

door for the entrance of the Gospel. When we realize the good which may be done by the influences flowing out from our home life, it is well worth our while to consider how we may make them stronger. To this end we should try to make our homes accessible to more people; not merely our houses but our family life, so that more may come under its influence. This will sometimes mean the sacrificing of personal comfort and privacy, but we shall be repaid by gaining new and strengthening old friendships. There is no surer way of making Moslem men and women your friends than by getting them into your homes and partaking of your "bread and salt."

Also in order to make the influence of our home life stronger over Moslems, we must combat the tendency to follow their custom in regard to the position of women in the home. By compromising our family life we lose an opportunity of letting them see a better and a Christian home life.

Another thing of importance is to get the children into our homes. This is not difficult, as they are usually attracted to us and our ways. By keeping in touch with them we bring them under the influence of our homes during the most impressionable period of their lives.

The evangelization of the Moslem world will be hastened according as we increase the number of true Christian homes in their midst.

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#### IV. KUWEIT, PERSIAN GULF

One sunny but cool afternoon two young Red Cross doctors made us a surprise visit and we were glad to see them. As they came into the drawing-room one gave a low whistle and said, "How good it is to get into a home again." Then we began talking to them about their work in the war. They had just run away from their work for a little change and rest as there seemed to be an opportunity in between military operations and they were staying on a small launch in our harbour. We asked them to

come again and they said they would indeed if their launch stayed long enough. The next day they dropped in again and we heard the same low whistle as they came in and sat down. One said, "I had no idea you missionaries lived so comfortably—it is good to see pretty rugs on the floor." They acknowledged that they knew nothing about foreign missions and had never given them any thought. I asked them if they had expected to find us living in mat huts and they laughed and said they supposed they had. A little later one of them said, "You see we have joined the Red Cross for six months and when our time is finished we may go home or we may stay on." I said, "Now you see the difference and why we like to have a comfortable home—we have joined for life and this is our home."

A nice home means a great deal to us in Arabia—to come home from a call in a very dirty house to a nice clean house with all its familiar pretty things around one seems to revive and refresh one at once. It is not that one's home must have costly or valuable things. Missionaries can hardly be accused of that. But it must be clean and orderly and so its value cannot be overestimated both in regard to its influence on the missionaries and on the people among whom they are working.

Let me give you a picture of the average Arab house. One enters the courtyard and if hot weather is at that time of the year one finds the whole place littered with furniture and utensils of every description. Wooden beds or old doors resting on old kerosene tins, the latter as a makeshift for beds; the bedding being rolled up at one end of the bedstead. Over by the well in the corner are the dishes used at the previous meal waiting for a convenient time to be washed and put in the sun. We hope, however, to find better conditions in the room into which we are ushered but alas! the matting has not been swept for many days or months and is strewn with peanut shells, bits of bread and perhaps a discarded piece of cucumber. A rug is spread on one side of the room with big pillows against the wall and this is the only clean spot for the missionary to sit. In one corner of the room is a

pile of soiled or worn out clothes and when the hostess serves tea she finds that her tea cups have not been washed since the last tea drinking so a little water is poured over them and she quickly gets something from that pile in the corner to wipe them with. Many times it takes much grace and shutting of the eyes to drink out of them. There are alcoves in the walls around the room which originally held bright coloured glass vases and were the joy and pride of the mother when she was brought to this house as a shy young bride. Many of the vases have been broken to pieces, but some not broken enough to throw away, and all are covered with thick dust. Many other little cups and bowls have climbed into the alcoves all giving you a good idea of what they once contained. When you leave the house you wonder that the death rate is no higher than it is.

Now contrast the missionary's home. When our callers first enter they say, "Mashallah! How wonderful God is!" and their exclamation is not because there are chairs and tables, I am sure, for everything is carefully examined. Even the lamp with its glass bowl is a wonder and my callers ask, "Is this really a lamp? Where do you get your oil, it is not like ours." Perhaps the dining room is more of a wonder to them. They are astonished at the cupboard full of crockery and ask me if I sell cups and saucers and if I don't, couldn't I just sell them one or two as I have so many. As they turn away to look at something else they say, "But how wonderfully clean everything is. We are really only cattle."

Two friends were calling one morning and hearing the servant in the next room brushing and dusting one leaned towards me and said "May God deliver you. Do tell us how often you have your room swept and dusted." The other woman passing her hand over the carpet said "There is nothing to sweep up." I well remember my first visit to this woman's house. It was very much like the description given above and how different it is now. First I noticed that the cups and saucers were improving and that imitation which is the sincerest form of flattery had gradually extended to the whole room. Her children

have rather plain words spoken to them which contain references to their ancestors if they throw their nutshells and bread about the floor. I am sure the husband finds it a more comfortable place to sit than in the old days.

One day we had an Arab mother and her little girls to lunch. It was an Arab meal, the little girls sitting on the floor and eating with their hands while the grown-ups sat at the table. All of a sudden one little girl sprang up and wiped her two little greasy hands on my precious white wall. We spoke to her at once but the deed was done and as she turned around she said, "Well then where shall I wipe them?"

But the missionary home has a wider and deeper influence in a Moslem land and its results cannot always be seen in washed cups, etc. Our Moslem sisters are interested in our very everyday life. One Moslem friend, the wife of a rich and very religious man, was at first very cold and stiff towards me. Her two daughters, young girls who had longings to see something of the outside world, were admiring the lace and embroidery on my clothes and were soundly rebuked by the mother for having any desire for the finery of unbelievers. But when we became better acquainted and I had answered many questions about our ways of wooing and marrying which showed that they were founded on love and not on the money the parents could get for their daughter, her line of vision was extended. She told me one day that she had been telling her husband how much she would like to take a walk with him along the seaside at sunset as my husband and I did. She gave an embarrassed little smile as she pictured to herself her daring deed but behind it all was the real desire for more companionship.

I was saying my good-byes in a house one afternoon and was pressed to stay longer but said that I must get home as I had not happened to mention to my husband that I was going out. Hands were thrown up in consternation and it was suggested that I might get a beating when I arrived home but when assured that nothing would happen they said it would be wonderful to have a husband

like that. But I said "Why shouldn't I go out, my husband trusts me."

Even the little missionary children have their part in this great work of winning Islam for Christ. Their clean skin and clothes are noticed at once and as the women see them oftener they see the love which bubbles up out of their eyes and hearts whose source is in their Christian birth.

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#### V. TABRIZ, PERSIA

The first Turk who ever spoke to me of his wife by her name, was Mousa, servant in a missionary home, who said, "when I was a Moslem, I used to pick up a stick of wood or anything handy and hit Fatima over the head, but now I am a Christian, I can't do that." His naming her struck me, as a Moslem generally calls his wife "My child, my house, or the mother of such a child." The children do not say mother and father, but the master, the mistress, the older brother and the great sister. They appear to be ashamed of the natural relations of life.

The family life of even nominal Christians is much above that of the Moslems, and where the two religions are brought into close relation it always makes a deep impression on the latter people. Much more is this the case where they see genuine Christianity, whether in the case of missionaries or people of the country.

The women envy the security and honor of the Christian wife. One said, "Your prophet has done well by you, but ours has done very badly; when we meet I shall have words with him." A young woman of a noble and wealthy family said, "You ask me if I fear my husband will divorce me, or take another wife? I think not; he is old and sickly; it does not seem likely"; then she added thoughtfully, "But we never know."

The servants of Christian families get to be ashamed of polygamy and divorce; in one clan, with which I am familiar, many of whose men have served in missionary