



Have we anything to offer our Moslem sisters, anything better than what they have? Listen a minute! There is music. A group of Arab women are visiting the missionaries. One of the hostesses is playing the baby organ, while the others sing in Arabic. The Moslem guests pay rapt attention. This is something new, it gives them pleasure; and the words, what do they mean?—

“What a friend we have in Jesus, . . .  
 Can we find a Friend so faithful,  
 Who will all our sorrows share?  
 Jesus knows our every weakness,  
 Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
 Are we weak and heavy laden,  
 Cumbered with a load of care?  
 Precious Saviour, still our refuge,  
 Take it to the Lord in prayer . . .  
 In His arms He'll take and shield thee,  
 Thou wilt find a solace there.”

It is very new to the Arab guests, and very different from anything they have ever heard before.

We have an Arab friend who used to be a Moslem. I wish you could hear her sing those words in Arabic. She knows what they mean, and she loves them. She knows Christ Himself. He is her Saviour. It is He who has put the look of joy upon her face and the song upon her lips. Ask her what Christ has to offer the women of Islam, what He has given her. She will tell you He has given her the beauty of His living Presence, for the ashes of a dead and powerless faith.

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## The Maskat Band

MISS FANNY LUTTON.

We have many musicians in Maskat. Their musical instruments are various—various in shape, material, and tone. One negro, who is almost as famous among some of his hearers as is Paganini, makes his own instrument out of a dried calabash, skin, some strings of wire, and a bow composed of two thin datepalm sticks. I have seen this man quite entranced with his own efforts; although I could not distinguish any musical sound whatever; and he is in great demand for the dances and musical festivals. Others have horns of animals which they blow for hours. At some of their all-night concerts, which frequently last from 8 p. m. to 4.30 a. m., they toot these horns in-

cessantly; in fact, Maskat is so musical that it is very hard for newcomers to get a good night's rest. It was distracting to me at first, but I have become hardened and unconscious of the din and let them toot away; and I sleep through it all because it frequently is really my reason for retiring.

But all this is digression or preface to my musical article. Within the last few years a wonderful change has come to Maskat. We have a real band of musicians and that is why I have put the above definite title to my article. The Sultan once went to Bombay and saw many wonderful things, such as people riding in carriages, good roads, water running through pipes, trains; and he also saw and heard several bands of musicians. I think, personally, it was the big drum that impressed him first and most of all. He began to have wonderful visions of a Maskat Band. When he returned to poor, little, primitive Maskat his dreams took shape and form, and, finally, action. He sent first for a band-master, then for the instruments; and the band was formed from young, raw recruits of his own soldiers. Now, after four years of practice, we have a band that can discourse really fairly good music.

There are two public recitals every week—on Wednesday evenings and on Friday afternoons. When the first musical was to be held I was invited by the ladies of the Palace to spend the evening with them. The first selection was, "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep, Have You Any Wool?" I informed the Sultana and princesses and ladies-in-waiting that I knew the song, and I sang it, although it is so long since my childhood days. I was loudly applauded and the comments were very flattering and flowery. They said, "She is clever" and "She knows everything." I am too modest to recount any more compliments. But now we really have good selections and up-to-date, even "It's a Long Way to Tipperary." The band-master is to be highly complimented, for out of what seemed almost impossible material he has developed good musicians. And now let me tell, before I wind up this musical article, that the Sultan had no national anthem. So one of his Sheikhs, who is an ancient retainer, composed the poem and the band-master composed the tune; and now, at the end of all these musical entertainments, the Sultan's National Anthem of Maskat is played. One very significant incident impressed me very much. One of their great religious feasts was celebrated in the very early morning, with musical selections and one of the pieces played was to the tune of "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood." All around them the blood was flowing from animals that were slain because on that day they celebrated the great sacrifices that are offered up in Mecca. The Sultan and his listeners had no idea of the significance of the hymn tune, nor of its meaning; but as I heard the strains of that sacred hymn I prayed that the day would come when they would know of the "Fountain that has been opened for sin and uncleanness" and "have their sins washed away."

## A Program For Mesopotamia

REV. JOHN VAN ESS.

You cannot make a dead man alive by warming him. In fact you thus only hasten the process of putrefaction. You cannot make a corpse much more attractive by dressing it up in fine clothes, though you may be sure of spoiling the clothes. The Paris Conference cannot regenerate Mesopotamia. I am just as sanguine of what will be done there for Arabia as any man, and will be as loyal to any scheme of British mandate as John Bull himself. But no program can remake the Arab himself save a program which brings him into touch with the source of life. Such a program lies before me. It is a humble document, nine inches by four, which I typed myself. Yet if I can keep myself rigidly to that program, amid many distractions, I shall have done more for Mesopotamia than any man in Paris.

The document contains the schedule of the Boys' School, drawn up in ten columns, covering the branches taught in a ten-year course. However, of these ten columns only the sixth is really important. It outlines the process by which the pupil is brought face to face with Jesus Christ and is kept facing Him until his eyes are filled with Him and his head understands that His wisdom is the highest wisdom. The smallest boys receive a half-hour daily in Bible stories, beginning with the Old Testament. It is interesting to hear the eight-year-old son of a Bedouin sheikh give the story of Abraham's life. When he told of Ishmael's mocking the new-born heir he went into detail and improvised the exact terms in which Ishmael mocked. Some of the language was not chaste but it certainly was Ishmaelitic. David before Goliath also appeals to their imagination and the language with which the giant cursed David is more picturesque than edifying. It throws new light on the Bible to hear these truths after they have passed through the brain of these who are also sons of Abraham.

When they have thoroughly assimilated the idea of God, of His covenant relationship with man and of man's pitiable failure to live up to that covenant, they are introduced to the story as found in Matthew. Matthew is chosen for various reasons: first, because it was written specifically for the sons of Shem and is thus most easily grasped; second, because it contains so much that Islam recognizes with the added spiritual implications which Islam totally lacks, as for example, divorce, uncleanness, alms, prayer and fasting; third, because it contains the Beatitudes in a form most easily learned, as well as the Lord's Prayer. The study is intensive, and by means of maps and drawings the geography and terminology of the Gospel are thoroughly learned. Then follows a study of the Life of Christ in a series of two hundred and fifty questions with references to all the gospels. The whole object of this course is to present the whole Christ—an appallingly difficult task—not my idea of Christ, or my interpretation of Christ, or the theological implications of Christ, but Christ Himself. Try it yourself. Imagine yourself before a person