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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 XI

No. 12

December, 1923.

1st December = 21st Rabi'ul Akhir (4th mo.), 1342, A.H.

An enlightened Moslem's views on "The New Moslem World."

IN a recent communication to the press, H. H. the Aga Khan said:—
"While Turkey is by far the most important single factor in Anglo-Moslem relations, she is still only part of a greater whole. The most cursory observer cannot fail to recognize, in the light of recent history, how important it is that the five more or less independent Islamic States should establish satisfactory relations with one another, with the Moslem peoples under Great Britain, France and Russia, and with Europe and America. A survey of the problem will be facilitated by an indication of the present status of these countries. Turkey and Afghanistan are now free to manage their own affairs, and have a status not different in essentials to that of other Sovereign States, whether large or small, such as Great Britain, Sweden or Peru. The relations of Turkey and Afghanistan with all other States are governed by international law and international usage. The ancient Empire of Persia is independent at least in theory, but foreigners retain the advantages of the capitulations, with consular jurisdiction and all its implications.

Egypt has at last reached the goal of her ambitions—the recognition of her national sovereignty. The fifth Moslem Power, Arabia, is the danger spot; and in all probability if any serious problem arises in our day to strain Anglo-Moslem relations, and revive old perils, it will have its origin among the sands and mountain ranges of Arabia.

The five States mentioned are united by the ties of a common civilization and religion and by that general similarity of ideas and manners which though modified by local conditions, prevails throughout Islam. But one conclusion may be drawn with confidence; unless Europe or some other particular European State unduly interferes with these Moslem States in a manner inconsistent with international usage, no responsible organs of Mohammadan thought or opinion

would consider it to be their interest to bring about any coalition or alliance between the five Moslem States with a hostile intention toward any other nation.

It is not merely improbable, it is well-nigh impossible, as being antagonistic to the interests of any of the three Moslem Powers, that they should seek active intervention in Western affairs or should go beyond ordinary cultural or fraternal intercourse between themselves.

If the statesman of Europe and especially the guides and teachers of the British Empire, recognize their own permanent interests, they will encourage to the utmost this wholesome and desirable Islamic movement. They will give their moral support to the up-buildings of a truly independent Turkey, Persia, Egypt and Afghanistan.

The one great cloud in this horizon, as already indicated, is the case of Arabia, and other portions of the former Turkish Empire. Mandates have been accepted under the Peace Treaties in Syria and Mesopotamia, by France and Great Britain, and the Palestinian question is one of great perplexity. Apart from these extraneous difficulties the Arab race is divided into minor sovereignties and principalities.

In my humble judgment the right solution of the Arab question will call for a greater application of statesmanship and breadth of outlook from the leaders of Great Britain and France than is required for any other international problem of the East. Unfortunately, both these great Powers are entangled with Arab mandates and responsibilities which the United States has taken care to avoid. I have no doubt as to what the solution should be. In spite of passing and temporary difficulties, the public opinion of Western Europe, and especially of England, should insist on working for a real and free Arabia, a federation of small States with Mecca or Medina as the cultural centre and including Syria and Palestine."

Dealing with Enquirers.

WHEN I was in Dacca, young men (Hindus and Moslems) would sometimes come to read the gospels with me. Whenever the question arose as to what a person should do who, because of his faith in Christ, was likely to be turned out of his home, I would invariably ask them to read verses 25-33 of the 6th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, and would explain to them the purport of those verses, emphasising especially the need of seeking first the Kingdom of God. Our Saviour's words cannot be improved upon. It is a solid fact that our Lord has never failed any one who has, with a true heart, sought to enter His Kingdom and to obtain His righteousness. I have known of cases of young men who though helped for a time by missionaries, have done remarkably well afterwards. It is our privilege to encourage enquirers to put to the test the teachings of our Lord after fully yielding their hearts to Him.

*Shahjahanpur,
U. P.*

J. D. M.

Tracts for Educated Zanana Women, in Persian Urdu.

