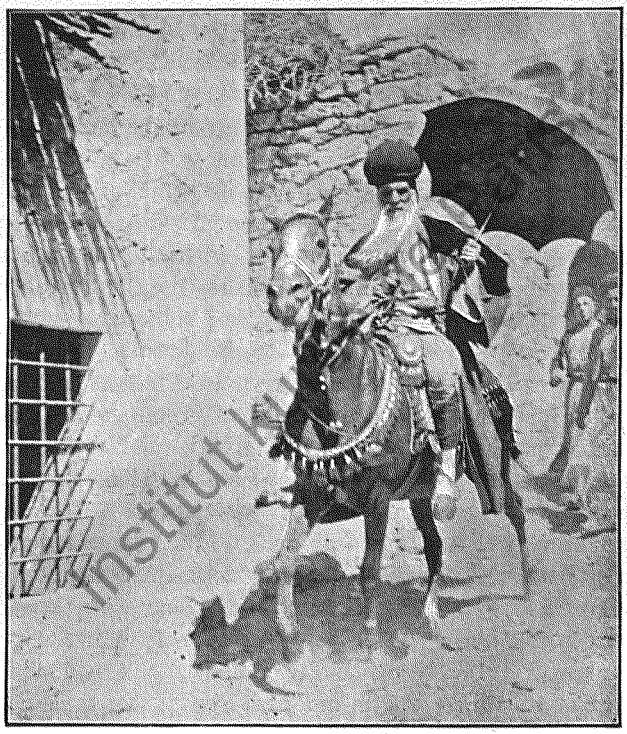
everyone made way, or struggled up to kiss the hand of the Patriarch, as splendid a figure on his Arab mare as could be conceived, or obtain an "Allah Ma'kum" (God be with you), as he passed. Through the bazar and up a narrow street we came to the open square before the Serai, and found it crowded with new recruits, zaptiehs, and soldiers, attendants



THE PATRIARCH PAYS A STATE VISIT.

on the Mushir, or police of the town, who, for the time, formed a guard of honour. Through the gateway of the Serai officials and visitors were passing in and out as our little procession stopped, and all dismounted to follow the Patriarch into the hall and up to the room where the Mushir held his diwan.

There was indeed a notable crowd in the room, as we entered, and one and all rose to give the Patriarch "Peace," and the Mushir to lead him, in virtue of his three and ninety years, to a seat of honour. Shoes were shed, and made one more row by those already laid at the door, and we sat down, to commence the ceremony of giving "Peace"* to everyone in the room who chose to accept it, and settle down to cigarettes until coffee was served. A decent period of solemn silence ensued, during which a handsome silver shibuk was pressed on the Patriarch but refused, and gave me an opportunity of scanning the company. On the left hand of the Mushir on the cushion of honour in the corner sat the Mutserraf, or provincial governor of the town, a man the most impossible and boorish that I met in Turkey. Such a person sticks in the memory, for the Turks nearly always are polite and endowed especially among men, with the grand manner. But this worthy, next to whom I sat, the Patriarch being on the right hand of the Mushir, as soon as I sat down, commenced a violent attack on England and all her works. The intense dislike felt by Mohammedans for England as most conspicuous in the march of freedom is generally veiled under a frigid courtesy due to men who rule so great an empire. But this man knew no restraint, and abused, with a freedom I nowhere else saw, the perfidy, the wordiness, the slow-moving regard for moralities, that characterises her policy. The Moslem cannot but admire the rigorous uprightness of her Indian rule, her justice to men of all creeds; but he hates her. The Turk hates her more for the obligations by which she has bound him. "Bulgaristan" has an ill-omened sound to him, rasping an open sore, and somehow England, and one of her Ministers in especial, seems the incarnation of the spirit

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* At Mardin Christians give the salute of "Salam Aleikum" (peace be upon you), and receive its answer, even from Sharifs (descendants of the Prophet); in another place it would be the highest possible outrage. In some towns the turband is the only part of the dress in which particular colours may not be used, in other the boots only; while in some again every garment has its specified shade.—Buckingham, "Travels in Mesopotamia," i. 324.

he hates. "Of a truth they are Sheitans,* these English;" there is no trusting them. Russia they hate more, for they are a more present danger. To Russia and England the Christians look, to the former as the power which they believe, to the latter as that which they hope, will come to possess the land. England, and her great Queen, is everywhere the protector of the oppressed, and it is wonderful the prestige which England possesses among the people merely from the rule of a Queen, who has sat fifty-five years on the throne, without an attempt at her overthrow, or one outbreak of disloyalty among all the nations she rules. We are too occidental in our ways for the Easterns, but the great Queen is one of the elements that make us regarded by them. I complained later of the tone in which the man spoke; but the Patriarch, to whom I mentioned it, merely shook his head, and said he was the "Father of disgust," and had no "Politika."†

I turned to my other neighbour, the "Reis," or Mayor of Mardin, a man of very different style, sitting in a most easy manner, one leg curled up beneath him, and smoking a huge "narjilah." I discovered that he had been to England, seen the Queen and a number of distinguished people, with none of whom he cared to talk, as they could give him no coffee, and no rocking chair, such as the American missionaries had. The Queen had given him one, and he sat in it before her! but he only saw the Queen for a short time! "She sat like a man, when I was in the room," he said. Then he played a little with his "Tasbih" (beads) that indispensable plaything of the East, and asked me whether I cared for the colour of his hair. It was a bright orange colour, having been that morning freshly dyed with henna. I evaded the question

* Sheitan—a word without definition—explains itself. Our greatest oriental diplomatist might be described as Sheitan. See Burton, "Mecca and Medina," i. 111, ii. 230. So Mrs Bishop, "Travels in Persia," i. 19, 171. "England talks and does not act" (cp. ii. 128, 272).

† A term applied to all the arts that are comprised in our old English expression "A man of parts," as well as suggesting diplomatic ability and good breeding.

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by saying that we had no custom to dye our hair. "Ah then, your women must have light hair sometimes; you like that, I suppose, and blue eyes; ugh! just like the Amerikanin." I admitted the soft impeachment, and praised the colour of the Mufti's (doctor of law) beard, which was black. "Ah the mufti, he is proud of his beard, and don't you know? but please God, you do know, as I, 'Hamdul-Ullah,' learned sometime since; he has, peace be upon him, and the mercy of God, a hair of the blessed one, peace be upon him, a hair of the prophet's beard. 'Subhan Allah, ya Engliz (glory to God, O Englishman)'"; and he looked curiously at me to see what I thought of the hair. Trembling lest I should commit myself, I asked what he did with it. "Mash Allah! it is his star, his 'qiblah,' the light of his dark nights; and, do you know, he shows it once a year in a small ebony box, which the people, the faithful ones, kiss, peace be upon them and God's mercy, and freedom from torment for ever." I wondered at the power of the hair, and was dumb.

The Mufti, who caused this digression, had just entered, and behind him the coffee. Those for whom this was the second relay, drank their cup, and watched their opportunity to rush out of the room like bolting rabbits, their hands beating a tattoo on the hearts and foreheads, a manœuvre designed to circumvent the polite host, who would otherwise conduct them to the door. The Mufti was such a solemn black-bearded man as I never before saw, and sat next to the Qadhi (judge), who was distinguished by a band of gold braid round his turband. The Mufti was gorgeous with green,* being a holy man and the possessor of the hair of Mohammed's beard, and seemed to take little notice of anyone in the room except a reverend sheikh, likewise arrayed in white and green, who occupied a seat of honour near the Mushir. This man was one of seven brothers, sheikhs and holy men all, another of whom was Sheikh of the ancient village of Dara, near Mardin. He was a man of most polished manners, and

* The colour green generally denotes a claim to descent from the prophet, being worn by Sharifs.

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talked pleasantly of things in general, and to me of things Turkish and English, bewailing the state of affairs in Turkey, and the leaden weight of custom that retarded progress. With the Patriarch he seemed especially friendly, and spoke in a way that betokened intimacy.

At last coffee was again served, and the Patriarch rose by the help of Rahab Elias, and walked slowly to the door accompanied by the Mushir, and my friend the Reis. There was one more visit to pay, to the Qadhi in his own diwan. The same ceremonies were gone through, and the same conversation followed, flavoured with inquiries as to customs in England, especially the manner of conducting legal inquiries. I was, with pardonable pride referring to the well-known integrity of our bench, when the Patriarch gave me a warning look. I desisted and began to describe our courts of law and juries. The warning was necessary, for in Turkey law, except in mere matters of technical legality, has been largely reduced to a matter of *£. s. d.*, and a case is decided by the extent of the douceur offered. Bribes are received from both parties to a suit as a matter of course, and the award goes to the highest bidder; and the higher and more unimpeachable the court, the higher the bid must be. The administration of law is one vast system of bribery; and to speak of the integrity of law courts is to provoke a smile of pity from a Turkish audience. Such a thing as impartial judgment appears to them not only impossible, but foolish. A man of law in Turkey depends on bribery for half his income, and owing to the vile system of allowing men to hold offices for a short time only, there is the ever present temptation to make hay while the sun shines.*

This visit over, our little train once more sought the streets, the Qadhi conducting the Patriarch and trying to make him accept a finely chased cigarette holder, which His Holiness refused, saying that he would only have to give one more

* Mrs. Bishop's words apply equally well to Turkey as to Persia: "There are few men (in Persia) pure enough to judge their fellows, or to lift up clean hands to heaven, and power and place are valued for their opportunities of plunder" (cp. Maclean and Browne, p. 26, 128, &c.).

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handsome in return; besides which he cared little for "fantasia."* The old man was very tired, for he had been out four hours, a long time for a man of ninety-three; so we mounted and rode in procession slowly to the church.

The Mushir remained a week in Mardin enrolling fresh recruits from the inhabitants of the plain, and then proceeded to Nisibin. There he caught sight from his tent of the Syrian church of St. James, the only building in the village worthy of the name. Having expressed a desire to sleep there, the large diwan over the church was prepared for him. When night came on and his own devotions were done, being of an inquiring mind, he requested the Bishop's servant to go through the form of his evening worship, during which his Excellency fell asleep. He pronounced therefore in the morning a favourable opinion on the man's devotion, and gained in the eyes of the Bishop, a simple man, who was absent at the time, the reputation of being a very Christian man, who for the sake of his position professed the faith of the false Prophet.

* A word descriptive of all kinds of ornament in words or things.

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CHAPTER IX.

Deir-el-Za'aferan.

On to God's house the people prest:
Passing the place where each must rest,
And entered like a welcome guest.

Tennyson.

About five miles eastward of Mardin and lower down towards the plain lies the monastery of Deir-el-Za'aferan. The ride from the eastern gate of the town, along the new Turkish road, above the gardens of figs and almonds and numerous vineyards, is one of extreme beauty. Not only is there the view across the boundless plain, with its varying shades of colour, its "tells" and villages, but westwards are the lower ranges of hills which rise out of the plain and grow more lovely as the sinking sun sharpens their outlines and throws the long shadows one upon the other. Eastwards are gardens too, a "paradise" with plane and walnut trees, stone-built fountains, in which the water from the hills above is husbanded, and where may usually be seen a group of women washing clothes, and boys who have galloped out their masters' horses to water, or a jaded drove of mules and donkeys resting after a weary journey from Mosul. A mile or more from the town, under the high range that runs far eastward, a bridle path leads off the road through vineyards to the village of Qala'at-el-Mara. Here and there, among the vineyards, one may see an erection of four poles roofed with brushwood, and a platform of the same, on which those who guard the grapes may take refuge from the noonday sun, and sleep safe from

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scorpions and snakes, such a booth as Jonah made at Nineveh and Isaiah often speaks of. The village contains a flourishing community of Syrians, occupied chiefly in making wine and weaving. They are ignorant, and therefore quarrelsome, although there are among them a few men of enlightenment, and one excellent priest. As is often the case, the three other priests look with little favour on their more worthy and more popular brother, regarding his continual visits to the private houses and diligent reading of the gospels as an encroachment on their own rights. It may be added that he was at one time attached to the Congregational community; but leaving them he was ordained priest at the urgent request of the village, and combines with the true doctrines of his own church the good he has learned from the American missionaries. His popularity is a considerable proof of the Syrian affection for the Bible. Within the last few years a large, handsome church has been built by the exertions of the villagers. The Patriarch gave a considerable sum towards the work, and, much to the delight of the people, celebrated the Holy Communion in the church one morning during last summer.

The name of the village is accounted for by the existence of a ruined castle on the top of the high conical hill, at the north foot of which the village stands. Who the lady or princess was, to whom tradition says that the castle belonged, it is impossible to tell. The natives of course say that she was a daughter of Darius, king of Dara, and held the fort successfully against Tamerlane. Perhaps the castle was, like the tower that stands near Dara in the plain, a fortification of the Romans or Persians; while, from the number of Sassanian coins found in the district, it would appear that it was built by one of that dynasty. Little remains, however, from which to determine its date.

The path from the village leads across a stream, which like the χαράδρα of Greece becomes a mere dry watercourse in summer, to a rich plateau, half-way between the top of the mountain and the plain, on which stands the picturesque monastery of the yellow rocks or Deir-el-Za'aferan. The

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building has called for little attention from various travellers who have visited it, nor could it have merited much from a casual observer, who perhaps would not have been permitted to see some of its most interesting contents. It is ten years since the place was restored by the present Patriarch, who obtained contributions for the purpose from all his people; so that now it forms a really imposing building, the additions being not only substantial but exceedingly picturesque.

As this monastery formed my home for some five months of the year, and also on account of its architectural beauty and the interest connected with it as a type of an eastern monastery and the headquarters of the Syrian Church, a rather longer description than usual may not be out of place.

High walls of massive masonry run all round the front that faces the plain, and inclose a large court, half of which serves as an inclosure for the mules, cattle, and goats, the other half as an entrance and stableyard. Along one side of the latter run the outer stables for the use of strangers; while on the north side steps lead up to the monastery. Before, behind, and on each side of the building are vineyards and gardens, with many a fruit tree and a pleasant reservoir. The little yellow figs are very abundant; and as they fail and are dried for winter use are succeeded by pomegranates and great juicy almonds, pears, and walnuts. In a good year the almonds and olives bring in a hundred pounds of revenue; but little care is taken of them, except during the picking season, so that they, like the grapes, do not yield half of what they should. The wine of Deir Za'aferan is justly famous, although few strangers are privileged to drink it; for not only is very little made, but the greater part of it is put aside for sacramental use, the grapes for this purpose being pressed by the hand instead of being trodden by the feet. As much, however, as remains over at the end of the year is used for general consumption with the ordinary wine, although the monks themselves are very abstemious all through the year, and seldom touch either wine or "arrak."

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The kitchen-garden, well-stocked with lettuces, pumpkins, cucumbers, and marrows, forms a delightful place in which to spend the heat of the day. A stream of cold water is collected in a great tank that stands in the middle for bathing and washing clothes, and runs from a marble mouth into the great "aiwan," or covered court, so commonly used in the east as a refuge from the sun. Mulberry and walnut trees form a pleasant shade, and keep off the mosquitoes; while there is always occupation, when needed, in killing off as many as possible of the small locusts that infest the country in July. To sit in such a garden as this, and hear the water trickle, and eat fruit, is the eastern idea of bliss. The horses tethered just outside cause an occasional diversion by stretching their cords and getting within pawing distance of each other; or one of the Syrians sets up one of those indescribably monotonous songs, all nose and throat and quarter tones; while the rest smoke, and, especially if there are Moslem Efendis amongst them, sip small glasses of "arrak." On these afternoons in the garden, the small boys, after their work among the fruit trees and sheep, or in the monastery, would rig up a swing, and get really hot like English boys; or they would bathe in the pool, or sometimes play draughts with pieces of pomegranate peel and a board improvised on a flat stone. In the evening, when the daily service was over and the day's work done, the Bishop would come down, and we would sit and listen to old-world stories of the Syrians, or to the latest news from Mardin.

Up the steps from the courtyard to the monastery we pass through an immense pair of iron-bound doors into the cloister that runs all round the inner quadrangle. To the right of these doors and over the stables in the outer court are the four new rooms built for the printing presses, at which the Bishop spends most of his spare time. The door at the end of this building leads on to the roof of the stables, and there we sat, evening after evening, watching the sun go down and the lovely lights succeeding each other, chameleon-like, over the plain. One could conjure up visions there of what this country had once been, and

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dream of what it might once again be, until a boy came to call us in to a frugal supper and the nightly inspection of the horses.

Within the quadrangle is at all times a busy scene, but especially towards evening; the deacons are preparing the boiled wheat and fruit for the monks' supper upon a raised stone dais in one corner; the boys are leading the horses that have just come in up and down the pavement to prevent them catching cold, and a group of monks sit reading or talking, listening perhaps to the news of a stranger from Mosul or Aleppo, or welcoming home a monk from travels among the mountains. The cloisters are arched all round; to the east is the great church of Mar Yakob, and to the south of that the mausoleum of the Patriarchs and the Bishops of the monastery. The former is a fine building, nearly square, with immense walls, in the thickness of which are alcoves ten feet deep. The capitals of the columns are richly but roughly carved, and a frieze of floral design runs the whole way round the church. The semi-domes over the alcoves are filled with modern and very bad paintings, as are the spandrils of the roof. There is also a dome, devoid of ornament, the outside of which is not circular, but a four-sided pitched roof of tiles. The eastern part of the church is of course occupied by three sanctuaries, the centre one containing the high altar, the north being used as a chapel for special occasions, such as the making of the oil of ordination and baptism; the south serves as a vestry and for the preparation of the sacramental elements. These three chapels are divided from each other and from the church by massive walls, in which there are doors, and are all of different shape. Against the wall, on the north side of the central sanctuary, stands the Patriarch's chair, in which he is consecrated and which he always afterwards occupies. It has the name of Peter and Ignatius written in gold upon the back, along the top and side of which runs a lovely design of inlaid ivory, and underneath is placed a card inscribed with the name of the reigning Patriarch. The chair is covered with a valuable Persian carpet, and has a high wooden canopy above it.

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Almost the only other ornaments of the church are the few altar vases, the Cup and Paten which always stand there covered with an embroidered cloth, the Patriarch's and Bishop's staffs, the cymbals, the fans, and the candlesticks. On the reading desk before the altar is placed the old manuscript Gospel* and Bible, lections from which form one of the chief parts of every service, and in the body of the church a lectern is placed on either side, containing the prayer and psalm books for the people's use. On the south wall is the portrait of the founder, the only original painting in the church. The Syrians never have approved of pictures† since the days of Jacobus Bardæus, and these portraits are the only genuine paintings to be found in their churches.

Morning and evening and at midday the bell‡ of the convent sounds for prayer. The Bishop and all the monks attend, as well as many visitors. An account, however, of these services will be reserved for a fuller treatment as part of the ritual of the Syrians.

The mausoleum that adjoins the church on the south side contains little of interest, except the tomb of Mar Evgen (Eugenius), a renowned Syrian saint, to whom the building is dedicated. The tombs are placed in large recesses, of which there are eight ranged round the walls, each containing several Patriarchs or Bishops. Like the Patriarchs of Athens, buried in the chamber on Mount Lycabettus, they are placed in a sitting posture, side by side, some of the chambers containing as many as ten. This manner of burial is not usual, the ordinary clergy and laymen being interred outside the

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* The gospel placed on this desk is always bound in silver, chased with a representation of the Crucifixion, of Byzantine design.

† Ainsworth, ii. 343, is quite incorrect when he speaks of the Syrians as partial to pictures. Such as they have, except of the kind mentioned in the text, are undoubtedly due to the Papal influence. Many have also been sent from Russia.

‡ The number of bells in the Syrian churches has considerably increased of late years, many new belfries having been erected, and bells procured from Europe or America. In some places the old *σίμανδρο*, or board, is still beaten instead. At Deir Za'aferan it is used now only to call the monks to meals.

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church, and in the same posture as is customary in England. It is, moreover, usual to place several bodies in the same grave.

One of these recesses contains a font, but it is seldom used, there being few families in or near the convent. By far the most remarkable ornament of this chamber, or even of the monastery, is the richly carved entrance of late Roman style, dating in all probability from the end of the eighth century, if we may judge from the analogy of work at Nisibis and Dara. Its characteristic features are the immense size of the stones used, and the shell designs in the canopies.*

The bricks that form the arch of the cloisters here and in other parts of the monastery seem also to point to a Roman date for the earlier portions of the building.

Beneath this church and that adjacent to it is a most extraordinary underground chamber, of the use of which the monks are perfectly ignorant, although they believe, as usual, that it contains a large amount of treasure. Its existence is on this account kept a profound secret, an easy matter considering how difficult the entrance is to find; nor is it at all improbable that treasure has been hidden there. I was very anxious to search for books, for I am persuaded that such a monastery must contain books somewhere, and there are very few above ground. But the Patriarch is very much averse to excavations of any kind, and will not allow the earth, which is

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* John, Patriarch 1124-1165 A.D., one of the most distinguished heads of this Church, restored many of the Syrian monasteries, and built others, chiefly in the neighbourhood of Mardin. Deir-el-Za'aferan had been restored by Ananias, Bishop of Mardin, about 793; but having fallen into ruin was again restored by John, who says that he was ignorant of the saint Evgen to whom it was dedicated by Ananias. In the same way Behnam, the patron saint of a church near Mosul, was unknown to history. Under John the monastery was adorned by the monks, and furnished with many books, among which were certain copies of the gospels and other books in the handwriting of John himself.

The monastery is called that of Ananias, the second founder, or the "monastery of the Yellow rocks" or the monastery of "Mar Evgen, and twelve thousand saints." Cp. Asseman, Biblioth. Orient. ii. 334.

The copy of the Bible, which Bar Hebræus mentions as presented by the Patriarch John, still remains in the monastery.

piled up at two ends of the chamber, to be removed. The ceiling, which supports the floors of the churches above, is noticeable as being flat and of stone ; it is still perfectly level, which speaks wonders for the strength and symmetry of the masonry. The resemblance between all the older masonry and that of Dara is very striking, and is thought by Doctor Badger to favour the tradition that assigns its foundation to "Mar Hananya of Kafr Jutha, a village in the plain, who is said to have purchased the building fifteen centuries ago while it was yet a castle, and to have converted it into a monastery."*

Under the eaves of the large church there is a frieze of curious carving carried round the four sides. Its rather uncouth designs, birds, flowers, mitres, and croziers, suggest very forcibly a Byzantine influence, of which we shall find later on very marked signs in Jebel Tur. The three remaining sides of the quadrangle are occupied with chambers for the monks, store-rooms, a large kitchen, and a third church. This last is now quite dark and never used, except as a store-house for grain. The chancels still contain their altars, and are closed by doors of wood, beautifully inlaid, like some of the doors to be seen in Mardin. But they are chiefly remarkable for containing the shattered remains of fine mosaic on the floor, evidently of Roman workmanship.

At the south-west corner of the large church a turret staircase leads to a "balakhana," or terrace, that runs all round the quadrangle above the cloisters. On to this open a number of rooms, most of which are not very large; at one corner is the Patriarch's winter diwan, a large and pleasant room, with a most glorious view to south and west across the plain and up the Qala'at-el-Mara Valley. His summer room is immediately below this, but it is older and less pleasant. These two and the guest room are the only rooms, except those containing the press, that are glazed. Last summer His Holiness, having spent a week at the monastery and been

* The tradition is perfectly correct, although the date is too early. John speaks of Ananias as the second founder.

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rather unwell, took a dislike to the place, and lived for the remaining months of the summer in the house that he usually occupies during the winter at Mardin.

These rooms, which are part of the building added by the Patriarch, are extremely substantial and comfortable. They are built of hewn stone, and are well fitted with cupboards and benches, so that I was able, with the help of a few carpets, to fit up in one of them a very pleasant diwan during the summer months.

It only remains to notice the "kursi," or throne room, a large square chapel, containing an altar of stone. Behind this is a marble altar piece, said to have been consecrated by St. Peter at Antioch, and to have been brought to its present position by the successors of the Apostle. I know no explanation of the curious design carved upon it and originally painted; two sheep seem to bow on each side of a Greek cross, behind which what seems to be a palm tree radiates. This is framed by an arch, round which are carved the words in which St. Mark records the great commission of our Lord. Two more arches, one above the other, raise the whole to the height of about sixteen feet from the floor. A few hideous pictures of Russian workmanship, and a tomb containing the bones of the 12,000 martyrs mentioned above, complete the furniture of this neglected house of God. It is used for the final enthronement of a Patriarch, after he has been consecrated in the great church of the monastery. Of this ceremony of consecration the following is an account, contained in a letter sent in 1872 by the present Patriarch to Mar Dionysius, Metropolitan of the Syrian Church in Malabar.

"At that time all the representatives of the councils bearing the seals of all their chiefs and the Mutrans of our nation, sent to us and reached us in Amid (Diarbekr). Therein it was said, for our information, 'We have chosen you to be our Patriarch.' And at that place the chiefs of Amid and all other places received us. And we were carried to Mardin amid a vast concourse of our people and others, escorted by the King's soldiers, and in grand procession of numerous

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people, as if to testify to the greatness of the Lord and the blessedness of the Holy Church. And in these days countless people from Amid, Besanagari,* Athur,† and Gosaratha of the Chaldæans,‡ the lands of Bissaria,§ and Turabdien,‖ and Mardin and all its bounds to the deir of Kurkuna¶ came to sing. And they said to us 'Thou art chosen by us as our shepherd to make firm the whole Church,' and again all shouted as from one mouth, by the act of God and by His love. And after some days, when Pentecost drew near, there came Episcopas, Rabbans (monks) Kashishas (priests), and Deacons; and the King and his armies,** and the Ishmaelites,†† and the Armenians and the Chaldæans, who were all more desirous to see than the Syrians themselves; and several nations of believers in Christ, men, women, young men, boys, children, and virgins, in parties, in batches, in lines, in crowds, in rows, and from all sides, and in several colours. Great notice and great press ensued, such as has never before been witnessed. And after matins and the holy and divine mysteries, the consecration began. Then as the time of the imparting of the Holy Spirit came, there arose of one accord a terrific and shaking voice from all the Bishops, from the vast numbers of Priests, from the Deacons, and from all orders, and from the entire Church; and they (the people) from outside and inside shouted 'Auxios, Auxios, Auxios, Mar Abuna, Mar Ignatius!'‡‡ Surprise and excitement overtook all; a new song was made at the time, while the Mutrans and Episcopas chanted the Cadesa,§§ and the whole

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* Unknown.

† Assyria or Nineveh.

‡ Unknown.

§ District of Basra, once an important diocese.

‖ The mountain of the monks, Jebel Tur, as it is called in Arabic.

¶ The Syriac name for Deir-el-Za'aferan.

** It must be remembered that the writer wishes to impress the Bishop; he refers perhaps to the Wali and a few Zaptiehs.

†† Arabs.

‡‡ "Worthy, worthy, worthy, is our father, the Lord Ignatius." Auxios is the Greek ἄξιος.

§§ *I.e.*, Holy, whether part of the Liturgy, or some hymn peculiar to the occasion, is not clear.

concourse chanted Breec Ikkorac,* and the Deacons, Ehup-deacons, Koroyans,† and Msamrans,‡ sang praise in crowds. And then I stood with the Mutrans and Episcopas, and each one held with his right hand the ebony staff that is bound with silver of the Patriarch. And first, the chiefest among them vowed the vow of his obedience to me, who held the lowest place; and he moved his hand below mine, and then the next, all in order, testifying their obedience and love to their new Patriarch. So men and women rejoiced; young men leaped rejoicing, young women and virgins sang praises to the Lord, and boys and children clapped hands and rejoiced. Bells and cymbals rent the air, and the King and his armies stood grieving. They separated the crowds with clubs and blows. Others than Christians in great numbers stood amazed, and in spite of themselves sang praise to God. And thus the crowds lived at the throne of Antioch for ten days, eating at the same table, filled with all good things and rejoicing."

One Saturday evening, when the grapes were growing black and the sheathes of the almonds near to bursting, I sat with Rahab Ibrahim under a great walnut tree close to the monastery, and watched the people streaming up the steep road to the gate. He had been speaking of the language, and discussing the method to be pursued when they began printing again at the Deir. Over a large area, inhabited by his people, Arabic is the language in common use all through Syria, as far as Aleppo, from Mardin to Mosul, in the northern part of Jebel Tur, and again in Sert. Turani, a corruption of the classical Syriac, is spoken chiefly in Jebel Tur, while in the neighbourhood of Urfa, Diarbekr, and Kharput, Armenian and Turkish contend for supremacy. In Diarbekr, these lingual streams meet, and a fine Babel is the result. But everywhere the more educated use the Syriac character for writing the local language, a combination known as "Garshuni," whereas the Rahab thought that

* These words are not Syriac. In Arabic, they might be intended to mean the "Brightness of shouting."

† The readers.

‡ Unintelligible, Mshamshana is a deacon in Syriac.

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few even among the higher clergy understood the classical language well, although everyone could read it by rote. The use of Syriac or Garshuni seemed best to meet the requirements of the printing press for two reasons: First, that the people consider any attempt to tamper with the national language as an attack on the nationality itself, and the ancient hymns and psalms, translated, would no longer fit the music of St. Efrem and his successors. An immense value is attached to these hymns, and the tunes serve, no less than the language in which they are written, as a great bond of the people. Strange tunes they are, starting on a high note, and coming down by gradual degrees through strings of appoggiaturas to a quiet minor hum. Quarter tones are used with a result strangely out of harmony with our ideas of music; but sometimes when one hears in the evening three or four voices of monks that sit singing round the fountain in the garden, the melancholy sound, softened by distance, has a mysterious and not unpleasing effect. In fact, though the music and the national language set to it deserve respect, yet Rahab Ibrahim had to admit that a language used chiefly for church books and services could not be of much use except as a subject of careful study in the schools, and that the chief reliance must be placed on Garshuni.

Rahab Ibrahim was enthusiastic about the Deir; would it not restore the glories of Edessa, and would not the spirit of their blessed Efrem be upon it? Then would Hebrew and Greek again be learnt, as it was clearly learned by those who wrote their old manuscripts, and then would the study of piety and good literature flourish again in the land.

We walked back by the garden, and went into the Court, where the "aiwan" is, and the water collects in a large basin for use in the garden. Old Yakob, the Patriarch's nephew, the gardener here, was letting off the water by channels, and leading it from terrace to terrace among the lettuces, and bamiyahs (*Hibiscus esculentus*) and cucumbers and pumpkins. Every evening he did this; but to-day he had to contend with a dozen small Mardin boys, who were among the crowd which had come over for Sunday. They wished to bathe,

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and would block up his channel, until the old man, losing all patience, called his son Sulaiman to guard one channel while he was posted at another. So the boys gave up their bathe, and made mischief by loosening the halters of donkeys left at the gate by some women who had come to wash their Sunday frills, and a fight was the result.

We sat and watched these things, "making keif" with cigarettes and fruit, as though it was all done to amuse us. One becomes very philosophic "making keif" in a hot country; and I doubt whether we should have had energy enough to interfere, if the boys had driven off the donkeys. They were not our donkeys; what did it matter?

The aiwan close to which we sat, beneath a walnut tree, covered one of those springs "whose waters fail not," that are the chief joy of the East. Its main use was to irrigate the garden on the terrace below. This was done by planting the vegetables in rows within the small square beds, and surrounding each of the latter with a little ridge, through a breach in which the water might be let, when required. In this way the water may be controlled with the greatest ease, and very little is wasted.

In the hill country, where the fields lie generally on the slopes, down which the streams flow to the valleys, the water is led off in channels dug parallel to the sides of the hills and so used for irrigating the crops below. These channels are often carried for great distances along the sides of hills, and are sometimes used to turn a mill wheel. It is in these places that trees chiefly flourish, having their roots fed by the water, just, as it is said, that the famous vine of Hampton Court owes much of its fertility to the fact that its roots reach to the Thames. Where rice is grown, or cotton, the irrigation is on a very large scale, and is apt to render the neighbourhood liable to fever through the large amount of water lying about and the consequent unhealthy vapours that rise after sunset; but these irrigated gardens are an exceedingly beautiful feature of an otherwise dry country.*

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* The method of irrigation employed by the banks of rivers is well described by Layard, i. 353.

Old Yakob's garden was a very fruitful plot, thanks to his untiring zeal and skill in tending it, so that there was no lack of the finest vegetables all the summer, except when the locusts came and swept all the lettuces off the face of the earth.

In one corner a little tobacco, or "tutun," was grown for the use of the monks, but its quality was not good. All round the garden were hedges of walnut trees, bearing fruit far larger than that of England, and rows of pomegranate trees, brilliant with their small scarlet flowers, and later in the year with rich red leaves and russet fruit. Mulberries red and white there were, magnificent fruit, and the air was heavy with myrtle and the pine trees. Lower down below the garden the flowers grew wilder, and amid clusters of roses yellow and pink, the pale iris and flaming anemone dotted the ground among the vines; and further still were gorgeous clumps of balsam and hollyhocks among the corn-fields.

This beauty fled as the rains ceased; and when the sun grew hotter, and the armies of locusts began their invasion, there was little of verdure or bright colour to be seen round the Deir, except in Yakob's garden below the aiwan.

As we sat half dreaming under the walnut tree the bell began to toll, and everyone awoke, for it meant sunset, and the evening prayer, which all attend, if not to pray, at least to swell the volume of the psalm singing. We walked slowly in, and entering the great gate found ourselves in the middle of donkeys with jangling bells, screaming to one another, horses whinnying for their food, or snorting for a fight with their nearest neighbour. The yard was strewn with packages, mattresses, babies, panniers; all the paraphernalia of a night encampment, so that it seemed one mass of confusion. Within the second court, things were little better, and the way to my room was crowded with helpless women, drawing water from the well or collecting firewood to cook the evening meal. The poor old monks had fled to their rooms, and left the management of the throng to the deacons, who

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helped everyone, settled one on the roof, another in the aiwan, gave out mattresses, and pitchers, and corn, until order was a little restored, and the bell ceased tolling as the evening prayer began.

The church was dark enough, except where a boy held a twist of tallow candle to light one of the great psalm books, round which the chanters crowded. Such a shrieking noise was never heard in church, of boys outdoing each other in zeal for psalmody, and proud to show their knowledge of the tune and words. A row of solemn monks stood before the sanctuary, in low voice chanting the same psalms they knew so well. The key in which they sang was quite different from that chosen by the boys; nor indeed did fresh comers at all concern themselves to discover any key already in vogue, provided they sang a similar tune, and introduced scale and trill at the right place. Among the crowd assembled round the lecterns strayed baby boys, or went from monk to monk to doff their caps and kiss the old men's hands. Other boys sat against the wall and looked on quietly, while in a row by the western door sat mothers and children, and here and there a white-veiled girl. It was a beautiful scene, and very solemn, these people at their evening prayer, preparing for the Lord's Day; and the solemnity grew as the psalms ceased and the candles all went out, except where two deacons held one on each side of the Bishop, as from before the altar he read in a fine rich voice, first in Syriac, then in Arabic, the evening lesson for the day.* During this, all the men removed their turbands, and stood intent, until, as the deacon pronounced the Gloria, they again covered their heads and returned to the singing of psalms. The singing was, of course, antiphonal in a church looking to Ignatius as one of its earliest bishops; for it was he who is said to have invented the practice common now to East and West; and in nearly every Syrian church stand two lecterns, one on each side of the

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* Cp. Bright's "History of the Church," p. 253, who recalls the tract of Jerome against Vigilantius, who affirmed that throughout the East the lighting up of tapers in broad daylight was a mode of welcoming the reading of the Gospel. Such is the case also at morning prayer.

sanctuary door, round which the people crowd, reading as easily upside down as any other way; it seems in fact to make no difference which way they read Syriac or any other language. At one part of the service one member from each of the two groups stood in front of the altar, and there the two chanted in antiphon several psalms. This singing is much admired among the Syrians; and indeed the chant to which the verses were sung was the pleasantest I heard, and, when well sung, the effect was beautiful. The psalms were followed by hymns of St. Efrem, in which all joined with that heartiness which is so characteristic of the Syrian services. Congregational they are in the fullest sense of the word. Then came prayers and collects, followed by the evening Psalm (xci.), and then the Bishop blessed the people, who came one by one to kiss his hand before they left the Church.* By some intuitive sense, peculiar to this people, each found his own shoes among the rows in which they had been deposited on entering the church. No one enters a church for prayer, or at least treads on the carpeted floor, with shoes upon his feet. The priests and deacons, however, who minister within the sanctuary, generally wear yellow shoes, in place of the black or red ones worn in daily life, just as they wear special garments during such ministrations.

The Deir was noisy enough for several hours after the sun went down; but gradually, as supper ended and cigarettes or shibuks began to glitter like glow-worms about the roofs, the women prepared for sleep and the boys started the nightly hunt for scorpions. This is a necessary precaution in a place where everyone sleeps on the floor, and where scorpions abound as they do at the monastery, and very exciting were these hunts with candle and lantern, and very delighted were the boys when they caught a scorpion, and fixing a candle-end on its back coolly watched it burn to death. It is asserted on good authority that scorpions will,

* The reader should refer to the very full account of the East Syrian services, which are very similar, given by Maclean and Browne, p. 212-242.

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when they see themselves threatened with certain death, sting themselves to death, as, for instance, when surrounded by a wall of fire. There was little need for them to exercise this prerogative in Deir-el-Za'aferan.

The next day was Whit-Sunday, and it was the special service for that day which had attracted such crowds to the Deir. Almost before daylight the bell began to toll, and the deacons had risen to prepare for the morning service. Soon the chanting began, and family after family rose and streamed into the church. The men stood or sat on carpets in rows in the middle of the church, hosts of small boys surrounded the lecterns, or busied themselves with the deacons in preparing the sanctuary. Behind, against the west wall, the women congregated, for in this church there was no divided aisle for them. Each one entering put off his shoes and laid them on a rack placed for that purpose by the door; then walked to where the sign of the cross was carved or painted on the wall, and, having kissed it, retired to his place to join in the prayers or psalms.

In addition to the men and boys crowding round the two lecterns, there was another choir, similarly divided, that stood within the sanctuary on each side of the altar to sing the anthems during the celebration. The sanctuary was therefore very full, for besides the priests there was a large number of deacons, both boys and men, who assisted in various ways at the service.

The service of the previous evening was considered, in a manner, connected with that of the morning,* inasmuch as all who came to the latter were supposed to have attended the former. It is of course the rule that no one should partake of food before the morning service. During the prayers that preceded the altar service or celebration, the celebrant and a deacon prepared the new bread and wine.

* According to universal ecclesiastical custom, each day is supposed to begin at sundown on the previous day, whether for feasting or fasting; hence in theory, the service of the previous evening is connected with the morning celebration.

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In this way no interval remains between the two services; and, in theory, there is none between the evening and morning services, for the monks are supposed to spend the whole night watching, praying, and repeating the psalms in the church.

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CHAPTER X.

Life in the Monastery.

I was not infrequently awakened in the morning by the sound of Sulaiman, my small attendant's voice reciting a chapter of the Syriac Gospel, or learning some psalm or hymn of St. Efrem by heart. There sat on the open space of the balcony, on the opposite side of the court to my room, a group of boys and deacons of the Deir around an elderly monk named Rahab Melki. This latter was a good, quiet man who gave such time as could be spared from his devotions to teaching this small band of eager learners the way of the Gospels. There they sat in their white tunics and red caps round the dark-robed monk, each with an ancient folio, as heavy as he could carry, upon his knee, spelling out the words or reciting in the loud and droning voice that soon became so familiar to my ear. After a time, would follow a lesson in chanting, far less pleasing to listen to, for all sang at once and in different keys.

One day there came a deacon, one Shammas Efrem, from Nisibis, a man filled with zeal for education, bringing with him a younger brother, whose whole soul was absorbed in the study of the ancient works of Syrian Saints, and teaching them and the services of the Church to any boys he could collect about him. Such a quiet little fellow he was, with shaven head and great serious eyes, and it was wonderful to see the eagerness with which, lying at full length upon the floor before a huge folio, he taught some child, scarcely

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smaller than himself, who lay in the same position on the other side of the book, to read and sing the contents. Sometimes he would carry on his work of love late into the night, with some wondering little boy, holding a roll of candle that steadily dripped upon the parchment page. His brother had a great scheme for opening a school at the village in the mountains where he lived, and promised to build the necessary rooms if a teacher could be provided, and help gained for his maintenance from headquarters. He was one of the most intelligent Syrians that I saw, and a man with less idea than most of turning things to his own advantage. Unselfishness is not a common Eastern virtue. The younger brother was most eager to learn in the school at the monastery, and made the best of his time learning from Rahab Melki, and teaching others in his turn.

It was very touching to see the affection of pupils for teacher in this little school; for, while this feeling is usual, yet the monk was a peculiarly lovable man, and the deacons and boys would do anything for him, and could scarcely be persuaded to leave him in quiet. Not less remarkable was their quickness, and the wonderful power they displayed of learning by heart. This is a great peculiarity of the Easterns, due rather to the absence of books than to any especial ability, for in other ways their genius is not so noticeable. In consequence of this, a large part of their lessons are learned by rote, a habit most carefully and continually to be guarded against. The quickness which characterises the children is said, by those who know the Syrians, to fail in a remarkable way soon after they reach the age of fourteen; but comes at the right time to be of value in the schools, for few boys can afford to remain at their books, at least in the country places, after the age when they can do useful work in the fields. Schools, therefore, which may be filled up with such boys in the winter, are apt in summer to fall to a small number of children of a much lower age.

The power of reading a book, whichever way it is held, has been already noticed. We may compare the numerous other things, such as sewing and writing, which the Syrians do in

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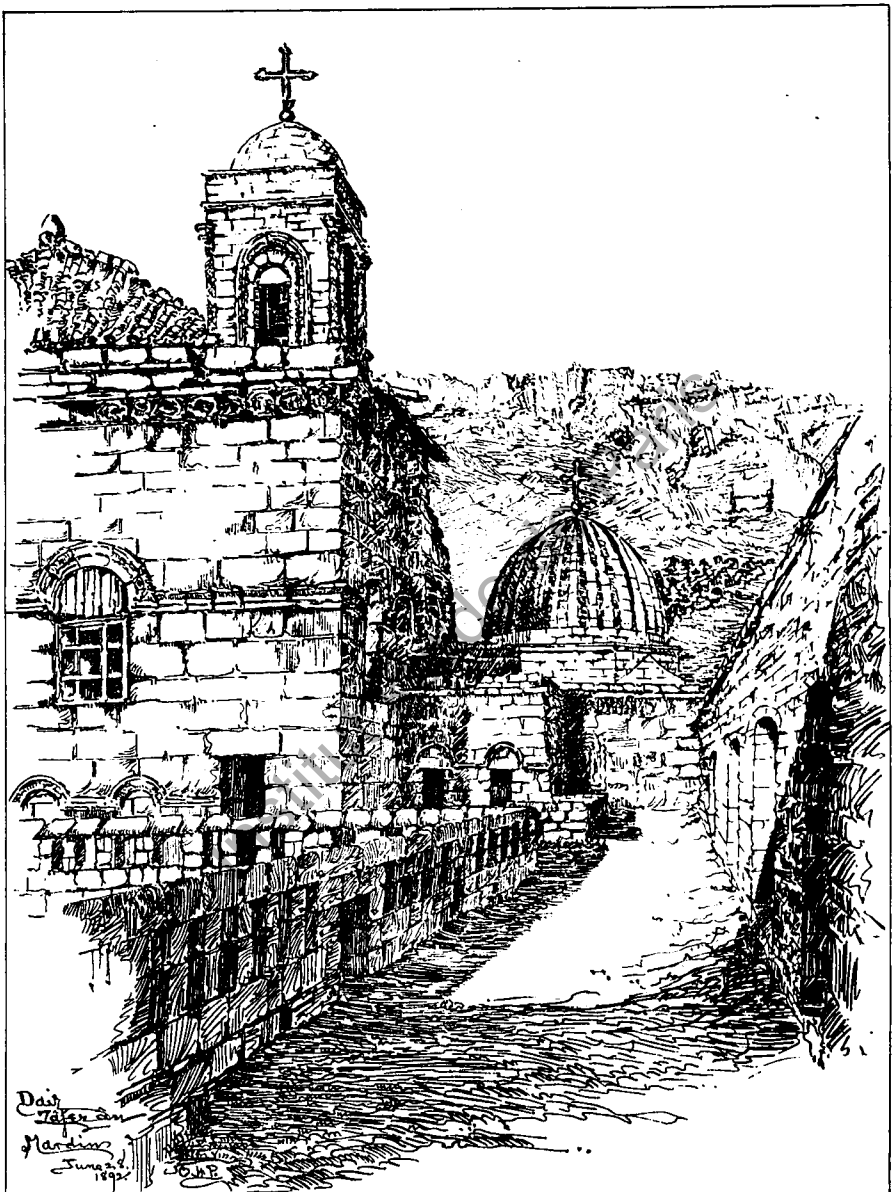
Deir Yâsîn
Jerusalem
1892

an opposite way to ourselves. The great desire of most boys and parents is to learn English, partly because of the success so many of their people have had in obtaining work and earning much money in Europe and America, and partly because of the interest with which they regard English things, and especially the English Church. It is, however, most important to restrain this zeal, and in all things direct the attention of the children to the perfecting of their native manners, and the acquiring an education entirely befitting their country and race.* The subjects taught are very limited in these monastery schools, few learning anything but Syriac, and Biblical history. Some acquire a "beautiful pen," as the art of writing, so highly prized in this land of manuscripts, is called, but most reach only the reading stage, and learn only so much as may serve them to take their proper share in the Church services.

The morning service in the Deir was generally ended soon after sunrise, when the noise of the school would awaken me, and call me out to walk upon the roof and enjoy the lovely morning air, until the heat drove everyone within doors. Sulaiman, as soon as he saw me, would run to my room for the water jars and carry them off to fill for my bath and breakfast from the well in the court below. Old Yakob, the cook, had then to be reminded in the midst of his boiling of wheat for the Rahabs that I needed eggs or milk for my more sumptuous meal; and he would come passing all obstacles to overwhelm my hand with morning dewy kisses, in token of gratitude for medicine with which I had once healed a bad scorpion bite. He was a curious old man, rather the butt of the monks, being very slow of mind and speech, and having the most sage notions as to the manner of conducting the business of the Deir. But it was unsafe to jest too far with him, for at times he would refuse to cook the wheat, or give up the keys of the huge store room,

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* Maclean and Browne have some valuable remarks on this subject, p. 170. The neglect of the principle is a serious defect in the work of the American Missions.

which he controlled, and then there were loud cries among the monks.

At this hour of the morning most of the monks were outside the monastery, and one might catch glimpses of them superintending the picking of fruit, the loading of mules, and grooming of horses. For the Deir was a busy place, even when service was not going on; and during this summer the Bishop and monks had continually to ride over to a village some six miles away, to inspect the building of a water mill upon some property of the Patriarch.

Later in the summer the threshing of corn gave a busy look to the great space between the vineyards and the back of the Deir, and then the figs and almonds had to be picked, so that the days seemed short enough, and passed pleasantly for one who cared to watch the work of the several seasons. The threshing floor was a fine place, level and beaten as hard as iron, and hither was brought load after load of wheat to be threshed out and winnowed before it was stored in the granary within the walls.

For some days there was always a busy crowd upon the threshing floor. Boys were driving donkeys heavily loaded with sheaves of corn, which they piled one after another round a huge stake in the middle of the floor. Round and round the stake through the livelong day another boy drove four or six oxen yoked together to tread out the corn; while round another heap of sheaves a man holding an iron spike or a goad drove a rough threshing machine consisting of a wooden board heavily armed with spikes and nails,* on which he sat to keep it firmly on the ground. Everyone sang to urge the cattle on, snatches of Turkish popular songs, and sometimes some old Syrian refrain. Whether in obedience to the old Mosaic law or not, the oxen were not muzzled, but snatched from the wheat so much as they wished.

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* For these instruments see Deut. xxv. 4; Judges iii. 31; Isaiah xli. 15. The last is used to cut up the straw into chaff or "tibn," which, after it has been trodden, is used in the place of hay for feeding cattle and horses, mixed with oats.

In another part women and children were gathering the broken chaff in shovels, and heaping the wheat in long lines exposed to the wind, while chaff and husks of corn were flying from the winnowing fans that men and women tossed in the air.* Others again swept up the winnowed corn and chaff, leaving the former to lie until the Government assessor of the tithes should come, and gathering up the chaff to be stored within the monastery for winter use. Overlooking all, and encouraging them in the work, stood Mutran Elias, the Bishop; and a happy company they all were, toiling in the sun, and undisturbed by village Aghas.

Within the monastery sat the women grinding day and night wheat for the daily bread. How monotonous through these months the sound became, of the two stones turning one upon another! for they grind slowly, and but small quantities at a time, so that there it is seldom that the people can leave grinding. In some places where water is plentiful there are mills to grind the corn; but the nearest one being built by the Patriarch was five miles from the monastery, and was not yet completed; so that the women were kept hard at work grinding between the millstones.†

The sun soon becoming too hot to allow us to stand idle round the threshing floor, I would go back to the Deir, and spend the remainder of a long morning reading and writing, or teaching one of the monks out of my books. A "Shammas," or Sulaiman would bring my morning dish of grapes and figs, a dish I should blush to consume in England, and little interruption occurred except from some boy compelled by sunstroke to leave the threshing floor, or another suffering from fever. But the Deir was a wonderfully healthy place, free from fever, and therefore from one half of the trouble which life in a semi-tropical country generally involves. Still there were now and then calls for aconite or quinine, but the majority of the cases which were brought to me were of a

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* Isaiah xxx. 24; Matth. iii. 12.

† The value set by millstones may be gathered from Deut. xxiv. 6: "No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge; for he taketh a man's life to pledge."

different kind. Scorpion stings, and cuts of all kinds, snake bites, and all manner of varieties of internal pains made the chief demand on my medicine stock. Whatever was the complaint, it was necessary to feel the pulse, and examine the tongue, neither of which operations ever threw any light on the matter in hand. The second requirement was to prescribe diet,* which the natives, with sound common sense, consider a most important element of cure. While finally it was necessary to measure out with great care drop by drop, or grain by grain, for to this great importance is attached, the panacea provided. Not least necessary was it that its taste should be strong and bitter, a want easily supplied by the admixture of some quinine.

The Syrians love quackery, and the medicine man must not despise externals. They have, too, some notable, if not commendable, cures, which they borrow from the Arabs; such as the practice of sewing up a man with fever in the skin of a lately killed sheep; the effect of which is rapid, if the process be unpleasant. Cautery always appeals to them, as do all heroic measures, but it is curious that they have an insurmountable prejudice against using cold water in illness, or even washing cuts and sores; so that wounds were often brought to be dressed in a perfectly revolting state due to their never having been washed. Perhaps the commonest of all complaints was the so-called Aleppo button, or date boil, an excrescence like a large wart appearing on different parts of the body, and very frequently on the face, which leaves a mark for life, and lasts in its unhealed state for about a year. Hence its native name of "Senawiyah" or year spot. It has been often described elsewhere, and is peculiar for the capricious way in which it prevails in some places and not in others, although only a mile or two apart. For instance, scarcely a child in Diarbekr Mardin is free from the scar, while in Mansuriyah, barely half a mile from

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* Cp. Burton's Pilgrimage, i. 384, for some interesting notes on diseases and their treatment among the Arabs; where he says a good word for the practice of dieting, foolishly derided by some practitioners in the East; also see i. 52 for an amusing account of the medical whims of the East.

Mardin, it is unknown. Its cause is as yet unexplained, and no remedy has so far been discovered for it. The American Doctor at Mardin has innoculated some cases, but as yet without much result. The boil usually attacks every one in the place, natives generally suffering while quite young children.*

Ophthalmia again is terribly common in the cities of the East, and due largely to the reckless way in which refuse is thrown in heaps about the streets, from which dust dried by the sun, and containing germs of every disease, is blown about by the slightest wind. In the plain, where there is less filth to spread disease, the complaint is more rare. However, it is not uncommon among the Moslems to court the loss of one eye, as this deformity brings exemption from military service. It is a good precaution in towns to wear glasses to protect the eyes from dust, and always to keep a stock of nitrate of silver, which forms the most valuable lotion. Nothing in my store of medicines was so much in demand as this; for the natives have no specific for the malady, except that, when they feel the pain in their eyes, they yield to the inevitable, bind a cloth, generally not too clean, over their eyes and lie with their faces upon a pillow, until the disease has run its course, perhaps for a period of three weeks.

But enough of medicine, and let us go to our midday siesta. When the sun is at its highest and the shadow on the north of my room not above a few inches broad, there is scarcely a sound to be heard in the Deir. The threshers and winnowers sleep under the booths, the shepherd has gathered his sheep into the shade of the almonds, or if the flies be troublesome has come to our old walnut tree. Down below in the court-yard there may be a cat stirring, or one of the mares that finding everything so still has strayed from her stall behind the church. The monks have all retired to well-earned sleep, and in the diwan-khana may be heard the measured snore that tells that the Bishop is as blest as all the rest. Only old Yakob, the cook, does not sleep. He is busy among his jars

* For a fuller account of the boil cp. Mrs. Bishop's Travels in Persia, i. 39.

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of "Semn"* and rice preparing for the midday meal, or boiling some fruit for me. He sees me watching him, and rushes up the stone steps, as usual, to kiss my hand, and pour out abuse upon some blackguard Arabs, who had taken advantage of the threshing time to come in and steal some corn; "might their countenances become cold, the sons of strong odours." I bade the old man be calm and mind his clarified butter in which the rice was simmering, but he would not hear of peace. "Aye, aye," he said; "if Sayyidna Batrik (our Lord Patriarch) were here, who would dare do such things? they are all sons of vile mothers, mules they are," and he proceeded to vent his wrath on the unoffending Sulaiman who stood smiling at his anger.

I left the old man, and returned to read; for being inclined to be lazy in the morning, I felt no desire to sleep during the day. An hour passed, I saw by my watch; had I been sleeping too? Anyhow the shadow outside my door had grown several inches, and the Bishop was crying out "Skander, Skander ya hu (O he)" in accents of some anger, which augured ill for Skander, whom, a boy of fourteen, the Bishop generally addressed with a polite "Ya Abui" (O my Father). But Skander was fast asleep, and had all sorts of evil things said about him, before he brought fresh water from the well, and coffee for the Bishop. Gradually the monastery awoke, and the threshing and winnowing began again, while I drank coffee and smoked a quiet cigarette with the Bishop in the diwan-khana.

There was a good deal to discuss with him about the two printing presses in the Deir. Daily it was expected that news would come from Constantinople renewing permission to work the presses. But no bakhshish had been forthcoming to elicit the permission, and a long delay was the consequence. For in this land the wheels of office require an inordinate amount of oil. Skander had been over to Mardin in the morning, to take the Patriarch his daily supply of grapes and figs, and was now minutely questioned on the

* Clarified butter.

news. This was an operation to be most warily performed. The Bishop knew, and Skander knew better, that he was a liar, as indeed are not a few of these "sons of a short shadow" (Southerners); he steered his course accordingly, setting traps to catch an answer by implication, rather than asking the question direct. To show a zeal for information is the surest way to be deceived, and it is extraordinary how much ingenuity an astute person like the Bishop could show in conducting his inquiries.

It appeared that news had come from Constantinople, and that the Patriarch was so pleased that he contemplated a visit to the Deir the following day in order to set the press to work, and see if fresh air would benefit his health, that had been so failing all the year.

It was rumoured, too, that one of the Papal Syrian Bishops, who was acting as head of that community since the death of their Patriarch, was travelling in state from the capital, and would stop some days at Mardin. We little thought at this time what this visit would bring forth. The rest of the day had to be spent in preparing for the Patriarch, and putting the presses into such order as should meet his Holiness' approval. So, leaving the Bishop to superintend these preparations, I retired to my room to wait until it was cool enough to take my accustomed walk, and try for the twentieth time to shoot a red-legged partridge with my small revolver. Returning from this sport with a somewhat empty bag, I heard the church bells ringing for evening prayer; I found the great gateway blocked with sheep and cattle, being driven in for refuge during the night. In the courtyard was a crowd of monks and others waiting for the Bishop to begin service. Service over, the "Semandro," or wooden board, was beaten, and old Moksi* Yakob came out bringing plates of boiled wheat and rice for the evening meal. I retired to eat mine in my room, and watch from the roof the sun go down behind the hills towards Mardin.

Then was the most glorious time of the whole Eastern day,

* "Mukuddas," sanctified—one who has been to Jerusalem.

a perfect calm and a wonderful glow, gradually giving way to the night; and star after star came out, great moons they seemed in the clear air, and the fires, where the Arabs burned "Alkali"* on the plain, glistened far away, as the talking died away, and the inhabitants of the Deir spread out their mats to sleep under the clear warm sky.

I left the upper roof, and joined the little group collected on the Bishop's bed on the "balakhana" above the cloisters. It was a huge erection of wood some ten feet square, which served as a pleasant lounge on the glorious evenings of the summer, when the rest of the Deir was going to sleep. There we would sit every evening after supper, and, with a great dish of grapes and slices of melon before us, talk and "drink" (as they say) cigarettes under the shadow of the Church.

The last few days of my stay at the monastery were enlivened by an occurrence which deserves narration, because it illustrates so well the intrigue that has such an important influence upon the relations between the various subjects of the Sublime Porte.

Complaints have been made for many years by the members of the Old Syrian Church against the appropriation of either the whole or a part of their churches by the Papal Syrian community, which, whatever its merits, cannot be considered but in the light of a schismatic body, and therefore with no right to the property which belongs to the Church from which its members have seceded.

In one Turkish town, the Papal party had so gained political ascendancy, owing to powerful influence at Constantinople and locally, as to have obtained possession of the most important church in the place. It had been largely a matter of money; and the Papal Syrians, being the richer, had sustained the drain of bakhshish, which official integrity required. In order to defend the rights of the Old Church, Mutran Yunas, Bishop of the town, had been sent to Constantinople to use all the influence he could command by

† More properly spelt "El-Qili."

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personality and gold. But the Patriarch finding that money, which was not plentiful, was being spent in vain, determined to give up his claim, and direct his energies towards collecting money to build a new church. A site was soon offered by a native of the town, and sufficient money collected from the whole people to commence building.

When, however, the necessary money was collected, news suddenly came from the capital that Mutran Yunas had at last found a man, who undertook for a certain sum to obtain from the Government the restoration of the church to its former owners; in consequence of which the Patriarch prepared to send the money required, and return the rest to those who had subscribed for the building of the new church. But, as chance would have it, while he was counting out the gold, who should come in but one of the Papal Syrian clergy, and ask the purpose of all this money? To which question his Holiness, whether deserted by his usual tact, or forgetful of possible results, told the whole story. It may be imagined that the latter lost little time in returning to his house, and sending off to Constantinople a telegram to inform the Government that one of its subordinates was being tampered with by a vile and treasonable Jacobite Bishop.

Now, in every matter great and small, from the gift of a bowl of milk in the mountains to the conduct of a high judicial suit, bakhshish is a universally recognised requisite. But don't say so. Everyone knows it, but let it be publicly proclaimed, and from that moment "instat crimen."*

So it was with Mutran Yunas, who employed the only recognised means of procuring an award in his favour, and everyone knew the fact. Positive and public accusation was made, and the Bishop was condemned, disgraced, and banished from the capital, while the award went by default. Intrigue is a hydra, and the Bishop seemed pursued by fate.

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* Mrs. Bishop's words ("Travels in Persia," ii. 257) might be applied with scarcely a change to the state of affairs in Turkey. Well may she ask, "Who is to cleanse the Augean stable?"

At the same time with his fall, came a letter to the Patriarch from a secret enemy of the Bishop, making vile and false accusation of plots against His Holiness, and of money spent on luxury and fine living in the capital.

This the Patriarch weakly credited, being by nature ready to believe things good and bad, and mortified by the failure which his own imprudence had partly caused. But for the Bishop it came as a terrible disgrace, that he, the most trusted of all the Bishops, should be degraded at the mere word of an enemy. But all entreaties to be granted a hearing were in vain; the Patriarch had made up his mind that the accusation was true, and nothing, not even twenty years of faithful allegiance, could prevail to alter his mind. Mutran Yunas was recalled, and ordered to remain in confinement in Deir-el-Za'aferan until the Government was pleased to let him go free.

It was perhaps little to be wondered at that the Bishop's indignation led him to speak unwise words in the towns through which he passed, inveighing against a Patriarch who had treated his servant so ill. But this came also to the Patriarch's ears, and made him only less inclined to relent. The effect on the condition of the people was disastrous, the Bishop's town being divided into two hostile camps, and the whole community was embittered by a quarrel, which external foes were doing their best to foster.

Three years had passed since Mutran Yunas' return, and no signs appeared of relenting on the Patriarch's part. The Bishop lived, or "sat" (as they say) in the Deir, with no occupation, and no honour, scarcely allowed to leave the walls, and treated merely as a monk.

Later on he was allowed to exchange the Deir for the house of one of the priests in Mardin. As time went by his spirit chafed against the imprisonment, and thoughts occurred to him of joining the Greek or Roman communion. It was in this frame of mind that I found him, and had all that I could do to persuade him to cultivate patience, and wait until a way of escape was opened to him.

This opportunity occurred in a most unexpected way.

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Mardin was in a flutter owing to the arrival of the Papal Syrian Bishop, of whom mention has been already made. He came with a large "nishan" or decoration from the Sultan, to greet which symbol of supremacy all Mardin trooped out on donkeys and horses on the day of his arrival. He was moreover a rich man, and the head of a rich community, so that he travelled with all the state consistent with his office. I, hearing that he had visited England, went with the rest of the world to call upon the dignitary, whom I found magnificently established in the Papal Syrian "Patrik-khana," or Patriarch's house, in the centre of Mardin.

"Qawwases," gorgeous in red and gold, and wearing silver-mounted swords and daggers, patrolled the courtyard, and did the work of special messengers to the Bishop. Knots of priests and monks stood about the doors, or went in and out of the room where his Lordship sat to receive visitors, surrounded by all that money and a not very numerous following could afford to impress that most impressible of living souls, the Syrian. In Mardin, however, the homage was paid less to the man himself, than to the Order of which he was the favoured bearer.

In the library, used as a diwan, sat the Bishop, attended by his brethren of Mardin and Diarbekr, but rose, as I entered, with all the courtesy and grace of a polished Oriental, and greeted me in English, which he spoke with ease. I gave "Peace" to the rest of the company, and received in return "A thousand Peaces upon my head," and then began the serious business of a visit, sitting with my hands upon my knees, like an errand boy waiting in an office, until coffee and cigarettes arrived. The Bishop talked affably of London, Paris, and Rome, considering, doubtless in view of his visitor, London to be far the most wonderful and beautiful; "so rich," he orientally remarked. S. Peter's he had seen and the Pope, the Louvre he had visited, but nothing was like London and London Bridge. There was but one man in England who impressed him, Lord Salisbury, and in Italy the Pope; these two seemed to him to rule the world—one the land, and the other the sea. There was one place, too, which,

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being a literary man, he admired more than any other, and that was the library and reading room of the British Museum; never had he seen so many slaves so perfectly trained to serve so few masters. Truly we English were the "sons of orderliness." He then spoke in general terms of the progress made by Christianity in the East, and the gradual loosening of the bonds under which it had so long laboured, and chief of all the growing acknowledgment secured to the Holy Father from a nation little inclined by faith or birth to admire such a personality.

