

expected to develop in efficiency and extent, and to prove an increasingly valuable means of advancing Christ's Kingdom.

Kuweit, P. G.

First Impressions

MISS MINNIE C. HOLZHAUSER

I should like to state—by way of an apology for appearing in these pages so soon—that I have been sternly requested to do so, and being quite infantile as concerns missionary experience I must obey, that trait being a peculiar missionary prerequisite. Perhaps this will suffice also to explain why the spark of literary genius is not evident in an article like this; the wee bud of ability in that line that may possibly exist is coldly nipped.



TWO OLD MINARETS OF BAHREIN

My first impressions upon my arrival in Busrah were singularly pleasant. After a trip of something over eleven thousand miles one is very glad to arrive most anywhere; and it was a luxury indeed to unpack and have my belongings about me.

With great fortitude I was prepared for the worst, and spared it. I doubt if there can be many places in this part of Arabia prettier than the river scenery from the Gulf to Busrah. Busrah itself seems busy, oriental and cosmopolitan all in one; I am sure there were at least a dozen large date-ships here at the time of my arrival, and as one viewed its many lights at night, both on the river and shore, one could not think of it as being a lone, desert, missionary outpost. Thus far I have been much pleased with everything here and I feel devoutly

thankful to my Heavenly Father that "my lines have fallen in pleasant places."

Among the people one thing that I have noted in particular is how apparently religious they are, but I have come to the conclusion that they praise the Lord as a matter of habit, and that in most cases it is not a heart service.

I was at first also greatly impressed by their seeming utter resignation to God, for "in sh Allah" (if God wills) was the first Arabic I heard out here. However, it loses its deep religious sentiment somewhat to me, when I ask of a native helper in the Hospital why a certain imperative thing has not been done, the reply being a shrug of the shoulders and "in sh Allah." I thereupon endeavor with my very limited Arabic and that universal language of signs and motions, to get something done, whether "in sh Allah" or no!

Our Arab patients constantly interest me; for one thing they are naturally very patient and oftentimes their uncomplaining resignation to the inevitable seems remarkable. I think a very large per cent. of them are up-country river Arabs and Bedawins who seem heirs to the open air and desert. Almost daily one sees among this type a man who, in spite of his tatters and filth, is almost majestic in the way he strides along, his whole attitude being fearless and undaunted. And the pain most of them can endure, to me seems quite remarkable.

The hospital interests them all very much, particularly the operating room where they can hear the sterilizers buzzing away, and in spite of our vigilance they manage to get a peek in.

My chief desire now is to learn the language, for although I can generally understand a few things they say, and can say a few words in return, yet I sorely want to talk with them and in so doing learn to understand them better. For after all it is the personal touch and influence that counts and we are not in Arabia solely to attend the sick and educate the youth, but to truly teach and make manifest by our lives why we are here, and to proclaim Him who brought Himself to the level of all, for the healing of the nations and the redemption of all mankind.

From the Other Viewpoint

(Extracts from a letter published in "El Minar," a prominent Moslem paper of Egypt.)

To my lord, the wise and noted, the author of "The Brilliant Beacon," may the Lord strengthen in you, the glorious law. Peace be upon you and the mercy of God and His blessings. I have not, nor do I, forget the persevering number of your honored communications, and what they contain of the published statements of the Protestant Christians, in their attack on the world of Islam, and their subterfuges to secure the defection of weak Muslims, and their menace to the life of religions, even of Islam, with its power and wonderful origin, and

what has been published by Dr. Zwemer concerning the Muslims of Bahrein, regarding the results of his work among them.

I read these statements and my finger-tips tremble, and the cartilages of my shoulder-blades shake, and the fire of sorrow is kindled in my intestines, and burns, till I loathed life and departed from people and country, and went, as one half-crazed wanders in the desert, till I reached the assembly of Bahrein, that I might search concerning the truth of the affair, and ascertain the facts of what has been published by the preachers of Bahrein concerning that village of sincere Islam, and perceive the matter with my own eyes.

And I landed in Bahrein on the first day of this year, and met the Ameer of the place and the Qadhi, with the wise men and the honorable of the people. And I inquired concerning Dr. Zwemer, and they told me of his departure to an Egyptian location and by accident my place of entertainment was in a house near to the Protestant Hospital, and to their school and houses, and I sent to some of their servants who were of the Muslims of Bahrein, and from them I secured some necessary information, and I learned concerning their present establishments in Bahrein, and in Maskat, and in Kuwait, and in Busrah.

Certainly the danger from them is not to be underestimated, but there are things that make the matter less serious, in that the most of what has been published concerning the success of their activity in this place, is exaggeration, or falsehood. They purpose by this news to incite their ruling assemblies, and to inspire them to the donation of extensive material gifts.

But the talked-of preachers of Bahrein do not amount, in their numbers, to twenty souls, counting men and women, and the most of them do not know Arabic well and do not know anything of the sciences of Religion, and this is part of that which shows that they deceive their governing assemblies, which send them a constant support, lest there should appear, their impotence, and their failure to accomplish their mission, and the fact that the gifts of the Assembly go like wind through a fish-net.

And I talked with them one day, in their book-shop, concerning the feeding by Christ, upon him be peace, of Five Thousand with five loaves, related in Matthew and elsewhere, and proved to them by distinct evidence, the contradiction between this story and the judgment of the intelligence, and knowledge. And they confessed to the contradiction with the judgment of the intelligence, but weakly replied that Religion is not injured by a contradiction with the intelligence. And I showed them in the words of "The Supplement to the Tail" the necessity of the support of the intelligence for Religion, and their mutual confirmation of each other, and that without this, the bands of man's certain faith are loosened. And I called their attention to the correspondence between the Religion of Islam and the Judgments of the intelligence.

And I report to your highness some of the things that I searched out concerning the affairs of these people, and in your presence, I will tell you the remainder, with my own lips, if so desires the Almighty God.