

NEGLECTED ARABIA

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The Arabian Mission

OF THE
REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

25 East 22nd Street, New York City

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The Arabian Mission which was organized in 1889 as a separate mission, was amalgamated with the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America in 1925. The change did not affect the work in Arabia or the organization in the field, but concerned only office administration and legal status. All former contributions should be continued and sent to the Board of Foreign Missions. They may be specially designated "For Work in Arabia" if desired.

NEGLECTED ARABIA

Missionary News and Letters

Published Quarterly

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION AMONG THE FRIENDS OF
THE ARABIAN MISSION

A Study in Reinforced Concrete

REV. D. DYKSTRA

Any one who has seen the condition of walls and buildings in Muscat will readily come to the conclusion that the local building materials leave much to be desired. A member of the Board's Deputation called Muscat "the abomination of desolation." Hardly any stone wall is intact, and the majority of the corners are falling away from the rest of the building. However, sand and gravel, both of very good quality, are obtainable at reasonable prices, and when the new Matrah Hospital was to be built, reinforced concrete was indicated as the best solution of local building problems. So the new Hospital building is largely of that type of construction, and all the pillars, lintels, girders, beams, floors, and roofs are of reinforced concrete. While the cost of this type of construction is about double that of the local methods and material, we trust the building will last at least four times as long as the local kind, and consequently the cost is only half as much when the time element is taken into consideration.

As this was the first reinforced concrete building to be put up in eastern Arabia, and I had never done any construction work of that kind, I knew nothing experimentally of the job to be done. Nor did it make me feel any happier to realize that the men and the masons who were to help me knew still less about it. However, we built the forms, bent the steel rods into the required shapes, poured in the proper mixture according to the books, and behold, the liquid mass hardened into an unbelievably hard substance, and we went ahead with more confidence with the rest of the building. After a brief year of training local labor, they were able to carry on for four weeks while I was away to the Annual Meeting at Basrah.

Our first concrete roof, built over a tank thirteen feet in diameter, caused considerable anxiety. I had buttressed the supporting forms as much as I thought necessary, and then added a few posts for greater security. But when the tremendously heavy mass of semi-liquid material was poured on top of it, I felt constrained to listen for sounds that might indicate the collapsing of the support. It held, however, and after the first day of hardening all fears were removed from my mind. But all fears were not removed from the minds of others. At the end of six days, so the books said, the supports could be knocked away, and the roof would support itself. I entrusted this task to a local

carpenter, but after a while the wrecking job had not yet begun. So I took a wrecking bar and the carpenter and I went down the man-hole together and took away the supports. It was only afterwards that I heard that the poor carpenter had not known what to do. He did not dare to go in to take away the props for fear the roof would come down, and he did not dare to refuse for fear of losing his job, so he went to a nearby mosque and prayed a few prayers so as to be prepared in case the worst should happen!

Another item of the building that still puts fear into the hearts of many, is the concrete stairway that seems to be suspended in the air without any visible means of support. Even after they had seen seven or eight of us on the stairs at the same time during the building operations, still they were fearful and would not entrust their lives to this new idea in building.



A STUDY IN REINFORCED CONCRETE

However, these fears will soon be things of the past. The last year or two has seen a tremendous increase in the local use of cement, and reinforced concrete and cement blocks will soon be as common here as camels and dates. A Japanese steamer has just landed 6000 bags of cement and one of the old palace buildings is being buttressed by a cement column more than fifty feet high.