A pleasant half hour soon came to an end, and as the bell sounded for evening prayer I started to ride back to the Deir, thinking that I had been talking to a man who, if things were as they should be, ought to have been born an English duke or made an Italian cardinal.

There had been one man present, who showed no slight impatience at my visit. I had witnessed some of the intrigues that formed his chief occupation, and he took much pains in my presence to deliver a circumstantial account of one of these, casting imputations on members of the Old Church, and letting me know that my interference would cost someone dear. This man bowed me out with a frigid politeness that scarcely disguised his dislike, and I felt the air clearer away from his presence.

Some days afterwards, when the Patriarch had established himself at Deir el Za'aferan, and I was spending a few days in Mardin, I went to see Mutran Yunas, who had scarcely uttered his words of cordial welcome, when he poured out an account of the perplexity, into which an offer from the Papal Bishops had thrown him. He had been to call on the latter, and received a visit in return, in the course of which a proposal had been made in the most flattering terms that he should join the Papal communion, and exchange his present humiliating condition for freedom and high position with them. The temptation to accept was the stronger, as an order had just come from Constantinople, authorising the Patriarch to use strong measures, if necessary, to restrain the Bishop, even by the aid of zaptiehs, in the monastery. This

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seemed almost more than he could bear; for, though an able and good Bishop, he was one of the haughtiest of men, and unutterably galled by the news. Hence, when the chance of escape came supported by offers of high place, although among men whom he had formerly counted his bitterest enemies, his mind was strongly shaken, and he requested three days to consider his answer.

It was on the second day that I visited him, and listened to his heartrending appeal for help and advice in this most difficult experience. He had seen no one else to whom he dared confide his trouble, and I now felt the advantage I had gained by making a friend of him before. I appealed to him by all he held sacred—his religion, his Saviour, even by his honour and ambition; I spoke of the fourteen years wanderings of Athanasius, the patience of Gregory, the sufferings of the Saints of his own Church, and finally of S. Paul, until in despair he cried out that he knew not what to do. He had served his God, his Church, and his spiritual Father; and after fifteen years of faithful service he was turned away at the light word of an enemy, and condemned unheard. I reminded him of the Patriarch's age, and that it was not entirely his hardness, but the intrigues of designing men, that had worked the evil. No, he said, he hates me; even if the people cared the very least, he might have hope; but they cared for nothing, but sat at home, afraid to oppose the Patriarch's will for fear they should call down a curse upon their families. The old man might live for years and not relent, for he took long to change his mind, while the Bishop sat wasting away a valuable life in wretched idleness. He had waited long and patiently, and now he was weary of the heavy hand of his father, and would free himself.

It was sad to see the great strong man bowed down by trouble, and watch the agony of his face, as he fought with the temptation; sadder still it was to note how ambition weighed in his mind. In the great perplexity I begged him consider how he could possibly join those with whom he never had nor ever could agree, and to ask the help of a

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greater Father than he whom he thought was dealing so unjustly with him. Finally I left him, having obtained a promise that he would not make his decision until I saw him again.

There was now but one thing to do, with clearly no time to lose; so off I went with Yakob, who had accompanied me, to take council with some trusted friends at the Church of the Arbain. Abu Selim, the man we needed most, was not at home, and an hour was wasted in looking for him. Then the whole story was gone over, and the best means of awakening the people discussed. It was plain that the one thing to do was to induce them to besiege the Patriarch in sufficient numbers to extort his forgiveness of the Bishop. This was a matter of some difficulty, for the people, or rather the wives, were in mortal fear of a possible curse, in spite of the ocular proof afforded by a late Mutserraf of Mardin, whom his Holiness had visited with the direct wrath of his curse, but who yet lived to enjoy prosperity, and return again to rule the city of Mardin.

The contemplation of the fatal results to the Syrian people of the secession of so important a Bishop persuaded our ally that a great effort must be made, and he determined to start that evening on a round of visits to the principal Syrians of the town. Only he feared the people's jealous nature, which scarcely ever allowed them, even where their interests pointed most clearly in the same direction, to pursue a harmonious course. However, he was destined to be rewarded for his pains beyond all expectation.

Selim, despairing of the people in his own quarter of the town, went straight to the elders of the Church of Mar Shimuneh, whom he knew to be more kindly disposed to the Bishop than the Patriarch. His visit was a success, and on the next morning, which was Sunday, the diwan was crowded, as soon as service was over, with men discussing the course to be pursued. The Arbain people chose as usual to abide by the event, not interfering in the matter. Sunday passed in the maturing of a plan, but I heard nothing more, until about midnight there came a great knocking at the iron gate of the

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Arbain, and Qas Gibrail arrived with a messenger from Mar Shimuneh, to say that the people of that Church had determined on sending him to Deir-el-Za'aferan to say that, unless the Patriarch allowed the Bishop to go to his own town, both he and they would join the Papal community. The messenger brought a sealed letter, with a request that Qas Gibrail, being highest in favour with His Holiness, would undertake to deliver it at the monastery. After a hurried consultation the priest prepared to start, so that he might be ready to see the Patriarch as soon as he awoke, which he ordinarily did very early, and have an interview before the diwan was crowded. The Patriarch was furious when he heard the contents of the letter, asking what it mattered to him, whether these Papists intrigued with his Bishops; he was Patriarch of Antioch, and would have nothing to do with such things; let the Bishop and his friends go. But the people were aroused, and would not be satisfied by such an answer; so the same day they trooped over some two hundred strong to besiege His Holiness, and obtain the Bishop's release. Yakob went with them to report on all that happened, while I carefully avoided any interference. The Patriarch took little care to conceal his wrath, and threatened wholesale excommunication. But finding this of no avail, and the people announcing that it was their intention to sleep in the diwan if he would not relent before night, the Patriarch after an eight hours' siege gave way so far as to promise to see Mutran Yunas the following day.

On the morrow there accordingly marched over to the Deir such a procession on horses, mules, donkeys, and bare feet as that road had not seen since the day when the Patriarch was invested twenty years before. The people of Mardin were at a loss to guess the meaning of this immense escort for a disgraced Bishop, and doubtless thought the Syrians had gone mad. Arrived at the Deir, they all repaired to the diwan, and the Bishop falling on his knees kissed the hands and feet of the old man, imploring forgiveness. Five hours passed before the latter gave way, and then a formal reconciliation was made, and a promise given that the Bishop

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should be allowed to return to his diocese, provided he was content to live for some time to come in a monastery and not in the town.

A triumphal procession conducted the Bishop back to Mardin, with wild gallopings of delighted horsemen, and promiscuous firing of guns into the air to display the boundless joy of the people, that so grievous a quarrel had been healed. As they drew near Mardin others came out to meet them, and it seemed as though the whole place was making holiday, and for once in a way a genuine holiday not ordained by Government. They escorted the Bishop to the Church of Mar Shimuneh, and there left him to take up his quarters with some of the dignity befitting his position, of which he had been so long deprived. The only people who seemed discouraged were the Papal Syrians and the Arbain elders, who had shown themselves so cowardly all through the affair. Chief among the crowd that day was old Abu-Selim, the author of the reconciliation, and it did one good to see his kind face beaming with honest pleasure at the success he had achieved, as he came into my diwan with Yakob to recount the events of the day, and ready to kiss everyone he met for joy. The following day was to be occupied by a council at the Deir, to which I was invited, and at which it was hoped some final arrangement would be made with regard to the Bishop.

A few days later Yakob and I went again to the Deir to see the Patriarch. We found a large company there, including Mutran Yunas, who was negotiating with His Holiness for the composition of a letter requesting from the Government his freedom. We were most cordially received by the Patriarch, who showed us, with almost childish delight, a small silver bowl, which the Bishop had given him as a peace offering. But he was still loth to grant a full pardon, being inclined to throw back the responsibility for the Bishop's imprisonment upon the Government, who had in the first place ordered it. In fact it was to be some months before the affair was finally settled. It was S. Michael's day, and a holiday, which brought great numbers of people to the

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monastery, including Abu-Selim. It being, moreover, very hot, it was proposed that, as soon as the sun should be less scorching, we should all make our way up to the little monastery of the Virgin, called "Deir-el-Seyyideh," and "make keif" in honour of the reconciliation.

We started, a motley crew, the Bishop, Abu-Selim, myself, and a collection, such as the Deir and the day could provide, of Rahabs, boys and men from town and village, to climb the rocky path to the cave at the top of the mountain. The excitement among the boys was intense, and not a little dangerous to our no less excitable horses, who caught the spirit of the occasion, and nearly upset half of us down the rocks. However, we reached the cave in safety, and collected under a great spreading mulberry tree just by the fountain. This was a large basin cut out of the rock, and kept full by the continual dripping from the roof of the cave. The water was cold as ice, and supplied, to a large extent, the deep well within the monastery. Round this basin we sat to enjoy the cool air, and the delicious sound of dripping water, as we discussed the events of the last few days, and I expressed a hope that the Bishop would soon be on his way home. "Insh Allah! Insh Allah!" (please God) was echoed twenty times, for I, with western profanity, had forgotten this necessary part of speech; and Abu-Selim went on quietly repeating the words to himself, as he cut up lettuces, leeks, and capsicum peppers, and squeezed sour pomegranates to make a salad for our enjoyment. This he handed round in spoonfuls, talking all the while to himself, and then burst out in his dear cracked old voice into the Syrian songs he thought I loved to hear as much as he to sing them, until he was overtaken by an uncontrollable fit of coughing, and handed on the song to someone else; he could not bear to let it stop, "the 'Hawajah' (myself) liked them so, peace be upon his head, and the mercy of the Lord." And yet I would give much to hear his kind old voice, and see his good face again; for he, more than anyone in Mardin, made life pleasant; but I should like to see him away from the jealousies and petty intrigues that forced a barrier of

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reserve between every friendship. There was a feeling of relief in this company that made this day and those that followed some of the pleasantest spent at the monastery, and made me look back from the plain as I rode towards Aleppo with feelings of heartfelt regret.

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CHAPTER XI.

Two Syrian Villages.

"On my word, a notable young baggage!"
Sir Roger de Coverley.

There are a few villages inhabited chiefly by Syrians, which lie in the immediate neighbourhood of Mardin, and apart from the large groups scattered through Jebel Tur. Of these, two—Goliyah and Mansuriyah—deserve some description.

Mansuriyah is a small village on the north side of the hill among the gardens, about half a mile from Mardin, which I visited one day accompanied by Khuri Ibrahim, and a small train of those people who in the East always attach to any expedition, however small and unexciting. We arrived early in the morning and found every roof covered with women weaving, or men carding the brilliant maroon cotton or wool. It is a general characteristic of these villages that one may walk from one end to another upon the roofs, to which the whole population flocks, and stands in groups of most picturesque form and colouring immediately that a stranger is espied. It is there things are "preached or proclaimed."* "In the time of persecution a man might run along the house tops to the outskirts of the village, without waiting to go down into his own house."† Many were still green with the grass, that "withereth afore it cometh up."‡ "In the summer everyone

* S. Matthew, x. 27; S. Luke, xii. 3.
† S. Matthew, xxiv. 17; Maclean and Browne, p. 54.
‡ Psalms, cxxix. 6.

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sleeps on the roofs, which are approached by an inside staircase or by an outside ladder. . . . These roofs are made curiously. The timbers are first firmly fixed into the walls, and covered by transverse laths, and then again by mats. On the mats is placed a layer of hay, and on the hay a great quantity of earth; the whole is then plastered down with a composition of mud and chopped straw. The roof is made to slant very slightly, so that the water may run off, and spouts are placed at intervals for the purpose." Great is the rolling of roofs as soon as the first November rains come; for the long drought has made them crack, and the breaches must be repaired, and all hardened down to resist the winter rains.

Something has been already said of the frequency of small feuds in the Syrian villages. This is no doubt due largely to want of education; but it is a very distressing element, especially in village life, and has done much to make more easy a good deal of the oppression, of which in many places the Christians complain. Not infrequently the Christians are involved in the quarrels of their Kurdish masters, and it becomes impossible for a man to cross a certain line of country, because the Agha or chief of his district is at feud with the Agha of the villages beyond, although the Christians of the two districts are on perfectly good terms with each other. But to the rule of internal quarrelsomeness Mansuriyah was no exception. Two children had been betrothed in early life and the time had arrived when they should have been married. Early marriage is very common in the villages, the boys of fourteen sometimes marrying girls of twelve. But as a rule the husband is older, although at Midhiat it is not uncommon for a woman of twenty-five to take a boy of fourteen, and treat him as her special charge, rather than as husband. Betrothal is a very ceremonious affair, and almost as binding as marriage itself; nor can boy or girl earn greater disgrace than by deserting the mate that has been chosen for him, and seeking another; while an account of the whole ceremony, with the amount of dowries, is most carefully written down, and sealed by impartial

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witnesses. When a man seeks a wife there is no question of wooing her, but only of obtaining her from her father, and settling the terms of the bargain, generally through a third person of some position. So Jacob asked for Rachel, and Shechem for Dinah.* Hence conjugal life has as a rule little of what we understand to be its real meaning, nor does the wife stand in any higher position than as a good housekeeper, the fruit of a careful bargain.

In the "Catholicos of the East"† a charming illustration is drawn from modern customs of the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, the whole of which describes an episode that may often be seen at the present time in the East, and expressed in the beautiful language still to be heard. So true it is that every day spent in the East presents a fresh picture of some Bible story.

The boy and girl at Mansuriyah had been engaged for seven years, and they were now twenty and fourteen years old respectively, and in accordance with Syrian custom were to be married. But, unfortunately, a handsome youth from the village of Benabil had met the damsel, and, as will happen even in this land of buying and selling in marriage, she had run away and married him. As usual, the village took sides, the girl's people heading one faction which was contented with the outcome of the elopement, and the aggrieved boy's people the other, claiming not only the money originally paid by the boy, but the divorce of the girl, and compensation in good Turkish gold for the scandal; for scandal it was of a most grievous kind, and only thus to be wiped out. The quarrel was taken to the Patriarch's diwan, where it languished for months, varied only by skirmishes in the courtyard, when the rival parties arrived the same day to urge their claims. The Patriarch had delivered his verdict in favour of the bride, who had obtained her parents' consent for the new match; but had balanced justice by ordering her

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* Gen. xxix., Gen. xxxiv. 4.

† "The Catholicos of the East and his People." By A. J. Maclean and W. H. Browne.

family to pay a fine to that of the aggrieved bridegroom. However, the parties were not satisfied, and insisted on going also to the local secretary for civil affairs, a man friendly with His Holiness and determined to abide by his decision. There seemed no prospect of adjusting the quarrel for months, nor did there seem much inclination among the people to put an end to so diverting an episode; and in time a disturbance in the Patriarchal court gained the synonym of a "Mansureti business." Under these circumstances there could be no progressing with the village school, for which it was found hard enough under the most favourable circumstances to raise the six pounds needful for the teacher's salary. So the school was closed, and the funds applied to the maintenance of the war.

The two factions, who united for once in glorious emulation to do me honour, seemed to have discordant notions as to the number of the boys who had been in the school, some saying twenty, others a hundred; and the schoolroom, which would have held fifty boys at the most, nearly became the scene of a fearful strife over this question. As I left the room I heard an old man of the "bride faction" furiously contending that at least a hundred boys had sat there at the feet of his honourable nephew, the teacher, a sickly youth, who looked upon the quarrel with anything but equanimity.

The people, when not engaged in the question of marriage and the school, were rational and entertained me hospitably, although they were ready at a moment's notice to flare up; but inflammability is a feature of most of these mountain people, and tact as well as wit is required in dealing with them. In matters, however, of large import, many years' subjection has seemed to infuse into them something of the "Kismat" of Mohammedans.

After sitting some time in a new and spacious diwan built by the head man of the Christians, and having been sufficiently regaled with bad coffee and cigarettes, while a group of boys and women gathered below the partition by the door to stare at us, Khuri Ibrahim proposed a visit to the two churches—most interesting rock chambers of early date. Such build-

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ings are not uncommon in the neighbourhood, the rocks above Deir-el-Za'aferan being honeycombed with them, but here was the largest I had seen. The church was, as might be expected, very dark, being cut from the living rock, and built up at the south-west corner with stones. In accordance with the usual custom, the door was low and small, and as on it the church, being without windows, depended for its light, the darkness grew as we approached the altar, before which burned a dim light, scarcely sufficing to show the way. The building consisted of two naves, each with a sanctuary at the east end, the larger nave containing, as often in the villages, a good store of grain, kept there for safety's sake. On the south side of the south altar was a low arch leading into a small rock-hewn baptistery, where I was shown a large font built into the wall and a smaller vessel, of the well-known and precious blue Persian pottery, containing oil.

The second church was smaller, but of much finer workmanship, pillars, screen, and altar being carved with great accuracy from the living rock. At the side were several chambers, apparently for the use of a priest, and in the centre of one of them a well full of clear water, forming a dangerous trap for the unwary.

As I was leaving the village one of the chief men came up, and said in a gratuitous way that Mansuriyah was a place on no account to be despised in the matter of antiquities. Had they not the Persian vessel in the church, and was there not in his hand the most beautiful inkstand in Turkey? I admired the treasure, and certainly it was beautiful. Was it for sale? Yes, a rich Moslem had offered two liras for it; but how could a Syrian sell to a Moslem the work of a pious monk some hundred years ago? But for all that the inkstand was mine, and anything else I wished. This seemed well enough so far, but was merely the artful beginning of a bargain. I knew it would be impolitic to accept the inkstand, or offer a price at that moment; so I refused politely, and waited until its owner should come among one of the contending parties to the diwan. Before many days were past he came, and was interrogated by Yakob as to the price

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of the inkstand. I was Christian, and might have it for a lira and a half. Yakob offered twenty piastres, one seventh the amount, and the matter was closed for some days. The next visit brought some fifty piastres diminution; and at the fourth visit the price had dwindled to forty piastres, about seven shillings, for which I procured it; and it was a good bargain. The original Moslem buyer had either died, or was a myth.

This is but one example of an Eastern bargain. Many men spend half their time in the pursuit, several hours always being consumed in the purchase of any but the most ordinary necessaries of life; but, as I was purchasing a good many antiquities, I adopted the plan of offering one-tenth of the amount asked, and waiting until the seller came to terms. It saved a great deal of time, although I had a large number of visits from dealers in all things, and a morning seldom passed, but several of these people spent a few hours sitting at my door, watching if I should relent, and rise in my price. I had in this way the interest of keeping at times half a dozen bargains on my books, few of which were completed in less than three weeks. Another secret of success was that I never conducted the bargaining myself, but always did it through Yakob, a perfect and most honest adept in the art.

My purchase of the inkstand was, of course, irregular, and more after the manner of David's purchase of Araunah's threshing floor *. It is imperative in good manners to say to a possible buyer that one's house, and all things in it are his and his children's; but for all that a good price is expected, and real business begins only when a price is offered.

It is, moreover, characteristic of these people to avoid a straight manner of dealing, if possible, and of this the following negotiation is a good example. Bulos the katirji, or muleteer, who conveyed me from Aleppo to Mardin, was, like many of his brethren an "unco crooked mon." He

* 2 Samuel xxiv. 22, cp. Gen. xxiii. 15. "And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, My Lord, hearken unto me; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver? What is that between me and thee?"

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drove a thriving trade with a dozen beasts or more, donkeys, mules, and horses, and kept a man to tend them. Now, it chanced that he and his man fell out, and Bulos determined to get rid of him; but, it being impossible for him to tell his servant plainly what he wished to do, he devised instead a subtle plan. A lady of Mardin had lately bought from him a fine white donkey of the Mosul breed, and promptly paid the purchase money. Calculating from this unusual occurrence that money was plentiful in that quarter, he went again to the lady with a proposal that she should go through the form of buying the rest of his animals, and receive a pretended receipt for them, undertaking their care until he should return for them. This proposal being met with lofty scorn, he went to some friends of his own, who with greater knowledge of the Turkish world, and an eye to their own advantage, closed with the bargain, and soon had a handsome receipt in hand, and twelve good beasts in their stables. Congratulating himself on his cunning, the muleteer went to his servant, and said, "Father, where are my horses? Have I not sold them? What further need, then, for thy service? God is beneficent; He will then reward thee; here are thy piastres." "Aiwa, but this is a scurvy trick, thou cut-off one!" replied the man, and struck his master on the nose. "Nay, but thou shalt eat wood (get a thrashing), thou father of contumacy," said Bulos, and being a monstrous body, laid him low and threatened revelations of past enormities to the Government if the churl did not cease complaining and praise Allah for his mercies. So the men parted, uttering fearful things about each other's relatives, especially the female ones, and avoided each other for several days to come.

Bulos now went to his friends, and asked for his animals; but never a hair of them could he see. "You sold them to us, and is not this the deed of sale?" they said. "Aiwa, Aiwa; but you never paid, you foxes!" "Who told you that, and who will go bail for you?" The man then thought ruefully how, in his anxiety to avoid notice, he had obtained no witnesses, and could therefore do nothing, when politely but firmly informed that "the river flows to-day and flows to-

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morrow, for which praise be to Allah." So the poor man lost his animals, all to dismiss his servant, which proves that he was an "unco crooked mon." His friends kept the horses all the spring and through the summer, until food became scarce and traffic small; then they returned them, with the receipt, to the rightful owner, who, with little work, and much food to pay for, had to keep them until the following spring.

Goliyah, another important village, inhabited solely by Syrians, forms a conspicuous object as one looks over the plain from Mardin. It lies about six miles to the south, and by it is a large pond, from which it takes its name, and where, toward evening, gather crowds of children to bathe, or water goats and cattle. A pretty scene it is, with the long grey shadows thrown over the water, and the bright dresses of women and children; the prettier, too, for the abundance of water, which adds a feeling of refreshment and content as one looks across the thirsty land.

It was a glorious day in June when we started, Mutran Elias, Yakob, and myself, to spend some hours at Goliyah, visiting on the way two villages, half ruined by the Kurds. We rode mules, for the horses of the monastery were down at grass, as is usual in the early summer, before the hay had been all dried up. Before we reached the lower ridges of the hills, the vineyards ceased, giving way to fields of grass, with barley, corn, and beans, thickly interspersed with brilliant clumps of balsams, hollyhocks, and anemones. From above these flowers gave a glorious brilliancy to the plain, great splashes of rich colour among the emerald crops. In a few places the villagers were beginning to cut the barley, but for the most part the harvest work had not begun, and they were sitting in groups upon the housetops, expecting the Bishop's visit. As we got nearer, the small children, who seemed to live in the water of the lake, dashed out to announce our arrival, and, doubtless warn the boys at school to be prepared for emergencies; while others, more amply clad than the bathers, ran up, swarming round us to obtain possession of the Bishop's hand, which, for the next half hour was the

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object of ceaseless kissing. It was not often that they had such a visit, and it was made a great occasion, and great things were preparing to regale us. Within the limits of the houses were groups of men spreading mud bricks to dry, or piling up the cakes of animal refuse,* which are used so largely both for building and for fuel, while under the guard of great shaggy dogs were women spinning in the courtyard shade, and others sifting last year's wheat.

A large number of men had descended from the roof to receive the Bishop, outside the courtyard of the church, and having all duly kissed his hand, and received his "Peace," they conducted us into a large room, where we found a young man engaged in teaching some dozen small boys the rudiments of Arabic grammar. The village priest, who was seated on an impromptu diwan, uttered a number of elegant speeches, and asked if we should care to hear the powers of his school. "For," he said, "though they say the Mardin boys read (*i.e.*, learn) well, yet our boys read as much in one day as they do in three." There were some sharp-looking boys in the class, which had dwindled to a dozen for the summer months, but in the winter numbered about sixty. With a good teacher—for I imagined the existing man, with his pittance of five liras a year, to be both ignorant and incapable—much might be done with the boys. The priest was a most intelligent man, and spoke in the beautiful way these Syrians so often do of the lack of water in this country, and how the people thirsted, too, for a better water—the water of life, which the clergy were too ignorant to give them. "For what clergy are we, men with neither education nor the power of the Spirit, that should be the basis of our ordination?" He was, however, a man with a good deal of education of a certain kind, and much oppressed with the feeling of his people's destitution in matters spiritual. From among a large

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* In places where wood is scarce this is the regular material for fires, and it is much valued. It gives a good heat for a short time, but has the disadvantage of filling a room with smoke. Every village is, through the summer, supplied with a large store of these cakes for winter use.

Cp. Maclean and Browne, 87, who compare Ezekiel iv. 12-15.

store of ancient liturgies and service books, a few of which were on parchment, he showed us two with immense pride and reverence; one,* a "Book of the Gospels," contained in the preface, or "History," as it is called, an account of the village when it was a flourishing place, able to resist the Arab inroads, and containing good schools and fourteen clergy. Among the other books were the Order of marriage, baptism, and ordination, a few on parchment, but the majority modern and on paper. These were all contained in a large box in the church, and preserved chiefly by the dust in which they slept. In the village were three churches, the one already mentioned, a fine modern building, built about 150 years ago, but, as a precaution against the Arabs, poorly supplied with windows. The second church was some way off from the village, and little used, while the third was a ruin.

It was now time to accept an elaborate invitation from the head of the village to "eat bread"† in his new diwan—a pleasant room on the roof of his house, overlooking the lake. Here were collected a number of the principal men to entertain us, and just outside the door elaborate preparations for a true desert meal were in progress. Very delicious it was, for cream there was in plenty, fresh that morning, the "kaimak" of the Arabs, with butter and honey, such as the Baptist ate; butter, made from fresh milk, and not from cream alone, and spread upon a shallow dish and honey poured upon it.‡

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* This book was part of the Great Syriac Bible called of Bar Hebræus, containing the commentaries of Mar Efrem Syrus, and Mar Yakob (probably Jacobus Bardœus), a MS. on paper, in three columns, not dated. The second, another fuller copy of the same, written by the hand of Priest Ibrahim in the year 1904 of the Greek Era (=1593 A.D.).

† "Eating bread" is the regular expression for taking a meal. Cp. Gen. xviii. 5, where Abraham entertains the angels, and Judges xiii. 16.

‡ Maclean and Browne think that by butter in the Bible, so often associated with honey, the "leben" or "yaurt"—that is, curdled milk—was intended. This delicious drink I never saw mixed with honey, nor would it improve such a sour dish. It is much more likely to be "Zibdè," the Arab butter, nearly always eaten with honey or "dibbiz" (molasses), that is a sort of treacle made by boiling grapes. Cp. 2 Samuel xvii. 29, Job xx. 17, Isaiah vii. 15-22, where butter is a

Fresh cheese, too, there was, from the store they are so busy at this time in making for the winter use. It was agreeable enough, but when it dries it gets a stronger flavour, and is generally eaten with herbs. A man going on a journey will always take a bag of this goat's cheese with him, beside his dates, bread, almonds, and other relishes.

The Bishop, Yakob, and myself were the only ones who took much account of the meal, although the priest, after much pressing, consented to sit with us. However, his part in the entertainment consisted mainly in rolling up attractive pieces of honey or omelette in pieces of the flat bread, and handing them to us to eat. This gift must never be refused, for it is a sign of love; but it is not necessary to eat it. So it was that Joseph sent "messes unto his brethren from before him; but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs."

After a glass of wine, brought out to-day as on a great occasion—for the Syrians, as is natural in a hot climate, drink very little wine—we performed the necessary ablutions, and the Bishop pronounced a long grace. Then came cigarettes, which youths had been preparing during our meal, and coffee of a very fine quality, more approaching true Arab coffee than any that I had before tasted.

Now, as Goliyah was a village of the plain, it shared with the Arab tents an all-pervading sentiment of coffee. Here, therefore, the first thing we met on arrival, and the last thing before we went away, was coffee. Coffee is to the people of the plain (as for the inhabitants of towns, they do not know what coffee is) what tea is to English ladies, and lying to the Greeks; in fact, it is their "craft," there being no other craft worth mentioning. A very solemn matter it is, especially for the tired guest, who enters the house or tent with parched lips, and altogether with a hollow feeling. But politeness and the exigencies of the "craft" demand patience.

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sign of plenty. Later in the year milk becomes too scarce to be used for butter but is all turned into "leben," and either eaten in its thick state with spoons, or mixed with water and drunk. That butter was brought in (2 Sam. xvii. 29) to David and his people alone seems to show it was considered a delicacy, whereas "leben" is what everyone drinks. So, too, Judges v. 25, Gen. xviii. 8.

From a niche in the wall a large mortar, round, and narrowed at the base, is brought down ready to grind the coffee as soon as it is roasted. This is a matter of delicate skill, and is done in a metal pan held over a wood, or, better still, a charcoal fire; but beware that the beans are not scorched or blackened, and see that their full richness is brought out, shaking them gently the while, and watching them as you love good coffee. When they begin to get lively and leap about, turn them into the mortar, and give them all you ever learned with the pestle. Slowly, and with quite exquisite precision, would an experienced coffee-maker pound them to the required fineness, but not too fine. This ceremony is usually performed on the plain by the host; for who else can be deemed really worthy of the calling of a coffee-pounder?

After the pounding comes the boiling in such a dirty little iron pot as you never beheld; three times must the coffee simmer to the boiling point, for it is cold water that is poured upon the grains, and three times sink again. At each boiling a grain of cinnamon, or perhaps of all-spice, is dropped in, and then the coffee is poured out of the dirty pot into still dirtier cups, and then your bliss is full, or, if not, do not say so, for you are among a people of coffee-drinkers.

Sometimes in the villages, in the towns always, you will find a brazier of elegant, and often really beautiful workmanship, where a small charcoal fire burns all day, with a pot for boiling and sugar for spoiling just by. But really good coffee you will not find, unless you are lucky, or the guest of the Syrian Patriarch, in the towns; for there coffee is only five or ten minutes in the making, whereas on the plain a man gives his whole mind to it for half an hour or more; and that half-hour you are likely to find very dull, especially if you are alone with your host. But that is not often the case, for coffee brewing has a magnetic influence, and everyone knows that, if he but arrives at the right moment he is sure of his cup; and the better the cup, the surer he is; for the nobler Arab has the nobler coffee. Without coffee, too, and the unfailing smoke, narjilah, shibuk, or cigarettes, no business

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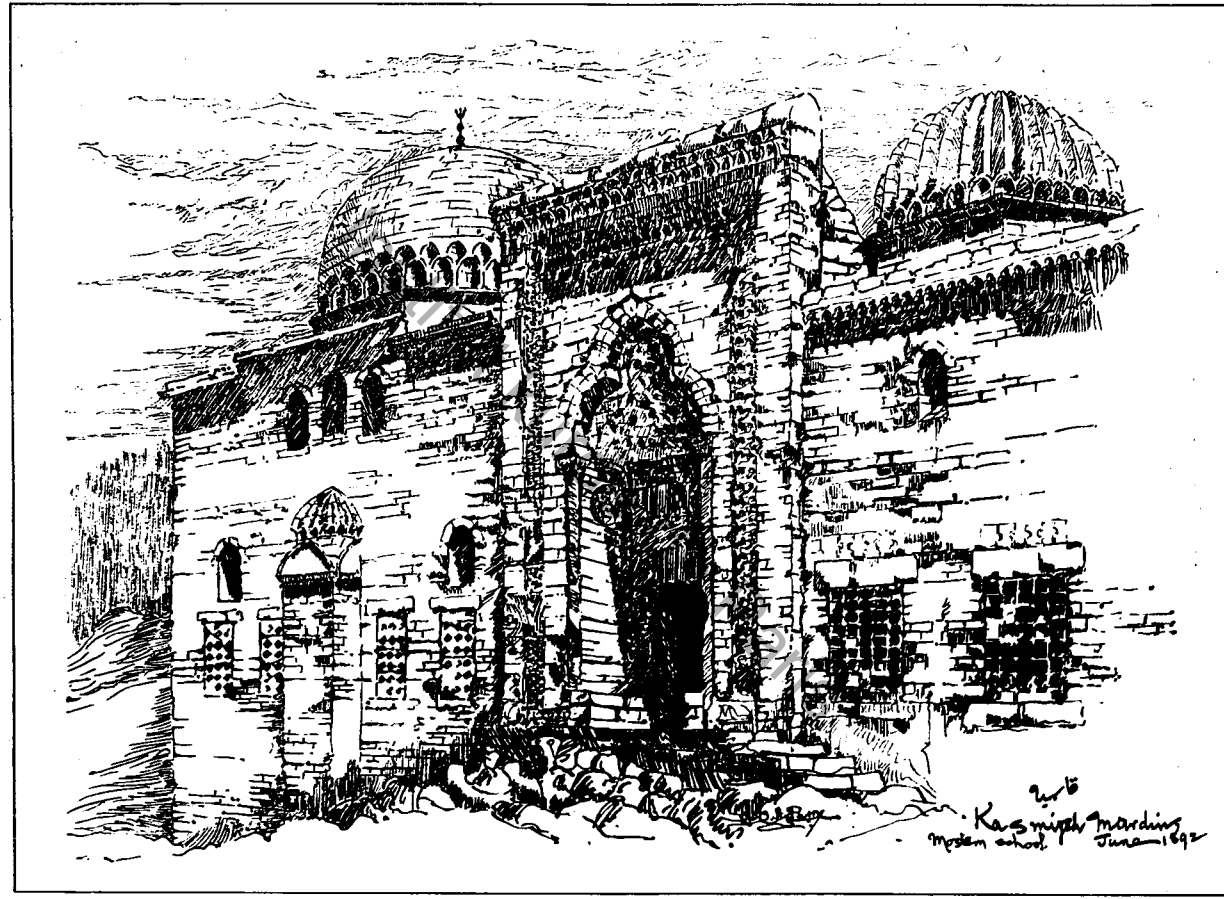
Kashmiri Mardins
Mosem school
June 1892

can ever be done, whether it be the purchase of a house, or the arrangements of a daughter's marriage. There is, too, this advantage in coffee-making, that its quality is so subtle, that much riches cannot buy it good, and, maybe, the best cup, excepting always the dirt, comes not from the Pasha in the town, but the keeper of goats and bullocks on the plain.

While we were sipping thimblefuls of coffee, a great excitement arose among the children bathing in the lake below, and we saw, a mile away, a train of riders, with banners and spears, filing slowly toward the village. It was soon apparent who they were, the men of Ibrahim Pasha, chief of a half-breed tribe of Arab-Kurds, that lived by the village of Veransheher, and were encamped some distance to the south, taking advantage of the rich spring grass of the plain for their sheep and horses. A large number of these had just been enrolled as irregulars by the Mushir, who had not long since arrived in Mardin, and were returning under the command of their chief, lately invested with the title of Pasha, in virtue of his villainies, wealth, and capability of setting at naught the authority of the government. They were all newly armed with government rifles, and who knows what may be the outcome of this enrolment of wild and irresponsible bashi-bazuks. However, they formed a most picturesque company as they passed the lake, with their long spears, and scarlet banners, riding on fine Arab mares; and I was very glad of the opportunity of a good photograph.

However, evening was coming on, and it was time to return to Mardin. After a short visit to the agent of the American Mission, an intelligent man, with a few adherents in the village and a small school, who gave an excellent example of simple Christian virtues, and more civilized neatness in his small school and library, we entered upon a long farewell, lengthened much by continued kissing of the Bishop's hand, until we were able to get quite away from the crowd of people, who accompanied us nearly half a mile from the village.

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Just as we reached the town we met what seemed a perfect embodiment of a Greek Faun, beautiful, with dark matted curls, and wearing nothing but a cloth round his waist, an unfortunate of a class only too common in the east, but of which it is one of the boasts of Islam to take especial care, as of children afflicted of God.

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CHAPTER XII.

DARA.

Indeed, the special marking of the man
Is prone submission to the heavenly will.
R. B.

AT a distance of about five hours' ride to the south-east of Mardin once stood under the western spurs of Jebel Tur the famous city of Dara, of which the massive ruins remain to this day. Of the power of the Sassanian kings and the Roman conquerors who fortified the place there are signs, not only here, but in numerous forts and castles, built about the plain and above the village of Qala'at-el-Mara, near Deir-el-Za'aferan, by the sons and daughters of the Persian kings.

Riding up to the Kurdish village built among the ruins, we passed over the fragments of the southern gates, by a great tower, crowned now by a stork's nest, which with its fallen companion once guarded the entrance. Past great masses of hewn rocks, the ruins of churches, baths, and palaces, we reached a grassy court, shaded by figs and walnut trees, and watered by two noisy, shallow streams, where pious Moslems were performing their prescribed ablutions. At one end of the court stood a school, and at the other the mosque and minaret, to which as guests of the Sheikh we had been directed.

There was a remarkable air of neatness and cool quietness about the place, especially within the mosque, the only one in interior Turkey that I was able to enter. The school upon

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the other side of the lawn was fronted by a broad verandah, built of pillars and capitals evidently taken from the Roman ruins all around, and half overgrown with creepers and vines. Through the large latticed windows could be seen some twenty pupils of the learned Sheikh, reading and writing, while some talked, or looked out at us. There we had a small white-washed room assigned to us for as long as we should wish to stay; and there we rested until a message arrived from the Sheikh requesting that we should honour him by taking breakfast in his house. This we were only too ready to do, for the room in which we had spent the night at the village of Qasser, had been so inhabited by creeping things innumerable, of all sizes and tastes, that Yakob had not slept for half an hour, so busy was he in the slaughter, and we had left early in the morning before having anything to eat. The messenger guided us to a house overlooking the village, and showed us into a room newly built, blazing in white plaster, and green painted, such as the Moslem loves, where sat the Sheikh, white turbanded and with long robes of rich green silk, reading some serious book of Moslem piety or law. Sheikh Mohammed Said we found to be a man of middle age and great solemnity. He had a curious Kurdish face, bronze coloured, with a fine nose, a broad, low forehead, and narrow eyes. His broad, straight mouth and full lips were half covered with a neatly trimmed beard of jet black; and as we made a profound obeisance, he greeted us with the most charming Oriental courtesies, inquiring whence we came, and hoping we should stay many days with him. He spoke of Europe and of civilization; and sighed as he expressed a hope that some day his country might be blessed with a better administration, and a civilization wisely introduced, not as in Syria, where he heard that western influence had brought little good, but in the way that a true Islam and a true Christianity might join to bring it. He welcomed us for all the world as if we had been Mullas, and said (sincerely, too, as we afterwards learned) that by his interpretation of the Prophet's law, he knew neither Jew, nor Christian, nor Moslem, but loved all in the spirit of the brotherhood he

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taught. It was only perhaps because I had not as yet experienced this brotherly spirit in Islam, that I was at first inclined to smile.

We had coffee and cigarettes, the latter of which he was too strict a Moslem to touch, and admired his beautiful and well-ordered village until breakfast arrived, and he left us to enjoy his hospitality of leben, eggs, and honey in the comb. After half an hour he returned, and said that he was sure we should wish to see the antiquities of the town, but that, while he sent for one or two of his best-informed pupils to act as guides, he would show us his house, for his wife was not one who kept her house as a prison, but entertained all guests that were not quite new comers. We eagerly accepted so flattering an invitation, and were taken into several rooms, even the ante-room of the harim, where, in the cool breeze, his little black-eyed daughter, profusely adorned with gold, was spelling out some chapter of the Koran before a solemn old Mulla. Thence we passed into a yard, which had once been the nave of a Christian church, but now served to keep chickens and his wife's palanquin. Lastly, he showed us his state diwan, hung with great banners of white and green, worked with crescents, which are carried before him on festivals and set upon the city walls on Fridays. Books, too, there were in profusion, ranged in glass cases, with yellow, green, and red bindings—books of law and religion. A very holy room it was, where the green-white-turbanded man performed his private prayers each Friday.

He was intensely interested, the more so, perhaps, that it savoured of the forbidden thing, in my camera, which I showed him; being, in fact, anxious to photograph him. Knowing the fame of his piety, I did not dare to ask to take his picture; but when I had gone to my room, he sent word to Yakob that he would again like to see the instrument. It was clear what this meant; he had discussed the matter with some of his learned brethren, and concluded that, as neither he nor any other of the Faithful were concerned in the making of the picture, and as the Christians had no law in the matter, and could do as they liked, there could be no sin in allowing

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the operation. The method was so wonderful, that might it not be also from God, to whom be praise? At least, the maker of the picture was one, and he whom it represented another, and if the one stood here with a wonderful box, and the other there among his mullas, what then? His still holier brother spoke in the same way in Mardin, and him, too, I photographed. But I strongly suspect that on reflection he repented, for when I sent him a copy of the photograph that Yakob took, I received no message of thanks.

A similar method of argument was used in India, where a photographic studio was opened and managed entirely by Mohammedan ladies. It was excused on the ground that Mohammed had received no inspiration with regard to photography, and therefore did not include it in his rigid law, which forbade the making the representation of any human being.

By the time the operation was finished, our guides were ready to conduct us round the ruins. All along the south-east we saw the remains of massive walls, connecting the principal entrance to the south with the great water-gate on the north-west. By the latter the walls were in very good condition, of enormous size and strength, and guarded by frequent round or octagonal bastions. The western tower of the main entrance was the more complete of the two; and at the south-east corner of the walls was another tower of later date. North-west of the chief water-gate was a stone dam, and a fine embankment to prevent the overflow of the stream, and above that a reservoir protected by a wall. East of this was the acropolis, the Cyclopean stones of which have been largely used in the construction of the Kurdish village, built mainly upon its western side, and stretching from here down to the southern gate. The bastions were grouped chiefly about the north-east corner, by the water-gate, which seems to have been the point on which most labour was expended, both to maintain the supply and prevent its use by the enemy for the purpose of flooding the town. On the acropolis there were some very curious cuttings upon a smoothed face of rock, like intaglios engraved in the stone, as it were, for

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seal dies. There were in all some two hundred of them, in several clusters; and they seemed far too regular and isolated to be by any chance the result of fossil formation. The patterns were mainly spirals, shells, and curves. On this acropolis were also reservoirs for the further storage of water.

The water-gates, mentioned by Gibbon,* were most remarkable, one at the north and another at the south, and each with a reservoir for collecting the water. The stream, one of those that joins the Mygdonius, had a full volume in June, and came down through the hills until it was confined by the embankment, and conducted from the reservoir through a four-arched water-gate below the walls of the city. In spite of the difficulties found by Dr. Ainsworth in Procopius' account of this water, which is said to have been so conducted that the enemy could not cut it off, the facts seem to explain it quite sufficiently, especially if, as is possible, the volume was at that time greater than it now is. From these gates the water was conducted into the city, distributed through it, and again collected in the reservoir to the south, before its egress. So substantial is the masonry, that all this remains to the present day in almost perfect working order, and consequently Dara is one of the best-watered villages of Mesopotamia.

Within the walls we were shown several huge buildings, as well as a number of ruined churches, all remarkable for the Cyclopean character of the masonry, not dissimilar in style to the older portions of Deir-el-Za'aferan. Of these remains the largest and best preserved was a subterranean building. It had a gallery running along one side, and vaulted, from one end of which a narrow staircase led down into a huge chamber of great height, and some eighty feet long,† divided into three

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* See Gibbon, ch. xl., who gives an account of Dara, taken from Procopius, Bell. Goth. iv. 7, cp. Ainsworth, ii. 340.

† The measurements are borrowed from Ainsworth, who, however, does not clearly explain that there are three aisles, 15ft. 9in. broad (ii. 339).

It is 120ft. high. Badg. i. 308, who mentions that a subterranean passage leads from one corner underneath the village.

aisles by massive square pillars, which supported the vaulting. The original use of the building was a mystery to my guides, although it was traditionally said to be a granary. Others said, however, it was used for storing water, or as a prison, a treasure house, or even as a diwan. In proof of its having been a prison, a hole in the wall was pointed out, through which a desperate prisoner once cut his way to the open air, some five feet above! There were no means, however, of ascertaining its actual use.

Another building, given over, like the last, to the swallows, and of similar plan, lies rather more to the north. It is built chiefly of brick, and seemed to have been a bath or a store house for water. The ground plan pointed to the former use. It was chiefly below ground, doubtless for the sake of coolness, and had much of its roof destroyed by lightning. It consisted once of ten parallel vaulted spaces, of which seven now remain, in which the water was stagnant, and from the vaults of which long stalactites hung.

Perhaps, however, the most interesting remains at Dara were the numerous tombs and chapels that formed the necropolis. They were mostly cut from the living rock, some large enough to form sheep pens or refuges for the shepherds, others again with space only for the repose of one body or two. Most of the approaches were arched, and had legends, entirely illegible, in Greek uncials. One of these chambers measured over fifty feet each way, containing a gallery all round with compartments for tombs. Below was another gallery similarly treated. Greek inscriptions, much defaced, and rude sculpture were to be seen on all sides, referring to death and the dead. The building was, however, so full of sheep and their invariable attendants that we scarcely escaped from this most interesting building with whole skins.

In regard to the history of Dara, it is said by Procopius that the Emperor Anastasius I., in fear of the encroachments of the Persians under the daring Kabades, fortified the village that existed on the spot.* Justinian then

* Gibbon, xl. 502 A.D.

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increased its strength, and to him, doubtless, were due the magnificent fortifications which Gibbon, quoting Procopius, describes as representing the military architecture of the age. In 531 A.D., Chosroes the Great, called Nusherwan, contemplated its destruction, but spared it on condition that it should never again become the residence of the General of the East.

Persian historians, however, ascribe its origin to Arsaces Tiridates, who became King of Armenia in 286 A.D., and in 296 A.D. delivered Armenia from the Persian yoke. The city belonged first to the one then to the other power, until, in 590 A.D., it was restored by the great conqueror, Chosroes II., to the Romans. It is natural, therefore, that fire altars should be carved upon one tomb, and the Cross within the circle of Eternity upon another, and "that Byzantine sarcophagi should be as frequent as Persian grots."*

In history it is most interesting for its splendid defence in 530 A.D. by Belisarius, the general of Justinian, against forty thousand Persians, which contrasts but sadly with the inglorious terms by which, in the next year, the Romans purchased the safety of their outpost.

The glorious death struggle in which Heraclius led the Romans for the recovery of the true Cross simply marks in more glaring colours the break up of the empire that preceded the rise of the Arabians and the loss of all these frontier towns—Amida, Edessa, Nisibin, Dara, and Singara—over which Persians and Romans had fought for five hundred years. A younger and greater power was waiting to succeed them and end the struggle for a boundary in which the two powers—one following Darius, the other Alexander—had engaged. The work of the old world was done, and a new era began.

The sun was high when we finished the exploration of Dara, and, though I would gladly have spent some days in a more exact examination of these most interesting ruins, it was time

* Ainsworth, "Travels in Asia Minor," ii. 117.

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to return to Mardin. After a short farewell to the Sheikh, and many expressions of our enjoyment of our visit, we started, and arrived soon after dark at the house of the Patriarch, who was delighted to welcome us, being always anxious whenever his guests were out of his sight.

My visit to Sheikh Mohammed made me realise for the first time that many blemishes that appear most glaringly on the forefront of Mohammedan life are not entirely the outcome of Mohammedanism. It is important in Turkey to distinguish the effect on the condition of the people of religion and the government under which they live, although that government be in fact a religious one, and the Sultan of the Turks also the Khalif of Islam. The Sheikh, living in simple state, shewed what the higher life of a Mohammedan may be; that in no way is his religion one that shuts the door to personal holiness and the practice of those virtues which some would so jealously claim for Christianity alone. I was fortunate in meeting men of Moslem creed, pure and of a noble life, men hating the corruptions of officialdom, and anxious to purify the defects of popular Islam by perhaps an unconscious reference to Christian standards; men whose notions of a brotherhood went out beyond the borders of their creed, who saw that slavery and polygamy were blemishes that it would be most surely in the spirit of their Great Founder to modify now and in time abolish. The mills grind slowly in the East and little good would be done by sudden change; but there is no doubt that polygamy is not cherished by higher Mohammedans, nor has slavery the ghastly features so indelibly stamped upon it in the South, and in the Western hemisphere. The methods of securing slaves may be what they may, but the conditions of slavery in the house of a good Mohammedan in Turkey compares not unfavourably with that of servants in many a European house. By no means is it intended to deny the utter evils of polygamy, or that the practice is condoned by the Koran. But after all it is the exception rather than the rule in Turkey, and, I believe, in most Turkish countries; and in most cases for the plain reason that it is an expensive luxury to

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have more than one wife. Slaves, and especially female slaves, are not so uncommon, and that on the score of economy, and it is impossible not to recognise the evil attending this fact. Contrasting the life of the Sheikh of Dara with that of our good friend Antonios Azar of Aleppo, polished gentleman of a civilised town, and taking circumstances into account, there is not so much difference. Antonios has two negro slave girls; to a third he lately gave her liberty. They are happy, having a good mistress, and not being in the degraded position with regard to their master to which the slaves of many a Moslem house are condemned, and in time will earn their freedom. They cost forty liras each, and are well worth it to their master. Mohammed, however, keeps no slaves, and has but one wife, and for servants has the ministers of the mosque.

Hard though it is to balance the character of Moslem and Christian in Turkey, where the faults of each are accentuated by their relative positions of conqueror and subject, yet there are certain types which court comparison and seem to show, among much good and evil evenly distributed between the two, a balance in favour of the Christian. There is little enough to choose between the efendi, freshly sent from Stambul to fill some minor post in a country town and import all the vices which he has learned in that sink of Eastern and Western iniquity, and the clerk, who, calling himself Greek Orthodox, or, perhaps, Papal Armenian, spends half of his day in the counting-house of a seaport Syrian town, and the other half sipping arrak and gambling in a café. It would be as hard to find viler specimens of humanity, presumably civilised, than these two as to weigh their peculiar merits.

If, however, we contrast two representative men in another rank of life, a difference will appear. There is a man lately honoured with the title of Pasha for the boundless services done to a grateful Government by devastating a hundred villages and enriching some high official out of the proceeds, to wit, the Kurd Mustafa, of whom more when we reach Nisibin. Such a man compares but ill with the wealthiest landlord of the Syrian community, one Abd-el-Messiah, who

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lives in a village north of the Tigris. It is true that the old type of Kurdish beg, by the witness of most travellers, was, as a rule, a good landlord and a kindly man; but he has been exterminated by a nervous official policy; and such men as Mustafa now represent the Kurdish landlords, but a poor contrast to Abd-el-Messiah, who lives among his people, supporting and feeding them, maintaining from his own purse a school and church, as his fathers did before him, a man who is a by-word through Mesopotamia for hospitality to all, noble open-handedness, and simpleness of life.

But with the best type of a Mohammedan, such as Sheikh Mohammed, let us contrast the Syrian Bishop, who is admitted by all to rank highest both for simpleness and holiness as well as for the life of active good to which he has devoted himself. In the influence of Mutran Hanna's gentle life none fail to recognise a spirit to which no Moslem does or ever can lay claim, a purity of motive, a sacrifice of life's goods, a simple trust in a God that is a Father, which is far removed from the sublimest we can find in the hard monotheism of Islam; all this combined with a hatred of intrigue and "Politika," as the arts of public life are admirably phrased in Arabic, and a simple desire to further the good of his people. One pictures readily the house of hospitality and almsgiving that are connected with a true Moslem; but where can we find one like this good Bishop riding from house to house, and village to village, preaching God's gospel and comforting the comfortless, hearing the troubles and soothing the quarrels of many a Syrian home? It is here the parallel fails. The Moslem is charitable, as no other man is, for are not all of the Faith brothers? but he lacks the common love for a Father which bids men be charitable in virtue of the Love which sacrificed itself for men, and leads them to sacrifice all to alleviate by but one jot the misery of life and advance the glory of the kingdom of God.

Nor is it only in the higher paths that the one faith yields to the other. Go into any house in an interior town, and in one moment you will see whether it is Moslem or Christian;

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and that not so much by the wealth or poverty, the cleanliness or dirt; but in the one you will see women, perhaps unveiled, who will be polite to you, and not fly as at the approach of a wolf, and in the other is the solemn dryness that lacks the element of female influence. Only too much room is there for improvement in the Christian house, and thanks to the good work of American missionaries there has been a very great change, so that in a well-to-do house in Diarbekr the ladies sit and talk with perfect equality with men in the diwan, and that not in a "Protestant" family. But in the Moslem house there is all the seclusion, all the dense stupidity, the bitter dissension, interwoven with the rule of the harim, which twelve centuries of Islam have been powerless to amend. In the Christian house it is a far different case; and often there is more difference between elder brother and younger than between younger brother and the women of the house. Nothing is more remarkable in these towns than the way in which the primitive purity of life has been maintained by the Christian. The case is different where there has been contact with the western cities. But in the towns of the interior the standard of morality is very high, and admitted by most travellers to be so, forming perhaps the strongest contrast of all between the manners of Moslem and Christian.

Celibacy is not enforced among the clergy; indeed for the parish priest it is forbidden; but there is celibacy for monks and bishops, and it is wonderful how almost unheard of are the evils supposed to accompany a celibate priesthood. So much so, that the Patriarch absolutely refused to believe a very positive charge made against a monk, and said that never in all his ninety-four years had he heard of such a case, nor could he believe in his old age that such a one had occurred.

It is hard to say how a conquered people would behave, were its relation to its rulers reversed. The Syrians never were a conquering nation, and perhaps will remain for ever subject. They are a loyal people, industrious, peaceful, intensely patriotic, and tenacious of their creed and

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nationality. But they cherish no idea of rebellion, even were it practicable, nor do they seem to realise any other position for themselves than that of dependents. But one can readily realise what an influence such a people, purified in their creed and imbued with a spirit of progressive Christianity, may have upon rulers who never have regarded them, nor do now regard them, with anything but friendliness and toleration. In this respect they compare favourably with all the other Churches under the Sultan. They are strong enough, and live in civilised places enough, not to be a prey to mountain robbers, like the Nestorians. They are not powerful or ambitious enough to have any desire to shake off the rule under which they live, like the Armenians. They are not consumed by a hereditary feud with a neighbour like the Maronites, nor objects of suspicion, as dependents and spies of a foreign power, and doubtful worshippers of a pure faith, like all the Papal Christians. So they stand in a peculiarly favourable position, inviting the help of which they are worthy in order to render them able to do that work which God has most certainly preserved them to accomplish.

It is not to be denied that what has been said exhibits the Syrians, as compared with their Moslem neighbours, in a favourable light—eager for reform in the dark places of their Church, eager for education, and eager, above all, to be recognised as part of the Catholic Church of Christ, and to regain some of the position which has been denied to them ever since the sixth century. Mardin, too, and Diarbekr are towns where life is very tolerable indeed, and where the Christians are strong enough in numbers to stand firmly to their rights. Further north and west matters are different, owing to the complications due to the Armenian question, of which one begins to feel the influence in Diarbekr. But there is no Syrian question; and, in consequence, the Christians of Mardin are well off with regard to the exercise of their religion and freedom to trade and converse with the outer world. But it is in the villages that we may find the shadows with which to heighten the picture. Ride but thirty miles, or

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even three miles, from Mardin, if you can find a village where Christians live among Moslems, and the difference will appear. Go to such a place as Saert, which is renowned for the fanatical character of its Moslem inhabitants, and it is literally true that, if a Moslem strike a Christian on one cheek, he must straightway offer him the other also, and that not for humility and the love of his Master, but because he dare not do otherwise.

The year 1892 was a black-letter year in the history of recent Turkish government in country places. For two years the cords have been much tightened, and this combined with the exactions of a syndicate formed in Diarbekr for the collection of the corn-tithes, and containing, I regret to say, some of the leading Armenians of the town, have made it a very hard year for the village people. The harvest, too, was bad, and the Kurd and Arab more unruly than usual, so that as I passed from one village to another the people cried that things could scarcely go further, and it must be that God had turned away his face and would not hear.

One day, as I arrived at a village in Jebel Tur, some thirty miles from Mardin, an old man came in on his way to the governor at Mardin. He had just arrived from the small village of Ain Werdeh, of which he was the chief, and brought a horrible tale of brutality. He had been for some years out of favour with the Government, whether for good or evil I do not know.

About a month since, mounted police had arrived in the village for the purpose of collecting taxes. They were armed, and carried their arms loaded, as they always do; they demanded the taxes of the village, one hundred Turkish pounds, which were promptly brought by the nephew and son of the old man. As soon as they received the money, the police turned on the men, and said they must arrest them; but, as they gave no reason whatever for this, the men walked away. One of the police slowly raised his gun and shot one dead, and the second followed his example, and the other lay by his side. Nine nephews, six sons, and five brothers had

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the old man lost at the hands of the police. So he came to Mardin, and stayed there six months, but no redress could he obtain. He came day after day, and said, "Take me to see your great Christian Queen; why have we no Christian Queen? God cannot hear us here among the Moslem; He has forgotten us, or why do such things happen? Praise be to God! But I would wish I could see a Christian Queen."

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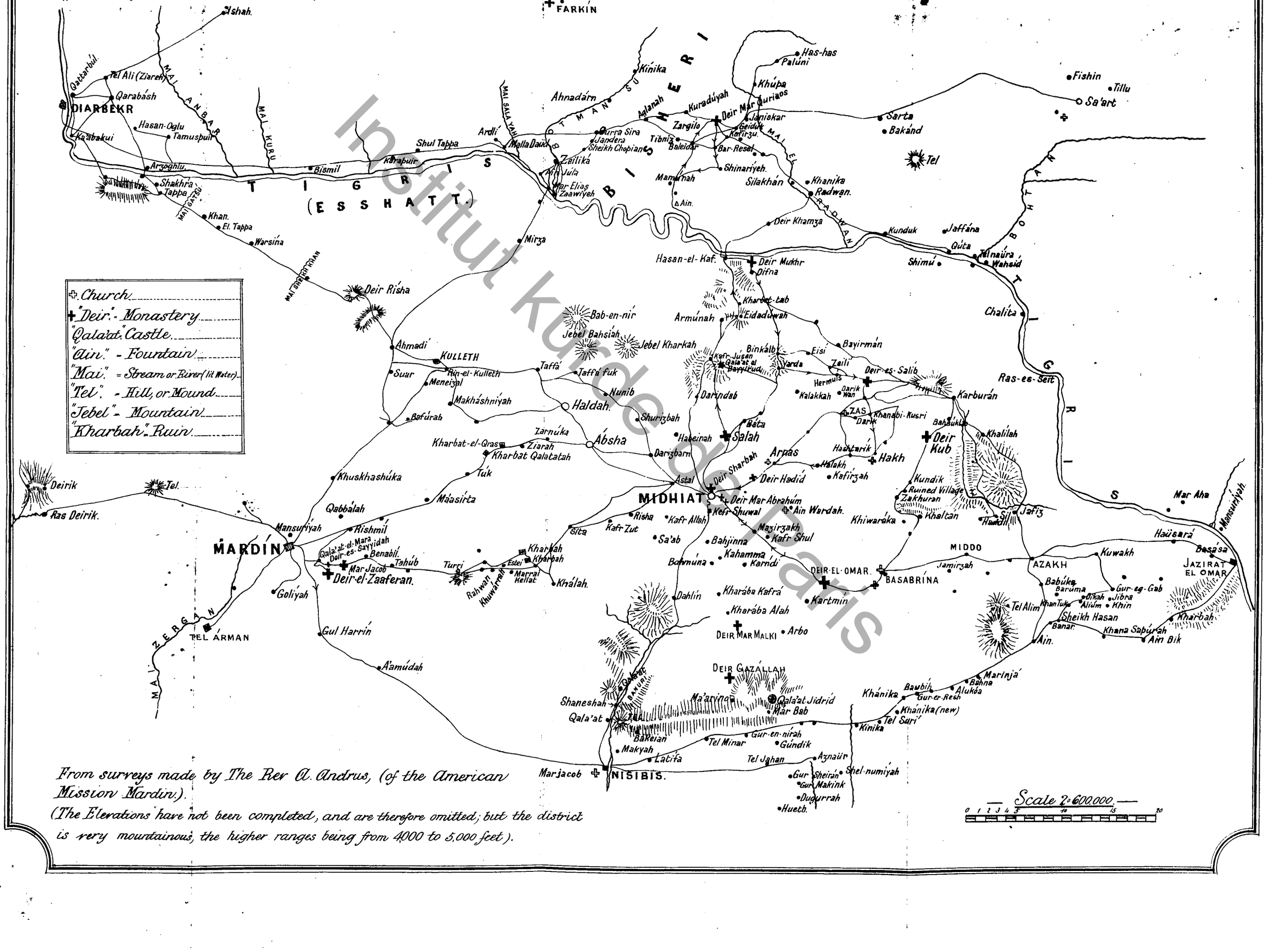
JEBEL TUR

IN THE NORTH EAST CORNER OF MESOPOTAMIA.



From surveys made by The Rev A. Andrus, (of the American Mission Mardin).

(The Elevations have not been completed, and are therefore omitted; but the district is very mountainous, the higher ranges being from 4,000 to 5,000 feet).

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CHAPTER XIII.

Jebel Tur—the Mountain Home of the Syrians.

> **And just as far as ever from the end!**
> **Nought in the distance but the evening, nought**
> **To guide my footsteps further!**
>
> . . . . . .
>
> For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
> Spite of the dusk, the plains had given place
> All round to mountains . . . . .
>
> R. B.

The middle of the third week of August had been predicted as the time when the cool wind would come and put an end to the tropical heat which the hot winds had ushered in at the beginning of July. It was now time to prepare for an expedition to the mountain country north-east of Mardin. It required a fortnight to make the necessary preparations, buying horses and those provisions for which it would be unwise to depend on a district in which Midhiat was the only village that boasted a regular bazar.

Yakob was to come with me, and in order to avoid the trouble as well as the risk of a large caravan in a country where there are plenty of Kurds, whose sole occupation is robbery, we determined to content ourselves with two horses, in spite of the derogation which my dignity might suffer from the absence of a fitting train. But there was this advantage, that one man can keep a secret better than two; and it is a golden rule in out-of-the-way places never to let more people than necessary know in what direction one is travelling, nor on what day. Guides are always procurable from day to day at the villages, and have this in their favour, as compared to

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Government police, that they do not attract attention or make people think that there is money with the caravan. One reason why the American missionaries travel with such complete safety all over this country is that they make it a principle never to carry money and are known never to do so; secondly, they always pay for what they have and bring no zaptiehs to quarter themselves upon the villagers, who know the missionaries to be their friends and to come for their good.

The mountains of Jebel Tur occupy the north-east corner of Mesopotamia, stretching eastward from Mardin to Jezirah, with their southern and western spurs reaching down into the plain all along the line that runs through Dara, Nisibin, and Tchelagha. Northward, the bend of the Tigris shuts the mountains in, while westward they run into the range of Karaja-dagh.

It is a country of barren hills, containing here and there valleys of rich pasture, and hillsides carefully cultivated for vines and cotton. There was a time when it was not so; when Nisibin and Hakh were capitals in a rich land, when roads were there, and water in plenty, stored from the winter rains; but now it is the same here as elsewhere. "The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth"; "the land it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein."* Truly may it be said "Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto the land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?" So it is over most of this hill country; the people are oppressed more by the Kurds than by the Government, and partly too by themselves; for it may be almost said that in these wild places there is no government, except so much as is represented by the mounted police that periodically visit it to collect taxes.

The Mutserraf of Mardin I had already found to be of the nature of a bear, not only rude, but disobliging; and he was the only official from whom I experienced nothing but discourtesy. He refused to supply us with a zaptieh, on the plea that we were not going the shortest way to Mosul (the

* Is. xxxiii. 8; Deut. xxix. 23.

