

Edited by SCOTLAND LIDDELL.

TRADE AT BATOUM.

Competition Reviving.

H.M. Consul at Batoum, in a recent report, says:—The number of steamers that have visited Batoum this year (1919) is comparatively small. Outside British transports and Government ships, the number since the resumption of trade has been 95 steamers. Of these 29 were under the British flag and 6 under the American flag. Small craft, including steamers plying between here and Constantinople, are numerous. They trade principally under the British, Greek, and Italian colours. Only about ten tank steamers have loaded oil here. They were:—One British steamer, about 3,000 tons, for Great Britain, two British steamers, about 6,000, for Turkey, one Belgian steamer, about 3,000 tons, for Antwerp, two Belgian steamers, about 3,500 tons, for Odessa, three Russian steamers, about 7,000 tons, for Odessa, one Russian steamer, about 1,750 tons, for Marseilles. The oil exports have quite recently taken a spurt, and healthy development before long is foreshadowed in this branch of trade. The approximate quantity of manganese ore shipped at Batoum and Poti since the Black Sea was reopened to trade has been, as near as possible, 25,000 tons. Of this quantity about two-thirds have gone to the United Kingdom, and one-third to American ports. About 2,000 tons of tobacco have been loaded, principally at Batoum and Soukhoum, for the United Kingdom.

The principal importers of manufactured goods (such as textiles, boots, shoes, stationery, perfumery, soap, screws, nails, enamelled iron ware utensils, leather and sulphate of copper) and colonial produce (as for instance, Indian tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar, etc.) are British firms. The Italians come next in rotation with a similar class of goods (except colonial goods), but cheap and much inferior in quality to the British-made article. They, nevertheless, find a ready sale at profitable prices for their merchandise. The French follow with more or less similar goods. The volume of their imports has hitherto not been great. A certain proportion—about 30 per cent. of the import trade—is carried on by small merchants of a variety of nationalities who travel backward and forward between Batoum and Constantinople. They buy goods of every conceivable description at the latter place, and

bring them to Batoum, where they are sold to small dealers and merchants who come here from the inland districts to purchase their requirements.

Members of the American Relief Committees are also busily engaged in opening up trade with America. Hitherto, little else but flour and clothing, for distribution to Armenian refugees and persons of other nationalities in distress, have reached this country, from the United States, but the attention which is being paid to the Trans-Caucasus by American interests points to an appreciable increase in American trade in the near future. The Italians are no less active. Their Mission at Tiflis is striving, by all means possible, to acquire an ascending position in the industries and trade of Transcaucasia. A striking example of their activity is the recent establishment by the Lloyd Triestino of a fortnightly service of passenger and cargo steamers, via Northern Black Sea and Caucasian coast ports, from Trieste to Batoum and back, calling at Poti. It is just possible that the new line may divert some of the trade, which is now coming to Batoum, through Poti to Georgia.

ITALY AND GEORGIA.

Civil Mission Coming to Tiflis.

Mr. Gegetchkori, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, has received the following note from Colonel Gabba, the chief of the Italian Military Mission in Trans-Caucasia:

"His excellency, Count Sforza, assistant of the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, asks me to communicate the following to you: On the special ship, 'Solunto', which will bring the Italian civil mission to Trans-Caucasia there will be five hundred tons of flour which the Italian government grants to the government of Georgia for the needs of the Georgian population. The Italian government is extremely sorry that the 'Solunto' cannot carry more freight and therefore the remaining 500 tons, which are also ready to be sent, cannot be loaded on it. Further, the Italian government has taken upon itself the task of supporting before the Economic Council the demand for supplying Georgia with victuals.

"The ship 'Solunto' will arrive about February 12. According to the latest information I have received, the Italian civil mission consists of about

forty members. Besides these, there are twenty men attached for service and for escorting the motor-cars which the mission is bringing for itself".

Georgian Colonies' Congratulations.

Telegrams from London and Constantinople.

