ARABIAN MISSION.

FIELD REPORT.

Number Three, July 1st to October 1st, 1892.
THE ARABIAN MISSION.

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AT BUSRAH, JULY 1st to SEPTEMBER 30th, 1892.

We begin our quarterly summary of work at Busrah with deep gratitude to God for the unbroken health of the missionaries throughout all of the most trying Summer heat. Although the thermometer ranged every day over 100 deg. F., and sometimes rose as high as 105 deg. in our coolest room, and although we were trying the experiment, partially forced upon us, of living in the midst of the native town and in an unsanitary dwelling, yet none of us were sick, even for a single day.

Jakoob Johann and his family were at Bagdad for the whole quarter. His wife and child suffered from fevers, but he enjoyed good health, and, though under police surveillance, was not idle. Dr. C. E. Riggs received notice of the discontinuance of his engagement with the Mission on August 14th, and left Busrah on the 17th of September. Elia Ghergis, the Mosul Christian engaged by us as colporteur, left for America, to seek his fortune, in the middle of July. For the rest there were no changes or additions to our forces.

EVANGELISTIC WORK AND TOURING.

Our work at Busrah for English residents and the ships in harbor was continued as much as possible throughout the quarter. Four preaching services were held in the harbor and twenty-one visits made to steamers with literature and Bibles. The funeral of a British sailor was held by Rev. Mr. Cantine on the 24th of August; and on his way to Hillah Mr. Zwemer baptized a child of Dr. Sutton at Bagdad, July 26th.

A regular Arabic Bible Class was held as usual every Sabbath morning of the quarter. The attendance varied both as to numbers and character. Two or three Moslems are quite regular in coming, and as their attendance is entirely voluntary we believe it is encouraging. One of them, however, has just left for Bombay. He is a Derwish and was the Imam of a neighboring
Mosque. Of an inquiring spirit, he did not hesitate to acknowledge his conviction that many of the cardinal doctrines of Christianity were true; yet, like many others in Busrah, he has lost faith in Islam and has not yet a saving faith in Christ. Others who attended were Sabeans or Mandaites. The latter have promised to send their children if we open a school. Our lessons at these Bible readings were entirely from the New Testament and mostly from the Gospels. All present join in Christian hymns and some even join us in prayer. Although we cannot speak of direct results from these simple gatherings, we yet feel that they are of strength to ourselves and certainly indicate an absence of so-called prejudice or fanaticism on the part of those who attend.

Besides such work as we do in visiting Moslems in Busrah itself, the following tours were made during the quarter: On July 7th Elia, our colporteur, went to Abu El Kasseeb, a date-garden settlement down the river. On July 9th Mr. Zwemer made a visit to Zobeir, about twelve miles south from Busrah and near the site of old Busrah. It is a small but populous town, facing the desert and the starting point of Busrah caravans for El Nejd. The people are mostly Shiah Moslems, and because of their isolation are suspicious of everything foreign. A few books were sold, but the reception given at this time and to our colporteurs during the previous quarter is not encouraging. On the 21st of July Mr. Zwemer left for an extended tour via Bagdad and Hillah down the Euphrates River. An account of this trip, prepared at the request of the mission, is enclosed with this report. Mr. Cantine visited Mohammerah September 2d on mission business, and Mr. Zwemer, Abu El Kasseeb with books on September 28th.

Jakoob Johann was engaged in such work as he was able to do at Bagdad. We received letters from him frequently, and Mr. Zwemer visited his house at Bagdad. When he left Busrah (see our last report) word must have been sent in regard to him by the authorities here to the Government at Bagdad. He was arrested on landing there, appeared before the Wali and finally was allowed to live in his hired house at Bagdad under police surveillance and instructions not to leave the city. Later news is, that after the arrival of a new official, “Moarrif,” or inspector, he may be allowed to leave Bagdad, but not to return to Busrah.

Meanwhile, he has been faithfully witnessing for Christ. In
one of his letters he spoke of two Moslems who were inquiring the way of salvation, and said that one of them desired baptism. The other accompanied Mr. Zwemer on his tour from Bagdad, and failing to find work at Busrah at his trade as shoemaker left again for Bagdad. Both of them are being taught Christian truth at Jakoob’s house. It is encouraging to note that Jakoob’s wife’s mother, who was at first bitterly opposed to Christianity, now lives with them at Badgad and shows a very different spirit. Jakoob can freely visit the Christians at Bagdad and attends the services of the C. M. S. Mission.

**BIBLE DEPOT AND COLPORTEURS.**

Our Bible and colporteur work has been carried on during the past three months under the supervision and care of Rev. Mr. Cantine with much encouragement and success. Colporteur tours were few because of the departure of Elia and the absence of Jakoob at Bagdad, but our Bible and Book Depot was open every week-day in the quarter and many came to purchase the Scriptures.

