



also that sometimes these sheikhs are fine specimens of men, carrying themselves with fine dignity.

Sociability and hospitality are strong features of the Omanee character. They themselves spend a great deal of time—and means too—in visiting each other. On the occasion of a call they must be greeted cordially and each one individually. After some conversation the usual coffee and *helwa* (Muscat sweets) are passed around and then some more conversation. Religious conversation is easily introduced. A couple of Bibles are kept in the reception room and if there are any that can read they are invited to do so, or else I do it myself, and interesting talks ensue. The callers are then escorted to the door and the visit is over. In some cases it is well to show a greater degree of hospitality, and then we invite them to a “feast” consisting of a sheep and rice done to their liking.

As a whole this work is one of the strong features of the Station. Through hospitality friendships are cemented that may at any time prove to be extremely valuable when we are out on the road. Hospitality appeals to the Arab as nothing else, a breach thereof is not forgotten nor is a good example of it. Speaking of results, I may say that while touring brings people to the house what we do here helps to keep the roads open for us. I have more invitations to places up-country now than I can possibly reach this year. The result of the personal touch along with a message from God’s word we cannot foretell.

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### A Visit to a Bedouin Market.

To the stranger from the West, even though he be fairly well acquainted with Eastern ways, a visit to the Bedouin market place at Kuwait will be replete with interest and new experiences. There is such a typical Arab and desert atmosphere about the place that the like can only be found in cities like this, which border on the desert and are a rendezvous for Bedouins.

The market-place at Kuwait lies towards the south of the city. In general it has the shape of the letter V, the open end of which lies towards the south and merges into the desert, while the sides are formed by the city itself. It is here that we find at almost all hours of the day, but especially towards sunset, a veritable hive of human beings. Prominent among them are the Bedouins, typical sons of the desert. In every aspect he bears the marks of his desert home. His clothing is of the scantiest. A long, loose garment which comes to the ankles, is his main article of clothing: once it was white.

but long use and the absence of water has long since turned it to a dark gray. Upon his head is a piece of cloth of the same color, held in place by a thin band of woven goat hair. From beneath this hang braids, or touseled curls, of jet black hair. In these garments he eats, sleeps, and dies, unless, indeed, he is wounded in a fight in which his enemies are the victors, in which case they will strip him entirely and desert him to his fate upon the desert sands.

Conspicuous in the midst of the market-place are large herds of camels. All are lying on their legs doubled under them. To keep them from escaping the legs are tied double. Some have just come in from the desert and all around are stacks of pack-saddles, wool, fodder and the like. Others are being loaded, to which process the camel objects with loud groans and a fierce, though ineffective show



BEDOUIN MARKET.

of anger. Well has the camel been named the "ship of the desert." The Bedouins could not possibly get along without him. From long distances of several days' journey they bring into port the few products of the desert—skins, wool and butter-fat. In return they take supplies, such as rice, coffee and piece-goods.

Along one side of the market we notice a long row of Bedouin women. Each is seated beside a small skin or jar of sour milk, which she sells either in bulk or at so much per drink. Her spare time she spends in spinning yarn on a coarse spool. Nearby are groups of demure-looking donkeys, patiently awaiting their heavy burdens. Each one is secured by having his leg tied to that of his fellow. These donkeys are used to carry heavy burdens to the nearby Bedouin camps.

A large part of the open market-place is occupied by groups of sheep and goats. The sheep are of the peculiar, thick-tailed, Oriental

type; the goats have enormously long ears, and are as playful as in the days of old when they gave rise to our words "caper" and "capricious." Each group is surrounded by a number of eager buyers, and many a sharp bargain is driven. It takes a man of experience to get the better of the Bedouin, who, though his knowledge is limited, is well up with the tricks of his trade.

Here and there are groups gathered around a man who has something special to sell. It may be a young gazelle from the desert, or possibly a "Thub," a peculiar animal about a foot long, which very much resembles a young alligator. The Bedouins use it for food.

Towards the western side of the open space there is a general market. Here even booths are dispensed with and all the seller has to do is to spread his wares out upon the ground, or at most on a piece of gunny bag. The amount of capital needed by a person to open up shop is reduced to the irreducible minimum. Two or three eggs, a spool of yarn, a box of matches, or a few hands full of peanuts, are sufficient excuse for a Bedouin to spread his mat and become a merchant. The variety of goods offered for sale beggars description. Old swords, rusty knives, tin cans, candy, peanuts, old locks, mirrors, nails, and much more are here to be bought. It is a mystery where all the goods come from. The other day the writer saw a man showing off an old Daisy air-rifle.

The general impression we have as we leave the market and wend our way homewards, is that the inhabitant of the wilderness is very poor and has a not to be envied lot. His life is a struggle to keep the wolf from the door on the one hand, and his plunder-loving brother Bedouin on the other hand. In summer he is baked by the merciless desert sun; in winter he has scanty protection and shivers in the chilling winds of the open plain. His flocks are his only possession, but of their possession he is uncertain. In the evening he may be rich, but the morning light may find him a beggar, having been robbed of all his possessions during the night. Again a drought spells ruin, when the spring rains fail to come; or an exceptionally cold winter, like the one just past, plays havoc with his flock.

Again his ignorance is dense. Outside of his own little sphere it is very hard to impress upon him a single new idea. Even his skill in desert lore is often times greatly exaggerated. What with his ignorance, his poverty, his roving from place to place and his love of robbing, the Bedouin presents a mighty and perplexing problem to the preacher of the Gospel, a problem that calls for the consecration, the devotion and the effectual, fervent prayer of the entire Church of God.

## Hospital Experiences.

*"From plague, pestilence and famine; from battle and murder, Good Lord, deliver us."*

Every word of this ancient petition has rung in my ears during the last month: the result of plague is the loss of the breadwinner, and the loss of the breadwinner means famine. Plague—that grim terror that used to sweep over Europe, that has lately stricken down some sixty thousand people in Manchuria, and which in the month of March alone killed one hundred and thirty-one thousand people in India—plague is with us. All day long funerals have been taking place, and as the number of deaths increased, the usual rites and ceremonies of a funeral were cut short. Bodies were no longer washed prior to burial and, instead of being carried to the grave on a bier, were bundled



FUNERAL OF A PLAGUE VICTIM.

along to their last resting-place with scant respect. By daylight and by moonlight and, as in the burial of Sir John Moore, by the light "of the lantern dimly burning," the sad business of interring the dead goes on. They do not dig their graves deep enough, and on damp, hot nights when the wind is from the cemetery, the stench chokes us as we try to sleep. Already some five hundred people have died; not a very large number when considered in the aggregate, but large in proportion to the population of the district—about twelve thousand. And now the Mohammedan, fatalist as he is, feels his helplessness, feels in the presence of this awful scourge that he must seek aid from Someone, and so he prays. At midnight we are awakened by the cry, "Allah is great; there is no God but Allah. I testify that Mohammed is the apostle of God. Come to prayer, come to salvation. There is no God but Allah." The cry goes from house to house, and in a few moments the air is filled with the sound of the familiar prayer call,