

which were no longer understood in the South, and the more so since here, too, we find the myth of the bull-shaped father who pursues his daughter (Asterios and Asteria), and since the Cretan labyrinth dance showed the leading forth of the radiant maiden in spring through the same winding paths through which she was led away in fall (*Trojaburgen*, pp. 262-276). These dances, however, are the same as the northern and old Italian vernal sword dances which ended in the expulsion, stoning, or killing of the winter smith (*Trojaburgen*, pp. 236-247).

The transformation of the divine dragon-slayer into the sun hero is preserved with especially remarkable completeness in the Persian mythology, in which Indra, who is here also called Vritrahan or Verethrayan (the dragon-slayer), is without difficulty recognized in Feridun. In the Tuti-Namah, a Turkish collection of stories probably derived from a Persian source, the fight with the dragon by which Ferid wins the daughter of the sultan is described just as in various German Siegfried tales, collected by the brothers Grimm. In this connection the story of "The Two Brothers" is of particular interest, including its variants (Vol. III, No. 60). This tale must be very old indeed, for the details of which it is composed are found from Scandinavia to Rome, from Hellas to India, in tales of the ancient Greeks and in the Vedas; we mention only the hero eating the magic bird, the hero drinking before the dragon-fight to gather strength, the "faithful animals" helping him in the fight, his profound sleep afterward, a rogue stealing the dragon's heads and claiming to be the real slayer, his being unmasked by means of the tongues previously cut out, and so on. We thus discover that even these minor details are in reality embellishments of the simple original myth of the sun maiden's liberation, added to it several thousand years ago.¹

ARABIAN PICTURES.

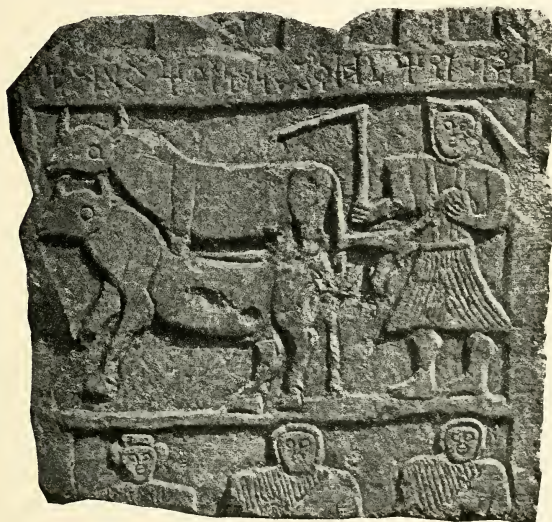
BY THE EDITOR.

ORIENTAL institutions, be they social, political, or religious, are very conservative, and especially so in Arabia. We may indeed assume that the family life of Abraham was practically the same as that of an Arabian sheik to-day. We may notice with special interest that the characteristic features of the general world-

¹[In our next number we shall publish the second part of Carus Sterne's argument, dealing with the Pitcher of Tragliatella exclusively; a summary will then draw the final conclusions.—Ed.]

conception and the daily habits of Oriental peoples are deeply religious.

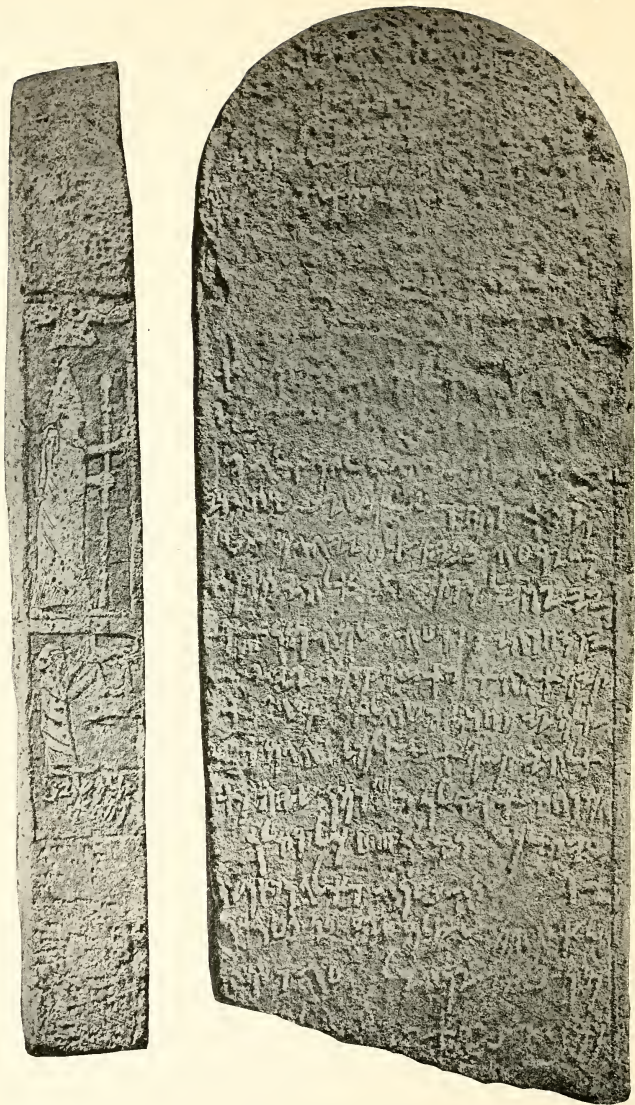
Though the Arabian of to-day may be neglectful of many essential things—including the laws of sanitation and even of ordinary cleanliness—he will never forget his daily prayer. When traveling through the desert he will dismount at specified hours and offer his thanks to God, while in the cities the call for prayer resounds from the minarets at the same hours to remind the faithful of their duties toward the Almighty.



