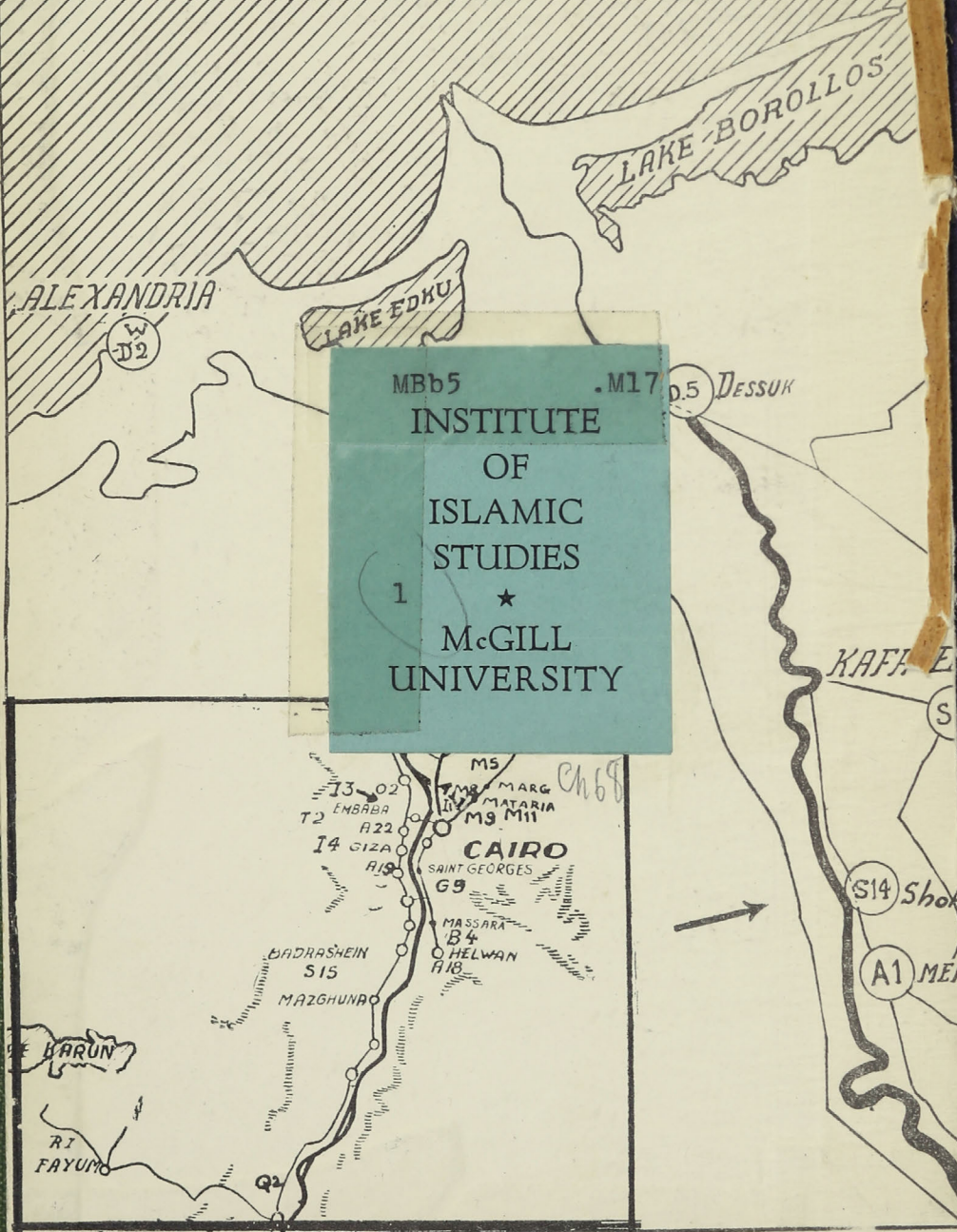


MAP OF DELTA AND FAYUM



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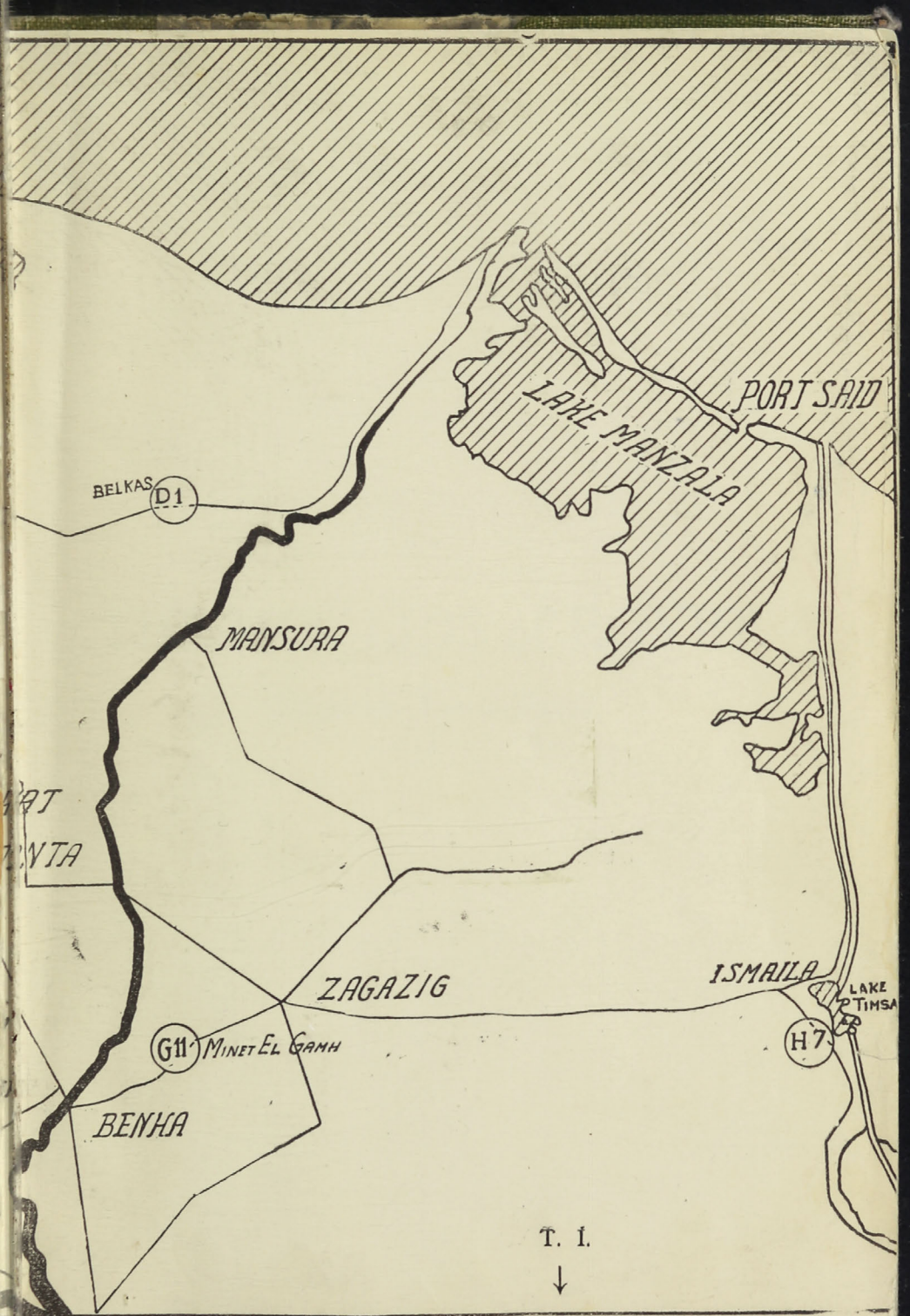
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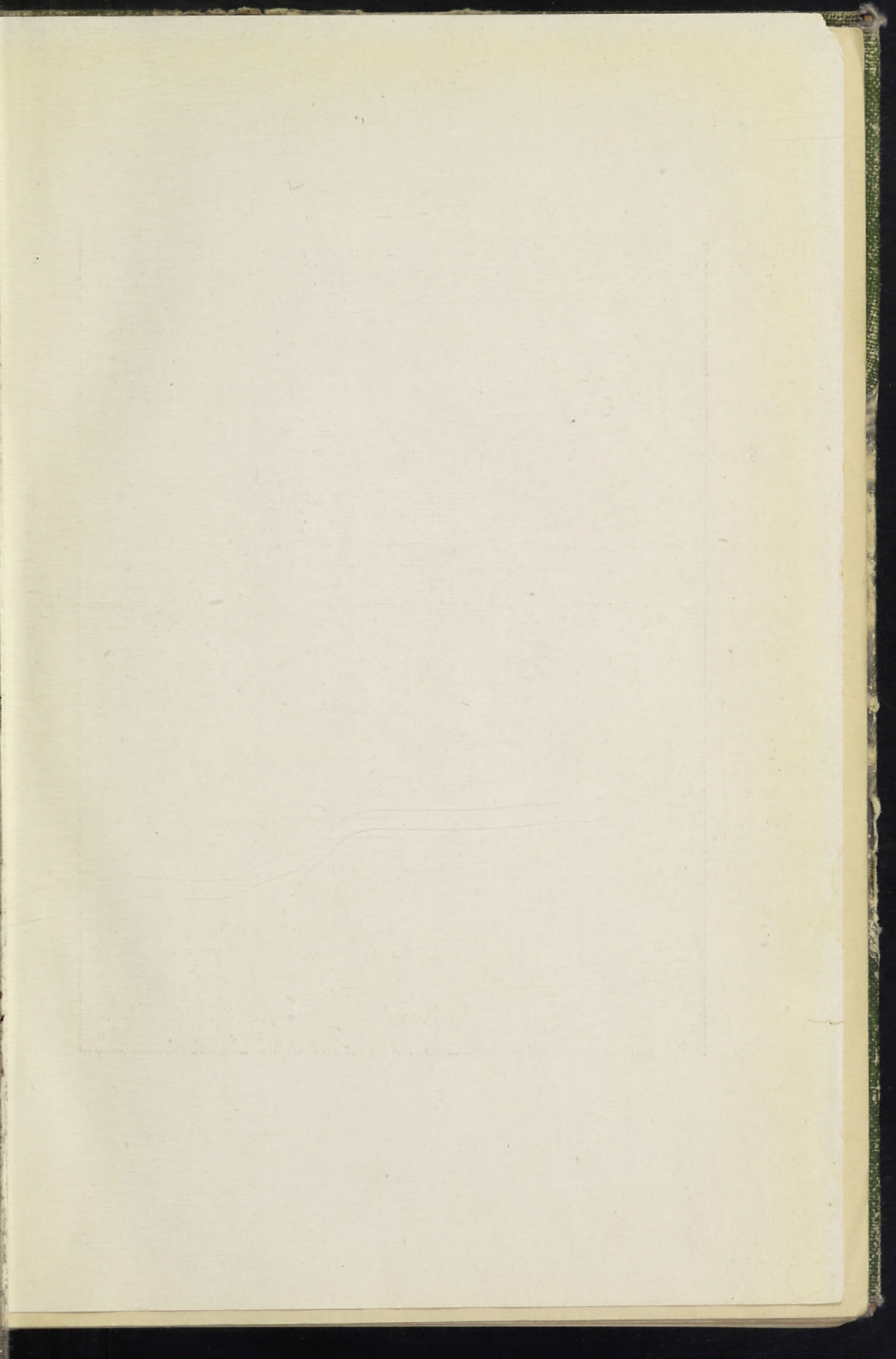
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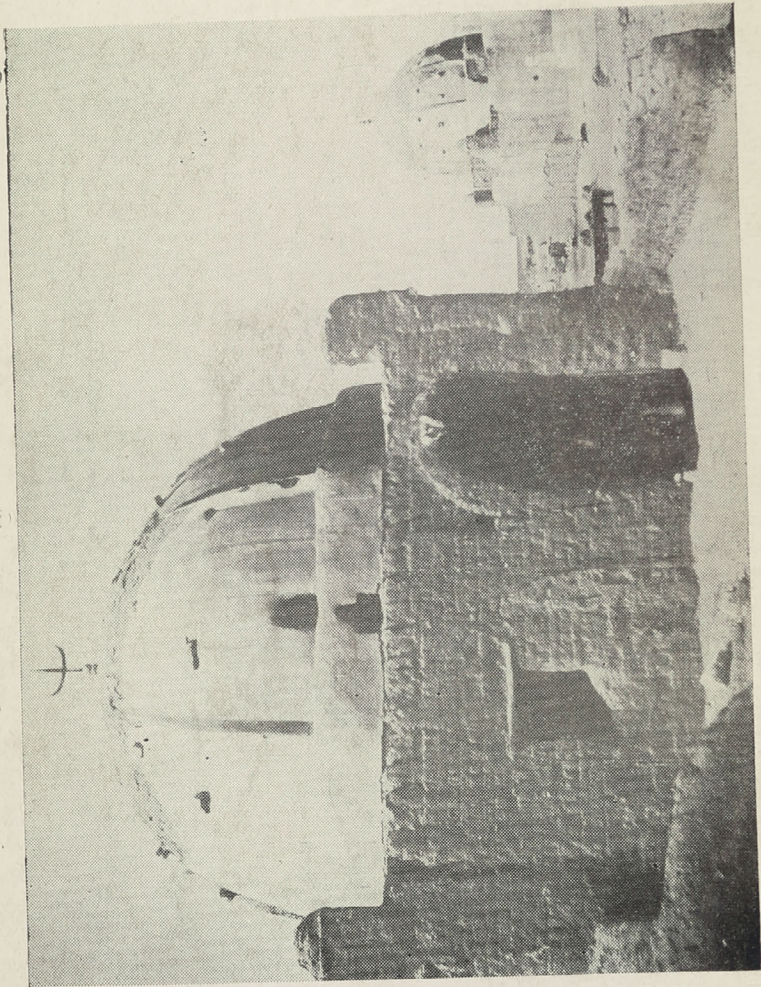
THE MOULIDS of EGYPT

(Egyptian Saints-Days)

Ptd. N. M. Press, Cairo

1941





A Sheikh's Tomb at Qoseir.

The MOULIDS of EGYPT.

(Egyptian Saints-Days)

By

J. W. McPherson,

M.A. (Oxon), B.Sc. (Bris.), A.R.C.Sc., &c.

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In Egypt, in the service of the Ministries of Education and Agriculture, — previous to the war of 1914-18, and of the Ministry of Interior, after the war. Mamur Zapt, with grade of Bimbashi, C.C.P., &c.

WITH A FOREWORD

by

Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard,

M.A. (Oxon), Ph.D. (Lon.), Bimbashi.

The Moulds of Egypt

(Fungi of the Valley)

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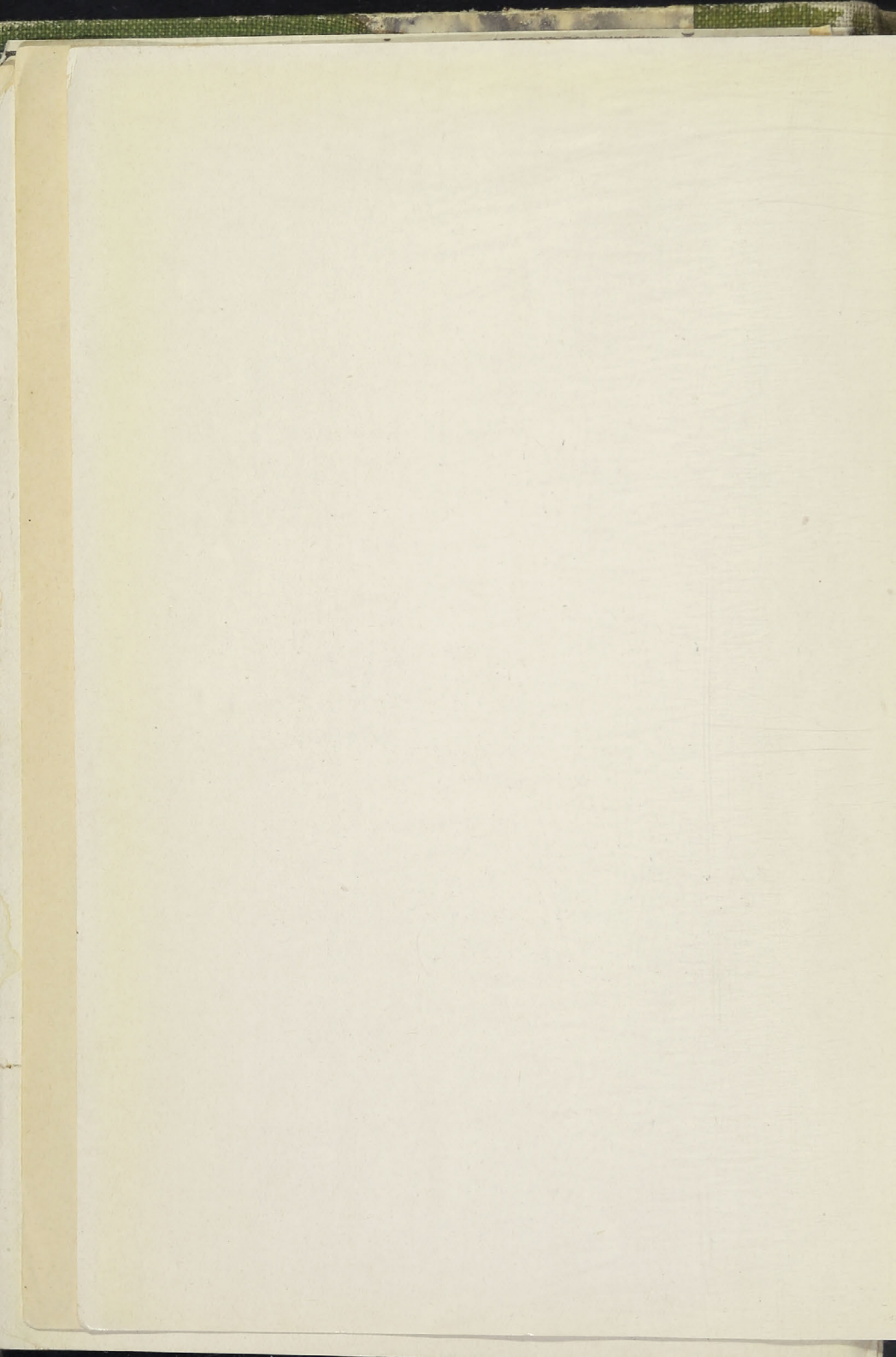
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Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard,
M.A. (Oxon), D.D. (Camb.), F.R.S.

أَتَسَاءَلُكُمْ تَبْدِيلُونَ

الَّذِي لِي هُوَ أَكْبَرُ

بِالَّذِي لِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ



To

H. Em. the Sayed
Abmad Morad el-Bakri,
Grand Sbeikh of the Sufi Orders,
Naqib el-Asbraf.
M. A. (Cantab)

To
H. E. the Saye
Alford, Mend. shire
Grand Steward of the Exchequer
North. shire
M. A. (Count)

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Foreword.

When my old friend Major MacPherson asked me to write a foreword to his book on Egyptian moulids he broke a convention, for a pupil does not write a foreword to the writings of his teacher. What I know about the moulids of Egypt I have learnt from him. He has learnt nothing from me about them. I was introduced to them by him, and many are the enjoyable evenings I have spent with him in visiting the tombs of holy men in Cairo, and its neighbourhood, at the time of the annual fairs held in their honour. As I am an anthropologist, these visits were a profit to me as well as an enjoyment, for Major MacPherson drew my attention to much that I would not have noticed had I been by myself and explained much that I could not have understood by reading books.

An anthropologist must at once be struck by many fundamental similarities between Egyptian moulids and the religious festivals of other peoples. It was for this reason, I fancy, that the author asked me to write a foreword to his book, and it was for this reason that I accepted the honour of doing so. I hoped to make in the foreword a short comparative analysis of religious feasts. This study must now wait for a more convenient season. When it is undertaken Major MacPherson's book on Egyptian moulids will be one of its main sources. Such an enterprise needs, however, leisure and the use of a library, and I must write this foreword on a patrol on the Abyssinian frontier as far from the one as from the other.

I may, however, stress a fact of considerable importance which Major MacPherson brings out in his book. To say that he brings it out in his book is, indeed, to do him an injustice, for it is its main theme. He says, and I agree with him that a moulid is not, and cannot be, a purely religious ceremony. It has, and must have, a secular side to it. The sports, games,

theatres, shadow-plays, coffee booths, beer booths, sweet stalls, eating houses, the meeting of friends, the singing, the dancing, and the laughter, are as much part of a mould as the religious processions, the visits to the tombs of holy men, and the prayers in the mosques. The gay and secular side to religious ceremonies is an essential part of all popular religious festivals. No religion which lives in the hearts of a people can survive there without its feasts. If the feasting and the religious rites fall apart it may well be that the feasting outlives the rites. An acute thinker, Pareto, has well said that in the history of peoples the reasons given for the holding of feasts may, and often do, change, while the feasts themselves show a remarkable uniformity from age to age.

I have frequently observed — and every student of the ways of primitive peoples has noticed the same fact — that in Central Africa a religious ceremony of any importance cannot be held without a banquet. There must be plenty to eat and drink and the meats must be of a kind that are not daily eaten. Very few ceremonies are held without singing and dancing. So much is this so that Marett defined one of the principal characters of primitive religions when he remarked that simple peoples dance their religion rather than formulate it as a theology. Religious ceremonies are always a holiday and a feast. I speak of primitive peoples because I have spent many years in the study of them, but what I have written of them in this respect might equally be written of the great religions of civilized peoples, of the religions of the peoples of Europe and of the East.

Religious ceremonies always tend to be associated with secular and festal activities. The secular festivities bring the people together and make the occasion a memorable one in their lives. A man remembers what he has enjoyed. The religious rites provide the festivities with a purpose and a centre round which they move. The festivities prevent the religious side from becoming a formal, lifeless, professional ritual performed

by a few persons who have a local, or some other exclusive, interest in their maintenance. The religious rites prevent the festivities from becoming formless social gatherings, lacking the regularity and a special character of their own which alone enables them to endure. The religious and secular strands are interwoven together, and those who try to retain the one and discard the other, show little wisdom.

This is Major MacPherson's main contention, but, though he tilts bravely at the puritanism and petty bureaucracy which seek to prohibit the secular side to moulids in Egypt, his book is in no way a polemic. It is a description of the moulids of Cairo, and of some of the principal moulids in the provinces, and, as such, has great scientific value. It is a contribution to our knowledge of Egyptian life, a worthy supplement to the immortal writings of Lane. Major MacPherson has paid to the people of Egypt the debt which he freely acknowledges he owes them for the hospitality and kindness he has enjoyed at their hands for close on half a century.

E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Pocala, Sudan.

Nov. 1. 1940.

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INTRODUCTORY

The writer has spent more than half of a long life in Egypt, and thanks Allah that such has been his privilege. From his early boyhood it was his dream to live in Cairo, and from that as centre to see and know as much as possible of the places peoples and languages all round the Mediterranean, but particularly in the Valley of the Nile.

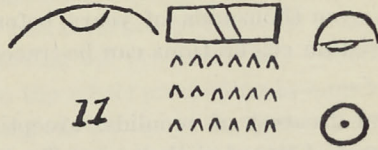
He found Cairo an inexhaustible treasure house of interest and delight, and when alone wandered for hours exploring, till utterly lost, knowing that any arbugy, donkey-boy or person could take him or explain the way to some well known spot such as the Ezbekia gardens or Qasr el-Nil bridge. He was fortunate too in falling into good hands during his first week, and feels specially grateful for the hospitality of the family of the present Minister of Hygiene, Hamid bey Mahmud, and that of Dr. Ibrahim Zaki Kashif, at whose houses in country and in town, he had wonderfully interesting and enjoyable times, and to the family of the late Mufti, the Sheikh Moh. Bikhit, with whom he wandered for months in Upper Egypt.

His work too, civil and military in later years gave him peculiar faculties for wandering almost anywhere, and acquiring an otherwise impossible intimacy with strange places and people. This was particularly the case in 1919, the year of the most serious riots, and the few subsequent years, when his double military rank, British and Egyptian, and his post of "Mamur Zapt",—a sort of Chief Inquisitor at the head of the secret police, necessitated frequent access to the interiors of palaces and huts: even at times the penetralia of harims, for the masters of these and the occupants, when given the option, invariably preferred the officer to take on this delicate task, rather than one of the detectives of the other sex whose special work that is.

(As an extreme case, I may mention,—being instructed to

sterious “drop”, and even now there are some who go for that in the middle of June as well as for the blessing to be derived from a pilgrimage to the shrine of the sainted Imbabi.

Wherefore all ye pilgrims to the zàwia of Sidi Ismail Imbabi : come to the banks of the Nile opposite the Gezira towards the end of “the second month of inundation”, àabet sen set,

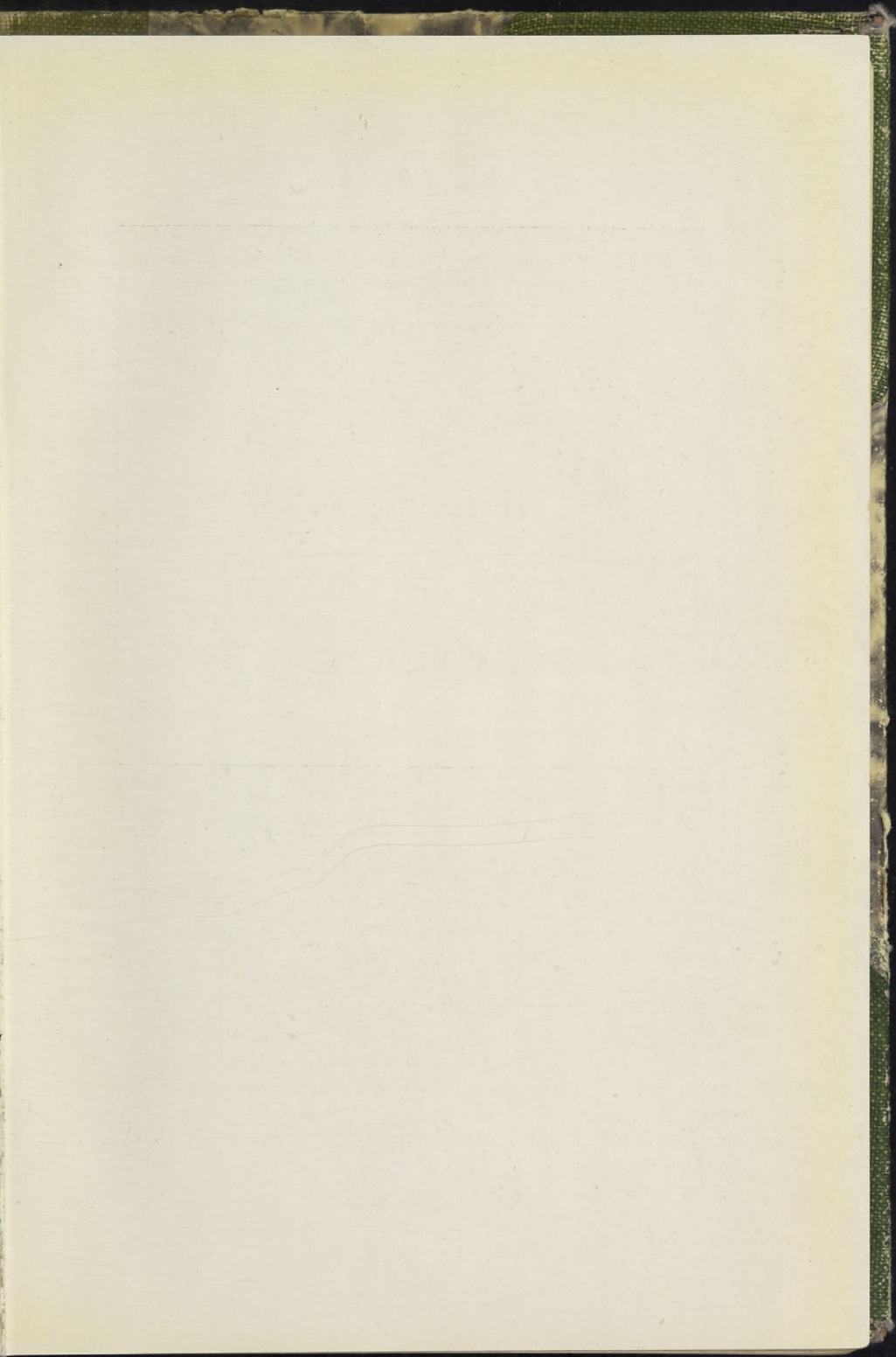


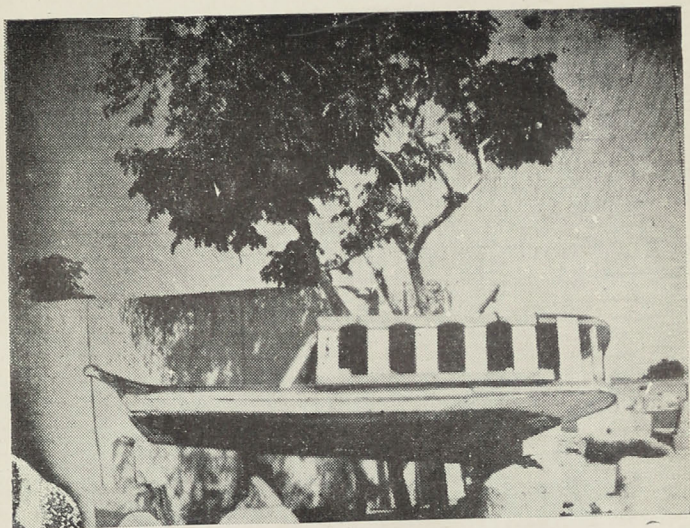
the Alexandrian month of Παωνι still so written in the Coptic language and as بؤونه and Bauna respectively in Arabic and English. That will be when we are nearing the time of the solstice, whilst the sun is yet in the zodiacal sign of Castor and Pollux.

The feast of Isis was a boat festival, for was she not the patroness of boatmen, and did she not teach them her invention of the sail : so at the moulid of Imbabi the river swarms with feluccas and rowing boats,—a lovely sight, especially when Isis-Diana is bright in the heavens. You will do well to join them on the water, and above the laughter and the singing and “all kinds of musick” you will doubtless hear the harsher rattle of the *sistrum*, associated with Cleopatra, the sacred instrument of Isis used in her worship as it still is in that of the Ethiopian Copts.

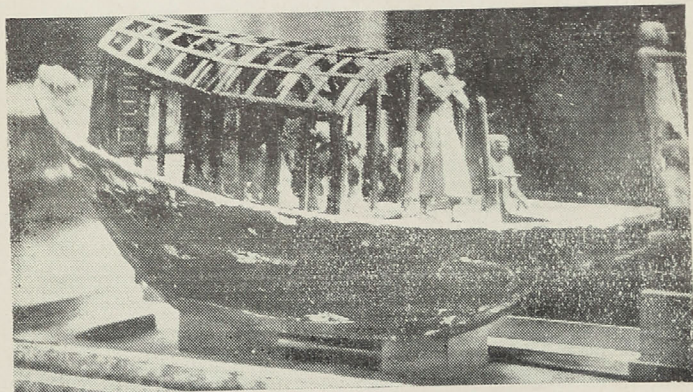
“Quod semper, quod ubique quod ab omnibus !”

The old leaders of Islam and of Catholicism were wise and reverent, and respected the traditions of their ancestors, and those old celebrations which were the expression of the hearts of the people ; and far from despising or destroying them, they adopted them into their own cult purifying or modifying with as gentle a hand as possible. The great feast of Sham el-Nesim





Processional Boat of Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi.



Funerary Boat of Tut Ankh Amon about 1500, B. C.

observed by Christians and Moslems and all Egyptians alike is in a way a Mouldid, (though not included in those which follow), for it doubtless was held originally to celebrate the re-birth of the Phoenix, and is a remnant of the cult of the Sun-god Ra by Egyptians of Pharaonic times. Those who doubt it should visit Mataria, the old Heliopolis or city of the Sun, before dawn on that day and see the crowds who have slept in the fields and the roads to see the sun rise near the obelisk which marks the site of the temple of Ra. Few of these are more aware of the pull which draws them there, than are migratory birds of the urge which impels them to fly at the same time and to the same spot as their ancestors of ages ago. Yet they are gay and happy and better for the holiday.

In describing the mouldids of Abd el-Rahim at Qena, and Yussef el Haggag at Luxor, I have pointed out that the procession with its boats dates back to the cult of Amun, as portrayed on the wall of the temple of Ramses III. This is of world wide interest, and in 1937 (1938) pictures of these boats and fascinating bits of research on the subject appeared in "Nature", in "Man", and other magazines. Dr. Evans-Pritchard the anthropologist invited me and one or two others to share rooms he had taken close to the Qena mouldid to witness this unique sight. The mouldid was indeed impressive though shorn of much of its original charm, but the local authorities had cut out the boats for no assignable reason. These boats are endeared to the people not only by their antique traditions but by more modern Islamic legends connecting them with the Saint they are honouring, so why send half a million poor people including ourselves away disappointed, and sacrifice one more of Egypt's real assets ?

This after all is a small incident compared with what mouldids all over the country have suffered of recent years, and therefore what Egypt has lost in popular content, piety and happiness : and also of its native charm, and rich inheritance of beautiful customs.

This book of Moulids, which should be a record of the popular expression of the exuberance of faith, goodwill, and light-hearted merriment, is unhappily full of incidents like the above or far worse which perforce come into the picture of the moulid and can only depress and grieve the lover of the Egyptian people and their customs.

The joy of forty years delightful residence in Egypt has been marred for the writer, and who can say how many else, by seeing these ancient popular religious institutions as indeed so much else that is picturesque and venerable discouraged in many ways, and of recent years attacked by open vandalism and undermined by the sophisms of Pharisees and Puritans.

People of culture and taste who come to Egypt now for the first time and find much to charm and fascinate them; can hardly imagine how much more there was a few decades ago, and those who knew it then and return to it now, cannot, I think, fail to weep over the city. The loss of so many of its beauty spots, its modern streets, ugly or at last banal like gashes across its oriental loveliness: the truncation of its picturesque customs, with the consequent damper on its native mirth and light-heartedness: so much that is unlovely and depressing: so much that Cairo might and should have escaped: so much indeed that is irretrievably lost. Happily the vastness of the city has saved much of it; and of recent years the splendid efforts of a Committee to protect venerable sites and buildings has checked much vandalism, but we still badly need some such group to defend its traditional customs.

Of course the Zeitgeist, which blew mainly from the far west, to chill and blight Europe, has afflicted most of the world, Egypt included, with its false values, its substitution of mechanical cacophonies for human melodies, of amorphous skyscrapers for shapely dwellings, of sordid materialism for the disinterested pursuit of beauty, of frenzied rush and blazing light and blatant noise for gentle living: in short, a new cult of savagery, (not as

they would claim,—a new and special culture), for an old civilisation.

The Nebi Moses would ask us as he asked Beni Israil, when they got their values all wrong,—

« أتستبدلون الذي هو أدنى بالذي هو خير »

“Would you barter blessed things for those which are base?”

But if, as is indeed the case, Egypt has been more sinned against than sinning, she might have done more and still might do to check this outside contagion, this spiritual and artistic decadence. By a strange paradox the virtues of generosity and complaisance, so conspicuous in the Egyptians have tended to the loss of some of their priceless assets. Born and bred amongst such material and spiritual treasures they do not realise their value, and that a little *laisser-faire* may and does lead to irremediable loss.

And they get no return, no thanks for these sacrifices. All these up-to-date lures to tourists are the grossest mistake. Even the Westerners are repelled rather than attracted by the nasty cinema shows, nasty jazzy noises, nasty bunny-hugs and black-bottoms, hideous buildings, and the rest of their own contributions to an anti-civilisation. They come here to escape the abominations they have brought on themselves and much of the world, and to bask for awhile in the soft beauty of Eastern peace. They are not, thank God, votaries of these idols, not all of them,—nor do they all appreciate the vulgar humour of Mark Twain who made his “hero” blow out the sacred lamp which pious hands had kept burning for centuries. I have in my mind at the moment a recent American visitor to Cairo, who although a millionaire had escaped the littlenesses which millions are liable to bring. He, Mr C.....had known our city more than half a century ago, and had visited it at intervals, and he mourned and deplored the ruthless changes.

But I am drifting into generalities, — almost into per-

sonalities,—a field which proved too vast for that great foreign friend of Egypt and the East, Pierre Loti, who wrote about “*La Mort de Constantinople*”, and “*La mort du Caire*”. He was also a Prophet, but of the Cassandra type:—almost a “*vox clamantis in deserto*”. Yet I think the East mourns now “*La mort de Loti*.”

This little book is simply and solely a plea for Egypt's moulids, which for the best part of a millenium have been an essential valuable element in the religion, happiness and life of the people from the least to the greatest; but which in recent times, as I have said for some deplorable reason,—or lack of reason, seem to have been specially marked out for coercion, restriction, and what amounts to persecution, with chilling results on the hearts and the souls of millions of dear people, who form the backbone of the nation. The fellahin and the masses generally are poor enough as regards this world's goods, but they are rich in natural spirits, and capacity for simple pleasures, and innocent gaiety,—especially when they can fit these in with piety. It is a truism that religion and joy go hand in hand. Pharisees and Puritans who, with perhaps the best intentions try to separate them, injure both, and unwittingly and unwillingly play into the hands of the enemy,—the godless, the *bezbojnik*, the bolchevic who have warned us by the unhappiness of their people, as in Germany and Russia, that popular expression of religion cannot safely be suppressed.

Though any old stick,—or rather,—new stick seems good enough to beat the moulids, I have enquired diligently, and have never elicited a valid reason for this attitude of antagonism or at least indifference, though there are plenty of reasons for sympathy and calls for support. The student class and the young effendis do not as a rule patronise them, but I have never known them actually hostile. They have their sports, their football, basket ball, and innumerable games; and an excellent thing too, and naturally go their own ways, as the corresponding classes in other countries. But what have the poor got? Their spades,

their *fasses* (hoes!) But what games except a swing here and there which they put up themselves usually, and a ride on their donkey if it is not too tired for work. My windows look out on forty or more acres of playgrounds provided for the "classes", and a splendid thing too, doubtless, for the physique of that section of the nation. The masses do not ask for that: they can amuse themselves if they are only allowed to do so: they can watch a conjuror or snake charmer or *galli-galli* man, a Punch and Judy or a shadow show delightedly for hours, or a dancer to some simple instrument, or an acrobat; but all these poor souls who made a modest living by amusing thousands up to a few years ago are chased from pillar to post, and seem to be looked on by the authorities as suspicious characters, and the little crowd of other poor souls, who like myself enjoy these antics, and are perfectly harmless, are scattered like a seditious mob. This is not only the case in the new and neurotic quarters, but has spread like a blight over the native *manshiehs* (squares), and open spaces that of late were full of fun and life. Recently on a Friday I saw a clever conjuror ejected very roughly from amongst the tombs near Imam el-Shafei, where he and his little audience had taken sanctuary; and the last monkey I saw riding a goat was arrested and dragged off. "Manouli" and the bow-wow had appeared as happy as the onlookers, but someone suggested that an S.P.C.A. fan had denounced "such cruelty," to dumb animals, and thought they were fit subjects for the boon of euthanasia. 'Pity they were dumb!' I thought,—'they might express other views.' Others surmised that Manouli was only being taken to the *caracol* (police station) to produce his *rukhsa* (licence), or his passport or birth certificate, or to fulfil one of those little formalities which have become so numerous and so important of late.

Of course this is an age of repression and neurotics not to mention narcotics, so much abused in Egypt these days. At the present rate of nerve destruction and decay, the great Plutocracies, Democracies, Aristocracies and the rest will have

surrendered in a *War of Nerves*, and merged before long into one grand Neurocracy. The trend of modern times too is a kill-joy trend, and the mania of modern people a kill-joy mania, and when they have killed joy and are "bored to death", they kill one another and themselves. Thank God this virus is so attenuated before it affects Egypt, that we have escaped so far its most pernicious effects, even as the hurricane which wrecks ships in the Atlantic, and makes people very seasick in the Mediterranean, is reduced to slamming a few doors and raising a little dust in Cairo.

This rage for repression, though most evident at moulids is by no means confined to such, as indeed I have indicated above. If a man may no longer laugh freely at a Punch and Judy show nor smile at a dancing girl, he is reminded in many of the cafes that singing is prohibited, by order of the Government, «منوع الغناء بأمر الحكومة» Women too may no longer indulge in lamentations for the dead, anyway in public.

The Elders and Notables of the land, like the students and effendi classes are seldom seen at Moulids, and as a rule profess little interest therein, but I have never known one of them actually antagonistic. They too have their clubs and sports, and their interests in art and literature and politics, which the poor have not, and they believe in the adage "live and let live". Many indeed go to the receptions (*tashrifas*), and the religious and historic ceremonies which mark the opening and the close: and not a few actually support the popular sides also with money and influence. It is, for example, the lavish hand of the Minister of Hygiene, Hamad Pasha Mahmud, which upholds the Tukh moulid, and that of Dr. Taha Hussein which has saved that of his native town, Maghagha. Many Christian and Foreign notables help to defray decoration and other expenses, and as far as I have seen, they are all sympathetic. I have known them even supply a feast for the poor, and there is one who has restored the ancient tomb and moulid of Sidi Haroun el-Husseini

on generous and beautiful lines.

It is a pity that of recent years rich and poor have drifted somewhat apart, at festivals and functions common to both. Typical of this is the "Cutting of the Khalig" This ceremony of the Bride of the Nile, (Arusat el-Nil. عروسة النيل) has not changed materially, but a decade or so ago, the evening celebrations, tashrifa, fireworks, and the rest were all together at the Fum el-Khalig, and there was a certain *Gemutlichkeit* about it which was quite lost when the reception tents were erected in a special enclosure on Roda Island, and the populace, not provided with special tickets, prevented by mounted police from crossing the bridge to it, and only able to hear the bands and see the fireworks from the other side of the water. In the same way the intimate charm and atmosphere of friendly fellowship has gone from the Mahmal and Holy Carpet festivals to a considerable extent. This will be found very marked in the accounts of the moulids of Mohammadi, Imam el-Shafei and some others.

Moulids, as for many ages past, are still under the aegis of the Government. They are not held without a permission from the Ministry of Interior. Many of them are officially supported and attended: the greatest of all, that of the Prophet, by the king or immediate representative. Ulama, Ministers, the highest officials mingle at some of them. They are in fact a precious part of the religious and social life of the country. And yet many of them are being crushed out of existence,—even that which centres round the head of the great Zein el-Abdin, son of Sidna Hussein, and the once immense celebration of Sheikh "Tashtoushi".

Who then or what is behind this destructive movement? Not even the kill-joy and freeze-religion tendency of modern times with its almost universal blight can wholly account for it. Those who see a moulid spoiled by the stupid excesses of askaris naturally blame the Police, but they are wrong in the main

ultimately, I believe - and the crowds seem to be realising that more and more. The writer was a good many years a policeman of sorts, and in a position most favourable to form an opinion, and he cannot remember any antagonism latent or expressed. And since he left that service, he has never pointed out a specific case of violence or interference through excess of zeal on the part of the rank and file to an officer, but the latter has checked this and mended matters.

Certainly the police are not blameless. Some of the minor officers at the gisms carry their responsibilities heavily and seem to be unnecessarily nervous lest a little mouldid crowd or procession might disturb the peace or check the trafic. I wish they could see the crowds about Trafalgar Square or Buckingham Palace, or in the Piazza di Venezia at Rome, or any big towns and the absence of fluster or coercion on the part of the police. I am not speaking of course about strikers, political demonstrators or seditious mobs of any sort; the sooner they are broken up the better, and if such is not done they get worse and things end badly. But the mouldid crowd is the most harmless and best disposed crowd in the world. Politics, tendentious speeches and such like have no part in them and are not tolerated by the people themselves if, as very rarely happens, a little extraneous party tries to introduce such. In the worst of the strikes and riots I have taken friends including ladies into the thick of a mouldid crowd, and the peaceful contrast and air of safety has amazed and delighted them.

Of course pickpockets and occasionally quarrelsome characters intrude as in any crowd, but such are easily dealt with on their own demerits, and the police have the sympathy and help of all the rest, and no reason for spoiling the mouldid, and visiting their wrath on well meaning decent people, as unhappily I have had to relate in some of the accounts which follow.

This official nervousness passes down in exaggerated form to the askaris, who often appear to think that they must

interfere, even in things which they individually approve. The writer has often seen them enjoying the singing of a sheikh or something amusing or edifying, and then suddenly become militant on the advent of someone who looks official, and break up the happy little show; and sometimes the writer has been horrified to realise that his arrival is the innocent cause of this demonstration. He is careful now to dress and comport himself in as unofficial a manner as possible, and to insist that friends who come with him do the same.

It is regrettable too that moulids often suffer for events for which they are entirely innocent and over which they can have had no control. As one example of this, on the 18 th Shaaban 1357 (12-10-38), on returning from the great Qena, mid-Shaaban moulid, I went to that of Sultan Hanafi. This was the final night and it had been working up before I went to Qena, but now I found practically nothing but lots of askaris with long severe faces and a few rather frightened and sad looking people. The mosque was most sparsely attended, and from the enclosure some distance away where Punch and Judy, shadow shows, swings, and the rest had amused a host of children, everything had been turned out and darkness reigned. "Whatever has happened?" I asked. "Why, don't you know" someone said, "there was a row near the station, a day or two ago, and some statesmen hurt." That was deplorable news indeed, but I could not ascertain that the smallest suspicion attached to anyone from that district, so why the votaries of the holy Sultan had to suffer, or why Qara Goz (Punch) was arrested remains a mystery. People go to moulids to obtain a blessing, and I am sure they ought to receive an extra one for paying, as they do, for other peoples' sins.

The above was written before war broke out, and was held over to see how far this would affect us generally and the moulids in particular. — As was hoped, in general we remain unaffected in our lives, a most favoured and happy nation : - God

has been indeed kind to us,—but man has not been so kind to His mouldid-going poor. One calamity has been the non-observance of the great Tanta mouldid of Sayed el-Bedawi, one of the greatest events of Islam, or at least its postponement *sine die*. It has been a blessing to and the pride of Egypt for more than six hundred years, bringing to it, it is said, more pilgrims than its holy places bring to Mecca. Are we so overstocked with holy men that we freeze out the flower of distant lands? And is it wise policy to anticipate the clouds of war, instead of carrying on as long as there is nothing to prevent it, and so encourage the masses to be of good cheer?

Cairo mouldids suffered but not at first so badly. The 3rd Sep. on which war was declared was the 19th Ragab (1358), a date at which they crowd into the short time before Ramadan and there was a rumour that they would be checked because of the alleged extra light, though up to the date on which I am now writing, 17 Shoual (28-11-39), Cairo has remained *une ville lumière* except for rare and very brief "blackouts", and I doubt if this has been officially applied even to mouldids, but locally it seems to have been advanced in some cases as a reason,—or a pretext, — for their discontinuance. — During the last few nights of Shaaban the region below the citadel from the Bab el-Wazir to the tombs of the Mamelukes is usually a most pleasant sight: tiny mouldids, dimly lighted shrines, little *zeffas* (procession) with their simple banners, torches and lanterns, the music of the *tar* (tambourine) and *ney* (flute), the rapt faces of sheikhs, and happy enthusiasm of children; — but in the year 1939 all was gloom, each time I went. One of these nights I saw a few disgruntled dervishes under that beautiful old archway near Saida Ayesha, with folded gonfallons and one huge paper lantern burning dimly. I think they had been on their way to the tomb of El-Gizi which is amongst those of the Mamelukes. Proceeding to the place of the mouldid of Sheikh Saleh Shahin el-Muhammadi behind the Khalifa Qism all was dark, but happily I found the important mouldid of Bahlul, near the

Bab el-Wazir proceeding smoothly. It had been threatened, I was told, but had had a blessed escape. On the way there I overtook a dervish whom I have known and respected for a long time. He was almost inarticulate with distress and emotion at the repressions so I hope Bahlul cheered him. Asking him why these little mouldids had been dropped on, he replied, — “they say the Army objects to the light”. Who “they” were I can’t say, but it is impossible to believe such an absurdity whether it emanated from the dervish himself or from “them”, for at that very time in addition to many lighted minarets, the citadel mosque was brilliantly flood lit, and high up blazed thousands of candle power.

Of about twenty mouldids I visited after war was declared, that is during the last days of Ragab and throughout Shaaban, all were washouts, blackouts or doleful survivals, except four, — El-Azaim, Bahlul, Matrawi, and last but by no means least, Barsum el-Aryan. This last was a magnificent mouldid, worth a long journey to witness, perhaps surpassing that described of three years ago, (which see), and indeed people had come from afar and settled there for a week or more. On the last night thousands, tens of thousands of Moslems mingled with the Coptic pilgrims, at the shrine of this Christian saint. Such is the blessed spirit of tolerance amongst the people of Egypt. All was piety and joy, and not the smallest friction.

But that this brightest and happiest of mouldids, should be one of the few surviving Coptic celebrations is very significant. It even suggests a clue to the quest which is the *leit motif* of this preface, — “who is behind this repression of the mouldids, this stifling of the people’s natural expression of their piety and joy of life according to their hearts’ dictates and the millennial custom of their Country?” Can it possibly be the very people from whom they might expect sympathy and support, — an academic section of their leaders in religion, who sacrificing the spirit for their own interpretation of the letter of the law,

with doubtless the best intentions, — tend to the same results as the modern *Zeitgeist* which we all deplore. Is it indeed the source to which we look for scholarly, constructive, guidance, that gives us instead scholastic prohibitions which are only destructive?

If this is the case as, I think, is commonly supposed, though I am unwilling to believe it, it exonerates the police to a great extent, for it is the Civil Arm which has to execute punitive measures on those whom the Church deem "heretics", as in the days of the Inquisition.

I am sometimes told by theological pundits, — "These moulids were not ordered by the Prophet, and therefore are not in our religion", — to which I reply, — "Did he order your motor cars or half the things you have and do? If they are not in your religion why have your holiest men delighted in them for ages, your Khalifs your Naqaib el-Ashaf, your Walis, your hosts of dervishes, and many whose tombs are now the objects of the very cult you discredit: has *modernism* shed such a holy light that it reveals to *you* their errors and new truths, unseen by them?"

There is a slogan specially applied to moulids, — "Nothing against morals and religion!" This sounds excellent, and certainly is in theory, but the application which is being given to it is working out very wrongly. No well thinking person would do other than approve the elimination of anything specifically evil, but the amusements of the people which are being attacked now are in the main no more evil than eating or sleeping, indeed they are almost as necessary for the health, contentment and happiness of the people and the whole body politic. Is the graceful stickplay of the Egyptians against morals or religion, or their dancing and racing horses, or the Ringas beloved of the Sudanese with their quaint music to which sometimes dancers fully clad do a *pas seul* suggestive of cockroach crushing; is singing wicked, or a little dancing for

the matter of that, — (the Nebi Daud danced in procession before the holy things, and to this day, at what is perhaps the most beautiful of all surviving religious pageants, the Palio of Siena, I have seen lads dancing the gonfalon dance before the altar and in the house of S. Catharine) ; is it irreligious to be or to watch an acrobat, a snake charmer, a clever conjurer, a man or a dwarf, or even an amusing clown or a gifted strolling player, or is it immoral to try your strength, or your skill at shooting at a micro-target or your resistance to electric shock? The people who go to make the world a pleasant place will be damned if it is. Yet everyone of these little joys which I have listed, I have seen ruthlessly checked or broken up again and again, and many more of the same type. The popular dwarf is now on the streets selling lottery tickets, the fat man is visibly slimming, and the rest,—what has become of them, poor fellows? Again, poor Qara Goz (Punch) is no saint, but he has flourished for probably more than a thousand years in Egypt, Turkey Persia, and the great Islamic states: has he fallen into heresy? And have the marionettes of the equally ancient and popular Kheil el-Zul, (shadow shows) come up against religion?

The great teacher, the Prophet Jesus compared the "Kingdom of Heaven" (on earth) to a field of corn in which an enemy sowed bad seed. When the zizania (tares, "cockle", nagil) sprung up the farm men wished to tear that up, but their Lord said,— "No, lest ye tear up the good wheat with it, leave it to the harvest."*

Though the field in the parable might well be the mouldy ground, the similitude hardly stands as regards the tares, for that which the husbandmen decide to tear up and do so very thoroughly are not "tares", but the poppies and corn-flowers which add colour to the crop, or the *helba* and *teel*, which protect it as well as beautify it and increase its value. The holiday games which grow up about a holy day shrine become in a way

*(*Saint Matthew, Ch. XIII, 24.*)

part of it,-

”,-even as the trees

That whisper round a temple become soon
Dear as the temple's self,--”

The stark truth is that these well meaning but misguided guides are tearing up religion itself. Anyone who saw a mouldid,

“Before this sad disease of modern times,”

even a very few years ago can check the truth of this by revisiting the same ceremony, (if it still exists) and noting the dwindled number and enthusiasm of those who visit the shrine, the broken zeffas, and disgruntled sheikhs and dervishes.

It is curious too that of the few things which *might* have been regarded as *tares*—the gaming tables of all sorts,—still flourish, and I think, more than they did before. Perhaps from a Machiavellian point of view they may be deemed to do more good than harm, for the odds against the youngsters who stake their milliemes and nicklas, are so great, that their inevitable loss should give them a distaste for the gambling habit.

Those who read the accounts which follow of the mouldids of Sitna Fatima el-Nebawiya bint Husein, of her great niece the other Fatima el-Nebawiya (bint Gaafar Sadiq), of Sidi Ashmawi, and alas of many others, or who have seen them for themselves in the past and also in recent times, and are thus in a position where comparisons are forced upon them,—cannot fail to detect a subtle evil which has crept in, undermining their whole-hearted sincerity, nor can they avoid the conclusion that at least a contributory cause is the false interpretation and application of the catch-word about “morals and religion”. Is it a triumph for religion that in the first of the three cases here referred to, a very vulgar buffoon should take the place, in an erstwhile solemn and dignified procession, of a descendant and representative of the grand-daughter of the Prophet? Or in the second case, that of the daughter of the sixth Imam; is it a moral gain that the joyful precincts of her beautiful little shrine should become

as gloomy at her mouldid as the prison over the way; that the cave-like dwellings which reechoed with zikrs should harbour a silent sulky party reduced to black tea and coffee, *sheeshas* and *gozas* in the semi-dark, and that the player on the *Raghul*, that fine old reed instrument with its deep notes, should be ejected from the adjoining street as though he had brought the plague?

And in the third case selected in this connection, that of Sidi Ashmawi, I think a very obvious lesson is to be drawn from the little corner formerly the scene of innocent stick play, singing and such like, substituting these by a zikr in intended conformity with the *mot d'ordre*, with results which were regrettable and profane.

The very virtue of the old mouldid was the sincerity and openness of its piety and its joy. Anything, however well meant that induces secretiveness or hypocrisy, tends, I hold, to unbelief and profanity, even to a spiritual retrogression, for which the people themselves can hardly be blamed.

Bliss in his work on the Religions of Syria and Palestine, attempts to sum up the position of the Dervishes in the scheme of the components of Islam, by saying,—"The Dervishes seek God in the heart; the Ulama seek Him in the Book." The epigram suggests that if the former can be too emotional sometimes in their zeal, the latter are in danger of laying too much stress on formal religion, and putting the letter before the spirit, of which indeed too many instances in the history of religion could be cited; but it is misleading in implying a sort of antithesis which ought not to exist, certainly not here in Egypt, where the Ulama include great leaders of the Dervish Orders, even the "Naqaib el-Ashraf", and the four "Sheikhs" of the four orthodox sects, the Hanafiya, Shafeiya, Malakiya, and Hambaliya.

In point of fact I have never heard that the Ulama in general are inclined to coerce mouldid-goers, or that they are in favour of these irritating and sometimes violent repressions at present so harmful: that responsibility seems to be always laid

at the doors of a certain potent authority of the great University of El-Azhar. Chastisement is perhaps a tradition. Certainly there are some classic cases on record;—as that recorded by Lane of the El-Azhar professor El-Kuwasini, who celebrated his nomination as *Sheikh Zawiyat el-Aamyān*, by having all his blind men (aamyān), about three hundred, mostly students, well flogged: not without reason, it is said, though they, failing to appreciate the reason, seized and bound the Sheikh and flogged *him*. I can find no early records however of that use of the palm rod being extended to pilgrims and public at mouldids.

Whilst penning the above lines it has been pointed out to me that El-Azhar applies its castigatory rod to beast as well as man, the latest of God's creatures to give offence being none other than the "Nebi's Camel", which bears the Mahmal to the Holy Places, which one would have thought indeed 'the last to give offence'.

There has, I am told, been considerable discussion of this cause célèbre in some of the papers, and it may not be out of place to append a copy of a letter to the Egyptian Gazette, which indicates that this august delinquent seems to have been handed over to the civil arm in the distinguished person of the Political Leader of the Country.---

25 April 1940.

The Editor, Egyptian Gazette,

Dear Sir,

I had noticed recently polemics in the papers, for and against the elimination of the "Nebi's Camel", from the Mahmal celebrations,

---ceū cetera nusquam
Bella forent.----

and had wondered who could have so little useful to do as to

open an attack on a venerable and picturesque National custom. Surely Egypt's traditional ceremonies have been sufficiently shorn of their beauty and significance in these drab days without clipping the Pilgrims' camel, the People's camel, the Prophet's camel—"ahsan min beni' Adam" (better than the sons of Adam) as I have heard women ejaculate as they press forward to touch it.

A friend of mine and of Egypt who regards the repeated uncalled for little vandalistic moves, which have already turned many of Cairo's brightest moulids and pageants into little better than "meitums" (wakes), as nothing short of a menace to the happiness and contentment of the people, has turned up in your back files and sent me a cutting from the issue of March 19, 1940, which I find sad reading.-

You commence an interesting and erudite article, entitled "Mahmal Ceremony May Be Curtailed", by the information that Sheikh *Fulan* of Al-Azhar University "has suggested that the old tradition of exhibiting the camel carrying the Mahmal should cease and that only the Kiswa should be exhibited. This proposal is now under consideration by the Prime Minister."

Poor Hadgi Camel : Has he fallen into heresy ?

Poor Prime Minister too, to be brought into the arena deuteragonist in such a *ghad* ! His Excellence, the pilot of our ship of state in these stormy seas !

Having sat at the feet of the late Mufti in Al-Azhar as he expounded the Qoran, it is my proud boast that I can call myself a student of that most venerable and noble source of learning and culture, and it is something of a shock to find it tending to become also the source of petty pedagogic inhibitions.

I turn, Sir, with serene comfort to the accounts in your columns of the splendid appeal of the Congress of Social Reform, and the note of calm constructive culture in the speech of its President, Dr Mansur Fahmi on "The Spirit of Conservation

and National Characteristics". There is much these days which calls for such an antidote!

Yours very faithfully,
Abu Masaud. (1)

I think the dictum "mens sana in corpore sano" applies to moulds as to so many things. When the "corpus" (the popular side) is healthy and happy, the "mens" (the spiritual side) has every chance of being the same,—not otherwise.

No plea for moulds can omit their political value: they make for happiness and content among the people, and therefore for loyalty and patriotism, invaluable assets to king and country. The Greek religious "moulds" **with** their popular games were most precious stabilisers of the State, and Rome would never have satisfied *Urbem et Orbem*, and kept her great empire together without lavish expenditure on festivals and games; *Panem et Circenses* was not only the slogan of the masses but also of a wise government.

An excellent article signed "R" appeared in the "Bourse Egyptienne" of Thursday 13 October 1932, headed,—

Nec Panem, Nec Circenses

and pointed out that this was becoming the order in Egypt. He mentions Mazarin's remark when the French Revolution was brewing, "As long as the people laugh and sing and amuse themselves, there will be no rising." The article is too long to quote in full, but it ends,—

"On ne leur donne pas de pain. On ne leur donne pas de jeux. Mieux: on trouble les quelques distractions qu'ils pourraient trouver. C'est tout juste si on leur permet le yo-yo.

Dangereuse méthode!"

The recent *King's Speech* has happily spread a certain concern about the *Bread of the People*. Inter alia I noticed in the

(1) Abu Masaud, I am told, was the name of the Prophet's camel.

“Balagh” (البلاغ) near the end of November of the year 1939, an appreciation of this and some statistics showing how urgent the matter is. If the *Balagh* is exact more than three quarters of the land of Egypt is in the possession of 6% of the people, which leaves not quite a feddan a head for the rest to live on, or *try* to live on. What a field for the communist propaganda so rife amongst us! I was shocked in a Cairo restaurant at hearing a foreign politician remark,—“The condition of the peasantry here is much what that of the French peasants was just before the revolution, and that of the notables will soon be like that of the French aristocrats shortly after the revolution began, if they do not soon do a good deal to ameliorate their lot.” An impertinent and exaggerated remark doubtless, but one which emphasises the value of the present movement in high places to *ameliorate their lot*. But with the best intentions and the most efficient organisation it takes time to give to all the *Panem quotidianum* and other material necessities,—but neither time nor expense to give them the equally desirable **Circenses** :—

Not by his exhortative words only but by deeds has our King set a fine example; and of these *beaux gestes*, none, I think, is more appreciated by the people than their freedom to enjoy some of the royal spectacles and music in the Palace parade ground, and always the charming sight and sound of the “Changing of the Guard”. On the eve of the *asboa* of the baby princess Fawzia (the octave of her birth), an immense happy crowd lined the great square enjoying the skirling of the *erba* (bagpipes), and the music of many bands parading like polychromatic transparencies in the radiance of great searchlights. These too in searching for a *tiara* (aeroplane) on which was inscribed the name “FAWZIA”, bracketed the moon and *Zuhra* (Venus) and many a glorious heavenly body, till one half expected them to find the royal name amongst the constellations as Conon of Samos found the shorn tress of the Empress Berenice, which had been snatched up by the Gods.

A few weeks later on the occasion of the IVth anniversary of his accession,—at the end of a perfect day of music and pageants, *finis coronavit opus* in the form of a very amusing cinema in the same royal square, with thousands of seats to accommodate first the children of the public and then their elders.

All were supremely happy at these royal entertainments because they were left in PEACE. No sticks or canes! No bullying! No pedagogic or official fussing or interference! A rumour that the King had come out and was somewhere there incognito added a delicious thrill. Even if this were not so, I hope at least His Majesty saw how much his humble subjects appreciated these memorable evenings, and may himself come to realise how his country's moulds are threatened.

Would that the royal eyes could have been turned for a moment from that pleasant scene on the night of his accession, to the seemingly wanton desolation that was being wrought about the shrine of the granddaughter of the Prophet and throughout a wide district, on this which was also the night of her once honoured mouldid. I will not spoil the picture of the royal entertainment in the Abdin square by painting here such a dismal contrast. A note thereon will be found in the account of the mouldid of Sitna Fatima el-Nebawiya which follows later.

As the war only overlapped the mouldid season of 1358 (1939) during forty days and forty nights, (from 19 Ragab to 29 Shaaban i.e. 3 September to 13 October), it was not conclusive how far its *pretext* would be used to further abase them, though things looked pretty bad when on the last night mouldids were blacked out even in the tombs whilst the citadel mosque was flood-lit, as mentioned above. Perhaps however it was deemed preferable to risk the city's stronghold being bombed than the dead being disturbed. A pious thought indeed!

A cheering incident was the observance after all of the Tanta mouldid, though on a considerably reduced scale on 19

Showal (1 December), albeit six weeks after the normal date; but unfortunately few outside of Tanta knew of this till too late. Its non-observance in October was probably not entirely due to the war, but also to Ramadan beginning in the middle of October, which would have necessitated the date being put forward about a week if held in that month. As the Scottish people say,—

“We maun be thankfu' for sma' mercies!”

or as we express it more elegantly here,—

“Al Hamd Lillah ala kul-hâl”

« الحمد لله على كل حال »

Alas! Alas! the resuscitation of Ahmad Sayed el Bedawi, and a fairly good opening of the season by the Bayumi procession in Safr only raised false hopes for 1359 (1940), for whilst the war has caused rather a boom in Cairo, and sports, cinemas, fashionable cafés, bars and such like have carried on with marked *éclat* the repression and suppression of the immemorial prerogatives of the people in the way of moulids and other public events have gone so far that the people are most undesirably scared and upset.

That this is asking for political trouble, especially at this time, seems to me and I should think to all who have studied history, and feel the pulse of the people, obvious and serious.

Rather than dwell on this phase, I will add, *in extenso* a letter which appeared in September 1940, (Shaaban 1359) in one of the papers published in Egypt.— —

Egypt's Real Danger.

The Editor,
Egyptian Gazette.

Dear Sir,

It is surely of prime importance to any country at any time that its peasantry and masses should be contented and happy, and vitally necessary when it is threatened as ours is now : and any forces however plausibly insinuated, which tend to lower the morale, and spirit of the people, naturally so high and sanguine, and to scare and disgruntle them should be combatted with all the Power of those which have it.

There *are* such forces, and one of the worst in its effects, but happily the easiest to remedy, is the repression of the people's mouldids and public fêtes, — their only joys, the only outlets for their natural high spirits and piety. Poor dear souls, they have not much of this world's goods, — an average of about an acre apiece to live or starve on according to an article in "El-Balagh", no basket-ball, or sports of any sort like the better-off : perhaps a swing or two which they put up at their own expense and by their own enterprise, to be torn down ruthlessly as often as not these days, as happened at the erstwhile immense Duqqi mouldid of Zefeti. At the mouldid of the granddaughter of the Prophet 16th Ragab, 20th August, I noticed two swings, a "goose nest" for infants, many little gambling tables and an expanse of sand, as the recreation section for the half million pilgrims and visitors expected on this great celebration. I am told the swings were reduced the last night. These crowds could hardly share the holy shrine from noon till midnight, nor confine themselves to zikrs, so being disappointed at finding no innocent amusements as of yore, no music, no singing, they were driven to the Esbekia quarters or to a doubtful film or perchance to listen to the lying poisonous enemy wireless, another deadly demoralising force.

What a lesson we might draw from Tinos ! When the *Helle* was sunk under the eyes of the pilgrims and visitors to the mouldid

of *el-Athra*, the first care of the king and prime minister was to telegraph to the leaders of the moulid to see that that suffered as little as possible, and that nothing must prevent or spoil the zeffa, (procession), and that all possible help and protection be given to the people. And it was so, — for there were no narrow or timorous minded persons to thwart the royal solicitude for his people. Our own King, God bless him, would show equal solicitude for *his* people as he has proved on many occasions by delighting thousands of them in the royal square, by cinemas and bands of music and other entertainments, as at the “asboa” of the baby Fawzia.

This spirit of repression, which is now a political danger, is to a great extent of course the modern kill-joy mania, but I find the people largely attribute it to a specious *slogan* enunciated by some, doubtless well meaning pundit,—“Nothing against morals and religion”. This sounds all right, but by the way it is being applied it is having a more and more pernicious affect on the *bien être* of the people, *and* on their religion. Are swings, shadow shows, acrobatics, laughter, music, singing, happy faces and the rest against morals and religion, that on that pretext or that of the war, the people should be deprived of the festivals that gave colour and brightness to their lives? The joyous ceremony of the Bride of the Nile, was always enjoyed by tens of thousands, until this year when it was shared, according to the pictures, by two sheikhs, a high civic official, and I think, an onbashi. The next Mahmal procession, or at least the prophet's camel, is threatened with emasculation. The moulids are crushed even in the country: including that of Ismail Imbabi, which blended so beautifully on land and on the Nile with that millennial Egyptian fête of “Leilat el-Nukta”. Last Friday, “Leilat el-Maarág”, a few people had a pleasant reminder of the Prophet's ride to Jerusalem and Paradise, by seeing the cars of the great going to and returning from the Mosque of Muhammad Ali, with its brilliantly lighted minarets, and some, the great joy of a glimpse of their much loved king,

but the great populace of Cairo, and the thousands who came from afar, as also the Ulama and leaders of the people no longer flocked to the shrine of the great Cairene miracle worker Tastoushi to do him and the Prophet honour, and hear of the shaking of the Lote tree of Paradise'

One is taught that the Walis are living entities. What do they think of the declining honours paid to them, and their moulids being turned into *meitums* ?

How unfair it seems that the cinemas, the dancing halls, the cabarets and the like should be benefited by the war, and only the moulids and time honoured festivals of the poor *blackened out!*

As a matter of the country's welfare how much better to encourage them in the face of crises, then to fill them with apprehension, and why flatter the enemy in this way, whose lying wireless has already accused us of shivering with fear in our shelters ? It is they and our fifth column who score by these repressions, and their effects on the people; *they* who are rejoicing over this gift of a priceless asset.

Aad now Sir,

for the love of the Lord and the people, I implore you to air these simple truths in your enlightened columns.

Yours very faithfully,

(*El-Hag*) *Abu Masaud.*

If this book not only arouses the interest and sympathy of the general reader in the subject of moulids, and the claims of the people to be amused or at least to amuse themselves, but also induces those in power to reflect on the subject and relax the present restrictions, to grant liberal 'Circenses', and particularly to give full scope to the piety and gaiety of the humble classes at their **Moulids**, — the writer will feel that he has not written in vain, and has repaid to a small extent the debt of gratitude he owes to the dear people amongst whom he has made his home, and

"Sublimi feriam sidera vertice".

I

MOULIDS —

THEIR ORIGIN AND OBJECTS.

A Moulid may be defined as a Religious and Popular Local Feast in honour of a reputed Saint.

The Egyptian Moulids described below form what may be regarded as a pioneer list, as it comprises only those which the writer has repeatedly seen, or those about which he has direct and reliable information. It has not seemed to him necessary nor even desirable to list Moslem and Christian moulids separately, their nature, origin and objects being broadly the same. The word مولد Moulid, (Birthday) is rather more applicable to the Moslem celebrations than the Christian, because the former are held for preference on the believed birthday of the Skeikh, whilst the latter are approximately on the supposed day of death, (the day of his birthday into eternal life,)

"Hic dies postremus, aeterni natalis est."

We must seek the origins of moulids in the ancient roots of society and religion: in an instinct of wholesome veneration of those who have left examples of holiness or merit, too high perhaps for common attainment but not too high to be striven after: and in the impulse which brings men together to find free scope for their divine aspirations and their animal spirits. They crop up in the records or folk lore of most countries and were great assets in the lives of the Greeks and Romans, who doubtless spread their observance in other lands, in willing soil, already not entirely strange to them.

The moulid of Anchises at the foot of Mt. Eryx in Sicily, where Trapani (the ancient Drepanum) now is, was typical, embracing all the criteria of our definition. Vergil in the Vth book of the Aeneid describes vividly the religious observances at the tomb, and the sports which were so popular with his Trojans and the natives, and doubtless the veneration in which Anchises

was held was mainly due to his having been the favourite of a goddess just as Moslem and Christian Saints are with us the favourites of God. Naturally in ancient times the mouldid was about the shrine of a God. This *was* the case in Egypt, or of a deified king, in many instances, instead of that of a human saint, but in those days the anthropomorphic conception of the Deity was very pronounced and the distinction between the divine and the human not so clearly drawn.

Some of the Egyptian mouldids of today retain practices which have come down from Pharaonic times, notably those in the Theban district. Those old customs, and then the observances at the tombs of Coptic saints centuries before Islam led up to the Egyptian mouldid as we now know it, though its great vogue and to a great extent its form seem to date from the death of Ahmad Sayed el-Bedawi in the VIIth century of the Hegira, (the XIIIth of the Christian era).

Ahmad's transcendent personality, and his reputation for valour, piety and miracle had not only made a unique appeal to the masses, but had constrained the greatest sheikhs of those days of Faith to acknowledge him their superior, and that not in Egypt alone but almost throughout the moslem world even before he was sent as a gift from heaven to Egypt. He had crossed North Africa, had lived twenty years at Mecca meeting and impressing the world's pilgrims, and had been received as a Prophet in Iraq; and so as the news of his death spread, his tomb became surrounded, not only by Egyptians, but by pilgrims from the Indies and all the Moslem world. Naturally such a throng over a considerable time in Tanta gave an impetus to the markets and the general life and prosperity of the little place, and the re-meeting of old friends who had perhaps first met at the Caaba, the making of new acquaintances and the hospitality of the people of the town soon lent a social and then a festive side to the occasion, which, blending with the air of sanctity about the very body of such a favourite of Allah created the perfect mouldid atmosphere. It was natural to arrange a

similar meeting for future years, and the same time of the year was chosen, the Coptic month Baba, (October), which date has been retained, without reference to the Arabic date, with two minor celebrations also following the solar calendar.

The prestige and prosperity of Tanta had so soared, that Desouk which is not far away decided to honour the bones of their great Wali Ibrahim in the same way, and Damanhur and other towns followed the example. Moulids thus spread, and the more readily, in districts (like the West of Cairo), where Sayed el-Bedawi had posted the apostles he sent out, notable amongst which is Sidi Ismail Imbabi, whose moulid is still one of the most typical and attractive.

Cairo is fortunate, unique in fact, in that a number of its moulids centre about the relics or actual bodies of members of the immediate family of the Prophet. The following list could not be equalled by any city in the world, I am convinced, not even by Mecca, certainly not now that vandal Wahabis have shamefully destroyed the tomb of Ayesha and many others.

Sidna Husein boasts the head of that "martyred" grandson of the Founder of Islam.

Sidna Zein el-Abdin (Aly el Asghar) is also represented by his head.

Fatma his sister by her body, and

Sakina his other sister by relics.

These three were all the children of Husein.

Saida Zenab their aunt, sister of Husein has her celebrated mosque and moulid and a tomb whose authenticity is doubted.

Fatima el-Nebawiya daughter of the Sixth Imam, Gaafar Sadiq and **Ayesha** her sister are similarly honoured, Fatima's body being believed to be enshrined in the street

of her name near Bab el Khalq. These two are descended in a straight line from Muhammad through Ali, Husein, Zein-el-Abdin, and Gaafar Sadiq.

Sitna Nefisa who shares the mouldid of Sakina is similarly Nebawiya in descent, being the great grand-daughter of the Imam Hasan, younger brother of Husein. She lived in Cairo for seven years, died and was buried here.

Haroun whose tomb is on the premises of Major Gayer-Anderson, at Ibn el-Tulun, and whose mouldid has been revived might be added, as he is certainly "Huseiny".

Sitna Rugaiya whose tomb is near the mosques of Nefisa and Sakina is, I am told locally, closely related to these and therefore also *Huseiny*. (I have not been able to obtain particulars or confirm her mouldid.)

Sidi Abdalla el-Hagr whose *tabut* outside of his mosque near Sitna Ayesha is the centre of a tiny mouldid, is testified to be of the Prophet's family, by the inscription,—

« هذا مقام سيد الشيخ عبد الله من نسل الحسين »

"This is the place of Sidi el-Sheikh Abdulla of the family of the Husein."

Of the remaining mouldids, a very large proportion of the Saints honoured thereby are Ashraf, descendants of the Prophet.

The term "Huseiny" is applied to such of the Ashraf as are descended from the Husein branch of the Prophet's family. It will be clear from the attached very abbreviated geneological tree that Sakina, Zein el-Abdin, Ayesha, and the two Fatima el-Nebawiya are Huseini, but that term cannot be applied to Nefisa,

guardian of the holy things of Islam.

Cairo too is *facile princeps* in the number and eminence of the Sheikhs and Walis it honours, not necessarily Ashraf, who are strictly local. Egyptian monarchs like Salah el-Din and Hasan have their mosques, but King Saleh has his mosque, his tomb, and his mouldid to this day in the Nahasin where he sat in a ragged *dilk* mending baskets and exhorting to piety, and through which he passed in triumph after he had captured Jerusalem, Damascus, and Ascalon, and when he had conquered at Mansura and made prisoner the King of France (with his army), of whom also it was "written" ("mektab") that he should be recognised as a Saint. Saleh was doubly Sultan, as King of Egypt, and in the religious sense in which the title is applied to "Sultan" Hanafi, "Sultan" Maghrouri, and others, as Sovereign amongst Saints.

Sultan Saleh's tomb at once came into repute and was visited by Sultan Beybars, amongst many pilgrims, and quite probably became quickly honoured with a mouldid, as Saleh died about 647 A. H. (1249 A. D.) ten years after Sayed's death at Tanta had given such an impulse to these observances.

Then in 890 A. H. (1485 A. D.) the great Abu el-Ela died and was buried near his Nile at Bulaq. The beginning of the Xth century A. H. (XVIth A. D.) was singularly notable. In the one year 930 A. H. (1523 A. D.) died and were buried in their own "zawiyas", the miracle-worker Dashtouti (Tashtoushi), and the two anchorites, Marsafa—who after fighting in Persia under Kait Bey lived 30 years in a Moqattam cave—and el-Muhammadi el-Demardashi; and almost at the same time the other Muham-madi (Shahin) who was also an anchorite of the Cairene *Thebaid* the Moqattam hills. (v. i. their mouldids.)

The objects of these mouldids are evident from the above, and from their very origin;—primarily "to glorify God by venerating one of his favourities", as I heard an old Dervish express it: contingently to acquire a blessing and a friend and



Entry to the mosque and shrine of Sultan Saleh.
The Nahasin.

intercessor in the heavenly court, and thirdly to recreate and refresh soul and body, with thankful joy — with freedom for everybody to visit the (local) shrine, and to take part in the amusements.

A ceremony such as the Commemoration of the Great Muhammad Ali does not constitute a moulid, nor can the Fête of the Bride of the Nile be considered such. Nor are the ordinary religious services of church or mosque,—such as Sunday mass or the Friday Prayer,—though perfect in their way: nor the Persian Threnody of the Ashura: nor the solemnities of the Maarag, (Ascension of the Prophet), and of the Leilet el-Qadr. Many of the Saint's Day feasts in Europe are true moulids, and many of the country Fairs are so. Unhappily we must exclude the Fairs of "Merry England", since the Reformation and Puritanism crushed and chilled the soul of them, leaving them mere markets, more or less merry.

Not that a moulid need exclude buying and selling from its liberal scheme. Some of the most typical of Egyptian moulids are also Fairs, for example, that of Sidi Huneidiq, in the desert by Lake Timsah. Its great enclosure is almost made up of booths where fruit, toys, sweets, &c. can be bought; but all the multitude visit the local tomb, and enjoy the horse and camel races and sports.

Even the greatest Cairene (and Islamic) moulid, that of the Nebi is not so typical, *qua moulid*, as those of Sidna Husein, Barsum el-Aryan, Sidi Bayumi and most of the others listed below because it does not centre round any spot specially hallowed by the Prophet. Even in my time it has been held in at least three different places. It is a general rather than local feast.

For the same reason I have excluded the supreme Christian moulid, — **Christmas**, — because it is so general, and its component parts divided between church and home, and not localised popularly at any one spot.

Likewise we have in Egypt, as far as I am aware, no Catholic moulds, in the sense of being religious, recreative, local, and free to all; though there are many in a more restricted way. I read, for example in the "Giornale del Oriente" of 2nd Feb. 1940

"Domenica 4 febbraio prossimo l'Istituto Salesiana di Rod el Farag festeggia la solennità del suo fonditore, S. Giovanni Bosco, con una funzione religiosa, al mattino, ed un trattamento ricreativo nel pomeriggio."

Then follow details of the mass and its officiants, and the music, plays, singing &c.,—the features of a mould, except that it is more for a community than the general populace,—inevitable in such a case. Perhaps the nearest approach is the Feast of S. Térésa at Shubra in October, when all the populace that can find room on the premises is there, a crowd much more Egyptian than Ifrangi, with Moslems, Jews, Greek Orthodox, and members of every religion and caste, taking part or bringing votive offerings to the shrine of "The Little Flower".

Naturally it is only the Egyptian Moslems or Copts, the *adscripti glebae*, who can arrange a typical Egyptian mould according to its traditions, and it is one of the many instances of their blessed tolerance and friendliness, that all dwellers in Egypt and visitors of whatever creed or nationality are made perfectly free and welcome.

II

MOULIDS

.....THEIR PLACE: THEIR TIMES AND SEASONS.

As the paramount object of this little work is to interest people in the moulids of Egypt, a necessary auxiliary object is to explain where and when they can best be seen, since it is astonishingly easy to miss them. For that reason each moulid described has been treated somewhat in guide-book fashion, the easiest way of approach being given, and notes as to its most probable date.

As with almost the sole exception of the Moulid el-Nebi, they centre about shrines which are fixed objects, their location is simple enough: yet even so, the recent tendency to keep the religious and secular sides apart makes it sometimes difficult for a stranger to find the latter. For example, the amusement booths of Sidna Hussein have fringed the "gabel" at the extreme end of the continuation of the Muski, but the last two or three years, what remains of them have been crowded into a bit of waste land considerably nearer. Those of Saida Zenab which were originally near the mosque in the Baghala district were moved to Darb el-Gamamiz, and then to a place not far from Ibn el-Tulun. Those of Muhammadi have retired from the main approaches to the mosque, to a quasi-concealed fold in the contour of the village of Demardash. At the moulid of Sidi Hili the mosque is on one side of the main road to Rod el-Farag (via Bulaq) and the amusement park away on the other.

When at a moulid, the manifold lights sounds and decorations are assertive enough: yet one can pass very near and not notice them. This is even the case in so central a moulid as Ashmawi. Indeed so inconspicuous are they that the writer wandered about Cairo for a quarter of a century without knowing of the existence of more than a dozen or so.

If the locality is simple, the date is often most elusive, especially to those not familiar with the lunar calendar, naturally used for Moslem feasts, which advances on the Gregorian 11 days every year, making a complete round of the solar year three times in a century. Even so, I can only recall about half a dozen important mouldids where the same date is rigidly adhered to every time. These are (giving the eve of the feast in each case.):

| | |
|---------------|--|
| On 10 Rabia 1 | Ashmawi |
| „ 11 Rabia I | El-Nebi |
| „ 26 Ragab | Dashtouti (“Tashtoushi”), and some small ones. |
| „ 14 Shaaban | Matrawi, and several minor mouldids |
| „ ” ” | Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi |
| „ ” ” | Yussef el-Haggag |
| (— 29 Shaaban | Bahlul, and a number of quite little ones) |

It is to be noted that of these dates, the 26th Ragab is a very special night, the eve of the Prophet’s Ascension, *Leilet el-Maarag*.

In Lane’s time, a century ago, the Tashtoushi mouldid was the actual great Cairo celebration of *El-Maarag*. Now the latter takes place at the Citadel mosque of Mohammed Ali, which doubtless partly accounts for the *αποκολοκυντῶσις* of Sheikh Tashtoushi.

Some mouldids are announced in the Arabic papers, and a few of the most important in the European journals. But there is a pitfall in the form of these announcements into which the writer fell more than once, and which is the cause of scores of persons, particularly visitors, missing each year the greatest spectacle of all, the Mouldid el-Nebi. For instance, in the year 1939, the papers stated that on the occasion of the solemnity of the Mouldid el-Nebi, Tuesday May 2nd would be observed as a public holiday, all government offices would be closed, and so on, that being 12th Rabia I, the birthday of the Prophet. Those who

ignored the fact that in Islam as in Genesis, the evening and the morning constitute the day, and were unaware that a thoughtful government fixes the holiday for 'the morning after the night before', naturally went to see the great function and the fireworks on Tuesday, and discovered that all had been consummated the afternoon and evening of the Monday. It is for that reason I have given the date of the Moulid el-Nebi as the 11th Rabia I, and followed this system for all the others. It may be taken that the great night is always the eve of the actual day, i.e. the evening before it, as we should reckon on Gregorian lines: though in some instances it continues into that day, which may be reserved for the grand procession, (zeffa). This is the case with Sayed el Bedawi, Abd al-Rahim, El-Haggag, and a few others, but with the rest, there is then only the very mild observance of the "Khatima", the closing of the whole moulid.

As for the great majority of moulids, their date is subject to fluctuation from so many causes, and often without apparent reason, that it is only by careful watching and enquiry on the spot that one can be at all sure. Even the man on the spot, the very sheikh at the mosque door, often misleads one, probably through having no certain knowledge himself, or through the date being altered after he has given his information. At one time I fancied that they looked on me as a suspicious character, and purposely diverted me from their moulid, but on sending my Moslem muraslas I still got wrong answers, sometimes as many as the number of emissaries sent. By repeatedly going however in successive years, and noting the day of the week and of the Arabic month, it has been possible to arrive at something like a formula in many, but not in all cases. The days and dates of the moulids which follow, and any conclusion which can be drawn from them, are therefore given as some guide.

There are many reasons for this uncertainty; among them that the exact birthday of the saint is seldom known, and a date

has arbitrarily to be chosen, which itself may be subject to local or seasonal changes, such as the death of a benefactor—a cause which once greatly delayed the moulid of Zefeti,—or delay in collecting the cost of decorations etc., or the date (which, if by the arabic calendar, passes through all the seasons) falling at a time when the piece of land required is under cultivation. That is the case frequently with country celebrations. I have known it happen to those of Mazlum and Farag.

Imbabi indeed has had such baffling modifications, including a postponement because of cattle plague in the district, that ranging from Safr to Rabia II in seven years, and seemingly enjoying summer, without reference to the lunar calendar, I was completely baffled till I discovered that its date followed that of an ancient Feast of Isis, which fell shortly before midsummer (1).

There are certain other Moslem moulids which follow the solar calendar, instead of the lunar, notably that of Sayed el-Bedawi held always in the Coptic Baba (October), and therefore also those of Desouq and Damanhour which closely follow it: also that of Bayumi which Murray writing in 1888 said was always celebrated in Baba (October), presumably because the Bayumiya dervishes are a branch of the Ahmadiya, the *tariqa* of Sayed el-Bedawi; but now seemingly in the month of Baramhat (March). It results from this that these and all such moulids must clash every thirty years with Ramadan, which is *mensis non* from this point of view, and then struggle through the pilgrimage months, very lean times for local feasts. Such a coincidence as long as it lasts involves the putting back or forward of the date, and the conduct of the moulid on reduced lines: and what is much more unfortunate, it gives that selfish element which grudges the people any open expression of their piety or joy, a pretext for checking the renewal of the moulid on its old lines when it emerges from this sort of eclipse. The great Sayed el Bedawi has now entered into the umbra of this perilous period, more gloomy perhaps than the penumbra of the war.

(1) Note. v. Introductory Chapter; and the detailed account of the moulid of Ismail Imbabi.

Within the general communion of Islamic saints, there appears a certain *symbiosis* between individual "sodales sanctorum civium", which is reflected in a *rapprochement* of their moulids. "As a first example I will mention Sidi Marzuk, about whom I know nothing but that he has a moulid with a wonderful zeffa, and a most puzzling and elusive date, varying from Zu'el-Qaada to Safr between 1352 and 1356 (1933 and 1937), and that the conduct of his moulid and zeffa are suggestive of Sidi Bayumi, particularly in the prominence of red banners. Now on comparing the dates of Bayumi and Marzuk on the three occasions I have noted both, I find that twice Marzuk has been celebrated exactly a week after Bayumi and on the third exactly a fortnight, and that both their moulids fall in Baramhat or Bermuda (March or April). These rather empirical premises, though not justifying a conclusion, suggest that Marzuk depends on Bayumi, and like the latter ignores the Arabic lunar calendar in favour of the Coptic and solar system.

Bayumi had another important satellite, the great Afifi, ⁽¹⁾ whose moulid amongst the tombs always followed immediately after that of Bayumi. I fear that it is now quite extinct. It is clear that this also must have followed the solar not the lunar calendar.

Sutuhieh at the Bab el-Fattuh, at or near the end of Shaaban, has her satellites in Qasid, Gaml, Abd el-Kerim and Abd el-Basat: and, in Bulaq,—Galadin, Wasti, Kurdi, Khasousi, and Awlad Badr seem to group in time as in place about Sidi Nasr.

The most definite case is that of Imam el-Shafei which, normally falling on the first Wednesday of Shaaban, pins down El-Leithi to the following Friday week and Saman to the Thursday week, and controls also Abu Daif, Abu Zaid, Ali el Gizi, Adawiya, Gamila and sundry small fry.

There are also imponderable influences, hardly dreamt of in our philosophy or theology, which sometimes determine the date

(1) v. Bayumi.

or ensure the observance of the moulid. In 1357 (1938) I found on or just before the final night that the moulid of Mazlum had been stopped for no real reason, the suggestion that it was on account of the fairly recent death of King Foad being rather a stigma on the memory of that kind-hearted monarch, who would have been the last to accept such an equivocal honour. But the disgusted ghost of Sheikh Mazlum appeared to the local authority responsible, and so alarmed him that the moulid started afresh and proceeded to the final night with all honour and éclat.