It is interesting to conjecture what would have been the course of building activities here if the hospital had been built twenty years ago as originally planned. Since the building work has lightened I have been looking through some of the Station Correspondence of previous years and found a letter dated February 28, 1912, and written to Dr. S. J. Thoms by Engineer Shaw of the University of Michigan Arabian Project. A few sentences from this letter will show the trend of their plans and projects: "I have just made a rough tracing of the ground floor of the Matrah Hospital. This plan of having a long building instead of a square one offers some advantages which should be taken into consideration before we finally decide on a plan. In the first place, it simplifies the problem of erection by reason of the fact that the floor girders will be shorter and can be lifted into position with less labor and

at less risk of accident. Again, in laying a reinforced concrete floor, each section will be 50 feet long instead of 64. This will mean less timber for holding the floor before the concrete sets, and it will mean that there will be less risk of not getting one section of the floor completed in a day—a very important consideration in reinforced concrete work, especially where the concrete must necessarily dry quickly. Aside from the problems of construction, the long plan gives you more air for your main ward and a greater veranda space on the north side. As regards the roof, I can make a flat concrete roof if you so desire and it could be used for sleeping purposes. I intend to get a concrete mixer, which will reduce the cost of labor and which will insure well-mixed concrete."

With these suggestions filed away in the Station Archives, unknown to us, it is interesting to see how nearly we followed them. The present building is certainly of the long type, measuring 170 feet by 48. Then it is nearly all of reinforced concrete, with this addition that even the above mentioned "girders" are of that material. This obviated altogether the necessity of lifting heavy steel beams into place, but it did mean bending heavy steel rods into all sorts of fancy shapes. We also limited the areas necessary to be poured in one day, the largest sections being 72 feet by 24 feet. The roof is flat, almost too flat for shedding water, but ideal for sleeping purposes. And lastly, the cement mixer, we had that also, but a home-made affair. It costs about five dollars to make, costs sixteen cents a day to run, and mixes from thirty to forty cubic yards of concrete a day. It saved about \$1000.00 in labor costs.

It is also interesting to compare some of the estimates. For instance, the following estimate of the cost of cement was given for the hospital as proposed twenty years ago:

350 barrels cement	@ Rs. 3-4 per barrel	Rs. 1120-0
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As to the present building, which provides about twice as much floor space, and has verandas of a construction similar to the rooms, the following is a record of the cement actually used:

1500 barrels of cement	@ Rs. 11-0 per barrel	Rs. 16500-0
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TYPICAL MUSCAT MASONRY

A further sentence in the above letter says: "The great advantage of this type of construction is that no iron work is exposed, and the repair bill should be low." We also hope that this will be the case with the present building as actually constructed and that it will not be an annual drain on Mission funds or a missionary's time.

And finally, our minds cannot but dwell on the fact that Dr. Thoms was not allowed to see the fulfillment of these plans but that twenty years ago he laid down his life for these people. And then our minds go back twenty years more and see the sacrificial service of George Stone and Peter Zwemer, both of whom also gave their life for Muscat, Matrah, and Oman. Forty years and more has the Gospel been preached and exemplified to the people here, and it is with sadness that we contemplate the paucity of the results. And we come more and more to the conclusion that the hearts of these people also present some of the qualities of reinforced concrete. One of the most prominent is their tendency to "set" and thus become impervious to the action of outside elements or influences. Isaiah had already noticed this characteristic as he speaks of a "hard vision" that comes "from the desert, from a terrible land." While in their youth their hearts and minds may be plastic and open to outside influences, they "set" very quickly and no human force or human quality can again make them plastic. Their firm belief in their own teachings often excites admiration, and even to shake their faith in weird tales and traditions seems impossible of accomplishment. That the moon at the time of an eclipse is being swallowed by a dragon is the unshakable belief of nearly all the people. As proof one need only listen to the bearded mueddihins calling prayers from every mosque, and to the children beating lustily on Standard Oil tins, all of it meant to drive away the fearsome dragon. That there are "holy (?) men" with vast powers for good or evil is also conceded by every one. Just lately one of these gentry established himself in a nearby mosque. He is such an undesirable character that he is deported from every place he visits. Yet it is calmly asserted that he will cure any sick person who comes to him. When I asked why all the sick did not go there to get well, the answer was, "I do not know." This answer does not indicate, however, that their faith in this "wonder-worker" is in any way diminished.

