



The following day we paid a visit to the castle and village of Anaj, where the colonel and his family extended the best of hospitality. Katif with its surrounding villages may have a population of perhaps twenty thousand. The following are the most important places: Darain, Tarut, Senabis, Eth Thania, Anaj, Shehad, Safwa, Karoodija and El Amair. The cavaran route to Hassa from Katif is not safe, nor is there much intercourse with the interior westward or north, but the population is too large to be permanently neglected, and affords an open door to all the villages of this coast. In recent years steamers have begun to carry cargo from Busrah and Bahrein to Katif at uncertain intervals, and the trade of the place seems to be on the increase. Will you not join us in prayer that the seed sown here may spring up and bear fruit, and that these people, too, in their miserable surroundings, physical and spiritual, may know something of the law and liberty of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

S. M. ZWEMER.



Life at Zobair.

The question is sometimes asked, does touring pay? My experiences this past year may help give the answer.

About twelve miles southwest from Busrah we find the typical desert town of Zobair, which can be reached, if the roads are in good condition, within two hours, at other times it may take five hours and more; it all depends with whom and at what season one travels. The road goes through uninteresting desert land, a part of an old crumbling mosque whose leaning tower threatens to fall any day and a coffee shop opposite the same are the only landmarks on the journey. Having passed these the city itself becomes visible, stretching from east to west. The one large unsymmetrical tower, like a parallel to Islam, indicates where the main Mosque is situated. Many unpretentious ones exist almost in every street, for Zobair is famous for its orthodoxy, and many Moslems look upon the people of Zobair as especially pious; some go there to gain spiritual footing. The town used to be governed by one big Sheikh whose mansions cannot be mistaken. One sees at the first look that they belong to a man of rank, but, unfortunately, he has absorbed all the vices of the civilized world and lost his dignity and the respect of the citizens; thus it happens that each one is at present his own master. Only when friendly tribes visit the place the Sheikh is expected to entertain them, any affairs which need arbitration or prompt decision have to be brought before the Mudir of the place; if he is unable to give satisfaction to the parties he refers them to the court in Busrah. Zobair has about

10,000 inhabitants who live in prison-like houses. A look from the roof puts one in mind that one is looking upon endless forts built of sand, without any foundation, upon sand. Our Lord's parable repeats itself very often here, for during the winter rains no less than sixty houses fell, and when I asked if anyone was killed in the accident I was assured that not a soul was lost "Only women."—Zobairies are almost all Nedjdies either direct or from their forefathers. They speak with great pride about Nedjd, especially that they will allow soldiers



STREET SCENE IN ZOBAIR.

(Turkish) and Jews to enter the place, but Christians, never, it would make the noble city unclean. These people are most careful to keep the eyes of neighbors or strangers from their inclosures and the women have to suffer more than in any other place I have seen yet from this seclusion. Although wealthy and more refined than most Moslem women they are compelled to die of their ailments or cruel treatment from native quacks, on account of this absurd strict confinement, which some of the bigotted ones count virtue. Almost all of the men are merchants, landowners or mullahs, all true, dignified Arabs in clean flowing

robes and brilliant headgear. One recognizes immediately that these people have traveled and that they have been in contact with the civilized world. For the silks of their garments for themselves and their families are from India, carefully chosen. Their manners as well show of experiences with cultured people, although they would not for the world have their wives and daughters know what they see in Bombay, for which I have been often grateful, because every English or European person is classed with the Christians by them. I was not a little surprised to receive one day an Arab gentleman who wished to talk with me about New York. After I asked him from where he had his knowledge of that city he began to tell me in fluent English that he had visited America. On another occasion a heavily veiled woman who would not for the longest time show me her face nor tell me her name, being afraid that I might give her away that she had left her house during the day, addressed me in broken English. She had for a time enjoyed freedom in Bombay, her husband being a pearl merchant, who used to take her along, but now she is again kept in strictest confinement besides growing blind although a young woman, and that on account of having no permission to go to Busrah to see a doctor. I could tell much of the miseries of the Moslem women but we are all already acquainted with the sadness of their lives. The problem is how can we win and help them. The only way is to make real, trusting friends of them and show our deepest sympathy for their lonely, empty lives and let them see how we enjoy our lives, to stimulate their longing for something better. This can only be accomplished by our living among them. I love nothing better than to go touring, for these women wait for our visits.

Touring is not as some think, a visit for a day. It means a thorough rounding up of a place where one gathers or scatters, and with the missionary it is almost always the latter. I have been asked in a horrified tone, "You don't mean you live and eat with the dirty Arabs?" Yes, a great many times the missionaries do and nearly always when the tourist is the only Christian soul in a Moslem town, because one has to invite all means to gain the confidence of the people. Further, either their friendliness or suspicion will not permit them to leave a stranger in their midst to be long alone. Does it pay? I give the following, to let the reader form the answer: Three years ago I just went for a short trip to reconnoitre the place. Fortunately the driver took me to the Sheikh's house and put me under his care. In spite of the armed men who were ordered to protect me on the street, I had a mob howling around me. Two years ago the people of Zobair remembered gratefully the medicines I had dealt out to them the previous year in the Sheikh's house and treated me very friendly the month I spent among

them, where I found many opportunities to talk to them on religious subjects. This year I had a chance to stay nearly three months with them. Medical work was given the second place. Religious talks and readings were invited on both sides. Mainly the harems of the rich took great interest in what was read to them so that some began to read the Gospel and one to study the Bible to convince herself of the prophecies. How their confidence and trust in us have grown shows in the fact that mothers wished to give me their children to bring them up Christians. I could not comply with their intentions on account of the fathers whom I wished to be consulted about it, although one bright little girl of about seven years old was sent along with me, whose week day dream is to go Sundays to church, and she disdains to go back to her former surroundings. I hope she will be the nucleus for the girls' school in Busrah.

Looking into the future Zobair will be one of the railroad stations and will link Kuwait and Busrah together. Besides the caravan road from Nasareah and many inland tribes terminate there, it is only a question of a few years more that also the women of Zobair will enjoy a greater freedom, civilization, and travel will enter with the railroad, and as we hope to see a Girls' Boarding School erected in Busrah the people of Zobair will have the best opportunity to send their daughters the short way, always in their parents' reach. When we have gained that step Kuwait will follow in the same way.

MARTHA VOGEL.



Arab Home Life.

Home life has such sacred and holy memories that to us it can only be associated with the highest virtues and the purest morals. Without them, it is no more home life. Home life associates one's thoughts immediately with a place where peace and love reign. Father, mother, or children are bound together by these holy ties. If either, father, mother, or children have left their home, the circle is broken. Home life is no more complete. Our Christian home spells "Union and Unity." The Arab home spells "Division and Separation."

Upon visiting an Arab home the first thing we notice after getting inside the dead, windowless walls, is division. A special place, the harem, is reserved for the women. No matter how much luxury we find in the harem, we may be certain that it is inferior to the men's quarter. The most comfortable rooms in the house can be occupied by the women and their visitors only when the men have left the house. Modern luxuries, such as chairs, are found in the men's *mejlis*; and