An instance of historical note is the appearance of the Prophet himself to the pious Sheikh el-Bahai at the shrine of his grandson Husein, to assure him that the noble head was really there, thus establishing the prestige of the mosque, the tomb and the moulid. Similar supernatural occurrences are associated with the tomb and moulid of Sultan Saleh, and many others. The last case with which I am acquainted dates back only a few months. In Shaaban (1939), 1358, the moulid of Sidi Haroun "el-Huseini", which was revived a few years ago by Major Gayer-Anderson, on whose ground the little tomb stands, failed to eventuate when due at the beginning of the month, owing to the major's return being delayed by the outbreak of war. When he arrived, Ramadan (in which month no moulids are held), was so near, that he reluctantly abandoned it for a year, the more unwillingly as I think he deemed the war no reason for such an omission, but rather a calamity calling for an extra effort to encourage the people in the simple and pious customs and pursuits, which tend to their contentment and happiness and the very stability of the realm in a crisis. But alas, it did not seem humanly possible to arrange all the details of a moulid in a few hours! That, however, was reckoning without the ghost of Sidi Haroun. That blessed spirit lost no time in appearing in the night watches to Sheikh Suleiman el-Kredli, the guardian of Haroun's last resting place, explaining that no excuses would be accepted for the omission of the ritual

Moulid
of
Sidi Haroun el-Huseini.



The Sheikh Suleiman el-Kredli.
Custos et Genius Loci & Adscriptus Glebae.

due to him. Suleiman is as ancient, venerable and picturesque as Eli or Simeon, (and as myope as Father Jacob). He is a sort of reincarnation of a long line of Kredlia, who occupied the Beit el-Kredlia (in which Gayer Anderson Bey now dwells) through the centuries, and is definitely *adscriptus glebae*. He claims that his *silsila*, or pedigree, goes back beyond these to the sons of the Prophet and friends of Haroun. Thanks to this humble representative and devoted adherent of the Saint, and with the Major as fairy Godmother, the mouldid blossomed as by magic, and Sidi Haroun had every cause to shower blessings on them both:— and so another legend is added to the many which cluster about the Beit el-Kredlia (1).

It has been mentioned elsewhere that the date of Sayed el-Bedawi follows the solar calendar and for that reason it will clash somewhat from now (1358/1939) on with Ramadan and the practically non-mouldid months, till it emerges again into Muharem. Abu Harera of Giza, though Islamic, adheres to the Coptic order of movable feasts, being always celebrated on Easter Monday with the great pan-Egyptian holiday of Sham el-Nesim. It however retains elements older far than Islam or Christianity, and may reasonably be believed to be derived from Sun worship and the Phoenix cult. Desuki, Bayumi and Imbabi take their cue from Sayed el-Bédawi, and follow the seasons, not the moon. (Also, I think, Marzuk, and possibly Shuhda.)

As for the few Coptic mouldids, they coincide with the feast of their patron saint, or culminate within a few day of it. Of these I have listed the following :—

Note. (1) Many of my readers are already familiar with the weirdly attractive character of Sheikh Suleiman, from Major Gayer-Anderson's "Twelve Legends of the Bayt el-Kredlea" which began to appear in "The Sphinx" on December 23th. 1939. This "old mysterious man" is indeed egregious, but still illustrative of a type which continues to wield strange spiritual influences.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Mar Girgis (S. George) in Barmuda | April | — Coptic Catholic |
| | — Bashans | May Coptic |
| | | Orthodox |
| Sitna Damiana | in Bashans | May |
| Sitna Mariam | in Misra | August |
| Sidi Barsum el-Aryan | in Tut | September |

It is to be hoped that there are many others in the provinces and certainly the feast of the Assumption in Misra (August 15th.) takes the form of a mouldid in a number of places, as it does in very numerous countries. The Palio at Siena is in honour of the *Assunzione*, and I was fortunate in witnessing the same under the name of **Ἡ Κοιμησις τῆς Θεοτοκου** at Cremasto on the Island of Rhodes. Ample religious observances, including the visit to ikons of Our Lady, were followed by Rhodian lads and lassies singing the songs and dancing the dances of ancient Greece most beautifully.

Butler in his book on the "Coptic Churches" mentions three mouldids which I have not been able to confirm :—

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| S. Mercurius (Abu Sefein) | 15 Hatur. |
| SS. Cyrus and John of Damanhur. | 4 Abib. |
| S. Sergius (Abu Serga) | 13 Amshir. |

In fact in the case of the first of these, I went to the Dir of Abu Sefein on 15 Hatur 1650 (14-11-33), and not only was there no sign of a mouldid, but people living in the "Skete" assured me ⁽¹⁾ that it was long since extinct.

(1) Note,—Though the Arabic word **دير** dir, and the Greek **σκητη** skêtê both mean monastery, they *may* refer to a group of such with their churches, and dependencies including the dwellings of lay folk connected

The Copts of course keep many other feasts which, not being moulids, are out of the province of this book : of which are the Christian movable feasts of Palm Sunday, Easter, Whitsuntide, etc., and many fixed Holy Days. Of these

Eid el-Ghatas, عيد الغطاس , Epiphany, in Kihak

Eid el-Salib, عيد الصليب , Festival of the Cross, in Tut

Eid el-Rusul, عيد الرسول , Festival of the Prophets, in Abib

Also Eid el-Milad, عيد الميلاد , Christmas, which though a moulid in a supreme sense is not included here for reasons given — Ch.I

(Certain Feasts of Our Lady are kept publicly with most of the characteristics of a moulid, of which I have included

Eid el-Idaa, عيد ادعاء العذراء , Assumption, in Misra in an account of Moulid Sitna Mariam at Mustarod, (and at Duqduş), with a reference to

in various ways with the foundation, the whole being enclosed by a protecting wall. The Dir of Abu Sefein may be used therefore (as Wallace Budge in "The Nile" uses it) in the latter sense to include not only the church and monastic buildings of St. Mercurius (Abu Sefein) with the enclosed chapels of Barsum el-Aryan, Girgis, Michael, Buktor, etc., but the distinct churches of El-Athra (the Virgin), and Anba Shenuda, the "Convent of the Maidens" and all the little streets and houses within the ancient boundary wall: the Greek word in its colloquial form σκητή (skêtê), I have always found to have this general sense.

Eid el-Bishara, عيد البشارة , Annunciation in Baramhat)

Similarly there are of course many Moslem celebrations which cannot be included in a book of moulids, as for example,

The two "Bairams"

The two Mahmal (and Kiswa) ceremonies, on the departure and return of the Pilgrims.

Cutting the Khalig قطع الخليج, or Eid Arusat el-Nil عيد عروسة النيل

Leilat el-Màràg and Leilat el-Qadr (and Leilat el-Nuqta)

Commemoration of Muhammad Ali

(The Ashura, العاشورة).

It will save many disappointments if it is remembered that with the exception of the very few moulids assigned to a particular day of the month, (v.s.), they usually have a preference for a definite weekday, often adhering strictly to such, e. g.,

| | | |
|---------|---|--|
| Sunday | El-Kurdi Galal Mazlum | in Ragab or Shaaban in Muharem or Safr Muharem to Rabia IInd |
| Monday | Fatma el-Nebawiya Abu Harera | the last in Rabia I usually Sham el-Nesim. |
| Tuesday | Fatma el-Nebawiya bint Gaafar Sadiq Hasan Anwar Saleh el-Haddad Sidna Husein Saida Zenab | early in Shaaban. Rabia to Shaaban (on 6 out of 7 visits). First after mid- Shaaban. Last of Rabia II. usually. That nearest the middle of Ragab |

| | | |
|-----------|------------------------|---|
| Wednesday | Imam el-Shafei | The first of Shaaban usually |
| | Sultan Hanafi | First after mid-Shaaban. |
| Thursday | Abu Atata | From Rabia I to Gumad I |
| | Abu el-Ela | Early in Rabia II |
| | Abu Sebaa | from Rabia I to Gumad II |
| | Bayumi | Baramhat (Mareh) |
| | Ismail Imbabi | Bauna (June) |
| | Marzuk | Baramhat (March) or Barmuda (April) |
| | Moh. el-Bahri | from Muharem to Safr. |
| | Muhammadi (Demardashi) | in latter half of Shaaban. |
| | Sayed el-Malak | Safr to Gumad I. |
| | Selim | Gumad II to Ragab. |
| | Farag | Rabia II to Ragab. |
| Friday | Abdulla | Ragab to Shaaban. |
| | Abd el-Daim | Muharem to Ragab. |
| | Emery | in Shaaban. |
| | Hamza | Gumad II (once on Sunday in Shaaban). |
| | Imam el-Leithi | near the middle of Shaaban. |
| | Maaruf | Ragab to Shaaban |
| | Saud | early in Shaaban. |
| Saturday | Marsafa | late in Shaaban. |
| | Zein el-Abdin | Gumad II (but has ranged from Safr to Shaaban.) |

I am sure this list could be greatly extended, especially for Thursday, the eve of Friday, and for Friday itself, but I have only ventured to put down moulids which I have attended.

again and again and always found adhering to one day of the week.

Zefeti seems to oscillate between Sunday and Thursday, and a few have no apparent preference. El-Hili, for example, I have known on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and ranging over several months.

It would be easy to draw up a consecutive list of Christian Saints' day feasts, (Catholic, Orthodox or Coptic), simply following the calendar in each case, the sequence being preserved, but the above list will show how impossible that is with the Islamic moulids. I have, however, preceded the detailed accounts which come later in this book by an approximate Calendar of the Feasts described. This at least will indicate which moulids may be expected about any given date. Where the range in time varies so that it may occur in one of several months, the first of these is given.

It is important to remember that a few Moslem moulids follow the Coptic, solar calendar, and not their own lunar reckoning

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Abu Harera | The Coptic Easter Monday, (Sham el-Nesim). |
| Bayumi | Baramhat (March). |
| Ismail Imbabi | Bauna (June). |
| Sayed el-Bedawi | Baba (October). |
| Ibrahim el-Desuki | do. |
| Marzuk | Barmuda |

and probably this is the case with some others, notably Shuhda in Barmuda. (*v. Shuhda*)

Apart from supernatural intervention, the dominating influence most potent in determining the ultimate date of a moulid is that of the Ministry of Interior. Its permission must be obtained, and any limitations or postponements it may impose must be complied with. Occasionally it withholds permission altogether.

The indications regarding place and date given in this chapter, and in lists, etc., which follow, are not based in any way on anything official but simply on personal observation and deduction over a series of years, up to this year of the Hegira 1359 (1940), and of course liable to modifications in the future.

Also, as I have emphasised elsewhere, the 126 mouldids which follow are far from being a complete list. They comprise only those I have assisted at, or about which I have the most direct first-hand information. I know there are many others, (of which some are big and important), but how many I have little idea.

For example, I believe that there is a mouldid of some importance at Damanhur, but not having had an opportunity of seeing it, and enquiries having elicited only vague and contradictory reports, it is left out altogether.

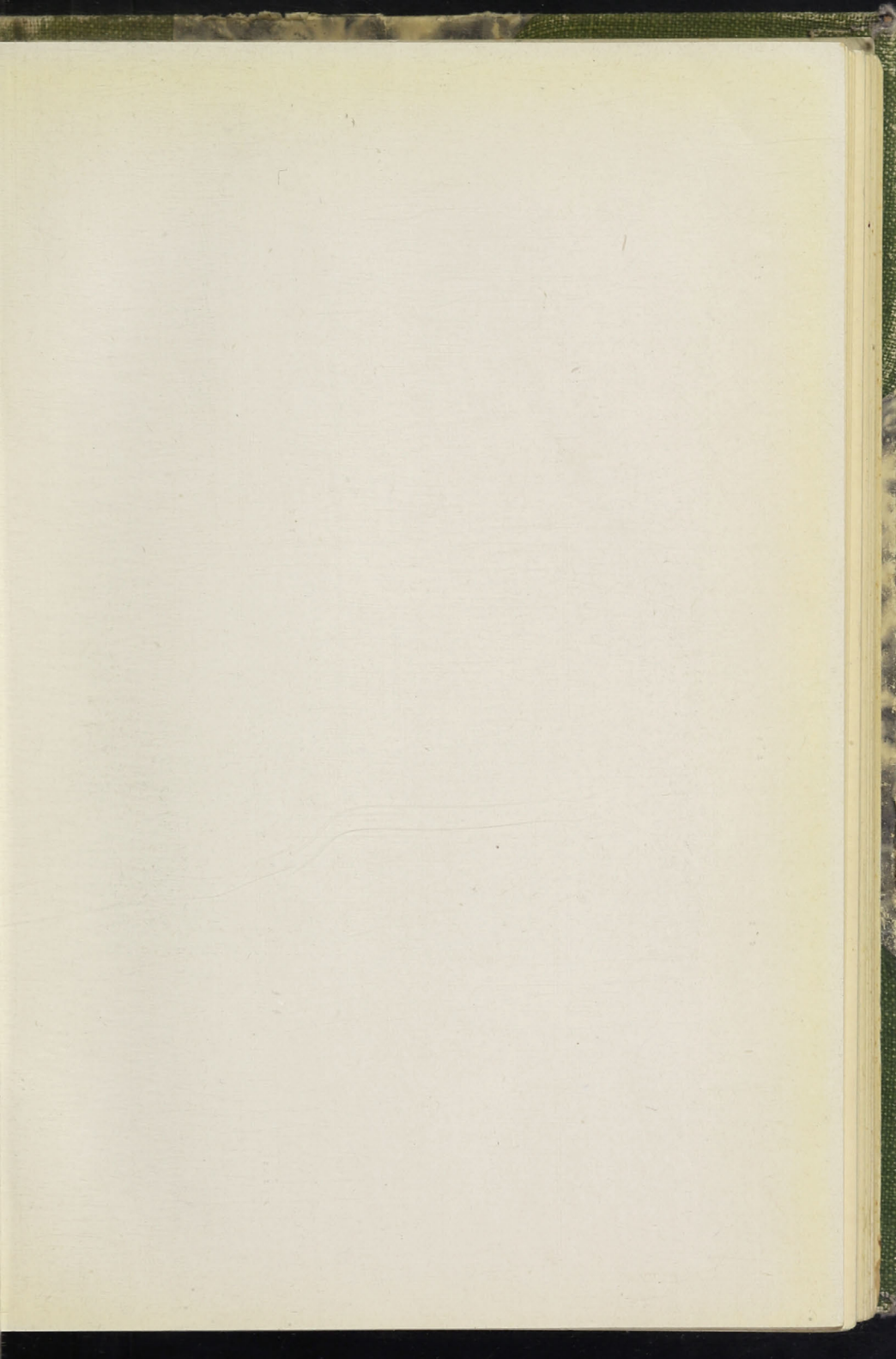
Again Major Gayer-Anderson, who visited the tomb of Sheikh Selim el-Aryan, on the E. bank of the Nile about a mile from Nag-Hamadi kindly sent me a long account from the lips of Sheikh Selim's nephews, who cultivate the eight fedans about the tomb presented by the Khedive Ismail in recognition of a notable miracle witnessed by his Highness. This famous Hag who never wore clothes, to whom all animals were tame, and who lived in austere sanctity must surely have a mouldid, but the Major not being able to ascertain the date or even to confirm this, I must not group it with the rest.

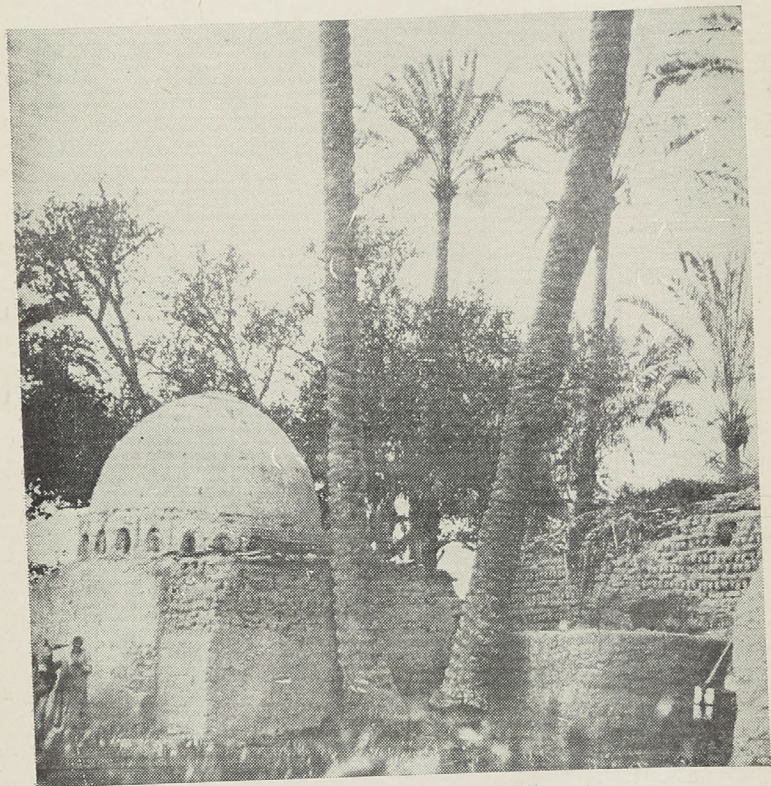
Lane's statement written a hundred years ago, that "where there is a Sheikh's tomb, there is almost always a mouldid", confirmed me in my determination to include only twentieth century celebrations of which I have direct knowledge.

It is strange that the great detailed, voluminous, and conscientious writers on Egypt, Lane, Budge, and Murray, and the rest as far as I know, should cull only the most flamboyant and conspicuous flowers from the garden of mouldids, for in over two thousand pages of the three named, now before me, I can only find the description of about fifteen, of which some are little

more than references, and two at least, Sidi Affi and Sultan Rifai are, I fear, quite extinct. But "kind hearts love the little flowers", and I am sure the kind hearts of my readers will be interested in and sympathise with these little mouldids, struggling, many of them, to keep their place in the sun. (Of the two mouldids Afifi and Rifai which had a great vogue in 1888 when Murray wrote about them, the first is referred to in my account of the mouldid of Bayumi. The other, Murray says, was "one of the most remarkable festivals that occur during the year". At it the Rifai dervishes, encamped in the necropolis between the tombs of the Mameluks and Imam el-Shafei, were in great force, and exhibited their most wonderful feats. The mid-day procession through the city also was unique. The account in Murray's Handbook of Egypt, 1888 issue, is a revelation of what a mouldid could be in those days.)

There have been great changes in the past, and doubtless will be in the future, but let us hope and pray that they will be favourable to Egypt's mouldids.





A Saint's Tomb (at Merg.)

III

MOULIDS .

... THEIR DEVOTIONAL SIDE.

A moulid being the celebration of some Saint, centres naturally about the spot where his body, or at least a relic, has been laid. This may be under his Tabut (تابوت) in a mosque or in one of the picturesque shrines surmounted by a dome (قبة) called Maqam (مقام) his place, or Dereh (ضريح) his grave, or Zâwiya (زاوية) his corner. The last term was applied by an anchorite to the cell in which he elected to live and in which he preferred to be laid for his eternal rest, as in the cases of Morsafa and Muham-madi, but it naturally extended to the "comb" of cells grouped sooner or later round about it, forming the rudiments of a monastery. ⁽¹⁾ Marsafa's zâwiya though still underground ranks as a mesgid, mosque, مسجد, with the inscription over the door, مسجد سيد علي المرصفي

"The mosque of Sidi Ali el-Marsafa" (v. his moulid)

The "Tabut" is sometimes in a private house, as in the cases of El-Ansari and of El-Azaim, whose moulids are described below, and I once witnessed a tiny moulid and saw the tabut in the house of one of the Romali family, but do not remember the name

Note (1) Miralai Gayer-Anderson tells me that the Senusi regularly make use of this natural system of cell division for the propagation of their tenets. One cell zawia (zawiyas) are established with the view to each one producing a group, still called a zawiya, each new occupant receiving instruction from the original anchorite, until he is qualified to go forth and found another nuclear cell, and so on.

Even before the Ministry of Interior has approved and fixed a period (which is usually a week, but may be two and even three, or as little as a single day), the number of worshippers at the hours of prayer greatly increases at these places, not only because of augmented zeal on the part of the local people, but on account of the afflux of visiting pilgrims; and more zikrs, often preceded by little processions, may be remarked. At the same time decorations begin to appear in the district, little flags, coloured lamps and globes, and so on. Big framed pictures representing circumcision doctors at their work are put up over the barbers' shops, often with a notice that this operation will be performed gratis; and gay stalls appear for the sale of "arusas", little sugar figurines brilliant with tinsel; and swings and many other things, to be treated more fully in the next chapter on the popular amusement side of a moulid.

The opening day being fixed, there is an inaugural ceremony of a religious nature, often official, with readings from the Quran, a panegyric of the Saint, zikrs and other devotional exercises. This may be presided over by a local sheikh, usually of one of the dervish orders, (طرق) frequently a spiritual or blood descendant, or both, of the Founder whose feast is being honoured. Or the Government may nominate some high ecclesiastical dignitary, such as one of the Ulama. The greatest of these, the Sheikh el-Bakri, lineal descendant of the First Khalif, Abu-Bakr, used always to lead the moulid of Tashtoushi, which was also the celebration of "El-Maarag", taking up temporary residence on the spot.

He is the head of all the numerous Orders of Dervishes, with the title of Nakib el-Ashraf (نقيب الاشراف), Prince of the Ashraf, (Sherifs, or members of the family of the Prophet), and as descendant of Abu-Bakr Sadiq "occupies" the supreme "carpet"

(sigada ⁽¹⁾ سجادة) of that great Founder, with the further title of Sahib Sigada (صاحب سجادة), the Sigada being the spiritual throne. The direct descendants of Ali and Omar have each his "carpet", but these rank after that of the Sheikh el-Bakri.

These dervishes become more and more *en evidence* as the days of the moulid go on, as the zikrs, the visits to the tomb, and all the essential characteristics work up in a rapid crescendo to the great apodosis of the feast. This usually is at the octave of the opening ceremony, and then they are the heart and soul of the culminating *zeffa* (procession), of which indeed they are the essence and nucleus, though multitudes of the laity accompany them, vying with them in zeal and enthusiasm.

Many non-moslems have a singularly vague and cramped idea of what the term "Dervish" implies. Quite recently a "person of culture", after asking me, "What is a moulid?", and my explanation involving a mention of dervishes, added, "Oh, I know all about the dervishes: they are or were the "howling" and the "whirling", *n'est-ce pas*, but I thought they were done away with!"

Apart from cases like this of simple ignorance, the fact that there is not the same clear line of distinction between clergy and laity as exists in Christendom, makes it difficult to assess the number and importance of those who may be regarded as in Holy Orders, major or minor. The initiation of the simplest member into the brotherhood of any of the *turuq* is a form of consecration, but need afford no outward and visible sign to the

Sigada (1) This word, though also used in our ordinary sense of carpet, has the original meaning of something spread for prayer. The verb to pray is "Sagada" سجد. This sacred mystic meaning may account for the strange legends of "flying carpets", which transported their possessors whither they willed.

outsider, except on such rare occasions as that of a *zeffa*. I met my own syce at a mouldid in the white and green of the Order of the Shazliya, sash and other insignia, and carrying a gonfalon and have recognised since in the *zeffa* many others whom I never dreamt possessed the *sanad* and *silsila* of a dervish.

In point of fact, they are both the heart and framework of Islam, and have been since the time of the great founders, Abu Bakr, father in-law of the Prophet and Ali his son in-law.

The idea, (which particularly underlies Sufism), of spiritualising Muhammadism by means of Orders has resulted in perhaps about a hundred Turuq, طارق (plural of Tariqa طريقة a "Way") all acknowledging and enjoying the Baraka, بركة which though ordinarily meaning a 'blessing' has in this case the further implication of something resembling "Apostolic Succession". For every dervish has been a Talib طالب, Postulant, and passed to Murid مرید under catechumenical instruction by a Murshid مرشد, Guide, to full initiation by "Ward and Zikr", receiving a sort of laying on of hands and complying with numerous canons, and acquiring his Sanad bi-Silsila سند بسلسلة Diploma and Catena, the Sanad certifying to the inviolability of the Silsila, (chain) of spiritual ancestry which unites him with the founder of his Order, and through him to the Prophet himself. Many of these genealogies are rather awe-inspiring, even some of those in the hands of quite simple souls, who make no boast of their ancestry, or hardly value it seemingly except in this sacred connection. They remind one of S. Joseph's family tree and similar biblical records. (They also bring home to one the ghastly irony of Nazi "racism" — that one without blood or breed should have the infinite impudence to stand as arbiter in such matters, and assign to a lower plane than himself anybody is revolting enough, but to do so with a race of millennial

descent and immemorial civilisation is beyond comment! This digressional lapse has nothing to do with the war: it is the citation of a shocking freak case in natural history.)

The "Ward", ورد, corresponds pretty closely to the Church's use of the "Rosary": it involves a telling of beads; and it is significant that though in its verbal sense ورد means to arrive, as a substantive it is the Arabic name of a Rose.

The "Zikr" is essentially the repeated utterance of the name God,—“Allah, Allah, Allah,”—the word meaning 'to mention', but extends to the Witness of the Unity of God, and the Apostolate of Muhammad, - « لا اله الا الله وحمد رسول الله »

“There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His Prophet”, This is known as the Kalima, كلمة, (the Word), and is of such significance, that its utterance by a non-moslem in some countries is liable to entail forcible circumcision.

It is, I think, invariably preceded by the Fathah, فاتحة the little opening chapter of the Qoran, a beautiful little prayer not unlike the “Pater Noster”, and may be accompanied by many a sacred stroph, *zarb*, such as

الله سامع الله باصر الله عالم

“Allah sâmaâ! Allah bàsir.' Allah aalim!

God heareth! God seeth! God knoweth!

In the case of the initiatory zikr, there is much else which varies with the Order, of which certain parts are not supposed to be divulged. The ceremony too contains the elements of a “Sacrament of Penance”—the Wadu, الوضوء Ablution; and a general confession by the Murid to his Murshid, (Pir), with vows of amendment, and subscription to a Covenant (Ahd, عهد) of heart-service to his God, and faithful allegiance to his spiritual father, whose hand he is clasping, from whom he receives an implied absolution.

This handclasp, which I have compared to the episcopal "laying on of hands", with the thumbs raised and pressed together, and the hands veiled by the sleeve of the Dervish, is similar to that of a couple at their betrothal, and has its counterparts in Coptic and other Christian functions, particularly in the East. I have noticed marked cases in Greek villages which were long under Turkish domination, and recall a dramatic incident in the History of the Moors in Spain, when the Lady of Lara adopted Mudarra the illegitimate son of her dead husband by a Moslem girl, by enveloping him in her very capacious sleeve.

Though the Dervishes date back to the very early days of Islam, their reorganisation on lines which have changed little to this day, was the work of Abd el-Qadr el-Gilani, عبد القادر الجلاني, in the 6th century of the Hegira, (12th, A.D.), so that his followers, the Qadiriya, constitute the parent Order, *el-Tariqa el-Aslia*, الطريقة الاصلية, of which the main branches are the Rifaiya and the Saàdiya, الرفاعية والسعدية. All three of these are very prominent in Egypt, but the Saàdiya has lost the great prestige it enjoyed at the time of the Dosah, when only its ruling Sheikh was deemed qualified to ride on horseback over the backs of a host of prostrate dervishes. That ceremony which was the crowning feature of the moulids of el-Nebi, Sidna Husein and Tashtoushi never resulted in any recorded injury, but was abandoned before the present century. The founder was Saad el-Din el-Gebawi, سعد الدين الجبوي.

The Rifaiya are remarkable for the wonderful way in which their spiritual exaltation triumphs over pain and physical limitations. Their walking in fire and eating the white hot embers, also glass and poisonous creatures,—things which normally cause death or the most grievous bodily disturbances,—have never been explained on material grounds. Exhibitions of this sort are frequently referred to in the notes on specific moulids, particularly those of Zefeti and el-Ansari. The case describe

of the human chandelier whose flesh was perforated and burnt in many places, but who showed no trace of blood or injury after the "Sheikh el-Rifai" had moistened his finger with his own tongue and touched the wounds, is paralleled by that of a dervish whom I saw at an obscure zikr in Bulaq. He held a bundle of thorns in the fire of a *meshal* (مشال a sort of brazier), till it blazed, then lifting his one flowing garment for a moment, crushed it against his ribs so that the thorns might have a firm grip, and then spun round and round like an ever brighter and fuller fire balloon, till just as suddenly he withdrew the fiery mass, and gave a friendly face-slap with it to some of the sheikhs who were zikring around him.

Naturally the Order of the great Sayed el-Bedawi of Tanta, called the Ahmadiya, is popular and important, as also its branches, which include the Bayumiya, named after Ali el-Bayumi, (v. his Moulid), the Shaarawiya, the Shinawiya, and the Awlad Nooh. These last attract attention by their youth, the conical *tartur*, (طرطور) on their heads, their wooden swords, beads, and little cord whips, *farqila*, (فرقة). They are much *en evidence* at the Tanta procession.

There are also the Burhamiya of Sheikh Ibrahim el-Desuki, the Bakriya, the Demerdashiya, each with local and general repute, and a small new order, the Aazimiya, and others.

Of the rest the "Way" of the Shazliya, الشاذلية founded by the Meccan, Abu Hasan el-Shazli in the seventh century of the Hegira, must by no means be omitted, for it is singularly strong and wide spread in the Cairo district, and has, I am sure, a very beneficent influence amongst the fellahin, artisans, and the youths of the villages, being *par excellence* the Order of the Laity, if that is not a contradiction in terms.

Bliss, the author of "The Religions of Syria and Palestine" deems the Shazlia the most spiritual of all the "Turuq". Its initiates are neither mendicants nor thaumaturgists, nor of the

whirling, "howling", or fire-eating types: are singularly unassuming and free from camouflage and show, and judging by many I know personally, have been drawn into the Shazliyan fold by an earnest desire for a higher spiritual life. People who are careful that those they employ or have dealings with be in possession of rukhsas: رخص (licenses), or shehadas, شهادات (testimonials) and such like recommendations might perhaps be still better advised to attach importance to the guarantee of the "Sanad" of a Shazli. One can only speak as one finds, but I can testify that Shazli lads whom I have had as syces have never let me or my horse down, and I cannot recall having ever known a real "bad hat" amongst them. They are just simple honest souls who never quite forget the "Allah sâmaa, Allah bâsir, Allah Aalim!" (God hears, God sees, God knows!)

Though the founder was buried near the Kaaba, he has had worthy representatives in Egypt. The name of Muhammad el-Shazli appears on many of the banners, and in face of the mosque of Sultan Hanafi is, or was, a shrine superscribed,

زاوية السادة الشاذلية

"Zawiyat el-Sada el-Shazliya"

("The cell of the order of the Shazliya")

The divers "Turug" can be distinguished frequently by a prevailing colour appearing in the banners, turbans or caps, the sash and the brassade. That of the Rifaiya is black: of the Qadiriya white: of the Saadiya, Burhamia and Shazlia green, and of the Ahmadiya red, as also its branches, the Bayumya, etc.

Before leaving the special consideration of the Dervish Orders, it may be useful to tabulate the dates of the founders of those with which we are most concerned:—

| | Founder | Buried A.D. | A.H. |
|----------|-------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Qadiriya | Abd el-Qadir el-Gilani, | Bagdad 1165 | عبد القادر الجلاني 561 |
| Rifaiya | Ahmad el-Rifai, | Busra 1182 | احمد الرفاعي 578 |

| | Founder | Buried A.D. | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Shazliya | Abu Hasan el-Shazli, Mekka | 1258 | ابو حسن الشاذلي 657 |
| (Sufi) Maulavi | Galal el-Din Rumi, Qonia, | 1273 | جلال الدين رومي 672 |
| Ahmadiya | Ahmad Sayed el-Bedawi, Tanta | 1276 | احمد سيد البدوي 675 |
| Burhamiya | Ibrahim el-Desuki, Desuq | 1278 | ابراهيم الدسوقي 677 |
| Saadiya | Sâd el-Din Geba, Jeba | 1335 | سعد الدين جبيه 736 |
| (Baktashi) | El-Hag Baktashi | 1357 | الحاج بكتاشي 759 |
| Senusi Muh. | Ibn el-Senusi, Jarabub | 1859 | محمد ابن السنوسي 1276 |
| Azamiya Muh. | Madi Abu el-Azaim, Cairo | 1938 | محمد ماضي ابو العزائم 1357 |

The name of Galal el-Din comes naturally in this list, not only because his Sufi principles made love and beauty and renunciation of self ladder up to God and prime factors in the ultimate apotheosis of man (thus softening the austerities and asperities of the Islam of those hard days, by the humanities of the Alexandrian school, and the poetical conceptions of Iran), but because his Order of the Maulavis is strongly represented in Egypt. That was very apparent up to a few years ago, before the great and touching Persian ceremony of the Ashura was crushed, and the misunderstood and unappreciated ecstasies of the Whirling Dervishes banned. Still we meet occasionally with their characteristic dress, their garb of Indian mourning, and see at moulids the mystic dance of the *Samaa* (سماء) which Galal el-Din introduced at Qonia.

The Baktashis, closely allied to the Maulavis in origin, history and cult, and like them happily absorbed into Islam, are little seen at moulids or in the streets of Cairo, but a visit to their monastery and beautiful garden at the mosque cave of Sultan Magrouri in the Moquattam cliffs, and a talk to the

monks and their urbane Baba is a fascinating and illuminating experience.

The Senusis have little place in this book of mouldids, but appear in the list as evidence of the persistence through the centuries of the dervish idea, whose mysticism and faith in God cannot be killed by modernism, materialism and atheism.⁽¹⁾

A startlingly pleasant local proof of this is the birth and development within the past few years of the Tariqa of the Azaimiya (v. mouldid of Azaim), whose reigning Head is the son of the enshrined founder himself. A pity that one cannot reckon on a series of metempsychoses enabling one to note the progress or decay of such an infant Order! Will it pass into oblivion, as many, many others must have done, or will honoured descendants of the founder point back to him through a long *silsila* as a star in the galaxy of Walis?

The ZIKR already referred to in connection with initiation is the all-prevailing religious observance at every mouldid, and is so named from *zākārā*, \int ; to mention, as its essential is the reiterated calling on the name of God, Allah, !⁽²⁾ It is performed inside or outside the mosque or zawia, in the streets, in private houses, everywhere. Some orders such as the Bayumiya may

(1) Senusis :— If it is true as I have read and heard, that the Senusis destroyed Moslem tombs with the fanaticism of the Wahâbis, and then raised a monument to their own founder, they cannot be held in much esteem, and in any case their iconoclastic efforts discredit them.

(2) Allah :— As Major Gayer-Anderson has reminded me “Allah” may be substituted by some other divine appellation,—such as “Hua” (He), “El-Wahid” (the One), “Allahu hei” (God lives), “Yà hei” (O living One), etc.

introduce words or gestures peculiar to themselves, but these are hardly noticeable to the ordinary observer, as after the opening prayer, the Fathah, فاتحة and another exalting the Prophet and the *favourites of God*, there is great scope in what may accompany or be associated with the actual utterance of Allah ! Allah ! Allah ! Certain strophs have been already quoted and these may be greatly extended, names or attributes of God being generally chosen, as Ya Daim, يا دائم O Everlasting One, and the whole "ninety-nine names of God" may be introduced. One of the most venerable of the company usually leads, frequently with a *neh*, a sort of flute, or other simple instrument, and the tempo and rhythm are impeccable. The musical element may take a lofty and complex form, as in a zikr I have described below—that of Sidi el-Ansari. The beauty of the sounds produced by skilled hands in ecstasy was a memorable treat, enhanced by the graceful shape and colour of the instruments put to such good purpose,—the *neh* and the *sibs* and other flutes, the drums and kettle-drums, *nakrazan*, *tabl baladi* and *tabl shami* and the *baz*, the cymbals, and strange and powerful tambourines, and the rest, which I will not further describe, as that will be found in some detail in the account of the mouldid referred to.

Apart from the rhythmic utterance of "Allah!", and the chanting of strophs and prayers, singing is not excluded, *munshids* being specially called upon to render *qasidas*, or elegies, often of the eroto-spiritual type that joys the heart of a Sufi, and remarkably resembling the lovely and graceful "Songs of Solomon".

It is beyond the scope of this work and the competence of its compiler to transcribe in detail what is said and sung at a zikr. In any case Lane in that wonderful achievement of his, "Modern Egyptians", has done so, and I strongly recommend to those not already familiar with it, the perusal of his account of the combined mouldids of the Prophet and Sidi Ashmawi, in which many *qasidas* and other matter are given, and also the

musical score of the Kalima, the *La Ilaha illa Allah*, etc., of which the place in a zikr should be stressed as much as that of the Fathah.

Another feature of a mouldid, closely associated with the zikr, to be stressed is the recitation of the Qoran. Sometimes a Khatma, *ختمة* is performed, the reading of the entire Book. The Hadith, *حديث*, the sayings of the Prophet' is also much read.

Lane in the same chapter gives a vivid account of the now obsolete *Dosah*, and of the reactions of some of those who assisted at the zikr. He mentions, *inter alia*, the ejaculation by the *munshids* of the word "meded", *مدد* ⁽¹⁾ as an invocation for divine aid (or strength). I have heard the same, and am struck by the parallelism of this with the word "dynamis", (*δυναμῖς*) which is ejaculated in parts of the Greek Orthodox mass, and is quite liturgical, and occurs in St. Chrysostom.

Lane's black eunuch who became "*melboos*", and ultimately epileptic, and foamed at the mouth, and his soldier who shook and groaned horribly, are by no means uncommon sights to this day. I have seen many on the very spot Lane wrote about, and they enter into my account of the mouldid of Ashmawi and

(1) Meded, *مدد* :- This word had indeed a profound mystical significance with the Sufi poets and others. Nicholson, in his "Divani Shamsi Tabriz" commenting an ode of Galal el-Din says, "this term is employed by Jalalu'ddin to denote the perpetual replenishment of the phenomenal world by a succession of emanations from the Absolute."

One wonders if *Selah* *سلاه*, so often interpolated in the Psalms of the Nebi Daud (David) had any such significance.

others. It is extremely rare for any suspicion to be roused that the subject is "putting on" his symptoms or that they are due to other than the extreme zeal of his devotions.

The command to make mention of the name of God, and the belief that it cannot be too often repeated has led through the ages to this extraordinary development. Through the cult of the Sufis and other mystics, the goal of the *zikr* is the "*Jazb*", (*Gazb*), جذب, the ecstatic trance when the soul sheds all earthly dross and is absorbed for a time in the "All-Soul." "*Magzub*," مجذوب from جذب meaning "drawn (by God)" is a better word than "*melboos*" for this condition in which things terrestrial have lost all hold and realities are apprehended in another sphere.

If the uninitiated onlooker finds the raucous ejaculations of the *zikeers*, and their contortions, and the outward form of a *zikr* almost grotesque, and the ultimate symptoms of the "*gazb*" rather dreadful, his wonder and admiration must be called forth at the ecstasy and utter aloofness from the world arrived at, and also at the amount of physical endurance shown.

He must remember, too, that the East is freer than the West from self-conscious restraint, and *pudor malus* and means strange to the conventional eye are taken to throw off the trammels of earth in cults other than that of Islam:—for example, flagellation, and "omphaloscopy" in Christendom.

In Lane's time, seemingly, the whirling dance of the *Samaa* was frequently employed in a *zikr*, and I am glad to say I have seen it more often again in mouldid *ziks* of very recent years, and marvelled at the entire absence of fatigue and giddiness after a vertiginous top-like spin of ten or more minutes.

The *zikr* is by no means confined to dervishes or even sheikhs: the ordinary laity may and do take part freely,—old men and youths and even young boys, and occasionally women.

Sometimes groups of tiny children organise a "zikrlet" of their own, behaving exactly as their elders, who do not interfere as long as their intentions are obviously good.

It is usual to lead up to these zikrs by processions, which may be of the simplest character, just a few sheikhs and others with a big paper lantern, *fanus*, at the opening of a moulid. As its apodosis approaches, however, they assume a more and more imposing *envergure*, till on the eve of the feast, or in a few instances on the day itself, they present, when at their best, one of the finest spectacles of a religious nature that the East affords, and even at small moulids may be extremely well worth seeing.

The paper lanterns give place or are added to by cressets or braziers of open iron work on poles. Each *meshal*, *مشال* as these are called, is constantly fed by quick kindling wood for the double purpose of illumining the way if the procession is at night and of stiffening the skins of the tars, *تران* : *تار* (tambourines), and similar instruments. The execution of the dervishes on these, especially on the great tambourines known as the Badir Qadiri, *بدير قديري* and Badir Arusi, *بدير عروسي*, is startlingly effective, sometimes resembling a volley of musketry, the more so as they manipulate them most gracefully, above their heads, performing at the same time a kind of dance, sometimes as the *zeffa* proceeds and sometimes circling at a halt.

Then there are the Buariq, *بوارق* : *بيرق* of the various orders bearing Islamic mottos, and the names of Muhammad and his khalifs, Ali, Omr, Osman, Abu Bakr, etc., or the style of the *Tariqa*, and the name of its section. The *beyraq* is a sort of *gonfallon*, swung on a pole, topped by a crescent or the word "ALLAH" in brass, or some other sacred symbol. The number of these banners at a big moulid is immense. Even at that of Abu el-Ela in the year, 1357, (1938), where the "zeffa" was a sort of compromise held at 10 in the evening.

I noticed about thirty of the Shazliya alone, with the title—“El-Tariqa el-Hamadiya el-Shazliya”—and the local name of the division, including the name of my own village, Bein el-Sariat, بين السرايات and neighbouring Ezbahs, such as Duqqi and Mit Oqba. (v. Abu el-Ela).

The dervishes on these great occasions of course appear with their insignia and colours, and may to a great extent be recognised by these and by the inscriptions on the *gonfallons*; but there is some confusion about the green as it is not only a favourite colour for the *Turuq* but is, or should be, the distinctive colour of a *Sharif*. The green of these descendants of the Prophet is however of a more or less distinctive shade and their turbans are usually particularly ample. The kaleidoscopic effect is increased by the patchwork of ragged *dilks*, دلوک دلق, home and hand-spun garments, and traditional robes of many colours: also by the varied and striking staves, wooden swords and the like, and the headgear, turbans and caps of innumerable shapes and colours, and the *tartur*, طرطور which is by no means confined to the Awlad Nooh, اولاد نوح, but is much affected by children, and which also takes strange devotional forms, by exhibiting sacred symbols, and invocations to numerous saints.

Lane, at the celebration of the Ashura (tenth Muharem) deciphered on a *tartur* of sorts in the mosque of Sidna Husein,

Ya Abu Bakr

Ya Omr

Ya Othman

Ya Ali

Ya Hasan

Ya Husein

Ya Sidi Ahmad Rifai

Ya Sidi Abd el-Qadir

Ya Sidi el-Galani

Ya Sidi Ahmad el-Bedawi

Ya Sidi Ibrahim Desuki

The central figure in the *zeffa* is the "*Khalifa*", chosen as the nearest available representative of the *Wali* or Sheikh who is being honoured, often a direct descendant.

It is well to be present at the very beginning, when the different units assemble with all their panoply, and this dignitary is solemnly mounted on his brilliantly caparisoned steed, frequently with a little lad of his tribe prettily dressed in Bedouin attire. This takes place often far from the destination, a favourite place being the precincts of the mosque of Sidna Hussein. This is the case with Sidi Bayumi, (which see), at about 3 in the afternoon, and the groups are most picturesque, and the whole course to the mosque (which takes about two hours) is through a most glorious bit of the old city. The Marzuk *zeffa* assembles at about the same time in the historic tract outside the Bab el-Nasr, the Adaliya district, and affords a brave sight. It then proceeds to the mosque by a round-about way, cutting into the Muski, and circling Sidna Husein. (v. Marzuk.)

In the old days the Zeffa, (or as it seems to have been then called, the Ishara, *اشارة*) was in the case of Tashtoushi a national and Islamic event, (v. Dashtouti) and that of Abu Harera at Giza on the Coptic Easter Monday morning was until recently vast, most ancient and important, (v. Abu Harera), and still has some vogue and interest. That of Sheikh Hamza assembled till recently, and I trust will again, in the afternoon at the mosque of Ashmawi. Sidi Selim in Bulaq still has a fine afternoon procession, where the distinctive insignia of the Rifaiya, Qadiriya and Shazliya can be well studied.

Of the evening zeffas, —Ansari's circulates from and back to the tomb itself, always pausing on its course at the underground

mosque of Marsafa, whose mould is on or near the same date. That of Abu el-Ela assembles at about 9 at Saptia, where the Shazliya has a sort of depot for their banners, etc.

Although the tambourines already referred to are the most striking instruments to be seen and heard on these occasions, they are by no means the only ones. Amongst others are the cymbals, (كاس) kas, various reeds from the small zumara, (زمارة) to the immensely long and deep-voiced arghul (ارغول) also flutes, and many kinds of nuqara, (نقارة) which latter are of earthenware open at the smaller end and closed by a stretched skin at the other. Then in some mould processions drums in great variety vie with the tars,—for instance in the day zeffa of Sidi Abdel-Rahim where the immense camel drums and others of the kettle type are a sight to see as well as an experience to hear.

Sometimes wandering minstrels, or professional strolling musicians cut in, as other extraneous elements, of which some through long custom enjoy a sort of symbiotic acceptance: of these the *Alexandrian* acrobats who act as forerunners to most big zeffas are a picturesque and harmless instance (v. photograph.) Also private celebrations, particularly circumcision processions frequently join up with a zeffa, to the general advantage, as a rule, of both.

Naturally there are pauses at intervals en route, and these may be punctuated by special exhibitions of ritual dancing including occasionally the whirling "samaa," with music usually, and at night with meshals (cressets), sirags, fawanis ⁽¹⁾ (lanterns),

(1) Sirag, etc. — Sirag, Surug, سراج : سراج though used in Arabic, Turkish and Persian as a general term for lamp, seems here to be applied mainly to a little oil lamp with floating wick, like an altar lamp, which when found in a zeffa is carried probably in a meshal (cresset) to be deposited in the tomb. Fanus, fawanis, فوانيس : فوانيس, though also lantern in general, is in Persian the special term for Chinese lantern.

and many illuminating devices. The Azaim paraded in 1358 (1939) with enormous chandeliers connected with proportionately large cylinders fitted with a pumping apparatus as in the case of the Primus stove—a highly luminous but not very picturesque innovation. They paused at the Bab el-Mitwalli and elsewhere for qoranic recitations, and the *fatha*, and other prayers, by no means an unusual proceeding at a zeffa.

The Rifaiya too, or allied orders, sometimes amaze all present by fire-eating or other feats of wonder, though that is not so common as of yore; and indeed one who frequently accompanies a zeffa has many startling experiences and surprises. I cannot better end these remarks on the processional part of a mouldid, than by referring readers to my subsequent account of the mouldid of Zefeti.

The salient feature was a revival of the Dosah with the differences that the representatives of Zefeti were not on horseback when they walked upon and over the recumbent dervishes, and that these were only in contact with the ground by their fingers and toes, and perhaps some by their heads. Their bodies and throats were supported on the points of long, rigid, and sharp daggers, of the dervish type, known as "Dabus", which also are described in detail in that account. The date was 1357 (1938).

Before coming to the ceremonies which conclude a mouldid, there are certain religious and quasi-religious customs to refer to. Of these are "free" circumcision, street preaching and the distribution of protective charms—hegabs, (حجباب : حجابات).

I have already referred to the circumcision booths, and the barbers' shops temporarily converted into such, to be seen at all big mouldids near the mosque or tomb. They can be recognised at once by the large picture sign. Ritual mutilation is performed on both sexes, certainly with wonderful skill and speed, and success, for a few piastres, or quite gratis with the very poor. The general atmosphere of a "Figaro's" establishment—anyone being welcome to sit and watch or gossip—is maintained.



Alexandrine
Acrobats
prodromoi of a
zeffa.

At the Moulid
of
Abu el-Ela.



The door of the
mosque and
Circumcision booth
with
picture signs.

Those who desire a fuller and more private ceremony, can have the operation performed at home, but even then the patients, wonderfully attired, are paraded with their harim friends in open carriages in the streets, in preference at the time of a moulid, when they may augment the zeffa by a brass band as well as their own colourful cortège. The doyen of the faculty, "Dr." Mahmud Enayat-Allah, whose headquarters are at Imam el-Shafei, has a gorgeous booth there with innumerable coloured lamps and decorations, and entertains his friends, clients and visitors freely, and displays the same sumptuousness at some other moulids, notably at Tanta where black "Sambos" in their war paint so amuse the little victims by their antics and *tarturs* and other lures, that these become of the mutaharin, مطهرين (purified), before they fully realise why they have been so brought into the lime-light, or in stubborn cases their cries are so drowned, that there is little risk of their panic spreading amongst waiting candidates for circumcision. For further notes on this subject, I refer the reader to the Moulid of Fatima el-Nebawiya.

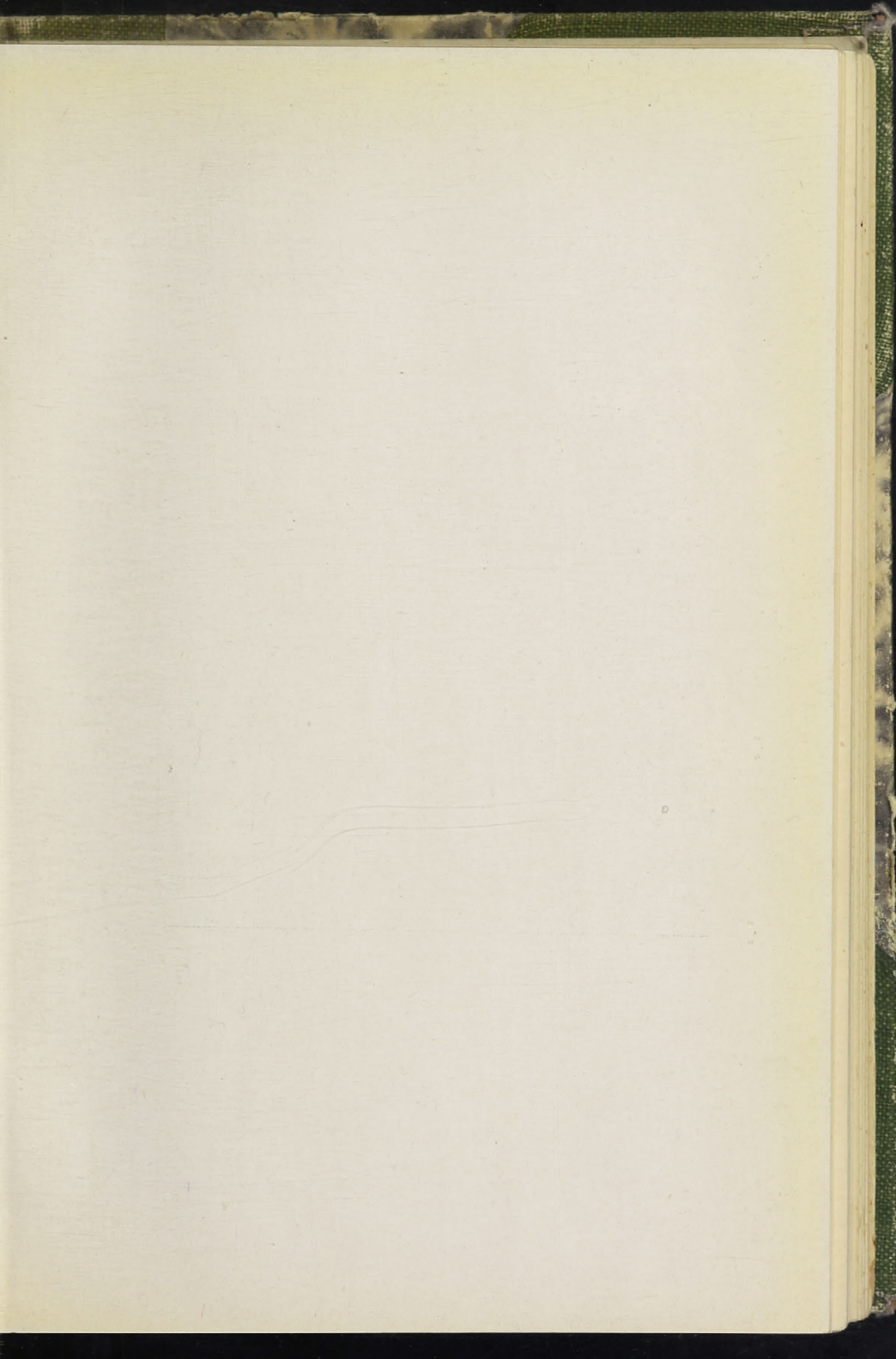
As regards preaching there are of course in addition to the authorised and orthodox discourses and panegyrics from the *mimber*, منبر (pulpit) and otherwise, sermons of a less formal nature introduced into zikrs, sometimes very powerful, of which an example is cited under "El-Ansari", but in using the term "street preachers", I am referring more to zealous revivalists who take up a position where they can attract a crowd, and thrill their listeners sometimes with their fiery eloquence. Such an extreme case as that described under "Zein el-Abdin", where the orator literally hypnotised some and terrified others, is unique in my experience. An extreme in the other direction is the gentle and reasonable blind Hag Husein, to whom reference is made under "Sitna Ayesha", who always rounded off his homily by the ninety nine sacred names, and the distribution of Qoranic texts. I have missed him the past year or more, but

hope he is still "in the bond of life", *في قيد الحياة*, as I have heard him express it. I last saw him at a mouldid of Sultan Hanafi, quite unmoved by a storm of torrential rain which soaked him, and his listeners.

The distribution of hegabs, (*حجابات*) religious charms or talismans, frequently follows the open-air sermon, and indeed often appears to be the end and object of it. The Hag Husein always wrote the name of the recipient on his hegab, and made no regular charge, though a small coin was usually given him. This seems to be the usual proceeding, and though there are exceptions, most dervishes whom I have seen engaged in this way seemed more bent on pious works than on money making. I knew a nice old fellow who stood near the door of the mosque of Sidna Husein at mouldid time, who would by no means part with a hegab till after he had made the applicant long exhortations accompanied with a panegyric of the Hasanein and citations from the Qoran, and he refused to part with more than one at a time. There were so many applicants that whilst he accumulated a few piastres he might have taken as many francs had he been worldly-minded.

Naturally the central religious act at a mouldid is the visit to the shrine in honour of the Sheikh who, if a Wali, *والى* (that is, a sheikh of peculiar holiness, one of *God's favourites*), is deemed to be still living; and to obtain a blessing. ⁽¹⁾ A simple ritual is followed and a few prayers uttered (mainly to the Sheikh for intercession), and offerings are made for or directly to the poor. Though there are plenty of willing recipients, I have very rarely been solicited by religious mendicants, whom

(1) This simple ritual usually includes the placing of the hands first on the tomb and then on the face, and of circulating, round it, with ejaculations eulogistic of the sheikh. The prayers always include the Fatha (opening chapter) of the Qoran.





A Sharabati,
with cymbals, and "doraq" of tamarhindi.

Lane found ubiquitous and persistent a hundred years ago. I only remember being pestered once, and that at an early night of the Tanta moulid, but I suppose I brought it on myself by the injudicious way in which I distributed a sum of money delivered to me by a Cairene friend, who could not come himself, and who had specially asked me not to put it in the chest for that purpose in the mosque, but to give it to deserving cases. These cropped up like the heads of Briareus, and when the sum was exhausted I beat a retreat, trying to cover that by surrendering my own small money. Then it seemed to me that a miracle had occurred! The blind eyed me from afar: the lame and legless coursed after me like stags; palsied and paralysed hands gripped me like Jiu-jitsu champions: the bedridden left their litters and joined in the pursuit: and it appeared to me that the dead were rising from the number of ghastly faces, hollow orbits and fleshless outstretched arms. I ran, and only felt safe when I reached the clocktower in the square. The form of charity I sometimes adopt since then, is to bestow on the thirsty ones a *Sebil Allah*, سبيل الله, a fountain of God. This sounds a lot but it simply means buying up a *qirba*, (قرية), skin of water, or a *doraq*, (دورق) of *tamarhindi*, *erqsus*, or some such iced and sugared drink, and leaving the onus of distribution on the vendor, whilst I evaporate. Once I bought up an ice-cream seller's stock of "dundurma", دندرمة but he hunted me up after to complain of severe manhandling (sic) by the mothers of little boys who came too late, and he wanted compensation for his torn clothes and damaged "machina".

Of the larger forms of charity are government grants and private gifts and bequests for the upkeep of the shrine, the expenses of the moulid, and for the poor: also one very popular form, dinners for the needy. Those may be remarked at the moulids of the Prophet, of Sidna Husein, Muhammadi, Saida Zenab, and others, and on a small private scale at nearly all. They may be on any or every night during the run of the moulid,

but of course mainly on the last. Perhaps the most conspicuous feasts at the time of the Asha, ^{عشاء} are on the East side of the mosque of Sidna Husein. A very curious incident I witnessed at a dinner given to the poor of the Ashmawi district is described under that mouldid.

Moulids which are deemed important end, or virtually so, by a ceremony similar in the main to that with which they were opened. This takes the form of a Tashrifa, ^{تشریفة}, a Reception, amongst the chief of which in Cairo are those of The Prophet, Imam el-Shafei, and Muhammadi, all described or referred to under those names and, of which the first is quite a national as well as Islamic event, under the *aegides* of the king, the Naqib el-Ashraf, the Ulama and the Ministers.

The usual elements are a visit to the shrine, readings of the Qoran with a panegyric of the Saint, and a sort of *polychronion* of his living representatives, some speeches, and a word with the personality who presides, who may be a member of the Muhammadan hierarchy, or the local "Khalifa", or the doyen of the particular mosque or Order, or sometimes a lay notable. The last was the case in 1357 (1938) at Qena, when the Mudir occupied the chair of honour. (He may be, however, quite likely, and for all I know, in Dervish Orders.)

Sometimes ceremonies of special solemnity are added, as one referred to under Muhammadi where white robes and light-tapers were brought into requisition. The Ulama, Ministers and Notables attend these *tashrifas*, and many of the general public. Coffee, sweets and cigarettes have been in evidence, and welcome, at all *tashrifas* I have seen, and sometimes music has been added. Not infrequently the performers are the lads of the band of the Reformatory at Bein el-Sariat, who until recently were to be heard also at the moulids of Tashtoushi and some others during the whole of the final evening.

The ultimate "Seal" is the Khatima ختمة—from khâtàmà, ختم (seal)—some time on the theoretical day of the saint, following the great "eve". At Sidna Husein it involves the circling of the mosque at noon by some of the Orders with their banners, etc., but usually, (exception being made for the few cases in which the great procession is merged into the *khatima* on this last day), these last rites are so mixed up with the pulling down of decorations, the departure of visiting pilgrims, and a certain natural reaction that there is something of the air of a *katabasis* about it, after the *anabasis* of the early days and the climax of the great night.

I am afraid that it will savour almost of eschatology to call up anything after this last day of the *Khatima* but I cannot refrain from noting a little rite I observed seven days after the conclusion of the mouldid of Fatima el-Nebawiya bint Gaafer Sadiq, renewing some of the mouldid observances at the tomb on a reduced scale. I had never seen or heard of this, and on my expressing surprise to a sheikh at the *tabut*, he exclaimed—'Seven days after the birth of a child, we celebrate his 'asboà',⁽¹⁾ so why not that of a great saint seven days after her birthday?' I could only repeat, "Why not?"

(1) Asboà, اسبوع is of course, from the word Sabà, seven.

IV

MOULIDS

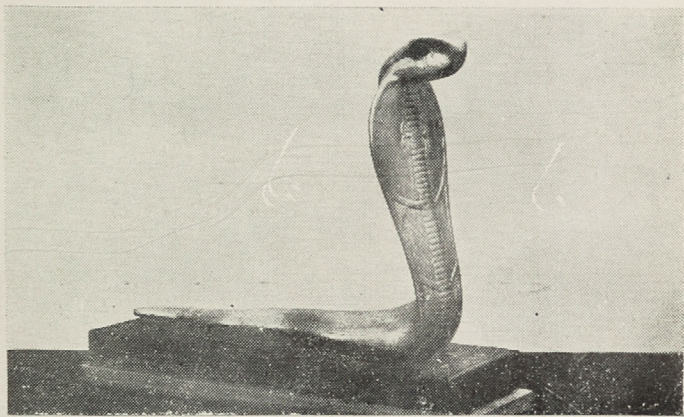
THEIR SECULAR SIDE.

The word 'secular' is used here in its original proper sense of 'saecular', as in the "Carmen Saeculare", in the "Secular Hymn", composed for the Roman sports, and in the expression "secular bird" as applied to the Egyptian Phoenix; as something venerable which has stood the test of the ages. I would prefer the word 'profane', but a perverse generation has similarly perverted its significance, which as *pro-fanum*, meaning before the temple, exactly describes a mouldid crowd before the shrine of their Sheikh, honouring God and him by worship in an atmosphere of light-hearted joy. Indeed it is with unwilling obedience to a convention that I separate the 'devotional' from the 'secular' sides, for surely a thankful appreciation of the good things created largely for our enjoyment is an acceptable form of devotion.

And is it not clear from the ancient and classical writers of East and West, that games owe their development, if not their very origin to religious observances? Who in the long pages of Homer can recall a single one of the many accounts of games in which they are not the accompaniment of devotional ceremonies: an essential indeed when these were of a popular nature?

I have referred in Ch. I to Vergil's account of a typical mouldid of the olden times—that of Sidi Anchises at his *dareh* (tomb), in Sicily—worship, games, and a sacrifice for the people.

Those who are divorcing games from the worship of our modern mouldids are leaving the Sacrifice, but a sacrifice which is not for the people, but a sacrifice of the people, of their inherited rights, of their joys and, with these, of their religion.



A Hawi
and "Manouli" the Monkey.

This point of view does not touch the fact that there is place and more need than ever now for the austere and meditative dervish soul to whom "*res severa est verum gaudium*", of which the East has produced so many. These get the intuitions and revelations out of the scope of human science and reason, from which those from whom such are withheld, by temperament or by the whirl of life's incidents, are wise to draw what benefit they can. —

"Trasumanar significar per verba
non si poria; pero l'esempio basti
a cui esperienza grazia serba".

The monks and anchorites of Islam, (especially the Sufis), have preached love and joy in earthly matters as leading up to rapture in heavenly things; and the Christian Church is superlatively hedonistic in the right way. The Church which has bred an army of martyrs, and a host of eremites, ascetics and contemplatives, uses a liturgy which is full of calls to joy and song: the Introits to its masses begin frequently with such exhortations as "*Gaudete ! Laetare !*" and the serious-minded St. Paul places charity and joy at the head of all the *fruits of the Spirit*. Solomon, wisest of men, Prophet of Islam, and author of the lovely "Canticles" and other canonical books of the Church, limns in the "Book of Wisdom" the attitude of the ΑΓΙΑ ΣΟΦΙΑ when God was creating the world, —

"Eram cum Eo", says the Holy and Eternal wisdom, "cuncta componens, et delectabor in singulos dies, ludens coram Eo omni tempore, ludens per orbe terrarum :"

The Holy Wisdom, though essential in 'composing all things', was playing about, literally skylarking, and greatly enjoying Herself, 'playing every day, playing before Him all the time, playing throughout the world,' whilst the Almighty was toiling in creating a beautiful place for us unworthy and unappreciative

creatures. Yet She was not indifferent to our race, for Wisdom Herself adds,—

“—et deliciae meae cum filiis hominum.”

Surely no Pope, Khalif, Monarch, Prince, Potentate, Ruler, or Teacher, no Man who ruthlessly or unnecessarily wipes the smile instead of the tear from the face of the people, can hope for God to smile on him or to wipe away his tears.

Forgive me, dear reader, for thus excursing, and let us away to a mouldid—through the gaily beflagged and brightly lighted streets, the decorated cafés and shops, guided by the ever-augmenting glare and blare, and the recurring report like a pistol shot, which indicates that some lusty youth has propelled the “babur” up the inclined track with such force as to fire the *cap* at the top: past the glittering rows of “Arusas” on the sugar stalls, and the swings and goose-nests and round-about, and innumerable little stalls and hand-barrows, and through the crowd till we reach the shrine, and perhaps witness a zeffa, or at least see a zikr. Then, having paid our “visit” to the sheikh, on to see Qara Goz, our old friend Punch, and the accompanying shadow show and conjuring display, augmented perhaps by fire-eaters, snake charmers and the like. Then a rest in one of the more ambitious variety theatres, or a tent of performing dogs, or some surprise attraction; or in the open air, join the ring of people watching graceful stick play and dances, or the tricks of a “hawi”, or listening to a raconteur. If you are a horseman you can admire the beautiful creatures, dancing or prancing, or pawing the ground in search of hidden treasure, or at a country mouldid, racing with stalwart and picturesque bedouins up. If you are a crack shot, you can fire with minute rifles at a tiny target at minimum range, and if you are a dunce at the game you will probably be just as successful. If you are great at throwing-in a cricket ball, your skill will stand you in good stead at the nine-pins, or other cock-shy; or if your *forte* is Samsonian deeds, you can bring down the house by firing the

percussion cap with a record weight on the *babur*, or by ringing the bell at the top of a pole by a hefty smite with a mallet on an anvil, or by actual "*jeu des poids et haltères*", or by driving nails into a log.

If you are a gambler, and have brought no millième with you, you can change your piastre at one of the "bankers" and squander the coins so obtained on pin-tables of divers kinds; or a game of dice whose coloured sides correspond to squares on which you put your stake; or a kind of 'shove-millième' in which you throw your stake onto a '*table quadrillée*', gaining if it falls into one of the many squares without impinging on the lines; or you can gamble on the station, Cairo, Tanta, Benha, or Alexandria, at which a revolving hand stops: or back your fancy from a team of homing pigeons or rats; or with a *nickla* buy a biscuit which may not or may contain a coin up to a *bareza*; or acquire a bottle of sharbat, or a doll or some other treasure at the very amusing "ma-lum" table, by purchasing a lucky envelope. You may even exceed the usual money limits and lose a big piastre at the three card trick, if no police are in sight.

Skill is brought in, in many variants of ring throwing,—the objective in one of these being a swimming duck, which disappears from the pool if her neck be encircled, to reappear in the fullness of time, I suppose, on thrower's table. Luckily for the duck's feelings, she is now generally represented on the water by a wooden bird, which is swapped for the real thing if won.

Fleeing from the snares of the Monte Carlo department, we hurry through the freaks,—Zubeida, of sixty years, and less than half that number of inches, the calf with five legs, on which she has been going strong for quite fifteen years and does not look a day older, (therein the greater marvel), the giant,

"and many more too long,
Gorgons and hydras chimaeras dire."

Near the circumcision booths we see a minor but equally permanent act of mutilation going on, — tattooing. This is done with great expertise and is interesting, and perhaps still more so the framed pictures of designs painted on glass from which to choose — purely geometrical for the strict Moslem, or Qoranic texts in *siluth* characters, or a name and address, or the record of a vow, (nadr ٧٤): for the rest snakes, lions, birds, trees, their sweethearts, etc., and sometimes very strange selections. (I once saw an effeminate long-haired youth, whom Lane would have certainly classified as a “gink” being tattooed with the names of his patrons, as far as appropriate surface space would allow. (That was near an arch of Muhammad Ali’s aqueduct, fairly remote from the mouldid then proceeding of Hasan el-Anwar.)

From the Booza booths we hear a persistent note of metal struck on metal in perfect rhythm, with other strange music. This is in accompaniment to equally weird Sudanese dancing. But that calls for rather a more special notice, as do several of the “attractions” catalogued above.

We are assailed but not tempted by piquant odours from stalls and from sizzling trays on little fires,—sausages, *taamia*, *fûl* (beans), *kebab*, *qufta*, *ruz* (rice), and many other delicacies,¹ and offered (also without falling), iced water, *limonata*, *tamarhindi*, *’arasus*, *sharbat*, and sundry other drinks. Cigarettes too, including Wills’s Flag, usually bought one at a time for a *nickla* (two millièmes): the seller rather looks askance at you if you demand a whole packet. *Subaris* (cigarette and cigar ends) was popular till a year or so ago, when legislation forbade the collecting of “megots” in the street or dealing in the same, giving rise, I fear, to a good deal of illicit trade therein, and the manufacture by an enterprising little clique of local Havana cigars, for which Spanish labels were locally printed.

One thing I miss, and indeed have not seen since the mouldid of Sidna Husein in 1357(1938), the “Piste à la Morte” of the in-

1 v. Glossary.

trepid Canadian, Billy Williams, which for years was an unique attraction. A sort of bear-pit round whose tall vertical walls Billy circulated at vertiginous speed on his motor-bike.

Having lost a near relation or two at the game, he has carried on alone and it is much to be hoped that he has not shared their fate. Billy's feat of blindfolding himself whilst dashing up and down to a few inches from the top and bottom of the pit, thus riding without hands or eyes must have been unique, and seeing that he did that at intervals of less than half an hour throughout a mould, one cannot help fearing the worst.

In addition to these characteristic and usual items there are plenty of sporadic happenings, and surprises, sometimes disappointing or even shocking, and sometimes very much the reverse, reminders of Pharaoh's day or of Greek and other bygone influence or startling up to date innovations, and what is always interesting — the by-play and the reactions of the onlookers who know not boredom.

Of the items which perhaps call for rather less summary mention than that made above is the first named, the Sugar Booths. The seller is perched up amongst his shelves of sugar figurines, to which the general name of *Arusa* is applied, a word which means bride, and which may also indicate a doll, because the prevailing type is that of a gorgeously dressed maiden. I have seen them pouring the hot sugar, red or white into wooden moulds, at a place close to the Babel-Fatuh, but how that is done and the result marvellously arrayed in paper garments, with tinsel of gold, spangles, and the rest and then sold at prices ranging from a small piastre (five millièmes) to about half a franc (twenty millèmes) is a mystery.

In addition to the *arusa* proper, there are horsemen, ducks, rabbits, dogs, goats, &c., sole or grouped, sometimes in a manner coarsely conceived and rudely executed, though recently some of the naughtiest seem to have been suppressed in Cairo, (though still on show in certain provincial centres). *En revanche* for

this expurgation, a very up to date model has appeared, representing a bridal chamber with mirrors and couch and the young couple, the aris, عريس and arusa, عروسة. I am told this is a revival of an old classic known as Aziza and Yunis, عزيمة ويونس. Other popular examples are the heroes Abu Zeid ابوزيد, and Antar, عنتر, armed and mounted, and sundry brigands such as, Abu Ali saraq el-Maza, ابو علي سارق المعزة, (Abu 'Ali-stole-the-goat).

These and other names suggest folklore, and present scope for anthropological research, as the resemblance of these ancient puppets to the Tanagra figures, and much that was turned up at Pompeii make them interesting to the archaeologist. In point of fact, I have found professors of these branches who have accompanied me to moulds rather fascinated by the *arusa* stall, but their fragile selections have usually crumbled up or been devoured by ants, before they have photographed them or left any permanent record to science.

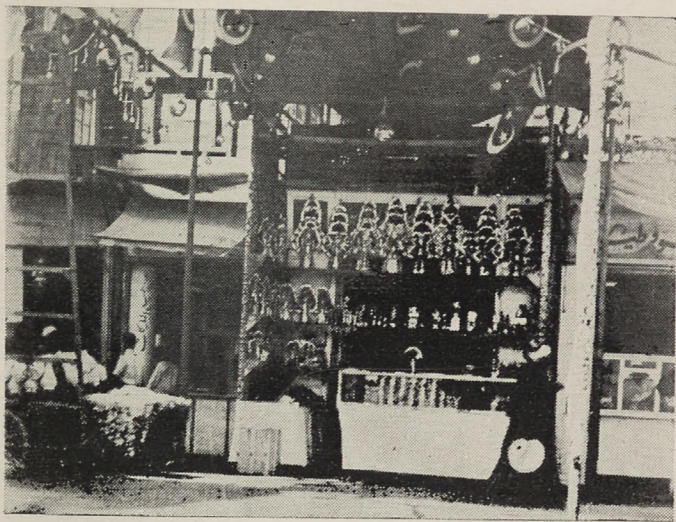
I am glad to be now told by Prof. Evans-Pritchard who read the above that his *Arusa* figurines did not perish in the usual way, but that after photographing them he gave the collection to the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford.

The late Prof. Hocart of the Egyptian University was prevented by his much deplored death from leaving, (as far as I am aware) a permanent record of the collection I helped him to build up.

Miralai Gayer-Anderson Bey kindly took me to a place in the Gamalia district where these are made by pouring melted sugar into wooden moulds. He has since had made permanent plaster models of some of the more striking.

Apart from the Tanagra figures and such like, they remind one of the "Santous de Provence", "les Bonhommes de pain d'épices" of French fairs, and the old gilded gingerbread men and animals, from which the gilt is now off, if they are not actually an extinct species.

Moulid
of
Ashmawi.



An Arusa Stall.

As a sop to religion, the *arusa* stall sometimes presents representations of the Haram or the Kaaba; and as an extra temptation to children, a variety of minor sweets,—simsimia, homosia, goz el-Hind, &c. (v. Glossary)

Qara Goz merits, I think, a high place in the list of attractions, for I find my personal predilections from earliest youth for a Punch and Judy show, are shared by all the *walads* (boys) of Egypt and *chojokler* of Turkey, and I think also by the *petits gosses* of Europe, who get either the classic Punch himself or at least the Guignol or other of his bastard offspring who inherit his quaint bonhomie and petulant audacity. I am told too that by peaceful penetration he has taken up strong positions in the hearts of the *chechees* of the Far East.

Orthodox Christianity identifies Punch with Pontius Pilate, and Judy with Judas Iscariot, who presumably betrayed his sex as he did his Master, Toby being no other than that very attractive boy, Tobias, in whose reflected light the archangel Raphael so shines in the liturgies and 'old masters', the puppy, his inseparable companion, taking his place in the little drama. But I suspect Punch of much greater antiquity, and that he apostatised from some pagan cult, as later he seems to have gone over to Islam, under the style of Qara Goz, قرة كوز, "Black-Eye", (suggestive of the number of black eyes he collected on his knuckles in his attacks on policemen and others). I have seen this title otherwise rendered, as Qara Qoja, قرة قوجة, "Black (bad) Husband", in reference to his unmarital conduct towards his wife Bakhita, who, one must admit in his defence, is a bit of a Xantippe: also here in Egypt by a somewhat different spelling, قرة قوس.

The show is too crudely mediaeval to be exactly edifying, and is not to be recommended to a nun-conducted "crocodile", but Mr. Punch is intensely amusing, and his voice and gestures are sustained in the local shows with extraordinary skill. His *savoir faire* and versatility too are such that he is a rapid expurgator

on the arrival of visitors whom he diagnoses as highbrow, to whom he alludes in his patter with great *bonhomie*, with pretty compliments and blessings, not forgetting hints concerning cigarettes and niklas, which are usually fruitful.

Khayal el-Zil, خيال الظل, a Shadow Show, is generally seen in the same booth under the aegis of Mr. Punch, alternating with his exhibition, and conjuring tricks, fire eating and minor attractions, for all of which the entrance fee is a *nikla* (two millièmes), drums and other music included. Visitors, who are always well received, are accommodated with chairs, if there are any procurable, and if not armfuls of children are thrown into corners, without their showing the smallest resentment, to make room on the benches. Unfortunately there is no provision for conditioning the atmosphere. Beyond veiled hints such as those of Punch's spokesman, or of the clever manipulators of the marionettes behind the sheet, (whose manual acts are worth watching also from behind the screen), there is no touting for baksheesh, and the gift of a piastre or so to the music or the performers is taken with smiles of gratitude, and showers of blessings.

Here too the jests and gestures are not of a very refined type, and the visitor must be prepared for shocks, and to take a lady to Khayal el-Zil is as risky as a visit to the monkey house at the Zoo; but there is nothing so essentially immoral nor so vulgar as many of the nasty films we get from the other side of the Atlantic, which so damage the prestige of the western races in the eyes of the east, and are said in India particularly to be doing more harm than all the other propaganda. Incidentally too there is nothing in Punch's funny squeak, or in any of the voices, to disintegrate one's marrow like the awful "twang" or twyank the "talkies" have added to the nastinesses of the "movies".

The conjuring tricks which I have noted as often thrown in with Punch and Khayal el-Zil are often childishly simple, like

the magic ball on a vertical cord, which stops in its descent at any point at the word of command, but others are extremely clever and baffling, and almost always highly amusing, though often at the expense of some good tempered person in the audience. The Egyptian conjurors are experts at card tricks and other feats of *legerdemain*, as witness the *galli-galli* men in the streets, but the Indians have still greater prestige in these matters. Of these a certain Hag Ahmad el-Hindi runs an independent show in his own booth, and at moulids is the *doyen* of the thaumaturgists.

At these performances, even if 'we are not amused', all the others present are, and provide us with a fine tonic by their laughter and merry appreciation, occasionally tumultuous, and their friendly attitude towards us leaves a pleasant impression.

The Variety Theatres are run on the whole on a much more ambitious scale than the little places just described: yet they range from a platform outside a café, shop, or house; or a screen of canvas or tent-work in the corner of a court, or in a passage between the buildings, where a few comic turns and a little singing or dancing may be witnessed, to a vast tent with rising tiers of benches about an arena big enough for a circus, with a varied entertainment of the circus style. In a big country or gabel moulid there may be quite a number of these.

The characteristic of the bigger tent-theatres is a lofty wooden platform on each side of the entrance, one of these for a brass band, the other to accommodate at frequent intervals, some or all of the performers,—singers, dancers of both sexes, clowns, dwarfs, giants, muscle-dancers, who give samples of their art, until the enthusiasm of the crowd is excited, to the point of buying tickets, and then the big performance commences inside. The last named, clad in little but loin clothes, always men, stand immovable, but for their muscles,—pectoral, abdominal, brachial,—which dance in a marvellous way, aided by unbelievable movements of the diaphragm. The danseuses, if allowed to show

themselves at all must emulate in sobriety the steps and undulations of the Thesmophoriazousai invoking the chaste Demeter. It is true that a few years ago they were adopting less laudable classic steps, and becoming somewhat too Greek, but they always danced fully dressed and never with men, and never attracted the gilded youth or the jazz fan, who knew that for half-naked bunny-hug they must seek the richer bowers of the most respectable cabarets and hotels. When a few years ago, the city fathers (or grandmothers) or whoever it is who arbitrates somewhat arbitrarily on the the matters of Terpsichore, vetoed the ancient "danse de ventre", and the public so clamoured for it, monotonous though it be, that the artistes, who moreover knew nothing else, lapsed into it, strange evasions were resorted to. On one occasion this dance was interrupted by a lad, (set to watch), announcing that police were approaching the entrance. The première danseuse with great presence of mind, and imitated at once by the others, turned the other side towards the door, and danced with the muscles of that. There being no legislation against "la danse de lune" that was not deemed a contravention.

A very well known character, a star unique in his way, has not been *en evidence* very recently. He danced always in the dress, ornaments, hair, lipstick, and manners of a woman, and people who watched for the umteenth time could hardly be made to believe that he was not what he appeared. He generally made a simpering round of the audience, and with a smirk presented his photo under which was printed, «الراقص المصري الشهير حسين فؤاد»

"The celebrated Egyptian dancer, Husein Foad"
and his address for private appointments to weddings, &c.

Whether of his own free will, he "walked sober off", or whether he attracted the attention of the 'city fathers' and was shoved off, I cannot say.

The last time I think, that I saw Husein Foad, was at a big New Year party at an English house near Zeitoun, under the caste-leader, Mahmud Lâlu, who himself manages one of the



Husein Foad.

mouldid tents. He brought good and amusing performers, and a highly conventional party were as delighted as they were surprised at an atmosphere of fun entirely new to nearly all of them. (The writer added an almost too successful thrill, by raiding the house, after secretly dressing up his own servants, one as a police officer, the others as ghafirs. The sweet blarney, and faces of our ladies, who took it entirely *au sérieux* obviated the execution of the "police" threat to rope us all together and take us to the *caracol*, (I think rather to the disappointment of some of the men.)

To a great extent the amusement side of a mouldid is served by a special professional class which follows them from place to place, even throughout the provinces, so that wherever one goes, he is likely to see familiar faces and to be himself recognised by their owners, and a subtle ear may recognise Punch's voice to be the same in Cairo, Tanta or Asyut. The same applies to the circumcision doctors, but most of all to the managers and artists of the theatrical shows.

The most popular of these shows is run by "Professor" Showal, a great character and a mighty man of muscle and strength. He might be Castor or Pollux for his prowess, and from his ovate form preserving the contour of Leda's egg. He introduces each of his caste, and invites to the marvels of his theatre, by a funny speech in which he punctiliously observes the grammatical forms, *waqf* and *wasl* and *tanwin*,—for well he knows that if you do not talk over the heads of an Egyptian audience they will metaphorically trample you under their feet. This rhetorical effort is always applauded, and is always the same, and at its peroration he generally perches the whole of his male staff on his head or his shoulders or abdominal prominence, and lightly revolves with "all up"—this as an earnest of what you may expect when he begins to show his strength. He is exceeding zealous for the reputation and orderliness of his house and its precincts, and never asks for nor allows occasion to bring in the invidious collaboration of the police. I have seen a host

of would-be gate-crashers attempting to gain free admittance or accumulating so about his gates as to form a rather rowdy mob, but quickly with his little *farqila* of many cords, he scatters the crowd in the imagination of their hearts. Once I saw him go to the assistance of the police trying to separate and subdue two hefty belligerents, (for occasionally a fight starts in the best regulated mould), and picking up a delinquent under each arm, he gave each a tender bear-hug, then threw him limp and gasping at the feet of the law.

Showal's *contre-partie* in the goà (جُوَّة, troop), is a dwarf, most unprepossessing in appearance, but his sense of time and rhythm is so subtle that his movements when he dances are positively graceful, in spite of bandy little legs. He has a hundred funny ways, but he is not funny when his irascible temper gets the better of him. I have seen him hurl a wrestling opponent three times his size into the midst of the spectators.

I mentioned rats and pigeons being made accessories to the gambling indulged in on a tiny scale. As I have never seen them put to this use elsewhere, I will describe the procedure in the case of the rats. (The pigeon play is similar.) The rat-table is a wooden disk of about a metre in diameter, with minute *houses* round its periphery, whose doorways are big enough for a rat to enter. Each house bears a number corresponding to those on a board for the stakes. When these are laid, a big white rat is placed in the centre of the table, and the number of the house into which he ultimately decides to enter indicates the winner. It is difficult for Abu Firan, ابو فران, the "Father of Rats", to prevent undue influence being brought to bear on his rodent's choice. I have seen, for instance, a little lad surreptitiously projecting fragments of cheese into the house of his chosen number.

The Sudanese Ringo (or Ringa), which is always associated with the consumption of their national drink *boozza*, has, (I have found) had always a special interest for savants, especially those

who have travelled in the districts south of Egypt. There are recondite features connected with the origin and analogies of this weird institution that attract these gentlemen, but no one can fail to be struck by the unique nature of his surroundings in one of these booza booths. (The Sudanese at home call this form of beer, *merissa* مرسية, a term hardly ever used here in Egypt).

The tread-mill-like step of the dance, and the weird instruments, which include a bit of a railway line, are not quite like anything else, and the rather sour and cloudy Sudanese beer (booza) served in bowls or gourds by ebony hands is equally strange: luckily tea, coffee or *qirfa* (cinnamon tea) can be indulged in instead. The crescendo of the vogue of the Ringo in Egypt within the last decade is I suppose the result of its novel features. From being a rarity, it is now found at almost every big mouldid, sometimes duplicated or triplicated; and it is established in a few places in Cairo on a more permanent basis, apart from the mouldids.

As it is referred to in the description of the mouldids of Fatima el-Nebawiya, Muafaq, and some others, instead of extending remarks on it here, I will conclude them by appending a letter written on the subject to an anthropologist friend, which deals specially with one of the instruments employed, the sistrum, and the theories of an ex-professor of the Egyptian University concerning it.

26 November, 1935

(29 Shabaan, 1354)

The Sistrum,—Shakhshaakha الشخشاخة

Dear Evans-Pritchard,

The quest of the Sistrum has proved a pleasant, if rather long and not very fruitful one. Though, I suppose, originally Egyptian, and introduced into Greece with the cult of Isis, its home now, anyway as a musical instrument, seems to be South of

Egypt, for though common enough here in Cairo, it is always in the hands of Sudanese, or Barberines, or at least in their "Ringas" or Booza booths, or ceremonies at which they predominate. Strangely enough it seems hardly known intermediately. Mousa, my Theban valet, and others from Upper Egypt assure me that they never saw nor heard of it till they came to Cairo. (I should be interested to know if you found it prominent in Abyssinia).

With the Sudanese it seems to play the role of the Egyptian *Zumara*. As that seems hardly to exist without the Tar (تار), the Shakshaakha sistrum is symbiotic with the Ringu (رنگو), and the Kuria (كوريا). You will remember the Ringu, which either gives its name to the whole show or takes it from it, the Ringa; that kind of harmonium with vertical wooden keys, and pipes or painted gourds, which wobbles eternally; and the Kuria which is or exactly resembles a section of a railway line, from which perfectly rhythmic notes are elicited by two iron rods.

In reference to a point raised by Prof. N., I cannot find that the sistrum is specially used in ceremonies connected with puberty, but in conjunction with the Ringu and Kuria, at practically all ceremonies such as Circumcision and Marriages, Moulids and the Zarr, as well as at simple social gatherings for frolic and the consumption of *Booza*.

I have never known the use of this form of Sistrum divorced from the dance; a dance that is usually suggestive of the treadmill or beetle crushing, but notwithstanding graceful and rhythmically perfect; but occasionally a dancer with two sistra in each hand leaps from the circle into the air with great *èlan*. The usual *motif* of the dance is the circling of some half dozen amorous swains about a *Nigra-sed-formosa*, displaying their charms and "sistral" talents and, one by one, taking her in his arms, till at last one is accepted. Their singing if indulged in at all is ejaculatory and croony, and S. Jerome's criticism,—

‘Gemitum pro cantu habent’, would be better justified than as he applied it to his doves. Occasionally in Arabic, they go a little further, the limit I have heard being.—

“Aiwa, aiwa, min es-Sudan,
Sirig es-sanduq Muhammad,
Lakin ‘muftah maai”.

(Oh yes, oh yes, from the Sudan
Muhammad stole the box
But (the) key’s with me.)

The “Ringa” we witnessed on the 18th of Tut, (28.9.35) at the Coptic Mouldid of Mar Barsum el-Aryan, at Maasara, near Helwan, was quite typical of its form in Egypt, whether accompanying Moslem or Coptic celebrations, and probably only differs from the purely Sudanese article, in that bowls of boozza are supplemented by cups of coffee or qirfa. Occasionally one sees young and very handsome girls dancing, but more often (as Mrs. Hocart, who accompanied me to the mouldid of Sidi Muafaq with the Professor some nights ago, remarked), they suggest Epstein creations. On the other hand some of the youths have features as delicate as one could find in statuary.

The sistrum is a cylinder of hard white metal, rather more than a foot long with handle and conical cap, and containing pebbles. From one to four are held high and in front of the dancer when shaken. The form rarely differs from the two I posted to you yesterday, but very occasionally, there is a handle de luxe of ornamented yellow metal. One such, suggesting both fish and phallus I tried to purchase at a recent mouldid, but the super-Epsteinienne held to it, she explained, in memoriam of her fisher lover, who perished in the Nile (She too was a fisher of sorts, by assumption of the Petrin mandate.)

I first observed the sistrum in 1919 at a Zarr; the *Aalima* (or *Godeya*) circling with it a kind of altar, after a blood sacrifice in a rite suggesting a mourning for Adonis, (*et ecce ibi mulieres plangentis Adonidem.*)

In this case neither she nor the family of the possessed woman were Sudanese, but the djin to be exorcised were, and I think some of the assistants.

Here too the handle of the sistrum was suggestive of the ichthyphallic cult of Min in ancient Egypt before the vogue of Isis, but, I imagine, by pure coincidence.

