

one of date gardens, wheat fields, and beautiful stretches of dark green alfalfa. It is the richest district of Arabia, and doubtless also the most densely populated. The inland bedouins come here to trade from almost the entire eastern half of the peninsula. The Church of Christ occupies no point in Arabia comparable to this in strategic importance.

But it is a bigoted fanatical place, whose doors are shut to every one except the Medical Missionary. What are the opportunities for medical work? Opportunities of the sort that break men. A mass of diseases to be treated, of surgery to be done, such as ten men could not overtake. Indeed, fifty men could not handle it properly. A sanitary situation as bad as human ignorance and filth can make it. The worker in Hassa with his little hospital must undertake single-handed the fight against the forces of hygienic depravity of the whole eastern part of Arabia. The inertia of centuries, ignorance so profound that it is almost sublime, some of the bitterest religious prejudices of the world, will all be pitted against him. But an inch at a time he will forge ahead and finally win, because the Promises of God and the Laws of God are with him.

To the man of softness and ease, Arabia has little to offer, but to the man who thirsts to fight for the bodies and the souls of men, against everything that the world, the flesh, and the Devil can muster, it has everything to offer. Hard tasks for strong men. Dangerous tasks for brave men. Long, tedious, back-breaking tasks for faithful men, who serve the Lord Christ.

Progress

BY MRS. EDWIN E. CALVERLEY, M. D.

There are some mission countries in which missionaries are looked upon as gods. As in the case of the early disciples it is sometimes necessary for the messenger of the Cross to restrain those whom he has helped from worshipping him as divine. In Arabia we are free, at least, from this drawback. The missionaries to the descendants of Ishmael are considered by those whom they would serve not as gods, but as infidels.

"Kafirs," they call us; "infidels." Should the missionary stop for a cup of tea in the tea shop by the road side, he may not, perhaps, be refused the beverage, but he must not be surprised if, after he has drunk, the owner of the shop dash the cup to the earth breaking it into a thousand bits lest some true believer be polluted by partaking from the same receptacle. "Unclean dogs," "eaters of pigs," "Would you go to *them* for medicine?" our enemies ask of would-be patients. Sometimes we hear the sick in the hospital talking quietly among themselves after they have been treated kindly and eased of their sufferings—"Why do people call them kafirs?" they ask.—"Surely they fear God; they are more merciful than the Moslems." "Have nothing to do with them" adjures the ignorant, fanatical mullah, "do not even listen to the telegrams which come daily with news of the war; beware of them; they are English magic!"

There is a house in Kuwait which is the home of the highest Moslem religious official to be found in all the country round-about. Wealthy in the extreme, he owns houses and gardens galore both here and in Basrah. He is an aristocrat, proud to be holding the position held by his father before him. He has travelled extensively in India, Egypt and Turkey, and loves to discourse at length, in English, upon his experiences. For a Mohammedan to be able to speak English is a great distinction here in Arabia. In his harem are perhaps the most beautiful Arab women we have seen, all women of high birth and gentle breeding.

It was to the harem of this gentleman, that I was called soon after our arrival in Kuwait, six years ago. His house was on the edge of the town, a long walk from our home, but small matter that, when a new and untried missionary doctor receives a call from an important personage! So along we went, the little black bag and I.

From the doorway in the wall I was ushered into a huge courtyard and from there into a long reception room carpeted with wonderful Oriental rugs. All along the sides of the room sat women, young and old, with their black cloaks drawn close about them. At one end a bed was spread on the floor and on the bed lay a lovely young bride, the most beautiful of all the women, and the daughter of the master of the house. I was received with the necessary greetings in low restrained tones and great dignity. Then I was allowed to sit at the side of the patient and take her temperature and feel her pulse and by other means ascertain the nature of her illness. She was not in a dangerous condition. Throughout all the examination I was conscious of that row of black robed women, silent, staring, unfriendly in their attitude. "Kafir," "Kafir" the very silence seemed to be shrieking. Finally when I felt ready to prescribe I took out a bottle of tablets. "One of these tablets every three hours," I was saying. "O no," answered the patient's mother, "give her a liniment if you like, but no internal remedy. We are not willing for her to take any internal medicine." So a liniment was prescribed. Perhaps coffee was served, I can't remember that, but I know that it was with a feeling of relief that I reached the open road once more, where the sky and the sea and God's own sunshine reached out to me hands of welcome with no cry of "Kafir, Kafir."

