

THE
OPEN
COURT


*Publication of
The New Orient Society
of America*

APRIL

1934

Vol. 48

Number 929



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Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science,
and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea.

FOUNDED BY EDWARD C. HEGELER

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HADJE, PEDLAR OF BAGHDAD

Frontispiece to The Open Court

THE OPEN COURT

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WHERE EAST AND WEST MEET

BY AMEEN RIIHANI

NATIONS, like individuals, reluctantly submit to a common measure, or to a single code of conduct. Rarely do we welcome the justice which is all inclusive; rarely do we accept the truth which we fashion for our neighbor; rarely, and never cheerfully, do we submit to the sword we sharpen for our opponent's head. We may be willing to look at both sides of a question, but often it is only to strengthen our own. Few are they, indeed, who face the facts always and accept the consequences.

We travel in parallel lines, though they may be in themselves very crooked. And instead of cutting through a curve or an angle—a custom or a tradition—to our goal, we find ourselves led by a dozen beckoning fingers in this or that direction, but often away from the point of intersection. We seem to have an atavistic dislike to meeting, through common measures, on common ground. If we conquer our pride, we trip through our prejudices; if we overcome our prejudices, we remain captives to our interests; and if in a moment of recklessness, we kick them all out of our way, the fear of ridicule continues and persists. And of all the evil dominations of the spirit, fear is the most potent. We are afraid, not so much of our enemy as of the possibility of his being in the right; we are afraid, if he is in the right, of according recognition; and if we do so, we are afraid of losing our little gains in the game. Thus, to the end of the fallacy of profit.

Man dislikes, I believe, equal and universal justice; democracy, too, may be one of his secret hates; and religion on the whole is a shameless expression of self-love. There seems to be no such course, single and direct, to a happiness innocent of booty. Success is often a butchery; fame is often a snare, and paradise has ever been a bribe.

Much depends in the three upon our pride, our prejudice and intolerance, as well as upon the denunciation we can master. East is East, for instance, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet. Which means that a common measure for both is impossible, is intolerable, is unspeakably wicked.

My subject, *Where East and West Meet*, implies, however, a denial of Rudyard Kipling's opinion, which was megaphoned to the world in a line of verse.

But the evidence, from a surface point of view, is in favor of Mr. Kipling. The East prays, the West dances; the East dreams, the West thinks; the East broods, the West plays. What is a mark of respect in the East is considered an offense in the West: the Oriental, when he enters a house, slips off his shoes at the door, the Occidental finds a hat-rack for his hat. The Oriental inquires about the health of your wife and children, before he "bleeds" you; the Occidental proceeds directly, at times even without a remark about the weather: the one is suave and insidious, the other is blunt and often crude. The Oriental is imaginative and metaphoric, the Occidental is literal and matter-of-fact; the one, when he is not naive, is subtle in his selfishness; the other, when he is not sophisticated, is a Gradgrind unashamed. But in sexual matters, the Oriental is downright lewd, the Occidental is prurient and suggestive: the one walks directly to his goal, the other meanders, through dances and dinners, to it. When gone wrong, the Oriental is a smiling villain, the Occidental is a slap-dash scoundrel. The Occidental, with billboard and headline, decoys the main chance in the open square; the Oriental waits for it in the alleys and by-ways of Circumstance: the one trusts in logic, the other in metaphysics. And from a point of view higher than our own—the point of view of the sun—the East is asleep, when the West is awake. The Kipling dictum is in this, at least, wholly to the point.

Like all generalities, however, these traits are not without exception. They are characteristic, but they are not exclusive. The mass gesture everywhere is dictated by a common need or a common fear; and nations, like individuals, are often the victims of the prevailing humor. Take, for instance, the fawning and florid Oriental, extravagant with the metaphor and the puff—he is not a type exclusive. He is a species produced by despotism and its pompous

court. The aristocracy kowtows to the emperor; the lower classes kowtow to the aristocracy and to each other; the whole nation kowtows, before the broken mirror of the soul, to herself.

When absolute monarchies were the rule in Europe, the Europeans, on the whole, were quite Oriental in the art of fawning and adulation; while the extravagant manner, as much in evidence in the nation as around the throne, was revealed, not only in the speech, but also in the dress of the period. Consider the ruffles and feathers of milord at court; the flounces and trains of milady in waiting: consider the dedications penned by impecunious scribes to their rich patrons, and consider, moreover, the lewdness and the ribaldry, which reached the height of fashion at the courts of Catherine of Russia, Queen Elizabeth, and Louis XV. The people ape their superiors, and the superiors follow their sovereign.

While I am still on the surface of the subject, let me give you an instance of how Oriental were the English writers of the past. Without mentioning Shakespeare, whose poetic imagery and figures of speech are in texture and volumes as rich as anything we have in the Arabic language, and without mentioning such masters of literary extravagance as Smollet and Stern, or such wholesale dealers in sentimentality as Dickens, I come to a more particular instance, which I find in the titles of some of the books of the seventeenth century.

That Arab authors delighted and to a certain extent still delight in extravagant titles, is true. Some of these titles are amusing in the metaphor and the rhyme, some are meaningless, and others are both telling and quaint. Here are a few examples: *The Cymbals of Pleasure About the Arabs' Literary Treasure*, *Wafts of Perfume Enow From Andalusia's Tender Bough*, *The Golden Strings of Advice to Kings*, *The Quaint and Strange in Every Art of the Age*, *The Magnificent Bride to Nature a Guide*.

But these flourishes of the mind were quite in vogue in England, particularly in the writings of the Puritans. A pamphlet published in 1626 was called by its author *A Most Delectable Nosegay for God's Saints to Smell At*. And here is a good example of the quaint and picturesque—*A Pair of Bellows to Blow Off the Dust Cast upon John Fry*.

But I can not find anything in Arabic to equal the title page of a book called *Hooks and Eyes for Believers' Breeches*. Not that the Arabs had neither hooks and eyes nor breeches: but the idea that

one's belief might only be a piece of frippery to hide one's shame does not seem to have occurred to them. Another aid to piety is a pamphlet entitled *High-Heeled Shoes for Dwarfs in Holiness*. This, too, is impossible in Arabic, except it be adapted to the modern affirmations of the feminine soul. But nothing, I dare say, can be found in any language to match this title:

A Sigh for the Sinners of Zion Breathed Out of a Hole in
the Wall of an Earthen Vessel, Known Among Men by the
Name of John Fish.

And this, which Mr. Kipling himself might admire:

A Shot Aimed at the Devil's Headquarters Through the Tube
of the Covenant.

Notice the alliteration, which takes place of the rhyme in Arabic, of the following:

Seven Sobs of a Sorrowful Soul of Sin.
A Handful of Honeysuckles.
Crumbs of Comfort for the Chickens of the Covenant.

And here is a title which the American editor will admire, for there is real pep in it.

The Spiritual Mustard Pot to Make the Soul Sneeze With
Devotion.

That snuff was one of the small vices of those days, is evident also from a book entitled *the Snuffers of Divine Wisdom*. This is eminently Oriental.

Even in this matter of sneezing I find a corresponding humor between the East and the West; for although the ancients had many superstitions about it, the Prophet of Arabia agrees with Don Quixote—or is it Sancho Panza?—on the subject. There is another passage in Montaigne's *Essays*, which accords sneezing the laurels, because it comes from the head. But the Prophet Muhammad goes beyond that. He is more practical than Cervantes and Montaigne. He awards prizes to those who sneeze. "They who sneeze," says he, "and praise Allah avert seventy diseases, the least of which is leprosy." Health, to be sure, is a prize; and when we strip the saying of its extravagance, the lesson will yet remain; and it is as sound as the scientific patter nowadays in advertising a soap or a chewing gum, a tooth brush or a rubber heel. Muhammad cherished high

ideals on the subject of hygiene and health. He is of all the Prophets the most hygienic: he was in himself a medical institute. Indeed, if his sayings on the subject of health and hygiene were translated into English, they would be featured and flamboyantly illustrated in our physical culture magazines. Muhammad upholds, not only spiritual ideals—spiritual according to the light of the desert, which is sometimes complicated by a mirage—but physical and political ideals as well.

This brings us to one of the most important aspects of the subject. Without ideals, no matter how insignificant, the business of life, whether in the Orient or in the Occident, would still have been a thing of the cave and jungle; and with ideals, no matter how material or crudely spiritual, nations rise to a point—to many points—of contact and recognition. But ideals must have exponents, noble and unselfish, and free; and the noblest and freest as well as the least selfish are the poets, the sages, and the artists, the representatives of a nation's culture. Indeed, a living and quickening culture, can not possibly be aloof, can not even maintain for a long time an attitude of aloofness. Its politicians may build a Chinese wall around it, but its poets, its artists and its sages, even its prophets will light their torches beyond that wall and carry them in the name of humanity to the ends of the world.

The Prophet Muhammad, I have said, lighted in the East a tricerion of truth—a triple torch of spiritual, physical, and political ideals. Aye, even political ideals. For is there anything more devoutly to be wished, anything more idealistic than to have a seer, a holy man, at the head of the state—a man of the people, heroic and self-denying and just—a man whose heart ever throbs with love and mercy—a man whose thoughts and words and deeds are the fruits of the holiness within him—a man like Abraham Lincoln, a man like Omar the Second Khalif? When such men lead their people, in the East or in the West, the nations, no matter how distant from each other, must meet; and they meet on the higher plane of mutual understanding and mutual esteem.

When I was in Baghdad, I was told by more than one Englishman that the young Arabs, particularly those in politics, have no ideals. They have one ideal, the ideal of freedom and independence. But this is not sufficient. It covers little or nothing of the ground of individual conduct. To be free to pursue your own selfish ends, to

be free to lord it over those under you, to be free to fasten on the neck of your neighbor the yoke that was once upon your own, to be free to gratify your passions, to be a tyrant, covetous and cruel and corrupt—this is not exactly the right conception of the idea of self-determination.

But we must not be hard upon the Orientals. Ideals in politics are rare today even in America, and they do not exist in Europe. There are idealists, to be sure, everywhere; but they do not join in Europe and America and they do not fit in the Orient of the present day. There, they lack a sense of the communal; here, they lack a sense of the practical.

Moreover, our young Arab idealists are inexperienced and often naive. They have not yet attained the knowledge that brings the ideal within the compass of the real; and one would wish that the young idealists of America and Great Britain and France—young but experienced—would extend to them a helping and sympathetic hand. To help without being selfish, and to guide without being domineering, this is one of the highest fraternal ideals. It is, moreover, one of those practical political ideals which the European nations, in their dealings with Orientals—the European Powers in Asia—will have to look upon as their only salvation. And here, too, the East and the West will meet.

I am not of those who look upon Europe as bankrupt: I do not believe that the post-war diseases of civilization are incurable. We are still forging ahead in science and discovery; and it little matters what happens for the present to literature and art. It may be well that the esthetic faculties should have a rest: it may be well that the esthetic passions should have their lententide.

A League of Nations may be only an intrigue of nations; but the idea—the ideal—that made the League possible is leavening the new life of Europe. Great Britain and France and Germany have a great deal yet to give to the world; and by entrusting their destinies to their young idealists—by ridding themselves of the old fogies of politics and the fossils of statesmanship—they can again regain their prestige and power. Sovietism is stirring the East and, in spite of Fascism, is leavening Europe. Which is good both for Europe and the East. The present tendency of the Orientals, therefore, to reject everything European is wrong, and we are doing our best to combat it.

The conservatives in Europe and the fanatics in the Orient are ever saying that they are not ready for this thing or for that. We are ready, I say, for everything, including the gallows—the gallows for everything old that has become useless, nay, poisonous, and everything new that is born sterile. It would be quite the right thing, moreover, to put Romain Rolland, for instance, in charge in London and H. G. Wells in Calcutta. New York and Cairo will profit no doubt by the example. And when the work of Rolland and Wells is done, the Churchills and the Ghandis can proceed with theirs and come without much delay to a happy conclusion. As it is, the backgrounds overshadow and confuse the contest. There is on both sides, especially in the Orient, much to overcome and much to discard.

I am willing to admit that everything came out of the East. But I must also admit that there is much in it, even in its spiritualities, of what Carlyle called “phosphorescent punk.” We want to save the West, the whole world, from the crass materialism of the present age; but we do not want to be crammed with all the spiritual cud of Mecca and Benares. What comes out of the wild soil is one thing, and what comes out of a cultivated garden is another. Luther Burbank, the American, has knocked the thorns out of the cactus fruit by sheer cultivation; Mary Baker Eddy, the American, has knocked the thorns out of religion by sheer cerebration: but we in the East would knock the thorns out of everything in life by resignation and divine grace.—Give us, O God, a constitution and a ballot box and a king, honest and just. And give us also, O thou most Generous, a few aeroplanes and some machine guns. Even if they are made in Europe, we will accept them and continue to curse that Siren of the West.

