

the war of the Turks made it necessary to abandon the engineering part of the enterprise. Only two missionaries are fully supported by the Christian Association, Dr. and Mrs. Hall G. Van Vlack. By an arrangement with the Arabian Mission they are representatives of that Board, regularly appointed by the Arabian Mission, altho not supported by their funds. This unifies the work at Busrah and avoids any possible confusion on the part of the natives. Shaw and Haynes both taught in the school conducted by Mr. Van Ess of the Arabian Mission and Mrs. Van Vlack, a kindergarten teacher, will also assist in this work later.

Despite the fearful financial depression attendant upon the war the industrial work has progressed favorably. A hospital at Kuweit has been built for the Arabian Mission under the constant personal direction of either Mr. Shaw or Mr. Haynes. The plans for a hospital at Matrah, near Muscat, were completed.

Dr. Sharon J. Thoms, Michigan, 1898, had built up the practise in this region and the hospital was intended for him. For nearly fifteen years Thoms labored in Busrah, Bahrein and Matrah. In 1912 Thoms performed more operations and treated more cases than any other medical man in all Arabia. For some years he had sought to bring Matrah into telephonic communications with Muscat, and the realization of this plan was the sad cause of his death, for on January 19, 1913, Thoms was killed by a fall from a telephone pole while engaged in stringing a wire between Matrah and Muscat.

Foreign firms have employed the

Michigan engineers for the erection and planning of buildings. One of the largest contracts was for a building just outside of Busrah. The Turks had plans drawn for shops as well as for a Normal School and other public buildings, and the natives were just beginning to grasp the fact that these men are Christian engineers, with emphasis on the Christian, and that they were planning to assist in building up the country, not in exploiting it.

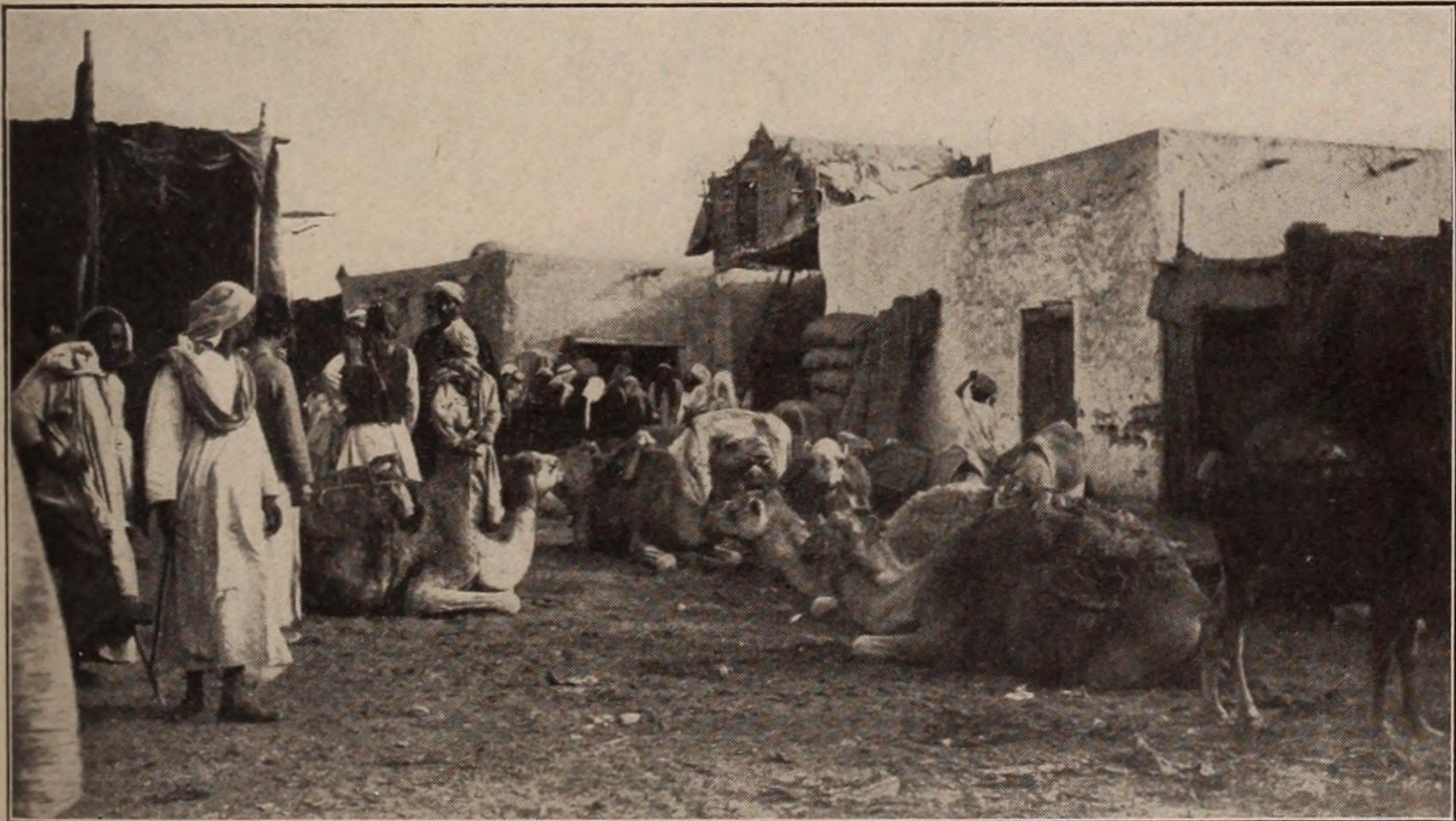
Busrah, a city of 40,000 inhabitants, has no water-works, no pavements, and no proper system of sewage disposal. Every year thousands of pilgrims embark at Busrah for Mecca and thousands more enter the city on their way to the shrines at Kerbela and Neif. Steamship lines connect with Bombay, London, Odessa, and Hamburg, and in date season even with New York.

