



The clergyman is responsible for three vital activities—Bible distribution, church service and care of converts. The Bible distribution is the old story of seed-sowing. There is scarcely a hamlet in Busrah field where you cannot find a copy of the Word. In Busrah City is the shop where daily the Gospel is sold and explained, and in Ashar suburb is another shop, next the barracks, where Turkish officers, like birds of passage, flit in and out for a few months, hear the message and move on to posts perhaps inaccessible or unreached. At Amara, up the Tigris, and at Nasaria, up the Euphrates, likewise, consecrated and able native evangelists break the bread of life. The writer remembers in 1903 meeting with an audience of six in the Sunday services, four native helpers and two missionaries. Today our chapel is too small, and several times Arabs have been turned away for lack of room. The foundation of a new church is already above ground. I think that is just the stage which we have reached in our spiritual building.

Care of converts—that is the hardest, most heart-breaking task. Today we can care for most of them only in our prayers, trusting that the Great Shepherd of the sheep will bring back the erring ones. It is a comfort to think that Jesus Christ loves the Moslem more than we do. I read yesterday that twelve thousand Pomaks in Bulgaria have come over in a body from Islam to Christianity. That is when God moves.

The problem of the future is to have faith. Lack of faith is the greatest sin. True faith is its own greatest reward.

JOHN VAN ESS.

Michigan Enterprise in Arabia

For some years now the larger universities of our country have been taking a noteworthy interest in foreign missions. The effort has been to concentrate this more than passing interest on some particular field and, generally speaking, on some particular station.

This idea of concentrated mission work appealed to those of the University of Michigan who were interested in missions. Consequently the eyes of the students sought a suitable place to establish a work representing the university. The choice settled on Busrah, in Arabia. The need was great, the laborers not many and the possibilities apparently unlimited. Also Arabia has been the scene of action, the field of labor and the place of burial of three graduates of Michigan. Dr. Thoms and his wife were the first of our fellow alumni to take up work in Arabia, and they were pioneer workers in Matrah and Bahrein. The memory of their work and death, and also that of Jessie Vail Bennett, who died so short a time after her arrival on the field, bound Arabia more closely to Michigan. Dr. and Mrs. Bennett, now on the field, are working out the ideals and theories acquired at the same place of learning.

As an outcome of these strong ties and interests there are now in the Station of Busrah five people directly representing the University

of Michigan, namely, Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Shaw, Mr. P. C. Haynes and Dr. and Mrs. H. G. Van Vlack.

Messrs. Shaw and Haynes, graduates of the engineering department, are laying the foundation for extensive work along their own line. Already they have made the beginning of a manual training course in the school at Busrah. It is necessary, they find, to start at the very base, as the boys know not even the rudiments of drawing nor the terms used to describe the different type forms. They are steadily gaining the confidence of the people of this place, not only of the natives but of the different firms as well. Many and varied have been the tasks required. An asphalt road has been laid in Muhammera, and plans drawn up by them for other roads have been carried out. Also they have made plans for school buildings and for a new Imperial Ottoman Bank.



MR. HAYNES SUPERINTENDING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A HOUSE

Having proved to the people that they are careful as well as capable, they have been entrusted to repair the lone automobile of Busrah, different launches and graphaphones. The fact that Mr. Shaw was requested to draw the plan of a gari, or carriage, in order that the owner might send for a small piece to replace one that was broken, is a standing joke among the missionaries.

For the English residents plans have been drawn and the construction will be superintended of an English marine hospital. At present Mr. Haynes has charge of the construction of a house for a member of one of the English firms. Here he has experienced the differences encountered when Western minds and ideas come in contact with Eastern. Unless the engineer is on the spot to personally superintend

the carrying out of his ideas the native worker either will not do the work at all or do it according to his own Oriental notions.

Of late Mr. Shaw has had the opportunity to show the people of Kuwait what modern building and engineering is like. He has been putting up a hospital of cement for the mission. It was a source of wonderment to the inhabitants to see a soft substance like cement mixed with large quantities of sand and water become in a few hours hard as stone. They crowded about in such numbers that they interfered with the work, and even asked for a little to take home. These people, especially those who have been to Bombay or possibly Egypt, are interested in modern improvements. But so long as the country stays under Turkish control little can be done in the line of change from old customs.

The time of Dr. and Mrs. Van Vlack has been spent carrying out the usual routine of new missionaries, that is, studying the language and getting acquainted with the people and their customs. During the summer Dr. Van Vlack made a trip to Baghdad, staying there several weeks to care for Mr. Van Peurseem, who was ill with typhoid. At present they are in Zobeir, still studying, with particular emphasis put on conversation. This place offers exceptional advantages to the language student, as especially good Arabic is spoken here and the people themselves are very cordial. Zobeir is very glad to have a doctor here even for so short a time, and twenty-five or thirty afflicted ones come every day for treatment.

Mention at least must be made of the last summer arrivals, Masters Bennett and Shaw, who, while not showing any marked Michigan tendency, promise to be worthy representatives of the *alma mater* of their parents.

The university itself has made great plans for the future and, being backed by able men, they will undoubtedly be carried through successfully. They expect among other things to send out enough doctors and nurses to man Busrah and its out-stations. They have aimed high, but nothing great is ever accomplished until something great has been attempted.

MERCY VAN VLACK.

From the Moslem Point of View

(NOTE—Translated from a Zobeir Circular directed against the Mission schools in Busrah.)

What say the wise of Islam, the benefit of God upon them, in particular and in general, of one whose religion is the religion of Islam, but who puts his child, male or female, into the schools of the Protestants, and they commissioned by the chiefs of their sect, to invite to Christianity. For this they have their living with all necessities, and they spend what is needed to secure acceptance of their invitation, and they declare themselves to be teachers, together with the open assertion that they are missionaries, and among their wiles is making companions with themselves of some doctors and those who care for the sick. They give medicine to the poor free to