This is the ideal of political fanatics or fanatics by birth and training who are espoused to a one-eyed and close-hearted nationalism. But the high ideal of the poets and the higher ideal of the prophets themselves, is neither Oriental exclusively nor Occidental. It includes the ethical and spiritual, as well as the practical aspects of life. It is supremely human. Before it every mark of birth disappears, and customs and traditions are held in abeyance—before it nationality and language and culture cease to be a hindrance to understanding.

The soul seeking expression, the soul reaching out for truth, is one everywhere. Confucius might be American in his ideal, even

as he is Chinese; and Emerson might be Chinese, even as he is American. Gotama Buddha made manifest in Palestine might be mistaken for Jesus of Nazareth, and Jesus revisiting the glimpses of the moon in Japan might be welcomed as Gotama. Jalal ud-Din Rumi, were he born in Assisi, might have been a St. Francis; and St. Francis, had he seen the light in Shiraz, might have been a Jalal ud-Din.

Even Tagore, to come down to our own time, and Yoni Naguchi are as much at home in New York or London as Lafcadio Hearn was in Japan and as Kipling was in India. The highest ideal of the poet, I say again, is supremely human; and the poet's love for an alien land, an alien people, which is reflected in his work, in spite of the harshness, if any, of its criticism,—that love finds its way, whole and pure, to the hearts of his readers. We know India and Japan better because of Kipling and Lafcadio Hearn; and the people of Japan and India will know America and Europe better because of Naguchi and Tagore. This is one of the essentials of the message of genius—one of its great achievements.

And genius everywhere is one. In the Orient and in the Occident the deep thinkers are kin, the poets are cousins, the pioneers of the spirit are the messengers of peace and good will to the world. Their works are the open highways between nations, and they themselves are the ever living guardians and guides.

Thus, when we go deep enough or high enough we meet. It is only on the surface that we differ and sometimes clash. True, we do not always find our way to the depth or to the height, or we do not take the trouble to do so. Often, too, when there is a will, we are hindered by a prejudice inherited or acquired. We begin by misunderstanding; and sometimes we only think that we misunderstand. Impatient, we turn away, when another effort—a moment even of indulgence, of tolerance, of kindly sympathy—might have brought us together. The difference in the traits of nations are like tones in a picture: the central theme, the ego and the soul, is one.

The artist may vary the theme, however, without changing it. Thus the ego may be more assertive in the West, and the soul more dominant in the East. But that is no reason why an Oriental, whose ego is brought up at the expense of his soul, should ape the European; or an American, who has an accession of spirituality, should begin to rave about the Orient. This is worse than nonsense. It

is affectation. We can preserve our backgrounds and project our sympathies—uphold our heritage and widen our vision. We can be Europeans or Americans with understanding. We can be Orientals with level heads. Reason and common sense are the safeguards everywhere of the human mind.

Nationality is the flower of a race, and the individuality of a nation is its supreme expression; but we can not, without injury to ourselves, make our national shibboleths our highest ideals. Conformity is not the guage of friendship. Wisdom carries not the sceptre of dogma; and dogma, whatever is its middle name—Christian, Hindu, Muhammadan—has not yet attained the highest possible expression of truth.

Says Zoroaster: "Whenever thou art in doubt as to whether an action is good or bad, abstain from it." This is an improvement upon choosing the lesser evil.

Says Confucius: "For benefits return benefits; for injuries return justice without an admixture of revenge." This is more natural than turning the other cheek.

Says Carlyle: "In art, religion and philosophy nothing is completed, but is completing." This goes beyond the truth and the wisdom of the Prophets.

But wisdom has not the fructifying force of folly;—it has not the wings of extravagance and stupidity. Consider the present state of the world, and the extravagance in the Occident and in the Orient of credulity and suspicion. We have the Ku Klux Klan in America; the Charka-Swaraj magicians in India; a hat craze in the Turkish Republic; a Marxian panacea in Russia; a nation of black-shirt Fascists driven by the rod of a man who had the inspiration to kowtow both to the King and the Pope; a nation of Gallic genius obsessed with the idea that her island neighbor has alienated from her the love of the whole world;—and we have in China and in Arabia the fellow fanatics of the Ku Klux Klan. But that does not mean that there are no wise men in America, in Russia, in India, in Italy, in France, or in Arabia.

There are also poets, and there are pious men, and there are real sages. The world is still safe for idealists. And international common sense is more enduring than international stupidity. Even when it is not, there is a compensating humor.

There is a goal towards which all nations gravitate, and there

is a common ground, even if it has to be at times a superstition or a stupidity, upon which all nations meet. Says the Arabic poet:

“Not in vain the nation-strivings, nor by chance the current’s
flow;
Error-mazed, yet truth-directed, to their certain goal they go.”

Indeed, whether we wear hats or turbans, our instincts and our ideals are more or less the same. A barrister in Bombay may argue in Hindustani or Gujrati, but his code of conduct is that of his colleague in London. A merchant who sits cross-legged at the door of his shop in Benares, adopts the same code of profit as that of the merchant of Manchester, who sits on a revolving chair behind a desk of quartered oak. A poet is a poet, whether he rides a Ford or a donkey; a sage is a sage, whether he plays golf in New Jersey or bathes in the Ganges or prays in the desert; and a fool is a fool, whether he be a descendant of the Pilgrim Fathers or a descendant of the Prophet. The only real difference between them is in the point of view and the point of direction. A rich barrister in London, with a seat in Parliament in the back of his head, does not pursue the same tactics as his colleague in Bombay, whose chief concern is to have a homestead and to be able to travel first class on a P. and O. steamer.

Life is a gift, liberty is a right, and the pursuit of happiness is a goal. But the conduct of nations, as of individuals, differs in the pursuit in accordance with the measure of justice they uphold. A common measure, irrespective of class or creed or race or color, is the pivot of equality and justice; it ennobles the individual and the nation; it is the only safeguard of peace and progress: but a common measure is only possible when we begin to understand and learn to appreciate each other’s point of view and point of direction.

When I see a camel, my mind travels to Arabia; but a taxi-cab evokes pictures of an American or a European city. If the process were reversed, if my mind travelled to America whenever I saw a camel or to Arabia whenever I saw a taxi-cab, then something would be the matter either with my mind or with my objective. Now, to force this unreasonable point of view and point of direction upon me by legislation or by religion, is to make of me a slave, or a hypocrite, or an ass—that is, if I obey your law or accept your creed.

If I do not obey, however, and you resort to force, there will be trouble—a conflict, a revolution, a war.

Here is another example. The average Muslim looks upon dancing as immoral, and the European looks upon it as an art. That art may be immoral is not the question; but that immorality might be raised to an art, is the very thing the Muslim fears. His point of view, therefore, is one of fear, and his point of direction is a calamity. A dance, a glance, a romance! And he knows his women folk better than you or I. Not until their mentality is changed, therefore,—not until their intellectual faculties are awakened and developed to act as a check to their emotions or as a guide to them,—and not until the Muslim man's idea of possession changes, is he justified in changing his point of view. Nor is it altogether safe to force a change by legislation. I do not know what is happening in Turkey today besides dancing; but I am not certain that the dancing floors of the Republic are not too slippery for the unpractised feet of the daughters of the harim.

As for the European, whose idea about dancing is opposed to the Muslim's, his point of view and point of direction are neither more reasonable nor more assuring. They spring from a higher level of sex relation, I admit, than that of the average Oriental. But the European has no right to expect from a Muslim a ready acceptance of his view, and he has no right moreover to look down upon him, if he does not do so. Nor is a Muslim justified in denouncing the dance, because he does not see—he can not at present see—its wholesomeness, its practical as well as its esthetic virtues. The only way of behaving in a gentlemanly manner towards each other, therefore, is to understand and appreciate each other's point of view and point of direction.

Mutual tolerance is the stepping-stone to mutual respect. A hospitable mind is the key to a neighboring or an alien spirit which is locked by dogma and guarded by tradition. A sympathetic approach is the opensesame to a hidden treasure. The heart yields to spontaneity, the mind bends to understanding. But we can not understand each other, if our sympathies are always tucked away; we can not understand each other if our approaches are always academic or conventional; we can not understand each other, if we crawl back

into our shells every time we see a worm across our path; we can not understand each other, if every time we venture out of our parochialisms or nationalisms, we stick the feather of cocksureness in our caps; no: we can never wholly understand each other and rise to the level of mutual esteem, at least, if we do not invest in the fellow feeling that triumphs over class and creed and race and color—that one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin.

ARABIC MUSIC

BY LAURA WILLIAMS

IN man's consideration of human affairs, his chief questions are, "What of the future?" and "What of the past?" History helps him to answer both. Dissatisfied with history the searching mind asks again, "And before that, what?"

The records of the careful digging of archeologists reveal, that many of the customs and habits of the ancients are not so different in their essence from ours of today. We know that in man's rise from complete savagery, in his first fumbings toward civilization there was an impulse toward beauty and toward an expression of it. We know too, that his earliest expression was to dance to his own instinctive rhythms. Later he sang. Still later he made instruments to accompany his dancing and his singing. At first he made pictures of his dancing and his instruments. Later he wrote about the dancing and his instruments. Later he wrote about the dancing and singing and the music. Men have uncovered many of his pictures and his writings. From the pictures we can see what the instruments were like. We can, perhaps, reconstruct them or similar ones and hear the quality of sound which they supplied. But no deciphering of the writings has yet disclosed to us what combinations or sequences of sounds were used, nor what accents marked his rhythms. While one man is digging in the earth to turn up what records he may find of man's life "before that," another is studying those races who today are living in similar primitive circumstances.

Western civilization proceeds from a place and time which we have chosen to call "The Cradle of the Race." We can trace our own culture back through history via Rome, Greece, and Egypt into that small territory near the two great rivers.

Though history carries us ever further and further back in our knowledge of man's habits and ways, our knowledge of music goes back only a short way. However, the study of primitive races gives us a key. We cannot know the music of the ancient world, but we find in that same territory where we are now searching for the earliest records of our race, a people whose culture has, in many respects, stopped at the Middle Ages.

The Semitic people, Arabs and Jews, descendants of those more

ancient people who lived in what we call the Near East, are more closely related to us racially and culturally, than the other oriental peoples. If the Jews, those wandering folk with their easy adjustment to new environments, are still using musical idioms brought over from Egypt (see page 82) why is it not possible that the Arabs of today are using the idioms of their distant past? Is it not extremely likely that they may provide the missing link in the musical succession?

Some years ago, I found, in a musical magazine a short article on Arabic music. It began something like this: "The Arabs are very fond of music." I read no further. What the writer could say after that could not interest me. Only an Occidental tourist, and probably an Anglo-Saxon tourist, could make such a statement. It is as if she had written, "The Arabs are very fond of breathing." In this country music is unfortunately an extra, a special, expensive, cultural luxury—the frosting on the cake—to be enjoyed after the main business of life has been disposed of. With the Arab, as with most other peoples, with the possible exception of the Anglo-Saxon, music is as vital a part of existence as eating and sleeping, in fact, as breathing. Perhaps because the Arab is closer to the fundamental principles of life, is less artificial than the occidental, his music partakes of that same vital quality as breathing. It is life and in its inflowing and outflowing it takes its own great rhythm. It nourishes him and flows out to nourish others.

But what exactly do we mean by Arabic music? We speak of Chinese music, Japanese music, Hindu, Javanese, Siamese music, and an idea is called up, clear and definite, based on something racial, national, something detached and separate, which belongs to a distinct homogeneous group. When we say "Arabic Music," the words call up no such clear idea. In fact, the majority of writers on Musical History say that there is no such thing; that what is called Arabic music is nothing but Islamic or Mohammedan music and that it has no significance because it is not old, but a cheap modern distortion of other and varied forms.

I shall hope to show in this article:

First:—That Arabic music is a clearly defined and old form and that, as such, it should receive more serious consideration than it has in the past.

Second:—That it has exerted a tremendous influence on western

music at several periods in the past and is therefore historically important.

Third:—That it can exert a great influence in the future, since, as a hitherto untouched source it has great value for the modern composer in that a natural and spontaneous employment of unusual rhythms and microtones might well be of assistance to the student and composer interested in such forms.

Let us take up, then, the first point, that there is a definite Arabic music and that it is old. The term here applies to the music of the Arabic speaking people of Egypt, Syria, Arabia, and North Africa. Persian music and Turkish music show marked resemblances as does much of the music of Moslem India. This lends some authority to the claim that it is Islamic music. There are, however, a large group of Arabic speaking people who are not Moslems, such as the Christian Syrians and they have been largely responsible for the preservation of the purity of the language and the finer aspects of the Arabic culture. There are also historical facts and internal evidences in the music itself to point to an antiquity which greatly antedates Mohammed and the Arab ascendancy.