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end of our journey), but should follow the Nisibin road, which led across the plain, and was almost without water. Besides which, I had come without a zaptieh from Diarbekr, and had no special passport for travel in the Walayet from the Wali, although I assured him that I had sent especial word to the Wali, who approved of my tour, and had said that no such passport would be necessary. But the man was obdurate, and we started alone. It was the last I saw of the man; for when I returned from Mosul, he had been dismissed by the request of the whole town, in which he was very unpopular, and a most excellent man from Northern Armenia reigned in his stead.

It is always a troublesome affair starting on a journey in Turkey; adjusting the weights to the several capacities of the animals, seeing that nothing is forgotten, and that there are no sore backs or loose shoes among the horses. This, and the obstinacy of the Mutserraf, delayed our departure until four o'clock, so that we had to look forward to a ride over unknown country for two hours in the dark. The only guide we could procure was an aged man, who was ready to go any distance at any pace for twenty piastres—a large price for a day's journey; but there was no time to bargain, so we took him with us, and trusted to obtain a more serviceable man at Midhiát. For an hour the old man—our "uncle," as we called him, being unaware of his name—kept up with us; but as dusk came on, and we rode at a very fast walk, we heard sounds about a quarter of a mile behind us, on the opposite side of a hill, as of a child whining. He thought he would be lost, and judged himself scarcely better off, whatever we thought of the matter, when we fell in with a party of boys returning to the village of Ma'asirta, whither we were bound, with half-a-dozen donkeys, which they had driven into Mardin that morning loaded with grapes. Leaving the old man to their mercy, of which he got a scant share, for the boys were in a mischievous mood and delighted to have a butt for their wit, which had been polished highly that day in the markets at Mardin, we rode on, in the direction that the boys showed us, through countless vineyards, until we reached

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Ma'asirta, the centre of a grape-growing district. There we were to be the guests of the Syrian priest, who, like many of the village priests, added to his small stipend by following a trade, namely, that of dyeing the rough mountain cloth. His hands, stained a deep indigo, betrayed his occupation. As our arrival was late, we had considerable difficulty in gaining an entrance, for the priest was out attending to a small vineyard which he possessed just outside the village, and the rest of the family were settled on the roof ready for their evening meal, and not at all inclined to come down and be troubled with importunate guests. It was a fine party that we found on the roof, when we had settled our animals for the night, and ascended by a rickety staircase to arrange our beds and other matters for the night. There was the housewife and her brother from a neighbouring village, together with a miscellaneous collection of children, to say nothing of a tame goat and great shaggy dogs that kept watch all night. Before long the priest came in with a huge basket of luscious grapes, which, with the melon we had brought, and the excellent cakes supplied by the unfailing kindness of one of the American ladies at Mardin, made an excellent supper. It was a busy time of year, and the priest had much to talk about with regard to the grape season, the harvest, and a dozen other things, beside matters of ecclesiastical and national concern, of which he eagerly enquired from us as new arrivals from Mardin. But we were all tired and glad to go to sleep; and for the first time I lay down upon an Eastern roof, and looked at the stars until they twinkled me to sleep, to the baying of wakeful dogs and the mournful sounds of babies crying.

When we awoke early the next morning we saw all round the signs that we were in the land of the vine. Ma'asirta is famous all through Mesopotamia as the place where the best grapes grow, and for miles round all the paths and roads lead between vineyards, "a wall being on this side, and on that," built of rough stones, and generally having a thick layer of old vine-rods or brambles on the top to keep out foxes and other pilferers. The people take the greatest care of these

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"hedges," as they are called in the Psalms,* and their good repair is one of the chief signs of prosperity and thrift about a village. Thus Solomon says, "I went by . . . the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down."

Every vineyard contains its "lodge," a cottage where the family will spend some of the summer months, when the grapes are ripening and afford tempting spoil to the passer-by. Such was the "tower" in St. Matthew xxi. 33, and the "lodge" in the garden of cucumbers in Isaiah i. 8. Beside these are often erected booths of less substantial form, being mere platforms of brushwood upon a framework of wooden poles, where a boy or two may watch during the day under the shade of oak-branches, and the workers sleep at night.† Careful though they were in guarding the vineyards, and strict as was the law of trespass among the Jews, yet the traveller might always gather so much as he wished to eat, so that he did not gather them into a basket; just as a man might pluck the ears of corn, but not enter another's corn field with a sickle to reap.‡ Such provisions are doubly necessary in a thirsty land, in which one may often travel hours without coming to a house where water or food may be obtained; and often as we passed between the walls of a vineyard, we picked or asked for some bunches of the rich fruit.

Besides the lodge there is generally a wine press, such as those which in Palestine mark the places where the vineyards

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* Ps. lxxx. 12. Such a passage as that of St. Matthew xxi. 33, together with many others, may be literally illustrated from modern methods of vine culture. The same remark applies to almost all cultivation of the earth in the East. Among other passages are Isaiah v. 1-6, Joel iii. 13, Isaiah xvi. 10, St. John xv. 2. Isaiah xxvii. 4, may refer to the briars on the walls. It may be noticed that in Surrey the word hedge is still commonly used for any bank, even without trees, that encloses a field.

† Job xxvii. 18; Isaiah i. 8, xxvii. 3.

‡ Exod. xxii. 5; Deut. xxiii. 24. Like this was the law forbidding to "wholly reap the corners of the field," or to "gather every grape of the vineyard." "Thou shalt leave them for the poor, and the stranger." Levit. xix. *cp.* Deut. xxiv. 19.

once were, generally places dug out and cemented, or in rock country cut from the hill side; and lastly there is somewhere in the inclosure, or perhaps in the village, a huge basin, sometimes cut out of the earth and cemented, with a space below for fire, in which the "dibbiz" is made by boiling the common grapes. It is a kind of thick syrup, like treacle, and is largely used with rice and other plain food, as we use jam. In the wine press, the grapes are generally trodden underfoot, except those used for sacramental wine, which are pressed in the hands. Of the dregs of the wine press is made arrak, or mastik, a kind of fiery liqueur, which is the favourite beverage of the Turkish official persons and of all those who take their pleasure in gardens and so make keif.

Good reason had we to bless the grapes; for the weather was still hot, and everywhere throughout Jebel Tur is there plenty of good grapes, although none so good as those of Ma'asirta.

After an excellent breakfast of omelette and grapes, supplied by the priest, a worthy man, but not remarkable for religious fervour, we went to look at a church, newly built at the Patriarch's expense, on the ruins of an ancient building. There was nothing to be seen in the building, which was neat enough, but the fine marble tomb of a young boy, discovered when the foundations were dug out, and in virtue thereof promoted to be a saint.

Our aged guide we dismissed with our blessing and half the stipulated price, and started for Midhiat, under the escort of the priest's brother-in-law. Everyone was busy in the village boiling "dibbiz," or at the threshing-floor winnowing out the chaff, while to and fro from the fountain under the rock came women bearing pitchers, picturesque in their long maroon dresses, and accompanied by little naked boys, and small girls dressed in miniature like their mothers. Out past them we climbed the hill and got among the vineyards, through which we rode for some time, until rugged rocks and scraggy oak trees took their place, and we came to a country of ruined towns. To each inquiry about the next village, we received the answer that its name was "Kharbah," the ruin, and so

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we found village after village with buildings of the lower Empire date, and all deserted since many a long day.

The paths were exceedingly bad and not at all clear; nor were matters improved by the behaviour of Yakob's horse, who to-day gave samples of what he promised the day before; he fell twice, stumbled every twenty yards, and at stated intervals threw out a fore leg sharply, tied up the rest in an elaborate knot, and by a mighty effort threw himself out of it, nearly landing himself on his back. No harm ever came of this diversion, except that it filled Yakob with abject and, for an unpractised horseman, not unreasonable terror. My own mare had been more carefully chosen, a steady, middle-aged lady, with immense walking power, who took no notice of her companion's frivolities, beyond cocking one contemptuous ear and taking advantage of the delay to increase her distance from him. She was a good half-breed, used to mountain work, and far more adapted to such travelling than a thoroughbred Arab would have been.

At the first Kharbah that we reached our companion left us, directing us to another a little further on, and thence by signs, clear enough to one who knew the country but rather uncertain to us, as far as Midhiat. The road, he said, was as clear as a Kurdish Agha's conscience, and we should find it as easily. The priest's brother-in-law, it seemed, was a witty man. We had descended a valley, and climbed another hill with such trust in our animal's intuition, for there was no apparent path, that we might have been going with our eyes shut, when in a wood we met two ferocious-looking ruffians, armed with rifles and stuck all over with knives, who told us that we were making good headway for a village some fifteen miles north-west of Midhiat, a fact of which our divergence from the telegraph line should have made us aware. The men turned out to be the merest lambs in wolves' clothing, one of them a Syrian, the other a Kurd. Nevertheless, we were not sure that they were not misdirecting us to serve some private end, until we again saw the telegraph posts, and had exchanged some paras for a bundle of delicious mountain cucumbers. Taking care not to lose

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sight again of the precious telegraph, we soon marched boldly into the Moslem village of Absha, half-way to Midhiat. There among half a dozen wells we came upon the pastoral scene so common in this dry country, but which seems always to have a fresh charm, the girls driving the sheep to water and the boys and men keeping off the cattle until the goats and sheep had drunk. Upon the mouth of each well lay a stone; and, when it was moved, one of the lads would let down a pitcher, or a goatskin bound round the mouth with a withy, to fill the trough, and then go again to the well and draw water. We had to wait like the cattle until the sheep had drunk, and then one of the girls "hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave us to drink."

As we were near the village, I let the reins hang upon my mare's neck, where they lay as she drank; however, for some strange reason she chose to enter the village by a narrow lane, roofed over about seven feet from the ground with vine-withies. There was room for her, but not for me; so that while she went straight ahead, I was left swinging in the air among the withies, not at all the most pleasant things to be caught amongst. Unfortunately this carefully guarded lane led to the Sheikh's harim, as I soon discovered from the yells with which its polished inmates greeted me. My mare from the nature of the case had a free passage, but I was left swinging, until matters explained themselves, and I obtained a safe conduct to the village house of refreshment. Such houses are generally to be found in every village, and are maintained at the expense of the inhabitants for the purpose of carrying out the law of hospitality so strongly insisted upon by Mohammedan law as well as Christian charity.

I soon forgot my scratches in the enjoyment of a splendid bowl of leben and a fine, juicy water-melon, which we ate sitting under the shade of a small verandah in the Sheikh's courtyard, and listened to the many inquiries of the village worthies as to who we were and whither we were bound. Our host was accustomed to entertain the American missionaries, and was glad to welcome one of their number, as he thought me to be. Of an English variety of that multiform religion

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of Christianity he had never heard tell; nor, as he was a Moslem, did it seem worth while to explain the distinguishing features of our Church's creed; so we asked the news. This was the signal for an aged sheikh, the gossip of the village, to exalt his horn, and tell how some weeks before the Prince of all the Protestants, one Mutran Mattha, had come to their village on his way from Jezireh to Mardin, and filled them all with wonder at his gracious manners and knowledge of things political. Now this was our good friend the Papal Syrian Bishop of Mardin, whose most distinguishing character is his ultramontane zeal; so our host seized the opportunity of displaying superior knowledge, and delivered an oration upon the various subtleties of Christian disagreement, in which his experience entitled him to lay down the law. There was, of course, a quarrel, in which I was appealed to, and told them that I knew one faith only, that of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and did not worship either the Bible or the Virgin, to one of which they conceive that all Christians paid homage. This they thought strange, for of the Christian faith they had heard little, and doubted what this new form of it could be, thanking God that they were Moslems and had no need to trouble about religion so long as some of them prayed morning and evening, and the rest gave praise to God when the grapes were plentiful or a son was born.

There was a matter of far more importance to relate. Could I not help them to a new sheikh by my unbounded influence at Mardin and the Courts of Europe? The village had taken sides in a furious feud caused by the late sheikh, and half of them wished him to be suspended. This was a delicate matter for interference, which might easily lead to bloodshed, so I made an excuse to call the horses and get on my way while daylight remained for the rest of our journey to Midhiat. Such a state of division is normal in these villages—Christian, I regret to say, as much as Moslem—and is due to the absence of any Government authority in the mountains. At the same time, it gives a tone to a life which is, at the best of times, colourless.

Our host accompanied us to point out the way beyond the

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vineyards, in his last words praying us to remember about the sheikh, that son of a black camel. In three hours we reached Estel, a flourishing village in the middle of a rich valley, and supporting a large number of people by its weaving and dyeing industry. But we stopped only for a bowl of water, and made the best of our way to Midhiat, being anxious to get in for the night, and make arrangements for a ride the following day to the river Tigris.

On reaching Midhiat, which stands in the middle of an undulating valley stretching from the hills ten miles to the west, to others four or five miles to the right, we soon found the house of Hanna Sefr, to which we had been directed in Mardin by Abu-Selim. He belonged to the chief Syrian family in the place, and being a man fairly well-to-do, had a good house built in the usual open-air fashion, with a strong flavour of the farmyard, through which we entered, and where dogs, cattle, sheep, and horses wandered about in a friendly manner in and out of the open door among the servants and children, making altogether an unparalleled scene of dirt and confusion. There is plenty of colour everywhere in the East, but more here than usual, thanks to the rich maroon, with which the women dye their clothes, and the picturesque dresses of boys and men; long white tunics with gaily striped scarves round the waist, and gorgeous red and yellow head-dresses, of which the ends of the kerchief are stuck up like wings upon a Norseman's helmet. A very handsome set of men they are, too, these mountain Syrians, something very different from the courteous townsmen of Mardin, but no less hospitable; wilder and far more impetuous, but with a spirit that seems capable of better things than the majority of their more polished countrymen. In spite, however, of the joys of the farmyard, we were glad to escape from the crowd of animals, and the stare of the children, up on to the cool roof, where coffee and a dish of grapes were awaiting us after our journey.

An admirable supper of lamb and rice, with leben, milk, and fresh cheese, ending with more grapes and coffee, inclined us only too readily to sleep. There was a zaptieh

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with us on the roof, bound the next day to Kafr-Juz, a village on our way, who promised to accompany us; and we slept in peace, thinking ourselves fortunate. After an hour's rest, however, we were rudely awakened by the loud talk of a tall, blustering man, demanding my passport. I suggested the morrow as a more seemly season for such interruption; but, discovering the man to be drunk, thought it wiser to humour him, especially as he was "Bimbashi," or head of the police, in all the importance of Turkish officialism drunk. We therefore held a parley, in the course of which he discovered his first surmise to be true, and triumphantly pointed to the lion on my English passport as a proof that I was a Russian spy. As to the Turkish teskereh, that was nothing; I had stolen it. But there was the very language, and there the very lion, tail and all, that he knew so well in Moscow. Argument was palpably useless; so off he rolled in a hiccoughing fever of delight, with the poor old British lion, to show to the Qaimaqam, the local governor, and prove his penetration in the matter of Russian spies. He nearly fell to the ground in his efforts to find the steps from the roof, nor did anyone assist him.

We determined to get the start of him, and knowing that, being drunk, he was unlikely to be up very early, hurried off soon after daybreak to visit the Qaimaqam; who, having been lately summoned to Mardin to explain matters relating to the murder at Ain Werdeh, had fallen suddenly sick, and retired to one of the monasteries just outside Midhiat. So we started for the Deir, and found the great man certainly rather feverish, and enjoying the beautiful air and an early smoke in the best room of the place. His indisposition was fortunate, allowing me to open business by prescribing a sure and certain cure for his malaria. Nothing could exceed his gratitude, nor the badness of his coffee; guests we were, he said, and entitled to all the resources of Turkish civilisation. After this auspicious beginning the Bimbashi arrived, and received a chilling order to be less officious in future and to pay suitable attention to distinguished strangers. He was very sulky, especially when the passports, on which he relied

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for our conviction, were handed back to me, immediately the Qaimaqam had seen that they bore the proper signatures; and he muttered that he had not been aware of our imperial connections in Europe.

The Qaimaqam, to whom I showed my map, then discoursed intelligently upon Turkish geography, but soon reverted to his favourite science of medicine. "Scorpions? Yes," he said, "they were plentiful in Jebel Tur; and had I any means of dealing with their stings?" On my suggesting hot water to allay the pain, and stop the circulation; "Ah, yes," he cried, with delight, "the scorpion is a large microbe, its sting a smaller one; apply hot water, and it acts as a true anti-septeek!" He had read some translations of French medical books, and was much pleased to display his knowledge, which, however, went scarcely beyond these two terms, which he applied to every form of disease and medicine. After some more talk of this kind, and whole mouthfuls of polite speeches, we bowed ourselves out of the room, with a hope that we might find him still here, but better, on our return. A most refreshing specimen of the Turkish official class, which is not as a rule of a communicative turn, although he was described by the American missionary at Midhiat as a bumble bee in a bottle.

Leaving all the baggage behind that we did not require in the mountains, we lost no time in getting the rest into the "khurjes," or large travelling bags, that hang on each side of the baggage animal, and starting on our way to Hasan Kaf, a large village on the Tigris, where we were to sleep. Our host found a guide who would take us as far as Salah, a Syrian village two hours' ride from Midhiat, where the Bishop would supply another to take us to Hasan Kaf. Our way lay over downs, as bare of trees and rocky as only downs in Turkey can be. Salah, however, stood on a well-cultivated hillside, and was found to contain a church of considerable interest, which had the rare advantage of an inscription containing its date. The Bishop, however, a bad-tempered, decrepit old man, excommunicated by the Patriarch for ordaining unfit men to be priests and neglecting

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his people, added little dignity to the monastery. It was a deserted-looking place, although it must once have been a fine building. Round a small court were ranged various rooms, and, from an arch leading into an inner court, we climbed some steps to the roof, and reached a small upper room where the Bishop was resting from the mid-day heat.

The fact that we came from the Patriarch produced little effect upon him, but he put on his cloak and turband to show us the church, and shouted to a boy to go and pick a good basket of grapes and then find a guide for us in the village. The church was much larger than those I had hitherto seen, and approaching to the Greek type, common in Asia Minor, rather than to the earlier buildings of Syria and Mesopotamia. Its chief features were three high lancet windows on the north and south of the nave, and a fine waggon-roof of brick, arching the same from east to west, so that the whole formed a great contrast to the low and badly-lighted churches of most Syrian towns. The bricks of the roof had gained the most lovely soft colours, and were arranged in a design worthy of the finest Lombard work—three squares, each formed of four triangles, meeting in a centre. Above the sanctuary door, which was of fine design and roughly carved, something in the same manner as the friezes of Nisibin, ran an inscription, stating that the church was built A.D. 1109. Other inscriptions there were, built into the walls inside and out, in the Estrangeli character; but I had neither the time nor the means for making squeezes. Of a large store of books, all that had escaped the ravages of time, the Moslem, and the German collector, were the incomplete leaves of a copy of the Gospels on parchment, of the same date as the church. The poor old Bishop cared for none of these things, and seemed only tired of being asked questions which he could not answer. Nor was his temper improved by the sting of an indignant baby-scorpion, whose sleep he had disturbed while searching for materials with which to make some rough sandals for our guide. We ate a good dish of grapes, and, leaving the old man to bathe the sting

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with that microbe-antisepteek, hot water, we started off at a round pace towards Hasan Kaf.

Low, barren downs, always rising slightly towards the north, our guide, quite an old man, traversed with the agility of a hare. We passed little but Moslem villages, Kurdish shepherds, and here and there a ruined rock-built church, until we reached at last a height that commanded one of the most glorious views in Mesopotamia. Straight before us to the north stretched a plain some four miles broad, and double that distance from east to west. Green and fertile even in September, the valley was crossed by a stream, belted thick with willow trees, and watering on the hill slopes fields of cotton and maize. Further down was tobacco, and every here and there were men and children standing along the banks of heaped-up corn and throwing it high in the wind to winnow out the chaff. Near them were boys driving oxen round the threshing-floors and singing as they drove, or bringing in the sheaves for threshing, while girls and women walked behind gleaning what was left. Northwards were the mountains shutting in the Tigris, through which the pass we were to follow pierced, and down which the stream came; westwards the hills that mount by degrees to the Karajadagh; and on the east the range that stretches on to Kerboran. Over all these hills the late afternoon sent shadow after shadow, while it filled the valley with a warm, sunny glow. Just below us, near the foot of the mountain on which we stood, was the prosperous village of Kafr Juz, where dwelt a splendid Kurdish beg, with twelve splendid sons, in three splendid houses. Away from towns and interfering officials, these sons of Nimrod ply a pleasant trade, and rule the valley, hampered though they are by administrative reforms, slighted and belittled by a Government, whose nervous policy has no other means of dealing with an hereditary class, which they fear to use and cannot abolish; but whose services were once a bulwark of the empire, the ancient landed gentry of Turkey.

Down in the plain we met one of these sons, a boy of about fourteen, riding a fine mare and attended by an old servant.

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He gave a salam worthy of a prince twice his age, and courteously asked where we were going and whether we would not turn aside and "eat bread" in his father's house. We thanked him and said we had five hours further to ride, with only three more hours of daylight, and must hasten on. Half way across the valley we stopped to refresh ourselves with grapes and biscuits at a spring, and then made the best of our way up the road that led through maize and cotton fields into the pass. The beauty of the place tempted us to linger in spite of the late hour; and as we reached the top of the pass and entered the gorge that leads down towards the river the tops of the eastern hills glowed for a few minutes a gorgeous pink, and the sun went down suddenly, as it always does in a south country, and especially among the mountains.

We now discovered our guide to be useless; for he had very bad sight, and the road was not clear. It grew darker, and no moon rose; while all we had to comfort us was the dismal moaning of the old man, "Dark, dark," and calling on the Prophet to help him. All I could do was gently to remind him with my whip, that these noises suited neither time nor place, in which it might be dangerous to attract attention; then, finding him hopeless, I dismounted, and setting him on my mare, led her for the remaining two hours. Over rocks and by a torrent, quite bad enough by day, but positively terrifying by night, and down a gorge that seemed to our fancy haunted by brigands, Yakob and I plodded along, with nothing but the stars to guide us, leading our respective beasts, and wishing it were day. Yakob was in a great fright, although, being both armed, we were probably in little danger, especially considering that we had passed two caravans making a night journey to Midhiat, and that no one knew that we were on the road. However, I cannot conceive how we ever found the way among the confusion of rocks and multitude of cross paths. The numerous streams and the larger torrent were our chief danger, and more than once we had narrow escapes over slippery boulders, and on the edges of deep pools.

The perfect stillness among these mountains, broken only by

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the footsteps of our horses and the sound of falling water; the great naked rocks and ragged trees; everything filled us, ignorant as we were of people and country, with a certain awe, and we were heartily thankful to hear the barking of dogs and bleating of sheep, never before so grateful, which told us we were not far from human habitations, perhaps the town. Soon we reached a number of caves on each side of the ravine, where were flocks of sheep, and hundreds, it seemed, of dogs, almost more terrifying than the rocks we had left; then further on a straggling line of low-roofed houses by the water, and as the pass grew broader rows of houses, one built above another, half caves, half fortresses, upon the perpendicular face of rock on either side. We went on until a Moslem directed us to the house of the head man of the Christians, an Armenian, who we had been told would give us lodging. However, he was in bed, so, after climbing up a winding path cut in the face of the rock, we descended to the house of the Congregational teacher, who met us on the way, and offered all the hospitality his house could afford. He had only lately come from the American high-school at Mardin, where I had known him; and he was most anxious to do anything he could for a friend of the Americans. It was too late to get any provisions, even water, every drop of which has to be fetched from the river, or oats and chopped straw for the horses. This was worst of all, for they had had a hard day and we had brought very little with us. We were able to content ourselves with cake and melon, and soon fell asleep upon the platform just outside the house. Yakob spent some time in praising God for our deliverance, and asking many questions about the scorpions, of which a very deadly species abounds in Hasan Kaf. Their season was fortunately over, so he slept in peace.

We rose early next morning, partly to obtain food for the horses, and partly because the cocks, and dogs, and donkeys drove away sleep. Never did I see such a curious town, built all up the sides of the two perpendicular faces of rocks which flank the gorge as it comes down to the river, on which the sunlight was gleaming. Down by the shores were

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many houses of the Moslems, and among them two minarets, one very beautiful, and the other half ruined and crowned by a great stork's nest. Near the latter were the remains of one of those magnificent Saracenic bridges that the Turks have allowed to fall to ruins, and on the other side a little Moslem shrine, brilliant with blue Persian tiles inscribed with legends from the Koran, but this, too, a ruin. The river at this time of the year was fairly shallow, and could be forded about a hundred yards above the bridge; but in winter, when the rains begin, it soon swells, and in the summer when the snow comes down is often flooded; and then "kelleks," or rafts of wood floated upon inflated skins, ply from side to side, and run from Hasan Kaf down to Mosul or Baghdad. Just below the ferry is a spring under the bank of the river, and from here is drawn all the drinking water, and carried up to the town by strings of donkeys. Of the houses, built like puffins' nests along the cliffs, that in which we lodged was a good specimen. Three rooms were carved out of the soft rock, and a front wall made partly of the rock itself, partly built up with rubble composite. In front of this ran a platform, on which two small rooms were built, and a "gate-house," so common in the East, in which to keep guard in times of danger, and put the horses at night. Before long the Armenian, to whom we had brought an introduction, came to call upon us, and ask what he could do for us the next night, and whether we should care to see the castle and the old fortifications. The castle was on the top of the north-west rock, and commanded the river and the approach to the town along its southern shore. On that side the fortifications were of immense strength, but all in ruins, and approached only by a narrow path up a bare face of cliff. There was, too, a curious little church built in the cliff, and accessible from the path below only by a ladder.

Taking a good stock of grapes to eat by the way, we started shortly before mid-day, and, having crossed the river, made our way along its northern bank towards the western pass through the mountains that divide it from the plain of Bisheri. We were forced by the insecurity of the nearer pass across the

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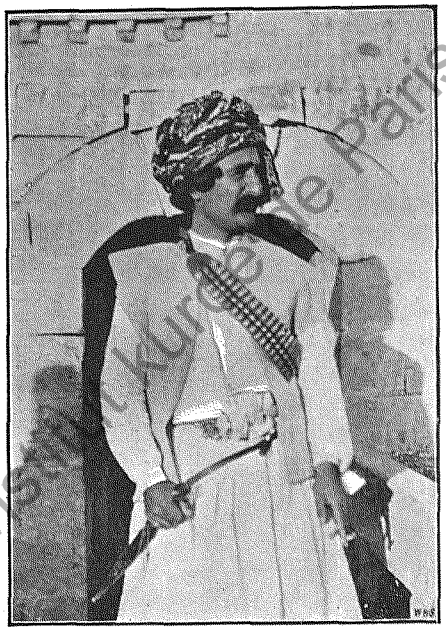
mountains, due to the number of Kurds living amongst them, to take the western caravan road, nearly double the distance; and it was four hours before we emerged from the hills and saw before us the plain, at the north-east end of which stood the monastery of Mar Quriaqos. At every village the people were busy bringing in the corn, and the threshing-floors everywhere were full of brilliant groups of men and women. Two hours before sunset we passed the last of these, and as



ALI AGHA.

we rode towards the monastery through the long grass, disturbed a large flock of wild turkeys. A few minutes more and we were under the walls of the grim old "Deir," and soon settled in a comfortable diwan, sipping excellent coffee. It was Saturday evening, and families were flocking in from the villages to spend the night and attend the early service in the church. Among these was the "Agha" of the district,

whom we had met, attended by half a dozen of his Kurds, all armed with Martini-Henry rifles, stolen from the Government, just leaving the Deir. He had been told by the Bishop of Deir-el-Za'aferan, who was staying in Bisheri, that I was coming and that I had a photographic camera, and being of all aghas the most conceited, was wild with desire to see his own portrait. When I said that I was too tired to take his photograph that evening, that the next day was Sunday, and that on Monday I was going on a visit to a village to the north, he replied that all that was nothing, and that either I must photograph him or he would unwillingly shoot me. After a fitting display of dignity, I therefore agreed to take his portrait, thinking it would be better to have this warlike person as a friend while in his territory, and promised to send him a copy.

It seemed a necessary precaution for him and his men to be well armed, on account of the feuds that are continually raged between the Kurds. This very man's father and brother were at the time lying in prison at Diarbekr in consequence of the bloody termination of a marauding expedition against the mountain villages by the river, in which they had played too conspicuous a part. Our friend Ali Agha should have been in prison too, said the Bishop afterwards, for though in some ways a good enough man, he had only killed eighteen men, chiefly harmless Armenians, who had been pressed into his rival's service during the last raid. He was a handsome man, and protected the Christian villages in his district in return for tithes of corn and service in times of war; and would, like the rest of his class, make a valuable ally to a Government that knew how to treat him.

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CHAPTER XIV.

Bisheri and Northern Jebel Tur.

"Thy shepherds slumber, O King of Assyria; thy nobles shall dwell in the dust; thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them."—Nahum.

The monastery, in which we spent Sunday as quietly as the continual influx of visitors would allow, was dedicated to Mar Quriaqos, a boy who, with his mother Diuliti, suffered martyrdom during the Persian persecutions of the fourth century.* It was a large building, dating apparently from about the eleventh century, and, having fallen partly to ruin, was restored by the efforts of a monk, the last head of the monastery. The church and "house of the Saints," as they call the burial chapel of the bishops, were fine specimens of the same style as the church at Salah, and occupying exactly the same position in the monastery as those at Deir-el-Za'aferan. Its inhabitants consisted of three monks, and a priest, besides half-a-dozen deacons and servants. Among these was a blind deacon, reputed to be a great scholar, who held a small school of boys from the neighbouring villages, and taught them Syriac and Arabic. Kurdish was the language spoken here, as through most of Bisheri; but Arabic was generally learned as a second language and a means of communication with strangers, for no educated man in Southern Turkey is ignorant of it. The monastery forms

* His festival is on July 15 in the East, and June 16 in the West. Ruinart, in his "Acta Martyrum Sincera" (p. 477), says that S. Cirycus and Julitta died at Tarsus about 305 A.D. Maclean and Browne, p. 350.

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also the headquarters of the neighbouring Syrian villages, whose inhabitants congregate there on Sunday morning and pay their tithes to the Patriarch through its head.

After the morning service in the church, my room, the large diwan or guest-room of the monastery, was crowded with visitors anxious to see how Yakob and I ate, and slept, and drank our coffee. This continual visiting, which is so marked a feature of Eastern life, makes one long for the inside rooms and privacy of a European house, where one is not at the mercy of every unoccupied person who chooses to intrude himself for two or three hours. Of course, after a time one takes no notice of these importunate people, unless they have some business or come really out of politeness. But to be continually watched is most unpleasant, and it takes a long time and much patience to get accustomed to the inevitable.* I tried going to sleep; the inquisitors snored too. I tried rudeness; they thought me mad. I walked about; they began to examine my things, until at last I dared the extreme step of walking out, and, when they had all come out and dispersed, returned with Yakob and locked the door. I thus procured a little time to read and write until lunch time, after which I had promised the chief man of a village just across the plain, who had come to pay me a visit, to ride out with him and see his people and a fine new church that they had newly built. It was one of the many built or restored during the last thirty years, which have seen more work of this kind than several hundred years previous. It has been already mentioned that the raising of belfries and crosses upon churches is one among many signs of increasing toleration of the native Christians by the Turkish Government during the last fifty years. The new churches are witnesses to the same fact; and to evade the law against erecting new buildings without the trouble of obtaining the necessary leave by means of much bakhshish and red tape, the Christians

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* See Burton, "Pilgrimage to Meccah," i. 36, who mentions some reasons why continual society is as dear to the Eastern as it is hateful to the English.

often rebuild a ruin, and meet their requirements by adding largely to it in the process. Bad though the actual administration of good Turkish law is in the provinces, and though complaints are frequent against Turk and Kurd, especially against the Turk, for doing nothing to restrain the lawlessness of the Kurd; and though to these are now added constant outcries against the tax-farming syndicates, rich men of the towns, and often Christians, who squeeze the villages in order to leave a good margin between their receipts and the amount guaranteed to the Government; yet things are a hundred times better than they must have been fifty years ago. Kurdish raids are less frequent, and appeals less often in vain, while the flourishing Christian villages of Jebel Tur and Bisheri, compared with the dirty, thriftless settlements of Kurds or Arabs in the same places, show that things are changing, and give good promise for the future.*

The church of Keferzo, standing on the top of a high mound in the centre of the village, was a fine building, equal in every way, taking the standard of house architecture into account, to many of our village churches of England. It has, too, in the matter of light, a great advantage over most of the Syrian churches, there being less need now of precaution against attack; although it is not unusual, even in places where no such precaution is necessary, to maintain the practice of building the windows high and small, especially in the sanctuary, thus fostering the idea of mystery so dear to Oriental minds. At the west end were some grain and boxes, stored there, as frequently, for safety, containing among other things the tithe due to the Patriarch. To the east of this space, where the women stand or sit, the church is divided into a nave and two aisles, separated by two rows of marble pillars. The sanctuary is, contrary to the usual plan, not divided into three chambers, but the three altars stand in one

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* Lest this should seem to contradict what has elsewhere been said, it is necessary to bear in mind that improvement lies in the *general* toleration of later years, as well as that in the past few years we have seen the development of several causes, temporary and local, which have increased the severity of the Turks towards their Christian subjects.

large open space, a dome covering the centre one, while the walls are decorated with considerable taste in the black and white Arabesque designs common in this part of the country.

The people had determined to do their best with their church, and had contributed liberally with money and labour, much of which was freely given to the building. They had, with unusual energy, quarried for the doors and pillars some rough white marble, which had been found about two miles from the village, so that the whole church presented an appearance of great solidity. Numerous coloured prints of wretched French and Russian manufacture adorned the walls, much to the offence of the straiter of the Syrians, to whom such things savour of idolatry; and to the side of the sanctuary door was a beautiful piece of cyanite built into the wall, which every Sunday morning, the priest told me, exudes moisture.

Two priests lived in the village, to perform the daily services, supplementing their meagre stipends by weaving, and labouring in the fields. When I asked the most intelligent of them, why he had no school for the children, he replied indignantly, "Am I a deacon, that I should teach letters?" I said something of a greater Teacher, who thought no service of man too mean; and he thought that he might do something in the winter, if the boys could be spared from their work. After a few minutes spent in trying to read some of the ancient inscriptions upon the tombs, we turned down the path to the house of our host.

There we found a party of village magnates sitting as they sit in English hamlets of a Sunday afternoon, with cigarettes to inspire the discussion of harvest prospects. They all rose at the approach of a stranger, and made room in the broad gateway, where they sat. There was, however, a constraint upon them, for just opposite me sat an official sent from Saert to superintend the gathering in of the harvest, and see that the interests of a paternal Government did not suffer. Although he was a miserable specimen even of a Government clerk, none dared utter a single unweighed word while he was by, and I had to put a strait guard upon myself,

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for an unwise word might seriously have damaged my hosts. After coffee had been served, and a basket of very fine grapes, we rose to go, and with much salaming, and many polite speeches, were accompanied to our horses, that had been eating quietly in the court. It was, as usual, a sad thing to say good-bye to the village, and feel how little one could help them. The grapes we had eaten came from the only garden within miles; for the fear of the Kurds prevents the people from planting the vines, unless, as at Keferzo, they are in numbers sufficient to protect them.

Next day we had settled to ride to the village of Has-has, that lay about four hours north of the monastery, in order to visit a Syrian, a rather wealthy man, who had chosen, the rarest of all things in this country, to live in an obscure village among his tenants and workpeople. The advantage to the villagers was evident, for they had to live amongst them one of their own creed and nation, whose interests are the same with theirs, and who could protect them, not only from the surrounding Kurds, but also from official exactions. One must admit that such a life as he leads cannot but be exceedingly dull, with no company but his family, two priests, one of whom is a tutor to his boys, and the Bishop when he comes on one of his rare visits.

When we arrived at the end of our ride, we found no one in the gate of the house, for the master was out looking after the threshing, except a most villainous-looking Kurd, who lay asleep upon the raised recess waiting for the mid-day meal. This is a meal of which every traveller has a right to partake; but the obligation to keep open house in this way is a considerable tax, which must be patiently borne, especially when officials are in question. The latter, being often some months in arrear with their pay, generally adopt this method of getting a meal for themselves and their servants, and gain not a little in the matter of tobacco besides. Food, however, is cheap in these parts; nor have time or privacy any marketable value in the East. But there is one decided disadvantage in the fact that your guest may at any time prove an informer, and lay to heart the utterances of

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unguarded moments. Shammas Efrem did not keep us long waiting, but soon came in, like Boaz, from the threshing, and, sitting in the gate, asked whether his men had brought us coffee and water, with whatever else we required. After him came a boy, his brother's son, handsomely dressed in the country fashion, with long white tunic and rich belt, in which was placed a splendid silver-mounted dagger. Next came the boy's father, a dark-looking man, who had quarrelled with his brother. Some difference had arisen, and the younger was soon to leave the village and take with him half the property to another house. It was strange how often I found the house divided against itself, the younger against the elder, in this manner, with very sad results to the peace and prosperity of the people. It is, no doubt, partly due to the custom that the sons remain after marriage in the house of their father, and jealousy is bred if one succeeds better than another; or sons are born to one, and not another; or perhaps there is a quarrel over the division of the property. The state of the country was clearly shown by the number of swords and daggers, and antiquated guns, that hung upon the walls, so that it all seemed like a vision of the Scottish Border three hundred years ago. Our meal in the spacious gateway was shared by the Kurd, an official with his servant, who ate apart, a pleasant and refined monk from Deir-el-Za'aferan, whom I had not previously met, and three priests, two Syrian, and one an Armenian, the last suffering terribly from ophthalmia. The Kurd was the wickedest-looking man I ever saw, and quite revelled with delight when he saw my revolver. I took the precaution to remove the cartridges before handing it to him, and wisely, for he kept pointing it at my face in the most absent-minded manner. Shammas Efrem casually mentioned afterwards that he was *known* to have committed thirty murders; the full tale would, of course, be far more. The monk was living in the village as tutor to the boys of the house, teaching them Syriac and Arabic, together with Bible history and the elements of their Church's faith.

After the simple meal was over, Shammas Efrem asked us to come into the house and talk over the matters concerning

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his people, which has caused my visit. It was a good house, with well-glazed windows, and built more in the European style, with rooms opening into a passage instead of the court-yard. We had not, however, much time to talk, as the Armenian priest seemed to have divined the presence of grapes within doors, and made his way up to the pleasant little room where we sat. Before we left the room, Efrem gave me a large present of tobacco grown upon his property, and said to be of the finest quality in Turkey, selling for about twelve shillings a pound in Constantinople, free of duty. As I had myself no use for it, I took it back to Mardin, where I presented it to my old friend, Abu Selim. Before leaving the village, however, Efrem insisted that we should see the church, a plain building, plastered outside with mud, but displaying inside a good deal of stone. It was well roofed with timber, while at the east end was some small attempt at decoration with cheap wall papers, and the whole was kept most scrupulously clean. Efrem took immense pride in the church, which he maintained at his own expense. Of the school he could not speak so well. The people had so much work, and could so ill spare their children, even in the winter, to learn that which seemed to them of little value; and, although he had built a good room, and paid the wages of a capable teacher, very few boys would come regularly beside his own. However, as soon as the press of harvest work was done, he hoped, with the Rahab's aid, to start again with greater success. It was noticeable, considering that this village was so far from any town, to find so much zeal to obtain teaching for the Syrian people.

Two small boys had accompanied us from the "deir," as guides; and, as the distance we had come was about sixteen miles, it was out of the question that they should return on their own legs. So with one mounted behind me, and the other behind Yakob, we started for the monastery with three hours of daylight before us. The way lay over parched hills, and the dry beds of winter streams, to the south of the great Kurdish mountains, where even in the height of summer the

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villagers light a fire in their cottages; and back we rode towards the Redwan river that cut us off from the plain of Bisheri. On the mud banks in the middle of the stream grew great water melons; and as we crossed we met the priest of a neighbouring village loading his donkey with two of the largest. He asked us to wait, and go home with him; but it was too late, and he rode far too slowly. As it became darker, the boy who rode behind me began to sing some of the songs of Mar Efrem; and soon a rival strain was heard from his companion behind, who was a little older, in the cracking stage, and very untuneful to listen to. Before long, however, their store of sacred song was exhausted, and was exchanged for a Kurdish duet, a contest of lung power. Every now and then a pause, followed by a rush of air past my ear, and a sound like the cracking of thorns in the boy's throat made me aware that he was about to burst out again into song. Off started my mare in fair surprise, at which the boy screamed all the louder, and dug his bare heels into her unoffending sides, clinging with all his might to my coat. The burden of the song was the love these two small boys had one for the other, interspersed with the recital of long prose intervals, which told how little "Geriko" played with foxes, hunted hares, and bearded the village Agha. The singing, which lasted until we reached the "deir," set up a furious barking among the sheep dogs; for it was some time after dark, and the monks, having prepared an excellent supper for us, were walking on the roof, wondering whether we had been lost upon the way.

Early next morning we awoke to find the Bishop of Deir-el-Za'aferan had returned from his tour among the villages with a priest, the head of the deir. This man was quite young, and according to the Eastern custom, which, putting a literal interpretation upon the words of S. Paul, forbids priests to marry again, was condemned to a perpetual widowhood by the death of his wife only a few months after his marriage. He seemed a most excellent and devout man, keeping the monastery in admirable order, and entering very eagerly into the proposed scheme of forwarding education. A permanently

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stiff knee gave him an awkward limp, and prevented him from sitting in the approved Turkish fashion.

The first question he asked of the monks was, what kind of supper they had given me. When they said that grapes and the fattest capons had been laid before me, "Why!" he said, "was he not worthy of two sheep? Kill two for this evening's supper." Accordingly two were slain with considerable ceremony in the court below, the Bishop meanwhile complaining with a laugh that he had not been thought worthy of two sheep, and was heartily tired of eggs, leben, and bruised meal; although the peaceful freedom of the place outbalanced a good many disadvantages in the way of diet.

About the middle of the morning we caught sight of the Agha and his men, decked out in their smartest clothes, riding from his village across the plain, to have his photograph taken. There was considerable trepidation among the deacons, lest he should smell the blood of the sheep and insist upon carrying one off for his own supper. When he had arrived, and was sitting in the diwan, it was most amusing to hear the way in which the Bishop half humoured him, half treated him as an inferior. It appeared the Agha had a great respect for the Bishop, who kept their acquaintance smooth by small presents of barley and other produce, and had enabled him to have a picture taken. The photograph occupied a long time, as the Agha was not easily satisfied with his own appearance, and was most anxious that nothing belonging to him, even down to his cigarette, should be omitted. The whole business was however successfully completed, and after a little more polite conversation the Agha bade his men let off their guns into the air by way of making an impression, and rode away.

A quiet afternoon ended in a stroll in the garden, where melons and pumpkins grew, and thence to the threshing floor to see a huge snake which the watchman had killed the evening before upon his bed. Such incidents as these form the chief topics of conversation in quiet places like the monastery, unless there has been a raid of police or Kurds to vary the monotony. Towards evening the excitement in the

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deir grew intense over the final roasting and dishing up of the sheep; for it was months since a visitor had arrived whose position demanded such a slaughter; and the deacons and servants had fasted all day in preparation for the feast. We ate our portion of the beasts sitting on the great bed upon the roof, in which the Bishop slept; and when it was finished and we had eaten our fill of grapes and melon, we sat smoking, and listening to the progress of a bargain, to wit, the exchange of six fat sheep for one of the monastic horses, which two travellers on their way to Mardin wished to compass. A warm discussion between them and the head of the deir ended in nothing, although it lasted two hours and cost thirty cigarettes.

The change of air and life, combined with freedom from the intrigue which is generally attached to life in an Eastern town, no less than the simple hospitality of the people and the beauty of the country, made these days some of the pleasantest I spent in Turkey. But like all good things they came to an end, and early the next morning we were ready to start on our way back to Midhiat, accompanied by a deacon, an old man, but one who knew the country well and was accustomed to travelling. We returned to Hasan Kaf and the Tigris by a mountain path, shorter than that by which we had come, but still three hours longer than the Kurd's way, which was still more impassable from the Bisheri side than from the Tigris, owing to the deadly feud existing between the Agha of our acquaintance and the one who ruled the hill country. Even though there was not much danger for us as strangers, if we could have found the way, yet our guide, belonging as he did, to the faction of the plain, would almost certainly have met his death; nor would Ali Agha have dared to venture his head into the noose always ready for him, as soon as he passed the last village of the plain.

Our road was very dry and rocky until we reached the Tigris, along the north shore of which we rode for two hours, until we came to Hasan Kaf. Crossing the river we nearly got into deep water, as Yakob's horse got excited, but the only result was a wetting for the load, by which the remains

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of my Kurd-enticing knives and scissors were ruined. However, we pushed on to Deir-el-Mokhr, where we were to spend the night, a miserable and dirty building in a valley leading down to the Tigris on the south side. There was no one in the place except an ignorant "rahab," with a shepherd and his family. The rahab was full of talk, and asked many questions about England, which he had visited long ago with his great-uncle, the Patriarch, recalling all kinds of curious little incidents, which one would not think to have made much impression upon him. Before we had time to unpack our things—which the monk immediately deposited, much against our wish, at the back of the church, as the only place having a lock to it—we were surrounded by people praying for eye-lotions and quinine, for the place was rather malarious, and here, as elsewhere, the dirty habits of the people encouraged affections of the eyes. The monk, too, was suffering from dropsy; and the only answer I could get to an inquiry about its origin was that it came from God. I told him that all things came from God, and asked him the more immediate cause, and what he did for himself. He repeated his answer, and then seeming surprised that anyone should take any interest in his condition, stopped a minute, and, entering into all the symptoms of his disease, asked me what I could do for him. My conscience rather smote me for having shaken his former notion (Mohammedan though it was), when I could do so little for him, beyond advising him to seek the doctor's aid at Mardin.

The sore eyes and fever were more within the range of my medical skill; but I gained little reputation by my answers to the rahab, if I had also little to lose. The rahab combined with his inquisitiveness on all matters English a considerable taste for horseflesh, and had in the court below a very beautiful mare and foal, which he, of course, immediately offered to exchange with my unattractive hack, as soon as my admiration was expressed. This was merely a form; and we proceeded to eat our supper and prepare our beds for sleeping upon the roof; and there the barking of dogs and the chatter of the men soon lulled us to rest.

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This monastery, like most others, was beautifully situated on rich land, and well supplied with water from the mountains to the south and the river to the north; but land and buildings, for one reason or another, now all lay waste.

With a long day's ride before us, we rose early and started with the shepherd, armed with a rifle, to guide us to Yardi, a village half way to the next monastery. The road was as bad as it could be, up a long pass, in winter a torrent, and even at the end of summer requiring care to avoid slipping on the wet rocks. As soon as we left Difne, where the slopes of the Tigris end, high rocks, covered thick with tangled vegetation, shut in the view, and there was little variation until we reached the open mountains to the south, and the great grape country, which stretches all along the north and west of Jebel Tur. The grapes here were very fine, and, as travellers, we could always have as many as we wished merely for the asking, or even pick them ourselves. The long climb up the pass had been very trying for the horses; and Yakob's animal, being more heavily loaded than mine, had, just before we reached the top of the hill that leads to Yardi, succumbed at a critical corner, and lay there helpless, until the loads had all been taken off and our united efforts had got him up again. Reaching Yardi half an hour after, we gave the animals a rest and sat in the house of the chief Syrian, waiting until a guide could be found for the remainder of our journey. Yardi seemed a flourishing village, inhabited by about equal numbers of Moslems and Syrians, among whom a native agent of the American missions was engaged in evangelistic work and held a successful school. On a height above the village was a castle, built years ago by some Kurdish chief, and now a ruin; but it formed a very picturesque object behind the houses down below.

Scarcely had we left the vineyards of Yardi before we met six most forbidding-looking ruffians, on their way to their own village of Arnas, and all armed with long rifles. Our guide was terrified, being a feeble little man; and, having lied to them as to the direction in which we were going, altered our course, and took us down a valley that led by a

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short cut to the monastery, in case the men should make up their minds to follow us. The inevitable result was that we lost our way, and wandered two hours in aimless dependence on the instinct of our guide. When I indignantly asked why he lost his way when only three miles from his native village, he looked up and shouted, with the usual expletives, that if we arrived that evening, we should arrive; if not, then God is Great! We were also haunted by the suspicion that we were pursued, continually imagining groups of wild brigands, with guns and white tunics glancing in the sun, attracted by the white umbrella which Yakob, in spite of his terror, would not put down. Nevertheless, after a breakneck ride of a few hours up and down hills and valleys covered with dwarf oak shrubs and rocks, we reached the village of Harmuis, and saw the monastery lying peacefully among the vineyards down below. It was one of the longest and most tiring days that I had ever spent, and I was glad to reach the deir, although of all places in Turkey this was the most filthy. It was a large building still in good repair; but, instead of retaining its original character as a school of discipline and learning, it had become the secure refuge of about twenty Syrian families and their flocks, who pay for the lodging a nominal rent to the Patriarch. A priest had his home among them, but, much to my disappointment, was absent at the time, so that I missed the chief object of my visit, which had been to see a small collection of manuscripts which were kept in the church. All my entreaties, however, could not persuade the people to bring out the books; they stoutly denied that there were any books in the place, although it was only the absence of the priest that made them do so. As a rule, by never allowing it to be suspected that I wished to buy any property belonging to the churches, I was enabled to see more than would have otherwise been possible; for, thanks to the ravages of museum agents and others, the people are exceedingly cautious in displaying anything of value that they possess. In addition to this, the solemn curse of the Patriarch has been uttered against anyone who shall sell or give away any property of the Syrian Church. Upon my first

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visit to Midhiat I was repeatedly assured that there were no old books except two colossal copies of the Gospels, which were shown with great apparent pride, although I knew positively that there were several books of much greater interest and value, which I was on my return allowed to see.

The monastery had once been a great seat of learning, and the home of Bar Hebræus and Bar Saliba,* two doctors and saints of the Syrian Church. All round the monastery the country seemed to be dedicated to the memory of Saliba and one Malik Hanna, apparently the Emperor John Zimesces, whose conquests extended over many parts of Mesopotamia, and by whose names castles and churches are continually called.

After wandering with difficulty, owing to the crowd of animals and filthy condition of the place, round the deir, we at length hit upon a secluded roof where we might deposit our goods without danger of scorpions or too much company, and from which we could easily watch our horses. But before long there arrived a messenger from a Kurdish Agha who, with thirty of his men, was spending the night upon another part of the roof, inviting us to do him the honour of a visit. This was, of course, a mere summons for inspection, which we thought it wise to obey, but at our leisure. After feeding the horses, and getting our things settled for the night, we left our guide in charge, and walked round the dirty yard to call upon the great man. There were a great number of Government rifles piled on one side of the roof, and in the middle a temporary diwan laid out with carpets, round which cigarettes and grapes were being circulated. At the head sat the Agha, a humane, polite-looking man for a Kurd, and badly supplied, it seemed, with pistols, inasmuch as he was anxious to exchange a handsome horse for my revolver. This was, of course, promptly refused. Even had the offer been seriously made, I should have lost by the transaction both revolver and horse, for he would most certainly have

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* Dionysius Bar Saliba wrote a treatise on bells, and flourished in the twelfth century.

stolen back the latter the next day. I asked a few questions, and answered as many as were not too personal—for these Kurds are nothing if not personal—and then retired, promising to take his photograph in the morning with the camera that had so excited his curiosity upon my arrival. Then we dined as well as we could on bread and milk and sugar, for soup was out of the question on account of the foulness of the water, which even our horses refused to drink.

Next morning, anxious though we were to leave the place, our departure was delayed by the eagerness of the Kurds to see my camera, and be photographed. But at last we got on our way, accompanied by an old man from the Agha's servants, who secured for us plentiful supplies of grapes, and guided us to the village of Hakh. We had not gone far before a boy came running out of a vineyard, bearing a stick upon which hung half-a-dozen bunches of the very finest grapes, and begged for a little medicine to cure his father's eyes. The old man was nearly blind; but, although I knew I could do little good, I promised to send back the best medicine I had by our guide; and the boy, seizing my hand, kissed it and covered it with tears, so that I had not the heart to tell him that cure was not what I hoped for, but only alleviation of the pain.

Three hours brought us to Hakh, now a small village inhabited by Kurds and Christians, but the signs of whose former greatness remained in the ruins of twenty or more churches. One only had escaped ruin, owing partly, no doubt, to the reverence obtaining, even among Moslems, for the three kings to whose memory, or, as some say, by whom it was built. It was disappointing to find the church so dark that it was impossible to take any photographs; nor was there sufficient time to make any drawings. We found a most excellent, but ignorant old rahab, busy boiling "dibbiz" in the court, while strings of gigantic youths and boys brought in loads of common grapes to boil or dry for raisins. The old man was a little put out by our arrival, but was far too proud of his beautiful church not to do the part of an excellent host and cicerone. While some eggs were frying, he told us numerous

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legends of wonderful things that had happened at Hakh, in the time of the wise men, and Malik Hanna, and the saints; but he was suddenly cut short in the middle of his narration by the "dibbiz," which he had forgotten for a few moments to stir, boiling over the huge earthen cauldron in the corner of the court. There was a general stampede among the boys and young giants, who spent most of their time eating the grapes they were supposed to dry; and after some vigorous stirring with a ladle worthy of a Cyclops, the unwieldy mixture was again reduced to its normal temper.

The freshly-dried raisins lay in heaps upon the floor of the portico, and the portion reserved for the Patriarch's tithe in the nave, the safest place in these wild villages. The first step after inspecting the church and eating our eggs, was to secure a guide back to Midhiat; but this was no easy task, owing to the feuds, not only between the Kurds, but also the Christians. Further difficulty was also caused by the fact that extra taxes had been levied in the last few months, and most of the inhabitants of Hakh, not having paid them, did not care to go too near a town in which Government officials were to be found. At last one of the young giants agreed to come with us, on condition that he might turn back as soon as we got within sight of Midhiat. He was a fine specimen of a mountain Syrian, tall and muscular, with a head like a crested eagle, as he wore his scarlet kafiyeh wound round his white skull cap with the ends stuck up like wings. A long linen shirt reaching to his ankles, cut on both sides from the knee downward and bound with a red scarf round the waist, formed his dress, which appeared still more scanty when girt up to the girdle for fast walking. He was at first lazy, a fact to which I inclined to attribute his reluctance to go as far as Midhiat; but when at last, yielding to the request of the old rahab, he actually started with his long gun slung over his shoulder, even my mare had some difficulty in keeping up with his pace.

He soon became talkative, and told us much of the mountain life; how the very Agha whom we had just left had robbed a brother of his of a hundred sheep because he had

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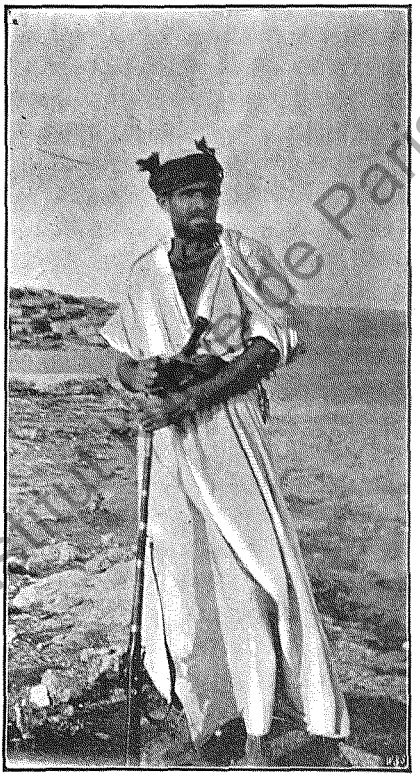
helped a friend, belonging to territory that acknowledged the authority of a rival Agha, to pass through his district. Many a story he told of crime and oppression, until we reached the Agha's own village of Gashtarik, and later on the larger village of Arnas. Here was another beautiful church, which we had too little time to examine, although the architecture was most



A Mountain Syrian.

interesting, and there were books of value in the church; for we were already late, and this part of the country was one of the least safe for travellers at night. So we pushed on past a pillar said to be the remains of a cross erected by the Empress Helena, until our guide left us by the ruined monas-

tery of Hadad, assuring us that we were only twenty minutes on the straight road from Midhiat. We stumbled along, however, for nearly an hour before we saw the lights of the town, and then made straight across country, regardless of rocks, and possible ravines, until we reached the monastery of Mar Abrahum, in which we had left the Qaimaqam, and after some difficulty persuaded the suspicious old monks to admit us. We were thoroughly tired after our week of very rough travelling, and soon fell asleep under the stars, upon the roof of the quiet old deir.

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CHAPTER XV.

Midhiat, and the Monastery of Deir-el-Omar.

Yakob and I had determined, for several reasons, to stay during this visit to Midhiat at the monastery just outside the town rather than in the house in which we had before spent a night, partly for the sake of obtaining a little seclusion, and partly because, among these mountain people, one is apt to miss small articles of use, if not of value. Such things as leather straps and knives seem to have a quite irresistible attraction for native fingers. There was another reason. Midhiat is not more free than other places from the factions that are the curse of Eastern subject races, as we soon discovered on inquiry of a house with which Yakob had some connections. My host, Aziz Hanna, had formerly represented the Syrians of the town in the government—that is, in the "majlis," or town council—and it was maintained that his rival had supplanted him by bribery and libel. Hence a small eruption in the place, and continual displays of mutual jealousy.

On Saturday morning we paid a visit to the Qaimaqam, who was still staying in the deir, and enjoying much better health, thanks to the excellent medicine which he had received. He was most affable, and professed great annoyance that we had not asked him for a zaptieh to accompany us to Bisheri, promising everything we could possibly wish for our journey to Mosul. He was as eloquent as ever on microbes and geography, and extremely interested to hear all that we had to say of our travels in the mountains. He then discoursed with great bitterness about the intrigues of a certain Papal Syrian Bishop, who, he said, was turning the

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whole place upside down, and lamented his inability to better the condition of Syrians and peaceful Kurds in the mountains. The Roman Catholics and the free-lance aghas were the curse of the country. I concluded my visit by mixing him another large bottle of fever "antisepteek," and then bade farewell in order to call upon our late host. There, however, we found ourselves little welcome, for the house was full of men discussing the means of dealing with the murder at Ain Wardah, and trying to comfort the old father. We therefore made only a short stay, and asked our friend, the Deacon, to take us to the bazar, and show us another monastery on the north side of the town. We sat in a stall in the bazar looking at coins and other antiquities, which the people brought for sale in large numbers, and then walked out past a large threshing floor to the monastery. It was in the process of rebuilding, and the monks, taking advantage of permission to restore the place, were considerably enlarging, and, in fact, building what constituted a new church. The walls were built out of the living rock to the height of a few feet, and higher up of well-cut square stones. The whole place was remarkably clean, and well built. When I suggested that it would suit admirably for a school, and asked why the people could afford to build so fine a church so far away from the town, but yet could not have even one good school in a town of over a thousand families, "Well," said the Deacon, "our people do not know; they have not got accustomed to know the value of schools yet. But it is a shame to leave an ancient church in ruins."*

This seemed the actual truth; and the most important thing when dealing with these people, is to inculcate the value of true religious education, with a love of learning and disseminating the Faith of the Gospel. One only of the monks

* Maclean and Browne, p. 304, say: "The Syrians look upon their churches with the greatest reverence, and the restoration of their village church is one of the very few things that will call forth their liberality. They are not at all utilitarian, and think it better to rebuild an old ruin in a place where there is not a single Syrian left, than to erect a new church in the middle of a large population." The words apply equally to the Syrians of Mesopotamia.

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was at home, but was voted by the rest of the party too poor and miserable to sit upon the same carpet as such dignitaries, in spite of frequent invitations from Yakob and myself.

A short walk about the field before the evening service, held in the open court of the church, and attended by the six priests of the town and several hundred people, ended the day's work; nor were we sorry to retire for some rest in the room at the monastery, which the Qaimaqam had just vacated.

The prospect of a quiet Sunday at the deir proved a delusive dream; for scarcely had I left church after the morning celebration, than the Shammas arrived from Midhiat to warn me that the church committee and a large body of leading Syrians was about to pay me the honour of a state visit. I groaned in spirit, for I knew it meant that I must resign myself for the rest of the day. The good people soon began to arrive, presenting the most intricate compliments and most insinuating bows, before they ranged themselves round the room with all the minute regard for rank and ceremonial that so horrifies the democratic American when first he leaves his native land. Last of all came a detachment of boys bearing a number of most excellent dishes; for the people had rightly guessed that we should not be overfed in the deir, for the monks belonged to the straitest sect, and never went beyond the simple diet of bread and herbs and fruit (in consequence of which I was besieged by them for cures of liver complaints).

Conversation began with a pressing invitation to take up my abode for ever at the church in Midhiat; but knowing that there I should be somewhat in the same condition as the Bengal tiger at the Zoo, I firmly but politely explained that I preferred to stay with the holy shades of Mar Abrahum and Mar Evgen, who long ago spent lives of unparalleled holiness upon two pillars near the church. I accepted gratefully, however, the kind invitation to take my meals in the village, in order to save the trouble of bringing all the food up to the deir.

For about four hours the large room of the deir was crowded with Syrians of all kinds, members of the Old Church

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and adherents of Papal and American missionaries. An unceasing fire of questions was maintained by the two latter, both being anxious to prove that in all things the position of the Church of England was one with that of the American missionaries. The members of the Old Church, being my hosts, refrained from the discussion, not only seeing the extreme bad taste of the inquisitors, but being already satisfied on all the points most disputed. It may be imagined that it was no easy matter in a mixed assembly to give such answers as, translated by a second-rate interpreter, might neither offend my interlocutors, nor compromise our Church's creed in the opinion of the Syrians. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon, that every Englishman travelling abroad, and especially in remote places, is to the people he meets England, and the English Churchman the English Church. To give some idea of the difficulties experienced in this way, the English Church was voted to be Protestant, that is, to agree with the Congregationalists, because it does not admit compulsory confession nor practise the use of oil in baptism, and because the priest administers the bread direct to the people, instead of first handing it to the deacon.*

This discussion, which it was most difficult to stop, did little to edify anyone, and only set the people quarrelling over their distinctive tenets and theological subtleties, as Orientals are always so apt to do; a fact which makes strongly against proselytism here even more than elsewhere, and reminds one how important it is not to allow the theological form to obscure the religious reality.

It was a great relief to get away in the evening to a quiet supper at the house of Naum Efendi, representative of the Syrians in the government, successor of Aziz Hanna, our former host, and therefore the unwilling head of one of the two factions in the village. The house was a great contrast to that of his rival; it was a neat building within a clean and spacious courtyard, and it is scarcely necessary to add that the

* *I.e.*, the bread of the "antidoron," not the bread of communion. My interlocutors confused the two.

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better dinner vouched for the better manners of the host. The absence of sheep and cattle in and about the house was no less refreshing than the admirable young chickens and rice pudding, which is cooked to such perfection in Turkey. Yakob Efendi had astonished me at the morning service at the deir by acting the rather noisy master of ceremonies, and directing the general conduct of affairs among the deacons and choir boys. He meant kindly, but made me exceedingly uncomfortable, when he placed me in the most prominent place in the church just before the sanctuary, considering that I should be offended if given a position of less dignity, and commanding a less complete and interesting view.

