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News and Notes

A Monthly Paper printed for the private use of the
Members of the Missionaries to Muslims League

Series X

No. 1

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January 1st = 1st Jumada'1 Ula (5th, mo.) 1340, A.H.

Our President's Message.

TO FELLOW-MEMBERS OF THE
M. M. LEAGUE.

I HAVE been asked to give a New Year Message, and, in view of what is exercising many earnest minds at the present time, will write a word about our attitude to the Bible.

A "Bible League" has been started for India at Berhampore, Ganjam, (Sec., Rev. J. I. Macdonald), by some dear brethren who feel we can best in this way explain criticisms, meet objections, unite fellow-believers, and help doubters. Some recent Bible Commentaries, which work on the assumption that there is no particular inspiration in what the Church has been accustomed to call "the Word of God," have led to this need of action. At the same time we strongly deprecate all uncharitableness and want of courtesy and friendly sympathy, where there is real difficulty. And, as workers amongst Muhammadans, we probably need to emphasize that we do not arrogate for our precious Bible the higher (?) kind of inspiration (or revelation) which they claim for the Qura'n—and which seems to ordinary readers so absurd in face of the actual contents of the Qura'n. But we do consider our Bible as the "Word of God," written by His servants "impelled by the Holy Spirit," (2 Pet i. 21, Weymouth). And in our private lives and in our public life we surely, as disciples of Christ, are to value it as He valued it, and use it as He and His apostles used it. This one main principle should distinguish His people from all other nominal Christians and non-Christians. Only so shall we be worthy of the honourable title "People of the Book" (Ahl-i kitab).

It seems sad that while denomination differences are rightly disappearing, and Christian Brotherhood so markedly widening, this new division into "followers" versus "critics" should have come into our

camp. But Christian patience and love and intelligent study of the Word may prevent real schism and defection.

Unfortunately our anti-Christian enemies are aware of it, and it supplies them with weapons ("fiery darts" Eph. vi) which only the "shield of faith" can "quench." Let us then be prayerful and faithful as we enter (D.V.) on a New Year's Campaign.

Your brother in CHRIST,
MALCOLM G. GOLDSMITH.

*Royapet House,
Royapettah, Madras.*

Report of the League for 1921.

HAS there ever been quite such a year as the one that has just closed, in the experience of us Missionaries to Muslims? Not so very long ago we were wishing that the Muslim problem could be brought more prominently before the Churches of the homelands. Some of us as deputations to those churches found there were many worthy people who knew not so much as that there were Muslims! And now behold, while we on the various fields have watched the progress of events, not without a little anxiety, the Muslims in many countries have themselves, thrust themselves and their peculiar point of view before the notice of the peoples of the West. The Moors across the straits from Spain, the Nationalists in Egypt, the Kemalists in Anatolia, the Arabs in Iraq, and, to us on the spot perhaps more especially, the Khilafat party in India, have separately and variously, yet most effectively forced the non-Muslim world to a recognition of the fact that the Muslims are a people to be reckoned with. Which of us now will be prepared to assert that Pan-Islam is dead?

Yet this is not the kind of prominence we desired, nor the problem as we wish it to be known. In spite of the opinion of the Hindu writer whom we quote in this issue, and in spite of the peculiar Muslim viewpoint which makes everything political, religious, and everything religious, political; the Muslims have chiefly succeeded in making themselves out to be a grave political menace in the eyes of the rest of the thinking world. It is because we are all of us conscious of this fact, because some of us have had it impressed upon us by the very grave nature of situations near at hand—as for instance, the annihilation of Spanish regiments in Morocco, the riots in Alexandria, and the Moplah outrages in South India—it is because of what we have seen and heard and indubitably understood, that we unite to pay the tribute of our praise to the one God and Father of us all, Who in His mercy has protected us, in His wisdom guided us, and by the treasures of His Love has helped us, in spite of all, to carry on the Task and commend the Gospel of His Grace in Jesus Christ to some of these same Muslims.

We trust you have all been helped by the chief medium of communication that is open to us—this little monthly paper. Your Secretary has been, from time to time, much cheered by notes of appreciation from several members during the course of the year. Evidently the method of selecting some subject of interest to most, and getting members to contribute their views and experiences therein, has been of real value. We owe our warm thanks to those members—always very busy people—who have kindly responded to our appeal in such matters. It is not equally clear, however, that other members, from whom we received no replies, were as enthusiastic over these subjects as ourselves! But perhaps they are only waiting to be asked again in 1922!

