



Nearly five years ago, Zahara first came to us for medical help. The disease was not very far advanced then, but it was commonly reported that she had leprosy, and the people frequently threatened to petition the Sultan to send her to the leper colony. While we feared she could not be cured, we were glad to give her what relief we could. From the first she showed great interest in the Bible, seeming to be much impressed with its teaching. She also began attending the Sunday services, which she enjoyed the more because knowing how to read, she could join in the singing of the hymns and the reading of the psalms.

For more than two years the advance of the disease was scarcely perceptible, but she gradually grew worse, and finally the much dreaded order came from the Sultan that she must go to the leper colony. She cannot come to us as often as formerly, but being allowed to visit her mother twice a week, she arranged for one of the visits to fall on Sunday so as not to miss the church services. Sitting on the veranda by the open window, she is one of our most attractive listeners. On her other visiting day she and her mother come for a Bible lesson. When reading about Christ healing the sick she often says: "If He were here now He would heal me." There is no doubt but that she loves Christ and is striving to live according to the teaching of the Scriptures, which she reads faithfully. We believe she is near the kingdom, but we long to see her fully entering in. Pray for Zahara that she may have faith to be spiritually healed, and for her fellow sufferers that they, too, may be led to the Great Healer.

And will you not also pray God to open a way whereby all the lepers in this part of Arabia may have the gospel brought near to them? Every large town has its leper colony, and in this land where the love of Christ has not yet softened people's hearts and taught them to relieve the sufferings of their fellowmen, none are more in need of our sympathy and help than these poor outcasts.—*The Mission Gleaner*.

ELIZABETH G. CANTINE.

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### A Day in Bahrein.

Wouldn't it be splendid if you could pay us a visit in Bahrein? Let us imagine that you really have come as a delegation from our Church to find how it seems to be a missionary in Arabia.

It is a great day for us when we go out to join you on the Persian Gulf Steamer which has brought you from Bombay to our pearl fishing island of Bahrein, and we are delighted beyond measure with this opportunity to introduce you to the land of our adoption.

A native boat manned by its half naked negroes, chanting their weird Oriental song, with each heave of the ropes, brings us to shallow water, where we mount the backs of donkeys and so reach dry land. It is not very far from our landing place to the Mission Compounds, but our walk will give us many glimpses of Bahrein life. We are soon in the very heart of the bazaar, winding our way through the narrow, dirty, illsmelling streets, lined with open shops and booths where bearded Arabs are drinking coffee and exposing their cheap imported wares for sale. We are followed by a mob of staring, noisy, men and boys. A loud voice calls in Arabic, "Get out of the way," and



LANDING FROM THE STEAMER.

we line up along the side of the street to let a large camel pass, with his load of goat skins filled with water. We mop our brows and wonder if our pith hats and umbrellas are really enough protection against the relentless rays of the tropical sun. If you could only have come in March or April you would have pronounced the Bahrein climate delightful!

Now we have left the bazaar, and make our way along a maze of paths between bare crumbly native houses of mud and coral, among hundreds of squatty mud huts, now past wells where jesting, splashing crowds of men and negro women wash their clothes, bathe, and then carry away skins of water for drinking purposes. We pass dignified Arab men with their erect stature and flowing robes, shrouded unrecognizable women, and little children, dressed gaily or not at all. The

little girls love to run along, taking our hands, or calling from their houses; "Salaam Khatoun"; (Lady) nor are we allowed to forget the animal population of Bahrein, for in our way are numerous donkeys, horses, sheep, goats, chickens, cats and dogs—most of them alive.

Now there is more breathing space, and there, right at hand are the mission buildings, with their broad verandas, and irrigated patches of green trees, a welcome sight after the long stretches of dry, hot sand. There are two good mission dwellings, accommodating eight mission-



MISSION BUILDINGS, BAHREIN.

aries, a good sized hospital, and a chapel of which the lower floor is used for a school.

Maybe you will be surprised to see how cozy and comfortable our homes are, that is because the Reformed Church is so good to its missionaries.

Shall we pay the school a short call? Here we find young Arab boys in their 'teens studying Arabic grammar, English, Mathematics, Geography, etc. They are from some of the best families in Bahrein, and will greet us in a very gentlemanly manner and probably in English. In the next room we find dear little girls, mostly from the poorer Persian families. They are very lively and love Mrs. Dykstra, their teacher, dearly. We are shown patch-work quilts which they have sewed. They will sing for us and show us how well they know the alphabet.

Let us visit the hospital now. Upstairs there is a nice white operating room, and two wards, one for women and one for men. Downstairs we will leave the men of our party to enter the men's clinic, where

we see long rows of men seated on chairs. Let us women go into the women's clinic. Are these women—these crouching black heaps on the floor? Yes, Moslem women. "Salaam Alaykum" we greet them, and from behind the black coverings comes the response, "Alaykum es salaam." Gradually after much peeping and whispering, most of the veils are withdrawn, hesitatingly, for they find it hard to be sure from our clothes, whether we are men or women. It does not take them long, however, to become very much interested in their American guests,—and many of them are very friendly. After a short, very simple, Bible talk and prayer to which some listen, upon which some turn their backs,



SCHOOL ROOM.

the clinic begins. You say, "What terrible eyes these people have!" Yes, it is very pitiful to find even the eyes of little babies approaching total blindness because they have been too long neglected. There are coughs, many ulcers, rheumatism, and very much malaria. Many are the pitiful tales we hear of divorces because of sickness; for a Moslem can divorce his wife with a word, or of places usurped by new wives, for a Moslem can lawfully have four wives at a time. There are some patients who need operations,—and we long to relieve the suffering that has resulted from the unspeakable methods of native "quacks." And so the women pass by, poor degraded, downtrodden women, hardly ever pretty, old while yet young, sick and miserable.

