

# EUROPE VERSUS ASIA

## A CHAPTER IN MANDATES

BY H. E. WORTHAM

### I

EAST is East and West — I need not complete the quotation. Indeed, I quote it only to be able to refer to Professor Hurgonje's remark which it elicited: 'To me, with regard to the Moslem world, these words seem almost a blasphemy.' Blasphemy or not, they remain a complete expression of the political philosophy which has guided the powers of Europe in their dealings with Islam. And if the battle-cries of history change, the struggle endures. The clash of the forces which can be conveniently summed up in the formula *Asia vs. Europe* is not only of yesterday or to-day. Many rounds have been fought; many more may be to come.

Let me not, however, be thought to indulge in vague and facile generalization. Asia, on analysis, becomes a congeries of uncoördinated elements. What common ground is there between an Armenian trader and a Brahman priest? Or a Turkish officer and a Chinese gentleman? But far be it from me to deal in continents. The narrower field of Islam is too wide for my purpose, which is to investigate the attitude of the Arabs of Asia toward the mandatory system.

I do not wish to exaggerate the antithesis between Islam and Christianity. At the basis of Mohammedan canon law lies the identification of

right and might on which the political practice of modern Christian states has been built. On the other hand, it would be idle to deny a cleavage stretching back through the Crusades, Byzantium, Rome, and Alexander the Great, to the dawn of history. Neither Europe nor Asia has been able to leave the other alone. As one or another has enjoyed the ascendancy, so the chapters have been written. It is a long tale of blood and tears, of slaughter, rapine, and destruction. Clio has wallowed in sensationalism in the telling of it.

If, unfortunately, there is nothing sensational in the small portion of the chapter I am touching on, we are aware all the time of an under-swell which tells us that we are on no land-locked sea. Or, to change the metaphor, the *basso ostinato* that persists throughout reminds us that Islam has come into the ring for the next round, determined that England, France, and other countries governing Mohammedan subjects must renounce their imperialist ambitions. Hence the experiment of the mandatory system as applied to the Arabs, who inhabit what we may call the motherlands of Islam, stands out as a vivid episode in the greatest of human stories. It has been an attempt to reconcile the identification of might and right with a demo-

cratic phraseology, which abhors, just as does Professor Hurgronje in the narrower field of Semitic religions, any profound differentiation in the aptitudes of Western and Eastern peoples.

The subject is brimful of interest, especially to Americans. Apart from the glamour surrounding the race that produced Harun-al-Rashid and the soldans and knights of Arab chivalry, Americans must remember that their college at Beirut has helped to educate and train the intelligentsia of the Arab peoples. From its halls many of the contemporary Arab leaders have been graduated. Until the Great War, it was the most influential of the Western educational institutions in the Levant, and its sons, not a few of whom found a prosperous exile in Egypt, spread those notions of freedom and independence which have inspired the Arab nationalist movement. They did more than any others to re-create the ideal of the solidarity of the populations of the Arab provinces.

We shall miss the essentials of the problem if we do not bear in mind that this ideal of Arab unity governs all its aspects. Europeans who know the Arabian Middle-East are often found to scoff at Pan-Arab pretensions, and to regard it as preposterous that the Syrians, Mesopotamians, and Palestinians can ever be brought within the confines of one all-embracing Arab state. Talk to an Arab statesman, and you will find that he considers this as the only guaranty of national existence. Divided, the Arabs can never emerge from their state of tribal weakness; they must fall a prey to the enemies who surround them. It is a truism to assert that Syria, Palestine, and Iraq — which is the Arab name for Mesopotamia — are economically and racially one, and as homogeneous as the United States, or Great Britain. Everywhere, from the Mediterranean to the

Persian Gulf, Arabic is the mother-tongue and Islam the predominant religion. Christians, Druses, and Jews form influential minorities in certain parts, but the younger force of nationality has tended to soften mutual sectarian animosities. To-day Moslems and Christians are grouped together. 'We are all Arabs,' is the catchword.

