



REZIAH (URMI) ISSUE

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LIGHT FROM THE EAST

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Patriarch's Appeal

From the Patriarchal Cell
of the Church of the East
Prayers and blessings receive

To Our Beloved Children in Christ, our Brother the Prelates, the priests, Deacons, and the Faithful of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East, along with the sons of the Assyrian nation living in the various countries of the World,

In this issue of the "Light From The East", there appears in the Syriac section, a lengthy report made by Mr. Samuel D'beth Kelaita of Marbishu, Visitor General of the Church of the East in Iran relative to his recent trip to the Church in Urmia (Reziah) and the adjacent Assyrian villages, along with a number of appeals addressed to us by the priests, deacons and elders of the Assyrian community in Reziah.

This trip was undertaken by our specific request and Patriarchal command and we wish to express our deep gratitude to Mr. Samuel D'beth Kelaita, for all the trouble he has taken and for the detailed report with which he has supplied us. His trip was made especially hazardous by the fact that he had only recently recovered from a serious illness. We send him our Apostolic blessing and pray that he may be restored to complete health by the Divine physician of Nazareth.

The importance of this trip lies in the fact that it is the first time in the last thirty four years, that a representative of the Patriarch has visited Reziah, and that we have received first hand information regarding the situation of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East in that historic part of Iran.

These reports contain a sad, yet encouraging picture of the existing situation. The description given of the many villages that are still partially in ruins as the results of the events of the first World War, and the fact that of the many thousands of Assyrians who once lived in Urmia only a fraction is now left cannot but bring sorrow to ones heart. On the other hand, the description given of the progress made in the modernization of the country which has taken place under the rule of his late Imperial Majesty of Iran and his successor, and the freedom afforded to the Assyrians by the government of Iran to maintain their faith and language are most heartening.

The appeal made by the authorities of the Church in Urmia, for the establishment of fifteen and eventually thirty village schools in which Syriac will

be taught, along with the faith of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of our forefathers, is most welcome, and we are confident that it will be read with deep interest by Assyrians all over the world, and especially by those in the United States of America, irrespective of denominational affiliations, to whom this appeal is primarily directed. The financial assistance asked for is indeed insignificant in accordance with the American standard, considering the enterprise involved.

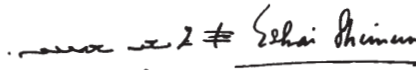
One hundred dollars will pay a teacher for the six months teaching period. In other words, thirty village schools can be maintained for three thousand dollars a year. Another thousand dollars would undoubtedly be needed for the publication of books and other extraordinary expenses connected with the operation of these schools.

This is indeed a very small sum when we consider the issue at stake. It means the loss or retention of our two thousand years christian heritage, the Aramaic (Syriac) language, spoken by Our Lord Himself, along with its history of thousands of years and a treasure of literature.

Hitherto all the help forthcoming for the educational cause has come from the members of the Church of the East in the U.S.A. and to a lesser extent from the Church of India, and through the Patriarchal Pence system. But as the membership of the Church of the East in this country is not large, and their financial commitments are many, it is not possible for the Church to bear alone this extra burden. Nevertheless, this question does not affect the Church of the East alone, but every Assyrian, irrespective of his church affiliations. Protestations of zeal and love for ones people and heritage are futile unless followed by action!

Our appeal is therefore directed to the readers of the "Light From The East", to Our Beloved Children in Christ, members of the Church of the East, and the Assyrians in general, along with the organizations existing among the Assyrians in this country.

It is our earnest prayer that all will generously respond to this heart rending appeal coming from a people who, despite the overwhelming odds existing, are willing and anxious to maintain the heritage of our forefathers in the cradle of its birth. There will be perhaps individuals who may undertake the maintenance of one school! All contributions may be sent to the "Church of the East General Educational Fund", and addressed to the Patriarchate of the East, 6346 N. Sheridan Rd., Chicago 40, Illinois, U.S.A. May the Grace of Maran Eshoo M'shikha, the love of Alaha Aba and the Communion of Rukha Qaddisha, be with you all, Amen.


