

in towns, and only some of these understand what they read of the Koran. The Bedouin are wholly illiterate. Slaves are imported via Jeddah and the Persian Gulf, they are sold in Busrah privately, and doubtless in other towns, being brought from Mecca as merchandise by the returning pilgrims. Polygamy is practically universal among the well-to-do classes, and divorce, almost unlimited, with its attendant horrors of cruelty and suffering, takes its place among the poorer. Thus, with polygamy, slavery, and divorce (all sanctioned by their religion) the state of Arab society may be imagined. Happily space does not permit me to enlarge upon this terrible subject.

So, with fasts and prayers and pilgrimages, hoping in his good works, the mercy of God, and the intercession of the Prophet (such intercession being wholly unauthorized by the Koran), the poor Arab wends his way down through life, is laid to rest at last with his face toward Mecca, and passes into eternity with a lie in his right hand. One thing he never knew, that gracious message that was intended to be familiar as a household word to every member of the human race, that God loved him as God only can love, that Christ died for him, and that a free pardon and full salvation awaited his acceptance. He knew it not because he was never told, and he was never told because for ages the Church lost the blessed truth, and since it recovered it has neglected the one great duty, to proclaim it to every creature. Thank God those times of ignorance are nearly over. Through the tender mercy of our God the day-spring from on high has visited Arabia. And may we not hope that the churches which have taken the lead in this great movement will spare no effort, neither men, nor life, nor money, to carry it on to the destined consummation.

Thus far we have traced the rise and progress up to the present time of the Arabian missions. A few brief remarks as to the future may not inappropriately conclude this paper.

1. It will be seen from what has been said that all the western and southern sides of Arabia are still without a missionary. The Free Church of Scotland Mission at Aden is doing an important work, and there is a wide field for extension before it. Not, however, being acquainted with its plans for the future, I do not venture to say anything on the subject here. Jeddah, however, the port of Mecca, might afford a base where, in spite of the intense jealousy and watchfulness of the Turk, a work might be begun. Asir and Yemen may not be accessible just at this moment, but they soon will be so.

2. As to the rest of Arabia, including the eastern, central, and southern provinces, in fact quite one half of the peninsula, I am indebted to the Rev. S. M. Zwemer for the following sketch, the result of four years' study of the subject on the spot, of a missionary scheme, such as the Church which sent him and his fellow-laborers out can hardly stop short of. I give this sketch only in very abbreviated form. Such a scheme would