Consider how the exigencies of trade alone make for unity. Damascus has been the age-long port of the caravan routes to the Euphrates and Arabia. Did not the Prophet himself consider it the 'earthly paradise,' and dared not trust himself to tarry in its shade? Now, as then, it is the emporium for Syria, Palestine, and the desert countries. Aleppo is another Basra, through which the produce of Mesopotamia must pass on its journey westward. To cement these economic and social ties there are the traditions of a common Arab history, in which Baghdad and Damascus have been brilliant and rival sister cities. And above all other considerations there has been the common religious allegiance to Mecca and Medina, the birth-place and burial-place of the Prophet.

When we hear to-day of the pro-Turkish sympathies of the Arabs, we must remember that under the Turkish régime the sentiment and, indeed, the fact of unity was maintained. Then at least the Arabs, if not free, were all under the same master. Very different is the situation now, when Damascus is cut off from the south, and Haifa, its Mediterranean outlet, is in a foreign country; when an Arab in Jerusalem can go on a visit to a kinsman in Beirut only after the preparation of passports and the other ritual which our enlightened age finds necessary to itineration; when the proud city of Aleppo, cut off from the district of which it is the mart, is dying like a deracinated

fig-tree; when Iraq, Syria, and Palestine has each its customs-barrier and each its own currency. The Syrians, who inherit the talent for business of their Phœnician forefathers, must be impressed with a system which finds economic expression in imposing the Indian rupee on Mesopotamia, the Egyptian piastre on Palestine, and the franc on Syria.

But the grievances are not only those of industry or mere convenience. Besides the grand and root complaint that the living body of the Arab nation has been carved into three or more portions, there are more specific reasons for disappointment and unrest. The high-handed conduct of the French in Syria, the British backing of the Zionist claims in Palestine, and the application of Anglo-Indian methods of administration in Iraq, have formed, in their various spheres, an opposition which has for its common denominator an antipathy to everything Western. Resentment and discontent smoulder from Aleppo to Baghdad, and from Alexandretta to Mecca. 'Down with the mandate!' shouted the Baghdad mob last August, when the British High Commissioner went to pay his respects to King Faisal on the anniversary of his accession to the throne. Later in the year, the Fifth Palestine Congress, at Nablus, protested against the Palestinian mandate, and demanded complete independence. In Syria the French have no love for such reunions. But when Mr. C. R. Crane last year revisited that country, he was greeted with demonstrations which ended in bloodshed and caused the French to visit leading Syrian Nationalists with imprisonment and deportation. Dr. Shabander, ex-Foreign Minister under King Faisal at Damascus, a graduate of the American College, was sentenced to twenty years' incarceration for his share in the movement.

## II

The mandatory system, then, is unpopular; that is evident. But what are the reasons for its unpopularity? After all, it may be said, the Arabs are not so badly off. French and British officials are surely better than Turkish; and the Arabs can always appeal to the League of Nations. Here we come to the root of the question. The Arabs are ready now, as ever, to recognize the hard logic of might. Had the Allies installed themselves in the Arab provinces by right of conquest, there would have been nothing more to say. *Allah akhbar*, God is great. He had made the foreigner stronger than the Arab; it was a wise man's part to submit. But everyone knew that Allah had not so willed it. On the contrary, he had distracted Christendom — how easily one's pen slips into these well-worn grooves! — and weakened it by war.