A FARMER AT WORK IN THE FIELD.

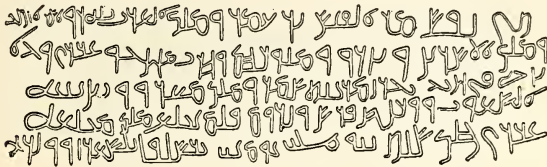
A slab with a Sabean inscription.

The civilization of Arabia is very old, but its early history is written only in monuments most of which have not come to light but in recent years. On one of these ancient stones, bearing a Sabean (South Arabian) inscription, we see a farmer plowing his field with oxen in a scene which must have been characteristic of the oldest time of Arabian civilization. Further there is an Aramaic inscription on a monument known as the stele of Teima, which is attributed to the seventh century B. C. and throws much



STELE OF TEIMA.
With Aramaic inscription. Seventh century B. C.

light on the conditions then prevailing in northwestern Arabia. It tells of the building of a temple dedicated to the god Salm of Hagam, and portrays besides the god one of his priests, Salmushezib. It not only informs us of the existence of the temple, but also of its income and maintenance, assured from its own pos-

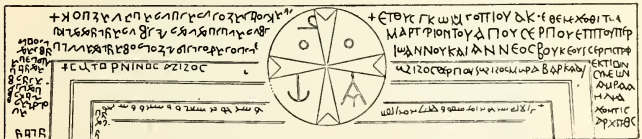


NABATEAN INSCRIPTION ON BASALT.

The oldest Arabic text in existence. It is reproduced from the tomb of an Arabian sovereign for whom a monument was erected in 328 A. D. in En-Namara near Damascus.

sessions and the royal domains. We learn that in those days well-established legal conditions prevailed in the country. The stone is preserved in the Louvre at Paris.¹

Arabia, as far as we know of its civilization, is connected with the outside world chiefly at two points, on its northwestern front which in antiquity was inhabited by the Nabateans, and in the south-



ARABIC-SYRIAC-GREEK INSCRIPTION.

Found in Zabad, near Aleppo, dated 512 A. D. and discovered in 1879.

western part (Yemen), the land of the Sabaeans, which was invaded by the Ethiopians from across the Red Sea in the beginning of our era. The Romans, too, heard the fable of the enormous wealth of this part of the country, which they accordingly called *Arabia Felix*, and in the year 24 B. C. Aelius Gallus, the prefect of Egypt, pushed into the desert in search for these treasures. He fared miserably, but under the emperor Trajan at last a Roman province

¹ A copy of it is in the Chicago Art Institute.

was formed of the regions to the east and south of Damascus and of Judea extending southward to the Red Sea (105, A.D.). A Roman immigration took place and developed a more highly civilized life among the native Nabateans. The capital was at Petra, south of the Dead Sea, from which the province took the name *Arabia Petraea*. In the year 1812 the ruins of some stone houses

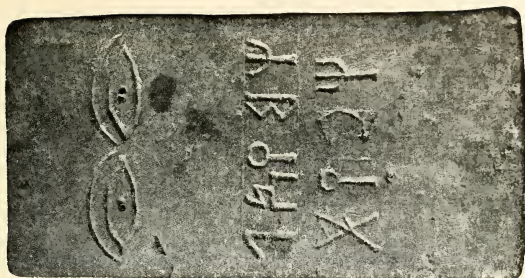


VOTIVE TABLET OF 'AMRAN.

The Sabean inscription informs us of Watar, the son of Martad, who has dedicated this tablet to Alamakh, the Lord of Hrn.

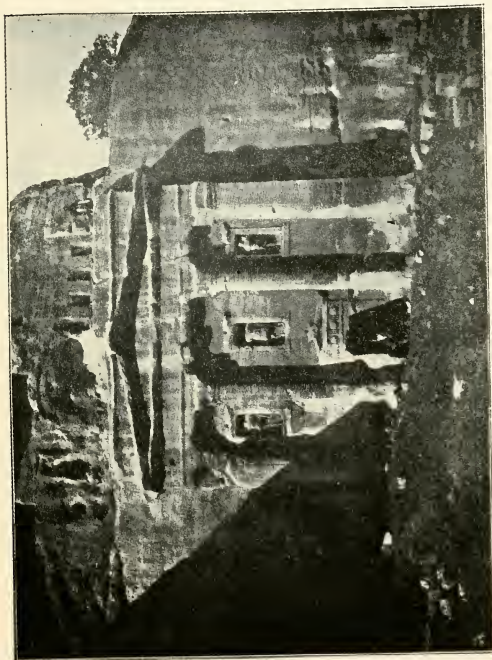
and temples were here discovered, dating back to the time of the late Roman emperors.