By Grace,
Catholicos Patriarch of the East.

THE PATRIARCH'S TRIP TO THE EAST

His Holiness Mar Shimun XXIII Catholicos Patriarch of the East visited Philadelphia on December 28th. For dinner he was the guest of Aprim d'Beth Mar Elia, and there were also a number of Assyrians present there on the occasion. On Sunday, the 30th, he celebrated the Qurbana Qaddisha in the Episcopal Church of St. Simeon, and the occasion was attended by a good sized congregation. The Patriarch had breakfast at the house of Samuel Yohannan, and he appointed the Committee for the Church in Philadelphia. Rabi Mishael, who recently came from Iraq, was appointed as president of the Committee. The Patriarch had dinner at the house of Shlemon Lazar Oushana.

On January 4th the Patriarch was guest for dinner at George Burney. On January 6th, he celebrated Qurbana Qaddisha in Yonkers in the Church of St. Andrews attended by Deacons Baba Sargis, David Sargis, Aprim Shomon and Khoona Shomon. A part of the choir of New Britain, which had specially come for the occasion, sang during the service. Breakfast was served by the Daughters of the Church of the East at the Assyrian National Association Club.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER TUCKER

The "Light from the East" is now being written by an editorial committee consisting of Rev. Isaac Rehana, Syriac editor; Narsay J. Serges, English editor; and Miss Shirley Bacus, editorial assistant. Rev. Irwin St. John Tucker reluctantly resigned the position of editor due to the pressure of duties of his parish. We shall strive to maintain the high standards established by Rev. Tucker since the inception of the paper in November, 1948.

It is a rare occasion for a man of one particular denomination to expend so much energy and time to another denomination. We have been privileged and fortunate to witness such an occurrence. In the rhetoric of journalism, Father Tucker served as reporter, copy-reader, and editor. No remuneration was ever requested. Only a man of great humility and deep religious convictions could have served us so faithfully.

The people of the Church of the East are proud to know you Father Tucker. On behalf of our subscribers throughout the world, I say "thank you for a job well done, and you will always be in our hearts".

Narsay J. Serges

THE BOOK OF TREASURES

Philosophy and Science of Job of Edessa (Mar Eyob of Urhai)

Assyrian members of the Church of the East throughout the world are now seeking to revive the educational institutions for which their people and church were famous for centuries. Herewith is begun the story of one of their greatest sages, Job of Edessa, born about 760 A.D.

According to Western historians, civilization and culture began with the Greeks, and spread to the barbarian peoples of the West with the advent of the Roman Empire.

This theory that the Greeks were originators of all knowledge and science has taken such firm hold on the West that even the Christian Faith has come to be understood as part of Western culture. While it is not denied that Christ and His apostles were Semites, yet every attempt has been made to show the influence of Greek philosophy in the moral and philosophic teaching of the New Testament.

This erroneous theory is due to three causes:

1. Ignorance of western historians regarding the history of Asia in general, and the Middle East in particular.
2. In more recent times the egoism, common to human frailty, which re- sents acknowledgement of indebtedness.
3. Reluctance to face the enormous task of rewriting the history of the West required by the total reversal of cultural conceptions caused by new discoveries in the Middle East.

Despite their reluctance Western historians are being forced to face this task. A gradual change of attitude is discerned, resulting from findings in the Middle East during the last century and especially since the first world war.

RECENT DISCOVERIES

E. A. Speicer, formerly director of the American School of Oriental Research in Baghdad, and chairman of the Department of Oriental Studies, University of Pennsylvania, in an article on the history of ancient Beth-Nahreen (Mesopotamia) entitled "A Light that Did Not Fail" published in the National Geographic Magazine of January, 1951, says:

"Mesopotamia gives tremendous perspective to our modern civilization. In common with the rest of the ancient Near East--Egypt, Palestine, Syria and

Iran--Mesopotamia had put in more time on the progress of mankind before the rise of Greece and Rome than has elapsed between the Homeric age and our own times.

