

Hind to Al-Muka'bar. If this letter should come to you by the hand of Al-Mutalammis, cut off his hands and his feet and bury him alive," and when he learned its contents he fled; but as for Tarfa, he did not take the trouble to inquire about the contents of the letter he bore, and consequently was killed. The tale of the letter of Al-Mutalammis became a proverb applicable to all who were deceived into their own destruction. In the story there is proof that the 'Ibadin, who were a Christian people in the region of Hira, knew writing and taught it to their youths. In Al-Aghani it is also said that the father of Al-Maraqqash the Great, entrusted his sons to a Christian from Hira, who taught them the *script*.

There is further evidence from the Mu'allaqat, the poems said to have been written on silk and hung on the curtains of the Ka'aba in Mecca. The most noted of these poems were written by poets from Christian tribes, as Taghallub and Bakr and Kanda, in whose writings there is a clear proof of the spread of the art of writing among the Christians.

Other proofs for this in the Christian poets are the lines of such as Hatim Al-Ta'i (Al-Aghani 7: 132).

"Do you recall the ruins of a mansion, like miniature writing on vellum."

Or as Mirar ibn Munqadh says in describing a ruin,
 "And you see there perpendicular forms, like the letter 'lam'
 in the revelation of the Psalms."

And also Lubaid,

"God has shielded the ruins from torrents, as though they were Psalms which the pen could not express."

And before all these poets, there was Imru' al-Qais, who likened the ruins of a house to the book of Psalms,

"To whom belongs a ruin, which grieves me like the script in the Psalms of 'Asib Yamani."

And he also said, referring especially to the Psalms of the monks,

"Come, let us weep because of the memory of a much loved friend, and for the signs of traces long since erased.

"Years have passed by, and they have become like the writing of the Psalms in the manuscripts of the monks."

Ummaya ibn As-Salt boasted of his tribe because they knew writing and said,

"My people are 'Ayyad, verily a great multitude, and if they settle in a country, the cattle become few by their generosity.

"A people possessing the whole land of 'Iraq and masters of the Book and the pen."

We have already shown that the Bani 'Ayyad were among the first to become Christians (Vol. I, p. 75), and one of them Laqait Al-'Ayyadi sent a letter to his people warning them of imminent danger from Kisra, which begins:

"Greetings from Laqait to all in the peninsula who are of the tribe of 'Ayyad."

In addition to all this, what dispels any doubt is the fact that the two pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions which are found today are by Christians.

The previous volume contains an engraving of the older of these (p. 100-104). It was discovered in Zubad near the Euphrates and goes back to the year 512 A. D., that is one hundred and ten years before the Hijrah. It is in three languages, Greek, Syriac and Arabic, and states that the monument erected there is in memory of St. Sergius the Martyr. In it there is a prayer addressed to God.* The second inscription was found in Harran, and is written in Greek and Arabic. It dates back to fifty-four years before the Hijrah, or A. D. 568. It is stated therein that it is a monument to St. John the Baptist, the first of it reading as follows: "*I, Shurahbal the son of Talmu, built this monument in the year 463.*"

We have also printed with this inscription two others in Arabic, one of which is in Nabatean letters. It was found at Namara in Safa by the French Expedition of R. Dussaud, and is from the tomb of one of the kings of Hira, called Imru Al-Qais ibn 'Amr, who died the 7th of Kaslul of the 223d year of Busra, or the 7th of December 328 A. D. The other document is a copy of the

*[See R. Dussaud's Expedition to the Syrian Desert, p. 316-324, and Lidzbarksi's Aramaic Documents, p. 484.]

Koran written on vellum dating from the third century A. H., and belonging to our Oriental Library. All of this evidence and proof has compelled the chief Orientalists to assign the origin or at least the spread of Arabic writing to the Christians of Arabia.

S. de Sacy has shown that the Arabs of 'Iraq and Mesopotamia borrowed the art of writing from the Christians. (*Journal Asiat. 1re Serie X*, pp. 210-211.)

