The Maronites of Lebanon



With an Historical Sketch of the Early Syrian Churches

by the

Reverend Paul Abraham, P. P.

THE MARONITES OF LEBANON

the

STAUNCH CATHOLICS OF THE NEAR EAST

With an Historical Sketch of the Early Syrian Churches



by the

REVEREND PAUL ABRAHAM, P.P.
OUR LADY OF LEBANON CHURCH,
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July 28, 1931

Rev. Paul Abraham,
Wheeling, W. Va.

Dear Father Abraham:

I received your letter yesterday evening. I hereby give my "Imprimatur" for the publication of your book. My comment on it would be this:

"In it is gathered together an immense lot of information that ought to be of very great interest to the people of the Maronite rite. It also has its interest in general as an important contribution to Church history, dealing, as it does, with the most ancient rite in the Church. I trust it may have a wide circulation."

Yours very sincerely in Christ,

JOHN J. SWINT,
Bishop of Wheeling

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HIS BEATITUDE,
PATRIARCH ELIAS HOYEK, D.D., LL.D.
(SEE CHAPTER XXXI)

PREFACE

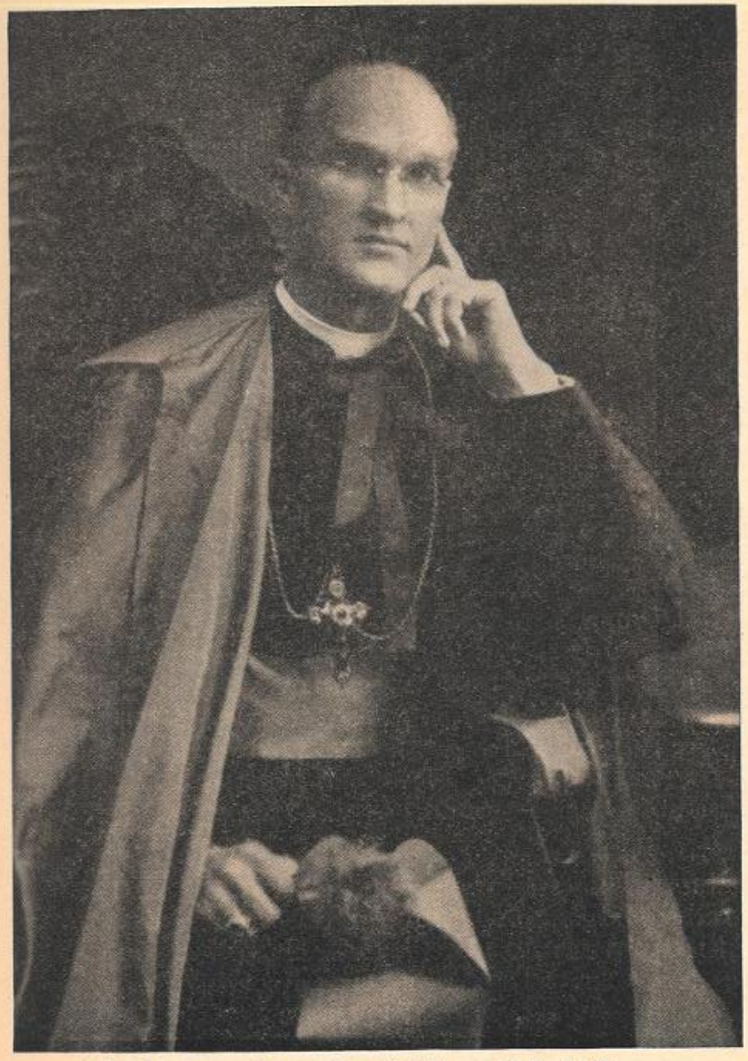
The historical significance of the name "Maronite" is not unfamiliar to the majority of priests, but the term means little to most laymen, even to those who know something of Syria and its people.

The layman's laudable curiosity may urge him to ask: "Who are the Maronites?" "What is their origin?" "What is their history, civil, political, religious?"

My first reason for writing a history of my people is to satisfy curiosity of this kind. I shall not write pretentiously. I shall be content to give the American people in general, and Catholic Americans in particular, a simple, unadorned narrative of facts that cover the salient points of Maronite history.

A second reason for writing is the wish to offer to the Americans of Syrian descent, who may not be able to write, read and think in the ancient tongue of their forefathers, the chronicles of the people of their blood; that they may intelligently set before themselves the heroic example of those ancestors, who, in the face of almost insuperable obstacles and perils, kept their God-given faith.

If I shall realize these aims, and, at the same time, succeed in producing pages of history that will be readable and that will interest both young and old, I shall feel amply repaid for the many, many days of labor devoted to this beloved task.



HIS LORDSHIP, RIGHT REV. J. J. SWINT, D.D., LL.D.,
BISHOP OF WHEELING

DEDICATED

to the

RIGHT REVEREND J. J. SWINT, D.D., LL.D.,

BISHOP OF WHEELING

Whose steadfast friendship for the Maronites of West Virginia is appreciated by these humble Christians and whose many sacrifices in behalf of this sturdy race have not been in vain, whose hearty encouragement of the author of these pages has been a constant stimulus in the production of a work that may give information to all, remind Syro-Americans of their glorious heritage, and, perhaps, contribute a worthy bit of historical reading matter to that which is already favorably known.



RIGHT REV. MSGR. E. E. WEBER,
V. G. AND CHANCELLOR OF WHEELING
DIOCESE

In the Catholic Observer, the official organ of the Wheeling Diocese, we read in its issue of August 13, the following comment:

Priest Writes Book

"The Maronites of Lebanon" a book revealing the staunch Catholicity of the Near East, is a historical gem now in the hands of the printer, which holds information of special interest to every Catholic. This is the product of the Rev. Paul Abraham, pastor of Our Lady of Mount Lebanon Syrian Church in this city, who deserves the highest praise and hearty commendation for his accomplishment.

Besides the many interesting historical facts therein revealed, there are numerous quotations and references which stamp the author as a literary genius and an historian of the highest type.

Father Abraham holds a distinct place among the priests of the diocese for his broad and fluent command of languages, especially of that of his Syrian country—the language used by Christ while on earth. Some time ago he was offered a chair of Syrio-Caldaic language at the Catholic University of America, but this honor was sacrificed as he preferred to remain among the Syrian people of Wheeling and serve them in their parish needs.

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CHAPTER I

Syria and Mount Lebanon

I. Syria.

Although later to become the name of a civil-religious community, the term "Maronite" signified originally an ecclesiastical grouping of Christians of Syria who took as their patron the holy hermit, St. Maron.

Many Christian nations render special honor to some one saint as a patron, the saint to whom, under God, they owe their faith. Thus St. Patrick is honored by Ireland, St. Boniface by Germany, Sts. Cyril and Methodius by the Slavic nations. Other nations have taken as their patron that saint who kept them in the faith which they had already received. Such a patron saint is the hermit Maron, who, with his monks, preserved the true faith for that portion of Syria near Mount Lebanon, the inhabitants of which section have been Christians since the time of the Apostles.

The history of the Maronites is inseparable from that of Syria and, furthermore, is interwoven with that of the other religious groups in Syria, at least until the Islamic Invasion towards the end of the seventh century of the Christian era. The first Maronite Patriarch, St. John Maron, formed a distinct group of the Maronites when he initiated in 686, A. D., the patriarchate that has continued since his death in 707 to our own times. As a preliminary to the history of the Maronites, let me sketch briefly that of Syria and Mount Lebanon.

The huge, near-eastern stretch of land that today we call rather loosely "Syria," has been the home of many nations that have left their mark on the history of the world. One of the oldest of the known Syrian races, which may be called the "marrow" of the Syrian people, was the Aramean, that settled in the interior toward the east. These Arameans founded a kingdom which, for centuries rivalled those of Palestine. Da-

mascus, the residence of their kings, is one of the world's most ancient cities.

On the seacoast of Syria the Phoenicians founded many cities from which, as bases, they did pioneer naval scouting over the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas on whose shores they founded colonies that were more vigorous than the mother cities. Northern Africa and southern Spain still show vestiges of the Syro-Phoenician influences. Had the Punic wars, the delight of the student of Roman history, resulted to Phoenician Carthage's advantage, what a different world ours now would be!

In the north and northeast of Syria the Hittites founded a powerful kingdom which lasted for centuries. To the south of Syria lies Palestine which many geographers consider, topographically, at least, as a part of Syria.

In the Hebrew Scriptures we find Syria named "Aram of Damascus," just as we find Mesopotamia designated as "Aram of Beit-Nahrim." In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, we do not find "Aram," but "Syria," thus leading many writers to state that "Syria," as a name, is of Greek origin. Probably the word-form, "Syria" is actually a Hellenized form of the original Babylonian "Shuru" which signifies "wall," as does the Arabic word "sur," from the fact that, in relation to the Babylonians and Assyrians, the Syrians were actually the "wall" separating them from the Egyptians.

Syria was the battlefield of the most powerful empires of the ancient East, Mesopotamia and Egypt. Mesopotamia was the seat of the mighty Babylonian and Assyrian kingdoms. Of these peoples, the Babylonians, because of the longer tenure of their culture, left the greater impress on Syria. The Syrian language itself is merely one of the many Semitic tongues, such as the Babylonian, the Phoenician, the Hebrew, the Moabite and other kindred languages that were cradled in Mesopotamia.[1]

[1] "Suria" is the Greek form for the Aramean "Shuro." In modern tongues the Greek "u" or "upsilion" becomes "y."



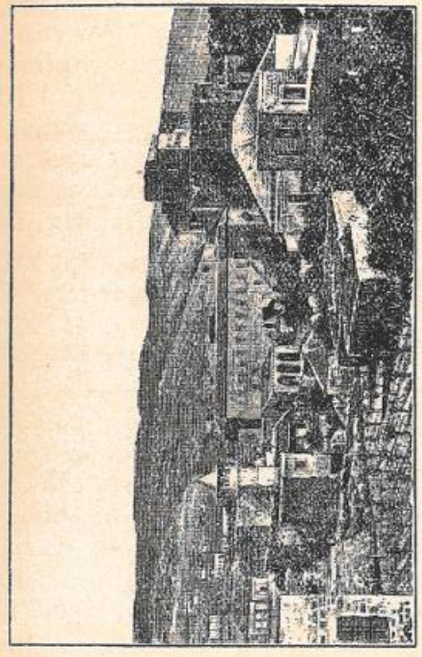
NAHRE EL KALB, "THE ANCIENT RIVER LYCUS"

Phoenicia occupied that part of Syria's seashore that extended in a narrow strip, thirty-five miles inland, but stretched one hundred and fifty miles along the Mediterranean coast from Tyre (Sur) in the south to Aradus (Arouad) in the north. Of pagan Phoenicia the most renowned cities were Tyre, Sidon and Byblos. The modern Beyrouth is a neighbor to these ancient cities. Sidon, Tyre and Byblos were the best known cities in ancient Phoenicia, Byblos having been the most ancient of the Phoenician cities. It was chiefly a religious centre and the seat of their divinities, Baal, Astarta and Thamouz (Adonis of the Greeks). Byblos had its kings as early as the eighteenth century B. C., as we know from the recent excavations undertaken by the French Government in that city. The Aramean and the Arabic name of Byblos is Gebail (mountain).

Sidon too has had its glory. It was called in Holy Writ "The Great Sidon." (Joshua, 19:28.) Tyre was called "The Stronghold:" (Ibidem 19:29.) After the year 1250 B. C., however, when the Philistines[2] forged their way ahead against the Sidonians and conquered the cities of Ashdod, Askalon, Ekron, Gaza and Gath, they forced the Sidonians to surrender the city of Dor, which was on the Mediterranean shore. These invaders also built the city of Jaffa nearer the shore. The power of Sidon, after that crushing defeat, was on the wane and her neighboring city and rival, Tyre, sought to establish her own prestige.

Tyre flourished for many centuries. Her first king was Hiram, a contemporary of David and Solomon. His reign began in 969 B. C. and ended in 922 B. C. After him many petty kings occupied the throne. In 880 B. C., Ithbaal, father of the famous Izabell, Queen of Israel, reigned in Tyre. His reign was one of trouble as the power of Tyre was on the decline. Methen I, one of his successors, died after a reign of nine years, leaving Pygmalion, an infant son, and a daughter, Elissa,

[2]These Philistines, so often mentioned in the Bible, and from whose name the land was called (Palestine) had come about 1250 B. C. from the Island of Cyprus and established themselves definitely in Palestine. Their origin is doubtful.



GEBAIL, "THE ANCIENT BYBLOS"

who was married to Sicharbas, the High Priest of Melkarth. Sicharbas succeeded Methen, but Pygmalion, after attaining to the age of manhood, killed him. Pygmalion, with some of the nobles who adhered to his cause, fled to the coast of Africa, where they founded Carthage, the famous rival of Rome, in the year 850 B. C.

Tyre and Sidon and the smaller cities of the Phoenician Confederation struggled for many centuries against the Assyrian Giant to keep their independence. They even survived the Assyrian Empire which was destroyed by the allied Babylonians and Medes (606 B. C.). Tyre incurred the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian conqueror who besieged the city for thirteen long years. This is the longest siege recorded in history. Tyre paid tribute, after the siege, to the conqueror and after him to the Medes and Persians, who subsequently conquered the Babylonian Empire.

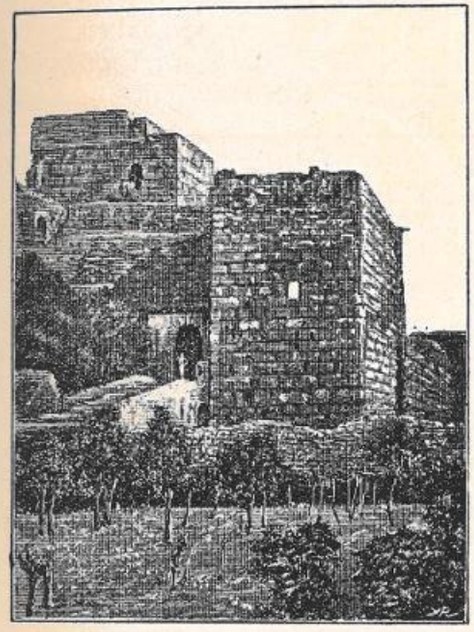
The Phoenicians fought with Artaxerxes, the Persian king who invaded Greece, and helped him with their fleet.

The Phoenician colonies were spread all over the coast of Asia Minor and the Islands of the Mediterranean. There was a flourishing Phoenician colony in the Island of Sicily which, later on, was snatched away by the Romans. The invasion of Artaxerxes had its counterpart in that of the Great Alexander of Macedonia (331 B. C.). Darius, king of Persia, was killed and the whole Persian Empire fell an easy prey to the Macedonian. Phoenicia fell to Laodemon, but in the year 314 B. C., Ptolemy of Egypt attacked Laodemon and annexed Phoenicia to Egypt. From that date down to the Roman occupation[3] the possession of Phoenicia was disputed by the Seleucids of Antioch and the Ptolemys of Egypt.[4]

The history of the Phoenicians dates back at least to the second millenium B. C. Quite recently, in the ex-

[3] The Roman occupation was effected by Pompeius, who defeated Mithridate and Antiochus (64 B. C.) and made Syria a Roman province.

[4] The Ptolemys held Phoenicia till 198 B. C. From that date until 64 B. C. it was held by the Seleucids of Antioch.

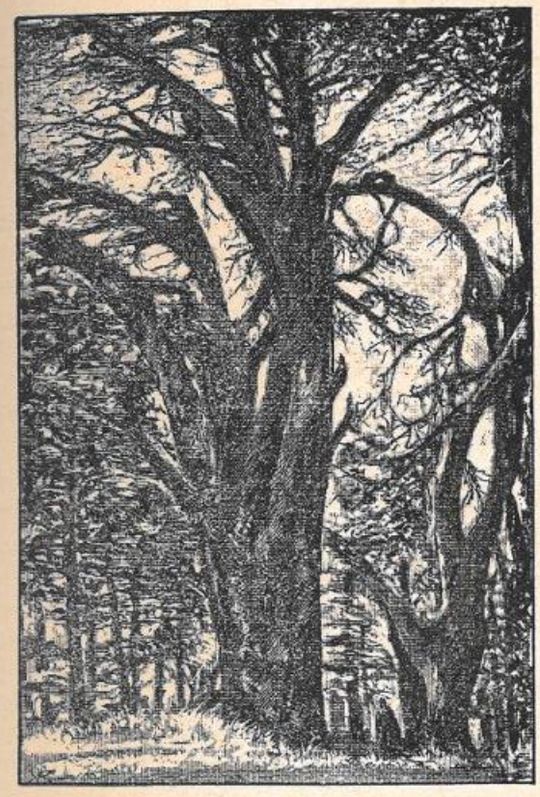


AN OLD CASTLE AT BYBLOS FROM THE CRUSADERS' TIME

cavations around Byblos made by the French Government, inscriptions were found, dated 1800 B. C. These were dedicatory inscriptions from the kings then reigning to the Phoenician divinities. Their writing is the most ancient that has yet been discovered. The Phoenicians invented the alphabet which is still the basis of the Semitic and European alphabets. Whether it was originated by the hieroglyph or cuneiform signs is not clear. In any case, it is the most useful invention ever made.

The Phoenicians were also the only people of antiquity who had a navy. Other more powerful nations of the East had none. The Greeks and Romans, after a contact of many centuries with the Phoenicians, organized theirs. The Phoenician language was spoken in western Asia and in their numerous colonies, but it was replaced in Syria by the Aramean some time in the tenth century B. C. The Aramean (Syrian) was the official language of Mesopotamia, Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine and the Nabateans before the invasion by Alexander. It had many centers of culture, two of which were Edessa and Nisibis, where celebrated schools flourished for centuries.

The Babylonian language of which the Aramean is but a branch, was the language of culture and civilization in western Asia from as remote a period as the twentieth century B. C. The correspondence between Egypt and Syria was in the Babylonian tongue. After the invasion of Alexander, Greek became the official language in the courts of Egypt and Antioch, but the Aramean remained the language of the natives and of the great majority of the people. The Arami were first mentioned in the cuneiform inscriptions (1330-20 B. C.) when they were defeated by the Assyrians under Shalmaneser I, who had succeeded his father, Ramon-Nirrari. Who were these Arameans? They were not the Arameans of Damascus of whom we hear later. Most probably, they were tribesmen living in the desert of Syria between Damascus and Bagdad. The first Arameans who founded a kingdom were the Arameans of Damascus.



AN OLD CEDAR TREE

The city of Damascus itself is very ancient. According to Flavius Joseph, it was founded by Us, grandson of Sem. It is mentioned in the Bible (Genesis XIV:15-XVI:2) at the time of Abraham. It did not become the capital of any independent kingdom, however, until the time of Salomon. The first king was named Rasin. (See III K. XI:24.) This kingdom of Damascus was destroyed by Theglathphalasar III, the Assyrian king, (See IV King XVI:9-12) after a short duration.

Another center of Aramean culture was Palmyra. (The Aramean and Arabic names: Tadmor.) This city was built by Salomon (III Kings: 9-18). It was buried in obscurity until the time of Septimus Odenath (A. D. 258) and his wife Zenobia, the famous queen of the desert, both of whom had a brief but glorious reign of fourteen years.

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2. Lebanon.

Geographically speaking, Lebanon is in Syria and is a part of it, but when we deal with political and religious history, we may speak of Lebanon as being a dintinct entity, especially in medieval and modern times. In this introductory chapter we shall say a few words about it.

Lebanon, "The White Mountain," took its name from the eternal snow that crowns its lofty summits almost all the year round. The sacred poets of the Old Testament have praised Lebanon in their most sweet and charming lines. Salomon in his Canticle of Canticles frequently reminds us of Lebanon and its beautiful springs, its wells of living water and its rivers. (II:V.) He again compares his beloved to Lebanon and to its selected Cedar (Canticle V:15), etc. In fact the climate of Lebanon is unsurpassed. The invigorating air, the picturesque scenery, the rich forests of pines, cedars and oaks and the fountains of health giving water combine to make these beautiful mountains comparable to the finest resorts in the world.

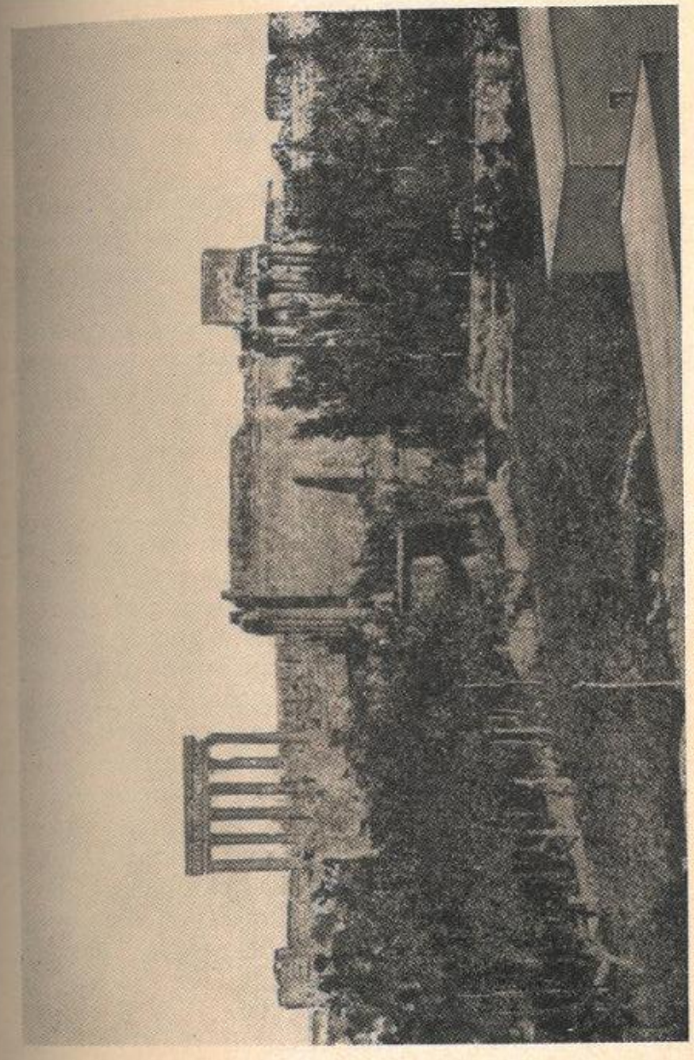
There are two Lebanons, i. e., Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. Between the two, stretches the famous plain



CEDARS OF LEBANON. (AS THE CEDARS OF LEBANON, I WAS EXALTED: ECCLES. XXVI, XXVII)

of Bequaa which, in its largest extent, is nine miles in width and seventy in length. In historic times the Phoenicians exercised dominion over Lebanon.

Joseph, the Jewish historian, speaks of the Itureans who occupied the southern part of Lebanon. The coasts of Lebanon on the Mediterranean were covered by the flourishing cities of the Phoenicians of which we have spoken, but it does not appear that the high mountains were populated until comparatively recent times. We shall have occasion to speak of Lebanon frequently in the course of this book.



RUINS OF BAALBECH, "THE TEMPLE OF HELIOPOLIS"

CHAPTER II

ARAMEAN, THE LANGUAGE OF SYRIA

Aramean is a somewhat generic name for three dialects spoken in Babylonia, in Syria and by the Nabateans.

The Aramean spoken in Babylonia, or the Chaldaic, is the language which was spoken in Judea, with some variation, in the time of our Lord. It is sometimes called the Eastern Syrian. Its vocabulary is one and the same as that of the Western Syrian, with some very slight differences, the chief of which is the use of the vowel a instead of o in the Western Syrian. These two dialects were spread all over Mesopotamia and were the common speech of the mass of the people, even after the invasion of Alexander. The truth of this historical fact is attested by a great variety of witnesses. Of course, the Macedonian invasion and the foundation of two kingdoms in Syria and Egypt made a profound and lasting impression in these two countries; but the two native languages, the Syrian in Syria and the Coptic in Egypt, persisted tenaciously in the minds of the people. After the Arab conquest the Syriac took the place of the Greek. The most famous center of Greek culture in Syria was without doubt the city of Antioch, which flourished in pagan times under the Seleucids and in Christian times under the Roman Emperors. Antioch had her famous school, founded by Libanius, under whom St. John Chrysostom studied eloquence. "Even outside the gates of Antioch, the fair city of the Greeks, the Syriac was the language of the people," says St. Isaac of Antioch, the holy hermit, who wrote his charming hymn in pure Syriac. (See Bickell edition, Vol. I, page 294.) In Antioch itself the Syriac was spoken conjointly with the Greek. There were other Greek centers in Syria, cities founded by the Seleucids, namely Laodicea, etc., but the native language was always spoken around these centers. We can compare the spread of the Greek language in the ancient world in the

time of Alexander and his successors to the spread of the English language nowadays. It was spoken in many countries and by many races.[1] Most of these races, however, held tenaciously to their native tongues and when the opportunity presented itself they repudiated altogether the foreign language.

To show the spread of the Aramean language in Syria and Palestine before and after the time of Christ, we have the following proofs:

1. The "Targums" which the Jews, returning from the Babylonian captivity, were compelled to use in order to understand the Hebrew Bible. This word "Targum" means interpretation. We read in the Book of Nehemias (Chapter 8:8-9) that Esdras, after he came from Babylonia, "began to read the Thora, and many interpreters and Levites aided the people to understand what was read." These interpreters translated the Bible from the Hebrew into the Aramean, the language of the Jews freshly arrived from Babylonia. (See also Esdras, Chap. 4:7.)

The Jews had three of these "Targums" or interpretations which, for them, were of almost as high authority as the Hebrew text itself. They were: The "Targums" Onkelos for the Pentateuck, which is an Aramean translation of the Five Books of Moses. It dates from at least the first century of our era.

The "Targum" of Jonathan for the Prophets, which is as old as the first one.

The "Targum" of Jerusalem, which is not so old as the first two.

The existence of these "Targums" proves to us that the Jews, after returning from the Babylonian captivity, had exchanged their original Hebrew language for the Aramaic language of Babylonia.

2. The second proof of the general use of the Aramean in Palestine can be inferred from the internal evidence of the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament. This proof is conclusive and most inter-

[1] In Rome itself the Greek was as current as the Latin in the time of Cicero and for long afterward. As late as the year 200 A. D. the Greek was the ritual language of the Church.

esting. The common opinion of the exegetical writers is that all the Books of the New Testament, except the Gospel of St. Matthew and perhaps the Epistle to the Hebrews, were originally written in Greek. The Gospel of St. Matthew and the Epistle to the Hebrews were written in Syro-Chaldaic. The Greek of the New Testament, though, is so different from the genius of the classical Greek that many writers of the present day on Biblical matters contend that the sacred writers had before their eyes Aramaic memoranda upon which they drew largely. Some details of this interesting question will, I think, be of interest.

The mode of expression in the Gospels is entirely Semitic; i. e., it lacks that accuracy which is characteristic of the Indo-European languages. It is far from being the philosophical language of Plato and Aristotle. There is no use of abstract words in the Gospels, but adjectives are employed instead of nouns. For instance, humility, modesty, sweetness, mortification are always designated by adjectives.[2] St. Paul and St. Luke, because of their Hellenical culture, are sometimes exceptions to this rule.

A peculiarity of the Hebrew and Syriac languages is the use of the word "nefess" (soul) for the first person. This usage is quite common in the Gospels: "The good pastor gives his **soul** for his sheep."[3] He means Himself. Also, the Blessed Virgin says: "My **soul** doth magnify the Lord,"[4] meaning I magnify (word used in the Vulgate) the Lord. The use of "nefess" for the personal pronoun is very frequent in the Bible, in both the Syriac and Arabic languages. Again, the word "Leb" means heart, but is also used to imply the intellect. In the New Testament the sacred writers translate this word by the Greek word "Kardia."[5] The heart is the seat of thought, according to the Biblical writers. The same metaphorical expressions are used frequently

[2] Matthew, Chap. 5:5. Mark, 1:29, etc.
[3] John X:11.
[4] Luke 1:46.
[5] Matthew, 15:19. Luke, 11:35. Luke, 24:38. Matthew, 13:15. See also John 12:4.

in Syriac and Arabic. If we discuss this matter from another angle we arrive at the same conclusion; the Aramean words kept in the other versions of the Gospels and other writers of the New Testament are witnesses to the original Aramean. The word "Rabbi" is kept in many places in the New Testament. (See Matthew, 23:7, 8 and 26:29 and 49. Mark, 9:9:5-II-21. John 3:2 and Chap. 6:23.) Mary Magdalen said "Rabboni." (John, 20:16.)

The word "Sikera," retained by St. Luke, 1:15, is Aramean, "Sekra," intoxicating.

The word "Satum," used in the parable of the leaven (See Matthew, 13:33; Luke, 13:21) is of Syriac origin. A Satum is equivalent to about thirteen litres.

The three words used in the Sermon on the Mount: "Raca, More and Gehenna," are Aramean.

The word "ephatha" used by our Lord in curing the deaf and dumb man (See Mark, 7:34), retained in the Greek text as well as in other versions, is likewise Aramean.

"Talita Koumi" (Young girl, get up) is also kept in all the versions and both these words are Aramean. (See Mark, 5-41.)

The famous words of the Psalmist, Psalm 22:2, "Elohi, Elohi Lama Sabactani"—My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?—uttered by our Lord on the Cross (See Matthew, 27:46 and Mark, 15:34), are Aramean. If they were Hebrew they would be said differently, especially the word "Sabactani," which, in Hebrew, is "Azabtani."

St. Paul, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, uses also the Aramean sentence: "Moran Atta"—our Lord came (First Corinthians, 16:22).

CHAPTER III

Early Syrian Liturgies

The word "liturgy" is of Greek origin, meaning performance. It is used in the Acts of the Apostles to signify the early service of Mass by the Apostles. (See Acts 13:2.) From thence it was introduced into the Church vocabulary, meaning the services of Mass and the other public and official prayers.

To discuss the subject of the early Syrian Liturgies is a hard task for the historian, from the fact that the written documents concerning the subject are as yet very scant. The first Liturgy written in Syriac is the "Didscalia Apostolorum," a work which modern historians and liturgists claim was originally written in Greek and translated into Syriac by a contemporary author. This valuable book was published by the German scholar, Lagarde, under the title "Didscalia Apostolorum Syriace" (1854). The "Didscalia," that is, "the doctrine of the Apostles," is supposed to be the same as the first eight books of the "Apostolic Constitutions," another book which is thought to be the first sacramentary. The outlines of this liturgy are as follows: The Mass of the Catechumens; their dismissal by the deacon. The Mass of the faithful. After the words of the institution comes the Epiklesis—the invocation, which is common to all the liturgies of Antiochene origin. After some prayers for various intentions, comes the elevation with the words: "The Holy for the holies." Then comes the Communion. That early liturgy lacks the Our Father. The two books: The Apostolic Constitution and the Didscalia, are compositions of Antiochene origin. The fact that the Didscalia was discovered to have been written in Syriac attests the great antiquity of the Syriac liturgies in Syria and Palestine. In fact, we have the testimonies of contemporary writers in the fourth century (333 A. D.) who testify to the concurrent usage of the Syriac with the Greek, even in the "Anastasis," the

Church of the Resurrection and other Churches built by Emperor Constantine in Jerusalem. St. Sylvia, the illustrious Roman who visited Jerusalem at that time, tells us "the monks chanted the liturgy in Greek and the interpreters translated it to the people." (See Peregrinatio Sylviæ, Edition Bernard, London 1891. Also: "Revue des Questions Historiques," 1903, page 367, etc.)

The Pilgrim of Bordeaux attests the same truth. (See Palestine Pilgrim Text Society. London, 1887, Preface and notes by Stewart.)[1] In the smaller localities the Syriac alone was used. The use of the two languages in Syria explains the existence of the Chorbishop, which is now a mere title in the Syrian Churches and is equivalent to Monsignor, but at the time of the Nicean Council the Chorbishop was invested with real jurisdiction and the episcopal consecration.[2]

The Syriac and the Greek liturgies were concurrently used in Syria and Palestine for at least eight centuries. Both were of pure Antiochene origin. The venerable liturgy attributed to St. James the Apostle is a derivation from these liturgies. It was first used in Jerusalem and later at Antioch. In Canon 32 of the Second Trullan Council, held in Constantinople, A. D. 692, it is also mentioned. This liturgy is still used by the Nestorians and Jacobites, a fact which proves its great antiquity. It was also used by the Melchites until the twelfth century and is still used by us. Which text is the original, the Greek or the Syrian, is hard to decide.