We sat down to supper, a party of five—our host and a priest, his uncle, Yakob, myself, and a servant, a sort of Qawwas, who entertained us with the most amusing account of a voyage in an English ship from Constantinople to Spain, during which he saw many wonderful things, and, having lost his wig in the sea, returned, much to his own distress and his friends' amusement, with a new one of a totally different colour. Conversation ranged through all the topics proper to the occasion and finished with a very serious talk on the future of the Church, a subject on which the priest, an ignorant but open-minded, devout old man, talked with great zeal. As it grew late we returned to the monastery, accompanied by four men with arms, so unsafe is the country, especially near a large village, at any time after dark.

All through the following day similar hospitality had to be undergone in the committee room of the church in Midhiat. It was a big room, with a fine clock at one end, in which practically all business relating to the Syrian people of Midhiat, both civil and ecclesiastical, is transacted. Adjoining was the schoolroom, so that between the noise of children spelling out at the top of their voices the hymns of Mar Efrem from huge manuscripts of the fourteenth century to the deaf deacon who said he taught them, and the continuous attentions of the committee, there was little peace. Much of the time was passed in conversation upon the English Church, comparing her uses with those of the Syrians, and setting to

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right some misconceptions which remained in the minds of certain brethren after the discussions of the previous day. The minds of these people seemed, as usual, full of the importance of forms, but very dead to the facts and faiths which they symbolize. The number of psalms sung daily, and to what tune, the exact amount of oil used in baptism, the precise form of address in prayer, these were of all importance; while the weightier matters of the law and life entered but little into their conceptions, if only a man lived honestly, providing well for his sons, and doing his obvious duty by his neighbours. Not that in the least the importance of form should be denied. Who knows but that God has preserved a large measure of these forms—even call them formalities—to serve as a protection through long seasons of trial and isolation, that the true Faith might be kept sure and unchanging by their means until the day dawn and a brighter season come.

During the afternoon all the manuscripts belonging to the church were brought out, the people having satisfied themselves that I did not wish to buy or steal them, and, in consequence, admitting that they had previously lied when they said that they had no books beyond what I had already seen. One book at least was, if not of value, yet of considerable interest, being a manuscript on parchment of the ninth century, containing a transliteration of the Greek Gospels in the Syriac letters. This use of different characters for a language is very common now; but it was interesting to find it in vogue at such an early date. It is hardly necessary to say that the Syrians at Midhiat had no notion in what language the book was written.

Two articles of great value and interest were also shown to me, being the property of Deir Mar Abrahum; one, a cope, of a Persian woven design, some three hundred years old; it was of silk, and covered with pictures of tigers and monkeys, camels and leopards, with garlands of flowers, and beautiful ladies looking sidelong out of lofty windows; a piece of work than which it would be scarcely possible to imagine anything more exquisitely beautiful in colour, design, and workmanship.

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The other treasure was a very ancient thurible, which the natives attribute to the time of S. James of Nisibis, whence it was said to have come. It was of bronze, and rudely sculptured with a representation of the nativity.

Whilst we were examining these treasures, a Papal priest, sent by the Bishop at Mardin to make Midhiat his headquarters for propagandist work in the mountains, entered to pay me a visit. He had received a note from the Bishop, and had been told to pay me all civility and at the same time keep an eye upon me. When quite a young man he had been taken from the mountains to be trained by the Jesuits at Beirut. He was not a pleasant, nor, I hope, a typical specimen of his class; comparatively well educated, and with intellectual tastes carefully encouraged, but most unscrupulous and insinuating. With a certain knowledge of Latin and Greek, which I soon found to be limited in quantity and terribly ecclesiastical in style, he discoursed on men and books with much ardour, thereby astonishing the natives most marvellously. "No Popery" is a cry easily raised and readily taken up in this mountain town; and the present occasion nearly saw a riot, caused by some unoffending remark of the priest's with regard to the books. However, that was avoided by an opportune proposal to take a walk before the sun went down and evening service began. Service took place as usual in the open court, and was impressive, if not from the devotion, at least from the number of those present. The music seemed to jar more than usual in the Syriac psalms; for the virtue of it, the Syrian crowd understood little more of the language than I did.

As it was our purpose to start the following day to Mosul, it was necessary to call upon the Qaimaqam the same evening. He was as affable as usual, sitting at his evening meal, only asking that our request for the zaptieh, whom he promised, should be put into writing. This boded no good, and simply meant that he was not going to comply with our request, but not wishing directly to refuse us made me send in a request for the zaptieh to the police, that is, to our friend the Bim-bashi. The reason soon appeared. Yakob, having no road passport

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of his own, had borrowed that of his brother; but on presenting it at Midhiat, and requesting to have it renewed, he received a reply that the official was not satisfied with it, and that if he wished for a new one the office would telegraph for fuller information to Diarbekr. Unfortunately, the man had a reputation for honesty. It was said that his predecessor had been a most "convenient" man; but he would not take a bribe, at least they did not like to risk it. So Yakob withdrew his request, and trusted that no more questions would be asked. Yakob, in case the real state of affairs had been discovered, would have been imprisoned for six months and suffered a heavy fine for not having his name duly registered in the Government list.

The next thing was to get a clerk to write out my request for a zaptieh. Not everyone in Turkey can write the official hand, or the official language, and although it would seem not such a difficult thing to find someone to put into writing the fact that I was in need of a zaptieh, yet among dozens of men speaking and writing the Turkish language in Midhiat, one only was capable of inditing a Turkish epistle, asking in due terms for what was needed. And this man was drunk. He was a young Syrian in Government employment, able but of bad character, who spent most of his evenings drinking arrak and playing cards with the Government efendis and police.

After an hour, however, he arrived, and was as affable as most people are under the same circumstances; and then he took another hour to adjust his paper and ink and indite the epistle; and then another hour passed while a stamp was procured (for it costs sixpence to make a request to the Government). And then the Serai was shut, and we discovered the stamp to be a used one, and the boy who procured it for us to have irrevocably fled. So we made up our mind that the letter, like nearly all other things and men in Turkey, must wait till the morrow.

We quite expected to be disappointed, as the saying is, about the zaptieh; and so we were. We received a polite answer from the Bim-bashi, that we had brought no zaptieh from Mardin, a fact of which we were already aware; and

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neither he nor his most fussy superior, the Qaimaqam, could undertake the awful responsibility of doing what neither Pasha nor Mutserraf had done. This was all very well, but why in the name of the Turkish spirit of exasperation, could they not have said so a week before?

There was nothing to be done, except to be angry, and that did no more good than abusing the terrified Yakob for not having got his name properly registered before he left Diarbekr. It was clear that it was all over with our visit to Mosul for the present; so I determined to console myself with a visit to the great monastery called Deir-el-Omar, about four hours' ride from Midhiat. I had intended to spend the night there in any case; and as I heard so much of its wonders, I determined at any rate not to miss the sight of them.

The road being one of the most infested by brigands in the neighbourhood, we started from Midhiat with a guard of four armed men over country which, as soon as we left the valley of Midhiat, looked all the evil things that were said of it. We passed a few villages, mostly of Kurds, but the greater part of our way lay over bare grey hills, clad only with dwarf oak trees; and we were not sorry to see at last the monastery lying before us in a slightly more fertile plain. It was indeed, as Lucretius says of Ætna, well worth a visit, if only for the sake of hearing the endless stream of legends which the hospitable and garrulous old Bishop poured forth, as we went the round of ruined tomb and chapel, or sat, as the sun went down, upon the roof, before a Cyclopean dish of luscious grapes.

The deir itself is one mass of broken walls, rebuilt out-houses, and untended fig-gardens; for the rest a stately echoing church, and half-a-dozen burial chambers. In the days of Justinian the monastery ranked second in holiness to Jerusalem itself, and pious men came from every nation to live or die there; and if that was not possible besought their relatives to carry their remains and deposit them near the bones of the thousand and one martyrs, or the eight hundred devoted soldiers of the Egyptian princess. Now of this princess a wonderful tale is told, the tale, moreover, of the

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building of the place. Mar Samuel, the pupil of a famous Syrian saint Sham'un, dreamed a dream in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius. The Angel Gabriel appeared to him, and bade him build a great temple to the Lord, and a home where his worshippers might dwell. As he spake, he showed him a great stone, balanced between heaven and earth, in the place where the keystone of the highest dome should be; and on the ground he traced the measure of the house and courts, bidding the old man consider it well. Only, if any female person came near to the place, then would the great stone fall in pieces on the earth.

When the good man awoke he looked and saw the great stone hanging as the angel said, so immediately he began to build. Month by month the work went on with stone hewn from the quarries, and gold and marble and precious stones sent by all the princes of the earth, until the fame of it reached the ears of the King of Egypt. Eager to do honour to the Lord, he prepared presents of gold and of precious marbles for the work. He had no son, only a daughter, most eager to be the bearer of these offerings. But with the news of the building came the warning that forbade the approach of women. But the princess was desirous to go; and, in spite of all, determined to travel in the dress of a warrior at the head of eight hundred men. After a journey of many weeks, accomplished in perfect safety owing to their sacred charge, she and her train reached the rocky hills of Mons Masius, and came to where they saw the wonderful building rising up to the great stone. But as she looked, that which the angel prophesied took place, and the stone fell down with a crash, breaking into many pieces. Then great fear fell upon the builders, until the princess, overcome with sorrow, confessed herself, and vowed to live a life of penance near the church. And they built her a tower, and she lived therein, never seeing the daylight again but when she went, closely veiled, to sorrow in the church. And her tower stands there to this day.

Her soldiers stayed, carving stone and fitting marble in the church, until the work was done. And in due course they

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died, and were buried in a great chamber that the monks made for them. Outside the chamber are two tombs of two cooks. These came with the princess; but her men, judging it not seemly to be eight hundred and two, determined that the cooks should die, which they duly did, and were buried with considerable pomp.

Time passed, and the golden house grew richer, and the monks ever more holy, until the great wars with Persia, when Nushirwan and Justinian fought together. Then it was that, for some misdeed that the Syrians did, the Emperor cut off all their fingers; but, repenting of the deed not long after, he made amends, and gave over the monastery to the Syrians for ever; and thus it passed from the hands of the Greeks to those of the Syrian people.

In later days Mar Gabriel became head of the monastery, he after whom the place is still sometimes called. He, too, dreamed a dream that he walked in the streets of Baghdad, and as he walked he met a man ragged and lame. And it was told him that he should be one day a king, and be an instrument in the hand of God to destroy all nations. So Mar Gabriel journeyed six days to the city of Nineveh, and thence he was borne down upon a raft to Baghdad.

There wandering in the streets he met a man, most miserable to look upon, sitting upon a broken pillar outside a rich man's gate. When he asked lodging of the man, "Mine uncle," he replied, "scarcely have I rice enough or room for my own needs, and how can I give thee hospitality?" "Is not thy name Timur? Then must I stay in thy house." So the holy man went home with the beggar, and told him what he had seen in his dream. But Timur believed him not, and lightly promised to spare the monastery of the Syrians for the sake of him that brought the flattering news.

Some years passed, when one winter as the snow lay thick upon the rocks of Deir-el-Omar, came the hordes of Tamerlane sweeping the East like a whirlwind, and encamped about the famous place, eager for plunder. The monks had heard with terror the rumour of their coming, and, barring the doors of the church, fled and hid themselves.

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The soldiers soon entered the monastery and lived there many weeks through the winter, carrying on meanwhile the work of demolition. Church and shrine and tomb were stripped of precious stones and gold, until at last they reached the sanctuary. And there they lit a fire to melt the gold from off the ceiling, but suddenly the work was stopped, it is said, by heavenly intervention. And only in the sanctuary are there still remains of the riches of the church, in the fragments of rich mosaic on the dome, vine and fig, and ears of wheat, and the rich tesselated marble pavement round the high altar.* It is said that Tamerlane took seventy mule loads of gold and one hundred of silver, beside lead and countless ornaments and embroideries, when he went away.

The monks, where were they meanwhile? The soldiers came, and fresh snow fell, and no one could tell where the monks were hid. One day the monks, eager to know what had befallen their beautiful church, sent one of their number to see what the soldiers did. He saw the church, and returned to tell the monks. But following his footsteps in the snow, next day the soldiers traced him to a cave, of which they had indeed heard that it was a place where spirits dwelt beneath the earth, terrifying the people by terrible sounds at night. Some, too, of the villagers lay hidden there; and on this fatal day Tamerlane bade his men light great fires at the cave's mouth, and, laying incense upon them, send up the smoke of the lazy monks with their prayers to heaven. So died Mar Gabriel with all his monks by the hand of the man whose greatness he had foretold.

Early in the morning, before we started back to Midhiat, the old Bishop took us down to see the cave, and grope about in the dark among the skulls and bones of the four hundred monks that were slain. Near the entrance was the charred skull of a child of six years old, the smallest victim of the conqueror. It was a grim story and a ghostly place, which we were no less glad to leave than the Bishop, who had sadly

* This beautiful tesselated work Dr. Badger dismisses with contempt as a "pavement of Dutch tiles."

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bumped his shaven head against the low roof, being a tall man, and afflicted with bad sight.

It is needless to add that the monks were sainted, and the monastery known in days to come by the name of Mar Gabriel the abbot. Of the former glories of the place little now remains, but four old monks, ignorant and poor, one of them a converted "Yazidi," or devil-worshipper, and the Bishop, little more distinguished in mind or body than his companions. The church contains little of interest except an immense stone which stands before the sanctuary, and said to have been cracked in half by a blow from the hand of Tamerlane. On one side is a long Estrangelo inscription, and its present use is to carry the books of Psalms and hymns chanted during the morning and evening prayer. The tesselated pavement, and the mosaics of the roof, are but gloomy memorials of what is gone for ever.

After visiting the marble tombs of the saints buried in the church and the various chapels built about the place, and reported to contain the bodies of many thousand saints, we lost little time in starting on our way to Midhiat. The Bishop was mounted on a most lovely Arab mare, the present of a rich uncle at Nisibin, and we were attended by four armed Syrians, partly on account of the general dangers of the way, but chiefly because the Bishop was the bearer of a most important and ancient document dating back to the twelfth century, which, in accordance with the law of Mohammed, gave exemption from taxation to the property of all monasteries. This year, however, the Government—of whose "admirable internal administration, and consequently increased revenues," we had lately heard so much in European papers, but had learned in Turkey still more—had made the attempt to exact tithes of all church property; and on this account the Patriarch, always ready to uphold the rights of his people against exaction, had sent for the document. In the middle of the day we reached Midhiat, and prepared to make a long journey on the next day to Mardin. Half way between Mardin and Midhiat, a hard ride of thirteen hours, we met a small party containing Dr. Andrus, the American

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missionary of Midhiat, and his wife. They were bringing a large number of letters and papers, which had accumulated during my absence from Mardin; but I was exceedingly sorry not to have seen him at home in his pleasant house, and learn from him on the spot something of his work in that village and the mountain district, of which he has the charge.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Across the Plain from Mardin to Mosul.

I had given up all idea of visiting Mosul, the more so on account of the fearful rumours that from time to time reached Mardin concerning the doings of the Fariq, when suddenly His Holiness asked why in the world I did not accompany the American missionaries on their journey to their quarters for winter work in Mosul. I had been repeatedly pressed by the hospitable Americans to form one of their party, and now that the Patriarch himself suggested the plan, and thought there would be no danger in undertaking the journey in their company, I began to make arrangements to prolong my stay in the country by a few weeks, and to prepare for a start in four days. Yakob, who would be of no use to me on this expedition, was to return to Diarbekr, and set the matter of his passport right; while I arranged with the Americans to take one of their servants in his place.

It is a serious matter to start on a journey when the caravan consists of twenty animals, and the travellers range from two to forty years of age. What most of us looked upon as most unpromising was an American wagon, which was to give the children rest, and the ladies shade during the heat of the day down in the plain. It took a week to get this conveyance into order, train an extra horse to it, and make a trial trip to see if it could pass through the narrow streets of the town. When at last the day of departure arrived, things began to take shape. Allowing four hours for the start, I arrived in readiness in the middle of the morning, and reaching the courtyard saw such a scene of confusion as would make

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some men cry and others laugh. The ladies were all in a piteous state of nervousness, the children thoroughly tired before the start began; the katirjis moved with jealousy of each other, and all doing everything they knew to shift the loads from animal to animal, so that their own particular charge might be lightly weighted, and they might get a ride from time to time. Then, as one of the children was four years old and the other six, their muhaffahs* would not balance, and it took some time to determine between the various expedients proposed to remedy the defect. The katirjis swore by all their fathers' beards that no camel that breathed could carry some of the loads; our servants retorted that as many cats could carry them to Canaan. The horses were too fresh, and had to be quieted; the mules fought, and the katerjis lost their tempers; until at last, when the children had fallen down a sufficient number of times, and shed a corresponding quantity of tears; when the horses had champed themselves and each other into an almost uncontrollable state of excitement; and, in fact, the only calm people within half a mile were a large white Mosul donkey, the American doctor, prince of caravan organisers, and the chief of the muleteers, an official and ambrosial person, who never descended from the Olympian heights of Turkish bumbledom—then the company started. We mounted our steeds, and rode out of the gates, followed by the chief groom of the party, Raphael, a large and slowly-moving man, but withal the mainstay of his department, and several others too.

I was the last to mount, and rode out on a horse which the Doctor lent me in place of my own mare; and the animal, a fine thoroughbred, being accustomed to lead caravans whenever he bemeaned himself by accompanying them, nearly laid me low as he gambolled over the slippery stones of the street, neighing loud enough to awake all the dead bishops of Mardin. Finally we emerged from the eastern gate of the town without mishap, except that we met a high official, and were nearly

* A pair of wooden panniers, with a screen from the sun, balanced on each side of an animal.

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suffocated by the crowd and the terrible scorn of the big man. Then down the rocky road we rumbled for two hours, until we reached the plain, and were not sorry to pitch an early camp, two hours before sunset, near a village called Tel Harrin.

It was the fourth time that I had been down upon the plain, and again I felt the indescribable exhilaration peculiar to the life upon this open land. Here one seems truly free from all the ties of civilisation; and though at times an overpowering sense of *ennui* comes over one, yet at first there is only the exquisite feeling of independence, the wish simply to try one's freedom and ride away for days on the back of an Arab mare right out into the infinite expanse of grass and corn and sweet smelling tamarisks. Here one learns why the Arab, so cramped in a town, as soon as he gets again upon the plain bursts out into song and galops away with all his might just for the love of it. Nowhere else does a man feel so well that no man is his master and that he has here found his natural life and that time is as nothing. It is a glorious life for a short time until the inevitable cravings of a higher self whispers that work is better than play, and that the secret of the enjoyment is in the relaxation it brings.

A first night's camping is always a serious matter; no one knows exactly where the things all are, or who is to be responsible for each department of the work; so the servants all quarrel, and things in general go crooked. The first thing to be done was, of course, to tether the horses by halters, fastened at equal distances from each other, to a long rope secured by its two ends to pegs driven into the ground. Their hind legs had then to be fastened by ropes and stakes driven in behind them, so that they might stand straight and not be able to turn every way and fight with each other, for the Arab thoroughbred is all for destroying his neighbours. While they were being groomed and curried, with loud encouragements from the grooms and considerable clatter of the currycombs, the tents had been put up, perfectly regardless of symmetry, for there were four men to each tent, and each man had a special theory of his own to carry out. The cook, too, had been preparing some supper, which it is the

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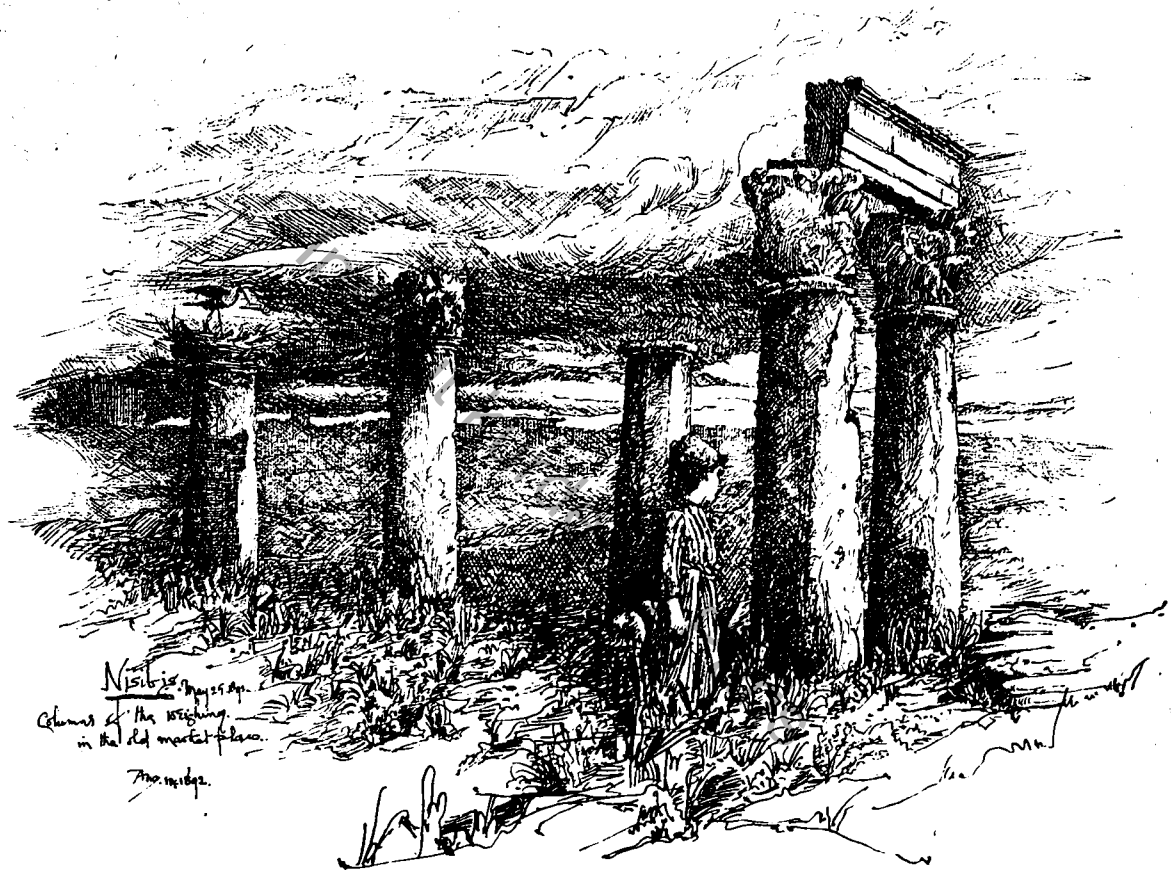
Nisibis, May 25 Ap.
Columns of the Triclinium
in the old market-place.
Aug. 1892.

pleasantest duty of each day to eat, seated round a tablecloth at the door of the open tent, and watching all the various diversions of a small camp meanwhile. An hour later the neighing of horses, the conversation of the katirjis, mingling with the crowing of cocks and the shouts of children from the neighbouring villages, lulled us to sleep under the stars. We awoke a little before sunrise, and started as soon as the katirjis were ready. The day's journey was to take us as far as Nisibin, from which point we hoped, if the Anizah Arabs were not too far north, to make our way straight across the plain, thus saving two days, instead of going eastwards across the river. The scenery was dull now, as autumn was coming on; and there were none of the sights to be seen which made the plain so lovely and entertaining in the spring. The flowers were withered, the grass and corn were cut or dried up, and the countless groups of black tents were gone with their whinnying horses and little brown urchins running in and out or playing with woolly little puppies under the reed awning. Nisibin I had visited in the spring, when the flowers were out and the fathers and mothers of the brown children were just preparing to cut their barley and oats.

For many years Nisibis formed the chief bulwark of the Roman Empire against the attacks of the Persians upon their eastern frontiers. Three times Sapur the Second, the great rival of Constantius, Julian, and Valens, besieged the town without success, for the last time in 350 A.D., ten years before the capture of Amida by the Persians. In this Mesopotamian campaign Sapur drained his strength, and, in consequence, abandoned his schemes of Western conquest. The tide of war rolled backward and forward over this land, led alternately by Julian and Nushirwan, Chosroes and Belisarius, until finally came the death struggle of Heraclius before the resistless flood of Arab conquest. In the third siege of Nisibis, Theodoret tells how, when there seemed most danger that the city would fall into the hands of the enemy, Mar Efrem besought the Bishop, Mar James,* to pray that the

* S. James was one of the Fathers who sat at the Council of Nicæa.

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enemy might be foiled. So, arrayed in all his robes, the Bishop went, and, standing on the walls, lifted up his hands and prayed: "May they know by small insects the power of the God of the Christians," which, indeed, happened, for a plague of flies came and so disturbed the Persians that they raised the siege. Some say, however, that they thought the Bishop to be the Emperor bringing fresh forces to aid the besieged; while Gibbon, leaving such questions to settle themselves, remarks that the Persians were drawn off to protect the Oxus against an invasion of the Messagetae. Gibbon doubts whether the account of Julian, who describes how, by damming the river below the town, engines were floated right up to the walls, is to be believed; however, the size and rapidity of the Mygdonius, even in October, would be quite sufficient for the purpose, especially if both streams, the black and the white, were dammed. The river has two sources, and flows in two streams past the town; one stream, the black, is said to be not drinkable, and is certainly of a dark colour; the other is purer in colour as in taste.

The condition of the modern town is, like most others in Asiatic Turkey, constantly changing. About 1838 some large new barracks were built by Mirza Pasha, but they have been since deserted, and Nisibin has been rejected as a military centre. At present the place is growing; mills are being built, and cultivation is on the increase, in spite of the atrocious system of tax-farming, by which the dues on agricultural products for the province of Diarbekr are let to a syndicate of men of that town. These men, partly Christians, partly Moslems, exact so much that, instead of taking one-tenth, by the time each of the collectors has his share, little more than one-tenth remains to the poor growers. Consequently, although the land here is so rich that it is said to yield easily a hundredfold, scarcely more is cultivated than will suffice for the yearly needs of the people.

The inhabitants consist of about three hundred houses of Moslems, a hundred and fifty of Jews, and some thirty Syrian families, who cling to the beautiful old church of

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S. James, which, being the seat of a Bishop, forms the headquarters of the Syrians of the neighbouring villages. The barracks to the north of the town have been deserted, and the troops transferred to Mosul, while a Qaimaqam sits in the seat of the former military commander. He seemed a pursy, self-important kind of man, but, finding that I shared his interest in antiquities, was very polite, and anxious that I should accompany him on an archæological visit to some of the neighbouring mounds. He possessed a number of Assyrian seals of little importance, but on which he set quite American values, and inquired eagerly what I thought the British Museum would give for them.

It seems strange that the Government should not use this fine old garrison town to keep the irrepressible Arab in order, and render the south country a little more safe. The only drawback to the place is its malarious character, which could, without difficulty, be remedied by planting trees and draining the marshes east of the river.

Of the old Roman town, the headquarters of Severus and Julian, there are considerable remains, most of which are built into the walls of houses, or lie buried underground. The only monuments of importance are five columns of the old market place, still called in the Arabic, "The Columns of the Weighing," the top of the most commodious of which is now occupied by a flourishing family of chattering storks.* In garden walls and mud built cottages columns of marble and carved capitals appear, and the old twelve-arched bridge that spans the twin streams may date from Roman times. The church itself must once have been a beautiful building, but ruthless Vandalism has destroyed what time would only have mellowed, and the whole west end and south aisle have gone, to be repaired with rough walls and clumsy buttresses by the modern Syrians. The ancient dome has been restored, but

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* The accounts of Nisibin by Badger (i. 67) and Ainsworth (ii. 337) are examples of how inaccurate the descriptions of accurate observers may be, when the subject does not interest them. It would appear that neither traveller ever saw Nisibin. Buckingham gives a far better description.

the windows, for safety's sake, blocked up, so that all that remains to testify of the former beauty of the place is half the nave, the sanctuary, and part of the north aisle. Three doors leading from the nave into each aisle, of which those to the south are now blocked up, contain some of the loveliest carving to be found in Turkey. Those to the north are still perfect, carved with a rich design of vine and the flowers of the place; and the lintels are surmounted by an arch in the usual Roman manner. It is strange, however, that this carving is not on the chancel side, but on the side of the door which faces the aisles. Perhaps the most noticeable thing for a building of the date is the exquisite egg-and-dart moulding carved on the doors, and running above a rich cornice all round the apse. At the east are three shallow apses, all open to the church, without any screen or wall between them and the body of the church, except some modern trellis work and a curtain, which may be drawn across the church in front of the altars in accordance with modern Syrian custom.

Over the lintel of one of the south doors, and now open to the air, is a Greek inscription, of which Badger and Fletcher have given readings. A second inscription is in a vault beneath the church. In this vault or crypt, which, with the stairs that lead down to it, occupies a large portion of the space beneath the church, once lay S. James of Nisibis, in a large sarcophagus of red marble. It is on his account that the Moslems hold the church in such respect, telling terrible stories of the judgments that have overtaken those wicked pashas who stabled their horses in the church, or used it as a magazine for corn and arms. All saints who died before the coming of Mohammed are regarded with great reverence by rightly thinking Moslems, and, in this case, the horns of the crescent on the dome of the mosque, called Zein-ul-Abedin, that stands opposite the church, are bent downwards towards the church, in acknowledgment of the superiority of the Christian Saint. The tomb of S. James is quite plain, except for a Greek cross carved at the head, which, though the body has been taken away long since, every pious visitor kisses as

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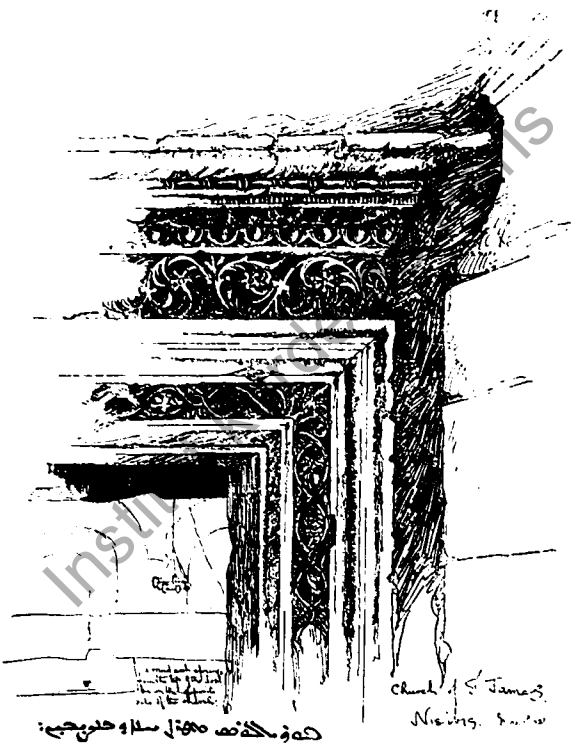
he prays for a blessing; and above it always burns a small lamp filled with oil of sesamé.

When the church was restored, apparently about thirty years ago, a large quantity of earth was dug away from the west end to make a space on the original level of the church; in other places the earth is still about twelve feet above its



DOOR IN THE CHURCH OF S. JAMES, NISIBIN.

original level. No doubt excavations here and elsewhere about the town would yield many interesting remains of the lower Roman Empire.

At the east end are some steps leading up to the roof of the church, on which have been built within the last few years a large and very pleasant diwan looking over the plain,

and a few other rooms for the Bishop's use. During my first visit I spent two nights in this room, and had plenty of time to wander among the ruins and listen to the Syrians discussing their prospects in these parts.

Their leader is a deacon who lives in a village in the hills just above Nisibin, and whom I found to be one of the most intelligent and capable men in the Church. Shammas Hanna and his brother Gabiel, a boy of seventeen, were filled with the idea of restoring their church and people, by obtaining the much needed education and enlightenment.

The Bishop was a good-natured and very simple man, who knew himself to be very ignorant, and hoped that as there were few in his church in a much better condition, except a small number of monks and deacons, help would be given them from outside. He was entirely persuaded of the existence of countless manuscripts, church plate, and other objects of value hidden beneath the ground; but having once, with the aid of a professional treasure finder, of whose dark services he spoke with great contrition, undertaken a little excavation on his own account, was very promptly stopped by the Government from attempting anything further in the archæological line. For the Turkish Government, as those who explored Nineveh have good reason to know, are astonishingly jealous of those who would pry into the secrets of the earth, whether to discover the remains of ancient life, or to enrich themselves and others with the mineral treasures of Northern Turkey. Consequently the pursuit of the digger is a dark art, and confined to the magic operations of the professional treasure finders, who with their squares and lines, and mysterious signs in books, are not difficult to find among the credulous natives.

There was no official objection made when a miller decapitated a year ago the fine human-headed bull that guards the northern gate of Kuyunjik or Nineveh to mend his mill; but there is a fine outcry when the foreigner comes to take away these buried images to set them up in that house of idols in which the natives believe that the Londoner worships.

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On the evening of October 8 we encamped on the ground to the east of the River Mygdonius,* much in the same position, no doubt, as Sapur encamped before the city fifteen hundred years ago.

From this point we hoped to be able to strike across the plain to Mosul, but, before going to sleep, we heard the discomforting news that the Anizah Arabs, who occupy the southern portion of the plain, had come right up into the Shammar territory, through which we were to pass, and that in consequence the Shammar escort, on which we were depending, would be useless, even if we could obtain it; for what small party of Shammar would care to face an onslaught from the Anizah for a lot of pig-eating Nazarenes? The muleteers, consequently, having made up their minds that they were not going to run any risk for anybody, but intended to take the road northwards across the Tigris, took care to oversleep themselves and prevent an early start next day. This was inconvenient, as it would be quite impossible to take the wagon up and down the cliffs on either side of the Tigris. The Qaimaqam, too, being nothing but a man of straw, refused positively to hazard the lives of his brave zaptiehs in such a dangerous expedition, thereby drawing upon his head reflections less polite than just as to the capability of his chiefs to manage their subjects. But that is by the way, for all the world knows who holds sway between the Tigris and Euphrates, to say nothing of the country further east and south. Be that as it may, we were all much relieved to see the Doctor's welcome form cantering with his two horses over the long bridge, for he alone of our party had any good acquaintance with Arabic and governmental ways, and possessed, too, that invaluable treasure in this land, "khater"—that is, the favour which the ability to kill or cure commands. He had been detained by some illness in Mardin, and had started the previous evening and ridden for three hours before daybreak. He prepared

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* Mygdonia, the name of river and province, was merely a corruption of Macedonia, the town having been founded, or rather refounded, by Antiochus, receiving the name of Antiochea Mygdonia. Strabo, xvi., 747; Polybius, v., 51.

immediately to go and beard the Qaimaqam, finally arranging that we should skirt the north of the plain, keeping this side of the river so as to avoid the Arabs, and taking two zaptiehs with us as a supposed protection. I was glad enough, on the Doctor's arrival, to exchange horses, the animal which I had been riding for the last two days being the most fidgety that ever walked. He was a fine beast, and had that fashion of well-bred Arabs, never to stop till they are dead. At morning, noon, or night, he was equally ready for a galop, with the natural consequence that when bed-time came he rolled over with exhaustion, but it only required a new arrival to bring him to his feet, snorting and whinnying enough to wake the whole camp. The colt that the Doctor brought was more conformable, and soon showed that he was made to be a first-rate traveller.

The Doctor found here as elsewhere former patients, who hearing of his arrival flocked to the camp to obtain his services for friends with sundry diseases most explicitly and unpleasantly described; so that it was some time before we got wagon, loads, babies, servants and all under way in a truly patriarchal procession to our next camping ground about seven hours distant. We were not really in the desert or near it; but there was all the glorious feeling of freedom and health which the exquisite air of the open plain brings, seasoned deliciously with a slight tinge of danger from the possible vicinity of Anizah Arabs. To find the danger a real one it was only necessary to stray fifty miles without an escort to the south; but as it was, we kept up near the villages, and on the beaten track.

It was Saturday, and we pitched an extra tent in which the Doctor and I might spend Sunday, and receive any choice Arab spirits that chose to call. We encamped on a fine grassy plot below a village, by the side of a good stream, flowing full and deep even in October, and with abundance of melons, grapes, and mutton. Three tall trees threw a pleasant shade over the tents, of which one, a gaunt old walnut, supported an immense magpies' nest, as noisy a house-

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hold as ever lived by thieving. It was a village of magpies, parties of which strutted in Sabbatic pompousness all about the grass or held indignation meetings in the trees, to the delight of the children and the annoyance of the muleteers whose handkerchiefs and beads they stole. Towards evening the tinkling of a distant caravan came over the rising ground from the west, succeeded by the growls of many a protesting camel, as his driver "nakh'd"* him and loosed his load. They had started several hours before we left Nisibin, and made in two days what we had made in one, for camels are slow going animals. As soon as the loads were all lifted down, and laid in a circle round the fire where the men were to sleep, Sayyid Mohammed, the head of the caravan, came to call upon us, and propose that we should join him and his camels, for our mutual protection in crossing the plain. We were glad of the opportunity of cutting our journey shorter, and settled to change our route, keeping away from the river. Mohammed sat in the door of the tent smoking a short hardware pipe, of the sort they make in Mosul, and sipping sherbat. "Haniya," "Your pleasure to it," we say, and he duly answers "God give thee pleasure"—"Allah yahannek"; and then he talks of his camels, and the dangers of travelling over the plain. Two "majids," a good six shillings, he has to pay for each, toll to the Shammar Arabs; and if he cross the Anizah, who knows how much more? "Far be such fate from me and you who hear me!" He had three hundred camels loaded with goods of Aleppo and European manufacture; so there would be a handsome bill to pay in case of an encounter.

Frogs there were by the score, growing very noisy toward evening, and affording great amusement to the children, while we basked in our tent, and listened to the Arab's talk, and the countless sleepy sounds to be heard in an encampment by a village. Close by was a fresh spring, which helped to feed the stream, having two basins separated by huge boulders; in one of which the women, red veiled and red cloaked, very

* The regular word for making a camel kneel.

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shy of intruding campers, and followed by little girls gay with necklaces of tawdry beads, washed and filled their great water jars, and then filed off in strings like camels to their homes. At the lower basins pious Moslems performed ablutions, and said their prayers at sunrise and at evening upon a jutting plot of grass; and then sat down to smoke a satisfied pipe or cigarette of peace, contented to have done their duty by God and man. It was curious to watch them standing in rows, the "leader of prayer" a little in front, and make their prostrations and observed forms of ritual like clock-worked bodies, except where one younger than the rest dragged behind from want of practice, or an old man's stiffer knees failed to wait upon his prayers so strictly. Our animals spent a quiet day chopping the short grass, and our men lay lazily about, or came to talk and listen at our door. One following our example collected a few attentive spirits, and led a small service of reading and prayer before the sun went down. We sat quietly, and read of a land not so very far from where we sat, which the Prophet likens, so rich and yet so barren, to a potsherd so broken that there is no piece to gather coals from the fire or water from the jar; and, as will always happen out upon this plain, we set to dreaming of what might be in store for this country, and what the mounds we see on every side could tell of its past.

The next day afforded little variety on the last, except for a chapter of accidents with our horses. The way led over gradually rising ground, long arms stretching out from the hills down toward the south, and every now and then between two of these a stream. The path was stony, sometimes rocky, and gave the wagon party, to which I did not belong, nearly as much trouble as did the various streams. One of these I had just crossed, and halted on the grass that stretched up the next rise, musing on the chances of human travel, and the folly of travelling with wagons in Turkey; when suddenly, without a sound of warning, I found myself sitting in an alarmingly undignified position upon the green sward, while my colt calmly trotted off to browse at ease. It

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seemed that in their peregrinations my thoughts had not chanced to turn to the proximity of the Doctor's servant leading by a long rein his second horse, a fire-eating little thoroughbred consumed with a continual desire to lame or devour all his male neighbours. As he passed me, he had swung suddenly round, and delivered an effective broadside into the unoffending flank of my colt, with the result above described. There was no damage done, and I easily caught the colt, determining next day to ride the fire-eater, and have my revenge. The very same evening, as we were descending a high mound, on which a village stood, down to our camping place on the other side, we saw the horse who was harnessed as wheeler to the wagon suddenly take it into his head to be offended because the horse, that was generally put in to help him up these hills, was not taken out immediately the top was reached. He got up against the wagon, and began to display all the temper and kicking he knew of, until there seemed nothing left to kick. Heels were flying in every direction over the board and up to the seat, until it seemed that the only whole part was the Doctor, who sat like a rock in the middle holding the reins. The animal seemed satisfied when both shafts were broken, and the ladies nearly out of their minds with fright; and then he quietly submitted to be taken out of the rags of harness, and marched off, and called for his supper. The wagon of course suffered most, and needed the new shafts which had been brought from Mardin. Some of the iron-work was also twisted or broken, so that it was ten o'clock before the ill-fated vehicle was restored to service. There was fortunately a blacksmith in this Kurdish village, but he had the spirit of a Kurd, and would not be persuaded for a long time to spend an hour or two of the night to assist a traveller. The wagon generally formed my bed; so I fared badly, what with the hammering and the lengthy discussion as to pay which followed.

Early next morning the Mukhtar, or head of the neighbouring village, came with his favourite son and almost more favourite mare to call upon the Doctor, an old benefactor of

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his. He was anxious to know what he could do for us; but was sorry, when he heard we were going to cut straight down to Mosul from this point, that he could not send his men with us, for it would be unsafe for them to venture so near to the Anizah; for us, Allah knew! So we determined to content ourselves with the company of the camels, as we had done for the last two days. What protection we really afforded to each other it is hard to say; for in case of attack neither party was in the least prepared or able to defend the other; for which camels would have suffered more than we. For they were open, in spite of toll already paid, to the chance attacks of any private body; while we were protected by the mere fact that we were foreigners. We paid no toll; but the extravagant fuss which inevitably follows any mishap that befalls an European is a wholesome check upon the marauding instincts of the plain. A hundred Kurds may be slain in silence, says the Kurdish proverb, but if one Frank, what then?

The camels generally started some hours before we did; and as they travelled at a much slower pace, we overtook them each day only to pass them in a very short time. This evening, however, we encamped together, as the neighbourhood was dangerous, and were consequently disturbed all night by the growling of the camels and the not too polite language of their drivers. Our supper of chicken and porridge over, we crossed the stream that divided us from the camels, and went to see them feed. The Arabs were highly delighted, and, being proud of their camels as if they had been their own children, told us this one's age, how much that one carried, or what a voracious appetite others had, and how another had always to be tickled under the lip with a magpie's feather before he would rise under his load, until we felt really very wise about camels. The camels were swallowing the dough balls on which they feed every evening, taking in stock, and then ruminating all night on what they had secured. These Arabs belonged to one of those despised tribes that live in villages, and do not live free upon the plain; they are, therefore, subject to the derision

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and pillage of their more independent cousins further south.*

They were curious beasts these camels, and it was interesting to watch the men loading and unloading, the camels growling horribly at the loads, and making frequent attempts to throw them off.

"Ikh!" "ikh!" the men say, as they make the beasts kneel, whether for loading or unloading; and as we passed them on the road, we heard continually cries of "Hai! hai!" to warn the animals of dangerous ground, and the almost continuous "Yah, Yah," to urge them on. All this interlarded with rich address to the camels, "Uncle of Ras-et Ain'" and a hundred other apostrophes, ranging from the polite "O Uncle," or "O Father camel," down to abusive onslaughts on their female relatives to very distant degrees. It was wonderful to notice how these surefooted creatures picked their way over stony or rocky ground, never slipping, and seeming as much at home as upon the level plain, on which their soft-padded feet can be used to most advantage.

During these days the quails were migrating southward. Each day some twenty flocks crossed our line of march, in dense clouds, literally darkening the sky. They are lovely little birds, not unlike the Greek partridge, grey, mottled, and red, and excellent for food. Had there been a gun

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* The approximate loads and pace of beasts of burden in Turkey are as follows:—

Post horses, changing every twelve hours, six to seven miles an hour, with light weight.

Caravan horse, three to four miles an hour, 200—240 lb. weight, eight to ten hours a day.

Caravan mule, three to four miles an hour, 240—300 lb. weight, eight to ten hours a day.

Caravan donkey, two to three miles an hour, 75—150 lb. weight, six to eight hours a day.

Caravan camel, two to three miles an hour, 360—480 lb. weight, four to six hours a day.

Dromedaries will, of course, go further and faster.

In Turkey distance is always calculated by hours, that is, by distances varying from two-and-a-half to four miles, according to the nature of the ground; in short, the Persian "Farsang," the Greek "Parasang," or the German "Stunde."

among our party we should have dined well every day, but revolvers were incapable of doing much execution. Gazelles, too, we saw in considerable numbers, but always at a distance, shyly sniffing the air among the long grass upon some rising ground, ready to scamper off as soon as they caught sight or wind of us. The Arabs hunt them with lynx or greyhounds and hawks, which work together, the hawk striking and the hound following to complete the work; for the latter is seldom fleet enough to catch the gazelle unaided. Gazelles are often to be seen in private houses, caught when young, and kept as pets or for eating. The Doctor had given to him by various grateful patients, a bear, a lynx, and a gazelle, which he kept about his establishment with considerable trouble. Hares, too, are abundant in the long grass, and many blue hares are to be seen, which afford good sport to the children of the villages in the long summer evenings. Larger game, too, abounds, but more toward the south and east of Mosul; while further south again are the wild asses, and from time to time a lion may be seen.

Riding through the long grass some way below Tchel-Agha, I was suddenly startled by my colt, who gave a violent plunge and nearly fell. We were crossing a "Wadi," * or gully containing a dry water-course, and as we passed disturbed a party of wild-boar, who were taking their midday nap among the reeds. These wild boar, as well as turkeys, are very common about this country, and would afford excellent sport both for shot and ball.

The night was spent upon a grand plot of grass near a ruined village, and flourishing cotton fields, by which some Arabs were encamped. Down past our tents flowed a fine full stream, on which a few hundred yards above us was built a mill. The neglect of such a place, and the ruined village, were the marks of devastation caused by a certain Kurdish chief already mentioned, who had risen to that rank by a

* Cp. Burton i. 150, who describes the real nature of "oasis," "wadi," "desert," and other geographical features. To denote such a hill watercourse he naturalises the word "fiumara."

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successful course of villainy and a judicious system of bakhshish; so that at last the authorities, tired of his wiles, created him Pasha, and made him ruler over all the land from Aznaür to Jazirah. His wealth in cattle and sheep he maintains by destroying every village, Christian or Kurdish, where he desires pasture, and by exacting toll in return for protection from all those whom it is not his interest to exterminate. We were on the ancient royal road of Persia, now a mere broad and level tract that leads to Mosul and Baghdad, with nothing to notice on the way, except the ruins, overhanging a tributary of the Tigris, of some barracks erected by the Turks about a century ago. There we refreshed ourselves with numerous melons, and saw the black tents of the Pasha pitched some way to the north; for he was on his slow way southwards for the winter.

It was the last day's ride to Mosul, and was terribly long over the same kind of country, diversified by no events, except that we began to meet caravans starting towards the north, and pass groups of Kurd or Arab encampments, with goats and cattle feeding on the parched grass.

Dark came on suddenly as it does in autumn in the South, and we found ourselves nowhere near villages or water. So I rode on with the cook and groom to find a camping place in the direction which the Arabs, whom we passed, pointed out, and found on the bank of the Tigris a fine camping ground near a village. We unloaded, and having prepared the tether for the horses, and procured some milk for the children, sat down to await the rest of the party. But we waited in vain, discharging our revolvers to let them know where we were, until we determined that they must have gone to the village of Hamadiyah, further south, and pictured to ourselves the awful state they would be in without either cook or groom to comfort man or beast. We found them on a much inferior camping ground further from the river, and near a ruined village full of thieves. There was also a party of good folk, Mosulis of the Presbyterian persuasion, who had journeyed out, native fashion, to meet the Americans

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and escort them to the city. In spite of this, and the noises in the camp, for the servants were growing cheery with the prospect of arrival, we slept a righteous and refreshing sleep, and rose to a leisurely breakfast at six o'clock.

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CHAPTER XVII.

The Two Cities on the Tigris.

"Nineveh of old is like a pool of water. . . . Nineveh is laid waste; who shall bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?"—Nahum the Elkoshite.

By eight o'clock we had started, a strange assortment of Westerns and Easterns of town and country, for a three hours' ride into Mosul. Like most Oriental towns, Mosul has a glamour of beauty spread over it by distance, especially when one approaches from the low western hills toward Hamadiyah; and the minarets and domes crowning the vast walls, and circled with gardens that stretch all round the river, are bathed with the hazy light of morning. Out to the east are mountains climbing higher and higher up from Jebel Maqlub to the ranges of Hakkari on the Persian borders. But the illusion passes, like a mirage on the plain; and riding along the dusty road it becomes clear that the walls are mouldy, and the gate half-ruined; until, as we come to a small monument built just outside the western gate of the Arabs by grateful Roman Catholics to a Moslem benefactor, all the filth and squalor strikes one sensibly of this meanest of rich and prosperous towns. For such it is still, carrying on in its name, from which we have derived the word for muslin, formerly one of its chief manufactures, the tradition of wealth and magnificence in which it once rivalled Baghdad.

The modern town of Mosul is the capital of a third-class "Walayat," the seat of a Pasha, or Wali, and contains a large garrison. Its inhabitants, which number about seventy

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thousand, or less, divide themselves as usual into Christians, Jews, and Moslems. The former are subdivided into Old Syrians, one thousand houses; Chaldæans (*i.e.*, Papal Nestorians), fifteen hundred; Papal Syrians, four hundred; and adherents of the American Presbyterian Missions, thirty. The rest are Jews, who live here in large numbers; and Moslems, either Turks, Kurds, or Arabs. The town lies on the west shore of the Tigris, almost exactly opposite the mounds that mark the site of Nineveh, or, rather, that part of it which enclosed the palace of Sennacherib.

A few ragged zaptiehs lounged in the gate, a great rambling place where people of all kinds sat and talked, doing business or watching the world go by; and they eyed us suspiciously until they saw that we had men of worth in our company, and among others a Hakim, name as of a golden key in a land of ignorant practitioners. We passed the gates, and entered the filthy streets, roofed over with oak branches to keep off the scorching sun; and as we rode, it seemed we had never seen such mean and desolate buildings. Without a fine façade, or one really beautiful mosque, the only feature of the town is its crowd of minarets, all but a very few stripped of the blue tiles which once made them glitter in the sun. One still stands covered with these lovely tiles: and another there is, a monster built of stone, and faced with fine bricks set in diamond and many another curious design. The story runs how a great and pious Moslem once built the great mosque, and added the two-galleried minaret that stands down by the river side of the town. It brought great fame to the builder, who soon was asked to build another more beautiful for the Pasha of the town. His friends said no, he could not; he was old, and his skill was gone; but his spirit was stirred, and he vowed he would build a fairer, and that with his left hand. And this he did; but age was on him, and in witness that the left was weaker than the right hand, the minaret leaned a little toward the holy city of Meccah, pointing the Qiblah for all the town.

The whole appearance of the town is in fact spoiled by the lack of good stone; for the gypsum marble is seldom used

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except for facing the inner walls of the courtyards. The contrast, therefore, between the squalid exteriors and the handsome, often luxurious, character of the courts is very noticeable. The swarms of dogs that lie about the streets do not add to the enjoyment of a walk. We fell upon puppy days in Mosul, and every corner was the temporary nursery of a family of curs. Some were decently clothed with hair; others we longed to put out of their misery, were it not for the strict law forbidding to kill these dogs, the only scavengers of the streets; for, foul as they often are, these dogs do good service in keeping Mosul clean. Just outside the door of the house of my kind American host was a bundle of these little creatures, rather more respectable than usual, which the children and I used to watch with some interest, as they progressed in the art of walking across the street. There were generally some small boys, too, from the neighbouring houses, and girls, who fed them. People in Turkey are, as a rule, kind to animals, even though they do not often make pets of any but goats or lambs.

Let those who regret the good old days that preceded railways experience the unloading of a large caravan! Was ever such confusion? trains of muleteers all out of humour, that awful wagon rumbling over the uneven pavement, and followed by the white donkey and its burden of babies, and a crowd of supercilious Arab boys jeering at the extraordinary conveyance. Then strings of mules, with bells clanging, and women screaming, and all the world crowding into the court-yard to see what had arrived.

The day passed in all the agony of unpacking, and receiving complimentary calls; for it is a point of honour for the natives to call as soon as the horses are in the yard, giving all manner of advice, and getting generally in the way. As these callers were not for me, I was glad to escape to my private room, and avoid, except at meal times, all the hideous exasperations of a Turkish decampment.

The house was one of those belonging to the American Mission, a good specimen of what Mosul houses may become, when improved by European adaptations, and comfortable

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enough until the rain comes. Then, however, being built round courtyards, they are like wells, and for want of sunlight become very damp. One sees this clearly, looking down from the roofs, which have here this peculiarity, that they are enclosed by high parapets of cement or perforated tiles, forming most delightful retreats, where the evenings and nights may be spent.

The courtyard, entered by a narrow archway from the street, was well paved, and contained in the centre a small plot of earth, where fond fancy might picture palms or orange trees, with groups of turbanded Turks and discreetly-veiled ladies discoursing on the tales of Harun-Al-Rashid. Round the court were ranged the living-rooms, alternating with cool "aiwans," in which to receive visitors or sit and enjoy the afternoon air. Below were the "sardabs," large underground vaulted rooms for a refuge from the midday sun, whose heat in summer is almost intolerable. Above again were rooms for guests; and in two of these, with a pleasant balcony between, running along one side of the court, the doctor and I had quarters. Nearly the whole of the walls was faced with the rough gypsum of the place carved in flat reliefs with various Arabesque designs. Three other features we here noticed for the first time, the elegant coloured glass windows of the Persian kind generally placed along the top of the larger diwans, but now, I regret to say, going out of fashion; the exquisite plaster decorated with designs in blue with which the roofs and walls are covered; and the beautiful mats, made from the river reeds, that cover all the floors.

Mosul is a very different place from Mardin, far more truly Turkish in many ways, and far more conservative. It is this, together with the occurrence of certain events during my stay, that must be my excuse for lingering in a town that has been before more fully and with greater vividness described. The days passed by monotonously enough, occupied at first with receiving and returning of sundry official calls. Though I had come not intending, on account of the disturbed state of affairs in the province, to pursue my work in Mosul, nevertheless rumour travelled rapidly through

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the bazars, and I was soon beset by all the chief Syrians in the place.

In the evening we generally rode out, a cavalcade of horses and white donkeys, for a galop over the plain, or round the battered walls to the north of the city, to the river, and the sulphur springs. We would then return through the large quarter made desolate by the ravages of the plague many years since, sometimes having a hard run to reach the gates before they closed at sunset. Sometimes we would make trial trips in a carriage newly arrived for one of the Americans. This conveyance caused the greatest excitement in the mind of a certain Moslem magnate, late "Reis," or mayor of Mosul. He was a man of much mechanical ingenuity, and filled his backyard with all manner of rubbish, being interested in every new scheme, whether for the more rapid evolution of cart-wheels, or convenient drainage of the sea. His house stood toward the south, outside the walls, and we often passed the walls on our way to the Serai or river.

Along the road an unending procession went between the river and the town; for just down by the post office most of the drinking water of the town is drawn. Sensitive sanitarians should avoid the spot; for such is the result of centuries of water drawing, that tobacco is an indispensible weapon of defence. But it is a picturesque place, with the crowds of men and boys in various fashions of head-dress, and with long white shirts well tucked-up filling the water skins, or taking horses out into the stream to wash or drink. On some rocks just below were women beating out clothes as they washed them, and children pretending to do the same, or teasing the donkeys. Just below was the telegraph, crossing the river into the gardens, and passing through the walls and over the mounds of Nineveh, a theme for moralisers. And guarding the northern gate of the palace of Sennacherib still stands the last remaining of the great winged bulls; and beyond that is Jebel Maqlub, oldest of all in the jumble of ages from the mountains to the donkey boys, Sennacherib's bulls to the telegraph. And there stands like a funeral

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monument of the city, whose doom he came to tell, the mound of En-nabbi Yunas, the Prophet Jonah; now it is a holy "Ziyareh" of the Moslems, who have built long since a shrine over the Prophet's grave, and marked him down in the roll of the saints of Islam.*

Returning from the river we passed companies of solemn water-loaded donkeys, and were met by as many more galoping with empty skins and brown legged boys shrieking on their backs on the way down to the great river. Then we left the donkey boys and reached the south gate of the city, which faces the barracks and Serai. Here the camels are unloaded outside the great arcades that stretch from within the gates. Hard by is the horse-market, where some of the finest animals in Turkey may at times be seen. And here are rows of vendors, under booths containing whole mountains of native fruits. Grapes are scarce in Mosul at the best of times, and were dying out with the year; but what melons, musk and water, all colours of the rainbow! with pumpkins and pomegranates, and many another southern fruit. Only the date had not begun its yearly exodus from Baghdad; for Mosul is cold in winter, and palms do not flourish there. In Mosul itself there is little to describe, except the wonderful many-coloured crowds, white-turbanded Molla, black-turbanded Rabbi, dark-robed priests; on these the changes ring with bullying soldiers, lounging merchants, and careless swinging Arabs.

From the first night that we spent in Mosul, our sleep was disturbed by shrill screams of women. It was the "tahlil," by which Eastern ladies are wont to signify great joy;†

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* The Mosque containing the shrine is kept exceedingly holy. Mrs. Rassam, wife of the late English Consul, was one of the few who saw the interior; for her description, which led Dr. Badger to consider the building to have been once a church, see Badger, i. 85.

† Burton, "Pilgrimage to Meccah," has the following note:—"The Lu lu lu, or 'Tahlil,' is peculiar to women, and is formed by raising the voice to its highest pitch, vibrating it at the same time by rolling the tongue, whose modulations express now joy, now grief. To my ear it resembled the brain-piercing notes of a fife. Dr. Buchanan likens it to a serpent uttering human sounds." (II. 159.)

to me it signified intense pain. The cause for making night thus hideous appeared on enquiry to be the near approach of a wedding among the Syrians, to which I received in due course an invitation. The scented billet betrayed its contents, written on pale pink paper, and enclosed in a soft brown envelope. I dreaded the event not a little, and feared how long I should be expected to attend at a ceremony, which lasts usually three days without a break, and not many years since was maintained for a whole week. An hour before sunset a servant arrived to say that all things were ready, and to escort me through the streets to the house of Malki Abdullah, at whose house the wedding was. I took the precaution, having learned wisdom by an empty stomach at other ceremonies of this kind, to have some supper before starting, and set forth prepared to sit any number of hours doing nothing.

Two large diwans were prepared for the guests, they and the whole courtyard being brilliantly lighted with lamps and Chinese lanterns. In one diwan the gentlemen, in another the ladies, were received, and an entirely different programme was arranged for the two parties, which did not meet until next morning in church. Hour after hour passed, as fresh guests arrived, each giving his salam, and disturbing the whole diwan, until he found a place suited to his rank. Nearly the whole company was Syrian, with the exception of a few Chaldæans, of the party called "the Cold," on account of the indifferent zeal which they show towards the Pope and his propaganda.

Arrak flowed freely, and cigarettes were handed round in appalling quantities, a son of the house informing me with family pride that he and his brother had during the week made fifteen hundred for the guests' consumption. "Haniyeh," "Allah yahannek," was frequently interchanged; one after another the guests toasted each other and the bridegroom, until I feared that there would be none left to support the hero of the occasion to church. The diwan became more and more crowded; the grandees sat in rows along the cushions by the walls, myself on an erection in the right-hand corner

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furthest from the door. On the ground in front sat boys by dozens cracking pistachio nuts, and listening to the scandal talked by the elders; and further down toward the door were the professional musicians. Was ever such a solemn merry-making? We sat like mourning judges instead of jocund wedding guests. The musicians added to the solemnity; their music nearly drove me into melancholic lunacy; such a noise they made, and so intolerably untuneful, worse by many degrees than the doleful dirges by which Abu Selim thought at times to cheer my soul in Mardin. Truly the stranger suffers many woes in a strange land! not least that which forces him in grievous pain to simulate consummate joy. Such was my lot for eight long hours that night.

Hour after hour went by, spent in conversation on the wedding or the "Fariq." Two people never talked together during these days at Mosul for five minutes without reverting to the subject of that unsavoury person. The beauties of Mosul, and the prices of such entertainments as we were enjoying in London, formed further topics for our talk. And so, varying the talk with the consumption of sweets and nuts innumerable, and racked by the torture of the musicians, we sat until at eleven o'clock the real proceedings of the night began.

About this time one of the Syrian priests of Mosul came in, and the various wedding garments of the bridegroom were brought for him to bless, as he sat at the top of the diwan. Meanwhile a tight-collared, tight-breeched, exquisite, something of the Stamboul Efendi type, had been making himself conspicuous among the guests. For some reason or other he seemed a personage of importance; and why, it soon appeared. A most important part of the wedding preparations was the shaving of the bridegroom, and the general setting in order of his head. A chair was placed upon a large cloth in the centre of the diwan, to which the happy man was conducted by the "Qarib," or groomsman, to undergo an hour's torture at the hands of the aforesaid exquisite. Grimace and flourish, pious ejaculation and cosmetic, occupied the two during this period, at the end of which

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the bridegroom had not one disorderly hair upon his head.*

Then came the friends of the bridegroom, all unmarried men, to dress him with the garments just blest by the priest. This was a dangerous matter; for all the married men, being bound by the etiquette of the thing to consider the new bridegroom as their natural foe, did their best to steal each new garment that made its appearance. Against these fearful onslaughts the "friends" banded themselves, finally achieving immense success, and seeing the bridegroom arrayed like a king in gorgeous silk tunic, and rich Persian girdle, over which they placed a fur-lined cloak of Diarbekr work. Each of these garments had to be passed round the bridegroom three times. Compared with the rest of the evening this was quite an exciting hour, especially as the Qarib, thinking to show his fine spirit, nearly cut the bridegroom through the leg with the sword which, in right of his high office, he carried.

Two more hours passed, while the same ceremonies were performed in the ladies' divan, and then it was announced that the horses had arrived to convey the company to church. It was three o'clock in the morning when we started through the streets. Bride and bridegroom were, according to custom, on horseback, as well as the Qarib, and a few near relations. The others walked in a large procession behind the horses. In front of all two brothers of the bridegroom carried two huge things like tinsel Christmas-trees, hung about with candles, and in fact looking as gaudy and as cheap as would suit any Eastern mind. The bride remained closely veiled all through the ceremony, and for several days after.

Arrived at the west door of the church, the bride and bridegroom, with their relatives, were received by the priest, who blessed them and led them slowly and with many prayers up to the steps before the altar. Here incense was burned

* The barber's duty in the East is to remove every superfluous hair off the head, excepting moustache, eyebrows, and hair only. The effect on the subject is one of displeasing smoothness.

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while the Gospel was read, and then, accompanied by the chanting of the choir, the priest laid the heads of the pair together, and held a fan, having a dove carved upon it, behind their necks. After this he took two silver chains, having each at the end a small cross, and passed them round their heads, and bound one round the neck of each. Incense was again burned, and more psalms chanted, while the procession again passed out to be received in the courtyard with a display of fireworks. I made my escape through fire-disgorging dragons, and men who made as though they would devour flaming swords, and retired more dead than alive, after a ceremony of eleven hours, to get some sleep. The rest of the procession went back to the bridegroom's house, and inaugurated with an enormous wedding breakfast a three-days' round of festivities. My share in these I considered to be ended with the ceremony in church. But three days passed, during which I believe that the merry-makers never slept, and it seemed to us that the Tahlil of the women never ceased morning or night. It was another week before the bride and bridegroom saw one another face to face unveiled, and had rest from the terrible ordeal to which those must subject themselves who would take unto themselves a husband or a wife in Mosul.

