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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 XII

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Kermanshah. November 27th, 1923.

To the Members of the Moslem League, Greetings for the New Year.

THE outlook here in Persia is most interesting and encouraging. On arrival at this station some two months ago, I found two Moslems and two young Jews anxiously awaiting further instruction. They had found the Gospel of our Lord, which they had read with the missionaries, answered the needs of their hearts as Islam and Judaism did not do. With them three or four of our servants gather twice a week to study the essential teachings of Christianity and to learn how to pray.

Now they are asking for a third meeting where they can invite other friends whom they hope to interest in spiritual things. This is a specimen of what is going on in all of our stations. The door is wide open for all who desire to know our Lord. We trust this is the best year we have yet had. Pray for us.

Cordially yours,

JAS. W. HAWKES.

American Presbyterian Mission.

Dealing with Enquirers.

HERE in Persia we find a great many persons mildly interested in our religion. They have lost all faith in their own and are looking for something different. They would prefer something new if they could find it.

We find it somewhat difficult to claim their serious attention. The conviction of sin, even when they acknowledge their shortcomings,

sits lightly on them. To them it is a matter of no great concern. When one has come to a knowledge of sin and found that neither he nor any of his friends or teachers can give him any light on this momentous subject, since they are all powerless to help, it is comparatively easy to lead him to Christ, the only Saviour that God has ever sent into the world. Then it is a joy to point him to the full, all-sufficient salvation in God's lamb. The great thing then is to get a full, complete surrender. A half-hearted acceptance of the truth is not enough.

Our Mission has adopted the rule that a convert must be under instruction at least a year before baptism. Our converts and missionaries, almost to a man, believe that this is the best way, at least here in Persia. We believe that a few real, live Christians make a far greater impression on the community than hundreds of half-hearted converts. Hence the small number of baptisms we are able to report.

Now for their development, we find the booklet "Roots and Branches" an excellent compendium and an inspiration to enquirers who desire to know what they should believe and do to become Christians. The roots are the twelve chapters on the Holy Scriptures, the Unity and attributes of God, the Holy Trinity, the Way of Salvation. The duties are Repentance, Faith, Confession, the Christian life. Another book we find very useful is McConkey's work on Prayer. Everything is made so plain and inspiring as well. Both these books are found in Persian.

The matter of support for converts is acute with us at times, but we generally leave them to solve those questions for themselves as far as possible.

J. W. HAWKES.

Kermanshah, Persia.

Some Interesting Modern Positions in Islam

M. T. T.

I. *In Theology.*

THERE is a progressive school of thought among Moslems that is making every endeavor to adjust the Faith and Practice of Believers to the very exacting conditions of a modern, scientific world. Serious attempts are being made to introduce a spirit of scientific enquiry into the claim that Islam has always made, that it is the best religion for man. Christianity has met and dealt with both of these problems; but *only within comparatively recent times has Islam felt the necessity for doing so.* Now there are apologists for the Faith, who are doing their best to provide a rationale of Islam which will

appeal to the youth of modern scientific education, and hold them steady, in the fold of their fathers. The great leader of this rationalizing movement in India was, of course, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, whose good works live after him in the Moslem University, Aligarh, where his body is interred. With him we may associate such names as those of Moulvi Chirag Ali; Syed Amir Ali, well known for his book, "The Spirit of Islam"; S. Khuda Bakhsh, author of "Essays Islamic and Indian"; Sir Abdur Rahim and many others. Of the views of these men of advanced thought much has been written, and I shall not deal with them here; but I will illustrate this modern position from the writings of two other men, one who deals with the theological problems, and the other who discusses the social problems.

Before we go farther, however, we should note that, while the attempt of modernists to adjust Islam to the spirit of the age is a matter of great importance and far-reaching consequences, and is being taken seriously by those engaged in the attempt, yet from our Christian scientific point of view, there would seem to be present an element of superficiality in the work. So far, there has arisen no great exponent of "Higher Criticism" in Islam, well equipped with training in historical and scientific research, who has sought to dig deep at the roots of Islam and bring forward the actual and honest results of fearless investigations. There has been no challenge yet from within, as to the claims of Mohammed regarding himself as a prophet, and the Koran as a product of inspiration. If these are unassailable positions, the work of the greatest scholars of impartial mind will but strengthen them. Certainly, such investigation has not wrought disaster for the world where Christianity is concerned; and we have every reason to believe that there will be great gain to mankind at large when serious students within the Islamic church go forth to make the same daring enquiries.