Among us this liturgy of St. James had undergone some modifications in the direction of the Roman liturgy. What are these modifications and about what time were they introduced among us? Of these questions I shall speak later in treating of the Lebanese Council.

[1] The habit of translating to the people was also introduced among the Jews after they returned from the Babylonian captivity. (See Catholic Encyclopedia, Article "Targum.")

[2] The Chorbishop means the Bishop of the rural district.

The Melchites exchanged this St. James' liturgy for the liturgy of Byzantium, the change having been brought about by Theodore Balsamon, the Greek Patriarch of Antioch, residing at Constantinople. This Theodore was born in the second half of the twelfth century and died toward the beginning of the thirteenth century. (See Catholic Encyclopedia Vol. 2, page 226.)

CHAPTER IV

GREEK VS. SYRIAN INFLUENCE IN ST. MARON'S TIME

From the time when the Macedonian Dynasty of the Seleucids was established in Syria there was an incessant struggle between the native and the foreign element in that country. The great majority of the people were Aramean and remained so. The Hellenic element tried to establish itself in the cities and on the Maritime shores. The Greek influence was chiefly felt through Greek literature and culture. Antioch, Laodicea and other Greek cities were centres of learning, rivalling even Athens itself, the school of eloquence headed by Libanius being worthy of the best days of Athenian eloquence. St. John Chrysostom, the brilliant disciple of Libanius, can bear with advantage comparison with Cicero or Demosthenes himself. All who cultivated the Greek eloquence and letters were not necessarily Greek by origin, as we know from the fact that Severian, Bishop of Gabala and contemporary of Chrysostom, had, in spite of his eloquent sermons in Greek, a strong Syrian accent which betrayed his Syrian nationality. (See Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History Chap. 8:10.)

At the same time there was another current toward the national ideals and traditions, a current which was represented by the rural districts and the smaller cities of purely national color and tendencies. Edessa, on the opposite side of the Euphrates, escaping the Seleucid influence, represented the Syrian element, struggling painfully for existence. It succeeded in obtaining independence for the space of four centuries (132 B. C. 244 A. D.) during which time and afterward it was the centre of Syrian literary activity. St. Ephrem, the most celebrated figure of the Syrian literature, transferred the famous school of Nisiais to Edessa. (St. Ephram died A. D. 368.)

A movement toward monasticism in the Christian Church had started in Egypt with St. Anthony (B. 270—D. 356 A. D.), St. Pachomius, his disciple, and St. Hilarion, who flourished in Gaza, West Palestine, at the same time as St. Anthony. (See St. Jerome, P. L. XXIII: 28-54.) In East Syria, Aphraate, who was himself a monk, tells us how the monastic life was flourishing about Antioch and in Mesopotamia. (See Wright; The Homilies of Aphraate. London 1869, I Hom. 6 and 18.)

One of the most illustrious monks of the fourth century was St. Maron, the patron saint of the Maronite nation.

The first writer who has given us any information about St. Maron is Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus, one of the most distinguished and highly esteemed writers of his time, and a contemporary of our saint. (He was born in 393, A. D. and died in 457.) His testimony, then, is extremely valuable. He wrote about St. Maron in his book, "Historia Religiosa," wherein he gives us the biographies of thirty famous ascetics. Here is what he has said (Historia Religiosa XV Vol. 82 of the Mign Edition P. G.): "After him (The Hermit Chapsimas) I mention Maron who was the ornament of the divine choir of saints. This saint, when he decided to live in the quiet of solitude, climbed to the summit of a mountain once sacred to the pagans. He dedicated there to the true God a once heathen temple and nearby he erected a small tent for shelter, which he used very seldom, for the most of his time was spent in the open air. He was not satisfied to exert himself in the ordinary exercises of piety, but added to them what he himself invented to secure the wealth of wisdom, because the militant soldier proportions his works to the grace received. God granted him the gift of miracles so abundantly that his fame spread to all the surrounding districts and attracted people from far and near. Those who came to him for a cure always had their hopes realized, because, by the dew of his benedictions, the fever slowed down, the nerves were quieted, the



THE HOLY HERMIT ST. MARON, PATRON SAINT OF THE MARONITES

devils were driven out and the various disases were cured, all by the same remedy. Physicians prescribe for each disease a special medicine, but the prayer of the saints is the universal remedy by which all ills are cured . . . . Not only was he wont to cure the ailments of the body, but also those of the soul."

This is a part of the precious document left us by Theodoret concerning the wonderful life of St. Maron. Continuing, he says further: "By cultivating that field (spiritual field) he raised in it many wonderful plants . . . one of these plants is St. Jacob the Great, in whom was verified the saying of the Prophet-King: 'the just shall flourish as the palm tree and as the Cedar in Lebanon.' . . . . After his death the people of the neighboring places had a dispute over the possession of his body; but the inhabitants of the nearest and most populous village came in great numbers, took possession of the precious remains and built over them a magnificent church. To our own day, they venerate these relics with great solemnity and obtain many miracles. As for us (Theodoret), we enjoy his benediction, although we are far away. We must be satisfied to invoke his name when we cannot visit his temple."

Concerning St. Maron we have another contemporary document from the illustrious St. John Chrysostom who, like Theodoret, was born in the city of Antioch and spent two of the best years of his youth in the monasteries around that great city, in prayer and contemplation. This glorious saint wrote to our saint his epistle, the 36th from his exile in Cucuse.[1]

The translation of that sweet message is as follows:

"To Maron, the Monk Priest:

"The relations of friendship and love which bind us to you represent you as being always before our eyes, because the eyes of love pierce through the distance and length of time does not weaken them. We would like to write to you often, if it were not that the distance is so great and that those who go from here

[1] He was exiled by Emperor Arcadius at the instance of his wife, Eudoxia, and died in exile at Cucuse (Armenia) A. D. 407.

to your region were not so few in number. Now we send you our best greetings. Be sure that we never cease to remember you wherever we are, because of the high place you have in our esteem. Do not be meagre in your good news to us, because your good news gives us great consolation and joy in our lonely exile. When we know that you are in good health our soul rejoices. All we ask of you is to pray for us." (See P. G. Vol. 52—Edition Mign.)

This magnificent letter, coming as it does from the pen of "The Golden Mouth," gives great praise to our saint. Valuable, though, as these two documents are, they are but scant records of what has been left us by the contemporary writers.

Many details which would be of great interest to us the historian has left us to guess. According to many esteemed writers, our saint was born A. D. 350 and died in 410. His birthplace was in the district of Apamea, where later we find the famous convent of St. Maron, of which we shall speak in the next chapter.

St. Maron was, in Northern Syria, the Patriarch of the cenobitic life as were Pachomius in Egypt and Hilarion in Palestine. This fact is justified by the high reputation enjoyed not long after his death by the Convent of the Monks of St. Maron who, it is natural to suppose, looked upon St. Maron as their founder and patron and whose advice and mode of life they accepted as their religious rule.

St. John Chrysostom, in his epistle quoted above, informs us that St. Maron was a priest, not an ordinary lay hermit, as some writers have supposed. We may presume that the two saints became acquainted with each other when John was in retirement in the solitude outside of Antioch for many years,[2] preparing himself for the terrible struggle in the midst of which his glorious life was to be spent. Later on, St. John wrote his book "On the Priesthood." Truly, he had

[2] St. John spent in this solitude four years in a convent under the direction of Diodorus, later Bishop of Tarsus, and two years as a hermit in a cave. (See Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 8, Page 453.)

before his eyes living examples of what a priest ought to be.

The elements of decay had already begun their work in the unfortunate East. Heresies were springing up and rending the mystical Body of Christ, His Church. Nestorius was soon to appear on the stage (A. D. 431), uttering blasphemies that would stir up great scandal among the faithful. Twenty years later (451) the ignorant monk, Eutyches would also appear and in his stubborn fight against Nestorius was destined to plunge Syria into the no less dreadful heresy of Monophysitism.

Nestorianism and Eutychianism.

From an early date in the Christian era there were in Syria and Egypt two schools or tendencies in Scriptural Exegesis: the literal and allegorical. The literal interpretation of the Scriptures was patronized by the schools of Antioch, Edessa and Nisibis. The allegorical was chiefly advocated by the School of Alexandria, where Neo-Platonism had a flourishing revival. We can trace all the heresies that vexed the East to one or the other extreme tendencies of these two schools. Both schools had their advantages if the underlying principles of each were applied rightly and with sobriety, and great disadvantages and disastrous results if they were pushed to the extreme. From the literalism of Antioch, originated by the famous priest, Lucian, sprang the heresy of Arius and, later, the heresy of Nestorius. The tendency of the literal school was to eliminate as much as it could the mysteries and the supernatural element in Christianity. Of course, many representatives of this school, guided by the traditional doctrine of the Church, avoided such excesses. Others failed to be guided by this infallible teacher and were involved in monstrous heresies. Nestorius, and before him Theodorus of Mopsueste and Diodorus of Tarsus, are sad examples of these excesses. Nestorius could not understand that God could be born, and he attacked with fierce brutality the Divine Maternity of the

Blessed Virgin. To him, the Blessed Virgin, whom St. Elizabeth called "The Mother of my Lord," was not and could not be the Mother of God. In one of his first sermons, when he was enthroned in the See of Constantinople, he said: "If we call the Virgin Mary the Mother of God we revert to the heathen mythology, where Cybelle is called the Mother of the gods." The people of the Imperial City who were wont to hear the beautiful sermons of Chrysostom and his Catholic teaching, were horrified at the blasphemy. Why was Nestorius so bold in denying this glorious title to the Blessed Virgin? Because his faith in the close union of the two natures in Christ was not orthodox. He could not understand that human nature could subsist in another personality than its own, thus denying the supernatural in the incarnation of the Word.

On the other hand, a reaction set in and Eutyches, the ignorant monk of Constantinople, contended that not only was Christ God, which is true, but that the divine nature in Christ so absorbed the human nature that of the two, there was only one compound—one nature.

These two heresies were in the following centuries to be the pivotal points of controversies in the East.

The golden mean was ignored by the two heretics, and this golden mean is the Catholic doctrine. Nestorius deviated from the truth in asserting that the union of the Word with the Humanity was but a union of wills and predilection. To him, Jesus Christ was merely the Temple of God, a great prophet with whom the Word of God has a special union, but not so deep as to absorb the human personality. This theory, unfortunately, was to take deep root in the Orient. Later the Arab "prophet" would borrow it from the Nestorian Monk Buheir. According to the Koran "Hisa" (Jesus), is a prominent prophet in this world and the next; upon him the spirit of God dwelt."[3]

On the other hand, the other sect went so far as to confound the notions of nature and personality. So,

[3] Koran Chap. 3.

according to them, if we say that Christ has one personality, that meant one nature. They claimed as a basis of their heresy an expression[4] of St. Cyril of Alexandria, the great opponent of Nestorius, who was instrumental in bringing about his condemnation in the Council of Ephesus (431 A. D.).

The East was thus divided into two big camps, both going astray from the true Faith, and both claiming to be in the true Fold.

At the same time, other factors were at work to detach the Eastern Provinces from the Empire of Byzantium, which still claimed the title of "Roman Empire." In truth, nothing was Roman in that Eastern Empire, except a few princes who reigned after Theodosius. Historians rightly called it "The Low Empire."

The Christians of those Eastern Provinces were grossly mistreated, and one who reads "El-Wakedy," the Mussulman historian who was living at the time of the Mohammedan Conquest of Syria, will be greatly disgusted at the depravity of officials of Constantinople in Syria.[5] So when the Arabs came, the natives breathed a sigh of relief.[6] In this state of things the role of St. Maron and his Monks was clearly set: i. e., to defend the Catholic Faith, which was splendidly defined in two general Councils, the Ephesian and the Chalcedonian, and to rally around it the national element. These two objects they attained, as historical monuments abundantly attest, and as we shall see in the course of this history.

The Nestorians were practically ousted from the Byzantine Empire when Emperor Zeno closed their famous school at Nisibis (A. D. 489). Later that city itself passed to the Persian Empire. This school was reopened and flourished for many centuries. About the year 800 A. D. another school at Bagdad succeeded

[4] St. Cyril said in his later writing against Nestorius, "One nature incarnate of God the Word." He meant of course, by one nature, one person. But the expression was unfortunate.

[5] His book: Conquest of Syria, Egyptian Edition.

[6] See Bar-Hebræus, his book: Ecclesiastical Chronicle, page 269.

it, under the protection of the Abbasside Caliphs, who were always favorable to the Nestorian Church.

St. Maron was one of the heroes around whose names shines a halo of sanctity and of deep veneration, and whose mission ended not with their death, but has continued to grow through the centuries. He died surrounded by the affection of his many disciples to whom he left a legacy which they were to keep as a sacred trust—the preservation of the Catholic faith, the Communion with the Holy See and the spirit of national consciousness, which later on, at the Mohammedan invasion, developed into a spirit of independence in the mountain fastness of Lebanon: "Montani semper liberi."[7]

The Byzantine Empire was growing weaker every day. The vigorous Arabian tribes were closing in, till the day (and it was near) when these sons of the desert were to snatch from the weak hands of the Caesars the rich possessions of Syria, Mesopotamia and the Valley of the Nile. Christianity in the East, torn by a variety of petty sects, was not powerful enough to absorb the new element, as did the Church of Rome in the West, because those small sects, going astray from the unity of the Church, lacked that divine vitality promised to the True Church. We can hardly find an excuse for Bishop Theodore, for giving so small a place in his history to St. Maron, the pious hermit, who, with his monks, made a permanent impression on the history of Syria in the subsequent centuries. We have said elsewhere that the place of St. Maron's birth was in the neighborhood of Apamea, where later was built the famous convent of the Monks of Beit-Maron, of which we shall speak in the next chapter.

[7] Mountaineers are always free.

CHAPTER V

Convent of St. Maron

A Saint's memory is perpetuated by his disciples and by the good example he leaves after him. More than all others, the founders of religious communities can be said to live almost forever in the persons of the gallant men and women who take upon themselves the hard task of carrying on their Master's work and following his example. St. Maron was one of these founders of religious communities. His labors bore their greatest fruit only after his death. The most probable opinion as to the location of the famous convent of St. Maron is that which places it in Apamea, in the Valley of Oronte.[1] To corroborate this opinion we have a very ancient document mentioned by the French priest, the learned Father Nau, in his publications, Opuscules Maronites. Another writer, the historian El-Masshoody, who lived in the tenth century, said, "There was dedicated to him (St. Maron) a great convent, located in the east of Hamah and Chizar. It was a splendid building. Around it were three hundred cells, inhabited by monks. . . . That convent was sacked, and the cells around it, by the many raids of the Arabs and by the cruelty of the Sultan. It is situated on the shore of the Oronte, the river of Emese and Antioch."[2]

The convent of St. Maron and the many other convents around it, or in the neighborhood, were centers of literary activity. They were also as many strongholds for the Catholic Faith. We should not, then, be surprised at their being exposed to the attacks of heretics of every description. The religious life was, from the earliest period of Church history, as it is now, a target for the attacks of those who are outside the True Fold, and the Monks of St. Maron were no exception to this rule. From the earliest days of their Order they were

[1] The river, on whose shore Antioch is situated.
[2] In his book, "El Tanbeeh Wal El Ashraf," Page 153.

staunch defenders of the Chalcedonian Council, so much so that they were often called "Chalcedonians." We have said elsewhere that the followers of Nestorius were practically ousted from the Roman Empire, and, consequently, from Syria. This was not the case with the Monophysites, i.e., those who believed in one nature in Christ. Their heresy was spread all over Syria and Egypt, they had powerful leaders to propagate it, and they had very little scruple in regard to the means they adopted for doing so.

One of the leaders of the sect was Severus of Antioch, the patriarch intruder in that See, a brilliant man, of literary achievement combined even with an ascetic life, but also with a profound hatred for the faith of Chalcedon and an inveterate and ruthless cruelty towards those remaining in the True Fold. Having found favor with Emperor Anastatius, Severus felt sure that he could, with impunity, start a persecution (against the Church?)[3]

The occasion presented itself. Severus, after seizing the See of Antioch, formed the grim determination to clear the ground of every vestige of Catholicity in his patriarchate. The task was a hard one; but Severus did not stop midway, and earned for himself the odious name of persecutor. Many courageous men and women met death at the hands of his emissaries, and among this number were the Monks of St. Maron. It seems that the Convent of St. Maron, or rather the numerous convents which were at that time under the patronage of St. Maron, were in a flourishing condition, as we may infer from the fact that eight hundred monks were going out at one time on a missionary journey, when

[3] This Severus was born in the City of Sosocles in Pisidia (Asia Minor). His grandfather was the Bishop of Sosocles, who assisted at the Ephesian Council against Nestorius. Severus went to Alexandria after the death of his father, and studied there Greek and Latin. After finishing his preparatory studies he returned to Beyrouth to study law. From Beyrouth he went to Tripoli, where he was baptised. He joined a religious community for a while, but turbulent by nature and seized by an inordinate love for honors, he went to Constantinople, where he prevailed upon Emperor Anastasius to promote Timothy, his friend, to the See of Constantinople. The latter helped Severus, in his turn, to seize the See of Antioch.

the troops, given by the Emperor to the sanguinary patriarch for his nefarious purpose, met them in an ambush and killed three hundred and fifty of their number. Our Church celebrates the feast of these noble martyrs the 31st day of July. Their deaths occurred about the year 517 A.D. Their companions at first presented a petition to Emperor Anastasius informing him of the fact, and claiming justice against the ignoble persecutors. Severus and with him Peter, Bishop of Apamea, were responsible for that atrocious deed. That the Emperor paid no attention to the petition was sufficient proof that all had happened at his instigation, or at least, with his connivance. It was then that the monks made the beautiful appeal to the See of St. Peter, the Supreme Refuge of all the oppressed. I mean their petition to Pope St. Hormisdas. It reads thus:

"Presented by the humble servants, the superiors of the convents in the districts of the Second Syria, to his Holiness and Sublime Sanctity, to Hormisdas, the Universal Patriarch, who sits in the See of Peter, the Prince of the Apostles. (Then the usual greetings.)

"Because the grace of Christ, Our Lord, inspired us to have recourse to Your Beatitude, like one who takes refuge from the heavy rains and storms in a safe port, we believe that such things (the storms of persecution) will not hurt us. Because even though we suffer the direst hardship, we bear it with joy, believing, as we do, that 'The sufferings of this world are as nothing compared with the eternal glory that will be revealed to us.'[4] Because Christ, Our Lord, the Supreme Pastor, has established you Doctor and Physician to every soul, we deem it our duty to reveal to you what persecution we have suffered . . . . . "

Then they give the names of their persecutors: Severus and Peter of Apamea, who persecute the clergy who are loyal to the Holy Council of Chalcedon and to the decisions of our Holy Father, Leo The Great.

[4] The Epistle to the Romans, Chapter VII.

And at the end of the petition, to assure the Holy Father, Hormisdas, of their Catholic faith, they declare an anathema to those persons excommunicated by the Holy See, i.e., Nestorius, Euthyches, Dioscorus of Alexandria, Peter Oelurus, Peter Fullo and Acacius.[5] (See for the whole text of this letter Rohrbacher. Histoire Generale L'Eglise, Tome IV, Page 752. And Labbe, Tome IV, Page 1461.)

That splendid document, dating 536 A.D., is of the highest importance. It was kept in the acts of the Fifth General Council, held at Constantinople at the same period, in the reign of Emperor Justinian, The Great, and Patriarch Mennas. It is signed:

1. I, Alexander, Priest, Superior of the Convent of St. Maron.
2. I, Simon, Priest and Superior, as above.
3. I, John, Deacon, Superior, as above.
4. I, Procopius, Priest, Superior.

There are 200 other signatures to this letter.

The Pope, St. Hormisdas, answered their letter, consoling and encouraging them and sent a formula to Emperor Anastasius, to be signed by every Bishop and Superior of a Convent, and by prominent laymen, as a distinctive mark of the Catholic faith. Emperor Anastasius remained obdurate, retained the delegates of the Pope, and, failing in making them yield to his threats, exiled them to a remote place in the Empire. But God punished him by a speedy and terrible death (518 A.D.). After Anastasius came Justin and Justinian, both Catholic Emperors, during whose reigns the Church in Syria enjoyed some years of peace.[6] Severus, the intruder, bloody patriarch, was ousted from the See of Antioch by Justin. During the reign of Justinian, the Fifth Oecumenical Council was assembled in Constantinople. The Convent of St. Maron, which was destroyed by the soldiers of Anastasius, was rebuilt and restored to its former prestige.

[5] These are the leaders of both heresies.
[6] These two Emperors reigned forty-eight years.

Justinian, in many respects, resembled Napoleon. Like him, he climbed to the Imperial Throne from an obscure position—the cottage of a Panonian farmer. His Code is one of the greatest monuments to his fame. He was one of the greatest of the Byzantine Emperors. He reigned about 38 years, and his reign covered one of the most flourishing periods of the Eastern Empire. Justinian's generals conquered the lost provinces of Africa, and were holding fast to the other provinces of the Empire. This was for a short period, however, because fifty years later these same provinces were to be lost forever to the Empire.

The elements of disintegration had been strongly working for some time to detach from the Empire those regions around the Mediterranean, where the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Babylonia and Assyria were maintaining a certain amount of national consciousness. These civilizations flourished long before those of Greece and Rome, consequently they stood aghast at the thought of being entirely effaced by the Greco-Roman civilization. Their languages were not entirely wiped out—far from it. The Syriac especially clung very tenaciously to life and there existed a rich Syrian literature from the fourth to the thirteenth century.

The monks played a preponderant role in Syria in keeping alive the seed of the Christian religion after the Mohammedan invasion, with the result that whatever remained of Christian civilization in that country is certainly due to the untiring and heroic efforts of those men and women who are much abused today by unscrupulous writers.

CHAPTER VI

The Roman Empire Before the Mohammedan Invasion

The Christian religion had spread among the nations of the East, from a very early date, even beyond the confines of the Roman Empire. St. Thomas is said to have gone as far as India. The Armenians accepted Christianity as early as the second century. Among the Persians the Christian religion took a deep root as early as the fourth century. For instance, the famous Saint Aphraate, a noble Persian, was converted to Christianity. When the persecution by Emperor Valens broke out he came to Antioch to remonstrate with him in defense of the Catholic faith. That author wrote his works in the elegant Syrian language.[1]

Later the Persian kings persecuted the Christian Church so terribly that they drove it utterly from their Empire, which was thus, by the ruthless cruelty of her rulers, deprived of the blessings of Christianity.

On the southern border of Persia there was a small vassal Arabian kingdom, the Monzer Dynasty. On the southeast of Syria there was another Arab Dynasty: the Gassanide. These Kings were vassals of the Caesars. Both of these royal houses were already Christian two centuries before the advent of Islam. Several other Arabian tribes in the desert were already won to the Christian religion by the efforts of the missionaries going out from Syria and Mesopotamia. Tamim, Tie and Tagleb[2] were already producing Christian poets.

In South Arabia, The Yemen, the Christian religion was introduced even earlier. We know the story of the martyr, Aretas, with his companions, who were put to death in the third century. We know also of the famous Bishop Ooss Iben Sayda, who was an elegant speaker.

[1] See the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. I, Page 593.
[2] Names of Arab tribes.

These Arabic tribes, especially those of North Arabia, led the nomadic life, which was very common, from the remotest antiquity. The outdoor life and good natural habits had given them a vitality which the decaying nations of the Roman Empire did not possess. All they lacked were the wholesome teachings of Christianity and its blessings; with these they would have built on the ruins of the crumbling Empire of the Caesars as many strong nations as the nations of Europe today, who divided the heritage of the Roman Colossus in the West. But alas! the Near East as a whole will henceforth not enjoy the benefits of the Christian religion for long centuries. Syria, the cradle of Christianity, where the most memorable events of the early Christian religion took place, was very soon to have new rulers who would treat the religion of Christ as did the Pagan Roman Emperors, if not worse. So also was to be the lot of Mesopotamia and Egypt, these lands of great saints and hermits. Islam was about to over-run, not only these provinces, but also the whole African coast and even Southern Europe—the greatest part of Spain to the Pyrenees. By the coming of Islam, the history of the Near East was changed. Before the coming of Islam Christianity in the Near East was divided into three great denominations: Nestorianism, Eutychianism and Catholicism. Besides these divisions along the lines of the creed, there was another one along the lines of the rite. The rite played an important part in the history of the Church, especially in the East. From the beginning of the Church there was always a diversity of rites. In the West the Latin language became very early the official and exclusive language of the Church. The few variations were soon merged into one great Rite, the Roman.

Not so in the East. The Greek Rite prevailed in a great many Churches, but always with it were the National Rites; in Syria, the Syriac; in Egypt, the Coptic; in the Balkan States and in Russia, the Slavonic. The struggle lasted for many centuries. Now-

adays, almost everywhere, these National Rites have supplanted the Greek.

Before the Mohammedan invasion the Nestorian Church used the Syriac in her liturgy. The Jacobite Church also used the Syriac, but after the invasion, these two Churches used it exclusively.

The Catholic party used both Greek and Syriac in the liturgy, but the Greek fell gradually into disuse after the Mohammedan invasion and was replaced either by Arabic or Syriac. This state of things affected also the ecclesiastical writers. The last ecclesiastical writer of note who wrote in Greek in Syria was St. John Damascene (born 676 A.D., died 754 A. D.).[3]

[3]His Arabic name is Sergius Ibn-Mansoor. He was counsellor of the Caliph Abdul-Malek of the Ommiades. St. John was born 37 years after the conquest of Damascus.

CHAPTER VII

The Mohammedan Invasion

The Arabic tribes of El-Hejez (Northern Arabia) who, as a rule, lived the nomadic life, took little share, if any, in the civilized life of those nations living around the Mediterranean. Before the great Islamic Invasion, there were indeed many other migrations towards the North—to the Euphrates Valley,[1] or towards the South, or the Southwest, i.e., to Abyssinia or Egypt respectively. There is no doubt about the Abyssianian language being derived from the Arabic of South Arabia, i.e., the Hymiarite branch.

The most famous migration to Egypt is said to have been the migration of the Hycsos kings (or the Pastor-kings) who ruled Egypt about 500 years. The early history of Arabia is buried in dim obscurity, in spite of the great antiquity of the race. Many reasons account for this, one of which is that the Arabic tribes remained aloof in their peninsula. Nevertheless, bold European explorers made some headway and gathered much data with which we can reconstruct the early history of that most ancient of the Semitic races.

The earliest and two most important kingdoms of Arabia are the Minean and the Sabean kingdoms. The Minean was in Northern Arabia. It flourished about the twelfth century B. C. The Sabean flourished in South Arabia; its capital is the city of Marib, which is famous for its dam, constructed at great cost. This Sabean kingdom lasted until the year 300, A.D., when it was conquered by the Abyssinians.

About the last quarter of the fourth century A.D., we see traces of Christianity in the Yemen. The first Bishop whose name is known to us was Sylvanus. In

[1]The great majority of the Assyriologues assure us that the Hammur-Abi Dynasty in Babylonia (about 2300 B.C.) is of Arabic origin. Hammur-Abi himself, was a great legislator, preceding the Mosaic legislation by many centuries.

Mohammed's time the Christian religion was flourishing in Yemen.

The Nabateans also appeared in the north and northwestern part five centuries before Christ. They stood as a bulwark against Roman progress in that direction until three centuries after Christ. Southeast of Damascus the Gassanide Dynasty reigned from the first century of our era. These Gassanides, embraced Christianity very early and were, in the fourth century A.D., powerful allies to the Romans. Their kingdom was a confederation of many Arabic tribes and their capitals were first, Balka, and afterward Petra and Sedeir. From these Gassanide tribes many a Syrian Christian family claims descent. The famous poet, Hasan, Poet of the "Prophet" was, before his conversion to the Islam, their poet. He wrote his best poems in their praise,[2] One of their last kings, Jablat Ibn-El-Aiham, was roughly treated by Omar El-Kattab, the second successor of Mohammed. Ruthless humiliation of these Christian kings under any pretext was the policy of Omar and that policy led to their utter extinction. On the northern border of Syria there was the Munzer Dynasty, which also was Christian.

The tribes of Hejaz, have been independent from time immemorial and have had only the clan system in their government.[3]

Among other tribes was prominent the tribe of Koreich, whose members had the guardianship of the temple El-Kaaba (The Holy Temple of the Arabs). Mohammed, the "Prophet" of Islam, is himself, the son of Abdallah, son of Andal-Mootalab, etc. to Ismael, son of Abraham, by Hagar.

Mohammed was born at Mecca (A. D. 582). He revealed his mission, when he was forty years old (A. D. 622). The citizens of Mecca did not take him seriously. After a few skirmishes, he left Mecca, the city

[2]"How magnificent a set of men" he said, "I have the honor to be their friend. They used to serve to their guest, in their beautiful villa, cups of delicious wine, etc." The poet recited his verses when he was already in the service of the Prophet where wine was no longer served.

[3]We see this clan system at the time of Abraham and Lot. (Gen. 13:6.)

where he was born. This was July 16, A. D. 622, the era of the Hegira.[4] He settled in the city Yssreb, which is called Medina, i.e., the city par excellence. From Medina as his headquarters he invaded Mecca with an army of faithful followers, gathered from those who followed him from Mecca (the emigrating) and from those who espoused his cause in Medina (Al-Ansar). With that army he conquered Mecca, destroyed every idol in the temple and proclaimed himself the "Prophet" with the chief motto, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed his messenger." The new religion spread with the rapidity of fire, backed as it was by extremely enthusiastic and militant followers. Mohammed himself could not read nor write, whence the necessity of a secretary, who was the Monk Buheir.[5] Buheir was a Nestorian and it was he who shaped the Islamic tenets about our Lord according to the Nestorian creed. According to the Koran "Jesus (Hisa) was a prominent Prophet in this world and in the other." He was the word of God sent to Mary (Chap. 3), but the Koran never admits that He is the Son of God, nor does it ever admit the Trinity. Mohammed expressly preaches against it. "The one God: He did not beget and was not begotten; no one was equal to Him." (Chap. 112.) We would not charge Buheir with this tirade against the Trinity; but in all probability it must be attributed to the Jewish Proselyte who succeeded him in the confidence of Mohammed. With this new adviser the "Prophet" drifted towards Judaism. That accounts for the many regulations drawn from the Old Testament.[6]

The political progress of Islam was rapid and marvelous. In a few years Mohammed himself subjugated all Arabia. He participated in sixteen pitched battles, and won the honors of victory. When he died, at the

[4]The word Hegira means in Arabic, migration.

[5]This Monk met Mohammed on a previous occasion when the young Arab was going to Damascus, with a caravan, on a commercial trip.

[6]The regulations about purification are drawn almost literally from the Old Testament. Also the laws about divorce and polygamy. On the other hand divorce and polygamy were practiced among the Arabs before Mohammed.

age of sixty-three, his generals were already on their way to the conquest of the mightiest empires of the time, the Roman and the Persian. The Roman domination was brought to an end in the richest provinces, Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia. The empire of the Chosroes was destroyed altogether, never to be reëstablished. It was a great upheaval; the greatest, I consider, in the history of the Middle Ages. Syria and Palestine were conquered in a violent and short campaign, in which some traitors played a shameful role, as in Aleppo and in some of the Palestinian cities. Nevertheless, deeper causes were underlying the surface and accounted for the quick change. A profound disgust for the Byzantine rule and corruption was permeating all classes of society. On the other hand, a similarity of race and language made the people hope that a complete fusion would follow, which would have been the case, but for the difference of religious tenets, then, as now, the great stumbling block. Europe has always been a great melting pot. Every wave of new immigrants from Asia is absorbed as soon as it appears on the soil; but in the East, as a rule, this phenomenon does not exist. On the same soil you may see many races elbowing each other and still forming distinct groups, after many centuries of common existence. This is, I suppose, what made Kipling say, "East is East and West is West." To the student of history this social condition is not new in the East. It has existed there from the remotest antiquity. We read in the Bible that the small territory of Palestine was large enough for many nationalities. In the land of Canaan there were also the Amoreans, the Hittites, the Farzeans, the Howeans and the Jebuseans (Exodus, 33:2 etc.), so many races in such a small territory!