FOR the benefit of our lady correspondent who first made the enquiry about tracts for women, and for all others interested on behalf of Indian Moslem women, we gladly publish particulars supplied to us by some friends who know both the need and the present supply.

The following can be obtained at the depot of the Panjab Religious Tract and Book Society, Anarkali, Lahore :—

Six small tracts written for women by Miss Greenfield. Hope or Mother Budhan's Telescope ; The Lost Found ; Who will pay my debt? ; Mahakor's Faith ; How shall I repent? ; Who is the greatest? *Also by Miss Greenfield,* (i) Hálátun Nissa us Sabiqa (Stories of women in O. T.), written specially for Moslem women. In *Roman Urdu* (ii) Hamará Báp Ibráhím, lessons for the month on the life of Abraham —written with an eye to the zanana teacher. (iii) Masih ke haqq men chand peshingoián, which gives all the O. T. prophecies concerning the Christ and, in a parallel column, their fulfilment.

A 'Bible Subject Index' has recently been done into Persian Urdu at Re. 1-8, and will be found useful for all teachers, preachers and inquirers.

Another list has been sent to us of books to be obtained from the C.L.S. Ludhiana (Rev. Dr. Orbison, C.L.S. Khanna, Dist. Ludhiana, Panjab). We are informed that these publications are now being offered at half price. We select the following from a long list :—

Izzat-i-be misal (Matchless Honour)				
by Miss Marston	...	...	...	4 as.
Masihi ka Safar (The Christian's Pilgrimage)	...	...	...	2 "
Baibal ki Naqlen (O. T. Stories)	...	...	...	6 "
" " " (N. T. Stories)	...	...	...	6 "
Tariq ul Hayat (The Way of Life)	...	...	...	2 "
Zainab the Panjabi (a Story)	...	...	...	2 "
Khudawand Masih ki Zindagi ka				
Ahwal (Life of Jesus)	...	...	...	3 "
Yadi Mahbub (Devotions)	...	...	...	4 "
Injil ki Kahanian (Gospel Stories) 1st Year	...	...	...	8 "
" " " " " 2nd Year	...	...	...	8 "
Talash-e-i-Haqq (Search for Truth)	...	...	...	3 "
Sirat ul Mustaqim (The Straight Path)	...	...	...	8 "
Isláhi Tamaddan (Social Reform)	...	...	...	5 "
Isláhi Akhlaq (Moral Reform)	...	...	...	4 "

The following two from the P. R. B. Soc., Lahore :—

Titus (a Story).

Shahídan-i-Karthage—an excellent book for women of the zanana.

What are the Children Reading?

QUASS Mary Dobson, lately returned from the Sinai Research Expedition gave an interesting report at the annual meeting of the Nile Mission Press of her observations while travelling from place to place. In the course of her report she said:—

'At Suez the E.G.M. has a Girls' School, and it was a joy to see Arab girls there under sound Christian instruction. One thing much amused us. They had had one little girl from among the Bedouin in residence as a boarder. But the love of her people and the restrictions of school life were too much for the child of the desert, and she went back to her own people. But she returned, from time to time, for an extraordinary reason; she wished for a bath, which she had had for the first time in the Mission School, and which had been a revelation of comfort to her. One felt that one could never despair of trying to inculcate new customs on ignorant peoples if this child could adopt a custom so contrary to the usage of her own people. We saw the little school at Tor on the Gulf of Suez, run by the Greek Church; about this school I would rather not say much, but there they were reading the regulation Government books, and as they begin to know more about other lands things must go ahead, even as they have in Mesopotamia and Jerusalem, where in the Government school for girls, there was even a kindergarten where tiny children learned their Arabic letters. Yet other evils come with education and so-called civilisation. In Egypt, and even in Jerusalem, the cinema holds sway, and children go. Some of the films shown are so revolting that they would be suppressed elsewhere, and there must be some counteracting influence if the morale of the children is not to be spoiled.

