

to the south—is often in unsettled condition, but the tendency is ever to a more firm and stable rule, giving us better grounds for our hopes of growth in these directions. Under the enlightened supervision of the Indian Government, the prosperity of the Islands seems permanently assured. Our mission here is amply provided with buildings, and with an adequate working force we face the future with much confidence. Dr. and Mrs. Worrall will continue their medical work, and Miss Scardefield is still in charge of the girls' school. Mr. Moerdyk will take Mr. Pennings' place early in the year.

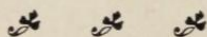
At Kuwait there are no changes this year. Dr. Harrison and Mrs. Calverley will do their best to treat the growing number of patients, looking forward to the time when the new hospital shall be finished. Mr. Calverley has his hands full in trying to meet new opportunities, evangelistic and educational. Our friendship with the ruling Sheikh and his people seems to be increasing and opening new doors for us yearly. One of these is the hinterland merging into the Nejd country of the centre of Arabia. It will be a disappointment if this same Nejd does not see one of our number before many months are past. Kuwait is another of those places on the Gulf, which, under the wise political direction of the British Government, seems to have a bright future ahead.

As at Kuwait, so at Busrah, no changes have been made other than releasing Mr. Van Ess from outstation work and giving him all his time for the growing school. Mrs. Van Ess is entering an unworked field with her plans for a girls' school. One will undoubtedly help the other and together they will fairly represent the mission's purpose to push education in this promising quarter. Prosperity is opening the lives of the people to many new impulses and outside influences are making themselves more and more felt in religion as well as commerce. Here is our opportunity, nay, our obligation, to present our message in a manner fitted to the new conditions. We can of course, with God's help be faithful in *little* things—little schools, little preaching rooms, little colportage—but it must mean more to the progress of the Kingdom in Busrah if we have the chance to be faithful in larger things—larger schools, chapels, hospitals and bible shops—larger, better plans for reaching the many, many thousands all around us. In Busrah will be felt the only loss due to furlough this year. Mrs. Vogel will be leaving for America and there is no one to take her place in the village and outstations.

Amara and Nasaria will have what they did not have last year, a resident missionary. Mr. Pennings will be there for the larger part of the time. In this district there now seems to be a more peaceable

spirit among the Arabs. Much seed sowing has been done there in years past and with one of our number on the ground to care for the sprouting grain, our hopes go out to the harvest season.

JAS. E. CANTINE.



## The Arabian Secret Service.

At the close of Annual Meeting, there are many things on the hearts of the missionaries. There is joy for success; there is sorrow for failure. There is uncertainty at the thought of great tasks to be undertaken; there is longing for the accomplishing of purposes not yet realized. Such great areas of the neglected peninsula lie as yet untouched by the gospel of Christ. Are we to see Arabia evangelized in this generation? Not by the unaided efforts of a few missionaries scattered in small groups along the coast. By whose help then? By the help of the Arabian Secret Service, of which you may be a member. Will you be among those who, helping together by prayer, by faith and patience inherit the promises for Arabia?

Shall we tell you some of the things for which special prayer is needed? In the last year two Moslem men have openly confessed Christ in two of our stations. Now begins the work of rooting and grounding them in the faith. Will you pray that they may be strong against the tremendous temptations which assail those who would leave Islam? Two years ago two other such men expressed their desire to follow Christ, and these are still faithful, although not yet ready for baptism. Your prayers will help to keep them true.

Last winter a most promising woman convert yielded to the temptations of the life she had left. Today she is most unhappy. You can help her gain the victory over the Tempter.

Another woman convert, though having denied Christ, seems, through suffering, to have lost her mental balance. It is not His will that one of these little ones should perish.

Four converts who were once baptized are now living openly as Moslems. These are the things that cause heartburnings in missionary life. Pray that these wandering sheep may return.

Our Mission is gradually emerging from the stage of small beginnings into the stage of large institutional work. Money and plans are ready for building a much needed hospital in Matrah. The Sultan there refuses to sell a building site. Pray that he may soon cease his opposition. Another such hospital and a dwelling are to be built

in Kuwait and five thousand dollars are needed to complete the project.

Our first large educational work is being started in Busrah. These are important years in the history of what we hope will soon be an influential Christian college.

The aim of the Arabian Mission from the date of its founding has been the occupation of the interior from the coast as a base. Almost a quarter of a century has passed and the interior remains unevangelized. Last year all attempts to enter were unsuccessful.



SON OF SHEIKH OF RIADH.

