

A Letter

This letter concerning the death of Dr. Christine Bennett was addressed to the Rev. John A. Van Neste, as his church at Ridgewood, N. J., was responsible for Mrs. Bennett's support.

Kuweit, Persian Gulf,
Via Bombay, India,
April 27th, 1916.

Dear Mr. Van Neste :

You will long ago have had the terrible news of the death of our beloved Mrs. Bennett on March 29th, but I thought you might be glad of a few lines from one who has recently been in Busrah and who is able to give you some details. It was in connection with Dr. Chamberlain's visit to Arabia that my duty led me to Busrah where I was to take charge of the doctor and bring him to Kuweit. I arrived there only a few days after Mrs. Bennett had passed away and as soon as I could spare the time I went to see Dr. Bennett. He is bearing his great sorrow wonderfully and it is an inspiration to be with him and learn from him how to face affliction. All the time that she was ill and on the day she died he was unconscious. It was as though he had gone to sleep with his wife beside him, and had wakened to find that she was gone. Dr. Bennett is especially anxious about his little boy, now motherless.

The disease that struck down Mrs. Bennett, typhus fever, was brought into the hospital by some Turkish prisoners. The first to go down were our two Indian nurses, and then Miss Holzhauser, the nurse in charge, and finally Dr. Bennett himself. All of these Mrs. Bennett nursed faithfully and when she finally herself succumbed to the disease they were all with the exception of the doctor out of danger. She faced her illness with her usual pluck, assuring everybody that she was going to have a light attack, but on the fourth or fifth day she became unconscious and died on the ninth day. It was certainly true of her that she "laid down her life for her friends." The loss to the Mission cannot be exaggerated, in every way she excelled, as a doctor and as a missionary.

She had the knack of being able to run her hospital work and her household work without either one or the other suffering unduly, and of course she was a woman of great energy. Everybody loved her, and at her funeral every bit of Busrah was represented, from the highest

government officials down. The government took upon itself all the expense of the funeral and left nothing undone to show its appreciation of Mrs. Bennett. A fine motor launch was placed at the disposal of the mourners and quite a handsome casket was furnished from the government workshops. And finally, the local paper printed an appropriate account of her illness and death.

It will not be easy to replace Mrs. Bennett. If we had a recruit to fill her place now it would take her at least four years before she could hope to be as valuable as Mrs. Bennett. The language must be learned and experience gained. It is a glorious opportunity for someone to come forward and say, "Here am I, send me." Do you know anyone that would come, and would the Ridgewood church like to take her over as Mrs. Bennett's successor?

Very sincerely yours,

C. STANLEY G. MYLREA.