And if nothing that we can say or do can shake their faith in men and things which are so obviously untrue, how can their faith in less obvious misconceptions be shaken, especially things of the spiritual realm where no ocular demonstration of their falsehood is available? It is like soaking a block of reinforced concrete in oil or boiling water in an attempt to soften it and make it pliable. The only remedy for these people that are so set in their ways and their beliefs is that the Lord Himself will "take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh."

It only remains for us to record our praise for the work of our Redeemer who by His grace has accomplished this wonderful change in the hearts of some, and besides has shown His marvelous workmanship in that He can soften the hard heart and at the same time retain in it the firmness and stability necessary to support an over-weight of scorn and opposition.

A Tour to Quriyat

MRS. D. DYKSTRA

Quriyat means villages and is the Arabic form of Kirjath of the Bible. The place is on the sea coast some 65 miles south of Muscat. We sent our goods by sea with two servants and ourselves followed by land, traveling in the two Mission cars, to Suakim, our terminal, 45 miles to the south. Do not picture a fine auto road. There is simply a broad trail, cleared of the biggest obstacles, with the steepest banks of the wadis leveled off sufficiently to make travel by car possible. We came along just after heavy rains, so the road was rather full of big stones and boulders which had been loosened from the mountain sides. There were men along the way, repairing the damage done. But where these had not yet come we had to get out to clear the road and frequently push the cars. Wadis are dry river beds, often boulder-strewn and very stony, and they become raging torrents in a few moments when there is a heavy rain. The barrenness and steepness of the mountains cause awe-inspiring waterfalls in a very short time and raging torrents in the otherwise dry wadis, and so many an unprepared and unwary person has been carried to the sea and destruction.



VIEW OF MATRAH HARBOR AND THE NEW MEDICAL PLANT

We had arranged with our servant, Shah Murad, to hire donkeys in Quriyat to get us from Suakim. But he thought donkeys could be gotten at Suakim, so why pay for the round trip—a fair argument, had the plan worked. Shah Murad was to be our escort, and he certainly looked the part, dressed as all the men of this country do, a belt of cartridges at the waist, topped off with a big dagger, and then a gun slung over the shoulder. We were a warlike-looking peace party. Our escort is quite a soldier of fortune, a brave enough fellow, his only failing being that he likes to please everybody at once. When we arrived in Suakim we asked about the donkeys. "Ready," said Shah Murad. "The price?" "One Qursh" (12 cents). This seemed too little, but that is the regular price. Before we were ready to start it

was learned for whom the donkeys were intended and the price went up. However, circumstances compelled us to acquiesce, and our sense of right made it easier to comply. But then we learned that the one important thing, the donkeys, were not on hand. There were vague promises of donkeys at sunset, but with the proof of their inconsistency before us such promise was of no use. Our bedding was in Quriyat, there was no place to stay in Suakim, and the cars had gone back to Muscat. The only transportation available was the donkey on which Shah Murad had come from Quriyat.

I have not yet told you who the party were. There were Nurse Mary and Azzo for the medical work, myself for the evangelistic work, and Miriam to cook for us. We four and Shah Murad had to manage with this one donkey. Shah Murad assured us that donkeys could be hired along the way, but we did not yet know our Shah Murad. After studying ways and means we decided to tie on to the donkey our hand bags and water supply, and the four ladies to take turns riding. Because the sun was still high, they insisted that I should ride first. I rode for an hour and got some distance ahead of the others. I was on the lookout for donkeys, but saw none. I got off and sent the donkey and its driver back to pick up some one else, which was Nurse Mary. When she caught up with me I suggested that she ride through to Quriyat, engage donkeys and send them back to meet us. This was a good plan, but it was carried out so tardily that we walked most of the 18 miles. I walked five hours, Miriam and Azzo six, and Shah Murad seven. Were we tired? The walking was bad, even by daylight, because of stones and thorns, which were specially bad after the rains. Footwear in this country is not adapted to hiking. The sandals of the men are fair, the loose slippers of the women are poor indeed. The slippers of the two women soon showed all their cheap workmanship and the nails worked through in many spots. For the two women walking was a very painful affair. They alternated between nail pierced slippers and bare feet, whichever seemed the lesser evil. It was bad enough by daylight while they could still see to pick their way, but after dark it became a matter of tears. The half inch high heels of my walking shoes were nearly worn away. It was on this long trek we really learned to know Shah Murad and also to appreciate him. He has a way of beguiling one with gay promises. He assured us again and again that Quriyat was near, or that we would soon come on some donkeys. In one place where we were resting for a bit, we asked him if we were near enough to Quriyat to wait for the donkeys. He said, "Surely." And then after a bit when he thought we had rested enough, he suggested going on. He meant well. He realized that we were in an unpleasant situation, and he did not want us to lose heart!

