No. 127.

Consulate of the United States,
Jerusalem, October 8, 1889.

Honorable William F. Wharton,
Assistant Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

In compliance with instructions of Circular dated August 16, 1889, I have the honor to transmit herewith a report on the national or patriotic song or air of Syria, together with the music of two airs which, so far as I am able to discover, are the only ones entitled to be considered of the character referred to.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

Consul.

Enclosure:
1. Report on the national or patriotic song or air of Syria.

Report on the national or patriotic song or air of Syria.

In pursuance of the investigations suggested by Circular of the 16th of August last, I have the honor to report that I have not been as successful as I could have wished. Dr. Van Dyck of Beirut, an authority upon the subject, states that "there is no such thing as a nation in Turkey, and consequently there can be no national air. Every man belongs to some sect; no man has any national feelings; sympathy of that sort being confined to sect."

The nearest approximations there are to anything like a national air are the two songs, of which I inclose copies. No. 1, entitled "Turkish National Air," is a native song or tune, to which, some years ago, a Syrian gentleman named Marun En-Naggusch (now deceased) wrote words to be sung to it. They are in the nature of a hymn or prayer for the late Sultan Abd-El-Aziz, during whose lifetime they were written. The first line is as follows:

يا ربنا كن واقيا عبد العزيز الغازي

which may be interpreted, "O our Lord be thou the protector of Abd-El-Aziz the Gazi." I regret to say that my attempts to recover the remainder of the words have, as yet been unsuccessful.

Turkish National air, with music

No. 1

The words and tune were sung by our owls, until Dr. E. R. Lewis, then of the Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, set the music to a hymn, printing it in a hymn and tune book which he published a few years ago, and from which it and its companion are taken.

No. 2, entitled "Syrian Air," is the other popular Syrian tune or song, which was also set to a hymn by Dr. E. R. Lewis, and published as in the former instance. I have failed to discover any original words to it, or its particular name. Perhaps it never had either.

Syrian air with music

No. 2

In both of the airs as here given, the music, it will be observed, is

written backwards, conforming to the Arabic, that is from right to left, and not as with us from left to right.

I shall not fail to continue my efforts to recover the original words of these airs, and if successful shall at once forward them with translation to the Department.

In my researches I have encountered several weird, fantastic airs of the country, some of the plaintive strains of which have a general family likeness to the ancient Celtic or Erse melodies. The almost exclusive use of the minor keys is a pronounced feature of the music. Another peculiarity is the employment of a one-third as well as semi tone, something I believe unknown to our composition. But it is not expected that, in these narrow limits, I should dilate on the characteristics of the Syrian music.—

(Signed) Amos Gillmore
Consul

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, October 8. 1889.

No. 128.

Consulate of the United States,
Jerusalem, October 15. 1889.

Honorable William F. Wharton,
Assistant Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that I have recovered the words of the Turkish National Air (No. 1 of my report submitted with my despatch

No. 126 of 8th instant), and I herewith forward "Supplementary Report on the national song or air of Syria", in which the words with translation are given.

I am, Sir
Your obedient Servant

Consul

Enclosure:
1. Supplementary Report on the national or patriotic song or air of Syria.

Supplementary Report on the national or patriotic air or song of Syria.

Having recovered the words of the "Turkish national air or song" of my former report of the 8th instant, in which it is given as No. 1, I herewith add the words in the original Arabic, together with a translation in English as follows:

يا ربنا يا ربنا ايدلنا سلطاننا

يا ربنا يا ربنا ايدلنا سلطاننا
عبد الحميد الغازي النصر موصول لنا
واحفظه في ابداً واهلك كل العدا
واحرس حصناً باقياً بالفرد وطاً والرضا
وافتح الفتح المبين واحرس البيت الشريف
واسمو مجداً واقياً العدل كي يسود فينا
لعهالنا معافياً نلنا لها معافياً
لازال قرباً راقياً اولي الفعال والصفا
اجمال اهل العلا ساداتنا نحو وعلى
لازال ممدوحاً لنا خير العلى الرحمنا
يا ربنا البسه الهم سربالها وقاً والنعم
خير الحماة الواقيا شاد بنا والشانا
يا ربنا ايدلنا بامة لعلم فضلنا
والعلم يسمو رايا مجد العلى مشرقنا