In the first place Arabic music must be considered folk music in the broadest sense of the term, in that it is that "body of song" which "embraces all vocal compositions which have come to be so fondly liked, loved, admired by the people that they have become a native and naive popular utterance." "Folksongs are the echoes of the heart-beats of the vast folk, and in them are preserved feelings, beliefs, and habits of vast antiquity." "Music cannot lie, for the reason that the things which are at its base, the things without which it could not be, are unconscious, unvolitional human products." "...it follows that the music of the folksong reflects the inner life of the people that gave it birth, and that its characteristics, like the people's physical and mental habits, occupations, methods, and feelings are the product of environment..."¹

It seems reasonable to suppose that where the "physical and mental habits, occupations and methods" have changed so little in several thousand years, the music, that "reflection of the inner life of the people" has probably changed as little. People who live in the same kind of dwellings, using the same tools, wearing the same kind of clothes that they did at the beginning of our era, are doubtless singing the same kind of songs. In fact the adoption by the Arabs of

¹H. E. Krehbiel. *Afro-American Folksongs*.

western ways does not have an effect on their music immediately and then in ways which I shall take up later on.

We can, at any rate, feel fairly certain that the Arab of today is singing and hearing the same music that he knew in the Middle Ages. We have, to guide us, the theoretical writings of the Arab scholars, those scholars of the Golden Age of Arabic culture which reached its peak in Spain in the tenth and eleventh centuries, which began in the eighth in the court of the Abbasides in Baghdad. These writers based their theory of music on the theories of Aristotle and Aristoxenus, rejecting that of Pythagoras, but they chose the system prohibited by the Greeks, the enharmonic.²

Unlike western music, Arabic music has never been what we might call composed music. The performer made his own, knowing little of the theories propounded by the scholars, unable to write down what he sang, teaching it by ear to his pupils, and so, with all the chances of error in such a method of transmission, the songs were handed down. Since, however, the songs now sung are modally in conformity with the theoretic writings of Al-Farabi, Ibnu Ghaibi, Ibn Sina, Al-Kindi, and the others of that time, and since the form of composition is that prescribed by the singers of earlier days, it is fair to think that the microtonic modes were those in use in those days and liked by the musicians and the people.

It might be well at this point to note that there has been brought out recently some question as to whether Arabic music was truly enharmonic. The very beautiful translation by Eleanor Haig of Julian Ribera's *Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain* is a truly great contribution to the literature on this subject. Ribera, however, mentions the fact that all the modern scholars who have already published the results of their research on Arabic music have been in agreement on one point, that it is essentially diatonic, not enharmonic and that there is no proof that the Arabs sing quarter tones. I contend that they do. In that connection let me call attention first to the following statement by Herbert Hughes in the introduction to his collection of *Irish Country Songs*: "...it has recently been demonstrated that the Irish possessed, and still employ, a series of scales or modes that are only quite distantly related to the Greek modes, and with a much greater variety of intervals. The obvious comment of the academy-nurtured musician is that they are 'only

²"Enharmonic—noting or pertaining to a style of music or a scale or instrument employing intervals smaller than a semitone."—*Century Dictionary*.

singing out of tune' but experience has proved that they have a scale system as delicately and elaborately constructed as the most fastidious modern artist could wish. So-called 'quarter tones' are deliberately sung by the unlearned and despised peasant."

When the occidental musician hears any oriental singer and makes the hasty statement that he is singing "out of tune," the answer can usually be, "If you will listen more carefully, you will note that he sings 'out of tune' only on certain notes in each song; that the note or notes on which he sings 'out of tune' come at the same place in the scale each time, which leads one to the conclusion that it is intentional and not the unfortunate faulty intonation too often heard on the concert and operatic stage." To hear Mr. Christos Vrionides, expert on Byzantine music sing an ascending chromatic quarter-tone scale taking in twenty-three clean, clear steps in the octave, is certainly proof of the possibility of such a performance. Mr. Vrionides tells me that it requires constant practice to be able to keep his ear sufficiently keen when hearing much occidental music, which may explain why the eminent theorists are unable to hear anything smaller than the half tone except as faulty intonation.

The western ear has been so long accustomed to clean intonation on the diatonic scale, that it takes a great deal of unlearning and resensitization to be able to discern the fine shades of difference between the Arabic modes. Probably the best way to attain to the kind of hearing necessary to discriminate between the fine intervals would be to learn to do it oneself. It can be done. But for those who are not singers there is an interesting Arabic instrument called the Qanoun on which the modern musicians have introduced a system of tuning by means of small shift keys or frets which can be lifted or dropped to change certain notes a quarter tone. Thus, the musician can set his instrument exactly for the mode to be played and need not pause to stop the string.

Any Arab musician of today can hear a new song and name the mode instantly and can recognize the exact moment when it modulates, even though the usual modulation is a dropping of two consecutive notes, each a quarter tone, making for the measure or two in which they are used, a different mode, just as in occidental music the use of accidentals may turn the composition for a few measures into the minor or the Dorian or Phrygian.

The fact is that there have been very few performers of Arabic music who were at the same time scholars, understanding scientific

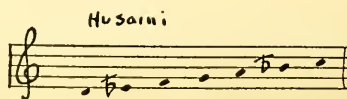
theory. The western scholars who have investigated it have all shown by their statements that they were merely listening and undoubtedly drawing their deductions from a background of occidental training and habit.

One occidental scholar only seems to have transcended this limitation. After twenty years of research in Tunis, Baron Rodolphe d'Erlanger prepared his findings for publication under the title of *La Musique Arabe*. The first volume of this work appeared in 1930.³ The second volume is now in the press. The remaining seven volumes will come out in time. Baron d'Erlanger's death in October, 1932, put an untimely end to his consecrated service to musicology, but he had been recognized as the greatest authority in the world on the subject.

What does Baron d'Erlanger say of the antiquity of Arabic music? Can we go further back than the Middle Ages? He thinks we can go back to the seventh century B.C. and find the origin of this music in Persia. Let me quote from an Arab scholar who worked with the Baron in his research, Manoubi es-Senoussi.

There exist in the world two very ancient musical scales known by primitive races. The first of these scales, the most widely known, with which the common people of all countries are acquainted, even the civilized countries of our epoch, is composed of five intervals—the pentatonic. One encounters a music based on this scale throughout the world. It was well known in the period when man overran the earth in search for pasturage for his flocks. When men became agricultural, they ceased to roam and formed what we call nations. Those which established themselves far from the lines of travel, escaped all exterior influence and conserved their primitive music based on the pentatonic scale. The others saw their music transformed following each political change, or each introduction into their country of a strange people.

The priests of ancient Egypt, on the other hand, invented an entirely new musical system based on their observation of the stars. We know the probable way in which they constructed it. Depending on an ancient Arabic book, the Baron has been able to reestablish this scale. It is still used by the Jews of the countries of Barbary in reading the Bible. It is composed thus:



³*Librairie Orientaliste*, Paul Geuthner, Paris.

The Arabs call it Husaini.⁴ In the time of ancient Egypt, then, there were to be found two scales throughout the world—the pentatonic and that which the Arabs now call Husaini.

After that Pythagoras invented, in Greece, the diatonic scale from which spring the Occidental scales of our day.

During this time, however, another and different music flourished in Persia. It is based on the tetrachord. The modes are numerous; each of them is composed, either of one tetrachord, of a tetrachord plus a whole tone, of two tetrachords plus a whole tone, or of three tetrachords plus a whole tone. In each of these it is the tetrachord which plays the important role. It gives to the mode its special character, by the size and placing of the intervals which go to make it up. The tetrachord contains, most often, one interval which is larger than the other two, sometimes than the sum of the other two. Such a tetrachord has a character inevitably sad, enervating, mystic. Persian music thus resembles all the Persian arts; it expresses something which dissolves the soul.

Each time, through the ages, that the Persians have invaded a country, they have introduced into it their music. They introduced it in Greece; thus we have found in each treatise on Greek music a separate chapter, having no relation to the musical theory of the different Greek scales, where is discussed the combination of fantastic tetrachords made up of strange intervals, of which the author makes no mention in showing the laws of consonances. The Greek Philosophers were united against this Asiatic music, considering it unhealthy, immoral, because voluptuous; and in order to discredit it in the eyes of the Greeks they called it enharmonic.

The Persians had, again, invaded Egypt in the fifth century B.C. They introduced their music there in spite of the efforts of the priests to prevent them. Plato, who visited Egypt, tells us in his *Republic*, of his admiration for the Egyptian music and expresses his disgust for that introduced in that land by the Persians, judging it enervating and "too rich and voluptuous."

If the Greeks were unfriendly to this music, the Arabs were certainly not. The great poets of the pre-Islamic era used it in reciting their poems. Some of the Persian instruments had already reached Arabia. The Persian influence was strong.

⁴The notation used here and throughout the article, employs the flat and sharp as usual. To indicate a tone only a quarter tone flat—as in this scale—meaning a tone between the natural and the flat, a flat sign with a line drawn through the stem is employed; likewise for the demi-sharp, the sharp sign with the lower crossbar omitted. One might say the flat plus and the sharp minus.

Then in the seventh century of our era came Mohammed, who coördinated and centralized the scattered Arab tribes, established the Islamic era of the Hejrah and began the conquests which carried his name and religion and the language of the Quran into Persia and India, north to the Caspian and Black seas and west to the Atlantic Ocean and into Spain.

When in the eighth century, the Abbasides established their great dynasty and set up their court in Baghdad, the great, almost fabulous, splendor of that court was fed from Persia. All the ministers were Persian and, what is chiefly interesting to us, the entertainers were Persian. They sang Persian songs in the numerous modes of that system which the Greeks had termed "enharmonic."

Arab ears had long been accustomed to this sensuous music. What they heard now that was new, was a more refined form, with greater elaboration and more complicated rhythms. The Arabs liked this music. They welcomed the new melodies and the longer rhythms. The Arab musicians adopted these forms and adapted them for their audiences. Because they did not understand the Persian words, they set their own words to the melodies and thus they have come down to the present time. The Arabian musician of today is still singing the old classical songs of an earlier day. We still find songs where the rhythmic cycle and the melodic phrase are longer than the poetic phrase, or where the accents of the melodic line do not fall with the strokes of the rhythm. To be sure this last characteristic is often found in the shorter North African rhythms, but there it is an indication of the Berber influence and the resultant syncopation. Where it occurs in the older, eastern songs, it might seem, at first hearing, to be a sign of compound rhythms, until we remember that the meters of the Arabic poetry are shorter than even the Persian.

What then is this music like which has so long a heritage, and what theoretical rules can we set down? How closely has it followed the original system and how has it altered? Manoubi es-Senoussi can help us again here.

To attempt to fix the number of oriental modes and rhythms is a useless pretention; they are innumerable. They multiply, change their form and often their names, with almost every generation. One finds the cause of this instability of name first, in the fact that the musician never thought to write down his music, and second, in the fact that the development of musical art among the Arabs is solely the endowment of those who practice it. It is they alone who, through rivalry

and in the quest for fame, constantly change the rules of their music. Their schools are numerous and live only as long as the reigns of the princes about whom they gather. Systems add themselves to systems, classification to classification and the list of names lengthens.

In spite of all this the soul of the Oriental remains the same. The color of the milieu changes but its essence is unaltered. The musician reflects that essence. The imagination of the improviser, far from being compelled to follow one single obligatory road, finds, on the contrary, many, and can, according to his fancy, open up for himself others, which approximate so much those already laid out that his innovations are unnoticed by the ear of the crowd.

The Arab scholars set forth several quite rational theories, which had little to do with this practice of the musicians, but which have had, nevertheless, an influence on the modern theorists. One theory which is held in high favor by Arab scholars of today is that which limits the number of the modes to seventy-two. All the modes reach the octave and are composed each of a tetrachord and a pentachord. There are six kinds of tetrachords, as follows:

1. Whole tone — whole tone — half tone.
2. Half tone — whole tone — half tone.
3. Whole tone — half tone — whole tone.
3. Three-quarter tone — three-quarter tone — whole tone.
5. Whole tone — three-quarter tone — three-quarter tone.
6. Three-quarter tone — whole tone — whole tone.

There are twelve kinds of pentachords, obtained by joining to each kind of tetrachord, either a whole tone below or a whole tone above. In adding each kind of tetrachord to each kind of pentachord, we get six times twelve, which equals seventy-two, octaves or modes.

There are in actual practice, however, many more. Es-Senoussi says,

One can count actually in each Mussulman country from forty to fifty names of modes, but the modes used can be counted by the hundreds. They differ in their length, the nature of their intervals, the tonic, the leading tone and even in the melodic design which fits each of them. There is not in the Orient, the idea of a scale. A single scale with us, gives birth to several modes.

Taking the fact that the octave of the classical oriental Arabian music admits of eighteen fundamental notes, there are at least ten modes based on each of these notes; that means

that the oriental Arabic modes having a personality, *definite* and *known to all* are, at the smallest reckoning, one hundred and eighty in number.

On the other hand, there is the primitive music of the tribes, which employs the modes contained in a fourth or a fifth, which differ one from the other, sometimes by only an eighth of a tone.

