The

Arabian Mission

Field Report

Number Seventeen
January 1 to March 31, 1896.
THE ARABIAN MISSION.

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Please draw checks and send remittances, or requests for information, to "The Arabian Mission," 25 East 22d Street, New York City.
During this quarter there has been a re-distribution of our native helpers caused by one of them leaving us permanently and one going to Bombay for a season. Jusef, formerly employed at Busrah in touring, has gone to Muscat and Isa takes the place of Razouki at Amara. Markus Galustian now acts as assistant in the Dispensary and spends only part of his time in selling Scriptures. By these changes our work at Busrah has not been strengthened and we are looking for a vigorous and efficient colporteur that our sales may not fall below those of last year. Merad, who was engaged last year on trial, has proved trustworthy and has been successful according to the measure of his ability. He is not at all a scholar but has spiritual gifts and loves the work. He came to us from Saert, near Mardin, and his family, who suffered the loss of all things during the Armenian massacre, are coming to Busrah, so that he has been permanently engaged as Bible Reader for the Dispensary.

Tours were made by Jusef before he left for Muscat to Fao and to Kuwait. On the journey back from Fao he called at all the small hamlets on the Arabian side of the Shatt-el-Arab, some of which he had not yet visited. Thirty-eight portions of The Word were disposed of and according to his journal he spoke with many Moslems from the Gospel. The tour to Kuwait was less successful, the Moslem Sheikh there continues to forbid the open sale of books although he is nominally ruling in Turkish territory.

In regard to our book sales at the shop and by colporteurs, it is encouraging to note that the sale of a small portion of the Word often leads to a desire for possessing the whole Bible. The Persian revision of the Old Testament is now completed and we learn from those that know this language that Dr. Bruce has made an accurate and beautiful translation. Next to Arabic, Persian is the language most in use by Moslems in the Gulf. By mail we occasionally receive orders for the Bible or other books from places not visited by our colporteurs. This shows that there is a real spirit of in-
quiry in a few minds at least. Were there freedom of the press this inquiry could be easily stimulated and directed into the right channels by means of controversial and apologetic literature. Both, however, are only bought and sold as the Turks do slaves—for the good of the few and unknown to the inquisitive.

At Amara an interesting incident occurred illustrating the material with which and among which we are called to work. An inquirer who visited our colporteur there for Bible study and instruction was spied one day by a policeman while praying with the "Nasrani" and threatened with imprisonment. Bazaar talk increased, and fearful for personal safety, the colporteur fled to Busrah like another Jonah. He found a storm and a whale as well! On arriving at Busrah the poor fellow broke his arm by accident; and, failing to give sufficient reason for deserting his post he was sent back, armed (no pun is intended) with a letter from the Wali, assuring him of his personal safety. It is impossible to call upon Moslems to forsake their religion unless we are ready to endure all things for the elect's sake among them and with them. In this respect American citizenship robs of some of the power of example, because our political status cannot be compared with that of our helpers who are Turkish subjects.

The Rev. P. J. Zwemer was at Busrah for nearly a month during the quarter, and our annual mission meeting was held during the time. Provisions were made for securing teachers in Arabic and for examination in the language, plans laid for the coming summer and other matters discussed relating to the various stations. The child of one of our colporteurs was baptised and the Lord's Supper administered.

The report of medical work by Dr. Worrall is given here-with:

"In general during the first quarter of 1896, the health of the Arabian Mission staff was very good indeed. None were laid on beds of sickness but all were able to do their work with ease and facility. The only serious case was a colporteur who fell and broke his fore-arm. The same was healing nicely when he was sent on duty up the river.

"At Busrah the dispensary was re-opened on January first and has been open without intermission the whole quarter. The first few days a few only came and on feast days none. During the Ramadhan, when they fast all day and feast all night, only few comparatively attended. The numbers gradually increased until recently the rate of 6,000 a year was reached. Over 615 treatments were given during the quarter of whom 370 were Mohammedans."
179 Christians, 66 Sabean and Jews. Again the number of women
and children were: (91 women and 54 children), 145 Mohammed-
dans; (75 women and 20 children), 95 Christians; and 21 Sabean
and Jews. From which one sees the purpose of our mission for
the Mohammedans is being in a measure fulfilled.

"The medical side of the treatment stands first in that there
were 456 medical, 98 surgical and 61 eye cases. These cases va-
ried from the most trivial to the more serious. From an ordinary
cold to fatal bowel complaints, from a splinter to an amputation.
Eye cases, from simple catarrhal conjunctivitis to total blindness.

"A most interesting case was one of a Mohammedan boy with
ascites relieved twice, but with it all very brave. It gave us op-
portunity to visit their mean hut and there bear witness of our
Saviour's love and compassion.