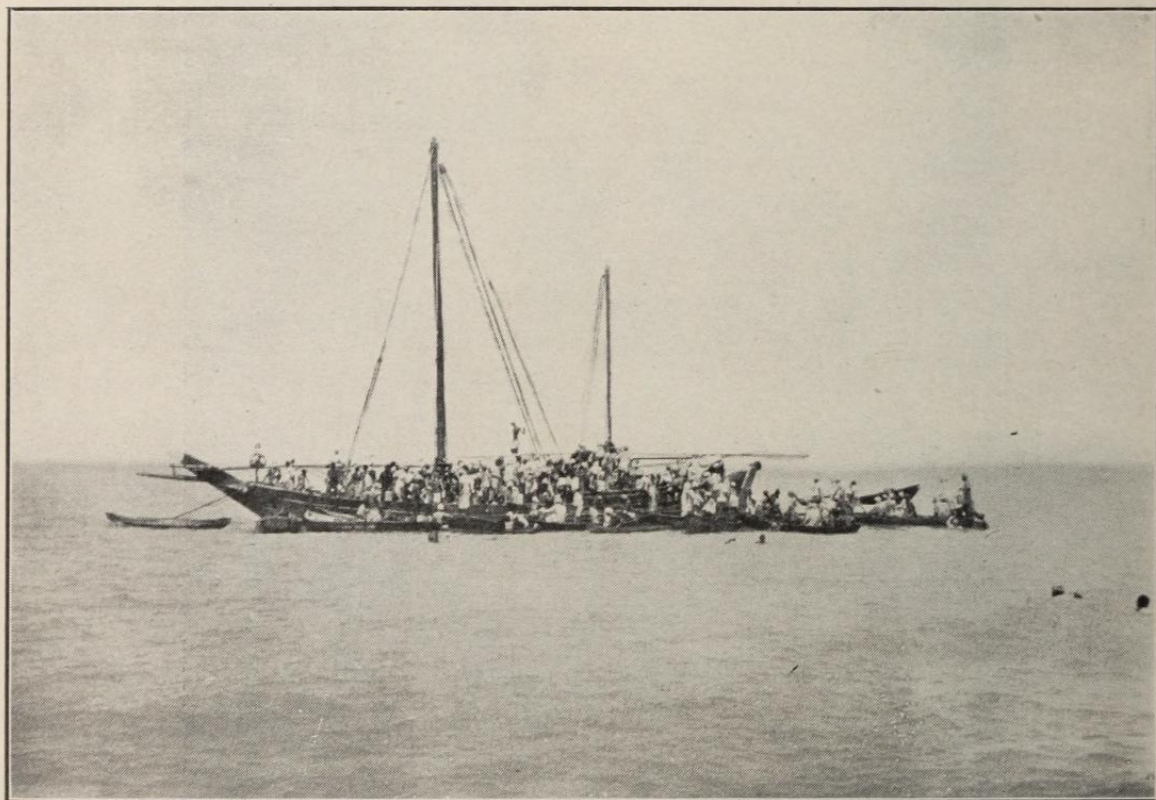
During this year other efforts will be made. In no part of the work are the services of the Arabian Secret Service more urgently needed than in this. Success must be the result of prayer. Will you pray now and often for these objects.

ELEANOR T. CALVERLEY.

## Touring on the Karun River.

It has been said of Missions to Moslem peoples, that the Medical work is the heavy artillery of the battle, since it breaks down prejudice and softens Moslem fanaticism, thus preparing the way for schools and churches. Medical Mission work is one of the fruits of Christianity, and so the Medical Missionary as the good Samaritan has unequalled opportunity to witness for his Master among the Moslems.

The Hospital as an institution exerts a powerful influence throughout the year, but the Medical Missionary needs to go out among the



BOAT ARRIVING AT KUWEIT WITH FRESH WATER.

people, far and near, in order to come into closer touch with all classes, and we try each year to tour for some time when the Hospital work is slack.

For a long time it has been my desire, to tour in the Karun River country because hundreds visit our Hospital from this region, so that we have not a few friends in the towns of Arabistan. Hence early in August our party consisting of Salome, the Hospital preacher, Julius, the Hospital Dispenser, my servant and myself, started out for Mohammera, where we were to take the boat for Ahwaz. The Karun is a short swift river, having its source in the mountains of