The following telegrams have been received in Tiflis: "President Georgian Government, Jordania, Tiflis—

"His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Allies having granted *de facto* recognition of the governments of Georgia and Azerbaijan, the Georgian colony in London offers its congratulations to the government and country on this first decisive international step in the way of our final political emancipation which will, we hope, soon be achieved as the result of the wisdom of our government and the political maturity of our nation.

Djakell, Chairman of the Georgian Colony in London".

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tiflis. "To the President of the Constituent Assembly and president of the Government Jordania.

The news of the recognition of Georgia has filled the whole colony with enthusiasm. We send our warm congratulations and wishes for the fortune and prosperity of free and independent Georgia.

Trzkhiladze, Georgian Colony, Constantinople".

Armenian Troops' Aggression.

On January 31 the editor of "Vozrojdenie" received the following telegram:

"Through the medium of the newspaper "Vozrojdenie" we ask you to advise the Georgian and Azerbaijan governments and the representatives of the Great Powers—England, America, France and Italy—that yesterday the Armenian regular forces passed through the village of Goulabart attacking the Tchaldyr district and sweeping off all the population of this district with artillery and machine-gun fire. The population asks, for the sake of humanity, that help be given and that they be saved from complete destruction.

The Akhaltzikh Committee, Khalil Aga, Abdulla-Ogly, Gassan Mamed-Ogly, Abass Benal-Ogly".

NINA WARDROP.

Georgian Ladies' Gift.

The Georgian Ladies' Society of Charity had presented to Miss Nina Wardrop, the little daughter of Mr. Oliver Wardrop, the British Chief Commissioner in Trans-Caucasia, an ancient cross of Saint Nina. The cross is studded with precious stones. Mr. Wardrop received the gift on behalf of his little girl.

PERSIA AND GEORGIA.

Historical Connections.

Referring to the acknowledgment of the independence of Georgia and Azerbaijan, "Iran", the official organ of the Persian government, writes, greeting this greatest event for both nations:

"For a long time Persia has had dreams of having good neighbours without imperialistic aspirations in mind... Azerbaijan is for Persia more than a good neighbour. Azerbaijan is our own brother. After the Azerbaijan people themselves, Persians are the next who are sincerely glad at the recognition of the independence".

Further, referring to Georgia, the paper writes:

"Persia has historical connections with Georgia. At the time when the Persian people struggled for their freedom with a despotic government, Georgian leaders, agents of freedom, shared this struggle with the Persian socialists. The Persian people will never forget those disinterested fighters for freedom who then came to Persia, ready to sacrifice their lives, and worked in order that the Persian people should have freedom".

The article concludes with the sincere wish that the best and most friendly relations be settled between the Trans-Caucasian republics and Persia.

"Rad", the most widely-read Persian newspaper, writes:

"The telegraph has brought us the glad news that Azerbaijan and Georgia have been resurrected from their historical tomb to a new, free and independent life. We heartily greet this event in the history of both nations, and we wish them welfare in their independent and cultural life".

EDITORIAL.

Georgian Beauties.

We wrote last week of some of the advantages of Georgia as a health resort—of mountains that out-Alp Switzerland, of great plains and sunny valleys that will surely tempt the traveller from abroad. Now we have to write of other Georgian beauties. The fact is—we have recently been several times to the Opera and we have been surprised to find that we never before realised how many pretty girls there are in Tiflis. A visit to the Town Theatre is a revelation. During the *entractes* one has only to stand in a quiet corner of the promenade to see a most interesting procession of happy pretty girls go by.

Workmen's Night.

But perhaps the most interesting time of all is to go to the Opera when there is a special workmen's night. Then one sees the Georgian people—the workers and their wives and families. They are all keen music-lovers and they take an extraordinary amount of pleasure in the performances. In few other countries can one see such crowded houses when grand Opera is the fare as in Tiflis, and the popular evenings are by no means the least well attended.

The Artistes.