It was after 9 o'clock when we heard sounds which made us all exclaim, "Donkeys!" Later, we recalled how we all had stopped in our tracks and stood like statues till the donkeys came up. These came without any sort of saddle or covering and we had to ride bare-back. We were so stiff that we could hardly get on the little animals. We got to Quriyat about 10 o'clock, had a cup of tea, and then sought our cots. We were stiff and sore for a day or two, but rest corrected all that.

We were able to rent a house very suitable for our use. The street door happened to be in the middle of the wall and the women that came

in turned to the right or left as they happened to want to see Nurse Mary or myself. All wanted to see her for medicines, of course, or wanted to see others treated, but by far the greater number also came to see me and later many came only to hear the reading of the Scriptures. One morning I began this reading before 8 o'clock, and at 11 o'clock the women were still there. Every day was not like that, but always there were the interested ones to whom it was a privilege to bring the Word of life.

We made two excursions from Quriyat, both by donkey. The first trip was a two hours' ride and the second a three hours' ride each way. Hail was the first place, known for its wonderful mango trees, under which we spent the day. The women and children were eating the green, unripe mangoes. Just why the inevitable result of eating green apples does not apply to green mangoes, I do not know. To all that came we gave medicine and preached the Gospel. On our way back to Quriyat a very heavy shower of rain and hail overtook us and we were drenched to the skin. We learned at first hand to understand and appreciate the Arabs' just fear of the wadi. We were just half way in crossing a wide one when the rain overtook us, and the donkey men had only one concern, to get us all safely through. The Lord watched over us for good and we got back safely.

On the second trip we had all sorts of exciting difficulties looming up along the way, but each one was successfully overcome. First, we had to cross a big inlet from the sea, which was rather deep at the time, and the Oman donkeys do not stand high. After this we came to a region where there were high mounds of deep, loose sand, blown into fantastic shapes. Crossing this area, with the little donkeys plodding pluckily through with their loads on their backs, we came to the edge of this sand and made for the sea beach. Here we met the work of millions of crabs. These had so undermined the sand in building their holes, that crossing this last stretch was treacherous going for the donkeys, which very easily break their legs by slipping into these holes. One of the animals did come down and at once the men felt of the animal's legs to see if they were whole. On the sea beach we had a stretch of fine going. After that we struck the wadis, and we had to descend and ascend very steep banks, with former tracks all obliterated because of the recent, heavy rains. It seemed as if nothing, not even glue, could make anything stick on the donkey's back, but we did stick somehow, with the help of two men holding the rider and the third supporting the donkey. It was exciting and a lot of fun, really. Next, we had to cross a nasty bit of water, underneath which were salt pans. The men held quite a consultation about crossing it. They had expected to get there before the tide had come in so far, but we could not then turn back. One of the men crossed alone, to test out the best track, and then we followed. We got across without mishap, but not without excitement, because one of the donkeys became frightened and balked. This part of the country is called *Doghmaár*. After we crossed the wadis we entered a very thorny area. "Never have I seen such thorny ground. Literally it seemed true of this country that it is "a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof." We had come to look up a sick woman. *Doghmaar* is made up of several villages. We rode too far, but this was an advantage, since we were invited into a house and entertained, and

