

The Doctor's Greatest Opportunity

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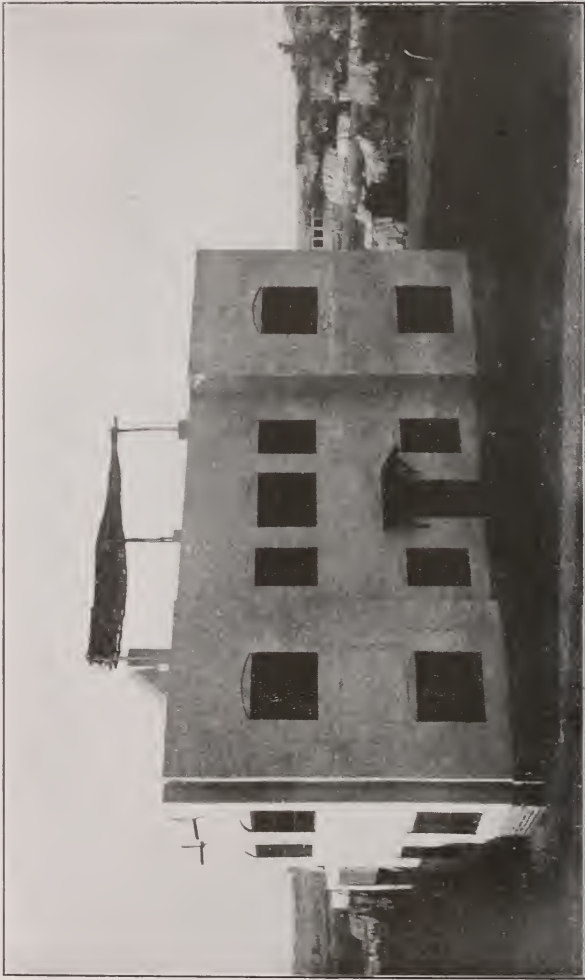


The greatest opportunity open to the Christian doctor to-day is in medical missionary work. Such work offers the gratification of all his finest professional ideals; it offers such an opportunity for genuine brotherliness as he can find nowhere else; not only his spare time, but his whole day's work will count with its full weight for the Kingdom of God.

The work of the medical missionary lies in a large and utterly neglected field. I speak more particularly of my own field of Arabia, but what I say is measurably true of all fields that need the medical missionary. Every service that he could render to society at home is needed. Absolutely nothing is known of hygiene. I remember that one of my Arab neighbors threw his recently dead sheep into the narrow road in front of his house. The road offered him an open spot, convenient in size, and easily accessible. Why not throw the carcass there? The mere fact that an American nose found the locality almost unlivable for some days did not concern him.

There is no adequate treatment of the sick. Asepsis and anesthesia are unknown. The pulling of a tooth sometimes takes hours, or even days; branding is universally used for every ill, imaginary or real; malaria is common, and any notion of how it is to be treated is quite lacking; tuberculosis is fearfully prevalent, because there is not the faintest idea of how it is spread or of how it may be prevented.

A medical man with a first-class training, placed in the midst of such conditions, has a wonderful professional opportunity. Problems requiring investigation abound, and there is such a wealth of clinical material that he has all that he can do to keep from being swamped. The only limitations are those of ability, training and physical strength.



HOUSE IN BAHREIN IN WHICH DR. AND MRS. HARRISON WILL LIVE. IT STANDS OPPOSITE THE HOSPITAL. THE ROOF IS USED AS A SLEEPING PORCH.

Only a few days' journey from the hospital at Busrah is a small district in Persia where perhaps ten per cent. of the population is afflicted with vesical calculus. They come to the hospital for operation in dozens and in hundreds, and for years I have been hoping to have a few free months to spend there in the search for some clue to the etiology of the trouble.



BAHREIN HOSPITAL

It is a mistake to suppose that the best work can not be done on the mission field. Hernias can be done under local anesthesia and sewn up with silk in Arabia as well as in Baltimore or in Boston, and there is a peculiar satisfaction in maintaining a professional ideal in the midst of great difficulties.