The London Bombay Railroad, in construction, passes through this city and another branch of this road is to run from Busrah to Cairo. Oil fields have recently been discovered near the city and other mineral resources could be developed. Thousands of acres of the most fertile land in the world require only irrigation to bloom again. Busrah is destined to become in the future as it was in the past, one of the world's great commercial centers. The Christian engineer has a great field here.

An engineering and industrial school in this once famous Arabic seat of learning and even a medical school loom on the distant horizon of the promoters of this movement. For the present these are visions, but the two engineers and the three medical graduates and all this brave company of Michigan enthusiasts are a worthy



BEDOUIN BOYS AT HOME IN ARABIA—THEY NEED "BIG BROTHERS"



A MISSIONARY OPPORTUNITY—A BAZAAR SCENE AT DUBAI

WHERE THE ARABIAN MISSIONARIES GO

beginning looking toward the realization of that vision.

Question may well be raised as to the effect of this missionary enterprise upon the religious work in the University circles. In the first place missions have become a real factor in the lives of hundreds of students, and missionaries are no longer regarded by the average student as religious fanatics, for *real men*, even classmates, have gone into this work. The total of gifts to such causes has been pushed far beyond the sums formerly obtained and by staging the big campaign in the spring the churches are given opportunity to make their requests for funds before that time. There has been no conflict of interests and the churches have profited by the enthusiasm generated for the local undertaking.

By the mass meeting in the largest auditorium in the city the Christian Association has been able to reach the entire student body in a way not heretofore possible. Further than that, each student has had this program of extension work in the Far East presented to him four times during his college career. Each year two hundred or more canvassers have received special instruction in details of the work. In 1912 Michigan sent seven men into the foreign field, only one of whom went to Busrah, while in 1913 this representation was increased to twelve. The number of applicants for places in Busrah has exceeded the demand and the surplus has not been lost.

Not only is there an effect somewhat measurable upon the students

resident in Ann Arbor, but there is a similar effect upon the alumni who are kept in touch with the developments in Arabia. Particular effort has been made to keep the medical classes of which the three physicians were members and the engineering class of 1911, of which Shaw and Haynes were members in touch with the work that these men are doing and the experiences which they are having in Arabia. Thousands of the graduates of Harvard, Yale, Pennsylvania, and now Michigan have been given that personal touch with live missionaries which is so essential for a real interest. Apart from the good works of these University Missions themselves, publicity service about missions in general is certain to bear fruit among the educated men to whom these appeals are directed.

