

Yemen and Its Khat



Three Wise Men of Yemen.

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

YEMEN, an independent country of Arabia, across the lower end of the narrow Red sea from the Italian colony of Eritrea, is the latest land to enter into treaty relations with Italy. As a result the likelihood is seen of the peaceful penetration of southwestern Arabia by Italian influence.

This reign, like all other parts of Arabia, was under at least nominal Turkish control before the great war; but since it has constituted an imamate, under the rule of the Arab Imam Yahya ben Muhammad ben Hamid al Din, who rules from Sana. Yemen has the distinction and the good fortune to be one of the few parts of Arabia that are of agricultural importance. Under a stable government it would have an important commercial future. The British protectorate of Aden is one of the chief outlets for its produce.

Yemen's American fame rests principally upon the familiar name of an almost deserted city, Mocha, through which coffee no longer comes, where debris clutters the streets, where only mosques remain intact.

Coffee still is a major crop of Yemen, but it is exported largely through Mocha, and in even greater quantity via Aden, port of the British protectorate to the south, which today is the commercial neck of the Red sea bottle.

Order coffee in Yemen, however, and you will not repeat the experiment. For the Arabians of coffee-land prefer the husks to the berries, and the brew therefrom has been compared to hot barley water. To the occidental mind this concoction affords neither flavor or stimulus. The Yemenite looks elsewhere for a stimulant—to khat.

The world knows almost nothing about khat. Our scientific books are nearly silent on the subject. Travelers who ought to have observed its uses write from hearsay and usually with the most amazing ignorance. There are even Europeans in the Yemen, whose servants have chewed khat every day of their lives, with so little knowledge of native life and customs that after years of residence they ask: "Why, what is khat? We never heard of it." Yet no Yemen event is complete without its presence, and no Yemen Arab—man, woman or child—passes a day if he can help it without the aid of at least a few leaves of the precious khat.

Khat Is Their Stimulant.
When the European is weary he calls for alcohol to revive him; when he is joyful he takes wine, that he may have more joy. In like manner the Chinese woos his "white lady," the poppy flower, the Indian chews bhang, and the West African seeks surcease in kola. Khat is more to the Yemen Arab than any of these to its devotees. It is no narcotic, wooing sleep, but a stimulant, like alcohol. Unlike alcohol, it conceals no demon, but a fairy. The khat eater will tell you that when he follows this fairy it takes him into regions overlooking paradise. He calls the plant the "flower of paradise."

Catha edulis, as the plant is known botanically, grows to some extent in Abyssinia, but it is cultivated chiefly in the mountains of the Yemen interior behind Aden. The word khat is said to be derived from another Arabic word, kut, meaning sustenance or reviving principle, and refers to the most salient property of the plant, that of exalting the spirits and supporting the bodily strength, under extraordinary conditions, of one who eats its leaves. The researches of Albert Beitter of the University of Strassburg, seem to show that its active principle is an alkaloid in the form of crystals, very bitter and odorless.

Along the steep, terraced slopes of the mountains between Taiz and Yerin you will find the small plantations of the khat farmer. Not till you have climbed nearly 4,000 feet will you see the first one, and when you reach 6,000 feet you will have passed the last.

Varieties and Cultivation.
Bokhari is the sweetest of all khat, and by far the most expensive. The

supply is so limited that it is never seen except among the richest merchants of Zeblde, Ibb, Taiz and Sanaa. The commonest kind is Moquari, which grows in the district of Maktra, about four days' camel ride from Aden, and most of the 2,500 camel loads of khat which reach Aden in the course of a year is of this variety.

Khat cultivation is simple. The plant bears neither flowers nor seeds, but is grown from cuttings. After the farmer has flooded his field till the soil has absorbed its utmost of water, he covers it with goat droppings and allows it to "ripen" for a few days. Then he buries the cuttings in shallow holes from 4 to 6 feet apart, with space enough between the rows for pickers to pass. But the Yemen cow and the sad-eyed camel, whose maw is never filled, have a nice taste in khat cuttings, and to discourage these marauders the former covers each hill with thorn twigs and spiny cactus leaves. Sometimes he trains one of the half-wild dogs which infest the village to guard that particular field.