The first modernist whom we shall consider is Sir Syed Ahmed Husain of Hyderabad State who has published some "Notes on Islam" which were written in the form of letters to his boys in college in England. They have all the charm and deep personal interest that one would expect to find in a father's letters to his sons. The author admits that his views are "neither quite orthodox nor quite heterodox but something midway between the two." His "Notes" are given up entirely to a discussion of the theological and ethical positions of Islam, and he quite frankly and freely makes comparisons between Islam and Christianity.

His first thesis is that "Islam is the best religion in the world." And here he seeks to differentiate between Islam, rightly understood and interpreted, and the Mohammedanism "of some of our formularist maulvies who say that a man goes to Hell or Heaven according as he wears his trousers lower or higher than his ankles." He insists that these have degraded Islam "by paying undue attention to formulas and forms to the exclusion and neglect of its living spirit and reality."

He explains his statement further by saying that he is convinced (1) "Islam is not inconsistent with *true* Christianity, or with any other *true* religion of which the fundamental principle is the One God"; (2) Islam "conforms to modern scientific ideas better than any other religion." The words of Jesus, and "Christianity as taught by Jesus in his own speeches," as they are reported in the synoptic Gospels, he believes, are undoubtedly valid and authentic. The author clearly sees that the teachings of Jesus declare "the same sublime truths as our Prophet himself inculcated;" and, as Jesus did not live long enough to complete His work, it was necessary for Mohammed to come and finish it; for, according to the Koran, Mohammed says, "This day have I completed your religion for you."

Discussing prayer, he remarks that the *Fatiha*, which is the opening chapter of the Koran, is better than the Lord's Prayer, because it is simpler. The *Fatiha* (The Opening) runs, as follows:—

"Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds
The Compassionate, the Merciful
King on the Day of reckoning!
Thee only do we worship and to Thee do we cry for help.
Guide Thou us on the straight path,
The path of those to whom Thou hast been gracious;—with
whom Thou art not angry, and who go not astray!"
—Rodwell's Translation.

He finds that the Christian and Moslem prayer are both built on the same model, giving expression alike to:—

1. Adoration
2. Submission
3. Supplication.

The difference, he asserts, is only one of language, and that both of them correspond to three "essential elements in all religions," namely:—(a) "*belief* in the existence of a Supreme Power which is infinite and absolute: (b) *feeling* of man's entire dependence on that Power, and, (c) *desire* to seek or solicit guidance of that Power in the daily life of man." Since both these prayers contain such fundamental conceptions and expressions of universal feelings, he declares that no one need hesitate to join in the solemn recitation of either."

True Islam is considered to be that religion which is founded on "The Path of Grace," which is seen to be the *via media* between the "Path of Sin" and the "Path of Error." Those who are polytheists, and those who do not believe in Mohammed as the Messenger of Allah, are clearly on the "Path of Error which leads to confusion worse confounded." The principle of the middle way, is said to be the underlying foundation of "everything which is Islamic or Muslim;" for the Prophet himself said, "the best of things is the medium thing."

A Momin or believer, who is a true Moslem, need only believe that "Islam is a real and true religion, and that Muhammad was a very great and good man." He is very positive in decrying those who

would "deify Muhammad, or represent him to be akin to God, as sometimes Maulvies represent him and call him 'the One in the guise of Ahmad.'"