I do not recall seeing it again until the moulid of Fatima el-Nebawiya, at which there were several Ringas, 27th Rabia I, 1353 (9.7.34), and though probably I had missed it when visiting moulids, I am sure its vogue and that of the Ringa have enormously increased recently. You may have noticed, when with me, Ringas at the Moulid el-Nebi, and the Moulids of Bayumi, Matrawi, Muhammadi, and Mazlum, (the last being the moulid in the fields where the brigand was unveiled and lynched.) This month (Shaaban, which ends to-day, and is a carnival of feasts before the fast of Ramadan,) I have visited Ringas not only at Muafaq, referred to above, but at the moulids of Imam el-Shafei, Matrawi, Mansi, Saleh Haddad, Sultan Hanafi, and Awlad Badr. There were two at Sultan Hanafi, one of which I visited with Mrs. Wyman Bury, and the other with Prof. Hocart, and at the very small Moulid of Awlad Badr two days ago there were two flourishing Ringas. They are prominent also at the Feast of Sayed el Bedawi.

It is important to note that although an attribute of religious feasts, it is always in the "amusement park", and never in Egypt brought into mosque or church, or employed at a Zikr.

So far I have only dealt with one form of the Sistrum, but I am sending you three of an entirely different type, made of coloured basket work, in the shape of an orb of 3 or 4 inches diameter, with a handle. Since your letter on the subject, I visited a Sunday afternoon ceremony, which takes place every week in the court of the great mosque of Sitna Nefisa, and purchased those I am sending at the door of the mosque. I had seen this type in the hands of some children at Bein el-Sariat.

a year or more ago. I have now, with the help of Gad el-Moula traced the children, and find that their parents bought these sistra at or in Sidna Nefisa when visiting that saint ceremonially; and I have not been able to ascertain that they can be obtained elsewhere. Gad assures me they are in pious memory of Sidna Nefisa, who was very fond of them. (This reminds me of Siena, where the little horses and other toys of S. Catharine, are preserved, and reproduced as her souvenirs for the faithful. I fear Nefisa's originals have been lost.)

It may interest Prof. Newberry, as a great Egyptologist and *sistrum* specialist, that some of the children about the mosque had lengthened their *sistrum* into a sceptre-like object, by means of a cane.

There is yet a form of *sistrum*, still more sceptre-like, borne on a pole, in the *zeffa*, (procession) of many moulids, and I think on some other occasions. Though much more ornate than the ordinary *shâkhshaakha*, it is called by the same name. You must have seen it, surrounded and followed by men and sometimes dervishes, gorgeously attired, and given to whirling and divers contortions. This I have known for about thirty years, and its use seems on the decline, though I was glad to see it in all its glory last Wednesday afternoon, though the full *zeffa* with banners, and the mounted "Khalifa" was not allowed (on account, they said, of the riots).

Now do make any use of this you like, (if it has any) mentioning my name or not as you wish. Ibrahim the black Ring-dancer, and others have helped me, but Mousa, keen on the quest as he knows it is for you, has been by far my most intelligent and reliable informant; he obtained the metal *sistra*.

The moon of Ramadan has been seen, so Ramadan Kerim, ya Azizi.

Yours,

J. W. McPherson.

In replying to the above letter, Prof. Evans-Pritchard told me *inter alia* that the *sistra* sent him from Egypt were now in the Oxford Pitt Rivers Museum. He mentioned that amongst the many associations of the *sistrum* with Egypt, was the use to which Cleopatra put it at the battle of Actium, where it acquired the name of "Cleopatra's trumpet".

He, and still more Prof. Newberry, would be interested in the "Dabus" I examined some years later at the mould of Zefeti and whose description will be found under that head, as, apart from its mystical use by the dervishes, it combined all the requisites of the ideal primitive royal sceptre,—the typical spherical shape with long handle, the loaded sistral head, with the addition of resonant bits of metal for calling to order, and potential death at each end to enforce such. I was unable at the time to obtain, and send one to Oxford, but have acquired one recently, by the kindness of Major Gayer-Anderson, which, however, owes its rattle qualities wholly to the bell-like bits of metal on chains, and has no loose particles for that purpose within the hollow head.

I think in this and the preceding chapter, I have enumerated enough of the characteristic things which one sees or hears at a mould, that edify, amuse or interest, without more than the most passing mention of the quacks who tempt you with *dowa* دواء (medicine) to cure all ills, the doctors who charm out aching teeth, or the fortune teller and his writing on sand, "darb el-raml", وضرب الرمل, etc., etc., or even the rarer exhibitions of television by looking into ink in the medium's hand, known as "mendal", and such like occult matters. There are often surprises, that may constitute the particular interest of the evening, on both the devotional and secular sides. Much of what I have described or omitted to mention, is of course highly banal, or extremely primitive, and so far removed from the conventional and fashionable evening's programme, that there must be many to whom it will have little appeal, but no one can be indifferent

to the simple piety and light-hearted enjoyment which pervade the atmosphere of a mouldid.

There is the freedom to move about when and where you will, '*semel huc, atque illuc*', and to leave at once any item which displeases for something better :—none of the prison atmosphere, so specially irksome to a claustrophobe, which discounts even good theatrical performances, concerts, picture shows and the like, and becomes a martyrdom when one goes for a supposed treat, and instead sits through hours of complete boredom, looking in vain for the happy, enthusiastic, unsophisticated, unsatiated mouldid faces to cheer one through it.

The writer appreciated and frequented the simple unsophisticated and human attractions of mouldids, more and more, *pari passu* with the regression of those qualities in conventional entertainments, due to the ousting of music by its spurious substitute jazz, with its nasty concomitants, and the ghastly error that the Muses can be mechanised. It was too sad a rôle to assist at the victory of blatant cacophonies and nauseous croonings over the inspired harmonies and lovely melodies which the genius and the souls of the great masters had bequeathed us though the centuries. Sad too to witness the surrender of the artistic public to this soulless invasion; and sad to know that the professional musicians who had delighted us, real and good musicians many of them, had to choose between murdering their own art or starving.

But the great tragedy, or so it seems to me, is that the young generations born into this, can have no vivid idea of all that was sacrificed, and therefore no more or little more urge to combat this bondage which has enthralled music and the arts, than a young Fijian, "to the manner born", to renounce the cannibalism which from his cradle he has regarded as natural.

Hasan Pasha Anis, who is a keen musician as well as a supreme master of aeronautics, once told me that in jazz he has frequently recognised primitive African music, of the Ringa and

allied types. That is interesting but does not console us for what was better than ringa or jazz, especially as it has lost its soul and simplicity in its migration to American negro bawdy house, and its exploitation by enterprising purveyors to dubious taste first in the New World and then in the Old, till it has come to roost again in Africa.

"Who will roll away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre" of the Muses, and deliver us from this cult of the grotesque, ugly, discordant and indecent, with its objective representation on the Hollywood screen, and its raucous support by the radio, to the extent that people of culture and refinement, with revolt it is to be hoped in their hearts, are mesmerised by the fashion of the cult into distorting their haunches with arms akimbo, slapping their own buttocks and poking their thumbs out, like stable lads and fishwives, in a way that would have earned them, not so long ago, the stocks or the spinning house at home or the bow string out here. Surely we are a race of sheep, caring little whether we be black, white or ring-straked, and following any false shepherd who has such abnormal bluff and impudence as to impose his fashion,

(Taking up this evening's "Bourse Egyptienne", I am glad to see that my views are not held by an isolated few. I read—

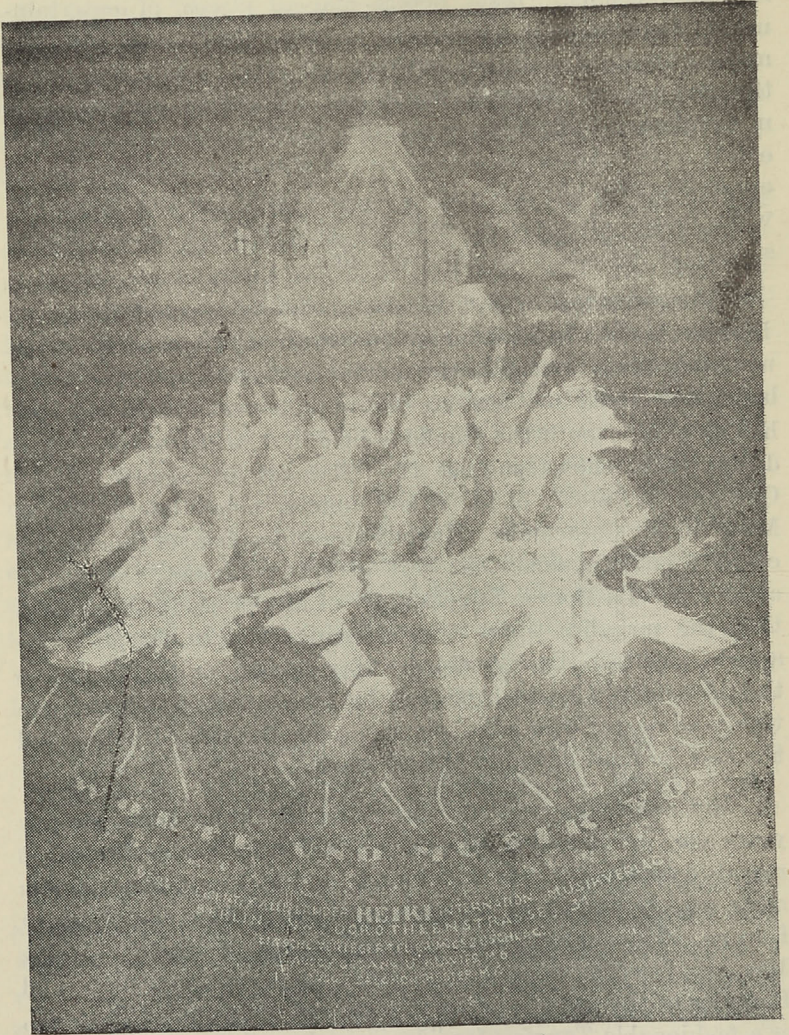
"Se trémousser, se déhancher, frapper des mains et des pieds, agiter la tête à la manière d'un pendu, hurler comme dans la jungle, telle est la symphonie négroïde qu'offrent nos salons à l'heure actuelle.")

Some readers may retort that I have hurled no Jeremiads at the Ringa dancers and their grotesque music, have indeed written rather sympathetically on the subject. To which I reply that though I have never seen anything actually vicious or repellent in a booza booth and would hesitate to put the ringa on as low a plane as our jazz, I do not cite it as an edifying item of a mouldid, but rather as a curiosity to be seen, heard or studied once or twice, and should resent and resist its being dragged

into our salons, "best" hotels, and all places of entertainment, to dominate everything and everybody and oust the music of culture and the masters. It, like jazz, is too primitive and coarse. Happily, unlike jazz, it has no propagandists nor protagonists to bring about this preposterous result. The evil is in the excess: a spot of jazz might lend piquancy to an entertainment, like a few freckles on a comely countenance, but when freckles become a confluent pigmentation on the face of society, it looks like an ugly contagion.

If an acid test of real natural gaiety, as opposed to forced hilarity, is the absence of all tendency to the morbid and the macabre, then the fun of the mouldid fair shows up well. Morbidity and intentional irreverence are unknown, and the *macabre* has no place even if the mouldid is held in a *macbara* مقبرة. Nor do any of its shows suggest the "Cabaret du Néant", or "Le Ciel", or "L'Enfer", of La Ville Lumière, much less a "Black Mass" in the Catacombs. Happily the atmosphere of this blessed country is all against that sort of entertainment, though an article in "La Bourse Egyptienne" of March 26, 1940 indicates that the macabre trend is progressing even in Egypt. The article, entitled, "Le mystère des voix d'outre-tombe," describes the invasion of Chatby cemetery by five hundred cars and five thousand people who left their cabarets, their fox-trotting and the rest, to hunt down an alleged ghost.

But any of my readers who were in Berlin some twenty years ago, (or since, for all I know), will have realised to what macabre depths Jazz can fall, and it is significant that it was more eagerly welcomed and cultivated there than elsewhere in Europe. The changes were rung on "Dances of Death"—Waltz Macabre, Der Tanzende Tod (Valse Boston), Shimmylieder—and Foxtrots of the same; and the *Programm* of a popular *Tanzsaal*, or a fashionable *Tanzfest* for "das vornehme Leben" was hardly complete without the sung-dance, "Fox Macabre Totentanz", of which the refrain ran—



"Berlin, dein Tänzer ist der Tod!

Berlin, du wühlst mit Lust im Kot!

Halt ein! lass sein! und denk ein bischen nach:

Du tanzt dir doch vom Leibe nicht die Schmach,

denn du boxt, und du jazzt, und du foxt auf dem Pulver-fass."

(Berlin, your dance is the dance of Death!

Berlin, with joy you whirl about in filth!

Halt! Stop! and think about it a bit:

You won't dance the shame out of your belly,

for you box, and you jazz, and you fox-trot on a powder-
magazine.)

This was advertised by a huge nightmare of a picture,—of gay company dancing on a bridge which spanned the bottomless pit, at the moment the bridge was collapsing and letting them down. This was all so near the superlative of ghastly decadence, that it is difficult to conceive what the Mutterleib can have produced further for this war, for seemingly the only next step would be,—

"Berlin, dein Tänzer ist die Hölle!"

But, to these poleemics and *cauchemars* a truce, and let those who love the macabre go to the heart of Germany, and the jazz fan to the OIKHMATA of the far West where the Congua, the Bunny Hug and the Black Bottom may be seen and heard in their pristine *purity*,

... Juvat integras accedere fontes,
Atque haurire."

or since

"Non cuivis contingit adire Corinthum."

"Hell's Kitchen" or the bas-fonds of Frisco or Chicago might serve, not to mention places nearer home,—but those who prefer an atmosphere of simple natural devotion and joy, and the fresh air of heaven, without the umbra or penumbra of the macabre, might do worse than come with me for once in a way to a Moulid, for preference, a country one.

You may even say or think, with Byron,—

... sweet are our escapes
From civic revelry to rural mirth.

V

MOULIDS

THEIR INDIVIDUAL FEATURES.

The preceding pages have envisaged moulids in general, though drawing illustration from specific cases: this chapter is of the nature of a guide portraying their individual features or idiosyncrasies, as far as the writer has observed on repeated visits to nearly all of them, and in the few remaining instances, from first-hand current information. He has never seen nor applied for official lists or particulars, which would doubtless have made this a much more valuable document technically and statistically, but which he leaves to others; for this compilation is intended to be of the nature of very mild research in a neglected but highly deserving field. Being such pioneer work, there are very numerous *lacunae* which want filling up; notably in the non-inclusion of important provincial moulids, for want of personal contact and direct reliable information.

Though all moulids must essentially have their devotional side, this varies from being their sole aspect in some of the small ones, especially those of a quasi-private nature, such as el-Azaim, to others such as el-Hili which tend the other way. Others like el-Nebi have a sort of official character: some borrow a charm from ancient or beautiful surroundings: desert and country meetings have their own picturesque items; immemorial customs are shadowed in a few: dervishes or musicians may have surprises for us, and so on, so that, in fine, few moulids are devoid of some points of individuality.

As explained in Ch. II, the date on which a moulid is actually celebrated fluctuates so greatly, sometimes over several months, that for the Islamic feasts which are in a very large majority, it is not possible to construct a calendar which is anything more than roughly approximate. An attempt at such is appended, which at any rate will give an idea of when to begin

looking out for a particular moulid, but reference to the moulid as described later in this chapter will bring one much nearer.

It will be noted that in the Calendar, I have only ventured to put in the actual day of the month in eight cases, and one of these Bahlul, on 29th Shaaban, is not rigorously exact as it is, I believe, intended for the eve of Ramadan, and there may be 30 days in Shaaban, though usually 29. The same probably applies also to several of the small moulids about the Babs of Fatuh and Nasr, and elsewhere. In Ch. II also are given the approximate dates of the relatively few Coptic moulids, according to that Calendar. It has been mentioned that the Moslem moulid of Abu Harera at Giza ignores the Moslem calendar in favour of the Coptic Easter Monday, and that Sayed el-Bedawi follows the solar, not the lunar months, falling in October, the Coptic Baba. Also Bayumi is in March (Baramhat), and Imbabi in June (Bauna).

As importance is often attached to the day of the week, rather than that of the month, the Table near the end of Ch. II should be useful.

The 126 Moulids which follow are arranged alphabetically, and appear in the general index, under "Moulid" in the same order.

Readers not quite familiar with Arabic are reminded that there is a Glossary of the Egyptian words used, arranged alphabetically according to the English transliteration.

**Approximate Dates of
MOULIDS
which follow the Islamic CALENDAR.**

(Where the date may vary more than a month, the first probable month is given.)

| | | |
|------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Muharem | Abd el-Daim | Cairo |
| | Abu Tarabish | Helwan |
| | Galal | Cairo |
| | Khalil | Shubra |
| | Moh. el-Bahri | Cairo |
| | Mazlum | Sharabia (Cairo) |
| | Omr | Cairo |
| | Qorani | Wasta District |
| | Shutbi | Cairo district |
| | Tunsi | Cairo district |
| Safr | Sayed el-Malak | Cairo (Saptia) |
| 10 Rabia I | Ashmawi | Cairo |
| | Fatima el-Nebawiya | Cairo |
| II " | el-Nebi | Cairo (Abbassia) |
| | Saleh, Sultan | Cairo |
| Rabia II | Abu el-Ela | Cairo |
| | Farag | Cairo district |
| | Farghal | Abu Tig |
| | Husein | Cairo |
| | Nasr | Cairo |
| | Shibl | Shuhda, Manuf |
| | Tarturi, Hasan | Cairo district |
| Gamad I | Abu Atata | Giza district |
| | Abu el-Leil | Beni Mazar |
| | Abu el-Sebà | Cairo (Bulaq) |
| | Ahmadein | Cairo |
| | Badran | Cairo |
| | Benhawi | Cairo |
| | (Desuki | Geziret el-Dahab) |
| | Galal el-Din | Asyut |
| | Guda | Minet el-Qamh |
| | Hamza | Cairo |
| | Hilal | Cairo |

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| Gamad I | Huneidiq Qraishi Sakina Salama | Ismailia Zenin Cairo Cairo |
| Gumad II | Aarif Abu Amera Gamal el-Din Gharib (el-Gharib) Hasan Anwar Itman Lashin Oqbi Selim Tarturi Zefeti Zein el-Abdin | Tilà, Menufia Khardassa Kafr Termis, Saft Mit Oqba O. Cairo Pyramids Mit Oqba Mit Oqba Cairo (Bulaq) El-Hatia (Mit Oqba) Duqqi Cairo |
| Ragab | Abdulla Abu Qafas Agami Azaim | Cairo Helmia, Zeitun Alex. district Cairo |
| 26 " | Dashtouti (1 ashtoushi) | Cairo |
| 26 " | Ibrahim Kurdi Maaruf Muafaq Qasid Shami (el-Shami) Wasti Zenab | Mataria Cairo (Bulaq) Cairo Cairo Cairo Geziret el-Dahab Cairo (Bulaq) Cairo |
| Shaaban | Abdulla el-Hagr Abdulla Kafr-el Darb Abd el-Basat Abd el-Karim Abd el-Qasid | Cairo, (Khalifa) Cairo (Khalifa) Cairo (Bab el-Nasr) Cairo do. Cairo do. |
| 14 " | Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi Abd el-Wahid Abu Badir Abu Daif Abu Zaid | Qena Cairo (Bulaq) Cairo Cairo (Imam) Cairo (Imam) |

| | | | |
|----|---------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| 14 | Shaaban | Ali el-Gizi | Cairo (Mameluks) |
| | | Ansari (el-Ansari) | Cairo |
| | | Arbein | Cairo |
| | | Awlad Badr | Cairo (Bulaq) |
| | | Awlad Shaab | Cairo |
| | | Ayesha | Cairo (Khalifa) |
| | | Ayesha el-Tunisi | Cairo (Khalifa) |
| 29 | „ | Bahlul | Cairo |
| | | Emery | Cairo (Moh. Ali) |
| | | Emery | Cairo (Touloun) |
| | | Fatima el-Nebawiya bint Gaafar | Cairo (Bab el-Khalq) |
| | | Galadin | Cairo (Bulaq) |
| | | Ganib | Cairo (Sarugia) |
| | | Hanafi, Sultan | Cairo |
| | | Haroun | Cairo (Touloun) |
| | | Khasousi | Cairo (Bulaq) |
| | | Leithi | Cairo (Imam) |
| | | Mansi | Cairo |
| | | Marsafa | Cairo |
| 14 | „ | Matrawi | Mataria |
| | | Muhammadi, Demardashi | Demardash |
| | | Muhammadi, Shahin | Cairo (Khalifa) |
| | | Qazazi | Cairo (Gamalia) |
| | | Saleh Haddad | Cairo |
| | | Saman | Cairo (Imam) |
| | | Shafei, Imam el- | Cairo |
| | | Sutuhia | Cairo (Bab el-Futuh) |
| 14 | „ | Yussef el-Haggag | Luxor |

(Fuller particulars as regards date etc., will be found in the detailed account of each Sheikh, which follows.)

THE ARABIC MONTHS.

THE COPTIC MONTHS.

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|----------|--------|
| Muharem | محرم | Tut | توت |
| Safr | صفر | Baba | بابة |
| Rabia I | ربيع الاول | Hatôr | هانور |
| Rabia II | ربيع الثاني | Kihak | كياهك |
| Gumad I | جماد الاول | Tuba | طوبة |
| Gumad II | جماد الثاني | Amshir | امشير |
| Ragab | رجب | Baramhat | برمهات |
| Shaaban | شعبان | Barmuda | برمودة |
| Ramadan | رمضان | Bashans | باشنس |
| Shawal | شوال | Bauna | بؤونة |
| Zu' el-Qaada | ذو القعدة | Abib | أبيب |
| Zu' el-Higga | ذو الحجة | Misra | مسرى |

Nasi نسيء

Notes — 1st. Muharem 1359.

=9th. February 1940.

The Moslem Calendar dates from the Flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina:—

=A. B. 622.

Each month has either 29 or 30 days being 11 short of the Solar year.

1st. Tut 1657

=11th. September 1940.

The Coptic Calendar dates from the "year of the Martyrs":—

=A. D. 284.

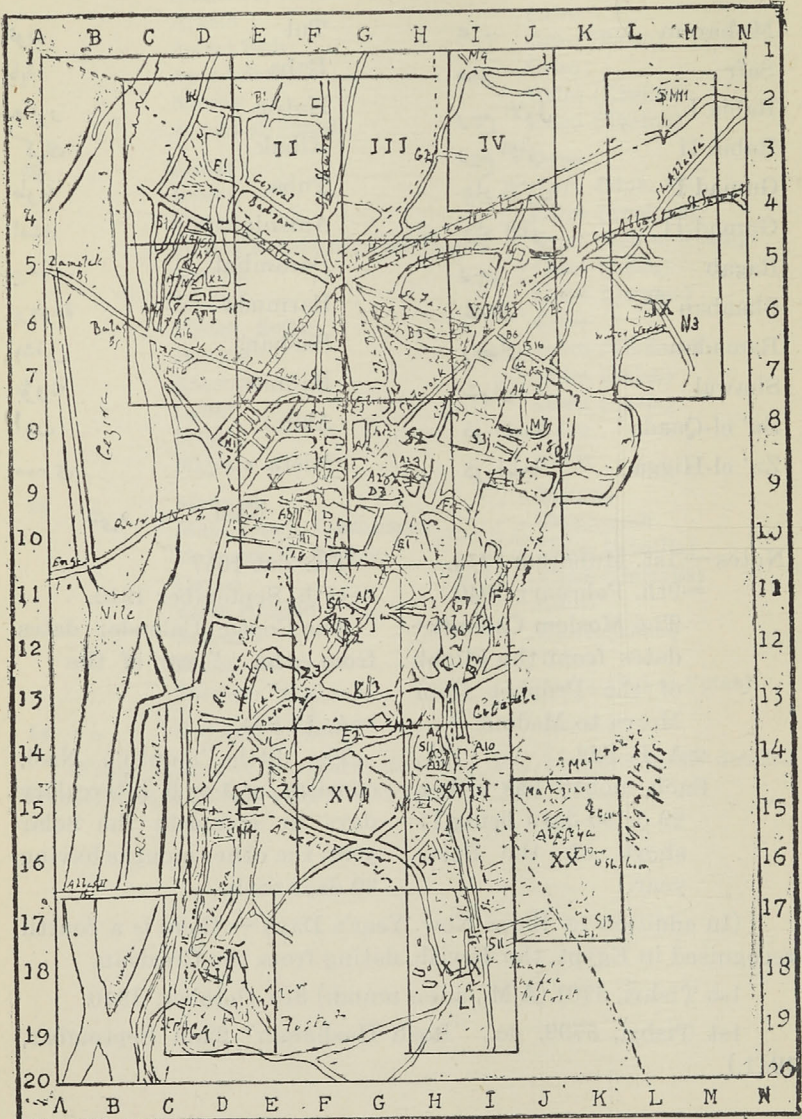
The little "month", Nasi, consists of 5 or 6 intercalary days to complete the Solar year, the other months having 30 days each.

(In addition to these New Year's Days — there is a fourth recognised in Egypt, the Jewish, dating from the Creation.

1st Tishri, 5701 (A.M., anno mundi) 3rd October, 1940

1st Tishri, 5702, do., "Rosh Hashanah" 22nd September, 1941.)

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TO THE 20
SECTIONAL MAPS.



SECTIONAL MAPS
OF
CAIRO.

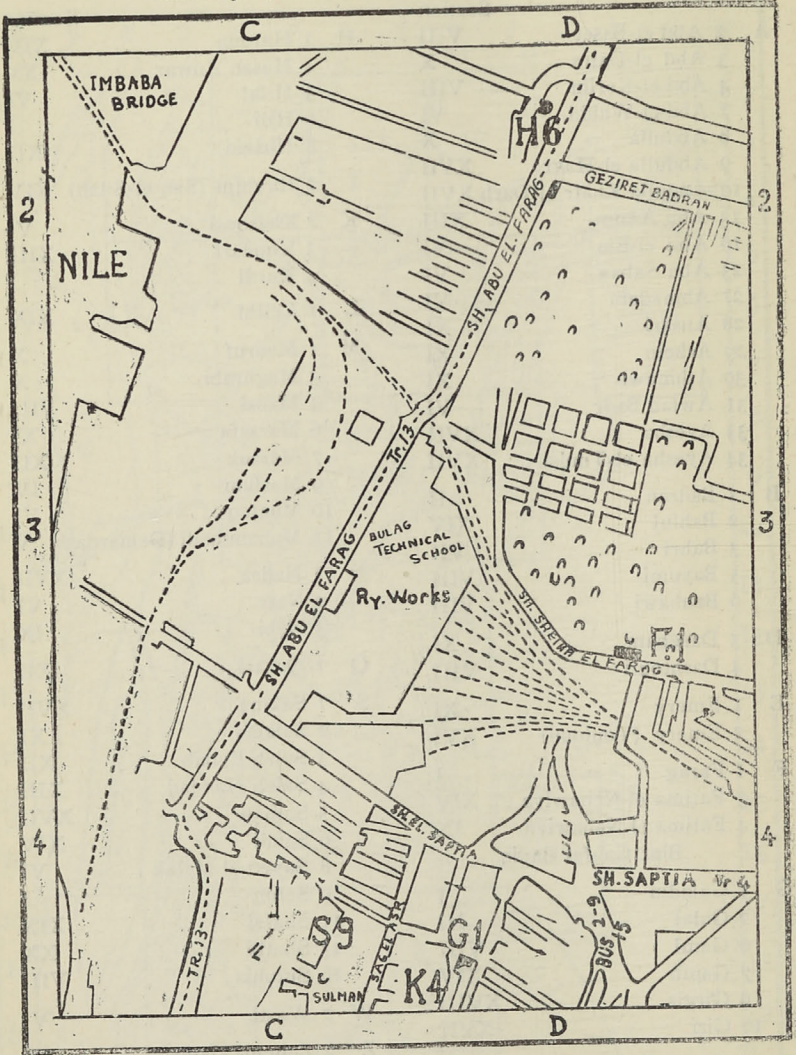
Section Section

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| A | 2 Abd el-Baset | VIII | H | 3 Haroun | XIII |
| | 3 Abd el-Daïm | X | | 4 Hasan Anwar | XV |
| | 4 Abd el-Kerim | VIII | | 5 Hilal | VI |
| | 7 Abd el-Wahid | VI | | 6 Hili | I |
| | 8 Abdulla | X | | 8 Husein | XII |
| | 9 Abdulla el-Hagr | XVII | I | 2 Ibrahim (Suq el-Silah) | XIV |
| | 10 Abdulla Khafr el-Darb | XVII | | | |
| | 13 Abu Azaim | XIII | K | 2 Khasousi | VI |
| | 16 Abu el-Ela | VI | | 3 Khuderi | XIII |
| | 23 Abu Sabaa | VI | | 4 Kurdi | I |
| | 27 Ahmadein | VI | L | 1 Leithi | XIX |
| | 28 Ansari | XI | | | |
| | 29 Arbein | XI | M | 1 Maaruf | X |
| | 30 Ashmawi | XI | | 3 Maghrabi | X |
| | 31 Awlad Badr | VI | | 4 Mansi | VIII |
| | 33 Ayesha | XVII | | 6 Marsafa | XI |
| | 34 Ayesha el-Tunisi | XVII | | 7 Marzuk | XII |
| | | | | 9 Mazlum | IV |
| B | 1 Badran | II | | 10 Muafaq | VI |
| | 2 Bahlul | XIV | | 11 Muhammadi (Demardash) | V |
| | 3 Bahri | VII | | | |
| | 5 Bayumi | VIII | N | 1 Nafisa | XVII |
| | 6 Benhawi | VIII | | 2 Nasr | VI |
| | | | | 3 Nebi | IX |
| D | 3 Dargham | XI | | | |
| | 4 Dashtouti | VIII | Q | 1 Qazazi | XII |
| E | 1 Emery | XI | | | |
| | 2 Emery (Touloun) | XVI | S | 1 Sakina | XVII |
| | | | | 2 Salama | XI |
| | | | | 3 Saleh Eyoub | XII |
| F | 1 Farag | I | | 4 Saleh Haddad | XIII |
| | 3 Fatima el-Nebawiya | XIV | | 5 Saman | XVII |
| | 4 Fatima el-Nebawiya | IX | | 6 Saudi | XIV |
| | Bint Gaafar Sadiq | | | 8 Sayed el-Malak | VI |
| | | | | 9 Selim | I |
| G | 1 Galadin | I | | 11 Shafei | XIX |
| | 2 Galal | III | | 13 Shatbi | XX |
| | 6 Gaml | VIII | | 16 Sutuhia | VIII |
| | 7 Ganib | XIV | | | |
| | 9 Girgis | XVIII | W | 2 Wasti | VI |
| | 10 Gizi | XVII | | | |
| H | 1 Hamza | X | Z | 2 Zein el-Abdin | XV |
| | 2 Hanafi | XIII | | 3 Zenab | XIII |

SECTIONAL MAP

I

BULAQ (and Rod el-Farag direction)

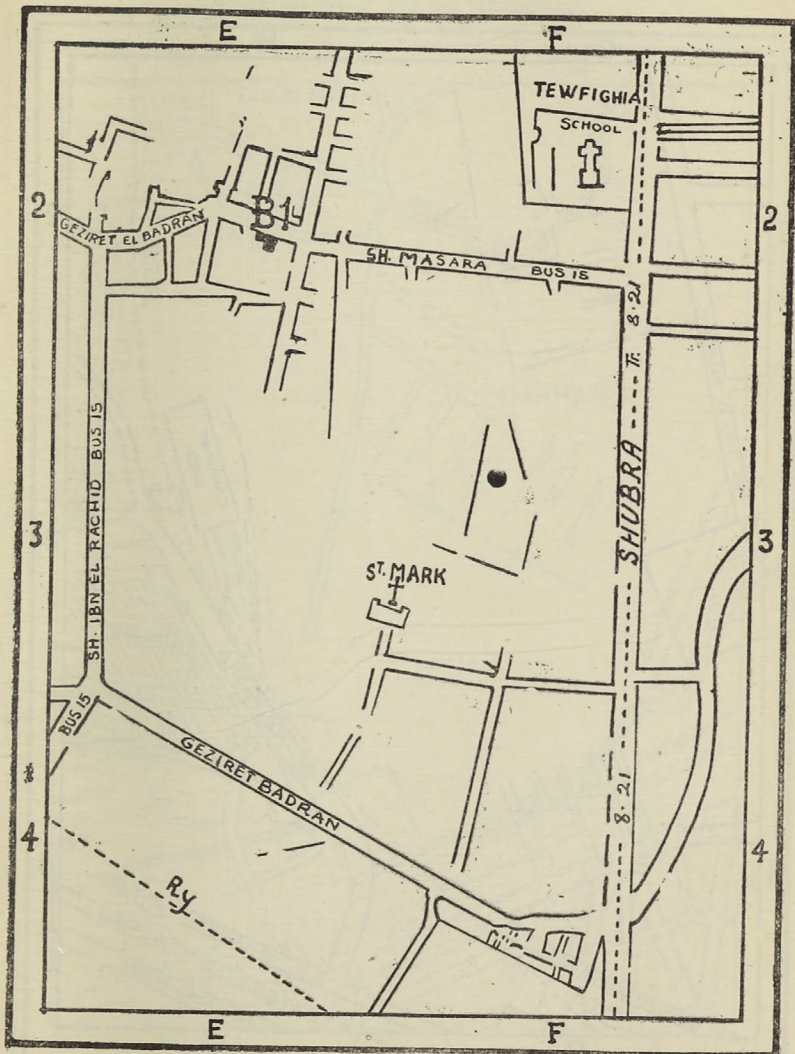


F 1 Farag
H 6 Hili

G 1 Galadin
K 4 Kurdi

S 9 Selim

SECTIONAL MAP
II
GEZIRAT BADRAN.

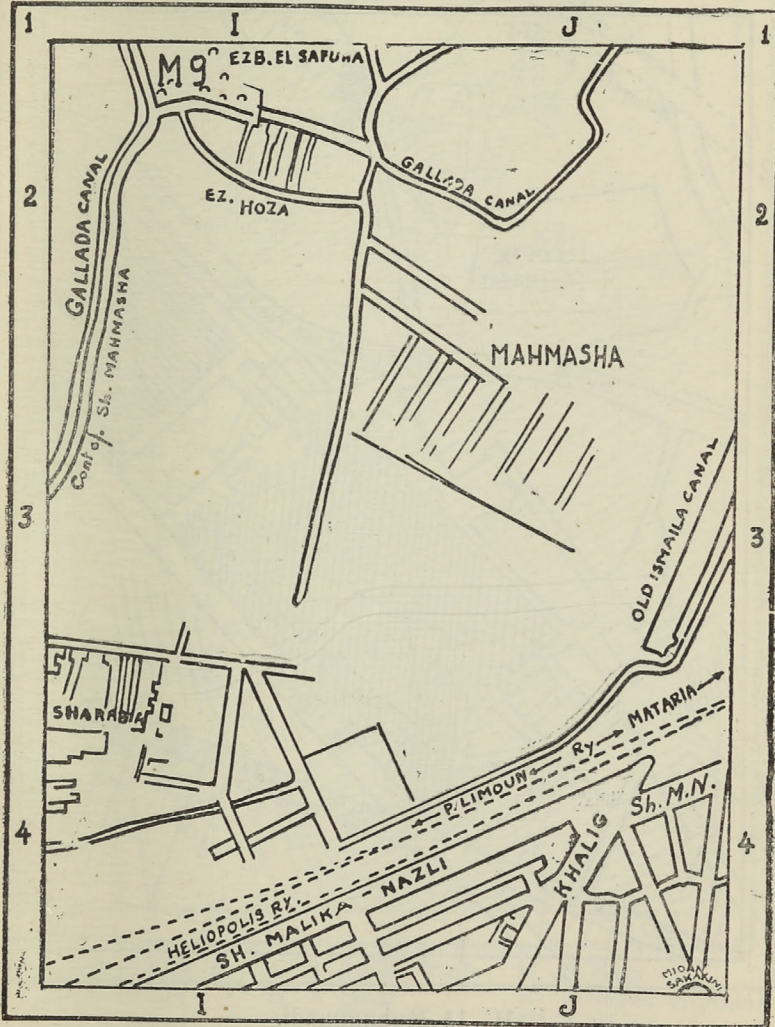


B 1 Badran

SECTIONAL MAP

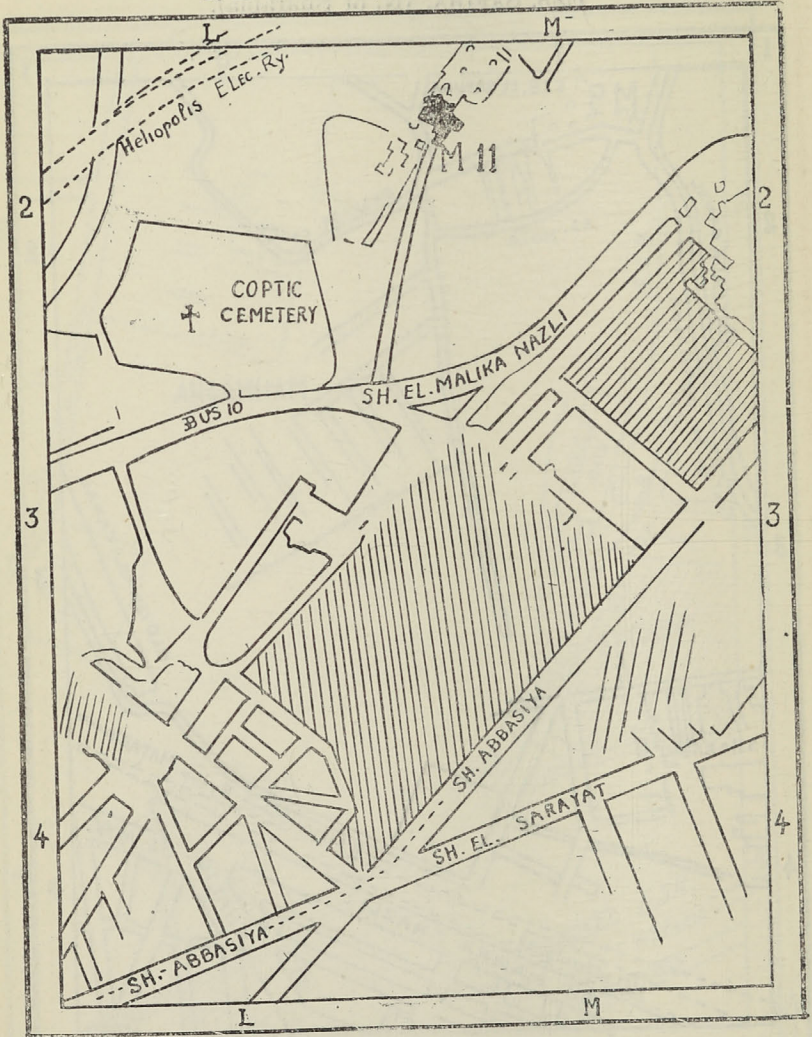
IV

EZB. SAFIHA, (N. of Sharabia).



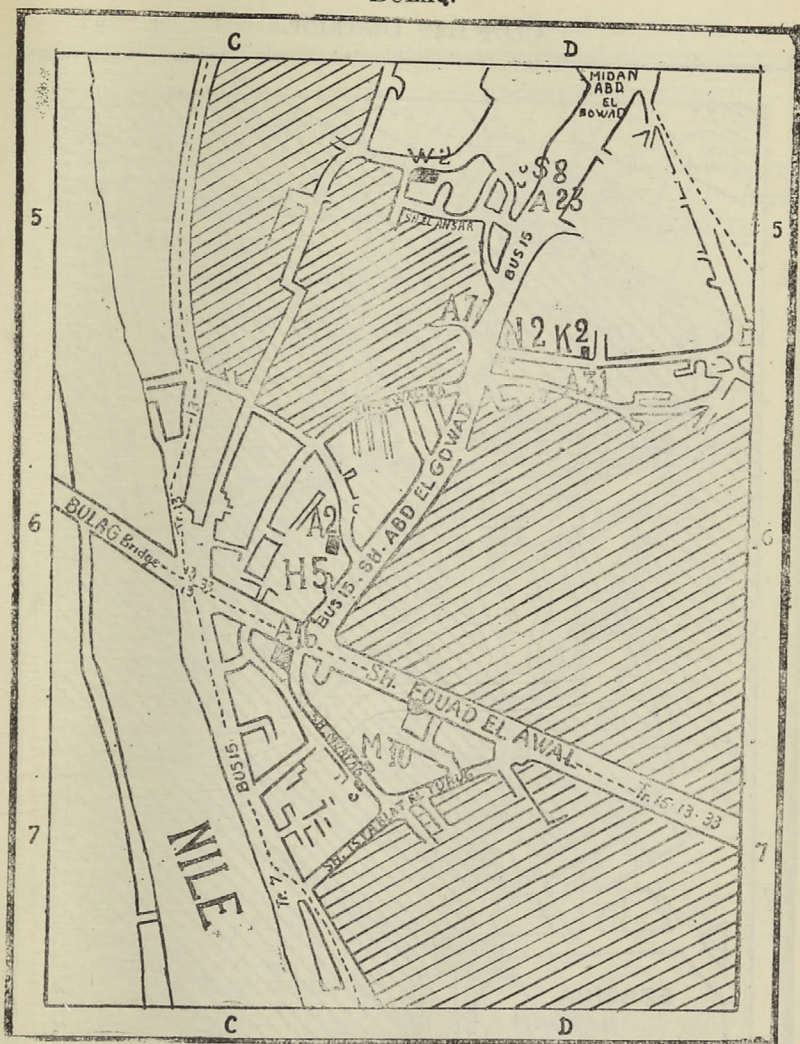
M 9 Mazlum.

SECTIONAL MAP
V
N-E CAIRO : (nr. Demardash).



M 11 Muhammadi.

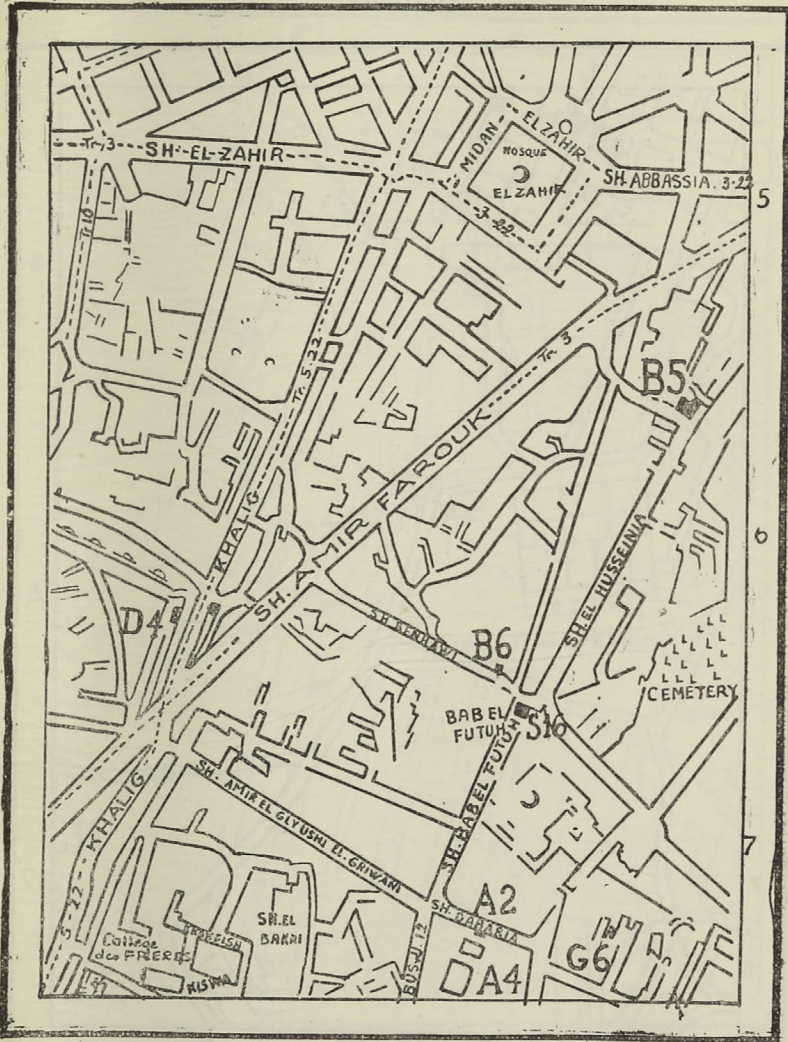
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SECTIONAL MAP
VI
BULAQ.



- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| A 7 Abd el-Wahid | A 31 Awlad Badr | N 2 Nasr |
| A 16 Abu el-Ela | H 5 Hilal | S 8 Sayed el-Malak |
| A 23 Abu Sabaa | K 2 Khasousi | W 2 Wasti |
| A 2(27) Ahmadein | M 10 Muafaq | |

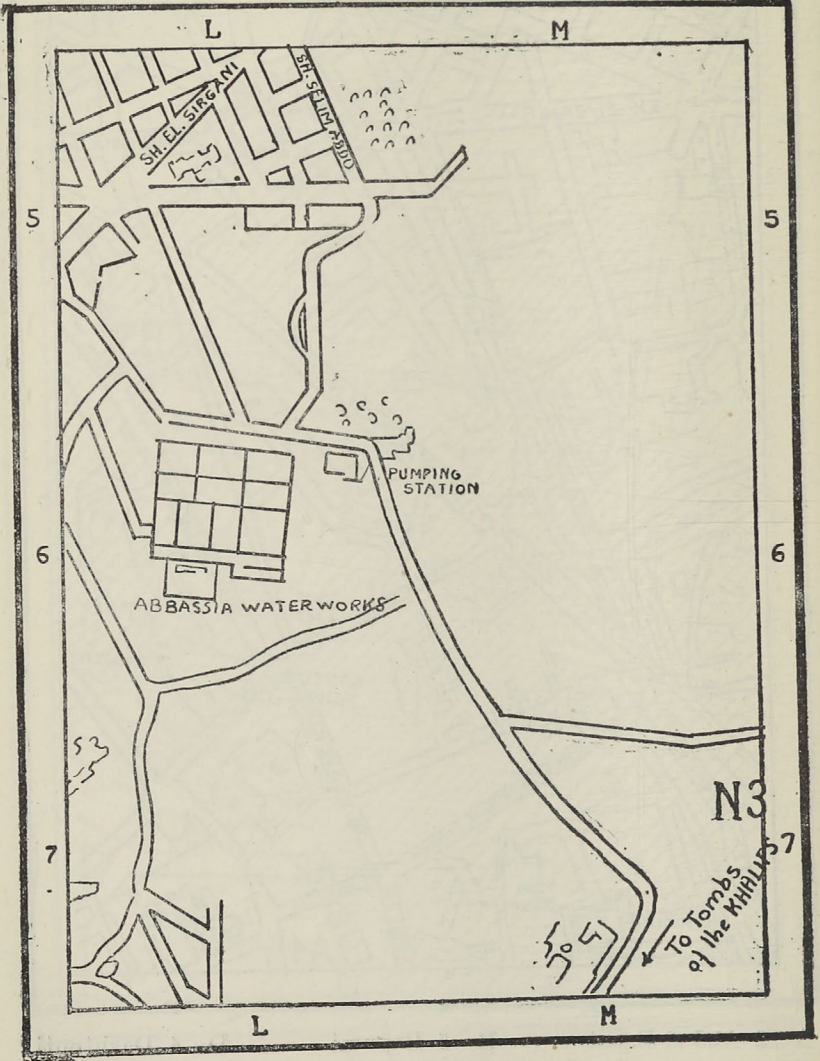
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VIII

BABS EL-NASR & FUTUH: and vicinity of Sh. Farouk.



- | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|------|---------|-----|-----------|
| A 2 | Abd el-Basat | B 5 | Bayumi | D 4 | Dashtouti |
| A 4 | Abd el-Kerim | B 6 | Benhawi | G 6 | Gamal |
| M 4 | Mansi | S 16 | Sutuhia | | |

SECTIONAL MAP
IX
ABBASSIA.

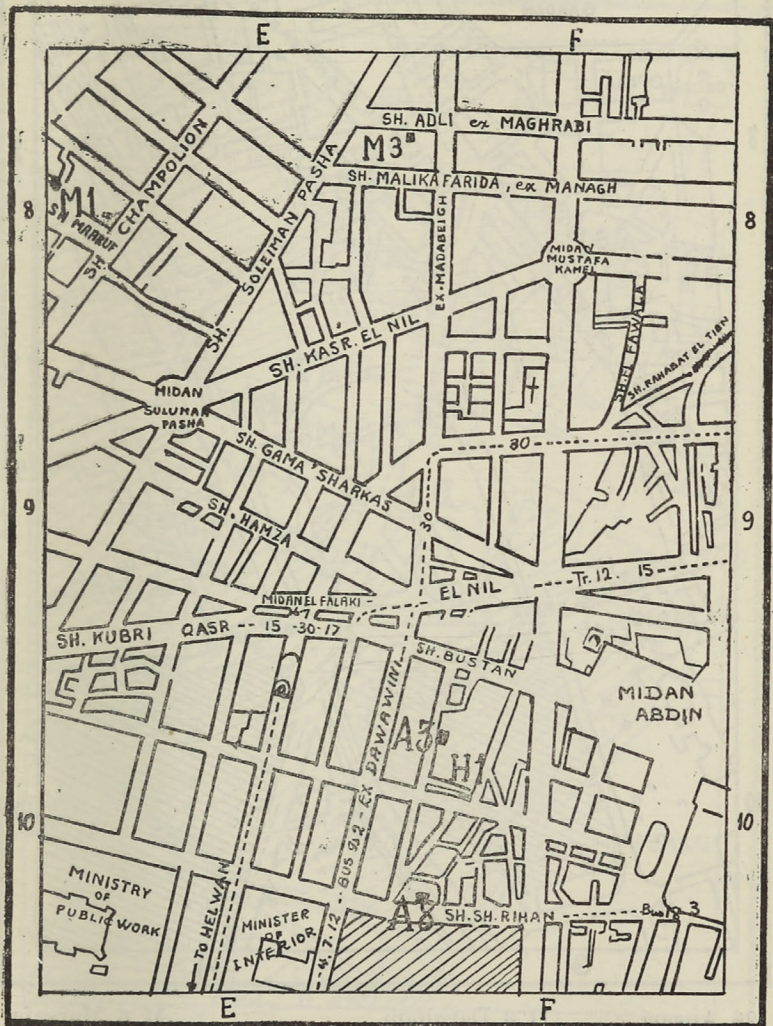


N 3 El-Nebi.

SECTIONAL MAP

X

ABDIN &c.



A 3 Abd el-Daïm

H 1 Hamza

M 3 Maghrabi

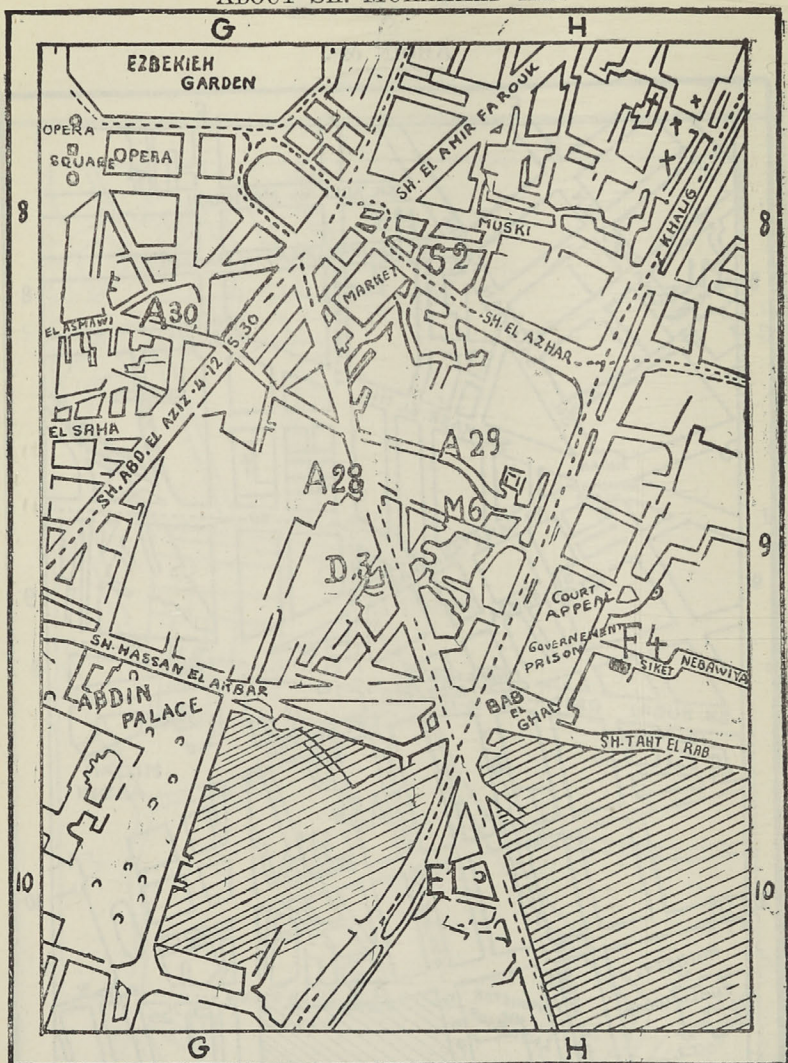
A 3 Abdulla

M 1 Maaruf

SECTIONAL MAP

XI

ABOUT SH. MUHAMMAD ALI.



A 28 Ansari

D 3 Dargham

M 6 Marsafa

A 29 Arbein

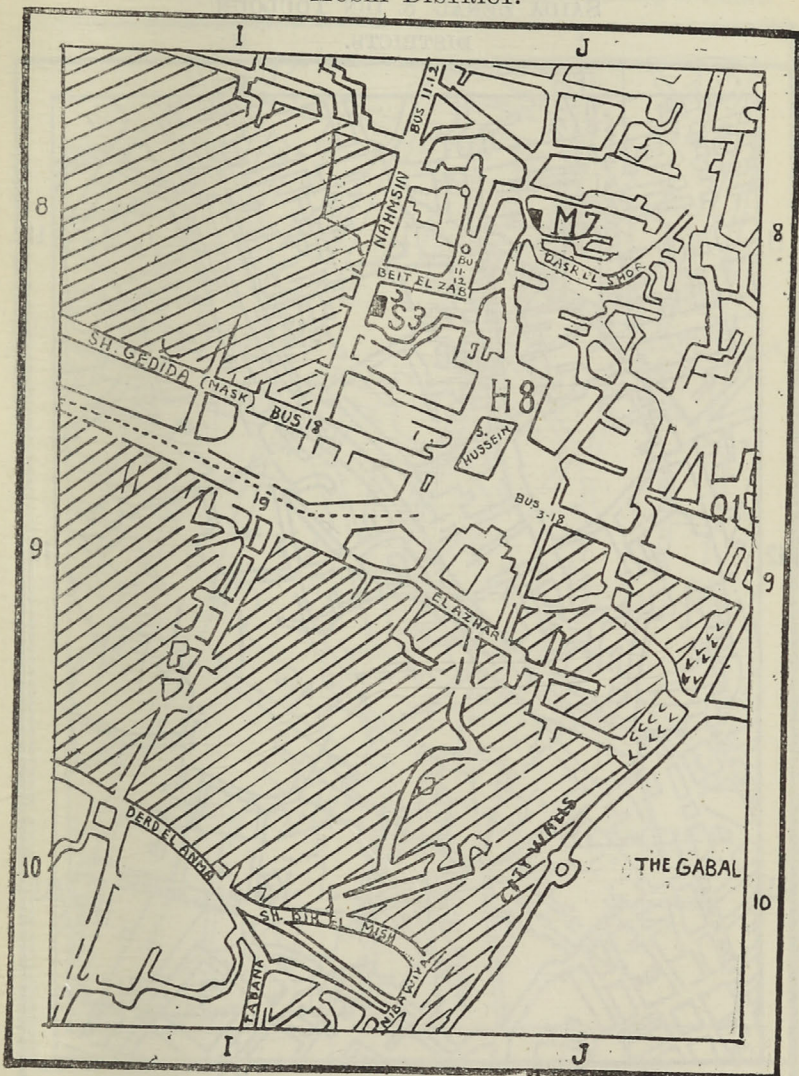
F 4 Fatima el-Nebawiya,
bint Gaafar

S 2 Salama

A 30 Ashmawi

E 1 Emery

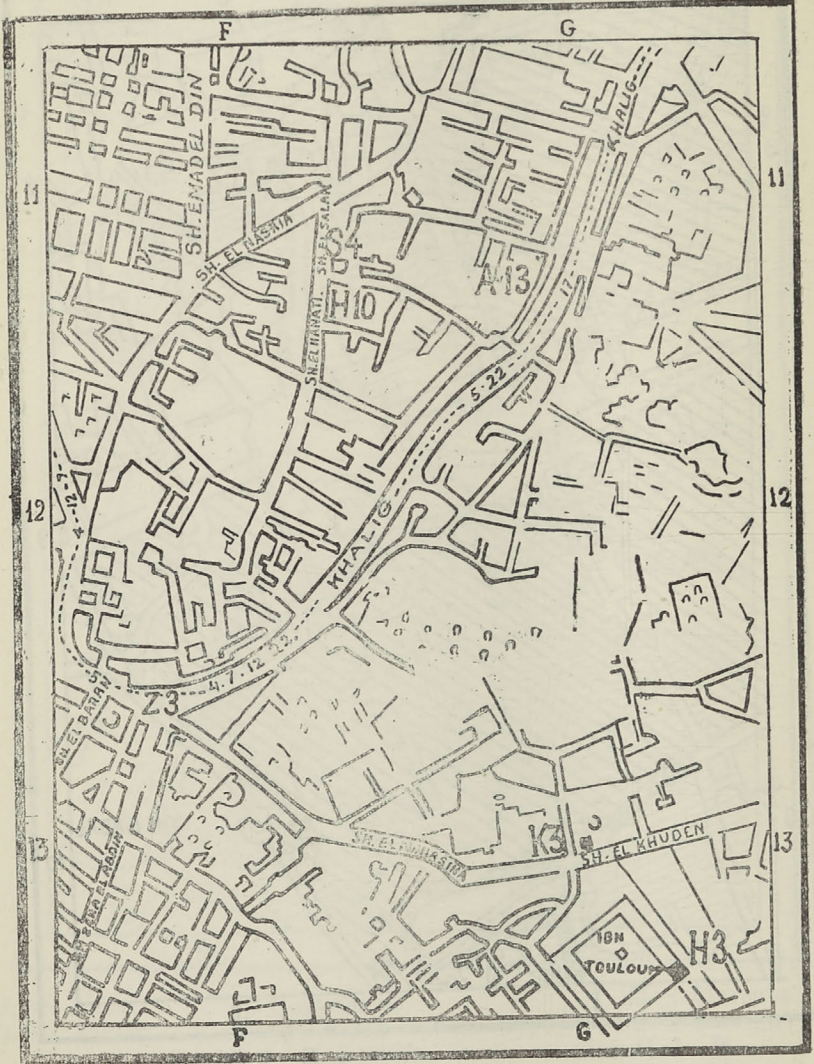
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 SECTIONAL MAP
 XII
 MUSKI DISTRICT.



H 8 Husein
 M 7 Marzuq

Q 1 Qazazi
 S 3 Saleh Eyoub

SECTIONAL MAP
XIII
SAIDA ZENAB & IBN TOULOUN
DISTRICTS.

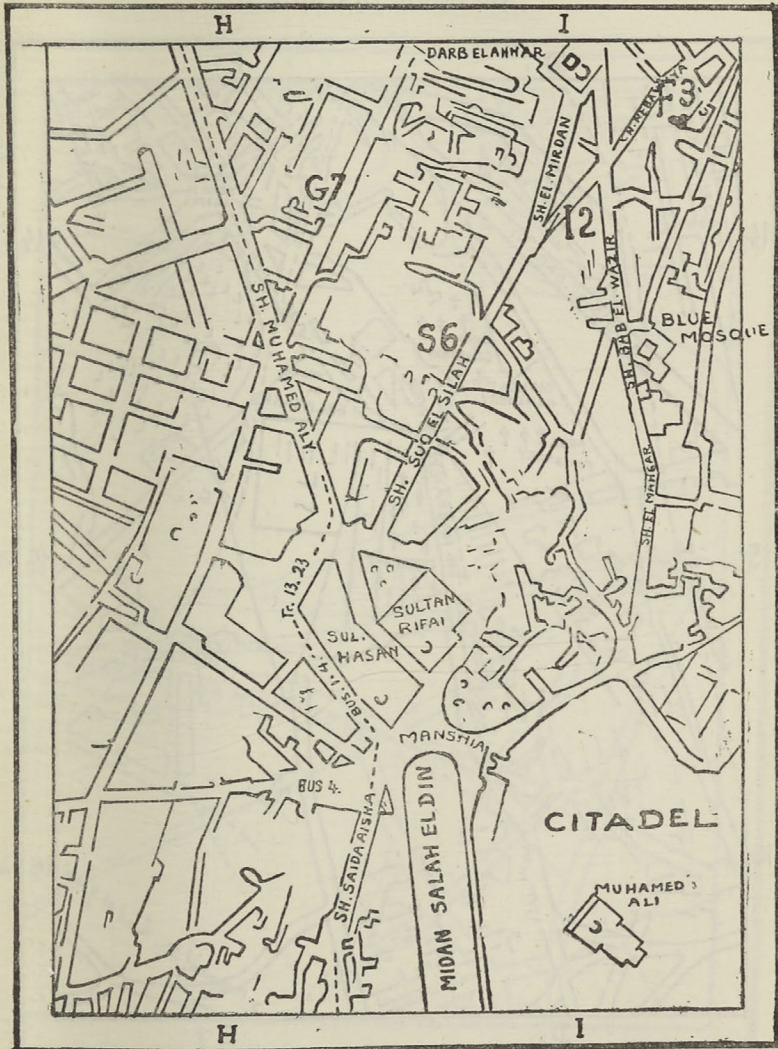


- | | | | | | |
|------|--------|-----|------------------|-----|---------|
| A 13 | Azaïm | S 4 | Saleh el- Haddad | H 2 | Haroun |
| H 2 | Hanafi | Z 3 | Zenab | K 3 | Khuderi |

SECTIONAL MAP
XIII

SOUTH-EAST^e CAIRO :—

neighbourhoods of Bab el-Wazir and Suq el-Silah.



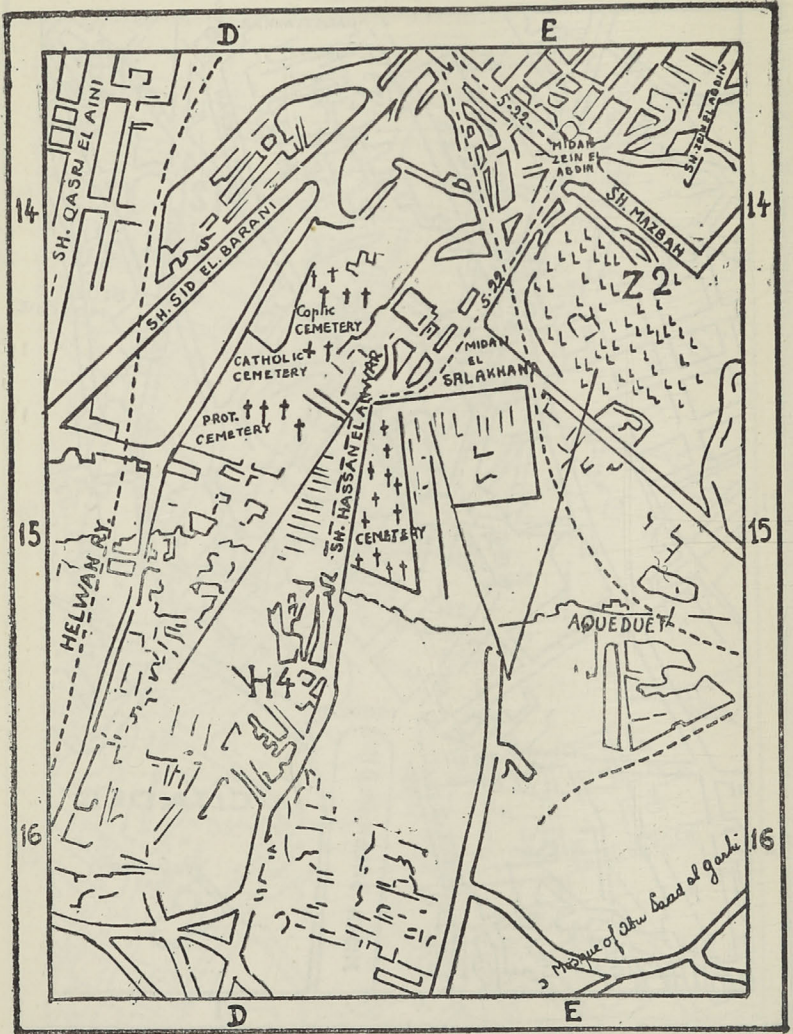
B 2 Bahlul
F 3 Fatima el-Nebawiya
G 7 Ganib

I 2 Ibrahim
S 6 Saudi

SECTIONAL MAP

XV

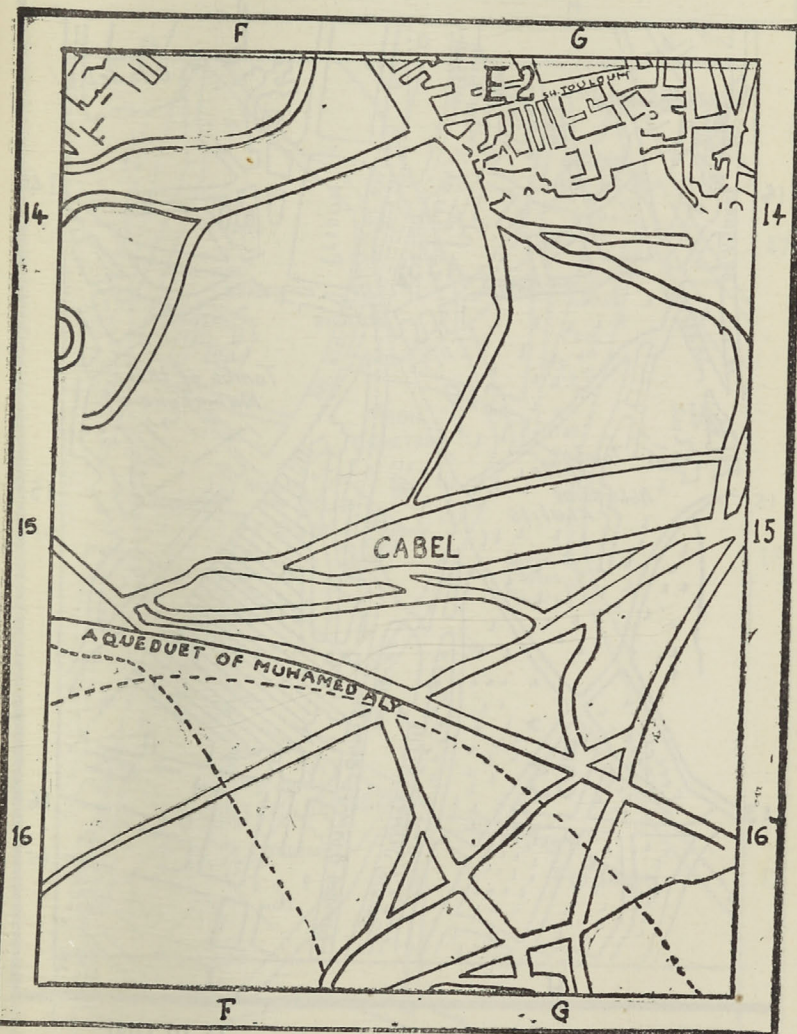
"ABATTOIR DISTRICT."



H 4 Hasan Anwar

Z 2 Zein el-Abdin

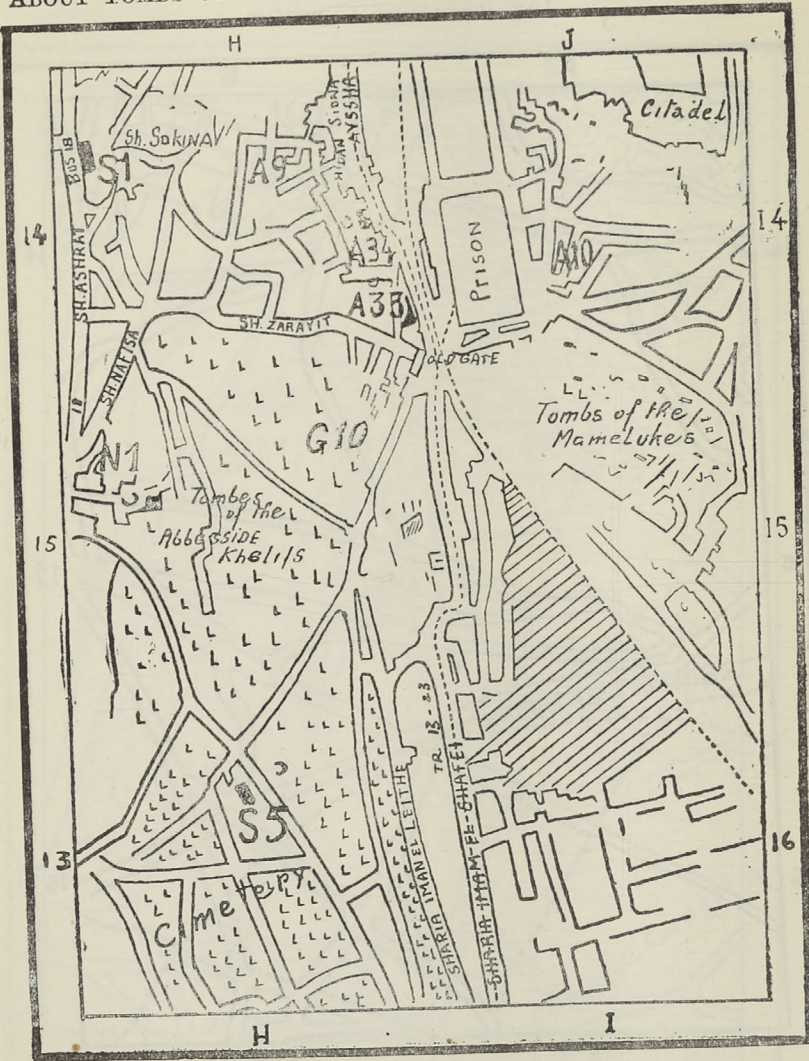
SECTIONAL MAP
XVI
IBN TOULOUN DISTRICT.



E 2 Emery.

SECTIONAL MAP
XVII

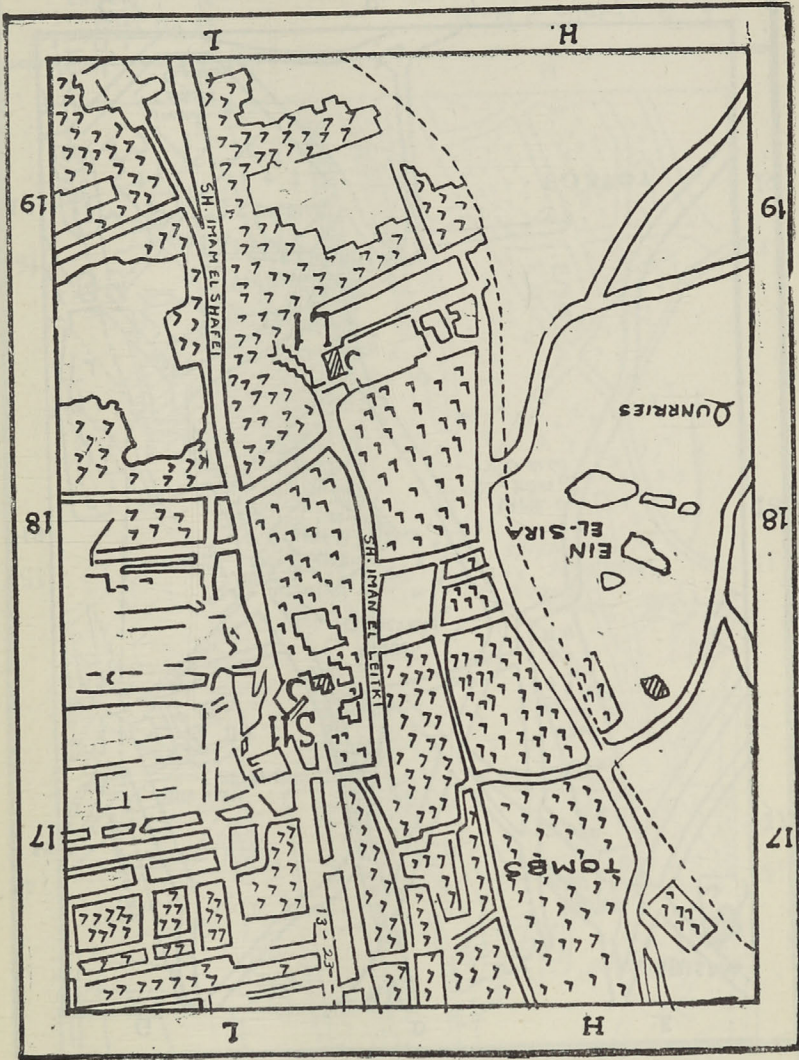
ABOUT TOMBS OF THE MAMELUKES AND ABBASIDE KHALIFS.



- A 9 Abdulla el-Hagr
- A 10 Abdulla Khafr el-Darb
- A 33 Ayesha
- A 34 Ayesha el-Tunisi

- G 10 Gizi
- N 1 Nafisa
- S 1 Sakina
- S 5 Saman

L I Imam el-Leithi S 11 Imam el-Shafei



NECROPOLIS OF IMAM EL-SHAFEI

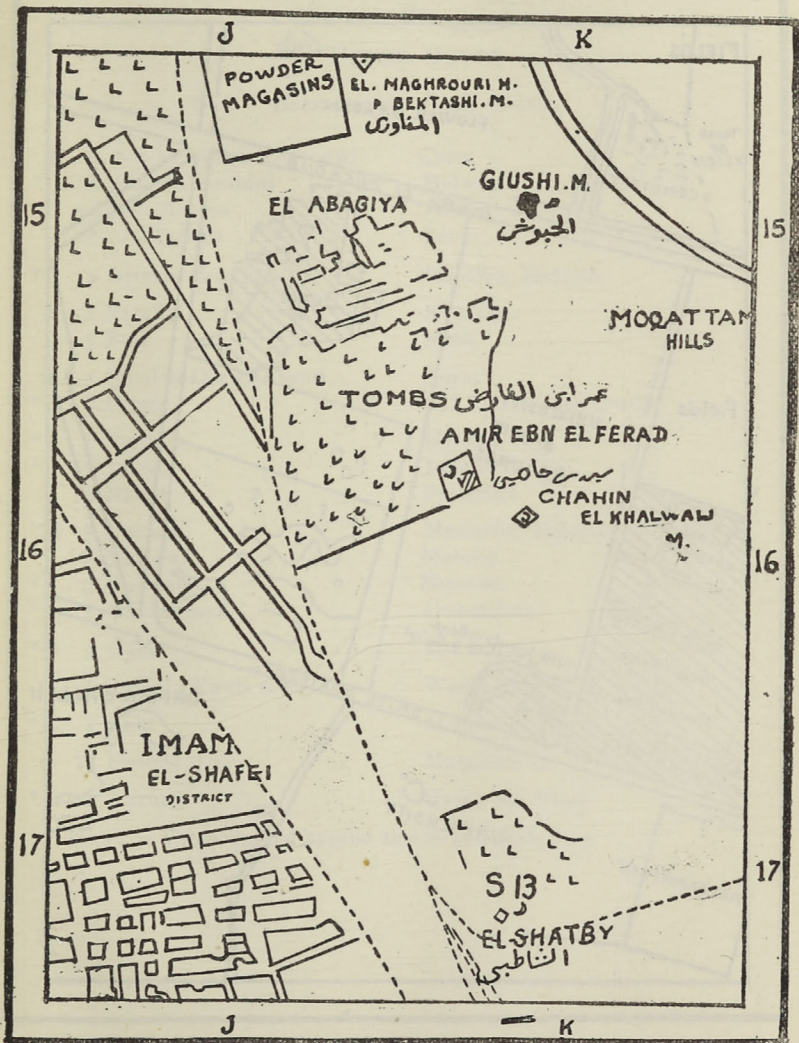
XIX

SECTIONAL MAP

SECTIONAL MAP

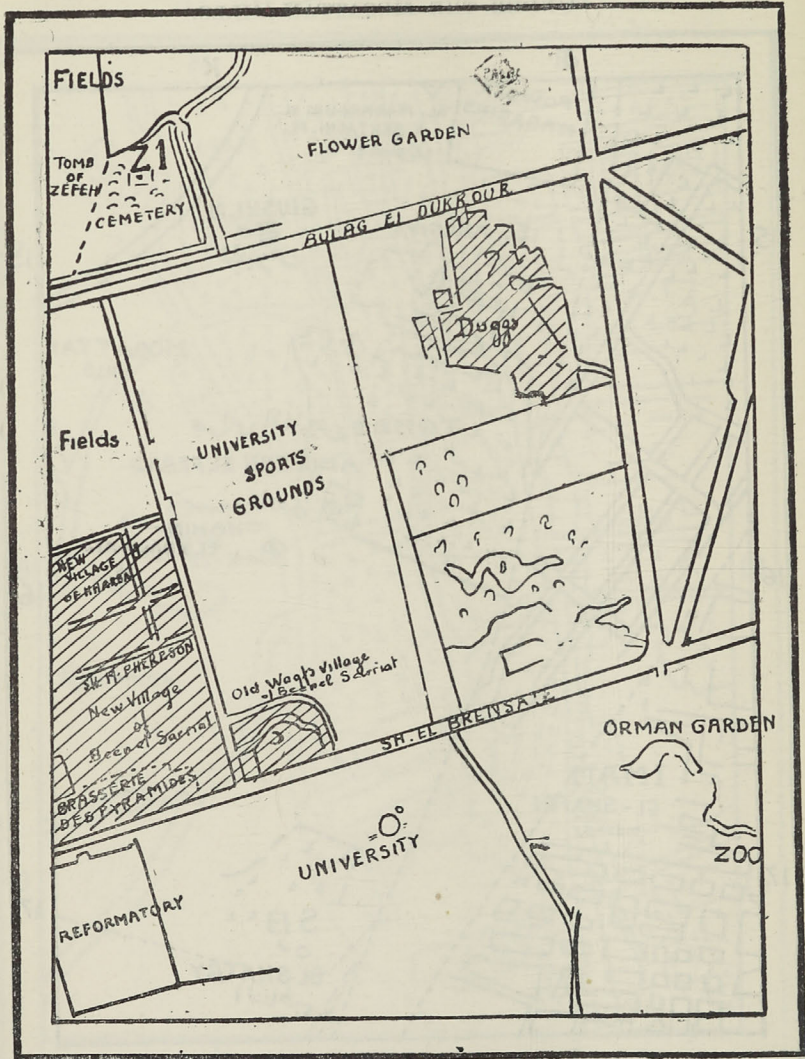
XX

UNDER THE MOQATTAM HILLS.



S 13 Shatbi

SKETCH MAP
OF
DUQQI DISTRICT.



FROM A
RAILWAY MAP
OF
UPPER EGYPT

Seen inside Book Cover.

| | | |
|----|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| A | 6 Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi | Qena |
| * | 18 Abu el-Tarabish | Helwan |
| * | 19 Abu Harera | Giza |
| | 22 Abu Qraish | Zenin |
| *B | 4 Barsum el-Aryan | Maasara, Helwan. |
| F | 2 Farghal | Abu Tig |
| | 5 Fuli | Minia |
| G | 3 Galal el-Din el-Asyuti | Asyut |
| * | 9 Girgis | Old Cairo, — St. George |
| *I | 1 Ibrahim | Mataria |
| * | 3 Imbabi | Imbaba |
| | 4 Itman | Pyramids |
| *M | 5 Mariam | Mostarod, Mataria |
| * | 8 Matrawi | Mataria |
| * | 9 Mazlum | Sharabia |
| * | 11 Muhammadi | Demardash |
| *O | 2 Oqbi | Mit Oqba |
| Q | 2 Qorani (Aweis el—) | Wasta district |
| *R | 1 Rubi | Medinat el-Fayum |
| S | 15 Shuhda | Mazghuna |
| *T | 2 Tarturi | Hatia, Mit Oqba |

Note, — Those starred appear also in the Delta map.

RAILWAY MAP
OF
DELTA AND FAYUM.

Seen inside Front Cover.

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| A | 1 Aarif | Tila, Manuf |
| | 18 Abu Tarabish | Helwan |
| | 19 Abu Harera | Giza |
| | 21 Abu Qafas | Helmia |
| B | 1 Barsum el-Aryan | Maasara, Helwan |
| D | 1 Damiana | Belqas |
| | 2 Daniel | Alexandria |
| | 5 Desuqi | Desuq |
| G | 11 Guda | Minet el-Qamh |
| H | 7 Huneidiq | Timsa, (Ismailia |
| I | 1 Ibrahim | Mataria |
| | 3 Ismail Imbabi | Imbaba |
| M | 5 Mariam | Mostarod, Mataria |
| | 8 Matrawi | Mataria |
| | 9 Mazlum | Sharabia |
| | 11 Muhammadi | Demardash |
| O | 2 Oqbi | Mit Oqba |
| R | 1 Rubi | Fayum (el-Medina) |
| S | 7 Sayed el-Bedawi | Tanta |
| S | 14 Shibl | Shohada |
| T | 1 Takruri | (Desert) between Cairo and Suez |
| | 2 Tarturi | Hatia, Mit Oqba |
| W | 1 Wafai | Alexandria |

A 1 (v. Map of Delta) سيدي عارف بالله سيد محمد الجبل

AARIF (Sidi Aarif Billahi Sayed Moh. el-Gaml)

I have no knowledge of this mouldid beyond seeing it mentioned in one of the Arabic papers in 1357, (1938) which indicates that it is of some importance. It was to be held near Tila in Manufia province, (two stations from Tanta on the main line), from Friday, 9th Gumad II to the 15th, (also Friday) = Aug. 5 to 12, 1938.

A 2 (v. Sectional Map VIII)

ABD EL BASAT (v. Sutuhieh) عبد الباسط

This microscopic mouldid seems to be always held at or very near the end of Shaaban. In 1355 it was the 29th Shaaban, the "waqfa" of Ramadan. (14-11-36).

It is about the smallest of a group of little mouldids held together in a most impressively picturesque bit of ancient Cairo, about the gates of the Eastern side of Cairo, Bab el-Futuh and Bab el-Nasr. Abd el-Basat is about equidistant from the two, and in the Sh. el-Dobabia. No. 12 'bus, between Beit el-Qadi and Abbasia, passes the end of this street.

A 3 (v. Sectional Map X)

ABD EL-DAIM عبد الدائم

I saw this very small mouldid on Friday 16 Moharem 1354 and on Friday 16 Rabia II 1356, (25.6.37).

The little modern mosque of Sh. Abd el-Daim is very near Bab el-Luq station, in Sh. Abd el-Daim, which runs parallel to Sh. el-Dawawin, and joins Sharias Qowala and Kubri Qasr el-Nil.

This is a very unpretentious mouldid, with few or no secular attractions, but rather impressive from the devotional attitude of its votaries, who with their prayers and zikrs fill the mosque and the little street.

A 4 (v. Sectional Map VIII)

ABD EL-KERIM (v. Sutuhia S 16) عبد الكريم

One of the very small moulids held at or near the end of Shaaban, in the region of the Babs Futuh and Nasr.

A 5 (v. Sutuhia, S 16)

ABD EL-QASID عبد القاصد

Another small member of the Sutuhia group, held in the district of the Bab el-Nasr and Bab el-Futuh, at or near the end of Sbaaban.

There is a tomb of a Sidi Qasid in Sh. Daïm almost opposite the mosque of Sh. Abd el Daïm and near Sh. Qasid (Bab el-Luq), at which I am told a small moulid is held. This I have not confirmed.

QENA.

A 6 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

ABD EL-RAHIM EL-QENAWI سيدي عبد الرحيم القناوي

This is one of the leading moulids of Egypt, and of provincial feasts I should imagine it to be second only to that of Sayed el-Bedawi at Tanta. Being observed at that very holy time, mid-Shaaban, it clashes always with the moulids of Mataria and Luxor, and with sundry smaller ones. For example in 1956, (1937), the beautiful little moulid of Sidi Haroun fell on the same night, but happily that has been avoided since.

Owing to the conflicting attractions of these synchronising Feasts, and its distance from Cairo, I had never witnessed Sidi el-Qenawi until the year 1957 (1938), when by the hospitality of Dr. E. E. E-P, and a companion, who were studying the ways of the Thebans in the Thebaïd, I was enabled to observe its salient features during four full days. They had forsaken for the time their Quarters, then an island, near Qoft, and engaged rooms at the Hotel Dendara, Qena, looking on the main street, with its little gardens and canal through which passed streams of galloping donkeys and camels, music, processions of women, goats, etc.

Moulid of
Sidi Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi.



Crossing the bridge to the vast enceinte enclosing a splendid group of sacred buildings, with the shrines of Abd el-Rahim and El-Qreshi, (هذا مقام عبد الله القرشي), it was depressing on the preliminary nights, to feel at once that the atmosphere even here was somewhat chilled by the kill-joy *Zeitgeist*.

The illuminations were brilliant and beautiful, but the lights fell on *marguhahs*, which did not swing, goose-nests which did not turn, and the disappointed faces of many who had come hundreds of miles perhaps to give innocent pleasure and earn a little money, and others who were only too eager to patronise them, but were driven after performing the religious observance to just loaf about, or visit one rather dull theatre, and two or three stalls. Has it suddenly become a sin to watch a shadow show or a *hawwi*, or a snake charmer, or a conjuror, *balawani* or fire-eater? And poor Qara Goz, the Punch of the East, who has been a good Moslem here and in Turkey and elsewhere for hundreds of years! Has he turned heretic in his old age?

On Friday, the 13th Shaaban, the dullness was relieved by the performance of beautiful horses and skilled picturesque riders, but only for an hour or so before sunset. Saturday, the 14th Shaaban, the great night was brilliant enough for minor entertainments to be little missed, and at last the swings and goose-nests performed their functions, though Qara Goz came not to life.

The shrines were thronged, and the groups about the numerous zikrs were immense, and perfectly orderly. Why the good people who preferred to stand should have been coerced into sitting down by the gentle application of whips was not quite obvious, but it tended to silence and attention. I was greeted several times by the "Magzub" the inspired one, whose hypnotic influence and powers were so wonderful at the mouldid of Zein el-Abdin on 17th Gumad el-Tani, 1357, (1938), as described in connection with that celebration, but here each time I saw him he was just a simple unit in a zikr, attracting little inter-

est, — illustrating the scripture “A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and amongst his own people.”

We were honoured by an invitation to a great “Tashrifa”, and excellent places, refreshments, etc, near H. E. the Mudir of Qena, who presided. There were some eloquent speeches, and quite brilliant rhetoric.

The *clou* of the whole mouldid was the great zeffa on Sunday, 15th Shaaban, (9.10.38) which commenced about 9 and went on till sunset. It appeared at about 10.30 in the sacred enclosure: the usual music, dervishes with their banners and insignia, and their “Khalifas” mounted on fine steeds, then after cameleers with great brazen drums, flute players and the rest, came the TUB, a sort of mahmal in honour of Sidi Abd el-Rahim: then a repetition of this on a minor scale, in the form of a great number of TABUTS arranged like *takhtarawanat* on splendidly caparisoned camels, each honouring some notable sheikh or *wali*. Amongst other groups the most impressive was a host of the “Shurafa”, waving green boughs and shouting paeons, most suggestive of a Palm Sunday procession at its best, when a multitude of children wave their palms and shout their Hosannas.

After a ceremony at the tent of Tashrifa, at which His Excellence was present, the zeffa and thousands of the crowd passed through the great necropolis and far into the desert, halting on the return, at the tomb of the Nebi el-Lusha, where a remarkable ceremony of rolling in the blessed sand, within the enclosure was enacted. It was highly reminiscent of the rolling women on Fridays at the tomb of the Sultan Maghrouri at the Baktashi monastery under the Moqattams.

A detail which seemed to us to somewhat discount the piety of the pilgrims, and detract from the magnificence of the passage of the zeffa through the cemetery was the deplorable condition of this resting place of the dead, — though perhaps this is unavoidable and a case of *necessity having no law* — hardly a square

Moulid of Sidi Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi.



The Túb.

Moulid of Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi.



At the tomb of the Nebi el-Lusha.

metre of the *campo santo* had escaped defilement by human deposits, and in many cases even the tombs had not been spared.