For the presentation of the various operas, we have nothing but praise. The scenery is excellent. As for the artistes, it is again a matter for surprise that there is so much talent in the town. Perhaps we are somewhat Philistine, but we confess that we have sometimes less appreciation of great singers than we have of smaller ones whose voices seem more agreeable to us. For instance, in "Tcherevitchky" ("High-heeled Shoes"), a most interesting opera, by the way—although we enjoyed the singing of Madame Davidova, we liked that of Madame Ris even more. In the same opera, the tenor, Zalipsky, had the most pleasing voice. But to us, the best singing of all was that of Madame Glaz in "Tzarskaia Nevesta" ("The Tzar's Bride"). In the character of Lubasha her unaccompanied solo in the first act was a real joy. With the orchestra, her singing is perhaps hardly strong enough for a large theatre, but without it her voice was true and very beautiful.

More Language Difficulties.

For those of us who speak and understand Russian somewhat imperfectly, it is difficult to understand the opera unless one knows it very well. But this is not a serious matter: one can always understand the music—and the music is the thing. We referred last week to the number of Georgian students who are learning English. Unfortunately, they do not speak very much as yet, hence the complaint of a British officer who grumbled to us about his inability to speak the local tongues. "I know 'Spassebo' and the Russian word for caviare", he said to us, grumbling, "and I defy anyone to carry on a very interesting conversation with these two words". As far as learning English is concerned, we feel we must mention an incident that occurred the other day. Probably a young man in the British service in Tiflis was anxious to combine the learning of type-writing with the acquisition of the English language, because when a sheet of paper which had been left in a type-writing machine was taken out it was found to read: "Hed, cuarters british militari michion trans caucasia tiflis"...

The Way to the West.

In this number of the "Georgian Mail" we publish an interesting statement regarding the train service between Constantinople and Paris. There was a time when this service was not altogether smooth, but each week matters are improving. We confidently expect that within a very few months travelling to Western Europe will be a much easier matter than it is at present. Shipping facilities should be improved by then and this will not only be a boon to travellers, but will also greatly help the trade of Georgia and Azerbaidjan with the outer world. So far, the shipping difficulties have been almost as serious a handicap as the money exchange. We met a British business man the other day who had just arrived from London. He told us that he came overland from Paris to Bucharest. At the latter town he was advised to go direct to Constanza where he would get a steamer to Batoum. This he did. There was no steamer, however, so after waiting for a few days he determined to travel to Constantinople. A ship was leaving Constanza the same day so he thought himself lucky to get a passage on it. Arrived at Constantinople, he considered

himself even more fortunate in securing a berth on another steamer which was going to Batoum next day. He left Constantinople, feeling very pleased with himself, but to his chagrin and intense annoyance he found that the first calling-place for the steamer was Constanza...

A Fable.

Once upon a Time, there was a Man who travelled from a Far Country to a Land across the Seas. And it came to pass that he found himself in Pastures new and Most Agreeable. He found himself in a Land overflowing with Carpets and Rugs and Articles of great Antiquity. And lo! they were Good to look upon, so the Traveller sojourned in the Land for Many Days. And in this time he was wont to hie himself to the Bazaar and there to purchase Merchandise. And the Merchants and the Sellers of Strange Goods basked in the Sunshine of his Patronage, while Karapet and Solomon would bow low before him, lest their glad Smiles should give the Game away. And the Stranger would carry many goods off to his Tent, while Karapet and Company took Paper Money to the Bank, where their Accounts waxed very fat. And lo! but it was Good. Now it came to pass after Many Days that the Stranger girded up his loins and turned his Face once more towards the West. He also girded up the Bales of Merchandise and hummed Strange Music, known to the pre-war Ancients as 'Rag time Tune'. Then he set out upon his Way. But there was Law in the Land, and it came to pass that those who sat in the Seat of Customs said to the Stranger, "Brother, what have you in these many Bales?" And the Stranger made answer, lifting up his Voice and saying, "These are my Haul—er—All. I prithee let them pass". But the Sitters in the Place of Customs hardened their Hearts against him and cried out with one Voice, saying, "Oh! Stranger, this is still more Strange. For it is written in the Book of the Law that such Things cannot be. This Land expects that every Man will pay his Duty". And lo! the Stranger was parted from his Goods, and they went their Separate Ways. And it came to pass, even as the Merchandise had failed to do, that the Stranger cried aloud to Heaven in Language of the Earth Unearthly—but what he said can only be written in Stars * * * * * and Stripes—

And the Moral?... There is none. This is an immoral Tale.