At the end of a year the young shrubs are two feet high with a thickly spread green foliage 18 inches in diameter. Behold now the farmer going out into the dawn of each morning to gaze at his field and the sky in the hope of seeing the portents of harvest time. On a morning the air is thick with bulbuls, sparrows, weaver birds, shrilly clamoring. They rise and fall upon his plants, picking at the tenderest leaves. "Allah be praised!" cries the simple farmer, "the leaves are sweet and ripe for the market."

And now he calls his women and the wives of his neighbors to the crop-picking. Under a bower of jasmine vines, with plumes of the sweet-smelling rehan in their turbans, the farmer and his cronies gather to drink kishar from tiny cups and smoke the hubbub, while the womenfolk bring them armfuls of the freshly cut khat leaves. What a joyous time it is for all the village; for always the farmer distributes the whole of his first crop among his neighbors.

The khat plant grows from 5 to 12 feet in height and then it stops. As the foliage thickens, the larger branches are pruned out to prevent crowding, and when the plant is sixteen years old the top usually dies. It is cut off about a foot above the ground, and from the stump new shoots spring out and the plant is reborn.

Marketing in Aden.
In Aden the arrival of the khat camels is looked forward to as the chief daily event. When they arrive, about noon, the market is filled with a restless, yelling mob. Bedlam has broken loose, but it is a merry, good-natured bedlam.

After the khat is weighed on the government scales and duly taxed, it is divided into bundles the thickness of a man's forearm. Then the sellers mount tables and auction it off.

In an hour the place is all but deserted and the foot-marked, earthen floor littered with debris. Now come the vendors of firewood and all the despised castes, like scavengers, to buy the refuse for a few pice. But out in the streets may be seen hundreds happily wending homeward, a bundle of the precious leaves under each arm, their jaws working and their eyes full of a delicious content. It is close on to noon, and you will not see them again until after two o'clock.

Contrary to the general opinion, khat is never used as a beverage in the Yemen, but the fresh leaves are invariably chewed. The youngest leaves are the best. They have a sweetish, slightly astringent taste, not unpleasant to the European palate, but certainly not alluring. When brewed, they lose most of their strength and the flavor of the decoction is much like that of grapevine "cigarettes."

Just what is the exact toxic effect of khat on the human system has never yet been ascertained. It is certainly a stimulant with a lively and nearly immediate effect upon the brain and nerve cells; the gloomiest man becomes cheerful under its influence, the most enervated active.

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon For the County of Columbia

Alma Urie, (Plaintiff),
SUMMONS

vs.
Charles H. Urie, Defendant.
To Charles H. Urie:

In the name of the State of Oregon you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit on or before the 12th day of March, 1927, and if you fail to answer or otherwise appear, the plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief demanded in the complaint, to-wit: for the dissolution of the bonds of matrimony between plaintiff and defendant, and for such other and further relief as to the Court may seem just and meet.

Service of this summons is made upon you by publication thereof in pursuance of an order of the Honorable J. E. Eakin, Judge of the above entitled Court, made, dated and entered on the 25th day of January, 1927, ordering such publication in the Vernonia Eagle once each week for six successive weeks, the first publication thereof being on the 27th day of January, 1927, and the last publication on the 10th day of March, 1927.

J. Mason Dillard, Attorney for plaintiff.—Postoffice address 404 Failing Bldg., Portland, Oregon. F21A7

NOTICE OF BOND SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that sealed bids will be received by the undersigned until the hour of 8 o'clock p. m. March, 14, 1927, and immediately thereafter opened by the City Council for \$4,128.39 par value Improvement Bonds of the City of Vernonia, Oregon, (Bancroft bonds). Said bonds to

be indenominations of five hundred dollars (\$500) each, bearing interest at the rate of six per cent (6%) per annum, to bear date February 1, 1927, and to mature ten (10) years from date of issuance, subject to redemption, however, at any semi-annual coupon date at or after one (1) year from date, principal and interest payable at the Fiscal Agency of the State of Oregon in New York City.

Bids must be unconditional and accompanied by certified check in the amount of \$206.00.

The council reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

D. B. Reasoner,
City Recorder. 302

CHRIST FOR ALL—ALL FOR CHRIST

The Word of God

BIBLE THOUGHT AND PRAYER
If parents will have their children memorize a Bible selection each week, it will prove a priceless heritage to them in after years.

