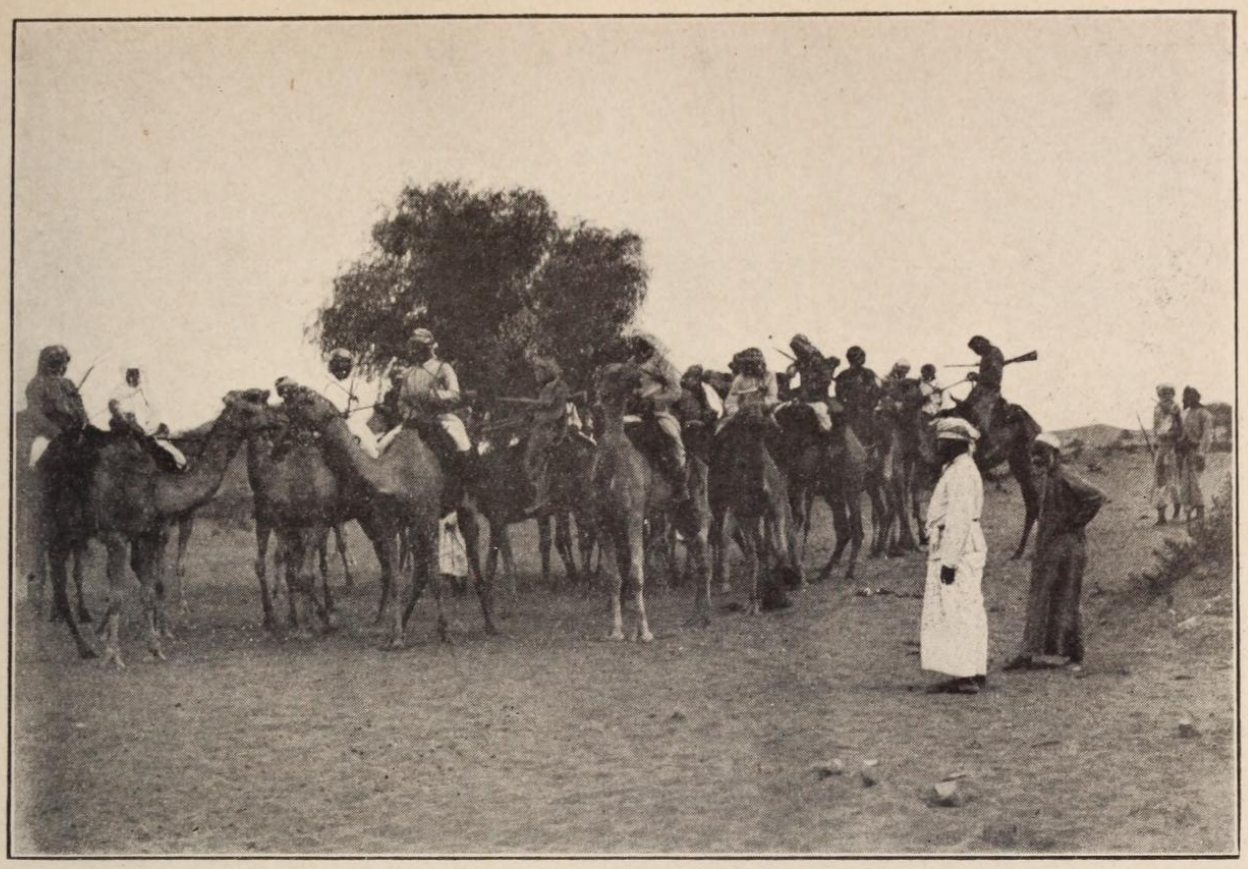

A CAMEL CORPS OF SOLDIERS IN OMAN, ARABIA

# War and Missions in the Persian Gulf*

BY REV. EDWIN E. CALVERLEY, KUWEIT, ARABIA
Missionary of the Reformed Church in America

THE mission stations in Arabia are far apart and, except those in Turkish Arabia, are under different native governments, with the British superintending their foreign relations.

At Muskat, where five missionaries are carrying on evangelistic and medical work, the government consists of a ruler, Sayid Taymur, whose title is Sultan of Muskat and Oman. His actual power extends only over Muskat and its environs, and is in reality maintained by British troops from India. The whole province of Oman has been in revolt for three years, chiefly because the British Government has been insisting that the gun traffic cease. This traffic has been a source of much profit, both to the Sultan and to the Arabs of Oman, who could buy guns in Muskat and sell them at a high price to Persians and others. They would then be smuggled across the Gulf through Persia and Beluchistan and sold to the tribes on both sides of the Indian frontier. The British were ready to

* Missionary work in the Persian Gulf is maintained by the Arabian Mission of the Reformed Church in America and by the Turkish-Arabia Mission of the Church Missionary Society. The former has stations on the western side of the Gulf at Muskat, Bahrein, Kuweit, and Busrah. The British Turkish-Arabia Mission is at Bagdad, with an out-station at Mosul. On the eastern side of the Gulf there are no mission stations, and 1,200 miles of Persian coast still await missionary occupation.—E. E. C.