When the Caliph declared the *jehad* (holy war) against Great Britain and her allies, it looked as if the 'ranged arch' of the wide British Empire might fall. In those dark days of the winter of 1914–1915, there were British statesmen who knew their East. Casting about for means to counter this new Turkish menace, they naturally turned to the Arabs. The Arabs were awake. They saw that their opportunity had come. The cruel repression by Djemal Pasha of their aspirations made them the more ready to listen to Great Britain. Thus it came about that once more a descendant of the Prophet appears on the stage of universal history. Sherif Hussein, of the Hashimite branch of the Koreish (Mohammed's tribe), with the Prophet's blood in his veins, and of the noblest family in the Arabs' *Debrett*, was Governor of the Holy Places. With him, in 1915, Sir Henry MacMahon, the British High Commissioner in Egypt, began

negotiations. The Arabs had already shown that they regarded Hussein as their leader, and the fact that two of his sons, Faisal and Abdulla, to-day occupy great positions in the Middle East, the one as King of Iraq and the other as Emir of Transjordan, is a proof of the traditional ability of the Sherifian family.

If the British, the French, and the Arabs had dealt more frankly with each other at this time, the Middle East to-day might already have been on the road to prosperity. Professor Hurgronje might have witnessed the beginning of a new collaboration between Islam and Christianity. But there was a lamentable lack of frankness on all sides. Sherif Hussein, in his own phrase, 'averted his eyes' from Lebanon and the Syrian littoral, which Great Britain earmarked for France. The British Government wrapped up its own reservation regarding Palestine with a tortuosity of phrase that left room for more than one interpretation. France said nothing. But she watched what was going on, and intervened later with demands totally incompatible with the promises already made to the Arabs.

Thanks to the press, these are known in their main outlines. It must be clear that Sherif Hussein, the acknowledged leader of the Arab party, which had a perfectly definite programme including all the Arab provinces, would not have agreed to put the movement, and his own neck, to the hazard of rebellion without being convinced that success would bring with it the realization of the party's aspirations.

Suppose, in the light of after events, that we were to frame the following offer as coming from Sir Henry McMahon: 'You and your people wish to shake off Turkish domination. We will in return recognize you as King of the Hedjaz and give you a generous sub-

sidy. If you are chosen Caliph, so much the better. You ask about the future of Syria and Mesopotamia? Well, we are afraid that the French will never be happy unless they establish themselves in Syria — they will take it all. And in Mesopotamia we have interests. To make it easier for you and the other allies who may be jealous of us, it will all be arranged under the form of mandates.'

What is a mandate? 'A mandate is essentially a restriction which the conquerors impose on themselves in the general interest of humanity.<sup>1</sup> And, by the way, Palestine is to be a national home for the Jews. We are not sure exactly what that means, but the Jews want it and you know what powerful people they are. In any case, don't worry. We promise that Arab interests shan't suffer. And to make things pleasanter, we will help to put one of your sons on the throne of Iraq, and another shall be Emir of Transjordan.'

That is what a good many people appear to think was said. The truth is that, in 1915, Arab and British views coincided about the establishment of an Arab state, or confederation of states. There may have been a divergence as to the rôle Great Britain was to play therein; the Arabs doubtless rated it low, and the British high. But there was more than the germ of an understanding. It was the tale of cross-purposes and intrigue that followed which prevented it from taking more solid shape. The British Government might make promises; the Paris press might talk about the rebirth of the Arab nation and the revival of the glories of the Abbasides and Ommiades; but the French Government had its own ideas about Syria and the Middle East — ideas that underrated the cohesiveness of Arab nationality and

<sup>1</sup> Lord Balfour at Geneva, May 17, 1922.

overrated the centrifugal force of religion. The British Government, in its correspondence with Hussein, had reserved the Lebanon for France. But what was the good of Lebanon without the Four Towns: Damascus, Homs, Hamath, and Aleppo? And there was Mosul, on the far-away Tigris. Besides, it was galling to French amour-propre that Great Britain should conceive of the establishment of an Arab Kingdom under British influence. The French had led the Crusades. Louis XIV had asserted French rights in the Levant. The two Napoleons had followed the traditional policy of France. At home, she might be officially agnostic, but everyone in the East knew that France was the great Catholic power, and that her mission schools were centres of French culture and influence. Why, every boulevardier was aware that France had a claim to Syria. The song, 'Partons pour la Syrie,' proved it.

