

# IN SYRIA



A Syrian Rebecca Returning From the Well.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

**T**HE strip of Syria and the Holy Land at the eastern end of the Mediterranean sea has ever been a stage for momentous world events. There the civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor met, their armies marching and counter-marching.

A few miles north of Beirut, at the point where Dog river enters the sea, the foothills of the Lebanon come down to the very shore of the Mediterranean, and since soldiers and armies have always sought to travel on the level, whether they have fought that way or not, the passage of this point where sea and mountain meet was always a difficult feat.

One army after another cut its path along the towering cliffs, and when the passage of this narrow defile was thus insured, the commanders left the record of their passing. Who the first men were no one knows, for the troops of Napoleon III, in passing this point, were too lazy to turn over a new leaf; they simply inscribed their record on a limestone page from which the record of some ancient Egyptian had been erased by the hand of time.

But the first record that still stands was left by the armies of the most famous of the pharaohs, Rameses the Great, when they were on their way northward to wage war against the Kheta or Hittites.

The great Assyrian, Ashurnasirpal, left his record here and his successors, Shalmaneser and Adadnirari, did the same. Then there was a lapse of more than a century, from 812 to 705 B. C., when Sennacherib and his son, Esarhaddon, had their names chiseled in this stone book of history.

## Railways on Old Caravan Routes.

If political conditions become definitely stabilized in this part of the world, it is not too much to believe that heavy trains, fired with oil from the Persian fields, will thunder along trade routes which plodding camels marked out when the world was young. Already, one may dine in Cairo and have luncheon the following day in Jerusalem. The step to Aleppo, Mosul, and Bagdad is short and all but 300 miles of the line is now open to traffic. However popular the route through central Europe along the famous Berlin-to-Bagdad line becomes, the safety of the British empire demands that the railroad which follows the old line of communication between the valley of the Nile and the valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris shall be kept in a state of perfection. There will be no Amanus or Taurus tunnels on this trail of the modern caravan, and an absence of heavy grades throughout a large part of the right of way will make it possible for the hoped-for Cairo-to-Catcutta express to beat the fastest sea route by several days.

The Hauran, south of Damascus, has long been a granary and the massive ruins of Baalbek dominate a plain whose fertility was once sufficient to make possible lavish local expenditures and at the same time return large taxes to imperial Rome, which used Syria not as a sinking place for public funds, but as a source of revenue for the treasury on the Tiber. When Rome ruled, this remote province had enough and to spare; but not for long did golden eggs from Syria enrich the greedy Turk.

Water holds a high place, not only in the view of the abstemious Mohammedan, but of the Syrian Christian as well. The main attraction of the Damascus cafe is a tiny fountain, whose sight and sound delight the son of the desert vacationing in the urban oasis, or the Sart of Samarkand, wearied by his desert march to Mecca, who

stops here and dreams of his distant Zarahshan.

## From Abraham to Allenby.

Dan and Beersheba are popularly considered the termini of Palestine, as they formerly were of Hebrew territory. One grew up around a source of the Jordan, the other owed its existence to the age-old wells whose limestone rims have been grooved and polished by a million bucket ropes. No hotel register attests so long and distinguished a line of guests.

From Abraham to Allenby, the rope-woven signatures that rim Beersheba's seven wells bespeak romance and passions broad as human life. Here Abraham arrived with Sarah, his wife, and being unused to town ways and fearing them, they registered as brother and sister. Later Sarah induced Abraham to drive Hagar and Ishmael out into the desert to die. Evidently cross-roads life did not improve Sarah's character.

Here Abraham, the father of his race, received a message to kill his only son, Isaac, and from this spot he set out with heavy heart to accomplish the task which he was saved from completing. Here Jacob robbed Esau of his birthright by methods that remind one of Launcelot Gobbo, and here he later stopped when, as an old man, he was on his way to visit his famous son, Joseph, in Egypt.

A single spring determined the site of Nazareth, and Jacob's well still provides water in an otherwise thirsty land. To the tired traveler from the hills of Moab, the dirty Jordan seems a blessed refreshment after the dry ride; but Naaman, the leper, because he was accustomed to the crystal streams of his native city, scorned the coffee-colored flood which had been recommended as a cleansing agent.