With regard to rhythm, Baron d'Erlanger had recorded over 360 different ones, while a man in Cairo, I am told has counted 200 rhythms based on the quarter note, 100 on the half note and over 300 on the whole note.

Such a statement sounds utterly fantastic to the western mind accustomed to the few short rhythms of occidental music. It is difficult for us to think of rhythm except in terms of measure and that in a count of two, three or four, with six, nine, and twelve merely combinations of those. Where in Russian music we find five, seven or nine, the tendency is to see in them merely alternating rhythms.

With the Arabs, rhythm is neither tempo nor meter. Any attempt to say what it is usually wanders into philosophical abstractions, for which there is neither time nor place in this article. It is necessary, however, to know the place which the element of rhythm occupies in art, in order to understand the Arabic idea.

Gevaert in his *Histoire et Theorie de la Musique de l'Antiquité* puts the arts into two classes, "Plastiques" and "Pratiques." The first class includes Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, those arts which "present themselves directly to the spectator in a finished state," and the second, Music, Dancing, and Poetry, those which need the "intervention of a skilled performer, which necessitate an act separate from that of the creative artist." The first class has for its domain, Space, and demands an order and regular arrangement in the space occupied—Symmetry. The second class has Time for its domain and requires an order and regular arrangement in the time occupied—Rhythm.

Havelock Ellis, in *The Dance of Life*, gives us the following :

Dancing and building are the two primary and essential arts. The art of dancing stands at the source of all arts that express themselves first in the human person. The art of building, or architecture, is the beginning of all the arts that lie outside the person; and in the end they unite. Music, acting, poetry proceed in the one mighty stream; sculpture, painting, all the arts of design, in the other.

When we consider that the chief plastic art—or art which lies “outside the person” of the Arabic people is Architecture (since all pictorial art was forbidden by Islam) we find an interesting parallel between their architecture and their music. The symmetry following rigidly definite mathematical laws, finds its counterpart in the rhythm of the music. The Arab’s love of ornament finds outlet in the elaboration of the arabesque and in the intricacies of the melody. In architecture his structural form is simple. In the courts of his palaces we may find rows of columns, all shaped and spaced alike, upholding arches of the same size and form, and no two of the columns may be carved alike, and the arabesque decoration on each arch may be different. In music he chooses a rhythmic form, and within the limits of that rigid form, he decorates with motifs selected, according to his taste, from a mode. Provided he holds to the limits of the form, he can do what he wishes with his modal material.

Someone has said, “In Arabic music, the rhythm is the piece of cloth on which one embroiders; the melody is the embroidery. Just as one does not count the thread in putting in the needle, so the accent of the melodic line does not always fall with the accent of the rhythm.” But the rhythm, unlike occidental rhythm, is exact, absolute, unchangeable, never quickening, never retarding, with never a hold. Once established, it proceeds as to a metronome. “In the sense that Arabic music is rhythmic,” says Baron d’Erlanger, “western music has no rhythm at all.”

Undoubtedly all musical rhythm, though much of it springs from the poetic rhythm, traces its descent from the dance. In Arabic countries, the song, wherever it is based on a rhythmic pattern and is not a free improvisation, is danced. Rhythm with its accompaniment of melody is used by all sects of the Dervishes to induce ecstasy.

Each Arabic rhythm has a name. Each has a definite pattern of beats—so many heavy strokes, so many light strokes, so many silences. Just why, or what they mean, no one can say. Like the modes their meanings are lost. There is a tradition among the Arabs that points also to ancient sources, that each mode and each rhythm had an occult significance. There was a mode for each hour of the day, each season, each element; modes corresponding to the planets and the signs of the Zodiac, the constellations. There were male and female modes and rhythms, and others denoting different emotions. In some cases the record has been kept; in most cases it is lost. “Such

information as we have is full of contradictions and holds mostly to legend," es-Senoussi says, "Religion has effaced all the ancient pagan traditions, often beautiful, and there is no chance to revive them or make them known."

Rhythm seems to be the first element to be affected by the adoption of western ways. In Egypt and Syria, the countries most westernized, there are today, two different kinds of musical composition in high favor, that in which the instrumentalist or the singer improvises on a given mode in an entirely free cadenza or recitative, and that used for dancing in which the rhythm Masmoudi is used practically to the exclusion of all others. Masmoudi is a four beat rhythm but is always played with the essential strokes syncopated thus:—



The Arabs call the heavy stroke, "Doum," from the sound as it is struck on the middle of the drum. The light strokes are called "Tak" and are struck sharply on the edge of the drum. Masmoudi is practically the Tango rhythm with the third beat omitted. As the Arab plays it, it is usually embellished with an elaboration of rapid, light strokes to fill in and make an intricate design. The Oriental musician generally contents himself with marking the accents with the tambourine while the western Arab of North Africa clings to the Durbekkeh or, as he calls it there, the Darbouka, and elaborates on the rhythm.

This Masmoudi rhythm has supplanted all the older rhythms in the East, where the older ones seem to have been lost practically in one generation. The young modern musician of Egypt or Syria does not use them and consequently has forgotten them or never learned them. In Tunis I listened to a concert of Egyptian music, played and sung by an excellent and highly accomplished group of performers who gave one group of songs, two of which they did in Masmoudi but which I knew in their older forms of *seven* and *ten*. In talking with Syrian musicians in America I have been told repeatedly, "Yes, my father knew those rhythms but I never learned them," or "I know those rhythms because my father taught them to me but I never play them." One exceedingly good drummer, who could embellish Masmoudi with delightful embroideries, was entirely incapable of learning *seven*, *ten* or *nine*, although I struggled with him for three days, spending altogether five hours trying

to get him to drop or add a beat. Even Masmoudi seems to be difficult for the occidental, and Alexander Maloof, the Syrian band leader, told me that in order to get his men to play it, he was obliged to have them count eight—three, three and two, that it was impossible with the four count.

In North Africa however, the longer rhythms have been preserved naturally so that Baron d'Erlanger was able to find musicians to work with him who could give him the exact patterns of the longer cycles. These longer rhythms give to the music a more fluid, flexible line. There would be extreme monotony, considering the exact tempo of Arabic music, were it not for the variety afforded by the longer cycles and the contrast between the heavy and light strokes and the silences. Later on I shall show some of these rhythms.

The other change now coming into Arabic music in Egypt is an attempt to harmonize. Most of the harmonizations, to date, are exceedingly elementary. But the necessity, when introducing harmony, to alter the modes to fit the diatonic scale and equal temperament, probably marks the beginning of the end so far as the enharmonic modes are concerned. However, with men such as Baron d'Erlanger and some of the musical scholars of Cairo who are studying to preserve the old music, and who are able to afford to keep permanently occupied musicians of the older traditions, there is hope that it may be possible to record the music of the past.

And now we come to the second point—that Arabic music has exerted a tremendous influence in the past and is therefore historically important.

What early influence on western music came from Persia is a matter for conjecture and some doubt since the diatonic system seems to have been adopted at an early date. It would appear, though, to be quite as reasonable to think that early Church music was as much affected by the East as by Greece, or perhaps that the popular Greek music of that day was more enharmonic than diatonic, since the Greeks also probably sang as they wished with little regard for theory. Certainly Byzantine music as preserved to this date in the Greek monasteries shows natural use of quarter tones. In referring to those Dark Ages with their dearth of record regarding music, Waldo Selden Pratt in his *History of Music* says, "These cataclysmic changes destroyed the continuity of civilized

life and thought, and interrupted the development of all the fine arts. The chief exceptions were in the Byzantine Empire and in regions under Moslem control, but in both cases culture was more oriental than occidental."

Leaving the Dark Ages, as we must, to their darkness, we take a long jump, which lands us in western Europe in the eighth century. The Moors are in Spain, have been defeated in their attempt to enter France. The Jongleur enters the scene with popular music, and under his arm and hanging to his shoulder "many Arabian instruments that were quite new, some of them constructed so as to give a more scientific scale than that which obtained in western Europe." Thus, Henry George Farmer refers to the Arabian influence in the Middle Ages.⁵

These Arabian instruments the Jongleurs adapted to western use. Among them was of course, the lute (from the Arabic *el-aoud*), the zither or European Conon from the *Qanoun*, the modern caisse from the Arabic *Qasa*. The trumpet, the cymbals, tambourine, and guitar came from the Arabs. The ancient rebec was derived from the Arabian *Rabeb*, still in use in North Africa.

The Jongleurs and the Trouveres and Troubadours during the years following and especially after the Crusades sang in the Arabian manner. Probably many types of songs were Arabic in their origin. In a little pamphlet published by the Cambridge University Press⁶ entitled *The Interpretation and Probable Derivation of the Musical Notation in the 'Aucassin et Nicolette' MS.*, Mr. Clifton Joseph Furness describes two café entertainers that he heard in North Africa, giving a recital which seemed to him so obvious a survival of the type of performance known as the *Chantefable* that he felt it might be identical. His further investigation, following that conjecture, showed that the musical notation of the "Aucassin et Nicolette" MS. corresponded with one of the most popular Arabic modes.

To return to Farmer—he says that to this "political contact" we owe such musical innovations as discant, organum, and instrumental tablature. As to what he calls the literary and intellectual contact, Farmer says, "Between the eighth and eleventh cen-

⁵*The Arabian Influence on Musical Theory*, Harold Reeves, London, 1925.

⁶Reprint from *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. XXIV, No. 2 April, 1929.

turies the Arabs had translated from the Greek many musical treatises hitherto unknown to western Europe. . . . Besides these, numerous original treatises on music appeared from the pens of Arabian writers. . . . When we compare the musical writings of Europe at this period with those of Arabian contemporaries, one feels abashed at western mediocrity." The scholars of Europe went to Spain and Andalusia and studied "both the Greek musical theorists *only to be found in Arabic* [the italics are mine] and the writings of the Arabian theorists themselves."

Farmer is convinced that "mensural music" which was "the outstanding musical innovation of the twelfth century" had its origin with the Arabs. It was known to the Arab theorists two centuries earlier and by the eleventh century the work of these theorists was widely accepted by the Andalusian Arabs and obviously studied and adopted by the European scholars. Farmer thinks further that the writings of the European scholars indicate that mensural notation also came from the Arabs and that Europe "owed its revision of the laws of consonances" to them.

There are possible influences also to be discerned in regard to form. Baron d'Erlanger believed the Sonata form to have originated in Arabic music. The so-called classical form consists of a group of several songs, usually four, in the same mode. The group opens with the *Doulab* or introduction, most often in Masmoudi rhythm, which is played by all the instruments of the orchestra in unison. Following the *doulab*, they go immediately into the first song, the players or one player singing. There is no pause until the group is finished. Because each mode has certain cadences and combinations of notes that belong to it the melodic material is similar in all songs in that mode; the only indication of the transition from one song to another is the change of rhythm. The last song of the group is frequently in a 6/8 rhythm. Each rhythm is performed in strict tempo until the very end of the last song, when there may be either a slight retard with an *ad lib.* measure to close or an *accelerando*, after which sometimes the instruments carry on alone for a few more measures and bring the group to a very rapid close.

In the construction of the songs themselves there is to be noted a definite rule of form which suggests further influence on our music.

Just here, I might pause for a moment to describe the modern

Arab orchestra for the information of those who may never have heard one. The orchestra consists of a qanoun, mentioned above, two ouds, a violin, the durbekkeh or hand drum and the tambourine. All play in unison with the voice. The only suggestion of harmony is the undertone of the drum and the octave coupling of the qanoun, which is played with both forefingers. The qanoun also contributes extra frills in the shape of rapid runs and trills, and in certain cases is used to establish the mode with an improvisation before the doulab. In more primitive communities, the flute is used instead of strings. Baron d'Erlanger spurned all modern or semi-modern instruments and used only the tambourine, the ancient nacara or tiny kettle drums, and the rebab—referred to above—which has only two strings. This is played with a bow and is extremely difficult to play inasmuch as the strings lie so high above the neck of the instrument that it is impossible to stop them by pressing down, and they must be stopped by a sideways pull.

Now we come to my third point—that Arabic music has a value for the musician of the present and the future. The Arabic modes show so spontaneous and natural a use of the small intervals, employing the small divisions of the octave not chromatically, but as we use the semitones in any occidental scale, that for the composer interested in working with quarter tones, a notation of some of them and a familiarizing of the ear to some of the themes should be of considerable value.

One oriental mode is already familiar to us and has been often used in the past for any expression of an oriental idea—the so-called chromatic scale—what Bourgault-du-Coudray calls *Chromatique Orientale*. The use that Russian composers have made of this scale is too well known to need mention. I should like to call attention, however, to two songs by Katherine Ruth Heyman, *The Blue Lotus*, 1. *Amina's Song* and 2. *Mystic Shadow*.⁷ In these songs the composer has handled the mode so consistently and with such insight into the oriental feeling and manner of expression, that they might be authentic oriental songs instead of remarkably fine occidental creations.

