The Arabian Mission

Field Report

Numbers Ten and Eleven

April 1 to September 30, 1894
THE ARABIAN MISSION.

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Rev. Henry N. Cobb, D.D.,
Corresponding Secretary,
25 East 22d St., New York.

April—June, 1894.

REPORT OF BUSRAH STATION.

In looking back over the past three months it seems as if Busrah has been largely a receiving and distributing centre for your missionaries. About the middle of April Mr. P. J. Zwemer arrived from Muscat, a residence there of several months having made a change necessary. Dr. Wyckoff, our new medical associate, after remaining here long enough to get acquainted with the field and the missionaries, went to Bahrein for the same purpose. At the same time, the end of April, Mr. Cantine left for a long talked of trip to Baghdad and down the Euphrates. Both returned to Busrah the first of June, and Mr. Zwemer started for Bahrein soon after.

Busrah's climate may not be better than that of our other stations, yet as regards cleanliness, society, and touch with the outside world, it is far superior, and justifies both our choice of it as a headquarters for work in the Gulf, and also the erection of our large and comfortable mission-house, where we may easily meet for a few weeks of rest and change.

Bahrein did not agree with Dr. Wyckoff, and he came back after a month's stay much run down. The exceptionally cool weather we have been having this summer has enabled him to progress steadily towards restored health.

The trip of Mr. Cantine across to, and down the Euphrates, was taken with the main purpose of settling upon
the most desirable place for an out-station. Up to this time the state of our finances has not justified us in assuming any additional expenses, but we hope soon to be able to locate a good native assistant at one of the large towns to the north. There are two such towns on the Euphrates, one on the Tigris, and two on the Hai, which is a connecting link between the large rivers. These should be evangelized more than is possible by the semi-yearly visit of the Bible colporteurs. The salary of a good, educated assistant is about $150 per year. We have such a man in view, but if he is sent it must be through added contributions from home. These towns are almost entirely Moslem, and offer an inviting field for the Master's servants.

Our Bible sales for the past quarter have not been large, only 212 in number, together with 139 religious publications, and more than that of educational. A feature of our shop work in Busrah has been the sale of a large number of tracts on drinking, gambling, etc. These are bought almost exclusively by Moslems, and it is a pleasure to have them thus identify our work with clean living.

On his trip to the Euphrates Mr. Cantine was accompanied by a colporteur. This and a visit to the villages south on the river, have been the only tours taken by our men during the past quarter. For reasons of economy one of our best helpers has just been discharged, though we hope to take him on again in the Autumn.

Soon after Mr. S. M. Zwemer's tour inland, from Bahrein to Hassa, the Turkish government refused us access to the towns along the Gulf coast. Efforts to obtain such permission, through the Busrah authorities, have as yet proved unavailing, though doubtless it will ultimately be obtained.

We cannot be too thankful that we have as yet escaped a return of last Summer's cholera. The high overflow of the river has made fevers prevalent, but it may also be the cause of the cool north winds we have enjoyed throughout almost the entire month of June.

Our English service was dropped for a short time on account of its being too warm in our upper rooms. We are now preparing a place on the ground floor which, we trust, will be more suitable.

Busrah, July 10th, 1894.

James Cantine.
MEDICAL REPORT.

During the first months of my stay I did not open my work, only doing a little practice among those who knew that I had arrived and who came to me,—it being thought best that I should study the people, language and conditions likely to have a bearing upon disease. Near the end of April I took a trip to Bahrein where I came in contact with the Arab as he is when not spoiled by European vices. Not that he has not enough vices of his own. But civilization without Christ, means but adding those of the West to those of the East.

The Medical cases consist of the usual Eastern Diseases with many cases of disease of the eye. In fact a large proportion of the population have but one eye, and that one, in many cases, is a very bad one. The pearl divers suffer from diseases of the ear, and emphysema, from their long stay under water, and other effects of the pressure of the water.

This continual straining of the lungs leaves it a fruitful field for the ravages of the tubercular germ, and milliary tuberculosis is a very familiar mode of death. This, by inheritance and lack of sanitation, has permeated the Island, and tuberculosis is found in all its varied forms. The surgical work was necessarily simple, as the patient must live at his own house, and no very important operation could be performed. They consisted of the usual minor surgical operations, coupled with the opening and cleansing of one knee and one hip joint.

While at Bahrein I made a tour to Refar, where I staid over night, treating the people in the morning. All the town congregated to see the unusual sight. After noon trips were made to Moharrak, where a little work was done. Although this treatment by only seeing a patient once is far from satisfactory, it may, in some cases, be an opening wedge for further work which eventually may end in successful evangelistic work.