Water bounds Syria on the west. The lack of it defines the eastern and southern boundaries. Many of the most pleasing pages of the Bible ripple with the songs of running brooks or praise the "still waters" of wells which have long marked the resting places of weary flocks and heavy-laden caravans.

## Bathing in the Dead Sea.

The Jericho region is supplied with three kinds of water, and this prodigality, coupled with the historic fame of the Jordan valley, has furnished a regular formula of bathing for pilgrims to this hot depression, nearly a quarter of a mile below the level of the sea.

Of course, every tourist has to bathe in the Dead sea; it is the thing to do. Lucky is the man whose skin does not crack in the heat of the valley, for Dead sea water on a cracked skin or the film of the eye reminds one of hollering oil and the Spanish inquisition. Having performed the necessary rite and dutifully completed an experience which can be recorded in the diary of the trip, the poor pilgrim, laved with a tenacious fluid that seems to be composed of salt, kerosene, and lye, drives off to the Jordan and seeks relief in the muddy waters of that river. Then, as night rapidly settles in the deepest wrinkle on the face of Mother Earth, the tired traveler rides between the miserable hovels which constitute modern Jericho and dismounts at the Sultan's spring, once sweetened by Elisha.

The traveler who is wise will not try to sleep in the hot hotel, whose confining walls seem to radiate discomfort, but will stretch his bed beside the still waters of Sultan's pool.

Water or the lack of it must always affect the development of Syria, but the supreme value of the land as a link between the production centers of Europe and the population centers of Asia must always make trade routes and cross-roads of traffic the locations for largest growth.

## NEW DRAPERIES for A FEW CENTS

By Mae Martin



All of us realize nowadays how bright-colored draperies seem to invite people in, and how warm touches of color in spreads, cushions and runners help to make us love our own surroundings.

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My new book, "Color Craft," gives hundreds of dollar-saving suggestions for beautifying your home and clothes. Sixty-four pages, fully illustrated in colors. It's FREE. Just write Mae Martin, Home Service Department, Diamond Dyes, Burlington, Vermont.

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Motorist—Why, man, there isn't a pedestrian on the street.

Policeman—All right, then: I'll make it attempted suicide.—Boston Transcript.

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## Race Mingling

In Hawaii, according to the Honolulu Nippu-Jiji, intermarriage between its many races is becoming more and more prevalent. American men in the islands showed the highest percentage of intermarriage in the year ending June 30, 1927, only 152 out of a total of 383 being with women of their own people. Hawaiian women also intermarry frequently, for out of 271 marriages recorded, 156 were with members of other races. The Chinese, in spite of a popular belief that they are inclined toward intermarriage, showed a total of but 42 such weddings out of 175 men who were married. Only 29 out of 798 Japanese men married women of another race, and intermarriages among Japanese women totaled 41 out of 810.

Envy is no friend of happiness.

## Man Fights for Life in War With Insects

America, more than any other part of the world, is engaged in a war for its existence against insects, the natural enemy of man, and their menace is greater than ever before, declared Dr. L. O. Howard, chief of the bureau of entomology, in a startling interview with the American Magazine.

America is especially threatened by insects, continued Doctor Howard, because of its varied climatic conditions and large areas of vegetation planted contiguously and affording the best possible feeding grounds for parasites.

"Any farmer, or anyone who has a little garden in the suburbs and a few fruit trees has come to know that he cannot get a perfect or even near perfect crop without protective mechanical or chemical measures against insects," added the entomologist. "When one buys fruit, vegetables or cereal product, an indirect toll is paid upon the insect hordes, which want exactly what human beings want and are trying to crowd us off the earth to feed their fabulously increasing families.

"Some idea of the extent of the cost of insects is shown by the fact that \$30,000,000 worth of wire screening is sold annually. Orchard growers of California alone spend \$45,000,000 annually fighting insects. The bureau of entomology spends about \$3,000,000 a year in field work and scientific investigations to determine what strategy to use against the enemies, but this sum does not include special sums to meet emergencies. The total actual cost of the insect warfare is conservatively \$60,000,000 a year.

"To put it more clearly, the damage wrought by insects every year in the United States nullifies the labor of 1,000,000 men. These material figures do not even touch upon the loss of life caused by the 65 well-known types of disease-carrying insects, which is beyond estimate."