S. L.

Paris-Constantinople, Paris.

The following memorandum on the train service between Paris and Constantinople has been forwarded by the British High Commissioner at the latter city:—

A train leaves Paris (Gare de Lyon) and Constantinople (Birkedji) daily. It contains six wagon-lits and one restaurant car, each wagon-lit being numbered. The restaurant car runs to Bucharest via Brodi, but there is no restaurant car service between Belgrade and Brodi. There is no direct wagon-lit service between Constantinople and Belgrade, but there is a wagon-lit service from Constantinople as far as Sofia only, three days a week, and the usual daily train leaving 14-15 hours on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; and from Sofia to Constantinople on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. The first-class fare between Constantinople and Belgrade is approximately L10 sterling, including wagon-lit accommodation as far as Sofia. Between Belgrade and Paris the first-class fare is 600 francs, wagon-lit charge 207 francs extra.

Civilians travelling through Serbia must have their passports viséd before leaving the frontier towns of Belgrade or Tsaribrod. These must be viséd by: (1) Serbian Prefecture; (2) Serbian G.H.Q. Civilians travelling Belgrade to Paris must have their passports viséd by (1) Serbs; (2) Italians; (3) Swiss. The same applies for journey between Paris and Belgrade. The journey takes two days between Paris and Belgrade, and three days between Paris and Bucharest. The journey takes four days between Constantinople and Belgrade, and between Constantinople and Bucharest. Owing to lack of rolling stock and bad conditions of track, there is an improvised service between Tsaribrod and Piroi, consisting usually of one ordinary box truck and the engine. Passengers are thus obliged to transfer their baggage, etc., into the improvised train for the short journey before joining the connecting mail train at Piroi. This journey takes half-an-hour only.

The Shah's Present.

The Shah of Persia has presented to his Majesty's ship *Ceres* a cup, as a souvenir of his voyage in that ship from Batoum to Taranto. In forwarding the cup to the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs writes:—"It is with much pleasure that his Imperial Majesty takes this opportunity of renewing his thanks for the admirable facilities placed at his disposal by his Britannic Majesty's Navy, and of expressing his appreciation of the courtesy and consideration shown by Captain Reinold and his officers".

The Desolation of Bolshevism.

Blockade as a Weapon Against Propaganda.

In the abundance of testimony to the real meaning and the dangers of Bolshevism which reaches us, particular interest attaches to the evidence of neutral observers. Such a one is Dr. T. H. Fokker, Dutch Consul-General at Kieff, who has just returned from South Russia. Dr. Fokker went to Kieff during the Skoropadski régime, and remained there throughout the Petlura administration and the dark days of Bolshevik rule. In the course of an interview with one of the editors of the Amsterdam *Handelsblad* Dr. Fokker tells the familiar story of extortion, torture, and murder.

Devilishness and destruction is his verdict of the meaning of Bolshevism. Destruction, desolation, and utter despair is all he has seen Bolshevism produce, even in the Ukraine, where its sway was comparatively short. For Central Russia, where Bolshevism rule has been continuous, he fails to see even the possibility of recovery. So much for allowing the Russian people to work out their own salvation in their own way, as some benevolent and charitable idealists proclaim to be England's sacred duty. Moreover, Dr. Fokker insists that the destruction and desolation wrought by the Bolsheviks has been their deliberate policy, their systematic handiwork from the very first day of their coming. It was not provoked by the resistance of "reactionary ogres" like Denikin or Koltchak. The "peace" which "poor Russia" may obtain owing to the Allies withholding their assistance from Denikin and Koltchak will not consequently make an end of destruction, devastation, desolation, and despair, but will rather increase them. The mentality bred by Bolshevism Dr. Fokker briefly describes as devilishness. Every abuse, every vice, every evil habit is fostered by them. Never was such abject villainy known among officials and authorities even in the darkest days of the Tsarist régime. Fiendish cruelty, unbridled profligacy, the general abuse of drugs, opium, cocaine, and of alcohol are the first fruits of the new "democracy".