Now, they say the pen is mightier than the sword, and it certainly is; and we must realise that there is a tremendous necessity for child-literature. *If you can get a child and train it, and give it a literature to read which can help it, it makes all the difference.* Think of the difference literature has made in our own lives; everything a child reads becomes part of the child, and we have only to look back to realise how, since childhood, our magazines and story-books have influenced us. And what do these young people of the East read? Once, in a native house in India, I found a sweet, gentle girl reading an unexpurgated edition of the "Arabian Nights." Unless we give them attractive literature in a lawful way they may grow up worse with their education than without it. And we can get at the children, where we cannot reach the older folk with their fixed ideas.

I have never forgotten how, once, when I had to do with a most interesting Mohammedan woman of high birth, she said to me, "Will you read the Koran with me?" I consented, and we were reading a Bible history at the same time. Presently the two books differed. The woman said to me: "Which is right? Your book or mine?" I replied: "Mine is right." She said, proudly: "We will read no more!" But the children are often accessible, and, in non-Christian countries, they are reading more and more as education spreads. In India they have recently brought out an illustrated children's magazine on Christian lines, and it is doing a great work. The Oxford University Press in the same country have felt that school-children must have literature about their country that they can understand, to read besides their school-books, and so have been bringing out special sets of stories to meet the need. It is an absolute necessity to have suitable literature for children if they are to be rightly trained.

Some people are down on fiction of every kind. I never can feel it is right to take that attitude, because our Blessed Lord made it part of His teaching to instruct by parables. Do you think the poor people and the children would have understood as well if our Lord had given them a discourse on the love of God instead of the parable of the Prodigal Son? But one does want to be tremendously careful what one is giving to the children; we do not want to give them fiction which has not the convincing power of Christ behind, since teaching by fiction seems to me to be teaching along the lines of Christ Himself.

Notes.

Collecting Subscriptions for 1924.—We hereby notify all members residing within the Indian Postal Area that, as heretofore, the January issue, 1924, will be sent by V.P.P. to such as have not paid their subscription in advance. In some cases there may a small amount to be added to the Rs. 2/- on account of arrears. Should any member feel compelled to discontinue his or her subscription, we shall be grateful to have a notification well beforehand. But we sincerely trust that no such necessity will arise. In view of the prospective furlough of the present writer the Post Office will be instructed to pay in all receipts to the Rev. M. T. Titus, of Moradabad, U. P., who has kindly consented to carry on the work of the league next year.

* * * * *

One of our correspondents sends the following notes from a friend's letter. "I am just back from our only simon-pure Mohammedan field, and am delighted with the way X—is getting hold of things up there in Baluchistan. He has met a lot of the village maliks and a number of them have been in and taken tea with him. We have a Pathan convert in the Bible school, and also a Persian convert, and a second Persian is almost sure to enter. We are wondering if these latter are providential indications of the way into Eastern Persia. I went to Duzdap, sixty miles into Persia, and on the edge of the west boundary of Afghanistan. We are asking for a hospital first at Chaman, on the border where fruit comes across from Kandahar. Between two and four thousand mule loads of fruit come in every day during the fruit season, and it makes a splendid seed-sowing place. We already have a Christian community of 110 there, though almost all of the lot are Indians, servants of the military. But it gives us a basis of touch with the people who come across, and our preacher there has any amount of opportunity for personal work. A hospital there and plenty of good literature for distribution would certainly touch Afghanistan. After Chaman we are going to recommend the same for Duzdap."

* * * * *

Dr. Zwemer is planning to visit India, for two months about the middle of next year. It is hoped that he will be able to attend Conventions for the deepening of spiritual life, both in North and South India, and that wherever possible he will be given opportunity to plead the cause of Moslems in missionary gatherings. The proper persons are now being approached with a view to making the necessary arrangements. Dr. Zwemer will value the prayers of the members of the League on his behalf.