"Another case was an abscess of the middle ear which opened
externally and necessitated an operation, but on account of pain
permission was refused to complete it. It was bandaged and left
with many misgivings for nature to cure. Much to our surprise
and joy a second opening which it was considered necessary to
make was after great delay made by nature. Although still un-
healed it is on the road toward recovery. Here also opportunity
was given for speaking, but in this case the patient was a Turkish
effendi. A gospel left with him was returned because 'they had
all the books they could read' and so had no time for the little
messenger of peace. The books were two on Turkish law and the
Koran.

"A Bedouin boy cut his hand with a sickle some time ago and
it was gangrenous when he reached the dispensary. After clean-
ing and amputation the family were so well pleased that they all
requested treatment. The father and mother for rheumatism, a
daughter for eye trouble, and another child for a broken arm;
broken one week previous.

"The number in attendance is often too great to be contained
in our little waiting-room; but the best of all this is, Christ is
preached. Not permitted in open bazaar, nor permissible to have
open meetings, but with bait held out of bodily healing we offer
them the service of the physician who is able to forgive all iniqui-
ties and heal all diseases."

BAHREIN STATION.

Three hundred and sixty-five miles, as ships sail, from Busrah;
one steamer in each direction every fortnight—it is not surprising
that this station was only visited once, for twenty-four short and
busy days, during the quarter. But, because we have not yet had news that the Reformed Church Mission Treasury has gone into the hands of a receiver; because we are assured that our supporters have a living interest in the work for Arabia, and desire its permanent growth; because we believe that God will thrust out laborers into this harvest in answer to prayer—therefore we determined not to spike guns, but strengthen the little fort in the enemy's country, hoping against hope for speedy reinforcements.

Better quarters were obtained for a mission house on the Islands through the kindly help of Colonel Wilson, of Bushire. A plan of this house is submitted herewith. The lower story is completed, and the upper floor will be in three months. The house is located centrally, healthfully and conspicuously, on the sea shore near the Indian Post Office. It has a northern exposure, and an unobstructed view toward the Island of Moharrek and the Gulf. The rent-contract is for four years, at a reasonable rate one-half lower, indeed, than the appropriation for that purpose. A very suitable room for such dispensary work as has hitherto been carried on has also been rented for a year. Some seventy patients were seen during Mr. Zwemer's visit, and Ibrahim Saeed, our assistant, was anxious to keep the place open for the whole summer. He has some knowledge of medicine, is also, therefore, a "hakeem" to the natives, and as there is continual demand for simple remedies, vaccination and extracting teeth, it seemed wise not to put the only set of dental forceps on the island under lock and key. Those who know Bahrein will not hastily take offence at such crude methods, although they are only a caricature of what medical missions should be on the islands.

Of the baptism of Ibrahim's wife and child, and her two younger sisters, we have spoken in the annual report, although the baptism took place on February 23d, this year. We believe that Ibrahim will prove faithful in further instructing them by word and example. Such babes in Christ need most tender care and earnest prayer. What stronger plea can there be for reinforcements than the presence of this single Christian family among so large a Moslem population. The strengthening and extension of the work begun here are utterly impossible unless a missionary is permanently stationed on the islands soon.

Herewith is the report for book sales at Busrah and Amara for the quarter.

S. M. Zwemer.
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**AMARA.**

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**MUSCAT.**

Letter from Rev. P. J. Zwemer.

What with the loss of all papers, etc., and finding and moving into another house, besides the fact that I was present at Muscat for only one month of the quarter, I must apologize for the absence of a report.

The work was carried on as usual, the Bible shop being in charge of colporteurs, and during the month of January, while I was present at the station, a daily Bible reading was held in...
a coffee shop in the bazaar. This is, perhaps, the most encouraging feature of our work at Muscat. A Bible lesson can be read and discussed without disturbance and with the usually polite attention of the Arabs.

As soon as the hot weather subsides somewhat with the coming of the monsoon, I think it would be well to rent a suitable place for regular preaching services.

The agreement for house rent has been made for three years, at twenty rupees a month; for the care of the garden (which is simply the wage of a gardener at six rupees a month), the tenant is to be responsible, so the full rent of the house is twenty-six rupees a month, which is far cheaper than any rentals inside the city walls.

It would be more advantageous to the Mission in the end to purchase this or another suitable house, as five or six years rent amounts to the value of the property; but, of course, I had no authority or funds for this. At a favorable opportunity I believe this house could be purchased at a reasonable figure. At present the owner wants 3,000 rupees. Two thousand is about the actual value of the house and lot. I would like very much to have the opinion of the Board in this matter. Funds could be obtained at any time from the American Consul here, who is a merchant, at a reasonable rate of interest. The interest in such a case would be much less than the present rental, and all improvements made to the property would be to our advantage.

I inclose the Report of Book Sales which, though much smaller than our book work at Busrah, compares favorably with previous reports of Muscat station.

The hot season is upon us—98 to 100 degrees is the daily maximum. My health, however, is excellent.

Muscat, April 24th, 1896.

BOOK SALES, FIRST QUARTER, 1896.

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Number of Sales to Muslim: 98

" " Jews: 2

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