Thus France, determined that England should not alone hold this new portion of the gorgeous East in fee, grew sullen or, at least, discouraged. Had the times been less critical, the British Government might have been more cautious. But in 1916 there were more important things for the Western Powers than the Arabs. So, to reassure France that she would not be cheated of her dreams in the East, Sir Mark Sykes was appointed to negotiate an understanding with France, and the Sykes-Picot Agreement was the result. Sir Mark Sykes loved the Arab East with a sincere and disinterested passion; and that he put his name to a document which has proved, and is likely to prove, an insuperable obstacle to Arab aspirations, is one of those ironies in which the careless Providence that orders our human story takes a cynical pleasure.

If there is a good deal to be said for

secret diplomacy, there is very little to be said for secret treaties. The fact that this agreement was kept from King Hussein's knowledge carries its own condemnation. England and France, in the very agony of the Great War, still sought a means, in Professor Hurgronje's words, to incorporate their [future] Mohammedan subjects in their own civilization. But secret treaties, like murder, will out. The Sykes-Picot Agreement<sup>2</sup> was no exception to the rule. In 1917, those *enfants terribles*, the Bolsheviki, unearthed a copy in the Petrograd Foreign Office. They sent it to the Turks, to pass on to the Arabs.

The effect was as they had calculated. The Arabs were very angry, and King Hussein threatened to withdraw from the war. He and his fellow countrymen were not going to fight, if the Allies, at the end, meant to parcel out their country into spheres and zones of influence. The British High Commissioner in Cairo thereupon cabled to him the following explanation:—

Bolsheviki found in Petrograd Foreign Office record of all conversations and provisional understanding (not formal treaty) between Britain, France, and Russia, made early in the war to prevent difficulties between the Powers in prosecuting the war with Turkey. Djemal, either from ignorance or malice, has distorted its original purpose, has omitted its stipulations regarding consent of native populations and safeguarding their interests, and has ignored fact that subsequent outbreak and success of Arab revolt and withdrawal of Russia had for a long time past created a wholly different situation.

The British reply is lame enough. It is sincere, in that there is other evidence that Great Britain really believed that Russia's withdrawal had changed the situation. It may have, for Constantinople. But for the Arab provinces, it changed nothing. The French

<sup>2</sup> See note on page 561.



had their bond, and they meant to see it fulfilled. At the time, however, King Hussein was pacified. He had gone too far to withdraw easily and, besides, in his own Hedjaz he was in imminent danger from the local Turkish forces. By the Sykes-Picot Agreement Palestine was to be internationalized. That undesirable consummation was prevented by Lord (then Mr.) Balfour's famous declaration of November 2, 1917.

But if it eluded one difficulty, it only created another. A national home for the Jews, interpreted in the light of Zionist claims, appeared to the Arabs incompatible with their ideals. The hope of independence and union with their fellow Arabs, which General Maude had held out to the people of Mesopotamia in his famous proclamation of March, 1917, was receding as the war neared its end. So unsatisfactory was the state of opinion in Palestine and Syria that in November, 1918, the French and British Governments issued a joint declaration couched in soothing language.<sup>3</sup>

It was not the last promise the Arabs

<sup>3</sup> In the first two articles, it is stated that the two countries are 'prepared to accord recognition to an independent Arab state,' but zones are mentioned where certain administrative and advisory rights are retained.

The third clause provides for the establishment in Palestine of an international administration.

The document is too long to give in its entirety, but this sentence is sufficient to show its general tendency: '*Le but qu'envisagent la France, et la Grande-Bretagne en poursuivant en Orient la guerre déchaînée par l'ambition allemande, c'est l'affranchissement complet et définitif des peuples si longtemps opprimés par les Turcs, et l'établissement de gouvernements et administrations nationaux puisant leur autorité dans l'initiative et le libre choix des populations indigènes.*' Iraq is the only part of the Arab provinces where, so far, any attempt has been made to do this; and even there it has hitherto been largely nullified by the policy of the local British officials.

