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THIS IS SOME DICTIONARY

Arabic Affair Used by Scholars Is in 20 Volumes and Weighs About 100 Pounds.

The ponderous dictionaries of Europe, even the famous many-volumed etymological index of Larousse, which is the monumental work of all modern tongues, are more than surpassed says the New York Sun, by the Arabic dictionaries of 500 years ago, which are still the great authority for students in that language.

The Arabic dictionary most used by scholars who are familiar with no other language is in 20 quarto vol-umes and weighs close to 100 pounds. There is a 50-pound ten-volume abridgment of it, presumably for use at home. This and virtually all the Arabic dictionaries were made in the time of the Harun-al-Rashid.

The Islamic empire is credited by Moslems with two great eras. The first was that of conquest, when the only history was written with the sword. Then came centuries of Mohammedan domination, when the Moslems peacefully held the empires they had conquered in Asia and in the Ibe rian peninsula. During these art and literature flourished and the Arabic dictionary was born. In Arabia the flower of this period was in the golden time of Caliph Harun-al-Rashid.

Each of the words that have been familiar in the daily life of the nomad Arabs for centuries has an enor mous number of synonyms. The llon, for example, was feared by villagers and hunted not only for sport but as a matter of necessity. Therefore in the Arabic dictionary the iion has more than a hundred different names. The camel was the sole means of transportation across the thirsty des-erts and is characterized in 122 dif-

But above all, the horse and the sword were the two great stand-bys of the Arab. There are more than 200 words that convey ideas of "horse" and "sword." All other familiar words, such as tent, flock, herds, water, woman, sun and air, have long lists of synonyms that are interchangedictionaries are of so large size. Arabic, so the Arabs say, was the language of the Babylonians, and it is also contended by them that it was the tongue which Abraham spoke.

Fame and fortune await the scien-tist who discovers the secret of the familiar firefly or lightning bug. one has been able to tell how the little insect produces the flashes of light we see twinkling about on dark nights. Careful scientific tests have proven, however, that this light is produced with about one four-hundredths part of the energy which is expended in the flame of a candle. Considering the strength or rather feebleness of the firefly this light is believed to be the most efficient form of Illumination today. If this method could be understood and put to work it is calculated that the energy exerted by a boy in driving a bicycle would be sufficient to run a powerful dynamo or light miles of street lamps. The light of the firefly is practically heatless and it is believed among scientists that the future of the lighting industry of the world depends upon the discovery of heatless light.—Boys' Life.

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lists of synonyms that are interchange-able and in constant use. This affords some slight explanation why Arabic



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