On the vexed question of the relation of Jews to Bolshevism, Dr. Fokker said, in reply to the question:—"If the population is so strongly opposed to the Bolsheviks, how do you explain that these latter controlled matters so easily at Kieff?"

"Through their powerful organization. You must keep clearly in mind that the Bolsheviks in a very large proportion are Jews, a people exceptionally clever at organizing. The Russians' unbelievable softness, which is typical of some Slav races, has been one of the principal reasons for the ever increasing influence of the Bolsheviks. Again and again groups of labourers and peasants by attacking Kieff have

tried to expel the Bolsheviks, but their aggressive methods were never so organized that any success could be expected from them. The bodyguard of the Special Commission' (under Rakowsky) were almost all Jews'.

It appears from the Dutch Consul's statements that, for all their bluffing arrogance, the Bolsheviks really dread the Allies at bottom, stand in awe of them, and, if properly treated, might well be made to act in accordance with this awe. Shortly before Denikin's successes, Dr. Fokker was told by Rakowsky that he would have to leave Kieff unless Holland acknowledged the Soviet Republic. This being out of the question Dr. Fokker left, taking the Dutch colony with him. Rakowsky, however, got a severe reprimand from Trotsky and the Moscow authorities for not being more tactful, "as it was feared that the Allies would make this a pretext for treating the Bolsheviks more harshly". Now, who are the "softies", one is tempted to ask, and what is their use? It is not by those who have taken up arms against it that Bolshevism has been encouraged.

Dr. Fokker does not seem to agree with the philosophers who urge that the blockade be raised. Eyewitnesses usually do not. He seems to hold that there is plenty of food in Russia, that it is only the system of distribution which is defective. But at the same time he has a most enlightening statement to make about the use of the blockade.

"The Commissary for Foreign Affairs frankly declared to me that he attached much more importance to the exportation of parcels of propaganda-matter than to the importation of food-stuffs—much more". Perhaps it will now be understood why some people are anxious that the blockade of "poor Russia" should be stopped at once.

Asked whether he considered this propaganda matter really dangerous, Dr. Fokker replied:—"All countries should strictly watch against the spreading of this dangerous propaganda; everywhere the peoples should be carefully informed of the dangers which threaten them through Bolshevism. . . Do not forget that the Bolsheviks have robbed the *bourgeois* of Russia of piles of foreign paper money and of all their treasure and valuables, and are trying to export these 'as propaganda-matter' to their friends in every country".

The King's Hopes.

King George addressed the following telegram to the Lord Mayor of London: "At this memorable hour when we are again at peace with Germany, I thank the citizens of London for their loyal message and I feel upon my side, too, the same hopes and ardently desire that, please God, the present occasion may be the dawn of a new era in which the British Empire may always live at peace with all the world".

OLD BAGHDAD.

In the *Treasury* of December, Mr. Donald Maxwell relates how he came upon Baghdad by night:

Suddenly we came upon a scene of strange beauty and dramatic effect. A turn in this narrow and cloister-like way brought us to an arched opening, with some steps leading to the water. It was a sheltered inlet from the surging and swirling stream of the Tigris, a kind of pocket built round by crazy old balconied buildings. This was filled with goufas, the weird round boat of the upper river, and the animated scene of people either embarking or disembarking, made a strange picture. We saw this scene for a few moments only, as we made our way through the crowd at this point. I have since wondered where all these goufas were going. They could not have intended to cross the river under present conditions. I think the rapidly rising river must have upset all calculations as to mooring boats at this point, and their owners were making sure that they were secure. The noise and apparent excitement was probably nothing but the usual Eastern custom of making a great fuss about nothing.