in turn were able to bring to them our message of salvation and to leave some simple medicines. Here we got instructions how to find our patient and found a very anaemic person. At first sight the case seemed hopeless, but since she had already responded to medicines previously sent, Nurse Mary was not altogether without hope. The woman had been confined some forty days before and just about everything that should not be done had been done for her. The people of the village were either very much afraid of us, or refused to have further dealings with us, so seeing her ended this visit.

Our tour lasted just under two weeks. We saw many bad eyes, due perhaps to the very sandy country and the fierce sand storms that prevail. Cauterizing is a favorite way to treat all diseases, in adults and infants alike. It is horrifying to see what dreadful sores this occasions at times. Surely the cure is worse than the disease. Very noticeable, among the people is Fear. Fear seems to be everywhere, at all times and for all kinds of reasons. Many were the messages I gave in connection with this subject of Fear. I distributed some thirty portions of Scripture. Many more were called for, particularly by boys of school age, but I hesitated to distribute too freely when later a colporteur would visit the place and try to sell the same, as the Bible Societies strongly urge them to do. I was surprised to see how many women could read and read well. To one young woman I gave the Gospel of Mark. At once she said, as she glanced at the portion, "Haven't you something else? I have Mark and John." Such an acquaintanceship with the Gospels was as unusual as it was encouraging. Happily I could give her a copy of Luke and Acts. In the house visiting many wanted to read and hear the reading, and they showed marked appreciation and a desire for more. But always there are those who consider themselves the true guardians of souls and they neither enter in themselves nor allow others to enter.

There are many Baloochis in this part of Arabia who have left their own inhospitable country and have settled in this land, which is somewhat kinder to them. These people are mixing well with the Arabs and a new race is being formed. Most of them have learned to speak Arabic very well. In this the Baloochis of Quriyat are a great contrast to the Beloochis of Muscat. Some authorities maintain that these people are a part of the lost ten tribes of Israel. If names alone were evidence enough, we would have to admit that there is considerable evidence in their favor, for many of the Beloochi men have Israelitish names.

Our trip seemed very worth while to us and we hope to be able to do more of this work if the Lord wills.



WHERE THE DESERT AND BAZAAR MEET

Report of the Evangelistic Work in Baghdad for 1934

REV. JOHN S. BADEAU

A recent volume of sermons has as its title the "Glory of the Grey," and its theme is the satisfaction that can be wrested from even the routine tasks of life done under grey skies. It is the "grey" that contains the "glory" of our evangelistic work in Baghdad during the past year, since for the most part we have been plodding ahead in the usual manner.

The bookshop has had a very satisfactory year in its new location—on the edge of the booksellers' bazaar in the Akhmak-khana. The number of visitors has increased, and many of them have been new. From the stream of people constantly going to and from the Serai (and is there *any one* in Baghdad who doesn't have business at the Serai?) and out of the ranks of the ubiquitous Baghdad schoolboy, a new clientele has been built up. We have placed with the religious books on the reading tables certain secular books that will appeal to effendis and schoolboys—such as a "Life of Feisal," a "History of Tamerlane," "The Universe and Its Wonders," etc., and various community and religious magazines, such as the monthly publication of the Society of Moslem Youth. The result of broadening the scope of literature available has been good, for it not only attracts readers, but tends to classify religion as a normal interest of life.