What did Islam do in invading Syria? Did the Arab conquerors amalgamate with the Christian population who, before, were masters of the land? Not at all. There still remained two peoples, Christians and Mohammedans. Of course there were many defections. Many Christians embraced the new religion because it

afforded them every advantage, political and social. But the heroic minority held to the Faith and defended it many a time by the blood of its martyrs. It is one of the miracles of history that such a small minority has resisted and held its ground for so many centuries.

The policy of Islam was: Let the Christians either be converted and be on the same level with the Mohammedans; or else, if they still persist in remaining Christians, let them pay the tax and be humiliated. They will never be on a social level with the Mohammedans. There resulted many social disadvantages, if not actual persecution. The Christian population, after the conquest, was immensely reduced. In Syria, before the Mussulman invasion, as various historians inform us, the Christian population was about 10,000,000. At the present day, after thirteen centuries and a half, there are 3,500,000 in all Syria.[7] In Egypt, according to Makrizi, the Arab Historian, the Christian population was 18,000,000 when Amroo Ibn-Al-Ass conquered the country. Now the Copts (the remnant of the Christian population) number about 2,500,000. We can well imagine how much the Christian population was reduced after the Arab conquest.

It was after that great havoc wrought to the country, that a few thousands were gathered together from the rich provinces of Antioch, Emese and Hamth and other cities of Syria and Mesopotamia; who betook themselves about 680 A. D., to the mountain fastness of Lebanon, to defend their independence and their religion. This was the nucleus of the Maronite nation. The great leader of this movement was a Monk from the convent of St. Maron, of which we have already spoken. The name of this Monk was St. John Maron, the first patriarch of our Maronites after their separation from the other Christian groups in Syria. Before speaking of our first patriarch, we shall devote a chapter to the separation between Maronites and Melchites.

[7] This figure was quoted before the World War. Now that number is smaller by 1,000,000.

CHAPTER VIII

Maronites and Melchites

When we say that the Christian religion suffered an immense loss by the Mussulman invasion of Syria, we are stating a well known truth; but the greatest damage inflicted upon the old religion in the East by these newcomers, was the depriving of the venerable See of Antioch of its lawful occupant, the Catholic Patriarch.

Anastasius II died in 609 A. D. by the hands of the Jews during the Persian invasion. After him the See remained vacant for thirty years on account of the war between the Romans and the Persians. In 640 A. D. all Syria was already in the hands of the Arabs. Sergius, the patriarch of Constantinople, succeeded in having one of his friends, Macedonius, appointed to the See of Antioch. This Macedonius never came to Antioch; he lived in Constantinople and died there (665 A. D.). After this, Macarius was appointed in the same way. In 680 A. D. the Sixth Oecumenical Council was assembled in Constantinople, against the Monothelite heresy. Macarius was summoned to the Council to defend himself. After every effort to force him to renounce the heresy had proved fruitless, the stubborn patriarch was deposed, and Theophane, the deacon, was appointed patriarch by the Council. Theophane, like Macedonius, never came to Antioch; he died in Constantinople (686 A. D.).

It was at that time that St. John Maron was elected Patriarch in Syria (see next chapter) by the clergy of Lebanon and the adjoining districts not influenced by Constantinople. The Church of Antioch was deprived of a resident patriarch for about 77 years. It was very natural and legitimate to give her a native and resident patriarch, instead of those foreign patriarchs who resided at Constantinople and who were the tools and docile instruments of the fickle-minded Emperors of Byzantium.

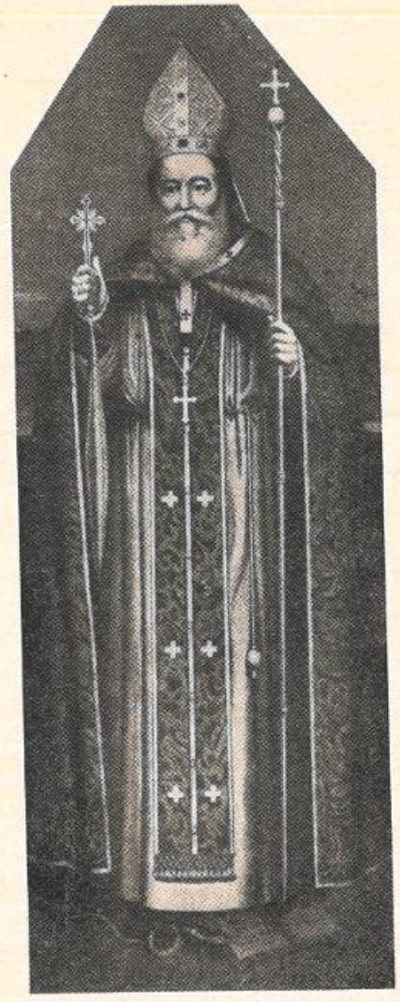
The Maronite patriarchate does not take its origin in the Monothelite heresy, as some modern writers contend.[1] But the first and the immediate cause of its establishment was a desire to free the See of Antioch from the encroachments of Byzantium. Anastasius, the librarian, mentions the appointment by the hierarchy of Constantinople after the death of Theophane, of a George and of an Alexander after him. This latter died in 702 A. D. After his death, even in Constantinople, they ceased to appoint patriarchs for Antioch, because they knew full well that the Caliphs would not let their appointee set his foot in Syria. "The See then was vacant for forty years," say the Arab historians, "until God inspired Hisham, the Ommyad Caliph, with the spirit of clemency, and he allowed the Christians to elect a patriarch." The Monks of St. Maron had already elected a patriarch about forty years before. Probably at that time his third successor occupied the See. Hisham then allowed the election of the Monk Stephen, who remained two years (742-744).

In the year 744, in the fourth year of Constantine, the Pogonat (See Theophane in his Annals) Theophylacte Bar Kanbara was elected. He was from Edessa and was a jeweler of Merwan, the Caliph. The same Theophane informs us that he occupied the Patriarchal See six years (744-750 A. D.).[2] In the time of this patriarch the separation between Maronites and Melchites was complete.[3] In the ninth century many of these patriarchs were involved in the schism of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople. They followed gradually the separatist tendencies of Constantinople. In the thirteenth century, patriarch Balsamon prevailed on the weakened Patriarchs of other oriental Sees to change their liturgy and adopt that of Constantinople.

[1] Labourt, Wailhe and others.

[2] Theophane, the conscientious historian we have quoted very often does not say a word about the so-called dispute between the Monks of St. Maron and this patriarch, of which we shall hear Denys speak.

[3] The party docile to the emperors of Constantinople is called thenceforth, Melchite by the Syrian and Arab historians. Other historians claim another origin for this name, but J. S. Assemani thinks otherwise.



ST. JOHN MARON, FIRST MARONITE PATRIARCH

CHAPTER IX

St. John Maron

St. John Maron was born in a small village in the neighborhood of Antioch, named Saroom.[1] When he was but a small boy, he was sent to the great city of Antioch to pursue his studies in Syriac and in Greek. After attaining a certain degree of perfection, he was sent to the convent of St. Maron on the shores of the Oronte River, where he perfected himself in Grammar, Mathematics and Scripture. That convent was then a center of learning and culture. The Arab armies usually respected the convents and monks, because the Prophet had expressly commanded them to do so; "Let no one of the faithful molest any monk or anyone who dwells in a hermitage." Later St. John Maron went to Constantinople to perfect himself in the Greek language, and it was while he was in that city that he learned of the death of his parents. Returning to Antioch he found his sister and her two sons, Cyrus and Abraham. He retired with Cyrus into the convent of St. Maron, where he had studied in his boyhood days. This time he went there to join the monks in the religious life. His nephew did the same. John was a brilliant figure in the convent. He soon was ordained priest, and in a few years of priesthood and missionary life, converted many to the Catholic faith. His reputation spread so rapidly that the Catholics throughout the patriarchate of Antioch, especially those of Lebanon, clamored for him to be their Bishop. He was consecrated Bishop of Batroun (one of the Phoenician cities on the seashore, between Byblos and Tripoli)[2] by Bishop John of Philadelphia, who was at that time the

[1]For the life of St. John Maron (see Assemani Bibliotheca Orientalis Tome 1, page 496. Sequ. also Patriarch Stephen Douihi) defense of the Maronites, Book 1:7 Sequ.

Evagrius, the Greek Historian, mentions this village (Saroom) in his history (Book 4:38).

[2]See the Historian Rohbacher, Histoire De L'Eglise Vol. 5, page 546.



Archbishop Joseph Freyfer,
Restorer of St. John Maron's College

Apostolic Delegate in the two patriarchates of Jerusalem and Antioch.[3] (About this point see Assemani, his Bibliotheca Utriusque Juris Book 2: Chap. 20.)

St. John Maron, Enthroned Patriarch.

Assemani (Bibliotheca Orientalis Tome 1: page 499) quoting patriarch Stephen Douihi, who in turn quotes the preface of St. John Maron's book, Exposition of the Faith, says the following about the consecration of this saint as Patriarch of Antioch: "After the death of Theophane, who was appointed patriarch of Antioch by the Sixth Oecumenical Council, the bishops met to elect a Catholic to the See of Antioch. The man they elected was Bishop John." After a short stay in Antioch the new patriarch was compelled to retire to the convent of St. Maron on the Oronte; but even in that solitude he could not stay long, because the incessant raids of the infidels made the place dangerous as a dwelling. He moved to Lebanon to a small village named Smar-Jebail, and from there to another village named Kfar-Hai, where he built a convent and where he deposited a precious relic he had brought from the convent of St. Maron. Before he left the convent he wrote a beautiful book entitled "The Exposition of the Catholic Faith." He sent it to his beloved people in Mt. Lebanon to caution them against the many heretics of the day.

There is a copy of this book in the Vatican Library, under No. 121 among the books brought to the library by the famous Maronite author Abraham Echellensis.[4] (See also Assemani, Vol. 1:515 of Bibliotheca Orientalis.)

Beside the book just mentioned, St. John Maron wrote a liturgy of which there is also a copy in the

[3]This John was Bishop of Philadelphia which is known today under the name of Oman, a small city in the Transjordania in Palestine. He was appointed by Pope St. Martin to be his extraordinary Legate in the two patriarchates of Jerusalem and Antioch, because the state of things in these two patriarchates required special attention. The patriarchs Macedonius, of Antioch, and Peter, of Alexandria, were both heretics. This appointment of John of Philadelphia is spoken of in the Bull of Pope St. Martin (See Labbe Councils Tom 6: page 29).

[4]The author was born in the small village Hakel in the District of Gebail, about three miles from the place where I was born.

Vatican Library, under No. 5, among the books brought there by the same Abraham Echellensis. He wrote also other books. All his writings are in Syriac. They denote, besides his solid learning and deep piety, a sweet unction peculiar to the fathers of the Church. All his books are still unpublished, except the Liturgy and the book on The Exposition of the Faith, which were published by Father Michael Gabriel, the Maronite author of a history of the Maronite Church.

But the main thing that made the memory of this Saint revered and loved is his prudent and firm administration of the Patriarchal See of Antioch during the most troubled period of its history (687-707 A. D.). St. John Maron, besides his sterling qualities as a religious leader, was also a civil leader and a chief who really established the civil liberty of the Maronites in Lebanon.

We read that at this period, in the history of Syria, the Arabs had not extended their conquests to Lebanon. To prove the truth of this assertion we quote the Greek Historian, St. Theophane:[5] "In this year (the eighth year of Constantine, the Bearded, 676 A. D.) the Mardaites went out to Lebanon and held in their possession every place between the Black Mountains (known today as the Bare Mountain in the neighborhood of Sweidiee near Tarsus) to the Holy City, Jerusalem. They took possession of the highest summits of Lebanon. Many slaves, natives and prisoners joined them, their numbers in a very short time reaching into the thousands."

Moawia (the Ommyad Caliph) heard this, and his advisers, greatly fearing the consequences, thought that God was protecting the Roman Empire. They then sent a deputation to Emperor Constantine, asking for peace and promising to pay a tribute every year. The Emperor received their deputation with great honor, accepted their offer and sent with them the Patrice John

[5]St. Theophane is a Greek Historian. He was born in Constantinople. He died 818 A. D.—exiled to the Island of Samothraki by Emperor Leo, the Armenian.

Betzigod, who was a Senator in the Empire, to treat with them about the conditions of peace. The Caliph, after consulting with his advisers, decided to write a treaty confirmed with a solemn oath "that the Arabs shall pay to the Romans every year 3000 pounds and set free 8000 prisoners, and give 50 horses of good breed." This treaty was concluded between the two parties (Arabs and Romans) and was to last thirty years. Constantine, the Bearded, began his reign in the year of our Lord 668, hence the eighth year of his reign was then 676 A. D. It is generally thought that St. John Maron was enthroned patriarch in 687 A. D., eleven years after that memorable peace between Moawia and Constantine, because of the invasions of the Mardaites.[6]

[6]We believe that these Mardaites were none other than the Maronites. Some modern authors try to cast some doubts on that. They contend that these Mardaites are simply a division of cavalry, raised by the emperors elsewhere and sent to Syria and Lebanon, to divert the attention of the Arabs and deter them from the siege of Constantinople. This opinion is highly improbable because the word Mardaite, itself, is Syriac, and means rebels. It would be highly improbable to think that the Emperors raised these divisions elsewhere than in Syria. A further proof that these Mardaites were natives of Syria is the fact they are identified with the Jarajimah. Who were these Jarajimah? They were the inhabitants of the city of Jarjuma, which lies between Baiyas and Butha on Mount Al-Lukam (Omanus). These people of Jarjuma and the surrounding villages made frequent incursions on Moslem territories. They had sometimes a Greek leader, i.e., an official from the imperial army of Byzantium. Finally they came to Lebanon and formed one people with the Lebanese of that time.

We have two valuable testimonies to prove our opinion. The first is a text from Denys Tell-Mahre, the Patriarch Jacobite (who died 845 A. D.), quoted by Bar-Hebræus in his Syriac History, page 52 (Vatican manuscript mentioned by J. S. Assemani, in his Bibliotheca Utriusque Juris). See for the quotation Msgr. L. L. David. His book, "Recrucil de Documents, etc.," page 85, edition Cairo. The text follows:

"There were invaders, Greek, Mardaites, i.e., heroes, called by the Syrians Jarajimah. They took possession (of the land) from the Mountains of Galilee to the Black Mountains and all the Lebanon Mountains. The Moslems suffered a great deal from them. At last the Moslems overpowered them and killed some and blinded some." From this testimony of Denys we have the confirmation of the narrative of Theophane about the incursions of the Mardaites and their identification with the Jarajimah. The other text is from Al-Baladhuri in his book "Futuh-Al-Buldan." We quote the English translation of Dr. Philip K. Hitti, the professor of history at the Columbia University:

"Certain Greek horsemen went forth to Mount Al-Lukam (Amanus) under a Greek leader and started for the Lebanon after having been joined by a large body of Al-Jarajimah . . . . Abd-Al-Malih had to make terms with them, agreeing to pay 1000 Diners per week." Page 247, Edition Longman and Green Co., New York, we see by the two texts pieced together that the bulk of the Mardaites were natives of Syria under the leadership of officials

from Byzantium, who betrayed them at the hour of danger and left them at the mercy of the Moslem armies.

We know from other sources that the original abode of our Maronites was in the country around Antioch, Emese and Apamea. They were driven by the Islamic invasion towards Lebanon. Al-Baladhuri says that the wars with Al-Jarajimah happened in the year 70 of Hojira which corresponds with the year 692 of our era, date coinciding with that assigned by Theophane with the peace of Justinian with Abd-Al-Malik.

Some authors have tried to cast doubts on the existence of St. John Maron, the first patriarch of our Nation. Others have endeavored to minimize his role in the keeping of the Catholic faith in Syria and Lebanon in the most critical period of its history. Most recently Mr. Labourt, in the Catholic Encyclopedia (word Maronite Vol. 9:685), made some hazardous assertions about St. John Maron, which we do not think he could ever substantiate. Of the many testimonies that extol the merit of St. John Maron as a patriarch and as a leader, we quote the words of the illustrious Pope Benedict XIV (his discourse before the Cardinals of the Roman Church, July 13, 1744): "You are not ignorant that at the end of the seventh century, when the Monothelite heresy had spread and corrupted the inhabitants of the Antiochene Patriarchate, the Maronites decided to save their Nation from that corruption and elect a patriarch who would be confirmed by the Roman Pontiff." Who was that patriarch whom the Maronites elected to save their Nation from the heresy at the end of the seventh century? He is none other than St. John Maron, their first patriarch.

Furthermore, the great Pope Pius VII[7] granted a plenary indulgence to everyone of the faithful who would visit the Church of St. John Maron on the day of his feast, March 2d. This indulgence was granted January 20, 1820.[8]

Very recently, the Holy See granted to our Church (Our Lady of Lebanon, 2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, W. Va.) the same plenary indulgence on condition that the faithful visit the Church and approach the

[7]He is the Pontiff who resisted Napoleon I, and died in exile.
[8]The Church dedicated to St. John Maron is in the village of Kefar-Hai, about six miles from Batroun (Mt. Lebanon).

Sacraments on the feasts of St. Maron, February 9th, St. John Maron, March 2d, and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

Every Catholic knows, or he is supposed to know, that the Roman Pontiffs are the highest authority in the Catholic Church to decide to whom the honors of the Saints are to be offered. (See about this matter H. Hurter, S. J. Theologia Dogmatica Tome 1: page 280.)

CHAPTER X

THE MARONITES BEFORE THE COMING OF THE CRUSADERS—700 TO 1096 A.D.

The Successors of St. John Maron

In writing about the patriarchs who succeeded St. John Maron we have for a guide, the illustrious annalist, patriarch Stephen Douihee, who is one of the restorers of our national history.[1]

We have said that St. John Maron had two nephews, Abraham, who was a civil leader of the young nation, and Cyrus. This latter became patriarch after the death of his uncle, and governed the See with firmness and wisdom. After him we find in the patriarchal See a Gabriel, who also governed the See for a few years. After Gabriel, another monk from the convent of St. Maron was elected, and was named John Maron II. About this John Maron, Bar-Claüs says: "After Gabriel a second John Maron was elected from the "divine" convent. He was a prominent doctor. . . . He came to Yanooh and was patriarch, and the faith of Maron never changed.[2]

After this patriarch a third John, of the village of Damalsa, was elected by the clergy and the people.

"We know the names of these five patriarchs," says our annalist Douihee, "from an epistle written by Bar-Claüs to the priest George, son of Bchara, and from a Syriac manuscript kept by our predecessor patriarch, George of Bsebhel. This manuscript was written in 1315 A. D., i.e., before the time of Bar-Claüs by 180 years." We can see from the foregoing passage

[1]Patriarch Stephen Douihee was born in Ehden, Northern Lebanon, 1630 A. D.—died 1704 A. D. He was the patriarch of the Maronites for 34 years. Later in this history we will introduce him to our readers.

[2]Bar-Claüs is a Maronite author, born 1495, A. D. He entered the order of St. Francis and became afterwards Bishop of Lafaksia in the Island of Cyprus. He wrote many treaties and pamphlets, in popular poetry. The village of Yanooh is about 12 miles distant from Gebail. It was the first residence of our patriarch after he retired from the convent of St. Maron in Kefar-Hai.

what pains the illustrious historian took to gather his historical data. We must not be surprised at the dearth of historical records in that period of transition since the men of that time had but little chance to busy themselves with literary work, as they were using their energies in defending themselves from the incessant incursions of enemies. Islam was at its zenith. The Caliph's soldiers were overrunning Syria and Egypt and had pushed ahead to the remotest parts of Spain. Had not Charles Martel stopped their triumphant march through France, they would have overrun all Europe.

We know the names of the fifteen next patriarchs who succeeded patriarch John of Damalsa, whom we consider to be John III. This list was kept for us by the Patriarch Stephen Douihee, mentioned above, and was copied after him by Joseph Simon Assemani.[3] The residence of this patriarch was the same village, Yanooh, which had none of the splendor of the palatial residence in Antioch, overlooking the beautiful river Oronte. No! That small residence, perched like an eagle's nest, on one of the rugged slopes of Lebanon, some eight thousand feet above the sea level, had nothing of the luxuries in the gorgeous palaces of Antioch, "The Queen of the Orient." Antioch in her best days was the pearl of the Asiatic provinces of the Roman Empire and was once a city of 1,000,000 people. Alexandria and Rome only could be compared with her in the splendor of her edifices, the magnificence of her theatres and the importance of her trade. The Arabs had occupied that city early in the first half of the seventh century and the Caliphs had forbidden the election of any Christian patriarch, thinking that the occupant of that high office would use his influence with the people to facilitate the return of the Roman domination in Syria. The Arabs always thought that the Catholic party in Syria was favorable to the Emperors of Constantinople and wished their return.

[3]See the Lebanese Council, Edition 1900, pages 430-431.

On the other hand, the other two sects were heart and soul with the Arabs, especially the Nestorians in revenge for the rough treatment they received at the hands of the Emperors, who exiled their leaders. This explains the special confidence the patriarchs of this sect enjoyed with the Caliphs of Bagdad. Our Maronites were loyal in their friendship with the Emperors of Byzantium until the time when Emperor Justinian Rinothmes abused their confidence.[4]

In the treaty of peace Justinian took upon himself the task of exiling twelve thousand of the most courageous soldiers of the Maronites from Lebanon to other parts of the Empire,[5] an act which deepened the aversion of the sturdy mountaineers to the treacherous policy of Byzantium.

We said in Chapter VIII that it is to this aversion of our Maronites to the influence of Constantinople that our separate patriarchate owes its origin.

The names of the fourteen patriarchs who resided in Yanooh, as we mentioned above, are the following:

Gregory, Stephen, Mark, Eusebius, John,
Josua, David, Gregory II, Theophylacte,
Josua II, Doumeth, Isaac, John III, Simon.

During the eighth and ninth centuries there were many prominent and influential Maronites living outside of Lebanon. We know of a flourishing group in the City of Edessa,[6] the native city of Theophilus.

We gather from what is left to us by Bar-Hebræus the biography of this Theophilus. Bar-Hebræus says (Church History, Paris Edition, in Syriac, page 127), "About this time (the time of the Caliph El-Mehdy) we meet Theophilus, son of Thomas of Edessa, the

[4]This Emperor concluded with Abd-El-Melek, the Ommyade Caliph, a peace in which he sacrificed the interests of our Maronites, who were holding in their possession the country from the Black Mountains to Jerusalem (see Theophane in his history A. D. 686). See also Agabius of Manbege, his history, page 352, edition Cheiko.

[5]These soldiers, exiled by Justinian, are called by the historian "Mardaites." We spoke about their identification with the Maronites.

[6]Stephen Douihee said (Annals, A. D. 939) that the Patriarch John II moved to Lebanon: meaning that the first five patriarchs lived in the Convent of St. Maron. That means that the patriarchal See was only moved to Lebanon in the middle of the ninth century.

famous astronomer, who was among the followers of the Maronite sect. He wrote a valuable history, in Syriac, although in that history he inveighs against the Orthodox (he means the Jacobites) and rebukes them." In his history of the Dynasties, which he wrote in Arabic, Bar-Hebræus speaks again of Theophilus. He says: "Theophilus was in his highest glory in this year (780 A. D.). He translated the two poems of Homer, "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey," on the conquest of Ilion (Troas) into the Syriac tongue with great eloquence." Unfortunately we do not possess even a fragment of these Syriac poems of Theophilus. They were still extant in the time of Bar-Hebræus.[7] Let us hope to find some of them at least in a corner of some European or American library. We find Theophilus also, mentioned by Agapius, the Melchite Bishop of Manbeeg, in his book "The History of the World,"[8] edited by the late Father Louis Cheiko, S.J. Bishop Agabius informs us that in compiling his book, he drew largely on the eloquent history written by Theophilus. This history is also lost. Monsignor J. S. Assemani tells us (Bibliotheca Orientalis Vol. 1, page 64) that Theophilus was the first Syriac writer who used the Greek vowels in a Syriac manuscript. These vowels correspond with the Hebrew punctuation, invented by the Massoretes, for the Hebrew Bible. The loss of this writer's works is a misfortune to history. The scantiness of our records at this period and in the tenth century is noticed and regretted by our writers of later date, and this can easily be explained by the circumstances of the time. The Arabs were for the most part illiterate and had but little appreciation for culture. The first Caliphs were all illiterate, as was the Prophet himself. Their first scribes were either Christians or

[7]Bar-Hebræus is a famous Syrian Jacobite writer. He was the son of Aaron, a Jewish physician, who was converted to Christianity. The contemporary writers remembered this fact and called his son Bar-Hebræus, i.e., the son of the Hebrew. Bar-Hebræus became an Archbishop and wrote many learned and interesting books. The quotation above mentioned is in the page 219. Edition Salhani.

[8]Page 369.

Jews. The Cadastres of the Empire were kept in the Greek language until the time of Mowaia, the first Omyad Caliph, who ordered them to be kept in Arabic.

Our Theophilus died A. D. 783. He was the secretary and adviser of El-Mehdy, the Abasside Caliph.

About the beginning of the tenth century we meet another Maronite author of note. His name is Kais. The little we know about him has been transmitted to us by the historian El-Masshoody in his book, "El-Tanbeeh Wal-Eshrasf," published in Leyden, 1894. The author says the following about Kais, the Maronite, page 152: "Among the followers of Maron, there is one Kais, who wrote a book of history which begins with the creation, and ends with the Caliph El-Moktafy." This Caliph died 902 A. D.

It follows from the foregoing brief statement that Kais lived at the beginning of the Tenth Century. Recently a French Priest, Father Nau, discovered in the British Museum some fragments of a Syriac book written by a Maronite. Father Nau thinks these fragments are part of the book written by our author mentioned above.

Still another Maronite author worthy of mention is the illustrious Bishop David who was living in 1059 and who translated from the Syriac, the official language of our Church, the Nomocanon or Book of Canons. This work is of particular importance because it was the Canon Law of the Maronite Church at that time and remained so until the time of the Plenary Council of Lebanon (A. D. 1736).

The sources of this book are:

1—Holy Scriptures.
2—The Constitutions of the Apostles.
3—The Didascala (or the Doctrine of the Apostles, of which we have spoken elsewhere in this book).
4—The definitions of the General Councils, especially the first eight.
5—Some Ordinances of the Emperors. These ordinances are taken usually from the Byzantine Canon Law.[8]

[8]Of this book, there is a manuscript in the Vatican Library No. 133 Syriac section, brought there by J. S. Assemani, who was once the Librarian. There is another manuscript of the same book, the National Library of Paris No. 223. A third manuscript is kept in the Library of the Kreimite Fathers, the Maronite Missionaries (Mt. Lebanon).

At the time of the Plenary Council of Lebanon, held by the illustrious J. S. Assemani, as Apostolic Delegate, the Ordinances of this book were still in force. Bishop Abdalla Kara-Ali was at the Council and was directed by it to draft a new code of Canon Law in the spirit of the existing canons, with a few changes necessitated by the times and circumstances. We will speak later in this book of the Plenary Council of Lebanon.

CHAPTER XI

Monophysitism and Monothelitism and The Maronite Church

We add this chapter to our history to clear as much as the data in our possession permit, these historical questions, i.e., whether the Maronites leaned to Monophysitism, or whether they leaned to Monothelitism.

Concerning this matter there was a controversy ever since the 17th century. Sometimes the discussion took a very heated tone, but now that the heat of the controversy is quieted down, let us examine it with the impartiality of the historian.

First of all let us start by explaining the two terms:

1. Monophysitism is the heresy professing one nature in Christ. This word is the compound of two Greek words, monos, one, and phusis, nature. We have spoken elsewhere in this book of Monophysitism. (See Chapter IV.)

2. Monothelitism is the heresy professing one will in our Lord. Again this word is the compound of two Greek words, monos, one, and telos, will.

We have seen elsewhere (Chapter IV) that the Monks at St. Maron were the irreconcilable enemies of Monophysitism. If our readers have a good memory, they will recall that 350 martyrs shed their blood to defend the doctrine of the Holy Synod of Chalcedon, which proclaimed the two natures in Christ (see the same Chapter IV).

Other historical documents affirm with certainty the unswerving allegiance of these Monks of St. Maron to the Council of Chalcedon.

The first document is published by Father Nau, the French priest, in the bulletin of St. Louis, Des Maronites (Paris 1903, pages 34, 350, 367 and 381). That document is in the British Museum (addition 12-155), and is mentioned by Wright (catalogue of the Syriac

manuscripts, page 945). It shows us the Monks of St. Maron at the head of the Catholic party against the Monophysite patriarch Callinice.

This patriarch and his Monks heaped insults upon the Monks of St. Maron because they defended the Council of Chalcedon. This was in the year of our Lord 590, i.e., at the end of the sixth century. Another document shows us the Monks of Beit-Maron, the enemies of the Monophysites. It was when Heraclius, the Emperor, asked patriarch Athanasius, the Monophysite, and his bishops to adhere to the Council of Chalcedon. This they refused to do. "Then," says the historian, "the Monks of Beit-Maron showed their wickedness by taking possession of our Churches."[1] This happened about 631 A. D. A later document dated 658-659 A. D. affirms the same thing about the orthodoxy of the Maronites in their struggle against the Monophysites. This document is kept in the British Museum (addn. 17216 vol. 1-15). In that document we are told of a conference held in the presence of Moawia, the Ommyad Caliph, between the Maronite Monks and the two most influential members of the Monophysite heresy, Theodore, their patriarch (who died 667 A. D.), and Sabocht, the Bishop of Kennesrin. In that conference the heretics were confounded and the Caliph condemned them to pay a fine to the Catholic party—twenty thousand dinars every year. Who was this Catholic party? The Monks of St. Maron, as the document reveals. In the thirteenth century (1286 A. D.) Bar-Hebræus, the oft mentioned historian and writer, affirms the same thing about Theophil of Edessa, who was a Maronite, by saying that the history of this Theophil was eloquent, although it was written against his sect (Bar-Hebræus). In face of so many testimonies, so plain and so certain, it is a grave injustice to accuse the Maronites of Monophysitism, as did V. Grumel in his article, "Recherches Sur les Monothelisme."

[1]This historian is the same famous Bar-Hebræus who transcribed in his history the Annals of Denys of Tell-Mahree (Chronicum Ecclesiasticum Tom I. edition Abbelos-Lamy Louvain, 1872, columns 269-277).

(Echos d'Orient Tome 31, 1928 A. D., page 257), and before him Bishop Clement David (his work Recueil de Documents, etc., page 94 seq. edition Cairo 1908 A. D.). These authors are really extremists and take an indefensible position.

Monothelitism

Did the Maronites lean toward Monothelitism in the period of their history extending from 750 to the end of the tenth century? We shall see. There are those who maintain that the Maronite Church never leaned to any Monothelitism, and, if there were some defections, they were individual; and those who claim that it is a positive fact. To determine this question we have to consult the historical documents and explain them in the light of their true surroundings.

The facts: There was a separate patriarchate for the Maronites between the last part of the seventh century and the early part of the eighth (685 and 746 A. D.). We know that the last of the Catholic patriarchs of Antioch, Theophane, who was appointed by the Sixth General Council, died (686 A. D.). We also know that before him the patriarchs for seventy-seven years did not live in Syria (see our Chapter VII). It is precisely in this year, 686, that our historians have placed the election of St. John Maron. No historian has yet maintained that St. John Maron was a Monothelite. On the other hand, let us see some other facts quoted by the historians who contend that the Maronites leaned to Monothelitism. The first one is the testimony of Denys Tell-Mahree. This author was himself a Monophysite and lived in the eighth century (died 845 A. D.). He has the following text about this question: "We must now speak of the schism that broke out among the Chalcedonians in this year (1038 of Alexander corresponding to the year 727 A. D.) concerning the heresy of the two wills. . . . . In the country of the Romans it prevailed from the time of Constantine Pogonat; but in

Syria it was not admitted. It was only introduced by the prisoners brought by the Arab soldiers. . . . . The Monks of Beit-Maron and their Bishop did not accept it, but the majority of the city dwellers did accept it. . . . . ." On another occasion Denys informs us that Theophylact obtained orders from the Caliph, Marwan, to persecute the Monks of Beit-Maron. After going into some details, Denys said, "The Monks of Beit-Maron continued to elect their patriarch without being molested until our own day." That other occasion was the year of our Lord 746, i.e., in the middle of the eighth century.