Truth is stranger than fiction. Through the kindness of members in paying up arrears, we have to-day a superfluous balance of nearly four hundred rupees.

It has been decided by a majority on your Committee that part of this money, at least, be devoted to producing that Life of Jesus, for simple Muslim readers, concerning which there has been considerable correspondence in News and Notes. The first step would be to get it done in simple English. Others favour the production of more suitable tracts for Muslims. These questions will be taken up as soon as possible this year.

An experienced member of your Committee has remarked recently that our monthly paper only needs to be more widely known to secure a great increase in the number of our members. We cannot publicly advertize ourselves, so that we must look again to each individual member to help us in this matter. We close the year with a membership of 266 in good standing. The number at last New Year was 240; 38 new members have joined us during the year; we have lost 2 members by death; and we have had to strike off the names of 10 people who have either resigned or lost touch with us.

You will be shortly receiving a complete and up to date list of members. It is arranged for use as a cycle of prayer. Spaces are left at each day of the month for you to add the names of new members as they will be notified in these pages. While praying for the work let us also pray for one another.

Permit us to call your attention to two further points. Do use these pages more for publishing requests for praise and prayer in matters relating to your work. And finally a word about ourselves. Your Secretary and his wife have recently moved into a new house built by a Muslim in the heart of this city—Begam Bazar House. Pray that God may make us a blessing in the lives of our Muslim neighbours, and give us evidence that His Hand is upon us for good.

A Gifted Worker for the Children of the Muslim World.

LET us introduce you to Miss Padwick, the talented and enthusiastic Superintendent of the Junior Department of the Nile Mission Press. She is doing splendid work in revising and preparing literature for Muslim children of all ages. In a recent letter to Mrs. Gordon Logan, Secretary of the Fellowship of Faith for Moslems, she expresses her feelings in the following manner :—

“Sitting at my desk, I often wonder why we are not in closer touch with missionaries all over the Moslem world. Don't they believe that God uses books to speak for Him? Surely the whole past story of the growth of Christ's Church throughout the world proves to the hilt that He *does*. Why then does not the Fellowship of Faith mean a showering of letters from all over the Moslem world, asking about books for old men, books for young men, books for boys, and books for babes? Is it we who are at fault in that we have not let our brothers know enough about the plans we make in Cairo?

“Let me at least mention two of the last, from among simpler things, not dealing with specialists' questions in the Moslem controversy.

“(1) *Story of Joseph*, printed in large type and simple classical Arabic, with four coloured pictures, supplied by S. P. C. K. The coloured pictures are a great joy, and this simple telling of the Genesis story may surely make an entering wedge for literature into many homes. Price 5 piastres (1/- in English money).

“(2) *Outline Texts for Colouring*. Is there any part of the Moslem world where parents would not be pleased with one of the Beautitudes in good Arabic penmanship, with true Arabic border designs, coloured and carried home by a boy or girl of the household? These texts, on good painting paper, with ancient Arabic designs, are worthy of a place on the wall in school or home when the children have followed their own eastern fancy in colouring. Others than children might enjoy such work. Questions and answers about the meaning of the texts are printed at the back. Price 5 piastres per packet.

“I hope I have said enough to set comrades writing to us with hints and questions. We should like to have a full list of all who are seriously interested in the use of Christian literature, and write to them regularly with the latest information.

“Yours very sincerely,

“CONSTANCE E. PADWICK.”

What Miss Padwick says of the members of the Fellowship of Faith, applies to us of the M. M. League and we are writing to tell her so! We want all the help she can give us. Send to her for samples of her goods for the children, at

The Nile Mission Press,
37 Sharia Al Manakh,
CAIRO.

What India Thinks

A HINDU WRITER has recently been contributing articles under this title to the columns of 'The Englishman,' a daily paper published in Calcutta. This is how he views the present upheaval amongst Indian Muslims:

THE AWAKENING OF THE MAHOMEDAN MASSES.