VOL. 131 — NO. 4

received. In October, 1919, Lord Curzon in a letter to the Emir Faisal repeated the British Government's previous undertaking that the four towns should form an independent Arab state.

### III

Thus ends the first phase of the question. The war was over. The Turkish Empire had been shattered. But, though the brunt of the campaigns had been borne by the devoted English soldier, he found himself in November, 1918, occupying the historic Arab lands of Asia as a liberator rather than as a conqueror. We need not exaggerate the work of the Arab armies, which Great Britain paid and equipped. Nor must we slight them. When Lord Allenby and Emir Faisal found themselves together at a Guildhall luncheon in 1919, the British Commander-in-Chief paid a fine tribute to the work Faisal had done with his northern Arab army, which had acted as the British right wing in the final campaign. Mr. Lloyd George, too, said that the Arabs had performed their part of the bargain, and Great Britain meant to do hers.

Happy is the statesman who makes no promises, for then can he never be accused of giving contradictory ones. But happier still, perhaps, must be the statesman who can blandly forget inconvenient obligations. Thus, M. Viviani, at the League of Nations meeting in London last July, extolled the generosity of his country apropos of Syria in these words: 'On the morrow of victory, we could quite well have annexed all the territories which were within our reach. We could have annexed them without asking the populations or considering their interests. But the Treaty of Peace laid down the new principle of mandates.'

We can dismiss M. Viviani's clap-

trap for what it is worth. But was it a new principle? Was it only a new name for an old thing, for the Western domination of Asia? The Arabs, judging mandates by their fruits, have thus decided. But not at once. After the Armistice, there were Arabs who believed they might be an embodiment of new ideas. King Hussein, more obstinate or more wary than others of his race, has all along refused to admit or recognize any mandate over the Arab provinces. For this reason, he has followed the American example in refusing to ratify the Treaty of Versailles. The word was not in the pledges, — that is, the correspondence he had exchanged with the British representative in Cairo, — and he would have none of it. At a meeting of the Supreme Council held in London in March, 1921, General Haddad Pasha, at that time his representative and another of the Arab leaders who have graduated from the American College at Beirut, explained his objections thus: —

King Hussein objects to the mention of the word mandate, which is not in the pledges. The spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations, as expressed in Art. 22, para. 4, does not appear to be incompatible with the aspirations of the Arabs. But the word is indeterminate in meaning. The text of the mandates, as published in the papers, has shown how an interpretation contrary to this spirit has been adopted. To this interpretation King Hussein and the Arabs will undoubtedly refuse to agree. King Hussein asks therefore that the definition of this assistance shall be corrected, to make it clear that the intentions of the Allies are simply to provide the assistance mentioned in the pledges without in any way impairing the national independence which the Arabs have been made to understand it was the policy of the Allies to secure.

How indeed can the Arabs believe that the mandate is only a restriction

placed upon the conqueror, when they see what has been done in Syria? Palestine, an integral portion of the country, is taken from it. Instead of an attempt being made to develop a national government from the nucleus provided by the Arab administration over which King Faisal presided, that leader is forcibly turned out by General Gouraud, the Arabs previously having been forced to disband their troops while the French had concentrated 70,000 men in the country. When all opposition has been borne down, the French High Commissioner divides Syria into six 'confederate' governments, whose only link lies in his own person. With as much show of reason England might have carved Egypt into three autonomous governments, one with a strong Greek element in Alexandria, another preponderantly Islamic in Cairo, and a third in Upper Egypt, where the Copts would have been predominant.