⁷Published in 1925 by The Composers' Music Corporation, Carl Fischer, agents.

In Arabic music this mode is called Hijaz Kar. Below is a melody as sung by the Arabs.

Mode - Hijaz-Kar.

Song. Rhythm Darj -

Another mode which could be used as easily, because it has no small intervals and is as logical a mode as our minor, is Kurdi:

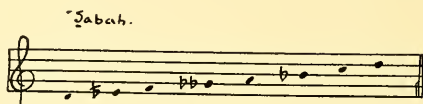
Mode - Kurdi.

Song - Rhythm - Masmoudi

Perhaps the most occidental sounding of all the Arabic modes is Rast, the first mode. It is similar to C major. But the third and seventh notes are dropped, each a quarter tone, giving us two tetrachords alike with a whole tone between as C major is two equal tetrachords joined by a whole tone. Here we have a mode formed in the manner described above, made of a tetrachord like No. 5 plus a pentachord made by joining a whole tone below to No. 5.

Then we have Hijaz, made of a chromatic tetrachord plus a No. 4 tetrachord.

When we look for an actual quarter-tone interval, we find one in such a mode as Sabah (Sheba). The Arabs say, "If you like Sabah, you really like Arab music." Listen to any of the phonograph records of the playing of Sami-Shaa, the great Egyptian violinist and see how a great improviser uses this mode.



It is possible that it may be some time before we can expect to hear much successful composition in quarter tones. It can be handled by strings with no frets, or by the several quarter-tone pianos already invented. Although I have not heard it, I am told that the most satisfactory instrument to date is that of Ivan Wischnegradsky in Paris. The Arabs are making some attempt to work out a kind of melodeon which will have stops to regulate the quarter tones. Such an instrument would be much better suited to the Arabic music than the piano, the tone of which can not possibly give the color for oriental music if it is to be used in its original form. As thematic material, however, for experiments in this new idiom, Arabic music can be of tremendous assistance.

The rhythms, on the other hand, seem more adapted to our immediate use. While many modern composers are employing unusual rhythmic devices, such as free rhythm or broken rhythm, while there has been much use of compound rhythms, there has been very little consistent use of longer rhythmic cycles or rhythms of an uneven number of beats. The Russian composers have been the chief users of such measures as *five*, *seven*, and *nine* and the

Mode Rast.

Handwritten musical score for Mode Rast. The score consists of seven staves. The first staff shows a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 10/4 time signature. The second staff is a rhythmic notation with vertical stems and flags, labeled "Song - Rhythm - Sama'i - Thaqil - 10/4". The following five staves continue the melodic line with various rhythmic markings and repeat signs.

recent interest in folk music has disclosed, in many countries, examples of longer meters. Such experimenting as has been done, however, by modern composers, other than the Russian, shows a very restricted, artificial handling of the longer rhythms.

I make no attempt to discuss those composers who have employed broken or compound rhythms. There is a long list of those who have successfully broken away from the simpler forms. My contention is that regular rhythms of *seven*, *eight*, *nine*, *ten*, *thirteen*, and even longer provide a greater fluidity and grace.

Let us take *seven* for example:—

The Arab calls this rhythm *Nawakht*. The same rhythm can be found in Greek folk music, in Celtic, and in Russian. The He-

Mode Hijaz

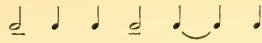
brides Milking Croon found in Marjory Kenneday Fraser's collection is the most perfect example of seven I have found. As the Arabs use it it has two accents, on the first beat and on the fourth,

as the Arabs would write it,

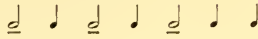
○ ● ○ ● ●
 Doum Tak Doum Tak Tak

It might seem to be alternating measures of three and four, just as the *eight* in the Arabic music can be thought alternating measures of three and five beats:

or the *nine*, four and five:



and the *ten*, three, three, and four.



However, the melodic phrase usually occupies one cycle of the rhythm and can not be considered to be made up of two or several unequal measures.

This inclination on our part to divide up a rhythm into short measures stands in the way of our feeling the uneven, the more fluid line. Only if we can think of *seven* as seven rather than as three and four, shall we be able to use it with any degree of success. Only when we can accustom our ears to the small intervals and to the accents of the melodic line, and our sense of rhythm to the longer cycles, can we employ these rich and beautiful forms intelligently.

Just here comes the interesting question as to which sense is our instrument in detecting musical rhythm. Close to it we hear it, or rather, we hear the instrument used to give the dynamic stress which marks it. At a distance, supposing that instrument to be one of percussion, we feel it before we hear it. Walk through an Arab village at night. There is silence, deep silence. Suddenly from somewhere far off, we are aware of a pulsation. We do not hear it. It is present like our heart beats, like breathing. We walk on. Gradually it becomes sound, muffled but unmistakable, then louder, until finally, quite close now, we hear over it, the shrill of flutes, the plunk of aoud or the singing of the violin. It is regular like the heart beat; it is regular like the cycles of life, like the revolutions of the earth around the sun, the precession of the equinoxes, the movement of the planets, the march of the stars. It is part of us like all those things. It is physical: we march to it; we run to it and dance to it. It is mental and spiritual: we think and feel to it; we aspire and work and create to it. We can no more escape rhythm than we can stop the vibration of electrons. But we can readjust our rhythmic sense to something longer than the short, choppy 2/4 of our usual round. Our music, that "reflection of the inner life of a people," can take to itself longer cycles and more flexible forms

and express something more profound than can be said in the short *two*, *four*, and *three* of our present-day music.

The world is turning to the East for inspiration. Things oriental have become welcome guests. Philosophy, art, literature are accepted as social equals. Oriental music is still regarded as more or less of a stranger and Arabic music, the newest arrival of all, is not even recognized. After all, this new visitor is more closely related to us than any of his eastern brothers. Can't we invite him in?

THE VANISHING BAZAARS OF THE NEAR EAST

BY MARTHA K. AND NEILSON C. DEBEVOISE

WITH the gradual westernization of the Middle Orient, the bazaars once so characteristic of this region are slowly disappearing. To the traveler these labyrinths of covered passageways have always offered days of delightful meanderings, opportunities to bargain for some desired rug, piece of jewelry, or nick-nack. What memories they hold! Early residents recall the turbaned dealer who sat cross-legged on the raised platform of his small stall with his goods carefully arranged beside him and invoked his blessing upon the passers-by as he invited them to consider his wares.

Buying and selling in the bazaars is an art to be learned and a pleasure to be enjoyed by both the merchant and his customer. Here, there is no rush and hurry as in our stores with their fixed prices, cash registers, and charge accounts. Buying becomes a social event in these countries which enjoy a slower tempo of existence. Coffee, tea, and cigarettes, if the transaction be of any consequence, add a touch to the mere business of buying which is well worth emulating. Woe unto the westerner who must do his shopping in a hurry! Not only must he pay more than the ordinary price but in some cases dealers have no interest in selling to one who will not pass the time of day and do the proper amount of bargaining.

Western shops with their plate-glass windows, standard wares, and machine products have gradually encroached upon the bazaars in Istanbul, Aleppo, Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, and Baghdad. Year by year in Istanbul the quaint inner bazaar, the Bezeistan (Arabic *bazz*, cloth; Persian *istan*, place, marketplace) has more vacant stalls, and one by one the old bewhiskered gentlemen who remember the days of the Sultans are disappearing from their accustomed places. Occasionally other merchants, wearing hats, start up in business but their stock in trade smacks of imported factory-made ware.

In Damascus even the past two years have seen a marked change from native-made to imported machine-made goods. Impetus to this movement was undoubtedly given by the partial destruction of the bazaars during the French bombardment of the city in 1925. Foreign influence in countries under mandates and the cheapness of western goods are partly responsible for this change. Especially



↑ THE COPPER BAZAAR, BAGHDAD
THE EDGE OF THE BAZAARS, ALEPPO

in Baghdad and to some extent throughout the Near East, low price is almost the sole criteria of goods, and quality and artistry receive little consideration. One cause for this may be found in the very low wage scale but another even more important one comes from lack of experience in judging western products. A similar westernization is taking place throughout all of the Near East. The change is most marked in those countries which are nearest the sources of European influence such as the ports on the Mediterranean or which stand, like Persia, at the back door of Russia.

The bazaar is the focal point for a study of the industries and the economics of both the ancient and the modern Near East. Until the introduction of modern transportation, especially the automobile, the East had changed but little in business methods in more than two thousand years. Raw materials came by camel to the great khans of the markets. From there they passed into the hands of the artisans to be converted into figured silks, engraved brasses or embossed leather, formerly so common. The archeologist may still find in the bazaars the key to some of the mysteries constantly encountered in the excavation of ancient cities. From two-thousand-year-old Selercia near Baghdad, we recovered two bone objects shaped like large knives. At right angles to the "cutting" edge were a number of small striations. Speculation was rife as to their use but no conclusion was reached until we happened to see in the bazaar of Mosul an implement exactly like it used by a weaver to push down the threads of the belt he was making. The threads of the warp had made the small striations.

The covered bazaar doubtless owes its origin to the necessity of protecting man and goods against the glaring rays of the semi-tropical sun. In the Near East, light means heat; therefore both residences and bazaars have tiny openings which in America would leave the interior in almost total darkness. The Oriental sun, however, illuminates the long streets of the bazaars with piercing shafts of light along which the tiny motes of dust dance with bewildering quickness. During the occasional rains or in the heat of the midsummer days, curtains or other coverings are placed over the openings. In hot weather the water carrier with his huge skin of water slung over his shoulder sprinkles the streets, ostensibly to keep down the dust and to cool the atmosphere by the rapid evaporation. The most noticeable effect of his labors is the layer of slime underfoot and the increase in the already too present odors.

The narrow streets are crowded with people of every imaginable rank and condition of life. The water seller or purveyor of sweet drinks clangs his cups together as he calls his wares. The elaborate fountain strapped to his back is polished to mirrorlike perfection. From a small refrigerator mounted on wheels, another pedlar dispenses colored ices. Throughout the bazaar in odd corners are itinerant pedlars of oranges and visiting Bedouins with bright colored baskets or brilliant kileems. A tinkle of bells warns of the approach of a string of heavily laden donkeys, plodding along with downcast heads and eyes. The responsibility for avoiding these animals rests on the pedestrian, few of whom care to repeat the experience of being struck from behind by a donkey whose paniers are full of several hundredweight of sand. A patch of sunlight always attracts a beggar who sits nodding in the warmth with begging bowl conveniently placed to receive alms. As the call to prayer echoes through the bazaar, the more devout hurry to the mosque while others who cannot leave their shops cease business transactions for the moment. After lunch, especially in the hot summer, the shops are nearly all deserted, and the few merchants who remain are usually found stretched out in the back of the booth snoring loudly.

Periodically the stalls of the merchants are interrupted by a short passage leading to the courtyard of a great khan. Here is where the wholesale business of the Orient is done. The yard is piled high with bales of goods among which scurry the porters, appearing and reappearing amid the apparent confusion. Around the courtyard are the offices in which business is conducted. The interior of the khan, cut and crisscrossed with the piercing beams of light which but dimly reveal its dingy interior, from the street seems veritably a portion of another world.

As in medieval Europe, the various members of the same trade are grouped together in the same portion of the bazaar. From a distance can be heard the workers in copper and brass as they beat their metals into vessels of every conceivable size and shape. For the people of the Orient, both rich and poor, and also to a large extent for the European colony, copper remains the material for kettles and cooking pots. These are beaten by hand from the sheet metal and then wiped with tin inside and out. When after many months of service this tinning is worn away, the vessels are taken to a special shop where they are reheated and the tin again applied.



THE KNIFE MAKER IN THE IRON BAZAAR, ALEPPO
THE BASKET MAKERS, ALEPPO

The larger kettles are cleaned by a man who stands on the interior and rotates the vessel in a bed of wet sand. As in all the shops of the metal workers, the great double bellows, fastened to the roof, are operated by small apprentices, tiny elves with blackened faces who dart hither and thither—when the master is watching them.

One of the most clever of the metal workers is the *tinikije* who converts five gallon gasoline cans into every conceivable object imaginable, from lanterns to sprinkling cans, from cups to kerosene pumps. For carrying water a collar is soldered around an opening in the top of the gasoline tin, and a metal cover is made to fit this collar.

Near-by are seen the shops of the iron workers, where smoke of countless fires have blackened the interior to a Stygian darkness. Keys, ornamental iron work, wagon fittings or other parts are to be had here if the master of the forge can be found, and a satisfactory price arranged. As with most work which is specially commanded, a sum roughly equivalent to the cost of the materials must be paid in advance. A drawn plan is unknown and many a time we have seized the sledge and tongs in desperation to show what was needed. If a wooden model can be made or a sample secured, the smith will turn out excellent copies at a very small cost. A drawing which shows a top, side, section, and elevation of an object will invariably produce four separate objects while the poor benighted unfortunate who produced a drawing of a tapered piece with six cross sections, received seven pieces of metal.

