



## Three Notes at Random.

1. *THE ENVIRONS OF BAHREIN.*—In the July-September number of *NEGLECTED ARABIA* last year, there was a map of North-east Arabia showing Busrah and Kuwait in their relation to the other towns of the river country and the interior. Here is a small sketch



map of Bahrein and its environs. Maps on a small scale are among the biggest foes of missions. They minimize the task and give a false impression of the real situation, putting a dot for populous villages and a quarter-inch penstroke for journeys of weary days.

This map is not on a very large scale. It does not show the nearly two hundred villages and hamlets on the Bahrein Island group, which to-day have a population of nearly 100,000; nor does the map indicate the Bedouin tribes and settlements of Katar. There is no map in existence, as far as I know, that even attempts to locate the tents of Kedar in the wilderness of Arabia. The map, however, gives the most important villages and centers of population on the mainland west of Bahrein. Even on a scale of ten miles to the half-inch, one can form some idea of how much land there still is to be possessed, and the journeys attempted or accomplished to Katif, Hofhoof,

Ojeir and the regions beyond will be more intelligently followed in our future reports by comparison with this sketch map. The two main trade routes and routes of travel are indicated. One is by boat from Katif northwestward; the other is south of Ojeir, the landing place for all the cargo that goes from Bahrein by this route into Hassa and Nejd. Within the area represented by this map there is probably a population of 220,000 souls!



BIBLE SHOP AND THE CUSTOM HOUSE, BAHREIN.

2. *THE BREAD OF LIFE AND THE BREAD THAT PERISHETH.*—The above interesting photographs taken by Mr. D. Dykstra, startlingly illustrate the growing importance of Bahrein as a distributing center for bread. The picture on the right is that of the new custom house and warehouse being built by the sheikh, which is to cost 500,000 rupees, or about \$170,000. It is intended especially for the storage of rice and grain at Bahrein, and even before the building is completed one can see how the space is utilized for the thousands of bags of rice from Rangoon and Calcutta, not only for the people of Bahrein but for Hassa and all the coast.

The other picture is that of our new Bible shop from which the Bible sales for last year have reached the total of over two thousand portions; which is open every day except Sundays, and where hundreds gather and hear the message of Life. The room above the shop is occupied by one of our colporteurs, and he has frequent visits at

night from men who come like Nicodemus, to seek the Truth. This Bible shop was built from a special fund received from a farmer in the West at a mission festival.

When one remembers how the Portuguese power was followed by the Dutch and that in turn by the Arabs, Persian and the British, one wonders about the future political history of the Persian Gulf and of Arabia.

“O, where are kings and empires now  
Of old that went and came?  
But, Lord, Thy Church is praying yet,  
A thousand years the same.

Unshaken as eternal hills,  
Immovable she stands,  
A mountain that shall fill the earth,  
A house not made by hands.”

3. *AN INSCRIPTION AND A CORRECTION.*—Arabia is as poor in architectural monuments as the language is rich in literature, yet once and again archeologists have made interesting discoveries in the peninsula, especially in Yemen. As far as I know, the only inscriptions or records of past history to be found in the Persian Gulf, however, are those of the Portuguese, who came to the Gulf about 1506 and remained in power until 1650. We are constantly reminded of the Portuguese conquest and their settlements in the East Indies by the fact that next to Arabic, Persian and Turkish, our mission disposes of more portions of Scripture in Portuguese than in other languages. Nearly all the butlers and table-boys on the steamers in the Gulf are Goanese, and their language is that of their ancient conquerors, Portuguese.

Mention has already been made in previous articles of *NEGLECTED ARABIA* of the Portuguese castles that hem the harbor of Muscat and are found at Bahrein and other places in the Gulf. Through the kindness of Dr. M. J. Saldanha, whom I met on one of the British India steamers, I am able to correct a statement given on page 81 of “Arabia the Cradle of Islam,” and to reproduce one of the interesting inscriptions which mark Portuguese rule.

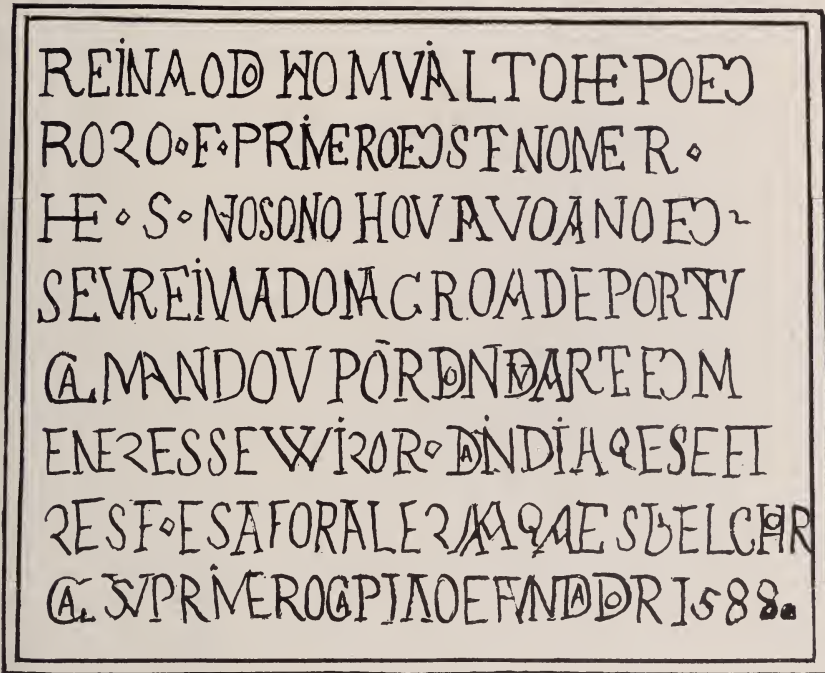
Over the front door of the fort called Marani, (which means Santa Maria,) at Muscat, there is the following inscription which Dr. Saldanha interprets and translates as follows:

Reinado ho mui alto he poderozo Filippe primeiro deste nome, Rei he Senhor nosso, no houtavo ano de seu reinado na croa de Portugal mandou por Don Duarte de Menezes, seu Viso-Rei da India,

que se fizesse esta fortalez, a qual fez Belchor Cal (?) seu primeiro capitao e fundador, 1588.

“When the very high and powerful Filipo, our King and Lord, was ruling, in the 8th year of his reign in the Crown of Portugal, he ordered through Don Duarte de Menezes, his Viceroy in India, that this fort should be built, and it was built by Belchor Cal (?), its first captain and founder, 1588.”

We notice how one letter is often made to do duty for two, as is the case in old inscriptions elsewhere.



A PORTUGUESE INSCRIPTION.

The high and powerful Philip at that time King and Lord of all the Portuguese dominions, would scarcely recognize the fort in its present condition, battered by warfare between the Persians and the Arabs and disintegrated by the weather. The inscriptions quoted from Pelly in my book on Arabia is over the window of the chapel, and contains only the following words in Portuguese: “Hail Mary, full of Grace, the Lord be with you.” Pelly evidently combined the translation of both inscriptions, or it is possible that the remainder of the inscription was destroyed.