When Rome, founded according to tradition in the eighth century B.C.,-- was less than a hundred years old, Nineveh in Assyria had come to the end of a 4,000 year career. What Mesopotamia has achieved during several milleniums of steady progress did not come to an abrupt close when the Greeks took over. Through one channel or another, the fruits of that accumulated experience spread to Europe, to enrich the classical world and to be passed along eventually to our own culture as a living and tangible force."

Geographical proximity of the Greek archipelago to the Near East and its very insignificance in comparison with that region in size and fertility as well as in the position the latter holds as link between East and West, are prima facie evidence that Greeks always played the part of borrower, rather than giver, to the Near East.

Geometry, until recently considered in the West an invention of the Greeks and attributed to the mathematician Euclid who lived in the third century B.C., was revealed only two years ago, by tablets unearthed in the little Sumerian country seat of Shadipur, near Baghdad, to have been taught to children of Beth-Nahreen 1,700 years before the birth of Euclid.

GREEKS ONLY TRANSMITTERS

With the fall of the Assyrian Empire and other kingdoms in the Middle East in the centuries - long internecine struggle, the Greeks, isolated in their remote barren islands, were able to maintain and perhaps add something to the culture, philosophy and civilization of the afflicted peoples of the Middle East.

But they were not originators, rather, they were the transmitters of that vast treasury of knowledge developed in the teeming lands of Mesopotamia through the four milleniums of its rich civilization.

During the first centuries of the Christian era, the Assyrian Christians, through the agency of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East, led the Christian world not only in propagation of the Christian Faith, but also in all the Scientific knowledge of the day.

GREAT BOOK DISCOVERED

Among the greatest thinkers of that magnificent Church--Job of Edessa stood preeminent. Yet his very name was unknown, in the West, until a copy of his greatest work, Kthawa d'Simatha ("Book of Treasures") was discovered by an Assyrian, A. Mingana, and published in English and Aramaic in Cambridge England by the firm of Heffer and Son.

Job of Edessa was a great philosopher, mathematician, physician and theologian, all combined. His work, with which this article is concerned, is in the form of an encyclopaedia, embracing almost all natural and philosophical science as taught in Baghdad about the year 817 A.D.

At this time the Dark Ages covered all of Europe. Only in the Middle East did the torch of learning flourish. How brightly that torch burned it is the purpose of LIGHT FROM THE EAST to show in this series of articles.

FIRST OF MANY COLLEGES

Job of Edessa, known in Aramaic as Eyob of Urhai, and by Arabic writers called Ayyub ar-Ruhawi, is said to have been born in the city of Urhai probably in the year 760 A.D.

In that city the first renowned college of the Church of the East was founded as a monastic institution in the early part of the third century, or perhaps earlier. The Greeks called it Edessa, after Edessa in Macedonia, Turks call it Urfa.

The history of Urhai goes back to the days of the Assyrian Empire. It is situated in the northwest of Beth-Nahreen, near the headwaters of one branch of the Euphrates River.

Universities such as that in Edessa were established by the Church of the East in Nisibin, Beth-Lapat, Seleucia-Ctesiphon and Baghdad. These, and other similar institutions of learning, became famous in history.

Little is known of the life and works of Job of Edessa. This work is his only known to be in existence, although scores of volumes of writings are attributed to him. Until Mingana stumbled across this manuscript in Beth-Nahreen, even it was unknown. The manuscript he found had been copied in the year 1221 from the original.

The theory on the part of Mingana as to the place of Job's birth is mere assumption, for if his family had originated from Urhai generations before, the appellation would still be applicable to the author. He was also nicknamed "Job the Spotted".

It is believed Job taught in the university of Nisibin, and also in the school of medicine in Baghdad. He lived in the Patriarchate of Mar Thimotheus I Catholicos Patriarch of the East, himself a man of profound learning.

This period, perhaps marked the apogee of learning and knowledge in the history of the Church of the East. Islam had just emerged as the great champion of Syriac civilization against the Hellenistic onslaught.