Then, too, the opportunity of the medical missionary is perhaps the finest in the world for the man who really believes in universal brotherhood. After all, the glory of medicine is not its scientific attainments, but, fundamentally, its outlook on all humanity as one family, with medicine as humanity's universal servant.

The East is East, and the West is West, but there is one who brings them together—the medical missionary. The Oriental may highly respect other westerners; he may even regard them with an almost superstitious reverence, but the doctor he knows as a brother. When his boy has run away or when some new tax has been levied, when his daughter is to be married, or when his baby is to be buried, it is to the doctor that he is likely to come.

I know of no field that surpasses in opportunity for brotherliness that of the medical missionary. His many friends come to him for help and advice on all kinds of subjects, taking his time, but not interfering, however, with his real work; for he is there to be a big brother to men and women and children who have no other, and whose needs are pitifully intense. His is a job that puts a man's soul next to the naked needs of the world, that turns the hair gray, that shortens life—but for the man who really believes in universal brotherhood it is a magnificent work.

But the supreme appeal of the mission field is not the great need for medical relief; it is not even the appeal for brotherly service, except as that service is spiritual as well as physical. The real trouble with the Mohammedan, the Hindu, and the South Sea Islander is not that tuberculosis is common, and that boys with smallpox run at large as soon as they are well enough to get out of bed. Here is the difficulty: there is no hygiene of the body, because filthy food, filthy dishes and filthy towns look as good to them as clean food, clean dishes and a clean town. There is no moral cleanliness because beastly self-indulgence looks just as good to them as chastity; indeed, it looks better.

The real service of the medical missionary is in the bringing of Christ into the lives of these people. In many places no one else can do it as well as he, and in others none can do it but himself. The man who goes as a medical missionary goes out to bring Christ to the people among whom he works. He proceeds as tactfully, as patiently, and with all the courtesy and respect for the other fellow's convictions which would characterize his efforts if he should try to bring Christ into the life of one of his best friends in this country. His steady purpose, as he carries out his professional ideas every day, his

continual effort as he wears himself out, is to put into their lives the Christ that he has in his own.

Medical work mends bodies; brotherliness of a purely human sort helps individuals, but men and society are regenerated by spiritual means. Egypt is a good example. In that land there has been established a small community of sincere followers of Christ. Already polygamy is being ridiculed in the theaters and condemned in the public press.

The medical missionary is a success if he succeeds in bringing Christ into the hearts of men. Failing there, he is a complete failure. The call is for men of the highest professional caliber—world citizens and democrats—socialists at heart—from whom pride and prejudice of race have disappeared; but, above all, the call is for men who know Christ and who go out with the desire to make other men know Him, too.

“Honor to Whom Honor”

EDWARD W. MILLER.

At the last meeting of the trustees of the Arabian Mission it was unanimously voted to request Dr. James Cantine and Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer to accept the position of honorary trusteeship of the mission. This action was taken in grateful recognition of the distinguished services rendered by these two founders of the Arabian Mission.

It is now a quarter of a century since these gentlemen, then theological students, conceived of the project of a Mission to Arabia and dedicated themselves to the task of introducing Christianity into this most neglected and fanatical of Mohammedan lands—a heroic undertaking involving many difficulties and perils. It was conceived in high faith and youthful enthusiasm. It has been prosecuted with unwavering fidelity and inexhaustible patience and the love that never faileth. And only now, after more than a score of years, does the harvest from their long sowing begin to show signs of ripening.

It was on October 16, 1889, that Dr. Cantine sailed for Syria, where he studied Arabic in the Presbyterian Mission at Beirut. In November of the following year he was joined by Dr. Zwemer and proceeded to Arabia. They went out in true Abrahamic faith, not knowing whither they went, but determined to find a foothold for the Gospel in southern or eastern Arabia. Their journey of exploration took them to Maskat and Bahrein and ultimately to Busrah, where the first station was established and work begun. Here and elsewhere along the western shore of the Persian Gulf Dr. Cantine has spent the years that have followed, in apostolic labors and adventures—“in journeys often, in perils of robbers, in perils in