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## News and Notes

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1st July = 15th Zu'l-Qa'dah (11th mo.), 1341, A.H.

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### **The Conversion of Mussalmans to Hinduism.**

We are indebted to Rev. Murray T. Titus, of Moradabad, for the following account of what is known locally as the "Shuddi movement"

**I**N the United Provinces of Northern India are a number of districts, in the vicinity of the ancient capital cities of the Mogul Emperors, where there is found a curious class of Mohammedans known as the Malkana Rajputs, or simply Malkanas. No little interest has been aroused of late because of the activity of the Arya Samaj workers in endeavouring to reclaim them, by "shuddi" rites, to the fold of Hinduism.

Swami Shraddanand of Delhi, who is at the head of the movement, is a noted Arya Samaj leader, who for some time was the Principle of the famous Gurukul of this sect at Hardwar. According to his own reported statement, the Shuddi Sabha was formed, with headquarters in Delhi, as a defensive association, when the Hindus found that their religion was in danger, apparently as a result of the provocation aroused by the forcible conversions of Hindus by the Mohammedans in the Moplah country of Malabar. It was designed primarily, he indicates, to organise Hindus for the removal of internal differences, and dissensions, without any political or proselytising motive in it, and for the purpose of "peaceful and legitimate reclamation work."

With these objects in mind the Swami and his band of Arya Samaj helpers began work, particularly in the districts of Agra, Muttra, Bulandshahr, Etah, Mainpuri and the Bharatpur State. According to one of the reports published by the Shuddi Sabha in the

"Leader" (Allahabad) at the end of April, between ten and eleven thousand of the Malkana Rajputs had been "reclaimed." It is hard to get at the real facts, but it is quite possible that many have been taken back into Hinduism. According to a correspondent from the affected area, the Arya Samaj workers go to a village, and explain to the Malkanas how, in the reign of Aurungzebe, their ancestors were compelled to become Mohammedans at the point of the sword. How they were killed if they did not, and their women carried off, all just as it happened so recently down in the Moplah country. Then when the Arya preacher finds he has been successful in prevailing upon his audience, arrangements are made for the *shuddi* or "reinstatement-in-caste" ceremony to take place.

Briefly, this consists in lighting a fire in a shallow pit dug in the earth in the midst of those who are to take part in the ceremony of purification. On this fire *ghee*, or clarified butter, is poured, while the officiating swami pronounces some *mantras*. This performance is called *hawana*. After this is completed the candidate is invested with the sacred thread of the Rajput, he is pronounced *shud*, and is once more within the fold of the orthodox.

Of course all this has stirred up a large amount of feeling on the part of Mohammedans throughout India. Bitter, not to say, violent articles have been written in the Moslem Press against the Hindus. The Moslems feel that the cause of Hindu-Moslem Unity has been dealt a severe blow, in spite of the fact that the Central Khilafat Committee refused to take any official notice of the Shuddi Campaign. The President of the Bombay Provincial Khilafat Conference, Maulvi Abdul Majid, recently said at the meeting of the Conference in May, that "he deprecated the conversions in certain provinces, which he characterised as politically inopportune." But just how the Conference could reconcile this statement with its resolution "urging the vigorous propagation of Islam all over India"; and just how it could find it possible to seriously object to the Hindus' trying to reclaim "forced converts" whether of the Malabar uprising of 1921, or the descendants of similar converts in the time of the Moguls, it is difficult for reasonable folks to understand. This is truly an interesting commentary on the ages-old attitude of the Moslem to his own and other communities.

But not only have articles been written and speeches made against the Shuddi Campaign, it is said that a number of Mohammedan workers jealous for their Faith, have been endeavouring to carry on a counter campaign. As neither correspondents from the districts affected, nor the reports in the Moslem Press indicate that they are meeting with any marked success, it may be safely concluded that up to date, at any rate, Swami Shraddanand and his workers have scored a complete victory.

Who are the Malkanas? They are a group of people who have never been completely Islamized. They are the descendants of

converted Hindus. According to the Gazetteer of the Northwest Provinces of 1884, their ancestors are said to have belonged as a rule to the superior land-holding castes, such as the Jats, Chauhans, and Gaura Rajputs, who were converted to Islam by the sword in the time of the Mogul Emperors. The origin of the name is much in doubt. It is probably derived in much the same way as that of the Lalkhanis of the Bulandshahar District. In this District one of the Hindu ancestors of the community took as his Moslem name on conversion Lal Khan.