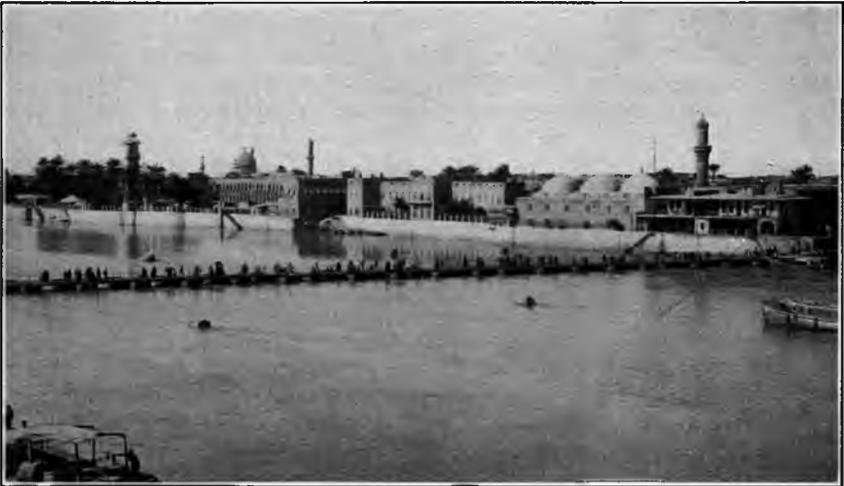
The only really serious difficulty encountered by the bookshop occurred when Mulallim Khedhoury was arrested and tried on a charge of blasphemy. A young Moslem from Damascus, evidently bent on making trouble, entered the bookshop one summer morning and asked the catch question "Do you Christians believe that the Quran 'came down' from God?" Upon receiving the answer "If we believed that, we would all have become Moslems" he went to the police and accused Khedhoury of blaspheming Islam. The first hearing of the case was before a Christian judge, who ordered a postponement to allow Khedhoury to gather witnesses from among those present in the bookshop at the time of the incident. The final hearing was before a Moslem judge—the well known Baghdad poet, Zahawy—who immediately dismissed the case without even calling for Khedhoury's witnesses. I understand that the youth who made the trouble has been sent out of Iraq because he was here without a passport.

On the whole, the incident has not been harmful. The case was kept out of the newspapers and has not had any wide-spread publicity. It has been especially gratifying to find the Government ready to do justice, even in a case involving the state's official religion. The fact that the case was tried before a Moslem judge, and that he promptly dismissed the charge, has disillusioned those who think they can utilize Moslem prejudice against us.

The meetings in the Evangelistic Center have been somewhat better attended than when the last report was written—just after the Assyrian troubles. This fall the number of visitors increased, and while regular inquirers have been few, more Moslems have come to the house. It is hard to get regular attendants at any meeting. Boys come for a few

weeks, then disappear for no known reason. The number of those really interested in the spiritual life for its own sake is almost infinitesimal—there is always the hope of some immediate gain. I still adhere to my original plan of having meetings primarily for non-Christians. Doubtless we could build up quite large groups by inviting local Christians to attend, but to do so might tend to drive away the few non-Christians.

The little group of converts has had a usual year. None of those regularly employed have lost their positions, but two who seem constitutionally unable to care for themselves are still a problem. There have been some requests for baptism, but the economic situation was such in each case that it did not seem wise to baptize. The "church in the house" that has been my hope is still as far as ever from fulfillment. Mutual fears, incompatibility of temperament and economic stress



THE RIVER FRONT AT BAGHDAD

all play their part in keeping our converts apart. The conditions of life for the convert from Islam are such that only strong, self-reliant, exceptional men can openly espouse the Christian faith and strong, self-reliant, exceptional men are few. There is always a fringe of people who are sincerely attracted to the Gospel and who count themselves in some sense "Christian." Were there a strong Christian community to nurture them, they might develop into mature believers, but lacking that helpful environment, they must remain timid followers.

We have had practically no contact with or services for local Christian groups, except through the Assyrian Evangelical pastor, who has continued to minister to his congregation. The Arab Protestant congregation has continued to hold its own services and we rejoice that through the interest of the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, the Revd. Karmouche has been called from Jaffa to become pastor of the Church.