At last, after much marching and counter-marching, we struck the main thoroughfare leading to the Maude bridge, which we crossed. The thick, seething waters foamed and struggled against the pontoons and swept down between them like roaring devils. We were very glad to get over, for it looked as though a little more force would have carried the whole thing away. Once clear of the bridge, we found ourselves in New Street, the thoroughfare made since the British occupation, and incidentally we ran into a cheery naval officer, who picked us up and deposited us again at Navy House, whither he was bound. Had we not received this timely aid I think we should have gone on looking for Navy House all night. A more amazing situation for it could not have been found if you searched the world over. Wedged in, cheek by jowl, with buildings that might have figured in the tall streets of old London, it lay nowhere near the water, down a very narrow and crooked lane, where mules and men, camels and beggars, jostled each other on their lawful occasions.

When we had settled down there and had fine weather for several days, Brown, loath to waste the romance of old Baghdad during glorious moonlight nights, insisted on some mysterious expeditions, which were for the purpose of adventure, but ostensibly arranged to give me an opportunity of sketching. He produced an Arab, arrayed in strange garments, to carry a light, and generally act as a guide. We called him the slave of the lamp. I am quite certain that he thought Brown was mad, but this belief on the whole was rather an advantage, as he treated him with all the more respect because of his affliction, which

he regarded as a special visitation of Allah.

I was surprised that he seemed to take great delight in my sketching, and several times, when I was making notes of some quaint latticed windows overhanging the narrow road, so that they nearly met, he became quite excited, chuckling and laughing to himself, as if in the enjoyment of some tremendous joke. I discovered afterwards that Brown's native servant had been pulling the leg of our worthy slave by telling him that these nightly expeditions were for the purpose of carrying off some ravishingly beautiful lady from one of the harems. No doubt he thought my sketching merely a blind. Measurements with a pencil were obviously part of some mystic language. Night after night we sallied forth and roamed about the narrow ways and tortuous turnings of old Baghdad.

On one occasion we embarked in a goufa, and floated down the rapidly flowing river, keeping close to the left bank, and taking advantage of every eddy and corner of slack water made by projecting buildings, lest we should be swept down too far and lose control of our curious and difficult craft. The level of the water was far above the usual height, and came up to the very thresholds of these riverside houses. We floated on, sometimes under the walls of dark gardens, sometimes getting glimpses of interiors—interiors which in this glamour of night romance suggested something of the splendour of Baghdad's old glory:—"By garden porches on the brim The costly doors hung open wide, Gold glittering through lamplight dim".

The Ex-Kaisers Mental Break-down.

According to the Hague correspondent of *Berliner Tageblatt* the ex-Kaiser has very much aged and the trembling in his right arm and leg has become very pronounced. He has become corpulent although he eats very little. He now speaks very slowly in contrast with formerly. Mr. Noone who has seen the ex-Kaiser at Amerongen has little doubt that he is shaken to pieces mentally and will never play an active role. He no longer expresses the wish to end his days in Germany as he considers that Germany is lost. He more than ever nourishes the belief that he has been deceived, tricked and forgotten by his advisers and the whole nation. It is expected that several members of the ex-Kaiser's family will later on join him in his place of exile. Those now around him including servants number about forty. The letters of his suite are subjected to Dutch censorship.

HASHISH.

"THIS WEIRD AND BEWITCHING DRUG".