Further along, the food bazaars display delicacies in profusion to the shoppers, for in season no markets in the world offer more delicious fruits and vegetables than these Near Eastern cities. Figs, dates, oranges, lemons, grapes, and bananas are perhaps the most common of the fruits, while vegetables vary according to the particular locality. Egg plant in shapes unfamiliar to the American eye, as well as kusa or vegetable marrow, is utilized by the common people for their daily dishes, especially for dolma and mahshi. Rice takes the place of potatoes in the diet of the majority of the population. Before many of the booths hang round wire baskets filled with eggs of uncertain age. With modern transportation facilities, meats of all kinds are available in the larger cities although lamb and mutton are most commonly found in the bazaars. There even the essentials of sanitation have not yet penetrated, and meats are usu-

ally black with flies or brilliant orange from clouds of fierce meat-eating wasps whose bite is said to be fatal to man especially when it is received on the temple. In the country districts "lamb" is apparently any animal deliberately killed and not dead of old age. Sheep and goats are to be found everywhere, along the dusty roads or in the busy streets. Chickens, ducks, and turkeys are sold alive by the itinerant merchant who ties their legs and squats behind them as he calls his wares. For anyone who has strayed from the beaten paths, chickens, eggs, and mutton form the staple diet, and long-time dwellers there seldom survive the ordeal without a slight abhorrence of these foods.

Small restaurants are certain to be found near the food markets or at the edge of the bazaar. Before the door the slowly turning vertical spit sends forth its call to all hungry passers-by. Behind the spitted mutton, now a rich brown, are the small horizontal trays with glowing charcoal. Meat is cut in thin slices from the outside only and the remainder left to brown again. Much of the food is prepared near the front of the shop. Here are great tinned copper kettles filled with dolma made of stuffed kusa, tomatoes, or grape leaves. Bowls of leben, glass jars of various sorts of pickles, as well as quantities of pastry are always in evidence.

Especially in Damascus, sweetmeat stalls abound in delicacies. Lacom or Turkish paste is a universal favorite. There are great trays of pastry—pastry made of hundreds of tissue thin sheets and covered with a heavy sugar sirup, and pastry made into thread-like bits which give to the whole the appearance of excelsior are but two of the delicious varieties. Damascus is also famous for its candied fruits. Pastries are especially popular at the celebration ending the long fast of Rammadan when every shop in the bazaar carries many sweets made only at this time.

Bread, ever the staff of life, has a variety of forms, for each section of the Near East makes its own special kind. In Syria it is about the size of a salad plate and consists of two sides with a hollow center, while in Iraq it is usually a single flap about one fourth inch thick. In many places bread is made in great sheets no thicker than blotting paper. Among the poorer classes, bread serves in lieu of plate and table service, and extraordinary dexterity is displayed in eating with a curved piece of bread. With bread, olives, and dates, goat's milk cheese takes its place as one of the most com-



BEANS AND SUGAR, RIHANIE
A NEW DRESS FROM THE RIHANIE BAZAAR

mon foods. Great stacks of small white bundles of cheese are usually accompanied by bowls of leben or yogurt, so commonly mentioned by travelers as "sour curds."

The moment the shopper enters the bazaar, especially the food section, the basket boys begin to plague his life until a boy is employed to carry the purchases in a large basket hung on his arm or slung across his back. These "waleds" of the bazaar know all the passing gossip and could give their employers a surprising amount of information about themselves. Once hired, they never forget their benefactor and invoke all the blessings of Allah upon his head in an effort to win his good graces.

The spice bazaar which usually adjoins the food bazaar is re-dolent with all the odors which one associates with visions of the East. Here all manner of spices, herbs, and chemicals are sold to the housewife, merchant, and chemist alike. Salt and sugar may be purchased. The sugar is hung in festoons around the entrance in huge cones wrapped in blue paper. Most of these cone-shaped sugar loaves come from Holland. A small adz, usually of brass, elaborately decorated and occasionally inset with a steel blade is used to break up these flinty sugar loaves into usable size. In this bazaar are also matches, for the most part in boxes of the small safety type. Flint and steel may also be obtained in the spice bazaar as well as *titūn*, a plant, not tobacco, used in water pipes.

Before the depression days, Iraq was an important market for second-hand clothes. Great bales of cast-off apparel were sold in the Baghdad bazaar where people of the country came to bargain for them. The desert folk who worked on the various excavations presented a comical appearance as a result of combining a ladies' evening coat or a frock coat with Bedouin undergarments. Fortunately this trade has largely ended, owing to the fluctuation in exchange and the ready market in America for second-hand clothing. Shops which deal in such clothing usually sell everything imaginable: household goods, bits of glassware, tinned copper kettles, samovars, and plain junk.

Especially in the ten years following the Great War, in Syria, Palestine, and Iraq, second-hand shops presented an astonishing appearance. There practically anything necessary for mankind could be obtained from a railroad train to an airplane. Some houses for archeological expeditions were entirely constructed of materials purchased in such stores.

There is no hobby quite so fascinating as searching for oriental rugs, and while the tourist who is pressed for time goes to the large stores where the rugs are selected and priced accordingly, there is great sport to be had hunting them in out-of-the-way corners of the bazaars. If one has been searching for some particular variety, the appearance of such a rug on the market will quickly bring a rumor to the ear of the prospective purchaser. Usually the quality of the rug is greatly exaggerated but often some totally unexpected treasure is uncovered as the dealer turns over the piles of rugs. Rugs take space to store, and they are often concealed in a back room off the bazaar or on the second story. In a prominent place are kept the coarse inexpensive rugs, brightly colored kileems and kis-kileems, as well as the Mosul or Zakho strip rugs. These rather ordinary products of the oriental looms are sold to those who wish bright colors at an inexpensive price. The more choice values are piled at one side or even stored in a separate room to be brought out on demand or for especially favored customers. Old residents speak of those now almost forgotten days when certain merchants sold their goods on the basis of cost to themselves plus ten percent profit. Nowadays it behooves the purchaser, as well as the merchant, to know the tricks of the trade, the aniline dye, the acid bath, or rotten warp.

Really fine antique rugs have for the most part vanished to markets abroad where they command a higher price than the occasional traveler can afford to pay. Some very fine rugs are now produced in Persia, utilizing ancient designs, fine wools, and excellent workmanship. Time alone will tell whether the new dyes will gradually fade to pleasing and harmonious shades as did the old vegetable colors. Certainly they do not run like the inferior aniline dyes used a few years ago.

The gold and silver bazaars are usually housed in some large enclosure which can be securely locked on days when the bazaar is closed. Here in small booths the workers sit quietly with their simple tools which consist of a small alcohol lamp and blow torch, a tiny charcoal fire and a few drills, pliers, and tongs. Their supply of material is generally small for the bulk of their business is done to order. The samples of their workmanship and stock in trade are usually piled hit or miss in a small glass show case. There one may find bits of Bedouin jewelry and occasionally pieces of the old wheat-



A WEAVER, ALEPPO
A LEATHER STALL, RIHANIE

seed chain although really fine examples are very scarce. With the fall in the price of silver in the past few years, these markets were flooded with Bedouin trinkets which had been exchanged by the ladies of the desert for gold. Today these craftsmen are as accomplished as they were in the heyday of artistic development, but they fail to produce really first-class work because they lack clever designers. There are no such artists as those who once made the famed Persian miniatures and likewise the sketches for the metal workers. The artizans of today are highly skilled and can copy any objects given them with great accuracy, but this will never result in original productions. It is the proud boast of the Amara workers of Baghdad that they can copy in inlaid silver any photograph the customer desires. Would that some friend of man might furnish them with a new view of the Arch of Ctesiphon, the loaded camel, and the boat on the Tigris! Nevertheless, these men now produce almost the only hand work of any note in the city of Baghdad.

Gold and silver are also used in conjunction with other metals, chiefly brass, as in the factories at Damascus, where they are wrought into trays, boxes, and vases. Here the quality of the work, which is now produced almost solely for the tourist trade, has fallen so low that we were unable to locate in the city one artizan who could produce really first-class work such as was common twenty-five years ago. Work in these factories is done under the modern industrial system, employing designers and craftsmen to execute the work with the firm taking charge of the sale and distribution of the finished goods.

Legislation against wearing native garments has had a deleterious effect on the production of local fabrics. In Persia where beautiful camel's hair cloth was woven for abas, the compulsory introduction of western clothes has practically destroyed this industry. Other countries have realized that local cloth weaving was in danger and have attempted to encourage these native trades. Turkey has lately made a successful attempt to stimulate the production of silk goods within her boundaries. With her factories at Brusa and her prohibition of imported silks, materials of unusual beauty have been developed. Syria, without similar protection, has seen the destruction of the silk producing industry in the face of artificial silk. Imported silks from India and Japan fill the silk stalls of many of the bazaars, and there, too, are the Manchester cottons in many

colors. The Oriental lady though entirely garbed in black outer garments has a love of bright and gay colors. Of late the looms of Aleppo are again producing good fabrics in successful competition with imported ones by the use of mixtures of cotton and rayon. Special fabrics, used in abas for winter and summer wear, and belts of bright red are still made, especially in Aleppo and Mosul. In the latter city and in the bazaars of Zakho are to be found the brilliant watered linens which are woven for Kurdish suits. There real craftsmanship exists, for this material is sometimes as fine as handkerchief linen. Special designs are interwoven so that when the cloth is made into costumes, spots of color will be suitably placed on the pockets. All of the spinning and weaving is done in the homes. Thread is made almost entirely by the women while the men weave the larger part of the cloth. The looms are located at ground level, and the warp shifted from below by the feet of the worker who sits in a small pit. Looms, shuttles, and other equipment are all hand made. The watered effect is produced by subjecting the dampened linen to heavy pressure.

The stalls of the leather workers are gay with bright colored materials and decorated with their finished products. In spite of an almost universal prohibition of arms, revolver holsters and heavy cartridge belts with pockets for clips of military cartridges form one of the principle stocks in trade. Leather is dyed red, yellow, or green. The bright red slippers made in Baghdad are one of the few products of that city which find their way across the desert. Quirts and saddles are also to be had in all the stalls, and western luggage is copied with fair results. The major difficulty with local leather is its inadequate tanning which leaves the finished product with the resiliency of rubber, an especially undesirable feature in trunk straps! In Mosul small stone axes exactly similar to those called "prehistoric" by the dealer in antiquities are used for tooling decorations in dampened leather. Here, as everywhere else in the bazaar, blue glass beads are used for decoration and protection against the evil eye. They dangle from the windshield of your car, from the ear of the weary donkey, or from the neck of the newly arrived infant.

Pottery is likely to be sold by many of the stalls which deal in household goods. Rows of sherbas (porous, unglazed drinking jugs) are suspended by the neck around the entrance to the booth. In



THE SIERBA VENDER, BAGHDAD
A CARPENTER AND LATHE, BAGHDAD

Syria these jugs are furnished with a small side spout from which every Syrian becomes expert in drinking without touching his lips to the vessel. This refinement is unknown in modern Mesopotamia, although it was in use there two thousand years ago. Near the edge of the bazaar or not far from it may be found the potter's kiln. The best grades of pottery are made from clay found in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. This is brought in and prepared by small boys in a dimly lighted back room of the establishment. The clay is given to the potter in the form of a long cylinder, the size varying with the vessel to be thrown. The wheel which the potters now use is operated by the foot. The potter sits at his task, kicking the lower wheel which thus turns the upper one upon which the clay is thrown. In Iraq the pottery is finished with the wet hand, and only occasionally is a rather poor green glaze applied. After a pot has been completed, it is removed from the wheel with the aid of a piece of string and taken by one of the small boys to the courtyard to dry in the sun.

The kilns are large irregular brick structures which are fired with whatever is available. One of the reasons for the superiority of the Mesopotamian pottery is the quick and very hot fire obtained from the camel thorn which the women gather in great quantities for this purpose. In Aleppo where neither wood nor thorn are available, city refuse is burned with rather poor results as regards both fire and pottery. Fine pottery is seldom made, although in Syria not far from Beirut, a German war veteran is now making a ware which can hardly be distinguished from examples of the best Roman period.

The stalls of the woodworkers almost invariably take a similar pattern in every bazaar. Wood is stored in the rear and the front is occupied by a lathe. This is operated by a bow and leather thong just as many of the carpenter's tools. The left hand of the worker manipulates the bow while the right holds the chisel which is steadied near the point of contact with the work by the toes of one foot. Furniture of all sorts is made. If some model or picture is available really creditable work is done. The chief defects come from improper seasoning of the wood, which causes warping, and from poor gluing and joining, which often result in the furniture falling apart. Drills are made of a square steel rod flattened at one end and ground to a "V"-shaped cutting edge. These are rotated with the bow and



THE POTTER AND HIS WHEEL, BAGHDAD
A KILN IN ALEPPO

cord. Saws which are imported, always cut on the pulling stroke rather than the pushing one as in America. Most of the work which would be done in America in a mill, such as doors, windows, and trim, is made very satisfactorily in the Near East by hand.