But the great shock and disappointment was the absence in the procession of the BOAT, * which has been a beautiful and distinctive feature of this mould, (shared only by Sidi Yussef of Luxor), for centuries; for thousands of years, in fact, seeing that Egyptologists hold that it was adapted by Islam, as an integral part of this zeffa from the processions of Pharaonic times. It must date back to beyond the time of Ramses III for it is pictured on his temple walls at Karnac. I know not who or what caused the suspension of this time-honoured practice, but what a responsibility to tamper with a beautiful and venerable Egyptian custom, part of the very spell of Egypt which holds the admiration, and draws the affection of the élite and cultured of the world! The Egyptians live in such a wealth of glorious antiquities, material and spiritual, that they barely realise their priceless worth, and are so open-handed and free that they give away obelisks, allow ugly modernisations, suffer old customs to lapse, without realising the irremediable loss of each sacrifice, and that a fragment of the *Glory of Egypt* has departed.

It was well on in the afternoon when the shrine was again reached, and circled seven times by the whole company which composed the zeffa, a ceremony foreshadowed all the day by galloping crowds of cameleers, donkey riders and horsemen, a most attractive and exhilarating spectacle. Then it moved on through the town, in the direction of the Mudiria, the good camel which bore the TUB showing practical disapproval of any deviation from the traditional route by summarily *baraking*: and only consenting to rise when adjured by a chorus of cries,—

“By the Prophet, rise!” واللهي قم

* Note, — The Boat though not used was to be seen. v. Photo. It is very similar to a Cantonese “Slipper Junk”, as given in the Illustrated London News of Nov. 5.1938, p. 836.

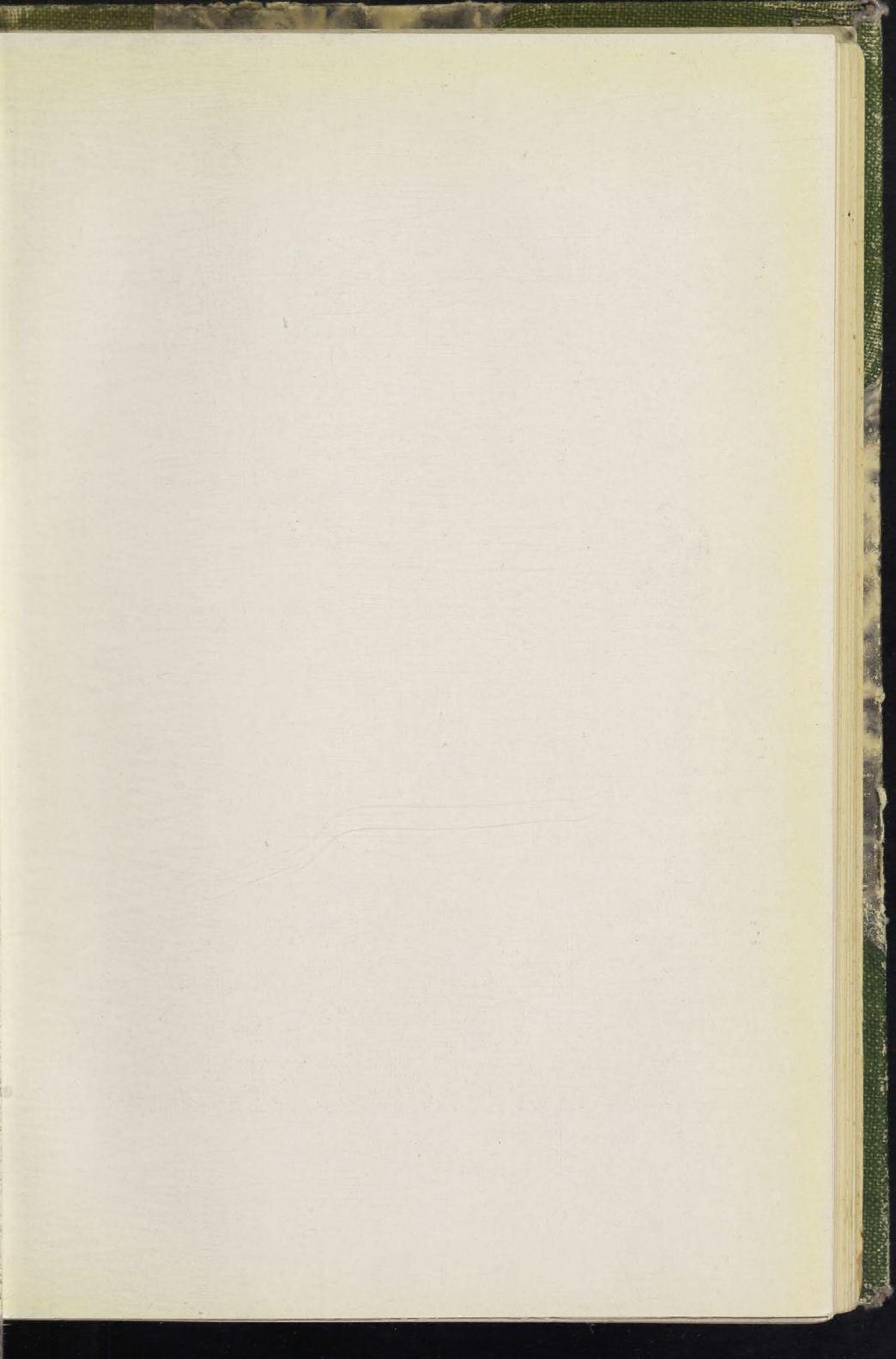
At last at sunset, arriving at the Mudiria, the great ceremony ended by the symbolic scattering of money amongst the crowd, and great was the eagerness to acquire one of the glittering millièmes and the "baraka" attached to it. (Little boxes of these blessed millièmes were also given to some of the pious notables who took part, doubtless in order that the baraka (blessing) might be extended to the people of their respective villages).

Qena is a treasure house of folklore and legend, much of which centres about pilgrims and the pilgrimages, for Qena is at the Nile end of the old pilgrim road across the desert to the port of Qoseir, and naturally Sidi Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi is the hero of many of these tales. One of these, of which I heard sundry versions when on the spot has just been retold to me by my gardener, who himself is a "Qenawi", and put baldly into English is as follows. —

Sidi Abd el-Rahim was not Qenawi by birth, but rather because he sanctified Qena by dying there. When very old and feeble he came from his home somewhere remote in the South, and leaving the Nile at Qena he was well on his way to Qoseir, when his naqa, ناقه camel, foundered and died. *If* he had companions, they went on, leaving him to follow painfully on foot. When his poor feet were worn to the bone he proceeded on all fours, till his hands were in an equally bad way. Rolling, crawling on his belly took him a little nearer Qoseir, and therefore his goal of Mecca, and then he tried to move forward by sitting on the sand and jerking himself along, but that only increased the abraded surface.

At length lying helplessly down, he called on the breeze, — "Ya Saad, go tell the Nebi, *صلى الله عليه وسلم*, * that I have done my best, but can go no farther", and the breeze returned and

* Note, — "Prayer and blessing be on the Prophet"; an ejaculation customary when the Prophet is mentioned.



Qoseir.
Mid-Shaaban Celebrations.



Sword Dancing.



Circling the Tombs.

whispered, "The Nebi takes the will for the deed and forbids you attempting more, but to return."

It was a wonderful thing to get a message from the Prophet though a disappointing one, for how was he to return. He did at length however get most painfully back as far as Qena, but only to die. On his death bed the Nebi himself came and cheered him, and said,— "You made all the efforts that mortal could, almost more, to come to me but could not, so I, the Prophet, have come to you, and bless you".

If tales of a different and more material stamp are to be believed, the Qena-Qoseir district is a treasure house in quite a different way. There are more than traces of the mines the Romans worked for silver and gems, where now precious deposits of phosphates bring wealth to an Italian Concession and to a Scotch firm, Messrs. Crookson and Son, and I daresay others, and everywhere, (at Qoseir, Safaga, Qena, etc) one hears tales of recent finds of precious stones. I know more than one wealthy family at Qena, who assure one, *sub rosa*, that their fortune is founded on emeralds the grandfather or some near ancestor lighted upon.

But to return to what is nearer the subject of this book, I recommend readers who desire an unique holiday without quitting Egypt, to voyage down the Red Sea, and having stayed long enough at Qoseir to enjoy its fascinations, to ride a camel to Qena, leisurely with an intelligent guide. If by happy chance they be in Qoseir at mid-Shaaban, as I was, they will see strange rites amongst the many tombs raised to those who died here on the way back from Mecca:— Arabs on brilliantly harnessed and accoutred camels, with *takhtarawanat*, (palanquins) on their backs circling the most holy tombs, in the neighbourhood of the old castle. There is much in this suggestive of a mouldid, but from what I understood locally, the celebration was too general to be classed as such, anyway to justify me in attributing it to one particular saint.

Though the writer has paid many visits to the Theban region of Egypt, finding new beauties and interests every time during nearly forty years' residence, he will look back on this last experience of the mouldid as something quite unique, and recommends both Cairenes and visitors to do the same. The Nile, the blending of "the desert and the sown", the glorious monuments even in beautiful but obscure villages like El-Awadat, العويضات, the hearty kindness and hospitality of rich and poor, the associations of such places in the immediate neighbourhood as Qoft, which gave its name to the country and to a great and ancient cult; and in addition this great mouldid, and this year a flood forming a sea almost from the Libyan to the Arabian hills, all unite to produce a picture* not easily matched. It is only marred by the fear that the trimming down of this splendid mouldid will go on, till the clipping of the wings of this bright bird of history and tradition will take away all its beauty, but let us hope it will quickly rise again like the phoenix, and that without first being reduced to ashes.

A 7 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

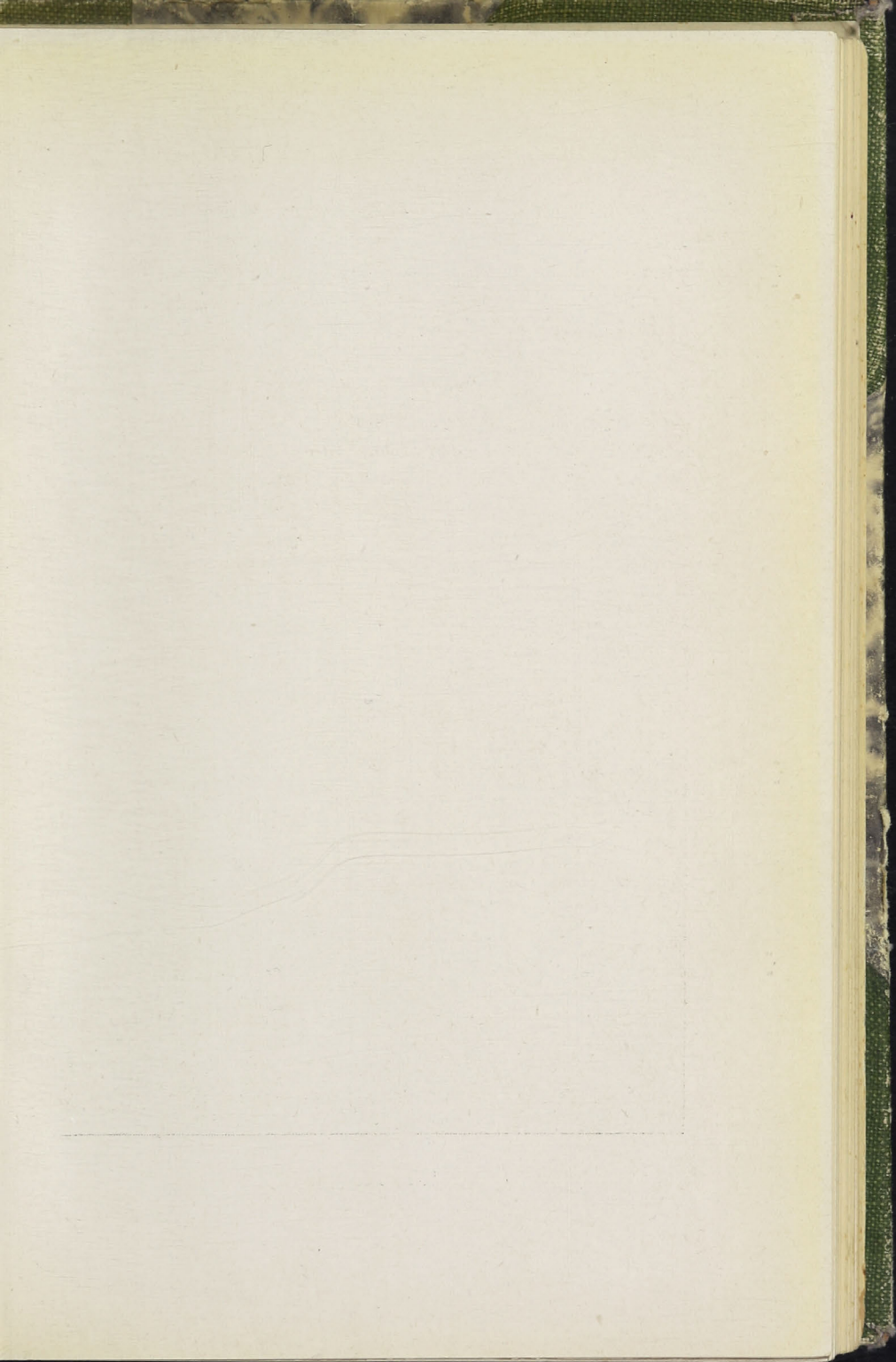
ABD EL-WAHID عبد الواحد

The date on the one occasion on which I witnessed this mouldid was Sunday, 25 Ragab 1355, (11.10.36).

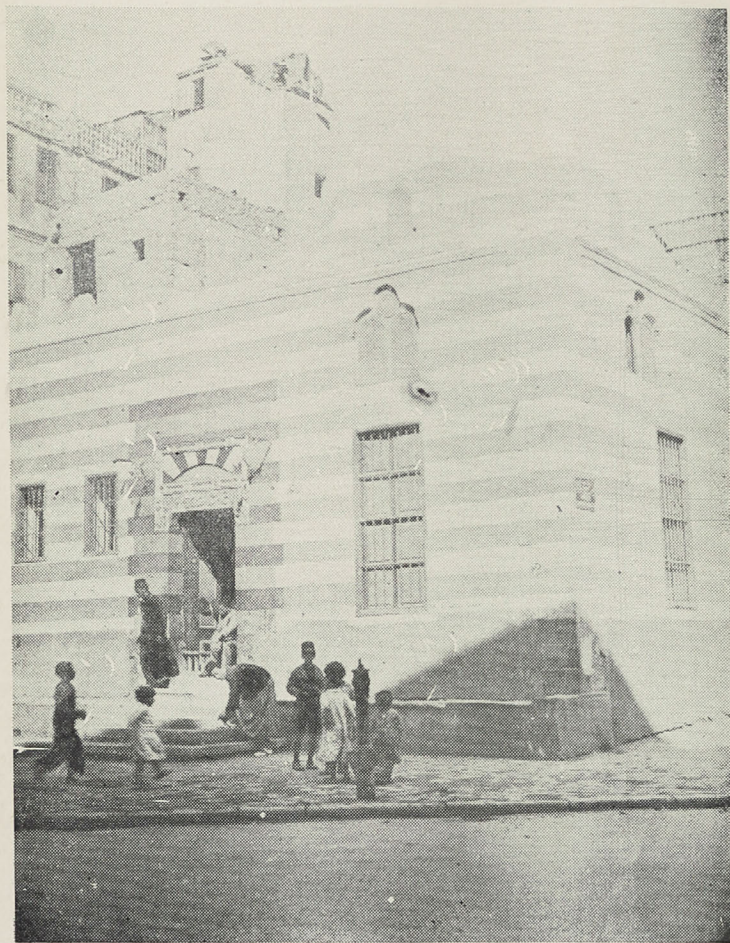
The Maqan is in a little garden on the W. side of Sh. Abd el-Gawad, the big Bulaq street commencing in front of the

* Note, — Nile flood;—

Naturally the time of the flood does not necessarily coincide with that of the mouldid, whose date, mid-Shaaban, recedes annually eleven days in the solar year. On the occasion described, the 15th Shaaban being the 9th October, about a maximum of land was under water. Mr. Evans-Pritchard's quarters at Qoft were so isolated that a little raft of earthen pots bound together with osiers called a ramüs (رموس) was in constant requisition for going and coming. This was pushed by one or two naked lads across a considerable stretch of water, seldom deep enough to necessitate swimming. Qoft or Qobt is the ancient Coptus, a city most famous in Egyptian history.



Moulid
of
Sheikh Abdulla.



The Mosque.

mosque of Abu el-Ela, not far from where it is crossed by the Darb el-Nasr. Autobus no. 15 passes it. It bears the super-
scription,— هذا مقام سيدي عبد الواحد

This is a very small mouldid hardly extending beyond the garden and a big café, in a rather rough and uninteresting neighbourhood. The people flocking about were not of the usual admirable type, but consisted mainly of "turpissimi pueri", who showed undue interest in me and some English and Dutch friends whom I had brought.

A 8 (v. Sectional Map X.)

ABDULLA عبد الله

On each of five occasions when I have witnessed this mouldid, it has been on a Friday, but the date has varied between 24 Ragab in 1353 to 21 Shaaban in 1355 (6.11.1936).

The mosque of Sheikh Abdulla is very accessible not far from Bab el-Luk station, off the Dawawin, — trams 4, 12, and 7 and several buses. It is on the N. side of Sharia * Sh. Rihan.

A small mouldid, but up to 1352 (1933) very bright — the mosque well filled, and a good zeffa; with a few stalls and a lot of people in the open space adjoining: and at a suitable distance Qara Goz, Fire Eaters, etc. A pleasant feature was the singing in the little side streets, mostly arranged by private parties, often accompanied by simple music.

What gave rise to the savage attack in 1352, (1933) when the space by the mosque was cleared most summarily, even of women sitting under its walls? Certainly it was not to keep the way open for traffic, for there is none through this sort of court yard. It survived rough treatment in 1353, (1934) but was nearly crushed out of existence in 1355, (1936) so that I did not

* Note, — Kemp, in his "Egyptian Illustration" gives a handsome wood-cut of the Tomb of Sh. Rihan, who doubtless gave his name to the street. I can find no trace of the tomb nor record of the Sheikh: both seem to have passed into the Ewigkeit in recent times.

go in 1356, (1937) but am told it appeared a vanishing quantity. In 1355 however (and I daresay other years), there was a small zeffa between 10 and 11 in the evening, consisting of about half a dozen sections of the Tariqa Hamadia Shazlia الطريقة الحامدية الشاذلية. One singing party also had survived, and proved very popular well away behind the mosque; but this also seemed to have disappeared in 1357, (1938), and about all I saw at the door of a nearly empty mosque was a man with a handcart and a disgruntled look, hoping to sell sweet potatoes.

A 9 (v. Sectional Map XVII.)

ABDULLA EL-HAGR سيدي الشيخ عبد الله الحاجر

This very small one-day mouldid was held in the year 1357 (1938) on 29th Shaaban, the eve of Ramadan, about the Tabut of Sheikh Abdulla which is outside his mosque. The superscription

«هذا مقام سيدي الشيخ عبد الله من نسل الحسين»

indicates that this saint is Huseini (of the line of the Imam Husein.)

Being close to Saida Ayesha, trams 13 and 23 pass it. It seems to be mainly a children's mouldid, and being in a very attractive quarter, is a pretty sight.

The zeffa promised for the afternoon, as I was assured had been the case in previous years, did not appear.

This year 1359 A. H. I found the mouldid in action, on the same date as in 1357, the eve of Ramadan, Wednesday 2. 10. 40. Its characteristics were unchanged, that of being a children's mouldid being decidedly emphasised.

A 10 (v. Sectional Map XVII.)

ABDULLA KHAFIR EL-DARB عبد الله خفير الدرب

On each of the two occasions on which I witnessed this picturesque little mouldid, the date was 27 Shaaban, (the latter date being 27 Shaaban 1354 (26.11.35).)

The Maqam of the Sheikh is in a weird, rather fascinating spot, behind the Prison behind Manshiah Moh. Ali, and near the Tombs of the Mamelukes; but though one feels rather out of the world there, it is a bare minute from the tram track leading to Imam el-Shafei, Tram No. 13.

It is a very small mouldid, in one bright street, in which the Maqam is situated. There is a very eager crowd, mostly of children, so that it takes the local sheikhs all their time to prevent the holy gate being crashed. Over this is the inscription

هذا مقام سيد عبد الله خفير الدرب

The only counter attractions seemed to be a small amusement show and a big café.

A 11

ABU AMERA سيدي ابو عميرة

This elusive little mouldid, near Khardasa, requires considerable enterprise. This I am told is rewarded by its general picturesqueness, and the beauty of its position *between the desert and the sown*.

Having been let down more than once by wrong dates, I succeeded at last in nearly reaching it by motor bus from the English Bridge, on Thursday, 11th Gumad II. 1353, (1934), but found myself separated from it by flooded land. I might have obtained a felucca, on the chance of finding a donkey at the mouldid, to take me to Mena House, or possibly to Giza, but preferred to return as I came by the bus which brought me, as it was the last. It was then about 10 o'clock.

I think it would be better approached by donkey or camel from the Pyramids: but now that the basin system of irrigation is abolished it should be approachable by bicycle or even by car via Bulaq Dakrur, Zenin and Saft.

A 12

ABU ATATA شيخ ابو اتاته

I cannot give an exact date for this mouldid, as on the two

occasions on which I have been present and noted it, the chief night was 17 Rabia I, 1348, and 6 Gumad I, 1353, (16.8.34) respectively.

The tomb of Sidi Abu Atata is in a village called El-Ezba el-Gharbia, العزبة الغربية near the Giza Reformatory, but on the other side of the level crossing over the railway, and of the canal, about half a mile to the south.

It is best approached from Cairo by taking tram no. 14 or 15, or bus no. 6, via Zamalik to the Giza Mudiria, turning at right angles up Sharia Brensate, crossing the line at the end, turning left and following the canal. The road admits of a car.

It is a good typical country mouldid, with an earnest crowd about the tomb, and a merry scene in a field near by, with Qara Goz and the usual shows, swings, &c., but I am told that it has lost much of its former vogue recently, and this year 1359 (1940) it appears not to have been held at all.

A 13 (v. Sectional Map XIII.)

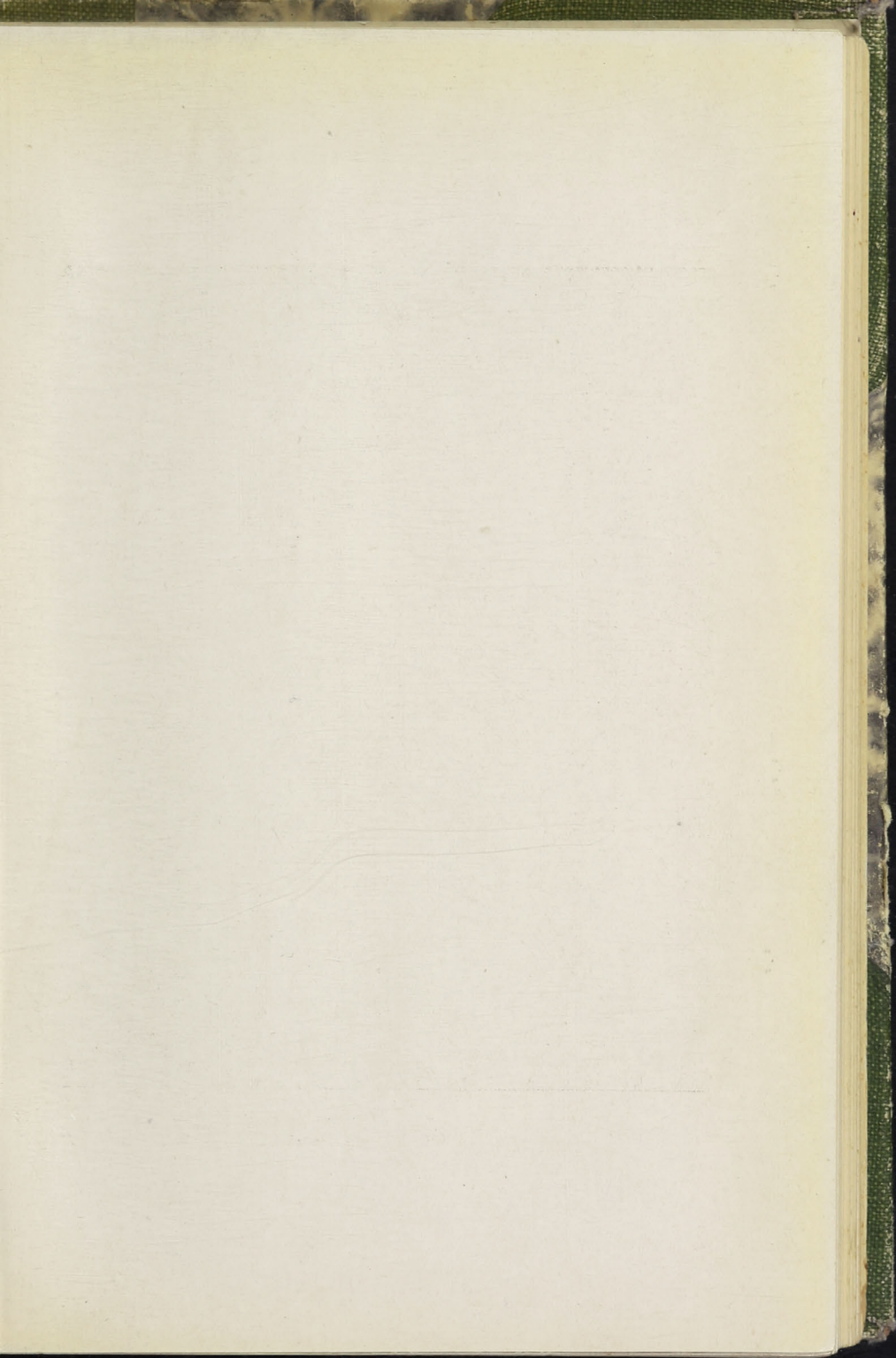
ABU AZAIM, (Sidi Muhammad Madi Abu el-Azaim).

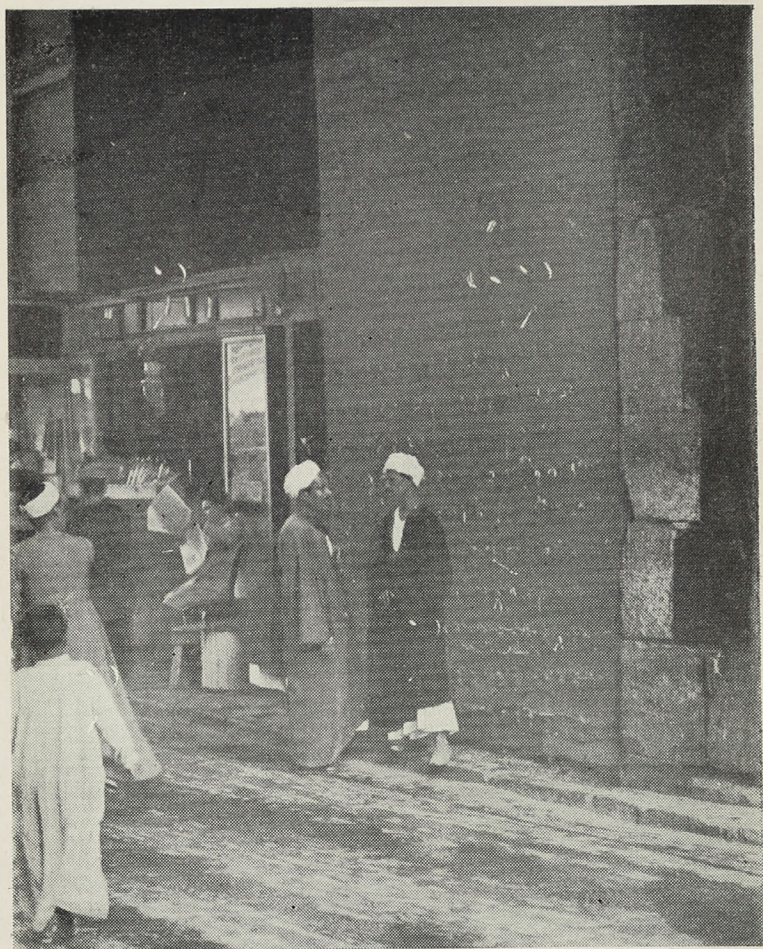
سيدي محمد ماضي ابو العزائم

Sidi Moh. Abu el-Azaim is probably the most recent local saint to be "raised to the altars" of Islam, having died as recently as 1936 A. D. (1355) A. H., about seven centuries later than, for example, Sayed el-Bedawi.

It is reassuring and stimulating to find that the modern world can still produce a saint, and recognise his sanctity, even to its *public* recognition by Mouldid, Zikr, and Zeffa, and the other venerable dervish ceremonies. The writer deems himself very fortunate in having made the acquaintance of the little sect of the Azmia. and its present venerable head and khalif, the son of Sidi Madi Abu el-Azaim, — and that through the curious accident of a little vagary of the moon, which upset the calendar.

I was returning from the Citadel Mosque on Sunday evening,





Bab El-Zuwela.

10th September 1939, the 26th Ragab 1358 according to the official calendar, and others which I have seen, and therefore the *Leilet el-Isra*, or *Leilet el-Maarag*, when the miraculous ride of the Prophet to Jerusalem and Paradise is celebrated — (for it had been ruled by the high authorities that the moon contradicted the calendar and that the following night was the true Night of the "Ascension"; and minarets which had been lit up were put out, and the ceremony at Muhammad Ali mosque postponed to the Monday evening) — and I was on my way to the mouldid of Tashtoushi to see if that had suffered the same postponement, when I noticed a great confluence under the Bab el-Zuwela, with innumerable lamps and much chanting.

I think everyone who knows Cairo is acquainted with this wonderful city gate, hung with votive offerings of hair, teeth, scraps of clothing, etc., behind which the holy *Wali* is thought by some to be concealed. I thought at first that the ceremony was exclusively in honour of the *Wali* of the Gate, but noticed that a large beirak (banner) was inscribed.

الطريقة العزمية بالديار المصرية الخ

"The Egyptian Order of the AZMIYA", etc.,—

a sect quite new to me, and on asking the bearer of the beirak, he told me that this was the mouldid of Sidi Moh. Madi Abu el-Azaim, and the *zeffa* had come from Sidna Hussein and was on its way to the *Tabut* (shrine) of the dead saint. Going there too, I was most hospitably entertained by the living Head of the order, the Sheikh Ahmad Madi Abu el-Azaim, Sheikh of the Order of the Azmiya of the Valley of the Nile,

شيخ السادة العزمية . بوادي النيل

He told me that this was only the ante-penultimate night, and invited me to the remaining celebrations, especially that of the final night, Tuesday, 28 Ragab, 1358 (12-9-39). The *tabut* is in his palace in Haret el-Fariq, between Sultan Hanafi and the Khalig — "Palace of the Azmiya Family", «بسمراي آل العزائم»

Picking up the zeffa on Tuesday evening about 9.30 I was interested and impressed by the rites which preceded the zikrs, the reading of an address by "The Sheikh", punctuated by exclamations from the company of "God is Great",

Allahu Akbar الله أكبر

and in praise of the dead sheikh, and finally of "Long live the Khalifa, the Sheikh Ahmad Abu el-Azaim".

يحيى الخليفة الشيخ احمد ابو العزائم

I should like to know what are the initial stages in the recognition of a Saint, and what rites go to the "making of a *Wali*." The Vatican examines a "cause" usually over a period of many years, though occasionally, as in the case of Teresa, "The Little Flower", — whose cult at her basilica at Shubra is shared by Moslems and Jews as well as by Catholic and Orthodox Christians — a few months proves sufficient. A "Devil's Advocate" is appointed to criticise the postulant's claims, and advance anything that should preclude canonisation. Miracles must be proved, and in the *gradus ad altare* a candidate is "Venerable" and "Blessed", before he is styled "Saint". I have little doubt that the process is somewhat parallel in Islam, and crave for "mehr licht".

* * *

Since penning the above lines on this *Latter-day Saint*, the further light I desired has been supplied by the kindness and erudition of Dr. Evans-Pritchard, the Sociologist. This information dissipates my assumption that Islamic sainthood may result from hierarchical investment, for in this case at least it is clearly established by popular suffrage, more or less within the dervish orbit, for Sheikh Muhammad Madi began as an initiate of the Sect of the Shazlia, making the "Azmiya" an offshoot from that great *Tariqa*.

Sheikh "Abu Azaim" as he came to be known was born in

1870 at Desouq but settled in the village of Mutaharia in Minia Province, Upper Egypt, which became the headquarters of his sect *the Azmiya*.

He felt that he had the mission of a religious reformer, and his enthusiasm and on the whole mild and laudable Shazliyan tenets attracted many, especially minor officials in Egypt and the Sudan, during twenty years' service under the Egyptian Ministry of Education and the Education Department of the Sudan Government: but in 1915 his views and actions became so tendentious that he was discharged from the post he then held at Gordon College. His nightly zikrs, secret meetings, and strenuous sermons brought him numerous disciples, but created mistrust in official quarters, and he was sent back from the Sudan to Egypt.

There he voiced ideas which were on the one hand almost the stern tenets of the Wahabites, mixed with polemics against other sects than his own, and political extravagances; and on the other liberal, even to alleged laxity, especially in the treatment of women. He is credited with having had a magnetic attraction for the other sex, and accused by some of having acquired much of his considerable wealth by traffic in hegabat (charms), and such like, not excluding the *poculum amoris*. Some of his money went in the purchase of two printing presses, and at that time his political activities included articles to "El-Akhbar". This side of his "mission" was most marked at the time of the entry of Turkey into the war.

His enthusiasm for a parliamentary career was damped by the antagonism of students who actually stoned him on one occasion at least.

Later, except for occasional violent political articles, he reverted to the more saintly character of his earlier years, and was well known in Egypt as *fiqi* and a preacher until he died in 1937 (1358) amongst many devoted disciples and adherents.

His vogue in the Sudan was at one time remarkable, but after reaching its zenith in the early twenties it has waned very considerably there.

On the other hand he seems to be held in great and increasing esteem in Egypt, especially in the Cairo district.

* * *

A 14

ABU BADIR الشيخ ابو بدير

This extremely small mouldid is one of many held at mid-Shaaban; or such was the case on the only date I have seen it, 14 Shaaban 1352 (1933).

The tomb of the Sheikh is in an *Atfa* of his name, off the Bab el-Shaaria. The entrance to the *atfa* is passed by bus No. 12 from the Beit el-Qadi.

A 15

ABU DAIF الشيخ ابو ضيف

Reported as one of the Imam el-Shafei group, held in Shaaban, but not so far located by me.

A 16 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

ABU el-ELA السلطان ابو العلاء

I enjoyed the fine mouldid of Sultan Abu el-Ela repeatedly, early in this century, well before the war of 1914-18. It was very big and popular, and extended not only all around and about the mosque, but far into the little Bulaq lanes on the other side of the main street. There was a sober brilliance about it: not many secular shows but many singing sheikhs in the shops and houses, and people were allowed to collect and listen and enjoy in peace, not irritated and hustled, and even beaten, as of recent years and goaded to a sort of perpetual motion.

Then came tragedy! A part of the mosque collapsed with tragic results. It was taken deeply to heart: not so much the loss of life and the expense of repairs, but the shock that so

Moulid
of
Abu el-Ela.



The Mosque.



Mosque of Abu el-Ela,

holy a place should fall down. "Why did not Sultan Abu el-Ela intervene?" asked some pious simple souls. It was left to another to heal broken spirits, for the young King Farouk, soon after his accession made publicly his Friday prayer in the now restored mosque and, as it were, took away its reproach, and set it gloriously up again. I have seldom seen in Cairo so large and enthusiastic a crowd as that which assembled in Bulaq on that propitious day; nor people more joyous than some of the sheikhs who frequented the mosque. One remarked,—“We have walked in darkness these twenty years, and now Farouk has brought light: he must be our Khalif as well as our King!”

This happy event was followed by the joyous renewal of the mould on a generous scale, and immensely popular it was. The apodosis was on Thursday, 15th Rabia II, 1356, (24-6-37), and it was repeated on Thursday, 10th Rabia II, 1357, (9-6-38), and Thursday, 13th Rabia II, 1358, (2-6-39).

This famous mosque is most easily found even by strangers to Cairo. It is about a hundred yards to the east of Bulaq Bridge, in Sh. Foad el-Awal, and is passed by trams 13, 14, 15 and 33, and autobuses 6 and 15. Tram 7 passes through the amusement park.

This collection of booths, tent theatre, "Piste à la Morte" of Billy Williams, and innumerable stalls, is discreetly distant from the mosque where prayers, zikrs, and zeffas are undisturbed, and is beautifully and picturesquely placed on the bank of the Nile: and a Ringa and a Qara Goz and some other attractions exist in a small side street.

The popularity of the Sultan Abu el-Ela is largely due to his being a local saint. Abd el-Wahab el Sharani in *El-Tabaqat el Kubra* refers to the head of the sainted Abu el-Ela being enshrined in Cairo, at Bulaq near the Nile. Natives of the spot assure me that that is so, but that his "sir" keeps watch in the Nile, much as the spirit of another Weli near Qoft, (Sidi Masaud according to some, Sidi Qenawi to others, or, as claimed at Minia,

their patron saint Sidi Fuli), prevents any crocodile passing north. If it runs the spiritual blockade it is forced to turn belly upwards, becoming an easy prey. I have been asked why steamers blow their syrens in passing near Bulaq Bridge. I have little doubt that it is in honour of Abu el-Ela, though possibly the whole group of Maqams in the vicinity of his mosque are considered also. These include Sidi Muafaq who has his own mouldid, as has Ahmadein, Hilal who has, or had his zeffa and has a very beautiful little tomb, and Sheikh Mustafa, and others.

I am told by the Sheikh Abu el-Ela Bedawi of Aguza, that the reason why his mosque was allowed to fall into such a crumbling condition, was a stern injunction against building or repairing laid by the *Sultan* himself. This is not an unique instance of such a veto: the Sultan Hanafi had the same fear for his beautiful mosque if tampered with, and put such a vigorous embargo on repairing, that until recently a part of the structure has been almost hidden by beams and wooden buttresses.

Floreas, Abu el-Ela! May nothing but blessing rest in the future on your head, and your mosque, and your Nile, and your mouldid.

In the war year 1359 (1940), Abu el-Ela presented such an unusual aspect, that a special note is necessary.

The mouldid was held on its day of predilection, Thursday, and at the normal date, 16 Rabia II (23-5-40), and its zikrs and religious side were nearly normal, except that I observed no procession of sufficient amplitude and solemnity to be regarded as a proper zeffa.

Italy had not then declared war, but there was a practice black-out whilst the mouldid was developing, and throughout there was no trace of amusement park in its usually charming site by the Nile and Bulaq Bridge, probably owing to the special precautions and regulations concerning bridges. But an enclosure on the S. side of Sharia Foad el-Awal, two or three

hundred metres E. of the mosque,* contained swings, some gaming and other tables and a considerable theatre. This ran for some weeks. I noticed that the dwarf who has been frequently referred to in these pages had found his duplicate, quite a promising *sosie*.

On the great night or rather afternoon there were very amusing attractions behind the mosque and in the region of Sheikh Muafaq, but these were scattered at sunset. There remained many singing groups and large zikrs, and perhaps the most striking thing to a visitor, was the beautiful view of the interior from the immense doors at the back of the mosque, which had been thrown wide open. The great groups of worshippers, and the fine detail of the architecture and the decorations were colourful and impressive to a degree.

The most popular object by the tomb of Sheikh Muafaq was quite new to me, and I think to moulids. It consisted of a large canvas globe blown up like an immense football, revolving slowly about a vertical axis, (connecting its north and south poles) and painted in sections with the name of some country on each. Owing to the fading light, to the crowd, and to the fact that at this moment it was raided by the police, I only made out Germany, Italy and America. Stakes were laid on a board painted in corresponding colours.

BENI MAZAR

A 17 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

ABU el-LEIL أبو الليل

This is a Beni Mazar moulid, held in 1357 in Gumad I and said to be important, at least locally, but any definite information about it is lacking to me.

* Note. — This small amusement park continued to function after the moulid.

HELWAN

A 18 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

ABU el-TARABISH ابو الطرايش

Though never there myself, English friends and others who were, on Friday 10th Zu'el-HIGGA 1355 (1936), told me that it was a big and interesting mouldid, in a picturesque desert setting.

It is just outside Helwan : an easy walk or donkey ride.

A 19 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

ABU HARERA سيدي ابو هريرة

I have come across a letter written several years ago to one of our leading anthropologists, covering so much of the ordinary mouldid ground, on the secular side, that I append it verbatim. As the letter is to illustrate a specific cult of very ancient origin, it naturally does not emphasise the religious side. This, however, is by no means neglected, witness the meetings of the *turuq*, the *zikrs*, readings in the mosques, pilgrimages to the tomb, &c., and the dervish element rather dissociates itself from the kaleidoscopic charivaria which included the "royal" car, and sundry others of lads dressed up as girls, in its elements. The elimination of the more carnal parts has not, however, heightened the spiritual side, if one might judge from the dingy, dismal condition into which I found the tomb to have fallen when visited subsequent to the date of the appended letter, and the diminished number of pilgrims. It told of poverty and the need of some wealthy benefactors.

A visit at dawn on the great day of the mouldid, which as I have pointed out, is also the most characteristically Egyptian feast of the year, "Sham el-Nesim", reveals many people rising from sleep in the fields to greet the rising sun. That this is a remnant of the worship of Ra is evidenced by the fact that at the same moment, a host which has passed the night in the fields and roads about the obelisk at Mataria is rising for the same purpose : this on the very site of the Temple of Ra, and of the rising of the Phoenix.

In spite of the great veneration in which Abu Harera is held, especially at Giza, I have learnt nothing consistent or reliable about him by local enquiry.

If, as I suppose, he is the Abu Harera chronicled by the Sheikh Abd el-Wahab el Shaarani, (v. Vol. I, p 22 of his "el-Tabaqat el-Kubra") he dates back to the first century of the Hegira, as he is recorded to have died at Medina at the age of 78 in the Khalifat of Moawiya, and, as we know, Moawiya opposed the Imam Ali, and usurped the Khalifat from the Imam Hasan, grandson of the Prophet, and was responsible for the great revolt in Egypt.

It seems to be one of the many cases of the body of an associate or descendant of the Prophet's immediate family being brought to Egypt by the Fatimites, — doubtless with a view to ingratiating the Egyptians in spite of their dislike for the Fatimite *heresies*.

Abu Harera's humble simple character, his love of poverty and of God's creatures, human or otherwise, and his excessive devotion remind one somewhat of S. Francis of Assisi. He was passionately fond of a little cat, loved to serve anyone, rich or poor, carrying bundles of faggots on his head, or performing any menial act. He is said to have commenced his day by uttering twelve* thousand praises to God, and to have so disliked abating his thanks to the Creator that he divided the normal time of sleep into three periods, during one of which his wife was responsible for this observance, his black woman slave, "garia" for another, and he himself for the third.

It is strange that he had a marked dread of death, and wept bitterly towards the end, saying "How can I know whether I shall wake in heaven or in hell?"

* Note,— كان رضى الله عنه يسبح كل يوم اثني عشرة الف تسبيحة

THE MOULID OF SHEIKH ABU HARERA, (GIZA).

The Professor of Sociology,
Egyptian University.

Dear Professor,

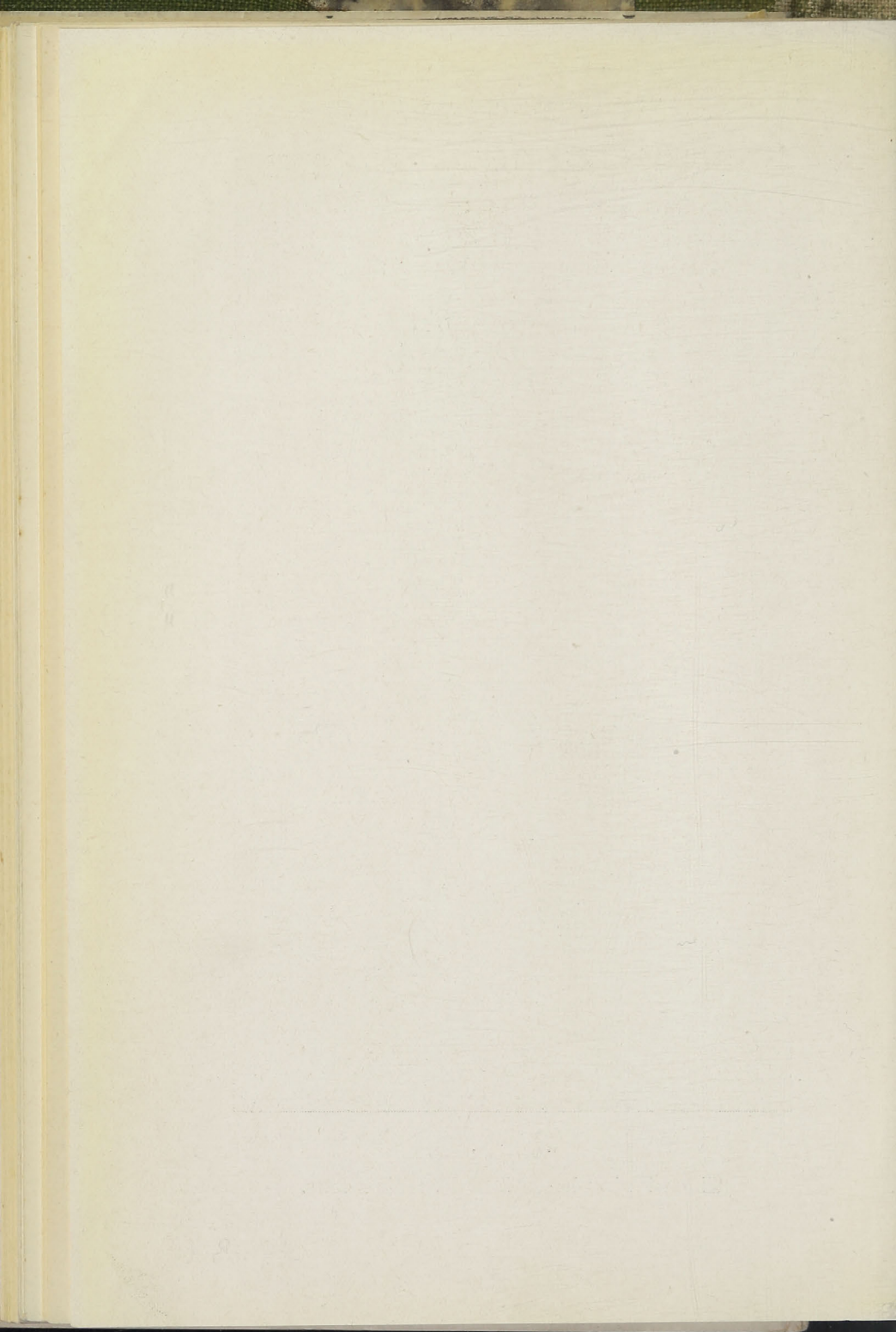
When the other day we were discussing the lamentable lapse of old Egyptian festivals, and picturesque ceremonies, and even the threatened suppression of the Moulids, under present vandalistic and kill-joy influences, you were struck by my mention of certain phallic elements in the Giza *Zeffa* of a quarter of a century ago. I did not realise that these had an anthropological and scientific value, but as you assure me that such is the case, I will put on record from memory what I witnessed with another Englishman, (whom you know and who will confirm this), at the Moulid of Sheikh Abu Harera in or about the year 1908.

The *Zawia* or tomb of the Sheikh is as you are aware close to the Giza Market, a vast space enlarged on this occasion to enable primitive horse races to be run. These, which I presume were the opening ceremony (apart of course from Zikrs and other Moslem observances), were about to start when I arrived at about 10 a.m. and being mounted on a very swift arab I was rash enough to take part. Competitors were allowed to use a stick to beat their opponents' horses, or to baulk the riders, exactly as in the *Palio* raced at Siena on the Feast of the Assumption. After a little preliminary play to get used to these peculiar conditions, we raced and I won amidst vociferous and generous applause, partly because "El-Buraq" was better fed than the other horses, and had had good practice at the Gezira Sporting Club, but more I think through the mild use they made of their sticks where I was concerned. My triumph was short-lived, for I was entirely outclassed in the management of my mount at the finish, they pulling up almost in a length and I committing some havoc in the crowd before I could stop. Riders and onlookers took this with the same chivalrous good

MOULID of ABU HARERA



"Buraq"
The winning horse in a Bedouin event.



temper. Even the people whom I fear I hurt, refused any compensation; but a picturesque vendor of *Qara Sus* or *Erg Sus*, a drink made mainly of sarsaparilla, I fancy, was on the spot and I bought up his stock for the liquid delectation of *quicumque vult*. As I rode away I heard his cry, سبيل الله يا عطشانين - Sibil Allah ya Atshaneen! (Fountain of the Lord, Oh ye thirsty ones), and saw him thoroughly well mobbed.

There was a great crowd about the tomb, with acrobats, conjurors, dancing girls and the rest; and the streets were so thronged that my progress was most difficult, and I had to take a short cut through the harlots' quarter, almost deserted at that early hour, and out of the route of the zeffa. At the beginning of the Suq, the main street of the little town, further advance was impossible, and I was immobilised for quite an hour watching the pageant pass, and there I spotted W., another Englishman in the same condition. After the usual "Turuq" with their banners, music, sashes, and insignia, came endless carts bearing groups dressed up to represent some guild or some fancy, and others drawn by one horse or donkey and bearing thirty or more children and women in gala attire, then I noticed approaching a large cart with a raised platform at the front. At the centre of this was a throne, and before it was standing a very handsome lad of fourteen or fifteen, perfectly naked except for a little crown, and an open bolero of crimson stuff embroidered in gold, and bearing little epaulettes, through which almost invisible cords passed. Brightly coloured circles had been painted round his navel and nipples. A "Wazir" in gorgeous robes adopted from syces' costumes stood on each side of the monarch, one holding a gilt chamber pot and the other a basin, which with low obeissance they presented to him at intervals. Musicians beat tars, toblas, and darabukas on a somewhat lower platform behind. But the amazing thing was that the little king's virile organ was dancing to the music in seeming excitement, turning to the right and left, dipping down, and then flying up and down as though actuated by a spring. The royal

car paused for a minute or more a few yards from where I was, and I could detect a fine cord attached to the anterior portion of this marionette of flesh and blood, passing under one of the epaulettes and descending from behind to the lower part of the cart, where obviously a string-puller was concealed.

I did not witness any of the subsequent proceedings, but as far as I am aware, they were such as are common to any mouldid.

Though I witnessed the zeffa on two or three rather more recent occasions, but before the war, I saw nothing of the *royal* car. I do not know if it was officially suppressed.

The war 1914-18 nearly obliterated this mouldid, though of recent years it has recovered some little of its ancient glory; as is also the case with the Giza weekly fair, سوق الثلاثاء, Suq el-Talat.

It is worth noting that the Mouldid of Sheikh el-Harera does not, (now at any rate), follow the Moslem Calendar observed by nearly all the others, but is held on شَم النسيم, Sham el-Nesim, the Easter Monday of the Coptic and Greek Churches; and I suspect the Zeffa, with its phallic elements, dates back to pre-Islamic, and pre-Christian festivals in honour of Spring.

Yours,
J. W. McP.

QOSEIR.

A 20

ABU HASAN EL-ABABDI

سيدي ابو حسن العبابدي

Information is required about this, as I have heard it referred to in the Qoseir district, and to the South of that Red Sea town, as of considerable importance, but can ascertain nothing definite. Zu' el-Qaada was mentioned as the month of the mouldid, but this needs confirmation.

Dr. Evans-Pritchard who has studied the important Bedawin tribe of the Ababda, which is met with mainly from

Qena to Aswan, confirms the existence of a mouldid which, he says, is unusual in those regions, except in the case of that of the Prophet, (v. Mouldid el-Nebi), but cannot at present give me the exact date and place.

HELMIA

A 21

ABU QAFAS

الشيخ ابو قفص

Though I have often heard this referred to as well worth seeing, my information has always been too late to enable me to witness it.

Dr.R..., who lives close to the Helmia station, says it is held under his windows, which fairly well locates it. I gather from what he and others have told me, that the date is in or about Ragab.

ZENIN

A 22

ABU QRAISH

الشيخ ابو قرش

I made a rather stormy acquaintance with this mouldid about 1348, (1929), as I arrived at about 9. 30, just as the police raided it, pulled down tents and utterly stopped it. I believe this step was justified by the mouldid having waited for no authorisation. It went smoothly enough on Thursday, 13 Gumad I, 1353 (1934) and again Thursday 15 Gumad II, 1357, (11-8-38).

It is situated at the village of Zenin, and may be reached by the Khardasa bus from the English Bridge. In 1357 (1938) taxis at one piastre for a place were plying frequently between these two, long after the very infrequent buses had ceased to run. It may also be visited by motor by the way of Sharia el-Brinsat crossing the line at the Brasserie des Pyramides, and following rather rough country tracks. It is a simple country

mouldid, lively and picturesque, and well worth a visit, especially before the light has gone, and the beauty of Zenin with its water and encircling vegetation can be appreciated.

On the secular side I saw no theatres in 1357, (1938), nor shows, though plenty of amusing and popular stalls, but was considerably surprised to find that all the big cafés had their music and dancing girls. There was a lot of merry feasting as eight camels had been slain earlier in the day.

As for the Sheikh, Abu Qraish, I could elicit no information sufficiently reliable to put down.

A 23 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

ABU EL-SABAA أبو السباع

The date of this seems very erratic, but on each occasion when I have seen the mouldid and noted the date, it has been held on a Thursday, but the month has varied from Rabia I in 1348 to Gumad I in 1353. In 1356 it was on the 8th of Rabia II, (17-6-37).

The mosque of Abu el-Sabaa is at the Saptia end of Sharia Abd el-Gawad, the big new street of Bulaq, a rather low district preserving some of the traditions of the old port of Cairo, and not singularly picturesque. — Bus 15 or Tram 4.

Though much reduced it is a big mouldid, with on the secular side theatres, Qara Goz, ringas, &c., and in several recent years the famous "Piste a la Morte" of Billy Williams.

A 24

ABU ZAID أبو زيد

Reported as one of the Imam el-Shafei group, in Shaaban, but not located.

A 25

ADAWIYA شيخ العدوية

Reported as one of the small mouldids in the Imam el-Shafei district, and following that of the Imam, in Shaaban.

I have not, however, been able to locate it.

A 26

AGAN سيدي محمد العجان

One of the smallest of moulids, but gaily beflagged, held at mid-Shaaban, in a small street off Sharia el-Khairat. Saida Zenab trams 7, 4, 12, and buses 3 and 9 pass this way.

Over the tomb is written,

« هذا مقام سيدي محمد العجان »

“This is the tomb of Sidi Muhammad el-Agan.”

A 27 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

AHMADEIN سيدي الأحمدين

Though present on Sunday 30 Gumad I, 1353, (16-8-34), and on one other occasion, whose date I omitted to note, I have not been able to hit the right day for several years, and if still held it must be at a widely different time.

The Maqam of Sidi Ahmadein in a little street of the same name, off the new broad one in front of the mosque of Abu el-Ela, is very easily reached, as it is only a couple of minutes walk from that well known mosque. Bus 15 passes it; and bus 6 and trams 13, 14, 15 which all traverse Sharia Foad el-Awal stop by Abu el-Ela.

The street is very picturesque with two tombs of Sheikhs in addition to the mosque and maqam of Sidi Ahmadein, which last bears the inscription over its portal, —

(“The tomb of Sidi Ahmadein”) مقام سيدي الأحمدين

The secular side is almost nil, the great feature being the zeffa in the late afternoon. This comes from the Saptia direction arriving at the tomb by the winding Sharia Wagha. It is very peaceful and well attended, and I hope to find that it is still flourishing.

A 28 (v. Sectional Map XI.)

ANSARI سيدي محمد الانصاري

This beautiful little mouldid has been held on each of the occasions on which I have been present in the last week of Shaaban : On the 26th in 1354 (1935) and 1355 (1936), and on the 27th in 1357, (21.10.38). In 1356 (1937) it was to have been on the 26th, but was put off owing to the death of a member of the family of Sh. Madbouli, who I understand is an Ansari descended from the Founder. This year, 1359 (1940) it was on the 26th Shaaban.

It is held in the tiny Haret el-Ansari, off Sh. Muhammed Ali, a few minutes' walk from the Ataba on the right. The Tabut is just within the main door of the house at the back of the *hara*, where there is also ample space for praying and for zikrs.

It is the fascination of mouldids, that though one is liable to shocks and disappointments, there is the chance of witnessing scenes of amazing beauty or interest, and of being carried out of this mechanised *blasé* age, into the sort of oriental atmosphere one reads and dreams about. This tiny mouldid has so delighted and impressed me that I venture to describe what I have heard and seen in some detail.

On Saturday, 26th Shaaban 1354, (23-11-35), I was enjoying another very pleasant and classic little mouldid, opposite the Court of Appeal, in the Qantara el-Amir Husein, that of the Sheikh Nur el-Din el-Marsafa, when we were visited by a singularly well appointed zeffa, with "Khalifa" mounted with his little son on a richly caparisoned horse, and expert musicians striking huge tambourines above their heads as they danced. When they had well heated their instruments in the flames of the *mesh'al* which always accompany these processions, their unisons were so exact and so powerful that they suggested volleys of musketry. Leaving the underground mosque of Sidi Marsafa, I passed with the little party through the Street of the *Thunder-*

bolt, (Suwayqa,) شارع السويقة, where the little mosque of Sidi Arbein was duly saluted. This I noticed was be-flagged for a coming moulid. Then, crossing Sh. Muhammed Ali, we were welcomed by a noble and venerable sheikh, referred to as the *Sheikh el-Rifai*, at the door of the shrine of Sidi el-Ansari. Over this is written

« مولد سيدي محمد الانصاري »

(The Moulid of Sidi Muhammed el-Ansari)

A religious service with zikr commenced at once, the *patriarch* presiding with a whip — and using it on any of the congregation lax in the observance of the “custodia oculorum”, or falling into the sin of “*admiratio populi*”. They took it in a humble and contrite spirit,—except one impenitent who grumbled. He received a further flagellation and was cast out into “outer darkness”.

Meanwhile under the flags and lamps of the “hosh”, more and more musical instruments were brought, quaint and some of great beauty, particularly the *nagrazan*, نقرآزان, a lovely hemisphere of glowing copper, richly decorated at the rim, a most attractive form of kettle drum or *tabl Shami*, طبل شامى. The genus drum was largely represented, ranging from the tiny *baz*, باز, to what was, I suppose, an immense *tabl baladi*, طبل بلدي, but which suggested a British military drum, and the species *nuqara*, نقارة, was conspicuous in various forms and sizes, some of these *naqaqir*, نقاقير, being of fine material and chaste workmanship, almost as decorative as the *nagrazan*. Of tambourines, تران, I noticed not only the great shallow *tar*, تار, so effective at the zeffa, called *badir qadri*, بدير قدرى, but a deeper type, the *qadir arusi*, عروس, and also the little *riqq*, رق. There were cymbals of brass, similar to but larger than those used in Coptic services, *kas*, كاس; and of wind instruments, the little *sibs*, سبس, about eight inches long, and the *nai*, ناي, twice that length. This is sometimes called the dervish’s flute, because employed as on this occasion to lead the sacred orchestra.

The players seemed trained musicians, and their souls were in the music. The time and harmony were wonderful, and there was mystery in it, enhanced by the *mise en scène*. I have very rarely enjoyed such a musical treat. It will be noted that this fine effect was produced without any brass wind instruments, or any of the common forms of the *zumara* and *raghul* زمارة وارغول. Strings also were excluded, such as the *qanoon*, قانون, the *ood*, عود, and the *kamanga*, كمنجة, all delightful in their right places, but perhaps suggestive of *awalim*, عوالم, or savouring of the theatre, or concert, or (such as the *ringa* and sistrum, رنجبه وشخشاخة) of the *booza* booth.

Looking forward to a repetition of this, I have been careful each year since not to miss this mouldid, but have been disappointed as far as the music has been concerned. What I have heard has been quite banal. In 1357 (1938), for instance, there was a brass band at a *zeffa* without "khalifa" and a few comparatively feeble performers on the *tar*, and so little prospect of much better things, that I deserted the little *hara*, and made a round of other mouldids, which like Bahlul were working up for the final evening, or actually consummating their last night. Of these were Abdalla near Babel-Luk, Ayesha el-Tunisi close to Sitna Ayesha, and Dargham and Emery off Sh. Muhammed Ali.

But passing in a tram about midnight I saw a much increased company in Haret el-Ansari, watching a whirling dervish. Getting off at the Ataba, and returning on foot, I found him still whirling, and commencing to divest himself of his "seven veils" without interrupting his gyrations. He was succeeded by a bearded dervish of the Rifaiya, brandishing an alarming *dabus*,* who commenced a sermon such as I think has seldom been heard since the time of Peter the Hermit. His rhetoric was most powerful: likewise his voice, or rather his voices, — for he had many, from a trumpet-call to a subtle whisper. He

* Note — for description of *dabus*, v. mouldid of Sh. Zefeti.

could roar, bark or growl: croon or rage: employ staccato: become hoarse or bell-like, and let his words fall like notes of music, over a gamut compassing falsetto and deep base.

His subject matter was both revivalist and philosophic, Sufic in the main. Suddenly without breaking off his discourse, he appeared to go berserker, spun round with his dabus at arm's length, its chains ringing and its dagger point glittering: then punctuated his sermon by jabbing it into his throat, under his beard. Aposiopesis followed: one could have heard a feather fall, as he sagged, dropped on his knees, and his head jerked forward, throwing his weight on the point, with the spherical head of the dabus vertically beneath. Just as we half expected to see the point emerge from the back of his neck, an ancient dervish jumped lightly on his shoulders, and proclaimed the greatness of God, "who alone worketh great marvels"; or words to that effect.

Certainly there seemed to be forces at work beyond our human ken, for he rose again, waited a moment for the leading dervish to touch and magically heal the punctured spot, then in an even tone discoursed on the quasi-spiritual functions of the heart. He might have been quoting Gregory Palamas, or some Hesychast of Mt. Athos.

But my eyes and attention wandered to a young man of our party, naked but for his *libas*, who was being converted into a living chandeleer. Small sharp *dababis* of sorts were being run through the flesh of his arms, chest and back, weighted at the lower end and fitted at the top with lighted tapers. The sermon over, a dabus, not unlike a sword was pushed through both cheeks, and whilst he held the blade in his mouth with his teeth, candles were adjusted and lighted at both ends, and he slowly revolved.

The youth was not excited, as might have been the case had he just emerged from a *ziker*: he was simply normal — if indeed it is normal to be normal under such abnormal conditions.

He showed no symptom of pain or discomfort, nor of interest in the proceedings: not even when the burning candles heeled over onto his flesh. When the blessed touch of the ancient dervish had immuned him from bleeding or any ill consequences, he just took his place amongst the other lads, with no sign of self-consciousness. I leave it to others to explain these things: "hypotheses non fingo". I was not in a stall below footlights, watching happenings on a stage with managed curtains, mirrors, lamps and the rest, but at the closest quarters free to examine and to touch, and could get no material clue. I shall be grateful for any light on this mysterious *candlemas*.

A 29 (v. Sectional Map XI.)

ARBAIN

سيدي أربعين

This very small mouldid is held almost at the end of Shaaban: in the year 1357 (1938) on the 23th. The small and most unattractive mosque is in Sh. el-Suwayqa, almost opposite Haret el-Ansari of Sh. Muhammad Ali not far from the Ataba end. The street and surroundings are not beautiful, its most interesting object perhaps being an enormous bottle of live leeches over a shop near the mosque. This is labeled, — "*Sangsues, دود رومي*".

A 30 (v. Sectional Map XI.)

ASHMAWI

سيدي العشاوي

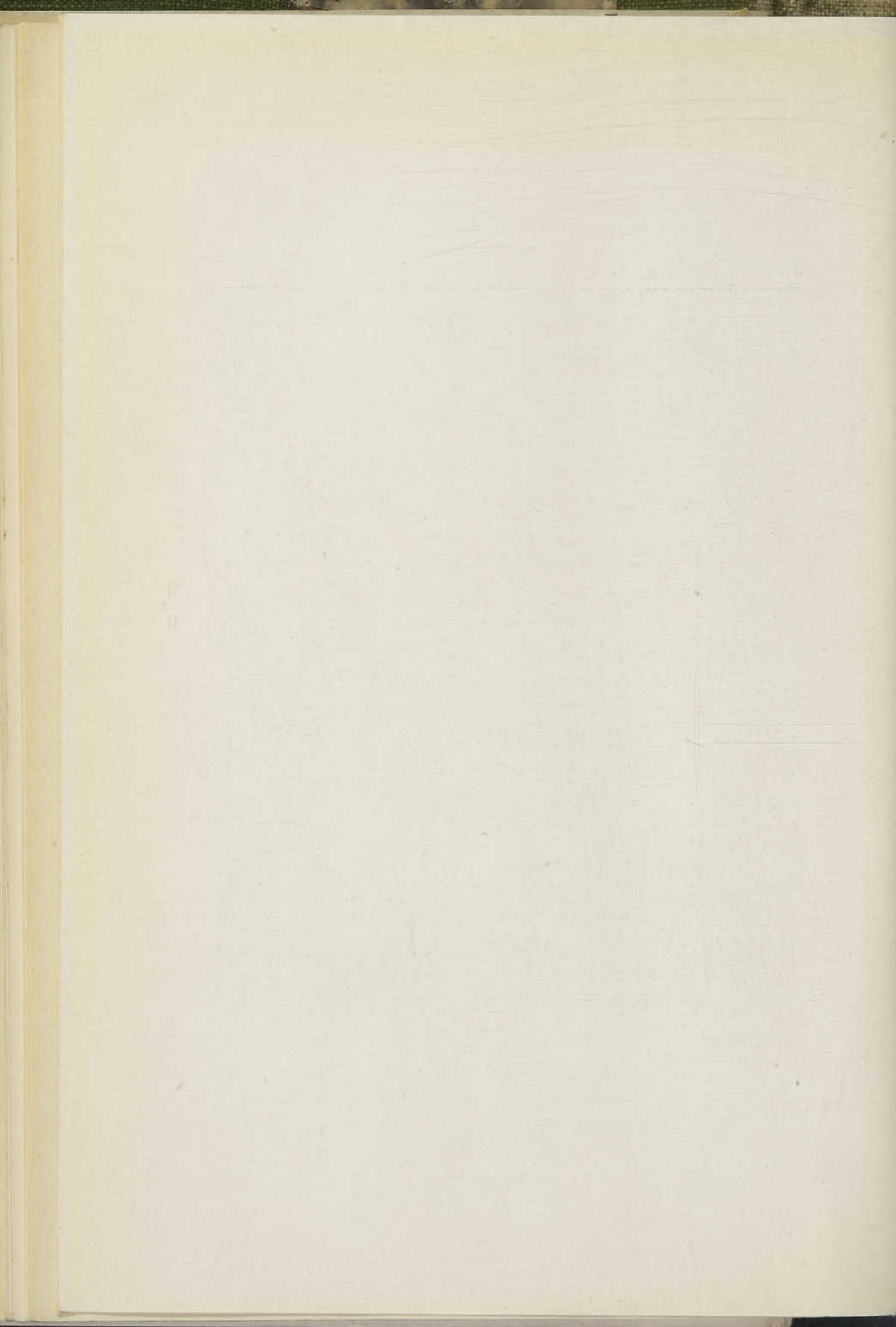
This is one of the comparatively few mouldids whose date is definitely fixed. It is now as it was in the days of Lane, over a hundred years ago, on the eve of the 11th Rabia I, always the day before the great Mouldid el-Nebi. It is equally easy to locate being the most central of all, in the Sharia el-Ashmawi behind the Post Office, and the Muski *Caracol*; (Police Station) the little street which emerges in Sharia Abdin, not far from the opera. It is now however so reduced that it is easy to pass in the main streets on each side of it without noticing it.

One of the most fascinating parts of Lane's great book, "The Modern Egyptians", is an account of a Zikr at the *Zawiya*

Moulid
of
Ashmawi.



Sharia Ashmawi
The old Suq el-Bakri.



of Ashmawi, the street being then known as the *Suq el-Bakri*. That was about 1880 when the palace of the *Sheikh el-Bakri* was here, close to the little lake which is now the Ezbekia Garden, and this part of Cairo was the site of the Moulid el-Nebi, and of the *dosah*. The Sheikh el-Bakri of today dwells in the Sharia el-Khronfish, and there is a disturbing rumour that his palace is marked for destruction.

Now, as then, the observances are of almost purely a religious nature, but a few years ago in addition to the zikrs and zeffa, there was some very pleasant singing by sheikhs and munshids, and a little *zuqaq* (court) near the Sharia Abdin end, where stick play, and innocent entertainments were held. Practically nothing of that remains, but I am told that the discontinued zeffa was renewed in 1357 (1938).

In 1351 (1932), I witnessed an extraordinary incident, strongly suggestive of a tale in the *Alf Leila wa Leila*, of a farouche but fearless lad who bearded the Commander of the Faithful in such violent and stinging terms, that seemingly the very excess of his language brought him forgiveness. *Asha*, (dinner), was provided in a tent to a great many poor, and when nearly over a tall boy of about fifteen, in rags, with wild black eyes and hair, burst unceremoniously in, and was as unceremoniously ejected. He took it ill, and *crashed* in again, but was told very gently by a police officer that he had come too late, and was given to an *askari* to be removed. But he kicked, fought, and tried to bite, abusing the patrons of the feast in unmeasured terms. "I come for *asha*", he shouted, "and ye give me blows : a curse on such charity!" Again and again attempts were made to lead him quietly away, but in spite of wonderful forbearance his own violence soon reduced his rags to tatters, and there was blood on his face. At length a high officer, (the *mamur* I think), and a couple of *ifrangis* who were in the tent talked to him with all gentleness, calling him a *gadaa*, (a brave lad) and smiled at his intrepid fury, and someone kissed him on the head, and

he was tamed at last. Then he was led in and a great dish of delicious *fath** put before him. Such patience and kindness were doubtless largely due to the piteous plight of the undaunted and handsome young fury, but also from a wish to divert an evil omen from the feast.

I wish I had asked his name and watched his career ; he had the makings of an Ataturk.

Lane in describing an Ashmawi *zikr*, and the beauty of the music and the words sung by the munshids, mentions the effect on a soldier and on an eunuch of "the Pasha". The eunuch became very "melboos", wildly ejaculated "Allah! ... la! la! la! ... Ya ammee! ... Ya Ashmawi! ... Ya ammee! Ashmawi! (Oh! my uncle Ashmawi!), and finally collapsed in a fit. Had he, Lane, been at the mould in 1356 (1937), he could not have complained of any falling off of the fervour inspired by the *zikr*. The floor of the *maqam* of Sidi Muhammed el-Beidek, in the little street connecting Sh. Ashmawi with Sh. Abd el-Aziz, was like a tiny battlefield at one time, as one after another became "melboos" and then collapsed for a while. So far, so good, but in the little *zuqaq* already referred to, in which singing, stick play and such like had been suppressed, and in which for the first time a *zikr* was held instead, the scene was far from edifying, and, I think, showed the danger and inadvisability of repressing natural exuberance and desire for *play* as well as *prayer*. Two great lads insisted on cutting in, roughly and with very improper language, much to the discomfort of the "zikeers", and quickly became violently "melboos". One subsided fairly quietly, but the other, a black youth, became so wild that it required several people to hold him, and he was ultimately carried away. Bystanders said that "Sambo" had been drinking. The next year when I went a little late, the *maqam* of Sh. Beidek was closed, the *zuqaq* empty, and mosque and street, compared with the past, rather deserted—

* v. Glossary

Allah! Allah! Ya Ashmawi! Oh, my uncle Ashmawi! Oh, my Uncle!

A 31 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

AWLAD BADR

اولاد بدر

This little mouldid centres about the mosques and tomb in Darb el-Sheikh Faraq, close to Darb el-Nasr and the big new Bulaq street, Sh. Abd el-Gawad, and should be early in Shaaban.

It is rather a rough district, and mouldids pay dearly for any disorderly behaviour — which happily is extremely rare. Anyway, I believe in 1353 (1934) it was suppressed altogether, and on going in 1354 (1935) to what should have been the chief night, 3rd Shaaban (31-10-35), I found flags and all decorations being hauled down, and all celebrations (which included a ringa or two and some small shows), forbidden. There only remained the freedom of the mosque, I was told there had been a free fight. However, after this warning it was allowed to resume, and the final evening, 27th Shaaban (24-11-35), passed quietly.

A 32

AWLAD SHEIB

اولاد شعيب

I have never located this little mouldid, but Mousa, my reliable murasla reported on Friday night, 28 Shaaban, 1355 (13-11-36), that he had just assisted thereat, and had witnessed rather a fine zeffa in the late afternoon. It is for this reason that I include it, for zeffas are becoming rather rare.

The position was given as between Sh. Abdin, and Sh. Emad el-Din, in the Harat el-Fawala. If so, it may be traced on Sectional Map X, F 8 & 9.

A 33 (v. Sectional Map XVII.)

AYESHA

سيدة عائشة

Although I only once witnessed this mouldid—on Thursday 16 Shaaban, 1356, (21.10.37), I think it is held annually about the middle of Shaaban.

The mosque is near the "Tombs of the Mamelukes", a few yards to the right of the tram track to Imam el-Shafei, behind a beautiful old city gate, and amidst ancient unspoilt surroundings, well worth a visit, apart from the moulid. Trams 13 and 23 stop at the station of Saida Ayesha.

It is a small but picturesque affair, with little on the secular side, beyond good stick dancing and playing, though there are cafés in the main road with dancing girls.

A feature, when I was there, was the blind Hag Husein preaching near the old city gate. He used very good Arabic, and was gentle and restrained. After his discourse he repeated the "ninety-nine names of God", and wrote the name of anyone so desiring on an illuminated text, of which he carried a sheaf.

This Saida Ayesha was daughter of Gaafar Sâdiq, the VIth Imam, and therefore in the direct line of the Prophet, and must not be confused with Ayesha the daughter of Abu Bakr Sadiq, and wife of Muhammad, whose tomb near Medina was destroyed by the Wahabis. She is described in the *Tobaqat el-Kubra* as singularly holy: one of her sayings quoted is, "I will trust God, even if He thrust me into the fire." Almost the words of holy Job who said,

"Etiam si occiderit me, in ipso sperabo."

A 34 (v. Sectional Map XVII.)

AYESHA EL-TUNISI عائشة الطونسي

A very small moulid very near that of Saida Ayesha bint Gaafar Sadiq, held in 1357 on Friday, 27 Shaaban, (21.10.38)

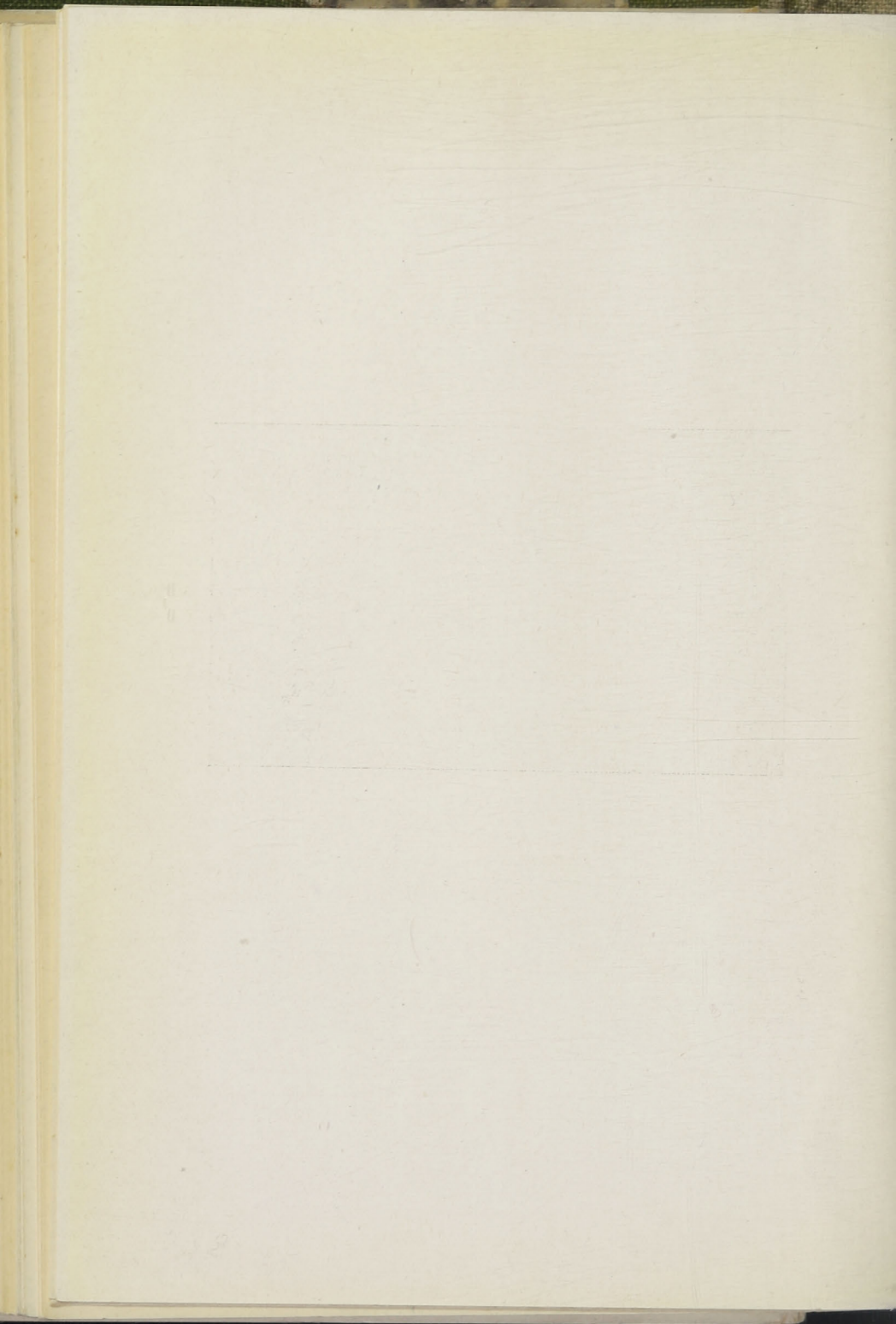
B 1 (v. Sectional Map II)

BADRAN سيدي بدران

I was present only on 16th Gumad I, 1353 (26-8-34) and was told that it was a new moulid only inaugurated the previous year.



"Tombs of the Mamelukes"
and
Ancient City Gate.



The mosque of Sidi Badran is in Sh. Massara, off Sh. Shubra, so that any Shubra tram and Autobus 8 serve, getting off at the station before Tewfiqia school, (if coming from town) and turning at right angles to the left. As however this involves a considerable walk along Sh. Massara, it is better to take Bus No. 15 from Midan Ismailia, as this after a pleasant run along the banks of the Nile, and through the Gezira Badran district, passes the door of the Mosque.

This moulid was initiated on a considerable scale, and promised well in 1353 (1934). The mosque with the shrine of Sidi Badran was thronged; and in the neighbourhood, but not too near was a large tent theatre with the dwarf, and fat strong man, and the muscle dancers and the rest. Also a Punch and Judy show, and the "Piste à la Morte", in which Billy Williams thrilled successive audiences with his intrepid motor-cycle riding on the vertical walls of his "bear pit".

Alas, for reasons quite unknown to me, the police showed unwonted ferocity, and it was a *sauve qui peut* for a disappointed crowd: and merriment and piety alike froze up.

As far as I know poor Sidi Badran has never lifted up his head since, but we hope for better things.

B 2 (v. Sectional Map XIV)

BAHLUL (Sidi Sayed Muhammad el-Bahlul)

سيدي سيد محمد البهلول

On every occasion that I have been present on the big night, it has been the 29th Shaaban, the "waqfa" of Ramadan, and therefore coincident with the Ro'ya, the ceremony of determining whether the new moon has been seen, and therefore whether the month of fasting has begun.

The tomb of Bahlul is near the Bab el-Wazir, in Sh. Muhaggar. It is best reached by autobus No. 17, from Ghamra to Bab el-Wazir, passing through Ataba el-Khadra. Also any

tram to the Citadel serves, in which case one leaves the tram at the Manshia, and walking half up the little hill towards the Citadel, turns to the left, a few yards from the tomb.

It was a big mouldid when I first discovered it in 1352 (1933), for though I had often heard of a great mouldid "at the Citadel", I was always misinformed as to date, and failed to locate it. A sheikh (Abu el-Shet), who as a youth had helped me in Intelligence work in the *gabel*, to thwart illicit traffic in arms, and who now appeared to be in charge of the tomb, insisted on introducing me into the Holy of Holies. An old woman more garrulous than anything I have ever met or imagined, was the only occupant, and though very friendly, so flooded the shrine with language, that it was difficult to even read the epitaph or be conscious of anything but her tongue.

Some people with whom I dined that evening, including an Egyptian who was Sharif, and an English Professor from the Egyptian University, were so interested in my account of Sidi Bahlul, that they asked me to conduct them there. The approach to the tomb seemed so changed, that I had difficulty in finding it and effecting an entrance, but no one opposed any obstacle or warned us that it was the ladies' hour. Too late we found that the tomb in the centre was entirely surrounded by devout women seated on the floor. I apologised and explained that a few hours before I had found the place empty, and they good-temperedly forgave our intrusion, but insisted, that since we were there we must process round the tomb in the correct manner. This my Sherif companion said must be in the opposite direction to the hands of a clock. We performed the ritual but had the greatest difficulty in preventing it being of the nature of a Dosah (v. Glossary), so closely packed were the votaries at the shrine.

I gather that this was once indeed a great mouldid, with important zeffa, and bound up with procession from the Citadel to the Qadi's Court and the Ro'ya, hence its being always held

on the eve of the 1st of Ramadan. It has greatly dwindled, especially of very recent years, but happily in 1356 (1937), there were signs of revival, and though small it was pleasant and very picturesque, and unharassed by police. A feature was the eloquence of the blind Sheikh Husein.

B 3 (v. Sectional Map VII)

| | |
|--|----------------|
| BAHRI (Muhammad el-Bahri) | محمد البحري |
| Present on Thursday 8th Muharram, 1354 (11.4.35) | |
| Thursday 25th Safr, | 1356 (25.5.37) |

On the first of these dates, the mouldid clashed with that of Sidi Marzuk. It will be seen that it is held on widely different dates, but apparently it affects Thursday, as also does Marzuk.

The mosque is on the north side of Sh. Bab el-Bahr near Clot Bey, from which Sh. Bab el-Bahr runs off in the direction of Bab el-Shaaria.

I have nothing but a sad tale to tell about this once brilliant mouldid.

As late as 1354 (1935), the religious ceremonies were carried on with all decorum, in and about the mosque, and to a less extent in a house situated in a narrow alley to the north of the mosque. Providence had provided an ideal place for lighter entertainment out of sight and sound of the mosque though not many yards away, in a *terrain vague* between Sh. Bab el-Bahr and the parallel street of Bein el-Harat, approached from the one side by the narrow alley by the side of the mosque, already referred to, and from the other by a small opening near the remains of the Fatimite Wall, — which by the way is not easily found.

This enclosure sheltered Theatres, Punch and Judy, Ringas, and innumerable stalls and places of entertainment, with plenty of room for Zikrs at its peaceful east end. All went happily, far from politics and mundane cares.

In 1355, the mouldid was suppressed on account of King Fuad's recent death. I doubt if his Majesty would have approved this mournful abstinence, but all gladly accorded this mark of respect and grief, but in 1356, with King Farouk gloriously reigning, supporters of the ancient mouldid naturally expected to be allowed to do honour to the Sheikh el-Bahri and commenced preparations; but on the night of the apodosis, 25th Safr 1356 (25-5-37), I was surprised to find police guarding the entrance from Bein el-Harat, and disgruntled votaries of el-Bahri forbidden to visit the mosque by this public way. I had no difficulty however in running the blockade, only to find nothing within but the most depressing melancholy: some singers and such like thrown out of their pleasure-giving work, and a-hungry: and a dismal attempt at a Zikr.

So I took my way down the alley, towards the main street and the mosque, noting on the way that no sounds of the reading of the Qoran, no zikring proceed from the now gloomy house, once echoing with religious joy and fervour, — the typical languishing of the soul of a mouldid when its body is oppressed. On nearing the end my progress was stopped by a much more effective blockade than that at the entrance from Bein el-Harat, and I realised that with a number of other victims, I was imprisoned between two guards stopping public ways in time of peace, and supposed rejoicing.

“ممنوع المرور Mamnoa' el-Murur”, said an askari when I tried to pass, so feeling that tact and patience were called for, I replied, — “But, Onbashi, if both ways passing is forbidden, how am I to go home, or how are the poor people living here to reach their homes”. (Applause from other victims). “Mush aaref, Hadratak, mush shugli, مش عارف حضرتك مش شغلي, — I don't know, your Honour, not my business!” “But why” I asked, “is the mouldid crushed in this way?”

“El-Malik mat, الملك مات, — The King is dead”, he replied.

“But that was over a year ago.” I rejoined.

“W’ana ma li, hua lissa meit,
what’s that to me, he is still dead.”

وانا مالي هو لسه مابت

All the time I was manoeuvring a sidelong movement in the desired direction, and ultimately wangled an escape; to find about the mosque few worshippers, no joy or enthusiasm, a few timid looking people, and an imposing array of police. “Surely”, thought I, “Sidi Muhammed el-Bahri must be the Patron Saint of ‘Bobbies’, but they need not keep him so exclusively to themselves”.

Still curious to know what was really wrong with the Sheikh el-Bahri, I enquired of a somewhat higher authority than the askari, and he gave as the reason “that the mouldid obstructed traffic”. A most irritatingly absurd reason, as the mouldid was always held in the *terrain vague* where there is no traffic, and the policy now adopted, by driving everyone into the main street *does* obstruct traffic, if only by the plethora of police, and of people hanging about in vain expectation. This reason, (sic) reminds one of some of the paradoxical absurdities in the police arrangements at home, where I recently wanted a few bottles of beer, and was told I could not have them unless I bought a bottle of cognac at the same time: this the shop-owner explained with a wry grin was to check drinking.

I went in 1857, in Muharem and in Safr, and in Rabia, but the Sheikh Muhammed el-Bahri, or at least his mouldid, seemed to have been definitely crushed. A disappointed little sheikh who claimed some sort of spiritual descent from el-Bahri exclaimed, “This is the work of the Djin”. I thought of the last verse of the Qoran el-Sharif, and went my way.

“قل اعوذ برب الناس”

..... من الجنة والناس”

(“Say:— May the Lord of the People
protect us from the Djin and the people”.)

B 4 (v. Map of Upper Egypt — in covers)

BARSUM (S. Barsum el-Aryan) مار برسوم العريان

This being a Coptic mouldid naturally follows the Coptic calendar, falling on or near the feast day of the saint, in the middle of the first month, Tut.