It is somewhat difficult to exactly locate this author's position with regard to the Koran, as the revealed Word of God; as that is understood by the orthodox. He says: We call the Qur'an the Word of God, chiefly because it contains messages of highly spiritual value delivered by an illiterate man like Muhammad. It is neither history.....nor biography...It is only a collection of sermons, commands and instructions delivered and issued from time to time, as occasions required. Commentators.....whose learning and authority cannot be questioned, have clearly proved that there is nothing in the Qur'an which is improbable, or cannot be rationally explained to be quite in accordance with the laws of Nature." From a later paragraph, it would seem that he is rather inclined to the position that the Koran is the product of *ilham*, subjective revelation, rather than *wahi*, or objective revelation; for he says, "According to Islam, there are two sources of knowledge, Science and Revelation; the one represents man's effort to learn God's ways, and the other represents God's grace to discover His ways to men. I, for one, believe that the difference between the two sources of knowledge corresponds to the difference between Experience and Intuition." If our conclusion is correct in regard to this matter, it is very interesting indeed; for it is at direct variance with the orthodox position.

(To be continued.)

The Moslem World Magazine

January, 1924.

WORK FOR THE TURK

ALL who are interested in the welfare of the peoples of the Near East, and especially of the Mohammedan races of that region, will rejoice to read the article by Dr. Ernest W. Riggs, Secretary of the American Board, in which he tells how the American Mission Board with which he is connected is proposing to fulfill the responsibility it has assumed in Turkey, and will not shrink from the difficult task of helping the Turks to take a more worthy place in the society of nations.

THE KORAN IN SWAHILI

Canon Dale, editorial secretary of the Universities Mission to Central Africa, has been working for years on the difficult and thankless task of translating the Koran into the Swahili language. He tells why this work has been undertaken, and the important results it is expected will be achieved by the circulation of a vernacular edition of the Koran in East and Central Africa.

Scandinavian Missions to Moslems, about which so little is known by English-speaking Christians, are very thoroughly and interestingly described by a Danish Pastor, Rev. F. Fris Berg.

The modern and unorthodox Mohammedan view point in regard to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is given by an Ahmadiya 'missionary' to America, Maulvi Muhammad Din.

The extraordinary ignorance of Mohammedan students in regard to the contents of their own sacred book is very clearly shown by a series of questions prepared by a missionary at the request of a young Moslem, who confessed his utter inability to give any adequate replies.

Students of the Theology of Islam will be interested in two articles the first of which, by Dr. E. E. Calverley, of the *Arabian Mission*, deals with al-Ghazali's treatise on the spiritual meaning of the Mohammedan forms of Worship, and the second is a translation from the Italian of an article on the meaning of the Arabic word "Tahrif," in connection with corruption of the text of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.

There are also articles on "A Hindu Apologist for Islam," on "Mohammedanism in Trinidad," on Arabia, and on mission work in Mesopotamia. The Notes on current Topics, and Book Reviews are of unusual interest.

Published by the Missionary Review Publishing Company, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City. 50 cents a copy \$2.00 a year.

In India the Christian Literature Society, Post Box 501, Madras, act as agents for *The Moslem World* magazine, and will be glad to receive orders from intending subscribers for 1924. The price in Indian currency is Rs. 6-10-0. Please send orders direct to Madras.

Notes

The Secretary Pro. Tem. of the M. M. League very reluctantly takes up his new duties. It was only because of the earnest and repeated solicitations of his friend, the Secretary, that he consented to "carry on" during the period of the latter's much needed furlough. All of the members of the League are greatly indebted to their Secretary, the Rev. L. Bevan Jones, for the effective and inspiring service that he was given. We regret that he is compelled to give up the work even temporarily, but we rejoice that it will not be for long. Rev. and Mrs. Bevan Jones sail for Home on March 15th. We wish them a very profitable furlough, a safe return; and we assure them that our prayers do follow them.

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Suitable Literature for Moslem Women. We are indebted to one of our members for the following list of books and tracts for Moslem women:—
Books by Miss L. Marston—C. L. S., Ludhiana.

Shahi Firman; Royat ul Amir Ali, Suraj Prakash.

Talim un nisa, giving advice on domestic management and training of children, Christian Vernacular Education Society, Allahabad.

Chashma-i-Hayat ki Shakhen—on characteristics of children.

By padri, S. Gracey. American Mission Press, Ludhiana.

The Muslim and Christian Idea of God. Urdu. Rev. J. Qalander; C. L. S., Allahabad.