Ph. Berger, the archaeologist, affirms the same in his *Historie de l'Ecriture dans l'Antiquité*, 2d ed., p. 287.

J. Wellhausen, the noted Orientalist, gives similar testimony in his "Reste Arabischen Heidentums" (p. 232).

Q. Rothstein (*Die Dynastie d. Lahmiden in al-Hira*, p. 26) and I. Goldziher (*Muhammedanische Studien I*, p. 110) both substantiate the foregoing conclusions.

All of these testimonies are quite sufficient to establish the fact that the credit for teaching the Mohammedans writing is due to the Christian Arabs, although we do not deny that the Jews, especially in Medina, had a share as Al-Baladhuri had shown. It is said that some of the Arabs of Pre-Islamic times wrote in Hebrew, or rather Aramaic or Syriac. There is the statement, for example, of the author of *Al-Aghani* (3: 13) that Waraqa ibn Naufal wrote in Hebrew characters from the Gospel whatever he chose.

This same tradition is found in the opening chapter of *Al-Bukhari*.

E. E. ELDER.

Cairo, Egypt.

SEEN FROM A STAMBOUL DAY SCHOOL

Neither the Sunday saunterers nor the playing children in the streets below pay any attention to the call to prayer from the mosque in Stamboul. Few keep the required five times of worship now, and the educated agree quite frankly with a friend of ours, who says he does not believe in religion. "I am neither Moslem nor Christian, but of course when a situation like this arises, when all Christendom is arrayed against Islam, I am a Moslem, and a strong one," he told me when the Turkish treaty was published last summer.

There is, however, a certain openness of mind, and an evident desire for help, from whatever source it may come. Dr. Sherwood Eddy's meetings were crowded, and there were many requests that he speak in higher Turkish schools, and at other times in the University, and in a theatre here in the Turkish section of the city. We were all sorry he could not stay here among the Moslems long enough to more than prepare the ground for later sowings. Near us the Stamboul Branch of the Y. M. C. A. was opened on Friday, with inspection of the building, a pleasant tea, and speeches from the chairman and the national secretary of the Y. M. C. A., the head of the Turkish Normal School for men, the director-general of the Turkish orphanages in the city, and the head of the Protestant Chancery. Finally Mr. Goodsell of our mission, who is at present in charge of this Y. M. C. A. work for Turks, declared the building open. The rooms were jammed with guests, mostly Turks, a few foreigners like ourselves, and a sprinkling of leading Protestants who are big enough to rejoice in this new opportunity of serving young men, especially those of the ruling race from which they have suffered so much. Now we will

see how the young men come to make use of the clubs and classes, lectures and meetings, books and good fellowship.

Before long we expect to open in a distinctly Moslem section, only ten minutes away, a similar house for girls under the Y. W. C. A. The head of one of the two principal schools in Stamboul which receive girls is one of our most ardent Stamboul Branch Committee members, and the English teacher in the other school and its principal are also very cordial to us.

Here in school we see the same willingness to take what we have to give, as far as they understand it. Since the end of August we have refused 188 children, quite half of whom are Turks, because we had no room for them and some of our 270 are packed in their rooms almost like sardines in a box. Yesterday a man suggested that his niece and nephew might stand if there were no chairs for them, or he would send two for them to use. Any proper public health official would agree with me that we already have more chairs in some rooms than is good for the pupils. I was rather glad the other day when the head of the public health of the city came to put his four-year-old daughter in school, that it was a Saturday and there were no children to crowd the rooms. And I was glad too to have a new excuse to give him for refusing to receive her—we do not take children under five.

It is rather heartbreaking to refuse all these children. Some are refugees from the interior. Just yesterday a thirteen year old boy came. He had been a pupil at Marsovan, and had a letter from Doctor White, president of Anatolia College. His people had been driven out, and brought him too. Now the way is closed for him to go back to school. But he does not know enough English to go in one of our two highest classes where there is room. He cannot get into the Greek school. I was thankful to send him to the central Y. M. C. A., for they have a school for just such boys. But there is no such hope for the two children for whom chairs were offered yesterday. The

Turkish schools are many of them closing now for lack of funds, so these children were put out of their own school, and besides their two uncles say that they want their wards to have the kind of training two cousins are receiving here. I could only suggest that they get a private teacher for the rest of the year, and register early next autumn. But many cannot do that, and their children remain "in the street," as the expression is.