* * * * *

Converts from Islam, in India, 1923.—The famous French traveller Francois Bernier, while at Delhi in 1663, left on record his views as to the

prospects of Christian propaganda among Moslems in India. In his "Travels in the Moghul Empire," in the course of a letter to a friend in France he wrote of the Moslems: "I despair especially of much success among Mohometans. You will be disappointed if you suppose that in ten years one Mohometan will be converted to Christianity." We of this League need not to be told how very difficult the task is, but as this is a statement made in India, about Indian Moslems, we do well to acknowledge with humble gratitude to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that, in this year of grace 260 years later, the prospect is very different. Not only have the intervening decades witnessed far more than 26 converts, but in the present year they have been coming in by twos and threes from all parts of British India. Why, *fourteen* have just been baptized in the province of Orissa by a preacher of the B.M.S., himself a convert from Islam! During the last few days we have had staying with us a fine young man of 25 years of age, of moderate education and good family, who having decided to leave all for Christ's sake, was baptized as recently as November 4th.

Concerning the young man for whom prayer was asked last month, the missionary who has had to do with him writes :—

'I may mention that he was an enquirer for about two years and that his baptism was delayed for a considerable time in the hope that we might have had the joy of baptising his wife as well. However, the relations stole away his wife and only child and we believe that his wife is now married to another Moslem.

The young man himself had to flee on account of the threatening attitude of his relatives which followed directly upon his baptism. He has written to me saying that he is enduring great hardship but manages to earn a precarious living by selling patent medicines. His great desire is to support himself apart from mission help. I shall indeed value the prayers of the M. M. League members on his behalf.'

* * * * *

Forced to recant.—On the other hand we have to record, with deep grief, a case of backsliding. The dear old man of 75, over whom we were recently rejoicing unfeignedly, has been prevailed on, by what manner of persuasion or persecution we know not, to say *tauba*. When first the rumour reached us we could scarce believe it, but after visiting the man in his own home we were no longer left in doubt. His only son and relatives of course are all against us, but a long and earnest appeal went home and pricked the old man to the heart. Please pray for him. His last word was that he would try to run away and come to us. Imagine what that means for a man of 75, with property valued at something like a lac of rupees! The text given to him at his baptism was, "If God be for us, who can be against us." Pray that conviction and confidence may return with added power.

* * * * *

Wanted—employment for a very fine young convert aged 25 years, unmarried, with a fair knowledge of English. This is the young man to whom reference was made in the issues of July (p. 55) and October (p. 76.) He cast his all upon God and came out. Work was secured for him in a jute godown. But he loathes it and the way in which the business is run. He is getting Rs. 20/- per men. He is active and likes to be busy. He is thoroughly trustworthy, lovable and ready to please one through service. But being 25 he can no longer hope for Government service. Your secretary will be most grateful to receive some offer for this young man.

BOOK REVIEW.

SELECTIONS FROM MUHAMMADAN TRADITIONS, by Rev. W. Goldsack. PUBLISHED BY C.L.S. MADRAS. 325 pp. Cloth cover, gilt title, price Rs. 5/- postage extra.

The importance of the Traditions (*hadith*) in Islam and for multitudes of Moslems, can scarcely be exaggerated. In quantity and in quality of interest and influence these famous collections surpass the *Quran* itself. "What the *mihrab* (the prayer-niche in every mosque) is to the true *kibla* that the *hadith* is to the *sunna*—the exact indication of what Muhammad himself would do."

In other words, these Traditions are the record of the "words of the Prophet and his actions and what he permitted," and when we bear in mind that Muhammad is believed to have been divinely guided in all the details of his life, we see the reason for the great value Moslems attach to the Traditions.

In very early times there grew up six standard collections of the Traditions and in the sixth century of the Hijra a careful and authoritative collection from these six was prepared under the title, "Mishkat-ul Masabih."

The work under review is the result of a painstaking effort to present to English readers a thoroughly representative collection, within a small compass, of the most authentic traditions in the aforementioned Mishkat, in the preparation of which the author has translated from the original Arabic.