A MISSIONARY CLINIC AT KUWEIT, ON THE PERSIAN GULF

recompense the Sultan of Muscat for the loss of the trade, but only after pressure was brought to bear did he agree to second their endeavors to stop the traffic at its base. The merchants and others whose risky but profitable livelihood was interfered with, consequently broke away from their allegiance to the Sultan, and refused to pay their regular tribute.

The association of the Sultan with the British allowed the rebels to give a religious character to their uprising, and they chose an *Imam,* or leader, who preached a *jehad,* or religious warfare. This Imam played upon the prejudices and superstitions of the people, and even promised to turn the projectiles of the English weapons into water, so that they could harm no one. Town after town joined in the revolt, until only Muskat and Matrah remained loyal to the Sultan. These towns were threatened by such a large body of rebels that the British increased their original contingent of 200 Sepoys to 700, and drew a cordon around the two towns for their protection. This indicates that the revolt has proved of more than ordinary importance.

In January the Arabs descended upon the towns, and were only driven off after 500 of their number had been killed. The missionaries, whose homes are outside the city walls, removed to the British Consulate during the attack, and so were safe.

The British officials claim that the revolt has been maintained by German interests, and report that they have discovered a German merchant at Bahrein who has been supplying the rebels with funds for a Moslem uprising.

Missionary work could not be ex-

pected to flourish in the conditions described. Only the medical missionary was able to do any touring. The out-station at Nakhl, in the heart of Oman, has been unvisited for some time. In Muskat the unsettled state of affairs has had an unfavorable effect on both school and Bible-shop work, but the dispensaries at Muskat and Matrah are kept busy.

Bahrein, the famous pearling center, has felt the influence of the European war less than the other stations in the Gulf. The people receive their information about the war chiefly from Indian and Egyptian sources, which are mainly pro-British, so that there has been little interference with missionary work. The hospital has been full, and the patients and others have provided large audiences for the preaching services. The work among the women has been especially encouraging.

The Bahrein doctor has also made a very successful tour to Katif, on the mainland, in a region that until two years ago was under Turkish authority, and practically closed to all Westerners. Since Abd el Aziz bin Saud, the Emir of Central Arabia, took the province of El Hassa, it is being opened by persistent and tactful efforts. There is every prospect that the province can be occupied as soon as the mission can secure the necessary workers.

When the European war broke out, Kuweit was a subject of much negotiation between London, Constantinople, and Berlin, since it has often been mentioned as a terminus of the

A SCENE IN THE KUWEIT BIBLE SHOP, ARABIA

Bagdad Railway. As the sources of news in Kuweit have been Turkish there has been considerable sympathy with the Germans. But the ruler, Sheikh Mubarak, whose title is now Sultan of Kuweit, is thoroughly pro-British, and recently gave over $15,000 to the Red Cross Ambulance Society. He is so strong in his rule, that nothing hostile to the Allies was ever done.

The absence of hostility toward the British, who are the chief foreigners of the Gulf, helps the missionaries, since peace and good will favor their activities.

Busrah is the mission that has suffered most from the war; but it has had less to endure than some other missions in Turkey and in Persia. The missionaries were not compelled to leave their station, altho there were anxious times when they wondered whether it would not be wiser to leave. Before Turkey entered the war the authorities started to mobilize troops and to requisition coal and other supplies belonging to their own subjects and to foreigners. The British consul ordered all British shipping to move to Persian waters at Muhammarah, and when the Turks announced that they were going to take over the British post-office the British ceased their mail service to Busrah. Later, all the British who could left for Muhammarah, and when war was finally declared the four American missionaries joined the Turkish Red Crescent Society.

The southern portion of Central Arabia, under Emir Abdul Aziz, was formerly occupied by Turkish troops, but has for some years been administered by the Emir for Constantinople. When Turkey joined in the conflict, she sent an envoy to the Emir to secure the assistance of his wild Bedouin against the British, but the Emir had already sent to ask the British how he could be of assistance to them.

No missionary work has yet been done in Central Arabia, but it is believed that the time is at hand when missionaries may enter there.

The chief activity in the Persian Gulf is pearl-fishing, and when the war started the market for pearls closed. Many of those engaged in the business continued their operations, but they only sank more of their capital in what yielded little or nothing. Around Busrah the Turkish mobilization also prevented the full harvesting of the dates and brought financial hardship to many. The situation in the Gulf is so serious that the British Government prepared to undertake relief measures for the needy, and the missionaries have also increased their methods of service.