Those who have lived in Egypt for any length of time, and mixed with the people, have no doubt come across the "hashash"—i.e., the man who eats, drinks, chews, or smokes hashish, the intoxicating product of the forbidden hemp. The habit still prevails largely, many suffer in health from it, and it is responsible for a good deal of the insanity which is treated in asylums. The term "hashash" is one of opprobrium. Most of us know that the word assassin is derived from "hashashin" (Latin, assassin) the plural of hashash. Hashish (Lat., assis), as a generic term, signifies grass or herbage, fresh or dry; specifically it is applied to preparations of hemp (*Cannabis Indica* or *Sativa*), alias benj, beng, bhang, or bhung, the intoxicating or exciting properties of which have long been known in the East. Sometimes the leaves are chewed. For smoking, the young leaves are used, either alone or mixed with tobacco. The result, Lane tells us in his "Modern Egyptians", is to produce boisterous mirth; but it has various other effects, according to the individual and the form in which it is taken. In India it is sometimes taken in a liquid state by both Moslems and Hindus. The hemp leaves, e.g., are pounded either with or without opium and spices (cloves, nutmegs, mace, black pepper, etc.) and drunk with water, milk, the juice of water-melon, or other fruit. Another method is to boil the leaves in butter or fat for some hours, then press out the juice and mix with honey or other sweet substances. This preparation is called *basit* (cheerfulness). In Arabia the vendor of cheerfulness, and sometimes the eater, is called *basit*. Another kind is called *shirih*.

Hashish is taken largely as an electuary, or conserve. In the streets of Cairo there are little shops called *mashashesh*, in which rows of porcelain, or glazed earthenware, jars—generally coloured blue and white—are ranged on shelves. The principal group of these shops is near the mosque of Sultan Kalatn, in the north of Cairo.

They are not like those in the drug and scent bazaars, but a class apart. The jars contain various preparations of hashish, combined with other ingredients, including henbane, opium, hellebore, and datura. The seed capsules of hemp are pounded and mixed with aromatic and sweet substances. The art of preparation is handed down from father to son, and the trade secrets are jealously preserved. The conserve is called *ma'gūn* (*maajoun*), and the man who eats or sells it *ma-gūngi* (*maajounji*). The varieties are very numerous. The most common is called *barsh* (*bers*). "One kind", says Lane, "makes the person who takes it

manifest his pleasure by singing; another will make him chatter; a third excites to dance; a fourth particularly affects the vision; a fifth is of a sedative nature". As there is such a variety in the quality and strength of the hashish, and the preparation of the ma'gun, and as constitutions differ greatly, it follows that the effects of absorption into the system differ very considerably.

Opium, the less popular rival of hashish, is in Arabic *afūn*, and the person addicted to it an *afūni*. The epithet is less opprobrious than that of hashash. The effect of this "elixir of pleasure", which, De Quincey tells us, "has the keys of Paradise", are well known, and perhaps this drug is the base of the ma'gun more often than the hashash imagines. Hashish is used for stupefying the senses. Thus in the "Thousand and One Nights" we find the companions of Sinbad made drowsy by it; and in another story the faithless wife gives it to her husband in his food, and then goes forth to meet her lover. Some preparations are believed to strengthen the constitution and renovate impaired vigour. Prospero Alpino, who spent some years in Cairo in the reign of our Queen Elizabeth, tells us that a certain quantity was taken daily by the dissolute Ottoman Sultan Murad III., "although he was subject to epilepsy". He discourses at length on various ma'guns, under the titles of *Philonium*, *Bernavi*, *Theriac magna*, *Mithridatium*, etc.

Theophile Gautier has given an amusing account of the fortnightly meetings of the "Club des Hashashin" in Paris. But perhaps the best description of the bizarre influences of hashish has been given by M. Charles Richet.* The chief effects are a great exaggeration of all the feelings, including that of *amour propre*. All the senses are strangely affected. The notion of time is completely upset. Seconds appear like years, and minutes like ages, owing to the immense number and variety of ideas flashed through the brain. Visions of space are equally delusive. Objects assume fantastic shapes and sizes, in an atmosphere of dazzling brilliance; they are magnified and multiplied. Thus a single soldier may appear like a host, and a low staircase like Jacob's ladder ascending to the heavens. Rough daubs or paintings transport you to enchanting scenes and landscapes. A slight noise affects the ear like a crash of thunder or the booming of artillery, and dropping water falls like a resounding cataract. Rude music is converted into celestial strains. A word of reproach is felt as an intolerable insult. And all