Not all bazaars occupy permanent quarters in a large city. In the vicinity of Aleppo there is a traveling bazaar held on a regular schedule, one day in Aleppo, one in Antioch, one in Rihanie, and so on throughout the week. Itinerant venders of cloth, household necessities, or farming tools go out from Aleppo to display their wares in the crowded market places of the smaller cities. In villages such as Rihanie only a minimum of business is done throughout the week, partly because many articles are not available, and partly because prices are much higher than on bazaar days when competition forces closer bargaining. In addition to the professional traders, farmers bring in much produce from countryside villages. Men and women tramp the larger part of the night to arrive early in the morning, for the market is over and visitors homeward bound before the heat of the noonday sun becomes oppressive.

The Near Eastern bazaars, whose origin goes back into the dim past, are rapidly disappearing. Change has come upon the unchanging East. In the vanishing bazaar, the archeologist, the historian, and the economist alike may find clues to much that perplexes them in ancient records. Tomorrow the opportunity will be gone.

MODERN ARABIC SHORT STORIES

BY M. SPRENGLING

THE READERS of this journal were told something over a year ago that modern Arabs were creating a modern literature quite distinct from the medieval productions which have up to now been known to the West as Arabic literature. Something of the problems of this modern literary movement and the ways in which young Arabic authors were trying to solve these problems were sketched in the numbers for September 1932 and December 1932. We here offer to members of the New Orient Society and to readers of this journal six short stories. Three of these were written by a young Mohammedan of a fine old family, Muhammad Taimur, who was born in Cairo in 1892 and who, after study and work abroad, returned to Cairo to die there in 1921, much too soon for the promise he gave. The sort of stories and sketches which young Arab authors produce nowadays cannot be better illustrated for American readers than by offering to them the following three tales.

CREAM WITH COFFEE AND CREAM WITH CLAY

This morning, after I had risen from my bed and put on my dressing gown, the maid came in with the breakfast that I might eat before going out. I cast my eyes over the food and found sufficient variety, cheese and olives and eggs and cream and coffee. My appetite was keen, and I ate of the cheese and the olives and the eggs until I was satisfied. Then I glanced at the cream and coffee and said to myself: "I drink cream with coffee every morning. Today I am satisfied with other things, and it is not possible for me to add to what is already in my stomach any cream whatever." So I rose to dress for the street. As I pushed back my chair I saw my dog wagging his tail at me. So I emptied what there was of cream in my cup into the dog's bowl, and left him with his meal.

I boarded the train for Alexandria and finished some business I had there. Then I was ready to return. But I had to wait a little while at the station pending the arrival of the train which was to carry me. As I walked I spied a man of about fifty and, running after him, a little fellow who was clearly his son. The man was carrying a jar filled with some liquid, I knew not what—and the two

were trying to board a train which had just left the station and was a little way out. In a moment the boy fell to the ground and the father fell over him. By good luck neither of the two suffered any harm. The jar, however, was broken and what was in it flowed onto the ground. It was snow-white cream. The man gave it a look filled with grief, the tears ready to start from his eyes. Then he walked away with his son, as if he boded ill of what had happened, and returned by the way he had come.

I had scarcely resumed my walk when I saw two little fellows, street urchins of Alexandria, racing toward the place of the accident. They were dressed in rags that covered but little of their bodies, bareheaded, barefooted, with grime lying thick on their faces and their clothes. When they arrived at their goal, they knelt down on the ground and fell to lapping up the cream—and it was cream with clay, not with coffee.

This morning my jaded appetite had refused a cup of cream with coffee; the heart of these two poor ones was delighted with cream mixed with clay.

GREENS! OH RADISHES. (CRY OF THE STREETSELLER)

Yesterday morning I passed an hour in the café reading the paper and drinking a cup of coffee. Then I rose to return home for lunch. As I was passing by the post office, a youth accosted me. He was well tanned, clearskinned, strongly muscled, and lithe of movements. The brightness of his eyes indicated a cheerful and resolute heart. He wore a new top coat over a somewhat worn suit which was clearly the work of a well-known tailor. He accosted me with an assured "Good Morning," and I returned his greeting with a glance at him indicative of my astonishment and confusion.

I was saying to myself: "What does he want of me? I do not know him, have, indeed, never met him before today. Perhaps he is a friend of one of my friends through whom that friend wants to communicate to me some special matter concerning himself. Or has he some ulterior design?"

The youth walked beside me smiling and said: "Without doubt the colonel is bound for an appointment, because he is in such a hurry!"

"Not at all, sir, I am merely going home."

"Well then, can the colonel give me five minutes? The colonel

knows the wrongs an educated man suffers in Egypt. The colonel knows how sluggish is the market of higher education in Egypt. The colonel is interested in the cause of educated men in Egypt. The colonel aids educated men in Egypt."

I answered him with a sour smile: "And the colonel has in his pockets no more than the price of a street-car ticket." He laughed and said: "I ask for no more than a quarter and no less than a dime, and the colonel is generous." I produced a dime from my pocket, gave it to him, and turned away from him to board a street car.

I got off the street car and turned in the direction of my home. As I turned into my street I found before me an old man of about sixty. He was stout of frame but bent of back, and he had a white beard which fell upon his breast. He was pushing a little hand cart loaded with radishes which he was selling. He would walk a little way, then he would stop a little, shouting at the top of his lungs: "Greens! Oh Radishes."

People were passing him on every side, but not one of them was moved to sufficient pity to lavish on him the price of a glass of beer which they were accustomed to drink every evening.

The man moved along until he had reached the end of the street. I was nearly abreast of him, when once more he cried: "Greens! Oh Radishes," then halted a moment to rest, and presently sank to the ground. I hurried to him with my servant, and we found him lying on the ground, faint with fatigue, too weak to speak. We carried him to my house that he might rest himself and refresh himself with food and drink.

Heavens above, what a difference between these two! The first, a youth who had chosen loafing for his craft and education for a means thereto; and loafing is the path of disintegration to the stage in which finer sensibilities die—or more aptly, it is cultured death. The other, an old man whom age had crippled and whom weakness had attained. But he refused to take a backward step in the great strife, the strife of life. It was out of the question for him to stretch forth his hand to beg. He stuck to his work, preferring death to faint-heartedness. And work is the path of ascent to that rank in which a man rises to the height of nobility or in which he dies a hero's death.

TO THE POOR GRATIS

The clock was striking twelve, and the doctor was writing.

At that same hour one of the poor was sitting cross-legged [on the floor] beside the bed of his daughter, who was pregnant and screaming with pain. She was trembling from the cold; her teeth chattered and her lips were drawn back. Her tears were flowing down upon her cheeks, writing lines of distress and pain. She was about eighteen years old. Her husband had died, leaving her pregnant. She was near the hour of her delivery, her labor was severe, and she was within two spans of death.

The poor man sat cross-legged, his head clasped between his hands, his heart oppressed with grief, his eyes downcast, not knowing what to do, unable to find any means whereby he might relieve his daughter's pains. Presently his blind wife, who had been weeping and beating her head against the wall, was saying: "Have you forgotten that Dr. So and So treats the poor gratis? Go to him and knock at his door. Perhaps his heart will soften and he will snatch our daughter from the jaws of death." The man rose without so much as a single sound passing his lips, headed straight for the door and went out into the street to fetch the doctor. He walked, reeling like a drunken man, until he reached the doctor's doorstep. He knocked thrice. The black servant came out and shouted at him: "What do you want?"

"My daughter is dying; I want to speak to the doctor."

"He is very busy; and he warned me to admit no beggar."

The poor man reiterated: "But my daughter is dying." The servant slammed the door [in his face], and the poor man turned back the way he had come, his heart beating violently. But he stopped for a bit, just before he had reached his dwelling, and said to himself: "Yes, I will do that! What harm can it do to me, if I do it?" He saw a man walking slowly along the street. He stretched out his hand and said: "An alms, dear Sir." But the man repulsed him rudely and went on his way. A second man passed, and a third, and a fourth. And the poor man's lot was a failure each time. Suddenly a policeman was saying to him: "What's this, you fellow? Begging in the street? Come along to the station!" The poor man had nothing with which to stop that policeman's mouth. He could only say: "I am not a habitual beggar, Sir. But my daughter is dying and I tried to collect the doctor's fee. And I found no other

means than this." But the policeman led him along to the station, and there the poor man spent that night.

In the morning he returned to his dwelling, after he had been given his discharge. The clock was just striking ten. As he drew near, suddenly he heard a shouting and a wailing. He hurried to his home. There he found his wife, weeping and screaming, his daughter having just breathed her last. He bent over her, his standing gone—a jailbird.

At that same hour the doctor was in the midst of his peroration before the assembly, and he was shouting at the top of his lungs:—"Medicine, my friends, is the abundant well-spring which slakes the thirst of the poor without money and without price. Medicine is the hall which the sick enter at the very point of death and from which they depart sound and fully cured. Nay, medicine in my opinion, is like the very houses of God, gathering together the poor and the rich, the miserable and happy in one [grand] equality. Indeed, medicine is wider of heart to the poor and more sympathetic to the weak and the distressed!"

* * *

The fourth sketch, to offset the three just presented, is by a Christian author, Anis al-Maqdisi, a man now about fifty years old, Professor of Arabic literature in the American University of Beirut. The feeling of the Arab-Christian as well as Mohammedan,—is well illustrated in his little sketch:—

THE HAJJ¹ IBRAHIM AND HIS HAPPY LIFE

In the autumn of the year 1921 the steamer entered the harbor of Alexandria with us on board. I was returning from America where I had spent about a year studying western civilization and examining it at close range. For some reason our steamer anchored at some distance from the pier and I was forced to effect a landing in a small skiff belonging to a seaman named the Hajj Ibrahim. Hajj Ibrahim was in his sixties, small of stature, very browned of face, wiry of build. His conversation was fluent, and his address was courteous. He wore a Moghrebine skull-cap type of fez, full trousers, and the Eastern clothes that went with these two. Beside him in the skiff were two young men, he managing the rudder, while they rowed.

¹Hajj is a title of honor given to a Moslem who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The boat ride in eastern waters delighted me, as I drank in the perfumed air of the East and enjoyed myself in its invigorating calm. I had been away from the East for a full year, the greater part of which I had spent in New York, that great city which teems with humanity of all kinds. People course along like torrents in its streets and squares, each one running to his work, crowding, racing—each one seeking profit and a higher level in the social scale, turning aside for nothing and concerned with nothing besides his self-interest. A long time I had stood in a nook of its nooks watching this constant strife and observing the movement of the passers-by, for all the world like lines of ants intent upon the search for food. I had heard the roar of the automobiles and the busses and the tramways under the earth and over it. Movement! Movement! This is New York.

And this was the impression of it left in my soul on the day when I entered the harbor of Alexandria and rode in the boat of Hajj Ibrahim. I said [to myself]: "A delight to me is this Eastern sea and its perfumed breath! Nay, it is a delight to me after this long absence to see a pure Easterner who speaks my speech and thinks my thoughts." So I began to chat with the Hajj, and he proved to be a surprisingly good conversationalist, as he related the news and told his tales. And we spun out the threads of our speech as the skiff was gliding gently with us between the steamers lying at anchor. The bewilderment of the West and its civilization was still strong upon me, and so I began to tell him about New York and its skyscrapers, and about its tramways, which travel above its streets and below them—even under the river which divides it from Brooklyn. And he would wag his head in wonderment at my tale and interrupt me with some naive question from time to time. Finally the course of the conversation carried us to the wealth of the Westerners, to their immersion in the maelstrom of their industries, to the deadly pace of their race in the arena of life.

Then the Hajj turned to me, after he had given the rudder a slight turn to the right, and said: "By your troth, Sir, it is greed that is killing men in these days. They fight for sustenance, and sustenance is in the hands of God. I am an old man, and more than forty years have passed over my head as I moved about on this sea, carrying passengers and goods. Yet I have never stood in need of anyone, nor have I ever been forced to beg for a gift. God has granted me seven lads, all of them by his exalted power strong of

build and of good conduct. I have reared them to the best of my ability. Four of them I taught my trade and the other three a craft by which they live. All of them have families except this youth, who is still with me," and he pointed to one of the two young men who were rowing. "Praise be to God! Praise be to God. I am by the excellence of my Lord a thousand times favored and well off. And the whole parcel of them earn their daily bread and live in the fear of God. They do not drink, nor do they gamble or fight. And what will a man ask of his Lord more than this? Good health, sufficiency of sustenance, and a sound conscience?"