What shall we think of this testimony of Denys Tell-Mahree? He was the patriarch of the Jacobite sect, of which we have spoken so often, and of which we said that they were irreconcilable enemies of the monks of Beit-Maron. Severus, who in 512 put to death the 350 Maronite Monks, was one of the predecessors of Denys. Another remark is this: It is also worthy of attention that this testimony of Denys did not reach us directly, but was transcribed by another Jacobite historian, Patriarch Michel, the Syrian, an author of the twelfth century. This historian was not always historically accurate, as is proved by the discrepancy between his texts and the text of Bar-Hebræus. Nevertheless, from the study of his text, we can first draw the conclusion that the Monks of Beit-Maron had already their patriarch before that controversy between them and Theophylact, because he says they "continued to elect their patriarch." In our opinion the separation was caused by the desire to get away from the influence of Constantinople, not by a difference of doctrine. After that, came the quarrel about the one and the two wills. According to Denys, himself, the Monks of Beit-Maron understood their adversaries as affirming that there were in Christ two conflicting wills. Here are his own words: "The Monks said you are Nestorians . . . . . because you admit that in Christ were two wills separate and op-

posed to each other, even hostile the one to the other."[2] The gist of the controversy was then revolving upon a misunderstanding. To explain clearly the mind of the Maronite Church on this point we have a charming hymn in the Mass for the Cathechumens in a Maronite missal of the eleventh century. This missal was used by patriarch Stephen Douihee.

The merciful who in Mary dwelt in poverty,
And as man went out of her womb humbly,
He came to the world by miracle in a wonderful way,
In the union of the two natures truly,
Having one person, He had one will twofold[3]
With the properties of the two natures undivided,
The natures remain in one person divinely.
Recognized without disunion, nor confusion.
By the divine nature, He wrought the miracles divinely.
By the human nature, He endured sufferings humanly.
Paul said, He was made similar to us entirely,
Except sin, impiety and iniquity.

The expression of St. Paul: That Christ was "similar to us in everything but sin," is profusely used in our liturgy and explains in what way our ancient Maronites understood the one will." They meant the moral unity of the two wills, because in Christ there was no will to sin. In the same way Pope Honorius spoke in his famous Epistle to Sergius.

There are other historians beside Denys who spoke of the Maronites' Monothelitism. We will not quote them because they are all based on this testimony of Denys.

What is worthy of note is that the Sixth General Council which was assembled against Monothelitism does not say a word about Maron and the Maronites. This is, for the present, sufficient as regards that question.

[2]Chabot Chronique Denys Tell-Mahree. Text Tome IV, pages 458-459 translation Tome II. 493-94. See also L'Eglise Maronite par Le-Choreveque Pierre Dib, Tome I, page 130.

[3]Here we have the real meaning of this formula—one will—twofold. The Maronites always insisted on the union of the two wills in Christ.

CHAPTER XII

MARONITES AND CRUSADERS

When the Crusaders came to Syria and Palestine, they met the Maronites.

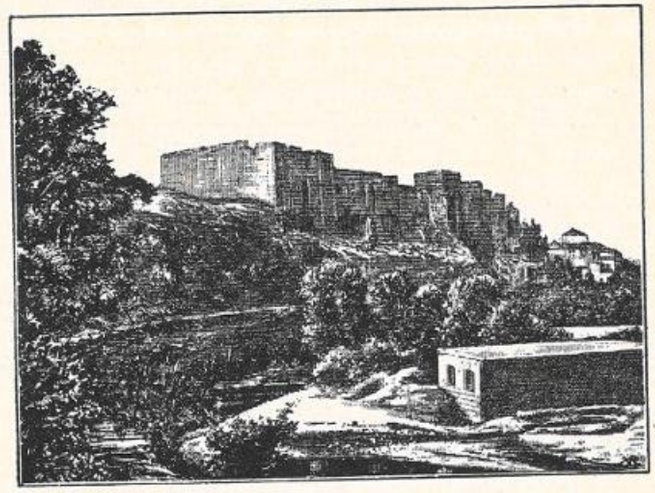
William, Bishop of Tyre, who was one of the leading Latin Bishops of the time, says: "When the Crusaders encamped in the suburbs of Tripoli, many of the faithful Syrians who were living in Mt. Lebanon above Gebail, Batroum and Tripoli, came to congratulate them and offer them their services. They (the Crusaders) welcomed them and received them with sentiments of brotherly love, and selected from among them guides, to conduct them through those high mountains which they had to cross." (History of the Crusaders Book 12, Chapter XXI.)

From this short narrative of William of Tyre we can see what cordial relations were established between the Crusaders and the Maronites after the treacherous treatment the former received from the Greek Emperor in Asia Minor. We will see later that these relations grew more cordial as time went on, but our people had to suffer terribly for it after the departure of the Crusaders.[1]

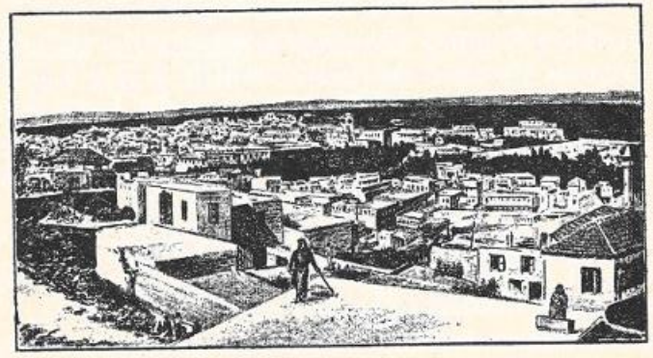
After the conquest of Jerusalem, Godfrey de Bouillon, the new King elected by the Crusaders, sent his messenger to Rome to announce to Pope Urban II the good news of the taking of that city. At that time the Maronite Patriarch Joseph George availed himself of this opportunity and sent also his messenger to the Sovereign Pontiff as a mark of his obedience and his union with the Holy See.

These messengers reached Rome when Pope Urban II was already dead, for he died fourteen days before the Conquest of Jerusalem. His successor, Pope Pascal,

[1] William of Tyre speaks of the Maronites, in another passage of his history, as being converted from Monothelitism, by Patriarch Emmericus. But in this he copied Said-Ibn Batrik, whose testimony is not reliable.



CHATEAU DE RAYMOND DE TOULOUSE (TRIPOLI)



THE CITY OF TRIPOLI

welcomed them with great joy and sent to the Maronite Patriarch a mitre and a crozier. This Patriarch lived until the year 1119 A. D.[2]

After Patriarch Simon we meet Patriarch Peter, who was in the patriarchal See in the year of our Lord 1121. We know that fact from a lengthy note written at the margin of the seventh book of the Syriac manuscripts brought by Joseph Simon Assemani to the Vatican Library.

This note (found on page 262 of the said book) reads as follows: "I am the poor Monk Simon, who wrote these lines, in this book, which I copied for our Holy Father, our Patriarch Peter, Patriarch of the Maronites, who lives in the Holy Convent of Maifook, in the Valley of Eleege, from the district of Batroun. His Holiness commanded me to be superior and director of the Convent of St. John in the land of Kozbend in the Island of Cyprus. . . . . This was in the year 1432 of Alexander (coinciding with 1121 A. D.), the twelfth day of the first month, i.e., the month of October, with which the Syrians begin the year."[3]

Patriarch Stephen Douihee mentions the same fact and assures us that the book, which was a book of poems of St. Jacob of Sarug. was still kept in the patriarchal library at Kenobeen in his time. It seems that Assemani transferred that book to the Vatican Library.

The successor of Patriarch Peter is Gregory, from the Village of Halat (south of Gebail). He sent a delegation to Pope Innocent II.

His successor is Patriarch Jacob, from the Village Ramat. This Patriarch died 1151 A. D., and was succeeded by Patriarch John VIII, who lived first at the village Lehfed in a convent where he made his residence,

[2]See about these events the Epistle of Bishop Bar-Claüs to the Patriarch Simon of Hedeth, 1494 A. D. See also Ibn-Nemroon in his book: Evoplia, page 67. See also the Dominican Lequien (his book The Christian Orient. Vol. 3). This patriarch lived at the village Yanooh, which was the residence of his predecessors for over two centuries.

[3]For that, see Joseph Simon Assemani, Bibliotheca Orientalis Vol. I, page 370.

but later transferred his residence to Habeel. He died 1173 A. D. He is the author of a Liturgy. After him we see Patriarch Jeremia, of Damalsa, who was elected Patriarch 1183 A. D. Patriarch Jeremia came to Rome to assist at the fourth Lateran Council, held by the Great Pope Innocent III. He remained in Rome five years—until 1216—and sailed from Italy to Lebanon January 3, 1216. When he landed at Tripoli he was welcomed by Bishop Theodor, his Vicar. Pope Innocent III sent to this Patriarch Jeremia, when he was in Rome, his famous Bull which is the first Bull officially known to have been sent to a Maronite Patriarch, and which is still kept in the Archives of the Patriarchal See. We will translate some of this important document in our Chapter "The Maronites and The Holy See." To Patriarch Jeremia succeeded Patriarch Daniel I, from the small village Shamat. He was elected 1230.

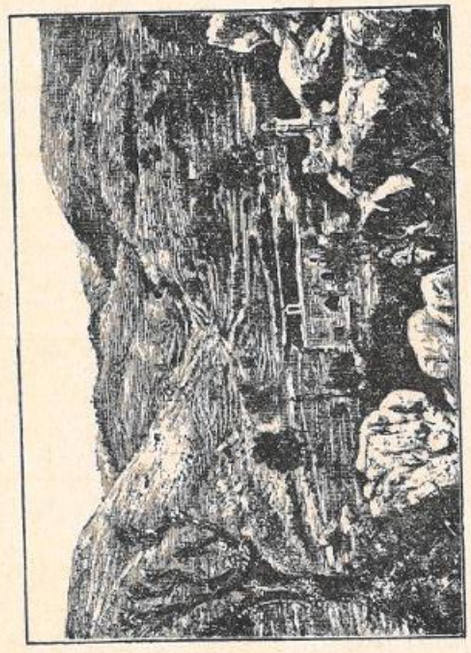
This Patriarch was succeeded, 1245, by Patriarch Simon II. To this Patriarch Pope Alexander IV wrote, congratulating him for receiving some European refugees escaping from Antioch, when that city was retaken from the Crusaders by the Saracens. The letter of this Pope is still kept in the Archives of our Patriarchate. To him succeeded Daniel II, who was from the village Hadsheet (in the Northern Lebanon). He was confirmed by Pope Nicholas III, who reigned in the See of St. Peter from 1277 to 1281. In this Bull the Pope insists that the chrism should be mixed from the olive oil and the balsam only.[4]

This Patriarch was succeeded by Patriarch Luke, from Bnehran. In his time the Mohammedans invaded Northern Lebanon and the Kosroan. We will speak about this invasion in the next Chapter. This Patriarch was succeeded by Gabriel of Hejoola, the Patriarch Martyr, who was put to death by the Mohammedans in 1295 on the outskirts of Tripoli.[5]

[4]Our Maronites, like the other Orientals, used to mix with the olive oil and the Balsam other aromatics.

[5]About the martyrdom of Patriarch Gabriel, see Archbishop Debs, History of Syria, Vol. V, page 376.

In the closing decades of the thirteenth century the last strongholds of the Crusaders in Syria and Palestine fell one after the other. Antioch had fallen in 1268. In 1289 the Sultan Mansoor prepared his armies to besiege Tripoli. The siege lasted thirty-five days. During that terrible time the besieged showed a great and wonderful resistance, but to no avail, because they were overcome by the superior number of the enemies. The city was taken and a horrible massacre ensued. After Tripoli came in its turn St. John of Akre. That city was the strongest place the Crusaders had on the Mediterranean shores. Its natural site was almost impregnable with a little effort at fortification, but the division and the lack of discipline among the besieged had done more harm than the big armies and the determination of the invaders to take the city. It fell May 18, 1292. It was before the walls of St. John of Akre, earlier in this century, i.e., 1250, that our Maronites fought side by side with the Crusaders headed by St. Louis IX, King of France. After the fall of St. John of Akre, Tyre, Sidon and Beyrouth were evacuated by the Crusaders in the same year and occupied by the lieutenants of the Egyptian Sultan, El-Ashraf. (See history of Syria, Vol. 6, pages 299 to 307, by the Archbishop Joseph Debs.)



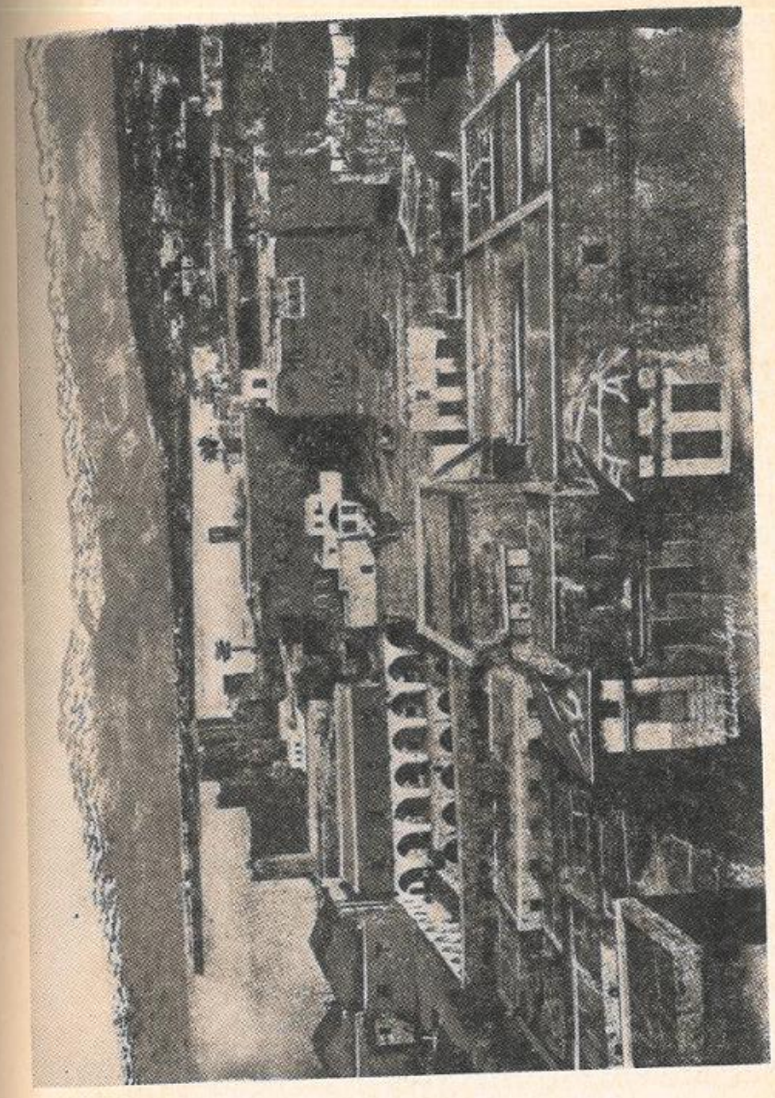
MONASTERY OF MEIFOOK, OLD RESIDENCE OF PATRIARCHS

CHAPTER XIII

Maronite-Mohammedan Wars After Crusaders' Departure

The neighboring princes of Syria and Egypt had conceived a deep hatred for the Christians of Mt. Lebanon because the latter had been on friendly terms with the Crusaders. The day of reckoning had now come. All they wanted was to mete out a swift and terrible punishment to the sturdy mountaineers, who had dared to sympathize with and to help the European invaders. These princes determined to attack in their turn the mountaineers in their own stronghold. We know of three of these invasions. The first one is mentioned by our famous annalist Douihee, whom we consider our national historian. In relating the events of the year 1287, he says: "The Maronites had come from their mountains to help the Crusaders when they were besieged in Tripoli. After the taking of Tripoli, the Lieutenant of the Sultan in Damascus, Hisam-Eddin Lajean, issued his orders to the general of the armies, Kara-Sankar, to get his armies ready for the invasions of the Kesroanites[1] who had helped the Crusaders in the siege of Tripoli. This first invasion proved to be an utter failure (see also Saleh Ibn-Yahyhia in his history of Beyrouth published by Father Cheiko, S.J., where he mentions this invasion in the year 1292 A. D., corresponding with the year 691 Hegira). Prince Bibars, the Lieutenant of the Sultan in Egypt, with Prince Kara-Sankar and other princes came over from Egypt with big armies and was met and reinforced by other armies of the Syrian Princes, but it happened, says the historian, that after they met in the mountains some one came and persuaded them not to push the expedi-

[1]He means by the Kesroanites the Maronites of Kesroan (the middle Lebanon).



View of the City of Beyrouth

tion. Then the Kesroanites profited by this advantage and drove out the invaders. (See Archbishop Debs History of Syria, Vol. 6, page 366.)

Second Invasion:

Again the Lieutenants of Damascus and of Tripoli and one from Egypt invaded the mountains of Lebanon in 1302, about fifteen years after the first invasion. This time the mountaineers were ready for them. With thirty thousand combatants and thirty sturdy leaders, they lured the armies of the enemy into their territory, and forced them into battle around the city of Gebail, where everything was to their own advantage. The Mussulmans were badly beaten; many thousands were killed and much booty was taken.[2]

In 1305, however, the Mussulman princes gathered their forces for the third time for a great blow against the brave mountaineers, who had twice defeated them. By sheer force of number they overcame them and scattered many of the inhabitants of the Kesroan, which was at that time one of the main districts of Lebanon. The Kesroan remained deserted about eighty years. This time Sultan Klaoon brought from around Tripoli some of the Turcoman tribes to settle on the seashores between the Christians in the mountains and any possible help coming by sea from the Crusaders in Cyprus or from other islands. In these wars the Druses of South Lebanon sided with the Maronites, and both nations fought together against the Mamelukes. The Christians who deserted the Kesroan after these expeditions moved to Northern Lebanon whence they originally came. During this time of persecution and misfortune the religious life of the nation was much intensified. We know the names of many saintly bishops and many hermits who grouped around the famous convent Kenobeen,[3] which became,

[2] See Patriarch Douihee Annals 1302, A. D., and Archbishop Debs Loc. Cit. Vol. 6, page 368. The place where the booty was divided was called Mahad, i.e., Rendezvous (it still retains this name).

[3] Kenobeen is the Syriac form of the word "Cœnobium." This convent is said to have been first built by Emperor Theodosius the Great, who cleared Syria and Phoenicia of the heathen temples and built instead Christian churches or monasteries.



THE VALLEY OF HOMANA, PRAISED BY LOMARTINE

a century later, the residence of our Patriarchs. The valley where this convent is built was called The Holy Valley, on account of the many monasteries and hermitages built therein by the Monks in every epoch of our history.



HOLY VALLEY OR WADI-KADISHA (KENOBEEN)

CHAPTER XIV

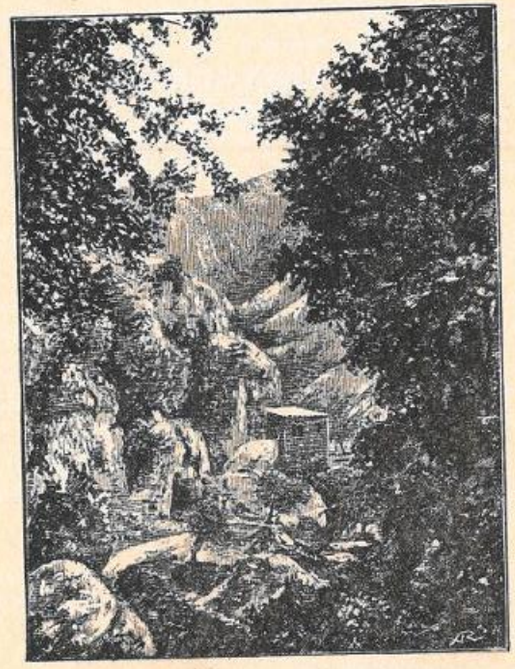
THE MARONITES OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

1—Patriarchs:

In Chapter XIII we mentioned the Patriarch Martyr Gabriel, of Hejoola. Piagius, the Franciscan author, in his book entitled "Syria Sacra," says, "This patriarch was martyred 1296 in the outskirts of Tripoli by the infidels. The place where he was martyred is called Tell-El-Raml. We have no further details of his martyrdom."

After him the patriarch who was elected was named Simon V. He lived a long time in the Patriarchal See because we find him mentioned by the deacon Saba Solomon, who copied a New Testament in the year of Our Lord 1332. At the end of the book he says: "This was written in the days of our Patriarch Simon, etc." He was mentioned by another scribe in the year 1339.

This patriarch was succeeded by John IX, who was mentioned by a scribe in the year 1357. This scribe says: "I finished the copying of this book in the year 1357, in the days of our patriarch John, Patriarch of Antioch and Mt. Lebanon and the country on the seashores, and in the days of Bishop John, Bishop of Cyprus." These good scribes who were wont patiently to copy their manuscripts, had the good habit of marking at the end of their books the names of the reigning patriarch and of their respective bishops. In this way they preserved the memory of many events and many names which otherwise would be lost to history. After this Patriarch came another whose name was David John. He had his residence in the Convent of St. Sergius, in the village of Hardeen (Northern Lebanon). He remained patriarch until the year 1404.



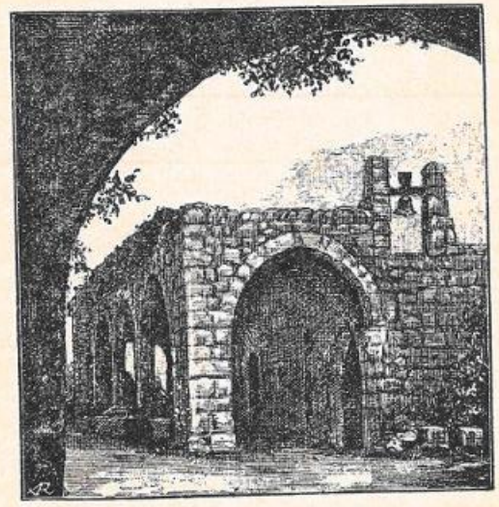
ENTRANCE OF THE KENOBEEN MONASTERY

2—Renewal of the Persecution:

Precarious indeed was the situation of the Christians in the East after the Mohammedan Conquest. For the least pretext they were persecuted. The pretext this time was as follows:

Peter of Lusignan, King of Cyprus, went to Europe to stir the European nations to another crusade. This was about 1360 A. D. He could hardly gather a few thousand mercenary soldiers. The Republic of Genoa furnished him with a few thousand more. With about ten thousand soldiers in all, he invaded Alexandria, burned the city and his soldiers, taking whatever they could as a booty returned to Cyprus. They did the same thing with the Syrian cities, i.e., Tripoli, Tarsus and Lataquiee (Laodicea) and returned to Cyprus; but this expedition, short as it was, excited the wrath of the Mohammedans against the native Christians. Many bishops and notables were held prisoners and afterwards martyred. Things did not quiet down until 1380 A. D. In 1388 the Sultan of Egypt, Barkook,[1] visited the convent of Kenobeen, above mentioned, and was welcomed by Abbot Peter the Superior. The Sultan was so pleased with the visit that later he exempted the Convent from the taxes and gave the Abbot a tablet of brass recording the fact.

[1]This Sultan is the first of the Dynasty of Mamelukes (Circassian slaves) who ruled Egypt and Syria for about one hundred and twenty-five years. The last Sultan of these Mamelukes is Touman Bey, who lost Syria to the Ottoman Sultan Selim II, 1517 A. D.



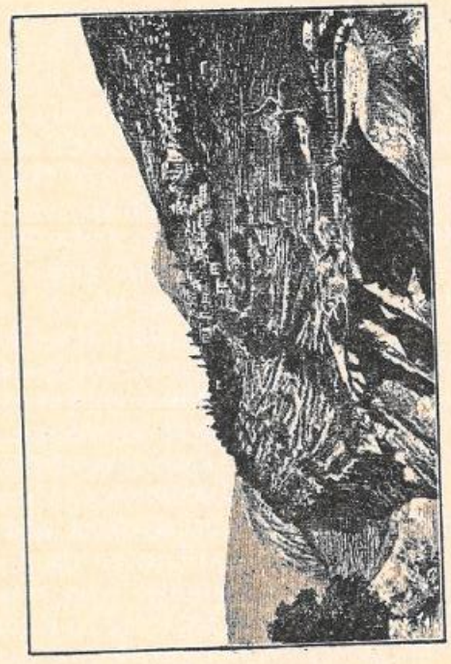
KENOBEEN MONASTERY, PRESENT RESIDENCE OF THE PATRIARCH

CHAPTER XV

Maronites of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, we find the Maronites calling their rulers in Syriac "Egmonae," the leaders. They were at the head of every important town and sometimes their rule extended to the whole district. We have met these leaders in the preceding centuries. For instance in the wars with the Mussulman princes above mentioned there were thirty of them who defeated the enemies, and had under their command thirty thousand soldiers. The manner of enrolling soldiers was very simple and primitive. In the hour of a common danger an urgent message was sent hurriedly from town to town. Every able-bodied man was supposed to take his arms and rush to the place of danger. The ablest among the leaders was put at the head of the little army.

The first of these leaders we know of in the fifteenth century is Jacob, son of Ayoub, who was appointed by Sultan Barkook, above mentioned, to rule in Becharry, his native city and the adjoining district. He ruled for sixty-two years. After him his sons also ruled until the year 1488 A. D., i.e., almost the whole century. Other important localities were also ruled by some of these leaders. They were called in Arabic "Mokademeen." The one who was at the head of the district of Becharry in 1488 was Abd-El-Minhem II, who had received his early education from a Jacobite priest. This priest and others coming from outside Lebanon and professing the heresy of the Jacobites, lured the young man into their error. He built a church for their sect, adjoining his home. Great confusion resulted from that tolerance of the Governor. The inhabitants of Ehden, another important town in Northern Lebanon, were scandalized because they were ardent followers of the



City of Beoharry, Residence of Maronite Leaders
(Mokademeen in the XVI Century)

Catholic faith. A strife began between the two groups and after two or three encounters the Catholics had the upper-hand and the others were scattered. The Governor Abd-El-Minhem died in the year 1495 and he was succeeded by his son, Gemal-Eddin Joseph, who was a good Catholic. In the other parts of Lebanon, they enjoyed a profound peace, not disturbed by any of these divisions.

Patriarchs in the Fifteen Century.

Patriarch David, of whom we spoke in the preceding chapter, was succeeded by Patriarch John X, who was born in the Village Jaj.[1] This patriarch sent letters with Fra. Joanne, O.M., the Superior of the Franciscans in Beyrouth, to signify his obedience to Pope Eugenius IV and to the Constitutions of the Council of Florence and to ask for the Pallium.[2] Pope Eugenius received the envoy with great marks of joy and kindness, and sent to the Patriarch, with the Pallium, a mitre and a chasuble, etc. When the envoy landed at Tripoli on his way back to Lebanon, a great multitude went to meet him. The event was so solemn and extraordinary that it aroused the suspicion of the Governor of Tripoli, who was Mohammedan. He detained the delegate and it required a great effort and the influence of many notables to explain to the Governor the peaceful mission of the delegate, who was finally released. The delegate, when he returned to Rome, went by way of Beyrouth to avoid a repetition of the unfortunate experience. This fact so embittered the Governor of Tripoli, that he sent a band of soldiers who sacked the residence of the patriarch and killed many notables. Soon afterward, the patriarch moved his residence from Maifook[3] to the convent of Kenobeen, his present residence, where he expected to be protected by the Christian Governor of Becharry, of whom we have

[1] This ancient village about 10 miles distant from the Mediterranean shores in the middle of Lebanon is the cradle of many important Maronite families.
[2] A large mantle, sent by the Pope to the Patriarch, Archbishops, etc., as a mark of full authority.
[3] The patriarchs resided in this convent for at least two hundred years.

spoken. He wrote a letter to Pope Eugenius IV concerning all these sad events, dated August 1st, 1440 A. D., and confided this letter to another Franciscan Friar, Father Peter of Ferrara. We have the answer of Pope Eugenius to the Patriarch. We will quote it in our Chapter, "Relations of the Maronites to the Holy See."

This Patriarch died at Kenobeen in 1445 and he was succeeded by Jacob II from the Village Hadeth (in the same province of Becharry). This Patriarch had spent his boyhood days in an hermitage. He was confirmed and given the Pallium by Pope Nicholas V, successor of Eugenius IV. The Bull of his confirmation was still kept in the Patriarchal Archives in the time of Patriarch Stephen Douihee, 1704.[4] He died February 8, 1468, and was succeeded by Peter, his brother. This Patriarch sent to Rome, to obtain the Pallium of Confirmation, Fra. Griffon, the famous Franciscan Belgian who played from that time on, an important role in our history. The Pope then was Paul II. Lequien says that Paul II wrote to this Patriarch a Bull mentioned by Fra. Quaresmius at the end of Volume II of his book, "The Holy Land." We shall quote some of this Bull in our Chapter, "The Relations of The Maronites With the Holy See."

Let us here sketch the life of Fra. Griffon and the life of Gabriel Bar-Claüs, whom Fra. Griffon persuaded to enter the Order of St. Francis, and whom he sent to Genoa and afterwards to Rome.

Fra. Griffon:

By nationality he was Flemish. The year of his birth is not known. He entered the Franciscan Order (the Conventuals) and when he was 22 years of age he obtained the degree of Doctor in Theology and taught that science for seven years; but the great reputation he attained offended his humility. He then left Paris and went to Rome to visit its holy places. He entered then the other branch of the Franciscans (the

[4] It is still kept there today.

Minors). In the year 1442 Fra. Griffon was sent to the Holy Land. In 1450 he was transferred to Lebanon. From that time a deep friendship was established between him and the Maronites. In 1468, after the death of Patriarch Jacob, his brother, Peter, sent Fra. Griffon to Rome to obtain the Pallium of Confirmation. Fra. Griffon brought with him on this journey to Genoa and then to Rome the young Maronite Gabriel Bar-Claüs and another companion whose name was John. In Rome the two young men studied till the year 1493. They returned to Lebanon and were ordained priests. Father Griffon, seeing the fruits of his work in Lebanon, was satisfied and left to his friend and disciple, Bar-Claüs, the task of working among his countrymen. He wanted to conquer new lands for Christ. He knew of the negotiations between the Holy See and Persia for the spread of the Catholic religion in that country. Pope Sixtus IV sent him the necessary papers to be his delegate there. He sailed from Beyrouth in spite of his old age; but owing to his infirmities he could not continue his voyage, and died at Cyprus, at the Franciscan Monastery in Famogoso (Cyprus), 1475.

His disciple, Bar-Claüs, worked a long time after him, first in Lebanon, where he preached to the people. He wrote many books, devotional and historical, which were spread among all and acquired an immense popularity. Many a time he chose for his discourses a form of popular poetry like that of the Troubadours of the Middle Ages in Europe. Many of these poems are still in the minds of the masses after the lapse of four hundred years. The first care of Bar-Claüs was to keep alive the Catholic Faith in the souls of his countrymen. He succeeded to a high degree. Many modern historians attribute to him some inaccuracies; but, to our mind, if he does not always refer to his sources, it does not mean that he has none. Furthermore, many historical events recorded by Bar-Claüs had their support in the local traditions, which in his time were more vivid

and nearer to the source. The works of Bar-Claüs are kept in the Vatican Library (No. 18 to 21 and No. 81) still unpublished. Many of his books are in the hands of the people, in manuscript form.

Let us resume our narrative. Patriarch Jacob died in the year 1492 (October 12) and was succeeded by a nephew, Bishop Simon, son of David Joseph Hassan. This Patriarch requested Father Francis Surianus, who was the guardian of the Holy Land and the Legate of Popes Alexander VI, Pius III, Julius II and Leo X, to write to Rome asking for his confirmation as patriarch. At that time a journey to Rome was very dangerous on account of wars, but in 1513, an opportunity presented itself. The Patriarch sent his secretary, Father Peter, to Friar Mark, Superior of the Franciscans of Beyrouth, to see if there was a ship ready for a voyage to Europe, and by good fortune it was found that a vessel was soon to set sail. Friar Mark persuaded the secretary not to lose any time. He sent with him commendatory letters for his hurried trip to Rome. The Pope at the time was Leo X, the famous protector of arts and letters. In his letter Friar Mark said, "The Maronite Nation has been, from her earliest history, the faithful daughter of the Church, most obedient to the See of Peter. The actual patriarch tried time and again to obtain the Pallium of Confirmation from the Roman Pontiff, but owing to the difficult circumstances, did not succeed."