The very awakening of our Mahomedan masses, which has lent so much strength to Mr. Gandhi's movement, constitutes in itself a very serious cause of uneasiness. The Mahomedan masses are for one thing much quicker to resent any wrong, real or imaginary, than the Hindus. They are endowed with a reckless courage which constitutes a very dangerous element in times of popular unrest. They are easily led by their religious teachers; and if once their religious passions are aroused, it is exceedingly difficult to control them. This is a matter of almost universal experience in India. Add to this, the whole genesis of the present Moslem movement is far more religious, both in its inception and objective, than political. Nor have we any reason to believe that the Musalman leaders themselves have any clear conception of Indian Nationalism. And it is impossible to say how long and how far they will be able to control the very agencies which they are using to arouse the enthusiasm of the masses and enlist their sympathy for the Khilafat cause. That these fears are not imaginary will be proved by a study of the proceedings of the All-India Ulema Conference that held its last sittings last month at Lahore. Among others one resolution proposed to appoint a deputation which would travel in the interior of India to propagate ideals of Khilafat and Islam. Another resolution said that a general meeting of the Ulemas' Conference would be held on the 10th and 11th of December at Badaun, which would, among other business "proceed with the election of Amir-ul-Hind for the organisation of the Muslim community." The Conference also called for at least a lakh of "Awan" members, each paying a rupee as annual subscription to "help the completion of the commandments of *Jamiat*." We know already what the *Jamiat* stands for. It has issued a Fatwa, appealing to Mahomedans in the police and army of the Government to resign their posts.

As long as the movement is personally conducted and controlled by men like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad or Maulana Abdul Bari and others of their class, who have an intelligent appreciation of both the Indian and the world situation, so long there is little reasonable fear of its getting out of hand. But these gentlemen cannot personally conduct the propaganda in far away rural tracts. There ordinary Maulavis must be employed; and judging from past experience in Bengal, during the Swadeshi agitation of the last decade, one is not very much encouraged to hope that when the decisions of the Lahore *Jamiat* are communicated to excitable masses by irresponsible propagandists, all will be smooth sailing in our outlying areas. The Mahatma would not appeal to the Government to protect people from mob outbursts. The people themselves have no organisation of their own for self-protection. The old Panchayats have been killed long ago, in any case, in Bengal. The old zemindars have lost their powers and their prestige. They have not the wherewithal with which their forebears at one time maintained their position and authority among their tenants. During the last agitation, the National volunteers of East Bengal persuaded the rowdy elements in their neighbourhood to keep themselves in check.

That valiant body of young patriots was dispersed as criminal by the Minto Government. There is little chance of reviving those bodies now. Mr. Gandhi would not tolerate the organisation of a "trained physical force party." And in view of it all, the only protection that peaceful people will be forced to seek is from the Government. So the Non-co-operation movement which wanted to starve the Government out by withdrawing the people's reliance on and support to it, promises to end by strengthening the hands of that very Government.

And the saddest tragedy of it all is that in its present financial difficulties, and in view of the general political distemper in the country, the Government may find itself unable to offer protection to outlying areas, if the forces of disorder get out of hand there. All this should lead every serious-minded Indian patriot and politician to think furiously of the situation in the country.

Notes

A MEMBER IN ARABIA writes; 'Am I too inexperienced to dare a suggestion re-title of the proposed 'Life of Jesus' mentioned by Mr. Sutton? Personally the feeling is growing on me that *our* use (I do not mean that we should object to *their* use), of the term '*Isa* tends to perpetuate the 'great misunderstanding' as you so aptly express it. After all we (a) cannot place the word re-origin or meaning; (b) do not recognise the character as portrayed; (c) but own allegiance to a very different, possibly incompatible 'person.'

I may be 'cranky' about this, for even the word *Allah* is unwelcome to me (except in Quranic quotation), from a feeling that we may not compare an intriguing colleague of *Iblis*, and Jehovah.

Some months ago several men spoke to me of the '*Isiwi*'. I shortly perceived that they were referring to Christians! None apparently knew of the dervish sect who perform ghoulish freaks of physical endurance for the entertainment of admiring Moghraby crowds. Since enlightening them, I have not again heard the term applied to us. That is merely a sidelight on my imperfectly defined feeling that the name ('*Isa*') is *infra dig*, as is also the fact that the name is commonly given nowadays, and by no means above every other name.