The Busrah department was opened June 4th, and, with the exception of a few days of illness when it was closed, it has been open since. The cases are extremely interesting from a medical point of view, and perhaps more so from an Evangelical point, as many women and children are among them, thus showing a gradual wearing away of prejudice.
Among the patients is the Mollah of the Mosque near by. He is very old and full of disease, but comes regularly to get a little medicine, although I have told him that I could not make him young again.

Each patient receives a ticket with his name on, or rather, number, on one side and a Gospel text on the other.

Here the fever affects the natives as well as Europeans, very severely, and the various diseases of parasitic origin are very common. In a short time there will have to be some other doctor or native physician, as the work will be too large for one man to attend to.

**CLIMATE AND CONDITIONS OF FIELD.**

Busrah is, for situation, much like New Orleans, lying on low ground and a good part of the time under water from the river.

This alternate flooding and drying causes the so-called Busrah Fever, which is a type of the Malarial Fevers of the South. The air is very damp, and for that reason the heat is at times very oppressive. The fever is the largest bug-bear for the whole Persian Gulf, the field resembling the African coast more than either China or India.

Bahrein has the fever and if that be not as severe as in Busrah it has the disadvantage of being thoroughly permeated with tuberculosis. As yet no suitable house has been procured. The sanitary situation of the present being very bad indeed. If a house could be built a little out of the town of Menamah, the situation would be very good and I would recommend that a house be built there at once or as soon as possible.

**REPORT BUSRAH DISPENSARY.**

June, 1894.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. New Cases</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>212</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calls and Treatments or No. of Patients</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgical</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
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</tbody>
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431
Percent Women and Children, .35
Percent Men, - - .65
Percent Moslems, - .50

GENERAL TOTAL.

No. of New Cases at both places,
Busrah aud Bahrein, - 759
No. of Patients, - - 1331

J. T. Wyckoff, M.D.

REPORT OF BAHREIN STATION.

Taking the place of my brother during the last weeks of the quarter upon his leaving on tour to Aden and Sanaa, the writing of this report devolves upon me. I find the following items recorded as data for the report for this quarter.

Bible Work. For the quarter three colporteurs have been at work in the Bible shop and on tours to the outlying places. Naif who devoted his time largely to touring, and Razouki, in charge of the shop at Menamah village, who returning to Busrah on account of sickness was relieved by Johanna Yezdi who came at this opportune moment from Bombay.

Johanna Yezdi is a convert to Christianity from the Baboo sect in Persia and being obliged to flee from the fierce persecution of his relatives and former friends was recommended by missionaries in Persia for employment by our mission especially among the Persians in Arabia. Being relieved for a time he spent a few months in Bombay, returning from there to Bahrein. To illustrate the feeling entertained by Moslems toward those who depart from their faith, his experience on board the steamer needs but to be told. It appears that on account of his discussing the Christian religion and offering for sale scripture portions and tracts, he incurred the general indignation of the Moslem passengers on board, which finally vented itself in their depriving him at night of all his clothing and property, including some money which was divided among the ringleaders, and his travelling chest thrown into the sea. The officer on watch seeing the chest floating on the water quickly came to the spot and
aroused Yezdi, but the perpetrators had dispersed. On the morrow an investigation was made, but the captain was dissuaded from making a search of the persons of the suspected ones by the threat of a riot among the large number of Moslem deck-passengers if such were done. Such was the feeling against Yezdi however, that the captain thought it wise to take him in the first class saloon for safety, where he remained until he reached Bahrein.

The Bible shop at Menamah village was open daily and frequent Bible readings and discussions have been held in the Bazaar to such as might be present.

Colporteur Naif made an extensive tour during this quarter to Linga, a town largely Arab on the Persian coast, and Sharkeh, a port for native craft on the extreme north of the Province of 'Oman.

Dispensary Work. This line of effort was continued as heretofore with the exception of the one month's residence there of Dr. Wyckoff. This changed for that time the free dispensing of simple drugs to the poor, to a larger qualified and surgical treatment of such cases as could not be undertaken before. By an investigation of the diseases there prevalent, he is able to advise as to what diseases are liable to be contracted by a European there, as well as the best methods of conducting medical work at such a place. It is very evident that the first need of Bahrein is a building suitable for hospital purposes. A large number of cases had to be refused by the doctor, on account of the lack of a suitable place to shelter and care for the applicant after treatment. The number of patients (see Dr. Wyckoff's report) reached its maximum this quarter, they coming not only from all parts of the island, but from Hassa and the Nejd, from 'Oman and across the Gulf from Persia. After a month's residence at Bahrein a severe attack of fever compelled Dr. Wyckoff's return to Busrah.