That Christianity exerted a great influence in Arabia during the first centuries after Christ is indicated by many inscriptions which make prominent use of Christian symbols. One hundred



INSCRIPTION ON A SABEAN
TOMBSTONE.

The original is preserved in the
court museum at Vienna.



RUINS IN WADI MUSA.

The Valley of Moses is near Petra, the old capital of the Nabateans in north-
western Arabia.

years before the Hejira we find Jewish and Christian (Abyssinian) powers trying to overwhelm one another in Yemen.

Perhaps we might grant that the Christian influence was neither deep nor permanent, but we should not forget that Christianity was one of the essential elements from which Islam, the religion of the Orient, has proceeded. Islam has not accepted Christianity, but neither has it denied Christian doctrines except the belief in the divinity of Christ, or rather the dogma of the trinity. The Moslem's interpretation of Christ's position comes very near to the religious views of the Christian Unitarian.



SABEAN LIMESTONE.

The inscription reads: "Magic Protection of Ilza'd and his brother Halqah, both of Chab'at." The original is in the court museum at Vienna.

• Christians have found an expression for their religious feelings in art—not so the Moslems. Originally Christians too forbade the representation of God or Christ and the saints, no less than the followers of Mohammed, because they thought images of any kind savored too much of the idolatry of ancient paganism. Gradually these sentiments changed and in Christianity the advocacy of artistic presentation gained the upper hand, although only after violent struggles, especially in the Eastern Church. But in Islam the

originally Jewish injunction against idols became so firmly established that even the portrayal of ordinary human beings was not



MOHAMMED'S ASCENSION.

From a manuscript in the Bibliothèque nationale at Paris, originally from Herat (Afghanistan). Beginning of the 15th century.

allowed. This was not an injunction given by Mohammed himself but became established later on. In fact the Persians continued

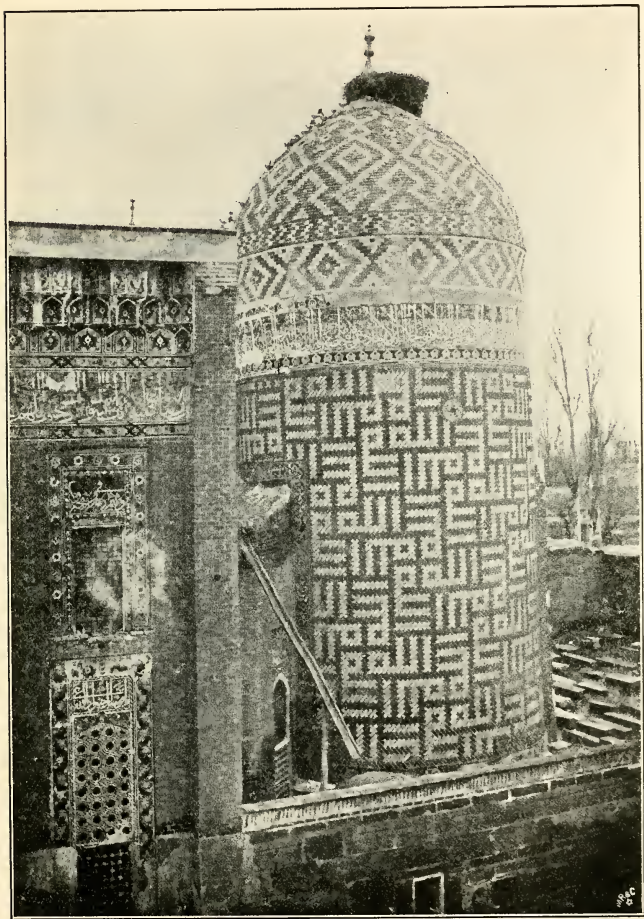
to follow their old artistic instinct and have produced many representations even of the prophet himself. The severe condemnation of all portrayals not only of God but of human personalities as well has limited Islam to the use of linear ornamentation, especially forms of decoration composed of Arabic letters in conventionalized



MASCHIA AND MASCHIANA (the First Human Couple).
By the Persian-Indian painter Mani of the 16th century. Library of the former khedive at Cairo.

forms. For instance, the Mosque of Sheik Safi at Ardebil shows in endless repetition the word Allah in an ornamental way, and it is well known that in this mode of decoration Arabian art has developed an original design called "arabesque," which occurs nowhere but in countries touched by Arabian culture. The central

mosque of modern Mohammedanism is the old Christian church of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and an important feature of its decora-



MOSQUE OF SHEIK SAFI AT ARDEBIL.

tions consists of pious inscriptions (quotations from the Koran) hung up on its walls (see frontispiece).