He mentioned also the reason why the delegate of the Patriarch was hurried in this trip. Father Peter went to Rome, but could give in detail no satisfactory answers to all the questions the Curia usually asks on such an occasion. Furthermore, he did not possess a perfect knowledge of either the Latin or the Italian language. The prudence of the Holy See is proverbial in these important matters. He was sent back to Lebanon with long letters to the Patriarch and to the Superior of the Franciscans, asking for more information about the practices of the Maronites and their election of a Patriarch. Special stress was put upon the question

as to whether the preceding patriarchs had received any Bulls and letters from the Holy See.

When the messenger reached Lebanon, the Patriarch called the Provincial of the Franciscans, Father Surianus, to Kenobeen. The letters of the Pope were translated into Arabic. Then the Patriarch dictated a long letter, which was in turn translated into Latin. A copy of this letter was still preserved in the Patriarchal Archives in the time of Stephen Douihee (1704 A. D.). The summary of this letter is: first, "Profession of Faith;" second, "The Election of the Patriarch is by the Bishops, Archbishops and the prominent men among the people;"[5] third, "The Consecration of the Chrism is according to the old custom, i.e., with the oil and chrism there were mingled some aromatics;" fourth, "The Patriarch sent the copies of six Bulls, sent by the predecessors of Pope Leo X to the Maronite Patriarchs." The first of these Bulls is the one sent by Pope Innocent III (1215 A. D.). The last one is that sent by Pope Paul II (1464 A. D.) to Patriarch Peter of Hadeth.

The delegate returned to Rome with these long letters and with other letters from Father Surianus (March 8, 1515). Pope Leo X wrote back magnificent letters to the Patriarch, granting all his requests. (This was August 1st, 1515 A. D.) In the same year the Patriarch received the visit of Fra. John, the Superior of the Franciscans in Beyrouth, who was going to Rome after the expiration of his term. The Patriarch sent with him to the Eternal City a Father Joseph, one of his priests, and two monks, to study Latin and complete their theological studies in Rome. They arrived there at the time of the Fifth Lateran Council. The letters of the Patriarch were read in the Council at the eleventh session, with their translation into Latin. The Pope ordered the messengers to be the guests of Cardinal Santa Croce. They said Mass in the

[5] In the election of the patriarchs, the prominent members among the people took some part, especially because the patriarchs had always great influence in civil affairs. In the olden times also in Rome the laity took some part in the election of the Popes.

Syro-Chaldaic but at that time no one in Rome knew that language. Later Tassius Ambrose studied it under their guidance, and Hebrew under a Jewish Rabbi. This was the humble beginning and the introduction of the Oriental languages into Europe.

Patriarch Simon sent another delegation to Rome in 1521. Pope Leo X had died. His successor, Pope Urban VI, welcomed them and sent a gracious message to the Patriarch, with many gifts of Church vestments. Patriarch Simon died 1524, at the age of one hundred and twenty years. His successor was Patriarch Moses Haccary, one of the delegates who was sent by the former Patriarch to Pope Urban VI. He took possession of the See December 11, 1524, eleven days after the death of his predecessor. Before his elevation he was a hermit of the Convent of Our Lady of Haouka.[6]

Assemani says of him (Bibl. Orient. Vol. I, page 522): "He was a pious man . . . . . four Popes sent him letters. The fourth letter from Pope Pius IV was dated September 1562. From this letter we learn that the Patriarch has sent George, Bishop of Damascus, to assist at the Council of Trent; but he did not assist at the Council because the discussions of that assembly were in Latin and he did not have a sufficient knowledge of that language. Patriarch Moses lived to the advanced age of eighty-five and occupied the Patriarchal See forty-two years and three months. He died March 4, 1567, and was buried at the hermitage at St. Marina, near the Convent of Kenobeen.

The three Patriarchs of the Rozy Family; The Maronite College in Rome.

After the death of Patriarch Moses, the Clergy, assembled with the faithful, elected the hermit Michael Rozy, who was the Abbot of the Convent of Kaz-Haia[7]. When he was elected, he was reluctant, for a long time, to accept the high dignity; but, convinced that

[6] A hermitage between Kenobeen and the Convent of Kaz-Haia in Northern Lebanon.

[7] This Convent is still the most important Convent in Mt. Lebanon. Its Superior many a time was a Bishop.

it was the will of God, he yielded. After accepting the office he sent for a deacon named Lucas from the Island of Cyprus, who was well versed in Latin and Italian. He ordained him priest and sent him to Rome to obtain the Pallium from the Holy See. The new priest, on his way to Rome, passed by his native island and had to stay there one whole year, because the island was blockaded by the Ottoman armies. After the blockade was raised he pursued his way to Rome; but he was unsuccessful in his mission this time, because many calumnies were current that the new Patriarch was infected by the Jacobite heresy. After careful inquiries by the Holy See and by Cardinal Caraffa, who was then the protector of our Nation, the calumnies proved to be without foundation. Then the Patriarch sent to Rome another delegation. The members of this delegation were a bishop and a priest. The Holy See sent to the Patriarch a beautiful letter dated February 14, 1577 A. D. With the two Maronite delegates Pope Gregory XIII sent two delegates from the Jesuit Society, Father John the Baptist and Father Thomas Radius, and commanded them to examine with careful scrutiny the liturgical books of the Maronites and to delve deep into all the points of their discipline.

John the Baptist and his companion spent a whole year in their work. At the end of that time they were recalled by their superiors to Rome, February 25, 1579. They took along with them two young students to be trained in the sacred studies. Arriving in the Eternal City, they related to Pope Gregory XIII all that concerned the success of their missions and requested the Holy Father to found a seminary in Rome for the young clerics of the Maronite Nation, which seminary would be a center of ecclesiastical learning for the whole nation. The Holy Father felt extreme joy over this good proposition. He ordered the delegates to return to Lebanon with the Pallium and a Bull of Confirmation for the Patriarch. This was March 12, 1580. Among the many gifts he sent with them was a beautiful set of Church vestments. The delegates also carried with them many rosaries. This was the first introduction of this devotion in the East. We will quote a portion of this beautiful letter, sent by Pope Gregory XIII, in the chapter "Relation of the Maronites with the Holy See."

In the presence of the delegates, after their return, a Provincial Council was held August 16, 1580. The summary of the acts of this Council are the following:

No. 1—The Council receives the books of the Holy Scripture, as they are enumerated in the Council of Trent and venerates the traditions concerning faith and morals. After this preface there are ten titles, one concerning the Catholic Faith, eight in reference to the Sacraments and the tenth dealing with ecclesiastical discipline.

The Council is signed by the Patriarch, the two delegates and a number of bishops.

Patriarch Michael governed fourteen years, five months and twenty-one days. He died September 21, 1581, and was succeeded by his brother, Sergius. During his occupancy the famous Maronite Seminary, recommended by Father John Baptist, was founded in Rome, with Pope Gregory XIII as its founder. This was in the year 1584. By establishing this college Pope Gregory XIII acquired a title to the eternal gratitude of our Maronites, for, from the date of the foundation of this seminary, which was also a college, a very brilliant period of religious and literary achievements started for our Nation. The enemies of the Catholic Faith have said time and again, "The Catholic Church cannot co-exist with learning and enlightenment;" but to the student of history the falsehood of this assertion is patent and palpable. Not only in the field of religious achievements and studies were the Popes the first promoters; but also in historical, literary and scientific movements they have ever been the first to encourage, to foster and to build.

Our college in Rome produced many great men, whose influence and learning effected an immense good

in rejuvenating the Near East, as we will see henceforth in this book. Let the reader be patient and see.

Father Brown, the friend and companion of Father John Baptist, was the one who wrote to Rome the letters of Patriarch Sergius. Along with him he took four young men to study in Rome. After receiving the Pallium from Rome, the Patriarch sent to the Eternal City three delegates to thank the Pope for his kindnesses. With these delegates he sent ten students who formed the first band to enter the famous college. Pope Gregory XIII, when he inaugurated the college, said: "We open this college-seminary for the Maronites of Mt. Lebanon, who are holding fast to the Catholic faith and to obedience to the Roman Church, unlike the other Orientals, who are not united with her."

The illustrious Cardinal Alfonso Carffa, the scion of a noble and ancient Roman family, took the success of this work to heart and at his death he left to the college, his estate, which was valued at that time at 10,000 ducats.[8] God rest his soul.

Pope Gregory XIII, of happy memory, died 1585, one year after he established the college. Pope Sixtus V, his successor, had the same zeal and benevolence towards the new college and provided it with a permanent income to support fifteen students. He entrusted the Jesuit Fathers with the care and the direction of the studies. Later we will mention some of the many illustrious men produced by this college; we will also speak of the changes brought about by the influence of this college in our liturgy and in our discipline to make the *approachment* between the Roman and the Syrian Churches more complete.

During the reign of Patriarch Sergius another provincial council was held. Two Jesuit Fathers assisted at its sessions as delegates of the Holy See. They were Father Jerome Dandini and Father Agapius Brown. In this Council and in the preceding, many abuses were condemned and some practices were abrogated for the sake of greater conformity with the Roman

[8]A silver coin about the value of one dollar.

rite. The practices abrogated were: first, the giving of Holy Communion to children immediately after their baptism; second, the allowing of priests to give Confirmation at the time of baptism; third, the extension of the degree of consanguinity to the fifth degree; fourth, the addition to the Trisagion: "Thou who wast crucified for us, have mercy on us."[9]

The last of the Rozy family was Patriarch Joseph, nephew of his predecessor, who issued a decree that the Maronite Nation should follow the new Gregorian calendar. This was done June 30, (Feast of the Apostles), 1606. Patriarch Joseph, in his desire for closer union between the Maronites and the Holy See in discipline, as well as in the faith, allowed the Bishops to eat meat on certain days of the year. According to the ancient discipline, Bishops and religious were obliged to abstain from meat all the year round. He lessened the number of fasting days before the Feast of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, and before Christmas.[10] He also allowed the laity to eat fish and to drink wine during Lent; but this departure from the ancient discipline did not meet with the approval of Pope Paul V, who sent a Bull dated March 6, 1610, to the successor of Patriarch Joseph, John Makloof, restoring the ancient discipline, but very few of the people returned to the old practices. Later in the famous Lebanese Council, held in 1736, these fast days were fixed as they are now.

Patriarch Joseph died in the month of August, 1608, after having been patriarch for sixteen years.

[9]This addition to the hymn to the Trinity was used in the Antiochene Church from time immemorial in a Catholic meaning, as we can learn from Patriarch Ephrem of Amed, quoted by Photius. Peter Fullo, one of the Monophysite leaders, had used the addition in a heretical sense, addressing it to the whole Trinity. This was the reason the Roman Church forbade it in our liturgy.

[10]The fast before the Feast of the Apostles started June 1st and the fast before Christmas started December 1st.

CHAPTER XVI

Sixteenth Century—Civil and Political Condition of the Maronites

In the first quarter of the 16th century (from 1515 to 1517), Syria and Lebanon passed from the hands of the Mameluke Dynasty, whose seat of government was in Egypt, to those of the Ottoman Turks. The Ottoman Sultan, who conquered Syria from the Mamelukes, was Sultan Selim I. After the Conquest of Egypt the Sultan returned to Damascus and wrote to the Lebanese Princes, granting them a general amnesty provided they would come and offer him their homage. Some went, but others who had taken the part of the Mamelukes in the struggle for the mastery of Syria did not dare go. They knew too well what was in store for them if they trusted their lives to the irate conqueror. To those who went to meet him, the Sultan gave the Government of the Provinces.[1]

The rule of the Turks in Syria and especially in Lebanon, was more nominal than real, as they had only to appoint a Governor or Governors and ask them every year to send a certain sum of money as tax, which was often an insignificant sum. The hardest tribute was in time of war, because it was required of every Governor, according to the importance of his district to contribute a certain number of men, besides the perquisites necessary for the maintenance of the army. This system resembles the feudal system in vogue in Europe in the Middle Ages. The Christian Governors, however, were seldom required to furnish their men to be incorporated into the Ottoman armies. Instead, they were required to furnish money or munitions. Concealed beneath this apparent advantage were two distasteful motives: distrust of their loyalty and the

[1]Those who went to meet Sultan Selim in Damascus from Lebanon, were the Emirs, Fakre-Eddin of the Mahn family, Jemal-Eddin, The Yamany and Emir Essaf, The Turkoman.

opinion that they were not worthy to defend the country. The first Turkish Sultans raised their Janizaries from the Christian orphans, who survived their parents in the wars; but that system of recruitment was never practiced in the Arabic speaking countries. Luckily for Syria and the Arabic speaking countries, the Ottoman Turks never tried seriously to amalgamate with the people, or to force their social habits, or their language on the Arabic speaking countries.[2] Their language itself was rudimentary and not enough cultured to replace the language of the Koran. On the other hand, their religious traditions forbade even the translation of the Koran into any other language, a fact which gave ascendency to the Arabic culture over the Turkish. It was not until lately that the Turks thought of translating the Koran into their language. This gave such offense that it arrayed against them the whole Islamic world. This state of things left Syria and Lebanon in almost the same degree of mentality as they were before the Ottoman Conquest. If Arabic Syria and Egypt experienced some influence from the Turkish contact on account of the community of creed and inter-marriage, Lebanon remained entirely immune to that influence. The feudal system was in vigor in Lebanon as late as the year 1860, when the European Powers replaced it by a Constitution, giving the country a large measure of liberty and making the Governor accountable to the six European Powers.

Under the feudal system the Governors were the source of all authority, military, civil and judiciary. They were subject to the suzerainty of the higher Psha and bound to pay him a certain tribute. That was all.

About this date many Maronite families sprung

[2]In the border Provinces, for instance, Aleppo and Bagdad, the Turk gained some admittance with the original Arabic; but in Lebanon the Turk was never known. Jemal Pasha during the last war said once when he was addressing a meeting: "I am sorry to have to speak to you in the language of the enemy, the French."

into prominence and held in fief many districts of Lebanon.

(1) **The Kazen Family**

One of the first of these is the Kazen family, whose birthplace is the Village Jaj.[3] The first member of this family was the Deacon Sergius Kazen who emigrated from his birthplace to the Kesroan and settled in the Village Bellone. His son, Abraham, gave refuge to the two Princes Fakre-Eddin and Jonas, grandchildren of the Fakre-Eddin who was Governor of Lebanon at the time of Sultan Selim I, who conquered Syria, 1517. With this Abraham began the good fortune of the Kazen family, because Fakre-Eddin, one of the two Prince refugees, was later one of the finest rulers of Lebanon and a part of Syria. Abraham and his descendants shared with this Prince, and with his successors, the honors of the Government.[4] We will see later the important role played by this family in subsequent events of our history.

(2) **The Hobeich Family.**

Their first known ancestor, Sheik[5] Hobeich, son of Moses, son of Michael, moved from Yanooh to Gazir, where they were selected as educators to the Essaf Princes. These Princes were appointed by Sultan Selim to govern the Kesroan. This fief was smaller than that of Fakre-Eddin and his successors.

(3) **The Daher Family.**

This family is a branch of the Rozy family, of which we spoke above, and which gave us three Patriarchs.

(4) **The Deacon Kater Family.**

He was the head of the Assemani and Awad families. He was first mentioned in 1579 A. D. as head of the Beoharry District, together with the Deacon Seder of Hadshett. We will meet later many illustrious names of the Assemani family.

[3] A small, ancient village in the district of Jebail.

[4] Deacon Sergius moved from his native village 1545 A. D. He died 1577 A. D. His two sons, Abraham and Rabah, died in 1600 A. D. They both were highly favored by Prince Fakre-Eddin.

[5] "Alderman." This title of nobility was conferred by the Emirs on the one who had rendered some service to the community.

CHAPTER XVII

The Maronites of the Seventeenth Century

Patriarch Joseph Rozy died in the month of August, 1608. Ten months later, in the month of June, 1609, the clergy and the people elected Patriarch John Makloof, from the important and ancient town of Ehden (in Northen Lebanon). About this Patriarch Piagius Tersi, the Franciscan writer, said in his book, "Syria Sacra," (page 53): "In him the lights of virtue were bright, so he was called the Saint. He enlightened the Oriental Church by his knowledge and consoled her by his zeal. The Roman Pontiffs had a great esteem for him." In the year 1612 Pope Paul V sent him a letter in which he granted him the faculty of bestowing the Papal Blessing on every Maronite, and granted that whoever will assist at his Mass and approach the Sacraments will gain a plenary indulgence. Pope Gregory XV bestowed upon Patriarch John the same privilege. This Pope ordered the printing of the Syriac Breviary for the use of the Maronite clergy. In 1624 Patriarch John ordered the Convent of Our Lady of Houka to be used as a preparatory seminary for the young clerics before sending them to the Maronite College in Rome. He sent to Rome Father John Kiriacus to convey to Pope Urban VIII the news of this foundation, and sent also with him twelve students for the College. Pope Urban VIII was greatly pleased with this message and sent the Patriarch a laudatory letter.

Patriarch John went to his reward December 15, 1633, after twenty-four years of labor. He was succeeded by George Homeira. This Patriarch was one of the first students of the newly created College in the Eternal City. He entered the College in 1584, the second year after its establishment, and was a brilliant scholar. From him we have a Syriac Grammar, printed

in Rome 1696. He was Patriarch ten years and seven months. His death occurred July 29, 1644, the same day on which Urban VIII died.

His successor was Patriarch Joseph Habib from the Village Akoura.[6] He is the author of many popular historical poems. He was Patriarch for forty years, and died November 23, 1648. (See Assemani Bibliotheca Orientalis, Vol. I, page 553.) In the time of this Patriarch another edition of the Breviary, with that of the Ritual was issued in Rome, 1647.

Patriarch John Safrawy succeeded Patriarch Habib and was confirmed by Pope Innocent X, 1649. This Patriarch was granted a rescript of protection by King Louis XIV of France. In this rescript the king renewed the traditional protection of France over the Maronites, which was started by Louis IX under the walls of St. John of Akre. Patriarch Safrawy died December 23, 1656.

His successor, George of Bisbehel (a small village near Tripoli), was elected January 1st, 1657, and held the Patriarchal See until April 12, 1670, the date of his death.

[6] An ancient village in the Gebail district, to which belong many old Maronite families.



PATRIARCH STEPHEN DOUIHEE
FAMOUS HISTORIAN

CHAPTER XVIII

STEPHEN DOUIHEE, PATRIARCH

His successor is Patriarch Stephen Douihee, our famous annalist and our first important historian in modern times. The reader will allow me to give some details of his life.

Patriarch Stephen Douihee is one of the rare men, who, by their personality, their work and their genius, mark an epoch in the history of nations.

He was born August 2, 1630, in the town of Ehden, the most beautiful town in Northern Lebanon, of pious parents, Michael Douihee and Mary Douihee, both of the same family. He was sent when he was but eleven years old, 1641, to the Maronite College in Rome by his uncle, Bishop Elias Douihee. He spent in the College the best years of his life (fourteen years). His professor in Theology, Father Sparsa, a famous Jesuit, used to say, "I taught in many lands and in many universities, but I did not find the like of Stephen in the brightness of his mind and in the purity of his life." After he completed his studies, he returned to his beloved Lebanon and was ordained a priest. His care for the first few years of his priesthood (till 1666) was to teach children the Catechism and to preach to the people. At that time a delegation from the Maronites of Aleppo came to Lebanon and asked the Patriarch with great insistence, to send the new priest to their city, because already his reputation had preceded him. The Patriarch could not refuse this request, and the young priest went to Aleppo and spent there six fruitful years, preaching, teaching and converting many. He came back from Aleppo to Lebanon on his way to visit the Holy Land. The Patriarch, knowing his merit, retained him and consecrated him bishop of Cyprus, where there was a flourishing Maronite colony.[1] He went to the Island to visit his people.

[1]The Maronites emigrated to Cyprus in the ninth century at the time of the great persecution of Al-Mamoon.

In the second year of his stay there, the news reached him of the death of the Patriarch George. The whole clergy and the faithful clamored for him to be the successor of the deceased Patriarch, so he was called from the Island and elected in the year 1670.

He remained in the Patriarchal See thirty-four long years, accomplishing immense and permanent good works for the entire nation. The main titles to glory of Patriarch Stephen Douihee are:

1. His liturgical works.

Under this head we have The Pontifical (or Keirotonia) that comprises the Rites of Consecration of Bishops and the Ordination of Priests. Of course, this ceremonial had existed in our Church from the beginning, but to the illustrious Patriarch belongs the honor of gathering the different manuscripts and of issuing an official edition of this important book.

2. The Book of Benedictions, or The Offices for the Feasts of the whole year. (Gathered from ancient manuscripts.)

3. Two important volumes about the Canon of Mass. These two volumes are a treatise explaining every part of the Holy Mass. This work has been printed in a splendid edition at the Jesuit printing house in Beyrouth. I have one copy of it in my library.

4. A history of the Syrian Liturgies and the biographies of the authors who wrote Canons of the Mass. This valuable book is still unpublished.

5. The arrangement of the Patriarchal Archives, including the correspondence of the Holy See with the Patriarchs during a period of about six hundred years.

The historical works of Patriarch Douihee are not less important. They are:

1—The Origins of the Maronite History.

2—The Annals, from the Hegira until his own time.[2]

3—The Defense of the Orthodoxy of the Maronites. The first two books of this work have been con-

[2]The Hegira is the year in which Mohammed emigrated from Mecca. It corresponds to the year 622 of our era.

densed in one and published by the late Professor Rasheed Shartouny, in the Jesuit Printing House mentioned above. I have also a copy of this splendid book. Patriarch Douihee is a thoroughly reliable historian. To him we owe the knowledge of many obscure points of our early history. He possessed all the requirements of an historian of high authority together with the opportunity of consulting many sources to which we cannot now have access. Many events related by him in our history of the Middle Ages have been checked up and verified by later discoveries of contemporary historians. His intense love for our Nation never stood between him and the truth whenever the truth was evident. The Roman Pontiffs held him in high esteem. Pope Clement X sent him the Bull of Confirmation. The King of France, Louis XIV, towards the end of his reign, August 10, 1701, wrote in his favor a royal rescript of protection, to all his representatives in the East in the Court of the Ottoman Sultan and elsewhere.

Patriarch Stephen died May 3, 1704, in his See at the Convent of Kenobeen, in the odor of sanctity, and obtained the reward of all the good work and the great things he did for his Church and the other Oriental Churches.[3] An event worthy of note happened in the days of Patriarch Douihee; this is the foundation of the religious order of St. Anthony. A group of brilliant young men, Maronites from Aleppo, Gabriel Awa, Abdala Karali, Joseph Alboton, came to Lebanon, gave up the world and its pleasures and founded a religious community under the patronage of St. Anthony, the first Patriarch of the religious life in Egypt. They communicated their project to Patriarch Douihee, who encouraged them and approved their rule in the year 1700. Later Joseph Simon Assem-

[3]Patriarch Douihee was instrumental in the conversion to the Catholic Faith of the Melchite Patriarch Cyrill Aleppan, and of four of his bishops. With this Patriarch starts a list of the Melchite Patriarchs after their conversion from the Schism of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople in the ninth century. Patriarch Douihee also made many other conversions among Jacobites and Nestorians, first when he was in Aleppo, and after he became Patriarch.

ani presented their rule to the Holy See and obtained its approbation. We will have occasion in this book to speak of this Order of St. Anthony.

Patriarch Douihee produced other writings, sermons and spiritual works. All his works are permeated with a spirit of sweetness and saintly unction comparable to that of the early fathers of the Church. About his style and literary merit, we shall speak in another place, in connection with the literary revival of this epoch.

CHAPTER XIX

Prominent Men and Writers of the Seventeenth Century

Gabriel Sionita. This prominent writer was born in the Village of Ehden, the birthplace of Douihee, in the year 1577. After a course of successful studies in the Maronite College in Rome, he was appointed Professor at the College Sapienza where he acquired so great a reputation that Louis XIII of France called him to teach the Oriental languages in the Royal College of France. The King gave him the title of Royal Interpreter. Sionita helped Michael LeJai in the publication in the year 1645, of the Parisian Polyglotte.[1] Abraham Echellensis was another illustrious pupil of the Maronite College in Rome. He was born in Lebanon, in the Village of Hakel, hence his Latin name, Echellensis. This village is in the district of Gebail.[2] After finishing his studies at the College, he taught Syriac and Arabic in Rome; then he came to Paris, where Father Michael LeJai asked his collaboration in the said Parisian Polyglotte. Beside this important work, he wrote a number of valuable books, many of which were published in Rome and in Paris. Those who visit Paris may see the name of this writer engraved on the frontispiece of the "College de France." There are other celebrated writers who flourished at that time, but we will be satisfied with the foregoing sketches, in order not to be wearisome to the reader.

[1] The Polyglotte is a Bible published in many languages.

[2] This village is about three miles from the place where I was born and raised, situated in a beautiful ravine, covered with a forest of oak and mulberry trees.



Gabriel Sionita

CHAPTER XX

Political Conditions in the Seventeenth Century

In the seventeenth century the feudal system continued to be in force in Lebanon and in Syria. From the time of the Ottoman Conquest, 1517, to the year 1697, i.e., 180 years, the Mahn family was in possession of Southern Lebanon and of some of the adjoining provinces. The Princes of this family trace their lineage back to the time of the Crusades. They were of Arab origin and were brought to the south of Lebanon, to stave off the incursions of the Crusaders on Mussulman territories. Later, after the extinction of the petty kingdoms founded by the Crusaders, these Princes established themselves in their places. Their capitals were most of the time Hasbaya or Rashaya, two important places in the South of Lebanon. They were in a continual state of war with their neighbors, but soon they found at their side the Sheabs, another Arab and Mussulman family of noble extraction.

The Sheabs traced their lineage to Malek, who was surnamed Sheab, i.e., the lightning, of the Koreish Tribe.[1] This Sheab family settled in the South of Lebanon, got in touch with the Mahn family and soon there were inter-marriages.

The favorites of the Mahn family were the members of the Kazen family, who were Maronites. They relied on them in all the affairs of their Government. They also gave them in fief some districts in Lebanon to be ruled directly by the Kazens.

The first Emir of the Mahn family who ruled South Lebanon was Emir Fakre-Eddin I. We find this Emir

[1]This is the same tribe who produced Mohammed. They were also brought to the south of Lebanon to help the Sultans of Egypt to repel the Crusaders in case they wanted to invade the Syrian shores again.



EMIR FAKRE, EDDIN THE GREAT, OF THE MAHN FAMILY

in the year 1505 A. D., allied with Emir Mansoor Sheab, Governor of Wadi-Ettaim in South Lebanon, against Sultan Selim I, the Ottoman.

When Sultan Selim conquered Syria and Egypt, Emir Fakre-Eddin managed to win his good graces. This was in the year 1517. Sultan Selim left him in possession of his fief. This Emir died in 1544, leaving as successor his son, Emir Kurkemas, who ruled until the year 1584, in which year he died.[2] His two sons, Fakre-Eddin II and Younes, were brought by their mother to the home of Sheik Abraham, son of Sergius, head of the Kazen family, as to an obscure place of hiding. The two young princes spent their boyhood days at the home of the Kazens in an atmosphere of Christian piety, and when they grew up, had a distinct leaning towards the Christian religion. Some historians have even said that they had been baptized and practiced in secret the Christian religion. In the year 1595, Fakre-Eddin and his brother returned to Southern Lebanon, where their father had the seat of his Government. Their uncle, Emir Seif-Eddin Thenoky, helped them to recover the provinces over which their father ruled. In 1598, Fakre-Eddin fought a great battle with Joseph Pasha Saifa, a Turkish Governor of Tripoli, for the possession of Kesroan. The Governor was defeated, but, after one year of peace, he recovered Kesroan by compromise. Fakre-Eddin returned to the South. The reign of this Emir was very turbulent. In 1612 he was so pressed by his enemies that he hired two European ships and fled to Italy, where he was sheltered by the Duke of Tuscana for five years until 1617. He then returned to Lebanon and entered upon a long reign, full of wars, with Joseph Pasha Saifa, the Governor of Tripoli, and with other Governors of Damascus and Aleppo. At last he was deported to Constantinople, where he was treated well, at first, by Sultan Murad IV; but after a short stay there the

[2] This Emir died in a cave near Djezeny in Southern Lebanon, where he was in hiding.

Governor of Damascus wrote to Constantinople, denouncing Emir Fakre-Eddin and all his relatives as public agitators. The Sultan then ordered that he should be killed with his three children (who were deported with him). With the exception of one child, Emir Hassan, all were put to death in 1633. The reign of this Emir Fakre-Eddin lasted for thirty-five years. He was one of the best rulers of Lebanon in those troubled days. After him his nephew, Emir Melhem, reigned; but his reign was troubled by the petty disputes between himself and the other Governors. He died 1658, after ruling for twenty-five years. After the death of this Emir, his two sons succeeded him; they were Ahmed and Kurkemas. The last one was killed by a ruse of a Turkish Pasha. Ahmed, his brother, reigned until the year 1697, i.e., thirty-nine years and was the last of the Mahn family as he died without a male issue. Following that of the Mahn family began the reign of the Sheabs, their friends, of whom we will speak later. This Mahn family was very well disposed towards the Christians, especially our Maronites, during all their reign in Lebanon and outside of it. They always had as their advisers, some members of the Kazen family, or other prominent Christian families. In some cases they gave in fief the district to these Christian families, as was the case of Kesroan, which was given in fief by Emir Fakre-Eddin II to Abi-Nader Kazen in 1617, and after him to his posterity. These Emirs lifted almost all the political disabilities of the Christians and tried hard to have all the social inequalities between Christians and Mohammedans removed. Their successors, the Sheabs, manifested the same dispositions, until at last one of their members, Emir Haidar Sheab, was, in 1754, converted to Christianity by Patriarch Joseph Stephen.

The Hobeish

The Hobeish family was also prominent in the seventeenth century of our history. They were the ad-

visers of the Essaf Emirs, who had their residence at Gazir, the beautiful town of Kesroan, dominating the Mediterranean at the north of Djounieh, the modern city. When the Essaf Emirs disappeared from the history of Lebanon, the Hobeish still produced many prominent men in the civil and in religious life of Lebanon.

CHAPTER XXI

Literary Revival in the Seventeenth Century

In this century begins the literary revival which was started by the students of the Maronite College in Rome and is still developing in our own time in different ways. The students of the Maronite College in Rome, as a rule, used to return to their native country and spread there the knowledge they had acquired in Europe. Many held responsible positions, as did Patriarch Douihee, of whom we spoke above. This great man, besides the reforms he undertook in restoring ecclesiastical discipline, gathered around himself many a man with great intellectual powers. Of these men we shall speak as the occasion presents itself.

After the conquest of Syria the Arabic language was spread all over Syria and Lebanon and over a great area in Western Asia and Africa, supplanting the other languages that were in use; but the Syriac has developed a literature parallel to the Arabic up to the thirteenth century. The Syrian Christian writers themselves have been the educators of the Arabs in every field of culture. Thus we see the great achievements accomplished in this direction at the time of Aaroon Al-Rasheed and his son, Al-Mamoon, the Abbasside Caliphs of the eighth century. The greatest credit in this movement is due to those Syrian writers; but, as the centuries rolled by, the light of this culture grew dimmer every day until the thirteenth century. "It gave a great flare before it died," says Wright in his history of the Syrian literature.