March 13, 1927

HOW TO CONQUER AN ENEMY:—When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. Proverbs 16: 7.

PRAYER:—O Lord, Thou hast revealed Thyself and taught us to rest in Thee, for Thou hast compassed us about with songs of deliverance.

QUESTIONS AND BIBLE ANSWERS

If parents will have their children memorize the answers in the Bible Citations, it will prove a priceless heritage to them in after years. What cometh when we draw water out of the wells of salvation?

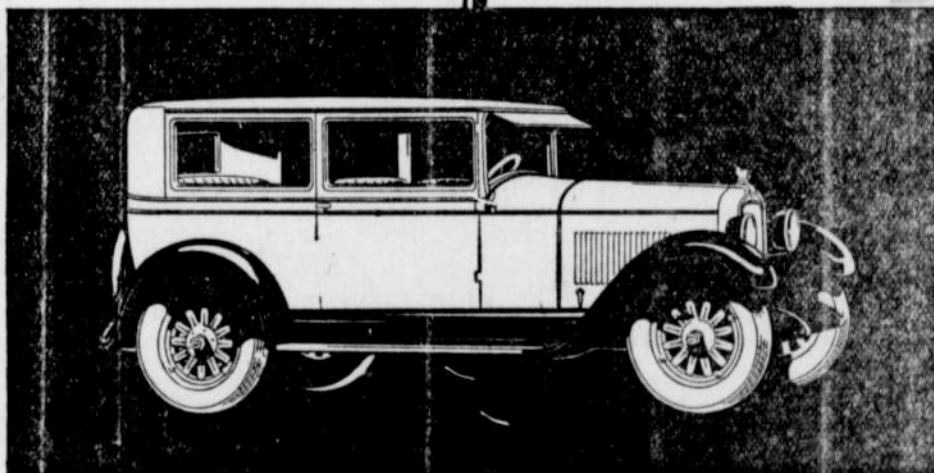
Answer, read—Isaiah 12: 2, 3.

Among the early vegetables which can be started in the house in flats or boxes are: Tomatoes, cabbage, peppers, cauliflower, celery and lettuce.

GENERAL MOTORS' LATEST ACHIEVEMENT

The New and Finer

PONTIAC SIX



SEDAN

\$775

Oakland today announces an entirely new line of Pontiac Sixes, notably enhanced in beauty, incorporating numerous refinements in design, and carrying new low prices.

New Fisher Bodies

Never in any low-priced six have been achieved such commanding beauty and luxury as in this latest achievement of General Motors. Lending luster to even the Fisher tradition of masterly craftsmanship, the new bodies by Fisher are longer, lower and superbly executed to the slightest detail.

All New Duco Colors

All body types are finished in new combinations of Duco colors. Original and fresh, these colors range from Beverly Blue and Black on the Sedan to Cherokee Gray on the Sport Cabriolet.

New Beauty and Style

Pontiac Six beauty has always been outstanding. But now in these new and finer models has been achieved not only new beauty but also an arresting rakishness—the results of a deeper radiator; larger, heavier, and more sweeping crown fenders; and more massive headlamps. Windshield and body

pillars are narrowed to conform to the accepted custom-built vogue and to provide a wider arc of visibility. Window ledges are smartly recessed and finished in a contrasting color.

Mechanical Refinements

In addition to the numerous elements of greater beauty and style, the new and finer Pontiac Six introduces many new features and refinements in engineering design—such as tilting-beam headlights with foot control, new transmission and brake levers, steering wheel with aluminum spider, a clutch even smoother and more positive in action and an oil-sealed universal joint.

Two New Body Types

Two entirely new body types of characteristic beauty have been added to the Pontiac Six line. These are a dashing, youthful Sport Roadster, finished in Lucerne Blue, striped with Faerie Red; and a 4-passenger Sport Cabriolet, with Brevoort Green top and fenders, and body in Cherokee Gray, striped with orange to rival in smartness the highest priced cars of the day. Come in and see the New and Finer Pontiac Six!

AT NEW LOW PRICES

Sedan - \$775	Sport Roadster \$775	Sport Cabriolet (4-pass.) \$835
Coupe - 775	Landau Sedan 895	DeLuxe Landau Sedan 975

All prices at factory

Gilby Motor Company

Vernonia, Oregon