It was more than five years after this experience that we returned to Kuwait after furlough in America. Many things had happened during the interval. The missionaries had left their former native house in the centre of the town and moved out to the edge of the desert to live in their comfortable bungalow and to work in their well equipped hospital, near neighbors of our aristocratic friends of whom I had been telling you. Meanwhile our women missionaries had been making friends by the score in this new neighborhood. "We must go to call on the family of ———," they told me soon after my arrival. "They ask about you and want to see you." "What!" I exclaimed. "Do you

mean to tell me that those women have become friendly?" And then I related my uncomfortable experience of the early days in Kuwait. We went to call one day and how they welcomed us! They wore their prettiest dresses in our honor and offered us their choicest refreshments. "Do you remember that time you called on us so long ago?" they laughed. "You did look so scared."

Since then, the invitations to the house of these neighbors have been constant and urgent. Gifts of food of various kinds are often brought to us by the slaves of the household. When our baby was lying very ill, messengers came from these friends with words of loving sympathy, solicitous to hear of the welfare of the little one. One moonlight night, as the greatest honor these purdah ladies could offer us, they came to call upon us and to see our new house. We had promised that no man should be on the premises, for it is only with the utmost precautions that these women are allowed to leave their home. They were like children out of school, light hearted and irresponsible. They went through the rooms of our new house with exclamations of delight and admiration. They walked on tiptoe and talked in whispers in the nursery, pausing to peep at the little sleeping forms in the cribs. They sat at the dining room table for refreshments with many laughing comments about one another's table manners, for they were used to eating on the floor. Dr. Mylrea's gramophone did its best for the occasion and the guests especially enjoyed the "laughing song" record, accompanying the music with much merriment of their own. When the time for departure had come, our friends were loathe to go. There was, I am sure, no thought of "Kafir" on this occasion.

We are frequently called upon to prescribe for various members of this household, from the father to the smallest infant, and the patients never object to taking remedies internally. Recently the gentleman took occasion to thank us for our professional care of himself and his family, and the women and children of the town.

But this is not all. For a long time we felt that in our intercourse with these friends religious subjects were prohibited. We have prayed and waited for guidance. Now, of their own accord the women ask us questions about our faith, and tell us that they have read the New Testament, while they request us to give them illustrated Bible stories and a copy of the Psalms. The word of God is in their hands; the results are in His hands.

The progress of the Kingdom seems slow in Arabia. Converts are not numerous. Is it not a great thing, however, that not only houses such as we have described, but whole towns are being won over from hatred and scorn to friendliness and willingness to hear our message? They cannot believe if they will not hear, but when they hear, the word of God is as a two edged sword. They are "coming, coming; yes, they are," even from Arabia.

The Present Need

BY C. STANLEY G. MYLREA, M. D.

Arabia is the hardest mission field in the world. This has been acknowledged again and again till to-day it is almost a platitude. The problem of Islam is the most difficult of solution of any of the Missionary problems, and though the outlook for the success of missions to Moslems is brighter to-day than ever before, still the fact remains that Islam is a stubborn, powerful, courageous and fanatical foe, proud in its own strength and very far from being beaten as yet.

Especially true is this estimate of the position in ancient Arabia where education is still non-existent and where true civilization is not wanted except by an insignificant minority. Arabia was Islam's birth-place and the spirit of the country is the same old uncompromising spirit that characterized the Arab of Mohammed's days.

The spirit of absolute superiority to and intolerance of all other religions, whose followers are all summed up under the one contemptuous heading—Unbelievers.

The spirit of absolute certainty that their religion cannot be defeated but that Islam will ultimately dominate the world, and that all nations, creeds and tongues will one day own the prophet of Arabia as the last of the prophets, the seal of God.

The spirit of Pharisaic self-righteousness which fasts and tithes and thanks God that it is not as other men are, that makes clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within is full of extortion and excess.

The spirit of hardness of heart, perhaps the most prominent trait in the Semite character—the same spirit that persecuted and killed the prophets of old—the same spirit that finally crucified the Lord of All.

The spirit that wearied Jehovah in the wilderness and wore out Christ in Jerusalem, till He cried out heartbroken, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life."

The spirit that murdered Raymond Lull and that has been responsible for the hundreds of thousands of murdered Armenians.

The spirit of contempt for the Christian missionary who in their opinion is wasting his time and cannot possibly attain any measure of success proportionate to the effort he is making.

This was the spirit which the pioneers of Christianity in Arabia had to face. They accepted the challenge to their faith and went out in the name of the King of Hosts whose armies were being defied by the Philistines.