After the Turks took over the post-office at Busrah, the missionaries were unable to receive their usual remittances and found themselves in straitened circumstances, and funds were only procured for them by cable through the American consulate at Bagdad.

In spite of difficulties the missionaries met in Muskat and celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Arabian Mission. They exprest the belief that never before were the prospects for their work among the Moslems of Arabia so encouraging, and asked for six new missionaries and increased funds to meet their growing responsibilities and opportunities.

# Why Be Interested in Missions?*

BY MR. GEORGE INNES, PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Honorary Secretary of the Cairo University

THERE are six reasons that I would like to mention, briefly, among the many that could be given, why one would choose to be directly and deeply interested in missions.

The first is that missions offer to one the greatest opportunity presented by any line of work for life. I do not think there is any enterprise in which a human being could engage that is capable of taking a man's talents and gifts and of expanding them as far as missionary work.

The second reason is that missions present the greatest difficulties of any enterprise, and so make one who is able to endure them, more rugged than he otherwise would be. The tremendous difficulties themselves give a charm to the work.

The third reason is the hopelessness of the task. A few years ago I traveled from mission field to mission field, marveling that any one had any hope of success, because I could see no good evidence that those lands would ever become Christian. When I spoke of this to a missionary who had spent sixty years in China, he answered: "It is true that, humanly speaking, there is no hope." There are other Christian enterprises that seem to hold out reasonable expectations of success, for the human mind can see how to attain the end in view. But one can not go into the heathen lands and come to any such conclusions by any human process. The very apparent hopelessness of the thing shows that we must be identified with a supernatural task.

Another reason is the exteme dangers of the task. It is hazardous to life; it is hazardous to one's family; it is hazardous to one's mind. But every undertaking is dangerous. The man in business is in constant danger. He is held in the constant grip of the nightmare that he may fail, that some day the thing may take a turn and slip away. The fear is not merely that he will lose money, but that his life will be a failure.

In this missionary enterprise, we have a guaranty that it will be dangerous from the start. When a man goes away to war, he knows that the chances are that he will lose his life. But to find a man wounded in the trenches is very different from finding a man wounded in his office. No explanation is necessary from the trenches, but an explanation may be necessary in the ordinary walks of life. If you lose your money for the glory of your country you are in a different position than if you lose it in the wheat-pit. Therefore, the very hazard of the missionary business is one of the greatest reasons why one is eager to undertake it.

A fifth reason is that it constitutes the most hopeful instrument for lifting one above self, of submerging

* From an address at the meeting of the American Christian Literature Society for Moslems, January 29th, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Olcott, New York.

ambition. Napoleon was a great man —or what might be called "near-great." He failed of being a great man because he could not rise above himself. He was not engaged in a big enough enterprise, or he might have succeeded. The missionary task practically guarantees that a man will rise above selfish ambition. I do not believe that a life spent continuously in the missionary enterprise in a heathen land can fail to accomplish it. One can not engage in the missionary enterprise without having conditions come up from time to time that make one say: "I will give everything to have this go." I do not mean it is always the wisest thing to dispossess one's self of all he has. As a matter of fact, it seldom is; but it is a mighty achievement to be willing to do it.

The sixth reason that I would give is that the task, being so difficult and so hazardous, means that you must live a life with Christ. You must pray or you will give up the work. Without Him you can not achieve anything. If a man has really given his heart to Christ, and is convinced that there is an enterprise that requires that he be a man of prayer, I think that he must ultimately undertake it.

What do I mean by that? There are men in all classes who pray. Some men who are not Christians pray, and nearly all Christians pray at times. But I mean more than that. Some years ago when I was in Scotland, my parents' native land, I stopt for a time in Glasgow, my mother's birthplace. While there I wrote to the only relative of my father whom I knew, who lived up in the Highlands, and told him that I was coming up to see them. I did not care very much about seeing him, for when he lived with us in Iowa, when I was a boy, he was such an austere man that the recollection did not bring much pleasure to my mind. But I went up there, and found that he lived about six miles out from the little town. With my little boy I drove out there, and finally stopt at the door of a little stone farm house. We rapped at the door, and my father's cousin greeted me. Then we went in and sat down together; but there was not much fellowship. When we had gathered corn together in Iowa for six weeks he spoke to me only twice during that time—and then he scolded me. That little old Scotch house had probably not changed much in generations. There were only two rooms, one at one end of the house was called the "butt," the other room at the other end was called the "ben." There were great flagstones for the floor, and there was a large, open fireplace in which they had burned peat until the creosote hung down like stalactites. It was a cold day in the latter part of December, and there was only a little piece of peat about the size of a potato smoking in the fireplace. My father's cousin said, "Come up to the fire and get warm." There was just about enough fire to make you hot by provoking you to anger.