The last great writer alluded to by Wright was Bar-Hebræus, the Syriac author who is quoted often in this book. After the thirteenth century we can hardly find any writer of mark. That date coincides with the great invasion of the Tatars and their Kan Hulako, who,

when he invaded Bagdad, compelled his army to march on a bridge of books taken from the libraries of that city. At the time of Patriarch Douihee in Lebanon we see the light of literature revived again. The Patriarch himself was a man of learning. He was master of Latin and Italian. He wrote in Latin a book entitled "The Paradise." In his native Syriac he was a master writer, but he wrote most of his works in Arabic for the benefit of the faithful to whom the Syriac was a sealed book. The style of Douihee in his Arabic writings is terse and concise, of the Lebanese dialect, interspersed with Syriac and liturgical expressions. You vainly seek in him the romantic expressions of an Arab poet or a writer of fiction. Besides, this Lebanese dialect is more akin by structure, to the original Syriac, than to the Nomadic, or even to the Post-Islamic Arabic. A contemporary of Douihee, the illustrious Bishop Germanos Farhat is the one who initiated in Lebanon the Arabic as we write it today.

We can compare Douihee at that early stage of our literature to Pascal in the French literature, with his powerful style and force of thought. The expression is not perfectly chiseled as yet, but the beauty of the thought makes you forget all about the form.

Bishop Germanos Farhat

He is the one who introduced among us the great revival in the Arabic literature. He was born November 20, 1679, in the city of Aleppo, of pious parents of the Matar family, who emigrated from the village Hassroon to Aleppo.

Young Farhat, when he was still of tender age, showed signs of precocious intelligence and exalted piety. He learned Syriac at the Parochial School in Aleppo and was taught Italian, philosophy and theology at the school then recently opened by a learned Maronite priest, Father Peter Toulawy, of whom we will soon speak. The main thing that constitutes the merit of Bishop Farhat is his acquisition of the Arabic language and the great work he has done in



ARCHBISHOP GERMANOS FARHAT

popularizing that language among the Christians. The literary Arabic, or the Arabic of the Koran, remained for many centuries almost foreign to Christians as all the liturgical works, and even the works of science, were written in Syriac, or in the Lebanese dialect, which had not yet attained the purity of the Koran language. Beside this, the Arabic was, after the Mussulman invasion, a profane language to the Christians. The students of the Roman College, with few exceptions, wrote either in Italian or in Latin. Bishop Farhat started the study of Arabic with relentless courage for many years, and acquired that mastery of the language which we still admire today. He inaugurated that era of so many brilliant writers whose achievements form one of the most glorious periods of Arabic literature. One of the masterpieces of Bishop Farhat is his Arabic grammar, which is still studied nowadays as it was in the lifetime of its author. He wrote also a series of books to complete the study of the Grammar: a dictionary, a treatise on the art of versification and "A Treatise on Sacred Eloquence," which is a master work of a master mind. One of his excellent works is the Arabic version of the New Testament, translated from the ancient Syriac "Peshito." This version is one of the best. Some writers have attributed it to Abdalla Zaker, the disciple of Farhat; but the credit belongs to Farhat himself. Besides having written or revised many spiritual books, Bishop Farhat was a great preacher. Unfortunately we do not possess all his sermons. He was also a religious poet, and we have the delightful poems composed by him in praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary and on other religious subjects.

Father George Manach, an Aleppan priest, wrote the biography of his illustrious compatriot in the Jesuit review "Al-Machrique."[1]

Father Peter Toulawy

This illustrious Professor of Bishop Farhat was born in the village of Toula, near the city of Batron.

[1] Al-Machrique (Volume VII).



ARCHBISHOP J. J. SIMON ASSEMANI,
THE GREATEST MARONITE SCHOLAR

In the year of our Lord 1657, when he was eleven years old he was sent to Rome, where he studied at the Maronite College until the year 1682, i.e., for a period of fourteen years. He returned to Lebanon, where he was ordained priest by Patriarch Douihee. Three years after his ordination, in 1685, he was sent to Aleppo, where he added to his studies that of Arabic literature and jurisprudence. He opened a school in Aleppo in 1698. That school produced such great names as those of Bishop Farhat and Abballa Karali, etc. Father Peter lived to the ripe old age of 82. He left several works.

The Assemanis

First: Joseph Simon Assemani. We have now to speak of another movement in the Maronite Nation parallel to the revival of the Arabic literature. This movement headed towards the revival of the past glories of the Christian Churches, the study of the monuments left by the old Oriental Churches and the restoration of the ancient discipline that flourished in the East before the Arab Conquest.

It is a fact that before the Arab Conquest, the Churches of Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Asia Minor were very flourishing and produced innumerable illustrious men and women in every field of Christian activity. Not only that, but these Churches were the center of a brilliant civilization in every field of human endeavor. These same Churches continued to flare up for some time under the Arab domination, but finally, under the oppressive rule of the Turk, died out exhausted. The inaugurator of this gigantic movement was again a product of the Maronite College in Rome, a genius of the first order, a man whose intellectual power is rarely equalled, Monsignor Joseph Simon Assemani.

Joseph Simon Assemani was the man who combined in himself the profound knowledge of the theologian with the vast erudition of the Canonist and the patient research of the historian. To his manifold ac-

tivities we owe the immortal works on the history of the Oriental Churches.

His great achievement was, first of all, the collection of thousands of manuscripts from every part of the East, which manuscripts still adorn the shelves of the Vatican Library. These precious manuscripts helped immensely in the reconstruction of the history of those old Oriental Churches, buried in the dim past of centuries of oblivion. He was sent to the East by Pope Clement XI to collect these manuscripts. His success exceeded all expectation. Of course, he met with many difficulties. For some manuscripts he paid their weight in gold, but he got them. When he returned to Rome, in 1717, he began his great work, "Bibliotheca Orientalis," etc. . . . . written in elegant Latin. The scope of this work was immense; it was planned to be in twelve folio volumes. Only the first four have been edited. For the remaining eight considerable material was prepared but a fire broke out in the apartment of the author in 1668 and destroyed a great part of the manuscripts. What remains is still unedited; but the loss of such treasures is irreparable.

The four volumes edited treat: the first, of the Syrian Catholic writers; the second, of the Syrian Monophysite writers; the third, of the Nestorian writers; the fourth, of the Syrian Nestorians.

This standard work on the history of the Syrian Churches was and is to the present day the great authority on the subject. It was a pioneer work for which an immense amount of research was required.

Other important works of Joseph Simon Assemani are "The Calendars of the Universal Church," of which six volumes on the Slavic Churches appeared in print in Rome in 1755. He wrote also the "Library of the Oriental Canon and Civil Law" in five volumes, quarto (it was printed in Rome, 1762 A. D.); and a collection of the Italian historians in four volumes (printed in Rome, 1751-1753). One of his important works is the catalogue of the Vatican Library, written conjointly with his nephew, Joseph

Evodius, in several volumes. Assemani wrote several dissertations in Italian on Oriental Churches. These works were edited by Cardinal Angelo Mai in his "Scriptorium Veterum Nova Collectio," 1831. One of the most important works of Assemani was his Lebanese Council, which was held at Mt. Lebanon 1736. Monsignor Joseph Assemani, as the special Legate of the Pope, presided over this Council. That Lebanese Council gave us our Canon Law. It was confirmed "Speciali Modo" by Pope Benedict XIV (September 1, 1741). Its last edition in Arabic is that which appeared in 1900. We will speak of it later. Toward the end of his life, Assemani was consecrated Archbishop of Tyre. He died January 24, 1768, at the age of eighty-one. His books number about one hundred. His memory remains ever with us, surrounded by the greatest veneration and love. (See the article on him by Father Gabriel Oussani in the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. I, page 794.)

Joseph Louis Assemani

He was the nephew of Joseph Simon Assemani (son of his brother).

This writer is the author of many valuable books. Among others we have his esteemed book on the "Liturgies of the Universal Church," written in Latin in 15 volumes; it contains much useful information concerning the various liturgies of the Universal Church, especially of the Oriental Churches.

Bishop Stephen Evodius Assemani

He is the nephew of J. S. Assemani (the son of his sister). Bishop Evodius succeeded his uncle in the prefecture of the Vatican Library. He also wrote many books, among others, his catalogue of the Vatican Library in three volumes. This work was printed lately in Paris. Bishop Evodius wrote also the catalogue of the Syriac and Arabic manuscripts in the library of the Medicis in Florence. From this book we have collected much information about our Maronite history.

Simon Assemani

He was the nephew of Joseph Louis Assemani. He was born in Tripoli 1752, and died in Padua, 1821. He wrote many books in Latin on the Arabs, their geography and their astronomy. He was the last of that illustrious family who has rendered the greatest services to the Maronite Church and nation.

The works of the Assemanis and the other Maronite scholars introduced into Europe the Oriental studies, and especially the study of the Syriac language. The History of the Oriental Churches since the Mussulman Conquest was almost a sealed book to Europe, except perhaps for some scant information imparted by the Crusaders and the writers of that period.

CHAPTER XXII

THE LEBANESE COUNCIL 1736

Several times the Maronite Patriarchs and Bishops had requested the Holy See to send a trusted Legate, versed in the Oriental languages and thoroughly acquainted with the needs of these Churches, to hold a council and restore the old discipline to its ancient splendor and to confer about the modern needs of the said Churches.

The ideal man for this mission was Monsignor Joseph Simon Assemani. He was sent by Pope Clement XII, with the necessary powers, to hold the council desired. He arrived at Beyrouth about the last of June, 1736, and was received by the Patriarch, the Bishops and the people with the greatest marks of joy.[1] After three months of preparation, the council was held at the Convent of Louizee, in the Kesroan, beginning Sunday, September 30, 1736, and lasting three days.

Monsignor Joseph S. Assemani had the agenda for the council prepared. When he came to Lebanon he discussed them at length with the Patriarch and the Bishops before the opening of the council. Many disputed questions of discipline were settled; some ancient practices were abolished for the sake of closer conformity with the Roman Church. The residence of the Bishops in their respective dioceses was the great point insisted upon by the Legate and this was the hardest point to observe because, since the Mussulman Invasion it had been, in many cases, impossible for the Bishops to reside in their own dioceses.[2] Now, however, the times having become better, the Church insisted on the observance of that ancient point of discipline. The same point was raised and discussed in the Council of

[1]The Patriarch was then Joseph Dirgham Kazen.
[2]Many cities which were the seats of bishops were occupied by the infidels. The presence of a Christian bishop was not tolerated.

Trent in which it was decreed that every Bishop with jurisdiction should reside in his diocese.

The acts of the Lebanese Council are divided in four parts, each of which is subdivided into many parts. We wish we had the space here to quote the many wise regulations of this Council. For the most part, the regulations were taken from the Council of Trent.

The fasts and feasts are specified in the Council, according to our ancient discipline; but for the fasts, the Council allowed some abridgement of the old stricter fasting days. There were also two departures from the Old Rite. The first was the forbidding any ordinary priest to bless the oils of the Catechumens; the second was the forbidding any priest to administer Confirmation. These two privileges were allowed in our ancient Rite as in any other Oriental Rite. In the Chapter on Clerics we find "The Periodeutes," i.e., The Visitors. They are the priests who have for their special function the visiting of the parishes in the diocese. They correspond to the rural deans in the Latin Rite. We also see "The Chorbishops." These were in the olden times Bishops of the rural districts and received episcopal consecration. Nowadays their office is a mere title equivalent to a Monsignorship.

The dioceses were limited by the Council to eight, with the right of the Patriarch to consecrate a few bishops with honorary titles. The territories of the dioceses were also limited. The Patriarch has the prerogatives and rights of the ancient Patriarchs of Antioch. On page 430 (from the edition of 1900 mentioned above in this book) the report of the Council enumerates the names of the Patriarchs, who, since St. John Maron, 685 A. D., to Patriarch Joseph Kazen, 1736 A. D., governed the Maronite Church. Their number at that time was fifty-three.

This is the most important of our Councils. It was confirmed in a special manner by Pope Benedict XIV on September 1, 1741, i.e., five years after it was held.

The acts of this Council are a masterpiece of Theology, Canon Law and Ecclesiastical History.

Those who were present were:

Patriarch Joseph Kazen,

Monsignor Joseph Simon Assemani, the Legate,

Ten Maronite Archbishops,

Two Syrian Archbishops,

One Armenian,

Eleven Abbots, or generals of religious congregations, with a great number of priests having the privilege to assist at the Plenary Councils.

There were also forty-nine prominent laymen. The laymen did not take any active part in the discussions.

CHAPTER XXIII

PATRIARCHS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

We will now take up the list of the Patriarchs from where we left it. (See Chapter XVIII.)

Bishop Gabriel Blouzawy succeeded Stephen Douihee and was bishop of the diocese of Aleppo for forty-one years. He resided in the Convent of Tamish in the Kesroan, but paid regular visits to his diocese in Aleppo.[1] He founded that Convent which was the mother house of the religious congregation of Mar-Shia. Before he was consecrated bishop he was a monk, and after he was elevated to the episcopal dignity, he continued the practice of his religious life for the rest of his career. When he was elected Patriarch he was an old man and lived only one year and a half. He died October 31, 1705 in the odor of sanctity, and was succeeded by Patriarch Jacob Awad, of the Town of Hassroun, the birthplace of the Assemanis.

Jacob Awad was elected Patriarch on November 5th, 1705, and confirmed by Pope Clement XI through his delegate, Father Ferdinand, the Carmelite, in 1706. During his administration he had some difficulties with the bishops who held a meeting with the object of deposing him and electing another candidate; but when their envoy reached the Holy See and asked for the ratification of their election, Pope Clement XI, after mature examination of the case, maintained the Patriarch in his See. This Patriarch lived until the year 1733 and consecrated seventeen Bishops. He was succeeded by Patriarch Joseph Dirgham Kazen, during whose reign the Lebanese Council was convened, as we saw above. Patriarch Joseph Dirgham Kazen died May 5th, 1742. After him we see elevated to the Patriarchal See Patriarch Simon

[1] In almost every case the Maronite bishops could not go out of Lebanon and reside in their respective dioceses on account of the persecutions, or, at least, the bad treatments of the civil authorities.

Awad. This Patriarch was at first elected by all the bishops, but declined to accept the election on account of humility. Then the bishops split into two factions, and each faction elected a candidate. Both parties sent to the Holy See their representatives to plead for their respective candidates. Pope Benedict XIV annulled both elections, and confirmed the election of Patriarch Simon. Both parties immediately submitted. The new Patriarch sent to Monsignor Joseph Simon Assemani, who was then in Rome, to obtain the Pallium, which was sent to him July 3, 1744. This patriarch lived until the year 1756. After his death he was succeeded by Bishop Toby Kazen, who remained Patriarch until the year 1766, in which he died. He was succeeded by Bishop Joseph Stephen, who was elected June 9, 1766.

We will dwell with some details upon the life of Patriarch Joseph Stephen, who was one of our most prominent patriarchs. He was born in the village of Ghosta,[2] in the Kesroan district of pious parents. The Stephen family had emigrated from the ancient village Jaj in the fifteenth century and settled in Ghosta. This same family has given to the Maronite Nation, besides the illustrious Patriarch, many saintly bishops. The young Joseph, when he was ten years old, was sent to Rome to the College of the Maronites, spending there ten years, the best of his life. He was one of the brightest boys of his class. During his stay at the college he mastered the Italian and Latin languages. He knew also perfectly his native Syriac tongue, in which he wrote many delightful prayer-hymns. After finishing his studies, he returned to Lebanon and was ordained a priest when yet very young (twenty-two years). At the early age of twenty-five he was consecrated bishop by Patriarch Simon Awad for the City of Beyrouth. This was 1750. Patriarch Simon, when he consecrated him, said: "We have a good reason for consecrating this young man bishop in the fact that we have very few who possess such superior qualities of mind and heart."

[2]It is the abbreviation of Augusta. It was so-called after the Emperor Augustus because it was in his time a Roman camp.

Bishop Joseph Stephen was militant by nature and upright by character, qualities which caused him many difficulties in his life. When he was consecrated Bishop of Beyrouth he had to contend with the claims of Bishop Michael Fadel, who disputed with him, for a long time, the possession of this See. Finally the Holy See decided in favor of Bishop Stephen. In 1766, after the death of Patriarch Toby Kazen, Bishop Stephen was the unanimous choice of the bishops for the Patriarchal See.

The chief event of his reign was the foundation of a religious community by a nun, Anna Hojeima, a native of Aleppo, who came to Lebanon in 1751 with the intention of establishing a body of religious to be known as the "Sisters of the Sacred Heart." The Patriarch, eager to introduce the devotion to the Sacred Heart in Lebanon, entered at once into the designs of the enthusiastic foundress, assisting and encouraging her in her enterprise. A convent was bought and many young girls, attracted by Sister Anna's high reputation for sanctity, flocked around her. Things went well for a number of years; but in time, doubts began to arise as to the faith and sincerity of the foundress, who had gone so far as to believe that the communicant would be united with Christ after Holy Communion in the same way that the sacred Humanity is united to the Divinity. This was a subtle, pernicious error, into which it is believed the poor nun was led by the reading of books written by the Quietists in France at the time of Fenelon. The Patriarch, deceived by her apparent piety, had been induced to approve the new congregation, his favorable opinion of which was strengthened by that of an Apostolic Delegate who came to Lebanon in 1776 and visited the convent of Sister Hojeima. So well impressed was the Delegate that he wrote: "I have visited Bekerky, the Mother House of Sister Hojeima, and I saw there a veritable sea of sanctity.

After close scrutiny by the Holy See, the Congregation was dissolved in 1778. The Patriarch received

his share of rebuke for not having checked in time the errors that were creeping in under the guise of holiness and was even suspended from his functions for a few years. He was restored to his See in 1784 and resumed his labors with more ardor than before. Sister Anna manifested sincere marks of repentance and died in 1802.

In 1789 Patriarch Joseph Stephen converted the famous Convent of Ain-Warka, which till then, had belonged to the Stephen family, into a Patriarchal College-Seminary for the whole nation. "This was by a special providence of God," says his biographer, "because it took place in the same year in which the French Revolution broke out in Europe." A few years afterward, the French armies, led by Napoleon, invaded Rome and destroyed, among other establishments, our college in the Eternal City. That college was recently restored through the munificence of Leo XIII and the zeal of our present Patriarch, his Beatitude, Elias Hoyek. The conversion of Ain-Warka into a Patriarchal College-Seminary contributed in no small measure to the ecclesiastical and literary revival among the Maronites. It is a center of learning which has produced many prominent men in every walk of life. We will mention a few of their names in the course of this history. Its first rector was Bishop Joseph Stephen, nephew of the Patriarch and himself a distinguished writer. Patriarch Joseph Stephen wrote numerous works in Syriac and Arabic. To him we owe many beautiful prayers, among others the Novena in honor of the Blessed Sacrament before Christmas.[1] He died in 1793.

[1]Rev. Doctor Paul Abboud wrote three valuable volumes about the life and works of Patriarch Joseph Stephen.



EMIR BECHIR SHEHAB, GOVERNOR OF LEBANON

CHAPTER XXIV

First Half of the Nineteenth Century

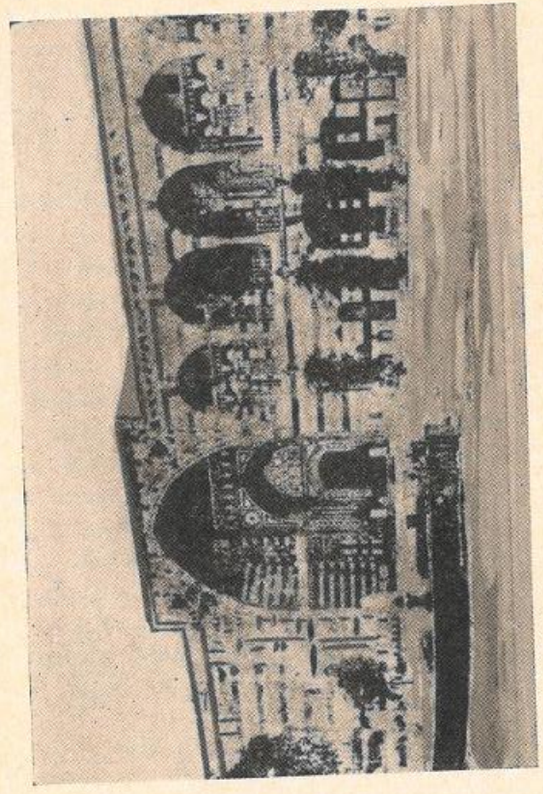
Emil Bechir

Emil Bechir is the son of Emir Kassem Omar Shehab. He was born in the Town of Gazir in 1761. His father was converted to the Christian religion, through the zeal of Patriarch Joseph Stephen, in 1768, seven years after the birth of his son. Before that date, i. e., in 1754, another Sheabite, Emir Joseph, son of Emir Haidar, was also converted to the Christian religion by Father Michael Fadel of Beyrouth. From that time on, the conversion to the Christian religion of the Sheabites was rapid.[1]

The Shehab family was brought to Southern Lebanon, after the Crusaders left Syria, to oppose any new attempt by the Crusaders to return to the Orient. This Shehab family has a just claim to a close relationship with the Prophet of Islam, Mohammed. They have been ruling small cities in Southern Lebanon ever since they settled there, i. e., since the beginning of the thirteenth century. Their headquarters were Hasbaya, Rashaya and Wadi-Ettaim. They ruled after the manner of the Feudal System, then in vogue also in Europe.

The Mahn family, of whom we spoke in a preceding chapter, was more prominent and almost eclipsed the Sheabites for about three centuries. In 1697 the last Emir of the Mahn family, Ahmed Melhem, died without a direct heir and was succeeded by a Sheabite, the son of his daughter. This is how the Sheabites succeeded the Mahnites in the Government of Lebanon. The Emirs of this family succeeded each other until the time when Emir Bechir was born, 1761. We said above that Emir Kassem, father of Emir Bechir, was converted to Christianity when the son was still a young boy. The boy was then raised in the Christian

[1] Few, however, remain Mohammedans.



Palace of Emir Bechir (at Beit-Eddin)

religion to which, in all the vicissitudes of his long life, he was very loyal.

The greatest passion of his life was a desire to rule, and he was not always scrupulous about the ligitimacy of the means he adopted to attain that end. This particularly was true, when for the first time he went to Aka to obtain the investiture from the famous cruel Wali Ahmed Pasha, the Butcher, an adventurer of the worst type. By intrigue and bribery Ahmed had gained the favor of the authorities in Constantinople, succeeding so well that the privilege of bestowing investiture upon the Governors of Lebanon was accorded him.[2] He abused that right so frequently, giving the Governorship to the highest bidder, that the one in office was never sure whether he would hold it until the next day. The young Emir Bechir was for the first time tempted to bid for it when he was but twenty-seven years old. The Governor was then his uncle, Emir Youssef. He sent his young nephew to the cruel Pasha with the message: "I do not mind if you become Governor in my place and I plead for your cause; but remember I am your uncle and friend. Do not turn against me." Alas! These last words of the old statesman were almost prophetic. The young Emir returned with the mantle of Governorship on his shoulders and chased his aged uncle, harrassing him, all over Lebanon, following in this the instructions of the Pasha. About four years were spent in these internecine wars between uncle and nephew. Finally, the uncle went to the Pasha and promised to collect more taxes from the already exhausted peasantry to satisfy the insatiable greed of the tyrant. Again he was made Governor and the young man dismissed. These sudden alterations of power continued for many years. The taxpayers were the victims. In 1798 Napoleon I came and laid siege to Aka. Emir Bechir was then Governor of Lebanon. Napoleon wrote to him, inviting him to join the French Army. He did not dare even to answer the letters of Napoleon

[2] Ahmed, the Butcher, was appointed Pasha of Aka. To the Pasha of Aka belonged the right to appoint the Governors of Lebanon at that time.

for fear that the spies of the Pasha might intercept the papers and his doom would be sealed. Napoleon lifted the siege after seventy days of fruitless attacks. Ahmed Pasha, for the time being, acknowledged the loyalty of the Emir. Nevertheless, his fickleness and his greed made him forget quickly this service and he invested with the Governorship of Lebanon the two cousins of Emir Bechir, the sons of Emir Youssef, and exiled Emir Bechir from Lebanon; but after two years of confusion and discontentment, i.e., in the year 1800, Emir Bechir returned to Lebanon. Peace was effected between the two factions, with the understanding that Emir Bechir would be the Governor and would grant his cousins the Government of the two districts of Gebail and Batroon. This arrangement did not please Ahmed Pasha because it reduced his income of bribery to a minimum. He stirred up some trouble; but in 1804 death visited that cruel man, and put an end to a life of crimes. Emir Bechir now breathed a sigh of relief, but he still felt uneasy concerning the two advisers of his cousins, George Baz and Abdel Elhad, his brother, and resolved to get rid of them. The two brothers were assassinated on the same day, as was planned. George, the older, was killed at Deir-Elkamar, the residence of the Emir, by emissaries directed for that purpose; the other brother met his death at Gebail, where he was sojourning with the sons of Emir Youssef. The killing of these two brothers remains a dark stain on the memory of Emir Bechir and his long reign. It was one of the worst methods of getting rid of a cumbersome enemy. That crime was perpetrated May 15, 1807. After freeing himself of the advisers, Emir Bechir also disposed of the three Emirs, his cousins, by ordering them to a place of retirement and by depriving them of their eyesight. After this, Emir Bechir ruled undisturbed for many years except that every year he was obliged to receive the investiture from Suleiman Pasha, successor of Ahmed in the Welayet of Aka. This investiture was

a matter of pure form.[3] In the year 1819, Suleiman Pasha died. He was the intimate friend of Emir Bechir, to whom his death was a real loss. His successor, Abdalla Pasha, treated the Emir fairly the first year, but in the second year, 1820, he wrote to him, asking for a million piastres,[4] "Because," he says in his letter, "the authorities in Constantinople pressed him for money." The Emir wrote him: "That amount is exhorbitant. I request you to reduce it and give me time to collect the amount reduced." Both requests were refused. Other Emirs, rivals of Bechir, were appointed Governors. They did not succeed. After one year, Emir Bechir was again appointed Governor, this time for life.

In those turbulent times, we can hardly expect peace to last long. War broke between Abdalla Pasha and Darwich Pasha, the Governor of Damascus. Emir Bechir took the part of Abdalla Pasha, his superior, but it happened that this official was in the wrong. Despite this fact, both Abdalla Pasha and Emir Bechir continued the fight against the Governor of Damascus and defeated him in two pitched battles. On the other hand, the Sultan, coming to the rescue of his defeated Governor, deprived Abdalla Pasha of the Governorship of Aka, to which he appointed Darwich Pasha, and wrote to Mustapha Pasha, Governor of Aleppo, to enforce these orders. The latter came to Damascus and wrote to Emir Bechir, ordering him to cease hostilities. When Emir Bechir saw things going adversely for himself and his superior, he resolved to go into exile and seek in Egypt the protection he lacked at home. From the visit to Egypt he expected the fulfillment of the most cherished hopes of his life—the independence of Syria from the Turkish misrule, which was reaching the lowest degree of decay and degeneracy. He wanted to link his destiny with that of the young and rising power of

[3] The ceremony of investiture consisted of this: The Governor would send one of his selected suits with a trusted officer to the candidate. The envoy would be received with great pomp. The candidate would then put on the suit which was the emblem of the authority thus imparted.

[4] Syrian and Egyptian coin equivalent to 5 cents.

Mohammed Ali Pasha, who, from a lowly son of a peasant in Yanina, was soon ready to threaten the Ottoman Empire itself and to establish on its ruins a mighty empire in Egypt and Syria. It was a beautiful dream. Will he see its realization?

Second Period in the Life of Emir Bechir

The Emir then went to Egypt. This was in the year 1822. Mohammed Ali Pasha held a great reception for him. After a rest of a few months he ordered him to come to see him every day. In these daily conferences Mohammed Ali inquired about the state of things in Syria and assured himself of the help of Emir Bechir, when the opportunity should come for the invasion of Syria. At the instance of Emir Bechir, Mohammed Ali wrote to Constantinople, urging the restoring of Abdalla Pasha to his former office, the governorship of Aka. After some efforts he obtained that favor for the rebel vizier. Mohammed Ali had his reasons for doing this: he needed both Abdalla Pasha and Emir Bechir in his invasion of Syria. The Emir returned to Syria in the same year and was received royally by Abdalla Pasha on his way to Lebanon. Upon his arrival in Lebanon and his appointment as Governor, he had to encounter the same forces that had previously been leagued against him. At their head was, this time, Sheik Bechir Jimblatt, the influential leader of the Druses. This was in 1825. A battle was fought at Elmoktara, the birthplace and stronghold of Sheik Bechir. The fighting lasted three days with the result that the rebel leaders were utterly defeated and fled toward the Hauran in the desert. The army of the Damascus Governor helped Emir Bechir this time and went after the rebels in hot pursuit. The leaders were seized and executed. A year later the Emir quelled an insurrection against Abdalla Pasha in the city of Naplous (Palestine) and returned to Lebanon.

The Invasion of Syria by Mohammed Ali.

In the meantime, Mohammed Ali was planning the invasion of Syria, which he started in 1831. The pretext for it was the refusal of Abdalla Pasha to extradite some Egyptian refugees, who had fled from Egypt during the war with Greece from fear of being commandeered for the army. Mohammed Ali sent a powerful army to lay siege to Aka, entrusting the command to his son, Abraham Pasha, who had proved his worth during the war with Greece and in the war with the Wahabites of Arabia.[5] With Abraham was Suleiman Bey, a Frenchman, who took charge of the Egyptian Navy. Abraham Pasha wrote to Emir Bechir to come to meet him before the walls of Aka. He came and met with a splendid reception from the Egyptian General. The march of Abraham through Syria could not be halted by the Turkish Generals, who were defeated one after another. Finally, Rashed Pasha, one of the best Turkish Generals, tried to make a stand in the city of Iconium, to halt the triumphant march of the Egyptians, but instead of halting them, the already demoralized Turkish army was terribly beaten. Rashed Pasha, himself, was taken prisoner. This was in December 12, 1832. The Egyptian army was at the doors of Broussa, the ancient capital of the Ottomans. In Constantinople, great was the anxiety lest the enemy might enter the capital; but the stand the European powers took against the new conqueror dissipated that fear. England, Russia, Austro-Hungary and Prussia agreed with Turkey to frustrate Mohammed Ali in his conquests in Syria and in Asia-Minor. They signed a treaty to that effect with a representative of Turkey, June 15, 1840. They also encouraged the Syrians and Lebanese to rebel against the rule of Abraham Pasha. A guerilla war started against him which ended by ousting him from the country about October 1st, 1840. The Lebanese regretted afterward

[5] A fanatical sect of modern Mohammedans who pretend to return to the pure practices of the Koran. Their leader now is the famous Sultan Ibn-Esshood.

their rebellion and their return to Turkish tyranny and misrule. They were soon to suffer the terrible consequences of their mistake by the massacres of 1860-61, about which we will speak later. Emir Bechir, when he saw that the fortune of war turned against Abraham Pasha, gave himself up to the Ottoman authorities. Hezzet Pasha, the Commander-in-Chief of the Ottoman Army, bade him choose his residence wherever he pleased, except in France, Syria or Egypt. He selected the Island of Malta, where he stayed for a while. From there he went to Constantinople, where he died an edifying Christian death in 1850, at the age of ninety years.

When we write the religious history of the nineteenth century, we will note many a religious trait of his character. He was, in many respects, a great man. His greatest ambition was to free Lebanon and as much of Syria as he could from the Turkish suzerainty and rule it by justice. He had a great love for literary culture and surrounded himself by men of literary talents. He was very careful to select, as his confessor, a man of fearless integrity. When he died in Constantinople, he was attended by Father Oun Zend.

CHAPTER XXV

The Seminary of Ain-Warka

We mentioned in the sketch of Patriarch Joseph Stephen the conversion of the Convent of Ain-Warka into a Seminary-College for the whole nation. We now owe some more details to our readers concerning the history of this fruitful seminary. The influential man, who by his advice encouraged Patriarch Joseph to convert Ain-Warka into a Seminary, was the pious and noble Gandoor Saad Khoury, a member of the pious and distinguished family of Khoury, mentioned above. Gandoor Saad Khoury was then (1789) Consul of France in Beyrouth. Another prominent personage who had a great share in founding the Seminary was the saintly and zealous Bishop Joseph Stephen, nephew of the Patriarch. He became the first director of the new Seminary and during his term the studies and the discipline reached a high degree of efficiency. The program of studies is indicated in the circular letter written by Patriarch Joseph, the founder. It is as follows:

First, Grammar, both Arabic and Syriac.

Second, Eloquence, Sacred and Profane.