It is estimated that there are in the city 100,000 Turks of school age, and by their own government figures, which are sure to make the situation look better than it is, 25,000 are registered in school. Since these figures were published, several of their schools have been closed. A larger proportion of Armenian and Greek children are in school, if we do not count the recently arrived refugees.

A couple of weeks ago the basement room of the church building, which was begun across the street from us before the war, was completed and dedicated by the Gedik Pasha Armenian Evangelical Church. The pastor, our neighbor, came in a few days ago to talk over with us plans of cooperation. The Armenian Christian Endeavor Society is to meet there on Sunday, and three of the older Armenian classes of the Sunday school. They will add also an adult Bible class in addition to Mr. Stambouljian's in Turkish, where several races come together. That will relieve greatly the congestion with us. We have two or three available teachers and we hope to get one or two additional classes started, from among those who have not been coming much yet.

Of course this Sunday-school attendance is all voluntary, in addition to the required curriculum Bible three times a week. We use the Pilgrim Graded lessons, which seem to fit our needs very well. Perhaps my favorite class is Senior Bible, using the life of Jesus for our teaching material. The greater part of the older children are day pupils also, but our two Primary and Beginners' Departments are made up largely of children who do not

come to day school. I hope we can keep an increasing number of these in the upper classes as time goes on, and get a larger number of our little day school children to come to Sunday school.

Except for the required Bible lesson and comparatively easy discipline, our school is very like one of similar grade at home. We have more language in our curriculum, for though English is the language of the school every child studies his vernacular a period a day, and French is elective above the fourth grade for those who are doing passing work in the required subjects. But the other things are the same old things a child of the same grade studies in an American school. And I was very much interested to have one of the Y. M. C. A. secretaries tell me today that our boys were far more like American boys than any other group he had seen out here. I suppose there is a certain atmosphere that they take in unconsciously, for it is very far from our thought to do anything like denationalizing them.

And we have the same mixture of boys and girls, rich and poor that you do. Among the twenty-six children of our second grade is the daughter of a drunken father and a woman who sometimes sells things on the street and who sometimes goes out washing, the son of our Protestant clergyman neighbor who received his training at Edinburgh University, the son of the mayor of Stamboul, and the son of an official of the court of the ex-Shah of Persia. In another grade is the son of the ex-Shah, who is also brother of the present ruler of Persia, the son of a wealthy cigarette manufacturer, the daughter of a teacher in our school who lost her property and her husband during the deportations, the son of a poor basket-maker who can pay only a tenth of the regular tuition of \$40 a year, besides the children of various self-supporting widows and small merchants.

We find that brains do not go with money any more surely here than elsewhere. One day last August two new

Greek pupils were registered. One was the 12 year old son of a wealthy cigarette manufacturer, the other the 10 year old boy of a widow who is earning her living by continuing her husband's little cheese shop. Both boys were put in the class of those who did not know English. Now the younger one is sent with honor to the fourth grade, and the older rich one can scarcely make the third grade. He will probably leave next year for the Preparatory Department of Robert College, so we will do the best we can for him until that time.

I've just been reading with great satisfaction Margaret Sherwood's "A World to Mend." Out here, even more than with you, the world seems to need a thorough repairing, like the shoes Miss Sherwood mentions, in which the original substance largely disappeared under the repairs. More and more deeply we are all learning—you and I—that the new world is not going to be built up on new laws or new governments, but on new men and women, made after the pattern of Christ. What greater privilege than ours who are called to help Him prepare the foundation stones of the new and glorious city of God?

ETHEL PUTNEY.

Gedik Pasha, Constantinople.