## World's Largest Statue

What will be the largest statue of its kind in the world is to be erected in the bay at Rio de Janeiro, a huge figure of the Christ, 100 feet high, says Popular Mechanics Magazine. It is the work of the Polish sculptor Landowski.

## Accommodating

She—"I don't like to be pawed over and kissed." He—"All right—I'll kiss you first."—Life.

Solid friendships are based on a thoroughly mutual understanding; and there isn't so much of that.



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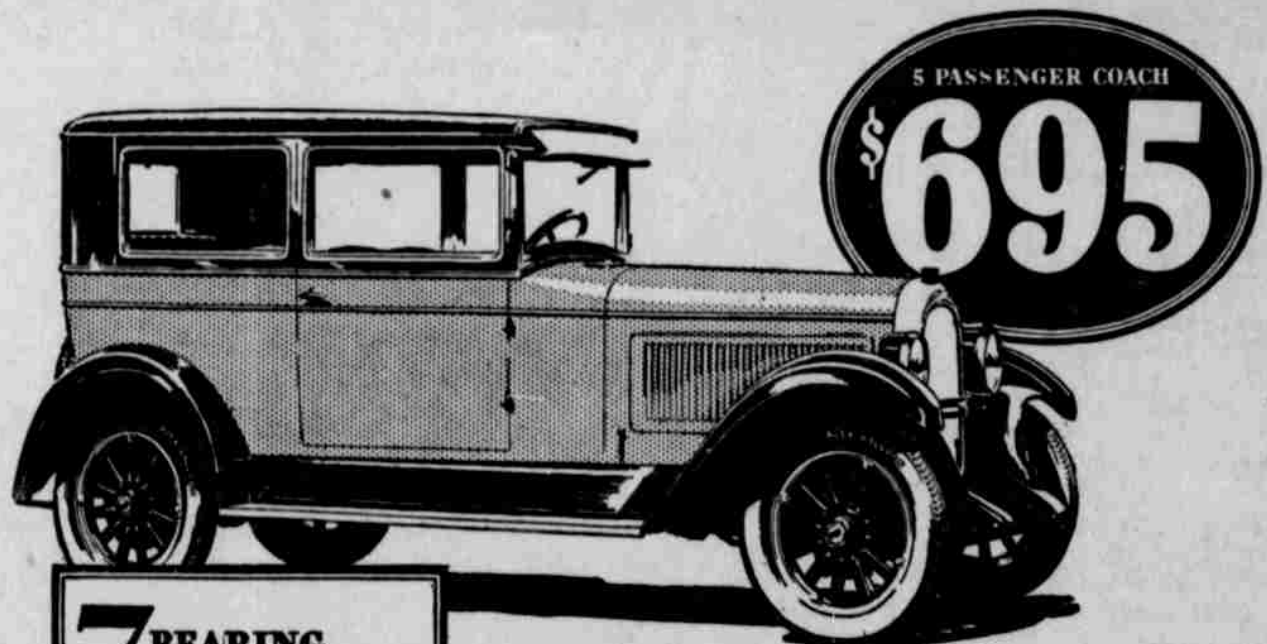
## Not His Line

Bill Brennan, Jr., isn't old enough to be a member of his father's firm and be known as a realtor, but he specializes the same as the W. A. Brennan company does in large downtown leases and real estate deals, having his small sister as his principal client. The other evening Bill, Sr., overheard some of the "business" conversation. The "client" had called by phone and Bill, Jr., answered.

"No," he spoke into the imaginary telephone. "I am not an insurer; I am a real estate."—Detroit Free Press.

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# THE new Whippet Six

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## Tucked-in Blouse New; Worn With Belted Skirt

One of those little touches that divide the new styles from the old is the tucked-in blouse.

The tucked-in blouse does not go with all costumes, nor with all figures. But important dressmakers employ it extensively on spring street and sports suits, particularly with skirts which have upstanding bands and belts pulled in to an almost normal waistline.

Many blouses of washable materials like linen, pique and crepe de chine are being shown in Paris for wear with suits and sport ensembles. Some of them are sleeveless and many have vestee fronts.

## Pale Colors Popular

Dozens of pale blue and pale pink ball gowns are shown among the fashions in Paris. Most of the dresses are chiffon, but some moire and stiff taffeta are used. Pink and blue sports costumes are also frequently seen.