Third, Philosophy.

Fourth, Both Theologies, Dogmatic and Moral.

Fifth, Holy Scripture.

Patriarch Joseph Tian, successor of Patriarch Joseph Stephen, borrowed the entire program of studies of the Roman College.[1] In this program were included the Italian and the Latin languages. Education flourished in this Seminary for a long time, and it was the nursery for a great number of distinguished men, both in the religious and the civil life. We count, in the number of pupils, five patriarchs, nineteen archbishops and bishops and a great many learned priests; and in

[1]The Gregorian University in Rome.



The Nobleman, Saad Khoury

the civil life we count a great number of lawyers, poets, doctors and mathematicians. Ain-Warka was a center of Arabic literary culture. It preceded by almost three-quarters of a century the great schools of Beyrouth. It had this distinction that it produced men who founded other schools and spread knowledge also in this indirect way.

The Patriarchs.

After Patriarch Joseph Stephen, Bishop Michael Fadel was promoted to the Patriarchal See September 10, 1793, four months after the death of his predecessor. The delay was unusual[2] and was caused by a pest spread all over Lebanon. This Patriarch did not live long, for he died May 17, 1795. His successor was Patriarch Philip Gemail, who was elected June 12, 1795 and died April 12, 1796, after ten months of occupancy.

After him Patriarch Joseph Tian was elected, April 28, 1796. This Patriarch was born in Beyrouth. When quite young he was sent to Rome, where he was educated in our College. He was ordained priest in 1784 in Rome. He had a large part, during his priesthood, in the restoration of Patriarch Joseph Stephen to his See. In the year 1786 he was consecrated bishop. After his elevation to the Patriarchal See, he governed the Maronite Church with zeal and wisdom for thirteen years, at the end of which time he resigned to live in the solitude of a convent. He lived in seclusion eleven years and died February 20, 1822. His successor was Patriarch John Heloo, who was elected June 8, 1809 and died May 12, 1823. His successor was Patriarch Joane Hobeich, who was the first Patriarch from the Seminary of Ain-Warka. He was elected May 25, 1823, and remained Patriarch twenty-two eventful years. He witnessed the Civil War between Maronites and Druses in 1841 and 1845, after beholding the great havoc brought about by the Egyptian invasion. We will soon speak of this murderous war between Maronites and Druses. The saintly Patriarch did all he

[2] According to the decrees of the Lebanese Council, the Patriarch must be elected within eight days after the death of his predecessor.



PATRIARCH JOSEPH KAZEN

could to prevent the civil strife, but, failing in the attempt, he threw open the gates of his residence and of all the convents to receive the refugees from the war zone. He died heartbroken May 23, 1845. His successor was Patriarch Joseph Kazen, from the old Kazen family, who was elected August 18, 1845 and remained Patriarch nine years. He died October 3, 1854. His successor was the illustrious Patriarch Paul Massad of whom we shall speak a little later.

Now, let us turn to the political events from the year 1840 to the year 1854.

After the exile of Emir Bechir in 1840, Hezzet Pasha, the Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Army, appointed as Governor of Lebanon another Emir Bechir, a namesake of the exiled Emir. This new appointee had nothing in common with Emir Bechir but the name and he was not capable of holding the position. A civil war broke out between Christians and Druses. The Government of the Sultan was secretly casting fuel on the fire actuated by the intention of appointing a foreign Governor from Constantinople. Mustapha Pasha was sent from that capital to persuade the people to accept a Turkish appointee. The Christians did not agree to this, but the Druses accepted. A certain Omar Pasha was appointed.[3] He did not please anybody and was dismissed. Another attempt was made to pacify Lebanon: Assad Pasha was appointed Wali to Sidon, with powers to appoint a Governor to Lebanon. He appointed two Governors, one for the Christians and another for the Druses. After this appointment a civil war broke out again, in which the Christians had the upper hand. This was in 1841; but the Turkish authorities helped the Druses and quelled the disturbance with severity. We should note that the Druses were the ones who started it. In justice they should have to take the consequences. The Turkish authorities were criminally in connivance with them, as they had their grudge against the Christians who did not see fit to give up their ancient prerogative of having a na-

[3]He was an Austrian and of Christian origin.



EMIR HAIDAR BELLAMA,
GOVERNOR OF LEBANON

tive Governor and to give themselves to the tender mercies of the Turks. It was indeed the right course for the Christians to follow, seeing, as they did, the greed of the Turkish officials, who, like Ahmed, the Butcher, came to the country to enrich themselves of its spoils and pay no attention whatever to the needs of the peasants, who were the great mass of the population. The Turks, on the other hand, had their reasons for having a man coming from Constantinople rule the country, because they learned from their recent experience with Emir Bechir, that a native Prince might try again to be independent of the Empire. After the war of 1845, two Governors were appointed to rule Lebanon—one Druse, Emir Ahmed Arslan, and one Christian, Emir Haidar Ismael. Emir Haidar died 1854, the same year in which Patriarch Hobeich died.

Patriarch Paul Massad.

He was born 1806, in the town of Hashkoot, in the district of Kesroan. He was sent to the Seminary of Ain-Warka when a young boy and studied there Arabic, Syriac, Italian and Latin. After finishing his literary studies, he was sent to Rome to study philosophy and theology. He was very bright in all his studies. In the year 1830 he was ordained a priest and returned to Lebanon. Patriarch Joseph Hobeich appointed him his secretary and had in him entire confidence, leaving to his prudence the solving of many difficult problems. On his part Father Paul Massad served the Patriarch with scrupulous fidelity. In 1841, Patriarch Hobeich consecrated him Honorary Archbishop and appointed him his Vicar General for the things spiritual. In 1845, the old Patriarch went to his reward. After his death the consensus of all the bishops was for the election of Archbishop Massad; but the country being in a civil war between Maronites and Druses, Archbishop Massad himself advised for the election of Archbishop Joseph Kazen, whose family influence, it was thought, could preserve the country from the further horrors of the civil war. Patriarch Kazen occupied the See for nine



PATRIARCH PAUL MASSAD

years, until 1854. On November 12, 1854, Archbishop Massad was elected Patriarch and obtained the Pallium from Pope Pius IX, March 23, 1855, about four months after his election, through his envoy, Father Ntain Darhouni, a Monk from the Aleppan Order. Patriarch Massad was one of our most distinguished Patriarchs in many ways. Theologian and Canonist of note, he was also an historian of stainless integrity. He specialized in the history of our Nation, following in this the footsteps of the illustrious Patriarch Stephen Douihee. He was preparing the materials for the continuation of the "Annals", written by Douihee, which work is still unpublished. He remained Patriarch for the long period of thirty-six years and died in 1890. One of his merits consisted in the picking up of bright men wherever he could find them and giving them a chance to develop their brilliant gifts of mind and heart by training and education. He was, on the other hand, conservative and gave due regard to the old families. who had served the country during her hours of trial and had preserved among them the traditions of loyalty to the Nation and the Church. In the first few years of his Patriarchate (1857-1859) the people of Kesroan revolted against the Kazen family, whose members were the feudal rulers of the districts for at least two hundred years. The Sheiks[4] of this family were scattered and persecuted and their properties confiscated. The Patriarch did all he could to avert all further harm from that family which had done much to help the Nation in the darker days of her history. Soon, however, (1860) the civil war between Christians and Druses was to be enkindled again by the criminal connivance and even at the instigation of the Turkish authoritites. The causes for this war were the same as those for the two former ones (1841-1845). The Turks seized the opportunity to govern Lebanon without appointing any native Governors, while the

[4]This was a title of nobility for some famlies in Lebanon and Syria, who by some services, military or otherwise, earned it from the Emirs, or from the Sultans.

Christians refused to give up their old privileges. There had been also some local causes of friction between Christians and Druses since the time of the Egyptian invasion. The war then broke out (1860) in different places—in Damascus, in Hasbaya and Rashaya and in Deir-El-Kamar. In all these places there were terrible massacres of Christians. It was not an open war, but treachery and treason. Napoleon III sent to Lebanon and Syria six thousand soldiers, under the command of Generals Beaufort De Hautpoul and DeCourt. The Sultan sent from Constantinople his minister of foreign affairs, Fuad Pasha, to repair what his sanguinary soldiers had done. It was agreed that from then on there should be a Christian Governor for Lebanon. The European powers also agreed on a Constitution of seventeen articles. This Constitution, however imperfect, was the first step toward complete emancipation from the detested Turkish misrule.

We have from Patriarch Massad, as historian, his book "Eddir-El-Manzoom." In this book he explodes the current opinion among many writers that the Eastern Churches[5] must be included under the name of "The Greek Church." He proves that all these Churches have their own history and their own languages; and if some of them used the Byzantine Rite, they must not be identified with the Byzantine Church. Patriarch Massad died at the ripe old age of eighty-four years.

[5]The Eastern Churches are the Coptic, the Syrian, the Nestorian, the Melchite, the Armenian and the Maronite.

CHAPTER XXVI

Revival of Literature in the Nineteenth Century

The revival of literature in the nineteenth century went on apace. Hitherto the most prominent representatives of the literary movement were from the ranks of the Clergy and the productions were religious, with few exceptions. From that time on the movement reached out further in its scope, purely literary productions becoming more numerous. The inspiration of this literature among our authors remained Catholic, but abreast of this movement developed another, nurtured and encouraged by Protestant propaganda. The two most prominent representatives of this movement are: Messrs. Peter Bostany and Fares Esh-Shidiac. Let us speak with some detail about them.

Peter Bostany was born in the village of Debbia (District El-Karroob, South Lebanon) in 1819. This village is the birthplace of the illustrious family Bostany, which gave to our Nation many bishops and prominent men in literature. Young Peter was sent to the Seminary Ain-Warka, where he studied Arabic, Syriac, Latin and Italian with success. He also studied philosophy and theology. He was brilliant in mathematics. Patriarch Hobeich wanted to send him to Rome to pursue further his higher studies, but his mother, who was then a widow, opposed his being sent away. The young man was appointed professor in the Seminary and held that position until the year 1840. In that year some American missioners accompanied the English expedition which came to Syria and Lebanon to arouse the Syrians and Lebanese against the Egyptians. Professor Peter was attracted by the missionaries who offered him a good position with a high salary. He accepted and a friendship began which was fatal to his faith. Of an ardent nature and with high



Professor Peter Bostany

ambition, he was disappointed, it is said, when another candidate received what he thought should be his reward. In the year 1846, Dr. Van Dyke, a Presbyterian minister from New York City, had come to Syria and founded a school in the village "Habyh".[1] He appointed Professor Peter teacher of Arabic and mathematics, in which charge he remained for two years. He was called after this to occupy the position of interpreter in the American Consulate, during which time he took up the study of the Hebrew and the Greek languages. Later he helped Dr. Smith, another Presbyterian minister, in the translation of the Holy Scripture into Arabic. Dr. Smith died and Dr. Van Dyke finished the work in co-operation with Professor Peter. In the meantime, Professor Peter, who was a tireless worker, wrote his dictionary of the Arabic language, one of the best known. In 1860 he started his paper "The Clarion Voice of Syria." In 1863 he opened his school, "The National School," where many famous men in the literary world received their training. Among others we number the illustrious Suleiman Bostany and his cousin Abdalla Bostany. We will speak of these two later. Sheik Abraham Elyazegy, the eloquent writer, was also one of the pupils of this school. The one who gave the school its reputation besides Professor Peter, the founder, was Sheik Nassif Elyazegy, who taught grammar and literature. He was a writer of high reputation and a deep student of Arabic literature. Professor Peter found time also to start the Arabic Encyclopedia, and completed the first six volumes in co-operation with his son, Selim. After his father's death, Selim wrote the seventh and eighth volumes.[2]

Professor Peter Bostany was a tireless worker, full of energy and activity; but in his earlier days he nourished against his former religion the bitterness of a

[1] It is in the district of Shoof. This beautiful village was the residence of the Druse Princes of Tnook.

[2] After the death of Selim, the other sons of Mr. Peter Bostany issued, in co-operation with Suleiman, their cousin, volumes 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th.



ARCHBISHOP PETER BOSTANY

disappointed ambition. This, the historian, who records the cold facts, without bias, deeply regrets. We are told that before he died he intended to return to the religion of his fathers; but death came suddenly. His sons returned to the Catholic religion.

Fares Esh-Shidiac

He was born in 1804. He was also trained in his youthful days at the Seminary of Ain-Warka; but his training was very incomplete. Having lost his father when he was a young boy, he was compelled to go out into the world to shift for himself. He went to Egypt, where he pursued his studies in Arabic literature. There he ventured into journalism; but, owing to his versatility, he went to the Island of Malta, where he stayed with the American missionaries, with whom he was already acquainted when he was in Lebanon. He remained in the island fourteen years as teacher and during his leisure wrote some books. In 1848 the Bible Society of London, requested the Governor of Malta to send him to London. When he reached that metropolis the Society asked his co-operation in the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Arabic; this he did. Owing to him, this version is one of the best as regards literary value. Fares was, for a long time, imbued with the Protestant ideas and wrote in defense of the new creed his famous book "El-Fariac," which can be compared with "Pantagruel" of Rabelais.[3] He tried by means of indecent jokes, to scoff at the religion of his fathers, but there is nothing serious in the book, not even literary merit. Later the author moved to Paris, where he met one of his old friends, Count Roshaid Dadah, who remonstrated with him on that subject and suggested that he should write another book on another topic to redeem his literary reputation and make the public forget the bitterness caused by the offensive book. He heeded the advice and wrote his book "Europe, Her Inhabitants and Her Social Hab-

[3]Rabelais, French ex-monk, who wrote his five books of romance full of indecent jokes.



ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH DEBS, HISTORIAN

its." It is a description of Europe, her social customs, etc., and is written in quite a different mood.

Fares traveled in many countries of Europe. During this period the Bey of Tunis came to France. Fares became acquainted with him and after the return of the Bey to Tunis, he sent him a poem which so pleased the Bey that he sent for the poet and gave him a very good position. Fares then gave up the Christian religion altogether and became Mohammedan. The Sultan sent for him to come to Constantinople. In that city he published his journal "Al-Jouayeb," which was very influential from 1861 to 1884.

About the end of his life he desired to return to Lebanon, to die among his countrymen, but his death occurred in Constantinople in 1887.

Fares was a persistent worker and had a deep knowledge of the Arabic language. He wrote many books on the Arabic philology and was one of our pioneer journalists. His paper was widely read in the Arabic speaking countries, from India to Algiers. For many years he was one of the influential men of the Turkish Empire. While in Europe, he acquired the knowledge of both English and French.

The one thing we regret deeply in this descendent of one of the best families in Lebanon is the unstability of his character and the giving up of his Catholic faith.

Count Rushaid Dadah.

He is the scion of a noble Lebanese family. The Dadah family has contributed more than one honorable page to our history. Count Rushaid Dadah was born at Aramoun, a small village in the district of Kesroan, in 1813. When he was a boy, he had a private tutor, Deacon Nohra Murad (afterward Bishop Nicholas Murad). He was sent by his father later to Ain-Warka, where he studied Arabic and Italian literatures. After some years he was sent to the Armenian College at Bzimmar where he learned the Turkish language. After being graduated, he was admitted to the Divan of Emir Bechir, where he was secretary to



ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH JAHJAH

the Emir for two years. After the exile of the Emir, Rushaid retired to his estate in Aramoun. About the year 1840 one of his relatives, Sheik Murhy Dadah, came to Lebanon from Marseilles, where he had a flourishing business. On his return to Marseilles he made the young man accompany him and give up his practice of law. Murhy gave him his daughter in marriage and made him his partner in business. Rushaid passed the rest of his life in France. Nevertheless, he found enough leisure to devote himself to literature. He published several useful books and poems. In Arabic he was an elegant poet. He was given the title of Roman Count by Pope Pius IX, to be hereditary in his oldest male descendants. We do not need to say after that that he was a very devout Catholic. He died in France in 1889 at the ripe age of 76.

Other Illustrious Names in the Literary and Religious World.

Archbishop Joseph Debs, Archbishop of Beyrouth. He was born in 1833 and died in 1908. Archbishop Debs was one of these rare and self-made men we seldom meet in history. He was born in the small village of Kfarzina, Northern Lebanon. This village is a few miles distant from the City of Tripoli. When the future Archbishop was a young boy, he showed extraordinary disposition for learning. His parents, being of modest means, could not send him to a boarding school where the tuition was high, so he managed first to go to Ain-Warka as a waiter and soon afterwards he realized that he had a vocation to the priesthood. In the few years he spent in that seminary he acquired the knowledge of Arabic, the Syriac, the Italian and Latin languages. A disease of the eyes compelled him to take rest at home. After a year or so he went as a private pupil to Father Joseph Assemani, who was the Maronite Archpriest in Tripoli; Father Joseph Assemani was educated in the College of the Propaganda and was of the number of those who had the privilege of assisting at the Vatican Council. Under such a good

master, the young Seminarian entered deeply into his studies. He mastered the Italian and the Latin languages, and studied philosophy, theology and Canon Law. Endowed with splendid intelligence and an admirable memory, he rapidly acquired all these sciences to a high degree of efficiency. His favorite branch of learning was history. Patriarch Paul Massad, who was very keen in observing men and things, soon discovered him, and when he was still a seminarian, sent him to teach a class of philosophy and theology in the seminary of St. John Maron.[4] When the seminarians first saw the newcomer, they were not much impressed by his modest appearance. He quickly perceived this and to bring them to a true appreciation of himself quietly started the first days of his teaching by translating a complete course of philosophy and dogmatic theology. In philosophy he translated the works of Father Lewis Dmofsky, S.J. In theology he translated the works of the famous theologian, John Perrone, S.J., who taught for many years the dogmatic theology at the Gregorian University, Rome. Later on Archbishop Debs published these books in his own printing house in Beyrouth. When his pupils saw his worth, they held him in the greatest esteem. A few years later, the Patriarch ordained him a priest and appointed him his private Secretary. He was in that position of trust twelve years, during which he wrote many books. In 1872 the Diocese of Beyrouth became vacant by the death of Archbishop Tobia Aoun. The Patriarch consecrated him Archbishop of that important See, to the joy of all his diocesans, among whom his reputation had preceded him. One of the characteristics of Archbishop Debs was his love for study and work. You cannot find a moment of leisurely rest in his long life. When he became Archbishop of Beyrouth, he inaugurated the period of Lent of that year with a magnificent series of eloquent sermons on morals and dogma. We have four volumes of these sermons for

[4] The Seminary of St. John Maron was a Patriarchal Seminary, opened by Patriarch Joseph Tian, of whom we spoke above.

the first four consecutive years of his episcopate. They are of sound logic and clear, pleasant diction. They compare very favorably with the conferences at Notre Dame of the famous Pere Lacordaire. Archbishop Debs was above all an historian, never tired of patient research. He wrote, towards the end of his life, his History of Syria in eight volumes, a monumental work which is a credit to the author on account of the immense researches it required and the amount of erudition displayed. As a work of literature, the style is most of the time dignified and elaborate. To be sure, sometimes the reader seems to be lost in the multitude of details and the trend of the narrative lacks the unity of plan required for the historian. This was necessitated by his purpose to condense in his columns as many events as he could for the information of his readers. We would desire also less reticence in drawing his conclusions from the events referred to and more courage in speaking out his opinions. This is especially true when the author deals with the history of the Mohammedan domination in Syria. The censorship of books during the reign of Abdul Hamid must largely account for that. All told, Archbishop Debs was a gigantic man, self-made, ahead of his time. From a poor farmer's boy he rose to a position of high fame and influence in Church and State. He died at the age of 75 years, leaving about fifty works on different subjects. He built the beautiful Cathedral of St. George, one of the ornaments of the City of Beyrouth. He built other beautiful Churches, also the College called "Le College de la Sagesse", which is both college and seminary, one of the best colleges in Beyrouth and a well known seat of learning.

Archbishop Germanos Chemaly.

Archbishop Chemaly, in our literature, is one of those gentle names that remind us of Archbishop Fenelon in French literature. He was born in the small village of Souhailee, in the Province of Kesroan and was brought up in the purest traditions of Catholicism by



ARCHBISHOP GERMANOS CHEMALY

his pious parents. When he was of tender age he was sent to Mar-Abda, another seminary which was converted into a Patriarchal Seminary by Patriarch Joseph Tian, with the consent of the Assaf family, by whom it was originally owned. This seminary rose soon to a high degree of efficiency in training our clergy, and many men of prominence were educated at this place. The young seminarian was trained there very carefully in his studies and in profound piety. He was ordained a priest and developed an extraordinary talent for preaching. Soon he joined the new congregation of Kreimites, founded by a prominent Priest, Father John Habeeb. The sweet and persuasive eloquence of Father Francis Chemaly (this was his name before he was consecrated archbishop) made him immensely popular. He preached the Lenten sermons in St. George's Cathedral at Beyrouth for several years. The people flocked to the Church by thousands and even the infidels, attracted by the fame of his eloquence, came in great numbers. He went outside of Lebanon, to Egypt and to Aleppo, the ancient city which was once famous under the name of Berea. Finally the Aleppans succeeded in persuading Patriarch John Hadj to consecrate him Archbishop of their city, which he did. The new Archbishop governed that See for some years. He felt the need of a rest and returned to Lebanon to stay a few months; but he had a paralytic stroke and died 1895, at Sarba, lamented by all who knew him. It is a great pity that Archbishop G. Chemaly did not always write his sermons. He used the method of Archbishop Fenelon, which method consisted in meditating deeply on the subject and when the time came to preach, to deliver the sermon impromptu. We have of his sermons only a small volume, gathered together by the late regretted Archbishop Bchara Chemaly, his cousin.[5]

[5] Archbishop Bchara Chemaly, the regretted Archbishop of Damascus, died three years ago (1927). He was my schoolmate in the University of St. Joseph (Beyrouth). We spent the sweet days of boyhood together on the benches of the Seminary of St. Francis Xavier in the same University. I will speak later of this Seminary and of the immense good work the Jesuit Fathers are doing through it to all the Oriental Clergy.



ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH DARIAN

He was also a poet of high excellence. We have a collection of his poems, recited on various occasions.

Archbishop Joseph Najm, also a pupil of the Seminary of Mar-Abda, was an able writer. He is the author of the translation into Arabic of the proceedings of the Lebanese Council. That composition alone entitles him to first rank as a writer, by its limpidity of expression and propriety of terms.

Archbishop John Habeeb is the founder of the Kreimite Congregation, whose rule is similar to that of the Sulpicians, and which is promised a bright future. Archbishop Habeeb translated into Arabic the Moral Theology of Father John Gury and adapted it, with many additions from the Arabic Civil Law, to the use of our colleges and seminaries.

Archbishop Paul Awad is an author of note. He is the translator of the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas. All theological students know the importance of that classical work.

Archbishop Joseph Darian, Archbishop of Tarsus and Patriarchal Vicar.

He was born at Hashkot, the birthplace of Patriarch Paul Massad. When still young he entered the Order of the Aleppan Monks and showed extraordinary marks of piety and bright mind. He was sent by his superiors to study at the Propaganda. After the second year of study in theology he returned to Lebanon to rest for a while. He completed his theological course in the University of St. Joseph.

Patriarch John Haj called him to Bekerky to be his secretary. After a few years the Patriarch consecrated him Archbishop of Tarsus and appointed him his Vicar. In that capacity he had a brilliant career and put to a profitable use his bright qualities of mind and heart. He was a distinguished writer in Arabic and an authority on the Syriac language. As a historian, he wrote a valuable work entitled "The Substance of the Proofs," concerning the history of the Maronites. In that book he sums up the history of our Maronites from the fifth to the thirteenth century. His exposition



ARCHBISHOP NAHMATALLA ABI-KARAM

is clear and his diction is flawless. He is also a poet of note; his charming religious hymns are in use in many Churches.

He died after the World War in Egypt, heartbroken when he saw the terrible havoc that great calamity wrought to Lebanon and Syria. During the war he rendered great services to the war stricken people of Lebanon by sending them immense sums of money and quantities of food.

Archbishop Pierre Chebly, Archbishop of Beyrouth. He was born in the small village of Dfoon, in the district of Shoof (Southern Lebanon) and studied first at Beyrouth in the seminary of the Diocese. Later he was sent to St. Sulpice (France) where he specialized in the ancient history of the East. Amongst his many friends was Father M. J. Lagrange, the famous Biblical scholar, and Mr. Maspero, the noted French Ægyptologist.

Archbishop Chebly was a noble character; he died in exile, victim of the cruel Turkish persecution. He left numerous works in French and in Arabic. Some of his works he left unfinished owing to his untimely death. I cannot and would not enumerate all the names of prominent men, especially those who are still living.

The Dramatic and Epic Poetry of Modern Arabic Literature.

In the first Arabic literary revival, under the Caliphs Haroun El-Rasheed and his son, Almamoun (towards the end of the eighth century), the stage was practically unknown. The Arabs, after the Mohammedan conquest, borrowed many things from Greek literature through the Syrians. Aristotle and Plato were translated. "Al-Mageste" of Ptolemy and the "Propositions of Euclid," in astronomy and geometry respectively, were also an open book for the Arab students. The cunning genius of the Arabs even improved on their masters, the Greeks and the Syrians, and invented algebra, whose very name is Arabic.[6]

[6] Al-Jabre means comparison—a reference to the Algebraic equations.



ARCHBISHOP SHEKRALLA KHOURY,
VISITED UNITED STATES IN 1922

They were far behind in oratorical art and in theatrical productions. The stage, of course, was known in Syria and Antioch. The Syrian Metropolis was famous for its theatres, though most probably the pieces played there and in other Syrian cities were in Greek. At least no plays in the Syrian languages are known to us. As regards Epic Poetry we find the famous Theophile of Edessa, who translated the two Homeric poems into eloquent Syrian verses. This Theophile was contemporary to Caliph El-Muhdi, father of the famous Caliph Haroun. Not even the slightest attempt was made to translate Greek dramas and this severe attitude toward the stage is explained by historians as a result of the severity of the Koran in regard to all such representations, the theatre being essentially representative. It was left to the modern literary revival to introduce the theatre into the Arabic speaking world. The first one to our knowledge who wrote plays in Arabic was Maron Nakash, the Maronite poet of Beyrouth, who, in the year 1855, wrote a brief comedy[7] which has great success. When he saw the prejudice against his productions, he moved to Egypt, where he chose a cast of good actors and wrote other plays which became quite popular. Other poets took up his work, among them Adib Ishak, who translated many productions of Racine into elegant Arabic poetry.[8] He had an immense success, but died quite young. Najeeb Hadad was another young poet who took up the work and translated some English plays of Shakespeare. Later he wrote "Salah-Eddin," a play which is still in vogue. He also died very young. Now the movement is in full swing.

In Epic Poetry we have Soleiman Bostany, who was educated at the "National School," erected by his cousin Peter Bostany. Mr. Soleiman translated into elegant verses the Iliad of Homer, and prefaced it with an introduction of a few hundred pages. The introduction itself is a masterpiece of literary erudition, in

[7] "Nasoor, the Drunkard."
[8] He staged "Andromaque and Iphigeny," later on "Athalie."



SULEIMAN BOSTANY,
POET AND STATESMAN

which Soleiman sketches an interesting comparison, between the poetry of ancient Greece and ancient Arabia and the Bible. This wonderful man possessed perfectly the knowledge of ten languages besides his poetic talent. He died recently in New York City, a devout Catholic.

Sheik Abdalla Bostany was also educated at the same "National School," with his cousin Soleiman. He was born a poet. Unlike his cousin Soleiman, he did not cultivate any other language than the Arabic. Besides the many pieces he wrote for the theatre, he left his great dictionary, which is a standard authority in the Arabic language.[9] He died recently at the age of eighty years.

[9] I had the good fortune to study under him one year. I cherish the happiest recollections of the kindly mannered professor with his vast knowledge and great poetic talent.



JOSEPH BEY KARAM
THE LEBANESE HERO

CHAPTER XXVII

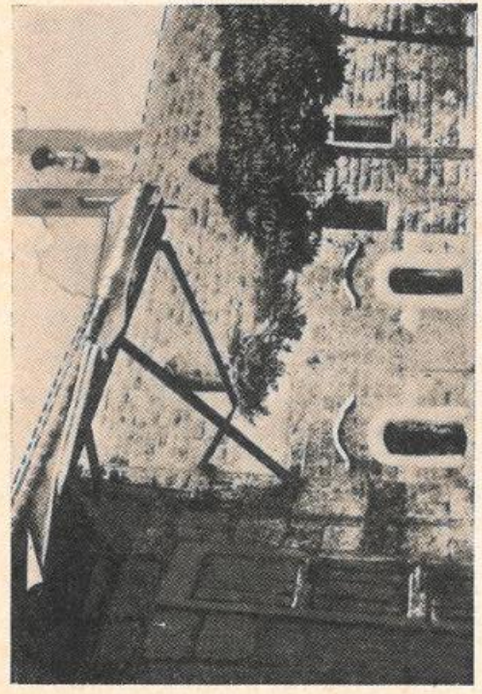
Political Revival—Joseph Bey

We have already seen, in sketching the history of Emir Bechir, that there was a thorough political awakening in Lebanon and Syria in the nineteenth century. The Turkish Empire was decaying rapidly and approaching its death. All the different nations it swayed by the sheer force of the sword moved restlessly toward liberty. The European powers pressed on year after year and snatched away, one by one, the different countries that were once under the Ottoman domination. Greece had been liberated in 1828; Egypt made a great effort under Mohammed Ali to supplant the Ottoman Empire in the Near East; but the interests of some European powers were opposed to the plans of Mohammed Ali and nipped his designs in the bud.

On the other hand, Lebanon never has been completely subjected to the Ottomans. Since the Turkish conquest, the Governors of Lebanon always have been its native sons. It is true that they have been invested with power by the Walis of Sidon, or Tripoli, or Damascus, or Aka, who were sometimes from Constantinople, but a Turkish Wali never governed directly in Lebanon.

Furthermore, the Ottomans never tried by their Turkish language to supplant Arabic, which is the language of Syria and Egypt and the greatest part of Mesopotamia. They made this attempt very recently, after they removed Abdul-Hamid in 1908, a few years before the World War, but they failed very miserably.

After the attempt of Emir Bechir to gain complete independence had failed, the national aspirations were awakened once more with more enthusiasm than ever. At this very time appeared a noble young man, of a prominent family and of extraordinary fitness for political and military leadership. This young man was Joseph Bey Karam. He was born 1825, at Ehden, the



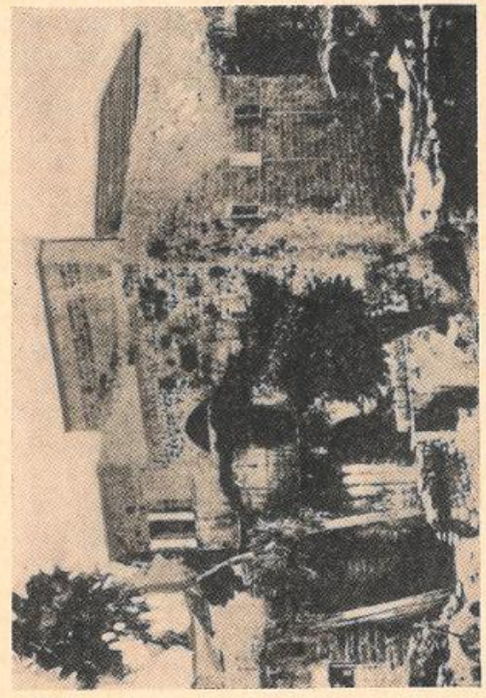
Palace of Joseph Bey Karam (at Zegorta, the Winter Residence)

beautiful town of Northern Lebanon, perched like an eagle's nest on the slope of "Gebel-El-Mechmel," one of the highest peaks of Northern Lebanon. Ehden, as its name suggests,[1] is a real paradise, or a delightful garden, irrigated by the beautiful rivulet, Mar-Sarkiss, that flows in abundant and icy cadences from the bosom of Gebel-El-Mechmel. Its two sides are dotted by stately trees of pears, apples, etc. This good sized town[2] has been, since time immemorial, the stronghold of Northern Lebanon, against the many invasions of restless neighbors. Bravery is traditional in Ehden; so, when Joseph Bey was born, he was surrounded by a band of courageous and determined men, ready to do whatever he would command. When he was still a young boy, his father placed him in charge of a private tutor, a Lazarist Priest, to take care of his education. The young man grew up to manhood endowed with great courage and a generous heart. His great quality, besides his courage, was his purity of life.