The mounds of Kuyunjik, which cover all of the palace of Sennacherib that has not been destroyed or found its way into the British Museum, need little description, even if I were competent to give it, after the fascinating accounts of Rich and Rawlinson, and chief of all Sir Henry Layard. Nimrud Rassam, nephew of the late English Consul and his brother, who rendered such services to the British Museum and the English nation by the work he did with Layard, had promised to show me what there was to be seen on the mounds; and early one morning he rode round to our gate to call for me.

As we crossed the river everything was calm and beautiful, bathed in warm autumn sunshine. The bridge was crowded as usual, and on the further shore were ranged in rows gaily coloured awnings and temporary booths of oak branches,

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where sat Jew and Moslem vendors of fruit and all manner of cheap goods; such a blaze of colour as one must go to the East to see. Under the now dry arches of the stone bridge, donkeys and horses were tethered, whose masters were waiting to gossip before they paid the piastre and crossed the bridge; and among them were numberless children playing about some old rotten boat, or helping their mothers to wash clothes, or load donkeys with pumpkins, marrows, and melons.

The present course of the Tigris is a mile and a half west of the place where it flowed in Assyrian times, washing the ramparts of Sennecharib's palace; but a galop over the dusty ground soon took us to some almond groves, and through the gap in the western walls of Kuyunjik, on the north side of which are the remains of the palace, and on the south the mound of En-nabbi Yunas. Though the mound on which stands the mosque, which Badger thinks from the interior arrangements must once have been a Christian church, was probably the site of an Assyrian palace or fort, yet so holy is the spot that no Christian can penetrate the buildings, far less carry on excavations. The discovery of the treasures buried in the great mound to the left of the gap in the walls occupies a large part of the description of Layard's explorations. The whole mound has not yet been explored, but it is to be hoped that one day the opportunity for completing the work will occur.

The western walls stretch in a south-easterly direction for rather more than two miles from the stream Khassar, that flows beneath the walls of the palace, and in the opposite direction, half that distance. The inner north-western wall extends about a mile, the distance between the north-eastern and the south-western reaching in one place nearly a mile and a half, and at the southern extremity, only 873 yards. Beyond the north-eastern wall is an outer rampart formed by the hill that shuts in the stream, and strengthened by artificial means. Between the two, where the stream turns and enters the inner wall, and along the south wall, is a ditch over a hundred feet wide and very deep, to form a protection against the east,

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from which side the city was most easily attacked. These walls doubtless surrounded gardens as well as the palace of the king, and not the whole city of Nineveh, which Layard considers to have been contained within the parallelogram enclosed by Nimrud, the original palace of Sardanapalus, the later palaces at Keramles and Khorsabad built by Sargon,* and Sennacherib's palace of Kuyunjik. These four points supply the necessary lines enclosing a city of three days' journey. For Kuyunjik is some eighteen miles from Nimrud, and Nimrud twelve miles from Keramles, making in all the sixty miles that form three days' journey in the East.† These facts make it unnecessary to explain the words of Jonah as meaning that three days were needed to proclaim the coming doom throughout the various quarters of the city.

Little remains above ground of the palace of Sennacherib. One winged bull still guards the northern gate of the enclosure, carved from a piece of marble twelve feet square, and until lately in good condition; but now its head has gone to mend a neighbouring mill! A slab carved with soldiers and a sepulchral scene; another with the familiar subject of men fighting among reeds, with backgrounds of pigs and fishes, and cranes flying over diminutive palm trees; these are all that are to be seen above ground, but point to more treasure below. I was perfectly ignorant of the archæology of the place, and had, therefore, no desire to take notes. This secured, perhaps, a present of a small sculptured fragment from the broken-down shanty that serves for a museum, but which contains little beyond broken glass and pottery, where many a lizard and scorpion finds shelter from the heat. The old Arab who guards the place was not a little pleased to have a visitor, and readily broke down the wall, in order to let me in, climbing on to the roof, and clearing away the stones from inside to make an opening.

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* Layard, iii. 615; ii. 247. There were, of course, later kings who rebuilt or added others to these palaces.

† Cp. Layard, ii. 245, for a full discussion of the size of the city. Diodorus gives 480 stadia, 90 × 150, as the circuit. Cp. Jonah, iii. 3.

A late Wali of Baghdad, taking some interest in matters archæological, tried to induce the government to do something for the preservation of the treasures of Assyria; but after contracting considerable expense on his part, and meeting no encouragement from the government, he relinquished the idea, and left the ruins to the protection of the Arab, who readily sells Sennacherib's head for a small bakhshish, as he plies round his solitary beat.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

The Yazidis.

"An ancient tale of wrong,
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that till the soil,
Sow the seed and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat and wine and oil;
Till they perish. . . . ."—*Tennyson.*

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There is an old man, well-known to the few Englishmen who have visited Mosul, once an East-Syrian monk of the Monastery of Rabban Hormuzd, now a deacon of the Presbyterian community.* He has a history which would be worth writing, especially if he wrote it himself; for he has been a traveller with the manners of an Englishman and the heart of a Syrian; and he has seen many troubles among his own people, and changes in the country from Erzingan to Mosul. But before all things he is a gossip; if there is news from Stamboul, Shammas is the first to retail it; for is not his wife's third cousin third-division clerk in the telegraph office? Has the Mufti run off with a Mulla's wife? Shammas was at the bottom of it, and probably supplied from his own stud (for he is a bit of a dealer in horse-flesh) the requisite barb. He deals, too, in manuscripts and ancient books, Persian, Arabic, Syriac; and once on a time over-reached himself in this pursuit. Among some books, which I was examining, he showed me one more especially commendable. Its actual personality so shamelessly belied its decent age and virtue as described by Shammas, that he drew forth a request that even if he loved gold, he should spare my folly. But with a candour, quite disarming rebuke, he drew out a letter, which

* Il s'agit du fameux Chammas Jeremia Chamme, originaire d'Ain Kawa et qui mourut vers 1908 à Mingana l'accueil d'avoir forgé [illegible]

he regarded as a high testimonial to his integrity as a dealer in palimpsests, but, in fact, containing so sound a rating of a rascal, that it seemed to bear more on the subject than perhaps the old man would have cared to acknowledge. Yet he reads and understands English well; truly these people have a strangely twisted sense of straightness, or more dullness than they get credit for.

However, Shammas proved of considerable use. His official duties, as purveyor of gossip, and representative of the Presbyterians, were not heavy; so that he was pretty well at my disposal during my visit to Mosul; and at small charges of cigarettes and coffee, dealt out with a liberal tongue from his stores of history, ancient and modern.

It was on an evening some days before we left Mosul that Shammas, almost bursting with some news of importance, came into the courtyard, and made his way to the diwan, where we were enjoying the evening air before supper. First a Russian Consul was to arrive shortly at Mosul, and would be followed as a necessary corollary by an English Consul. This he knew for a positive fact, though we were contented to allow the fact to slumber on in the caves of rumour. But that very afternoon he had been to the Serai, and there heard from his wife's third cousin, and from his son-in-law's nephew, who was secretary to the Fariq, that awful news had arrived from the army in the Sinjar, and that in consequence the band had ceased to play at evenings in the Serai.

This Fariq, Osman Pasha, Lieutenant-General of the Turkish army, of whom we had heard such ominous rumours in Mardin, had come with a definite commission from the Sublime Porte, so it was said, to perform three things in the provinces of Mosul and Baghdad; first, to collect twenty years' arrears of taxes; second, to induce the Arabs to exchange their nomad form of life for one more settled; third, to convert the Yazidis of Jebel Sinjar and Sheikhan from their worship of devils. The first object was quite legitimate; the second harmless, because impossible; the third was a more serious matter, and with its attempted accomplishment we are here concerned.

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The soldiers of the Fariq had been sent to the Yazidi villages on the lower slopes of the Sinjar mountains, and were preparing to loot the houses, from which the inhabitants had not had time to carry their property into security among the rocks, when some of the chiefs came with an avowal of Islam, and with a promise, if their villages were spared, to conduct the soldiers by night and surprise the villages higher up. This was readily agreed to, and soon after nightfall a start was made. What was the surprise of the soldiers when, on entering a gorge half-way to the summit, they were received by a rapid succession of volleys, while their treacherous guides hurried on to join their friends, between whom, stationed in two companies on each side of the gorge, they had led the soldiers. To make matters worse, the soldiers found that very few of their own shots took effect, the gunpowder in the cartridges having been secretly replaced by dust. It may seem incredible, but it is said that not infrequently peculating officials take these means to enrich themselves. At any rate the unlucky soldiers, unlucky, too, that this persecution of the Yazidis was little to their taste, made the best retreat they could, but found by this time the villages deserted and little left to eat. The belief that a hundred were killed was confirmed by a soldier brought in wounded to Mosul a few days later.

Four days after the crisis came. A telegram arrived from Stamboul demanding from the Wali a full explanation of the conduct of the Fariq. If the news, which had reached Stamboul, was true, who gave leave that the soldiers should be ordered out without a notice to the Commander-in-Chief, the Sar-Askar at Stamboul, and who would be responsible if any of the troops or Imperial subjects were killed? The warrant had been to collect the taxes and convert the Yazidis from worshipping devils; if blood was shed, who was to answer for it? The Fariq recalled his son and the troops from the Sinjar, and sat down to await the inevitable, to wit, an inspector from Stamboul. Meanwhile he would mature plans for hoodwinking him, or making it worth his while to hoodwink the Government. A month later I met

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the inspector on his way from Aleppo to Diarbekr, so that the Fariq had good time to weave his web.

The same evening that Shammas brought his news, the heavens declared against the outrageous Fariq. We heard suddenly a great blowing of trumpets, beating of drums, and general holloaing which soon drew us up on to the roof. The moon was eclipsed, and it was the duty of all men of sound faith and proper principles to assemble on their roofs, and with fire and tongs, tin kettle and drum, conspire to drive away the dragon that would otherwise without doubt devour the gentle moon. It was a glorious total eclipse, but the natives were far too busy with the voracious dragon to think of the beauty of the sight. The perfectly clear air and immense space of horizon, with all the subtle beauty of an eastern night, combined to form one of the most lovely sights imaginable.

To explain the significance of Shammas' news, we must retrace our steps and describe what had already happened at Mosul. At first the Pasha, although a man of harsh manners and harsher methods, won golden opinions. His victims, Moslem and Christian, abused him equally; for he favoured no class or creed in his attempt to reform the financial state of the Walayet. The magnitude of his task may be judged from the fact that in one village a thousand houses figured in the revenue returns as three hundred; in another four thousand sheep dwindled down to three hundred. A worse state of affairs occurs when, as not infrequently happens, a prosperous village dwindles, and a population of three hundred families is taxed according to a long obsolete assessment, made when there were perhaps eight hundred families. This is the normal state of things in some parts of Turkey, being due partly to the bad distributing, partly to the bad method of collecting the taxes. These things, however, have been already dealt with; so it remains only to tell how the Pasha accomplished his task. Twenty years of taxes is a large amount to pay at three months' notice; but it had to be done. If any community failed to do so, its members were collected in their church or mosque, and soldiers set to smear their

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faces with honey, and drive them, with hands tied behind their backs, through the streets, a prey to autumn swarms of flies. Others were beaten, others imprisoned, or made to undergo every indignity, until each community had paid up its full amount.* The last straw was laid on the camel, when the Pasha attempted in Mosul, of all conservative and slowly-moving places in this world, to fly in the face of ancient Mohammedan custom, as had been done in Aleppo and other towns, and tax the women. Here the soldiers themselves refused to obey; he had gone too far, and infringed the old-established right of Moslems, that the harem should remain exempt from the inquisition of tax-collectors.

This part of his work was reaching completion, and the province was poorer to the extent of some thirty thousand pounds, which, owing to the laxness of the Government, had been allowed to fall into arrear, when Osman Pasha turned his attention to the "conversion" of the Yazidis. He had signally failed to persuade the Shammar Arabs to give up their nomad life; for having accepted his invitation to a parley in Mosul, they had come in all the simple pomp of the desert, and after listening to the kindly proposals on their behalf, wished him a polite "Peace," and galloped off some hundred miles to the south-west, muttering that the Pasha would need rise very early in the morning to catch that Arab "the meek in spirit"†—and more regarding sleeping weasels.

The Yazidis, however, of whose history more in a subsequent chapter, were already a home-keeping people, frugal and industrious, cleanly, and in every way but that of their religion commendable subjects of the Porte. They, therefore, had not the same means of escape. Invited to Mosul, forty of their chief men came, and listened gravely to all the Pasha

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* It has already been explained how in all such matters the Government regards each community as a whole, and not each individual as a separate person to be taxed. I am indebted to Mr. Hormuzd Rassam for the following note:—"Formerly the people used to be taxed individually, but the different communities elected to be taxed collectively, themselves levying rates on each person according to his person and income."

† A term of polite conversation referring to the speaker—"El faqir."

had to say. There was the council of the Province present, many "Ulimas" learned in the law, and some few Christians; and in the presence of these men he tried to turn them from the error of their ways. It was unseemly in the realm of the Khalifa that any should worship such a foul creed; let them turn, and high place would be theirs, please God, and wealth, and titles, and mullas would be sent to bring up their children in the way. None responded; Christianity they were less unready to accept; the Christians were their friends and fellow-sufferers; Islam had always cursed and persecuted them. No, they would live as their fathers had lived, remaining Yazidis, sons of Yazid. Let the Pasha remember what freedom had been granted to them to worship according to their own faith forty years before.

I cannot do better than relate the rest of this story in the words of Shammas himself, only omitting or correcting what is plainly wrong or exaggerated.

"When Osman Pasha saw that they were firm in their faith, he began to torture them, casting them into prison, so that some died, others fled, and a few, through fear of these tortures and a painful death, accepted the faith of Islam; apparently, and not in truth; silently, not from love of it; and that is a lie and hypocrisy. Then he sent soldiers to the villages, where the Yazidis dwell, and ordered them to accept Islam or be slain. And under the commands of his son, Osman Beg, the soldiers slew in all some five hundred men; so at least the Pasha confessed in his diwan, when he upbraided their chiefs as the cause of death to so many of their people.

"The pretty women and girls he took captive, marrying them by force to his soldiers. Some he took and cast into prison, every day threatening and torturing them to become Moslems. And one, Mirza Beg, the civil chief of the Yazidis, shame be to him, forsook his faith, and from fear, and to gain money and a title, became a Moslem. Of the noble firmness of Ali Beg we will tell later.

"And when Osman Beg came to Bah-Shika and Bahizani, the chief villages of the Yazidis, that lie among the olive

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groves below Jebel Maqlub, he bade the public crier proclaim through the streets that on the morrow the house of every man refusing to accept the faith of Islam would be plundered, the honour of his family, his wife and daughters, taken from him by force, and he and his sons slain by the sword. Oh what a night of sorrow! What a bitter hour! for the grief, and the wailing, and the lamentations for fear of what was come upon them! Never was such calamity as now came upon them. Morning came, and those Yazidis that had been wandering and in flight, assembled, and for two hours of the day raised a sorrowful wailing, men and women, maidens and young men, casting dust and ashes on their heads. Seeing this availed nothing, but that by force they must obey, they went to the son of the Fariq in great perplexity and sorrow. And as they stood before him, he began to take their declarations one by one, telling them, 'Say that you have renounced the religion of Yazid, and taken that of Mohammed; confess and say, "We testify that there is no god but God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God;"* and say, "A curse upon Satan, and upon the king of the Peacocks."' So he compelled them, and tore open the fronts of their shirts, in token that they were Moslems, and sent them to their homes.

"Then he gathered their children, and placed them with a mulla in the mosque to learn the Moslem faith. And he ordered them to be present every day five times at prayers, and wash themselves with the ordained ablutions, greater and less.† From terror they did so, but during prayers were reviling and in secret cursing. Then seeing that their thoughts were still with their old creed, Osman Beg tore down their shrines, which it is appointed for them to visit, as on Fridays and at other set times, and light the lamps in accordance with their faith. And the shrine of Sheikh Mohammed, which is by the cucumber garden of Bahizani, he demolished, and of Melki Miran, near the fountain of

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* The "Kalimat Islam," the recital of which implies the adoption of the creed and is irrevocable.

† For these Moslem customs see Lane or Burton, or any good authority.

running water; and the shrine of Esh-Shadak by the threshing-floor; and of Sheikh Hasan, between the Chaldæan church and the olive-yards, where one enters coming from Mosul. All these, and others, he destroyed, making of them a heap of ruins. And he left in the villages soldiers, and mullas to teach the children, if by any means he might really draw them to the faith of the Moslems.

"But Amir Ali Beg, their chief in religious and civil affairs, after much imprisonment and torture did not obey. When the Fariq saw him thus obstinate, clinging fast to his religion, he was wroth; for had he given way, then many Yazidis would willingly have become Moslems; then thinking it better not to keep him as an example of firmness to his people, he banished him with soldiers to Kastamuni, a fort near Stamboul.

"But worst of all was what happened to those who refused to change their faith. The men were cruelly tortured, and killed, the women taken away, outraged, or killed. One Sheikh was cut into many pieces and thrown over a rock; another ground like corn between two mill-stones. The women were at the mercy of the soldiers. Some fled, and to escape dishonour cast themselves from a high rock and were slain.

"Then Osman Beg heard that a number of young girls were hidden near the olive groves in some long grass; savagely he ordered fire to be set all round, and with screams too fearful to hear, they were all burned to death. A young girl, soon to be a mother, was pursued to the Syrian church, where the priest gave her refuge. There the soldiers found her, and having committed unspeakable things, killed her near the sanctuary. The Kurds and other robbers of the mountains, encouraged by these things, came down, and added much cruelty and outrage to what was already done.

"Now before this occurred the Fariq had sent word to Stamboul that all the Yazidis had willingly accepted the faith of Islam, and other lies, as that the taxes were fully collected, and the Arabs had submitted to the life of villages; which was all a lie and a delusion, by which he would show his

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loyalty and service to the Empire, such as no one before had shown. But when he saw the Yazidis, indeed, not obeying, he charged some among the Moslems and Christians of the town, writing that the Consuls and many important men had persuaded the Yazidis to resist him. Many he imprisoned, and some he tortured, gaining reproach from all good men. So much he did, that the bazars were closed, and the people in uproar armed themselves and prepared for battle. Fearing therefore what the people would do, he ordered that a hundred mullas and efendis should become imams and teachers for the Yazidis; for their own pleasure and advantage he did this, that in return they might praise him. But when they went to the villages they found that all the Yazidis had fled, or were slain, or were in prison. But giving heed to their work, they brought children of the Kurds and of their own people, so that they might earn their money. As the Fariq deceived the Government, so they deceived him.

"Still failing to attain his object, and fearing the government, whom he had deceived, he forbade any man to go to the telegraph, and forbade the clerk to send any message which he had not first seen. Then he by force took the seals of the Council of the province, and made them affix them to a paper declaring how all the desires of the Sultan were attained; and he forbade any man to visit the consuls, using to them and towards the Americans most vile language, saying that they encouraged the Yazidis. So he deceived the Sultan; but so ill at ease he was, and so fearful for his life, that he ordered music to play continually for his relief, and that he might escape the reproaches of his conscience.

"Thus have we written briefly an account of these most detestable matters."

I have written a full account of these events for several reasons; partly because the Yazidis are of considerable interest in themselves; partly because these outrages far surpass any that have been committed for many years, being perpetrated, not only in the name of the government and by a high official claiming direct authority from the Sultan, but also in direct contravention to the firman of 1847 granting

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the free exercise of their religion to the Yazidis. The results, too, are far reaching. At least four hundred people were killed; hundreds of acres left unsown; a whole province drained of its resources, and crippled for years; and all that happens is that an inspector is sent, and the author of all this brutality imprisoned.

Of the central administration in Turkey I know little and say nothing. It is reported of it by some who know that it is good. Further, I firmly believe his Majesty to have been ignorant, and purposely kept so, of what was being done in his name. He is a humane Sovereign, almost superstitiously averse to the shedding of blood; nor do I believe any more than the Moslems of Mosul, with whom I spoke frequently, that his orders went beyond the establishment of legitimate means of converting of Yazidis.

And the moral is this: England and certain other powers find it to their advantage to maintain Turkey in her present position. This policy may be right, as I think that those who best know Turkey agree that it is. But this fact is clear: that if we do so maintain a Mohammedan state in power, it is our duty to see she does not abuse it, and recognise that influence must be maintained not by crying wolf at every imaginary outrage, not by encouraging disloyalty, not by idiotic abuse of the Turk and all his deeds, but by showing that our Government is one that can be trusted, whether Conservative or Liberal be in power, and that whatever we do, we will keep our treaties, and guard the rights wisely of our fellow religionists in Turkey.

The truth is that here as elsewhere our economy has made fools of us. An English consul is still looked on as a repository of honour, and a support against oppression. Yet we roam from Baghdad to Aleppo before we see a consul worthy of the name. On the importance of guarding our trade stress is not here laid, though it should be if that argument will touch our shopkeeper pockets. We have a higher trust, and at times the traveller simply burns with shame to hear what men, Christian and Moslem, say of this England, to which they once looked with such faith. Men

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speak of the time when the sword will pass on from the Yazidi to the Jew, and from the Jew to the Christian; and, when that comes, perhaps someone will recommend a remonstrance to the Sublime Porte, or send an unpaid vice-consul to Mosul. To the fact that there was no consul of the type of the much-honoured Christian Rassam at Mosul at this time, I believe was largely due the outrages of which I was the helpless spectator.*

* The Appendix contains an account of the Yazidi people and beliefs, drawn partly from the accounts of other travellers, partly from their own books. During the last year a member of the family of Rassam has been appointed Her Majesty's Vice-Consul in Mosul.

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CHAPTER XIX.

The Monastery of Mar Mattha, and the Syrians of Mosul.

I had hoped before I left Mardin that it would be possible to combine a visit to the headquarters of the Yazidis at Sheikh A'di with a stay at the Syrian monastery of Mar Mattha, which lies nearer Mosul in the same direction. But circumstances had compelled me to relinquish the former plan, and content myself with a visit to the monastery and, if possible, a ride to the Assyrian sites of Nimrud and Khorsabad. Mar Mattha is in general known by the name of Sheikh Mattai, in accordance with the frequent custom of sheltering a Christian saint beneath a Moslem title.* Before starting, I called upon the French Consul, from whom letters of introduction had secured much kindness and hospitality, in order to ask his opinion whether the expedition would be safe. He is a native of Damascus, brought up as an European, and a very ardent Roman Catholic. The last is a necessary qualification for consular service with a government that, fighting with the Church and religion at home, considers priests and Jesuits as valuable articles of export to lands where their beliefs will make them useful propagandists. The Consul is a great student of Cufic, and has lined his library with big

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* Elijah is known as Al Khudhr, the green one. S. George is also known by this name, probably to hoodwink the Moslems. It is hard to imagine why Elijah should be such a popular Saint all through northern Turkey, unless he has usurped some of the regard paid to S. George.

black inscriptions, looking nearly as grim as the brass rubbings with which antiquarian country clergy in England make their halls repulsive. He showed me a pretty little collection of antiquities, chiefly Babylonian, besides some beautiful specimens of Persian and Arabic caligraphy, among which was a magnificent copy richly illuminated of Sa'di's poems, and one of the small octagon Korans so prized by collectors.

In answer to my inquiries about the mountains, he assured me that there was no danger, although, like a true Oriental, he would not like to take the responsibility of advising me to go there. However, I determined to brave the risks, and went off to see the Wali, and get permission to go, and a guard of police to take with me. Such a proceeding was quite unusual, and only necessitated by the state in which all that part of the country had been thrown by the late persecutions. I found the Wali in the best of humours, making his common old jokes and wagging his empty old head, so that the two zaptiehs were easily secured, without the usual reference to the "Fariq;" and I prepared to start early the next morning for a three days' excursion on the eastern side of the Tigris.

Next morning only one zaptieh arrived, with whom I started without waiting for the second. A driving wind had set up the river, stirring up quite a little sea, and making the bridge of boats rock and creak as we passed over it. This bridge is made half of boats and half of stone, the river being too rapid in winter to allow a stone bridge to be built across mid-stream, either by the Turks, or the French, who last made the attempt. So a number of great clumsy boats are fastened side by side, covered with poles and brushwood, and firmly beaten down with earth on the top; and this mass is allowed, when the flood time comes, to swing right round along the shore, so that all the traffic has to be performed by means of rafts that ply endlessly backwards and forwards across the swollen river.

The zaptieh secured us from any inquiries at the custom house or from the guards who lounged at the town end of the

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bridge, and we passed in safety the long strings of camels and crowds of country people who all day long are crossing and re-crossing the bridge. It was a glorious view down the great river* towards the south, with swelling domes, and half-ruined khans and coffee house stretching along its banks; and in the water crowds of men and women and boys, some drawing water, others performing matutinal ablutions, others playing in full enjoyment of the fœtid smells that haunt the river shore. A little way down some men were loading half-a-dozen donkeys with melons and pumpkins they had floated down the river; and there in mid-stream was one of those great "kelleks," rafts floated on numerous skins, that have borne the trade from Nineveh to Basra since the days of Cyrus and Herodotus.

As soon as we had crossed the river, we were nearly blinded by the dust, of which the air was so full that it was impossible to see more than a few yards ahead. This lasted for about an hour, until we were past the mounds and through the walls of Nineveh, and out upon the level country under Jebel Maqlub. There were numerous groups of black tents, with their accompanying sheep and horses tended by the little urchins of the tribe, some belonging to Arabs, and others to the "Kochers," as the nomad Kurds are called. Beyond these was nothing but broad fields, all bare and unploughed this year on account of the persecutions. We passed a few ruined Yazidi shrines and a large village before we reached the rising ground and the dark olive groves under the hills. It is said that olives do not flourish out of reach of sea air; but here were magnificent groves, heavy with fruit, and more carefully irrigated and tended than any trees I had yet seen. Many belong to the monastery, others to the Syrian Mosulis, who own the Christian houses in the villages of Bah-Shikah and Bahizani. As we rode through the former, marks of the late onslaught were traceable on every side. Heaps of stones and plaster, and

* The Tigris is called by the Arabs, "Shat" the Arrow, from the extreme rapidity of its current.

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here and there a broken wall, were all that remained of the Yazidi shrines and houses. The chief feature that former travellers remarked in these villages, the little clusters of conical white shrines, the Yazidi "Shaqs," was gone; and in their place stood a new white-plastered mosque, looking ghastly out of the ashes from which it had risen. Thirty or forty soldiers lounged about the village, reminding the people how noble a thing it is to be a Moslem, and slay professors of a foreign creed. Even the Christians did not seem happy, but looked at us in a cowed way, while Yazidis, thinking it was some government inspector, slunk away into the shelter of the houses. The Syrians, who number about thirty houses in this village, were busy building a new church. They were very proud of it, and pressed me to stay a night with them, saying how much their landlord, Abdunnur, did for them, and that a friend of his would be doubly welcome. But thinking that I should do neither them nor myself any good by remaining in the village, filled as it was with soldiers, I mounted and made my way on towards the Deir.

It was rough riding across the spurs of the hills to Kopan, and thence to Malleh, a village at the base of Jebel Maqlub, on the almost perpendicular face of which was built the monastery, clinging like a swallow's nest against a wall. From the village it seemed scarcely credible that there could be any way up the rock, nor was any visible. And when we reached the path, it had much the appearance of those that lead up to hillside pagodas on antique china plates, scooped out and banked up on the rocky side of the steep. As we neared the top, leading our horses in Indian file, two monks looked out over the high wall upon us straight below them, where they could have dropped a stone upon our heads; and half feared when they saw the zaptieh that they were honoured by an official visit, to demand the taxes, which the Fariq was threatening to extort for the convent sheep. There were two monks in the monastery, one old and rather deaf, who had spent most of his life in Midhiat, and had come to pass his remaining days at Mar Mattha. The second was a

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young man, ordained Rahab only two years since, but being a trustworthy and well-educated man, was obtaining considerable influence, and had almost the entire management of the place, even when the Bishop was there. For it is part of the mismanagement of things among the Syrians that the small diocese of Mosul has two Bishops, while the great Jebel Tur district has only the same number.

As soon as we had been greeted with an "Upon my head you come in peace!" and the younger man had reverently kissed the Patriarch's letter, we went to feed our horses, and house them comfortably for the night. The monk then led us to a pleasant diwan at the very top of the building, where water was brought, and grapes, while he disappeared to prepare the customary cup of coffee. A servant then came up with a hen, which he had with difficulty caught, and proceeded to slay and pluck just outside our door in view of the evening meal. Refreshed with grapes and coffee, I then went out with the younger monk to see the monastery and its surroundings. It was a strange place indeed, almost inaccessible, with a few trees, mostly figs and apricots, and pasture here and there among the rocks enough to feed the convent's flock of four hundred sheep. None but a recluse could have chosen such a spot, although the air is glorious, and even in summer, when Mosul is intolerable, one may be as comfortable here as on the hills about Mardin. During the hottest months many Mosul families find their way hither, to escape from the heat of the town, and make keif in the monastery or at the grotto just beside it. For this purpose several of the richer Syrians have combined to rebuild the monastery, but in a manner more adapted to family life than the requirements of a place of retreat. Nevertheless, the place has benefited in so far as it is no longer a ruin, but a very comfortable abode; and only in the hot weather does it at all serve the purpose of pleasure-makers, such as love to frequent Deir-el-Za'aferan. The situation requires that the rooms be built on terraces one above another, giving the whole a very irregular appearance. It is built almost entirely of the rough

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concrete commonly used in Mosul, instead of the hard stone of which the mountain is formed. Outside it looks rough, and likely to fall to pieces; but it is well built, and the rooms within are clean and comfortable.*

A little to the west of the great gate is a large cave, from the roof of which water continually drips. Here is the great place for making keif, for being in itself very cool, and thickly shaded in front by fruit trees of all sorts, planted on the level grass before the opening, it forms a delicious retreat. There was a little garden, where leeks and lettuces, and even a little tobacco grew; and on one side was a flourishing row of beehives, made, as usual in these parts, of huge earthenware pots sealed up at both ends with mud, which could be broken away when the honey was to be taken. Under one of the dripping stones was a large basin cut out of the rock, in which the water collected; it had a strong mineral taste.

Far over the plains, storms were sweeping in quick succession from the east, where the Gumar winds down to the Khazir, until both together meet the Great Zab, and fall below Nimrud into the Tigris. Westward, over the setting sun, all was clear, and the hills of the Sinjar stood out clear above the plain. Bad weather seemed to be coming. The whole scene reminded me irresistibly of Scott's magnificent description of a storm at the Convent of Mont Saint Victoire, just such a place as this, where the *mise en scène* serves to heighten the tragic fate of Queen Margaret of England. It was a glorious view; Mosul lay like a small village, in spite of all its domes and minarets on the banks of the Tigris, which curled serpent-like down to the sea. Behind were the Sinjar hills and the limitless extent of blue, and ruddy plain. A thin rain came on as the sun went down; and instead of the crier calling the faithful to prayer, a little bell kept tinkling for the monks and scanty shepherds to attend vespers.

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* About 1830 the place was plundered by the Kurdish Pasha of Ruwanduz, and has only lately been restored.

The church is a large plain building, chiefly interesting as containing the tomb of the great Bar Hebræus,* known in the west more generally as Abulfaragius, who, ordained at Tripolis, and wandering between Malatia and Antioch, became in 1264 A.D., Metropolitan of Mosul. The number of his writings is great, and varying in kind from a treatise on bells to an universal history of mankind. Some books in his own handwriting are said still to exist at Jazirah; and every monastery of the Syrians contains some copies of parts of his numerous works. There is an interesting story of how, being greatly in favour with Hulaku Khan, he went to Baghdad; and there on the occasion of his visit, the Eucharist was celebrated on Easter-day by the united clergy of Jacobites and Nestorians. He lies buried with his brother Barsome in the "Beit Qadishe" of the church, and over them is placed the inscription:

> "This is the grave of Mar Gregorios John, and of Mar Barsome, his brother, the children of the Hebrew, on Mount Elpep." †

"In his life, he was an elegant writer of the Syriac and Arabic tongues, a poet, physician, and historian, a subtle philosopher, and a moderate divine. In his death, his funeral was attended by his rival, the Nestorian Patriarch, with a train of Greeks and Armenians, who forgot their disputes, and mingled their tears over the grave of a rival." ‡

The church is peculiar in having the "Beit Qadishe" within the church, and not joined to the south wall, as is more usual. It contains, too, a kind of double chancel of an unusual plan, there being two sanctuaries instead of the more usual three; for the space generally occupied by the third aisle and sanctuary on the north, is here taken up by empty rooms and the "Beit Qadishe." Near the

* In A.D. 1244, Bar Hebræus went from Malatia on the Euphrates, at that time the seat of the Patriarchate, to Antioch.

In A.D. 1000, John Ebn Abdon, Patriarch, removed from Antioch to Malatia.

† Cp. Badger, i. 97. Elpep, the Syriac name of Jebel Maqlub. He was born 1225 A.D.

‡ Gibbon, ch. xlvii.

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church was another building where many of the Syrian Bishops are buried; and in a grotto just below the monastery, the Rahab pointed out the place where lived Mar Behnam, the son of the Assyrian king Sennacherib, who slew both his son and his daughter Sara for embracing Christianity. The portrait of "Sittna" Sara is still to be seen painted life-size upon a large pillar in the church of the monastery of Mar Behnam, near Nimrud, now the property of the Papal Syrians.

The Rahabs talked very eagerly about the prospects of opening a school for the Syrians of Mosul, and were anxious that it should be established at the monastery, away from the interference of outsiders, and in a quiet place where the youth could learn more readily the "way of the Church." This, no doubt, was a monk's view of the matter; but, after all, it would be a gloomy place for a lot of boys.

It was a splendid night, with a bright moon; but the lightning played all along the horizon, threatening rain. Early next morning a fine rain began to come down, and seemed likely to increase. The threatening weather, combined with the dangerous condition of the country, which the monks said that even our zaptieh would not counterbalance, made me determine to ride straight back to Mosul. With many regrets at the shortness of our visit, the monks bade us good-bye, expressing hopes that something would be done to help their poor neighbours the Yazidis, the worst accounts of whose treatment they amply confirmed.

It was still harder work going down the mountain path than it had been to ascend, and we were heartily glad to reach the village Malleh, and the stream below. The zaptieh was in the worst possible temper, for he had brought an unshod colt to ride, not knowing that we were going up the mountain, and the animal had been little benefited by the rocky climb. A profusion of oleanders were just coming into blossom along the stream, and my servant told me how, if a horse eats of the leaves, he will certainly die, unless he immediately drinks of the water running through the roots. It sounded like some old Odyssean myth; but the man had his instance

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ready, to wit, that the horse of his late master, having eaten of the dangerous leaf, and scorned the cure provided by God, dropped down within an hour dead.

Back through the villages and olive groves we retraced our steps, and in a few hours found ourselves once more riding through the walls and standing beneath the mounds of Nineveh. Then passing the tomb of En-nabbi Yunas, we reached the river, and, crossing the bridge, threaded the squalid streets until we came to the house where I had found a temporary home.

Mosul has been chosen by the propagandists of Rome as the strategic point from which to conduct operations in the East. It is here, therefore, that one may see most clearly in practice those principles which have been already enumerated as underlying their dealings with the natives. I had thus expected to find considerable state and magnificence surrounding the two chiefs of the Roman adherents in Mosul. With one of these men, Mutran Behnam Benni, Bishop of the Papal Syrians, I had already become acquainted; the other, the self-styled patriarch of the Chaldæans, had only just returned from a visit to the mountain Nestorians. He had undertaken the mission in the hope of persuading the East-Syrian patriarch, Mar Shamun, to submit to the inevitable, and acknowledge the Papal supremacy. He had sent messengers to announce his visit, and had started some days on his journey to the patriarchal headquarters at Kudchanes, when he received an answer, saying that the Patriarch had no time, and could not manage to receive his brother of the Roman Communion. So the Chaldæan returned in high dudgeon to Mosul, being baulked of his purpose; and in consequence of his journey and the rebuff which he had received was indisposed for several days. We called upon him in the splendid new house which his Italian superiors have built for him, and found him not at all inclined to be gracious to a member of the same Church, to which the men belonged, to whose efforts on behalf of the native Church he may have attributed his failure. On this account, and because the diwan was crowded, conversation was general.

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It has been already explained that the Roman policy is to gain adherents among the important houses, and put its members in positions of trust. It is thus that the bishops of the Uniat faith are influential men; while at the same time they are almost entirely under the direct control of Rome. Nevertheless, there remains among the Papal Uniats in Mosul a considerable party of those who would gladly exchange their present yoke for their ancient freedom. It was my business to avoid interference in matters of this kind; but a good many facts forced themselves on my notice in the ordinary course of conversation. This party had been headed for many years by Mutran Elias, with whom I had formed a very intimate friendship in Mardin. He was, too, a great friend of the Syrian Patriarch, and, having grown old in the contest against unequal odds, had accepted the fate which he deemed inevitable, and, joining the Papal Party, found a resting place as Bishop of the small Chaldæan diocese of Mardin. His supporters followed his example, but are by no means contented, and look to some opportunity in the future for recovering the heritage which they have lost.

The Bishop of the Papal Syrians in Mosul, Mutran Behnam Benni, held an important position in Mosul during the interregnum caused by the death of the late Patriarch, until the Pope should be pleased to appoint a "Patriarch of Antioch." What a position for the Church of Antioch, to accept a Patriarch only at the hands of the Patriarch of Rome! This Bishop I found to be a man of most courteous European manners and of genuine cordiality. He was also the most learned and capable prelate whom I had the fortune to meet in Turkey, contrasting in many ways pleasantly with some of his brethren. He had built in Mosul, in addition to the churches taken from the old Syrian community, a fine new church in the Italian style, well stocked with blue and tinsel Madonnas and tortured saints, that harmonise ill with the calmer, severer air of Assyria.

One morning I donned my blue spectacles and hoisted my white umbrella, and sallied forth to visit the Bishop in the

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beautiful garden where he has built for himself a fine house. Past a picturesque five-domed mosque, through broad fields of beans and other vegetables, we came to one of those clumsy machines with which the water is drawn from the river level to the fields. Two aged mules went solemnly up and down the shoot, delivering pail after pail into the irrigating canal. The creaking wheels were heard a long way off, and much disconcerted our horses. But some coaxing persuaded them to pass the wheels and enter the farmyard of the Bishop. It was crowded with screaming geese and chickens, sheep and white turkeys, not to mention small boys and the Bishop's two qawwases, only lately stripped of the swords which they had previously worn. This was done by order of the Fariq, who failed to see why bishops should assume civil or military prerogatives, and made no secret of his dislike for this one, whose garden he much wanted for a new cavalry exercising ground.

In the middle stood the Bishop himself superintending the breakfast of some favourite pigeons. He led the way through a second court, where grew orange, palm, and many another ornamental tree and flower, to a row of buildings containing his library, chapel, and bedroom. The library was such a room as scarcely exists elsewhere in Mesopotamia, handsomely furnished in the English style, and stocked with some two thousand volumes. There were a few pictures and pieces of choice china, and a marble head of Roman workmanship brought from Antioch. He was immensely proud of the room, and told me in good English how he had adopted various plans from libraries which he had seen when he visited London to study the Syriac manuscripts of the British Museum. He would not have been a Syrian had he not told the price of everything, and that was a good sum; but he comes from a fairly rich family, and Papal Bishops in the East have not left their old churches for nothing. The chapel was plain, excepting the altar, which was tawdry; the bath was all that could be desired. My visit was a long one, and the conversation of this cultivated man most interesting; but somehow, perhaps because we both felt that our real sym-

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pathies scarcely coincided, free discussion of the most important questions seemed impossible.

Of the real rulers of both these sects, the Chaldæans and the Papal Syrians, the Dominican monks of Mosul, and the Papal Legate, something will be said later. The Dominicans have a large establishment, with an oratory, and an admirable printing-press, managed by the Padres for purposes of education and conversion. Writing fifty years ago of Mosul, Mr. Fletcher says: "Perhaps the next fifty years may render the names even of the Jacobites and Nestorians a matter of history." His words have not been justified, in spite of the magnificent array with which the Church of Rome has garrisoned this outpost in the East. Moreover, in Mosul there remain some thousand houses of Jacobites, far outnumbering their Papal rivals. To this body let us therefore turn.

In Mosul, as in many other towns, the Syrian house was divided against itself. The two chief men, it is true, came to call upon me on the same day; but I suspect the meeting was accidental, for there was clearly a mine always ready to burst. The Patriarch's visit during the previous year had not been conducive to peace. People who desired the welfare of their nation were discouraged, while the professional mischief-makers had a busy time fomenting ill-feeling between the Patriarch and their own chief men.

Thus the people were distrustful of each other, not liking to lay the blame for the turn events had taken on any individual, but secretly hinting that matters had been mismanaged at headquarters as elsewhere. They had in Mosul a Bishop, who enjoyed the soubriquet of "The Bishop of Sheep," and that in no Biblical sense; for he was a stupid, ill-educated old man, fit rather to control the lower departments of a monastery than sit in the seat of the late Bishop, an able man, it seemed, under whom schools had grown, and a strong stand been made against Papal encroachment.

Several times I went to the Bishop's diwan on weekdays, or on Sunday mornings after the celebration of the Eucharist. But instead of the crowd that is wont on Sunday mornings to

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flock to the diwan and receive a blessing on their week, there were just one or two who came to drink coffee, and a priest, who did forbear to order the old man about in my presence, but scarcely concealed the contempt which he felt, and at another time freely confessed. Poor man! he was a piteous sight as he sat there smoking his shibuk, and longing to return to the convent, whence he had been summoned to guide the sinuous courses of the Mosul flock. He was daily troubled by calls for the taxes of the community, and the dues demanded by the new Pasha on the sheep of the monastery. Twice one Sunday morning the tax-collector came in, and was told to come later; this he did, but only to receive the same answer. In truth, the Bishop had no taxes to pay, the Patriarch having clearly and with perfect right refused to pay for monastic property, appealing to an ancient charter granting exemption for all such from taxation.

I had been some time in Mosul before I could speak in confidence with any trustworthy Syrian. Such an one was Melki Abdullah, to whom I had letters of introduction, and with him I had long and earnest conversation. He was the head of one of the oldest houses in Mosul, which in his father's and uncle's time had been wealthy, and renowned for learning. He, too, had a good library of Syrian theology. But the death of the fathers brought ill-feeling between the sons, and things did not go smoothly between Melki and his cousin. Melki blamed him for neglecting business, and squandering on pleasure the money that should have helped his people. He himself had offered large sums of money to build a new church, and maintain a school in the house, which his father had built for the purpose. He was enthusiastic over the notion of a school, such as was contemplated at Deir-el-Za'aferan; but raise hopes of a restored church as he would, he met everywhere the dull indifference that the quarrel seemed to have bred. Then there was the continual cry for material aid. It is a legacy of the oppression of a thousand years, and perhaps too a taint in the Syrian character, that this cry ever comes before the desire for a purer faith, and less contentious way of life.

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So it has been for years; and things have been made far worse by the presence of proselytizing bodies in the Church's midst. The earlier American missionaries, to whose honour be it said, that they have ever determined to stand firm against anything that might obscure the purely spiritual aim of their work, turned with tears in their eyes from the town in which seven of their number had lost their lives. It is perfectly certain that were this not so, and substantial help and protection were given to their native brethren, the position of the American missionaries would be stronger, and their adherents far more numerous. Those that know the East, know the temptation there is to use these means, and will admire, without stint, the spirit which foregoes every advantage, rather than weaken a right principle. This temper in the American I have frequently seen, and am glad to bear witness to it. It is the same as ever it was, this love of temporalities; and it will be a hard task to remove the canker, before the wound can be truly healed. God forbid that they will not one day see clearly through the mist, and find the truth enshrined in the system and ritual of their own church, for it is written, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening stay not thy hand; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, either this or that."

Such thoughts were forced upon one by all that one heard said, and those who have followed the course of events in recent East or West Syrian history will forgive the despondent tone. Yet for all this I found many both among priests and people yearning for a more lively faith and zealous hierarchy. I no longer wondered at the tone of sadness in which Mutran Abdullah and Mutran Yunas always spoke of their people; but I found comfort in the thought that if there was not much here to encourage, yet in every other town or village of Syrians there was so much to counterbalance the state of things in Mosul.

It was our last Sunday at Mosul, and I went as usual to the early celebration at the Syrian church of Mar Thoma close by. It was the most orderly service, and the most hearty, that I had seen in Turkey. There was an

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evidence of training in the choir, and reverence both in celebrant and congregation that was not common. I heard the time-honoured sermon of the poor man entering the room, and the rich man with a ring upon his finger, so full of application to this people, but with all the power dried out of it by constant repetition. The blest bread was distributed, to myself a double portion, and a few remained behind to receive the full sacrament, while the rest disbanded, and I went out to the diwan to say farewell to his lordship, the "Bishop of Sheep."

Again it was evening, and I stood once more upon the roof of my kind host's house, watching the sun go down. Over the parapet I saw the horses munching their evening meal, and the white donkey by their side. Suddenly the bell of the Dominican church rang out. It was twelve o'clock, and strange it sounded over the sleepy town. It seemed like some old Italian city, until I looked eastward, and there I seemed to see great palaces rise upon the mounds, with the river flowing beneath them, and the quiet hum of the streets sounded quite as far off as they. And as this faded, I lifted my eyes and caught sight on Jebel Maqlub of the old Syrian monastery, carrying my thoughts on to Christian times, and the day when the great Jew's son, Bar-Hebræus, foreshadowed in his funeral the time when these bitter dissensions shall be done. And then my thoughts went further out to the scene of the horrible deeds so lately done out beyond the mountains, reminding me of the rulers that be, and the present fear of Islam. And at last I awoke from the strange magic of the scene, as the old man walked out of his door on to the gallery of the nearest mosque, followed by his cat with tail erect; and echoing from dome to dome and minaret to minaret, fell on my ear for the last time in Mosul the daily cry that "Allah is great, and Mohammed the Prophet of God; come, come to prayer." Truly may Islam pray, if such a hard fate can pray. The cannon boomed from the Serai, and darkness stole rapidly on, until one long streaky glow was all that remained to tell where the sun went down.

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The next day we started on our return journey to Mardin. There I said farewell to our kind Doctor and his friends. I lingered some time about the church of the Arbain before the Patriarch would let me go, so overjoyed was he at my safe return from that "City of Abominations," and feared that if I went no one would come to take my place. Abu Selim grew very despondent, and on the day of my departure, after I had once more received the Patriarch's blessing and kissed his hand, rode out to say farewell on the road to Diarbekr. It was the last I saw of Mardin, Abu Selim riding slowly back up the winding road; he was too sad to sing that day, and so was I.

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THE OLD SYRIAN CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

The Church of Antioch.

"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Paul; and when he had found him he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves together with the Church and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Thus was formed the earliest Gentile Church, which was through its sons to extend its influence over the whole East, and suffer more from persecutions and contentions than any other in the world.

The Apostle St. Peter was universally recognised by the early Church as the first Bishop of the see, or as the Eusebian chronicle more accurately says ὁ κορυφαῖος τὴν ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ πρῶτον θεμελιώσας ἐκκλησίαν, and it is to him that the Patriarchs of Antioch have always looked back as the first of the line which they claim to represent.*

Of the wonderful spread of the Gospel towards the East, of the work of Thaddæus at Edessa, of Maris his successor —called the Second "Catholicos of the East," of Ignatius

* Cp. Neale, "Patriarchate of Antioch;" Etheridge, "The Syrian Churches;" for accounts of the early years of the Church.

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"Theophorus the borne of God,"—every history gives ample accounts. "I am the corn of God; I must be ground by the teeth of beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of God." So said Ignatius, the first in this Church of that great army of martyrs, whose zeal sowed the "seed of the Church" so richly through the East. Ignatius died 116 A.D., and nineteen years later Judas, the last of the Circumcision, followed him. There were many churches now organized: Cæsarea, to which Jerusalem still owed allegiance; Seleucia, whose Catholicos came for consecration to Antioch; Edessa, Damascus, Tyre, and Apamæa. All these acknowledged the primacy of Antioch; but it was not until the Council of Nicæa that her exarchal authority was confirmed throughout the East.

The Church of Antioch boasts a long roll of martyrs saints and doctors. Theophilus, the opponent of Marcion, published a famous defence of Christianity in 181 A.D. Serapion defended the faith against Montanus, and was succeeded by Alexander, by whom Origen was ordained, and who, having died in prison, is counted a martyr. Babylas, his successor, suffered a martyrdom (251 A.D.), which aroused the enthusiasm of Chrysostom, himself a Syrian. Under Demetrian (252 A.D.),* the next bishop but one, was held the first Council of Antioch to condemn the heresy of Novatian of Rome. But on his death Antioch herself fell into heresy, first of all the Churches, and for many years suffered the immoral rule of Paul of Samosata, the instructor of Zenobia. After two councils he was deposed, and succeeded by Domnus (270 A.D.).†

During the episcopate of Cyril the great tenth persecution was commenced by the edict of Diocletian and Valerius (303 A.D.). Among others Pamphilus, the learned doctor of Cæsarea and friend of Eusebius, suffered; while the pages of the historians are full of the glorious sufferings of the martyrs of the Church, which had peace only when the Edict of Milan was proclaimed (313 A.D.), giving freedom of worship to the Christians.

* Eus. vi. 46. † Eus. vii. 30.

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The Edict of Milan marks the beginning of a better-known period of the Church's history, the era of Constantine and the Council of Nicæa, during which the See of Antioch was filled by a succession of bishops illustrious throughout the Church. Some years previously Gregory (297 A.D.), a prince of the royal house of Tiridates, who was restored to his Armenian kingdom by the Roman arms, was converted. He suffered persecution in his own land, then received consecration as Bishop from Leontius of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, and finally became known as the "Illuminator of Armenia."

The episcopate of Eustathius is marked by the great struggle with Arianism (325 A.D.). S. Jerome speaks of him as the "resounding trumpet that first gave the alarm against Arius." He was deposed by Constantine through the intrigues of the Arians (331 A.D.), and died in exile at Philippi (380 A.D.). Many troubles followed his deposition. For sixty years Arian bishops filled the see; and under the auspices of the Arian Emperor Anastasius a remarkable council was held at Antioch (341 A.D.), at which a basis of communion was established* between the Catholics, Semi-Arians, and Arians. The quarrels rife at this time in the Patriarchate of Antioch are a saddening spectacle; but it is to be remembered that while the quarrels between sects obtain necessarily a foremost place in history, yet the quiet growth of the Church goes on unrecorded, because it is peaceful; while the men who do this peaceful work are those who, after the great champions of the Faith, a Chrysostom or an Augustine, earn the truest glory by their lives. Hilarion (b. 292 A.D.)—the founder of monasticism in Palestine—Efraim of Nisibis (d. 378 A.D.)—the "sweet singer" of the Syrians—with a countless throng of martyrs, bear living witness to the reality of the Church's growth; while the name of the great Athanasius stands out as of a man who to all succeeding ages has shown in the highest light the heroism and the profundity of the Christian ideal.

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* Some valuable canons were the result of this Council. But it is tainted by the sentence of deposition passed upon Athanasius.

For a time it seemed as if Arianism was to triumph over the Catholic faith, spreading under imperial favour throughout the whole Church. In Antioch, the Catholic supporters of the deposed Eustathius held together under the leadership of two laymen, Flavian and Diodorus.* Athanasius visited and encouraged them, and when asked by the Emperor Constantius to grant to the Arians a church in Alexandria, "willingly," he replied, "if Leontius† will give one in Antioch to be the property of the Eustathians."

The Arians and semi-Arians were still struggling for supremacy at Antioch (354 A.D.), when the orthodox Meletius, one of the noblest of her bishops, was appointed to the See. It was an epoch of great Bishops, Cyril at Jerusalem, Basil and Gregory of Nanzianzen in Asia Minor; but in Antioch Meletius, in spite of his universally recognised holiness, was unable to make peace between the combatants. He was three times banished through the intrigues of the Arians, and at last died (381 A.D.), while the Second General Council, of which he was President, was sitting at Constantinople. Athanasius in vain attempted from Alexandria to heal the divisions at Antioch. John of Constantinople, ever claimed as one of themselves by the Syrians, and called by the Syriac equivalent for his Greek name Chrysostom, was more successful, and reconciled Rome and Alexandria to Flavian,‡ the Catholic Bishop of Antioch. He saw, too, the final triumph of Christianity, which may be dated from the death of Julian and the succession of Theodosius to the rule of the entire Empire. He also saw complete peace restored at Antioch by the Patriarch Alexander § before he died in exile (407 A.D.).

In the middle of the fifth century, the names of three great men come into prominence, Cyril Patriarch of Alex-

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* Theodoret H. E. ii. 24.

† Arian Patriarch of Antioch, 345—350 A.D.

‡ Patriarch, 381—404 A.D.

§ Theodoret, v. 35. Patriarch either 408—418 A.D. (according to Eastern tradition), or 413—423 A.D. according to Le Quien, Or. Chr. ii. 718.

andria,* John of Antioch,† and Nestorius of Constantinople,‡ with whom is connected the history of the struggles, which resulted in the condemnation, first, of Nestorius, at the Council of Ephesus; secondly, of Eutyches, at that of Chalcedon, and thirdly, in the secession of the two churches of Syria and Persia, which followed the teaching of the two great heresiarchs. The See of Seleucia, no longer dependent on Antioch for the consecration of its Catholicos, adopted the heresy of Nestorius, which taught substantially the existence of two personalities in our Lord, and consequently refused to the Virgin Mary the title of Theotokos. Nestorianism became the recognised form of Christianity in Persia; and the Catholicos, encouraged by the Persian Emperor to adopt a doctrine that would estrange his Church from that of his rivals in the West, assumed the title of Patriarch; while Persia became the refuge of many who held the same opinions from the rigour of Justinian.§

John of Antioch had been delayed on his way to Ephesus, and the Council, which condemned Nestorius, was held without him under the presidency of Cyril. As soon as he arrived, John, vexed that the Bishops had not waited five days longer for him, held a second Council, and condemned Cyril for the use of phrases that savoured of heresy in the direction opposite to that in which Nestorius had erred. But after the first heat of controversy mutual explanations and a more careful adjustment of phrases on the part of Cyril

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* 412–444 A.D.

† 428—440 A.D.

‡ 428—431 A.D.

The Patriarch of Antioch was now the recognised Metropolitan of the fifteen provinces of the Eastern Church. At the Council of Ephesus, however, John received a check to his claim to jurisdiction over Cyprus. It was an age when Patriarchs were inclined to extend their power, and it would have been well had others besides John borne this check in mind.

§ Circa 498 A.D.

In 489, the famous school of Edessa, founded by Efraim of Nisibis, was closed by the Emperor Zeno, because it had become a stronghold of Nestorianism. In connection with the favour shown to Nestorianism in Persia, it must always be remembered, how large a share politics have had in the ecclesiastical affairs of the East.

effected the reunion, which both seem really to have desired. Nevertheless, Cyril had used expressions which, if they did not justify, at least gave colour to the doctrine, which Eutyches, an Archimandrite of Constantinople, promulgated in alarm at the spread of Nestorianism in the East. John of Antioch had been a man of peace, and had used all his influence to urge Nestorius to modify his dangerous language. But Eutyches had no such adviser. It seemed that with the death of John of Antioch and Sixtus of Rome in 440 A.D., and of Cyril four years later, that the Church was losing her great champions; but the same Providence that raised up Athanasius against Arianism and Cyril against Nestorianism, called to the seat of Rome one of the greatest Bishops of that greatest of sees, Leo the Great, to combat the error of Eutyches.

Eusebius of Dorylæum, a man, it seems, with a keen scent for heresy, having been the first to attack Nestorius nine years before, suddenly denounced Eutyches, an ignorant but worthy monk, more zealous to defend the unity of our Lord's person than mentally capable of defining it. Flavian, the gentle Patriarch of Constantinople, counselled peaceful remonstrance; but Eusebius was resolute, and a Council was summoned. It is not surprising that Eutyches resented this treatment, and doubtless he was confirmed thereby in his opinion, refusing to answer the charge before a personal enemy, such as he knew Eusebius to be. On the other hand his stupidity lessens our sympathy, especially when we consider the gentleness with which he was treated by the Bishops assembled by Flavian at Constantinople. Matters might have ended with the explanations there given, had not Dioscorus, the successor of Cyril at Alexandria, violently espoused the cause of Eutyches, and held the Council known ever since as the Robber Council of Ephesus (A.D. 449), over the scene of which it is best to draw a veil. The injuries received there caused the death of Flavian. A general Council was now a necessity, and it was convened at Chalcedon by the Emperor Marcian on October 8, 451. After seven sessions Dioscorus and Eutyches were condemned, and exiled

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to Paphlagonia. The answer of Dioscorus was a denunciation of the Council, and a protest that it disannulled the faith of Nicæa, as upheld by Cyril.

However much we may regret many of the circumstances connected with this Council of Chalcedon, the tyrannical behaviour of Eusebius that preceded it, and the lamentable schisms that followed it, it must remain a matter of thankfulness that it called forth the great "Tome" of Leo, which determined for ever the language in which may be expressed all that we can know of our Lord's nature, and added the coping stone to the dogmatic structure of our creeds. But the native Churches of Syria, Armenia, and Egypt, have never accepted the Council, and for these reasons, that it seemed to throw doubt and dishonour upon the sainted Cyril, and was the result of a desire to enforce the authority of Constantinople and Rome upon the patriarchates of Alexandria and Antioch. With the doctrines of the Council no fault is found, in so far as they agree with the Nicæans and Cyril, by the Egyptians, Syrians, or Armenians. But it is impossible that they can stand in a completely satisfactory relation to the Catholic Church, until the Council be accepted as setting forth by the mouth of the great Leo the one formula that can express the nature of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

That they do not hold, nor ever have held, as a body, pure Eutychianism, will appear later. But we must leave this subject to describe the steps by which the final separation between the Greeks and the Syrians was brought about. It

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* The Council condemned Eutychianism as "*σύγχυσιν καὶ κρᾶσιν*," the monstrous doctrine that the Divine nature of the only begotten Son was a commixture capable of suffering. It confessed one Christ "*ἐν δύο φύσεσιν* (not only *ἐκ δύων φύσεων*) *ἀσυγχύτως ἀτρέπτως ἀδιαιρέτως ἀχωρίστως γνωριζόμενον*." The phrase of Cyril, recalling that of Apollinaris, ("The one incarnate nature of Christ") was much fought over. It was "The one Divine Nature of God Incarnate." This was the watchword of the Eutychians who "used some of the words of Cyril, and those in a sense not intended by him. From real, though erring reverence, they wished to honour Christ and to bar out a profane heresy by regarding His manhood as absorbed in His Godhead." Bright's "Hist. of Church," p. 378.

is not an edifying spectacle, the Church at war during these hundred years, but it is necessary to consider it in order to rightly understand the present position of the two parties.

The chief scene of the struggle, heralded by the Council of Chalcedon and the deposition of Dioscorus, was Alexandria. A Catholic Patriarch was appointed, to fall a victim almost immediately to the friends of Dioscorus, who raised Timothy "the Cat" to the throne. That city is described as full of a diabolical frenzy, upon which it is needless to dwell. At Antioch, Peter the Fuller, an ardent anti-Chalcedonian, was raised to the Patriarchate, twice deposed and as many times restored. He was the first to introduce into the ancient hymn to the Trinity known as the "Trisagion" the expression "Who wast crucified for us," in order to emphasise his belief in the unity of our Lord's natures and his opposition to the decrees of Chalcedon.* The expression became the badge of party in the Capital; and the weak Emperor Anastasius was powerless to check the violence of the green and blue factions, who displayed their theological and political sympathies by chanting in the churches the hymn with or without the addition so hateful to the Catholics. Actual war broke out in 514 A.D., when the Count Vitalian espoused the cause of those who supported the Synod against the blasphemy of its opponents, and won the day.

In the reign of Zeno, an attempt was made to assuage the violence of the storm by the publication of an edict called the "Henoticon" or Concordat.† All mention of Chalcedon was carefully omitted, although all doctrines contrary to the Synod were condemned. But the extreme Monophysites, no less

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* The phrase did not refer to the whole Trinity, but was intended to emphasise the fact that He who was crucified for us was verily one of the divine Trinity. But the plain outcome of the position was one which, nevertheless, no coanti-Synodite" would recognise, namely that God died.

† The "Henoticon" is generally admitted to be free from heresy (Asseman, B. O. i. 343; Pagi. iii. 411). But it was a political move to gain peace, rather than a real attempt to adjust differences with a view to final unity; and this was no reason for mere compromise. Cp Evagrius, H. E. iii. 13.

than the orthodox Romans, refused to accept it, the first because it did not condemn, the last because it did not enforce the decrees of the Chalcedon while both parties anathematized Peter Mongus, the Monophysite Patriarch of Alexandria, and Acacius of Constantinople, for accepting a well-meant, but ill-advised compromise. The extreme Monophysites separated from their brethren (484 A.D.), and being without Bishop or Emperor, were known for many years as the "Acephali" or headless party.*

The divisions, which Zeno and Anastasius had vainly tried to heal, were only widened by the religious differences between the orthodox Justinian and his heterodox queen Theodora. The Council of Constantinople succeeded at last in introducing peace, by ruling that the obnoxious addition to the "Trisagion" expressed only the truth, "that one member of the holy and consubstantial Trinity was crucified;" an explanation which, it may be thought, might with advantage have been made at an early stage of the quarrel. But the addition, even so explained, was never adopted by the orthodox, who continued to look upon it as a badge of Monophysite sympathies.

The Council had been made necessary by the attempt of Justinian to make peace between the contending parties, by enforcing the condemnation of the famous "Three Chapters." These chapters were the writings of three men formerly accused of Nestorianism; (1), Theodore of Mopsuesta; (2), Theodoret of Cyrus; (3), Ibas of Edessa; but as the two latter had been acquitted of heresy at Chalcedon, the edict was only the signal for another outburst of religious zeal. It was essentially a disingenious attempt to discredit Chalcedon. The Western Churches fought for the honour of Leo and Chalcedon, vigorously denouncing the Emperor; but their cause was weakened by the simoniacal and cowardly Pope

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* Cp. John Eph., v. 6, for their subsequent history, as for an account of the numerous sects which grew from them. "Some are altogether imaginary; some different, not in reality, but only in terms; some were distinguished, not by their doctrine, but by some external rites, and other outward ceremonies." Mosheim, ii. v. Thirty-six sects of Monophysites are enumerated.

Vigilius, then in Constantinople. Africa, too, condemned the Emperor; and a Council was summoned at Constantinople (A.D. 553). Little was gained by the Council's confirmation of the edict condemning the Chapters, and the quarrel was left to linger for a hundred years and die a natural death.