The Malkana Rajputs like the Lalkhanis describe themselves as Mohammedans, and as such they sometimes keep up mosques, bury their dead, wear clothes of Moslem cut, practice circumcision, observe Moslem prayers and fasts to some extent, and take part in the *'Ids* or festivals of the Mohammedans. At the same time they are found to prefer Hindu names for their children, use the Hindu salutation "Ram Ram", worship Hindu deities, attend Ganges bathing *melas*, and while they mostly use the Hindu form of wedding ceremony, yet not infrequently seek the services of a Moslem Qazi as well. They are said to eat beef, though in former times Hindu Rajputs would sometimes eat cakes (*purryan*) given them by Malkanas. They inter-marry with their own castes only; and prefer to be addressed as Miyan Thakur, a designation that is half Moslem and half Hindu. They are sometimes spoken of by other Mohammedans as Nau-Muslims.

The number of Malkanas and Lalkhanis is not great, and while the exact figures are not yet available from the last census, yet from estimates that are obtainable it may be said that both communities would probably not exceed a total of 25,000.

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## Dealing with Enquirers

WE publish below a letter and an article, both from League members, that have come to hand almost at the same time, on the ever-present problem as to how we should deal with enquirers. It is no new topic, but that it should ever become 'stale,' God forbid! As a League we have, we believe, never yet got to grips with this subject, and to all concerned it is of the first importance that we should do so and without delay. We propose to carry out the suggestion of our brother on the N. W. Frontier here in India and invite members to write quickly and candidly what they feel about this matter.

The letter runs as follows:—

'I would like to have a "Symposium" on the very practical question of how to deal with enquirers who feel, and for good reasons, that they must leave home as soon as they are baptized. I have many enquirers who find this cross the stumbling-block which prevents their coming out.

The new enquirer has had little experience of God's protecting and keeping power. So that it is no great marvel that he halts here. My own faith has often failed to support them sufficiently to carry them through. I have to acknowledge with shame many failures here. Is there any balm in the experience of others of our band that will insure a cure for the situation?

The question usually asked is about their support. This at once tends to limit the number of converts to the ability of the mission to employ or support them. *This to me does not seem to be in accordance with the will of God.* The Industrial School does not solve the problem, for many are not capable of getting benefit there. This is a very live problem here with us. I could have a large class of catechumens almost any time would I but insure them a living or employment. I would like to hear what others do.'

W. T. A.

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The article reads thus:—

"Life is growing short, let it be my business though I am the slave of no man, to make myself the slave of all men, if by any means I can save some. For this I know, that the power of Christ does still save men. This is the one essential creed, and nothing else greatly matters."

There are some of us who are willing to be servants of India in order to save her sons, but we are perplexed in regard to the best method to employ in exercising our mission. With set purpose we write here of our perplexity hoping that some successful soul-winner may give us a solution. Our problem is—*How can Bengali Inquirers be changed into genuine, self-supporting, strong Christians?*

We are face to face with this problem every day. Who can give us a satisfactory solution?

About five years ago a student came to us stating frankly that he wished to become a Christian, and that with the missionaries' help he hoped to gain a lucrative position. For some time we supported him by paying his expenses at a local hotel; daily he came to us for instruction about our religion; then we sent him back to his Moham-medan home. A few months after he returned to us bringing a girl-wife with him. On our recommendation he obtained, and for a time kept, the position of teacher in a non-Christian school. After this he became a colporteur for us. At one stage he worked in a local office, but the Indian officer in charge of that department dismissed him and sent him to us with the significant remark that our inquirer was very lazy. About eighteen months ago he and his wife were baptized. At the time of his baptism, after days of fasting and prayer, there came an apparent yielding to the Holy Spirit. Because there was no sudden manifestation of power; because this individual

could not bring himself to believe that through him hundreds would immediately be brought into the kingdom ; because there still remained in his life a tendency towards sin, he sank in despair and disappointment. We had to assert our authority and order him to stop grovelling on the ground, and to rise and take his rice. We commanded him to play the man, and told him that along with his yielding to Christ there must be definite and positive action on his own part. Since then he has been selling Gospels, and ostensibly preparing for the Lower Grade Evangelists' Examination. He passed the Matriculation Examination yet both his attempts to pass this Lower Grade Examination have resulted in failure ! On account of this and his generally unsatisfactory work we have decided to put him off our staff. We do not doubt his faith in Christ, but he is a Christian of such mediocre character that we do not know where or how to find employment for him. The only way open for us seems to be to send him out to battle for himself to find some means of supporting his wife and child. Our hope is that this struggle may strengthen him, and that this being thrown out on his own resources may awaken initiative and power which as yet have not been manifested.