He said, "I am glad you came out."

"Yes, I am glad I came out," I replied—and I was, because I could go home and say that I had seen my father's relative—but I might also have said, "I will be glad when I can go away."

"Well, can't you stay? Why didn't

you bring your wife out? Where is she?"

"Oh," I replied, "she is at the village, but it is cold and we have a little child that it would not do to bring. Besides, we have not very much time. We go to Egypt pretty soon." It was ten days before we had to sail, but I did not say anything about that.

We talked on for a while until the men came in from the fields. The wife got a big pot of potatoes and a pot of kale, and the men took their great horn spoons and went to eating. They did not even invite us to sit down with them. "Well," I said to myself, "this is hospitality." But by and by the food was cleared away. The wife and her husband had not eaten.

After the men had returned to the field, they said, "Weel, Gordie, come awa this wie," and they led us through a door into a room at the other end of the house. There they had prepared a meal that I did not know anything about. There was a stove in this room, and it was warm. There was linen on the table. They had gone down into their treasures, and gathered up all the heirlooms of generations to decorate that table. We sat there all the afternoon, and they brought the old Bible and we prayed together. Then when they said, "We do wish your wife had come," I said, "I really wish so, too; and perhaps she may, for in the livery where I hired the trap to-day I noticed a closed carriage."

The next day my wife and I drove out, and sat there all day long talking over relationships of the family. We rehearsed all the choice stories of the family, about those who were far away and those who had passed beyond. We spent one of the most delightful days of my whole life.

Now, you and I, in the ordinary forms of Christian work, have come into relationship with Christ, and we want to go away into the inner chamber and spend our days and nights with Him. We must have this fellowship of the inner chamber with Christ normally every day. Of all enterprises I know, missionary work is most likely to bring us into this intimate relationship with our Lord.

## CHOOSE YE THIS DAY

Three little words set forth the way
Which leads to Zion Hill,
And form three steps from earth to heaven—
"I ought," "I can," "I will."

"I ought"—'tis here that *conscience* speaks—
God's voice within the heart—
Points out the right, detects the wrong,
And shows where pathways part.

"I can"—this is the word of *faith,*
With eyes on Jesus' face,
Sure that when duty says "thou shalt,"
God gives the needed grace.

"I will"—mark now the word of *choice*
Which angels wait to hear;
For a willing God meets a willing soul,
And brings salvation near.

"Choose then this day whom ye will serve,"
Our Leader summons still;
Let each young voice make glad response—
"I ought," "I can," "I will."

—*Life and Work.*

# What Were the Apostles?*

## A MISSIONARY BIBLE-READING

BY MR. GEORGE J. WILLIAMS

THE word "missionary" is the Latin equivalent for the Greek "apostle," both words denoting "one who is sent." If we substitute the word "missionary" for "apostle" wherever it is used in the Gospels and Epistles, what a different meaning would be brought out in some familiar passages. For example, if we read: "He chose twelve whom He named missionaries."

"He sat down and the twelve missionaries with Him."

"I am the least of the missionaries that am not meet to be called a missionary." (St. Paul, 1 Cor. 15:19.)

"That ye may be mindful of the commandment of us the missionaries of the Lord and Savior." (2 Peter 3:2.)

What different associations would the expression "apostolic succession" suggest if we read it "missionary succession." It is doubtless true that the meaning of both words is different today from that which they conveyed when the original words were first used by the writers of the New Testament, but we believe that the substitution of the word missionary for apostle recalls important truths which have been forgotten, and brings us nearer to a true understanding of the original expression. At the same time it helps to remind us of the high apostolic dignity which attaches to the office of every Christian missionary.

The Gospels contain the substance of the message which the missionary has to deliver to the world, and the Acts of the Apostles, which might equally well be rendered, the "Acts of the Missionaries," provide illustrations of the ways in which this message was first delivered.†

A very illuminating reading of the New Testament follows the substitution of the word "missionary" for "apostle," as is seen in the following passages:

"When it was day, He called unto Him His disciples, and of them He chose twelve, whom also he named *missionaries.*"

"Now in the names of the 12 *missionaries* are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter; and Andrew, his brother; James, the son of Zebedee; and John, his brother," etc.

"The *missionaries* gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told Him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught."

"And the *missionaries,* when they were returned, told Him all that they had done."

"The *missionaries* said unto the Lord: Increase our faith."

"When the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve *missionaries* with Him."

"It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the *missionaries.*"

"They gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven *missionaries.*"

"They continued stedfastly in the *missionaries'* doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

---

*From *Australasian Men and Missions.*

†See canon C. H. Robinson's book, "The Missionary Prospect."