Persia, near Ispahan and Kermanshah and joining the Shat el Arab, about thirty miles below Busrah City. At their junction is located Mohammera a city of considerable and growing commercial importance. Here we took a small river steamer, for Nasaria el Karun, or Ahwaz as the British call the town. The steamer was much smaller than those plying the Tigris between Busrah and Baghdad, but it made fairly good time, covering about 125 miles in two days, through a country level, but in reality rising about a foot a mile. This country is very suitable for irrigation, and is covered with green vegetation, even in the hot months of summer. The same ancient method of drawing water is used that one sees everywhere along the Euphrates and Tigris. Along the river banks are wells with inlets from the river. From these weary oxen draw the water, by means of a skin bucket and a rope running over a pulley attached to wooden uprights. The operation is repeated hundreds of times all day, and sometimes long into the night one hears the creaking and squeaking of dozens of these bucket pumps. One ten horse power engine would irrigate enough land to open the eyes of the people to the inefficiency of their methods. An engineer who traveled down the Karun with us, said that a steam barge supplied with two ten horse power pumps, could go up and down the river, supplying water for irrigation. This would mean a fortune for the owner of the boat, not only, but also for the users of the water.

On the steamer we sold quite a number of Bibles. The Moslems showed little opposition, until a Chaldean Catholic priest, told one of them that the Gospel which we sold was not the true Gospel, but one that had been corrupted. The Moslem came to me, when I explained to him how and where we got our Arabic Bible. He went away satisfied. There should be harmony among Christian workers out here, because one of the hardest arguments to meet from the Moslem, is the oft-repeated one, that we Christians have taken certain passages referring to Mohammed from the Gospels.

Having arrived at Nasaria, Sheikh Chessab, son of Sheikh Ghazal, of Mohammera, received us, and insisted that we make his house our headquarters. We accepted this invitation, and were royally entertained during our stay.

The second day after our arrival, the Sheikh held a celebration in honor of his younger brother, on which occasion I counted nearly three hundred Arab horsemen who took part in the manœuvres and sports. Some of the horsemen made a fine appearance as they raced past one another, in a mock spear and rifle contest.

Ahwaz is a town of about eight thousand inhabitants, and is the center of a good farming district. Just above the city there are steep

rapids in the river, so that merchandise has to be transshipped by mules and carts, to a place two or three miles farther up, from whence steamers carry the freight another hundred miles into the interior.

It is nearly four years since the Anglo-American Oil Co. struck oil at Mesjid Solomon, in the foot-hills back of Ahwaz. Since that time, oil has been piped a distance of nearly one hundred miles to the banks of the Shat el Arab. Ahwaz is the center of the field management, and is consequently rapidly developing into a busy place. One sees here two or three automobiles, and small mule tram cars, working overtime on the company's business. As over a million pounds sterling have been put into this project, there is no doubt that the prosperity of this part of Arabistan has come to stay.

As yet there are no missionaries or colporteurs working in all this territory. The people who came to visit us at the Sheikh's house, were persistent in their demand for a dispensary and a school. The Sheikh treated us very kindly during our stay, so that we managed, not only to treat a good many patients but also to sell many Bibles, in his own house. He invited us to come there to open up work, promising us his help and favor.

In all we were in Ahwaz less than a week, but we sold over 150 portions of Scriptures, mostly Gospels. We were obliged to return at the beginning of the Moslem Fast of Ramadhan. But for that we would have stayed until all our books had been sold, and all our medical supplies exhausted. At another time we hope to go prepared for a longer stay, and we trust that we can occupy the town with a Bible shop before many years have passed.

ARTHUR K. BENNETT.



### Moslem Women's Meetings in Bahrein.

In Bahrein there are two great leading sects among the Moslems, viz., Sunnis and Shiah. The Sunnis are greater in number and influence. The Chief or Ruler of the island is a Sunni.

A very antagonistic party spirit exists between these two sects, and just as we read "The Jews had no dealing with the Samaritans" it is practically the same here between Sunni and Shiah. They do not pray in the same Mosques nor intermarry, nor allow their children to attend the same school. The Shiah observe or keep a ten days mourning every year which the Sunnis utterly ignore and ridicule. In many minor details they differ. The Shiah do not wash their hands the same way as the Sunnis before they pray. In a fu-