The problem that confronts us in reviewing this unsatisfactory case is—*How should such inquirers be dealt with?*

If we refuse to help them financially and in other ways besides giving them teaching, we will probably lose them ; if we help them they tend to become weak Christians depending almost entirely upon us. Rev. Roland Allen, in "Missionary Methods, St. Paul's and ours," p. 109, makes this statement—"The fatal mistake has been made of teaching converts to rely upon the wrong source of strength. Instead of seeking it in the working of the Holy Spirit in themselves, they seek it in the missionary. They put him in the place of Christ, they depend upon him."

Is this the reason for our failure ? It may be, but in the case mentioned above the chief notes of the teaching given him were dependence upon Christ, and reliance on the Holy Spirit.

The fact that from time to time to prevent his falling into debt we have advanced small sums of money has probably in a measure taught him to depend on us.

For the present let us accept the above statement as true. Let us confess that this convert has learnt to rely on *the wrong source* ; how can we teach him or others to depend on the *right source* ?

Young Bengalis come to us as inquirers. They ask for our help. They want to know the truth ; they must have some means of livelihood. We know that from the moment their relatives come to hear that they have decided to follow Christ they will be ostracised. What should we do ? How can such inquirers be changed into strong, genuine, self-supporting, self-respecting, and respected followers of the Man of Nazareth ?

H. W. M

## Notes

*A Member in North India writes:—*" I am delighted to know that our League is about to do a thing which has been crying out for some one to do for a long time, *i. e.* review, cull out, revise and put in a more usable shape our Moslem literature. This should be put in as brief a form as possible consistent with clearness. The new literature should have less of the polemic and more of the direct appeal, based on strong doctrinal and evangelistic grounds. We need, too, to stress the love of God: that His appeal is not through fear but He uses the stronger appeal of love."

[We heartily endorse this view and feel sure that the new work will be carried out on the lines indicated. It is not of course the League, as such, that is conducting this campaign of revising and replenishing our stock of literature, but a Central Committee under the National Christian Council, the personnel of which are indeed, almost to a man, members of the League. Ed.]

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*Funds available for Christian Literature for Moslems.*—The work of the Survey Committees for India and elsewhere having been completed and the Report all but published, the practical issues are now being handled. In India, as probably elsewhere, funds are being made available, almost at once, for publishing MSS. that are held back through lack of financial assistance. Naturally however any claims for grants must be well endorsed. Now however is the time to get busy, and we hereby notify all League members connected with their respective Provincial Sub-Committees on work among Moslems, that they take prompt steps to see that this day of opportunity is not lost so far as the needs in their particular vernaculars are concerned. Any in India who have specific requests for grants-in-aid that they would like to put up to the Central Committee, should first secure the necessary application forms from the Rev. W. Paton, Secretary of the National Christian Council, (c/o. Y.M.C.A. 5 Russell St., Calcutta), and having filled them up should forward them to Mr. Paton through their Provincial Council Sub-Committee on work among Moslems, or the Council's Literature Sub-Committee.

An important stipulation made by the parent Appropriation Committee of the American C.L.S. for Moslems, is that requests for such grants "must come from the missionaries on the field; that the literature desired represents the judgment of a group of missionaries rather than of an individual, and that it shall take the form of a request for a definite amount for a specific piece of work."

Remember: funds are now available for well-established claims, and the time is short—claims should be put up to Mr. Paton during July, and the Central Committee for India will meet to pass upon them some time in September. It will be well in the case of claims agreed upon by the Provincial Committees, to send all Mss. to the Convener of the Central Committee on Literature for Moslems: The Rev. Murray T. Titus, Methodist Mission, Moradabad, U.P.