Mr. Goldsack's collection meets a long-standing need and will prove a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of Moslem faith and practice. It is safe to say that there is nothing like it available in our language. The last (and probably the first) attempt to produce an English translation of these Traditions was made by Capt. Matthews of the Bengal Artillery, whose much larger work was published in two volumes in Calcutta in 1809. Needless to say it is long since out of print and to all intents and purposes unobtainable. This will give some indication of the great value of Mr. Goldsack's production.

No Moslem looks to the *Quran* alone for guidance in matters of religion. On the contrary many of the obscurities of that book are only to be explained by reference to the Traditions, which are more lucid in every way. Thus we have in the present work sections dealing with Purifications, Prayer, Almsgiving, Fasting, Pilgrimage, Marriage, War—in fact the whole range of Moslem life is touched upon.

As one reads them one realizes afresh the truth of the remark that the Traditions are at once the strength and weakness of Islam.

"They reveal the true Muhammad and indict him." As Dr. Zwemer has said, "Intelligent Muslims reverence and yet dread many of these Traditions."

The present work has the advantage of a very full list of contents; the printing has been handsomely done and the general get-up makes it a credit to the printers and publishers alike.

In anticipating the publication of this volume a year ago, Dr. Zwemer urged every worker among Moslems to "sell his cloak, if need be, and furnish himself or herself with this newly-burnished weapon for our spiritual warfare." Now that it is published we can assure our readers that it is certainly a book well worth having.

L. B. J.

For Praise and Prayer.

- PRAISE** for the baptism of fourteen converts from Islam in the province of Orissa. (p. 94)
- PRAISE** for the baptism of two Pathan and two Persian converts on the borders of India. (see p. 93).
- PRAISE** for the baptism of a young Moslem of 25 years of age in East Bengal, son of well-to-do parents; he has left all for Christ's sake. (see p. 93).
- PRAYER** is asked for the young Moslem who has had to flee from the persecution of his relatives, that he may be kept by the grace of God and prove a faithful witness of Jesus Christ. (see p. 93).
- PRAYER** is asked that three converts of some months' experience, and now being trained for evangelistic work, may prove steadfast under strong inducement to revert to their old companionship and faith. (India).
- PRAYER** is urgently sought on behalf of the old man who under stress of persecution in his own home has said *tauba*, that he may yet fearlessly stand out as Christ's. (see p. 93).
- PRAYER** is asked on behalf of our friend Dr. Zwemer who intends to visit India for two months about the middle of next year, that God will prepare the way.
- PRAY** for two men of middle age, who seem to be earnestly seeking the way of life, who have been studying the Bible, and who declare themselves about ready for Baptism.
- PRAY** that great wisdom may be given to those who deal with enquirers, and that God may lead us to some real solution of this great question of how to deal with an enquirer who is ready to give up all for Christ.

DEATH OF A MEMBER.

We record with sorrow the death of the Rev. M. E. Botham of Lanchow, Kansu, China, which took place recently, after a trying illness. He is a great loss to the work for Moslems in China.

NEW MEMBERS.

212	Rev Earl McConnelec,	Amer. U. P. Mission,	Sialkot, Panjab.
343	Rev. T. C. Carne,	Meth. Miss. Austr.	Azamgarh, U. P.
344	Rev. P. Erdman,	Amer. Press,	Beirut, Syria.
345	Prof. R. C. Rankin,	Christian Coll.	Lucknow, U. P.
346	Miss M. Means,	M. E. Mission	Bijnor, U. P.
347	Miss A. Ashbrook	M. E. Mission,	Shahjahanpur, U. P.
348	Rev. H. C. Scholberg	M. E. Mission,	Narsinghpur, C. P.
349	Rev. F. M. Wilson,	M. E. Mission,	Cawnpore, U. P.
350	Miss R. C. Manchester,	Isabella Thoburn College,	Lucknow, U. P.
351	Rev. L. A. Core,	M. E. Mission,	Budaun, U. P.
352	Rev. C. R. Pittman,	Amer. Miss.	Tabriz Persia.

The annual subscription to the League is only Rs. 2-0-0 (English about 3s.) 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.

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