The Church of the East, as repository of Syriac civilization, was greatly favored by the enlightened Khalifs of Baghdad, and employed by them in translating into Arabic the voluminous philosophic and scientific literature existing in both Syriac and Greek,—with which latter language the Church was thoroughly familiar.

Job of Edessa was therefore only one of a legion of luminaries which shone brightly in the crown of that Church.

Thousands of works by these glorious writers have disappeared completely. Their greatness may be faintly judged by this encyclopaedia, rescued from oblivion by a chance discovery. How many such treasures exist to be discovered among the relics of the Church of the East only time will reveal.

A. Mingana, the discoverer, was an Assyrian from the Zakho area of Iraq. He spent the major part of his life in England. His translation runs into 296 pages, with an introduction of 32 pages. The Syriac manuscript itself is produced in facsimile, and is 297 pages in length.

Although this is the only work of Job's known to the present, there is ample testimony to his great versatility. The great Khunain bar Iskhag, another equally noted Assyrian physician who died in the year 876 A.D. says Job translated into Syriac (Aramaic) thirty-six works of Galen, the great Greek medical author: especially his famous book on Simple Drugs.

MANY FAMOUS WRITERS

Of Khunain Bar Iskhag, Mingana says "He was responsible more than any other, for spreading knowledge of Greek learning in the Abbasid capital."

Other equally famous Assyrian physicians and authors of this period are Sahda of Karkh, Shimun d' Taybuteh, and Abu Yahya al-Batriq, Christian Arab, who died about A.D. 805. His son Yahya al Batriq, shared his fame. These, as well as Khunain bar Iskhag "The Great" were devout members of the Church of the East.

Abu Yahya al-Batriq was employed by the Khalif Mansour to translate various works from Syriac and Greek into Arabic. The accomplishments of these

famous physicians from the Bokhtisho family, of a later period, have become a legend.

These are only a few of a host of equally noteworthy names of the physicians and authors of the Church of the East, whose fame has passed into history. There were many, many others, whose works along with their names, have been completely lost.

LIGHT BROUGHT TO EUROPE

Their thirst for knowledge was so great that some Greek philosophers whose works had been lost in the original survived only as translated into Aramaic (Syriac) and from that translated into other languages.

Thus the Assyrian Christians, through the agency of Islam, gave back to the west the knowledge once borrowed from them by the Greeks, then lost to the West through the superstition and ignorance prevailing in Europe during the Dark Ages.

The university established by Arab conquerors of Spain in Cordova became the gateway for diffusing the knowledge of philosophy and science in the West, during the centuries-long Arab rule. Deeply indebted were the Arabs, says Mingana, to the Church of the East both in the acquirement and also in the propagation of knowledge. He writes:

"Job was the first to develop in detail, through a deductive method of reasoning based on natural phenomena, the idea of the elemental origin of the universe and of the different bodies comprising it. Ibn Rabban at Tabari, who wrote some years after him, distinctly borrows some of his conclusions. His views reached Cordova, in Spain, another Moslem center of learning and from it radiated to the foyers of knowledge in Italy and France.

The philosophy and physics of Averroes (Ibn Rushd) Avicenna (Ibn Sina) Alfarabius (Al-Farabi) and many others were translated into Latin, and exercised great influence on the scientific teaching of the Middle Ages.

Western scientists of that period, having lost sight of the works of Aristotle and his followers in their original Greek, were dependent on the Arab writers.

Their development of the idea of the elemental origin of bodies was not more advanced than that worked out by Job of Edessa at the beginning of the 9th century. He therefore rightly may be considered as the father of the concrete development of the theory of the elemental origin of bodies, a conception which became firmly rooted in the minds of scientific investigators of later generations.

(To be continued.)

JOSEPH HOLLERBACH

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CHICAGO NEWS

The Church of the East held a farewell dinner in honor of Father Saul D. Neesan on January 13th. The affair was held in the church basement, and approximately 100 members attended. Guests of honor were Rab Khaila and Lady Helen d'Beth Mar Shimun and Rev. and Mrs. Irwin St. John Tucker. The toastmaster was Gabriel Sargis. A delicious roast beef dinner was prepared and served by the Daughters of the Church of the East.