Amongst the dates on which I have been present are as follows:—

Wednesday 16 Tut 1651 = 26 September 1934 =
17 Gumad II 1353

Sunday 18 Tut 1652 = 28 September 1935 =
1 Ragab 1354

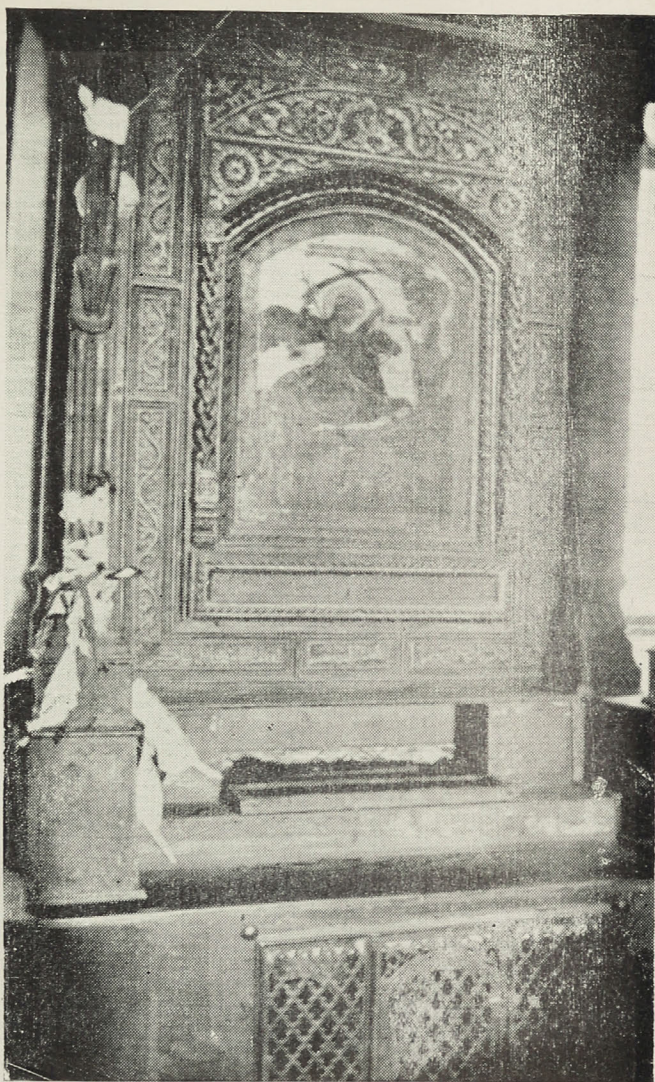
Saturday 16 Tut 1653 = 26 September 1936 =
10 Ragab 1355

Wednesday 16 Tut 1656 = 27 September 1939 =
13 Shaaban 1358

It is held at the monastery of S. Barsum el-Aryan at Maasara near Helwan, and is therefore reached by train from Bab el-Luq to Maasara station, where donkeys are waiting not only on the great night but during the previous week. If one prefers to walk it is a pleasant stroll of about twenty minutes through the little village, and over the canal bridge through the vegetation.

Coptic mouldids have sadly waned, but this, the only one of note with which I am acquainted, remains big, popular and wonderful. No visitor to Cairo in the latter part of September, (and for the matter of that, no resident) should miss it, if interested in pilgrimages and popular religious gatherings: and not only is the apodosis worth witnessing but a visit or two on the earlier and smaller nights also. I usually, especially if I have friends with me, combine a pilgrimage with a picnic, by going well before dark, and taking a sufragi with me who lays an al fresco meal in the dura fields by the canal, whilst one is

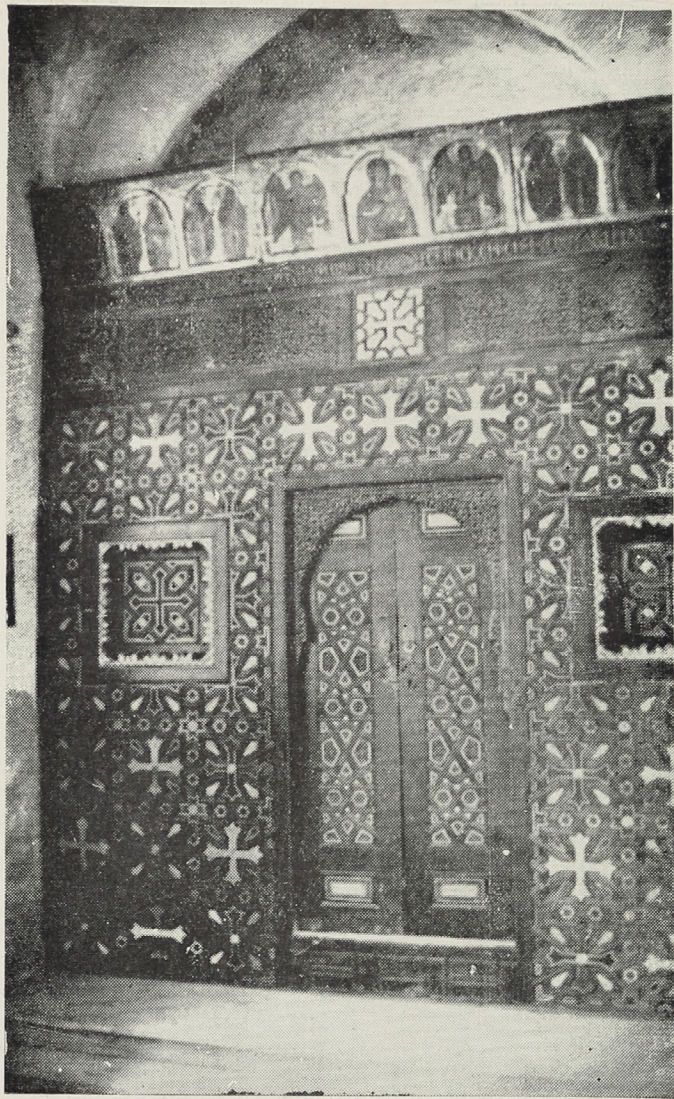
In the Church of SS. Mercurius and Barsum,
Old Cairo.



An Ikon of St. Mercurius, — "Abu Seifein."
i.e. Father of Two Swords

أبو سيفين

In the Church of SS. Mercurius and Barsum el-Aryani,
Old Cairo.



Iconostasis (screen).

having a preliminary turn by daylight. There is unlimited time after as donkeys and trains seem to be always available, even hours after midnight.

I have never, however, ventured to take ladies on the last night, owing to the crush on the trains. These are invaded by window and doors with no respect for class, and particularly on the return one has to take a strong position on the platform, and try one's luck in a good humoured fight for a place. I have been mischievously amused to see a dozing magnate in a first class carriage to himself, or an affectionate but high-brow couple, suddenly invaded, sat on, subjected to all manner of shocks and pressure, and snowed under by a boisterous jolly mass of humanity sufficient to fill several compartments. The pressure is soon relieved by a number of these occupying the luggage racks.

The fields in front of the monastery, from which the corn has been cut, are filled with Ringas, *Cafés chantants*, shows, theatres and so on, on which none of the very modern Moslem restrictions press : but the fascinating sight is within the walls in the vast grounds of the monastery. There, several acres of orchard and garden have become for the time a village of tents and wattled dwellings. People have come from far and near, and are living here for the nonce, and have their beds, cook their food, and entertain themselves and their friends with dancing, music and singing, not forgetting the pious exercises which the place and the occasion claim. Little streets are arranged, and a water supply, primitive drainage, and butchers' and other shops, and the scene is most colourful. There cannot be much privacy, but this seems to cause no annoyance, though the brilliancy of texture and hue in the little dwellings, and the picturesqueness of their occupants, tempts the passer-by to glance in unduly. The only reaction is a smile and a hearty invitation to enter and partake of whatever there may be. A gay and innocent freedom prevails ; though if the whole truth must be told, I have known occasions when the honours of the little house have been proffered by a lady so fair, so highly

tinted and scented, so dazzling with kohl and lipstick, and so mouvementé about the haunches, and so exiguously and exquisitely clad, that I have thought of Tasso's verses picturing Armida in her bower.

At other Christian moulds, and allied ceremonies, I have generally found the church doors open to pilgrims well into the night, so was surprised here to find them closed even on the last and great night. I suppose it is that pilgrims come here to stay, sleep in the sacred precincts, and hear mass in the morning. In 1353 (1936), the final night falling on a Saturday, I returned to Cairo in the early hours of the Sabbath morning, and went to mass in the church of St. Mercurius, (Abu Sefein), in the Deir of that name near Old Cairo, and was impressed by hearing a reading about Barsum el-Aryan, and his commemoration in the anaphora. I had hoped for this, and for more as Butler in his "Coptic Churches", declares the screen of Abu Sefein so beautiful that it alone is worth a visit to Egypt, and says that the church contains a little chapel of Mar Barsum in which service is held, once a year on his feast day.

I could not confirm this, but a young archdeacon kindly took me down into the cave, (within the church of Abu Sefein) where he assured me he, Mar Barsum, spent 25 years, in company with a snake, as a variant to passing 30 years on the roof unprotected from sun and weather. He showed me an ancient picture of Barsum and his snake, and a little devil the snake had vomited up. The casting out of this devil was the beginning of a long and happy symbiosis, in the cave, very different from the tragic companionship of Rodrigo, the last of the Gothic Kings of Spain, and his black serpent in the tomb. I was assured by the Archdeacon and his friends, and others in the Deir, that Barsum acquired from his snake knowledge which gave him power over all serpents, and that his name is still invoked in the district for the exorcism of such. (I have been told since by a high authority on such matters that this power should be attributed to a certain other Saint, not to Barsum.)

In the Church of SS. Mercurius and Barsum el-Aryan:
Old Cairo.



The young Archdeacon
"Shammas" شماس

In any case, "May Amba BARSUM be Exalted", as they say in the Coptic Liturgy,...

«العظيم انبا برسوم»

Πρωτοϛ Δεξα Παρσουμα

It is characteristic of the tolerance of the Egyptians, that this Christian feast is almost as popular with Moslems as with Copts. In fact they gently appropriate Mar Barsum, and I have heard him referred to as SIDI MOHAMMAD BARSUM. What a truly blessed trait this is! Never have I found a place, where Christians of various sects, Moslems, and others so honour one another's mosques or churches publicly, with graceful friendliness, apply for blessings at one another's shrines, and where the Prophet's words in the Surat el-Baqara are so practically observed—

« ان الذين امنوا والذين هادوا والصابين من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر وعمل صالحاً فلهم اجرهم عند ربهم ولا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون »

"Moslems, Jews, Christians, and Sabines, who have believed in God and the Last Day, and have pursued virtue, have their reward from their Lord, and for them is neither fear nor grief."

Note — That the moulid of 27 September, 1939 (16 Tut 1656, 13 Shaaban 1358) should have been enhanced in every way, rather than the reverse, by the fact of war having broken out, whilst the Islamic moulids at the same period were most adversely affected, is so significant that it is specially commented on in my Preface.

I am indebted for the photographs to Miss Barbara Fry, an authority on the Eastern Churches, who accompanied me to the church on a different occasion.

B 5 (v. Sectional Map VIII)

BAYUMI (Sidi Ali el-Bayumi)

سيدي علي البيومي

Though always on Thursday, I found the date most baffling, for it ranged from Zu el-Qaada in 1351 (1932) to Safr in 1359 (1940), falling intermediately in Zu el-Higga in 1353 and Muharem in 1355. The advantage of noting both Islamic and

Christian dates over a number of years is exemplified in this case, for all of these widely differing *lunar* dates fall in March, between the 8th and the 28th. This points strongly, though empirically to the feast of Bayumi following the solar calendar, and leads to our expecting it in March, or by the Coptic reckoning, in the month of Baramhat. I have recently found confirmation of the first of these conclusions in Murray's "Egypt". I will quote his paragraph on the subject, in extenso, as it shows that important changes have taken place since he wrote in 1888.

"The Moolid el-Beiyoomee—This is a very extensive and remarkable fair and dervish festival, which is held annually in the early part of October. The scene of the fête is the portion of the desert bordering on the Abbasseeyeh road, immediately N. of the Bab el-Hassaneeyeh. It is in honour of the Seyyid Ali el-Beiyoomee, founder of the great sect of Beiyoomeeeyeh Dervishes (a branch of the Ahmedeeeyeh), whose memory is much respected in Egypt. All the characteristics of the Moolid en-Nebbee, are here repeated."

It will be noted that it was then a desert moolid and that the date was October. Possibly there was a second celebration in March not mentioned by Murray, as in the case of the parent feasts of Sayed el-Bedawi about March and October, (with yet a third).

It is curious that almost the only other Cairo moolid which goes by the seasons and not by the moon, is that of Sidi Ismail Imbabi who was a Tantawi and sent from there to spread the Ahmadiya tenets. To quote again from Murray it appears that there was yet another which followed the sun by following Bayumi, that of Affi,—which I have failed to trace, and fancy no longer exists.

"The Moolid el-Afeefee.—This is also a remarkable festival, always celebrated immediately after that of Beiyoomee. The

scene is the E. district of the Tombs of the Circassian Memlooks, in which is the tomb of Afeefee, the founder of a large sect of Cairene dervishes. Here amongst the tombs are pitched innumerable tents, and country people from all parts of Egypt, including many Bedaween, encamp around. *The moulid* lasts as usual 8 days, and is of the usual festive and semi-religious kind."

The moulid of Sidi Bayumi is now held at his mosque and tomb, in the street of that name, to the North of the Bab el-Futuh, and is therefore best reached by Autobus No. 11 which, plying between Abbasia and Beit el-Qadi, passes the mosque both ways. As its secular attractions are on a terrain vague between Sh. el-Bayumi and Sh. Farouk, and very visible and audible from the latter street, any tram going in the Abbasia direction up Sh. Farouk may be used, descent being made before Hasania.

It is, when given a fair chance, a very fine event, perhaps the nearest to what moulids were in bygone days: by no means the biggest or the grandest, but singularly satisfying in its very primitiveness.

The zeffa from Sidna Hussein to Bayumi in the afternoon should by no means be missed. It is easily the finest to be seen in Cairo nowadays, at least as far as my knowledge goes, for an unfortunate predilection for siestas may have robbed me of marvellous manifestations about the time of the "asr".

The gathering of the "Turuq" in the early afternoon, in the courts of Sidna Husein is a brave sight, and the crowd displays a happy mixture of gaiety and piety, as the "Khalifa" mounts his steed, and the procession with banners, insignia, and music proceeds in peace. The Alexandrine *balawanis* in their picturesque boleros and other garments, their long meshal and their quaint musical instruments have already set out, and indicated to the crowds who line all the way from Sidna Husein to Bayumi that the "Khalifa" is coming with his dervishes and varied following, and all the people are agog in expectation.

These *prodromoi* fill up any delay with balancing tricks and other performances, and expect a few millièmes from the bystanders, the only time throughout the moulid that anyone is asked for money, (except of course in the enclosed shows and cafés, where the charge may vary from a millième to a piastre.) This is a pleasant change from the days about which Lane wrote, when every phase of every ceremony seemed to be accompanied by customary donations.

Descending to the Nahasin, the zeffa passes that glorious group near the Beit el-Qadi which includes the great mosques of Kalaoun and Barquq, then continuing on the main way to the Bab el-Fatuh past the Sebil and some dear old mosques, and passing under the Bab, it struggles on through an immense crowd to the mosque and shrine of Bayumi, where the proper devotions proceed, quite uninterrupted by the lively assembly in the *terrain vague*, a short but sufficient distance removed.

There are usually at least two large tent theatres, and smaller shows, and Ringas, and of course the ubiquitous Punch, and zikrs are held and fiquis employed in many houses in the neighbourhood. This moulid is usually unmolested or nearly so, because mainly there is no traffic route through the waste bit of ground, but in 1352 (1933) the interference amounted to something like persecution. Some eminent professors had accompanied me, and were enjoying the merry sights and the tonic atmosphere of the happy orderly crowd, when for some reason unknown, (and indeed inconceivable to us, for no one was in anyone's way), we were charged by a lot of askaris, and scattered utterly, with the greatest difficulty keeping our feet in the stampede. The forceful way these police soldiers scaled the heights and laid about them, was worthy of a real and important cause. My poor friends had the shock and surprise of their lives.

After King Fuad's lamented death in 1355 most moulids were *en deuil* long after court mourning had officially ceased, but in 1356 (April 8th, 1937), the moulid was surprisingly fine. Some

minor incidents indeed happened, as for example, at the congestion incident on the stopping of the zeffa on arrival and the pressure of those behind, a mounted askari herded a gang of us in the little Atfet Abu el-Ela just beyond the mosque, to relieve pressure in the main street. So far so good, but another, ignoring the fact that the *atfa* is a cul de sac, and pretty full of women, children and carts before we were driven in, attempted to ride in and force us through. One boy was badly injured but no general harm done. Also the manoeuvre of storming the heights was repeated, but in such a comparatively mild way, that only youngsters were in danger. As these scampered under carts, into holes or anywhere for safety, a motherly soul near me appealed to the Askaris in moving tones, "For the love of the Prophet, spare the rabbits."

There are places about this mouldid and some others, where little "rabbits" can go with impunity, but grown up 'bucks' at their peril. This I found to my discomfiture when exploring curious little *zugaqs**, and cavelike entrances to ancient half-ruined mansions, from which came light and sight or sound of zikring, or of music and dancing. Attracted to one of these by the *zagharit**, that curious wavering tongue-trill that one hears at farahs and many ceremonial occasions, I ventured in, to find, too late, that I was intruding at some purely feminine function, suggestive of a Zarr*. Confronted by a lot of indignant and threatening women, I was more than alarmed, but happily had the inspiration to exclaim,

«اللّٰه تَحِبُّ النَّبِيَّ تَزَغْرَتُ»

"Illi tahib el-Nebi tuzaghrat"

(Let her who loves the prophet warble!)

For a moment I feared I had made matters worse, but I had put them in a dilemma, and I think, rather appealed to their sense of humour, and my punishment was nothing worse than to be chased out with a chorus of *zagharit*.

* Note. v. Glossary.

The mosque of Bayumi had long called for repairs, so without risking a tragedy such as befel Abu el-Ela, these were taken in hand in 1356 (1937) and continued for about two years, during which time no mouldid was held.

In Ramadan 1358 (1939), the King assisted at the ceremony of reinauguration: a most popular occasion somewhat similar to that on which he restored Abu el-Ela to its high prestige. As also in the case of Abu el-Ela, this was followed by the renewal of the mouldid, and on Thursday 5 Safr 1359 (1940), in spite of the depression of mouldids, (where there was not actual repression), ascribed to war conditions, Sultan Bayumi was honoured almost in the fine old style. The zeffa had lost nothing of its essential elements, and showed the greatness of the Bayumiya, for the red banners and insignia of this branch of the Ahmadiya, stretched in the afternoon zeffa perhaps a mile or more.

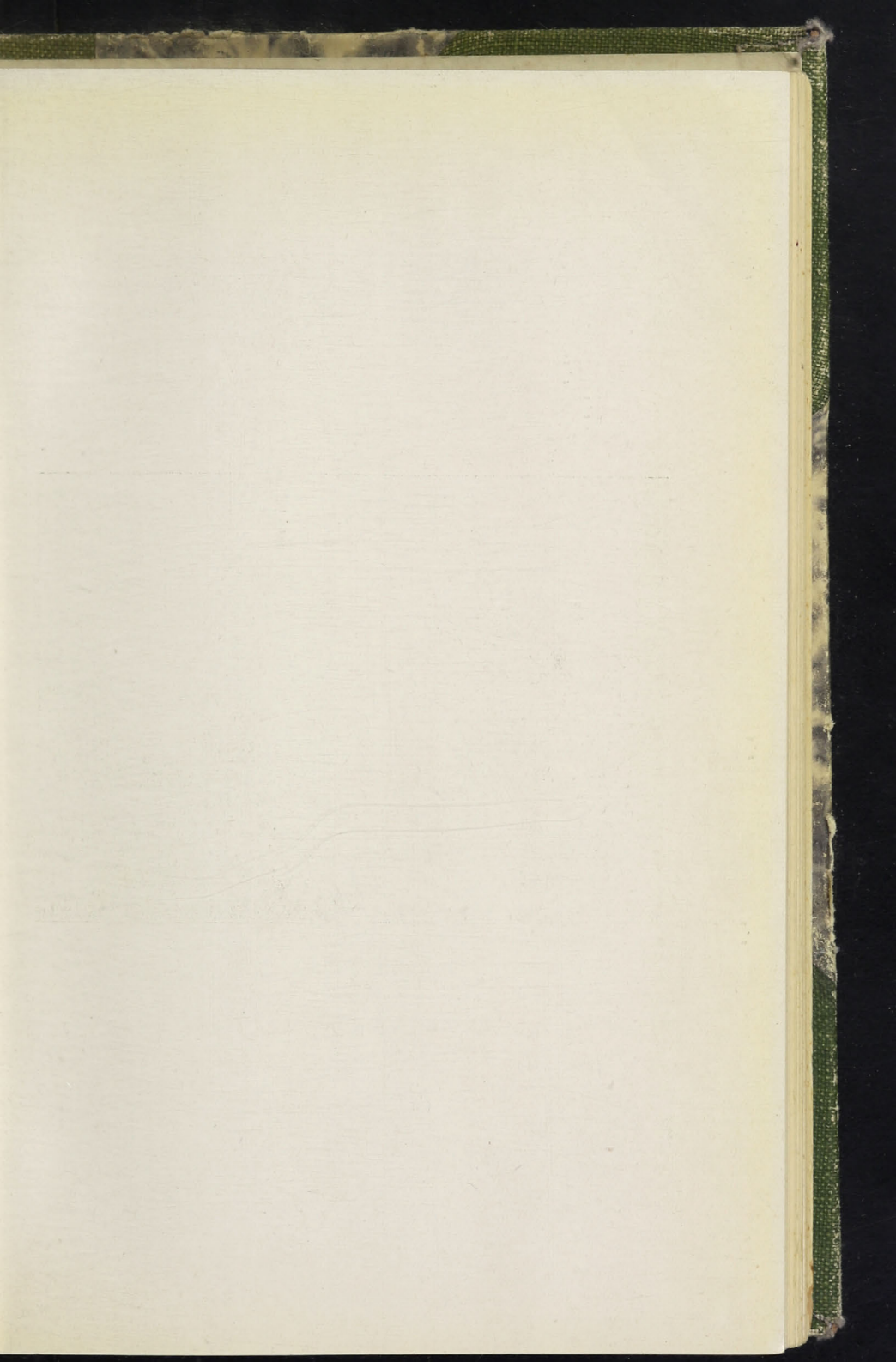
The amusement park on the terrain vague was considerably reduced by building which has been and is still going on, but during an hour or two that I was there all was peaceful and happy, and the affluence at the shrine correspondingly satisfactory.

B 6 (v. Sectional Map VIII)

BENHAWI سيدي البنهاوي

I heard of this mouldid for the first time in 1353, and then too late to assist at the principal night, 13th Gumad I, and saw only what small celebrations and decorations remained the following day, at the "Khatama" Friday, 14th Gumad Awal, (23-8-34). It seemed definitely not held in 1354, and I have not been able to ascertain if it has been celebrated since.

I include it mainly because the little mosque is in a uice old street, in one of the most beautiful and unspoilt parts of Cairo, close to the Bab el-Futuh. It is best reached by autobus, No. 12, which plies between Bab el-Hadid and Beit el-Qadi, and passes through Sh. Benhawi on the way to the Beit el-Qadi, but





The Convent of Sitna Damiana

not on the reverse journey. Or autobus No. 11 between Abbasia and Beit el-Qadi can be used as that passes through Bab-el-Futuh both ways, and Sh. Benhawi ends at the Bab on the north side.

It must have been a primitive little mouldid, but attractive from the situation, and its very simplicity.

BELQAS (Delta)

D 1 (v. Delta Map, — in covers)

DAMIANA (Sitna) ⁽¹⁾ القديسة دميانة

I regret never having seen this great Coptic mouldid, nor even the celebrated convent of Saint Damiana, which Marcos, a Roman Governor, her father erected as a retreat and protection for her and her maids, who, however were all martyred, because they refused to apostatise at the time of the Diocletian persecutions.

The convent is to the north of Belqas in the Behera province, in the direction of Damietta. Belqas is on the E.S.R. not far from Shirbin, but I do not know how far from the Convent.

My old friend Kemp, who explored the desert and the Delta alone more thoroughly and more lovingly than anyone I have met, gives an interesting account of his very rough and bumpy journey of forty miles on a mule, with a woodcut of the convent: but that was nearly half a century ago, so perhaps the railway arrangements were then very different from now.

Note 1 Many Delta people stoutly maintain that her name is Gemiana.

(i) Kemp does not describe the mouldid, but gives the date as 12 Beshans. That date is still observed, for several newspapers announced it for, "from the 12th to 20th May 1938" — the 20th being 12 Beshans — and, "for Monday 12 Beshans 1656" (20-5-40, 13 Rabia II 1359)

ALEXANDRIA

D 2 (v. Map of Delta)

DANIEL (El-Nebi Daniel) النبي دانيال

I have been assured that the Nebi Daniel has his mouldid at Alexandria, and understand that it centres about the mosque of his name, but beyond that am lamentably ignorant, not having been able so far to connect it with or disconnect it from the remarkable Nubian procession that takes place on the 10th Zu' el-Higga, the first day of the Courban Bairam.

Judaic and Byzantine elements are so conspicuous in the *zeffa* which goes from the mosque of Nebi-Daniel to that of Sidi Morghani, that they support certain curious theories concerning the religious history of the once powerful nation of the Nubians.

My attention has been drawn to an article in which this thesis is developed by Dr. Pappalexis, — so significant in some

Note 1 Two articles on this subject are contained in his book, "This and That of Egyptian Illustration", a book not only written and illustrated by him, but printed, woodcuts and all, by himself here in Cairo.

The same is true of another book of his with which he presented me, — a collection of his poems commencing with one entitled "The Bashful Earthquake".

Further Note —

There is an excellent note on Sitna Damiana (or Dimiana as he calls her) in "The Oriflamme in Egypt", by Dean Butcher of Cairo, a charming book about the battle of Mansura, &c. His wife points out in her "Story of the Church in Egypt", that there is considerable confusion between the two Saints Catharine and Damiana, particularly as regards their ikons.

of its points, that I reproduce the part bearing directly on the zeffa, regretting that the length of the entire article precludes my adding his further suggestive and illuminating information on "La Grandeur et Decadence des Nubiens".

(The extract in my possession is not dated, but I imagine was written three or four years ago.)

Une curieuse survivance religieuse.

(De Notre Rédaction D'Alexandrie)

Les Nubiens ont-ils pratiqué successivement les religions juive et chrétienne avant leur conversion à l'islamisme ?

Cette hypothèse n'est pas inadmissible quand on compare la procession religieuse en honneur chez les Nubiens, à l'occasion du premier jour du Grand Bairam avec celles des juifs du temps de David, ainsi que les litanies byzantines, conservées chez les grecs-orthodoxes.

Notre concitoyen, le Dr. C. Pappalexis a fait, à ce sujet, dans la revue hellène "Pan égyptia" du 20 janvier dernier, la description d'une procession des Nubiens d'Alexandrie, qui n'a rien des fêtes nombreuses des musulmans du pays.

"La procession" a observé le Dr. Pappalexis, "part de la Mosquée Nébi Daniel pour aboutir à celle de Marghani, qui est spécialement affectée aux besoins religieux des Nubiens.

La Mosquée de Nébi Daniel est maintenant universellement connue, car c'est dans ses hypogées qu'on place généralement le tombeau d'Alexandrie le Grand.

La procession nubienne n'a pas la simplicité des autres fêtes musulmanes : elle ressemble plutôt à une pompe byzantine et s'il n'y avait les très nombreux tarbouches et les gallabieh qui la suivent on croirait une solennité grecque.

Tout d'abord les servants qui composent la principale partie du cortège sont habillés comme les diacres grecs. Il ne manque ni les dalmatiques polychrones, ni l'étole ou plutôt le "sticharion", la bande longue et large qui s'enroule autour de la taille, puis remonte sur les épaules, descend sur la poitrine et retombe jusqu'aux

genoux. Ensuite nous voyons les divers encensements avec des encensoires de toutes sortes, ici simples, là luxueusement travaillés, ou brûle un encens de la même composition que celui en usage dans les églises grecques, à en juger par le parfum qu'il répand et la couleur de la substance. Mais ce qui attire l'attention ce sont les nombreuses bannières en soie disposées en longues séries entre les rangs des drapeaux, portées très haut et couvertes d'inscriptions brodées en or sur fond rouge, bleu, vert ou d'autre couleur. S'il y avaient aussi des cierges et si les assistants portaient un autre couvre-chef, par exemple le bonnet des Perses, on se croirait à une litanie chrétienne. Mais la fête a lieu pendant le jour et les cierges seraient déplacés.

La fête d'Alexandrie rappelle aussi celle des anciens Juifs, au moins celle que fit David pendant le transfert de l'Arche dans sa nouvelle capitale, Jérusalem. A la tête du cortège marche un chœur accompagné de typanons. Tous sont des jeunes gens, des éphèbes. Ils ouvrent la marche comme faisaient dans l'antiquité les prêtres lorsqu'ils accompagnaient l'idole de leur dieu, ou les lévites lorsqu'ils accompagnaient le transfert de l'Arche.

Les danseurs ne sont pas nombreux, trois ou quatre au plus, et ils dansent au rythme des tympanons battus par les éphèbes. Puis vient un groupe de fidèles ayant à sa tête des jeunes gens, richement vêtus qui portent les drapeaux et les bannières et d'autres qui chantent des hymnes. Derrière le groupe on conserve un vide assez large, pour permettre aux porteurs des encensoires de circuler librement afin d'encenser tout le monde. Cet arrangement se répète à l'infini. Des nouveaux chanteurs, des danseurs, des bannières, puis un nouveau vide et ainsi de suite. L'ordre est maintenu par des hommes spécialement affectés à la surveillance de tout ce monde et qui sont choisis parmi les vieux. Ils précèdent chaque série et veillent surtout à conserver les vides successifs. La musique des chanteurs est analogue à celle des Byzantins, c'est-à-dire orientale."

D 3 (v. Sectional Map XI)

DARGHAM

ميدى درغام

This very pleasant little moulid is held near the end of Shaaban. I witnessed it in 1355, and again on Friday 27 Shaaban 1357, when it seemed to have developed considerably.

It is in a Hara of the same name as the mosque, off Sharia Moh. Ali, on the right going towards the citadel, and not far from the Ataba end. It is just beyond the Hara and Moulid of Ansari. It has no secular side. In 1357, in addition to zikrs there was a whirling dervish late in the evening.

D 4 (v. Sectional Map VIII)

DASHTOUTI (Sidi Abd el-Qader el-Dashtouti)

سيدي عبد القادر الدشطوطي

The Moulid of Tashtoushi, (as he is usually called), is one of the few limited to a definite date, being held on the 26th Ragab, coincident with the Leilat el-Ma'rag, or Leilat el-Isra'⁽¹⁾, the night of the miraculous journey of the Prophet on the winged horse Buraq to the Seventh Heaven. In 1356, (1937) when, presumably owing to some ambiguity about the moon, the celebrations of Leilat el-Ma'rag were on Saturday evening, 27th Ragab, both in Alexandria, and at Sultan Rifai in Cairo, instead of Friday, which according to the official calendar was the true date, the Tashtoushi moulid was correspondingly put off from Friday to Saturday. (This coincidence is probably due to one of the Sidi's reputed miracles being intimately bound up with the miracle of the Ma'rag,—as described below.)

The Mosque of el-Dashtouti is easily reached from the Ataba by any tram going up Sharia Farouk to where the Khalig crosses the track. A few minutes' walk to the North, along the Khalig, or via Sh. el-Adawi, parallel to it brings one to the site of the moulid. Or of course a Khalig tram serves, in which case one gets down at the first tram station north of the crossing. Also Autobus No. 12 from the station to Beit el-Qadi passes through Sikkat Baghala which is close to Tashtoushi.

Tashtoushi was a most popular and celebrated Saint, and his moulid one of the biggest and most solemn events of the

Moslem year in Cairo. He was essentially a Cairene, associated with Maadi, Giza, Ghamra, and particularly with the district of his mosque, where a street bears his name.

Abd el-Wahab el-Shaarani who met him on the 1st Ramadan 912 (1506 A.D.) gives a long account in his "Tobaqat"⁽³⁾, of Tashtoushi's affectionate relations with great and small,⁽²⁾ and of the miracles he wrought. He groups him with the *Magazib*, a term now used, like *maganin* for fools,⁽⁴⁾ but really meaning those divinely entranced. Indeed the singular of this word, *مجنوب* *magzub*, was the name of many eminent Sheikhs, such as Sheikh Ali el-Dameri el-Magzub, Khalil el-Magzub, Aamr el-Magzub, &c.

He neither wore hat nor shoes, even on his pilgrimage to Mecca, and had already acquired a reputation for holiness at Medina, and there on arrival, he was too humble to enter the sanctum sanctorum, but laid his head on the threshold of the Bab el-Salam, and slept. ^[5]

The Sultan Kaitbey ^[6] held him in great affection and esteem, and on one occasion obeyed a summons to the grave where Tashtoushi then dwelt, and acceded to his demand for ten thousand dinars for the poor. And the poor got it, for the saint brooked no false claims, and no peculation by his almoners, and regarded a *waqf* as a very sacred trust. One who lapsed is said to have paid for his cupidity with his life.

Note 2

«له القبول التام عند الخس والعام»

Note 3

الطبقات الكبرى — سيدي عبد الوهاب

Note 4

«كان صاحبا وهيئة هيئة المجاذيب»

Note 5

«لما وصل الى المدينة المنرفة وضع خده علي عتبة باب السلام وتام . . . ولم يدخل»

Note 6

سلطان قايتباي

When the "gazb", [7] the Spirit of the Lord, came upon him, his life was profoundly modified, much as were the lives of S. Francis and the other saints who received the stigmata. He is reputed to have fasted from all food and drink for forty days, and when his disciples suggested that he had given up praying he could hardly be sure whether indeed he had prayed, or at any rate in the accepted manner, so exalted had been his ecstasy.

Then rumours of amazing miracles spread abroad. It was declared that he slept with two different persons during all the same night in different places, and the Sheikh el-Islam and the Sheikh Galal el-Din el-Siouti investigated and confirmed this. When Kaitbey hesitated about journeying from the Nile to the Euphrates, and consulted Tashtoushi, and was told to go in peace and safety, he and his companion, the Emir Yussef, were surprised at repeatedly seeing him at the head of their party, but disappearing when they dismounted to accost him, but much more surprised on arrival at Aleppo to find him there, and in bed ill, where he had been for many weeks according to the neighbours.

Lane, in his "Modern Egyptians" tells of another miracle, which suggests in an interesting way the close association of Sidi Dashtouti with the Leilat el-Ma'rag. An unbelieving Sultan whilst playing chess with his wazir in a public place scoffed at the miracle of the Prophet's ascension, on the ground that Buraq the winged horse could never have carried Muhammad to Jerusalem, and then to Heaven, and back again to Mecca so quickly that the Prophet's bed had not had time to cool. Tashtoushi, who was hard by, shortly after offered to take on the Sultan at shatrang (chess), stipulating that in the event of his winning, he was to be obeyed in a little matter.

The expert Sultan, seeing no possibility of being beaten by the Sheikh, willingly agreed, and when in effect he found his king check-mated⁽⁸⁾, he obeyed Tashtoushi's order to plunge in a tank. On entering the water he found that he was in a royal palace, had changed his sex and was a fair long-haired maiden, who married a prince and brought up three children. When at length he came out of the palace, he also emerged from the water, and was amazed to find his wazir, Tashtoushi, and the rest around the chess board, and on realising that, as they assured him, he could not have been under the water a single minute without drowning, he recanted his unbelief in the miracle of the Ma'rag, and became a good Moslem.

Tashtoushi built several mosques and converted many to Islam. When once his scandalised followers blamed him for going to the Christian quarter, and sleeping with a youth who was "Nasrani", he put himself again into good odour by assuring them that the youth was no Nasrani, — for he had converted him, and had made an excellent Moslem of him.

When he felt a presentiment of death, he ordered the builders of his tomb to hasten with its completion, and to so construct it that no one could share it with him. Then he wept and died in the year of the Hegira 930, (1523) and all the great ones of Cairo, and many from afar came to do honour at his grave, and amongst them Malik el-Emira, Kheir Bey.

It is no wonder, then, that Lane, writing a hundred years ago, and describing barely half a dozen of the very greatest moulids, should include that of Tashtoushi in this select few. Besides the solemn inauguration of the moulid, the Sheikh el-Bakri took up his residence on the spot some days before the Night of the Ma'ràg, and entertained poor and rich most

Note 8.

Shatarang شطرنج or chess is of course an ancient Eastern game, whose origin appears in such terms as Check-mate, الشيخ مات el-Sheikh mat, the Sheikh is dead.

lavishly. An ancestor of his had been made "Wakil" of a *waqf* for the poor by Sidi Dashtouti. Then on the 26th Ragab, the Sheikh el-Saïdiya, after preaching and praying at noon in the mosque of Sidna Husein, came riding with a hundred dervishes, and then when with many others they had prostrated themselves before the mosque, he rode over their closely packed bodies, — he alone being reputed to have the power of performing the "Dosah" to the benefit of souls and without injury to bodies. Then the mouldid "*battait son plein*", until late on the 27th, when, after the "khitama"⁽⁹⁾, the Sheikh el-Bakri returned in procession.

Alas, what a drab and trumpery affair the mouldid has become, under the wet blanket of the modern outlook, and kill-joy restrictions which *pari passu* slay also religious fervour. Even a few years ago the mosque was thronged, and eagerness shown to join in the zikrs; in the lively streets, stalls were raised for singing sheikhs, and the cafés were full of mirth, and the band of the Reformatory was a bright and tuneful spot opposite the corner of the mosque, and children could enjoy swings on the tiny hill by the khalig, and even watch the antics of Qara Goz.

The year of the Prophet 1356 (1937 A.D.) saw the "apococytosis" of poor Tashtoushi: no sheikhs sang, no children swung, no band played, few people prayed in the mosque whose outer wall showed a line of police askaris, as the one bright spot. The only thing to interest the multitude was a prison van, like a mighty cage from the Zoo, in Sh. el-Dashtouti, into which offenders were popped to be jeered at or pitied through the bars. A good thing indeed to immobilise the rare disturbers of the mouldid's peace, but why depress and disappoint a host of poor and worthy people: why trample on fine old traditions, and treat the memory of the great miracle worker, and illustrious Cairene with such a miserable simulacrum of the old glory.

Note 9. Khitama خاتمة, final prayers.

(I think it was in 1357 (1938), that an English visitor to Egypt accompanied me to this moulid, but remembering a dinner engagement, had only time to locate the mosque, and note the decorations, and a few circumcision booths and such like. Having read Lane's account, these seemed promising, and he asked me to meet him there at 9. 30. This I did, but he had brought the whole dinner party, an English Professor, and three foreign diplomats, all in evening dress with tall hats or opera caps. We proved an immense attraction, and were joined by great numbers who evidently regarded us as the best show of the evening, and as the nucleus of an up to date procession, till a much-worried police officer "besought us to depart out of their coasts".)

D. 5 (v. Map of Delta)

DESUQI (Sidi Ibrahim el-Desuqi) سيدي ابراهيم الدسوقي

It may seem a little out of place to include this in the Cairo moulids, as of course the great celebrations are at Desuq in the Delta where Desuki was buried in 1278 A.D., but it is interesting to know that at Saqiat Mekka, ساقية مكة close to Giza, (and therefore to Cairo), we have representatives of the illustrious line, holding, I am told, the Diploma,—Sanad, سند — of the Tariqa Desuqia, الطريقة الدسوقية. These hold zikrs, readings, and quiet ceremonies in honour of their Founder, though he has not even a cenotaph there.

I have never been, but sent two reliable muraslas to it Monday 17th Gumad I, 1353, (27-8-34); and in 1357, it was reported to me as held on Sunday, 18th Gumad II, (14-8-38), the same day as Sidi Oqbi, which he said was the case each year. I know of no reason for this synchronism.

Though Egypt justly claims Sidi Ibrahim el-Desuki, he is far from being a local saint merely. His cult in Palestine, Syria, and some other places perhaps exceeds that in this country. With the Walis Abd el-Qadir el-Galani, Ahmad el-Rifai, and

Ahmad el-Bedawi, he is said to "hold up the earth". These four great founders of mighty Dervish Orders, Turuq, طرق are therefore known as the "Poles". They are deemed as pre-existent in the Spirit of Muhammad, and as trees of which the other Turuq are the branches. It will be noticed that of these "Four Poles", Egypt can boast also Ahmad Sayed el-Bedawi, buried at Tanta, and honoured by perhaps the greatest mouldid known, and though Ahmad el-Rifai lies at Bagdad his cult in Egypt is immense.

E. 1 (v. Sectional Map XI)

EMERY I سيدي عمري

Present on Friday, 20 Shaaban 1352

„ 15 „ 1353

„ 18 „ 1354

in each case the third Friday in Shaaban.

The little mosque is very near the khalig, between it and Sharia Moh. Ali. Any tram from Ataba el-Khadra going in the direction of the Citadel will serve. Leave the tram at the first stop after Bab el-Khalq, and proceed for a few minutes up the little street to the right.

It is a small and squalid mouldid, attended sometimes by dirty, officious, offensive people, especially of the hooligan class, and the immediate surroundings are not very attractive. There are no secular attractions beyond a few cafés and singing groups near the mosque, and it is one of the very few mouldids not much to be recommended to visitors.

E. 2 (v. Sectional Map XVI)

EMERY II سيدي عمري

Present on Friday, 21 Shaaban, 1355, (6-11-36)

The small rather modern mosque of Sidi Emery, is in the hara of that name off Sh. Ibn el-Touloun, near the great mosque of Touloun, and between it and the gabel.

Bus 4 which can be picked up at the Gezira, English Bridge, Bab el-Luq etc., takes one to Touloun; also bus 13 from Giza to the mosque of Saida Zenab, and any tram to Saida Zenab leaves one a short interesting walk, but the best way is by bus 18 plying between Darasa and Sitna Nefisa, via Ataba el-Khadra, in which case it should be left at Sh. Ibn el-Touloun, and that street followed past the big mosque.

It is a tiny mouldid, and perhaps mainly interesting from its position near Touloun. In 1355 a great sheikh from Sultan el-Rifai attracted many in the evening.

F. 1 (v. Sectional Map I)

FARAG سيدي فرج

On one of the two occasions on which I saw this mouldid I noted the date—Thursday, 7th Rabia II, 1353, (19-7-34) — but have not found it at or about that time since. According to informants on the spot, it can only be held when the piece of almost waste land in front of the mosque on which it is kept is free from crops. (Several other mouldids, especially provincial ones, have their dates more or less dependent on the cultivation.)

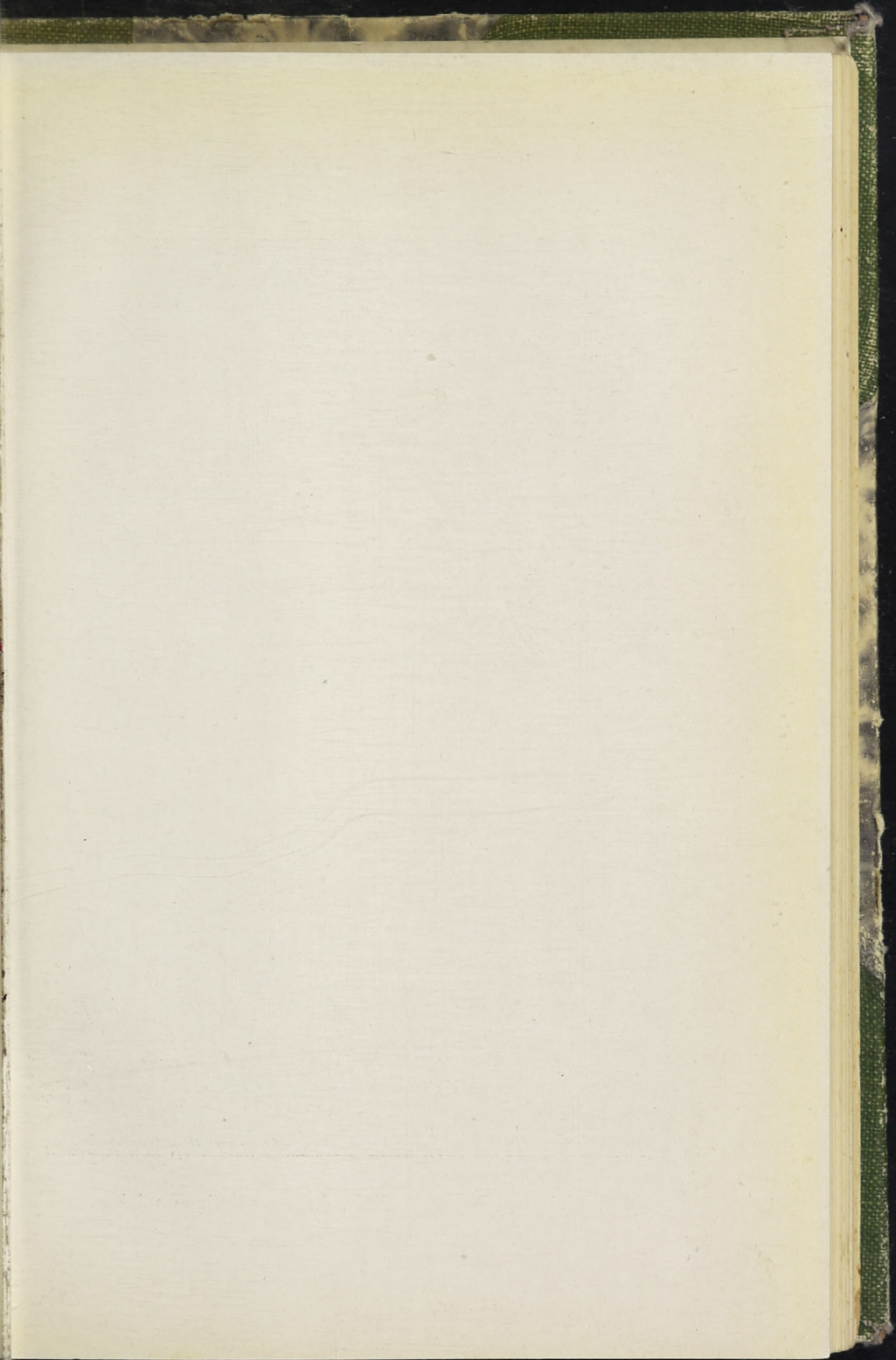
This spot can be reached by car via Gazirat el-Badran, or by a walk of about 10 minutes from the level crossing in Sharia Saptia, to which Tram 4 takes one, or by a rather longer walk from the Rod el-Farag track, Tram 13, leaving the tram at the raised part shortly before the site of the mouldid of Sidi Hili.

It is a pretty and jolly mouldid, or was when I saw it, with zikrs about the mosque, and theatres, Punch and Judy, performing dogs and the rest away in the patch of land.

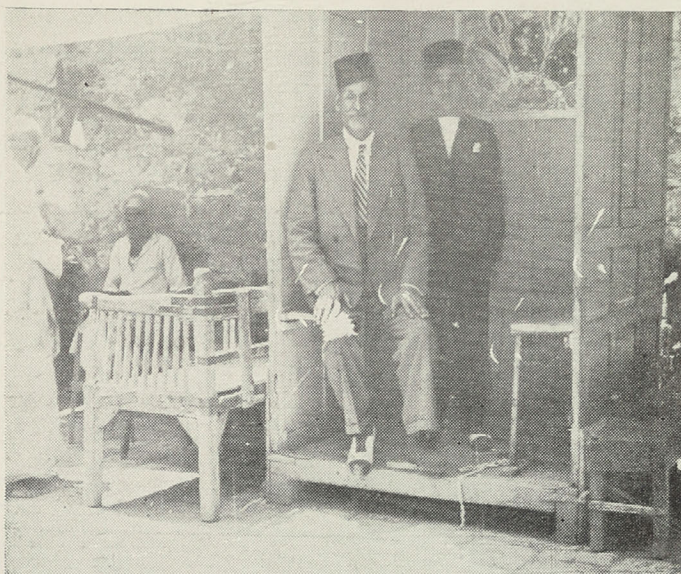
F. 2 (v. Map of Upper Egypt) ABU TIG .

FARGHAL سيدي فرغال

This is one of the important mouldids of Upper Egypt, and is held at or near Abu Tig in Rabia II.



Moulid Fatima el Nebawiya.



Dr. Mahmud Enayet Allah, doyen of Circumcision.

F 3 (v. Sectional Map XIV)

FATIMA EL-NEBAWIYA

ستنا فاطمة النبوية

This important mouldid is usually held on the last Monday of Rabia I: anyway this was the case in 1351, 1353, 1356, 1359 on which four occasions I was present, but in 1348 I think it was on a later date, and in 1357 the great night was Monday, 7th Rabia II, and in 1358 Monday, 3rd Rabia II (22/5/39).

The little mosque is in the Darb el-Ahmar district, one of the least spoilt and least known bits of Cairo, though not far from Tabana and the popular mosque of Aqsunkur, (the Blue Mosque), but away to the East towards the *gabel*.

Though as a function the mouldid has dwindled, a ramble is well worth while, through the narrow streets beneath mighty buildings, whose stones in places are so immense that one's attention hardly strays beyond them. — "Quand les pierres disent de telles choses on oublie les édifices".

It is easily reached by Bus 17 which on its way to Bab el-Wazir passes the entry to sundry gaily beflagged little streets on the left, either of which leads in a very few minutes to the heart of the mouldid.

Whether I had been extraordinarily unobservant in previous years, or whether 1351 (1932) was an epoch in Egyptian mouldids I do not know, but I rarely if ever noticed either public circumcision booths or Sudanese music and dancing before that date. In 1351 the former were most conspicuous at Fatima el-Nebawiya, and the latter, though too far from the mosque to call attention, were big and numerous in a side street.

The booth of Dr. Mahmud Enayat Allah, the doyen of this guild was at the door of the mosque, and those of Dr. Nadi and others in Hara el-Nebawiya and the Sharia of the same name. Each booth had its large framed picture illustrating the operation. An European doctor to whom I mentioned this, and who was in the habit of charging L.5 to parents desiring to mutilate

their offspring, greatly marvelled that anything so delicate could be achieved so summarily for nothing or a few piastres, with results* enviably satisfactory and safe; and desiring to witness the technique accompanied me on the penultimate day of the moulid. Though these medical gentlemen showed no desire to conceal the secrets of their skill, and were most obliging, we had come at an off time, when there were few patients, and only one operation, that on a little girl, in action. As my companion was only remaining a day or two in Egypt he expressed his willingness to pay for anyone the small customary fee, and 5 piastres over to the patient. The response was surprising, and one of the volunteers was an old gentleman who looked about seventy, to whom it was explained with difficulty that certain things can only happen once in a lifetime.

In 1353 (1934) moulids seem to have reached their zenith, for modern times, as witness a notice in the Arabic papers of that date, which reads,

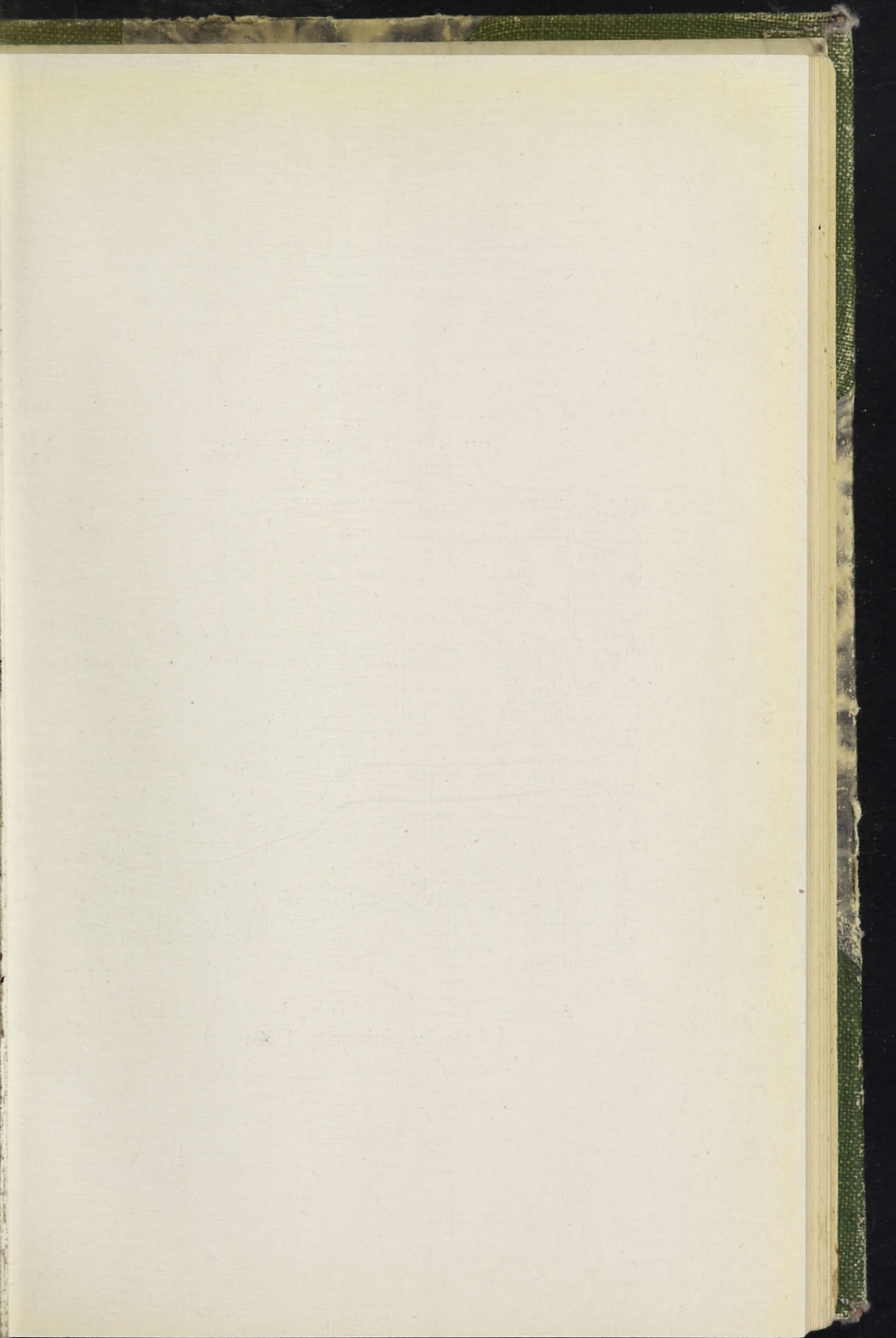
“MOULID EL-SAIDA FATIMA

The Ministry of Interior has authorised the observance of the Moulid of El-Saida Fatima El-Nebawiya by the people of the Darb el-Ahmar, Cairo, for a period of fifteen days beginning today and ending Monday evening, 9 July 1934, and H. E. Abd el-Magsud Khadr, Naqib el-Sada el-Ashraf of Giza Mudiria, has undertaken the decorations and ceremonies in honour of the night of commemoration of this majestic moulid.”

It should be mentioned in this connection that the full title ‘Naqib el-Ashraf’ is a very eminent one in Islam, it is at least as high as ‘Patriarch’ in Christendom. The Naqib el-Sada or

* Note by an English Doctor, resident in Egypt,—

“This is perfectly true,—European circumcision necessitates half an hour’s anaesthetic, an intimate operation, a dozen stitches, copious dressings, and a L.5 fee. Arabic is instantaneous, needs no anaesthetic, little dressing, and a shilling fee, and gives infinitely better results.”



Moulid
of
Sitna Fatima el-Nebawiya.



An adjacent tomb of considerable sanctity
(Murasla Muhammad Mousa)

Sheikh el-Sada, is the lineal descendant of the Khalif Ali, and "occupies the carpet" of that great Founder, the spiritual throne. There is another who "occupies the carpet" of the Khalif Omr, and yet a third, the greatest of all, and ruler of all Cairo Dervishes, whose "carpet" is that of the first Khalif, Abu Bakr. He, of course, is the Sheikh el-Bakri, Naqib el-Ashraf, (Chief of the Sharifs), who figures largely at the Moulid el-Nebi, and other great moulids and Islamic functions.

(These Naqaïb are commonly credited with supernatural powers. Early in the century, for instance, I was assured in the palanquin of the Naqib last named, that the Khedive Abbas Hilmi had been smitten by a dreadful infirmity for speaking disrespectfully about him, but on humbling himself in the dust before the representative of Abu Bakr, he was miraculously cured.)

Three years later, 1357, when I went with Eric Gill the sculptor and other visitors, the moulid had still much of its old charm and characteristics, and they were edified and deeply interested: but on Rabia II, 1357 (6. 6. 38), an unpleasant air of insincerity had crept into the moulid, demonstrating convincingly the ill results of restraining the natural expression of the people's piety and emotions. Going in the afternoon to see the zeffa disappointed people told me there was not to be one, and I was presented to a forlorn-looking sheikh whom they had expected to mount as Khalifa and follow to some shrine.

The original of the announcement, transcribed on the previous page into English, was as follows:

مولد السيدة فاطمة

صرحت وزارة الداخلية بإدارة مولد السيدة فاطمة النبوية بحمي الدرب الأحمر في القاهرة
لمدة خمسة عشر يوماً ابتداءً من اليوم وتنتهي مساء يوم الاثنين ٩ يوليو سنة ١٩٣٤
وقد أقام حضرة السيد عبد المقصود خضر نقيب السادة الاشراف بمديرية الجيزة الزينات
لاحياء الليلة بذكرى هذا المولد الجليل

Whilst talking to him I was greatly puzzled at hearing music, rather blatant from some brass instruments, and seeing a little crowd escorting a turbaned rider. A zeffa after all, I thought, but some rival Khalifa, and straightway followed. My first shock was when we were about to emerge by the side of a beautiful mosque detached on all sides, into the main road near the *caracol*; a carter blocking the way made no effort to make room for the "Khalifa", and addressed that dignitary in language worse than flippant, to which he replied in terms I can not put down, starting a duel between the two of coarse badinage, and to increase my amazement the people laughed and chaffed. We ultimately halted in the court of a large private house, where the "Khalifa" in response to requests from the windows above descended from his horse, did a comic dance and held up his garment to catch coins which they were throwing down. "What manner of holy man is this?" I asked. "Oh, he is a *Magzub*" * was the reply: "isn't he funny?"

So I was no longer assisting at the ancient picturesque devotion of the Zeffa, but at a mockery. I came away.

Sitna Fatima el-Nebawiya was no less a personage than the daughter of Sidna Hussein, and great-grand-daughter of the Prophet. She was therefore great-aunt of the other Fatima el-Nebawiya, bint Gaafar Sadiq, the Sixth Imam. (The mould of this namesake is held on an early Tuesday of Shaaban in a street of the same name (Nebawiya) near Bab el-Khalq, behind the Appeal prison.)

May Allah see that the great-grand-daughter of His prophet have a zeffa this year worthy of her lofty state, and not a vulgar clown to usurp so honourable a position.

* Note (1) *Magzub* مجزوب which in its original meaning is entranced—carried away by God—is commonly used, as in this case, for a fool or buffoon.

It is painful to have to add a note on the moulid of Monday 28 Rabia I (6-5-40), within the war period, but before that had assumed alarming proportions. In point of fact I could not ascertain any connection between the war and the happenings about the shrine of the grand-daughter of the Prophet.

This is referred to in the Preface, in striking contrast to the happy peaceful evening enjoyed by the people in the royal square, for this was the occasion of the king's accession.

I had seen the moulid timidly working up on two of the preliminary evenings, and though late after the royal entertainment, (after 10 perhaps), went to the great *dénouement*. The usually bright Tabana district was gloomy, and on turning up one of the streets towards the mosque I was stopped by an askari, and told that it was forbidden to go there. Though this was repeated elsewhere I finally arrived by a round about way, to find sheer desolation. I enquired the cause of Sheikhs, residents, police (including an officer), and visitors, and elicited no reason. One indeed gave me in lieu of valid reason, that there had been loose women in the neighbourhood, and took me to the place where these had offended, and in truth I needed a guide, it was so far from the afflicted shrine. All whom I spoke to, and those I did not, seemed distressed, — except perhaps one Italian-speaking visitor, who remarked, — “You are too late for the raid: except for the costumes how splendidly it would have filmed, — as a ghetto in Warsaw with the Gestapo at work !”

F. 4 (v. Sectional Map XI)

FATIMA EL-NEBAWIYA BINT GAAFAR SADIQ

السيدة فاطمة النبوية بنت جعفر صادق

Always held on a Tuesday early in Shaaban: in 1353, 1355, and 1356, the first Tuesday: in 1354, 1357 and 1359 (10. 9. 40) the second.

This must not be confused with the moulid of Fatima el-Nebawiya held in the month of Rabia in the Darb el-Ahmar

district, (which see). They are both in a street called by the same name, el-Nebawiya, but the tomb of Bint Gaafar Sadiq is behind the Governorate and prison, and therefore reached by any Citadel or Khalig tram or bus.

This is clearly the daughter of the Sixth Imam, Abdalla Gaafar Sadiq, the inscription over the door of the shrine being

« هذا مقام السيدة فاطمة النبويه بنت جعفر صادق »

“This is the ‘maqam’ of Saida Fatima el-Nebawiya
bint Gaafar Sadiq.”

She is therefore the grand-daughter of Zein el-Abdin, and descended directly from the Prophet through Husein, and is sister to Sitna Ayesha and Sitna Sakina, both of whom as well as Zein el-Abdin have moulids in Cairo.

It is, or was, a small but lively and attractive moulid, and the shrine well worth a visit: but it has changed character in a curious way. When I first saw it in 1853 the very numerous zikrs dominated everything. They were very weird and earnest in the cave-like “sous-sol” chambers of the *Sikka*, and throughout the range of the moulid. In 1854 more than one of these *caverns* had become cafés of sorts, and two others presented strange sights. In one, youthful dervishes, or would-be dervishes were whirling, and in the other was a boys’ zikr, conducted so sedately and with such apparent seriousness, that I did not see any one of the little chaps rebuked by his elders.

But the really curious change came in 1855, when except in the tomb it was difficult to find a zikr, and on the other hand the street under the prison windows was full of little gaming stalls and amusements of all sorts, to the great delight of the occupants of the cells who joined in vociferously from their windows. This modification was quite paradoxical as it came just when the *mot d'ordre* was to raise the spiritual and religious side of moulids at the expense of what was considered profane. In effect exactly the opposite came about; but all was orderly and happy, and nothing to shock the gentlemen up at their windows.

Another thing in 1355 (1936) which to me was new and peculiar, was the observance of the *asboa*, octave, of the great night on 11th Shaaban, the official consummation of the mouldid having been on the fourth. That, however, took an almost exclusively religious form.

I have never seen a zeffa there, but this is probably my own fault in coming late, as I was assured on arriving after sunset in 1356 (1937) that there had been a very fine procession with mounted *khalifa* in the afternoon.

The daughter of the great VIth Imam was one of the first scape-goats of the war. Her mouldid fixed for Tuesday, 5 Shaaban, (19-9-39) was simply crushed, and her shrine forsaken. Enquiring the reason at a cigarette shop near the end of the Sharia el-Nebawiya, I was taken for an official, and informed in tones of horror, that some wretch had had the audacity to play on a 'Raghul' in the street under the prison. I wonder what his fate was, and why this dear instrument with its immensely long reed, and deep base notes, almost peculiar to Egypt, the delight of visitors and the pride of music-loving Egyptians, should have fallen under a ban. I looked up at the prison windows, generally full of happy faces enjoying an annual treat. Not a face! Poor things, they doubtless found their cells more cheerful than the look-out.

Finding a café open, I called for a *qirfa* (cinnamon tea) and an Arabic paper. In that I read an exhortation from the ancient University, to cheerful acceptance of the situation that might follow from the war, and to carry on as usual. Other equally harmless platitudes followed but the whole tone was so depressing that I felt it should be read aloud in the perfect staging of this little corner of dejection, like Mark Antony's oration in the Roman forum.

MINIA

F. 5 (v. Map of Upper Egypt)

FULI سيدي فولي

I have no information about this mouldid except that it is of local importance in the Minia district of Upper Egypt.

Sheikh Fuli is generally credited with being the Wali who protects us from crocodiles, by preventing their passing North of Minia: but this is contested by the votaries of certain other Walis by the side of the Nile further South.

G. 1 (v. Sectional Map I)

GALADIN سيدي جلادين

This I saw on 27th Shaaban, 1355, (12. 11. 36), but on going more recently about that date I have been informed that I am too late.

It is in a street of the same name in the Bulaq district, off the Suq el-Asr, and adjoining the Haret el-Kurdi, where the mouldid of that name is celebrated. (v. Kurdi)

It is small and bright, without any shows, and centres about the mosque of Galadin. A conspicuous inscription in the mosque is

« رأس الحكمة مخافة الله »

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom”.

G. 2 (v. Sectional Map III)

GALAL سيدي جلال

Held on Sunday, but the day of the month and the month itself varies. It was on 4th Muharem, 1354 when I first discovered it through my murasla, the 20th Muharem in 1355, and 21st Safr in 1356, (2-5-37).

It is in the Sharabia district, behind the railways, about half way between the station of Kubri Limoun and the site of the mouldid of Mazlum, (which see). There is no way of

reaching it as far as I know except by walking, (about half an hour), riding or driving. One misses the good old donkeys when going, and still more on returning, as a cab easily obtained at Kubri Limoun to go there, generally fails to return for one late in the evening.

There is one theatre and a few shows in a long squalid street, and it is hardly worth a visit. I suppose there is a mosque or shrine, but have not found it. It boasts, however, a fair zeffa in the afternoon.

ASYUT.

G. 3 (v. Map of Upper Egypt)

GALAL EL-DIN EL-ASYUTI سيدي جلال الدين الاسيوطي

Being in this most ancient city of Lycopolis in the middle of June 1936, I had the good luck to see the big provincial mouldid in full swing. The great night was on 28th Rabia I, 1355, (18-6-36).

Its features, both religious and secular, were on the whole those of a typical mouldid, but being a rare occurrence in these parts, there was more excitement and intensity than is usual at a Cairo mouldid. A zeal amounting almost to fanaticism animated a group of dervishes, as a party of English friends of mine butted in. These were solemnly warned off the pitch by a venerable turbanned sheikh, to whom their bare or billy-cocked heads and very ifrangy gait was evidently a shock, I think, quite understandably so: but what repelled him and his associates proved an irresistible charm to a multitude of youngsters who formed a moving entourage whithersoever they wended. Staying on in my inconspicuous tarboosh, unchallenged and in peace, I marvelled for the umteenth time at the peculiar insular complex still rife which prevents many from appearing in the Egyptian head-dress except when obliged to by their official functions.

The number of sugar figures, "arusas", great at all mouldids, was here enormous, and many of them of a type no longer see nin

Cairo except rarely, suggestive of Tanagra, or of Pomeian figurines, groups representing the loves of the animals, human and otherwise: of much interest, I am told, anthropologically. Lycopolis was of course a great centre of the animal cult, mummies of which are still abundant, so that the excess of these figurines here is suggestive.

G. 4

GAMAL EL-DIN سيدي جمال الدين

A small mouldid reported as held on Thursday, 17th Gumad el-Akhir 1358 (3-8-39) at Kafr Turmus near Saft.

G. 5

GAMILA ستنا جميلة

Reported as one of the Imam el-Shafei group, held in the tombs about the middle of Shaaban.

G. 6 (v. Sectional Map VIII)

GAML (Sidi Muhammad el-Gaml) سيدي محمد الجمل

A member of the group of small mouldids held at the end of Shaaban near the Bab el-Nasr. The very pretty tomb of the Sidi is in the Harat Guania.

G. 7 (v. Sectional Map XIV)

GANIB سيدي جانب

I was conducted to this on its penultimate night, on Saturday, 28th Shaaban, 1357, (12-10-38), by a dervish with whom I made friends at the little mouldid of Ali el-Gizi in the tombs of the Fatimite Khalifs, but to our distress found that for some reason the police had actively discouraged it by moving on the people who were sitting about in the Sarugia where the tomb is situated, even those recessed back from the road. I did not go the next night so that I cannot tell to what extent it was observed. The district is not nearly as well known as it deserves, though it is very accessible, between Bab el-Mitwali and the Mosque of Sultan Rifai in Sh. Moh. Ali.

G. 8

G HARIB (Sheikh el-Gharib) شيخ الغريب

One of the three little moulids held in the village of Mit Oqba, the others being Sidi Oqbi and Sheikh el-Lashini.

I do not know if it is always the case, but in 1358 all three were held on one evening, Thursday 24 Gumad II (10. S. 39) (v. Oqbi).

G. 9 (v. Sectional Map XVIII)

GIRGIS (Mar Girgis,—St. George) مار جرجس

This Christian moulid, observed by Copts and Orthodox Greeks principally, is naturally held on or very near the Feast Day of the Saint. This being according to the Latin calendar on April 23rd, and the old reckoning being 13 days later, the observance is at the beginning of May. In 1937 it was 2nd May, that is 24th Bermuda 1653, (21 Safr 1356)

It should not be missed, for the old fortress of Trajan in which the Church of S. George, and a Chapel beneath belonging to the Copts are situated, is a picture of light and life. The circular galleries and every part are full of people, visiting the shrine or sitting about meditating or engaged on more social intercourse: and a curious woman's ceremony is observed now as on certain other occasions of circling the head with a mighty and ancient chain. Outside the barbican all is lighthearted enjoyment at the tent cafés and little shows, most of which are just on the other side of the level crossing. Inside the fortress of Babylon too there is unusual animation and light, but the sombre majesty of this classic enceinte with its ancient Coptic churches, synagogue and buildings seems only to become more striking.

Let us hope that this Feast will not go the way of those of S. Mercurius (Abu Sefein), and S. Sergius (Abu Sarga), which according to Butler's notes were brilliant in his day, and now alas, as far as I can ascertain almost vanishing quantities!

I am told there are considerable observances at Asyut.

G. 10 (v. Sectional Map XVII)

GIZI (Sidi Ali el-Gizi) سيدي علي الجيزي

At 9 o'clock of the evening of 28th Shaaban, 1357, (22-10-38), I accidentally came across a small zeffa, with the usual lanterns and tambourines, and the dark banners of the Rifaiya approaching the tombs of the Fatimite khalifs; and joining it, we soon arrived at a *tabut*, that of Sidi Ali el-Gizi, where a religious service commenced leading up to a zikr.

The weird surroundings, and the zeal of a wild-looking, earnest and picturesque little crowd gave a romantic air to this small and obscure mouldid.

Its position is just off the track of tram No. 13 to the west, near the beginning of the tombs.

MINYET EL-QAMH منية الفمح

G. 11 (v. Map of Delta)

GUDA

الشيخ جوده

I am told reliably that this is a big and important mouldid, and was held in the year 1358 on Thursday, 25th Gumad Awal (13-7-39).

Minyet el-Qamh is on the main line between Benha and Zagazig, and about half way between the two. I should like to know whether the name of the next station given on the railway map as El-Gudaiyida has anything to do with Sheikh Goda (or Guda).

H. 1 (v. Sectional Map X.)

HAMZA

شيخ حمزه

Sheikh Hamza favours a Friday for his mouldid, but seems thankful in these days for any date he can obtain, since he is under a sad cloud. In 1351 the chief night was that of Friday 14 Gumad II, in 1353 Friday 28 Gumad I, and in 1354 the date at first fixed, Friday 15 Gumad II, was changed to Sunday 13 Shaaban (10.11.34). Since then it has been quite irregular. In 1359 it was on Friday 29 Gumad I (5-7-40).

The tomb is at the junction of Sharia Balaqsa and Sh. el-Qowala, the latter being the street at right angles to the old front of Bab el-Luq station: the mosque is a little up Balaqsa which opens up at the other end in view of Abdin Palace, and is near and parallel to Emad el-Din.

The secular attractions were of the simplest, not going beyond vendors of biscuits which might or might not contain a prize varying from a millième to a *bariza* (10 piastres), and the quaint sellers of equally quaint articles to a chorus of "ma'lum" from the youngsters. Its great feature was the zeffa from the mosque of El-Ashmawi, which attracted an enthusiastic concourse, but 1351 was the beginning of sorrows, for the pressure and excitement of the people was such that on entering the narrow Balaqsa, the old infirm "Khalifa" fell from his young and frightened horse. Not that he was physically hurt for his supporters caught him before he reached the ground and carried him to the shrine, but many looked on this as an evil omen. This superstition gains support from the fact that things have never gone well since; the moulid has been put off or the zeffa forbidden, and in a recent year someone must have been deemed to have sinned against "morals and religion", and the moulid was afflicted in consequence. I had returned with friends from Meadi, and we were walking down Sh. el-Qowala ignorant that it was Sheikh Hamza's day, until we were suddenly swept nearly off our feet by a rush of terrified votaries pursued by askaris with canes, and the "purge" extended to the walls of the tomb where women were sitting in supposed sanctuary. Disgruntled souls assured us that Abdin caracol was like a concentration camp for the nonce. My poor friends, who had long wanted to see a moulid, are cured of that yearning, and have carried away the idea that such is a pious observance, from which a blessing is looked for through flagellation.

It sometimes happens that an early minor night is more edifying and enjoyable than the final: that was the case on 10 Shaaban 1354, (7-11-35), three days before the apodosis, when I

went through Sh. Balaqsa with the Professor of Anthropology of the Egyptian University and his wife, and finding things very dull, we were about to move on to the mouldid of Sidi Muafaq behind Abu el-Ela. But suddenly a whirling dervish appeared, with the accessories of music, etc., and his performance and endurance were wonderful, and the whole scene impressive.

Resurgat Hamza!

H. 2 (v. Sectional Map XIII.)

HANAFI (Sultan Hanafi)

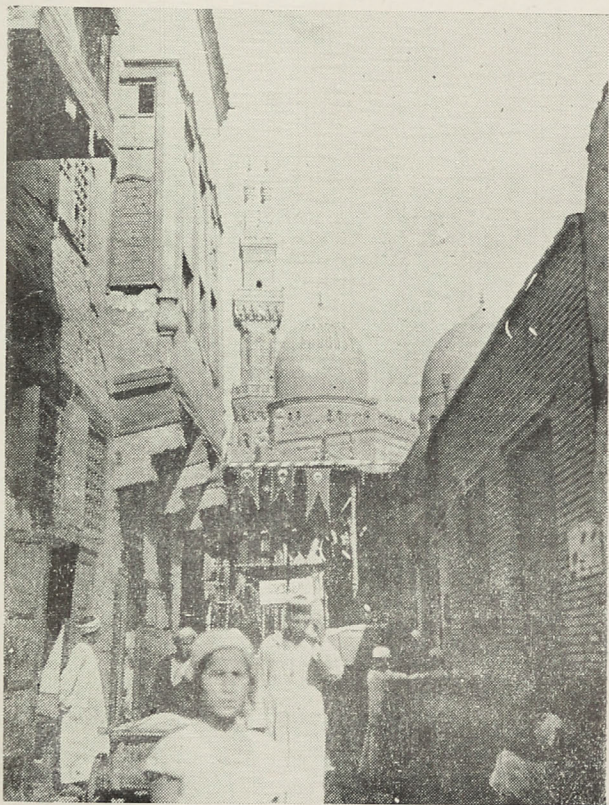
سلطان حنفي

On each of seven occasions that I have been present the main day has been the First Wednesday after mid-Shaabān, so that this is one of the mouldids whose date can be calculated and relied on. It is also an example of the utility of noting the day over a series of years, and establishing one's formula, so to speak, in preference to empirical information about the expected time. Sultan Hanafi runs officially for seven days, but decorations are up for nearly a month, and I have again and again been given a wrong and unduly early date, and should have had a journey in vain, but for preferring the above generalisation.

The two great contiguous mosques of Hanafi and Saleh are in a little known region between Abdin and Saida Zenab, worthy of far better acquaintance. For those not familiar with the intricacies of the district, they are best reached by tram 17 or bus 18, getting out where one leaves Sh. Emad el-Din at Sh. Sheikh Rihan. By walking straight on the small remainder of Emad el-Din and turning down to the left, one is on the spot in a few minutes.

There was a great charm about this mouldid, now unhappily lost. There never were (in my time) theatres, ringas and such like, but in the little side streets the people brought out chairs and musical instruments, and a table decorated with lighted candles and flowers, and the singing and playing had a most pleasant effect, and was often really good, a graceful supplement to the more austere ceremonies at the mosque. Then a

Moulid
of
Sultan Hanafi.



little south of the mosque, on the other side of the road, and well out of sight and sound, a mighty stone gateway and an arched passage leading to a great space amongst old palaces revealed a merry host of youngsters on swings and goosenests, or enjoying the quaintest of Punch and Judy shows and shadow pictures. That survived until 1357 (1938).

Circumcision booths with their great framed pictures are still plentiful, and I am glad to say an innovation of hanging huge banners across the street bearing an inscription offering free treatment, survived only one year, 1351.

A dramatic incident occurred the next year not easily forgotten. A most peaceful evening was suddenly marred by the apparition of a mad woman, blaspheming, and attacking anyone who tried to restrain her, with teeth and nails. Holy men who tried to quiet her regretted their temerity, and police and people were puzzled how to deal with such a fury, whose strength seemed almost supernatural. When even gallant askaris recoiled before her fangs and claws, suddenly a merry handsome lad cut in, laughed cheerily in her face, chaffed her, and ultimately led her quietly away, joking her as they went. He soon returned and I asked him if he knew her? "O, no", said he, "but she's all right!" I have seen and heard of the youth several times since, Mahmud Ali by name, and was recently told that he is with the R. A. F., a fine boxer, and in the running for Olympic honours.

In 1354 the ancient zeffa was suppressed, in the afternoon. In the evening there was a little one to a shrine in a neighbouring street. In that year the Sheikh el-Khouli, of some local importance, showed me remarkable old buildings in the neighbourhood of the Punch and Judy enclosure, referred to above, one immense place suggestive of the well-known Beit el-Qadi. He also offered to show me a treasure worth L.10,000. The Sheikh Abu el-Ela of Aguza showed me much of interest about the mosque, and explained the enormous wooden buttresses and supports which disfigured it, as the result of Sultan Hanafi's injunctions to his

followers against tampering with his mosque by any sort of repairs. That too implicit obedience to such exhortations is dangerous has been demonstrated by the tragedy of Abu el-Ela, amongst other cases, so the authorities have wisely taken the matter in hand and effected considerable repairs to the stone work, and removed the timber. As I write in February 1939, Zu el-Higga 1357, King Farouq is expected shortly to inaugurate the restored mosque. God save the King, and restore the dilapidated mouldid!

Since penning the above I have seen two mouldids under war conditions, and in spite of having to fight against these and more destructive foes at home, they *did* show favourable symptoms, and at the mouldid of Wednesday 22nd Shaaban of this year 1359, (25-9-40) old Punch had come to life again, and was very actively pugnacious in attacking powers of evil new to him in the persons of Hitler and Mussolini. But a sick mouldid takes a lot of healing. Let us hope Sidi Hanafi has kind and pious friends to nurse his feast back to vigour and beauty.

The date of the first Wednesday after mid-Shaaban was strictly adhered to on both of these occasions.

H 3 (v. Sectional Map XIII).

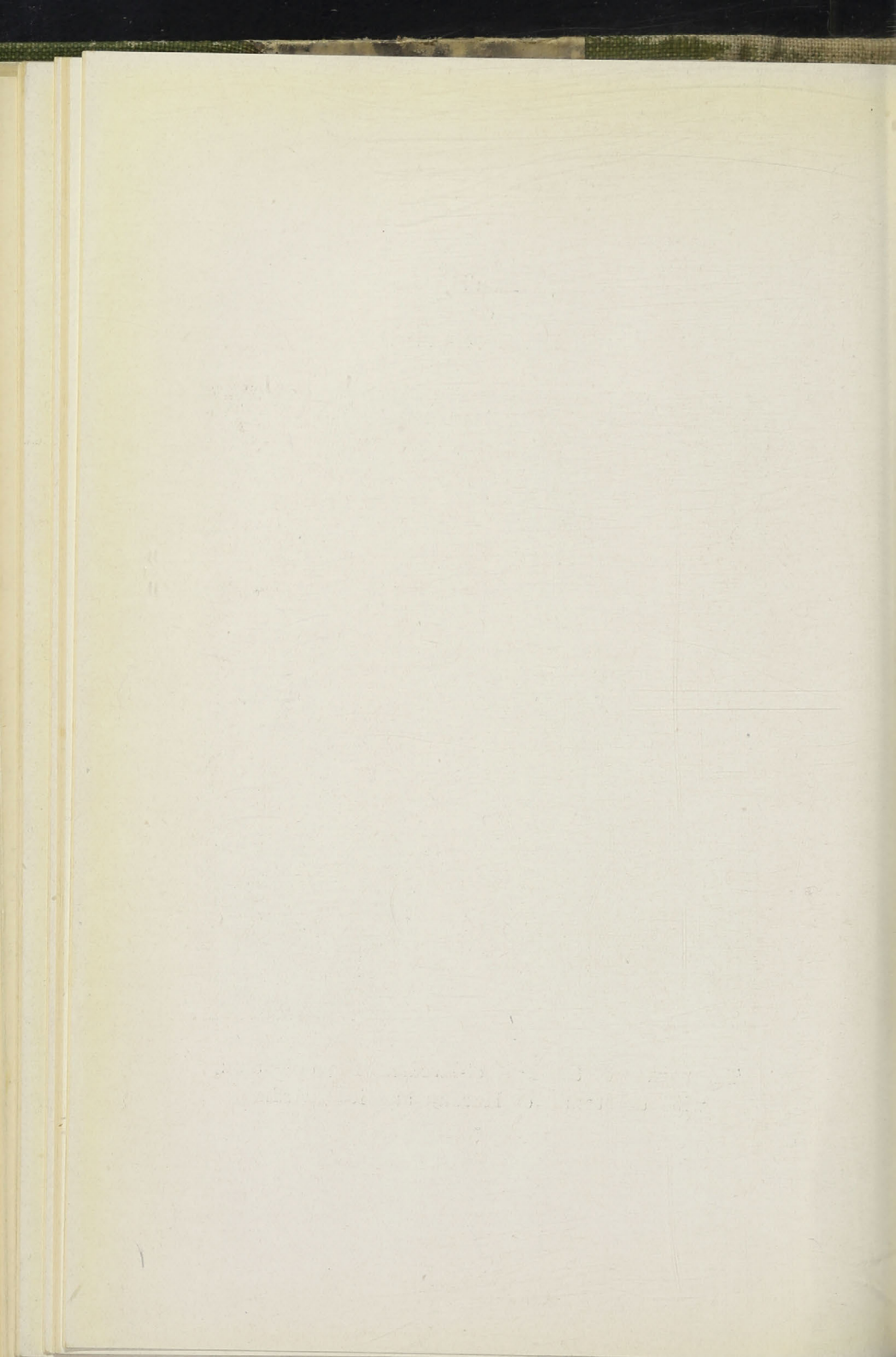
HAROUN (Sidi Haroun el-Huseini) سيدي هارون الحسيني

In these days when even old-established mouldids are struggling for existence, and in some cases, as in that of Dash-touti fallen from the eminence and magnificence of a National and Islamic celebration to a parade in front of a more or less neglected shrine under police supervision, it is a high pleasure to be able to record the revival of an ancient mouldid, which had not been observed within the memory of this generation until its re-establishment a few years ago by, the writer is proud to add, the instrumentality of one of his own countrymen—one, too, who has breathed in all that is best of the atmosphere of Egypt, whose taste and judgment in such Oriental matters is above all attack, the springs of whose actions are purely a love

Moulid
of
Sidi Haroun el-Huseini.



The corner of the Beit el-Kredlea, Ibn el-Touloun,
with the tomb of Haroun and its guardian.



of Egypt and the Egyptians, and all that is venerable and beautiful in the valley of the Nile and elsewhere.

Sidi Haroun, spoken of as Huseini* owing to his close relationship to Sidna Husein and therefore to the Prophet, has his *maqam* at the corner of the great enceinte of Ibn Touloun. It forms part of perhaps the most beautiful old house in Cairo, rendered more so by the lovely antiques introduced by its occupant. He has put the tomb in order, lighted and adorned it, and established there an ancient sheikh, Sheikh Suleiman el-Kredlea, of the family associated for generations with the shrine and the house, and who boasts his "sanad" connecting him with the wali whose tomb he watches over.

The new lease of life commenced in 1354 (1935), so that the great celebration on 23rd Shaaban, 1357, (17.10.38), was the fourth. Each year it has been in Shaaban, though the day of the month has varied from the 11th to the 26th.

It is best reached from the Ataba by bus No. 18, getting down at Sharia Ibn Touloun, from which point it is barely two minutes distant. Bus 4 also passes near, and it is quite a short walk from the Citadel and from Saida Zenab, to both of which sub-centres many trams and buses run.

Sidi Haroun is a very colourful and tuneful little mouldid. It has its zeffa, with visits to the tomb, followed by zikrs, and the usual ritual, and a great feature has been a Dervish of the Rifaiya whose mastery over fire can hardly be explained on natural lines. He also fascinates all present by the use of his *Dabus*, a straight dagger headed by a ball to which are attached a number of short chains terminating in pieces of metal, to produce a musical effect, enhanced sometimes by objects contained in the ball, which is in that case a kind of sistrum. The dabus is thrust freely through his face or into his body without any appearance of pain or flow of blood. A whirling dervish and a hawi add also their quotum.

(*) Note. Over the portal is written, — « هذا مقام سيدي هارون الحسيني »

The tomb, over whose dome floats a mighty gonfalon in the colours of the Rifaiya, besides numerous smaller banners and the processional *buariq*, بوارق, has a little window looking on to a picturesque corner garden known as the "Dorotheum", which on these occasions is very full of visitors, only lightly separated from the zikr enclosure. The overflow take up a commanding position on the roof of the Beit Kredlea, or at the meshrabia embrasures, or at the door of the tomb with the old Sheikh and his pious companions, initiates of the Qadariya, Rifaiya, Shazlia and other "Turuq", murids and talibs, naibs, khalifas and the rest,—a goodly company.

These are not a whit disturbed by the proximity of non-Moslems and Occidentals, for happily the virtues of tolerance, mutual regard, and sympathy are the blessed order of the day in Egypt, and indeed they soon become so absorbed in their mode of throwing off all earthly shackles, that they are rendered oblivious to all visible surroundings.

This meeting and blending of East and West in the home of an ex-Oriental Secretary is a heartening sight, and the names or functions of a few of the people I have met at this mouldid of Sidi Haroun will show what varied types of Anglo-Egyptian society have been represented, by no means excluding those also of other nationalities. I have seen leading members of the British Embassy there, and Baron de Bildt and other representative diplomats, also the Commandant of Police, with Lady Russell, and sundry distinguished Egyptian Officers. It is not perhaps generally known that Sir Thomas is an authority on Dervish lore and *persona grata* with the Baba and monks of the Bektashi Taqia, at the "Maghrouri" under the Moqattams, and (so the Baba informed me with great satisfaction) is writing a book about their Order. One of the officers referred to, Yuzbashi Abd el-Rahman Zaki, showed me the second volume of his work on Cairo, "El-Qahira, القاهرة", beautifully produced and illustrated. Other writers present of authority and renown, on the mon-

uments of Islam, were Mrs. Devonshire, and Prof. Creswell. In the Poet's corner was Prof. Scaife of the Egyptian University, whose beautiful *qasida* on Sayed el-Bedawi was read by himself in these most appropriate surroundings not long ago. Also the poet and writer, Mr. S. F. A. Coles, who, by the way, introduced a picture of the tomb of Sidi Haroun into his account of the Beit Kredlea, in the "Sphinx", 9th November, 1935. (*)

Amongst military leaders, Spinks Pasha, with Lady Spinks, and General MacReady were there, and at least one Egyptian Lewa.

An interesting and appropriate guest on each occasion has been the Sheikh Daif el-Khoderi, descended from the founder of the neighbouring mosque of the same name, who rides "Khalifa" in the zeffa of his own mouldid. Amongst other Sons of the Prophet were Ashraf, whose *sanads* (diplomas) show a *silsila* proving not only their descent in a clear line from the Founder of Islam, but even going back much farther, till the old parchment reads like a chapter from the Book of Numbers.

Amongst the guests of great good omen were several members and the president himself of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments against the attacks of material vandalism, which have, alas, irreparably reduced the great beauty of Cairo, even in places to utter uglification. This Society had, I believe, much to do in the rescue of this very Beit Kredlea, and we know not how much we all, and Cairo itself, have to thank it for. There is, moreover, the Society for the Preservation of Coptic Art, also represented at the mouldid of Sidi Haroun, and doubtless other groups engaged on this

(*) Pictures of the tomb and the house also appeared in "Egyptian Radio" of 27th February, 1937; and one of the "Miraculous Well" in the *hosh* in the issue of 22nd. January, 1938.

v. also "Country Life" of 13-12-31, &c. : also a series of 12 Tales told by Sheikh Suleiman el-Kredli, which came out in the "Sphinx" from Dec. /39 to May /40., &c. &c.

splendid work, but I am not aware of any concerted effort to save priceless old Egyptian customs from an equally deadly wave of *spiritual* vandalism. Is it too much to hope that committees similar to the above will be formed to defend Egypt's dear old customs, before it is too late? Perhaps the germ of this lies in the mouldid meetings at the Beit Kredlea. May Sidi Haroun, to whom miracles are ascribed by his votaries, be propitious here, and interpose to save us from what Pierre Loti termed "La Mort du Caire."