On May 13th, the Lord's Supper was celebrated for the first time at Bahrein, four being present.

S. M. Zwemer left on June 4th, on a tour to Aden and Sanaa, and on the same day the work was left in my charge.

After a month at the end of the quarter, leaving our faithful colporteur Yezdi there for a time, I proceeded to Muscat.

P. J. Zwemer.
BAHREIN DISPENSARY.

SECOND QUARTER, 1894.

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S. M. Z.</th>
<th>J. T. W.</th>
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<tr>
<td>In Charge.</td>
<td>In Charge.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>APRIL</strong></td>
<td><strong>MAY</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of new cases treated</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of patients</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent. Moslems</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent. Hindoos</td>
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<td>.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Per cent. women and children</td>
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<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. who paid for treatment</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>Rs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of cash received</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>36.14½</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. cases minor surgery</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of deaths</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of new cases from April 24th to May 20th</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>287</td>
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No report for Muscat has been received.

REPORT FOR BUSRAH—July to September 1894.

The summer in Busra is generally a dull time in all business, and as mission work is done by human agents, it is no exception to the rule. Perhaps the obstacles in our way were more this year than usual. For one thing, the heat is said to have been greater than for fourteen years past, though on the other hand, it was our first summer in our new house, which is roomy and open to the air. And again sickness has interfered much with our plans. The dispensary, under the care of Dr. Wyckoff and his assistant, Naif, was most encouraging, so long as the doctor could manage to get down for an hour or two each day, but his increasing ill-health soon compelled him to keep to his room. In the latter part of July it was thought necessary that he go to the cooler and healthier climate of Karachi; India. But even this gave him no relief, and on his return to Busra it was at once decided that he must leave for America. A steamer,

*Child, of fever, early in April.
sailing September 26th, direct to New York, offered the hope of a quick and comfortable passage. And so, after having been reopened only six months, our medical work is again crippled until another, ready to risk life and health, will give himself to the Master's service here in Arabia.

In our Bible work we have also lost on account of sickness, two of our best men—one leaving in July, and the other in August. To take the place of these, our Persian convert, John Yezdi, was brought up from Bahrein. Very unexpectedly to us all, he was at once arrested and taken to prison, ostensibly because of his not having a passport (that paper, together with most of his personal property, having been thrown into the sea by some of his fanatical fellow countrymen a few months before), but really on account of his having become a Christian. It is peculiar that in Busrah, we and our assistants are never spoken of as Christians, but always as Protestants. Perhaps this distinction has arisen from the efforts of the Greek and Roman Catholics to disclaim all connection with our uncompromising attitude towards Islam.

All efforts to have Yezdi liberated were unavailing. The promises of the Persian Consul amounted to nothing. We were indeed told that a bribe of a few rupees would set him free, but this neither he nor we would consider.

He was not treated very harshly, and, with his friendly way and polite manners, he made some friends among the guards and officials, to whom he sold and gave away several Testaments in Turkish and Arabic. Several times the Governor had him up for examination, but there is no reason to believe that he departed from the open profession of his faith. Afterwards he told me that it seemed as if the Spirit put the words into his mouth with which to answer his accusers. One day, nearly a month after his arrest, the Governor sneeringly asked him—how many converts he had made among the soldiers, his guards. He replied in the politest of Persian, that there was none as yet, but that if, through the kindness of His Excellency, he were allowed to stay long enough, he would, with the blessing of God, convert them all! A couple of days after he was given a ticket to Bombay, and sent, under guard, on board a departing steamer. He is now at Muscat with Mr. P. J. Zwemer.

We believe that it was in answer to special prayer that
Yakob Yuhanna, who so long has been in exile at Hillah, was at last permitted to return to his home in Baghdad, and has been promised a full release after a few months. He has written, saying that he is hoping to come to us next Spring, and assuring us—as we have also heard from other sources—of his faith and constancy. The effect among his Moslem neighbors and friends, of such an object lesson in Christian life, cannot be estimated, and like Paul, we have reason to thank God and take courage.

During the past quarter one of the large rooms below has been fitted up as a chapel, and now answers nicely for our religious services. All the expense has been met by the English community.

S. M. and P. J. Zwemer arrived in Busrah just as Dr. Wyckoff was leaving, and, though saddened at his loss, yet we who were left had a busy and profitable season of mutual counsel and planning for the further spread and upbuilding of Christ's Kingdom in Arabia.

JAMES CANTINE.

No reports for the Bahrein and Muscat Stations for this quarter have been received. Rev. S. M. Zwemer made a tour from Aden to Sanaa in July and August, of which an interesting journal is separately enclosed.