In appreciation of Rev. Neesan's devotion to duty, the Church Committee and the Daughters of the Church of the East presented him with Fifty Dollars and a beautiful Parker 51 desk pen set. At a previous club meeting, the Youth Organization had presented him with a Parker 51 pen and pencil set.

Rev. Neesan served the church faithfully for ten years, and he will be reverently remembered.

We wish you good health and great success in New Britain.

Sgt. George Neesan, son of Rev. and Mrs. Saul D. Neesan, recently spent a fifteen day furlough at home. George is now enroute to Korea. We wish him a safe and speedy return home.

On January 27th the congregation elected the following Church Committee officers and members:

President Gabriel Sargis
Vice President Alex Stephen
Treasurer..... Alex Warda
Secretary..... Narsay J. Serges

Sam Aziz, Saul Elias, John Hosanna, Zia Miroo, Joel Pera, David Sargis, Nimrod Sargis and David Yadgir.

Mr. and Mrs. James Warda are the proud parents of a baby boy. James is the treasurer of the Youth Organization, and the son of Alex and Emma Warda.

The Daughters of the Church of the East recently held a successful rummage sale in the church basement. The sale lasted five days, and the women are to be congratulated for their efforts.

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NET BRITAIN NEWS

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Sargis of Linwood St., are the proud parents of a baby boy.

Eight members of the church choir motored to Yonkers in order to sing at the communion service held on Sunday, January 6th at St. Andrews Church. They were accompanied by Deacons David Sargis and Arthur Nimrod.

His Holiness, Mar Eshai Shimun celebrated the Christmas communion service at the Parish House on January 7. He was attended by Deacons Yonan Jones and David Sargis. Special prayers were offered for Mariam Joseph who passed away recently.

The Patriarch spent two days in the city, and discussed several matters of importance with all the church committees. His Holiness especially impressed upon the Youth to re-activate their organization.

The Youth Club has been re-organized, and at a recent meeting the following officers were elected for 1952:

- President Albert Sargis
- Vice President..... Julie Ives
- Secretary..... Rose Baba
- Treasurer..... Jack Baba
- Asst. Treasurer..... Anna Yonan

The "Light from the East" congratulates the leaders of this movement, and wishes the group great success.

TURLOCK NEWS

The church members wish to publicly thank Mrs. Roomie Yohanani, president of the Daughters of the Church of the East, for her time and co-operation in helping to make all the church activities a great success. Words alone cannot express the gratitude held by every member towards Mrs. Yohanani.

A bazaar was recently held by the Daughters of the Church of the East. The members of the society wish to thank the Assyrians of Turlock who, regardless of denomination, always attend the church affairs, and are always so eager to be of any help.

Jimmy Cauldy prepared and served a turkey dinner for the church members in honor of his daughter Karen, who has recovered rapidly since her accident. He also donated \$100 to the Daughters of the Church of the East.

Keyou Yonan gave a dinner, honoring the baptism of the latest addition to his family, a son named Khanoo Keyou Yonan. Congratulations Mr. and Mrs. Yonan. He also donated \$100 to the church society.

The Daughters of the Church of the East gave a surprise birthday party in celebration of David Badal's 85th birthday. He was presented with many lovely gifts, and was greatly overwhelmed.

In a recent election the following church officers were elected:

- President..... Louis Odishoo
- Vice-President..... Avesha Yohanani
- Secretary..... Kinya Yonan
- Asst. Secretary..... Baba Iramia
- Treasurer Jimmy Cauldy

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. John Lazaar on the birth of their second son.

LAMSA'S BOOKS

This great scholar's translation direct from the original Aramaic, and his wonderful commentaries on Scriptural life and times, have produced the effect of a revolution in all religious circles. The word most often applied to them is "Marvellous!"

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GOSPEL LIGHT,	\$2.75	THE BOOK OF PSALMS,	\$1.50
THE NEW TESTAMENT,	\$2.50	THE SHEPHERD OF ALL,	\$.60
NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY,	\$3.75	MODERN WISDOM,	\$.75

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