At Antioch meanwhile there had been no peace since the Synod. Peter the Fuller was a man of war and eagerly opposed the "Synodites," as his party called the Greeks. But he, no less than Severus, his successor, anathematized Eutyches and Dioscorus as heretics. Severus now headed the Moderate Monophysites, aided by the learned and powerful Philoxenus, whom Peter had consecrated Bishop of Hierapolis. Their efforts succeeded in the expulsion of the vacillating Flavian (512 A.D.). and the appointment of Severus to the See of Antioch by the influence of the Monophysite Emperor Anastasius. Severus was a native of Sozopolis in Pisidia. He studied law and was baptized by one of the Orthodox in Beirut; but soon after he joined the "Acephali," denounced the Catholics as Nestorians, and entered a Monophysite monastery at Gaza, where he was consecrated Bishop.* Passing from one place to another he became first an extreme Eutychian, and denounced Peter Mongus of Alexandria and all who accepted the "Henoticon" of Zeno; then, charged with stirring up tumult at Alexandria, he fled to Constantinople, where he was received with honour by Anastasius (491 A.D.). On being raised to the See of Antioch he recanted his extreme Monophysite views; but being charged with cruel persecution of the orthodox in his diocese, a sentence of deposition was drawn up against him (518 A.D.), and ratified through the influence of the orthodox Scythian Count Vitalian. Irenæus, Count of the East, was commissioned to cut out the tongue of the heretic; but he escaped to Alexandria, where he received protection from the Monophysite Patriarch Timothy. Not long afterwards Philoxenus was murdered by the "Synodites" in Paphlagonia, and Antioch ceased to be in the hands of the Monophysites

* Evagrius, iii. 33.

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until, on the death of Severus in Egypt,* Paul the Black, the gentle and much persecuted Monophysite Patriarch, was appointed to the See.

The death of Severus (542 A.D.), the deposed Patriarch of Antioch, may be taken to mark the beginning of a new period in the history of the Syrian Church; for from this date the double succession to the See has been maintained to the present day.

Theodosius, the Monophysite Patriarch of Alexandria, had found an honourable refuge in Constantinople under the favour of the Empress Theodora until his death (567 A.D.). Justinian, influenced perhaps by his wife, had gradually towards the end of his reign came to look with favour on the Monophysites, who for a time were free from persecution. But with the death of Justinian (565 A.D.), and the succession of Justin, the violent supporter of the orthodox believers, more troubles were in store for them, chiefly at the hands of the implacable John Scholasticus, of Sirmin, who in the same year succeeded the mild Eutychius in the Patriarchate of Constantinople. John began by an attack on the convents in the Capital, where Theodora has given a refuge to the persecuted nuns of Antioch and Asia Minor. This he followed up by obtaining the imprisonment of four leading Bishops of Asia who stood out against Chalcedon: John of Ephesus, the historian, Stephen, Metropolitan of Cyprus, Paul "the Black," Patriarch of Antioch, and Elisha, another Bishop in Asia Minor. A fifth Bishop,† Paul of Aphrodisias, Metropolitan of Caria, he had already arrested, and deprived of his orders as an opponent of Chalcedon. He forced him to sign a recantation which he never read, and reconsecrated him Bishop of Antioch in Caria. "And this became a mockery and a derision to the actors themselves, and to his own people; and his clergy called him the double-dyed."‡

The same course was pursued with regard to the imprisoned Bishops, whose ordination John wished to annul, and so

* Evagrius, iv. 11. Cp. Gibbon, iv. 382.
† John Eph. ii. 42.
‡ John Eph. ii. 41.

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extend his own jurisdiction. The persecution dragged on, the Patriarch insisting on the acceptance of Chalcedon, and re-ordination, and the Bishops urging the thirty-six communions in which he himself had previously joined with them. Finally, the mediation of Justin induced them to give way, and, on the understanding that Chalcedon should be rejected, consent to communicate twice. The Patriarch prevaricated when the time came to anathematize Chalcedon; the Bishops withdrew, and, an inquiry having been made by Justin's orders, they were banished each to a separate exile, "so that neither friend nor stranger should see them any more."

The Monophysite Bishops formally renounced all connection with the "Synodites," and thus cut themselves off from the communion of the Church of Constantinople. But the exile of the Bishops did not content the "Synodites," or "Melkites," as their opponents contemptuously called the servants of the imperial power. Paul the Black, imprisoned in a monastery, was used with every brutality for daring to occupy his time in writing an account of the events he had witnessed. Stephen of Cyprus had been more discreet; and, having been convinced of the soundness of Chalcedon, obtained at Constantinople considerable influence over the weak Emperor Justin, who supported him against the ambition of the Patriarch John. This he utilised on behalf of Paul, who was summoned to Constantinople. But Paul had no desire to stay in the capital; and before long, John Scholasticus, fearing that his influence with the Emperor might grow, connived at his escape to Mesopotamia, where he found refuge with Mondir, the son of Harith, the Christian King of the Tayan Arabs. Stephen had no greater success with John of Ephesus, and was the unwilling but helpless witness of the sufferings which the good Bishop so touchingly describes in his history.

Orthodoxy was upheld and extended by the cruelties of Justin and John, who took decisive steps to undo the work which the influence of the Monophysite Empresses Theodora and Sophia had done. There is no reason to doubt the substantial truth of John of Ephesus, although a partisan of the

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persecuted, in his account of the outrages, for which he saw a judgment in the terrible disease which overtook both Emperor and Patriarch, and finally caused their death.

The incapacity of Justin, that came of his disease, caused Tiberius Cæsar* to be appointed Regent (574 A.D.), who proved himself later (578 A.D.) to be one of the noblest Emperors that occupied the throne. He immediately rebuked the Patriarch John, whose venom seemed only to be increased by his malady, and commanded peace to be kept towards the Eastern Bishops. Urged by Tiberius to tell what fault he found with the "Diacrinomeni"† John could bring no definite charge of heresy, but only repeated that they abhorred the Council of Chalcedon and the two natures, and would not communicate with the "Synodites." "Why then," said Tiberius, "do you urge me to be, like Diocletian, a persecutor of Christians?" Tiberius was no less firm with Eutychius (577 A.D.), who on the death of John was restored to the patriarchate of Constantinople, and wished to involve the "orthodox"‡ in the persecutions which the Emperor countenanced against the Arians and other heretics; while the death of Eutychius, and the succession of the tolerant John the Faster, brought complete relief to the persecuted "Anti-Synodites."

It is necessary now to retrace our steps, in order to follow the course of events in the East which led to the consolidation of the Jacobite Church. About the year 540 the Bishops imprisoned at Constantinople were delighted, just at the time when their cause seemed hopeless, by the arrival of a monk of the monastery of Phasil, near Edessa, named James, known later as Bardæus§ or Zanzalus. He was the son of

* The heirs to the Byzantine throne adopted the title of Cæsar.

† Distinguishers—*i.e.*, between the doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria and Leo of Rome. Cp. John Eph. iii. 12.

‡ So the adherents of John of Antioch and Theodosius of Alexandria always called themselves.

§ Called by the Syrians "El Barda'ani," from the rags in which he dressed. His history may be read in John of Ephesus, in Asseman B.O. i. 424, ii. 62; Le Quien, ii. 1346; Laud Anecdota Syriaca. Tela Manzalat is in the Arabic called Tel-men-Izla.

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Theophilus-Bar-Menu, a priest of Tela Manzalat (Constantina), in the same province, and was sent to plead the cause of the Monophysites at the capital. He was accompanied by another monk, Sergius, and remained some fifteen years at Constantinople, devising means for restoring the "orthodox" faith in Asia. James was consecrated Metropolitan Bishop by the imprisoned Bishops, and returned to Syria to take the lead of the Monophysites. There he had strong supporters in Harith and his son Mondir, kings of the Tayan Arabs. On the death of Severus he consecrated his friend Sergius to the See of Antioch; and, when Sergius died, appointed Paul the Black, one of the Bishops imprisoned at Constantinople, to fill his place * (545 A.D.). James thus continued the succession of Patriarchs, which began with Severus, at Antioch, and has lasted unbroken down to the present day.†

It has been mentioned that Paul the Black had gone to Constantinople in 571, and communicated with Stephen of Cyprus and John Scholastius, thinking thus to promote unity. Three years after his flight and repentance he was received into communion by James Bardæus. But Peter of

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* Dionysius Chron. quoted by Asseman B.O. ii. 16.

† Renaudot (Lit. Or. i. 365), relying on the statement of Maris and Amrus, for which no proof is given, says that James was never more than a priest. Asseman (B.O. i. Introd.) affirms his belief in his valid consecration, because Rome recognises Syrian orders as well as Greek. He quotes a letter written by Andreas Masius to Moses Mardenus, a Jacobite who in 1552 visited Rome, telling him that he was mistaken in thinking that his orders were not recognised at Rome. Nor is it conceivable that at a time when exact and valid consecration was so much insisted on (as is clear from the pains which were taken to secure proper consecration for Theodore, Monophysite Patriarch of Alexandria, in 568 A.D.), that James should have afterwards, without any apparent remonstrance, consecrated two Patriarchs, eighty-nine Bishops, and ordained an immense number of priests, if he in reality was no more than a priest. Theodosius of Alexandria, Anthimus of Constantinople, both deposed patriarchs, John of Egypt, and Constantius of Laodicea, are named as his consecrators in 541 A.D. It was for want of duly consecrated Bishops that Tritheites died out. Bar Hebræus asserts (ap. Asseman B.O. ii. 327) that he was not Bishop of Edessa, as generally supposed, but "Œcumenical Metropolitan," with no fixed See, but with Metropolitan authority over all his followers in every place. He mentions two Bishops of Edessa—Theodore 540 A.D., Thomas 542 A.D.—during the episcopate of James. Cp. Bar Salib in Asseman, ii. 424.

Alexandria accused Paul of having helped to consecrate Theodore, without the knowledge of the people, to the See of Alexandria, and pronounced his deposition from the See of Antioch. The result was a bitter schism between Alexandria and Antioch, which was not healed until after the death of James in 578. Since the deposition of the Patriarch Theodosius in 538 there had been no peace in Alexandria. Egypt was Monophysite almost to a man, and the Catholic Patriarchs, Paul of Tanis (538) and Apollinaris (551), like Proterius (451) the successor of the heretic Dioscorus, were obliged to maintain their position by the aid of the Imperial guards. Gibbon draws a grim picture of the horrors of the times, and speaks with relief, if also with contempt, of the milder efforts of Eulogius and John the Almoner a few years later to maintain the faith of Chalcedon against overwhelming odds in Alexandria. "A thousand years had now elapsed since Egypt ceased to be a kingdom. . . . The conflict of zeal and persecution rekindled some sparks of their national spirit. They abjured with a foreign heresy the manners and even language of the Greeks; every Melkite, in their eyes, was a stranger, every Jacobite a citizen."

In addition to their hatred of the Greeks, the Egyptians were divided among themselves, one party supporting Peter and the other Theodore, the two Monophysite Patriarchs. James had until 576 upheld Theodore, but in an evil moment he was persuaded to go to Alexandria, and not only communicate with but draw up articles for union with that same Peter, whom he had but lately anathematised as an adulterous intruder* in the See of Alexandria. He was persuaded to agree moreover to the deposition of Paul of Antioch, but not to his excommunication. The immediate result was a violent schism in Syria, which spread all through Asia and Armenia. "Even of heathens and Jews and heretics, no one, however fierce and savage, would venture to speak so reproachfully as the believers did of one another; at the very time when in

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* So in the ecclesiastical phraseology of the day was an intruded Bishop spoken of.

matters of faith there was no difference or dispute between them." * In vain Paul desired to confer with James; there were those whose interest it was to keep them apart. Mondir, the Arab, of his own accord, and urged by Paul and others, attempted in vain to mediate between his two friends, Paul and James. Longinus, Bishop and evangelizer of Nubia, added his entreaties to those of Mondir; but a kind of madness was in the disputants, prompted, says John, by no one but Satan; and the country presents a universal spectacle of intestine war. Suddenly all were overawed by the sudden end of James. Peter of Alexandria having died scarcely a year after his election, James, without making known his object, set out on a visit to his successor Damianus. But as he and his attendants arrived at the monastery of Cassianus, on the borders of Egypt, the whole number died one after another. "And astonishment seized all men because of these things, and wonder that the blessed James and his company should so suddenly be snatched away. And many concluded in themselves that possibly he was about to do something strange, and likely to increase the troubles of the Church; or that he was even purposing to make a Patriarch (of Antioch); and so God took him to himself, that the soul of the pious old man might not suffer loss." † So died the consolidator of the Syrian Church, a man deserving pity rather for his weakness, and love for his gentle goodness, than censure for the unwise course into which he was driven.

It may not be out of place here to add the just and kindly words with which John of Ephesus praises the virtue and mourns the weakness of his beloved James. It has been the fate of the Eastern Churches now out of communion with the Greeks, to have been led by ignorant or weak men; for such were Nestorius Eutyches† and James. "Of the simplicity and innocence of the old man Jacob may be said that which is

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* John Eph. iv. 19.

† John Eph. iv. 33.

‡ It must on no account be imagined that Copts or Syrians acknowledge Eutyches. Both sternly anathematize him, although he was the original cause of the quarrel which led to their excommunication.

written in the Scriptures, concerning the brethren in the days of the blessed Apostles, 'that in singleness of their heart they praised the Lord.' For he, like them, to simplicity and innocence joined great spiritual zeal, and from his youth, even unto old age, was indefatigable in his exertions and labours for the Church. He was, however, too much under the influence of the crafty and designing men about him, who turned him every way they chose, and used him as a means of establishing their own power, swaying him now in this direction, and now in that, like a child." *

It is clear from this and other passages that John considered most of the troubles that vexed his party in the Church to have been due to the weakness of the pious Bishop James. His influence was doubtless immense, and in spite of every sympathy which one may have with the cause of orthodoxy, one cannot but regret that there was not a stronger man to lead the Monophysites, and bring them, perhaps, to some nderstanding with the "Melkites," for which we may see that the reign of Tiberius afforded ample opportunities.

The quarrel dragged to its close. Where the Ambassadors of Tiberius to the Persians failed to reconcile the opponents, "neither side being able to persuade the other, but parting with mutual annoyance," the haughty Eutychius was not likely to succeed by summoning them to Constantinople (A.D. 580). Mondir and John, our historian, were scarcely more successful, although the former came all the way to the capital to establish peace. Meanwhile fresh sedition had been caused at Antioch by the visit of Damianus of Alexandria, and his attempt to consecrate, as a parallel to himself, a new Patriarch of Antioch. A hollow peace was made with his opponents, which Damianus did not hesitate to violate on his return to Alexandria. At the same time Peter Callinicus was intruded

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* John Eph., iv. 15. John of Ephesus may, I think, be implicitly followed in his account of their quarrels, of which he, belonging to neither party, was the unwilling spectator, labouring to unite the disputants.

Book iv. 12, is a very remarkable commentary on the history of the times, and fills the reader with admiration for the good and gentle old Bishop of Ephesus.

against his will by the opponents of Paul into the See of Antioch, and Paul, "the Patriarch of evil days," retired to concealment and death in Constantinople. There he was secretly buried in a convent; and Peter, feeling himself now lawful Patriarch, made further attempts at union with Alexandria. Two years later John the Faster succeeded to the See of Constantinople; persecutions ceased, and with the death of Paul of Antioch, and Theodore of Alexandria, the dissensions between the two Sees began to heal.

The second era in the history of the See of Antioch was closed, and the dawn of a third was breaking, heavy with the signs of an Empire's fall and the birth of a new religion. The seventh century closed alike on the wonderful missionary exploits of the Eastern Church in Persia, and the triumph of the Islam that came like a scourge upon a people drunk with dispute.

The death of the Emperor Maurice (602 A.D.), and the succession of his murderer Phocas, gave the signal for the Persians to ravage the Roman dominions. Hitherto Mesopotamia had been the arena of war between the rival powers, and Dara Amida and Nisibis the keys of possession. But Heraclius came to the throne in 602 A.D. to find all Syria in the hands of Chosroes. First Damascus, then the Holy City itself fell before the Persian general Shahrbarz (614 A.D.), and the Patriarch Zacharias of Jerusalem was carried off with the true Cross itself, to grace the infidel's triumph. Never since Constantinople was built has there been such a disaster; and at Chalcedon itself, almost opposite the very walls of the capital, the Persians were encamped, stretching out their hands to the Slavs and Avars, who threatened the city on the north side of the isthmus, and inviting them to join in its destruction.

An insulting and blasphemous letter from the Persian king aroused the Emperor and all Christendom; while from Constantinople to Arabia the Church poured forth her treasures of plate and money to help in the crusade. Constantinople was fortified, and with a gigantic effort, worthy of the great conquerors of the world's history, Heraclius drove

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back the Persians, cutting them off in Cilicia, and forcing them finally to make an abject appeal for mercy in the very royal palace of Dastagerd itself. Chosroes had been already murdered by his son, who submitted to Heraclius (628 A.D.). The Emperor returned, leaving the East in peace, to restore the Cross in its place in Jerusalem.

Meanwhile in an obscure corner of the empire a greater than Heraclius had been born, and in this very year sent a letter round demanding for a new creed the submission of the kings of the earth. "The year of flight" (622 A.D.) had passed, and Mohammed was at the head of a devoted band of followers, ready to conquer Arabia and perhaps the world. It was an epoch of the world's history, and twice the Patriarchs of Jerusalem saw the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, and thought the end of all things at hand. Ten years after Shahrbarz (637 A.D.), when the glories of Heraclius paled before the storm of Arab conquest, Sophronius the Patriarch, and Omar the Arab, stood side by side at the altar of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

East of the Mediterranean the Roman Empire had given way for ever, and the Arab arms now ruled the Churches that the Councils of two centuries before had cut off from the orthodox communion. For the future it was not the Melkite or Imperialist to whom the Eastern Churches were to acknowledge an unwilling homage, but to the sword of Islam. Byzantine history now affected them little, for the successors of Heraclius had enough to do to keep the Saracen fleets away from the capital.*

The famous "Iconoclastic" controversy, begun by Leo the Isaurian, was continued for near a hundred years (720—802 A.D.) by his successors, desirous of checking the growing tendency of which the Christians of the day seem to have been truly in danger, to magnify the importance of those rites, legends, and observances, which are apt to spring up

* Leo the Isaurian did more than any of the Byzantine emperors to save Europe from the Saracens, by his bold opposition to the Ommiade Suleiman, 717—718 A.D.

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round religion in a superstitious age. The quarrel is made famous by one great name, John of Damascus, the bold opponent of the Emperors; but it is chiefly to be remembered as an ill-advised attempt to stem an evil when the time had gone by in which it might have been cured. The opposition to the Imperial policy was fostered by the feeling, natural to many a sincere Christian, that the Emperors were leagued with the Mohammedan to destroy all outward expression of their faith.

How little the second great controversy of the times affected the Syrians may be judged by their own language in regard to the "Procession of the Holy Ghost." The words inserted in the creed by the Western Church were the occasion of the rupture, for which the rival claims of Gregory of Rome and John Scholasticus of Constantinople had paved the way; and the ninth century witnessed the unseemly recriminations and the final break between the two great communions.

Many of the Churches of the East still remain under the domination of the Mohammedans. It is a cheap criticism to speak of Mohammed as the "arch-impostor," the "self-deceived fanatic," for such are the terms in which he is too often spoken of. It is clear to anyone who glances even cursorily over the pages of Eastern Christian history at this time, that a time for judgment had come. Christians had forgotten, in their quarrels over the right expression of their faith, the spirit of charity which should have made them one; and a lesson was needed to tell them how they had abused their birthright. No man can doubt that in the mind of the Great Ruler the birth and life of Mohammed were conceived to call men back to contemplate His unity, and to purify seven times in the fire of suffering the Churches which are one day to rise again to fulfil the mission of their Founder. Nor is it less probable that under the rule of an alien, and, as it officially now most assuredly is, tolerant rule, the union of the various divided Churches may be consummated, than were the Mohammedan yoke removed, and, with the division of the empire among Christian races, the national distinctions and antipathies brought more into prominence and perhaps

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opposition. It cannot be too often repeated that the Churches of the East are essentially national Churches, kept separate to a large extent by their differences of language, and still less likely to unite, were the bond of a common submission removed. When the Churches begin to contemplate unity, then will the work of Mohammed perhaps be done.

In the seventh century the Syrian Christians fade from the general history of the Church. The Arabs were inclined to favour them as rivals of the Greeks, and early in the eighth century Walid secured the entry of their Patriarch into Antioch, whence they had been driven by the Greeks since the death of Jacobus Bardæus. But he remained there only a short time, nor were his people free from the persecutions which Abdelmalik and Yazid ordered against the Christians; while in 771 A.D. the Khalif Abdullah took a census throughout Syria and Mesopotamia, ordering all Jews and Christians, especially at Jerusalem, to be branded on the necks and foreheads. A short-lived union between the Syrians and Armenians (726 A.D.) was followed by persecution at the hands of the Greeks (750 A.D.), who took away many Syrian and Armenian slaves from Mesopotamia to the West. Two centuries later Nicephorus Phocas, anxious to unite Christendom against the Arabs, caused John Sarighta, the Patriarch of the Syrians, to be brought to Constantinople, there to discuss with Polyeuctus, Patriarch of that city, the differences that divided them. In the letter written by John to Mennas of Alexandria, we perceive how much the controversy had become a mere matter of verbal expression, and how the Syrians clung to the words which Greek tyranny had made the badge of a rival party. The imprisonment of John added to other acts of tyranny confirmed their hatred of the Greeks, and made them prefer even the domination of the Moslem.

A few leaders of the Syrians deserve mention; Michael I., who enjoyed the favour of the Turks, and restored the monastery of Barsum near Malatia (1167—1200 A.D.), which John Sarighta had built in the tenth century, did much to increase the power of his people. Dionysius IV. had left Malatia, hitherto the seat of the Patriarchs, in 1034, and

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settled in Amida, in order to be out of Greek territory; and Michael in turn went to Deir-el-Za'aferan near Mardin, which has been ever since the head quarters of the Syrian Patriarchs.* This monastery had been restored by his predecessor John the Great (1125—1165), and was again enlarged and beautified by Ignatius XI. in 1484 A.D.

In 1226 A.D. was born the one Bishop of the Old Syrians, who, besides great writers like Dionysius Bar Salib, has gained any notoriety outside his own Church. He was nephew of the Patriarch Michael, and a native of Malatia. At the age of twenty he was consecrated Bishop of Tripoli, twice transferred to other Sees, and finally made Mafrian or Metropolitan of the Eastern provinces. His history has been written by himself, and he has earned the admiration of the impartial Gibbon by the generous toleration of his views, and the learning which his numerous writings display. He died in 1286, lamented and followed to the grave by members of all the Christian communities of Mosul, affording a proof of the power for unity which one strong and tolerant man may possess.

* In the summer of 1246, during the occupation of Antioch by the Franks, the Patriarch Ignatius David resided there for a short time.

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CHAPTER II.

Modern History of the Old Syrians.

The history of the old Syrians during the last three centuries is to be gathered almost entirely from the records of Roman Catholic or American travellers and missionaries. English travellers have been, as a rule, too callous or too prejudiced to be of much value as witnesses, considering the Syrians either in the light of fanatical heretics, or professors of a degraded Christianity. That neither light is the true one has been, I hope, already proved.

I. To trace the progress of Roman Catholic claims in the East would be a long matter, requiring a careful discussion of the quarrels between Constantinople and Rome from the middle of the sixth century. Even then Papal supremacy was no new dogma, and Gregory* only carried out what Leo instituted. But a new state of things began with the political fall of old Rome, and the consequent rise of the Papal power. The period of crusades that give the high water mark of Papal influence, may be taken as that in which Rome found men to give most practical expression to her claim.

The unwilling homage that Alexius Comnenus exacted from the first Crusaders (A.D. 1095) served only to show the Franks the tempting prize that a century later fell into the hands of their degenerate descendants (A.D. 1203). The Byzantine

* 590—604 A.D. Stephen was the first Pope actually to break off from the authority of the Emperors of Constantinople, when in 750 A.D. he called in Pepin the Frank against the Lombards.

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Empire may have fallen low, but all agree in stigmatizing the fifty-eight years of Frankish rule in Constantinople as the blackest era in the fortunes of that city. The Holy Orthodox Church, defiled by ribald Frankish soldiery and a sack of unparalleled brutality, provoked the Pope's disapproval, "while the Greeks saw the eye of the world, the ornament of nations, the fairest sight on earth, the mother of Churches, . . . draining the cup mixed for her by the hand of the Almighty." "Meanwhile a Venetian prelate was appointed Patriarch of Constantinople, and news was sent to the Pope that the union of the Eastern and Western Churches was accomplished."* As things were at the Capital, so in the provinces; and Aleppo, Damascus, and Edessa were centres for the no less vigorous propagation of Papal power. Nevertheless, when the Jesuits came to Mesopotamia in 1540, they found a more tractable field among the Nestorians than the Jacobites, whose position was more securely guaranteed by the Turk, and whose Patriarch held a high position in the Empire. The Roman missionaries succeeded so far with the Nestorians that in 1680 the Chaldean, or Papal Nestorian sect, was definitely formed under the approval of Pope Pius XI.†

What induced the several Jacobites to send in confessions to Rome, such as that sent by Moses Mardenus to Julius III. in 1552, and some others it is hard to tell;‡ at any rate these "reconciliations" were none of them permanent, and the Romanizing party among the Western Syrians was finally given a separate existence. But, though the Roman power increased steadily until in the year 1850, the effects of the French and Italian revolutions were seriously felt in the withdrawal of public support by those two countries.

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* Oman, Byzantine Empire (Story of the Nations), p. 292. A not dissimilar history belongs to Papal Supremacy in Malabar.

† Ainsworth found in 1837 the convent of the Dominicans in Mosul deserted. Since then they have returned to carry on their work with redoubled energy.

‡ This confession was disavowed by the Patriarch. A similar confession was sent by David Ignatius Patriarch to Gregory XIII. through Leonard, Bishop of Tyre, but without result. Another Patriarch, Nehema, who had become Mohammedan, finally went over to Rome. Asseman, vol. ii., de Syris Jacobitis v.

Mosul has for many years been considered as the strategic point for Papal missions in this part of Turkey. It is a quiet corner of the world, where for several centuries Rome has had things a good deal her own way. Aleppo and Damascus perhaps contain more Roman adherents, but they are chiefly drawn from the Greek and Armenian community.

All that can attract the inclinations or overawe the senses is gathered about the Papal organisation at Mosul. It is the seat of a "Qassid," or Legate, who occupies the finest palace in the city, and of the Patriarch of the Chaldean (Papal Nestorian) body, whose new mansion is scarcely less splendid according to Eastern ideas. The Bishop of the Papal (Western) Syrians is a man of culture, surrounded by all the luxuries the East can afford; and none of these three dignitaries ever goes from his house without his sword-bearing "Qawwases."

In the same way the churches are made as imposing as possible; and the tower of the Dominican Oratory in Mosul is conspicuous among the Mohammedan minarets. The churches are built on a magnificent scale, and decorated in such a way as to combine the peculiarities of Syrian and Roman tradition. Often do the Syrians of a town or village say to the American missionaries: "Build us a church finer than that of the Latins, and we will all become Protestants." Such is the value of display. The same principle guides the authorities in the selection of the higher clergy, who are drawn almost exclusively from the more patrician or wealthy houses, and thus attract their influential relations, and bring the immense influence that belongs to rich houses to the service of their adopted Church. For most of the poorer inhabitants of towns and villages are dependants or tenants of the wealthy houses. Nothing is spared to make these ecclesiastics capable in themselves to fulfil their office, or imposing in their surroundings, and it is hinted, too, that it thus becomes less difficult for them to make or approve alterations in the canons of the old Churches. The propaganda of Rome is liberal in dealing with the native clergy. As many men as possible are sent to receive a good education at the

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Jesuit's College in Beirut, while those who show special promise are sent on to Rome or elsewhere in Europe. Of a man, whom the authorities think will repay the outlay, they spare neither trouble nor expense to make a perfect tool. So, too, when a prize is captured, like the nephew of the late Syrian Patriarch, he is treated according to his worth, and every effort is made to make him all that Rome can make him. In this particular case his father is maintained in Mardin in comfortable ease at the Church's expense, in consideration of the family influence.

Of the Latin missionaries themselves, with several of whom the writer was on intimate terms, and from whom he always received great kindness, there is little but praise to be spoken. They are noble, self-sacrificing men, who have done and are doing an immense amount of good in educational and religious ways, whatever others may think of the final end they have in view, or the means at times adopted to attain it. Their policy has been, in the main, to find good strategic points from which to work, massing their strength at such places as Mardin and Mosul. One seldom hears of the "Padres" travelling from place to place; they are content to stay at headquarters, quietly directing the government of the various bodies under their control, keeping a firm hand and watchful eye upon the higher clergy, and superintending—the most important of all—the town schools. Of these they are very wary of letting a stranger, unless of their own communion, see the inside. It will be seen that they do not thrust themselves to the front, but prefer to do everything through the native clergy, a wise policy in a country where foreigners are disliked.

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The conditions required of converts are not hard, little at first beyond the acceptance of Papal supremacy. The native clergy, too, are to a large extent supported by the money derived for the masses said for the "faithful" departed in France and Austria. Often exemption from taxes is held out as an inducement to join the Romans, and freedom from a large part of the dues rightly levied by the authorities of the native Churches. If to these facts be added the

certainty of political protection by means of the wealthy members of the community and the French consuls, and above all through the immense influence exercised at the Porte by the Papal Legate, to say nothing of the Austrian and the French Ambassadors, the only wonder is that the Propaganda has not swept all before it.

The proof of the Papal power lies in the fact of its influence with a Mohammedan power, although no good Moslem can regard with anything but abhorrence their seemingly idolatrous worship, and their free introduction of not only pictorial, but even sculptural representation of the human and divine form. But in Turkey gates are seldom closed to the golden key.

Nevertheless there remain large bodies, in fact the majority, in the native churches, that resist the Pope to the last breath, and this for several reasons. Many years of persecution have strengthened patriotic feelings; and, while the spirit of religion has gradually faded, there has been fostered an almost pathetic clinging to the form and shell. Many there are who would gladly embrace any opportunity to return from the foreign rule to the communion of their restored mother Church.

Papal supremacy suffered a severe shock when infallibility was broached. Rome was at best an unwelcome refuge for proud Syrians, and her yoke had grown heavy enough to nearly snap the tightly drawn cords. Her special dogmas had never found such favour in the primitive Eastern mind, savouring as they did of Protestantism and innovation, that they could win their way by reasonableness alone, unassisted by considerable guarantees of temporal protection and material comfort. Yet for all this Rome is very strong in Turkey, and prepared to maintain her position by all means. She does noble work, and her missionaries are noble men; the issue lies beyond us, whether she shall prevail or not, and it is an issue in which with very little doubt Russia will play a part.

II. During the present century missionary efforts have been vigorously directed towards Turkey by the two great mission-

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ary bodies of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians of America. That the difference in faith between them involves no disagreement as to their method of dealing with the native Churches is clear from the transference two years since of the station of Mosul from the agents of the former to the latter.* The whole country is parcelled out into stations between the two bodies, although they may be said to have no definite mission to either the Syrians or Armenians, but to all the inhabitants of the places where the missions are stationed.

The Americans, both in books and conversation, frequently refer to the policy of their predecessors, who repudiated proselytism and interference with the existing organisation of the Churches, so long as it was evangelical. As might be expected, they soon found themselves at issue with the heirs of a primitive Church as to what was or was not evangelical; and before long it was found impossible for men believing in the organisation only as a convenient form to work in harmony with men who saw in it signs of its Divine institution.†

The Americans came with a Gospel true in itself, in fact containing the very essence of that soul-winning message, but so rudely shorn of the garb in which the Eastern Christian had been wont from time immemorial to see it clothed, that his sensibilities were shocked and his national instinct aroused by what seemed sacrilege. It was natural that men who talk of the native Syrians as "so-called

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* I must here take the opportunity of recording the liberal and charitable spirit with which I always met in the American Missionaries in Turkey, hoping that none of their number, who may peruse these pages, will consider anything here said, except in the light of fair and sympathetic criticism. Of the personal kindness received from the missionaries at Mardin and Mosul, enough is said elsewhere.

† Two instances will illustrate this. In 1831 a well known American Missionary spoke of the Armenian Episcopal Government as a harmless institution, an outwork to be allowed to remain if the citadel could be reached in spite of it. In 1833 the Armenians of Smyrna were highly indignant when a Bishop, who had married contrary to the rule of the Church, was accepted by the Americans.

Christians," and place them in thought on a par with or below their Moslem brethren, should be asked for the credentials of doctrines that never saw the light until their own Church was sixteen hundred years old; it was natural that the Syrian should ask who it was that helped to build the first Christian Church, witnessed the very writing of the Gospel itself, and sent missionaries with that Gospel to the shores of the distant West. It was a poor gratitude to come and charge these men's children with the ignorance and want of life that centuries of oppression had conferred as their accustomed lot. This is what many a fair-minded Syrian does say, though quite acknowledging the personal worth and piety of the missionaries, and the valuable work done by their schools; but fair-minded Moslems equally admit this. What the Syrian does complain of is the ignorance most of the missionaries display of their Church's history, and the small allowance made for a conquered people. There are some among the American missionaries who have acquired distinction as Oriental and ecclesiastical students;* but in general they disregard the early history, the study of which is involved in the general axiom that missionaries should know so much as will give them sympathy with those among whom they labour, as if the charge made against Protestants were really true, that Church history begins for them with Luther. This tendency has blinded the Americans to many of the virtues of the Syrians, in regard to whom it is much to be regretted that they have not discriminated more between excusable ignorance and deliberate wrong-thinking;† for perhaps no missionaries would have opened out a certain side light on the Gospel so well as these noble men have done.

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* Dr. Shedd of Urmi, and Dr. Vandyck of Beirut, need only be mentioned among others. Some of the earlier Americans in Turkey, to say nothing of the present generation, were heroes of the mission field.

† As an instance may be mentioned an American missionary, who for twelve years thought the whole Syrian Church services were conducted in the ancient Syriac, which is not "understanded of the People." The Patriarch introduced Arabic largely in the services fifteen years ago.

Nothing strikes a stranger visiting the American stations so much as the apparent disregard for native habits or customs. Nevertheless he must remember that the American has no mission directly to the Syrian Church. He sees the apparatus of a Far West School transplanted into the midst of a people whose habits contrast almost ludicrously with those of the stranger. It is true, doubtless, that the natives are of all things imitative; and that five years would certainly find, in spite of any care of the missionaries to prevent it, a considerable modification in the direction of the foreign manner of life. But this is no reason why such a change, certainly not in itself desirable, should be actually encouraged. The missionaries bring with them all that is portable of the democracy which is their boast at home, and display it bravely before the pitying conservatism of the East. This is done, I believe, deliberately. Not only is it a struggle for the American to attune himself to the unchanging etiquette of the Orientals, and an overpowering temptation to teach a more excellent way, but it is a matter of principle to exemplify and gain converts to the religious and civil life of democratic bliss. Little regard is paid to the conventionalities of the "diwan," and all natives are treated with an equality which is to many an Eastern no less a mark of ignorance than insult. But this policy has two bad results; in the first place it is fatal to many customs of daily life, which few who have visited the East desire to see die out; secondly, the Eastern is not as a rule ripe for the change, even with the long and careful training from the Western teachers which some obtain. The fatal veneer of Western civilisation has only to be seen to be deplored; and in considering the good specimens of the training, one must bear in mind others of a different kind which a similar contact has produced nearer the coast. The mental and spiritual danger is more serious. Men, especially young students, taught to substitute for the authority of Church and Bishop an appeal to their own conscience, are apt to become their own Bishops, and running into the extremes of private judgment, or even rationalism, clamour for the abolition of all

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restraint* of thought or action. And here one word as to schism. If in the West we find schism bred by schism, and that liberty of thought has not fulfilled all that was predicted of it, what shall we say of the East? Not only is the unity, which is the bond of peace, not the most striking feature of the new independent communities, but the establishment of missions, Papal or Protestant, which are avowedly proselytising, cannot but give an opportunity to the worst fault of the Syrian, material cupidity, and the desire to play off one mission against another. This is the great weakness of proselytism all over the world; but how fatal must it be when it is attempted in the case of an ancient Church, which it is our duty not to weaken, but rather strengthen by all the aid that a foreign and friendly Church can supply.

Some Americans reluctantly admit much of what I have said, and regret that means were not found to keep on good terms with a Church that claims for the Bible all that the extremest Protestants claim, and welcomed originally the Americans as protectors against Roman intrusion.

Of the manner of life among the missionaries it would be impertinent to say anything, since that is a matter that concerns themselves alone. Where it can be afforded, it is a good thing to have married men among these Easterns, one of the great lessons which they have to learn being the respect due to women. The natives do undoubtedly look on the missionaries as not living a very self-denying life; but people who think life in their own Mardin the acme of human bliss, would not appreciate the privations of exile, to say nothing of other things. Reports are often heard of the luxury of the missionaries; they may be absolutely denied, except in the case of those who have private means, and cost the mission nothing.

Lastly, I would say that I do think the Americans pursue a wrong policy, even granting for a moment that schism is not a wrong act in itself. Missionary expediency—the only

* The danger is a very real one, especially among Armenians. Hence the popularity of the Plymouth doctrines for certain American converts.

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argument which will be heard, and the liberal courtesy and spirit of Christian charity with which the Americans listen to it, should be carefully remembered—should lead them to appreciate the evil results of weakening existing Churches. The education which they give is the best in Turkey, and it is scarcely fair to treat with little but abuse men who undertook the work which the Church of England left untouched during fifty years of piteous appeal.

III. If existing agencies have failed in their dealings with the Old Syrian Church, it is reasonable to inquire what agency and what methods are more likely to succeed. The urgent requests of the Patriarch himself, and the many expressions from others in the Church, answer the former question. To obtain full materials for answering the second, the journey of which the present work gives a sketch was undertaken on behalf of the Society that has been working quietly for the last twenty years to help the Patriarch in carrying out his scheme of education and renovation. That no interference with existing organisation or practices which were not opposed to Catholic principles should be contemplated, seemed a first principle. To renew and strengthen the Ancient Church was the aim, and the method seemed to be that of supplying to the Patriarch the means of starting a school of religious teaching for his clergy. This should be the starting point, and from it it may be that work might expand in many streams. For this school there is the monastery called Deir-el-Za'aferan, capable of holding a very large number of students, over the teaching of whom an Englishman might preside. Before all things it is necessary to emphasize the need of pure religious and moral teaching, all experience agreeing as to the importance among this people of the precept to "Seek first the Kingdom of God." Any suspicion that the English Church has views of wide acquisition and proselytism in the East can only be removed by experience, and those who have charge of the work should be careful to show themselves helpers first and teachers afterwards. In all things it should be borne in mind that the people are patriotic to the core; superstitious perhaps in their clinging to old

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ways; but above all do they claim to be members of the old Syrian Patriarchate of Antioch, of whom it may be said that it is a miracle that their loyalty has withstood so firmly the disintegrating forces of three hundred years.

Again, it is clear from all evidence that Christian effort among the Moslems is at present impracticable. The extreme efforts required, the infinitesimal results, and the fearful persecution consequent on conversion, have persuaded even the most sanguine that the times are not ripe for the work. What then can be wiser than to turn the attention to those Churches, who, if in the future they do not co-operate in the work of Mohammedan conversion, will be the greatest hindrance to it? The Moslem will for ever see in them a proof that Christianity can outlive itself, as he points the finger of scorn and says, "Physician, heal thyself." Who, on the other hand, would be better qualified than the Syrian to deliver the Gospel, which he once delivered to us, to the sons of the apostates of his own land? for on the difference between Eastern and Western character all are agreed; and few deny the hopelessness of really reaching the one through the other. Nor can the debt we owe to the Eastern Churches be better repaid than by helping to renew the spirit of their faith, which they have so largely lost, and teaching their children to understand the meaning of those truths which long darkness has obscured.*

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* I cannot refrain from quoting from a paper lately issued by the English Bishop in Jerusalem, to corroborate what is here said with the words of one whose words are weighty.

"The Churches of the East are aware that one day they must become the missionaries to the East, the Jew and the Moslem. . . . . The Churches are at present under the most numbing oppression that ever weighed upon Christianity. They are not allowed to do missionary work, yet the very life of a Church depends on its being missionary. They are not aided or encouraged in education, consequently ignorance degrades them, with much of the vice that follows upon ignorance. . . . . The spread of education will mean the revival, already stirring, of spiritual life in the Churches. It is renovation rather than reformation that they need; some are separated by a false, others by a nominal rather than a real charge of heresy. They need but a sister Church who, as a common friend, may bring together those whom pride mainly severs from those whose orthodoxy is unquestioned."

To conclude, from only one direction does the Syrian Church discern the possibility of gaining disinterested help to resist the inroads made upon her, which it is surely not the duty of the English Church to tacitly encourage by neglecting such an opportunity of furthering the cause of the Catholic Church. For seventy years the Syrian Church has been crying for someone to come over and help her. She cannot stand alone as yet; and it is time something was done to redeem the long period of callousness and neglect during which her cry has been unheard. Something has been done through the untiring exertions of a few devoted friends; would it not be a neglect, that might have some day to be answered for, if the English Church does not follow up these exertions, and show that our true claim to a primitive faith and catholicity lies not so much in lavish indulgence of sentimental taste at home, as in the extending of a hand of sympathetic charity to distressed sister Churches in the East? Intercommunion with a Church excommunicated by the Holy Orthodox Church is for us out of the question, until the faith as expounded at Chalcedon be formally acknowledged by her. May it not be hoped that by the aid of a friend to both Communions the breach between the Greek and Syrian may be healed? The charge of heresy there is good reason to believe is a formal one, and it will be no unworthy deed if the English Church shall so use her intercession and help that at some future date there may be one Patriarch of Antioch, both for Greek and Syrian; and not only a source of weakness be removed with the division, but a step taken towards that universal union of Christendom for which all loyal Christians pray. That the union would have to be based on an explanation from the Greek side of the doctrine of Chalcedon, which we too acknowledge, and a readiness from the Syrian side to accept the language which enshrines a truth which they are among the foremost to declare, is the most reasonable hope to express. Perhaps it is an event far in the distance, but it is no impossible dream to conceive the day when all these churches shall once more practice in general and authoritatively the intercommunion which is in cases of extremity allowed;

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and is it too fond an affection for our loved English Church that sees in her the instrument by which it is possible that this unity may be accomplished? It was with a belief in its possibility that the work of the above-mentioned society was inaugurated by the late Archbishop of Canterbury; the success of which work is a sure ground of hope that the means will be found to carry it to its end.

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CHAPTER III.

The Clergy and Churches of the Old Syrians.

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The official title of the chief of the Old Syrian * Church is "His Holiness Moran Mar Ignatius Peter III., Exalted Patriarch of the Apostolic See of Antioch and of all the Jacobite Churches of Syria and in the East." He has sometimes been called "Papa Orientis," "Patriarcha theopolis Antiochiæ totiusque Orientis;"† but the first is the title most generally used. He is the absolute chief, spiritual and temporal, of his people, the Porte finding it convenient to deal with its Christian subjects through a chief directly responsible to Constantinople; nor is it long since, to balance this authority, the Patriarch was liable to be called upon to answer in person for the crimes committed by any of his people. The present Patriarch has obtained, by strenuous exertions, the right to be directly represented at Constantinople, instead of the mere right to appeal through the Gregorian-Armenian Patriarch. He has now a Bishop at Constantinople, with the right of audience of the Sultan. Since 709 A.D. the Patriarchs have been in the habit of

* This name is adopted as that by which the people are spoken of by themselves and their neighbours in the East. It distinguishes them (1) from the Greeks of Palestine by the word Syrian, (2) from the Latin proselytes by the word old, (3) from the Assyrians or East Syrians by the same words. No theory is propounded or maintained by this use of this title; nor has any consideration weighed but that of custom and convenience.

† Renaudot, Liturg. Orient. i. 375.

receiving diplomas from their infidel rulers. Walid gave to Elias, the then Patriarch, such a diploma (in 711 A.D.) two years after his consecration, and ordered him to enter Antioch, whence the Syrians had been driven by the Greeks, and there build a Church. The various rulers of Armenia, the Tartars, and the Arabs, have given this diploma to subsequent Patriarchs; and at the present time there hangs in the Patriarch's guest room at Mardin a "Nishan" or "Tughra," a great order framed upon the wall, as a visible token of the recognition of the Sublime Porte.

The Patriarch acknowledges no control from any of his clergy when once consecrated, except in the case of heresy, when the Bishops may depose him, as was done in the case of Paul the Black in 574 A.D.* He may also be deposed by the unanimous vote of the whole people. This authority he wields in virtue of the right, which he alone possesses, of consecrating the sacred oil necessary for the consecration of all clergy. For many years he has had the sole right to consecrate all Bishops of the Church, but there is good reason to believe that this has been arrogated contrary to original custom. The first Patriarch to claim the right was Theodore, in 649 A.D., when he ordained the Mafrian Denha; and Bar Hebræus speaks of it as having been the general rule for many years, although the consent of the Bishops of the Eastern province was necessary before consecration by the Patriarch of Bishops for that province was possible.† The Mafrian, during the Patriarchate of Dionysius (835 A.D.), is especially mentioned as having consecrated oil for use in the Eastern province, and there have been instances, notably that of Jacobus Bardæus in the sixth century, of Metro-

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* Uncanonical cases did occur, as of Bar Wahib in 1493, and John XI. Abdon, who was four times deposed, and died 1077.

† Bar. Hebr. ap. Asseman II., 380. In 668 A.D., a schism was caused by the Bishops claiming the right to ordain in their own dioceses in accordance with the canon of Nicæa, without reference to the Patriarch. It must be added, however, that this action of the Patriarchs has been partly caused by the autocratic power given him by the Turkish and other Governments.

politans possessing this power. There are, no doubt, disadvantages in such an absolute autocracy, but it will be readily believed that in a country like Turkey the position of the Patriarch has been of great value to his people in times of peculiar difficulty, while the harsher features of it are considerably softened by the entire freedom of speech allowed in his diwan.*

The Patriarch is elected by the vote of the whole people; if the votes are evenly balanced, the election is decided by lot in a long service conducted by the Bishops. The election must then receive the approval of all the Bishops of other communities resident in Mardin.† The Patriarch should be chosen from a rank below a Bishop, from the monks, or even deacons. The parish priests, being married, are not eligible for the Patriarchate. There is one instance even of a layman, Dionysius I., in 818 A.D., being chosen Patriarch, and receiving all the preliminary priestly orders. The first Bishop consecrated Patriarch was Severus Bar Maske, Bishop of Amida, in 977 A.D. In 1222, Ignatius David was raised from the Mafrianate to be Patriarch, and for many years this custom has been followed. There is, indeed, no canon forbidding translation in the Old Syrian Church, but their writers show the dislike felt for the custom, as being a kind of bigamy or re-baptism, especially as a new titular name was given to the Patriarch on consecration. All the Bishops must be present, if possible, at the consecration, especially the Mafrian, who actually consecrates the Patriarch. In old days the senior Bishop of the Western province performed this duty, but since 1077 it has belonged to the Mafrian, except when the Mafrian himself has been

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* The power of excommunication is the chief weapon in his hand, and there is no fear upon his people so great as the danger of invoking his curse, which gains power from the rarity of its utterance.

† Asseman II. 381. Dean Maclean (Catholicos of the East, p. 187) upholds the hereditary episcopate prevalent amongst the East Syrians. The Old Syrians have always strongly repudiated it; nor does the contrary system work so badly as he surmises that it would among Orientals. The custom of Bishops nominating young nephews as coadjutors was abolished by Athanasius, Patriarch (1139-1166).

elected.* On assuming the office of Patriarch or Bishop, a titular name is taken. Ignatius is the title of the Patriarch, and was first assumed in 1293 A.D. by Bar Wahib. It was not always taken by his successors, and, by some old Syrian writers is condemned as a sort of re-baptism, especially in the case where a Bishop becomes Patriarch.

The office of Mafrian is peculiar to the See of Antioch, and represents the independent authority formerly granted to the Catholicos of the East. The first Mafrian was Achudemes, consecrated by Jacobus Bardæus in view of the heresy of the Persian Church; but the first generally recognised was Maruthas, since he first occupied the fixed See of Tegrit† in 629 A.D. In 991 A.D. Tegrit was confirmed as the seat of the Jacobite Mafrian, and Baghdad of the Nestorian Catholicos by order of the Khalifa. But in 1089 Tegrit was destroyed by the Arabs, and John Salib the Mafrian consequently moved to Mosul. However, a quarrel with the Metropolitan of the Monastery of Mar Mattha near Mosul caused the Mafrian Dionysius (1112—1134) to return to Tegrit and there rebuild the church. In 1153 a council was called by John, Bishop of Mardin, and confirmed in 1155 by the Patriarch Athanasius, which formed the diocese of Mosul, containing Mosul Tegrit and the monastery of Mar Mattha, and ordained that Mar Mattha should be the seat of the Mafrian. Previously a Metropolitan Bishop had resided at the monastery, consecrated by and holding the next place to the Mafrian, according to the Nicene Canon. The Mafrian was in early days consecrated by all the Bishops of the Eastern province, over which he was to rule. In time his jurisdiction grew to be very extensive, reaching eastwards to Urmi and Tabriz, and southwards to Baghdad; so that, especially at the time of the Arab and Mogul invasions of Persia, during which many Jacobites were taken

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* This rule was confirmed by Dionysius, Patriarch 835 A.D., and by the Council of Capartutæ in 869.

† Bar. Hebr. Ass. II., 414, 419, 441, 448. Asseman identifies Martyropolis with Tegrit. It is most generally supposed to be Meiafarkin, near Diarbekr. Cp. John Eph. vi. 20. Le Quien, Or. Christ, ii. 1533.

with the invaders, there were more Jacobites in the Eastern than the Western province. The Mafrian became practically independent of the Patriarch, ordaining, consecrating oil, and forming new dioceses all through the East; while during the period 935—1345 A.D. some Mafrians consecrated as many as fourteen Bishops. Bar Hebræus, himself Mafrian (1264—1286), says, "In this my diocese I live, by the Grace of God, in much quietness, and in it I lack nothing which should induce me to leave it for another, like those of my predecessors who are departed. . . . Even were I ambitious of the Patriarchate, as some men, yet when I behold the Western dioceses, how wasted they are, what remains in them that I should desire them?" Of all the power little now remains. One small diocese, that of Mosul, is left from the numerous divisions of the Eastern province, and the Mafrian retains no authority except that of an ordinary Bishop, although the first of the Bishops, and holds that authority direct from the Patriarch.*

The Bishops are divided into two classes; those chosen from among the monks, who are called "Mutrans," and those chosen from parish priests who have lost their wives, and have so become eligible for the Episcopacy. These are called "Askof" (Episcopi). The Greek custom of consecrating a priest to the Episcopacy and sending his wife into a convent, is unknown. The Askof rank a little below the Mutrans, and are eligible neither for the Metropolitan nor Patriarchal dignity.

The duties of the Bishops are nearly as much civil as religious; they are the chiefs and overseers of their diocese, and to them the people come to have all kinds of cases judged, whether of theft, or divorce, or even murder. It is a frequent sight to see in the Bishop's diwan a poor widow seeking aid against an oppressor, or two parties settling, without the great expense of the civil courts, some

* The name Mafrian is derived by Bar Hebræus from the root "Afran," fruitfulness, and means "Father of fathers." His other title is "Metropolita Magnus Orientis." He also claims the title of Catholicos, but this is denied him by the Nestorians.

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quarrel that has occurred. The priests, monks, and deacons are as a rule ordained by them, only a few being ordained by the Patriarch; but the Bishops have not the duty of confirmation, that rite being joined with the baptismal ceremony performed by the priest.

The Bishops are much looked up to by the people, who address them as "Sayyidna," my Lord, or if intimate, "Abuna," my Father. "Sayyidna" is also the form of address to the Patriarch, while strict formality imposes all sorts of complimentary forms, the recognised one being "Sa'adatkum," "Your happiness, or beatitude," or more rarely "Qudsakum," your Holiness.* Christmas and Easter, the great and the little Feast, are the special "diwan" days of Bishops and Patriarch, when the people crowd to visit them, bringing their small offerings toward their maintenance. These bring in no exorbitant incomes, the expenses of the Patriarchal diwan being little over £100 a year, and the income of a Bishop £40, if he be very "discreet." The various duties of a Bishop, and the time he must spend in travelling from village to village, prevent him from undertaking any secular work, such as is done by some priests.

The dress of Patriarch and Bishop is similar, being nothing but a modification of lay attire, with a special turband. Over the tunic, reaching to the feet, one of rich material and colour being used on high days, is worn an ordinary cloak or "abba" of black or coloured cloth. The Patriarch's state dress consists of a tunic of scarlet silk, bound at the girdle with a scarf of white and gold Baghdad embroidery, over which he wears a black satin cloak. Generally, however, he dresses as simply as his clergy, reserving the other dress for high occasions, on which he wears his gold cross upon his breast above his orders, and is preceded by his monks. The turband proper to the Episcopal order is a large round headdress upon a card or canvas frame, covered with black cloth in

* The title Mar, prefixed to the names of all Bishops, as well as the Saints, means "My Lord," being strictly an Episcopal title.

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fine folds, which is, as far as I know, peculiar to the Old Syrians.

"When a Bishop receives consecration he stands at the door of the altar, while the Patriarch says, 'I call you in the name of the Holy Ghost,' three times. Then the other will kneel, and respond to the call. He will then be taken to the Sanctuary, and many prayers will be said. After that the vestments belonging to the office will be taken and given to the man by the Patriarch, who will himself dress him in the 'Pathrasinom' and will place the head-dress upon him. After crying 'Auxios'* three times he will call the Bishop by his titular name. Then more prayers are said by the Patriarch, during which he places his hand upon his head."†

The Bishops wear neither mitre nor ring, the sign of their office being the gold or silver-gilt cross with which they bless, and the silver-gilt staff surmounted by two serpents, which also is carried before the Patriarch when he rides out. Each Bishop on consecration receives one of the titles given below, which belong to the various Sees. This is in accordance with a custom begun by Bar Wahib, as mentioned above; but as Bishops are not infrequently translated from one See to another, it now happens that more than one Bishop has the same title; for instance, the late and the present Bishop at Jerusalem are both called Gregorius. With the decadence of the Church dioceses have of course become confused, only the greater Sees of Jerusalem, Amida, Damascus, Mardin, Mosul, Edessa, and Nisibis, remaining in their ancient condition.

For the consecration of a Bishop, the presence of three Bishops is necessary, and by them the whole service is conducted. The ceremony begins with a profession of faith, proclaimed by one of the Bishops, and signed by the Bishop elect. The Gospel is read by the Patriarch and held open above the head of the elect. After he has given him his

* *i.e.* ἄξιος—he is worthy.

† From the description of a Bishop from Malabar.

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vestments and pastoral staff, the Patriarch signs him on the forehead in token of his consecration, enthrones him, and then reads a second section of the Gospel.*

At different periods of the Church's history there were

* The following is a table of the Old Syrian Bishops and their Sees.

See.	Title of Bishop.	Present Bishop.	
I. Antioch	Ignatius	Peter III.	The merely nominal seat of the Patriarchate since Paul the Black; Elias lived there in 711: later Athanasius VII. and Ignatius David (1246 circ.) spent each a short time there.
II. Jerusalem	Gregorius	Georgius	In 1134 the four sees of Syria, Jerusalem Damascus Tripoli and Emesa, were reduced to two, Jerusalem and Damascus. The Bishop of Jerusalem holds in theory the position of the fifth Patriarch, as in the early days, but his diocese is very small. That of Damascus or Homs (Emesa) contains about ten thousand Old Syrians. To Ignatius Romanus, of the monastery of the Magdalene, Bishop 1140—1185, Bar-Salib sent a commentary on the Eucharist.
III. Damascus (Homs).	Gregorius	Abd-el-Messiah	
IV. *Edessa* (Urfa).	Severus	Abdullah	The home of Jacobus Bardæus, Dionysius, Bar Salib, and many other famous Syrian writers and leaders. Still an important See.
V. *Amida* (Diarbekr).	Timotheus	Georgius	Always a separate diocese from Mardin, and dating from the time before the Council of Nicæa. Acacius, Bishop of Amida, was famous for having sold the plate of the Church to redeem 7,000 Persian captives taken by Theodosius, A.D. 421.

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many other Sees formed; but these twelve alone remain.* The translation of Bishops has created great confusion in their titles; for instance there are two Gregorius'; Abdullah now Bishop at Diarbekr has been twice translated, first from Jerusalem, then from Emesa; and Georgius, now at Urfa, has the title of the See of Diarbekr, whence he was translated.

In addition to the Bishops above mentioned there are six

See.	Title of Bishop.	Present Bishop.	
VI. *Mardin*	Athanasius	The Patriarch	The Bishop sometimes resided in the monastery of Cartamina, close to the city, founded before 500 A.D.
VII. *Nisibis*	Athanasius	Yohanna	The seat of the famous S. James in the fourth century. At one time united with Mardin, but now a separate See. The first Jacobite bishop since the Nestorian schism was Abraham Jacob in 631.
VIII. *Maiferacta* (Farkin).	Ivanius	Elias	Asseman (II. 334) says it was sometimes joined with Tegrit. He seems to have confused the two, applying the ancient name Martyropolis wrongly to Tegrit.
IX. *Mosul*	Basilius	Behnam	The seat of the Mafrian.
X. *Ma'adan*	Kurillos		This See includes the district north of the Tigris and east of Diarbekr. Now joined to Farkin.
XI. *Aleppo*	Dionysius		
XII. *Jazireh*	Julius	Behnam	On the Tigris sixty miles north of Mosul, called Bezabde by Ammian (20.15). Its Bishops were subject to the Mafrian.
XIII. *Turabdien*		Several metropolitans in the monasteries	The district of Jebel Tur; whose Bishop resided sometimes at Salah, sometimes at Hakh.

* Other titles belonging to ancient Sees are Georgius, Dioscorus, Clemens Philoxenus, Anthimus, Eustathius.

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œcumenical Bishops, that is, Bishops residing in monasteries, without regular Sees. These are:

Askof Efrem, at Deir-el-Omar in Jebel Tur.
Mutran Elias, at Deir Mar Mattha near Mosul.
Askof Ablahad, at Deir Salib in Jebel Tur.
Mutran Sham'un, at Deir Mar Jacob at Salah.
Mutran Denha, at Deir Mar Abrahum at Midhiat.
Askof Bulos, at Constantinople.

The first man consecrated Bishop of a monastery without a See, "honoris causa," was John, Bishop of the monastery of Cartamina, in Mardin (d. 578).

The canonical age for consecration is thirty-five; but the rule has for long been laxly kept. Bar Hebræus became Bishop of Tripolis at the age of twenty.* In the same way deacons are often ordained at ten years old instead of the canonical age of twenty; but no one may be ordained to any holy office until he can read at least the Psalms. Physical defects do not in any way necessarily debar from ordination, even to the episcopacy, unless they prevent a man from doing his work, such as blindness, deafness, or dumbness.

Of the priestly order there are three divisions, the monks, the priests, and the chorepiscopi.

The monks, though higher in the hierarchy than the secular priests, yet being poor, receive as a rule less respect from the people, who are less dependent on them than on the priests, unless they are men of distinguished learning or piety, two qualities highly esteemed among the Syrians. As from them the Bishops are chosen, their lives are spent in the monasteries rather than in the towns, and are given up to the study of God's word, and the practice of self-denial. Attendance at service three times a day occupies much of their time, while in the autumn they are sent by the Patriarch to collect tithes of corn and money throughout the villages, and report on the state of the Patriarchal property.

Their asceticism, if we remember that we are considering the East, where wants are few, is not at all excessive, while

* Bar. Hebr., Ap. Assem. B.O. ii. 332. Sozomen mentions the custom with approval. H.E., vi., 32.

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at the same time it is very real. In a country, moreover, where provision for travelling is very meagre, their untiring hospitality and kindness in all the monasteries, and without any thought of return, is beyond all praise. They are, as a rule, frugal, self-denying men; and the sociable nature of the monasteries does away with many of the abuses with which such men are generally charged.

The Priests, on the other hand, being engaged entirely in parish work, are obliged to marry before ordination is permitted. A priest, whose wife dies, if he does not become an Askof, generally retires to a monastery, since the people have a strong feeling against an unmarried parish priest, and the canons forbid their second marriage. There is, too, an interesting office for the ordination of the priest's wife, now unfortunately seldom used, but which thus provides for a kind of order of deaconess. In villages where there are no priests, the church is served by a monk from the nearest monastery.

The priesthood carries with it exemptions from some of the taxes, and being also a position of great honour, is much coveted. It thus happens that in some villages there are far too many priests, as for instance Midhiat, a village of three thousand inhabitants, which has a Bishop and eight priests, besides monks and deacons innumerable. This is an abuse which the present Patriarch has done his best to prevent, by ignoring the custom which forbids priests to leave their native village, and distributing those whom he ordains in villages where they are really needed.

In a village the priest is a great man, although, chiefly on account of the church council of laymen and deacons, which he is bound to consult, the people are in no way "priest-ridden." He sits in the chief seat, which he will yield only to the Bishop or a guest, and is beloved by the flock which has chosen him its pastor. There is no rule requiring priests to be sons of priests, nor are they generally so; but when a village requires a priest, the church council selects the most suitable, for piety, learning, and good influence, and sends his name to the Patriarch, who then commissions the Bishop to

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ordain him. The priest is dependent on his people for his stipend, and in the villages will generally eke out the produce of the small church-fees by labour in the field or house. It is a pleasant and a usual sight in the country to see the priest winnowing the corn among the village men and women, with cloak off, and wearing over his tunic only the short jacket common to all classes. The only distinction in dress is that a cloak of a dark colour is generally worn, and a black "kafiyah" is worn round the turband. All the clergy are bound to shave the whole of the head and allow the beard to grow.* The title of "Khor-Episcopus" is generally given to the leading priest in any large town. He has the duties of a lesser Bishop, corresponding roughly to an English Rural Dean; but he has no right of ordination, and ranks as a priest.

All monasteries are under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of the diocese, or an œcumenical Bishop; and those, in which Patriarchs or Mafrians are buried, are directly under the Patriarch or Mafrian. No Bishop may, however, ordain monks without the advice of the Archimandrite.† Of the four divisions of monks, Cœnobites, Eremites, Stylites, Inclusi, only the first and last now remain. The Stylites, who lived on the tops of pillars, died out in the eleventh century; of the Inclusi there are still a few, living in cells among the mountains, devoted to monastic exercises.

The last, but by no means the least important order is that of the Deacons, of whom a large number will be found in every village, occupied either with secular business or in the service of the Church. Education being entirely connected with the Church, it happens that nearly all those who study

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* Maclean and Browne, p. 204, say that the Eastern Syrians adopted the custom of shaving only the middle of the head to distinguish themselves from the Western Syrians, who practise the so-called "Tonsure of S. Paul." The tonsure of the monks is performed as a religious ceremony by the Archimandrite of their monastery.

† Bar. Hebr. Nomo. Canon, 7, 10. The monks are not necessarily ordained; some are lay brethren, or perhaps deacons.

at a school, whether in church or monastery, until the age of fifteen, are ordained deacons. Some are ordained quite as children; others who find themselves called to the ministry later in life remain deacons until then. But of the ordinary students who are ordained, the larger number return to the business of their fathers, and remain deacons all their lives; and being proficient in the classical Syriac language, and well versed in the Bible and their history, become great pillars of the village church, and of no slight assistance to the priest or Bishop. One Syrian of Mardin, a merchant, has written no less than thirty manuscripts for the use of various churches, portions of the Bible or the daily services; and it is from him more than any one else in the church, that the Patriarch seeks advice on every possible subject. It may well be imagined that this order is one of great value to the Church, comprising so large a number of men occupied in secular business, yet with considerable learning and a large interest in everything that concerns the Church.