The following table shows the sales for each month:

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<th>Bibles</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Educational</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>109</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>148</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarter</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
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42 per cent. 28 per cent. 30 per cent.

This table shows that the total number of books and portions of Scripture sold during the quarter was three hundred and twenty-nine, and the total value of sales equalled five hundred and sixty-four krans, or $77.75. Of all the books sold the Bibles and religious books equal 68 per cent. Naturally, the value of the educational books is more than that of Bibles and cheap Testaments, which are sold at the lowest price possible. The religious books include the usual Christian classics, sermons and Bible-picture stories for children. Most of these, as well as the Arabic educational books, are from the press at Beyrout. Dur-
ing the quarter both the American Tract Society and the Religious Tract Society of London have offered us very liberal terms in their publications, for which we owe them thanks. A grant of hymn books for our English services was made to us by Mr. S. B. Schiefelin of New York and a grant of Arabic tracts has been promised us by the Religious Tract Society.

We have kept no exact record of the number who call at the Bible depot from day to day. All classes visit the place, and nearly every one that comes and is able to read purchases something. More than half of our sales, perhaps two-thirds, were to Moslems. The depot is located near the bazaar and directly opposite to the Jewish Synagogue; on Saturdays we are always sure of a non-purchasing but interested Jewish audience. Although we advertise our depot by a large signboard, and do not hesitate to present the Gospel openly to such Moslems as come, no one has interfered with the work in any way; on the contrary, many of the government employees are our regular customers. Besides Arabic books we keep in stock and find some demand for Turkish, Persian, Chaldee, Hebrew, Hindoostanee, Greek, French and English portions of Scripture. We have not yet been able to secure a good colporteur for our work at Busrah, although we are in correspondence on the subject. During the greater part of the quarter the missionaries have themselves taken care of the depot every morning.

**MEDICAL WORK.**

Patients were seen by the mission doctor at our house as during the last quarter, although with added difficulties, until the 14th of August, when Dr. C. E. Riggs left the mission house and began private practice. Both at Busrah, and wherever we have been on tours, the call for medical missionaries is urgent, opportune and promising. And the demand for such a method of work only increases when its temporary supply is cut off. Of the power and success of this method in disarming prejudice and awakening sympathy in Moslem lands the C. M. S. Dispensary, conducted by Dr. H. M. Sutton at Bagdad, is a wonderful proof. The pre-eminent place and potency of this agency in Arabia, and in pioneer touring, it is unnecessary to reiterate.
TEACHING AND LANGUAGE STUDY.

The constant inquiries by Moslem and Jews in regard to a school during this quarter indicate a need and an opportunity. The Moslem day-schools here are so narrow in scope and so far behind in methods of instruction that they scarcely merit the name. The Jewish school, although still continued, has no longer an English teacher and is otherwise hampered in its work. While awaiting reply from the Trustees in regard to our recommendation as to a school, in the last quarterly report, a private class of Moslem young men, numbering five, has been organized by Mr. Cantine for the study of English. The lessons were at a private house. Besides this class one or two others have received lessons at our house as we had opportunity.

Both of the missionaries have had Moslem Arabic teachers during the quarter, but we have not yet been able to secure a first-class teacher at Busrah. For new missionaries a native teacher from Syria or Egypt would be essential.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The experience of the missionaries ever since arriving at Aden, their tours along the coast and inland, the opportunities for work along the Euphrates, the Tigris and the Gulf, and the deep consciousness that our mission is called of God to carry the Gospel into the interior of Arabia—all prompt us to make a special plea at this time for additional workers. There are several points near Busrah where permanent work should be inaugurated without delay, and places like Baherein, Muscat or Sanaa are equally, perhaps more, open to the Gospel than Busrah itself. The opening of a new station would not weaken, but in every way strengthen, our work here. Three ordained men at one station, unless extensive school-work prove possible and politic, are unnecessary. To place one man alone at Sanaa or Muscat, and he not a medical missionary, might be possible, but not wise. If the Arabian Mission is to be true to its name and purpose, it must occupy Arabia. After our letters and reports for the past year and a half it is no longer necessary to state that Arabia is as much open to the Gospel as other Moslem lands already occupied.

Hitherto one of the reasons why more men have not been
sent out seems to have been a lack of uninvested funds. We, therefore, recommend and ask that our salaries be reduced to $600 per annum (which is sufficient for living here), and the balance be applied to the salary of another missionary; that every effort be made, both by us here and by the Board of Trustees in America, to secure as soon as possible five men, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," ordained-men physicians or lay men, married or unmarried, to join us; and that, if need be, the invested legacy be used toward their support.

We recommend all the above, respectfully but urgently; conscious of Arabia's need; confident that the best way to increase contributions is by extending our work, and trusting that God will provide for the future.

JAMES CANTINE,
S. M. ZWEMER.

The Arabian Mission,
Busrah, October 6, 1892.