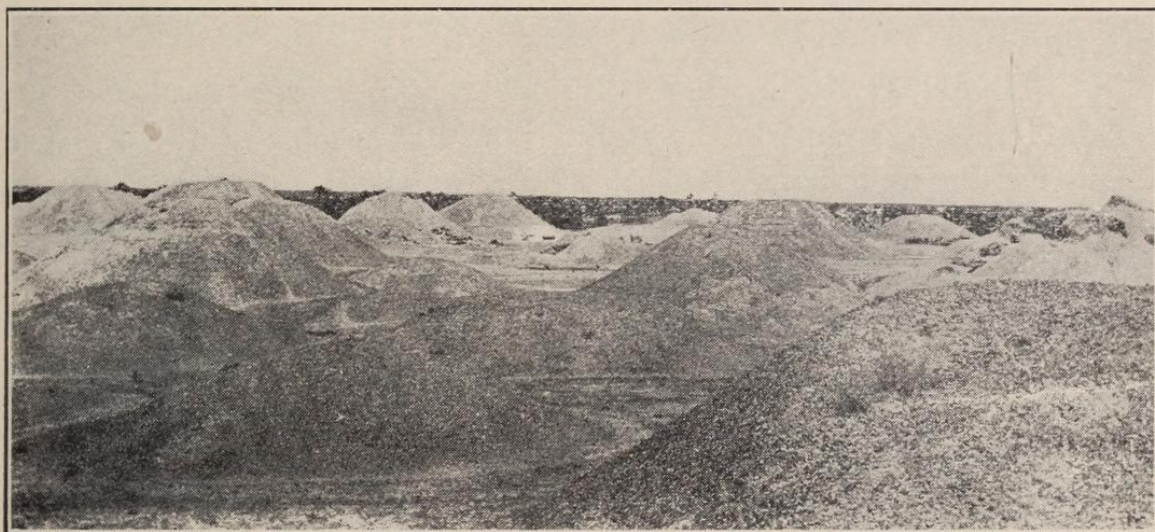
neral procession the Sunni women do not join or follow in the funeral procession but remain at home and weep until the relatives return. The Shiah women on the contrary follow and make great lamentation on the way to the grave, and if the corpse is a female the women lower the body into the grave, the men then return (after the women have departed) and fill in the grave.

Sometime ago I attended two different meetings, one among the Sunnis and one among the Shiahs. Perhaps you would like to hear a description of these two meetings.

The Sunni women do not hold many meetings with the exception of Ramadhan. I do not think they amount to four in the year.

The Sunnis celebrate the birthday of Mohammed, and at one of these gatherings I was present.

The first thing that strikes one on entering are the bright colored



PHOENICIAN (?) TOMBS AT BAHREIN.

dresses of the women and children. Various shades are mixed together, bright purple, orange, green, majenta and numerous other tints, which we cannot say blend well. Every one has on a new dress in honor of the occasion. All the jewelry they possess is worn, necklaces, ear-rings, nose rings and fingers adorned, and ornaments dangling from the braids of their hair, also jasmine and bunches of sweet smelling greens hang on the braids of their hair. Not content with finger rings they dye their hands and decorate them with a yellow and black stain, which they think is very becoming. When you sit down (but not on chairs) you have time to study the whole group.

READERS. In a prominent place, sitting against the wall are the readers, perhaps ten. Each reader takes part in turn, and reads in a high pitched key. I could not say that any of the audience paid any attention to what she was reading. Visitors were coming in all

the time and saluting one another as they took their places. The women would say "How is your condition?" "How is your evening?" "How are your children?" and many more of the same inquiries, and this was often repeated three times over. The reader never stopped, but went on reading as if the whole audience was hanging on her words.

I did my best to listen to what she was reading, but could gather nothing of exhortation, edification or comfort from what she read. It was a mass of endless repetitions and jingling rhymes. At stated times the whole assembly would respond, and that was rather harmonious; but if we repeated God's name the numberless times like they did it would sound anything but reverent. Over and over again they would respond "O God!" and nothing else.

Then came a very interesting part of the meeting (to the women), various slaves dressed in handsome silk dresses passed around with refreshments.

REFRESHMENTS. The coffee pots were held in the left hands and the handleless cups in the right. The coffee cups are always presented by the right hand, and the coffee pot held and poured out by the left hand. The reader never paused, but continued her reading while the refreshments were being partaken of.

Can you imagine a meeting in your own land like this one? The reader reading aloud, people coming in and going out as they choose, children making a noise, women scolding them, and refreshments passed around at the same time.

This is a faint pen picture of a Sunni Moslem's afternoon gathering or reading.

#### SHIAH MEETING.

The Shiahs on the contrary have many meetings in the year. Some of them have readings every Thursday and Friday afternoons. Some of these reading halls or rooms are attached to the houses of the wealthier class.

SHIAH HALL. Last week a Shiah lady asked me into the reading hall of her house. It was a good thing she favoured me, because many would have put me out, but it was her property and she had great influence. I took a very back seat (on the floor) so that I would not defile any of the ladies present. I kept my face as solemn as a judge, but it was hard work when I heard some of their remarks. Said one, "What is she doing here?" "What does she want?" Ans. "Oh, she will not do any harm." "Shall I put her out?" Ans. "No, let her stay." I let them fight it out between themselves, and kept perfectly quiet.

PIPES. In a corner of the room, very close to the readers, a