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# ARABIAN MISSION.



FIELD REPORT.



NUMBER SIX, APRIL 1st to JUNE 30th, 1893.

# THE ARABIAN MISSION.

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# Quarterly Field Report of the Arabian Mission.

APRIL—JUNE, 1893.

## *BUSRAH—CHOLERA.*

About the beginning of June, Busrah was suddenly visited by the cholera, and, as this was our first experience with the disease, we naturally felt some apprehension. However, the epidemic proved comparatively light. At first there was a great exodus, especially among the Jews and richer classes, leaving the business part of the place almost deserted, but before the end of the month the worst was over. A few precautions and a prompt attention to preliminary symptoms were generally effectual. Only one of the English residents was attacked, though a number of our friends among the natives were taken. Some medicine and disinfectants were distributed by us, but except among our servants and their families, little could be done. The apathy inherent to Islam, with the ignorance and prejudices of the lower classes, make the necessary treatment very difficult, even when one is on the spot to see that directions are carried out. The local Government probably did all that could be expected of them, but it was only a Merciful God who restrained the pestilence.

If these people would only look upon God more as a Person, a loving Friend! It is true they say that cholera is a disease pre-eminently from God, "min Ullah," but this use of the name of God means no more to them than their other expression of resignation, "naseebe." How to come to Him who is a "Refuge in times of trouble" they know not. May God give His missionaries grace and wisdom so to use adversity and distress as to reveal Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

## *BIBLE WORK AND COLPORTEURS.*

In spite of the interruption to business by the cholera, our sales at the Bible-shop have been most encouraging, being more than during previous periods. The colportage tours that were planned for the quarter could not be taken, so that almost all the sales were in Busrah itself. The emigration fever has caused an-

other of our helpers to leave us for America, so that during the last few weeks we have had but one man in our employ. We are, however, in correspondence with others in India who, we trust, will be better satisfied and will stay with us longer than those who come from the North.

We have lately received from an English friend of missions a number of books comprising extracts from the Old and New Testaments; these are for distribution among Muslims, and we believe they will be a great help to us.

In May, Mr. Lethaby, of the Kerak Mission, paid us a brief visit at Busrah. He also remained some time in Bahrein helping in our work there, while planning to journey overland to his station in Moab. His plan, however, was finally given up.

#### *THE NEW MISSION HOUSE.*

Our new house, which we are having built on a five-years' lease, is about finished, and before this reaches you we trust that it will be in the hands of the Mission. Since we have been in Busrah we have occupied four different houses, entailing much worry and more or less interfering with our work. Now we trust that we will soon see the advantages in being settled and having more conveniences, both personal and for our Mission enterprises.

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During the months just past we have had no interference from the Government, and think that we are being tolerated as an unavoidable affliction.

The missionaries have been kept, almost without exception, in good health; and for this and many other blessings have much reason to thank a Merciful Providence, who, we feel sure, has answered the prayers that have gone up for us from friends at home.

The known spiritual results of our work for the quarter just past are, alas! not numerous. Fully believing that the Lord will richly bless all consecrated effort for the extension of His kingdom, here and now, we must, with deep humility, confess our need of an increased indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and earnestly we beseech the friends of our Mission that their prayers for us may be earnest and prevailing. May God find us prepared and willing instruments for His purpose.

JAMES CANTINE,  
P. J. ZWEMER.

## Report from Bahrein. April—June, 1893.

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The work at Bahrein during the past quarter has been two-fold:—the Bible work has continued as heretofore, and there has also been daily treatment of the sick who came for help. In regard to the latter work, we cannot speak at length, as it was entirely unprofessional, and yet of great help to us in winning favor among the people and reaching many with the Word of Life.

The total number of patients seen, exclusive of old cases that came from day to day, was 301 for the quarter just past. The most of these came to our house, but some were visited on request or in touring among the villages inland. The average number that received treatment was 10; the prevalent diseases, rheumatism, neuralgia, fevers and ulcers; the total number of cases of minor surgery, 23; and the number of known deaths, 2, one from gunshot wounds and the other of consumption. The amount of money received from patients during the quarter was equal to about \$17.00, besides small gifts of milk, fruit, sugar, etc.

### *BIBLE WORK.*

As regards Bible work, it passed through a time of opposition that might have proved disastrous to our new work had not God, in answer to prayer, made even our enemies to be at peace with us, and the wrath of men to praise Him. Where our shop is located, and how the work is carried on, I have endeavored to tell in the second printed letter from Bahrein, which will reach the committee soon after this. The accompanying statement of sales and values shows that the work, though yet in its infancy, is growing. And the fact that nearly all of our sales here are necessarily to Moslems proves to us the wisdom of continuing and expanding this branch of mission effort. Although a few of the portions of Scripture have been torn up, we have reason to believe that the rest are being read, and know of some cases where they are read intelligently and thoughtfully. Nearly all of the people on the island are glad to have us remain with them for the sake of the medicines, and the only persons who have shown hostility were two or three of the "pharisee-party," with the largest pearl merchant, a man of some influence as their leader.

On May 7th the Kadhi of the Island called me to his house and forbade me selling Scriptures from the shop of which he was the agent. I declined to comply with his demand except on written request from the ruling Sheikh of the Island, but offered to vacate the shop. He remained friendly and did not press the matter. On Saturday, May 13th, there was trouble at the shop. The following day, just after morning prayers, word came to us from the Kadhi to come to his house. Because it was the Sabbath we promised to come the following day, but soon after a crowd of native police came to bring us by force. To avoid trouble at the house we followed, but were told on arrival at the Sheikh's that he had forgotten it was Sunday, and had made a mistake in calling us on that day! On Monday I called quietly and early and found that those who opposed our work had entered complaint against us for "speaking against the prophet and selling Scriptures to the ignorant." I had a talk with the Kadhi for nearly two hours, during which he lost his temper repeatedly, and finally ordered one of his servants to tell the town-crier to proclaim in the bazaar that no one was to rent me a shop, or buy books, or take medicines. After leaving the Kadhi I continued to sell books and patients continued to come for medicines. On Wednesday the Ruler of the Island sent word requesting me to leave the Island on the next steamer, and gave as a reason the excitement caused by the complaints against our work.

Then I wrote to the British Resident at Bushire, telling him our side of the story, as I had been requested to do by his representative here. The reply that came to us was brief but friendly. What other word was sent we know not, but the storm of trouble blew over completely, and the column of statistics showing sales in the Bible-shop proves that Islam is not a unit, and that England has a strong voice at Bahrein. During June there was no further trouble, and many have since told me that they were not at all in sympathy with the hostility shown us by the mischief-makers.

On June 21st Peter J. Zwemer returned with me, and together we closed the quarter—busy every day healing the sick and selling Scriptures. He continued in charge, while I, early this month, returned to Busrah.

S. M. ZWEMER.

BUSRAH, JULY 15, 1893.