The challenge of the Baghdad work is the challenge of a young, irreligious generation that has not time to be bothered with the fables and superstitions of religion. It is a challenge hard to meet, but rewarding if we can capture the heart and mind of young Iraq.

The American Mission School for Girls in Baghdad

Report of 1934

MRS. MAY DEPREE THOMS

Time for reporting has come again, and one wonders what items about our school in Baghdad will be most interesting to friends of the school, to those who are making possible such an institution here.

The school is indeed a little world of its own. One feels a difference in the atmosphere the moment one steps through the doorway of the house which serves as school building. Cleanliness and happiness are to be found here.

When one enters, whether it be a half hour or an hour before the hour for the opening of the school, one is sure to find many girls already there. The older girls are upstairs in their classrooms, or walking up and down the long verandas arm in arm, studying together as they walk; but the little tots, like the choir in the old Christmas carol "with peals of glee rend the air asunder." However, they are always ready to leave their play and run to welcome one with a happy "Good morning," the new pupils beaming over the accomplishment of having learned that much English.

At seven thirty, eight, or eight thirty, according to the season of the year, the school bell is rung and the girls line up in the courtyard by classes, and soon a hundred voices or more are lustily singing an Arabic hymn. Then they recite one of many psalms which they have committed to memory, or the Ten Commandments, and that is followed by an English prayer-hymn such as, "Father of All, Thy Child am I," "Father, Lead Me Day by Day," or "Father, We Thank Thee for the Night." Then the girls go up to the classrooms built around the court.

There are wide verandas on two sides which serve as recitation rooms when both of the classes that occupy one room have a recitation period that coincides. In winter when the rooms with their brick floors are most uncomfortably cold, every class vies for a place on the sunny veranda, which we call our "sun-parlor." At recess, instead of going down to the courtyard to play, all try to get a bit of warmth from the sun. "In summer quite the other way," they try to find the spot farthest away from the sun. We cannot use our surdabs, the cellar-like rooms so popular in the hot weather, because lighting and ventilation in them are not adequate for school work, but we begin work as early in the day as we can and dismiss the pupils at one o'clock. The heat is terrific at that time of the day, but the girls after their noonday meal sleep for an hour or more before preparing their lessons for the following day. Neither the cold of our two winter months nor the heat which begins in April are conducive to good study, and one often marvels at the amount of work accomplished in spite of these and other handicaps.

Of course, some of the houses are very much more comfortable than others, for we have girls from every sort of home conceivable—houses with mirror-lined walls, the acme of beauty in decoration, the chairs and divans in straight lines along the walls of the large rooms; homes European or semi-European in arrangement and furnishings; houses in

which, though the families may be crowded according to our standards, yet comfortable as standards of living are here; and the home of one room and the use of a bit of courtyard around which other rooms, each of which contains a family, are built.

In school all the differences of station are forgotten, and the daughter of a high government official turns the rope for the child who lives in the corner of the court yard which the family shares with the cows, the source of living for the family; the girl who pays ten dollars a term tuition fee, side by side with the child whom she helps to feed and clothe and who shares with her the time and attention of the teacher. It cannot be said always that they share equally, for the chances are that the rag-tag and bobtail demands more of the teachers' attention both to keep her in order and to help produce some development in brain cells.



PROMENADE ON THE BANKS OF THE TIGRIS

One wonders sometimes what the future has in store for girls who have little ability or aptitude for mastering the simplest subjects taught, but who are faithful in attending school year after year, in some cases, because of their love of school life. We have wondered whether we may not be able to train some of these girls to become useful servants. One of the naughtiest of the lot, one whom we despaired the oftenest of being able to help, an orphan who has nothing to attract her homeward after school hours, offered without any expectation of pay to remain after school and help the old Assyrian janitress. Two girls have worked during the summer in homes of other students, being thus assured of good food and some clothing with which to start school.

