



We were so encouraged by seeing how many children there were in this quarter that we determined that the next Sunday we would try to start a Sunday school there. But it was impossible, as we were called out at the time set for Sunday school to see a very sick patient. Each day we tried to find time to go, but it was not till Friday that we had the opportunity. When we went we had such a nice time with the children, and some of the Sabean boys learned the first verse of Jesus Loves Me, in Arabic, very quickly. So we went again on the next Sabbath and had a nice Sunday school. Some of the boys then learned the second verse. The Sabean man promised to gather them together after we went and to continue to teach them more of the hymn.

May the love of Jesus soon take possession of the hearts of all in Amara and in all Arabia.

## The Arab Woman's Dress

MISS SARAH L. HOSMON, *M.D.*

The woman's number of the Neglected Arabia will not be complete without an article on the fashions of the Arab women. She is most fortunate in not having to alter the model of her clothes, for her fashions do not change, although they vary some in different localities. So if she moves from Bahrein to Busrah she will dress a little different from the women of Bahrein. The same thing will also occur if she moves to Kuwait or Maskat. Since I have been only among the Bahrein women I shall write about them.

At first I did not think their dresses were pretty because they are made of such loud and contrasting colors. But after I had been here sometime on this desert island, where we do not see any colors, I learned to admire the women's dresses very much. Of course, you know they do not show their gowns on the streets. If they are outside their houses they wear long black capes or cloaks that cover their heads as well as their bodies. They all have the one solid appearance of black out in public.

The Arab woman's wardrobe is in direct proportion to her husband's social rank and his finances. Perhaps you will be interested in knowing how the wealthy woman dresses. When she is completely attired she hasn't as many pieces of clothing as the western woman. I should here explain I am describing her as she dresses in the winter season only.

She wears about five pieces of clothing when she has completed her toilette. First she wears a "sirwall" or pantaloons that are long and tapering down over her ankles. These are sometimes of silk or satin. The ankles are finished off by bands of silver embroidered work that make a pretty trimming. Over this she wears a "distasha" which is a plain close-fitting gown with high neck and long, tight sleeves. It is narrow in width and the length is near to the ankles. The sleeves have pretty broad cuffs of silver braid-work, some pretty

pasamentry trimmings which their husbands bring them from Bombay. The neck has no collar but it is stitched very neatly with three or four rows of stitching. The distasha is also of one color only. However she often wears a "sirwall" of bright blue satin and a "distasha" of a red satin. Above the "distasha" she wears a long loose flowing gown called "thobe." It is rather difficult for me to tell you how to cut a pattern of their "thobes." They are long with a train in the back. They are not very wide and are rather straight cut in the body of them. They too are without collars but neatly stitched or trimmed around the neck and the small opening in front. The most striking part about these thobes are their immense sleeves. The length of the sleeves extend to the end of the fingers and they are extremely wide. I have been told they are three yards wide. They are cut straight and really are like wide parallelograms sewed into the side of the thobe. The women have a certain way of taking the front side of the sleeve and draping it over the opposite side of the head. The head is completely covered by both sleeves in this manner. I know I haven't described clearly this way of draping their sleeves over their heads. But you couldn't do much better, for even after you have seen them do it on your own head you couldn't repeat it correctly without asking for help.



A MASKAT WOMAN

The thobes are not of one color as the distashas are. The upper front and back may be of one color while the sides at the bottom and the sleeves may have big pieces of orange and green sewed into them. They may be of silk but sometimes crossed-barred chiffon is used. I saw a thobe, worn by the daughter of the Sheikh, made of silk and gold material woven together so there was one thread of silk alternating with one thread of gold.

Before the Arab woman completes her toilette she combs her long black shining hair and plaits it into many small long braids. They have from ten to twenty of these small braids and the end of each one is adorned with a silver or gold bangle. The parts in her hair are colored a yellowish red color from henna. This henna she also uses on her finger-nails. Her feet are painted on the toes and soles in the same manner. Moreover she paints her eyebrows and her eye-lashes black.

After all this is done she puts on all her jewelry. She has an abundance of it and it is very expensive because it is all made of the pure heavy gold. But it is rather coarse and clumsy in patterns and designs. She wears rings on all her fingers and thumbs. Her bracelets are a pair for each wrist. Then there are big heavy anklets, nose rings, sometimes earrings, and plenty of necklaces. At least three or four, one that fits closely around the neck while the other two or three are long enough to reach the waist line.

When she has adorned herself completely with her jewels she dresses in another part of her clothing called the milpha. This is a thick black veiling used as a scarf which she drapes over her head and leaves one end loose in front to put over her face if a man meets her unexpectedly. Over the milpha she drapes the sleeves of her thobe. She is now ready to receive her guests. But in the house of the Sheikh the Sheikha wears an abba or cloak over her thobe. While the other women do not until they go out of their houses, then they wear black abbas. The abbas are all black trimmed in gold needlework. They are very pretty. The Sheikhas sometimes wear white ones made of white sicilian cloth. The sides of the front and the top are bordered with some red broadcloth or braid. Along this red border there is much heavy gold needlework. This needlework culminates into two large long gold tassels which hang from the sides at about the waistline.

The wealthy women have a large supply of such outfits. Each one is from fifty dollars to two hundred dollars. I am not including in this estimate their jewelry which sometimes reaches exorbitant prices, I have not mentioned shoes or stockings. A few use stockings but not all of them. They wear some pretty toe slippers when they have to go out into their court ways. But they never use shoes inside their rooms.



A MASKAT WOMAN

## The Arab Woman's Story of the Arabian Mission

MRS. G. D. VAN PEURSEM

Last summer we treated in the Mason Memorial Hospital a woman who became so attached to the place that after she was cured she would not leave us. She was full of humor and could amuse us all by her funny expressions. One evening while the patients, nurse Zakkia and I were sitting on the veranda enjoying the cool evening breeze, Shahraban got up from her sitting position, threw her hands up in the air and laughed the loudest laugh I ever heard from a Moslem woman. I asked her what the joke was. "I was just thinking," she said, "of how I used to be afraid of you people at first, while now I trust no one more than you. It is all because of our ignorance."