The following tracts in Urdu may be had for free distribution from the Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund by application to Rev. J. J. Lucas, Allahabad:—

1. Answer to the question of questions, "who is Jesus of Nazareth?"
2. How the Death of Christ differs from the Death of Prophets, Patriots and Martyrs.
3. Pundita Ramabai—A Wonderful Life.
4. A Wonderful Prophecy—viz., Matt. XXIV, 14.

A word of caution. It is perhaps not out of place to call the special attention of *New Members* who receive News and Notes to the fact that it is "Strictly Confidential" publication. Experience has proven that it is well to take this precaution, and it is gratifying to record that in the thirteen years of its existence there has been no embarrassment arise as a result of neglect on the part of any member. The Moslem World is exceedingly sensitive, so let us keep up our good record.

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Moslem Periodicals. Requests have reached the writer to suggest the names of Moslem Periodicals published in India in English giving the general Moslem attitude of India on things Islamic and non-Islamic. For the benefit of any who may be interested I know of nothing better than the "Muslim Outlook," Lahore, Punjab, which is the only Moslem daily paper in English, published in India. It is now in its third year. The subscription price is Rs. 25/- per annum. A new monthly journal the "Moslem Herald" has been announced from Madras, but apparently funds have not yet been secured to make its appearance possible.

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What are the Moslems reading? "Tell me what you read and I will tell you what you are," is an old saying. May it not be that if we knew a little more about the types of books our Moslem neighbours are reading, we might be better able to help them? May the acting secretary suggest that the members in different parts of India and other countries make an endeavour to discover what the "best sellers" are, and send reports as soon as possible?

The Islamic Studies Circulating Library

(Under the Auspices of the M. M. League.)

WE publish below a further list of books which your Committee have agreed shall be added to the Library.

Life of Mahomet (abridged)	Muir,
Sources of the Quran	Tisdall.
Rise and Decline of Caliphate	Muir.
The Coran	Muir.
History of Philosophy in Islam	deBoer.
Presentation of Christianity to Moslems (Bd. of missionary Preparation, New York.)	
Muhammedanism	Snouch Hugronje.
Life of Rowland Bateman,	
Commentary on the Quran,	Wherry.
Muhammadan Jurisprudence	Abdul Rahim.
Henry Martyn	C. E. Padwick.

The Library is open to all members residing within the Indian Postal area on payment of the Annual subscription of one rupee. All correspondence in connection with the Library should be addressed to the Secretary of the League, Rev. M. T. Titus, Moradabad, U. P. who is acting as Librarian.

FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER.

- PRAISE** for the baptism of a wealthy land-holder in North India.
- PRAISE** for the growing change of attitude among many Moslems in India toward the death of Christ.
- PRAISE** for a firman from H. H. the Nawab of Rampur lifting the ban on public preaching in his State.
- PRAY** for a rich young man in East Bengal who is seeking baptism but on certain terms; that he may cast his all on God and come out unafraid.
- PRAYER** is requested that the Holy Spirit may bring to fruition the seed which has been sown in the hearts of pardah women in Lucknow.
- PRAYER** is earnestly asked for a new and sincere enquirer in the United Provinces.
- PRAY** for the Secretary of the League as he goes on furlough; and for the Acting Secretary as he takes up his new duties.
- PRAY** for the Near East Conference which meets at Jerusalem, April 3rd, that it may be a time of vision, inspiration and constructive planning for the Kingdom.
- PRAYER** is asked for a young Moslem widow. For two years she has listened most earnestly to the Christian teaching given in the Mission School and she believes in Christ, but there are very real difficulties in the way of her openly professing herself a Christian at present. May the way open for her soon.

NEW MEMBER.

361 Miss Ethel Ward, Meth. Miss. Darwha Motibagh, Berar.

DEATH OF A MEMBER

On December 29th, the Rev. Chas. L. Bare of the M. E. Mission, Bareilly, U. P., passed away very suddenly and unexpectedly, from cerebral hemorrhage. He had almost completed 44 years in India, and was greatly interested in the work of the League.

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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 Officiating Hon. Secretary :—

Rev. Murray T. Titus,
Methodist Mission,
Moradabad U.P., India