The great event in Karam's life was the defense of the people's rights and liberties against the encroachments of the Turkish officials and government. After the massacres of 1860, the European powers gave to Lebanon a miniature Constitution, to safeguard its ancient privileges against the treachery of the Turks, whose sole aim was to reduce these privileges to a minimum. The great point was: should the Governor of Lebanon be a native or foreign born? The Turks contended that he should be foreign born. The ambassadors of the European powers at Constantinople agreed with the Turkish authorities that the Governor be a foreigner for the first three years as an experiment. If the experiment did not succeed, they would appoint a native to the Governorship. Joseph Bey struggled for seven years (from 1860 to 1867) to assure to Lebanon that ancient prerogative, but most of the time he met

[1]Ehden in the Syriac means Paradise. The peak of Gebel-El-Mechmel is about 10,800 feet above sea level.

[2]The town above is composed of 15,000 people. This is a good size for the sparsely populated Lebanon.



CHURCH OF OUR LADY (AT ZEGORTA)

with no co-operation from the other forces of the country. In 1867 he condemned himself to a voluntary exile, going first to Algiers, then to France and Belgium. Lastly, he went to Naples, where he spent the last years of his life and where he died in 1888. Fifteen months after his death his nephews brought his body to Lebanon with great pomp.[3] His ideals were finally attained when, after the World War, the Turks were chased out of Lebanon, after they reduced its population to one-half by cruelty and starvation.

[3]His body is still in a state of incorruption. "It was not embalmed," says Archbishop Joseph Debs, who was an eye witness.



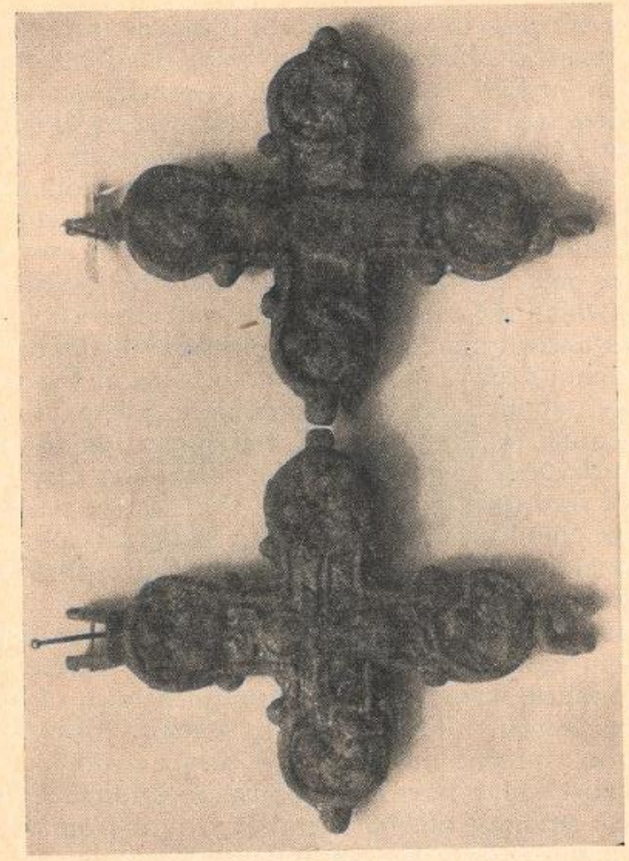
PATRIARCH JOHN HAJ

CHAPTER XXVIII

JOHN HAJ, PATRIARCH

After the death of Patriarch Paul Massad, which occurred April 28, 1890, Archbishop John Haj, Archbishop of Baalbek, was elected Patriarch. He received the Pallium from Pope Leo XIII through his delegate, Archbishop Elias Hoyek. Patriarch John Haj was elected when he was seventy-three years old. He was educated at the Seminary of Ain-Warka, where, besides the ordinary course of study, he also studied jurisprudence. He was even judge for a while. During the Civil War between the Druses and the Maronites, he defended our rights with courageous integrity. On the 15th of August, 1861, Patriarch Paul Massad consecrated him Archbishop of Baalbek. He so improved that diocese that it became the richest of our dioceses, whereas it had been the poorest. After his election he built the magnificent palace of Bekerky, which is now the residence of our Patriarch. He also, through his Vicar, Archbishop Elias Hoyek, our actual Patriarch, rebuilt our college in Rome, which was so famous in times past. The munificence of the Immortal Pontiff, Leo XIII, who contributed to the fund the sum of three hundred thousand francs, was an immense help to the renovation of that seat of learning.

Patriarch John Haj died December 27, 1898. On the 6th of January, 1899, Epiphany Day, all the Archbishops at Bekerky elected as Patriarch Elias Hoyek, who is our present Patriarch happily reigning for the last thirty-two years.



CROSS OF BRONZE FOUND AT SHAMAT (BYBLOS DISTRICT) 1931

CHAPTER XXIX

Religious Congregations, Native Seminaries, Colleges

The religious life started in the East, as every student of ecclesiastical history knows. Even our Nation and our Patriarchate owes its origin to a religious order. We have seen in the course of this history how the Monks of St. Maron kept alive the light of the Catholic Faith during the great upheaval of the Mohammedan invasion and that a monk of their convent, St. John Maron, was our first Patriarch. Even now our bishops and archbishops still retain the traditional cowl, which the monks have as a part of their habit, but the ancient monks for many centuries had separate, autonomous convents. It was in the time of Patriarch Douihee, about 1695, that three pious Aleppans came to Lebanon to found a regular congregation of men. Patriarch Douihee approved their rule. Later they were divided into three branches, the Lebanese, the Aleppan and the Monks of St. Shia. Their rule was approved by the Holy See through the efforts of Joseph Simon Assemani.

These three branches still exist and are flourishing. In recent years the ancient fervor and discipline of the first founders were revived by prominent men of sanctity and learning. These orders have many convents in Lebanon and one in Rome and they are doing very good work. They have many houses of studies for their novices; amongst others, one in Beyrouth from where their students have the advantage of assisting at the studies at St. Joseph's University of the Jesuits.

A more recent congregation of men is that of the Kreimites, whose founder is the late Archbishop John Habeeb; their rule calls for teaching in the seminaries and preaching missions. They have a flourishing house in Buenos Aires, in the Argentine Republic. Their mother house is Kreim, a distance of a few miles from Beyrouth.



Archbishop John Habeeb, Founder of the Kreimite Congregation

Sisters:

We have few classes of sisters: first, the cloistered sisters, whose occupation is mostly prayer and manual work. Their order is as ancient as the orders established in the time of Patriarch Douihee.

Second, the teaching sisters, or the order of the Holy Family, founded by the existing Patriarch. These Sisters have convents throughout Lebanon. Their chief work is the teaching of youth. Their mother house is at Hebreen, in the district of Batrun. Our present Patriarch is taking special interest in them and furnishes them their needs from whatever resources he can command. They at present have flourishing schools for girls, where many hundreds are trained every year.

Seminaries:

Ain-Warka. We spoke of this seminary elsewhere. Its director now is my good friend, the Venerable Chorbishop Kairalla Stephen. He was in Brooklyn, N. Y., for the last thirty years but recently returned to Lebanon. The Patriarch appointed him director of this ancient seminary in the hope that he would make it regain its old prestige.

Mar-Abda. We also spoke of this seminary, which flourished for a long time, but which is now being remodeled and has no students.

Diocesan Colleges and Seminaries:

First: The college-seminary of the Beyrouth diocese, erected by the late Archbishop Debs, of whom we spoke above. This college is the most flourishing of our college-seminaries. It has an average enrollment of four hundred pupils. The regular course of studies is Arabic, Syriac and French, and some English. The college is a center of Arabic literary activity, enjoying a well earned reputation. The students come from all over Syria, Egypt and Mesopotamia. The present archbishop of Beyrouth, Ignatius Mobarak, was educated within its walls and finished his studies in St. Sulpice (France).

Second: The college-seminary of Kornet-Shehowan. It was erected by the late Archbishop Paul Zogby. This college also is flourishing. The present archbishop is Paul Awad, a famous writer and theologian.

Third: The college-seminary of St. John Maron. The ancient convent of St. John Maron was converted into a college-seminary by Patriarch Joseph Tian. It is also flourishing and has about one hundred pupils.

Other colleges—The College of Maifook. This college was opened recently by the Order of the Lebanese monks. It is flourishing and is situated in the beautiful valley of Maifook. In olden days, as a convent, it was the residence of our Patriarchs for a long time. It is connected now, by an automobile road, with the City of Batroun, on the seashore. The distance between the two places is about fifteen miles.

There are other colleges and seminaries which were flourishing and have furnished numbers of pious priests to the rural districts.[1]

[1] I mention here the small seminary which was in our own village, Misreh. My late uncle, Father Paul Abraham Sr., taught in it for the period of thirty years and trained about eighty priests.

CHAPTER XXX

Foreign Seminaries and Colleges

The most important of the foreign seminaries which took a leading part in the education of our clergy and in that of all the Catholic clergy in the Near East, is that of St. Francis Xavier, erected by the Jesuit Fathers, first at Gazir (Lebanon) and later in Beyrouth.

The Jesuit Fathers enjoy the well deserved reputation all over the world of being the best educators of Catholic youth. With us they were at their best. In the countries of Europe they had to struggle against many adverse and powerful forces; but here the atmosphere was freer. The Turkish Government was disinterested and put no restrictions upon the beneficent activity exercised by the Society in educating the young people. The seminary, then, was established in the beautiful town of Gazir, in the Kesroan, in 1850. In 1875 it was transferred to Beyrouth, the largest city of the present Republic of Lebanon. In Beyrouth the seminary was enlarged into The University of St. Joseph of which the seminary is the heart. It enjoys the benefits of the higher studies of this center of learning and at the same time the privacy which seminarians need for their sacred studies.

I was fortunate enough to spend my younger years in that Alma Mater. Sweet indeed were those years spent fruitfully among intimate friends and loving professors. No cares for the outside world! All our energies were bent towards the acquisition of a good education. A good education! Indeed the good Fathers imparted it. The regular course of French, Latin and Greek was strictly and successfully given. With this the Arabic language also was studied. Mathematics, sciences, literature and philosophy—all these were conducted with thoroughness and method. This university compares favorably with the best of Europe and America. The seminarians take their course with the other stu-

dents. The separation starts with philosophy. The lay students have only one year of philosophy. If they take up law or medicine or engineering, etc., they have to shift to those studies. The seminarians go through the whole course of philosophy and theology in six years.

Indeed the recollection of those happy years lingers in my memory, and I still owe a debt of gratitude to those holy men who were at the head of this useful establishment. This seminary is literally a nursery for our clergy and for all the Catholic Oriental Clergy of the different rites, as well.

College of Antoura

This college is conducted by the Rev. Lazarist Fathers. It has a regular course for the lay students in French and in Arabic. Many brilliant men have been educated there, from every walk of life. To enumerate those who have been educated by both establishments would be impossible. Suffice it to say that they were and still are of incalculable benefit to our Lebanon.

The Christian and Marist Brothers

The Christian Brothers have many fine colleges in the important cities, Beyrouth, Damascus, Tripoli and other cities.

The Marist Brothers also have many colleges of lesser importance, but not less useful.

During the war all these establishments were closed and many were made the headquarters of the Turkish Armies.

CHAPTER XXXI

ELIAS HOYEK, PATRIARCH

Patriarch Elias Hoyek was born in the village of Helta, in the district of Batroun. This village is at a distance of about twenty miles from the city of Batroun. The date of his birth is December 20, 1843. His pious parents raised him in the purest principles of the Catholic religion. When he was still a young boy he showed extraordinary signs of a brilliant mind and of a profound piety. He was taught the preliminaries in the village school, but owing to his great desire for learning, he later went back and forth to the College of St. John Maron, which is at a distance of about five miles from the village. Finally he boarded at the college and stayed there two years. After this he persuaded his father to send him to the Seminary of Gazir, directed by the Jesuit Fathers. The superior, seeing the great aptitude of young Elias for study, received him very willingly. The young man spent seven years in that seminary, where he studied French, Latin and Greek and the complete course up to theology. He was very brilliant in his studies. Before starting theology he wrote, on his own initiative, to the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda College in Rome requesting for an opportunity to a scholarship in the College. The Cardinal, interested in the bold request of the bright young man, wrote to Patriarch Paul Massad to send Elias to Rome. In Rome he pursued his theological studies very brilliantly and came back to Lebanon with the title of Doctor in Theology and Canon Law. His father had died when he was in Rome. He spent a while at home to take care of his mother and his young brothers, but he was asked to teach theology in St. John Maron Seminary and spent there three years. Patriarch Paul Massad, who was very keen in observing men and knowing their merits, took him as his secretary in the place of Father Joseph Debs, whom he had consecrated

Archbishop of Beyrouth. Father Elias Hoyek remained in that position of trust seventeen long years, in which he was the wise adviser of the Patriarch and his intimate friend. Of perfect integrity and a fearless character, he was revered and respected by all. Patriarch Paul Massad, before he died, consecrated him Archbishop with the honorary title of Arka and made him his spiritual Vicar. After the death of Patriarch Massad, 1890, the Bishops and Archbishop elected as Patriarch Archbishop John Haj, as we said above. The new Patriarch sent his Vicar to Rome, where he was well known, to be his delegate in securing the Pallium and for the restoring of the Maronite College in Rome. He obtained the Pallium. To the College Leo XIII donated three hundred thousand francs to give the work a start. Archbishop Elias then began to collect the additional sums necessary for the new college, and traveled throughout Europe for this purpose. He succeeded in this enterprise wonderfully. Now this college again has a number of students, reminding us of its former prestige, and the immense service it rendered to the nation. Archbishop Elias Hoyek, in his journey through Europe, came to France, where he met with a warm reception. He delivered a number of speeches which were greatly appreciated by the Press. I remember having read in one of the leading journals of Paris the following comment on his eloquence:

"The eminent Prelate speaks our language as fluently and elegantly as few of us do."

In fact, Patriarch Elias Hoyek is an eminent writer and speaker in both French and Italian, besides his native tongue, the Arabic. He is also a very good writer in the language of Cicero. I once heard the following remark from one of his schoolmates in Gazir:

"When Elias was through with his literary studies I am satisfied that he could write in Latin a speech that would remind us of Cicero."

Such was the admiration of his schoolmates for him.

After his journey in Europe he returned to Lebanon by way of Constantinople, where he had an audience

with Sultan Abdul-Hamid, and obtained for the college a gift of ten thousand francs. On January 6, 1899, Archbishop Hoyek was elected Patriarch, ten days after the death of Patriarch John Haj.

The two great events of Patriarch Hoyek's life are the emigration en masse of our Maronites, and the Great War. On the subject of emigration I will write a special volume, if God wills. Let us dwell with some details upon the happenings of the Great War. Everybody is aware of the immense havoc the terrible struggle wrought in the whole world. The smaller nations have especially suffered from this great calamity. The Turks had conceived for centuries a great hatred for the Christians of the Empire, the causes of which hatred were many. In modern times, the main reason was the desire to solve the Oriental question. What was the Oriental question? The abnormal state of the Christians in the Turkish Empire has created the Oriental question. Ever since the ascendency of Islam there existed a social inequality between Mohammedans and Christians; but, in the course of time, the small Christian communities in the Empire found powerful protectors in the respective nations of Europe. The Catholics were protected by France, the Orthodox by Russia, the Protestants by England. After the Crimean war (1855-57) France and England exacted from Sultan Mahmood IV, the famous "Hatti-Sheriff of Kolkana," which is a decree of emancipation for the Christians. By that decree the Sultan acknowledged that all his subjects, whether Christian or Mohammedans, were equal before the law. That principle was never admitted before in the Mussulman jurisprudence. Furthermore, the decree admits that the Christians are eligible to all the offices of the Empire except a few. That was a great concession which offended the pious Mussulmans and created a profound hatred in the mind of the masses. The Turkish Gov-

ernment was waiting for the occasion to take it back.[1]

On the other hand, European civilization was spreading rapidly in Egypt and in Syria, through the many missionaries and religious societies from France, England and the United States. The minds of the middle classes were awakened to their rights and liberties. A movement towards liberty started among the Turks themselves; but that movement was from the beginning accentuated by an absurd chauvinism for everything Turkish. That sole fact made it fail of its aim, which was to restore the Turkish Empire and to put it on a modern basis. Their famous "Committee of Union and Progress," even before the Great War, alienated the different parts of the Empire. When the Great War broke out, the whole Arabic speaking world was against everything Turkish. For the first time in the history of the Islamic world, Christians and Mohammedans were united against the Turkish Rule, under the leadership of the Allies. The Turks then during the World War let loose all their blood-thirsty instincts. Lebanon and Syria suffered from this cruel war as no other nation has suffered in the whole course of history. Half of the population died from starvation. Patriarch Elias Hoyek suffered the greatest anguish of his life during this trying period. The Turkish authorities tried twice to exile him and let him die in exile, but they were prevented from that criminal attempt by the intervention of the Holy See and the benevolence of the late Emperor Franz Joseph, who was the personal friend of the Patriarch.

It was for the old Patriarch a slow and painful martyrdom to see his flock die by thousands during the long four years of the awful war. The Turks and the

[1]The following anecdote will serve to illustrate the profound hatred conceived for the memory of Sultan Mahmood IV by the average Mussulman. In my seminary days (about 1898), I was going through the streets of Jerusalem, on my way to St. Stephen School, where I was studying, when I overheard the following conversation between two Mussulman Sheiks: The first one: "Crete is going to be taken away from Turkey." The second man: "Yes, I wouldn't be a bit surprised." First man: "Why?" Second man: "Don't you know that since Sultan Mahmood, of bad memory, gave that concession of equality to the Christians and broke the law of the Koran, things are going worse for Islam?"

Germans cornered all the food stuffs, to provide for the armies and in retaliation for the blockade that the allies had put around Germany and her allies. In Lebanon during the war there was the greatest famine and starvation in history, comparable perhaps only to the famine in the siege of Jerusalem by Titus.[2] During the war the Patriarch endeared himself to the hearts of all the people of every creed to such a degree that, after the war, they chose him to be their delegate to the Peace Conference in Paris. He came there, in spite of his old age, and pleaded their cause, backed as he was by hundreds of thousands from Lebanon and Syria and from the emigrants here in the United States and in South America. In Paris, Lebanon was granted its autonomy under the French Mandate. France has been the traditional friend of the Lebanese since the time of the Crusaders. We have already spoken in this history of the rough treatment our brave mountaineers met at the hands of the Moslem Princes after the departure of the Crusaders. The small Lebanese Republic is one of the many states that sprung up after the Great War from the debris of the once Turkish Empire that disappeared, leaving in its wake a legacy of numerous crimes and cruelties for the historian to deplore. Patriarch Elias Hoyek took the main part in the formation of the new Lebanese Republic and in the restoration of many cities and the fertile plain of Bequaa, which always belonged to it.

The venerable Patriarch is still living, enjoying good health, at the age of eighty-seven years.

[2]The Lebanese and the Syrians emigrants in the United States and South America, etc., were of great help to the Mother Country during the Great War. From the United States many hundred thousands of dollars were sent there, beside clothing, etc. I personally sent over $3,000.00 during that period.

CHAPTER XXXII

Relations With Holy See

The Maronite Nation had always the most cordial relations with the Holy See of Peter, Center of Truth, of which St. Ambrose once said, "Where Peter is, there is the Church."

We have seen, in the course of this history, the petition of the Monks of St. Maron to Pope Hormisdas in the first half of the sixth century, 536 A. D. (See Chapter V of this history.)

After the establishment of our separate patriarchate we find the first written document to our Patriarch Jeremia of Damalsa, sent by the Great Pope Innocent III.[1] It starts with these words:

"Innocent the Bishop, the Servant of the Servants of God. To the Venerable Brothers Jeremia, the Patriarch, and to the Metropolitans and Bishops, and to our dear Children, the Clergy and the Maronite People."

In this Bull there is the first official recognition of the Maronite Church in medieval times. Pope Innocent III says that he sent Cardinal Peter, Cardinal Priest with the title of St. Marcellus, to receive the profession of faith of the Maronites. The Pope says that Patriarch Jeremia received the Cardinal in Tripoli and with the Patriarch were Joseph, Bishop of Assaia, and Theodore, Bishop of Kfarfu, etc. In this letter also the Pope requires that the Maronites express their faith in the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son; in the two wills in Christ; that they should mention once the name of the Holy Trinity in Baptism; they should prescribe Confession at least once a year; and that they should use a chalice

[1]Patriarch Stephen Douihee informs us that Pope Pascal wrote a letter to Patriarch Gregory of Halat, but a copy of this letter is not to be found in the Archives of our Patriarchs.

and a paten of gold or silver, or at least of tin, etc.[2] From these enumerations some writers concluded that the Maronites did not have the right faith in all these matters; but the fair historian would only conclude that in the course of time some errors and some abuses might have crept into the practices of the Maronites. The Pope required the correction of all these abuses. That order was promptly complied with. If there had been obstinate heresy it would have required more than a simple correction. We have to note here that the prescription of Confession at least once a year had been recently made at the Fourth Lateran Council, presided over by Innocent III himself. On the other hand, the Pope speaks in this same letter about the Greeks, who already were led astray by some of these errors.

The Pope, in ending his letter to the Patriarch, says the following: "And We renew to you and to your successors the usual prerogatives that you and your predecessors enjoyed in the Antiochene Church. We do grant them to you and to your successors by Our Apostolic authority."[3]

From these concluding sentences it is easy to infer that this Maronite Patriarch and his Bishops were enjoying the grace of union with the Holy See of Peter. The date of this letter is 1215 A. D.

After this we have the letter of Pope Alexander IV to Patriarch Simon of Hadeth, 1256. In this letter Pope Alexander praises the faith of the Maronites, names Patriarch Simon, Patriarch of Antioch and recommends to him those of the Crusaders who took refuge in Lebanon after the Crusaders left Palestine.

Almost two hundred years elapsed before a new Pope wrote any letter to the Maronite Patriarchs. That period was during the domination of the Mameluke Dynasty in Egypt and Syria. The Sultans of this

[2]Father Jerome Bandini, who was once a delegate of the Holy See to the Maronites, wrote about the Bull of Innocent III as follows: "Rome received from her delegates and sometimes from elsewhere an exaggerated report of many abuses in the East, which reports were not substantiated by later facts."

[3]See Father Tobey Honeissy, "Bullarium," pages 2-3.

Dynasty forbade to their subjects any communication with the Occident. The first Pope after that who wrote to the Maronites was Pope Eugenius IV. He sent a letter to Patriarch John of Jaj, 1439. We quote from this letter the following:

"Eugenius the Bishop. Servant of the Servants of God.

To the Venerable Brother, John, Patriarch of the Maronites. Peace and Apostolic Blessing:

We received what you wrote to Us last August from Our dear son, Fra. Peter, O.F.M., and we saw that the grace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ is with you because you accept the doctrine of His Faith with all willingness and you have a great confidence in the Apostolic See and in every Pontiff who occupies this See. Let God Almighty pour His graces on you and on all the people who are under your obedience . . . . . We know that you received Our delegates with such great joy, that this aroused the wrath of your enemies. They seized some of your prominent men and killed others. You showed a great and generous patience on that occasion, so that the saying of the Apostle was realized in you . . . . . We feel that it is our duty in addressing you to tell you that you deserve, because of this, praise and an eternal reward. . . . . .

Given in Florence, 1441, A. D., the eleventh of Our Pontificate."

Patriarch John, to whom this letter was written, was the Patriarch who moved the Patriarchal See to the Monastery of Kenobeen, the present residence of our Patriarchs. Pope Nicholas wrote to Patriarch Jacob, of Hadeth, another letter similar to the one written by Pope Eugenius to Patriarch John. This was in 1447. Pope Calixtus III wrote also to the same Patriarch a letter of praise in 1455. Pope Paul II wrote to Patriarch Peter, of Hadeth, another letter in 1464. The originals of all these six letters are still religiously kept in the archives of our Patriarchs with other more recent Bulls.

Copies of these six Bulls were sent to Pope Leo X at the time of the Fifth Lateran Council. Pope Leo X sent to Patriarch Simon, of Hadeth, a magnificent letter of praise. This letter is dated August 1, 1515.

"God has chosen you," said the Pope, "among the Oriental Churches, to worship Him with Faith; and has preserved you in the midst of the infidels and heretics like the roses among the thorns, etc., etc."

Pope Urban VI, successor of Leo X, is not less explicit. He sent to the same Patriarch Simon a letter not less laudatory.

Pope Pius IV, in whose pontificate the Council of Trent was assembled, wrote September 1, 1562, to

Patriarch Moses, who was successor of Patriarch Simon, as follows:

"When We know from your letters your great respect, obedience and love to the See of Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, and your constancy and the constancy of your Nation in keeping the Faith that the Holy Roman Church holds and teaches, We congratulate you and your Nation, thanking from the bottom of our heart the mercy of God, because He spared for Himself, in those far regions[4] many thousands who did not bend their knees to Baal. The unbearable yoke of the infidel did not succeed in making them break away from the Christian religion, nor could the proximity of schism and heresy corrupt their Faith and separate them from the Catholic Church . . . ."

Pope Clement VII wrote to Patriarch Sarkiss Rozy April 1, 1596.

"Dear Brother: We embrace you and bestow on your Nation, which believes in Christ, Our special love, because you are united with us in the bond of charity . . . . . Your extraordinary devotion to this Holy Apostolic See makes you worthy to be Our dearest sons in Christ Jesus . . . . . By the Grace of God you did not cease to keep safe and intact the Faith that you received from this Roman Church . . . . . ."

Paul V had similar words of praise in his letter to our Patriarch Joseph (December 15, 1606). He calls our Maronites "roses among the thorns."

Pope Urban VIII, in his letters to our Patriarch John (August 3, 1625), calls our Fathers "the flower of Carmel, the glory of Lebanon and of Mount Sion."

Pope Clement XI wrote to Patriarch Stephen Douihee February 7, 1702:

"Your faith grows brighter in our eyes every time we see it surrounded by the darkness of heresies."

We would need much more space if we attempted to copy here the texts of the magnificent letters that the Supreme Pontiffs wrote to our Patriarchs and to other prominent persons in our Nation. Our famous Patriarch, Stephen Douihee, took especial care to collect all the letters of the Roman Pontiffs to the Patriarchs up to his own time (1704). They are known as the Douihee Volume in the Patriarchal Archives. That volume contains 770 pages.[5]

The religious care which our Patriarchs have ever taken of these precious letters speaks for itself.

[4] In those times Lebonon and Syria were considered far away.

[5] More recently Father Tobey Honeissy, the esteemed writer, compiled in one volume most of the Bulls of the Roman Pontiffs to our Patriarchs, under the name of "Bullarium," etc.

The preserving of the correspondence between the Holy See and our Patriarchs since the time of Douihee up to our own was a much easier task.

In ending this first book about our Maronites, I pray to God Almighty to keep always in the hearts of our young generation that precious gift of the Faith, for which their forefathers made so many sacrifices. By the Faith I mean that active Faith that lives by charity, as St. Paul expresses it; because the mere fact of being born of Catholic parents does not at all suffice to make us citizens of that Heavenly Kingdom in which Jesus Christ reigns.

If God grants me life I have in mind to write a second volume, the subject of which will be: "Our Contemporary History."

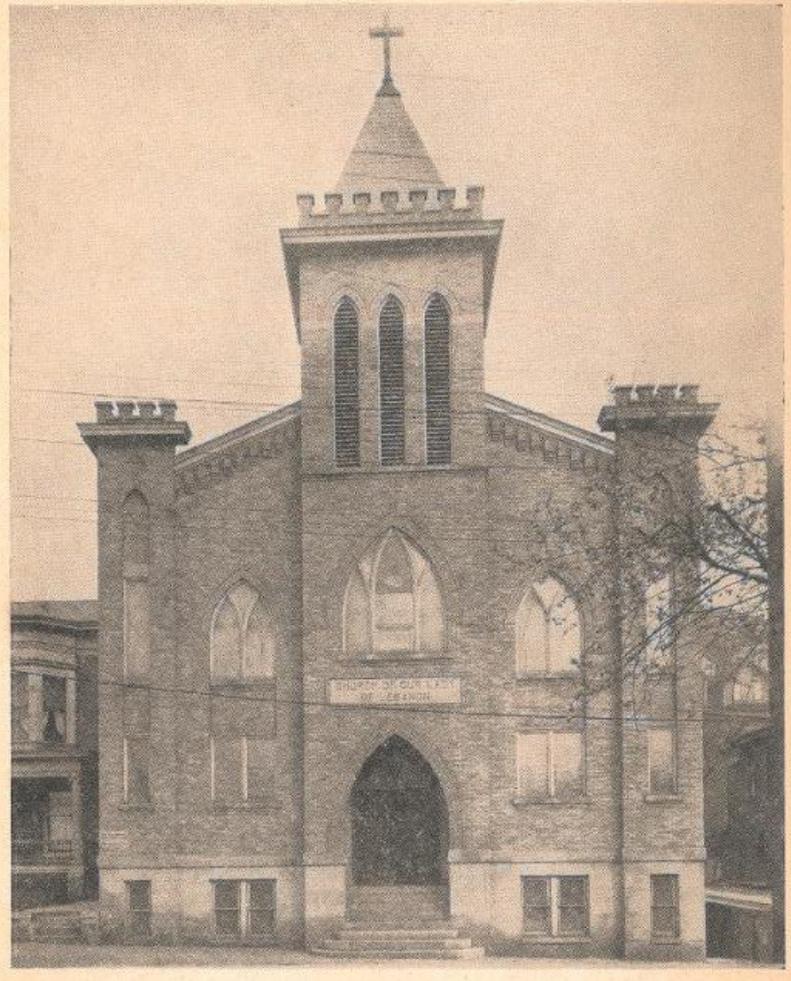
THE END



REV. PAUL ABRAHAM

Was born July 10, 1875, in Missreh (Batroun District, Lebanon). In 1887 he entered the patriarchal Seminary of St. John Maron. In 1890 he was admitted to St. Joseph's University of the Jesuit Fathers in Beyrouth (Syria) where he followed the classical course of French, Latin and Greek. In 1895 he entered the School of St. Etienne in Jerusalem for the study of philosophy, theology, Holy Scripture and Hebrew. The head of the school was Father J. M. Lagrange.

In 1901 he was ordained a priest at the Monastery of Kenobeen. In 1906 he was sent by his beatitude Patriarch Elias Hoyek, by order of the Holy See, to Wheeling, W. Va. In Wheeling was built, by God's help, the favors of the late Bishop P. J. Donahue, the Right Rev. Bishop J. J. Swint and the co-operation of the congregation, the beautiful Church of Our Lady of Lebanon and the adjoining school and Sister's house.



CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF LEBANON, 2216 EOFF ST., WHEELING, W. VA.

ERRATA

Error, The Pogonat, page 44, line 22; correct, Pogonat.

Error, Omanus, page 50, line 26; correct Amanus.

Error, Recrueil, page 50, line 35; correct, Recueil.

Error, Abd-Al-Malih, page 50, line 48; correct, Abd-Al-Malik.

Error, Hojira, page 51, line 6; correct, Hegira.

Error, fifteen, page 54, line 12; correct, fourteen.

Error, Abd-El-Melek, page 55, line 26; correct, Abd-Al-Malik.

Error, book the national, page 57, line 41; correct, book in the national.

Error, Emmericus, page 64, line 36; correct, Amaury.

Error, Hedeth, page 66, line 36; correct, Hadeth.

Error, Lomartine, page 73, picture page; correct, Lamartine.

Error, Psha, page 93, line 33; correct, Pasha.

Error, Beoharry, page 93, line 32; correct, Becharry.

Error, Emil, page 126, lines 3 and 4; correct, Emir.

Error, Abdel-Elhad, page 129, line 21; correct, Abdel-Ahad.

Error, languages, page 162, line 6; correct, language.

Error, Soleiman, page 162, lines 32-34; correct, Suleiman.

Error, has, page 162, line 21; correct, had.

Error, title, page 180, line 29; correct, titles.

Error, Soleiman, page 164, lines 1-7-8; correct Suleiman.