Most of the girls from the poorest families are still married off while quite young, and it is some consolation to know that they have had a few happy, helpful years in wholesome surroundings, years in which

they have learned something of what purity of life and integrity as taught by One whom they have learned in some measure to revere, may mean to them.

The marriage age for those of the so-called upper classes is very much higher because those girls are remaining in school for a term of years which is steadily increasing. Of the eighteen girls who have graduated from our Junior High School, twelve have gone on to higher schools, half of them in Baghdad and the others to Beirut; four have married—three of these to men who have had some training abroad in their professions, and the fourth to a business man. The first of our graduates to go to Beirut has graduated from the American School for Girls there and is now teaching in the Government School of Home Arts, the American principal of which is much pleased with her work.

A year ago I was bemoaning the fact that we were losing a teacher who had been with us eight of the nine years of the existence of our school, the teacher who was in charge of our Junior High School. We do miss her very much as she had made a large place for herself in the work of the school and in the hearts of the girls and of the other members of the staff. However, we have been most fortunate in securing a graduate of the Junior College for Women in Beirut to take her place. Miss M. is a girl of ability and good training and one who is definitely interested in being a messenger of the Good News we have to offer.

It is interesting to see the reaction of new teachers to our school. The group of Syrians from which our teachers come is a Christian group and most of their associates have been Christians. Two-thirds of our pupils are from non-Christian homes and the teachers who come to us are surprised to find them so responsive to the Christian message. Miss M. gets quite excited when she talks of her Bible Class and the thoughtful way in which questions had been answered in an examination after a two months' course in the Gospel of Matthew.

More and more one learns to appreciate the opportunity in a Mission School of having students under instruction not only day after day, but month after month, and in many cases, year after year. And each year does so definitely show progress in the school as a whole and in individuals. There are the girls whom we have been on the point of expelling for fear their influence over the others was bad, but still holding on in the hope of being able to help them, and then being richly rewarded, in some cases at least, by seeing them make more and more of an effort to be like the older girls whom they have learned to admire; and these older girls in turn feeling responsible for helping those who have little opportunity of learning anything worthwhile except at school.

The Junior High School girls have learned a prayer which begins, "Grant, O Lord, that this day which Thou hast given us in mercy, may be returned to Thee in service." So, O Lord, may the lives which Thou hast given us be returned to Thee in Service. And again in the words of the prayer, "If in anything we fail or come short, through ignorance or weakness, O God, let Thy fatherly wisdom correct us and Thine infinite mercy forgive us and Thy divine love amend our fault; through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

PERSONALIA

Rev. and Mrs. John S. Badeau and their two children arrived in New York on the SS. Exochorda, on June 12th, returning on furlough from the United Mission in Mesopotamia. Mr. Badeau has been appointed to the staff of the American University at Cairo and expects while on furlough to study with a view to preparing himself for that special work.

Rev. John Van Ess, D. D., is expecting to sail from America on the SS. Franconia, September 14th, returning to his work in the Boys' School at Basrah. Mrs. Van Ess will sail some weeks later, family considerations delaying her departure.

Mr. John W. Beardslee, 3rd, sails from New York on the SS. Aquitania, August 22nd and will join Dr. Van Ess on the latter part of the journey to the field. They plan to arrive in Basrah some time in the first week of October. Mr. Beardslee succeeds Mr. Coert Rylaarsdam who returns to America this year after a four year term of service in the Basrah Boys' School.

A letter has been received from the Rev. G. D. Van Peurse, from Hail, in the Kingdom of King Ibn Saoud, indicating the arrival there in the latter part of April of a party of missionaries, including Dr. Dame, Mrs. Van Peurse and young Robert Van Peurse. This is the first visit of our missionaries to Hail.

Rev. and Mrs. Dirk Dykstra are to return home on furlough and are leaving Muscat in the early part of June, stopping in the Netherlands to visit relatives en route.

At the Easter Services in Arabic held in Bahrain, the audience was the largest on record, 168 people being present. The English service also was exceptional, 103 crowding the chapel.