I heard the words of the Hajj and they touched my soul, like the breath of the perfumed sea, after what I had witnessed of the terrible tempest of civilization. I felt my spirit quickening. This practical philosophy seemed admirable to me, and I wanted him to spin more of it. So I said, as the buildings of Alexandria began to overshadow us: "But, my dear Hajj, do our souls not demand more than a sufficiency of food? Look at these big buildings and tell me, would you not like to have one of them? Would you not like to be a wealthy merchant and possess warehouses and landed estates? How will man achieve this, if he be satisfied with little and withdraw from the strife?"

He said in his gentle accents: "What have you to do with that? The giver is God. We praise him in any case and are content with what he allots to us. I, my brother, am a simple seaman. I do not know book-learning. I have nothing to do with government and commerce. Despite this, I am happy with what God has given me by way of health and work and children. God apportioned to me this trade and I stay by it happy and at peace and living as God and his apostle bid me. Shall a man take ought with him yonder? No, he will take nought but what is good of his deeds. By the Lord of the Kaaba,² it is greed and irreligiousness that make man miserable."

With that we had arrived at the shore. The boat's rudder demanded his attention for a moment and I was busied with my preparation for the landing. Then I paid him his hire and entered the city.

"Happy art thou, oh Hajj! May God increase the likes of thee!"

²The sanctuary at Mecca to which the pilgrimage is directed and to which one turns in prayer.

Somewhat older than the two authors just presented is Elias al-Ayyoobi (the Ayyubid, claiming descent from Saladin's dynasty), who was born at Acco in 1874. His prize book is a history of Egypt in the time of the Khedive Ismail Pasha. Ismail was the first to receive for his splendor the title Khedive. From the western viewpoint we know him as the man who fell for the attraction of easy borrowing from western bankers and so led Egypt toward British occupation and Lord Cromer. The East sees him in a different light, as we may perceive from Ayyoobi's story:

THE GENEROSITY OF THE KHEDIVE ISMAIL.

One of the great nobles of France invited the Khedive Ismail to a banquet in his palace, and the Khedive accepted the invitation. To his surprise he found a palace beautiful and majestic and sumptuously furnished, such as one scarcely expected to find except as the property of kings. Ismail was much taken with it, and after the meal, when conversation was going round in the smoking *salon*, he took occasion to express to his host his great admiration of his palace, and the noble thanked him for his kindness. But Ismail had been told that the man was in sore financial straits and he wanted to help him in some way which would not wound his sensibility. So he asked, did he want to sell his palace. Now the man, in spite of his great need for cash, did not think that he would be able to part with this splendid family seat. Yet he was loathe to meet the kindness of Ismail with a rude refusal. It occurred to him that he might set the price so high that it would induce Ismail to desist from his desire for the purchase. So he answered: "Yes, I will sell it, Sire, for 5,000,000 francs," while the actual value was not more than one and one-half millions. Ismail plucked the word from his mouth on the fly, and said: "I take it from you at that price," and immediately wrote him a check for the sum on one of the banks of Paris. The man saw no possibility of escaping from the sale. But Ismail at that very moment turned toward the daughter of that noble—a slender girl of fifteen—and said with his beautiful smile to her father: "Surely you cannot deprive me of the pleasure of turning over the bill of sale to this exquisite lady, your daughter, to commemorate the admiration of the Khedive of Egypt for her charm and gentility, and in order that it may not be said that I visited you only to deprive you of your property."

This majestic gift and the manner of its bestowal caused a rip-

ple of astonishment throughout the French capital and made Ismail a marked man and a cynosure of all eyes wherever he happened to be. Furthermore it helped him greatly in the realization of his highest wishes, which were directed toward the striking off of the fetters which bound the freedom of his country—I mean, what remained of the shadow of Ottoman authority, and foreign intervention.

We end with a feminist note. The modern movement in Arabic literature has produced a few eminent women authors. The outstanding Moslem woman who stands for woman's rights and dignity in Moslem society is Malak Nasif, who writes under the significant pen-name, *The Searcher in the Desert*. Born in Cairo 1886, she died still a young woman in 1918. The manner and matter of her appeal are well illustrated by her sketch:

WHY DOES A MAN LOSE HIS INFLUENCE IN HIS FAMILY?

A man spends his day in his place of business and in the evening slips away to some café to kill time without profit. He returns home only when his eyelids are heavy with sleep. Weeks pass, and he does not see his children except on a school holiday. They grow up, knowing nothing of character training and discipline. He cuts as short as possible his contact and his conversation with them, as though he feared that he would lose his dignity in talking with the little ones. Some of them maintain an attitude of dignified silence in the presence of their wives, until, when both he and she are bored, he takes up the newspaper to read. Yet he explains to her nothing of what is in the paper, if she be ignorant, nor does he read to her if she be intelligent. Then how may she know his ideas and his preferences, if he does not speak to her?

The boy of the house—by his father's care for him and by the frequency of his contacts with his fellows outside the home—gains useful experience. But the girl's portion is small in the way of that mental rearing, which is the foundation of character, and she gains little of the stock of general human knowledge, unless she be a person of strong will. Now it is my conviction that a wise and loving father, by social intercourse with his boys and girls, can compensate them for much which they cannot easily gain by experience.

I do not like the father who lords it over his family and his

children and appears to them in the guise of a severe tyrant, thinking that that will maintain respect and reverence for him and never suspecting how they feel about it. Respect in moderate measure is, indeed, necessary, but if it exceeds the proper bounds, it turns to fear. Then the father loses sympathetic contact with his children, and they lose much of their love and trust in their father. Frequently you will find little children, who love their mothers more than their fathers for this very reason. This high and mighty tyranny on the part of the father weakens and destroys the character of the children, since it fosters in them a spirit of cringing cowardice, which turns to wasteful recklessness, when they grow up. The children of avaricious parents are often the most wasteful spenders, when they are grown up.

I once visited a lady afflicted with a severe husband of this sort. We were chatting comfortably, the little ones were playing near by, and the older girls were laughing. Suddenly a terrified silence ensued, the mother was clearly embarrassed, her eyes fell, and she grew pale. One of the girls hurriedly silenced the little ones, another listened at the staircase, a third went to see what she might straighten up in her father's room. I was surprised at this terrified commotion and asked for the reason of it. Then the lady, with manifest grief, scarcely daring to talk above a whisper, told me: "The lord and master may be approaching."

I said to myself: "If there is all this excitement, when there is still some doubt of his approach, then what will these women do, if they are told he is here?" Then the girls began to explain that they never spoke in the presence of their father, and that they always tried to keep out of his way, because he was easily roused to anger, and he did not permit them any little visits nor any friends. If any of them made a mistake in her service or was a little tardy, he flared up and reviled her. And when he partook of his meals, the mother and the three of them remained standing like maids until he had finished. I was astonished and grieved to find the growth of this spirit of despotism among our men, carried into their homes in the midst of their own flesh and blood.

AN ARABIAN KNIGHT AND A DESERT POETESS

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY NA KATIBAH

An Arabian knight was on his way to a spring of water, seeking repose from a long, wearisome journey. On approaching the spot he heard a damsel singing:—

O, bid thy phantom from my sleep depart,
 Mayhap in slumber rests my flaming heart;
 Lovelorn, I turn me on an irksome bed,
 And seek in vain the comforts of the dead.
 Since thou wouldst heal, relenting say thy "yea,"
 And quicken thou this aching lump of clay.

"Whose verses art thou repeating, sweet songster?" he asked. "Mine," came the reply. "Nay if they be truly thine," replied the knight, "canst thou preserve the words and the measure, but only change the rhyme?"

Thereupon the damsel sang:—

O, bid thy phantom from my sleep begone,
 Mayhap in slumber drowns my every moan;
 Lovelorn, I turn me on my burning breast,
 And seek in vain the comforts of the blest.
 Since thou wouldst heal, but grant thy love's rebirth,
 And quicken thou this aching lump of earth.

"Thou hast indeed done well—but canst thou yet make another attempt?" pleaded the knight. "Willingly," replied the desert maiden and sang:—

O, bid thy phantom from my sleep retire,
 Mayhap in slumber ebbs my raging fire;
 Lovelorn, I'm tossed by burning wave on wave,
 And seek in vain the comforts of the grave.
 Since thou wouldst heal, thy willing heart now trust,
 And quicken thou this restless pinch of dust.

"Sweet poetess! let me importune thee but once more. Thou re-echoest the musings of my soul. Wouldst thou, pretty one?" "As thou desirest," replied the maid and again sang:—

O, bid thy phantom from my sleep recoil,
 Mayhap in slumber ends my fruitless toil;
 Lovelorn, I turn me on my bed of gloom,
 And seek in vain the comforts of the tomb.
 Since thou wouldst heal, but breathe thy love divine,
 And quicken thou this withered heart of mine.

ARABIA'S DESOLATE QUARTER

ONE of the greatest deserts, until recently untouched by the foot of the Westerner, is calling to the adventurous spirit of the West. The great empty or desolate quarter of Arabia (in Arabic, Ruba al-Khali) has of recent years been broached three times. Some four or five years ago it was crossed for the first time by Bertram Thomas along its relatively easier eastern length, where by digging one may usually obtain some sort of water. Some two years later H. St. John Philby crossed it in the more difficult east-west direction in the northern half. Philby's book, *The Empty Quarter*, as well as Bertram Thomas' book will be known to many of our readers. Philby sought for ruined cities, but found none. Instead he found what the Arabs considered ruined city walls but what turned out to be great craters caused by the fall of tremendous meteorites. This is of particular interest to Chicagoans because, as Mr. Henry Field and Mr. H. W. Nichols inform us, the Field Museum of Chicago is, beside the British Museum, the only place outside of Arabia which possesses a meteorite from this region.

Early in March 1934, there appeared in the Chicago papers the astonishing but garbled news that French aviators had actually discovered from the air the towers and battlements of a great city somewhere in the northern section of this desert. The news prints were quick to call this the capital of the Queen of Sheba. This is alluring but quite certainly false. If the French aviators saw something other than a mirage, the truth is probably much more astonishing. Philby was led in his search by legends quite other than those of the Queen of Sheba. It remains to be seen whether the desert will reveal to us the truth of some of those ancient Arabic legends of which the story of the Queen of Sheba is a mere detailed incident.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The discovery of the alledged capital city of Sheba has been heralded by the daily papers. According to the reports, it is said that on March 7, Captain Edouard Corniglion-Molinier and Andre Malraux made an exploratory flight by airplane to the desert Ruba al-Khali. Starting from Djibouti as base, they flew over the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, along the coast of Yemen, over Sana towards Mareb. Here they saw the ruins of but two columns and a pile of stones. They went on to the desert, where, after flying over a volcanic valley, they came upon the ruins of a great white city, with storied buildings and towers, lying upon a hill of black volcanic stone. Near-

by they found a city of tombs, some small, some large, arranged in rows. In order to make sure that what they saw was no mirage the aviators dropped to 300 meters and took both photographs and moving pictures.

Inside the city, and here and there in the neighborhood the aviators report having seen Bedouin tents, and Bedouins who fired at them as they circled about. Luckily the airplane was not damaged and they returned safely to Djibouti on their last drop of fuel.

On March 23, the photographs of these ruins were exhibited in Paris.

BOOK NOTES

The Path of Prayer. By Dhan Gopal Mukerji. New York. E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc. Pp. 18. Price \$1.00.

The author of this booklet, a companion-piece to his *Daily Meditation*, recommends prayer as a means of reaching that high level sought by man "to live above the battle of doubt and fear," and to attain realization of the divine. His definite suggestions for the practice of prayer, make the book well worth the attention of those who would live fully and "replenish their life on earth day by day with Divinity."

The Herald Wind. Translations of Sung Dynasty Poems, Lyrics and Songs. By Clara Candlin. New York. E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc. 1934. Pp. 113. Price \$1.20.

An anthology of delightful poems collected and translated by Clara Candlin who has lived many years in China. This is the first collection in separate form of the poetry of the Sung dynasty, which represents the zenith in the history of Chinese art and culture. The poems are short and in general of the lyric type. We offer as a sample:

THE ORIOLE SHUTTLE

A golden Oriole, treading in and out of willow bloom,
 With chatter, chatter, chatter like a weaver's loom.
 In spring the flowers resemble gilded gay brocade,
 When will this happy bird have all its fabric made?

The Message of Krishna by A. S. Wadia. The Message Series No. 5. New York E. P. Dutton and Co., 1934. Pp. xiv 146. Price \$1.50.

The fifth volume of the Message Series, whose purpose it is to further the understanding of the common truths of the great religions of the world, thereby creating greater spiritual comradeship among nations, deals with the teachings of the great Krishna. Professor Wadia finds in the *Bhagavad Gita* the highest expression of Hindu religious thought and in Krishna the noblest fulfilment of Hindu manhood. In straightforward and brief exposition he explains the tenets of Hindu religion as expounded and interpreted by the educated classes. The Hinduism of the uneducated masses, however, must dispose of the "accumulations of decayed traditions and base superstitions" before it can realize the nobility of this old and great religion. The book is valuable for its direct and simple treatment of Hinduism.

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