Other deacons there are, who remain deacons to be teachers in the monastery schools; while others are ordained to the priesthood. It is a far more real order than with us in England, and the step to the priesthood is regarded as very important. In the services of the Church the deacon has a part almost as indispensable as the priest; the exhortations, the ejaculations, and the psalms are said by him; he prepares the holy bread, swings the censer, and gives the holy elements from the priest's hand to the people.

The lesser orders, the Psaltes, the Reader, the Hypodiaconus, are almost obsolete, the offices being performed by deacons. Deaconesses also had ceased to exist by the time of Michael I., Patriarch 1180 A.D. They might perform all the part assigned to the deacon in the Eucharist for women and small children, and in nunneries might administer the consecrated Eucharist in the absence of a priest. They were not allowed to marry after ordination, and their chief duty was to assist at the baptism and unction of adult women. But as adult baptism ceased to be customary, and

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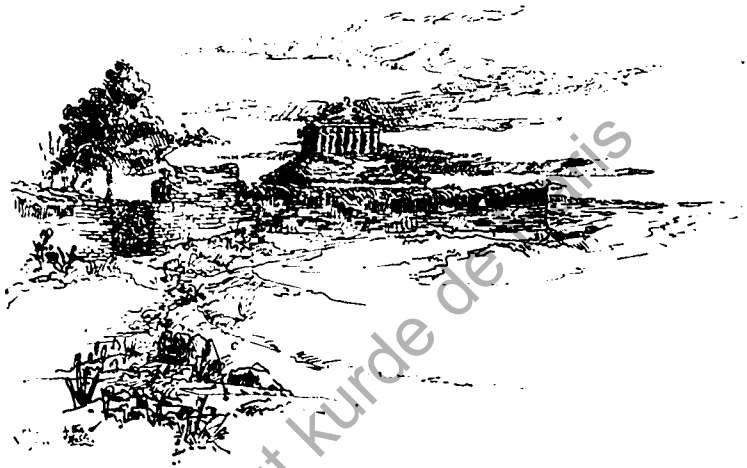
nunneries to exist, the office became obsolete,* and has been replaced by the ordination of the priests' wives mentioned above.

It may not be deemed out of place to give here some account of the many beautiful churches scattered among mountains



CHURCH OF S. MARY THE VIRGIN AT HAKH.

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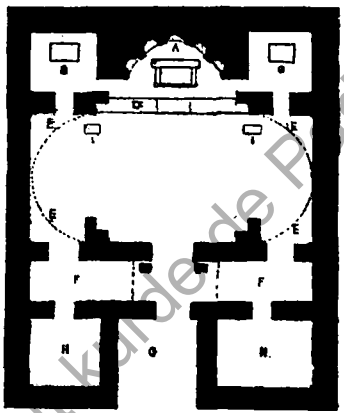
inhabited by the Syrians. Foremost in interest as in beauty comes the church of Hakh, a village situated in the centre of Jebel Tur, about fifty miles due east of Mardin. Of this church the story goes how at the Saviour's birth not three only, but twelve wise kings came from the far East through Nineveh to Jebel Tur, and there rested at the great town of Hakh on their way to pay homage to the Holy Child. At Hakh nine of them remained, while three continued on their

* The orders are thus enumerated in the Syrian Pontifical (Ap. Assem.):—Minores: Psaltes, Anagnostes, Hypodiaconus. Majores: (1) Diaconus, Archidiaconus; (2) Presbyter, Chorepiscopus, Periodeutes; (3) Episcopus, Metropolita, Patriarcha. Janitor, Acolyta, Exorcista, are included under Hypodiaconus.

journey to the Holy Land. Now as they rested in the evening, and washed the cloths of their turbands and dried them by the fire, for it was winter time, the cloths fell all upon the ashes of the fire; and when they took them up, behold on each was printed the image of a king. Such a wonder demanded that a church should be built to preserve the cloths; and on that very day the people set themselves to



CHURCH OF S. MARY THE VIRGIN, AT HAKH, JEBEL TUR.

A Sanctuary containing High Altar, and Stalls for Bishop and Clergy.
B Side Altar.
C ,, ,,
D Modern Stone Screen.
E Line of Vault supporting Dome.
F Galleries in the Narthex.
G Modern Portico.
H Modern Chambers.
I Lecterns.

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build the first church in Hakh,* being converted to the faith of the new-born Saviour. And they built it there to the memory of the nine wise kings, and to the glory of the Virgin Mother of the Lord. And there stands the church until this day; but the wonderful cloths have gone, the spoil of time or of the infidel. So the priest told me! and who will say

* Tradition says that the Magi built the church of Mart Miriam in Urmi.—Maclean and Browne, p. 301.

that the tale is one whit less true than the legends told at many a European shrine?

The church was small, but exceedingly beautiful both in ornament and proportion. With the three arms of a cross, and a vestibule at the west taking the place of the fourth, it follows a plan of design similar to that of the domed Byzantine churches. The east arm is semi-circular, and forms an apse; the south and north are square upon the ground plan, but semi-vaulted like the east end, so that the roof is all symmetrical. On each side of the apse is another sanctuary, with a door, evidently original, leading to the central altar; but it was interesting to note that while the side sanctuaries (such being the purpose for which they are now used) are entered by a door from the body of the church, the stone screen, through which a curtained door leads to the chief sanctuary, is palpably of modern date. The plan shows a transition from the plan of the earlier church at Nisibis, where the sanctuaries are all quite open to the church, and are distinguished merely by shallow apses round a raised space at the east end, and that of the church at Arnas, where there are three sanctuaries, those on each side being separate chambers entered by a door, and the central one raised and shut off by a screen of four open pillars and arches. The existing screen at Hakh was a heavy wall, and quite spoiled the beauty of the sanctuary within.

Behind the altar in the apse were built five stalls, carved with simple leaves upon the capitals at the sides, and canopied with the beautiful shell design that was such a favourite in later Roman work. Here doubtless sat the Bishops and clergy. It was their usual place of old; and we read* in his own words how S. Athanasius, when pursued by the Arians at Alexandria, rose up from behind the altar in the church of S. Theonas, and bade the people listen to the hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm, and then save themselves from the five-thousand armed men who were seeking for him. Over the doors leading into the side sanctuaries were canopies

* Athan.: Apolog. de fuga, 24. A.D. 355.

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also of the same style, and above all ran a lovely moulding of four-fold plait design. On the capitals were carved garlands of leaves that grow among the hills; and these were continued all round the church, as a cornice below and above the now blocked windows. The space of the vault above the altar was filled by a great Greek cross spreading its arms over the whole, and above the top of it was carved a dove. Such is the most extreme symbolism of which true Syrian ornament admits. To the west were three doors, the centre one large, and finely carved; flanked by Roman columns and surmounted by an elaborate cornice. These led out into a portico running the whole breadth of the church, and wagon-roofed like the church at Salah already described.* It had also at each end a gallery, of which I could not discover the use. From this portico, in which were the tombs of many Bishops, another door led into a large square porch added later.

Not the least beautiful part of the church was the roof. From the arc of the vaults, which cover the four sides and the four corners, rose eight walls, and from that again an octagon dome, built of thin Roman bricks. Such was the most beautiful church in Mesopotamia; for it was also the most complete, whereas the church of S. James at Nisibis, although in the detail of its carving much finer, was so ruined and restored, that it was difficult to form an opinion of its original beauty.

From the ground plans of the several churches it will be seen that they represent various modifications of one design, that common throughout the East, a temple divided into three parts, the sanctuary, the nave, and the narthex. Sometimes there is a fourth division forming a portico, or part of a cloister, known as the "exo-narthex," and "pronaos," either within or without the west wall of the church.

The churches of Syria, as many as I saw, face east and west according to the custom of the fifth and following

* See p. 181.

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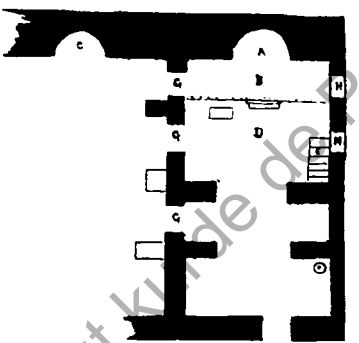
centuries;* that is with the door at the west and the altar at the east end. The western doors are in the older specimens three in number, the central one being according to invariable custom the largest of the three, and most profusely decorated, the two side doors standing "guards for it, as for a queen."† This is well exemplified at Hakh.

The "πρόναος," or vestibule, called also by Eusebius "τὰ ἐνδότατα πρόπυλα," may have occupied the space now covered by the modern portico at Hakh; while at Deir-el-Omar, and at Salah, there still remains a cloister.



CHURCH OF S. JAMES, NISIBIS.

A High Altar.
B Raised portion of Chancel, four feet, enclosed by modern Wood Screen.
C Side Altar.
D Nave.
E Steps down to Tomb of S. James.
F Font made from broken pillar.
G Richly Carved Doorways.
H Doorways now blocked up.

Scale 16ft. to 1in.

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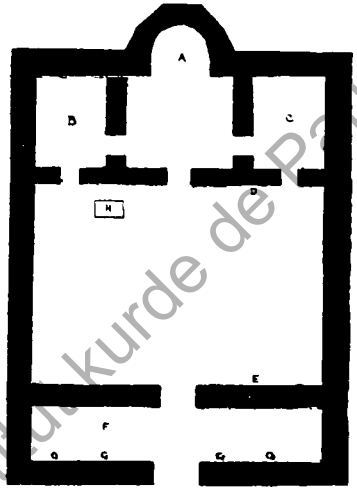
Entering the great west door we stand in the narthex, which at Nisibis seems to have been formed of two divisions, like that of the church described in the Hellenic journal, these two divisions being, it is suggested, adapted for the

* Cp. Kraus Real Encyclopædie, s. v. Orientierung. Up to the end of the fourth century the altar stood at the west end, the door being, as in the Greek and Roman Temple, at the east end; during the fifth century the later custom became fixed. Cp. Headlam, "Supplementary Papers of Hellenic Soc., 1892," No. i., p. 18. Cp. Euseb., x. 4, 38.

† Euseb. x. 4, 41.

"audientes" and "substrati," whose position was just within the building.* The west end of the narthex at Hakh and Salah is occupied by the tombs of bishops and clergy, for whose burial there was no special building, as was the case in some churches. There seems to have been no especial rule as to the burial place; at Deir-el-Za'aferan all the Patriarchs are buried in a separate chamber, and this rule is followed in most monastic buildings. At Deir-el-Omar, besides the



CHURCH OF MAR YAKOB, AT SALAH, NEAR MIDHIAT.

A Sanctuary containing High Altar.
B Side Altar.
C " "
D Inscription on wall, 1470 Greek Era = 1159 A.D.
E Remains of fine polished plaster on walls.
F Narthex.
G Tombs of Bishops.
H Lectern.

Scale 16ft. to 1in.

various burial chambers scattered about the monastery, there are tombs in the recesses all round the church; so, too, in the church of the Monastery of Mar Mattha, near Mosul, where Gregory Bar Hebræus lies in the north chamber of the chancel. S. Gabriel lies in a similar position at Deir-el-Omar, from which it seems that, according to his repute for holiness,

* Headlam, ibid., p. 14.

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a place of burial was assigned to a saint or bishop. On each side of the narthex at Hakh and Salah is a gallery, for which the purpose was not obvious, unless it were for the women; but in none of the churches did I see such a gallery in the aisles of the nave. Women were little considered, if this was all the space assigned to them; but it is well known that in most early churches there was a gallery for them. At Salah and Hakh very handsome doorways lead into the nave; at Nisibis a low wall that once ran between the two westernmost pillars has been succeeded by a wooden rail. The absence of a narthex from the church at Deir-el-Omar may be accounted for by the fact that it is a monastic church; but it is scarcely probable that here any more than at Deir-el-Za'aferan, where there is also no narthex, but only an external cloister, all the pilgrims who doubtless visited the place would be permitted to penetrate into the nave.

The naves* appear to be of three types: one domed like the conventional Byzantine church, as at Nisibis and Hakh; a second vaulted north and south, as at Arnas; a third having a wagon-roof from east to west instead of cross-wise, as at Salah. The materials are of three kinds—wood, stone, and brick. The roof of the church at Deir-el-Omar, being of the third type, and having to span a great space, seemed, as far as could be judged from the ground, to have been formed of a rough composite laid over beams of wood, this then being coated with fine plaster, and covered with mosaic. The roof at Salah is built of bricks, formed in three squares, after the manner of parquet flooring. At Hakh the same method is used for the roof of the narthex; and for the octagon dome, which has been described, bricks are also used.

The nave is naturally the place of those worshippers who have attained a knowledge of the Gospel faith, of which the four pillars that support the dome are typical. It contains, in general, nothing but the carpet on which the worshippers sit or kneel, and the lecterns round which they

* Called ἐυκτήριον τοῦ λαοῦ in a letter of Valentinian and Theodosius.—Headlam, ibid., p. 15.

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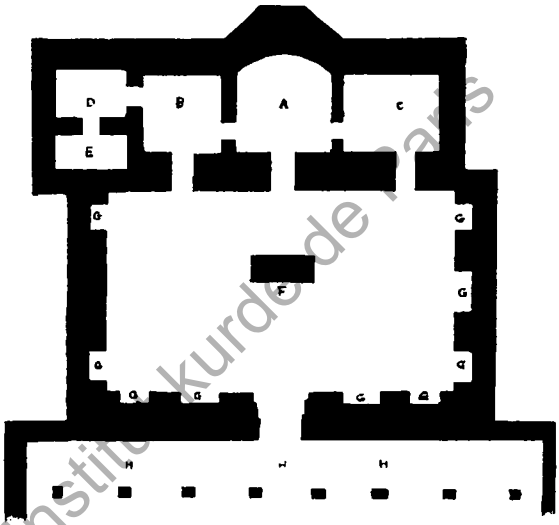
stand to chant the psalms or hymns during morning and evening prayer. The latter are generally substantial wooden stands, on which are placed various books of hymns and psalms, and contain underneath a cupboard where other books are stored. The only picture strictly allowed in Syrian churches is a portrait of the Founder frescoed on a wall, as at Deir-el-Za'aferan and the church of Mar Behnam, near Mosul. Most churches contain other pictures, either framed



CHURCH IN THE MONASTERY CALLED DAIR-EL-OMAR, NEAR MIDHIAT.

A High Altar.	E Tomb of Mar Gabriel.
B Side Altar.	F Stone.
C " "	G Tombs.
D Burial Chamber.	H Vestibule.

Scale 16ft. to 1in.

importations or frescoes; but these are modern, and treated with little of the reverence they obtain among the Greeks. Whether this is due to Mohammedan influence, or a remnant or the Iconoclastic controversy, it would be hard to decide.

A glance at the plans will show how the stereotyped plan of the east-end has developed out of the primitive form. In modern Syrian churches there are invariably, as far as I know, three altars, each generally in a separate chamber.

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Occasionally there is one large open space containing all three, although a distinct dome for each marks their separation.

The name for the whole sanctuary is in Syrian "Madbkha" the place of offering, in Arabic "El Heikil" the temple, or "Quds-el-Qudas" the holy of holies; but the word "Madbkha," in Arabic "Mudhbah," is not infrequently restricted to the altar, and the baldachino which covers it.

Three chapels, or sanctuaries, are supposed to prove a late date for a church; an internal apse an early one. At Hakh and Nisibis we have both characteristics. It will be seen, too, that the earlier churches have no stone wall in the original plan, in front of the altar; the later ones have either a door or a screen. Thus at Nisibis, Deir-el-Za'aferan and Hakh we find examples of the earlier type; at Arnas there is to be seen a transition in the columns that form an open screen; at Salah and Deir-el-Omar we find the fully developed chamber. At the present time, the practice is uniform of having a large curtain across the entrance, which is drawn when the sanctuary is not in use; the same being the case with the side chapels. In cases where there was originally no screen, there has been raised some sort of barrier; at Hakh, a wall pierced by a large door has been built; at Nisibis, a wooden trellis-work, such as Eusebius says was placed round the altar at Tyre, stretches in front of the altar; and at Deir-el-Za'aferan and Diarbekr, large folding doors stand open, never used, as far as I know. Curtains are universal. Out of the centre sanctuary a door leads into each of the side chapels, whose arrangement is precisely similar to that of the central one. The south chapel not infrequently contains the font in a recess in the walls; but its more usual position is just outside the chapel.* In this chapel all preparations for the celebration are made.

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* Maclean and Browne, p. 291. mention that among the Nestorians, this chapel is both sacristy and baptistry. The south chamber is generally called the "diaconicum" and used for a vestry, the north the "prothesis" in which the elements are laid. The use seemed to vary in different Syrian churches.

The beautiful stalls behind the altar in the church of Hakh have already been described.* The custom of so placing them seems to have died out with the open sanctuaries.

The Church of Deir-el-Omar displays most completely the final development in the arrangement of the three sanctuaries, and it is interesting to note that tradition says that the church was built by a Greek Emperor. In the early days none but the sanctified were admitted into the interior parts of the church, the rest having a place provided for them without. It may be that as the churches became more frequented by all kinds of men, and it was thought unfitting that impious eyes should behold so plainly what was done at the Holy of Holies, as well as from a growing desire to distinguish clergy and laity, it became customary to enclose the sanctuary.

The altar itself, the actual "Holy of Holies," the "Throne," or "Place of Offering," is generally contained within a small sanctuary† of wood or cement set round it, and domed above. This is formed of four pillars with lattice work, variously decorated at the back and sides, and with a curtain, sometimes of exceedingly beautiful work, to draw across the front, when it is not in use, and during the preparation of the elements. It is similar to an Italian baldachino, and may be well realised by those who have seen the canopy of the altar at S. Mark's church in Venice. On the altar itself there is nothing but the Book of the Gospels, and the sacred vessels, which always stand there. These stand on rich embroideries, or common printed calico, according to the means of the congregation. On the rear-altar, formed sometimes of three or four tiers one behind the other, stand several crosses, with vases and candles. Two candles always stand one on each side of a cross on the lowest tier. The side altars are adorned with the same or greater simplicity.

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* Cp. Headlam, p. 17, the remains of the Bishop's chair, and seats of the Presbyters are still to be seen at Koja Kalessi. Cp. Eus. x., iv. 44.

† Called "ciborium." "S. Chrysostom uses the word to explain the silver shrines of Diana in the Acts. Subsequently the name was given to the Pyx erected under it for the reservation of the Host." Payne Smith on John Eph., ii. 30.

In front of the altar at the top of the steps which lead down to the nave stands the wooden lectern, and on it the Book of the Gospels bound in leather, and with the front overlaid with a silver representation in the Byzantine style of the Crucifixion.* On each side, or below in the nave, stands one candlestick or more, at the side of which hangs the thurible. A small stock of books, and the chair of the Bishop just within the door, complete the furniture of the sanctuary. In the north chapel are kept the oil and "morone" used in the baptisms and ordinations of the Church. The valuable property of the Church, such as silver vessels or ancient books, is generally kept in a recess in the wall behind the high altar, called the treasury.

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NOTE ON SYRIAN MANUSCRIPTS AT DEIR-EL-ZA'AFERAN.

1.	1156 A.D. Three columns parchment.	Commentary on Bible, compiled from works of St. James (of Nisibis or Bardæus) and St. Efrem by John, Bishop of Mardin.
2.	1001 A.D. Two columns parchment.	Commentary on the Gospels by Philoxenus and Abraham of Malatia (on the Euphrates), containing hymns of St. Efrem and St. James.
3.	1044 A.D. Two columns parchment.	Copy of Gospels, written by John, Bishop of Deir Mar Gabriel (Deir el Omar). Ornamented margins.
4.	1055 A.D. Two columns parchment.	Copy of the Gospels, written by Shammas Peter, who was killed by the Moslems, containing full-page paintings of the Virgin, St. John, St. James, Mar Barsom, Mar Georgios.
5.		Smaller copy of the Gospels, exceedingly finely written, but containing no date.
6.		Syrian treatise on the Nestorian controversy, containing no date.
7.		List of Eastern Bishops at Council of Ephesus. Greek words occur in the margin frequently.
8.		Some writings of Bar Hebræus.
9.		Part of the writings of St. Chrysostom.
10.		A calendar dating from the tenth century, treating of political and ecclesiastical events.

Cp. Ainsworth, ii. 345; Badger, i. 51.

* Theodoret, v. 3, speaks of the reverence paid to the Book of the Gospels in early time. Its position in the Church is significant, the most conspicuous object in the building. Cp. Bright, 162.

Most of these books are kept in a cupboard in the lower diwan of the monastery, others in the Patriarch's house at Mardin. It is probable that more might be found hidden in the chambers below the church.

Midhiat was the only other place containing a library that I had any opportunity of visiting, although there are said to be small but interesting collections of liturgical books at Deir-el-Salib and Enhal. The latter I could not visit; I found the priest had left the former for a journey, and taken the key of his room with him.

The most interesting book at Midhiat is a small copy of the Gospels in most exquisite Estrangeli character, but in the Greek language, which is valuable as showing that the present custom of writing the current language in Syriac character is an old one. The book belongs to the ninth century, and is written on fine vellum; it contains many words, on whose transliteration the writer was doubtful, in Greek letters on the margin, and would form a valuable guide to the pronunciation of Greek at that date.

There is another small copy of the Gospels, dated 929 A.D., being a translation from the Greek; besides two large copies of the version made by Thomas of Harkel, and dated 1530.

The few books of interest that ever existed at Mosul seem to have been sold or lost. A small collection still remains at Diarbekr, but I had no opportunity of examining them. Their existence there as elsewhere is kept a secret, in order to escape the ravages of Moslems and collectors.

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CHAPTER IV.

The Customs and Condition of the Old Syrians.

I. The Liturgy in use among the Old Syrians is that of S. James, of which translations are given in several English books.* Certain peculiarities of this Church may, however, here be noticed.

The celebrant, after his preparation, retires to the south sanctuary to vest himself. Returning thence to the central altar, he sets ready the sacred vessels, and lights the tapers. During this the curtain is drawn across the front of the altar, and an antiphon sung by two of the deacons.

The prayers of the oblation from before the altar are pronounced after the curtain has been withdrawn, and are followed by the censing of the altar and the elements by the priest, and of all the Church by a deacon. Three or four boys meanwhile recite several psalms in succession.

The Trisagion, "Holy art Thou, O God, Holy, O Mighty, Holy, O Immortal," is remarkable as containing the much contended expression, "Who wast crucified for us;" but that it refers only to God the Son is laid down very emphatically in the Old Syrian profession of faith. The lections follow,

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* The bread used for the Eucharist is leavened, and made of the finest flour. The wine is made of the best grapes, pressed by hand instead of the feet. The leaven used is mixed with leaven said to have been handed down from the first ages, a portion being always retained from each baking. For this custom and the tradition connected with it compare Maclean and Browne, p. 248.

Salt and oil are also mixed with the bread (Cp. Asseman, B. O., ii. 182). The bread must be baked fresh for each celebration, and not reserved, "as the manna in the wilderness."

first from the Old Testament, then from the Epistles, then from the Gospel. The celebrant reads the last from the great Book bound in silver, which stands before the altar; while on each side of him stands a deacon, holding a lighted taper. All stand bare-headed, until the Gospel is finished. The choir fills up every interval with singing, and the deacon assisting at the altar utters many ejaculations explanatory of or calling attention to what is read by the priest.

With prayers uttered by the priest and the recital by all of the creed, the chief part of the Liturgy begins (*i.e.* the Missa Fidelium), in which it is not perhaps necessary to mention more than the "Kiss of peace" given near the end. The deacon approaches the celebrant, and having taken the tips of his two hands between his own, pass his hands down over his face. Another deacon then receives the hands of the first in the same way, and so the kiss is passed from one to another through the whole Church.

The "Ter-Sanctus," the words of Institution, and the Invocation of the Son and Holy Spirit are followed by a very long prayer of intercession for the "Whole estate of Christ's Church," and the commemoration of all its greatest members living or dead, and of the Patriarch in especial. Then the curtain is again drawn, and the celebrant comes down to the entrance of the sanctuary and preaches a sermon in Arabic. The same sermon is preached again and again, of the poor man and the rich man with a gold ring. The people seem to have heard it too often to listen.

Again the Celebrant returns to the altar, and when the curtain has been withdrawn, with his right hand on the altar, and the other uplifted towards the people, pronounces the blessing. Then, having broken and signed the bread with the cross, he pronounces the Lord's Prayer, and taking the sacred vessels in his hands comes westward toward the people. During this, as at other times, the boys or deacons about the altar beat cymbals, and shake the fans (long staves with a round plate at the top encircled with bells).

The priest then returns to the altar to give thanks and dismiss the people. All crowd up to kiss the Gospels and the

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priest's hand and receive the blessed bread* before leaving the church. A few remain to receive Communion after the rest have gone.

On Whit-Sunday a curious ceremony occurs after the sermon. The deacons begin to chant, but suddenly stop, as everyone pretends to be asleep. Then each man taps his neighbour's shoulder to awake him, while the priest prays and scatters water with an almond branch over the people. This is repeated three times, and explained to signify the gift of the Holy Spirit, symbolised by water to the sleeping members of Christ's Church.

Since in the Old Syrian Church baptism and confirmation are administered together, children communicate from quite an early age; and it is very touching to see the women bring their little ones to share with them the Body and Blood of Christ.

From each celebration a portion is reserved for the communion of the sick; but if it is not used, it must be eaten by the priest; for it is strictly forbidden to leave the consecrated elements upon the altar from one day to another.

A number of the small cakes of blessed bread, called the "antidoron,"† are generally taken to the Patriarch or Bishop at the monastery or church, and distributed by him to those who come to visit him after service.

Of the dress worn during the services, the girdle is necessary for all who take any part within the sanctuary. In the daily services no other special garb is worn, except a stole by the priest who reads the Gospel, and the deacons who recite the psalms before the altar.

During the celebration all the deacons and the choir wear white surplices, with gaily coloured stoles tied cross-wise before and behind. The celebrant wears a special alb with a

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* The "Pain béni" of France, where the custom of blessing bread to be distributed among the people still remains. This bread, like that consecrated in the Eucharist, is baked into small round cakes about two inches in diameter, covered with small crosses impressed on them by a wooden die.

† Syriac "Burotho," = Εὐλογία; "Αντίδωρον" is the Byzantine word for the same.

coloured girdle, and over this a chasuble split down the front, and fastened at the neck by large silver buckles. Over the sleeves of his alb he wears long richly-embroidered gauntlets, and over his head he draws from time to time the top part of a veil that hangs over his back, like a kind of amice. He has on his head besides this only a skull-cap of the same sort as generally worn under the turband, but more richly embroidered with white crosses on a black ground. Under the chasuble he wears an undivided stole, like a scapulary, and on his feet the yellow shoes always exchanged within the sanctuary for the usual black or red ones. The vesting is performed not before the great altar, but in the south sanctuary, where the preparations are made for the celebration.

In the daily celebrations the Saints that are departed, especially those most honoured by the Old Syrians, such as Athanasius and Cyril, and their Patriarchs are commemorated, and prayer is likewise offered for the Patriarch. Before communion confession is recommended by the canons, but it is now almost obsolete, while it is doubtful if it ever implied more than a formal confession of sin and absolution. This is probable, for it is the custom where confession is made, for several to confess together at the steps of the altar.* It is said, too, that bathing was a necessary preliminary to confession.

Of baptism, marriage, and funeral customs among the Syrians there is little to relate, being the customs rather of Eastern Churches in general than the Old Syrian Church in particular. Baptism is forbidden in private houses, and for the ceremony it is necessary to have, in addition to water, the "sythe" or olive-oil, and the "moron" or holy oil prepared by the Patriarch year by year, with which the "sythe" is consecrated.† With "moron" the child is first

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* Asseman, in his account of the Syrian customs, laments the absence of clear teaching on confession. Biblioth. Orient. ii. intr., from which it is clear that the practice was not very general in the twelfth century of which he writes.

† The preparation of the "moron" is an important ceremony, and the dependence of various Churches, as in Ceylon and Malabar, for its supply upon the Patriarch, signifies their obedience to his supremacy. It is made chiefly of balsam.

signed with the sign of the cross upon the forehead, before being baptised. He is then anointed all over with the consecrated olive oil, and dipped up to the neck in the water of the font, which has been also consecrated with "moron." This is done three times in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; after which the child is again clothed, and taken to the sanctuary for confirmation by the priest.

The names given to children are in general Biblical—Peter, Paul, James, Nahum, Isaiah and such like; but it is not unusual to find men and women with names of a more Mohammedan sound, Aziz, Abd-el-Rahman, Amin, Abd-el-Karim; while others again have names of Christian origin formed on the Mohammedan system, such as Abd-el-Messiah, servant of Christ. Abdullah is, of course, a name common to both creeds. Women frequently have the Biblical names, nor is it rare to find such names as "Werdeh" (Rose), or "Luleh" (Pearl). One never hears, however, a Christian called by such a name as Omar or Mohammed, or in fact any name which directly implies Mohammedan faith; Mohammedan names, when borne, being due generally to a loyal regard for Sultans and beneficent Pashas. Children in general receive the names of their grandparents rather than their parents, and for surnames call themselves "of the house of such an one," or the "son of such an one." Actual surnames are now more common, taken either from a common family name, or the district where the father lives.

The marriage customs of the old Syrians are described elsewhere; it remains to add a few words on those of funerals. There are numerous services, differing in various ways, according as it is for the burial of a Patriarch, a Bishop, a Priest, a layman or a child; and for all the service is of great length, and very impressive even to one who does not understand what is said. A death in a Syrian house is a terrible thing for a Western to witness. Even during the most extreme sickness, the room is never quiet; for it is the bounden duty of relations and friends to crowd in, and standing about the bed, condole with or comfort the dying and bereaved. Many an illness is thus handed on from dying to living, and the last

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hours of many are hastened or disturbed by what seems to us unseemly intrusion. But it is their custom, and custom is the heaviest weight of all that lies upon the East, and its transgression is scarcely so easily pardoned as many a graver fault. But when life has actually departed, it is hard to describe the terrible outburst of grief from relations and friends, some of whom, perhaps, scarcely knew him who has gone, but under the influence of those who were nearer, break out into uncontrollable lamentations, throwing themselves on the bed, and crying aloud on the dead and on God to restore him to the bereaved.

This grief, though excessive according to our ideas, is intelligible; not so the hiring of mourners, and the practice of placing women to weep for hours at the grave, lamenting their loss and recounting the good qualities of the dead.

The scene in the church and churchyard is very impressive. Large crowds form in the procession behind the women mourners, who are veiled in black; and chants are sung as the procession passes through the streets, and between the church and the grave. There are cemeteries round most churches, where the laity are buried; only Bishops and very holy men being ever buried within the church walls, or in the mortuary chapels of the monasteries. At the grave prayers are said and the Gospels read, while drums and cymbals are beaten. After the body has been laid in the grave and the earth filled in, the clothes of the dead are placed on the top and the women sit down to mourn, beating their breasts, and wailing. Then the relatives gather at the head of the grave near to the priest, and all the rest pass by in order, kissing the hands of the latter, and touching those of the former, as they utter some words of comfort and peace; and leave the courtyard for the house of the deceased, where they again mourn and take some food.

On the third, the ninth, the thirtieth, and the fortieth day, there is a ceremony in memory of the departed; and once a year, on the day on which he died, there is another service and celebration in the church. The mourning is renewed on each of these days, but has been curtailed by the present

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Patriarch, who has strictly forbidden such excessive display of grief as was common, and limited the duration of these services. Finally a stone is laid upon the grave, generally a stone covering the whole grave, about three feet high, and ornamented with carving and inscriptions relating to the dead. Upright stones are very rare, that being the form used by the Moslems; but sometimes a large tablet of stone will be placed in the wall within or without a church to commemorate a holy man, or a Bishop. Some of these stones and tablets are of very great beauty, and carved with very elegant designs.

There are five fasts observed among the Syrians. The "Great Fast" of Lent begins on the Monday forty-nine days before Easter, and must be strictly observed by all. The "Little Fast" of Advent begins for strict observers on November 15, lasting forty days. The seculars of the Western, or Patriarchal province, we are told by Bar Hebræus, fasted only for two weeks from December 10, while those of the Eastern province, that of the Mafrian, fasted from December 1. The fast of Nineveh is observed for three days from Monday in the third week before Lent. The Westerns used to fast five days. This fast commemorates the preaching of Jonah. The Fast of the Apostles lasts fifty days after Pentecost; the Easterns beginning on the first, and the Westerns on the second Monday after that Sunday. The Fast of the Virgin Mary is observed from August 1 to 15. All over twenty years of age are obliged to fast on Wednesday and Friday, beginning at sunset on the previous day. On Saturdays the fast may be broken at midday, on other days at the ninth hour. On ordinary fast days, eggs, milk, and cheese, are entirely forbidden; during Lent not even oil may be touched; from which it may be gathered that fasting among the Syrians is no light burden.

II. The Syrian people—or "nation," as they love to call themselves—that acknowledge the supremacy of the Patriarch, Ignatius Peter III., inhabit chiefly the tract of land known as Mesopotamia or "El Jazirah" (the Island), between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates. In Syria proper there are some

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ten thousand Old Syrians in the villages scattered about Homs and Damascus, Saddud (Zedad), a well-known Biblical town, containing about three thousand. In Aleppo almost all the Syrians have followed the example of so many Greeks and Armenians, and joined the Roman Communion. A few have joined the Americans, while one man of influence remains loyal to his nation, and acts as agent to the Patriarch in that town.

Passing eastward, Urfa, known better by its classical name of Edessa, is the first town where many Syrians are to be found. It is pleasant to find the ancient seat of a great University, and the home of St. Efrem and St. James of Nisibis, still containing a good number of members of the old Church, besides as many as four thousand houses of Armenians. North and east towards Kharput and Diarbekr are scattered many Syrian villages, while south-east their numbers increase in the mountains between Mardin and the Tigris known as Jebel Tur or Mons Masius, among which are many churches and monasteries, and probably as many as forty thousand Christian inhabitants. Round Mosul there are villages containing a good number, bringing up the whole to something between one hundred and fifty and two hundred thousand.

The inaccuracy of the census, due partly to a desire on the part of all the Christians to lessen their numbers on account of the poll-tax levied on all males in lieu of military service, and partly to the extreme laxity on the part of the Government officials, makes it extremely difficult to obtain correct statistics. The number of inhabitants of a village can often be only ascertained in a secret way, or on the absolute assurance that no detrimental use will be made of the information. It may therefore be taken for granted that the actual population considerably exceeds the numbers given.

The Syrians in the towns generally follow some trade, most frequently that of cloth merchants; in the villages they are agriculturists. In general, their means are small. There are, of course, some rich, and a few liberal men. But apart from

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the tendency to hoard and hide money in order to escape the exactions of officials, the Syrians are not an open-handed people. Moreover, the very large majority of them are exceedingly poor; and although in the open-air life of a warm country poverty does not pinch as it does in the north, yet the means of supporting even the simplest life, to say nothing of the higher needs of education and religion, are often wanting. The few men of means have to pay the taxes of their poorer brethren in addition to their own. For instance, in Diarbekr there are about six families of some means, and two hundred wretchedly poor, whose taxes the former have to pay; for taxes are collected not from each member of the community individually, but from the whole body together. In the country villages matters are far worse, and the taxes exacted with much cruelty and oppression. While the fiscal policy of the Porte weighs much more heavily on agriculture than on the trade of towns, the country people are much less able to defend their interests.

An important part of those who acknowledge the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch is resident on the Malabar coast of India. Some three hundred thousand Syrians trace their origin to Syrians from the West, and their present subjection to Antioch demands a short account of the events which led them to exchange a Nestorian for a Jacobite supremacy. Eastern tradition is unanimous in assigning to the Syrian Church a very early origin, whether or not its foundation was actually due to S. Thomas the Apostle, Pantænus of Alexandria (200 A.D.), or to Nestorian missionaries of a later date from Persia. It is certain from the testimony of the Nestorian Cosmas (522 A.D.), an Alexandrian merchant who sailed to India early in the sixth century, that there was in existence at that time, on the Malabar Coast, a Church headed by a Metropolitan appointed by the Catholicos of Persia.

The Christians of Malabar are called Syrian, not so much because they are so by race, although two immigrations (745 A.D.), one of Christians from Baghdad Nineveh and Jerusalem under Thomas of Cana, and another from Persia (822 A.D.)

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under two Nestorian priests, Mar Sapur and Mar Peruz, are recorded in the traditions of the Indian Church, but because their Christianity and their Bible were received from those to whom, as to all who at one time acknowledged the supremacy of Antioch, Syriac was the ecclesiastical, if not the national, language. For some years Malabar was under the rule of Christian Kings, known as the Perumals; but on the death of Cheraman, the power passed into the hands of the neighbouring Rajah of Cochin, to whom, and to the Rajah of Travancore, the Syrian Christians have since been subject.

Early in the fourteenth century Jordanus, a Dominican missionary, visited India, and reported Malabar to be a fruitful field for Roman enterprise; but it was two centuries before an active campaign was entered upon in India. The way was prepared by the Portuguese; and in 1560 the Inquisition was established by the favour of John III. of Portugal in Goa, for two hundred and fifty years* the centre of tyranny and cruel persecution throughout the Eastern dominions of Portugal.

The crisis of the dealings of the Romans with the Syrians (1599 A.D.) came when Don Alexo Menezes, Archbishop of Goa, summoned the Synod of Diamper with a view to reforming the abuses of the Syrians, and inducing them "to return to the allegiance of Rome, from which for twelve hundred years they had fallen away." "The most cruel of the Synod's proceedings was the making the decree about the celibacy of the clergy retrospective. . . . But what history will least willingly forgive this notorious Synod is its wanton destruction of books. The liturgies were either destroyed or altered beyond recognition, and there is probably no entire copy now in existence which was used by the Syrians in Southern India before 1599."† Menezes then made a tour among the Syrian Churches "to

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* In 1812 the Inquisition was abolished by order of Don Josè, Prince Regent at Rio Janeiro.

† "The Syrian Church in India," by C. Milne Rae, p. 251.

secure peace by reconciling it with the Mother Church of Rome."

In 1663 the Dutch dealt the death blow to the Portuguese power in India by the capture of Cranganore and Cochin, and inaugurated an era of toleration for the Syrians. Ten years earlier a large number of the Syrians had risen against the Roman tyrants, and sworn at a huge assembly round the Coonen Cross near Cochin to rid themselves of the Portuguese usurpers. Of this meeting the immediate cause was the murder by the Romans of Theodore, a Bishop who had been sent from Babylon to rule over them. It was now necessary at all hazards to obtain a Bishop from one of the Eastern Patriarchs in the place of the priest Thomas whom they had elected from themselves to rule over them. Soon after the conquest of the Dutch, Gregorius, Bishop of Jerusalem, came from the Syrian Patriarch at Mardin (1665 A.D.), and being received with unbounded joy, consecrated Thomas, and remained to rule jointly with him until his death in 1672. From this point the Syrians began to look to Antioch for the consecration of their Metropolitans, in place of Babylon, the supremacy of whose Catholicos they had for so many years acknowledged. Nestorian Bishops did indeed continue to come to Malabar; in 1700 Mar Sham'un came to the East to restore his authority, and five years later another Bishop, Mar Gabriel, came for the same purpose. But the majority of the Syrians adhered to Antioch, which they regarded with gratitude as the source of their deliverance from the Romans, and in 1751 the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch sent at their request three Bishops to India. Up to the present day there has been a growing regard for Antioch; but of the history of these years it is not proposed to say more here than will explain the relation of the present Patriarch to the Syrians of Malabar.

A recent trial in the Courts of Travancore decided that, whether or not each individual Metropolitan of the Malabar Syrians owed his consecration directly to the Patriarch at Mardin or his delegates, that Patriarch was regarded since the year 1665 as the legitimate head of the Syrian Church in

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India.* In the beginning of the century, English missionaries began a praiseworthy attempt to infuse life into the Malabar Christians. For some years their efforts were crowned with success, due partly to the excellence of their plan of work, partly to the influence, avowedly immense, exercised by the British Resident in the cause of progress. The distance of Mardin placed a difficulty in the way of securing direct consecration of the Metropolitan by the Patriarch. This was increased on the death of Thomas IX. in 1825, when the Resident caused one Philippus Malpan, elected by lot to succeed him, to be proclaimed by a Royal decree head of the Church. Complaints were sent to the Patriarch, who in 1827 sent two men, Athanasius and Abraham, to take charge of the Church; and ten years later the Syrians ended their brief connection with the English missionaries, after the emissaries from Mardin had been forcibly, and against the wish of the people, deported by the Government of Travancore. Continual appeals were made between 1825 and 1842 to the Patriarch, who took advantage of the visit to Mardin of one Matthew to consecrate him Metropolitan of Malabar with the title of Athanasius. But information was sent to Mardin, representing Matthew in so bad a light, that the Patriarch sent Bishop Mar Kurillos to make inquiries on the spot, with power to supersede Athanasius, if found guilty of heresy or misconduct. Kurillos had undoubted right, in virtue of the authority vested in him by the Patriarch, to supersede Athanasius as he then did, whether or not the charges against him of making false representations at Mardin were proved. In 1865, the Patriarch consecrated another Metropolitan, called Dionysius Joseph, in place of Athanasius, whom he had excommunicated in 1846. Athanasius, however, did not acquiesce in this arrangement, and led a violent opposition to Dionysius. Dionysius appealed to the Government of Madras, which, avowing to him its policy of strict neutrality in

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* The supposition that the apostolic succession of the Syrian Patriarch is null, and that, even were this not so, his authority in India is usurped (two of the merest suppositions, it may be added), vitiates the conclusions of the writer of the above quoted book to a deplorable degree.

accordance with the rule of the Honourable Court of Directors in London, at the same time handed over all the money lying in the Resident's treasury to Athanasius Matthew, who, although excommunicated by the Patriarch in 1846, was supported by the very men, who, many years before, had dismissed him from their college as unfit for the ministry, and had been proclaimed Metropolitan by the Government in 1852.

Matters came to a head when in 1874 the Patriarch Peter III. came to England by invitation of the late Archbishop Tait of Canterbury, and having been honourably received by the Queen and the authorities at the India Office, sailed to India again on their urgent advice to settle the dispute between Athanasius and Dionysius Joseph, whom the previous Patriarch James had consecrated in 1865 at Mardin. The withdrawal of the royal proclamation made in favour of Athanasius in 1852, proved that the Government thought it to have been illegally made, and the law of strict neutrality transgressed.

In 1877 Athanasius Matthew died, and was succeeded by Athanasius Thomas, whom he had been careful to consecrate as far back as 1868. With this man as defendant, Dionysius Joseph, in accordance with the advice given to the Patriarch in England, entered upon a suit for the recovery of Church property, in which after ten weary years of litigation he obtained a favourable award, and secured the legal acknowledgement of the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch as supreme head of the Church in Malabar since the year 1665, and of himself as lawful Metropolitan of Malabar.* The Patriarch returned to Mardin in 1876, having held a meeting of the Syrians to

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* I have dealt with the whole question of this quarrel with as little detail as possible; but in justice to the Patriarch, of whom the author of the above quoted book speaks in a tone of extreme dislike, I have thought it necessary to sketch an outline of the events from another point of view. I will only call attention to three facts: (1), The royal proclamation as to Athanasius was in itself illegal; (2), He was already excommunicated by his own acknowledged superior; (3), The Patriarch was invited to England to treat of matters entirely different from those in India, whither he went, not by his own wish, but on strong advice given him in England.

determine the organisation of the churches, and their relation to himself. His visit had succeeded in all respects, and it is much to be regretted that good men, and zealous for the welfare of this Church in India, were not enabled to see the justice of his position. Even were all the personal charges made against the Patriarch true, the strength of his position as the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch and, therefore, the head of the Syrian Church in India, would be in no way weakened. The Patriarch rules over some three thousand people in India; but the number of his adherents seems to be growing both there and in Ceylon, where, not long since, a large number of Roman Catholics left their adopted communion to join with the Syrians of Malabar from whom they had separated.

III. The Church of the Old Syrians has from early times based its belief in regard to the Person of Christ on the doctrine laid down by Cyril of Alexandria. At the same time it has been forward in anathematizing the doctrine of Eutyches, who, thinking that he emphasized that of Cyril, in reality erred as far on one side of the truth as Nestorius did on the other. Having already given an account of his teaching, it is necessary, before saying anything as to the present belief of the Old Syrians, to give a short account of the doctrine taught by the books of their doctors.

Even before the time of Eutyches, language had been used by other fathers than Cyril, which they would have repudiated, had the doctrine of the nature and person of Christ been more clearly defined.*

1. Philoxenus, Bishop of Hierapolis, and the friend of Severus, the Patriarch of Antioch, is regarded by the Old Syrian writers as expressing their belief as to the Incarnation. He taught one nature constituted out of two, divine and human, but without fusion of the two, or conversion or absorption of one into the other; and it was Christ in this unified, complex nature that lived and died for us, although

* *E.g.*, Gregory's zeal to insist on the unity of Christ led him to use language which at a later time was condemned as unorthodox. Cp. Article of Monophysites in Dict. of Bibl. Biog. iv. 308.

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the divine nature did not suffer, nor were His human nature and His death merely visionary, as the followers of Julian of Halicarnassus asserted.

2. The teaching of Severus was not dissimilar, although he agreed more nearly with Cyril. "We discern mentally two natures in the Christ, the one created, the other uncreate; but the Synod of Chalcedon having defined two natures in the case of Christ, and two activities of them after the ineffable union . . . divided Christ into two persons, for an impersonal nature is never active." So the whole compound nature shares all His actions; "but so far as He was God, the Emmanuel suffered only in seeming." In harmony with this doctrine Peter the Fuller had previously inserted the additional words into the "Trisagion," as has been already mentioned.

3. Now it will be clearly seen that this attempt to deny the confusion of natures which yet become one nature is impossible; and that between the orthodox view which maintains two natures in one person, and the Eutychian or Julianist view which admits the absorption or fusion of the human into the divine nature, there can be no middle way. "One nature consisting *of* two natures, but not *in* two natures," is a contradiction in terms; while that the doctrine has been maintained by so many teachers in the Old Syrian Church can only be due, as Asseman says, to a confusion between the meaning of the words "nature" and "person." This confusion is made in a letter written by Theodosius, Patriarch in 853 A.D., who speaks of "one person from two persons, one nature from two natures;" and in 969 A.D. John, Patriarch, insists on "one nature composed of two," without trying to explain how that could be, in a discussion with Polyeuctus, Patriarch of Constantinople.

4. This confusion between nature and person lies at the root of whatever misunderstanding may at the present time exist in the mind of the Old Syrians in regard to the doctrine; and it may be reasonably believed that, were an attempt made by a party against whom the Syrians would not be prejudiced by national or political feelings, the difference based mainly

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on adherence to a party badge and the wrong verbal expression of a right belief would be removed. I have purposely said nothing here about the political elements which had so large a share in causing the separation of the Old Syrians from the Catholic Church, as they have been amply dwelt on elsewhere; but I will enumerate a few reasons why the hope above expressed is not a vain one:—(*a*) The confusion between person and nature cannot but be recognised and avoided, if duly and charitably explained to the Old Syrians. (*b*) The meaning of the word nature to the Syrians includes far more than it does in English, being most strictly translated "essential being." (*c*) The Old Syrians are perfectly ready to accept the orthodox *doctrine*, if the technical language be avoided.* Unorthodox technical language is used both by themselves now and in their books, and the mental constitution which they share with other Orientals makes it often impossible to obtain an accurate definition of their thoughts; while seeing that their maintenance of the doctrine of the one nature is largely bound up with a misunderstanding of the actual meaning of that word in the plain Greek "φύσις," and that, in spite of the language in which the doctrine has been clothed by many of them, they do actually hold the orthodox doctrine, there is no reason to suppose that in time the Old Syrians may not be induced to accept the wording confirmed by the Catholic Church as expressing the faith which the Old Syrians agree with her in actually holding.

I will complete this section with a quotation from a book to which I am indebted in much that I have written, "The Catholicos of the East." "It may be remarked that the subject should not be approached, as has too often been the case, with a desire to pick holes in every loose statement, but in a spirit of charity which compares one thing with another,

* The Patriarch, no less than a Bishop who visited England in 1888, in spite of long and frequent examination from good theologians and Oriental scholars, such as Dr. Liddon, Dr. Badger, Dr. Irons, gave absolutely no grounds for the supposition that they held anything but the orthodox view. These learned men absolutely acquitted the Old Syrian Church, so far as they were able to judge it, of actual heresy.

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and where necessary presumes the better and not the worse interpretation of ambiguous language."

The Old Syrians hold in regard to the "Procession of the Holy Ghost" a position half way between those of the Greeks and Romans, that "He proceeds from the Father and receives from the Son." Some of their writers have even acknowledged His procession from the Son; while none of them have shared the strong feeling of the Greek Church against the Western insertion.

In the Eucharist they assert not the identity of the Sacred Elements with the Body and Blood of Christ, but only a hypostatic union of the Word with the Bread and Wine.

Compulsory confession is and always has been repudiated by them and their writers, although Dionysius Bar Salib late in the twelfth century pleaded for its introduction. In regard to the dead they hold that they await in Paradise or Hell the common resurrection, and in no sense accept the doctrine of purgatory, as set forth by the Church of Rome.*

* John of Dara: "De Resurr. Corp.," 4. 20. Bar Hebræus: "Lib. Radiorum," 7. 5. 2.

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APPENDIX.

The Yazidis of Mosul.

The manuscript from which the following translation is made was written by a native of Mosul, who has enjoyed peculiar opportunities for obtaining information concerning the Yazidis. His chief sources were (1), The "Kitab-el-Aswad" (The Black Book), a manuscript dating from the tenth century, and containing indications of Mohammedan influence and censorship; for instance the word "Sheitan" is systematically erased, hence its name; (2), "Kitab-el-Jilwa" (The Book of [Divine] Effulgence), ascribed to Sheikh A'di himself, dating from the twelfth century; (3), A history of Mosul, written about a hundred years ago; (4), The statements of an Old Syrian priest, for thirty years resident among the Yazidis. Unfortunately the writer did not specify whence each particular part of his information was obtained.

A short summary of the history of the Yazidis may conduce to a better understanding of the manuscript itself. Several writers have left accounts of this most interesting people, and have borne unanimous witness to their bravery and hospitality. I can only sketch by their help a few of the more salient features of their life and creed.*

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* The following is a list of books treating of the Yazidis. (1), Layard's "Nineveh and its Remains," and "Nineveh and Babylon," 1853; (2), Badger's "Nestorians and their Rituals," 1852; (3), Ainsworth: "Transactions of the Ethnographical Society," vol. i., 1861; (4), Buckingham's "Travels in Mesopotamia," 1827; (5), Baillie Fraser's "Mesopotamia and Assyria"; (6), Niebuhr's "Turkish Travels"; (7), Rich's "Kurdistan": (8), Forbes' "Account of the Yazidis of Jebel Sinjar," in the "Transactions of R. G. S.," vol. ix.; (9), Haxthausen's "Transcaucasia," containing an account of the Yazidis in Russian territory; (10), Several Papers by M. Siouffi, French Consul at Mosul, in the "Journal Asiatique," series 7, vol. xv., p. 78; (11), Menant's "Les Yezidis," published in the popular series of the Musée Guimet.

To (1), (2), (10), I am most indebted, as the writers witnessed what they describe.

(I.) The Yazidis are divided into five tribes, according to districts, namely, those of Russia, Khalatiyah, Aleppo, the Sinjar hills, and Sheikhan. Khalatiyah includes all the district north and north-east of the Tigris; Aleppo all west of the Euphrates. The head-quarters of the people are in Sheikhan, the district to the north-east of Mosul, where their chief resides, and the annual festival is celebrated at the shrine of Sheikh A'di. The Yazidis of this district were anciently called "Da'aseni," a name of which they can give no account, although it may be recognised as the same as that of the old episcopal diocese. A Kurdish tribe of this name is mentioned by Layard as living near Sulimaniyah.

The recent history of the Yazidis has been one of persecution. Fifty years ago the prosperity of the Yazidis of Sheikhan aroused the cupidity of the brutal Pasha of Mosul, Inji Beirakdar. In 1844, they suffered cruelly at the hands of the famous Kurdish Beg of Ruwanduz, when the mounds of Nineveh opposite Mosul gained the name of "Kuyunjik" (The Slaughter of the Sheep), from the horrible massacre which he there inflicted on them. Mohammed Rashid Pasha, and Hafiz Pasha of Mosul, did their best to exterminate these hated "People without the Book," while Pashas of Mosul began generally to look upon an annual hunt of Yazidis as a legitimate recreation, and a cheap means of recruiting their revenue. Nor did Bedr-khan-beg, the notorious author of the Nestorian atrocities, find them a less fruitful source of plunder. It was little to be wondered at that the Yazidis then captured and tortured or murdered every Moslem who fell into their hands, just as they did after the brutal onslaught of 1892.

Various attempts have been made by the Turkish Government to subject the Yazidis to the military service required from all Mohammedans. The double injustice of forcing them to perform a service required by law only from Mohammedans, and to undertake the performance of several actions repugnant to their religion, caused Lord Stratford in 1847 to obtain in Constantinople a proper recognition of their religion, and exemption from military service. In the face of this the "conversion" already described was undertaken by order of the Government; while the fact that the recognition was obtained by our Ambassador should stir up some sympathy in England for the fate of this ill-treated sect.

(II.) The Yazidis hold that the God who created all things and permeates all things, created seven spirits by a kind of emanation,

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"as a man lighteth one lamp from another," each of which is to reign ten thousand years. Of these Malak Ta'us (Angel Peacock) is the first, and the present ruler of this world, having fulfilled already six thousand years of his reign. In some way these seven spirits seem to be connected with the heavenly bodies. The sun and moon have a large place in the religious system of the Yazidis, as appears from the importance of the shrine of Shams-ed-din, the sacrifice of white bulls, the adoration of the sun and moon at their rising and setting, and the burial of the dead towards the rising sun, or perhaps the North-pole. Sheikh Shams-ed-din is the name of one of the spirits, Azazil; and these spirits are also the creators of the heavenly bodies. While sheep are commonly sacrificed among the Yazidis over the graves of distinguished men, and the blood of sheep is used by the chief Sheikh and the Pirs in the exercise of their supernatural powers of healing, and the dung of the same animals laid on the graves of the dead, the sacrifice of white oxen seems connected exclusively with the ceremonies at the shrine of Sheikh Shams-ed-din.* It is said that Yazidis will never spit into the fire, although this may be from reverence not so much for the fire as for the place where it is kindled.

The number seven holds a no less prominent place in the Yazidi religion than in the Chaldæan, Hebrew, and Sabæan systems. The seven altars of Balaam, the seven offerings made to ratify a covenant, the seven lamps of the golden candlestick in the temple, the seven angels and their seven trumpets, readily suggest themselves in writings of the Old Testament.† Among the Chaldæans we read of the seven stages of the Babylonian temples, dedicated to the seven planets, and coloured in accordance with the rules of Sabæan astrology; and the Birs-Nimrud, near Babylon, has seven stages. So, too, Ecbatana had seven walls, and the temple built by Behram Gur was seven-bodied, as is related by Nizami in the poem of Haft Peiker. In the Koran (Sura 23), generally free from Sabæan influence, the seven heavens are spoken of, in reference

* "Der Tempel des Sheikhs Shams ist ohne allen Zweifel ein Sonnen-Tempel, der so gebaut ist, dass die ersten Strahlen der Sonne so häufig als möglich auf ihn fallen." Chwolson: "Die Ssabier," xi. 296. Southgate visited in 1837 a tribe called Shamsiyah in the hills near Mardin. They called themselves "Sons of Ishmael," doubtless to evade the suspicion of the Mohammedans. I could neither hear nor see anything of these people.*

† See Numbers xxiii., 2 Chr. xxix. 21, Tobit xii. 15; and cp. Rev. vii. 2, i. 4, iv. 5.

* See "Chemsiyes", of Campanile, O.P. Storia del Kurdistan... lb. VIII cap. I p. 194 (Trad. fr. p. 62-64)

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either to the paths of the seven planets, or to the seven storeys into which Moslems believe heaven to be divided.

The honour paid to Malik Ta'us, or Azaziel (which appears also as a name of Satan in the Bible), the first created of the seven Spirits, and the present vicegerent of the Almighty, is the most prominent feature of the Yazidi creed. Propitiation enters largely into his worship, as among the Sabæans and Magians. He is the author of all those things called by the professors of other religions evil, just as God ("Khuda" in Persian) is the author of all good; but the Yazidis avoid all reference to such words as imply or call to mind his evil nature. It is possible to trace here the principle, according to which evil has no positive existence, but only the negative quality necessary to the reality of good, a principle common to Plato, the Sabæans, and the modern Sufis of Persia.

The "Sanjaks" (banners), or symbols which represent Malak Ta'us and the other spirits, have been amply described, with the ceremonies connected with them, by Layard and Badger. The Yazidis deny that any reverence is paid to them except as to the symbol of their chief, by means of which he collects his dues. Nevertheless, they kiss devoutly the cloth that covers them, and take the utmost care to prevent them falling into the hands of the Moslems. During the recent persecutions the Moslems boasted to have gained possession of several, but they were found to be copies made to deceive them, while the real images were safely buried.

Both Layard and Badger draw attention to the "Iynges," or golden images of birds in the palace of the king of Babylon, said to be powers animated by God, and used in consequence for divination. It may be only a coincidence that the Yazidi legend relates how God at the Creation placed the pearl mentioned in the text on the back of a bird called "Anghar" or "Anghas." But at least the impersonation of Azazil by a bird, and the similarity between the sanjaks and the Iynges, are remarkable. Nor is it impossible that these sanjaks are used for the divination which the Amir of the Yazidi practises. Lastly, we may notice the "Ferouher" of the Zoroastrian system, and the fact that among the Parsis the attendant of the evil spirit is called Izid Ferfer.*

In addition to the rather confused accounts given in the text of Sheikh A'di himself, it is necessary perhaps only to add that the tenth century saw the final success of the attempts made since the

* Ainsworth, 41. Badger, i. 127. Cp. Deut. iv. 16, 17.

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seventh century to crush Magism. The Mohammedan religion is entirely alien from the mystical teaching of the Magians; nor is it impossible that the Yazidis may have taken advantage of the similarity between their own name and that of several of the Omayyad Khalifs to screen themselves from the destruction which orthodox Moslems meted out to followers of Magian and kindred creeds. It is unlikely that the Yazidis, whose sympathies would be with the less orthodox Shiites rather than the Sunnis, had any real connection with the Ommayad house, ever cursed by true Shiites as the murderers of the sainted Hosein and Hasan. Yet even so the name would be a better protection for a semi-Magian sect, which chose to borrow from eminent Sufis names more congenial with which to disguise their saints. If, as they themselves assert, they are called Yazidis because they are the worshippers of Yazdán (the Persian name of God), they may have gladly welcomed the similarity to the name of an enemy in order to secure a more effectual disguise. There seems no particular reason to doubt that Sheikh A'di was an actual person, who lived at the date specified, which suits well with what we know of the history of Magism in the tenth century; while his alleged migration from the West is in harmony with the fact that Haran was a great centre for such worship, and that the neighbourhood of Aleppo is still inhabited by many who profess a similar creed.*

(III.) Seven orders of priests are enumerated among the Yazidis. Of these two seem merged in the remaining five, to wit the "Kuchak," whose office seems identical with that of the Amir, and the "Mulla," who has no duties assigned to him, except those of teacher, which are held also by the "Qawwals," and of "keeper of the affairs of the nation," a fine but vague Oriental hyperbole.

The Amir, religious and political head of the people, called also the Khalifa, holds his office by inheritance, the most worthy and not necessarily the eldest son succeeding his father. He should be leader in prayer "Pish-namaz"; but as this duty involves the wearing of a peculiar dress, which, owing to the frequent intercourse between the Amir and the Turkish authority, might so fall

* With the story told of Yazid's birth in the text it is interesting to compare the Sabæan legend, according to which Maude-de-hajje, the good principle, caused Inochwei, the aged wife of Saona, to drink water, and conceive a child of promise, whose name was Yahya. Cp. "A Pamphlet on the Sabæans," by M. Siouffi.

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into the hands of the enemy, one of the most reverend Sheikhs officiates for him. The Amir enjoys with the chief Sheikh the highest priestly prerogatives, which include a power of excommunication as severe as has ever been exercised among Christians. He has powers of prophecy, and alone of the Yazidis may marry in the month of April. He is the official public intercessor for the people, from whom he receives tithes each year.

The Sheikhs as a priestly order must be carefully distinguished from the so-called Sheikhs by whose names the seven great spirits are called. As servants of Sheikh A'di they guard his tomb, keep the holy fire, and provide for those who dwell within the precincts and for pilgrims of distinction, taking charge of all offerings made, and selling the clay balls and other relics from the shrine. They are the only class among the Yazidis with any claim to learning, being acquainted with Arabic, the language in which the sacred hymns are written. The chief Sheikh of the district of Sheikhan has a primacy above the others, being a kind of national high priest, and wearing as insignia a white turband and a girdle of small copper rings, in which he carries a small axe. He is believed to have supernatural powers of prophecy and of curing epilepsy and making the barren fruitful, in which offices he uses as charms the blood of sheep and sacred clay from the shrine of Sheikh A'di. During the minority of the Amir he acts as his representative. He is bound, according to the rule that holds for all classes of the Yazidis, to marry one of his own order.

The "Qawwals" belong all to one family, and are under the direct control of the Amir, whose tithes they collect, and for whom they generally act as emissaries. They dwell almost exclusively in the villages of Bah-shika and Bahizani. They are the musicians at the yearly festivals, playing, dancing, and chanting at every ceremony, and conduct the funerals of the Yazidis, playing and pouring water into the mouth of the dead.

The "Pirs" do not, according to Ainsworth, form a separate order or have any special duties, but are men canonised during life on account of peculiar holiness. The word signifies in Persian an old man, and is thus identical with "Sheikh." They are said to have special powers of healing and interceding for others.

To the "Faqirs" belong the various menial duties connected with the Yazidi shrines, such as trimming the votive lamps and keeping clean the sacred precincts. They dance during the

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ceremonies, and teach dancing to the children. Their dress is a black or dark-brown tunic of coarse cloth reaching to the knee, and tight-fitting, with a black turband bound by a red handkerchief, from which they have the name "Karabash," or black-heads.

(IV.) Prayer and fasting are but little accounted of by the Yazidis. The Qawwals are the professional offerers of prayer for the people who do not understand them. One member of a family may fast for the rest, on the same principle, no doubt, as that on which some Bedawin tribes on reaching a town, send one of their number to a mosque to pray for them all. It is probable that they do not like to neglect a custom so prevalent among their neighbours, but that their own tendency is to condemn fasting, as Zoroaster did, as the impious refusal of God's good gifts.