"BETWEEN THE LINES

A PRIVATE MULID

"It is not everybody's privilege to have a Sheikh's tomb attached to his home, and to have, as it were, his own private *mulid* once a year at his very gates. It is one, however, enjoyed by Major Gayer Anderson, the owner of the beautiful old Arab house overlooking the Ibn Tulun mosque, which he has filled with all the treasures of Arab art, and which must be quite unique of its kind. Attached to his house is the little white-domed tomb of Sheikh Haroun, reputed to be a relation of the Prophet, whose *mulid* is a strictly local affair, celebrated by the people of the quarter.

THE FIRE-SWALLOWER

"The guests whom Major Gayer Anderson invited to watch the festivities from his house on Monday night were lucky; in addition to the usual *zikr* there was a dancing dervish and a ragged performer who licked red-hot knives, swallowed fire, walked on burning ashes, and stuck skewers through his cheek and tongue, all with the utmost sangfroid. With the man standing less than a yard away, it seemed indisputable that the

Note.— The above appeared in the Egyptian Mail of 19th Oct. 1938.

Thanks to the unknown writer for the appeal for the more liberal treatment of Moulids!

skewer was really sticking through his cheek, though there was no hole and no blood when he withdrew it, but no one present could explain how it it was done.

“Such performances are getting rarer every year. There are always *zikrs* at every *mulid*, but few dancing dervishes can be seen, and you have to go fairly far afield to find a fire swallower. The authorities unfortunately frown on the purely secular side of a *mulid*; they have gone so far as to sweep away the fairground which used to be a feature of the *Mulid el-Nebi* at Abbassia, and it seems likely, unless someone can persuade them to a more liberal point of view, that in a few years time all the fun of the fair will be gone.”

In Ch. II, under the rubric of “imponderable influences, ..., which sometimes determine the date or ensure the observance of the *moulid*”, the case is cited, of the apparition of Sidi Haroun to the old Sheikh Suleiman el-Kredli, guardian of his tomb, warning him that nothing must be allowed to deprive him of his *moulid* rites and rights.

In this thirteen hundred and fifty-ninth year of the Prophet, and second of the war, the person referred to in the above connection as the “Fairy God-Mother”, who caused the vision to materialise, mentioned to me that though Shaaban, the last *moulid* month, was far advanced, Sheikh Suleiman had not reported any such vision as the previous year, nor even broached the subject. This I found on a quiet visit to the tomb was in no way due to apathy, but to a perfect confidence that the F.G.M. would hold the *moulid motu proprio*: that were it otherwise there would have already been voices from the penetralia of the shrine. This faith was rewarded by a small but excellent celebration on the [first Thursday after mid-Shaaban, at which piety and joy were most pleasantly mingled. At the tomb was a continual *va et vient*, and a striking feature was the earnestness with which a great number of young lads joined the mature dervishes in the *zikrs*. There was at the

opening a zeffa, at which *tars* and *tabls* observed impeccable time. Later a red robed *maulavi* gave us the whirling dance of the *samaa*, and then some marvellous dervishes of the Rifaiya demonstrated the supremacy of the spirit over matter, over pain and the usual physical limitations, in a way that could neither be explained nor explained away, culminating by defying the dagger point of the mystic *dabus* (*), and the edge of the sword, and submitting to the *dosah* (*) on a small scale, a rite so rarely seen these days.

Old Sheikh Suleiman, leaning on his stick and his son's arm, though bent double, paid a visit to the Beit el-Kredlea adjoining, and received a return visit. He looked ecstatically joyful, and his lips moved as if muttering a 'Nunc Dimittis'.

H. 4 (v. Sectional Map XV.)

HASAN ANWAR سيدي حسن الانور

Originally the date of this mouldid appears to have been 7th Rabia II, at least this was the case in 1348 and 1351, but since then it has suffered from chronic postponement, but, I think, always on a Tuesday. I have been present and noted the date on Tuesday, 9th Gumad II, 1353, Tuesday, 22nd Gumad II, 1355 and Tuesday, 3rd Shaaban, 1357 (27. 9. 38). It is on the fringe of the *gabel* beyond the Salakhana (Slaughter Houses) and reached by Khalig trams 5 or 22. One goes to the end of the track and walks on through the broken mass of Muhammad Ali's aqueduct, then between groups at stick play and divers diversions on the right, and theatres, ringas, and other shows on the slope of the *gabel* on the left, and reaches the mosque of Hasan el-Anwar situated in the square of a sort of suburban village, a few minutes after leaving the tram. Sometimes I have seen the egregious Billy Williams there with his wonderful "Piste à la morte".

The mosque and the square are full of zikrs and groups of sheikhs, and the amusement place, sufficiently removed, is a

(*) v. Glossary for words in italics!

weird, attractive sight in its setting of ruined aqueduct and rugged desert.

Hasan el-Anwar had bad luck in 1353 (1934), for after repeated postponements torrential rain burst many city drains, and on the last night, the column of sewage carts coming through was obstructed by the crowd which the police could not keep to the sides, and the local authorities broke it up.

I was told in 1357 (1938) that I had missed a good zeffa at 5 o'clock.

H 5. (v. Sectional Map VI.)

HILAL سيدي هلال

I have included this microscopic mouldid which I lighted on by chance on 6th Gumad I, 1353 (16-8-34), the final day of the big Bulaq mouldid of Abu Sebaa, (though I am not certain that it was anything more than the destination of a zeffa from the bigger mosque). because of the beauty of the little shrine in a delightful court easily visited, and worth the visit. It is just off the big new street, Sh. Abd el-Gawad at right angles to the façade of the mosque of Abu el-Ela, a minute from that mosque on the left between the Foad el-Awal end and the Sh. Ahmadein, the scene of a mouldid and the site of many shrines. (v. Ahmadein).

The zeffa came at about 5.30 in the afternoon, but I do not know if it is a regular institution.

H. 6 (v. Sectional Map I.)

HILI سيدي حلي

Both the day of the week and the date vary greatly. I first saw this mouldid on Saturday, 17th Safr, 1352, (10. 6. 33), but when I went early in Safr the following year, I was told it was over. I missed it also the three following years, but was assured that in 1356 it was held on Thursday, 7th Gumad I (15. 7. 37). Going early in Gumad I in 1357 I found it in full swing, and witnessed the big night on Tuesday 7th, Gumad I, (1357), (5. 7. 38).

It is situated between Bulaq Workshops and Rod el-Farag and trams 7 and 13 pass literally through it for the little mosque, and the zikrs, &c., are on the west side of the Rod el-Farag road, but the amusement park on the East, in the road which becomes Sh. Masarra and emerges in the Shubra Road, a little south of the Tewfiqia School. Tents, swings and shows spread into the *terrain vague* on each side of the road. Anyone missing the last tram, (about 11.30) to Cairo, can of course obtain tram or bus by walking along the road mentioned to Shubra.

Sidi Hili is a strange mouldid, the secular side being relatively more pronounced than that of any other that I have seen, except perhaps Abu Harera, the great Sham el-Nesim mouldid held at Giza. I had difficulty in refinding the mosque, several good people whom I asked being equally ignorant, and could obtain nothing the least reliable concerning the history of the Saint. I fancy this, like many Christian local feasts, is a religious graft on some ancient fair or perhaps pagan ceremony. I am sure there is scope here, as at Giza, for a student of folk lore, anthropology, and ancient customs.

When I first discovered this mouldid in 1352 (1933), some evenings before its apodosis, I was *intrigué* by the action of three girls of perhaps 13 to 16, in the rubbish heaps and holes well away from the crowd. They appeared in the fading light to be girding two of their party with *ceintures de chastité*; but their subsequent behaviour indicated clearly the reverse, and so absorbed were they in a "game" in which two of them affected the part of boys, that I was able to approach near enough to see that the anterior part of each girdle was armed with a phallus apparently of tin, but perhaps of cardboard, length about 6 or 8 inches. A scream of pain only partially suppressed from the third, brought a real lad on the scene, who spake winged words to the accompaniment of strokes of an *aluba*, (a five-millième cane sold at all mouldids), and drave them towards the houses. There

was nothing apparently to connect this with the mouldid; yet so unusual a sight on this spot at such a time seems to suggest the possibility of the tradition of some ancient phallic observance.

Hili is fortunate in being one of the few mouldids in crescendo. In 1352 it was indeed big and popular, but in 1357, a year of the suppression or reduction to a minimum of many great feasts, Hili flourished exceedingly. I noticed two big tent-theatres, a *qara goz*, a tent for the display of the dwarf Zubeida, a Sudanese Ringa, stick combats, aunt Sallies, and endless stalls and side shows; and on the mosque side many more groups, some more sober and sedate than on the amusement side, some less so.

LAKE TIMSA, ISMAILIA.

H 7 (v. Map of Delta in covers.)

HUNEIDIQ

سيدي حنيدق

About the end of the war I was camped for a short time with the R. A. F., near Lake Timsah, (The Lake of Crocodiles), and heard of a strange Bedouin mouldid, with wonderful horseraces, in the desert near by. We saw nothing of it and indeed it was probably suspended in war time,—and there was plenty to occupy us in the way of fancy flying, looping the loop and such like, and a sport new to me, duck shooting from aeroplanes over and about Lake Timsah, in which to my surprise few birds were lost, for Arab boys retrieved them from the sand or the water, and received a piastre a head. I have enquired about it often since, but could never get definite information, as regards place or time, and could find no Englishman or European who knew anything of it, nor Egyptian, for the matter of that. Then in 1357, (1938), my *murasla* got definite information from relatives of his little Bedouin wife, who had settled at Birkat el-Gamus, (Buffalo Pool), quite near the site of the mouldid. So I took him and his wife and youngster with me to Ismailia, where a lot of her tribesmen met us, and Mousa went on with them to arrange anything necessary,—horse, tent &c.,

whilst I took a room at the Locanda el-Sharq as a pied-à-terre, close to the lake. That was on the 9th of Gumad el-Awal, 1357, (7-7-38), and there were to be two big days, Saturday and Sunday 11th and 12th Gumad I, the second date being that of the Khitama and the horse play and races. On enquiring at the jetty if it were possible to sail to the moulid, I was told that steam launches were being specially run, and that big steamers would ply the final nights.

I took the first launch that went, and had a most picturesque hour's run, in the light of the stars and a half grown moon, across the lake, and then along the canal, till the lights of what might have been a town appeared, at the foot of a desert hill, crowned by the shrine of Sidi Huneidiq. From the height of that I saw that we were on a tiny stretch of land, its shores bathed by another lake, the moon glitter broken in places by palm woods. Except for swings and a few shooting galleries, and such like, and of course the mosque itself, the moulid was far from typical: streets and streets of wattled huts, and stalls, made it more like a fair, and toys, trinkets, garments and all manner of things were changing hands. Most trade was done in melons, of which camel loads were constantly arriving: the celebrated melons of Huneidiq, big as the head of Goliath and going at half a piastre.

When I landed I hardly noticed that I had done so across a plank, long, and less than a foot wide, but on returning to the launch, I was very aware of it and disliked it very much: for it was not quite level and was swaying; and gazing down into the deep dark waters of the Suez Canal, they seemed to be swirling past, and what looked like the flukes of an old anchor were projecting just above the surface. There seemed to be a spot of murder going on in the launch, for a little man was attacking an enormous fellow with a key such as they start cars with, and had already torn his clothes off and had got him down. But the giant rose again, grim and gory, and the little

one sprang over the side. This did not tend to the stability of launch or plank, nor to the prospects of a happy voyage, as presumably these pugnacious gentlemen were our able mariners.

Hesitating whether to *walk the plank* and descend *dans cette galère*, I noticed that the launch was moving out *motu proprio*, so to speak, and fearing it might be the last for the night, I made a sort of hop, skip and jump, landing on an upper story of the colossus, and sliding down his naked and bloody body into a seat. Someone took effectual charge of the navigation, and all went well. Before reaching the lopen lake, we met two enormous liners, whose searchlights transformed the sand and rocks of the canal banks into snow and icebergs, luminous, glittering, and seemingly transparent: a weird and beautiful sight.

When I went again two days later, I was decidedly glad to find that a gangway and excellent landing arrangements had been made. Several people had slipped in, and there were some drownings, but whether the plank were responsible or not for these I do not know. There was a great concourse on the Saturday, but many were complaining that the mouldid had been wet-blanketed the past few years and had lost much of its éclat. And that in spite of the fact that the old difficulties of approach by riding or walking only, are now removed not ony by the launches but by a motor track from Ismailia. There was a row of tents at the mouldid for parking *private* cars, but what seemed a very cruel regulation was made on the big night, that only *private* cars, *no* taxis might use the road after 6 o' clock. I suppose there must have been some reason for this, but it was indeed hard that the desert people, old votaries of the shrine, and the many people of Ismailia and the villages who could have raised the money for a taxi for the occasion, but could not buy a car, had either to come and go in the blaze of the sun, and leave before the best part, or pass the night in the sand with the privilege of watching any flaneur, dilettante, or Saturday evening pleasure seeker with a car enjoy the freedom of the road, and of the

parking tents. My *murasla* had come late in the afternoon with his wife and a party of her friends in a taxi from Birkat el-Gamus, and found themselves marooned, so to speak. They would have had to sleep *sous la belle étoile*, and thank Allah for soft sand and warm air, but that Mousa, who had heard of the launches from me, had enough money and *naus* to put a harem of nine including his wife, and also three children into a launch and squeeze the lot into one taxi at Ismailia for Birkat el-Gamus. Hundreds of others of both sexes either slept in the sand, or tramped their weary way, if indeed there was no regulation forbidding pedestrianism. The sufferers from this seemingly arbitrary action blamed the Canal Co. rather than the police authorities.

The *clou* of the *moulid* was the horse racing and equestrian sports on Sunday afternoon, which alone was well worth coming from Cairo to see; and when the riders, about a dozen of them, fell to quarrelling, through the fault of one of the onlookers, and fought on horseback with whips, sticks or anything they had, nothing could have been more picturesque, even back in mediaeval times. And what a setting of desert, lake, and a city of wattles, with an unclouded sun!

I have gone rather fully into this little experience, as I think, even apart from the *moulid*, that Ismailia and its lake and surroundings are not appreciated as they deserve. There is fine fishing, bathing and sailing, good accommodation, nice gardens, and lovely walks, some of them in the richest of vegetation, and the builders of the attractive little city have shown, as those who built Heliopolis, that new buildings need not necessarily be hideous. Its climate too is good, and it is very accessible.

(I came on to Port Said in time for the French fête of XIV juillet, with its fireworks on the breakwater; and flew here, Haifa,* the next day, in time for the Feast of Our Lady of

* Note, — This is a copy of a private letter written home, which at the time of writing I had no idea of ever publishing.

Mt. Carmel on the 16th July, and that of Mar Elias on the 20th, and tomorrow go on to Iskanderun, and wonder if the Sandjak will have a little mouldid on, though I regret leaving this delightful and hospitable place, Stella Maria, on the Holy Mountain.)

As regards the Sheikh Huneidiq, my purely local information is vague and unreliable, but he seems definitely regarded as a Patron of the Canal and water-ways, and this is supported by a tablet at the door. People about the tomb told me that it is subsidised by the Suez Canal Company. He is generally supposed to be Arab, though there is an idea with a few that he was a Frenchman. Why not?

H. 8 (v. Sectional Map XII.)

HUSEIN الحسين بن علي بن أبي طالب

Always a Tuesday in the latter half of Rabia II, after a fifteen days run. Anyway such was the case over a hundred years ago, as Lane recorded a visit on Tuesday, 21 Rabia II, 1250, (1834), and equally so during the present century on the many occasions I have been present. In 1357 it occurred on the 20th of the Arabic month, but in all previous years that I have noted, it was on the last Tuesday. This was also the case in 1359 (1940).

The position of the great mosque behind the Khan el-Khalili is too well known to require description. It is best reached from the Ataba by bus 18 which passes through the mouldid, or by tram 19 to el-Azhar, which is on its fringe. (Bus 3 from Saida Zenab and busses 11 & 12 from the Station and Abbasia respectively also serve.)

Two of the features Lane emphasised and which greatly enhanced the *éclat* of the mouldid, and still observed at the beginning of this century, were the brilliant lighting of the contiguous bazaars with chandeliers, and the singing sheikhs in shops and houses in these bazaars, in the Nahasin and other places. Dancing girls which Lane calls Ghawazee, and which

he says were of a distinct tribe, seem to have been much in evidence; and their modern successors, (whether tribal Ghawazees or not I cannot say) had a meteoric revival in recent years, reaching their zenith in 1353 (1934), when, however, they did not perform nor accost pilgrims and visitors in the precincts of the mosque, but were in ringas and other dancing booths, in a mile-long line of tents, beginning at the end of the Sharia el-Gedida, and skirting the *gabel* towards Abbasia. Other tents in this row housed theatrical troops and all manner of shows, and the line was interrupted by open spaces for stick play, horsemanship and zikr groups, though these last were of course much more prominent near and in the mosque. Previous to 1353 there had been a few little shows in the rubbish heaps at the end of Sh. el-Gedida, the continuation of the Muski, with a "telegraph", — a long wire stretched across space, with pulley wheels and nooses by which lads swung and traversed to the other end of the wire.

This sort of fair in the *gabel* had disappeared in 1355, and the Ghawazee stars had fallen as rapidly as they rose, and all I saw of the diversional side then and in 1357 (1938) were a few little shows and gambling carts in a bit of waste land in Darasa, (beyond the mosque to the right). In 1359 (1940) only a big and good circus survived to the final night.

The *peritomists* are busy as in Lane's day, Dr. Enayat Allah, the *bash-prépuicier* informing me that he had already circumcised over a thousand infants, some days before the end of the moulid. He has a wonderful erection with towers and boats quite near the mosque, by the main road.

To refer once more to Lane, his account in "Modern Egyptians" should be read. It is full of vivid detail, from the crush about the tomb and the utterances of the *zikakir* to the manners of the "Ginks". These were Greek singing boys, with effeminate ways, flowing manes, and often impudent manners. In contrast were the Moroccan dervishes of the Eysawiya sect,

Moulid
of
Sidna Husein.



The Bab el-Akhdar.

followers of Sidi Moh. Ibn-Eysa, whose wonderful fire-eating feats when in a state of spiritual exaltation, almost beyond belief, are equalled to this day, though not so freely before the public.

Murray, writing half a century ago, says that the Khedive went always in state, and describes his passage on foot through the Khan el-Khalili, over rich Persian carpets, spread for the occasion.

Lane's long account of his personal experiences at the head of Husein emboldens me to mention my brief imprisonment in the mosque the first time I ventured in under the aegides of Sidqi (R. I. P.) a brother of Hamid Bey Mahmud, Minister of Hygiene; and the now well known doctor, then pupil, Ibrahim Zaky Kashif.

With youthful thoughtlessness they chose the time of the midday Friday prayer, and, though the worshippers showed no sign of resentment at their prayers, on our trying to go away, every exit door was barred. Presently Sidki and Zaki were taken off in terror, whilst I was left within a ring of silent sheikhs, near the shrine containing the sacred head, the which I had plenty of time to observe, for, as I was told later, the lads' wrists had been examined for the Coptic cross, and then retaining Sidqi as hostage, Zaki had been taken under escort to his home at Qasr el-Eini. Happily his sainted father was at home, who assured the sheikhs that all our intentions were of the best, that the *Englishman* regularly came to his house to hear the Figis read the Qoran, (which was exact) and that he unequivocally guaranteed us.

(There endeth my first lesson in mosque-gate "crashing". the second lesson appears under the account of the mouldid of Saida Zenab).

Of course all centres round the head of Husein, believed to be enshrined in this mosque, the most sacred Islamic relic in Cairo. Its authenticity has been questioned through the

centuries, but found much support in the vision of a very holy man, Moh. el-Bahai who was assured by the Prophet himself that his grandson's head was truly there.

Abd el-Gawad el-Shaarani in his "Tobaqat" is very definite in the affirmative. He says *inter alia*,—

"He (Husein) was born in the year 4, and made the pilgrimage twenty five times on foot, was slain a martyr on Friday, (yom el-Ashura) 10th Muharem in the year 61 at the age of 56, ... his sister Zenab, buried in Cairo sang lamenting him, raising her voice and baring her head; then the head was borne to Cairo and buried in the famous mosque &c."

« الحسين بن علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله تعالى عنهما » ولد في شعبان سنة أربع من الهجرة وحج رضي الله عنه خمسا وعشرين حجة ماشيا وقتل رضي الله عنه شهيدا يوم الجمعة يوم عاشوراء في المحرم سنة إحدى وستين وهو ابن ست وخمسين سنة

وانشدت أخته زينب المدفونة بقناطر السباع من مصر المحروسة برفع صوت ورأسها خارج من الحباء

« ماذا تقولون ان قال النبي لكم * ماذا فعلتم واتتم آخر الامم »

وحملت رأسه الى مصر ودفنت بالمشهد المشهور بها ومشى الناس امامها حفاة من مدينة غزة الى مصر تعظيما لها رضي الله عنه »

The chronicler is a little misleading in the last passage quoted, which seems almost to imply that the sacred head was taken to Cairo shortly after Husein's death. This of course is far from being the case. He lived and died in the first century of the Hegira, and it was not till the Fatimite Emir el-Giush was warring in Syria at the end of the fifth, (by the Christian reckoning the eleventh), that the head was found by him at Ascalon, and suitably enshrined. Owing to the crusades, fears were entertained lest it might be desecrated by the Christians, which may account for its having been kept for a time in

Damascus, as the Damascenes allege, and for its ultimate transference to Egypt in A. H. 549 (A. D. 1154), in the time of the Fatimite Khalif Faiz. There, after lying for a time in the mosque of Saleh ben Raziq, it was placed magnificently in a mausoleum in the royal palace, the Qasr el-Zumarad, the site subsequently of the mosque of comparatively recent date, where behind one of the *qiblas*, (for there is another to Husein's brother Hasan,) it is still enshrined.

Reference above to the "Ashura" renders it advisable to add, that a second great ceremony centred about the head of Husein up to about the time of the 1914-18 war, on the 10th of Muharem. After mourning at the tomb, a procession, mainly of Shi'ah dervishes, proceeded to the Persian Takia, slashing themselves with swords and crying, Ya Hasan! Ya Husein! These, when I witnessed the threnody, were led by a boy in white on a white pony, pathetically eager with voice and sword. Both horse and rider were crimson as were indeed the streets before the *takia* was reached. Considering how bitter the feuds have been between Sunnis and Shi'ahs, in many parts of Islam, and that the great majority of Cairenes are Sunni, it is a great tribute, — one of many, — to Egyptian tolerance, that the Sunnis and Shi'ahs are united in one bond in the mosque, and nothing but sympathy shown at the procession.

The Ashura is still observed in many Muhammadan countries, and in Persia it is perhaps the greatest ceremony. Let us hope the recent union of the royal houses of Egypt and Iran will bring about the revival of this august and ancient observance.

Oh Hasan! Oh Husein!

MATARIA

I 1 (v. Map of Delta.)

IBRAHIM

الشيخ ابراهيم

This mouldid, like that of Tashtoushi, is held on the Leilat el-Ma'rag, 26th Ragab, or at least that has been the case on

three out of four occasions when I was present. The fourth occasion, it was on Saturday 27 Ragab, 1356, (1.10.37), that is the eve of the 28th, instead of the 27th. Tashtoushi was also held a day late according to the official calendar, and also the Ma'rag celebrations at Sultan Rifai, and a minor ceremony at Abu el-Ela in honour of that miracle. I suppose the moon was in some way responsible for this seeming exception.

It is held at Mataria, but must not be confounded with the great moulid of Matrawi, always held at mid-Shaaban. The little mosque and shrine of Sheikh Ibrahim are well behind the great mosque, and in the heart of the ancient village. Quite near is a holy tree on which people, particularly women, hang all sorts of votive offerings of an intimate nature. Quite early in the century at which time I had a *châlet* and garden at Mataria, I frequently saw many women visit the tree and then the tomb of Sh. Ibrahim, but I have not been able to ascertain what relation there is between the two, if any, nor indeed have I been able to gather anything reliable or consistent about the Sheikh.

Though obscurely placed, so that one might pass up and down the adjacent main road, without detecting its existence, this moulid is very well attended, especially by Bedouins; and the village streets as well as the mosque, and the Ringas, Cafés, etc., intensely crowded, presenting a very colourful and picturesque sight.

If visited by rail, there is a considerable walk from Mataria station to the site of the moulid, past the garden in which is another Holy Tree, that of the B.V.M., and the spring and well of the Virgin. It is therefore easier of approach by means of a Mataria bus from Cairo, getting out immediately after the big mosque and turning down a dark and narrow street to the right. (The Mataria bus, now (1940) No.16, starts from the Station Square, Cairo.)

I had a curious experience there in 1934, (on October 20th, 1935), when feeling was running strong against Italy, and great resentment felt because of the aggression in Abyssinia. On my way to the mouldid I had visited some Italian friends in Mataria, and one of these had accompanied me as far as the lane by the mosque referred to above, but left me there with salutations, to which I reciprocated in Italian, in the hearing doubtless of a good many people. Almost at once I noticed that I was persistently dogged by a little group, including the black servant of the Italian family I had visited. They regarded me and discussed me with great obvious interest, and presently one of them, whom I had seen at the Sporting Club, and who seemed to recognise me, saluted me politely and said "Buona Sera, Signore! Scusi tante, che ora è?" Falling into the trap, I replied,— "Nove meno dieci." He turned triumphantly to his companions, saying, "What need have ye of further witnesses?" or words to that effect, and instantly there commenced a chorus of highly uncomplimentary remarks about Italy, the Italians, and Mussolini, — "Et-Talianen awlad el-kalb: yasqut Mussolini ibnel-kalb, harami," (the Italians are sons of dogs! Down with Mussolini, son of a dog, brigand.)

Though they could not hurt my feelings by the worst things they might say about the master gangster, I felt that I was in danger of becoming his innocent scapegoat, and tried to beat a dignified retreat, but bigger louts joined my young tormentors and I soon had to defend myself with my stick. This broke, but an enterprising seller of "alubas" instantly handed me a tough cane which I bought and used. The sheikhs and people generally took an academic rather than an active interest in the conflict, but when they acted at all they helped me rather than the hooligans, and a party of police askaris coming up, so vigorously clouted my adversaries, that they recoiled long enough to enable me to pass unscathed through the dark and dangerous lane, into the main road. There in supposed security, I awaited a bus. Suddenly the gang appeared again from I know

not where, and attacked, this time, with real viciousness, and but for a stalwart young giant in khaki, who was passing and took my part, I could hardly have fought my way to the café, where at once cafetier, staff and customers put the pack to route. Drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes, with these good people, I could see shadowy forms in the distance both ways, like wolves hanging about a camp, so when a bus was passing and I jumped on without stopping it, I was prepared for their raiding this. And they did, but the conductor rose to the occasion, and when I wished the ring leader, "buona notte", he was on his back in the road.

I went again the next year, curious to know what would happen, but took the precaution to have my garden boy, murasla, and one or two of their friends within rescuing distance, but nothing whatever of an untoward nature happened; so I went alone in 1936, (1937) and was surprised to find that I was recognised. But this time I think they realised that I was *Inglizi* and not *Taliani*, and though a little troublesome there was no attempt at violence. I hope that this personal explanation is the correct one, and that they have in no degree abated in their wholesome ferocity towards the arch brigand.

I. 2 (v. Sectional Map XIV.)

IBRAHIM سیدی ابراهیم

This is only the ghost of a mouldid. I never saw it, and now certainly never shall. Its story, tragic and pathetic is perhaps worth recording.

I had heard more than once of the shrine of a holy man, named Ibrahim, in the region of the Suq el-Silah, and being assured by a dervish friend that its mouldid was on the 27th of Shaaban, I gladly accepted the offer of his guidance in 1937 (1938), but a long tiring search was in vain. I mentioned my fruitless quest to a resident, a Miralai, formerly of the Egyptian Army, whose knowledge of the intricacies of native Cairo is

unique, particularly as regards the Suq el-Silah district. I had lit on the very person who could give me a first-hand account,— not of the mouldid, — but of the little shrine. He said, —

“Useless your searching! That seems to be the little Qubba that stood on a property of the Yeghen family, at which time Sidi Ibrahim was duly honoured: but the land was sold to a Hebrew in the belief that he at least would realise the sacred nature of the shrine and respect it. But the purchaser finding it in the way of some modernisation he proposed, blew it up with dynamite. I saw the beautiful little dome lying like a broken egg-shell, near the shattered *tabut*, and the turban of the Sheikh on the ground”.

Sic transit!

Recently (in 1940), the Miralai, my informant, kindly showed me the spot. A great number of houses (over 60 I believe) now stand on the site of the vast Yeghen Palace. With difficulty and with the help of some residents and a sort of local *ghafir* we located the scene of this appalling act of vandalism, and the *ghafir* (or whatever his office was) glibly recited what appeared to us a well-taught and oft-repeated tale, in quasi-explanation of the destruction of the Qubba. He said, — “It was no true sheikh buried there, but a false prophet, whom foolish people regarded with superstition, believing that money buried under the *qubba* would increase by magic, and so they came and hid their savings. The only way in the interest of pure religion was to strike at the object of such gross superstition.”

This yarn had by no means the ring of truth, and the *ghafir* was annoyed when I asked him “how much money was revealed when the tomb was blown up?”.

If there be any truth in this version, it seems to suggest a worse and more sordid reason, than mere vandalism, for the sake of clearing the ground for building.

I 3 (v. Map of Delta.)

IMBABI (Ismail Imbabi)

سيدي اسماعيل امباني

The Sheikh Imbabi was one of the *apostles* of Sayed el-Bedawi, or of his great disciple Abd el-Aal, and his mouldid which was probably established soon after his death is therefore one of the oldest in Egypt, before it became the custom to adopt a date from the Moslem calendar corresponding to the birthday of the saint honoured. Like those of Tanta, Desouk, and Damanhur, and of Bayumi in Cairo, (which last, as founder of a branch of the Ahmadiya dervishes, comes into the orbit of Ahmad Sayed el-Bedawi), Ismail's mouldid is fixed by the season of the year, not by the lunar calendar. It is or should be always held on a Thursday a little before midsummer near the 10th Bauna, (16th June), absorbing and superseding an ancient festival of Isis, of which traces exist till this day. This was the *Leilet el-Nuqta*, when once multitudes, and considerable numbers until recently watched for the falling of a precious tear of Isis into the Nile near the spot where the mouldid is now held,—a tear of grief for her dismembered husband which the river refused to yield up in its entirety. *

Sometimes agricultural conditions, and once the prevalence of cattle plague, and now the war, have prevailed over the traditional claims of the "Night of the Drop", so that the date is becoming more and more erratic, and early enquiries as nearly as possible on the spot are desirable.

The village of Imbaba is on the Upper Egyptian line, and the station is close to the mosque and the centre of the celebrations, but stopping trains are none too numerous, and there are none after 9 o'clock either way. The most serviceable tram is No. 33, which runs to the village, but that leaves a walk of nearly a mile to the mosque. Tram 15 and buses 6 and 7 which cross Zamalek bridge are nearly as useful. The spot, opposite

*Note— v. Introductory chapter.

the Gezira is well known to Cairenes, especially to votaries of the cat-goddess Bast, to whom, — judging from its name “Kitcat”, — a modern *temple* has been erected. Such have only to urge their cars a little further along a rough road, crowded with all manner of animal and vehicle, to arrive at, to the visitor, the most picturesque part of the mouldid, its celebration on the Nile banks, and on the river itself. They would do well to take a *felucca* or other boat and join the laughing, singing throng on the water, and more consciously than most of these keep up a more than millennial custom, in honour of Isis the inventress of the sail and patroness of boats and boatmen.

I have seen fine zeffas in the late afternoon, and beautiful horses, and displays of horsemanship. These horses are frequently for sale, and in several ways this mouldid has characteristics of a fair, as is so often the case with village and desert celebrations of the local saint.

It is well to remember that carriages, taxis, and even donkeys are difficult to obtain late at night, and the weary pilgrim may have to walk, at least to the tram, or share an open cart with a score and more of men, women and little children.

I 4 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

ITMAN سیدی عثمان

Though a small mouldid, that of Sidi Itman is perhaps better known to visitors and European residents than any except the three great ones, El Nebi, Sidna Husein, and Saida Zenab, the reason being that it is held under the Pyramids near Mena House in the village well known to those who go to the Pyramids, Naslit Siman.

Somehow I have always missed it, which is the more strange, seeing that for some years I kept a couple of tents and a horse-shelter, in the desert quite near. I was kindly invited by a local notable, the Sheikh Abd el-Salaam, to the mouldid and

a banquet at his house on Tuesday 10 Ragab 1354, (8-10-35), but to my regret was unable to go. Prof. Sencourt of the University and other guests on that occasion described it as highly picturesque and interesting, especially the equestrian performances in the afternoon. Previous and subsequent mouldids have been reported in similar terms.

SHUBRA

K 1

KHALIL شيخ خليل

I had never heard of this mouldid till Tuesday 9 Muharem 1358 (28.2.39), the eve of Ashura Muharem, and not being free sent a murasla. He went by Shubra tram, No.8, to the terminus, and walked on over the little bridge to Shubra village, and found that it was the final night. He reported it as quite small: saw no zikrs or ceremonies outside the mosque: a little theatre and a few stalls in the adjoining village street.

K. 2 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

KHASOUSI الشيخ خصوصي

An insignificant mouldid of most indefinite date, Thursday 21st Shaaban in 1353, Wednesday 26 Rabia II in 1355 (15.7.36), centring about a very unattractive mosque in rather a fine old district, the Darb el-Nasr, Bulaq.

K. 3 (v. Sectional Map XIII.)

KHUDERI الشيخ خضيري

A small private mouldid in Shaaban when held, but this has been seldom in recent years. It is not however abandoned, as I am invited to it, when next held, by Khuderi Bey, *حضرة صاحب العزة محمد ضيف الحضيري* the *genius loci* of the mosque of his name, who himself rides in the zeffa as "Khalifa". It is in the Sharia el-Khuderi (the continuation of Sh. Marrasina, and part of the street which joins Saida Zenab to the Citadel, the mosque almost facing Ibn el-Touloun. Bus 4 passes the mosque, and bus 18 crosses the street quite near it.

K. 4 (v. Sectional Map I.)

KURDI or El-Kurdi سيدي الكردي

On each of three occasions when I have been present on the final night it has been a Sunday, but the day of the month and even the month itself is very vague. In 1352 it was 8th Shaa-ban, in 1353 the 3rd of that month, and in 1354 the 22nd Ragab (20.10.34). I was then looking for the little mouldid of Wasti in the same district, and lighted on that of El-Kurdi by chance. Since then I have been on probable dates but have been much too late or too early.

Also it is by no means easy to find, unless one is acquainted with the Suk el-Asr district of West Bulaq. It is in a Hara called Harat el-Kurdi, off Darb Galadin : the entry is very narrow, but the way opens out somewhat near the Tomb of the Sheikh, which is a handsome little structure.

It is perhaps best reached by tram 13 or 7, getting out just before the Bulaq workshops, and turning up to the right, and again to the right at Sh. Suk el-Asr. Or the new main road in front of the Mosque of Abu el-Ela, may be followed about two thirds of the way to Saptiah, turning to the left down Sh. el-Ansari. Or tram 4 to Saptiah may be employed.

Though small, there is a good attendance, and notable zikrs near the tomb. In 1353, I was accompanied by an English lady, and we were both amazed and fascinated by a remarkable whirling dance, preceding a zikr. It was executed, not by a dervish, but by a young man clad in a galabia who seemed immune from giddiness, for certainly he spun at great speed, and with easy grace, without a pause or turn in direction, for a period which could not have been much less than a quarter of an hour.

There is usually a primitive theatre in a kind of cave, a Qara Goz, some music, dancing &c., and a number of stalls with various attractions; and the mouldid is greatly patronised by women and children.

The district is very old and unspoilt, and near el-Kurdi is the fine mosque of Galadin in the street of the same name. This, owing to the very limited space about the tomb of el-Kurdi, is invaluable as an overflow for zikrs, Qoranic readings and so forth. Galadin has his own mouldid in Shaaban, and the mosque is well filled, but on the whole that mouldid is not nearly so popular as that described above.

L 1 (v. Sectional Map XIX.)

LEITHI (Imam El-Leithi)

امام الليثي

This is one of the comparatively few mouldids whose date can be relied on, for on the many occasions that I have enjoyed it, the final day has always been the Friday close to mid-Shaaban, nine days after the vastly greater mouldid of Imam el-Shafei, which also has a fixed day, the first Wednesday in Shaaban.

The ancient mosque is in the tombs behind Imam el-Shafei about a kilometre's walk from the terminus of tram 13.

Some years ago—it was Friday 15 Shaaban 1353 (23.11.1934)—I called on tourist friends at their hotel and found them rather disillusioned. Even the pyramids had been spoilt by hideous photo kiosks and the banal cackle of guides and others, and they had never succeeded in getting quite away from jazzy American horrors, and aggressive modernisations. “Can you not take us somewhere with a purely unspoilt Egyptian atmosphere?” they asked me rather plaintively, — “it need not be pyramidal, monumental: simple as you like, but that will give us back the dream of mystery that was our Egypt before we came.” “I promise you your dream back,” I replied, — “but no cars, which most of you visitors dash round the beaten tracks in, seeing rather more than if they were in a coffin and rather less than in a hearse, and we might begin this evening by a walk in the tombs and a moonlight mouldid in their midst, if you will take the remote sporting risk of being murdered.”

The many mosques en route, Sultans Rifai and Hasan and the rest with the citadel flood-lighted by the moon, the ancient city gate near Saida Ayesha, and much else were passed in the tram; and then on foot going behind Imam el-Shafei down a narrow way to the right the lights and voices of Imam el-Leithi guided us to what must once have been a stupendous building. Its minaret now stands far away from what remains as a mosque, at the corner of what is now a sort of courtyard, which we reached from the mosque door by a tiny alley. In that I was rejoiced to see reenacted a strange kind of ritual leap-frog, for it seems to have some connection with the moulid. At least I have never seen it at any other time. Youngsters and big lads, all experts, treated the spectators to most complex, graceful variants of the ancient game, even to leaping with another on the shoulders over three at once. Others indulged in whirling worthy of a dervish *murid* (initiate). Taking my companions up a yard or two of rubbish by the minaret, a truly weird and lovely prospect charmed us. The vast rocky desert glittered white, and across it were the lights of Babylon and Old Cairo, and nearer the minarets of one or two mosques in the wilderness silhouetted against the sky. The son of Dr. Enayat Allah, whose circumcision kiosk was at the door of the mosque, had seen us, and with him some Bedouin notables. They led us back by a way that took us into the mosque itself, showed us the tomb of the Imam and much of beauty and interest, and introduced the women of my party to a number of their own sex sitting demurely near the shrine. These were pious women leading almost the lives of nuns. They were mostly of high families, and some of them conversed freely and pleasantly in French, to my delighted visitors. When we took our leave, we passed down narrow vaulted ways, almost subterranean, to the warm springs and baths of Ein Sira, and the quarries and Sheikh's desert tomb: then cutting again into the city of the dead, traversed it—a matter of more than a mile, — to Sitna Nefisa, passing the little moulid of Sidi

Saman, celebrating its khitama, the final rites, an oasis of light and life, in the gloom and silence of the sepulchres.

My tourists confessed that I had kept my promise, and left Egypt with their dream at least good in parts.

Go and do thou likewise !

A note must be added concerning the celebration on 11 Shaaban 1359 (13-9-40), as it was rendered a red letter day by the king having elected to hold his Salamlek, (as the Royal Friday Prayer was always termed in Turkey, in the days of the Sultans), at the mosque of Imam el-Leithi. His sympathetic and kindly attitude toward his country's mouldids was shown in a practical and generous way, by his insisting on paying all the expenses of that of the Imam from his own private purse.

The writer was on the spot, and can answer for the heartening and exhilarating effect on the people, and their appreciation.

The newspaper extract adjoined is from the "Bourse Egyptienne" of the same evening.

UN BEAU GESTE DE S.M. LE ROI

Comme nous le disons par ailleurs, S.M. le Roi a fait ce matin Ses dévotions à la mosquée d'El-Imam el-Leissy.

En arrivant à la mosquée le Souverain apprit que l'on célébrait par un mouled (fête) l'anniversaire de l'Imam el-Leissy.

Immédiatement, le Souverain ordonna que tous les frais de la fête soient prélevés sur Sa cassette personnelle.

Les habitants du quartier sont vivement touchés par ce geste de générosité royale.

Certain incidents of this "Salamlek" are faithfully recorded in a letter, signed "El-Hag Abu Masaud", which has appeared in today's "Egyptian Gazette", and as this bears on the mouldid of the Imam, and on our subject generally, it is appended *in extenso*.

“SALAMLEK”

The Editor,
“Egyptian Gazette.”

Dear Sir,

Now that Stambul has lost the traditional ceremony of the “Salamlek” — the Friday noon prayer attended by the Sultan — it is a great thing that it should be kept up by royalty here in Egypt. It is moreover exceedingly popular, as the enthusiastic crowds prove which line the streets between the palace and the mosque chosen each week by the king. It is one of the few bright occasions left for them, now that their moulids are so crushed, and the old public festivals dying out or at least suspended in the main, though we must gratefully remember the splendid thought of someone in these drab days to relieve them by the exhibition of Italian trophies in the Ismailia meidan, a move most highly appreciated by all the populace, besides being the best bit of propaganda so far.

On the Friday before mid-Shaaban, when the moulid of the Imam el-Leithi is held, the king chose the mosque of the Imam for his “Salamlek”. The vast space before the mosque was entirely enclosed by tent work, somewhat inartistically, I thought, concealing the beautiful old building, and what was much more to the point — or so the local people thought — concealing all view of the brilliant scene before the mosque, and the advent of the royal party. When I arrived after a Sabbath day’s journey from many miles on the other side of the Nile, and across the desert which lies between Old Cairo and Ein el-Sira, and through a weird and fascinating corner of the great necropolis on the south of Cairo, I found one little opening on to a wilderness of tombs which gave standing room to a small but eager little party, but this being promptly cleared by the police, there would have been absolutely nowhere to stand or sit even in the sun, but that the leading circumcision ‘doctor’ had his little operating booth in the corner, as always at moulid time, and promptly gave me a chair under a welcome awning.

over which was an immense gonfalon inscribed with "Long live King Farouk." His own name and profession,—“Mahmud Enayet-Allah, Free Circumcision,”—was on a small sign below the royal welcome. Many other visitors arrived and all were given chairs, coffee and cigarettes by the doctor, till presently an officer, with a *crown* up, came and ordered him to take his sign down. The doctor pleaded in vain and, the *sagh* becoming peremptory, lost his habitual urbanity, and declared—“Never will I take my own sign down; Mahmud Enayet-Allah is an honourable name! my sign is my ensign! If you tear it down by force I cannot prevent you, but never will I commit sabotage” To which the gentleman with the *crown* said,—“Then you will pay for this, and dearly”. The dean of the faculty of Circumcision, still undaunted, exclaimed, —“I care not a prépuce what I pay or what I suffer, but tear my sign down, *abadan! abadan!*”

A brass band, paid for, I was told, by the doctor, then arrived, and a picturesque group of women at the only window, thinking the royal party near, began to trill a warble of welcome. This was instantly suppressed by horrified ejaculations of “*mamnua*” (a word I need not turn into English, as it is heard here now almost as often as “*verboten*” in Germany), for “*emancipation*” of women is not consistent with such indulgences as *wailing or warbling*, albeit sanctioned by the custom of about forty centuries.

But now the supreme moment arrives; the guard springs to attention: the doctor’s band plays the royal salute: the king is received with due honours and enters the mosque.

Relative silence reigns without, till a distant bleat breaks it. Excited whispers that two sheep are being brought for slaughter in our corner—for the poor—reach my ears, and someone adds, “and two fat oxen”. Someone else suggests that that also is the doctor’s largesse, but he will not own to it, (from modesty some say), and further enquiries are checked by

a prudent member of our little party holding up a warning finger and saying, "mamnua el-kalam". So all shut their mouths though continuing to lick their lips.

Then a bomb fell! Not a mere bomb from an aeroplane, but a prohibition, by the same sagh I understood, against bringing beasts there for slaughter, as "the sight of blood might upset the king". Not that there was any reasonable chance of the king seeing it in that corner, which was not on his route, and if he had, I can imagine his indignation had he known that he was brought into a *pretext* that might do the poor out of their feast.

We came away at that, hoping that this prohibition would be overruled as the attack on the "ensign" had been! but the trams being suspended and not being able to get a cab till after two, we sat and chatted to the people in a café near the mosque of Imam el-Shafei. The rumour seemed already to have arrived that the donors of the beasts might withhold them altogether under the circumstances, and there were some dour and glum faces, but presently all brightened up at a new rumour that the king had expressed great interest in the moulid, and intended to defray (from his private purse) all the expenses. A dervish of the Rifaiya told me they would have a fine zeffa in the evening, in which Qadiriya, Shazlia, and other Orders would take part, and begged me to come, (which only tiredness prevented me doing.) As I came away the last ejaculation I heard was remarkably like Shakespeare's

"Now is the winter of our discontent,
made glorious summer by this son of 'Foad'."

Yours faithfully,

(El-Hag) Abu Masaud

M. 1 (v. Sectional Map X.)

MAARUF سيدي معروف

Though always on a Friday, the date has varied on the six evenings I have seen it from 21 Ragab in 1352 to 7 Shaaban in 1355. The moulid of Sidi Maaruf coincided with that of Abdulla on 4 Shaaban 1351 and on 24 Ragab in 1353.

This is essentially the moulid of the Berberines, in their district of Maaruf, and lies between the Mixed Courts and the Museum, close to Sharia Champolion. Trams 17 and 12 pass within sight and sound of it.

It is rather a squalid unattractive little moulid. The best thing I have seen there was a zeffa at 11 o'clock at night on 7 Shaaban 1355, (23-10-36).

M. 2

MADRUS سيدي مدروس

This minute moulid in the Bab el-Shaaria district was seen by me once only, — on Friday 27 Shaaban 1352 (15-12-33). It is passed by bus 11 which plies from the Beit el-Qadi to the station.

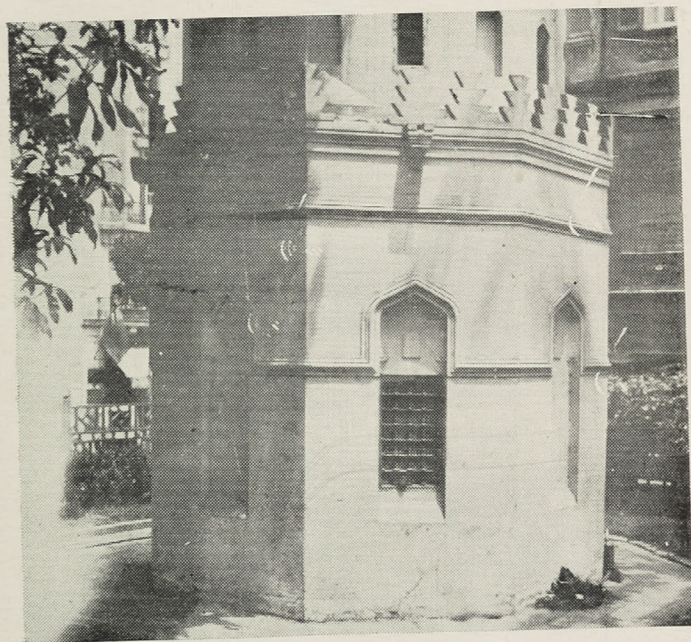
M 3 (v. Sectional Map X.)

MAGHRABI الشيخ المغربي

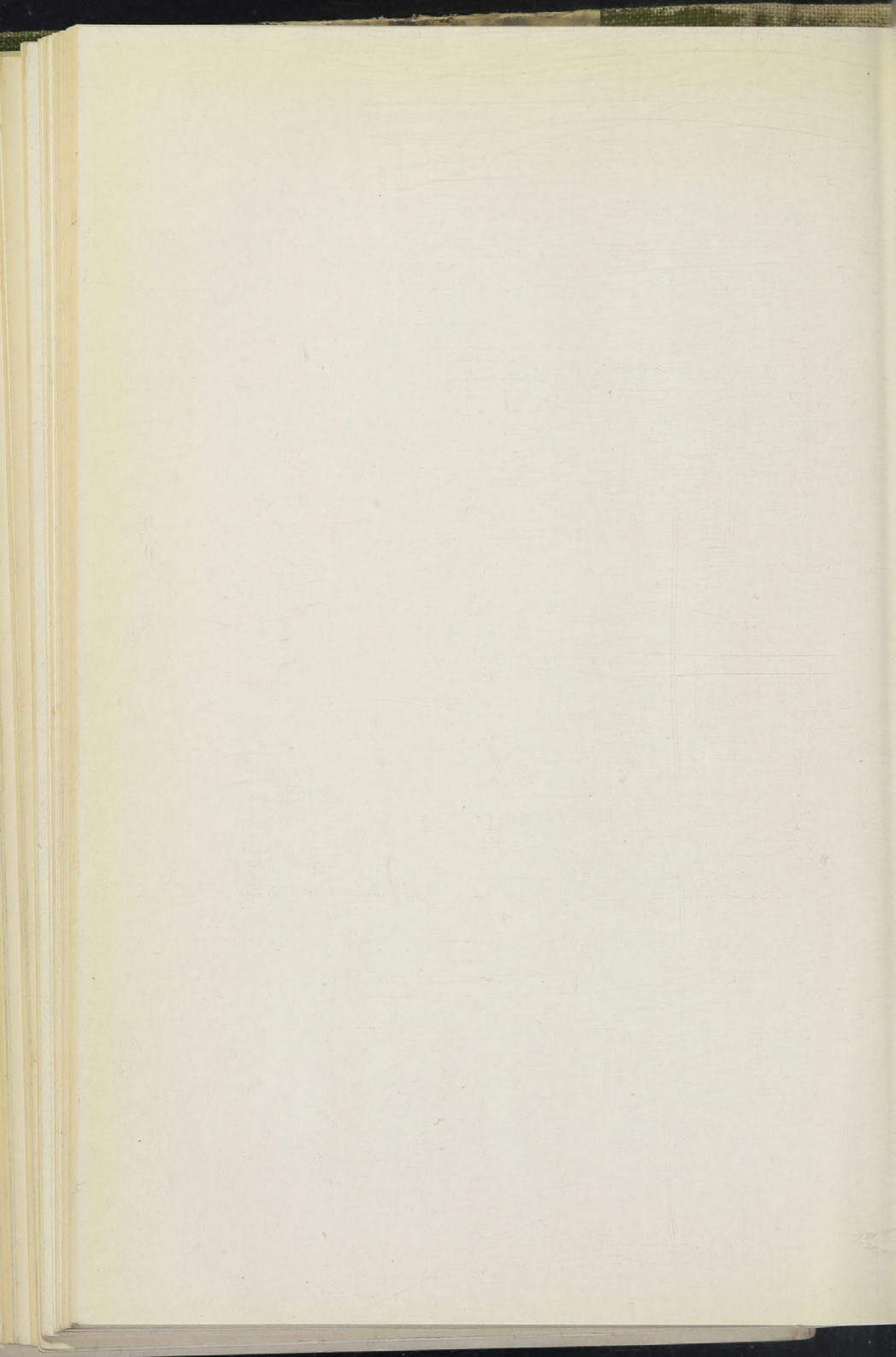
I have never witnessed this moulid, but am informed by Major G-A who had a house in Sharia el-Maghrabi, almost opposite the little shrine, that he saw it some six years ago. It was a very small private moulid organised and financed by some local people.

The time of the year seems to have been about Ragab. The tomb is very central and well known, and is beside the Turf Club, and a considerable piece of that district is said to have once belonged or to have been controlled by the Sheikh Maghrabi.

This moulid is included here, though apparently fallen into disuse, as it is not rare for a moulid to be dormant for years,



Tomb of Sheikh Maghraby
Patron Saint of Turf Club.



and then to be revived. (This was the case with Abu el-Ela, and an extreme instance is that of Sidi Haroun which was dormant almost from time immemorial, until revived a few years ago.)

The name of the street has recently been changed, in accordance with an invidious innovation, that causes endless confusion, dislocates local history, (a great pity in Cairo, where the names of streets and places were full of significance), and raises delicate problems, as for example,—Does in this case the tomb also change its designation? Will the mouldid, if revived, be that of Sidi Maghrabi or Sidi Adli? And which of these saints should pious members of the contiguous Turf Club regard as *Genius Loci*, to be appeased by libations, and revered as Patron?

M 4 (v. Sectional Map VIII).

MANSI سيدي المنسي

This mouldid, since I have known it, some six years, has varied but slightly in date, from 23 Shaaban in 1354 to 21 Shaaban in 1355, and has been quite independent of the day of the week.

The tomb is in the Daher district, near the intersection of the Khalig and Sharia Farouq, and therefore easily reached by trams 3, 5, 7, 22, 33, or by following Sharia Mansi from the point of intersection of the Khalig and the Abbasia Road.

It has been the victim of diverse vicissitudes. It was lively and popular with a rather pronounced secular side up to 1354, and I took a good many European visitors who found the theatres and shows and the very mild-scale gambling interesting, and the confluence at the shrine picturesque and impressive. In 1355 it was dismal to a degree, reduced almost to nothing, but in 1356 (1937) it rose again, had a fine zeffa at 5 in the afternoon, from the Sebil (fountain) near the Huseinia, and gave edification and pleasure to a large crowd in the evening. I do not know what happened in 1357 (1938) but when I went

in the evening, sheikhs and others were sitting in the waste land between the now almost deserted shrine and Sh. Farouq, more dismally sad than if they had been amongst the tombs, and all music had been silenced.

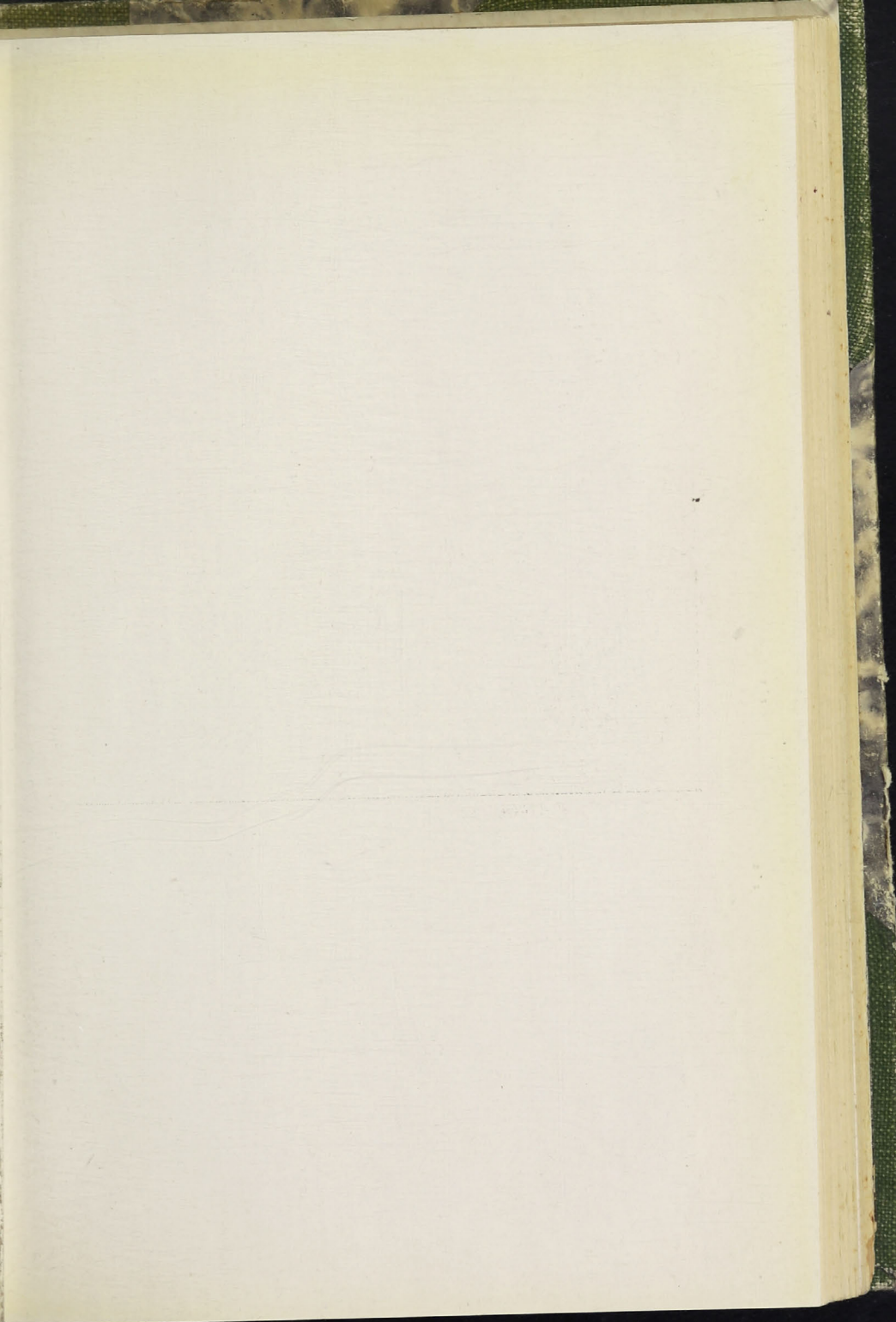
What had Sidi Mansi done ?

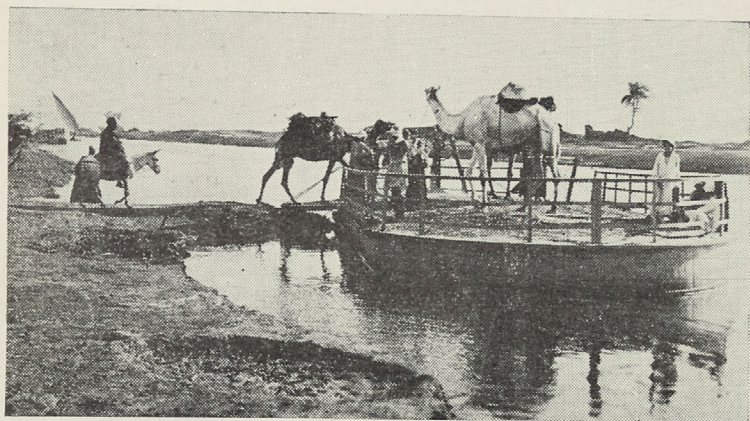
Hearing this year, 1359 (1940) that Sheikh Mansi's Feast was to be observed on the last Sunday of Shaaban, I went on the Wednesday previous to this, to confirm the alleged date and to enquire about the prospects of a zeffa. A zikr was in progress in the *maqam*, very impressive and colourful, amongst the lights and decorations, and the rich covering of the *tabut*. The sheikh-guardian of the tomb, recognised me, and informed me that no zeffa would be attempted, but that on the Friday night there would be a great zikr by the Nubians, and on the Saturday night by the Dervishes of the Rifaiya, and some others, who would do many marvellous things, and that possibly this would be repeated to some extent on the next and final night, Sunday.

I went on the Sunday, but only for a short while, as this was also the main night of the moulids of Sidi el-Ansari, and of the anchorite Marsafa, and found even the tomb nearly deserted, and nothing but a few gambling tables and a cafe in the waste patch of land that used to be so merry. I was assured however that the progammme for the earlier evenings had been carried out.

I mention this as it is becoming rather frequent for some of the preliminary nights to go better and more smoothly than the last, if indeed the moulid survives to the end.

It seems a little pathetic that fear of interference or repression gives rise to little manoeuvres and subterfuges in order to ensure the performance of rites which have been customary and approved. It reminds one, but happily in only a remote way, of the Christians in ancient Rome going underground for the peaceful conduct of their services. Here the dervishes are handicapped by having no catacombs to use as a last resort.





Mustarod Ferry.

MOSTAROD

M 5 (v. Map of Delta.)

MARIAM ستنا مريم

This Coptic mould in honour of the Assumption of Our Lady is always held on or very near the date of that feast, Coptic reckoning. I saw it on 16 Misra 1650 (22-8-1934), a Wednesday, and also on 16 Misra 1652 (22-8-1936 or 5 Gumad II 1355).

It is not easy to get at, and still harder to return from, but well repays the trouble. There is now an occasional bus from Mataria station to the ferry near Mostarod, leaving the ferry crossing and a short and pleasant walk along the canal bank.

Before the war, at which time I had a chalet at Mataria, though I knew nothing of the mould, I often took riding parties to the little village, for the sake of the ride past the Obelisk and over the site of On, the ancient Heliopolis, and the beauty of the position of the ancient Coptic church in the Land of Goshen, and its own priceless icons and other treasures. There was no bus in those days, but the whole distance could be done on horseback as the quaint ferry carries man and beast. The priests were and are always most kind and willing to show their precious things.

The mould is an extremely pretty sight, particularly if there is a full moon, though there is little but a few small shows and a large tent for singing, dancing, and light refreshment, on the canal bank, and of course the church into which a stream of pilgrims passes till well on in the night. Across the canal is a palace much favoured by the Khedive Abbas Hilmi in his day.

The buses stop at about nine. I have been lucky in spotting a cab at the ferry which has brought night visitors and would have returned empty to Mataria. Otherwise it means an hour's walk.

This is not a mouldid in the typical sense of a celebration at the shrine of a local saint, but is rather of the type of Christmas or the Mouldid el-Nebi,—not connected with the locality,—except perhaps by a relic or icon, but is included here as being popular and open to all, and the goal of a pilgrimage: and also as being an example of the numerous Coptic feasts held at this time in honour of the Assumption of Our Lady, عيد إهداء العذراء. These are all, as far as I know, held by the *Orthodox* Copts.

I was invited to a mouldid to be held in the village of Daqduṣ, دقذوس, near Mit Ghamr, ميت غمر, on the 14th August 1940, (8th Misra, 1656), the eve of the Assumption with all Catholics, Eastern or Western, so concluded that I had at last hit on a Coptic—*Catholic* mouldid, but on going with my host and informant on that date, it was evident that his carefully acquired and sifted information was not exact, for instead of the final night of a Catholic Feast it was the opening of an Orthodox celebration whose great night was to be on the octave, 21st. August, (15th Misra). The local priest showed us with great urbanity and pride the old icons and other treasures of his church.

The beating of tom-toms and other merry noises, mainly children's voices, called us to the canal banks in front of the church; where Punch and Judy, and other little shows were already inaugurated.

I am told that Our Lady is honoured in many parts of Egypt by mouldid-like feasts also at or about the date of the Annunciation, عيد البشارة, 6th April, (28th Baramhat), that is thirteen days after the vigil of the feast by the Western reckoning, 24th March.

The public observance of these two Holy Days of the B. V. M., العذراء, the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, and her translation into heaven, is common throughout Coptic, Orthodox and Catholic Christendom, the second being, I think the

more general and popular. I have already referred to the beautiful celebrations of that at Siena and Cremasto. My readers will at once think of the foul crime which emphasised the pilgrimage to Tinos in August 1940, the torpedoing of the "Helle", and subsequent bombing of the injured. That island is thronged at both of these Feasts.

But what a blessed country where the first care of the authorities was to protect the mouldid and those who attended it, and to see that the zeffa and all proceeded in peace, *malgré tout!* And what a difference from the attitude here! One might ask, "But why this difference?" — to which the obvious answer is, "Because there the enemy was from *without*, here the enemy of mouldids is *within*."

But the lesson of the Tinos crime, a material loss but a moral gain to the Greeks and to Greece is brought out in a letter before me in the Egyptian Gazette of 4 September, 1940, which is so full of important truths bearing on our subject, and on the welfare of this country and its people that I propose introducing it *in extenso* into the Introductory Chapter. (which see.)

M 6 (v. Sectional Map XI.)

MARSAFA سيدي علي المرصفي

The mouldid of Sidi Ali el-Marsafa has been held on the last Saturday of Shaaban, each of six occasions on which I have noted the date, though in 1355 when I was not there it was reported as being held on Monday 24 Shaaban (9.11.36). This year, 1359 (1940), it was on the last Sunday.

The little street in which the Saint lived, died and was buried, Qantarat el-Amir Hussein is just off the Khalig in front of the Parquet (Court of Appeal), or it may be reached from Sh. Moh. Ali by taking a walk down Sh. el Souaqa. The little underground mosque however may easily be missed as only the door is on the level of the street, and quite inconspicuous with

its pots, pans and people to be seen inside, but for the *epitaphion* over it, "The mosque of Sidi Ali el-Marsafa":

«مسجد سيدى علي المرصفي»

It is a small private delightful mouldid unspoilt by police interference though so near their headquarters: anyway that was the case up to 1355 (1936), but I fear it has been on the decline since. Apart from the religious ceremonies down in the mosque and in buildings opposite, the residents in the Qantara and an adjoining little street make up most pleasant little singing parties with a few comical characters entertaining the people innocently. A few years ago I saw a rare and beautiful sight, which it delights me to record: a large car containing police officers dashed into one of these narrow streets in which one of the entertainments was proceeding, and in which the way was confessedly obstructed if not blocked by performers, onlookers and chairs. An awful pause and frantic efforts to clear a way, when an officer called out cheery salutations, and an injunction *not to disturb themselves*, and the car backed out and went off. The singers were speechless for a moment and then their voices warbled forth the praises of God and the Hekimdar.

The *chronicler* El-Sharani who calls our Saint, "Nur el-Din el-Marsafa" records that he died about 930 A. H., and was buried in his corner *zawia* in Qantarat el-Amir Hussein, where his tomb is to be seen."

«الشيخ نور الدين المرصفي رحمة توالي ورصي الله عنه امين . . . مات رضي الله عنه ورحمه سنة نيف وثلاثين وتسعمائة ودفن بزاوية بقنطرة الامير حسين بمصر وقبره بها ظاهرا يزار رضي الله عنه»
الطبقات الكبرى عبد الوهاب الشعراني جزئان ص ١١٦—١٧

M 7 (v. Sectional Map XII.)

MARZUQ سيدى مرزوق

Though always on a Thursday, this mouldid in the years I have known it, has varied in date from 29 Zu'el-Qaada in 1352

to 4 Safr in 1356 (15-4-37). In some way it is dependent on the greater moulid of Bayumi, having always followed this by either seven or fourteen days. This curious sort of symbiosis appears from the following dates:—

| | | | | | | |
|------|--------|--|------------------|------------------------|----------------|---------|
| 1352 | Bayumi | Thursday | 22 Zu'el-Qaada : | Marzuq | 29 Zu'el-Qaada | |
| | | | = 8.3.34 | | 15.3.34 | 7 days |
| 1353 | " | " | 23 Zu'el-Higga : | " | 8 Muharem | (1354) |
| | | | = 28.3.35 | | 11.4.35 | 14 days |
| 1355 | " | " | 3 Muharem | " | 17 Muharem | |
| | | | = 26.3.36 | | 9.4.36 | 14 days |
| 1356 | " | " | 26 Muharem | " | 4 Safr | |
| | | | = 8.4.37 | | 15.4.37 | 7 days |
| 1357 | " | Abandoned | | Abandoned | | |
| 1358 | " | In the hands of God at time of writing, Muharem 1358 | | Likewise in His Hands. | | |

The mosque of Sidi Marzuq is situated in a beautiful so-far unspoilt bit of Cairo, in Qasr el-Shoq, near the Sagha (Assay Offices), Gamalia district. It is quite near Sidna Husein and the Beit el-Qadi. Perhaps the easiest way of reaching it is to take bus 18 from the Ataba, and descending at Sidna Husein, to walk past the great door of that mosque and as far as possible straight on for a few minutes.

Behind the mosque there is a long *cul de sac* full of attractions of a varied nature: still nearer and possibly a part of the mosque premises, a hall for a sort of *tashrif*a (reception) at which a band plays: also in the neighbourhood Punch and Judy, booths for circumcision and spaces on the ground for tattooing, and occasionally whirling fire-eaters *et sic*, but the great feature is the beautiful zeffa, the best, I think, after Bayumi to be seen in Cairo. In 1356 (1937) I watched this, from the collection of its elements outside the Bab el-Nasr at about 3 in the afternoon, a splendid sight in a majestic spot, to its arrival after 5 at the mosque. The various companies of dervishes, with mounted

“khalifa” music, banners and the rest, after a preliminary march into the desert processed to the muski, rounded Sidna Husein, and past the Sagha, every inch of the way attractive, especially that glorious group of Kalaoun, Barquq and other mosques and buildings at the end of the Nahasin.

The above short account of Sidi Marzuq, written in Muharem 1358 (March 1939) begins with a comparison of dates with those of “Sultan” Bayumi, and it will have been noticed that though these dates advanced through Zu’ el-Qaada, Zu’ el-Higga, and Muharem in the lunar calendar, they only passed from March to April in the solar. When then in 1359 (1940) Bayumi was revived after being dormant for three years, owing to mosque repairs, his date had advanced yet a lunar month to Safr, but returned to March, it was almost conclusively evident that Sidi Bayumi actually follows the seasons, and that his symbiot as regards date must do the same. This conclusion as regards Bayumi was made quite definite by an account I found in an edition of Murray of 1888 stating that his mouldid was fixed by the season, not by the lunar reckoning.

That the same is the case with Marzuk I have little doubt, but unhappily when I looked for the final proof in the mouldid of Marzuk being renewed in March 1940, a week after Bayumi as was expected also by the people of the district, it was said to have been postponed, and now six months later we are still waiting and trusting that it is still in the hands of Allah, and that He will prevail.

It is curious that all the Moslem mouldids which follow the seasons like Sayed el-Bedawi’s are, as far as I know, his dependents directly or indirectly, for to take those in Cairo alone, Imbabi was Sayed’s apostle, Bayumi’s sect of the Bayumiya is a branch of Sayed’s great *tariqa* of the Ahmadiya, and Marzuk seems a filial of Bayumi.

Writing on the eve of Ramadan, 1359 (1940), a sort of *stop-press* postscript, and referring to the last clause but one, I am able to add, that He did prevail, and here are the details:—

The vicissitudes of the moulid of the great Saint Marzuk of recent years, its abandonment on more than one occasion, and particularly its failing to follow that of Sidi Bayumi, according to immemorial custom, now that that has come again into honour, raised dismal forebodings. Happily these were dispelled by an announcement that the moulid and the ancient zeffa would take place on the last Thursday of Shaaban of this year 1359 (26 September 1940). The news was as welcome as it was unexpected, for as has been indicated above it should fall about the beginning of April (Baramhat), thus being nearly half the year late, and there only remained a few days before the advent of Ramadan would close the moulid season for some months. The tidings reached me on the day itself about the time the zeffa was to start from the Bab el-Nasr, 3.30 in the afternoon.

As it took some hours to reach Qasr el-Shok, where the mosque and tomb are situated, deviating as usual through the Nahasin and Muski to visit the shrine of Sidna Hussein, it was about sunset when the banners were furled, and a friendly dervish led me into the ancient mosque, and showed me the green stone which bears the impress of the Prophet's feet, and of course the *tabut* above the saint's body.

The mosque was very full of worshippers, including many distinguished people, and I much appreciated the privilege of entry at such a time, and the friendly attitude of everybody. My dervish's information was fascinating, though largely apocryphal, especially as regards the visit of the Nebi to the mosque, and his relations with Sidi Marzuk on the occasion of the *impression* of the sacred foot. He confirmed what I have long felt sure was the case, that the relations of Marzuk and the great Ahmad Sayed el-Bedawi were very intimate, though I think the assertion that he was Sidi Ahmad's son also apocryphal.

A door in the side of the mosque led us into the hall of *tashrifa*, where a band of young musicians who had enhanced the zeffa, were giving pleasure to a considerable company.

The *zeffa* I need not describe, as it was on its own traditional lines, and those of Sidi Bayumi, and of course the dominant colour was the red of the Ahmadiya and the Bayumiya. The allied *Order* of the Awlad Nooh was well represented, and was as picturesque and popular as ever.

It was reassuring to see this very ancient and venerable mouldid shared and protected by high official personages, and the Khalifa in the *zeffa* a lineal descendant of the great Khalif Abu Bakr, father-in-law of the Prophet, in the person of the Sheikh Muhammad Shams el-Din el-Bakri. He was hailed by the crowd as *Sahib Sigada*,—*Naqib el-Ashraf*. This is not strictly correct, though I understand he comes very close to El-Sayed el-Bakri who recently succeeded to his father's supremely high position as *Sheikh el-Bakri*, which carries these titles.

It was a little unfortunate that this belated mouldid was assigned to the same date as those of Mar Barsum el-Aryan at Maasara, and Sidi Muhammadi at Demardash, by that is vastly outweighed by the moral support its official recognition lends to Egypt's traditional customs in this hour of their depression.

MATARIA

M 8 (Map of Delta.)

MATRAWI

سيدي المطراوي

This mouldid, almost unrivalled for the beauty and fascination of its position and associations, is one of the most easily accessible, for, unlike most others, its date can be relied on, always the 14th of Shaaban, and bus No. 16 passes through it and past the doors of the mosque of Sidi Matrawi. Or the train may be taken to Mataria, and a walk of about a mile enjoyed past the Jesuit gardens, and the Holy Tree and Well of the Virgin, and that in the light of the full moon. Those who wish to combine the Mouldid with a visit to the Holy Tree and Well should, however, go before sunset, lest the gate be found locked; and then retrace their steps a little, before they become absorbed in the

Feast of Matrawi, to see the obelisk on the site of the Temple of Ra, and the ancient city of On, as the Sun-God goes to rest and the great full-moon of Shaaban comes up. This is the home of the phoenix; and I think there must be something of the Phoenix about Sidi el-Matrawi, for before the war for many years I had a *piéd à terre* at Mataria, (the original Heliopolis), and passed the mosque constantly and through the present place of the mouldid, and never saw it nor heard of its existence. Once certainly, about 1321, (1903), the mosque and the cafés were crowded, and there was an unusual concourse of Bedouins and others, but I have no direct reason to associate this with the Saint.

I saw it first in 1351 (1932), a first class mouldid: a crowded mosque on one side of the road, and on the other so gay and happy a crowd that it did one's heart good; picturesque also to a degree. Prof. E-P of the University had motored me there, and as we flitted from attraction to attraction, we halted where a crowd was watching a strength contest,—pushing a cannon, with ever increasing load up an incline till it rang a bell. Some hero had achieved great things, when my companion cut in. I heard amusing comments,—“He can't be very strong, I don't suppose he has ever had a *fass* in his hand in his life.” When E-P beat the record there was most generous applause, and I confess I was surprised for the Egyptians are the most powerful people muscularly that I have ever come across. Three years later I was asked by a Bedouin at the mouldid,—“Where is your friend who rang the bell with top weight on?”

I think the mouldid reached its zenith in 1353 (1934). The following year, the police in clearing the road for traffic, with excess of zeal drove the crowd back and away from the road till there was a considerable mix up with the guy ropes of the show tents; but a *mulazim awel* coming along told them to keep to their orders, and maintain a way for traffic only. They obeyed absolutely, and all went happily, but I was much amused at a

swing of the pendulum to the other extreme:— a doddering carter came along, swung cart and donkey athwart the road, and gaped at the show, till an askari came to him and in honeyed tones said,—“Have the kindness, oh, my uncle, to move on just a little, and no offence!”

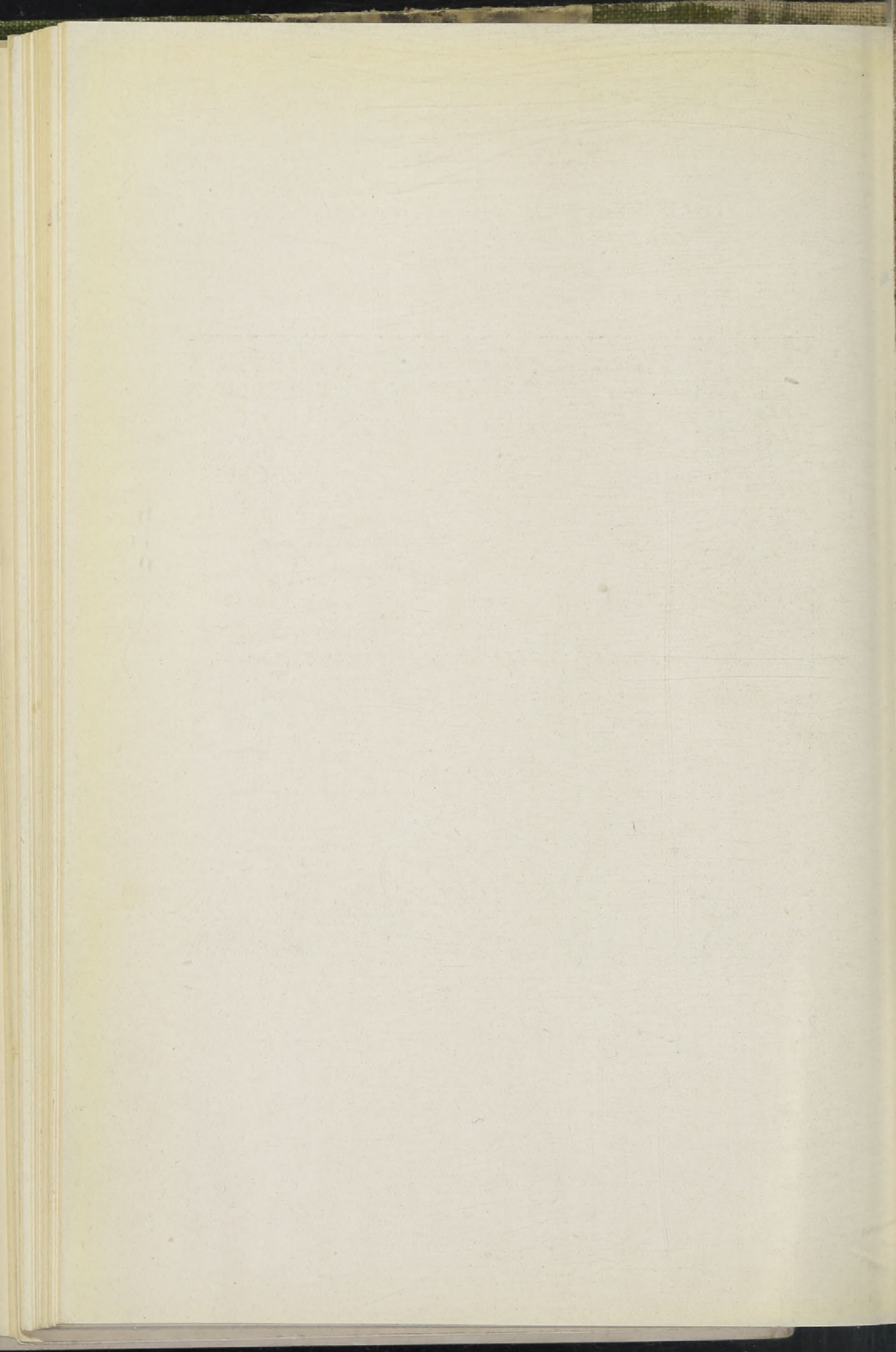
أعمل المعروف يا عمي وقدم شوية ولا مواخدة

At the beginning of this short account of the mouldid of Matrawi, I mentioned some of the sights which render Mataria one of the most fascinating spots in Egypt, which could be easily visited at the same time. There is much more to be visited and studied which requires rather more time. For example, in addition to the Holy Tree of the B.V.M., there are at least two other trees sacred to local Islamic saints, hung with votive offerings of a very simple nature, unless they have gone in recent years like the beautiful *sebil* and grove of fig trees near the obelisk, and the avenue of mulberry trees which connected them. One of these is at the back of the old village behind the mosque. The other is about a mile in the direction of Marg, near the railway, where the canal is crossed by a bridge. I had the temerity to photograph the first of these one Friday morning, in what evidently was the ladies' hour, and incurred considerable displeasure. Excusing myself on the ground of a shocking cold in the head, and the desire to hang up my handkerchief and obtain the benefit of the Sheikh's intercession for my cure, I was ultimately forgiven and allowed to perform this *act of faith*. This is not fundamentally as incongruous as it may seem: many Moslems come to the Coptic relics of Mar Tadros in the hope of cures or blessings, and hundreds of non-catholics, largely Moslems, to the Catholic shrine of St. Teresa at Shoubra, bearing their votive gifts. Very numerous similar cases could be cited, and cases reciprocally where Christians seek cures or blessings at Moslem shrines.

Going this year 1359 (1940), on the 14th Shaaban, according to the official calendars, somewhat after the time of the *asha*,



A Holy Tree, Near Merg.



I was not surprised at finding the recreative side much reduced, but distinctly so at a closed and unlighted mosque. On enquiring the reason, I was assured that the calendars were all wrong, and for *lunar* reasons this was decreed to be the 13th, and tomorrow night the eve of the 15th,—mid-Shaaban.

This information was correct, as the lit-up minarets and the celebration at the mosque of Muhammed Ali, and other indications showed, but I was unable to repeat my visit to Sidi Matrawi, so cannot report on that.

The importance of fixing the date exactly at this time, of course arises from the peculiar solemnity of the eve of mid-Shaaban,—*Leilat el-Nusf min Shaaban*, — ليلة النصف من شعبان : for on this night is shaken the Lote Tree of Paradise, "*El-Sidr*", the Tree of the Extremity, as it is called in the Surat el-Nigm, the 53rd. of the Qoran,— "عند سدره المنتهى", and each leaf which falls bears the name of one who is to die in the ensuing year.

My little neighbours, and children elsewhere make tiny processions, and sing

« يارب ثبت ورقتنا
على شجرتنا
وأحنا لسه صغار

which may be translated,—

"Lord, keep our leaves
Firm on our trees,
For we're Thy little kiddywees."
Amin.

M 9 (v. Sectional Map IV.)

MAZLUM

سيدي مظلوم

A short account of Sidi Mazlum will, I hope, convince those addicted to sedentary forms of worship and amusement, that if the non-moslem and uninitiated cannot expect the maximum of

edification, he can at least look forward to movement and excitement, life and colour ; apart from the interests of anthropology, folk lore and the like ; and the great tonic of an atmosphere free from boredom and feigned interest and enjoyment, where fun and piety are equally whole hearted.

The great night seems always to be a Sunday, but has varied in the five years 1353 to 1357 from the 22nd Muharem to the 27th Rabia Tani. Its date depends somewhat on the state of cultivation on its site, as is the case with Embaba, Farag, and doubtless others.

The "Maqam" is in the fields beyond Sherabia, past the shrine of Sidi Galal, who also has a mouldid ; and unless you have at your disposal a car built for rough roads, the best way is to take a cab outside Kubri el-Limoun station. But do not rely on the cabby's promise to fetch you back at night. You must be prepared for a walk of two or three miles, or a rough mount, or a place on a cart of sorts.

I made the acquaintance of Mazlum in 1353 (1934), some evenings previous to the big night, and found a circle of tents, theatres, ringas, qara goz, kheil el-zil, conjurers, performing dogs, push-cannon, Aunt Sally, shooting galleries, and all manner of shows and games surrounding a group of trees picturesquely enshrining the Maqam of the Saint. There was an outer circle of stick players, performing horses, hawis &c. &c., but having at the time an injured leg, I could do little but sit near the shrine, at the café of Amin, a well-known character, and enjoy the *va et vient* of the Pilgrims to the Maqam, a colourful, and impressive sight.

My cabby failed me, and I much regretted the army of donkeys and donkey boys of a few decades past, available almost anywhere : a picturesque and useful asset to Egypt, brutally crushed out alas, by the rage for mechanisation. I was in luck however for a Bedouin of quality pressed on me his horse which

had been performing early in the evening. A lovely beast, but with a difficult mouth, and prone to dance when we met a zeffa with tambourines, and anxious at times to show me how neatly he could lie down and pretend to be dead !

I came again the next day, and early, bringing a *murasla* with provisions in the cab, and much enjoyed a picnic dinner in an adjoining field. I had taken the precaution of withholding the fare, promising a big one on return, but the cabby did not appear. At least not then for he accosted me in town days after, swearing he had come but was commandeered by a group who made him drive them back. The *murasla* sought for a donkey in vain : donkeys indeed were still alive but the enterprise of their owners was dead, and they missed a chance of *coining* money. Ultimately he produced a colossal mule, surmounted by a pyramid of leather and brass. What a mount, and what a time he gave me and my groggy leg ! His owner was not to be seen, as arranged, at Pont Limoun, but my despair at having his sumpter mule left on my hands was soon dissipated by his arrival.

On the last and great night, I had the advantage both ways of Dr. E-P's car, but his desire, as Professor of Anthropology to see a typical mouldid, was hardly fulfilled. The skeleton at the feast appeared soon after sunset, in the form of a huge veiled Arab, who caused intense annoyance by his freedom with the women, and the audacity with which he helped himself at anybody's stall. He was soon shadowed by two police agents in plain clothes, but finding his movements hampered, and their questions awkward, he suddenly produced a murderous file and laid one of them out. The law-abiding crowd immobilised and unveiled him at once. It was a dramatic moment ! Some woman cried, "Why, that's the *harami* that kidnapped my little Mustafa !" And a man exclaimed, "And stole my cattle !" He was in fact recognised as a brigand chief, a hated terror, and this was to be the end of his evil acts. The furious villagers closed in upon him, and he was lost to my sight, and I have grave hopes that he was torn to pieces.

News reached the authorities with more quickness than accuracy, and in a very few minutes mounted askaris with sticks charged and recharged the assembly with more zeal than discrimination : tents came down : artistes dressed or otherwise fled into the fields : the mouldid was utterly wiped out. I was sorry for the honest crowd, who in lynching the villain had done good service, if a bit irregular, but that could hardly have been known to the police till after, and their job was obviously to stop bloodshed and disorder, however caused.

Appended is the account of the lynching affair as given by "La Bourse Egyptienne".—

Un malfaiteur est lynché par la foule.

6/5/34 22/1/53

A l'occasion du mouled du cheikh El-Mazloun, à Charabia la police avait chargé deux agents de veiller au maintien de l'ordre à l'endroit où se déroulait le mouled. Les agents remarquèrent qu'un certain Mohamed Kassem, grand malfaiteur sorti de prison il y a deux mois à peine, faisait le tour des étalages et rançonnait les marchands, en les menaçant avec une grande lime. Ils durent intervenir pour empêcher le malfaiteur de continuer ses méfaits. Ils lui enlevèrent la lime. Furieux, Mohamed Kassem sortit de dessous ses vêtements, une barre de fer et blessa un des agents, nommé Mohamed El-Sayed. La foule accourut. Comme elle en avait assez de Mohamed Kassem, elle se rua furieusement sur lui et le roua de coups. On l'assomma à coups de gourdins, de bouteilles et de chaises.

Le cadavre du malfaiteur fut transporté au poste de police de Mahmacha et le Parquet fut saisi de l'affaire. Plusieurs individus furent interrogés. Ils confirmèrent tous les dépositions des agents.

L'agent blessé a été transporté à l'hôpital. Son état est sérieux. Le cadavre du malfaiteur a été soumis à l'autopsie.

The following year, Sunday, 25 Moharem 1354, (28-4-35), an English lady who had wandered through Arabia and the Yemen, attracted rather than the reverse by my stories of this mouldid, accompanied me in my cab, but when approaching this temporary city of a hundred tents, a wheel subsided in the soft earth at the edge of the embankment, and the cab overturned. Bumping across a well filled ditch into some rich vegetation, we escaped without broken bones :—and without broken bottles, for we had brought picnic rations—and after getting together a willing fatigued party to get *Humpty Dumpty* up again, and obtaining the arbugy's blessing and solemn oath that he would send a cab for us, as he was seemingly very grateful for what he considered liberal treatment, and after a preliminary round of the tents, &c., we sat down by running water in a field close by. There was a bucolic atmosphere of fresh soil and spring onions, for we were in a salad field, and the one lacuna in our menu was supplied on the spot. One item was a succulent plant which I have not seen elsewhere. The local swain called it *Kirat*.

The mouldid went smoothly this time, and my companion was specially attracted by the conjuring of El-Hag Mahmud, by the shadow shows, and the dancing horses. She indulged in mild gambling of various sorts with enormous luck for the benefit of some appreciative youngsters. But at the latter end, history repeated itself—*breach of promise* by the *arbugy*, and nothing that my *murasa* could find to ride but the sumpter mule with the brazen pyramid on its back. To sit fore and aft of this appealed to neither of us, but a donkey cart load of women and children consented to our squeezing in with them,—and so to Cairo.