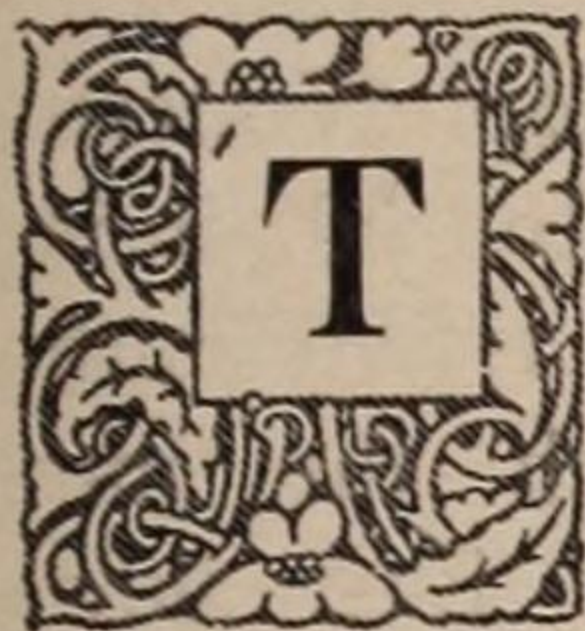
The Western world is prone to forget the debt we owe to the Arabs. For three centuries these people kept the spark of learning aglow while Europe was in darkness, for six centuries they led the world in all the branches of learning. Even today many mathematical and philosophical works of the Greeks are preserved only in Arabic translation made when the Arabs were the leaders of civilization. When through enterprises like this worthy project of the students at the University of Michigan we reveal to them the discoveries of our laboratories, and when we make available to them the achievements of our engineers we do no more for them than centuries ago they did for the civilizations of which we are a product.

The Future of Mesopotamia

SIGNS OF PROGRESS IN TURKISH ARABIA

BY ARTHUR K. BENNETT, M.D., BUSRAH, ARABIA

A Michigan Missionary of the Reformed Church in America



THE magic word Arabia has had a charm for us since the days of our childhood, when we were held entranced by the stories of the "Arabian Nights," but we have been ignorant of the facts about this most interesting country and its people.

Arabia is the land of the Arab and has been in his possession since the time of Abraham. To be sure Alexander the Great entered this country as did the Romans a little later, and the Portuguese, Dutch and English have held fortresses on the borderland, but that vast interior known as Arabia has held aloof from the rest of the world so that most of her secrets up to the present moment are her own. Few, indeed, have been the explorers who have successfully penetrated her dominions. Niebur, Palgrave, Doughty and others have given us glimpses of this strange land, but little real geographical knowledge has been obtained, and over 700,000 square miles of territory is absolutely undiscovered.

Hogarth in his book "The Penetration of Arabia" says: "Here is a land larger than peninsular India, which lies in the heart of the Old World and beside its main road of commerce, but we know much of it hardly better than the Antarctic Continent. It is so lean a territory

that international trade has little or no concern with it, and so difficult that the long circuit by sea is preferred to any cross route by land. Nevertheless, few regions of the world, have played a greater part in the history of mankind."

Arabia is sacred soil to a Moslem and not only are the cities of Mecca and Medina sacred because they are the birthplace and tomb of Mohammed, but Hail and Riad, the capitals of the two great Arab factions of the interior, boast nearly as absolute seclusion to all Christians.

We need only recall what the Arabs have done in history to realize that they have a right to our respect and consideration. At present they are impeding the progress of Western civilization not only by the religion which Mohammed founded, but by their system of lawlessness and brigandism. To-day, as a thousand years ago, this system defies the statutes of the rest of mankind, attacks and pillages neighboring tribes, raids peaceful merchants and harmless pilgrims. Plunder and murder is the chief objective of these Bedouin bands. The wasteful, destructive, ever-roving Arab presents a problem which even the English in Egypt, masters as they are in the art of governing Eastern peoples, have only just begun to master in their task of pacification.

The Arabs have been, however, intrepid explorers and master mer-