* *Revue des Deux Mondes*, "Les poisons de l'intelligence", Mars 1, 1877.

the time there is an entire absence of will and of self-control; you know that your senses are fooling you, but you have no power to resist the spell of the subtle influence. Memory, too, is unimpaired, unless the dose has been too strong; you recollect perfectly what you have said or done. There is often much resemblance to the states of hysteria. M. Richet considers that intoxication by hashish is practically identical with a state of dream or temporary madness. With some persons sleep brings pleasant and fantastic dreams. They are lulled into ecstatic trances or reveries of indescribable beatitude, apparently like those of the dunes of Hassan, the "old man of the mountains".

The sufferings of those who are deprived of the powers to gratify the cravings which habit creates, as in the case of the opium-eater, have been sometimes described. Prospero relates two instances. In one a sailor threw himself into the Nile from a vessel and fled like a maniac to the desert, to the great consternation of his fellow-travellers, who feared they would be held responsible. In the other, a leading camel rider of a caravan on a journey to Jerusalem completely lost the use of his hands and feet, and had to be bound by his companions upon his camel until relief was found.

A resident in the East, can indeed both read and hear many an amusing anecdote regarding the eccentricities of those who indulge in this weird and bewitching drug.

"The Near East".

Japan's Lone Hand in Siberia.

The London newspapers give prominence to the position of Koltchak and Denikin, and to the Japanese resolve to check Bolshevism in Eastern Siberia. A high authority interviewed by the *Daily Mail* said that the presence of the Japanese in Siberia will prove the salvation of the province and even of Manchuria from Bolshevik control. *The Matin* commenting upon the free hand in Siberia conceded by America to Japan says that the fear of Bolshevism has conferred upon Japan a supremacy which neither the triumphs of the Russo-Japanese war nor the negotiations with the Entente during the European war were able to conquer for her. Japan has attained the aim of being alone in Siberia.

Belgiums' "Open Gate".

Lieut. General Dejardin of the Belgian Army has declared to some journalists that Holland's refusal to conclude a military accord with Belgium leaves the north western part of Belgium open to invasion through Maestricht. This gate must be closed. A military alliance should be concluded as soon as possible between France and Belgium.

Mahomed and the Beggar.

In addition to the Koran there is an immense body of tradition which swells the body of Mahomedan religious practice. The following is a story from this collection of traditions.

A man came to the Prophet, begging of him something, and the Prophet said, "Have you nothing at home?" He said, "Yes, there is a large carpet, with one part of which I cover myself, and spread the other, and there is a wooden cup in which I drink water". Then the Prophet said, "Bring me the carpet and the cup". And the man brought them, and the Prophet took them in his hand and said, "Who will buy?" A man said, "I will take them at one silver piece". He said, "Who will give more?" This he repeated twice or thrice. Another man said, "I will take them at two pieces of silver". Then the Prophet gave the carpet and the cup to that man, and took the two pieces of silver, and gave them to the other, and said: "Buy food with one of these pieces, and give it to your family, that they may make it their sustenance for a few days; and buy a hatchet with the other silver piece and bring it to me". And the man brought it and the Prophet put a handle to it with his own hands, and then said, "Go, cut wood, and sell it, and let me not see you for fifteen days". Then the man went cutting wood and selling it, and he came to the Prophet, when verily he had ten pieces of silver, and he bought a garment with part of it, and food with part. Then the Prophet said, "This cutting of wood, and making your livelihood by it, is better for you than coming on the Day of Resurrection with black marks on your face".



CHURCH OF ENGLAND SERVICE

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 15

(Quinquagesima Sunday).

Matins and Holy Communion 11 a. m.

At the house of the British Chief Commissioner, Sergievskala 13.

All British and Americans are invited.

H. THOMPSON.

Chaplain to the Forces.