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PALESTINE.—We are glad to hear that the Colportage work in Palestine has been extended beyond the Jordan, into Gilead and Bashan. Books having been also sent to Moab. The *Times* gives us the news that a Railway has been carried through to Amaan, and that a train runs both ways weekly from Haifa to the land East of the Jordan. This will make it easy to carry our books there, and from there they will find their way to Arabia.

It is also very interesting and encouraging to hear that our colporteurs are welcomed to the outlying Jewish colonies.

We sell large numbers of Scripture Pictures (Copping's) in Palestine. We have just sent out nearly 5,000, besides fresh supplies of books for our Bookshop.

Friends who help us may know that the work is going on all the time, and we ask them to follow it continually with the prayer of faith.

FROM 'BLESSED BE EGYPT.'

NILE MISSION PRESS.—The value of the books sold in the twelve months was £E. 612'285, which is an increase of £E. 114'017 (say 25 per cent. but not 50 per cent.), the total number of books and pamphlets being 28,006, which is 1,314 copies more than last year. One great result of the Colporteurs' Conference was to vividly impress upon the men the importance of small tracts, such as those of the Sherwood Eddy addresses, for the human inclination of some (we refer here to the less earnest men) used to be to the larger, fatter book as being less trouble than twenty separate tracts of the same total value! We are gradually changing that by offering a prize for the largest number of small tracts.

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A NEW BOOK IN URDU.—We are delighted to see that that most valuable little book, *Sirátu-'l-Mustaqim*, originally written in English by our Vice-President, Mr. Takle, has recently been translated into Urdu by one of our new members, Professor Muhammed Ismail, M.A., of the Forman Christian College, Lahore. It is a book of 90 pages, costing 8 annas and published by the C.L.S. Panjab Branch, Ludhiana. A first edition of 1,000 copies has been printed. We cordially recommend this book to those of our members who have to do with thoughtful, educated Muslims. Mr. Upton, of the Nile Mission Press, writing to Mr. Takle about translating 'At Tariqat' into Arabic says: 'We are going to start it at the very earliest moment, not only because of its value in itself but because your previous book—'As Sirát'—was so exceedingly well received by Muslims' (in Egypt).

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A CONVERT FROM ISLAM IN ARABIA after speaking of the change that had come over his views of Muhammad and Islam, and of Christ and Christianity goes on to say:

'Most wonderful of all is His influence on my conscience, for one word of His has done what swords could not do, nor giants, for by His word He cleft the rock of my heart and opened it as a grave. So I see He does to the hearts of other men evil and wicked as I was. Verily it is His Word which makes of a wolf a meek and willing lamb, and of a ravenous beast a mild and docile creature. Such things rouse men from their sleep and make them seek forgiveness. It is His divine spirit like a clear, shining lamp which shines into and dispels deepest darkness, or like the pole-star to the mariner, guiding him to the right path, nay to life and truth. He is the remedy for the healing of the sick soul, the salve to the wounded heart, and comfort to the sorrowing spirit, riches to the poor, water to the thirsty. Thus was I led to Jesus Christ and to salvation. Long live the Gospel and the messengers thereof. In the name of the Redeemer Jesus Christ I pray this. Amen.'

For Prayer.

PRAYER is desired "for a Mohomedan woman who seems interested, but whom relatives are trying to hinder; that she may come out for Christ."

PRAYER for God's guidance and rich blessing to rest upon the deliberations of the National Missionary Council at their meetings in Poona from the 11th-17th January.

NEW MEMBERS.

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|------|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 228. | Rev. E. Holliday-Owen, | Swed. Miss. | Cooch Behar, Bengal. |
| 259. | Rev. John A. D. Khan, | Ch. of God. | Calcutta. |
| 273. | Miss. A. G. Jones, | A. P. Mission. | Etah, U. P. India. |

The annual subscription to the League is only Rs. 2-0-0. The Secretary will be glad to send spare copies of this issue to addresses mentioned by members with a view to securing new subscribers. News and requests for prayer will always be welcome and should be sent early in the month to the Hon. Secretary :—

Rev. L. Bevan Jones,
Baptist Mission,
Dacca, Bengal, India.