Whilst seated, *pro fanum*, I have had considerable conversation with pilgrims to the shrine of "Mazlum", but their information has been neither consistent nor reliable. Some say that his name was not Mazlum, but that the term is applied to him, almost in the sense of Martyr, on account of his having been falsely accused and put to death. My informants have agreed

that he was a friend of the fellah and patron of agriculture. He might also be patron of Wanglers, for he usually obtains abnormally long runs and gracious concessions for his moulids : twenty days or more against the Prophet's seven. Even the death of King Foad, in 1355, which checked all such celebrations, only held up this for a time, and really prolonged it ; and in 1357 it must have run for more than a month. When nearing the date of its apodosis, it was stopped (for reasons unknown to me), but I am told that the sheikh of the tomb made strong representations to the Mamur, not without a soupçon of menace, which that high functionary had in his mind, when at night Mazlum himself appeared in a vision and told him roundly that lives could be cut short as well as moulids. The good man, (so the local people say), assured his ghostly visitor that he, the ghost, had been misinformed about the curtailment of the moulid, and that it should be consummated with all [honour and five nights added to its duration. And it was so :—and the writer was present the final night, Sunday 27th Rabia Tani, 1357, (26-6-38), and enjoyed "quietam noctem et perfectum finem", with the usual picnic meal in the salad field, and rough ride home.

Floreat Mazlum,—and the Mamur, and may the latter have five years and more added to his valuable life.

M 10 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

MUAFAQ

سيدي موفق

This moulid seems to have a precarious existence and the votaries of the Saint to be glad of any day of the week or month when they can celebratelhis memory, and invoke his intercession. In 1353 it was Sunday 26 Ragab : in 1354 Tuesday 10 Shaaban : in 1355 Thursday 27 Shaaban : in 1356 Tuesday 28 Shaaban : and in 1357 (1938) I fear it was relegated to the Greek Kalands.

It is just behind the great mosque of Abu el-Ela, and therefore passed by trams 14, 15, 13, and bus 6 and 15.

The squalid little street which contains the tomb of Sidi Muafaq has nothing else to redeem it except just opposite, another tomb, that of Sidi Mustafa. Their names are superscribed,

هذا ضريح سيدي حامدة موفق هذا ضريح الشيخ مصطفى

When I found this mouldid in 1353 (1934) it was a big affair, with good attendance at the shrines, and the usual shows, with a large tent theatre under the Mosque of Abu el-Ela. This disappeared in 1354 and Qara Goz did not survive till the last night, but there were some "Ringas", with highly primitive Sudanese music and dancing; a subject of interest and research to the late Professor of Anthropology of the University and other savants who accompanied me. In 1355 (1936) another sort of dancing place was violently raided, but went on again in a few minutes. In 1356 (1937) there were a few gaming tables and an odd pilgrim or so at the shrines, and an attempt at a tiny zeffa at 4. 30. In 1357 (1938) nil! and I fear since!

M 11 (v. Sectional Map V.)

سيدي الشيخ دمرdash المحمدي

MUHAMMADI (Sidi el-Sheikh Demardash el-Muhammadi)

This is one of the mouldids recognised officially, (like that of Imam el-Shafei), by ceremonies of considerable *envergure*, attended by many of the Ulama, Ministers, High Functionaries, and Notables, descendants of this great local Cairene Saint, and bearing his name, being included.

On the site of the little *zawia*, زاوية⁽¹⁾ where Sidi Demardash meditated, there is now his *tabut*, and on the patch of land which he cultivated for the poor and for the state four hundred years ago, there is now a splendid mosque and buildings, supplemented at his mouldid by pavilions for a great *tashrifa*. I have had the honour of attending this on several occasions on the final night which is always a Thursday of the second half of Shaaban, varying from the 17th in 1352, to the 26th, 1357, (20. 10. 38). It is quite splendid, and rendered more impressive by the white-robed

(1) «مات سنة نيف وثلاثين وتسعمائة ودفن . اوبته رضى الله عنه»

candle-bearing devotees. I have not witnessed a zeffa, but that may be because I have not come sufficiently early. Before the *tashrifa* many of the poor are entertained to dinner.

It is best reached by motor-bus No. 10, but if the train be preferred it is but a short walk from Demardash station, and in any case the lofty illuminated minaret is a beacon guiding one to the *zawia*, which will be found surrounded by a dense concourse of pilgrims.

This mouldid until 1353, was not only the goal of a pilgrimage but a highly popular event, and the road from the Abbasia boulevard to the mosque was a gay scene of booths, stalls, zikr groups &c. on both sides, and an immense crowd, but on going in 1355 (1936), this track was quite deserted except for automobiles going to or returning from the *tashrifa*. Doubtless the blending of the two was deemed incongruous and inadvisable, but the result was depressing and disappointing to many, so that in 1356, I rejoiced with many to find that the amusement department still carried on, but in the village at a respectable distance from the track referred to. The same was the case in 1357, and all passed tranquilly and everyone was edified and happy. (Old friends of the people reappeared,—the strong man and his dwarf and company, Mahmud el-Hindi the conjurer, some performing dogs, and the great favourite, Qara Goz.)

In most cases it is very difficult to obtain consistent information about the life and origin of the Saint one is honouring, but from readings at the *tashrifa*, and the chronicles of Shaarani, Muhammadi stands out a very real and attractive character tilling his plot of almost desert soil, till many attracted by his holy life, or benefited by his prayers or the produce of his labour settled about his *zawia* and formed the nucleus of the village which bears his name. It comes down to us that his wife, an earnest disciple, shared his cell, and was awe-stricken at the frequency with which he rose throughout the night to perform ablutions, pray, or study the Qoran el-Sherif. His motto like that of most of *Western* monasticism was evidently, "Ora et labora".

M 12

MUHAMMADI (The Sheikh Saleh El-Aabud Chahin
el-Muhammadi)

الشيخ الصالح العابد شاهين المحمدي

I hesitate to include this Saint in a book of moulds because I have no definite proof that his cult, almost limited as far as I know to the Moqattams and their vicinity, actually extends to a mould. My main reason for doing so is to dissipate the confusion between him and his contemporary recluse of the same name, Demardash el-Muhammadi, a confusion transmitted to me by my informants, and only now cleared by the help of The Tobaqat el-Kubra of Sh. Shaarani.

Sh. Saleh el-Muhammadi was a soldier in the army of the Mameluke Sultan Kaitbey, and a great favourite of the latter. *He accompanied the Sultan in his expedition to Persia, but returned to Cairo and settled down to an anchorite's life, living 30 years in a cave or a grave of the Moqattams, dying in great sanctity about the beginning of the 10th century, A. H., (the end of the XVth, A. D.).

He went as naked as St. Onephrius, without the advantage of that saint's beard which reached his feet. He seems to have made a vow of silence, for his visitors and disciples could not persuade him to talk, but gained edification from the pious austerity of this ascetic.

I have been unable to trace his cell in the Moqattams.

* Note :

الشيخ الصالح العابد شاهين المحمدي (رضي الله عنه)
من جند السلطان الاعظم قايتباي . . . راح المجمع ورجع . . .
سكن في المقطم في قبر ٣٠ سنة من غير ان ينزل إلى مصر . . . توفاه الله تعالى سنة
نيف تسعمائة . . .

One of our Sheikh's names being Chahin or Shahin*, I was inclined to identify him with Abu Shahin, whose lovely ruined mosque merges into the rock, south of the *Geiushi*, from which it can be approached by a narrow track skirting in one place a precipice. From this you crawl like a rabbit up through a hole cut in the live rock, avoid falling into a great dark cave on the left, or mistaking a sort of natural *oubliette* on the right for the track, and so hurtling into space, squeeze through a long rock gallery, and emerge on one of the beauty spots of Egypt, perhaps of the world, commanding a view of the Nile, green Maadi, distant Howamdia, the Saqqara pyramid, and much else, (an ideal spot for picnic and a siesta). Thence you climb down to the old mosque with its fine minaret vertically beneath you, and find a gaping hole which once contained the mortal remains of the Sheikh, dug up and violated unhappily about 1918, at which time also the wonderful green tiles and all things portable were stolen.

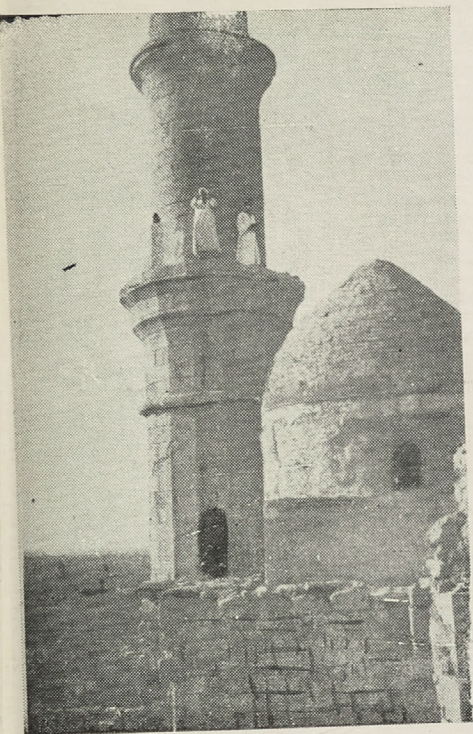
* Note,— Chahin or Shahin?

Either spelling may be used, according to whether we transliterate from the original Turkish چ , chîn; or from the Arabicised form ش , shîn; there being no چ in the Arabic alphabet. By a paradox therefore it is more correct to write this and similar words of Turkish origin with initial "Ch", but better Arabic to employ "Sh".

There are lots of similar cases, e.g.

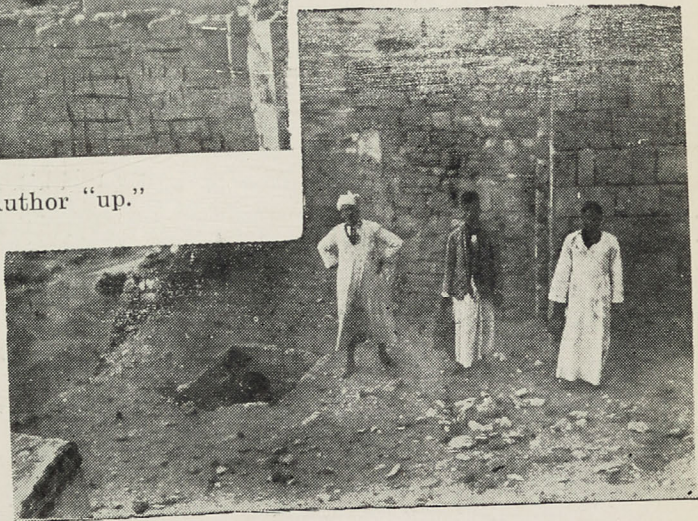
| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Chalabi (a foreign gentleman, noble person) | from چلي , or شالي |
| Cháwîsh (sergeant) | ,, چاويش ,, شايوش |
| Chai (tea) | ,, چاي ,, شاي |
| Chamashîrgi (laundryman) | ,, |
| | (from چاشيرجي or شاماشيرجي) |

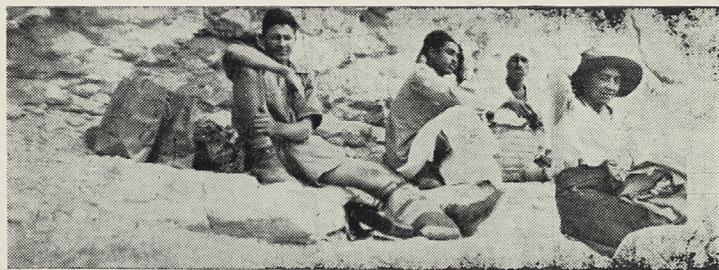
The last shows well the subtle difference between the letters چ , chîn and ش shin.



Mosque of Chahin.

Author "up."





Picnic on Moqattam Hills.

That the clearing up of these points must be left to others was brought home to me at the end of Shaaban 1358 (1939), when I was assured by a sheikh, (without any guarantee of accuracy) that the tomb and mouldid of Muhammadi were behind the manshieh of Muhammad Ali, and the new Caracol, and the mouldid then on. The spot I found in darkness and crowds of children showed me what might have been the tomb, many of them declaring that this was the first year that the mouldid had been suppressed.

N. 1 (v. Sectional Map XX.)

NAFISA

سيده نفيسة

Strictly speaking as far as I am aware, Sitna Nafisa has *now** no mouldid of her own, but she shares in a way that of Sitna Sakina, (who was, I think, her great-aunt,) near the middle of Gumad el-Awal. On that occasion her tomb seems as much in favour as that of Sakina, and the amusement park is in a bit of waste land facing the *gabel* close to Sitna Nafisa's great mosque, and some distance from that of Sakina.

Bus 18 from Darassa via the Ataba runs to the *gabel* in question passing Sitna Sakina. This is one of the most fascinating bits of Cairo and should not be missed. I recommend a visit on Sunday, when there is always a little pilgrimage to the tomb of the great Saint, (great-grand-daughter of Sidna Hasan, and therefore directly descended from the Prophet,) and collateral celebrations suggestive of a small mouldid.

Nearly always on the Sunday at the door of the mosque one finds women sitting, selling for three milliemès a little orb-shaped sistrum of wickerwork on a stalk, which one of them informed me was in remembrance of Nafisa as a girl, these sistra having been her favourite toys. This touching remembrance reminds me much of toys shown in the house of Santa Catarina, with

*Note:— I have seen in an old book, the mouldid of Saida Nafisa referred to as an important occasion.

which she played as a little girl, and of which replicas can be purchased in the *contrada* at the time of the Palio race, at Siena.

There is a more scientific interest in this sistrum, in that it supports Prof. Newberry's theory that the royal sceptre was in origin a sistrum.

Sitna Nefisa is held in such esteem and affection by the Cairenes, especially their womenfolk, that she perhaps rivals in that respect her great-great-aunt Saida Zenab. That is largely due to her having spent the last seven years of her life in Cairo, and bringing up a son and daughter here. She married late in life, her early days having been taken up in devotion and good works. Born in Mecca in 145 A.H. (762 A.D.), she passed away in Cairo in 208 A.H. (823 A.D.) at the age therefore of 63 years (Eastern reckoning).

The great Imam el Shafei was an ardent votary of hers, praying constantly at her mosque, which is only separated from his tomb, and the beautiful mosque built over it, by the necropolis, *qarafa*, قرافة, which contains the tombs of the Fatimite Khalifs, and always praying the special prayers of Ramadan with her.

I will conclude with a citation from the Chronicles of Abd el-Wahab el-Shaarani concerning her,—without translation, as it conveys practically what has been written above. . . .

«السيدة نفيسة ابنة الحسن بن زيد بن الحسن بن علي ابن ابي طالب رضي الله عنهم
ولدت رضي الله عنها بمكة وكان مولدها سنة خمسة واربعين ومائة ونشأت في العبادة
وتزوجت باسحق المؤمن ورزقت منه بولدين القاسم وأم كلثوم واقامت رضي الله عنها
بمصر سبع سنين وتوفيت الى رحمة الله تعالى سنة ثمان ومائتين

ولما دخل الامام الشافعي رضي الله عنه مصر كان يتردد اليها ويصلي بها التراويح في
رمضان في مسجددها رضي الله تعالى عنهما» (الجزء الاول من الطبقات الكبرى صفحت ٥٨)

N 2 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

NASR

سيدي نصر

On the one occasion on which I was present, Thursday 14 Rabia II, 1353 (26-7-34), this mouldid was fairly big and lively. It is held in the Darb el-Nasr, Bulaq, and is reached in a few minutes from Sh. Foad el-Awal, by leaving tram 13, 14, 15, 33 or bus 6, 7, at Abu el-Ela and going North along the new big street, Sh. Abd el-Gawad, till that is crossed by the Sh. Darb el-Nasr. In the open space near the crossing there was a very big Zikr, and in the Darb, an amusing little theatre and Punch and Judy.

The Darb el-Nasr is a long picturesque street, full of people at all times, and crowded when this mouldid is on, or the mouldids of Khasousi, and of Awlad Badr, which are both held here in Shaaban.

N. 3 (v. Sectional Map IX.)

NEBI (El-Nebi)

النبي محمد

صلى الله عليه وسلم

I was introduced on 11 Rabia I, 1320 (1902) to this most august of Moslem festivals, by the late Mufti, and was amazed, as all must be who visit it, at its magnitude and magnificence. I went the following year a night too late, owing to the misleading notices which I think still persist in the European papers, announcing the day corresponding to 12 Rabia as the Prophet's Birthday, and a public holiday, but omitting to point out that the great celebration is on the eve of the feast. Again and again I have met disappointed people who have missed the great occasion in the same way.

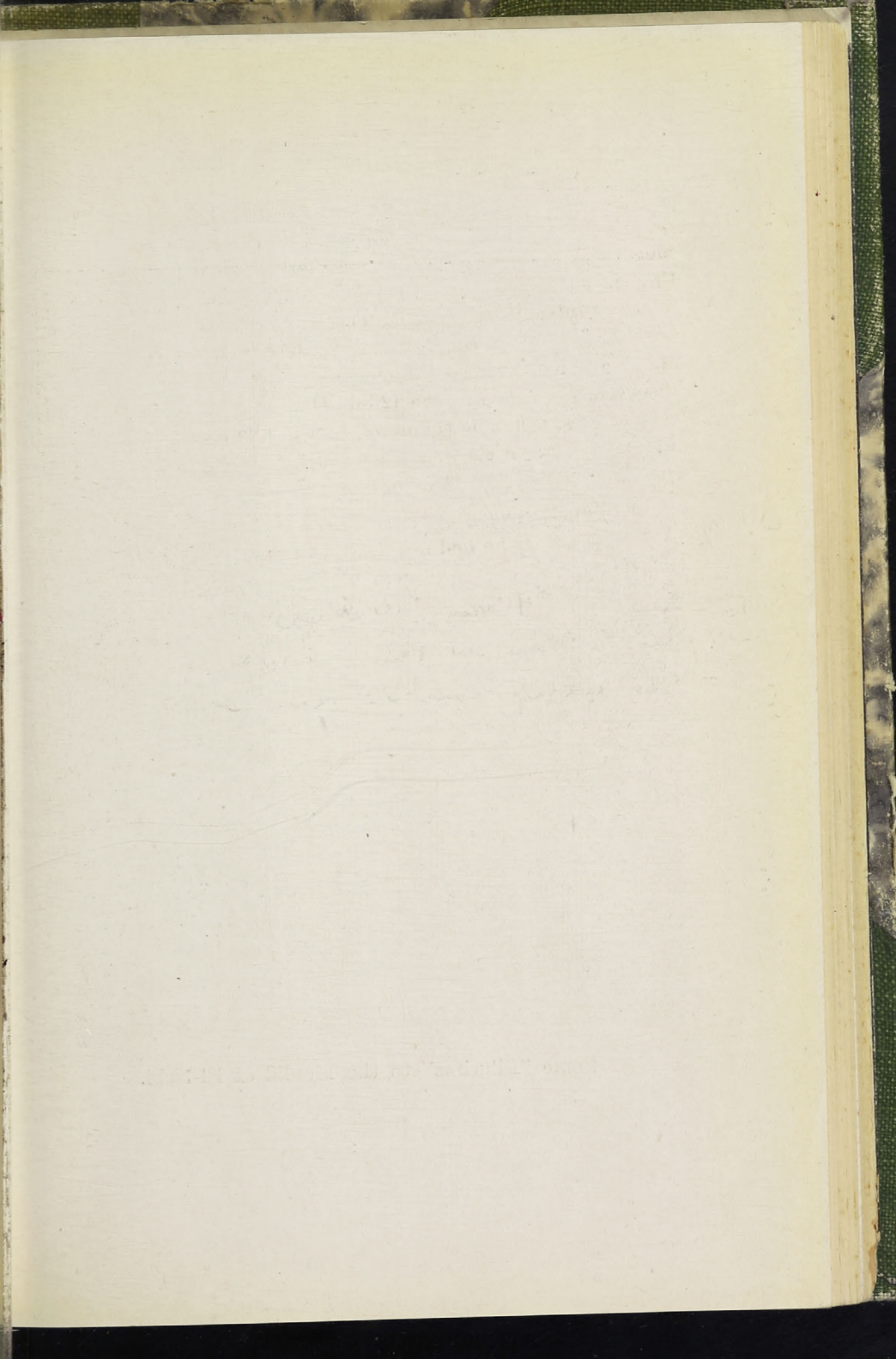
Lane in his *Modern Egyptians*, writing over a hundred years ago, gives a splendid account of the mouldid in detail, even the words and music employed in the zikrs and other religious ceremonies. Those were the days of the "Dosah", when the Sheikh of the Saïdiya rode over the prostrate bodies of a multitude of dervishes. This was suppressed before the present

century owing, it is said, to the Khedive listening to earnest representations made by a European visitor. Butler's name is mentioned, but I cannot believe that the author of the "Coptic Churches of Egypt" could have been capable of such a display of arrogant interference and ignorant narrow-mindedness, and I hope it was not an Englishman. There is no record of anyone having been injured at the *Dosah* during all the years it was observed, whereas in 1353 (23-6-34) Europeans and Egyptians alike were shocked by the number of people injured by the zeal and impatience of the police, who expected the great square clear the minute the fireworks ceased.

In Lane's days, the Sheikh el-Bakri had an important rôle in this *moulid* as he had in that of *Dashtouti*, and all occasions of the *dosah*, but a custom which concluded the ceremonies in his house, that of eating snakes by *Saadiya* dervishes, had been forbidden already, one reason given being that serpents are unclean and unfit for food. That, I think most people will agree, was "a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance".

The Sheikh el-Bakri then dwelt on the shores of the little lake which occupied during a big part of the year, the site where now we have the *Esbekia* gardens, and it was there that the *moulid* was celebrated,—by the lake or in its dry bed according to the season in which *Rabia* fell. The religious ceremonies took place largely at the mosque and tomb of *Ashmawi* in what was then the *Suq el-Bakri*, now *Sharia el-Ashmawi*. The *moulid* of that great Saint is still held in conjunction with that of the Prophet, the final night being always the eve of II *Rabia*.

The site has long since been transferred. For a time it was at *Fum el-Khalig*. All the early part of this century, it was a desert tract close to the *Abbasia* tram, now built over. Then for some years on the *Abbasia* parade ground just beyond the *Rasadkhana* (the old Observatory), where the ceremony of the *Mahmal* is now held, and quite recently in the desert between





Some "Pilgrims" to the Mouldid of El-Nebi.

Abbasia and the tombs of the Khalifs, near the water towers. From the terminus of tram 7 it is a walk of about a quarter of an hour. Cab or taxi it is difficult to obtain there. Tram 3 passes the same spot. There is parking accommodation for those who come in cars, and buses run on the evening of the great night between the moulid and the city, passing Sidna Husein. Therefore though there is regal sitting accommodation in the great pavilions whilst there, going and coming may be tiring. Some years ago the Carmelite monks of S. Térésa, (Shubra), including the present Vicar of Mt. Carmel, were invited, and were interested and impressed, but lost their way on the return, and at last, after midnight and half dead with fatigue from the long tramp in the sand got into Cairo somewhere near the top of the Muski. When at last they arrived at the little monastery at Shubra at an unheard-of hour, the other monks, who had probably completed matins, looked down their noses. The Very Rev. Vicar remarked to me that "Moslem Pilgrimages were more austere and arduous than many Christian ones."

Amongst the moulids of Cairo, this for sumptuous magnificence is *facile princeps*. I have seen no celebration of its sort, Islamic or Christian, to touch it. Three sides of an immense square covering many acres are enclosed by vast and handsome tents: in the centre of the south side, the royal pavilion, and royally indeed is it appointed. On each side are the almost equally superb tents of all the Ministries, carpeted, and adorned with palms, parterres of flowers, and decorations indicative of the function of each Ministry, that of War being a great favourite with its display of arms and cannons. The Parliament has its pavilion, and so has the Sheikh el-Bakri. The East and West sides consist also of rows of tents of the various Turuq (Orders of Dervishes) and of eminent Sheikhs. Refreshments and lordly sitting accommodation are provided in all of these, and after the opening ceremonies in the royal pavilion before the king or his representative, the reading of parts of the Qoran, and the Life of the Prophet, *صلى الله عليه وسلم*, — the

Ministers and others of the high company, go to their tents and visit the others, where sheikhs on a dais are already intoning. A *beau geste* of very recent years is the admission of those of the multitude who wish into practically all of the tents about sunset, when in many of them zikrs begin. They appreciate this enormously and do not take advantage, or crowd inordinately. The mighty space holds the overflow, which crowd becomes denser and denser, till all are rewarded and entranced by such a brilliant display of fireworks as could hardly be seen at the Crystal Palace.

The marvellous opening procession which Lane describes passed long since into the *Ewigkeit*, with the *dosah* and much else, to be replaced by this city of tent-work palaces, and the fireworks. Early in the century, there was rather a sordid little amusement park without the main precincts; carts and booths of *taamia* and other edibles prevailing, but this developed until a vast assemblage of theatres, ringas, circuses, Qara Goz, (Punch and Judy), and the like, occupied a big piece of desert sufficiently removed from the official part. That died in 1355 (1936) with King Foad, for in that year even the fireworks were suppressed as a sign of mourning: and though these were restored in 1356, little remained of the Fair but a few stalls and inferior shows, and happily as a redeeming feature that most popular attraction, the *Piste à la Mort* of the intrepid Billy Willams. Though this deprivation is a disappointment to the poor people who come from near and far, it does not hit them as at other moulids, owing to the éclat of the tents, and the brilliance of the myriad of coloured lamps which illumine them, and of the fireworks.

This major feast of the prophet is, curiously enough, one of the shortest, officially only a week, and in reality hardly frequented at all till the great night. Not so in the villages and the provinces, where zeffas and zikrs are held most nights of the week, and almost all night, and alms and food are given to the poor. In the Ezba where I live, swings and goose-nests are put

up for the children: all the week prominent villagers supplement the accommodation of their houses by tents, for ceremonies of consequence; and sleeping on the roof as I do, I hear special commemorations of the Prophet from the minarets, and the sounds of music and zikring almost till the dawn, culminating in a zeffa of the Shazlia, Saadiya, Rifaiya and other dervish orders with their dababis, toblas and tars, zumaras and kass, their banners and insignia, much, I should imagine, on the old original lines.

I think few Egyptians can be aware how far their devotion to the Prophet exceeds that shown in other lands, even in Stambul before its yankification. Recently I came down from the top of the Lebanon on the 11th Rabia, to Beyrouth, the Syrian capital and largely a Moslem city, and in the evening found some boys collecting sticks and paper and lighting tiny bonfires in open places, and a few windows showing a candle flame behind a bit of transparent red paper; and a few pocket fireworks were let off. It is true that the following morning a unique little ceremony was enacted: some sheikhs mounted to the top of a leading mosque and sang, and after the noon prayer went in procession to an outlying mosque, but *voilà tout*.

I gather from accounts Prof. * Evans-Pritchard has given me of Bedawin tribes in the far south of Upper Egypt, in Nubia, the Sudan and Abyssinia, with whose ways he is intimately acquainted (with, I think, special reference to the Bisharin and Ababda tribes), that though the cult of their saints is by no means neglected this does not involve a celebration of their moulids, except in the case of the Prophet himself. In that, however, their Walis and the minor Sheikhs all participate

* Dr. Evans-Pritchard, Research Lecturer in African Sociology at Oxford, (but at the moment on active service on the Abyssinian frontier) is well known to very many of my readers, having been Professor of Sociology at the Egyptian University.

Amongst his major works is "Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande", and very recently a book on the Nilotic People entitled "The Nuer."

in a way, and are duly commemorated, with naturally special emphasis on any local saint of each district. They too—the tribesmen—at the time of the Prophet's birthday aspire to humble communion with this great company, and to participation in the divine benefits in the gift of these "*favourites, friends and companions of Allah*".

The last verse of the "Lauda, Sion, Salvatorem," does not ill express their vague yearnings, and generally indeed those of Pilgrims and mouldid-goers of the right type,—

"Tu, qui cuncta scis et vales,
Qui nos pascis hic mortales :
Tuos ibi *commensales*,
Coheredes, et sodales,
Fac *sanctorum civium*."

(The only exception to the above generalisation that I am at all sure of is in the case of Sidi Abu Hasan el-Ababdi, who has his own mouldid near Qoseir, in addition to his commemoration at that of El-Nebi. (v. mouldid of Ababdi, A 20.)

The Aswan "Pantheon", if I may venture to so term it, is a mysterious evidence of the solidarity of the community of IsIamic Walis and Sheikhs, and holy men generally. Mysterious to me anyway, who have not visited it, and whose sole information thereon is derived from one Sharif and two or three sheikhs who have been more fortunate, and whose testimony may be summed up as follows :—

"About a kilometre from Aswan, in the *gabel* sacred to the Prophet, *صلى الله عليه وسلم*, where his blood still is to be seen on the rocks, all the Walis and Sheikhs who have mouldids are represented. The *Awlia* (walis) and those with special repute for holiness have their "dareh", with dome and *tabut*, whilst the rest have at least their names inscribed on a *tabut* or something to testify to their being of the select company.

They have as guardian, or *Naqiba* (نقيبَة), as she is there termed, a sheikha named Sofhia Abd el-Hakim, (صفيحة عبد الحاكم), who lived a very austere life amongst the tombs until one of the Awlia appeared to the mudir and called attention to her privations. His Excellence at once had a house built there for her, with water-supply and all requirements.

It is the writer's hope to see and know much more about this mystic epitome of all Egyptian mouldids.

The following extract from a Cairo paper indicates a traditional custom of distributing sweets on the occasion of the Mouldid el-Nebi. Husein Pasha Heikal's move was naturally a very popular one. This custom is not confined to Cairo, though it has its variants, such as the substitute of money. I was informed in Tunis years ago that the "Bey" rides amongst the crowd on this occasion scattering purses. I fancy that nothing of that sort will survive in the present *Vichyated* atmosphere.

Les dragées du Mouled El Nabi

Il est de tradition de distribuer aux fonctionnaires de l'Etat des dragées à l'occasion du Mouled El Nabi (anniversaire de la naissance du Prophète).

Les ministères et les administrations ont déjà préparé les listes des fonctionnaires, des employés et des ouvriers temporaires qui bénéficieront de cette distribution.

Les crédits nécessaires à l'achat des dragées sont prélevés sur le budget affecté annuellement aux cérémonies du Mouled.

D'ordinaire, les hauts fonctionnaires reçoivent une part bien plus importante que celle des petits fonctionnaires et des "farraches".

Il n'en sera pas de même cette année au ministère de l'Instruction Publique. En effet, S.E. le Dr. Hussein Heikal pacha a voulu profiter de l'occasion pour apporter un peu de joie au sein des familles des petits fonctionnaires. Il a décidé de leur offrir des douceurs en abondance, en réduisant la part des hauts fonctionnaires.

King Farouk's presidency for the first time in 1357 (1938) lent a special *éclat* to the celebrations, as will be seen from the

attached extracts from "La Bourse Egyptienne" of that date. (It is regrettable that he was not left in peace on the Prophet's birthday, but his petitioner seemed very harmless.)

I have included the tract distribution incident, as it is unique,—the only example I know of politics being dragged into a mould, (except on one trifling occasion, when a few students aired some slogan, and were promptly and effectively checked.

A la Cour

Cabinet du Grand Chambellan,

Le mercredi, 11 mai, 1938.

A 4 h. 38 p.m. Sa Majesté le Roi accompagné de Son Excellence Mohamed Mahmoud Pacha, Président du Conseil des Ministres quitta en voiture le palais d'Abdine pour assister, à Abbassieh, à la fête de Moulded el Nabi. A son arrivée à la tente royale Sa Majesté fut reçue par LL. EE. le Président du Sénat et les ministres, par le Recteur d'el Azhar, le Président du grand mehkémeh, le grand Mufti, le Nakib el Achraf, le chef des confréries religieuses, les sous-secrétaires d'Etat, le vice-président du Sénat, le Chargé d'Affaires de la Légation d'Irak en Egypte, le gouverneur du Caire et les hauts fonctionnaires de la Cour Royale. La force de l'armée prenant part à la fête rendit les honneurs militaires et sa musique entonna l'hymne royal pendant qu'une salve saluait l'arrivée de Sa Majesté, lorsque Sa Majesté eut pris sa place. S. E. le grand chambellan s'avança pour prier Sa Majesté de daigner assister au défilé militaire, ensuite les chefs des confréries religieuses se présentèrent pour exprimer leurs vœux et témoigner leur dévouement à l'Auguste Souverain.

Sa Majesté daigna ensuite se rendre à la tente d'El Sayed Abd Hamid el Bakri pour assister à la récitation d'El Kissa. Une salve fut tirée en l'honneur de cette solennité, Sa Majesté rentra ensuite avec le même cérémonial au palais d'Abdine.

Sa Majesté le Roi a délégué S. E. le gouverneur d'Alexandrie à la fête organisée par la municipalité d'Alexandrie à l'occasion du Moulded el Nabi.

Sur le Terrain du Mouled el Nabi
Un Ingénieur Distribuait Des Tracts Anti-Juifs

Il est arrêté par la Police

La police a arrêté, hier, sur le terrain du Mouled El Nabi, à Abbassia, un ingénieur de l'Arsenal en train de distribuer des tracts séditionnels contre les Juifs.

Les brochures ont été saisies. Quant à l'ingénieur il a été incarcéré pour les besoins de l'enquête.

La brochure se résume en ceci : Les Juifs de Palestine qui sont continuellement en conflit avec les Arabes sont aidés moralement et financièrement par leurs corréligionnaires d'Egypte. Il importe donc aux Musulmans et aux Arabes de boycotter les Juifs d'Egypte qui sont en rapports étroits avec les Juifs de Palestine.

Il est à espérer que les autorités prendront toutes les mesures utiles pour mettre fin à cet état de choses qui ne cadre nullement avec l'esprit de tolérance et d'amicale collaboration entre toutes les races et les religions vivant sur le sol hospitalier de la vallée du Nil.

A la Cérémonie Du Mouled el Nabi
Un jeune homme voulait présenter une pétition
à S. M. le Roi

Pendant que le cortège de Sa Majesté le Roi se rendait hier au Mouled El Nabi et, près des lieux où se déroulait la cérémonie religieuse, un jeune homme traversa en hâte les cordons de police se dirigeant vers la calèche où avaient pris place le Souverain et son Premier ministre.

Il tenait en main un rouleau de papier, plus précisément une pétition qu'il voulait remettre à Sa Majesté. Les soldats de la garde royale arrêtaient le jeune homme. Celui-ci réussit toutefois à jeter la pétition qui vint échouer au pied de Sa Majesté le Roi.

Dans cette pétition, le jeune homme fait part au Souverain de son état d'indigence et demande à être nommé "maazoun".

Une enquête est ouverte.

I am supplementing the above account by two more cuttings from Cairo papers.

The short one indicates the lavish way in which the Prophet's Birthday is honoured in the Egyptian capital, L.E. 8,500 being spent to begin with, in levelling the site and putting on water from the reservoirs close by.

The longer one gives some interesting particulars and statistics. It will be noted that its date is 1358 (1939).

May nothing ever happen in Egypt to dim the lustre of the Birthday of the Prophet.

صلى الله عليه وسلم

Où se tiendra le prochain

Mouled El-Nabi

Nous avons annoncé que les autorités avaient décidé que le prochain Mouled El Nabi devait se tenir à l'Abbassieh près des réservoirs et filtres de la Cie des Eaux du Caire.

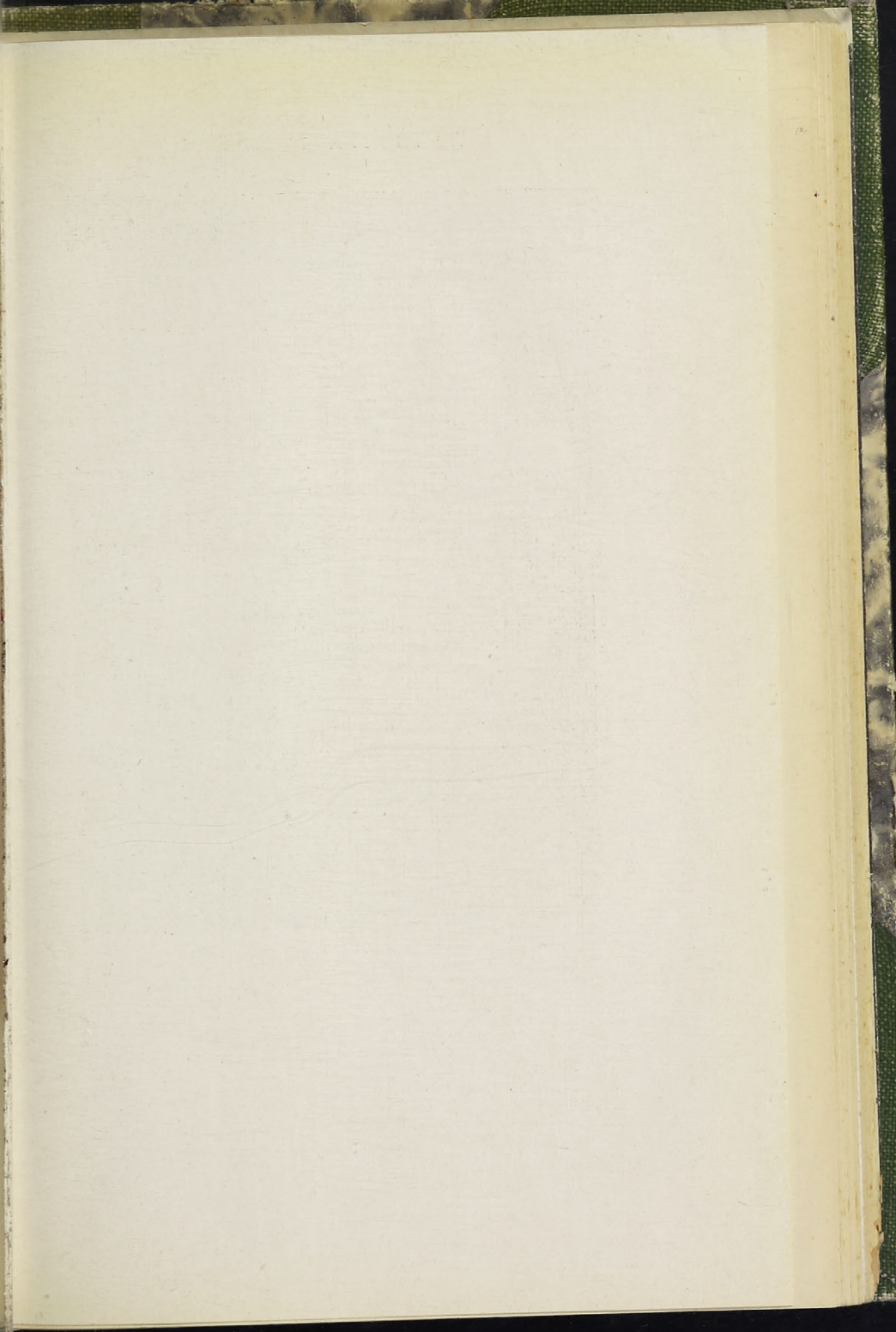
Nous apprenons que les frais nécessaires à l'aplanissement du sol et à la fourniture de l'eau potable sont évalués à L.E. 8500. De son côté la Compagnie Lebon s'est engagée de poser à ses frais l'installation électrique nécessaire.

Cet emplacement servirait également aux autres cérémonies telles que le départ et l'arrivée du Tapis Sacré, etc.

Mouled El-Nabi

Moslem World Celebrates Prophet's Birth

Mouled El Nabi, "The Prophet's Birthday" was celebrated last night by 400,000,000 Moslems all over the world. 1,358 years ago, yesterday, Amina, a "noble lady of Koreish" who had been a widow for some months gave birth to an infant who



AT THE MOULID EN-NEBI.



اصبر على الصبر وستر ما كفرنا
تلك الامارات والحارة
اصواتهم
١٠

was destined to proclaim a faith which revolutionized the life of the Arabs and had far-reaching effect on the peoples of the East.

Yesterday, the Imams of mosques recited the Prophet's life story, the miracles which took place on the day of his birth, the adversity he had to suffer, the fact that although born and brought up among idolators, he had always worshipped one God, and the first inspirations he had as a Prophet and Apostle of God.

Like Christmas for Christians, the Moulded El Nabi is an occasion for bringing joy to children. Dolls and toys made of sugar are presented to young folks, and although there is no Santa Claus, parents do all they could to make their children happy.

Owing to King Farouk's indisposition, Aly Maher Pasha, Chief of the Royal Cabinet, attended the official ceremony as the King's representative. He was received on arrival at the official marquee at Abbassia by the Ministers, the Ulema and the high officials.

After a military display, Maher Pasha went to the marquee of Sheikh El-Bakry where he listened to the recital of the Prophet's life story.

The marquees of the various government departments, particularly that of the Ministry of Waqfs, were gaily illuminated and the fireworks were admired by the huge crowds which took part in the celebrations.

All Government offices will be closed today to celebrate the occasion.

Celebrations in Alexandria.

Over twenty marquees were erected to celebrate the moulded in Alexandria, in the different quarters of the city and refreshments and alms were distributed on the occasion.

An official marquee was erected by the Alexandria Municipality on the eastern Quay, near the National Court building. Mohamed Hussein Pasha represented King Farouk. Ulema, notables and officials were present to hear Sheikh Rifaat read the history of the Prophet's life. The celebrations continued until well after midnight.

O 1 (v. Sectional Map XX.)

OMR (Omr Ibn el-Farad)

سیدی عمر ابن الفارض

I have been assured by Miss G., a person deeply interested in Moulids that "one is held in honour of Sidi Omr somewhere behind the citadel, in the Imam el-Shafei direction". I have never been able to confirm it in place, and no date was indicated, but evidently this must centre about the little mosque and *takia* of Sidi Omr el-Farad, behind the rather gruesome little village of Abagiya, at the foot of Moqattam precipices immediately under that most picturesque ruined mosque, Abu Chahin.

The fortress-like wall of the Moqattams confronting the citadel teems with weird beauty and interest, and lovely vistas, much obvious enough; but much also hewn in the living rock by monk, Christian and Moslem, for seclusion, security, and worship preserves a good deal of its secrecy to this day, and requires a lot of learning. Some particulars of one part of this are given in the account of the moulid of Chahin el-Muhammadi, M 12, the photograph showing the goal of many an unique picnic adventure.

I take this opportunity, (though late), of thanking the good dervishes of Sidi Omr Ibn el-Farad, for coming to my rescue in a desperate situation. I had introduced a large party,—the Cairo Catholic Association—to some of the mysteries of the places: they had scaled the cliff front, squeezed up vertical shafts, and through holes and galleries, and arriving at the spot shown in the picture were more than ready for a picnic tea,

already spread by my boys except for the tea itself, and for that a kettle was boiling in a deep and windless cave. Then my batman whispered to me that he could not find the packet of tea, and must have left it behind. I felt that my guests were entitled to hurl me and the batman from this Tarpeian rock, but the garden boy Sayed made himself the scape-goat. He slithered down this seeming precipice, flew to Sidi Omr, and up again, bearing a canister of excellent tea and the pious and friendly greetings of the monks.

God bless'em !

O 2 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

OQBI or OQBA

سیدی عقیبی

I had never heard of this mouldid, but lighted upon it accidentally in 1938, (1357) when riding across the fields from my home at Bein el-Sariat to a football match at Zamalek, and passing through the big picturesque village of Mit Oqba. The precincts of the tomb of Sidi Oqbi were decorated, but it wanted three days to the big celebration, and not being free then, I sent a *murasla* on Sunday, 18th Gumad el-Tani, 1357, (14-8-38), who reported that it was quite a considerable event, with a great concourse at the shrine, and even a theatre of sorts in the amusement department. It was of the simple country mouldid type, similar to that of Abu Qraish two nights previously at Zenin, (which see, A 22) ; but my messenger was assured that usually it is much larger, being reduced this year by the competition, so to speak, of a plethora of mouldids,—Sidi Ibrahim Desuqi the same evening at the cenotaph of that great founder of the sect of the Desuqiya by the Nile at Gezirat el-Dahib; Abd el-Rahim el-Tarturi in the neighbouring village of El-Hatia, and Abu Qraish of Zenin, and another, whose name and place I am not sure of, only just over, and the great mouldid of Zefeti, through which I passed on my way from Bein el-Sariat to Mit Oqba working up for a grand finale on the 22nd of Gumad II.

It may be reached by Giza tram No. 15, getting out at the first stop after Zamalek bridge, and taking the road at right angles to the Bahr el-Aama. As it is nearly a two-mile walk, a car is preferable, and the road is not bad.

I have not succeeded in obtaining any reliable information about Sidi Oqbi.

In 1358 the same *murasha* reported Sidi Oqbi's mouldid to have been kept up on Thursday 24 Gumad II (10-8-39) in conjunction with two minor mouldids in the same village. These were El-Sheikh el-Lashine and Sidi Gharib.

There is a mosque and small cemetery of a Sidi Oqba a little south of Imam el-Leithi, but I am ignorant of any connection between these and the shrine at Mit Oqba.

Q 1 (v. Sectional Map XII.)

QAZAZI

الشيخ قازازي

This small mouldid I came across accidentally on 28 Shaaban, 1354 (25-11-35), a little after 10 at night, for whilst interested in the tomb of Sidi Mustafa el-Gaml in the Darasa district, a small zeffa appeared from the direction of Sidna Husein, and following this we halted at the little modern mosque Qazazi in the Sharia Tamain el-Guwani. It was a *private* mouldid but well attended though this I was told was only the penultimate night. I was not free to go on Shaaban 29th.

WASTA

Q 2 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

QORANI (Aweis el-Qorani)

سيدي عويس القرني

I have found this the most elusive of mouldids, and have been misled about it, to the extent of going to Mazghuna and witnessing that of Sayed el-Shuhda on the assurance that I was present at the Qorani mouldid.

The frequent mention of it as an important event induces me to include it, and I believe it is in the direction of Wasta but have no idea of the date.

Also there is no question as regards the importance of Aweis el-Qorani in Islam. Abd el-Wahab el-Shaarani gives a *long (but to me obscure) account of his sayings, and doings and groups him amongst the earliest dervishes almost at the beginning of the spread of Muhammadanism.

He seems to have had great authority with the Djin, so that he was not seen to enter or leave his house sometimes for a year or two at a time, and at his death his body miraculously disappeared.

FAYUM (فيوم)

R 1 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

RUBI

الشيخ روبي

A big and important mouldid, I am told, in beautiful surroundings, which I am anxious to see. At present I know nothing about it from personal experience, but believing it to be held at mid-Shaaban, I sent this year of the Prophet, 1359 (1940.), my garden boy, and he has come back full of enthusiasm, as he found it compared very favourably with the Cairo mouldids of today. Medinat el-Fayum was crowded with pilgrims and visitors, and the place was full of life by night and by day. There was a great confluence at the shrine and at that of a local sheikh of great holiness and repute, with whom Sidi Rubi consorted constantly after he came to Egypt — for according to Sayed, (the garden boy,) Rubi was "Rumi" by origin and birth, and came somewhat late in life to the Fayum.

Unfortunately there were no horse races nor performing horses, and other beauties had disappeared in recent years. Qara-Goz and a shadow show survived, and also a little theatre.

According to all the Calendars, the eve of mid Shaaban, 14 Shaaban, coincided with Monday, 16th September, but someone seems to have played about with the moon, as the West (and

unhappily the East is following suit) has taken to monkeying with the sun, and the shaking of the Lote Tree of Paradise was put off to the Tuesday. This gave two last nights to Sheikh Rubi, as the news only filtered through slowly to the Fayum.

(In Cairo and doubtless elsewhere, the minarets were lighted up on the Tuesday, not the Monday, and the Citadel celebration was held then.)

S 1 (v. Sectional Map XVII.)

SAKINA

ستنا سكينه

Though I have witnessed this curious mouldid several times, I only once noted the date. That was Wednesday, 12 Gumad el-Awal 1353 (22-8-34).

Bus 18 which runs via Ataba from Darasa on the edge of the desert on the East to Sitna Nefisa at the beginning of the desert to the South passes the mosque of Sitna Sakina near the latter terminus. Sitna Sakina in a way shares her mouldid with her great-great niece Nafisa, especially on the secular side, the theatre and all the shows being on the edge of the "gabel" close to Nafisa's mosque, which excels in beauty the celebrated place which contains the remains of Sakina, daughter of Sidna Husein. This district, which lies south of Ibn el-Touloun, and north of the great necropolis ending at Imam el-Shafei, remains unspoilt, and abounds in splendid monuments, including these two great mosques, some majestic tombs, and a remarkable tower which was probably used as a beacon: no visitor or resident should omit exploring it. Apart from mouldid time, the best day is Sunday, as Sitna Nafisa is always then en fête.

The mouldid is big, bright and popular, but on two occasions I have seen it broken up by ragamuffins who swarm on the "rubbish heaps". These are expert stone throwers, often dividing into camps and indulging in pitched battles amongst themselves.

The numerous lights and the large white tent which houses a theatrical troop prove irresistible attractions to the stone throwers, and it is pathetic to see enraged persons, sometimes aided by the police, charging the heights in pursuit of the attackers, and perhaps throwing stones up at them at a hopeless disadvantage. A few plain clothes men, police, or just from the private individuals affected, unostentatiously taking up positions on the higher slopes, concealing good stout whips, would turn the tables on the aggressors and discount the chances of a repetition. Instead of this on the two occasions to which I have referred, the unsuccessful stormers of the heights,—to relieve their feelings, and I suppose with the idea that if the tent had not been there the incident could not have happened—have made an onslaught upon that, stopping the performance, ejecting the spectators; then, extending their attentions to Punch and Judy and other attractions, have finally brought the mould to a regrettable end.

I have heard doubts cast on the actual existence of the remains of the daughter of the Imam Husein in the mosque of her name, but Abd el-Wahab el-Shaarani states unequivocally that Sitna Sakina is buried near Sitna Nefisa.

I am reminded (whilst this is in the press,) by an interesting broadcast by Mrs. Devonshire on "Mausoleums of Cairo", (v. "Cairo Calling", Dec. 14-1940,) that in referring above to "Majestic Tombs", I omitted all reference to the Mausoleum of Sitna "Ruggeya", (as I think Mrs. Devonshire rendered her name). Mrs. Devonshire's broadcast is illustrated in "Cairo Calling", by a picture of this tomb.

It is a shrine much frequented, especially on Sundays: is passed by Bus No. 18, and is almost opposite the mosque of Sitna Sakina, a shade to the south.

I have been told that a small mould is held in this Saint's honour, but have not been able to confirm this.

In the broadcast mentioned above, it was pointed out that she was a relative of Sidna Husein.

I have referred to her in this connection in Ch. I, under the name of Rugaiya, taken down phonetically from the words of a local sheikh, but he may have been Upper Egyptian in origin, where they pronounce the ق, q, as ح, g; but if I read her epitaph aright, her name in Arabic is رقية, which may perhaps be transliterated simply as Ruqiya, though without the diacritical signs to indicate the weak vowels, the doubling of a letter by the "shadda", &c., there is scope for several other pronunciations my various informants have given me.

Alas, this is only one instance of the baffling problem of transliteration!

S 2 (v. Sectional Map XI.)

SALAMA الشيخ سلامه

This mouldid I saw in full swing on Thursday, 13 Gumad I 1353 (23-8-34), and on one or two previous dates not noted, but have not been able to find it at that date since.

It is most easy of access, just behind the Ataba, and its two opposite parts overlooking Sh. el-Azhar; the tomb of the Saint being on the North side, and a number of dancing cafés, ringas etc., on the South.

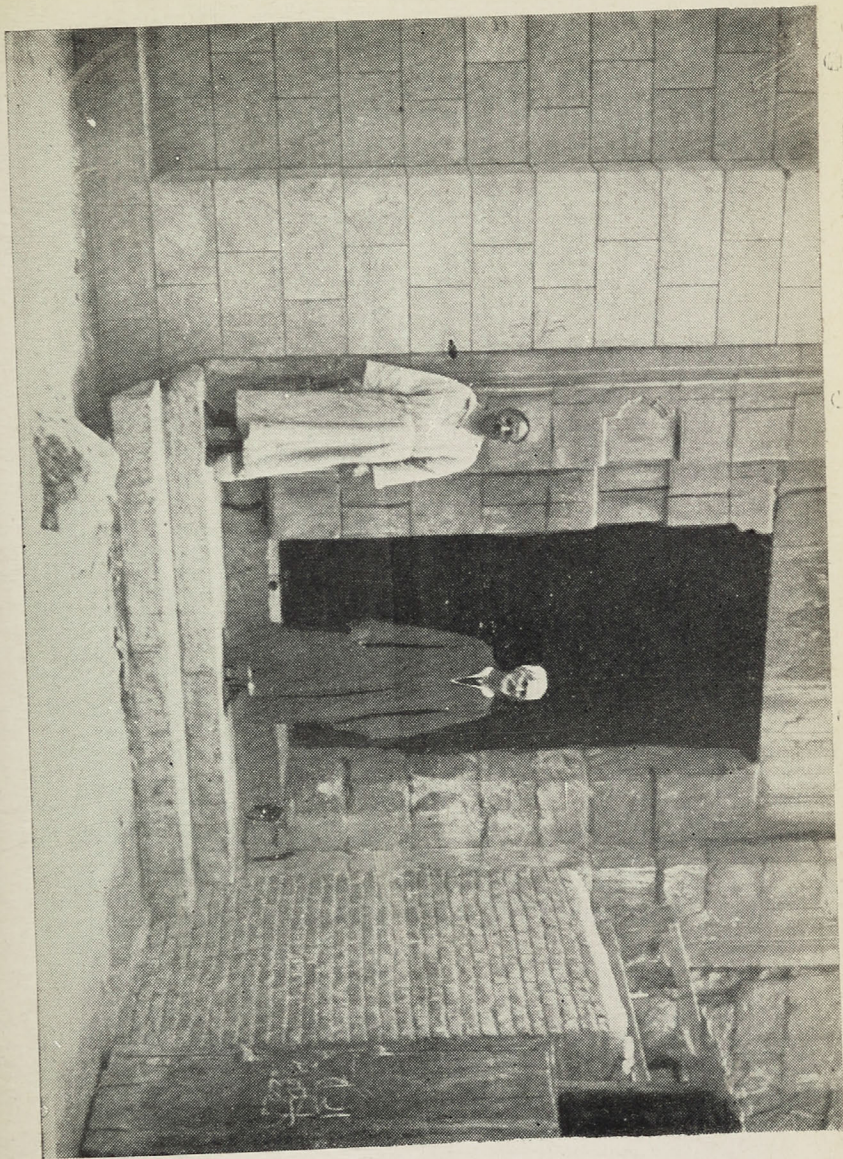
Like Maaruf, this is essentially a mouldid for Sudanese and Barabra. It is lively but rather squalid, and though in an old district, there is little about it attractive.

S 3 (v. Sectional Map XII.)

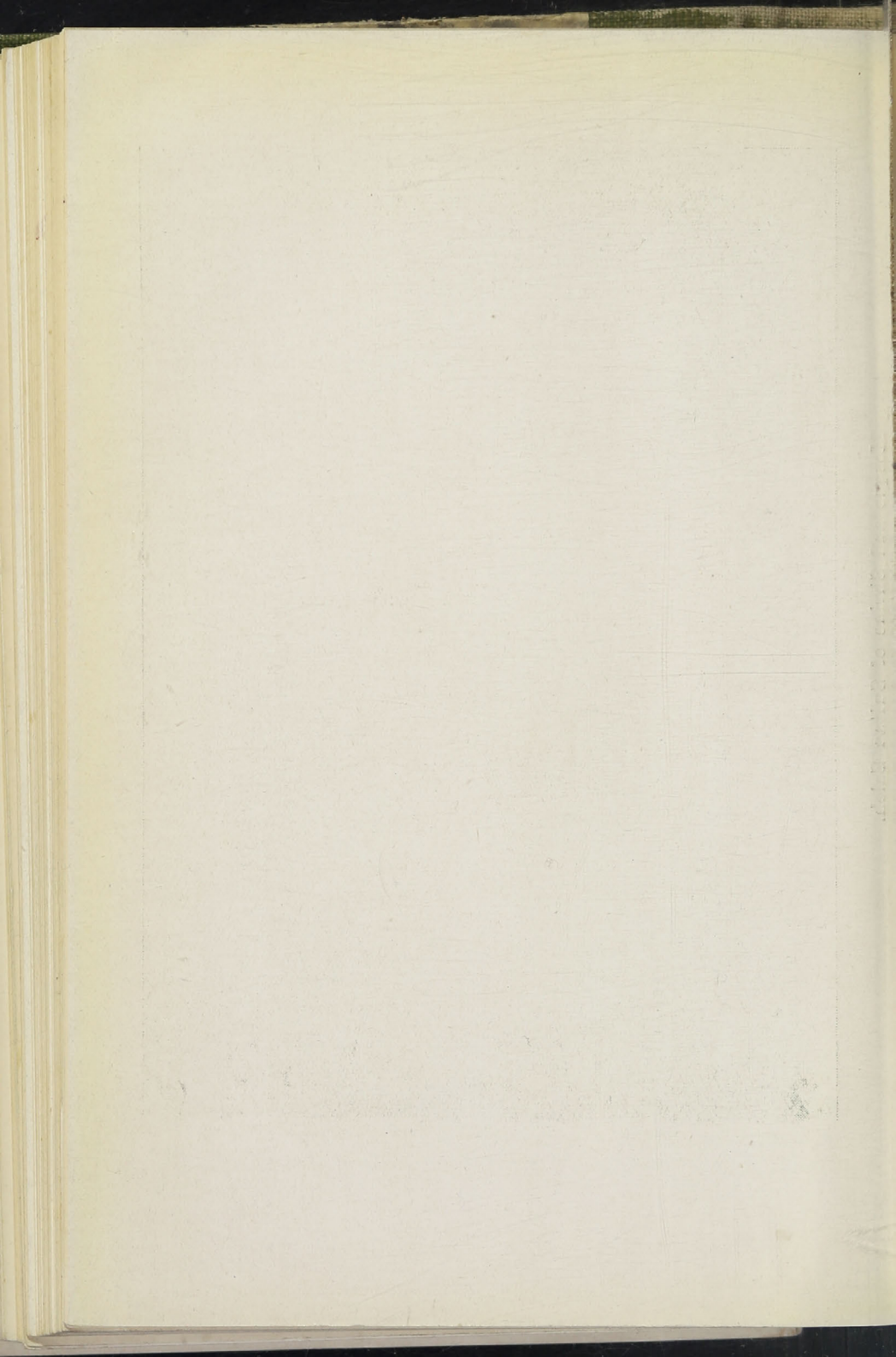
SALEH (Sultan Saleh)

السلطان الصالح الابوي

Many years ago, at the mouldids of Sidna Husein, there was always a crowd about singing sheikhs in the Sharia Nahasin at the far end of the Khan el-Khalili, but I did not understand the significance of this, until recently reading Lane's "Modern



Mosque and Shrine of Sultan Saleh.



Egyptians", written over a hundred years ago I came across an account of a great Wali, a "Sultan" (King of Sheikhs), buried at this spot, and whose mouldid was held on the same night as that of Sidna Husein. Lane describes the mosque and tomb as dirty, neglected and in the last stages of decay, so my surprise and delight were great when, a few days ago, Miralai G-A, an authority on these matters took me there, to find the vast chamber in which a "tabut" is still over the body, clean and perfectly kept. The mosque indeed is mostly gone, but a part is still used for the customary prayers, and what remains is well looked after, and very impressive. The *tabut* is surrounded as in Lane's time by a wooden fence, which he calls a "maksura", and bears inscriptions, one of which refers to the family of El-Bakri, Naqib el-Ashraf.

A worthy sheikh showed and explained much of interest and stated that Saleh's mouldid is *now* always on the night *before* the final night of Sidna Husein, and that it will be certainly held this year.

The spot is well known: near that marvellous group of mosques, Kalaoun, Barquq, etc., but on the other side opposite the gold bazaars.

We enquired about the "Roman Candles", which in Lane's day towered at either end of the tabut, but are no longer there; and were told that they are now in the Arab Museum. They were presented, it is said, to the shrine by some mighty but evil person, but the Wali Saleh appeared in a vision to the guardian of his tomb, warning him that these candles were full of gunpowder and must be encased in plaster, which was done.

This Malik el-Saleh Eyoub was a great thorn in the side of the Crusaders, taking from them the stronghold of Ascalon, the last position held by them. He was conqueror also at Damascus and the Holy City, and on the field of Mansura, taking King Louis prisoner. (The deadly gift of candles may have had something to do with this.) v. also Ch. I.

The famous Shagarat el-Durr was Saleh's wife. The tomb of his mother Fatima Hatun was shown me in that splendid group of ruins between Sitna Sakina and Sitna Nafisa.

The "muhaddits", as Lane calls them, (story-tellers), thirty in Cairo alone, in his day, occupied themselves exclusively in recounting the Romance of El-Zahir, (El-Sultan Beybars), which turns on El-Malik el-Saleh, and his son and successor El-Malik Eysa and the rivals and contemporaries of Beybars who ascended the throne of Egypt in A. H. 658 (A. D. 1260), and vividly describes the pious visit of Eysa and Beybars to the tombs of Saleh and the Iman el-Shafei. This recital has become rare in Cairo. Lane's charming version is well worth reading.

S 4 (v. Sectional Map XIII.)

SALEH EL-HADDAD

الشيخ صالح الحداد

On the very numerous occasions on which I have been present, the main night has invariably been the first Tuesday after mid-Shaaban : that is the night before the mouldid of Sultan Hanafi.

As the two mosques are contiguous, and the mouldids of Saleh and Hanafi so nearly coinciding, I refer readers to the account of the latter, which applies to Saleh in almost every detail.

S 5 (v. Sectional Map XVII.)

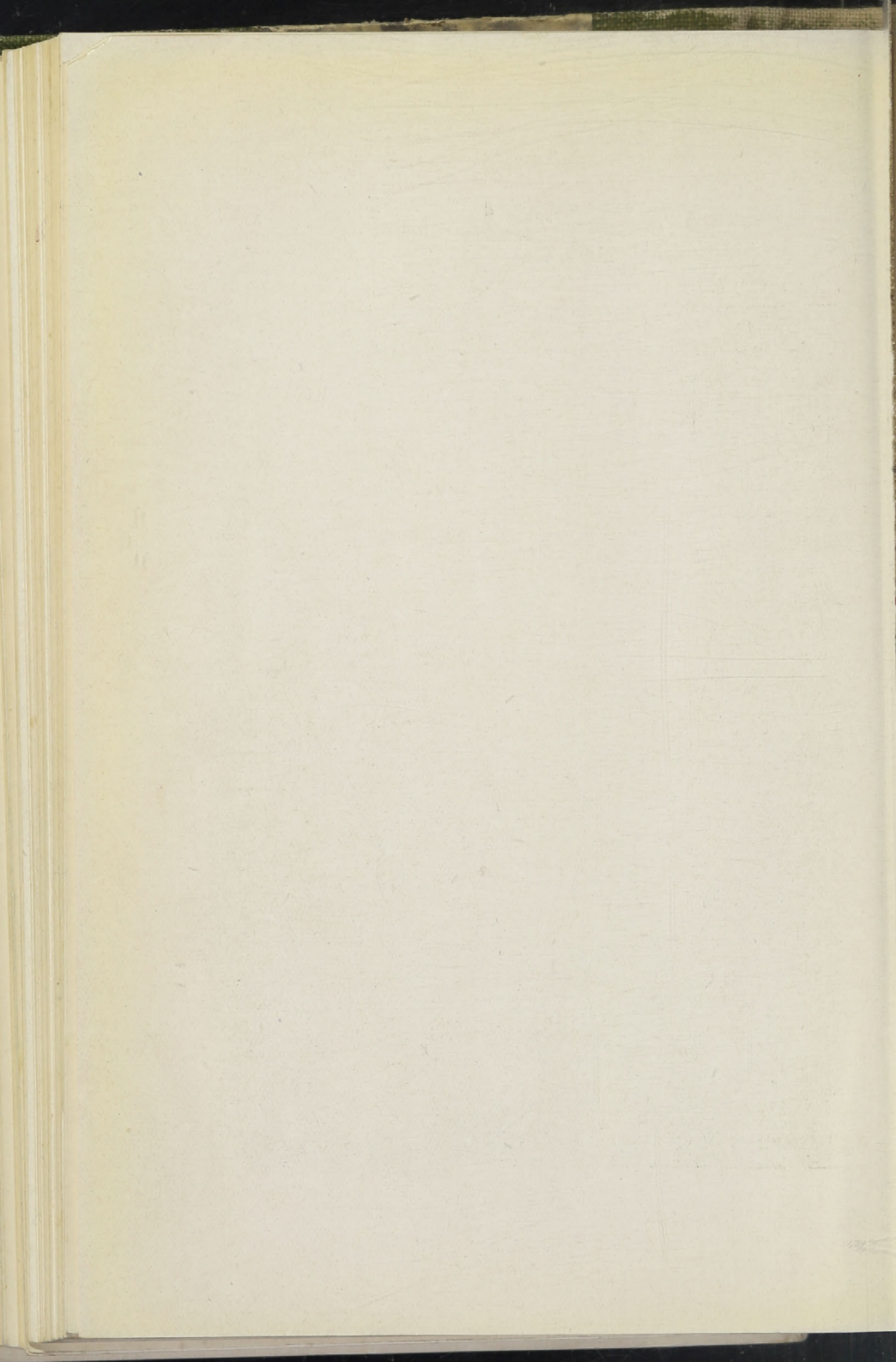
SAMAN

الشيخ السمان

A colourful little mouldid, all light and shade, amongst the tombs of the Fatimite Khalifs, not far from Sitna Nafisa, and therefore best reached by bus 18. From the bus terminus at the mosque of Nafisa it is about five minutes walk through the great necropolis. Or tram 13 may be used, getting off at the straight which leads to Imam el-Shafei, and taking a rather longer walk, winding in and out amongst the sepulchres, and almost requiring a guide.

Moulid
of
Saleh Haddad.





On the four occasions on which I have been there on the principal night, that has been the second Thursday in Shaaban, eight days after Imam el-Shafei, and the day before Imam el-Leithi.

In the account of Imam el-Leithi (which see), a longer but more fascinating way of visiting this mouldid is described, via the Imam el-Shafei district, the mouldid of Imam el-Leithi, and through the city of the dead. Amongst people who have gone with me and fallen under the spell of this weird place were Prof. Hocart of the Egyptian University, and his intrepid wife. She consented to put a nickla (a two millième piece) on the board, (or perhaps it was a tomb) for a tiny lad who had lost heavily on the dice and colour game that was being played there. Never have I seen such a run of luck. She was soon in urgent request as a mascot, but nothing broke the spell, till we were rescued by some kindly sheikhs, somewhat shocked I fancy, who led us through stalls and tombs to a little *Tashrifah*, (a sort of reception), where singing men and figis were in full voice, and where we were most hospitably treated.

S 6 (v. Sectional Map XIV.)

SAUDI (Sidi el-Saudi el-Rifai)

سيدي السعودى الرفاعي

I enjoyed this pleasant little mouldid on Friday, 7 Shaaban 1355 (23-10-36), and was told that it should have been held in Ragab.

It is strange that the beautiful Suq el-Silah seems almost an unknown street to Europeans, and yet it is most accessible, emerging as it does into Sh. Moh. Ali near Sultan Rifai, past which run trams 13 and 23. Its other end near Tabana is passed by bus 17 from the Ataba to Bab el-Wazir. The *suq* has glorious stonework and fine old buildings and is almost unspoilt, and it is approached from either direction through some of the grandest bits of Cairo. The little *maqam* is on the West side.

I was fortunate in seeing an impressive *zeffa* at about 9.30, with the usual music and banners and an *effendi* on horseback as *Khalifa*, with a little child: and also a whirling dervish.

It was held this year, 1359 (1940), on the last Friday of *Shaaban*, and judging from the night before, Thursday, 26-9-40, when I witnessed a *zikh* in a large room adjoining the *maqam*, it followed the same modest but pleasant lines.

Some local sheikhs think that the tomb is that of the great Sultan Abu Saud, whose name is invoked almost as often as that of the Companions of the Prophet, particularly in conjunction with that of *Saida Zenab* and *Imam el-Shafei*. There is a mosque however in the *gabel*, not far south of *Hasan el-Anwar* and the *Aqueduct of Muhammad Ali*, which has far juster claims to the honour of enshrining the remains of this great *Wali*.

This is well worth a visit, especially on a Tuesday when there is a fair, with visits to the tomb making the occasion very like a *moulid*. I cannot ascertain that there is any definite *moulid* beyond this. The walled enclosure of the mosque is very extensive, and near it there is a great confluence of camel tracks named *Midan Abu Saud*. The full title of the mosque is *Sidi Abu Saud el-Garhi*.

In re-reading Lane I find ample confirmation to the above views. He states without reserve,—“The tomb of *Aboo-So'ood* is among the mounds of rubbish on the south of *Cairo*.” It is interesting that he notes also that on the return of the pilgrims, he was urged in the *Mosque of Sidna Husein* to offer up a prayer in the names of *Saida Zenab*, *Imam el-Shafei* and “*Aboo-So'ood*”: interesting because these three are neighbours, so to speak, all their shrines being within easy walking distance: also because this prayer was at the shrine of the brother of the first of the three.

The spot is situated at the N-E corner of sectional map XVIII, and is best reached by walking south from the terminus of Tram 5, or by the new road from Malik el-Saleh Bridge at right angles to the river, that is due east.

TANTA.

S 7 (v. Delta Map.)

SAYED EL-BEDAWI El-Sayed el-Hasib el-Nasib
Abu el-Abbas Sayidi Ahmad el-Bedawi el-Sharif.)

السيد حسيب النسب ابو العباس سيدي احمد البدوي الشريف

This provincial mouldid, though lacking the brilliance and majesty of the Mouldid el-Nebi, as celebrated at Abbasia, is probably the most popular of all mouldids, drawing more pilgrims than any other, and even more in the old days, and perhaps still, than Mecca itself. I am assured that the crowds from all parts of Islam amount to more than a million, at the principal mouldid which, independent of the Moslem calendar is always held in the Coptic month, Baba, our October. On each occasion that I have been present, the great finale has always been the Friday zeffa, varying in date from the 10th to the 26th October.

The beautiful mosque, not far from the station, contains not only the body of Sayed, but of Abd el-Aal, Abd el-Megid and other of his disciples. The whole district is decorated, and there are numerous public circumcision booths, and stalls for vending souvenirs and food, but no secular attractions, unless tattooing be so regarded. But if one follow the multitudes under the railway arch, to the outskirts of the town, one reaches the official and other tents, the place of fireworks, and a perfect city of booths, theatres, and improvised dwellings, in which one can wander for hours, or so it seems to me, without reaching its limits. Yet its occupants overflow at night and sleep anywhere and everywhere in the streets, and open spaces.

The moulid lasts a week, pilgrims arriving all the time, till on Thursday, the great night, the whole mighty multitude is gathered together in one place to see the fireworks, then scatter to the innumerable zikrs, and entertainments. But the *clou* of the festival is the zeffa beginning on Friday morning and lasting half the day, Egypt's greatest zeffa, though Luxor and Qena run it close in their great feasts of Abu Haggag and Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi respectively. Of course all the *turuq* are represented by their dervishes, banners, insignia &c., the Ahmadiya, the order of Ahmad el-Bedawi naturally predominating with its red turbans and banners, and the branches of this great order, the Bayumiya, the Shaarawiya, the Shinawiya and the Awwad Nooh. The red turban borne in the procession is partly that of Ahmad but as he never discarded a turban till it fell off with wear, it is helped out by red material from the "libas" of Abd el-Aal.

Several years ago, I think 1933 (1352), I witnessed a queer sight at dawn of the last day, from my window in the square, a sort of burlesque, but harmless at the time, called locally "zeffa el-Sharamit". It was a procession of gaily decorated carts bearing the prostitutes of the town with their admirers, with much music and song. At that date the secular side of moulids had become rather too like ancient Greek and Roman feasts, with Lesbian and mixed dances of a pronounced character, and other unseemly things. These have been properly suppressed, but it would be a disaster if the pendulum were forced to swing too much the other way, and Puritans and Pharisees knocked all life and soul out of these ancient rites. "Stulti qui vitia vitant in contraria currunt."

This moulid stands unique, as does its great founder. Long before the Fatimites brought saints and relics to Egypt, and gave great impetus to the moulid cult, and material to support it, pilgrims crowded from all Moslem countries to the tomb of Ahmad Sayed el-Bedawi, three times in the year, particularly

just before the winter, and brought so much piety and incidentally mirth and money to Tanta, that Desouk and other cities more or less in the neighbourhood pedestalled their own Walis and inaugurated celebrations in their honour, which in due course crystalised into definite and permanent moulds.

Khuderi Bey who, represents his sainted ancestor Khuderi at the mosque and mouldid of that name, assures me that before this period, mouldids such as we now know them did not exist in Egypt, and these early celebrations in honour of some holy man were held without reference to the date of his birth or death.

That even the sanctity, the notoriety, the wide travel and sharif descent, and the miracles he wrought could establish such a vogue is hardly to be admitted, particularly when we remember that Ahmad was a stranger in a country boasting many of the outstanding saints of Islam. Why is his star still in the ascendant when for example that of the Egyptian miracle-worker Dashtouti is in danger of extinction? Dashtouti whose cult in Egypt was enormous and whose mouldid was a national event!

The explanation lies in the extraordinary appeal of his character—for I am convinced that Ahmad Sayed el-Bedawi is one of the world's outstanding personalities. His position in Islam is much that of S. Francis in Christendom, though their individual traits differed widely. A few notes on his advent in this country may help to suggest his immense virility and spirituality, his human appeal and his mysticism....

Ahmad's family was Meccan and Sharif in origin; and had taken refuge from a slaughter of Muslims, in Morocco. He was born in Fez in the year of the Hegira 596, (1199 A.D.)

«مولده رضي الله عنه بمدينة فاس من المغرب»

so that he was only seven when in 603 A.H., his father the Sharif Ali was warned in a dream to migrate to the Holy City

فلما بلغ سبع سنين سمع ابوه قائلاً يقول له في منامه يا على انتقل من هذه البلاد الى مكة المشرفة

and straightway set out on that pilgrimage which occupied four years. Ali's elder son, Hasan, who seems to have idolised his young brother, became to a considerable extent his chronicler, and recounts how warmly they were received by the Meccans, particularly Ahmad, and how the lad grew in stature and in grace, and in favour with God and man—"Et proficiebat sapientia et aetate, et gratia apud Deum et homines." How Ahmad's Meccan companions recognised his horsemanship and heroic qualities, and declared that "braver knight never strode a horse", and styled him, "El-Bedawi." How after twenty happy years, the father Ali died and was buried there in great odour of sanctity, in 627 A. H. (1229 A. D.)

The brother notes a profound mystical change soon after this date. Ahmad (now Ahmad el-Bedawi), was constantly rapt in meditation, communicated only by signs, and began, like his father, to see visions and dream dreams. His "voices" told him to go first toward the dawn, then toward the sunset, and he interpreted the oracular commands as indicating Iraq and then Egypt, and he lost no time in responding.

At that time Iraq was particularly strong in its spiritual leader, and they at once recognised Ahmad as a Prophet, and two of their chiefs, Sidi Abd el-Qadr and Sidi Ahmad Rifai representing them all, told him that they had the keys of Iraq, of Yemen and the Indies, of Rum and of the West and East, and he could take which he chose. He declined with the reply, that "he could take no key except from the Great Opener",

« لا آخذ المفتاح الا من الفتاح »

and having visited the tombs and holy places, journeyed with his brother Hasan to Egypt; and they were about to enter Tandata (Tanta), when a rough gang opposed them. He used his pugilistic strength and skill flooring the lot, gaining at least their respect, and a further title of *ابو الفتيان* Champion Bruiser.

He retired for a time to Um Aabida, without giving up the idea of settling in Tandata, but Hasan had had enough and returned to Mecca.

Into this time of trial, entered the romantic episode of Fatima bint Biri. Her supreme beauty captured hearts and fortunes, and she doubted not that Ahmad el-Bedawi would prove her crowning conquest, but at his hands she fell penitent, and like the Magdalen became a model of saintly virtue. Ahmad was by no means indifferent to her charms, but he escaped the fate of the lover of Thais—helped by a heavenly apparition, as Aeneas was by the vision and words of Mercury. A "Hatif" stood by his bed and told him his destiny was to enter Tanta, and live there, and named to him Abd el-Aal and some of his future disciples. Obeying, he entered hastily the city and the house of Sheikh Ibn el-Shahet and mounting to the roof consummated his Passion. Always standing he gazed up to heaven, and for forty days and nights neither ate nor drank nor slept, till his eyes turned to the fiery red of burning coals.

Then he came down, and once more went out of Tanta, but followed by Abd el-Aal, Abd el-Megid and many others. He asked an egg of Abd el-Aal, which the lad promised in exchange for Ahmad's green palm stick, (a veritable palmer's staff), but his mother, who violently opposed her boy associating with the Sheikh, sent back word that there were no eggs. Abd el-Aal was sent back to look again in the Soumaa* (egg box) and found it full, and fulfilled his word by bringing back a sample. (It is curious that one of the first miracles attributed to St. Joan, was her causing the hens to lay inordinately for the supporters of her cause.) Yet the mother did not repent at the hands of the Sheikh; but—as she said—she "repented at the horns of the bull" which was about to gore her son to death, and was only prevented by the superhuman courage and strength of Sayed el-Bedawi, who seizing the bull literally by the horns, threw it down.

*Note,—The soumaa, *سوما*, or safat, *سفات*, a mud structure much used in Egypt, for storing grain, often lends itself when empty to the laying hens.

This exodus of the saint from Tanta is attributed to jealousies and aversions of some of the leading sheikhs and authorities of the town; and such an overruling of the traditional hospitality of Egyptians, seems to have been part of the trial which purified him for his mission.

A delightful *qasida* on this event by Mr. C. F. O. Scaife of the Egyptian University, was read by the poet himself, in the perfect arabic surroundings of Major Gayer-Anderson's house at Ibn el-Touloun. The writer and a big company of Egyptians and English were much interested and impressed. The *Scaivian saga* portrays even the trees and the little houses following him to exile till Tandata was empty, and the holy man had to be appeased with entreaties to return from those who had in vain attempted to rid their city of him who was to be its pride and its glory.

I venture to give a few quotations from Scaife's "Saïd el Bedawi", but the whole poem should be read to feel its full beauty and enjoy the atmosphere of old "Tandata", so admirably recreated. Incidentally these citations illustrate the eternal law that the Saint wins in the end, and his detractors reap nothing but confusion.

"'Who is this man?' the Caliph asked—they told him all the
tale :

At last the holy prince arose and looked both stern and pale.

'O arrogant, blind souls,' he said,

'Yours is the most unhappy sin,

You have cast out the man of peace God put your restless town
within.'

He ordered them to bring there clay, and straw and joists of
wood,

And they rebuilt the beggar's hut in the place where it had stood.

When all was done the Caliph went

On foot towards the north,

And as the twilight died away the stars in heaven came forth.

.....

The Caliph knelt upon the ground and kissed his ragged hem ;
'The house is ready' then he said, 'be merciful to them,

These children know not what they do.'

The beggar sighed and raised his head—

'God is compassionate. my lord ; let us go back' he said."

The remaining forty years or so of Ahmad's life were passed tranquilly in *Tandata*, though most austerely, especially the first twelve spent on the roof. The devoted Abd el-Aal was a great comfort and help, cooking for and looking after him, and taking mundane cares off his shoulders. As a *murid* (disciple) this youth was exemplary, and as an administrator he proved his genius in Ahmad's life and after his death. "The companions of the roof", «*اصحاب السطاح*» Ahmad's chief disciples, were the nucleus of many, and sent as it were apostles in all directions. Abd el-Aal sent Sidi Ismail to Imbaba, (v. Moulid of Ismail Imbaba, I 3), and Abu Tartur to the desert near it, now the village of El-Hatia adjoining Mit Oqba. He also has his little moulid, (which see T2). Sidi Yussef, father of Imbabi has his tomb in Qasr el-Eini, Cairo, and descendants living near, of these Ahmadiya apostles.

His old rivals and opponents either went away, or like Sidi Selim, whose tomb is in Tanta, came over to him ; and few if any of his followers are reported to have come to the bad : unless the case of Abd el-Megid be so considered. This early murid implored his master to show him his face, which he kept doubly veiled, and was warned that the price of a look was a life. He said he would die rather than forego what he had set his mind on, and die he did before the second veil was removed. (This suggests rather "the veiled Prophet of Khorazin", but is the only unsavoury story I have heard about the saint.) Those however who contemned his moulid throughout the centuries had a bad time, (in this world at least), unless they repented. Abd el-Wahab el-Shaarani in his *Tobaqat* mentions amongst other offenders a man who was eating fish at the time he spoke foolishly, and a bone stuck in his throat, giving him unspeakable

torture for nine months, till he went repentant to El-Bedawi's tomb at Tanta, and immediately sneezed up the bone. Lane, writing a century ago, mentions a friend of his in Egypt then suffering from the same reason, and within the last year or two I have heard several instances.

There are people now who seem bent on bringing down this great mouldid at Tanta, and shocking and disappointing a million poor people. Those who persecute mouldid goers at Tanta and elsewhere should think of the man with the bone in his throat, and consider too the feelings of those who come from all over Egypt and most of the world for peace and blessing.

Many records exist of miracles he wrought, before his death and since : how he appeared and even spoke to some, and how he rescued a man in an unfriendly country and flew with him safe to sanctuary in Egypt, and so on. Visitors at his shrine have not been the poor only. Amongst the great ones of the earth who enriched and honoured Ahmad's resting place exceedingly was the great Sultan Beybars, protégé of Sultan Saleh now lying in Sharia el-Nahasin. Indian pilgrims of the highest class have stated that every child in their provinces swears by Sayed el-Bedawi, and mountains and seas have not kept away his votaries from still more remote regions.

Scaife is not the only poet who has honoured him in song. Lane heard the people singing, —

« يا شيخ العرب يا سيد »

Oh, Sheikh of the Arabs! Oh Sayed!

and I have often heard the same and the like. He is invoked on all sorts of occasions in similar and other words, a favourite expression being يا ابو فراج Oh. Deliverer! Even in the liturgical prayer from the minarets before dawn, the "Abed", he is called upon with other of the Walis, the friends of God, — « يا ابو فراج يا شيخ العرب » "Ya Abu Farag, Ya Sheikh el-Arab!" "Oh, thou Deliverer, thou Sheikh of the Arabs.." May he deliver his Mouldid from all forms of vandalism!

The only news I have in this, the second year of the war is a note in this evening's "Bourse Egyptienne", 15 Nov. 1940, (15 Showal, 1359), which I will send to the printers, on the chance of its not being too late, (the MSS being already in their hands.)

DE nombreuses donations parviennent au moudir de la Gharbieh pour les distribuer aux pauvres à l'occasion du mouled de Sidi Ahmed El Badaoui qui se tient à Tantah.

S.M. le Roi a daigné faire un don de L.E. 50. Cette somme sera répartie parmi les indigents durant la cérémonie de clôture.

S 8. (v. Sectional Map VI.)

SAYED EL-MALAK

الشيخ سيد الملك

In 1352, 53, & 54 this Bulaq moulid, a very big one at that time, was held on the last Thursday of Safr, but in 1356 though still on a Thursday it was the last of Rabia I, (3-6-37).

The site which is the Saptia end of Sh. Abd el-Gawad, the same as Abu el-Sabaa, is passed by bus 15, and is near the terminus of Buses 2 and 9 and trams 4 and 23.

The moulid has a run of sixteen days, and on the secular side had big theatres, many ringas, Punch and Judy and Shadow shows, with the Piste à la Morte of Billy Williams, but there were often rough and unpleasant characters about which reduced its attractiveness for visitors. For that reason I did not encourage friends to accompany me, but in 1354 (1935), Mrs. Col. R..., a resident, expressed a wish to see what a moulid was like. We went in her car, before sunset, when as a rule things are very quiet, but on this occasion we proved an irresistible attraction to the Bulaq gamins, who swarmed on and in the car like flies on sugar. The alarmed chauffeur had difficulty in manipulating a retreat, and calculates that we shed at least sixteen kiddies from roof, windows &c., before we regained Sharia Fuad el-Awal.

The turbulence of the people of this old port of Cairo perhaps brought the decadence which came on their moulid, for

in 1356 (1937) it was badly wet-blanketed, in spite of the marvels of Billy Williams, and a much censored theatre. I am not aware if it has been held since.

S 9 (v. Sectional Map I.)

SELIM

سيدي سليم

I enjoyed this pleasant little mouldid on Thursday, 27 Ragab, 1352, (16.11.33), but missed it in subsequent years until Thursday 29 Gumad Tani 1357, (25.8.38), owing mainly to its date being put forward, and being variable.

It is situated not far from the Nile in the old "Port" of Bulaq, near the Caracol, in Sharia Suleiman Pasha el-Qadim, and easily reached by tram No. 7 or 13, getting off at the second stop after leaving Bulaq bridge, and walking first at right angles to the tram line and then to the left, when it is full in sight. The walk takes about three minutes.

Going in the hope of a zeffa at 4 in the afternoon, I was told the *Turuq* were already on the move, but not being very successful in picking up these I settled down and waited in a nice café in the centre of the street, drinking *qirfa*, and reading the "Moqattam" 's account of the ancient ceremony of "Arusat el-Nil", which had come off the day before with tremendous éclat.

A little before 6 the zeffa came into sight and sound, to the enthusiasm of the picturesque little crowd which had gathered: first branches of the Qadiriya with their white, and Rifaiya, with their black banners, and vigourously played tambourines and cymbals: then after a discreet interval, for the Shazliya are a little exclusive, came over twenty branches of that ancient and most praiseworthy Order, with their caps, sashes and banners of white and green, all chanting, book in hand. Each beiraq in addition to the designation of the Tariqa Shazlia الطريقة الشاذلية bore its local name, amongst which I noticed —

Bein el-Sariat, (my village)
Geziret Mit Oqba,
Sidi Farag, Bulaq,
Akhwan Hei Bab el-Shaaria
Waraq el-Arab,
El-Duqqi
Zawiat Sidi Atia,
Zawiat Sidi Abu el-Dalail

بين السرايات
جزيرة ميت عقبة
سبدي فراج ببولاق
اخوان حي باب الشعريّة
وراق العرب
الذقي
زاوية سبدي عطية
زاوية سبدي ابو الدلايل

Last of all came the "Khalifa", of the same name as his sainted ancestor of over 400 hundred years ago, mounted on a very beautiful black horse. I had the honour of meeting this honourable but most gentle and unassuming sheikh at the tomb of Sidi Selim, later in the evening, where a pavilion filled the little street, and a goodly company including the Head of the Shazlia, Sheikh Abd el-Salaam, listened to a Fiqi.

Making a round also of the little places for acting, dancing, singing, and so on, I was struck by the even more than usual happiness and good temper and behaviour of the people, and the less usual gentleness of the police, who never beat, harried or coerced the people in any way, but looked smilingly on,—but very ready to act if necessary—this too in the very roughest bit of Cairo, with the tradition of the old port of Bulaq. I understood why we were enjoying this paradisaic state when I met an old friend of nearly forty years standing, the Kaimaqam A... H....., a high inspector of the Interior, whom the people so like and respect, that (as some of them told me after) they would hate to do anything which could annoy him, even if it could be done with impunity. O, si sic omnes!

I recommend any old resident who can find little that is beautiful in Bulaq, to go round with the zeffa at the next moulid and see the magnificent cupolas and bits of architecture, culminating in the peaceful little square with the Mosque of Salmania, just before one regains the street of the moulid.

I gathered little about the history of Sidi Selim, beyond what his successor and namesake told me,—that he was a holy and famous follower of the Tariqa of Abu Hasan el-Shazli in the tenth century of the Hegira.

S 10

SHAARAWI

سيدي شعراوي

Years ago I saw a mouldid in the Bab el Shaaria district which I suppose was this, but I noted neither name nor date. In 1353 (1934) Dr. Enayet Allah described it as rather big and important, and it must has been so for him to establish a circumcision booth there.

I do not know if this mouldid is in honour of the Sheikh el-Shaarawi who founded the Tariqa of the Shaarawiya as a branch of the Ahmadiya, (the great order of Ahmad el-Badawi) but hope to investigate this.

S 11 (v. Sectional Map XIX.)

SHAFEI (Imam el-Shafei)

الامام الشافعي

This mouldid in honour of the great founder of this leading sect of Islam, as far as Cairo is concerned, always terminates on the first Wednesday of Shaaban, except perhaps that when Shaaban begins with a Wednesday, the mouldid may begin on that day and end on the 8th.