We must make at least one call to a native house. The men will visit one of the sheikhs, perhaps, I should like to take you women to

visit some negro woman in her little datestick hut. She has much more freedom than her Arab sisters, and will listen eagerly to what we tell her of Christ. But since our time is short let us go into the more aristocratic houses, that we may see the life of Arab women at its best. In many such households, the women never are allowed to venture beyond the four walls of their houses.

Here is the gate,—a big wooden gate in the stone wall. They would laugh if we should knock, for the Arabs never knock before entering. Negro slave women greet us profusely in the court yard,



NATIVE HOUSE.

and conduct us up winding, shockingly dirty stairs, to the reception room, where we are to await the mistress of the house. It is a beautiful room, carpeted with soft Persian rugs, and bordered with numerous divans with silken cushions, and with here and there a chair, a lamp, or some other imported luxury.

They are coming! We hear the rustle of silks and they enter slowly and with dignity. Some of them are very beautiful with their soft, dark eyes, long glossy black braids, silken draperies and jewels. We exchange many salaams and formal greetings. At first the women are a little shy in the presence of so many American guests. Soon, however, there is a flourishing conversation, chiefly on the subject of matrimony and wearing apparel. "Don't you use oil on your hair?"

"Don't you blacken your eyelids, and color your hands and feet red with henna?" "Would you mind taking off your hats, so that we may see your hair?"

They cannot understand why any grown woman should be unmarried, for their girls marry in their early 'teens. Of those who are married they ask, "How many wives has your husband?" "Only one! Will he never have more than one wife?" "How strange!" "Will your husband never divorce you?" "Do you eat with him?" "Does he consider you his equal?" "Wonderful!" Not long ago one Arab bride acknowledged, "Yes, your way is better, but what can we do?"

Now refreshments are brought in. First come fruits, melons and grapes, on pretty China, which they tell us with pride, "came from Bombay." Then there is the usual very sweet hot milk, flavored with tea, and after that very bitter black coffee without sugar or cream. "You have brought a book," they say, "Won't you read to us?" If they knew how much we long to read to them! So we select a very simple passage about Jesus and his love,—and they listen very politely to the story and the explanation. Sometimes we fear that they are impressed more by the fact that we can read, for Moslem women are seldom educated at all, than by the message. Then too, they often know so little about the real meaning of their own religion, that they scarcely realize that ours is different. But we know some of the seed which we sow takes root,—and we know that it is ours to sow beside all waters, and that Christ will take care of the results, and so we leave them and they beg us to come again.

It is sunset. Such a glorious, fiery, sunset, with the outlines of nearby date gardens in graceful relief against the glowing sky. Just outside our gate a Moslem crier is giving the call to prayer from the tower of a mosque and all around we see men standing, kneeling, prostrating themselves toward Mecca in their evening prayer. Soon it grows dark, save for the soft starlight from our Arabian skies. The Moslems are chanting in their mosques, "There is no God, except Allah" over and over again, until we wonder if the rhythm can be broken.

You will not ask as do some visitors, "Do you not despair of ever making any impression on this fanatical country?" You know, and we know, that we are here at the command of Him, to whom all things are possible. And you, as you have prayed, have seen the answer to your prayers in the ever increasing number of opening doors from which we were formerly barred out. You know too, that we cannot get missionaries fast enough to take up the work waiting to be done. Best of all, you know, that there are lives in Arabia which have been actually transformed by the Light which has found its way so quietly into this country; and we believe with all our hearts that in this gen-

eration shall come the time, when into the heart of Arabia, the Cradle of Islam, that Light shall have penetrated and proved itself the Life of Men. Do you wonder that we are glad to be your missionaries in Arabia?

ELEANOR TAYLOR CALVERLEY.

## The Converts' Conference, at Zeitoun, Egypt.

The eagerly-anticipated "Second Conference of Converts from Islam" has come and gone, leaving both workers and converts greater blessings coupled with greater responsibilities.

It was a truly cosmopolitan and very happy company that met on Tuesday evening, 30th August for the opening prayer-meeting.

While the majority were Egyptians, there were several Syrians from the Holy Land and from northern Syria, with Nubians, Sudanese, one Persian and one Bedouin. About 35 converts stayed the period arranged, *i.e.*, three days and four nights,—but others were not able to stay more than one day, or even one meeting, and these brought up the number to about 50 in all.

*The Expected.* We had anticipated a happy time in the large tent, making friendship and renewing old ones, and enjoying spiritual conversation and informal talks, and we found it as delightful as expected. Then how interesting to watch the fraternising of Sudanese and Syrian, Effendi and Evangelist, Cairene and Fellaheen.

At the "Mutual Acquaintance" meeting on the Wednesday afternoon, no less than 38 gave experiences in leaving the religion of Islam to find rest and peace in Christ. On the Friday afternoon many testified to blessing received at this Conference.

*The Unexpected.* Some had not expected to find prayer so difficult, and the fight so hard, as was the case the first two days. On the Thursday, more particularly, it was said, "The addresses are all right, and there is some blessing, but we are needing much more brokenness of Spirit, more sense of sin, and consequent power in prayer." Not all the attenders knew how this was ultimately obtained for them. Not all of them knew of the little band that settled down to "pray through" immediately after the main morning meeting on Thursday. Right on through the dinner-hour without intermission, during the afternoon meeting, and on until 5:30 the "Upper-Room Company" fought a good fight. On again in the evening, until weariness and the lateness of the hour obliged adjournment at 11:15 p. m.

But it was not until Friday that the fuller blessing came. The worker who conducted the first half of the meeting gave an opening word upon John 7: 37, 38. A spirit of prayer came upon us, and numbers prayed to the point, *i.e.*, that rivers of blessing might flow from