

beaten while in stocks. At the present writing she has been released from prison but it is not known who secured her release or where she has been taken. Two other women have been receiving instruction for some time, one of whom has asked for baptism. The other has been deceived, persecuted, beaten, threatened, villified, slandered, all without measure. But through it all she has clung to her confession of salvation through Christ, although it has cost her husband, children, houses, land, reputation, ease, affluence.

That Mission work in Moslem lands is one of the most difficult and that this is particularly true of Arabia has been stated so many times that it seems unnecessary to reiterate this fact. But just as the brightest bow is traced upon the darkest cloud so these promises and signs of an awakening are more apparent because of the dark background. The hard and stony field is beginning to show signs of life that tell of the workings of God's Spirit. The efforts, tears, and prayers that have been expended on this part of God's vineyard will some day have their full fruition and who shall say it is not even now the beginning of the harvest? Only let us not imagine that the harvest will be without its cost. Those that have sowed have perhaps often thought how happy those would be who would reap. And no doubt they will be. But it will be a joy mingled with tears and blood and prayers. The converts are not going to come into our churches to confess Christ and they with us to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. It will rather be the joy that Christ foretells when he says, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." and the joy of the apostles when they glorified God because they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. And when God in His own good time shall give us an abundant harvest may we both at home and abroad be prepared to bear the burden of the reaping.

Quackery and Medical Superstition in Arabia

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How many of us protest that we are not superstitious in the very least and yet how often unwilling to acknowledge our feelings even to ourselves, we throw spilt salt over our left shoulders, and knock on wood when we say we have not had a cold this winter. There are people who dare to walk under ladders, but there is always some one ready to remind them of it if anything happens within the next year. It seems difficult even with all our Christianity and civilization to get away from superstitions, so we must have patience with the Arabs when we see some bad results of a sickness due to their superstitions.

In spite of our toleration for their superstitions we cannot help but pity when we see an eye gone or a foot twisted and hear the reasons they give for such misfortune. Some of the superstitions

about disease and its cure are almost laughable, but they are very serious to the Arabs.

Let us begin at the beginning. A new-born baby has its little forehead, eyes and nose blackened with antimony. Around the eyes it is done for medical purposes, but on the forehead and nose it is to keep the evil eye away. The next step is sore eyes, and when the mother is asked how her child's eyes got sore she will tell you that it is "from God" and will protest when you tell her that if she had washed the baby's eyes and kept its little body clean she might have saved it this go of ophthalmia.

Every family seems to have a piece of bright yellow material about as large as a child's handkerchief which is brought out and fastened on the gown of the member who has an acute attack of sore eyes and the eyes are wiped with it. This cloth is a piece of muslin dyed yellow with turmeric. Whether it is ever washed or whether as each one's turn comes round for sore eyes he or she gets a new yellow piece I have not been able to find out, but I must say that the yellow piece of cloth which one usually sees looks as if it had served the family.

Branding with a red hot piece of iron is the cure for every ill, but doctors must know just where to brand. If one has a sore head they brand on the head, or if a swelling is on the neck they might brand at the back of the head just above the neck. If one has something the matter with one's stomach they brand in several places, five or six, all over the abdomen. This branding must be quite painful, but they have such implicit faith in it that they submit stoically. One woman whose eyesight was almost gone as the result of corneal ulcers allowed her very eyeball to be branded several years ago. She now comes to our hospital for treatment and says if she had only known of us before she would never have allowed the native doctors to play with her eye. Not long ago the doctor had jaundice. Every one who heard of it prescribed and assured him that he would get well at once if he followed their instructions. One said he should drink buttermilk with turmeric in it, and others said he should eat a great many water melons and should be branded on the left wrist just above the thumb. One man who called said "The doctor is very bad—I tell him he must be branded, but he won't have it; he must, though, for it will cure him very quickly. He must be branded on the little finger near the nail. If he is not better in two days I will come and bring a man to brand him."

A stray dog took up her abode in the hospital compound and as the watchman is fond of animals he fed her and she very soon felt she had a good home. One day I heard her crying as I was passing through the compound. I found the watchman with a hot piece of iron trying to brand the dog on the nose. When I asked him what he was doing he said, "Khatun, her chest is bad, she coughs, and branding will make her well." However, he found it hard to hold on to her and had to give it up.

Smells seem to influence people who are ill. One day I was visiting in a harem and I heard talk like this:

"Let the Khatun see Fatima's eye."

"I don't know whether it will do any good."

"Oh, yes, let her see it."

Finally I asked what was the matter and was told that one of the little girls had a very bad eye, so I said, "Do let me see her." Their first excuse was "She can't come out into the courtyard because the light is too strong." So I offered to go inside, but I noticed that my offer was not accepted. The mother from the doorway said, "I am afraid she smells!" And the women, after sniffing my skirt and sleeves, said, "No, there is no smell, only the smell of soap, we don't think that would hurt the child." However, I never saw that little girl until the attack was over and the sight of that eye was gone.

A woman came to the hospital one day with a badly infected hand. She had a rag made into two plugs stuffed into her nostrils, she removed these plugs while her hand was being dressed. A few days later she told me that she would not be able to come the next morning as it was a big feast day and so many people would be out on the streets that she was afraid the smells would make her hand worse. Her hand was getting on nicely and all the pain had practically gone but one day when she came and I asked her how her hand was she said, "It was beautifully comfortable until yesterday afternoon when a woman who was highly perfumed came to call and at once my hand began to hurt."

It will take more than a lifetime to learn all their cures and superstitions, but these few will give you some idea of the amusing side and also the obstacles and difficulties the medical missionary has to contend with. We rejoice when the people trust themselves to our care, but so often it is after their own remedies and practices have failed and they are in a bad way. One would think that they would soon come to the conclusion, after seeing a perfect recovery, that our way was better, but superstition has a very strong hold in Arabia and we must be patient.