Circumcision is usual among the Yazidis, being performed with baptism about seven days after birth: if possible, at Sheikh A'di in the water of the sacred spring: if not, the ceremony is postponed until the arrival of a Qawwal with a skin of the holy water. But circumcision is not obligatory, nor in the Sinjar and the Armenian district even customary. Baptism seems to be far more intimately connected with Yazidi belief. The practice recalls immediately the strange sect of so-called "Christians of S. John," still to be found in some numbers between Baghdad and Basra, to whose ancestors there may be a reference in the dwellers near Ephesus "who knew only the baptism of John." The great number of springs held sacred by the Yazidis in the district of Sheikhan, the practice of throwing money into some of them, which has attracted the cupidity of several Pashas of Baghdad and Mosul, the festivals connected with some of these springs, notably that called Ain Safna near Bahizani, the customs of lighting lamps at them, or in some adjacent niche or cave, all point to a peculiar reverence for the element of water. No Yazidi will ever enter a Mohammedan bath, or eat any produce of the water, fish being considered "mubarak," sacred. Connected with this regard is the story told in the text of the Sufi-saint Mansur-el-Hallaj. It has often been remarked that a special origin need not be sought for ceremonial lustrations in a hot country; it is therefore impossible to argue from their prevalence among the Yazidis to any consequent connection with Mohammedan or Christian traditions. Baptism is repeated at each visit to the shrine, all new garments being at the same time baptized. The "Sanjaks" of the seven spirits must also be baptized once a year

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in "sumaq" water at Sheikh A'di.* The sacred water at Sheikh A'di, within the shrine, is believed to have been brought from Mecca by Sheikh A'di, and is consequently called "Zamzam." †

The Yazidis, like many Moslems, consider the sign of the cross to be a valuable charm. Christ, they say, was a great angel, who took the form of man; he did not die upon the cross, but ascended to heaven to appear again with Imam Mahdi. For the Bible they have some regard, but consider it to have been corrupted by false teachers. The Russians hold Christ to be the Son of God and of Mary, but not to be divine; but the confession of "Malik Esa," Esa son of Mary, is less defined among them than among the Moslems. There is a strange tradition among the Yazidis with regard to the Crucifixion. "When Christ was on the Cross, in the absence of his friends, Satan came in the form of a darweish and carried him to heaven. The Marys soon came, and seeing the Lord not there, inquired of the darweish where He was. They would not believe his answer, but promised to do so if he would take the pieces of a cooked chicken and bring the bird to life. He consented to the proposal, and bringing back bone to bone, the

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* Among the Hemerobaptists, a Jewish sect near Ephesus in the first century, S. John Baptist was held as the chief prophet in place of Messiah, and baptism was held to be the great ordinance of religion, "a daily-recurring atonement for sin and sanctification of the person." Lightfoot, Colossians, p. 402. Norberg quotes the "Recital of Conti the Maronite," 1650, that a Johannine sect had migrated from Galilee to Mergab in the Lebanon about 1500, and holding S. John Baptist as their founder, used locusts and wild honey as their sacrament, while their priests wore turbands and garments of camel hair. Their four annual fasts commemorated the birthday of S. John, the institution of baptism, the lamentation for the death of S. John, the slaying of the dragon by S. John. These customs do not exist among the Mendæans or the inhabitants of the Hauran.

Mohammed-ibn-Ishac (987 A.D.) speaks of the Sabians as "El Moghtasilah," those who purify themselves by washing, while Chwolson (xxii. 17) derives "Sabian" from a Hebrew root "to dip."

Origen speaks of Elchasai, the name by which the Hemerobaptists were known, as a man who repudiated asceticism and sacrifice, recommending baptism as a purification from sin, and delivering his revelations to one Sobai. This Elchasai or Ἠλξαΐ (*i.e.*, δύναμις κεκαλυμμένη), was connected with the Ebionites and Sampseni, and held Gnostic views in regard to our Lord's Incarnation. Cp. Hippolytus, adv. hæreses, ix. 8, 15. Epiphanius, adv. hæreses, xix. 1.

† The "Hukama," or rationalists of El Islam, who invariably connect the rites of their faith with the worship of the heavenly bodies in general and of Venus in particular, derive Zamzam from the Persian, and make it signify "The Great Luminary." Burton, "Pilgrimage to Medinah," ii. 162.

cock crew. The darweish then announced his real character; they expressed their astonishment by a burst of adoration. Having informed them that he would henceforth always appear to his beloved in the shape of a beautiful bird, he departed."*

At a marriage the bride is bidden by the Yazidi law to visit a Christian church, if there be one on the way, and the "Shuqus."† So Ainsworth relates that "when Yazidis come to Mardin, or any other town, they kiss the hands of the priests, and receive the Sacrament from them, suffering not a drop of wine to fall to the ground, or even on their beards." By others they are asserted to observe Easter.

The use of certain words is strictly prohibited by the Yazidis. Reverence for Malak Ta'us forbids all reference to his evil nature, and to words of similar sound, such as "keitan" a thread, "shat" an arrow, "sharushat," all derivatives of the root "la'n" (curse), and even "na'l" (horse shoe), "na'l-band" (farrier), which contain the same letters. These all approximate in sound to "Sheitan"; nor can anything shock a Yazidi more than the utterance of the Tartar curse "Na'alat-es-Sheitannak." Layard gives an amusing description of the consternation he caused by uttering half the word "sheitan" (applied commonly to a clever fellow or rascal) during a Yazidi feast. It is as if we avoided the word evil because of its similarity to devil.

The marriage rites of the Yazidis are very simple, and include clay from the tomb of Sheikh A'di, a loaf of bread, a small stone, and a visit to a church. The Amir, or the chief Sheikh, probably as his proxy, sometimes marries persons of rank, but ordinary people are satisfied with the Qawwal, who ascertains mutual consent, breaks bread between them, and gives them of the sacred clay. Intermarriage of the several orders is forbidden, and the number of wives limited, except for the Amir, to six; divorce being moreover as easy amongst them as amongst the Moslems. Monogamy is, however, the rule, doubtless on the score of economy, although the Amir has generally a large number of wives. The chief Sheikh is apparently condemned to celibacy. After marriage the bride remains in her husband's house, but does not see him for three days. When they meet bread is again broken over her head, and the bridegroom strikes her with a small stone in token

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* Quoted by Ainsworth from Mr Lobdel, an American Missionary, 1852.

† Perhaps the keeper of the "Shaqs," or shrine.

of the marital prerogative. Dancing, man and woman together, is usual among the Yazidis, a strange custom in the East, where "promiscuous whirlings" are looked upon with as much horror as by the pious Scot. They form part of the ceremonies at Sheikh A'di.

The bride is looked upon as a property for purchase; and Layard describes the desperate state of the Qawwals at the time of his visit, because they could not afford the price demanded. Some travellers have maintained the charge made by the Moslems that the Yazidis practice vile rites in connection with the ceremonies at Sheikh A'di. It is a charge commonly made against the professors of a secret creed; but both Badger and Layard, who were eye-witnesses of the ceremonies, acquit the Yazidis of all of the charges made. The Yazidi law is plain, forbidding marriage during the month of the feast and on Wednesdays and Fridays, as well as within the sacred precincts of Sheikh A'di.

The funeral are as simple as the marriage rites. Water and sacred clay placed in the mouth of the dead, and clay upon his face, bathing the body in running water, and burying it to face the North Star, complete the ceremonies. The Qawwals lead the procession burning incense, and the relatives, male and female, continue to do the same for some days after the funeral. It appears from the custom of the Kuchak to prophesy of the dead, whether he shall return to earth or go to another world, that the transmigration of souls is held no less than the permeation of all things by God, two doctrines common to the Sabæans also. The Yazidis hold that none will be eternally condemned, but all will spend an expiatory period in hell; while the dead have communion with the living, by which the good souls dwelling in the sky make revelations to their brethren upon earth.

The Yazidi year begins on the first Wednesday in April, called "Sar-Sali," and is kept as an annual feast, being the day on which God determines the course of events for the year. Feasts of the various Sheikhs are kept throughout the year, that of Sheikh A'di, the chief of all, in October. Wednesday and Friday are always kept holy, the Qawwals assembling at sunset on the previous days to burn incense and watch at the shrines. Layard has given two descriptions of the festival held at Sheikh A'di in 1846 and 1849; a third, of the festival of Sheikh Mohammed at Bahshikah, comes from the diary of Mrs. Badger. Preparation is made on the first day of the year for coming feasts of the various Sheikhs; sheep

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are slain, flowers—especially scarlet anemones *—are placed on the courtyard gate, while the Amir receives the pilgrims, already purified by bathing in the sacred springs. All feed without cost at the feasts. For the details of the feasts the reader may be referred to the ample accounts of Layard and Badger.

Such are, in short, the main features of the Yazidi creed. At present, their origin and the history of their beliefs are shrouded in mystery, awaiting the arrival of one who can bring a deep knowledge of Eastern mystic creeds, and a profound sympathy with a much suffering people, to the task of unravelling the thread that binds the Yazidis to the peoples of pre-Islamic times.

[Translation of Arabic MS. History of the Yezidis].

We purpose to write the history of the Yezidi sect dwelling round about the City of Mosul, together with somewhat from their Book entitled "Jilwa," and other matters.

And first of all—

In the time of the Caliph el-Muqtadir Bi'llah, A.H. 295,† there appeared Mansur el-Hallaj ("the Wool-carder"),‡ and Sheykh 'Abdu'l-Qadir of Gilan,§ and Sheykh 'Adi from the mountains of Hekkariyya, who was originally from the country round about Aleppo and Ba'l-bekk, whence he came and settled in the mountain of Lalesh,‖ distant from Mosul about eleven hours' journey. Some, however, assert that he was of the people of the Hawran, and

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* Ostrich feathers dyed scarlet are also worn during the dancing at the feast. The Parsis and Hindus hang leaves across their doors at the New Year.

† A.D. 907-8. This is the date of el-Muqtadir's accession. He reigned till A.H. 320 (A.D. 932).

‡ Huseyn Mansur, the Wool-carder, a celebrated Persian mystic, revered as a saint by the more advanced Sufis, was put to death with great cruelty at Baghdad in A.H. 309 (A.D. 921-2), on a charge of heresy and blasphemy, because he had cried out in one of his ecstasies "*Ana'l-Haqq*," "I am God!" One of the oldest accounts of his life, doctrine, and death, is that given in the *Fihrist* (ed. Flugel, p. 190, and notes), but he is mentioned in nearly all Biographies of Sufi saints Faridu'd-Din 'Attar, Hafiz, and Jami, all speak of him with admiration and respect.

§ Sheykh Muhiyyu'd-Din 'Abdu'l-Qadir of Gilan (in Persia), the founder of the Qadiri order of dervishes, was born, according to Jami (*Nafahat*, ed. Lees, p. 587), in A.H. 471 (A.D. 1078-9), and died A.H. 561 (A.D. 1165-6).

‖ Yaqut calls it Lailesh or Lelesh. Cf. Hoffmann's "Auszüge aus Syrischen Akten Persischer Märtyrer," p. 197, and note 1568.

Texte arabe (Mashriq, 1953, p. 571-588 (RP Khalife)

was descended from Merwan ibn el-Hakam. His full name was Sharafu 'd-Din Abu 'l Faza'il 'Adi ibn Musafir ibn Isma'il ibn Musa ibn Merwan ibn el-Hasan ibn Merwan. He died in the year A.H. 558 (A.D. 1162-3), and his tomb is still known and visited near the village of Ba'Idri.* The Yezidis are the progeny of those who were the *murids*, that is, the disciples, of Sheykh 'Adi, though others trace them to Yezid ibn Mo'awiya,† and others again to Hasan of Basra.‡

Now they (*i.e.* the Yezidis) are divided into seven classes, whereof each class has a special function assigned to it to the exclusion of the others, who cannot and may not perform it: §

First, the *Amir*, who must needs be of the race of Yezid. And in the hands of these is a pedigree ascending through sires and grandsires up to Yezid; and in them are vested the administrative, political, and aristocratic functions.

Secondly, the *Sheykh*, who is the servant of Sheykh 'Adi's shrine. He has insignia which he wears; on his body somewhat of the nature of a girdle,‖ and on his hand a net like the head-netting of a camel. And when he appears amongst them (*i.e.* the Yezidis) they do him reverence in all humility and respect and self-abasement.

Thirdly, the *Qawwal*, to whom is delegated the duty of shrouding the dead and chanting religious litanies.

Fourthly, the *Pir*, whose function is [to superintend] fasts, and festal displays, and the breaking of the fast.

Fifthly, the *Kuchak*, to whom is assigned the service of the cymbals, and celebrations, and song.

Sixthly, the *Faqir*, whose duty it is to assemble the boys and girls, and to instruct them in playing the cymbals, and in religious dancing and merry-making.

Seventhly, the *Mulla*, who is entrusted with the instruction of the children, and the guardianship of the Book and the mysteries of religion, and the affairs of the community.

The *Sheykhs* pretend to prophetic gifts, and the *Amir* exercises control over their persons and their affairs.

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* See Hoffmann, *op. laud*, p. 197, and note 1561.

† The second Omayyad Caliph, reigned A.D. 680-683.

‡ A celebrated theologian, who died in October, A.D. 728. His life is given at pp. 370-372 of de Slane's translation of *Ibn Khallikan*.

§ Cf. Menant's *Yezidis* (Paris, Leroux, 1892), pp. 54-64.

‖ *Zunnar*, the girdle worn by the Brahmins and Zoroastrians, and, as the Muslims suppose, by the Christians also.

[Of their observances] they have taken fasting and sacrifice from Islam; baptism from the Christians; prohibition of [certain] foods from the Jews; their mode of adoration from the Idolators; dissimulation of doctrine * from the Rafizis [*i.e.* the Shi'ites]; human sacrifices from ancient [Arab] Paganism, and incarnation and transmigration from the Sabeans. For they say that when the spirit of man goes forth from his body, it enters into another man,† if it be just; but if unjust into an animal. They worship the sun and moon, and their elders sell unto the common folk a place in paradise, and that for money. They have a book called *Jilwa*, which they ascribe to Sheykh 'Adi; and they suffer no one who is not of their sect to read it or look upon it. It contains many absurd fables and strange stories, foreign to all other religions, and remote from their traditions. Thus it is said therein that there exist seven gods, each of whom controls the universe for a period of 10,000 years.‡ And one of these seven gods is Lucifer, the chief of the fallen and rebellious angels, whom they call *Malak Ta'us*. And they make an image of him of molten copper in the likeness of a bird, resembling most closely the ordinary domestic cock, and they offer adoration to it, and celebrate its praises, and beat the cymbals before it. And by some artifice and cunning they make it dance, as though it too were rejoicing with them when they assemble round it in the towns and villages. For they carry it about unceasingly [from place to place], and collect money from the common folk who come to visit it, because these suppose that if this his image enters any house, that house becomes blessed and honoured.

Now some of them would ascribe Divinity to Sheykh 'Adi, while others say, "Nay, but he is to God like a powerful and trusted minister, agreeably to whose advice and arrangement all things are done." Likewise they say that the Primal Cause is the Supreme God, who, ere He created this world, brooded alone over the seas; and in His hand was a great pearl wherewith He played. Then He cast it, of set purpose, into the sea; and from it the world was produced.

Furthermore, they suppose themselves not to be of mortal seed

* *Mukhalafat* appears to have this meaning, but it may also signify "opposition to constituted authority."

† *Fi ghayri insan*, which should properly mean "into other than a man;" but I fancy that it is intended to have the meaning given in the text; unless, indeed, it signifies "into a superhuman being." Cf. Menant's *Yezidis*, pp. 79, 87.

‡ Cf. Menant's *Yezidis*, p. 87.

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like the rest of mankind, but that a son was born to Adam of his spittle, and that they are begotten of this son. For this cause do they imagine their nature to be more refined, nobler, and more acceptable to the gods than others.

A period of 6,000 years of the turn and cycle of control of Malak Ta'us has elapsed, and the control will continue in his hand for another 10,000 years [*sic MS.*— ? 4000]. And when these 10,000 years be fulfilled, another god will begin to govern the world for another 10,000 years; and so on for ever. And amongst these seven gods there subsists perfect accord.

It is related by them that once God Almighty invited Sheykh 'Adi to heaven, together with his *murids*, that is, his disciples; and there was in heaven no chaff wherewith they might feed their horses. Thereupon Sheykh 'Adi bade his disciples bring chaff from his threshing-floors; and whilst they were conveying the chaff, some of it fell, and the token thereof remains in the sky until this our time,* and is known as "the Way of the Chaff," or "the Ram's Tongue" [?], stretching from the East to the West, and clearly visible during almost the whole year.

They likewise suppose that prayer must be of the heart, and not outwardly performed; for there is laid upon them no command or injunction to pray.

Some of them assert that Sheykh 'Adi went to visit Mecca in company with Sheykh 'Abdu'l-Qadir of Gilan, and abode there for four years; and that some while after his departure the Devil, assuming his form and likeness, told them that Sheykh 'Adi had returned from Mecca, instructed them and gave them a code of laws, and then disappeared from amongst them. Then, when Sheykh 'Adi returned after four years, they treated him with contempt, gave him the lie, and drove him forth, saying that Sheikh 'Adi had some while since been taken up into heaven. But after his death the Devil again appeared to them, and said, "This was indeed Sheykh 'Adi." So they buried him, and made his tomb a place of pilgrimage, which, in their opinion, is more excellent than Mecca. And it is incumbent and binding on every Yezidi to visit it once at least every year; and he who cannot visit it gives, instead of his visitation, a sum of money to the servants [of the shrine, placing it] in the hands of their elders in the presence of the image of *Malak-Ta'us*.

* *I.e.*, the Milky Way, which is called in Persian *Keh-keshan*, "the chaff-carriers."

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In their estimation the Mountain of Lalesh is more excellent than the *Ka'ba*. They say that on the Resurrection-day Sheykh 'Adi will carry in a tray on his head all the Yezidis, and will cause them to enter into Paradise without any reckoning, or written permit, or judgment. Sheykh 'Adi was the first who took to himself disciples and imposed on them a discipline,* and from him did the institution of spiritual direction take origin. He was remarkable for devoutness and assiduity in spiritual exercises. He used to hear the preaching of Sheykh 'Abdu'l-Qadir of Gilan in Baghdad, he himself being [at the time] in Mount Lalesh. And he would draw a circle on the ground, and say to his disciples, "Whosoever will hear the preaching of El-Gilani, let him enter this circle." From this originated a custom which exists even to the present day amongst the Yezidis, namely that when a quarrel arises, or any difficult case requiring the taking of an oath, the Sheykh draws a circle [on the ground] and causeth him who shall take the oath to enter therein.

They will not eat lettuce (*khass*), because, as they allege, Sheykh 'Adi one day passed by a garden, and when he asked of it, and received no answer, he said, "Come away (*his*)!"

They say that Ramadhan was a deaf man, and that when God enjoined the fast on Christians, Muslims, and others, He likewise commanded the Yezidis to fast thirty days, but Ramadhan understood it as three days only. Wherefore they fast but three days in the month of Ramadhan.

Round about [the tomb of] Sheykh 'Adi are many domed shrines, each of which they associate with one of their elders—Sheykh 'Abdu'l-Qadir of Gilan,† Sheykh Qadhibu'l-Ban,‡ Sheykh Shamsu'd-Din,§ Sheykh Mansur-i-Hallaj,‖ Sheykh Hasan of

* Literally, "gave them a path," or "rule of conduct."

† See note at the foot of p. 367 *supra*.

‡ Sheykh Qadhibu'l-Ban of Mawsil (Mosul) was a contemporary of Sheykh 'Abdu'l-Qadir. Some account of his life is given at pp. 608-9 of Jami's *Nafahatu'l Uns* (ed. Lees). Ibn Khallikan (De Slane's translation, vol. ii., p. 651) says that his tomb lay near the Meydan Gate of Mawsil. De Slane (*loc. cit.*, n. 5) declares himself to have been unable to find any notice on this Sufi saint.

§ There are so many Shamsu'd-Dins that, in default of fuller particulars, it is impossible to identify the person to whom allusion is here made. The most celebrated of them was Shamsu'd-Din of Tabriz, the friend and spiritual guide of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi, who flourished during the first half of the thirteenth century of our era.

‖ See note at the foot of p. 367 *supra*.

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Basra,* &c. On each of these domes they place a flag of green or yellow cotton, that is to say, an ensign of victory and triumph, and the like.

They will not eat the flesh of the gazelle, because, according to their assertion, its eyes are like the eyes of Sheykh 'Adi.

They believe that in the Upper World there will be eating and drinking, and enjoyment of carnal and corporeal pleasures.

Some of them say that the government of Heaven is in God's hand, and the government of the earth in the hand of Sheykh 'Adi or of Malak Ta'us.

When the soul of Mansur-i-Hallaj went forth from his body (when the Governor of Baghdad sentenced him to death) it hovered over the waters. And it chanced that his sister came with her jar, at the time of [drawing] water, and filled it with the water of the Tigris, and knew not of the soul [of her brother] when it entered the jar. So she brought it home, and, being affected with thirst, drank it unwittingly. Thus did the soul of the above-mentioned [Mansur] enter into her, and being her brother by birth, became her son by imputation. Wherefore they [the Yezidis] use not drinking vessels with narrow mouths, unless these be provided with [a covering of] net-work to guard them, in reverence to Sheykh Mansur. When they cast his head into the water it boiled, and became possessed of a voice and a murmur. Some of them imagine that a Prophet will arise from amongst the Persians, and will abrogate the law and religion of Muhammad.

In the year [AH] 1289 the Imperial Ottoman Government wished to draw soldiers from them for the army, as from their Musulman subjects. But they all declared and advanced sundry reasons which prevented them from this:—*Firstly*, that it was incumbent on every Yezidi to visit the image of Malak Ta'us three times in each year, namely, in the months of *Nisan*, *Eylul*, and the *second Teshrin*.† *Secondly*, that it was obligatory on every Yezidi to visit the tomb of Sheykh 'Adi once every year, in the month of
4 *Eylul*. ~~*Thirdly*~~, that every Yezidi was bound to kiss daily the hand of his brother, *i.e.*, his spiritual brother (I mean the servant of the Mahdi), and the hand of his Sheykh, and his hand.
5 ~~*Fourthly*~~,‡ that the Yezidi cannot hearken to or tolerate the prayers

* See note at the foot of p. 368 *supra*.

† *i.e.*, April, September, and November.

‡ The MS. has "*fifthly*," omitting "*fourthly*" entirely, and continuing "*sixthly*," "*seventhly*," &c.

Dans le MS c'est le no 5 qui est manquant

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of the Muslim, because [in the course of his prayers] the latter says, "*I take refuge with God from Satan the stoned,*" hearing which the Yezidi is bound by his religion to kill the sayer, or else to kill himself. *Fifthly*, that, when one of the Yezidis dies, his spiritual brother, his *Sheykh*, and his *Pir* must be at his side, as likewise a *Qawwal* [reader or reciter] to recite over him three sentences, which are these: "*O Angel 'Abta'us! This man dies in our faith. He hath never believed in any religion but this, nor accepted such.*" *Sixthly*, with us are the blessings of Sheykh 'Adi, by which I mean the earth from his tomb, which every Yezidi must have with him, and whereof he must eat at the inevitable and appointed time *—an observance obligatory upon us. *Seventhly*, every Yezidi must, when he fasts, be in his own house, and must go every morning of the fast to his *Sheykh* and his *Pir*,† at whose hands he accepts the fast, and at whose hands he breaks it with consecrated wine. *Eighthly*, when a Yezidi continues absent from his house for a year, his wife becomes unlawful unto him, neither will they give him another wife. *Ninthly*, it is necessary that every Yezidi should have the collar of his shirt, when it is new, opened by his spiritual brother or sister. *Tenthly*, every Yezidi must dip his new clothes in the water of Sheykh 'Adi. *Eleventhly*, a Yezidi must not wear dark‡ raiment; nor dress his hair after the fashion of the Muslims, Christians, or Jews; nor shave his head with the razors of these. *Twelfthly*, a Yezidi entereth not the [places of] purification or baths of the Muslim, nor eateth food that hath been prepared by a Muslim, nor drinketh the drinks of other peoples [than his own]. *Thirteenthly*, the Yezidi may not eat fish, nor cucumber, nor *bamiyya*,§ nor French beans, nor cabbage, nor lettuce [*khass* ‖], &c. So when they had adduced these objections to their entering the army, the government began to levy on them army-rates such as it levies on the Christians and Jews, which practice subsists to the present day, namely, the year 1300 of the Flight (A.D. 1882-3).

* *i.e.*, the time of death.

† Cf. p. 368 *supra*.

‡ *Kuhli*, of the colour of the *kuhl*, or antimony, used to blacken the eyelashes and eyebrows. The Yezidis are said always to wear white garments, and to hold the colour *blue* in particular aversion. Cp. Menant's "Yezidis," p. 85.

§ An edible leguminous plant, identified by Schlimmer (*Terminologie Médico-Pharmaceutique Française-Persane*, p. 1) with *Abelmoschus* (*Hibiscus*) *esculentus* (Gombo).

‖ See p. 371 *supra*, and cp. also Menant's *Yezidis*, p. 66.

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Every year the Yezidis gather at [the shrine of] Sheykh 'Adi, and this gathering they call "the General Assembly" (*Jima'iyya*). During a period of eight days they spend their time in eating, drinking, sports, and the like.

They say that Sheykh 'Adi was so strenuous in God's service, and so pious, that even serpents, reptiles, and beasts of prey used to consort with him; and he used to disclose to his disciples revelations, mysteries, prophecies, and knowledge of the unseen. Even at the present day certain of their elders lay claim to this power. They say also that Sheykh 'Adi used to dwell in the sixth island of the Circumambient Ocean, and that he would command the wind and it would be still, or he would do the converse of this.

"From the book 'Jilwa',
which existed before all creatures.

"Malak Ta'us sent 'Abta'us into this world to warn and separate his chosen people from error; *first*, by [teaching them] resignation, *secondly* by this book "*Jilwa*," which it is not permitted to strangers to read or to look upon.

First Section.

"I was, and am now, and will continue unto eternity, ruling over all creatures and ordering the affairs and deeds of those who are under my sway. I am presently at hand to such as trust in me and call upon me in time of need, neither is there any place void of me where I am not present. I am thine evil in all those events which strangers name evils because they are not done according to their desire. Every age has a Regent,* and this by my counsel. Every generation † changes with the Chief of this World, so that each one of the chiefs in his turn and cycle fulfils his charge. I grant indulgence according to the [just] merits of those qualities wherewith each disposition is by nature endowed. He who opposeth me vexeth and grieveth the other gods, to whom it is not given to interfere in my business and work: whatsoever I determine, that is.

"The Scriptures which are in the hands of strangers, ‡ even though they were written by prophets and apostles, yet have these

* *Mudabbir.*

† Or race, or age (*jeyl*).

‡ *I.e.*, those of other religions (*el-Kharijun*).

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turned aside, and rebelled, and perverted them; and each one of them confuteth the other and abrogateth it. Truth and Falsehood are distinguished by proving them at the time of their appearance. I will fulfil my promise to those who put their trust in me, and will perform my covenant, or will act contrary to it, according to the judgment of those wise and discerning Regents to whom I have delegated my authority for determinate periods. I take note of all affairs, and promote the performance of what is needful in its due time. I direct and teach such as will follow my teaching, who find in their accord with me joy and delight greater than any joy wherewith the soul rejoiceth.

Second Section.

"I reward and I punish this progeny of Adam in all different ways of which I have knowledge. In this my hand is the control of the earth and what is above it and beneath it. I undertake not the assistance of other races,* neither do I withhold good from them; much less do I [grudge it] to those who are my chosen people and obedient servants. I surrender active control into the hands of those whom I have proved, who are, in accordance with my will, friends in some shape and fashion to such as are faithful and abide by my counsel. I take and I give; I make rich and I make poor; I make happy and I make wretched, according to environments and seasons, and there is none who hath the right to interfere, or to withdraw any man from my control. I draw down pains and sicknesses upon such as strive to thwart me. He who is accounted mine, dieth not like other men. I suffer no man to dwell in this lower world for more than the period determined by me; and, if I wish, I send him back into this world a second and a third time, or more, by the transmigration of the soul, and this by a universal law."

Third Section.

"I guide without a [revealed] book; I point the way by unseen means unto my friends and such as observe the precepts of my teaching, which is not grievous, and is adapted to the time and

* *'Awalim* I here translate "races" not "worlds"; for I suppose that Malak Ta'us (or whoever may be the speaker) intends to say that he is responsible for the Yezidis only, who, as it appears, regard themselves as a race apart from the rest of mankind, descended indeed from Adam, but not from Eve.

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conditions. I punish such as contravene my laws in other worlds. The children of this Adam know not those things which are determined, wherefore they oft-times fall into error. The beasts of the field, and of heaven, and the fish of the sea, all of them are in my hand and under my control. The treasures and hoards buried in the heart of the earth are known to me, and I cause one after another to inherit them. I make manifest my signs and wonders to such as will receive them and seek them from me in their due season. The antagonism and opposition of strangers to me and my followers do but injure the authors thereof, because they know not that might and wealth are in my hands, and that I bestow them on such of Adam's progeny as are deserving of them. The ordering of the worlds, the revolution of ages, and the changing of their regents are mine from eternity. And whosoever walketh not uprightly therein, him will I chastise in my own appointed time, and turn back to his former charge."

Fourth Section.

"The seasons are four, and the elements are four; these have I vouchsafed to meet the needs of my creatures. The scriptures of strangers * are accepted by me in so far as they accord and agree with my ordinances and run not counter to them; for they have been for the most part perverted. Three there are opposed to me, and three names do I hate. To such as keep my secrets shall my promises be fulfilled. All those who have undergone tribulations for my sake, will I recompense without fail in one of the worlds. I desire all my followers to be united in one fold on account of those who are antagonists and strangers to them. O ye who observe my injunctions, reject such sayings and teachings as are not from me. Mention not my name or my attributes, as strangers do, lest ye be guilty of sin, for ye have no knowledge thereof."

Fifth Section.

"Honour my symbol and image, for it will remind you of what ye have neglected of my laws and ordinances. Be obedient to my servants and act with sincerity towards them, [in gratitude] for what they communicate to you of that knowledge of the unseen which they receive from me."

* *I.e.*, of such as are not of the Yezidi faith.

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Mashefa Res

Another Account.

"In the beginning God created the White Pearl out of His most precious Essence; and He created a bird named *Anghar*. And He placed the pearl upon its back, and dwelt thereon forty thousand years. On the first day, Sunday, He created an angel named *'Azazil*, which is *Ta'us Malak* ('the Peacock Angel'), the chief of all. On Monday He created *Darda'il*, which is Sheykh Hasan.* On Tuesday He created *Israfil*, who is Sheykh Shams [-ud-Din]. On Wednesday He created *Mika'il*, who is Sheykh Abu Bekr. On Thursday He created *'Azra'il*, who is Sajadin. On Friday He created the angel *Shemna'il*, who is Nasiru'd-Din. On Saturday He created the angel *Nura'il*, who is of the religion of *Malak Ta'us*; and him He made chief over them.† Afterwards He created the form of the seven heavens, and the earth, and the sun, and the moon. [Afterwards ‡ He created mankind, and animals, and birds, and beasts, and placed them in the folds of His mantle, and arose from the Pearl, accompanied by the angels. Then He cried out at the Pearl with a loud cry, and forthwith it fell asunder into four pieces, and water gushed out from within it and became the sea. The world was round without corners [?]. Then He created Gabriel in the form of a bird, and committed to his hands the deposition of the four corners. Then He created an ark (?) and abode therein thirty thousand years, after which He came and dwelt in Lalesh. He cried out in the world, and the sea coagulated, and the world became worms which continued to wriggle. Then He commanded Gabriel to take two of the pieces of the White Pearl, one of which He placed under the earth, while the other rested in the Gate of Heaven. Then He placed in them the sun and the moon, and created the stars from their fragments, and suspended them in heaven for an ornament. He also created fruit-bearing trees and plants in the earth, and likewise the mountains,

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* Presumably Sheykh Hasan of Basra (see note on p. 368 *supra*), who would consequently seem to be regarded as an incarnation of this angel.

† Cf. Menant's *Yezidis*, p. 84, where the names of the Seven Angels are somewhat differently given.

‡ The manuscript has here *Fakhru'd-din khalaqa'l-ins*. . . . 'Fakhru'd-din created mankind,' &c. The text seems to be corrupt; we should, perhaps, read *Fakhran li'd-din*, "for a glory to the religion," and take these words with what precedes instead of with what follows. It would, however, appear, from pp. 378 and 387, that Fakhru'd-Din is identified with the god Chemosh.

to embellish the earth. He created the Throne over the Carpet.* Then said the Mighty Lord, "O Angels, I will create Adam and Eve, and will make them human beings, and from them two shall arise, out of the loins of Adam [*Shehr ibn Jebr ?*]; and from Adam [alone] shall arise a single people on the earth, the people of 'Azazil, to wit of *Ta'us Malak*, which is the Yezidi people.' Then He sent Sheykh 'Adi b. Musafir from the land of Syria, and he came and dwelt in Lalesh. Then the Lord descended to the Holy Land, that is Jerusalem (*el-Quds*), and commanded Gabriel to take earth from the four corners of the world: earth, air, fire, and water. He made it [man], and endowed it with a soul by His power. Then He commanded Gabriel to enter Paradise and to eat of the fruit of every green herb, only of wheat should he not eat.† After a hundred years *Ta'us Malak* said to God, 'How shall Adam increase and multiply, and where is his offspring?' God said to him, 'Into thy hand have I surrendered authority and administration.' Then He came and said to Adam, 'Hast thou eaten of the wheat?' He answered, 'No, for God hath forbidden me so to do, and hath said, "Thou shalt not eat of it."' [*Malak Ta'us*] said to him, '[Nay, but] all shall go better with thee.' But, after he had eaten, his belly swelled up, and *Ta'us Malak* drove him forth from Paradise, and left him, and ascended into heaven. Then Adam suffered from [the distension of] his belly, because it had no outlet. But God sent a bird, which came and helped him, and made an outlet for it, and he was relieved. And Gabriel continued absent from him for a hundred years, and he was sad, and wept. Then God commanded Gabriel, and he came and created Eve from under Adam's left arm-pit. Then *Malak Ta'us* descended to earth for the sake of our people—I mean the much-suffering Yezidis—and raised up for us kings beside the kings of the ancient Assyrians, *Nesrukh*‡ (who is Nasiru'd-Din), and *Kamush*‡ (who is King Fakhru'd-Din), and *Artimus* (who is King Shamsu'd-Din). And after this we had two kings, the first and the second Shapur, whose rule lasted one hundred and fifty years, and from whose seed are our *Amirs* until the present day; and we became divided into four Septs.§ To us it is forbidden to eat lettuce (*khass*)—because its name resembles

* By "the Throne" (*'arsh*) is meant "the Throne of God," and by "the Carpet" (*farsh*) the Earth.

† Wheat, according to the Mohammedan belief, was the forbidden fruit.

‡ The gods Nisroch and Chemosh of Scripture.

§ Cf. Menant's *Yezidis*, pp. 117-118.

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that of our prophetess *Khassa**—and haricot beans; also to dye [our garments] dark [blue];† neither do we eat fish, out of respect for Jonah the prophet; nor gazelles, because these constituted the flock of one of our prophets. The Sheykh and his disciples, moreover, eat not the flesh of the cock, out of respect for the peacock; for it is one of the seven gods‡ before mentioned, and its image is in the form of a cock.§ The Sheykh and his disciples likewise abstain from eating [the flesh of] hornless beasts. It is, moreover, forbidden to us to make water standing, or to put on our clothes sitting, or to cleanse ourselves in the privy as do the Muhammadans, or to perform our ablutions in their baths. Neither is it permitted to us to pronounce the name of Satan (because it is the name of our God), nor any name resembling this, such as *Kitan*, *Sharr*, *Shatt*‖; nor any vocable resembling *mal'un* [in sound, such as] *na'l*, or the like. Before [illegible] ¶ our religion was called idolatry; and the Jews, Christians, Muslims, and Persians held aloof from our religion. King Ahab and Amon (?) were of us, so that they used to call the God of Ahab Beelzebub, whom they now call amongst us *Pir-bub*. We had a king in Babel whose name was Bukht-i-Nossor,** and Ahasuerus in Persia, and in Constantinople Agricola. Before heaven and earth existed, God *was* over the waters in an ark in the midst of the waters. Then He was wroth with the pearl which he had created, wherefore he cast it away: and from the crash of it were produced the mountains, and from the clang of it the sand-hills, and from its smoke the heavens. Then God ascended into heaven, and condensed the heavens, and fixed them [in their place] without supports, and enclosed the earth. Then He took the pen in His hands, and began to write down [the names of] all His creatures.

* Cf. p. 371 *supra*, where a different reason is given.

† Cf. note on p. 373 *supra*.

‡ *I.e.*, Malak Ta'us, "the Peacock Angel."

§ This image is figured at p. 99 of Menant's *Yezidis*.

‖ Cf. Menant, *loc. cit.*, pp. 80-82: 'Aussi, en parlant d'une rivière, ils ne disent pas *Shatt*, parceque ce mot a trop de rapport avec la première syllabe du nom Satan, "*Sheitan*, le Diable," mais ils emploient l'expression *Nahr*. C'est pour la même raison qu'ils ne se servent pas du mot *Keitan* "fil" ou "frange;" *Naal* "fer à cheval," et *Naal-bend* "maréchal," sont des mots défendus qui rappellent l'expression *Laan* "malédiction," et *Maloun* "maudit."'

¶ The text of the first part of this sentence is so corrupt that I cannot even conjecture its meaning.

** Nebuchadnezzar.

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From His essence and light He created six gods, whose creation was as one lighteth a lamp from another lamp. Then said the first god to the second god, 'I have created heaven; ascend thou into it, and create something else.' And when he ascended, the sun came into being. And he said to the next, 'Ascend!' and the moon came into being. And the third put the heavens in movement, and the fourth [created] the stars, and the fifth created *el-Kuragh* (?)—that is to say, the Morning Star; and so on."

*Another Account.**

The Yezidis say that there are seven gods, one of whom descended to earth and created hell and paradise. After this he created Adam and Eve and all animals. And Adam and Eve disputed and were vexed with one another as to the generation of the human race, each one of them saying, "From me shall it be begotten." And they saw the beasts mating, and the male pairing with the female, and how they brought forth their young. Then each one of them put their seed (some say their spittle) into a jar; and they closed the mouths of the two jars with their seals. And after nine months they opened their jars; and in Adam's jar they saw a pair of children, exceeding fair; but in Eve's jar only two white worms. Then God created paps for Adam wherewith he suckled them; and they were male and female, and from these two was the Yezidi people begotten. After this Adam knew Eve, and children were born of them, and from these sprang the Jews, the Christians, the Muslims, and the rest of the human race. But Seth, Enoch, Noah, and other good men are of us—us, the Yezidis; from Adam alone are they descended, and not from Eve. At that time arose strife and enmity betwixt the man and his wife. And when they came before a just man for arbitration, he decided between them and sent them away. And the cause of this [strife] was that the man would say, "She is my wife," and the woman would say, "He is not my husband." Therefore were the drum and horn introduced [at the marriage ceremony], in order that whosoever heard the sound of them might inquire and know that such an one was wedded to such an one, and that they [who heard] might be witnesses against them when one of them denied the rights of the other.

They say also that the Deluge of Noah was the last flood in this world; and that the Yezidi people descend and spring from a noble personage, the King of Peace, whose name is *Nu'ma*, whom they

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now call ***Malik Miran***; and that the rest of mankind are from the seed of Ham, who mocked his father.

They likewise say that God Almighty talked with our father Adam in the Kurdish tongue, which was the first tongue, and was from of old in the world; and that the Ark of Noah rested once in the village of 'Ayn Sifni,* which is near to Sheykh 'Adi, and distant about [seventeen hours] from Nineveh. Men are wicked 5 parasanges because they condemn and despise our religion; wherefore God sent against them the second deluge. And when the Ark of Noah rose and floated on the water, it drifted and passed onwards to the Mountain of Sanjar, which is distant about eighteen hours from Mosul; and there it struck on a rock which pierced it, and the serpent coiled itself up, and pushed itself into the hole, and stopped the leak. Then the Ark halted and stood still over the Mountain of Judi, [which is distant about twenty-four hours from Mosul.] And when the race of serpents multiplied, Noah caught them and burned them, and from their bones fleas were produced.

From the Deluge until now about seven thousand years have elapsed, and every thousand years one of the seven gods descends to earth bringing signs and wonders, and ascends again into heaven. The Holy Temple and other sacred spots are ours, and in the hands of our people. At this time Allah-Yezid descended to teach and confirm us. For Muhammad the Prophet of God, whom God illuminated, had a servant by name *Mo'awi*.† And he (*i.e.* Muhammad) walked not in the way of God uprightly, wherefore he was afflicted with pain in the head. One day he said to his servant *Mo'awi*, "Scarify my head, for it pains me." But when he scratched it too violently the blood flowed from it, whereupon he, that is *Mo'awi*, licked it with his tongue. And when Muhammad perceived this, he said to him, "What hast thou done? For [now] from thee shall come forth a people and a nation which shall vex and hurt my people." Then *Mo'awi* answered, "Then will I not wed, so that I may have no offspring." But after a while ***Mo'awi*** fell sick, until at length the physicians agreed that he must either marry or die. So they married him to an old woman aged seventy years; and he lay with her. And next morning, behold, she was a young girl of twenty-five, and she conceived and brought forth Yezid, our god. Those of other faiths and races say that when

* *See* Hoffmann, *loc. laud.*, p. 197.

† *Sic*, apparently for Mo'awiya.

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our god descended to earth, he was cast out and cut off from the Great and Almighty God; wherefore they blaspheme and revile him. In this they err and go astray. When he descended to this earth, he gave us banners, and tokens, and signs; then he ascended into heaven. Hell was created in the first days of Adam. At that time, too, he begat a son called Ibriq Asghar, and for him he created companions. For a period of six years he was afflicted in his eyes; and his nose, hands, and feet ached. And he had a little ewer, and into this ewer his tears ran whenever he wept, until it was filled. Then he emptied it and poured its contents over hell, and the fire thereof was quenched. They say that each of the seven gods made for him a banner, that is to say a flag for a token; and these were for a time in the keeping of Solomon the Wise, who bequeathed them after his death to our kings. And when our god was born, he took them and gave them to our *Amir*, and they have remained in our hands till now. And they carry them in processions and recite praises before them in the Kurdish tongue, with mumblings of uncouth words, such as "*Halumma halalu*," and the like. Every year they deposit a pledge of money with the Amir, the chief Sheykh, the Vakil, and the rest, and send one [of the flags] to Khalatiyya (which is the name of a district), and another to Aleppo, and another to Masquq, and another to Sanjar. These, after depositing this pledge, they take to Sheykh 'Adi, where they wash them with acid sumac-juice. Then they dip them in water, and send with each one a handful of earth from the tomb of Sheykh 'Adi. And this earth they make into little pellets like gall-nuts, which they hawk about and sell for money as amulets for the dead and those newly married. And when the standard approaches any town or village, they first send a herald in advance to announce its arrival. Then all the Yezidis who dwell there go forth to meet it with cymbals and flutes, and bring it in to the largest and noblest house, which gives a sum of money in honour of its entry. Here the people assemble to pay their respects to it, and make offerings to it of silver, gold, arms, clothes, and the like. The remaining three banners (for there are seven in all) they keep in their holy places, two at Sheykh 'Adi and one at Bakhrafi; and every four months they carry round in procession each of them in turn through the Amir's diocese. And each of them has its appointed chamber, wherein they place a lamp in which they burn olive oil. Their most solemn festival is in the month of *Nisan* (April), during the first four days of which there must be meat in the house of every Yezidi, and

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their maidens gather roses and other flowers, which they place at the gates of their courtyards as a token of rejoicing for the feast. Their women send food and provisions to the tombs at sundown, and wayfarers, the poor, and the destitute eat thereof; and this they do for other than their own dead. And the *Kuchak* mutters (?) as though he were praying over the tombs, and [for this] receives money; and so, likewise, the *Qawwal* plays shrill music on his flute, and invokes mercy on them [the dead], for which he receives money as remuneration for his labour. On the first day of the year, which they call *Sar-sali*, they refrain from playing on cymbals, drums, or flutes, because [on that day] God sits on His throne arranging the decrees for the [coming year], as to whom He shall send, and how He shall send him, and whither He shall send him, and so on. They imagine that God does not require them to fast or pray, but only to give alms, and to do good works, and act uprightly. And when one of their *Kuchaks* is fasting, if one of the common people comes and offers him food he at once breaks his fast, and eats. Their elders intimidate and threaten them, if they fail to give gifts and alms as it behoves them to do, with chastisements, such as plague, fever, famine, and divers pestilences and pains, or with the triumph of their enemies over them. Every Friday they must bring one load of food and drink to each *sanjaq*,* and, when one of them arrives, he cries out in a loud voice on the terrace, saying, "An invitation to the sons of so-and-so," mentioning the name whereby the *sanjaq* is called. And, when they hear, they kiss the stones and earth about the place where they are standing, as they do at the rising and setting of the sun and moon. "Our books are our hearts," say they, "for they announce and foretell to us what hath been and shall be, and the like." [Wherefore] want of agreement and discord [sometimes] subsists amongst their *Kuchaks*, who, as they say, speak and prophesy as it is revealed to them in visions and dreams in the night. Accordingly the *Kuchak* is as a prophet in their eyes, so that one of them will say, "I was in Jonah's ship, and with my hands did I cast him into the sea; and Jonah remained in the bosom of the deep forty days and nights." And another will say, "I was in the council-chamber of God when He sent Christ into the world; and He disclosed to our Church seven treasures, which are now deposited

* Flag, banner; or the district governed by each of these banners. See the preceding page, about the middle.

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and hidden in Sheykh 'Adi. Strangers, that is to say the Jews, Christians, and Muslims, do not preserve the order of their descent as we do; that is to say, [with us] *Sheykh* is the son of *Sheykh*, *Kuchak* of *Kuchak*, *Qawwal* of *Qawwal*, and so on; and none marries save with his own order, and kind, and sept, contrary to the custom of the Christians, with whom it is possible for one to be a priest whose father was not a priest, and so in the case of the [Muhammadan] *mulla*, &c." The *Qawwals* suffer not the razor to pass over their faces. At their marriages they take cakes of thin bread from the house of the *Kuchak*, half of which they give to the bridegroom and half to the bride; and also a little earth from the tomb of Sheykh 'Adi, which brings blessing, and is a perfecting of the marriage rite in their eyes. And in every house there must be a little earth from the tomb of Sheykh 'Adi against the time of necessity.

When one of them wrongs the wife of another, he must make compensation in money, or surrender up [to the other] his sister, or his mother, or his daughter, or his wife. It is unlawful and forbidden to them to marry in the month of *Nisan* (April), because it is the beginning of the year;* to all, that is to say, except the *Kuchak*, who is exempted from this rule, and may marry, if he list, even in the month of Nisan. Each one of them, if he desire it, may take to himself any number of wives up to six. An exception is made in favour of the *Amir*, to whom is brought whatsoever woman he desireth. With them the daughter has no share of inheritance from her father, but is accounted as an estate which the father can sell if he will. And, therefore, if a daughter does not wish to marry, she must pay her father a sum of money earned by the labour of her hands, her craft, or her gains. On the occasion of a marriage they drink intoxicating liquors to celebrate the union, except the *Kuchak* and three of the *Sheykhs*. And it is permitted to them to dance together, men and women alike. And the bride, ere she depart to the house of the bridegroom, must visit the personages [revered by the Yezidis],† that is to say their shrines, and likewise any church of the Christians which happens to lie on her way. And when she reaches the bridegroom's house, he strikes

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* That is, I suppose, of the old Persian solar year, the beginning of which is marked by the entry of the Sun into the Sign of Aries.

† The MS. has *Shuqus*, for which (as it seems to give no intelligible meaning) I read *Shukhus*, "personages," or "images."

her with a little stone, to indicate that she is subject to his authority. Then they break a roll of bread over her head, to indicate that she shall be merciful and compassionate towards the poor, and needy, and indigent. On the eves of Friday and Wednesday it is forbidden to marry, or to lie with the bride.

When a Yezidi dies, they place a little earth from [the tomb of] Sheykh 'Adi in his mouth and on his face, and lay pellets of sheep's dung on his grave. The *Kuchak* recites prayers over the dead man, and describes by inspiration what hath befallen him after his death, whether he shall return again to this world, or hath not returned, and, if he has returned, what form or whom [his spirit] inhabits. For the souls of their just ones pass by metempsychosis into human forms, but the wicked into animals. And there are found some amongst them who bury money and other things in the ground, and there conceal it, that it may be a provision for their second advent into this world. They further suppose that the spirits of their just ones dwell in the air, and disclose secrets, and hidden things, and visions, to those who dwell in this world of ours. And the *Kuchak* * can cause to die or give life.

Behind the Mountain of Sheykh Matta † lies the shrine of a person ‡ named Muhammad Rashshan, who is greatly venerated by them, so that in disputes and quarrels amongst themselves, his name is used as the final adjuration.

When one among them falls sick, he seeks healing at a *Khasin*,§ that is to say, a shrine, which exists [at] || Sitt Nafisa, and is an elm-tree¶ in the village of Ba'ashika** (called by others 'Abdi-Rash, which is on the stone), or at an elm-tree in the village of Kharabak. And when one among them is sick with the jaundice, he goes to a spring called Kaná-zár; while he who is afflicted with the dropsy goes to the house of a *Pir* who dwells in the village of Mam-Rashshan.

Kani Zer

* That is, I suppose, his spirit, after his death.

† *Jabal Matta*. *See* Hoffmann's *Akt. Pers. Mart.*, p. 176, note 1373.

‡ Again the MS. has *Shags*, for which I again read *Shakhs*.

§ This appears to be the Kurdish word *khasin*, a corruption of the Arabic *khazina*, a treasury. Cf. Jaba's *Dict. Kurde-Français*, published by Justi, p. 155.

|| The word *fi* (in, at) seems to be needed here to make sense of the sentence.

¶ *Tusha*, apparently for *tusa*.

** *See* Hoffmann, *op. laud.* p. 184, notes 6 and 7.

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During their assemblies at [the shrine of] Sheykh 'Adi, it is not permitted to any of them to cook food, but all must eat from the table of Sheykh 'Adi alone. Stones * are specially allotted to each *Kuchak* and *Pir*, beside which they are wont to sit, as though praying, and which the common folk visit with presents of money, in order that these may make intercession for them. To these stones also they vow offerings of cattle, sheep, and the like, in order that their aspirations and aims may be fulfilled; and each one offers [at least] the equivalent of what he eats at [the shrine of] Sheykh 'Adi.†

To Sheykh 'Adi, and Sheykh Shamsu'd-Din, and King Fakhru'd-Din are assigned certain days called *Wala'im*,‡ during which they (*i.e.* the Yezidis) eat without payment, in consideration of their guaranteeing from year to year a fixed sum of money [to defray the expenses of these feasts]. The retainers of their *Amir*, together with one of their *Sheykhs*, go about amongst them at these assemblies to prevent any theft, or murder, or dispute. The consummation of marriage at the shrine § is not permitted, because in their eyes it is a holy place. When they have eaten the *Gavdush*,‖ by which I mean the flesh of the consecrated ox, they afterwards bathe in the water of the *Zamzam* which flows beneath one of the shrines of Sheykh 'Adi. They keep the flesh which has been placed in the cauldron and boiled therein; and there are some of them who, when they are burnt, lay it upon their sores. They ascend the mountain firing off their guns, and each one of them takes a little earth from [the tomb of] Sheykh 'Adi; after which they turn back and put on the *Barshiki* [?],¶ that is to say the girdle consecrated with the holy water, &c. One of them, who is named the *Chawush*,** wears a girdle woven with goat's hair, and holds in his hand a *Kabala*, that is to say, a plaited cord, about nine spans in length, woven of fine goat's wool, and dyed with *Barkúsak*, that is, black

* *Hijar*. Perhaps, however, this is a clerical error for *hujar*, "cells," "shrines," which seems to give a better sense.

† See *supra*.

‡ Plural of *Walima*, a banquet, feast.

§ Again *shaqs*, for which it seems necessary to substitute *shakhs*, "person," "image."

‖ A corruption of the Persian *gav-gusht*?

¶ I can find no trace of this word, and am quite uncertain as to its etymology, meaning, and proper pronunciation.

** A Turkish word, signifying a sergeant, or herald.

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dye. He likewise carries freshly-cut branches.* And when their visitation is duly accomplished and concluded, they bring the money which they have collected before the *Amir*, who gives to each according to his function, and keeps for himself whatever remains over.

There are two [annual] gatherings, one at the Feast of the Pilgrimage, on which occasion they ascend the Mountain of Arafat, whence they race to [the shrine of] Sheykh 'Adi.† And he who outruns the rest is accounted most honourable amongst them. The second gathering is called "the Way of the *Kawwals*,"‡ and on this occasion they bind ropes about their necks, go up into the mountain, collect fire-wood, and carry it to Sheykh 'Adi to seethe meat (which they call *simat*) for the *Amir*.

Now they suppose that they have had their kings from of old in all the world, in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere: Ahab, king of the Children of Israel; Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon; Ahasueras, King of Persia; and Agricola, King of Constantinople. These, and others, as they say, were in their time their kings: Beelzebub, who if *Pir Bub*; Nesrukh,§ who is *Nasru'd-Din*; Kamush,§ who is *Fakhru'd-Din*; Artemis, who is *Shamsu'd-Din*; and, in later days, of the progeny of Shapur and Bahram,‖ who have continued and begotten offspring without interruption unto this our time,* which is the year 2202 of the Greeks, or 1892 of the Christian era. And they keep the water wherewith they have washed their idols, and give it to drink to the sick, and unto their women, for their evil purposes.

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* The MS. has *shanashil*, which I suppose to be a mistake for *shamashil*, an Arabic form of plural from *shemshal*. See Jaba's *Dict. Kurde-Français*, p. 261; and Vullers' *Persian Lexicon*, s. v., *shimshar*.)

† This ceremony, as well as the names *'Arafat*, *Zamzam*, &c., seems to be a mere copy of the Mecca Pilgrimage.

‡ *Tariqu'l-Qawwalin*.

§ See note on p. 378, *supra*.

‖ The MS. has *Yuram*, which is an easy corruption of *Buram*, which, in turn, I suspect to be a corruption of *Bahram*.

* Le P. Khalifé = 2200 des Grecs = 1889 CH = 1305 Hég.

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ITINERARY.

I.—From Alexandretta to Mardin.

(Caravans generally travel from three to four miles an hour.)

	HOURS.
Alexandretta—	
Beilan	3½
Khan-el-Diarbekrli	3½
Bridge of Murad Pasha	2
El Hammamát	3½
Afrín Khan (on river Afrin)	1
Tarmannín	4½
Aleppo	7¼
Akhterín	8
Ayash	5¾
River	2¼
R. Sajur	1¼
Zambúr	1¼
Kasandash	1¾
River	5
Euphrates	3
Birejik	½
Charmálik	9¼
Urfa	8¾
Karájerún	12
Mishmishin	2¾
Sewerék	6
Village by a broken bridge	2¼
Utchkúah	1
Kainak	4
Karabáksha	2¾
Sarsink	3½
Khan of Sarsink	4½
Diarbekr	4½
Cherukíyah	1¼
Khan Akhbúrah	4¾
Ford	1¼
Ford	1¾
Khániki	1½
Sheikh	3½
Mardin	4½

II.—Mardin to Mosul.

Mardin—	
Tel-Harrín	3
Qala'at	1½
Stream	2
Dara	½
Sarjkhan	1¾
Khásser	¼
Nisibis	2¼
Kerasín	¼
Hajikhán	4
Stream	½
Aznaúr	½
River	½
Hajilúk	1¼
Buwúrdah	1
Atba	1
Deirúneh	¾
Kanigúr	4
Shuswadíyah	5
Stream	2¾
Stream	10¾
Ruined barracks	3½
Hamadíyah	6

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II.—Mardin to Mosul.—*Continued.*

	HOURS.
Mosul	3¼
Tel Kaif	3¼
Stream	5¾
Mill	3½
Samíl	¾
Gars	4¼
Kanigár	¾
Márși	1
Feishkhabúr	5¼
Ruined village	3
Ruined village	1
Stream	1½
Tchélagha	2½
Deirúnah	3

III.—Jebel Tur.

Mardin—	
Rishmíl	1½
Ma'asirta	3¼
Khárbat-el-Qala'atah	2
Khárbat-el-gras	2¼
Ábsha	2¾
Midhiát	3
Sálah	2½
Darindáb	1¾
Kafr Júsen	½
Ain	¼
Eidadúwah	½
Hasan-el-Kaf	1¼
Saúr	1
Village	1
Turn from river	¼
Mamúnah	1¾
Baleídr	1¼
Deir Mar Quriáqos	1¼
Janáskar	1
Mai Radwán	½
Khópa	¼
Palóni	1½
Has-has	1
Deir Mar Quriáqos—	
Bar-résel	½
Shinaríyah	½
Mamúnah	¾
Ain	1¼
The Tigris	½
Hasan-el-Kaf	2¾
Deir Mar Mokhr	1
Difna	¼
Ain Rúsa	1¾
Yárda	3¾
Hármuis	3
Deir Mar Salib	1
Pakubu	1¼
Hakh	1¾
Hastarik	1
Hálakh	1½
Arnas	1¼
Midhiat	2
Mazirzakh	1½
Deir-el-Omar	2¼

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GLOSSARY.

Abba	Cloak.
Abd	Servant.
Ab	Father.
Abúna . . .	Our Father.
Agha . . .	A Turkish title.
Ain	Fountain.
Aiwa	An exclamation.
Aiwan . . .	Open court.
Allah . . .	God.
Allah ma'kum	God be with you.
Amir	A title (Lord).
Antidoron (Greek)	Blest bread.
Arba'ín . . .	Forty.
Árrak . . .	A liqueur.
Askóf . . .	Bishop.
Auxios (Greek)	Worthy.
Bakhshísh . .	Present.
Bala khána .	Upper room.
Bamíyah . .	*Hibiscus esculentus.*
Báshi-bazúk .	Irregular troops.
Bátrik . . .	Patriarch.
Bazár . . .	Covered shops.
Beg	Turkish title (Sir).
Beit	House.
Bim-bashi . .	Police officer.
Dallál . . .	Auctioneer.
Darweísh . .	Derwish.
Deir	Monastery.
Dibbiz . . .	Molasses.
Diwán . . .	Reception room.
Dukkún . . .	Shop.
Efendi . . .	Gentleman.
Fantasía . .	Ornament.
Faqír . . .	Poor.
Faríq . . .	A military title.
Haj	Pilgrimage.
Háji	Pilgrim.
Hammám . .	Bath.
Haníyah . .	May it be pleasant to you.
Harím . . .	Women's apartments (the closed).
Hawájah . .	Sir.
Heikel . . .	Temple.
Híjrah . . .	The Flight (of Mohammed).
Hosh	Court yard.
Imám . . .	Leader.
Insh-Allah . .	Please God!
Islám . . .	Submission.
Jazírah . . .	Island.
Jebel	Mountain.
Jilwah . . .	Effulgence.
Kaimák . .	Cream.
Kali	Alkali.
Kalimat-el-Islam . . .	Word of submission (the Mohammedan Profession of faith).
Kanún . . .	Zither.
Kargh . . .	Pole-star.
Kátib . . .	Scribe.
Kátirji . . .	Muleteer.
Kefíyeh . . .	Kerchief.
Keif	How.
Kéllek . . .	Raft.
Khálifa . . .	The Religious Head of Mohammedans.
Khalíl . . .	Friend.
Khan	Inn.
Kháter . . .	Favour.

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Khurj . . .	Saddle-bag.
Kitáb . . .	Book.
Kismát . . .	It is fated.
Korán . . .	Reading (the sacred book of Mohammedans).
Kursi . . .	Throne.
Leben . . .	Sour milk.
Mádhbkha . .	Kitchen.
Mádrasah . .	School.
Mafi	There is not.
Mafrian . .	Metropolitan.
Majíd . . .	Twenty-piastre piece.
Majlis . . .	Council.
Malik . . .	King.
Mar	Lord.
Mara	Lady.
Mashallah . .	Expression of wonder.
Mastík . . .	Liqueur.
Minárah . .	Minaret.
Moran (Syriac)	Lord.
Mu'állim . .	Teacher.
Mudhbah . .	Altar.
Mudír . . .	Treasurer.
Muéddhin . .	Prayer-caller.
Múfti . . .	Law-teachers.
Muháffah . .	Panniers.
Mujáhid . .	Fighters in a holy war.
Mukhtár . .	Head of a village.
Múlla . . .	Teacher.
Mushír . . .	General.
Mutrán . . .	Bishop.
Mutserrafiyah.	Second division of the empire.
Mutserráf . .	Governor of second division of empire.
Nábbi . . .	Prophet.
Nárjilah . .	Water-pipe.
Narthex (Greek)	Vestibule of church.
Nakh . . .	Make to kneel.
Nishán . . .	A decoration.
Nizám . . .	Regular soldiers.
Para	A fortieth part of a piastre.
Pasha . . .	Governor.
Piastre . . .	Two pence
Pronaos (Greek)	Court of church.
Qaddíshe (Syriac)	Holy.
Qádhi . . .	Judge.
Qaimaqám . .	Governor of division of mutserrafiyah.
Qaríb . . .	Groomsman (near).
Qala'at . . .	Castle.
Qas	Priest.
Qássar . . .	Fort.
Qawwas . .	Orderly.
Qiblah . . .	The direction of prayer.
Quds	Holy.
Rafidhíyah. .	Deserters. Sectarians.
Rahab . . .	Monk.
Rahat-el-lakúm . .	Turkish delight.
Rahman . .	Merciful.
Ramadhán .	Ninth month in Mohammedan year.
Rammán . .	Pomegranate.
Reis	Head.
Sa'adat-kum .	Your Beatitude.
Salám aleikum	Peace be upon you.
Salíb . . .	Cross.
Sarásker . .	Commander-in-chief.
Sardab . . .	Cellar.
Sarj	Saddle.
Sáyid . . .	Lord.
Semn . . .	Clarified butter.

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Senawíyah . .	Year spot; a boil.
Senjak . . .	Banner.
Serai . . .	Palace.
Shammás . .	Deacon.
Shaqs. . . .	Shrine (?).
Sharíf . . .	Noble.
Shat	Arrow.
Sheikh . . .	Old man.
Sheitán . . .	Clever fellow.
Sherbet . . .	Drink.
Shibuk . . .	Pipe.
Simandro (Gk.)	Board beaten in place of bell.
Sitna . . .	Our Lady.
Subhan-Allah.	Praise be to God.
Suq	Market.
Súra	Chapter.
Sytha . . .	Holy oil.
Tahlíl . . .	Cry of joy.
Tanzimat . .	Regulation (especially the reforms of 1841).
Tarbúsh . .	Fez.
Tasbíh . . .	Rosary.
Ta'ús . . .	Peacock.
Téskereh . .	Passport.
Tibn	Chopped straw.
Túghra . . .	Order.
Turáni . . .	Dialect of Syriac.
Turband . .	Head-dress.
Tutun . . .	Tobacco.
Ulima . . .	Body of men learned in the law.
Uzbashi (Turkish)	Head of police.
Wádi . . .	A valley through which water flows in winter.
Wakíl . . .	Deputy.
Wáli	Governor of a province.
Waláyat . .	Province.
Wárdah . . .	Rose.
Wazír . . .	Minister.
Ya'urt (Turkish)	Curdled milk.
Za'aferán . .	Saffron.
Zámzam . .	Murmur (the sacred spring at Mecca).
Záptieh . . .	Mounted police.
Zibde . . .	Butter.
Ziyárah . . .	Place of pilgrimage.

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