



"After the durbar I saw Ibn Saoud twice in the Kuweit Sheikh's *mejlis* and once when he made a personal call, and I was able to chat with him informally and further study the man. It is always an extremely difficult thing to estimate Arab character from a political point of view; but a straightforward friendship will, without doubt, make a valuable ally of Ibn Saoud, and go a long way towards bringing all the chiefs of Arabia into harmony—an event far more likely to-day than yesterday. Once the Arab chiefs can be made to realise that their welfare lies, not in constant feud, but in peace and mutual confidence, what England desires for Arabia will be accomplished. It may be that Ibn Saoud is the instrument that can bring those desires to pass."

The invitation from this strong Sheikh to Dr. Harrison to visit his capital and the welcome which he received on his arrival promises great things for the future. The prayers and the sacrifice and the patience of twenty-five years will not be in vain. The purpose of the founders of the Arabian Mission under God will yet be accomplished and the interior of Arabia will be occupied. It is imperative that we, as a Church, do our utmost this year to hold our own in our missionary contributions that we may be prepared when the time comes to "go up and possess the land."

N. B. In connection with this article read the latest word from Dr. Harrison in his article on the Present Urgent Medical Situation, written from Hassa probably on his way back from Riadh. His own report on the trip will be published later.—EDITOR.

## Some of Maskat's Shadows

By MISS CHARLOTTE B. KELLIEN.

The tears of a thirteen year old girl are usually neither rare nor alarming, but come, like sudden April showers, refreshing and sweetening, and making sunny smiles shine all the more brightly; but in Moslem lands where there is little or no carefree girlhood, such tears often spring from a tragedy too grave for the young heart. The child who came to the mission house to bid her friends a long farewell, was weighted down with a woman's sorrow, and from that sorrow there is no redress in Islam; indeed, not even a consciousness that redress is needed.

Why should she weep, the father would say, when all he intended was to give her a husband; but women are such unreasonable creatures, never satisfied with what Providence—at the hands of their exalted menfolk—has decreed for them. The girl, however, looked at the prospect before her with different eyes and a truer vision because of the experiences of women all about her. On the far-off western coast of Arabia lived an older cousin,—how much older it may spare our feelings not to know, and to this strange kinsman the father had determined to give her in marriage. In vain the mother pleaded for

delay, for the choice of a husband nearer home; her only answer was abuse and finally divorce and, hardest of all to bear, a refusal to allow her to see her child before she was forced away into a new servitude under an unknown master. Was it any wonder that she wept on the eve of her departure from the familiar scenes of her childhood, with a long and terrifying journey by sailing vessel before her, and in her heart a fear of the new husband and his relatives far greater than her dread of the deep and its dangers. And to leave behind her the only real love she had ever known, and perhaps would ever know,—this was the crowning grief as she faced the uncertain future.

And what of the mother's heart? It is for this that Moslem women rear their daughters and are mute.

Beggars seem to be an inescapable feature of life in the East, and need not surprise us wherever found; but as we take our walk at sunset along one of Maskat's dusty roadways, we are moved to wonder concerning this large company of suppliants that line the way, until the hideousness of some of the outstretched hands tells its own story. We have reached the leper colony outside the city gates, and here, when the heat of the day is past, the victims of this dread disease assemble, hoping for a few mites to meet the morrow's needs. Many of the passers-by are themselves miserably poor, and yet the appeal for alms is never made in vain; for in addition to the constraining impulse of compassion, they are moved by the thought of the reward stored up for them in the next world for every kindness shown to a fellow believer on earth. There are suggested horrors behind the covered faces of these suffering men and women, and other sadly marred faces which ought, in mercy to the public, to be veiled. Their houses are close by, small, mean places where the poor unfortunates drag out a miserable existence, without special medical work or organized charity to alleviate their lot. One feels a shock of apprehension at the sight of little children, at present free from the scourge, playing about unconcernedly in such surroundings, and one longs to be able to rescue them before the taint has entered and made of their young bodies a living tomb. There is a courage and an uncomplaining acceptance of their fate more pathetic than tears as the outcasts return our greetings and in reply to our inquiries answer only, with Islamic resignation, "Praise be to God." His name is constantly on their lips, but their hearts are as far from Him as their poor, diseased bodies are from purity. Would that they might understand and accept the message of the One who can grant them the cleansing that will give them the right to enter in through the gates into the city.

Grim tasks await the woman physician who would help remove the age-long burden of suffering from the women of Islam, some of them so revolting in their details as to remain forever untold. The proud, passionate nature of the Arabs is easily roused to unreasoning anger,

and since there is no demand in their religion for self-restraint and the keeping under of the body,—except in the yearly fast of Ramahan, when the feasting and rioting of the night time provide abundant compensation for any discomfort by day,—the result of a man's fury is sometimes so terrible as to surprise even himself in a saner mood. A man and his wife disagree over a daughter's waywardness and unwillingness to stay at home! As usual all the blame is placed on the mother, who does not acquiesce in her husband's opinion as dutiful wives are supposed to do, and the sequel is that she is brought to the mission dispensary with a great gaping knife wound in her abdomen, almost unconscious from loss of blood and shock. The husband meantime feigned himself mad, and because the woman was a former slave of one of the town's great men and the mother of his daughter, nothing could be done to punish him, lest that noble family be touched with a breath of scandal by even this remote connection with a criminal.

An immediate operation was necessary for the woman, and as one went about the unlovely work of preparation, the heart was not strengthened by the thought that a husband's hand had dealt the cruel blow. There was a question and a dumb wonder in the eyes she sometimes turned on us, as if the *Why* of her fate was a problem too big for her simple mind and she sought from us the answer to the riddle. The women of Islam are trained to suffering from childhood and survive much, but in this case the death wound had been dealt and could not be combated. All the doctor's efforts were in vain, and the neglected, sinful spirit went out through the darkness into the presence of the Great Judge. Remembering His justice, as well as His mercy in which Moslems so implicitly trust, we wondered then, as we wonder now, how the soul of this, our Moslem sister, found a resting-place for eternity.

## The First Lady of Kuwait

By MRS. C. STANLEY G. MYLREA

As we entered the room our hostess stood up and with a merry smile said in reply to our greetings, "Welcome, welcome, how are you? If God will, I hope you are well." She motioned us to the chairs which were obviously arranged for European visitors, while she sat on a rug on the floor. There were large hard pillows against the wall and a small and softer pillow was near her so that she could lean her elbow against it when she got tired.

She was small and stout with fair skin and her pretty Arab clothes falling gracefully about her made her a real picture. Her close fitting dress was of a delicate shade of pink silk and over that was a full robe, golden brown in color and also of silk. Around her head was the black veil of milfa which came down under her chin and was spread out over her chest making the pink and brown underneath even