Tram 13 takes one to the spot where normally the celebrations commence, though they retrench more and more every year, and a few minutes' walk brings one to the mosque, and to the place of the Tashrifa (reception) where the representative of the Imam receives the Ulama, Ministers and other visitors. This "Tashrifa" used to be on the previous night, the Tuesday, leaving Wednesday to the populace; but since 1351 (1932) it seems to be held on the Wednesday. The solemnity of this overshadows the simple amusements with which both sides of the street from the tram terminus to the mosque were filled, and even the Qara Goz and similar shows which favoured the side

streets towards the *gabel* have been frozen out. It was still left to the populace to admire the *éclat* of the going and coming of their betters in their cars, and to enjoy the music at the entrance to the Tashrifa, but in 1357 (1938) they were driven away from that.

The doyen of the circumcision doctors, Enayet Allah Eff., is here at his head quarters and *facile princeps*: his booth with its elaborations and decorations, brilliant illumination, singing men, etc. is the most conspicuous object of the moulid. Between his place and the door of the mosque there has always been a *zikr* at the side of the street.

Over the dome of the mosque is a conspicuous object in the form of a boat, intended to hold an *ardab* of corn for the birds,— provided for by a charitable endowment. Years ago that was filled, at any rate at the time of the moulid, but if such is still the case, the birds have lost their appreciation for grain, for during the moulid and at other times I have looked in vain for birds, but have never seen one, except sometimes a hawk.

In the good old days, the ceremony of the *Dosah* (v. *Dash-touti*) was annually performed here as at the moulid of the Prophet and of *Sidna Husein* and *Sidi Dashtouti*, and the people went home edified and content.

Imam el-Shafei or, to give him his full style, Imamna Abu Abdulla Muhammad Ben Idris el-Shafei was Palestinian by birth, but was taken from Ghaza where he was born to Mekka when he was only two years old. Like Ahmad Sayed el-Bedawi, he was a great wanderer, especially in the Yemen and Iraq, and ultimately in Egypt, and early established a reputation as doctor and teacher, and was recognised as such by the Ulama of the countries mentioned, and generally. The last four years or somewhat more of his life, from A.H. 199 to 204 (A.D. 814 to 819) were passed in Egypt, mainly in Cairo where his memory and his tomb are illustrious.

There is a kind of spiritual romance about the affectionate attachment which sprung up between him and the Lady Nafisa, each recognising the great and saintly character of the other, and withal the attractive and magnetic human qualities. As she lived in Cairo from A. H. 201 till her death in 208, they were able to associate and to pray together, (as they made a point of doing each Ramadan), for about three years, 201 to 204. The case of these two is, I think, closely parallel to that of Saints Francis and Clare.

Abd el-Wahab, el-Shaarani, though he gives the date of the Imam's death as above, A.H. 204, refers to him as the *Prophet's cousin*, «ابن عم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم». This expression, mysterious to me, is, I daresay, clear enough to my Moslem readers.

S 12

SHAMI

الشيخ الشامي

My murasla reports a tiny mouldid at Gezirat el-Dahab, close to Giza in celebration of this saint. He tells me he was there on the final night and noted the date as Sunday, 5th Ragab, 1358 (August 20th, 1939).

S 13 (v. Sectional Map XX.)

SHATBI

سيدي الشطي

On Friday, 9 Muharem 1354 (12-4-35), I visited this most picturesque little desert mouldid, by walking under the guidance of the son of the circumcision doctor, Enayet-Allah, from his "clinique" by the mosque of Imam el-Shafei, half way to the Moqattams. The little shrine is near the line and embankment which run parallel to the hills, not far from the Monastery of Omr, as I have heard it called, and the ruined mosque of Abu Shahin on the side of the cliff, (Imam el-Shafei is reached by tram 13).

It was not yet sunset, but there were many poor pilgrims there and zikrs were proceeding. There was also a little theatre and stalls for simple refreshments.

The beauty of the view and quaintness of the little gathering well repays the walk of a mile or so each way.

(EL-SHUHDA, MENOUF)

S 14 (v. Delta Map)

SHIBL (Amir el-Gesh Muhammad Shibl el-Aswad)

أمير الجيش سيدي محمد شبل الأسود

Though never present, I have heard the moulid of Sidi Shibl frequently referred to enthusiastically, and I gather it partakes considerably of the nature of a country fair. The only definite information I possess is the appended short extract from an Arabic paper, which may be rendered as follows—

“MOULID SIDI SHIBL”

The Ministry of Interior has sanctioned the holding of the moulid of the Amir of the Army Sidi Muhammad Shibl al-Aswad, (who is) lying in his mosque at Shuhda, for a period of two weeks, beginning from the 6th July (the present month); and the place of the moulid has become crowded with merchants, and visitors (pilgrims) and the leaders of Sufi dervish Orders.....”

مولد سيدي شبل

سررنا — لمراسلنا :

صرحت وزارة الداخلية بإدارة مولد أمير الجيش سيدي محمد شبل الأسود السكائن مسجده ببلدة الشهداء لمدة اسبوعين ابتداء من يوم ٦ يوليو الجاري . وقد ازدحمت ساحات المولد بالتجار والزوار وأرباب الطرق الصوفية .
ويقد يومياً على مقام صاحب المولد المئات من الزوار للزيارة والتبرك بصاحبه حسب المعتاد سنوياً .

If, as I believe, the cutting is from a 1353 (1934) paper, that fixes the date of the final night as 19th July, that is Thursday, 7th Rabia II, 1353. This moulid at El-Shuhda

must not be confused with the mouldid of El-Shuhda (or Sayed el Shahid) held in Upper Egypt, near Mazghuna. (v. Shuhda, S 15) El-Shuhda is on the east bank of the Rosetta branch of the Nile, not far from Menuf, on the line between Benha and Kafr el-Zayat.

MAZGHUNA

S 15 (v. Map of Upper Egypt)

SHUHDA (El-Shuhda or Sayed el-Shahid)

الشهداء (سيدي سيد الشهيد)

I enjoyed this great desert mouldid on Thursday, 22 Moharem 1354 (25-4-35) under the impression that it was that of Aweis el-Qorani. On sending my Murasla, Mousa, with some of my neighbours of this village, on Thursday 17 Rabia Awal, 1359 (25-4-40), they assure me that El-Qorani is nearer Wasta, and that this is in honour of a great number of Moslems who fell fighting in a Holy War (*gihad*), and are therefore martyrs (*shuhda*), and that their leader was a famous sheikh, el-Shahid Sayed,—(*shahid* being the singular of *shuhda*). The word means "one who testifies, bears witness to the faith", and so corresponds to the Church's word "confessor", rather than to "martyr", though its acceptation approaches nearer to the latter.

Mazghuna is on the Upper Egyptian line, about half way between Cairo and Wasta, and less than an hour's walk or half an hour on a donkey, (always to be had near the station at mouldid time) from el-Shuhda. Motor buses also run to and from Giza.

It is curious to note that the two dates of which I am certain, though nearly two months apart by the lunar calendar, to which one would expect them to conform, are the same to a day by the Gregorian reckoning, and by the Coptic, (17th Bermuda).

This is one of the few cases of a mouldid being in crescendo, for though it was big when I saw it five years ago, my murasla who was also present then reports it as very much bigger now.

The religious observances centre about what might be regarded as a sort of cenotaph of tent work, put up for the occasion

by the *tariqa* of the Shazlia, but there are *zikur* also amongst the numerous stones which still mark the old necropolis of the martyrs.

Like Sidi Huneidiq near Ismailia, and most desert mouldids it is also a fair, and exhibits the picturesque element of performing and racing horses and camels. There is found also at least one theatre and Punch and Judy show.

Buffalos (*gamus*) are slain for the poor and eaten on the sand, with a curious kind of puff paste, (*fatir*), known as Egyptian bread, (*aesh masri*), or "*marahrah*".

There is much scope here for research. Information I have accumulated is very bulky, but so contradictory or impossible that it cancels down to the few points stated above.

It is pure speculation but I cannot help fancying that this Moslem mouldid was originally in honour of the Christian martyrs who fought under St. George, *Mar Girgis*, against the "infidels". Why otherwise should the Moslem calendar be ignored, and the mouldid in 1354 (1935), and 1359 (1940) fall on the same Christian date, and that the time of the Feast of St. George?

One recalls in this connection that the Coptic monastery of St. George at Biba, some fifty miles further up the river, claimed in a time of riot and outrage to be under the protection of a mythical sheikh *Bibawi* who, the monks alleged, dwelt as a Wali within the walls of their *dir*, causing many a pious Moslem to recite a *fatha* and leave an offering before a picture of St. George and the Dragon.

S 16 (v. Sectional Map VIII.)

SUTUHIA (Saida Ayesha Sutuhia)

سيدة عائشة السطحية

On three occasions on which I have seen this little mouldid, the date has been 29 Shaaban, the last being 1355 (1936).

The little shrine of this sister of Saida Rabia nestles under the great mass of the Bab el-Futuh, and is therefore passed by bus 12, which plies between Beit el-Qadi and Abbasia.

There is so much doing on this eve of Ramadan, including the moulid of Sidi Bahlul near the Bab el-Wazir, that one is apt to miss this small celebration, but at least a short visit should be paid to this majestic part of the old and still unspoilt city, the region of the Gates of el-Nasr and el-Futuh. The lighting up of the tiny tomb in the shadow of the mighty gate, and that of the little mosque just beyond the gate to the north, is an impressive sight, and the same may be said of the groups of pilgrims and the zikrs, and a little way to the south, on the main street, the concourse of simple souls about a café where comic turns are interspersed with more serious performances and singing.

On the same night there are a number of microscopic moulids between and in the neighbourhood of the "Babs", which should be seen : of these are Abd el-Basset in Sharia Dababia

Abd el-Qasid

Moh. el-Gaml (haret Guania, Bab el-Nasr).

Abd el-Kerim.

(Since writing the above, this tomb, unique in style and in beauty has disappeared, and the Saint has been dug up. The Bab however is still standing, or was when I passed through it a week or so ago.)

Sic transit decor Aegypti !

ON THE SUEZ ROAD.

T 1 (v. Map of Delta.)

TAKROURI or DAKROURI

شيخ طكروري

I have no knowledge of the date nor of the conditions of this little desert moulid, but there are points of interest about the tomb which induce me to introduce it.

Crossing the desert from Cairo to Suez in December, 1911, on a push bike, I visited this picturesque shrine, and was struck particularly by the number and quaint variety of votive offerings on the *tabut*, considering that the door was open and, I am told,

is always so, and the tomb is quite near and in view of the desert track. The offerings were not valuable certainly, including teeth, hair, rags, pipes, beads, little flags, a sardine tin and small coins. Amongst and attached to some of these I noticed the visiting card of the late W. G. Kemp, and quite recently in reading the book called "Egyptian Illustration", which was written and illustrated and I think printed by him, I came across a short account of this tomb, with a woodcut of the interior. He mentions that "large numbers of desert Arabs collect here to celebrate" Sheikh Takrouri's mouldid. He unfortunately does not give the date, and as I met no one there I left my little offerings without obtaining any information.

The tomb is roughly half way between Cairo and Suez, after Dar el-Baida is left on the left, and a little to the right before reaching Station No. 9. Kemp mentions that it is near the "venerable Pilgrims' Tree at the outlet of the Jendali Valley".

The Sheikh died at this spot,—murdered, some say,—on his return from pilgrimage to Mecca.

T 2 (v. Map of Delta.)

TARTURI

سيدي أحمد أبو طرطوري

This small but attractive mouldid is at the little village of El-Hatia adjoining Mit Oqba in the Imbaba district, not far south of the tram track by the Bahr el-Aama, between Zamalik and the English bridges. I found it a pleasant ride from my home at Bein el-Sariat on Thursday, 15th Gumad Tani 1357 (11-3-38). The tomb of the Saint and the surroundings were bravely decorated but I was too early in the day to see the ceremonies, and I expect they were somewhat overshadowed by those of the very considerable mouldid of Sidi Qraishi at Zenin the same evening.

I have little doubt that the Sheikh who is buried and honoured here is the "Sidi Ahmad Abu Tarturi", who was placed

in the wilderness near Imbaba by Abd el-Aal, the celebrated disciple and friend of Sayed el-Bedawi. (Some local people however refer to him as Abd el-Rahim el-Tarturi.)

T 3

TARTURI (Hasan el-Tarturi) شيخ حسن الطرطوري

I have heard from a fairly reliable source that there is a mouldid in honour of one Hasan el-Tarturi in the Rod el-Farag district, and that its date in 1353 was Thursday 28 Rabia el-Tani (9-8-34).

T 4

TUNSI التونسي

I regret never having seen this mouldid, which has been reliably reported to me several times, but too late, notably on Friday, 2nd Muharem 1354 (1935).

It is the opening mouldid, or nearly so, of the Moslem year, and the more popular from that fact, and from its situation in a wild and lovely district beyond Imam el-Shafei. Friends of mine who went and enjoyed it took tram 13 to its terminus, then walked the rest with an amateur guide picked up near the mosque.

(ALEXANDRIA)

W 1 (v. Map of Delta.)

WAFAI (El-Wafai) سيدي الوفاعي

My ignorance about Alexandria mouldids is complete, and in this compilation I have already attempted much more ground than I had intended, so I must not try to fill this great lacuna, and a number of minor gaps.

This ignorance is the more discreditable, as I have spent much time in "Alex.," living once in Ibrahimia over two years, and I attended Commemorations of Muhammad Ali, Celebrations of Leilet el-Marag, Leilet el-Qadr, &c., and in honour of the Prophet, but never saw a mouldid, and only heard of this one, El-Wafai, which I am told is in the month of Muharem.

Though I have certainly missed much I feel sure that compared with Cairo, "Alex." has kept little of the old and beautiful in buildings and in ceremonies. As an example of the awful iconoclasm from which this great port has suffered: there is hardly a really ancient and unspoilt Coptic church left, though they form one of the priceless riches of the metropolis.

The appended newspaper account of a Moulid of the Nebi el-Wafai, shows it to be of considerable note in Alexandria, and a happy occasion for the poor of the district.

COMMEMORATING THE PROPHET EL WAFAY

To celebrate the anniversary of the prophet "El Wafay" Maher Hassan Farag Effendi, concessionary for the sale of newspapers in Alexandria and Lower Egypt, has organised for this evening a ceremony over which the Governor of Alexandria, Hussein Sabry Pasha, will preside. A large gathering of notabilities is expected to be present.

A marquee has been erected near the Sidi Abdel Razzak El-Wafay Mosque, where verses of the Koran will be chanted by eminent Sheikhs.

As usual, food will be distributed in the afternoon to the poor and needy of the quarter.

W 2 (v. Sectional Map VI.)

WASTI (El-Wasti)

سيدي الواسطي

My murasla, Mousa, discovered this cheery little moulid, and conducted me to it on Thursday 30 Ragab 1353 (8-11-34), but though I have looked for it several times since at about that date, I have never found it in progress.

It is in the Suq el-Asr, Bulaq, and perhaps best reached by leaving bus 15 in Sh. Abd el-Gawad at Sh. el-Ansari, (which is near the Saptia end on the left going from Sh. Fuad el-Awal): then following that little street which nearly cuts it till its lights and music are apparent.

The little mosque is good and there is a certain picturesque *gemütlichkeit* about its surroundings, albeit the district is one of the poorest, and without striking monuments.

LUXOR

Y 1 (v. Map of Upper Egypt.)

YUSSEF ABU'L HAGGAG

سيدي يوسف ابو الحجاج

This mouldid falling on 14th Shaaban, rather unfortunately clashes with that of Sidi Abd el-Rahman el-Qenawi held at Qena which is also in the Theban region, as well as with Sidi Matrawi at Mataria, and often with other minor mouldids, and in 1357 (1938) it coincided with the great Tanta mouldid of Sayed el-Bedawi, but this was purely accidental, because Sayed el-Bedawi does not follow the Moslim Kalendar but is always in October, and in 1357 mid-Shaaban happened to fall in that month. This year, 1359 (1940), it synchronised with Sidi Rubi of the Fayum. (v. mouldid R 1).

As explained elsewhere Shaaban is crowded with mouldids, because the next month, Ramadan, excludes these celebrations, and in the following months of Pilgrimage they are extremely rare. Moreover of the nights of Shaaban, none is so solemn as the eve of mid-Shaaban when each mortal's term of life is determined and written on the leaves of the Lote tree of Paradise, the *morituri* loosing their leaves this night on the shaking of the tree, and their lives in the ensuing year.

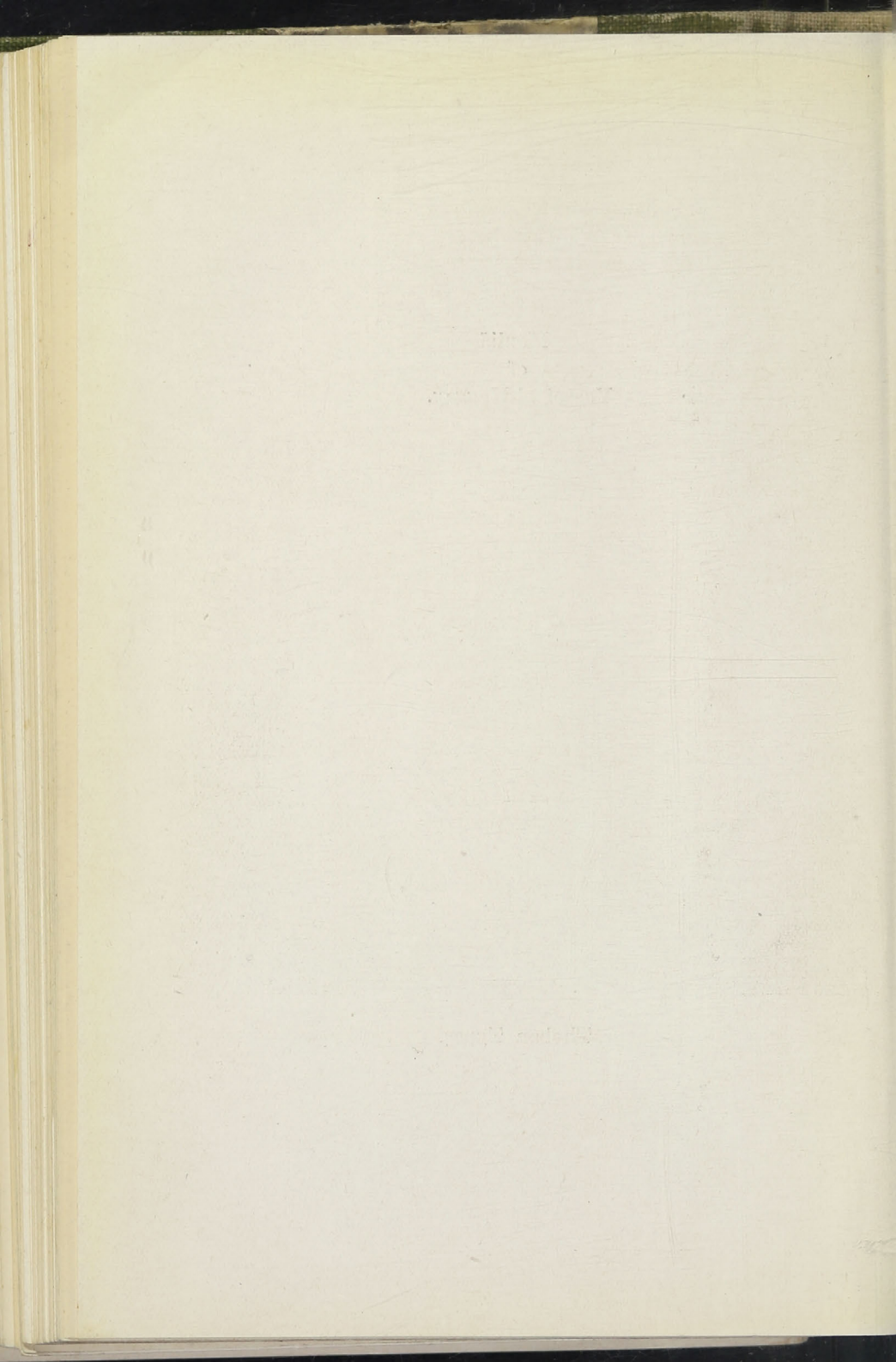
In addition to the characteristics of mouldids generally, and the additional attractions of Arab races and trick riding, and the extra freedom and colour of a provincial mouldid, there is a peculiarity—shared as far as I know only with the sister mouldid of Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi,—and that is the carrying of *boats* in the Zeffa, two in the case of Luxor.

This is explained locally by the tradition that the holiness and fervent effectual prayers of Sheikh Yussef Abu el-Haggag saved the ship in which he was returning from Mecca, when the rest of the pilgrim-fleet foundered, but anthropologists recognise in it one of the cases, and an unusually clear one, of the adaptation into an Islamic ceremony of something far more ancient than

Moulid
of
Yussef el-Haggag.



Theban Types.



Islam or Christianity. Hornell has an interesting article in "Man" of September, 1938, illustrating the boats* carried in the Luxor Zeffa, and pointing out their resemblance to "the sculptured record on the exterior of the western wall of the temple of Ramses III, within the great enclosure of Amun at Karnac", which represents the towing of the royal barge, and that of Mut and Khons. He states that Egyptologists in the main regard the Luxor procession as "a shadowy survival of the great water festival of Opet, when the Theban Triad, Amun and his divine companions, Mut and Khons, journeyed up-river from the vast temple of Karnac to visit their shrines in the Luxor temple".

These boats gaily decorated, like the "Aqaba" in the Cairo ceremony of the "Bride of the Nile", do not take the water as in the case of the Aqaba, but mounted on carts are dragged by youths connected with the various "Turuq", filled with children whose parents are supposed to possess a "Sanad" showing their descent from Sidi Yussef.

Z 1 (v. Map of Duqqi district.)

ZEFETI (Sidi Muhammad el-Zefeti)

سیدی محمد الزفیتی

This is an extraordinary instance of a mouldid coming into existence, or if it lived years ago, rising Phoenix-like from its ashes, and after a rapid crescendo becoming absolutely fortissimo, the more so as its meteoric rise has been during a period in which Zeitgeist and the authorities have been anything but propitious. I have been living since the beginning of 1922 within a mile of the little *qarafa* of Sidi Zefeti, where the simple tombs of my neighbours are grouped about the almost equally unpretentious last resting place of this obscure saint, and still nearer the Bulaq Dukrur road, whence a merry din and even voices can easily reach me, and for over ten years I neither heard the mouldid, nor rumours of its existence. I cannot think that it was held at all, or if it were, that it was anything more than a zikr or two at the tomb, or at the mosque of Duqqi.

* v. also "Nature"—about October 1938

It crystallised into a definite mould, but a very minute one, in 1351, when the main night was Sunday, 10th Gumad Tani, (11. 9. 32). Though away when it was held in 1352, I saw it—still small but grown a little—in 1353: and in 1354 it was reported on return from absence to have become a big affair, and to have had a long run. In 1355 I left Egypt for a couple of months early in Rabia Tani, and left it developing—swings, Qara Goz, and such like already very popular, and I was much surprised on my return to find it still going strong, much stronger, in fact. A record run I should think, but I am told it was somewhat intermittent. It culminated that year on Thursday, 24 Gumad Tani, (10. 9. 1936), simply immense, a string of booths and tents of all sorts, with spaces for zikrs, swings, Arab singers, and the rest; extending from the Waqf buildings, at the cross roads, (Bulaq Dukrur and the road from the Orman Gardens to the Agricultural Museum), past Duqqi nearly to the line at Bulaq Dukrur. I have only seen this side of a mould exceeded in Cairo at that of Sidna Husein in 1353, (1934), when the booths fringed the foot of the *gabal* from the end of Sharia el-Gedida, (the continuation of the Muski), to the necropolis outside the Bab el-Nasr.

In the year of the Prophet 1357, (1938), it was even greater, especially in the magnitude of the theatres and their castes, and of the dancing cafés and ringas, and though the last night and the culmination was 22 Gumad Tani, (18-8-38), and the next day the *Khitama* only, I could then still hear the sound of tars and naqaras, the cracking of the percussion cap when a strong man pushed the little engine up to the limit of the rail, and the varied sounds and voices of a mould.

But the *clou* was the marvellous zeffa in the afternoon. Sections of it made preliminary tours of the fields before 4 o'clock, and by about 5 all had met in the village of Duqqi. Duqqi is a stronghold of the Qadiriya, الطريقة القادرية, that great primitive and original sect founded by Abd el-Qadir el-Galani, who was buried in Bagdad in 1165 A. D., (A. H. 561), and of the

Rifaiya, الطريقة الرفاعية, an immensely powerful branch of the Qadiria, founded, as its name implies, by the "Sultan" Rifai, buried in Bosra in 1182 A.D., (578)⁽¹⁾. Their black banners were very prominent, and their dervishes very fervent, as they rotated, *dabus* in hand, in a circular dance to the sound of tar, طار, kas, كاس, nuqara, نقارة etc.

The *dabus* is not as its name would suggest, an ordinary pin, but an anomalous instrument of devotion, torture and music. It is a straight and pointed rod of steel about two feet in length, with a spherical head, either of wood, in which case it resembles the "Jack" played at in bowls, or of hollow metal, and in each case fringed at the top with a number of little chains, bearing at the free end a triangle of metal. These play the part of bells. One young dervish, with a wild chevelure which would have been startling even on a Beshari, in kindly showing me his *dabus*, called it a *shakhshakha*, شخشاخه a *sistrum*, as it contained objects which converted it into a rattle. This would interest Prof. Newberry, late of the Egyptian University, for in his book on Ancient Egypt, he voices his theory that the royal sceptre was in origin a *sistrum*, with which the king could call to order or reduce to silence. What an ideal sceptre for a despotic monarch the *dabus* would make! If it did not produce the desired effect when used as a rattle, a blow with the head or a prod with the point, would effectively assert royalty.

(1) My authority for the statement that "Sultan" el-Rifai was buried in Bosra is Bliss (v. "Religions of Syria and Palestine"), but I understand from Mrs. Devonshire, whose Conferences and Books on the mosques and other monuments of Cairo are so well known and so much appreciated, that the great mosque of Sultan Rifai opposite that of Sultan Hasan was built comparatively recently about the shrine of El-Rifai. Others, including Miralai Gayer-Anderson Bey, who is full of accurate information on such matters, are confident that the shrine in question is no cenotaph but actually holds the body of that great founder.

Is Egypt (and Cairo in particular) indebted to the Fatimites for this precious possession? I wonder!

But I am delaying the procession! It is preceded by the traditional Alexandrians, in their picturesque boleros, and baggy *libas*, some holding up long poles bearing a kind of highly decorated and tasselled sistrum, some dancing or spinning, and in this case one, a bicycle expert, holding his inverted machine in his teeth. Then the dervishes of the "turuq", followed by the "Khalifa" on horseback with a couple of baby Bedouins, most picturesque in *laasa* لأسسة, and *aaqal*, عقال. As the word implies الخليفة, the khalifa, represents the sheikh in whose honour the mouldid is held, and is chosen from his family. In this case the Sheikh Abu Zaid filled the rôle with dignity. Then more of the *turuq* with their banners and their sashes, bearing the insignia, *nishan*, نشان of the sect, and others playing all kinds of music, or gyrating alone or rotating with their fellows in the dance of the *dababis*; some also carrying cressets, *mishal*, (مشعل) to keep the skins on the tambourines taut, though this was not necessary as the thoughtful villagers had kindled tiny fires by the wayside for this purpose. To vary the dancing, certain of the dervishes thrust their *dabus* though the lips or cheek; then suddenly going down and impaling themselves with their *dababis*, in the face, throat, chest or abdomen, they formed a human causeway — *gisr*, جسر, with their bodies, and a local sheikh of note, Sheikh Ayed, representative and descendant of El-Rifai, walked upon them, making a short prayer and exhortation at intervals. An effendi of the tribe of El-Rifai did the same, and this was repeated several times before the zeffa had passed out of the village. Lagging behind to see the rest of the zeffa pass, I noticed that the theatre company of "Saida Fatima el-Kisara", in two well-filled carts, brought up the rear with songs, music and belly-dances. They were a pied and multicoloured and lively party. They gave out papers with some of their photographs, and which notified that Fatima and her caste were there to honour the Sheikh Muhammad el-Zefeti, —

« احتفالا بمولد سيدي محمد الزفيتي بالدقي »

At length the zeffa emerged into the Bulaq Dukrur road, following it westward till the canal bridge was reached, shedding all secular elements on the way, the Alexandrines and Fatima Kisara's party. Finally it reached the beautiful spot, where Zefeti's body rests in the lush grass, under mighty trees, an English-looking country spot, such as Gray's elegy might have been composed in. Then zikrs were commenced and visits paid to the tomb: visits which must have taken hours, for never in modern times can Zefeti have seen such a concourse. It was as significant as it is typical, that when the merry side of a mouldid is not checked, the piety of the people is enormously enhanced.

The above description locates the mouldid pretty well. To get there from town, No. 4 bus serves till nearly 9 o'clock, passing right through it. Bus No. 6, or tram 15 takes one to the English Bridge, whence a walk of a few minutes due west leads to Dugqi and the mouldid. Taxis and cabs are always to be found at the English Bridge, and that is the starting point for the Khardasa bus which passes through the mouldid, but is very infrequent and ceases to run at or before 9.

A rather striking incident was omitted from the description of the zeffa. A remarkably handsome and patrician little lad took from a dervish, doubtless a relative, his *dabus* and thrust it in and, I believe, through his own cheek. Was this, I wonder, a variant on, or an addition to the initiation ceremonies of *zikh* and *ward* ورد, (rosary)? It reminded one of the "bleeding" of a young rider who is well in at the death in a hard hunt.

As for Sidi Zefeti, I regret that I have no reliable or consistent information, in the way of history or tradition.

Alas, Sheikh Zefeti's fall was even more meteoric than his rise! I was in Europe when the mouldid was held on Sunday, 27 Gumad II, 1358 (13-8-39), but was told on my return that it had been dreadfully reduced. The reason generally assigned was that the cafétiers, owners of booths, tents, etc., who had paid

well the previous year for the use of the waste land by the side of the road, had been unable to come to terms with the Waqf officials and others concerned.

This year of the Prophet 1359 (1940), the specious war pretext seems to have given almost the *coup de grâce*, for even swings and such like put up by local enterprise (possibly irregularly in some technical way) were pulled down before the final night on the 18th Ragab, (22-8-40), and the people of Duqqi and visitors were bitterly disappointed. I am told, however, that there was a zeffa in the afternoon, but by no means like that of 1357 described above; and that there was no crush of pilgrims at the tomb.

Z 2 (v. Sectional Map XV.)

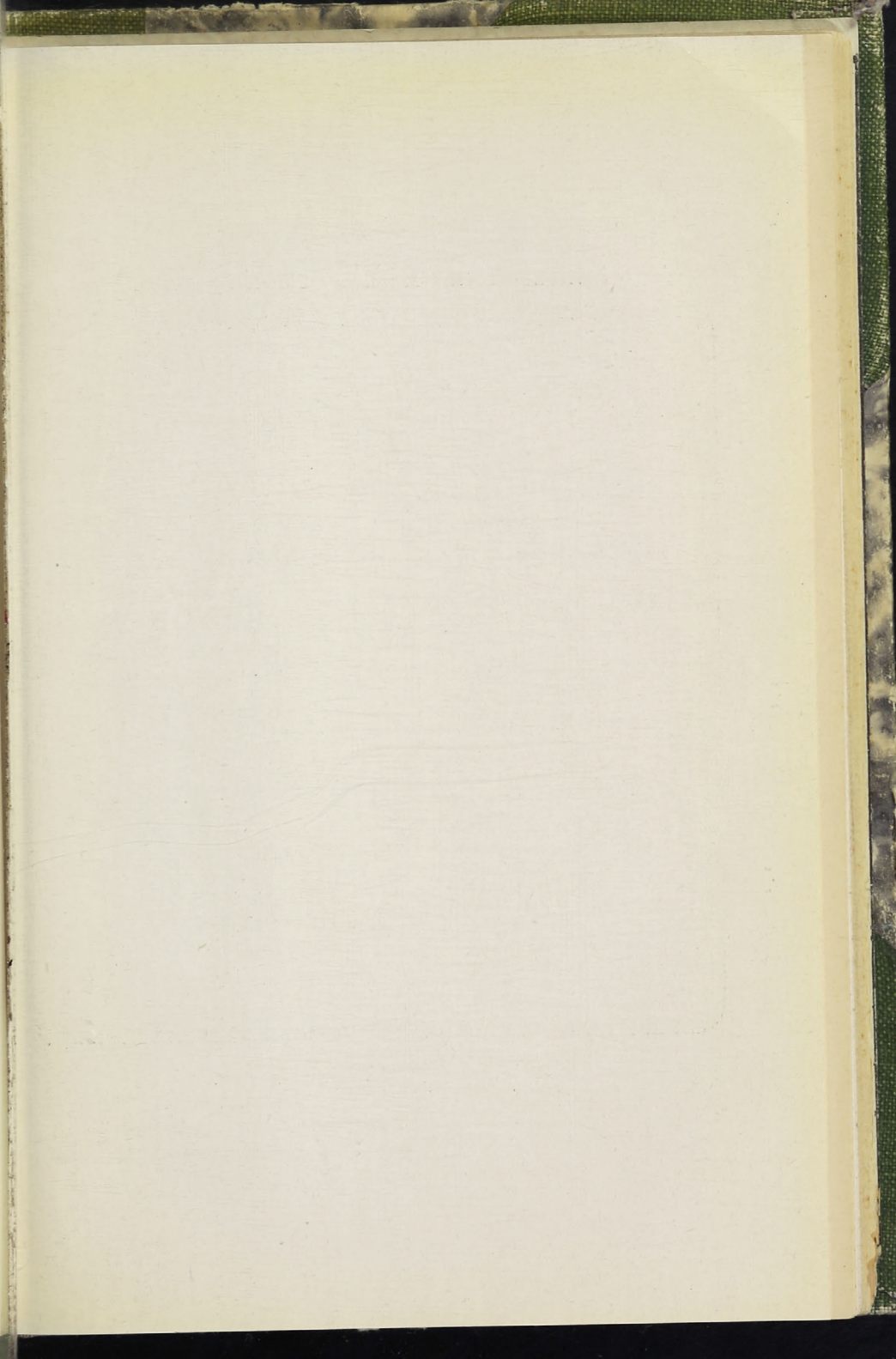
ZEIN EL-ABDIN

سیدی زین العابدین

The mouldid of Ali el-Asghar, Zein el-Abdin, was formerly one of the great celebrations of Islam, and certainly should be still, seeing that Cairo is privileged to guard the shrine of one of the leading characters in the History and Religion of the Prophet, who was Zein el-Abdin's great-grandfather.

It was still big and impressive when I saw it on Saturday, 5th Shaaban, 1351, (3.12.32), in its weirdly wonderful setting of tombs and mighty mosques, but it was not held at all in 1352, because, I am told, there was a murder somewhere in the qarafa, *قرافة*, necropolis, in which the shrine is situated, though I cannot trace any connection between the crime and the mouldid.

On Saturday, 6th Safr, 1353, (19.5.1934), I witnessed a miserable simulacrum of the mouldid, and even this poor ghost was laid until 1357, when gallant attempts were made by the friends of the saint to bring him into his own again. The zeffa and the great night were fixed for Saturday, 17th Gumad Tani, (13.8.38), and a week before that the Qarafa and the approaches to the shrine were thronged by pilgrims. The treat-





لآلى ليالى الأانس برحاب زين العابدين قد انتظمت -
وثغور البشر بمولده الشريف قد ابتسمت . وسحائب البركات
قد أمطرت بأبوابه . ورياض النفاحات قد أزهرت بأعتابه
وفي يوم السبت ليلة الأحد الموافق ١٧ جماد الثاني سنة ١٣٥٧
ياوح بغير تمامه . ويفوح مسك ختامه فأرجو التشريف
بمنزلنا بشارع السلخانة نمرة ٩ الساعة ٢ أفرنكي بعد الظهر
أدام الله لكم هذه العادة وبلغكم ببركته الحسنى وزيادة آمين

خادم المقام

الشريف

ment it then suffered from the Police of Saida Zenab was heart-rending, the more so as of all Cairo moulids perhaps it has the most purely religious character, and being in a cemetery where there is no traffic whatever, the aggression seemed almost wanton. Though the zeffa was not allowed, the last night was peaceful and happy *and attended by an enthusiastic and goodly crowd, many from remote parts, for invitations had been sent out, and the fame of this great Wali is as wide as Islam.

The approach, by the way, is very easy, by Khalig tram, No. 5 or 22; the Qarafa being near the Salakhkhana and Muhammad Ali's Aqueduct.

There was no secular side, no amusement park, and the general character of this celebration did not seem to call for these, though I regretted that the Fiqis who sang in the cafés and shops of the district, and who were so much appreciated in the good old days, are no longer heard, or at least I neither saw nor heard them; but I did not wander much from the shrine and its immediate surroundings. I was privileged to enter the holy of holies, where a beautiful grille in metal with a floral design, encloses the tomb, and garlands and bouquets of fresh roses add beauty to it. With some of these I was presented. But WHAT does the tomb contain? That I should be still in uncertainty illustrates the extraordinary difficulty there is to obtain definite or reliable information about these matters. Abd el-Wahab el-Shaarani, a recognised authority, in his *Tobaqat*, clearly states,—“His head was brought to Cairo and buried near the aqueduct which brings water to the Citadel,—in Old Cairo.”

وحملى رأسه الى مصر ودفنت بالقرب من مجراه الماء الى القلعة بمصر العتيقة

Yet the Sheikh El-Sayed Ali Abdin, whose hospitality I enjoyed,† who is, I understand, the spiritual if not the blood successor,

* Note—the result of representations made to the Governorat, which checked the destructive zeal of the local authorities.

† —This sheikh's sudden death was recently announced under strange tragic circumstances.

(but I am told both), of Zein el-Abdin in unbroken "silsila", attested by diploma, "sanad", and who would, I suppose, have ridden as "Khalifa", had the zeffa been allowed, assured me that the *entire body* of the Waly lies there, and was supported by relatives and sheikhs who naturally have inner knowledge. If a casting vote can be taken to decide the question, the Sheikh directly in charge of the tomb, on being asked by me if the tomb contained the body, replied,—“No, only the Noble Head, الرأس الشريف.

In the *qarafa*, not many yards from the great door of the *dareh*, through which there was a perpetual passing of a crowd of pilgrims to and from the inner *maqam*, a gaunt and terrible creature fascinated literally an immense ring of people. He was a Magzub from Upper Egypt: in the army once, I was told, now a religious maniac: and never have I met in real life, a being with such a powerful and terrible personality. He hurled Jeremiads at the people and kept them entranced and terror-stricken by his voice, his fearsome gestures, and his marvellous whirling and contortions. He was a born witch doctor, and now and again smelt out a heretic or a pious fraud, and hypnotised him on the spot. Sometimes the ring was like a spot on the island of Circe, bodies with the head bent back nearly to earth, or circulating upside-down on all fours and looking like scorpions, or bleating cries for mercy in ovine voices, or in the attitude of an ass carrying the magzub on their backs or shoulders, whilst he himself emitted sounds which were anything but human, roars, grunts, and animal notes indescribable. When he took a new victim in hand, he generally fixed him with fierce wild eyes, and with fingers vibrating like claws asked him,—“Are you laughing at me?”—for he was as sensitive to ridicule as Cyrano de Bergerac, and I am sure, would just as willingly have run the offender through the body. Without waiting for a reply, and indeed the subject was usually rendered speechless and helpless, he seized him by the hair, nose, or any member, swung him into the ring, made a few more rapid passes with his hand and if necessary again used his eyes and voice on him, and then at once proceeded to the Circe transformations.

Early on he had not come into his power, and used some restraint, and even passed police scrutiny, though only just. When I was near he was obviously *gené* and very conscious of me, and in fact challenged me with his sphinx question, with baleful eyes, and claws working like snakes, but had not quite his usual confidence. I assured him with truth that I was not laughing at him, and to relieve the tension bluffed him by asking if he did not remember me at the mouldid of Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi, (to which in point of fact I had never then been, but guessed he as a Saidi would have,) and he replied,—“Yes, by God, I remember you well”. This I think was purely the Egyptian instinct of politeness, which conquers all other feelings. It was towards midnight that the Spirit came upon him with unusual power, and he came into “his hour”. Then the police kindly and wisely left us alone, except one “saff zabat” who thought, but was not quite sure, that it was his duty to interfere. He shuddered away,—in time,—like a falling withered leaf. I confess I should have liked to see the Mamur of the Qism in the magic ring: he might have been cured like Saul of the persecuting tendencies with which he is locally credited. The last occult triumph I witnessed was the subjugation of a highly respectable-looking sheikh, wearing a green turban, proclaiming him to be of the seed of the Prophet. He was walking past our ring at some distance, but the witch-doctor dashed through the people and had him into the charmed circle in a flash, tearing off his green *aama*, and accusing him of being a false Sharif, and daring to approach Zein el-Abdin whilst “niggis” (in a state of ceremonial impurity).

With flashing eyes, the “Sharif” indignantly expostulated, but he met other eyes, and his went dull, and his face expressionless, and his voice lapsed into *aposiopesis*; and after many antics worthy of Qara Goz, at word of command he was down and grunting on all fours, like the companions of Ulysses. Then after dancing a *pas seul*, he performed a lonely *zikh* — Allah! Allah! Allah! — which changed into a mere cry, so full

of pain and pathos, and so high-pitched, that it resembled no sound I have ever heard except the dying cry of an animal poisoned by prussic acid. We all appealed to the Magzub to desist, to which he responded making a few counter passes, and thrusting the Sharif out of the ring with words that sounded like an absolution. He also dealt with two or three other of his subjects still lying about, absolving some, but heaping unheard-of and horrible curses on one and hurling him among the tombs.

Out of curiosity, I followed the "Sharif", and got into conversation with him, asking him the name of the Magzub. He said he did not know, though he had seen him once before, and he was "a very good man". "But", I said, "what he has just put you through must have been dreadful for you." "Anything but dreadful", he replied, — "I love a Zikr". And he looked at me with an expression of great surprise, as though entirely unconscious of his recent canine, ovine, porcine and Punch-like variants.

Seated on a tombstone to meditate on the strange beauty of the surroundings, the whispering of veiled women — vaguely seen — came to me, with the sound of zikrs, and the singing or droning of holy men, and the animal cries of the untiring *magzub*. Tombstones all about and a few trees, and in the distance veritable mansions of the dead, some of them fresh with flowers and greenery, and festooned minarets, and their ancient domes glowing softly in some hidden light: partly the effect of the now risen moon. I tried to place him whom we were honouring in the scheme of things. Grandson of the Imam Ali and Fatma, daughter of the Prophet, he escaped death on the field of Karbela with his father Sidna Husein, "the martyr," and elder brother, Ali el-Akbar, through his being too sick and too young to fight, and died in the year 99 at the age of 58, having founded a line illustrious to this day in the person of the Agha Khan and others. For Zein el-Abdin, Ali el-Asghar, was father of Gaafar Sadiq, the sixth Imam, whose son Ismail was

the first of the sect of Ismailiya, which embraced the Assassins under Rashid el-Din, the Old Man of the Mountains, who proved such a thorn, or rather dagger in the sides of the Crusaders, and who levied a tribute, (or some call it blackmail), which tens of thousands of Ismailiyans still pay to his successor, the great Derby winner at Bombay. We owe many Cairo mouldids to his immediate family, apart from that of Sidna Husein: Sitna Sakina, Saida Ayesha, and Fatima el-Nebawiya among them, the last named, his granddaughter Fatima, having her *Maqam* and her mouldid, behind the governorate, beneath the windows of the Istyanaf prison — a yearly source of delight to the prisoners.

Z 3 (v. Sectional Map XIII.)

ZENAB (Saida Zenab)

سيدة زينب

After the birthday of the Prophet, that of Saida Zenab is one of the two leading Mouldids of Cairo, the other of course being that of her brother Sidna Husein; the two being children of the Imam Ali and Fatima daughter of the Prophet, and therefore grandchildren of Muhammad himself. Though doubts have been thrown on the authenticity of the tomb in the Cairo mosque, ancient tradition and belief are strong enough to draw the best part of a million pilgrims to this reputed shrine each year. The mosque itself, though attractive, is not old nor famous architecturally: it was built on the site of an older mosque 140 years (lunar) ago by Muhammad Ali. The recent modernisation of the square of Saida Zenab, and destruction of a fine old tree and tomb and other such objects in the immediate neighbourhood have deprived it of much of the charm it possessed a few years ago.

After a run of three weeks, the mouldid terminates on the nearest Tuesday to the middle of Ragab, at least as far as my experience goes: in 1348, 16th Ragab; 1351, also 16th Ragab; 1353, 14th Ragab; 1354, 17th Ragab; 1355, 13th Ragab; 1357, 18th Ragab; 1358, 14th Ragab; 1359, 16th Ragab (20.8.40).

The writer made an early and strange acquaintance of mosque, tomb and moulid in 1819, (1901), being smuggled into the very exclusive penetralia, on one of the early nights, by two of the sons of Arabi Pasha and the son of my host, Hamad Mahmud, later friend and doctor to Zaglul, and now Minister of Hygiene. I was introduced to Sheikhs and notables who knew the lads, as a Turkish visitor of great piety, and Harold Base, whom many of my readers must have met, and who also was smuggled in, as a dumb dervish; and we were received with a kindly hospitality which smote our consciences. Seated and drinking *qirfa* (cinnamon tea) I made the most of my very limited Turkish and Arabic, and we were all happy, till someone had the *mauvaise idée* of bringing over to our little group a Bey from Stambul who, he thought, would love a chat with *a fellow countryman*. Hamad and the Arabi boys were in the greatest consternation, and before Base and I realised what course they proposed taking, the Arabis bolted across the mosque, and Hamad, not then perfected in the ways of diplomacy, did the same. The *dumb dervish* and I, not knowing what fate might await us, followed them out of the mosque and down Baghala at high speed.

Any of the Saida Zenab trams, 4, 7, 12; and busses, 2, 9, etc. take one to the door of the mosque. So well known is Saida Zenab that this information may seem superlative, but some residents have so concentrated on certain parts of Cairo to the neglect of others, that I dare not omit it, — having in mind an incident of some years ago. Dining a few evenings before the big night, with Mr. Humphreys of Bulaq Duqrur, who had been resident here since about the end of last century, I asked him if he would like to come with me to the moulid, and he replied, "I should love to, but what is a moulid and where is Saida Zenab?"

A feature of this moulid has always been the numerous zikrs in and about the mosque, and in the side streets and courts, and until recent years the singing sheikhs in Sid el-Barani, who

seem unhappily to have, to a large extent, come under the El-Azhar ban on anything "against religion or morals". Also the five-legged cow, Qara Goz and other characters have been chased from the precincts. But *en revanche*, quite a big amusement park sprang up away to the east, by the Darb el-Gamamiz, and the Khalig, with several theatres and many shows, stalls and entertainments. I have not seen a proper zeffa with mounted "Khalifa" since 1351. In 1353 Billy Williams amazed thousands of people by his daring riding in his "Piste à la Morte". Recent building on the terrain vague which was utilised will make things difficult. *

Some ten years or more ago there was a serious bagarre at which a number of people were killed, mostly Saidis. A most rare occurrence, as a mouldid crowd is full of piety and fun, and good temper. And ladies whom I have taken into the thick of the Saida Zenab crowd would add, "good manners", for a way is always made for them, politely and pleasantly, and every consideration shown. On one occasion my lady companions were invited into the mosque to visit the tomb, a favour which delighted them and left them most appreciative and grateful. "Saida Zenab was a lady," one of them remarked, "and her votaries here are gentlemen."

ENVOI

It is the hour of sunset, but at the moment of writing I am not sure of the date, — whether it be this month, last month or the next. The official date has been already changed recently, as mentioned under the mouldids of Matrawi and Rubi, and now the Ro'ya is looking for the crescent of Ramadan to decide whether the month of Fasting is to begin, or whether Shaaban is to claim another day.

* Note,— A fresh spot was selected in the direction of Ibn el-Touloun, by the new gardens.

The up-to-date aspect of this mouldid is touched on in a letter to the "Egyptian Gazette" of 4 September, 1940, (2 Shaaban, 1359), and quoted in extenso at the end of my "Introductory" Chapter.

Anyway this is the 2nd October, 1940 A.D., and the 22nd Tut in the Coptic year of the martyrs 1657, and the eve of the Jewish New Year, 5001 A.M., as well as being the year 1359 A.H. and the cannons will fire and the minarets be all ablaze, if we are to welcome Ramadan.

My list of Egyptian Saints ends appropriately enough with two of the greatest of Islam, the great grandson and the granddaughter of the Prophet, but it is strange and regrettable that the Nebawiya group of the near relatives of Muhammad, of supreme value in religious history, should seemingly have suffered even more than some of the less exalted. The account of Zein el-Din's mouldid, as in the cases of the two Fatimas, is just a "Tale of Woe", and one who has witnessed recently their agony is tempted for a moment to repeat the despairing words of Keats in his "Hyperion", —

"Leave them, O Muse! for thou anon wilt find
Many a fallen old divinity,

Wandering in vain about bewildered shores."
or to paraphrase the words of the same poet—

Ay, the count

Of mighty Poets is made up; the scroll
Is folded by the Muses; —

substituting "Poets" by Mouldids: but what are we to put in the place of "Muses"?

I had proposed holding up the MSS of this compilation till the end of Shaaban, the completion of the mouldid season, but passed all in to the printers on the 18th of this month, rather on the "de mortuis nil nisi bonum" principle, for I found some old friends dead, and others reduced to such lifeless condition that I felt NIL to be the word.—

But — to adapt the old hymn! —

"Sometimes a light surprises,
The pilgrim on his road",

the very next day I was summoned to the shrine of Sidi Haroun el-Huseini, and found his recently resuscitated mouldid very much alive, an inspiring little scene of spiritual enthusiasm, and joyous piety.

Then came the welcome surprise that, although nearly six months late, Sidi Marzuk was to come into his own, when the hopes of his votaries had faded; and in spite of his mouldid being denuded of some of its few popular items, its zeffa was so majestic and so true to traditional lines, that these were hardly missed, and Qara Goz supplied the pabulum so indispensable with the youngsters. Some account of these two at least I must induce the printers to find a place for. (v. pp. 211 and 246)

I cannot ask them to do so in the case of a small discovery the "Khalifa" of Sidi el-Ansari helped me to make on the 27th of Shaaban,—the tiny mouldid of the Sheikh el-Goudari in a little street of the same name, not far from the Babel-Mitwali.

Of the others I saw in the latter part of Shaaban, — Saleh Haddad, Sultan Hanafi, Hasan el-Anwar, Mansi, Ansari, Marsafa were black-outs or nearly so, Bahlul a little better, and Saudi and Abdulla Hagr very small but good as far as they went. But when I sought the beautiful little tomb of that eminent saint, Sitna Sutuhia, in its ancient place under the Babel-Fatuh it had simply disappeared, and local people explained that she had been dug up. Of course her mouldid must be struck off the scroll.

I cannot speak for the important mouldids of the two great *hermits* Barsum el-Aryan, and Muhammadi of Demardash, as they both fell on the eve of the last Friday of Shaaban, clashing with that of Sidi Marzuk, and some minor celebrations. They were both held, and I am told that the monastery grounds at

Maasara were thronged much as usual, and that the usual *tashrifa* was held at the *zawia* of Sheikh Muhammadi.

Their date coincided with 16th Tut 1657, (26th Sept. 1940).

The Feast of S. Térésa on October 3rd was mentioned, at the end of Ch. I, as perhaps the nearest Catholic approximation to an Egyptian *moulid* that we have. This is the last night of the Novena of the "Little Flower", and at more than one minor celebration at which I have assisted during the past week, the vast Basilica (sprung in a few years from a tiny room used as a chapel), has been crowded and the precincts full of life, with people of all denominations of Catholic and Orthodox christendom, and many Moslems and Jews, invoking the miracle-working saint or bringing votive offerings to her shrine. (The phenomenal rise of this cult has, I fear, thrown into the shade the ancient miracle shrine of the Emir Tadros, (S. Theodore) in the Haret el-Rum, which though in Coptic hands is equally in vogue with Moslems.) The sight at Shubra tomorrow afternoon at the time of the Blessing of the Roses, will indeed be a striking one, especially for the comparative few who succeed in finding a place within the church.

But there is no longer any doubt about the date. The Cairenes are all agog, and, leaving this *envoi* for a few minutes, I witnessed the beautiful sight of the glowing minarets. About the manshieh of Muhammad Ali alone, on the two mosques of Sultan Rifai and that of the citadel, there must be the best part of a thousand lamps ablaze, and the domes of these and of Sultan Hasan are either flood-lit or show up as if they were in their light.

I am being greeted by

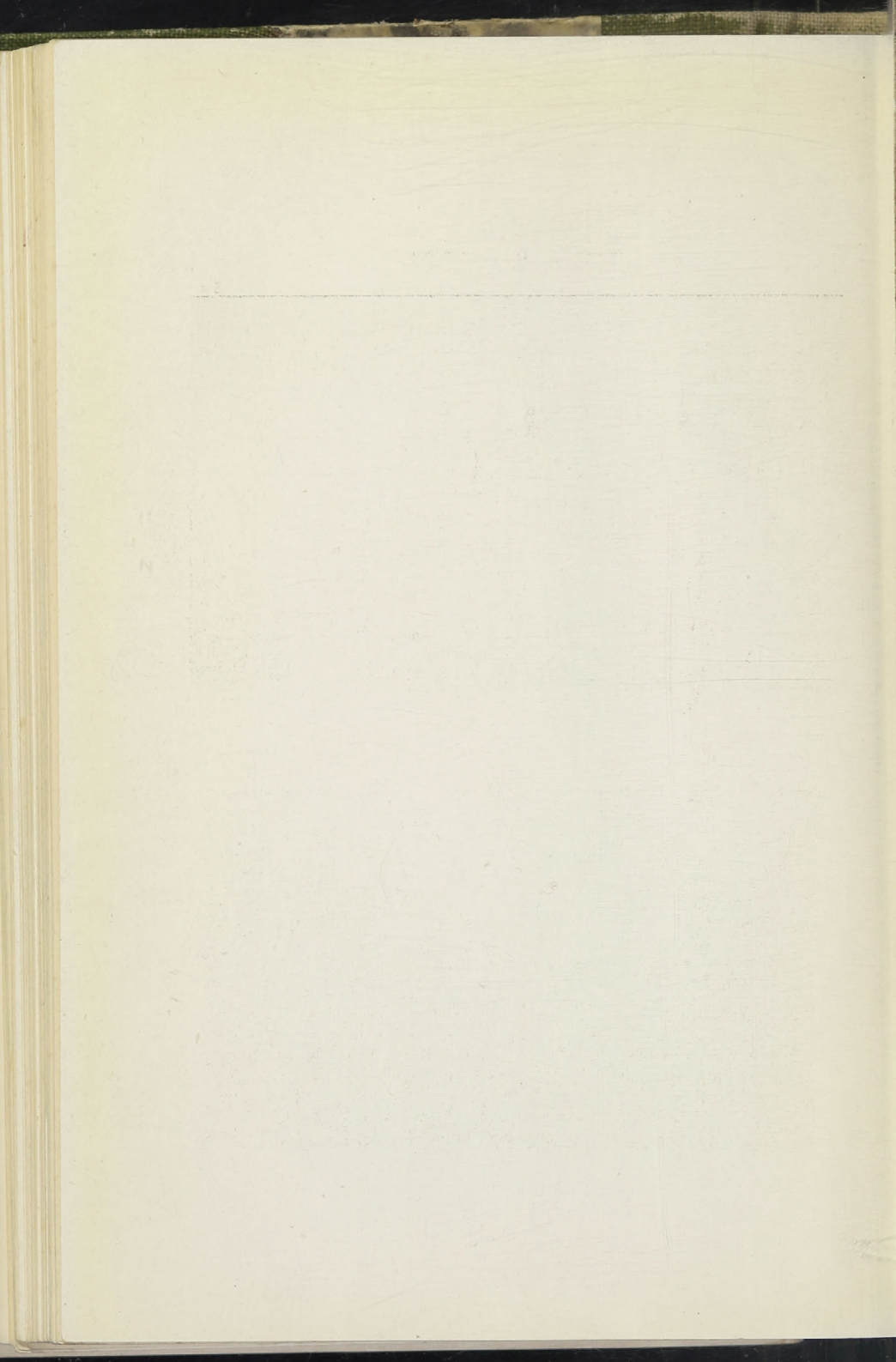
RAMADAN KERIM رمضان كريم

to which I say in reply, as I do to all my kind and patient readers.

ALLAH AKRAM الله اكرم

FETE of S. TERESA.





Post Scriptum.

It is with the greatest hesitation that I take up my pen again after completing the "Envoi": but from one cause and another, an unexpectedly long time has elapsed since that date, 1st. Ramadan, 1359, when the MSS were passed in to the printers and the appearance of the book. So that now, at the eleventh hour, seeing in an English paper, a leading article entitled "A PLEA FOR MOULIDS", completely endorsing my point, the temptation to display to my readers such a *rara avis* is too strong for me.

As the writer—to me unknown,— of this "leader", refers to a letter the "Egyptian Mail" had published a few days earlier, I have obtained the issue which contained this, and also their issue containing an account of the Return of the Mahmal referred to therein. Here follow therefore,—

From the "Egyptian Mail" of Sunday, 16 February, 1941,
(20 Muharem, 1360)

—the shorter of two articles on the "Return of the
Mahmal".

From the "Egyptian Mail" of Friday, 21 February,—

—a letter on "The Mahmal Camel", signed
"Abu Masaud".

From the "Egyptian Mail" of Sunday, 23 February,—

—the *leader* entitled, "A PLEA FOR MOULIDS".

Return of Mahmal

Yesterday morning Hussein Sirry Pasha the Prime Minister, as the representative of H.M. King Farouk, drove in state from the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to the Mould el-Nebi Midan at Abbassia, where the ceremony of the return of the Mahmal to Cairo took place.

The usual review of Egyptian Army units was held, the Prime Minister taking the salute in place of the King, and then the processions of Sufi dervishes went past the great marquee with their banners and drums.

The most interesting part of the programme was that of the camel carrying the Mahmal making the seven rounds in the square, at the end of which the Emir El-Haj handed its halter to the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister drove back to his office with the same ceremonial while a salvo of guns was fired.

The Mahmal Camel

To The Editor of The Egyptian Mail

Sir,

The articles on pages 2 and 3 of the Sunday *Egyptian Mail* concerning the Mahmal ceremony were pleasant and interesting reading, and still more so the view of this fine old function in the eyes of the tens and tens of thousands of people who came from near and far to witness it.

You mention that "the most interesting part of the programme was that of the camel carrying the Mahmal—", and so say all of us, though the military and other elements were brave sights.

As on the occasion of the departure of the Kiswah, everyone wanted the camels, and there was some anxiety until they appeared and great relief and joy then, for it was well known that some pressure had been put on the Prime Minister last spring, by—it was believed—a high personage, to mutilate the ceremony by cutting the camel out.

It is a mystery why such people cannot find evils to combat, or good objects to promote, without letting what looks like sheer ignorance and arrogance lure them to such limits as to urge the destruction of a picturesque and majestic National and Islamic custom, which had met with the approval and support of Egypt's leaders and saints for many centuries.

It seems indeed heartless also to wish to deprive the populace, particularly the poor, of one of their remaining innocent and legitimate joys.

I feel confident, Sir, that I have the whole of Saturday's great multitude with me, in thanking the Government and the Prime Minister for preserving the Mahmal ceremony intact, and we utter a heartfelt chorus of

El Hamd Lillah!

I am, Sir, Yours etc.

ABU MASAUD.

Cairo, Feb. 18, 1941.

A Plea For Muleds

A few days ago we published a letter from one of our readers, protesting against the gradual but relentless process of suppression which is being applied by those in authority to the old traditional ceremonies and merrymaking which have formed the core of Egyptian popular life for centuries.

Traditions die out. That is only natural under changing conditions. Other traditions arise, and some traditions may well be socially harmful, relics of superstition and ignorance, which no one would regret to see disappear. But that is not the same as casting a cold and disapproving eye, and enforcing it with all the power officialdom has at its command, on the ordinary pleasures of the fellahin and the poorer classes of Egypt.

The repression of all the secular fun and gaiety which used to accompany saints' birthdays in Egypt is one of the most striking instances of this sort of intolerance. For generations the celebration of the local saint's birthday, commonly called a 'muled', has been about the only break in the drab and colourless monotony of the peasant's existence. Swings, roundabouts, tumblers, dancers, plays, booths of sweetmeats and cheap finery, flaring lights and sizzling 'felafel', all the fun of the fair, went hand in hand with the reverent visit to the saint's tomb, the delirious sway of the 'zikk', the solemn procession through the streets and fields to the holy mosque. It is a process which is duplicated all over the world — the very word holiday, so full of gay relief and lighthearted merriment, began its life as Holy Day, and popular rejoicing has always gone hand in hand with religious festivity.

If the dead hand of officialdom has its way, these rejoicings will soon be a thing of the past. Every day new restrictions are placed on the secular celebration of muleds, regardless of the fact that the peasant has little else to brighten his life. He does not read. He knows no games. He cannot afford cinemas, or radios, or modern methods of distraction, even if they were, as they often are not, more desirable. As long as nothing better is provided for his recreation — and where are there signs of it? — he should at least be left the old traditional pleasures that have stood the test of centuries.

My readers will remember a letter in the Introductory chapter, signed Abu Masaud and dated 25-4-40, voicing the indignation of the people that suggestions had been made to the Prime Minister by a sheikh of el-Azhar, to abandon the camel part of the Mahmal ceremony, (as published in the "Egyptian Gazette" of 9-3-40). That makes the press cuttings in this post-script clear.

I understand that the further letter of Abu Masaud of 21-2-41 appeared in the "Egyptian Mail" verbatim, except for the deletion of its heading, — "Cacoethes delendi", — and the prudent omission by the editor or censor in the last clause of "*the Prophet's camels*", who were included with the writer and the multitude in returning thanks. I think Abu Masaud had in mind the Qoranic text in the *Chapter of the Pilgrimage*.

«صورة الحج»

«والبدن جعلناها لكم من شعائر الله لكم فيها خير»

which is rendered in the only translation I possess, and which is rather archaic Italian, —

"I camelli devono partecipare all' omaggio che rendete all' Altissimo."

One wonders whether the learned Sheikh had forgotten this, when he tried to force the hand of the Minister, and to deprive people and camels of a rightful and beautiful fragment of their heritage, and indeed whether the injunction in the *Chapter of the Sanctuary*, «صورة الحجرات», is not sometimes overlooked:—

«لا ترفعوا اصواتكم فوق صوت النبي»

"Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet."

Oh, if the multitude of Egypt's faithful poor were not almost as voiceless as their camels, my feeble plea and the few *voces clamantium in deserto* in defence of their priceless heirlooms would not be needed, for the roar of their chorus would drown the voiceful few who would deprive them of their rightful joys and traditions, and barter Egypt's real gold for dross; and a happy people would continue to enjoy its lovely old customs, which make the charm and fascination of Egypt, and not least of these the MOULIDS OF ITS SAINTS.

أنتسبيل لوجه الزى هو ادنى بالذى هو خير

GLOSSARY.

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------|---|
| Aaqâl | عقال | Ornaments of a Bedouin's headdress. |
| Aalim, pl. Ulama | عالم علماء | A learned person. |
| Aalima (fem.) | عالة | Generally applied to a professional woman expert, e.g., the leader (Godeya) of a zarr. |
| Aam | عم | Uncle. Much used to other than relations, or a mere ejaculation. |
| Aama, pl. Amyan | اعمى عميان | Blind. |
| Ab, Abu | اب ابو | Father, much used in the names of persons and things, without necessarily the idea of <i>paternal</i> relationship. |
| Abd | عبد | Slave: sometimes used of black people. Much used in names in conjunction with one of the "names" of God. |
| Adhra | عذراء | Virgin: The B. V. M. |
| Aesh | عيش | Bread: (life) |
| Ahd | عهد | Covenant. |
| Alf | الف | A thousand. |
| Alf Leila wa Leila | الف ليلة وليلة | A thousand and one nights, "The Arabian Nights". |
| Amyan — v-Aama | | |
| Aqaba | عقبة | The name of the ship which bears the "Bride of the Nile". |
| Aris | عريس | Bridegroom |
| Arusa | عروسة | Bride: sugar figurine. |
| Asbo'a | اسبوع | Octave |
| Asha | عشاء | The time of the fifth and last prayer dinner, dinner time. |
| Ashraf, sing. Sharif | اشرف | Nobles: descendants of the Prophet. |
| Asr | عصر | The time of the third prayer: afternoon. |
| Ashura | عاشورة | The tenth day: particularly the 10th Muharem. The great Persian Threnody observed on that date. |

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|--------------------|----------------|---|
| Ataba | عتبة | Threshold: "The tram centre". |
| Ataba el-Khadra | العتبة الخضراء | (The threshold of the vegetable market, —the tram centre, (recently afflicted with some new name.) |
| Atfa | عطفة | Court or very small street: usually a <i>cul de sac</i> . |
| Bab | باب | Door: A city gate, e.g., Bab el-Nasr, some other important gateways, e.g. Bab el-Ahdar at Sidna Husein. |
| Badir | بدير | A large tambourine, |
| Badir Arusi | بدير عروسي | „ a deep form |
| Badir Qadri | بدير قدري | „ a shallow form. |
| Barak(a) | برك | To kneel (of a camel). |
| Baraka | بركة | A blessing. |
| Bariza | بريزة | A ten piastre piece |
| Baz | باز | A very small drum. |
| Beiraq pl.buariq | بيرق ييارق | Gonfallon: processional banner. |
| Birka | بركة | Pond |
| Booza (or Merissa) | بوظة | A fermented barley drink. |
| Caracol (Turkish) | قراغول | Police Station |
| Dabus pl.Dababis | دبوس | Pin: the dervish dagger used mysteriously, particularly by the sect of the Rifaiya. (v. Moulid Z-I) |
| Daïm, Ya Daïm ! | دائم يا دائم | The Everlasting, Oh, Eternal One ! |
| Dalail el-Sughra | الدلائل الصغرة | A book in praise of the Prophet. |
| Darabuka | دربوكة | A large musical instrument of earthenware, open at one end, but covered at the other and larger, by skin. |
| Darb el-Raml | ضرب الرمل | Fortune telling, by tracing figures &c. on sand. |

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|------------------|------------|---|
| Dareh | ضريح | The grave of a sheikh, with dome, &c. |
| Dervish | درويش | An Initiate into one of the Islamic "Orders" (Turuq) (v. Ch. III pp 52-60) |
| Dilq pl.-duluq | دلوق — دلق | A patchwork coat of many colours, worn by some dervishes, and many <i>soi-disant</i> "Holy Men" |
| Dir | دير | Monastery |
| Djin | جن | Spirits recognised by religion: usually evil or mischievous but may be good. |
| Doraq pl. doariq | دورق | Jug: the vessel used by sellers of tamarhindi, erq sus, limonata, &c. |
| Dosah | دوسة | The riding by the mounted Sheikh of the S'adiya over the prone bodies of many dervishes, at the moulids of el-Nebi, Imam el-Shafei, & Tashtoushi, (Leilet el-Marâg) |
| Dowa | دواء | Medicine |
| Dowaiya | دواة | Ink stand, writing having a supposed medical force. |
| "Dud Rumi" | دود رومي | Leeches (sangsues) in a bottle as a sign over a door. v. Moulid A 29 pp. 160 |
| Dundurma | دندورمة | Ice cream. |
| Erq sus | عرق سوس | A cold sarsaparilla decoction. |
| Fagr | فجر | Dawn: time of the first prayer. |
| Far, pl. fran | فار فران | Rat |
| Fárah | فرح | Rejoicing: specially used of wedding festivities. |
| Farqila | فرقلة | Dervish small whip of cords. |
| Fass | فاس | Egyptian hoe |
| Fath | فتح | A favourite dish of rice, bread, meat and rich sauces. |

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|---------------|------------------------------|---|
| Fatha | فاتحة | The little opening chapter of the Qoran. |
| Fatur | فطور | Breakfast : the sunset meal of Ramadan after the day's fast. |
| Feddan | فدان | An acre approximately. |
| Fiqi | فقي | A professional singer of the Qoràn. |
| Full | فل | An exquisitely scented flower. |
| Fûl | فول | Beans |
| fûl mudames | مدمس | „ cooked and eaten with butter or oil |
| fûl-nabit | نابت | „ sprouting, (a decoction of these is a mild medicine) |
| Gabel | جبل | Desert, wilderness, rocky hills. |
| Gadaa (Gazaa) | جذع جذعان | A gallant lad, a “young buck”. |
| Galli-galli | جليجلي | The opening and oft repeated words of a street conjurer, (galli-galli man.) |
| Garia | جارية | Black (slave) woman. |
| Gazb | جذب | State of religious ecstasy. |
| Ghada | غداء | Mid-day meal. |
| Gihad | جهاد | Holy war. |
| Go'a | جوقة | Theatrical caste. |
| Godeya | جدية | The leading woman at a Zarr, who exorcises the djin. |
| Gumad I & II | جماد أول — جماد آخر | The fifth and sixth Arabic months. |
| | او جمادى الأول — جمادى الآخر | |
| Hadith | حديث | The collected sayings of the Prophet. |
| Hag | حاج | Pilgrim : one who has been to Mecca or Jerusalem. |
| Hara (t) | حارة | Lane or small street. |
| Harami | حرامي | Brigand : any kind of villain. |

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|---|
| Hatif | هاتف | Apparition |
| Hawi | حاوي | Snake-charmer, magician conjurer etc. |
| Hegab | حجاب | Charm: Talisman: usually containing Qoranic texts and mystic figures. |
| Hég(i)ra | هجرة — الهجرة | The transfer of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. |
| A. H. | السنة الهجرية | The year of the Hégira, the Islamic calender dating from the above event. |
| Hei, Ya Hei | حي يا حي | The living (God) O, living One! |
| Helba | حلبة | Plant bearing fine flowers: tea is infused from its leaves. |
| Homosia | حمصية | A sweet containing homos seeds. |
| Hôsh | حوش | Courtyard. |
| Ibn (ben) | ابن بن | Son: much used in names as Ibn-Touloun. |
| Ibn-kalb | ابن كلب | Son of a dog,—a much-used expression. |
| Ishara | إشارة | Sign: Used by Lane for “ zeffa”, a religious procession. |
| Jazb | جذب | (v. Gazb) |
| Kaaba (Caaba) | كعبة | The “Sanctum sanctorum” of Islam, the central object of the pilgrimage to Mecca, round which the pilgrim must go seven times to become “Hag”. Covered by the Kiswa, Holy carpet from Egypt. (The Kaaba is a Mosque). |
| Kabab | كباب | Roast meat, (preferably on a spit). |
| Kalima | كلمة | Word: specially applied to the confession of the faith, “There is no God but one, and Muhammad is his Prophet”. |
| Kamanga | كنجة | Fiddle. |
| Kas | كاس | Cymbals. |
| Kashaf | كشاف | Search-light. |

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| Kashafa | كشافة | Boy Scouts. |
| Khalifa | خليفة | "Commander of the Faithful" The rider in a zeffa representing the sheikh who is being honoured. |
| Khayal el-Zil | خيال الظل | Shadow show. |
| Khalig | خليج | Canal : especially that which traversed Cairo, from Nile at "Fum el-Khalig." |
| Khatma | ختمة | The recital of the entire Quran. |
| Khitama | ختامة | Final rites at a mould. |
| Khoss | خوص | Palm leaves : often placed on tombs : used in basket-making, &c. |
| Kufta | كفتة | Rissole eaten with Kabab |
| Laasa | لاسة | Large scarf |
| Leila | ليلة | "Eve" : |
| Leilat el-Eid | ليلة العيد | Eve of the Feast |
| „ el-Isra | ليلة الاسراء | „ „ „ Ascension (Prophet) |
| „ el-Maaràg | ليلة المعراج | „ „ „ „ eve of 27 Ragab |
| „ el-Qadr | ليلة القدر | „ „ „ 27th Ramadan. |
| „ el-Ghatas | ليلة الغطاس | „ „ „ 1Ith.Tuba, Epiphany |
| Libas | لباس | Drawers |
| Maaràg | معراج | The ride of the Prophet to Paradise and Jerusalem on the horse Buraq celebrated on eve of 27th Ragab. |
| Magnun | مجنون | Fool : in the power of the Djin. |
| Magzub | مجنوب | Idiot : entranced (v. Gazb.) |
| Mahdar | محضر | <i>Procès verbal.</i> |
| Makri | مكري | Selection from Quran. |
| Malkaf | ملاقف | Roof opening for air |
| Mameluk (memluk) | مملوك | White slave : feudal nobles, and a line of kings. |

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| Mandel (darb el- mandel) | مندل | Divination, usually by vision in ink in the palm of a!boy's hand. |
| "Manouli" | منولى | A Greek proper name: commonly applied to a monkey, especially of the performing type. |
| Manshia | منشية | A "square" or open space, (such as that below the citadel). |
| Maqam | مقام | Tomb of a Sheikh, about which a mould centres. |
| Maqbara | مقبرة | Cemetery |
| Marahrah | مرحرح | Flaky bread, specially used at the Mazghuna mould. |
| Marguha | مرجوحة | Swing |
| Masgid (masjid) | مسجد | Mosque: from Sagada=to pray. |
| Ma sha'llah | ما شاء الله | An expression of wonder and admiration: lit.—Oh, what God hath willed! |
| Masri (misri) | مصري | Egyptian |
| Maulavi | مولوي | Sufi dervish. |
| Meded | مدد | An interpolated ejaculation in singing: (more or less equivalent to "dynamis" in the Byzantine liturgy, and "Selah" in the Psalms.) (v. note in Ch. III p. 62) |
| Meghrib | مغرب | Sunset: the time of the fourth prayer. |
| Merissa | مرسة | A Sudanese fermented barley drink, known in Egypt as "booza" |
| Minbar (Mimbar) | منبر | Pulpit. |
| Mishal | مشعل | Torch: a brazier used in zeffas, for solemn effect, light and for tightening the skins of the tambourines. |
| Mohaddith | محدث | Story teller: especially a recounter of the exploits of "El-Zahir", Beybars. |
| Mould | مولد | "A popular religious feast in honour of some Saint". |

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| Mufti | مفتي | Chief Doctor of the Law,—with very considerable ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction,—e. g.—no capital sentence can be executed without the “Fetwah” of the Mufti. |
| Muharem | محرم | First Arabic month (v. Ch. V p. 103) |
| Munshid | منشد | Professional singer. |
| Murasla | مراسلة | Messenger. |
| Murid | مرید | Postulant for initiation in one of the “Turuq” (of dervishes). |
| Murshid | مرشد | Initiate : Religious leader and guide. |
| Mutahir | مطهر | Circumcised : lit. — (ceremonially) purified. |
| Nadr | ندر | Vow |
| Nagil | نجیل | Coarse grass |
| Nai | نای | Flute, much used by dervishes. |
| Naib | نائب | Deputy |
| Naqara | نقارة تقیر | Small musical instrument of earthenware closed at the larger end by taut skin. |
| Naqib, pl. Nuqaba | نقیب - نقباء | Ecclesiastical rank like Qutb, and Wali, but generally inferior to these : Descendants and representatives of the First Khalifs. |
| Naqib el-Ashraf | نقیب الاشراف | The highest Naqib : representing Abu Bakr, the Sheikh el-Bakri of Cairo. (v. Moulds of el-Nebi, Tashtoushi &c.) |
| Naqrazan | نقرزان | A beautiful musical instrument of hemispherical shape, of the Tabl (drum) class. |
| Natiga | نتیجة | Calendar (v. Ch. V. p. 103 for names of months) |
| Nebi (el-Nebi) pl.-Anbia | نبی انبیاء | The Prophet Muhammad Many biblical and qoranic characters, e. g., El-Nebi Daniel, Daüd (David), |

El as, Suleiman (Solomon), Yahya (John Baptist). Also many non scriptural characters are given the title "Nebi".

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| Nikla | نكلا | A 2-m/m piece, (worth a ha'penny). |
| Nishan | نشان | Decoration, medal, military badge, &c. |
| Oud | عود | A kind of lute: dating back to 1600 A. D. |
| Pir (Persian) | پير | Spiritual father. |
| Qabr, pl. qubur | قبر قور | Grave |
| Qadr | قدر | The mystic subject of the 97th. Ch. of the Qoran. |
| Leilet el-Qadr | ليلة القدر | Eve of the 27th Ramadan, when the Holy Spirit came down, which night is said to be "more blessed than a thousand months." |
| Qaimaqam (Turkish) | قائمقام | Military rank entitling to crown and two stars, and the title of Bey. |
| Qalaa | قلعة | Citadel. |
| Qanôn | قانون | A musical instrument of 72 chords, much on the principle of the harp, played by two plectra. |
| Qarafa = Maqbara | قرافة | Cemetery: necropolis. |
| Qara Goz | قره قوس — قره قوجة قره كوز | A variant of Punch (and Judy) (v. Ch. IV, p. 81) |
| Qaseda | قصيدة | Ode: Elegy. |
| Qibla | قبلة | Praying niche of a mosque. |
| Qirba | قربة | Water skin (of goat or sheep) carried by "Saqqa", water carrier: smaller skins are used for churning cream into butter: Bagpipes. |
| Qirfa | قرفة | Cinnamon: qirfa is much drunk in cafés and private houses in place of coffee or tea. |

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Qoran | قرآن القرآن | The sacred book of Islam, of 114 chapters. |
| Qubba | قبة | The dome of mosque or tomb. |
| Quridati | قرداتي | Showman of performing monkey. |
| Qutb | قطب | Axis : Pole : Pole-star : The most holy Wali, only occasionally seen by mortals, still sometimes looked for behind the Bab el- Mitwali, (Bab el-Zwela). |
| Rabab (rababa) | رباب — ربابة | The one-stringed viol with which the "muhadit", ("raconteur"), accompanies the recitation of his romance. |
| Rabia el-Awal & el-Thani | ربيع الأول و ربيع الثاني | The third and fourth months of the Arabic year. |
| Ragab | رجب | The seventh month of the Arabic year. |
| Raghul (Arghul) | رغول - (أرغول) | A deep bass reed instrument : very long. |
| Ramadan | رمضان | The ninth month of the Arabic year, the month of Fasting. |
| Ramus | رموس | Raft of earthen pots bound together by osiers.(v. Note on moulid of Abdel-Rahim el Qenawi, Ch. V, p. 136) |
| Raqs | رقص | Dancing |
| Rasadkhana | رصدخانه — مرصد | Observatory (the old Turkish name). |
| Ringa | رنجة | Sudanese entertainment of music, dancing, and "booza" drinking : The chief musical instrument used, a sort of piano. (v. Ch. IV, p. 88) |
| Riqq | رق | Small tambourine |
| Rukhsa | رخصة | Licence |
| Ruz | رز — أرز | Rice |
| Sada | سادة | Dervish "Order", (= "Tariqa") |
| Safr | صفر | The second month of the Arabic year. |
| Sahar | سحار | Magician ; conjurer. |

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| Samaa | سماع | The whirling dance of the Sufis, (introduced by Galal el-Din at Iconium.) |
| Sanad | سند | Diploma of Initiation to a Dervish Order. |
| Saqqa | سقاء | Water seller; bearer of the Qirba. |
| Sebil | سبيل | Public fountain. |
| Sebil Allah | سبيل الله | Free drinks (to the populace.) |
| Sena Hegria | سنة هجرية | The year of the Heg(i)ra: "A.H." |
| Shaaban | شعبان | The eighth month of the Arabic year. |
| Shababa | شبابية | Reed pipe |
| Shagarat el-Durr | شجرة الدر | Queen of Egypt: contemporary of Beybars. |
| Shahada | شهادة | Witness: Testimonial: Recommendation. |
| Shahid, pl. Shuhada | شاهد - شهدا | Martyr (witness to the Faith) |
| Shakhshākha | شخشخة | Rattle: Sistrum: particularly the cylindrical metal rattle of the "Ringa". (v. letter quoted in extenso, Ch. IV, p. 87) |
| Sham el-Nesim | شم النسيم | A pan-Egyptian feast held on the Coptic Easter Monday, (meaning the smell of the breeze.) The date of the Giza mouldid of Abu-Harera. |
| Sharbat (sharabat) | شربات | A general term for "drinks" but specially a sweet fruity concoction to be got in bottles or from the "Doraq". |
| Shar(a)batī (Sharbatly) | شرباتي (شربتي) | Seller of the above: the picturesque character who hawks divers sweet and iced drinks in the streets. (v. picture, p. 71) |
| Shar(i)ā | شارع | Street or Road. |
| Sharif, pl. Ashrāf | شريف - اشرف | Descended from the Prophet: noble. |

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|------------------|--------------|---|
| Shatran | شطران | Chess. |
| Shawal | شوال | The tenth month of the Arabic year. |
| Sibs | سبس | Small flute. |
| Sigada | سجادة | Carpet (properly, — for praying. v. Note Ch III p. 53) |
| Sahib sigada | صاحب سجادة | One of the great hereditary leaders of Islam, e.g. in Cairo, the Sheikh el-Bakri. |
| Sigàt | سجات | Castanets of brass |
| Sikka | سكة | A street, smaller than a Sharia. |
| Silsila | سلسلة | Pedigree: "tree": the dervish's line of descent from the spiritual founder of his "Order". (lit.—chain.) |
| Simsimia | سمسمية | A sweet full of coriander (sesame) seeds. |
| Sir | سير | The watching spirit of a sheikh (long since dead.) (v. Moulid of Abu el-Ela Ch. V, p. 145) |
| Sketé | ΣΚΗΤΕ | Monastic enclosure, (v. p. 44) |
| Subaris | سبارس | Tobacco consisting of cigar and cigarette ends picked up in the street. |
| Sufi | صوفي | Persian dervish sect, particularly associated with Galal el-Din; tenets hedonistic and loose from Qoranic standpoint. |
| Suluth (Thuluth) | ثلث | Large decorative Arabic writing. |
| Suq | سوق | Market: often applied to street or district, where marketing is or has been customary:— |
| Suq el-Asr | سوق العصر | A district in Bulaq, (lit.—Afternoon market.) |
| Suq el-Bakri | سوق البكرى | Now Sharia Ashmawi, (v. moulid of Ashmawi, Ch. V, p. 160) |
| Suq el-Haramia | سوق الحرامية | Market for stolen goods. |

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| Suq el-Silah | سوق السلاح | A street joining Sh. Muhammad Ali by Mosque of Sultan Rifai, [lit. market for arms, (weapons.)] |
| Suq el-Talat (thalatha) | سوق الثلاثاء | Tuesday fair, (at Giza and elsewhere) as for other days of the week, according to place. |
| Taamia | طاعمية | A kind of vegetable rissole, eaten hot. |
| Tabl tabla | طبل | Drum |
| Tabut | تابوت | Structure usually of wood over the body of a Sheikh. |
| Tahur | طهور | Circumcision, (lit. purification) |
| Takhtarawan | تختروان | Palanquin on back of camel or two camels. |
| Talib | طالب | Candidate (e.g.—for initiation) |
| Tamar hindi | تمر هندي | Fruit from which sweet drink is made. |
| Tanwin | تنوين | A grammatical observance concerning the letter "nun" = "n". |
| Tar, pl.tiran | تار تيران | Tambourine |
| Tarb | طرب | Meat sausage |
| Tariqa pl.-taraic turuq | طريقة - طرائق طرق | "Way" : Sect : Order of dervishes. |
| Tarkiba | تركيبة | Metal Tabut. |
| Tartur | طرطور | Conical cap worn by children and dervishes of the Awlad Nooh. |
| Tashrifa | تشريفة | Reception. |
| Tekiya (Persian) | تكية | Cell : monastic retreat. |
| Tiara | طيارة | Aeroplane : child's kite. |
| Til | تيل | Flax |
| Tilsam | طلسم | Talisman |
| Timsah | تمساح | Crocodile |

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|------------------|---------------|---|
| Birkat el-Timsah | بركة التمساح | Lake Timsah at Ismailia |
| Tob (tub) | توب | The central object of veneration in the zeffa of Sidi Abd el-Rahim el-Qenawi, somewhat of the nature of a miniature mahmal. (v. Qena mouldid Ch. V (A. 5) p. 130 and illustration p. 132) |
| Tum | توم | Garlic. |
| Tunbur | طنبور | Tambur, an Archimedean screw for raising water to irrigate land. |
| Turba, pl.-turub | تربة ترب | Grave |
| Tormus | ترمس | Lupines |
| Ulama | علماء | Leading sheikhs of el-Azhar. |
| Wadu | وضوء | Ablution before prayer. |
| Wakil | وكيل | Deputy : Representative. |
| Walad, pl.-awlad | ولد أولاد | Boy |
| Wali, pl.-Awlia | والى أولياء | A very great Saint, deemed not utterly to die, but to reveal himself and even be seen occasionally of men. |
| Waqf | وقف | A grammatical rule, suppressing the terminal sound of a word, when at the end of a sentence. |
| Waqf, pl.-Awqaf | وقف أوقاف | A pious gift or bequest in permanence. |
| Wazarat el-Awqaf | وزارة الاوقاف | The Ministry in charge of the government "waqfs", corresponding in a way to the English Court of Chancery. |
| Waqfa | وقفة | Eve. |
| waqfat el-Eid | وقفة العيد | Eve of the Feast. |
| Ward | ورد | Rose. |
| Ward | ورد | Rosary rite in initiation to dervish "tariqa". (v. Ch. III, p. 55) |

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|------------------------|---------------|---|
| Wasl | وصل | A grammatical rule concerning the "liaison" of the final letter of a word with the first of that following. |
| Wazir | وزير | Minister. |
| Ya! | يا | Oh! |
| Yom | يوم | Day. |
| yom el-eid | يوم العيد | Feast-day |
| yom el-Ashura | يوم العاشورة | 10th Muharam: the Persian Feast of Husein. |
| yom el-Qiama | يوم القيامة | Resurrection day. |
| Zâwiya pl. zawâya | زاوية - زوايا | Cell: small monastery: (lit. corner.) Often equivalent to "maqâm" and "dareh" as the tomb of a Saint. |
| Zaghrota, pl.-zagharit | زغروطة زغاريت | A marvellous tongue trill, which women produce at "farahs", at the passing of a zeffa or the mahmal, and other great occasions. |
| Zarr | زار | The ceremony of the expulsion of (Sudanese) djin from possessed women. |
| Zeffa | زفة | Dervish procession, the great feature of a complete mouldid, brought up by the "Khalifa", the representative of the Sheikh whose mouldid is being observed. (v. Ch. III, p. 64 et seq.) |
| Zikir | ذكير | One who takes part in a "Zikr". |
| Zikr | ذكر | A religious observance, whose essential is the repeated utterance of "Allah" (or one of the "names" of God,) (v. Ch. III, p. 60) |
| Zikr el-Hadara | ذکر الحضرة | A congregational zikr. |
| Zu' el-Higga | ذو الحججة | The twelfth and last Arabic month: (the month of Pilgrimage) |
| Zu' el-Qaada | ذو القعدة | The eleventh Arabic month. |
| Zuhra, (El-Zuhra) | زهرة - الزهرة | Venus. |
| Zumara | زماره | A reed instrument: the general name for that class of musical reed. |

ERRATA.

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|-----|--|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| List of illustrations | | For | p.v. | read | 273 |
| Page 2 | 1.22 | For | absolutey | read | absolutely |
| 3 | 15 | " | tremenous | " | tremendous |
| 14 | 30 | " | gonfallon | " | gonfalon |
| | | | | and elsewhere where this word occurs. | |
| 33 | 20 | " | XXth | read | Xth. |
| 41 | 2 | " | individuai | " | individual |
| 61 | 24 | " | strophs | " | strophes |
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| 119 | | | Insert B 2 at S. end of Sh. Mahgar | | |
| 126 | | For | Z 2 Zefeti (below map) | read | Z 1 Zefeti |
| 128 | | " | B 1 | " | B 4 |
| 157 | 29 | " | <i>qadir</i> | " | <i>badir</i> |
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| 226 | 5 | " | route | " | rout |
| 248 | 17 | " | by | " | but |
| 320 | 12 | " | Zein el-Din | " | Zein el-Abdin |

The author has not found it practicable to standardise completely the English spelling of Arabic words.

Many of the terms and names were transcribed from verbal accounts where the pronunciation differed from place to place and time to time. The difficulty will be appreciated by anyone with a knowledge of the variations in Egyptian colloquial.

In the case of the Railway and other maps, and of newspaper extracts and such like, he has left the spelling as found.

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