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*Literature Needed in Bengal.*—And now a word with my fellow-members in Bengal! Truly this is embarrassing, isn't it? We have needs in abundance, haven't we, but we can't get them all on the table in so short a time. Our Provincial Committee originally included both Mr. Takle and Mr. Goldsack (Convener), and in their absence from India now comprises

(i) Mr. Badshah, a convert from South India and at present the greatly-valued and much-beloved Evangelist of Mr. Pengwern Jones of Moulvi Bazaar; (ii) Rev. K. N. Basu of Calcutta, whom I do not even know; and (iii) your Secretary who is acting as Convener only until the Committee meets its fate (whatever that may be!) at the forthcoming meeting of the retiring Assam and Bengal Representative Council of Missions in Calcutta about the middle of the present month!

In the circumstances I take upon myself to put the following facts before you and suggest that the remnant of the Provincial sub-Committee (named-above) together with the members of the League Committee for Bengal, viz., Miss C. Williams, Rev. E. T. Butler, Rev. A. J. Grace, and (luckily for us!) Rev. W. Paton, be authorized in the name of the missionaries working in Bengal, to pass their opinion upon them.

1. Mr. Goldsack, before leaving India, deposited with me the completed Ms. of his "Traditions in Islam" in Bengali. It had previously been declined by the C.L.S., Calcutta (now defunct), through lack of funds. I propose we ask for a grant to publish this Ms.

2. Both of Mr. Goldsack's excellent booklets, "God in Islam" and "Christ in Islam" (3rd ed. 3,000) in Bengali are completely sold out. I propose that we ask for grants to reprint new editions of 3,000 of each of these.

3. Mr. Takle's excellent book, "Sirat-ul-Mustaqim" has been translated into Urdu and Arabic. Should we not ask for funds to publish it in Bengali? There is no Ms. ready yet.

4. Mr. Upson, of the Nile Mission Press, proceeded to turn Mr. Takle's "At-Tariqat" into Arabic because he considered it so suitable for Moslems. We have nothing like it in Bengali. Should we apply for a grant to publish it?

5. *Hriday Darpan* in Bengali is out of print. My colleague has been working at a translation in Mussalmani-Bengali because it is such a ready-seller amongst Moslems: should we ask for funds to publish this?

I have taken your breath away? but then I too am breathless!

### 'Rejoice with me'!

It gives me profound joy to share with my fellow-members of the League the glad news that the 'promising young Moslem in East Bengal' for whom prayer was asked in the February and June issues of *News and Notes* was baptized by me here early Tuesday morning, the 19th of June. He is 25 years of age, was his school captain and athletics champion, passed the Matriculation in the 1st division, with distinction in mathematics, and answers to the beautiful name of "Faith's diadem— which we construe to mean another 'precious jewel in the Crown of Christ.' I must tell you more of him later on. I ask your earnest prayers for him, that we may find work for him and, above all, that he may be kept by the power of the grace of God.

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Truth is always stranger than fiction. Meanwhile another "promising young Moslem in East Bengal" has found the feet of Christ, in Calcutta. And a friend thinking *my* request had to do with *his* enquirer, has sent in a note that the request for prayer be changed to one for praise for his lad too has been baptized, and he asks that we pray for his perseverance as a Christian. Then let us praise God indeed!

## For Praise and Prayer.

PRAISE for answered prayer in the bold confession of faith in Christ by baptism of the 'promising young Moslem in East Bengal' (see N. N. February and June); and prayer that he may be kept by the power and grace of God.

PRAISE for the simultaneous confession of faith in Christ by baptism of another young Moslem convert, in Calcutta, and prayer 'for his perseverance as a Christian.'

PRAYER is sought for 'an old school-girl in Bihar, who is married, but would like to come out as a Christian; and for her Christian friends that they may know how best to help her.'

PRAY for all Moslem enquirers everywhere; for the various Literature Committees in the different Moslem areas now dealing with demands for literature; for a deeper interest at home and abroad in Islam's salvation.

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### NEW MEMBERS.

176	Rev. S. D. Hinde,	St. John's Coll,	Lahore	(17th Day)
327	Rev. T. M. Wiley,	C. and M. Allee,	Mardan, N.W.F.P.	
				(16th Day)
328	Rev. J. Christensen,	do.	do.	do
329	Rev. Isaac Mason,	C.L.S. China,	Shanghai,	(2nd Day)
330	Dr. W. R. Mathewson,	B.M.S.	Palwal, Panjab,	
				(18th Day)
331	Rev. F. E. Philip,	C.M.S.	Hyderabad, Deccan,	
				(14th Day)
332	Mr. L. S. Dudley,	C.M.S.	do.	do.

(The last figure indicates the number now in membership.)

*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.