But the French have done more than this to estrange the Arabs. By the Franklin-Bouillon Treaty with the Kemalists, they have actually handed back to the Turks a strip of Arab territory, from the Mediterranean to the Tigris, containing several Arab towns. This territory was specifically included in the pledges given to Hussein. One of the provisions of a mandate is that the mandatory shall not cede any portion of the territories of the mandated state. A proviso of similar character was included in the Sykes-Picot Agreement. But M. Franklin-Bouillon had to come to terms with the Kemalists; they insisted on regaining control of the Arab towns of Aintab, Urfa, Berejik, and Nisibin, all of which have a strategical importance in controlling the railway from Aleppo eastward. The Arabs therefore were sacrificed. King Hussein protested, as usual, to the Supreme Council and the League

of Nations. And the Arabs gave one more bad mark to the mandatory system.

We know what the Syrians wanted, through the American Commission under Mr. C. R. Crane, which visited Syria and Palestine with that object in 1919. Their report has never been published, it has been repeatedly pressed for in the House of Lords, where there are many expert critics of Near-Eastern and Middle-Eastern policy. The British Government knows nothing about it, officially. It lies in some pigeon-hole at Washington, and may still be lying there when the world ends, and Asia and Europe return together to their original gases in the next radical rearrangement of our universe.

Luckily there is a press, to which even pigeon-holes are not sacred. The *New York Times*, of August 20 last, published the gist of the Commission's report. From this we learn that the Commission pronounced in favor of a mandate, on condition that the well-being and development of the Syrian people was recognized as a 'sacred trust,' but recommended that the 'unity of Syria be preserved in accordance with the earnest petition of the great majority of the Syrian people.' In this recommendation Syria includes Palestine. Other recommendations were that Syria should be placed under one mandatory power, as the natural way to secure real and efficient unity, and that Emir Faisal should be made the head of the new, united Syrian state. I have said enough to show how closely the Commission's advice has been followed.

Syria is the unhappiest example of the working of the mandatory system, for the Syrians are the most advanced of the populations of the Arab provinces and the régime under which they live is the most illiberal. The French

have shown as much eagerness to placate their former enemies, the Turks, as to alienate their former allies, the Arabs. Courts-martial, the censorship of the press, and the exile of political opponents have been the accompaniments of Western rule in other places than Syria. But perhaps nowhere else has the ruling race behaved with such arrogance as the French have shown there.

In Palestine, however, where the Administration has dealt comparatively mildly with opposition, the people have no inclination to accept the mandate. Hitherto the Palestinians have been mainly hostile to the Zionists. They have affirmed their willingness to be mandated to Great Britain so long as the Jews were kept out. Now they have gone further. At the last Palestinian Congress, held at Nablus, it was resolved that the British mandate should not be recognized, and that any foreign loans contracted by the Government should be repudiated by the people. Previously, the Palestine Committee, at a full meeting held in Egypt on June 25 last, declared that Palestine and Syria should be united under an independent national government, and that the Palestinians would never accept the ideal of Palestine as a national home for the Jews.

To enter into a discussion of the Zionist question is, happily, foreign to my purpose. But I believe that the Zionists will never find the guaranty of tranquillity they need by relying on Western force, in whatever way it may be wrapped up. On the other hand, history, if it teaches us any lesson in this matter, shows that the Jews have played a distinguished rôle in past periods of Arab greatness. The best hope for Zionism is, in my opinion, to get away from the unreal atmosphere of the mandate, and to approach the Arab as a fellow Semite. Zionism, if it



wants to achieve anything lasting, must go hand in hand with Arabism.

That may happen. Its best augury lies now in Iraq. There Great Britain has at length shown something of the political flair for which her statesmanship is deservedly famous. The British Government, realizing once again that Arab Nationalism is a force and not a farce, has agreed to abrogate the mandate. Not bluntly or directly. Such is not the manner in which British high policy works. It will be done, if at all, through the very mechanism on which the system rests. By the Anglo-Iraq treaty, signed last October, the British Government promises to assist Iraq in securing admission to the League of Nations, which would, *ipso facto*, terminate the mandate.

It is an ingenious solution. Of course, the treaty will remain, and this will give England a privileged position in the country. But if the Colonial or Foreign Office can restrain the not always discreet zeal of the British officials on the spot, the Arabs of Iraq may settle down to the orderly development of their great resources. The Iraqis want advice and assistance. They do not want the system of imperial bureaucracy which has darkened the face of the British Crown Colonies in the past twenty years. It is sig-

nificant of the trend of affairs that already the British Government is looking toward a solution on the same lines in Palestine. The Palestinian delegation, which failed to come to an agreement with the last British Ministry, is now back in London, and negotiations in this direction are now in progress. If the mandates over Iraq and Palestine are withdrawn, it will be only a matter of time before the same thing happens in Syria.

Such is in outline the story of one more attempt by the great European powers to incorporate a part of Islam, and that the most characteristic part, in their civilization. In admitting its failure, I do not want to draw any moral judgment. No sensible man can believe in the doctrine of the self-determination of peoples, of which the whole course of history is a refutation. Nor is it good to lay too much stress on the sanctity of treaties, or of international pledges. Races will continue to rule where they have the power and the aptitude. It is well that they should do so. But political shams only cumber the earth. Happily they carry their own Nemesis. We can only rejoice in this case that the Goddess has been so prompt to assert herself in this instance of the mandatory system as applied to the Arabs.

## THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

### THE PLUMBER IN RESIDENCE

THE plumber is with us always — but there his resemblance to the poor ceases. His sleek little Buick stands often at my door, taking precedence of my modest Ford; and there you have our relative financial status in a nutshell — and a real car.

But although he is with us always, yet he is never really a permanent inmate of our house. A chronic transient, he might be called, and I have often wished that he were actually living under my leaky roof, and could be paid a salary instead of drawing the same amount in monthly installments as income.

When I think of the Rich and Great keeping private chaplains as household pets, or domesticating resident physicians, my soul is untouched by envy. The thought of a clerical ear or a medical eye forever cocked in my direction leaves me cold; but if the wealth of all terrestrial leak-menders were mine to squander on luxuries, my first extravagance would be a Resident Plumber, in whose calling are combined the ecclesiastical and the surgical functions.

My experience of plumbers as a class being limited to one specimen of his race, it may be that I am guilty of exaggeration, or at least of generalization, when I speak of plumbers generically as alarmists; but the impression produced by Mr. Piper (who happens to be my own minister of grace and healer of leaks), when I open the door of his shop to give him an emergency call, always brings to mind Hamlet's disordered aspect as seen through Ophelia's terrified eyes: —

Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,  
And with a look so piteous in purport,  
As if he had been loosed out of hell  
To speak of horrors — he comes before me.

'What is it?' he asks hoarsely.

When I report the murmurings and gaspings of my laundry tub, he looks far more apprehensive than Dr. Mendum would look if I had summoned him to investigate my own bronchial wheezing.

'That sounds very serious,' Mr. Piper says, frowning and shaking his head; 'I can't tell at all what may happen. I must come over at once.'

Thereupon he nervously clutches his bag of tools, and in trembling tones calls to some fellow in the cellarage to come and join him at once in this probably vain effort to save the life of my waste-pipe. By this time I am as nervous as he, and we hurl ourselves into our respective cars and dash down the street in agitated procession, dreading to see the patient, for fear that we merely shall be viewing the remains.

It is at my back door that the ecclesiastical aspect of plumbing comes to the front. The attendant boy produces a candle from some hidden recess of his vestments, and, like a faithful acolyte, reverently follows the high priest of plumbing through the kitchen and into the laundry, where both kneel at the washerwoman's high altar and inspect the foundations of her faith—the laundry tub.

At this point the officiating priest is transformed into the surgeon, and the clumsy tools turn into delicate instruments. In his hands the wrench becomes a lancet, and the acolyte seems suddenly transformed into the physi-